

RUSHMOOR
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Rushmoor Borough Council Engagement Survey



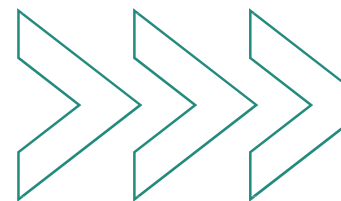
**Active
Insight**

Moving Leisure-net forward



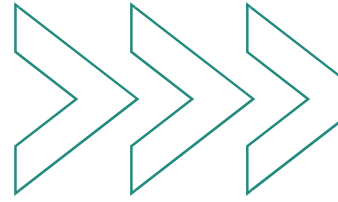
2025

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1 Project Background



Project Background

This research was commissioned by Rushmoor Borough Council to gain deeper insight into residents' attitudes toward physical activity. Specifically, it explores the types of activities residents participate in (or choose not to) and identifies opportunities to better support the community in leading healthier, more active lifestyles.

About Active-Insight

Active-Insight, a recognised leader in customer insight and market intelligence within the active leisure sector, is pleased to present this report on behalf of Rushmoor Borough Council.

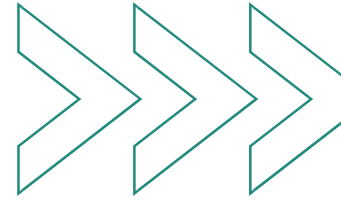
Research Methodology

Data for this study was collected via an online survey developed and promoted by the client. Conducted in April 2025, the survey followed a self-selection format and received 565 responses.

Based on our experience, surveys of this kind often attract respondents with strong views on local services—particularly those already engaged with sport and leisure activities. As such, the findings should be considered within this context.

To maximise reach and participation, the survey was promoted through a range of channels, including the Council's social media platforms, targeting both existing users and the wider community.

2 Key Findings & Recommendations



Consensus on Benefits:

Key Finding: An overwhelming majority of respondents (96%) either strongly agreed (74%) or agreed (22%) that being physically active has significant benefits for their mental and physical wellbeing. Only 1% disagreed, indicating a broad consensus on the positive impact of physical activity.

Recommendation: Promote the mental health benefits of physical activity through targeted campaigns, especially to groups less engaged in physical activity for mental health reasons. Utilise testimonials and success stories to reinforce the positive impact.

Current Activity Levels:

Key Finding: The majority of respondents (62%) are currently active and maintaining their activity levels. A further 34% are at earlier stages of their activity journey, with only 4% not yet considering becoming physically active.

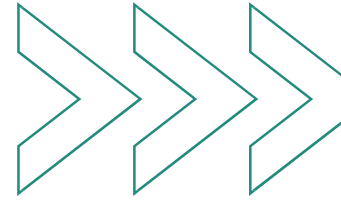
Recommendation: Develop programmes to support individuals at different stages of their activity journey. Offer beginner-friendly activities and provide resources to help those planning to become active.

Meeting Guidelines:

Key Finding: Over half of respondents (57%) reported that they always (26%) or usually (31%) meet the recommended physical activity guidelines. However, 22% rarely or never meet these levels, suggesting room for improvement.

Recommendation: Implement strategies to encourage consistent physical activity, such as regular community challenges, incentives and support groups. Provide educational materials on the importance of meeting activity guidelines.

Key Findings & Recommendations



Preferred Activities:

Key Finding: Recreational walking is the most common form of physical activity (24%), followed by gardening (12%) and activities in open spaces (8%). Leisure centres and home-based activities are also popular.

Recommendation: Enhance accessibility to outdoor environments and community spaces. Invest in maintaining and improving parks, trails and gardens to encourage more recreational walking and gardening.

Mental Health Benefits:

Key Finding: 61% of respondents often or sometimes engage in physical activity, specifically to support their mental health, while 19% do not engage for mental health reasons.

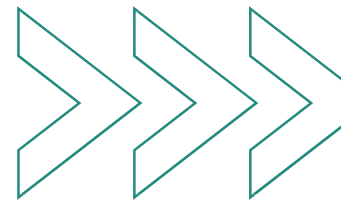
Recommendation: Increase awareness of the mental health benefits of physical activity through workshops, seminars and promotional materials. Collaborate with mental health professionals to integrate physical activity into mental health treatment plans.

Desire to Increase Activity:

Key Finding: 92% of respondents expressed a desire to increase their levels of physical activity, with 43% wanting to do a lot more and 49% a little more.

Recommendation: Address barriers to physical activity by providing accessible, motivating options. Offer a variety of programmes that cater to different interests and fitness levels.

Key Findings & Recommendations



Motivations:

Key Finding: Improving or maintaining physical health is the primary motivation for nearly half (46%) of those wanting to be more active. Weight management and mental health are also significant motivators.

Recommendation: Tailor programmes to focus on health benefits, including weight management and mental health improvement. Provide personalised fitness plans and health coaching.

Preferred Future Activities:

Key Finding: Personal or family swimming sessions (13%), walking (10%) and gym use (8%) are the most frequently selected activities respondents would like to do more of.

Recommendation: Expand offerings of popular activities such as swimming, walking and gym sessions. Ensure these activities are accessible and affordable for all residents.

Barriers to Activity:

Key Finding: Lack of convenient facilities (22%) and costs (16%) are the most commonly reported barriers, along with time constraints related to work (14%) and home life (7%).

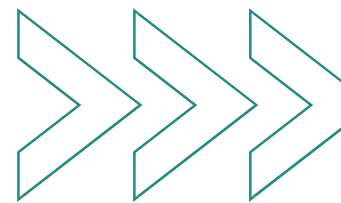
Recommendation: Improve the availability and convenience of physical activity facilities, particularly in underserved areas. Implement subsidised programmes or sliding scale fees to make physical activity more affordable.

Important Factors for Increased Activity:

Key Finding: Good quality facilities (89%), personal motivation (75%) and direct costs (74%) are the most important factors for respondents when considering more physical activity.

Recommendation: Ensure facilities are well-maintained, clean and equipped with modern amenities. Consider extending opening hours to accommodate different schedules. Provide motivational support through community initiatives and personal coaching.

Key Findings & Recommendations



Reasons for Not Increasing Activity:

Key Finding: The most common reason for not doing more physical activity is feeling active enough (29%), followed by health conditions or disabilities (22%) and costs (14%).

Recommendation: Develop inclusive programmes that accommodate disabilities and cater to specific demographic needs. Offer financial assistance or subsidised memberships to reduce cost barriers.

Availability and Accessibility of Spaces:

Key Finding: A significant proportion of respondents expressed concerns about the availability and accessibility of spaces for physical activity in their local area. While 14% felt there were plenty of facilities with easy access, the majority indicated gaps—39% said there are a few but more are needed and 30% said there are very few and they are hard to access. An additional 12% noted that access could be improved despite a sufficient number of spaces.

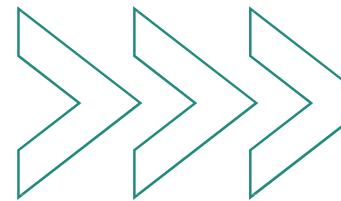
Recommendation: Enhance both the availability and accessibility of physical activity spaces. Invest in building new facilities and improving existing ones, ensuring they are easily accessible to all residents. Consider community input to identify priority areas for development.

Support for Families:

Key Finding: While the majority of respondents (70%) said they are not responsible for children under 18, nearly a third (30%) are, including 28% who are parents or guardians. This group may have specific needs relating to childcare, family-friendly facilities and activity scheduling.

Recommendation: Ensure provision that supports families by offering flexible session times, affordable pricing and on-site childcare. Develop family-friendly facilities and programmes to enable more parents and carers to be active.

Key Findings & Recommendations



Barriers for Children's Activity:

Key Finding: Among respondents responsible for children, the most commonly reported barrier to supporting their activity was a lack of nearby facilities (18%). Financial constraints were also significant, with lack of money cited by 10%, followed by timing of children's sessions (8%) and lack of time (7%).

Recommendation: Address structural and logistical challenges by improving the availability of nearby facilities, offering affordable options and scheduling sessions at convenient times. Provide information and create welcoming, inclusive environments for families.

Engagement with Facilities:

Key Finding: Most respondents identified as residents (61%), while notable proportions also reported using council-run facilities (19%) or non-council leisure sites such as private gyms and clubs (14%). A smaller number said they represented a school, club or voluntary organisation (3%), selected other (3%), or worked at council leisure sites (0.4%).

Recommendation: Foster collaboration between council-run and private facilities to enhance community engagement. Encourage schools, clubs and voluntary organisations to participate in promoting physical activity.

Researching Health and Wellbeing Activities:

Key Finding: The most popular method for researching health and wellbeing activities in the local area is through internet searches (69%), followed by social media searches (9%) and asking friends, family, or colleagues (7%). Traditional methods such as newspapers/publications and direct enquiries at leisure facilities are less favoured.

Recommendation: Optimise online presence and digital resources to provide comprehensive information about local health and wellbeing activities. Utilise social media and community networks to disseminate information effectively.

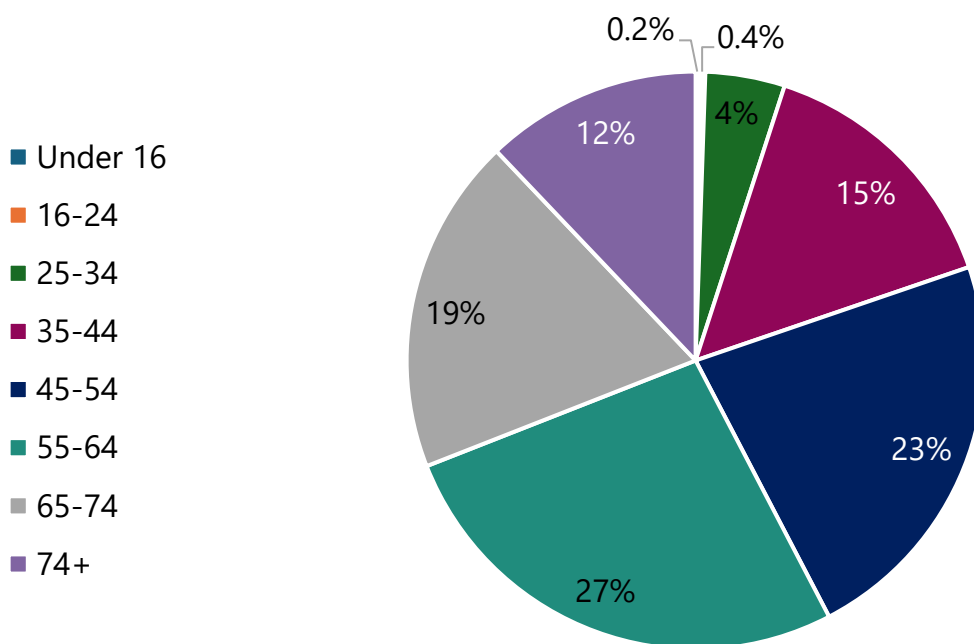
3 Survey Results



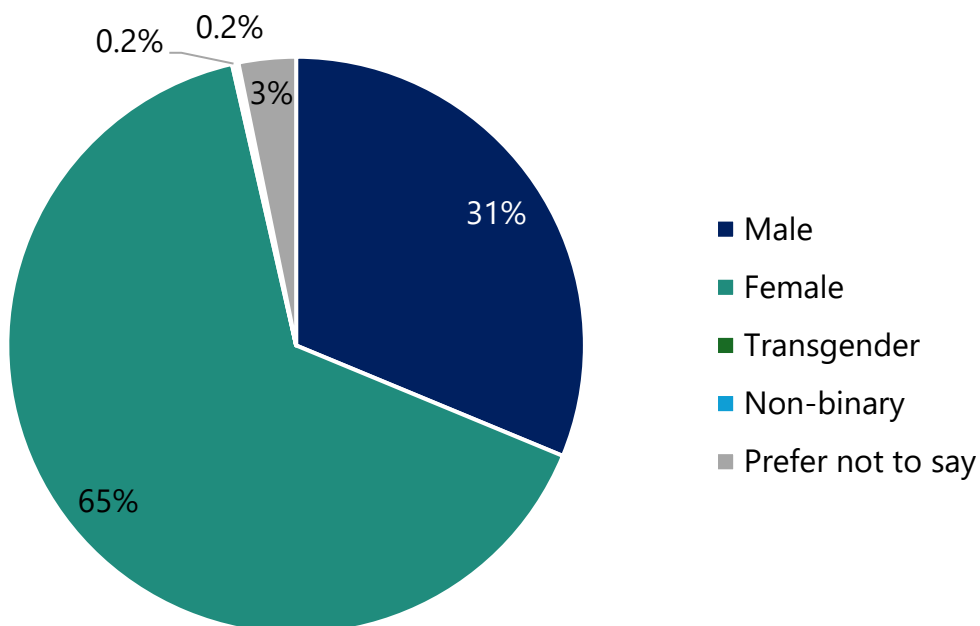
The Survey in Numbers

SAMPLE 565

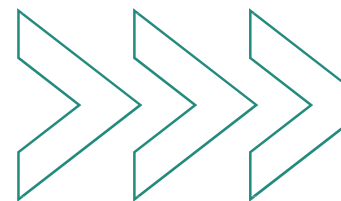
What is your age?



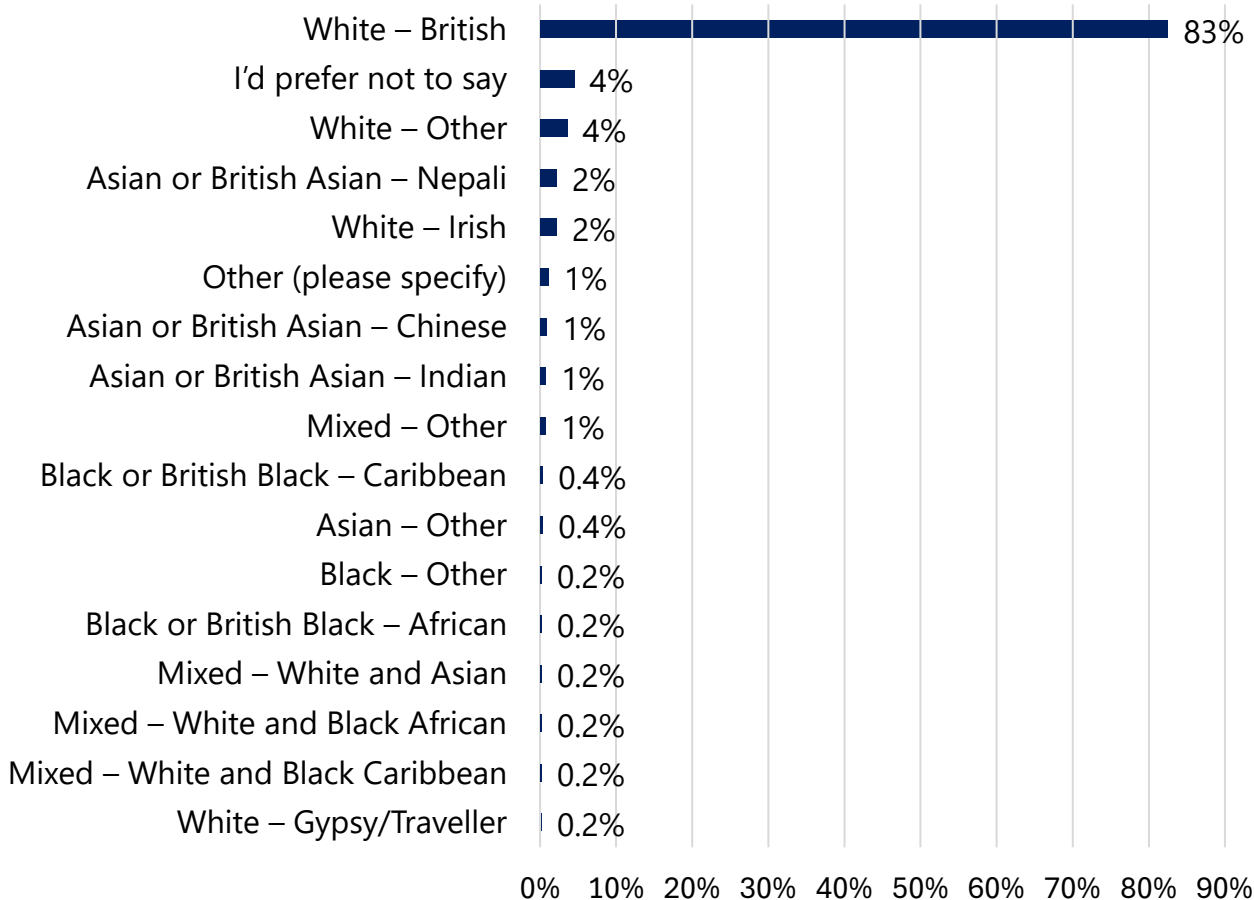
What is your gender?



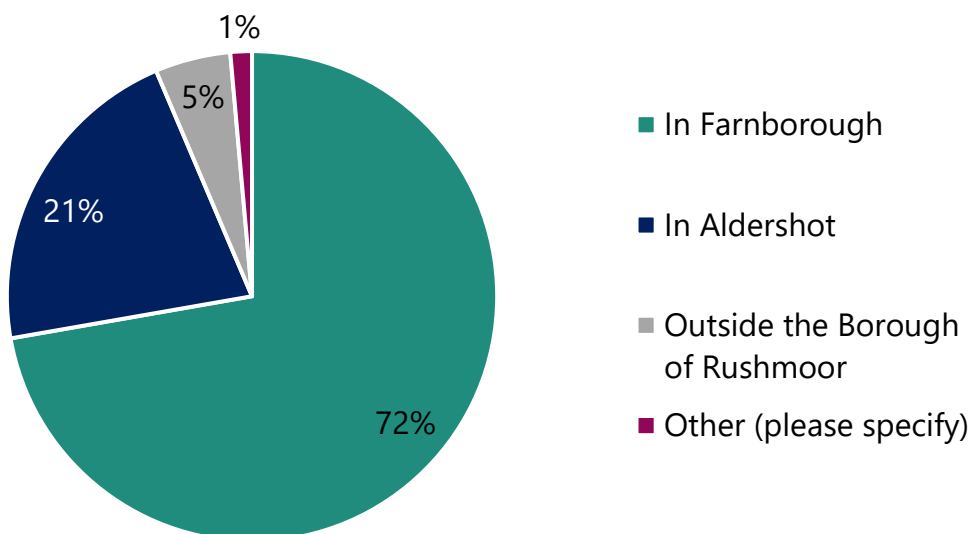
3 Survey Results



Ethnicity

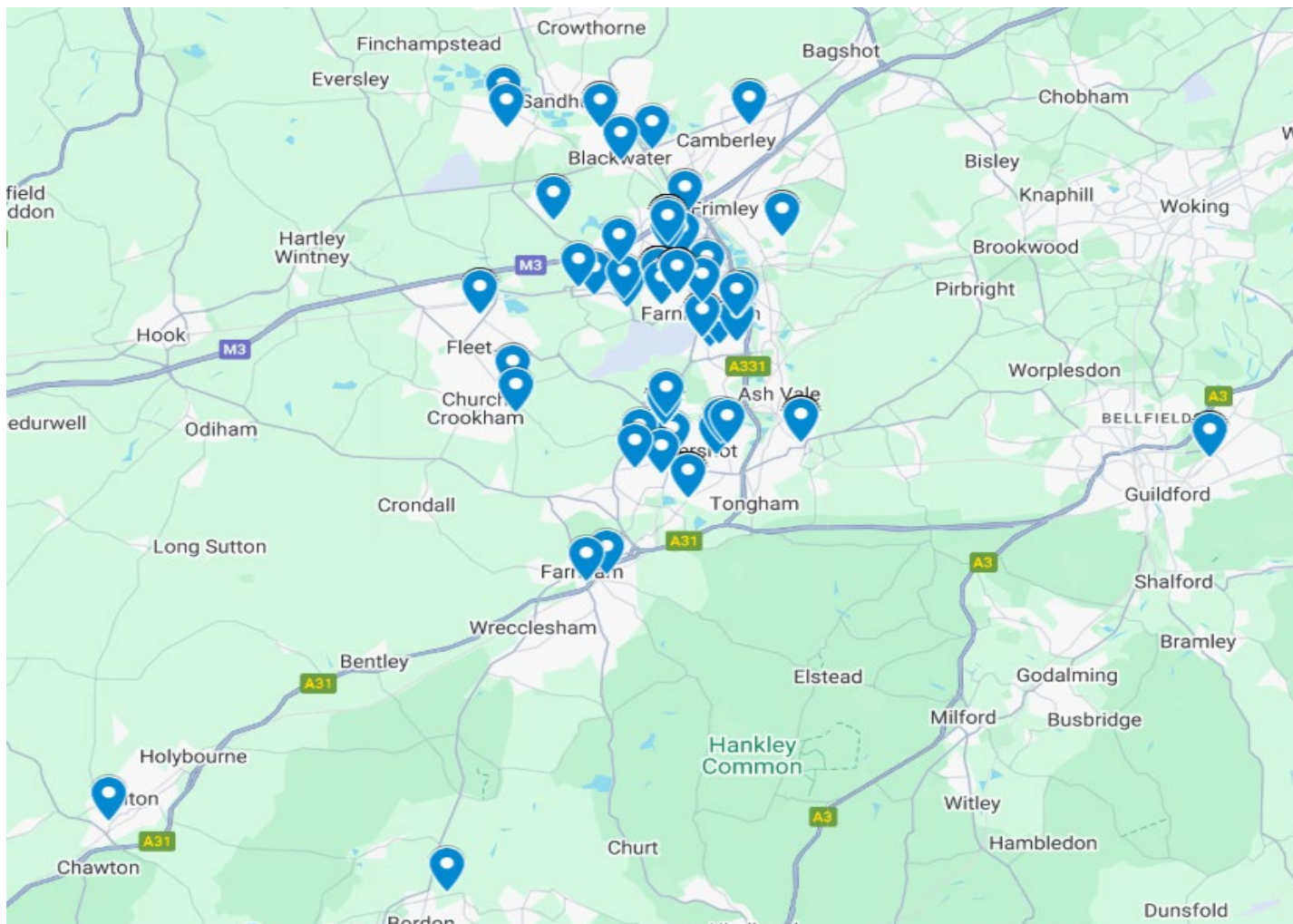
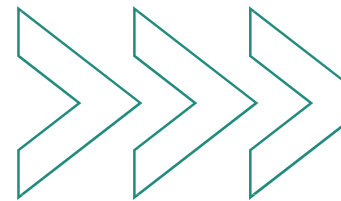


Would you say you live:



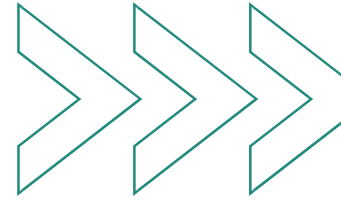
3 Survey Results

Postcode pins



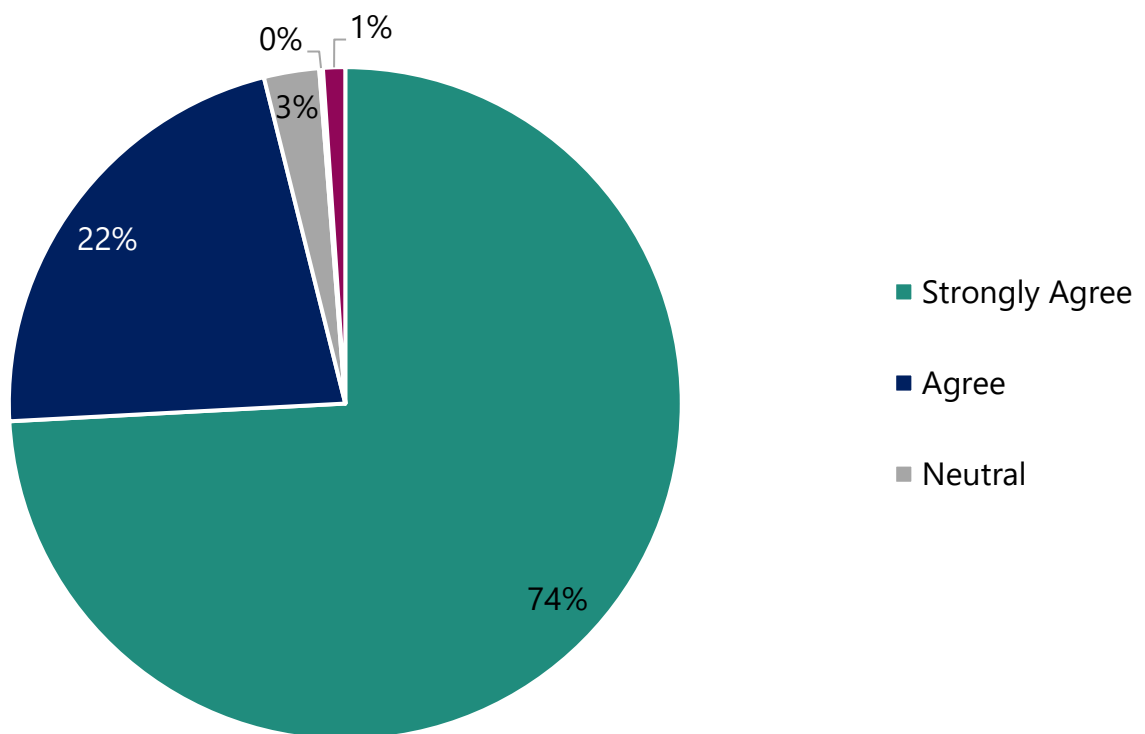
Full list in open comments document

4 Question Breakdown

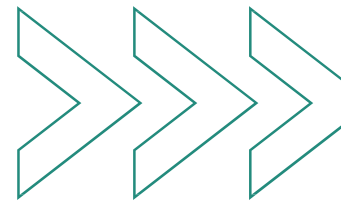


To what extent do you agree with the following statement:

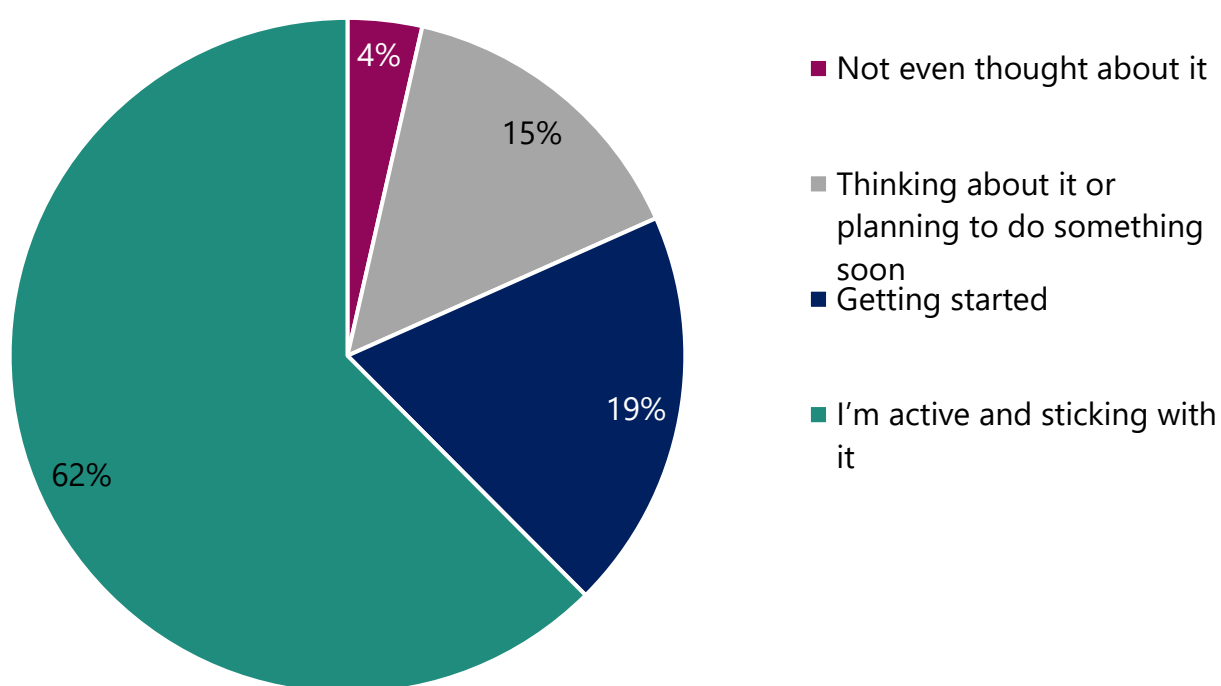
"Being physically active has significant benefits for my mental and physical wellbeing"



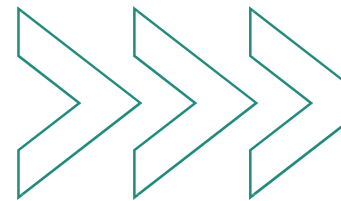
An overwhelming majority of respondents (96%) either strongly agreed (74%) or agreed (22%) that being physically active has significant benefits for their mental and physical wellbeing. Only 1% of respondents disagreed with the statement, indicating a broad consensus on the positive impact of physical activity.



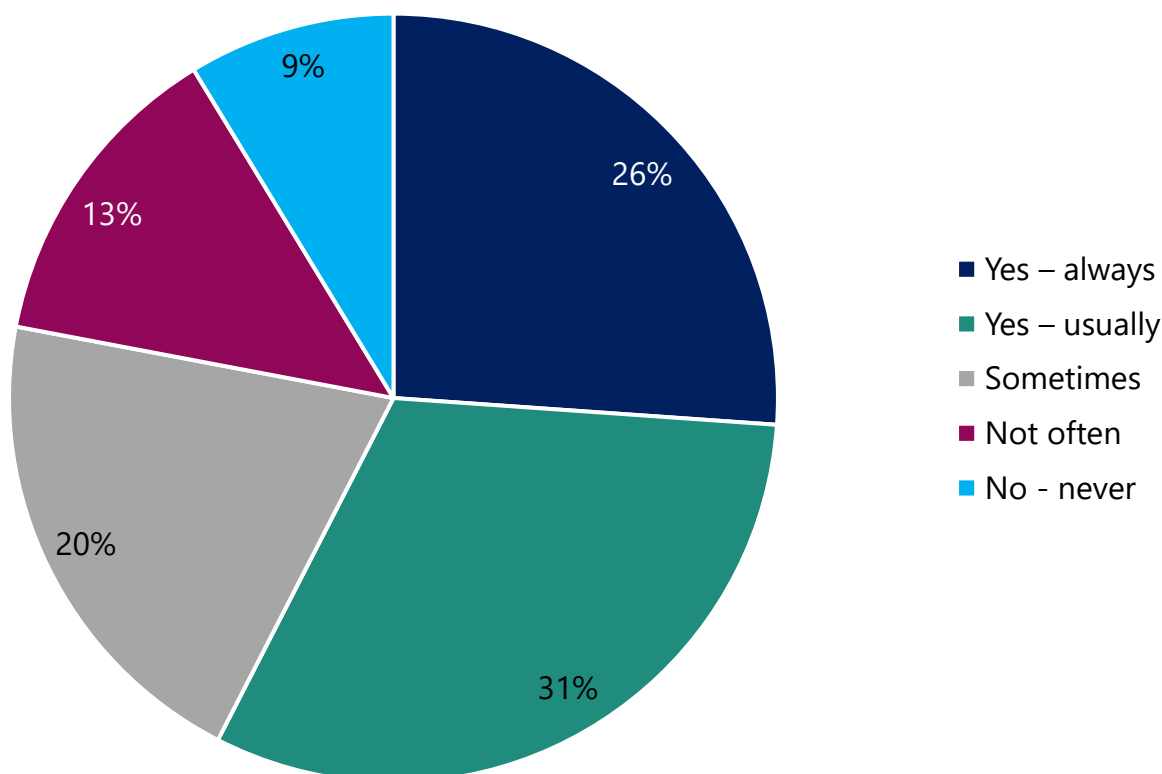
Which of the following best describes your current attitude towards becoming or being physically active?



The majority of respondents (62%) reported that they are currently active and maintaining their activity levels. A further 34% are at earlier stages of the activity journey, including getting started (19%) and planning to do something soon (15%). Only a small proportion (4%) had not yet considered becoming physically active, highlighting a generally high level of engagement or intention within the community.



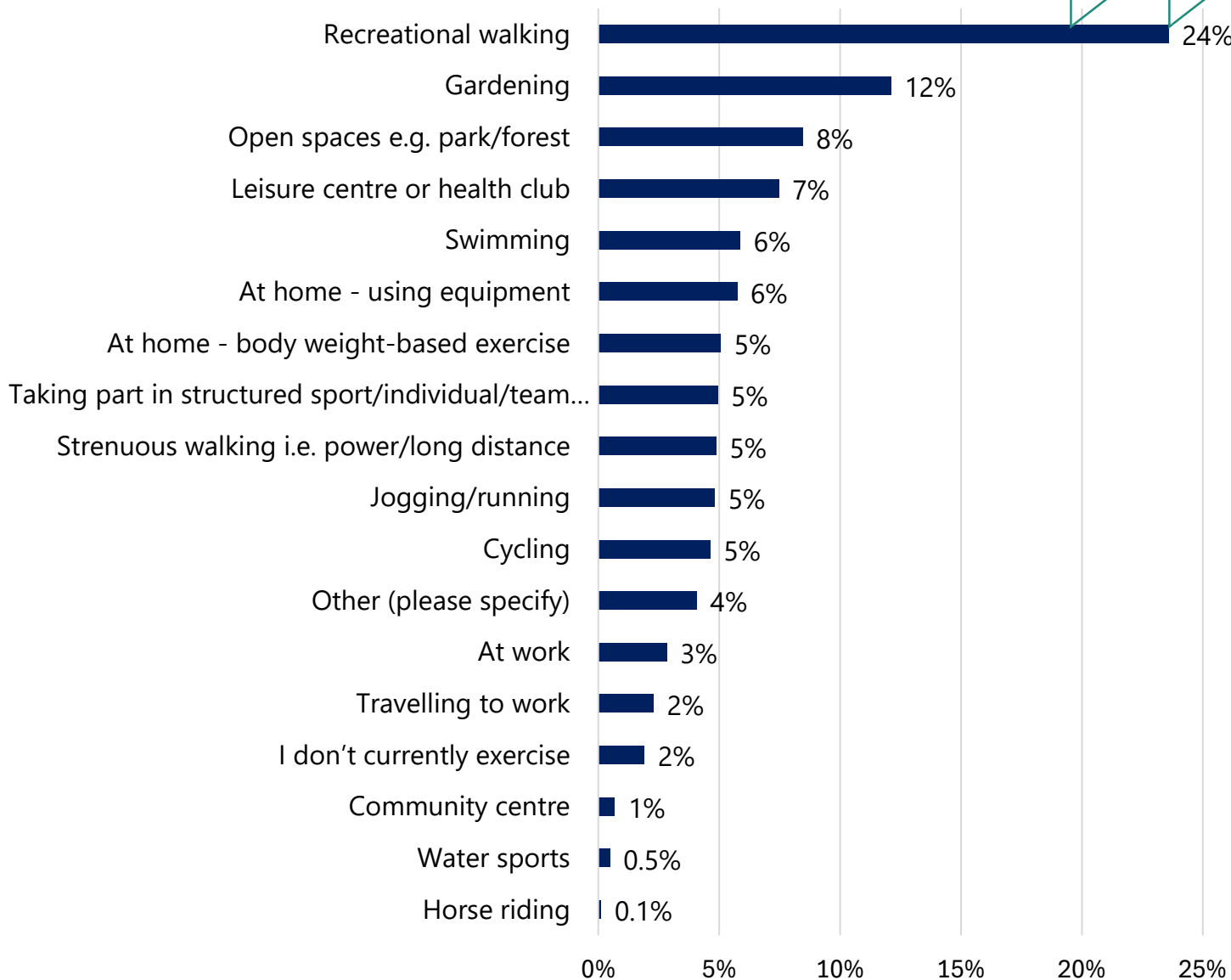
Over the course of a normal week, do you do 150 minutes (two and a half hours) of moderate intensity activity, or 75 minutes of vigorous intensity activity?



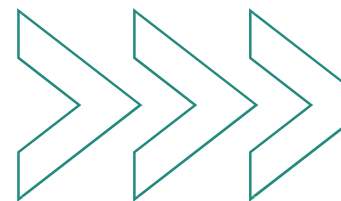
Over half of respondents (57%) reported that they always (26%) or usually (31%) meet the recommended physical activity guidelines. An additional 20% indicated they sometimes meet these levels, while 22% said they rarely or never do so. This suggests that while many residents are regularly active, there remains a significant portion of the population who could benefit from increased support or motivation to become more consistently active.

How do you do most of your physical activity?

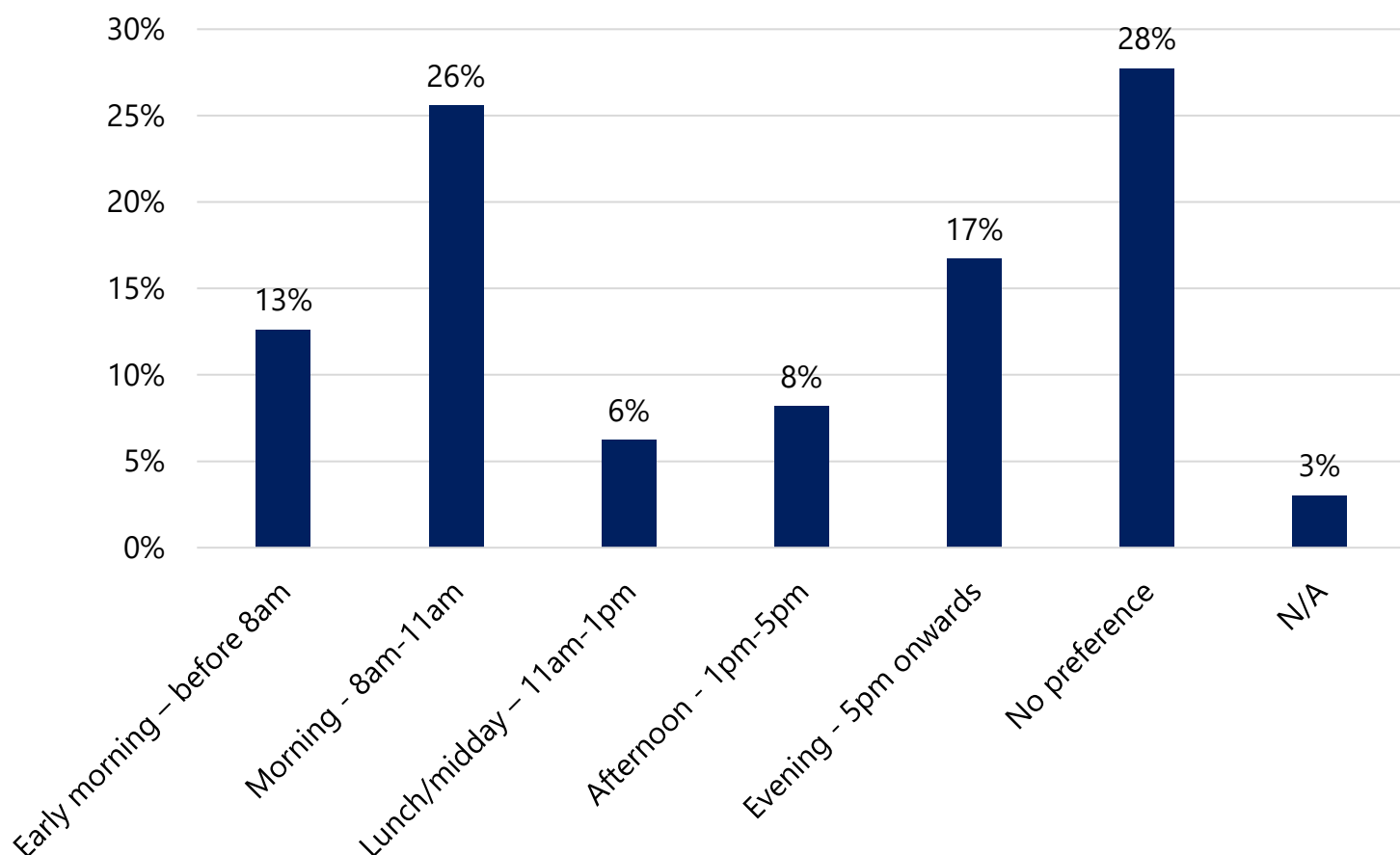
Participants were asked to select all that apply



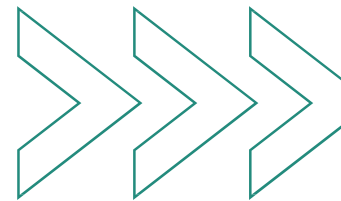
Recreational walking emerged as the most common form of physical activity, with 24% of responses indicating this as a preferred method. Gardening (12%) and being active in open spaces such as parks or forests (8%) were also popular, highlighting the importance of accessible outdoor environments. Leisure centres or health clubs accounted for 7% of responses, while home-based activities (bodyweight or equipment-based) made up a combined 11%. A small portion (2%) reported not currently exercising, suggesting that most respondents engage in physical activity in some form, often through informal or everyday means rather than structured sport.



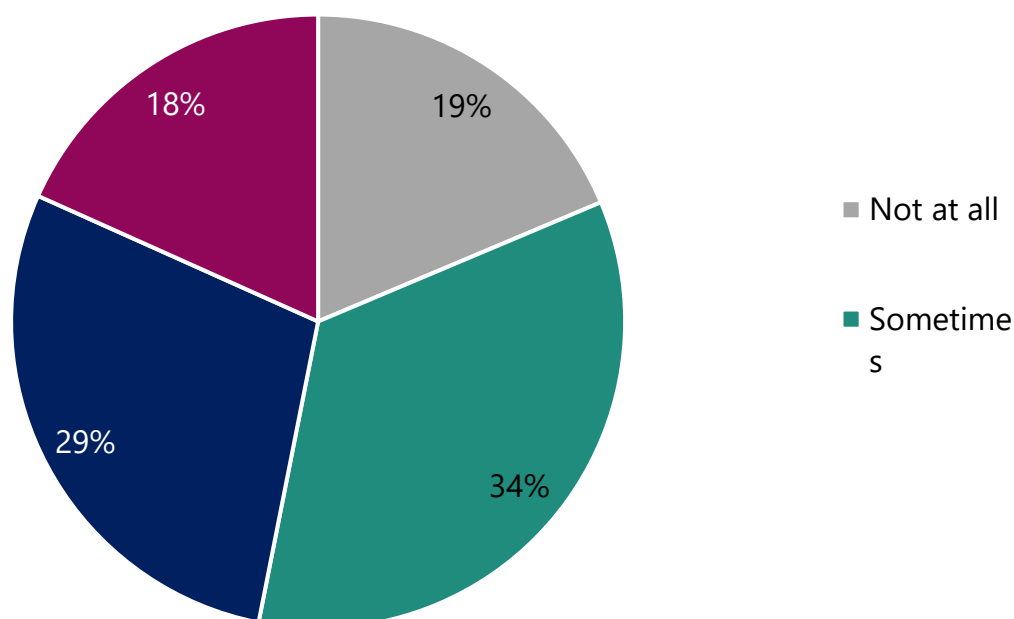
What time of day do you prefer to do physical activity?



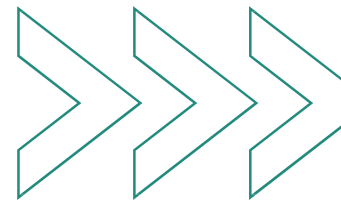
Preferences for the timing of physical activity varied with the largest proportion of respondents (28%) indicating no preference. Among those who did express a preference, morning (8am–11am) was the most popular time (26%), followed by evening (5pm onwards) at 17% and early morning (before 8am) at 13%. Fewer respondents preferred to be active around midday (6%) or in the afternoon (8%). These findings suggest that while many residents are flexible, morning and evening are key periods to consider when scheduling or promoting physical activity opportunities.



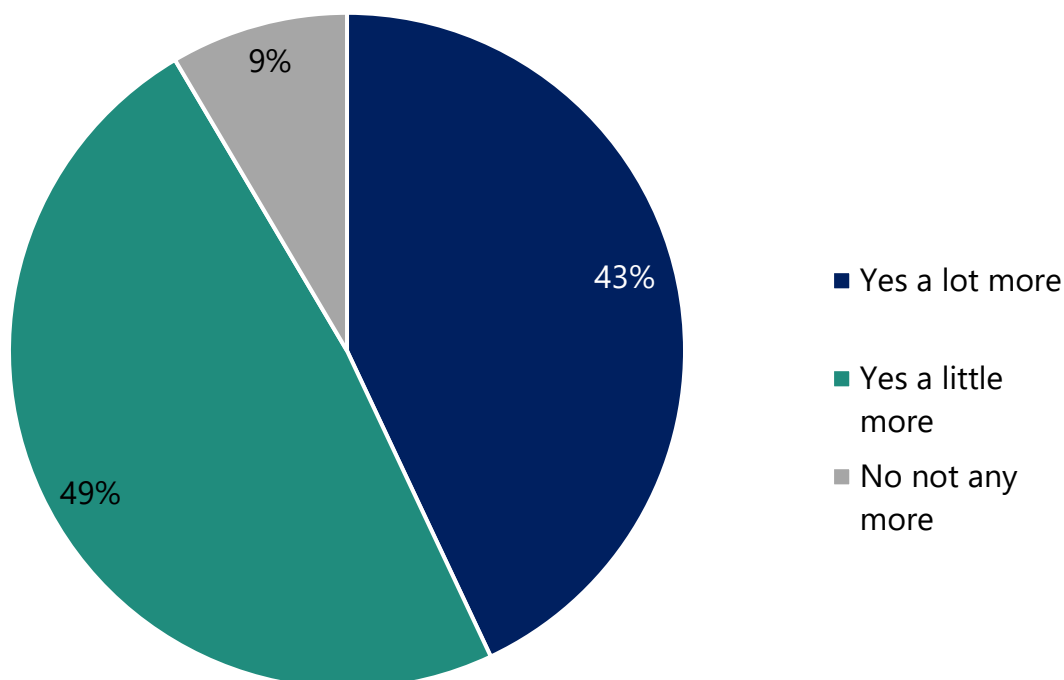
To what extent do you engage in physical activity specifically to support your mental health?



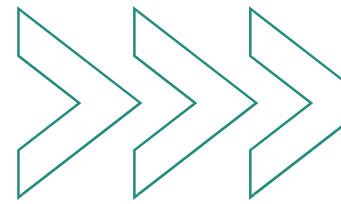
Over half of respondents (61%) reported that they often or sometimes engage in physical activity specifically to support their mental health, highlighting a strong awareness of its psychological benefits. While 18% said they always exercise with this intention, 19% reported not engaging at all for mental health reasons—suggesting there may be opportunities to further promote the mental health benefits of physical activity to less engaged groups.



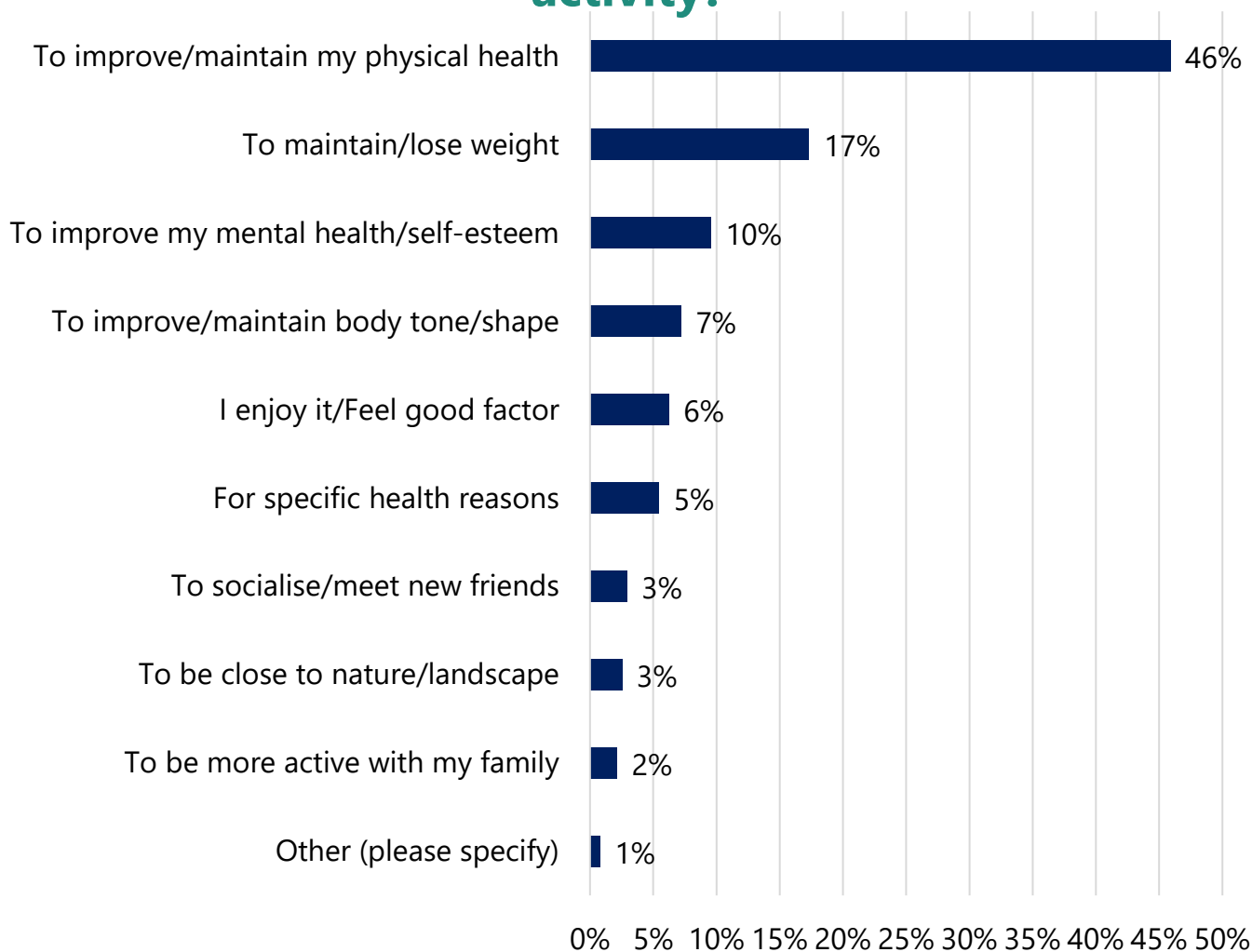
Looking forward, would you like to do more physical activity?



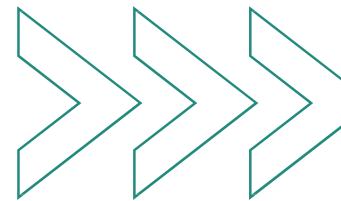
The vast majority of respondents (92%) expressed a desire to increase their levels of physical activity, with 43% wanting to do a lot more and 49% a little more. Only 9% indicated they did not wish to do more. This strong interest presents a valuable opportunity to engage residents further by addressing barriers and providing accessible, motivating options to help them become more active.



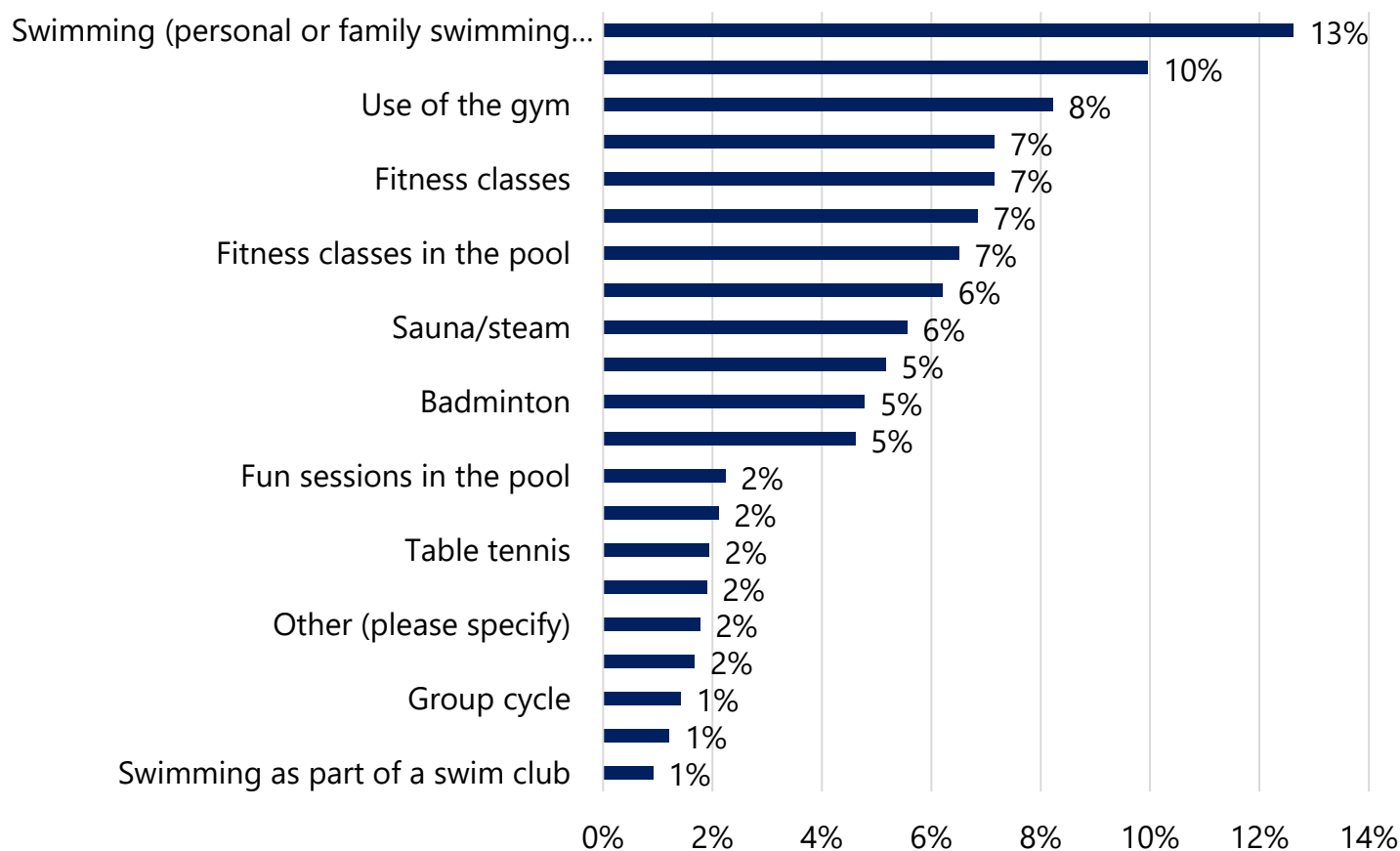
Why would you like to do more physical activity?



Among those who expressed a desire to be more active, nearly half (46%) chose improving or maintaining physical health as their primary motivation. A further 17% wanted to maintain or lose weight, while 10% were motivated by mental health and self-esteem. Enjoyment, body tone and social factors were less frequently mentioned though still notable. These findings highlight that health—both physical and mental—is the dominant driver behind residents’ interest in increasing their activity levels.

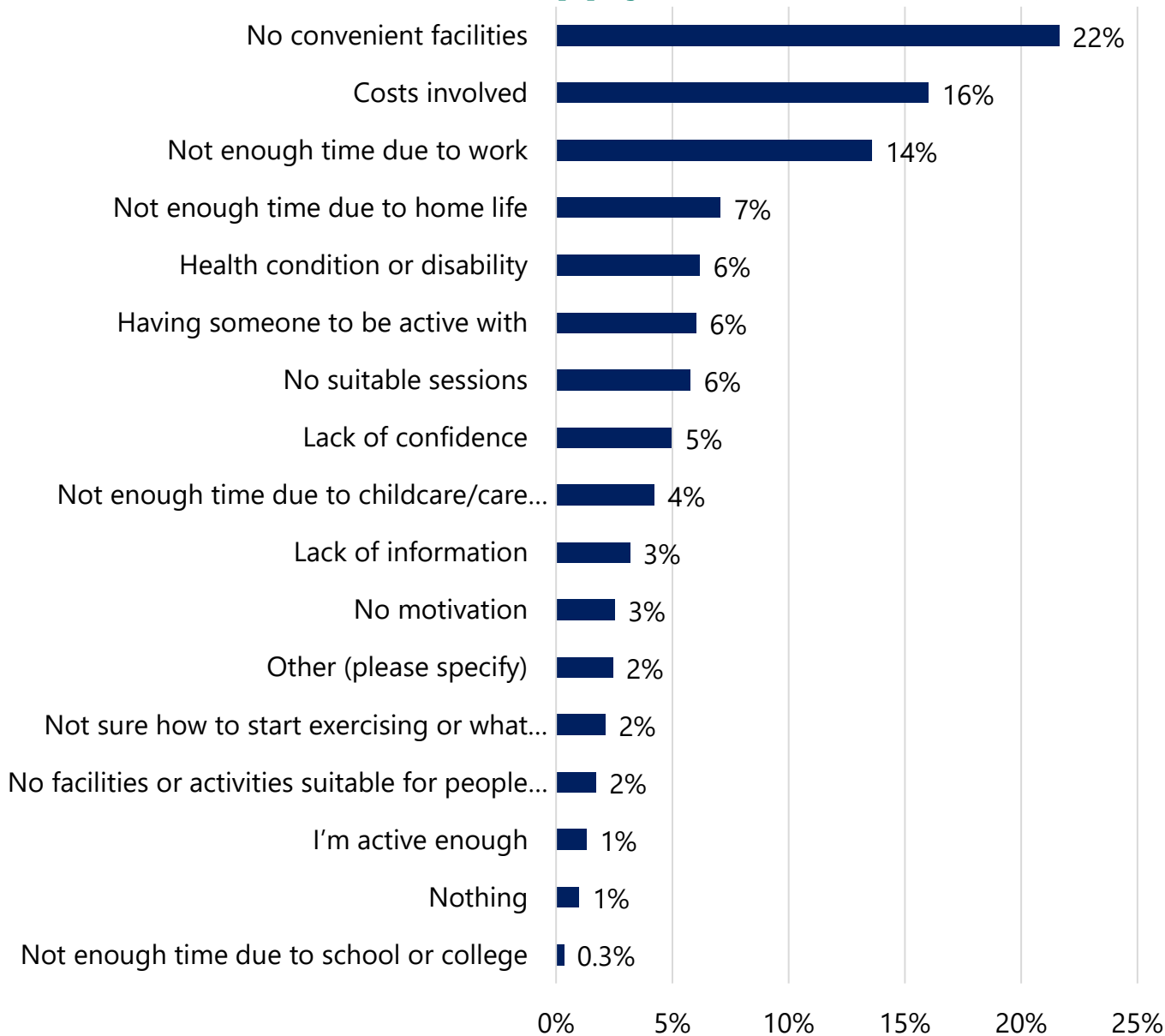
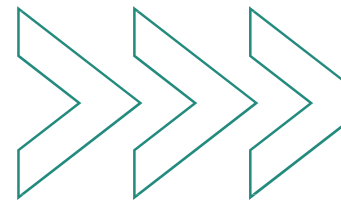


What activities would you like to do more of? Participants were asked to select all that apply



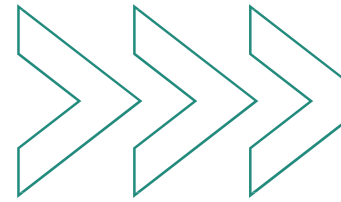
Among those who expressed a desire to be more active, the most frequently selected activity they would like to do more of was personal or family swimming sessions (13%), followed by walking (10%) and gym use (8%). Structured wellness-focused activities such as Pilates, fitness classes and yoga each attracted 7% of selections, indicating a strong interest in accessible, health-oriented options. While activities like team sports, martial arts and swim clubs were less commonly chosen, the variety of responses reflects a broad range of preferences, with a notable emphasis on low-barrier, flexible ways to stay active.

What are the main reasons that are stopping you from doing more? Participants were asked to select all that apply



Among respondents who wanted to do more physical activity, the most commonly reported barriers were lack of convenient facilities (22%) and costs involved (16%), highlighting accessibility and affordability as significant challenges. Time constraints were also a major factor, particularly related to work (14%) and home life (7%). Additional barriers included health conditions or disabilities (6%), lack of suitable sessions (6%) and not having someone to be active with (6%). These insights point to a mix of practical, personal, and structural challenges that may need to be addressed to help more residents become active.

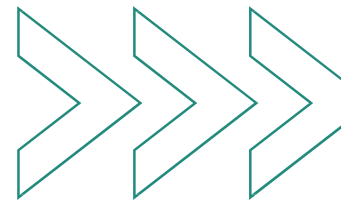
How important are the following for you when considering doing more physical activity?



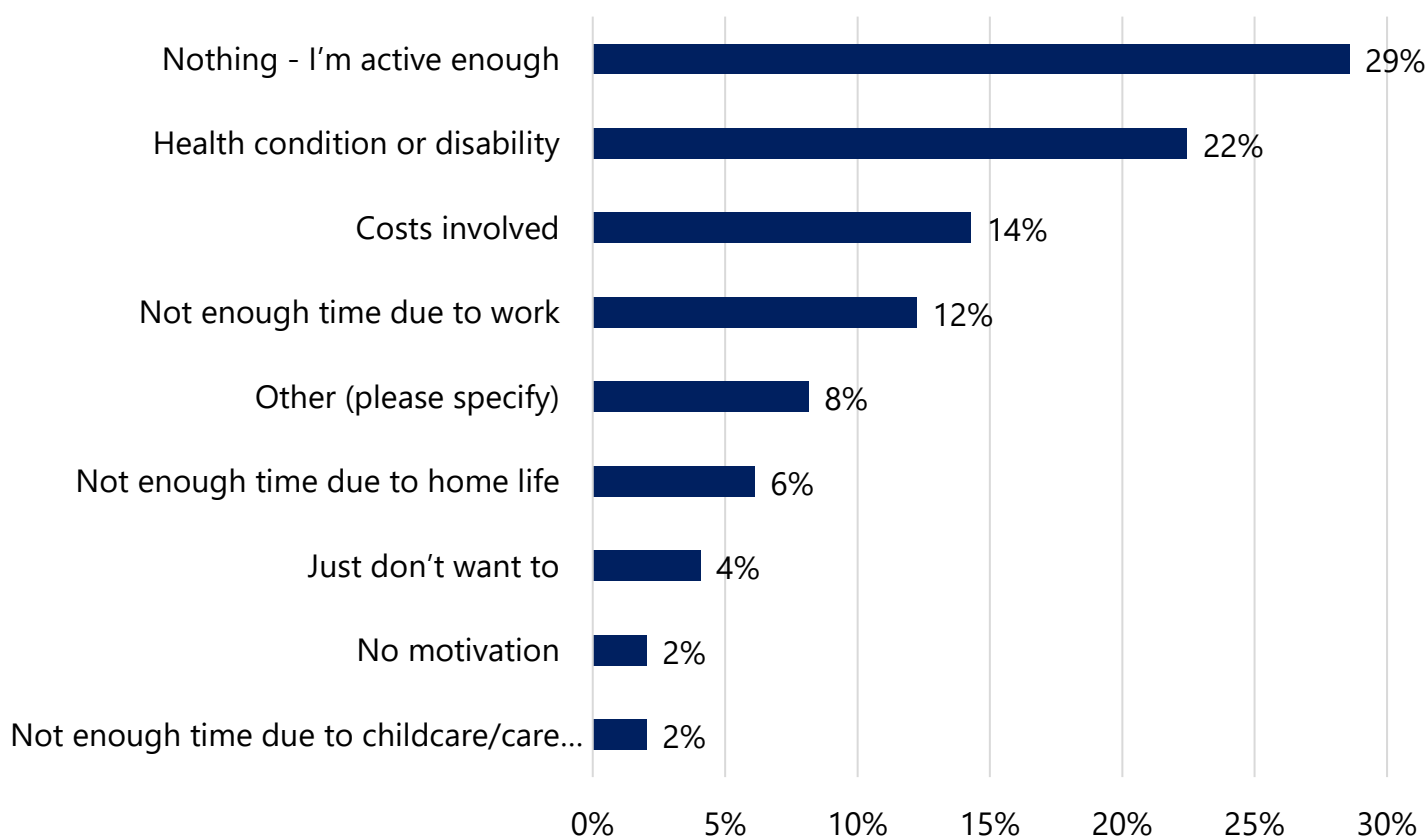
Important & very important



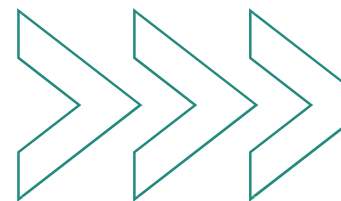
When considering doing more physical activity, respondents identified good quality facilities as the most important factor (89%), closely followed by personal motivation and goals (75%) and direct costs such as fees and charges (74%). Age-appropriate facilities and activities (72%) and availability of time (69%) were also rated as highly important. Social and access-related factors, such as having people to be active with (45%) and availability of transport (28%), were less prominent but still meaningful. Factors related to inclusivity, such as accommodating disability (35%), sex or gender reassignment (15%), and ethnicity or religious requirements (12%), were identified as important by a smaller proportion of respondents, suggesting these may be key for specific groups. Overall, the findings highlight the need to address both personal and structural enablers to increase participation.



What is most likely to stop you from doing physical activity?

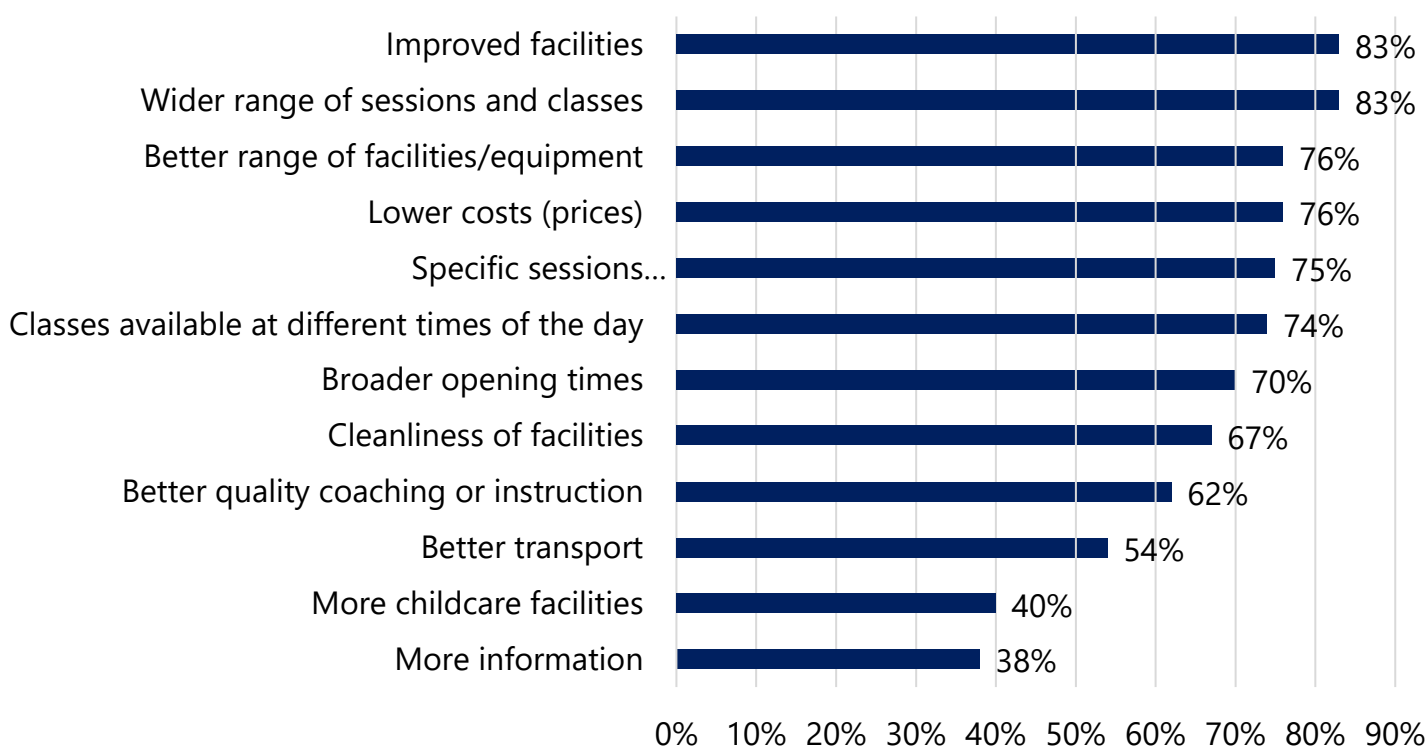


Among respondents, the most common reason given for not doing more physical activity was that they already feel active enough (29%). However, a notable proportion cited health conditions or disabilities (22%) and costs involved (14%) as key barriers. Time constraints, particularly due to work (12%) and home life (6%), were also mentioned. These responses suggest that while many are content with their current activity levels, physical health limitations and affordability remain significant obstacles for others.

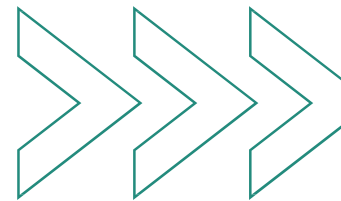


To what extent would the following encourage you to start doing more physical activity?

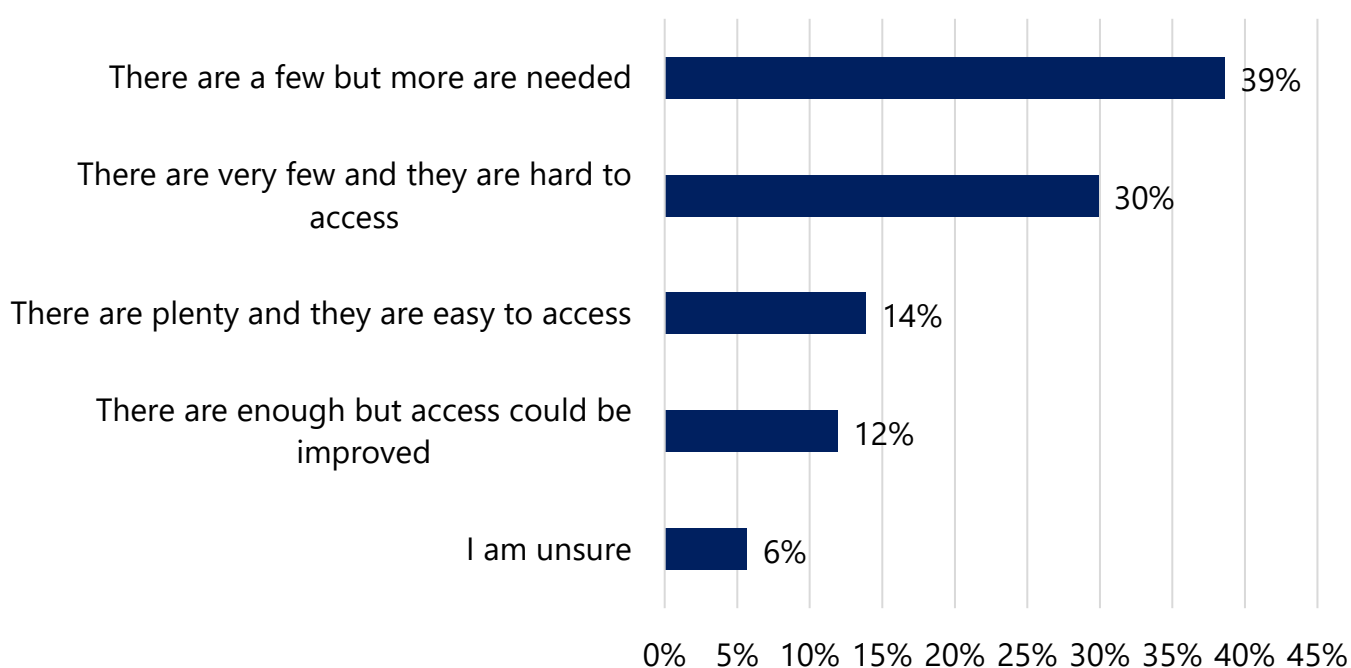
Strongly encourage & encourage



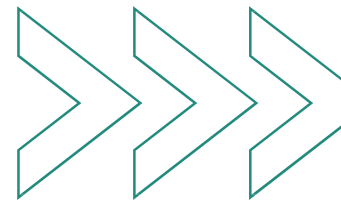
Respondents identified a range of factors that would encourage them to be more physically active, with the most influential being a wider range of sessions and classes and improved facilities—both selected by 83% of participants. Lower costs and better facilities or equipment (76% each), along with specific sessions tailored to particular needs (75%), were also strong motivators. Broader opening times (70%) and cleanliness of facilities (67%) further highlight the importance of accessibility and environment. While better transport (54%) and more childcare (40%) were less widely endorsed, they still matter to certain groups. Overall, the findings suggest that variety, affordability and quality of provision are key to increasing participation.



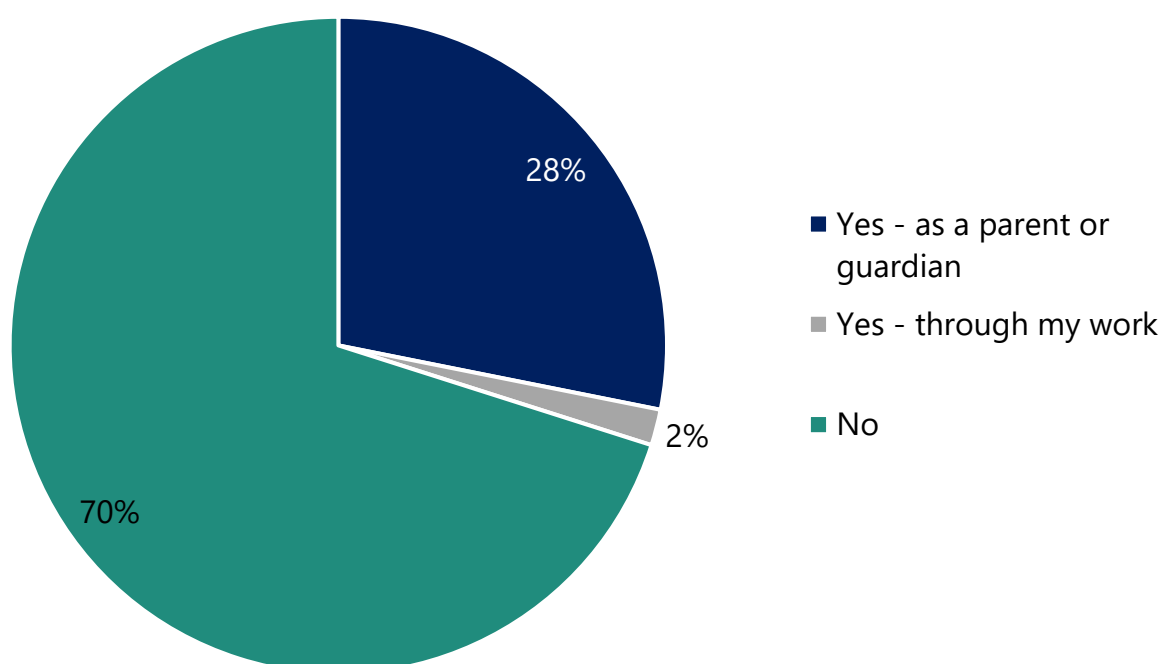
Thinking about where you live; how do you feel about the availability of spaces where you can be physically active (e.g. parks, gyms, sports halls, community centres, leisure centres) in the local area?



A significant proportion of respondents expressed concerns about the availability and accessibility of spaces for physical activity in their local area. While 14% felt there were plenty of facilities with easy access, the majority indicated gaps—39% said there are a few but more are needed and 30% said there are very few and they are hard to access. An additional 12% noted that access could be improved despite there being a sufficient number of spaces. These findings suggest that enhancing both the availability and accessibility of physical activity spaces is a key priority for many residents.



Are you responsible for children under 18?



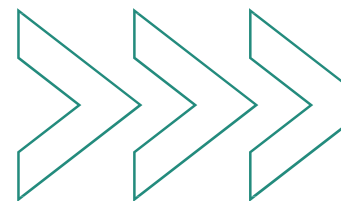
While the majority of respondents (70%) said they are not responsible for children under 18, nearly a third (30%) are, including 28% who are parents or guardians. This group may have specific needs relating to childcare, family-friendly facilities and activity scheduling, particularly given that lack of time due to childcare responsibilities was identified as a barrier by some. Ensuring provision that supports families—such as flexible session times, affordable pricing and on-site childcare—could help enable more parents and carers to be active.

What are the barriers you face in getting them active?

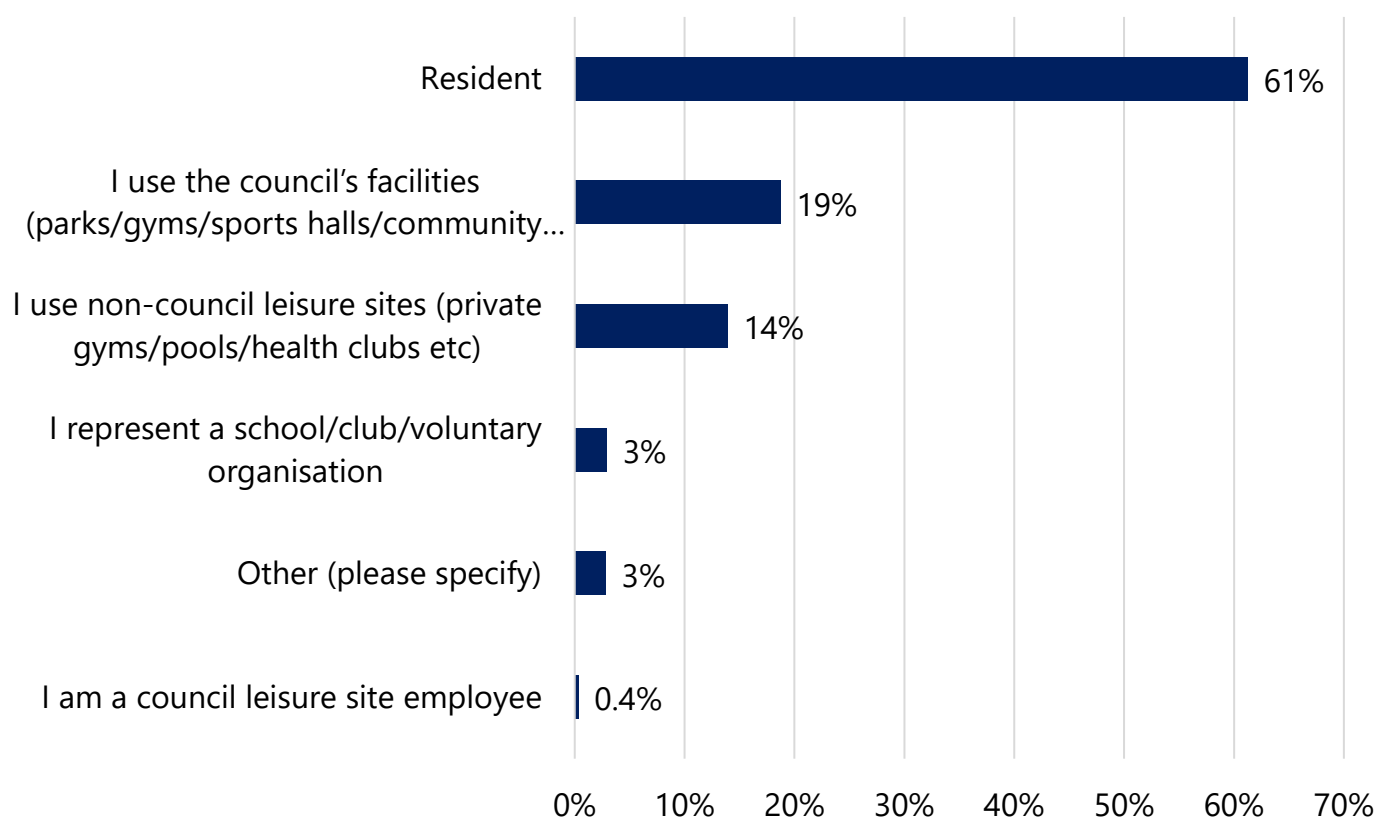
Participants were asked to select all that apply



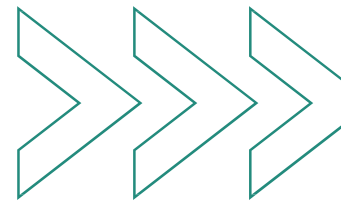
Among respondents responsible for children, the most commonly reported barrier to supporting their activity was a lack of nearby facilities (18%). Financial constraints were also significant with lack of money cited by 10%, followed by timing of children's sessions (8%) and lack of time (7%). Other frequently mentioned issues included lack of information, limited availability of children's sessions and a lack of welcoming or inclusive environments for families. While individual factors such as children's motivation, confidence, or competing interests like online gaming were also noted, the findings point to structural and logistical challenges as the most prominent obstacles for parents and carers.



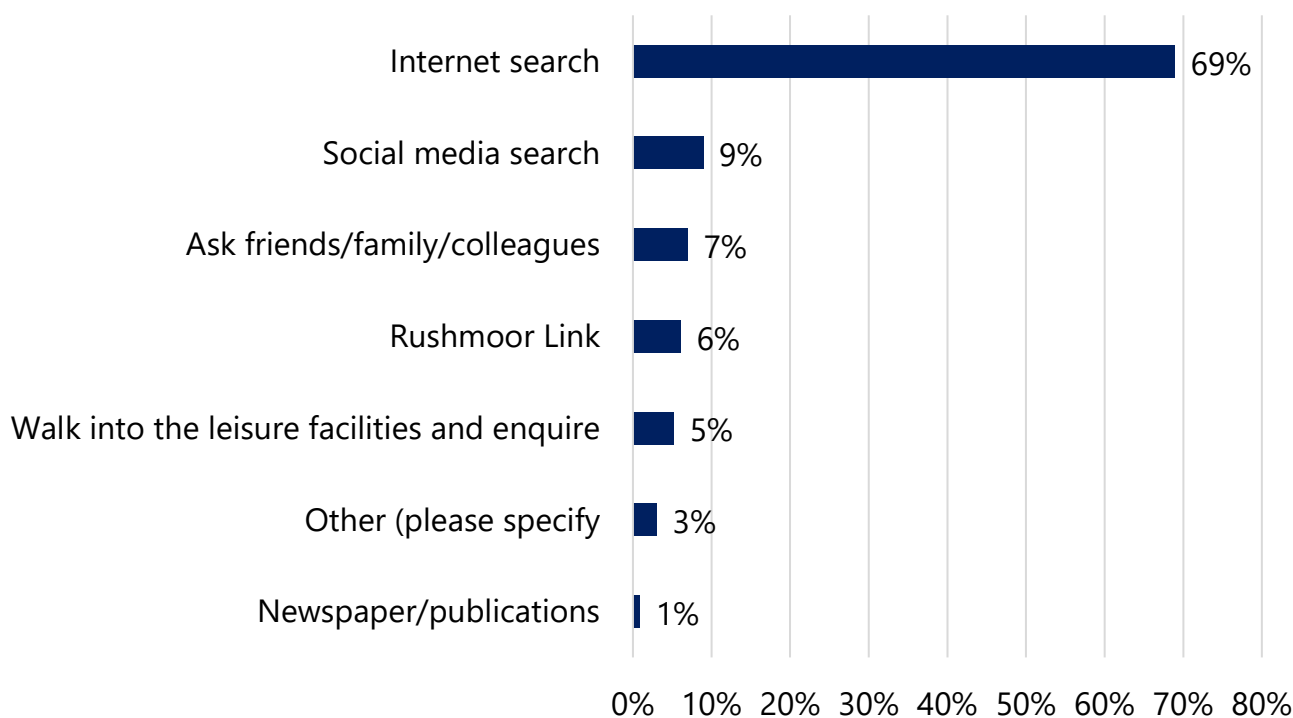
What is your interest in this survey? Participants were asked to select all that apply



Most respondents identified as residents (61%), while notable proportions also reported using council-run facilities (19%) or non-council leisure sites such as private gyms and clubs (14%). A smaller number said they represented a school, club or voluntary organisation (3%), selected other (3%), or worked at council leisure sites (0.4%). These overlapping categories indicate that many respondents engaged with the survey in multiple capacities, providing insight from both personal and community-based perspectives.



How would you research or find out about health and well-being activities in your local area?



The most popular method for researching health and wellbeing activities in the local area is through internet searches, with a significant 69% of respondents indicating this preference. This is followed by social media searches (9%) and asking friends, family, or colleagues (7%). The Rushmoor Link is also a notable resource used by 6% of respondents. Traditional methods such as newspapers/publications and direct enquiries at leisure facilities are less favoured, with only 1% and 5% of respondents respectively choosing these options. Notably, no respondents reported using information from schools or colleges for this purpose.

6 Appendix 1 - Open Responses

How do you do most of your physical activity?
Other (please specify)



Top 3 Trends:

Pilates - 9.2%

Dance/Dancing - 9.2%

Gym - 7.7%

Open Responses

What activities would you like to do more of?
(Other – please specify)



Top 5 Trends:

Running/Jogging – 14.6%

Golf – 12.2%

Squash – 12.2%

Tennis – 12.2%

Padel/Pickle ball – 7.3%

Open Responses

What are the main reasons that are stopping you from doing more?

Other (please specify)



Top 3 Trends:

Lack of facilities/leisure centre closure - 51.9%

Cost/financial issues - 14.8%

Transportation/travel challenges - 11.1%

Open Responses

Thinking about where you live; how do you feel about the availability of spaces where you can be physically active (e.g. parks, gyms, sports halls, community centres, leisure centres) in the local area?



Top 5 Trends on Pg 33.

Open Responses

Thinking about where you live; how do you feel about the availability of spaces where you can be physically active (e.g. parks, gyms, sports halls, community centres, leisure centres) in the local area?

Top 5 Trends from the Comments

After analysing all 333 comments about the availability of physical activity spaces in local areas, here are the top five trends with their percentages:

1. Lack of Leisure Centre/Swimming Pool in Farnborough (42.8%)

The most dominant theme was frustration about the closure/demolition of Farnborough Leisure Centre and the lack of a swimming pool, with no adequate replacement yet built. Many residents mentioned having to travel to other towns (Camberley, Fleet, etc.) for swimming and other leisure activities.

2. Cost and Affordability Barriers (16.4%)

Many respondents mentioned that private gyms and facilities are too expensive, membership fees are prohibitive and there's a lack of affordable options for regular exercise, especially for families, seniors and those on lower incomes.

3. Accessibility Issues (13.2%)

Comments highlighted challenges with accessing facilities due to distance, transportation limitations, lack of public transport connections, parking problems and limited accessibility for people with disabilities or mobility issues.

4. Appreciation for Available Green Spaces/Parks (11.6%)

A positive trend was acknowledgment of good local parks, walking spaces and outdoor areas like Southwood Country Park, Queen Elizabeth Park, and Blackwater Valley paths, though some mentioned safety concerns or maintenance issues.

5. Limited Facilities for Specific Activities (10.0%)

Respondents noted a lack of facilities for specific sports and activities like badminton, indoor bowling, squash courts, tennis, sports halls for team sports and specialized classes for different age groups and abilities.

The percentages represent the proportion of comments that substantially mentioned each theme out of the total responses.