



Community Life Survey: England, 2013 – 2014 Statistical Bulletin

This release provides headline findings from the Community Life Survey, an Official Statistic. This is the data from all quarters of the 2013-14 survey combined, which covers May 2013 to April 2014. The findings presented here are broken down into sections covering volunteering, charitable giving, wellbeing, neighbourhood and civic engagement. This release provides an overview covering key areas from the Community Life Survey, with further analysis to be released in due course.

The Community Life Survey incorporates key measures from the previous Citizenship Survey (run by the Department for Communities and Local Government), in order that trends in such measures can be tracked over time. Where applicable, time series data is included in this release and accompanying outputs.

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Correction notice 16.07.15

While producing the data for 2014-15, it emerged that there was an error in the 2013-14 dataset for two measures in **Table 18: Average rating for Wellbeing measures, 2012-13 to 2013-14**, leading to some missing values being included in the calculation. After rounding, levels of anxiety in 2013-14 have been corrected from 2.8 to 2.9 and levels of feeling worthwhile have been corrected from 7.8 to 7.9. This has been amended on page 12 and does not affect any other results.

Cabinet Office apologises for any inconvenience caused.

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This publication is available for download at the Cabinet Office website
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/community-life-survey>

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Introduction

The Community Life Survey is a major survey of adults in England, aiming to track the latest trends and developments across areas that are key to encouraging social action and empowering communities.

The objectives of the survey are to:

- provide robust, nationally representative data on behaviours and attitudes within communities to inform and direct policy and action in these areas
- provide data of value to all users, including public bodies, external stakeholders and the public, engaging with end users to refine and develop the survey as appropriate
- underpin further research and debate on building stronger communities.

In order to achieve this, the Community Life Survey tracks measures that are key to understanding our society and local communities, including:

- Volunteering and charitable giving
- Neighbourhood (views about the local area, and community cohesion and belonging)
- Civic engagement (community empowerment and participation, and influencing local decisions and affairs)
- Social action
- Subjective well-being.

The Community Life Survey incorporates a small number of priority measures from the previous Citizenship Survey (which ran from 2001 to 2010-11) in order that trends in these issues can continue to be tracked over time. For these measures the Community Life Survey findings will be compared within this bulletin to the Citizenship Survey findings. For other measures, comparisons are only available with the 2012-13 Community Life Survey findings.

The Community Life Survey forms Official Statistics, meaning that it meets the high standards of quality set out by the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Note: All differences and changes reported in the release, both between groups and over time, are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

In 2013-14, 74% of people had volunteered at least once in the last 12 months, no statistical difference from 2012-13. This is a statistically significant increase compared to 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11, but no statistical difference from any other year since 2001.

Nearly two thirds of people (64%) volunteered informally, no statistical difference from 2012-13. This is a statistically significant increase compared to 2009-10 and 2010-11 but not statistically different from any other year since 2001.

41% of people volunteered formally, a statistically significant decrease compared to 2012-13, 2007-08 and 2005 but no statistical difference from any other year since 2001.

In 2013-14, just under a fifth of people (18%) had been involved in social action at least once in the last year, a statistically significant decrease compared to 2012-13 (23%).

In 2013-14, the proportion of people giving money to charity was sustained at three-quarters (75%) compared to 2012-13. This is a statistically significant increase compared to 2009-10 and 2010-11 (both 72%), but no statistical difference from all other years since 2005.

In 2013-14, there was a statistically significant increase in the proportion of people who were 'very satisfied' with their local area as a place to live (43%) compared with 2012-13 and all years since 2008-09.

In 2013-14, 85% of people said that their neighbourhood was a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together. This is no statistical difference from 2008-09 to 2012-13, and a statistically significant increase compared to all other years since 2001.

In 2013-14, 60% of people agreed that people pull together to improve their neighbourhood. This is not statistically different from 2012-13 (62%) but a statistically significant decrease compared to all other years since 2001.

In 2013-14, 70% of people had a strong sense of belonging to their neighbourhood, a statistically significant decrease compared to 2012-13 (78%) and all other years since 2005.

In 2013-14, 41% of people took part in civic participation and 18% in civic consultation at least once in the last year, a statistically significant decrease compared to 2012-13.

In 2013-14, 34% of people felt that they could influence decisions affecting their local area, a statistically significant decrease compared to 2012-13 (38%) and all other years since 2001.

Volunteering

Volunteering covers two measures captured within the survey:

Formal volunteering – giving unpaid help through groups, clubs or organisations

Informal volunteering – giving unpaid help as an individual to people who are not relatives

Any volunteering

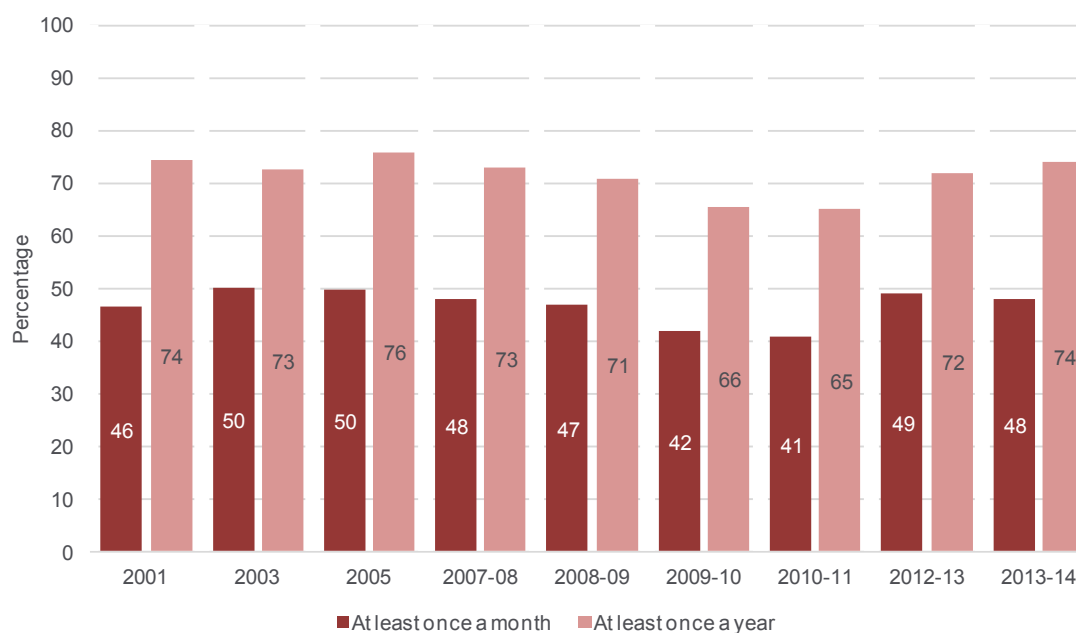
Overall, there was no significant change in volunteering rates in 2013-14 compared to 2012-13 (formal and informal combined). Rates were significantly higher than in 2009-10 and 2010-11, but were not significantly different from levels seen from 2001 to 2007-08.

In 2013-14, just under half of people (48%) participated in formal and/or informal volunteering at least once a month in the twelve months prior to being interviewed. This is not significantly different from 2012-13 (49%) and significantly higher than levels seen in 2009-10 and 2010-11 (42% and 41% respectively).

74% of people took part in formal and/or informal volunteering at least once in the twelve months prior to being interviewed. This is no significant change from 2012-13 (72%) and a significant increase compared to 2008-09 to 2010-11 (71%, 66% and 65%, respectively).

Other than these differences, participation at least once a month or at least once a year was not significantly different from levels in any other year since 2001.

Figure 1: Whether people had participated in any volunteering, 2001 to 2013-14



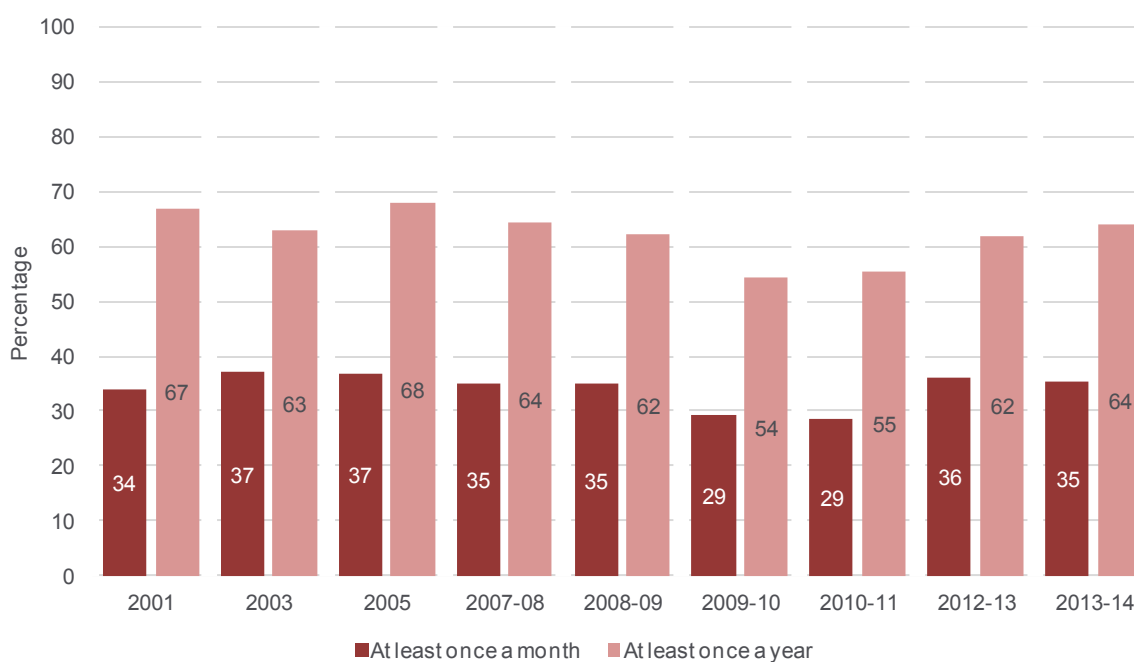
Informal volunteering

Overall, informal volunteering rates in 2013-14 were the same as in 2012-13, with no significant changes. Such levels are significantly higher than those in 2009-10 and 2010-11, but otherwise rates were unchanged compared to 2001 to 2008-09.

Just over a third (35%) of people said they had volunteered informally at least once a month in the 12 months prior to being interviewed. This is no significant difference from 2012-13, but a significant increase from 29% in both 2009-10 and 2010-11.

64% of people said they had volunteered informally at least once in the last year prior to being interviewed. This was no significant difference from 2012-13 (62%), but significantly greater than in 2009-10 (54%) and 2010-11 (55%).

Figure 2: Whether people had participated in informal volunteering, 2001 to 2013-14



Formal volunteering

Rates of formal volunteering have been fluctuating since 2001, with lows in 2009-10 and 2010-11, and highs in 2005 and 2012-13.

In 2013-14, 27% of people said they had volunteered formally at least once a month in the twelve months prior to being interviewed. This was a significant decrease compared to 2012-13 (29%) and 2005 (29%) but no significant difference from all other years since 2001.

41% of people said that they had volunteered formally at least once in the last year prior to being interviewed in 2013-14. This is significantly lower than in 2005, 2007-08 and 2012-13, but not significantly different from other years since 2001.

Figure 3: Whether people had participated in formal volunteering, 2001 to 2013-14



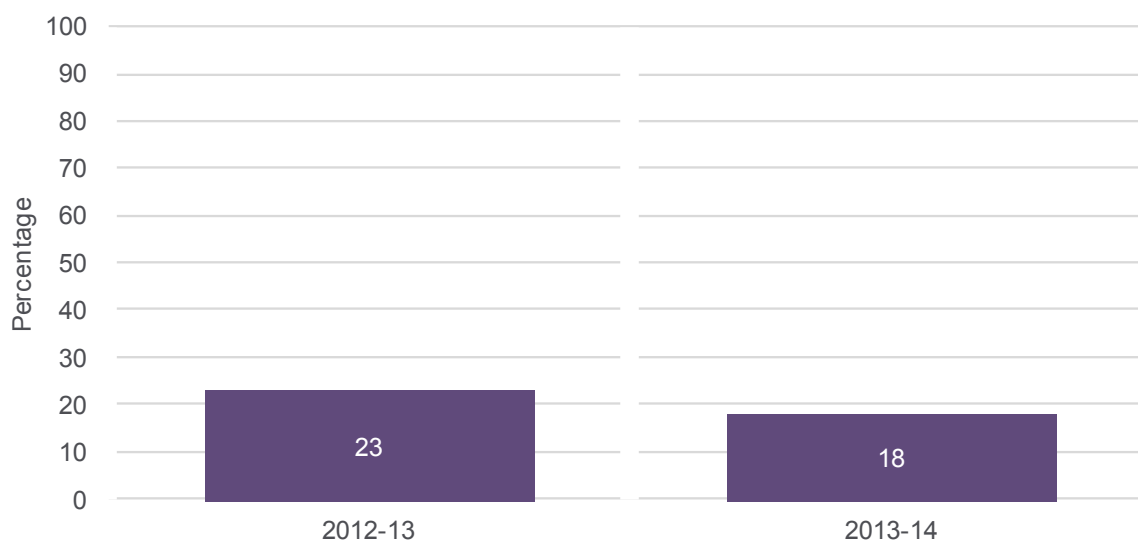
Table 1: Participation in civic engagement and voluntary activities, 2001 to 2013-14

Social Action

In this survey, the term social action covers people getting together to support a community project in their local area, e.g. trying to set up a new service or amenity to help local residents, or organising a community event e.g. a street party.

In 2013-14, just under a fifth of people (18%) had been involved in social action at least once in the last year, a significant decrease compared to 2012-13 (23%). 37% of people were aware¹ of people in their area getting together to support a community project, but were not involved in it.

Figure 4: Whether people were involved in social action in their local area at least once in the last year, 2012-13 to 2013-14



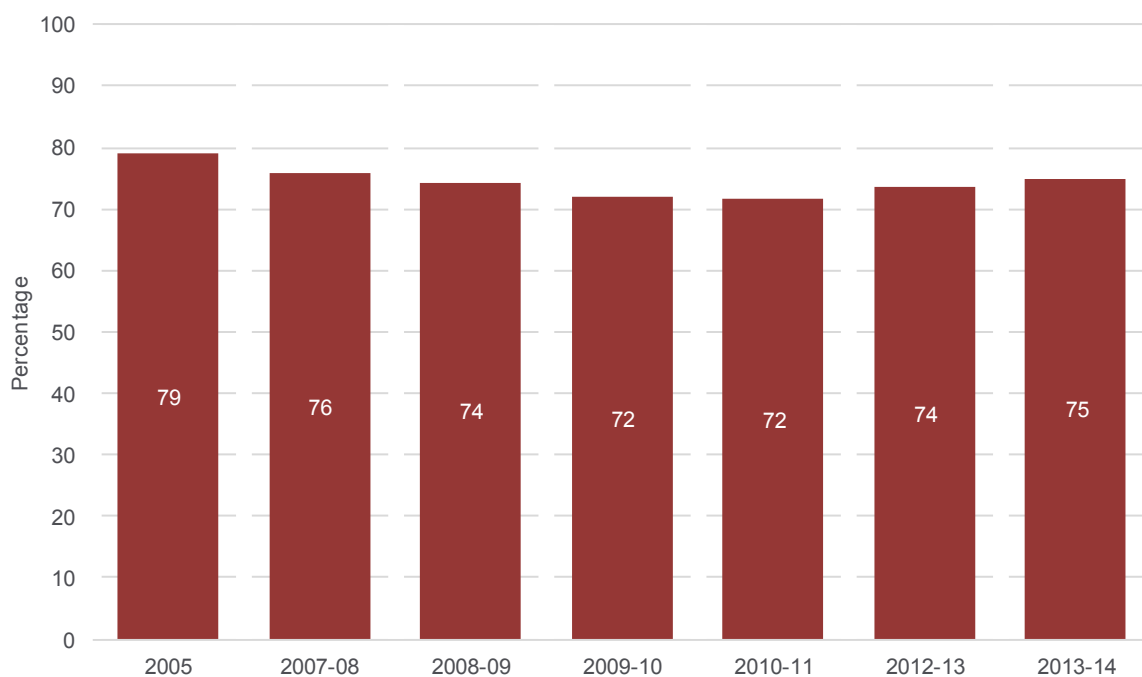
- Table 7: Whether people are aware of or involved in social action in their local area at least once in the last year by sex and age, 2012-13 to 2013-14

¹ In 2013-14, people were only asked if they were **aware** of social action projects if they were not **involved** in them, unlike in 2012-13 when everyone was asked if they were **aware**. It is therefore not possible to compare the data to 2012-13.

Charitable Giving

In 2013-14, three-quarters of people (75%) gave money to charity in the four weeks prior to being interviewed, statistically the same proportion as in 2012-13 and significantly greater than the proportion giving in 2009-10 and 2010-11 (both 72%), but no significant change from all other years since 2005.

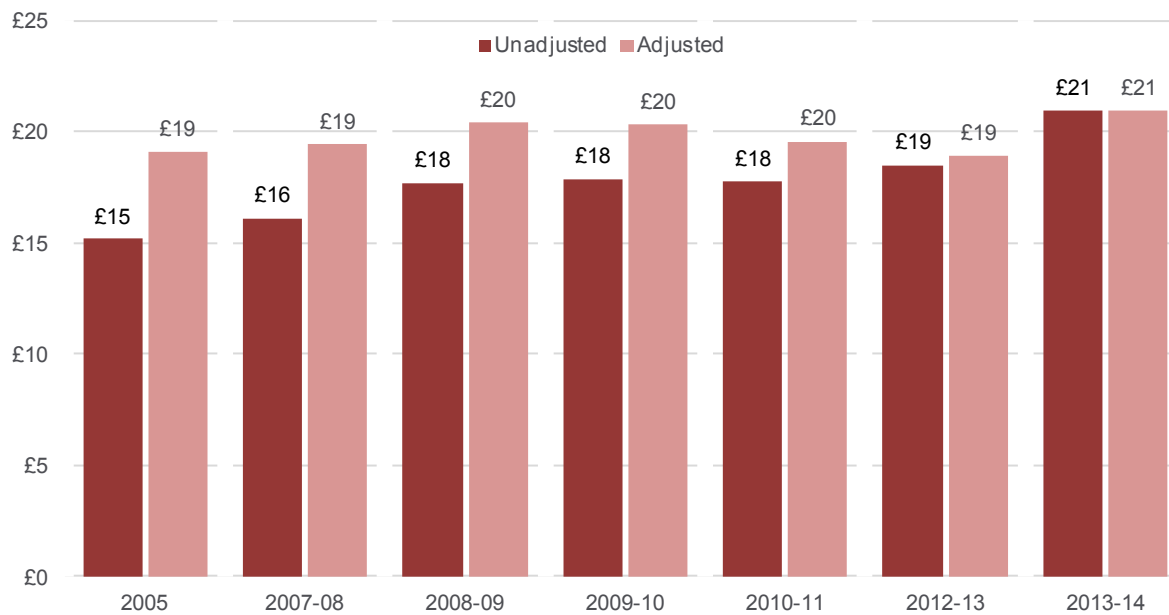
Figure 5: Whether people had given money to charity in the four weeks prior to being interviewed, 2005 to 2013-14



- Table 5: Charitable giving by sex, age and ethnicity, 2005 to 2013-2014

In 2013-14 people gave on average² £21 to charity in the four weeks prior to being interviewed. When adjusted for inflation³, this was significantly more than in 2005, 2007-08 and 2012-13 (all £19).

Figure 6: Average amount given to charity in the four weeks prior to interview, adjusted for inflation and unadjusted, 2005 to 2013-14



- Table 6: Amount given to charity in the 4 weeks prior to interview, 2005 to 2013-14

² Average (mean) excludes those who gave £300 or more and those who responded 'don't know' or for whom the figure was missing, to ensure data is comparable to the citizenship survey. Amounts are rounded to the nearest pound.

³ Inflation adjusted figures calculated using CPI measure of inflation

Well-being

People's average⁵ ratings of overall 'life satisfaction', 'happiness yesterday' and 'worthwhile' measures⁶ significantly increased in 2013-14 compared to 2012-13.

The average rating for overall life satisfaction was 7.6 in 2013-14, compared to 7.5 in 2012-13.

The average rating for 'happiness yesterday' was 7.5 in 2013-14, compared to 7.3 in 2012-13.

The average average rating for whether people felt the things that they do in their lives are worthwhile was 7.9 in 2013-14, compared to 7.8 in 2012-13.

The average rating for 'anxiousness yesterday' was no different from 2012-13 (2.9).

Figure 7: Average rating for well-being measures, 2012-13 to 2013-14⁷



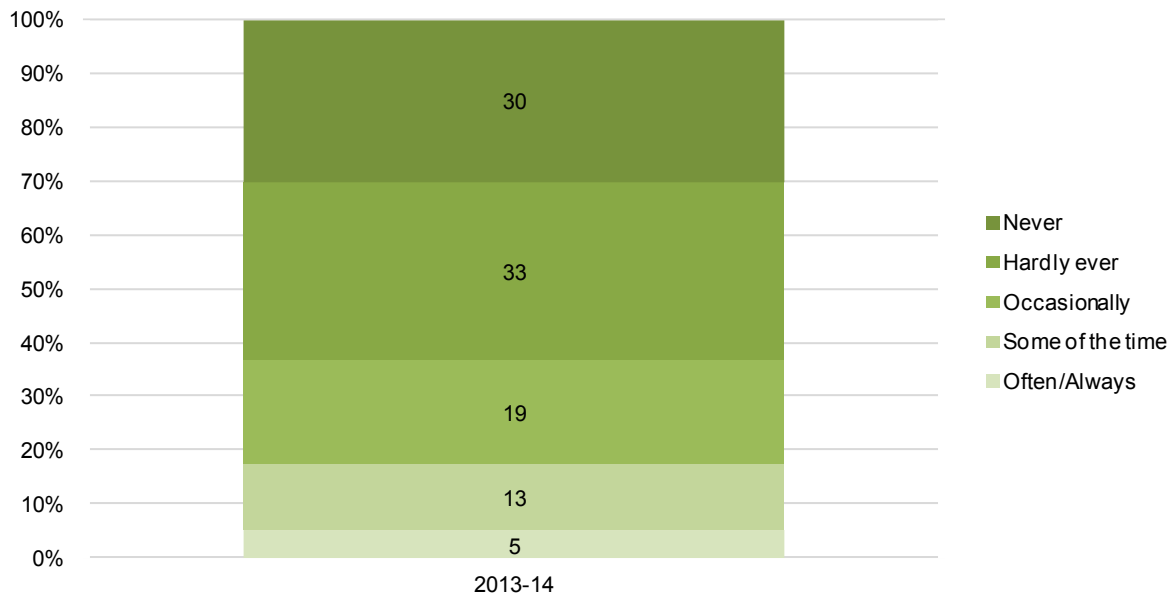
⁵ Average=mean

⁶ All measures use a 0 to 10 scale where 0 is 'not at all' and 10 is 'completely'

⁷ The National Statistics on well-being can be found here: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/user-guidance/well-being/index.html>

Nearly two thirds of people (63%) hardly ever or never felt lonely⁸, while 18% of people felt lonely always, often or some of the time.

Figure 8: How often people felt lonely, 2013-14



-Table 18: Average rating for Well-being measures, 2012-13 to 2013-14

-Table 19: How often people felt lonely, 2013-14

⁸ Question added in 2013-14

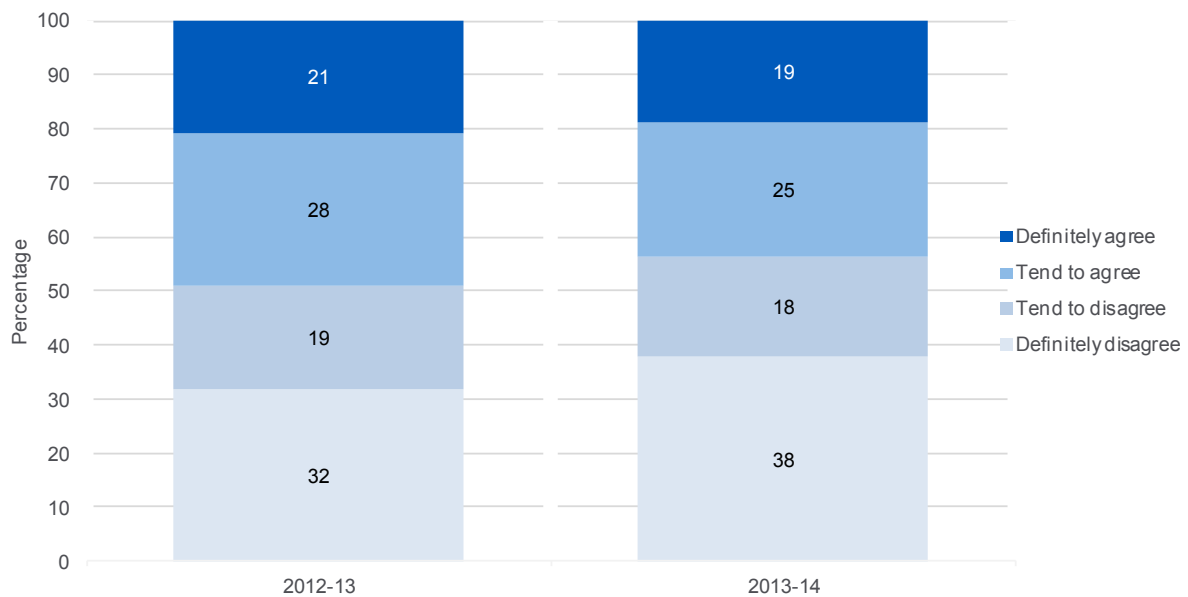
Neighbourhood

Borrowing

In 2013-14, 44% of people 'definitely' or 'tended to' agree that they borrow things and exchange favours with their neighbours, a significant decrease compared to 2012-13 when 49% of people agreed.

In contrast, 38% of people definitely disagreed that they borrow things and exchange favours with their neighbours, a significant increase compared to 2012-13 when 32% of people definitely disagreed. However, the proportion of people who tended to disagree in 2013-14 (18%) was not significantly different to 2012-13 (19%).

Figure 9: Extent to which people agree that they borrow things and exchange favours with their neighbours, 2012-13 to 2013-14

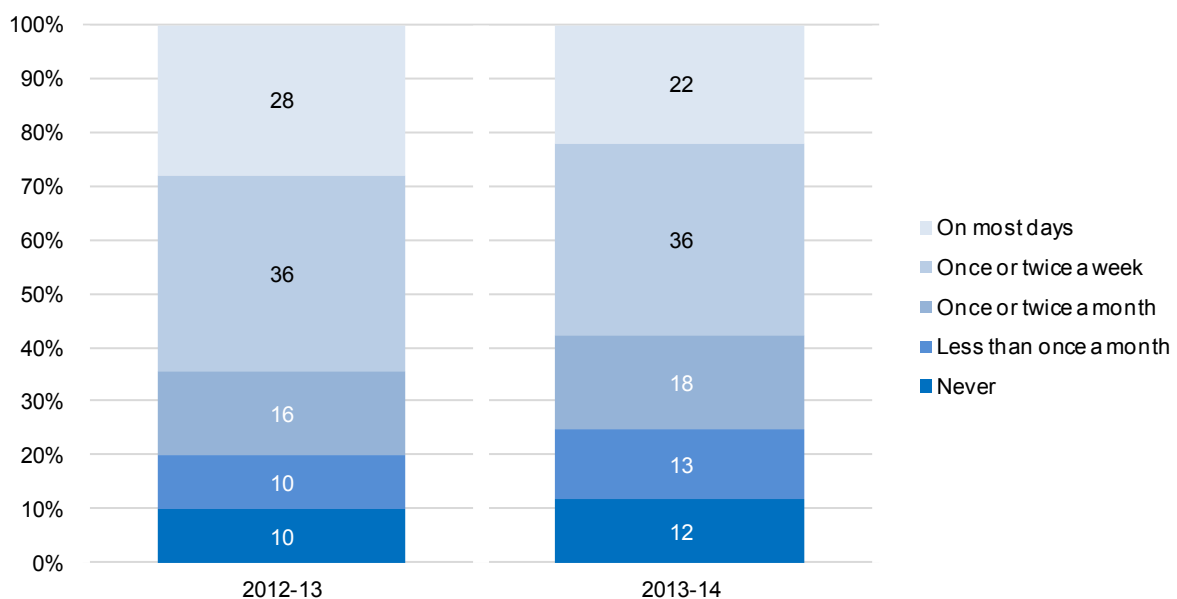


-Table 20: Whether people borrow things and exchange favours with their neighbours, 2012-13 to 2013-14

Chatting to neighbours

In 2013-14, 75% of people said that they chat to their neighbours at least once a month, more than just to say hello, a significant decrease compared to 2012-13 (80%). The proportion of people who said they chat to their neighbours on most days in 2013-14 also significantly decreased from 28% in 2012-13 to 22%.

Figure 10: Frequency with which people chat to their neighbours, 2012-13 to 2013-14

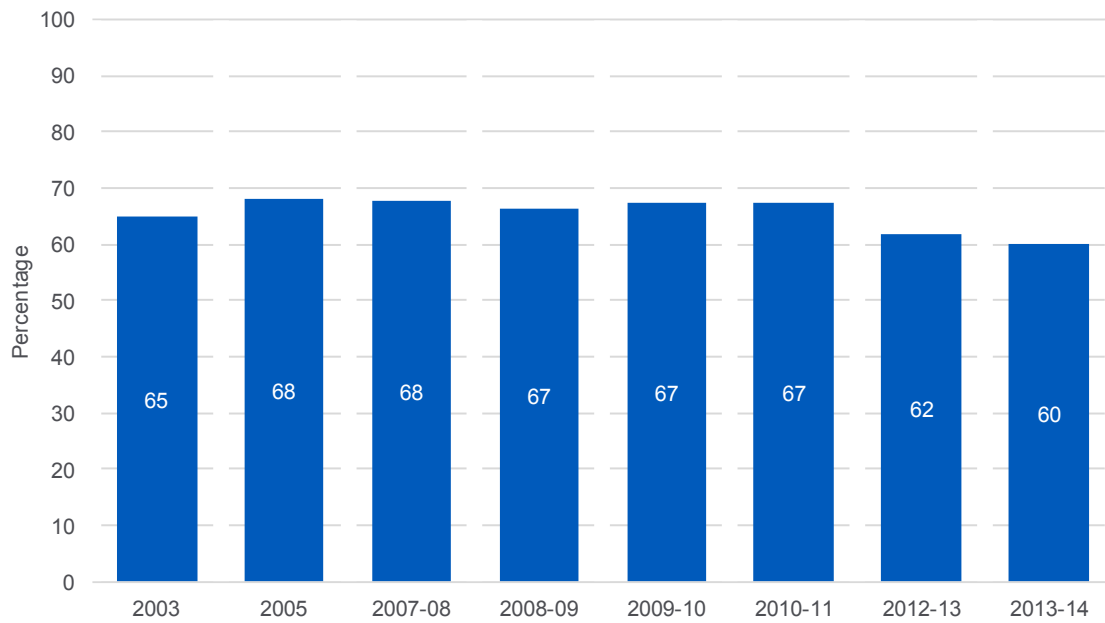


- Table 9: Whether people chat to their neighbours at least once a month by sex, age and ethnicity, October 2012 to 2013-14

Pulling together

In 2013-14, 60% of people agreed that people in their neighbourhood pull together to improve their neighbourhood, a similar level seen in 2012-13 (62%) but significantly lower than all other years since 2003.

Figure 11: Proportion of people who agree that people in their neighbourhood pull together to improve the neighbourhood, 2003 to 2013-14



Improvement in local area

In 2013-14, 16% of people felt that their local area had got better, no significant difference from 2012-13 (15%). The proportion of people who felt that it had got worse remained at 18%, no significant difference from 2010-11 and 2012-13, but significantly lower than in previous years since 2007-08.

Figure 12: Proportion of people who think their local area has got better, worse or stayed the same over the last two years, 2007-08 to 2013-14

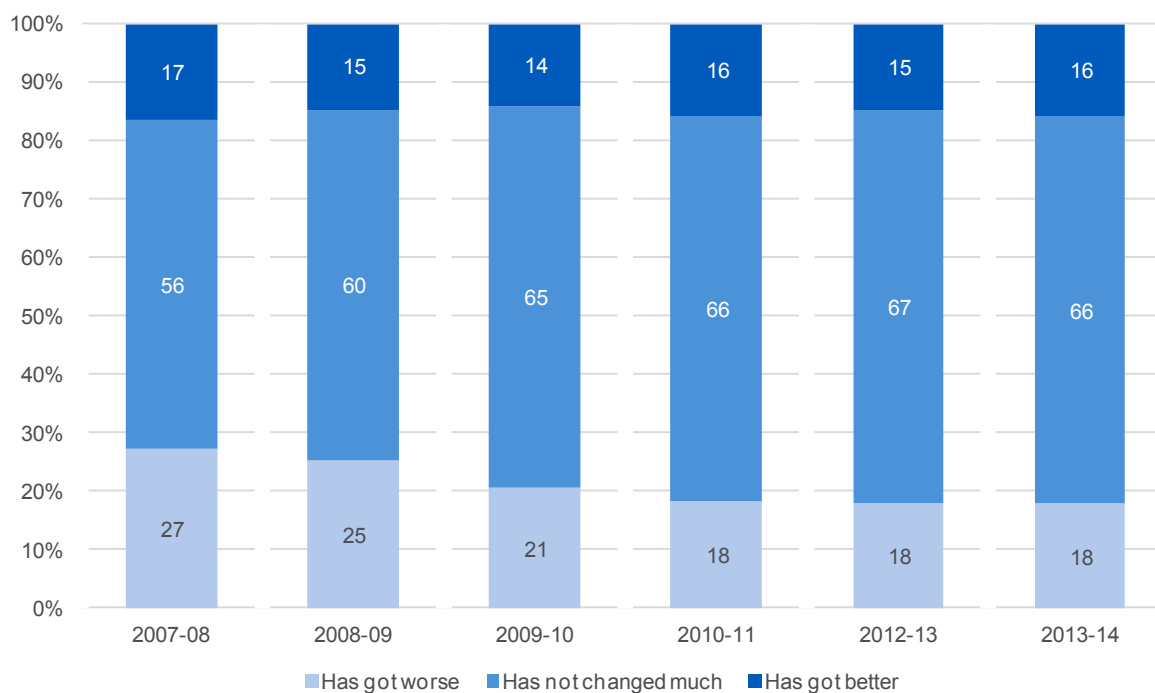


Table 21: Whether people think that their local area has got better or worse to live in over the past two years, 2007-08 to 2013-14

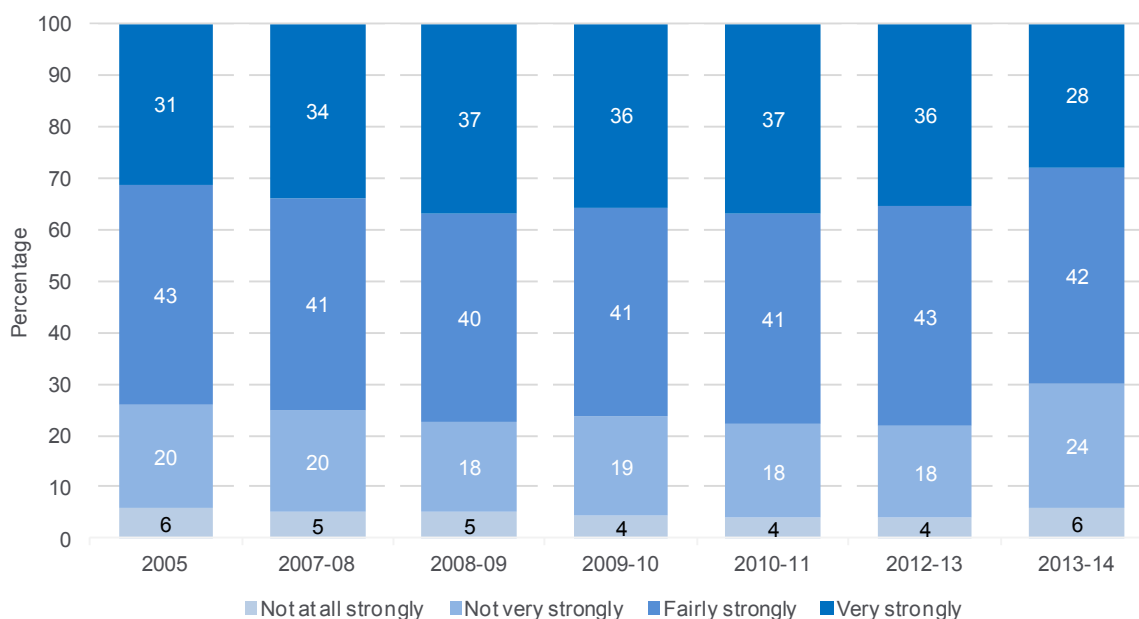
Belonging

In 2013-14, 70% of people felt that they belonged 'very' or 'fairly' strongly to their neighbourhood, a significant decrease from levels in 2005 to 2012-13.

The proportion of people who felt they belonged 'fairly strongly' in 2013-14 was not significantly different from 2012-13 (42%) or all other previous years since 2005, but the proportion of people who felt they belonged 'very strongly' significantly decreased to 28% in 2013-14 compared to all years from 2005 to 2012-13.

In 2013-14, the proportion of people who felt they belonged 'not very strongly' significantly increased to 24% compared to all other years since 2005. However, the proportion of people who felt they belonged 'not at all strongly' was significantly different from 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2012-13 but no different from other years since 2005.

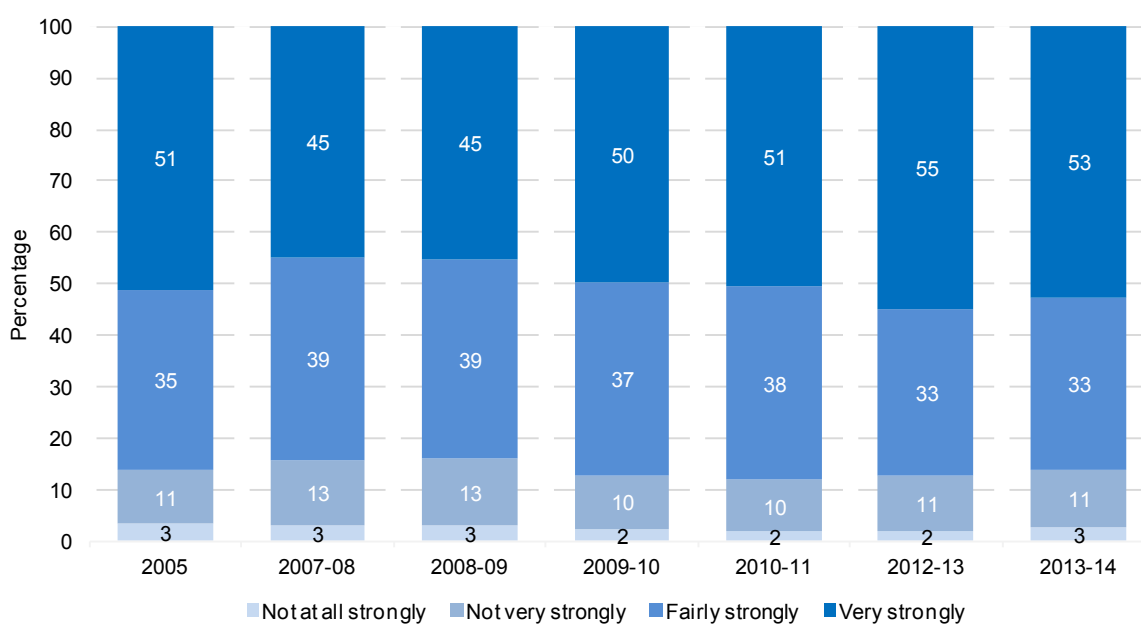
Figure 13: Proportion of people who feel they belong strongly to their neighbourhood, 2003 to 2013-14



In 2013-14, 86% of people felt that they belonged 'very' or 'fairly' strongly to Britain, a significant increase compared to 2007-08 and 2008-09, but no significant difference compared to all other years since 2005.

53% of people said that they belonged 'very strongly' to Britain, no significant difference from 2005 or 2012-13, but a significant increase compared to all other years since 2005.

Figure 14: Proportion of people who feel they belong strongly to Britain, 2003 to 2013-14



- Table 10: Whether people feel that they belong strongly to their neighbourhood and Britain, 2003 to 2013-14

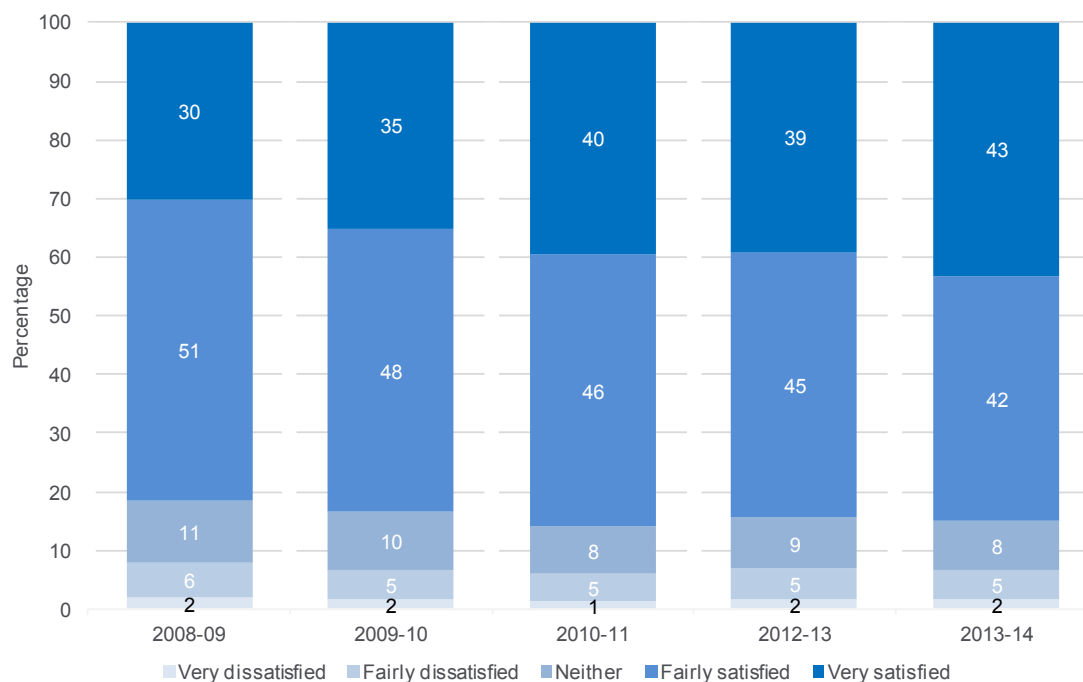
Satisfaction with local area

In 2013-14, there was a significant increase in the proportion of people who were 'very satisfied' with their local area as a place to live (43%) compared with 2008-09, 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2012-13 (30%, 35%, 40% and 39%, respectively).

85% of people were either 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied with their local area as a place to live, no significant difference from 2012-13 (84%), 2010-11 and 2009-10 but significantly greater than 2008-09 (81%).

In 2013-14, there was no significant change in the proportion of people who were 'very' or 'fairly dissatisfied with their local area as a place to live, compared to all other years since 2008-09.

Figure 15: Proportion of people who are satisfied with their local area as a place to live, 2008-09 to 2013-14

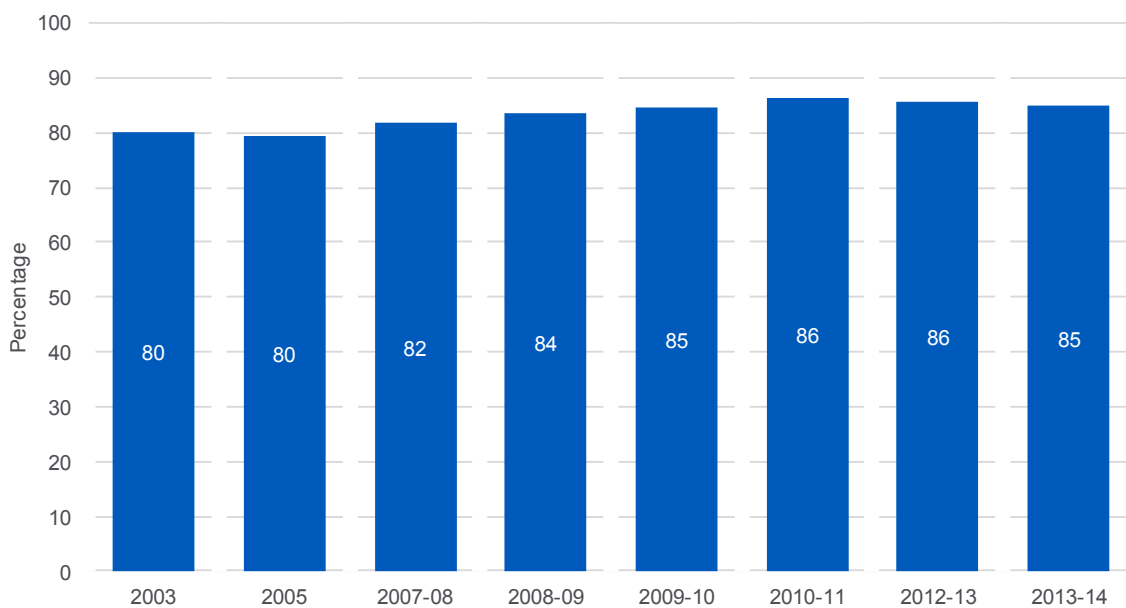


- Table 12: Satisfaction with local area, 2008-09 to 2013-14

Community Cohesion

In 2013-14, 85% of people thought that their community was cohesive, agreeing that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together. This is no significant difference from levels in 2008-09 to 2012-13, but a significant increase compared to all other previous years since 2003.

Figure 16: Proportion of people who agree that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together, 2003 to 2013-14



- Table 13: Community cohesion by sex, age, ethnicity and region, 2003 to 2013-14

Civic engagement

Civic engagement⁹ covers three measures captured within the survey:

Civic participation – engagement in democratic processes (both in person and online), such as contacting an elected representative or attending a public demonstration

Civic consultation – taking part in consultations about local services such as completing questionnaires, attending public meetings or being involved in discussion groups (both in person and online)

Civic activism – involvement in decision-making about local services or in the provision of these services (both in person and online) such as being a school governor or magistrate

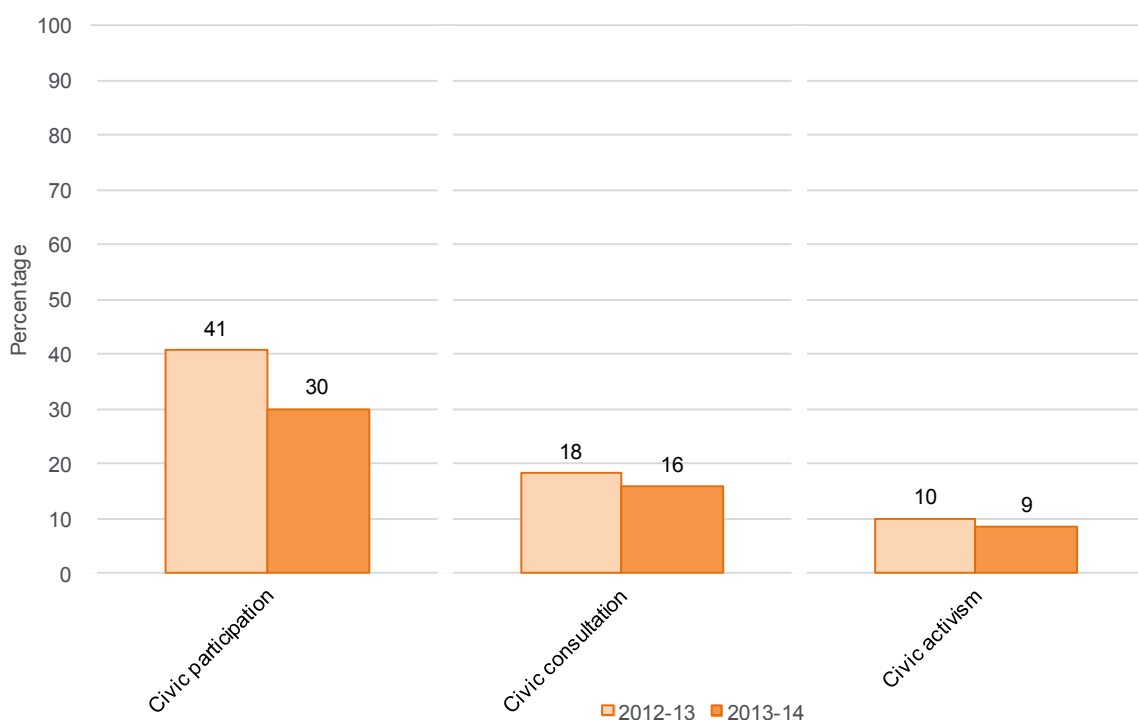
⁹ Civic engagement data is not comparable to Citizenship Survey data as the questions covering these measures were updated in the Community Life Survey to include online participation and are therefore not directly comparable

Civic participation continued to be the most common form of civic engagement in 2013-14, with 30% of people engaging in some form of civic participation in the 12 months prior to being interviewed, although levels significantly decreased from 41% in 2012-13.

16% of people took part in some form of **civic consultation** at least once in the 12 months prior to being interviewed in 2013-14, a significant decrease compared to 2012-13 (18%).

9% of people had participated in some form of **civic activism**¹⁰ in the twelve months prior to being interviewed, a significant decline compared to 10% in 2012-13.

Figure 17: Whether people engaged in civic participation, civic consultation or civic activism at least once in the past 12 months, and at least once a month, 2012-13 to 2013-14



- Table 1: Participation in civic engagement and voluntary activities, 2001 to 2013-14

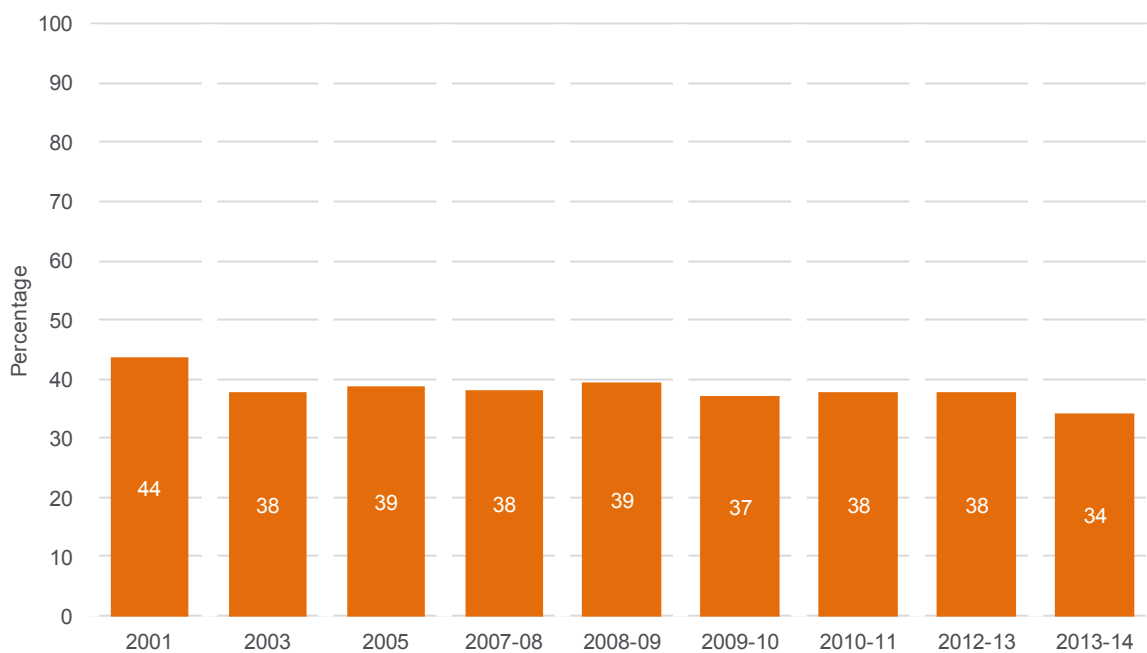
- Table 2: Participation in civic engagement and formal volunteering at least once in the last year, by sex, age, ethnicity and disability, 2007-08 to 2013-14

¹⁰ People were only asked if they engaged in civic activism at least once in the past 12 months

Influencing decisions

In 2013-14, 34% of people felt that they could influence decisions affecting their local area, a significant decrease compared to all other years since 2001.

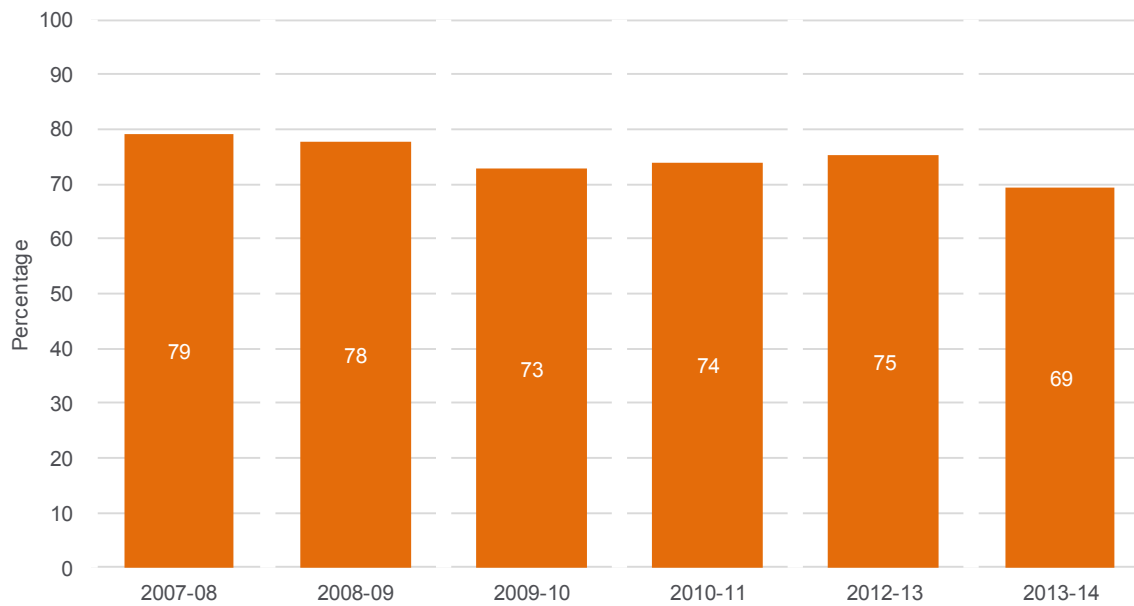
Figure 18: Proportion of people who feel they can influence decisions affecting their local area, 2001 to 2013-14



- Table 14: Whether people feel able to influence decisions affecting their local area, 2001 to 2013-14

In 2013-14, 69% of people thought it was important to feel that they can influence decisions in their local area, a significant decrease from the level seen in 2012-13 (75%) and all other years since 2007-08.

Figure 19: Proportion of people who think it is important to feel that they can influence decisions in their local area, 2007-08 to 2013-14



- Table 16: How important is it for you personally to feel you can influence decisions made in your local area, 2007-08 to 2013-14

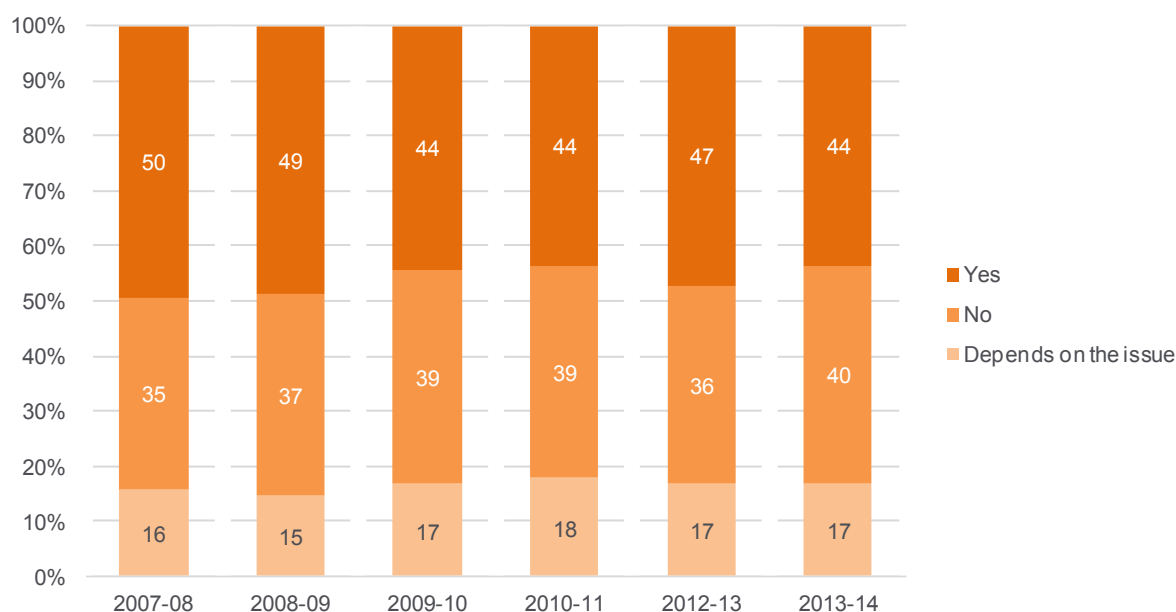
Involvement in decisions

In 2013-14, there was a significant decline in people wanting to be more involved in council decisions about their local area (44%) compared to 2012-13 (47%), 2007-08 (50%) and 2008-09 (49%). However, this was not significantly different from other years since 2007-08.

The proportion of people who did not want to be more involved in local council decisions significantly increased from 36% in 2012-13 to 40% in 2013-14.

There was no significant difference in the proportion of people who felt it would depend on the issue (17%) compared to any year apart from 2008-09 (15%).

Figure 20: Whether people would like to be more involved in decisions made by the council affecting their local area, 2007-08 to 2013-14



- Table 17: Whether people would like to be more involved in decisions made by their local council, 2007-08 to 2013-14

Annex A

Key terms and definitions

1. **Local area** – area within a 15-20 minute walk from home.
2. **Community cohesion** – local area (defined as 15-20 minutes walking distance) is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together.
3. **Civic engagement** – covers the following three separate measures:
 - **Civic participation** – engaging in one of the following activities:
 - contacting a local councillor, Member of Parliament, member of the Greater London Assembly
 - contacting a public official working for a local council, central Government, Greater London Assembly
 - attending a public meeting or rally
 - taking part in a public demonstration or protest
 - signing a petition (either paper petition or e-petition/online petition)
 - **Civic activism** – involvement (in person or online) either in direct decision-making about local services or issues, or in the actual provision of these services by taking on a role such as a local councillor, school governor or magistrate.
 - **Civic consultation** – active engagement (in person or online) in consultation about local services or issues through activities such as attending a consultation group or completing a questionnaire about these services.
4. **Formal volunteering** – giving unpaid help through groups, clubs or organisations.
5. **Informal volunteering** – giving unpaid help as an individual to people who are not relatives.
6. **Social action** – getting together with others to support a community project in the local area, e.g. trying to set up a new service or amenity to help local residents, or organising a community event e.g. a street party.

Content of Report

7. The Statistical Release is designed to report on the key topic areas within the Community Life Survey and includes data supporting the Cabinet Office's and Other Government Departments' key priorities. However the Community Life Survey covers many other topics which cannot all be incorporated into a Release such as this, so the underlying data will be made available through the University of Essex data archive.
8. Anonymised data for the full survey year will be available to download through the University of Essex Data Archive (www.data-archive.ac.uk) in Autumn 2014.

Background notes

9. The Community Life Survey is a survey commissioned by the Cabinet Office and fieldwork for the survey is conducted by TNS-BMRB. It is a household survey covering a representative sample, which in 2013-14 consists of 5,000 adults over four quarters, aged 16+ in England. The survey covers a range of topics including volunteering, charitable giving, social action, community cohesion and civic engagement.
10. The survey is carried out via face-to-face interviews and has a continuous design. This release cumulatively covers four quarters' worth of data, based on interviews carried out between May 2013 and April 2014. The total sample size for this period was 5,105. The median interview length was 32 minutes 27 seconds.
11. This release is an Official Statistic produced by the Cabinet Office to standards specified in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. More information can be found at <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/code-of-practice-for-official-statistics.pdf> .
12. In accordance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, the statistics in this release match up to the six dimensions of quality defined by the European Statistical System (ESS). These are relevance, accuracy, timeliness, accessibility, comparability and coherence. More information on these quality indicators will be available in the full technical report for the Community Life Survey, which will be published in Summer 2014.
13. The data are weighted to ensure the representativeness of the Community Life sample by compensating for differences in sampling probabilities and non-

response by sub-group. Weighting is based on 2011 census population figures in terms of age, sex and regional distribution.

14. For more information about the Cabinet Office's revision policy and how revisions are handled for the Community Life Survey, please see Cabinet Office's statement of compliance on our website at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/community-life-survey>
15. All differences and changes reported in the release, both between groups and over time, are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level, unless otherwise specified. This means that the probability of any observed change happening by chance is low (1 in 20). The number of respondents the percentage is based on and the percentage observed will affect whether an observed change is statistically significant or not. A 'ready reckoner' has been provided alongside the Excel tables which can be used to test for statistical significance between percentages in the tables at the 95% confidence level. An overall design factor of 1.3 has been applied to the dataset. More information on design factors will be available in the full technical report for the Community Life Survey, which will be published in Summer 2014.
16. The Community Life Survey incorporates key measures from the previous Citizenship Survey (run by the Department for Communities and Local Government), and has used a comparable methodology in order that trends in such measures can be tracked over time. Where applicable, time series data is included in this release and accompanying outputs. The Citizenship Survey was commissioned by the Department for Communities and Local Government and ran from 2001 to 2010-11 (more information can be found at <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20120919132719/www.communities.gov.uk/communities/research/citizenshipsurvey/>).
17. The Cabinet Office has consulted with end users on a number of different issues to inform and shape the future of the survey. A written response to this consultation will be published in due course and will be available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/community-life-survey>
18. The statistical contact for this release is Julia Dudley. Any comments on issues relating to this release or the survey in general are welcomed – please contact us at:

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Email: communitylife@cabinet-office.gsi.gov.uk

19. The fieldwork for this survey is being conducted by TNS-BMRB. More information can be found at <http://www.tns-bmr.co.uk>