CLIMATE EMERGENCY CITIZEN SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS ANALYSIS

INSIGHT AND PERFORMANCE, BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AND CHANGE
BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 BE HEARD SURVEY

The Climate Emergency Citizen survey took place on Birmingham's online consultation platform, Be Heard, between 20 Jan and 21 Feb 2020. There were 1,394 total respondents.

The purpose of the survey was to engage with Birmingham citizens to find out about their awareness and understanding of climate change and the climate emergency, as well as understand what barriers people face and what can be done differently to ensure everyone can make positive changes to help tackle climate change.

This report covers all the results from the survey, including both quantitative and qualitative responses.

Note: The survey took place before the impact of COVID-19 on the UK became a major issue. This should be borne in mind, particularly for themes and comments concerning public transport and working from home.

1.2 FOCUS GROUPS

The Council also commissioned One Black Bear to understand more about specific groups of audiences, their thoughts on climate change, and what sort of engagement and communications on this issue would work best for them.

This was done through a series of focus groups and tele-depths (in-depth telephone interviews) with six audience groups centred around Experian segments[1] - Senior Security, Transient Renters, Family Basics, Urban Cohesion, Vintage Value, and Municipal Challenge. Details of their findings can be found at Section 8.

[1] Experian segmentation is centred around grouping households with similar sociodemographic characteristics into different 'segments'.

2. KEY FINDINGS

2.1 OVERALL ATTITUDES TOWARDS CLIMATE CHANGE IN BIRMINGHAM (SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS)

The survey and focus groups outcomes are not strictly comparable due to differing socio-demographics and different methodologies used to research how they felt about climate change.

Additionally, the survey and focus groups demographics are not necessarily reflective of Birmingham's demographics, but the research did cover a wide range of demographic groups and attitudes.

Across both the survey and focus groups, **most agreed that Birmingham's climate is changing,** with only a few sceptical responses. The respondents to the survey were more passionate and knowledgeable about climate change. Those in the focus groups, however, were more uncertain and felt that they didn't know enough. This could be due to the nature of self-selecting surveys, i.e. that those who have an interest in a topic are more likely to answer a survey about it than those who don't.[2]

There was a lot of agreement on **what could be improved to help people or organisations impact climate change**:

- Cost and accessibility of relevant facilities, products and services, and the lack thereof, was very important.
- The quality of public transport was criticised.
- **Cheaper and more accessible public transport** was a priority for both groups, as well as making **recycling and waste collection easier** to do. A wider range of options and more information available to the public for both services were considered crucial, e.g. more transport links, more recycling facilities.
- **Small changes**, such as reducing the use of plastic bags, seem to be the easiest for people to accept.
- Raising awareness and education: authorities need to **inform and educate** on what people can do and the best way to do it, to help people make better decisions for the environment in a convenient, and easy to understand way.

2.2 BE HEARD SURVEY FINDINGS

VIEWS, CAUSES, AND IMPACTS

Most respondents are **knowledgeable about different aspects and impacts of climate change** and related environmental issues, with proportions who are knowledgeable never falling below 91% on each aspect.

Most respondents **believe** in the existence of climate change and its impact, with almost all agreeing that climate change is occurring (95%), that there is a climate emergency (89%) and that it will affect their family and friends (90%).

Most respondents are extremely concerned about it (70%).

[2] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Self-selection_bias

INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS

MOST POPULAR INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS

What people already do:

- Bringing their own bag for shopping (98%)
- Turn off lights when leaving the room (94%)
- Use energy efficient light bulbs (93%)
- Plastic, paper or glass recycling (94 – 95%)
- Double glazed windows (90%)

What people are willing to do:

- Install solar panels (65%)
- Buy locally produced products (57%)
- Avoid buying products with non-recyclable packaging (55%)
- Compost food waste (47%)
- Use a green energy provider (43%)

What people would not consider doing:

- Eat less dairy (24%)
- Install water meters (19%)
- Install solar panels (19%)
- Install smart energy meters (16%)
- Buy second-hand items (15%)

The most popular forms of transport were walking (26%) or using a diesel/petrol car (25%).

WHAT WOULD ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO DO MORE – IN THE HOME; TRAVEL, WASTE AND RECYCLING; WHAT TO EAT, BUY AND USE

Overall, **cost and affordability** have a major influence on what would encourage people to do more, as well **as quality of services, accessibility of suitable facilities and businesses**, and **more education** on what people can do.

In the home

- Cost of green products and services are inhibitive
- Impartial information and advice
- Financial assistance with cost of solar panel loans
- Financial incentives, tax rebate or returns on expenditure to help with cost

Travel/Transport

- Improved, reliable, cheaper, safer, and more integrated and accessible public transport
- Improvements to walking and cycling provision in the city
- Prohibitive cost of electric vehicles

Waste and Recycling

- Reduce - Supermarkets, manufacturers and the Government have a big part to play in reducing waste, excessive packaging and single use plastics
- Recycling Service - Better information/education is needed around reliable and easy to use waste and recycling collections
- Recycling Streams - Introduction of food waste recycling and the provision of neighbourhood/local recycling and composting facilities

Disincentives

- A lack of trust that collected recycled waste is actually recycled rather than going to landfill, and
- A lack of recycling facilities in apartments and flats

What to Eat, Buy, And Use

- Too expensive to eat, buy and use in a sustainable fashion – affordability is key
- Availability of sustainable options to buy from supermarkets, including clear labelling and reduction or total removal of single use plastic
- More accessible and clear information to improve understanding
- Accessibility of local shops, independent businesses and farmers' markets

YOUR VIEWS ON HOW DIFFERENT PEOPLE AND GROUPS CAN HELP TO TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE

Overall, **improving public transport and recycling and refuse services**, as well as **more education and awareness**, were the main themes across how different groups could help tackle climate change.

Individuals, Businesses and Communities

- Transport - Improve public transport, reduce reliance on cars, and improve cycling and walking facilities
- Packaging - Reducing single use items and excessive plastic packaging
- Recycling - Improved recycling facilities and increasing recycling rates
- Education - Increasing awareness, information and knowledge sharing

The Council

- Recycling - Improve recycling and refuse options available, including suggestions on how to do so
- Awareness - Duty to ensure the population has access to information, including a greater focus on sustainability in school education
- Transport - Improvements to public transport a major factor, including higher quality, more affordable, and a broader range of transport options. Also, improving cycling and walking infrastructure.

The Government

- Government financial investment in the country to help combat climate change - financial incentives, subsidies or grants
- Transport - encourage the use of public transport through better quality and accessible services
- The Government to enforce or create regulations to encourage changes towards better practices and take climate change more seriously

- Energy efficiency – supporting greener and more renewable sources of energy such as solar panels and relevant home/building improvements

DEMOGRAPHICS

The most popular demographic categories for survey respondents:

- Age: In their 30s and 40s (43.6%)
- Sexuality: Heterosexual or straight (74%)
- Long-term health conditions: None (73%)
- Ethnicity: White (92%)
- Gender: Female (57%)
- Religion: No religion (53%)

2.3 FOCUS GROUPS

1. Residents' worries are **closer to home or reactionary to national news** (e.g. health, their local area, financial concerns). Climate change never spontaneously came up, and resident knowledge of its impact was low. Few are sure about what is happening, or why.

2. Although doubt of climate change existing is rare **there were mixed thoughts regarding who or what is responsible,** along with feeling helpless over being able make any impact.

3. **Children** could prove to be **the emotional driver** with which to engage with residents, especially those with children/grandchildren.

4. There is an **overarching sense of shame** from many of the groups for not having enough or being able to buy the best. Some were already engaging in environmentally friendly behaviours because of financial circumstances, e.g. **buying second hand, using public transport**, and there should be encouragement of these actions, not stigmatisation.

5. Encourage cohesion and **sharing of ideas to help between communities**, not just from positions of authority.

6. **Educate and inform** across all touchpoints and tailor the messaging.

7. **Small enforcements** work, e.g. the carrier bag charge which has effectively changed behaviours and raised awareness.

8. **Cleaning up local areas** is essential to engage residents and encourage changes in behaviour. **Make recycling easier** for residents, with bigger bins and more collections.

9. Explain **the benefits to residents**, followed by the additional environmental benefit., e.g. financial savings by turning items off or making some dietary changes.

10. Everything is interconnected, and the focus could be on 'be kinder to you, be kinder to Birmingham, be kinder to the planet'; often these changes will **benefit the individual as much as the collective.**

Specific demographics were not available, but the main groups involved were diverse urban communities, older people, short-term renters, and families/individuals on low incomes or receiving state support.

SECTIONS 3 – 7 COVER DETAILED RESULTS FOR THE BE HEARD SURVEY

3. YOUR VIEWS ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Figure 1: Changing climate

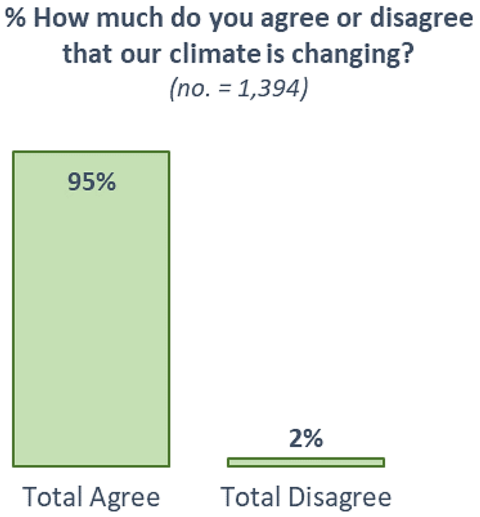
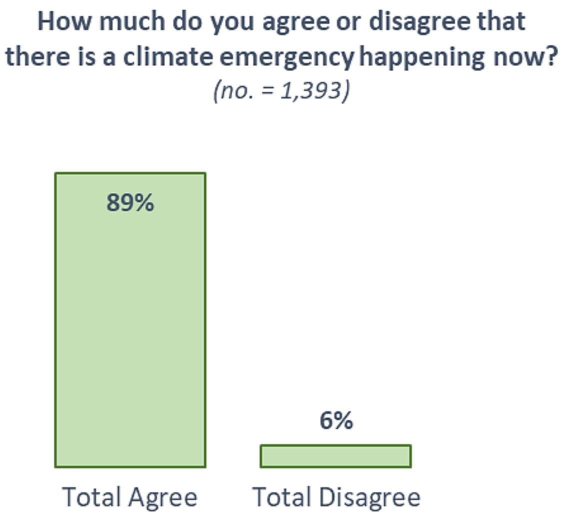
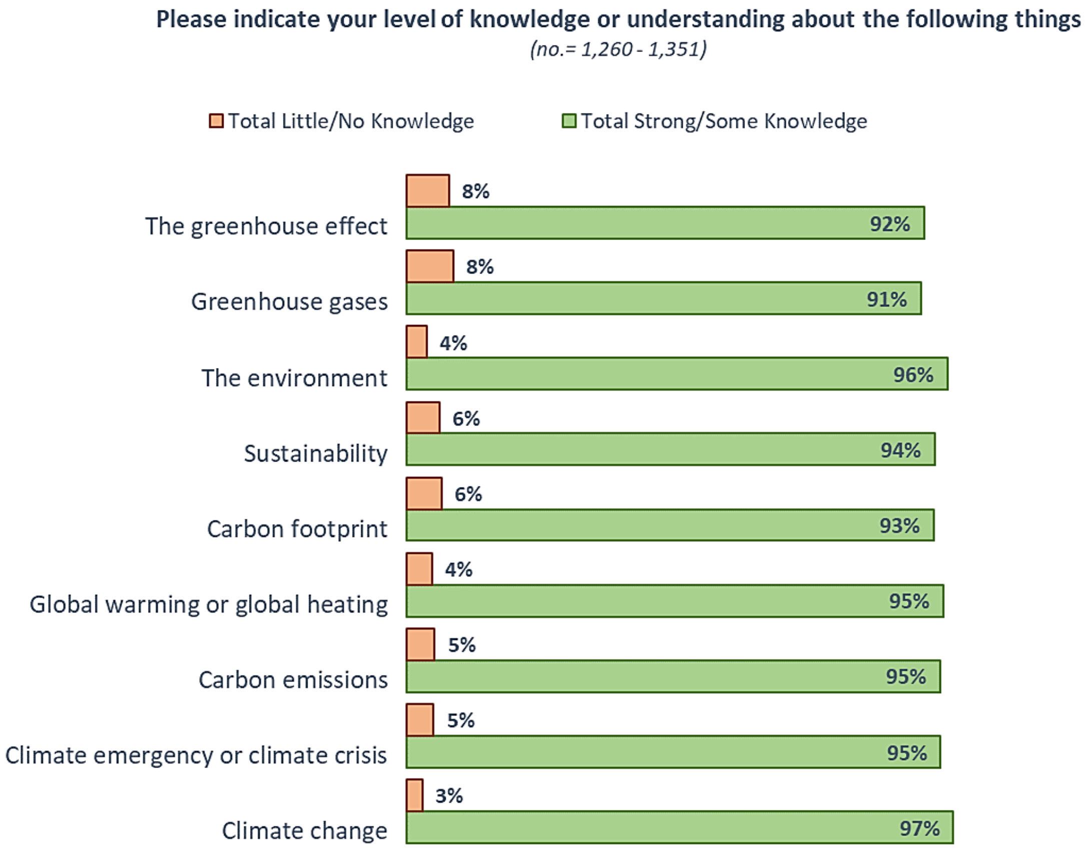


Figure 2: Climate Emergency



Almost all respondents agree that there is climate change and that a climate emergency is happening now.

Figure 3: Knowledge/Understanding



91% or more of respondents said they had strong or some knowledge of all listed aspects of climate change and the environment.

Figure 4: Causes

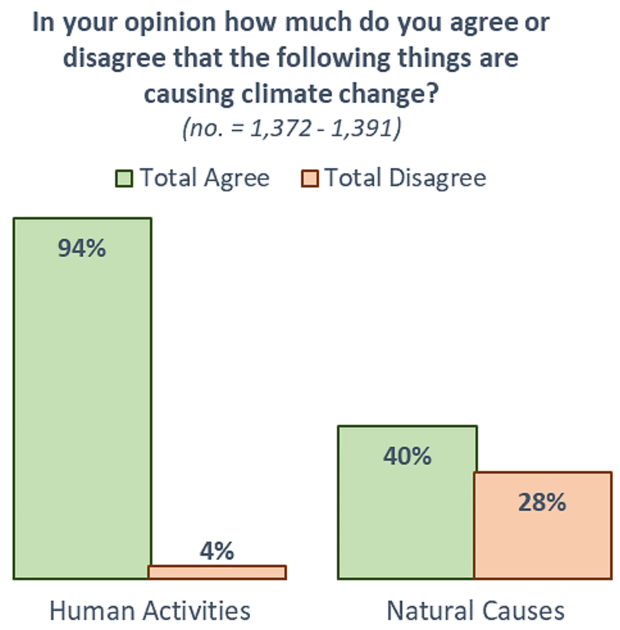
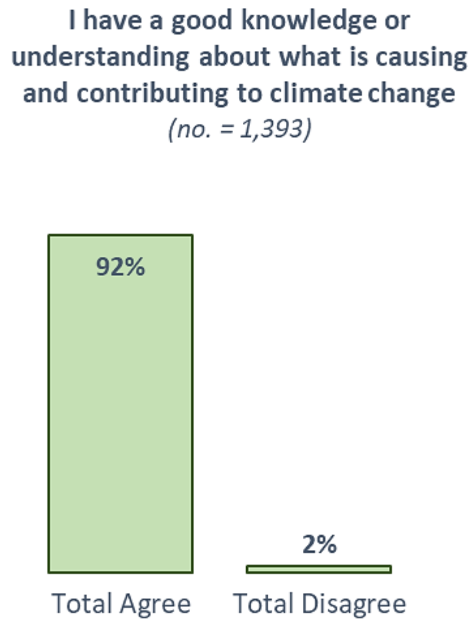


Figure 5: Knowledge



Most respondents agree that human activities are causing climate change but are more split on whether natural causes have had an impact.

For natural causes, nearly a third (30%) answered Neither Agree Nor Disagree. This may be due to a lack of knowledge on whether natural causes are causing it, or uncertainty over what 'natural causes' means in terms of this question. Given that the majority say that they have good knowledge over climate change causes (92%), it is unlikely to be due to a lack of knowledge over natural causes.

Also, the high proportion who say they have good knowledge of climate change causes reflects the high level of environmental knowledge in the previous question's results (see Section 3). Along with the high level of agreement over whether there is climate change and a climate emergency, this suggests most respondents to this survey already have an established interest and knowledge of environmental issues. Therefore, this survey will less reflect the views of those who do not.

5. UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Figure 6: Impact on family

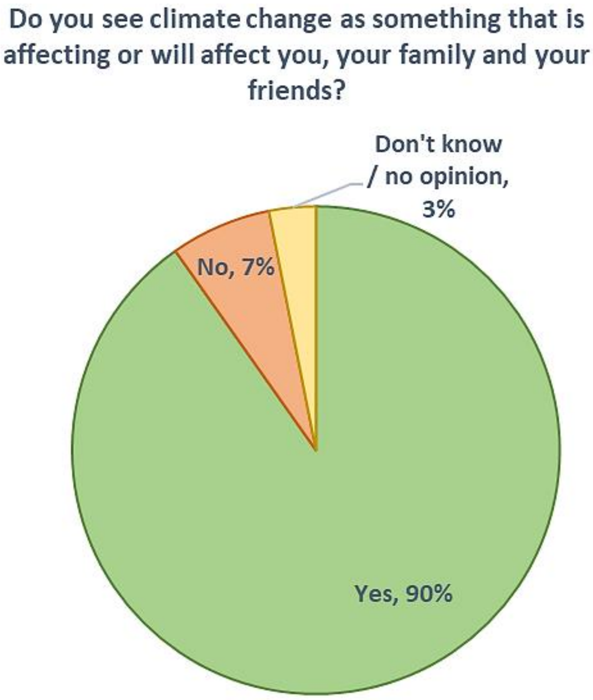
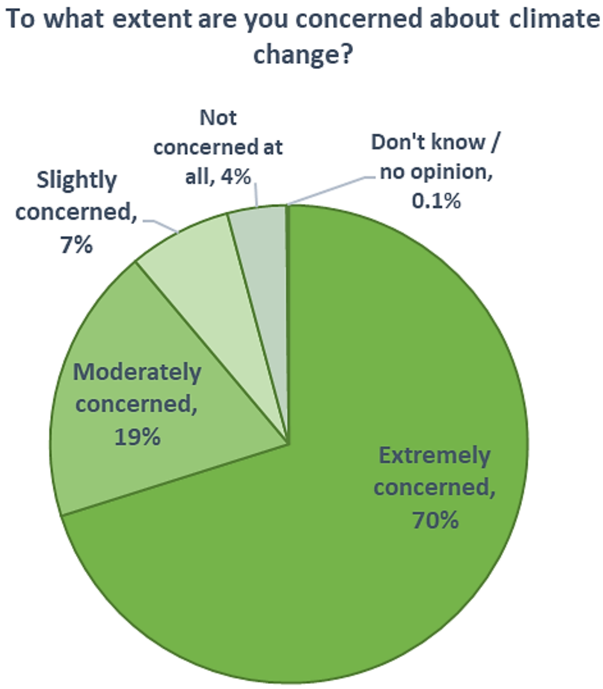
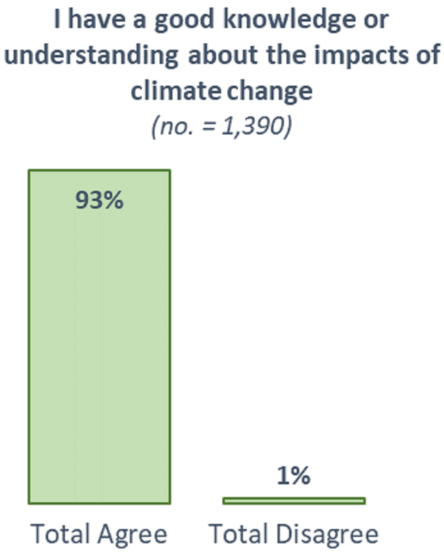


Figure 7: Concern



Concern over climate change and its impacts are high for the majority of respondents. Almost all think it will impact their family and friends, and the majority are extremely concerned about it. This is not surprising considering that most respondents think there is a climate emergency happening (see Section 3).

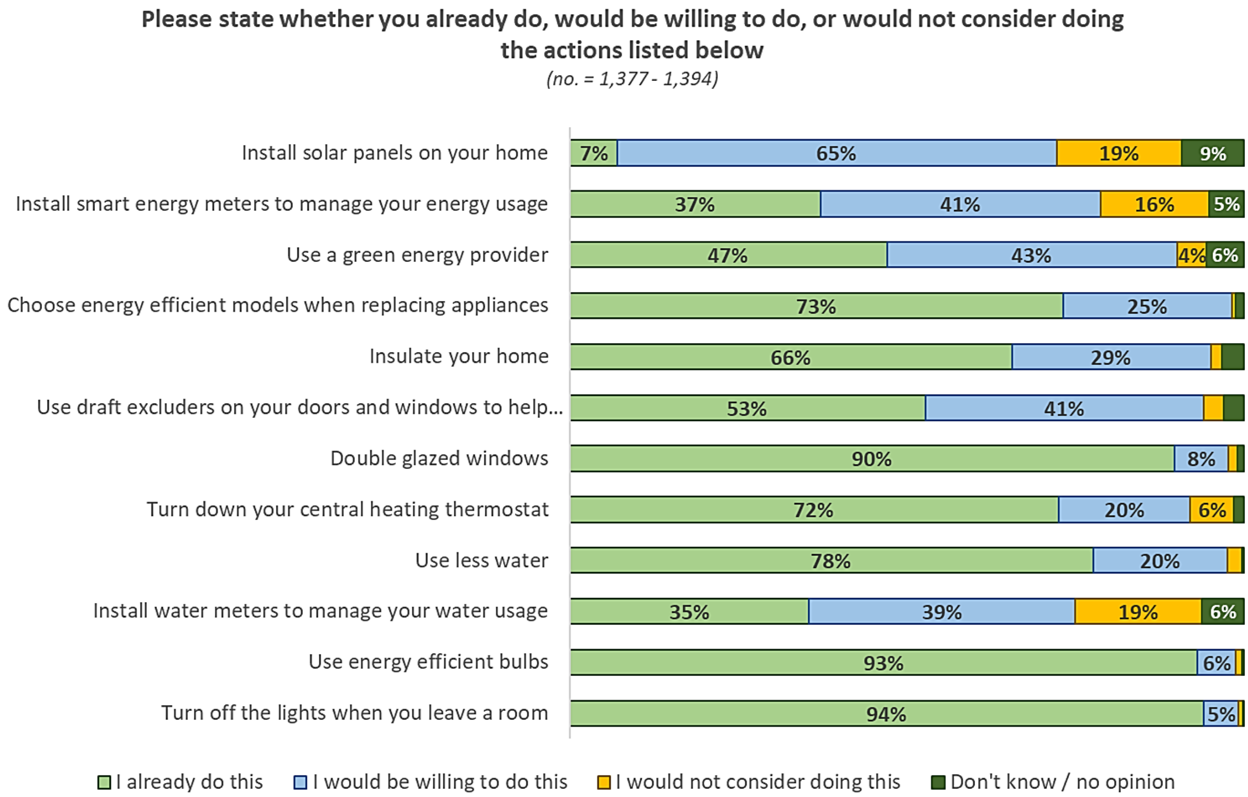


Almost all respondents believe they are knowledgeable about climate change impacts. This ties in with the high level of knowledge/understanding from previous questions on climate change and the environment.

6. YOUR VIEWS ON INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS

6.1 IN THE HOME

Figure 8: Actions in the home – willing to do



The results are positive overall, with high proportions already doing or willing to do a particular action to help with energy efficiency and other issues in the home.

Actions with the highest proportions 'already doing this':

Turning the lights off when leaving a room had the highest proportion – this does not have any cost attached to it and is already a well-known habit to save money.

Replacing older products with **new energy efficient products** – lightbulbs (93%) and appliances (73%) – also had high proportions who already did this.

Most respondents also say they already have **double glazing**, which ties in with statistics that show most households do have it[3].

Actions with the highest proportions 'willing to do this':

Solar panels by far had the highest proportion not currently but willing to do this (65%). However, this action also had one of the highest percentages of 'not consider doing this'. This could likely be due to the expense of solar panel installation, or being in a property not suitable for this, such as a rented property, flat, etc.

Energy management also had high proportions who were willing to install smart energy meters and use a green energy provider. However, **smart meter installation** for both energy and water usage also had amongst the highest proportions who would not consider it.

[3] English Housing Survey: Energy Efficiency of English Housing. July 2015. ONS & MCLG.

IN THE HOME - WHAT WOULD ENCOURAGE YOU TO DO THESE THINGS MORE?

In the Home part of the climate change survey received 1,012 responses including comments and suggestions.

The top themes were:

- Cost inhibitive (26%)
- Information and advice (18%)
- Solar panel loans, assistance or grants (17%)
- Financial incentives, tax rebate or returns on expenditure (14%)

The most popular theme relates to the **cost of products and services,** which could be classed as green, being out of reach in affordability to many: *"A lot of this simply comes down to cost. We insulated the house when there was a scheme. We do have double glazed windows, but they are 20 years old and we cannot afford to replace them although they are not as efficient as we would like. I would be happy to install solar panels but again could not afford it. It always seems to be the middle-income earners who are expected to be able to afford things like this and are offered little or no support and yet our budgets only go so far too."*

Respondents also wanted to be able to **receive impartial information and advice**, perhaps regulated and made available via Government or councils. People were not sure where they could go for trustworthy advice or surveys on their home, feeling that a company would only try to sell their products without the possibility of genuine need: *"better non-bias knowledge on energy providers via government."* Pre-approved suppliers and installers would people with a confident approach to do more in the home.

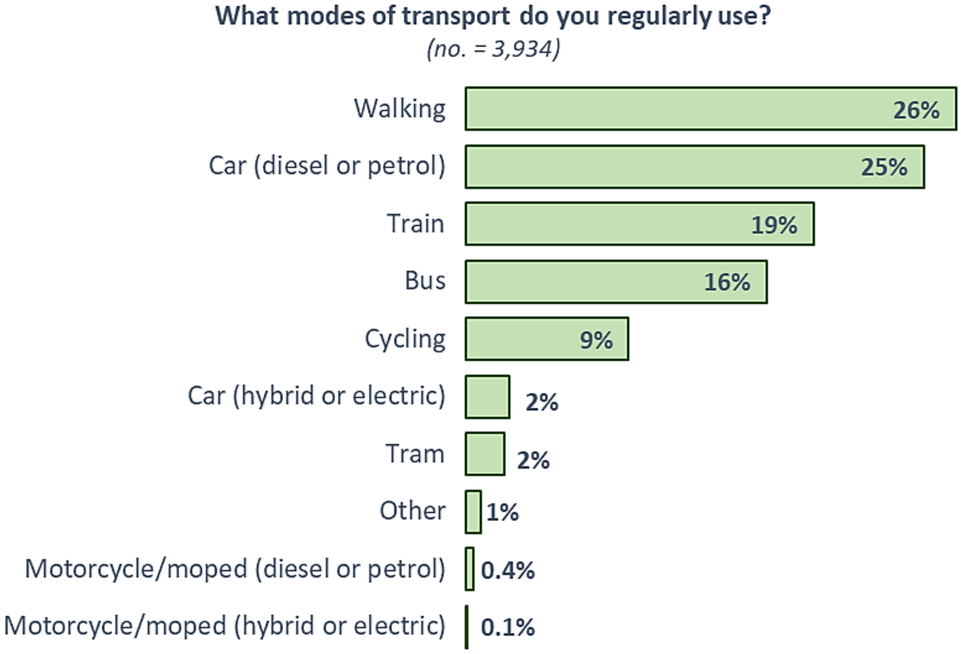
Comments in relation to **solar panels** was a big draw for many. Solar panels are seen as quite expensive for people to pursue and many recalled when there was a Government subsidy available for solar panels and other green products. There were suggestions for the **Government to bring back loans or grants to provide assistance** with costs and of course an independent body that does not just wish to sell but provides a guaranteed service.

Suggestions for **financial incentives, tax refunds or returns** were along the similar lines of cost inhibitive. If the cost of green products were lower or there was assistance towards the products, then they may well be more attractive. Tax refunds or returns were also seen as an incentive to move towards green products: *"Government incentives or tax relief for example would assist with these choices otherwise the payback is often not worth the change."*

There was also several comments where people felt they have done or **are already doing enough**. Some put this down to affordability, others unable to see that there was anything else they could do. Others were not convinced with the climate change agenda or felt that **Government and/or local councils should be leading by example** and 'going green' themselves, e.g. using and providing green energy providers, solar panels on their buildings and new builds being eco-friendly.

6.2 TRAVEL

Figure 9: Transport Use



Walking and cars are the most popular modes of transport, each with about a quarter of responses. Few of those who travel by car have a hybrid/electric vehicle.

Over a third of respondents (37%) travel by public transport (train, bus, tram). However, usage may be impacted in different ways by the following:

- Media concerns over safely using public transport due to COVID-19[4]
- Birmingham Clean Air Zone implementation this summer 2020

WHAT WOULD ENCOURAGE YOU TO USE MORE SUSTAINABLE AND ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY MODES OF TRANSPORT MORE OFTEN, OR MAKE FEWER JOURNEYS?

There were 1,188 total respondents to this question.

More than 60% of respondents wanted **improved, reliable, cheaper and much integrated and accessible public transport**. Cost was the most dominant issue. The cost of public transport often exceeds the cost of using vehicles.

There were also small numbers who felt public transport was **not safe or disabled friendly**. There were a few respondents who felt they could not change how they were travelling due to disability or work purposes or pointing out that it would be impossible on some journeys, e.g. carrying a weekly shop home on a bus. Safety is a theme which was directed towards all forms of public transport including cycling. *"Greater awareness of the safety implications (for women and children in particular) of walking or using public transport."*

[4] https://www.telegraph.co.uk/global-health/science-and-disease/coronavirus-time-stop-using-public-transport-no-walking-cycling/

Respondents mentioned the **lack of reliability**, problems with cancellations, ability to travel by a single integrated system like London's instead of having to negotiate different transport operators, and the **availability of public transport, especially for shift workers**, when public transport is poorly available or even non-existent e.g. Sundays or a night service. The length of time it takes to travel using public transport is also an issue with many responding that they use their vehicle because the public transport would put add lengthy extended travel times to their journey.

“This is not London where a GOOD transport system exists for you to make drastic changes because there isn’t a good system to replace it. There are older cars on the road because people can’t afford new ones which pump out less fumes. Where are the incentives to help? Those who can afford better cars can’t afford electric ones. Where’s the incentive for them? You don’t have enough local train systems and your bus connections around the city are appalling.”

The second biggest issue raised by respondents was the **improvements to walking and cycling provision** in the city (21.6%). Improvements suggested included: improved infrastructure to help people walk and cycle more, thereby reducing congestion in the city; exploring and enhancing additional safer cycling routes to help keep less confident cyclists off the roads, such as canal routes or even in parallel to train lines. In addition, safe and secure bike storage at place of employment and train stations, and employers providing more showering facilities for staff.

“I would not consider cycling on the roads at present-too dangerous. A separate cycle network would make me reconsider.”

About 8% of the respondents felt the **cost of electric vehicles** was a deterring factor in purchasing them. Respondents would switch to these modes if finances were made available or cost was to come down, with some mentioning that an increased number of charging points and a better range of electric cars would help.

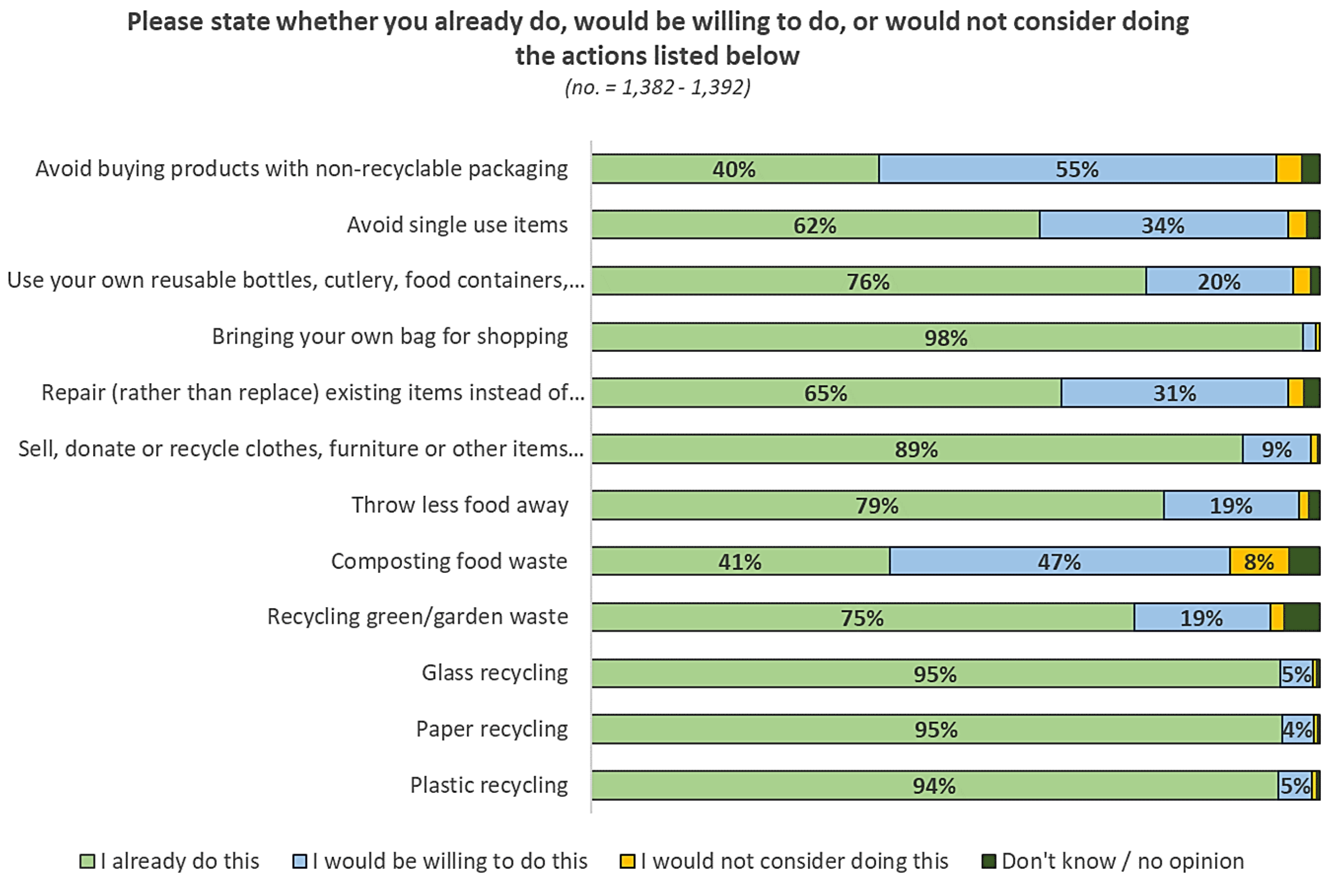
“More electric charging points and better management of existing ones would encourage me to replace my diesel car with an electric one.”

There were several other miscellaneous themes, particularly around respondents feeling that employers should allow **more home working** to ensure less travel. There were quite a few responses suggesting **local train stations** such as Kings Heath, Moseley, Sutton etc., **to be reopened**. Some other issues highlighted were improved better lit canals, clearer government legislation on what type of fuel is best and making local towns more vibrant. A small minority of respondents felt that the transport strategy was geared towards younger people and the needs of the wider population were not given priority.

Of 1,188 responses, 86 were not relevant to the question asked and ranged around "no comment", "Already use public transport", "can’t do more", and "live near work". There were a few who mentioned the use of car either due to work purposes or because of disability. Very few mentioned personal health problems or old age.

6.3 WASTE AND RECYCLING

Figure 10: Waste and recycling - willing to do



The results are positive overall, with high proportions already doing or willing to do a particular action to help with energy efficiency and other issues in the home.

Actions with the highest proportions 'already doing this':

Bringing your own bag for shopping (98%) – due to the introduction of a charge for plastic bags, plastic bag usage has decreased by over 90 percent, according to some estimates.[5]

Recycling of paper, glass, and plastic (94 - 95%) – there are kerbside collections for this across Birmingham.

Sell, donate or recycle clothes and other items also has a high proportion (89%). There are numerous charity shops across the city and in surrounding towns to which people can donate clothes and other items, with some local charities that will collect items from people's homes.

Actions with the highest proportion 'willing to do this':

Avoid buying non-recyclable packaging (55%) and **avoiding single use items** (34%) – this will depend more on what's available in local shops or online retailers.

Composting food waste (47%) – this would rely on being in a suitable property with outside space where it was possible to compost: e.g. a flat with no outside space would not be able to compost.

Repair existing items – most say they already do this, but there is a third willing to do this (31%).

[5] https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/jul/31/shoppers-use-of-plastic-bags-in-england-continues-to-fall

WHAT WOULD ENCOURAGE YOU TO DO MORE TO REDUCE YOUR WASTE AND RECYCLE AND REUSE MORE?

There were 1,041 respondents who commented on this question. Please note that respondents can comment on more than one theme. The main themes were around:

- Reduce (45.3%)
- Reuse (15.5%)
- Recycling Service (43.8%)
- Recycling Stream (31.3%)
- Disincentives (23.2%)

Reduce

The reduce category attracted the highest number of responses (45.3%). 60% of survey respondents thought that **supermarkets, manufacturers and the Government had a big part to play in reducing waste, excessive packaging and single use plastics**. Supermarkets were criticised for plastic packaging particularly on fruit and vegetables and multi pack items. Consumers were left with no choice but to buy products in plastic wrapping. Many would like to be able to return packaging back to the supermarket it came from. Manufacturers should shift their production to create more recyclable packaging and reduce excessive packaging.

Government action was also seen as a solution via legislation calling for a ban or imposing a system of fines or increasing taxation on all non-recyclable packaging: *"It's not for the consumer, it is the manufacturer and retailer to sort this problem out. The government needs to make them conform"*

Supporting zero waste supermarkets was the most popular way for the public to reduce plastic packaging.

Re-use

The re-use category attracted the **lowest number of responses** (15.5%). The most popular re-use option (6% of total respondents) was establishing within communities, **repair centres, community workshops, or repair cafes** where items that would otherwise have been thrown away were repaired - *"Basic workshops in repair skills would be good"*. Concerns were raised over repair costs being high and sometimes more expensive than replacing with a new item and that manufacturers by design were making repairs more difficult or building in obsolescence.

Second most popular was the ability to **refill their own bottles and containers picking** up both liquids and dry goods. Some supermarkets had started to make this possible in a small way and it was felt this should be expanded to more stores with a bigger product range. *“Companies delivering products direct to the door, that can be put straight into refillable containers”.*

Recycling Service

The recycling service was the second highest category for responses overall (43.8%) and the top three things that would make people recycle more were very close together. **Better information/education** came out top (15.4%). The recent strikes and disruption to the service was a factor in this and so the reliability of the collections was a constant issue raised. **Reliable and easy to use waste and recycling collections** came a close second (14.7%).

The two stand out issues here were firstly the **labelling on packaging** was seen to be unclear using a variety of symbols and labels that were not understood by the general public. Clearer labelling was needed across the industry. Secondly, there was confusion with the information issued by the Council about **what could and couldn't be recycled**, with greater detail needed on items that could be recycled.

In third place was the number of respondents who wanted to see a **greater range of material recycled** (14.6%). Respondents saw Birmingham as having a very limited range of recycling, particularly plastics. A constant request was for Tetra Pak to become part of mainstream recycling in Birmingham – *"Collecting a wider range of materials for recycling (tetrapaks, toothpaste tubes as examples) would be a huge benefit to many".*

Recycling Streams

Comments on the recycling streams were the third highest (31.3%). The introduction of food waste recycling and the provision of neighbourhood/local recycling and composting facilities accounted for the majority of responses in this category (24.6% of total survey respondents). *"Bring back recycling bins in e.g. supermarket car parks for glass, paper, textiles".*

Food waste: respondents were aware that this was already in place in a number of local authorities across the country and it was seen as the most popular way to increase recycling in Birmingham – *"Food waste recycling at the kerbside".* **The provision of neighbourhood/ local recycling and composting facilities** was particularly relevant to those without a car and/or were living in flats without recycling facilities - their recycling was put in the general household waste as there was no other alternative available (see disincentives to recycling below).

The third most commented stream (6.7%) related to the **garden waste collection** with a majority asking for this to be returned to a **free collection or the current fee reduced**. Many commented that individuals making separate car journeys to the household recycling centres with garden waste was itself adding to pollution.

Other responses were around why Birmingham was not selling the compost produced from garden waste as this could be used to offset collection costs. An idea to increase capacity of cardboard and paper recycling at no additional cost was to make the main body of the wheelie bin for paper and card and the pod for the other recyclable materials.

Disincentives

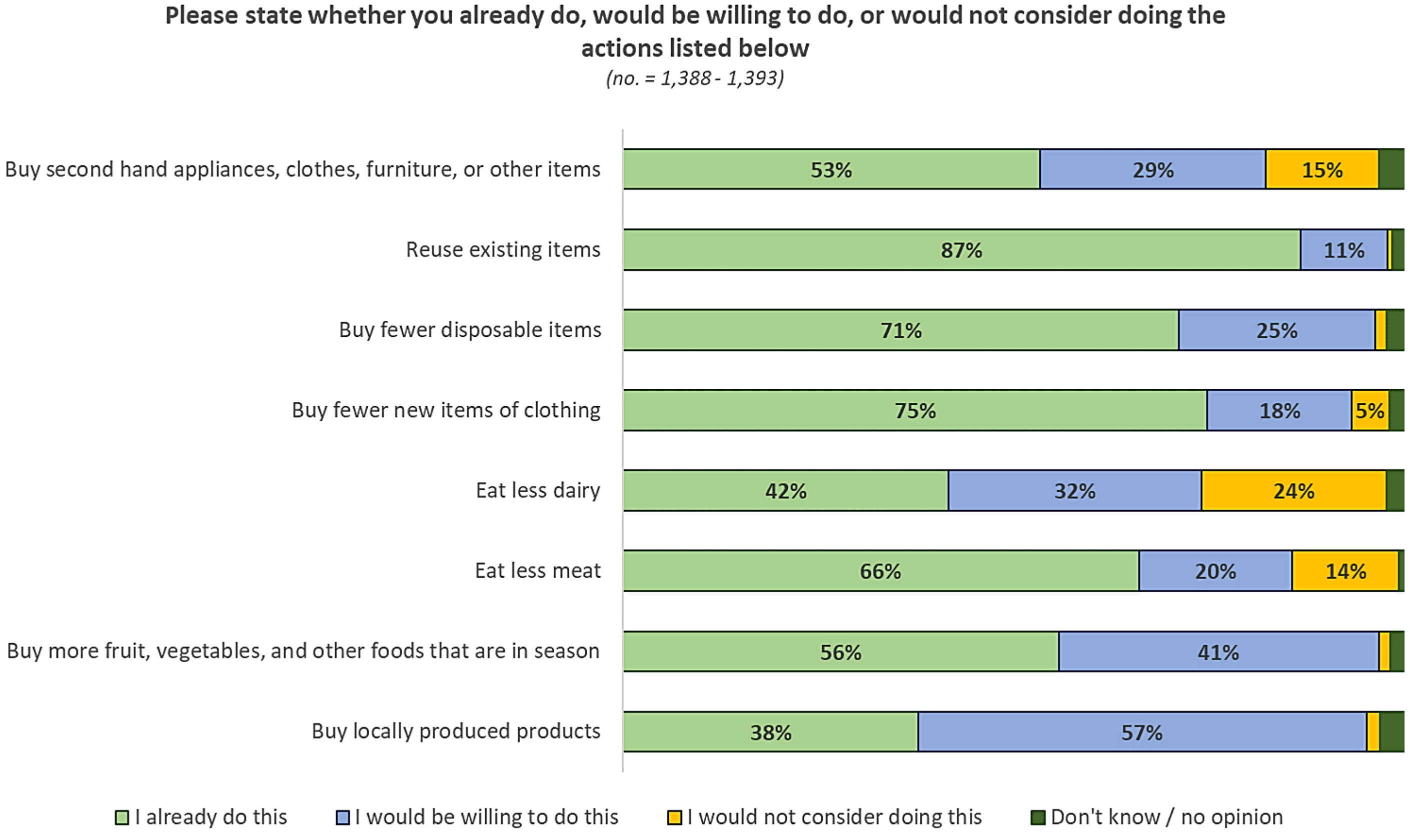
A number of disincentives to recycling were identified, accounting for 23.2% of total respondents. The biggest concern was one of **trust** (9.5%), with a number of respondents **wanting assurance that collected recycled waste is actually recycled rather** than going to landfill, incineration or shipped abroad. Many observed sorted recycled waste being put in the same bin lorry as domestic waste and so questioned if their recycling efforts were really worthwhile – *"I have observed all my carefully separated items being tipped in the general waste bin, seeing this happen discourages people who then lose trust in the Council".* The Council was criticised for being poor at informing residents what was being done with their recycling once it left the kerbside.

The second disincentive was the **lack of recycling facilities in apartments and flats** (5.6%). A number only had a general waste bin so effectively nothing was being recycled – *"My flat in the city centre has taken away the recycling bins! This means over 100 in the flat complex are no longer able to recycle items"*. There were no local or neighbourhood recycle points available to flat dwellers to allow them to recycle. A lack of recycling facilities was also noted in some council offices, schools and community centres.

Other disincentives included the concern that **unpackaged goods were often more expensive** than their plastic wrapped counterparts and made them unaffordable for many people. Although there was support for zero waste supermarkets there were concerns about accessibility both opening hours and limited locations. This would often require travel by car so adding to emissions and pollution.

6.4 WHAT YOU EAT, BUY AND USE

Figure 11: Eat, buy, use - willing to do



The results are positive overall, with high proportions already doing or willing to do a particular action to help with energy efficiency and other issues in the home.

Actions with the highest proportions 'already doing this':

Buying fewer items, including **disposable items** (71%) and **clothes** (75%), as well as **reusing existing items** (87%), are what most respondents are currently doing.

This trend ties in with the question on Waste and Recycling, where high proportions of respondents said they bring their own bags for shopping (98%) and repair items instead of replacing them (65%), and use their own reusable bottles, cutlery, etc (76%).

Actions with the highest proportion 'willing to do this':

Buying **locally produced products** (57%) and **seasonal food** (41%), were the most popular actions that people were willing to do. Transporting goods from other countries impacts on the UK's carbon footprint.

Nearly a third of respondents (32%) would be **willing to eat less dairy**. However, this action also had the highest proportion of respondents not willing to do it (24%), too.

WHAT WOULD ENCOURAGE YOU TO MAKE MORE SUSTAINABLE CHOICES WHEN DECIDING WHAT TO EAT, BUY, AND USE?

A total number of 812 individuals answered this question. Each answer contained a variety of responses, which were then categorised using 19 themes that were reoccurring.

The most common answer was that individuals found it **too expensive** to eat, buy and use in a sustainable fashion. Answers such as*, "simply can't afford to have principles"* and *"it's not easy to pay for this"* appeared frequently, with 25.2% of total respondents commenting on issues around the **affordability of items**, making this the most dominant out of all answers. Recommendations to combat this issue were also made, such as companies leading by example, including the Council by reducing rent for shops that are promoting sustainable behaviour, as this could help reduce the price of items sold. **Increasing tax on unsustainable choices** was also a common answer to resolve the issue of affordability, as respondents felt that unsustainable items are promoted through cheap prices and therefore become easier to buy.

The second most common answer was the **availability of options to buy from supermarkets** (22.7%). Many of the respondents felt that supermarkets had the responsibility to identify which foods were in season and local, with 10.5% of respondents advocating for **clear labelling** in order to make more informed and sustainable decisions. 8.5% stated that a **reduction or total removal of single use plastic** and excess waste packaging is crucial in the effort to become more sustainable, whilst holding supermarkets and large companies responsible.

"Supermarkets supplying food without plastic packaging...it's not always practical [sic] to go to a market".

20.7% of respondents said that by having **more accessible and clear information**, they would be able to improve their understanding of how to become more sustainable. Under this factor, there were several other issues that the respondents identified, such as clear labelling of carbon footprint (5.9%), better community networking to further educate the local population in sustainable practices (2.8%) and more refill, repair, recycle and swap shops (8.7%).

"Supermarkets should display 'in-season' and 'local' produce prominently, so that customers can shop those items first and then shop for other less-sustainable goods, in full knowledge of the impacts of their choices."

Accessibility of local shops, including **independent businesses and farmers' markets** was something that 15.6% of respondents stated would encourage them to make more sustainable choices. The absence of butchers, green grocers and other high street shops was held accountable as a factor that has prevented people from sustainable practices.

"Easy labelling and access to local foods and drink. Why isn't there a 'local goods supermarket' in Birmingham city centre?"

8.9% of the responses stated that they were either **already doing enough or nothing would encourage** them to make more sustainable choices.

7. YOUR IDEAS

The survey asked the following three free text questions for respondents to share their views and ideas on how different people and groups can help to tackle climate change.

7.1 WHAT CAN INDIVIDUALS, COMMUNITIES, AND BUSINESSES DO?

Of the 985 comments received, some of the main themes were:

- Transport (26.7%)
- Packaging (22.3%)
- Recycling (17.8%)
- Education (17.6%)
- Re-use (11.3%)

Transport was the most popular theme (26.7%). The main suggestions were to **improve public transport, reduce reliance on cars, and improve cycling and walking facilities**. Transport was also an important theme for what national Government could do to tackle climate change.

"Communities can work on encouraging more cycling, walking and reducing the use of cars."

"Individuals: Walk more, use public transport or car sharing where possible, Avoid flying"

Packaging was the second most popular theme (22.3%). **Reducing single use items and excessive plastic packaging** were the most common suggestions under this theme.

"Ban plastic carrier bags and non-reusable food containers."

"Avoid buying products/items with too much plastic packaging and also items that are plastic especially disposable plastic."

Recycling was another recurring theme (17.8%). **Improving recycling facilities** and **increasing recycling rates** were popular recommendations.

"Businesses need to tackle not easily recyclable packaging so the consumer has more choice not to have to get it."

Education in tackling climate change was considered important for individuals, communities and businesses (17.6%) **Increasing awareness, information and knowledge sharing** were common themes mentioned under this topic.

“Communities need education and we need honesty about what the health implications can be in the future.”

Re-use was also mentioned by some respondents (11.3%). The creation of sharing facilities for old items and community repair workshops and events were suggested.

"Set up forums for the sharing of goods/products, passing on secondhand items, reusing items."

7.2 WHAT CAN THE COUNCIL AND OTHER ORGANISATIONS DO?

A total of 1,059 individuals answered this question. Each answer contained a variety of responses, which were then categorised using 44 recurring themes.

The most common answer was that the Council should **improve the recycling and refuse options** available across the city (27.7% of respondents). These comments contained suggestions on how the Council could improve its recycling. Answers included issues around the Council not recycling Tetra Pak and other household items, with comparisons to other councils who are already doing so being made regularly.

"Introduce local recycling stations for recyclable items not collected in household waste such as hard plastic, tetra paks, paint etc "

"Advertising how to dispose of bulky waste and reducing the cost of doing so. Encouraging household composting. Advising on household systems for segregating waste."

Respondents also made recommendations, such as swapping the general refuse bin collection frequency with the recycling bin collection. This was suggested to **make people more aware of what they are disposing**, creating a general shift in attitudes and awareness towards sustainable behaviours. Similarly, 13.6% of respondents stated that the Council and other organisations have a duty to ensure the **population has access to information**, including a greater focus on sustainability in school education. 10.1% of respondents thought that the Council should lead by example.

"Run/ more widely advertise more sustainable options or community events. More green spaces and more recycling options."

"...I think that our children in all schools should be made aware and taught accordingly and educated so that they will automatically perform the new format of saving our planet which is needed."

The second most common answer was regarding transport (21.1%), with many calling for **improvements to public transport** (20.6%). Many of the respondents felt that to ensure Birmingham meets its net zero targets, it is important to make sure that public transport is at a standard that will enable a wider array of users. Respondents highlighted that the **affordability of public transport** must also improve, bus fares were highlighted as being more expensive than in London. 14.2% of respondents stated that improvements must be made to **walking and cycling infrastructure**, with a call for more pedestrian friendly initiatives, such as supermarket tokens for those who came without using a private car.

"Improve public transport - more regular, more links between areas without needing to go through town."

"Create low traffic zones with better routes for cycling, walking and using public transport."

Specific **food waste collections** were also suggested (4.9% of the responses). This strongly correlates with the general theme - that people think the Council's current refuse and recycling collection requires improvement.

7.3 WHAT CAN NATIONAL GOVERNMENT DO?

1,038 respondents commented on this question.

There were a number of interconnected themes from people's thoughts on what Government can do in terms of climate change. Respondents often discussed many different options within one response.

The most popular theme was on **financial investment** by Government to help combat climate change (29%). This included providing **financial incentives, subsidies or grants** (15%) to help individuals or businesses to be more environmentally friendly, or to invest more into research and transport infrastructure. There were also comments on more local funding, particularly to local government and businesses, to help empower them to do more at a local level.

".... Additionally, INVEST MONEY. Adapting quick enough to climate change will require major regional, local and national investment and this needs to be devolved to the appropriate levels. Make sure to invest in natural solutions (such as reforestation) as well as emission reduction efforts in order to meet targets."

Transport (29%) was another popular theme. This was centred particularly around how to encourage the use of **public transport** (18%), either through investment in better infrastructure, lower ticket costs, more reliable and high-quality services, or greater accessibility. There were also comments on how to increase electric vehicle usage (7%), either through grants, or through more charging points.

"Prioritise public transport over all other forms & ensure a regular, reliable, safe & clean services."

Another popular theme was calling on the Government to **enforce or create regulations to encourage changes** towards better practices (25%), particularly with businesses. In comparison with the incentives theme above, many respondents (12%) thought that **taxes and penalties** relating towards poor business practice would help, especially with larger companies. This included enforcing a carbon emissions tax on big businesses and industries, and taxing air and motor travel.

"Hold multi-nationals to account- Top down action is needed. There is no point of the average person getting their house in order when most emissions come from industry!"

Related to this, respondents in general wanted the Government to **take climate change more seriously** and focus on it more (21%). This included creating or enacting existing climate change legislation, making it a key focus across legislation generally, being a climate change leader on the international stage and working with other countries to improve environmental practices.

Energy efficiency was also raised by many respondents (19%), many of whom wanted the Government to support greener and more **renewable sources of energy** (17%), particularly solar panels, or encourage home improvements, such as insulation.

Other themes emerging from the comments included: reducing or banning non-recyclable packaging; raising awareness and promoting good practice across the country; a focus on protecting natural areas and green spaces, including planting trees and 're-wilding' areas; criticism of the fossil fuel industry, and of the meat & dairy industries.

8. FOCUS GROUPS

A company called One Black Bear were commissioned to understand more about people's thoughts on climate change through a serious of focus groups and telephone interviews.

8.1 OVERALL

- Residents' worries tend to be more focused on personal or local issues or national news (e.g. health, their local area, financial concerns). Climate change never spontaneously came up, it had to be raised in the discussion and many thought it referred to the weather. Some respondents made links between climate-related news stories, but few were sure about what is happening, or why. Respondents were even less able to identify how climate change is impacting them now, or how it will impact them in the future.
- Although few doubted the existence of climate change **cynicism regarding who or what is responsible was found**. There were mixed thoughts on where responsibility lies (i.e. Government/big business vs. individual responsibility) and some felt apathetic towards it, i.e. any changes they can make are pointless. There was often an undercurrent of climate change being too big a problem to comprehend and, therefore, tackle.
- Most think that the **responsibility for role modelling should come from both adults and children**. Children could prove to be the emotional driver with which to engage with residents, especially those with children/grandchildren.
- There is an **overarching sense of shame** from many of the groups for not having enough or being able to buy the best.

8.2 FOCUS GROUP AUDIENCES

The different audience groups were **broadly similar in attitudes and approaches**, however there were some key differences identified.

Senior Security are elderly people with assets who are enjoying a comfortable retirement. They are simultaneously the most engaged and the least engaged. Some had the **most knowledge, passion and informed choices** relating to climate change, however this group also had participants who were **unengaged and least likely to believe** in climate change.

Vintage Value are elderly people reliant on support to meet financial or practical needs. This group are making **good choices on the whole, but out of necessity rather than beliefs**. They were the group most likely to be influenced by those around them, in part due to their reliance on them. All felt that the Government should lead, and the general population should follow.

Family Basics are families with limited resources who have to budget to make ends meet. They are the group with **the least understanding** and for many, climate change is simply not on their radar. Some want to know more but there is **some confusion** about what climate change is and will mean to them. There is also a feeling that the **Government does not have any empathy towards them** or their lives.

Urban Cohesion are residents of settled urban communities with a strong sense of identity. This group is the most likely to be **angry and cynical about whose responsibility climate change is** and use that as a reason for not changing their behaviour. This group are those **living amongst fly tipping**, their environment made it difficult to have pride in it and want to take care of the planet more generally.

Transient Renters are single people privately renting low cost homes for the short term. This group had the **biggest concerns and were trying**. However, they were also the group who were **most defeatist in attitude** and felt that they were being expected to pick up the mess left by big corporations.

Municipal Challenge are urban renters of social housing facing an array of challenges. Similar to Vintage Value, this group are **making good choices but out of necessity**. Their financial situation dictates the choices they make; however, being told that it is good for the environment made them feel proud and happy. This is the group **most looking for help to recycle**, especially those who live in flats.

8.3 FURTHER FINDINGS

Most of the groups interviewed mentioned that it is **difficult to think about the environment when their immediate area was so run down**. There was a belief that immediate areas need to be cleaned up before people would start thinking more widely and that pride in their local area would help encourage better (and more environmentally friendly) behaviour.

The majority of people are **already recycling in some way**; however, the bin strikes did damage the belief that recycling takes place or makes a difference. All participants **try to reuse or take non-plastic bags** when shopping and the vast majority began to do this when carrier bag charges came into effect.

There was a mixture of initiatives identified that participants were doing in their homes, and these were often **driven by finances**. Generally, there was **a lack of understanding around energy usage** in the home. Smart and water meters have either been installed by the most environmentally engaged and the most financially savvy or are avoided out of a lack of understanding. Very few participants are using green energy suppliers.

When asked about purchasing goods, **very few participants made the link between consumption and climate change**, although they felt better about charity shop purchases when this link was pointed out. All participants donate to charity shops, but the language used to talk about buying from charity shops is associated with shame. There was less stigma attached to other ways of buying second-hand, such as online outlets. Those that did buy second-hand electronics did so for financial reasons, not environmental. Whilst **environmentally 'good' decisions were made when buying food, environment was rarely the driving factor** and attributed much more to finance or health reasons.

The groups interviewed were **mostly using public transport** as they generally can't afford private transport or could only afford older models. **Concerns were raised around public transport**, with the biggest issues being safety, cost, reliability and the network not being fit for purpose. Participants were understanding about the Clean Air Zone overall, however for those it is most likely to affect it was seen as frustrating and a money spinner.

8.4 COMMUNICATIONS RESPONSES

The participants were asked for their responses to types of communications regarding climate change and related issues.

It was found that **hard hitting or emotional campaigns have resonance**, are the most likely to be noticed, but need to be easily understood to really work. **Small changes** were felt to be manageable, but they need to be told what to do and what impact it will make.

8.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were identified:

- **Celebrate the less affluent groups in society who are already contributing positively.** One Black Bear found that these groups have a sense of residual shame of what they aren't doing or can't do. Second-hand should be de-stigmatised and should be a point of pride by celebrating those already doing it.
- Encourage cohesion and **sharing of ideas between communities**, not just from positions of authority.
- **Educate and inform across all touchpoints** and tailor the messaging dependent on the medium or placement, e.g. highlight the health benefits of walking as well as environmental benefits in healthcare locations.
- **Small enforcements work**, e.g. the carrier bag charge which has effectively changed behaviours and raised awareness.
- **Cleaning up the streets and local areas** is essential to engage residents and encourage changes in behaviour. Make recycling easier for residents, with bigger bins and more collections.
- Communications need to **focus on what's in it for the resident**, followed by the additional environmental benefit. Explain the benefits that matter to residents, e.g. financial savings by turning items off or making some dietary changes.
- Everything is interconnected, and often **positive environmental changes will benefit the individual** as much as the collective Birmingham.

APPENDIX 1: BE HEARD SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

Figure 12: Age Group

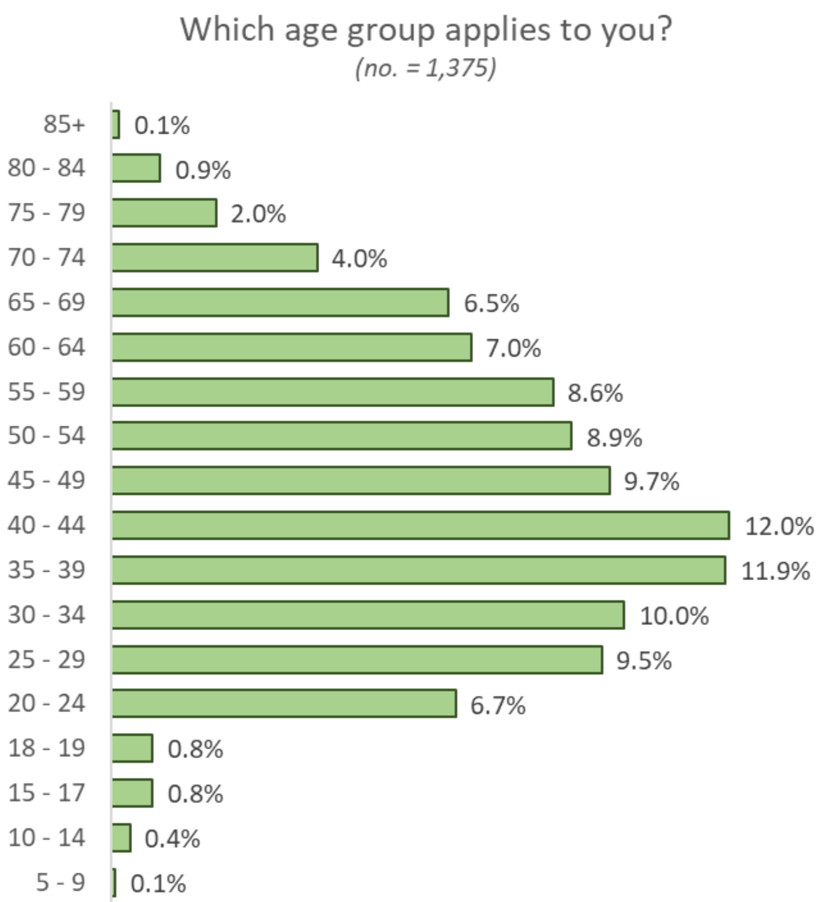


Table 1: Sexual Orientation

What is your Sexual Orientation?	% Total Respondents
Bisexual	4%
Gay or Lesbian	4%
Heterosexual or Straight	74%
Other	1%
Prefer not to say	16%
Total Respondents	100%

No. of respondents = 1,374

Table 2: Health Conditions

Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last for 12 months or more?	% Total Respondents
No	73%
Yes	17%
Prefer not to say	10%
Total Respondents	100%

No. of respondents = 1,373

Table 3: Detail of condition

Disability - conditions (Tick all that apply)	% Total Respondents
Vision (e.g. blindness or partial sight)	5%
Hearing (e.g. deafness or partial hearing)	15%
Mobility (e.g. walking short distances or climbing stairs)	22%
Dexterity (e.g. lifting and carrying and carrying objects, using a keyboard)	13%
Learning or understanding or concentrating	6%
Memory	8%
Mental Health	28%
Stamina or breathing or fatigue	21%
Socially or behaviourally (e.g. associated with autism, attention deficit disorder or Asperger’s syndrome)	7%
Other (please specify)	11%

Based on 343 respondents who put an answer for at least one condition

Note: percentages do not add up to 100% as respondents may have selected multiple conditions

Table 4: Ethnicity

Ethnicity	% of Total Respondents
Asian / Asian British	5%
Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	1%
Mixed / multiple ethnic groups	3%
Other Ethnic group	1%
White	92%

No. of respondents = 1,204

Note: percentages do not add up to 100% as respondents may have selected multiple ethnicities

Table 5: Gender

Gender	% of Total Respondents
Female	57%
Male	35%
Prefer not to say	8%
Total Respondents	100%

No. of respondents = 1,313

Table 6: Religion or belief

What is your religion or belief?	% of Total Respondents
No Religion	53%
Christian (including church of England, Catholic, Protestant, and all other Christian denominators)	30%
Buddhists	1%
Hindu	1%
Jewish	0%
Muslim	3%
Sikh	1%
Any other religion (please specify below)	2%
Prefer not to say	10%
Grand Total	100%

No. of respondents = 1,329

The most popular demographic categories for respondents:

- Age: In their 30s and 40s (43.6%)
- Sexuality: Heterosexual or straight (74%)
- Long-term health conditions: None (73%)
- Ethnicity: White (92%)
- Gender: Female (57%)
- Religion: No religion (53%)