

**MAYOR OF LONDON**

---

# **Survey of Londoners 2021-22**

Headline findings

---

## **COPYRIGHT**

**Greater London Authority  
September 2022**

Published by  
Greater London Authority  
City Hall  
Kamal Chunchie Way  
London E16 1ZE

enquiries 020 7983 4000  
minicom 020 7983 4458

[www.london.gov.uk](http://www.london.gov.uk)

---

## **CONTENTS**

<b>Foreword</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Executive summary</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Financial hardship</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>A robust safety net</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Labour market equality</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Strong communities</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Mental health and wellbeing</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Digital access for all</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Equity in public services</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Conclusions</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>1 Introduction</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>1.1 Objectives of the Survey of Londoners 2021-22</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>1.2 Survey methodology</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>1.3 Survey context and caveats</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>1.4 This report</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>2 Financial hardship</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>2.1 Introduction</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>2.2 Food security</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>2.3 Day-to-day banking activities</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>2.4 Reliance on cash</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>2.5 Debt</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>2.6 Savings</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>2.7 Housing conditions</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>3 A robust safety net</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>3.1 Introduction</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>3.2 Financial hardship support organisations</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>3.3 Financial hardship support</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>4 Labour market equality</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>4.1 Introduction</b>	<b>56</b>

---

4.2 Insecure employment	56
4.3 London Living Wage	57
4.4 Job satisfaction	59
4.5 Employment rights	60
<b>5 Strong communities</b>	<b>64</b>
5.1 Introduction	64
5.2 Views on the local area	64
5.3 Family, friends and other people Londoners meet	72
5.4 Public spaces	79
5.5 Free-time activities	81
5.6 Volunteering and social action	85
5.7 English-language proficiency	94
<b>6 Mental health and wellbeing</b>	<b>97</b>
6.1 Introduction	97
6.2 Satisfaction with life	97
6.3 Loneliness	98
6.4 Social isolation	100
6.5 Satisfaction with leisure time	101
<b>7 Digital access for all</b>	<b>104</b>
7.1 Introduction	104
7.2 Digital exclusion	104
<b>8 Equity in public services</b>	<b>106</b>
8.1 Introduction	106
8.2 Trustworthy sources of information	106
8.3 Unfair treatment	107
8.4 Civic participation	113
8.5 Civic consultation	115
8.6 Voter registration	116
8.7 Influencing local decisions	118
8.8 Satisfaction with local schools	119
<b>9 Discussion</b>	<b>121</b>
<b>10 Conclusions</b>	<b>127</b>

<b>Appendix 1 Terms and definitions used in this report</b>	<b>132</b>
<b>Individual classifications</b>	<b>132</b>
<b>Area-based measures</b>	<b>133</b>
<b>Appendix 2 Methodological notes</b>	<b>136</b>
<b>Survey mode</b>	<b>136</b>
<b>Fieldwork period</b>	<b>136</b>
<b>Statistical significance</b>	<b>136</b>
<b>Rounding</b>	<b>136</b>
<b>Population estimates used to estimate numbers of Londoners</b>	<b>137</b>
<b>Food security scoring and categorisation</b>	<b>137</b>

## Foreword



The COVID-19 pandemic was undoubtedly one of the worst crises in London's history. Not only did it claim thousands of lives, but it also had a profound impact on Londoners' social and economic lives – impacting people's mental health, exacerbating inequality, pushing families into hardship and inflicting a heavy toll on London's business community.

Of course, the response within London was nothing short of heroic – from Londoners looking out for their neighbours and helping the most vulnerable, to communities rallying to support local businesses and our amazing NHS staff and key workers.

But recovering from the effects of the pandemic will take time and a concerted effort by all. That's why the Mayor has made supporting London's recovery one of his top priorities as he strives to continue building a better, fairer, safer, greener and more prosperous London for everyone.

However, as life had changed for many Londoners as a result of the pandemic, it was important to understand exactly where Londoners were in relation to key societal issues. The Mayor published results from the first Survey of Londoners in 2019 and was able to shed a light on issues such as social integration, equalities and fairness, and access to food. However, this was now before the pandemic, when life was very different. We, therefore, needed to understand how Londoners were faring as a result of it in the present.

That's why we commissioned this second Survey of Londoners – to deliver on the Mayor's commitment to understand the issues affecting Londoners' daily lives, so we can work with others to develop the right interventions to tackle the impact of the pandemic and, now, the cost-of-living crisis.

This report offers a valuable insight into the lives of seven million adult Londoners after the initial phase of the COVID-19 crisis. It has provided updates on many of the measures collected in the first survey back in 2018-19, like Londoners' sense of belonging to the city,

to the local areas in which they live, and their personal wellbeing. It has also examined Londoners' financial situations to assess whether the pandemic has had effects on these.

An encouraging aspect was that the report shows the resilience of Londoners and how, by the time this survey was being conducted, some of the key issues facing Londoners had recovered to pre-pandemic levels. Less encouraging was that although it appeared that Government support after the pandemic struck helped to ensure overall financial hardship did not increase in London from 2019 to early 2022, there was a concerning growth in inequalities. Some of the groups hardest hit by the effects of the pandemic were much more likely to be in financial hardship when the second Survey of Londoners was being carried out. With the cost-of living-crisis now affecting the country and our city, this means that these groups of Londoners are in the worst possible positions to be able to stave off the increasing cost pressures facing them in 2022 and beyond.

The Mayor is committed to helping the most in-need Londoners through the current crisis and reducing inequalities. He has called on the Government to introduce support, on a similar scale to the measures that helped the country through the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, though it would need to be far more targeted so that it will help the most in need Londoners through the current crisis. These measures should include introducing a Lifeline Tariff to ensure the most vulnerable people receive a basic amount of free energy every day, giving the Mayor the power to freeze private rents in the capital for two years, providing free school meals to all primary school children to ensure all those in need are reached, and uplifting Universal Credit in line with inflation. In addition to this, he is helping to tackle fuel poverty through his Warmer Homes programme and energy advice services, improving security for private renters and housing Londoners who are rough sleeping or homeless, connecting Londoners with welfare advice, as well as funding programmes to tackle food insecurity.

Given the importance of this survey and the data it provides, we are pleased to have collaborated with the North East London Health and Care Partnership who will be using the findings for their sub-region to support their own public health and community policies.

This report only scratches the surface of what Londoners have told us, and we want all Londoners to be able to make use of this evidence in their decision-making. Therefore, we are inviting everyone with an interest in making the city a better place for us all to analyse the report and data further, so that we are able to improve the outcomes for every Londoner and, in particular, for those most in need.

**Dr Debbie Weekes-Bernard**

Deputy Mayor for Communities & Social Justice

## Acknowledgements

We would like to thank everyone who contributed their time and expertise into developing the 2021-22 survey and the 8,630 Londoners who gave their time to answer the survey. We would also like to thank the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) who carried out the sampling, question-testing, fieldwork and data preparation; the GLA analysts, policy experts and colleagues in the Mayor's Office who managed the survey from start to finish; and to the North East London Health and Care Partnership (NEL HCP) for boosting the sample, to allow for results to be analysed in more detail in that sub-region.



# Executive summary

## Introduction

In 2018-19 the GLA first undertook a Survey of Londoners. At the time it provided vital evidence on Londoners that had never been collected before in such detail. There were always plans to repeat the survey, but the COVID-19 pandemic lent further weight to repeating the exercise. By conducting a survey in 2021-22, we could provide a snapshot of Londoners' lives after the initial phase of the COVID-19 crisis.

Therefore, in 2021-22, the GLA conducted another Survey of Londoners, following the same methodology as the Survey of Londoners 2018-19, an online and paper self-completion survey of adults aged 16 and over in London. The survey, which received responses from 8,630 Londoners, aimed to assess the impact of COVID-19 and associated restrictions on key social outcomes for Londoners, not available from other data sources.

It is important to understand the context in which the Survey of Londoners 2021-22 took place. Survey fieldwork began in November 2021; so, up to that point, it had been four months since most legal limits on social contact had been removed. However, after fieldwork had started, some restrictions due to the emergence of the Omicron variant were introduced. This may or may not have had some effect on the data. Given these changing circumstances, caution should be applied when interpreting the results.

The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 also took place just before the full effects of the cost-of-living crisis began to set in. The situations of Londoners will have changed while this report was being drafted.

This initial report provides descriptive results for the key headline measures and supporting demographic data collected by the survey. The statistics are reported in terms of their correlation and do not imply causation.

## Financial hardship

- **Adults' food security:** Sixteen per cent of adults in London had low or very low food security, equivalent to 1.2 million adults, a reduction since 2018-19 when it was 21 per cent (1.5 million adults). Lower-income Londoners were more likely to be food-insecure.
- **Children's food security:** Around one in seven (14 per cent) parents in London had children living in low or very low food security, not a statistically significant difference from 2018-19 when it was 17 per cent. Parents were more likely to experience food insecurity than their children.

- **Food bank use:** Three per cent of Londoners had collected a food parcel from a food bank in the past 12 months, while 37 per cent had donated either food or money. Full-time work appears to be the protective factor when it comes to food bank use.
- **Day-to-day banking activities:** The majority of Londoners were using digital channels to conduct their day-to-day banking, with 70 per cent saying they had used a mobile app and 59 per cent had conducted online banking. Face-to-face channels were used by 36 per cent of Londoners; the younger a person was, the less likely they were to use face-to-face banking channels.
- **Reliance on cash:** Around 500,000 Londoners (7 per cent of all adult Londoners) said they relied on cash to a great or very great extent, in that they paid for most or all things in cash, including larger purchases and bills. Lower-income Londoners were more likely to report relying on cash to a great or very great extent than the highest-income Londoners.
- **Debt:** Around a third of Londoners (32 per cent) owed money on unsecured debt, including personal loans, credit cards, household bills and other forms of consumer credit, down from 37 per cent in 2018-19. Eighteen per cent of Londoners who owed money found keeping up with that debt a heavy burden, equivalent to around 400,000 Londoners, a decrease from 2018-19 when it was 24 per cent or around 600,000 Londoners. Pakistani (42 per cent) and Bangladeshi Londoners (31 per cent) who owed money were more likely than average to say their debt was a heavy burden.
- **Financial resilience:** A quarter of Londoners did not have at least £1,500 in savings (25 per cent). This is a significant reduction from 2018-19, when 33 per cent of Londoners reported not having savings of at least £1,500. Londoners not living with someone in their household as a couple were more likely not to have at least £1,500 in savings (32 per cent) than Londoners living with someone in their household as a couple (18 per cent).
- **Keeping home warm enough in winter:** Thirteen per cent of Londoners aged 16 and over said they were not able to keep their home warm enough in winter (no significant change from 2018-19 when it was 12 per cent). Lower-income Londoners were more likely to report not being able to keep their home warm enough in winter than higher-income Londoners. Further expected rises to the price of energy, as part of the cost-of-living crisis, means that the situation will probably have changed a lot by the time this report is published.
- **Quality of housing:** Private renters were more likely to rate their housing as good quality (63 per cent) than Londoners renting from a housing association or trust (55 per cent) and Londoners renting from the local authority (45 per cent). Bangladeshi Londoners who were renting were the ethnic group most likely to rate their housing quality as poor (26 per cent).
- **Outdoor space:** The majority of Londoners (84 per cent) had access to either a private or shared outdoor space that their household could use. Londoners renting their home were more likely not to have access to outdoor space than owner-occupiers.
- **Tenancy situation:** Around three-quarters of renters (74 per cent) mentioned at least one aspect of their current tenancy situation that was positive. Conversely, around four in 10 renters (39 per cent) mentioned at least one negative aspect of their current

tenancy situation. Part-owners and part-renters were more likely to say that the relationship with their landlord or agent had deteriorated (13 per cent) compared with social and private renters (ranging between 3-5 per cent).

- **Security of private rented sector accommodation:** Among London's private renters, 26 per cent were classified as being affected by housing insecurity, having had to leave their previous accommodation due to issues related to cost, conditions or their relationship with their landlord; not a statistically significant difference from 2018-19 when it was 29 per cent. A series of protections were put in place for tenants after the pandemic hit and removed just before fieldwork started on the Survey of Londoners 2021-22. As rent increases are one of the reasons deemed as an 'issue', the cost-of-living crisis may now be exacerbating this as a reason for leaving, given all of the other cost pressures facing families during this time, meaning that the situation of private renters may have changed by the time this report is published.
- **Overcrowding:** Four per cent of Londoners aged 16 and over were living in overcrowded accommodation. The groups more likely to be living in overcrowded accommodation than average included Londoners with a household income of less than £14,900 per annum (10 per cent); Londoners in receipt of state benefits (10 per cent); and Londoners living in social rented accommodation (9 per cent).

## A robust safety net

- **Financial hardship support organisations:** Around three-quarters of Londoners (74 per cent) were aware of food banks providing financial hardship support, while around two-thirds (66 per cent) were aware of Citizens Advice providing this service. There was much lower awareness of all of the other organisations that were shown to respondents in the survey, namely Law Centres Network, Debt Free London, the employment rights hub, boroughs' hardship/local welfare schemes and other local advice services/networks. Some of the groups less likely to be aware of any of the listed support organisations included Londoners who said they were not proficient in English, Muslim Londoners, Londoners who had lived in London for less than five years and non-UK born Londoners.
- **Financial hardship support:** Around eight in 10 Londoners (79 per cent) were aware of Housing Benefit as a form of support, with a similar proportion (78 per cent) being aware of Universal Credit or Pension Credit. A smaller proportion (56 per cent), though still a majority, were aware of Council Tax Support. There was lower awareness of all of the other forms of support shown to respondents in the survey, namely Discretionary Housing Payments, council local welfare/crisis support, advanced payments/extra help for people on benefits and interest free loans/grants from charities. The same groups of Londoners who were less likely to be aware of those listed support organisations were also less likely to be aware of these listed financial forms of support.

## Labour market equality

- **Insecure employment:** Ten per cent of working-age Londoners in work were in insecure employment, that is, being employed on a temporary contract, working through an employment agency or self-employed in low-skilled occupations (the same as in

2018-19). Around a quarter (26 per cent) of working young Londoners aged 16-24 were in insecure employment.

- **London Living Wage (LLW):** Around one in nine (11 per cent) working Londoners said that they did not earn the LLW or more in their current main job. Those in the managerial and professional occupation class were less likely to be paid below the LLW (5 per cent) than those in routine and manual occupations (33 per cent) and those in intermediate occupations (15 per cent).
- **Job satisfaction:** Around six in 10 (62 per cent) workers in London were satisfied with their current job. Around two-thirds of workers (66 per cent) who did earn at least the LLW in their current job were satisfied with their current job, compared with only 33 per cent of workers who did not earn at least the LLW.
- **Employment rights:** Twenty-three per cent of working Londoners felt they were not very well informed, or not at all well informed, about their rights at work; no significant change from 2018-19 (22 per cent). Nearly half (46 per cent) of working Londoners who said they were not proficient in English felt that they were not well informed about their employment rights. Eighteen per cent of working Londoners did not know where to find information about their rights at work if they needed to; no significant change from 2018-19 (17 per cent). Knowledge of where to find information about rights at work increased with age.

## Strong communities

- **Belonging to London:** Most Londoners exhibited high levels of belonging to London, with 80 per cent saying they belong to the city. In comparison to 2018-19, there has been no significant change in feelings of belonging to London (81 per cent). However, since 2018-19, feelings of belonging to London have decreased in Bexley and Bromley by 12 percentage points.
- **Local area belonging:** Almost three quarters of Londoners (73 per cent) said they felt they belonged to their local area (unchanged from 2018-19). Older Londoners and Londoners who had lived in their local area for five years or more were more likely to feel they belonged to their local area.
- **Relationships with neighbours:** Almost half of Londoners borrowed things and exchanged favours with their neighbours (47 per cent), no significant change from 2018-19 (45 per cent). Londoners living in the most deprived areas of London were less likely to agree that they borrow things and exchange favours with neighbours than those living in the least deprived areas.
- **Social cohesion:** Around eight in 10 Londoners (80 per cent) thought that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together (an increase from 75 per cent in 2018-19). White British Londoners and retired Londoners were two groups of Londoners whose perceptions on this measure had increased since 2018-19 (by six percentage points and seven percentage points respectively).
- **Neighbourhood strength:** Just under half of all Londoners (46 per cent) agreed that people in their neighbourhood pulled together to improve it. Londoners living in the least deprived areas were far more likely to agree that people in their neighbourhood pulled

together to improve it, compared to those living in the most deprived areas (62 per cent compared to 41 per cent respectively).

- **Face-to-face contact with family, friends, and neighbours:** Around three-quarters of Londoners (73 per cent) reported having face-to-face contact with neighbours once a week or more; 59 per cent had face-to-face contact with friends once a week or more; and 37 per cent with family they do not live with once a week or more. This is in line with findings from the 2018-19 survey, except for face-to-face contact with friends where frequent contact has decreased (70 per cent, 66 per cent and 36 per cent respectively).
- **Diversity within Londoners' friendship groups:** Londoners' friendship groups are more likely to be similar by age than by education, ethnicity or income. Around seven in 10 Londoners stated that over half of their friends were of a similar age (70 per cent) and 63 per cent stated that over half were of a similar level of education. Around six in 10 Londoners stated that over half of their friends were of the same ethnic group (58 per cent) and 34 per cent stated that over half were of a similar level of income. These were all similar to the proportions in 2018-19, so Londoners' friendship groups have not become more or less diverse since 2018-19.
- **Londoners' wider social networks:** The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 also explored social mixing in Londoners' wider social networks, excluding close friends. Londoners were more likely to spend time with those from a different ethnic group than people older, younger or from a different social class. Over one-third of Londoners (36 per cent) frequently spent time with adults of a different ethnic group. This was followed by 17 per cent of Londoners who frequently spent time with adults who were much older; 14 per cent with adults who were much younger and 13 per cent with adults who were from a different social class. More frequent, wider mixing with different ethnic groups has increased from 32 per cent in 2018-19; meanwhile more frequent, wider mixing with younger adults has decreased from 18 per cent. More frequent, wider mixing with older adults and adults from a different social class were similar to the proportions in 2018-19 (19 per cent and 12 per cent respectively).
- **Public spaces:** Around two-thirds of Londoners (66 per cent) had visited their local high street at least once a week in the past 12 months, while around half (49 per cent) had been to a park at least once a week in the past 12 months. Londoners in central and north London were more likely to have visited their local high street frequently in the past 12 months, and Londoners in east London were less likely.
- **Free-time activities:** Londoners were less likely to have participated in any of the free-time activities asked about in 2021-22, compared with 2018-19, except for going to parks, which increased by five percentage points. For example, 55 per cent of Londoners had engaged in activities such as going to the theatre, cinema or live music and attending local community festivals and events in the last month (formal culture and events), down from 66 per cent in 2018-19. Also, 20 per cent of Londoners had played sport in the last month, down from 23 per cent in 2018-19.
- **Formal volunteering:** Around one-third of Londoners (33 per cent) had participated in formal volunteering in the last 12 months. This compares to 28 per cent in 2018-19. However, the increase needs to be treated with caution as questionnaire differences between the two surveys may have had an effect on the results. When formally



volunteering, Londoners were most likely to have volunteered for a religious organisation, club or group. Londoners in part-time work, retired Londoners and students were more likely to have formally volunteered than Londoners in full-time work.

- **Informal volunteering:** Around six in ten (60 per cent) Londoners had participated in informal volunteering in the last 12 months, defined as giving unpaid help to other people such as friends, neighbours or other people who were not relatives, separate from any help given through groups, clubs or organisations. This compares to 52 per cent in 2018-19. Again, the increase needs to be treated with caution as questionnaire differences between the two surveys may have had an effect on the results. When informally volunteering, the most common activity performed by Londoners was giving advice to someone who was not a relative. Some of the groups more likely to have informally volunteered included Londoners who were carers, LGBTQ+ Londoners, Londoners in part-time work and students.
- **Mutual aid groups:** Seven per cent of Londoners had been involved with a mutual aid group in the past 12 months, while 88 per cent had not been involved. Londoners more likely to be experiencing financial hardship across a range of different measures were far more likely to have been involved in a mutual aid group than those less likely to be experiencing hardship. Londoners who were Sikh (17 per cent), Jewish (13 per cent) and Hindu (11 per cent) exhibited higher rates of involvement in a mutual aid group.
- **Social action:** Reported as 'civic participation' in the 2018-19 headline findings report, around one in five Londoners (19 per cent) had been involved in social action in the past 12 months. Social action includes campaigning on behalf of a political party; trying to set up a new service/amenity for local residents; trying to stop something happening in the local area; running local services on a voluntary basis, organising a community event or being involved in another local issue. This is slightly lower than in 2018-19, where 24 per cent of Londoners had been involved in social action in the past 12 months. Londoners educated to university-degree level or higher (23 per cent) were more likely to have engaged in social action than those with qualifications lower than university-degree level (16 per cent) and those with no qualifications (9 per cent).
- **English language proficiency:** Of those Londoners for whom English was not a first language, 90 per cent were proficient in English, no significant change from 91 per cent in 2018-19. English-language proficiency was much lower among older age groups, a pattern unchanged from 2018-19.

## Mental health and wellbeing

- **Life satisfaction:** Reported as 'personal well-being' in the 2018-19 headline findings report, 60 per cent of Londoners reported high or very high satisfaction with their life nowadays (unchanged from 2018-19). Londoners facing economic disadvantage exhibited higher rates of dissatisfaction with life nowadays than the London average.
- **Loneliness:** Eight per cent of Londoners often or always felt lonely (unchanged from 2018-19). Londoners experiencing financial hardship on a range of different measures experienced higher rates of loneliness than the London average. Londoners who were not living with someone in their household as a couple were significantly more likely to feel lonely often or always than Londoners who were living with someone as a couple.

- **Social isolation:** Around a quarter of Londoners were socially isolated (26 per cent), defined as not having someone they can rely on a lot in an emergency (no significant change from 27 per cent in 2018-19). As with feelings of loneliness, Londoners more likely to be experiencing financial hardship on a range of different measures were far more likely to report being socially isolated. Digitally excluded Londoners were significantly more likely to be socially isolated than digitally active Londoners.
- **Satisfaction with leisure time:** Almost half of all Londoners (46 per cent) felt satisfied with the amount of leisure time they had, and just over a quarter (28 per cent) felt dissatisfied. Satisfaction with leisure time was positively associated with economic and social advantage.

### Digital access for all

- **Digital exclusion:** Five per cent of Londoners were digitally excluded and 94 per cent were digitally active. Around eight in 10 (81 per cent) digitally excluded Londoners were over the age of 50. Around seven in 10 (71 per cent) digitally excluded Londoners were not educated up to university-degree level.

### Equity in public services

- **Trustworthy sources of information:** Londoners were most trusting of news and information from the NHS and from family and friends, with the proportions indicating high trust at 67 per cent and 60 per cent respectively. Only 8 per cent of Londoners reported having high trust in news and information received from commentary on social media feeds. White Londoners were less likely to report high trust in news and information from commentary on social media feeds (4 per cent) than Londoners from BAME communities (13 per cent).
- **Unfair treatment:** Thirty-seven per cent of Londoners had been treated unfairly in the last 12 months because of one or several protected characteristics or because of their social class. In 2018-19, the question asked respondents to exclude any unfair treatment from family or friends, which resulted in 35 per cent of Londoners saying they had been treated unfairly. In 2021-22, on this comparable measure, 36 per cent of Londoners had been treated unfairly in the last 12 months (no significant change from 2018-19). Black Londoners are the only ethnic group to have seen an increase in unfair treatment experienced as a result of their ethnicity (from 26 per cent to 43 per cent). The most common source of unfair treatment was from retail, leisure or shop staff.
- **Civic participation:** Around half of Londoners (48 per cent) had engaged in civic participation in the past 12 months, with the same proportion having not engaged in civic participation in the past 12 months. Civic participation is defined as engagement in democratic processes, both in person and online, including contacting a local official (such as a local councillor or MP); signing a petition; or attending a public rally (excludes voting). Groups that were highly unlikely to have engaged in civic participation in the past 12 months include Londoners who said they were not proficient in English (16 per cent); the digitally excluded (16 per cent); and Londoners with no qualifications (30 per cent).

- **Civic consultation:** Sixteen per cent of Londoners had taken part in civic consultation at least once in the past 12 months, defined as taking part in a consultation about local services or problems in the local area through completing a questionnaire; attending a public meeting; or being involved in a face-to-face or online group. Groups that were highly unlikely to have engaged in civic consultation in the past 12 months include Londoners who said they were not proficient in English (4 per cent); the digitally excluded (6 per cent), Londoners with no qualifications (7 per cent) and Londoners aged 16-34 (10 per cent).
- **Voter registration:** Eighty-six per cent of Londoners aged 16 and over reported that they are registered to vote, not significantly different from 2018-19 (84 per cent). In 2018-19, a voter registration rate (88 per cent) was able to be derived for the eligible population of Londoners aged 16 and over, as nationality was collected for each respondent. Nationality was not collected in the 2021-22 survey, so a comparable figure cannot be derived.
- **Influencing local decisions:** Twenty-eight per cent of Londoners either definitely or tended to agree that they personally can influence decisions affecting their local area, not significantly different from 2018-19 when 31 per cent agreed. Londoners aged 16-34 (24 per cent) were less likely to feel they could personally influence decisions affecting their local area, than Londoners aged 35-64 (32 per cent) and Londoners aged 65 and over (33 per cent).
- **Satisfaction with local schools:** The majority of Londoners (60 per cent) said they were very or fairly satisfied with local schools. Londoners living with someone in their household as a couple (66 per cent) were more likely to feel satisfied with local schools than those who were not living with someone as a couple (56 per cent).

## Conclusions

The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 has assessed the impact of COVID-19 and associated restrictions on key social outcomes for Londoners, not available from other data sources; provided evidence and insight on the state of London to inform a range of recovery missions, and associated policymaking; and provided data to support our understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion, including groups with protected characteristics for whom we lack evidence from existing sources. In addition to this, it has provided some potential courses of action to take when navigating the cost-of-living crisis.

Overall, the survey highlights the resilience of Londoners, given many of the outcomes tracked in the 2021-22 survey have not seen any substantial declines since the survey was previously conducted in 2018-19, pre-pandemic.

The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 clearly shows that Government support, in the form of protections like furlough and the Universal Credit (UC) uplift, helped to ensure overall financial hardship did not increase in London from the time of the first Survey of Londoners (2018-19) to the second in early 2022. However, inequalities grew, as these improvements were driven by the financial situations of higher-income Londoners, compared with lower-income Londoners. To help with the current cost-of-living crisis, the Mayor of London has



urged Ministers to help lower-income Londoners by bringing in support on a similar scale to the measures that helped the country through the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic – though it would need to be far more targeted so that it reaches those most in need. This includes introducing a Lifeline Tariff to ensure the most vulnerable people receive a basic amount of free energy every day, providing free school meals to all primary school children to ensure all those in need are reached, and uplifting Universal Credit in line with inflation. The Mayor is also undertaking work to address food insecurity in the capital, through programmes such as Food Roots, which will support emergency food aid partnerships in London, and the Food Connect pilot, which will support food hubs to increase surplus redistribution to those in the community who need it.

Overall awareness of some forms of social and financial support was low among Londoners, though there were indications that the Londoners most in need of their support were more aware. The Mayor of London is already undertaking work to raise awareness of people's rights and entitlements, through the Cost-of-living Hub; cost-of-living leaflets; cost-of-living digital tools grant programme and encouraging Pension Credit uptake. He's also provided more than £4 million in funding across 2021-22 and 2022-23 to organisations offering advice on understanding and claiming financial rights and entitlements. This is helping them to both increase their capacity in the face of rising demand, and improve the accessibility of their services by embedding them in community settings.

On energy specifically, a new advice service, Energy Advice London, will be launched in November in partnership with the Energy Saving Trust. It will be open online and over the phone to anyone in London struggling with their energy bills. Londoners will be able to get advice on saving energy and keeping warm at home, on installing renewable energy systems, and on financial support to make their homes more energy efficient. Alongside this, the most vulnerable households will continue to receive in-home energy advice, and support with energy debt, from the Mayor's Warmer Homes Advice Service, which has already helped over 15,000 households. Over 300 organisations across London are referral partners, including the NHS and local third sector organisations. And the Mayor's Warmer Homes programme (£43m this year) is providing grants of up to £25,000 to low-income Londoners to make their homes warmer, greener and cheaper to run.

The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 has also illustrated the importance of other issues affecting Londoners, like the importance of working Londoners to earn at least the London Living Wage, which the Mayor continues to encourage employers to opt-in and leads on efforts to make London a Living Wage city. The survey showed how being digitally excluded leads to a range of negative social outcomes. The Mayor, through his work with the London Recovery Board, has a digital inclusion mission which is to ensure that every Londoner has access to good connectivity, basic digital skills and the device or support they need to be online by 2025. This includes using his Adult Education Budget to help thousands of Londoners gain the essential digital skills they need for both life and work.

The Mayor has also launched engagement and community outreach campaigns to help digitally excluded Londoners access this crucial training offer.

It is worth reemphasising that the Survey of Londoners 2021-22 took place just before the full effects of the cost-of-living crisis began to set in. The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 can serve as a new baseline point for the changes that we are currently seeing in living standards in relation to the cost-of-living.

With this in mind, we hope that partners in London boroughs, central government and civil society use the data and build on this descriptive analysis, with further intersectional analysis and multivariate analysis, as appropriate. By sharing our findings, we can then improve our shared understanding of social policy issues in London.

# 1 Introduction

In 2018-19 the GLA first undertook a Survey of Londoners.<sup>1</sup> At the time it provided vital evidence on Londoners that had never been collected before in such detail. It provided measures of economic fairness and financial inclusion not available from other sources; measures of social integration based on the GLA's framework; a robust measure of food insecurity in London; and data to support our understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion in London.

There were always plans to repeat the survey, but the COVID-19 pandemic leant further weight to repeating the exercise. By conducting a survey in 2021-22, we could provide a snapshot of Londoners' lives after the initial phase of the COVID-19 crisis. Data on Londoners will be crucial to informing the recovery effort, which has been organised across a series of missions.<sup>2</sup>

The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 helps meet the requirements of the recovery programme by providing a wide range of high-quality data on the behaviour and attitudes of different groups of Londoners. It enables an understanding of the drivers of different socio-economic outcomes, such as wellbeing and food security; helps shape recovery efforts; and informs policy and programme development.

## 1.1 Objectives of the Survey of Londoners 2021-22

The objectives of the survey are:

- to assess the impact of COVID-19 and associated restrictions on key social outcomes for Londoners, not available from other data sources
- to provide evidence and insight on the state of London, to inform a range of recovery missions and associated policymaking
- to provide data to support our understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion, including groups with protected characteristics for whom we lack evidence from existing sources
- to provide an updated measure of the levels and types of food insecurity in London.

Data from the Survey of Londoners will be made available to download through the UK Data Service for further analysis by academics and others by the end of 2022.

---

<sup>1</sup> GLA, [Survey of Londoners Headline findings](#), 2019 (updated 2020)

<sup>2</sup> London.gov.uk, [Recovery in context](#)

## 1.2 Survey methodology

The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 followed the same methodology as the Survey of Londoners 2018-19, with a few minor tweaks to improve response. The survey was a self-completion survey of 8,630 adults aged 16 and over living in London. The survey ran from November 2021 to February 2022. The survey used an online-first methodology, followed by paper questionnaires. The sample was drawn from addresses in the Postcode Address File across the whole of London; and was designed to provide estimates for major demographic groups in London by age, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, etc. The North East London Health and Care Partnership (NEL HCP) paid for a boosted sample in their boroughs to enable them to report their results separately.

The questionnaire for the 2021-22 survey used the 2018-19 survey questionnaire as the starting point. Many of the questions used in the 2021-22 survey were either adapted or kept in to allow for comparison with the 2018-19 survey year. However, where questions asked in the 2018-19 survey were not carried across, this allowed space for new questions. These questions were designed and tested prior to inclusion by NatCen, the survey organisation contracted for the sample design, questionnaire testing, fieldwork and data preparation.

## 1.3 Survey context and caveats

Though the Survey of Londoners 2021-22 was largely identical to the 2018-19 survey in terms of methodology, it should be borne in mind that fieldwork for the 2021-22 survey still took place during the coronavirus pandemic. After fieldwork had started, the Prime Minister (PM) announced a move to 'Plan B' measures in England following the spread of the Omicron variant.<sup>3</sup> Face masks become compulsory in most public indoor venues under Plan B, and people were advised to work from home. England ended these Plan B restrictions on Thursday 27 January 2022, towards the end of the survey fieldwork period. There is no way to know for certain what impact this had on the data arising from the 2021-22 survey. However, the data for the 2021-22 survey has undergone extensive quality assurance prior to publication and further methodological details can be found in Appendix 2.

One noticeable difference with the 2021-22 survey, compared with the 2018-19 survey, was that a higher proportion of responses were received via the online questionnaire than the paper questionnaire (71 per cent and 61 per cent respectively).

Also, in between the close of fieldwork and the publication of this report, the first results from the 2021 Census were released.<sup>4</sup> This provided an estimate for the usual resident population in London on 21 March 2021. However, the Survey of Londoners 2021-22 data was finalised before this, so calibrated to population data based on the GLA's 2020-based Demographic Projections for 2021 (housing-led model and identified capacity scenario), which was our best estimate of the population at the time. In this report, we continue to

<sup>3</sup> Prime Minister's Office, 10 Downing Street, [Prime Minister confirms move to Plan B in England](#), 8 December 2021

<sup>4</sup> ONS/Census 2021, [Phase one of Census 2021 results – first results](#)

base our population figures on these projections, rather than on Census 2021, given the uncertainty around the Census's first published results, and as the census took place eight months before the fieldwork for the Survey of Londoners took place, so the population could have changed in that time as well.<sup>5</sup>

Finally, this survey was a response to one crisis that affected our city, the COVID-19 pandemic. However, just as this survey was starting its fieldwork in late 2021, another crisis was on the horizon, namely the cost-of-living crisis: the fall in 'real' disposable incomes (that is, adjusted for inflation and after taxes and benefits).<sup>6</sup> The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 will not have captured the effects of this new crisis, so the results of this report should be read with this in mind. The situations of some, if not all, Londoners will have changed in 2022 as a result of this new crisis.

## 1.4 This report

This report provides the key headline measures from the survey and supporting demographic results. It is being published so that these can be used publicly for a range of policy purposes. This initial analysis is primarily descriptive in nature, and reports statistics in terms of their correlation and does not suggest causation. Findings will be reported for different sub-groups of Londoners to highlight the current situation and any inequalities, but these results cannot determine the drivers of any inequalities that exist. We understand that the causes of many disparities in the UK, and London, are as a result of structural factors.<sup>7</sup> By structural inequalities, we mean the inherent biases in social structures such as businesses, social networks and public institutions, which produce advantages for some groups at the expense of others.

This is the first stage of a longer programme to analyse and disseminate the survey findings. Figures in this report are provided to illustrate statistically significant differences either from the average for all Londoners, or between two or more highlighted groups.

This report focuses on the most significant findings among sub-groups in London. There is not space to report on all of these in a headline findings report. The groups reported in this analysis were supported by additional regression analysis to understand the most significant differences. In some cases, this means that variables such as income or social class, which are traditionally associated with many social and economic outcomes, are not reported on here because they did not show significant variation between sub-groups. Our analysis sometimes found that associations with financial hardship measures were more significant and these are presented here. A more complete set of data tables will be published alongside this report on the London Datastore.

For this report, the geographic analysis is limited to where there is a significant variation by area – either according to the Indices of Multiple Deprivation, or by London Assembly

---

<sup>5</sup> London Datastore, [What to expect from the first Census results for London](#), 17 June 2022

<sup>6</sup> Institute for Government, [Cost of Living Crisis](#), updated 22 July 2022

<sup>7</sup> The Conversation, [Yes, there is structural racism in the UK – COVID-19 outcomes prove it](#), 6 April 2021

constituency areas. An explanation of the terms and definitions used in this report can be found in Appendix 1.

Quotations illustrating analysis in this report are taken from spontaneous free-text responses to a question at the end of the survey asking, “Finally, is there anything else about your experience of living in London that you would like to add?” The quotations have been chosen to illustrate the main issues covered in the survey, and to present a balance of views. The quotations have been added in largely unedited, save for spelling and grammar mistakes, to provide an authentic sense of Londoners’ feelings on life in London.

The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 provides a rich dataset for further detailed analysis of how outcomes in the policy areas covered are shaped by the characteristics of Londoners and the places in which they live. Further analyses following this publication will support the development and delivery of a variety of policies, including more detailed analysis of topics covered in this report.

## 2 Financial hardship

### 2.1 Introduction

The pandemic brought about severe restrictions on social contact and thus changed how Londoners went about their daily lives. While people with jobs that could be done remotely switched to remote working, this was impossible for some. Certain industries relied on close contact, so had to shut down altogether. This meant that, for some Londoners, their main source of income was severely impacted.

The government enacted a series of emergency measures to help those whose incomes were most adversely affected by the lockdown measures. These included the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme or 'furlough'; the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme; and benefit increases, such as the increase to Universal Credit (UC). All of these support measures had ended before the start of fieldwork on the Survey of Londoners 2021-22, though there would have been some overlap as many questions in this section asked respondents to think about the 'last 12 months'.

This section will look at, in particular, Londoners' experiences of food insecurity; various aspects of their financial situations; and their housing conditions. As will become apparent during reading through this chapter, particular groups of Londoners will be highlighted again and again as having more negative outcomes compared with some others. These are undoubtedly borne out of structural inequalities. It is important to reiterate that all of the trends and patterns presented below are correlations i.e. they indicate associations, but they do not show causation i.e. one factor causing another.

### 2.2 Food security

#### 2.2.1 Adult food security

Having food security means having access at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life. Being food-insecure means that, at times, a person's food intake was reduced and their eating patterns were disrupted because of a lack of money and other resources for obtaining food.

The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 replicated the approach taken in the 2018-19 survey, in that it used five questions to assess London adults' food security; and seven questions to assess London children's food security (asked of parents in the survey). The questions were recommended by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Economic Research Service.<sup>8</sup> The questions were about behaviours and experiences associated with any difficulties in meeting food needs in the past 12 months. The Department for Work and

---

<sup>8</sup> USDA, [Food Security in the US](#)

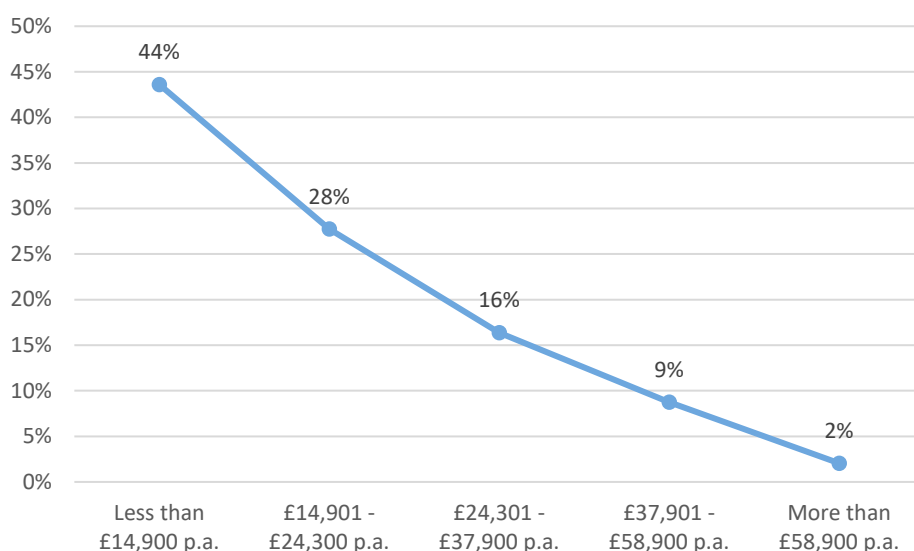
Pensions' (DWP's) Family Resources Survey started tracking household food security from 2019-20.<sup>9</sup>

In 2021-22, 16 per cent of adults in London had low or very low food security (circa 1.2m adults). This is a reduction since 2018-19 when it was 21 per cent (circa 1.5m adults). There was also an indication, from the DWP's survey, that household food security had improved from 2019-20 to 2020-21, i.e. during the pandemic (though the improvement was small and probably not statistically significant).

This fall, since 2018-19, might be attributed to the extraordinary measures that were put in place by the government towards the beginning of the pandemic period to provide a safety net to those whose incomes would be most affected by lockdown restrictions. It might also be as a result of the efforts of those in civil society, those volunteering in food banks and wider community efforts to help those in severe need. Lockdown restrictions also meant that for some groups of workers in London, they switched to remote working, which resulted in a drop in spending on things like transport and commuting, thus leaving more money available for food.<sup>10</sup>

In the analysis below, the categories of 'low food security' and 'very low food security' have been combined and will be reported together as being 'food-insecure'. Unsurprisingly, lower-income Londoners were more likely to be food-insecure (see Figure 2.1).

**Figure 2.1 – Nearly half of all Londoners (44 per cent) with a household income of less than £14,900 per annum were food-insecure**



Base: Londoners aged 16 and over with an annual income of: less than £14,900 (867); £14,901-£24,300 (631); £24,301-£37,900 (888); £37,901-£58,900 (931); more than £58,900 (1,465)

<sup>9</sup> DWP, [Family Resources Survey](#), 1 June 2010, updated 31 March 2022

<sup>10</sup> ONS, [Homeworking and spending during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic, Great Britain: April 2020 to January 2022](#), 14 February 2022



In terms of the groups who were most likely to experience food insecurity, these included single parents (41 per cent); Londoners reliant on cash in their day-to-day lives to a very great or a great extent (40 per cent); Londoners living in social rented accommodation (39 per cent); and disabled Londoners (27 per cent).

Being food-insecure was also associated with many other aspects of financial precarity. Around one in eight food-insecure Londoners (12 per cent) had collected a food parcel from a food bank in the past 12 months (the London average was 3 per cent). Around seven in 10 food-insecure Londoners (69 per cent) did not have financial savings of at least £1,500 (the London average was 25 per cent). Over four in 10 food-insecure Londoners (43 per cent) reported not being able to keep their home warm enough in winter (the London average was 13 per cent). Finally, around a third of food-insecure Londoners (32 per cent) were currently receiving state benefits (either UC or Pension Credit), compared with 11 per cent across London overall.

### **2.2.2 Children's food security**

As mentioned above, seven questions were used to assess London children's food security. These questions were put to Londoners who responded to the survey to say that they were the parent or guardian of any children aged under 16 currently living in the household.

As these are proxy responses, with parents giving answers on behalf of their children, it should be acknowledged that there may be some under-reporting of their children's circumstances, as parents are not always aware of their children's experiences with food.<sup>11</sup> This should be borne in mind when looking at these results.

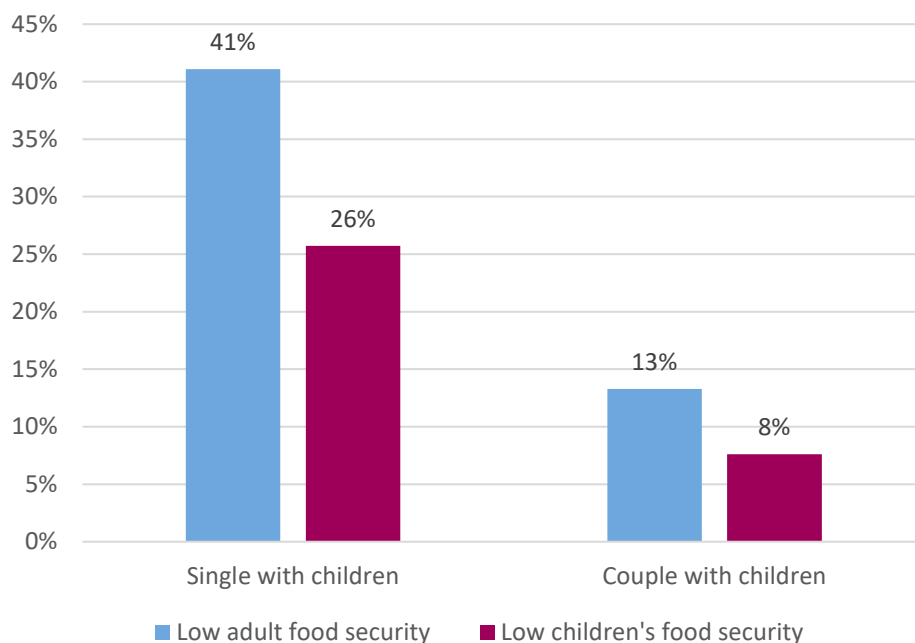
Around one in seven parents in London (14 per cent) had children living in low or very low food security. This is not a statistically significant difference from 2018-19 when it was 17 per cent.

As in 2018-19, we can assess the extent to which some parents are able to shield their children from food insecurity, by looking at their rates of food security compared with their children (see Figure 2.2).

---

<sup>11</sup> Maryah Stella Fram, Edward A. Frongillo, Sonya J. Jones, Roger C. Williams, Michael P. Burke, Kendra P. DeLoach, Christine E. Blake, Children Are Aware of Food Insecurity and Take Responsibility for Managing Food Resources, *The Journal of Nutrition*, Volume 141, Issue 6, June 2011, Pages 1114–1119, <https://doi.org/10.3945/jn.110.135988>

**Figure 2.2 – Parents were more likely to experience food insecurity than their children**



Base: Single Londoners aged 16 and over who were the parent or guardian of any children aged under 16 currently living in the household (555); Londoners aged 16 and over living in a couple who were the parent or guardian of any children aged under 16 currently living in the household (1,233)

Around four in 10 single parents (41 per cent) were food-insecure, but only 26 per cent reported that their children were food-insecure. Of parents living in a couple, 13 per cent were food-insecure, but only 8 per cent of this group reported that their children were food-insecure. This adds further weight to the argument that parents will do everything they can to protect their children from the consequences of financial hardship, including enduring extreme hunger so that their children can get enough to eat.<sup>12</sup> As well as this, there are more options for some children to access free or subsidised food, like free school meals, breakfast clubs and commercial initiatives such as 'kids eat free' type schemes, which may help with children's food security, but not adults' food security.

In terms of the groups whose children were most likely to experience food insecurity, they were very similar to those experiencing adult food insecurity in general. These included parents with an income below £14,900 per annum (40 per cent), parents who relied on cash in their day-to-day lives to a great or very great extent (38 per cent), and Londoners whose highest qualification is below degree level (24 per cent).

Again, where children were food-insecure, their parents were more likely to have other financial concerns. Around one in five Londoners (22 per cent) whose children were food-insecure had collected a food parcel from a food bank in the past 12 months (the London average was 3 per cent). Around eight in 10 Londoners (81 per cent) whose children were

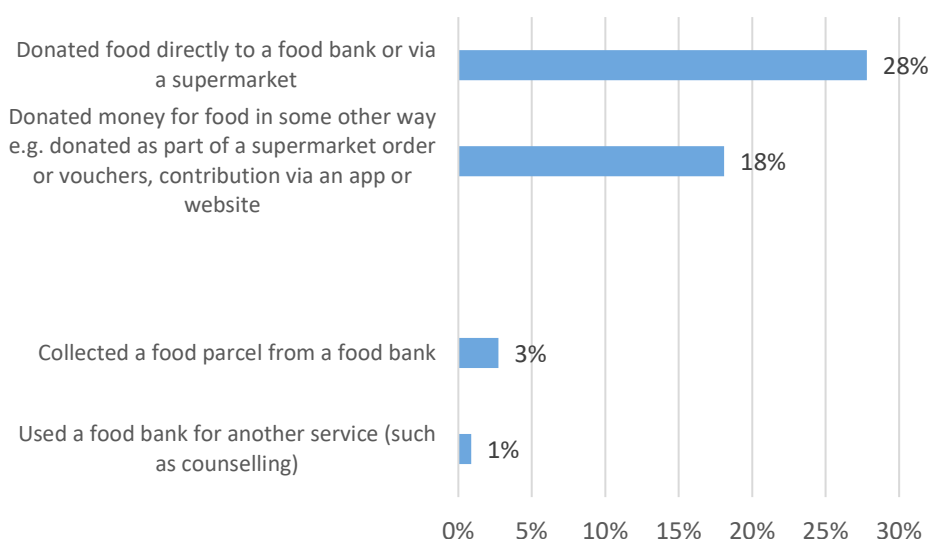
<sup>12</sup> Child Poverty Action Group, [Children growing up in poverty endure hunger and shame](#), 3 April 2019

food-insecure did not have financial savings of at least £1,500 (the London average was 25 per cent). Nearly six in 10 Londoners (56 per cent) whose children were food-insecure reported not being able to keep their home warm enough in winter (the London average was 13 per cent). Finally, around one in five Londoners (20 per cent) whose children were food-insecure reported that their accommodation did not have access to any outdoor space (the London average was 14 per cent).

### 2.2.3 Food banks

The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 asked Londoners about whether they had used or donated to a food bank in the past 12 months (see Figure 2.3).

**Figure 2.3 – 3 per cent of Londoners had collected a food parcel from a food bank in the past 12 months**

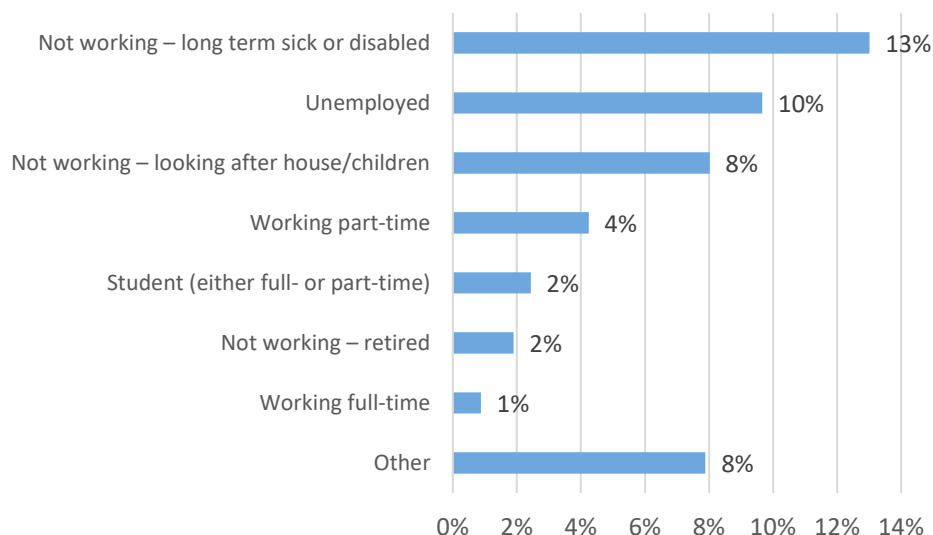


Base: Londoners aged 16 and over (8,630)

Though the proportion of Londoners who had collected a food parcel from a food bank in the past 12 months was low (3 per cent), this equates to circa 200,000 adult Londoners. An even smaller proportion had used a food bank in the past 12 months for another service (such as counselling). Larger proportions had donated food directly to a food bank or via a supermarket (28 per cent), or donated money for food in some other way – for example, as part of a supermarket order, vouchers, or a contribution via an app or website (18 per cent). Combined, this meant that over a third of Londoners (37 per cent) had donated either food or money in the past 12 months.

Full-time work appears to be the protective factor when it comes to food bank use (see Figure 2.4).

**Figure 2.4 – Londoners were more likely to have collected a food parcel from a food bank in the past 12 months if they were not working full-time**



Base: Londoners aged 16 and over not working due to long-term sickness or disability (296); unemployed (365); not working – looking after house/children (277); working part-time (1,151); student (either full-time or part-time) (372); not working – retired (1,579); working full-time (4,146); other (170)

According to the survey, 1 per cent of full-time workers had used a food bank in the past 12 months. This is lower than the rates for part-time workers (4 per cent); Londoners not working as they were looking after their house and/or children (8 per cent); unemployed Londoners (10 per cent); Londoners not working due to long-term sickness or disability (13 per cent); and Londoners who reported some other working status (8 per cent).

The groups most likely to have used a food bank in the past 12 months included Londoners currently receiving state benefits (12 per cent); single parents (11 per cent); Londoners with an income below £14,900 per annum (9 per cent); Londoners relying on cash in their day-to-day lives to a great or very great extent (9 per cent); Londoners living in social rented accommodation (9 per cent); and the digitally excluded (6 per cent).

Around three-quarters (76 per cent) of those who had used a food bank in the past year did not have financial savings of at least £1,500 (the London average was 25 per cent). Around half (51 per cent) of those who had used a food bank in the past year reported not being able to keep their home warm enough in winter (the London average was 13 per cent).

Turning to donations, higher-income Londoners were more likely to have donated food or money to a food bank in the past 12 months than lower-income Londoners (see Figure 2.5).

**Figure 2.5 – Londoners with an income above £58,900 per annum were around twice as likely to have donated food or money to a food bank in the past 12 months than Londoners with an income below £14,900 per annum**



Base: Londoners aged 16 and over with an annual income of: less than £14,900 (867); £14,901-£24,300 (631); £24,301-£37,900 (888); £37,901-£58,900 (931); more than £58,900 (1,465)

Around half (49 per cent) of Londoners with an income above £58,900 per annum had donated food or money to a food bank in the past 12 months. Though there was a decline with decreasing levels of income, there was a sizeable minority of the lowest-income Londoners (those with an income below £14,900 per annum) who had donated food or money in the past 12 months (25 per cent).

Women were more likely to have donated food or money to a food bank in the past 12 months than men (43 per cent and 32 per cent respectively).

Other groups with higher than average rates of donation include Londoners with caring responsibilities (48 per cent), Londoners in a managerial and professional occupation class (45 per cent), Londoners with at least a degree (44 per cent) and White Londoners (43 per cent).

### Quotes from Londoners on food security

*“There are growing numbers of our local community who are living well below the poverty line – COVID has compounded their struggle to survive. Food banks, fuel bills, and cuts to universal credit!”*

*“Worry for the amount of people that need to use food banks and wish the government would give lower income families more support.”*

### Quotes from Londoners on food security

*“In our rich country food banks should not exist.”*

*My sister struggles singles parent of two kids. I buy the everyday bits for them, bread, milk, toiletries, laundrette, school lunches. I receive nothing, I would like to help more but transport is hitting my wallet. “*

*“Is such an expensive city, the supermarket items have gone up since covid and brexit I feel I cannot buy the same amount of food as previously for the same price. Offer of food and supplies reduced a lot too, mainly because of Brexit and also the rent are going up again. It’s such an expensive city to live and the daily rate is low compared to all expenses we have, as rent and food.”*

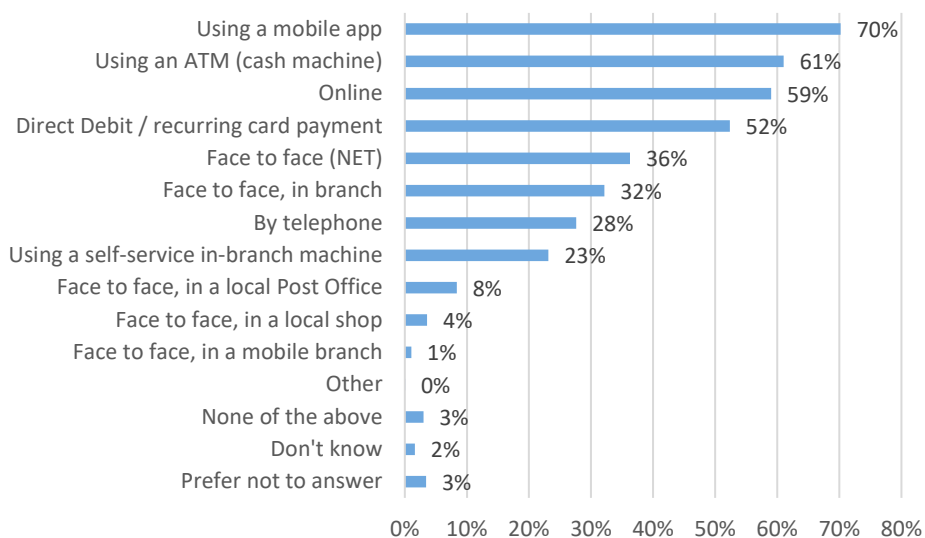
*“The cost-of-living is extremely high, I am working 3 jobs and completing full time education and still cannot afford to buy food.”*

*The need for food banks is sad. The homelessness is also sad and feels worse than when I moved to London in 20XX*

## 2.3 Day-to-day banking activities

The 2018-19 Survey of Londoners put a question to participants to ascertain whether they were ‘unbanked’, i.e. did not have a bank or building society account. The proportion of Londoners who were unbanked was very small (2 per cent), so for the Survey of Londoners 2021-22 we decided to switch our focus onto banking channels. Both technology and the pandemic are changing the way that people access essential banking services and those who depend on more traditional channels are at risk of financial exclusion. Respondents were asked about the channels they had used to undertake day-to-day banking activities in the past 12 months (see Figure 2.6).

**Figure 2.6 – Around seven in 10 Londoners had used a mobile app to conduct day-to-day banking activities in the past 12 months**

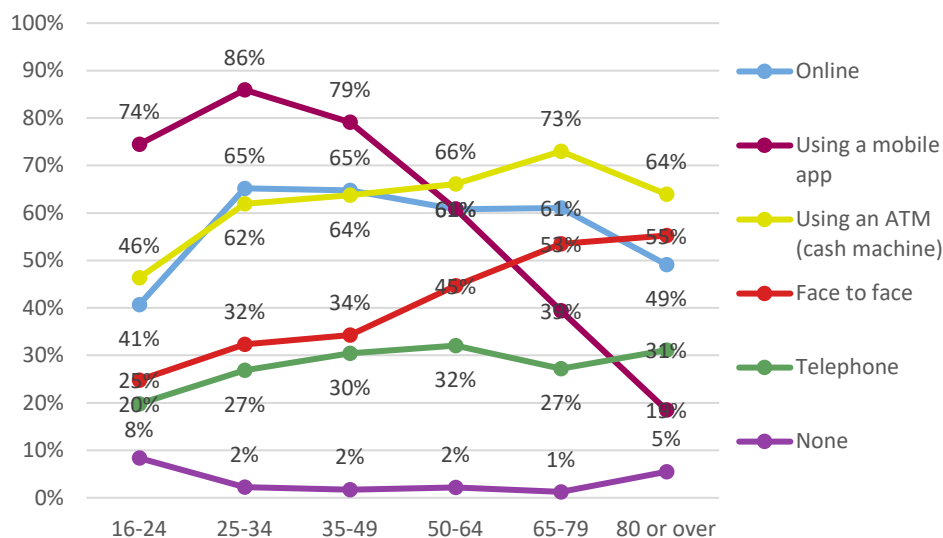


Base: Londoners aged 16 and over (6,088)

The majority of Londoners were using digital channels to conduct their day-to-day banking, with 70 per cent saying they had used a mobile app and 59 per cent had conducted online banking. Face-to-face channels were used by 36 per cent of Londoners, while telephone banking was used by 28 per cent of Londoners.

Different channels are used to a greater and lesser extent by different age groups (see Figure 2.7).

**Figure 2.7 – Digital banking channels are favoured by younger Londoners, whereas older Londoners still use face-to-face channels to a great extent**



Base: Londoners aged: 16-24 (541); 25-34 (1,334); 35-49 (1,799); 50-64 (1,261); 65-79 (819); 80 or over (96)

Mobile app banking was the most popular channel among Londoners aged under 50 (usage ranging from 74 to 86 per cent). For Londoners aged 50-64, both mobile app banking and online banking were equally popular (each used by 61 per cent of this age group). Online banking was the favoured channel among Londoners aged 65-79 (used by 61 per cent of this age group). Face-to-face banking channels were the most popular among Londoners aged 80 or over (used by 55 per cent of this age group). The younger a person was, the less likely they were to use face-to-face banking channels. Telephone banking was the least-used channel for all age groups except for Londoners aged 80 or over, 31 per cent of whom used telephone banking. For this age group, the least-used banking channel was a mobile app (19 per cent).

The older a person was, the more likely they were to use a cash machine. However, usage declined for Londoners aged 80 or over (64 per cent), compared with those aged 65-79 (73 per cent).

Londoners aged 16-24 were the most likely age group to have not used any banking channels to conduct day-to-day banking activities in the past 12 months (8 per cent).

## 2.4 Reliance on cash

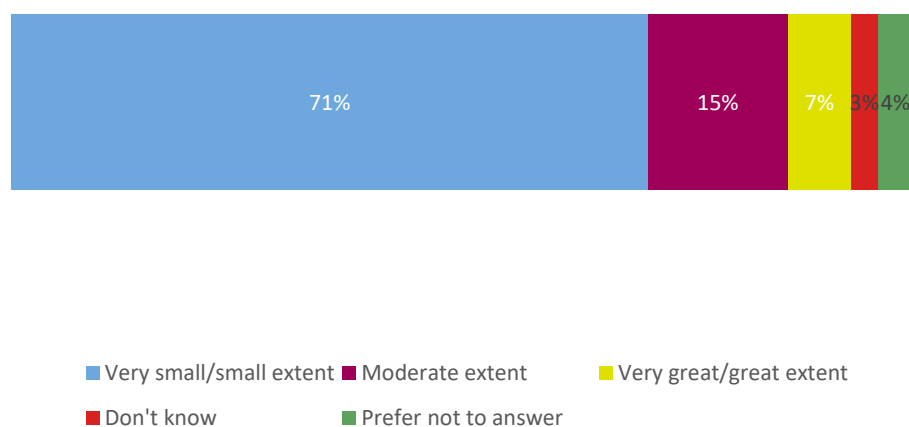
In the Survey of Londoners 2021-22 Londoners were asked to what extent they relied on cash in their day-to-day lives, rather than using other payment methods such as credit or debit cards or online payments. A reliance on cash could be through choice (e.g. they prefer to use cash for transactions), or it could be forced on them (e.g. they are unbanked and so have no access to mainstream financial services). The FCA has highlighted a number of harms associated with cash reliance, namely accessing cash if the availability



of cash declines; difficulties transitioning to alternative payments; and using cash in the face of cash being less widely accepted.<sup>13</sup> Despite these harms, cash users have listed numerous positive reasons for using cash, like providing peace of mind and being able to more easily budget when they know how much is physically in their pocket.<sup>14</sup>

The majority of Londoners (71 per cent) reported that they only relied on cash in their day-to-day lives to a small or very small extent. In the survey, 15 per cent said they relied on cash to a moderate extent, in that they used cash and other payment methods at about the same rate; and 7 per cent reported relying on cash to a great or very great extent, which corresponds to around 500,000 Londoners (see Figure 2.8).

**Figure 2.8 – Around 500,000 Londoners (7 per cent of all adult Londoners) said they relied on cash to a great or very great extent, in that they paid for most or all things in cash, including larger purchases and bills**



Base: Londoners aged 16 and over (8,630)

Londoners aged 65 and over were more likely to report relying on cash to a great or very great extent (12 per cent) than Londoners aged 16-34 (5 per cent) and Londoners aged 35-64 (7 per cent).

Londoners living in social rented accommodation were more likely to report relying on cash to a great or very great extent (16 per cent) than Londoners living in private rented accommodation (6 per cent) and owner-occupiers (5 per cent).

Reliance on cash has a strong income gradient, with lower-income Londoners (annual income of less than £14,900) being more likely to report relying on cash to a great or very

<sup>13</sup> Savanta: ComRes and the FCA, [Understanding cash reliance – qualitative research](#), July 2021

<sup>14</sup> [Access to Cash Review, Final Report](#), March 2019

great extent (14 per cent) than the highest-income Londoners (annual income of more than £58,900) (2 per cent).

Londoners who reported not being able to keep their home warm enough in winter were around three times more likely to rely on cash to a great or very great extent than those who could keep their home warm enough in winter (16 per cent and 5 per cent respectively).

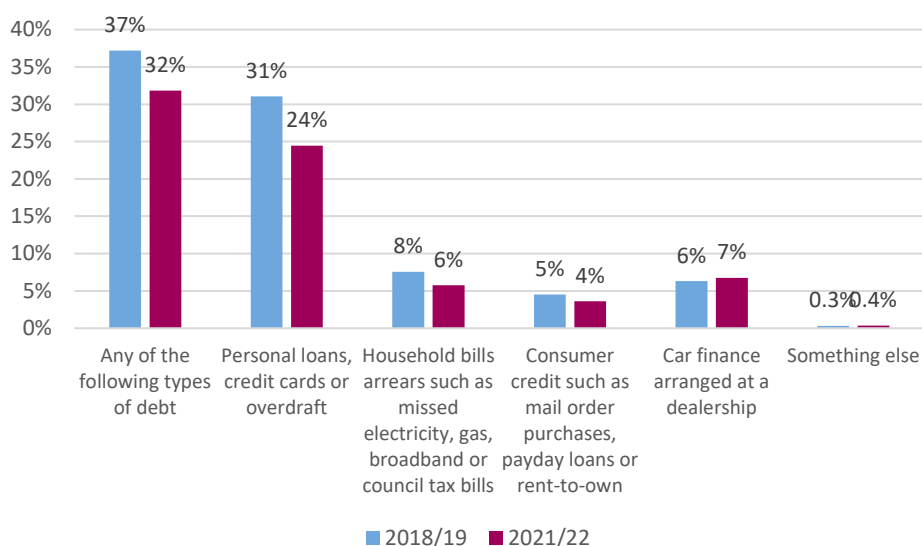
## 2.5 Debt

### 2.5.1 Debt holdings

The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 replicated the 2018-19 question about whether Londoners had any of the following types of debt, excluding mortgages and student loans (see Figure 2.9):

- personal loans, credit cards or overdraft
- household bills arrears such as missed electricity, gas, broadband or council tax bills
- consumer credit such as mail-order purchases, payday loans or rent-to-own purchases
- car finance arranged at a dealership
- something else.

**Figure 2.9 – In 2021-22, around a third of Londoners (32 per cent) owed money**



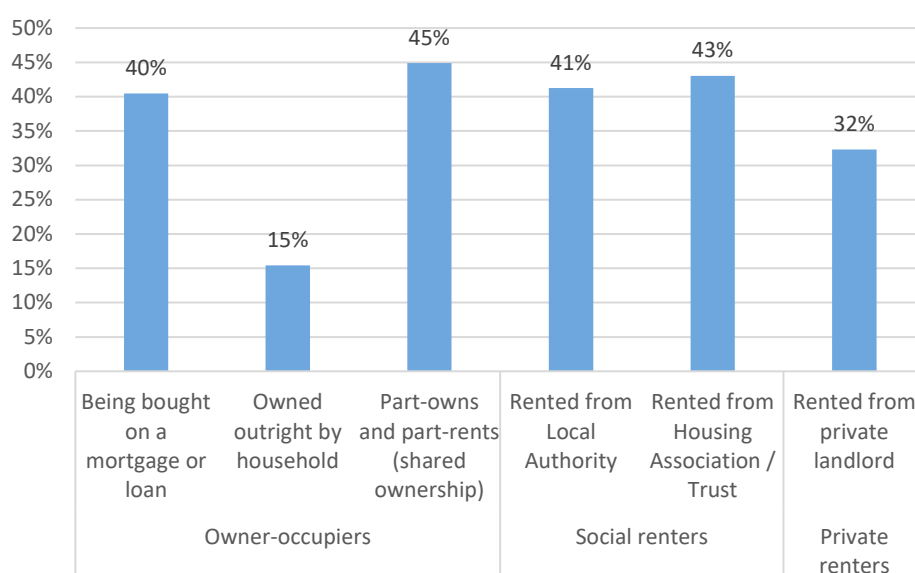
Base: 2018-19: Londoners aged 16 and over (6,601); 2021-22: Londoners aged 16 and over (8,630)

Around a third of Londoners (32 per cent) owed money on one of these types of debt, which is around 2.3m Londoners (a decrease from 2018-19 when it was 37 per cent or around 2.7m Londoners). Most debts were in the form of personal loans, credit cards or

overdrafts: around a quarter of Londoners (24 per cent) had this type of debt (a decrease from 2018-19 when it was 31 per cent). Meanwhile, 6 per cent had household bills arrears (a decrease from 2018-19 when it was 8 per cent); 7 per cent had car finance; and 4 per cent some form of consumer credit, such as mail order purchases, payday loans or rent-to-own purchases. There were no significant changes in the proportion of Londoners having these latter two types of credit.

Figure 2.10 shows how social renters and owner-occupiers who did not own their home outright were the most likely to owe money on one or more of these forms of debt (between 40 per cent and 45 per cent).

**Figure 2.10 – Owner-occupiers owning their home outright were the least likely to owe money (excluding mortgages and student loans)**



Base: Londoners aged 16 and over whose home was bought on a mortgage or loan (2,509); owned outright by household (1,991); part-owned and part-rented (shared ownership) (207); renting from local authority (769); renting from housing association/trust (714); renting from private landlord (1,693)

In the survey, 15 per cent of owner-occupiers who own their home outright owe money on one or more of these forms of debt, while private renters were in-line with the London average (32 per cent). By the time of the 2021-22 survey, the proportion of private renters who owed money on one or more of these forms of debt had decreased from 2018-19 when it was 41 per cent.

Londoners who did not have financial savings of at least £1,500 were around twice as likely to owe money on one or more of these forms of debt than Londoners who did have financial savings of at least £1,500 (54 per cent and 26 per cent respectively).

Around half (48 per cent) of Londoners who reported not being able to keep their home warm enough in winter owed money on one or more of these forms of debt. The same

proportion (48 per cent) of Londoners currently in receipt of state benefits owed money on one or more of these forms of debt.

We turn our attention to a particularly pernicious form of debt asked about in the survey, household bills arrears. Owing money on this form of debt is not usually an active choice, compared with the other forms of credit asked about. Having household bills arrears usually means that the household is in some sort of financial strife. As mentioned, the proportion of Londoners with household bills arrears has decreased since 2018-19. However, certain groups in London were more likely to be in arrears with their household bills. These include Londoners in receipt of state benefits (22 per cent), Londoners not working as they were looking after their house and/or children (16 per cent), Black African Londoners (16 per cent) and Londoners living in social rented accommodation (15 per cent).

Disabled Londoners were more likely than non-disabled Londoners to have household bills arrears (10 per cent and 4 per cent respectively). Londoners working part-time were more likely than Londoners working full-time to have household bills arrears (9 per cent and 4 per cent respectively).

We can illustrate how having household bills arrears is an indication of other aspects of financial struggles. In the survey, 16 per cent of Londoners who had household bills arrears had collected a food parcel from a food bank in the past 12 months (the London average was 3 per cent). Around seven in 10 Londoners (68 per cent) who had household bills arrears did not have financial savings of at least £1,500 (the London average was 25 per cent). Between four and five in 10 Londoners (45 per cent) who had household bills arrears reported not being able to keep their home warm enough in winter (the London average was 13 per cent).

### **2.5.2 Debt burden**

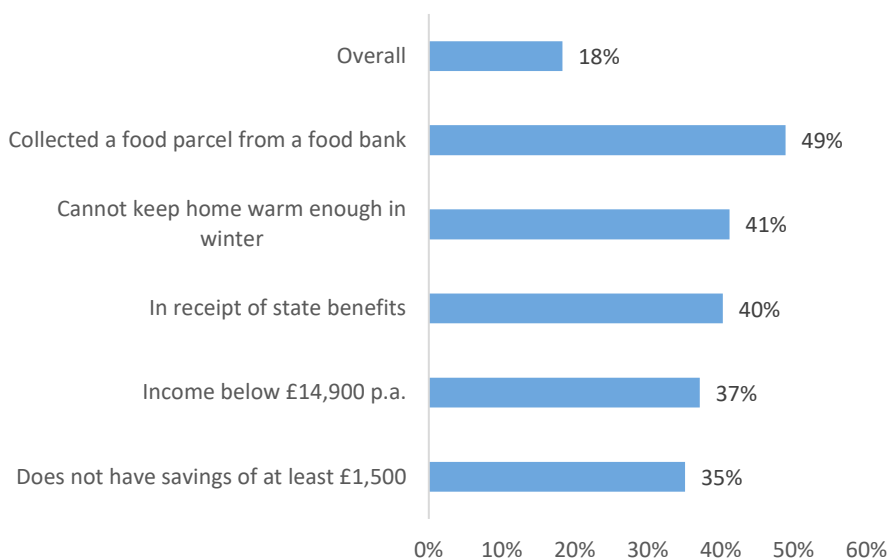
Having debt in itself is not necessarily a problem. Problems arise when people are unable to keep up with that debt and it becomes a burden. The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 replicated the 2018-19 question to those who owed money, about whether keeping up with the repayments was a financial burden.

Around one in five Londoners (18 per cent) who owed money said that keeping up with that debt was a heavy burden, equivalent to around 400,000 Londoners (a decrease from 2018-19 when it was 24 per cent or around 600,000 Londoners).

Pakistani (42 per cent) and Bangladeshi Londoners (31 per cent) who owed money were more likely than average to say their debt was a heavy burden. While disabled Londoners who owed money were more likely than non-disabled Londoners to say their debt was a heavy burden (28 per cent and 15 per cent respectively).

Figure 2.11 illustrates how Londoners who owe money with other markers of financial precarity are more likely than average to find keeping up with their repayments a heavy burden.

**Figure 2.11 – Those groups in London who were most likely to find their debt repayments a heavy burden were those with other markers of financial precarity**



Base: Londoners aged 16 and over who owed money on one of the forms of loan or credit agreement from the survey (2,786); collected a food parcel from a food bank (159); unable to keep home warm enough in winter (551); were in receipt of state benefits (463); an income below £14,900 per annum (346); did not have savings of at least £1,500 (1,173)

Around half (49 per cent) of food-bank users who also owed money said that their debt was a heavy burden. Similar proportions of Londoners who owed money, and who could not keep their home warm enough in winter (41 per cent), and were in receipt of state benefits (40 per cent), said that their debt was a heavy burden. Similar proportions of Londoners who owed money with an income below £14,900 per annum (37 per cent) and did not have financial savings of at least £1,500 (35 per cent) said that their debt was a heavy burden.

### Quotes from Londoners on debt

*"It's very expensive but a great multi cultural place to live. Debt doesn't allow us to save a deposit to move so we are stuck here and it's a struggle. Only for thr wealthy to live in London really and we are far from that. "*

*"The wages and prices of housing don't correlate. I was surprised when I moved here and learnt how people live in constant debt for everyday things."*

*A medium average family is working 24/7 just to pay off the bills, never able to save their hard earned wages, hardly can afford to go on holidays. Its always about taking out*

### Quotes from Londoners on debt

*loans, credit cards and your whole life is gone repaying the unrealistic loans. Citizens are always stressed than various forms of health issues comes up. Never happy living. “*

*“Feels like you are being discriminated against for having cash instead of cards. Also feel like it is a way of encouraging people to get into unnecessary debt as it is much harder to keep track of your spending when you're using a card to pay for things.”*

*“The ULEZ expansion has been a huge financial impact on me, as I rely on my car to go to work. I had to get rid of my old car and finance a new car, which meets ULEZ regulation. This has put me further into debt.”*

## 2.6 Savings

We now explore another aspect of Londoners' financial resilience: whether they had at least £1,500 in savings. Financial resilience is about being able to cope financially when faced with a sudden fall in income or unavoidable rise in expenditure, so having savings is one of the main ways of being able to cope with these scenarios.

In 2021-22, a quarter of Londoners aged 16 and over (25 per cent) did not have savings of at least £1,500. This is a significant decrease from 2018-19, when 33 per cent of Londoners aged 16 and over reported not having savings of at least £1,500. In November 2020, the Bank of England reported that household savings had risen substantially since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, as a result of household spending being lower but incomes not being as hit as much, so this result can be traced to that.<sup>15</sup> However, their analysis also revealed a wide dispersion of experiences across households. They found that higher-income households and retirees were more likely to have increased their savings during the pandemic. We, therefore, turn our attention to examine which groups of Londoners were more and less likely to have at least £1,500 in savings in 2021-22, by which time, many of the government's support measures put in place to mitigate the impacts of the pandemic had ended.

Women were more likely than men not to have at least £1,500 in savings (28 per cent and 22 per cent respectively). Both have decreased since 2018-19 when the proportions were 35 per cent and 31 per cent respectively. Londoners not living with someone in their household as a couple were more likely not to have at least £1,500 in savings (32 per cent) than Londoners living with someone in their household as a couple (18 per cent). Again, both have decreased since 2018-19 when the proportions were 41 per cent and 25 per cent respectively. Previous data from the ONS has shown how people living on their

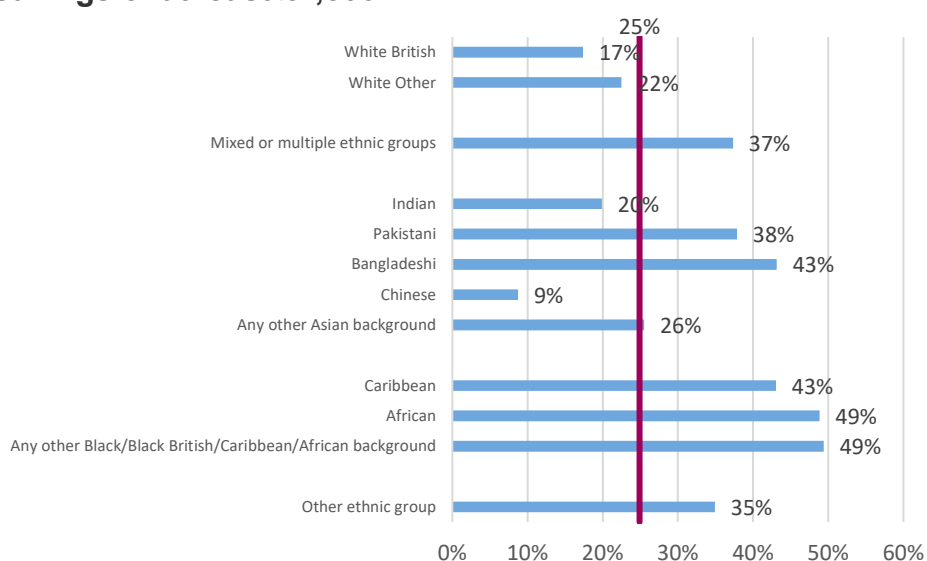
<sup>15</sup> Bank of England, [How has COVID affected household savings?](#), 25 November 2020

own spend more on average than two-adult households.<sup>16</sup> Thus, people living on their own would probably find it harder to accumulate savings.

Londoners with qualifications lower than degree level (37 per cent) and Londoners with no qualifications (46 per cent) were less likely to have savings of at least £1,500 than Londoners with at least a degree (15 per cent).

Figure 2.12 highlights differences in savings for different ethnic groups in London.

**Figure 2.12 – Black Londoners were the ethnic group most likely not to have savings of at least £1,500**



Base: Londoners aged 16 and over (8,630); White British (4,021); White other (1,298); mixed or multiple ethnic groups (283); Indian (652); Pakistani (221); Bangladeshi (327); Chinese (200); Any other Asian background (281); Caribbean (199); African (304); any other Black/Black British/Caribbean/African background (175); other ethnic group (261)

Black Londoners were, on average, around twice as likely as Londoners overall to not have savings of at least £1,500 (47 per cent and 25 per cent respectively). White British Londoners (17 per cent) and Chinese Londoners (9 per cent) were the ethnic groups least likely to not have savings of at least £1,500.

Compared with all other distinct religious groups in the survey, Jewish Londoners were the most likely to have savings of at least £1,500 (84 per cent). The other religious groups' proportions with savings (including Londoners with no religion) ranged from 38 to 74 per cent.

Having savings varied very distinctively by household tenure. Around six in 10 (58 per cent) social renters did not have at least £1,500 in savings, whereas around three in 10

<sup>16</sup> ONS/Census 2021, [The cost of living alone](#), 4 April 2019

(29 per cent) private renters did not have this at least this amount in savings. Meanwhile 21 per cent of part-owners and part-renters did not have this amount in savings, which was not significantly different from the 14 per cent of Londoners buying their home on a mortgage or loan who did not have this amount in savings. The group least likely not to have at least £1,500 in savings were those who owned their home outright (6 per cent).

Having children appears to be a factor in not having savings. Couples with children were around twice as likely as couples without children to not have at least £1,500 in savings (27 per cent and 14 per cent respectively). Single parents were considerably more likely than single Londoners without children to not have at least £1,500 in savings (54 per cent and 31 per cent respectively).

Not having adequate savings has a strong income gradient, with lower-income Londoners (annual income of less than £14,900) being more likely to report not having at least £1,500 in savings (61 per cent) than the highest-income Londoners (annual income of more than £58,900) (4 per cent).

Not having adequate savings is also related to a Londoner's reliance on cash. Londoners who reported relying on cash to a great or very great extent were more likely not to have at least £1,500 in savings (49 per cent), compared with those who reported relying on cash to a moderate extent (35 per cent), and to a small or very small extent (20 per cent).

Like with the other financial measures analysed in this survey, we can illustrate how not having adequate savings is related to a range of other indicators of financial strains. According to the survey, 8 per cent of Londoners without £1,500 in savings had collected a food parcel from a food bank in the past 12 months (the London average was 3 per cent). Around three in 10 Londoners (30 per cent) without £1,500 in savings reported not being able to keep their home warm enough in winter (the London average was 13 per cent). Finally, around three in 10 Londoners (29 per cent) without £1,500 in savings were currently receiving state benefits, compared with 11 per cent across London overall.

## 2.7 Housing conditions

### 2.7.1 Keeping home warm enough in winter

Fuel poverty in England is measured using the Low Income Low Energy Efficiency indicator.<sup>17</sup> This indicator uses three elements in determining whether a household is fuel-poor:

- household income
- household energy requirements
- fuel prices.

---

<sup>17</sup> BEIS, [Fuel poverty statistics](#), 19 September 2013, updated 24 February 2022

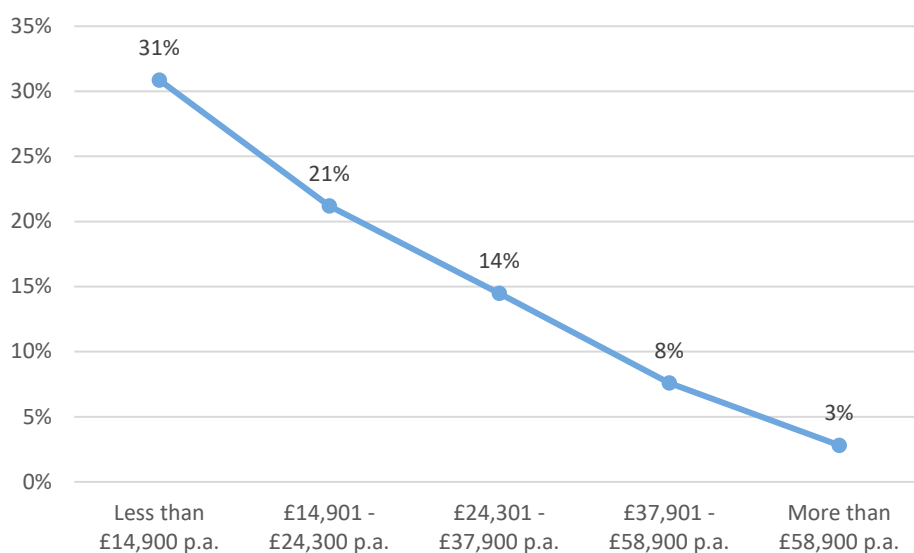


It was not possible to go into this level of detail in the Survey of Londoners 2021-22 to establish whether Londoners were in fuel poverty. Therefore, the question from the 2018-19 survey asking whether Londoners were able to keep their home warm enough in winter was asked again.

By the time of the 2021-22 survey, 13 per cent of Londoners aged 16 and over said they were not able to keep their home warm enough in winter (no significant change from 2018-19 when it was 12 per cent). We mentioned earlier that the cost-of-living crisis was on the horizon, just as this survey was closing. Rising energy prices are part of this new crisis and the first significant rise in the energy price cap was on 1 April 2022, after the Survey of Londoners 2021-22 had been completed.<sup>18</sup> Further rises in the energy price cap are expected in October 2022 and January 2023. Thus, by the time this report is published, we expect the proportion of Londoners not able to keep their home warm enough in winter to be much higher.

As in 2018-19, not being able to keep a home warm enough in winter has a strong income gradient (see Figure 2.13). Lower-income Londoners (annual income of less than £14,900) were more likely to report being unable keep their home warm enough in winter (31 per cent) than the highest-income Londoners (annual income of more than £58,900) (3 per cent).

**Figure 2.13 – Lower-income Londoners were more likely to report not being able to keep their home warm enough in winter than higher-income Londoners**



Base: Londoners aged 16 and over with an annual income of less than £14,900 (867); £14,901-£24,300 (631); £24,301-£37,900 (888); £37,901-£58,900 (931); more than £58,900 (1,465)

Social renting Londoners were more likely (28 per cent) than Londoners renting from a private landlord (16 per cent) to report not being able to keep their home warm enough in

<sup>18</sup> Forbes Advisor, [Ofgem's Energy Price Cap Explained](#), updated 9 Aug 2022

winter, who in turn were more likely than Londoners who were owner-occupiers (7 per cent) to report not being able to keep their home warm enough in winter.

Related to the above findings, certain ethnic groups were less likely to report difficulty in keeping their homes warm enough in winter, namely Chinese Londoners (6 per cent), White British Londoners (9 per cent) and Indian Londoners (10 per cent). Conversely, the ethnic groups more likely to report difficulty in keeping their homes warm enough in winter were Londoners of another Black background (31 per cent), Black African Londoners (25 per cent) and Bangladeshi Londoners (24 per cent).

### **2.7.2 Quality of housing**

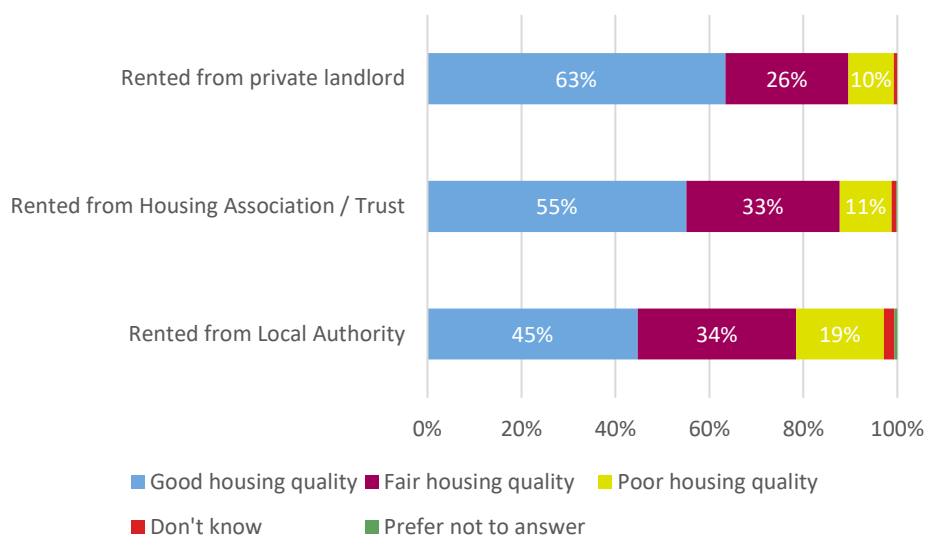
The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 included a new series of questions looking at the housing conditions of Londoners, given the pandemic's effect of forcing Londoners to be indoors more, i.e. imposed lockdowns.

Londoners living in social and private rented housing were asked to rate the quality of their housing. Owner-occupiers have more autonomy for improving the quality of their homes, so were not included in this question. The majority of renters (58 per cent) rated their housing as good or very good; 29 per cent rated it fair; and 12 per cent rated it poor or very poor.

In the analysis below the categories of 'very good' and 'good' have been combined, and will be reported together as 'good housing quality'. Similarly, the categories of 'very poor' and 'poor' have been combined, and will be reported together as 'poor housing quality'.

Private renters were more likely to rate their housing as good quality (63 per cent) than Londoners renting from a housing association or trust (55 per cent) and Londoners renting from the local authority (45 per cent) (see Figure 2.14).

**Figure 2.14 – Private renters were more likely to rate their housing as good quality than social renters**



Base: Londoners aged 16 and over renting from a private landlord (1,693); renting from a housing association/trust (714); renting from the local authority (769)

Unsurprisingly, poor housing quality was related to some of the other measures of housing quality collected in the survey. For example, renters (both social and private renters combined) who revealed that their accommodation was overcrowded were more likely to rate their housing quality as poor (34 per cent) than renters whose accommodation was not overcrowded (10 per cent).

In a similar vein, renters who reported not being able to keep their home warm enough in winter were more likely to rate their housing quality as poor (25 per cent) than renters who could keep their home warm enough in winter (8 per cent).

When it came to the proportions that rated their housing quality as poor, there was no significant difference between renters with access to outdoor space and renters with no access to outdoor space. However, among these groups there was a difference in ratings of good housing quality. Renters with access to outdoor space were more likely to rate their housing quality as good than renters with no access to outdoor space (61 per cent and 52 per cent respectively).

Digitally excluded Londoners who were renting were around twice as likely as digitally active renters to rate their housing quality as poor (22 per cent and 11 per cent respectively). The majority of digitally excluded renters were social renters (85 per cent), rather than private renters (15 per cent), which explains this difference.

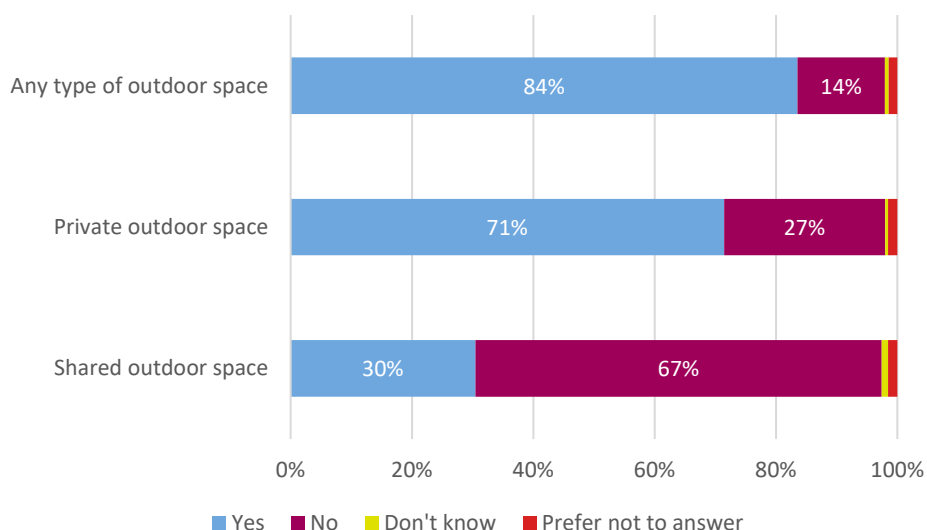
Renters who had lived in their local area for five years or more were more likely to rate their housing quality as poor than Londoners who had lived in their local area for less than five years (17 per cent and 6 per cent respectively).

Bangladeshi Londoners who were renting were the ethnic group most likely to rate their housing quality as poor (26 per cent).

### 2.7.3 Outdoor space

In the Survey of Londoners 2021-22 all Londoners were asked whether they had access to a private outdoor space (such as a garden, balcony or terrace) that only their household could use; and whether they had access to a shared outdoor space (such as a garden, balcony or terrace) that they shared with more than one other household (see Figure 2.15).

**Figure 2.15 – The majority of Londoners (84 per cent) had access to either a private or shared outdoor space that their household could use**

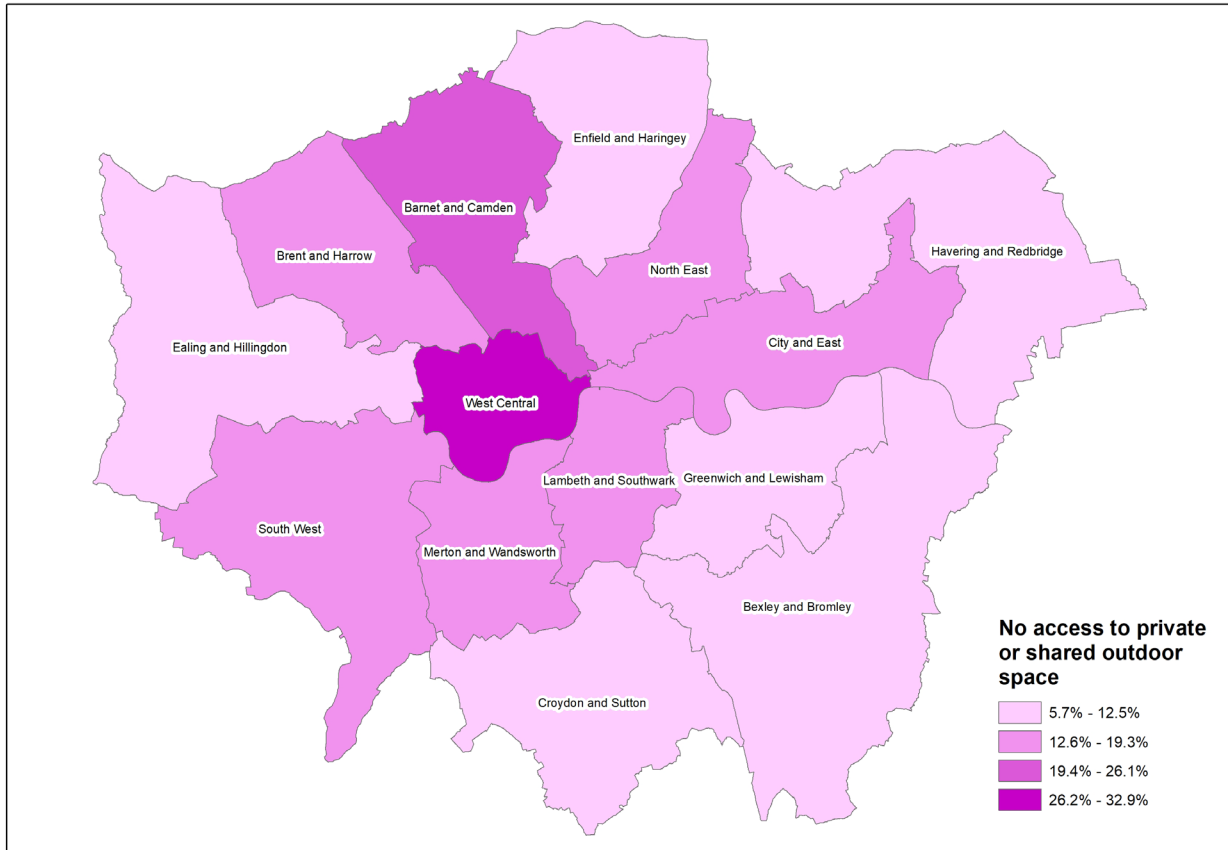


Base: Londoners aged 16 and over (6,088)

Around seven in 10 Londoners (71 per cent) had access to a private outdoor space, while around three in 10 Londoners (30 per cent) reported having access to a shared outdoor space. Combined, this meant that 84 per cent of Londoners had access to some sort of outdoor space that their household could use.

Londoners living in the constituencies West Central (33 per cent) and Barnet and Camden (22 per cent) were more likely not to have access to any sort of outdoor space than Bexley and Bromley (6 per cent), Havering and Redbridge (8 per cent), Ealing and Hillingdon (8 per cent) and Greenwich and Lewisham (10 per cent) (see Figure 2.16).

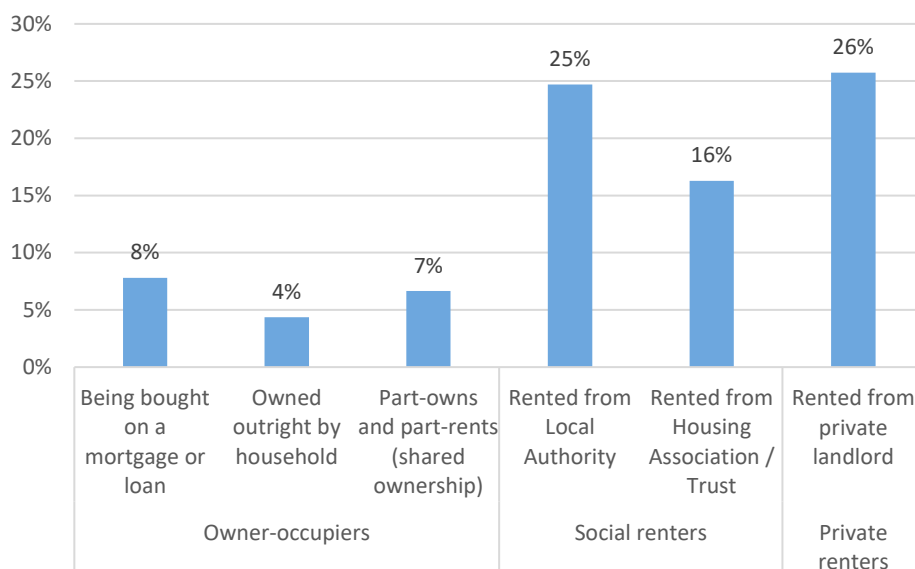
**Figure 2.16 – Londoners were more likely not to have access to outdoor space in inner London constituencies than outer London constituencies**



Base: Barnet and Camden (296); Bexley and Bromley (241); Brent and Harrow (259); City and East (1,392); Croydon and Sutton (243); Ealing and Hillingdon (288); Enfield and Haringey (226); Greenwich and Lewisham (368); Havering and Redbridge (768); Lambeth and Southwark (357); Merton and Wandsworth (216); North East (985); South West (285); West Central (164)

Londoners renting their home were more likely not to have access to outdoor space than owner-occupiers (see Figure 2.17).

**Figure 2.17 – Londoners living in rented accommodation were more likely not to have access to outdoor space than owner-occupiers**



Base: Londoners aged 16 and over whose home was being bought on a mortgage or loan (1,857); owned outright by household (1,241); part-owned and part-rented (shared ownership) (162); renting from local authority (466); renting from housing association/trust (457); renting from private landlord (1,350)

Lack of access to outdoor space affected between 4 and 8 per cent of each of the constituent groups of owner-occupiers. Private renters, and Londoners who rented from their local authority, were the most likely not to have access to outdoor space (26 per cent and 25 per cent respectively). Lack of access to outdoor space affected 16 per cent of Londoners renting from a housing association or trust.

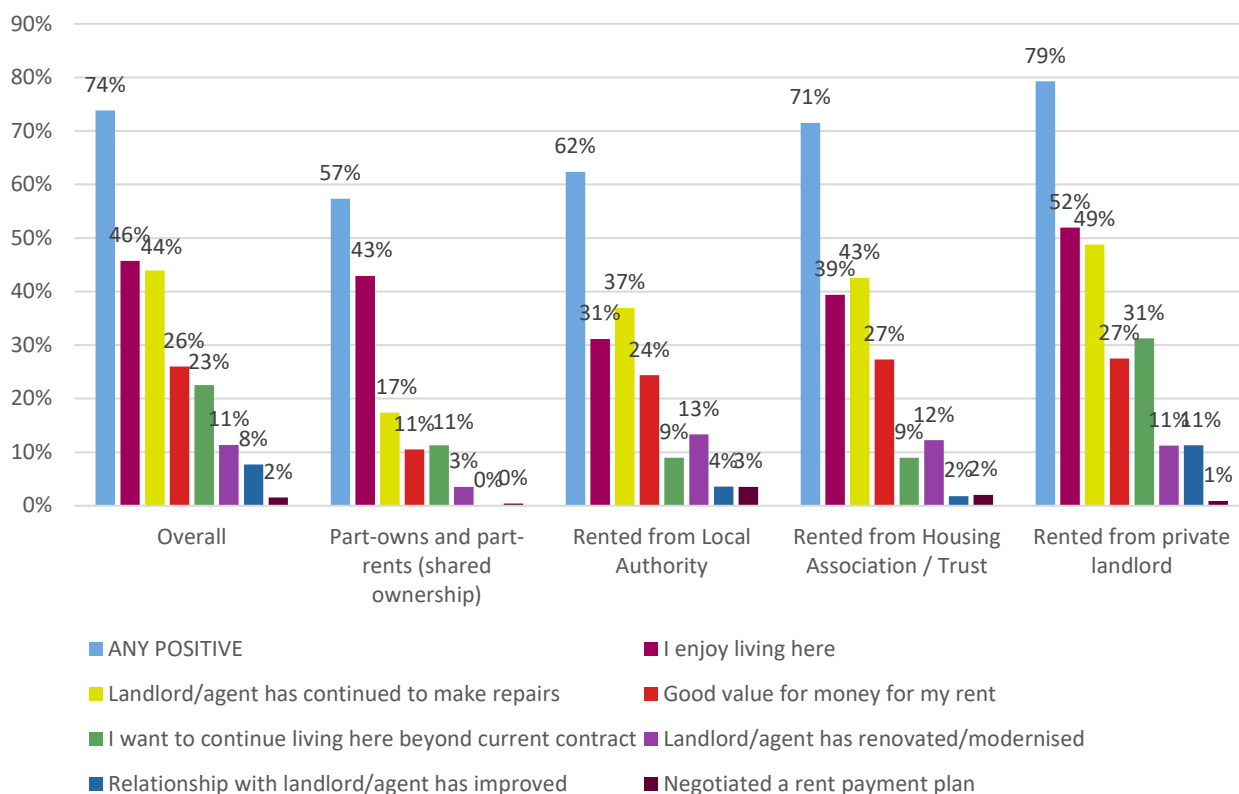
Londoners who said they were not proficient in English were much more likely to live in a home with no access to outdoor space (26 per cent).

Among parents and guardians of any children aged under 16 currently living in the household, 11 per cent did not have access to outdoor space. This compares with 15 per cent of non-parents.

#### 2.7.4 Tenancy situation

The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 asked renters in London (including those who were part-owners, part-renters) about their tenancy situation, and presented 13 statements for consideration. Seven of these can be thought of as 'positive', in that they represent a positive aspect of a current tenancy. The remaining six can be thought of as 'negative', in that they represent a negative aspect of a current tenancy. Figure 2.18 displays the positive aspects of a renter's tenancy situation; around three-quarters of renters (74 per cent) mentioned at least one aspect of their current tenancy situation that was positive.

**Figure 2.18 – The majority of Londoners who were renting (74 per cent) mentioned at least one positive aspect of their current tenancy**



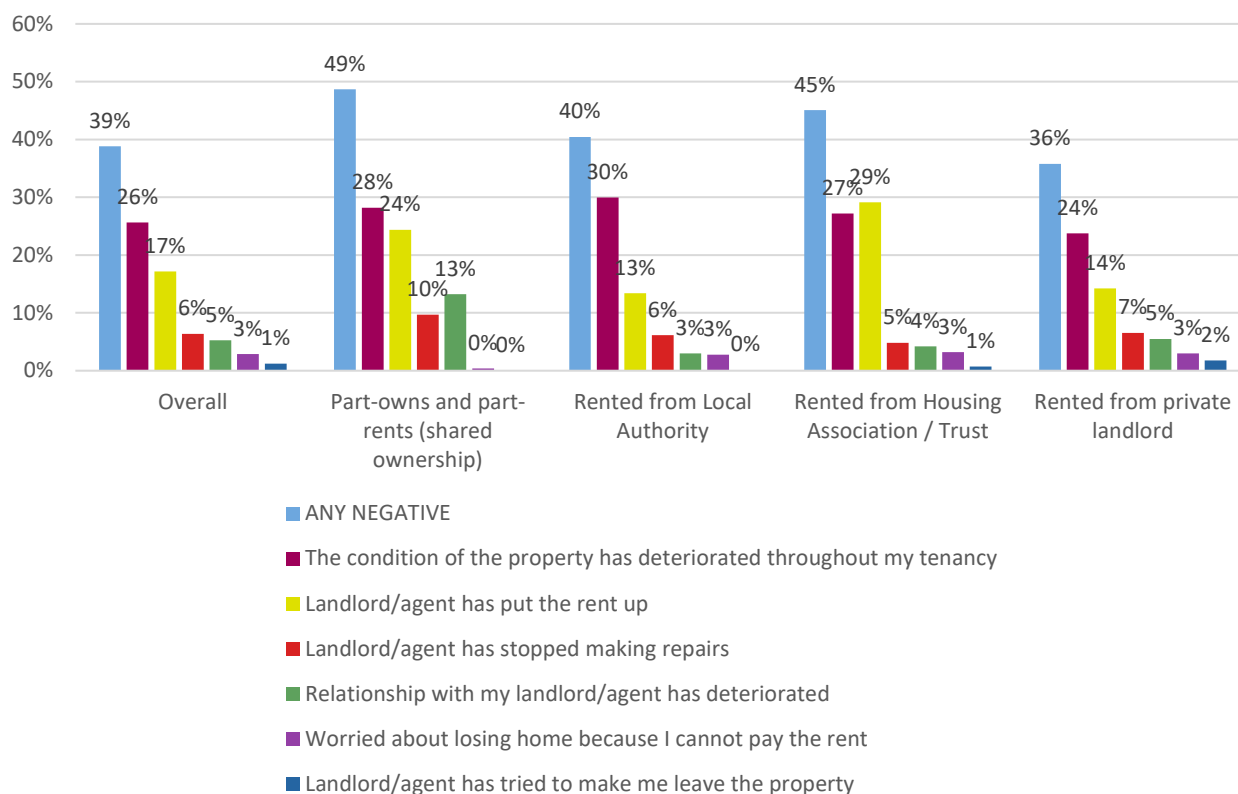
Base: Londoners aged 16 and over, renting or part-renting their home (2,435); Part-owns and part-rents (shared ownership) (162); Rented from Local Authority (466); Rented from Housing Association / Trust (457); Rented from private landlord (1,350)

The most commonly cited positive aspects were that they enjoyed living there (46 per cent); and that their landlord or agent had continued to make repairs throughout their tenancy (44 per cent).

Private renters were more likely to mention at least one positive aspect than local authority renters and part-owners and part-renters (79 per cent, 62 per cent and 57 per cent respectively). In particular, around three in ten (31 per cent) private renters said they wanted to continue living there beyond their current contract, compared with 9 per cent of social renters and 11 per cent of part-owners and part-renters.

Figure 2.19 displays the negative aspects of a renter’s tenancy situation. Around four in 10 renters (39 per cent) mentioned at least one negative aspect of their current tenancy situation.

**Figure 2.19 – Around four in 10 Londoners (39 per cent) that were renting mentioned at least one negative aspect of their current tenancy**



Base: Londoners aged 16 and over, renting or part-renting their home (2,435); Part-owns and part-rents (shared ownership) (162); Rented from Local Authority (466); Rented from Housing Association / Trust (457); Rented from private landlord (1,350)

The most commonly cited negative aspects were that the condition of the property had deteriorated throughout their tenancy (26 per cent); and that their landlord or agent had put the rent up (17 per cent).

Part-owners and part-renters were more likely to mention at least one negative aspect than private renters (49 per cent and 36 per cent respectively). In particular, part-owners and part-renters were more likely to say that the relationship with their landlord or agent had deteriorated (13 per cent) compared with social and private renters (ranging between 3-5 per cent).

### 2.7.5 Insecurity of private-rented-sector accommodation

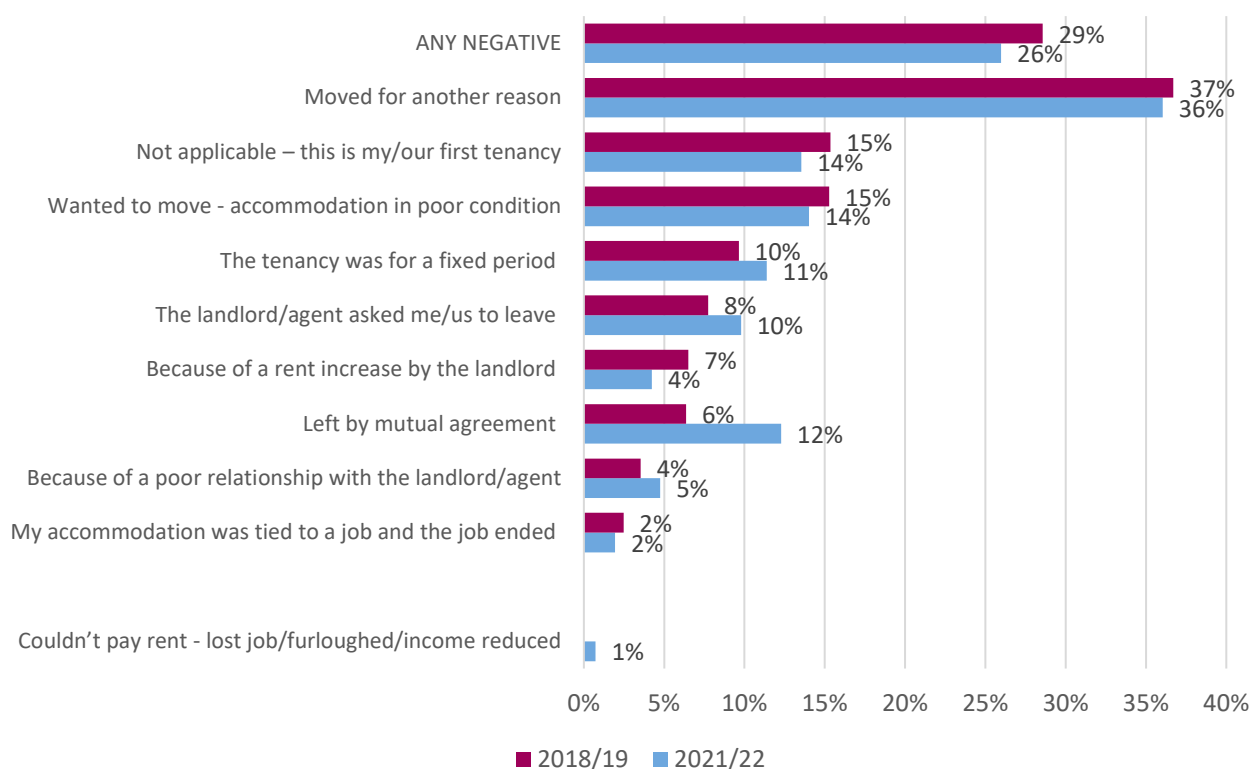
As with the 2018-19 survey, the Survey of Londoners 2021-22 asked London's private renters whether they had been affected by an issue in their last private-rented-sector accommodation that caused them to leave. However, an additional reason was added to the response list in 2021-22 to account for the circumstances in which the 2021-22 survey took place – namely whether they could not pay the rent because they had lost their job, been furloughed or had their income reduced. Respondents were able to choose more than one response from the list shown to them. The onset of the pandemic brought about



some changes for those in the private and social rented sectors.<sup>19</sup> In particular, they provided some extra protection for tenants, for example, extending notice periods for tenants, stopping cases from progressing through the courts, and a pause on bailiff enforced evictions. These protections for tenants had been removed before the start of fieldwork on the Survey of Londoners 2021-22, but as the question about insecure tenancies referred to a renter's last tenancy, it would overlap with this period of enhanced protections for tenants. This should be borne in mind when interpreting these results.

Figure 2.20 shows that, at the time of the Survey of Londoners 2021-22, around a quarter of London's private renters (26 per cent) had been affected by an issue in their last private-rented-sector accommodation that caused them to leave (no significant difference from 2018-19, when it was 29 per cent).<sup>20</sup>

**Figure 2.20 – The proportion of London's private renters that had been affected by an issue in their last private-rented-sector accommodation that caused them to leave remained unchanged from 2018-19 to 2021-22**



Base: 2018-19: Londoners aged 16 and over who were private renters (1,288); 2021-22: Londoners aged 16 and over who were private renters (1,350)

<sup>19</sup> London.gov.uk, [Rights of renters and landlords during coronavirus](#)

<sup>20</sup> An 'issue' was if they were asked to leave; or if they left due to a rent increase, poor conditions or a poor relationship with their landlord.

Private renters who were working in a job earning less than the LLW were more likely to cite an issue with their last tenancy (39 per cent) than private renters overall (26 per cent).

Finally, it should be borne in mind that this was the situation of private renters in late 2021, ending just before the full effects of the cost-of-living crisis began to set in. As rent increases are one of the reasons deemed as an 'issue', the cost-of-living crisis may exacerbate this as a reason for leaving, given all of the other cost pressures facing families during this time. Also, as those protections that were in place during the pandemic have now been removed, the courts are hearing slightly more cases and private renters might now be awaiting eviction orders. Thus, by the time this report is published, we expect the proportion of private renters that had been affected by an issue to be much higher.

### Quotes from Londoners on housing quality and tenancy situation

*"My housing haven't put draft excluders in, so my heating is too much and I wear more clothes. "*

*"The reason many people in London don't feel warm in their homes is because of the bad housing quality, including newbuilds."*

*Our properties under X council would strongly benefit from improvements under some sort of green scheme. There is no insulation in either walls or roofs (which are flat, and leak), and many of the double glazing panes are blown and windows no longer fit tightly - meaning that a considerable amount of heat is lost and we are unfortunately contributing to environmental warming.*

*"The cost-of-living is depressing – work, work, work just to keep up for paying bills, rent, food. No time for social life. I applied for council flat, they say I'm not eligible. I'm paying £985 instead of £380 for 1 bedroom flat and that's housing association. I'm a full time worker. Housing benefit helping me with £280. I would hope to see friends and family but I'm skint all the time. It's embarrassing."*

*"Buy to let properties and the lack of Landlord intervention when there is bad behaviour has spoiled our community. It must also be really hard for tenants who have to constantly move on when the rent goes up or they can't get repairs done."*

*"It is a vital need to live in a property that is draft free, mould free. The impact of these living conditions has a severe detrimental effect on my physical & mental health."*

*Private landlords and shoddy letting agents get away with charging a fortune for rent - either half or a third of monthly salary and often do not update/do repairs and squeeze you for every penny. They do not understand this is your home despite not owning it.*

*Private landlords need more regulation- finding safe, decent quality housing in London has been the biggest issue while living here. If it isn't mice then it's mold!*

### Quotes from Londoners on housing quality and tenancy situation

*I have lived in this flat longer than I've ever lived anywhere (10+ years) I can't get a mortgage and I live in fear of my landlord selling the property or dying. I will never be able to afford to rent another place in the area but it's my home.*

*"More affordable housing, more properties with private garden or outdoor space, rent caps for landlords to avoid huge increases in monthly rent"*

#### 2.7.6 Overcrowding

The pandemic brought into sharp focus those living in overcrowded accommodation, as this was identified as a risk factor for acquiring the COVID-19 infection.<sup>21</sup> Thus, it was felt important to include a question about this in the 2021-22 survey.

Two standards are used to determine whether a home is overcrowded. The first is the 'room standard', which identifies overcrowding wherever there are so many people in a house that any two or more must sleep in the same room – as long as those persons are aged 10 or older, are of opposite sexes, and are not living together as husband and wife.

The second is the 'space standard', which calculates the permitted number of people for a dwelling by using either the number of living rooms, or the floor areas of each room size.<sup>22</sup>

Given the limitations of asking for such complicated information from Londoners in a social survey, a pragmatic approach was taken. To ascertain whether a Londoner lived in an overcrowded home, the survey asked the yes/no question: 'Thinking about your home, do two or more people aged 10 or over AND of different sexes have to sleep in the same room? Please do not include any rooms which are slept in by couples sharing a room together.' Therefore, the Survey of Londoners 2021-22 looks at the 'room standard' when referring to overcrowding.<sup>23</sup>

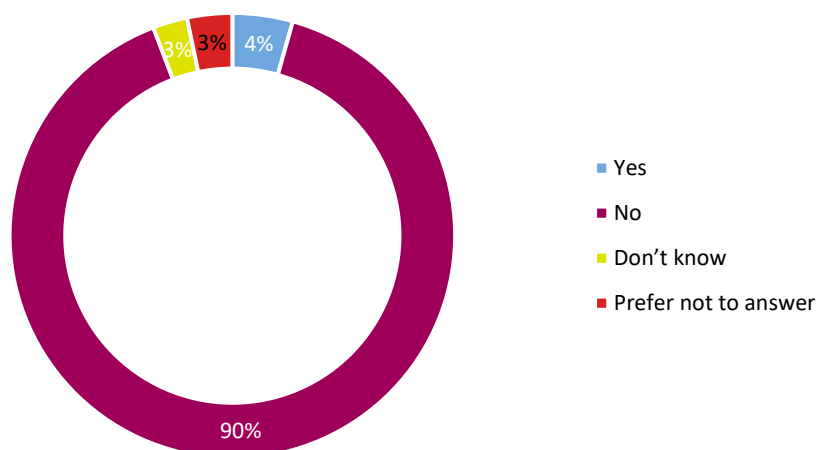
The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 found that 4 per cent of Londoners aged 16 and over were living in overcrowded accommodation (see Figure 2.21).

<sup>21</sup> PHE, [Disparities in the risk and outcomes of COVID-19](#), August 2020

<sup>22</sup> House of Commons Library, [Overcrowded housing \(England\)](#), 15 June 2021

<sup>23</sup> The GLA's ['Housing in London' report](#) sets out the evidence base for the Mayor's housing policies and includes the official measure of overcrowding in London, with the English Housing Survey as the main data source. Owing to methodological differences between that survey and the Survey of Londoners, it is reasonable to expect differences in the estimates.

**Figure 2.21 – The majority of Londoners aged 16 and over (90 per cent) did not live in overcrowded accommodation, while 4 per cent did**



Base: Londoners aged 16 and over (8,630)

Some groups of Londoners were more likely to be living in overcrowded accommodation than average. These included Londoners with a household income of less than £14,900 per annum (10 per cent); Londoners in receipt of state benefits (10 per cent); and Londoners living in social rented accommodation (9 per cent).

There was no significant difference between the rate of overcrowding among single parents (14 per cent) and parents living as a couple (10 per cent). However, both were higher than average, reflecting the fact that this overcrowding measure largely affects families with children (12 per cent of the Londoners who had reported being the parent or guardian of any children aged under 16 currently living in the household, compared with 2 per cent of non-parents).

Londoners living in multi-adult households with children were much more likely to report living in overcrowded accommodation (16 per cent) than Londoners living in multi-adult households, with no children (2 per cent).<sup>24</sup>

Londoners not educated to at least degree level were more likely to be living in overcrowded accommodation (7 per cent) than Londoners with at least a degree (3 per cent).

<sup>24</sup> Multi-adult household means the household contains at least three household members aged 16 or over.

### Quotes from Londoners on housing overcrowding and outdoor space

*“My daughter is overcrowded with three children, one is in her room, one is with his brother who is in a small two bedroom. Flat they have never had a garden and with the lockdown has made her mental health take on has made her very bad. “*

*“I have lived in London for the past XX years. I am a single parent and I live with my daughter one bedroom flat. We are feeling overcrowded now as my daughter is growing something fast, it’s making a great impact in our feelings and to have the space of our own. “*

*“House/flats are built tiny and incredibly overcrowded. No outdoor space. Lockdown was very hard on our family”*

*“Lack of outdoor space made/makes lockdown restrictions difficult for Londoners in flats. Feeling increasingly concerned about my safety as a woman after recent attacks but that victim shaming is still too common. Have lived in London all my life but cannot afford any outdoor space- I feel pushed out and like I am not wanted here.”*

*“The last 19 months have been very hard for anyone living in central London. Esp with no outside space like me. The parks like x and y have been a godsend.”*

## 3 A robust safety net

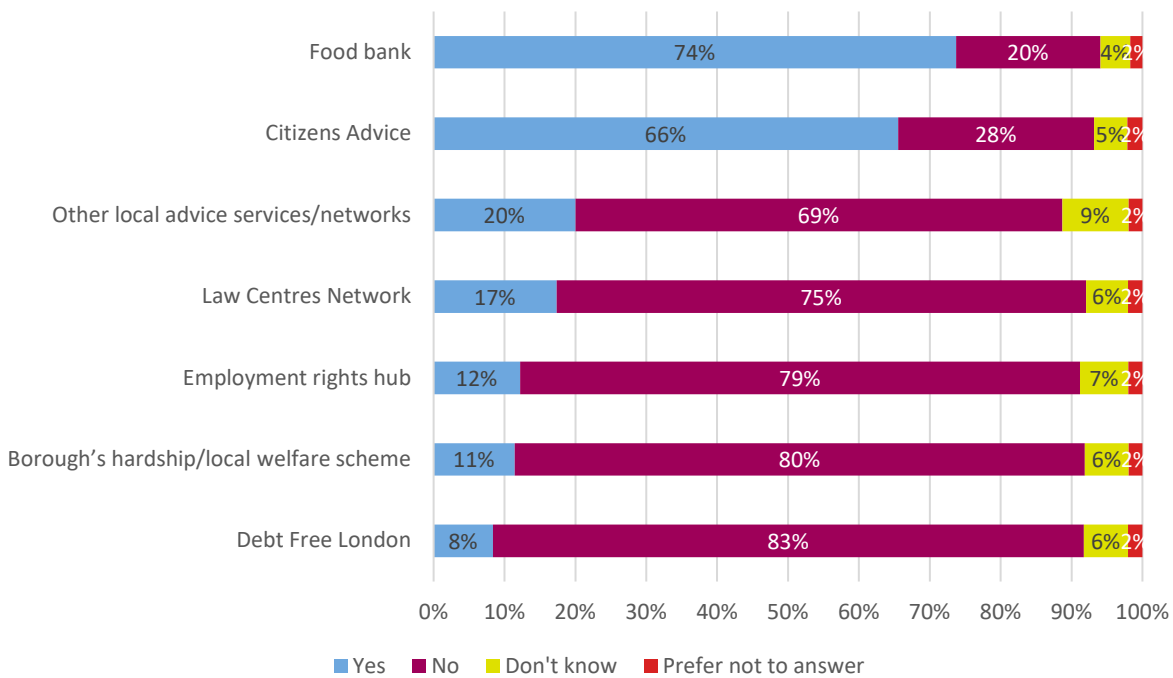
### 3.1 Introduction

One of the key actions of the London Recovery Board’s ‘Building a Fairer City’ report is helping Londoners to know and access their rights and entitlements.<sup>25</sup> Various organisations promote rights and entitlements to different communities. Creating this robust safety net is one of the central missions of London’s recovery programme.<sup>26</sup>

### 3.2 Financial hardship support organisations

The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 asked Londoners whether they were aware of various support organisations that could help them if they were experiencing financial hardship (see Figure 3.1).

**Figure 3.1 – The majority of Londoners were aware of food banks and Citizens Advice as sources of financial hardship support, but not of many of the others that were shown to them**



Base: Londoners aged 16 and over (6,088)

<sup>25</sup> The London Recovery Board, [Building a Fairer City](#)

<sup>26</sup> London.gov.uk, [Recovery in context](#)

Around three-quarters of Londoners (74 per cent) were aware of food banks providing financial hardship support, while around two-thirds (66 per cent) were aware of Citizens Advice providing this service.

There was much lower awareness of all of the other organisations that were shown to respondents in the survey. This ranged from 20 per cent of respondents being aware of other local advice services and networks, to 8 per cent being aware of Debt Free London, the organisation with the lowest level of awareness.

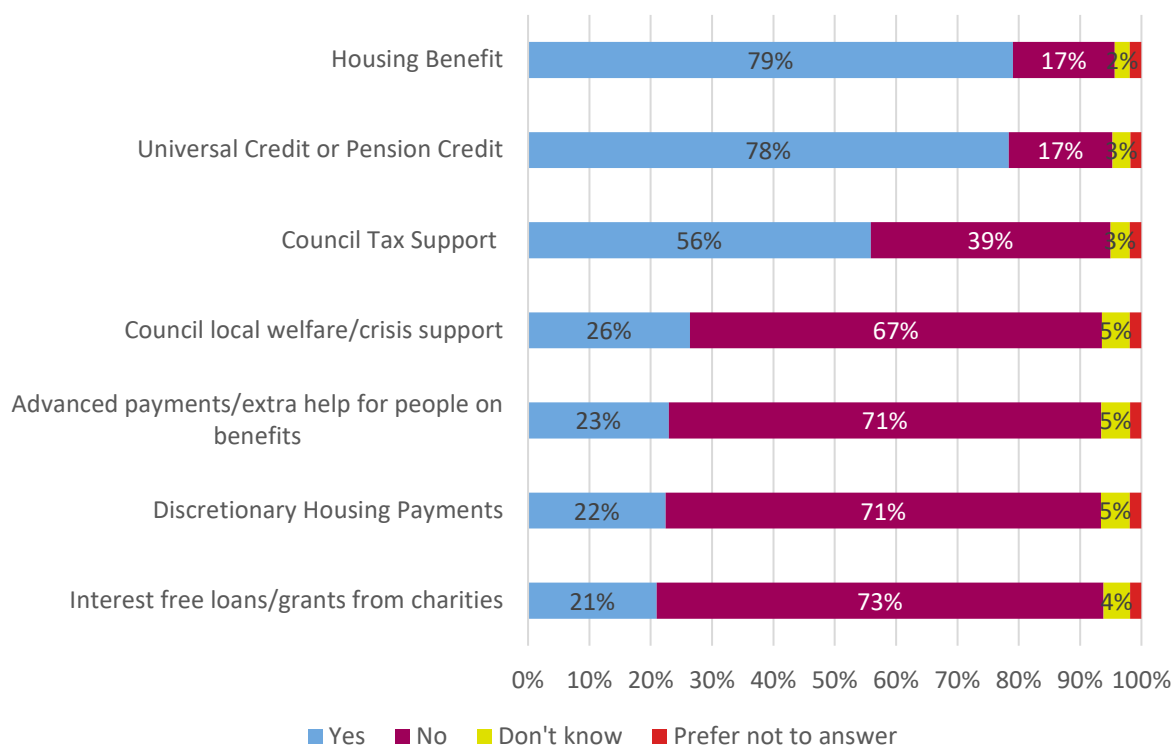
Some of the groups most likely not to be aware of any of the listed support organisations included Londoners who said they were not proficient in English (52 per cent), Muslim Londoners (31 per cent), newer arrivals to London i.e. those who had lived in London for less than five years (28 per cent) and non-UK born Londoners (25 per cent).

Though Debt Free London had the lowest awareness among Londoners overall, there are indications that the Londoners most in need of their support were more aware. For example, 16 per cent of those who had used a food bank in the past 12 months were aware of Debt Free London, compared with 8 per cent of Londoners who had not used a food bank in the past 12 months. Similarly, 14 per cent of Londoners without financial savings of at least £1,500 were aware of Debt Free London, compared with 6 per cent of Londoners with at least that amount of savings.

### **3.3 Financial hardship support**

The survey then asked Londoners whether they were aware of a range of different financial forms of support (see Figure 3.2).

**Figure 3.2 – The majority of Londoners were aware of Housing Benefit, and UC or Pension Credit, as types of financial hardship support, as well as Council Tax Support**



Base: Londoners aged 16 and over (6,088)

Around eight in 10 Londoners (79 per cent) were aware of Housing Benefit as a form of support, with a similar proportion (78 per cent) being aware of UC or Pension Credit. A smaller proportion (56 per cent), though still a majority, were aware of Council Tax Support.

There was lower awareness of all of the other forms of support shown to respondents in the survey. This ranged from 26 per cent being aware of council local welfare/crisis support, to 21 per cent being of interest-free loans or grants from charities – the lowest awareness level.

Some of the groups most likely not to be aware of any of the listed financial forms of support again included Londoners who said they were not proficient in English (31 per cent), newer arrivals to London i.e. those who had lived in London for less than five years (23 per cent), Muslim Londoners (21 per cent) and non-UK born Londoners (18 per cent).

Again, though overall awareness of some forms of support was low, there are indications that the Londoners most in need of their support were more aware. For example, 38 per cent of Londoners currently in receipt of state benefits were aware of advance payments and extra help for people on benefits, compared with 21 per cent for Londoners not currently in receipt of state benefits. However, there are concerning signs in the other



direction as well. For example, 22 per cent of Londoners able to keep their home warm enough in winter were aware of interest-free loans or grants from charities; but only 15 per cent of Londoners unable able to keep their home warm enough in winter had the same awareness. Private renters were less likely to be aware of Discretionary Housing Payments as a form of support than social renters (18 per cent and 26 per cent respectively).

## 4 Labour market equality

### 4.1 Introduction

One of the key aims of the London Recovery Board's plan to build a fairer city is to reduce labour market inequalities. The pandemic exacerbated many pre-existing inequalities, notably among those in insecure or low-paid employment. In this section, we explore in more detail the working conditions of those in London, as well as their awareness of their rights as employees.

Previous research has already highlighted the extent of structural inequalities in the labour market, which affect people from BAME communities, women, those with disabilities or anyone who has experienced discrimination based upon preconceived notions of what makes a good employee.<sup>27</sup> Again, this chapter will go onto demonstrate where these inequalities still persist. It is important to remember that any inequalities presented are correlations i.e. they indicate associations, but they do not show causation i.e. one factor causing another.

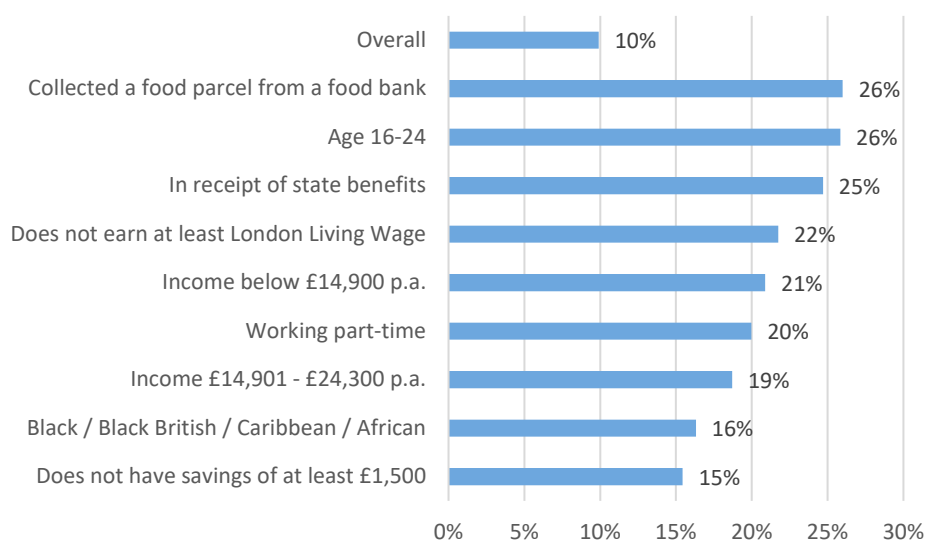
### 4.2 Insecure employment

Insecure employment is where a person is employed in a job with a temporary contract; working through an employment agency; or self-employed in occupations considered insecure.<sup>28</sup> In London in 2021-22, 10 per cent of the working-age population in work was in insecure employment (see Figure 4.1). This figure is entirely unchanged from 2018-19.

---

<sup>27</sup> Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, [Race in the workplace: The McGregor-Smith Review](#), 28 February 2017

<sup>28</sup> For the Survey of Londoners, occupations classed as 'semi-routine manual and service occupations' and 'routine manual and service occupations' were deemed insecure.

**Figure 4.1 – One in 10 working-age Londoners in work were in insecure employment**

Base: Working Londoners aged 16-64 (4,915); collected a food parcel from a food bank (88); age 16-24 (276); in receipt of state benefits (304); not earning at least the LLW (522); income below £14,900 per annum (278); working part-time (980); income between £14,901 and £24,300 per annum (366); Black/Black British/Caribbean/African (373); did not have savings of at least £1,500 (1,065)

The chart illustrates the financial precarity that those in insecure employment are more likely to face. Around a quarter of Londoners (26 per cent) who had used a food bank in the last year were in insecure employment – as were 25 per cent of those in receipt of state benefits. Among those without savings of at least £1,500, 15 per cent were in insecure employment.

Being in insecure employment is also indicative of having a low income overall. Londoners in insecure employment accounted for around one in five of those not earning at least the LLW in their main job (22 per cent); those with an annual income below £14,900 (21 per cent); and those with an annual income between £14,901 and £24,300 (19 per cent respectively).

Other groups more likely to be in insecure employment include Londoners aged 16-24 (26 per cent); those working part-time (20 per cent); and workers from a Black ethnic background (16 per cent).

### 4.3 London Living Wage

The LLW is an hourly rate of pay, which has just increased from £11.05 to £11.95. It is calculated by independent experts to reflect the higher cost-of-living in the capital. It is not statutory for organisations to pay the LLW to staff, but the Mayor of London encourages it as part of his efforts to promote good work in the capital.

The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 asked working Londoners whether they earned the LLW or more in their current main job.<sup>29</sup> Around one in nine (11 per cent) working Londoners said that they did not.

The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 also asked working Londoners to choose the occupational category into which their work best fitted, from a list of eight. There is a clear occupational pattern when it comes to not being paid the LLW (see Table 4.1).

**Table 4.1 – Routine and semi-routine occupations were less likely to be paid the LLW**

Occupation category (with examples)	Proportion not paid the LLW (%)	Base
<b>Semi-routine manual and service occupations</b> Postal worker – machine operative – security guard – caretaker – farm worker – catering assistant – receptionist – sales assistant	38%	294
<b>Routine manual and service occupations</b> HGV driver – van driver – cleaner – porter – packer – sewing machinist – messenger – labourer – waiter/waitress – bar staff	31%	266
<b>Clerical and intermediate occupations</b> Secretary – personal assistant – clerical worker – office clerk – call centre agent – nursing auxiliary – nursery nurse	16%	492
<b>Technical and craft occupations</b> Motor mechanic – fitter – inspector – plumber – printer – tool maker – electrician – gardener – train driver	11%	199
<b>Middle or junior managers</b> Office manager – retail manager – bank manager – restaurant manager – warehouse manager – publican	7%	417
<b>Modern professional occupations</b> Teacher – nurse – physiotherapist – social worker – welfare officer – artist – musician – police officer (sergeant or above) – software designer	6%	1,647
<b>Senior managers or administrators</b> (usually responsible for planning, organising and coordinating work, and for finance) Finance manager – chief executive	4%	865
<b>Traditional professional occupations</b> Accountant – solicitor – medical practitioner – scientist – civil/mechanical engineer	2%	751

These occupational classes are used as the basis of the ONS National Statistics Socio-economic classification (NS-SEC). It is therefore no surprise that those in the managerial and professional occupation class were less likely to be paid below the LLW (5 per cent)

<sup>29</sup> When the fieldwork for the survey was taking place the LLW was £10.85, so referred to this rate in the question put to respondents.

than those in routine and manual occupations (33 per cent) and those in intermediate occupations (15 per cent).

Those working part-time were more likely to be paid below the LLW than those working full-time (27 and 7 per cent respectively).

Workers with qualifications lower than degree-level (22 per cent), and workers with no qualifications (34 per cent), were more likely to be paid below the LLW than workers with at least a degree (6 per cent).

Londoners aged 16-24, who were in work, were the age group most likely to be paid below the LLW (32 per cent).

Not earning the LLW is also associated with elements of financial precarity. Around a quarter (27 per cent) of workers unable to keep their home warm enough in winter were not paid the LLW. A similar proportion of workers who did not have savings of at least £1,500 were not paid the LLW (26 per cent).

#### **4.4 Job satisfaction**

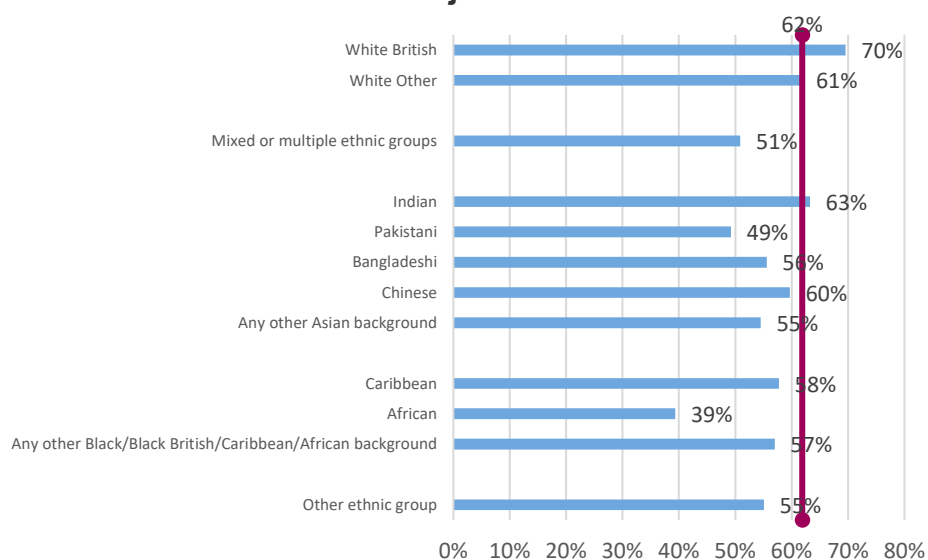
The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 asked workers how satisfied they were with their current job. There are individual elements of a job that make up a worker's satisfaction level – for example, pay, work-life balance and other working conditions. However, the survey only asked about overall job satisfaction, as this could hopefully serve as a composite of all of the factors that make up a job.

Around six in 10 (62 per cent) workers in London were satisfied with their current job. Around two in 10 (21 per cent) expressed dissatisfaction, while 16 per cent were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

Whether or not someone earns the LLW has an enormous bearing on self-reported job satisfaction rates. Around two-thirds of workers (66 per cent) who did earn at least the LLW in their current job were satisfied with their current job. The proportion is halved for workers who did not earn at least the LLW, with only 33 per cent of this group being satisfied with their job.

Seven in 10 (70 per cent) working White British Londoners were satisfied with their current job, compared with 39 per cent of working Black African Londoners, 49 per cent of working Pakistani Londoners and 51 per cent of working Londoners with mixed or multiple ethnic groups (see Figure 4.2).

**Figure 4.2 – White British working Londoners were the ethnic group most likely to be satisfied with their current job**



Base: Working Londoners aged 16 and over (4,022); White British (1,761); White other (730); mixed or multiple ethnic groups (144); Indian (336); Pakistani (108); Bangladeshi (135); Chinese (116); any other Asian background (135); Caribbean (100); African (138); any other Black/Black British/Caribbean/African background (38); other ethnic group (127)

Working disabled Londoners were less likely than working non-disabled Londoners to be satisfied with their current job (55 per cent and 64 per cent respectively).

Job type has a large bearing on job satisfaction. Around four in 10 workers (41 per cent) in routine and manual occupations were satisfied with their current job. However, around two-thirds of workers (67 per cent) in managerial, administrative and professional occupations were satisfied with their current job.

Those working part-time were more likely not to be satisfied with their current job than those working full-time (51 and 64 per cent respectively).

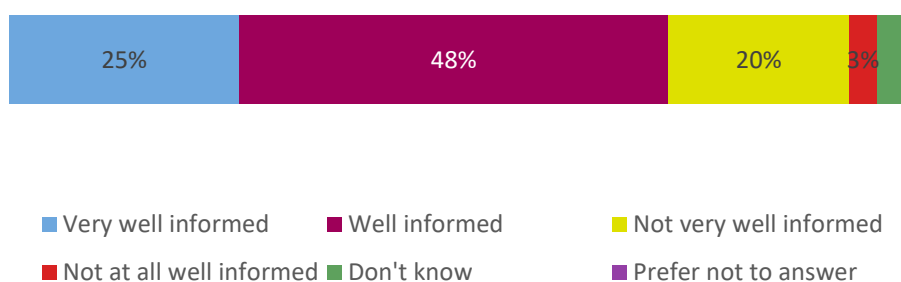
Workers with qualifications lower than degree level (53 per cent), and workers with no qualifications (34 per cent), were more likely not to be satisfied with their current job than workers with at least a degree (66 per cent).

## 4.5 Employment rights

As part of the Mayor's commitment to make London a fairer city to work in, he wants to ensure that workers in London are informed about their employment rights. To learn more about this issue, the Survey of Londoners 2021-22 asked working Londoners how well informed they felt about their rights at work, and whether they knew where to find out information about their rights at work if they needed to.

Figure 4.3 shows that in 2021-22, the majority of working Londoners felt either very well informed, or well informed, about their rights at work (73 per cent). However, 23 per cent of working Londoners felt they were not very well informed, or not at all well informed, about their rights at work. This marks no significant change from 2018-19 (22 per cent).

**Figure 4.3 – Around three-quarters of working Londoners (73 per cent) felt either very well informed or well informed about their rights at work**



Base: Working Londoners aged 16 and over (4,022)

Of those working Londoners who said they were not proficient in English, nearly half (46 per cent) felt that they were not well informed about their employment rights. This compares with 26 per cent of working Londoners who said they were proficient in speaking English as a second language and 22 per cent of working Londoners who spoke English as a main language.

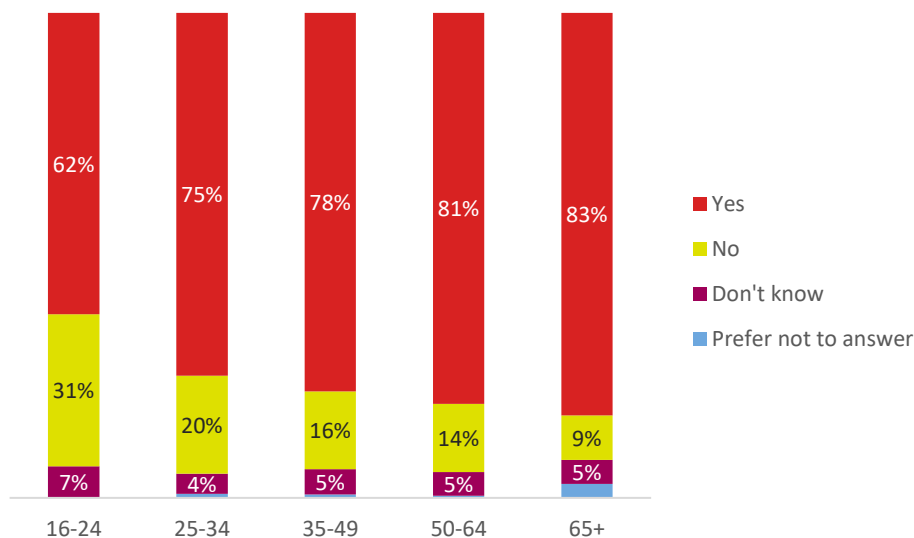
Workers in routine and manual occupations were more likely to not feel well informed (35 per cent) than workers in a managerial and professional occupation class (21 per cent).

Not feeling well informed about rights at work is also associated with elements of financial precarity. Over one-third (36 per cent) of workers who could not keep their home warm enough in winter did not feel well informed, while 39 per cent of workers who were not paid the LLW did not feel well informed (26 per cent).

Around three-quarters of working Londoners (76 per cent) knew where to find information about their rights at work if they needed to, compared with 18 per cent that did not. The proportion of working Londoners not knowing where to find out this information is not significantly different from 2018-19 (17 per cent).

Figure 4.4 shows how knowledge of where to find this information increases with age. Around three in 10 (31 per cent) working 16-24 year olds reported not knowing where to find information about their rights at work. This compares with 14 per cent of workers aged 50-64, and 9 per cent of workers aged 65 and over.

**Figure 4.4 – Knowledge of where to find information about rights at work increases with age**



Base: Working Londoners aged 16 and over: 16-24 (236); 25-34 (1,123); 35-49 (1,499); 50-64 (878); 65 and over (183)

Workers in routine and manual occupations were more likely to not know where to go (28 per cent) than workers in a managerial and professional occupation class (16 per cent).

### Quotes from Londoners on the labour market/work

*“Became a single mother of X since X. It’s very difficult to get a job suitable for me. I wanted to change career but unfortunately need to return to previous position of support worker although really wanted to have a change in employment and role.”*

*As someone who is self employed and works in the arts precarity is a central part of my life and feels synonymous with living in this city at this time in history – that said I can’t imagine myself anywhere else.*

*“Wealth inequality – we are a very rich city. Why can’t we have the homeless? Why can’t we pay a living wage to all workers? Why can’t we control rent so people can afford reasonable living conditions?”*

*“0 hour contracts will be the death of people. I am on 30 hour contracts and this month due to COVID, I can’t afford rent however I can’t get another job.”*

*“Central government mps still get massive pay rises even though the poorest people in London starve trying to make ends meet.”*

*“Single-parent life for women during COVID has been very challenging especially in relation to employment. Extended provision 7.45am-6.30pm via school which many key worker single parents rely on, as the cheapest and most practical form of childcare has been absent/minimal. Private provision is difficult to obtain for the non school hours*



### Quotes from Londoners on the labour market/work

*periods and too costly even for those considered to be in 'good' jobs as the cost-of-living is too high."*

*"The amount people are paid for minimum wage in comparison to how much tax is taken does not allow for an enjoyable lifestyle. I'm only ever at work to afford things for my children. "*

*"My employer pay the minimum wage not the living wage but nothing I could do."*

## 5 Strong communities

### 5.1 Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic had a bigger impact on certain communities in London than on others. This resulted in clear increases in demand for support and basic services amongst some communities, particularly those already experiencing social and/or economic disadvantage. For example, health data showed that Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups were more at risk of the virus; community surveys highlighted the disproportionate mental health impact on LGBTQ+ Londoners; and other surveys highlighted the reduced social contact amongst groups such as the digitally excluded.<sup>30</sup>

Changes in need, and demand for support, were met by an increase in provision from new and existing mutual aid groups; an increase in volunteers providing help in local areas; a strong community response; and improved social networks.<sup>31</sup> In other cases, however, mutual aid groups experienced funding and capacity challenges, and a drop in the charitable activity they were able to deliver; and some were unable to continue providing support to those in need. Social networks amongst some Londoners deteriorated alongside the community strength in their local area. Thus, a key issue to understand was how resilient Londoners' networks were and how they adapted to the challenge of the pandemic. The first set of questions in the Survey of Londoners 2021-22 sought to investigate this.

Each measure in this chapter has been analysed for different groups of Londoners. Any patterns or trends that have been picked indicate statistically significant correlations i.e. associations, but they do not show causation i.e. one factor causing another.

### 5.2 Views on the local area

#### 5.2.1 Belonging to London

The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 asked respondents how strongly they felt they belonged to London. This question was asked in the 2018-19 survey. The question used a four-point scale from 'not at all strongly' to 'very strongly'. The analysis below categorises 'very strongly' and 'fairly strongly' as 'belonging to London'.

Most Londoners exhibited high levels of belonging, with 80 per cent feeling they belonged to the city. Very few Londoners, just 4 per cent, felt they belonged 'not at all strongly' to

---

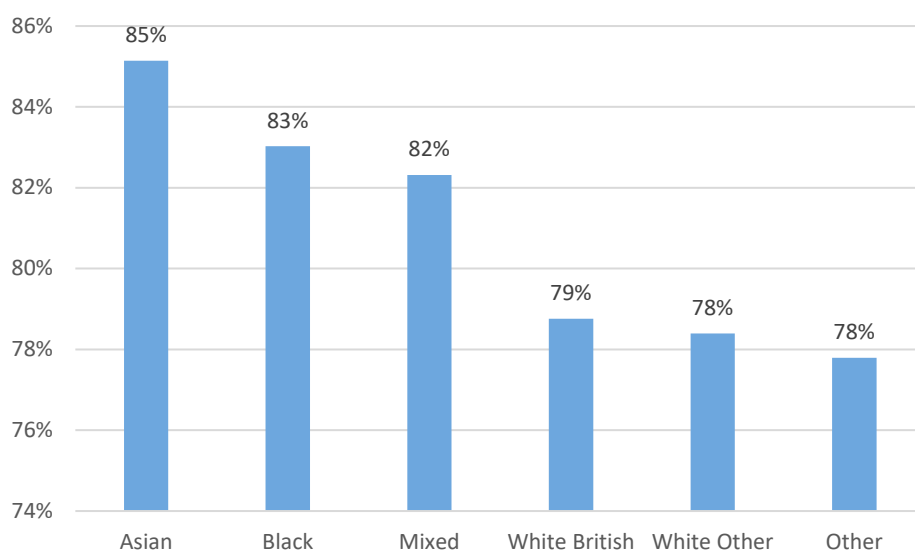
<sup>30</sup> London Datastore, [Rapid Evidence Review – Inequalities in relation to COVID-19 and their effects on London](#), 2020

<sup>31</sup> UKHSA blog, [The community response to coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#), 1 June 2020

London. In comparison to 2018-19, there has been no significant change in feelings of belonging to London (81 per cent).

As in 2018-19, feelings of belonging to London varied by ethnicity (see Figure 5.1). The highest rates of belonging to London were seen among Asian Londoners (85 per cent), Black Londoners (83 per cent) and Londoners with a mixed ethnic background (82 per cent). Amongst Asian Londoners, those of an Indian ethnic background (90 per cent) and Bangladeshi ethnic background (88 per cent) exhibited the highest rates of belonging to London. The lowest rates were seen among Londoners of a White other background (78 per cent) and those of a White British ethnicity (79 per cent).

**Figure 5.1 – Feelings of belonging to London varied by ethnicity**



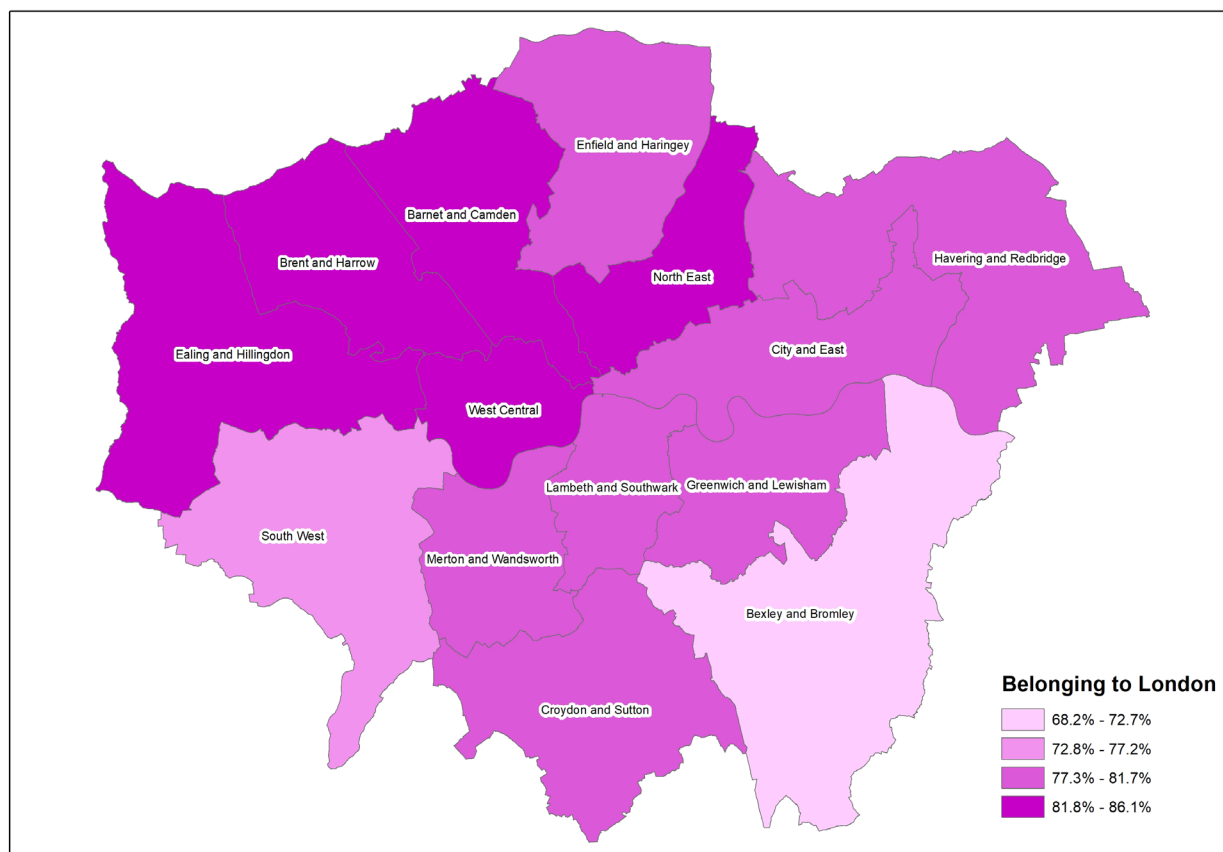
Base: Asian (1,681); Black (678); mixed (283); White British (4,021); White other (1,298); other (261)

Religious belief was also closely associated with feelings of belonging: 82 per cent of Londoners with a religion felt that they belonged to London. The highest rates of belonging were exhibited among Sikh Londoners (93 per cent), Jewish Londoners (92 per cent) Hindu Londoners (91 per cent) and Muslim Londoners (86 per cent).

Londoners living in the most deprived areas of London exhibited the highest rate of belonging to London (83 per cent). This is likely to reflect the characteristics of those who live there, rather than the deprivation itself. Since the 2018-19 survey, feelings of belonging amongst Londoners in the least deprived areas of London has decreased by eight percentage points, from 85 per cent to 77 per cent. This fall largely corresponds with the trend noted below in south eastern London.

Across the city, belonging to London was highest in the North East constituency (86 per cent); and lowest in Bexley and Bromley (68 per cent) – (see Figure 5.2). Since 2018-19, feelings of belonging have decreased in Bexley and Bromley by 12 percentage points.

**Figure 5.2 – Feelings of belonging to London varied by London Assembly constituency area**



Base: Barnet and Camden (391); Bexley and Bromley (335); Brent and Harrow (387); City and East (1,872); Croydon and Sutton (354); Ealing and Hillingdon (430); Enfield and Haringey (359); Greenwich and Lewisham (492); Havering and Redbridge (1,149); Lambeth and Southwark (515); Merton and Wandsworth (304); North East (1,407); South West (397); West Central (238)

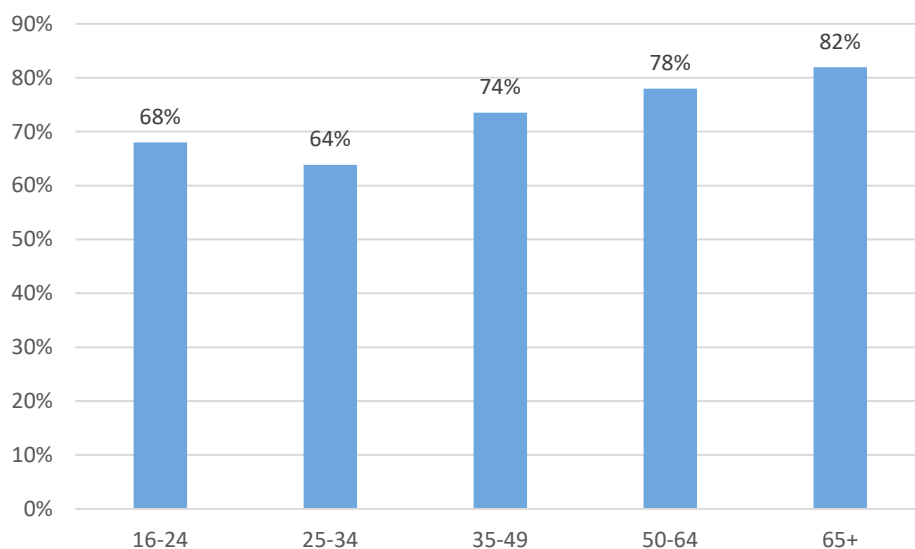
### 5.2.2 Belonging to local area

The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 asked respondents how strongly they felt they belonged to their local area. It defined a respondent's local area as being within 15-20 minutes walking distance from their home. The question used a four-point scale from 'not at all strongly' to 'very strongly'. It was also asked in the 2018-19 survey. The analysis below categorises 'very strongly' and 'fairly strongly' as 'belonging to their local area'.

Almost three-quarters of Londoners (73 per cent) felt they belonged to their local area. Very few Londoners (6 per cent) said they belonged 'not at all strongly'. In comparison to 2018-19, there has been no significant change in feelings of belonging to their local area (also 73 per cent).

As in 2018-19, Londoners aged 65 and over were far more likely to feel they belonged to their local area than Londoners aged 16-24 (82 per cent compared to 68 per cent respectively; refer to Figure 5.3).

**Figure 5.3 – Older Londoners were more likely to feel they belonged to their local area**



Base: Londoners aged: 16-24 (627); 25-34 (1,631); 35-49 (2,323); 50-64 (1,935); 65 and over (1,820)

Feelings of belonging also varied by ethnicity. Black Londoners exhibited the highest rate of local-area belonging (78 per cent), while Londoners of a mixed ethnic background exhibited the lowest rate of belonging (66 per cent).

Londoners with a religion (78 per cent) were more likely to feel that they belonged to their local area than those with no religion (67 per cent). Sikh Londoners (84 per cent) and Muslim Londoners (81 per cent) exhibited the highest rates of belonging.

Londoners who had lived in their local area for five years or more were more likely to feel that they belonged to their local area (80 per cent) compared to those who were newer to their local area (59 per cent).

With regard to London Assembly areas, those living in West Central and Merton and Wandsworth exhibited the highest rates of belonging to their local area (both 80 per cent), while Londoners living in Croydon and Sutton (65 per cent) and City and East (67 per cent) exhibited the lowest rates.

#### Quotes from Londoners on belonging to London/their local area

*“The ability to save money for a flat in London is near impossible with no parental support and means that I cannot see my future here, despite it being the city I was born in and the place I most strongly consider my home. My attachment to the city is reducing only because I feel I cannot afford to have a good quality of life here once I start a family”*

### Quotes from Londoners on belonging to London/their local area

*“I love being a Londoner and feel very proud to be a resident here. I think we are a very resilient bunch of people as evidenced by our behaviour during the pandemic.”*

*“Having lived in other cities in the UK and abroad I feel like London is in a league of its own – I feel like I belong here and it’s a big melting pot of cultures and people.”*

*“I have lived in Barking all my life, and I’m in my seventies. It was Barking Essex then! There was loads of green spaces around me, now it’s just a concrete jungle with loads of high rise flats. ... I do not feel that I belong here any more.”*

*“The experience for a young person/ex-student is so transient. There has been little sense of community in neighbourhoods. People don’t speak to one another. I’ve only managed to find a sense of community since joining a church and living with a family.”*

### 5.2.3 Relationships with neighbours

The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 repeated the question from the 2018 survey asking Londoners to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the statement, ‘Generally, I borrow things and exchange favours with my neighbours.’ It used a four-point scale from ‘definitely agree’ to ‘definitely disagree’. The analysis below groups ‘definitely agree’ and ‘tend to agree’ together as ‘agree’; and ‘definitely disagree’ and ‘tend to disagree’ together as ‘disagree’.

Just under half of Londoners (47 per cent) agreed that generally, they borrow things and exchange favours with their neighbours. Since 2018-19, there has been no significant change (from 45 per cent).

As in 2018-19, Londoners who have lived in the city for five years or more were more likely to agree that they borrow things and exchange favours with neighbours than those who were newer to the city (49 per cent compared to 31 per cent). This was also true for Londoners who had lived in their local area for five years or more, compared to those who were newer to their local area (51 per cent compared to 39 per cent respectively).

Londoners in the most deprived areas of London were less likely to agree that they borrow things and exchange favours with neighbours than those living in the least deprived areas (43 per cent compared to 56 per cent respectively).

Household tenure and household type were also related to Londoners’ relationships with neighbours. Private renters (33 per cent) and social renters (42 per cent) were less likely to agree that they borrow things or exchange favours with neighbours than owner-occupiers (55 per cent).

Londoners with children were more likely to form this type of relationship with neighbours than those without children: 59 per cent of couples with children agreed that they borrow things and exchange favours with neighbours, compared to 47 per cent of couples without children. Similarly, 50 per cent of single Londoners with children agreed, compared to 40 per cent of single Londoners without children.

Those in a managerial and professional occupation class were more likely to agree that they borrow things and exchange favours with neighbours (49 per cent) than those in routine and manual occupations (42 per cent).

#### **5.2.4 Perceptions of social cohesion**

The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 repeated the question from the 2018-19 survey that asked respondents whether they agree or disagree with the statement, 'This local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together.' The question used a four-point scale from 'definitely agree' to 'definitely disagree'. The analysis below groups 'definitely agree' and 'tend to agree' together as 'agree'; and 'definitely disagree' and 'tend to disagree' together as 'disagree'.

Around eight in 10 Londoners (80 per cent) agreed that their local area was a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together. This was an increase from 75 per cent in 2018-19.

Since 2018-19, groups of Londoners who have become more likely to agree that people from different backgrounds get on well in their local area include White British Londoners (six percentage points) and retired Londoners (seven percentage points).

Londoners from some of London's under-served communities had lower than average rates of agreement that people from different backgrounds get on well in their local area. This included Londoners who said they were not proficient in English (66 per cent), those not working because of sickness or disability (70 per cent); Londoners with no qualifications (71 per cent) and those who were digitally excluded (71 per cent).

#### **5.2.5 Neighbourhood strength**

In the Survey of Londoners 2021-22, respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed that people in their neighbourhood pulled together to improve it. The question was not asked in 2018-19. The question used a four-point scale from 'definitely agree' to 'definitely disagree', with an additional option for 'nothing needs improving'. The analysis below categorises 'definitely agree' and 'tend to agree' together as 'agree'; and 'definitely disagree' and 'tend to disagree' together as 'disagree'.

Just under half of all Londoners (46 per cent) agreed that people in their neighbourhood pulled together to improve it. Around three in 10 Londoners (31 per cent) disagreed with this statement; and 2 per cent did not think anything needed to be improved in their

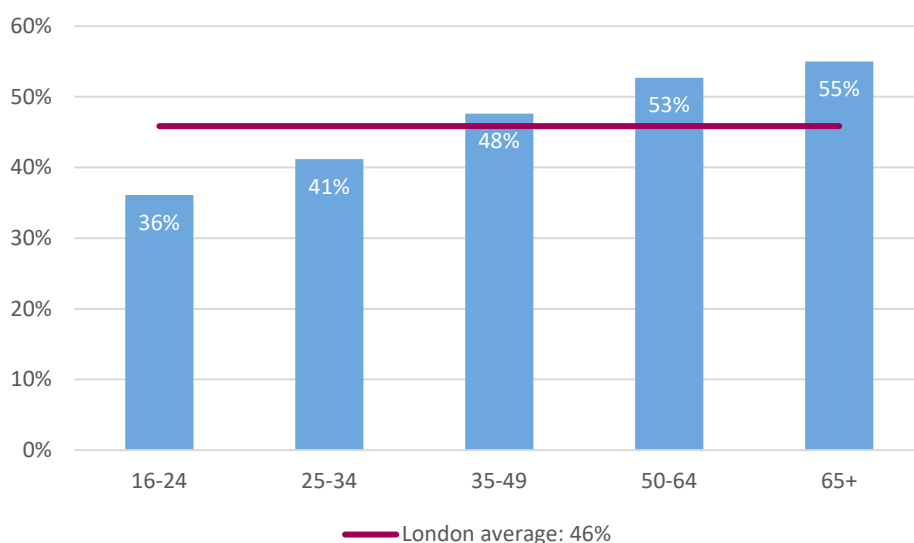
neighbourhood. A sizeable minority of around one in five Londoners (21 per cent) said they did not know whether people in their neighbourhood pulled together to improve it.

Of those Londoners who agreed that people in their neighbourhood pulled together to improve it, 82 per cent felt they belonged to their local area. Of those Londoners who disagreed that people in their neighbourhood pulled together to improve it, 64 per cent felt they belonged to their local area.

Londoners living in the least deprived areas were far more likely to agree that people in their neighbourhood pulled together to improve it, compared to those living in the most deprived areas (62 per cent compared to 41 per cent respectively). This was also true for Londoners at the highest end of the income spectrum compared to those at the lowest (53 per cent compared to 43 per cent respectively).

Londoners aged 65 and over (55 per cent), were far more likely to agree that people in their neighbourhood pull together to improve it than Londoners aged 16-24 (36 per cent) and the London average (46 per cent, refer to Figure 5.4).

**Figure 5.4 – Londoners aged 65 and over were far more likely to agree that people in their neighbourhood pull together to improve it**



Base: Londoners aged 16 and over (6,088); 16-24 (541); 25-34 (1,334); 35-49 (1,799); 50-64 (1,261); 65 and over (915)

Owner-occupiers (51 per cent) were more likely to agree that people pull together to improve their neighbourhood than private renters (41 per cent) and social renters (44 per cent).

Londoners with children were more likely to say that people in their local area pull together to improve it than Londoners without children. For example, 54 per cent of two-adult



households with children agreed with the statement, compared to 46 per cent of two-adult households without children.

Londoners who have lived in the city for five years or more were far more likely to agree that people in their local area pull together to improve it than those who have been there for less time (47 per cent compared to 40 per cent respectively). This was also true for Londoners who had lived in their local area for five years or more, compared to those who were newer to the area (48 per cent compared to 42 per cent respectively).

Among different ethnic groups, White British Londoners (50 per cent) and Asian Londoners (46 per cent) exhibited the highest rates of agreement that people in their local area pull together to improve it. In particular, Londoners of a Pakistani ethnic background (59 per cent) exhibited the highest rate. Londoners of a White other ethnic background and an other ethnic background exhibited the lowest rates (both 41 per cent).

Londoners with a religion were more likely to say that people in their local area pull together to improve it compared to those without a religion (49 per cent compared to 43 per cent). Londoners who were Buddhist (56 per cent), Jewish (55 per cent) and Muslim (50 per cent) exhibited the highest rates. Sikh Londoners exhibited the lowest rate (29 per cent).

Heterosexual Londoners were far more likely to agree that people in their local area pulled together to improve it than LGBTQ+ Londoners (48 per cent compared to 36 per cent respectively).

Londoners who were digitally active were far more likely to say that people in their local area pull together to improve it compared to the digitally excluded (47 per cent compared to 23 per cent respectively).

### Quotes from Londoners on neighbourhood strength

*"I believe the pandemic brought elements of that sense of looking out for your neighbours back."*

*"I have lived in London for 36 years and loved every day of it. I don't agree with it being unfriendly and impersonal. I think you get back what you put in. My local community, in particular, is amazing."*

*"I feel community spirit has been lost. People tend to live in silo's. You don't have much contact with your neighbours and Covid/Pandemic seems to have increased isolation amongst the elder and most vulnerable people within the community."*

*"Greater sense of community as a result of the pandemic"*

### Quotes from Londoners on neighbourhood strength

*“COVID-19 has obviously affected the way people relate to each other and strengthened some community relationships”*

*“As a widow in my mid 60's I have always been happy living and working in London and contrary to popular opinion I've always found people friendly and happy to help.”*

## 5.3 Family, friends and other people Londoners meet

### 5.3.1 Face-to-face contact with family, friends, and neighbours

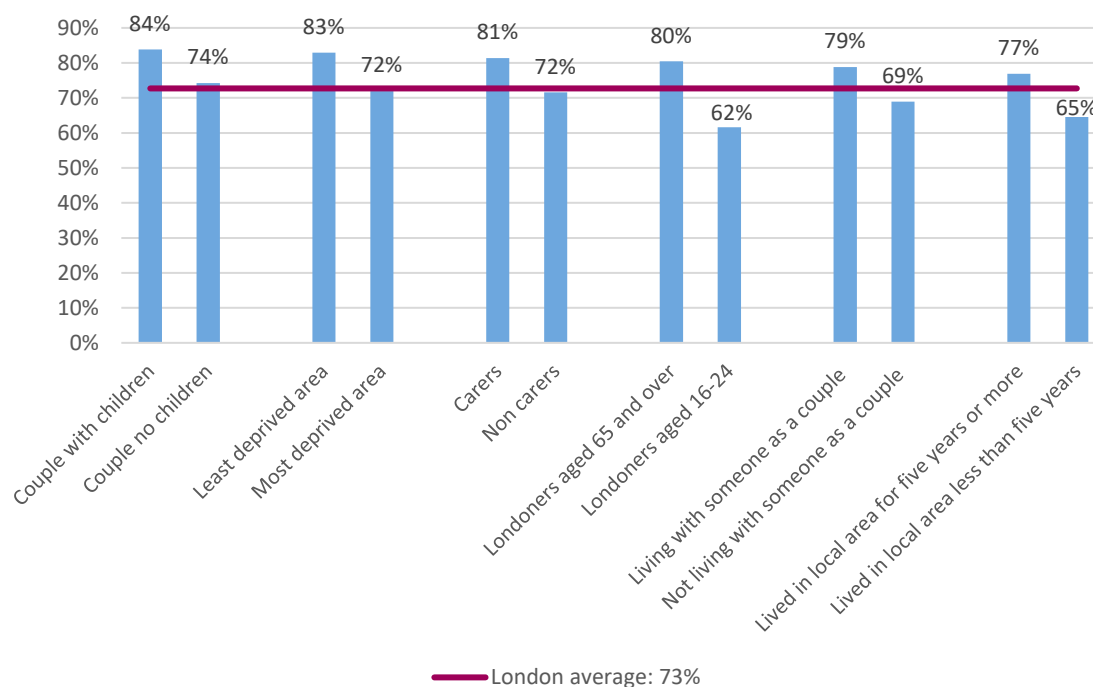
The survey asked Londoners how often, if at all, they were in face-to-face contact with family members they do not live with; friends; or neighbours. It used an eight-point scale from ‘at least once a day’ to ‘never’. The analysis below groups ‘around once a week’, ‘two to three times a week’, ‘four to six times a week’ and ‘at least once a day’ together as ‘once a week or more frequent’. It groups everything else together as ‘less than once a week’.

Around three-quarters of Londoners (73 per cent) reported having face-to-face contact with neighbours once a week or more; 59 per cent had face-to-face contact with friends once a week or more; and 37 per cent with family they do not live with once a week or more. This is in line with findings from the 2018-19 survey, except for face-to-face contact with friends where frequent contact has decreased (70 per cent, 66 per cent and 36 per cent respectively).

#### 5.3.1.1 Face-to-face contact with neighbours

Figure 5.5 shows some of the groups of Londoners most likely to have face to face contact with their neighbours once a week or more and their less likely counterparts.

**Figure 5.5 – Londoners living with someone in the household as a couple were one of the groups most likely to report having face-to-face contact with neighbours once a week or more**



Base: Londoners aged 16 and over (8,630); couple, with children (1,233); couple, no children (1,822); least deprived area (661); most deprived area (2,073); carers (1,473); non carers (6,773); Londoners aged 65 and over (1,820); Londoners aged 16-24 (627); living with someone as a couple (3,900); not living with someone as a couple (3,875); lived in local area for five years or more (6,213); lived in local area less than five years (2,380)

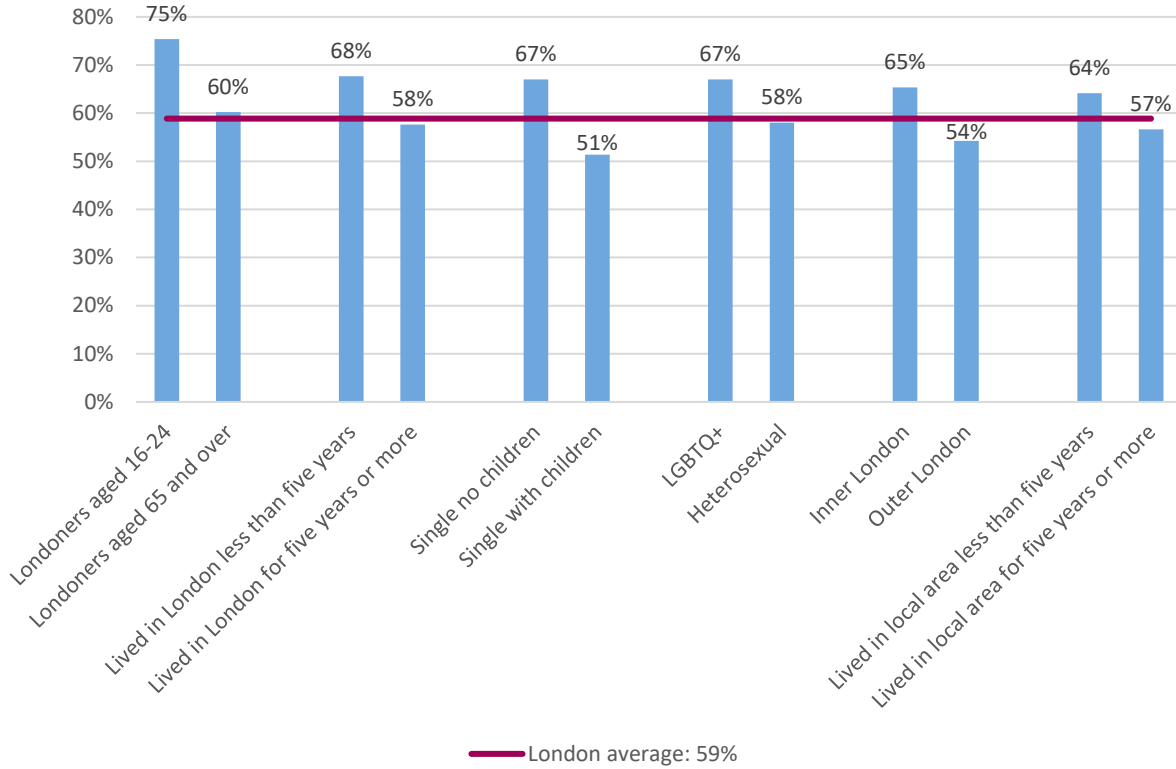
Eighty-four per cent of couples with children had face-to-face contact with neighbours once a week or more, compared to 74 per cent of couples without children.

Other groups with higher than average rates of frequent face-to-face contact with neighbours include Londoners living in the least deprived areas (83 per cent), carers in London (81 per cent), Londoners aged 65 and over (80 per cent), Londoners living with someone in the household as a couple (79 per cent), and Londoners who had lived in their local area for five years or more (77 per cent).

### 5.3.1.2 Face-to-face contact with friends

Figure 5.6 shows some of the groups of Londoners most likely to have face to face contact with their friends once a week or more and their less likely counterparts.

**Figure 5.6 – Young Londoners were one of the groups most likely to report having face-to-face contact with friends once a week or more**



Base: Londoners aged 16 and over (8,630); Londoners aged 16-24 (627); Londoners aged 65 and over (1,820); lived in London less than five years (910); lived in London for five years or more (7,659); single no children (2,380); single with children (555); LGBTQ+ (540); heterosexual (5,147); inner London (3,764); outer London (4,866); lived in local area less than five years (2,380); lived in local area for five years or more (6,213)

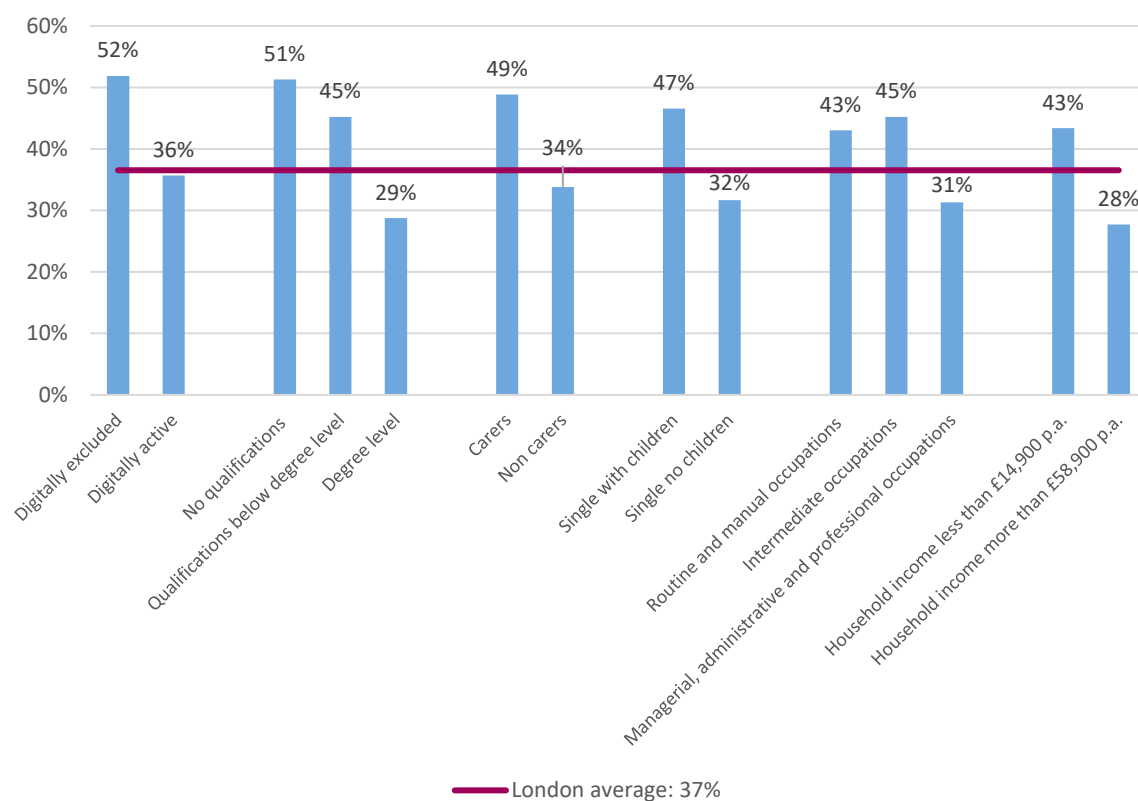
Younger Londoners were far more likely to have had face-to-face contact with friends. For example, 75 per cent of Londoners aged 16-24 had face-to-face contact with friends once a week or more, compared to 60 per cent of Londoners aged 65 and over.

Other groups with higher than average rates of frequent face-to-face contact with friends include Londoners newer to the city (68 per cent), single Londoners without children (67 per cent), LGBTQ+ Londoners (67 per cent), Londoners living in inner London (65 per cent), and Londoners newer to their local area (64 per cent).

**5.3.1.3 Face-to-face contact with family members Londoners do not live with**

Figure 5.7 shows some of the groups of Londoners most likely to have face to face contact with their family members they do not live with once a week or more and their less likely counterparts.

**Figure 5.7 – Digitally excluded Londoners were one of the groups most likely to report having face-to-face contact with family members they do not live with once a week or more**



Base: Londoners aged 16 and over (8,630); digitally excluded (493); digitally active (8,036); no qualifications (742); qualifications below degree level (2,755); degree level (4,550); carers (1,473); non carers (6,773); single with children (555); single no children (2,380); routine and manual occupations (1,025); intermediate occupations (1,091); managerial, administrative and professional occupations (4,686); household income less than £14,900 p.a. (867); household income more than £58,900 p.a. (1,465)

Digitally excluded Londoners (52 per cent) were more likely to have had more frequent face-to-face contact with family members they do not live with than digitally active Londoners (36 per cent) and the London average (37 per cent).

Other groups with higher than average rates of frequent face-to-face contact with family members they do not live with include Londoners with no qualifications (51 per cent), Londoners with qualifications lower than a university degree (45 per cent), Londoners who were carers (49 per cent), single Londoners with children (47 per cent), Londoners in intermediate occupations (45 per cent), Londoners in routine and manual occupations (43 per cent), and lower-income Londoners with an annual income of less than £14,900 (43 per cent).

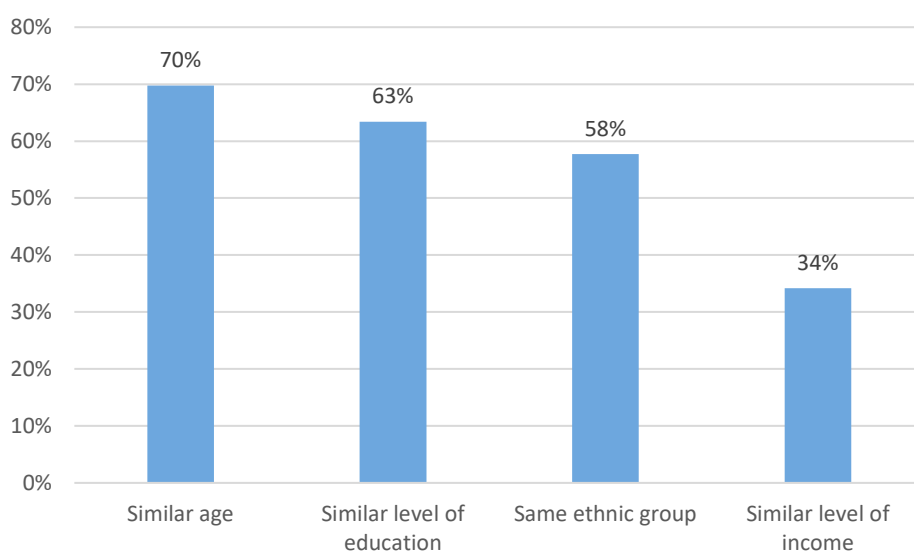
### 5.3.2 Diversity within friendship groups

The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 repeated the questions in the 2018-19 survey about the diversity of Londoners' friendship groups. This could help measure how well people got on with those from different backgrounds. If all or most of one's friends were from the same background, this may suggest a lack of opportunities for social mixing, an issue particularly pertinent as a result of lockdown restrictions.

The characteristics measured were age, ethnicity, education and income. The survey used a rating scale of 'all', 'more than half', 'about half' and 'less than half' to measure the diversity of Londoners' friendship groups. The analysis below groups ratings of 'all' and 'more than half' as 'over half'.

Figure 5.8 shows that around seven in 10 Londoners stated that over half of their friends were of a similar age (70 per cent) and 63 per cent stated that over half were of a similar level of education. Around six in 10 Londoners stated that over half of their friends were of the same ethnic group (58 per cent) and 34 per cent stated that over half were of a similar level of income. These were all similar to the proportions in 2018-19 (68 per cent, 62 per cent, 59 per cent and 34 per cent respectively) i.e. Londoners' friendship groups have not become more or less diverse since 2018-19.

**Figure 5.8 – Londoners' friendship groups are more likely to be similar by age than by education, ethnicity or income**



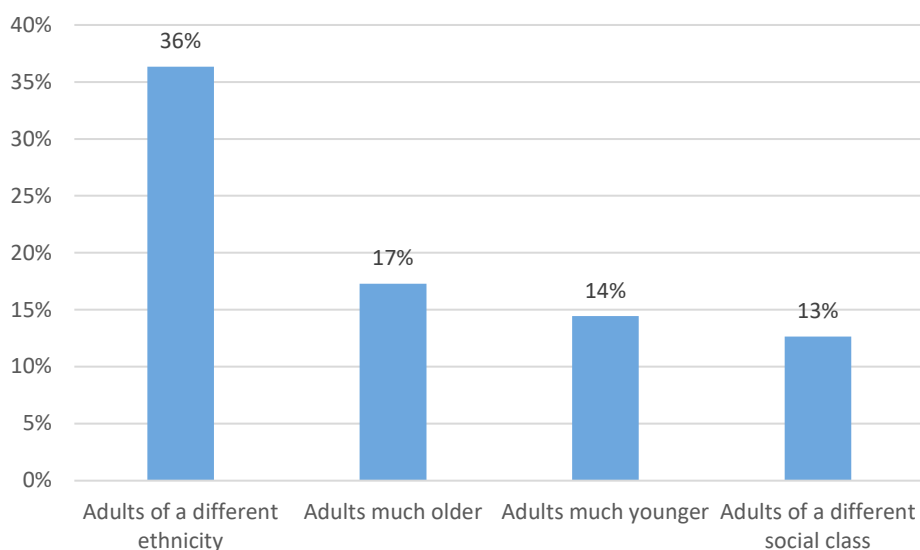
Base: Londoners aged 16 and over (6,088)

### 5.3.3 Londoners' wider social networks

The 2021-22 survey included several questions that focused on Londoners' wider social networks, measuring the frequency of interaction with others of different backgrounds. The characteristics measured include age, social class and ethnicity. The analysis below groups ratings of 'all the time' and 'quite a lot of the time' together as 'frequent' time spent.

Over one-third of Londoners (36 per cent) frequently spent time with adults of a different ethnic group. This was followed by 17 per cent of Londoners who frequently spent time with adults who were much older; 14 per cent with adults who were much younger and 13 per cent with adults who were from a different social class (see Figure 5.9).

**Figure 5.9 – Londoners were more likely to spend time with those from a different ethnic group than people older, younger or from a different social class**

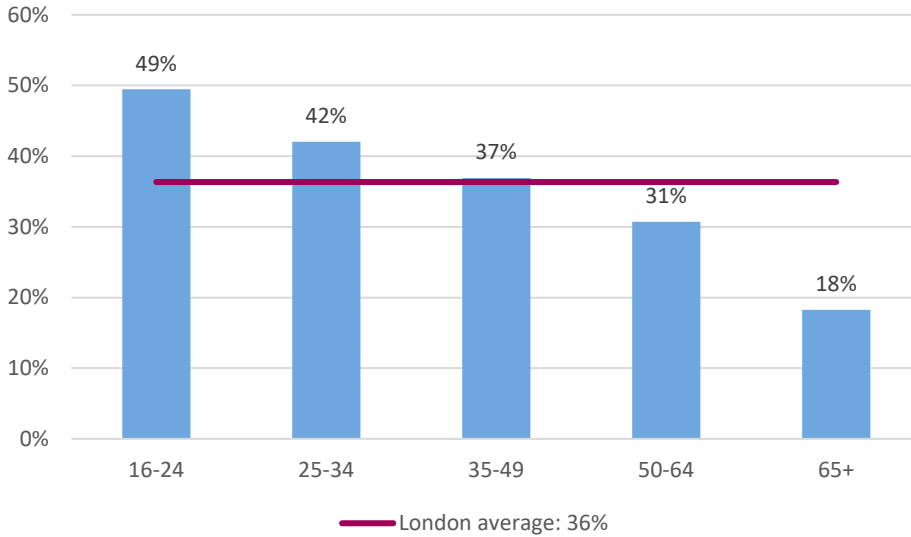


Base: Londoners aged 16 and over (6,088)

More frequent, wider mixing with different ethnic groups has increased from 32 per cent in 2018-19; meanwhile more frequent, wider mixing with younger adults has decreased from 18 per cent. More frequent, wider mixing with older adults and adults from a different social class were similar to the proportions in 2018-19 (19 per cent and 12 per cent respectively).

Figure 5.10 shows how Londoners aged 16-24 were far more likely to frequently spend time with adults of a different ethnic background than Londoners aged 65 and over (49 per cent compared to 18 per cent respectively).

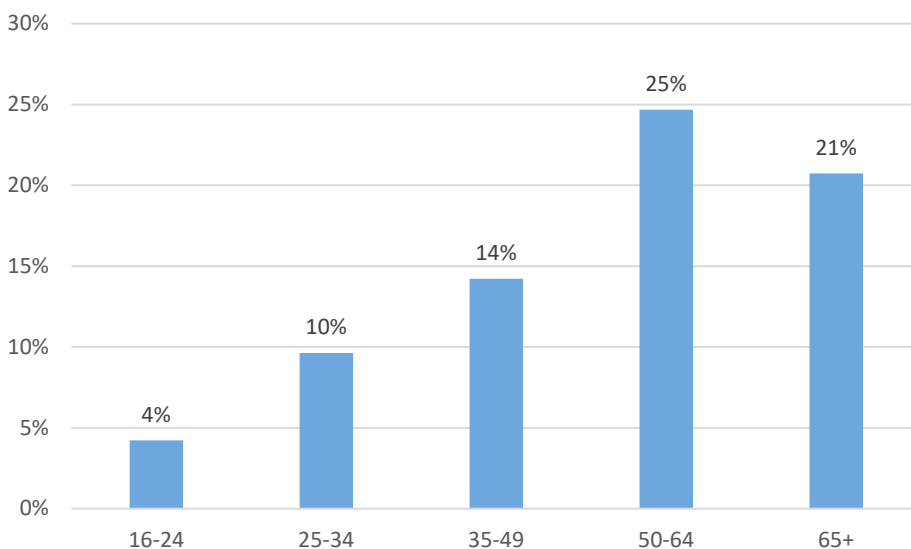
**Figure 5.10 – Younger Londoners were more likely to frequently spend time with adults from different ethnic backgrounds**



Base: Londoners aged: 16 and over (6,088); 16-24 (541); 25-34 (1,334); 35-49 (1,799); 50-64 (1,261); 65 and over (915)

As expected, frequency of time spent with younger adults was closely associated with age (see Figure 5.11). Londoners aged 50-64 (25 per cent), and those aged 65 and over (21 per cent) exhibited the highest rates of time spent frequently with much younger adults. Londoners aged 16-24 exhibited the lowest rate (4 per cent).

**Figure 5.11 – Older Londoners were more likely to frequently spend time with adults who were much younger**



Base: Londoners aged: 16-24 (541); 25-34 (1,334); 35-49 (1,799); 50-64 (1,261); 65 and over (915)



**Quotes from Londoners on social mixing**

*“I find London a hard place to make friends as very transient. I have lived in my flat for XX years and I only have 1 next door neighbour I speak to as people moving in and out all the time. I find that people in [x borough] don’t tend to mix with other cultures than their own”*

*“I was born and bred in London and would hate to live elsewhere. I have friends and family of all religions, ethnicity and age. And although London is the size it is it is still possible to bump into people you know in central London. I love London.”*

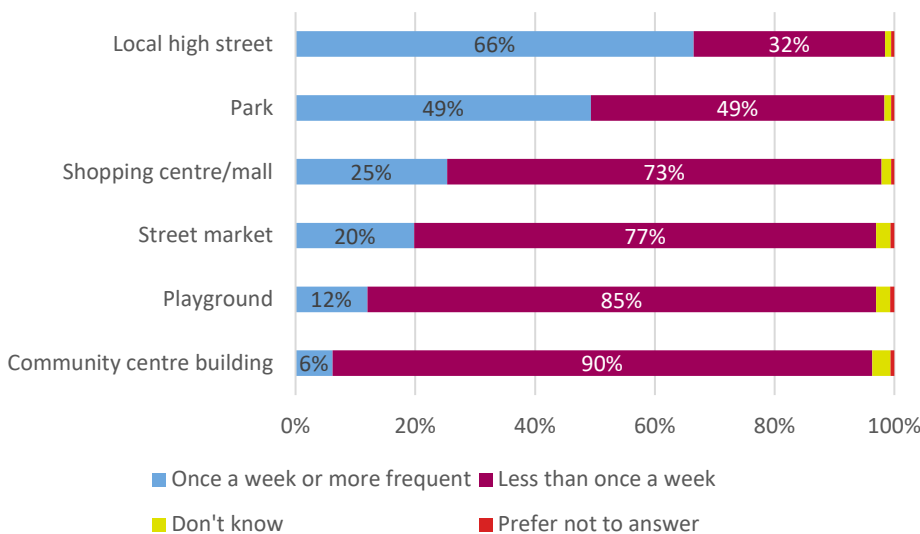
*We enjoy our multi-ethnic friends and neighbours' company.*

*Coming from a working class background and now working in a firm with mostly with middle to upper class employees, I recognise how class amongst other things has a huge bearing on a person’s future prospects and access to opportunities, facilities, etc. It also has a huge effect on someone’s experience of London and views generally.*

**5.4 Public spaces**

Turning to the use of public spaces, the pandemic highlighted the importance of public spaces to the wellbeing of communities that depend on them. Therefore, the Survey of Londoners 2021-22 asked respondents to think about the past 12 months and say how often, if at all, they had used or visited different public spaces in their local area. Around two-thirds of Londoners (66 per cent) had visited their local high street at least once a week in the past 12 months, while around half (49 per cent) had been to a park at least once a week in the past 12 months (see Figure 5.12).

**Figure 5.12 – Londoners were more likely to have visited their local high street and parks frequently in the past 12 months than other public spaces**

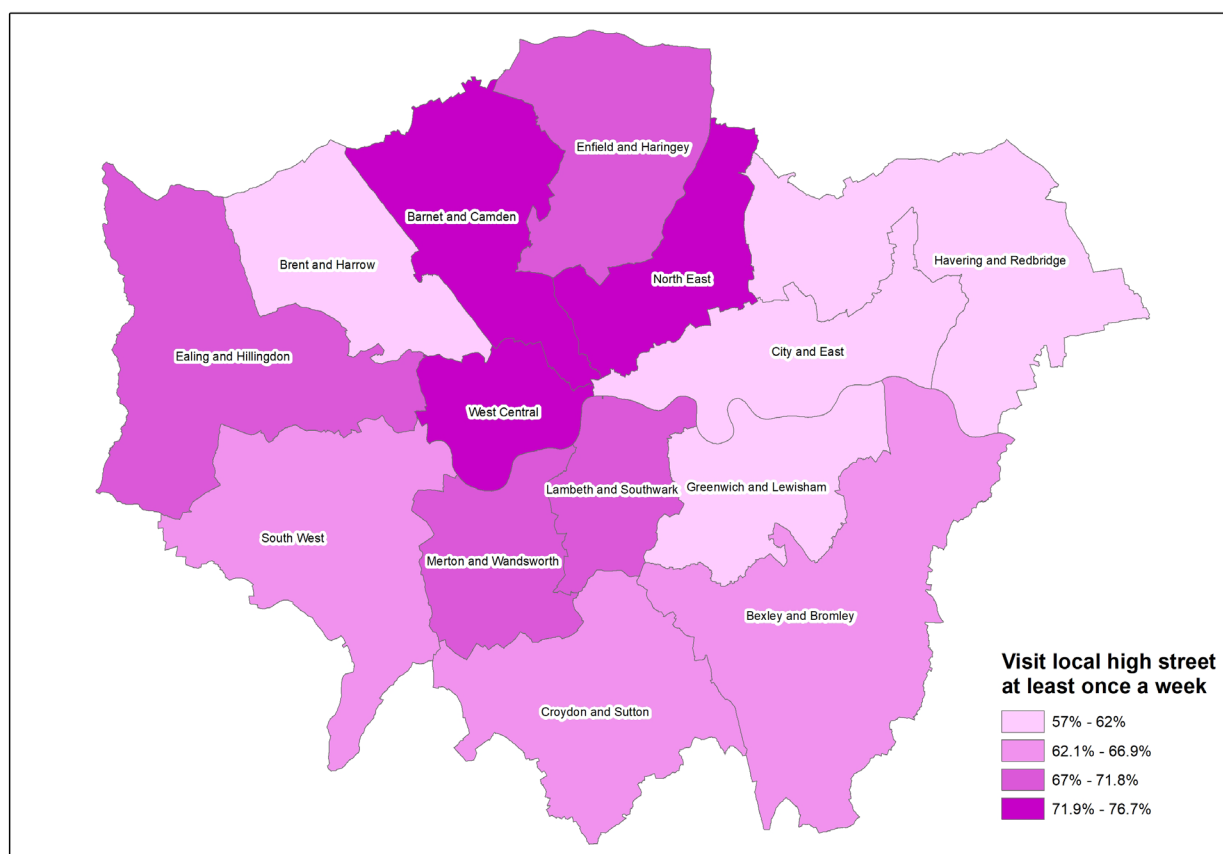


Base: Londoners aged 16 and over (6,088)

Londoners were less likely to have visited a shopping centre (25 per cent), street market (20 per cent), playground (12 per cent) or community centre building (6 per cent) at least once a week in the past 12 months.

Londoners living in the constituencies of Barnet and Camden (75 per cent), West Central (77 per cent), and North East (77 per cent) were more likely to have visited their local high street at least once a week in the past 12 months than City and East (57 per cent), Greenwich and Lewisham (60 per cent), and Havering and Redbridge (61 per cent) – see Figure 5.13.

**Figure 5.13 – Londoners in central and north London were more likely to have visited their local high street frequently in the past 12 months, and Londoners in east London were less likely**



Base: Barnet and Camden (296); Bexley and Bromley (241); Brent and Harrow (259); City and East (1,392); Croydon and Sutton (243); Ealing and Hillingdon (288); Enfield and Haringey (226); Greenwich and Lewisham (368); Havering and Redbridge (768); Lambeth and Southwark (357); Merton and Wandsworth (216); North East (985); South West (285); West Central (164)

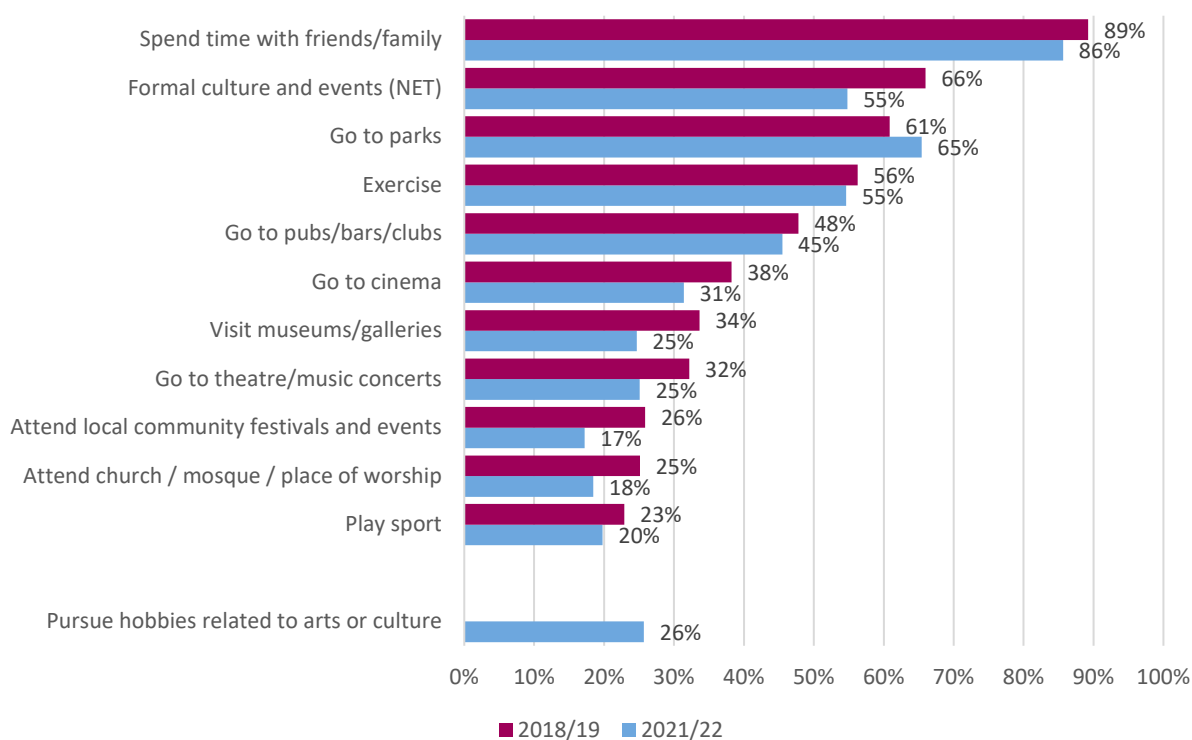
Some of the London boroughs within the constituencies where high street visits were less frequent over the past 12 months appear to be the same ones that had the highest age-

standardised COVID-19 mortality rates for people younger than 65 e.g. Barking and Dagenham, Newham and Tower Hamlets.<sup>32</sup>

## 5.5 Free-time activities

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in measures that limited the extent to which Londoners could mix with each other. The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 repeated the question used in the 2018-19 survey about what free-time activities respondents had done in the last month, as a way of seeing whether Londoners were engaging in fewer opportunities for shared experiences (see Figure 5.14).

**Figure 5.14 – Londoners were less likely to socially participate in 2021-22 than in 2018-19**



Base: 2018-19: Londoners aged 16 and over (6,601); 2021-22: Londoners aged 16 and over (8,630)

As expected, given the pandemic and restrictions, Londoners were less likely to have participated in any of the free-time activities asked about in 2021-22, compared with 2018-19, except for going to parks. Across all measures except for going to parks, the mean decrease was five percentage points; the largest decreases were seen in attendance of local community festivals and events, and visits to museums and galleries (both decreased by nine percentage points). Going to parks increased by five percentage points: in 2021-22

<sup>32</sup> The Health Foundation, [What geographic inequalities in COVID-19 mortality rates and health can tell us about levelling up](#), 17 July 2021

around two-thirds of Londoners (65 per cent) had said they had been to the park in the past month (up from 61 per cent).

Figure 5.15 illustrates how going to parks has a strong income gradient, with lower-income Londoners (those with an annual income of less than £14,900) less likely to have gone to the park in the last month (54 per cent) than the highest-income Londoners (annual income of more than £58,900) (87 per cent). This income gradient is likely to reflect easier access to nearby parks for those on a higher income, and also those on a higher income working shorter hours or being more likely to work from home.

**Figure 5.15 – Lower-income Londoners were less likely to go to parks than higher-income Londoners**



Base: Londoners aged 16 and over with an annual income of: less than £14,900 (867); £14,901-£24,300 (631); £24,301-£37,900 (888); £37,901-£58,900 (931); more than £58,900 (1,465)

Related to income, White British Londoners (73 per cent) and Londoners of a White other ethnic background (77 per cent) were more likely to have gone to a park in the last month than Black Londoners (40 per cent). Londoners with qualifications lower than degree level (55 per cent) and Londoners with no qualifications (40 per cent) were less likely to have gone to a park in the past month than Londoners with at least a degree (77 per cent).

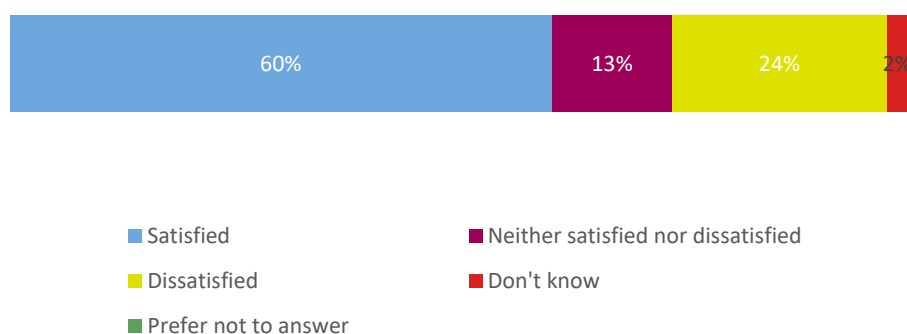
Disabled Londoners were less likely than non-disabled Londoners to have gone to a park in the past month (53 per cent and 69 per cent respectively).

Londoners living in inner London were more likely than Londoners living in outer London to have gone to a park in the past month (72 per cent and 61 per cent respectively). In particular, Londoners living in the constituencies West Central (77 per cent), Merton and Wandsworth (74 per cent), Lambeth and Southwark (72 per cent), and North East (71 per cent) were more likely to have gone to a park in the past month than Londoners living in

Brent and Harrow (52 per cent), City and East (57 per cent), and Havering and Redbridge (60 per cent).

The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 asked a related question about how satisfied or dissatisfied respondents were with open spaces and parks in their local area. Around six in 10 Londoners (60 per cent) were satisfied to some extent, around a quarter (24 per cent) were dissatisfied to some extent, while 13 per cent were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (see Figure 5.16).

**Figure 5.16 – Around six in 10 Londoners (60 per cent) were satisfied with open spaces and parks in their local area**



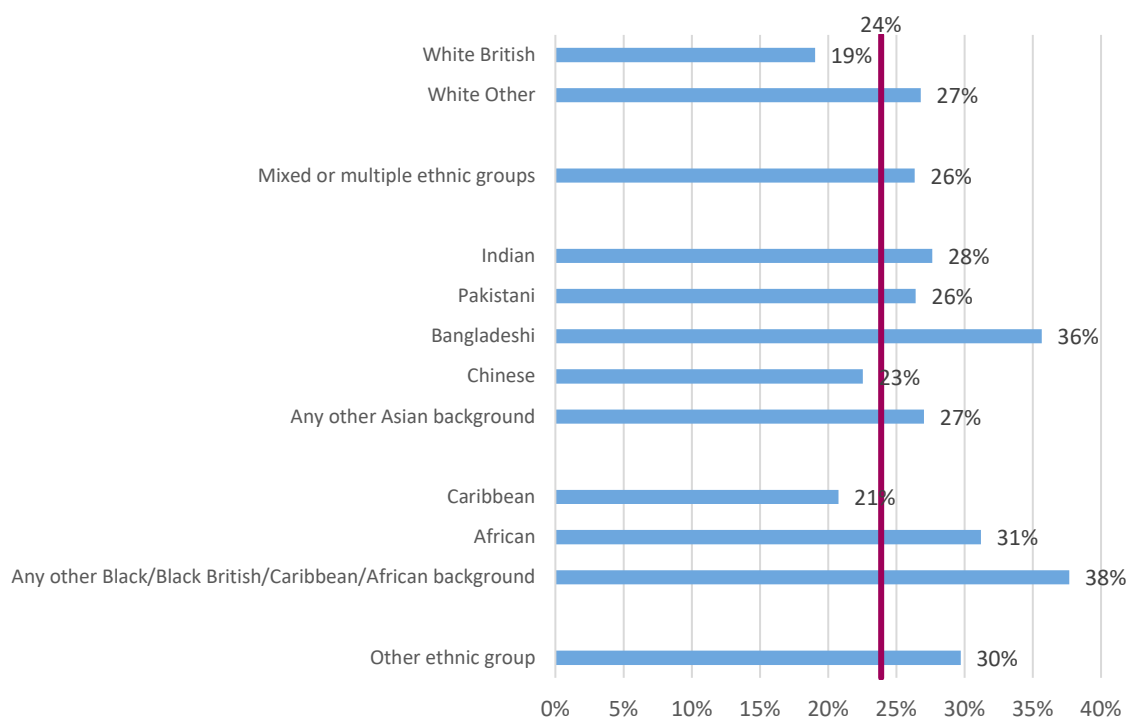
Base: Londoners aged 16 and over (6,088)

Londoners living in the most deprived areas (28 per cent) exhibited a higher rate of dissatisfaction with open spaces and parks in their local area than those living in the least deprived areas (18 per cent). This is reflected in some of the later findings we go on to highlight.

EU-born Londoners were more likely to express dissatisfaction with open spaces and parks in their local area (29 per cent) than UK-born Londoners (21 per cent).

Compared with White British Londoners, most other ethnic groups were more likely to be dissatisfied with open spaces and parks in their local area (see Figure 5.17).

**Figure 5.17 – Bangladeshi Londoners and Londoners of another Black background were the most likely ethnic groups to be dissatisfied with open spaces and parks in their local area**



Base: Londoners aged 16 and over (6,088); White British (2,743); White other (943); mixed or multiple ethnic groups (226); Indian (495); Pakistani (178); Bangladeshi (250); Chinese (156); Any other Asian background (209); Caribbean (145); African (210); Any other Black/Black British/Caribbean/African background (60); other ethnic group (186)

In particular, statistically significant differences compared with White British Londoners (19 per cent) were found with Londoners of a White other ethnic background (27 per cent), Indian Londoners (28 per cent), Bangladeshi Londoners (36 per cent), Black African Londoners (31 per cent), Londoners of another Black background (38 per cent) and Londoners with an other ethnic group (30 per cent).

Social renters (31 per cent) were more likely to be dissatisfied with open spaces and parks in their local area than owner-occupiers (21 per cent).

### Quotes from Londoners on public spaces

*“The parks make a huge difference to my life (and local reservoirs and nature reserve) and I hope they are always maintained and care for. Even more would be great, open spaces are vital to peace and mental health.”*

*“Grateful for open parks/woods which can be accessed easily.”*

### Quotes from Londoners on public spaces

*I really appreciate the green spaces and my local community more now than before covid.*

*“Love the local parks, they are such an important aspect of living well here.”*

*“Shops on high streets are changing with many closing - would like to see such spaces being used for community benefit-centres to promote health and wellbeing.”*

*“Our local high street has deteriorated greatly in recent years, partly due to online shopping, but also due to overpriced rent.”*

*“Our high street is very depressing and nothing like it was 20 years ago. I would like more outdoor areas where all the large housing complexes are going up. Plant more trees and plants.”*

*“All answers are effected by covid, for example meeting/seeing friends and neighbours definitely diminished. No tenants and residents association meeting. No Theatre/Music concerts etc. All the nice things what make London quite soul destroying to be honest!!!”*

## 5.6 Volunteering and social action

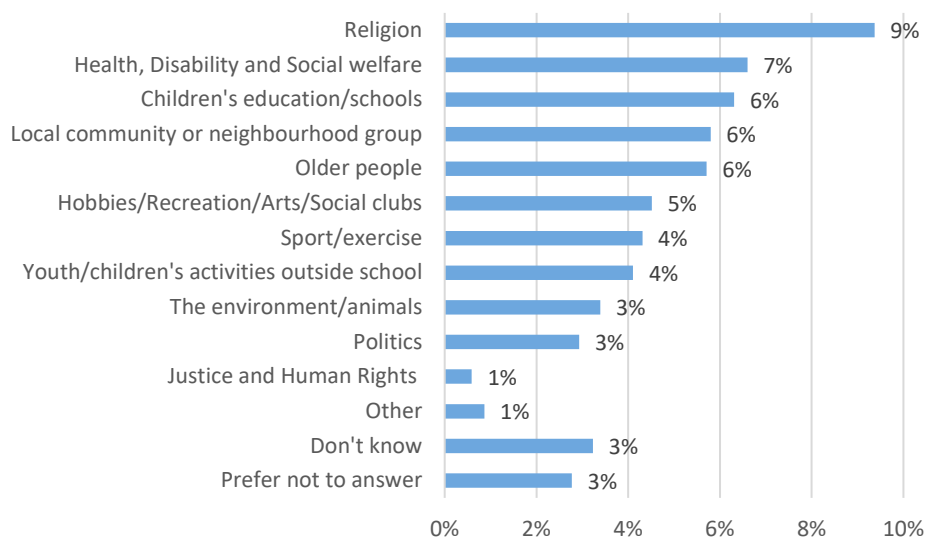
### 5.6.1 Formal volunteering

The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 included a question asking respondents whether they had participated in any formal volunteering in the past 12 months (defined as giving unpaid help to groups, clubs or organisations). Whilst this was repeated from the 2018-19 survey, the 2021-22 survey collected additional information on the types of groups, clubs or organisations for which Londoners had volunteered or given unpaid help.

Around one-third of Londoners (33 per cent) had formally volunteered for a group, club or organisation. This is in comparison to 28 per cent in 2018-19. The increase needs to be caveated. Among those who may not have specifically identified some of their volunteering work as such, the 2021-22 survey question about the types of groups, clubs or organisations Londoners had volunteered for may have prompted positive responses this time around. However, the proportion recorded is similar to that recorded in the Community Life Survey 2020-21 (31 per cent).

In 2021-22, Londoners were more likely to have formally volunteered for a religious organisation, club or group (9 per cent) followed by a health, disability and social welfare organisation, club or group (7 per cent) (refer to Figure 5.18).

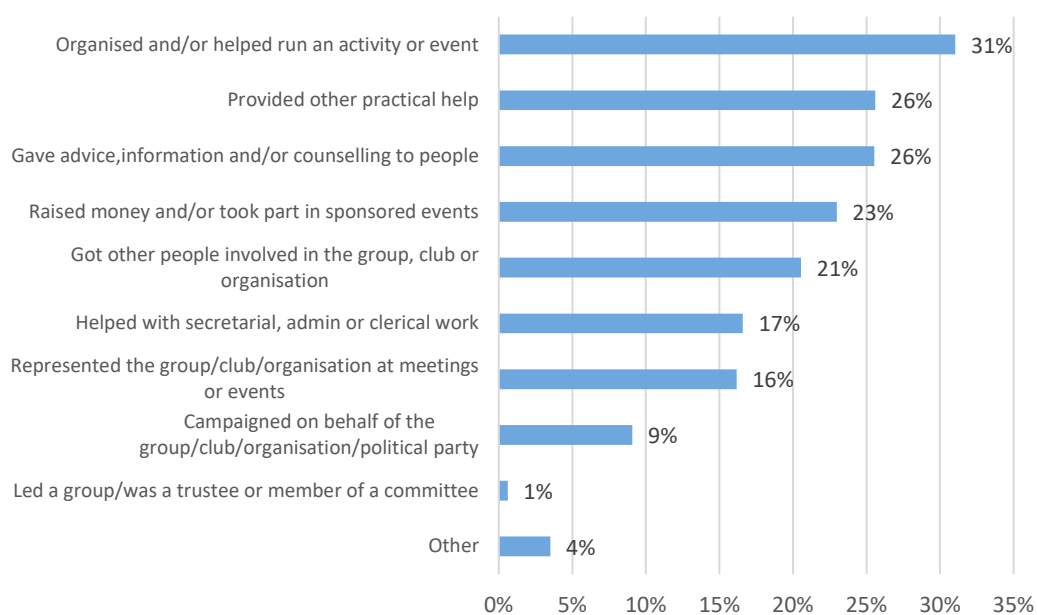
**Figure 5.18 – Londoners were more likely to have formally volunteered for a religious organisation, club or group**



Base: Londoners aged 16 and over (8,630)

The 2021-22 survey also asked Londoners how they volunteered or gave their unpaid help. Around one-third of Londoners (31 per cent) helped organise or run an activity or event (see Figure 5.19). The next-most reported activities were providing practical help; and providing advice, information and/or counselling (both 26 per cent).

**Figure 5.19 – When formally volunteering, Londoners were more likely to have helped organise or run an activity or event**



Base: Londoners aged 16 and over who had formally volunteered in the last 12 months (2,925)



Rates of formal volunteering were closely associated with current working status. Londoners in insecure employment were more likely to have formally volunteered than the London average (39 per cent compared to 33 per cent respectively). Londoners in part-time work (45 per cent) were significantly more likely to have formally volunteered than those in full-time work (30 per cent). Retired Londoners (37 per cent) and students (43 per cent) were also more likely to have formally volunteered than full-time workers.

Londoners in managerial, administrative and professional occupations (37 per cent) were more likely to have formally volunteered than those in routine and manual occupations (25 per cent). This was also true for Londoners educated to university-degree level or higher compared to those with no qualifications (37 per cent compared to 22 per cent respectively).

Londoners who were carers were far more likely to have formally volunteered than Londoners who were not carers (44 per cent compared to 31 per cent respectively).

Formal volunteering was also closely associated with housing tenure. Owner-occupiers (38 per cent) were far more likely to have volunteered than social renters (29 per cent) and private renters (29 per cent). Amongst owner-occupiers, Londoners who owned their home outright exhibited the highest rate (40 per cent) and those who part-owned and part-rented their home exhibited the lowest (29 per cent).

Black Londoners (37 per cent), mixed ethnicity Londoners (37 per cent) and White Londoners (36 per cent) exhibited the highest rates of formal volunteering. Asian Londoners (30 per cent) and Londoners of a White other ethnic background (29 per cent) exhibited the lowest rates. Amongst Black Londoners, those of a Black African ethnic background (43 per cent) and any other Black background (38 per cent) exhibited the highest rates.

Londoners aged 65 and over (37 per cent) and Londoners aged 16-24 (37 per cent), along with those aged 50-64 years (36 per cent), exhibited the highest rates of formal volunteering. Those aged 25-34 (27 per cent) exhibited the lowest rate.

Londoners with a religion (36 per cent) were more likely to have formally volunteered than Londoners without a religion (31 per cent). In particular, Londoners who were Jewish (56 per cent) and Sikh (45 per cent) exhibited the highest rates.

Digitally active Londoners were significantly more likely to have formally volunteered than digitally excluded Londoners (34 per cent compared to 21 per cent respectively). This was also true for Londoners for who said they were proficient at speaking English as a second language, in comparison to those who said they were not proficient (31 per cent compared to 16 per cent respectively).

Londoners who had lived in London for a longer period of time were far more likely to have formally volunteered than those who had lived in the city for five years or less (35 per cent compared to 25 per cent respectively). This was also true for Londoners who had lived in their local area for more than five years, compared to those who were newer to their local area (35 per cent compared to 29 per cent respectively).

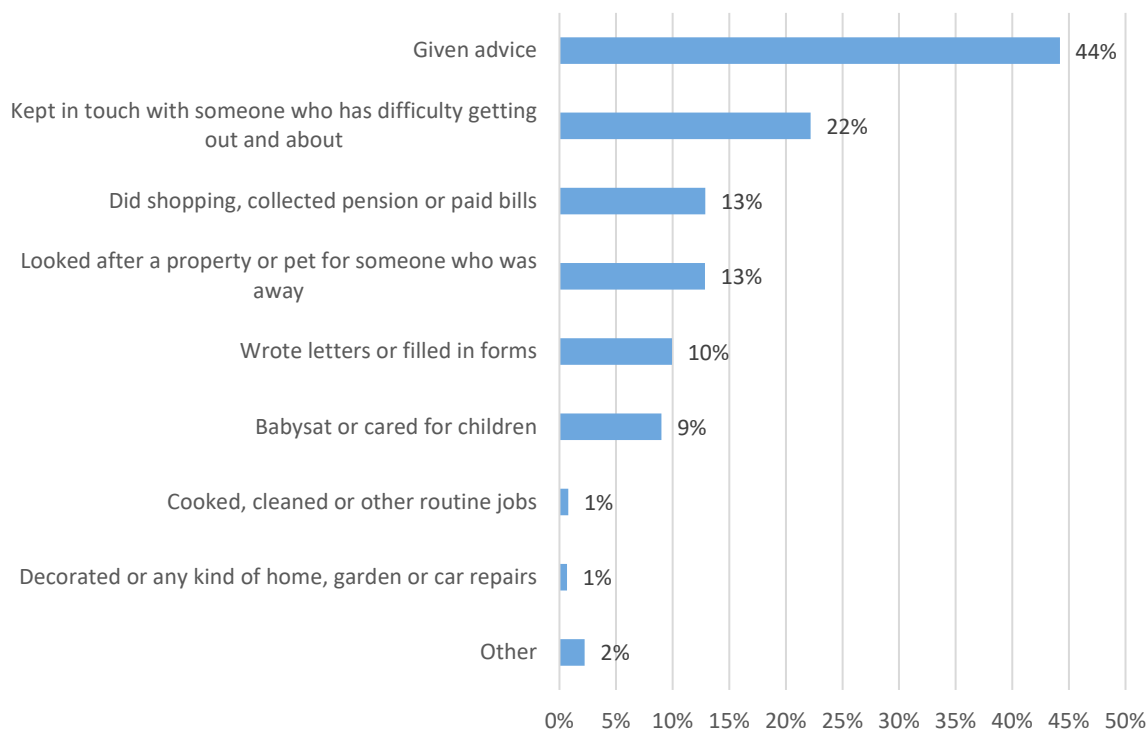
### **5.6.2 Informal volunteering**

The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 asked respondents whether they had participated in any informal volunteering within the past 12 months (defined as giving unpaid help to other people such as friends, neighbours or other people who were not relatives, separate from any help given through groups, clubs or organisations). This question was repeated from the 2018-19 survey, with an additional question about the type of informal volunteering in which Londoners were engaged.

There was an increase in the number of Londoners who had informally volunteered in the past 12 months: 60 per cent in 2021-22, up from 52 per cent in 2018-19. As with the increase seen in the formal volunteering rate, the increase in the informal volunteering rate also needs to be caveated. Among those who may not have specifically identified their informal volunteering as such, asking for more detail about the type of informal volunteering in which Londoners were engaged may have prompted positive responses. The proportion recorded is higher than that recorded in the Community Life Survey 2020-21 (55 per cent), so it may be indicative of a genuine increase.

In particular, in 2021-22, Londoners were more likely to have given advice (44 per cent) to someone when informally volunteering (see Figure 5.20).

**Figure 5.20 – When informally volunteering, Londoners were more likely to have given advice to someone who was not a relative**



Base: Londoners aged 16 and over (8,630)

Londoners who were carers (72 per cent) were far more likely to have informally volunteered than Londoners who were not carers (59 per cent).

Londoners in part-time employment (71 per cent) were more likely to have informally volunteered than Londoners working full-time (63 per cent). Students (66 per cent) also exhibited a high rate of informal volunteering.

Londoners working in managerial, administrative and professional occupations (68 per cent) were more likely to have volunteered than Londoners in intermediate occupations (60 per cent), and routine and manual occupations (54 per cent).

Londoners educated to university-degree level or higher (67 per cent) were far more likely to have informally volunteered than those with qualifications lower than university-degree level (57 per cent) or those with no qualifications (40 per cent).

LGBTQ+ Londoners (71 per cent) were far more likely to have informally volunteered than heterosexual Londoners (62 per cent).

Women were far more likely to have informally volunteered in the past 12 months than men (65 per cent compared to 57 per cent respectively).

Rates of informal volunteering also differed amongst Londoners of different ethnic backgrounds. Londoners of a White other background (65 per cent) and those of a mixed ethnic background (63 per cent) exhibited high rates of informal volunteering. Asian Londoners (59 per cent) exhibited the lowest rate, with the exceptions being Chinese Londoners (68 per cent) and Pakistani Londoners (65 per cent), who exhibited higher rates of informal volunteering.

Owner-occupiers and private renters (both 63 per cent) were far more likely to have informally volunteered than social renters (54 per cent). Amongst owner-occupiers, Londoners who had bought their home on a mortgage or loan exhibited the highest rate (65 per cent); those who had part-owned and part-rented their home exhibited the lowest (56 per cent).

Londoners on the highest end of the income spectrum exhibited the highest rate of informal volunteering (66 per cent). Londoners on the lowest end of the income spectrum exhibited the lowest rate (59 per cent).

Digitally active Londoners were significantly more likely to have informally volunteered in the past 12 months than Londoners who were digitally excluded (62 per cent compared to 29 per cent respectively). This was also true for Londoners who said they were proficient at speaking English as a second language compared to those who said they were not proficient at speaking English (61 per cent compared to 40 per cent respectively).

### Quotes from Londoners on volunteering

*"I would like to volunteer and have enquired at several places but there are very few opportunities at the weekends which makes this challenging."*

*"I am slightly ashamed of ticking 'NO' to some of the boxes in this form on helping the community/food banks/volunteering. I absolutely would like to get involved but I am not sure how."*

*"I love living in London it has provided me with opportunities for work, making friends, support agencies are there if I need help I know how to access them such as Age UK. I have done voluntary work for people in housing need for XX years through housing associations and housing co-ops/circle"*

*"Volunteering opportunities should be more widely available; I'd care to volunteer but struggle to find suitable options for full-time employees."*

*"My youngest child is severely disabled and a central point of information around how to access London would be amazing. Somewhere that pulls together travel options, days out, accessibility, carers allowances etc would ensure that London continues to remain a place where my family can live and enjoy without the huge additional work and associated impact that planning a day out currently involves. Really happy to be part of"*

### Quotes from Londoners on volunteering

*a conversation that starts to make that happens for disabled people, parents and carers.”*

*“Appreciate over 60 oyster card. Would like to be able to use it before 9am as I volunteer at a school and travel by bus to start before 9am”*

*“I would like the freedom pass to be used before 9am. Put this back so people of my age can travel to their voluntary work without thinking of any extra expenses that would come from their own.”*

*“I've tried to volunteer at a club for senior citizens but haven't been able to due to the pandemic.”*

### 5.6.3. Mutual aid groups

With the rise in prominence of mutual aid groups, particularly as a result of the measures associated with the pandemic, the Survey of Londoners 2021-22 asked respondents whether they had been involved with a mutual aid group in the past 12 months. A definition was provided to respondents, namely:

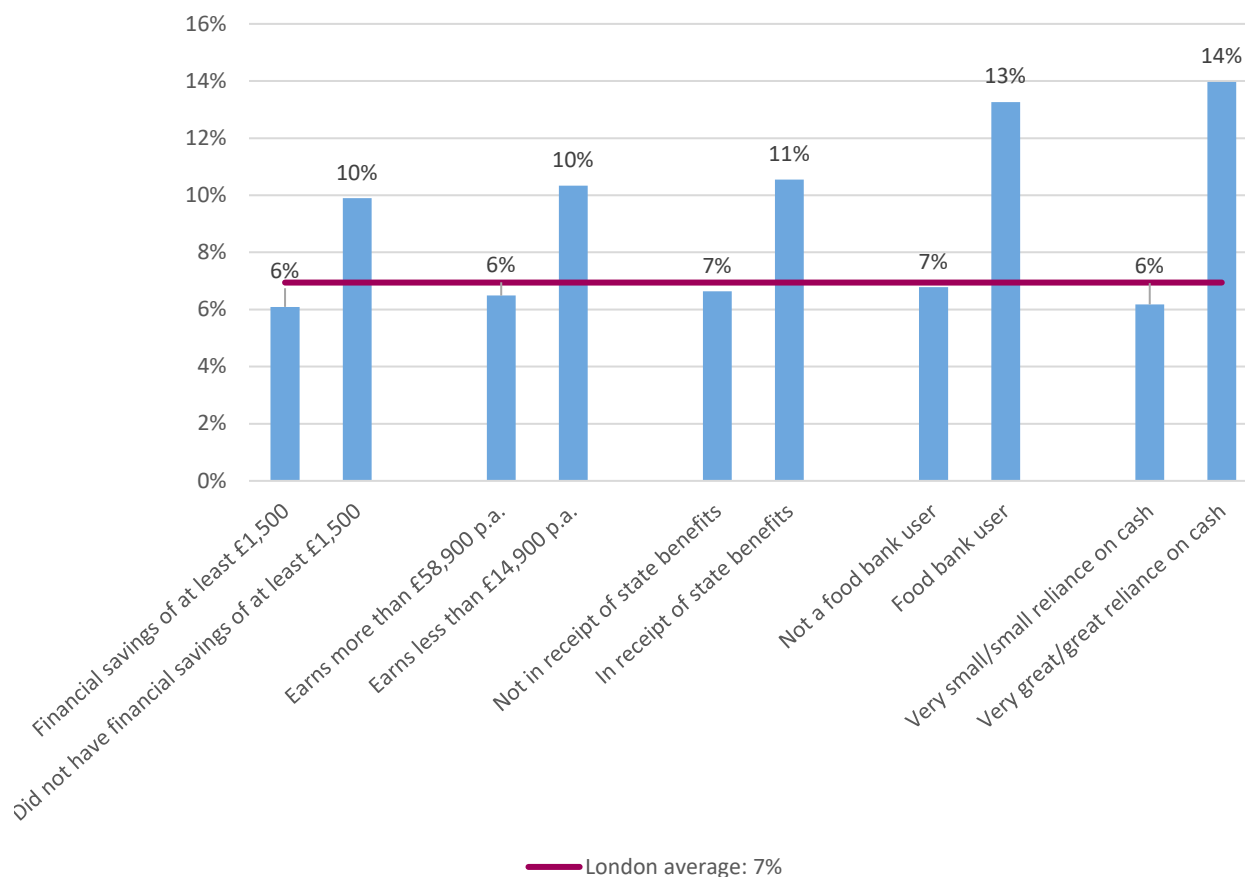
*“A mutual aid group is a volunteer-led initiative where groups of people in a particular area join together to support one another, meeting vital community needs without relying on official bodies. They do so in a way that prioritises those who are most vulnerable or otherwise unable to access help through regular channels.”*

This question, about involvement in a mutual aid group, was not asked in the 2018-19 survey.

The survey found that 7 per cent of Londoners had been involved with a mutual aid group in the past 12 months, while 88 per cent had not been involved.

Londoners more likely to be experiencing financial hardship across a range of different measures were far more likely to have been involved in a mutual aid group than those less likely to be experiencing hardship (see Figure 5.21). For example, Londoners who relied on cash to a great extent were significantly more likely to have been involved, compared to those who relied on cash to a small extent (14 per cent compared to 6 per cent respectively). This was also true for food-bank users, in comparison to Londoners who had not used a food bank (13 per cent compared to 7 per cent respectively).

**Figure 5.21 – Londoners likely to be experiencing financial hardship were far more likely to have been involved in a mutual aid group**



Base: Londoners aged 16 and over (6,088); had at least £1,500 in savings (3,867); did not have at least £1,500 in savings (1,439); household income of more than £58,900 per annum (1,465); household income of less than £14,900 per annum (867); not in receipt of state benefits (5,110); in receipt of state benefits (594); not a food-bank user (5,913); food-bank user (175); reliant on cash to a small or very small extent (4,422); reliant on cash to a great or very great extent (371)

Involvement in a mutual aid group also differed among Londoners of different ethnic backgrounds. Londoners of a mixed ethnic background (12 per cent) exhibited the highest rate of involvement, followed by Asian Londoners (9 per cent) and Black Londoners (8 per cent). Amongst Asian Londoners, those who had an ethnic background that was Bangladeshi (12 per cent), Chinese (10 per cent) and Indian (9 per cent) exhibited the highest rates. This was also true for Londoners of a Black African background (11 per cent). White British Londoners and Londoners of a White other ethnic background exhibited the lowest rates (both 5 per cent).

Londoners in part-time work (11 per cent) were far more likely to have been involved in a mutual aid group than those in full-time work (6 per cent).

Londoners who were carers were more likely to have been involved in a mutual aid group than Londoners who were not carers (10 per cent compared to 6 per cent respectively).

Involvement in a mutual aid group also differed by religious belief. Londoners with a religion were more likely to have been involved in a mutual aid group than those without a religion (8 per cent compared to 5 per cent respectively). In particular, Londoners who were Sikh (17 per cent), Jewish (13 per cent) and Hindu (11 per cent) exhibited the highest rates.

#### **5.6.4 Social action**

The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 repeated the question on social action from the 2018-19 survey, which asked respondents to select from a list of activities they had been involved in over the past 12 months (it was reported as 'civic participation' in the 2018-19 headline findings report).

The 2021-22 survey question was modified slightly, however, by excluding some activities that were asked about elsewhere in the questionnaire. Therefore, in order for the question to be comparable with 2018-19, a derived variable was produced, which took answers from other parts of the questionnaire to more closely match the version used in 2018-19. Social action includes campaigning on behalf of a political party; trying to set up a new service/amenity for local residents; trying to stop something happening in the local area; running local services on a voluntary basis, organising a community event or being involved in another local issue.

Using this more comparable measure, in 2021-22, around one in five Londoners (19 per cent) had been involved in social action in the past 12 months. This is slightly lower than in 2018-19, where 24 per cent of Londoners had been involved in social action in the past 12 months.

UK-born Londoners exhibited a higher rate of social action than non-UK-born Londoners (22 per cent compared to 16 per cent respectively). This was also true for Londoners who said they were proficient at speaking English as a second language, in comparison to those who said they were not proficient (15 per cent compared to 7 per cent respectively).

Rates of social action also differed by ethnicity. White British Londoners (23 per cent) exhibited the highest rate of social action, while Londoners with an other ethnic group (14 per cent), Asian Londoners (15 per cent), Black Londoners (17 per cent) and White other Londoners (18 per cent) exhibited lower rates.

Londoners in managerial, administrative and professional occupations were more likely to have engaged in social action in the past year than those in routine and manual occupations (24 per cent compared to 12 per cent respectively). This was also true for Londoners who were in part-time employment compared to those in full-time employment (26 per cent compared to 19 per cent respectively).



Londoners educated to university-degree level or higher (23 per cent) were more likely to have engaged in social action than those with qualifications lower than university-degree level (16 per cent) and those with no qualifications (9 per cent).

Londoners who were carers were more likely to have engaged in social action in the last year than Londoners who were not carers (24 per cent compared to 18 per cent respectively).

Engagement in social action was also associated with housing tenure. Owner-occupiers (23 per cent) were more likely to have engaged in social action than social renters (14 per cent) and private renters (17 per cent).

Londoners living in the least deprived areas were more likely to have engaged in social action than those living in the most deprived areas (26 per cent compared to 14 per cent respectively).

Digitally active Londoners were far more likely to have engaged in social action than digitally excluded Londoners (20 per cent compared to 8 per cent respectively).

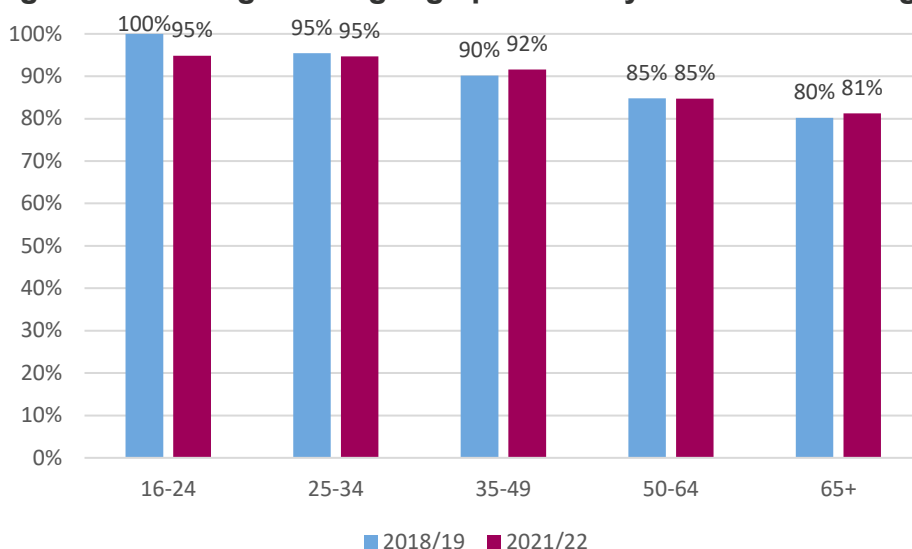
## 5.7 English-language proficiency

As in the 2018-19 Survey of Londoners, the 2021-22 survey included a question asking respondents whether the main language they spoke at home was English or another language. The Technical Report for this survey, that will be published alongside this report on the London Datastore, provides further details on how Londoners with lower levels of English-language proficiency were supported to take part in the survey. Around one in eight (12 per cent) Londoners reported only speaking a language other than English most often at home.

Where respondents said they spoke another language, they were asked to say how 'good' they thought they were at speaking English when needed (including those who spoke both English and another language most often at home). Those that selected 'not very' or 'not at all good' were coded as not being proficient at English. Of those Londoners for whom English was not a first language, 90 per cent said they were proficient in English, i.e. 'good' or 'very good' (not significantly different from 2018-19 when it was 91 per cent). Proficiency was not asked of Londoners who only spoke English or, if they spoke another language, spoke English mostly at home. If it is assumed that they are all proficient, then English-language proficiency, based on all Londoners, is 95 per cent, with 2 per cent of all Londoners not being proficient in English.

English-language proficiency for Londoners for whom English was not a first language was much lower among older age groups, a pattern unchanged from 2018-19 (see Figure 5.22).



**Figure 5.22 – English-language proficiency was lower among older age groups**

Base: 2018-19: Londoners for whom English was not a first language aged 16-24 (153), 25-34 (359), 35-49 (569), 50-64 (261) and 65 and over (157); 2021-22: Londoners for whom English was not a first language aged 16-24 (186), 25-34 (457), 35-49 (751), 50-64 (469) and 65 and over (277)

In the survey, 95 per cent of Londoners aged 16-34 for whom English was not a first language were proficient in English, falling to 81 per cent among those aged 65 and over.

Of Londoners for whom English was not a first language, and who said they were not proficient in English, the largest proportion were born in Asia (39 per cent); the next largest group were those born in Europe (27 per cent); and 13 per cent were born in the rest of the world.

This group (Londoners for whom English was not a first language, and who said they were not proficient in English) had a lower level of education compared with London overall.<sup>33</sup> Around a third (34 per cent) had no qualifications, compared with 6 per cent of Londoners overall. Around one in five of this group (20 per cent) were educated to university-degree level or higher. Across London, the proportion was 56 per cent.

This group was also more likely to have a low income. Around a third of this group (35 per cent) had an annual income of less than £14,900, compared with 13 per cent among Londoners overall. This partially stems from the fact that only 24 per cent of this group were working full-time, compared with 52 per cent among Londoners overall. This group were also more likely to be unemployed (13 per cent) than Londoners overall (4 per cent).

<sup>33</sup> When answering the question on their highest level of education attainment, respondents were told that if their qualifications were attained overseas, then we wanted to know what the equivalent qualifications were in this country, using the response list presented (which contained a list of English qualifications)

This group was more likely to be digitally excluded (16 per cent) than Londoners overall (5 per cent).

This group was made up of around the same proportion of men and women (49 per cent and 50 per cent respectively). Around four in ten (41 per cent) of this group reported being the parent or guardian of at least one child aged under 16 currently living in their household.

## 6 Mental health and wellbeing

### 6.1 Introduction

The pandemic has had a huge impact on many Londoners' mental health and wellbeing.<sup>34</sup> Prior to the pandemic, poor mental health was one of London's biggest challenges and there is substantial evidence that the pandemic has exacerbated poor mental health amongst those already experiencing disadvantage.<sup>35</sup>

### 6.2 Satisfaction with life

The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 asked Londoners how satisfied they were with their life nowadays, using a rating scale where zero was 'not at all satisfied' and 10 was 'completely satisfied'. The analysis below groups ratings of between zero and six as 'low/medium'; and between seven and ten as 'high/very high'.

Around four in ten Londoners (37 per cent) reported low or medium satisfaction with their life nowadays, with 60 per cent reporting high or very high satisfaction. This is in line with data from the 2018-19 Survey of Londoners.

Young Londoners aged 16-24 were more likely to exhibit higher rates of dissatisfaction with life nowadays (47 per cent) than any other age group (ranging between 30 and 41 per cent).

Disabled Londoners were more likely to report low or medium satisfaction with their lives currently than non-disabled Londoners (59 per cent compared to 31 per cent).

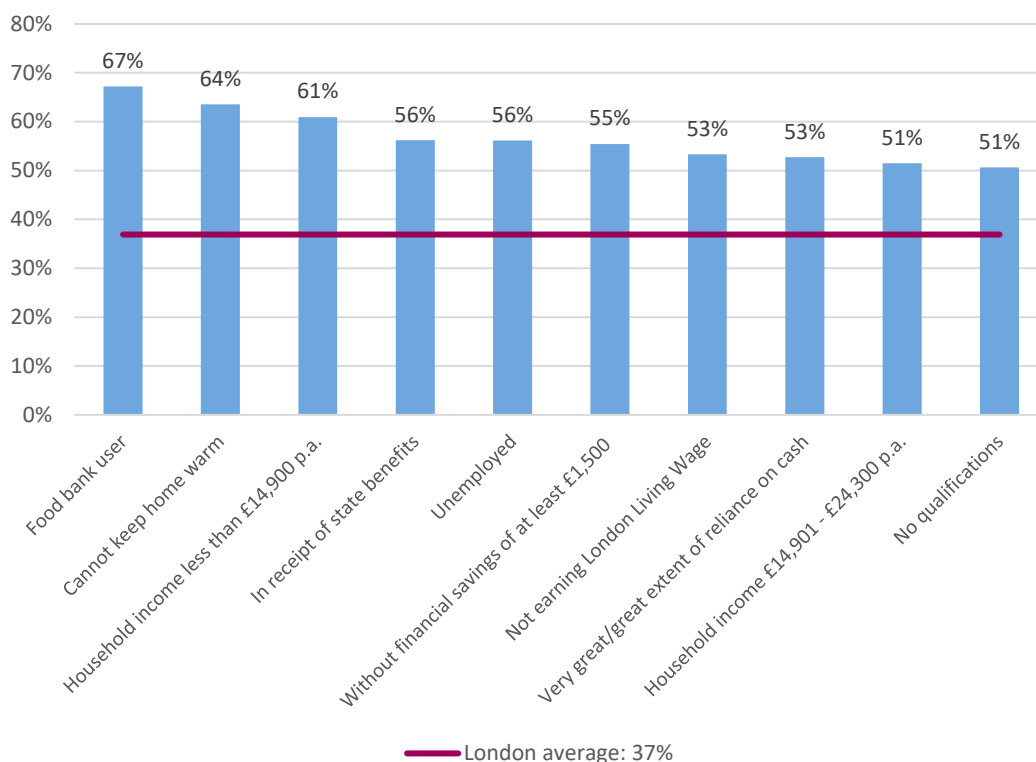
In general, Londoners experiencing economic disadvantage exhibited significantly higher rates of dissatisfaction with life nowadays than the London average (see Figure 6.1). Food-bank users (67 per cent) were amongst those exhibiting the highest rates of dissatisfaction.

---

<sup>34</sup> UCL COVID Social Study, [Understanding the psychological and social impact of the pandemic](#), 2020

<sup>35</sup> London.gov.uk, [London Health Inequalities Strategy](#)

**Figure 6.1 – Londoners facing economic disadvantage exhibited higher rates of dissatisfaction with life nowadays than the London average**



Base: Londoners aged 16 and over (8,630); collected a food parcel from a food bank (272); unable to keep their home warm in winter (1,161); earning less than £14,900 per annum (867); in receipt of state benefits (991); unemployed (365); without financial savings of at least £1,500 (2,126); not earning the LLW (584); reliant on cash to a great or very great extent (664); earning between £14,901 and £24,300 (631); no qualifications (742)

Londoners experiencing economic disadvantage were more likely to feel dissatisfied with life nowadays. These include Londoners who could not keep their home warm in winter compared to those who could (64 per cent compared to 32 per cent); those without financial savings of at least £1,500 compared to those with at least this amount (55 per cent compared to 30 per cent); and those on the lowest end of the income spectrum compared to those on the highest (61 per cent compared to 20 per cent).

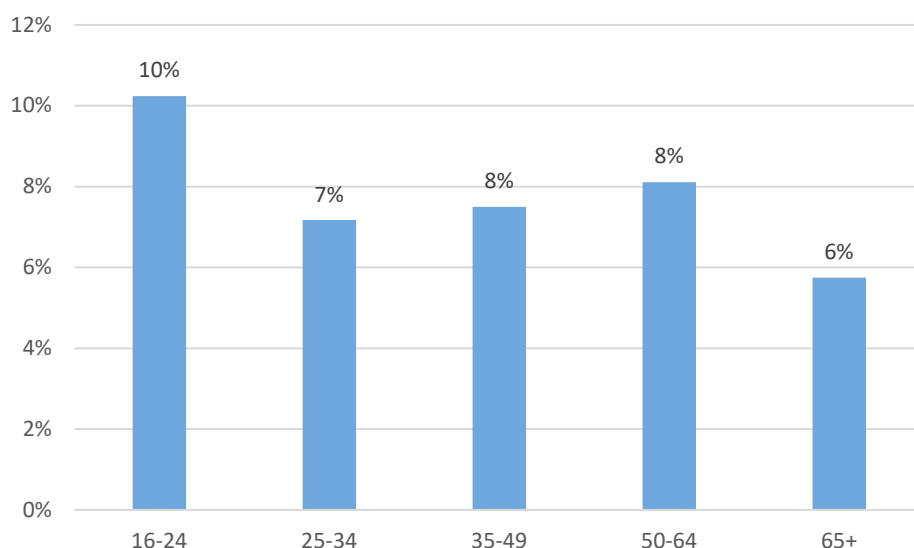
### 6.3 Loneliness

The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 asked respondents how often they feel lonely. This question was repeated from the 2018-19 survey. It used a five-point scale from 'often/always' to 'never'.

In the survey, 8 per cent of Londoners stated that they often or always feel lonely. More than half of all Londoners (53 per cent) felt lonely occasionally, some of the time or often/always; and 19 per cent never felt lonely. This is in line with the 2018-19 survey.

Figure 6.2 shows that loneliness was highest amongst Londoners aged 16-24 year olds (10 per cent). Londoners aged 65 years and over exhibited a lower rate of loneliness (6 per cent). This pattern by age was also seen in 2018-19.

**Figure 6.2 – Loneliness was highest amongst Londoners aged 16-24**



Base: Londoners aged: 16-24 (627); 25-34 (1,631); 35-49 (2,323); 50-64 (1,935); 65 and over (1,820)

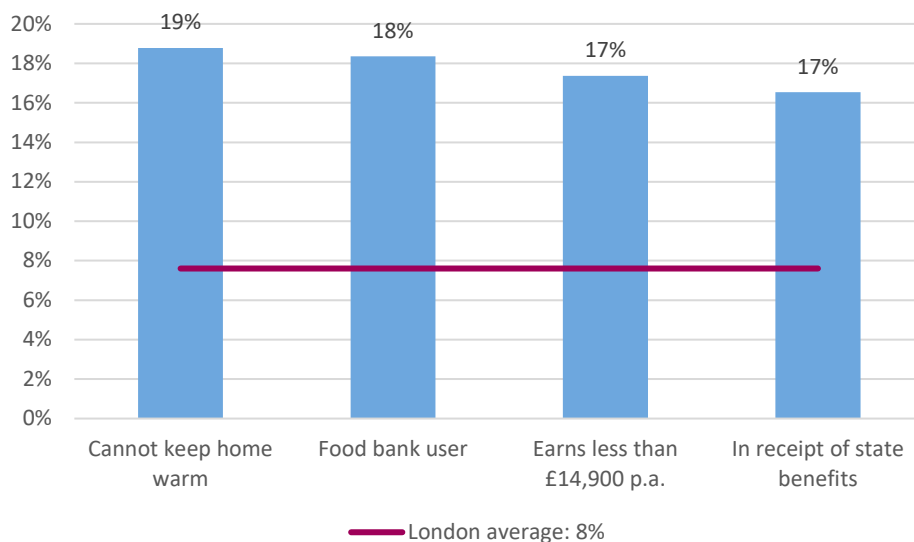
As in 2018-19, Londoners who were not living with someone in their household as a couple were significantly more likely to feel lonely often or always than Londoners who were living with someone as a couple (12 per cent compared to 3 per cent respectively).

As in 2018-19, LGBTQ+ Londoners were more likely to feel lonely often or always than heterosexual Londoners (14 per cent compared to 7 per cent respectively).

As in 2018-19, disabled Londoners were more likely to report feeling lonely than non-disabled Londoners (17 per cent compared to 5 per cent).

Londoners more likely to be facing economic hardships exhibited higher rates of loneliness than those less likely to be facing these hardships. For example, Londoners unable to keep their home warm in the winter were significantly more likely to report feeling lonely than those who could (19 per cent and 6 per cent respectively). This was also true for Londoners on the lowest end of the income spectrum compared to those at the highest (17 per cent compared to 3 per cent, refer to Figure 6.3).

**Figure 6.3 – Londoners experiencing financial hardship on a range of different measures experienced higher rates of loneliness than the London average**



Base: Londoners aged 16 and over (8,630); unable to keep their home warm in winter (1,161); collected a food parcel from a food bank (272); earning less than £14,900 per annum (867); in receipt of state benefits (991)

## 6.4 Social isolation

As in 2018-19, the 2021-22 survey measured whether respondents were socially isolated (not having someone else they can rely on a lot in an emergency).

Around a quarter of Londoners (26 per cent) were socially isolated, i.e. they stated that they could not rely on someone close to them a lot if they had a serious problem. This is in line with the findings from the 2018-19 survey (27 per cent). Around three-quarters of Londoners (74 per cent) stated that they could rely on people close to them a lot if they had a serious problem.

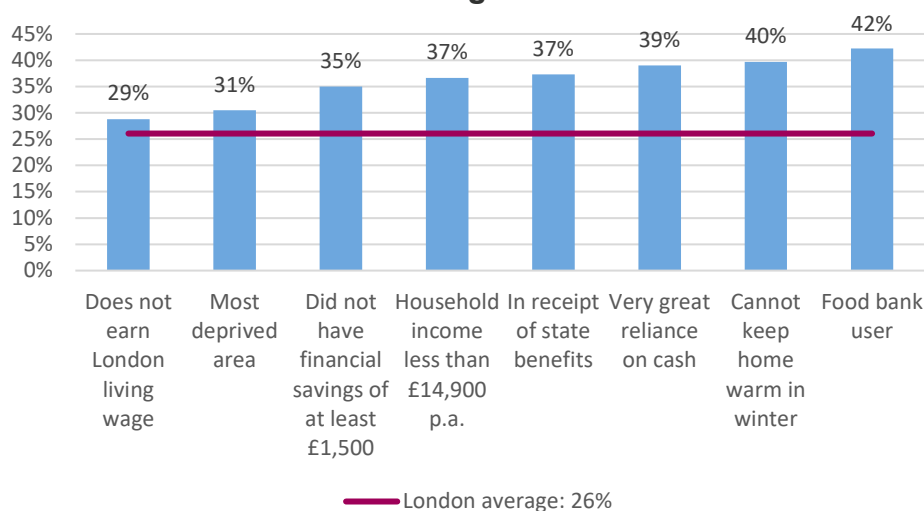
As in 2018-19, single Londoners were far more likely to be socially isolated than Londoners in a couple. For example, 36 per cent of single Londoners with children were socially isolated compared to 13 per cent of Londoners in a couple with children. While 33 per cent of single Londoners without children were socially isolated compared to 14 per cent of Londoners in a couple without children.

As in 2018-19, disabled Londoners were significantly more likely than non-disabled Londoners to report being socially isolated (35 per cent compared to 22 per cent).

Londoners more likely to be experiencing financial hardship on a range of different measures were far more likely to report being socially isolated (see Figure 6.4). For example, 40 per cent of Londoners who could not keep their home warm in the winter were socially isolated compared to 23 per cent who could keep their home warm. There was also a higher rate of social isolation for Londoners on the lowest end of the income

spectrum (37 per cent) compared to the London average (26 per cent) and those at the highest end of the income spectrum (15 per cent).

**Figure 6.4 – Londoners more likely to be experiencing financial hardship on a range of different measures were significantly more likely to say they were socially isolated than the London average**



Base: Londoners aged 16 and over (8,630); not earning the LLW (584); most deprived quintile (2,073); did not have at least £1,500 in savings (2,126); household income of less than £14,900 per annum (867); in receipt of state benefits (991); reliant on cash to a great or very great extent (664); unable to keep home warm enough in winter (1,161); food-bank user (272)

Digitally excluded Londoners were significantly more likely to be socially isolated than digitally active Londoners (36 per cent compared to 25 per cent respectively).

## 6.5 Satisfaction with leisure time

The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 asked respondents how satisfied or dissatisfied they felt with the amount of leisure time they have. This was a new question and was not asked in the 2018-19 survey. It used a five-point scale from very dissatisfied to very satisfied.

The analysis below groups ratings of 'very satisfied' and 'fairly satisfied' together as 'satisfied'; and 'very dissatisfied' and 'fairly dissatisfied' together as 'dissatisfied'.

Almost half of all Londoners (46 per cent) felt satisfied with the amount of leisure time they had, and just over a quarter (28 per cent) felt dissatisfied.

Satisfaction with leisure time was closely associated with economic and social advantage. For example, Londoners with financial savings of at least £1,500 were more likely to report feeling satisfied with the amount of leisure time than those without savings (52 per cent compared to 33 per cent respectively). This was also true for Londoners who were able to heat their home during the winter compared with those who could not (50 per cent compared to 27 per cent respectively); and Londoners who relied on cash to a small or

very small extent compared with Londoners who relied on cash to a great or very great extent (48 per cent compared to 38 per cent respectively).

Disabled Londoners were far less likely to feel satisfied with the amount of leisure time they had than non-disabled Londoners (38 per cent and 49 per cent respectively).

### Quotes from Londoners on mental health and wellbeing

*“My neighbours both suffer mental illness during Lockdown I prepared their food and went food banks for us. Wish government would see we ground troops need support to carry on.”*

*“I feel trapped in my shared ownership flat, and therefore in London, due to the building safety crisis and the prospect of unpayable bills for cladding remediation. The effect on my mental health of this horrific situation has been catastrophic.”*

*“I live in a block of flats which now faces an issue of cladding – which means I am unable to sell. I have worked all my life, managed to get on the property ladder to now be stuck here, with no hope. It affects my mental wellbeing. Despite a densely populated area, I often feel alone. I live on my own. “*

*“I love London! But based on some friends’ experience. This city is not for everybody: loneliness, stress, mental health seem to be reasons they don’t love it here.”*

*“I no longer enjoy living in London. The pandemic has put a huge strain on my mental health and I am now looking at option to leave the city.”*

*“I strongly believe that the health, social and mental health is decreasing because of the pandemic and the ageing population. ... I believe that investing into GP practices, social and mental health services will help to ease the strain on the NHS. “*

*“I work with older adults and observe many people who are lonely. Their family cannot afford to live nearby and I see many older people who are very isolated. Although there are activities many older people are unable to get to them. Loneliness is underneath many mental health problems and I feel more should be done to address this”*

*“There needs to be more activities for youth and disabled adults (including mental health issues) as well as more support and prevention strategies.”*

*The ULEZ has been terrible for people with disabilities as now people can’t afford to visit them and they can’t afford to visit other people. The benefits to health do not outweigh the dis benefits. It’s about quality of life. What’s the point in being healthy if you can’t see anyone? And telling people to get a new car is frankly ridiculous. No one I know can afford a new car or get a loan because they are on very low incomes. I don’t qualify for motorability, because my condition is a mental disability, not physical, but I still can’t use public transport!*



### Quotes from Londoners on mental health and wellbeing

*Covid has had a big impact on life in London, and has definitely made me feel more lonely than I would usually. It's harder to meet people because of everyone's concerns over getting Covid, and my social life hasn't really recovered.*

*It is a very lonely place for older, single people with no children – we may as well not exist as everything is focussed on families and children.*

# 7 Digital access for all

## 7.1 Introduction

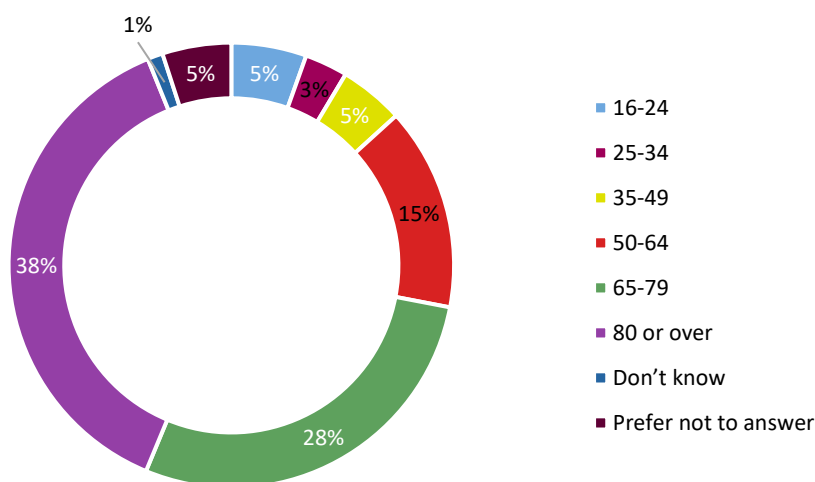
The COVID-19 pandemic introduced lockdowns on the general population and, as a result, affected how people were able to interact with long-standing services. Face-to-face contact was limited and online channels became increasingly important. As a result, those without the requisite resources, skills or capacity to cope with the increasingly digital world were left further behind as a result.

## 7.2 Digital exclusion

Digital inclusion (the opposite being exclusion) means having adequate digital skills, connectivity and accessibility.<sup>36</sup> The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 copied an existing question set over from the Financial Conduct Authority’s (FCA’s) Financial Lives survey to ascertain which Londoners were more likely to be digitally excluded.<sup>37</sup> Therefore, when we talk about people experiencing digital exclusion, we mean their ability to use the internet is poor; they use the internet rarely; they never use it; or they do not know if they use it.

In 2021-22, 5 per cent of Londoners were digitally excluded and 94 per cent were digitally active. Figure 7.1 shows how around eight in 10 (81 per cent) digitally excluded Londoners were over the age of 50.

**Figure 7.1 – The majority of digitally excluded Londoners were aged 50 and over**



Base: Londoners aged 16 and over who were digitally excluded (493)

<sup>36</sup> NHS Digital, [What we mean by digital inclusion](#)

<sup>37</sup> FCA, [Financial Lives Survey](#), published 19 June 2018, updated 7 June 2022

Around seven in 10 (71 per cent) digitally excluded Londoners are not educated up to university-degree level compared with 37 per cent among Londoners overall. Seven per cent of digitally excluded Londoners reported not being proficient in English compared with 2 per cent among Londoners overall.

This group is much more likely to be reliant on cash in their day-to-day lives, rather than other payment methods such as credit/debit cards or online payments. Around half of digitally excluded Londoners (50 per cent) said they were reliant on cash to a moderate extent, a great extent or a very great extent. This compares with 23 per cent of Londoners in general.

According to the survey, 9 per cent of Londoners who had used a food bank in the past year were digitally excluded, compared with 4 per cent of Londoners who had not used a food bank in the last year.

#### Quotes from Londoners on digital inclusion/exclusion

*All of the services he [my father] used to be able to access face-to-face have moved online and he is not able to use a computer so I now obtain his parking permits, blue badge and other services.*

*No recognition that entry to museums, exhibitions etc only via online. Not everyone has that facility and one therefore declined entry.*

*I miss 'East End' life, The local council newspaper which really made me feel involved in the borough when I first moved here. I would help out more and exercise more if I still had that information in paper form. Please don't tell me to use the internet! I'm hoping not to have it all as I get older.*

*The pandemic has changed everything. Social clubs are closed or reduced. ... Also as an older person, I am constantly harassed by scammers on the phone and on line. Many of my older friends are not able to use the internet, that means that they cannot access services, including banking services. There is a general feeling that retired people are disposable and this is causing a real distress and mental health issues.*

*Councils and other authorities have made things impossible for the older generation who have never used a computer. Phone numbers and physical addresses are no longer included on most correspondence, so without an email address there is no way to get in contact or use services. I live on my own and have managed XX years without an email address or smart phone. Now I am made to feel useless. I do not know where to go to learn.*

## 8 Equity in public services

### 8.1 Introduction

Londoners' experience of public services varies considerably and the pandemic exacerbated this, with some groups feeling they had been overlooked or treated less favourably during this time. Trust is therefore an important aspect of what public services should strive to achieve. If structural inequalities are to be minimised, then it is important that Londoners' experiences with public services are equitable. This also manifests itself in democratic participation and wanting to be involved with public services, in order to influence decisions in their local area. If there are structural barriers that prevent particular groups of Londoners from being involved, then this could lead to local area developments that favour those who faced no barriers to involvement.

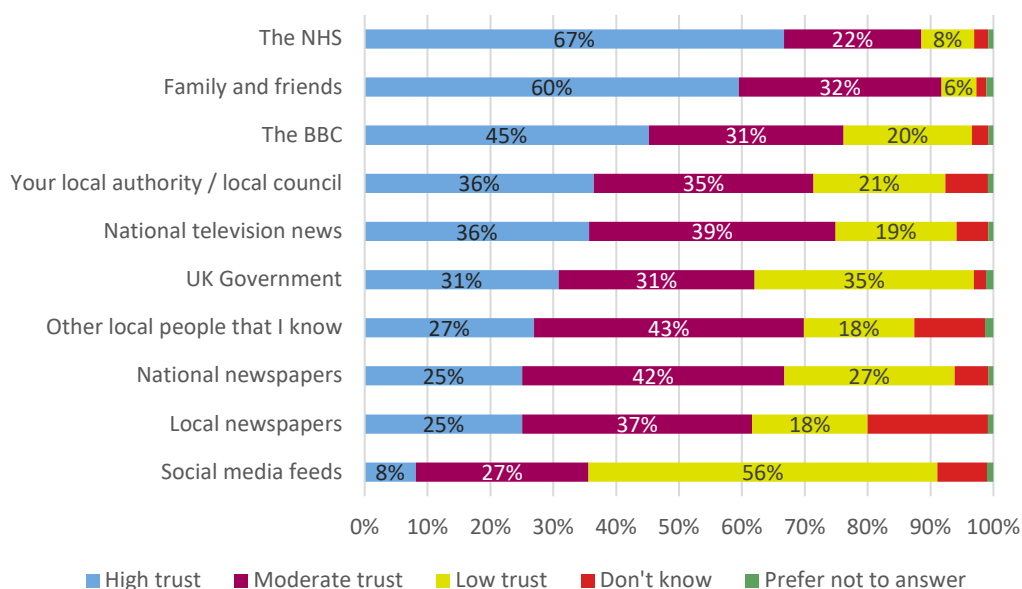
As with all previous analysis in this report, when results are presented for different sub-groups of Londoners, they illustrate an associative relationship rather than a causal one, which cannot be ascertained from this survey.

### 8.2 Trustworthy sources of information

The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 asked Londoners how much they trusted different sources of news and information, using a rating scale where zero was 'not at all trustworthy' and 10 was 'completely trustworthy'. The analysis below groups ratings of zero to three as 'low trust'; four to six as 'moderate trust'; and seven to ten as 'high trust'.

Figure 8.1 shows that Londoners were most trusting of news and information from the NHS and from family and friends, with the proportions indicating high trust at 67 per cent and 60 per cent respectively. Only 8 per cent of Londoners reported having high trust in news and information received from commentary on social media feeds. Over half (56 per cent) expressed that they had low trust in the news and information from this source.

**Figure 8.1 – Londoners were most trusting of news and information from the NHS and from family and friends**



Base: Londoners aged 16 and over (6,088)

Those in a managerial and professional occupation class were more likely to have high trust in news and information from the NHS (73 per cent), than those in routine and manual occupations (58 per cent).

There was a difference between White Londoners and Londoners from BAME communities when it came to high trust in news and information from commentary on social media feeds. White Londoners were less likely to report high trust (4 per cent) than Londoners from BAME communities (13 per cent). Other groups that were more likely to place high trust in the news and information from this source include Muslim Londoners (17 per cent) and Londoners who reported relying on cash in their day-to-day life to a great or very great extent (20 per cent).

### 8.3 Unfair treatment

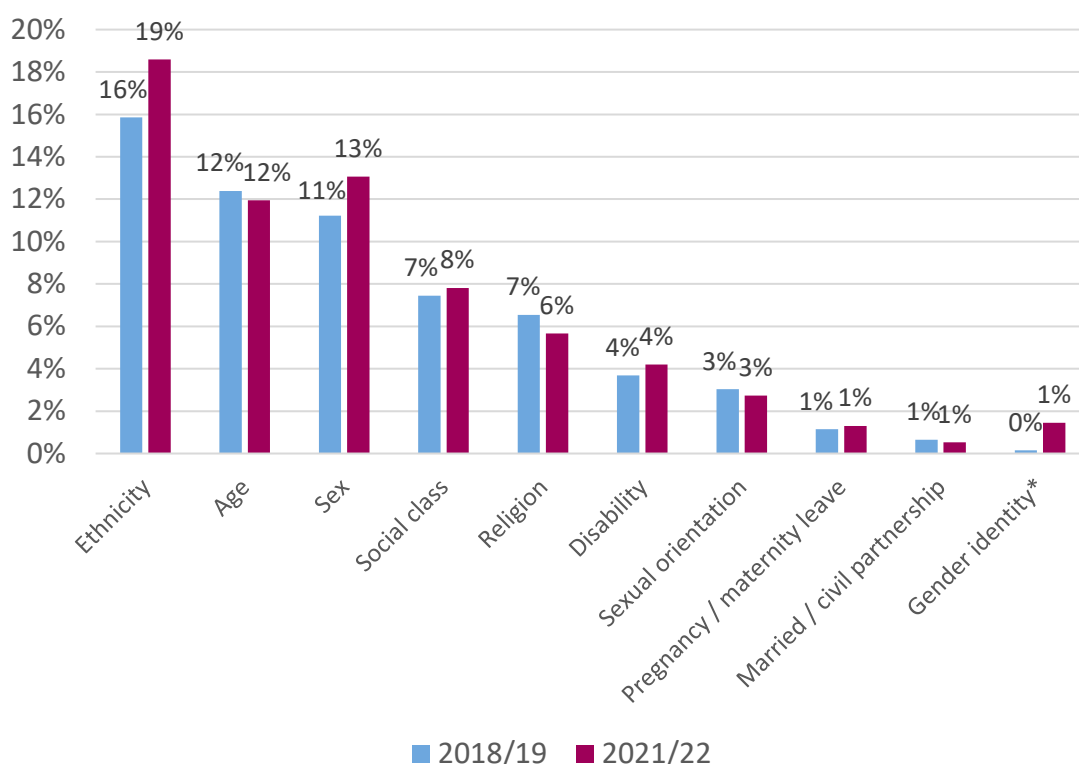
The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 repeated the question used in the 2018-19 survey about whether respondents had been treated unfairly by people in the past 12 months, but with one small modification. In 2021-22, respondents were not asked to explicitly exclude any unfair treatment from family or friends. Therefore, the two questions are not entirely comparable, though a more comparable question can be derived, which is used later on in the analysis.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>38</sup> The follow-up question asked who committed the unfair treatment. By excluding those who said 'family' or 'friends', a rebased question can be created – one that is more similar to the 2018-19 question, and asks respondents to exclude unfair treatment committed by family or friends.

Focusing on the 2021-22 survey, it found that 37 per cent of Londoners had been treated unfairly in the past 12 months because of one or several protected characteristics, or because of their social class. The comparable figure excluding friends and family was 36 per cent, which is not significantly different from the 2018-19 survey (35 per cent).

Figure 8.2 provides a breakdown of the characteristics by which Londoners were most likely to be treated unfairly across both waves of the survey. In 2021-22 ethnicity was the most common (19 per cent), followed by sex (13 per cent), age (12 per cent), social class (8 per cent) and religion (6 per cent).

**Figure 8.2 – Londoners were more likely to be treated unfairly because of their ethnicity than any other characteristic**



Base: 2018-19: Londoners aged 16 and over (6,601); 2021-22: Londoners aged 16 and over (5,963)

\* This characteristic was labelled 'gender identity' in the 2021-22 survey, and as 'being or becoming a transsexual person' in the 2018-19 survey. Therefore, these are not wholly comparable labels.

For each characteristic, there has been no significant change since 2018-19 – except for the proportions that were treated unfairly because of their ethnicity, which has increased from 16 per cent to 19 per cent; and because of their gender identity, which has increased from less than 1 per cent to 1 per cent. However, the latter change should be noted with caution, as the wording of the characteristic was different in 2018-19.

Table 8.1 summarises how different groups of Londoners experience different forms of unfair treatment based on their age, sex and ethnicity.

**Table 8.1 – Some groups of Londoners are more likely to experience unfair treatment than others**

Unfair treatment by this characteristic	Sub-group	2018-19		2021-22	
		%	Base	%	Base
Age	16-24	24%	536	20%	522
	25-34	12%	1,317	11%	1,307
	35-49	6%	1,827	7%	1,766
	50-64	13%	1,496	14%	1,233
	65 and over	14%	1,224	14%	898
Sex	Man	4%	2,930	4%	2,551
	Woman	18%	3,515	22%	3,204
Ethnicity	White British	7%	3,252	4%	2,676
	White (other)	16%	1,014	16%	934
	Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	20%	199	24%	219
	Asian/Asian British	28%	994	33%	1,263
	Black/Black British/Caribbean/African	26%	543	43%	407
	Other ethnic group	27%	234	29%	181

Londoners aged 16-24 were more likely to report being treated unfairly because of their age than the overall average (20 per cent and 12 per cent respectively). Other age groups were similar to the overall average – except for those aged 35-49, 7 per cent of whom reported being treated unfairly because of their age.

As in 2018-19, women were much more likely than men to report being treated unfairly because of their sex (22 per cent and 4 per cent respectively).<sup>39</sup> However, the proportion of women that reported being unfairly treated because of their sex has increased since 2018-19, when it was 18 per cent.

The pattern of how different ethnic groups experience unfair treatment has largely remained the same since 2018-19. However, Black Londoners are the only ethnic group to have seen an increase in unfair treatment experienced as a result of their ethnicity (from 26 per cent to 43 per cent).

Turning to the other characteristics, Muslim and Jewish Londoners were much more likely to be treated unfairly because of their religion (27 per cent and 18 per cent respectively).

<sup>39</sup> The survey question asks about unfair treatment because of their sex. However, the survey only collected data on a respondent's gender identity, rather than their sex. The breakdown is, therefore, presented for men and women, rather than for males and females. We appreciate that some Londoners may not see their sex and gender as the same nor identify within this gender binary.

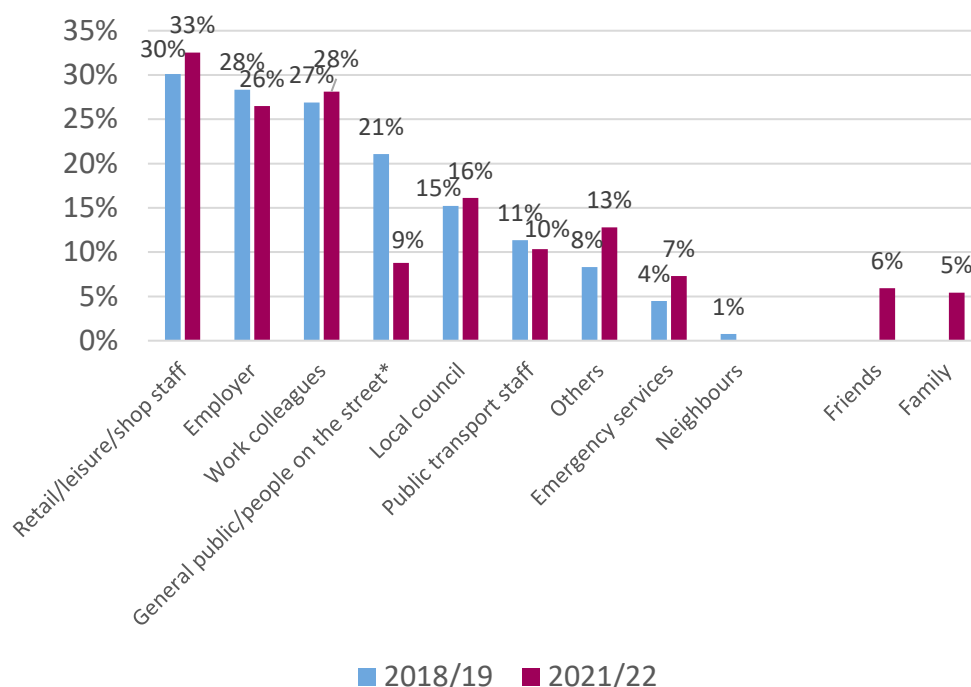
Those in a managerial and professional occupation class were less likely to have reported being treated unfairly because of their social class (7 per cent) than those in routine and manual occupations (12 per cent).

A number of other characteristics measured affect smaller groups in London's population. For example, around a quarter of LGBTQ+ Londoners (26 per cent) reported being treated unfairly against because of their sexual orientation, and 20 per cent of disabled Londoners reported being treated unfairly because they are disabled.

In the survey, 3 per cent of women reported that they had been treated unfairly in the past 12 months due to pregnancy or maternity. Although this figure is low it should be noted that only a small proportion of women will experience pregnancy and maternity in any given year. This corresponds to around 90,000 women in London.

Londoners who had been treated unfairly due to a protected characteristic or their social class in the past 12 months were asked who they felt had treated them unfairly (see Figure 8.3).

**Figure 8.3 – Londoners were most likely to be unfairly treated due to a protected characteristic or their social class in the past 12 months by retail, leisure or shop staff**



Base: 2018-19: Londoners aged 16 and over who had been treated unfairly in the past 12 months because of one or several protected characteristics or because of their social class (1,467); 2021-22: Londoners aged 16 and over who had been treated unfairly in the past 12 months because of one or several protected characteristics or because of their social class (2,124)

\* Spontaneous response code, i.e., respondents were not presented with this option, but wrote it down when they chose the 'other (specify)' option



Around a third (33 per cent) of Londoners who had been treated unfairly in the past 12 months said it was by retail, leisure or shop staff. Slightly smaller proportions mentioned workplace-based unfair treatment: 26 per cent by their employer and 28 per cent by their work colleagues. These are all not significantly different from 2018-19.

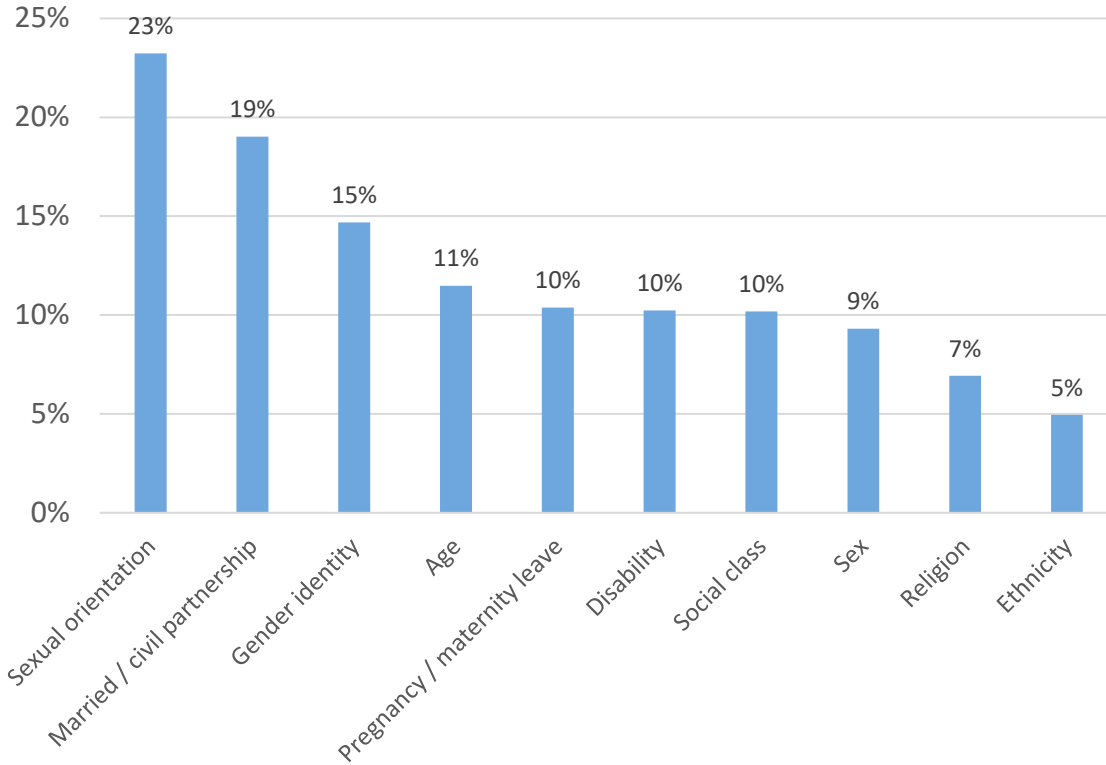
Although unfair treatment given out by individual public services was relatively low (local council: 16 per cent; public transport staff: 10 per cent; and emergency services: 7 per cent), combined this corresponds to around a quarter of respondents (26 per cent) having been treated unfairly by a public service (the same proportion as in 2018-19).

The proportion citing unfair treatment from the emergency services specifically has increased since 2018-19, from 4 per cent to 7 per cent. In 2018-19, there were no discernible ethnic group differences. However, in the 2021-22 survey it can be seen that White British Londoners (3 per cent) were less likely to mention this source, compared with Londoners of a White other ethnic background (10 per cent), mixed ethnicity Londoners (13 per cent), Indian Londoners (12 per cent), Pakistani Londoners (15 per cent) and Bangladeshi Londoners (21 per cent). Some of these ethnic group differences account for why a higher proportion of Muslim Londoners also cited unfair treatment from the emergency services (14 per cent). Disabled Londoners were around twice as likely as non-disabled Londoners to cite unfair treatment from the emergency services in the past 12 months (12 per cent and 6 per cent respectively).

In 2018-19, around one in five Londoners (21 per cent) who had been treated unfairly in the past 12 months spontaneously mentioned that it was by the general public and people on the street. In 2021-22, the proportion mentioning this group had gone down to 9 per cent. It is difficult to interpret whether this is a real change, as this response code is not presented to respondents to select and instead relies on respondents to spontaneously mention this group. A real change is plausible, however, given the restrictions on contact and movement that were imposed throughout 2021, for which this question asks respondents to refer back to.

In the 2021-22 questionnaire, respondents were given the option to cite unfair treatment from family and friends. Among Londoners who had been treated unfairly in the past 12 months because of one or several protected characteristics, or because of their social class, 8 per cent cited friends and 7 per cent cited family. These proportions are slightly different to those shown in Figure 8.3 as that chart excluded unfair treatment from just family or friends, whereas these proportions include them. Focusing on unfair treatment by family members, Figure 8.4 shows which characteristics were likely to prompt this group to treat Londoners unfairly.

**Figure 8.4 – Family members were more likely to treat Londoners unfairly because of their sexual orientation, as opposed to other characteristics**



Base: Londoners aged 16 and over who had been treated unfairly in the past 12 months because of their sexual orientation (166); being married/in a civil partnership (49); gender identity (97); age (750); pregnancy/maternity leave (94); disability (273); social class (429); sex (840); religion (366); ethnicity (1,028)

Around a quarter (23 per cent) of Londoners who had been treated unfairly in the past 12 months because of their sexual orientation said it was by family.

**Quotes from Londoners on unfair treatment**

*“I was sexually harassed by two men 100m from my front door on a major lit road, whilst wearing my TfL baby on board badge.”*

*“I have been told sometimes to go back to my country.”*

*“Unfortunately, I don’t feel safe here, in London. I experience all the time disrespect and other forms of contempt. The [Emergency Service] are not absolutely interested in helping foreign residents.”*

*“My children are mixed race (half black African) and my partner is black African and he experienced and still does at work and outside work hidden and open racism. I am very worried about that and about my children being racially discriminated.”*

### Quotes from Londoners on unfair treatment

*“After Brexit and the pandemic, people are ruder. There is more overt racism. “*

*“I’m very proud to be a Londoner, though I know it’s got a lot of problems. I hate ... the fact it doesn’t always feel safe to be a woman in the city, and I hate the insidious racism and xenophobia that has been creeping more boldly around since Brexit (and the BLM backlash). “*

*“Most Londoners are extremely tolerant and kind. I have dropped and misplaced my wallet multiple times and by some force of good it has always found its way back to me. There will always be some forms of sexism and racism which I experience but the vast majority of other people around me will step in, as I have experienced. You wouldn’t find that in many other places in England, and that makes me feel proud to call myself a Londoner.”*

*“Feel slightly uncomfortable being a gay man, especially in the area where I live in London. I travel to the NW of England quite often and feel safer there than in London. “*

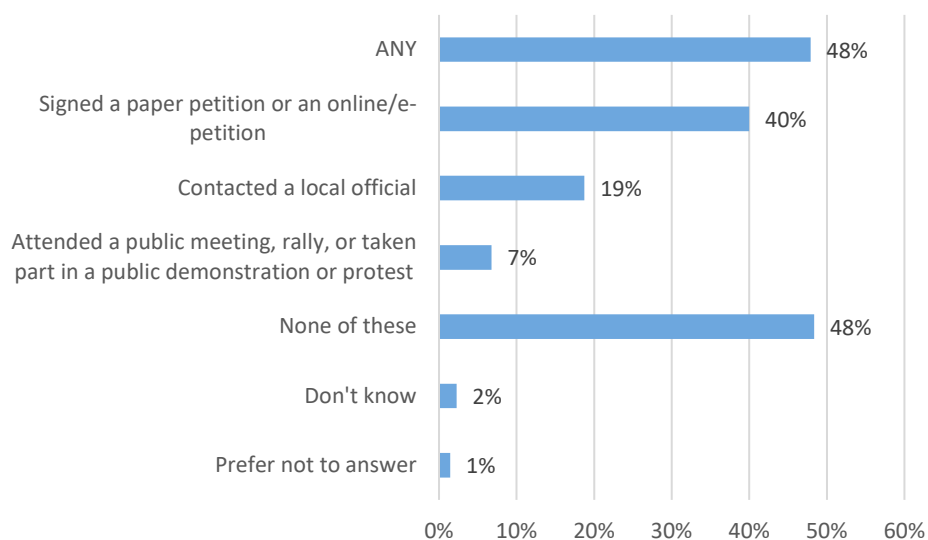
*“Racism against ethnicities other than black is seen as more acceptable, sometimes perfectly fine.”*

*“I am a student here, and I feel so lonely. Which is why I need any of my parents here sometimes. But, about [X time] ago my mother was rejected by the British Embassy based on unfair reasons while it does not normally happen to other nationalities”*

## 8.4 Civic participation

Civic participation is defined here as engagement in democratic processes, both in person and online, including contacting a local official (such as a local councillor or MP); signing a petition; or attending a public rally (excludes voting). In 2021-22, around half of Londoners (48 per cent) had engaged in civic participation in the past 12 months, with the same proportion having not engaged in civic participation in the past 12 months (see Figure 8.5).

**Figure 8.5 – Londoners were split equally when it came to those who had engaged in civic participation in the past 12 months and those who had not**



Base: Londoners aged 16 and over (6,088)

Most civic participation was in the form of signing a petition (40 per cent). Less common was contacting a local official (19 per cent), while 7 per cent of Londoners had attended a public meeting or rally, or taken part in a public demonstration or protest.

Groups that were highly unlikely to have engaged in civic participation in the past 12 months include Londoners who said they were not proficient in English (16 per cent); the digitally excluded (16 per cent); and Londoners with no qualifications (30 per cent).

LGBTQ+ Londoners were more likely to have engaged in civic participation in the past 12 months than heterosexual Londoners (65 per cent and 47 per cent respectively).

Disabled Londoners were more likely than non-disabled Londoners to have engaged in civic participation in the past 12 months (55 per cent and 47 per cent respectively).

Londoners with caring responsibilities were also more likely than those without to have engaged in civic participation in the past 12 months (57 per cent and 47 per cent respectively).

Londoners who had lived in the capital for five years or more were more likely to have engaged in civic participation in the past 12 months (50 per cent) than Londoners who had lived in the capital for less than five years (35 per cent).

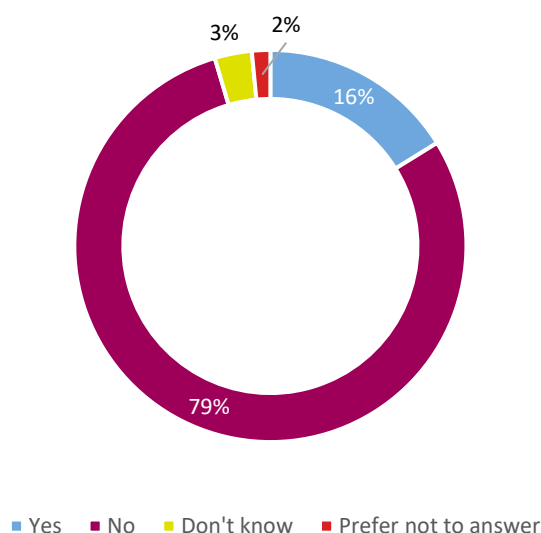
Social renting Londoners, and Londoners renting from a private landlord, were both less likely (43 per cent and 41 per cent respectively) to have engaged in civic participation in the past 12 months than Londoners who were owner-occupiers (57 per cent).

Londoners working part-time were more likely to have engaged in civic participation in the past 12 months (59 per cent) than Londoners working full-time (49 per cent) – who in turn were more likely than unemployed Londoners to have engaged in civic participation in the past 12 months (29 per cent).

## 8.5 Civic consultation

Civic consultation is defined here as taking part in a consultation about local services or problems in the local area through completing a questionnaire; attending a public meeting; or being involved in a face-to-face or online group. In 2021-22, 16 per cent of Londoners had taken part in civic consultation at least once in the past 12 months (see Figure 8.6).

**Figure 8.6 – 16 per cent of Londoners had taken part in civic consultation at least once in the past 12 months**



Base: Londoners aged 16 and over (6,088)

Groups that were highly unlikely to have engaged in civic consultation in the past 12 months include Londoners who said they were not proficient in English (4 per cent); the digitally excluded (6 per cent), Londoners with no qualifications (7 per cent) and Londoners aged 16-34 (10 per cent).

LGBTQ+ Londoners were more likely to have engaged in civic consultation in the past 12 months than heterosexual Londoners (21 per cent and 16 per cent respectively).

Londoners who had lived in the capital for five years or more were more likely to have engaged in civic consultation in the past 12 months (18 per cent) than Londoners who had lived in the capital for less than five years (8 per cent).

Londoners renting from a private landlord were less likely (9 per cent) than social renting Londoners (16 per cent) to have engaged in civic consultation in the past 12 months, who

in turn were less likely than Londoners who were owner-occupiers (21 per cent) to have engaged in civic consultation in the past 12 months.

Londoners working part-time were more likely to have engaged in civic consultation in the past 12 months (24 per cent) than Londoners working full-time (15 per cent) – who in turn were more likely than unemployed Londoners to have engaged in civic consultation in the past 12 months (8 per cent).

Around a quarter of those who had used a food bank in the past 12 months (26 per cent) had engaged in civic consultation in the past 12 months, compared with 16 per cent of Londoners who had not used a food bank in the past 12 months.

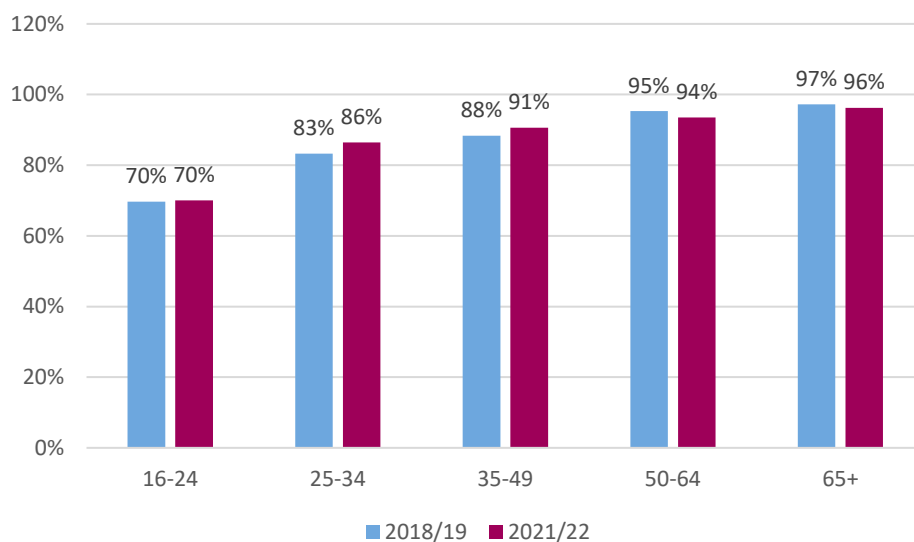
## 8.6 Voter registration

As in the 2018-19 Survey of Londoners, the 2021-22 survey included a question asking respondents whether they were registered to vote. A slightly more accurate registration rate was able to be produced in 2018-19, as the results were combined with respondents' answers about their nationality (the voter registration rate based on this eligible population was 88 per cent). However, given space constraints in the 2021-22 survey, data on respondents' nationality was not collected this time round. Thus, the voter registration rate presented is from all Londoners aged 16 and over, regardless of their nationality. The voter registration rate will, therefore, never be 100 per cent – this is because we would expect some respondents to answer that they are not registered, as they are not eligible to vote. The 2018-19 voter registration data presented in this report has been adjusted to match the base from this survey, to enable more direct comparisons.

In 2021-22, 86 per cent of Londoners aged 16 and over were registered to vote. This is not significantly different from 2018-19 (84 per cent).

A much smaller proportion of those aged 16-24 were registered to vote (70 per cent) than those aged 65 and over (96 per cent) a similar pattern to that seen in 2018-19 (see Figure 8.7).

**Figure 8.7 – Londoners aged 16-24 were less likely to have registered to vote than Londoners aged 65 and over**



Base: 2018-19: Londoners aged 16-24 (437), 25-34 (932), 35-49 (1,184), 50-64 (820), 65 and over (509); 2021-22: Londoners aged 16-24 (541), 25-34 (1,334), 35-49 (1,799), 50-64 (1,261), 65 and over (915)

As was the case in 2018-19, the voter registration rate is related to how long the respondent has lived in their local area and in London. In 2021-22, 79 per cent of Londoners who had lived in their local area for less than five years had registered to vote, compared with 91 per cent of Londoners who had lived in their local area for five years or more. Furthermore, 73 per cent of Londoners who had lived in London for less than five years had registered to vote, compared with 89 per cent of Londoners who had lived in London for five years or more.

A similar pattern emerged in the 2021-22 survey compared with the 2018-19 survey when looking at household tenure. Owner-occupiers (94 per cent) were more likely to have registered to vote than social renters (88 per cent), who were in turn more likely to have registered to vote than private renters (81 per cent).

Country of birth was collected in the 2021-22 survey. Even though this is not the same as a Londoner's nationality or citizenship (which are among the eligibility criteria for voting), they are closely related.<sup>40</sup> Country of birth therefore shows an expected pattern with regards to voter registration. UK-born Londoners were the most likely group to have registered to vote (91 per cent), though the rate was similar to EU-born Londoners (88 per

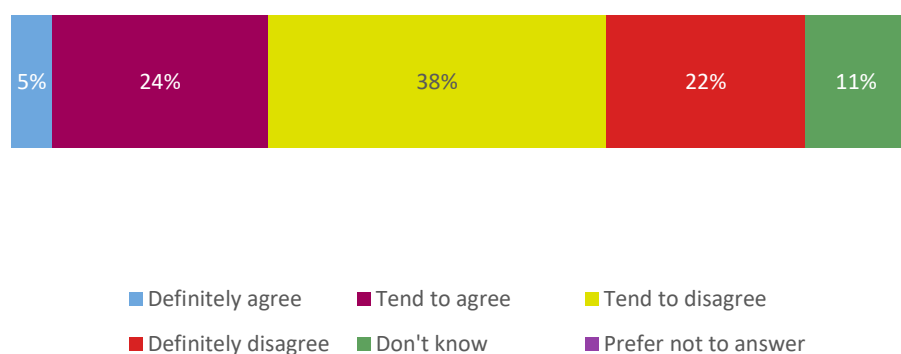
<sup>40</sup> In the Survey of Londoners 2018-19, 56 per cent of non-UK-born Londoners had a non-British nationality, while 52 per cent reported not being a British citizen. The majority (95 per cent) of UK-born Londoners were of British nationality and 98 per cent were British citizens.

cent).<sup>41</sup> However, the rate was higher than Londoners born in Asia (79 per cent); in the rest of the world (78 per cent); and in non-EU Europe (62 per cent).

## 8.7 Influencing local decisions

Figure 8.8 shows that 60 per cent of Londoners felt they could not personally influence decisions affecting their local area, and 28 per cent felt they could (with no significant difference in the latter from the 2018-19 survey, which put the figure at 31 per cent).

**Figure 8.8 – The majority of Londoners (60 per cent) either definitely disagreed, or tended to disagree, that they could personally influence decisions affecting their local area**



Base: Londoners aged 16 and over (6,088)

Londoners aged 16-34 (24 per cent) were less likely to feel they could personally influence decisions affecting their local area, than Londoners aged 35-64 (32 per cent) and Londoners aged 65 and over (33 per cent).

Household tenure was related to Londoners' perceptions of whether they could personally influence decisions affecting their local area. Londoners who owned their home outright (33 per cent) were more likely to feel they could personally influence decisions than private renters (27 per cent).

UK-born Londoners (26 per cent) were less likely to feel that they could personally influence decisions in their local area than non-UK-born Londoners (33 per cent).

<sup>41</sup> Citizens from member countries of the EU are eligible to register to vote in local government elections. See The Electoral Commission, [Can a citizen from the European Union register to vote?](#), updated 2 August 2021



**Quotes from Londoners on influencing local decisions**

*“My local council makes decisions that have a direct impact on my life (shutting roads) without consultation.”*

*“I value my local council – the information and services it provides.”*

*“I wish we had more green spaces and that I could do something to affect decisions made by the council, I feel like my voice is not being heard. “*

*“Sometimes you are made to feel that local councils’ decisions are already concluded and that local consultations are just superficial.”*

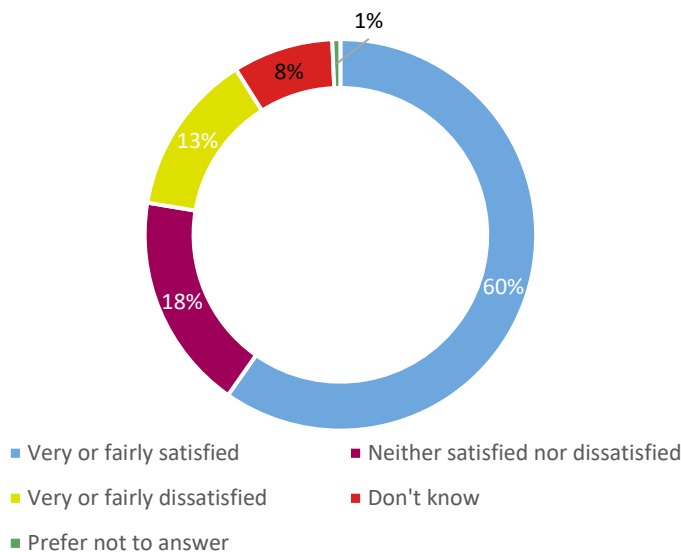
*“X Council is a great council which helps underprivileged families.”*

**8.8 Satisfaction with local schools**

In the Survey of Londoners 2021-22 Londoners were asked how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with local schools. As this question was less relevant for some groups of Londoners, a ‘no opinion – not relevant to me’ response code was added. The results below are based only on those who did give their opinion.

In the survey, 60 per cent of Londoners were satisfied with their local schools; 18 per cent said they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied; and 13 per cent said they were dissatisfied (see Figure 8.9).

**Figure 8.9 – The majority of Londoners (60 per cent) said they were very or fairly satisfied with local schools**



Base: Londoners aged 16 and over who did not respond ‘no opinion – not relevant to me’ (3,353)

Londoners aged 16-34 were less likely to feel satisfied (55 per cent) with local schools than Londoners aged 35-64 (64 per cent).

School satisfaction was also related to household situation. Londoners living with someone in their household as a couple (66 per cent) were more likely to feel satisfied with local schools than those who were not living with someone as a couple (56 per cent).

Londoners born in a country classified as 'rest of the world' were more likely to be satisfied with local schools (70 per cent) than UK-born Londoners (58 per cent) and EU-born Londoners (53 per cent)<sup>42</sup>.

Disabled Londoners were less likely than non-disabled Londoners to be satisfied with local schools (52 per cent and 63 per cent respectively).

---

<sup>42</sup> See Appendix 1 for further details on country of birth.

## 9 Discussion

Our objective with the Survey of Londoners 2021-22 was to provide a snapshot of Londoners' lives after the initial phase of the COVID-19 crisis. The chapters above do this by going through each of the key measures and comparing with Londoners' situations in 2018-19 where possible.

The 2018-19 survey was conducted in what we now call the 'pre-pandemic period', while the 2021-22 survey was conducted during the pandemic period (though after the most severe restrictions associated with the pandemic had been lifted). We had expectations that the pandemic had resulted in severe trauma for many groups of Londoners, as this was borne out in other literature and feedback from groups working with London's communities; such a result would negatively affect many of the measures collected in the 2021-22 survey compared with 2018-19.<sup>43</sup> However, this has not been the case with many of the measures we collected. The resilience of Londoners over the course of this crisis has been demonstrated, with some measures having even seen improvements since 2018-19.

This may be explained by the timing of the Survey of Londoners 2021-22. Fieldwork started in November 2021, and there had been a gradual easing of restrictions in the country up until that point.<sup>44</sup> On 19 July 2021, most legal limits on social contact were removed. Thus, by the time the survey started, life was beginning to return to a situation more similar to that seen in 2018-19.

Perhaps the most unexpected results have come from the survey's financial hardship measures. Overall, the proportions of Londoners in food insecurity, with household bills arrears, with a heavy burden of debt, and without at least £1,500 in savings had all decreased since 2018-19. Some of this might be attributed to the government's emergency measures put in place almost immediately after the first national lockdown – such as the UC uplift and the 'furlough' scheme – which have shielded some Londoners from these precarious positions. Though the average positions may have improved, the survey is very clear in showing that huge inequalities within London remain.

The 2018-19 survey highlighted previous inequalities – namely, how disabled Londoners and single parents fared poorly on most, if not all, of the economic precarity measures from the survey, as well as Black Londoners. In the 2021-22 survey these groups of Londoners were again found to be the most severely affected. Wider research has shown how this is due to factors such as long-term structural inequalities, which disadvantage

---

<sup>43</sup> London Datastore, [Rapid Evidence Review - Inequalities in relation to COVID-19 and their effects on London, 2020](#)

<sup>44</sup> Institute for Government, [Timeline of UK government coronavirus lockdowns and measures, March 2020 to December 2021](#)

minority groups, and reductions in welfare support since 2010, which have affected single parents and disabled people the most.<sup>45</sup>

For example, in 2021-22, single parents were one of the groups most likely to be in food insecurity (41 per cent) and to have used a food bank in the past 12 months (11 per cent). Single parents were also more likely than single Londoners without children to not have at least £1,500 in savings (54 per cent and 31 per cent respectively).

Disabled Londoners were also one of the groups most likely to be in food insecurity (27 per cent). Disabled Londoners were more likely than non-disabled Londoners to have household bills arrears; and to say that, if they did have debt, their debt repayments were a heavy burden. Disabled Londoners were also more likely than non-disabled Londoners to report not being able to keep their home warm enough in winter.

One in five (20 per cent) disabled Londoners reported being treated unfairly in the past 12 months because they are disabled. The inequalities that disabled Londoners face are not just related to their financial circumstances, but to their social lives as well. Disabled Londoners were less likely than non-disabled Londoners to have gone to a park in the last month. Disabled Londoners were significantly more likely to report feeling lonely than non-disabled Londoners (17 per cent compared to 5 per cent) and socially isolated, i.e. not having someone to rely on a lot in a serious emergency (35 per cent compared to 22 per cent).

Working disabled Londoners were less likely than working non-disabled Londoners to be satisfied with their current job (55 per cent and 64 per cent respectively). While disabled Londoners, in general, were far less likely to feel satisfied with the amount of leisure time they had than those without a disability (38 per cent and 49 per cent respectively). All of these inequalities contribute to disabled Londoners being far more likely to report low or medium satisfaction with their lives currently than Londoners who were not disabled (59 per cent compared to 31 per cent).

Turning to Black Londoners, in 2021-22, they were the ethnic group most likely not to have savings of at least £1,500 and were also one of the groups more likely to be in insecure employment. The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 collected more detailed information on ethnicity than the 2018-19 survey, so the 2021-22 survey has provided further details on how Black African Londoners were one of the groups most likely to have household bills arrears, as well as be one of the ethnic groups more likely to report difficulty in keeping their home warm enough in winter. These inequalities are all concerning, as the cost-of-living crisis starts to have an impact.

Our groups of interest are limitless but, in this discussion, we will focus on one more, namely young Londoners – i.e., Londoners aged 16-24. There is a mixed picture with regards to young Londoners. Young Londoners were less likely to have registered to vote

---

<sup>45</sup> Landman Economics, [Cumulative Impact Assessment of Welfare Reform in London](#), July 2019

than older Londoners; and, perhaps related to this, they were also less likely to feel they could personally influence decisions affecting their local area (22 per cent) than Londoners aged 35-64 (32 per cent) and Londoners aged 65 and over (33 per cent). They were also less likely to feel they belonged to their local area than Londoners aged 65 and over (68 per cent compared to 82 per cent respectively). Young Londoners (36 per cent) were far less likely to agree that people in their neighbourhood pull together to improve it than Londoners aged 65 and over (55 per cent). However, among the various age groups, Londoners aged 16-24 exhibited the joint-highest rate of formal volunteering in the last 12 months, along with Londoners aged 65 and over (both 37 per cent).

Though most young Londoners favour digital channels when it comes to day-to-day banking, as opposed to banking face-to-face, they were also the most likely age group to have not used any banking channels to conduct day-to-day banking activities in the past 12 months (an indication that those Londoners may be 'unbanked').

Turning to the labour market, young working Londoners were one of the groups most likely to be in insecure employment (26 per cent), and to not be paid at least the LLW in their main job (32 per cent).

One in five (20 per cent) young Londoners reported being treated unfairly in the past 12 months because of their age.

Again, all of this contributes to young Londoners being more likely to exhibit higher rates of dissatisfaction with life nowadays (47 per cent) than any other age group (ranging between 30 and 41 per cent).

While the results for some of the financial hardship measures at the overall London level may be somewhat of a surprise, when comparing data with 2018-19, the results for particular groups of Londoners and the inequalities that have been presented are not. Other reports investigating the effects of the pandemic on inequalities presented similar pictures.<sup>46</sup> So to establish a truer picture of what has happened in London, the reading of any results from the Survey of Londoners 2021-22 should always be with an inequalities lens.

Social contact was one of the areas that was most affected by lockdown restrictions. By the time of the 2021-22 survey, rates of face-to-face contact with family members outside the home and neighbours were in line with findings from the 2018-19 survey. However, frequent face-to-face contact with friends had decreased. In 2021-22, 59 per cent of Londoners reported having face-to-face contact with friends once a week or more – compared with 66 per cent in 2018-19.

Another area that had not fully recovered was Londoners' participation in free-time activities. Londoners were less likely to have participated in all of the free-time activities

---

<sup>46</sup> Institute for Fiscal Studies, [Inequality and the COVID crisis in the United Kingdom](#), 4 January 2022

asked about in 2021-22 compared with 2018-19, except for going to parks. The largest decreases were seen in attending local community festivals and events; and visiting museums and galleries. Parks became an increasingly important feature of Londoners' lives in coping with lockdown restrictions and the increase in use since the pandemic began has been seen and elaborated on in other studies.<sup>47</sup>

The lockdown restrictions imposed as a result of the pandemic also highlighted the issue of digital exclusion. In 2021-22, 5 per cent of Londoners were digitally excluded – an issue mostly affecting Londoners aged 50 and over. This age group were also more likely to have been 'shielding' during the pandemic, which would have resulted in some Londoners being extremely isolated and cut off from the rest of society.<sup>48</sup> The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 has highlighted how digital exclusion is associated with a whole range of negative social outcomes collected in the survey, like being more likely to be socially isolated and being less likely to have formally volunteered.

The pandemic had a huge impact on many Londoners' mental health and wellbeing, particularly life satisfaction, which suffered massively when the first lockdown restrictions were imposed in March 2020.<sup>49</sup> However, as restrictions eased over the course of 2020 and 2021, there were signs that life satisfaction rates were returning to pre-pandemic levels. By the time of the Survey of Londoners 2021-22, 60 per cent of Londoners reported high or very high satisfaction, in line with the proportion from the 2018-19 survey. Life satisfaction is just one of many types of wellbeing indicator. Other studies tracking other measures like, for example, depression and anxiety, had not seen levels returning to their pre-pandemic levels by the time the Survey of Londoners 2021-22 was being conducted.<sup>50</sup>

Unfair treatment and discrimination were, again, spotlighted during the pandemic as a potential source of friction, resulting from differing views on lockdown compliance and heightened levels of anxiety.<sup>51</sup> The question about unfair treatment because of a protected characteristic or social class, which had been asked in the 2018-19 survey, was therefore asked again in the 2021-22 survey. The overall proportion experiencing unfair treatment was not significantly different from the 2018-19 survey. However, the proportion that were treated unfairly because of their ethnicity increased from 16 per cent to 19 per cent. The proportion that were treated unfairly because of their gender identity also increased significantly, from less than 1 per cent to 1 per cent – though this figure should be read with caution as the wording of the characteristic presented in the questionnaire was different in 2018-19.

---

<sup>47</sup> ONS/Census 2021, [How has lockdown changed our relationship with nature?](#), 26 April 2021

<sup>48</sup> ONS, [Coronavirus and shielding of clinically extremely vulnerable people in England](#), 5 August 2020

<sup>49</sup> London Datastore, [Socio-economic impact of COVID-19](#), 2020, updated 2021

<sup>50</sup> [COVID-19 Social Study](#)

<sup>51</sup> UCL, [Nearly half of adults have experienced discrimination during COVID-19 pandemic](#), 10 September 2021

The pandemic resulted in many people wanting to help others, including through volunteering, both formal and informal.<sup>52</sup> In the early stages of the pandemic, there were numerous initiatives set up such as the NHS Volunteer Responders programme, which was a way of involving people in volunteering who had not previously considered it.<sup>53</sup> However, formal volunteering rates have been in decline in London (and across England overall) since 2013-14.<sup>54</sup> The Community Life Survey 2020-21 recorded a substantial fall in formal volunteering between that year and the previous year (2019-20, so pre-pandemic), probably as a result of lockdown restrictions closing many of the venues where formal volunteering usually took place. The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 took place after many of the legal restrictions had been removed, so covered a period with more opportunities for formal volunteering. As it happened, the Survey of Londoners 2021-22 reported that one-third of Londoners (33 per cent) had formally volunteered for a group, club or organisation in the past 12 months – an increase from 28 per cent in 2018-19. The increase needs to be caveated, as the 2021-22 survey question was slightly different and asked for more detail about the types of groups, clubs or organisations Londoners had volunteered for or given unpaid help to. This may have prompted those who may not have regarded some of their volunteer work as volunteer work to respond positively. The proportion recorded is similar to that recorded in the Community Life Survey 2020-21 for London (31 per cent).

The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 reported a similar increase in informal volunteering rates between 2018-19 and 2021-22 (from 52 per cent to 60 per cent). Again, the increase needs to be caveated as the 2021-22 survey question was slightly different and asked for more detail about the type of informal volunteering Londoners were engaged in. This may have prompted those who may not have regarded some of their informal volunteering as informal volunteering to respond positively. The proportion recorded is higher than that recorded in the Community Life Survey 2020-21 for London (55 per cent). When the pandemic struck, there were reports that many people did step up within their communities to offer support to their neighbours, so this may help explain some of the increase in informal volunteering rates.<sup>55</sup>

There has been much talk around the emergence of mutual aid groups, with many being established to ensure people could access support during lockdown.<sup>56</sup> The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 found that these were not particularly widespread; just 7 per cent of Londoners had been involved in a mutual aid group in the past 12 months. Their supportive role was backed up with the finding that Londoners likely to be experiencing financial hardship were more likely to have been involved in a mutual aid group than those less likely to be experiencing hardship.

---

<sup>52</sup> Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport/Office for Civil Society [A look at volunteering during the response to COVID-19](#), 11 January 2021

<sup>53</sup> [NHS Volunteer Responders](#)

<sup>54</sup> Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, [Community Life Survey 2020/21](#), 29 July 2021, updated 1 July 2022

<sup>55</sup> NCVO, [What happened to volunteering during the pandemic?](#), 5 August 2021

<sup>56</sup> LSE, [Where next for Britain's 4,300 mutual aid groups?](#), 6 May 2021



There are some caveats and limitations to the survey that should be noted. Firstly, despite the easing of restrictions up to the point when fieldwork for the 2021-22 survey started, and efforts to follow the same methodology as in 2018-19, it still took place during a time of great uncertainty. Indeed, after fieldwork started, the PM announced a move to 'Plan B' measures in England following the spread of the Omicron variant. There is no way to know for certain what impact conducting the survey at this time had on the data arising from the 2021-22 survey. One noticeable difference between the 2021-22 and 2018-19 surveys, as noted earlier, was that a higher proportion of responses were received via the online questionnaire than the paper questionnaire (71 per cent and 61 per cent respectively). Thus, interpreting differences between the 2021-22 survey and 2018-19 survey should be done with caution.

Finally, as noted above, the fieldwork period for the Survey of Londoners 2021-22 ran from November 2021 to February 2022, ending just before the full effects of the cost-of-living crisis began to set in. As a result of this new crisis facing the city, the situations of Londoners will have changed again while this report was being drafted. Thus, this report, and the analysis contained within, should be read as the snapshot of London in 2021-22 before the full effects of the cost-of-living crisis appeared.



## 10 Conclusions

The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 has assessed the impact of COVID-19 and associated restrictions on key social outcomes for Londoners, not available from other data sources; provided evidence and insight on the state of London to inform a range of recovery missions, and associated policymaking; and provided data to support our understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion, including groups with protected characteristics for whom we lack evidence from existing sources. In addition to this, it has provided some potential courses of action to take when navigating the cost-of-living crisis.

Overall, the survey highlights the resilience of Londoners, given many of the outcomes tracked in the 2021-22 survey have not seen any substantial declines since the survey was previously conducted in 2018-19, pre-pandemic. Fieldwork for the Survey of Londoners 2021-22 was conducted between November 2021 and February 2022, so before the most significant impacts of the cost-of-living crisis being felt, but while some pandemic restrictions due to the emergence of the Omicron variant, such as wearing of face masks in most public indoor venues and working from home, was still advised. Therefore, the Survey of Londoners 2021-22 can serve as a new baseline point for the changes that we are currently seeing in living standards in relation to the cost-of-living.

The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 clearly shows that Government support, in the form of protections like furlough and the UC uplift, helped to ensure overall financial hardship did not increase in London from the time of the first Survey of Londoners (2018-19) to the second in early 2022. However, inequalities grew, as these improvements were driven by the financial situations of higher-income Londoners, compared with lower-income Londoners. As in 2018-19, some groups of Londoners were still much more likely to be in financial hardship, for example, disabled Londoners and single-parent Londoners. Black Londoners were the ethnic group most likely not to have savings of at least £1,500, while Bangladeshi Londoners who were renting were the ethnic group most likely to rate their housing quality as poor. To help with the current cost-of-living crisis, the Mayor of London has urged Ministers to help lower-income Londoners by bringing in support on a similar scale to the measures that helped the country through the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic – though it would need to be far more targeted to reach those most in need. This includes introducing a Lifeline Tariff to ensure the most vulnerable people receive a basic amount of free energy every day, providing free school meals to all primary school children to ensure all those in need are reached, and uplifting Universal Credit in line with inflation.

Overall awareness of some forms of social and financial support was low among Londoners, though there were indications that the Londoners most in need of their support were more aware. The Mayor of London is already undertaking work to raise awareness of

people's rights and entitlements, through the Cost-of-living Hub; cost-of-living leaflets; cost-of-living digital tools grant programme and encouraging Pension Credit uptake. He's also provided more than £4 million in funding across 2021-22 and 2022-23 to organisations offering advice on understanding and claiming financial rights and entitlements. This is helping them to both increase their capacity in the face of rising demand, and improve the accessibility of their services by embedding them in community settings.

On energy specifically, a new advice service, Energy Advice London, will be launched in November in partnership with the Energy Saving Trust. It will be open online and over the phone to anyone in London struggling with their energy bills. Londoners will be able to get advice on saving energy and keeping warm at home, on installing renewable energy systems, and on financial support to make their homes more energy efficient. Alongside this, the most vulnerable households will continue to receive in-home energy advice, and support with energy debt, from the Mayor's Warmer Homes Advice Service, which has already helped over 15,000 households. Over 300 organisations across London are referral partners, including the NHS and local third sector organisations. And the Mayor's Warmer Homes programme (£43m this year) is providing grants of up to £25,000 to low-income Londoners to make their homes warmer, greener and cheaper to run.

The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 has demonstrated the redistributive role played by food banks. A small proportion of Londoners (3 per cent) reported collecting a food parcel in the past 12 months, while over a third of Londoners (37 per cent) had donated either food or money in the past 12 months. Food bank use is often seen as an extreme form of destitution, when people are unable to access enough food, so it is not surprising that food bank use is associated with other negative social outcomes, like being more likely to be socially isolated. Around a quarter of Londoners (26 per cent) who had used a food bank in the last year were in insecure employment. Again, the Mayor of London is already undertaking work to address food insecurity in the capital, through programmes such as Food Roots, which will support emergency food aid partnerships in London, and the Food Connect pilot, which will support food hubs to increase surplus redistribution to those in the community who need it.

As with the 2018-19 survey, the Survey of Londoners 2021-22 asked London's private renters whether they had been affected by an issue in their last private-rented-sector (PRS) accommodation that caused them to leave. The proportion that reported an issue remained unchanged between the two survey periods. As with the welfare system measures that were introduced at the start of the pandemic to help people with changes in the labour market a series of measures were introduced in the PRS to help tenants, which may have helped on this issue. These measures have since been withdrawn. To help with the current cost-of-living crisis, the Mayor has asked Ministers to freeze private rents in the capital for two years, or give him the power to do so, as this would help provide certainty for private renters. He is also calling on government to extend notice periods to protect renters from expensive unplanned moves. The Mayor's Rogue Landlord and Agent

Checker, Property Licence Checker and Report a Rogue tool continue to help Londoners make informed decisions about who they rent from and report concerns about landlords failing to properly manage their properties.

Around one in 10 working-age Londoners in work were in insecure employment, as in 2018-19. This is unchanged, but what was new in the Survey of Londoners 2021-22 was an assessment of how many workers were earning at least the London Living Wage (LLW) or more in their current job. Around one in nine (11 per cent) working Londoners said that they did not. A larger proportion of Londoners working in routine and semi-routine manual and service occupations, like van drivers, bar staff, security guards, caretakers and sales assistants were less likely to earn the LLW. Whether or not someone earns the LLW has an enormous bearing on self-reported job satisfaction rates. Only 33 per cent of workers who did not earn at least the LLW reported being satisfied with their job, which is half of what workers who did earn at least the LLW in their current job reported (66 per cent). This provides further evidence of the known benefits of the London Living Wage to the lives of Londoners and businesses, and the Mayor continues to encourage employers to opt-in, as well as co-chairing the steering group for the 'Making London a Living Wage City' project.<sup>57</sup>

Many of the social outcomes tracked in the 2021-22 survey have not seen any substantial declines since the survey was last conducted in 2018-19, apart from the extent to which Londoners were participating in free-time activities and face-to-face contact with friends, though these are more expected given the various restrictions on social contact throughout 2021. There had been no significant change in feelings of belonging to London since the last survey and remained high (80 per cent). There were, however, increases seen in rates of formal volunteering and informal volunteering since 2018-19. This might be due to questionnaire differences, as mentioned in the discussion earlier, but if these increases are real, then it points to perhaps a positive to have emerged from the crisis of the pandemic, which is the willingness to help others through tough times. This extra, tangible community spirit will be extremely important in supporting Londoners' future wellbeing, given the current cost-of-living crisis.

By the time of the 2021-22 survey, the proportion of Londoners reporting high or very high life satisfaction was the same as reported in 2018-19. Other surveys conducted after the pandemic struck, but before the Survey of Londoners 2021-22 was conducted, showed how life satisfaction rates had fallen substantially during this time, so the Survey of Londoners 2021-22 demonstrates how Londoners had bounced back on this measure. However, it was clear that Londoners facing economic disadvantage exhibited higher rates of dissatisfaction with life nowadays than the London average. With the current cost-of-living crisis, life satisfaction rates are likely to fall for all Londoners, but the effects will be particularly acute on those groups of Londoners already experiencing some form of financial hardship, for example, disabled Londoners and single-parent Londoners.

---

<sup>57</sup> Trust for London, [New Steering Group launched to focus on Making London a Living Wage City](#), 16 May 2022

Loneliness and social isolation rates were in-line with the rates reported in 2018-19. Young Londoners were, again, more likely to feel lonely often or always than older Londoners. As with life satisfaction, Londoners experiencing financial hardship on a range of different measures experienced higher rates of loneliness and social isolation than the London average. The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 and the Mayor of London's recent report on *Reconceptualising Loneliness in London* shows how loneliness can be felt across London's population.<sup>58</sup> As Londoners experience a cost-of-living crisis, to help prevent rises in loneliness across the city, the Mayor's report recommends organisations to prioritise increasing Londoners' levels of social connectedness and to rethink the targeting of loneliness interventions to those more likely to experience the drivers of loneliness. The Mayor of London, through his work with the London Recovery Board, has established a Mental Health and Wellbeing mission and a Building Strong Communities mission. These will support healthier and stronger communities, where Londoners can volunteer, get support and build strong networks. Addressing loneliness and the drivers of loneliness are part of sustaining London's social and economic recovery.

The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 has highlighted how digital exclusion is associated with a whole range of negative social outcomes collected in the survey, like being more likely to be socially isolated and being less likely to have formally volunteered. Around seven in 10 (71 per cent) digitally excluded Londoners were not educated up to university-degree level. This group was much more likely to be reliant on cash in their day-to-day lives, rather than other payment methods such as credit/debit cards or online payments. Again, the Mayor of London, through his work with the London Recovery Board, has a digital inclusion mission which is to ensure that every Londoner has access to good connectivity, basic digital skills and the device or support they need to be online by 2025. This includes using his Adult Education Budget to help thousands of Londoners gain the essential digital skills they need for both life and work. The Mayor has also launched engagement and community outreach campaigns to help digitally excluded Londoners access this crucial training offer.

Londoners were most trusting of news and information from the NHS and from family and friends than other sources, though high trust was still only expressed by 67 per cent and 60 per cent respectively. Though 8 per cent of Londoners overall reported having high trust in news and information received from commentary on social media feeds, Londoners from BAME communities were more likely to report high trust (13 per cent) than White Londoners (4 per cent). Muslim Londoners were one of the groups most likely to place high trust in the news and information from commentary on social media feeds (17 per cent). Trust in news and information is a societal wide issue and was no more important than when the country was rolling out its COVID-19 vaccination programme. Many lessons have been learnt from this experience and these principles remain important considerations in responding to future crises.<sup>59</sup>

---

<sup>58</sup> Neighbourly Lab, [Reconceptualising Loneliness in London](#), March 2022

<sup>59</sup> OECD, [Enhancing public trust in COVID-19 vaccination: The role of governments](#), 10 May 2021

The overall proportion experiencing unfair treatment in 2021-22 was not significantly different from the 2018-19 survey. However, Black Londoners were the only ethnic group to have seen an increase in unfair treatment experienced as a result of their ethnicity since 2018-19 (from 26 per cent to 43 per cent). In 2021-22, around a quarter of respondents (26 per cent) who had been treated unfairly were treated unfairly by a public service (the same proportion as in 2018-19), that is, by the local council, public transport staff or the emergency services. The proportion citing unfair treatment from the emergency services specifically had increased since 2018-19, from 4 per cent to 7 per cent.

Finally, it is important to reemphasise the context in which the Survey of Londoners 2021-22 took place. Survey fieldwork began in November 2021; so, up to that point, it had been four months since most legal limits on social contact had been removed. However, after fieldwork had started, some restrictions due to the emergence of the Omicron variant were introduced. This may or may not have had some effect on the data, in terms of the people responding or their answers when they did respond. Interpretation of the results is therefore not as straightforward, given these changing circumstances.

The country (and the city) is going from one crisis to the next – specifically, at present, the cost-of-living crisis. The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 will not have captured the effects of this new crisis, which is undoubtedly plunging more Londoners into financial hardship. And it can be expected that the same groups of Londoners who were more likely to be in financial hardship before this new crisis began will be hardest hit again, both economically and socially. The climate crisis is also having a tangible effect on Londoners, and climate impacts often exacerbate existing pressures like financial insecurity and health inequalities, which this survey has highlighted. Heatwaves and flooding are occurring with more frequency and greater severity than ever before and, in some cases, simultaneously, as we saw in summer 2022. In July, drought conditions combined with record heat contributed to wildfires that destroyed more than 40 homes and businesses in London. The effects of crises, like the climate emergency, were not captured by this survey, so we have to be mindful that this is only a partial picture of the state of Londoners in early 2022.

The final comment to make is that this report is just the starting point. We hope that partners in London boroughs, central government and civil society use the data and build on this descriptive analysis, with further intersectional analysis and multivariate analysis, as appropriate. By sharing our findings, we can then improve our shared understanding of social policy issues in London.

## Appendix 1 Terms and definitions used in this report

Several standard demographic and area-based classifications are used in this report to understand how issues affect different groups of Londoners. Those that require further definition are explained below.

### Individual classifications

**Carer:** A Londoner is identified as a carer if they said that, outside of anything done as part of paid employment, they looked after, or gave help or support to, someone because they had long-term physical or mental health conditions or illnesses, or problems related to old age.

**Country of birth:** After saying what country they were born in, Londoners were then classified into five groups:

- UK
- EU
- Other Europe
- Asia
- Rest of the World

**Digitally excluded:** This is when a Londoner's ability to use the internet was poor, they used the internet rarely, they never used it, or they did not know if they used it.

**Disability:** In this report, Londoners are classified as 'disabled' if they had any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses that were expected to last for 12 months or more; and if their condition and/or illness reduced their ability to carry out day-to-day activities.

**English language proficiency:** In this report, when we talk about the group of Londoners who were not proficient in English, it refers to the group within the subset of Londoners for whom English was not a first language.

**Ethnicity:** In the online survey, Londoners self-classified into ethnic groups using the response codes from the official ONS ethnicity question (19 response codes), plus an additional ethnic group category of 'Latin American' (so 20 in total). In the paper questionnaire, the response list was shortened to 12 response codes. In this report, findings are only reported for groupings where the sample size was sufficient.



**Income quintiles:** To aid comparison with the 2018-19 survey, in the 2021-22 survey Londoners were classified into the same five income quintile groups that were used to classify Londoners in the 2018-19 survey:

- Lowest income quintile: annual income of less than £14,900
- Second income quintile: annual income between £14,901 – £24,300
- Third income quintile: annual income between £24,301 – £37,900
- Fourth income quintile: annual income between £37,901 – £58,900
- Highest income quintile: annual income over £58,900

**LGBTQ+:** Londoners who described their sexual orientation as either lesbian, gay, bisexual or other, or who described their gender as trans man, trans woman or non-binary, are referred to as LGBTQ+.

**Londoners:** Adults aged 16 and over who live in London.

**Overcrowded accommodation:** A Londoner is said to be living in overcrowded accommodation if they reported that, at home, two or more people aged 10 or over, and of different sexes, had to sleep in the same room (excluding any rooms which were slept in by couples sharing a room).

**Single parent:** Parent or guardian aged 16-64 of any children aged under 16 currently living in the household, and not living with someone in the household as a couple.

**Social class:** Social class is reported using the official ONS NS-SEC classification based on occupation. A three-category classification is used:

- Managerial and professional occupations: Managerial, administrative and professional occupations
- Intermediate occupations: Intermediate occupations, small employers and own account workers
- Routine and manual occupations: Lower supervisory and technical occupations and Semi-routine and routine occupations

**State benefits:** This does not cover all state benefits, but is specific to whether a Londoner was receiving either UC or Pension Credit.

**Young Londoners:** Adults aged 16-24 who live in London.

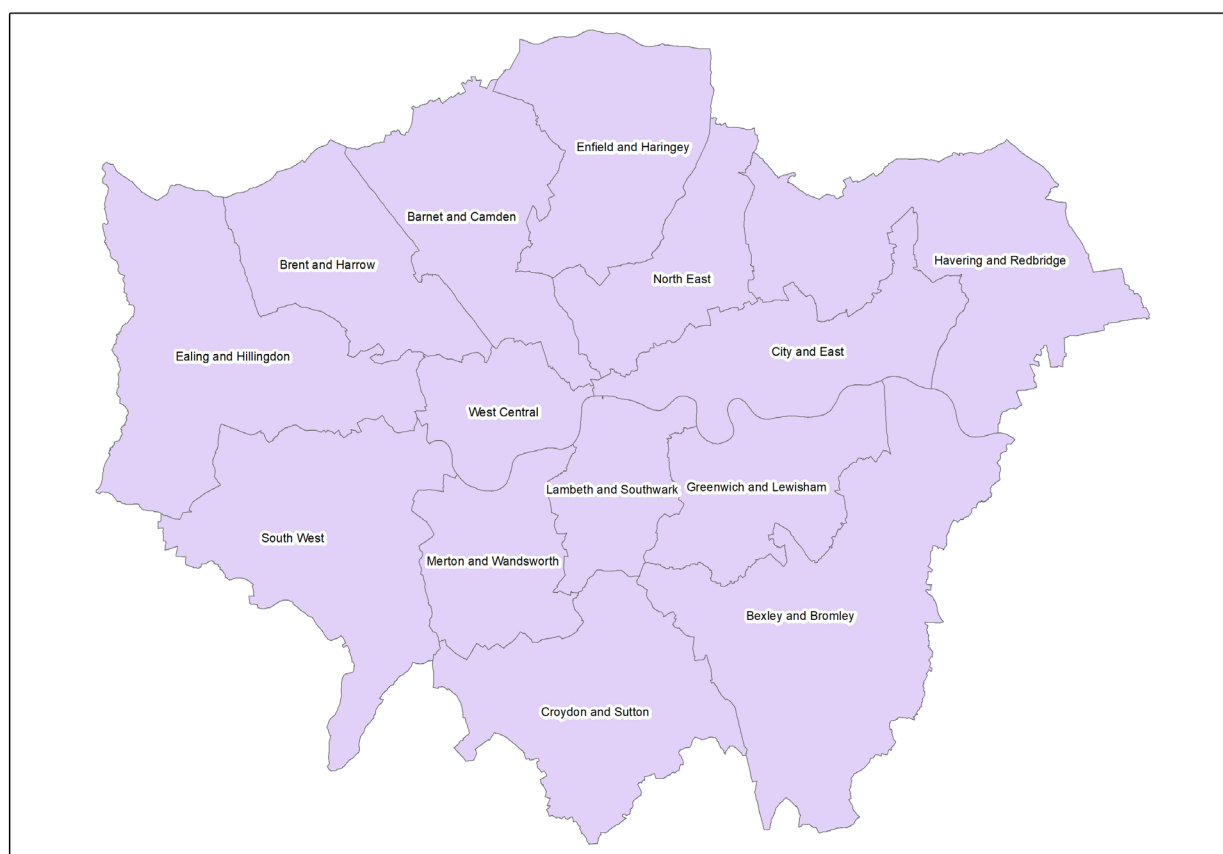
## Area-based measures

There are two main area-based measures used in this report: the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) and London Assembly Constituencies.

**Indices of Multiple Deprivation:** The IMD is the official measure of relative deprivation for small areas in England. This is calculated using several measures such as income deprivation, crime and living environment deprivation. The IMD ranks every small area in England from 1 (most deprived area) to 32,844 (least deprived area). In this publication, we have clustered these areas into 'IMD quintiles', with one being the most deprived areas and five being the least deprived areas.

**London Assembly constituencies:** London's boroughs are aggregated into 14 constituency areas, each served by a member of the London Assembly. These have been used to compare area variation across the different measures in this report (see Figure A1.1).

**Figure A1.1 – London Assembly constituencies**





Code	Name	Boroughs	Code	Name	Boroughs
1	Barnet and Camden	Barnet Camden	8	Greenwich and Lewisham	Greenwich Lewisham
2	Bexley and Bromley	Bexley Bromley	9	Havering and Redbridge	Havering Redbridge
3	Brent and Harrow	Brent Harrow	10	Lambeth and Southwark	Lambeth Southwark
4	City and East	Barking and Dagenham Newham Tower Hamlets City of London	11	Merton and Wandsworth	Merton Wandsworth
5	Croydon and Sutton	Croydon Sutton	12	North East	Hackney Islington Waltham Forest
6	Ealing and Hillingdon	Ealing Hillingdon	13	South West	Hounslow Kingston Richmond
7	Enfield and Haringey	Enfield Haringey	14	West Central	Hammersmith and Fulham Kensington and Chelsea Westminster

## Appendix 2 Methodological notes

All data quoted in this report are from the Survey of Londoners 2021-22 unless otherwise specified.

### Survey mode

The Survey of Londoners 2021-22 was a web-first survey of Londoners aged 16 and over. The design of the survey was intended to encourage participants to complete the survey online; but paper self-completion surveys were sent out with reminder letters to maximise response and sample quality. Overall, a total of 8,630 valid responses were received, with 71 per cent of respondents completing the survey online and 29 per cent by paper. A sample boost was conducted in the NEL sub-region, which gave extra responses being received from that sub-region to allow for more detailed analysis within that sub-region.

By design, the online questionnaire was longer and covered more questions than the paper version. The survey was fully 'device-agnostic', and so could be completed on mobile devices as well as on a desktop PC/laptop.

### Fieldwork period

Fieldwork began on 24 November 2021 and was extended until 7 February 2022 (from 30 January 2022) to allow respondents sufficient time to return their completed questionnaires. However, despite this extension, over nine out of 10 responses were received before 7 January 2022 (the day when all the returns from over the Christmas period were booked in).

### Statistical significance

Differences between groups are only reported on in this publication where they are statistically significant, i.e. where we can be confident that the differences seen in the sampled respondents are reflective of the population. A significant difference at the 95 per cent level means we can be confident that, if we carried out the same survey on different random samples of the population, 95 times out of 100 we would get similar findings.

### Rounding

Where findings are shown in terms of the number of Londoners, these are rounded to the nearest 100,000.

## Population estimates used to estimate numbers of Londoners

The population data used where the findings are presented in terms of numbers rather than proportions are the GLA's 2020-based demographic projections for 2021 (housing-led model and identified capacity scenario).<sup>60</sup>

## Food security scoring and categorisation

As in 2018-19, the 2021-22 survey measured Londoners' food security status with a set of questions used by the USDA Economic Research Service.<sup>61</sup> The six-item short form of the food security survey module was adapted for use in the survey. This short form six-item scale provides a reasonably reliable substitute where surveys cannot implement the full 10-item measure.

Seven questions were used to assess London children's food security. Again, these were recommended measures from the USDA Economic Research Service. The questions were only asked of Londoners who, in the survey, responded that they were the parent or guardian of any children aged under 16 currently living in the household.

---

<sup>60</sup> London Datastore, [Housing-led population projections](#), 2019, updated 2021

<sup>61</sup> USDA, [Food Security in the US](#)