



# 2025 Survey

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**engage**  
scotland

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# KEY MESSAGES

## Local area and services

Strong satisfaction with ER as a place to live, but below 2021

Satisfied with Council services, but fallen since 2016

Divided on whether services are good value for money

## Supporting carers

More than half of carers know who to contact if they needed support, but 22% do not

Carers generally do not feel supported in their caring, mixed views on their caring:life balance.

## Planning for the future

Most agree LDP should encourage new housing – older people and affordable homes are top priorities

Public transport, new business and employment and parks/ open spaces are top LDP priorities

## Safe and supportive communities

Most feel live in safe place, less likely to feel area is well looked after

Most have people to turn to, feel people are kind and trustworthy

Strong sense of community, different backgrounds get on

## Wellbeing and keeping active

Generally positive about quality of life and emotional health, loneliness remains below 2021 levels

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

## Getting involved

3 in 4 have volunteered but most do not feel well informed about opportunities

Large majority feel it's important to influence decisions, but don't feel able to do so

Generally feel Council services are accessible, vast majority confident with digital services

# INTRODUCTION

The East Renfrewshire Citizens' Panel continues to provide a means for residents to give their views. This report sets out findings from the most recent Citizens' Panel survey, conducted in early 2025. This survey sought Panel members' views on Council services, planning and housing, supporting carers, safe/supportive communities, keeping active, getting involved in your community and how the Council communicates.

**A total of 495 survey responses were received**, equating to an overall response rate of 59.4%. This is a strong response to any survey and continues the c60% response seen over the last 10 surveys.

The survey also indicates continued growth of web-responses with more than 85% of responses submitted online (up from only around half of responses to the 2019 survey). A Panel refreshment exercise was carried out in 2023 to replace longer-standing members, and this improved representation of several socio-demographic groups such as people from minority ethnic backgrounds, people with a disability, and people living in the most deprived parts of East Renfrewshire. The refreshment also contributed to the positive overall survey response, with new members showing a higher response than others (and also being more likely to respond online).

The volume of response is sufficient to permit more detailed analysis of results within specific respondent groups such as electoral ward area, age, gender, disability and housing tenure. Further detail on the profile of respondents is provided in section 1 of the Technical Report.

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

# LOCAL AREA AND SERVICES

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## Key messages

Satisfaction with East Renfrewshire as a place to live is high (84%), although this remains below ratings over the period to 2021.

A majority of respondents (62%) are satisfied with Council services overall, although this represents a 17-point decrease from a peak in 2016.

Respondents are divided in their views on whether Council services represent good value for money (23% feel they are good value, 27% feel they are poor value).

Views on specific services are most positive in relation to education, libraries, theatre/arts and public parks/open spaces, and least positive on roads.

Most feel that Council employees represent the three Council values to some extent.

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

## East Renfrewshire as a place to live

**Survey findings show high levels of satisfaction with East Renfrewshire as a place to live;** 84% are satisfied with the area as a place to live. This is a strong rating and is in line with results over recent surveys, but remains below ratings over the period to 2021 (in the range 89-95% between 2007 and 2021). The 84% satisfaction rating is also below that reported across Scotland as a whole through the Scottish Household Survey (95%).<sup>1</sup>

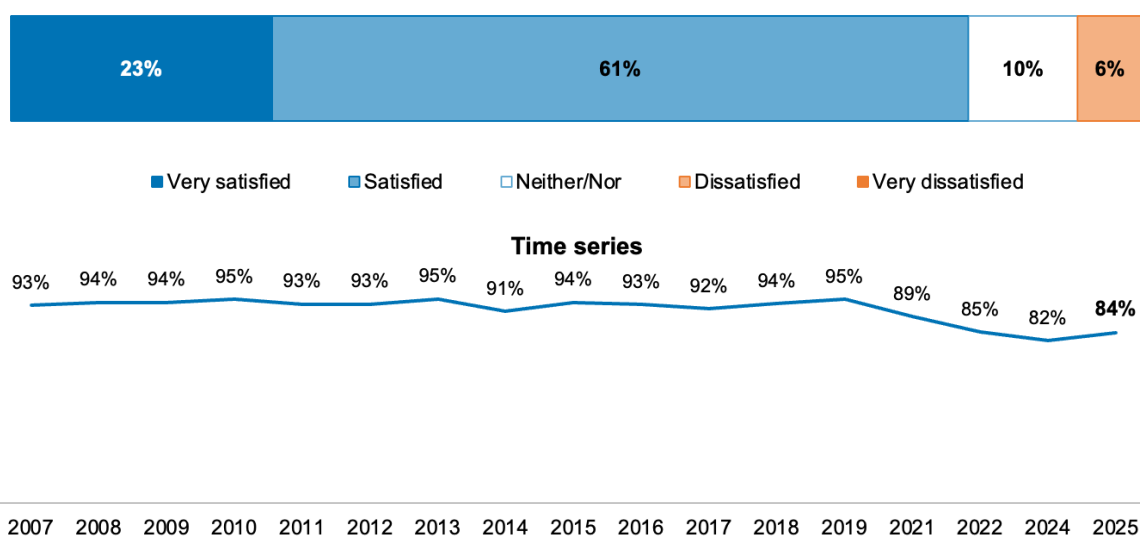
Survey results indicate that satisfaction levels are broadly consistent across most respondent groups. However, the following variation is evident:

- Disability. Those with a disability report lower satisfaction with East Renfrewshire as a place to live.
- Geography. Those in the Giffnock & Thornliebank area report higher satisfaction while those in the Barrhead, Liboside & Uplawmoor area report lower satisfaction.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-household-survey-2022-key-findings>. Note that the SHS methodology differs from the present survey, and may affect comparability of results.

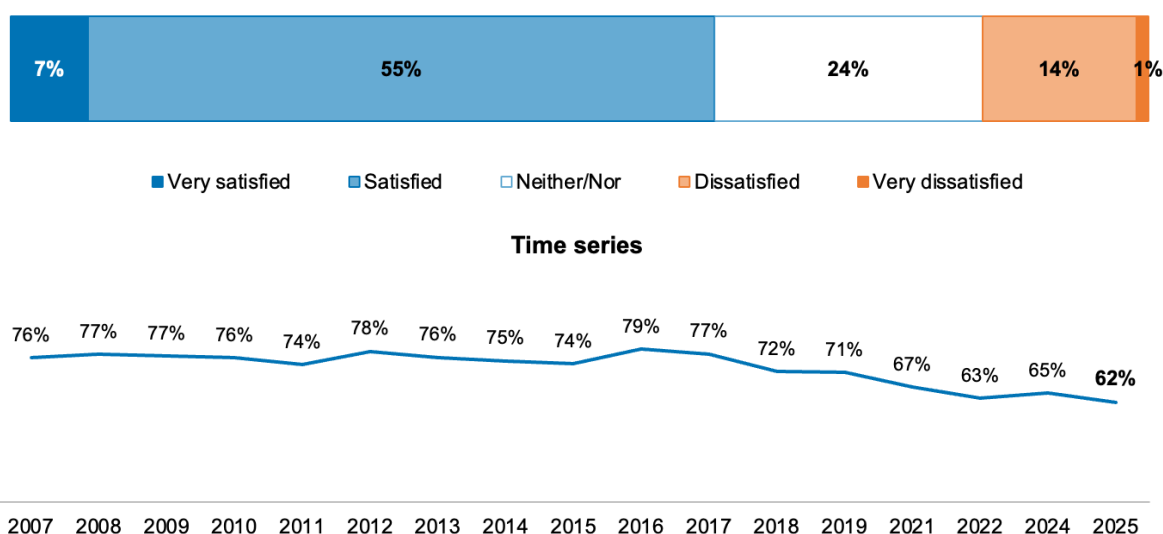
**Figure 1: Satisfaction with East Renfrewshire as a place to live**



## Overall satisfaction with services

**A majority of respondents (62%) indicated that they are satisfied with Council services overall.** Although this is a positive overall satisfaction level, and is consistent across key respondent subgroups, satisfaction with Council services has shown a downward trend since a peak of 79% in 2016. The current 62% satisfaction rating is also at the lower end of available comparison survey data for other local authorities (a range of 61% to 81%).

**Figure 2: Satisfaction with East Renfrewshire Council services overall**

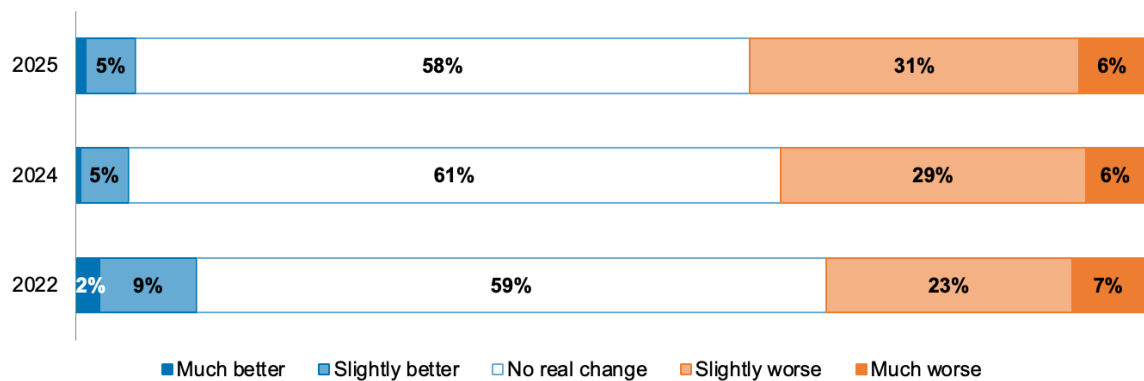




In addition to tracking satisfaction over time, the survey also specifically asked Panel members about whether they feel the standard of Council services has changed over the past year (Figure 3).

**Respondents generally feel there has been no recent change in the standard of Council services;** more than half suggested this has remained unchanged in the last year (58%). However, amongst those that had seen a change, respondents are significantly more likely to have seen a decline in the quality of services (37%, compared to 6% who had seen an improvement). Survey results also show an increasing proportion of respondents who feel that service quality has worsened (a 7-point increase since 2022).

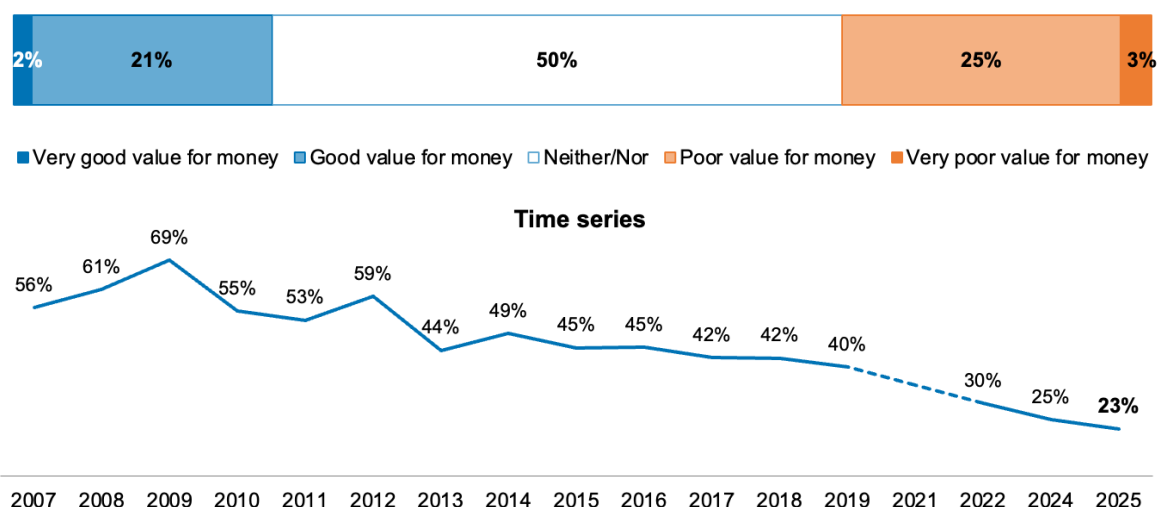
**Figure 3: Whether the standard of Council services has changed in last 12 months**



**Respondents are divided in their views on the extent to which Council services represent good value for money.** While half of respondents selected the neutral “neither/nor” response (50%), others were fairly evenly split between those who feel that services are good value (23%) and those who feel services are poor value (27%).

This represents a 17-point reduction since 2019 in the proportion of respondents who feel that Council services are good value for money. Survey results also show some variation across key respondent groups, with those in the Giffnock & Thornliebank area, those aged under 45 and homeowners less likely to feel that services are good value for money.

**Figure 4: Value for money of East Renfrewshire Council services**

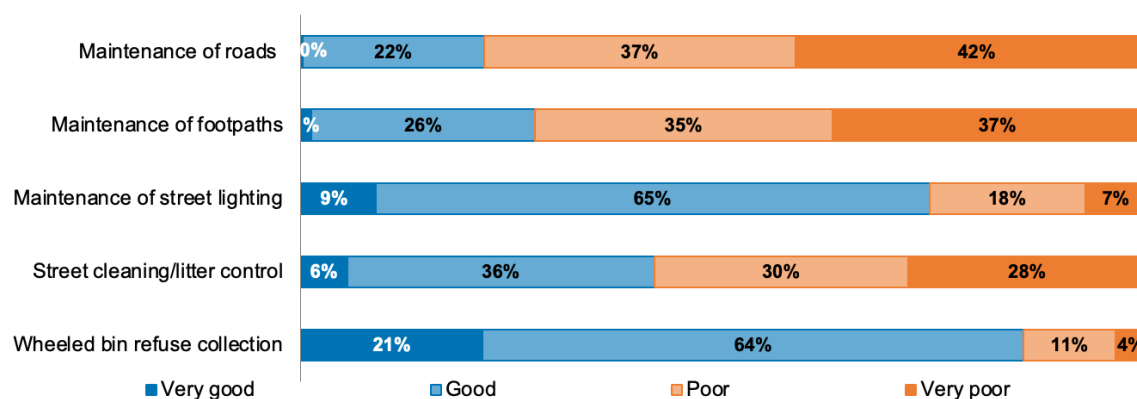


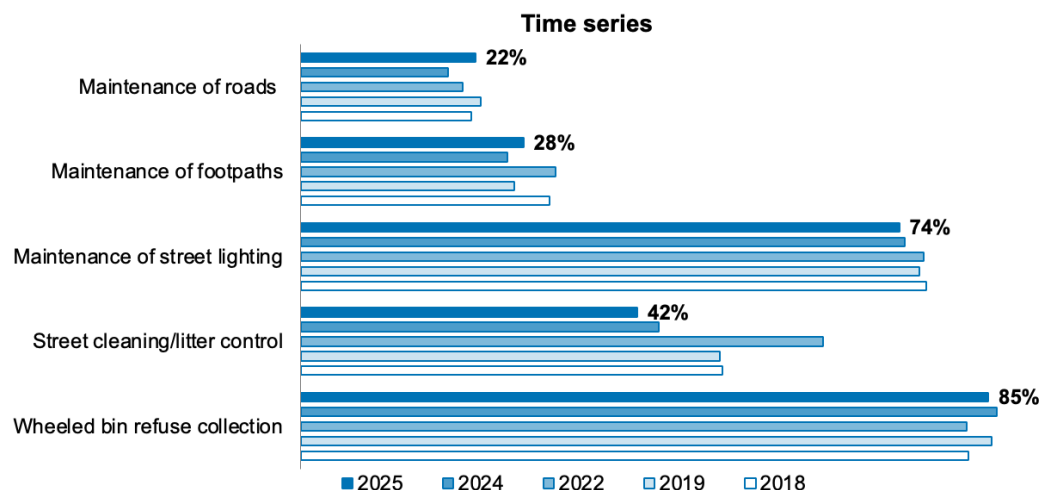
## Satisfaction with specific services

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

Ratings are **most positive for wheeled bin refuse collection and maintenance of street lighting**, and **least positive for maintenance of roads and footpaths**. Wheeled bin collection is rated as good by 85% of respondents, and maintenance of street lighting by 74%. Maintenance of roads and footpaths are the only services which a majority of respondents rated as poor or very poor; 78% rated roads and 72% rated footpaths as poor. The overall ranking of these services has remained largely unchanged over recent surveys.

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





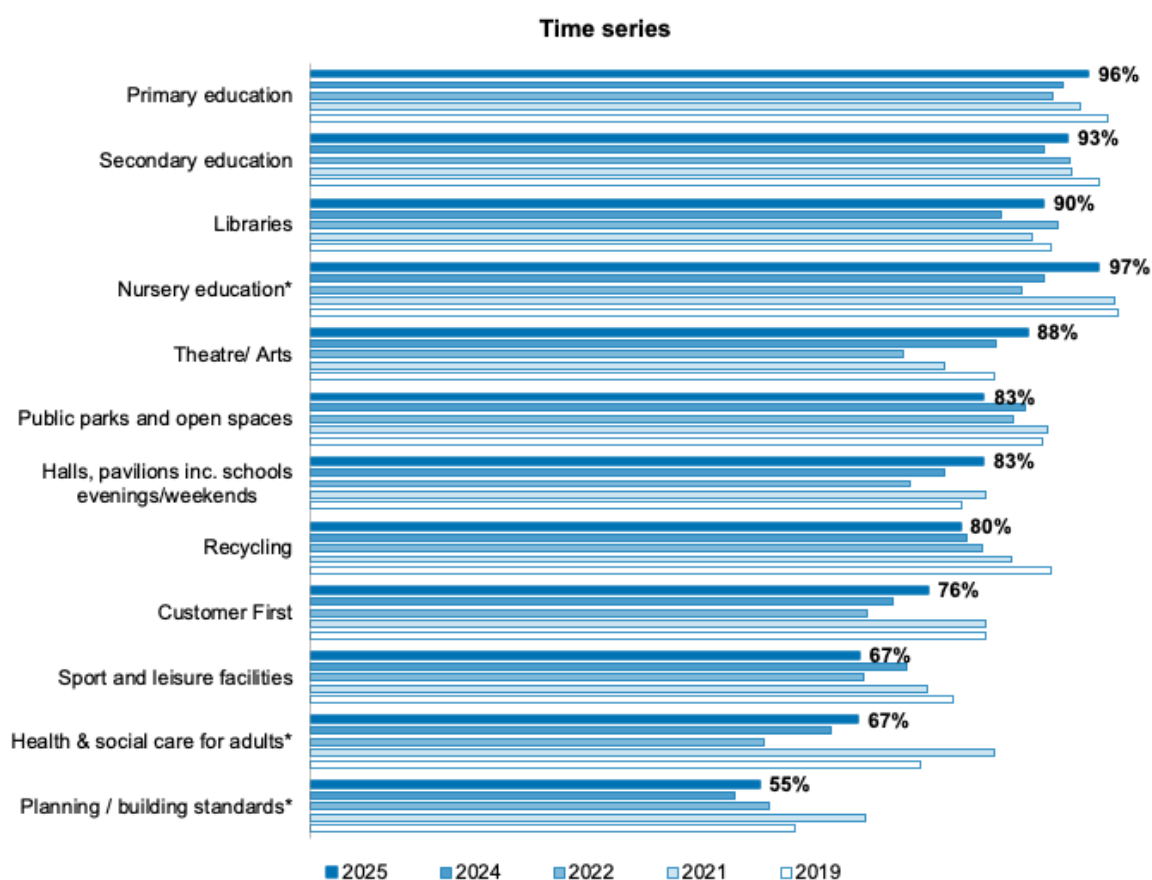
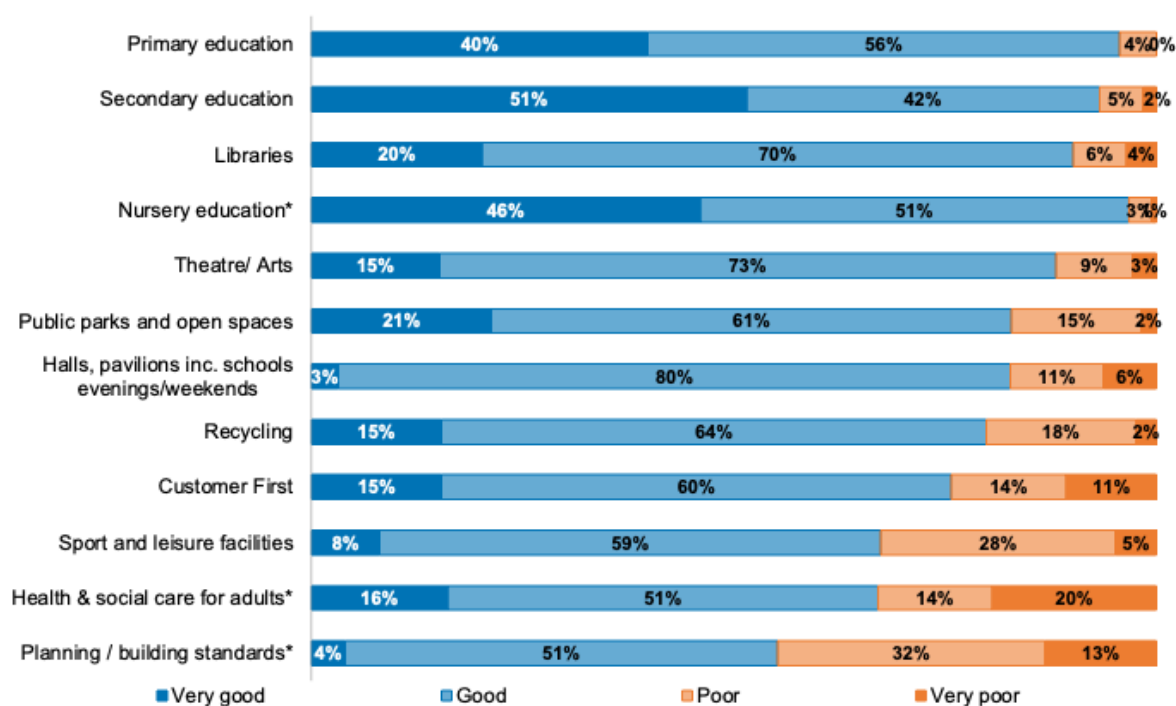
The survey also asked for Panel members' views on specific Council services that they may or may not have used over the last year.<sup>2</sup> Figure 6 summarises views on the quality of these services.

All services for which results are available received a positive rating, including some which the overwhelming majority of respondents rate as "very good" or "good". Respondents are most positive about education services, with 96% rating primary education and 93% rating secondary education positively. Views were also very positive in relation to libraries (90% rating positively), theatre and arts (88%), public parks and open spaces (83%) and halls/pavilions (83%).

The overall ranking of Council services has remained largely unchanged over recent surveys - education, libraries, theatre and the arts, and parks/open spaces have consistently been amongst the top-rated services. Comparator survey results are available for a small number of the services listed at Figure 6, and suggest that residents' views on these services in East Renfrewshire are generally similar to those across other areas.

<sup>2</sup> Note that the results presented at Figure 6 are based on all Panel members expressing a view for each service, and exclude "don't know" responses. We also run results specifically for respondents who have used each service in the last year; base numbers are small but these results are presented in the associated Technical Report for information.

**Figure 6: Satisfaction with specific East Renfrewshire Council services**



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

## Most recent contact with Council services

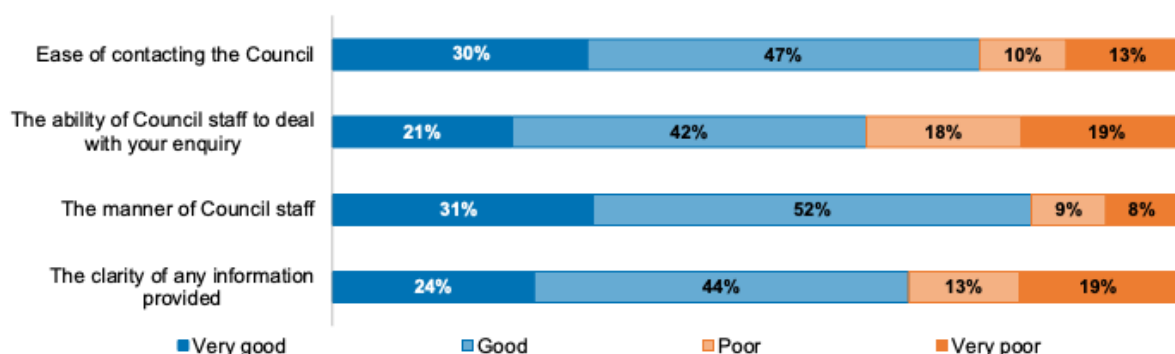
The survey also asked Panel members specifically about their most recent contact with Council services. Responses are summarised below.

Around two thirds of respondents (68%) indicated that they had contacted the Council in the last two years. Around half (53%) indicated that they had been contacting the Council about an issue for the first time, while 45% had already contacted the Council about the issue. Respondents reported having used a range of methods to get in touch: 30% had contacted the Council via telephone, 29% via email and 24% via website form.

The survey also asked Panel members to give further detail on the reason for their most recent contact with the Council. Written comments indicate that the great majority had been making contact about a specific service, with roads/transport and refuse/recycling the most commonly referenced services. Other commonly mentioned services included environment and cleansing, social care, planning and sports/leisure services.

Respondent views were **generally positive on the quality of the most recent contact with Council services**, especially on the manner of staff (83% rated this positively) and ease of contacting the Council (77%). Respondents were somewhat less positive on the ability of Council staff to deal with their enquiry (63% rated as good, 37% rated as poor) and the clarity of information provided (68% rated as good and 32% as poor).

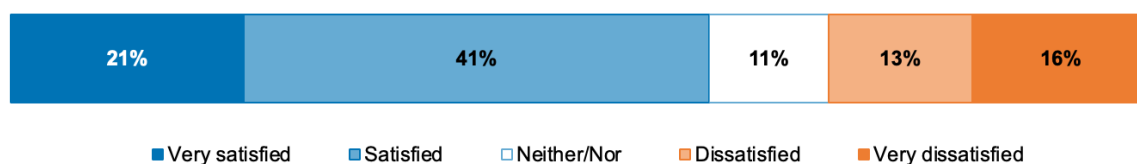
**Figure 7: Rating of most recent contact with Council services**



The **majority of respondents (61%) were satisfied with the response** they received from the Council, but there remained more than a quarter (28%) who were dissatisfied (see Figure 8).

The survey asked the 28% of respondents who had been dissatisfied with the Council's response to elaborate on the reasons for this. Some indicated that they had not received any response to their most recent contact, but most of those providing written comment felt that the Council's response had not effectively resolved the issue. This included examples of responses which respondents felt did not address their enquiry and which some described as "dismissive", and others regarding a persistent issue which respondents felt the Council had failed to resolve. Respondents also referred to having to wait too long for a response.

**Figure 8: Satisfaction with Council response to most recent contact**



Panel members were able to add any further comments on their most recent contact with the Council. Most of those providing comment reiterated issues noted above, but several additional points were raised. These are summarised below.

- Difficulties using response forms via the Council website including poor functionality on mobile devices and a lack of response from services.
- Frustration where respondents felt that multiple contacts are required to secure a response from services and/or to resolve an issue.
- Concern that the Council can appear quick to dismiss enquiries, and that services do not have the flexibility to be able to respond to the specifics of an enquiry or individuals' needs.

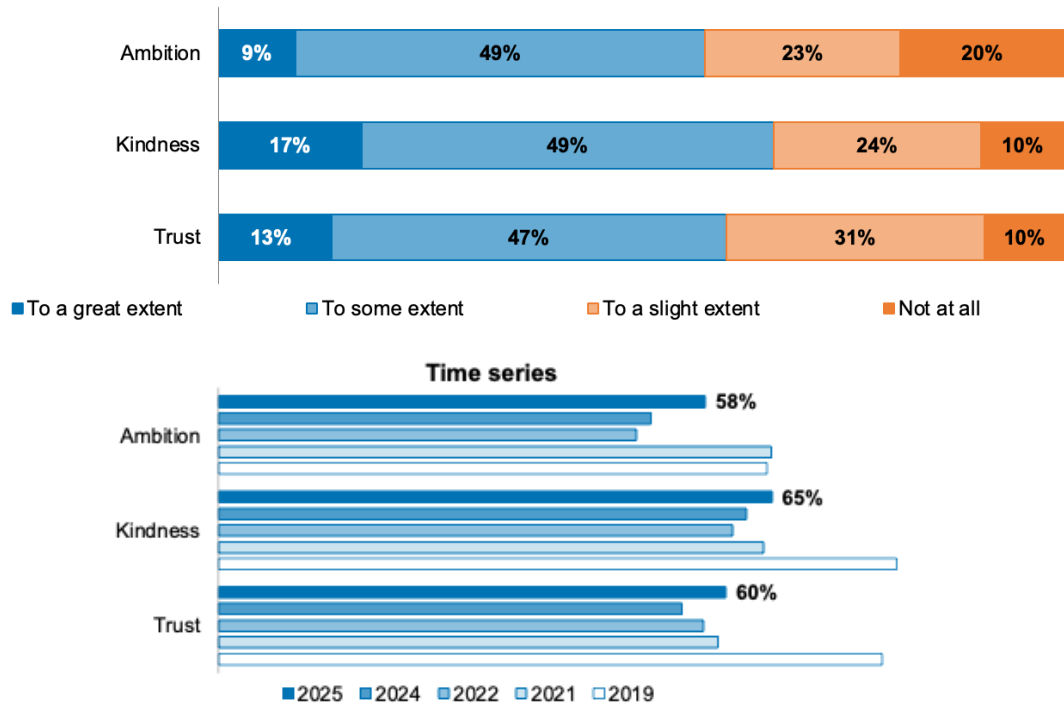
## Council values

In addition to views on the quality of Council services, Panel members were also asked to consider the extent to which they feel that Council employees represent the three Council values (Figure 9), and whether the Council as an organisation represents a range of other attributes (Figure 10).

**Most respondents feel that Council employees represent the three Council values to some extent.** This was particularly the case for “kindness”, with 65% of the view that the Council represents this value; 60% feel the Council represents “trust” and 58% feel the Council represents “ambition”.

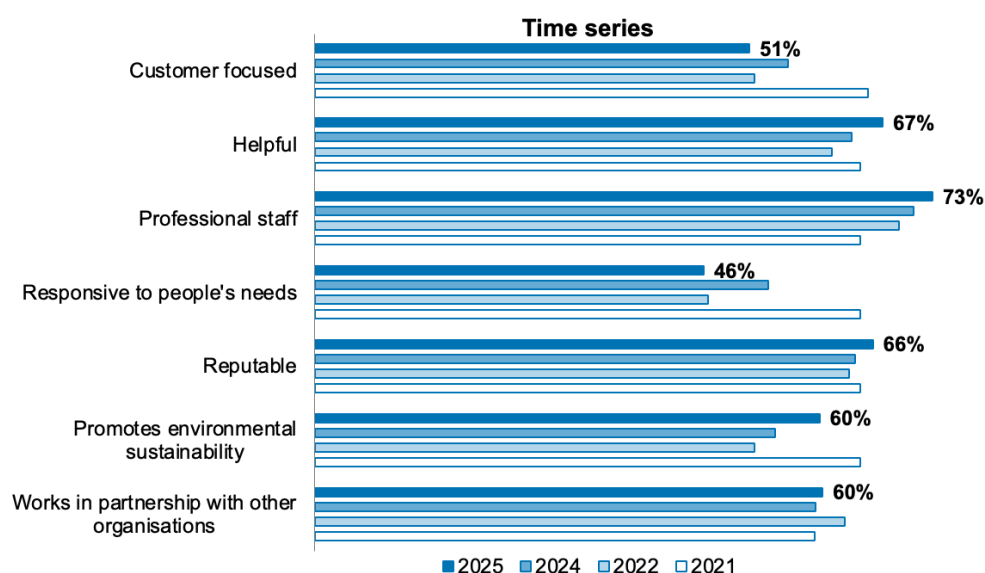
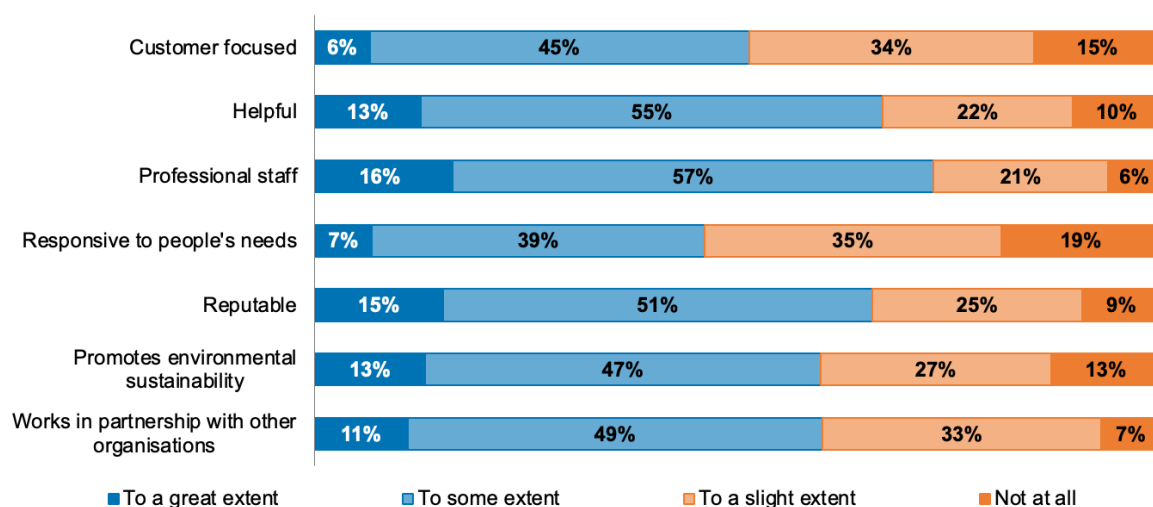
There has been some fluctuation over recent years in views on the extent to which Council employees represent the values listed at Figure 9, but no consistent upward or downward trend. Views are broadly consistent across key respondent groups although it is notable that those in the Newton Mearns North & Neilston and Giffnock & Thornliebank areas, and homeowners are less positive than others about Council employees representing these values.

**Figure 9: Extent to which employees represent Council values**



Respondents generally agree that the Council as an organisation represents the range of attributes listed at Figure 10. Views are most positive in relation to “professional staff” (73% agree with this), “helpful” (67%) and “reputable” (66%). Respondents were less likely to agree that the Council is “responsive to people’s needs” (46% agreed). It is notable that there has been a reduction since 2021 in the proportion of respondents who feel that the Council is responsive to people’s needs and customer focused.

**Figure 10: Extent to which Council represents attributes**





# SUPPORTING CARERS

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## Key messages

Around 1 in 6 respondents provide care for someone.

More than half of these respondents (58%) would know who to contact if they needed support, but a fifth (22%) would not know who to contact.

Respondents generally do not feel supported to carry on caring (21% feel supported, 37% do not), and are divided on whether they have a good balance between caring and other things in their life (35% do and 39% do not).

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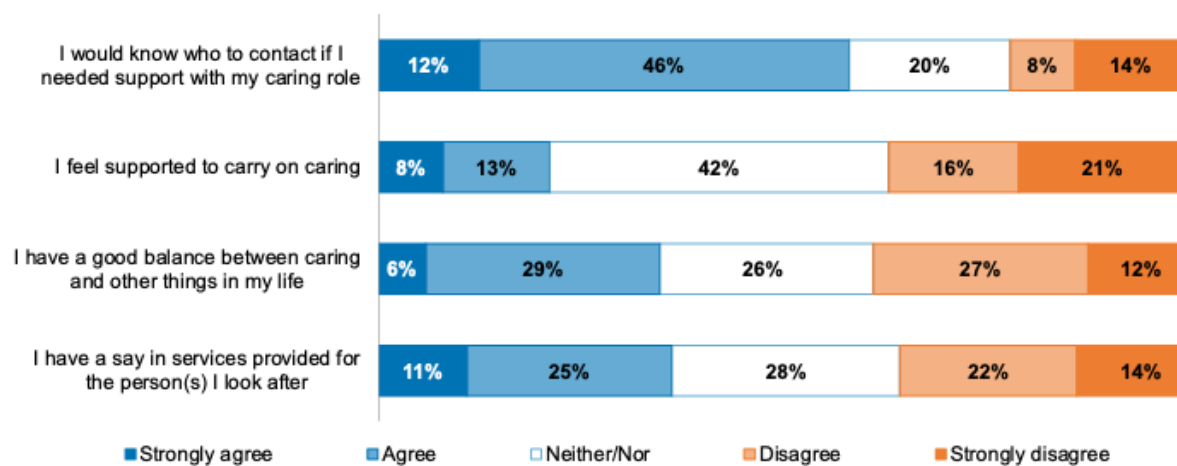
This section considers the views and experiences of Panel members who provide care for someone. This is defined as someone who provides a parent, partner, child, sibling or friend with support as a result of their illness (physical or mental), disability, long-term condition or substance misuse.

Around **1 in 6 respondents (16%) indicated that they provide care for someone**. Survey data did not identify any significant differences in the profile of carers and other respondents.

Those who provide care to someone were asked for their views on a series of statements relating to their experience as a carer. Key points are summarised below – note that responses are based on the relatively small minority of respondents who indicated that they provide care to someone.

- **More than half of respondents would know who to contact if they needed support** with their caring role (58% agreed), although there remained around a fifth who disagreed (22%).
- Respondents **generally do not feel supported to carry on caring** – only 21% feel supported, while 37% do not feel supported.
- Respondents were divided on whether they have a good balance between caring and other things in their life (35% feel they do 39% disagree) and whether they have a say in services provided for the people they care for (35% feel they do, 35% disagree).

**Figure 11: Views on caring experience**



# PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

## Key messages

More than half of respondents agree that the Local Development Plan should encourage development of new homes (58% agree, 28% disagree).

Homes suitable for older people or people with disabilities, and affordable homes for social rent are seen as the top development priorities for East Renfrewshire.

Areas that need regeneration, with good access to jobs, services and facilities, and near good public transport links are seen as the best places for development.

Improving public transport routes, new business and employment, and protecting parks, open spaces and play areas are seen as the top priorities for the LDP.

This section considers Panel members' views on planning issues in East Renfrewshire. The Council is currently preparing a new Local Development Plan (LDP) for East Renfrewshire, setting out plans for the next 10 years to meet the housing needs of the whole community and the future of the area's economy. Panel members were asked for their views on a range of issues to be considered by the LDP.

## Views on new development in East Renfrewshire

**More than half of respondents agree that the LDP should encourage development of new homes** to meet housing needs – 58% agree and 28% disagree. This balance of views is broadly consistent across key respondent groups, although those aged 45-64, minority ethnic groups and homeowners are less likely to agree.

**Figure 12: Whether agree that the LDP will encourage the development of new homes to meet the area's housing needs**

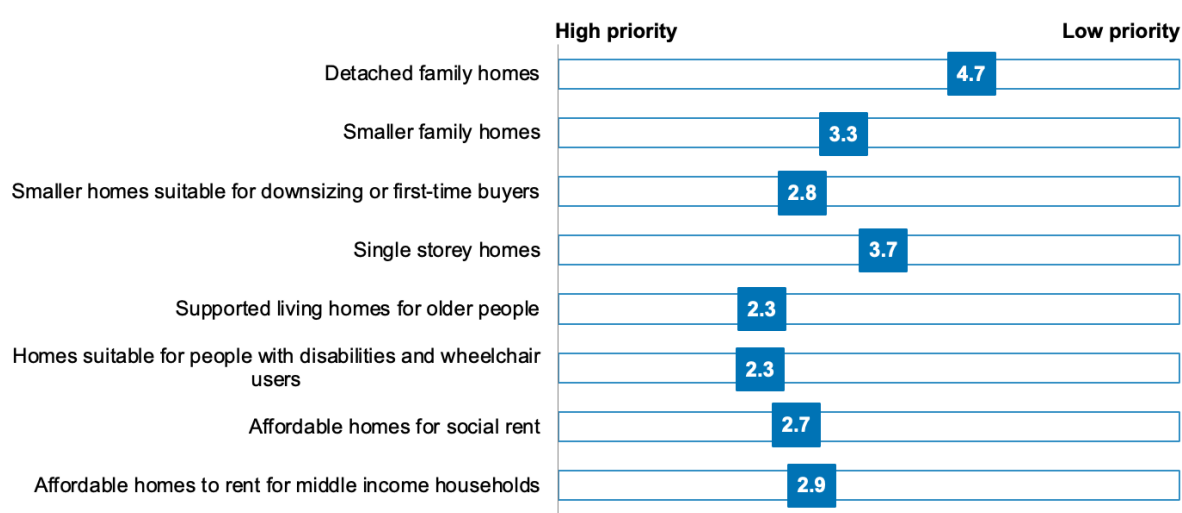


The survey asked Panel members to rank a range of housing development types in terms of which they felt should be a priority for the area. As Figure 13 shows, **homes suitable for older people or people with disabilities/ wheelchair users, and affordable homes for social rent are seen as the top priorities for East Renfrewshire**. While most of the listed property types are seen as a priority by a substantial proportion of respondents, it is notable that detached family homes are ranked lower than other development types.

The priority assigned to different property types is broadly consistent across most respondent types, with the only notable differences linked to age, location and housing tenure:

- Age. Older respondents generally give higher priority to supported homes for older people and affordable homes for social rent.
- Ward area. Those in the Barrhead, Liboside & Uplawmoor and Giffnock & Thornliebank ward areas give higher priority to affordable homes for social rent. Barrhead, Liboside & Uplawmoor area respondents also give higher priority to single storey homes.
- Tenure. Those who rent their home give higher priority to affordable homes for social rent and affordable homes to rent for middle income households.

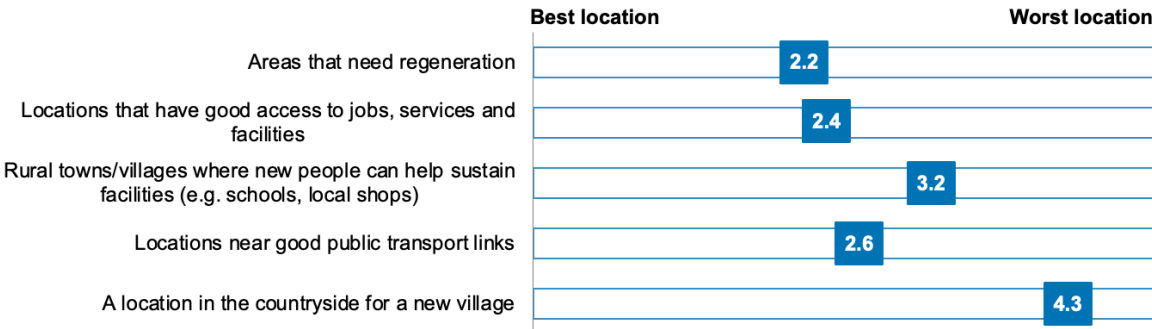
**Figure 13: Priorities for types of home to be built in East Renfrewshire<sup>3</sup>**



<sup>3</sup> Respondents were asked to rank types of home from 1 to 7, 1 being the highest priority. The lower the overall score, the higher the priority. Figure 13 shows the mean score (out of 7) for each type of home.

Panel members were also asked to rank the best locations for new housing and economic development (see Figure 14). Respondents give the highest priority to development in the following areas: that **need regeneration**; with **good access to jobs**, services and facilities; and **near good public transport links**. A location in the countryside for a new village is seen as the lowest priority location for new development. These views are broadly consistent across key respondent groups.

**Figure 14: Views on the best locations for new housing and economic development in East Renfrewshire<sup>4</sup>**



**Respondents identified a range of concerns relating to new development in East Renfrewshire**, the most significant being a shortage of key facilities, and traffic congestion (mentioned by 56% and 54% respectively, and each seen as the most important concern by a quarter of respondents). Other commonly mentioned concerns are the affordability of new homes (mentioned by 37%), loss of countryside (41%), and availability of school places (35%).

Survey results show some area variation in concerns about new development:

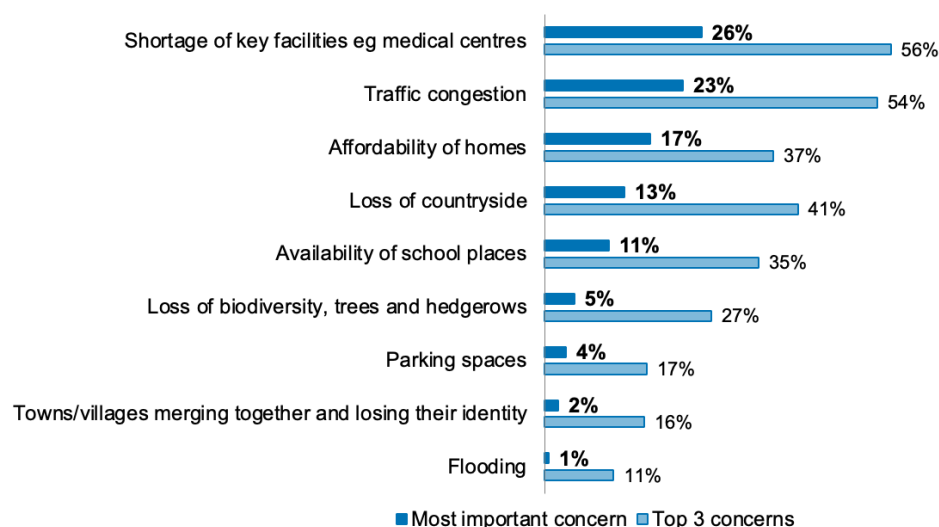
- Barrhead, Liboside & Uplawmoor respondents are generally more concerned than others about shortage of key facilities, and less concerned than others about traffic congestion and towns/villages merging together.
- Newton Mearns North & Neilston respondents are generally more concerned than others about loss of countryside, and flooding.

<sup>4</sup> Respondents were asked to rank each type of location 1 to 5, 1 being the best location. The lower the overall score, the better the location. Figure 14 shows the mean score (out of 5) for each type of area.

- Giffnock & Thornliebank respondents are generally more concerned than others about traffic congestion, and less concerned than others about shortage of key facilities.

Views also varied somewhat dependent on housing tenure. In particular, those who rent their home are more likely than others to be concerned about shortage of key facilities, affordability of homes and availability of school places. Homeowners are more concerned than others about loss of biodiversity.

**Figure 15: Concerns about new development in East Renfrewshire**



Note: Respondents could select multiple options

## Priorities for the LDP

Finally in relation to planning in East Renfrewshire, respondents were asked for their views on a range of potential priorities for the LDP. As Figure 16 shows, of the list priorities, the top three are: **protect and enhance parks, open spaces and play areas** (mentioned by 60%, the top priority for 22%); **improve public transport routes** (mentioned by 55%, the top priority for 25%) and **new business and employment** (mentioned by 50%, the top priority for 23%).

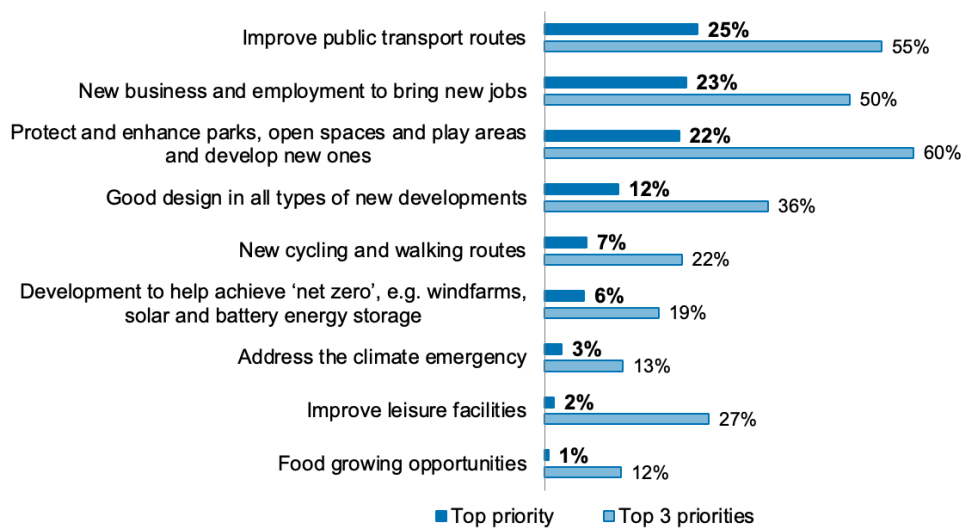
Survey results show some variation in views on these priorities:

- Barrhead, Liboside & Uplawmoor respondents are generally more likely than others to mention new business and employment, and less likely

than others to mention improving public transport or protecting and enhance parks/open spaces.

- Giffnock & Thornliebank respondents are generally more likely than others to mention protecting and enhance parks/open spaces, and less likely than others to mention new business and employment.
- Newton Mearns South & Eaglesham respondents are generally more likely than others to mention improving public transport.
- Those in Locality Planning Areas (LPA) are generally more likely than others to mention new business and employment.
- Those with a disability are generally more likely than others to mention improving public transport.
- Homeowners are generally more likely than others to mention new cycling and walking routes.

**Figure 16: Views on priorities for East Renfrewshire LDP**



Note: Respondents could select multiple options

# SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES

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## Key messages

Most feel they live in a safe place to live (78%), but are less likely to feel there are places to socialise (58%), and that the neighbourhood is well looked after (57%).

Most have people they can turn to in a crisis (90%), and feel that people in their community are kind (81%) and trustworthy (80%).

The majority of respondents have people in their community they can rely on (76%) and feel that people from different backgrounds get on well (72%). Most feel a strong sense of community (60%).

A large majority are concerned about local or online scams (83%), and feel that work to prevent scams should be a priority (88%).

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

## Your local neighbourhood

Panel members were asked for their views on a range of statements related to their local neighbourhood. **Most respondents feel their neighbourhood is a safe place to live, but are less likely to feel that there are places locally to meet up and socialise, and that the neighbourhood is well looked after**<sup>5</sup>.

- More than half of respondents (57%) feel that their local neighbourhood is well looked after, although there remains a quarter (26%) who disagreed.<sup>6</sup> Those in the Clarkston, Netherlee & Williamwood area are most likely to feel that their neighbourhood is well looked after, and Barrhead, Liboside & Uplawmoor respondents are least likely to agree.
- Around half (52%) feel that people in their neighbourhood take action to help improve things, with Giffnock & Thornliebank respondents and

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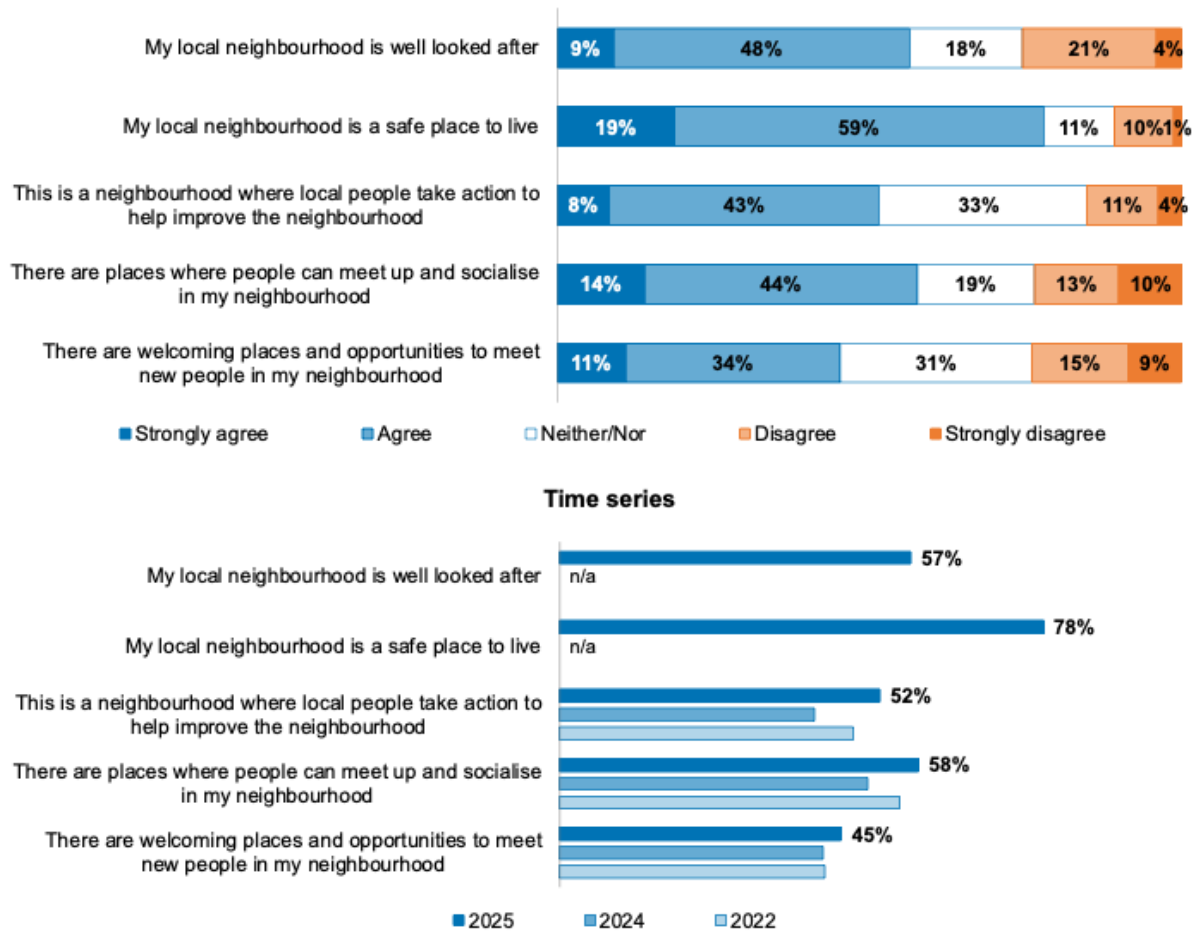
<sup>5</sup> This is a new question that will be tracked with the Panel over future surveys.



homeowners most likely to agree, and Newton Mearns North & Neilston respondents least likely.

- More than three quarters (78%) feel their local neighbourhood is a safe place to live. Those in Barrhead, Liboside & Uplawmoor and those in LPA areas are less likely than others to agree with this.
- More than half agree that there are places in their neighbourhood where people can socialise (58% - similar to the national Scottish Household Survey figure of 57%), but a smaller proportion feel there are welcoming opportunities to meet new people (45%). Those in the Clarkston, Netherlee & Williamwood area are most likely to feel there are places locally to socialise, and Barrhead, Liboside & Uplawmoor respondents are least likely.

**Figure 17: Views on local neighbourhood**



Note: "Don't know" excluded from analysis

## Feeling safe and supported

Panel members were asked for their views on a range of statements related to feeling safe and supported in their community. **A large majority of respondents have people they can turn to in a crisis, would offer their help to others, and feel that people in their community are kind and trustworthy.**

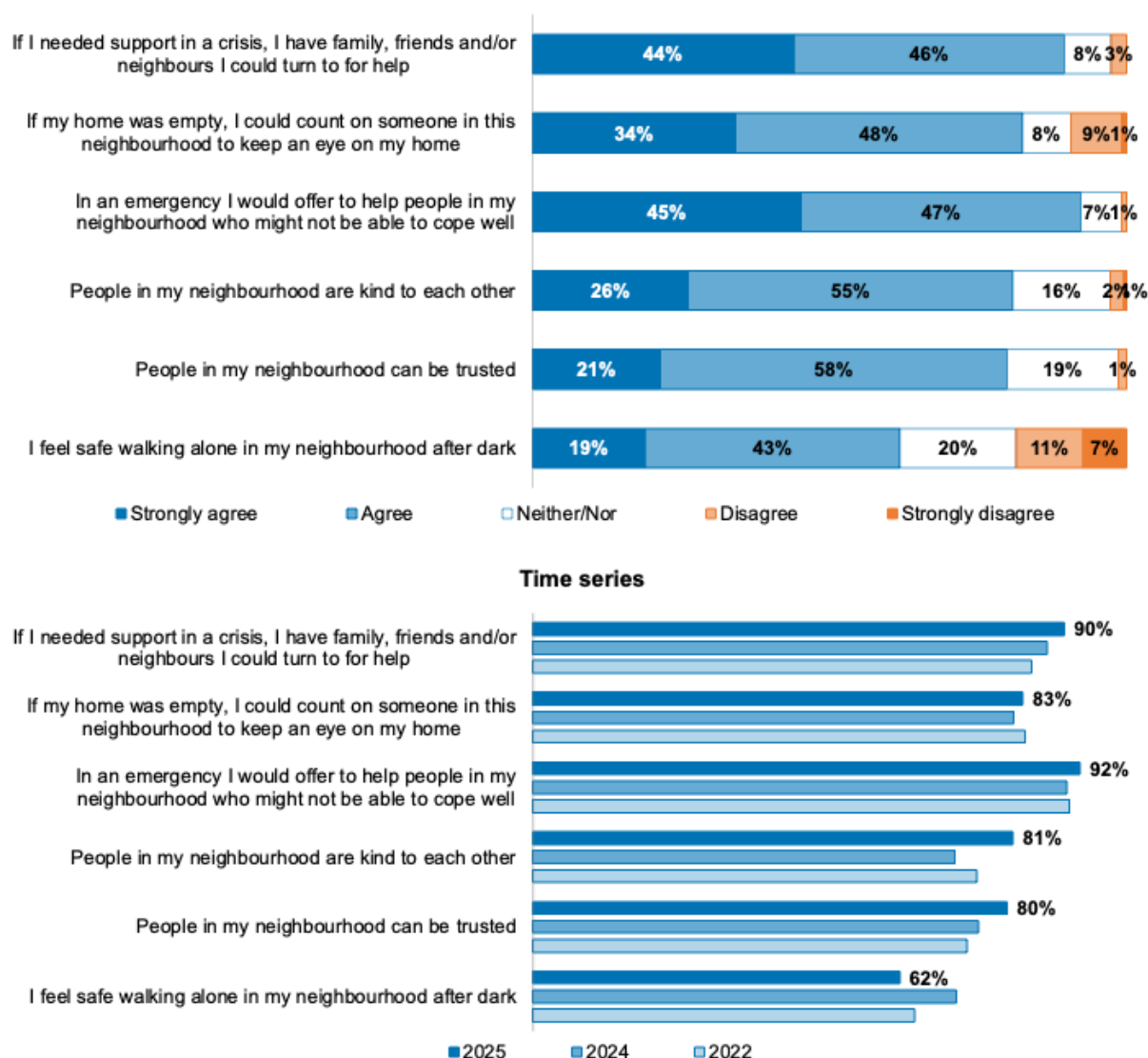
- A large majority have people they can turn to for help; 90% have people to provide support in a crisis, and 83% could count on someone to watch their home if it was empty. The great majority (92%) would offer help to people in their neighbourhood in an emergency.
- Most respondents feel that people in their neighbourhood are kind to each other (81%) and can be trusted (80% agree). Trust in people in their area is below the level reported for East Renfrewshire in the NHS Health and Wellbeing Survey (88% felt people in area can be trusted),<sup>7</sup> but is similar to the national average as reported by the Scottish Household Survey (82%)<sup>8</sup>.
- Most feel safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (62%). Women, those aged 55+ and those in the Barrhead, Liboside & Uplawmoor area are less likely to feel safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark.

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<sup>7</sup> NHSGGC 2022/23 Health & Wellbeing Survey (East Renfrewshire).

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-household-survey-2022-key-findings>

**Figure 18: Views on feeling safe and supported in the local community**



Note: "Don't know" excluded from analysis

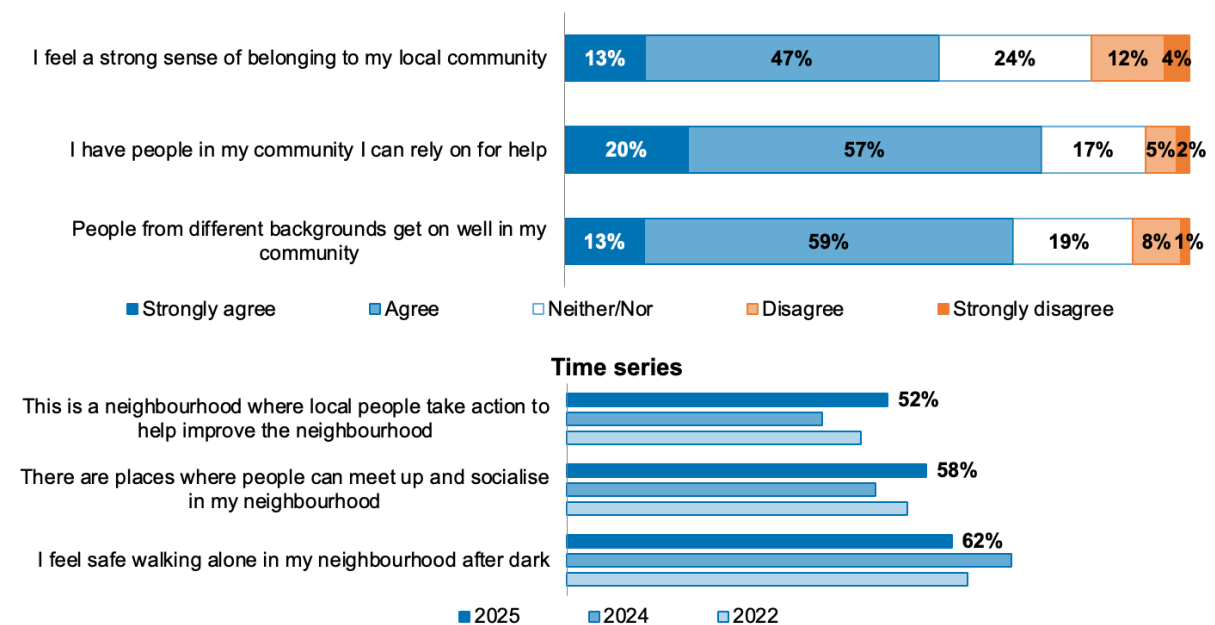
Panel members were asked for their views on a range of statements related to how people get on and support each other in their community.

**Respondents generally feel a strong sense of community and that people from different backgrounds get on well.**

- Most respondents have a strong sense of belonging to their community (60% agreed) and have people in their community they can rely on for help (76% agreed). These findings are broadly similar across key respondent groups, although those aged 55+ are more likely to feel that they have people in my community I can rely on for help.

- Most respondents feel that people from different backgrounds get on well in their community (72% agreed, slightly above the Scottish Household Survey national average of 68%)<sup>9</sup>. Minority ethnic respondents and those in the Newton Mearns North & Neilston and Giffnock & Thornliebank areas are most likely to agree.

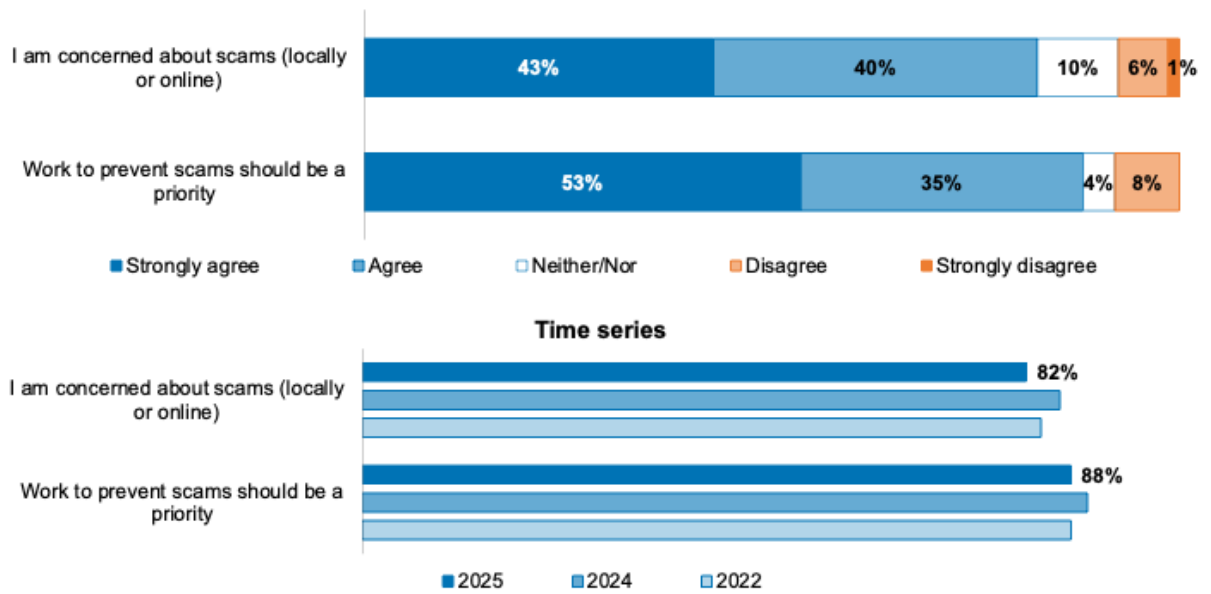
**Figure 19: Views on how people get on with and support each other**



Also in relation to feeling safe and supported, **a large majority of respondents are concerned about local or online scams** (83%), and feel that work to prevent scams should be a priority (88%). Concern about scams is widespread across all key respondent groups, although those aged 55+ are more likely than others to feel that work to prevent scams should be a priority. Levels of reported concern about scams has been broadly consistent over previous surveys.

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-household-survey-2022-key-findings>

**Figure 20: Views on online and in-person scams**



# WELLBEING AND KEEPING ACTIVE

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## Key messages

Most respondents are satisfied with their life at the moment (avg 7.5 out of 10).

Respondents were generally positive about their recent mental and emotional wellbeing, and the proportion who experience loneliness remains below 2021 levels.

A large majority (72%) have taken part in some sport or physical activity in the last 4 weeks, and have participated in cultural events or activities (92%).

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

## Mental and emotional wellbeing

As Figure 21 shows, **most respondents are satisfied with their life at the moment**.<sup>10</sup> Overall, respondents scored their life satisfaction at an average of 7.5 out of 10, with the majority (63%) giving a score of 8+. Around 1 in 7 respondents (14%) gave a life satisfaction score of 5 or lower.

Ratings of life satisfaction are broadly similar across key respondent groups, although it is notable that people with a disability, those who rent their home and those in LPA areas generally report lower life satisfaction than other respondents. Life satisfaction is a complex subjective indicator, and care is required when drawing comparisons with other surveys, but it is notable that the average score for East Renfrewshire is very similar to that reported across Scotland as a whole (average of 7.49).<sup>11</sup>

**Figure 21: Life satisfaction (average on a scale 0-10)**



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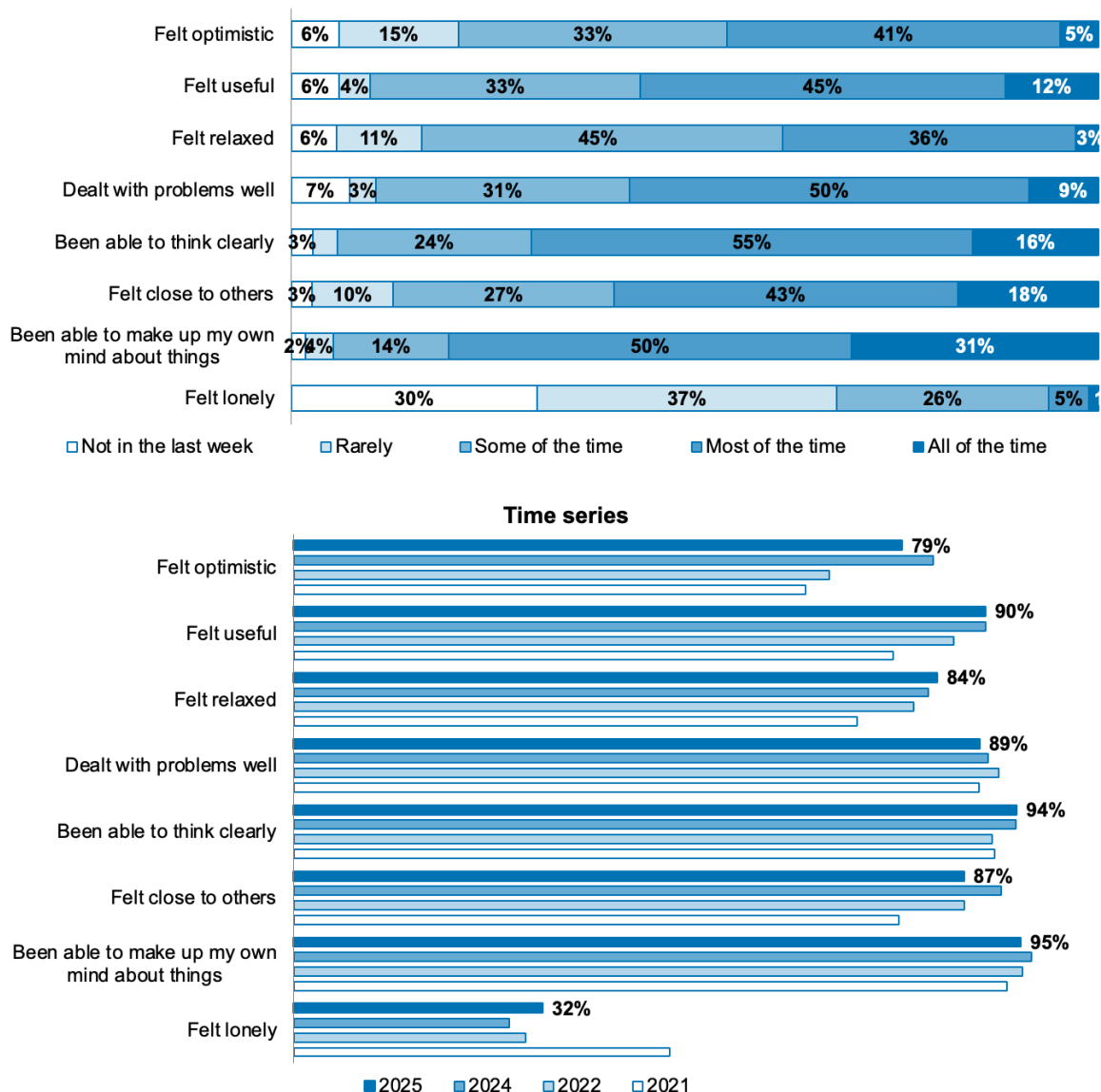
<sup>10</sup> This is a new question that will be tracked with the Panel over future surveys.

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.ons.gov.uk/datasets/wellbeing-local-authority/editions/time-series/versions/4>

As Figure 22 shows, **respondents are generally positive about their recent mental and emotional wellbeing**, particularly in relation to being able to make up their own mind about things, thinking clearly and dealing with problems.

- The majority of respondents have felt optimistic, useful and relaxed at least some of the time in the last week (79%, 90% and 84% respectively). The proportion of respondents who are optimistic has fallen slightly since 2024, but remains 12-points above the level reported in 2021. Those with a disability are less likely than others to have felt optimistic, useful and relaxed. Those aged under 55 are also less likely than others to have felt relaxed, and renters are less likely to have felt useful.
- A large majority have felt able to think clearly, to deal with problems well, and to make up their own mind over the last week (94%, 89% and 95% respectively).
- A large majority have felt close to others at least some of the time in the last week (60%). This represents a small decrease since 2024, but is similar to the 2022 result and remains 8-points above the level reported in 2021. Those with a disability and renters are less likely than others to have felt close to others recently.
- Around a third (32%) have felt lonely at least some time in the week prior to the survey. The proportion of respondents who have experienced loneliness is significantly below the peak of 49% in the 2021 survey (conducted during ongoing restrictions to control the spread of COVID-19) but remains above the national average (23% reported by the Scottish Household Survey). Those with a disability and homeowners are more likely than others to have felt lonely in the last week.

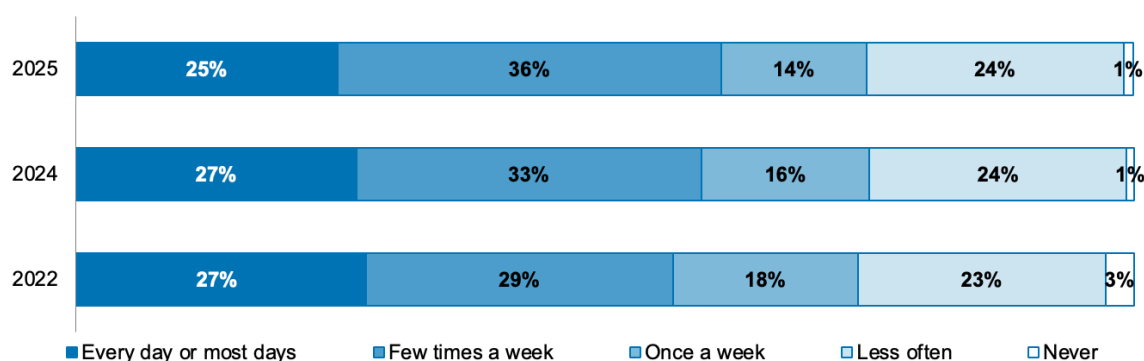
**Figure 22: Mental and emotional wellbeing in the last week**



**Three quarters of respondents (75%) have met with family, friends or neighbours at least once a week in the last year**, including a quarter (25%) who met socially every day or most days. However, there remains a similar proportion (25%) who met socially less often than once a week. It is notable that those aged under 55, minority ethnic groups and those in rented housing are less likely to have regularly met with family and friends.



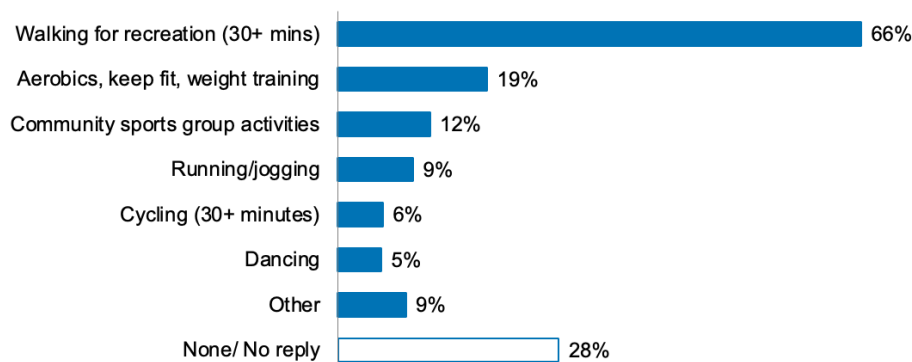
**Figure 23: How often met socially with family, friends, etc in last 12 months**



## Physical activity

**The majority of respondents have taken part in some sport or physical activity in the last 4 weeks** (72%), below the level reported by the Scottish Household Survey (82%). Physical activity most commonly involved walking for recreation (66% having walked for at least 30 minutes in the last 4 weeks). The profile of physical activity has remained largely unchanged over recent surveys, and is similar across key respondent subgroups.

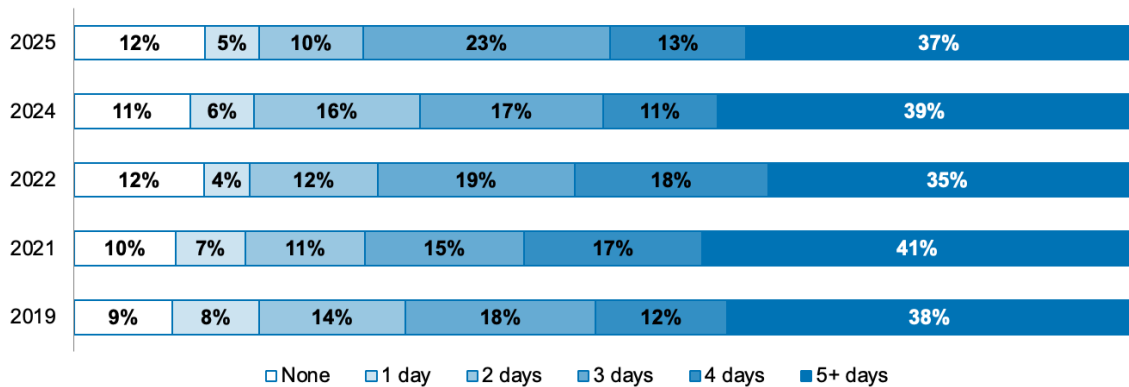
**Figure 24: Physical activity in the last 4 weeks**



Note: Respondents could select multiple options

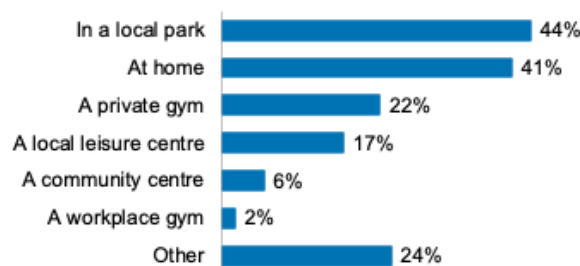
Most respondents report taking physical activity on a relatively frequent basis; nearly three quarters (73%) of all respondents had taken 30+ minutes of exercise on at least 3 days a week over the last four weeks. This included more than a third (37%) who had taken 30+ minutes of exercise on at least 5 days a week. Survey results indicate that those with a disability and renters are less likely than others to take exercise on three or more days a week.

**Figure 25: Frequency of physical activity in the last 4 weeks**



Respondents are most likely to take physical activity in a local park (44% usually do this) or at home (41%). Around a quarter (24%) usually take exercise in a private or workplace gym, and a fifth (20%) in a leisure centre or community centre. A substantial proportion of respondents mentioned taking exercise in “other” locations, most commonly walking in local countryside and outdoor sports such as golf and cycling.

**Figure 26: Location usually used for physical activity**

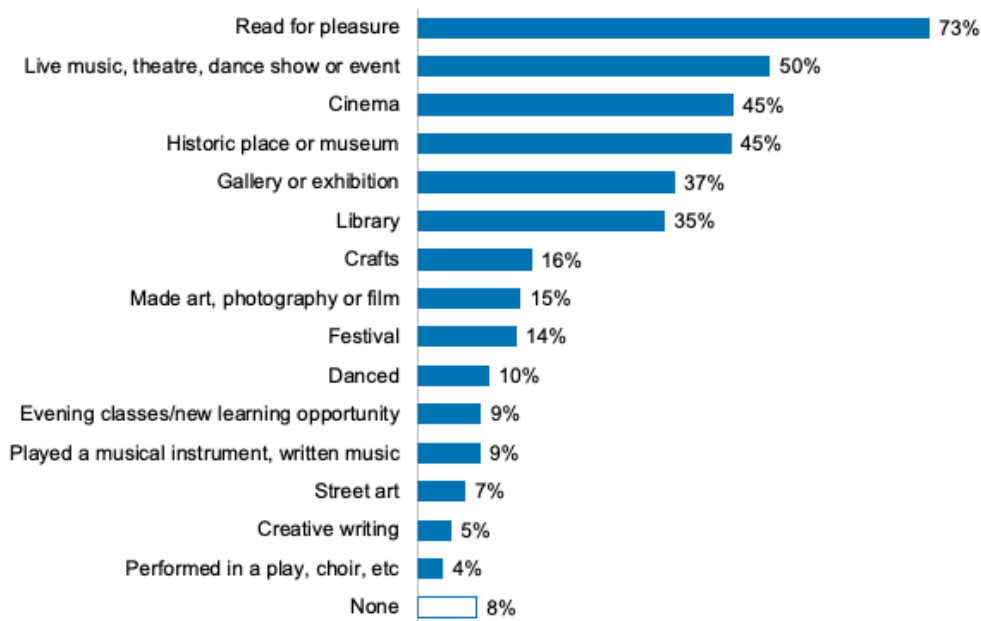


Note: Respondents could select multiple options

## Cultural participation

**A large majority of respondents have participated in cultural events or activities in the last year (92%).** This has most commonly involved reading for pleasure (73%), live music/theatre/dance (50%), cinema (45%) or historic places or museums (45%).

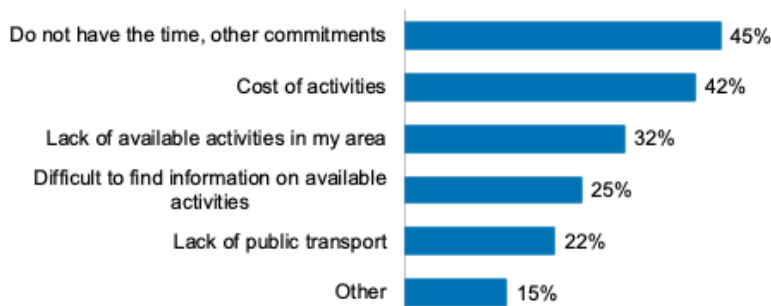
**Figure 27: Participation in cultural activities over last 12 months**



Note: Respondents could select multiple options

**The most common factors preventing participation in leisure or cultural activities are lacking the time and cost of activities.** More than 2 in 5 respondents mentioned each of these as factors limiting their participation (45% and 42% respectively). In addition, around a third (32%) mentioned a lack of available activities locally, a quarter (25%) mentioned difficulty finding information on available activities, and around a fifth (22%) mentioned a lack of public transport.

**Figure 28: Factors that prevent participation in leisure or cultural activities**



Note: Respondents could select multiple options

A quarter of respondents (25%) would like to attend other types of activity or event if they were available in East Renfrewshire. Written comments included respondents expressing interest in:

- Crafts including art classes, ceramics, dressmaking, and cooking.
- Exercise classes such as tai chi, dancing for fitness and walking groups.
- Local food and drink related events such as festivals or farmer's markets.
- Cultural activities such as theatre, live music, musical theatre and outdoor cinema.
- Activities for specific groups including LGBTQ+ people.
- More daytime activities.

# GETTING INVOLVED IN YOUR COMMUNITY

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## Key messages

Three quarters (76%) have volunteered, but most (72%) do not feel well informed about local volunteering opportunities (and 28% do not feel informed at all).

A large majority feel that it is important to be able to influence local decisions (79%), but generally feel that they are not able to do so – and do not feel encouraged to get involved.

Panel members generally feel Council services are accessible for them (63%) and, to a lesser extent, that services meet their needs (51%).

The vast majority would feel confident using digital options to access Council or other services.

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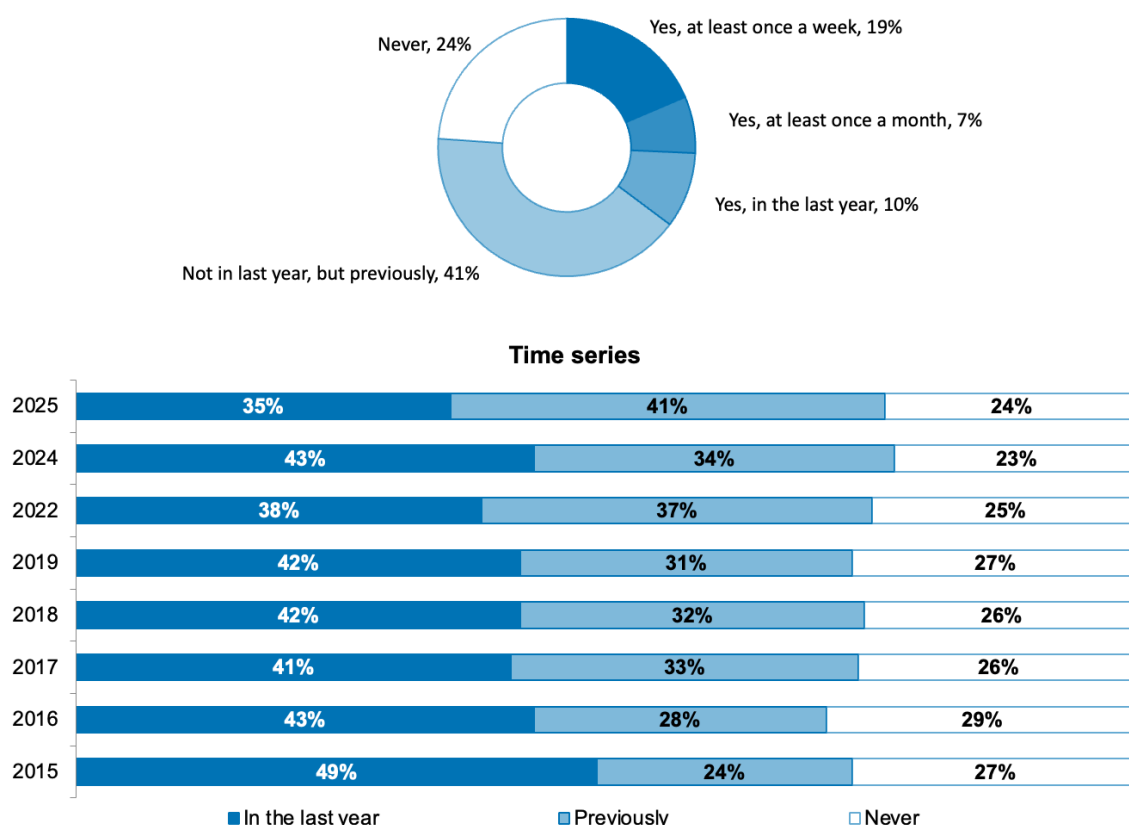
The final section of the survey sought views on getting involved in the local community, influencing local decision making and access to local services.

## Volunteering

As Figure 29 indicates, **three quarters of respondents have given up time to help clubs, charities or other organisations** (76%). This includes more than a third (35%) who have volunteered in the last year and around a quarter (26%) who do so at least once a month. Findings are broadly consistent across key respondent groups.

Comparison with other data suggests that Panel members are more likely than the wider public to volunteer. The 35% who have volunteered in the last year is lower than reported in 2024, but remains above the 30% reported for East Renfrewshire in the NHS Health & Wellbeing Survey, and the 26% reported nationally by the Scottish Household Survey.

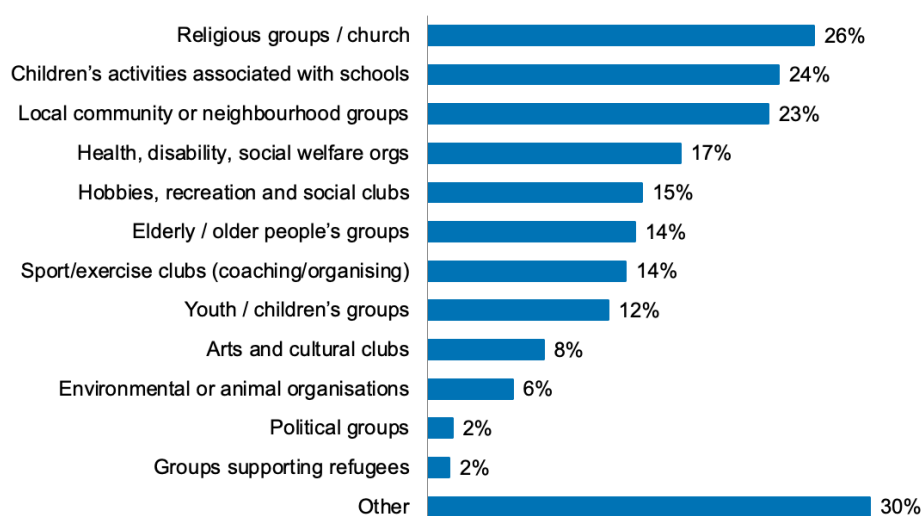
**Figure 29: Whether given up unpaid time in last 12 months**



Respondents have given up time for a range of organisation types. The most common are: religious groups (26% of those who have volunteered); children’s activities linked to schools (24%, a 10-point increase since 2019), and local community or neighbourhood groups (23%).

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

**Figure 30: Types of organisation given up time for**



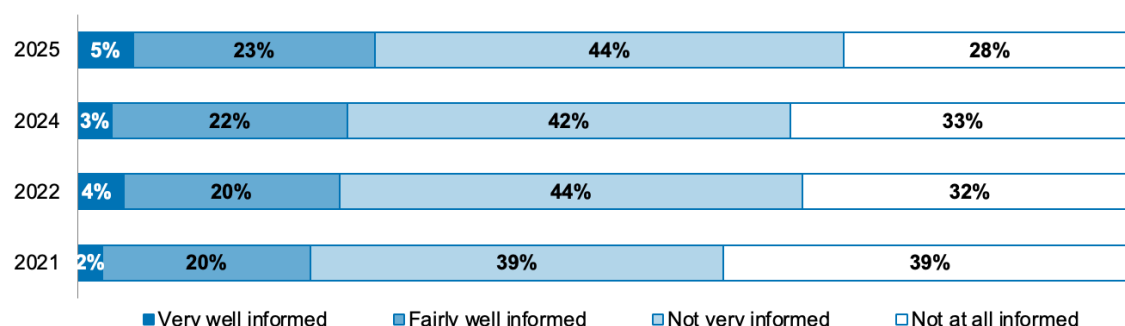
Note: Respondents could select multiple options

Around 1 in 6 respondents (17%) have stopped volunteering in the last 2 years. This was most commonly due to other time commitments; most of those who had stopped volunteering mentioned family and/or work commitments. Poor health (including associated with ageing) was also mentioned by some.

**Despite the relatively high level of volunteering activity, Panel members generally do not feel well informed about volunteering opportunities.**

Nearly three quarters (72%) do not feel well informed about opportunities in East Renfrewshire, while 28% feel fairly well informed. People aged under 55, those without a disability and homeowners generally feel less well informed about volunteering opportunities.

**Figure 31: Whether feel informed about volunteering opportunities in East Renfrewshire**



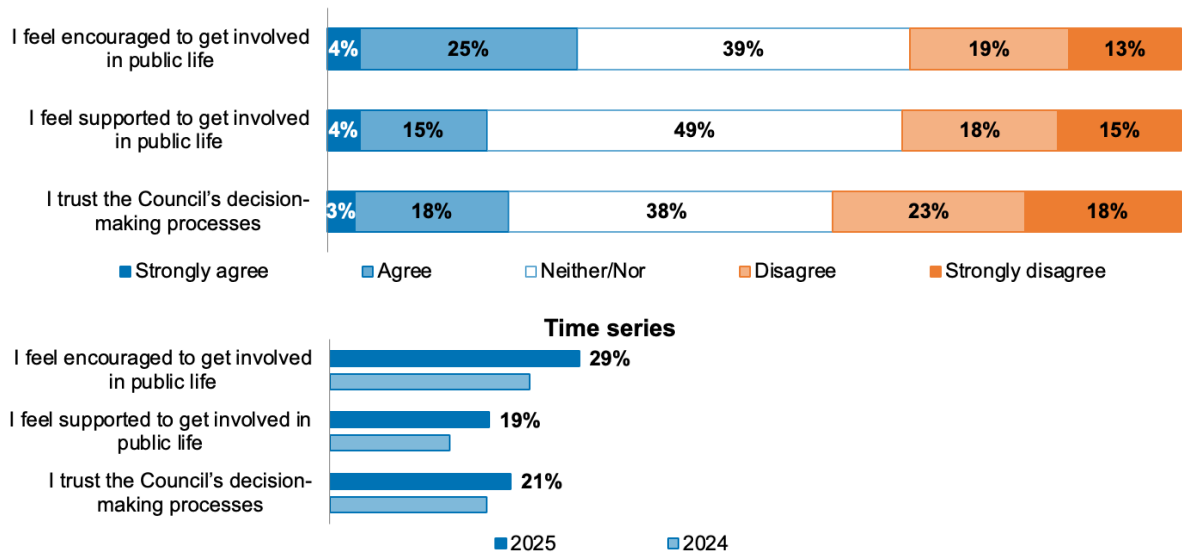
# Tackling inequalities - local decision making

As Figure 32 shows, **views were somewhat divided but Panel members generally do not feel encouraged or supported to get involved in public life**. A large proportion of respondents selected the neutral “neither/nor” response, but others were more likely to indicate that they do not feel encouraged or supported; 32% do not feel encouraged (while 29% do) and 33% do not feel supported (19% do). This balance of views shows some improvement since the 2024 survey, with a 6-point increase in the proportion who feel encouraged to get involved in public life.

Panel members also generally do not trust the Council’s decision-making processes; 41% indicated this compared with 21% who do trust these processes.

This mix of views is consistent across most respondent groups. However, it is notable that minority ethnic groups and homeowners are less likely than others to feel supported to get involved or to trust Council decision-making.

Figure 32: Views on being well represented in public life

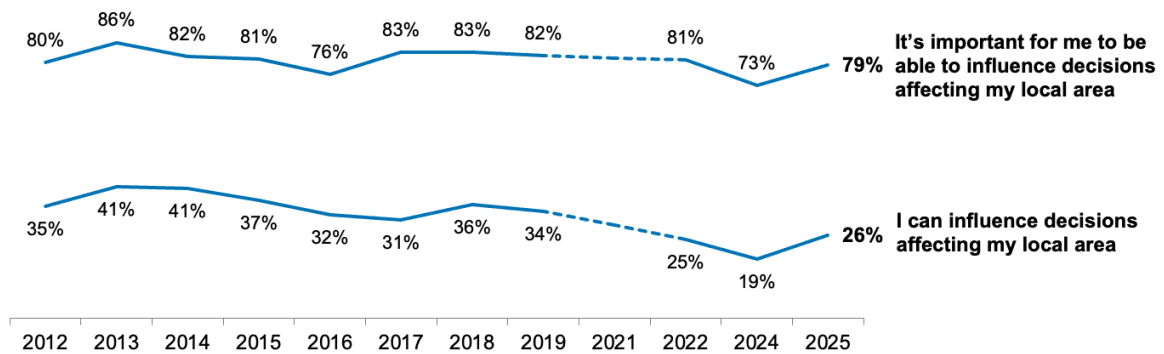


As Figure 33 shows, **Panel members are clear in their view that it is important for them to be able to influence decisions affecting their local area**; 79% agree with this and only 2% disagree. However, Panel members generally feel that they are not able to influence local decisions; 41% feel they are not able to do so, while 26% do feel able to influence decisions.



The proportion of respondents who feel able to influence local decisions shows a 7-point increase since 2024, and is above the level reported nationally by the Scottish Household Survey (18%). However, this result has been declining in recent years, and remains 10-points below the level reported in 2018.

**Figure 33: Views on influencing local decisions**



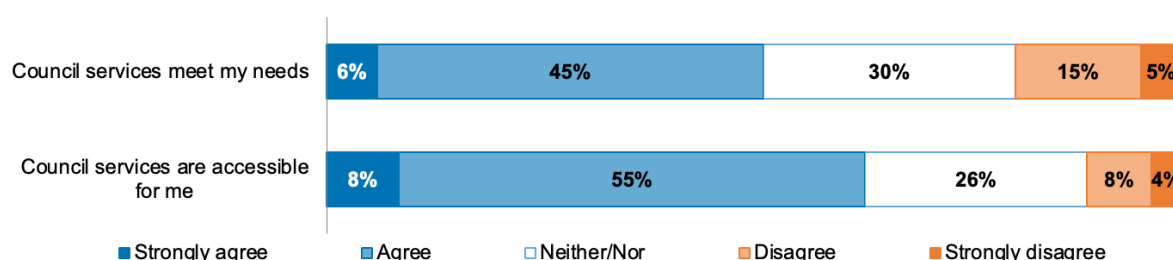
Respondents suggested a number of areas where they feel that change could help more people contribute to local decision making. These suggestions included:

- Improving awareness of local opportunities to contribute, including through newsletters or community letters, and advertising in local venues.
- Addressing what was seen as “apathy” around potential for communities to influence local decisions. This included calls for more “honest” and “transparent” decision making, based on more meaningful consultation to ensure communities can have a genuine influence on decision making – and providing feedback to demonstrate how communities views have been used.
- Ensuring the approach to engagement with communities is informed by an understanding of what works for local people, and provides multiple participation options to minimise barriers to participation. This included suggestions for more opportunities for in-person engagement in local communities, and greater use of web-based consultation.

## Tackling inequalities - accessing services

**Panel members generally feel that Council services are accessible for them and, to a lesser extent, that services meet their needs.** Most respondents agreed that Council services are accessible for them (63%, 11% disagreed) and around half (51%) agreed that services meet their needs (19% disagreed). Views were broadly consistent across key respondent groups.

**Figure 34: Views on access to Council services**



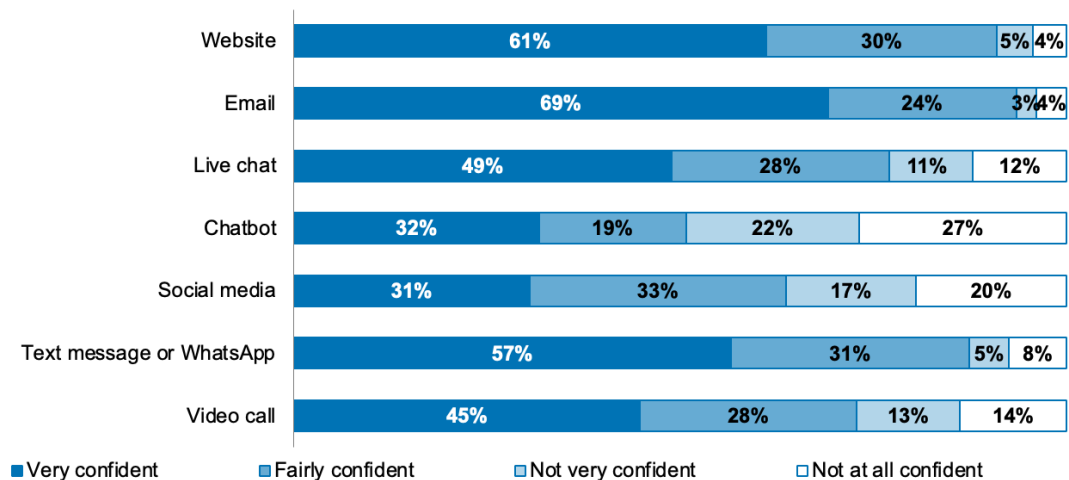
Those who feel that Council services do not meet their needs and/or are not accessible referred to a range of issues. These most commonly related to transport barriers, difficulty contacting Council services (including examples of services failing to respond to requests), and a perceived lack of support for specific groups (including vulnerable people and those with particular needs).

Several potential changes were suggested to ensure that Council services are accessible and meet people's needs:

- Making Council services more accessible including reference to longer opening hours, making it easier for residents to report issues, better online information that is easier to find, and more in-person contact and options for those who struggle to use web-based services.
- Regular community meetings to share information regarding the Council and to raise issues.
- Reduce charges for services.
- Improve transport options.

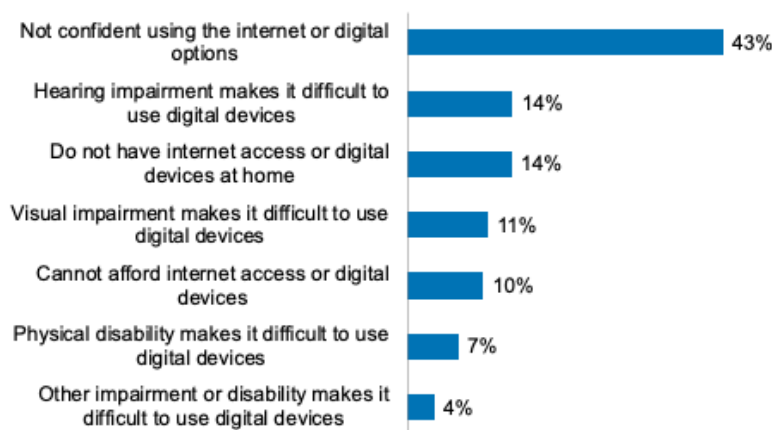
**Most Panel members would feel confident using digital options to access Council or other services.** The great majority (98%) would feel confident using one or more of the digital options listed, with confidence highest in relation to email, websites, messaging, 'live chat' and video calls. Survey results indicate that confidence in digital options is broadly consistent across key respondent groups, although those aged 65+ are less confident using some options such as 'live chat', social media, chatbots and video calls.

**Figure 35: Confidence using digital options to access Council services**



As Figure 36 shows, for the minority of respondents who would not feel confident using digital options this was most likely due to a lack of confidence in using the internet or digital devices (43% indicated this). Respondents also referred to sensory impairment and a lack of internet access/digital devices limiting their ability to use digital options.

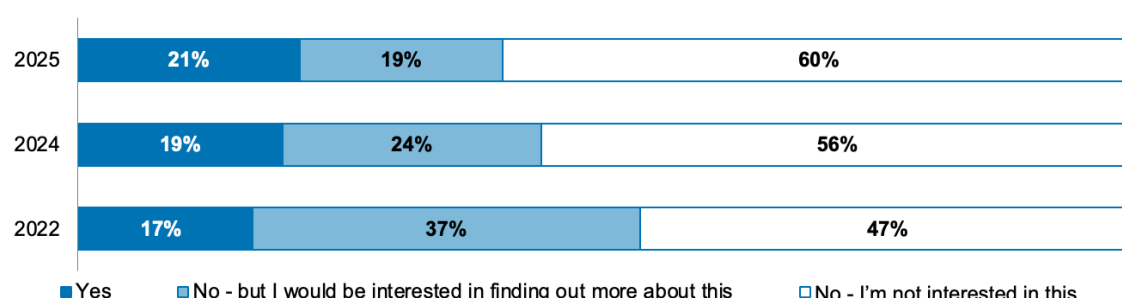
**Figure 36: Factors making it difficult to use digital options to access services**



Note: Respondents could select multiple options

**Relatively few respondents (21%) are aware of local services providing support and information on digital learning and access.** Survey results suggest that a further fifth of respondents (19%) would be interested in finding out more about these services.

**Figure 37: Awareness of local support or information to help people use digital services**



Panel members were also asked to suggest changes that could make digital services more accessible to people with additional needs. A relatively small number of respondents commented here. The following suggestions were provided:

- Engaging with local services and organisations working with people with additional needs to identify the support required.
- More provision for internet access and digital training in local communities, including through libraries.
- Better and more affordable internet connectivity, especially in rural locations.
- Ensuring alternative contact methods are available for those who have difficulty with digital services due to additional needs.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

This report has provided an overview of results from the latest East Renfrewshire Citizens' Panel survey, conducted in early 2025 with a focus on Council services, planning and housing, supporting carers, local communities, keeping active and how the Council communicates. More detailed findings are provided in the Technical Report.

**The level of survey response remains strong at 59%**, and is sufficient to **produce a robust set of survey results**. These provide an accurate representation of the views of East Renfrewshire residents, and are sufficient to support robust detailed survey analysis.

However, response shows a small reduction from the 2023 and 2024 surveys suggesting a potential need for further Panel refreshment in the short to medium term. The most recent refreshment exercise carried out in 2022/23 improved representation of several socio-demographic groups, and the present Panel profile suggests that there would be value in boosting member numbers in the most deprived areas, those aged under 35 and people from minority ethnic backgrounds.

Meaningful feedback of consultation findings is an important factor in maintaining Panel members' engagement. This is provided via feedback to Panel members, and online publication of survey reports and member newsletters (at <https://www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/east-renfrewshire-citizens-panel>).

## Ward profiles

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

These include comparison of results for each ward with the East Renfrewshire average (for all respondents) and consideration of trend results across the last 3-4 surveys (where available). Arrow icons indicate whether results for the ward are higher (▲), lower (▼) or similar to (=) the comparator. Due to the relatively small sample sizes involved, **comparison with the East Renfrewshire average and previous surveys are indicative only.**

# Ward 1 Barrhead, Liboside and Uplawmoor

## Life in in East Renfrewshire and local services

vs ER avg

Trend



77% satisfied with East Renfrewshire as a place to live

=



63% satisfied with Council services

=

=



28% feel Council services are good value for money

=



## Safe and supportive communities



43% feel their neighbourhood is well looked after



n/a



67% feel a strong sense of community



37% feel safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark



## Wellbeing and keeping active



7.3 out of 10 average quality of life rating

=

n/a



67% taken part in physical activity in last 4 wks

=

=



73% given unpaid help, 33% in last year

=

=

## Planning for the future



59% wish to see LDP encourage new housing development

=

n/a

## Ward 2 Newton Mearns North and Neilston

### Life in in East Renfrewshire and local services

vs ER avg

Trend



80% satisfied with East Renfrewshire as a place to live

=

=



54% satisfied with Council services

=

=



31% feel Council services are good value for money

=

=

### Safe and supportive communities



54% feel their neighbourhood is well looked after

=

n/a



64% feel a strong sense of community

=



77% feel safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark



### Wellbeing and keeping active



7.5 out of 10 average quality of life rating

=

n/a



66% taken part in physical activity in last 4 wks

=

=



78% given unpaid help, 35% in last year

=



### Planning for the future



60% wish to see LDP encourage new housing development

=

n/a



## Ward 3: Giffnock and Thornliebank

### Life in in East Renfrewshire and local services

vs ER avg

Trend



97% satisfied with East Renfrewshire as a place to live



72% satisfied with Council services



=



21% feel Council services are good value for money

=



### Safe and supportive communities



60% feel their neighbourhood is well looked after

=

n/a



59% feel a strong sense of community

=

=



64% feel safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark

=

=

### Wellbeing and keeping active



7.2 out of 10 average quality of life rating

=

n/a



70% taken part in physical activity in last 4 wks

=

=



79% given unpaid help, 35% in last year

=

=

### Planning for the future



60% wish to see LDP encourage new housing development

=

n/a

# Ward 4 Clarkston, Netherlee and Williamwood

## Life in in East Renfrewshire and local services

vs ER avg    Trend



88% satisfied with East Renfrewshire as a place to live

=

=



71% satisfied with Council services



21% feel Council services are good value for money

=



## Safe and supportive communities



70% feel their neighbourhood is well looked after



n/a



53% feel a strong sense of community

=

=



67% feel safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark

=

=

## Wellbeing and keeping active



7.9 out of 10 average quality of life rating



n/a



81% taken part in physical activity in last 4 wks



=



76% given unpaid help, 29% in last year

=

=

## Planning for the future



57% wish to see LDP encourage new housing development

=

n/a

# Ward 5 Newton Mearns South and Eaglesham

## Life in in East Renfrewshire and local services

vs ER avg

Trend



82% satisfied with East Renfrewshire as a place to live

=



53% satisfied with Council services

=



13% feel Council services are good value for money



## Safe and supportive communities



56% feel their neighbourhood is well looked after

=

n/a



53% feel a strong sense of community

=



63% feel safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark

=

=

## Wellbeing and keeping active



7.3 out of 10 average quality of life rating

=

n/a



76% taken part in physical activity in last 4 wks

=



75% given unpaid help, 41% in last year

=

=

## Planning for the future



50% wish to see LDP encourage new housing development

=

n/a