

Ferryhill Town Council

Community Plan 2023



Photograph: Glenys Newby

Acknowledgements

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Historic photographs from Ferryhill Town Council website, courtesy of Ferryhill History Society.

Contents

Acknowledgements	I
Introduction	3
History of Ferryhill	4
Ferryhill Town Council	6
Ferryhill Key Facts	7
Methodology	8
Summary Findings	12
Outlook	12
Place and Planet	14
Economic Opportunities	16
Learning	17
Health	18
Community	19
Ferryhill Town Council Amenities	20
Conclusions	22
Recommendations	23
Appendix I: Detailed findings of Ferryhill Community Consultation	25

Introduction

Ferryhill is a town in County Durham situated 7 miles south of Durham city on the Old Great North Road (A167). There are approximately 9,600 people living in 4,700 households.

In 2022 Ferryhill Town Council commissioned Durham Community Action to consult with the local community and develop a community plan with a steering group made up of representatives of local community representatives.

The community consultation initially aimed to find out about community services in Ferryhill, particularly those which were the responsibility of Ferryhill Town Council. However, inspired by The City of Santa Monica's Wellbeing Project, a community wellbeing focus was developed to provide a baseline for Ferryhill to improve policies, prioritise and attract resources, and to catalyse partnerships to strengthen residents' quality of life.

The results were intended to help:

- Identify which features and local characteristics people value
- Identify local problems and opportunities
- Reflect how residents want the community to develop in the future
- Provide evidence of community needs and priorities to policy makers, decision makers and funders
- Help attract funding for local initiatives
- Encourage partnership working and strengthen relationships

A consultation was carried out between March and July 2023 by members of a Steering Group, supported by Durham Community Action.

The survey asked some deeply personal questions about individuals' emotional wellbeing, their finances, and their feelings about their lives and their community. Thank you to everyone who chose to complete it.

History of Ferryhill

An Anglo Saxon charter shows a settlement existed in the area now called Ferryhill from as early as 900 AD. In the Middle Ages, Ferryhill was mentioned in the Court Rolls of the Abbey of Durham. The medieval hamlet of Ferryhill consisted of farming families who paid rent to the local Abbey.

Local legend has it that Ferryhill was named after Sir Roger de Fery of Brancepeth who slayed the last wild boar in 1200 AD near the site of Cleves Cross Farm, and a plaque in the Cleves Cross area of Ferryhill commemorates this. An alternative theory is that Ferryhill took its name from a ferry (river) which flowed through the limestone gap where the main railway line now runs.

Mining is recorded as being part of Ferryhill's history from as far back 1354 when coal mines and seams of coal were leased to the Prior of Durham.



Mining and agriculture existed side by side in the village for hundreds of years. During this period there were many small coal mines in the district, but they employed few people.

In 1840 the arrival of the railways gave access to larger markets which led to several new, deeper, and larger mines being sunk near Ferryhill. Mainsforth Colliery, next to Ferryhill railway station, was sunk in 1872, and by 1904 Dean and Chapter Colliery, on the edge of the village, was

sunk. This was the most modern and largest mine in the area and contributed to Ferryhill's rich mining heritage.

The town grew in the 1900s around the coal industry. To house the workforce and their families, 1,000 houses were built at Dean Bank, by the Coal Company between 1902 and 1907. The population of the village increased from 3,123 in 1902 to 10,674 by 1921. By 1939 the number of miners was so great that some had to be housed in temporary huts built behind the Post Office in Dean Road.

In 1966 Dean & Chapter Colliery closed and Mainsforth Colliery closed soon after, in 1968. The dance halls and cinemas, which provided entertainment for the once growing population, eventually closed. Various companies moved into the area and Dean and Chapter Industrial Estate was created on the site of the former Dean and Chapter Colliery to provide employment.





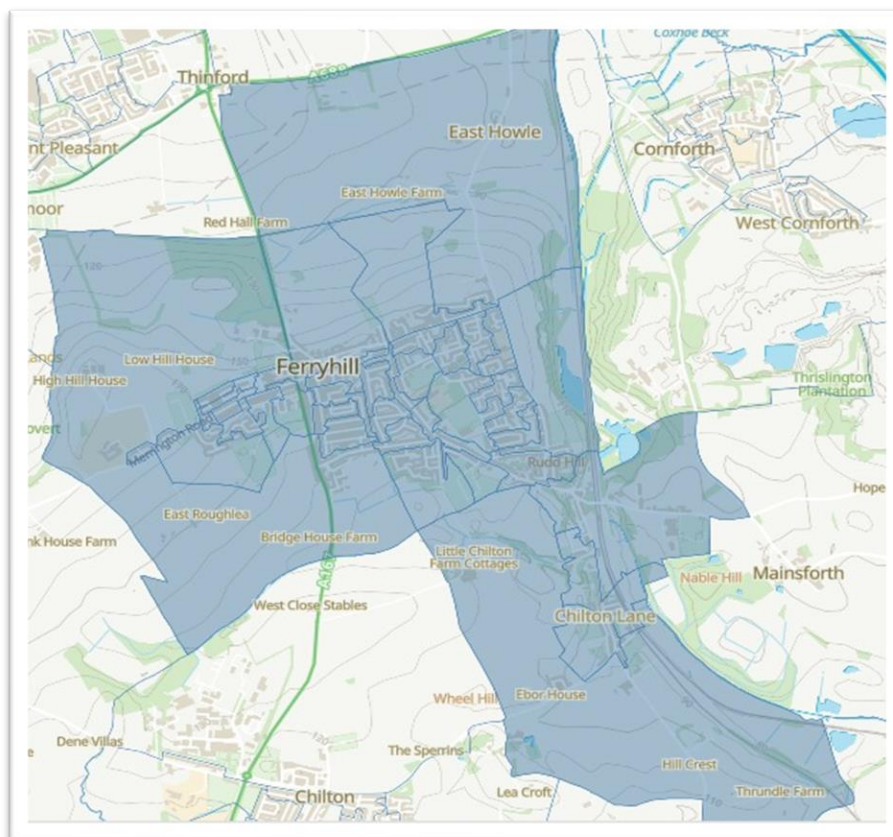
Dean Bank Recreation Park, which was originally created by the former Dean and Chapter Colliery, was conveyed to the Town Council in 1966 and now provides football pitches, a multi-use games area, picnic areas and children's play areas for the public to enjoy.

The land which was part of the former site of Mainsforth Colliery was conveyed to Sedgfield District Council in 1974 and in 1998 it was transferred to Ferryhill Town Council. It is now a recreation complex with cricket square, bowling green and football pitches.

One of the best known buildings in the town is the Town Hall which was built in 1867 on the land vacated by the first St. Luke's church using left over stone from the original building. This great building has served many uses over the years including a library and reading room and today houses the offices of Ferryhill Town Council.

Ferryhill Town Council

Ferryhill Town Council covers 870 hectares and includes the areas of Ferryhill Station, East Howle, Metal Bridge, Chilton Lane, Dean Bank, Mainsforth and Ferryhill Village.



17 town councillors represent people in the three wards of:

- Broom
- Ferryhill Station
- Ferryhill Village and Dean Bank Ward

Ferryhill Town Council is responsible for some services and events in the town including:

- Town Hall
- Allotments
- Cemetery
- Market
- Parks
- Public Toilets

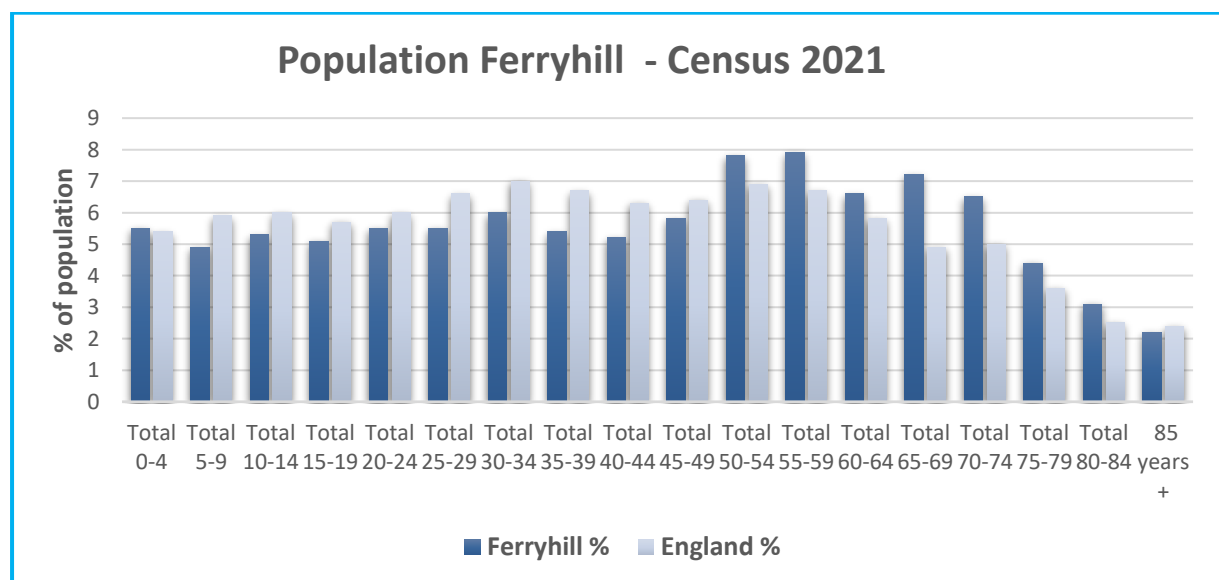
In 2022 Ferryhill launched a Members Initiative Fund offering local community groups the opportunity to apply for funding to develop local projects. The initiative proved hugely successful, supporting 18 community groups and twenty-three projects.

The Town Council also hosts a variety of annual events for the community and organises commemorative events to ensure that important dates in the national calendar are marked appropriately.

Ferryhill Key Facts

Population

Ferryhill has a similar age distribution to other parts of County Durham, although there are more older people here than on average, particularly in the 65 to 74 group. Almost half of all Ferryhill residents are over 50 years old compared to 38% across England.



The older population is reflected in the housing stock where a fifth of homes are bungalows. Nearly half of all homes in Ferryhill are rented: half of these are to social housing landlords, the remainder to private landlords. 2 out of 5 people in Ferryhill live alone.

There are fewer younger people in the town than average, except for children under 4 years old where Ferryhill has a higher proportion than is typical.

Rates of child poverty in Ferryhill are significantly higher than elsewhere; according to HMRC one third of children in Ferryhill were from low-income families in 2021/22, a drop from the peak in 2020/21 when it was over 37%.

There are more carers in Ferryhill than in other places; over 1000 Ferryhill residents are unpaid carers (11%) and more than 430 people provide care for more than 50 hours every week.

(Sources: ONS 2021 census).

Ferryhill has some of the highest rates of anti-social behaviour and other criminal activity in County Durham (12 months to July 2023). (Source: <https://crimerate.co.uk/durham/ferryhill>)

Methodology

Launch



Ferryhill Community Plan was launched at a public meeting on October 22, 2022, attended by 25 local residents.

The purpose of the launch was to gain an initial sense of local priorities and concerns and to encourage local involvement in the consultation.

Steering Group

Following the launch, a Steering Group was set up, facilitated by Durham Community Action, with representatives from a cross-section of the community, including local organisations and residents' groups:

- A representative from Ferryhill Residents Associations:
 - Broom Residents Association
 - Dean Bank Residents Association
- Voluntary sector organisations operating in Ferryhill:
 - Approach Too
 - Ferryhill Ladder Centre
- A young person, supported to engage with the meetings and the process
- Two elected town councillors
- Ferryhill Town Clerk, attending in an advisory capacity

Ferryhill Station and Chilton Lane Residents Association was initially represented but was unable to maintain involvement due to external factors.

The Ferryhill Town Clerk, David Anderson, was a key contributor to the Steering Group until his retirement in summer 2023.

Wellbeing Approach

The Steering Group met on a regular basis and reviewed typical model questions for an online survey of the community.

Thanks to the Town Clerk, the Steering Group were introduced to an alternative type of community consultation, the Santa Monica Wellbeing Index.

The focus of the Santa Monica project was to understand the needs of their community through a wellbeing lens. They recognised that traditional economic and health outcomes are only a part of wellbeing and that improving peoples' opportunities, their satisfaction with their social connections and with their community, and their health, all contribute to wellbeing.

Despite great differences between the communities of Santa Monica and Ferryhill the Steering Group recognised the value of the approach that Santa Monica had taken. Having a better understanding of wellbeing in Ferryhill will provide vital evidence to policy makers, to community organisations, and to those funding services and determining resource priorities.

The Santa Monica Project

At the Santa Monica Project's core is the Wellbeing Index, a tool developed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the strengths and challenges faced by community members in the following areas:

Outlook: How are people doing?

Community: How connected do people feel with one another and their local government?

Place: Does the built and natural environment promote wellbeing?

Learning: Do people have the opportunity to enrich their knowledge and skills throughout their lives?

Health: How physically and emotionally healthy are our residents?

Economic Opportunity: Can a diverse population live and thrive in our community?

The U.S. project was large scale and well resourced, using multiple sources of data to measure their wellbeing index. Ferryhill Community Plan did not try to replicate this project in full due to limited resources but used some of the wellbeing questions and analysis to build a picture of challenges and opportunities faced by people living in Ferryhill.

The Ferryhill project developed a questionnaire based on the Santa Monica themes. Alongside the wellbeing questions the Ferryhill survey contained a section which looked at the services that Ferryhill Town Council is responsible for, to provide some specific feedback to the Town Council on these amenities.

An early decision was taken not to focus on anti-social behaviour and crime within this survey so as not to replicate the Ferryhill Young Ambassadors survey which had been recently undertaken and which had reached 500 children and adults.



Engagement

Actions taken to consult with local people included:

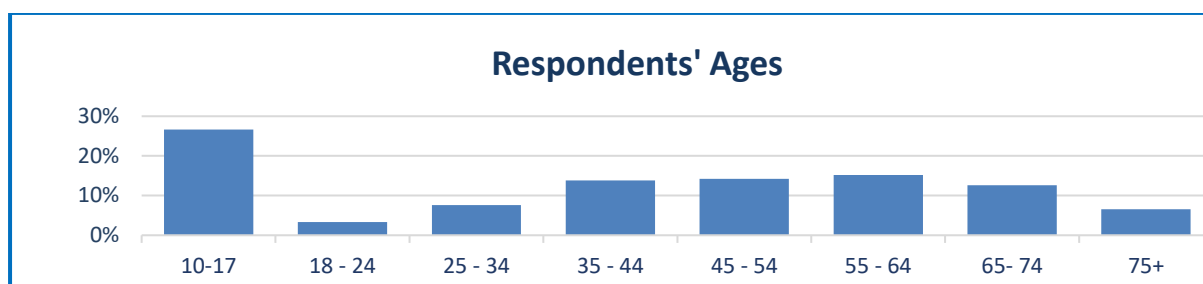
- An online survey which was widely circulated
- The link to the online survey was emailed to local schools, out of area schools catering for older Ferryhill students, to churches and community organisations
- Printed information was made available containing a QR code, web link and details of where to complete a paper survey
- Posters were put up at local shops and business cards were distributed at community venues with information about how to engage with the survey
- The survey was promoted in the local free newspaper, Ferryhill & Chilton Chapter which is received by every household in Ferryhill
- Steering Group members went into schools to support completion of the survey with local children
- DCA staff and Steering Group members promoted the survey at Ferryhill market
- Steering Group members promoted the survey amongst their members and users of their services

Rates of engagement were regularly reviewed to ensure different sections of the community were responding, resulting in further in-depth interviews:

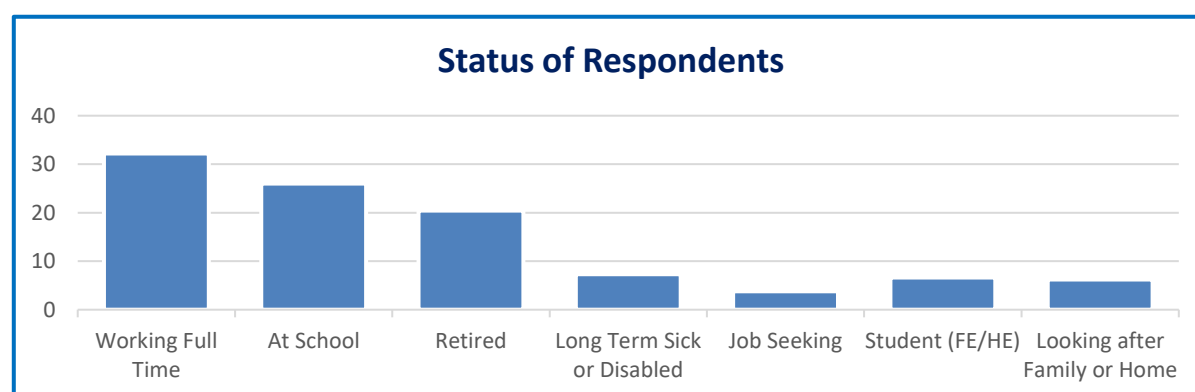
- Focus group with Ferryhill Ladder Centre Men's Group (11 people)
- Focus group at Ferryhill Methodist Church with older women (4 people)
- In depth interviews with individuals who wanted to be further involved after responding to the survey (5 people)

Response Rates

The total number of online and paper responses received was 1012, equal to approximately 10% of Ferryhill residents. All responses were anonymous.



The age range of respondents was broadly reflective of the proportion of Ferryhill residents at the older end of the age range, but the proportion of under 18s was statistically over represented and younger working age people (especially men) were under represented.



A fifth of survey respondents were retired, just over a quarter were at school and almost one third were working full time.

Amongst all adults, 4 out of 10 were working full time.

In this report we refer to three age groups, aged 10 -17 (referred to as 'under 18s' or 'young people'), aged 18 – 64 ('working age' or 'mid age' people) and aged 65 and older ('older people').

More women than men completed the survey (58%), but amongst under 18s over half of respondents were male.

Summary Findings

The findings below summarise the detailed findings contained in **appendix I**.

Outlook

“Outlook assesses how people view their lives, their perspectives on the future, and their levels of optimism and resilience.”

We asked people about their day to day emotions, how satisfied they felt overall, their sense of accomplishment and achievement, and the things that they felt would improve their lives.

Personal Wellbeing

In general, people reported that they were satisfied with their lives, and more than half said they felt happy often or most of the time. But this picture of personal wellbeing was complex, revealing areas of concern around stress, energy, and emotional resilience.

64% of older people say they are satisfied with their lives

People’s optimism about the future was directly linked to their age; young people felt the most optimistic and older people the least. But overall people aged 65 and older reported fewer negative responses than other age groups. They also reported consistently higher levels of overall life satisfaction, happiness, and sense of accomplishment and lower levels of loneliness, sadness, and stress.

Working age people were less optimistic about their future and had the least energy, with 2 in 5 reporting that they rarely or never had a lot of energy. More than a third said that they didn’t have time to do things that they really enjoyed.

Energy levels were highest amongst young people; most felt energised all or most of the time. Despite this, a significant minority of younger people (1 in 5) said they rarely felt energised, and a quarter also felt they had little time to do the things they enjoyed.

Stress levels and loneliness in children and mid aged adults was high, with 1 in 5 people saying they felt sad or lonely often or all the time and 2 in 5 stressed often or all of the time. Rates were even higher amongst females.

1 in 5 working age people and young people report very high stress levels

A third of young people in Ferryhill struggle to be emotionally resilient

A significant minority of people said that when things go wrong in their life it generally takes them a long time to get back to normal. Amongst under 18s over one third reported low levels of emotional resilience.

Improving the Wellbeing of People in Ferryhill

We asked people to rank the top three things which would improve the wellbeing of local people.

Top 3 issues to improve Ferryhill:

- Emotional wellbeing
- Housing
- Transport

Addressing emotional wellbeing, improving housing options and improving transport options ranked highest. Housing was most frequently ranked first with 7 out of 10 of respondents including this as one of the top three.

Improving transport options was the most pressing issue for working age people.

People aged of 65 and over were also keen for greater promotion of social connections, with two thirds including this as one of their top three issues.

Seventy-five people left additional comments for this question, mainly about addressing anti-social and criminal behaviour in Ferryhill. This was not an option amongst the listed choices but repeatedly arose when speaking to people during the consultation. This issue is also reflected in other questions on the survey, notably about noise.

After the online survey, focus groups were held to look more deeply into some topics especially housing concerns. All three focus group stated that housing issues related to private sector properties which were in poor states of disrepair. Negative perceptions of the private rented sector also featured very highly at the public launch and was repeatedly linked with issues of anti-social behaviour and criminal/ drug related activities.

Anti-social behaviour and housing issues are key concerns for local residents



Place and Planet

“The characteristics of the area in which people live - physical, social, and environmental - affect how wellbeing is fostered and supported.”

Transport and Travel

Amongst under 18s walking was the most common method of transport with 4 in 10 regularly walking to school, work or college compared to around 3 in 10 who got a lift or got the bus.

Working age people going to work or college mainly drove their own vehicle (62%) and only 1 in 10 used a bus or cycled to get to work.

Many local people feel that bus services do not meet their needs

Public transport was a topic that came up at several public events and focus groups. There was a widespread perception of a lack of reliable, frequent buses to and from Ferryhill and worries that bus services were soon to be further reduced.

This perception was challenged by some, who felt that the range of bus services from the town centre marketplace was relatively good and that it was connections from outlying parts of Ferryhill to the town centre that was the problem.

Most people travelled out of Ferryhill regularly, with 6 in 10 people visiting other areas at least once a week and a third of people travelling out of Ferryhill daily.

Aside from going to work or school the most frequent reason for visiting other places was to visit a supermarket. The lack of a local supermarket and the limited choice of other grocery shops was another key issue for local people and was raised in all the public events and focus groups. Some people felt that it was expensive to rely on Ferryhill shops for household items and food ingredients and that this contributed to cost of living pressures.

“The town centre is not anchored by a large food store, unlike other centres in Durham”

(Durham Town Centre Survey 2019)

Other reasons people travelled outside of Ferryhill included access to leisure or sports activities – either because the choice of activities and venues was greater elsewhere, or because some people felt that Ferryhill had little to offer them.

Spending Time in Ferryhill

Most young people (70%) and half of all adults spent leisure time outdoors in parks, walks or during outdoor activities at least once a week. But more than a third of older people and working age people are outside for less than 1 day a month.

Over a third of people spent at least 1 day per month in local community or public spaces such as libraries, leisure centres, community, or sports centres.

Noise and Other Anti-Social Behaviour

Over half of all survey respondents said that they were bothered by noise to some degree, but for some people in Ferryhill noise was having a deep impact on their lives. More than 1 in 10 (15%) said that they were bothered by noise “a great deal”.

This section of the survey generated the highest number of additional comments with 229 people adding individual comments about noise.

A quarter of the comments mentioned that traffic noises were disruptive. Speeding cars, especially at night, were a significant nuisance to some. Almost as many people said that motorbikes and quad bikes were noisy and sometimes dangerous.

Other types of noisy anti-social behaviour affected almost as many people as vehicle noise; this included fighting, shouting and other activities associated with people who were under the influence of (or dealing) drugs or alcohol.

Other disruptive noise factors included barking dogs, loud music and noisy neighbours.

Anti-social and criminal behaviour, including drug related activities came up repeatedly at the focus groups, the public launch and amongst Steering Group members. It was seen by many as widespread and persistent and having a significant negative impact on the lives of Ferryhill residents.

Perceptions of Ferryhill

Six out of 10 people (58%) disagreed, or strongly disagreed, with the statement “Ferryhill is an attractive town”. However, people under the age of 18 were much more positive, and 1 in 5 agreed that they found Ferryhill attractive.

16% of people agreed that Ferryhill is an attractive town

Half of all respondents disagreed with the statement “Ferryhill has the businesses, shops and services that I would like it to have.”

Economic Opportunity

“Economic conditions, are key to creating a community in which a diverse population can thrive.”

Overall, people in Ferryhill value cultural and social activities with 6 in 10 people reporting that such activities are important to them. Activities which we asked about included:

- Cultural activities such as theatre, music and local heritage
- Community events like festivals, parades and markets
- Organised opportunities to learn about or enjoy the natural environment
- A vibrant social scene, such as bars, social clubs, restaurants and cafes

People under the age of 18 were generally less interested in all of these activities. The exception to this was around having a vibrant social scene, which appealed to 7 out 10 young people.

People over the age of 65 year placed greater importance on all activities than other age groups.

In the comments section some people said that they would like more spaces available for children or teens to meet up or that they would like to see additional cafes or restaurants in Ferryhill. Several people mentioned that it was important that any meeting places were safe and that this is not always the case now.

More than 1 in 10 Ferryhill residents are struggling to get by

The survey also asked people to tell us about their financial situation to gain a better understanding of some of the financial challenges people are facing.

Whilst nearly 6 in 10 adults said that they were doing ok or that they felt financially comfortable, this left a significant proportion of people who were less well off.

More than 1 in 10 (13%) Ferryhill adults who completed this survey said that they were struggling to manage. Another fifth (27%) reported that they were just getting by.

Almost half of working age people and carers said they were struggling or just getting by.

People between the ages of 18 and 35 were most acutely affected with 6 out of 10 struggling or just getting by.

Nearly a third of people (28%) with financial stresses were working full time.

Learning

“Education is linked to virtually all wellbeing outcomes, ...lifelong learning in and out of the classroom is a key factor of wellbeing.”

1 in 5 adults in Ferryhill took a course or lesson in the last 12 months

A fifth of Ferryhill residents who are over the age of 18 had taken a course or lesson in the last 12 months. This is similar to the

findings of national research which shows that 22% of UK residents were participating in adult learning (including formal, non-formal and informal learning) in 2022. (*Source: Learning and Work Institute*).

We asked people about their confidence levels in carrying out some basic life skills:

Most people were confident using the internet to find reliable information, and confidence levels around cooking a meal from basic ingredients were also very high amongst adults, but confidence levels dropped amongst older people.

Overall, people were less confident carrying out basic household repairs with 1 in 5 people either not very confident or not at all confident. This was particularly acute amongst people aged 65 and older where 1 in 3 said they were not confident.

Health

“Being and feeling healthy - or at least having the tools and resources needed to manage any health challenges - are essential to wellbeing”

We asked people about their sleeping, physical activity and healthy eating habits and how easy it is to stay healthy in Ferryhill.

Eating Healthily

Only 10 percent of people said they ate the recommended minimum of five portions of fruit and vegetables a day. Half of all people surveyed said they ate, at most, two portions a day.

Amongst younger people nearly a fifth (17%) said that they ate 5 or more portions of fruit and vegetables most days, however, 1 in 10 young people said that, on an average day, they ate no fruit or vegetables at all. More than half of under 18s said that they ate 2 or fewer portions per day.

1 in 10 young people in Ferryhill eat no fruit or vegetables

Older people reported eating the most fruit and vegetables with 1 in 5 (22%) eating five or more portions a day. This is a much lower proportion than compared with national trends.

Working age people reported eating the lowest amounts of fruit and vegetables with 3 in 5 adults eating a maximum of two portions on an average day.

Physical Activity

Under 18s were the most physically active, with 7 out of 10 doing thirty minutes of physical activity at least once a week. However, 1 in 5 under 18s said that they did such activity less than once a month.

UK guidelines for physical activity for adults / older adults is for at least 150 minutes moderate exercise per week.

(Source; Department of Health and Social Care)

Over 18s were generally less physically active. A quarter of adults said that they never, or almost never, did physical activity for 30 minutes which made them breathe more heavily than usual.

Amongst young people, a third agreed that ‘Ferryhill has accessible options to help support my efforts to keep fit and healthy’, but working age adults were much less likely to agree with this.

Sleeping Habits

Over half of the people who answered this survey said they slept for more than seven hours a night on average. Fewer people under 18 managed seven hours a night (46%), and 1 in 10 under 18 year olds typically slept less than five hours a night.

Community

“A community with strong connections among its inhabitants can flourish in good times and withstand the tough ones.”

The majority of people who completed the survey reported having deep rooted connections in Ferryhill. Most people felt there were people in Ferryhill they could count on and that they regularly talked to when they were out and about.

Local connections were especially strong amongst young people with most (7 in 10) meeting people socially at least once a week. But even amongst young people around 1 in 10 said they never, or hardly ever, met with friends or family socially.

Many older people also saw friends and family socially at least once a week (6 out of 10), but a small group of older people (7%) saw no one.

Working age people were much less likely to meet family, friends or colleagues socially with just over a third doing so on a weekly basis. Many more people in this age group reported that they never, or almost never, met socially with friends, family or work colleagues.

More than 1 in 10 people reported that they take part in some form of volunteering for a charity or community organisation sometimes, and almost 1 in 5 volunteer at least once a month.

The vast majority of people taking part in the survey said that they planned to stay in Ferryhill for a number of years. But a sense of connection in Ferryhill wasn't entirely shared with fewer than half saying that they felt they 'belonged' in Ferryhill and only 1 out of 5 people reporting that they trusted other people in Ferryhill. Furthermore, nearly 6 out of 10 people (57%) said they would not want their child to live in Ferryhill when they are adults.

Only 1 in 10 people felt that they could influence decisions affecting Ferryhill.



Ferryhill Town Council Amenities

People were asked to rate the local amenities and events provided by Ferryhill Town Council.

Parks and Open Spaces

People under the age of 18 generally gave lower positive ratings to all the open spaces than older people and working age people did.

- **Mainsforth Sports Complex ("The Cricket Ground")** and **Flower beds** were given the most positive assessments, with over half of respondents saying they were good or excellent.
- **King George V Playing Fields ("Broom Rec")** was least well thought of with 19% of people rating it as poor.
- Almost half (47%) of people thought that **Dean Bank Recreation Park** was good or excellent. This was the most favoured park among younger people.
- **Surtees Doorstep Garden** was not well known by many residents but was rated excellent or good by 20% of people. Young people liked this less than the other parks.

Services Provided by Ferryhill Town Council

- The **Christmas lights** were rated highly with 3 out of 5 saying they were good or excellent.
- **Duncombe Cemetery** also scored highly with more than half of over 18s rating it good or excellent.
- The **market** was regarded less highly with almost half of all respondents rating it as poor.
- The **marketplace car park** was more popular with 38% rating it as good or excellent but another 19% rating it as poor.
- 28% of all respondents said the **public toilets** were poor and this figure increased to more than half amongst under 18s.
- Most people did not know about the **small grants scheme**. Amongst those who had heard of it one third said it was good or excellent.
- Of the respondents who gave a view about the **allotments**, one third said they were good or excellent and a quarter said they were poor.

The market came up in many conversations about Ferryhill. There was a widespread perception it was rundown and lacked appeal and quality products. Some felt that it contributed to a rundown feel to the town and others that there was a missed opportunity to provide a wider range of produce in Ferryhill.

Events

By far the most popular event organised by Ferryhill Town Council was **Remembrance Sunday** with more than 6 in 10 people ranking it as one of the most important.

Other popular events organised were the **Miners Banners Parades** (45%), the **Fireworks Display** (37%) and the **Christmas Fayre** (36%).

Under 18s also highly rated the **Party in the Park events** (53%) and people aged 65+ liked the **Seniors Trips** (47%).



Conclusions

Overall personal outlook is positive amongst Ferryhill people

Most people in Ferryhill said that they felt satisfied and happy and that what they do in their life is worthwhile. Older people reported consistently higher levels of overall life satisfaction and many reported active social lives away from their homes.

Anti-social behaviour has a deep impact on many people in Ferryhill

This consultation had deliberately tried to avoid getting too deeply into matters around anti-social behaviour as there was felt to have been recent community focus on this. Despite this, anti-social behaviour came up again and again from local residents. Disruptive anti-social behaviour was seen as common in Ferryhill and there were widespread negative perceptions of poorly maintained private rented housing linked to anti-social behaviour.

Anti-social behaviour and associated housing problems underpinned many other issues including levels of civic pride and trust in neighbours, perceptions of how attractive the town is, readiness to use certain community assets, and mental wellbeing and resilience.

The strength of community connections and civic pride is mixed

Many people reported deep rooted connections in Ferryhill, particularly amongst young people, but only a minority of residents said they felt a sense of 'belonging' in Ferryhill and there was distrust of other local people. Many residents lacked a sense of civic pride, and few people wanted their children to live in Ferryhill in the long term.

Involvement in civic activities like volunteering was limited and most people said they felt they had no power to influence decision making.

Mental wellbeing and social isolation are a concern across all groups

Stress was high and emotional resilience low, particularly amongst young people and working age people. A minority of residents of all ages reported having little contact with other people in a typical week and many of this group also said they often felt lonely or sad.

Residents are not as healthy as had been hoped

The amount of fruit and vegetables eaten by local people was very low across all age groups. A significant minority of young people were sleeping far less than recommended. Physical activity levels amongst adults were much lower than recommended and many people reported minimal energy reserves.

Residents want better shops and services in Ferryhill

The range of shops and services was not meeting the needs of local residents, with the lack of a supermarket or wider range of grocery stores a common source of frustration and inconvenience. The market was felt to be unsatisfactory with inferior products.

Buses were a hot topic for many who said that bus services were not meeting their needs; only a few people used public transport for work and working age people wanted improved transport options.

People felt there were insufficient opportunities in Ferryhill to take up healthy pursuits and many travelled outside of Ferryhill to access more leisure activities.

Community assets are valued but under-used

People said they valued cultural and community activities and were supportive of events, including those organised by Ferryhill Town Council, but use of Ferryhill's community assets such as parks and libraries are low. Many events and services provided by Ferryhill Town Council are well regarded but there is room for improvement at a number of amenities.

Safety is a concern for some who want more safe meeting spaces for children and for young people.

The impact of financial pressures has affected residents unevenly

Financial hardship affected certain groups more than others; carers, people working full time and adults under 35 are disproportionately affected.

Older people who lack social contact may struggle to manage their homes

Many older people said they lacked the confidence to carry out basic household repairs; this may be problematic for people who also reported having little social contact.

Recommendations

- Prioritise multi agency partnership work with police and landlords to tackle anti-social behaviour and housing issues.
- Encourage community partners and residents to work together to restore a sense of civic pride and belonging.
- Create activities that better use outdoor spaces including assets run by Ferryhill Town Council.
- Create improved community spaces for social engagement, particularly those that target younger and older people, making use of existing community assets.
- Develop initiatives which tackle social isolation and wellbeing.
- Support the development of targeted financial support initiatives for carers, working people and younger adults to mitigate financial distress.
- Review local public transport needs and services, and support initiatives to promote greater use of cycling, walking and public transport.
- Explore opportunities to improve the range of shops in Ferryhill and look at ways the market can improve its offer with better food options and other quality products.
- Develop partnerships between children and young people's services, schools and health professionals which support the delivery of initiatives to improve mental resilience and loneliness, and which encourage healthy eating and healthy lifestyles.
- Ferryhill Town Council work to amplify the voice of local residents and explore opportunities to expand the role of residents in shared decision making.

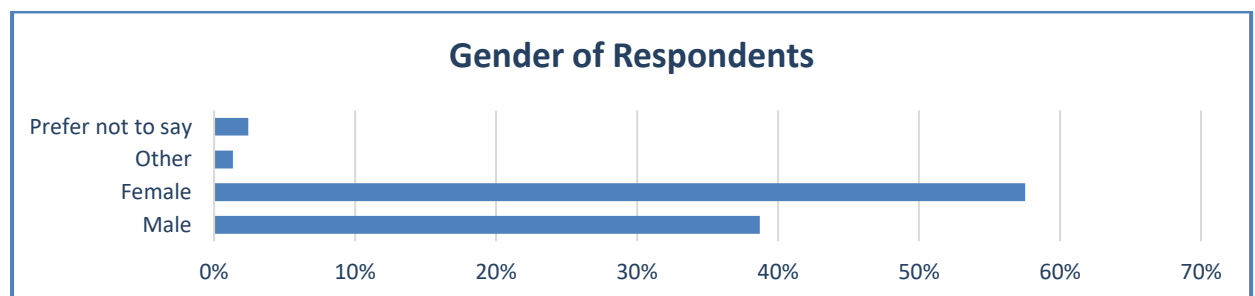
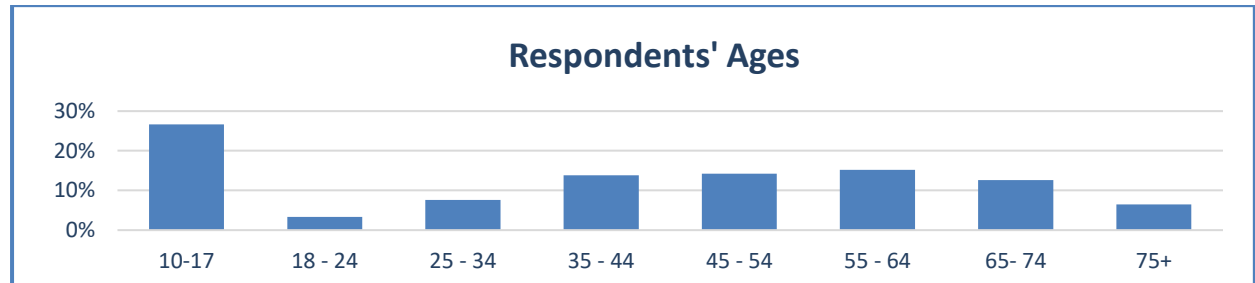
In addition, it is recommended that Ferryhill Town Council:

- develop an action plan based on the contents of the report.

- support the Town Clerk to take forward community actions that result from the findings.
- disseminate the report widely to residents, community groups, schools and other stakeholders.

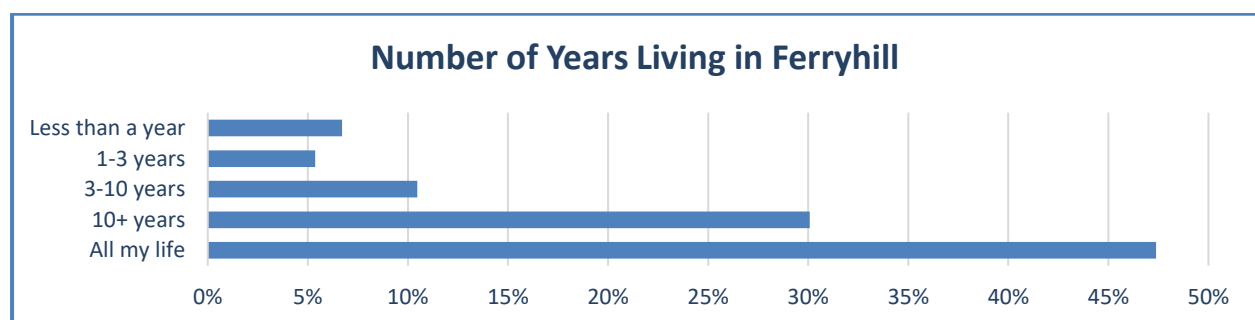
Appendix I – Detailed findings of Ferryhill Community Consultation

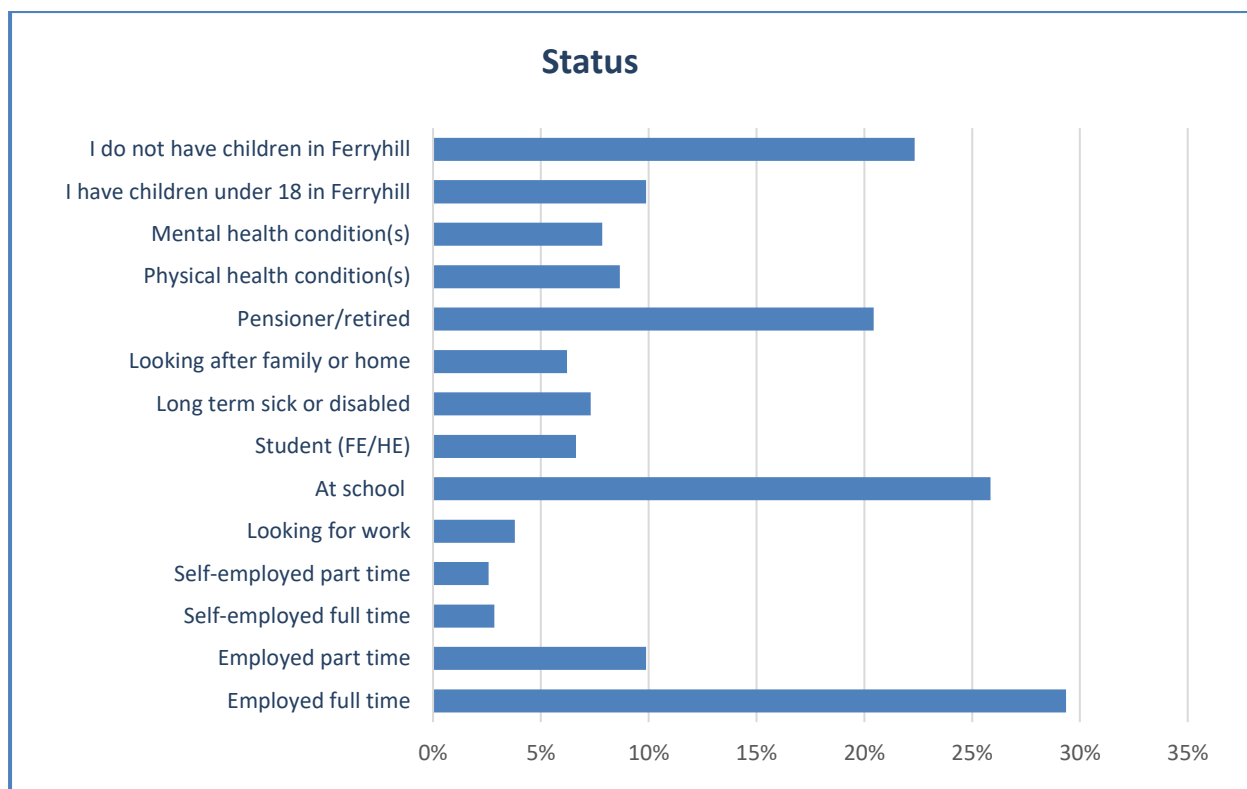
Number of responders: 1012



64% of respondents over 18 were female

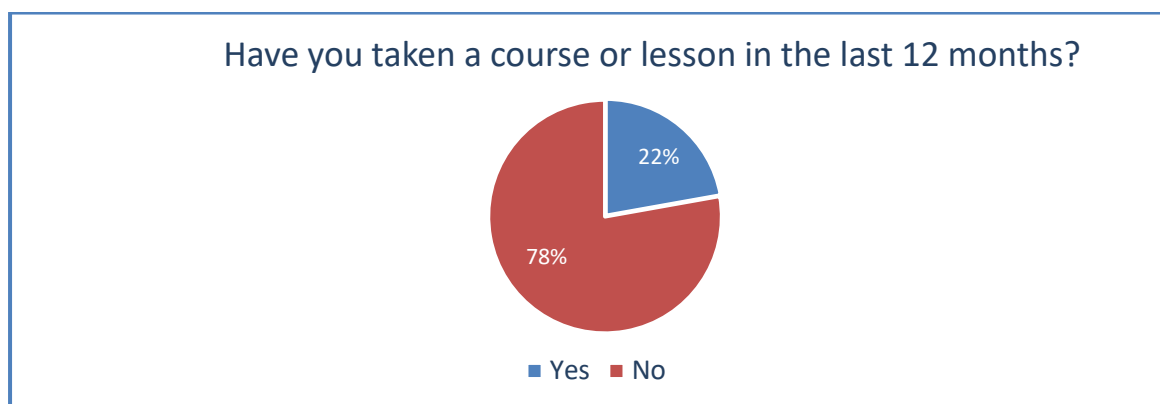
55% of respondents under the age of 18 were male.

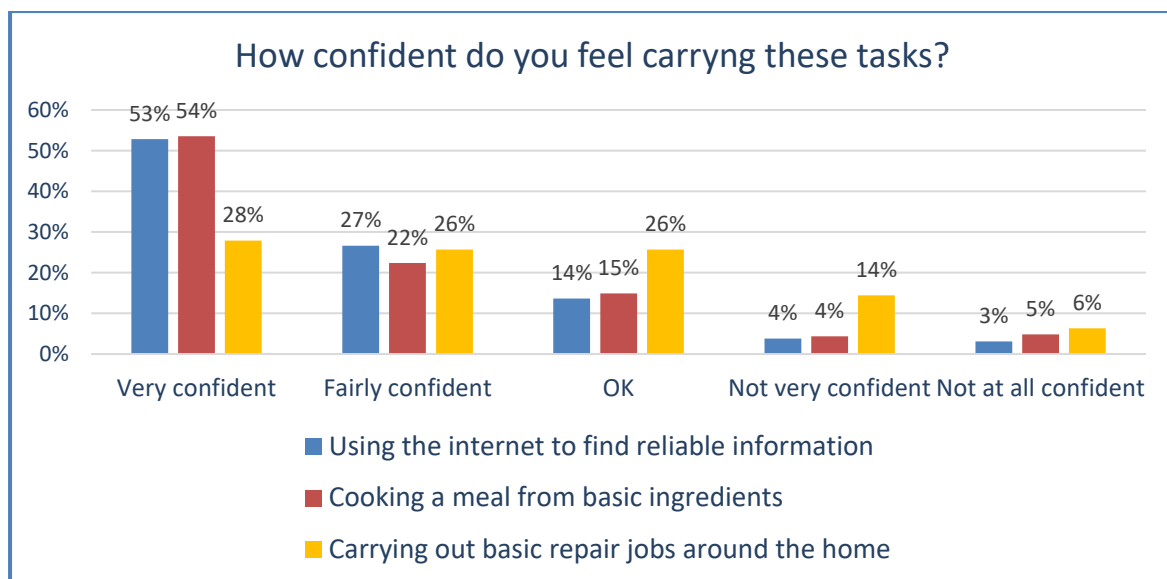




Respondents could tick multiple boxes

Questions

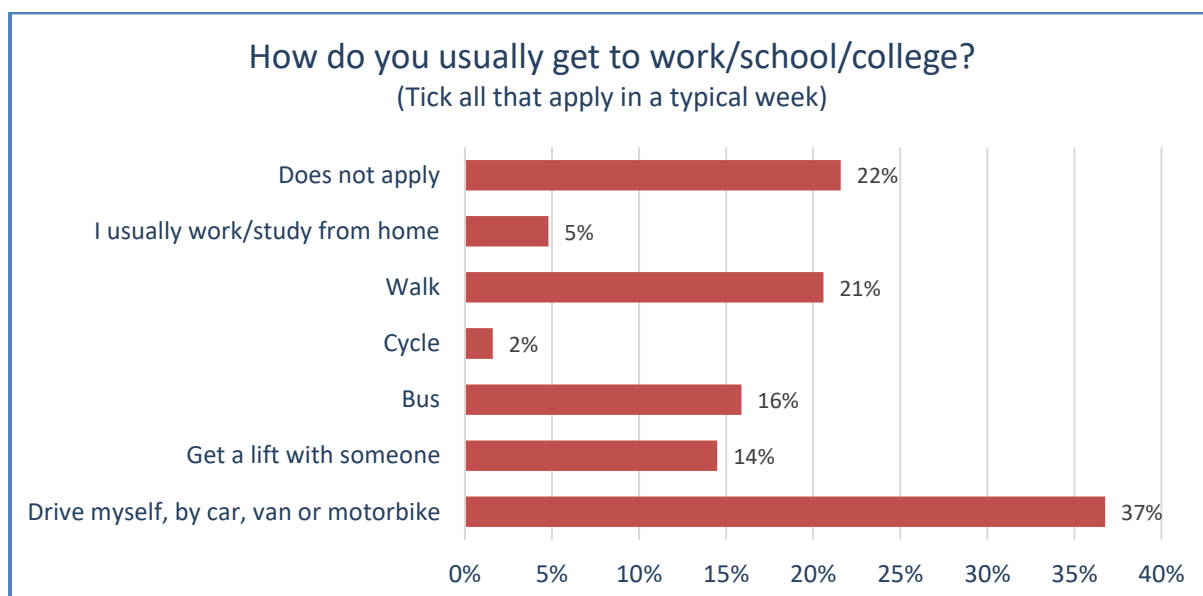




86% of working age adults were **very or fairly confident** using the internet to find reliable information, compared to 82% of respondents under 18 and 59% of people over the age of 65.

Working age adults were the most confident cooking, with 87% saying they were **fairly or very confident** preparing a meal from basic ingredients. This fell to 80% for people over 65 and 59% for those under the age of 18.

Respondents were overall less confident carrying out basic household repairs with 20% either **not very confident or not at all confident**. The proportion of older respondents who said they were not confident carrying out repairs was higher at 31% which was almost twice as those of working age adults.

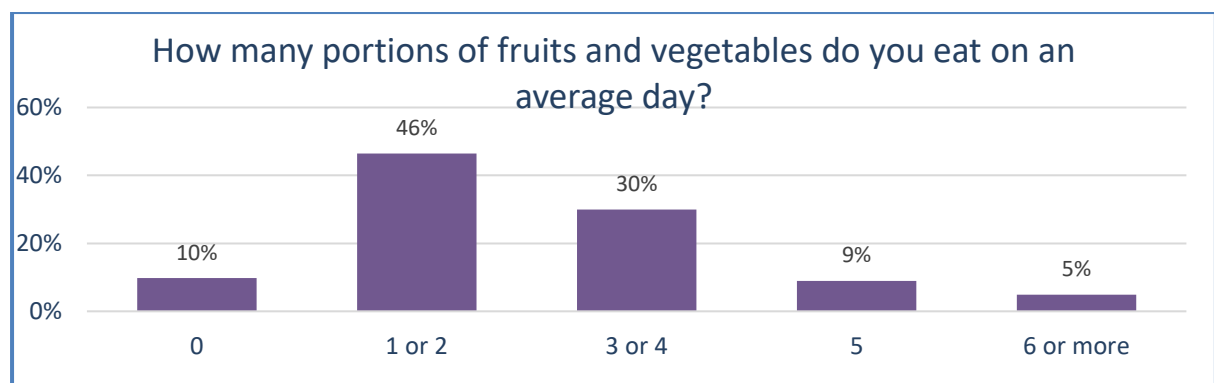


Amongst under 18s walking was the most common method of transport with 41% regularly walking to school, work or college compared to 37% who got a lift and 35% who got the bus. Working age respondents going to work or college mainly drove their own vehicle (62%).



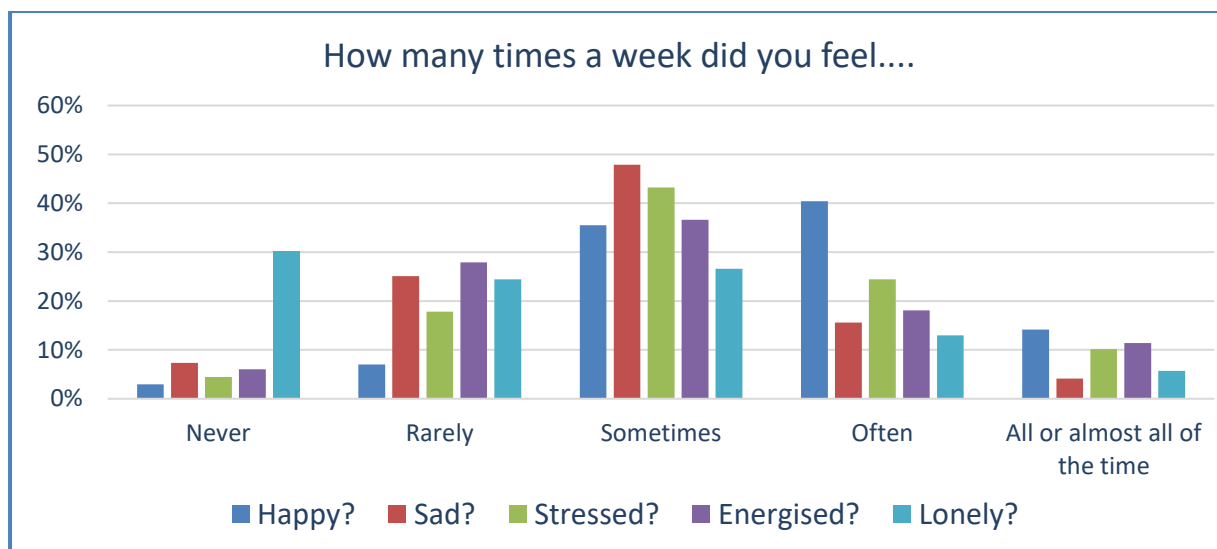
Over 50% of the people who answered this survey said they slept for more than 7 hours a night on average. For people under 18 this dropped to 46%.

Over 10% of respondents aged under 18 years old slept less than 5 hours a night on average compared to 7% for adults.



14 % of respondents said they ate 5 or more portions of fruit and vegetables a day. **56% of all respondents said that they ate 2 or less portions, this was most acute amongst working age people where 61% ate 2 or fewer portions.**

Amongst younger people 10% said that, on an average day, they ate no fruit or vegetables at all. Older people reported eating the most fruit and vegetables with 23% eating 5 or more portions a day.

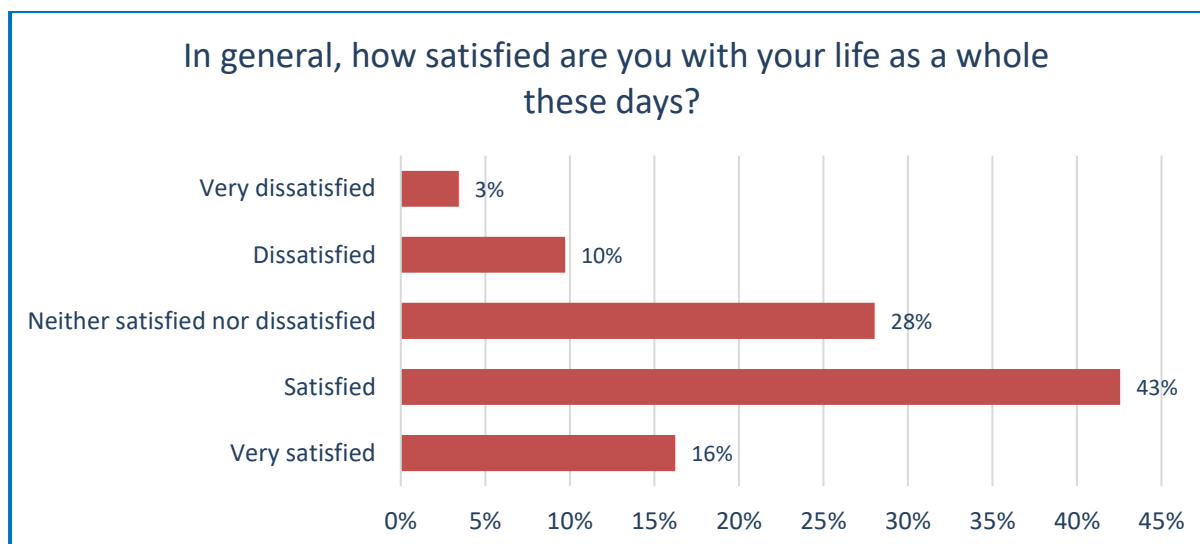


Under 18s were happiest with 67% feeling **happy** often or all/most of the time compared to 62% of people over 64 and 49% of working age people.

Under 18s and 18–65-year-olds gave similar responses in this section with over 65s giving a greater number of positive answers:

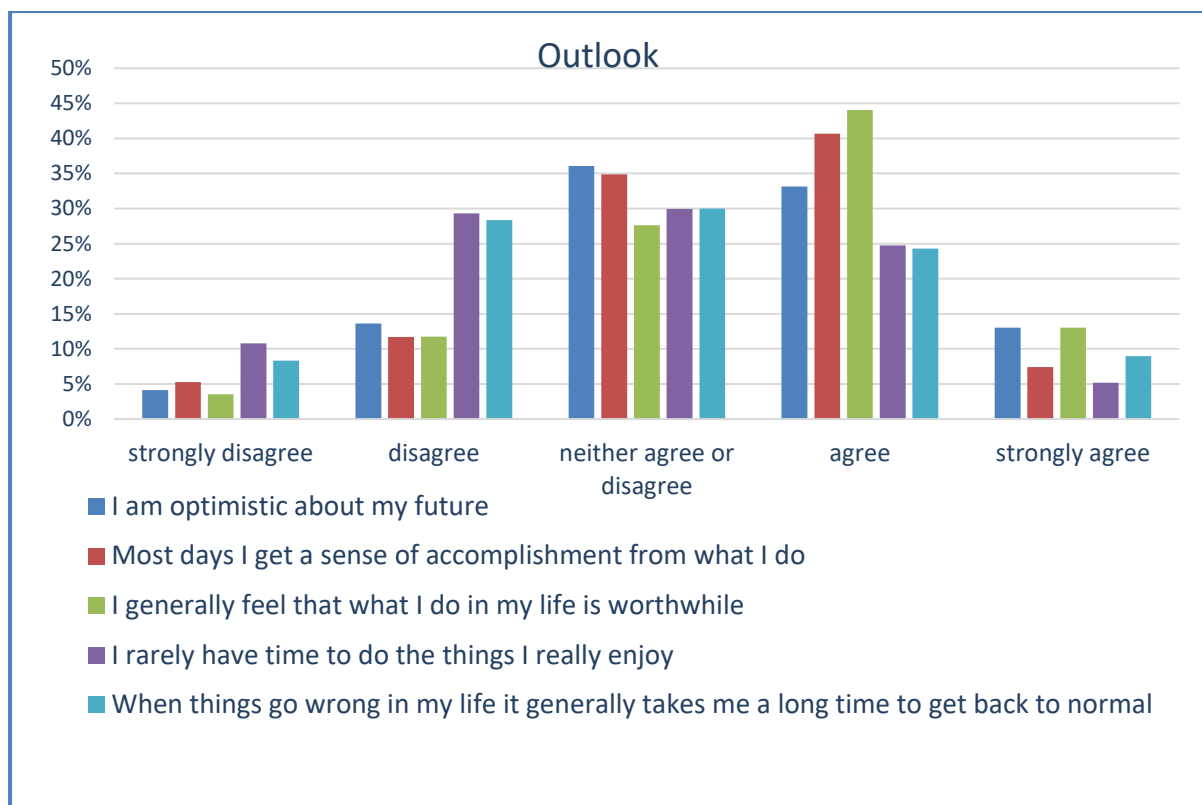
- 40% of under 65s were **stressed** often or all/most of the time compared to just 8% of people over 65.
- 20% were **sad** often or all/most of the time compared to 13% of people aged over 65.
- 19% were **lonely** often or all/most of the time compared to 15% of people aged over 65.

Under 18s were more likely to feel **energised** often or all/most of the time at 60% compared to 19% of over 18s. **40% of working age adults said they rarely or never felt energised**



People over 65 years old gave more positive answers to this question compared to young people and working age adults:

64% of older people were satisfied or very satisfied with their lives whilst 9% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. This compares to 60% of under 18s and working age adults satisfied or very satisfied with their lives and 15% dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

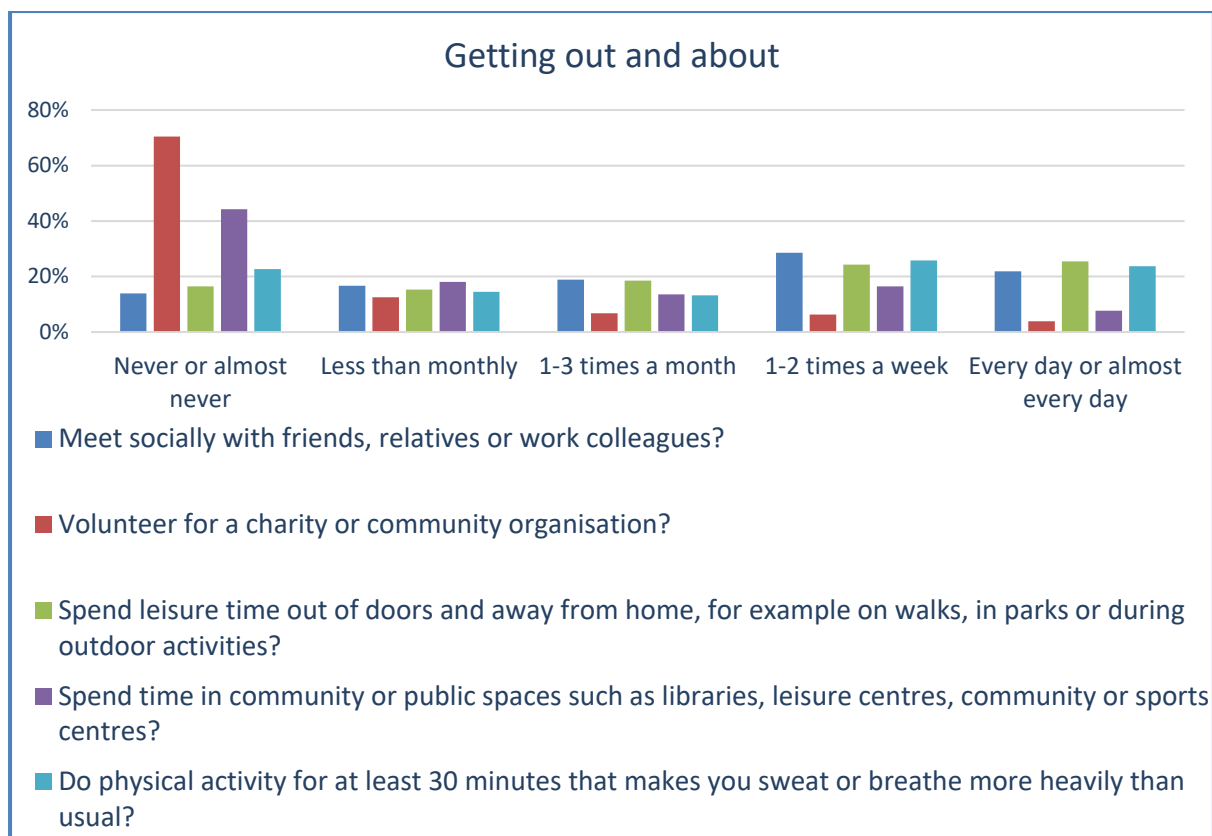


58% of younger people agreed with the statement that they were **optimistic about their future** compared to 47% of working age people and 30% of over 65s.

54% of older people and 49% of working age people felt **a sense of accomplishment** most days compared to 44% of under 18s.

36% of working age people agreed / strongly agreed that they **rarely had time to do things they really enjoyed** as did 24% of under 28s and 20% of people over 65.

A third of all respondents said that **when things go wrong in their life it generally takes them a long time to get back to normal**. The number of under 18s agreeing with the statement was higher, at 36%.



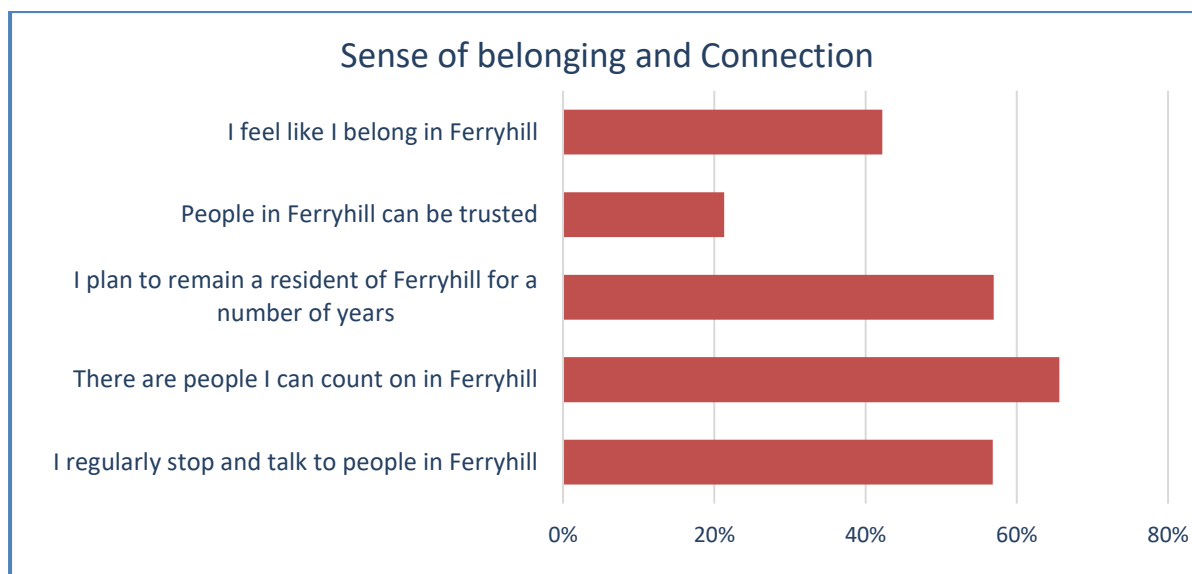
41% of over 65s said they **met socially with friends, relatives or work colleagues** either less than once a month or never/almost never compared to 19% of other respondents.

17% of people **volunteered for charity or community organisations** at least once a month.

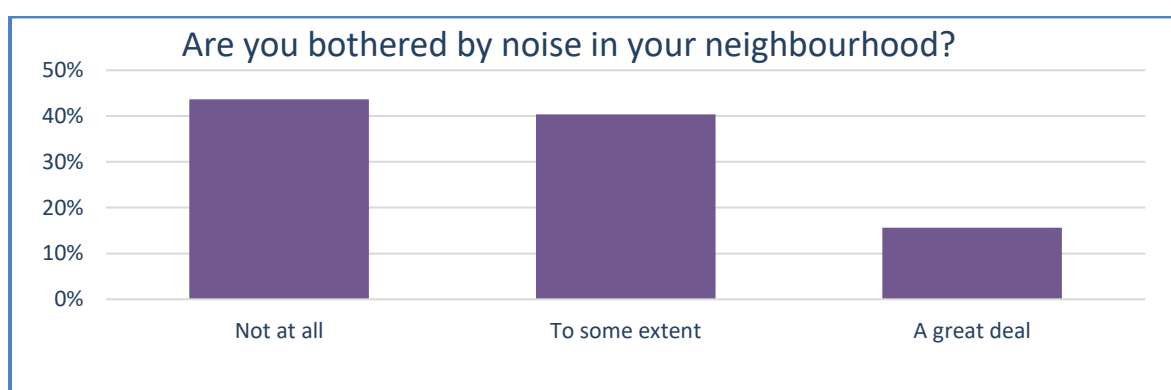
67% of young people **spend leisure time outdoors** at least once a week, but 17% of young people spend less than one day a month outside in their leisure time. Half of over 65s and 40% of 18 to 65s spend leisure time outside at least once a week. More than a third of older people and 35% of working age people are outside for less than 1 day a month.

38% of people had spent at least 1 day per month in **community or public spaces such as libraries, leisure centres, community or sports centres**. 44% of respondents said they spent little or no time in these venues.

70% of under 18s do **30 minutes of physical activity** at least once a week, with 21% doing such activity less than once a month. Over 18s were less physically active with 44% active at least once a week and 45% less than once a month.



Some people feel a strong connection with the town with 66% of respondents **feeling there are people in Ferryhill they can count on**, 57% feeling there are **people they can talk to** and 57% **planning to stay in Ferryhill for a number of years**. 21% of people did not trust other people in Ferryhill with that number dropping to 16% amongst working age people.

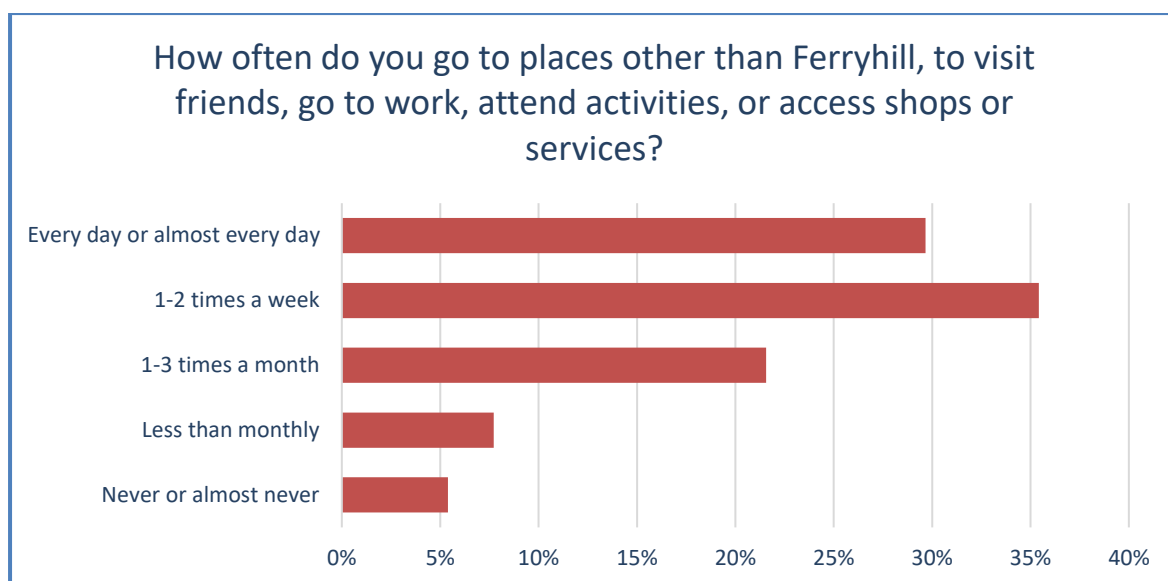


The survey allowed people to provide written comments to this question. 229 people added individual comments about noise.

A quarter of the comments mentioned that traffic noises were disruptive. Speeding cars, especially at night, were a significant nuisance to some. Almost as many people said that motorbikes and quad bikes were noisy and sometimes dangerous.

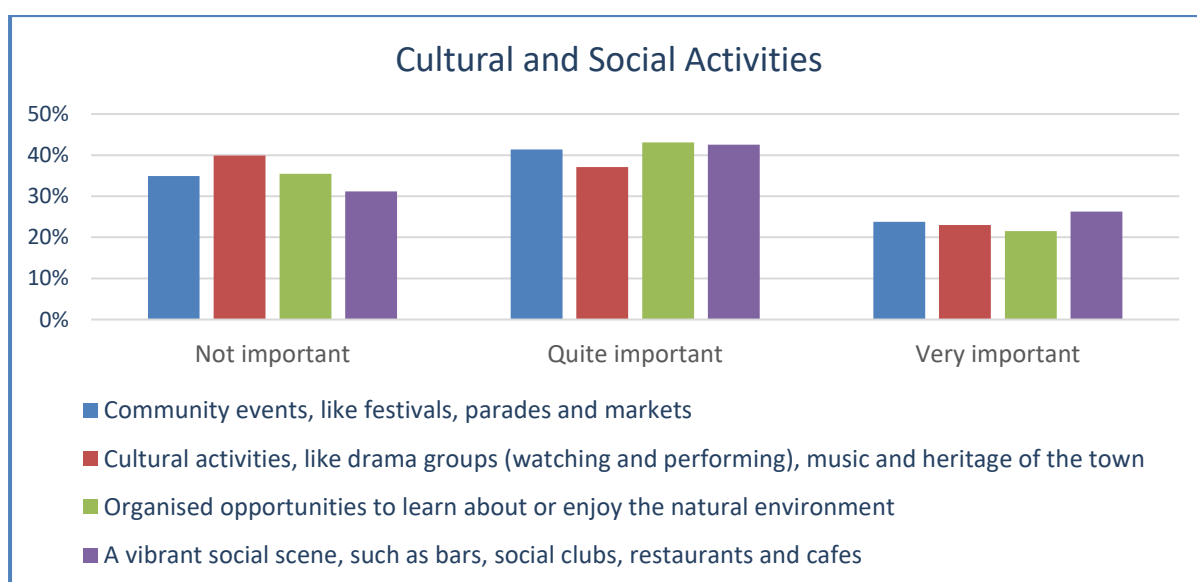
Other types of noisy anti-social behaviour affected almost as many people as vehicle noise; this included fighting, shouting and other activities associated with people who were under the influence (or dealing) drugs or alcohol.

Other disruptive noise factors included barking dogs, loud music and noisy neighbours.



Most people travelled out of Ferryhill regularly with over 60% visiting other areas at least once a week. 15% of under 18s went to places other than Ferryhill less than once a month.

Aside from travelling to work the most frequent reason for visiting other places was to access a supermarket. Other reasons cited included to access leisure or sports activities – either because the choice of activities and venues was greater elsewhere or because people felt Ferryhill had little to offer them.



Over 60% of all respondents said that cultural and social activities were quite or very important to them.

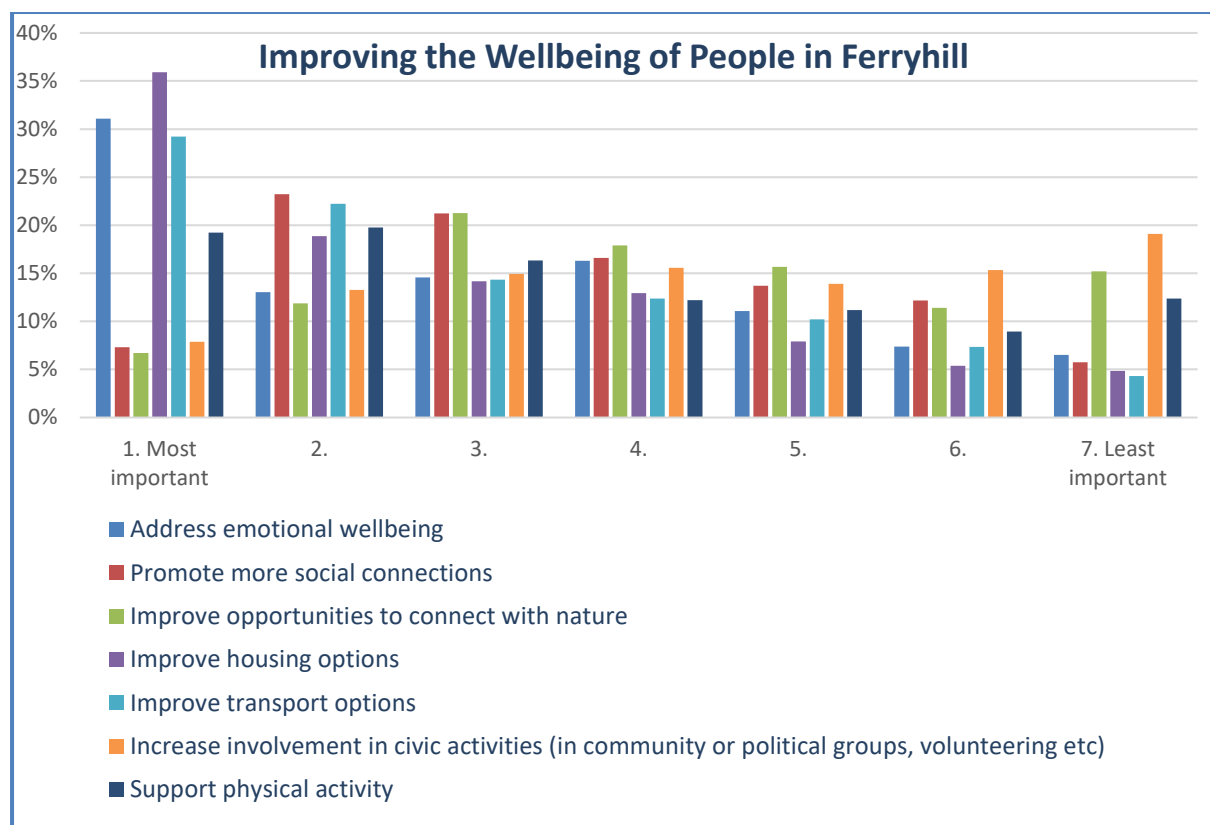
People over the age of 65 year placed greater importance on all activities than other age groups.

Under 18s were generally less interested in all activities. The exception to this was having a **vibrant social scene** which 71% said was quite or very important to them.

Cultural activities were least popular amongst under 18s with 44% saying this was quite or very important to them compared to 67% of over 18s.

Community events and **opportunities to learn about the natural environment** were most popular with over 65s where 74% said these activities were quite or very important to them.

Within the comments section people said that they would like more spaces available for children or teens to meet up or that they would like to see additional cafes or restaurants in Ferryhill.



In this question people were asked to rank the top three things which would improve the wellbeing of local people. They were given a menu of choices and the opportunity to add other topics in comment boxes.

Addressing **emotional wellbeing**, **improving housing options** and **improving transport options** consistently came up in the top 3 issues. Housing was most frequently ranked first with 69% of respondents including this as one of the top 3.

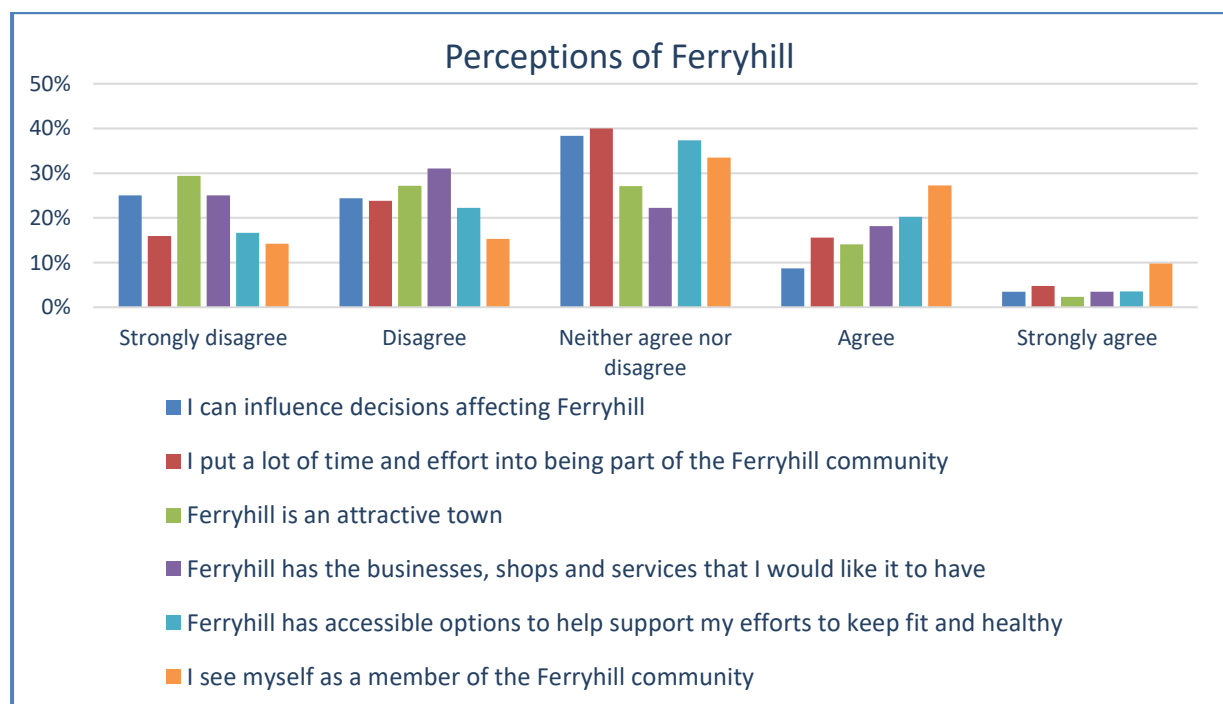
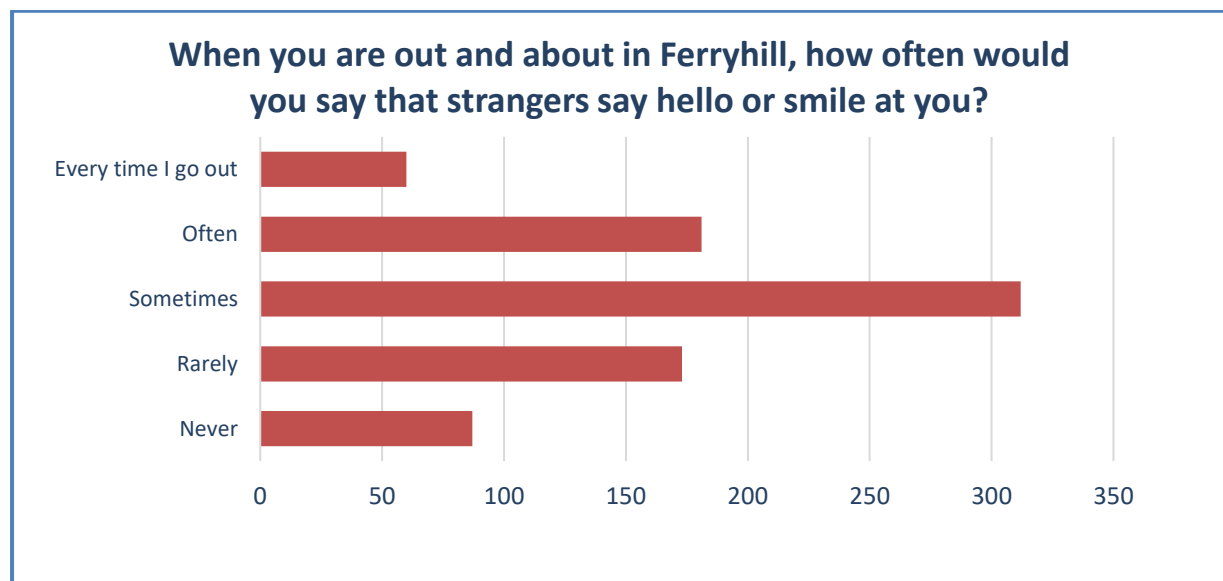
Improving transport options was the most pressing issue for working age people with 78% ranking this in their top3.

People over the age of 65 were also keen for greater **promotion of social connections** with 66% including this as one of their top 3 issues.

75 people left additional comments for this question. The most frequent comment was about addressing anti-social and criminal behaviour in Ferryhill.

Focus groups

Following the online survey, focus groups were held to look more deeply into some of the topics which arose and in particular to try to better understand what people wanted in regard to improved housing options. All three focus group stated that housing issues related to private sector properties which were in very poor states of disrepair. Negative perceptions of the private rented sector also featured very highly at the public launch and was repeatedly linked with issues of anti-social behaviour and criminal/ drug related activities.



Perceptions of Ferryhill, as reflected in this question, tended towards neutral or negative.

The most positive statement was **I see myself as a member of the Ferryhill community** which 37% of respondents agreed with.

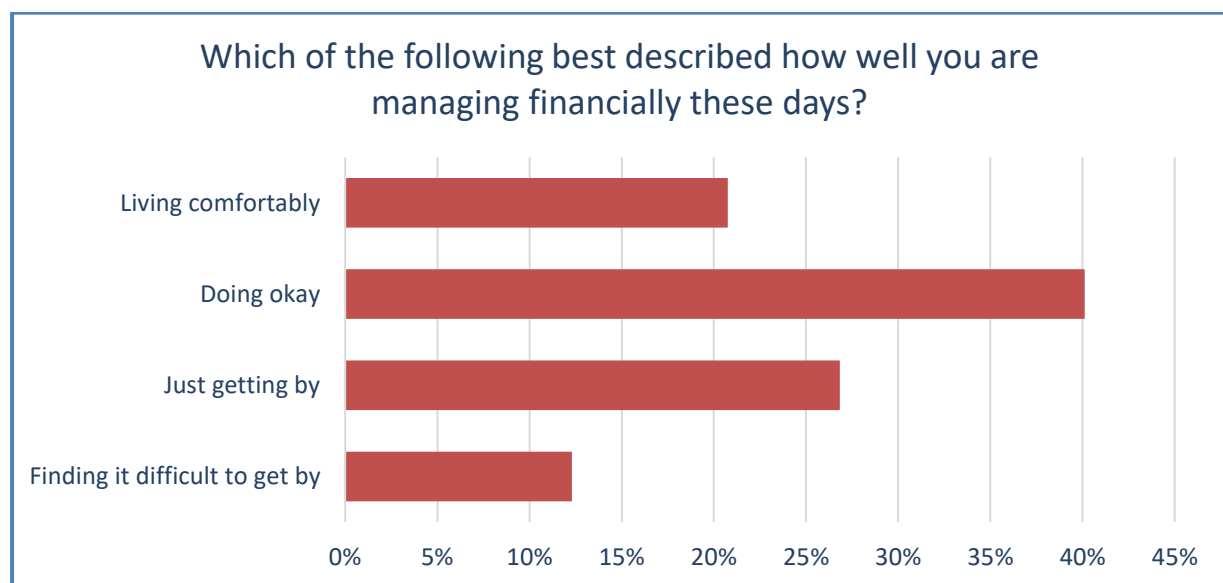
The least positive responses were around the statement **Ferryhill is an attractive town** where 49% of people disagreed or strongly disagreed and only 16% agreed or strongly agreed.

49% of people disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement **I can influence decisions affecting Ferryhill**, whereas 12% agreed with the statement.

21% of people agreed with the statement **I put a lot of time and effort into being part of the Ferryhill community**.

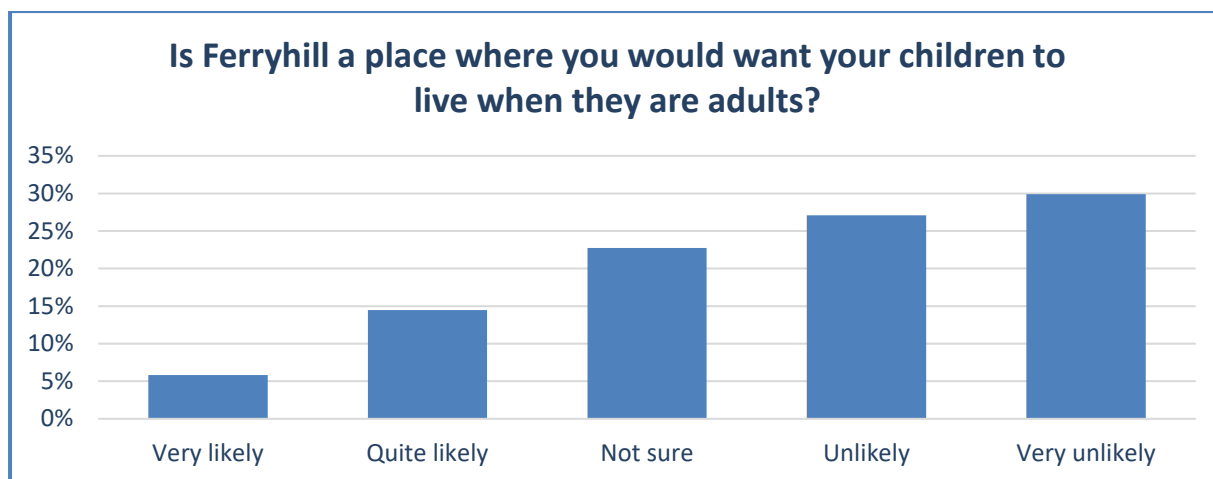
Over half of all respondents disagreed with the statement **Ferryhill has the businesses, shops and services that I would like it to have**. There was a marked difference in the answers from under 18s, 39% of whom did agree with the statement, compared to over 18s where only 15% agreed.

Amongst young people 33% agreed that **Ferryhill has accessible options to help support my efforts to keep fit and healthy**, this dropped to 17% amongst working age adults.

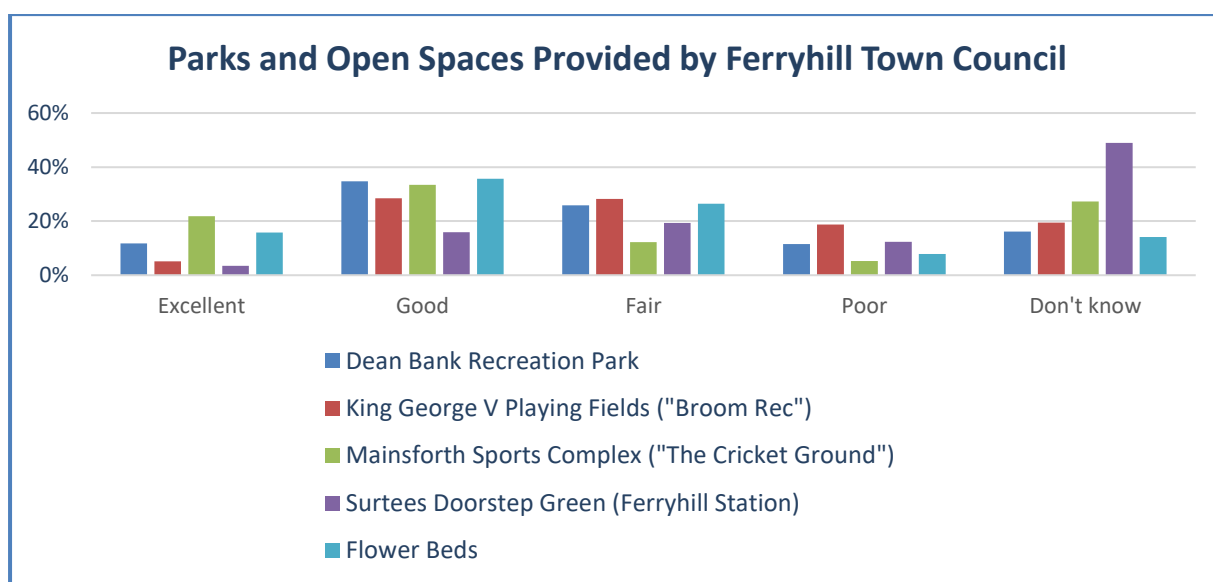


12% of Ferryhill respondents said that they were struggling to **manage financially** and a further 27% were just about managing.

Amongst working age people the numbers who were struggling rose with 15% saying they were struggling and another 32% saying they were just getting by.



57% of people said they were unlikely or very unlikely to **want their children to live in Ferryhill when they are adults.**



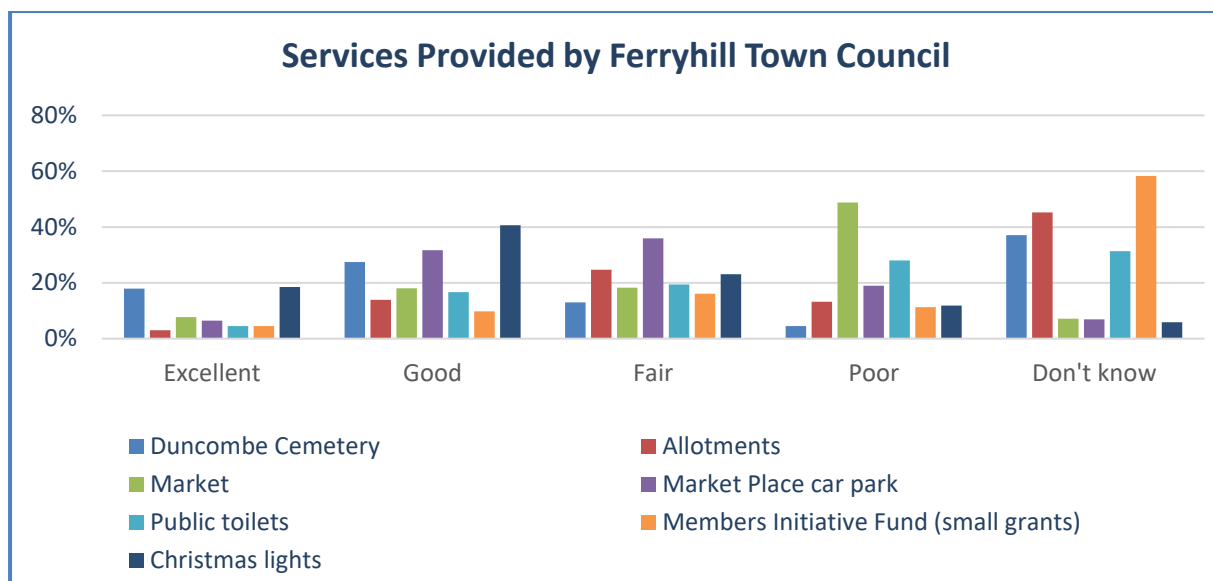
This question asked people to rate the local parks and open spaces provided by the town council.

Mainsforth Sports Complex ("The Cricket Ground") and **Flower beds** were given the most positive assessments, with over half of respondents saying they were good or excellent.

King George V Playing Fields ("Broom Rec") was least well thought of with 19% of people rating it as poor.

Almost half (47%) of people thought that **Dean Bank Recreation Park** was good or excellent.

Surtees Doorstep Garden was not well known by half of respondents and was rated excellent or good by 20% of people.



This question asked people to rate services provided by the town council.

The **Christmas lights** were rated highly with 59% saying they were good or excellent.

Duncombe Cemetery also scored highly with 45% saying they were good or excellent, rising to over 50% of over 18s.

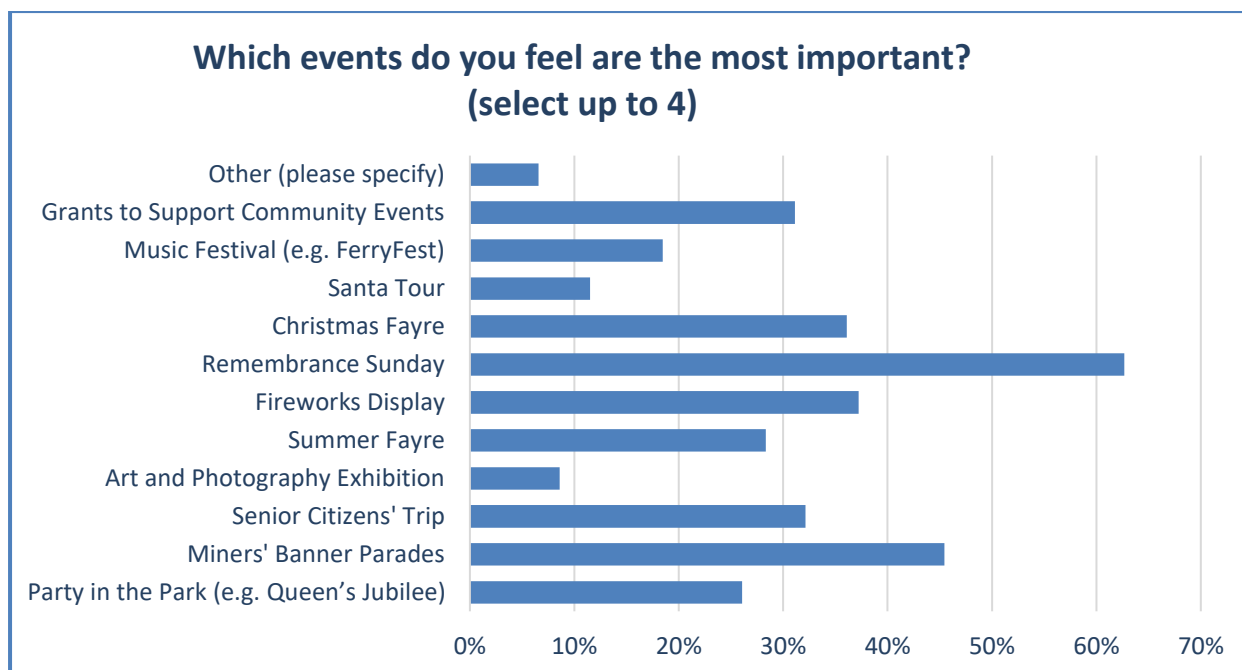
The **market** was regarded less highly with almost half of all respondents rating it as poor.

The **market place car park** was more popular with 38% rating it as good or excellent but another 19% rating it as poor.

28% of overall respondents said the **public toilets** were poor and this figure increased to 56% amongst under 18s.

The majority of people (58%) did not know about the **small grants scheme**, amongst those who had heard of it one third said it was good or excellent.

Of the respondents who gave a view about the **allotments**, one third said they were good or excellent and a quarter said they were poor.



The most popular events organised by the town council were **Remembrance Sunday** (63% of responses), **Miners Banners Parades**, (45%) the **Fireworks Display** (37%) and the **Christmas Fayre** (36%).

Under 18s also highly rated the **Party in the Park events** (53%) and over 65s liked the **Seniors Trips** (47%).