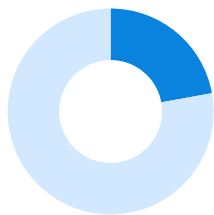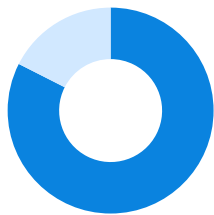Department for
Digital, Culture,
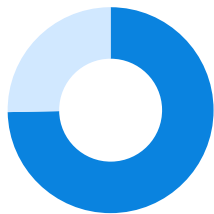Media & Sport

# Community Life Survey: 2017-18

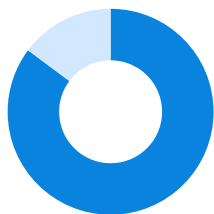Of those who took part in the 2017-18 Community Life Survey:

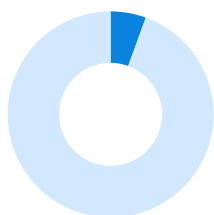**22%** volunteered formally at least **once a month**

**82%** agreed their area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together

**75%** gave to charity in the 4 weeks before completing the survey

**85%** felt they belonged to Britain

**6%** said they often or always feel lonely

**About**

The Community Life Survey is a household self-completion survey of adults aged 16+ in England. The survey is a key evidence source on social cohesion, community engagement and social action.

This report summarises the results from the 2017-18 survey, which ran from August 2017 to March 2018. In 2016-17, the survey discontinued the face to face collection and moved fully to an online/ paper self-completion methodology.

All results summarised in this publication are from the online/paper self-completion methodology. Not all questions are included in the paper version of the questionnaire.

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# 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.

**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.

**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.

**Limiting long term illness or disability**

In this report, respondents are classified as having a limiting long term illness or disability if they have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses which are expected to last for 12 months or more and their condition and/or illness reduces their ability to carry out day to day activities. This information is only available for those who completed the online version of the survey.

**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.**

**The 2014-15 and 2015-16 survey had a smaller overall sample size than other years reported in the bulletin so figures for these years may be less reliable.**

**Small sample sizes for some demographic characteristics (such as some ethnic minority groups) presented in this report mean we are less able to detect significant differences between groups.**

# Chapter 1:  Identity and Social Networks

### 1.1     Social Interactions

Participants were asked how often they communicated with family members or friends via a range of methods. Overall, 73% of people said they meet up in person at least once a week, 80% speak on the phone/video call/audio call via internet, 38% email or write and 82% exchange texts or instant messages.

**Figure 1.1        Percentage of people who communicate with family or friends <u>at least once a week</u> by the following methods:**
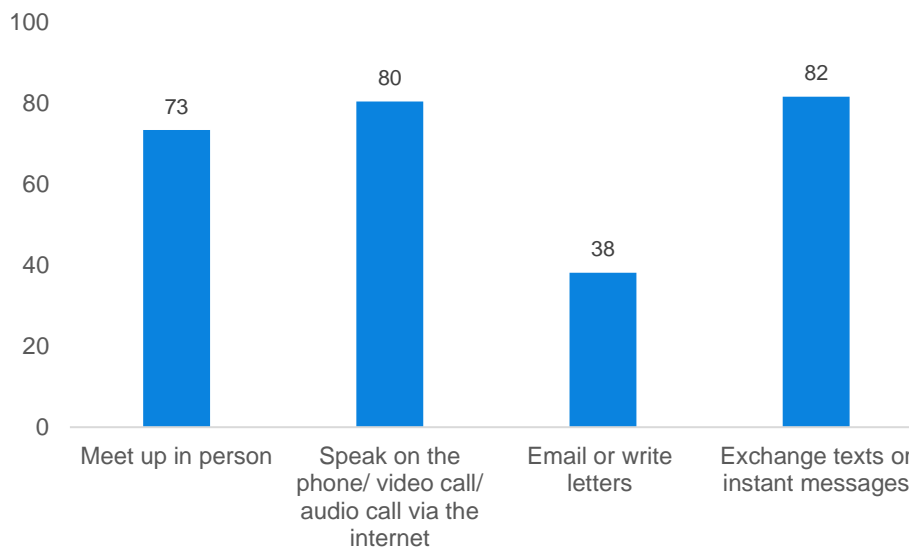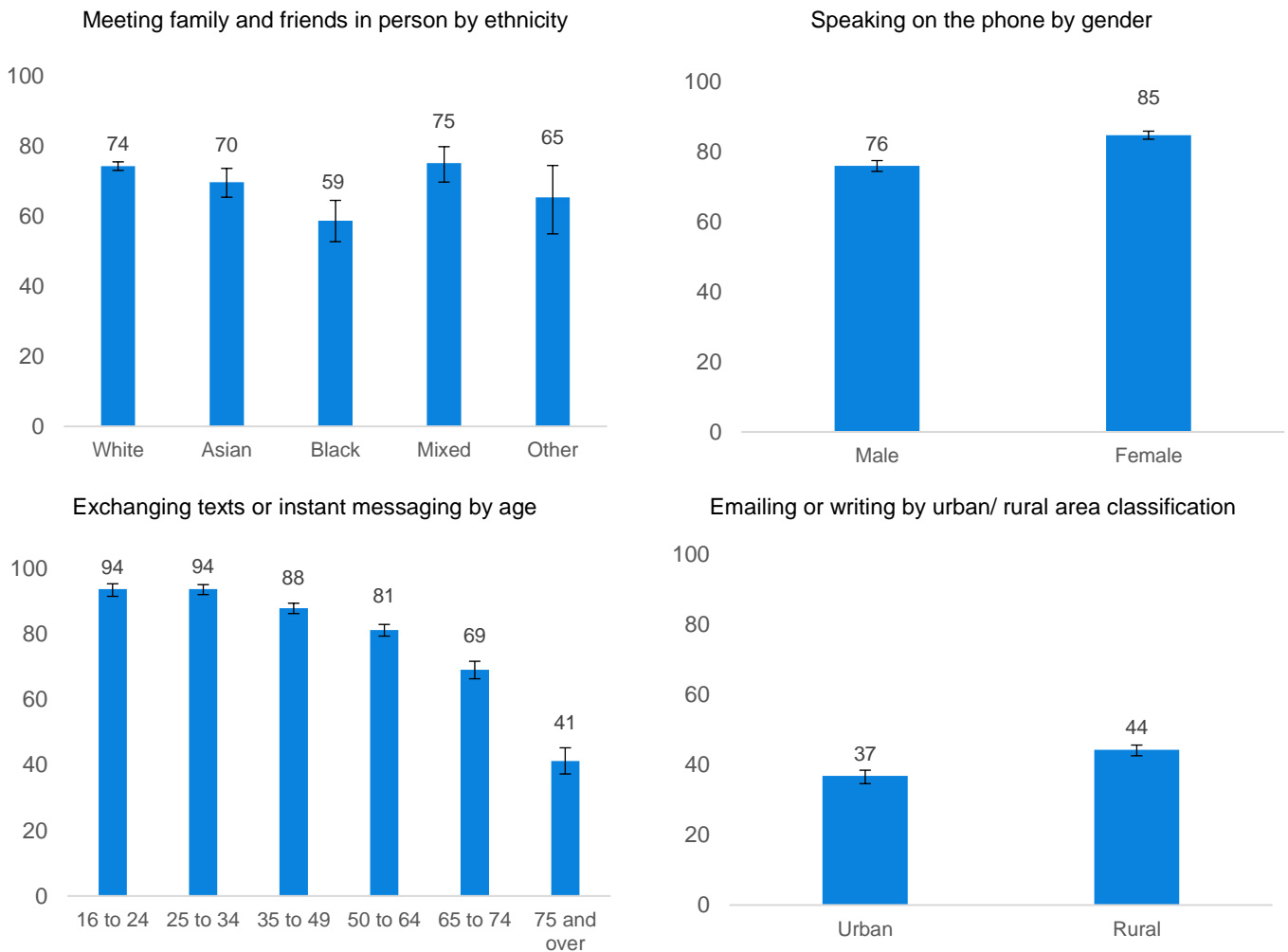


*2017-18, online and paper responses*

Women were more likely than men to meet up with family and friends in person, speak on the phone or send texts/ instant messages at least once a week.  White and Asian people were also more likely to meet family and friends in person than Black people, with only 59% of black people reporting meeting friends or family face to face at least once a week compared with 74% of White people and 70% of Asian people.

Those aged 75 and over were more likely than most other age groups to speak on the phone to family or friends, with 86% doing so once a week or more compared with 76% of 16-24 year olds.

Younger people were more likely to send texts/instant messages than older age groups, with 94% of 16-34 year olds doing so once a week or more compared with 41% of those aged 75 and over.

Those living in rural areas were more likely to write letters or email than those in urban areas, with 44% doing so at least once a week compared with 37% of those living in urban areas. Those living in the least deprived areas were also more likely to write or email once a week (45%) than those living in the most deprived areas (32%).

**Figure 1.2    Percentage of respondents who communicate with family or friends at least once a week using the following methods and selected demographic characteristics**

Meeting family and friends in person by ethnicity

Speaking on the phone by gender

Exchanging texts or instant messaging by age

Emailing or writing by urban/ rural area classification

*2017-18, online and paper responses*

⊥ *95% confidence interval*

### 1.2    Support Networks

Overall, most people said they had someone if they needed support:

- 95% agreed that if they needed help there are people who would be there for them
- 92% agreed that if they wanted company or to socialise there are people they could call on
- 96% agreed that there is someone they can really count on to listen when they need to talk

The most notable difference among demographic groups is between those with a limiting long term illness or disability and those without. Those with a limiting long term illness or disability were less likely to agree there is someone there for them if they needed help (91% compared with 96% of those without a disability), less likely to agree there would be someone there if they wanted company (85% compared with 94% of those without a disability) and less likely to agree there was someone they could count on when they really needed to talk (93% compared with 97% of those without a disability).

**Figure 1.3    Percentage of respondents with support networks available by limiting long-term illness/disability (LLTI/Disability).**
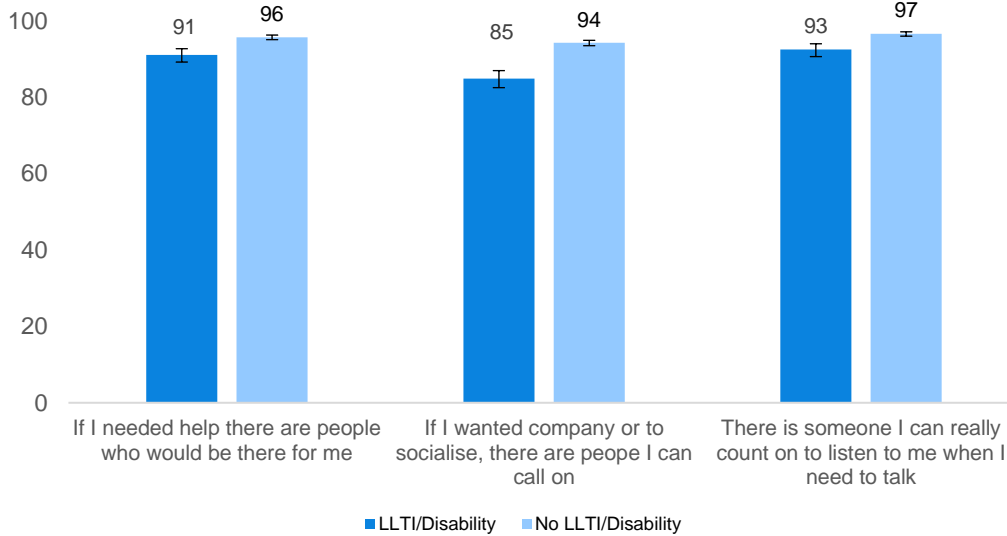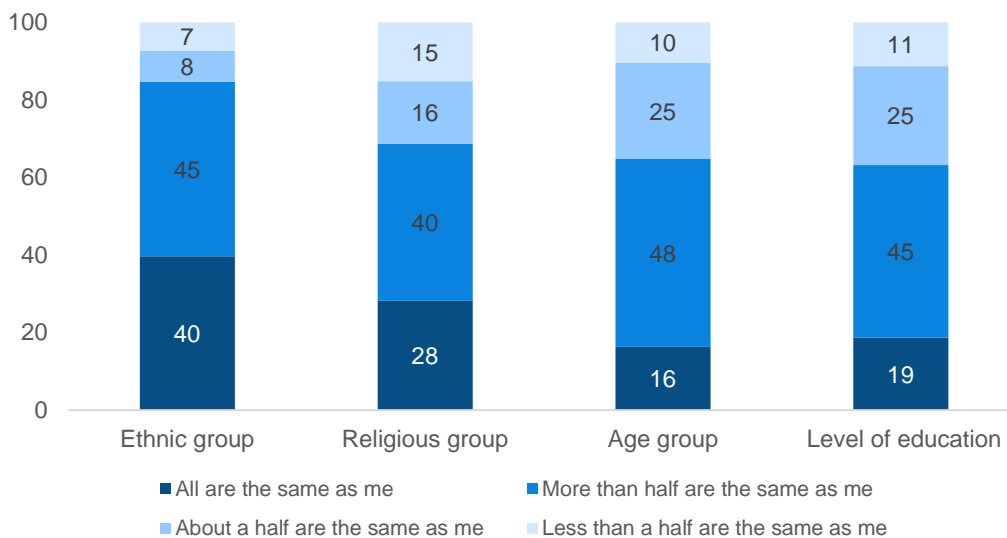


*2017-18, online responses only*

Women were slightly more likely to agree there would be someone there for them if they needed help than men (96% compared with 94%). In addition, those living in the most deprived areas were less likely than those in the least deprived areas to agree there would be someone if they needed help (93% compared with 96%).

## 1.3    Diversity of Friendship Groups

In 2017-18, 40% of people said that all of their friends are the same ethnic group as themselves, 28% said all were from the same religious group, 16% were all the same age group and 19% said all their friend had a similar level of education. These proportions have remained consistent with last year's findings, although there has been a statistically significant increase in the percentage who said all their friends are the same religious group to them since 2013-14 (25% in 2013-14 to 28% in 2017-18).

**Figure 1.1 How similar are your friends to you in terms of ethnicity, religion age and education.**



*2017-18, online responses only*

**Figure 1.2** **Percentage reporting that all of their friends are the same ethnicity, religion, age and education level.**
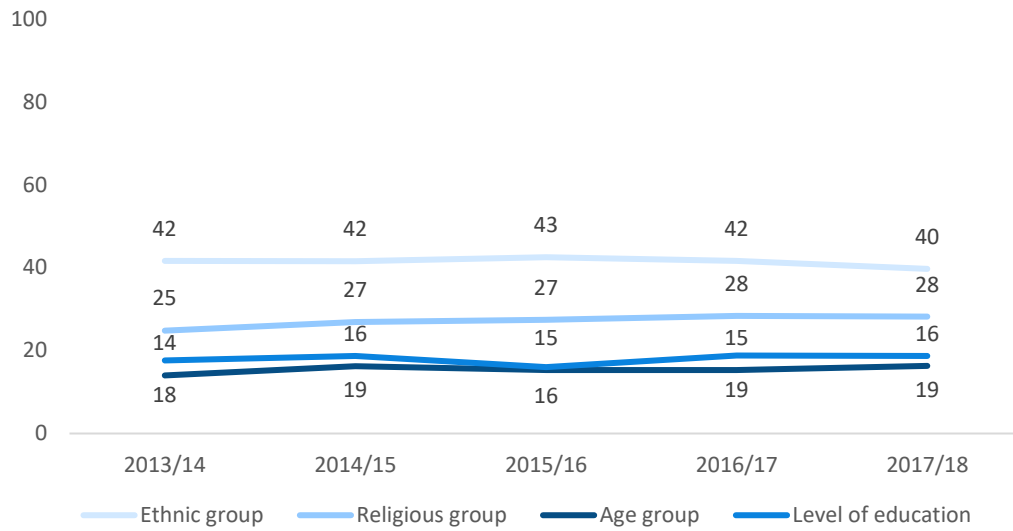


*2013-14 to 2017-18, online responses only*

# Chapter 2: Neighbourhood and Community

## 2.1 Neighbourhood

In 2017-18, almost three quarters (73%) of people said they chat to their neighbours at least once a month, the same as in 2016-17. Older people were more likely to chat to their neighbours than younger people (86% for those aged 65 and over compared with 49% of 16-24 year olds) and White people were more likely to chat to their neighbours than Asian or Black people (74% compared with 67% and 62% respectively). This could be related to different demographic profiles between ethnic groups. Those living in rural areas were more likely to chat to neighbours than those in urban areas (78% compared with 71% respectively) and people in the least deprived areas were more likely to than those in the most deprived areas (76% compared with 69% respectively).

The proportion of people who agreed they borrow and exchange favours with their neighbours has fallen since 2013-14, with 37% agreeing in 2017-18 compared with 42% in 2013-14.

In 2017-18, 59% agreed that people in their neighbourhood pull together to improve the neighbourhood. This is similar to 2016-17 (57%).

**Figure 2.1** **Percentage of adults who chat to their neighbours, feel people in their local area pull together to improve things, and who borrow things and exchange favours with neighbours.**
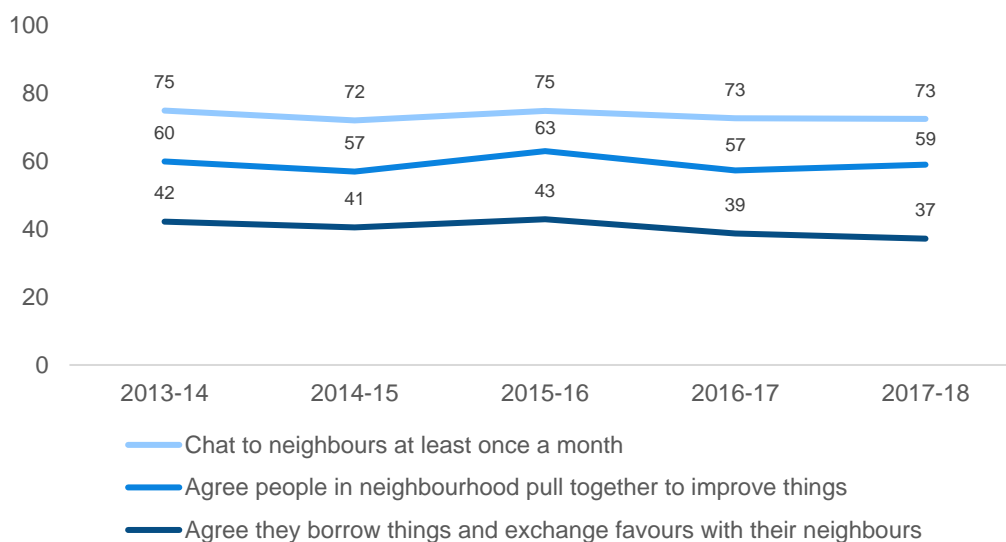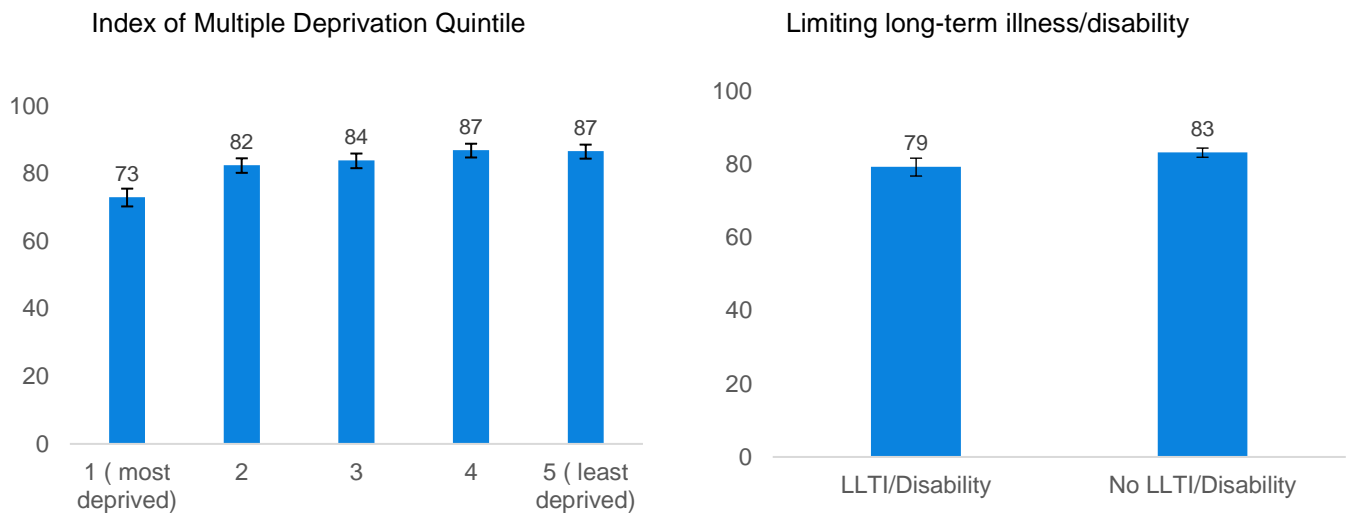


*2013-14 to 2017-18, online and paper responses*

## 2.2 Community Cohesion

The percentage of people agreeing that their area is a place where people from different backgrounds get along well together has remained fairly consistent since 2013-14, with 82% agreeing in 2017-18.

People without a long term limiting illness or disability were more likely to agree than those with (83% compared with 79% respectively). People aged 75 and older were also more likely to agree than those aged 16-24 (89% compared with 82% respectively). People living in the most deprived areas were less likely to agree, with 73% agreeing compared with 87% of those who live in the least deprived areas.

**Figure 2.2**    **Percentage of people who agreed their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get along well together**

Index of Multiple Deprivation Quintile

Limiting long-term illness/disability



*2017-18, online and paper responses (disability information from online responses only)*

There has been a gradual decline in the proportion of respondents who feel many of the people in their local area can be trusted, from 48% in 2013-14 to 41% in 2017-18. The proportion who said none of the people in their local area can be trusted has remained fairly consistent at 4% in both 2016-17 and 2017-18 and 3% in 2013-14 to 2015-16.

**Figure 2.3**    **Percentage who say many of the people in their local area can be trusted**
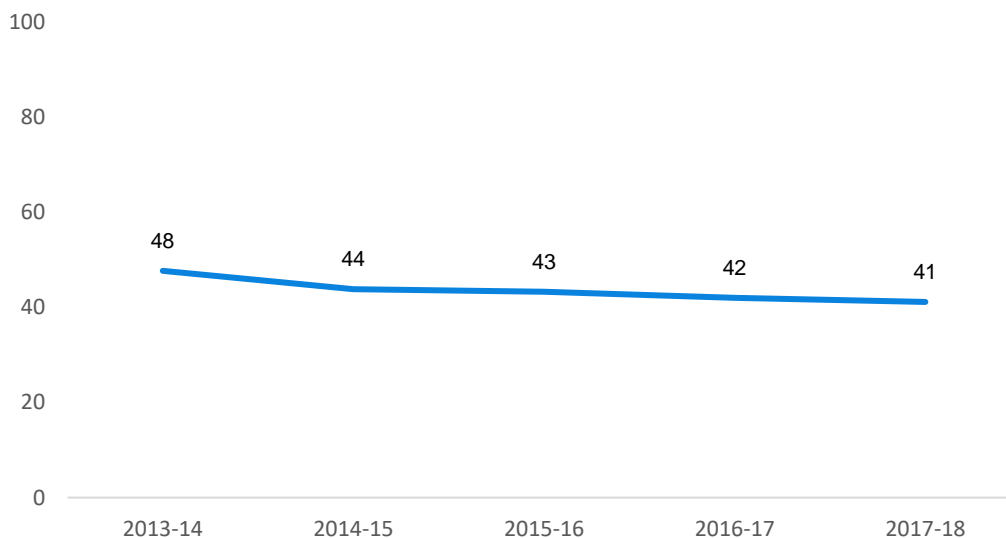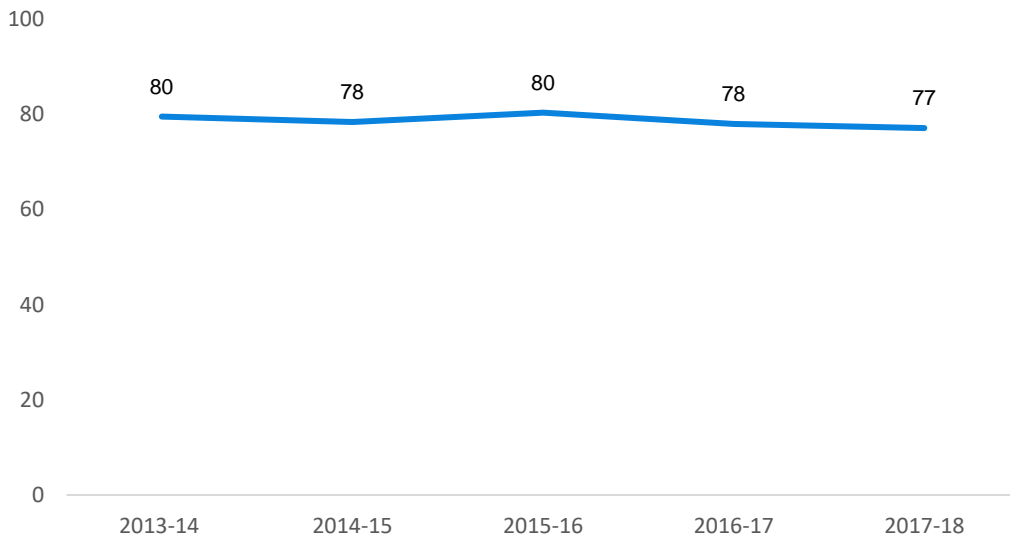


*2017-18, online and paper responses*

## 2.3    Neighbourhood Satisfaction

In 2017-18, 77% of people said they were either fairly or very satisfied with their local area, a decrease since 2013-14, when 80% were satisfied. This decrease is largely seen in those reporting they are very satisfied, which has fallen from 36% in 2013-14 to 29% 2017-18.

**Figure 2.4**     **Percentage of people who said they are satisfied with their local area**
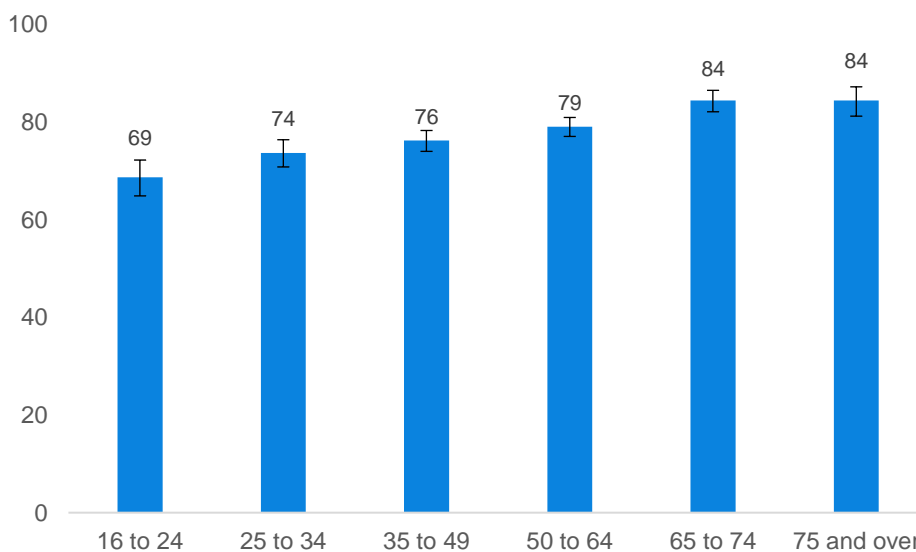


*2013-14 to 2017-18, online and paper responses.*

The largest difference in area satisfaction was seen between IMD quintiles, with only 60% of those living in the most deprived areas reporting they were satisfied with their local area compared with 88% of those in the least deprived areas. There were also differences among age groups, which showed an increase in area satisfaction with age. Among 16-24 year olds, 69% said they were satisfied with their local area compared with 84% of those aged 65 or over. This is a consistent pattern seen over the last five years. There is likely to be overlap in these two characteristics, with younger people more likely to live in more deprived areas.
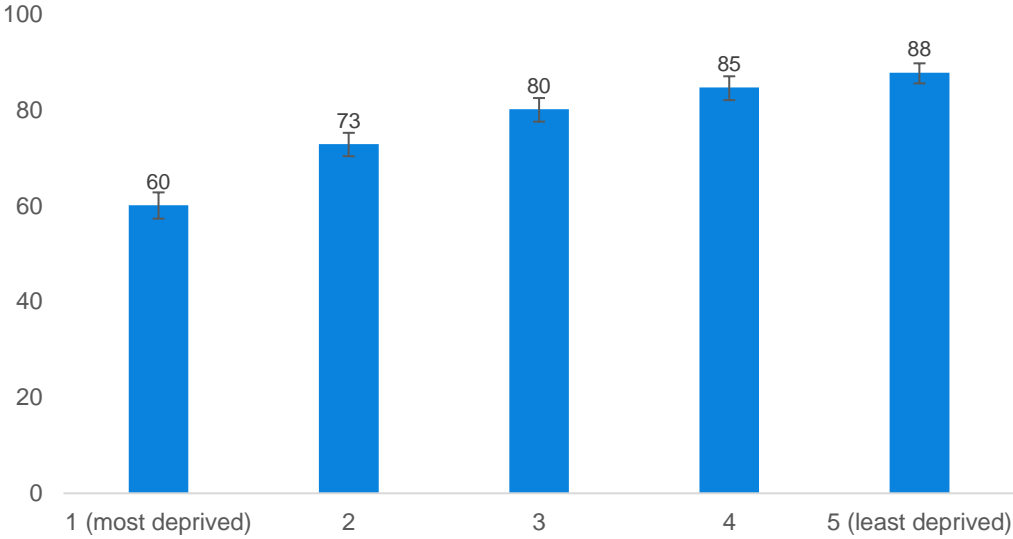
People with a limiting long term illness or disability were less likely to be satisfied with their local area than those without (72% compared with 79%).

**Figure 2.5**     **Percentage of people who are satisfied with their local area by age group**



*2017-18, online and paper responses*

**Figure 2.6        Percentage satisfied with local area by index of multiple deprivation quintile**



*2016-17 to 2017-18, online and paper responses*

In 2017-18, the proportion who said their local area has got better in the last two years was similar to 2016-17 (14% in 2017-18 compared with 15% in 2016-17) but has increased since 2013-14 (12%). Conversely, there has also been a gradual increase in the proportion of people who feel their area has got worse to live in over the last two years, at 24% in 2017-18 compared with 22% in 2016-17 and 20% in 2013-14.

**Figure 2.7        Percentage of respondents who felt their area has got either better or worse in the last 2 years**
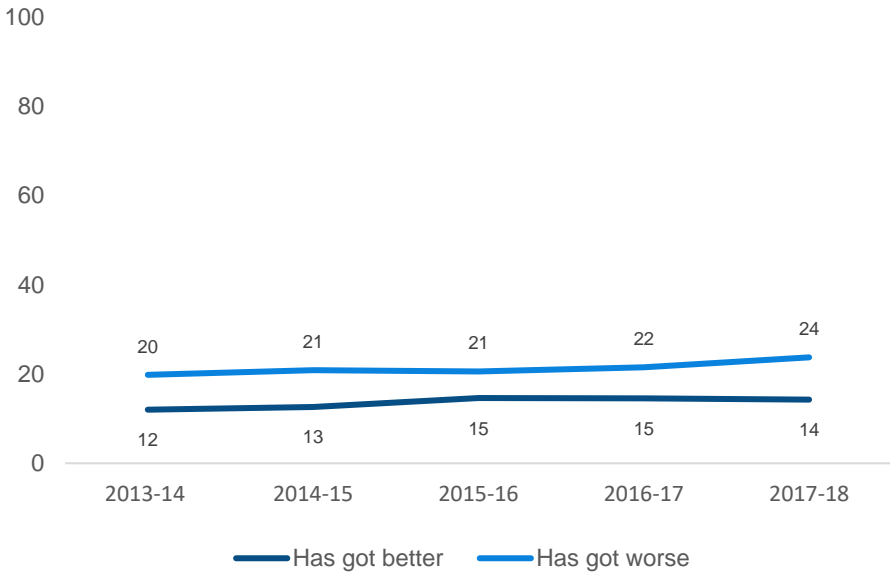


*2013-14 to 2017-18, online and paper responses*

## 2.2    Belonging to Neighbourhood and to Britain

Belonging to Neighbourhood:

The proportion of people who feel they very strongly or fairly strongly belong to their local neighbourhood has stayed the same as in 2016-17 at 62%, however this has increased from 58% in 2013/14. As in 2016/17, feeling of belonging to neighbourhood was stronger in the older age groups than younger age groups, with only 52% of 25-34 year olds agreeing compared with 73% of those over 75, however the proportion of 16-24 year olds agreeing increased from 48% in 2016/17 to 55% in 2017/18.

People with a limiting long term illness or disability were less likely to feel they belonged very or fairly strongly to their local neighbourhood than those without (58% compared with 63%), as were people who lived in the most deprived areas compared with the least deprived areas (56% compared with 70%) and people living in urban areas compared with rural areas (61% compared with 68%).
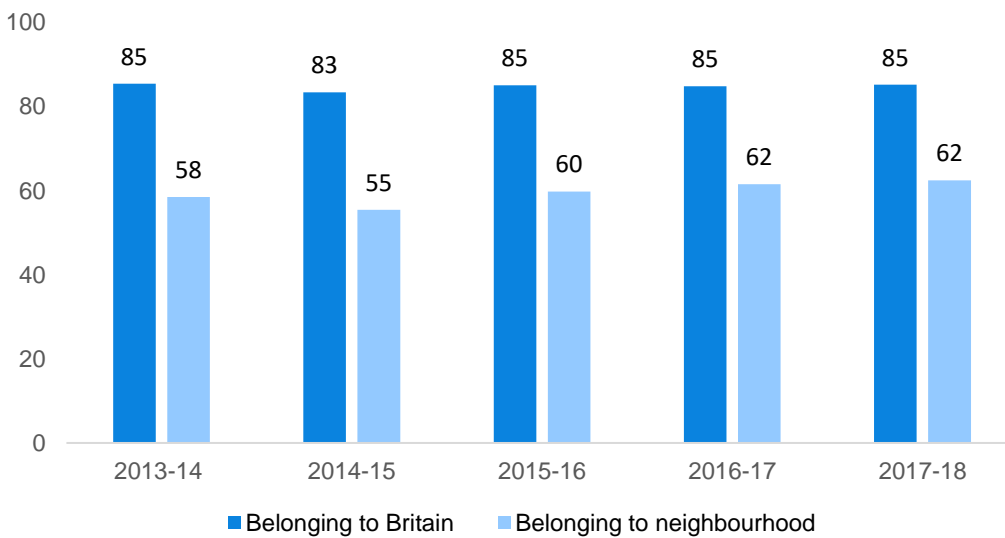
Belonging to Britain:

Feeling of belonging to Britain has remained fairly consistent over the last five years, with 85% of people feeling they either very or fairly strongly belonged to Britain.

Again, younger people were less likely to feel they belonged to Britain, with 81% feeling they either strongly or fairly strongly belonged compared with 97% of those aged 75 or over.

People living in the most deprived areas were less likely to feel they belong to Britain than those living in the least deprived areas (81% compared with 89%) and people living in urban areas were less likely to agree than those living in rural areas (84% compared with 89%).

**Figure 2.8    Percentage of people who feel they belong very strongly or fairly strongly to their local neighbourhood and to Britain**.



*2013-14 to 2017-18, Belonging to neighbourhood: online and paper responses, Belonging to Britain: Online responses only*

# Chapter 3: Civic Engagement

**3.1    Civic Participation, Consultation and Activism**

> **Civic participation:**  Engagement in democratic processes, both in person and online, including signing a petition or attending a public rally (does not include voting).
>
> **Civic consultation:**  Taking part in consultations about local service, both in person and online.
>
> **Civic activism:**  Involvement in decision-making about local services, both in person and online.

Civic Participation:

As in previous years, the most common form of civic engagement was civic *participation*, with 38% having undertaken some form of civic participation at least once in the last year. This is a decrease from 2016-17 when 41% took part but greater than 2014-15 and 2015-16. White people were more likely to have taken part than Asian people (39% compared with 31%) and people with a limiting long term illness or disability were more likely to have taken part than those without (46% compared with 38%). Those from the most deprived areas were less likely to have taken part than those from the least deprived areas (31% compared with 42%).

Civic Consultation:

In 2017-18, 18% of people undertook some form of civic *consultation*, the same as 2016-17 and similar to previous years. Those living in rural areas were more likely to have taken part than those living in urban areas (26% compared with 17%). White people were more likely to have taken part than Asian people (19% compared with 13%) and those in the most deprived areas were less likely to have taken part in consultation than those in the least deprived areas (13% compared with 22% respectively).

Civic Activism:

The rate of civic *activism* also remained the same as in 2016-17, with 8% engaging in civic activism at least once in the last year. Black people were more likely to have taken part than White people (12% compared with 7%). Those living in rural areas were more likely to have taken part than those living in urban areas (11% compared with 7%).

**Figure 3.1**      **Percentage taking part in civic engagement activities at least once in the last year**
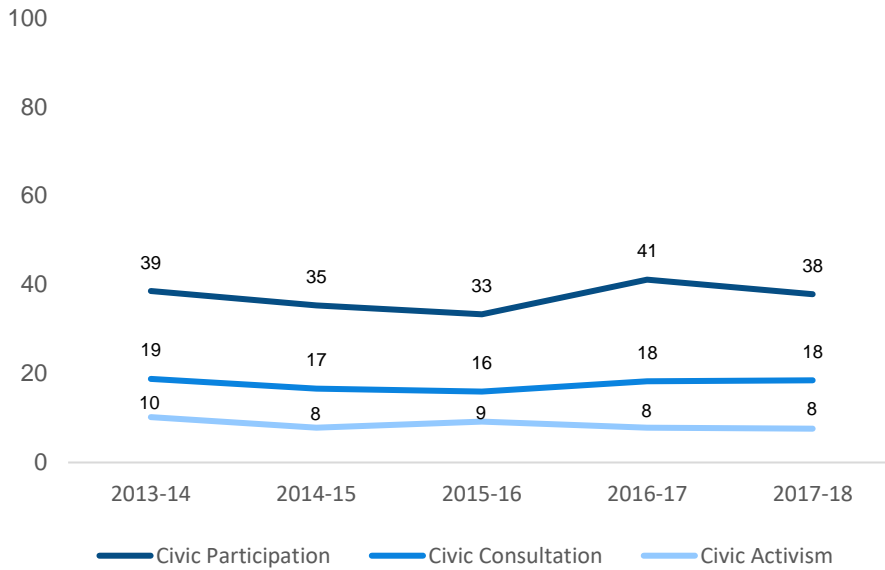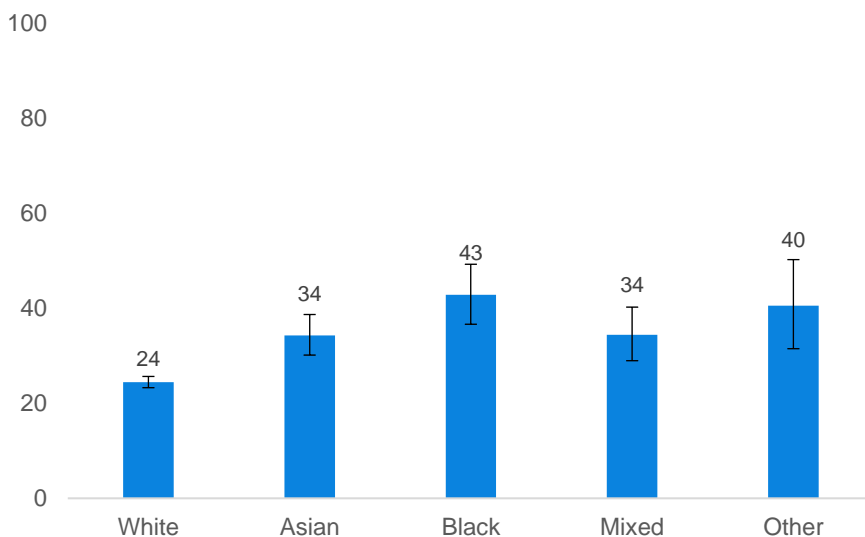


*2013-14 to 2017-18, online and paper responses*

## 3.2      Local Decision Making

In 2017-18, 26% of respondents agreed that they are able to influence decisions affecting their local area. This has remained fairly consistent since 2013-14.

White people were less likely to agree they can influence local decisions than other ethnic groups. Only 24% of White people agreed compared with 34% of Asian people, 43% of Black people, 34% of people with Mixed ethnicity and 40% from other ethnic groups. People with a limiting long term illness or disability were less likely to agree than those without (22% compared with 27%).

**Figure 3.2**      **Percentage who feel they are able to influence local decisions by ethnicity**
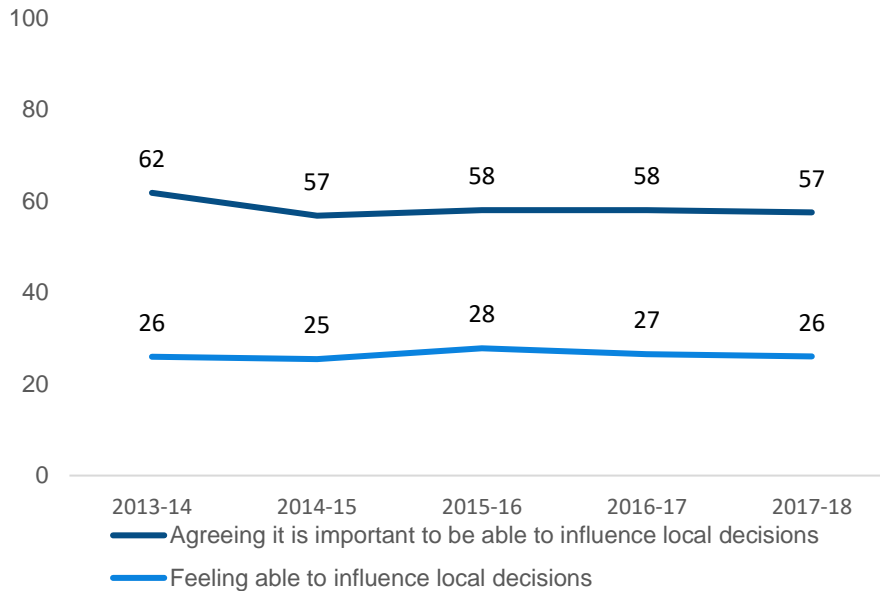


*2017-18, online and paper respondents*

In 2017-18, 57% of people felt it was important to be able to influence local decisions. This is similar to 2016-17 but lower than 2013-14 when 62% felt it was important. People aged between 35 and 64 were more likely to feel it is important to influence local decisions than those aged 16-34 or aged 75 and

over. People living in the most deprived areas were less likely to agree it is important to be able to influence local decisions than those living in the least deprived areas (51% compared with 64%).

**Figure 3.3**  **Percentage agreeing they are able to influence decisions affecting their local area and the percentage agreeing it is important to be able to influence local decisions.**



*2013-14 to 2017-18, online and paper estimates*

Over half of respondents (54%) said they would like to be more involved in the decisions their local council make which affect their local area.

**Figure 3.4**  **Percentage of people who would like to be more involves in decisions their local council make which affect their local area[1]**
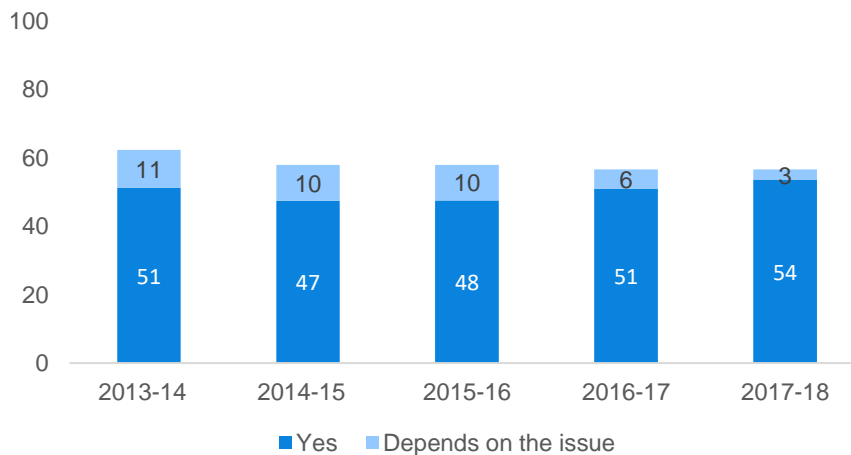


*2013-14 to 2017-18, online and paper response*

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[1] During the 2016-17 collection year, there was a minor change to the question instructions for this measure which may have affected the overall responses.

# Chapter 4:   Volunteering and Charitable Giving

The Community Life Survey collects information about formal volunteering and informal volunteering.

> **Formal volunteering**:        Giving unpaid help through clubs or organisations
>
> **Informal volunteering**:        Giving unpaid help as an individual to people who are
>                                         not a relative

### 4.1     Formal Volunteering

The percentage of people taking part in formal volunteering at least once a month has remained the same as in 2016-17 at 22%, but is lower than in 2013-14 (27%).

In 2017-18, 38% of people volunteered formally at least once in the last year, a similar rate to 2016-17 but again lower than in 2013-14 (45%).

**Figure 4.1        Percentage taking part in <u>formal</u> volunteering once a year and once a month.**
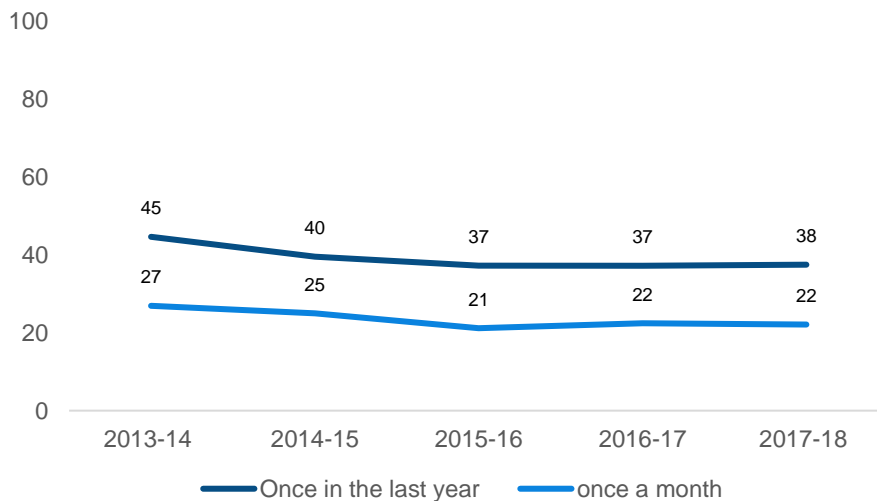


*2013-14 to 2017-18, online and paper responses*

As in previous years, 25-34 year olds had the lowest rates of regular formal volunteering at 15%. Those aged 65-74 had the highest rates of regular formal volunteering, at 29%.

**Figure 4.2    Percentage taking part in <u>formal</u> volunteering at least once a month by age group**



*2017-18, online and paper responses*

Those who are economically inactive were more likely to volunteer regularly (29%) than those in employment (22%) and those who are unemployed (19%). People living in rural areas were more likely to volunteer regularly than those living in urban areas (29% compared with 21%).

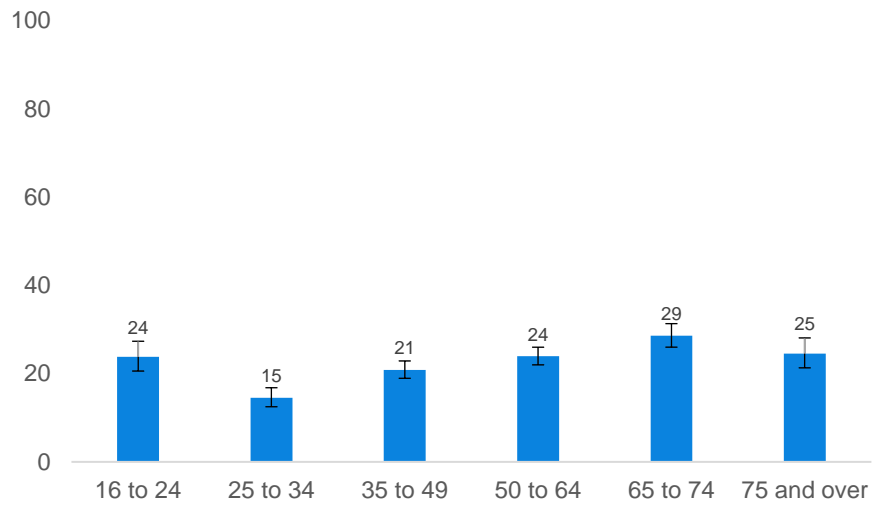## 4.2    Informal Volunteering

The percentage of people who took part in informal volunteering (giving unpaid help as an individual to people who are not a relative) at least once a month remained the same as in 2016-17 at 27% but lower than in 2013-14 (31%).

The percentage of people who took part in informal volunteering at least once a year was similar to 2016-17 at 53% (compared with 52% in 2016-17) but lower than in 2013-14 (58%).

**Figure 4.3    Percentage taking part in informal volunteering at least once in the last year and at least once a month**
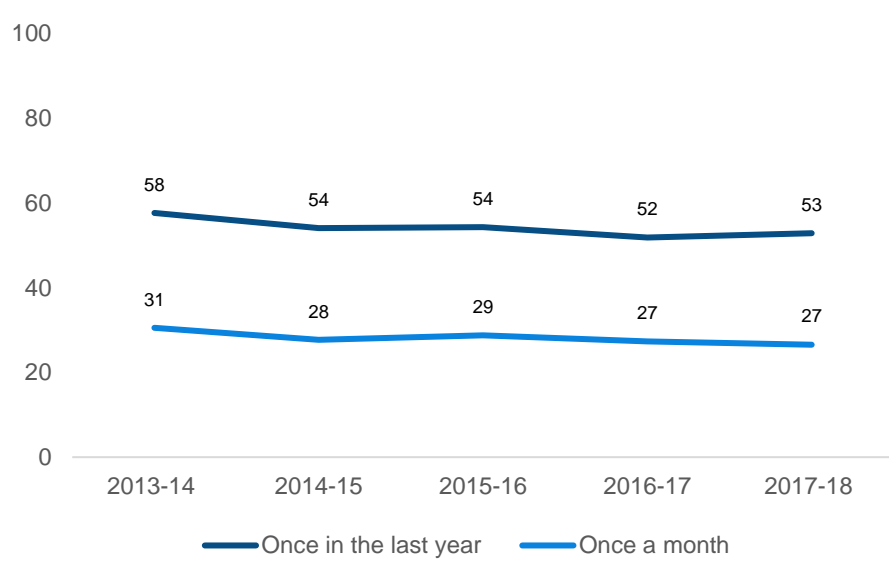


*2013-14 to 2017-18, online and paper responses*

Those aged 65 and over were more likely to have volunteered informally (34%) than those aged between 25 and 64. 16-24 year olds were also more likely to have taken part in regular informal volunteering than those aged 35-49 (28% compared with 22%).
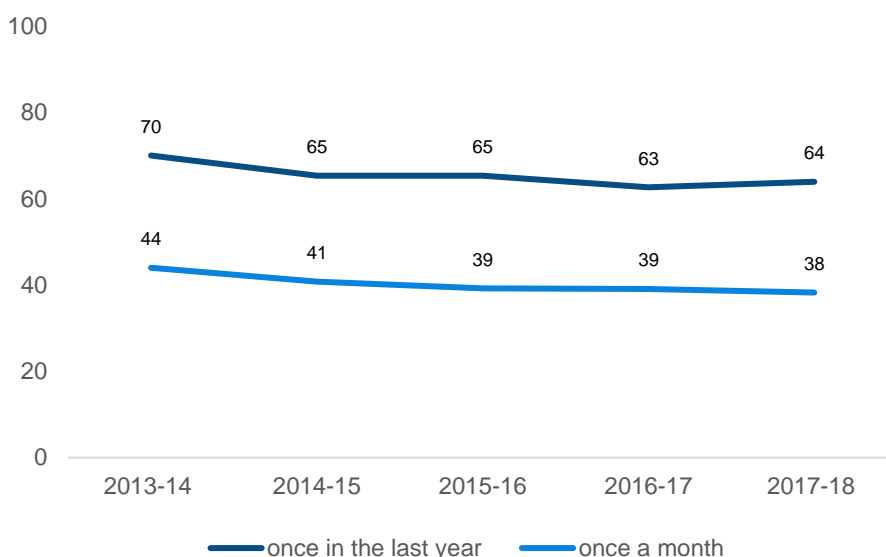
People with a limiting long term illness or disability were more likely to have taken part in regular informal volunteering than those without (34% compared with 26%).

## 4.3    Any Volunteering

In 2017-18, 38% of people had volunteered either formally or informally at least once a month. This is a similar rate to 2016-17 (39%), but has gradually decreased since 2013-14, when 44% took part in some form of volunteering at least once a month.

Nearly two thirds (64%) of people took part in either formal or informal volunteering in the last year, similar to 2016-17 (63%) but again, there has been a gradual decrease since 2013-14 (70%).

**Figure 4.4      Percentage taking part in any formal or informal volunteering in the last year**



*2013-14 to 2017-18, online and paper responses*

Woman were more likely than men to have taken part in some form of volunteering at least once a month (41% compared with 36%).

People with a limiting long term illness or disability were more likely to have done some form of volunteering at least once a month than those without (44% compared with 39%).

People living in the most deprived area were less likely to have taken part in some form of volunteering at least once a month than those from the least deprived areas (33% compared with 44%).

## 4.4    Reasons for volunteering

The most common reason given for taking part in formal volunteering was 'I wanted to improve things/ help people', with almost half of people who volunteered citing this as a reason (46%). 'The cause was really important to me' was the next most common reason (31%) and a quarter of people (25%) said 'I wanted to meet people/ make friends' or 'I had spare time to do it'.

**Figure 4.5** **Percentage who gave the following as reasons for starting volunteering among those who volunteered formally**

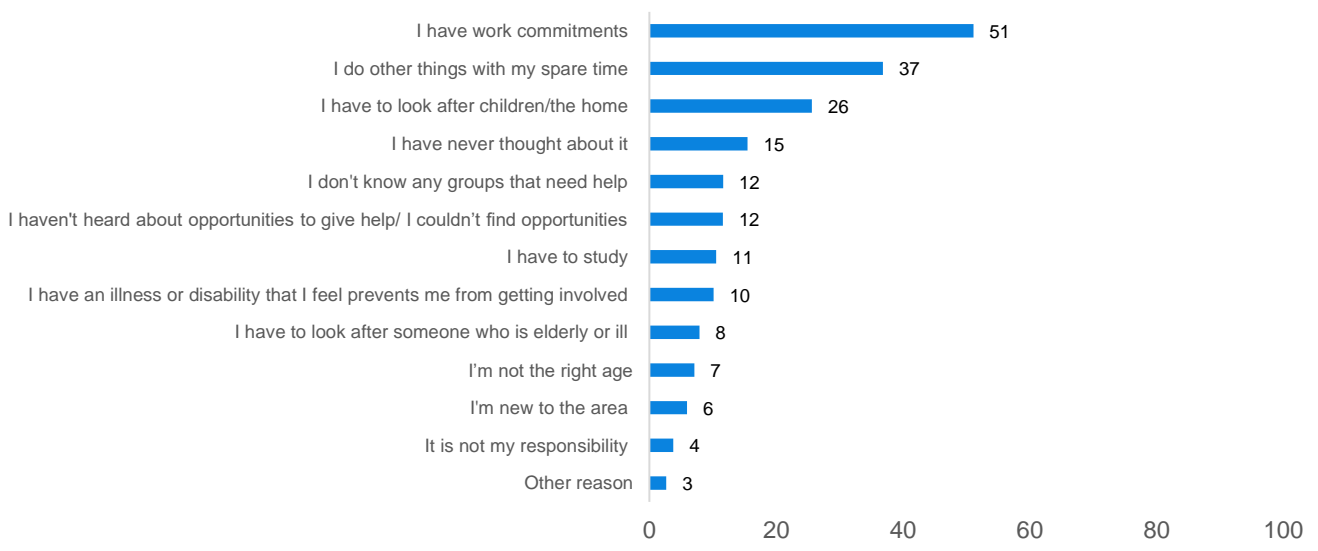| Reason | Value |
|---|---|
| I wanted to improve things/help people | 46 |
| The cause was really important to me | 31 |
| I had spare time to do it | 25 |
| I wanted to meet people/make friends | 25 |
| I thought it would give me a chance to use my existing skills | 24 |
| I felt there was a need in my community | 21 |
| Its part of my philosophy of life to help people | 19 |
| It was connected to the needs of my family/friends | 18 |
| I thought it would give me a chance to learn new skills | 17 |
| My friends/family did it | 16 |
| Its part of my religious belief to help people | 16 |
| I felt there was no one else to do it | 7 |
| It helps me get on in my career | 7 |
| None of these | 5 |
| it gave me a chance to get a recognised qualification | 2 |

*2017-18, online and paper responses*

## 4.5 Barriers to Volunteering

People who did not take part in formal volunteering at least once a month were asked about barriers to volunteering. Having work commitments was the biggest barrier to volunteering or to volunteering more frequently, with over half (51%) citing this as a reason. 37% said they had other things to do in their spare time, and 26% had to look after children/ the home.

**Figure 4.5** **Percentage selecting each of the following as barriers to volunteering with groups, or not volunteering more regularly (those who do not volunteer formally at least once a month only)**

| Barrier | Value |
|---|---|
| I have work commitments | 51 |
| I do other things with my spare time | 37 |
| I have to look after children/the home | 26 |
| I have never thought about it | 15 |
| I don't know any groups that need help | 12 |
| I haven't heard about opportunities to give help/ I couldn't find opportunities | 12 |
| I have to study | 11 |
| I have an illness or disability that I feel prevents me from getting involved | 10 |
| I have to look after someone who is elderly or ill | 8 |
| I'm not the right age | 7 |
| I'm new to the area | 6 |
| It is not my responsibility | 4 |
| Other reason | 3 |

*2017-18, online and paper responses*

## 4.6  Charitable Giving

Three quarters of respondents (75%) said they had given money to charitable causes in the last 4 weeks, the same as in 2016-17 but lower than 2013-14 when 82% had given to charitable causes.

**Figure 4.7**    **Percentage of people who gave money to charitable causes in the 4 weeks before completing the survey**
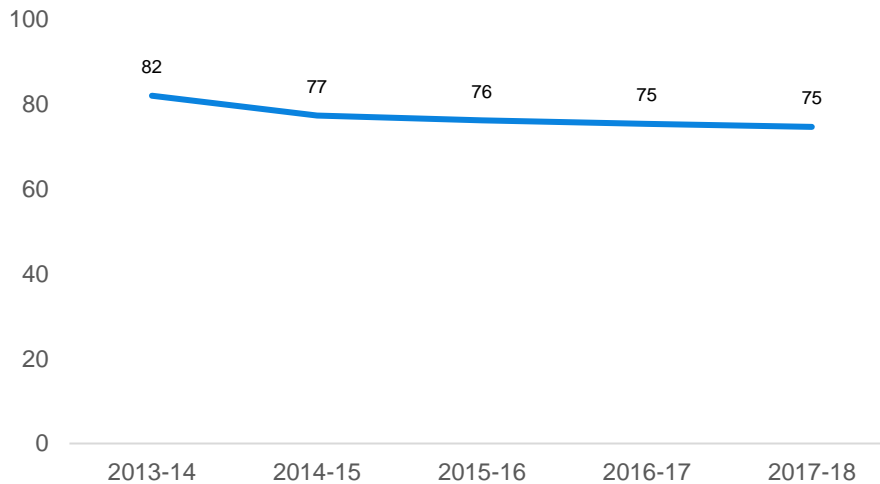


*2013-14 to 2017-18, online and paper responses*

Women were more likely to have given to charity than men (79% compared with 70%); this pattern has remained consistent since 2013-14.  Older people were more likely to have given to charity than younger people, with 83% of over 75s donating in the last four weeks compared with 57% of 16-24 year olds.  People living in the most deprived areas were less likely to have given to charity in the past four weeks than those living in the least deprived areas (67% compared with 80%).

The mean amount given in the four weeks prior to completing the survey (excluding those who donated more than £300) remained the same as 2016-17, 2015-16 and 2013-14, at £22, with 13% donating more than £50.

# Chapter 5:   Social Action

Social action is about being involved with issues affecting the local area by doing things like:

- setting up a new service/amenity
- stopping the closure of a service/amenity
- stopping something happening in the local area
- running a local service on a voluntary basis
- helping to organise a street party or community event

In 2017-18, 15% of people had been involved in social action in their local area at least once in the last year, similar to 2016-17 (16%). The overall rate of social action has decreased slightly since 2013-14 when 19% were involved.

People living in rural areas were more likely to have been involved, with 22% having done so in the last year compared with 13% of those living in urban areas.

People living in the most deprived areas were less likely to have been involved in social action, with 10% being involved compared with 20% in the least deprived areas.

**Figure 5.1       Percentage of people getting involved in social action at least once in the last year.**
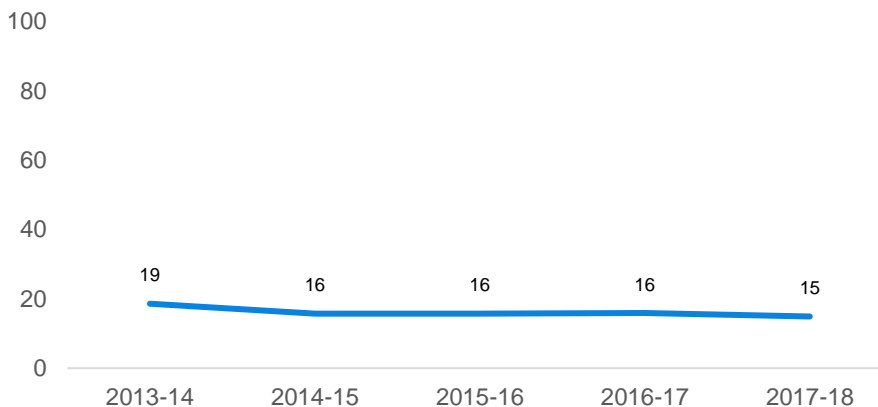


*2013-14 to 2017-18, online and paper responses*

In 2017-18, 38% of people were aware of other people getting involved in social action in the last year. Older people were more likely to have been aware than younger people (50% of those aged 75 or over compared with 28% of 16-24 year olds). People living in rural areas were more likely to have been aware than those in urban areas (53% compared with 34%) and those in the most deprived areas were less likely to be aware than those in the least deprived areas (26% compared with 49%).

# Chapter 6:   Wellbeing and Loneliness

## 6.1   Wellbeing

Average ratings across the four measures of personal well-being in 2017-18 were:

- 7.1 out of 10 for life satisfaction
- 7.1 out of 10 for happiness yesterday
- 3.4 out of 10 for anxiety yesterday
- 7.3 out of 10 for feeling that what you do in life is worthwhile

There was no overall change in the average ratings of life satisfaction, happiness, worthwhile and anxiety between 2016-17 and 2017-18.

**Figure 6.1**      **Average wellbeing scores**

Life satisfaction



Happiness



Anxiety



Feeling that what you do with life is worthwhile
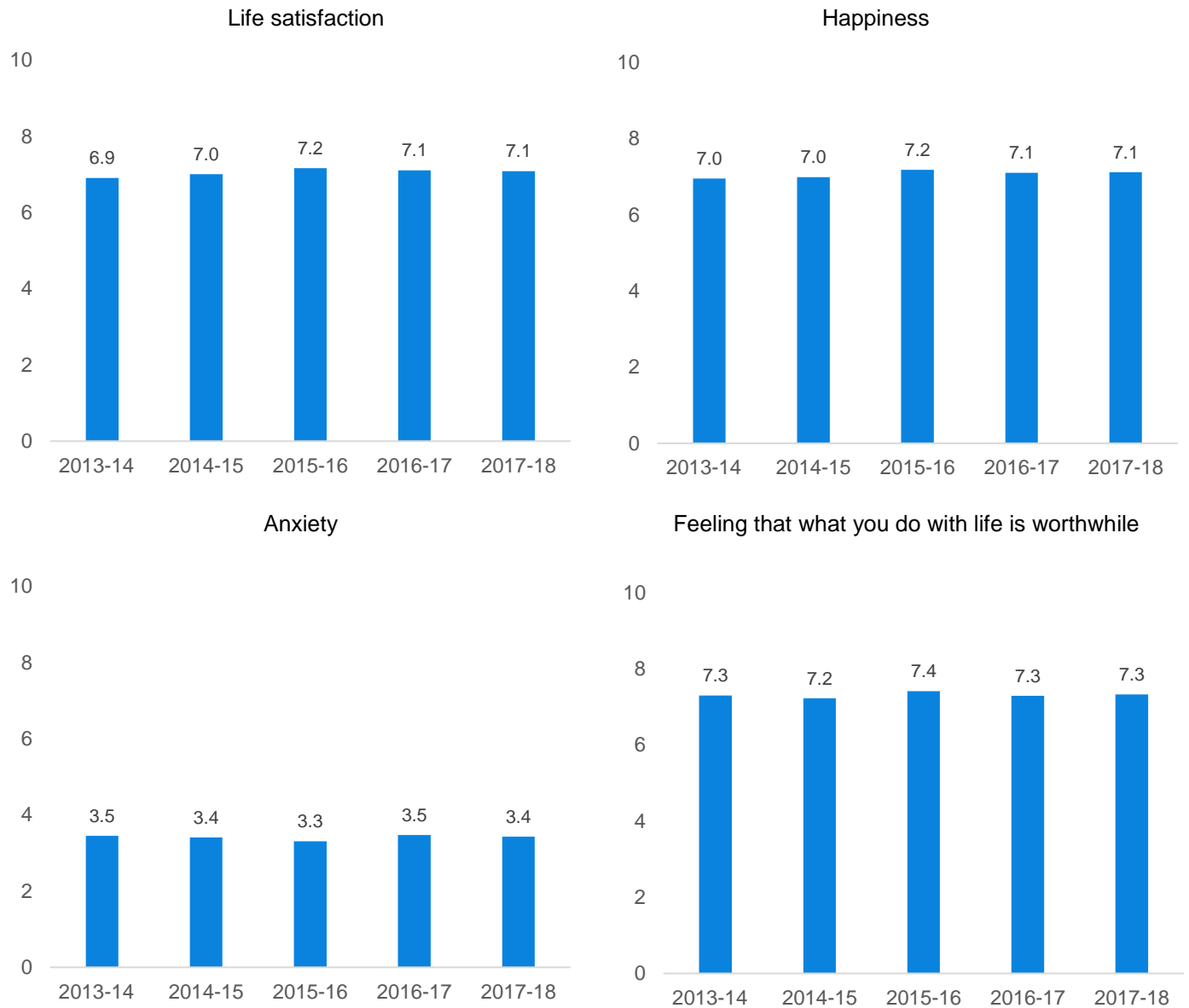


*2013-14 to 2017-18, online and paper responses*

## 6.2    Loneliness

Overall, 6% of respondents said they feel lonely 'often or always' and 23% said they never feel lonely. In 2016-17, 5% said they often/always feel lonely however this change is not statistically significant.

**Figure 6.2:        Frequency of loneliness (percentages)**



*2017-18, online and paper responses*
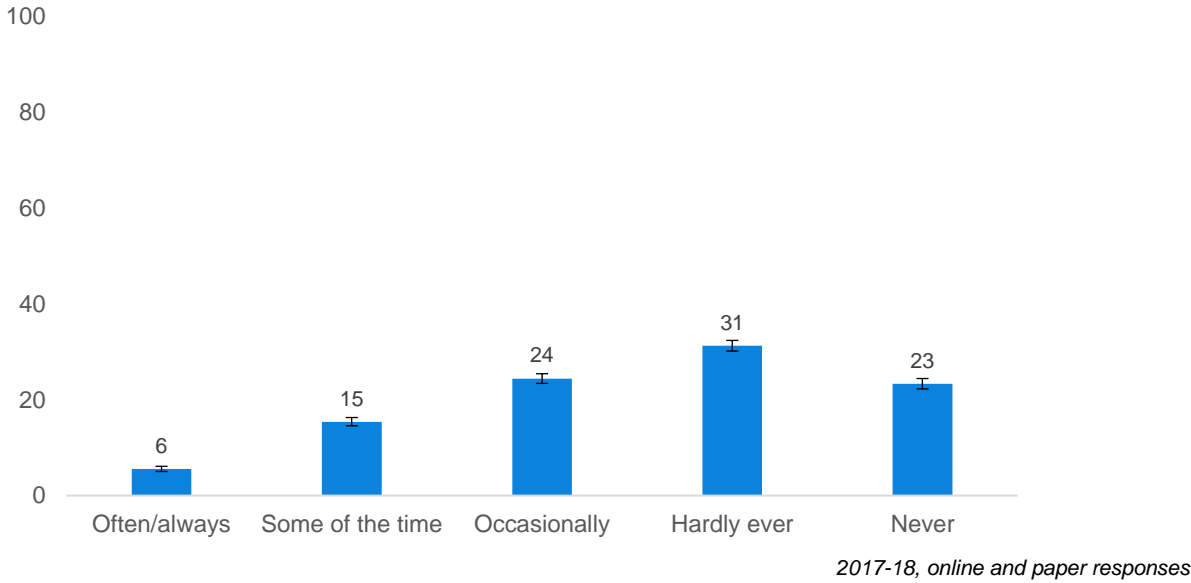
The most notable difference in loneliness was between those with a limiting long term illness or disability and those without. Those with a limiting long term illness or disability were more likely to say they feel lonely 'often or always' than those without (13% compared with 3%). In addition, 16% of people with a limiting long term illness or disability said they 'never' felt lonely compared with 24% of people without.

**Figure 6.3:        Frequency of loneliness by limiting long term illness/disability (percentages)**



*2017-18, online responses only*
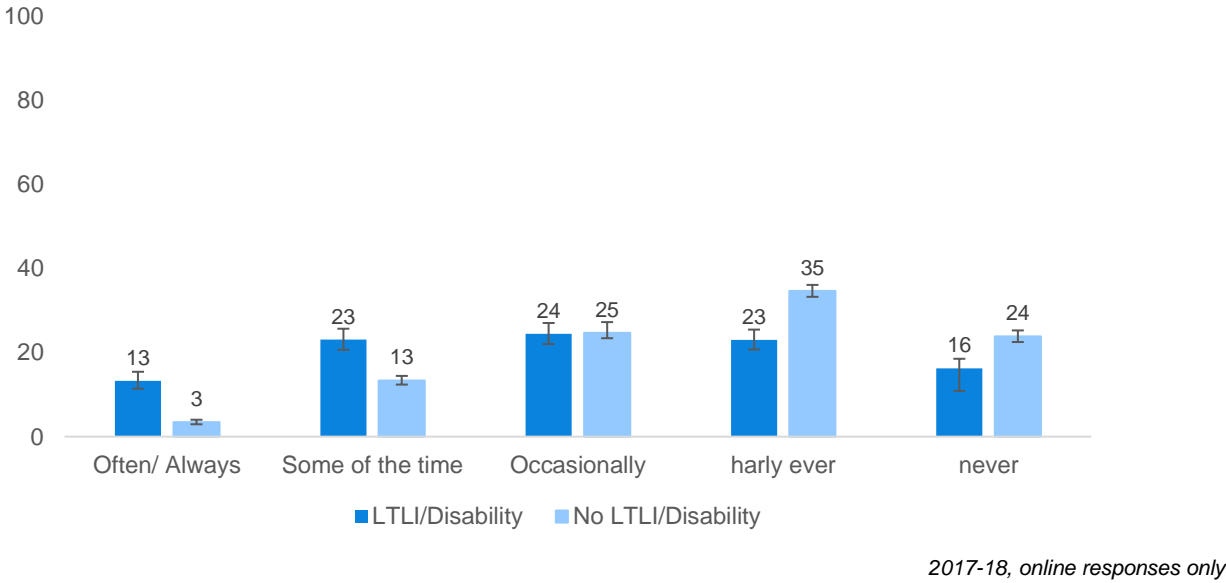
Men were more likely to say they 'never' felt lonely than women (27% compared with 20%).

People aged 16-24 and 25-34 were more likely to say they felt lonely always or often (both 8%) than those aged 65-74 and aged 75 and over (both 3%). These younger age groups were also less likely to say they 'never' felt lonely than those aged 35 and over.

**Figure 6.4      Frequency of loneliness by age group (percentages):**



*2017-18, online and paper responses*
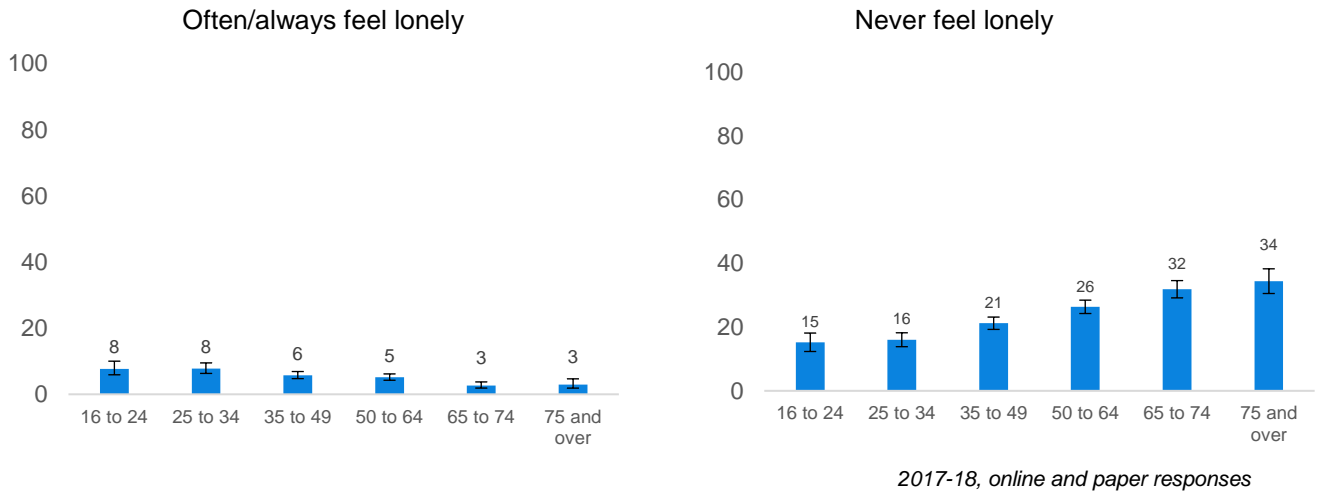
White people were more likely to say they 'never' felt lonely than Asian or Black people, with 24% of saying they never feel lonely compared with 17% of Asian people and 15% of Black people.

People living in urban areas were more likely to feel lonely 'often or always' than those living in rural areas (6% compared with 3%). People living in the most deprived areas were more likely to feel lonely often or always than those in the least deprived areas (8% compared with 4%).

# 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.

   This release is based on self-completion online/paper questionnaires, completed between April 2013 and March 2018. The exact total sample size for the 2017-18 period was 10,217. Sample sizes for each breakdown can be found in the accompanying tables. All households sampled were invited to complete the survey online with the option to request a paper version. A targeted sample were also sent two paper questionnaires in their second reminder letter. In 2017-18, 2,659 people (26%) completed paper version of the questionnaire and 7,558 (74%) completed the survey online. Due to space limitations in the paper questionnaire booklet, not all questions from the online survey are included in the paper version. This includes information about limiting long term illness/disability and employment status.

2. 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. 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.

3. 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.

4. 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.

   Related publications:

5. Further analysis into patterns that impact on loneliness, using the data collected in the 2016-17 Community Life Survey, was published by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) and is available on the ONS website and is also published alongside the ONS well-being measures.

6. 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.

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

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