Engage | Empower | Enable
What you told us about
getting involved in local areas

Big City Conversation – a reminder!

In October 2019, we launched the Big City Conversation and spoke to Sheffielders across the city about their priorities and how they wanted to get involved in decisions and issues in their local community.

We launched an online survey but also went out and about in district and local centres across Sheffield to talk to people about what mattered to them. The survey closed just as the Covid-19 pandemic was taking hold in the UK and the country went into the first lockdown in March 2020. We presented the initial findings to Scrutiny and to Full Council in January 2020 to inform discussions and proposals ahead of the referendum in May 2020 that was also postponed because of Covid-19.

We've learned a lot during the pandemic and communities, community organisations, businesses and public services have stood together to support and protect each other from Covid-19.

As we look to develop the Local Area Committees, this summary reflects on the key things that Sheffielders told us during the Big City Conversation about influencing decision making in their area, in Sheffield and how people want to get more involved.

Big City Conversation – the headlines

Between October 2019 and February 2020, we engaged around 3,500 Sheffielders either through the online survey or through a variety of face-to-face events in the city centre and district centres.

Over 2,700 people completed the online survey providing a rich picture of what issues Sheffielders care about, what they value and how they want to have a say over those issues.

We got responses from communities right across the city and across all age groups (but with younger age groups under represented in the survey).
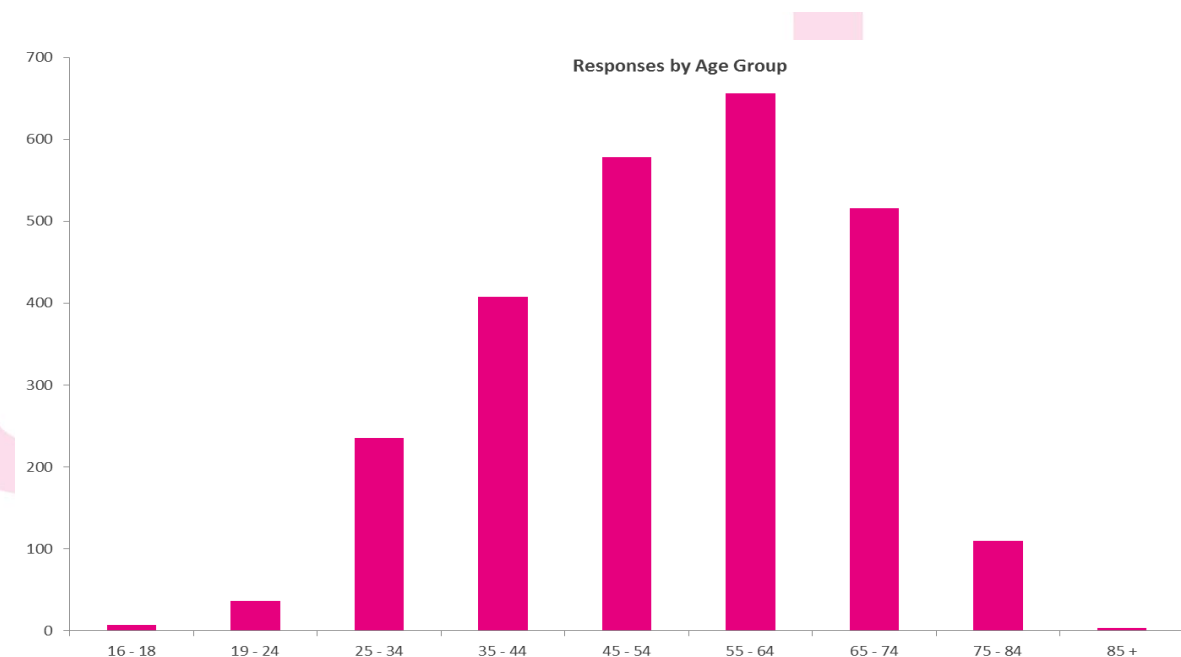
55% of respondents were female; 36% male and 8% identifying as non-binary or other.

The majority of respondents were white (82%) with only 9% from a BAME background which is an underrepresentation of the city's BAME population.

Big City Conversation - Number of Responses by Ward

No of. Responses
- 26 - 35
- 36 - 46
- 47 - 57
- 58 - 63
- 64 - 74
- 75 - 81
- 82 - 111
- 112 - 132
- 133 - 162
- 163 - 193
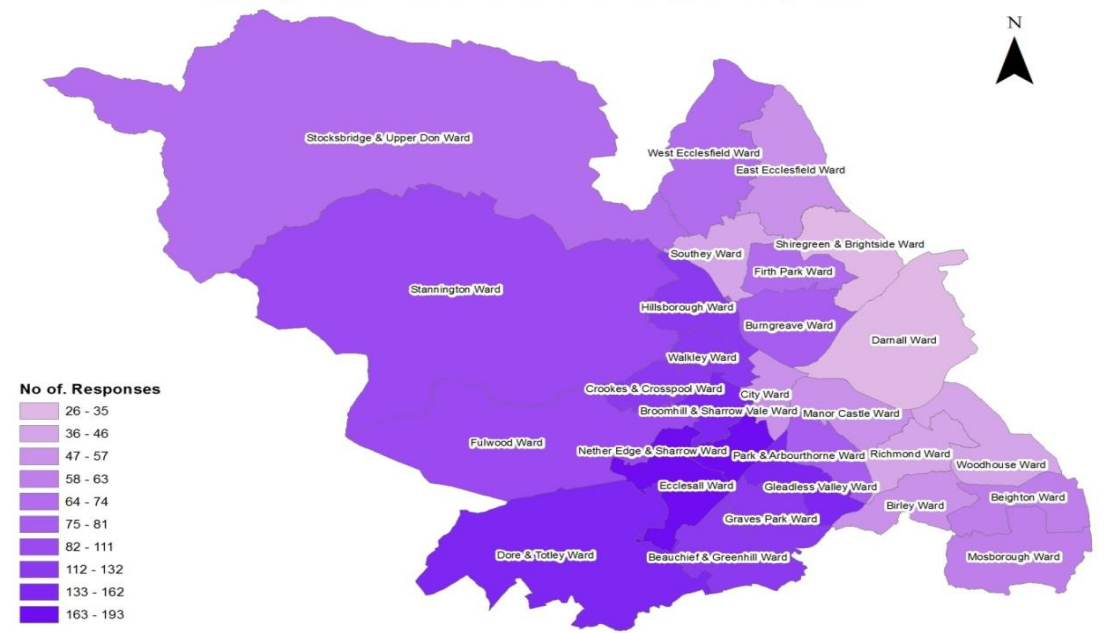
© Crown copyright and database rights 2020 Ordnance Survey 100018816

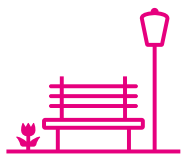**Responses by Age Group**

What Sheffielders love about their area….

…and what needs improving
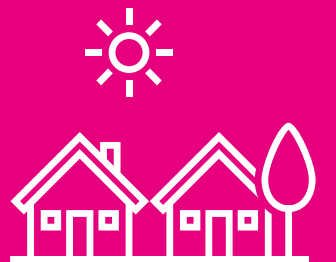
Our communities – what we love and what needs to change

We asked respondents to the survey to say what three things really loved about their area and what three things that they felt needed to improve.

What Sheffielders like best about their neighbourhood

People in Sheffield love their parks and open spaces. It was by far and away the thing that people liked most about their area in almost every part of the city

People really value their local community too and how well our communities get on together across the city.

Public transport matters to our communities but some places feel more connected (Darnall, Birley) than others (Dore and Totley, Stocksbridge)

Housing, libraries, local shopping facilities and local health services were also seen as things people in Sheffield like about their areas.

What Sheffielders want to see improve

Traffic congestion is the issue that most people said needed improving in their local area. This was consistent across wards but particularly in Broomhill and Graves Park.

People also said that public transport could be better and this was the second biggest priority, particularly in Stocksbridge, West Ecclesfield, Stannington, Walkley and Dore and Totley
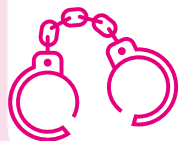
Reducing the level of crime/ASB in neighbourhoods is also a key priority for residents – particularly in Manor, Woodhouse and Darnall.

Respondents want to see improvements in activities for young people across all areas of the city along with cleaner streets and reduced pollution.

Priorities for neighbourhoods – what's great and what needs to improve

	The level of traffic congestion	Activities for teenagers & young people	The level of pollution	Clean streets	The level of crime	Road and pavement repairs	Public transport	Job prospects	Facilities for young children	Community activities	Sports and leisure facilities	Education provision	Health services	Availability of affordable fresh food	Cultural facilities (e.g. libraries, museums)	Schools	Good quality housing	Shopping facilities	Community cohesion (how well everyone gets on together)	Parks and open spaces
Beauchief & Greenhill	-0.3	-0.3	0.0	-0.1	-0.2	-0.1	-0.2	-0.1	-0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	-0.2	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.6
Beighton	-0.5	-0.2	0.0	0.0	-0.2	-0.1	0.1	0.0	-0.2	-0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.6	0.1	0.3
Birley	-0.2	-0.3	0.0	0.0	-0.3	-0.2	0.3	0.0	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.3
Broomhill & Sharrow Vale	-0.6	-0.1	-0.5	-0.3	-0.1	-0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.7
Burngreave	-0.1	-0.3	-0.2	-0.6	-0.4	0.0	0.2	-0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.1	-0.1	0.1	0.2	0.4	
City	-0.3	-0.1	-0.4	-0.4	-0.2	-0.1	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.4	0.0	-0.1	0.4	0.0	0.1
Crookes & Crosspool	-0.3	-0.2	-0.2	-0.1	-0.1	-0.2	-0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	-0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.6		
Darnall	-0.1	-0.3	-0.1	-0.4	-0.5	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	-0.1	-0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.2	-0.1	0.4
Dore & Totley	-0.3	-0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	-0.1	-0.4	0.0	-0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	-0.3	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.4	0.1	0.3	0.6
East Ecclesfield	-0.5	-0.3	-0.2	-0.2	-0.1	-0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.5		
Ecclesall	-0.5	-0.2	-0.4	0.0	-0.1	-0.2	-0.2	0.0	-0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.3	0.0	0.2	0.7	
Firth Park	-0.1	-0.3	0.0	-0.4	-0.3	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.5	
Fulwood	-0.4	-0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	-0.3	-0.2	0.0	0.0	-0.1	-0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.1	0.7	
Gleadless Valley	-0.3	-0.2	-0.3	-0.3	-0.2	-0.1	-0.2	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.4	0.8	
Graves Park	-0.6	-0.1	-0.3	-0.1	-0.2	-0.1	-0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.8		
Hillsborough	-0.5	-0.3	-0.2	-0.2	-0.1	-0.1	0.2	0.0	0.0	-0.1	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.7		
Manor Castle	-0.4	-0.2	-0.1	-0.3	-0.5	0.0	0.2	0.0	-0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.2	-0.1	0.1	0.6		
Mosborough	-0.3	-0.3	-0.1	-0.2	-0.1	-0.3	0.2	-0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.0	0.3	
Nether Edge & Sharrow	-0.4	-0.2	-0.4	-0.2	-0.1	-0.3	-0.2	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.5	
Park & Arbourthorne	-0.2	-0.1	-0.1	-0.2	-0.3	-0.1	0.2	-0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.4		
Richmond	-0.3	-0.2	-0.2	-0.3	-0.3	-0.1	0.3	0.0	0.0	-0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.3	
Shiregreen & Brightside	-0.1	-0.2	-0.1	-0.3	-0.3	0.1	0.0	0.0	-0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	-0.1	0.1	0.0	0.2	-0.1	0.5	
Southey	-0.2	-0.2	0.0	-0.1	-0.2	-0.1	-0.1	0.0	-0.1	-0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.0	0.5	
Stannington	-0.3	-0.3	0.0	0.0	-0.1	-0.2	-0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.7	
Stocksbridge & Upper Don	-0.2	-0.3	0.0	0.0	0.1	-0.2	-0.5	-0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.5	
Walkley	-0.3	-0.2	-0.2	-0.2	-0.1	-0.1	-0.4	-0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.3	0.6	
West Ecclesfield	-0.2	-0.4	0.0	0.0	-0.1	-0.1	-0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.0	-0.1	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.6
Woodhouse	-0.2	-0.2	-0.2	-0.1	-0.5	-0.1	0.2	-0.1	0.0	0.0	-0.1	0.1	-0.1	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.5	
[Ward not known]	-0.3	-0.3	-0.2	-0.2	-0.1	-0.1	0.0	-0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.5		
Total	**-0.35**	**-0.22**	**-0.18**	**-0.16**	**-0.15**	**-0.15**	**-0.10**	**-0.04**	**-0.04**	**0.01**	**0.04**	**0.04**	**0.05**	**0.06**	**0.06**	**0.09**	**0.15**	**0.18**	**0.19**	**0.56**

How informed people feel about local services

Sheffielders do not feel informed about local services, particularly how they are performing and how decisions are made

Over 70% of respondents said that they do not feel informed about local services, how decisions are made about their local area or about how local services are performing

The Big City Conversation demonstrated that people care about their local area and know what needs improving but respondents clearly said that they do not feel adequately informed about local decisions or local services.

As with other areas of the BCC, there is significant variation across wards, with over 40% of respondents in Stocksbridge feeling informed about local decisions compared to 23% in Sheffield overall.

As part of the development of Local Area Committees, there is a significant opportunity to work with communities to talk about public services and involve people in shaping and holding services to account to best meet the needs of local areas.

Again, the experience of Covid and how communities have supported each other and collaborated with public services and VCF organisations to support their fellow residents may have impacted on awareness of local services. But, there remains a significant need for change by better engaging and empowering communities to have a stronger say over local services.

Sheffield overall	Informed	Not well informed
How decisions are made about your local area	23.5%	74.4%
What standard of service you should expect from local public services	36.1%	61.0
How well local public services are performing	22.0%	74.4
How to complain about local public services	38.3%	58.6
How well informed overall	25.8%	72.9

% of respondents that are very well informed or fairly well informed about how decisions are made about their local area
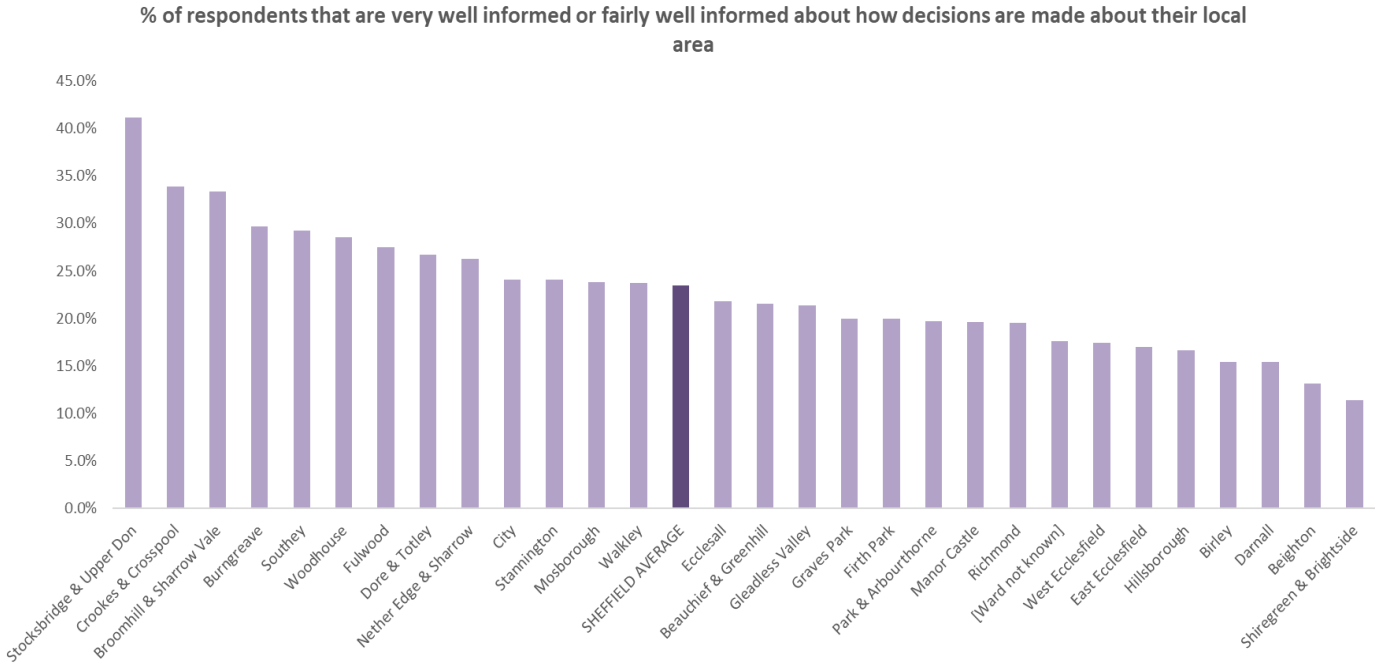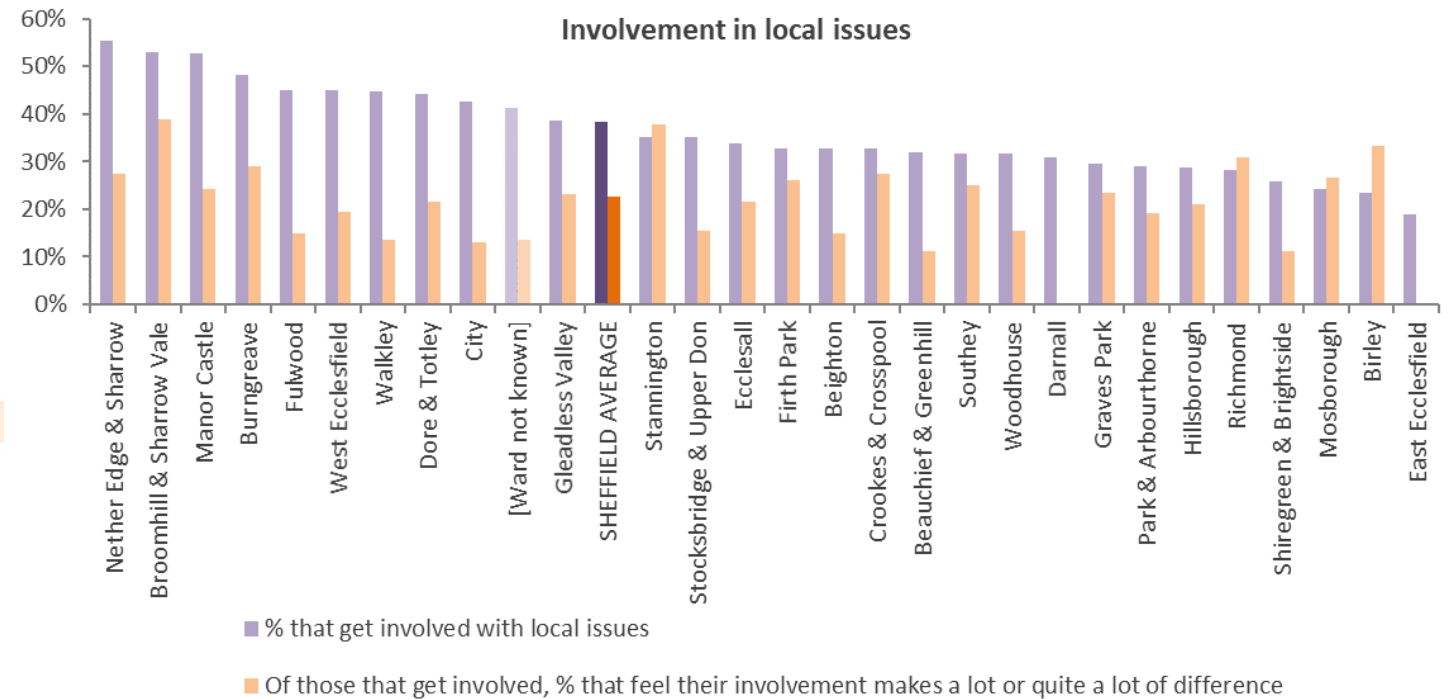
Getting involved in local issues

People do get involved in their local community but this ranges considerably across the city and where people do get involved, they aren't sure it really makes a difference

Almost 40% say they get involved in local issues

A good proportion of people across the city say that they get involved in local issues, particularly in Netheredge, Broomhil, Manor Castle and Burngreave. On average, almost 40% of respondents said that they do get involved in local issues which demonstrates Sheffielders across the city are dedicating their time to helping their local neighbourhood. There are good opportunities to learn from the most active areas to see what networks and approaches are most effective at getting people involved. Given the question, local activism could be very related to prominent issues at the time of the survey or a genuine indicator of good practice and strong networks within wards.

People don't always feel they can make an impact

Whilst 40% of Sheffielders say they get involved locally, only 23% felt that their time and effort resulted in any real impact. This was particularly true in Walkley, Beauchief, Darnall and City wards. But, people were much more likely in Stannington, Birley, Broomhill and Richmond to feel that if they got involved, they made a difference.

Involvement in local issues

- ■ % that get involved with local issues
- ■ Of those that get involved, % that feel their involvement makes a lot or quite a lot of difference

The range of local involvement and views on how much impact that involvement has indicates that there is a real opportunity to learn from the good practice in the city, perhaps doing some sharing sessions between Members, officers and local community representatives across the city. The above may also provide an indication of where communities may need more support or resource to find innovative ways to get more people involved in local issues.

How do Sheffielders currently get involved in local issues and if not, what stops them?

Online channels and networks matter

Of those that get involved at local level, people predominantly use online channels or engaged with local public services and Members.
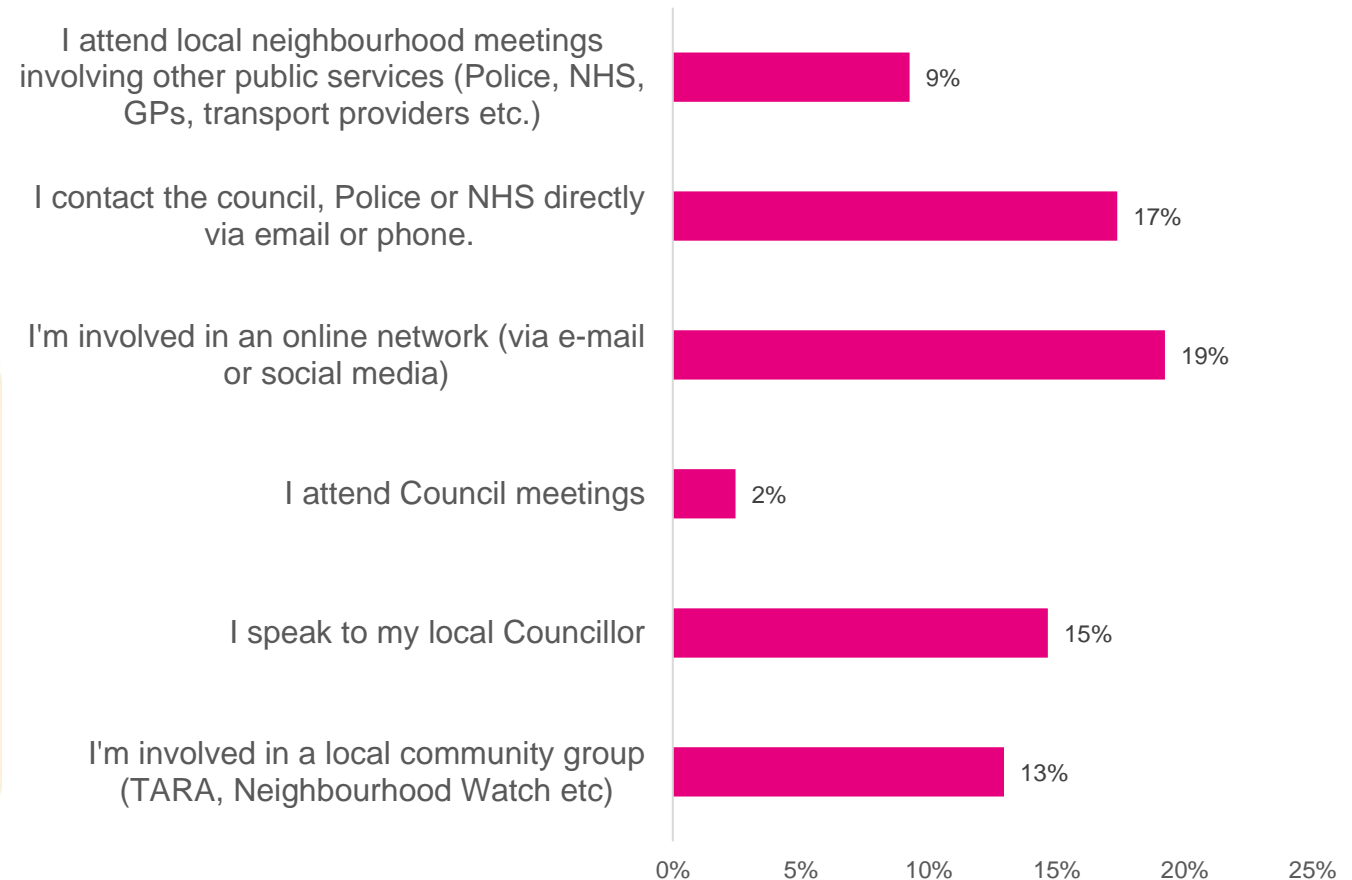
Attending 'Council meetings' were not a significant route to get involved but the absence of any regular local council meetings (like area committees) probably reduces the opportunities for people to attend.

Time is precious

But, of those who said that they don't get involved locally, respondents said that they have busy lives and therefore struggle to find the time or they are sceptical that they could make any real difference.

But, people also said that they did get involved in other ways, such as national issues or campaigns, therefore indicating that people are motivated to engage and get involved in

How people currently get involved

Category	Value
I attend local neighbourhood meetings involving other public services (Police, NHS, GPs, transport providers etc.)	9%
I contact the council, Police or NHS directly via email or phone.	17%
I'm involved in an online network (via e-mail or social media)	19%
I attend Council meetings	2%
I speak to my local Councillor	15%
I'm involved in a local community group (TARA, Neighbourhood Watch etc)	13%

Getting involved in local decision making

The majority of people don't currently feel that they can influence decisions in Sheffield but people are keen to get more involved, depending on the issue
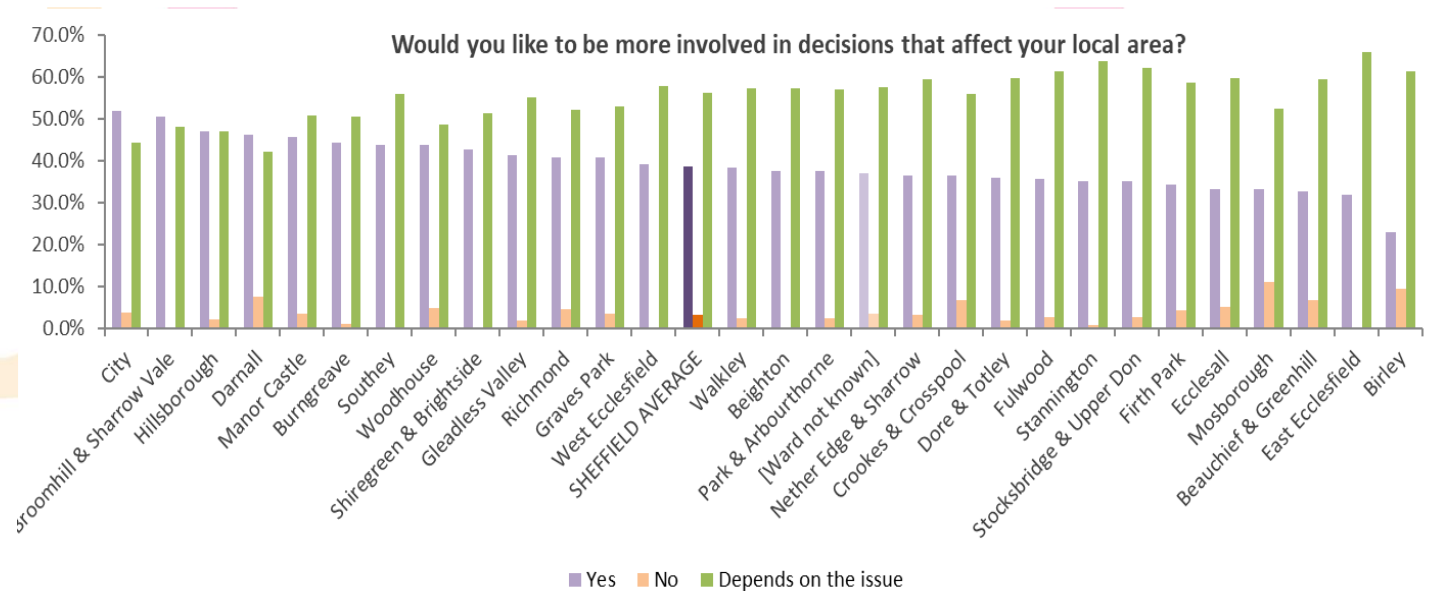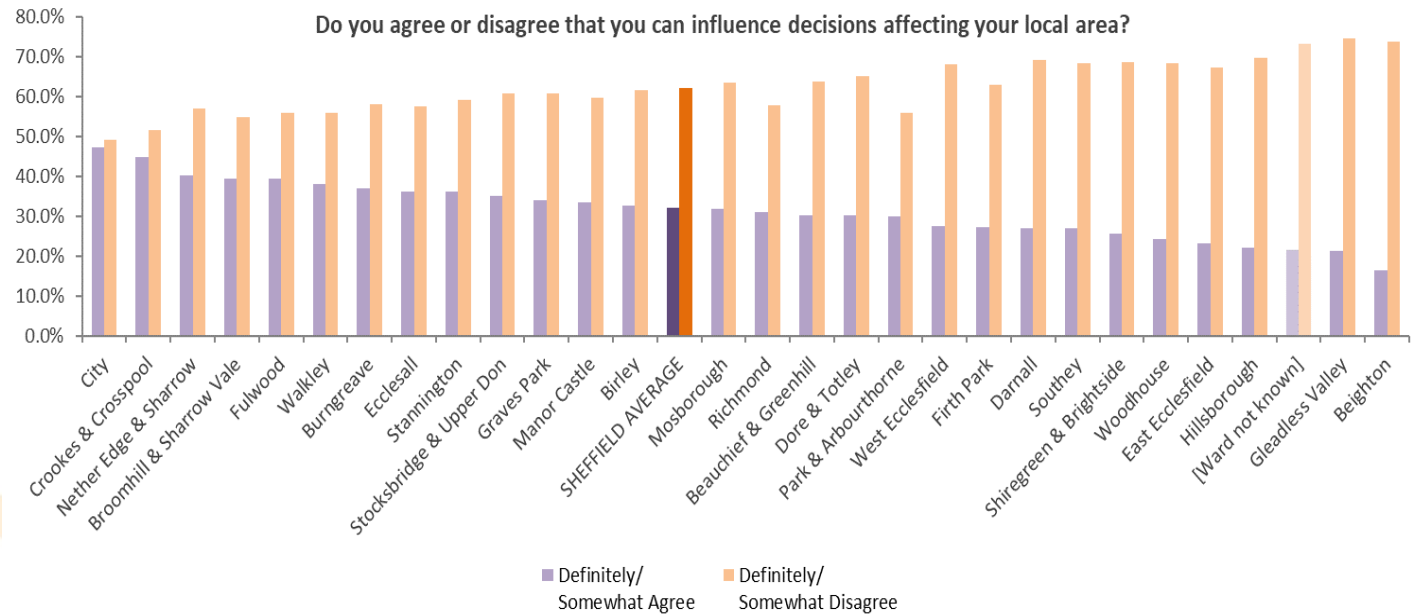
60% of respondents said they don't feel that they can influence decisions affecting their local area

Of the 2,700 respondents, only 32.2% said that they felt they could influence decisions affecting their local area in Sheffield. People did feel they had more influence in City, Crookes and Crosspool and Nether Edge and Sharrow wards but was less than 20% of respondents in Beighton. In free text responses, respondent asked for greater connectivity with citizens – better communications, being more open with citizens, listening, talking with and asking citizens their views and feeding back when we've asked.

But, people are keen to get more involved if the issue matters to them

Very few respondents (just 3% across the city) said they wouldn't be willing to get more involved in local decision making, with 40% stating they'd like to be more involved and 56% saying they would depending on the issue. City, Broomhill and Hillsborough wards had the largest proportions of people who'd like to get involved.

This represents a significant opportunity for communities, public services and community organisations to collaborate on local issues and citizens having a much greater say and influence over key local issues.

Do you agree or disagree that you can influence decisions affecting your local area?

Legend: Definitely/ Somewhat Agree; Definitely/ Somewhat Disagree

Would you like to be more involved in decisions that affect your local area?

Legend: Yes; No; Depends on the issue

Local neighbourhood meetings and online networks are key channels for people who want to get more involved in local decisions and services

Physical and virtual networks are critical channels to enable more people to get more involved in local decision making
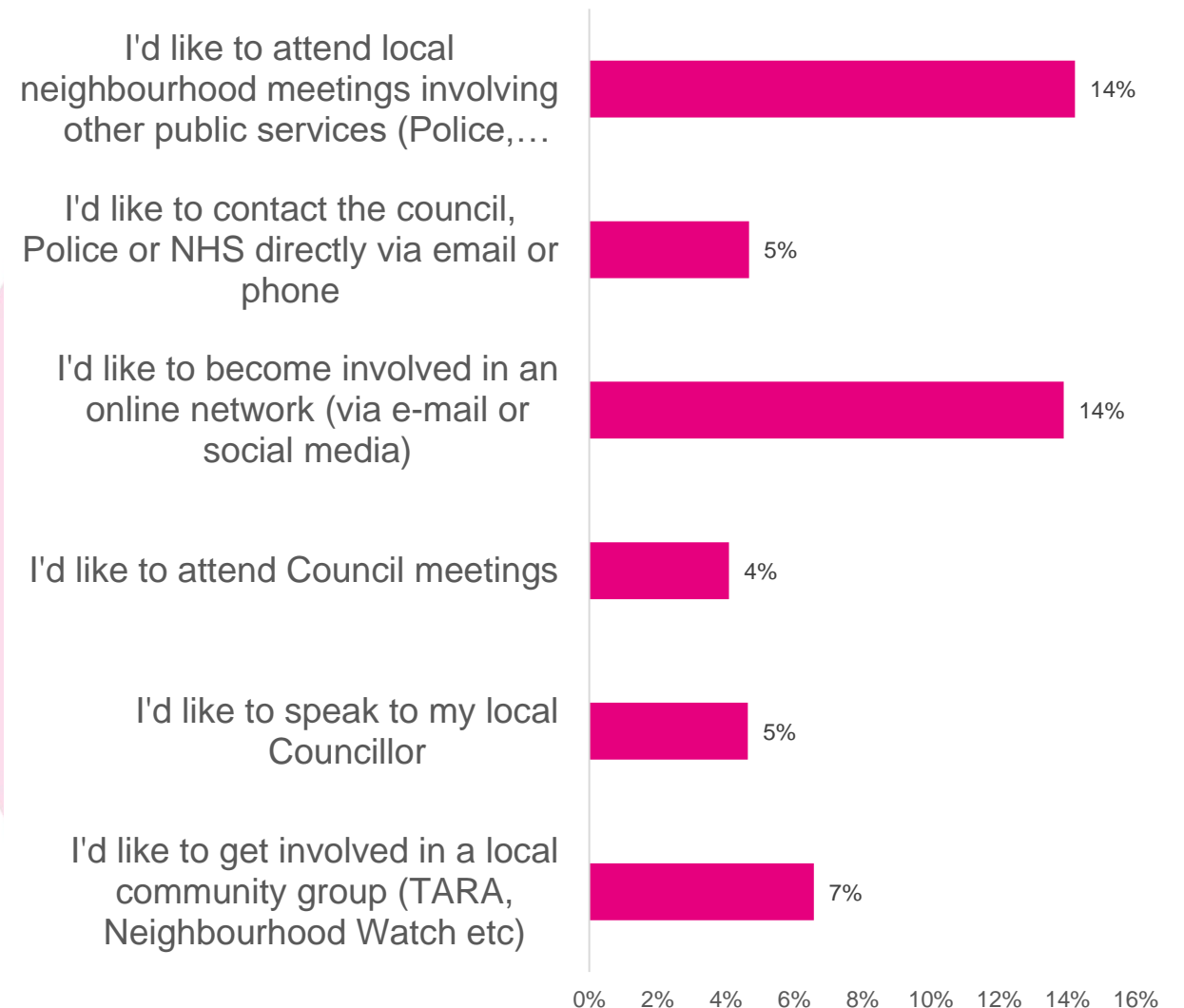
Of those that said that they'd be willing to get more involved locally, neighbourhood level meetings with public services and online networks were the most preferred routes.

Clearly, the Big City Conversation took place before the Covid-19 pandemic impacted on the UK. Over the last year, the restrictions needed to protect ourselves from Covid-19 have led to an increase in the use of virtual channels such as Zoom and MS Teams which have transformed how we connect to family and friends and how we work.

The learning and experience from the last year may have increased confidence, skills and knowledge of online channels potentially bringing new opportunities to empower communities and create more regular and convenient routes to engage and enable people in all parts of the city.

Clearly, digital exclusion remains a significant challenge and we will need to ensure that empowering communities with greater local decision making is accessible to all.

How people want to get more involved

Category	%
I'd like to attend local neighbourhood meetings involving other public services (Police,…	14%
I'd like to contact the council, Police or NHS directly via email or phone	5%
I'd like to become involved in an online network (via e-mail or social media)	14%
I'd like to attend Council meetings	4%
I'd like to speak to my local Councillor	5%
I'd like to get involved in a local community group (TARA, Neighbourhood Watch etc)	7%

0% 2% 4% 6% 8% 10% 12% 14% 16%

Of those who want to get more involved, how they want to do it (by ward)

	I'd like to get involved in a local community group (TARA, Neighbourhood Watch etc)	I'd like to speak to my local Councillor	I'd like to attend Council meetings	I'd like to become involved in an online network (via e-mail or social media)	I'd like to contact the council, Police or NHS directly via email or phone	I'd like to attend local neighbourhood meetings involving other public services (Police, NHS, GPs, transport providers etc.)
Beauchief & Greenhill	10%	4%	3%	15%	6%	16%
Beighton	5%	3%	3%	11%	7%	7%
Birley	12%	8%	2%	10%	4%	8%
Broomhill & Sharrow Vale	6%	7%	5%	15%	2%	7%
Burngreave	2%	6%	5%	14%	6%	9%
City	7%	6%	13%	15%	6%	19%
Crookes & Crosspool	7%	1%	3%	11%	6%	17%
Darnall	4%	8%	8%	4%	0%	12%
Dore & Totley	5%	1%	1%	9%	2%	12%
East Ecclesfield	15%	11%	6%	26%	8%	19%
Ecclesall	8%	4%	3%	15%	5%	16%
Firth Park	6%	3%	1%	10%	7%	16%
Fulwood	5%	4%	4%	10%	4%	13%
Gleadless Valley	8%	5%	3%	14%	5%	12%
Graves Park	10%	6%	8%	18%	4%	23%
Hillsborough	10%	6%	5%	20%	6%	18%
Manor Castle	11%	4%	4%	19%	7%	12%
Mosborough	6%	2%	5%	19%	8%	25%
Nether Edge & Sharrow	2%	2%	2%	7%	1%	9%
Park & Arbourthorne	8%	9%	12%	26%	8%	12%
Richmond	2%	9%	9%	11%	9%	17%
Shiregreen & Brightside	9%	3%	9%	20%	6%	29%
Southey	12%	5%	2%	22%	10%	17%
Stannington	5%	4%	2%	11%	5%	19%
Stocksbridge & Upper Don	4%	1%	1%	19%	4%	19%
Walkley	8%	9%	4%	16%	7%	13%
West Ecclesfield	4%	1%	6%	10%	0%	13%
Woodhouse	5%	10%	2%	7%	0%	10%
[Ward not known]	5%	4%	4%	11%	5%	13%

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