

# Annex B

## Community Engagement Survey 2025-26: Usability testing findings

## 2025-26 Community & Engagement Survey Questionnaire Usability Testing

### Usability testing findings

#### 1. Initial approach to questionnaire

##### Answer strategies

##### **Reading/ skimming:**

We expect two main types of respondents; readers, who tend to read all the text on the page and are detail oriented; and skimmers, who tend to skim read large amounts of text and pick out early or key words within each paragraph or anything that draws their attention.

When probed by researchers on their approach to the questionnaire, most participants stated that they like to read things carefully and wouldn't skim read if they were taking the survey at home. This could be due to their higher age band, but it is difficult to be certain from such a small sample size. Researchers observed that the general approach participants took was to use their finger or pen to guide their reading. This technique was used at multiple different question types, such as grids, introductory text and long lists.

Information in bold was more likely to be read. This was true for both the front page and throughout the whole questionnaire. Researchers observed that even participants that said they like to read all the text would tend to gravitate towards the bold text first.

For participants that skimmed, their main strategy was to read as little text as possible, focusing on the highlighted or bolded text and then reading more or referring to instruction texts if they felt they needed more information. Although it is important to note that, despite stating they would refer back to instructions, researchers did not observe this technique or behaviour during the testing.

##### **Inconsistent approaches:**

Participants read and followed the instructions on the front page to cross the boxes, but researchers noticed that some switched to ticking within the survey (or accidentally ticked first and then crossed) before switching back to crosses. This suggests that although participants follow the instructions, sometimes they revert to instinct or habit.

Researchers also noted that participants referred to and implemented the routing / filters inconsistently throughout the survey. For example, participants followed certain filters and ignored others and there was no discernible pattern. It was not clear as to why this occurred; one participant suggested that they were getting tired when they were probed. Level and positioning of filters and information on the page may also be a factor. Even so, this inconsistency was noticed by researchers at all points of the survey and for all types of filtering, even where participants tended to read the text carefully.

##### **Key takeaway:**

- Keep in mind that respondents' main objective is to complete the survey quickly and efficiently. As such, they won't be consistent in their use of filters and assume that respondents will likely not follow every instruction. We suggest that the number of filtered questions are kept to a minimum as much as possible in the paper questionnaire.

##### Front page

The front page was read by all participants, with most reading it through carefully but some skimming the front page for key information. It is important to note that the front pages of the Engagement survey and Community survey are different, with key differences being the colour and sections included (Engagement includes 'What is the survey about?'), but similar comments were made for both versions.

When probed on their initial approach to the questionnaire and their impressions, participants said that they would read the front page in 'real life' as it tells them what to do and how to take the survey.

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- They liked the images on the front that gave examples of the routing that they would see within the questionnaire and found these visuals helpful.
- Interviewers observed two respondents make a change in the survey and use the method as instructed on the front without much trouble by blocking out the box in black and then selecting the correct box, indicating that participants had read and taken in the information at the start before taking the survey.
- Researchers prepared a selection of pens and pencils on the table before the interview for the participants to choose from. All chose a black pen, and one opted to use their own pen suggesting that participants followed the instructions on the front page. When probed, one participant said they had selected black because it says so on the front page.

### Recommendations

- Participants do tend to read the front page of the survey, so including important information is key, although it is important to keep the information on the front page as streamlined and concise as possible for those that inevitably skim or skip, and so as not to deter people from taking the survey.
- Emphasise important information in bold.
- Include images as examples where possible to give visual aid: we recommend adding an example of the bar routing to the front page for completeness, and as this was the most problematic form of routing.
- We suggest that both the Community and Engagement paper questionnaires have the same front page, and we have recommended minor adaptations to 'What is the survey about?', 'How do I fill in the questionnaire?' and 'Where can I get more information?' based on this as well as previous usability testing work.

## 2. Questionnaire layout

### Column layout

The questionnaire is laid out in either a double column format or a single column format. Wider literature shows that a double column format is recommended for A4 booklets, and our testing supported this, showing that participants find the double column layout easy to follow. They liked how the survey flowed and commented that it doesn't waste space on the page. Participants had no issues when the format changed between double and single columns. This did not appear to be noticed as no one spontaneously mentioned this.

Questions that were positioned on a single column page with the response options presented in two columns did not cause any issues. However, we would recommend presenting all response options in a single column to prevent any options being inadvertently missed.

**Q70** In the last 12 months, have you visited a museum or gallery in person in England?  
Please don't include direct employment within a museum or gallery.  
⇒ Please cross all that apply ☑

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I have visited a museum or gallery in my leisure time	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I have visited a museum or gallery as part of my school, college or structured academic activities
	<input type="checkbox"/> No, I have not visited a museum or gallery

**Q71** In the last 12 months, which of these virtual or online activities have you done?  
Please don't include paid work, school or college or structured academic activities.  
⇒ Please cross all that apply ☑

<input type="checkbox"/> Taken a virtual tour of a museum or gallery in England	<input type="checkbox"/> Engaged with text, image, audio, video, or animation, games, or podcast content from museums in England
<input type="checkbox"/> Researched items from a museum or gallery collection in England online	<input type="checkbox"/> None of these

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### Filtering and navigation

Three types of filtering are used in the paper questionnaire: arrows, boxes and bars.

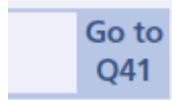
#### Arrows



- Arrow filters were fairly straightforward and didn't present any issues.
- Most participants found the arrows easy to follow, with some describing them as the easiest of the three types of instructions used in the survey. Including an example image of the arrow filter on the front page of the survey may have helped make this clearer; participants mentioned this as useful when probed on the front page of the survey.
- Despite this, researchers observed that arrow filters were routinely ignored, even by participants that followed them easily throughout most of the survey and said they found them clear. It was not completely clear why they were sometimes ignored. One hypothesis is that filters in general are more likely to be ignored when they are positioned lower down on the page. Since respondents are looking to make progress in the survey and move on to the next question, they likely give more of their attention to questions at the top of the page. This was implied through respondents' actions, such as nearing the end of the page and lifting the corner ready to move on even before reaching the last question, especially as they got into the flow of answering questions.
- Researchers noted that the arrow at Q4 in the Community survey was ignored by most participants answering this survey, perhaps because it was the first instance of routing, or that it was towards the bottom of the page.
- The arrow routing at Q8 in the Community survey caused some minor issues as it instructs participants to go to Section 2. Participants would search for section 2 overleaf (pg. 4) rather than on the next page (pg. 3). One participant said that they did this because *"I didn't know it's on the next page"* and another because they hadn't initially seen it and assumed it would be on the next page overleaf. This was the only instance that researchers observed this kind of confusion, which suggests it is due to being at the very start of the survey where participants have not yet become familiar with the routing and the section headers.

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Boxes

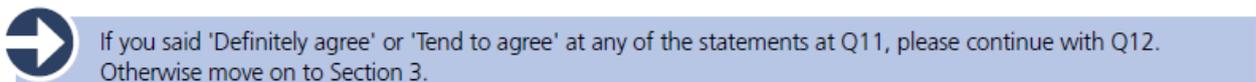
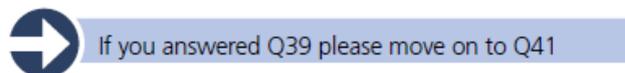


- Box filters were also straightforward and didn't cause any major issues.
- Most participants found box filters clear to follow. Some respondents said they preferred them over the arrow filters.
- Including an example image of the box filter on the front page of the survey was useful and may be a factor in explaining why respondents had little issue following them during the survey.
- Similar to the arrow filters, researchers observed that participants sometimes missed box filter instructions. This was the case for all participants, whether they said they found them easy to follow or not. We have the same hypothesis, that is that filters positioned higher up on the page are more likely to be noticed whereas ones lower down on the page are more likely to be ignored, but without a larger sample size it is hard to draw any concrete conclusion.
- One participant thought that they would notice them more easily if they were positioned to the right of the question rather than the left.
- Community: Of the three participants, one struggled with the complicated filter at Q48 asking "do I go to q49 or 51?". The participant decided to go to Q49 which was correct; during probing they said the confusion came about because they thought the filter might apply to more rows than just the bottom one. Only one of the three respondents correctly identified that the filter applied only to the last row.

**Q48** How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?  
 ↻ Please cross one box per row ☒  
 After you have crossed the last row, please go to the next question as directed

	Definitely agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Definitely disagree	Don't know
In five years' time I would like to still be living in my local area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would recommend my local area to others as a good place to live	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am proud to live in my local area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Go to Q49		Go to Q51	Go to Q50		Go to Q51

Bars



Bar filters were the most difficult of the three filters for respondents to follow across both paper questionnaires.

Things that worked well:

- Respondents liked the arrow image as it drew attention to the instructions.

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- Respondents liked when the instructions told them where to go next if they **had** answered something and what to do if they **hadn't** answered something (as shown in the second example).

### Things that didn't work well:

- Researchers observed that participants tended to skip the bar routing and go to the next question before realising that the bar was there. In these cases, participants tended to realise the question did not apply to them and would then return to the filter to work out what had happened and where they should go next. This was observed at different points throughout the survey amongst all participants.
- When probed, respondents said that they continued to the next question as it was in bold text rather than noticing or following the bar instructions, or that they had not seen it or just didn't notice it on the page.
- Confusion was caused when the bar did not tell respondents where to go specifically. For example, some bars included an 'otherwise' clause which respondents said was useful and ensured the instruction was complete, covering all circumstances. Respondents were regularly uncertain where they should go without this. This was seen for example in the Engagement survey at the top of pg.12 – *"I gather this means that if I have visited, I pass these two... That's what I think but I would question that, I'd be like, oh."*
- Participants consistently missed bar filters when they appeared underneath grids and where they were at the bottom of the page (for example Q11 in the Engagement questionnaire on p4). This may be because participants are intuitively looking to move on, to progress through the questionnaire and are already in the process of turning the page over, thus missing the grid. During follow up probing, two participants suggested the bar would be better positioned at the top of the next page where participants were more likely to notice it. While the data can be cleaned to remove answers at questions completed in error, the issue that participants feel the questions are not relevant to them remains. There is a risk that participants become frustrated at being asked what they feel are irrelevant questions or that they have made mistakes themselves and give up with the questionnaire.
- Bar filters that fell on the next page (overleaf) were slightly more demanding in terms of cognitive effort as participants had to flick back and forth between the pages to understand where they needed to go next. For example, this was observed in the Community survey on pg. 9, 12, 20. Although these bar instructions took longer and added more user burden, they were generally followed correctly, with one participant saying at pg. 12 *"I will blindly go there"*, which implies that bars positioned at the top of the page are more likely to be read.

### Recommendations

- We recommend following existing evidence and retaining a double column format as much as possible within the survey.
- We recommend presenting all response options in a single vertical list rather than across two lists placed horizontally side by side to prevent any options being inadvertently missed.
- We recommend keeping the number of filters to a minimum as it is evident that participants will struggle to follow every single filter in the questionnaire.
- We suggest all bar filters include clear and complete directions for where participants need to go if they **have** answered something and where they should go if they **have not**.
- To reduce inconsistency of respondents applying filters we suggest that we aim to position filters towards the top of the page. However, this won't be feasible for all routing (especially arrows and boxes) and might apply more to bars.

## 3. Complex question types

### Grids

Participants found the grids intuitive and were able to complete them with relative ease. Generally, the first grid took slightly longer to work through and then once participants were familiar with the layout and structure, they knew what to expect at subsequent grids.

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Being able to see the whole grid within its context on one page was useful; one participant commented that it would likely be quite difficult to complete this type of grid online and would require a lot of scrolling. The separation of the 'None' column by a thicker black line helped differentiate it from the applicable response options. Alternate row colours were also helpful in aiding participants in differentiating between the rows when working through the grid items.

Strategies for approaching the grids across both questionnaires were:

- To complete each row in turn (rather than column)
- To follow each row with a finger to ensure they stayed on the correct line. For example, one participant said, "otherwise I wouldn't know where I'm at...but maybe that's to do with my dyslexia."
- To refer back to the question or item wording where clarification or a reminder was needed, this more relevant at the longer lists of items

While participants did not find the grids challenging or confusing, there were a few minor issues observed during completion, all of which are relatively minor:

- The 'other' box, at the bottom of the grid, was missed by a few participants who ticked or crossed the 'other' option but did not notice that they should write in the specifics of what this was. In probing, participants said it didn't seem part of the grid or that they just didn't notice it. The impact of this would be missing data which could not be coded/back coded at the processing stage. Amending the size and/or borders of the 'write in' box so that it stands out more clearly against the background may help with this issue.

Some other cultural event in England (write answer in the box below)	<input type="checkbox"/>					

- Participants also occasionally did the opposite of this where they wrote in an open description of the 'other' option but did not tick or cross the 'other' box. This is less of an issue as the option can be amended during data cleaning.
- Similar to above, participants commonly left rows completely blank where the item didn't apply rather than selecting 'None'. As above, this is not an issue as the 'None' option can be inferred and applied during data cleaning.
- As noted above, participants consistently missed bar filters when they appeared underneath grids and particularly where these were at the bottom of the page.

Issues relating to questionnaire content rather than the layout were:

- Engagement Q11: One participant commented that the differences between the response options was confusing and needed re-reading/checking.
- Community Q108: The 'Your job' category is not applicable to those who do not work and there is no NA option or instruction to explain what to do.

Answer boxes

**Age boxes**

There were no issues with writing in age. However, there is inconsistency between the age boxes with two in the Engagement questionnaire (Q2) and three in the Community questionnaire (Q4).

**'Write in' boxes**



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**Weekly**

£	£	£	£	£	£	£	.	P	P
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

**Monthly/Every four weeks**

£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	.	P	P
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

**Annually**

£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	.	P	P
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Don't know

Prefer not to say

## Recommendations

### Grids

- Amend the size, positioning and internal borders of the 'write in' box so that it stands out more clearly against the background colour.
- At Q48 on the Community questionnaire, consider using a different filter style, possibly a bar filter.
- At Q108 on the Community questionnaire, add a NA option for 'Your job'.

### Answer boxes

- Remove one box at Q4 in the Community questionnaire so that there are two boxes for age.
- Add an instruction at the name, telephone and email address boxes to clarify whether participants should leave spaces, for example 'Please do not leave spaces' or 'Please leave a space between words'.
- At Q106 in the Community questionnaire, consider asking for an income band rather than exact £ and pence.

## 4. Text

### Section headers and intro text

Section headers were useful for participants. They help participants to break up the survey, with one respondent commenting that they make it "easy to compartmentalise" the survey.

As mentioned above (as it also relates to filtering), there was initial difficulty at the Community survey section 2 header on pg. 3 as Q8 routing instructs participants to go to section 2, however all participants initially turned over the page (to pg. 4) to search for section 2, before realising that it is on pg. 3. One participant said, "I didn't know it's on the next page" and only after looking on pg. 4 and seeing section 3 and section 4 did they realise they had gone too far. Similarly, another respondent said that they had initially missed it on pg. 3 as they didn't see the section header.

Since this is the only time that participants were observed to have struggled with the section headers, and throughout the rest of the survey respondents were able to navigate the section headers with ease (reporting that they used the colour to recognise them on the page and grew accustomed with what to expect) this is not a major concern and is likely the result of people figuring out the survey as they start. It may be that question numbers are more salient than section headers for respondents as they require action and respondents are often looking to complete the task and move through the survey.

### Text size and amount on page

Participants were generally content with the size of text and the amount of text on each page. There were no instances where participants said that they would be deterred from taking part based on the size or amount of text.

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Although respondents didn't directly report issues with the size or amount of text, there were several moments observed by researchers where participants slowed down, took more time to read and answer, skimmed text, or misinterpreted the text.

- Engagement: The archives intro on page 10 contains lots of text and researchers observed that participants that skim read are likely not to read the whole intro.
- Community: Due to the length of the volunteering question on pg. 9, researchers observed that participants are likely to pause and take more time on this question. It may be that because the question takes up the full page, it pauses respondents or breaks their flow. Despite its length, respondents did not say that the question would put them off continuing with the survey, but researchers noted that it took respondents more time to consider and answer this question and that they were likely to skim read the answer options.
- Community: Researchers observed fatigue in participants by pg. 14 and 15. This is just after halfway in the survey and includes section 14 (engagement with cultural and heritage activities) which contains lengthier questions with more complex language in the answer options. Participants took longer at these questions and their speed answering the survey decreased around this point.
- Community: Routing at section 18 (work and employment) on pg. 19-22 is longer and slightly more complicated. Even when taking their time to read the routing, respondents tended to go to the wrong question. This was observed for those that had selected 'retired' at Q93, but who proceeded to Q101 rather than Q103 as instructed at the top of pg. 20 in the bar routing.

### Recommendations

- Community: Routing instructions at Q8 and Q9 could be changed from 'Go to section 2' to 'Go to Q11' to overcome the initial struggle of searching for section 2. The caveat here is that respondents miss the section 2 header and any information that is given, and the filtering may not be as consistent with other filtering that directs them to sections rather than questions.
- Engagement: archives intro – we suggest reducing the text in the intro (match intro agreed after Cognitive testing).
- Community: suggestions on where to remove sections or questions / cut down text from the survey have been made based on observations from pg. 9, pg. 14-15, and pg. 19-22.

## 5. Colour scheme

### Colour scheme

Overall, participants were positive about the use of colour in both the Community and Engagement versions of the questionnaire. One participant said that they liked the blue colour scheme because it was "easy on the eye" and another said that the use of blue was "more interesting than black and white".

Participants mentioned that they appreciated the use of different colours for different functions of the questionnaire, and that this helped them work through the booklet. For example:

- The use of a specific blue for the headings of sections let participants know when they were starting a new block of questions on a new topic. One participant said that by the fourth/fifth pages they had started to recognise the section headers quickly due to their colour.
- The use of the different tones to mark out the separate rows in the grid questions was mentioned by several participants as especially helpful. Participants liked that this made the separation between each row very clear when they were answering, especially when there were lots of rows and the grid covered the whole page.
- The difference in colour for question text and the instruction text underneath. One participant commented that they liked that questions were always in black and instruction text in blue, as it helped them distinguish between the two easily.

However, it is worth noting that one participant did suggest that the colour scheme was a "bit orthodox" and reminded them of something they would "fill out for a local council". They suggested that as the survey is about things such as arts and culture, it could be more colourful. Another similarly described it as a "generic survey."

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### Bold and underlined text

The use of bold and underlined text was noticed to different extents across participants. Some said that they did not really notice it, and it may have had more of a subconscious impact, if any. When it was pointed out, one participant said that it was helpful as a way of identifying key words, even if they didn't take note of it. For those who did notice it, it was seen as useful and, in some cases, they suggested it could be used elsewhere to draw attention. Examples of where the bold and underlined text was helpful include:

- The underlining in the instruction for single or multi-code answers at one and all. One participant said that the way in which this was underlined helped to make it clear quickly whether they should select one or more from the list.
- In answer codes, the use of bold (e.g. Q50 in the Engagement survey) helps to answer the question easily and quickly, especially in questions where the same text is repeated in the answer codes (in Q50: **Many** of the people can be trusted, **Some** of the people can be trusted... etc).
- Use of bold helps to draw attention to question text, separating it from other text on the page.

The testing indicated that bold text can be useful for skim-readers; one participant said that if they were doing this at home, they would likely skim but stop at any bold text to read more closely. Another participant who missed some of the routing in the bars (section 3.2) said that they would have been more likely to see it if it had been in bold text like the questions. Interviewers observed that participants' eyes were drawn from question to question at least partly because they were in the same bold black text, sometimes missing what was in-between.

One participant suggested that bold be used on the front page to highlight key information, for example where it says to use 'black or blue ink'.

### Recommendations

- As participants were drawn to the black bold text, and in particular the question text, it could be useful to use bold text for the blue routing boxes to reduce the number of participants missing these. We suggest that this is tested before being implemented in the paper questionnaire.
- Bold text could also be introduced at key words or phrases on the front page, such as 'use black or blue ink'.

## 6. Length and overall experience

### Length

During the end of interview probing, participants said they felt the length of the questionnaires was just about ok but there were signs of fatigue researchers noticed during the interviews, particularly with the Community questionnaire which is significantly longer. Reducing the number of questions to under 100 would help make the questionnaire feel a lot shorter and the booklet thinner and less overwhelming/off-putting. One participant commented that initially there seem to be a lot of questions but once you've actually read through them and made a start it's less in reality.

As mentioned above, there were key places where fatigue started to set in which in turn could lead to satisficing behaviours, error and in the worse cases break off. These tended to be at complex or busy layouts after the halfway point but not close to the end. Examples were:

- On turning to pg. 14 and 15 in the Community questionnaire where Section 14: Engagement with Cultural and Heritage Activities is made up of a number of long multi-code questions requiring significant cognitive effort to work through.
- The Volunteering question on pg. 9 of the Community questionnaire.
- The two length sections of the introduction text (Section 12: Local arts and culture and Section 13: Local heritage and sports) at the top of pg. 13 of the Community questionnaire.

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- Section 13: More about you... in the Engagement questionnaire. On missing the filter at Q64 and realising this at Q64, one participant said, *"I didn't read that...I must be getting tired now because I didn't see those."* They commented that the filter was quite small but added *"maybe I'm just going oh I'm near the end now."*

Participants felt close to or under half an hour was an appropriate length of time to spend on the questions with one participant saying they would put an hour aside. Completing it in one sitting was the preference although participants acknowledged that wasn't always possible, citing childcare, other commitments or just needing a break or refreshment.

There were mixed comments on the incentive amount with some participants taking the view that it was a reasonable amount and one in particular saying that they would not complete the questionnaire for £10 and that by the time you've done it and posted it, it wouldn't be worth it.

**Overall experience**

Participants were positive about the experience of completing the paper questionnaire overall. There were no issues with the subject material, although it should be noted that we purposely skipped some of the more sensitive questions as the focus was on layout rather than specific content.

Aspects of the questionnaire participants spontaneously mentioned when asked for overall feedback at the end of the interview were:

<b>Positive feedback</b>	<b>Things we could improve on</b>
The use of colour contrast between black and blue	Increase the text size at the bar filter
The layout in general	Reduce the length / number of questions overall
The use of underline in the instruction texts to emphasise whether to select <u>all</u> or <u>one</u> option(s)	
The information and particularly the examples of visuals on the front page	
Being able to complete the survey on paper or online	

**Recommendations**

- Reduce the number of questions in the Community questionnaire in line with suggestions made separately. Fewer than 100 questions would feel a more reasonable, shorter interview.
- Reduce wording where possible and prioritise the question text over explanatory or instructional text. At many of the section introductions there is lengthy text, for example Section 4: Archives in the Engagement questionnaire, that is very likely to be skimmed or ignored and, as such, cutting this down as much as possible would reduce burden and increase the likelihood of participants motivation to both read the text and complete the questionnaire accurately.

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## Recommendations (combined in full) and agreed amends

Front page	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants do tend to read the front page of the survey, so including important information is key, although it is important to keep the information on the front page as streamlined and concise as possible for those that inevitably skim or skip, and so as not to deter people from taking the survey.</li> <li>Emphasise important information in bold.</li> <li>Include images as examples where possible to give visual aid: we recommend adding an example of the bar routing to the front page for completeness, and as this was the most problematic form of routing.</li> <li>Suggest that both the Community and Engagement paper questionnaires have the same front page, and we have recommended minor adaptations to 'What is the survey about?', 'How do I fill in the questionnaire?' and 'Where can I get more information?' based on this as well as previous usability testing work.</li> </ul> <p><b>DCMS Agreed with all of Verian's suggested amends.</b></p>
Columns and Filtering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We recommend following existing evidence and retaining a double column format as much as possible within the survey.</li> <li>We recommend presenting all response options in a single vertical list rather than across two lists placed horizontally side by side to prevent any options being inadvertently missed.</li> <li>We recommend keeping the number of filters to a minimum as it is evident that participants will struggle to follow every single filter in the questionnaire.</li> <li>We suggest all bar filters include clear and complete directions for where participants need to go if they <b>have</b> answered something and where they should go if they <b>have not</b>.</li> <li>To reduce inconsistency of respondents applying filters we suggest that we aim to position filters towards the top of the page. However, this won't be feasible for all routing (especially arrows and boxes) and might apply more to bars.</li> </ul> <p><b>DCMS agreed with all of Verian's recommended amends.</b></p>
Grids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amend the size, positioning and internal borders of the 'write in' box so that it stands out more clearly against the background colour.</li> <li>At Q48 on the Community questionnaire, consider using a different filter style, possibly a bar filter.</li> <li>At Q108 on the Community questionnaire, add a NA option for 'Your job'.</li> </ul> <p><b>DCMS agreed with all of Verian's recommended amends.</b></p>
Answer boxes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remove one box at Q4 in the Community questionnaire so that there are two boxes for age. Agree that we should make the Age boxes consistent in the PS and CLS versions of the paper survey.</li> <li>Add an instruction at the name, telephone and email address boxes to clarify whether participants should leave spaces, for example 'Please do not leave spaces' or 'Please leave a space between words'.</li> <li>At Q106 in the Community questionnaire, consider asking for an income band rather than exact £ and pence.</li> </ul> <p><b>DCMS agreed with the first two amends suggested by Verian, but decided to keep the income question as it was.</b></p>
Text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community: Routing instructions at Q8 and Q9 could be changed from 'Go to section 2' to 'Go to Q11' to overcome the initial struggle of searching for section 2. The caveat here is that respondents miss the section 2 header and any information that is given, and the filtering may not be as consistent with other filtering that directs them to sections rather than questions. Will come back to confirm this.</li> <li>Engagement: archives intro – we suggest reducing the text in the intro (match intro agreed after Cognitive testing).</li> <li>Community: suggestions on where to remove sections or questions / cut down text from the survey have been made based on observations from pg. 9, pg. 14-15, and pg. 19-22.</li> </ul> <p><b>DCMS suggested sticking with the original routing instructions in response to Verian's first bullet point. DCMS agreed with Verian's second suggestion and collaborated with Verian to reduce text regarding the third suggestion.</b></p>

## 2025-26 Community &amp; Engagement Survey Questionnaire Usability Testing

<p><b>Colour scheme</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● As participants were drawn to the black bold text, and in particular the question text, it could be useful to use bold text for the blue routing boxes to reduce the number of participants missing these. We suggest that this is tested before being implemented in the paper questionnaire.</li> <li>● Bold text could also be introduced at key words or phrases on the front page, such as 'use black or blue ink'.</li> </ul> <p><b>Given the time further testing was not possible, so the first point was agreed to be revisited for the next survey year. DCMS agreed with Verian's second suggestion.</b></p>
<p><b>Length</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reduce the number of questions in the Community questionnaire in line with suggestions made separately. Fewer than 100 questions would feel a more reasonable, shorter interview.</li> <li>● Reduce wording where possible and prioritise the question text over explanatory or instructional text. At many of the section introductions there is lengthy text, for example Section 4: Archives in the Engagement questionnaire, that is very likely to be skimmed or ignored and, as such, cutting this down as much as possible would reduce burden and increase the likelihood of participants motivation to both read the text and complete the questionnaire accurately.</li> </ul> <p><b>DCMS worked in collaboration with Verian to reduce the number of questions in the Community paper survey as well as the amount of text across both surveys.</b></p>