Sheffield City Council

Evaluation of responses to the Library Service Review Phase 2 Consultation

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1. Introduction

During summer 2012 Sheffield City Council held a consultation about the future of the Library Service in Sheffield, 'Have your say on Sheffield's Library Services'. Sheffield City Council consulted on how library services can change to make them fit and affordable for the future and to meet people's aspirations and needs across the city.

The full report of that phase 1 consultation can be viewed at:

www.sheffield.gov.uk/libraryreview

Following the phase 1 consultation, Sheffield City Council used these results to inform the development of the new library proposals. A comprehensive needs assessment was also carried out and used to inform the proposals.

This phase 2 consultation followed a decision by the Executive Director of Communities to consult on the new proposals to create a new structure for the Library Service. The report about that decision is available at www.sheffield.gov.uk/libraryreview

The second phase of the consultation ran from 11 October 2013 to 10 January 2014 and aimed to find out public views on the new proposals.

This consultation report summarises and explains the comments and feedback received by Sheffield City Council. This report will be considered by decision makers prior to any decisions being made on the library proposals.

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2. Summary of responses

- Nearly 9000 people have submitted some comments, the majority being via the consultation survey with 7435 individuals completing it.
- A positive response includes those who answered 'yes' and those who answered 'yes with reservations'. Many of the reservations listed were significant.
- 39% of survey respondents are positive about the proposals as a whole, although answers to questions about individual proposals vary.
- 53% of respondents were positive about the needs assessment process
- 44% of respondents are positive about the hub proposals
- 43% respondents are positive about community led proposals
- 45% respondents are positive about independent library proposal
- 41% respondents are positive about the mobile library proposal
- 62% respondents are positive about the home library proposal
- Job seekers and BME communities are significantly less positive about the proposals, although it does vary from question to question.
- Disabled people are very significantly less positive about all the proposals
- Respondents who were least affected by a proposal were significantly more positive than those who were most affected by a proposal.
- Most responses were received from those who would be affected by the proposals
- if a respondent's library is proposed to be a hub overall positive responses to the proposals ranges from 51% to 67%, but if their library is proposed to be independent led then positive responses lie between 32% and 41%.
- For hub proposals the biggest reservation is longer distance to travel, followed by loss of service.
- For community led the biggest reservation is uncertain long term future, followed by loss of knowledge and expertise of staff.
- For independent led the biggest reservation is uncertain long term future tied with reliability of service.
- For mobile library proposal the biggest reservation is loss of service provision followed by loss of convenience.

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3. Consultation methodology

Our aim was to ensure as many people of Sheffield as possible were aware of the library review proposals and knew how to have their say in relation to these. A survey was prepared asking questions about each proposal and possible impact, and allowing space for free text responses too.

Engagement and involvement in this consultation was promoted by:

- Paper copies of the survey in all libraries and Sheffield City Council First Points
- Online survey on the council website
- Dedicated phone line to give views over the telephone or complete a survey over the telephone
- Dedicated email address to email views and comments or requests
- Language Line poster in all libraries and advertised on web to offer interpretation support to all communities
- Alternative formats of the survey including large print and easy read were produced and available upon request
- Clear explanation of the proposals by production of a document highlighting them all, available at all libraries, First Points and online
- 42415 registered library users were emailed about the consultation
- Public sector employers in Sheffield advertised the consultation on their staff intranets, e.g. NHS and South Yorkshire Police
- Details emailed to 7,538 organisations in Sheffield and asked to disseminate information to all staff and customers
- Postcard with contact details about the consultation distributed at all consultation events and targeted distribution across the city
- Publications and press stories in 25 different journals
- Regular press releases from the council's communications team
- Regular social media advertising including twitter
- Offered to facilitate consultation events with all organisations contacted and targeted organisations that support underrepresented groups to ensure their views were heard. In total, 24 different groups were consulted with
- Commissioned Sheffield Futures to organise and facilitate focus groups with children from secondary schools age up to age 25. Engagement included working with young carers, BME groups and Sheffield Youth Cabinet
- Commissioned the Council's Children's Commissioning Team to organise and facilitate focus groups with children from primary school ages, including children with disabilities and from minority groups
- Pop up events where staff were able to promote the consultation through postcard distribution and assisting people to complete the survey

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Full details of the consultation methodology and all activities organised to raise awareness and promote engagement in this consultation can be found in **Appendix 1.** Copies of all the documents used in the consultation process can be found in **Appendix 2.**

An equality impact assessment was also undertaken for the consultation plan and this too can be found in **Appendix 3.** Effort was made to target those groups or areas of the city who are seldom heard or where responses were low.

The consultation was undertaken by the Quality and Involvement Team within Business Strategy, Communities portfolio Sheffield City Council. This team has experience and expertise in consultation work, particularly reaching those who are seldom heard and are independent of the library service.

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4. Feedback and other interest in consultation

As well as the planned consultation activities described above, feedback and interest was received in a variety of ways from members of the public.

4.1 Petitions

16 petitions were received by Sheffield city council in relation to the library proposals comprising a total of 23,666 signatures. Some of these were received before the proposals were published but indicate interest in the future of libraries. All these petitions have been logged and will be available on the council's website. See **Appendix 4** for a table of petitions received about library proposals.

4.2 Freedom of information requests

12 requests from members of the public were received for further information/detail about the library proposals. All of these have been responded to in line with the Freedom of Information Act and regulations.

4.3 Emails, letters and phone calls

See the table below for a summary of other contact received.

Comms contact through:	Numbers
Emails regarding consultation	21
Emails regarding FOIs	12
Emails requesting alternative formats	6
Emails regarding request for further guidance	6
Emails regarding expressing further comments	31
Emails requesting a paper copy of survey	18
Emails to complete a survey	3
Telephone calls received to complete survey	66
Telephone calls to seek additional guidance	10
Telephone calls to request alternative formats	1
Telephone calls to comment on consultation	6
Telephone calls to register interest in community led	5
Letters/poster from children and young people	207
Letters from adults	6
TOTAL	**398**

8 schools undertook an activity with children to write letters and draw posters about the library proposals. These schools were Lydgate Junior School, Tapton Secondary school, Charnock Hall Primary school, Totley Primary school, Bradway Primary school, Dore Primary school, Totley All Saints School and King Ecgberts Secondary school.

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4.4 Surveys conducted by community groups

A number of community groups organised their own surveys and forwarded the completed ones to the consultation teams. These were:

- Zest Young People's survey
- Broomhill library action group children and adults surveys

A summary of these surveys can be found at **Appendix 5.** It should be noted that respondents did not necessarily have access to information about proposals before completing the surveys and the consultation team was not asked to advise on survey design.

4.5 Community organised public meetings

A number of community organisations/interested parties arranged public meetings during the consultation period to which councillors and council officers were invited. See **Appendix 6** for a list of public meetings attended by Sheffield City Council representatives. Notes were taken and the views expressed have been taken account of. All attendees were invited to complete the online or paper survey so it is possible that people may have expressed their views in the survey and at a public meeting.

4.6 Media coverage

A number of stories appeared in the press, on local radio and on television during the consultation period. Some of these were in response to council press releases and some of these were generated by members of the public.

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5. Consultation responses

5.1 Introduction

There are 550,000 residents in Sheffield, of whom 133,000 are adults registered with the library service and 60,000 children who are registered with a library. It is acknowledged that registration with the library service doesn't necessarily denote use of the library service.

Overall, 7,435 people completed a survey and other people shared their views at public meetings, through petitions, focus groups and writing letters or emails. Specific consultation work was also commissioned and delivered with children and young people. In total nearly 9,000 responses were received in addition to those who had signed a petition.   A summary of contributions received outside of the survey is included at **Appendix 7.**

A copy of the survey questions is available in **Appendix 2.** The questions asked whether or not people used libraries and if so which library service. The survey asked whether people agreed with proposals individually. Some questions gave options to tick about any reservations people had with additional free text space if there wasn't an appropriate choice. Some questions were open with all responses being free text boxes. All the comments made have been analysed and recorded and used in the analysis below. Paper copies of surveys received were loaded online and included in the survey analysis.

The conclusions reached below include analysis of the survey and have taken account of views shared outside of the survey process as well.
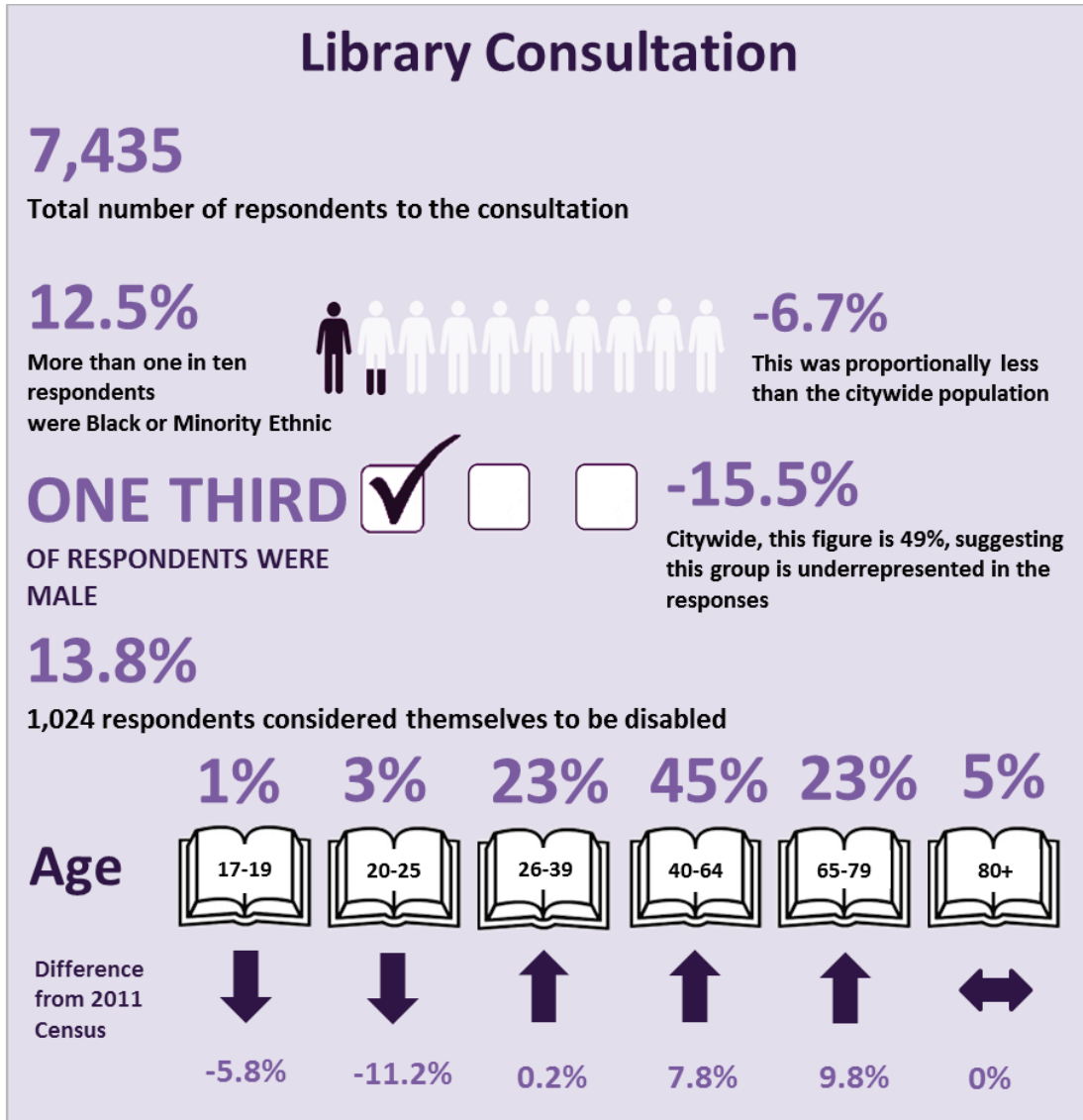
A positive response means where people have ticked 'yes', or 'yes with reservation'.

A statistically significant result is one where there are enough responses and a big enough sample size to be reasonably certain that the differences seen are genuine. There are specific formulae that are applied in order to decide whether a result is statistically significant. See Appendix 2 for a more detailed summary of the statistically significant calculations.

5.2 People who responded

- 4.9% of adults registered with a library responded to the consultation via the survey.

- The specific work commissioned with Sheffield Futures, heard from 164 11-25 year olds, of whom 31% were from BME communities and 19% identified themselves as disabled. See **Appendix 8** for full report of this consultation work.

- The work undertaken by the Children's involvement team heard from 152 children aged 5-11, of whom 41% were from BME communities. See **Appendix 9** for a full report of this consultation work.

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A summary table below **Figure 1** shows who responded to the survey.

Library Consultation

7,435
Total number of repsondents to the consultation

12.5%
More than one in ten respondents were Black or Minority Ethnic

-6.7%
This was proportionally less than the citywide population

ONE THIRD ☑ ☐ ☐
OF RESPONDENTS WERE MALE

-15.5%
Citywide, this figure is 49%, suggesting this group is underrepresented in the responses

13.8%
1,024 respondents considered themselves to be disabled

	1%	3%	23%	45%	23%	5%
Age	17-19	20-25	26-39	40-64	65-79	80+
Difference from 2011 Census	⬇	⬇	⬆	⬆	⬆	⬌
	-5.8%	-11.2%	0.2%	7.8%	9.8%	0%

- Please note that as described in section 3 specific consultation work outside the survey also took place in order to ensure all groups were included. The results from these other activities are included in the analysis. Comments made outside the formal consultation process have also been included.

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The table below **Figure 2** shows response by library, and shows the percentage of the overall response and also the percentage of registered library users at each library/service.

Figure 2

	No.	%	% of RLUs
Totley	611	8.2%	13.6%
Stannington	376	5.1%	12.9%
Walkley	363	4.9%	11.0%
Home Library Service	72	1.0%	10.8%
Greenhill	371	5.0%	8.4%
Gleadless	271	3.6%	7.7%
Broomhill	591	7.9%	7.0%
Woodhouse	221	3.0%	6.1%
Park	177	2.4%	5.5%
Mobile Library Service	178	2.4%	5.4%
Ecclesfield	136	1.8%	5.1%
Upperthorpe	182	2.4%	4.7%
Frecheville	80	1.1%	4.5%
Ecclesall	450	6.1%	4.4%
Chapeltown	258	3.5%	3.3%
Jordanthorpe	57	0.8%	2.8%
Stocksbridge	148	2.0%	2.8%
Woodseats	186	2.5%	2.7%
Hillsborough	222	3.0%	2.4%
Crystal Peaks	295	4.0%	2.4%
Burngreave	101	1.4%	2.2%
Newfield Green	57	0.8%	2.1%
Central	976	13.1%	2.0%
Highfield	173	2.3%	1.9%
Tinsley	50	0.7%	1.7%
Manor	109	1.5%	1.3%
Southey	51	0.7%	1.3%
Parson Cross	57	0.8%	1.2%
Firth Park	107	1.4%	0.7%
Archives	45	0.6%	0.6%
Darnall	39	0.5%	0.5%
Not Selected	425	5.7%	

- The biggest percentage of responses was received from Central Library. Those libraries that were proposed to be an independent library had a higher proportion of registered library users responding, perhaps because of organised local campaigns, or people being more motivated to respond.

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5.3 What do you use the library for?

The table below, **Figure 3,** shows what people stated they use the library for.

Figure 3

	Number of Respondents	% of Total (exc. Non library users)
Borrowing books for adults	6,219	87.9%
Borrowing CDs / DVDs	3,207	45.3%
Reading books / newspapers in the library	2,203	31.1%
Printing and photocopying	1,910	27.0%
Access to computers and the internet	1,798	25.4%
Education and learning	1,680	23.7%
Meeting people	1,646	23.3%
Clubs / activities	1,258	17.8%
Access to archives	1,095	15.5%
Borrowing books for children	804	11.4%
Other	677	9.6%
Job searching and / or volunteering opportunities	598	8.4%
Access to other services	556	7.9%
Advice and guidance, e.g. Councillor's Surgery, Credit Union, etc.	524	7.4%
Room hire	307	4.3%

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5.4 What will you do if the library you use most closes?

The table below **Figure 4** shows what people stated they will do if the library they use closes.

	No.	%
Stop using libraries and lose access to facilities available in libraries	2,255	31.9%
Not applicable as the library I use most is one of the proposed 11 hub libraries	1,632	23.1%
Use the Central Library in the city centre	1,263	17.8%
Go to your next nearest library	1,145	16.2%
Not sure	908	12.8%
Other	687	9.7%
Buy books / CDs / DVDs or get them electronically, e.g. Kindle, iTunes, LoveFilm	672	9.5%
Go to another hub library	265	3.7%
Use computers elsewhere	227	3.2%
Have another way of meeting my needs	211	3.0%
Use a school library	111	1.6%

- The biggest category in 'other' was lose community resource followed by cost and inconvenience of travel.

- Job seekers reported that they were more likely to use central library or the next nearest library than non- job seekers

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5.5 Are you satisfied that we have taken into account the right things to inform the proposals?

- Overall 53% of respondents to the survey answered 'yes' or 'yes with reservations'.
- Those people who contributed views outside of the survey in general expressed the same sort of reservations about the needs assessment as those responding to the survey.
- The most common reservation people expressed was that the loss of a library as a 'community or social resource' had not been adequately taken into account (see below for explanation and examples).
- The next two most common reservations were 'process' followed by 'against closures' and closely followed by 'travel'.

Community/social value

This included factors of added value/significance which people don't believe have been taken into account sufficiently and the potential impact if these aren't available. It included things like:

- Use of the library building by community groups, and a fear that alternative venues may not be available locally so groups may face closure.
- The effect on the wellbeing of some users if they lose the opportunity for local social interaction

☺ 'You did not appear to have taken into account the number of people who gain their only human interaction through the local library, who would otherwise be isolated'.

☺ 'The Zest Centre, which includes Upperthorpe Library, is a very popular and well used space and resource….In an area of huge need and a very ethnically diverse population the loss of this centre will fragment the sense of community and lead to isolation and community degeneration. Why is it that when many big cities experienced riots a year ago Sheffield was spared? I feel it is these sorts of services that make a huge difference to people and we scrap them at our peril'.

☺ 'Totley library is the only Council-provided public facility for meetings, events, other than book lending and computer services'.

☺ 'The Library is the heart of the Burngreave community as there is no other centre. It is a meeting point, a help centre etc'.
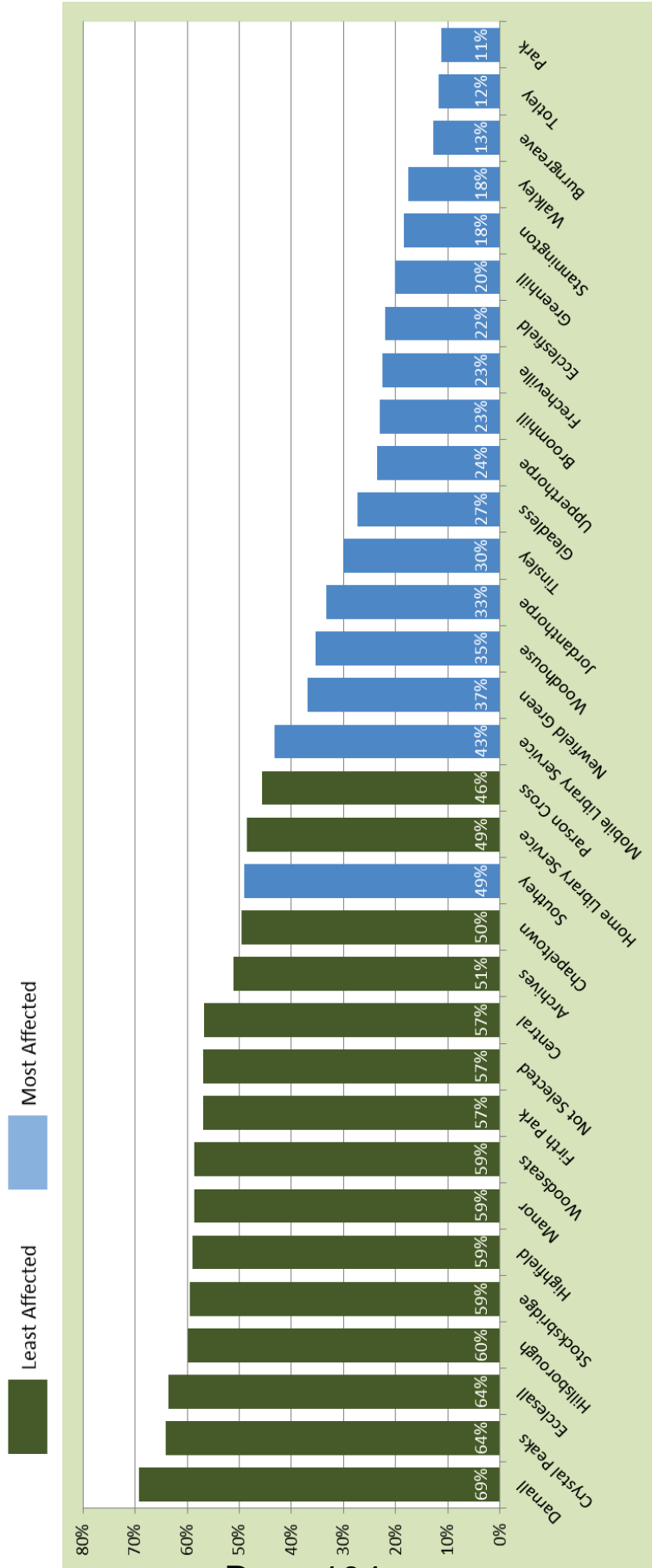
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5.6 Overall, what do you think of the proposals?

- 39% of survey respondents answered with 'yes' or 'yes with reservations' that the proposals as a whole were fair and reasonable.

- The most common reservation was the loss of a 'community or social resource' (see above for explanation and examples).

- The next most common reservations were 'against closures' followed by 'fairness'

- ☺ 'The scale of the proposed cuts is scandalous! Important centres of learning, inspiration and enjoyment will be lost.. .'

- ☺ 'A reduction in the number of libraries will only be the start of the overall decline and eventual termination of library services in Sheffield'

- ☺ 'Unreasonable as SCC have a legal duty to maintain a comprehensive, efficient, modern service..'

- ☺ 'A definite backwards step…not equality of opportunity..'

- ☺ 'I think it deprives the people who most need it to access resources they can't really afford..'

- ☺ 'Not fair on the local residents who use the service..'

- ☺ 'It is always the south west of the city that suffers in council cutbacks.'

- ☺ 'I will be unable to access library services due to disabilities'

- ☺ 'In the 2012 Library Review consultation, the second most important factor identified by the public for a community library was "within walking distance", however the needs analysis is based on the use of buses …'

- The respondents most affected by the proposals were the least positive in their overall responses and those that were least affected were the most positive. See **Figure 5** below.
- Those respondents who don't use any library services were more positive about the proposals.

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Figure 5

Least Affected Respondents are those who indicated they most use
- Proposed Hub Library
- Central Library or Archives
- Home Library Service

Most Affected Respondents are those who indicated they most use
- Proposed Community or Independent Library
- Mobile Library Service

Legend: Least Affected | Most Affected

Data (category – value):
- Park – 11%
- Totley – 12%
- Burngreave – 13%
- Walkley – 18%
- Stannington – 18%
- Greenhill – 20%
- Ecclesfield – 22%
- Frecheville – 23%
- Broomhill – 23%
- Upperthorpe – 24%
- Gleadless – 27%
- Tinsley – 30%
- Jordanthorpe – 33%
- Woodhouse – 35%
- Newfield Green – 37%
- Mobile Library Service – 43%
- Parson Cross – 46%
- Home Library Service – 49%
- Southey – 49%
- Chapeltown – 50%
- Archives – 51%
- Central – 57%
- Not Selected – 57%
- Firth Park – 57%
- Woodseats – 59%
- Manor – 59%
- Highfield – 59%
- Stocksbridge – 59%
- Hillsborough – 60%
- Ecclesall – 64%
- Crystal Peaks – 64%
- Darnall – 69%

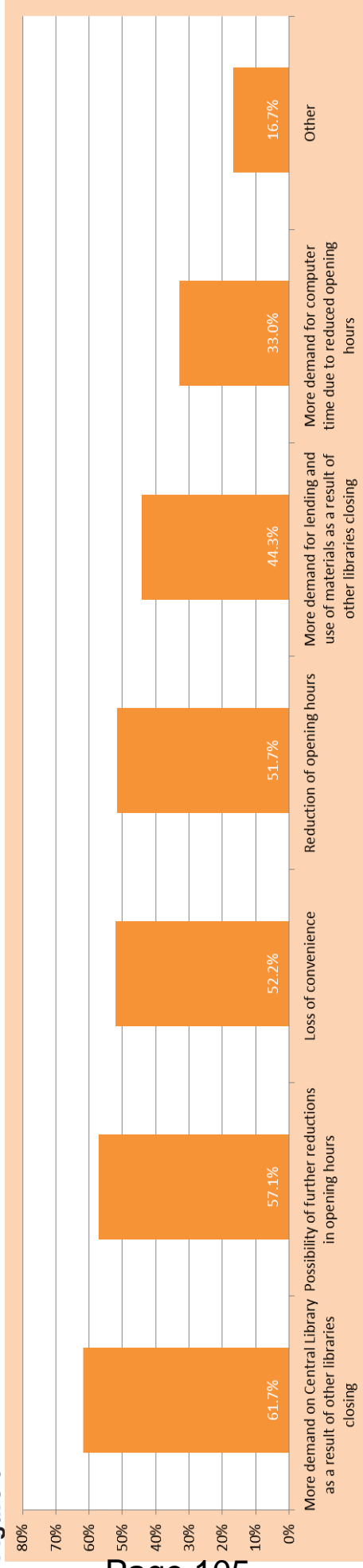Y-axis: 0%, 10%, 20%, 30%, 40%, 50%, 60%, 70%, 80%

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- There is a statistically significant difference overall to the responses from disabled people. Overall they are less positive about the proposals as a whole

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5.7 Do you agree with the proposal to reduce the opening hours of the Central Library by one afternoon and one evening?

- Overall 55% of survey respondents said 'yes', or 'yes with reservations' about the proposal to reduce the opening hours of central library by one afternoon and one evening.

- the most common reservation was that there would be more 'demand on central library' if other libraries in the city close followed by a concern that this might be followed by a 'further reduction in opening hours' (see Figure 6 below).

- Job seekers were statistically less positive about this question as were BME people, disabled people, men and people under 65.

- People who contributed views outside of the survey in general did not make a lot of comments about the central library proposals.

Figure 6

Category	Value
More demand on Central Library as a result of other libraries closing	61.7%
Possibility of further reductions in opening hours	57.1%
Loss of convenience	52.2%
Reduction of opening hours	51.7%
More demand for lending and use of materials as a result of other libraries closing	44.3%
More demand for computer time due to reduced opening hours	33.0%
Other	16.7%

- The most common reservation people expressed in 'other' in the free text was around the issues that arise from changing the opening hours.

- Children and young people in the commissioned work expressed particular reservations about the loss of afternoon and evening closures as that is when they can access libraries.

5.8 Do you agree with the proposal to have 11 hub libraries?

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- Overall 44% of respondents to the survey said 'yes', or 'yes with reservations' about the hub proposals.
- Respondents using libraries which are proposed to be hubs were all more positive about that proposal than respondents whose library was not one of the proposed hubs. This is illustrated below in **Figure 7** bar chart showing percentage of positive responses by library area. Those in brown/red are hub libraries i.e. 'least affected' by this proposal. Those in green are 'most affected' by the proposal i.e. they are libraries which are proposed to be either a community led or an independent library and are at risk of closure. (NB the mobile and home library and central library users are also shown as least affected by this particular proposal).

Figure 7

- The most common reservation expressed was longer distance to travel (see **Figure 8** below).

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- Disabled people were statistically much less in favour of these proposals than nondisabled people. Their biggest reservation was longer distance to travel.
- People contributing outside of the survey in general tended to be from most affected groups i.e. their library was not proposed to be a hub and therefore reflected many of the same concerns as the survey respondents who were most affected.
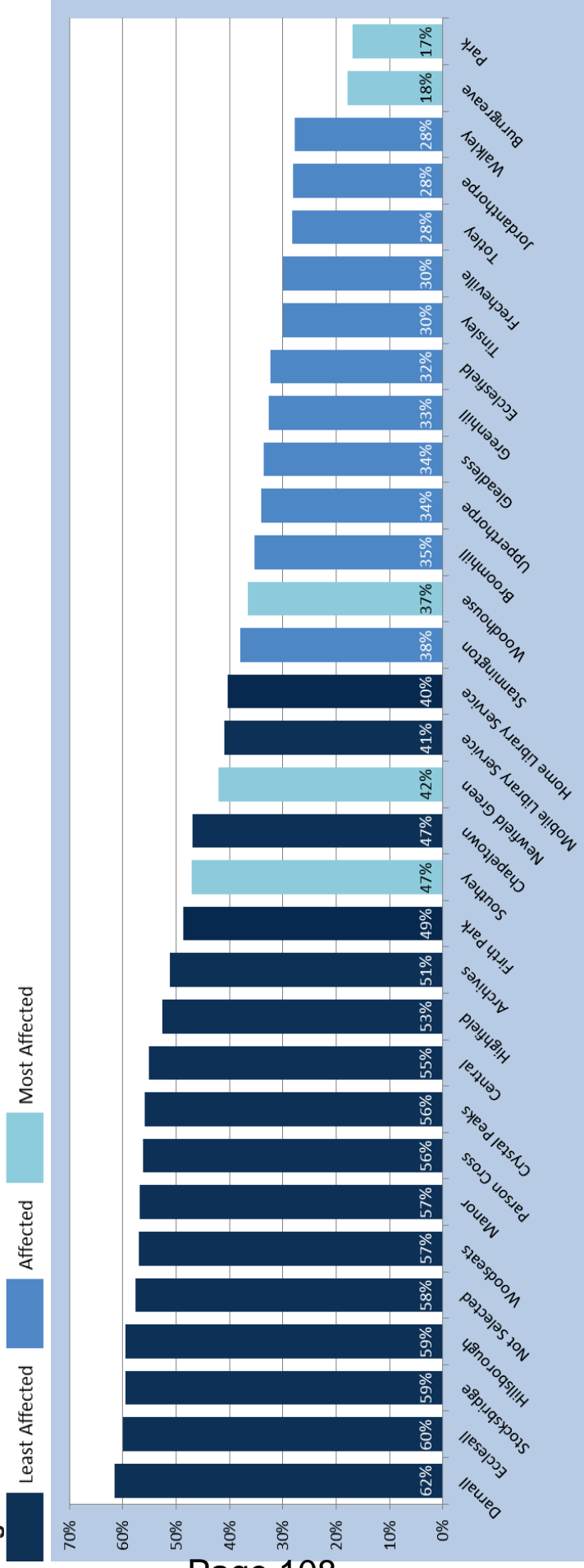
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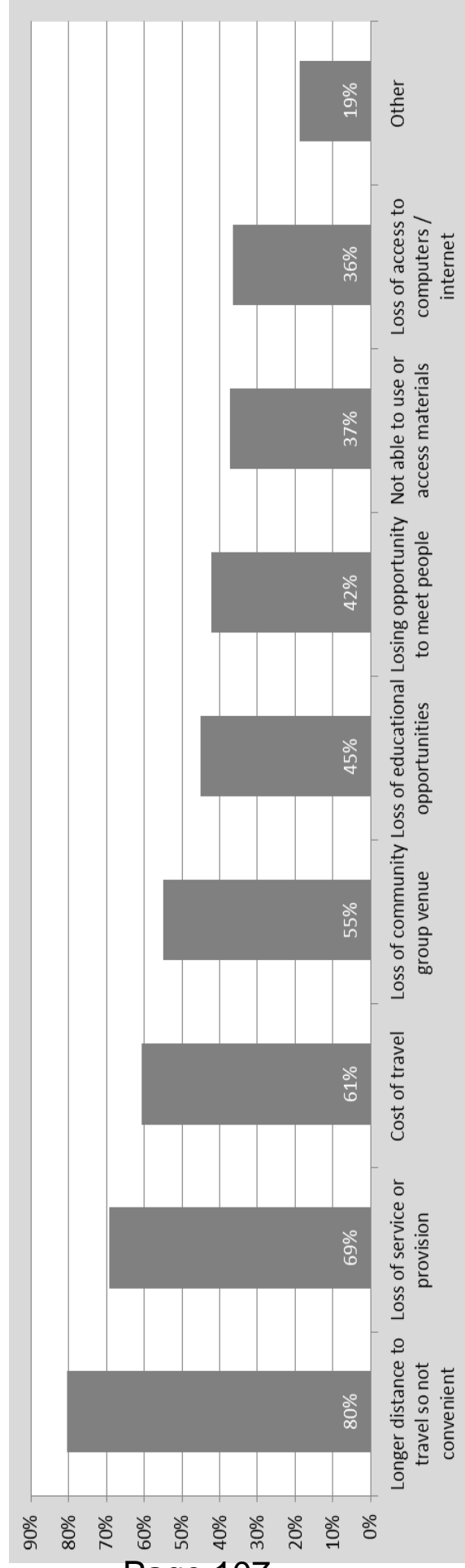
- The most common reservation people expressed in free text reservations was 'against closures'

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5.9 Do you agree with the proposal to have up to 5 community-led libraries?

- Overall 43% of people who responded to the survey answered yes or yes with reservations to the question 'do you agree to the proposal to have 5 community led libraries.

- Those who were least affected by this proposal were the most positive about it. See summary bar chart **Figure 9** below.

Figure 9

- The most common reservation expressed was uncertainty over long term future (see **Figure10** below).
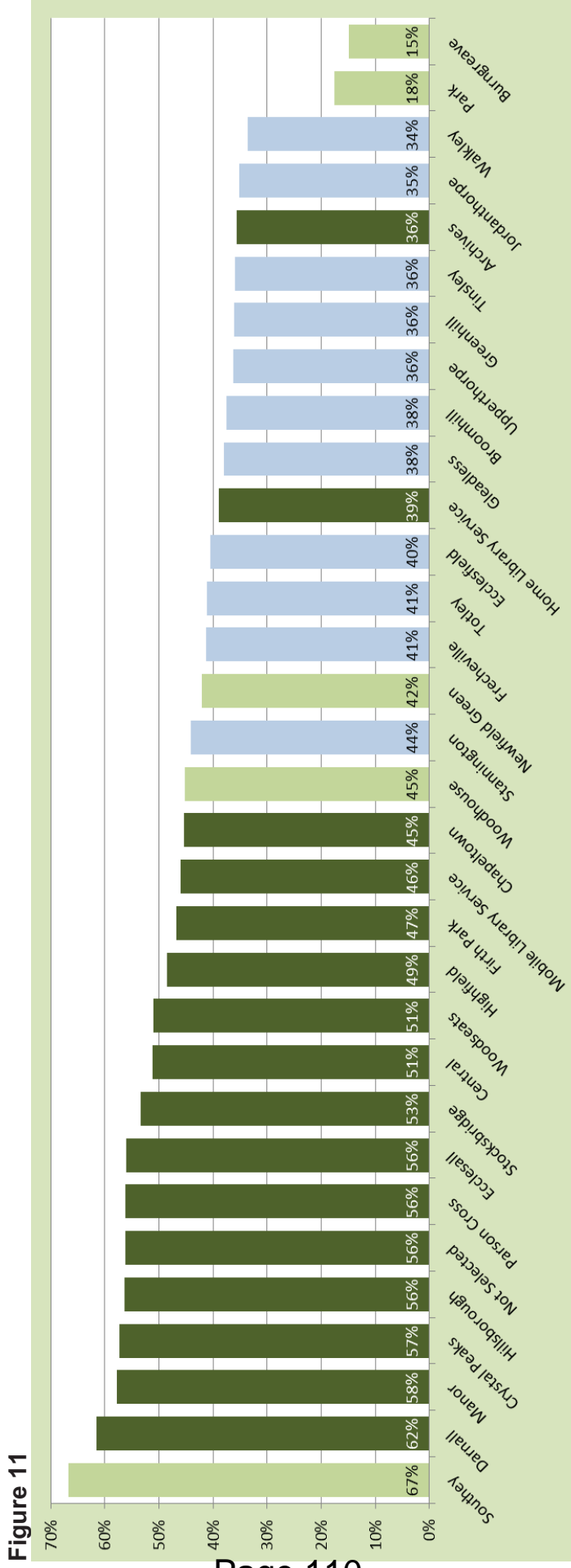
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Figure 10

- BME peopls were statistically significantly less positive than non BME people about these proposals and disabled people were statistically significantly less positive than non-disabled people. The most common reservation for both these groups was uncertainty over long term future i.e. the same as the overall group.
- Those people who contributed views outside of the survey in general expressed the same sort of reservations about the proposal as those responding to the survey.
- The most common reservation people expressed in 'other' free text reservations was 'objection to volunteers'. This included concerns about data security, reliability and loss of jobs for library staff etc.

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5.10 Do you agree with the proposal to have any remaining libraries run by independent groups?

- Overall 45% of survey respondents answered 'yes', or 'yes with reservations' about the independent library proposal.
- Those who were least affected by this proposal were the most positive about it. See summary bar chart **Figure 11** below.

Figure 11

- The most common reservation expressed was uncertainty over long term future of the library, closely followed by concerns over reliability of service (see **Figure 12** Below).
- BME people were statistically significantly less positive than non BME people about these proposals and disabled people were statistically significantly less positive than non-disabled people. However, people over 65 were statistically significantly more positive about these proposals.

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- The main reservation for BME communities was reliability of service, very closely followed by uncertainty about the long term future. The main reservation for disabled people was reliability of service, followed by uncertainty about the long term future. These reservations have a reversed emphasis for these groups compared to the overall responses.
- Those people who contributed views outside of the survey in general expressed the same sort of reservations about the proposal as those responding to the survey.
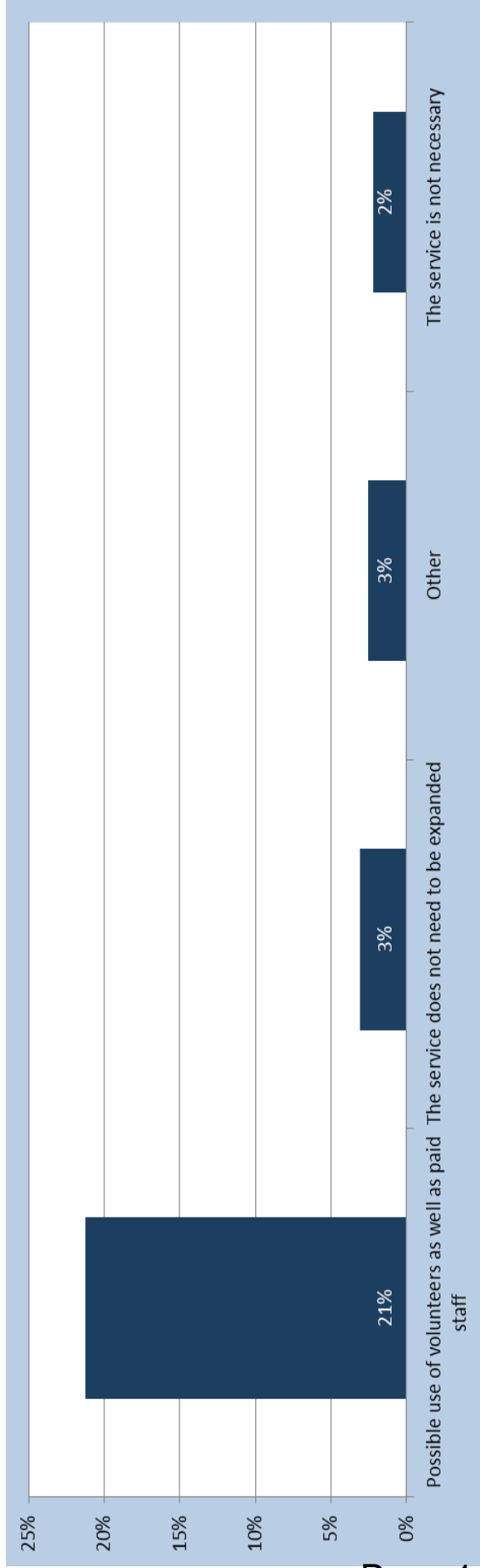
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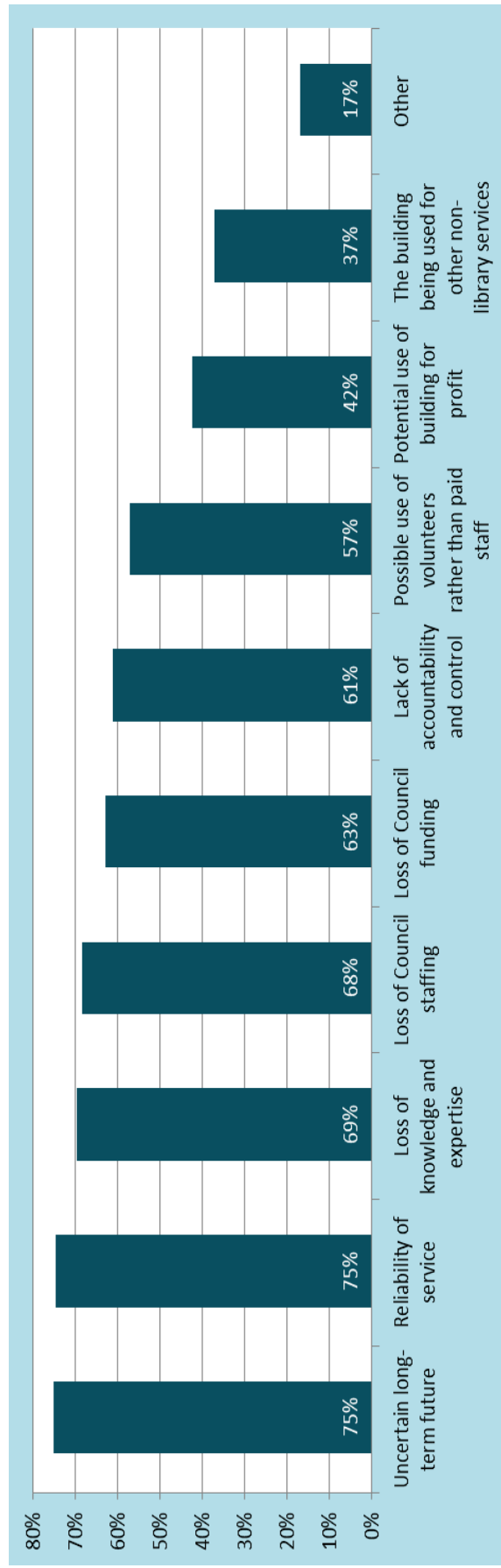
The most common reservation people expressed in 'other' was 'wrong approach' i.e. reservations about the proposed model.

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5.11 Do you agree with the proposal to develop and expand the Home Library Service by the use of volunteers?

- 62% of survey respondents answered 'yes' or 'yes with reservations' to the proposal to expand the home library service with the use of volunteers.
- The most common reservation expressed was the possible use of volunteers as well as paid staff (see **Figure 13** below).
- BME people were statistically significantly less positive than non BME people. Although the use of volunteers was the biggest reservation, within the free text box BME differed from the whole group in being slightly less concerned about vetting arrangements and slightly more concerned about quality.
- Job seekers were statistically significantly less positive than non-job seekers. The use of volunteers was again the biggest reservation but they differed from the main group in the free text box by being less concerned about vetting arrangements and more concerned about loss of knowledge and expertise of staff.
- Disabled people were also statistically significantly less positive than non-disabled people. Use of volunteers was again the biggest reservation but they differed from the main group in the free text box by being more concerned about vetting arrangements for volunteers.
- Those who contributed views outside of the survey process in general did not comment in detail about the home library service proposal.

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Figure 13

- The most common reservation people expressed in 'other' free text reservations was with the 'vetting arrangements for volunteers'

5.12 Do you agree with the proposal to close the Mobile Library Service?

- 41% of the survey respondents answered 'yes' or 'yes with reservations' about mobile library proposal.
- The biggest reservation was the loss of service provision (see **Figure 14** below).
- The most affected by the proposals i.e. those who currently use the mobile library service are statistically significantly a lot less satisfied about the proposals, with only 10% of mobile service users answering 'yes' or 'yes with reservations'. 32% of respondents who identified as mobile service users were disabled.
- BME responses were in line with group, i.e. no significant difference.
- People over 65, disabled people and job seekers were all significantly less positive about the proposal. Their biggest reservation was loss of convenience.
- Men were significantly more positive about the proposals than women.
- Those who contributed views outside of the survey process in general did not comment in detail about the home library service proposal.

Figure 14
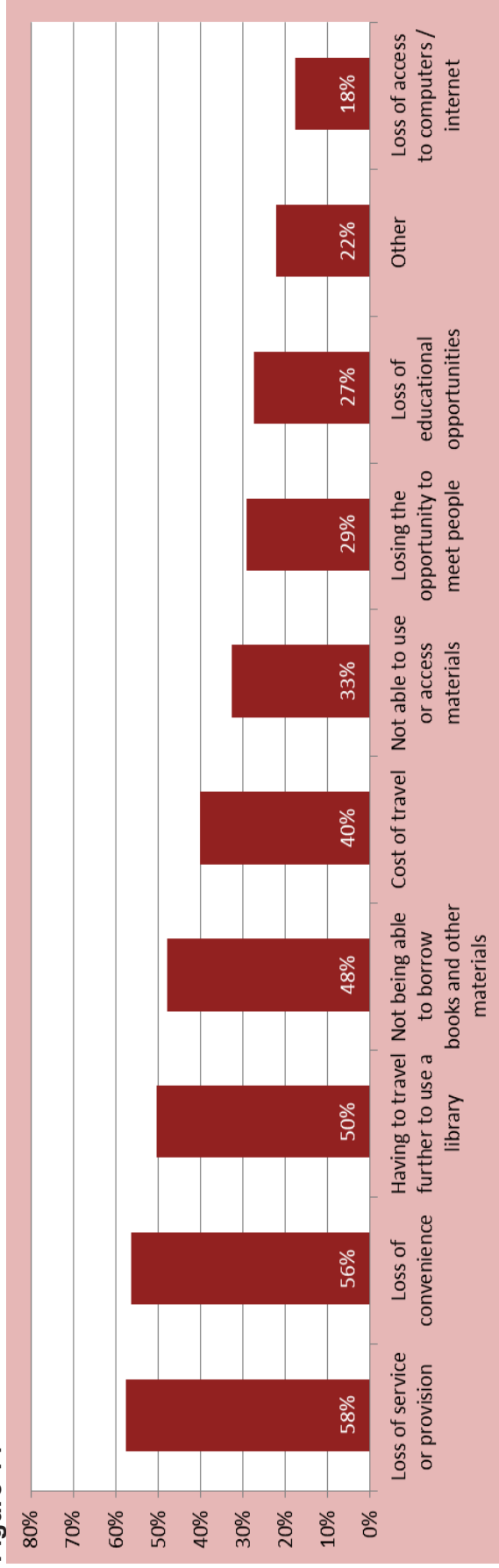
- The most common reservation people expressed in free text reservations was the impact on 'older and disabled people.'

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5.13 If there are things we could do to lessen any potential concerns you have, let us know what they are.

Respondents were invited to contribute any ideas they had to lessen any potential concerns about the proposals as a whole. People took the opportunity to comment on a number of issues, including logging their reservations. A summary of comments is in the chart below **Figure 15.**

Figure 15
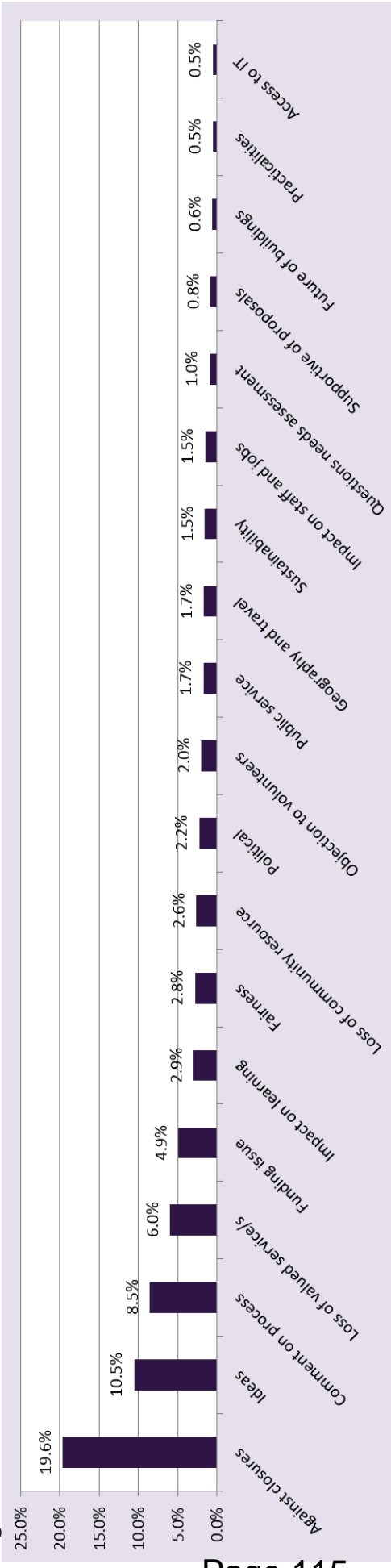
- The second most common point raised was to suggest alternative ideas. See **Appendix 10** for a summary of ideas, suggestions, alternative models and ideas for funding from elsewhere. This includes contributions from the survey respondents and from outside the survey.

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5.14 Do you have alternative ideas or suggestions or any other comments?

Respondents were invited to contribute any other ideas or suggestions they had. A summary of responses is in the chart below
Figure 9

- People who contributed outside of the survey also submitted ideas and suggestions, many of which were replicated by those who commented within the survey.
- Please see **Appendix 10** for a summary of ideas, suggestions, alternative models and ideas for funding from elsewhere.

☺ *'Keep all libraries open!!! This is why we pay our council tax.'*

☺ *'Cost of keeping libraries is not great, closing them is retrograde.'*

☺ *'Remove the stress and anxiety from mums and the elderly by keeping the library open'.*

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☺ 'Please make every effort to keep open and fund and staff as many libraries as possible. It could save a lot of people from despair resulting in extra medical treatment costs.'

☺ 'A positive vision of the future would be helpful..'
☺ "feels very much like a rushed attempt to see just how much the money can stretch to, rather than thinking about just what the library service is for in the first place. An opportunity missed.'

☺ 'This consultation does not feel like a consultation, it feels like we really will have no choice or real influence on your proposals. I hope I am wrong in thinking that.'

☺ 'Books are not a luxury; they should be an everyday part of life for all. By closing local libraries you are taking away the right that children and adults have to read – and therefore to learn'

6. Results by equalities groupings

6.1 Children and Young People

Children's Consultation re: Library Proposals

The consultation work undertaken with children 5-11 years gathered the views of 152 children. 28% of these were non-library users. In the work undertaken by Sheffield Futures with 164 11-19 year olds views, 49% were non-library users. See Appendices 8 and 9 for full reports of the consultation activity.

Some of the key concerns expressed by children and young people were:

- Library hours as they are at the moment are inconvenient for children and are a reason why some of the children don't use libraries

- Central library – want it to close in mornings instead of afternoons and evenings as they can only go later in day after school

- Hubs proposals – Those whose local library isn't becoming a hub had concerns about distance to travel and the cost and safety implications of travelling on their own. This mirrors concerns expressed by adults in the survey.

- Community-led – concerns about volunteers with no professionals librarians on site

- Scepticism about whether volunteers in the number needed could be recruited for non-profit making activity.

- In favour of expanding the home library service

- Against the closure of mobile library service

Children and young people concerns through survey

A range of issues were expressed about children and young people, particularly pre-school children in the main survey. These included:

- Loss of activities e.g. toddler groups, reading groups
- Travel with small children and pushchairs
- Loss of support networks for parents
- Libraries fostering positive attitude to literacy and current low literacy rates in the city

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Children's views from letters and community group surveys

Where letters and surveys were received from schools and community groups, it wasn't clear how much of the rationale behind the proposals had been explained to the children. All the children were library users who submitted comments in this way.

Comments received were usually about the proposed loss of their local library and concerns expressed were very similar to those expressed by adults who use those libraries in the main survey e.g. distance, convenience, loss of a service etc. Some children particularly mentioned:

- Loss of a venue for homework and study and a safe place to go after school
- Issues with travel, distance and safety e.g. if unable to travel alone particularly at night and the cost of travel
- Access to the internet for children and young people who don't have it at home and the ability to complete homework.
- Loss of venue for school trips and libraries as a venue
- Loss of libraries as a part of the school curriculum

Job seekers

Overall job seekers are less positive about the proposals than non- job seekers.
The responses clearly show that a significantly greater proportion of Job Seekers use the library for:

- Accessing computers
- Borrowing CDs/DVDs
- Printing and photocopying
- Job searching and /or volunteering opportunities
- Reading books/newspapers in the library
- Education and learning
- Meeting people
- Advice and guidance

Job seekers were significantly more likely than non-job seekers to use Central library or the next nearest library should their usual library close. However, they were not significantly more likely to lose access to library services altogether, nor were they significantly more concerned about travel to another library.

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Older people

Overall, older people did not offer statistically different opinions to people aged under 65. However, there were significant differences on a few questions where those under 65 were less positive than those over 65.   This included the question about the proposals overall, the central library proposals and the proposal for independent libraries.   Only on the question on mobile libraries were people over 65 less positive than those under 65.
However, some of the free text comments received offered some insight into factors that might be important for older people. These comments are not statistically significant but highlight some possible areas to note

- Reliance on local libraries as a source of social contact to relieve isolation.
- Difficulty travelling and carrying books.
- Concerned about cost of transport if bus passes are withdrawn at some stage.
- The closure of the mobile library service was a particular concern.
- Travelling longer distances in bad weather and negotiating the hills

Disabled people

As reported in the results section, disabled people were significantly less positive about all the proposals than non -disabled people. Some comments from free text boxes that might shed some insight into the reasons are listed below. These are not statistically significant but may highlight some causes for concern:

- Value relationship with current librarians which they fear will be lost if they have to attend another library e.g. making adjustments and offering support where required e.g. with accessing appropriate materials – audio books and Braille.
- Concerns about fewerstaff being available to support disabled people.
- More difficult to travel to alternative libraries in general and a greater impact on disabled people of this
- Some alternative libraries reported as being particularly inaccessible for disabled people e.g. Hillsborough, Woodseats, Central and Ecclesall. Parking, distance to walk and toilet facilities were registered as factors in this.
- Upperthorpe was particularly valued for its ease of access.
- The cumulative impact of the proposed cuts in library services and other changes e.g. benefit changes.

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BME

People from BME communities were significantly less positive about the proposals overall than non BME communities. This did vary from question to question though. Some factors identified in the free text boxes and in visits to BME groups which might indicate a difference in reliance or use of libraries are listed below. These are not statistically significant but may offer some insight:

- Confidence in their local area but concerns about using libraries outside of their community e.g. personal safety.
- Expressed concern about loss of language support if their local library closes.
- The libraries they use now have resources in community languages e.g. Urdu and Bengali and concern that alternative libraries may not have these.
- Familiarity with staff and strong relationships with staff are something people value, perhaps because of the support that's been available.
- People who've arrived relatively recently have less awareness of the geography of the city and therefore will find it hard to navigate to alternative libraries outside of their communities.
- Some BME people use libraries as a way to engage with people in their local community and are concerned that if their local library closes it will have a more significant impact on BME people

7. Results by individual libraries

- Results have been analysed by individual libraries. Some of the response rates are small, so it hasn't been possible to analyse each library for equalities data.
- Results overall demonstrate that within each category of proposal there are differences in positive response between different libraries.

7.1 Hub libraries

- Although there is some variation between individual libraries which are proposed to be hub libraries, overall the responses are generally positive in line with the overall survey results which show that those who are unaffected by proposals are more positive about the proposals.
- Figure 10 below shows the responses by library for those who answered 'yes' or 'yes with reservations' when asked whether the right things had been taken into account to inform the proposals.

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Figure 10 hub library positive responses to needs assessment

Chart data (hub library / positive response):
- Parson Cross: 77%
- Darnall: 77%
- Firth Park: 77%
- Manor: 76%
- Stocksbridge: 74%
- Crystal Peaks: 74%
- Hillsborough: 74%
- Ecclesall: 73%
- Highfield: 73%
- Woodseats: 70%
- Chapeltown: 67%
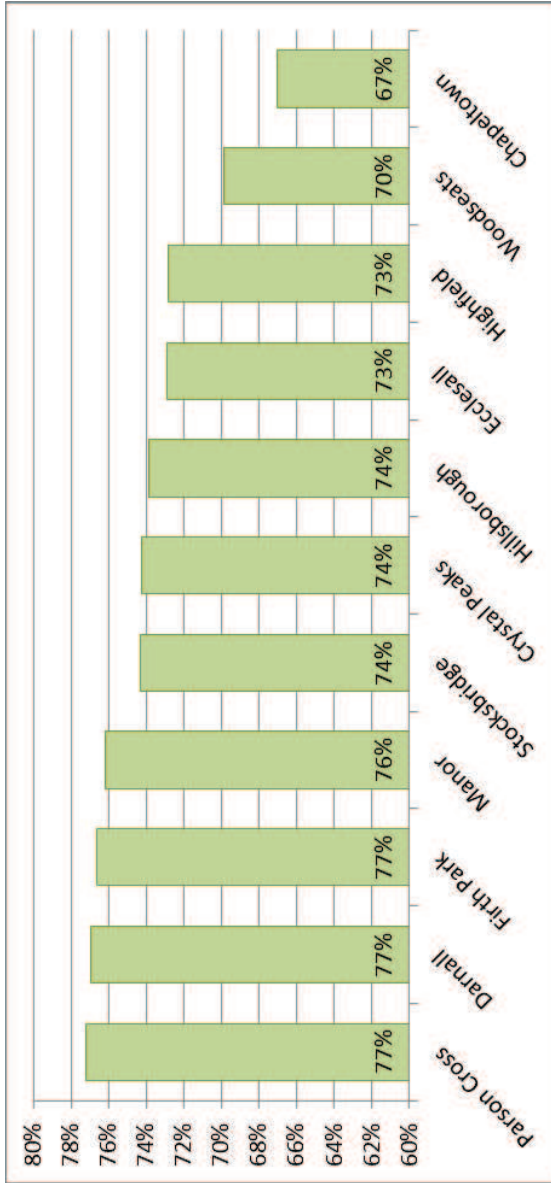
- The response by the different equality groups for hub libraries as a whole to the question 'do you agree the right things have been taken into account to inform the proposals' is shown below in figure 11.

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Figure 11 positive responses by equality groups for hub libraries for needs assessment question

Group	Value
Total	72.8%
Job Seekers	57.8%
Non Job Seekers	74.4%
Disabled	62.6%
Non-Disabled	75.3%
Female	73.4%
Male	74.0%
65 and Over	77.3%
Under 65	72.7%
BME	73.9%
White British	73.7%

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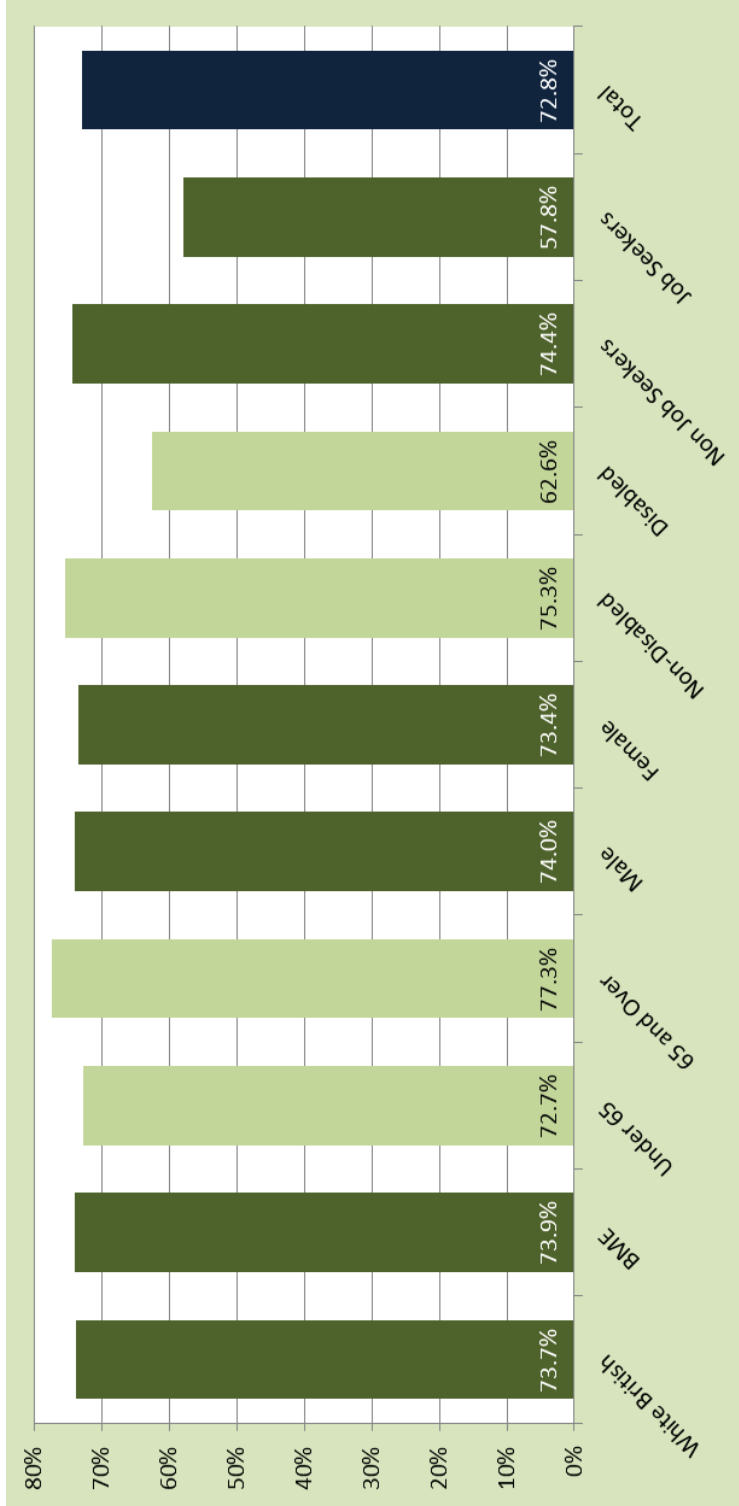
Figure 12   hub library positive responses to overall proposals

Bar chart — hub library positive responses:
- Darnall: 69%
- Crystal Peaks: 64%
- Ecclesall: 64%
- Hillsborough: 60%
- Stocksbridge: 59%
- Highfield: 59%
- Manor: 59%
- Woodseats: 59%
- Firth Park: 57%
- Chapeltown: 50%
- Parson Cross: 46%
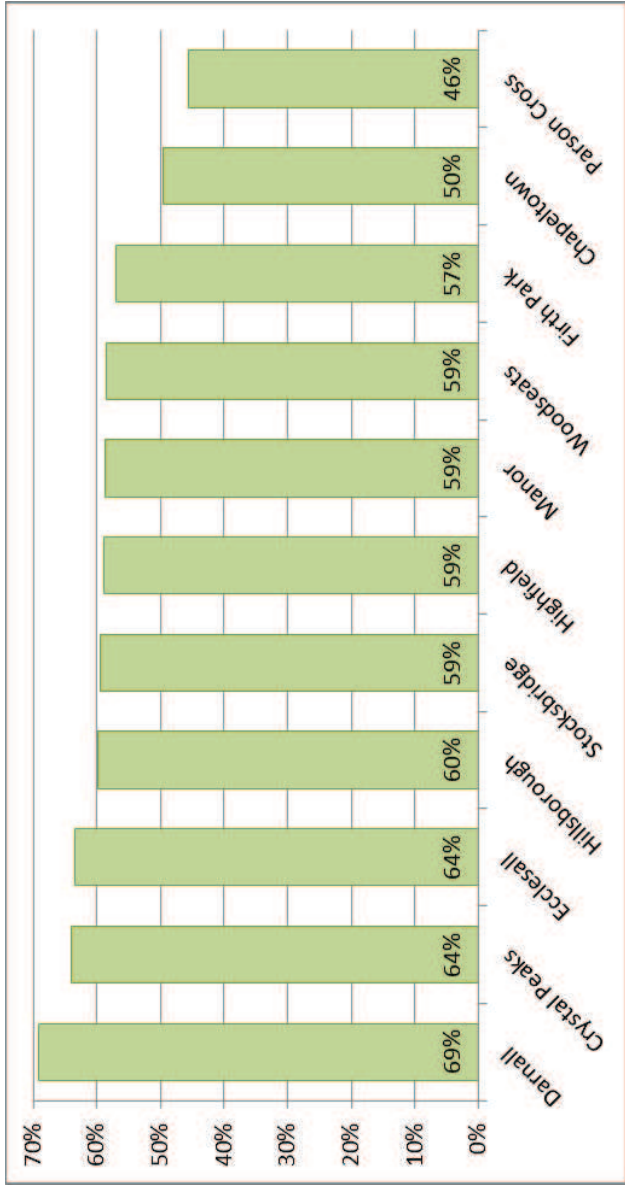
- Figure 12 above shows the positive responses by hub library to the question 'overall what do you think of the proposals?'.

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- Figure 13 below shows the positive responses by equality group across all hub libraries to the question 'overall what do you think of the proposals?'

Figure 13 Equality group positive responses across all hub libraries to question about overall proposals

Group	Positive response
Total	59.3%
Job Seekers	45.1%
Non Job Seekers	61.2%
Disabled	46.4%
Non-Disabled	63.0%
Female	60.0%
Male	61.5%
65 and Over	64.8%
Under 65	59.1%
BME	57.7%
White British	61.0%

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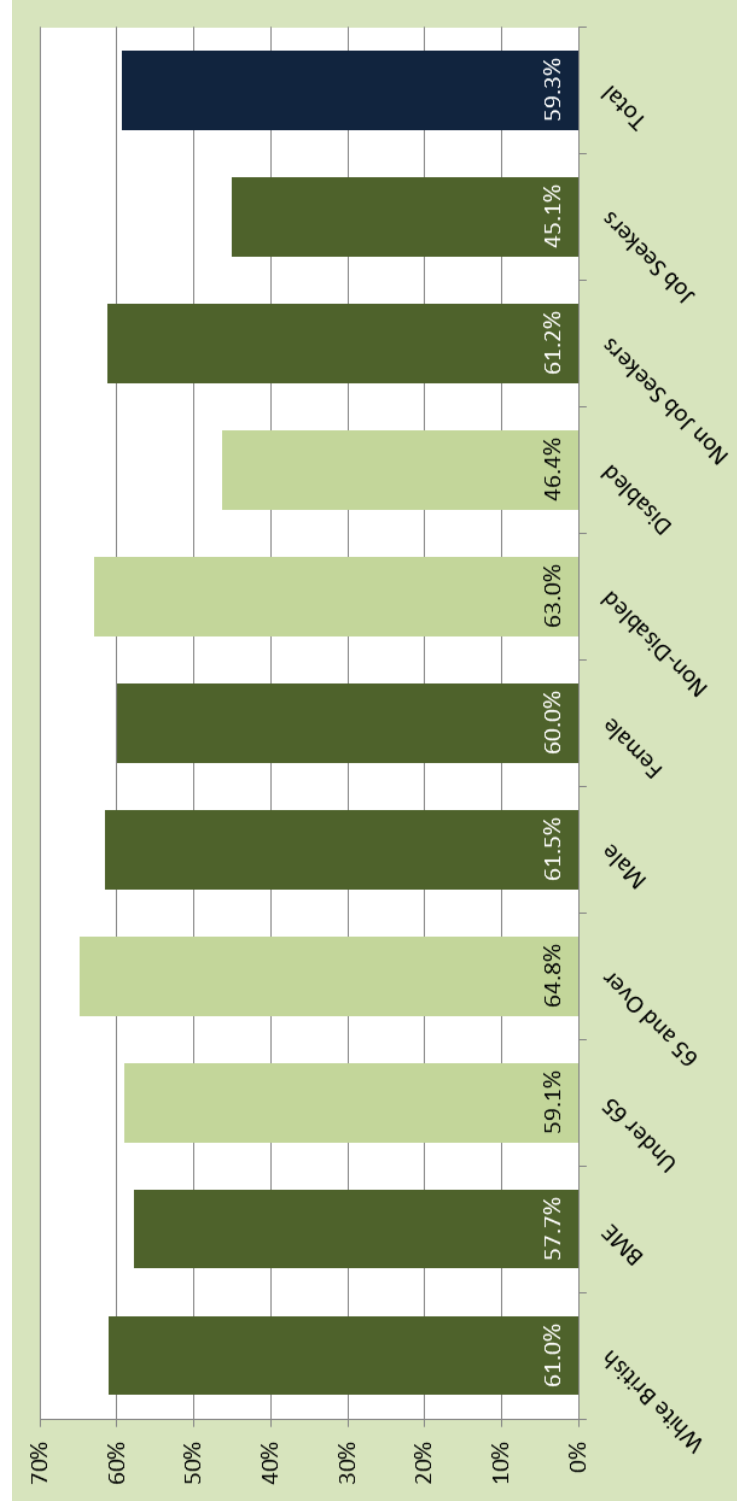
- Figure 14 below shows the positive responses by individual hub library to the question 'do you agree with the proposal to have 11 hub libraries?'

Figure 14 positive responses by hub library to the hub library proposal question

Figure 14 positive responses by hub library to the hub library proposal question

Darnall	74%
Stocksbridge	73%
Manor	72%
Hillsborough	68%
Ecclesall	68%
Woodseats	67%
Crystal Peaks	65%
Highfield	62%
Firth Park	54%
Chapeltown	54%
Parson Cross	49%

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- Figure 15 below shows positive responses by equality group across the hub libraries as a whole to the hub library proposal question.

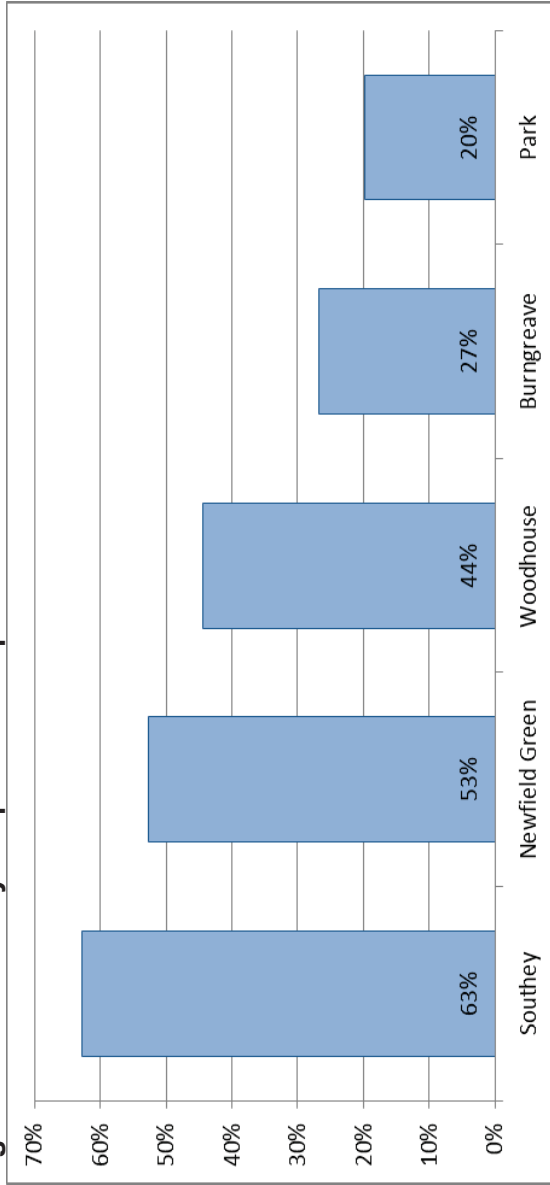**Figure 15 equality group positive responses across all hubs to the hub library proposal**

| Equality group	Positive response
Total	64.5%
Job Seekers	56.9%
Non Job Seekers	65.8%
Disabled	51.5%
Non-Disabled	67.3%
Female	65.8%
Male	64.7%
65 and Over	67.8%
Under 65	64.5%
BME	60.9%
White British	66.0%

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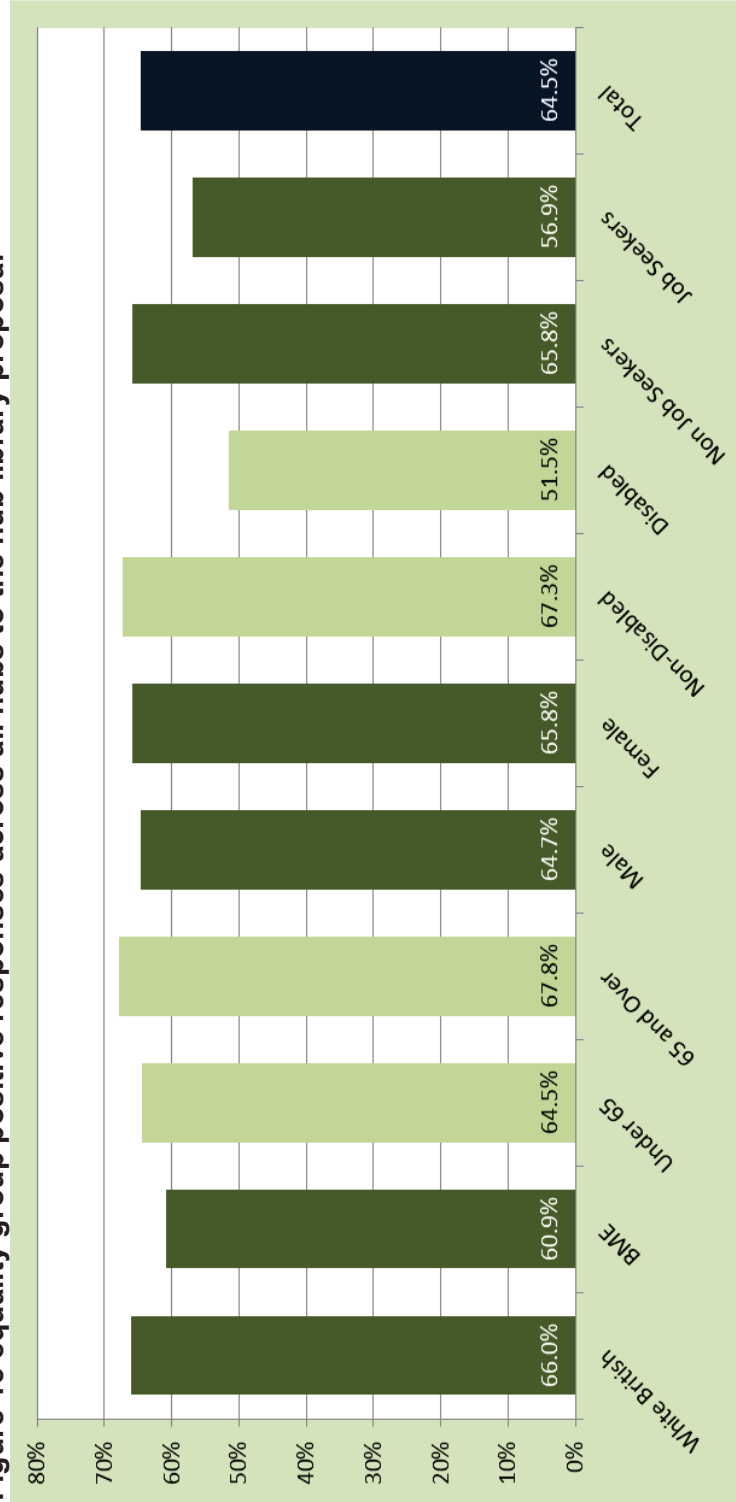
7.2 Community Led libraries

Figure 16 Community-led positive responses to needs assessment

- There was a wide range of views across the libraries proposed to be community-led as illustrated above.

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Figure 17 positive responses for community-led libraries for needs assessment question by equality groups
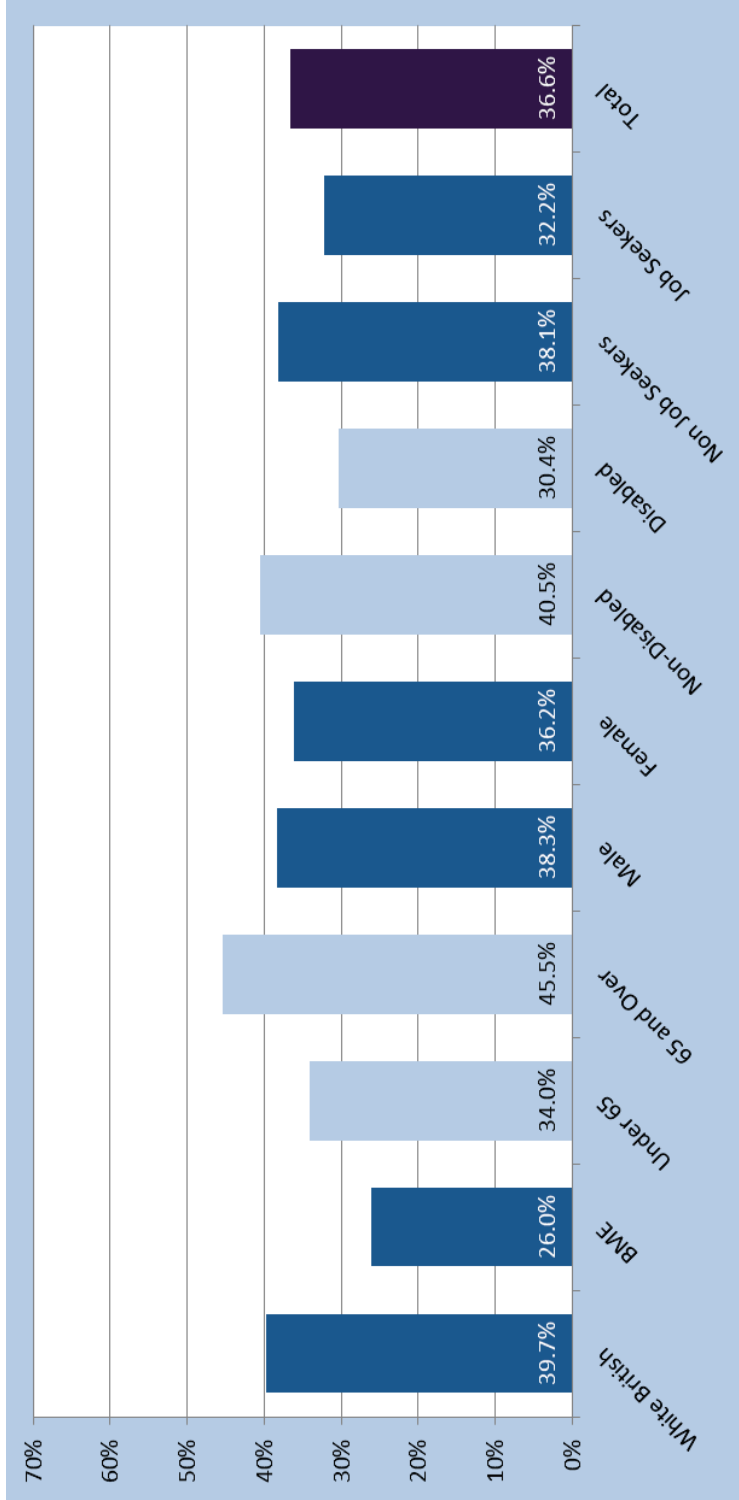
- This reflects the overall survey results which demonstrate that those people who are not affected by a proposal are more positive about the proposal than those who are affected, i.e. most groups are not very positive about the proposal

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Figure 18   community-led library positive responses to overall proposals
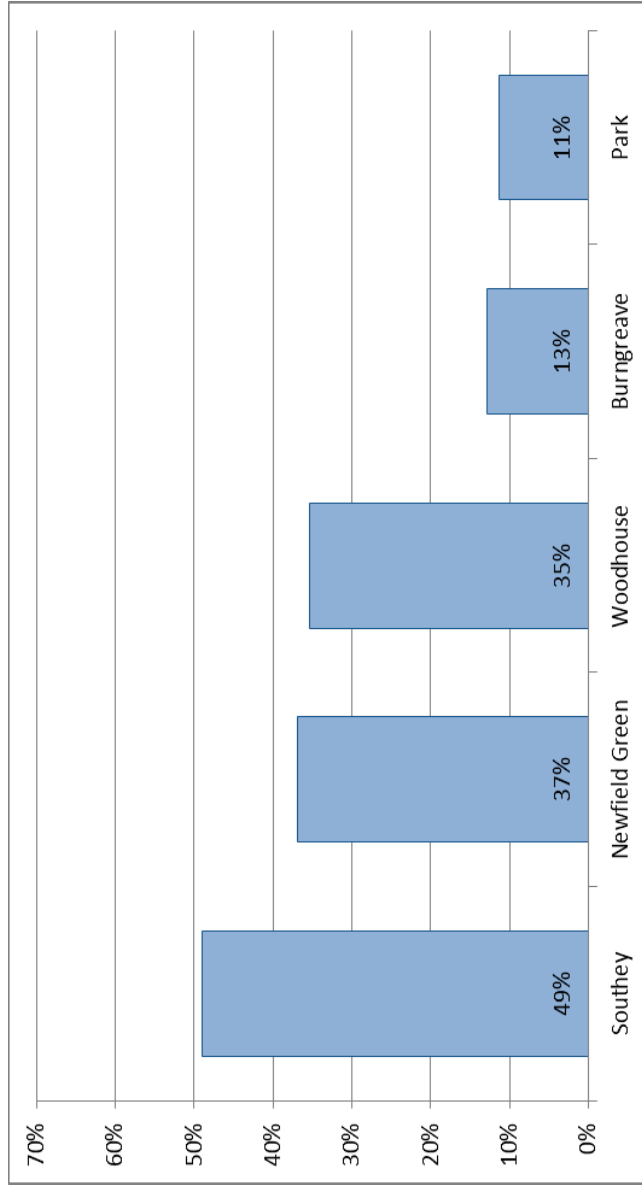
- Respondents from libraries who are proposed to be community led showed a range of responses to the overall proposals as illustrated above.

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Figure 19 community-led libraries positive responses by equality group to overall proposals

Equality group	Percentage
White British	27.7%
BME	21.0%
Under 65	22.3%
65 and Over	39.0%
Male	26.4%
Female	26.4%
Non-Disabled	27.2%
Disabled	26.5%
Non Job Seekers	25.3%
Job Seekers	28.8%
Total	25.9%
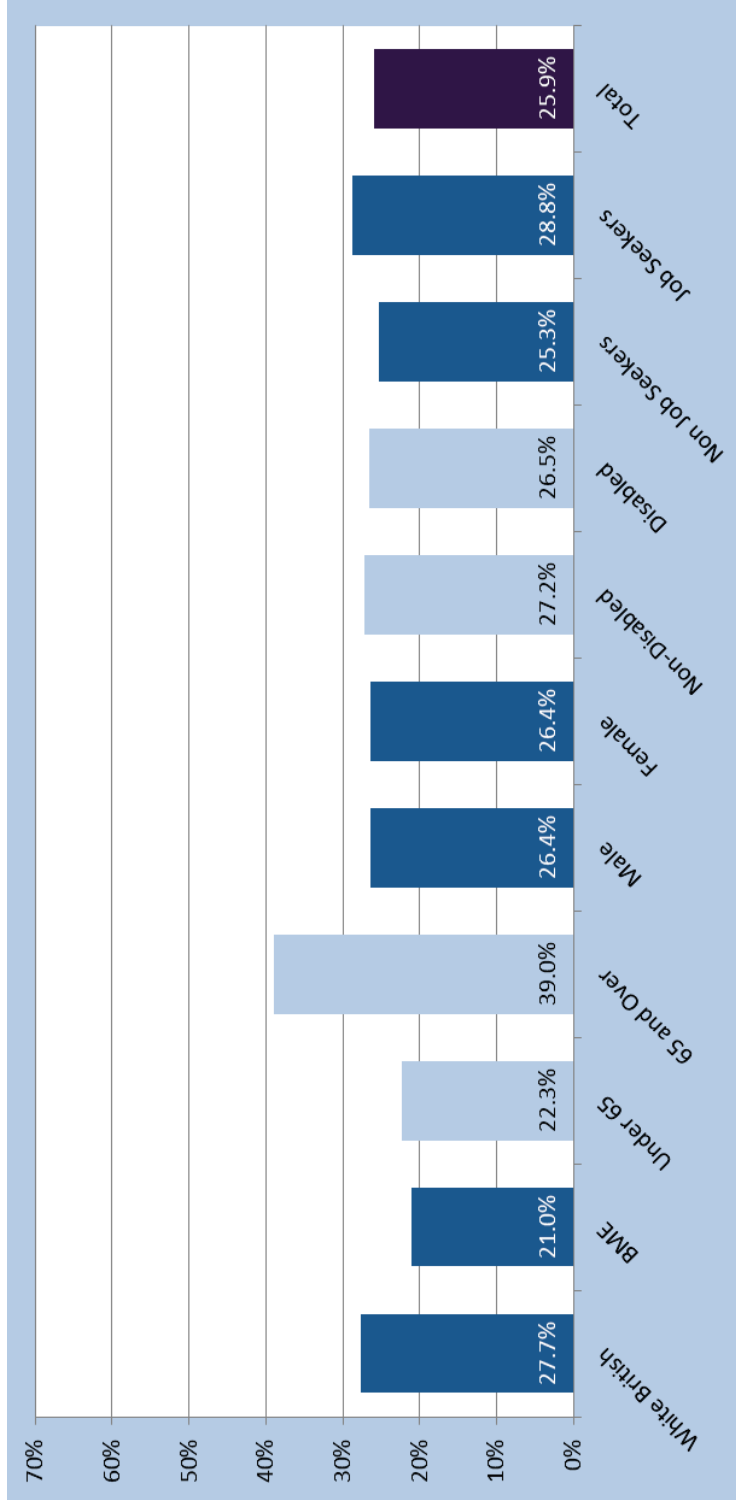
- There was a marked difference between the responses for under 65s and over 65s to the community-led proposal for those people responding who use a library which is proposed to be a community-led library.

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Figure 20 community-led positive responses to community led proposal
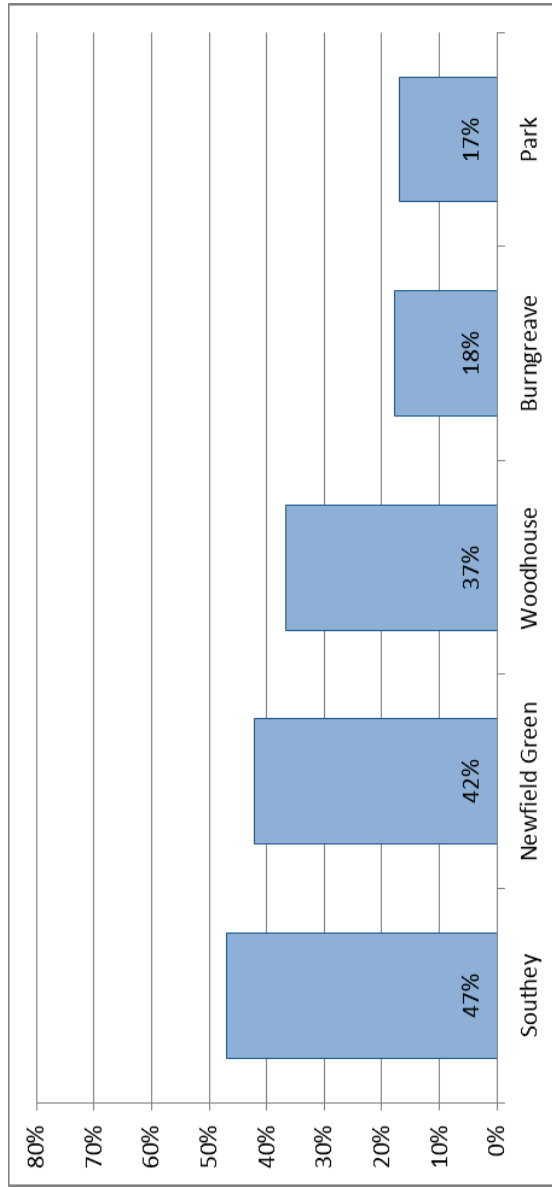
- A range of views were expressed, with Park and Burngreave lower than the other 3 libraries, however it should be noted that relatively small numbers of people were responding from most of these libraries so comparing these results should be done with caution.

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Figure 21 community-led positive responses to community led proposal by equality groups

Category	Percentage
White British	31.5%
BME	19.0%
Under 65	25.4%
65 and Over	39.0%
Male	25.9%
Female	30.5%
Non-Disabled	31.2%
Disabled	28.4%
Non Job Seekers	28.8%
Job Seekers	28.8%
Total	29.2%
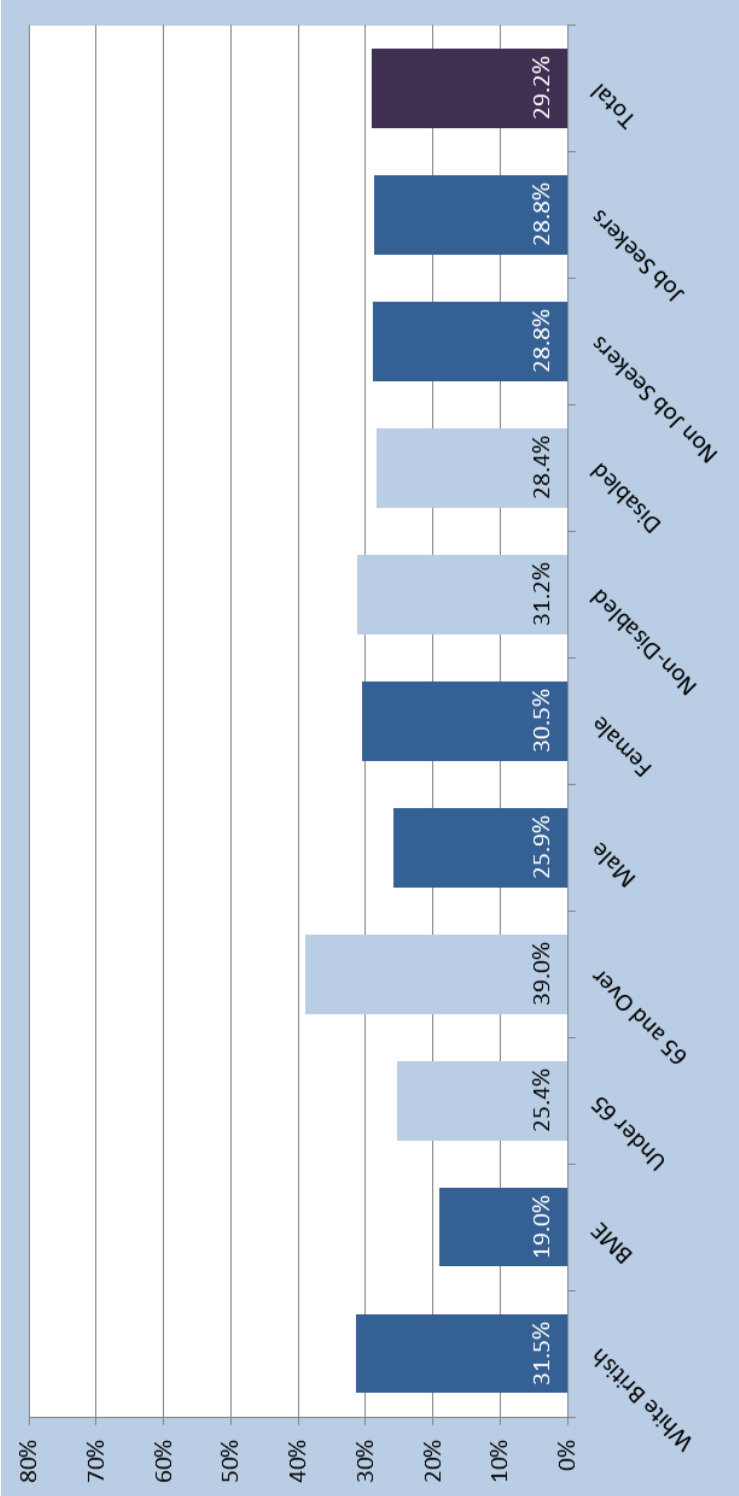
- Relatively small sample sizes means these figures should be treated with some caution.

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7.3 Independent libraries

Figure 22 independent libraries positive responses to needs assessment

Figure 22 independent libraries positive responses to needs assessment
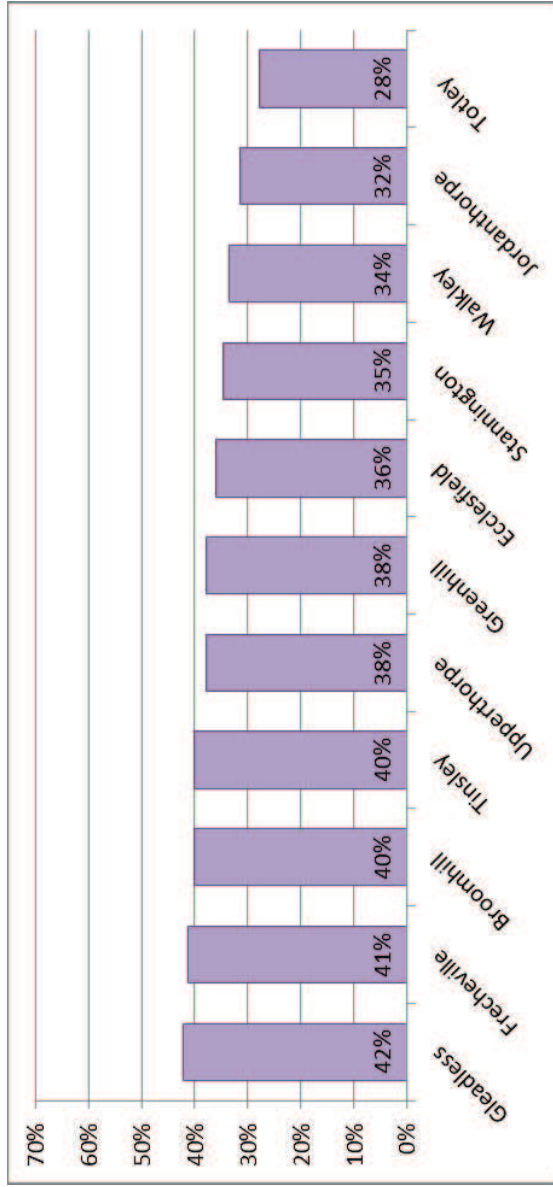
- It should be noted that some libraries had a larger % of their registered library users completing the survey e.g. Totley had 13.6% of its RLU's responding whilst Jordanthorpe only had 2.8% of its RLU's responding.
- Several of these libraries also contributed additional material in the form of petitions, surveys, and comments outside of the survey.

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Figure 23 independent libraries positive responses to needs assessment by equality groups

Group	Percentage
Total	35.7%
Job Seekers	34.7%
Non Job Seekers	36.6%
Disabled	32.3%
Non-Disabled	37.6%
Female	36.3%
Male	36.4%
65 and Over	37.4%
Under 65	35.9%
BME	34.7%
White British	36.6%

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Figure 24 independent libraries positive responses to overall proposals

Library	Positive response
Jordanthorpe	33%
Tinsley	30%
Gleadless	27%
Upperthorpe	24%
Broomhill	23%
Frecheville	23%
Ecclesfield	22%
Greenhill	20%
Stannington	18%
Walkley	18%
Totley	12%

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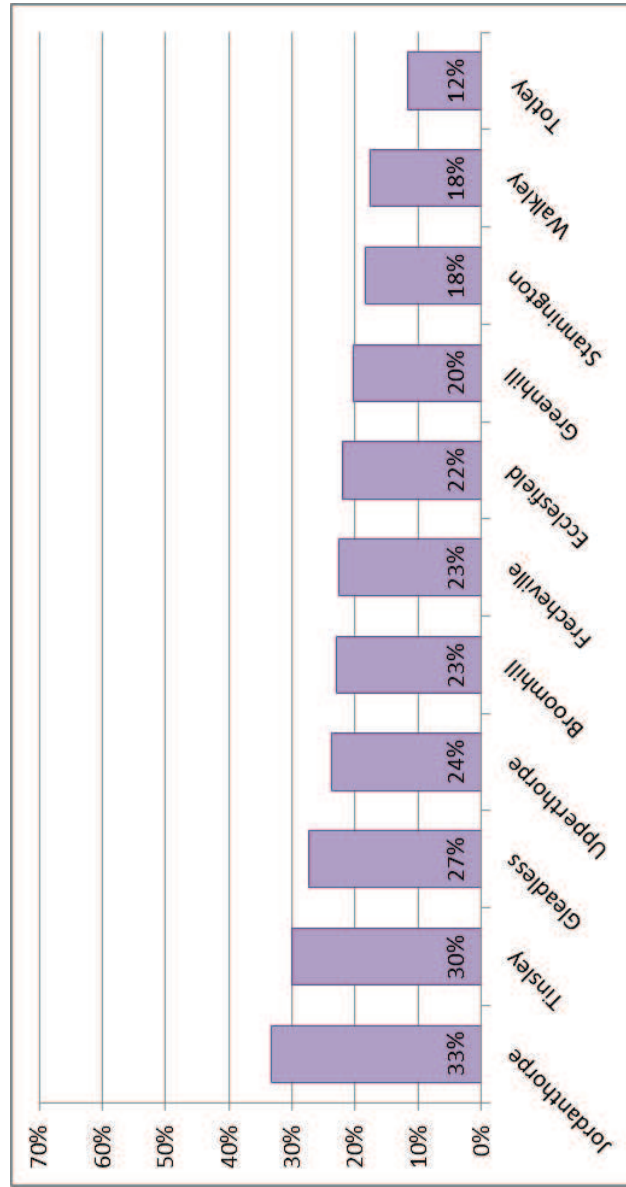
Figure 24 independent libraries positive responses to overall proposals by equality groups

Equality Group	Positive Response
White British	20.6%
BME	19.7%
Under 65	19.3%
65 and Over	23.5%
Male	20.7%
Female	20.4%
Non-Disabled	21.0%
Disabled	19.3%
Non Job Seekers	20.5%
Job Seekers	23.4%
Total	19.9%

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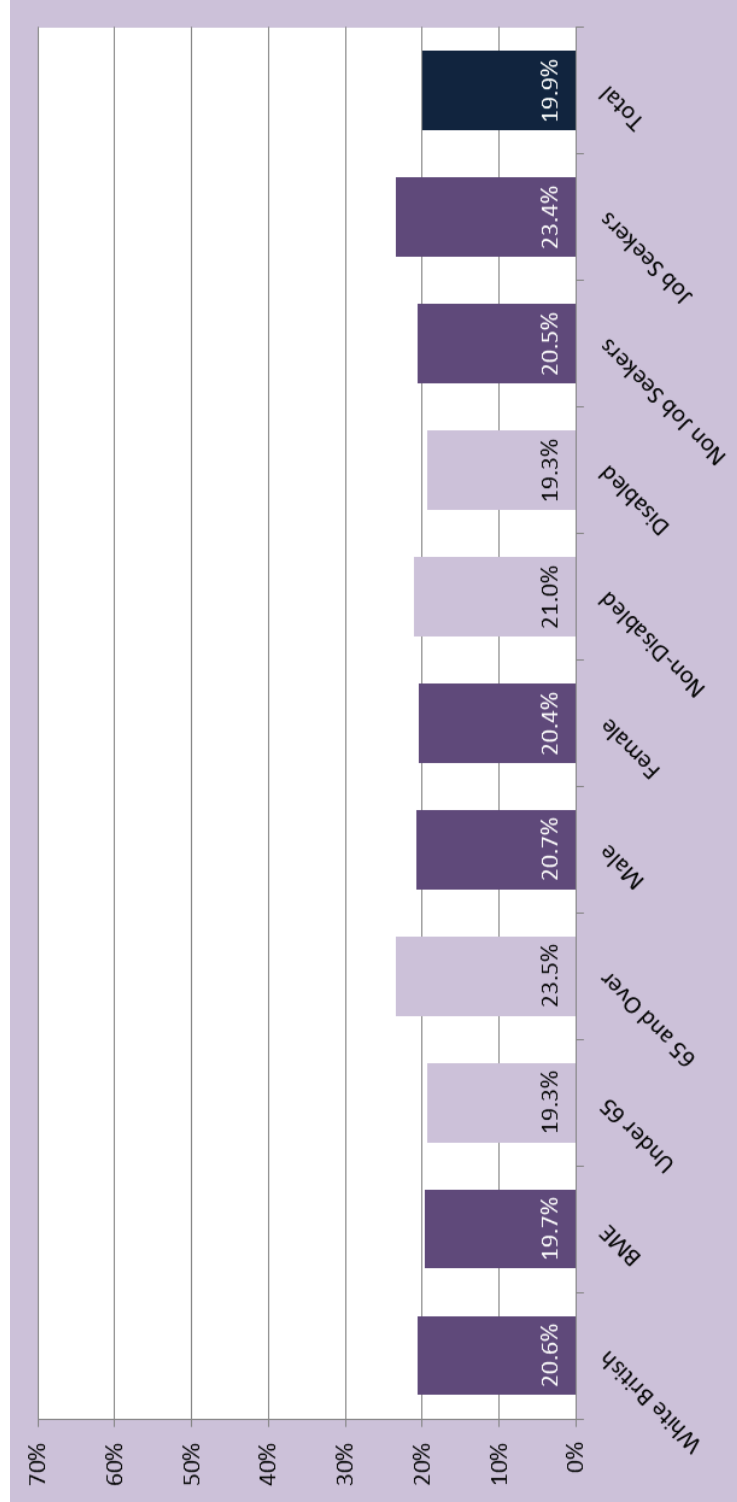
Figure 25 independent libraries positive responses to independent library proposal

Library	Positive response
Stannington	44%
Frecheville	41%
Totley	41%
Ecclesfield	40%
Gleadless	38%
Broomhill	38%
Upperthorpe	36%
Greenhill	36%
Tinsley	36%
Jordanthorpe	35%
Walkley	34%

51
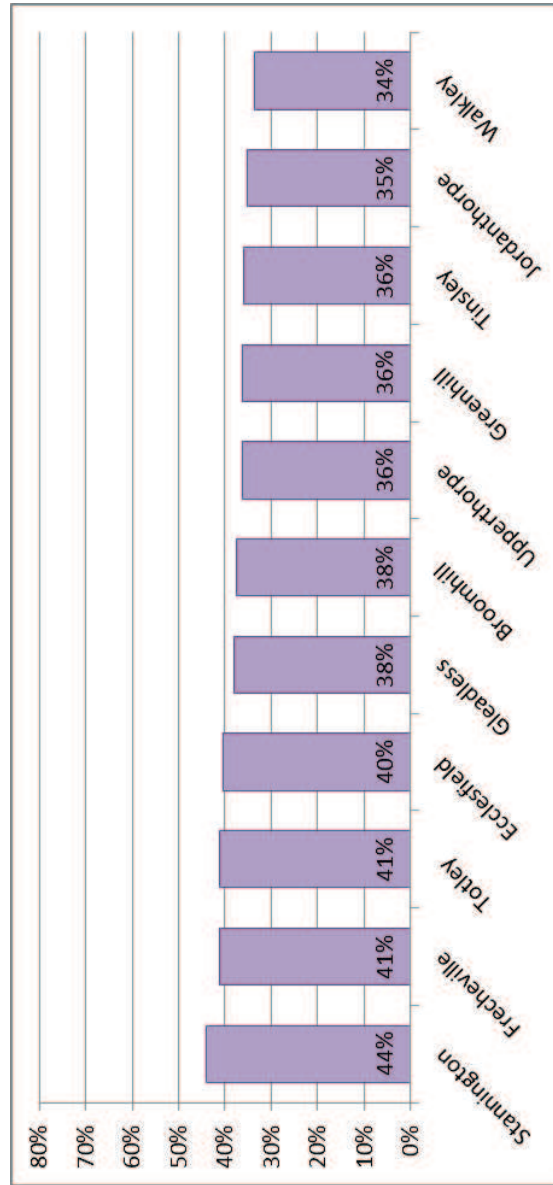
Figure 26 independent libraries positive responses to independent library proposal by equality group

Equality group	Positive response
White British	36.6%
BME	20.0%
Under 65	29.3%
65 and Over	46.8%
Male	33.2%
Female	33.6%
Non-Disabled	34.4%
Disabled	38.2%
Non Job Seekers	33.3%
Job Seekers	32.2%
Total	33.6%

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