

## Survey Responses

### **Carers Strategy 2025-2028 (Draft) Survey Results**

The Draft Carers Strategy 2025-2028 went out to public consultation on the 7<sup>th</sup> of October 2024 for 6 weeks. The consultation closed on the 17<sup>th</sup> of November 2024. We were keen to hear your views on the draft Carers Strategy particularly our six priorities (which are outlined below) and the delivery plan. It was important to us to get your feedback to help us shape the final strategy.

Six priorities identified:

1. Raise awareness and increase the identification of carers (including hidden carers) to enable them to access help and support.
2. Provide information and advice to carers and young carers.
3. Enable access to peer support groups for carers and young carers.
4. Support carers to improve their physical, mental, emotional and overall wellbeing.
5. Support carers and young carers to take breaks from caring.
6. Support a life outside caring to enable carers and young carers to achieve their potential.

We received 88 responses to the survey. Below is a breakdown of the responses:

- 96.59% from residents in West Berkshire
- 4.55% employed by West Berkshire Council
- 1.14% A West Berkshire Council Service Provider
- 4.55% other (did not specify)

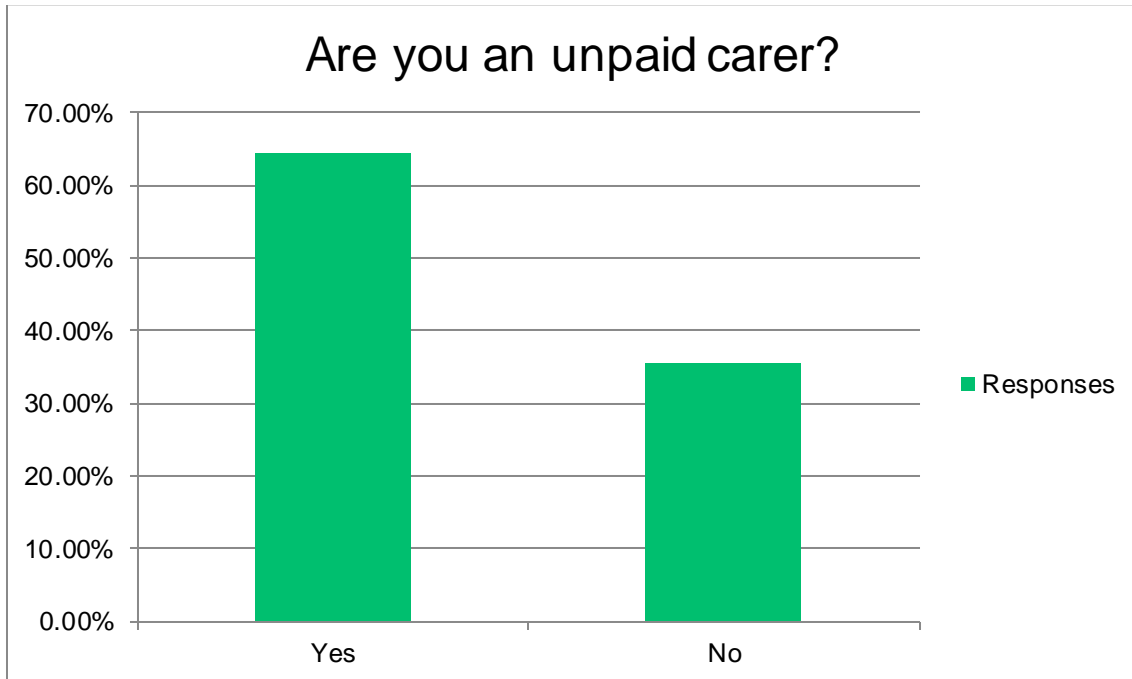
A summary (%) of responses related to the survey is presented below:

## Q2. Are you an unpaid carer?

87 people answered this question.

64.37 % responded 'Yes'

35.63% responded 'No'



## Q3. Do you believe the aims of the strategy strike the right level of ambition?

75 people answered this question.

73.33% responded 'Yes'

26.67% responded 'No'.

Below are some of the responses:

*'The aims are common to most Carers Strategies. The proof of effectiveness is in the delivery of Services for Unpaid Carers'*

*'It is clearly focused and highlights existing weaknesses.'*

*'One can have access to something but not know how to use or do it. Signposting to a website or a charity simply doesn't help. Carers need active help to understand: What support is available, what forms to fill in, what the point of the form is, and help to fill it in'.*

*'West Berkshire appear to be aware of the needs and aspirations of the vast majority of care givers and recipients and with frequent consultations and discussions are constantly adjusting the framework to suit all players.'*

*'It all looks about right to me'.*

*'Unpaid carers need all support they can get, and that support should be easily accessible'.*

*'Additional support for unpaid carers is vital'.*

*'Identifying carers particularly young carers important as some carers don't recognise that they are carers.'*

*'It is a very positive ambition; the issue is whether it is achievable'.*

*'I think a lot more can be done to support unpaid carers I think they do a wonderful job and sometime could do with a break. Maybe more rest bite break could be offered of someone to take over in some case to give a break to meet with other carer maybe for a coffee. Also, someone to help with benefit claims so carers dont know what financial help is out there after giving up work to care for family members.'*

*'I think there are good ambitions, it is just whether there is the Staff, resources, finances to be able to carry out all the ambitions. I know from my own Carers Assessment that I never heard anything else after the assessment so no outcome. I have a carers card and that is all'.*

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that our six proposed priorities will help us achieve our vision for carers in West Berkshire?**

66 people answered this question.

Priorities	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Raise awareness and increase the identification of carers (including hidden carers) to enable them to access help and support,	43.94%	34.85%	10.61%	3.03%	7.58%
Provide information and advice to carers and young carers.	46.97%	30.30%	13.64%	3.03%	6.06%
Enable access to peer support groups for carers and young carers.	42.42%	34.85%	15.15%	3.03%	4.55%
Support carers to improve their physical, mental, emotional and overall wellbeing.	46.97%	28.79%	10.61%	4.55%	9.09%
Support carers and young carers to take breaks from caring.	54.55%	19.70%	13.64%	4.55%	7.58%
Support a life outside caring to enable carers and young carers to achieve their potential	51.52%	24.24%	12.12%	4.55%	7.58%

Below are some of the responses:

*'Caring is exhausting, demanding, overwhelming, stressful, all-encompassing, limiting and emotionally rewarding in equal measures and it feels like we are forgotten and taken for granted so we need support to continue to care for our loved ones and we all face different challenges as the loved ones we support are all different, in so many ways.'*

*'Unable to disagree, most of these areas have previously been identified and asked for by carers and practitioners. The hope is they worked up to tangible, measurable and first-class resources for support.'*

*'Support is vital for everyone's wellbeing.'*

*'All good priorities.'*

*'I strongly agree with these 6 priorities, however, for some carers, the groups that are available to them (such as for older carers of people with learning disabilities) are not specific to their concerns and experiences. Whilst there is a need for groups to support people, there is also a limited time for carers to be able to look after themselves, their health and wellbeing, their own appointments and hobbies as well as attending other groups as well. I can see that peer groups for young people can be more generic as they are likely to share information/guidance, but equally allowing those young people the freedom to be children.'*

*'They are central to the needs of carers particularly at a time of fund cutting.'*

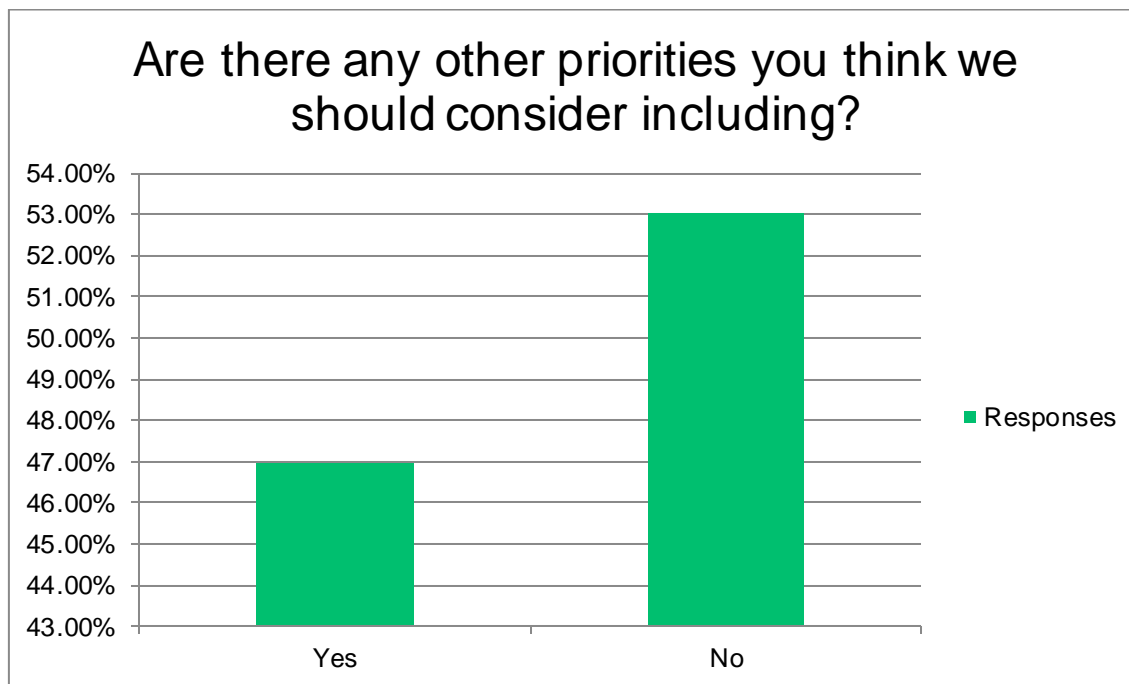
*'This survey and forthcoming discussion is proof positive that all aspects of the system are being thoroughly examined and discussed as an ongoing matter for achieving all the goals.'*

**Q5. Are there any other priorities you think we should consider including?**

66 people answered this question.

46.97% responded 'Yes'

53.03% responded 'No'



**Q6. Please tell us what other priorities you would like to see included and why.**

29 out of the 31 people who responded 'Yes' to Q5, answered this question.

Below are some of the responses:

*'The priorities themselves are fine, but it's not engaging Carers & not addressing the ongoing issues they face e.g.' -the anxiety they live with daily, worrying about what will happen when they are no longer able to care. local Carers discount card would encourage more Carers to make themselves visible.'*

*'Review and simplify the access to support'.*

*'Young carers must not be denied education opportunities, therefore support if required is essential'.*

*'All care should be provided by either local or central government. Unpaid caring is destroying people future'.*

*'Specific recognition of older carers and their needs. Specific recognition of lifetime carers and their needs. Clearer recognition and support requirements of key stage events which can be classed as 'moving on' some may well be life changing'.*

*'Support with mental health and finance. Many of us face challenges with earning enough to survive because we are so limited by our caring responsibilities. It would be beneficial to have some subsidies on things like Council Tax, support with energy bills and basic day to day living needs.'*

*'Making access to help easier'.*

*'Continuity & hidden (nor aware of) support'*

*'Everyone assumes an unpaid carer is older I have never got to meet other carers of my age with young adults that are disabled, unless I've met parents through education. Also, not all carers can get someone to look after who they care for to attend a coffee morning, or an evening event'.*

*'Accessibility to information that is not just geared to the elderly or referring people to national charities who may not have any local presence'.*

*'You need to see the world from a carer's perspective and to understand the frustration and the frustration and inevitable loneliness experienced'.*

*'Enough social workers to engage with carers, each identified carer to be given a named social worker to support them'.*

*'Easier access to respite care for short periods or a sitting service for a day or day/night'.*

**Q7. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed actions will help us to achieve our priorities? You can read more about our proposed actions in our draft Carers Strategy 2024-2027.**

60 people answered this question.

Priorities	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Raise awareness and increase the identification of carers (including hidden carers) to enable them to access help and support	36.67%	36.67%	15.00%	3.33%	8.33%
Provide information and advice to carers and young carers.	31.67%	41.67%	18.33%	3.33%	5.00%
Enable access to peer support groups for carers and young carers.	31.67%	36.67%	23.33%	3.33%	5.00%
Support carers to improve their physical, mental, emotional and overall wellbeing.	33.33%	31.67%	20.00%	10.00%	5.00%
Support carers and young carers to take breaks from caring.	38.33%	33.33%	18.33%	6.67%	3.33%
Support a life outside caring to enable carers and young carers to achieve their potential.	35.00%	33.33%	20.00%	6.67%	5.00%

Below are some of the responses:

*'The proposals are laudable; affordability is the question'.*

*'Helping young carers is crucial - they don't necessarily have the detachment and ability to say "no" on their own'.*

*'I agree that reaching out to diverse communities is important and also peer support groups can be really helpful'.*

*'They are all important hence my responses'.*

*'They are all very good ambitions and seem to cover a range of the needs of carers and young carers'.*

*'How effective these steps will be remains, of course, to be seen but none of them strike me as unreasonable or unachievable. If I could be certain that they would have the desired effect I would have put "strongly agree".'*

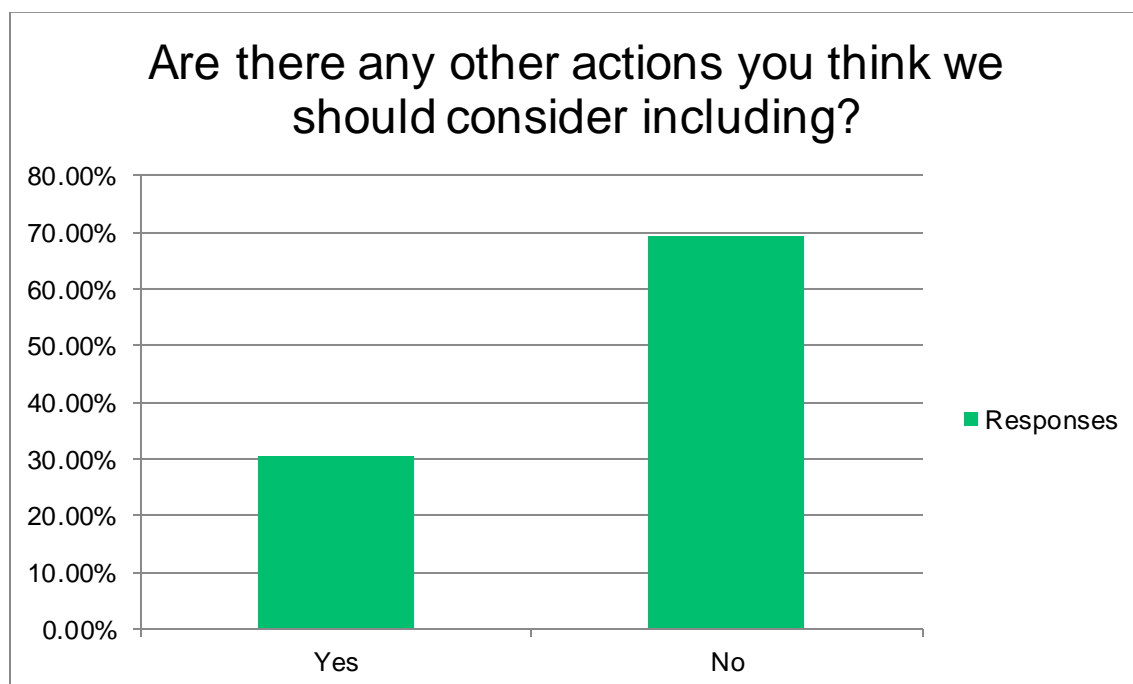
*'So far as a carer for two people and trying to work full time I have had very limited support'.*

**Q8. Are there any other actions you think we should consider including?**

16 out of the 18 people who responded 'Yes' to Q7, answered this question.

30.51% responded 'Yes'

69.49 % responded 'No'



**Q9. Please tell us what other action you would like to see included and why.**

16 people answered this question.

Below are some of the responses:

*'It would be good to have a "shop front" or Carers community cafe where there are staff to have an informal chat with, get advice, have a coffee, meet other Carers etc'.*

*'Support groups for couples to attend together to discuss how they can help each other'.*

*'Actually, implementing the support carers desperately need'.*

*'Working with a broader range of other counties/councils. E.g., what about young carers who are at school in WB but who live just over the border in Hampshire? It's too broken up'.*

*'All I can say is I hide away in my world. So somehow need people to draw me out of this situation. Feel alone'.*

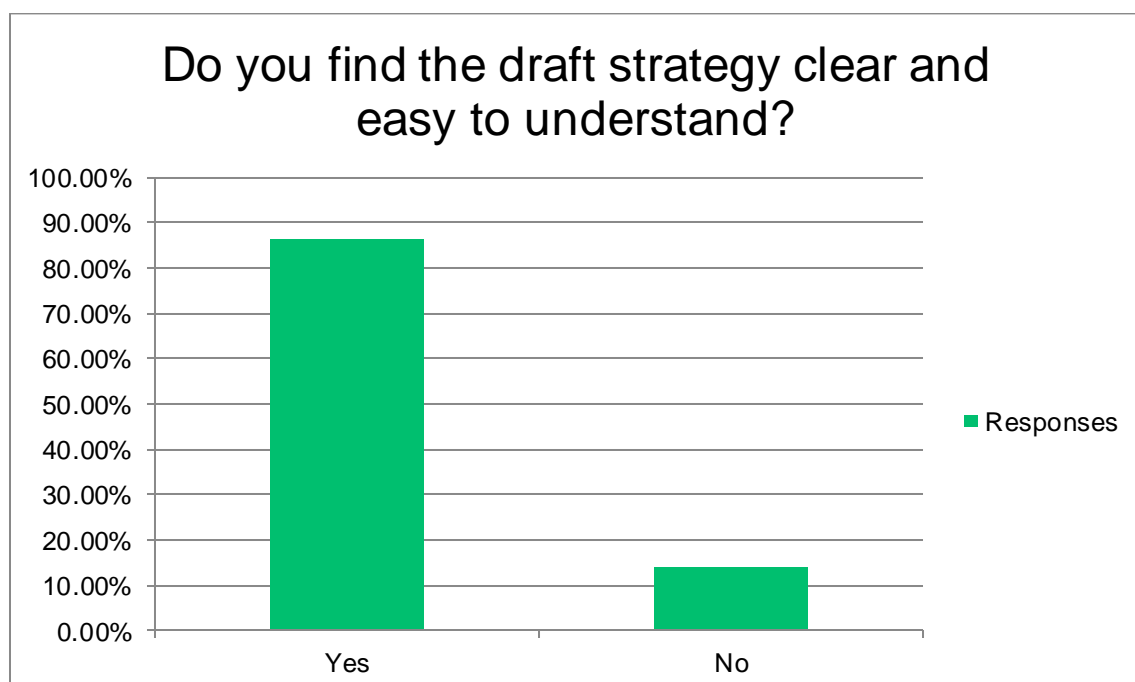
*'More emphasis on really finding out what the reality is like for carers.  
'Carers often don't know where to seek support it's a minefield and overwhelming for already exhausted people. More pushing of information from GPs, other services etc'.*

**Q10. Do you find the draft strategy clear and easy to understand?**

58 people answered this question.

86.21% responded 'Yes'

13.79% responded 'No'





**Q11. Do you have any further comments?**

34 people answered this question.

Below are some of the comments from unpaid carers who answered this question:

*'Need to deliver concrete actions and funding to allow carers to have short and longer breaks.'*

*'The additional barriers to support for carers and those needing care who live in rural parts of West Berks are significant.'*

*'I think young carers are particularly important to support as when I was at school in the eighties, I felt there was no one I could talk to about my mum and dad's mental health problems.'*

***'It is an impressive draft and should be commended'.***

*Don't make carers have to keep explaining their situation to get support or help'.*

*'Help carers help themselves.'*

## Appendix

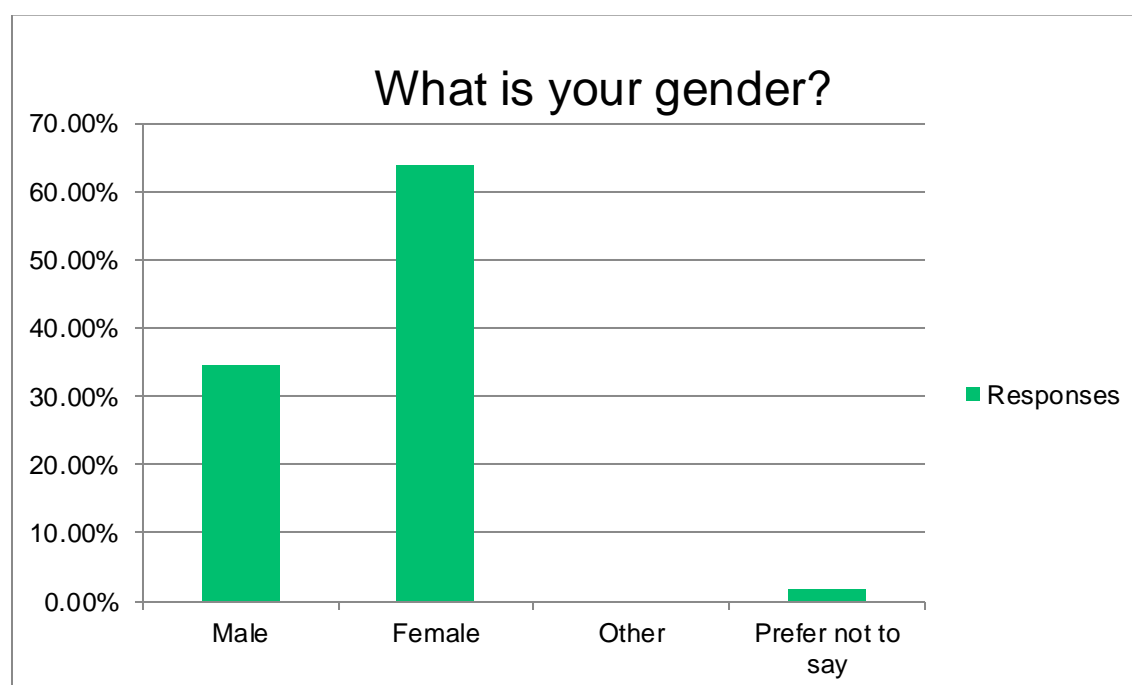
### Methodology

As already mentioned, the survey was open for a period of 6 weeks from 7<sup>th</sup> October 2024 to 17<sup>th</sup> November 2024. The survey was available in printed form on requests. It was communicated through social media posts, emails, residents' bulletins and internal communications at West Berkshire Council.

### Respondent Profile

#### ***Q12. What is your gender?***

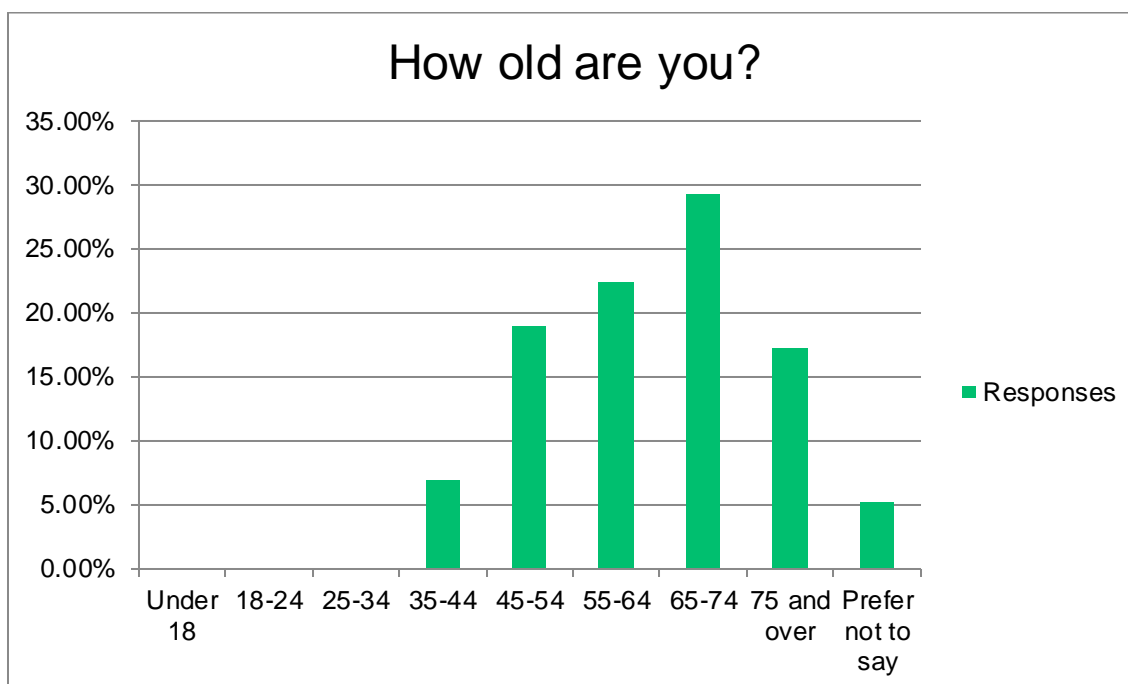
58 answered the question,  
34.48% are 'Male'  
63.79 are 'Female'  
1.72% prefer not to say.



#### ***Q13. What is your age?***

**58 people answered this question.**

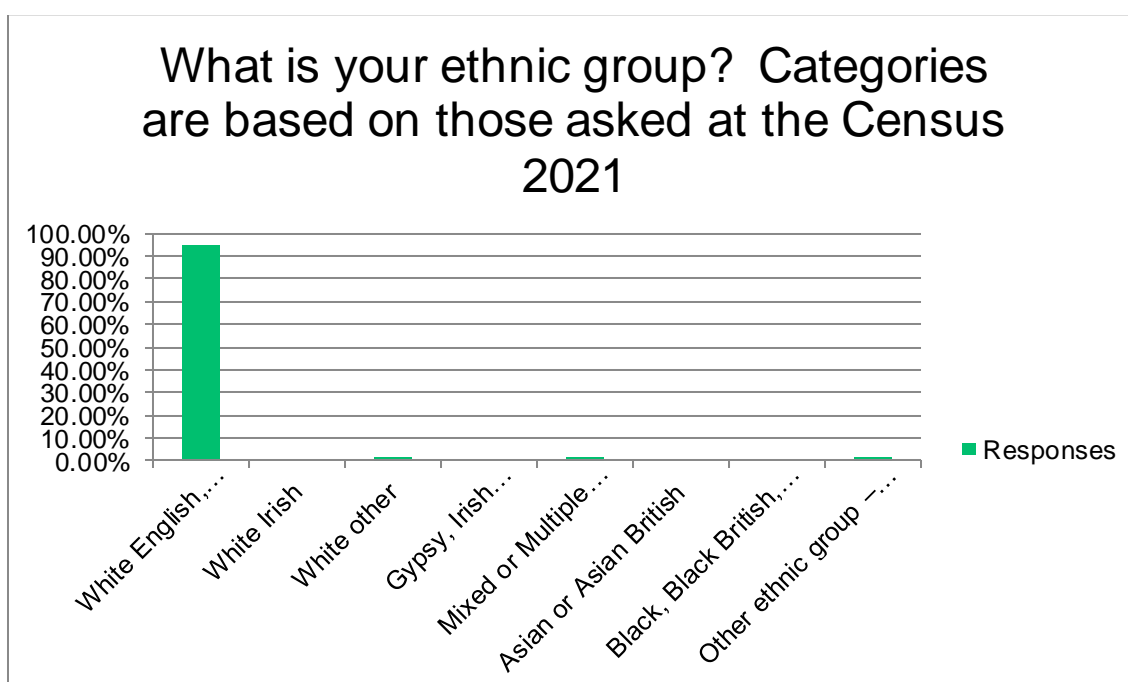
Under 18 yrs	0.00%
18-24 yrs	0.00%
25-34 yrs	0.00%
35-44 yrs	6.90%
45-54 yrs	18.97%
55-64 yrs	22.41%
65-74 yrs	29.31%
75 and over	17.24%
Prefer not to say	5.17%



**Q16. What is your ethnic group? Categories are based on those asked at the Census 2021**

54 people answered this question.

White English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British	94.44%
White Irish	0.00%
White Other	1.85%
Gypsy, Irish Traveller or Roma	0.00%
Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups	1.85%
Asian or Asian British	0.00%
Black, Black British, Caribbean or African	0.00%
Other Ethnic Groups; please specify	1.85%



**Q17. Do you have a disability, long-term illness, or health condition.**

54 people answered this question

46.30% responded 'Yes'

53.70% responded 'No'

