



CHARITY COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

# Trust in Charities 2020 – overview of findings

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JUNE 2020

**Populus**

# Who are the public? Explaining the socio-demographic map

Understanding public opinion means recognising we are all products of our backgrounds and circumstances, and in many cases differences in our past and current lives go a long way to explaining differences of opinion and behaviour when we relate to the world around us. They also help to explain why sometimes these differences can be so difficult to handle. Associate professionally and socially only with people from your own social and educational background and you risk two things: overestimating the extent to which people outside your direct experience agree with you; and demonising those who disagree with you.

Better then to start with some dispassionate analysis of the general population. Imagine a map of the country where people or the communities they live in are located not by their latitude and longitude but by how high or low they score relative to the rest of the country on two independent measures derived from census data.

These are *security*, combining measures of health, wealth and wellbeing such as income, occupation and education; and *diversity*, a combination of factors including ethnicity, culture and population density which determine how close you are to your neighbour in terms of distance and or background.

The result is a breakdown of the country along these lines into quarters representing areas or people with higher and lower, security and diversity scores than the national average. From this we can link other pieces of information from public and private data sources, including polling data, and plot these on the map we've created.



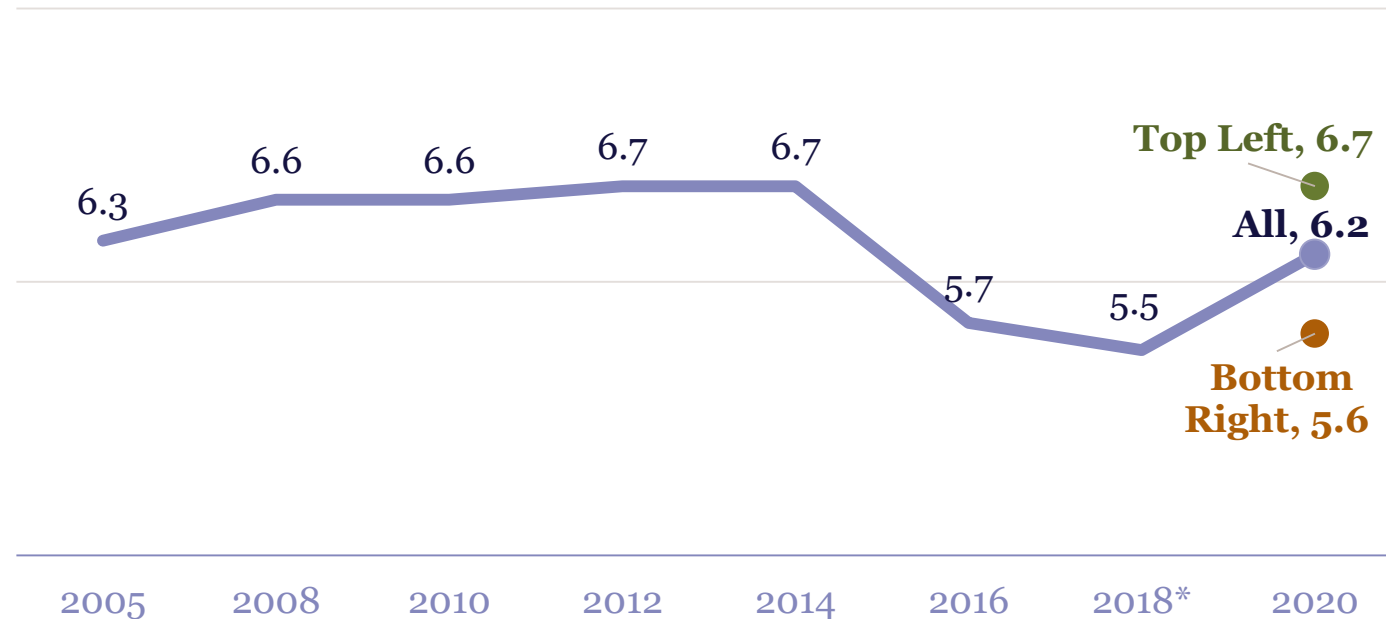
The state of Charity is improving in the eyes of the public but significant challenges remain if it is to maximise its potential for improving society.

Trust and confidence in charities has increased over the last two years but has still not recovered to its pre-2014 levels; they are now trusted to a greater extent than ordinary people. Clear majorities see charities as the best way of channelling good will, think they ought to have a greater role and believe they are easier to engage locally. However, the numbers describing the current role that charities play as essential or very important has continued to decline.

Resources reaching intended recipients remains the number one priority for the public in judging a charity, and being registered by the Charity Commission gives an overwhelming majority confidence that this is happening.

# Trust in charities has modestly increased but is still below pre-2016 levels

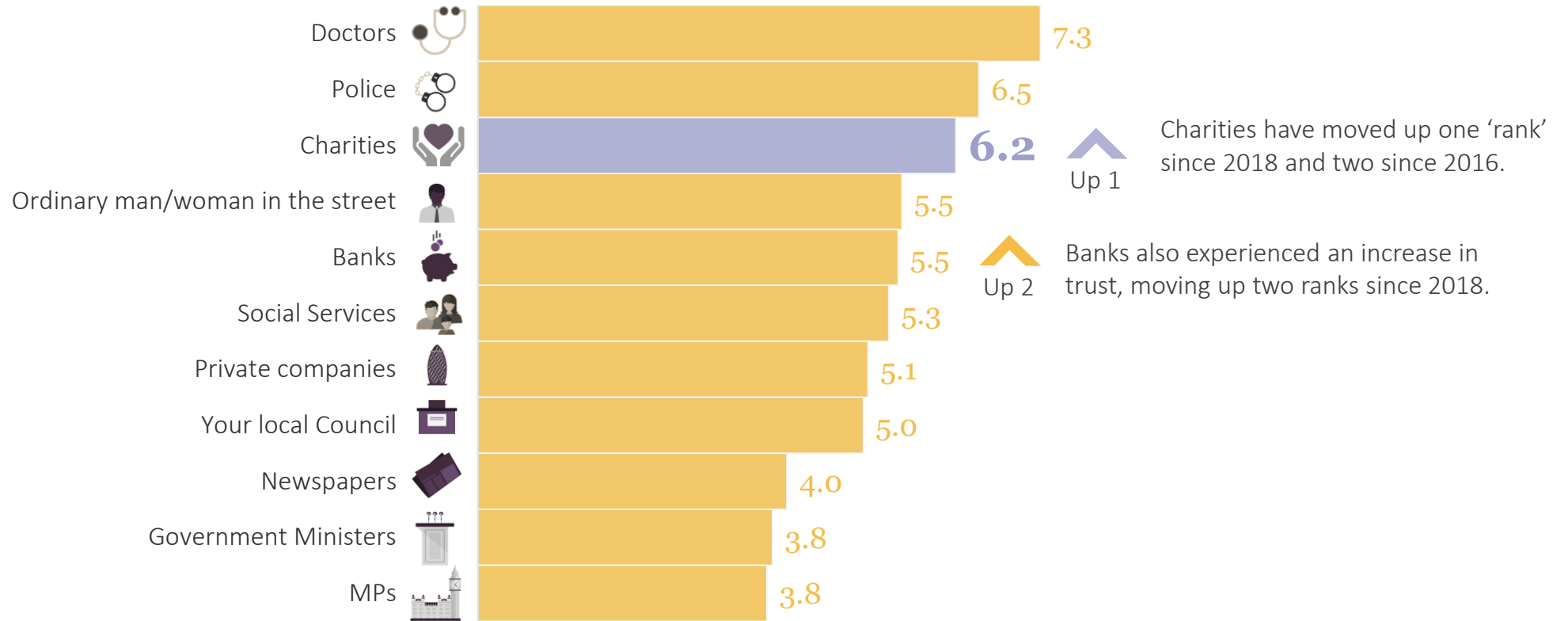
Overall trust and confidence in charities over time



\*From 2018 onwards, the survey was conducted online rather than via telephone. This question, however, was also asked on a concurrent telephone survey as a comparison in 2018, giving a mean score of 5.7/10 (a difference of +0.2). Q1

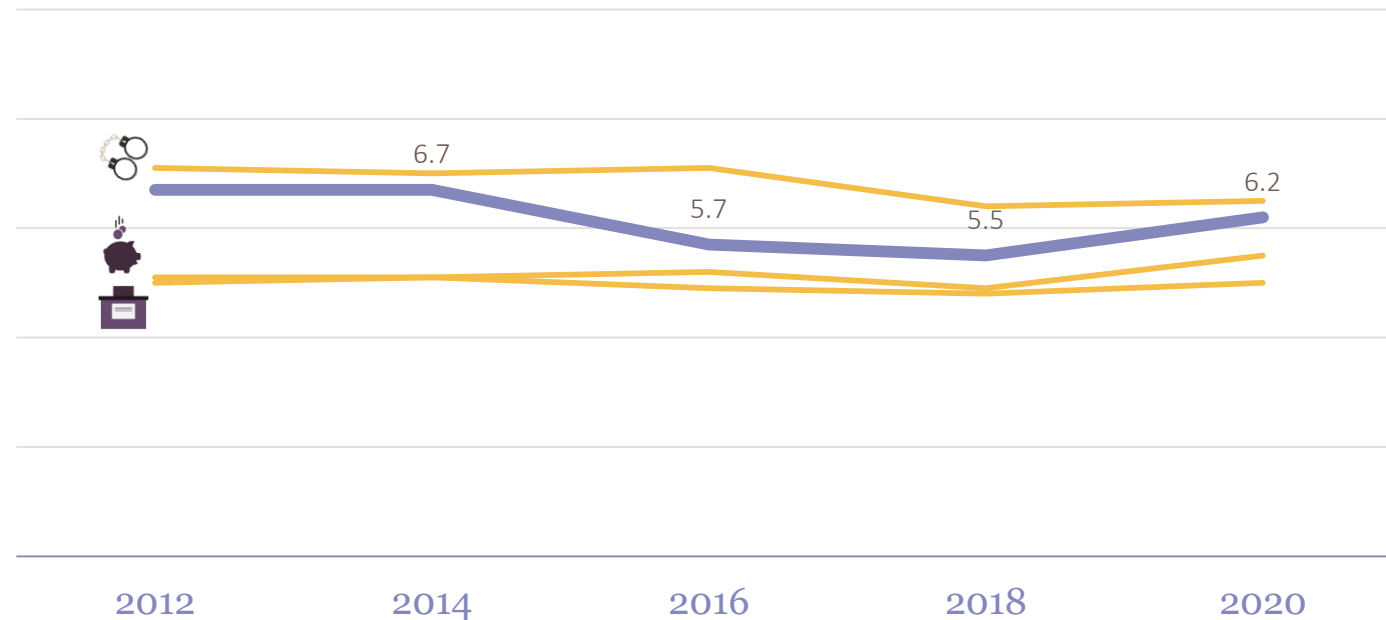
# Charities have moved up one rank since 2018 in terms of trust

Mean trust and confidence by sector/group /10



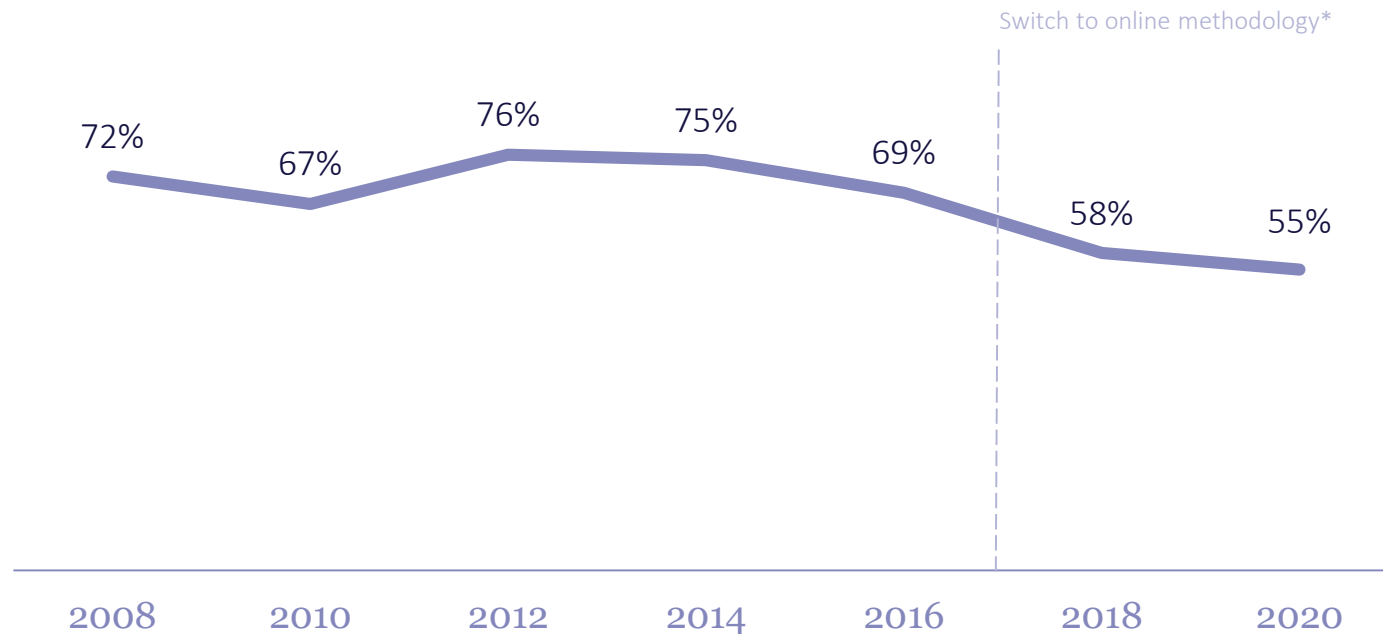
# Trust in charities has increased more notably than trust in banks, the police and local councils since 2016's dip

Overall trust and confidence in charities over time



## But the perceived importance of charities has fallen over time (even accounting for changes to survey methodology)

*Perceived importance of charities in society, over time [% saying charities play an 'essential' or 'very important' role]*

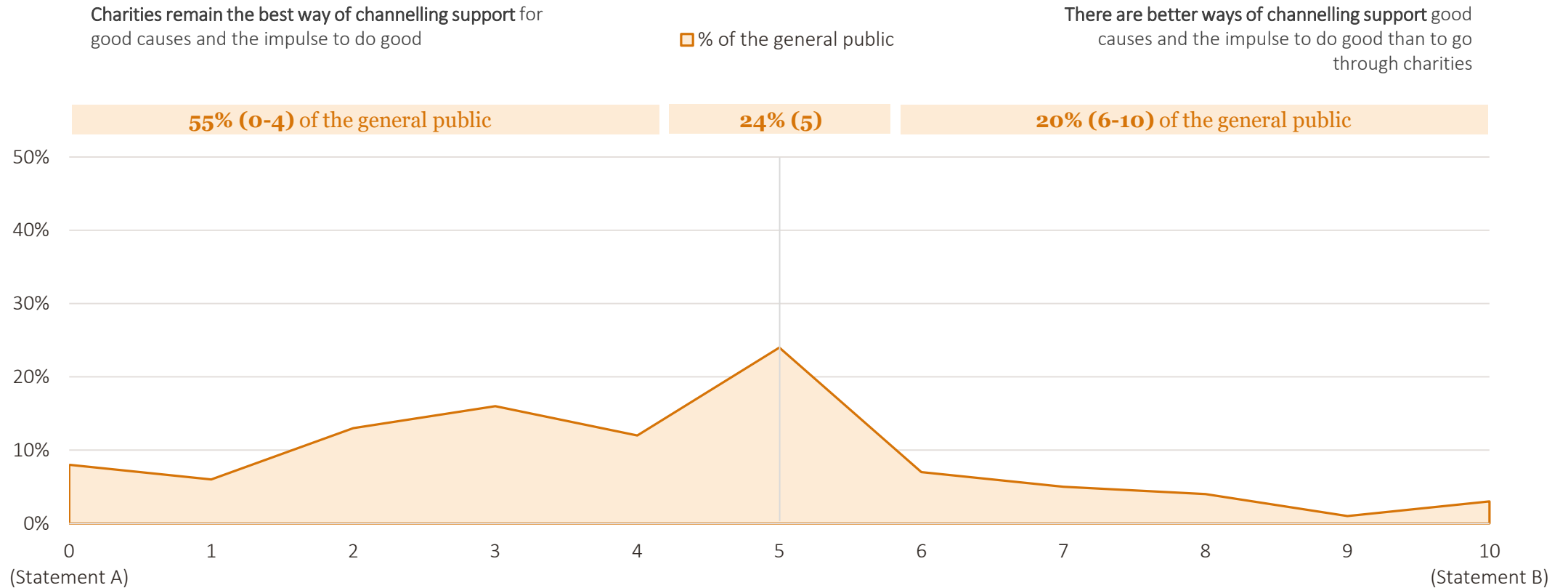


# The public tend to still see charities as relevant but the consensus is not strong

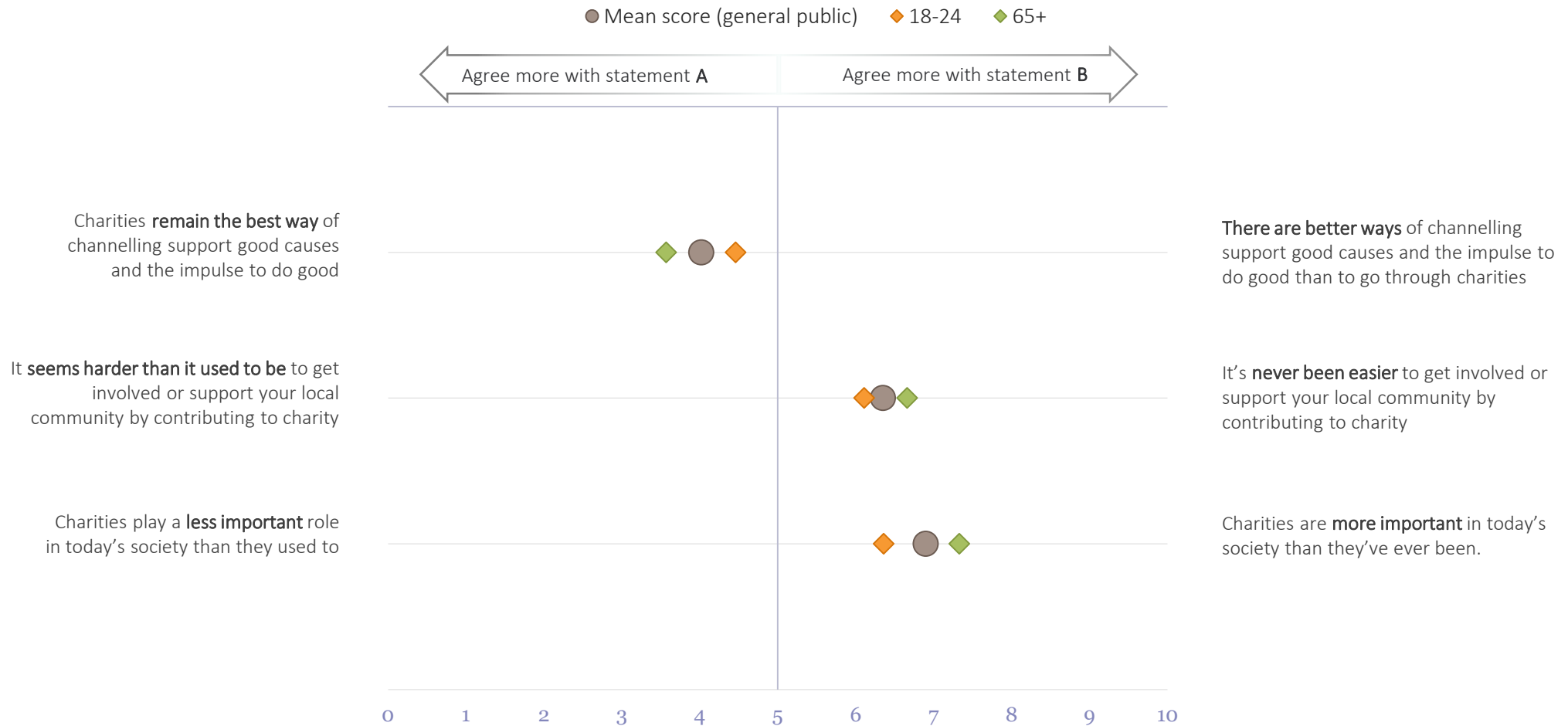




# The importance of charities to channelling Charity



# Younger people are less likely to see charities as relevant



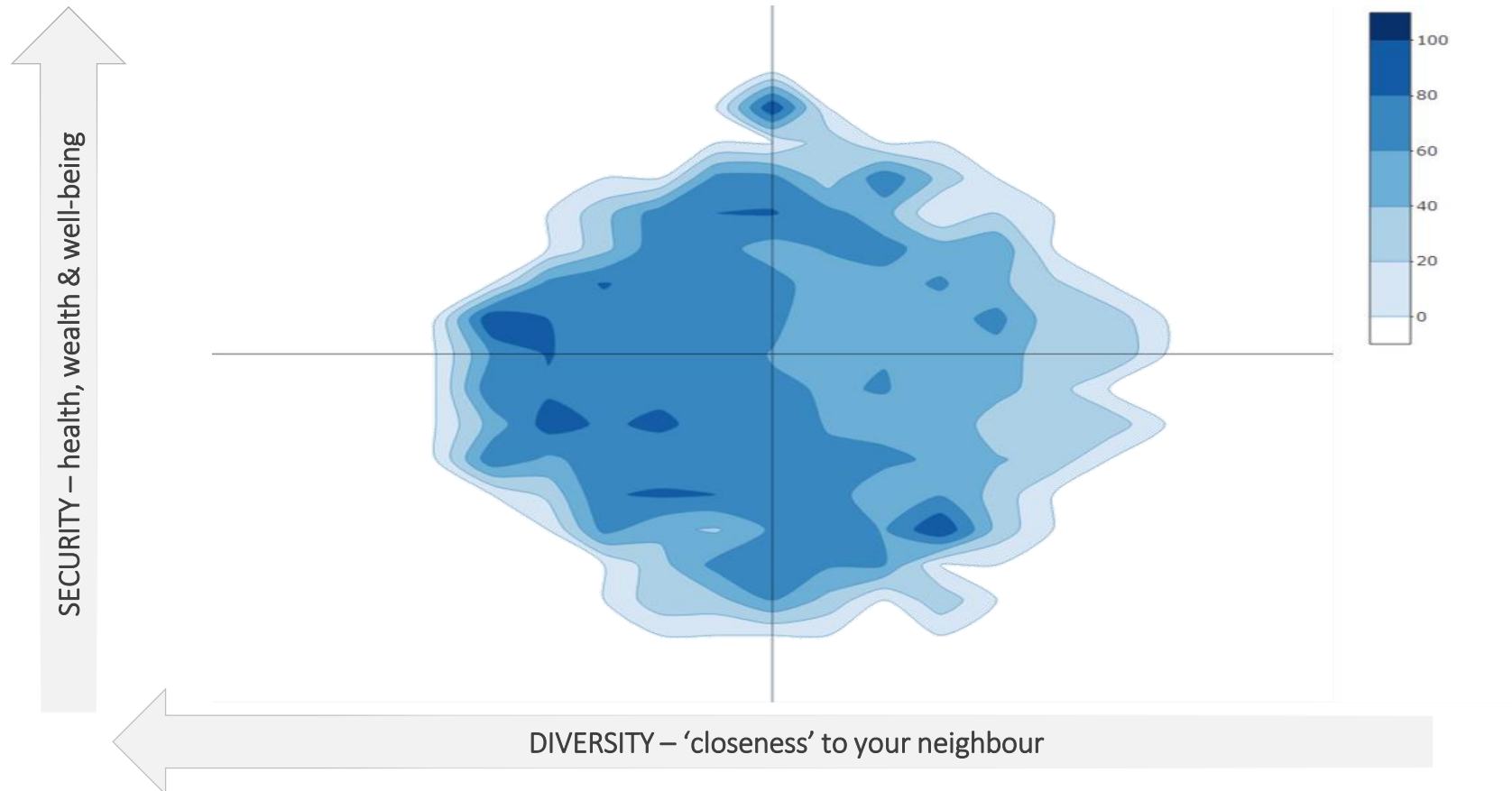
There are **better ways** of channelling support good causes and the impulse to do good than to go through charities

It's **never been easier** to get involved or support your local community by contributing to charity

Charities are **more important** in today's society than they've ever been.

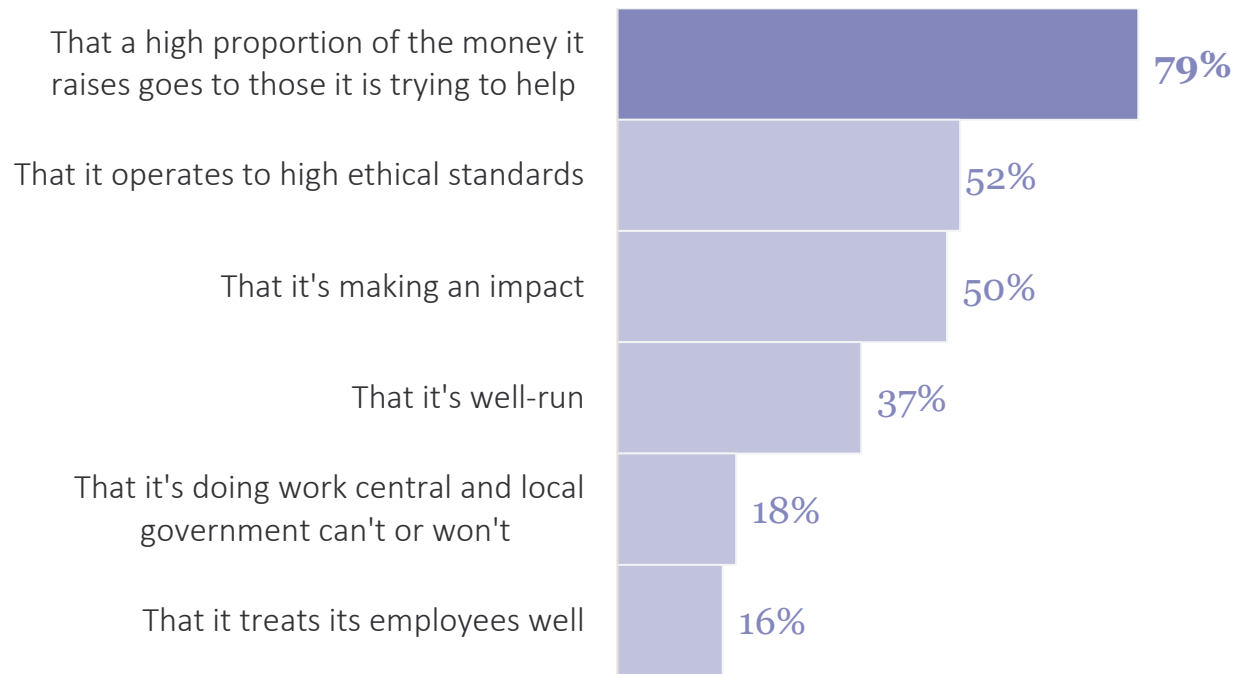
Those on the left hand side are more likely to say ‘charities are more important than they used to be’ – other segments are less sure

Heatmap: % who tend to agree that charities play a more important role than they used to (as opposed to less important)

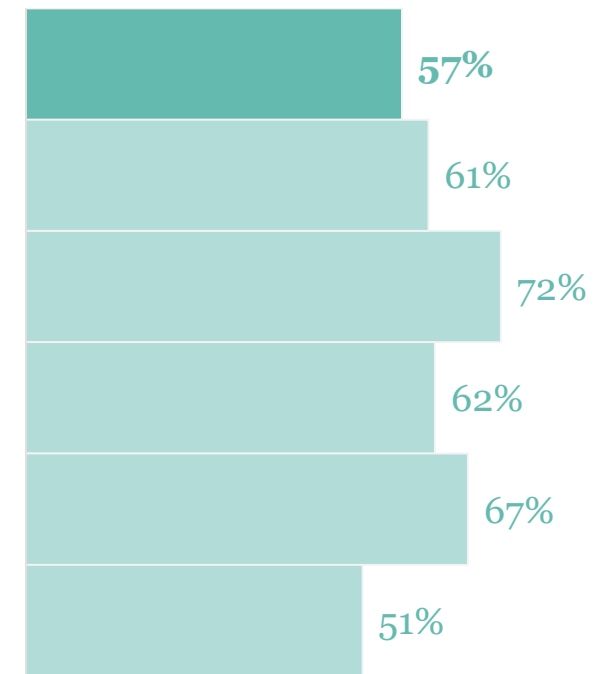


# Money reaching end beneficiaries is the most important factor to the public, but the sector's perceived performance on this measure is mediocre

*Most important factors when it comes to the way a charity operates (select up to three)*



*% who say charities they know about are doing each of these ['very much so' + 'to some extent']*

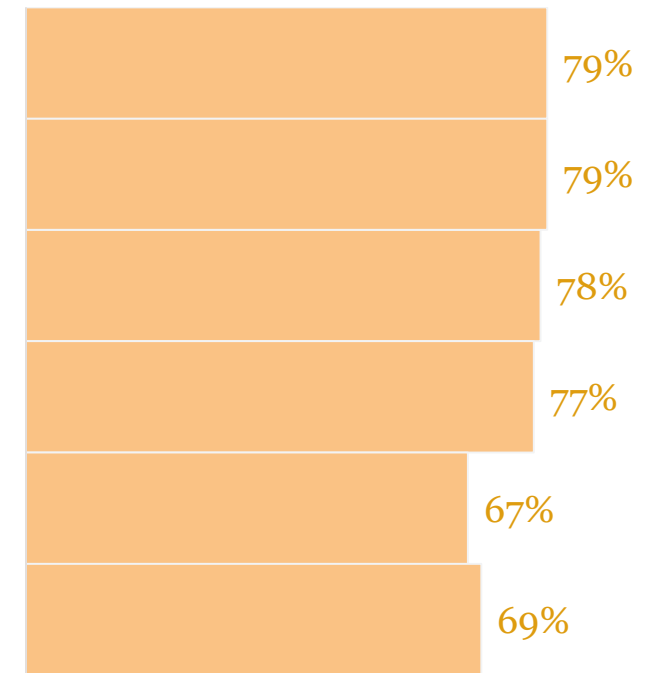


# Knowing that a charity is registered has the power to reassure the public that the charity is delivering on each factor

Most important factors when it comes to the way a charity operates (select up to three)

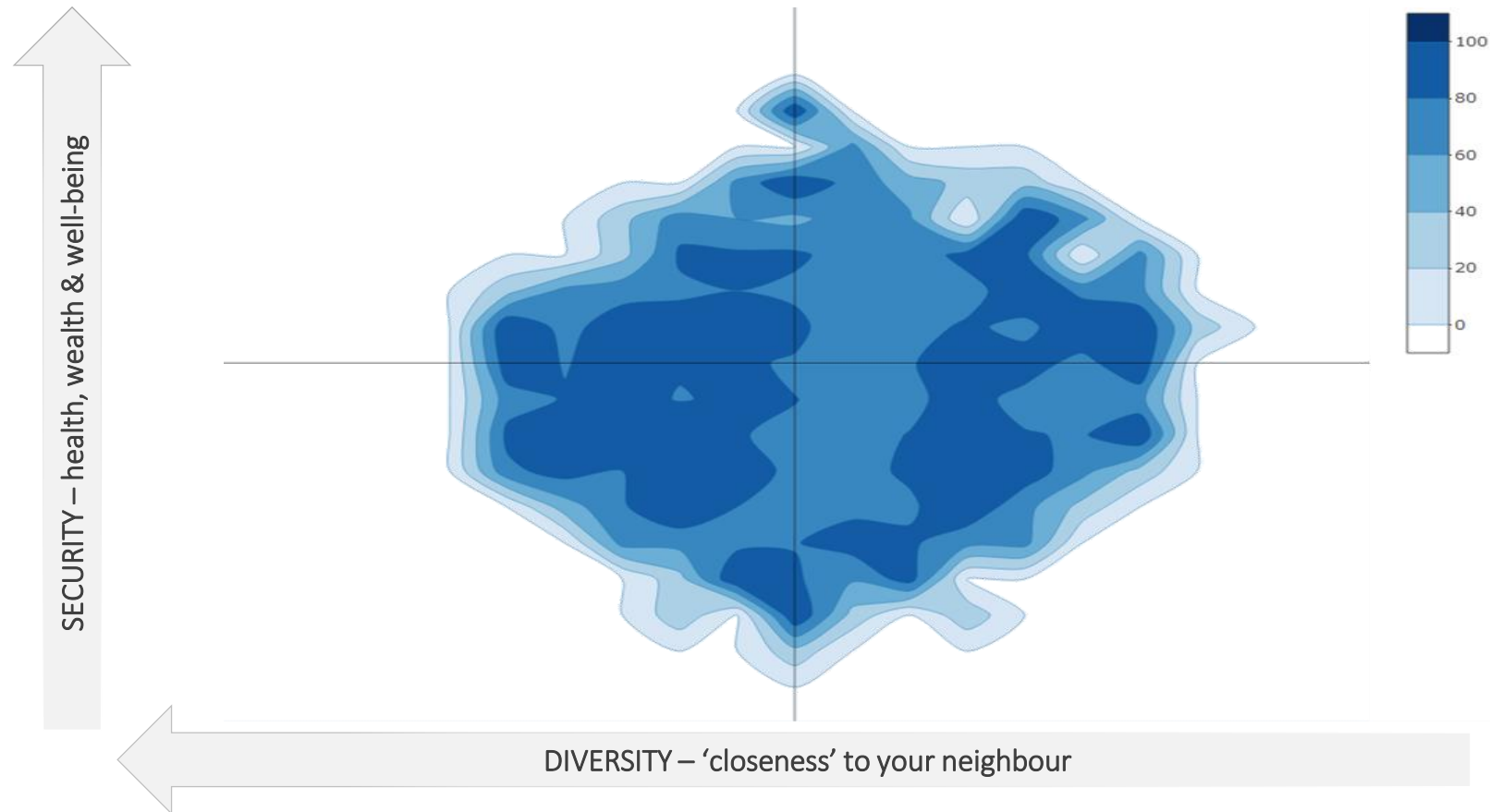


% who say that knowing a charity was registered would make them feel more confident it was delivering on each measure



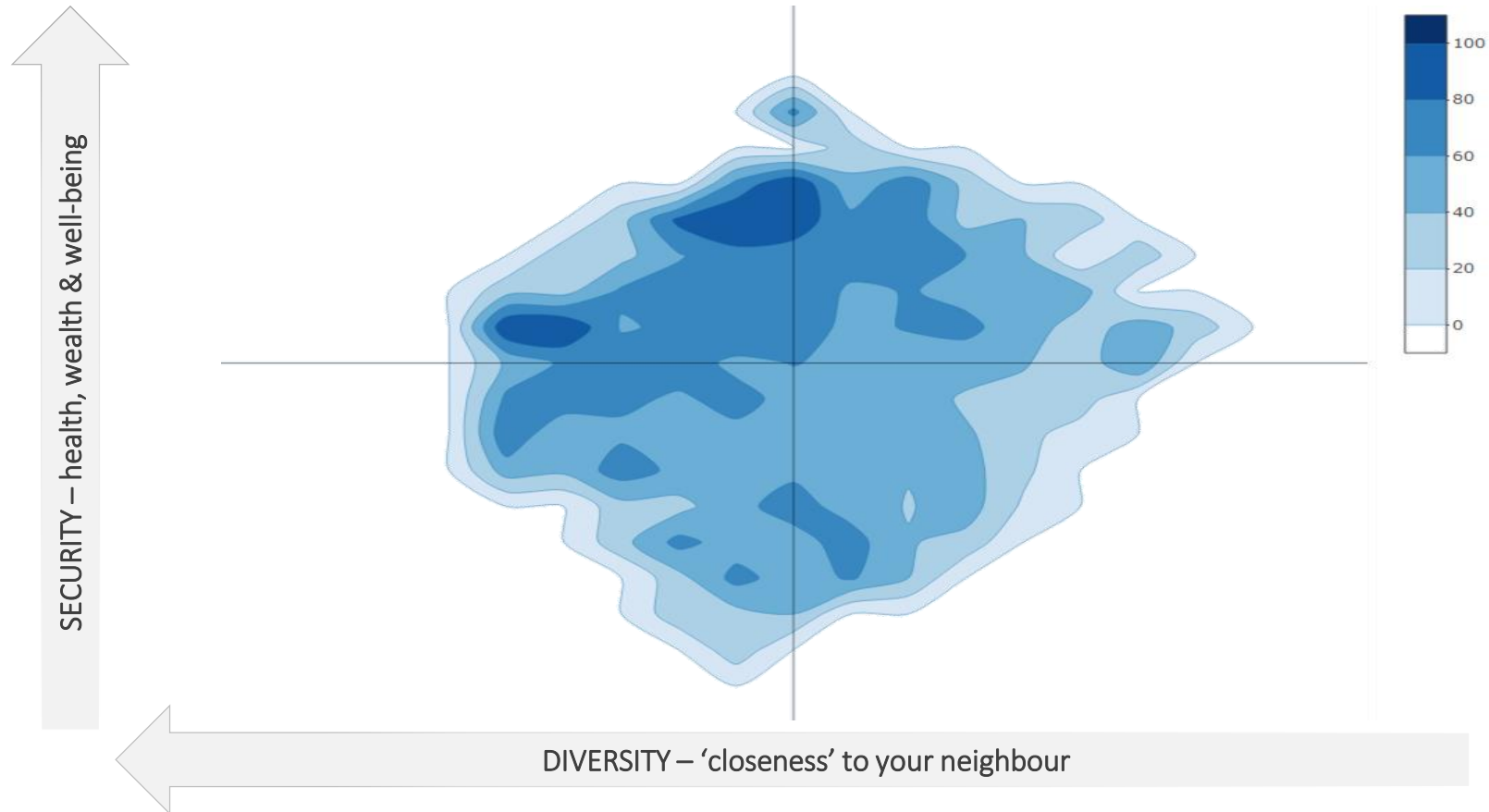
# Making sure that money reaches the intended cause is important to people across the socio-demographic map

Heatmap: % who select a high proportion of money reaching the end cause as important



But the people who think charities are actually doing that are concentrated in the top left

*Heatmap: % who think a high proportion of money reaches the end cause for charities they know about*



# Awareness of the Charity Commission has not increased overall, but those who have heard of it are more likely than before to say they know it well

Overall awareness

*% who have heard of the Charity Commission*



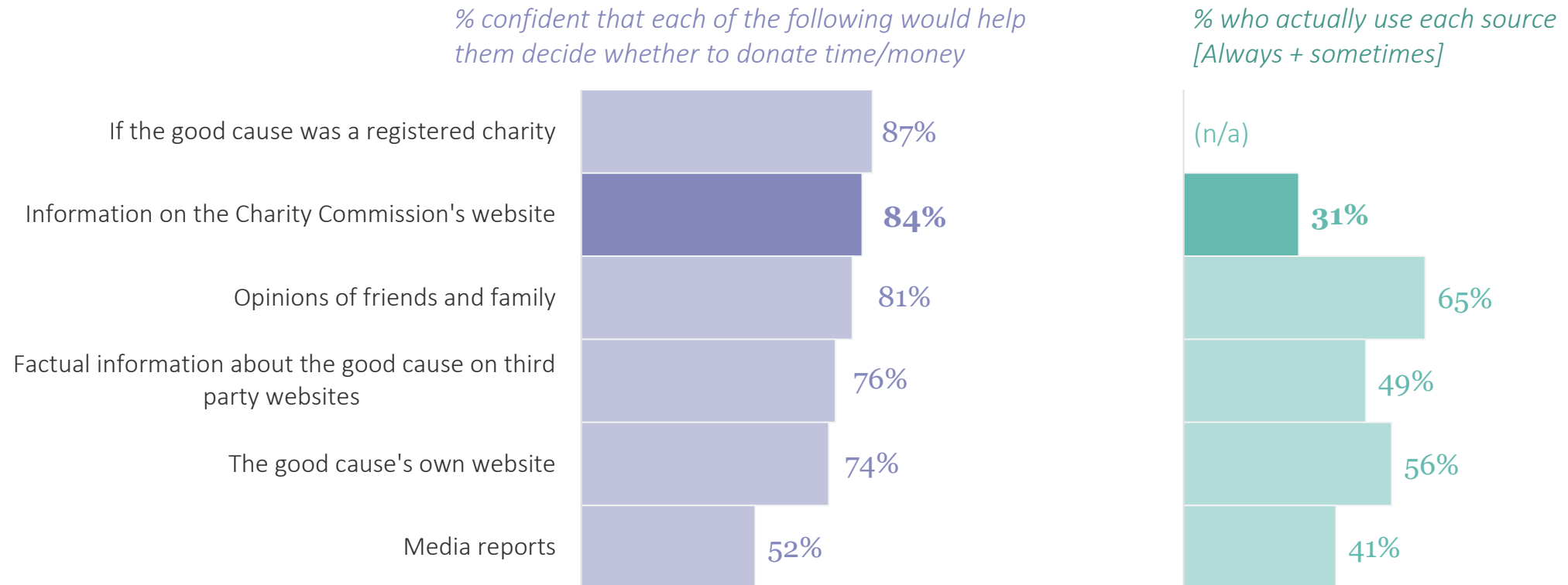
Those aware of the Charity Commission

*% of those people who feel they know the Charity Commission and what it does 'very well' or 'fairly well'*





## There is a gap between the % who think the Charity Commission's website is a trustworthy source of information and the % who actually claim to use it



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