Department for Culture Media & Sport

Community Life Survey
Focus on: Diversity
2016/2017

This report explores differences by gender, ethnicity, disability status, region, Index of Multiple Deprivation and age for key measures in collected in the 2016-17 Community Life Survey.

Older people were more likely than younger people to agree that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together.

People who live in London were less likely to regularly chat to their neighbours than people from most other regions in England.

People who live in the most deprived areas were less likely to agree they feel they belong to Britain than those in the least deprived areas.

Women were more likely than men to give informal help. This includes things like helping with shopping, babysitting or giving advice.

Black and Asian people were more likely to feel they are able to influence decisions affecting their local area than White people.

People with a long term limiting illness or disability were more likely to say they often or always feel lonely than people without.

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Chapter 1: Overview

Community Life Survey

The Community Life Survey (CLS) is a survey of adults (16+) in England. It tracks trends across areas that are key to encouraging social action and empowering communities.

This nationally representative survey provides data on behaviours and attitudes to inform policy and action in these areas. The survey provides data of value to a range of users, including government departments, public bodies, external stakeholders and the public.

Related Publications

The majority of ethnicity breakdowns included in this release were published as part of the Government's Race Disparity Audit in autumn 2017. Data included in this can be found on the Ethnicity Facts and Figures website.

Further analysis into patterns that impact on loneliness, using the data collected by the Community Life Survey was published by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) and is available on the ONS website

Information about volunteering is also collected in the Department for Digital, Media, Culture and Sport's Taking Part Survey. This asks about volunteering in a different way to CLS so estimates can vary. CLS should be used for headline measures of volunteering, while Taking Part can be used to understand volunteering in the DCMS sectors. More information can be found on the Taking part statistical release page.

Measures and terms used in this report

Confidence intervals: A confidence interval is a range in which the true value is likely to fall. For this report 95% confidence intervals are used, meaning if the sampling was conducted 100 times, creating 100 confidence intervals, then 95 of these intervals would contain the true value for adults in England. When sample sizes are smaller we can be less certain in our estimates so confidence intervals are wider.

Statistically significant: Differences between groups are only reported on in this publication where they are statistically significant, i.e. where we can be confident that the differences seen in our sampled respondents are reflective of the population. A significant difference at the 95% level means we can be confident that if we carried out the same survey on different random samples of the population, 95 times out of 100 we would get similar findings.

> **Small sample sizes for some ethnic groups and regions presented in this report mean we are less able to detect significant differences between groups.**

Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Quintile: The Index of Multiple Deprivation, commonly known as the IMD, is the official measure of relative deprivation for small areas in England. This is calculated using several measures such as income deprivation, crime and living environment deprivation. The Index of Multiple Deprivation ranks every small area in England from 1 (most deprived area) to 32,844 (least deprived area). In this publication, we have clustered these areas into 'IMD Quintiles' with 1 being the most deprived areas and 5 being the least deprived areas.

> **There are likely to be interactions between different demographics reported in this publication. For example, ethnic groups have different age and regional profiles. This report focuses on individual characteristics, so differences cited here cannot necessarily be attributed directly to the characteristic being described.**

Chapter 2: Social Cohesion

2.1   Chatting to neighbours

Respondents were asked how often they chat to their neighbours more than just to say hello. Overall, 73% of respondents said they chat to their neighbours at least once a month.

The largest differences were seen between age groups, with older people more likely to chat to their neighbours than younger people. Only 46% of 16-24 year olds said they chat with their neighbours regularly compared with 88% of those aged 75 or older.

There were some differences between ethnic groups, with White people being more likely to say they chat to their neighbours than Asian people (74% compared with 67% respectively).

People who lived in the less deprived Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) quintiles, were more likely to say they chat to their neighbours at least once a month than those who lived in the more deprived quintiles. Among those in the least deprived quintile, 76% chat to neighbours regularly compared with 67% of those in the most deprived quintile. People who lived in London were less likely to chat to their neighbours than most other regions, although differences between London and the West Midlands were not statistically significant. 66% of people from London chat to their neighbours compared with 78% from the East Midlands and South West.

Differences between those with or without a long term limiting illness (LTI) or disability, and between genders were not statistically significant.

Figure 2.1 Percentage of people who chat to their neighbours at least once a month

95% confidence interval
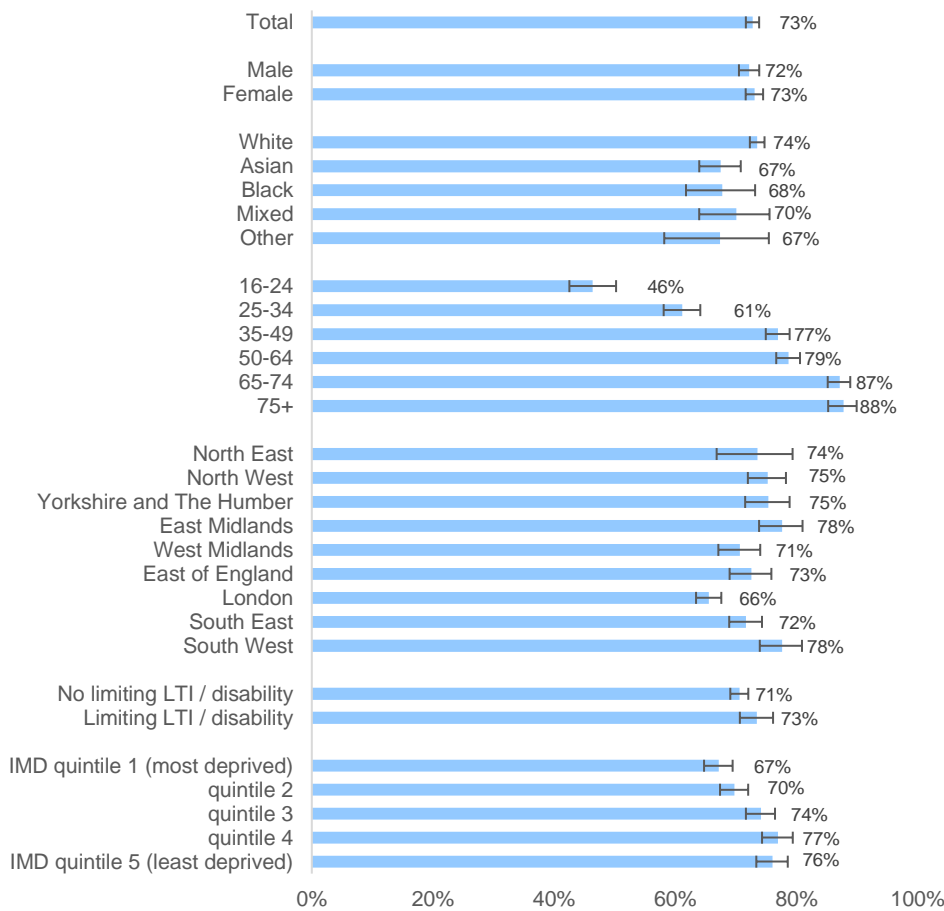
2.2 Agreeing that people from different backgrounds get on well together

Respondents were asked if they agreed that their local area is place where people from different backgrounds get on well together. Overall 81% of people either said they either definitely or tended to agree.

Asian people were more likely to agree than White and Black people (85% compared with 81% and 77% respectively).

Older people were more likely to agree than younger people. 88% of those aged 75 or older and 84% of those aged 65-74 agreed. In contrast, 78% of those aged 16-24 and 25-34 agreed.

Rates of agreement ranged from 76% in Yorkshire and The Humber to 84% in London, the South East and South West, however, only the difference between London and Yorkshire and The Humber was statistically significant.

Among people without a limiting LTI or disability, 83% agreed compared with 77% of those with a limiting LTI or disability.

Rates of agreement decreased as deprivation level increased, with 89% from the least deprived quintile agreeing that people from different backgrounds get along in their area compared with 73% from the most deprived quintile.

Differences between genders were not statistically significant.

Figure 2.2   Percentage of people who agreed people with different backgrounds get on well in their area
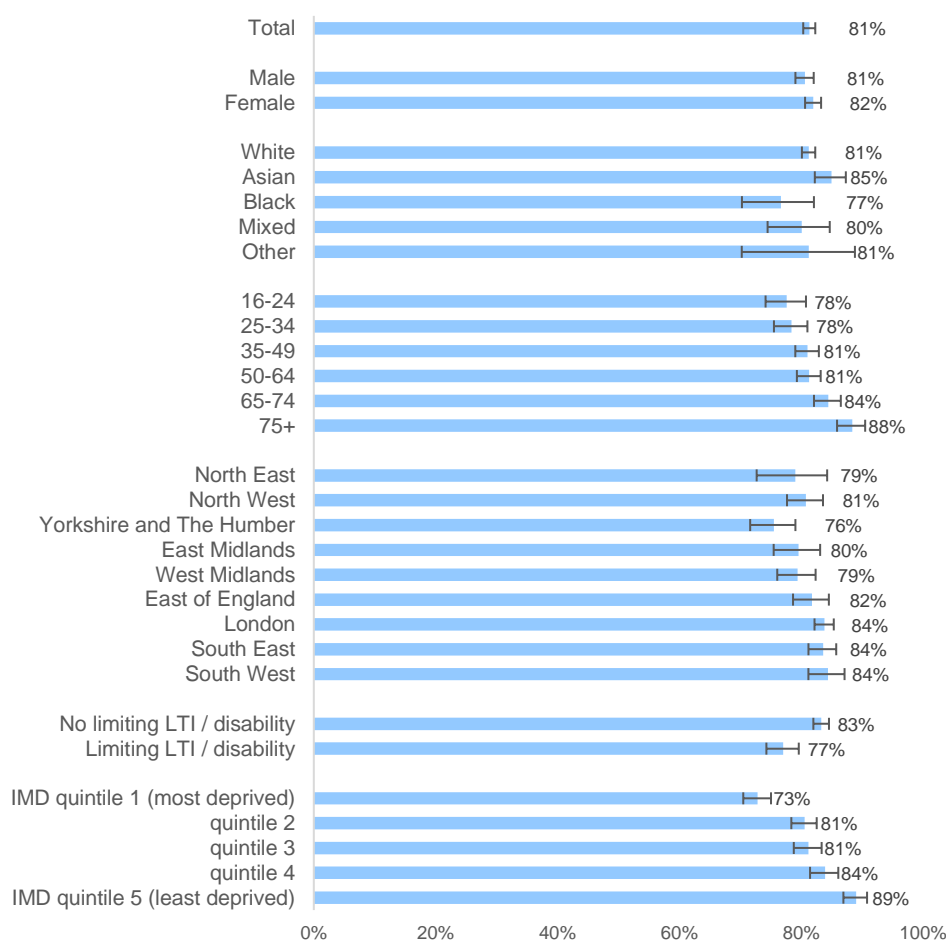
2.3   Belonging to Local Neighbourhood

Respondents were asked whether they felt they belonged to their immediate neighbourhood. Overall, 62% of people said they felt very or fairly strongly that they belonged to their immediate neighbourhood.

Feeling of belonging to the neighbourhood appears to increase with age. Only 48% of 16-24 year olds felt they belong to their local neighbourhood compared with 76% of over 75s.

People from London were significantly less likely to say they belong to their neighbourhood than people from the North East, North West, Yorkshire and The Humber, East Midlands and the West Midlands. Only 57% of people from London felt they belong compared with 68% of those in the North East. Responses to this question may be influenced by how long people had lived in their local area. For example, people living in London were more likely to have lived in the area for 4 years or less than those in the North East.

People who lived in the two least deprived quintiles (four and five) were more likely to say they felt they belonged to their neighbourhood than those from the two most deprived areas (one and two). Among those living in the least deprived quintile, 68% felt they belonged compared with 55% in the most deprived quintile.

Differences between ethnicity, gender and disability status were not statistically significant.

Figure 2.3:   Percentage who felt strongly or fairly strongly that they belong to their local neighbourhood.
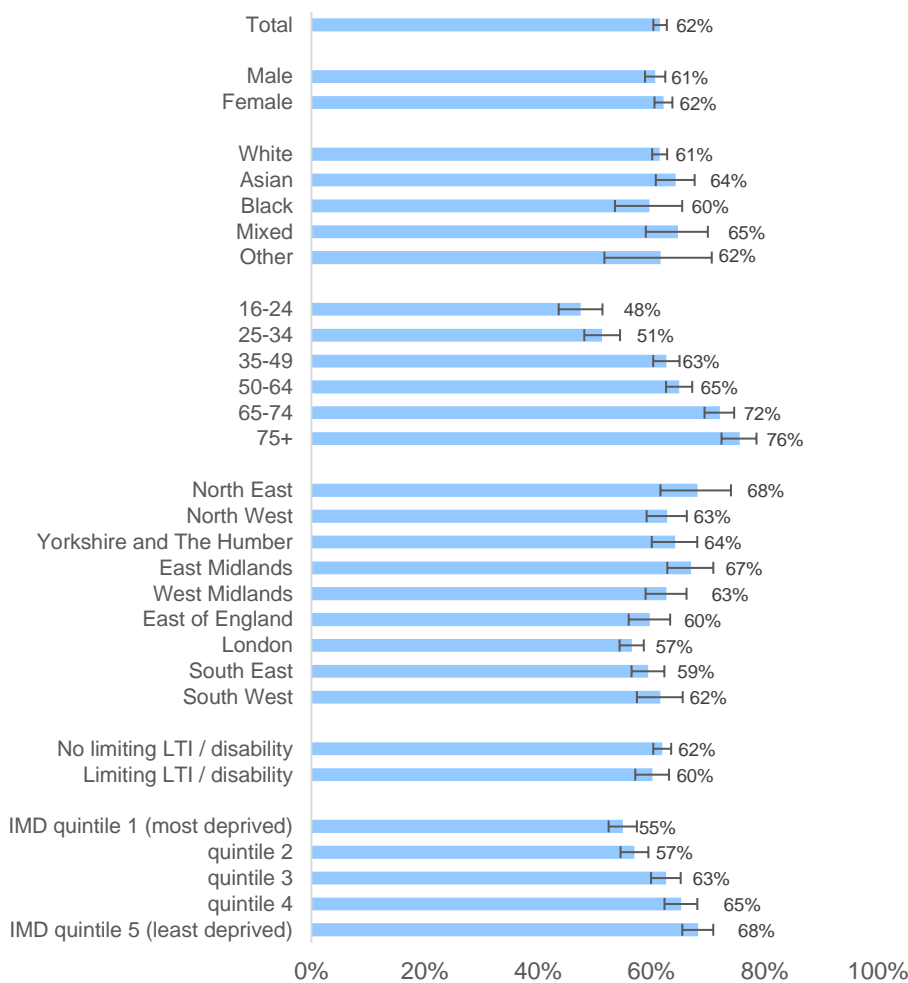
2.4 Belonging to Britain

Respondents were asked how strongly they felt they belonged to Britain. Overall, 85% of respondents said they either felt very or fairly strongly that they belong to Britain.

Most differences between ethnic groups were not statistically significant, although White and Asian people were more likely to say they felt they belonged to Britain than those in the 'Other ethnicity' group (85% and 84% compared with 68% respectively). It should be noted that the 'Other ethnicity' group has a relatively small sample size, and as such, caution should be taken when interpreting these findings.

Feelings of belonging to Britain increased with age, ranging from 79% of 16-24 year olds and 78% of 25-34 year olds, to 96% among those aged 75 and over.

Those living in the two least deprived quintiles (four and five) were more likely to say they felt they belonged to Britain than the more deprived quintiles. Among those in the two least deprived groups, 89% felt they belong compared with 80% in the most deprived quintile.

People who lived in London were less likely to say they felt they belonged to Britain than people who lived in the South West (82% compared with 89% respectively)

Differences between other regions, gender and LTI/disability status were not statistically significant.

Figure 2.4: Percentage who felt strongly or fairly strongly that they belong to their Britain
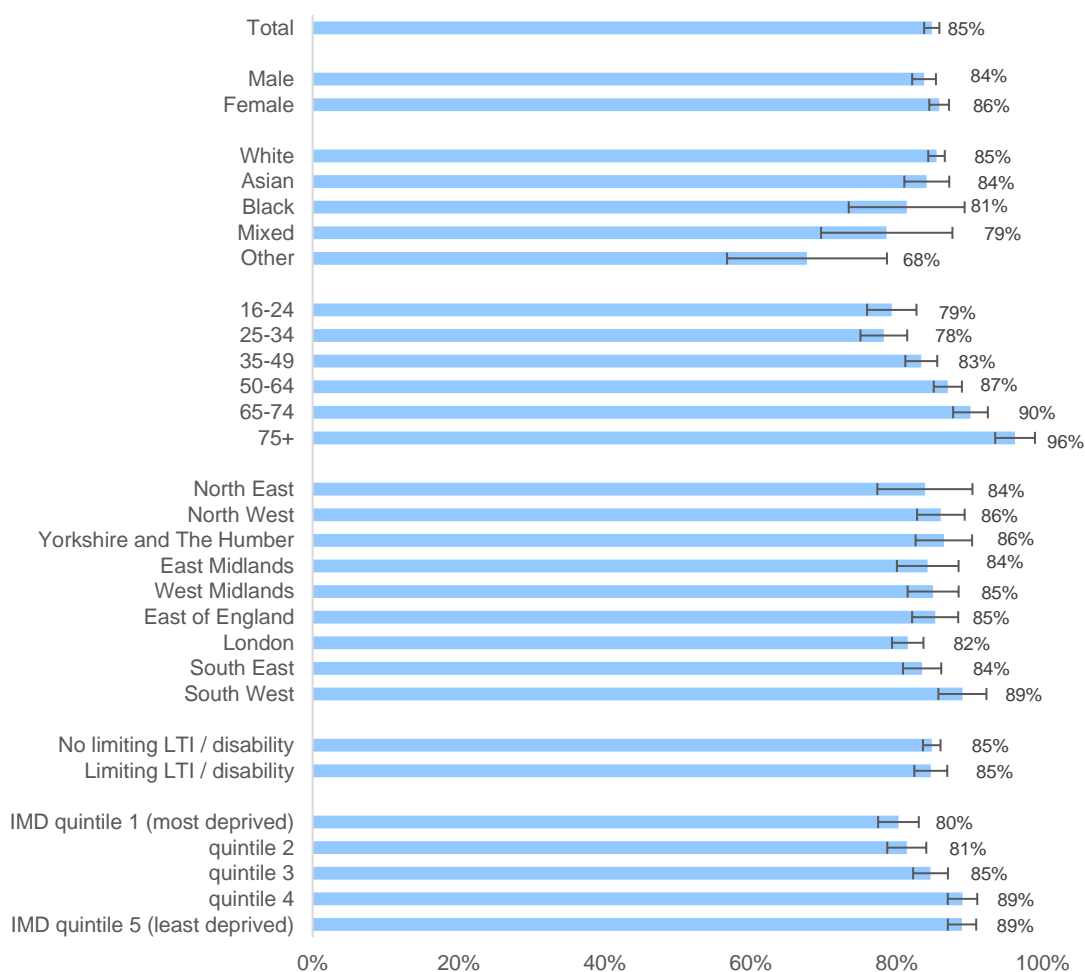
Chapter 3:   Volunteering

3.1   Formal Volunteering

Formal volunteering is defined as providing unpaid help for clubs or groups. Overall, 22% of respondents engaged in formal volunteering regularly (at least once a month). The exact questions on which these results are based are included in Annex B.

Asian people and people from a Mixed ethnic group were less likely to regularly volunteer than White people. Black people were also more likely to volunteer regularly than Asian people. A quarter (25%) of Black people and 23% of White people said they regularly volunteered compared with 17% of Asian and 16% of people with Mixed ethnicity. It should be noted that rates of *informal* volunteering, such as helping friends and neighbours, do not differ significantly between ethnic groups (see section 3.2).

Those aged 25-34 were least likely to volunteer formally, with only 15% volunteering at least once a month, compared with 32% of 65-74 year olds. This may be linked to greater work and childcare commitments among this age group.

People who lived in the South West were most likely to volunteer formally with 29% regularly volunteering. This was a significantly greater rate than people who lived in London, West Midlands, Yorkshire and The Humber or North East.

Those living in the least deprived quintile were most likely to formally volunteer, with 29% regularly volunteering. Those in quintile three, four and five were significantly more likely to regularly volunteer than those from quintile one and two, with 15% of those in the quintile one volunteering regularly. Those aged 24-35, the age group least likely to volunteer, were the most likely to live in these areas.

Differences between disability status and gender were not statistically significant.

Figure 3.1: Percentage of people who volunteered formally at least monthly.
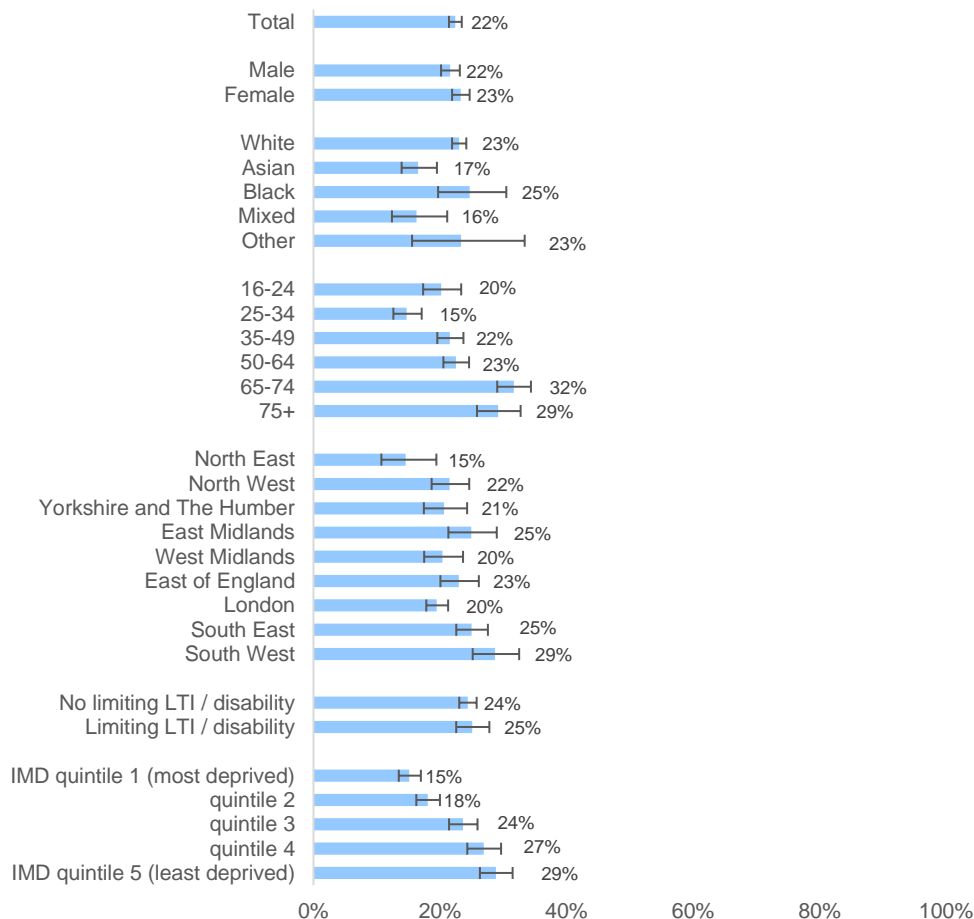
3.2   Informal Volunteering

Respondents were also asked about informal volunteering. This includes giving help to people outside of the family such as doing their shopping, giving advice, or helping with household tasks. The exact questions on which these results are based are included in Annex B.

Women were more likely to have informally volunteered at least monthly than men, at 30% and 24% respectively.

People aged 65 or over were more likely to informally volunteer than those aged 25-64. People aged 16-24 were also more likely to informally volunteer than those aged 25-49. Those aged 65-74 had the highest rates of informal volunteering at 39%, compared with 21% of 25-34 year olds.

People with a limiting LTI or disability were more likely to have volunteered informally than those without at 32% and 25% respectively.

Differences between ethnic groups, region and IMD quintiles were not statistically significant.

Figure 3.2: Percentage of people who volunteered informally at least once a month
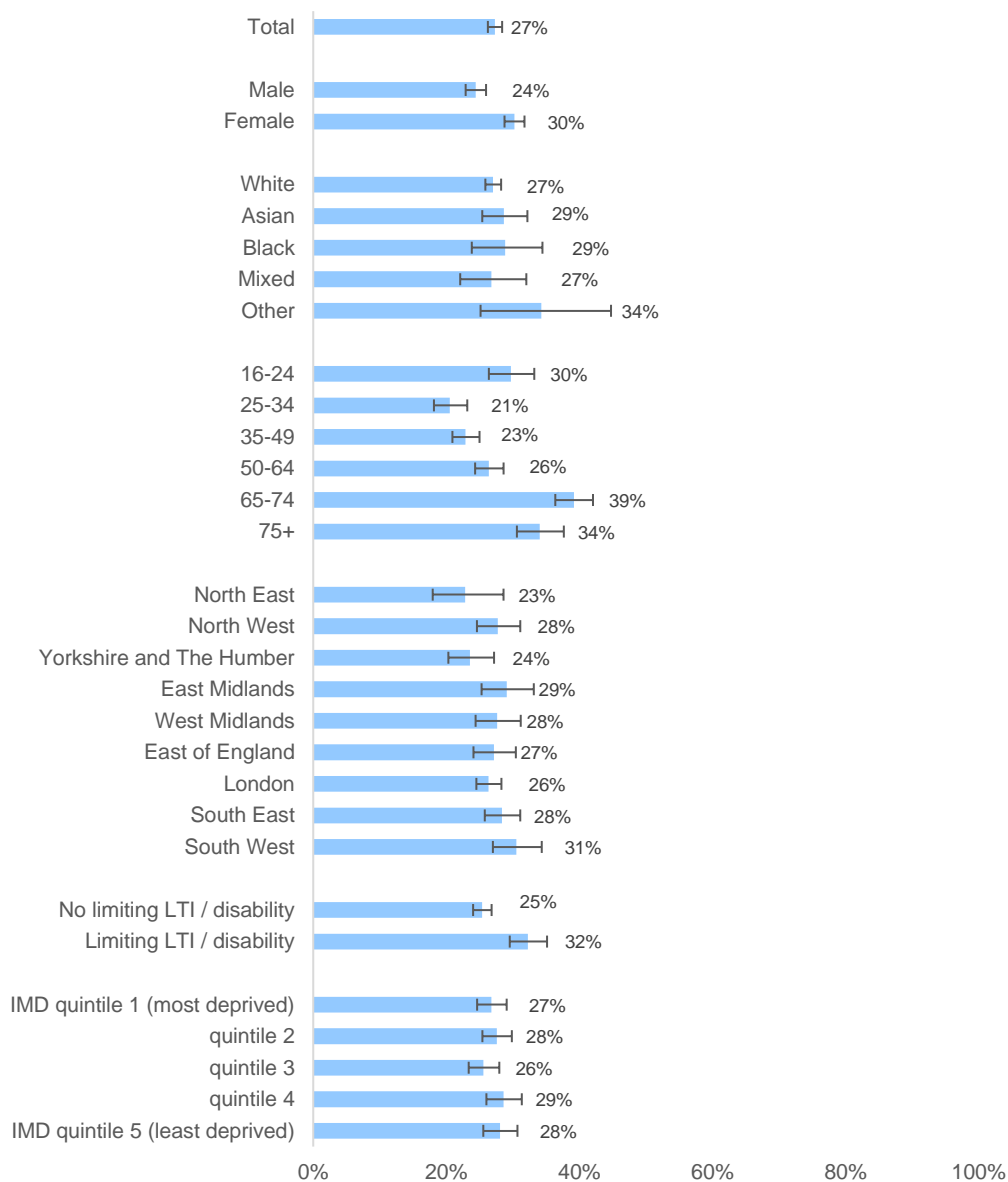
Chapter 4: Civic Engagement

## 4.1   Influence over decisions affecting the local area

Respondents were asked if they agree that they personally can influence decisions affecting their local area. Overall, 27% either tended to or definitely agreed.

People from Black, Asian and Mixed ethnic groups were more likely to agree that they can influence local decisions than White people. Black people were most likely to agree, with 44% saying they agreed compared with 25% of White people.

People who lived in London were more likely to agree that they are able to influence local decisions than other regions, although the difference between London and the South West is not statistically significant. Of those living in London, 32% agreed compared with 19% of those in the North East.

Differences between gender, disability status and IMD quintile were not statistically significant.

Figure 4.1: Percentage who agreed they can personally influence decisions in their local area
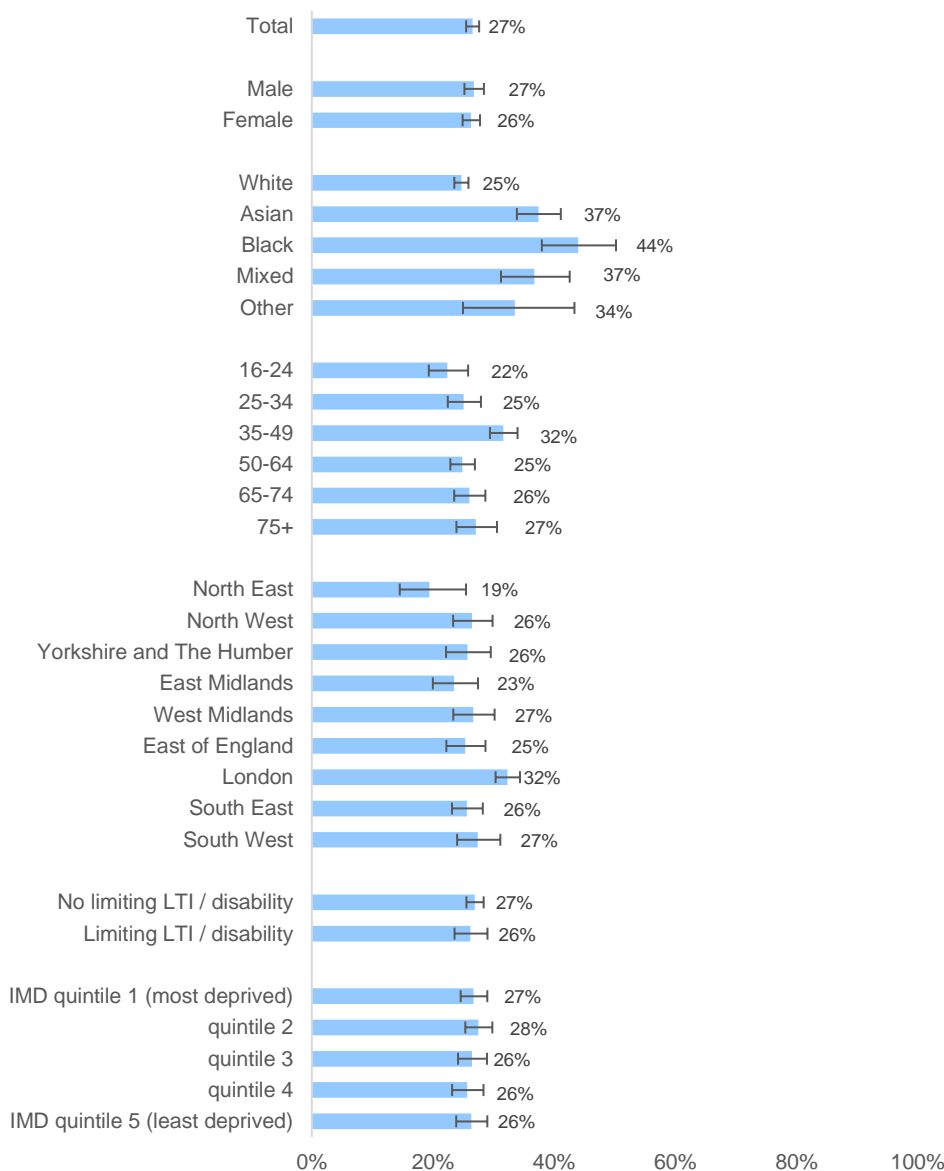
4.2 Civic Participation

Respondents were asked about civic participation in the last 12 months. This includes contacting a local official, attending a public meeting or signing a petition. Overall, 41% of people had engaged in civic participation. The exact question on which these results are based is included in Annex B.

White people (42%) were more likely to say they have been involved in civic participation than Asian (34%), Black (34%) or Mixed ethnic groups (33%).

People aged over 75 were the least likely age group to have engaged in civic participation, with 32% engaging at least once in the last 12 month. Differences between other age groups were not statistically significant.

People who lived in London were more likely to be engaged in civic participation than those who lived in the West Midlands (44% compared with 38% respectively).

Civic participation increases as deprivation decreases, ranging from 34% in the most deprived quintile to 48% in the least deprived quintile.

Differences between genders, disability status and other regions were not statistically significant.

*Figure 4.2:* *Percentage of people who engaged in civic participation in the last year.*
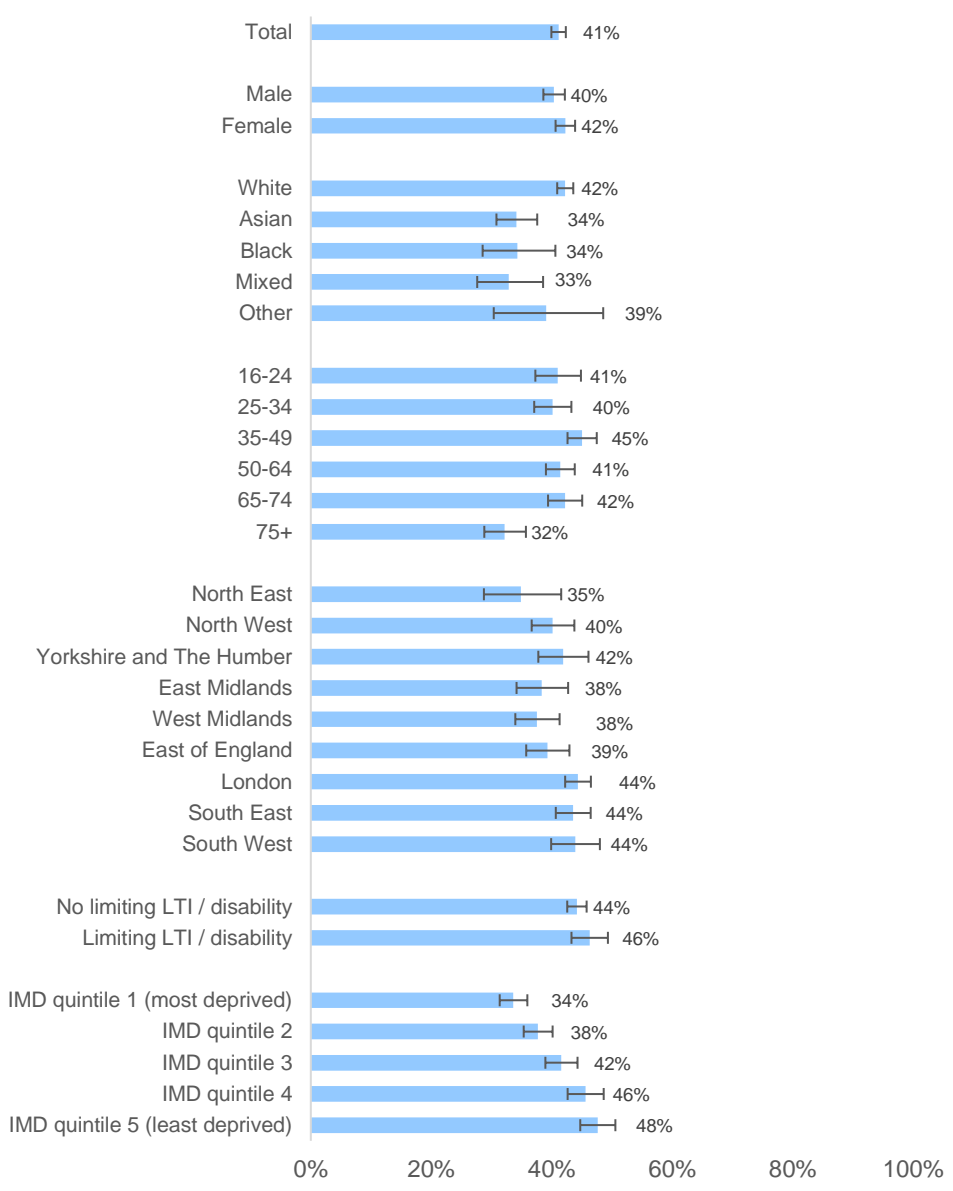
Chapter 5:   Loneliness

Respondents were asked how often they feel lonely. Overall, 5% of people said they felt lonely often or always and 23% said they never felt lonely.

5.1   Loneliness by Gender

Women were more likely to say they sometimes or occasionally feel lonely and less likely to say they never felt lonely than men. 27% of men said they never felt lonely compared with 18% of women.
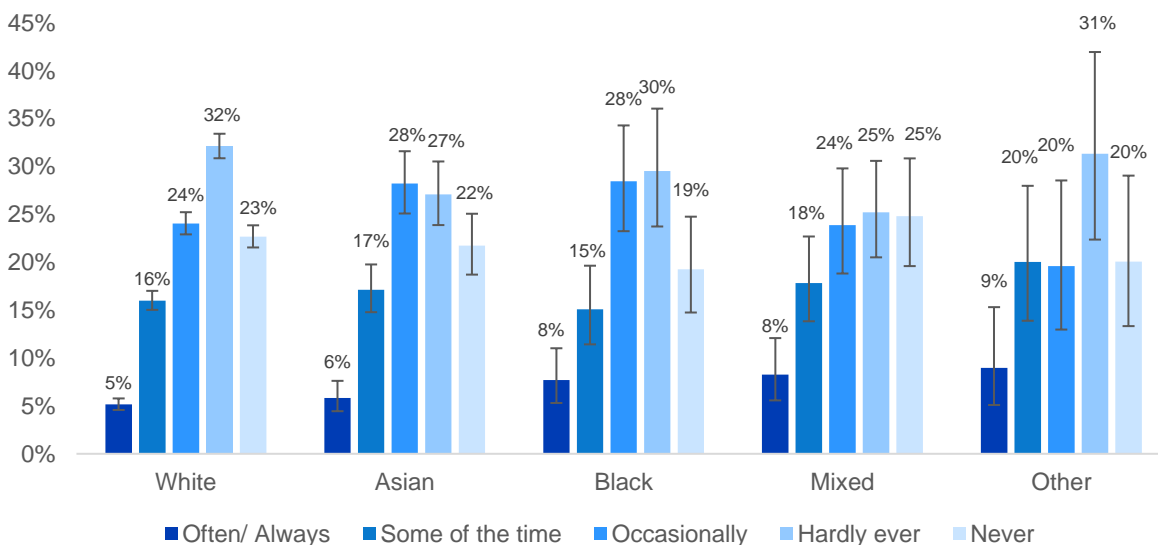
Figure 5.1: Frequency of feeling lonely by gender.
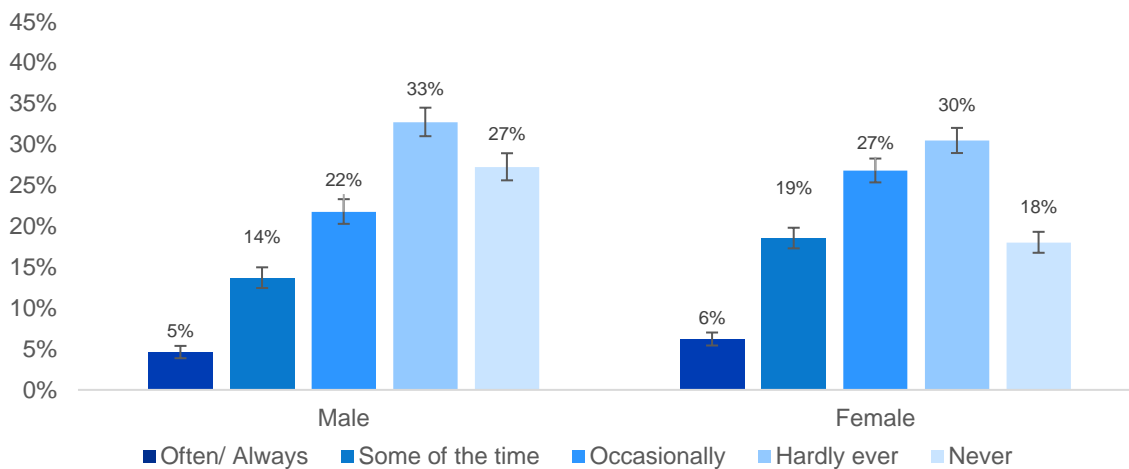
5.2   Loneliness by Ethnicity

Most differences between ethnicities were not statistically significant, although White people were more likely to say they hardly ever feel lonely than people from Asian or Mixed ethnic groups (32%, 27% and 25% respectively).

Figure 5.2: Frequency of feeling lonely by ethnicity

5.3 Loneliness by age

People aged 16 to 24 years were significantly more likely to report feeling lonely often/always than most other age groups (except the 25 to 34 years group). 10% of 16-24 year olds said they felt lonely often/always. They were also the least likely to report never feeling lonely, with only 12% saying this compared with 28% of those aged 75 or over.

Figure 5.3   Frequency of loneliness by age group
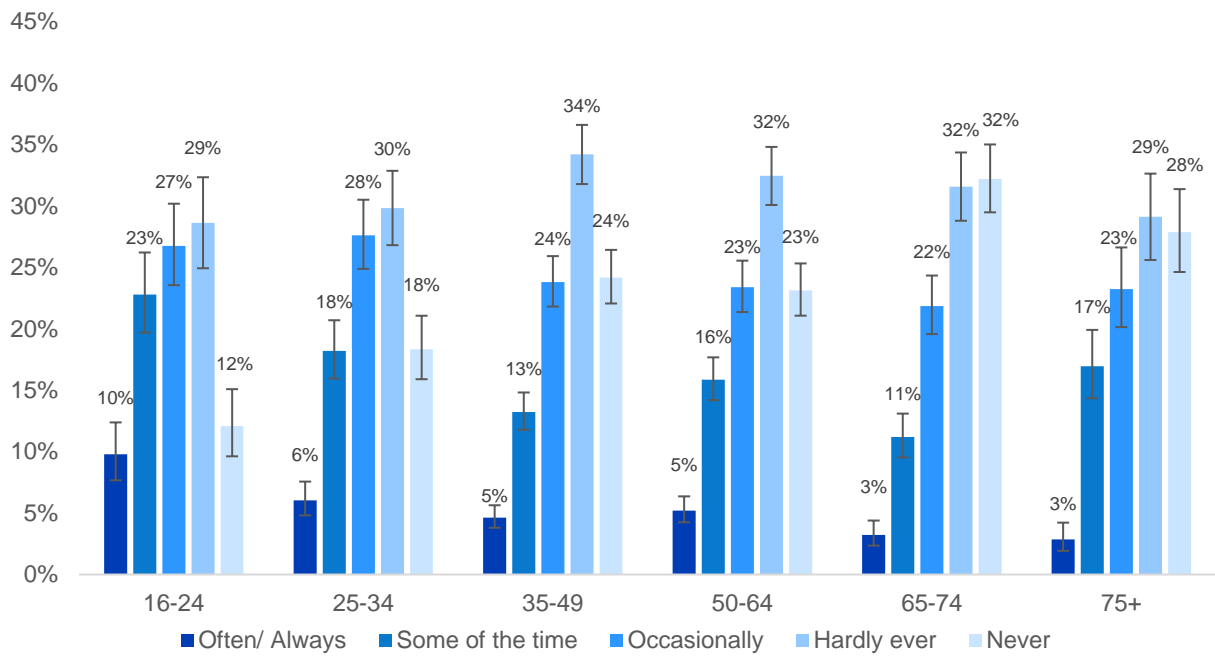
5.4 Loneliness by long term limiting illness (LTI) or disability

People with a limiting LTI or disability were more likely to say they feel lonely often/always or some of the time, and less likely to say they hardly ever or never felt lonely than people without a limiting LTI or disability. 11% of people with a limiting LTI or disability said they often/always felt lonely compared with 4% of people without a limiting LTI or disability.
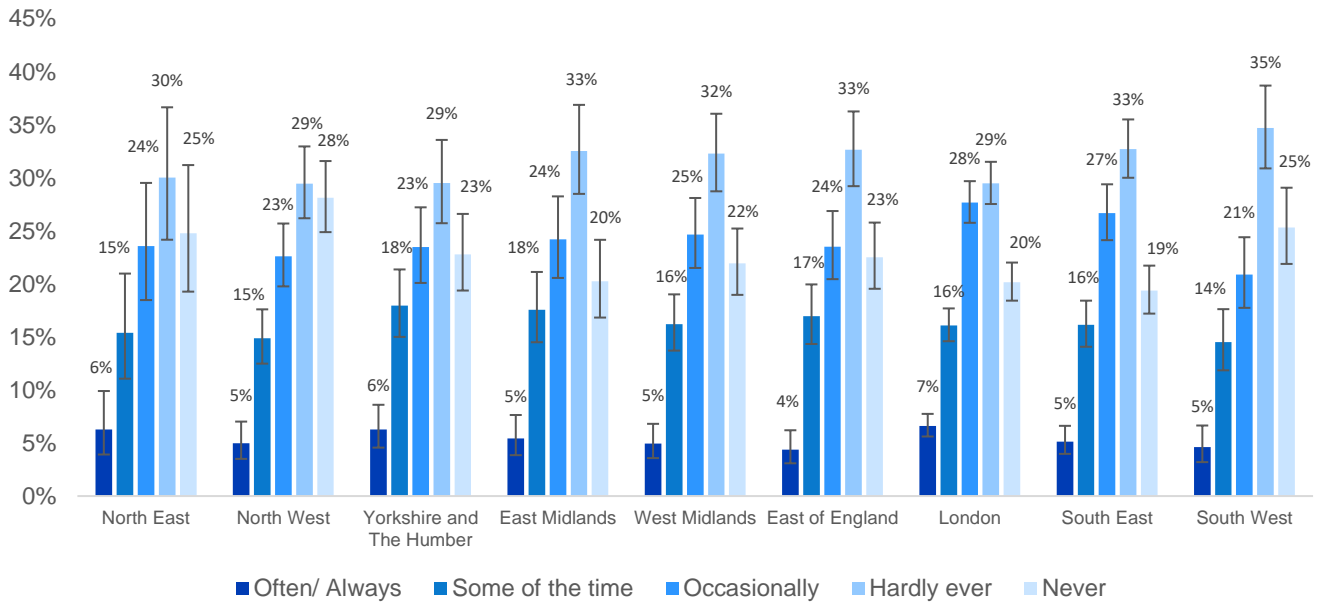
Figure 5.4   Frequency of loneliness by disability status.
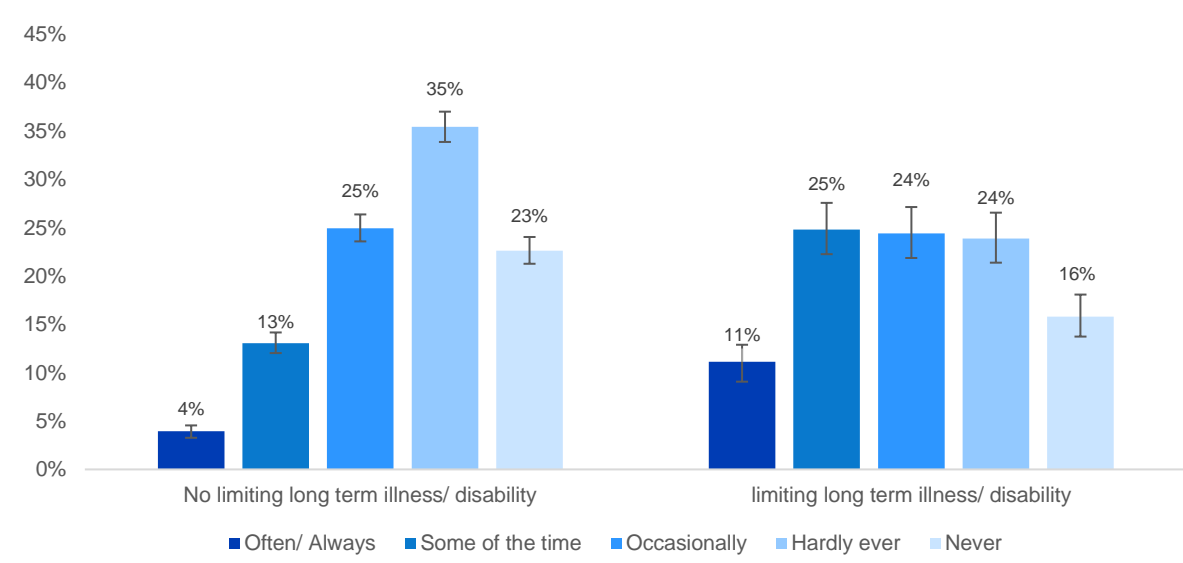
5.5   Loneliness by region

People who lived in the North West were more likely to say they never felt lonely than people who lived in the East Midlands, London or the South East (28% compared with 20% in East Midlands and London and 19% in the South East).

*Figure 5.5   Frequency of Loneliness by region.*

5.6 Loneliness by Index of Multiple Deprivation quintile

People who lived in the most deprived quintile were more likely to say they feel lonely often/always than people who lived the three least deprived quintiles (8% in the most deprived quintile compared with 4% in the two least deprived quintiles).

Figure 5.6   Frequency of loneliness by IMD quintile
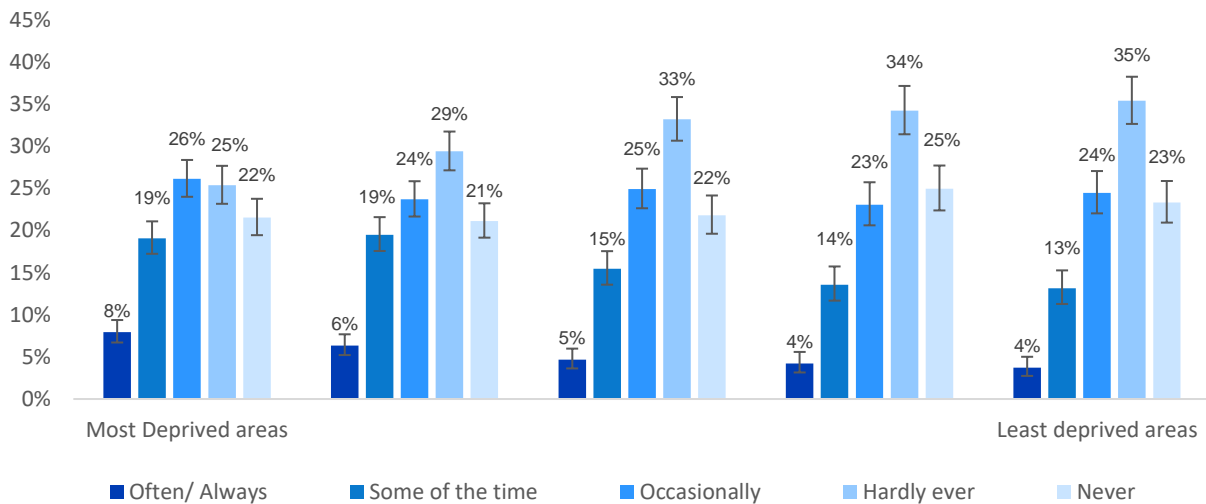
Annex A: Background

1. Following the move of the Office for Civil Society from the Cabinet Office to the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) in the summer of 2016, the Community Life Survey is now commissioned by DCMS. The fieldwork is conducted by Kantar Public (formerly TNS-BMRB). It is an annual household survey, conducted via self-completion questionnaire.

2. This release is based on self-completion online/paper questionnaires, completed between August 2016 and March 2017. The exact total sample size for this period was 10,256. Sample sizes for each breakdown can be found in the accompanying tables. Previous year's publications can be found at https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/community-life-survey.

3. Stringent quality assurance procedures have been adopted for this statistical release. All data and analysis has been checked and verified by at least two different members of the DCMS team to ensure the highest level of quality

4. Differences between groups have only been reported on in the text of this report where they are statistically significant at the 95% level. This means that we can be confident that the differences seen in our sampled respondents are reflective of the population. Specifically, the statistical tests used mean we can be confident that if we carried out the same survey on different random samples of the population, 95 times out of 100 we would get similar findings. When sample sizes are smaller we can be less confident in our estimates so differences need to be greater to be considered statistically significant.

5. The upper and lower bounds presented in this report have been calculated using a 95% confidence interval. This means that had the sample been conducted 100 times, creating 100 confidence intervals, then 95 of these intervals would contain the true value. When the sample size is smaller, as is the case for certain groups, the confidence intervals are wider as we can be less certain that the individuals in the sample are representative of the population. This means that it is more difficult to draw inferences from the results.

6. Descriptive statistics have been calculated using complex samples analysis. Upper and lower estimates may vary slightly from analysis using other methodology or different software packages.

7. The responsible statistician for this release is Rosanna White. For enquiries on this release, please contact Rosanna at evidence@culture.gov.uk.

Annex B: Survey Questions

The questions used to produce rates of formal volunteering, informal volunteering and civic engagement are listed below.

Wording can differ slightly between online and paper versions of the questionnaire.

B.1   Formal Volunteering

Initially, respondents are asked to think about activities they are involved in in any way, not necessarily as a volunteer.

For each of the following types of groups, clubs or organisations, please state whether you have been involved with any of these during the last 12 months, that is since [DATE ONE YEAR AGO].
That's anything you've taken part in, supported, or that you've helped in any way, either on your own or with others. Please exclude giving money or anything that was a requirement of your job or organised through your employer.

Children's education/schools: e.g. Parent Teacher Associations, School governor, supporting fairs and fundraising, helping in school, running pupils' clubs

Youth/children's activities: Outside school e.g. Youth clubs, Sports clubs, Hobby or cultural groups for children)

Education for adults   e.g. attending or teaching classes, Mentoring, Cultural groups, Students Union, College governor

Sport/exercise   taking part, coaching or going to watch (e.g. Sports clubs or groups (e.g. football, swimming, fishing, golf, keep-fit, hiking), Supporter clubs)

Religion   e.g. Attending a place of worship (church, chapel, mosque, temple, synagogue), Attending faith-based groups, Saturday/Sunday School.

Politics   e.g. Membership of, or involvement with, political groups, serving as local councillor.

Older people   e.g. Involved with groups, clubs or organisations for older people (e.g. Age UK, Pensioner's clubs, visiting, transporting or representing older people)

Health   Health, Disability and Social welfare (e.g. Medical research charities, Hospital visiting, Disability groups, Social welfare (e.g. Oxfam, NSPCC, Samaritans, Citizens Advice Bureau), Offering respite care, Self-help groups (e.g. Alcoholics Anonymous))

Safety, First Aid   e.g. Red Cross, St. Johns Ambulance, Life Saving, RNLI, Mountain Rescue, Helping after a disaster

The environment, animals   e.g. National organisations (e.g. Greenpeace, National Trust, RSPCA), Local conservation groups, Preservation societies

Justice and Human Rights	e.g. Special Constable, Magistrate, Legal advice centre, Victim Support, Prison visiting or aftercare, Justice and peace groups, Community or race relations, LGBT groups, National organisations (e.g. Amnesty International))
Local community	Local community or neighbourhood groups (e.g. Tenants' / Residents' Association, Neighbourhood Watch, community group, local pressure group)
Citizens' Groups	e.g. Rotary Club, Lion's Club, Women's Institute (WI), Freemasons)
Hobbies	Recreation/Arts/Social clubs (e. g. Clubs or groups for the Arts (e.g. theatres, museums, amateur dramatics, orchestras), Hobby or cultural groups (e.g. local history club, Social club)
Trade union activity	e.g. Membership of, or involvement with, a trade union.
Any other activities	(SPECIFY)

Have you been involved with any other groups, clubs or organisations in the last 12 months?

If the respondent selects yes to any of the above, indicating they have been involved in some way, they are then asked about any unpaid work relating to these activities:

In the last 12 months, that is, since [DATE ONE YEAR AGO], have you given unpaid help to [the group, club or organisation/any of the groups, clubs or organisations] you've just selected in any of the following ways?

Please select all that apply.
A. Raising or handling money/taking part in sponsored events
B. Leading a group/member of a committee
C. Getting other people involved
D. Organising or helping to run an activity or event
E. Visiting people
F. Befriending or mentoring people
G. Giving advice/information/counselling
H. Secretarial, admin or clerical work
I. Providing transport/driving
J. Representing
K. Campaigning
L. Other practical help (e.g. helping out at school, shopping)
M. Any other help
None of these

If the respondent selects any of the above, they are considered to have completed formal volunteering in the last year. Establish whether this is considered regular volunteering (once a month), the following question is asked:

Over the last 12 months, how often have you helped [this/these] group(s), club(s) or organisation(s)?
1. At least once a week
2. Less than once a week but at least once a month
3. Less often than once a month

Those selecting option one or two are considered to volunteer regularly for the purpose of this analysis.

B.2   Informal volunteering:

Respondents are asked to consider any help they have given to someone who is not a relative. Those who select a response from 1-12 are considered to have engaged in informal volunteering for the purpose of this analysis.

The next section asks about any unpaid help you as an individual may have given to other people, that is apart from any help given through a group, club or organisation. This could be help for a friend, neighbour or someone else but not a relative.

In the last 12 months, that is, since [DATE ONE YEAR AGO], have you done any of these things, unpaid, for someone who was not a relative?

Please select all that apply.

1. Keeping in touch with someone who has difficulty getting out and about (visiting in person, telephoning or e-mailing)
2. Doing shopping, collecting pension or paying bills
3. Cooking, cleaning, laundry, gardening or other routine household jobs
4. Decorating, or doing any kind of home or car repairs
5. Babysitting or caring for children
6. Sitting with or providing personal care (e.g. washing, dressing) for someone who is sick or frail
7. Looking after a property or a pet for someone who is away
8. Giving advice
9. Writing letters or filling in forms
10. Representing someone (for example talking to a council department or to a doctor)
11. Transporting or escorting someone (for example to a hospital or on an outing)
12. Anything else
13. No help given in last 12 months

Those who selected a response from 1-12 indicating they had given help were then asked about frequency:

Over the last 12 months, that is, since [DATE ONE YEAR AGO], about how often have you done [this/these things]?

1. At least once a week
2. Less than once a week but at least once a month
3. Less often than once a month

Those selecting option one or two were considered to have engaged in regular informal volunteering for the purpose of this analysis.

B.3   Civic Participation:

Civic Participation is defined using the following question:

In the last 12 months, that is since [DATE ONE YEAR AGO], have you…?
Please select all that apply.

1. Contacted a local official such as a local councillor, MP, government official, mayor, or

public official working for the local council (Please do not include any contact for
personal reasons e.g. housing repairs or contact through work)
2. Attended a public meeting or rally, taken part in a public demonstration or protest
3. Signed a paper petition or an online/e-petition
4. None of these

**This report focuses on those who have taken part in any of the above options 1-3 at least once a
year.**

The full 2016/2017 Community Life Survey questionnaire can be found here.

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