

Equality Plan

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Introduction

This report presents the findings of the consultation on the Equality Plan.

The online survey was hosted on the Hackney Council consultation hub and was open from 20th November 2023 to 21 January 2024. It was also promoted in the Council's magazine; Love Hackney. In total, 90 completed responses were received.

Alongside this, face to face engagement was conducted around Hackney to allow people with barriers to accessing the online survey to participate.

This engagement involved a further 690 people: 355 staff, 239 partners and 96 residents, of which 50 took part in focus groups. The analysis of this engagement is detailed in the Engagement section of this report.

Background

In November 2022 Hackney adopted a new Strategic Plan at Cabinet and Council, Working Together for a Better Hackney. The New Strategic Plan sets out the ambitions for the Council for the next four years, as well as the challenges we face.

An Equality Plan is now being drafted which will help us consider these ambitions through an equality prism to understand:

- Key inequalities in outcomes and what is driving this
- The strengths and diversity in communities that we need collectively to value
- The lived experience of residents - trends, insights and feelings about the borough and the Council

This work will help us identify:

- Proactive actions needed to tackle inequality of outcomes, build prosperity and celebrate diversity
- What needs to be embedded into service design, delivery and practice models - the "DNA of the organisation."
- How we need to change as institutions - our culture, workforce, leadership

The New Equality Plan will replace the existing Single Equality Scheme 2018-2022 and so we are at a key point of change in policy which requires consultation and engagement, as we did in 2018. It is, furthermore, a statutory duty to publish equality objectives, and consult on them. The new Plan includes key plans and frameworks and raises new issues that have, to date, generated a lot of community interest and further engagement has been promised at different points.

Promoting the survey

Channels (online/ social media)

- Consultation webpage launch promoted on X (Twitter) and Facebook - Hackney channels,
- Consultation promoted in Hackney e-newsletter and Love Hackney magazine, and staff internal newsletter
- Online promotion on Hackney Council's social media for a final call to complete the consultation
- Final call to complete the consultation in Hackney Council's newsletter
- E-newsletters (external and internal staff newsletter)

Email

- Community Champions and other community partners
- CVS organisations such as Healthwatch Hackney and Hackney CVS
- Key contacts with wider networks

Consultation & Engagement Approach

A consultation and engagement plan was developed in partnership with the engagement team. In addition, a communications plan was developed to ensure the consultation was promoted effectively. Engagement on the draft Equality Plan was split into two parts, consultation and face- to- face engagement.

Consultation:

- Sense check if we have got the objectives right and if we are explaining them in an accessible and relevant way.
- Test if priorities are the right ones and understand what is missing?
- Share the groups we are planning to focus on and identify if any groups are missing.

Face - to - face engagement:

- Share the context for this work, the challenges and constraints and role of the Council, partners and residents
- Gather new insight about what is driving inequality, that helps us develop a shared understanding of inequality
- Take a strength based approach to understand what is working and is valued in tackling inequality and identify new ideas and solutions
- Develop specific thematic areas of work with those who face inequality or discrimination
- Help us develop richer deeper links into communities with insights, actions and ideas to share

- Help us develop more ongoing ways to involve partners and residents in working with us to help us tackle inequality and provide critical challenge and accountability - learning from existing approaches

The consultation was created and published on Citizen Space, the Council's survey platform, and was live from 20 November 2023 until 21 January 2024.

Communications were sent out via the following channels:

- Social media - Twitter, Facebook
- Love Hackney
- Newsletter - Corporate newsletter and community champions

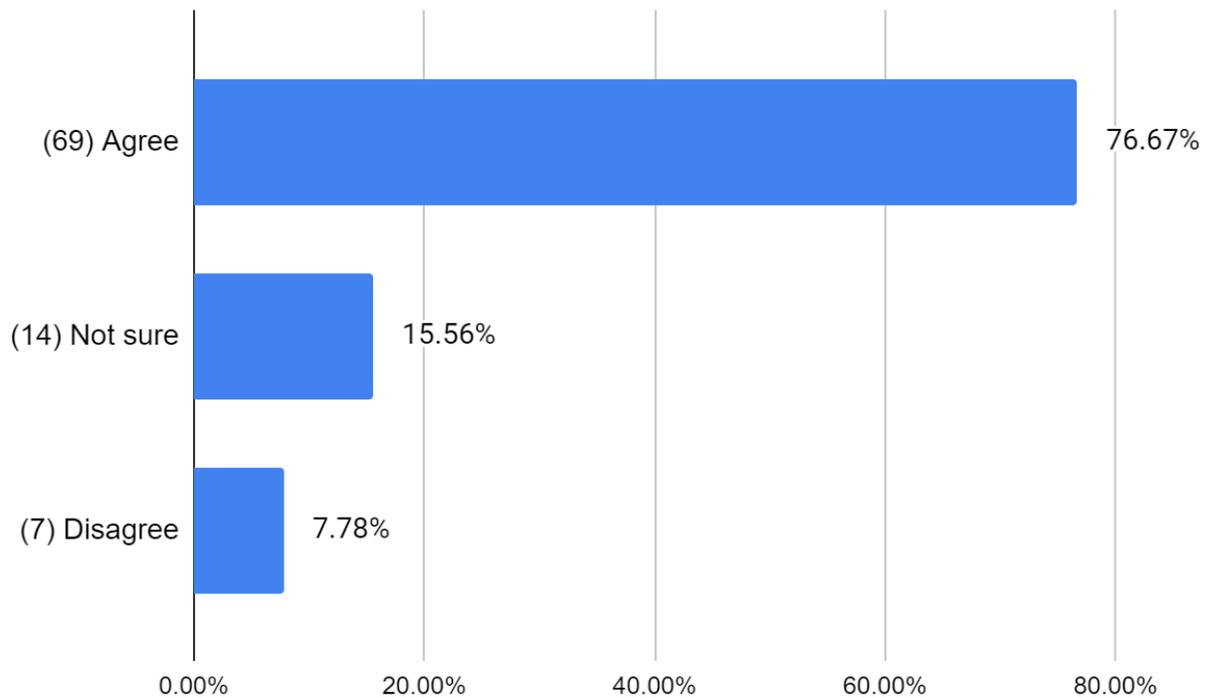
Response rate

A total of 90 respondents took part in the online consultation. Engagement activity involved a further 701 people: 355 staff, 239 partners and 107 residents (of which 53 completed monitoring information)

Overview of results- Online consultation (90 people)

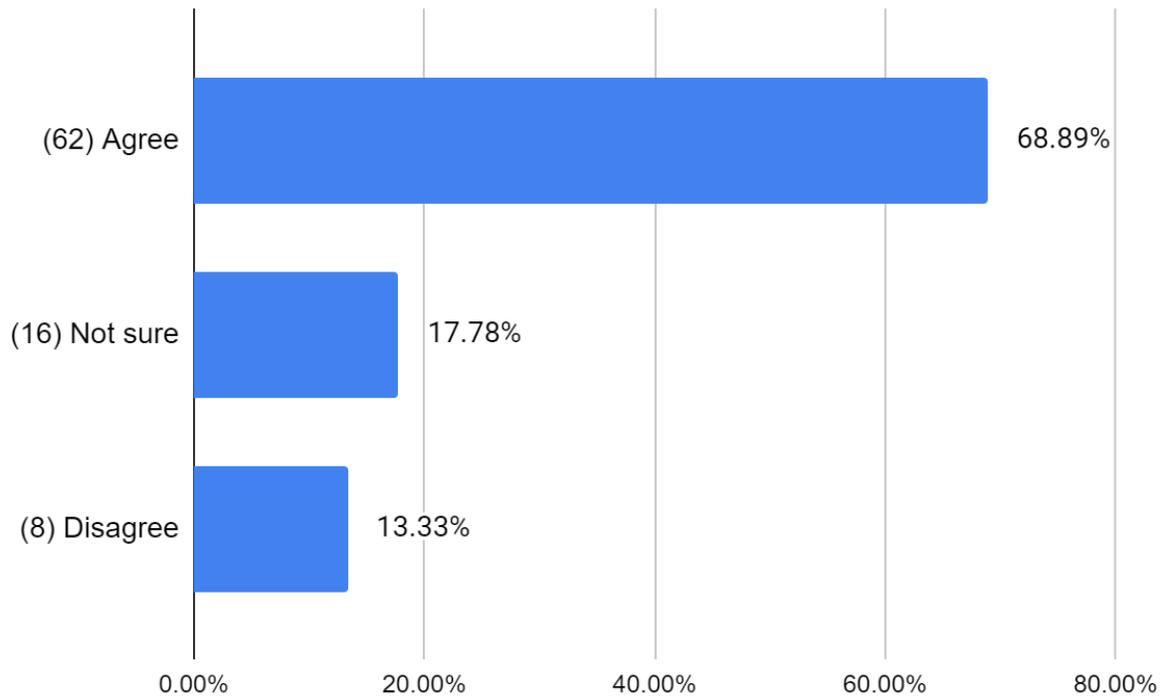
Equality Plan- Objective 1: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

“I think this objective will help us tackle inequality” (90 responses)



The majority of respondents, just under 77% stated that they agree with the statement “I think this objective will help us tackle inequality” (69 respondents). This is followed by just under 16% of respondents who stated that they were not sure (16 respondents). Just under 8% of respondents disagreed with the statement (12 respondents).

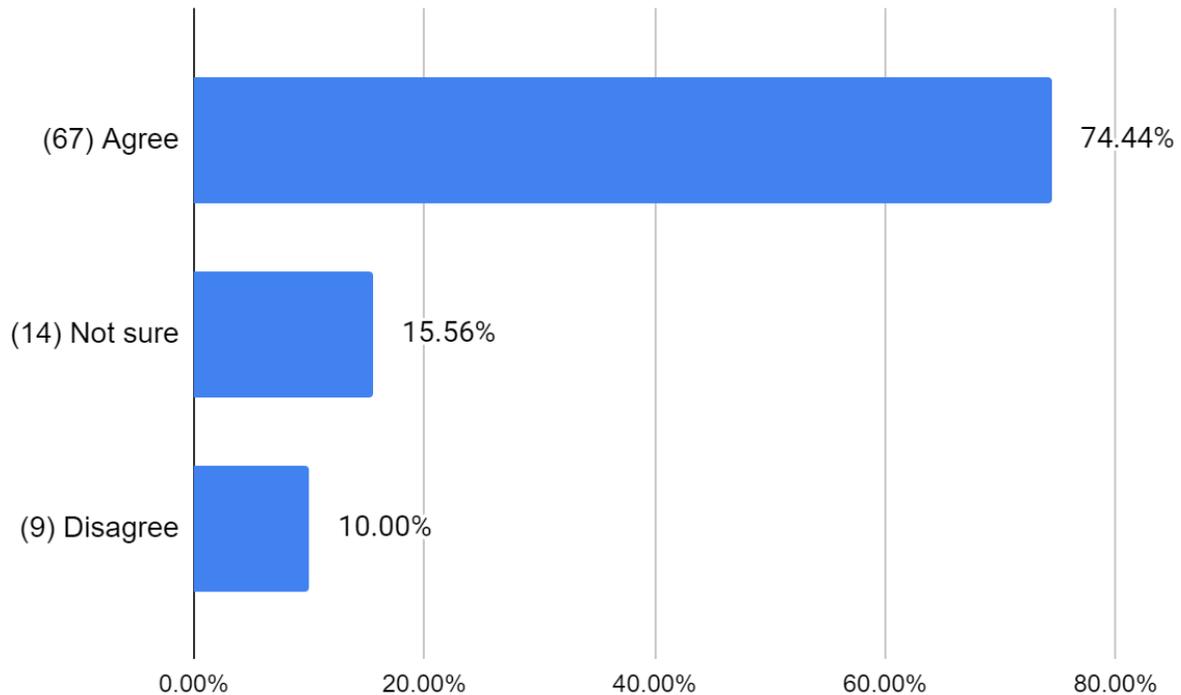
“I think the proposed activities will help achieve these objectives” (90 responses)



The majority of respondents, just under 69%, stated that they agree with the statement “I think the proposed activities will help achieve these objectives” (62 respondents). Just under 18% stated that they were not sure (16) and just over 13% stated that they disagree (12).

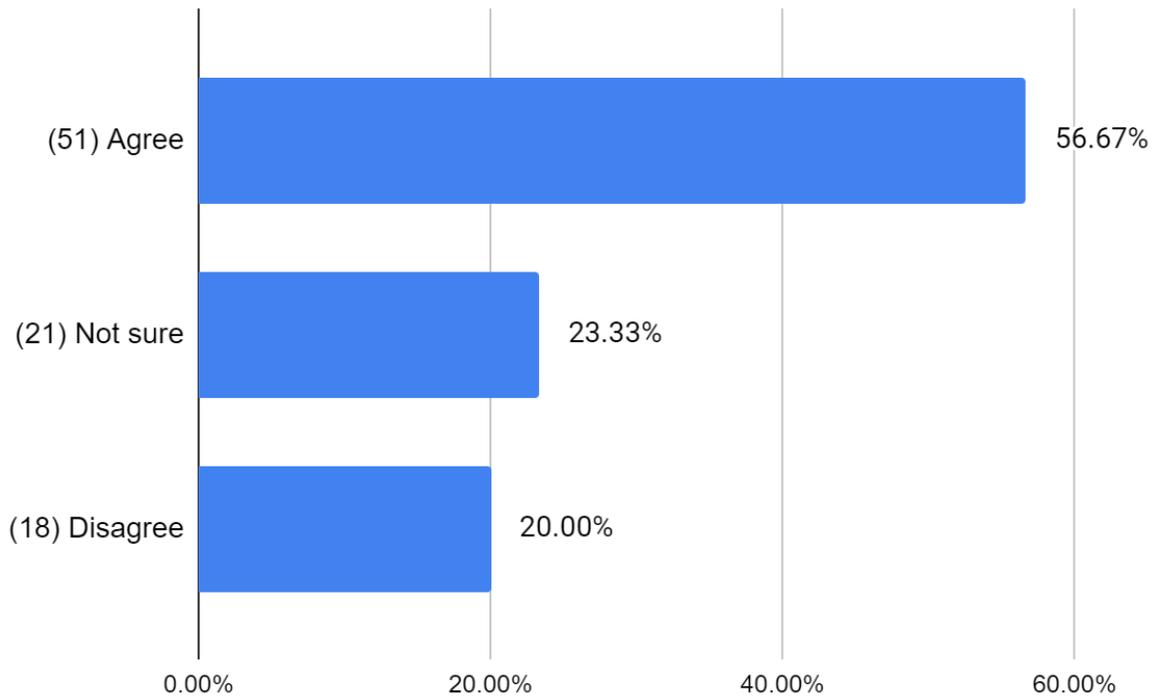
Equality Plan- Objective 2: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

“I think this objective will help us tackle inequality” (90 responses)



The majority of respondents, just over 74%, stated that they agree with the statement “I think this objective will help us tackle inequality” (67 respondents). This is followed by just under 16% of respondents who stated that they were not sure (14). 10% of respondents stated that they disagreed with the statement (9).

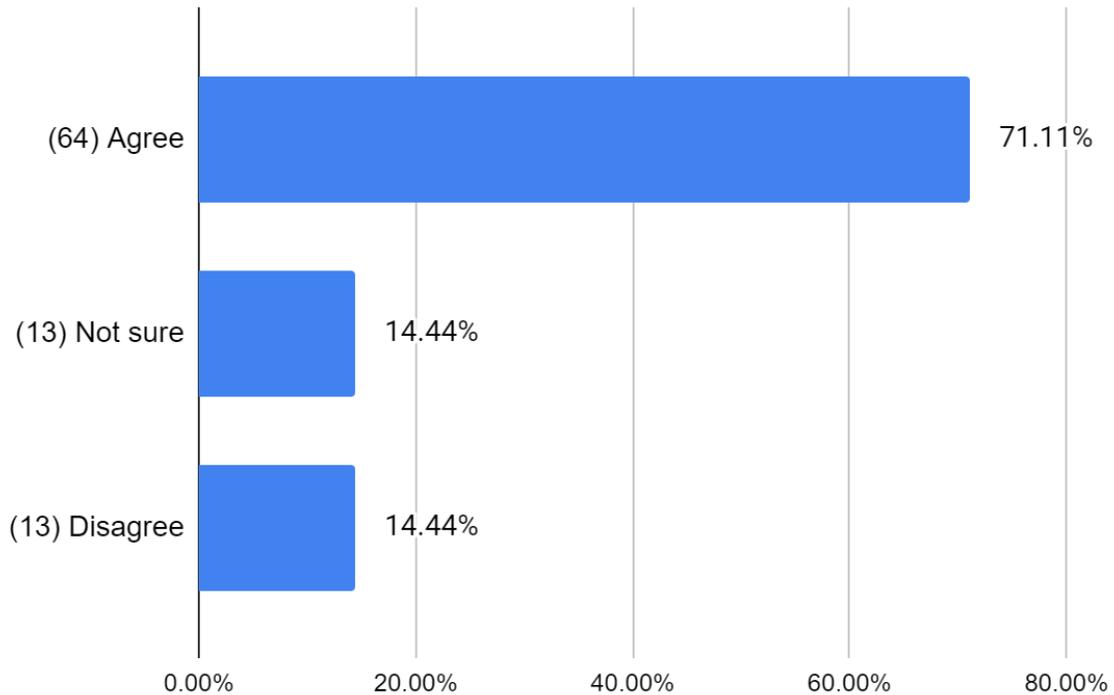
“I think the proposed activities will help achieve these objectives” (90 respondents)



Just over half of respondents, just under 57%, stated that they agree with the statement “I think the proposed activities will help achieve these objectives” (51 respondents.) Just over 23% of respondents stated that they were not sure (21). 20% of respondents stated that they disagree (18).

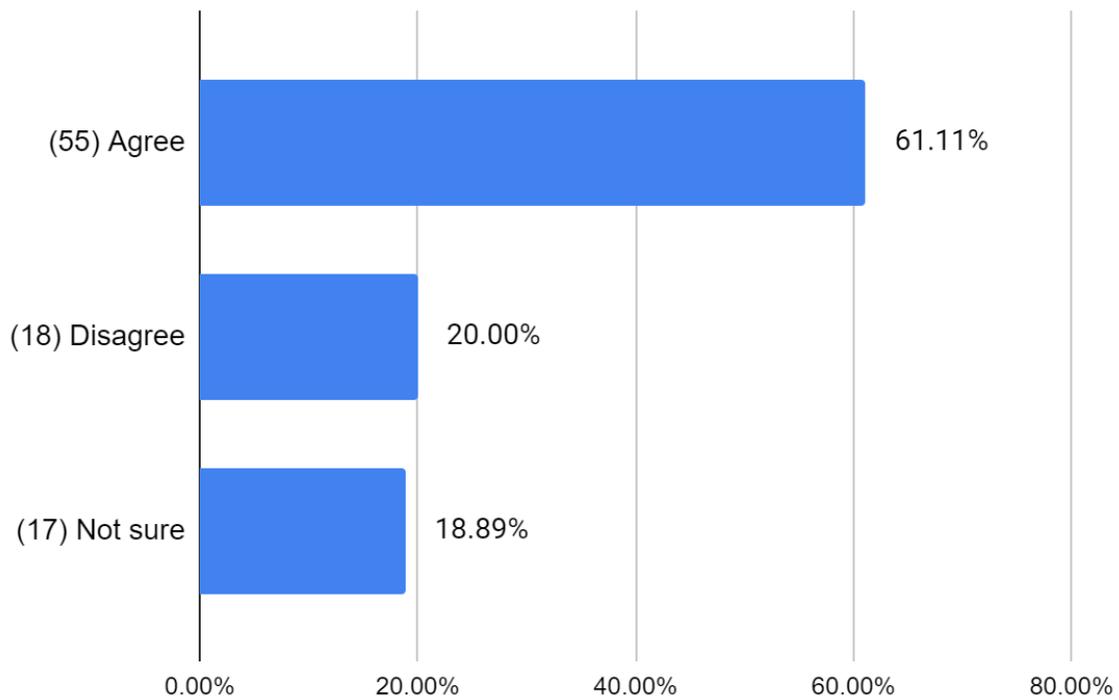
Equality Plan- Objective 3: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

“I think this objective will help us tackle inequality” (90 responses)



The majority of respondents, just over 71%, stated that they agree with the statement “I think this objective will help us tackle inequality” (64 respondents). An equal percentage of respondents, just over 14%, stated that they were not sure and that they disagree with the statement (13 respondents for each response).

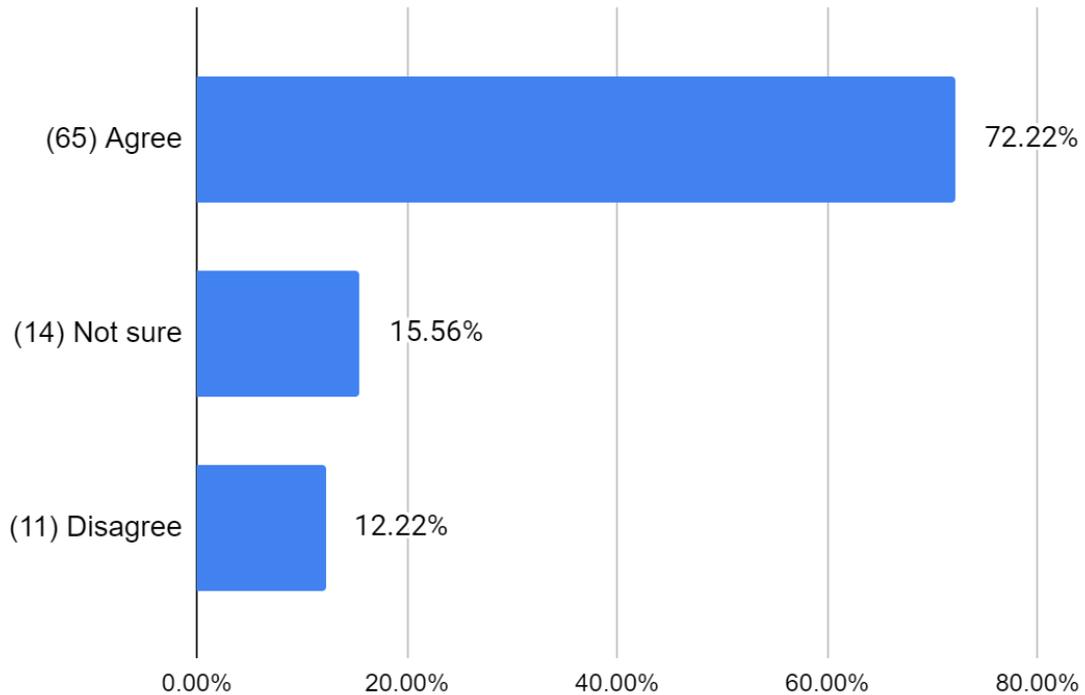
“I think the proposed activities will help achieve these objectives” (90 respondents)



The majority of respondents, just over 61%, stated that they agree with the statement “I think the proposed activities will help achieve these objectives” (55 respondents.) 20% of respondents stated that they were not sure whether they agree or disagree with the statement (18) and just under 19% of respondents stated that they disagree with the statement (17).

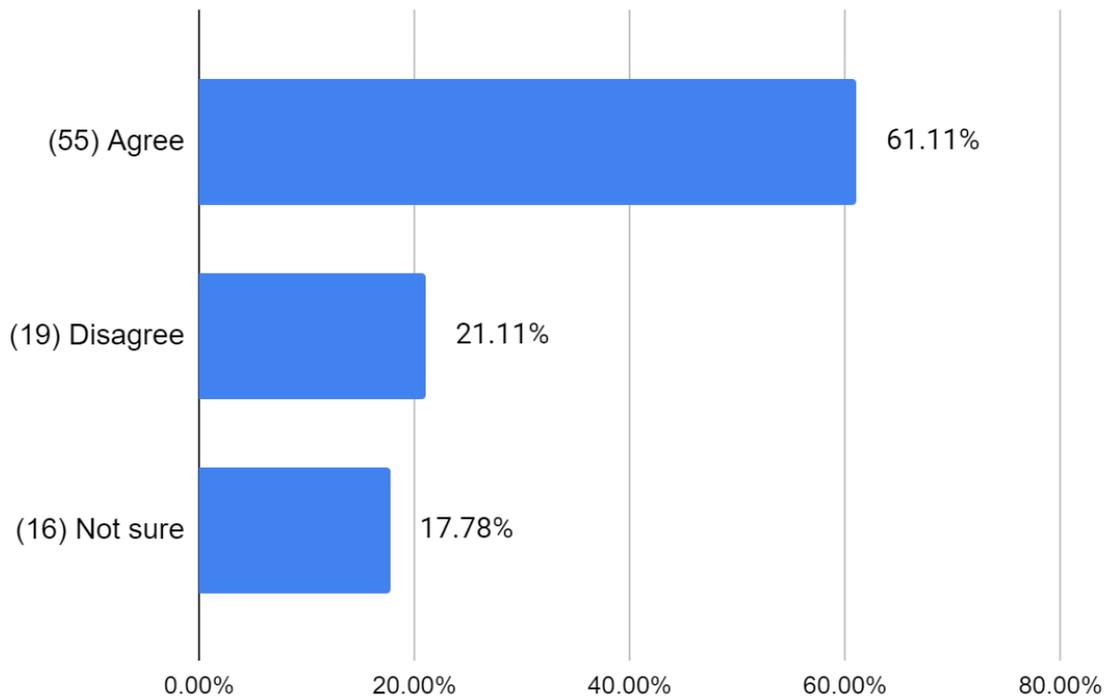
Equality Plan- Objective 4: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

“I think this objective will help us tackle inequality” (90 responses)



The majority of respondents, just over 72%, stated that they agree with the statement “I think this objective will help us tackle inequality” (65 respondents). Just under 16% stated that they were not sure if they agree or disagree with the statement (14). Just over 12% stated that they disagree with the statement (11).

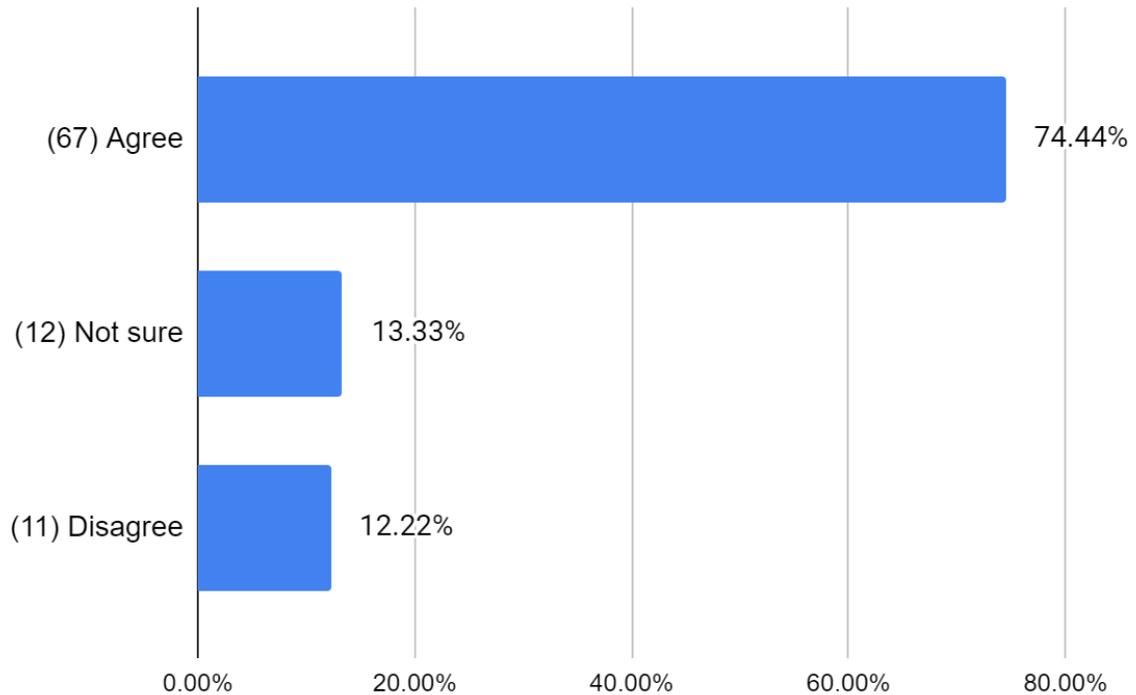
“I think the proposed activities will help achieve these objectives” (90 respondents)



The majority of respondents, just over 61%, stated that they agree with the statement “I think the proposed activities will help achieve these objectives” (55 respondents.) Just over 21% of respondents stated that they disagree with the statement (19). Just under 18% of respondents stated that they were not sure (16.)

Anti- Racism Plan

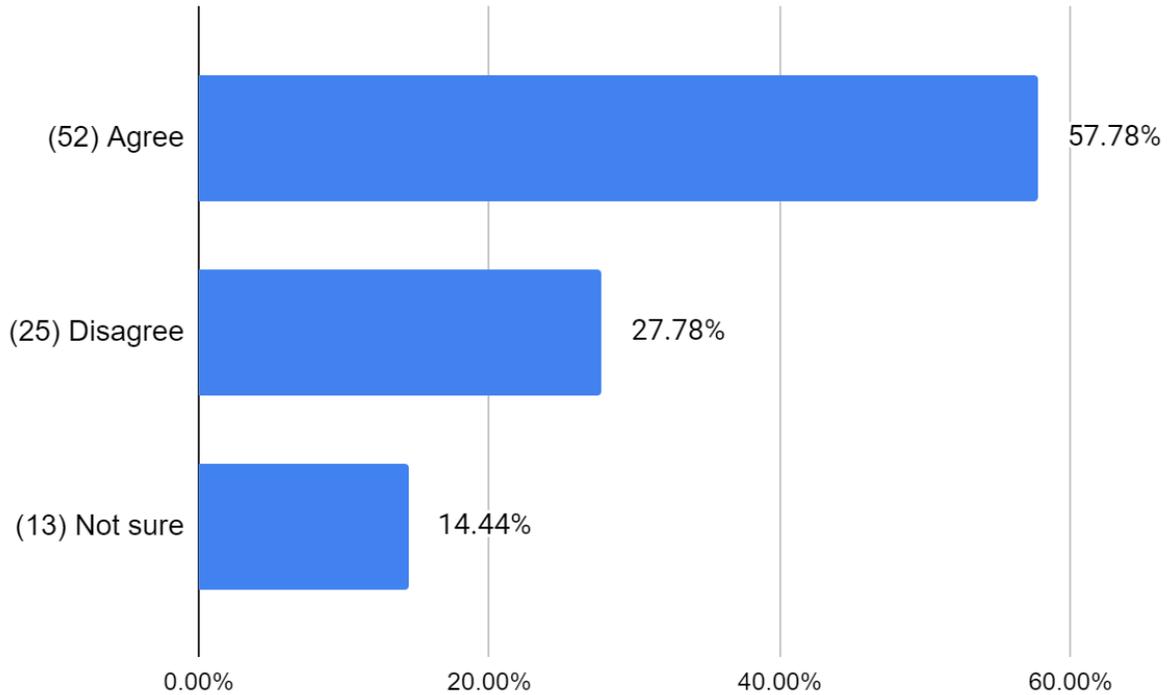
To what extent do you agree or disagree that the objectives above will help Hackney become an anti-racist borough? (90 responses)



The majority of respondents, just over 74%, stated that they agree that the Anti-Racism Plan objectives will help Hackney become an anti-racist borough (67 respondents.) This is followed by just over 13% of respondents who stated that they were unsure (12). Just over 12% of respondents stated that they disagree that Anti-Racism Plan objectives will help Hackney become an anti-racist borough (11).

LGBTQIA+ Strategy

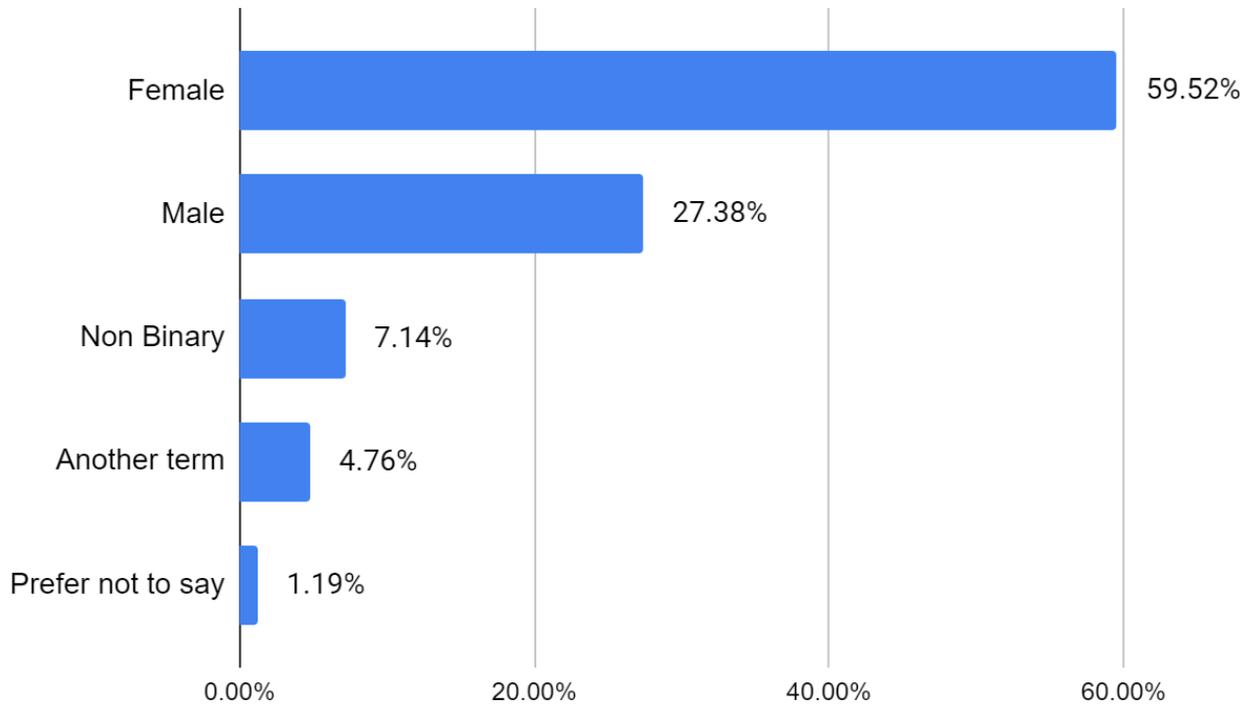
To what extent do you agree or disagree that the aspirations set out above are clear and understandable? (90 responses)



Just over half of respondents, just under 58%, stated that they agree that the aspirations set out above are clear and understandable (52 respondents). Just under 28% of respondents disagreed with the statement (25). Just over 14% of respondents stated that they were not sure (13).

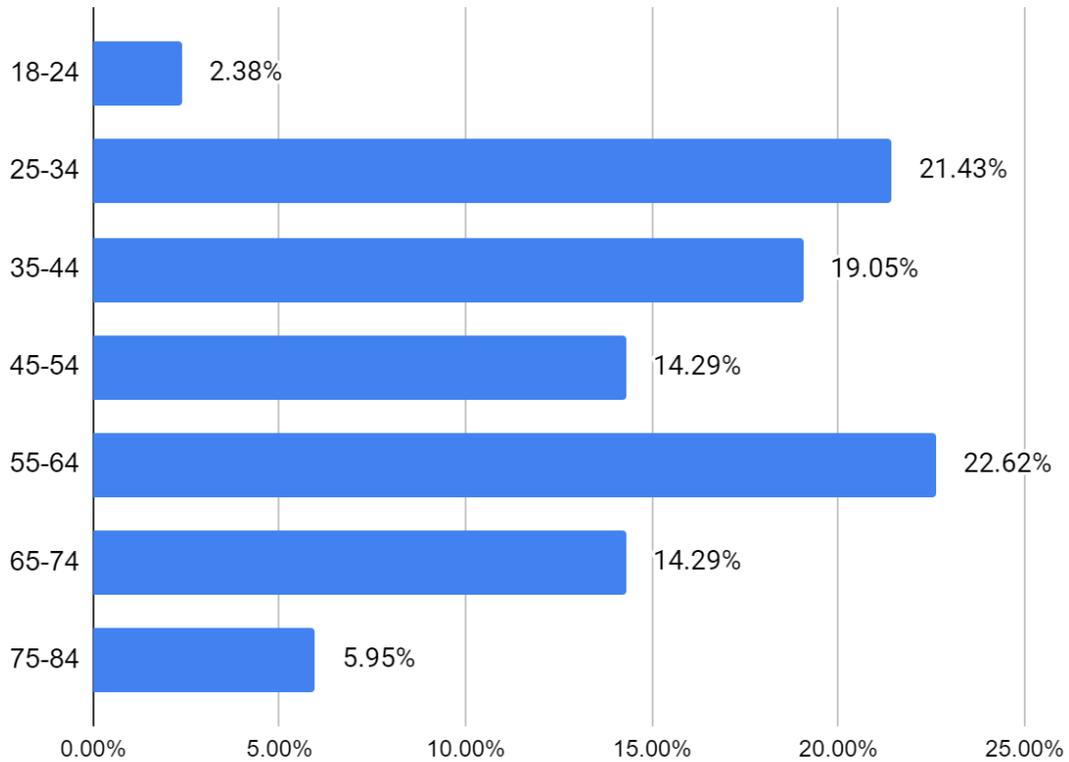
About you

Gender: Are you... (Base 84)



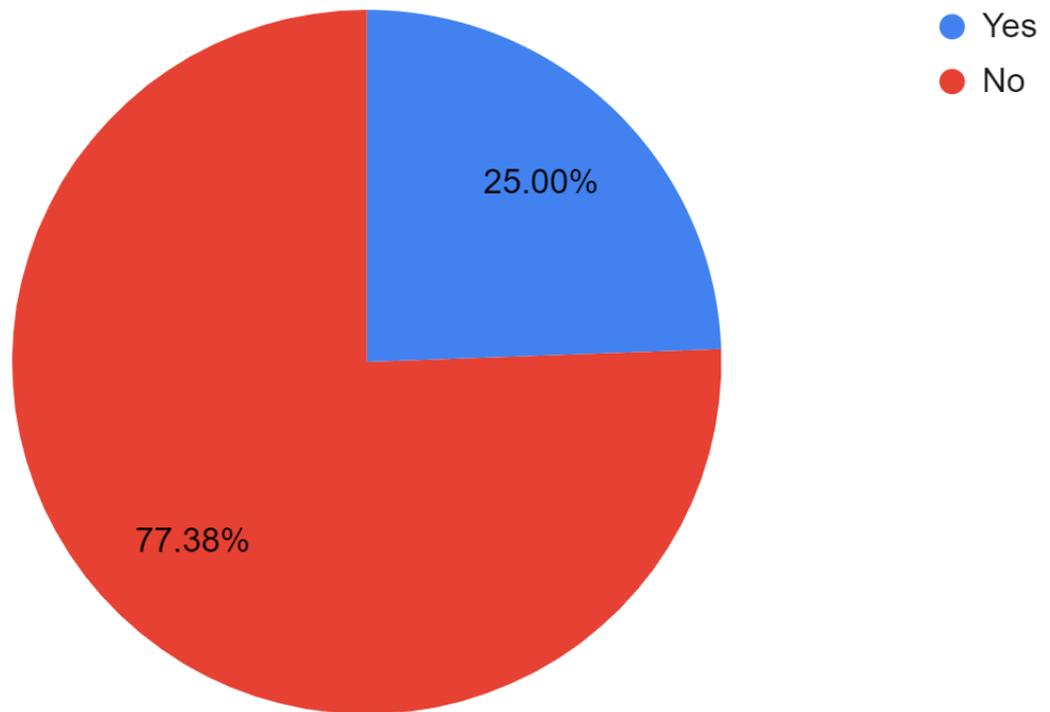
The majority of respondents, just under 60%, stated that they are female (50 respondents.) This is followed by who stated that they are male (23) and non-binary (6). Four respondents use another term, one stated that they prefer not to say.

Age: what is your age group? (Base 84)



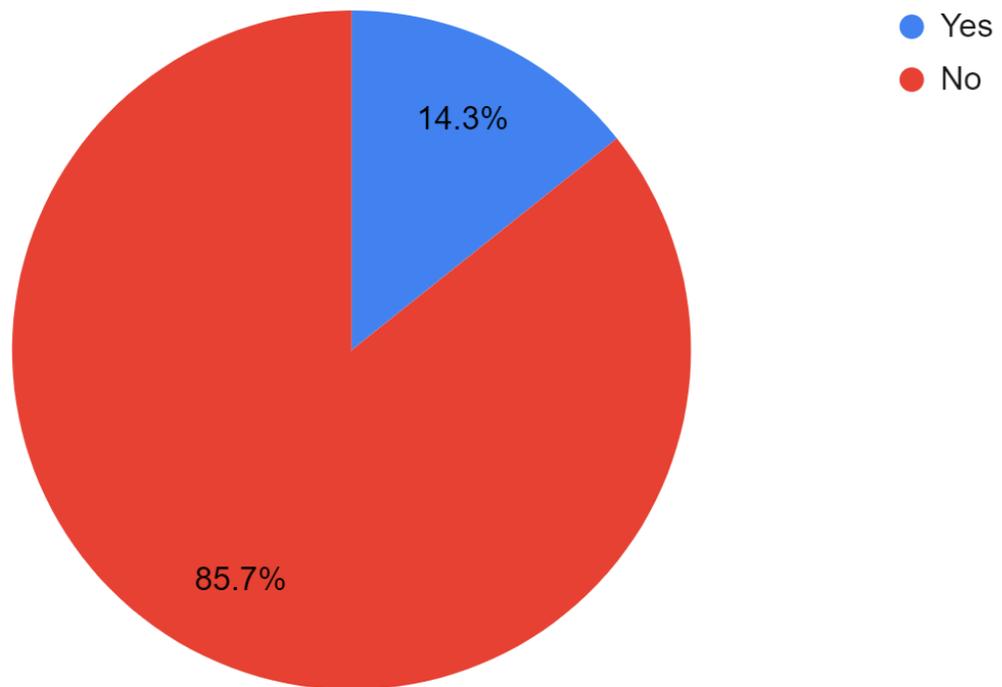
The highest percentage of respondents, just under 23%, stated they are aged 55-64 (19). This is followed by 25-34 (18), 35-44 (16), 45-54 and 65-74 (both 12), 75-84 (5) and 18-24 (2).

Do you consider yourself to be disabled? (Base 86)



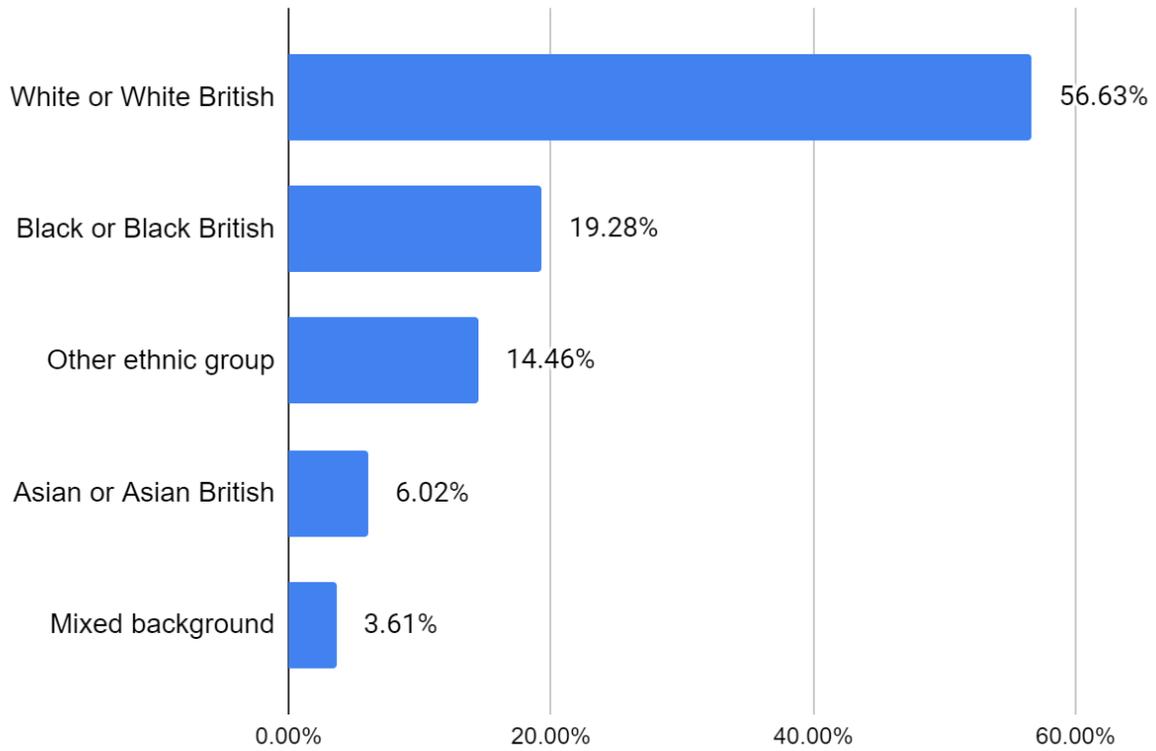
The majority of respondents, just over 77%, stated that they do not have a disability (65). 25% of respondents state that they have a disability (21).

Do you regularly provide unpaid support caring for someone? (Base 84)



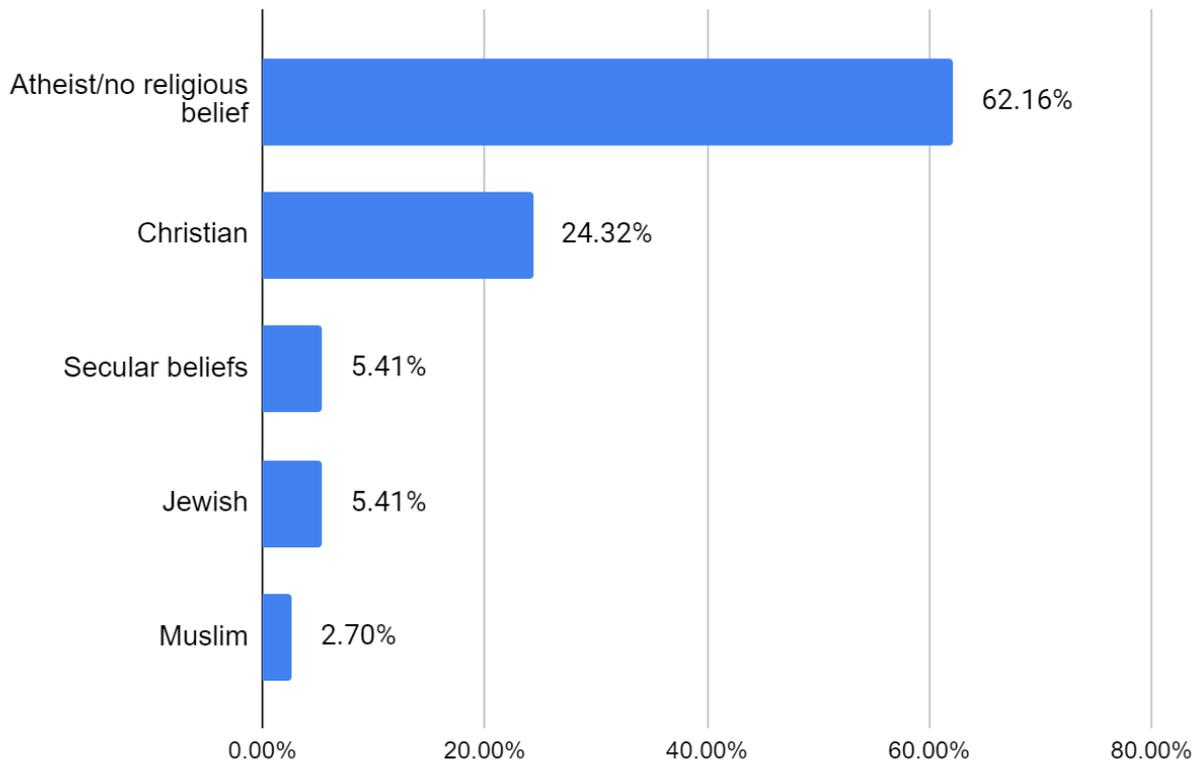
The majority of respondents, just under 86%, stated that they do not regularly provide unpaid caring support (72). 14.3% of respondents stated that they do provide unpaid caring support (12.)

Ethnicity: Are you... (Base 83)



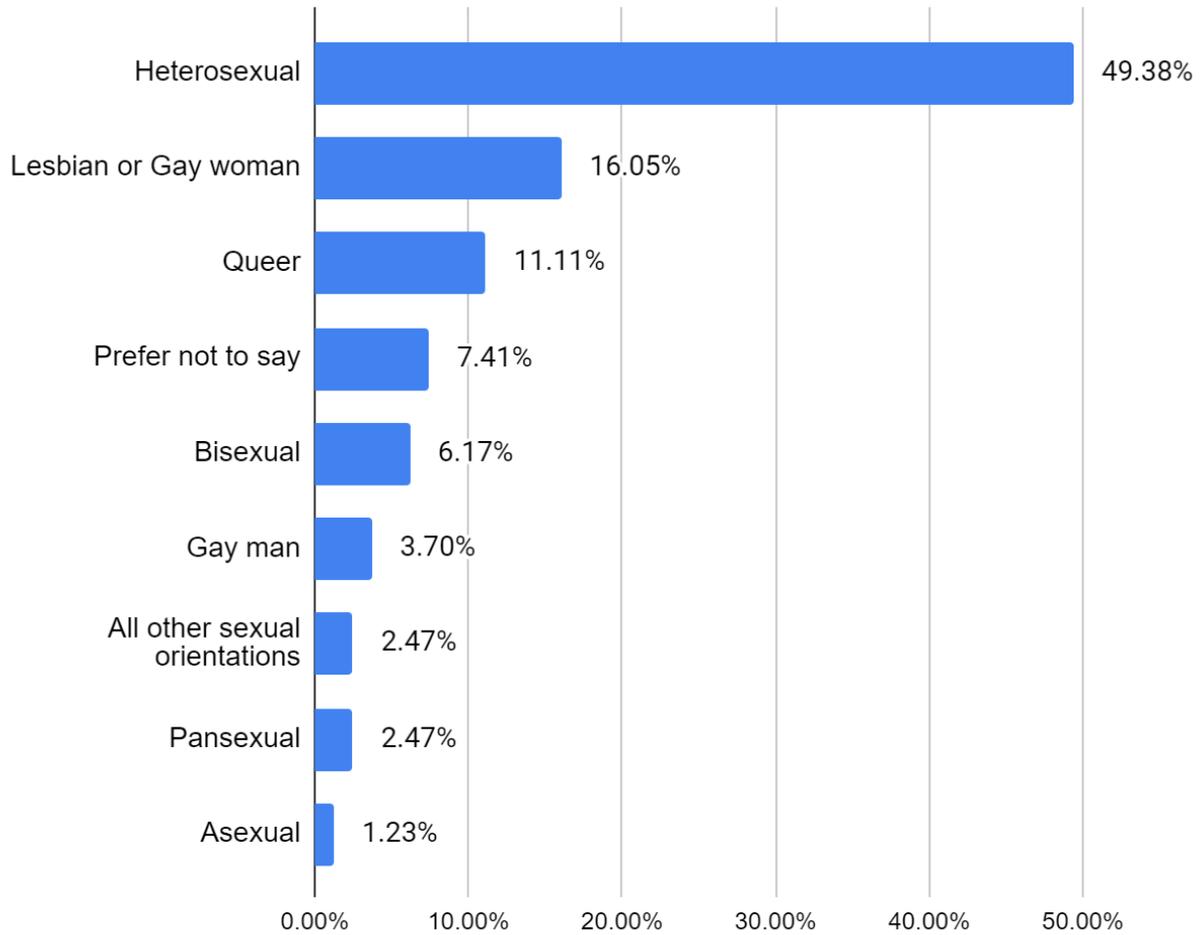
The majority of respondents, just under 54%, stated they are white or white British (47). This is followed by respondents who state they are Black or Black British (16), other ethnic group (12), Asian or Asian British (5), and mixed background (3).

Religion or belief: Are you or do you have... (Base 80)



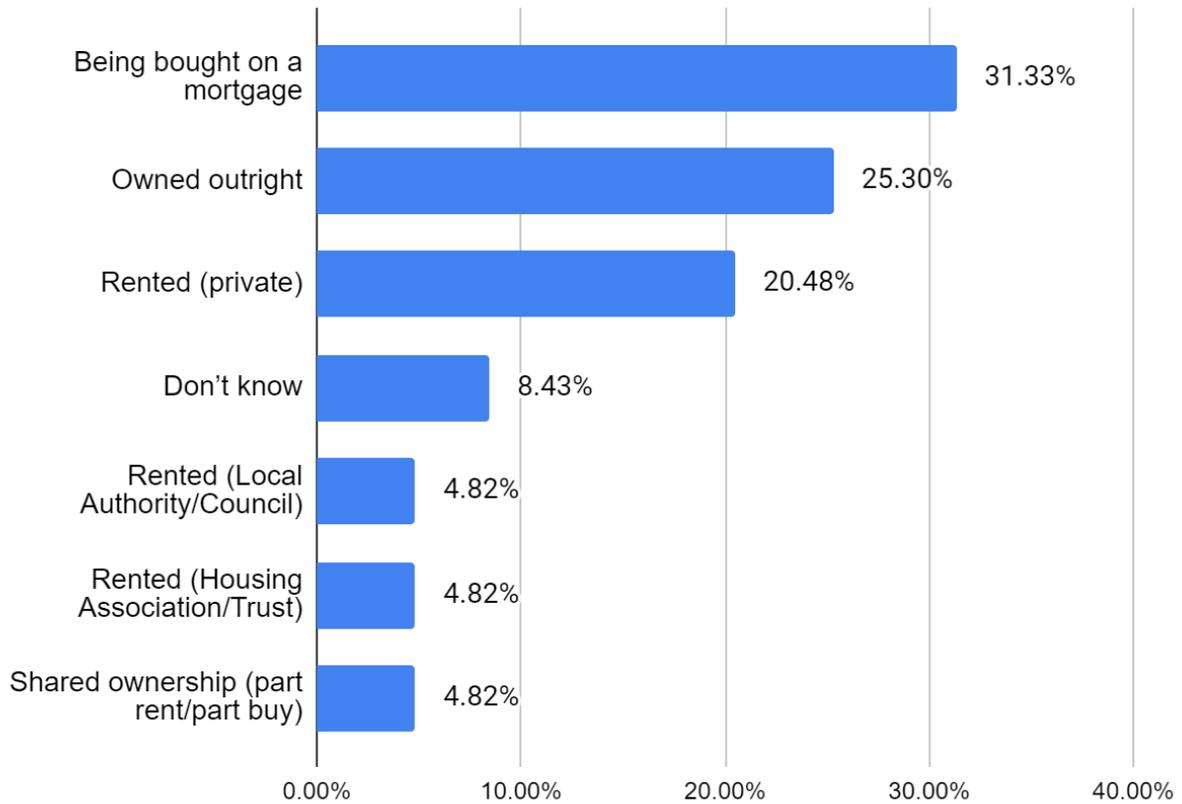
The majority of respondents, just over 62%, stated they are atheist/no religious belief (46). This is followed by respondents who stated they are Christian (18), have secular beliefs (4), Jewish (4), and Muslim (2).

Sexual orientation: Are you... (Base 84)



The highest percentage of respondents, just over 49%, stated that they are heterosexual (40). This is followed by respondents who stated they are lesbian or gay woman (13), queer (9), prefer not to say (6), bisexual (5), gay man (3), all other sexual orientations (2), pansexual (2), and asexual (1).

Housing Tenure: Which of the following best describes the ownership of your home? (Base 83)



The majority of respondents stated that their house is being bought on a mortgage (26). This is followed by respondents who stated that they owned outright (21), rented (private) (17), don't know (7), rented (local authority/Council) (4), rented (housing association/trust) (4), and shared ownership (part rent/part buy) (4).

Other engagement work

Engagement activity involved a further 701 people: 355 staff, 239 partners and 107 residents (of which 53 completed monitoring information)

	Residents events and focus groups	
Age	Hackney Circle Christmas Party (older residents)	30
Disability	Autism Experts by Experience Focus group with adults with learning disabilities Disabled Residents Focus Group <i>HPF Speak Up Group</i> <i>Deaf Plus</i> <i>Healthwatch Hackney Mental Health</i>	30
Gender reassignment	Healthwatch LGBTQIA+ Forum LGBTQIA+ Sig (update only) LGBGTQIA+ Residents Focus Group	14
Pregnancy and maternity		
Race	<i>Connecting All Communities Focus Group</i> Daymer-Turkish and Kurdish community organisation (evidence submission)	19
Religion and Belief	Hackney Faith Forum <i>Interlink Foundation Focus Group</i>	11
Sex		
Sexual orientation	Healthwatch LGBTQIA+ Forum LGBTQIA+ Sig (update only) LGBGTQIA+ Residents Focus Group	4
Other groups	Armed forces breakfast Care Leavers Council Focus group	(not recorded) 3

53 people residents completed a diversity monitoring form. The equality information is below. The form was designed in part to help us improve our equalities data collection by expanding our understanding of the different terms people might use to describe themselves.

	Focus groups
Age	The highest percentage of respondents, just over 35%, stated they are aged 30-39. This is followed by 40-49(31.5%), 50-59 (14.8%), 60-69 (11.1) 70-90 (6.9%) and 20-29 (1.9%).
Disability	The majority of respondents, just over 83%, stated that they do not have a disability . 14.8% of respondents states that they have a disability
Do you consider yourself to be trans or as having a trans history?	The majority of respondents, over 96% said no, 3.8% said prefer not to say
Ethnicity	<p>15.3% White British, 9.5% Black British, 7.5% Somali, 3.8% british Somali</p> <p>Due to the diversity in Hackney as well as free text there are a lot of single count responses listed below</p> <p>Single count responses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> African African (Eritrean) African (Somali) x2 African (Sierra Leone) Bengali British Black African Black Caribbean British British Asian British Jewish Charedi Dual Heritage White European an Caribbean East African (Eritrean) East African (Sudanese) Iraqi

	<p>Jewish Latin American Mixed Orthodox Jewish Turkish White White Irish White other -Jewish Black British N.irish Western European</p>
How would you describe your religion faith or belief	The majority of respondents, nearly 33% stated they were Muslim, followed by Christian, 17%, Jewish (10%), atheist/no religious belief (10), Catholic (5.8%), followed by Pagan, Science, Buddhist, Spiritual, humanity and secular all at (1.9%)
How would you describe your gender	The majority of respondents, just over 72%, stated that they are female. This is followed by 13.2 who said they were male. Followed by 3.8% non-binary and then CIS male, cisgender woman, woman all at 1.9%
How would you describe your sexual or romantic orientation	The majority of respondents, nearly 79% stated they were heterosexual/straight, followed by Bisexual, 9.8%, Gay, 7.8%, Queer, 5.9%, Lesbian and Pansexual both at 2%. 2% of people used a different term that was not listed
What is your relationship status	The majority of respondents, over 44% said they were married, followed by 24.1% who are single, 20.4% who have one partner, 11.1% divorced, 5.6% widowed and 1.9% in a civil partnership
Are you Intesex/have Variations of Sex Characteristics	The majority of respondents, 98.15 said no, with 1 person preferring not to say

Do you consider yourself to be neurodiverse	The majority of respondents, 73.6% said no, 24.5% said yes and 1.9% prefer not to say
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This form asked more detailed questions about how protected characteristics contributed to them experiencing inequality or discrimination as can be seen in the table below.

Age	13%
Disability	15%
Sex	48%
Gender reassignment	0%
Sexual orientation	15%
Marriage or Civil Partnership	0%
Pregnancy or Maternity	6%
Race	59%
Religion or belief	42%
None of the above	7%

The form also asked if any of the following characteristics contribute to them experiencing inequality or discrimination. The responses reflect the need to include the socio economic duty as well as the additional groups included in the plan who are vulnerable because of life experiences

Providing unpaid care for a disabled, chronically ill older neighbour or friend	32%
Being a looked after child, care leaver or other experience of the care system	0%
Immigration status	32%
Being in receipt of benefits	45%

Housing or living situation	50%
Socio-economic background or class	42%
Substance misuse or addiction difficulties	0%
Mental ill health	13%
Chronic health difficulties which don't amount to a disability	18%
Experiencing menopause (including perimenopause)	8%
Having been a member of the armed forces	0%
Other reasons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● From the Police and when shopping (racial profiling and stereotyping) ● Sexism at work (in the past) impacting career progression ● Being the parent of neurodivergent children ● Having a learning disability ● Coming from a non-commonwealth country ● Being a single parent ● Immigration status of my partner 	13%

Staff -355

- RP, TMOs and Communities Service Awayday
- SEND Development Day All Send teams - Jo Wilson & Helen Walker
- City & Hackney Partnership Autism Summit - Sarah Darcy
- Disabled Staff Focus Group
- Bump Buddies
- Proud Hackney Focus Group In Person
- Hackney Nights Focus Group Hybrid
- Parking full SMT
- Show & Tell - Equality Plan
- Show & Tell - Anti Racist Plan
- Show & Tell - LGBTQIA+ Strategy
- Social workers
- Council senior managers
- Regeneration and Economic Development Management Meeting*
- Staff Focus Group - open to all staff*
- Anti-racism peer support group - Black and Global majority staff
- Children's Services Leadership Team*
- Equality Plan Climate, Sustainability & Environmental Services Team Meeting*
- ESO Team Meeting*
- Hackney Education - Outcomes, Business Intelligence and Strategy, Strategy & Governance*

Parking full Senior Management Team
All Library Staff Development Day

Partners - 239

Anti Racist Partnerships Day
SEND local partnership board
SENCO Induction - Ed Chiltern
Temporary accommodation action group meeting

Main gaps

Unfortunately we do not hold the numbers for all of the focus groups and do not hold demographic information from the show and tells (see below) and staff meetings. We have been clear in the Anti-racism action plan that it is important to be specific about different communities when working with residents and in decision making and service design. However the ethnicity data collected as part of the online consultation was in broad categories so it is difficult to identify gaps. The monitoring information from the focus groups is much more detailed but it is difficult to draw conclusions from small numbers.

The focus groups targeted groups who the Council does not always hear from, such as disabled people, people with insecure immigration status and LGBTQIA+ staff and residents

However the data suggests that the main gaps are Turkish and Kurdish communities, as well as Asian and South East Asia communities. Young people under 20 and people who are Trans or have a Trans history.

Conclusions

Online consultation

The online consultation was designed to sense check if we have got the objectives right and if we are explaining them in an accessible and relevant way.

Synthesis of online and engagement responses

The resident engagement was designed to gather new insight about what is driving inequality, understand what is working and is valued, develop specific thematic areas of work, develop richer deeper links into communities with insights, actions and ideas to share, develop ideas for how we involve partners and residents in working with us to help us tackle inequality and provide critical challenge and accountability.

We have reviewed and analysed all the qualitative responses and identified key themes and issues.

This is a summary of the key changes that have been made to the Equality Objectives and outline priorities. We will, however, be returning to the rich analysis and insight as we develop the full action plan.

Overall

From the online consultation, we can conclude that the objectives overall are supported for the Equality Plan. Support was strongest for the first objective.

There was also support for the objectives in the Anti-Racism Framework with 74% agreeing that the objectives would help tackle inequality. There were more mixed views on the LGBTQIA Framework with 58% agreeing and 28% disagreeing. Some of the reasons for this are provided in the open text responses and this needs to be explored further as we take forward the work on this framework. This needs to be explored further, but we also need to acknowledge that the [LGBTQIA population](#) in Hackney is around 9% of the population. The general population is less likely to understand the benefits of a LGBTQIA framework.

From the online consultation, there were more negative views on whether the activities would help achieve the objectives. This could be because we did not share the full range of activities and priorities and this will have affected views. From the Consultation and Engagement, **it also was clear that residents wanted to see the detailed actions below this high level plan.** We have added more detail on priority activities to the Equality Plan. We will bring a full action plan back to Cabinet which draws on all the rich data and insight gathered.

We were asked to show how we were building on previous learning and work. The outline plan sets out how the objectives will build on existing work and also provides a summary of progress made through the last Single Equality Scheme (an update was published as part of the Corporate Plan Update in February 2022). We will also look at

sharing progress in an equality hub, similar to the anti-racism hub published in 2022.

We were asked to **reference the difficult financial context that the Council is in**, and have added a section to the Equality Plan on this and the implications for the plan.

Residents have told us that we need to be open and self-critical about past shortcomings and set out measures to avoid repeating these patterns of failure. They want to see the involvement of residents and community partners, including the voluntary and community sector, in holding the Council to account, as well as frontline workers. There are existing examples of working with the community that the Council leads or has helped shape that could be learned from. There need to be anonymous feedback loops for both residents and staff to share their experiences about equality in Hackney. There is a call for brave and courageous leadership that is able to listen and be more creative and open in order to move further forward. The Council will use this feedback to establish final governance arrangements which will involve resident feedback, challenge and contribution.

Not all residents were in support of taking anti-racism action or LGBTQIA equality. There were very divergent views on trans rights. We need to recognise these views and engage with residents about the reasons we are taking action, in line with needs and legal duties, in line with the Equality Duty and Strategic Plan.

The equality data from the engagement sessions suggests that the main gaps are Turkish and Kurdish communities, as well as Asian and South East Asia communities. Young people under 20 and people who are Trans or have a Trans history. We will look at how we can improve engagement with these groups through taking forward the work of the Equality Plan.

Objective 1

We received feedback was that this objective was too soft and reactive. We have used bolder and more positive language.

The majority of respondents to the online survey (just under 77%) agreed that the objective will help us tackle inequality. 8% of respondents disagreed.

There were suggestions about more of a focus on early intervention and root causes and emotional wellbeing for children, noting the impact of the pandemic. We have strengthened the objective and added more detail under priorities.

Objective 2

Prosperity as a concept jarred. We have amended the second objective to talk about opportunity and wellbeing.

There were strong views that there needed to be more of a focus on how Hackney and the Council could be more inclusive and accessible. We have strengthen commitments to digital inclusion, shaping and accessible borough and inclusive communication under

this objective and objective 4.

The feedback was that the objective needed to be strengthened to cover more fully health inequalities and wellbeing. We have done this, and added more detail under priorities.

The majority of respondents to the online survey (just under 74%) agreed that the objective will help us tackle inequality. 10% of respondents disagreed.

Objective 3

There were strong views that we needed to celebrate and stand up for communities who are seen as a “problem” in society. We were urged to see community tensions and strengthen efforts to build good relations. We have strengthened the focus on this and been specific about the groups we need to stand up for- trans people, refugees and migrants, children with SEND. We have included a priority to undertake a review of cohesion and how communities get on with each other.

The majority of respondents to the online survey (just over 71%) agreed that the objective will help us tackle inequality. 14% of respondents disagreed.

Feedback called for more effort to see intersectionality and diversity in communities and not see communities as homogenous or generalise what residents from a community might want. This included Muslim communities, the Turkish Kurdish community and Charedi community. We have strengthened commitments to improving engagement under both this objective, and in the guidance we provide under objective 4.

Objective 4

There was wide support for the existing focus on institutional change and on the need for the Council to serve residents better. In order to strengthen the emphasis on this, we have split this objective in two:

- Embed equality into service plans and practice across the council and the borough
- Change as an institution to ensure internal and systemic change

There was a strong ask for us to be trauma informed and to find ways to collaborate with communities in an ongoing way. We have added more detail on this being a priority under the new objective which is about embedding equality.

The majority of respondents to the online survey (just over 72%) agreed that the objective will help us tackle inequality. 14% of respondents disagreed.

Groups missing

From the synthesis of the online consultation and consultation and engagement insight, we have identified the need for more of a focus on groups who were in **precarious**

housing situations and temporary accommodation, more comprehensive work looking at disability equality and carers, including children with special educational needs and neurodiversity. We also needed to look at gender and sex based inequality and discrimination. We have either strengthened explanations of what we are already doing or added these new priorities in the high level Equality Plan.

The new plan also focuses on those who are vulnerable because of life experiences. This is so we ensure we are considering need through different lens when we undertake service planning and delivery and engage with residents. **During consultation and engagement, we heard compelling reasons to include other groups.** The groups added are indicated in bold in the table below- teen parents. Those who fall below statutory thresholds, people in insecure private rented accommodation, at risk of homelessness or living in precarious conditions (eg sofa surfing) and people in temporary accommodation, domestic abuse victims and survivors and people with an offending history. Other groups such as young black men and carers were also suggested- but these groups are already covered by protected characteristics. Carers are a protected group, associated with disability.

This is the final list, but is not intended to be an exhaustive list:

- Looked after children, care experienced people and care leavers
- Single parents **and teen parents**
- People with insecure immigration status
- Ex Armed Forces
- People with multiple interconnected challenges (“complex needs”) including **those who fall below statutory thresholds**
- People experiencing perimenopause and menopause
- People in **insecure private rented accommodation, at risk of homelessness or living in precarious conditions (eg sofa surfing) and people in temporary accommodation**
- **Domestic abuse victims and survivors**
- **People with an offending history**

