Local Government Reorganisation

SURVEY RESPONSE REPORT

02 July 2025 - 31 August 2025

PROJECT NAME:
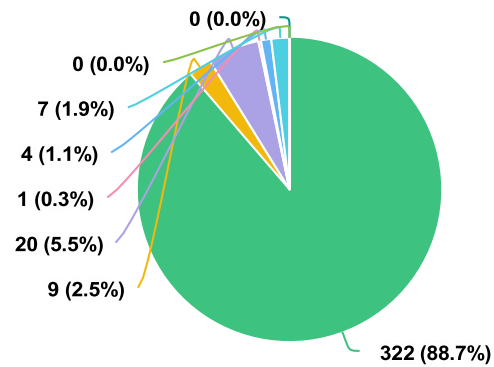**Local Government Reorganisation**

GRANICUS

The responses for the following questions have been removed:

- Q1 – Name
- Q2 – Contact email
- Q5 – Where do you consider your local area?
- Q6 – What is your home postcode?

Navigation

Q3	Are you answering as a

3

0 (0.0%)

0 (0.0%)

7 (1.9%)

4 (1.1%)

1 (0.3%)

20 (5.5%)

9 (2.5%)

322 (88.7%)

Question options

- ● Resident
- ● Business
- ● Councillor (this includes County, District or Parish/Town)
- ● Student
- ● Voluntary or community sector organisation
- ● Other (please specify)
- ● Member of Parliament
- ● On behalf of an organisation

Mandatory Question (363 response(s))
Question type: Radio Button Question

Q4	What is your connection to Mid Devon (select all that apply)
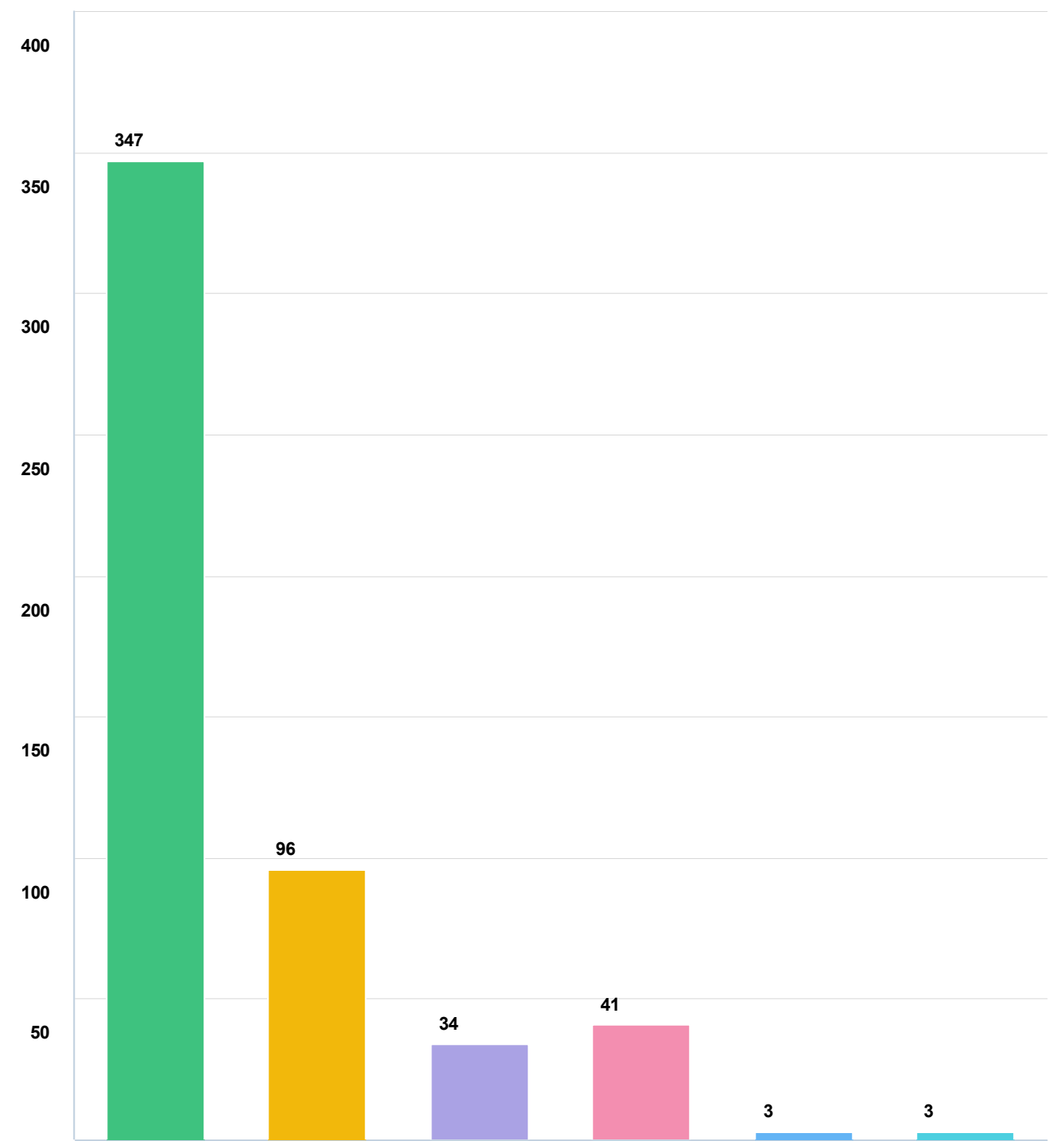
Question options

● I live here ● I work here ● I run a business here ● I represent a community organisation here ● I study here

● Other (please specify)

Mandatory Question (363 response(s))
Question type: Checkbox Question

4

Q7 | **Where is your work or education based?**

- Retired = 79
- Rural / Other = 67
- Tiverton = 57
- Exeter = 56
- Cullompton = 16
- Crediton 14
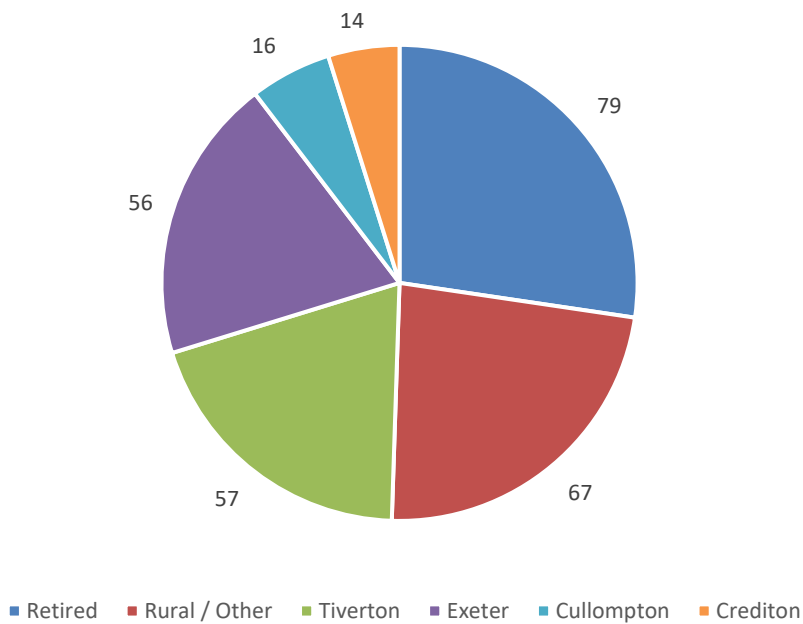
Q8	**Where do you do most of your shopping?**

- Tiverton = 133
- Crediton = 78
- Exeter = 62
- Cullompton = 54
- Online = 43
- Taunton / Wellington = 37
- Other / Rural = 25
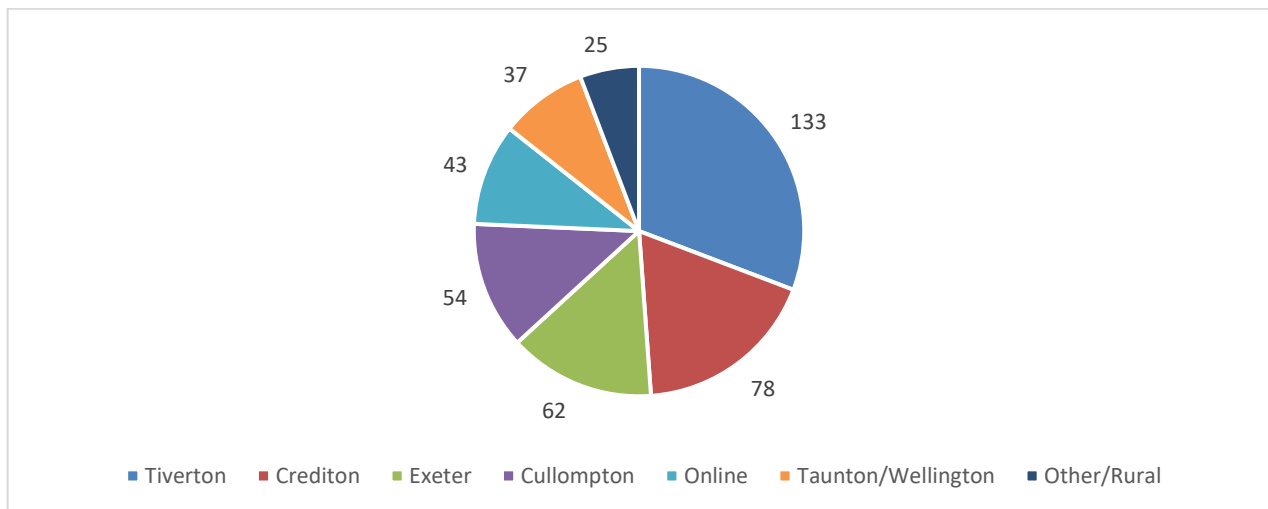
Q9 **Where do you spend most time socialising or taking part in cultural activities? (Please specify locations)**

- Exeter = 115
- Tiverton = 111
- Rural Mid Devon = 86
- Crediton = 61
- Cullompton = 36
- Outside Mid Devon (excluding Exeter & Taunton/Wellington) = 35
- Taunton/Wellington = 29
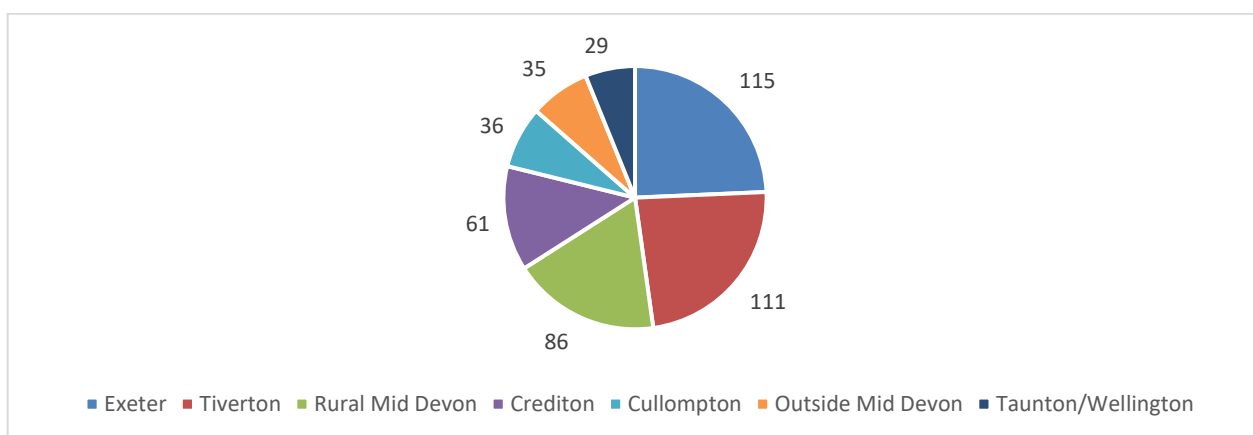
Community/Village Halls = 15
Walking/Outdoors = 13
Pubs/Restaurants/Cafes = 12
Theatre/Cinema = 10
Shopping/Leisure = 9
Sports Clubs = 8
Church/Religious = 6
Choir/Music = 3
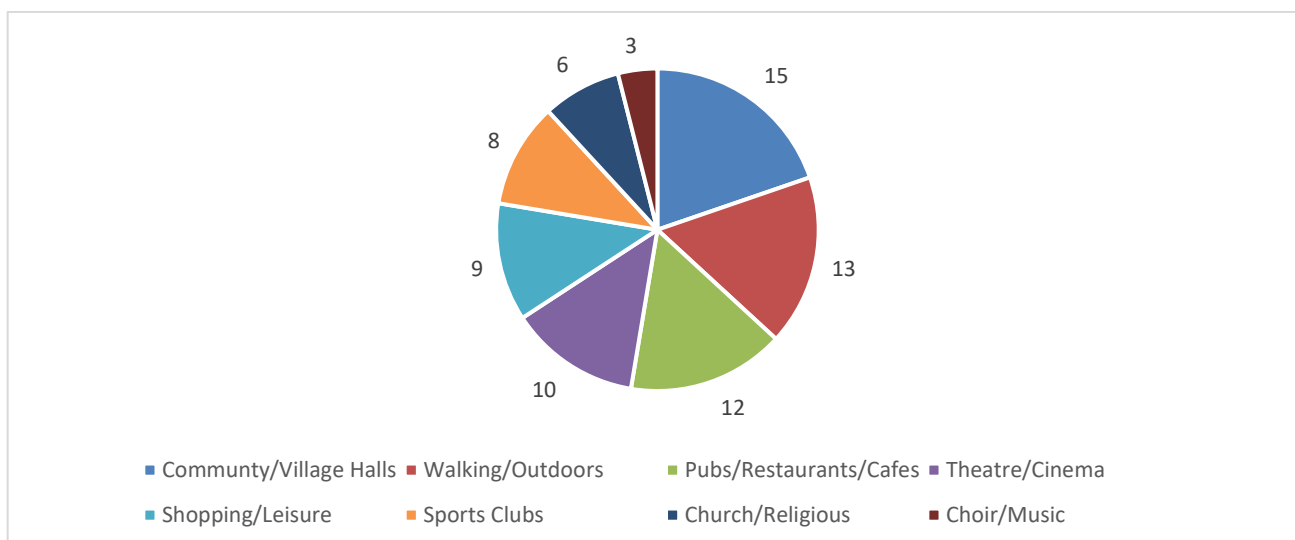
Q10	What do you like about the area where you live, work, study or represent in Mid Devon?

1. **Natural Beauty and Rural Environment:** Many respondents value the picturesque countryside, green spaces, and rural tranquillity. The area's proximity to coastlines, moors, and outdoor recreational spaces is frequently mentioned.

2. **Community Spirit:** A strong sense of community, friendliness, and social cohesion is widely appreciated. Respondents note the welcoming atmosphere and the kindness of neighbours.

3. **Accessibility:** The area's accessibility to larger towns and cities like Exeter and Taunton, as well as good transport links (e.g., M5 motorway and Tiverton Parkway railway station), is seen as a positive.

4. **Local Amenities:** Respondents appreciate the availability of essential services such as schools, leisure centres, libraries, and local shops. Specific mentions include Tiverton's Grand Western Canal, parks, and cultural facilities like cinemas and theatres.

5. **Safety and Low Crime Rates:** Many respondents feel safe in their communities, citing reduced crime and a peaceful environment.

6. **Slower Pace of Life:** The relaxed and laid-back lifestyle in Mid Devon is a key attraction for many, offering a break from the hustle of city living.

7. **Local Produce and Businesses:** The availability of local produce, independent shops, and community-focused businesses is valued.

8. **Environmental Efforts:** Some respondents appreciate efforts to preserve nature, such as leaving areas unmown for wildlife and maintaining clean public spaces.

9. **Cultural and Historical Significance:** The area's rich history and cultural activities, including annual events and heritage sites, are appreciated.

10. **Connectivity to Nature:** Easy access to walking trails, canals, and outdoor activities is frequently mentioned.

Q11	What would you like to be improved in this area?

1. **Roads and Infrastructure:** Many respondents express frustration with the poor condition of roads, potholes, and inadequate drainage. Improved road maintenance and traffic management are frequently requested.

2. **Public Transport:** A lack of reliable and frequent bus services, especially in rural areas, is a major concern. Respondents call for better connectivity to towns, villages, and railway stations.

3. **Town Centres and High Streets:** Revitalizing town centres by reducing empty shops, encouraging independent businesses, and improving aesthetics is a priority. Respondents also suggest cheaper parking to attract visitors.

4. **Healthcare and Dental Services:** Access to doctors, dentists, and mental health services is seen as insufficient, especially with population growth. Respondents call for more NHS facilities and quicker appointment availability.

5. **Housing and Development:** Concerns are raised about excessive housing developments without corresponding infrastructure improvements (e.g., schools, healthcare, and transport). Respondents emphasize the need for affordable housing for locals.

6. **Youth Services and Facilities:** A lack of activities, youth clubs, and post-16 education opportunities is highlighted. Respondents want more spaces and programs for teenagers and young adults.

7. **Environmental and Green Spaces:** Calls for better care of rivers, wildlife-friendly farming, and preservation of green spaces are common. Respondents also suggest more tree planting and sustainable development practices.

8. **Community Safety and Policing:** Increased police presence to address antisocial behaviour, vandalism, and drug-related issues is requested.

9. **Education:** Respondents want improved schools, better facilities, and more post-16 education options, including sixth forms.

10. **Cycling and Walking Routes:** More footpaths, cycle paths, and safer walking routes are desired to connect villages and towns.

11. **Local Economy and Employment:** Respondents suggest creating more job opportunities, supporting local businesses, and reducing business rates to encourage growth.

12. **Waste Management:** Improved recycling services and better waste collection are mentioned.

Q12	What are your hopes and dreams for your local area?

1. **Preservation of Rural Character:** Many respondents hope to maintain the area's natural beauty, green spaces, and rural charm, avoiding overdevelopment and protecting farmland and wildlife.

2. **Improved Infrastructure:** Respondents dream of better roads, public transport, and connectivity, including bypasses, railway stations, and cycle paths. Enhanced infrastructure is seen as vital to support growth.

3. **Vibrant Town Centres:** Revitalizing town centres with thriving high streets, independent shops, cultural venues, and community spaces is a common aspiration.

4. **Affordable Housing:** There is a strong desire for truly affordable housing for locals, including council housing and starter homes, to support young families and prevent displacement.

5. **Enhanced Community Spirit:** Respondents hope to strengthen the sense of community, with more local events, youth clubs, and spaces for social interaction.

6. **Better Education and Opportunities for Youth:** Improved schools, post-16 education options, and activities for young people are seen as essential to retain and support the next generation.

7. **Environmental Sustainability:** Many dream of a greener future, with clean rivers, renewable energy initiatives, and sustainable farming practices.

8. **Economic Growth and Local Jobs:** Respondents hope for more local employment opportunities, support for small businesses, and a thriving economy that benefits the community.

9. **Safety and Wellbeing:** A safe, clean, and peaceful environment with low crime rates and accessible healthcare is a key aspiration.

10. **Balanced Development:** Respondents want growth to be carefully managed, ensuring infrastructure and services keep pace with new housing developments.

11. **Local Decision-Making:** There is a desire for decisions to remain local, with councils that understand and prioritize the needs of Mid Devon communities.

Q13	What are the biggest challenges in your local area?

1. **Roads and Infrastructure:** Poor road conditions, potholes, inadequate drainage, and lack of maintenance are significant concerns. Traffic congestion and speeding vehicles also pose challenges.

2. **Public Transport:** Limited and unreliable bus services, especially in rural areas, make commuting difficult. Respondents emphasize the need for better connectivity to towns, villages, and railway stations.

3. **Housing and Development:** Overdevelopment, particularly on greenfield sites, is a major issue. Respondents worry about insufficient infrastructure (schools, healthcare, transport) to support new housing developments. Affordable housing for locals is also lacking.

4. **Healthcare and Services:** Access to doctors, dentists, and mental health services is inadequate, especially with population growth. Respondents highlight long waiting times and limited facilities.

5. **Youth Services and Opportunities:** A lack of activities, youth clubs, and post-16 education options leaves young people with few opportunities, contributing to antisocial behaviour and disengagement.

6. **Economic Challenges:** Respondents note limited local employment opportunities, especially for young people, and the closure of small businesses. High rents and business rates further strain the local economy.

7. **Environmental Concerns:** Pollution, poor water quality, and loss of green spaces due to development are significant challenges. Respondents also highlight the need for sustainable farming and better waste management.

8. **Community Safety:** Antisocial behaviour, vandalism, drug-related issues, and rural crime are persistent problems. Respondents call for increased police presence and community safety measures.

9. **Social Isolation:** Rural areas face challenges with social isolation, especially for older residents, due to limited transport and services.

10. **Education:** Poor secondary education facilities, lack of sixth forms, and inadequate support for special educational needs are highlighted.

11. **Planning and Governance:** Respondents criticize poor planning decisions, lack of local representation, and insufficient funding for rural areas.

Q14	How would you like to be involved in future local decision making?

110 (30.9%)

113 (31.7%)

87 (24.4%)

46 (12.9%)
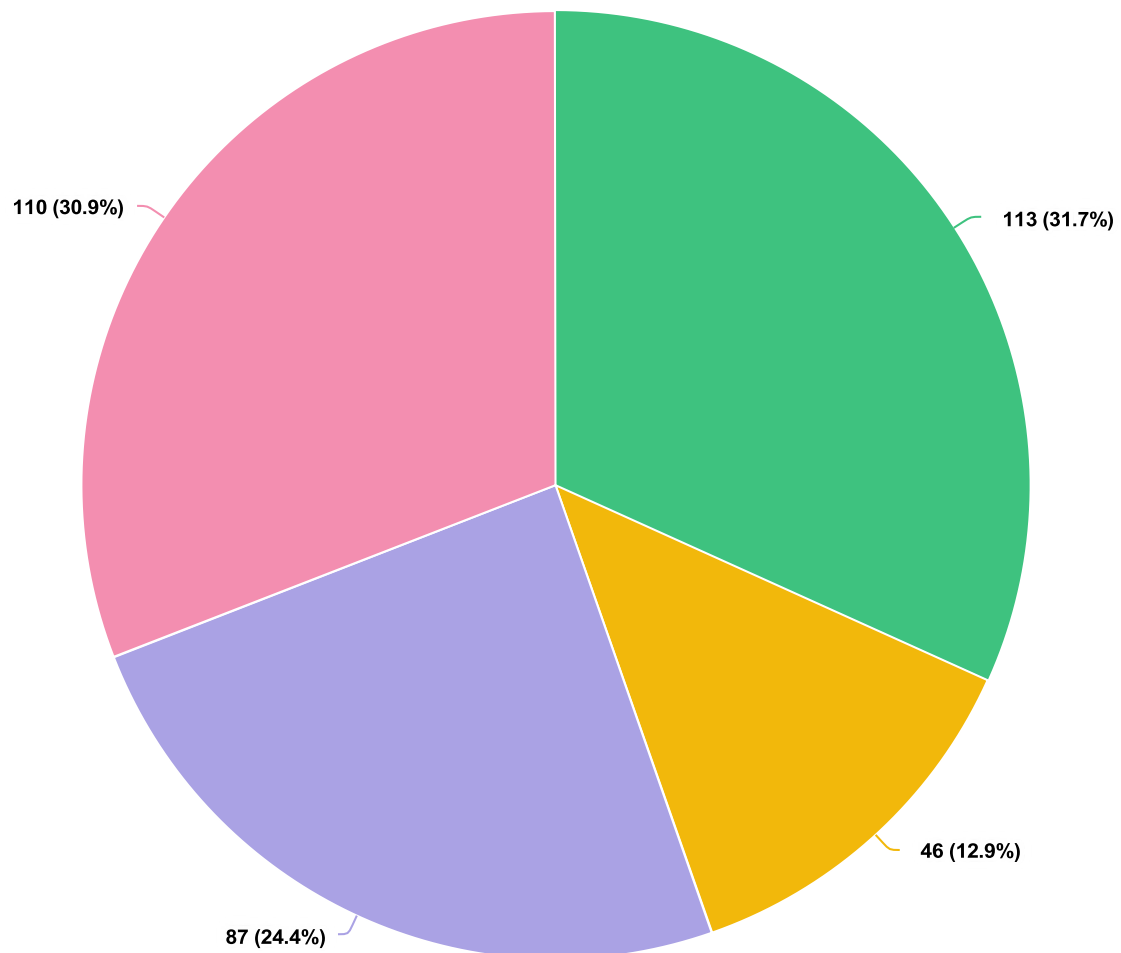
Question options

- 🟢 Through my Town or Parish Council
- 🟡 Through existing community groups and/or organisations
- 🟣 Involvement in focus groups and consultations run by the Council
- 🩷 I want to be kept informed by the Council but don't want to get involved

Optional question (356 response(s), 7 skipped)
Question type: Radio Button Question

Q15 | **What is your age?**

15 (4.1%)

1 (0.3%)

1 (0.3%)

3 (0.8%)

4 (1.1%)

45 (12.4%)

57 (15.7%)

122 (33.7%)

114 (31.5%)
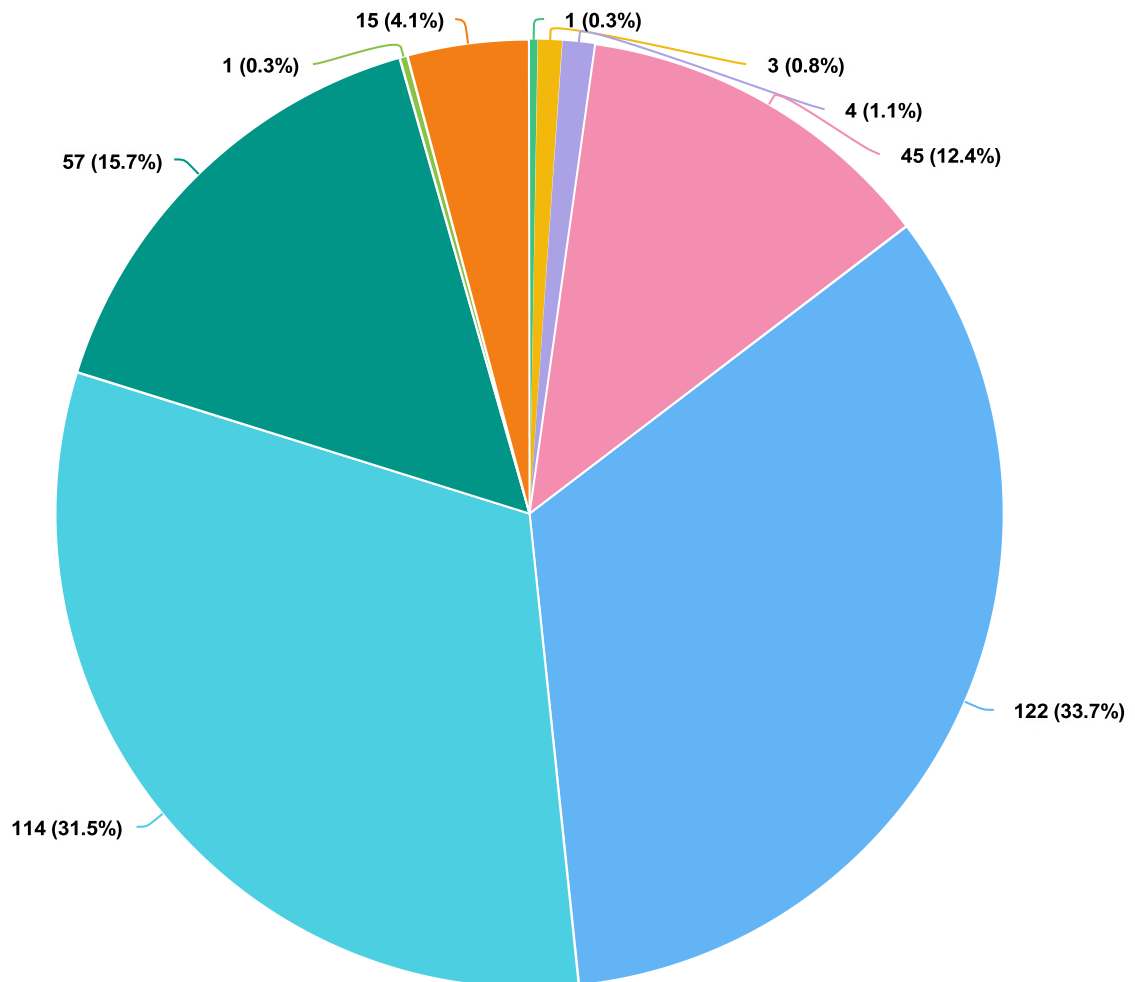
Question options

● 19 and under ● 20 to 24 ● 25 to 34 ● 35 to 49 ● 50 to 64 ● 65 to 74 ● 75 to 84 ● 85 and over
● Prefer not to say

Optional question (362 response(s), 1 skipped)
Question type: Radio Button Question

Q16 │ **Do you consider yourself to have a disability (according to the Equality Act 2010)?**
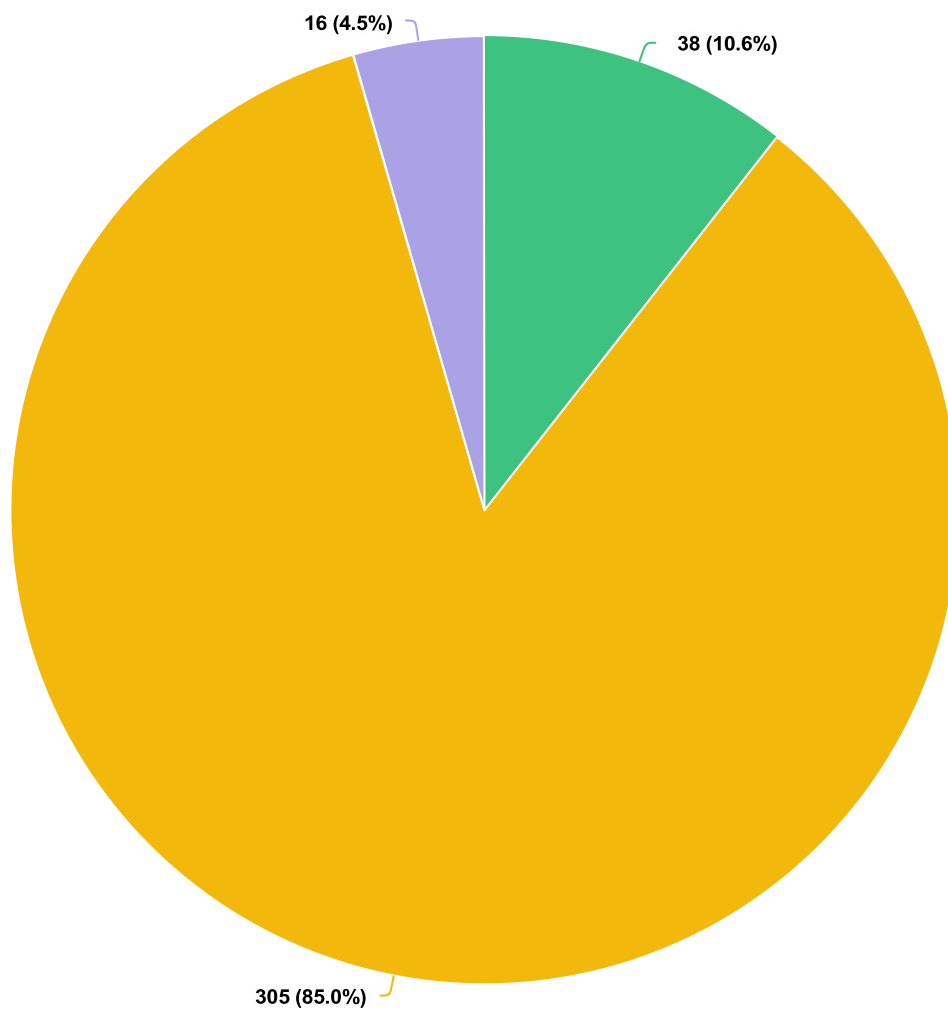
16 (4.5%)

38 (10.6%)

305 (85.0%)

Question options

● Yes   ● No   ● Prefer not to say

Optional question (359 response(s), 4 skipped)
Question type: Radio Button Question

Q17 | **How would you describe your ethnicity?**

25 (7.0%)

2 (0.6%)

1 (0.3%)

3 (0.8%)

3 (0.8%)

325 (90.5%)

Question options

🟢 Asian, Asian British, or Asian Welsh 🟡 Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean, or African

🟣 Mixed or multiple ethnic groups 🔴 Other ethnic group 🔵 White 🔵 Prefer not to say

Optional question (359 response(s), 4 skipped)
Question type: Radio Button Question

Q18 | **What is your religion or belief?**
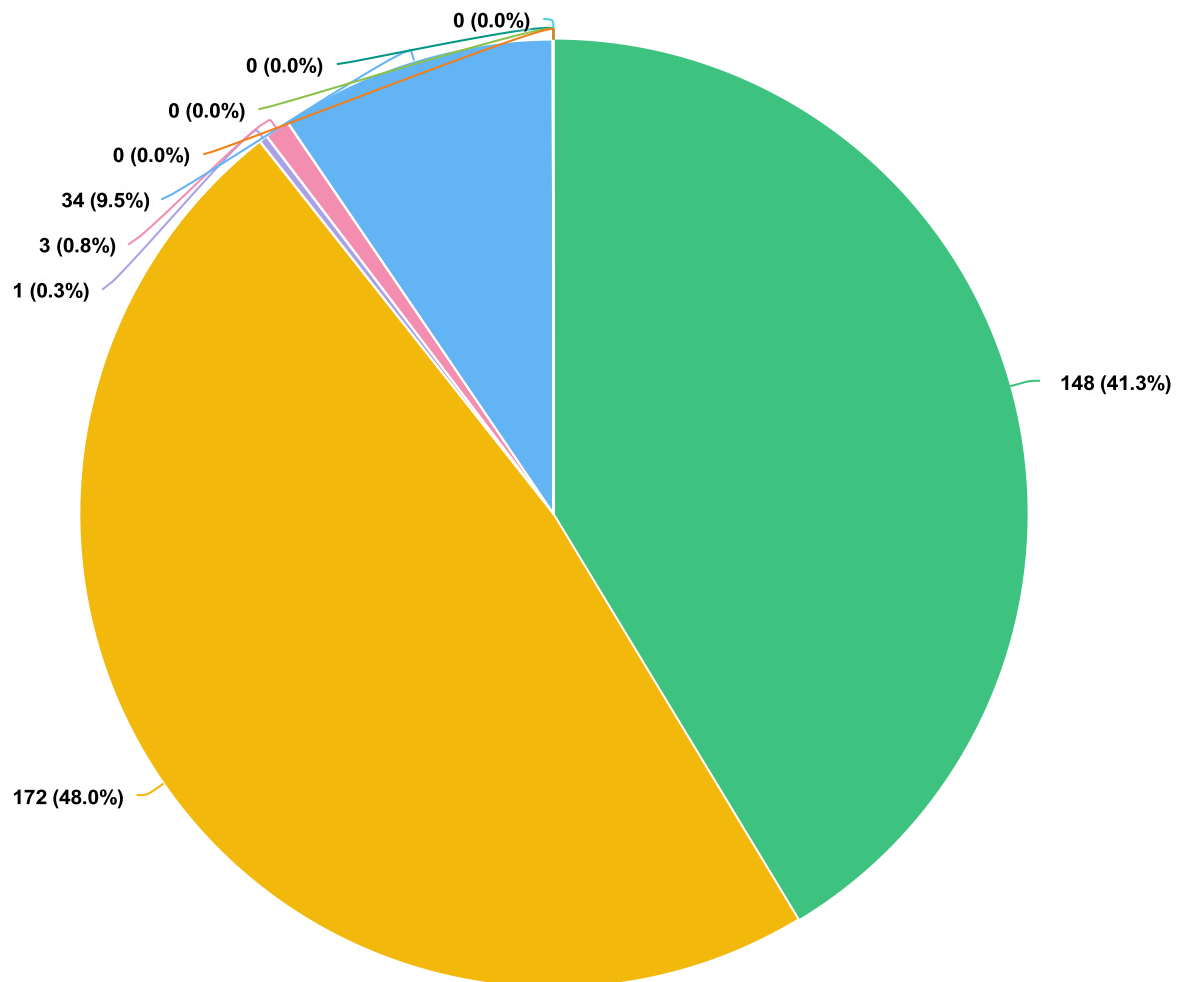
Question options

- No religion
- Christian
- Jewish
- Other religion
- Prefer not to say
- Buddhist
- Hindu
- Muslim
- Sikh

Optional question (358 response(s), 5 skipped)
Question type: Radio Button Question

Q19 | Sex

13 (3.6%)

1 (0.3%)

175 (48.7%)

170 (47.4%)
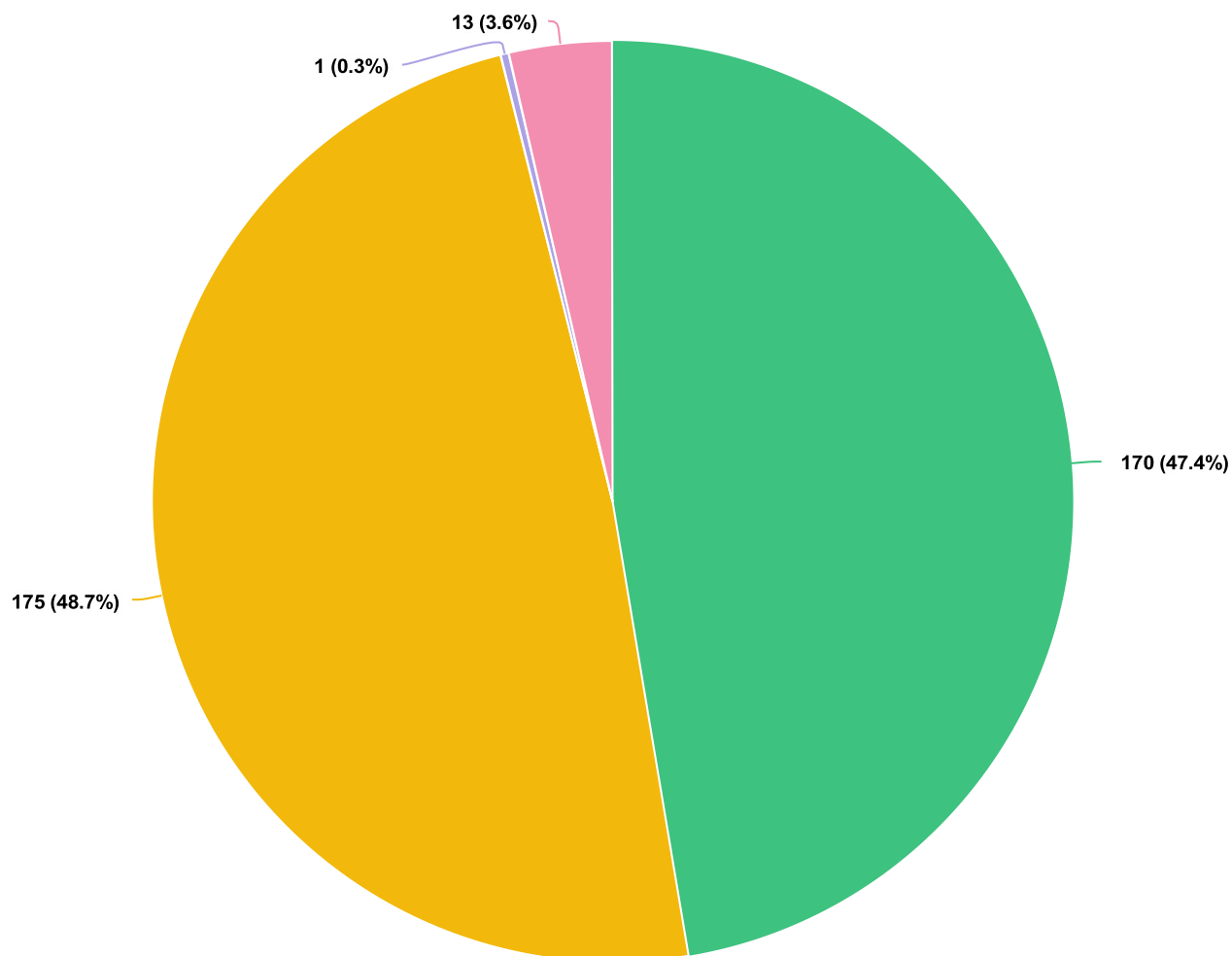
Question options

● Female ● Male ● Other ● Prefer not to say

Optional question (359 response(s), 4 skipped)
Question type: Radio Button Question

Q20 | **Please confirm if this is the same as registered at birth**
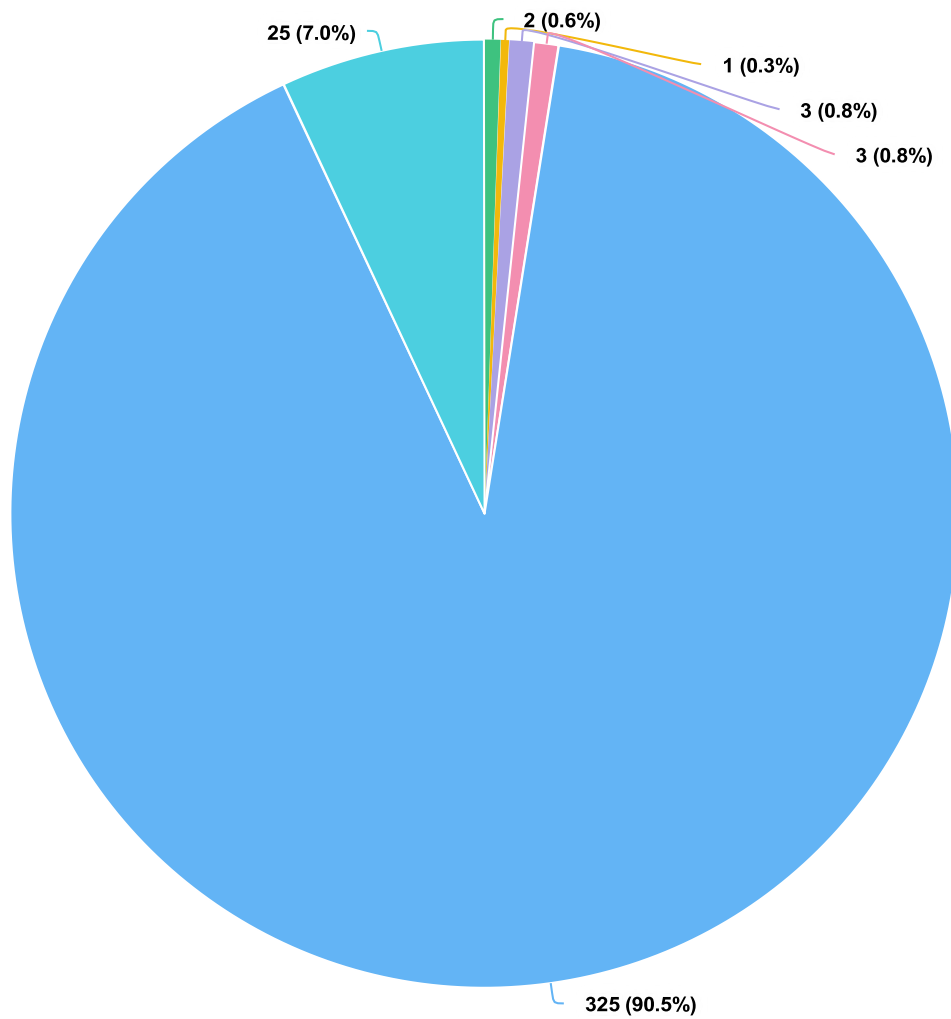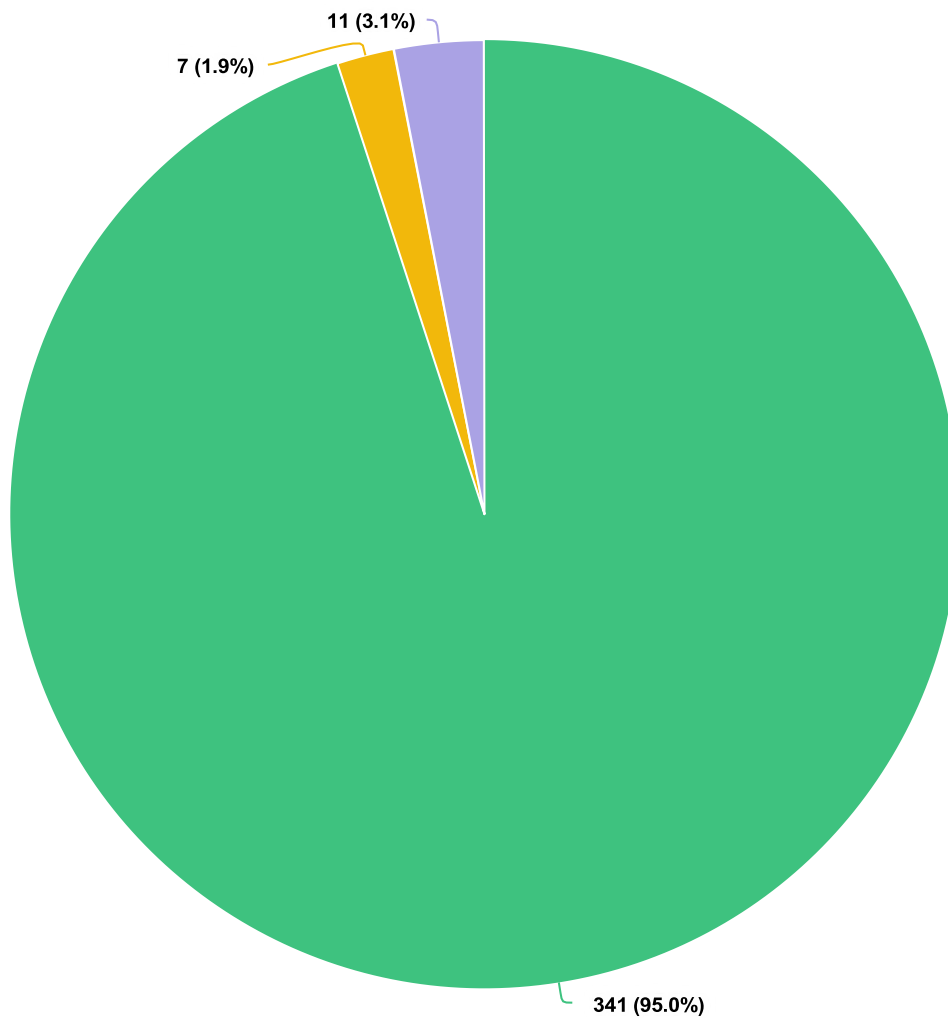
11 (3.1%)

7 (1.9%)

341 (95.0%)

Question options

● Yes ● No ● Prefer not to say

Optional question (359 response(s), 4 skipped)
Question type: Radio Button Question

Q21 | Sexual orientation

Question options

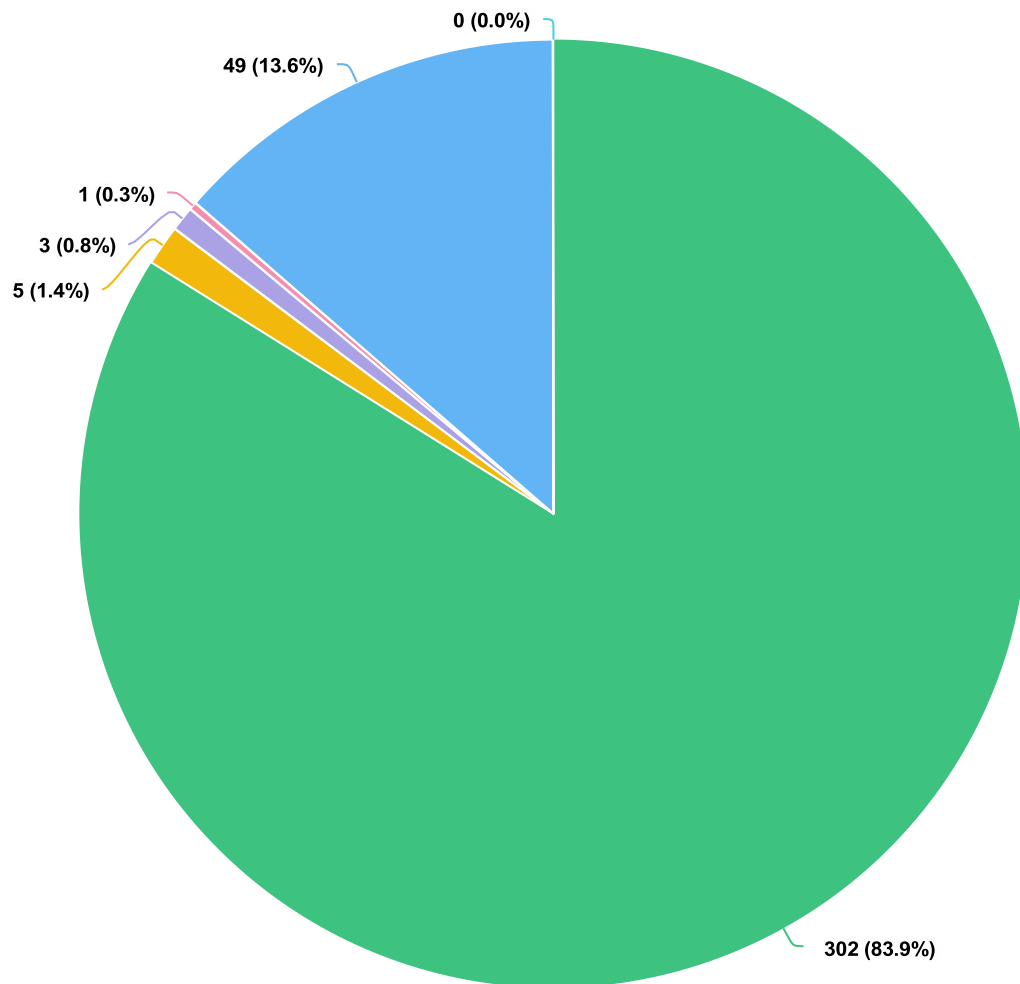- 🟢 Straight or Heterosexual
- 🟡 Gay or Lesbian
- 🟣 Bisexual
- 🔴 Pansexual
- 🔵 Prefer not to say
- 🔵 Other sexual orientation

Optional question (360 response(s), 3 skipped)
Question type: Radio Button Question

Q22 **How do you hope that Local Government Reorganisation will impact you and/or your community? (Please rank in order of importance with 1 being the most important)**

OPTIONS	AVG. RANK
Good understanding of the issues facing your local area	3.45
Improved services	4.42
Clear, open and honest decision making	4.46
Decisions that impact you will be made locally	4.81
Efficient services which offer value for money	4.95
Easy access to the council services you need	4.98
Supportive and accessible local Councillor for my area	5.51
Clarity around who is responsible for delivery of services	6.06
Council offices open to the public are located nearby	7.64
Council decisions are made in easy travelling distance from my area	8.06

Optional question (357 response(s), 6 skipped)
Question type: Ranking Question

Q23 **What should be the top priorities when shaping the future model of local government for Devon? (Please rank in order of importance with 1 being the most important)**

| OPTIONS	AVG. RANK
Keeping children safe from harm	5.99
Care and support for older people and vulnerable adults	6.04
Safe and well-maintained roads, pavements, lights, parking and cycle paths	6.21
Education services, including school admissions and transport, and support for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities	6.29
Recycling, rubbish collection and waste disposal	6.49
Protecting the environment and keeping it clean	7.26
Local facilities like libraries, public toilets and sports centres	7.32
Local places like parks, open spaces and clean beaches	7.66
Supporting the local economy and creating job opportunities	8.15
Availability of truly affordable, warm and secure housing	8.84
Building related services such as planning applications, planning enforcement, building control, protecting old buildings	9.27
Community safety and standards, such as trading standards, food safety, licensing, noise and air quality	10.31
Supporting and empowering local groups to improve their communities	10.98
Helping people stay healthy, including support for drugs, alcohol and health checks	11.12
Support with housing needs, council tax and benefits	11.30
Working to mitigate the consequences of climate change	11.35

Optional question (356 response(s), 7 skipped)
Question type: Ranking Question

Q24	Do you have any further comments?

1. **Criticism of the Survey Design:** Many respondents found the ranking system difficult, restrictive, and poorly designed, particularly for questions with numerous options. They felt it did not allow for nuanced or meaningful responses.

2. **Concerns About Local Government Reorganisation (LGR):** Some respondents expressed scepticism or opposition to LGR, fearing it would lead to a loss of local identity, reduced accountability, and prioritization of urban areas like Exeter over rural communities.

3. **Desire for Local Decision-Making:** Respondents emphasized the importance of keeping decisions local, ensuring councils understand and address the specific needs of Mid Devon communities.

4. **Frustration with Current Governance:** There were criticisms of Mid Devon District Council's financial management, planning decisions, and perceived focus on Tiverton at the expense of other areas like Crediton and Cullompton.

5. **Calls for Balanced Prioritisation:** Many respondents felt the survey forced them to rank equally important issues, making it hard to reflect their true priorities. They suggested alternative formats, such as rating items on a scale.

6. **Focus on Key Issues:** Respondents reiterated concerns about infrastructure, affordable housing, public transport, environmental protection, and support for vulnerable groups. They called for better planning and investment in these areas.

7. **Scepticism About Impact:** Some respondents doubted whether their input would influence decisions, viewing the survey as a "tick-box exercise."

8. **Suggestions for Improvement:** Respondents proposed clearer communication, better consultation processes, and more transparency in decision-making.

Q25 | **How happy are you with the amount of information that we provided to help you answer the questions?**
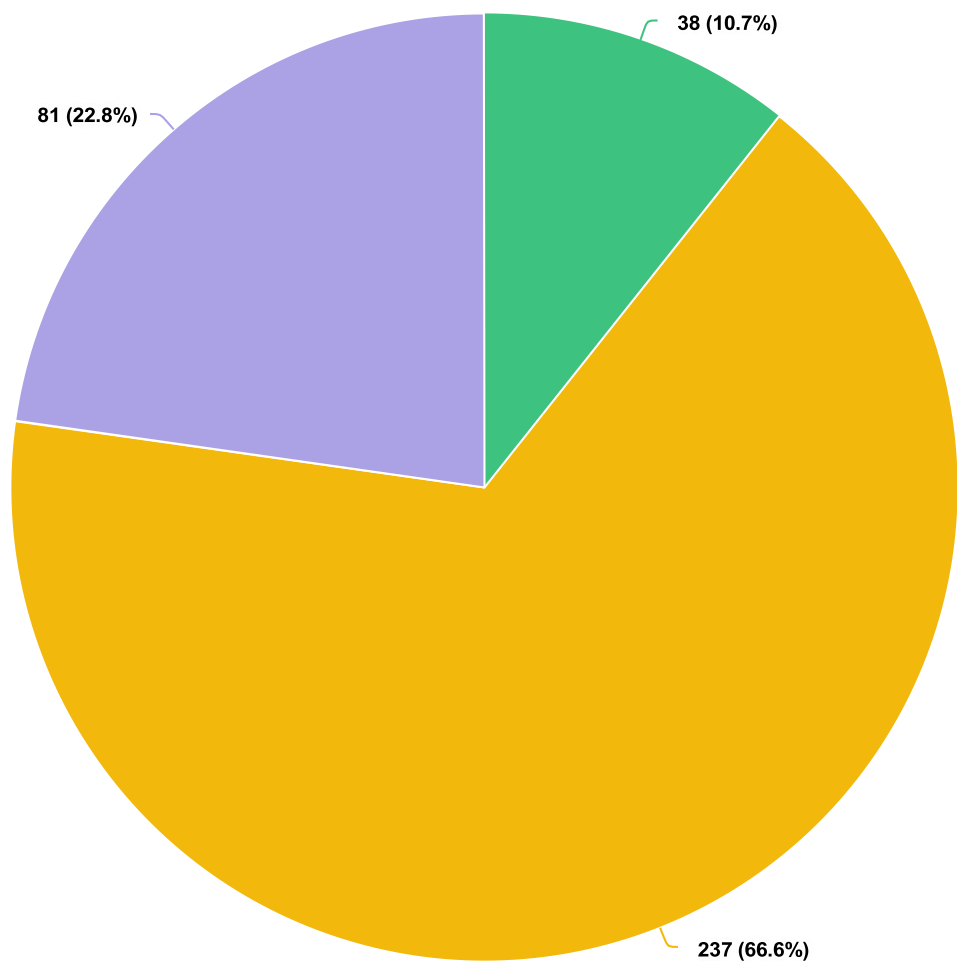
38 (10.7%)

81 (22.8%)

237 (66.6%)

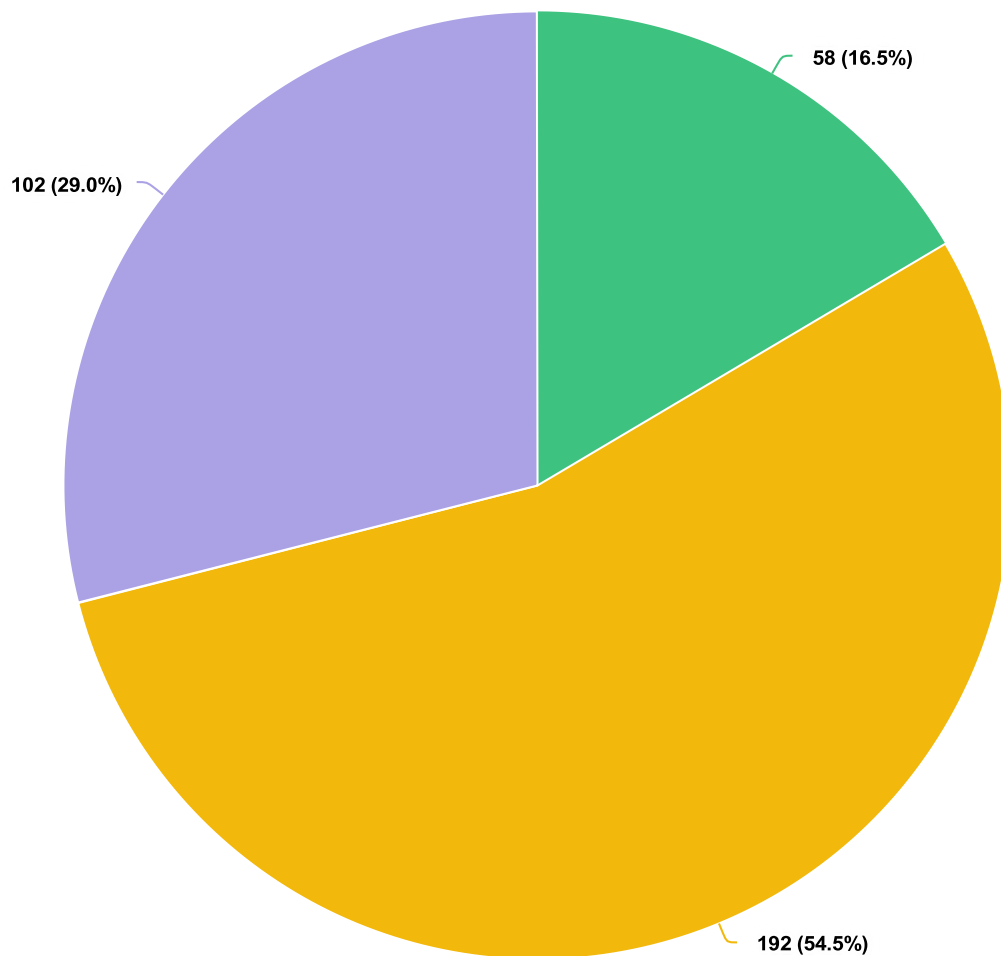**Question options**

● Unhappy ● Neutral ● Happy

Optional question (356 response(s), 7 skipped)
Question type: Emoji Question

23

Q26	If unhappy, please give further details of what was missing

1. **Ranking Process:** Many respondents found the ranking process challenging, clunky, and time-consuming. They noted difficulties in reviewing and changing rankings, especially on mobile devices.

2. **Too Many Options:** The number of options to rank was overwhelming, making it hard to prioritise effectively. Some felt that the options were too diverse to compare meaningfully.

3. **Lack of Context:** Respondents felt there was insufficient context or explanation about the current performance of services, the implications of their rankings, or the purpose of the survey.

4. **Survey Design Issues:** The dropdown format for ranking was frustrating, and some suggested alternative methods like typing numbers or using a drag-and-drop interface.

5. **Accessibility Concerns:** The survey was difficult to navigate on mobile devices, and some respondents noted that it was not user-friendly for older adults or non-English speakers.

6. **Bias and Ambiguity:** Some felt the survey was leading or designed to achieve specific outcomes, with limited scope for nuanced or equal prioritisation of issues.

7. **General Dissatisfaction:** Several respondents expressed scepticism about the survey's effectiveness in influencing decision-making or reflecting their true views.

Q27 | **How happy are you that the questions allowed you to give your views?**

58 (16.5%)

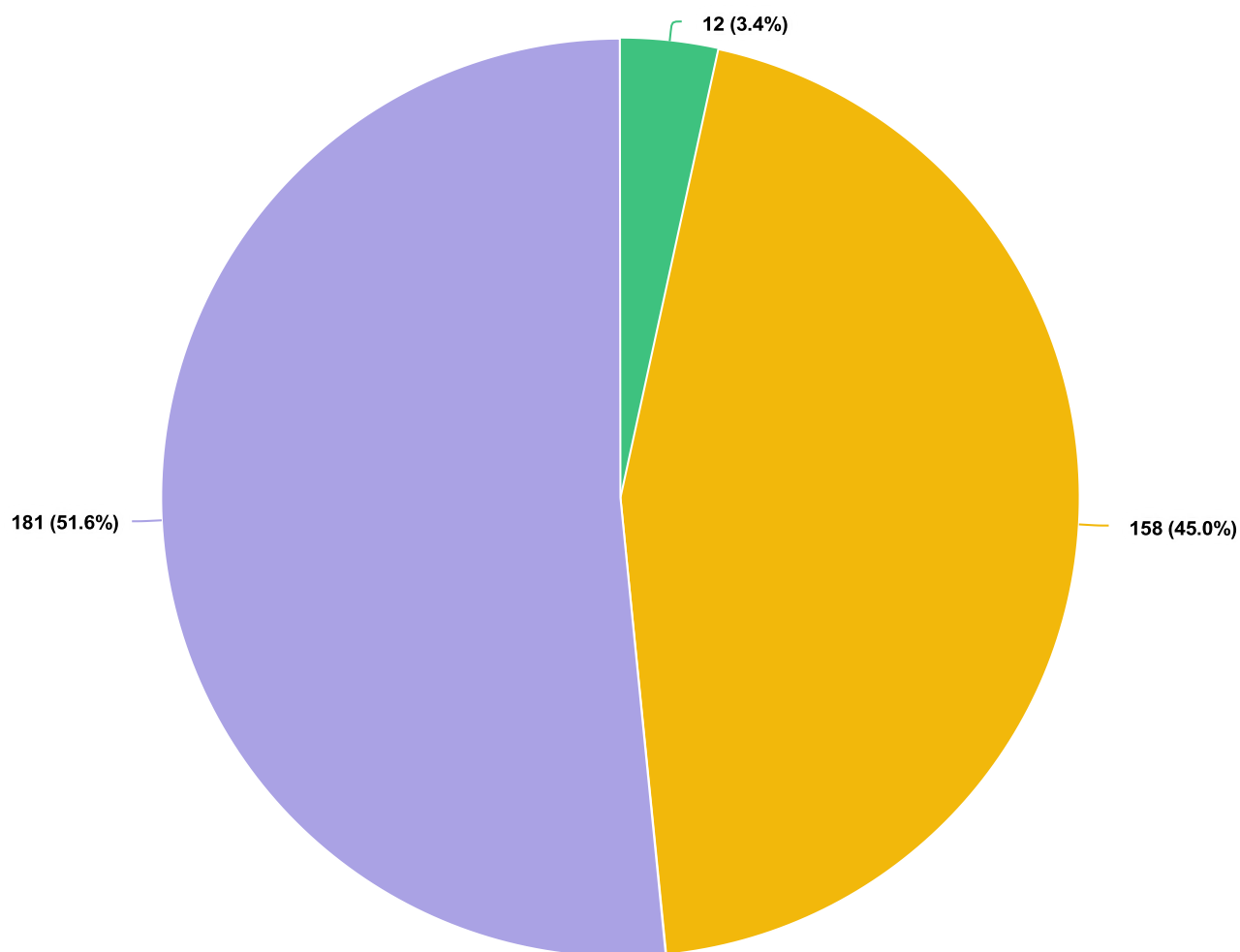102 (29.0%)

192 (54.5%)

Question options

● Unhappy ● Neutral ● Happy

Optional question (352 response(s), 11 skipped)
Question type: Emoji Question

25

Q28	If unhappy, please provide further details

1. **Ranking Issues:** Many respondents found the ranking system problematic, as it forced them to prioritise issues that they felt were equally important. They felt this approach compromised their true opinions.

2. **Overwhelming Options:** The large number of options to rank made it difficult to provide thoughtful and accurate responses. Some suggested that fewer options or grouping priorities into categories would have been more effective.

3. **Lack of Key Questions:** Respondents noted that the survey did not ask critical questions, such as whether they supported local government reorganisation or their views on specific proposals.

4. **Inflexibility:** The survey format did not allow for nuanced responses or the ability to express concerns about interconnected issues. Many felt their views were oversimplified or misrepresented.

5. **Bias and Agenda:** Some respondents believed the survey was designed with a predetermined agenda, limiting their ability to provide genuine feedback.

6. **Accessibility and Usability:** The survey's structure, particularly on mobile devices, was seen as cumbersome and difficult to navigate, further limiting respondents' ability to express their views.

7. **Missed Opportunities:** Several respondents felt the survey failed to address their specific concerns, such as the impact of reorganisation on local identity, infrastructure, and services.

Q29 | **How happy are you that the survey met your accessibility needs?**

12 (3.4%)

158 (45.0%)

181 (51.6%)

Question options

● Unhappy ● Neutral ● Happy

Optional question (351 response(s), 12 skipped)
Question type: Emoji Question

27

Q30	If unhappy, please provide further details on how your needs could be met

1. **Mobile Usability:** Many respondents found the survey difficult to navigate on mobile devices, with poor functionality and layout that discouraged participation.

2. **Complexity:** The survey was described as overly long, messy, and confusing, making it hard for respondents to engage effectively.

3. **Ranking System Issues:** The ranking system was seen as restrictive and frustrating, particularly for those who wanted to assign equal importance to multiple options.

4. **Ambiguity:** Some respondents did not understand the question or felt it lacked clarity, making it hard to provide meaningful feedback.

5. **Accessibility for Elderly and Non-English Speakers:** Respondents felt the survey was not user-friendly for older adults or those with limited English proficiency, reducing inclusivity.

6. **Suggestions for Improvement:** Respondents suggested simplifying the survey design, improving navigation, and allowing more flexibility in responses to better meet accessibility needs.