



## National Survey for Wales, 2018-19 Local democracy and access to services

26 November 2019  
SB 55/2019

In 2018-19, the National Survey included a series of questions on local authorities, their services, and local democracy. People were asked about their involvement in decisions about local authority services and budgets, whether they knew how to find out about local authority services, and whether they felt they could access information about their local authority in the way they would like. Questions were also asked about the availability of services and facilities in their local area and people's access to them and about their understanding of, and their involvement with, their local councillor. This bulletin presents the results, which are used to help monitor progress against the [Well-being of Future Generations Act](#).

### Main points

In 2018-19:

- 77% of people said that they know how to find what services their local authority provides and 76% said that they could access this information in the way they would like. 78% of internet users agreed they could do this, compared with 62% of non-users.
- 14% agreed that the local authority asks people for its views before setting the budget.
- 69% of people were satisfied that good services and facilities were available in their local area and 80% were satisfied with their ability to get to these services and facilities.
- 90% of those who were satisfied with the availability of local services and facilities were also satisfied with the area as a place to live.
- 36% of people said they understand what their councillor does for the community.
- 35% said their local councillor works closely with their local community.



### About this bulletin

This bulletin provides more detailed analysis of the 2018-19 results for the questions on **local democracy and local services and facilities**. It also compares results over time.

The full questionnaire is available on the [National Survey web pages](#).

More tables can be found in the [Results viewer](#).

### In this bulletin

<a href="#">Introduction</a>	2
<a href="#">Local authorities</a>	3
<a href="#">Local services</a>	6
<a href="#">Local democracy</a>	10
<a href="#">Terms &amp; definitions</a>	13
<a href="#">Key quality information</a>	15

## Introduction

This bulletin presents the National Survey results relating to local democracy, local authorities and their services, and other facilities available in the local area. It compares results from 2018-19 with those from 2016-17 and 2017-18.

Local authorities play a vital role in everyday life for people in Wales. They are responsible for services including refuse collection, recycling, street lighting, road maintenance, care for the elderly, and housing.

Councillors are elected by the community during a local government election and their role is to represent the people living in their ward and also make decisions about how the council spends its budget, the level of council tax it sets, and what services are provided.

Councillors' role in representing people includes helping them with problems and raising issues on their behalf with the council and other organisations. In 2014-2017 the Welsh Government ran the [Diversity in Democracy programme](#) with the aim of increasing the proportion of people from different backgrounds standing for election from 2017 onwards. Therefore the 2018-19 National Survey results reflect public opinion on this new group, to some degree.

In the National Survey, people were asked whether they feel that they:

- have the opportunity to participate in decision making about how local authorities run their local services and in the setting of the budget;
- know how to find out about their local authorities' services and can access this information in the way they would like;
- are satisfied with the availability of and access to services and facilities in their local area; and
- understand the role of their local councillor and whether their local councillor works closely with the local community.

The National Survey provides an important baseline in monitoring citizens' access to - and satisfaction with - public services, to evaluate and shape policy in these areas. This analysis can also form an important part of local authorities' own scrutiny and review processes.

These results provide evidence for the implementation of the [Well-being of Future Generations Act](#), specifically the national indicators<sup>1</sup> measuring the percentage of people who feel able to influence decisions in their local area (Indicator 23), and the percentage of people satisfied with their ability to access/get to the services and facilities they need (Indicator 24).

---

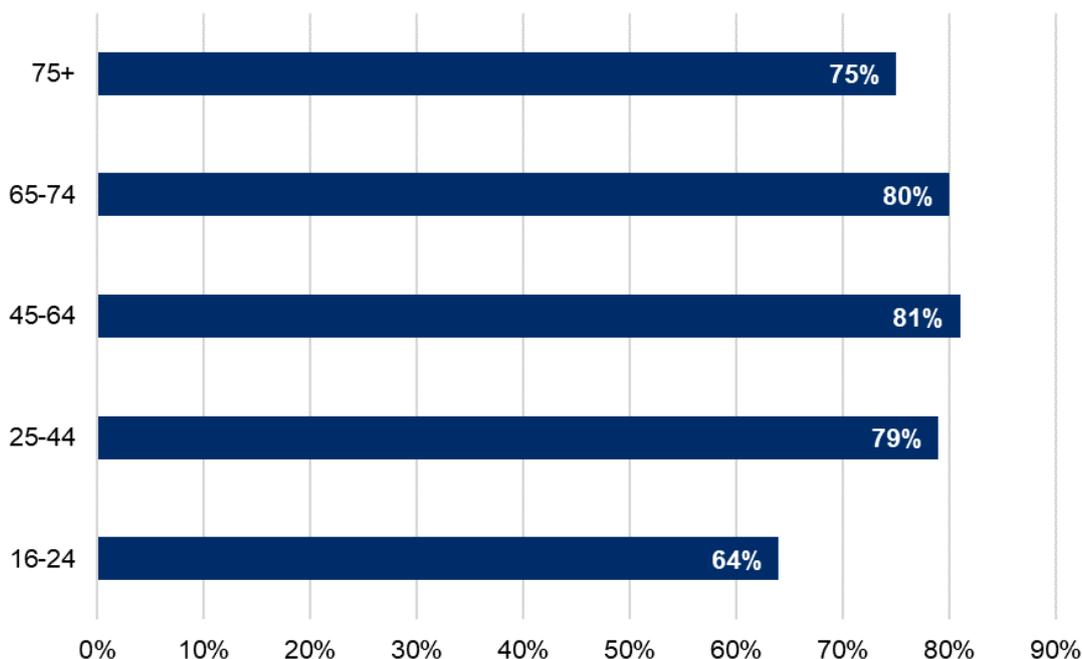
<sup>1</sup> See [Key quality information](#)

## Local authorities: accessing information

77% of people agreed that they knew how to find what services their local authority provides. 40% said they strongly agreed, and 38% tended to agree<sup>2</sup>.

81% of those aged 45-64 and 80% of those aged 65-74 agreed that they knew how to find what services their local authority provides, compared with 64% of those aged 16-24 (see Chart 1). There were no differences between men and women.

**Chart 1: Percentage who knew how to find out what services their local authority provides, by age**



Internet users were more likely to know how to find out what services their local authorities provide. 79% of internet users agreed, compared with 65% of non-users.

Those with higher qualification levels<sup>3</sup> were more likely to know how to find what services their local authority provides. 84% of those with qualifications higher than 'A' level agreed compared with 68% of those with no qualifications.

80% of people in employment agreed that they knew how to find what services their local authority provides compared with 70% of unemployed people and 75% of those who were economically inactive.

74% of people with a limiting long-term illness agreed that they knew how to find what services their local authority provides, compared with 80% of people who didn't have such a condition.

People's responses to this question vary by 21 percentage points depending on which local authority they live in. Those living in Denbighshire, Monmouthshire and Vale of Glamorgan were more likely to agree they were well-informed, with a higher percentage of people in agreement than the national level of 77%. In contrast, the results for people living in Blaenau Gwent and Merthyr

<sup>2</sup> As percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number, the percentages for those who strongly agreed and those who tended to agree do not add up to the percentage of those who agreed overall

<sup>3</sup> Qualifications – see [Terms and definitions](#)

Tydfil were below the national level. It should be noted that this difference is more likely to be due to differences in population makeup than differences between how the councils operate.

76% of people agreed that they could access information about their local authority in the way they liked, and 38% strongly agreed that they could do this. 79% of people aged 25-44 agreed compared with 73% of 16-24 year olds and 70% of those aged 75 or older. There were no differences between men and women.

78% of internet users agreed that they could access information about their local authority in the way they would like, compared with 62% of non-users.

Again, responses varied depending on where people lived. There was a 24 percentage point difference between the highest and lowest proportions. The proportion of people in Denbighshire, Caerphilly and Pembrokeshire that agreed they could access information in the way they wanted was higher than the national level of 76%. In contrast the results for people living in Powys, Merthyr Tydfil, Isle of Anglesey and Blaenau Gwent were below the national level.

### **Further analysis – know how to find what services the local authority provides**

More in-depth analysis was undertaken to find out which groups of people were most likely to strongly agree that they knew how to find what services their local authority provides.

We used a statistical method sometimes known as “controlling for other factors”<sup>4</sup> to study each factor’s link with the outcome of interest, in this case people who strongly agreed that they knew how to find out about services, whilst holding the values of other factors constant.

The following factors each had a separate link with people agreeing that they knew how to find out about services, when other factors were controlled for<sup>5</sup>:

- being aged 45 or over;
- being an internet user;
- having qualifications above ‘A’ level<sup>6</sup>;
- having high well-being<sup>7</sup>; and
- being a Welsh speaker.

As with all analysis of this type we are unable to attribute cause and effect between the main statement and the associated factors, or to take account of factors that we didn’t measure.

---

<sup>4</sup> This analysis is known as logistic regression. Information about the method can be found in [Regression analysis](#)

<sup>5</sup> The factors controlled for were gender, age group, local authority, whether an internet user, respondent qualifications, economic status, limiting long-term illness, area deprivation, material deprivation, mental well-being score, satisfaction with life, whether a Welsh speaker, tenure, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, valleys taskforce area

<sup>6</sup> Qualifications – see [Terms and definitions](#)

<sup>7</sup> Well-being score – see [Terms and definitions](#)

## Local authorities: decision making

Respondents were asked whether they felt they could influence decisions affecting their local area (national indicator 23). 19% of people agreed that they could influence local area decisions, a similar result to that in 2016-17.

Younger people were more likely to agree they could influence decisions affecting their local area, as 26% of 16-24 year olds agreed, compared with 15% of those aged 75 and older. There were no differences between men and women. People without a limiting long-term illness were also more likely to agree that they have a chance to influence decisions affecting their local area, as 20% of these people agreed, compared with 15% of those with a limiting illness.

18% of people who are white (Welsh, English, British etc.) agreed they could influence decisions affecting their local area, compared with 27% of those of a non-white ethnic group.

## Further analysis: influence on decision making

Cross-analysis indicates that various factors may be associated with the people who feel they can influence local area decisions. However, these factors are often linked to each other (for example, people with a limiting long-term condition may also be older). To get a clearer understanding of the effect of each individual factor we have used statistical methods<sup>8</sup> to separate out the individual effect of each factor. These methods allow us to look at the effect of one factor while keeping other factors constant – sometimes called “controlling for other factors”.<sup>9</sup>

We found that the following factors are those most closely linked to people who agree that they can influence decisions affecting their local area:

- being aged 16 to 44;
- being satisfied with their local area as a place to live; and
- feeling safe when at home and when walking or travelling in their local area.

Levels of life satisfaction were also linked with agreement but no pattern emerged in either direction. However, when other factors were held constant the analysis no longer found that having or not having a limiting long-term condition was associated with a person agreeing that they could influence decisions. As with all analysis of this type we are unable to attribute cause and effect or to allow for factors not measured in the survey.

---

<sup>8</sup> This analysis is known as logistic regression. Information about the method can be found in [Regression analysis](#)

<sup>9</sup> The factors we controlled for were: age, gender, whether a child in household, respondent qualifications, tenure type, material deprivation, area deprivation, satisfaction with life, ethnicity, limiting long-term illness, satisfaction with local area, feeling safe at home and when walking and travelling in local area.

## Local authorities: budget setting

14% of people agreed that the local authority asks people for their views before setting its budget. This has increased since 2017-18, where 12% agreed.

There is a difference between people with and without a limiting long-term illness, with 13% of those with a limiting long-term illness agreeing with the statement, compared with 15% of those without.

People living in Pembrokeshire, Caerphilly, Wrexham and Gwynedd all had a higher proportion of people who agreed, that the local authority asks for people's views before setting the budget, than the national level of 14%. Levels of agreement were below the national average in Blaenau Gwent, Powys, and Vale of Glamorgan.

## Services and facilities available in local area

Respondents were also asked to state which of the services and facilities listed in Chart 2 were available in their local area. It is important to note that the definition of "local area" was the respondent's own interpretation. Shops, public transport links (regardless of quality and frequency), pubs/restaurants, and primary schools were all reported to be available in the local area by at least 80% of people. 3% of people said they have none of the listed services or facilities available in their area; 58% of these live in hamlets and isolated dwellings.

Of those with a sports centre or club in their local area, 37% played sport 3 or more times a week, compared with 28% of those without a sports centre or club in the area.

**Chart 2: Percentage of people who had the listed service or facility in their local area**

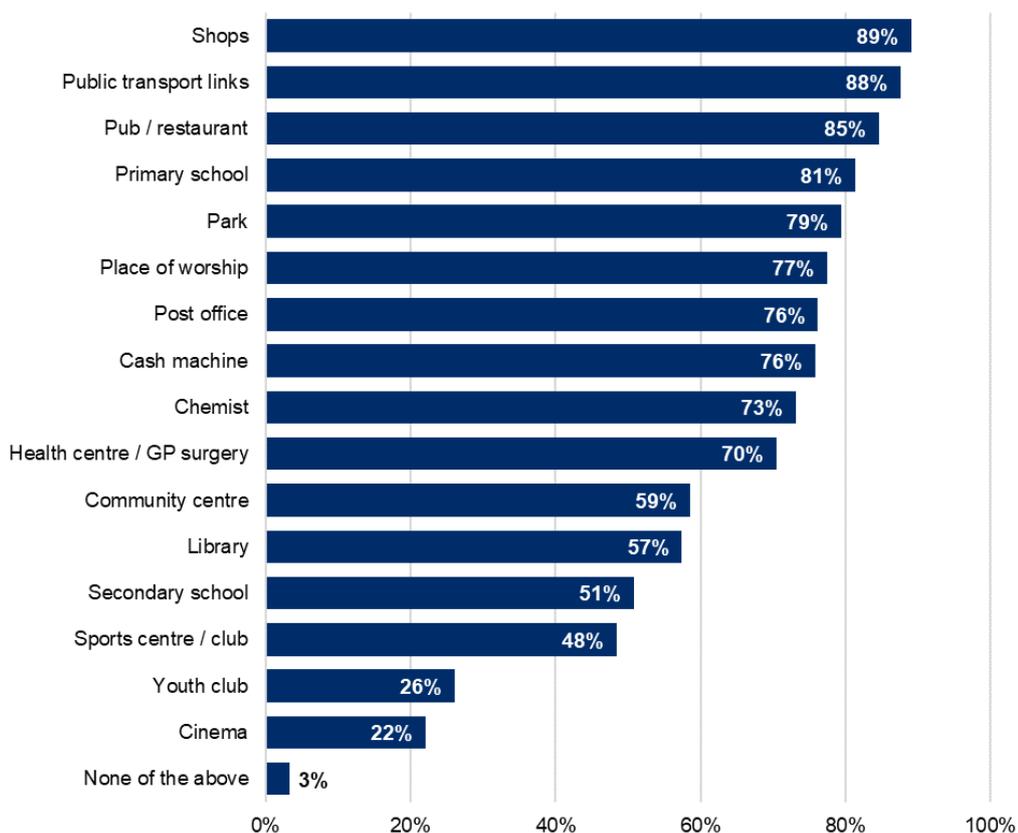
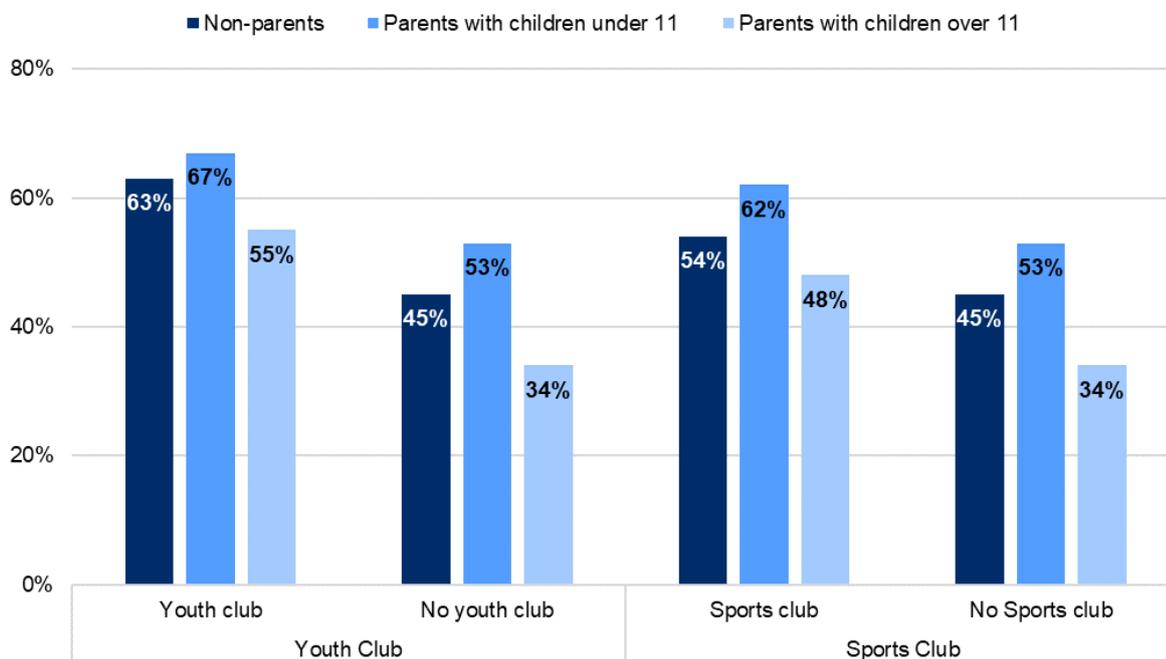


Chart 3 shows that the availability of local youth clubs and sports clubs appears to improve people’s satisfaction with places for children to meet up and play. Both parents and non-parents showed higher rates of satisfaction when these facilities were available, compared with people living in areas without such clubs.

**Chart 3: Satisfaction with place to play, by presence of sports club or youth club**



### Satisfaction with availability of local services and facilities

Overall 69% of people were satisfied that good services and facilities were available in their local area: 27% said they were very satisfied and 42% were fairly satisfied.

Satisfaction with local services and facilities varied by area deprivation as measured by the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD)<sup>10</sup>. Those living in the 20% least deprived areas were more likely to be satisfied (76%), compared with 69% in the most deprived 20%. 65% of people in material deprivation<sup>11</sup> were satisfied, compared with 70% of those not in material deprivation.

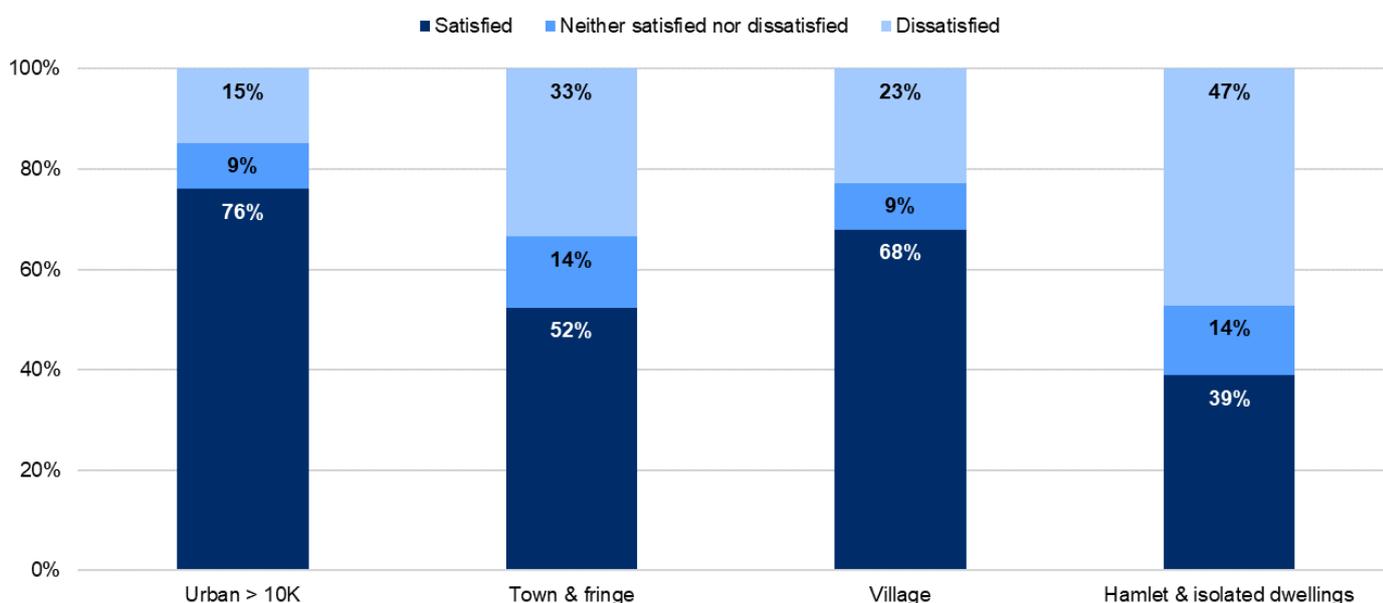
People with a limiting long-term illness were less likely to be satisfied with local services and facilities. 66% of those with a limiting long-term illness felt satisfied, compared with 71% of people without such an illness.

Chart 4 shows that people in urban areas, with more than 10,000 inhabitants, were more likely to be satisfied. 76% of people in urban areas were satisfied, compared with 52% of people in town and fringe areas, 68% in villages, and 39% in hamlets and isolated dwellings.

<sup>10</sup> WIMD – see [Terms and definitions](#)

<sup>11</sup> Material deprivation – see [Terms and definitions](#)

**Chart 4: Satisfaction with local services and facilities, by urban/rural area<sup>12</sup>**



69% of people who are white (Welsh, English, British etc.) were satisfied with local services and facilities compared with 78% of those of a non-white ethnic group.

People who were satisfied with their local services were more likely to be satisfied with their local area as a whole and feel like they belong in their local area. 90% of those who were satisfied with local services and facilities were also satisfied with the area as a place to live, compared with 72% of those who were dissatisfied with local services and facilities. 75% of those who were satisfied with local services and facilities also felt they belonged to their local area, compared with 67% who were dissatisfied.

80% of people were satisfied with the recycling collection service provided by their local council. 72% of people who were satisfied with the service were also satisfied with the availability of local services and facilities as a whole, compared with 56% who were dissatisfied.

71% of people agreed their local authority keeps them informed about its recycling collection service. 72% of people who agreed that they could access information about their local authority in the way they would like also agreed that their council keeps them informed about its recycling service. This compares with 58% who disagreed that they could access information about their local authority in the way they would like but thought that they were kept informed about recycling.

## Satisfaction with ability to access services and facilities



80% of people were satisfied with their ability to access local services and facilities (national indicator 24). This is an increase from 2017-18, when 77% of people were satisfied.

<sup>12</sup> Urban/rural – see [Terms and definitions](#)

People living near public transport links<sup>13</sup> were more likely to feel satisfied with their ability to access local services and facilities. 81% of those who have public transport links available in their local area were satisfied, compared with 70% of those without.

Living in an urban area<sup>14</sup> also increased the likelihood of satisfaction. 84% of those living in an urban area of over 10,000 people were satisfied, which was higher than those living in smaller town & fringe areas (67%), villages (77%) and hamlets & isolated dwellings (65%).

### **Further analysis: access to services and facilities**

More in-depth analysis was undertaken to find out which groups of people were most likely to be satisfied with their ability to access their local services and facilities.

As before, we used a statistical method sometimes known as “controlling for other factors”<sup>15</sup> to study each factor’s link with the outcome of interest, in this case people who were satisfied with their ability to access local services and facilities, whilst holding the values of other factors constant.

The following factors each had a separate link with being satisfied with the ability to access local services and facilities, after other factors were controlled for<sup>16</sup>:

- living near public transport links;
- having use of a car;
- being in good or very good health;
- being under 75 years of age;
- not living in material deprivation; and
- living in an urban area of more than 10,000 people.

As with all analysis of this type we are unable to attribute cause and effect or to allow for factors not measured in the survey.

---

<sup>13</sup> Near public transport links – this is the respondent’s own interpretation, people were asked whether or not public transport was available in the local area, regardless of the quality or frequency of the service.

<sup>14</sup> Urban/rural – see [Terms and definitions](#)

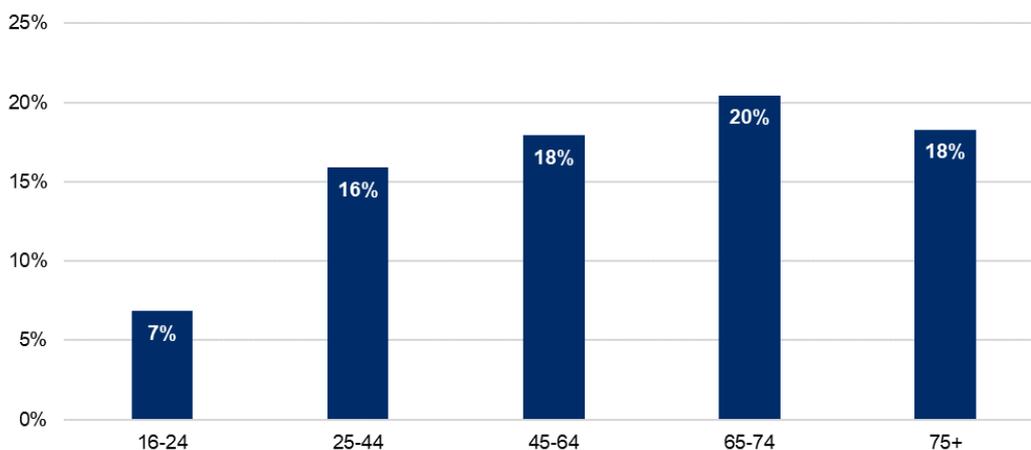
<sup>15</sup> [See regression analysis](#)

<sup>16</sup> The factors we controlled for were age, local authority, access to a car, access to public transport links, urban/rural areas, limiting long-term illness, general health, material deprivation, area deprivation, satisfaction with life, whether an internet user, respondent qualifications, economic status, tenure, gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and Valleys Taskforce area.

## Local democracy: contacted local councillor

A series of questions on local councillors were included in the National Survey in 2018-19. 16% of people had contacted their local councillor in the previous 12 months. This was the same result as in 2016-17 but an increase from 12% in 2014-15.

**Chart 5: Percentage of people who had contacted their local councillor in the previous twelve months, by age group**



Proportions of people who had contacted their local councillor varied by age group. 7% of those aged 16-24 had contacted their local councillor, compared with 20% of those aged 65-74. A breakdown by all age groups can be seen in Chart 5. There were no differences between men and women.

Those who are white (Welsh, English, British etc.) were more likely to have contacted their local councillor in the last 12 months than those of a non-white ethnic group, 17% compared with 12%. 14% of people with no religion had contacted their local councillor in the previous 12 months compared with 18% of people who are Christian.

## Local democracy: understanding of local councillors' role

36% of people agreed that they understand what their local councillor does for the community. 14% strongly agreed and 21% tended to agree.

The proportion of people who said they understand what their local councillor does increased with age: from 21% of 16-24 year olds to 48% of those aged 75 and older. There were no differences between men and women.

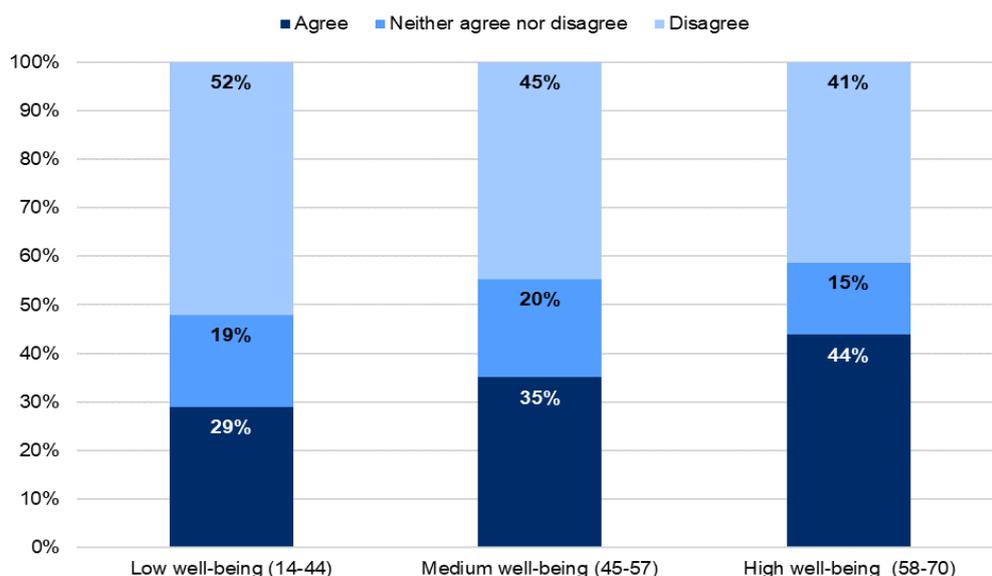
People with a high mental well-being score were more likely than those with medium and low scores to say they understand what their local councillor does: 44% of those with high mental well-being, compared with 29% of those with low mental well-being.

40% of people living in the least deprived 20% of areas<sup>17</sup> agreed they understand what their local councillor does for the local community, compared with 31% in the most deprived 20% of areas. 29% of people in material deprivation<sup>18</sup> agreed they understand the role of their local councillor, compared with 37% of those not in material deprivation.

<sup>17</sup> WIMD – see [Terms and definitions](#)

<sup>18</sup> Material deprivation – see [Terms and definitions](#)

**Chart 6: Proportion of people who agreed/disagreed they understand the role of their local councillor, by mental well-being score**



Proportions of people who agreed they understand the role of their local councillor varied from 26% to 48% across local authorities. People in Denbighshire and Flintshire were most likely to agree, whereas those living in the Vale of Glamorgan and Torfaen were most likely to disagree. Once again, it should be noted that this difference is more likely to be due to differences in population makeup than differences between how the councils operate.

### Further analysis: understanding of local councillors' role

More in-depth analysis was undertaken to find out which groups of people were most likely to understand the role of their local councillor.

As before, we used a statistical method sometimes known as “controlling for other factors”<sup>19</sup> to study each factor’s link with the outcome of interest, in this case people who agreed that they understood the role of their local councillor, whilst holding the values of other factors constant.

The following factors each separately associated with understanding the role of the local councillor, when other factors were controlled for<sup>20</sup>:

- Being aged 45 or older;
- having high mental well-being<sup>21</sup>; and
- living in owner occupied or social housing.

As with all analysis of this type we are unable to attribute cause and effect between the main statement and the associated factors, or to take account of factors that we didn’t measure.

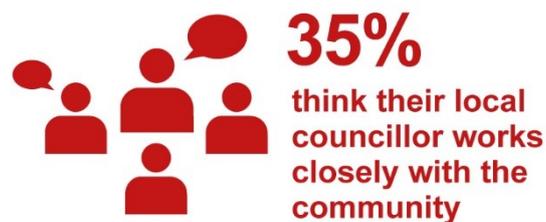
<sup>19</sup> Regression – see [Regression analysis](#)

<sup>20</sup> The factors we controlled for were: age, gender, religion, ethnicity, local authority, mental well-being score, satisfaction with life, whether internet user, respondent qualifications, economic status, tenure, material deprivation, area deprivation, whether a child in household, limiting long-term illness, and Valleys Taskforce area

<sup>21</sup> Well-being score – see [Terms and definitions](#)

## Local democracy: local councillor works with the local community

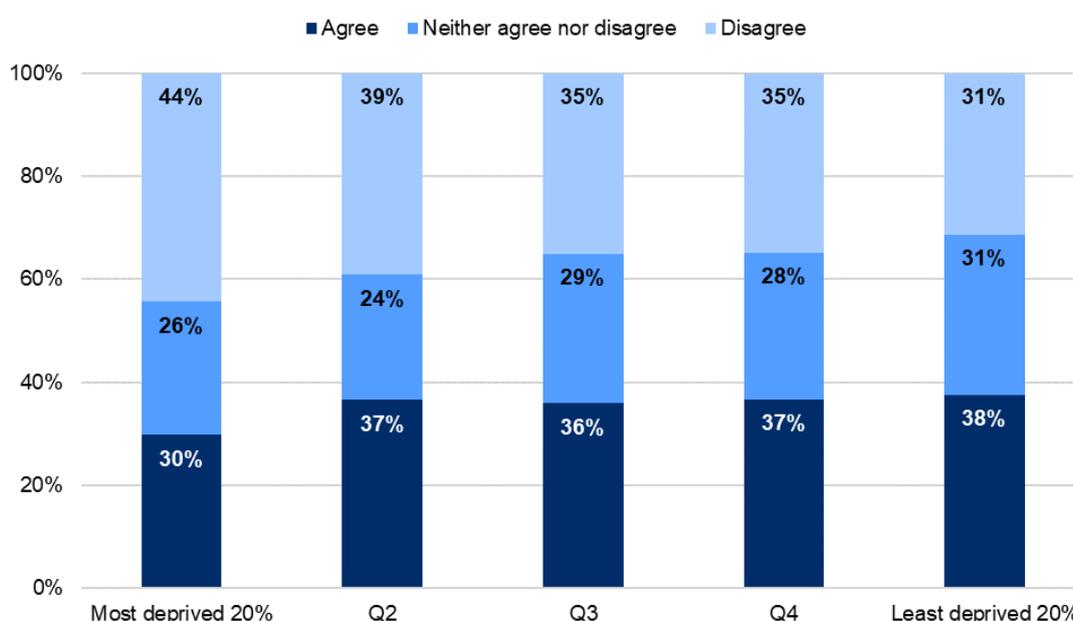
35% of people agreed that their local councillor works closely with the local community. This breaks down to 14% who strongly agreed, 21% who tended to agree and 37% of people who disagreed. 28% said they neither agreed nor disagreed.



Agreement with this statement increased as age increased: 24% of those aged 16-24 agreed, compared with 48% of those aged 75 and older. There were no differences between men and women. People living in urban areas were less likely to agree that their councillor worked closely with the local community than those living in more sparsely-populated areas.

Results varied by levels of area deprivation<sup>22</sup>. Chart 7 shows that 30% of people in the most deprived 20% of areas agreed their local councillor works closely with the community, compared with 38% in the least deprived 20%.

**Chart 7: Proportion of people who agreed/disagreed that their local councillor works closely with the local community, by level of area deprivation**



27% of those in material deprivation<sup>23</sup> agreed that their local councillor worked closely with the local community, compared with 37% of those not in material deprivation.

The proportion of people who agreed their local councillor works closely with the local community varied between local authorities, from 21% to 49%. Highest proportions of agreement were in Denbighshire, Gwynedd and Flintshire. The lowest proportions were in Caerphilly, Torfaen and Vale of Glamorgan. Again, it should be noted that this difference is more likely to be due to differences in population makeup than differences between how the councils operate

<sup>22</sup> Welsh index of multiple deprivation (WIMD) in five quintiles from 'Most deprived 20%' to 'Least deprived 20%' – see [Terms and definitions](#)

<sup>23</sup> Material deprivation – see [Terms and definitions](#)

## Terms and definitions

### Qualifications

Respondents' highest qualifications have been grouped according to the National Qualification Framework (NQF) levels, where level 1 is the lowest level of qualifications and level 8 is doctoral degree or equivalent. For the National Survey, respondents have been grouped into 5 groups, those with no qualifications are in the lowest category and respondents with qualifications at levels 4 to 8 have been grouped together in the highest qualification category.

To provide more meaningful descriptions of the qualifications, the following short descriptions have been used in this bulletin.

National Qualification Framework levels	Short description used in bulletin
NQF levels 4-8	Degree level and above (Level 4+)
NQF level 3	'A' level and equivalent (Level 3)
NQF level 2	GCSE grades A to C and equivalent (Level 2)
Below NQF level 2	GCSE below grade C (below Level 2)
No qualifications	No qualifications

### Urban / rural

"Urban" includes settlements with a population of 10,000 or more and small towns and their fringes, where the wider area is less sparsely populated. "Rural" includes all other areas.

### Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD)

The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) is used as the official measure of deprivation in Wales. Deprivation is a wider concept than poverty. Deprivation refers to wider problems caused by a lack of resources and opportunities. The WIMD is constructed from eight different types of deprivation. These are: income, housing, employment, access to services, education, health, community safety and physical environment. Wales is divided into, 1,909 Lower-Layer Super Output Areas (LSOA) each having about 1,600 people. Deprivation ranks have been worked out for each of these areas: the most deprived LSOA is ranked 1, and the least deprived 1,909. For this bulletin, we have grouped the people living in the 20% of LSOAs that are most deprived based on WIMD score and compared them against the 20% of the LSOAs that are least deprived.

### Material deprivation

Material deprivation is a measure which is designed to capture the consequences of long-term poverty on households, rather than short-term financial strain. Non-pensioner adults were asked whether they had things like 'a holiday away from home for at least a week a year', 'enough money to keep their home in a decent state of decoration', or could 'make regular savings of £10 a month or more'. The questions for adults focussed on whether they could afford these items. These items are really for their 'household' as opposed to them personally which is why they were previously called 'household material deprivation'. Pensioners were asked slightly different questions such as whether their 'home was kept adequately warm', whether they had 'access to a car or taxi, when

needed' or whether they had their hair done or cut regularly'. These also asked whether they could afford them, but also focussed on not being able to have these items for other reasons, such as poor health, or no one to help them etc. these questions were less based on the household and more about the individual. Those who did not have these items were given a score, such that if they didn't have any item on the list, they would have a score of 100, and if they had all items, they had a score of 0. Non-pensioners with a score of 25 or more were classed as deprived and pensioners with a score of 20 or more were classed as deprived. Parents of children were also asked a set of questions about what they could afford for their children. In this bulletin the non-pensioner and pensioner measures of deprivation are combined to provide an 'adult' deprivation variable. The terms 'adult' and 'household' deprivation may be used interchangeably depending on context.

### **Mental well-being (WEMWBS)**

The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale is a standard scale composed of 14 questions designed to measure respondents' mental well-being. These questions were not asked by the interviewer, respondents were provided with a laptop in order to answer these sensitive questions themselves. The statements covered both "feeling" and "functioning" aspects of well-being.

Respondents were shown the following statements and asked how often they experienced these feelings over the previous 2 weeks

- 'I've been feeling optimistic about the future'
- 'I've been feeling useful'
- 'I've been feeling relaxed'
- 'I've been feeling interested in other people'
- 'I've had energy to spare'
- 'I've been dealing with problems well'
- 'I've been thinking clearly'
- 'I've been feeling good about myself'
- 'I've been feeling close to other people'
- 'I've been feeling confident'
- 'I've been able to make up my own mind about things'
- 'I've been feeling loved'
- 'I've been interested in new things'
- 'I've been feeling cheerful'

These questions have 5 responses, and corresponding scores:

1. None of the time
2. Rarely
3. Some of the time
4. Often
5. All of the time

Scores from the 14 questions are combined to give an overall score ranging from 14 to 70, where higher scores suggest higher mental well-being.

Scores were grouped, with scores of 58-70 defined as high mental well-being, 45-57 defined as medium mental well-being and 14-44 defined as low mental-wellbeing.

## **Key quality information**

### **Background**

The National Survey for Wales is carried out by The Office for National Statistics on behalf of the Welsh Government. The results reported in this bulletin are based on interviews completed in 2018-19 (1 April 2018 – 31 March 2019).

The sample was drawn from the Royal Mail Small Users Postcode Address File (PAF), whereby all residential addresses and types of dwellings were included in the sample selection process as long as they were listed as individual addresses. If included as individual addresses on the PAF, residential park homes and other dwellings were included in the sampling frame but community establishments such as care homes and army barracks are not on the PAF and therefore were not included.

The National Survey sample in 2018-19 comprised 24,762 addresses chosen randomly from the PAF. Interviewers visited each address, randomly selected one adult (aged 16+) in the household, and carried out a 44-minute face-to-face interview with them, which asked for their opinions on a wide range of issues affecting them and their local area. A total of 11,922 interviews were achieved.

### **Interpreting the results**

Percentages quoted in this bulletin are based on only those respondents who provided an answer to the relevant question. Some topics in the survey were only asked of a sub-sample of respondents and other questions were not asked where the question is not applicable to the respondent. Missing answers can also occur for several reasons, including refusal or an inability to answer a particular question.

Where a relationship has been found between two factors, this does not mean it is a causal relationship. More detailed analysis is required to find whether a factor causes change in another.

The results are weighted to ensure that the results reflect the age and sex distribution of the Welsh population.

## **Quality report**

A summary [Quality Report](#) is available, containing more detailed information on the quality of the survey as well as a summary of the methods used to compile the results.

## **Sampling variability**

Estimates from the National Survey are subject to a margin of uncertainty. Part of the uncertainty comes from the fact that any randomly-selected sample of the population will give slightly different results from the results that would be obtained if the whole population was surveyed. This is known as sampling error. Confidence intervals can be used as a guide to the size of the sampling error. These intervals are calculated around a survey estimate and give a range within which the true value is likely to fall.

In 95% of survey samples, the 95% confidence interval will contain the 'true' figure for the whole population (that is, the figure we would get if the survey covered the entire population). In general, the smaller the sample size the wider the confidence interval. Confidence intervals are included in tables of survey results published on StatsWales.

As with any survey, the National Survey is also subject to a range of other sources of error: for example, due to non-response; because respondents may not interpret the questions as intended or may not answer accurately; and because errors may be introduced as the survey data is processed. These kinds of error are known as non-sampling error, and are discussed further in the quality report for the survey.

## **Significant differences**

Where the text of this release notes a difference between two National Survey results (in the same year), we have checked to ensure that the confidence intervals for the two results do not overlap. This suggests that the difference is statistically significant (but as noted above, is not as rigorous as carrying out a formal statistical test), i.e. that there is less than a 5% (1 in 20) chance of obtaining these results if there is no difference between the same two groups in the wider population.

Checking to see whether two confidence intervals overlap is less likely than a formal statistical test to lead to conclusions that there are real differences between groups. That is, it is more likely to lead to "false negatives": incorrect conclusions that there is no real difference when in fact there is. It is also less likely to lead to "false positives": incorrect conclusions that there is a difference when there is in fact none. Carrying out many comparisons increases the chance of finding false positives. Therefore, when many comparisons are made the conservative nature of the test is an advantage because it reduces (but does not eliminate) this chance.

Where National Survey results are compared with results from other sources, we have not checked that confidence intervals do not overlap.

## **Regression analysis**

Where further analysis has been carried out selection of the initial variables used in the regression was based on; the results from cross-analysis, policy direction, and the practicality of using the variable. The results for some factors were only available for a sub-sample of respondents, or there were a large number of 'missing' results which resulted in a substantial drop in the sample size on which the regression model could be tested. For this reason some variables/factors were

omitted from the investigation. The final models consisted of those factors that remained significant even after holding the other factors constant. These significant factors are those that have been discussed in this bulletin and the use of regression analysis is indicated by the statement that we have 'controlled for other factors'. It is worth noting that had a different range of factors been available to consider from the survey, then some conclusions about which factors were significant may have been different.

More details on the methodology used in the regression analysis in this report are available in the [Technical Report: Approach to regression analysis and models produced](#).

## Technical report

More detailed information on the survey methodology is set out in the [technical report for the survey](#).

## National Statistics status

National Statistics status means that our statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value, and it is our responsibility to maintain compliance with these standards.

The continued designation of these statistics as National Statistics was confirmed in 2017 following a compliance check by the Office for Statistics Regulation [[letter of confirmation](#)]. These statistics last underwent a full assessment [[full report](#)] against the Code of Practice in 2013.

Since the latest review by the Office for Statistics Regulation, we have continued to comply with the Code of Practice for Statistics, and have made the following improvements:

- provided more detailed breakdowns in the Results viewer and made it easier for users to compare results across years;
- updated the survey topics annually to ensure we continue to meet changing policy need; and
- made regression analysis a standard part of our outputs to help users understand the contribution of particular factors to outcomes of interest.

## Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG)

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act puts in place seven well-being goals for Wales. These are for a more equal, prosperous, resilient, healthier and globally responsible Wales, with cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. Under section (10)(1) of the Act, the Welsh Ministers must (a) publish indicators ("national indicators") that must be applied for the purpose of measuring progress towards the achievement of the Well-being goals, and (b) lay a copy of the national indicators before the National Assembly. The 46 national indicators were laid in March 2016, and this release includes two of the national indicators namely:

- the percentage of people who feel able to influence decisions affecting their local area (indicator 23); and
- the percentage of people satisfied with their ability to get to/ access the facilities and services they need (indicator 24).

Information on the indicators, along with narratives for each of the well-being goals and associated technical information is available in the [Well-being of Wales report](#).

Further information on the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#).

The statistics included in this release could also provide supporting narrative to the national indicators and be used by public services boards in relation to their local well-being assessments and local well-being plans.

## **Further details**

The document is available at: <https://gov.wales/local-democracy-and-access-services-national-survey-wales-april-2018-march-2019>

## **Next update**

Not a regular output

## **We want your feedback**

We welcome any feedback on any aspect of these statistics which can be provided by email to [surveys@gov.wales](mailto:surveys@gov.wales).

## **Open Government Licence**

All content is available under the [Open Government Licence v3.0](#), except where otherwise stated.

