



Residents Sustainability Perceptions Research 2021

Presentation format:

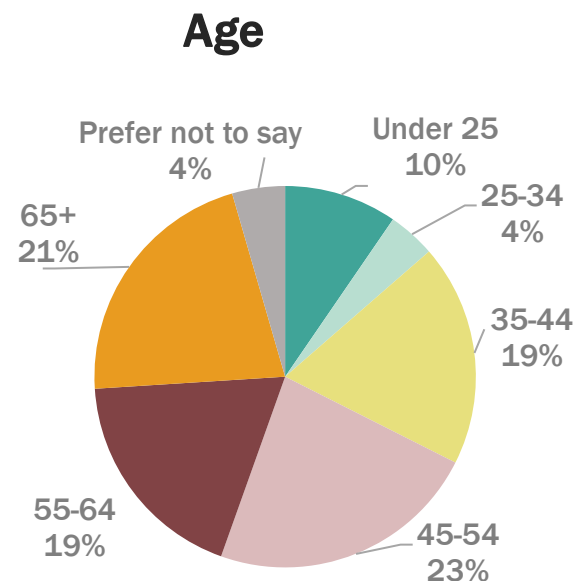
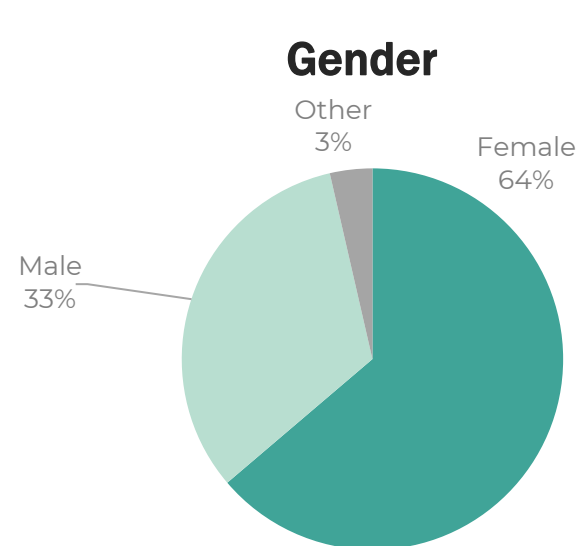
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Methodology & Sample



671 online surveys were completed by residents of the London Borough of Richmond during the period 15th March-9th June 2021. Included were a mix of close-ended and open-ended questions, and the survey took an average of seven minutes to complete.

Quotas were not set on any demographic, with the sample falling out as such:



The following analysis has been undertaken by collating viewpoints from all stakeholders. Interviewees were assured of anonymity and so no quotes are assigned to particular individuals.

Current Attitudes



Resident appetite for input

- **We sense a real appetite for change, for action and for involvement from many residents**
- **Many spontaneously expressed their thanks for being asked about these issues, and considered this kind of survey a worthy exercise**

**Great initiative,
glad to support**

**Thanks for doing
this, what an
excellent initiative!**



**Thank you for this
exercise – it's already
making me think**

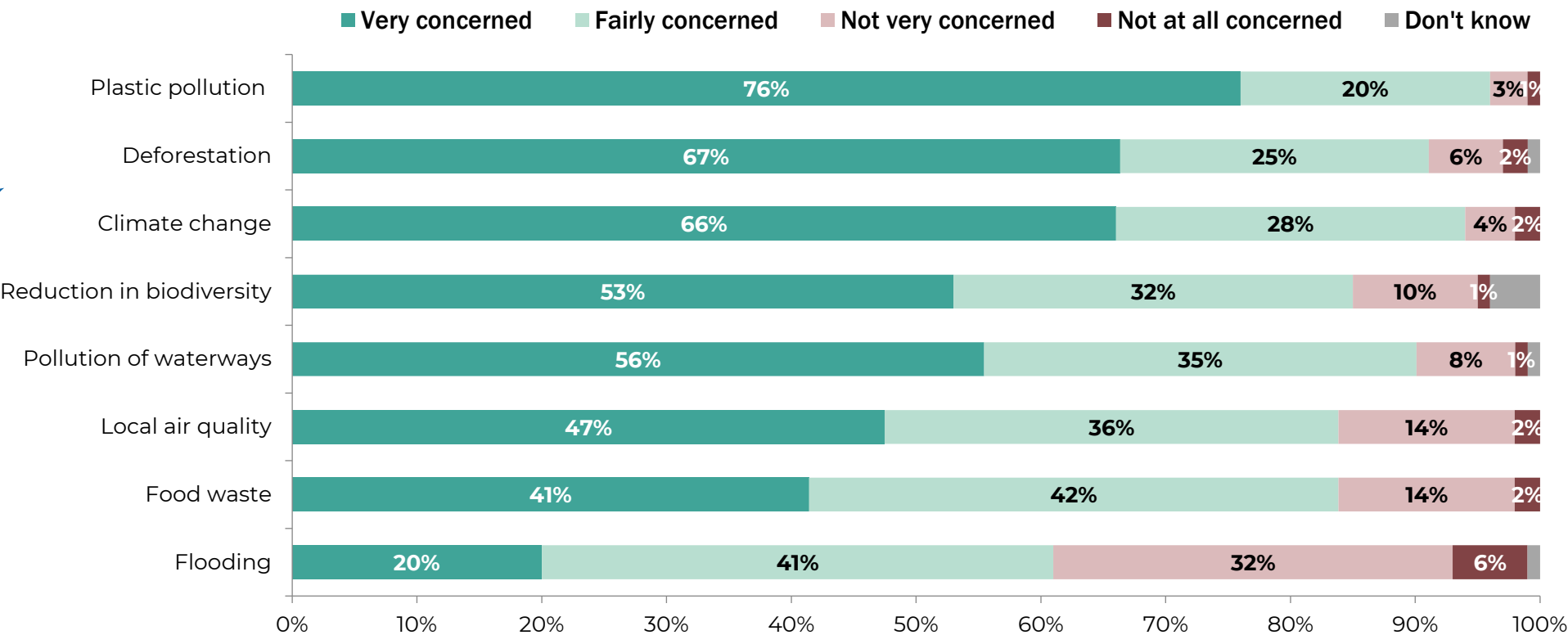
**There should be
surveys like these
more often**

Areas of concern



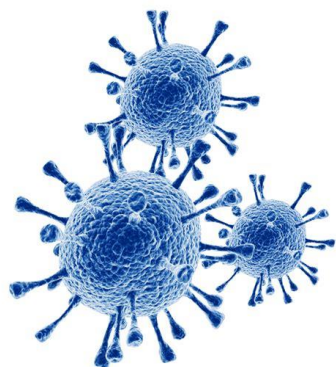
- The majority of residents are ‘very concerned’ about several environmental issues
- Plastic pollution ranked highest among residents’ concerns
- Flooding was of significantly less concern to respondents than other issues – albeit of at least some concern to a majority

These issues are so important and absolutely need addressing



Impact of COVID-19

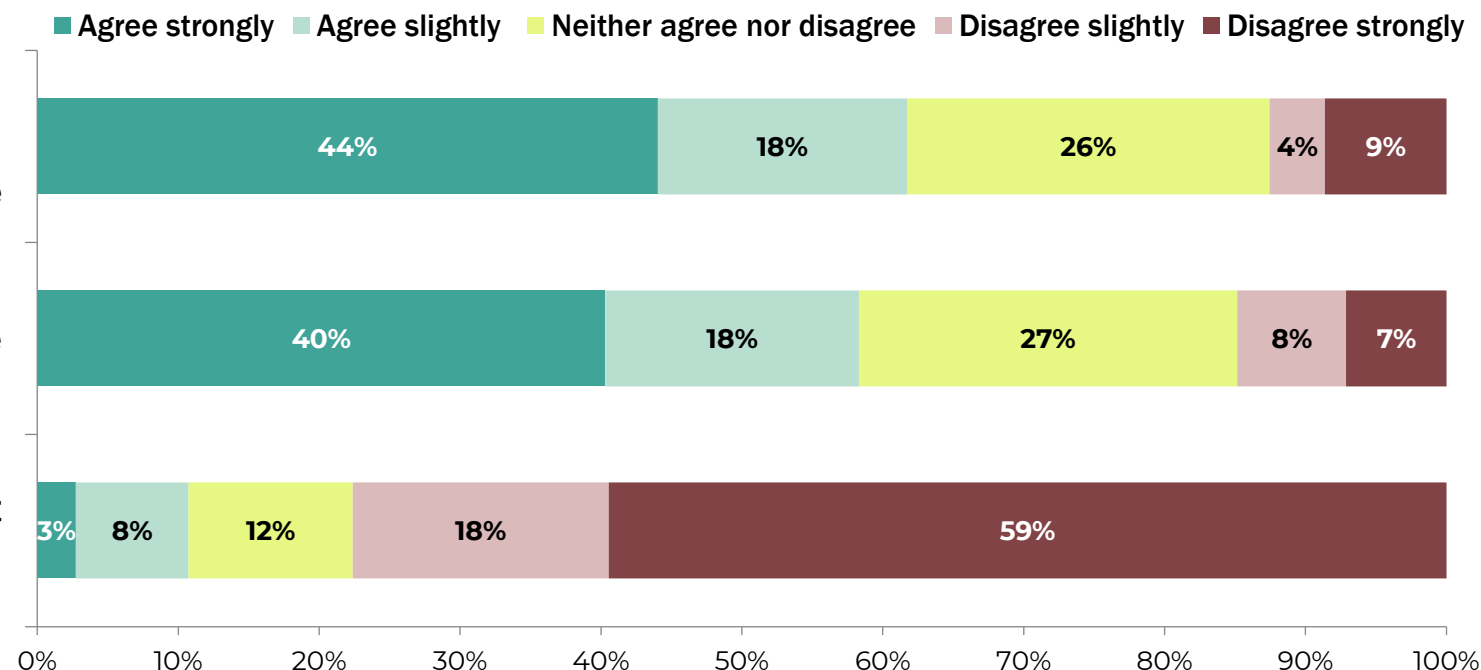
- COVID-19 has prompted the majority of residents to think a global response is required to tackle climate change
- The majority also feel future pandemics will become more likely due to deforestation and habitat destruction
- Despite the seismic effects of the pandemic, only a small minority claim it has stopped them thinking about climate change



COVID-19 has made me think we need a global response to climate change

Deforestation and habitat destruction is making future pandemics more likely

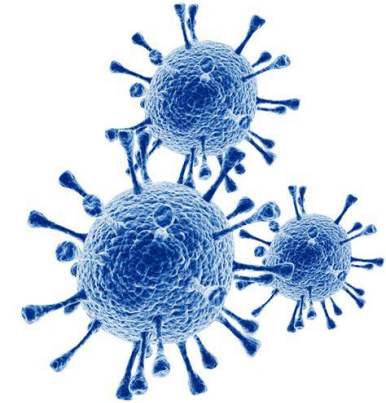
I'm too concerned with COVID-19 to think about climate change at the moment



Impact of COVID-19

- There is some thought that the community spirit experienced during the pandemic could be similarly mobilised in terms of local environmental action

During the pandemic many residents have volunteered to help with all sorts of things... they should be invited to continue to engage with their community in 'turn up and help' green projects such as litter picks, allotment schemes, etc



- Also waste issues arising from the pandemic
 - Masks adding to street litter
 - The use of single-use plastic in clinical settings

I work in the NHS Covid has resulted in huge increase in use of plastic gloves and aprons. As an organisation it doesn't feel very environmentally friendly.

The blue, single use masks are ending up strewn on the streets and green areas

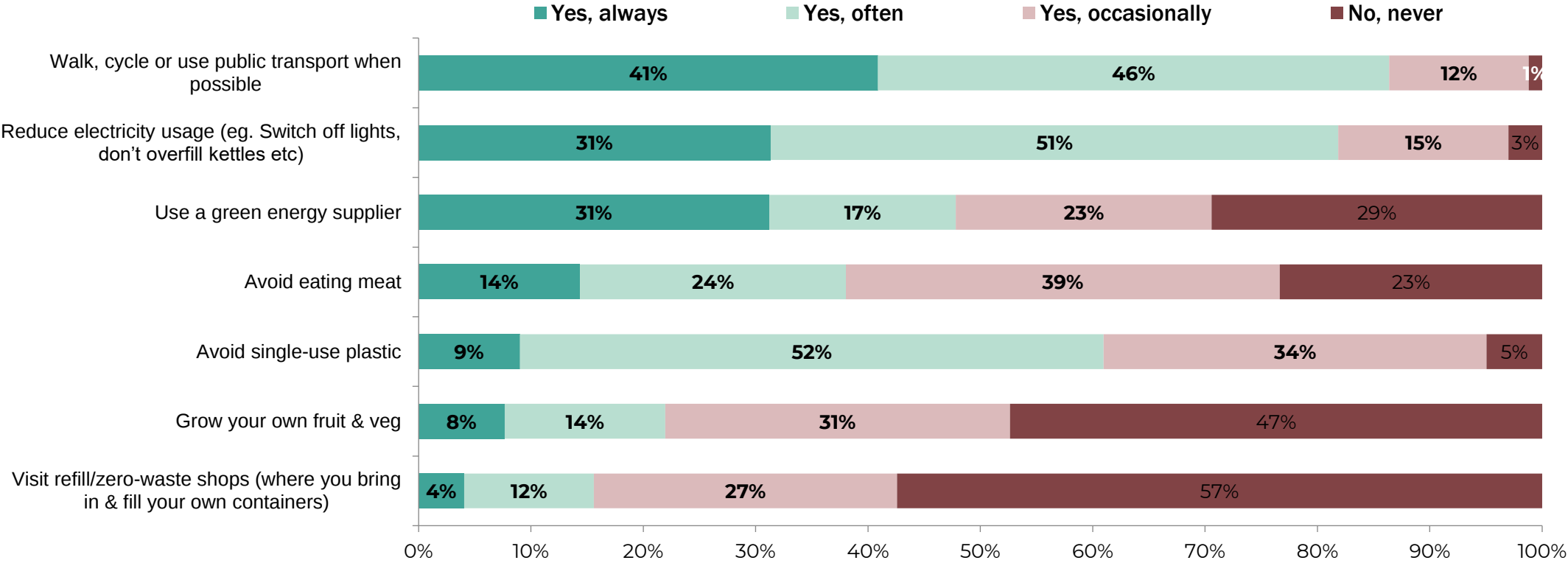
Behaviour



Current habits & behaviours



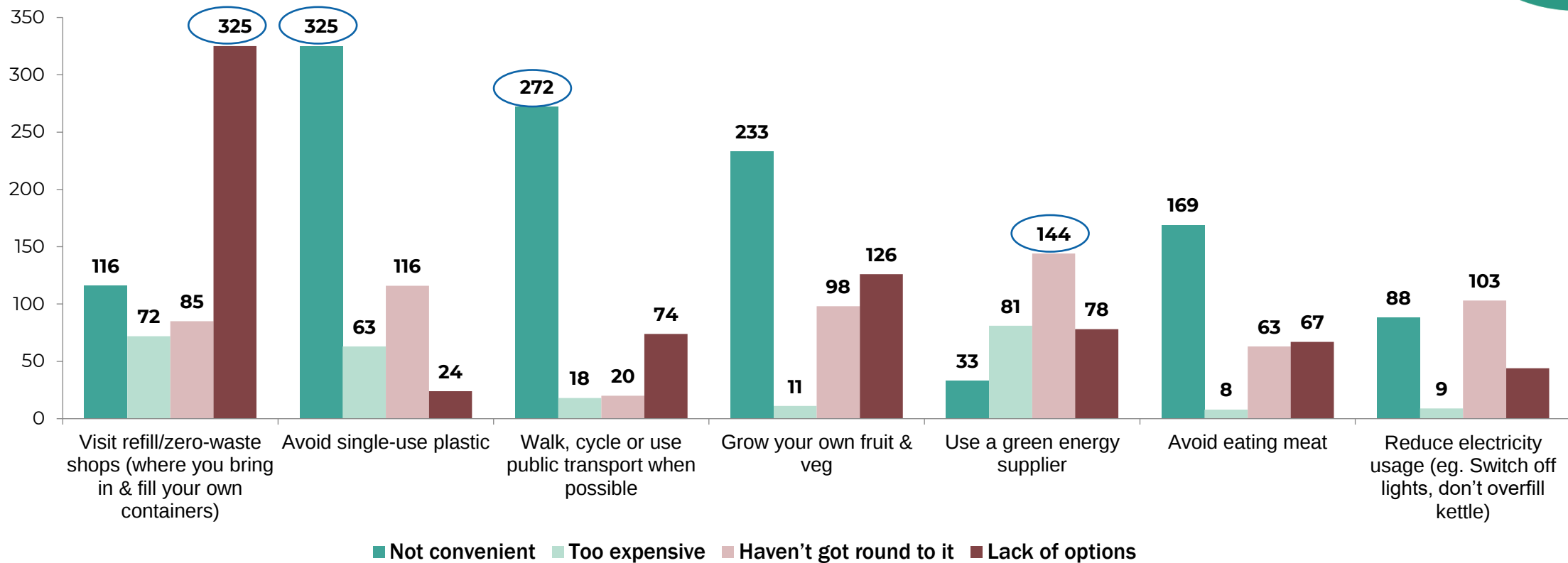
- **Entrenched sustainability-minded behaviours for most residents are walking, cycling, using public transport when possible, and also reducing electricity usage via simple measures**
- **Much less habitual among residents, with only a minority regularly doing these things, is visiting refill shops and growing their own fruit & veg**



Q3: Here is a list of some of the things people can do to reduce their environmental footprint. Please indicate whether or not you do any of these things personally, and if so, how often.

Barriers to changing behaviour

- **Inconvenience** is most often cited as the key barrier to change
 - particularly in terms of single-use plastic and transportation
- **A lack of options** is the key barrier in terms of refill shopping
- Those not using a green energy supplier have mostly not done so because they just haven't got round to it



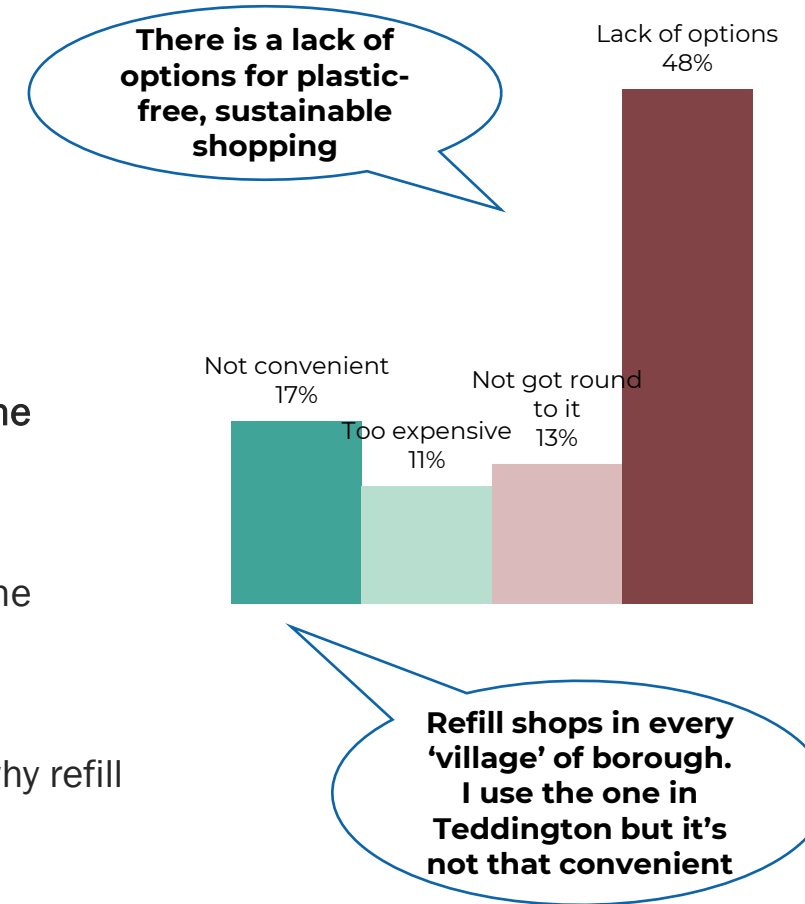
Q4: Looking at the same list, what would you say is the main reason why you might not do these things more often?.

Overcoming barriers: Refill options



We recommend:

- **With lack of options the key barrier, finding ways of encouraging new refill stores into the Borough would be beneficial**
 - Commercial incentives – e.g. preferential rates?
 - Showcasing successes – e.g. Refill Larder in Teddington upgrading premises
 - Broader communications to encourage perceptions of ‘one-stop villages’ within the Borough
- **In addition, investigate with existing businesses mechanisms for refill options**
 - Engagement program with businesses that use single-use packaging, bags etc. why refill & reuse is so beneficial
 - Campaign to broaden water refill offer within businesses - and advertise this
 - Cooperative purchase options for businesses on refillable / reusable containers?
 - Embedded technology on refillable / reusable containers? – potential reward schemes etc

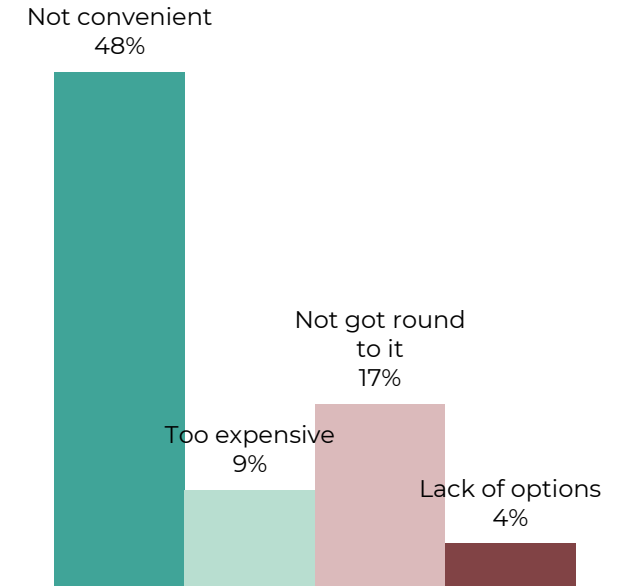


Overcoming barriers: Single-use plastic avoidance



We recommend:

- **Convenient alternatives need to exist to pull people away from single-use plastic**
 - Campaign to 'bring your own' on coffee cups, pint cups, food containers, etc and to discourage the use of plastic cup lids
- **Businesses need to understand the need for cutting down on single-use waste and why plastics are so environmentally harmful (fossil fuel derivatives, high carbon footprint, microplastics, etc)**
 - Communication campaign/workshops with local businesses
 - Encourage shops to only supply goods in bags on request, otherwise to opt for paper or home-compostable
 - Encourage cafés to only use disposables for take-aways, and when doing so to choose the most eco-friendly options
 - Investigate take-away container schemes – e.g. [DabbaDrop](#)
- **Investigate options for non-plastic bin bags (for both households and businesses)**
 - Cooperative buying scheme for reduced rates?



Put a ban on plastic bin bags

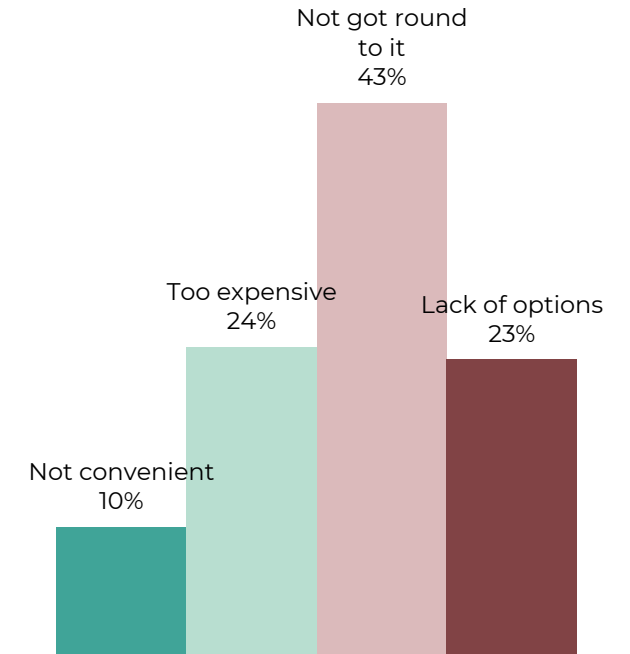
Have paper or cardboard bags instead of plastic

Overcoming barriers: Green energy



We recommend:

- **With most just ‘not having got round to it’, any kind of nudge on green energy suppliers would be helpful**
 - Lead by example: Communications on how LBRUT has itself swapped to green energy suppliers, share information / quantification of benefits
- **Validation of green energy companies to allay any concerns over service, quality, price, etc.**
 - Approved supplier list?
 - Any sponsorship potential from green energy companies for particular council initiatives?
 - Potential for high-profile third-party partnerships to increase visibility – eg. Twickenham stadium solar power / generator
- **Any potential for community-led renewable energy projects?**
- **Dynamic, comprehensive information on green energy options and impact information available via the Council website – updated frequently**
 - e.g. carbon savings on solar panels, heat pumps
 - Government grants information



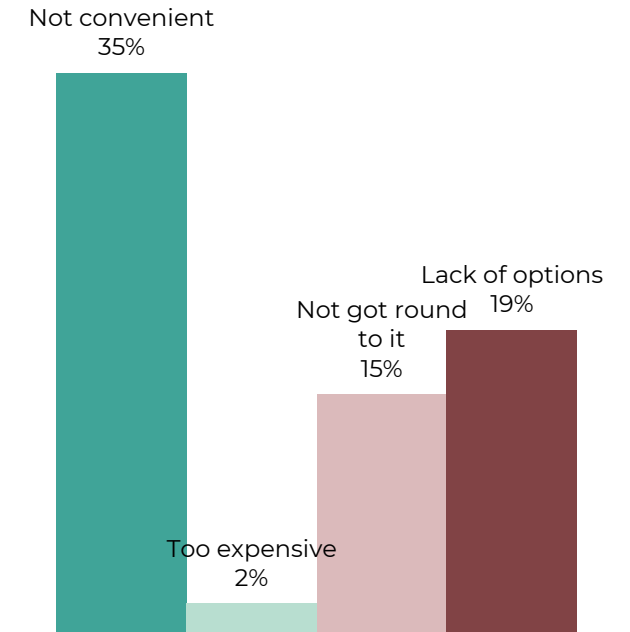
**Local government
should use only
green energy
suppliers**

Overcoming barriers: Grown your own



We recommend:

- **Try to encourage interest in growing your own**
 - Investigate potential for all schools in the Borough to have some dedicated space for fruit & veg growing
 - Encourage links between schools and other interest groups
 - Encourage businesses (eg. Squires) to offer supports in terms of knowledge, supplies, etc.
 - Potential open days at allotment sites for the general public?
- **Private space for growing your own obviously not an option for many residents**
- **Several residents suggest community growing schemes**
 - Allotment waiting lists mean demand is far out-stripping supply
 - Look at alternative spaces – however big or small – for community use
 - Could include random raised beds in town centres
 - Consider options such as [Incredible Edible Network](#)



Growing cooperative, share second products

More planting clubs for children

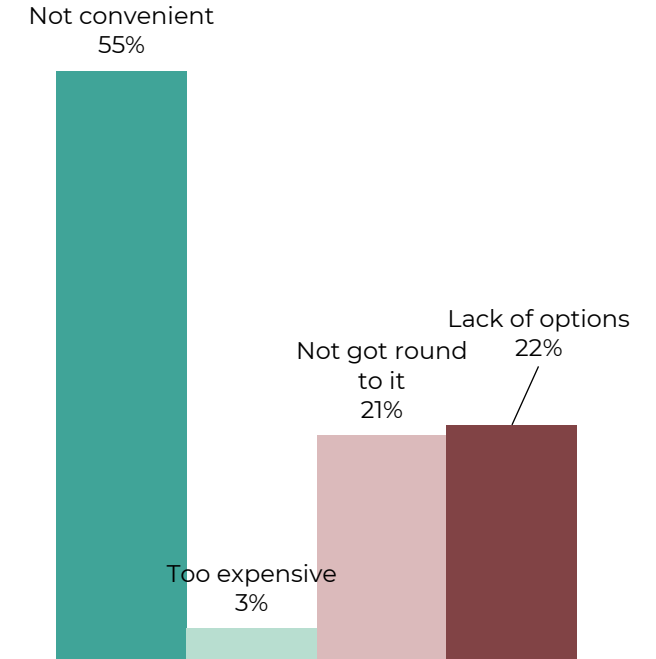
Further access to allotments for food productions, currently they are near impossible to access and those in flats have no option

Overcoming barriers: Sustainable eating



We recommend:

- **Getting the population to stop eating meat is not a realistic objective, but aspiring to encourage a reduction in carbon intensive diets is worthwhile**
 - Lead by example: Consider largely plant-based menus at Council facilities and at Council events; try to optimise sustainable sourcing of all produce
 - Talk to school about reviewing options with their catering suppliers
- **Possible collaboration with local (non-chain) businesses on initiatives**
 - Meat-free Monday promotions in eateries?
 - Compile information resources for local produce suppliers etc
 - Work with Borough-based businesses on education, promotions etc? eg. Windmill Organics
- **Wider targets social equality with regards access to healthy eating**



Council catering (school meals etc) to be aligned to the Cool Food pledge for health and environment reasons or Sustain's work with Councils on less and better animal sourced food

Council meetings and any publicly funded catering should be vegan

Education on reducing meat and fish consumption

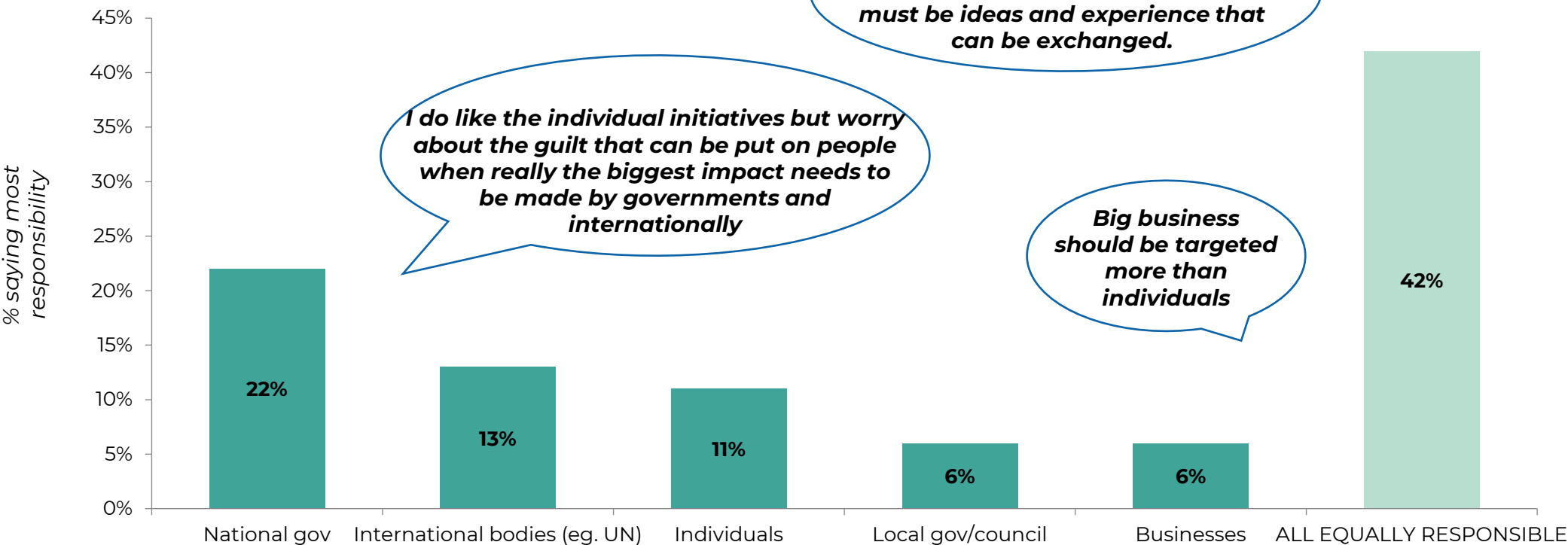
Facilitating Change



Who has responsibility for action?



- The highest proportion of residents don't see action as solely the responsibility of any one group
- When a choice is made, national government leads (22% of respondents)
- Local government / council is first choice for 6% of residents – at parity with businesses
- Collaboration a theme spontaneously mentioned by several residents



LBRUT's role



- **Many calls for input from the council**
 - The Council's role to cover both their own actions and initiatives, but also a potential advisory role
 - Advice channels for residents?
 - A feeling the Council should make sure it has its own house in order, too
- **Scrutiny and evidence-based prioritizing of initiatives**
 - Any council initiatives need to be justifiable in terms of effect
 - Inevitably a portion of residents will question Council spending on sustainability initiatives, so focus on long-term savings and benefits in comms
 - Authenticity needed in response and messaging

Information to increase support for these measures is important

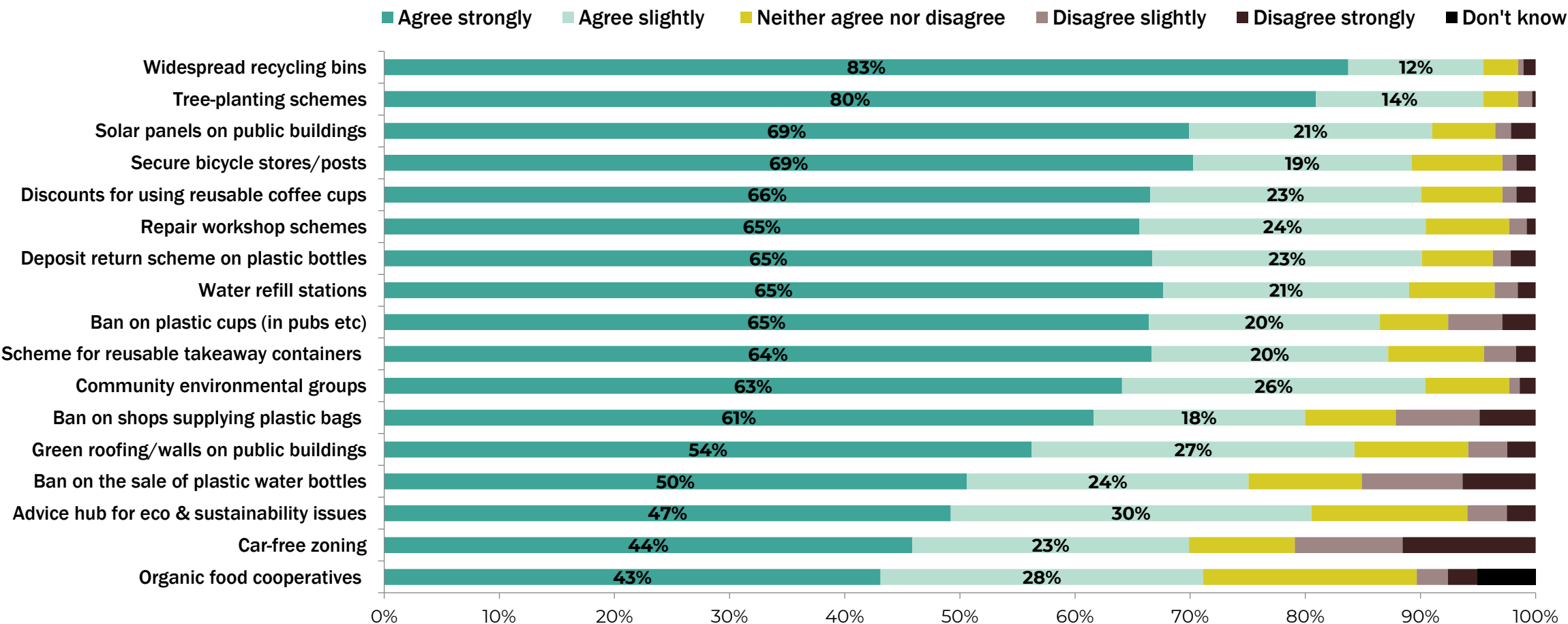
Show us how the council is reflecting green policies on its spending plan. Illustrate the carbon footprint of their decisions (do not offset it by buying carbon credits), minimise it. Show us how the council is reducing unnecessary travel for its staff (flexible work at home)

I am extremely concerned that LBRUT's approach to the climate crisis will be only lip-service or a green-washing, tick-box exercise. LBRUT must take practical steps with a genuine impact, using all the powers belonging to local government to implement measures, rather than relying on nudge-factors or voluntary measures.

Support for particular schemes



- High level of support for all schemes
- Biggest push-back comes on car-free zoning and on the banning of plastic water bottles and plastic bags



Q6: Below are some schemes or initiatives that can help reduce an area's carbon footprint. How much do you agree or disagree that each of these schemes should be used in the London Borough of Richmond?

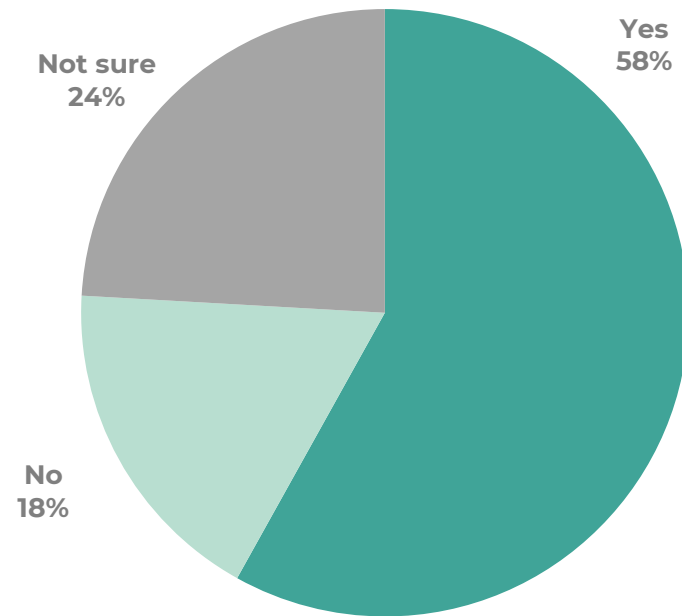
Engagement



A Green Pledge



- The majority of residents (58%) were enthusiastic about the idea of signing up to a green pledge and receiving information on sustainability initiatives
 - Skews female (65% interested)



Central information about where to volunteer and help schemes mentioned here would be very useful



We recommend:

- The implementation of a pledge would encourage a feeling of community cohesion and participation
 - Encourages individual responsibility
 - Collective pride in making the Borough greener
 - Competitive angle in making Richmond greener than all other Boroughs
 - Platform for education and information exchange
- Pledges could be made via the Council's website but also via events around the Borough
 - The exact mechanism of the pledge for discussion, but could include pick & mix options for residents to self-select
 - Potential levels to encourage progression?

Communications hub & events



We recommend:



- **Have a comms plan with continuity in look & feel, messaging and values**
 - Consistent and easy messaging, following terminology guidelines; impact statements
 - Signpost resources: Website should be a usable source for residents to find information relating to advice, best practice, etc
 - Interactive features – with speedy responses from the council where necessary - would be great
- **Social media is a highly effective channels for creating awareness via topical discussion and visual imagery**
 - Dedicated social media account for green issues and advice?
 - Account needs to be led by team with PR experience but also well-informed on sustainability issues
 - Based on a dynamic communication plan
 - Increase followers – follow key accounts, influencers, liking, sharing etc.
- **In terms of wider communication planning, have a schedule sustainability-related events for the long-term that are targeted at different audiences in different locations – always seek to invite media contacts**

[The] borough should have an online newsletter with information about what you can do to help the environment and community



- Council newsletter, MP newsletter
- Events to raise awareness and embed feelings of community cohesion
 - Central source for information on different group activities
 - Youth-led events
 - River-cleans
 - Business links
 - Street table information events, summer fairs, school fairs
 - Showcasing events
 - Thought-leadership circuit to promote Council's successes – society meetings, GLA, grassroots groups, schools, podcasts, local radio

Schools & young people



We recommend:

Educate children in sustainable growth and circular economy

Get kids involved early, it's all about education



- **Arguably the most important area of focus!**
 - Guardians of the future – and able to influence parents and other family / peers
 - Mental health benefits for our youth – giving them a voice, empowerment, seeing solutions taking positive effect
 - Education benefits – wider understanding of issues, political process, science, community responsibility etc etc etc
- **Cross-Borough strategy for schools and nurseries is required**
 - Consultation with education stakeholders (school staff, parents, students, suppliers, etc) to feed into roadmap
 - Knowledge-sharing forums/mechanisms established
 - Review of available resources, expertise, access to nature, etc
 - Ongoing investigation into government grants, public-private partnerships, etc required
- **A wide-range of potential initiatives to be investigated**
 - Target-setting and budget agreements to ensure implementation
 - Engagement and education exercises across stakeholder groups
 - Effectiveness monitoring – behavioural change, cost and carbon savings, etc

Living walls around schools

Education schemes in schools [about] what happens to rubbish that isn't recyclable or that just is not recycled e.g. gets sent to Global South and burnt

Internal comms



We recommend:



- **LBRUT's strategy and values need to be consistently and continuously communicated so that these values are foremost in the minds of all staff**
 - Set the tone for the Borough, leading by example
 - Motivational workshops for staff
 - Regenerative projects a regular feature on any internal newsletters
 - Internal steering group?
- **Encourage collaboration / mentoring between staff members – to avoid people feeling 'stuck in their silos'**
 - Knowledge-sharing actively encouraged and valued
 - This will facilitate new ideas and strategic decision-making
 - Everyone can have an impact
- **Think about internal initiatives to**
 - Eg. 'Sustainability employee of the month' type schemes
 - Integrated into staff appraisals

Tackling scepticism



We recommend:

- A section of the population will inevitably remain unconvinced that investment in climate change mitigation is money well spent or a priority
 - That said, this cohort will very likely dwindle in numbers over the longer term
- As such, the Council needs to have a well-conceived strategy and communications plan so that spending on regenerative initiatives has a definable long-term purpose
 - Target-setting and monitoring of progress
 - Transparency on performance
 - Long-term cost-benefit analyses
- Investigation into options and signposting of third-party involvement and commercial sponsorships
 - Intelligence gathering on sponsorship opportunities for local infrastructure – eg. On biodiversity, commercial partnerships for infrastructure such as [Scotscape](#) greenwalls & planting, [YourPact](#) wildflowers
 - Make it clear when initiatives have not impacted on the public purse

The funding of such schemes....at a time of immense debt, I prefer the council focus on health, social care

Living in a safe a secure neighbourhood should be your #1 priority, not virtue signalling about climate change





Thank you