

# Cemeteries Consultation

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Research and Engagement, Corporate Services



# Introduction

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# Introduction

## Background and methodology

The Portsmouth Cemeteries Delivery Plan identifies policy priorities for the council owned cemeteries in Portsmouth and how we will take forward the management of our spaces. The delivery plan considers the forthcoming 10 years. It is part of a wider conversation nationally regarding the provision of existing burial space under current regulations. A consultation was launched to gather feedback on the proposed focus areas.

A quantitative online survey launched on Thursday 15 February 2024 and closed on Sunday 14 April 2023.

## Objectives

The main aims of the research were to:

- Understand levels of agreement with the proposed priority themes
- Understand levels of agreement with the proposed action principles

## Response rate

**In total the survey received 351 responses.** It is difficult to calculate the statistical robustness of this consultation because it is unclear how many individuals interact with Portsmouth's cemeteries. Assuming a "total population" of 170,818 (the latest 2021 census data from the Office for National Statistics for people aged 16+ in Portsmouth) this volume of responses ensures a 95% confidence level with a margin of error of 5%, within acceptable parameters, although this does exclude the visitor population.

## Who we engaged with

The majority of respondents were responding as an individual (96%). Overall, just over a fifth of respondents visit cemeteries in Portsmouth weekly or daily (21%), and the same proportion visit monthly. Kingston is the most frequently visited cemetery, followed by Milton and then Highland.

## Focus areas

Overall, the majority of respondents agree/strongly agree that the six priorities are the right ones (82%), whilst 14% neither agree nor disagree and just 3% disagree/strongly disagree. Site maintenance, accessibility and safety, and thinking beyond ‘green spaces’ to protect wildlife and the environment are the main things respondents feel are missing.

Priority	Agree	Disagree	Unsure	Top three suggested improvements
<i>‘Address capacity for existing cemetery space and identify new cemetery provision’</i>	79%	15%	6%	Create more cemetery space, investigate use of old/ vacant graves, maximise layout of existing cemeteries
<i>‘Enhance cemetery green space’</i>	79%	16%	6%	Improve maintenance, encourage wildlife and diversify foliage, generally agree with priority
<i>‘Review management of assets (buildings)’</i>	86%	13%	2%	Generally feel old buildings should be used or restored, use for historical/ educational purposes, create/restore for cemetery services
<i>‘Review memorials management’</i>	79%	21%	1%	Carry out regular inspections and maintenance, communication with plot leaseholders, enforce (stricter) regulations
<i>‘Engaging with the community - history / heritage opportunities’</i>	86%	9%	5%	Guided walks and talks, generally feel it is a good idea (preserving history), work with community
<i>‘Development of customer experience’</i>	70%	25%	5%	Issues with wording/ term ‘customer’, improve maintenance, engagement with community key

## Further comments

Further comments left by respondents generally praise the policy and consultation (9% of respondents), suggest improvements to the physical space of cemeteries, or suggest improvements to communication, engagement, and information dissemination.

## Sample demographics

The majority of respondents are over the age of 55 (70%), whilst just 4% are younger than 35. A higher proportion of respondents are female (56%), whilst 42% are male and 2% prefer to self-describe. The vast majority of respondents are White or White British (96%). Most respondents do not have a disability or a long-term illness, physical or mental health condition (78%), whilst 22% do. The most common disability type is physical/ mobility (69%).

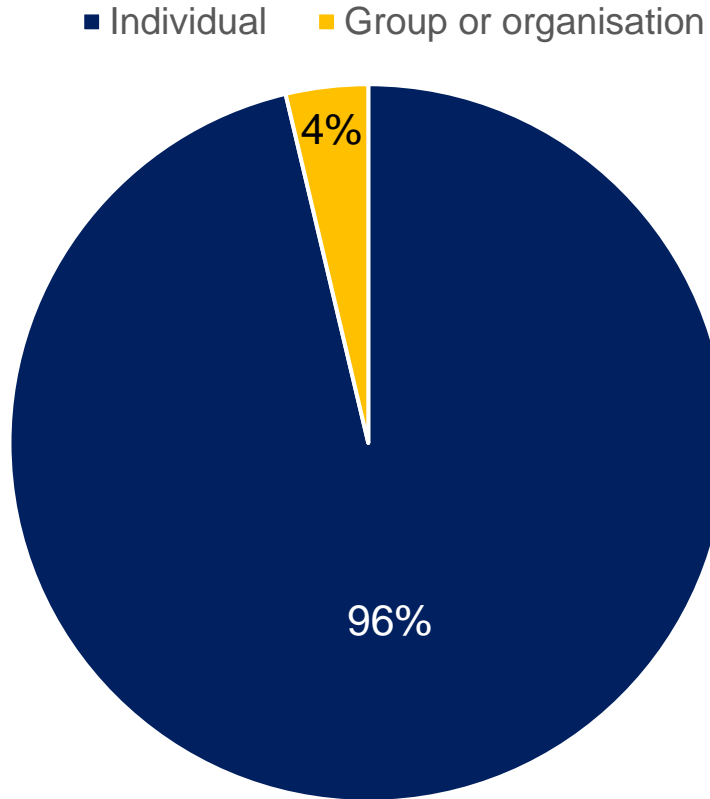


# Who we engaged with

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# Respondent type

Q: 'Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of a group or organisation?' | Base: Total sample (351)



Q: 'Please tell us your name and the group or organisation you are representing.' | Base: Those responding on behalf of a group or organisation (13\*)

\*Caution small base

## Religious organisations

- Cornerstone Church
- Cosham Baptist Church
- North End Baptist Church
- Portsmouth Central Mosque
- United Reformed Church

## Charities

- Pompey Pals
- The Salvation Army

## Cemetery organisations

- Commonwealth War Graves Commission
- Friends of Highland Road Cemetery
- The Federation of Burial and Cremation Authorities

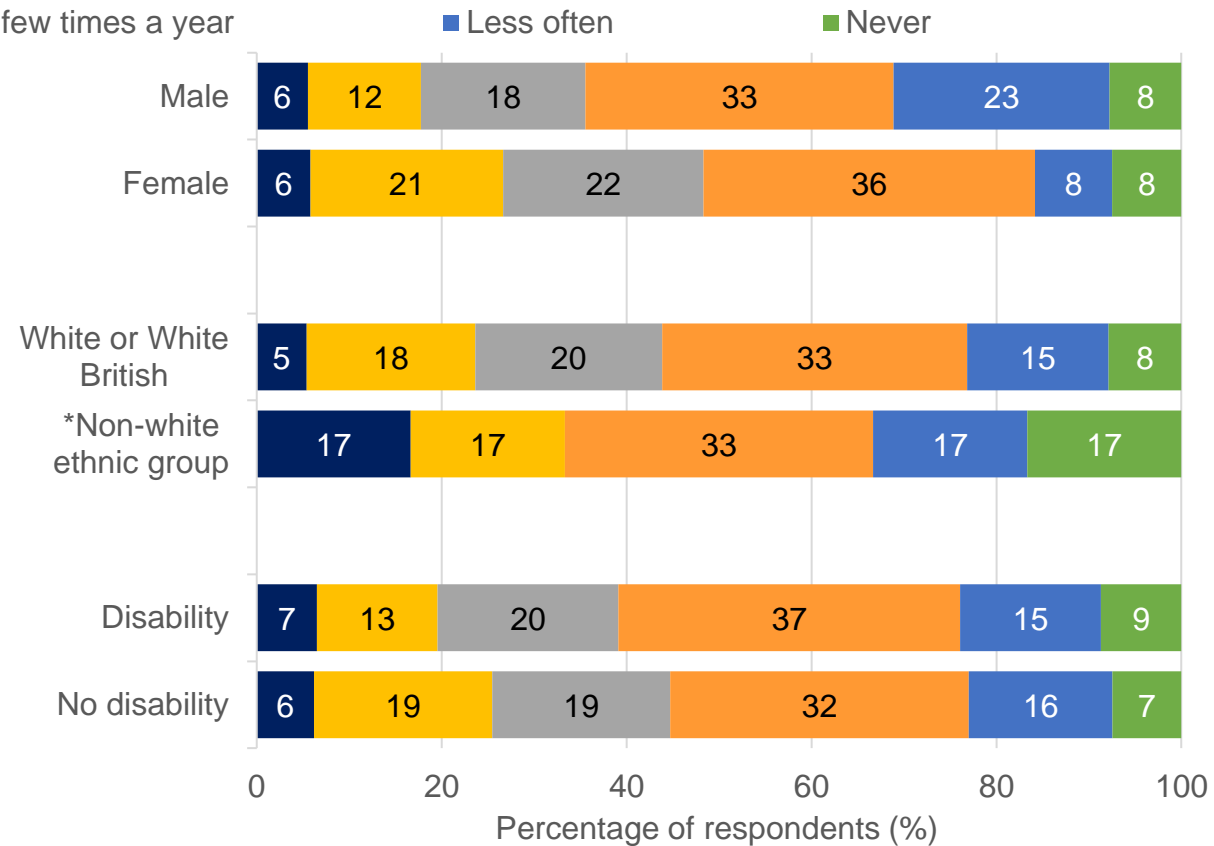
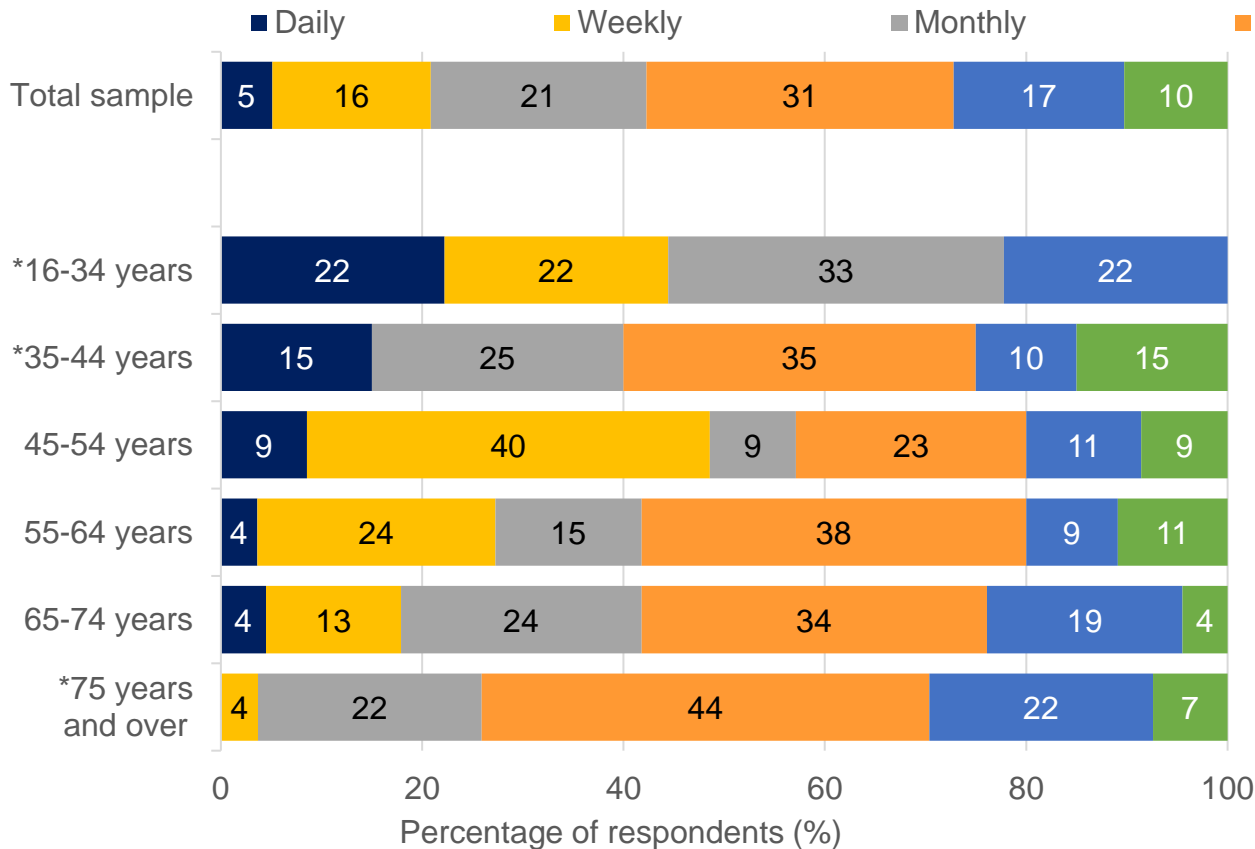
## Local authorities

- Portsmouth City Council (Transport)
- Gosport Borough Council

- The majority of respondents were responding as an individual (96%), whilst 4% were responding on behalf of a group or organisation
- Groups and organisations reflected in the responses to this survey include religious organisations, cemetery related organisations, charities, and local authorities

# Frequency of visiting cemeteries

Q: **'How often do you visit or plan to visit any of the city's three cemeteries (Kingston, Highland or Milton)?'** | Base, individuals: left chart, from top to bottom – Total sample: 331 | Age: 9\*, 20\*, 35, 55, 67, 27\* | right chart, from top to bottom – Sex: 90, 120 | Ethnicity: 203, 6\* | Disability: 46, 161 | \*Caution small base

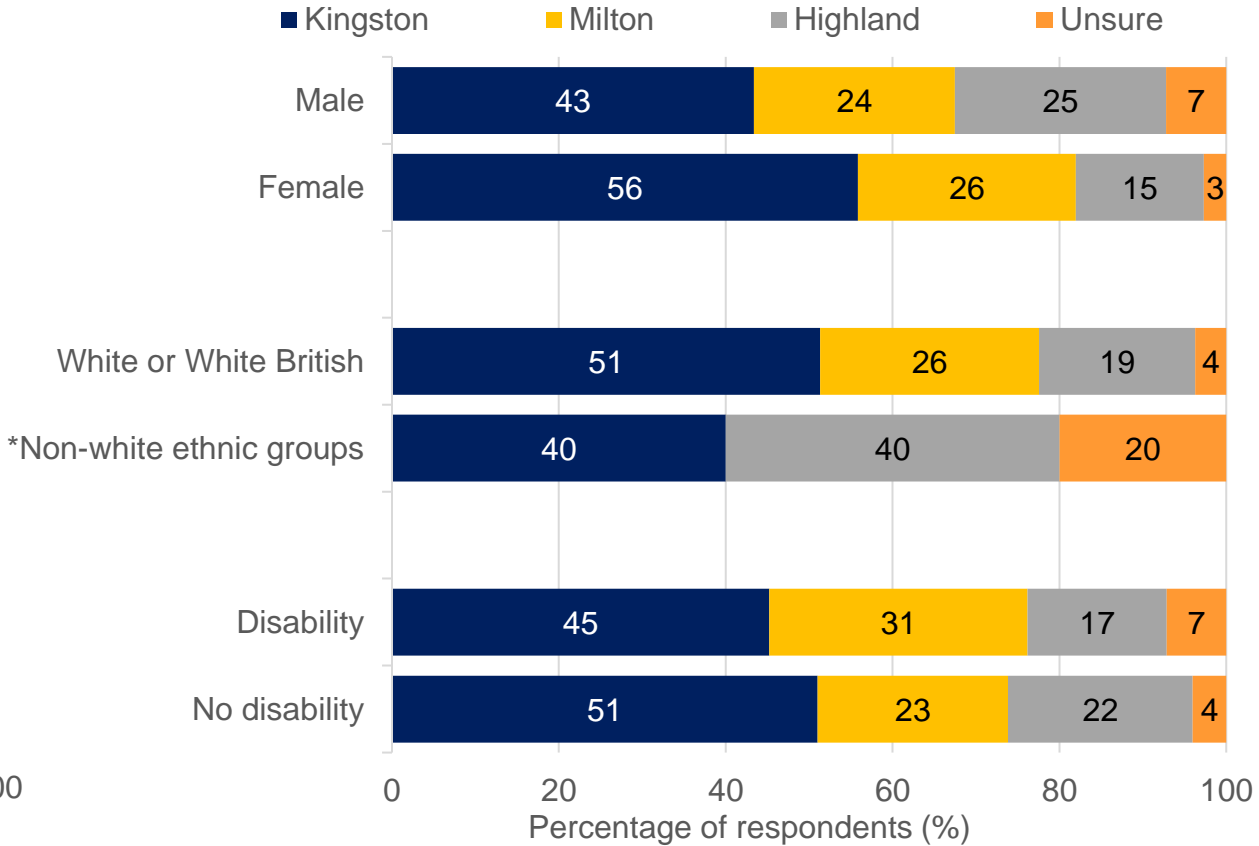
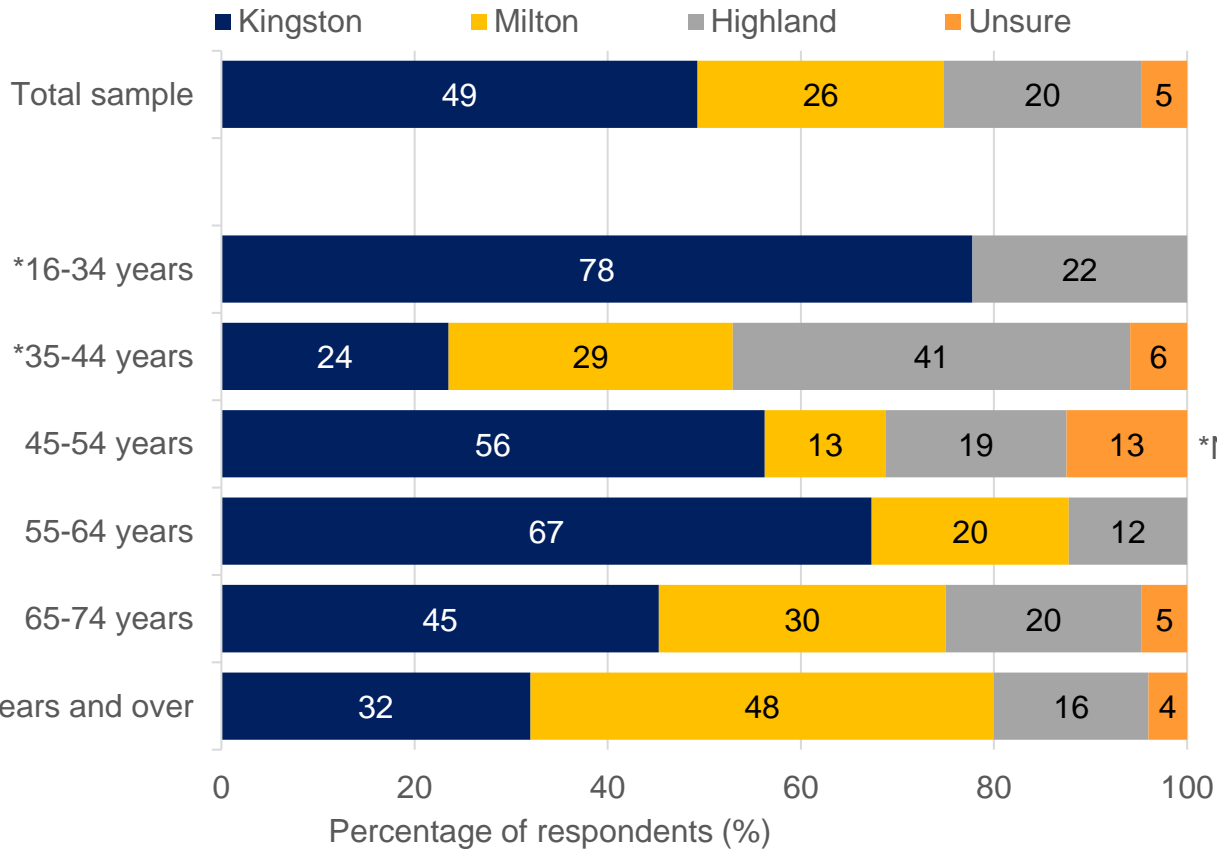


- Overall, just over a fifth of respondents visit cemeteries in Portsmouth weekly or daily (21%), and the same proportion visit monthly. 10% never visit
- Those aged 16-34 appear to visit cemeteries most frequently (77% visit at least monthly), however, there is a small base size for this age group
- Slightly higher proportions of those aged 45-54, females, those from White ethnic groups, and those with no disability visit at least monthly (43%-58%)



# Most frequently visited

Q: **'Which of the city cemeteries do you visit most?'** | Base, individuals who ever visit cemeteries: left chart, from top to bottom – Total sample: 294 | Age: 9\*, 17\*, 32, 49, 64, 25\* | right chart, from top to bottom – Sex: 83, 111 | Ethnicity: 187, 5\* | Disability: 42, 149 | \*Caution small base



- Kingston is the most frequently visited cemetery (49% visit this one most often), followed by Milton (26%) and then Highland (20%)
- Highland cemetery appears to be visited more frequently by those aged 35-44 and those from non-white ethnic groups (40-41%), whilst slightly higher proportions of those aged over 65 and with a disability visit Milton cemetery (30-48%)



# Focus areas

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# Focus areas: priorities

## The draft Portsmouth cemeteries delivery plan outlines six priorities:

Address capacity for existing cemetery space and identify new cemetery provision

Enhance cemetery green space

Review management of assets (buildings) - reviewing how we can best use and regenerate disused cemetery buildings

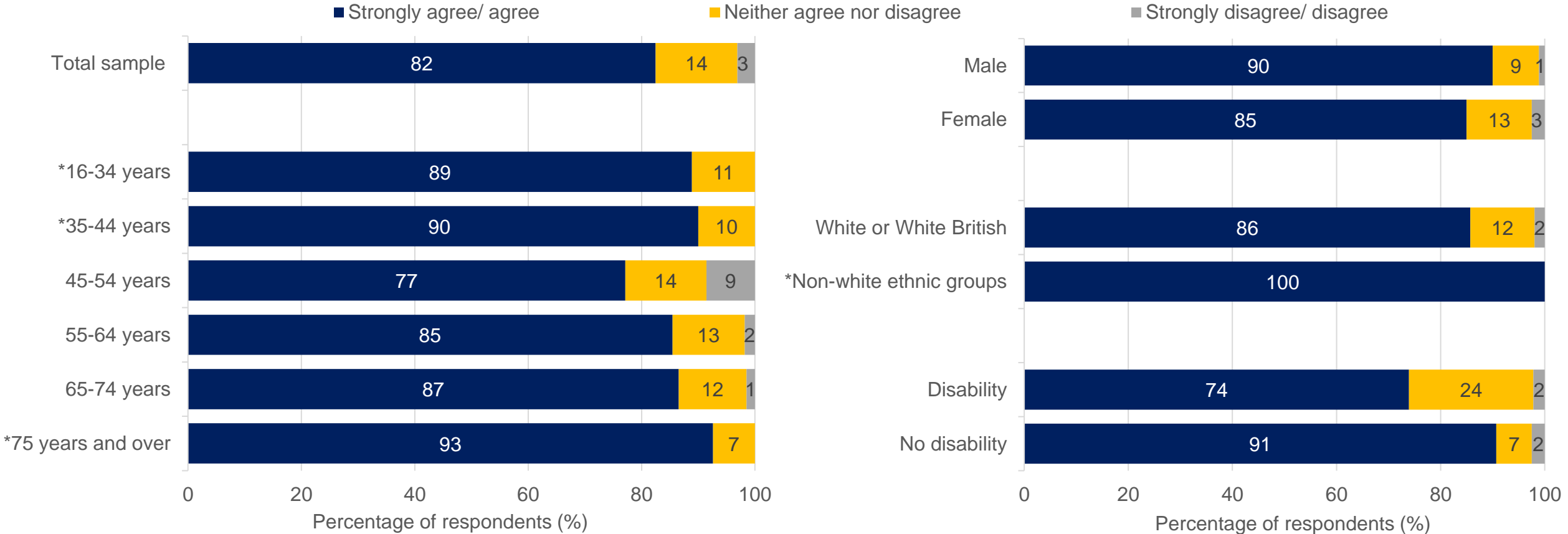
Review memorials management - making sure the memorials are reviewed and inspected as required

Community engagement (history / heritage opportunities) - offering history and heritage focussed guides / walks

Develop customer experience - making sure the experience is customer-focussed

# Priorities

Q: **‘Overall, how much do you agree or disagree that these six priorities are the right priorities?’** | Base: left chart, from top to bottom – Total sample: 291 | Age: 9\*, 20\*, 35, 55, 67, 27\* | right chart, from top to bottom – Sex: 90, 120 | Ethnicity: 203, 6\* | Disability: 46, 161 | \*Caution small base



- Overall, the majority of respondents agree/strongly agree that the six priorities are the right ones (82%), whilst 14% neither agree nor disagree and just 3% disagree/strongly disagree
- Agreement is highest (at least 90%) among those aged 35-44 and 75 and over, as well as male respondents, those from non-white ethnic groups, and those without a disability

# Missing from the priorities

Q: *'Do you think anything is missing from the priorities?'* | Base: Total sample (291)

Key themes	%
<b>Site maintenance</b> e.g. general upkeep, graves and headstones, pest control (e.g. foxes), paths and perimeters, trees/ grass/ greenery	5
<b>Accessibility and safety</b> e.g. for wheelchair users, paths, visible community wardens for safety, lighting, entrances and travel connections	5
<b>Beyond 'green spaces' – wildlife and environment protection</b> e.g. encouraging wildflower and woodland growth (e.g. natural burial site), prioritising environment in general	5
<b>Respect and tackling anti-social behaviour</b> e.g. vandalism and damage	3
<b>Facilities</b> e.g. toilets, bins, taps/ water access	3
<b>Better information and engagement</b> e.g. online, information centres on-site, in other organisations (e.g. libraries)	2
<b>Regulations about dog walking</b> – some would like more restrictions, others would like more provisions (e.g. off-lead areas)	2
<b>Building maintenance or repurposing</b> e.g. renovation and maintenance of listed buildings	1
<b>Repurposing cemetery space</b> e.g. for activities, recreation	1
<b>Other</b>	3
<b>No comment or No – it's all covered</b>	76

*“Planned path maintenance and more frequent grass cutting to enhance the appearance of the area!”*

*“Pathways for disabled people in wheelchairs.”*

*“Encourage the natural environment and preserve the trees within the cemeteries.”*

*“Addressing vandalism and damage, proactively and reactively.”*

- Measures to enhance the experience of using cemeteries is the most common theme respondents feel is missing from the priorities, such as improving site maintenance, prioritising accessibility and safety, tackling disrespect and anti-social behaviour, and the provision of facilities
- Respondents would also like to see the environment and wildlife protection featured more heavily in the priorities
- Other comments also focus on how cemeteries can encourage engagement and maximise use from the public, such as improving information (online or on-site) and maintaining or repurposing buildings or other cemetery space

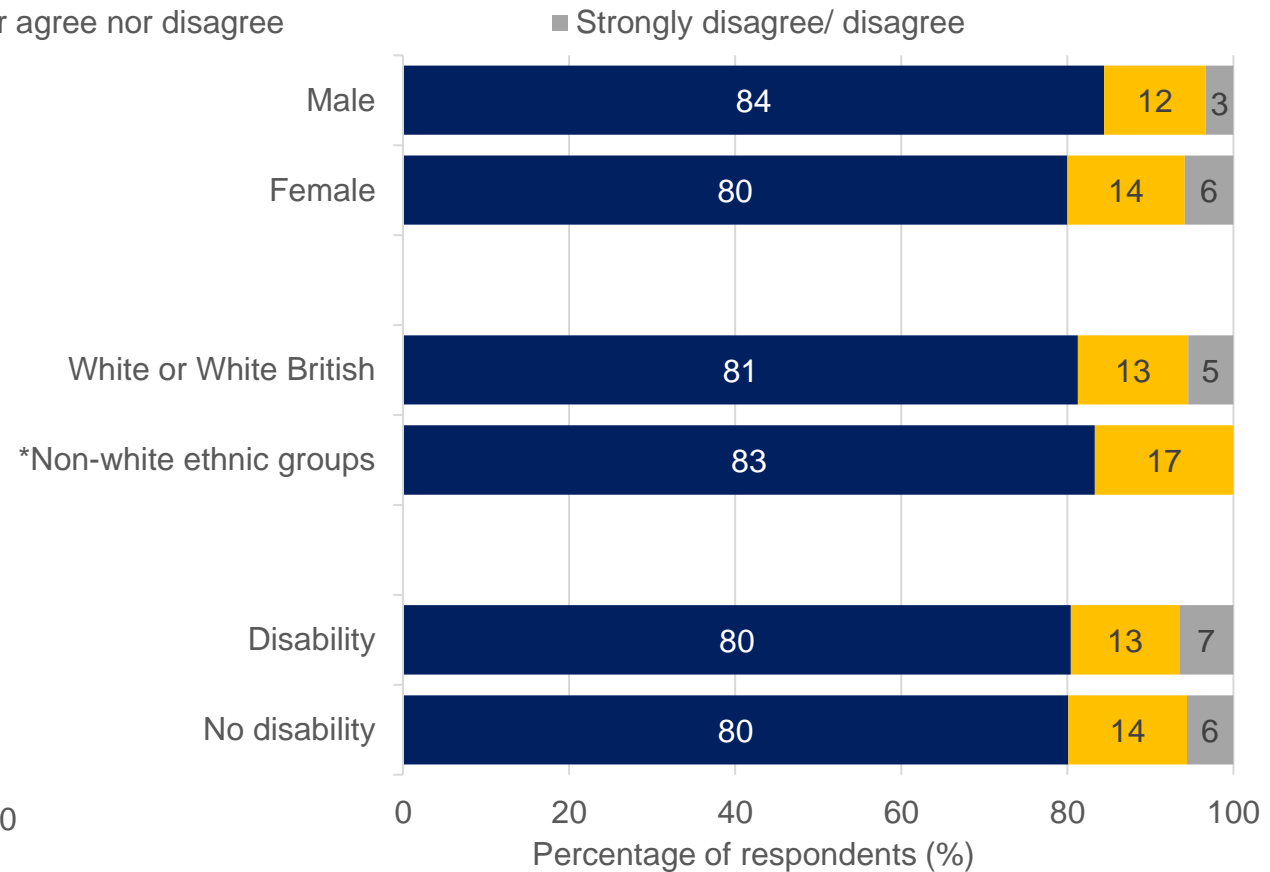
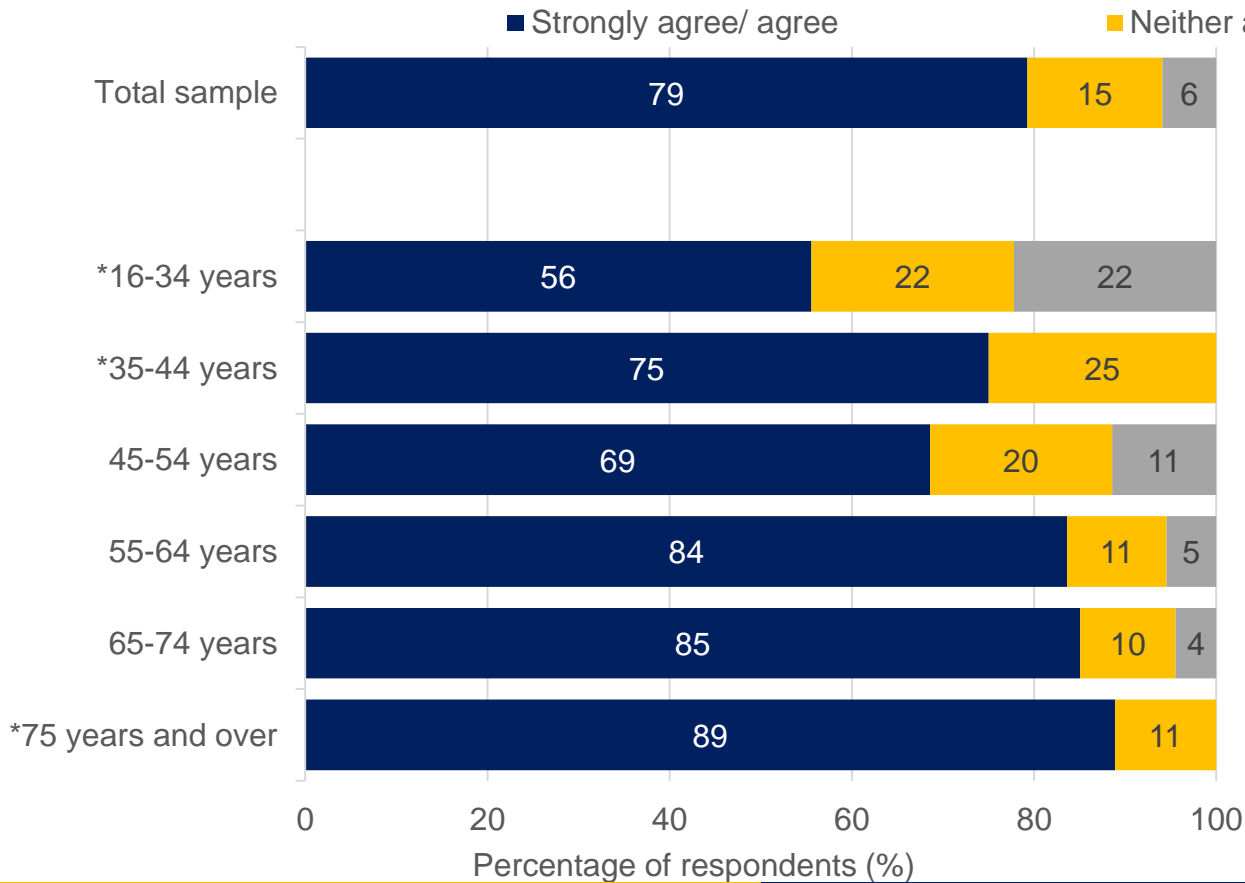


Address capacity for existing cemetery space and  
identify new cemetery provision

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# Levels of agreement with the first priority

Q: **'How much do you agree or disagree with the first priority 'Address capacity for existing cemetery space and identify new cemetery provision'?'** | Base: left chart, top to bottom – Total sample: 270 | Age: 9\*, 20\*, 35, 55, 67, 27\* | right chart, top to bottom – Sex: 90, 120 | Ethnicity: 203, 6\* | Disability: 46, 161 | \*Caution small base



- The majority of respondents agree/strongly agree with the first priority (79%), whilst 15% neither agree nor disagree, and 6% disagree/strongly disagree
- Agreement is highest among respondents aged 55 and over (84%-89%), whilst those aged 16-54 express higher levels of disagreement or neither agreement or disagreement
- Agreement is consistently high across different sexes, ethnic groups, and those with or without a disability

# Disagreement with the first priority

Q: **'Why do you disagree with this priority?'** | Base: Those who disagree with the first priority (16\*) \*Caution small base

## **'Address capacity for existing cemetery space and identify new cemetery provision'**

Key themes	%
<b>(Green) space is restricted in Portsmouth/ not enough space</b>	25
<b>Space should be prioritised for the living/ other needs</b>	25
<b>Should be encouraging other (more sustainable) methods of disposal</b> e.g. cremation or donating bodies	19
<b>Disagree with disturbing graves</b>	19
<b>Other</b>	6
<b>N/A / No relevant comment</b>	25

*"Green space is too limited on the island to be used for burial - other things need to be looked at."*

*"Because we should be moving towards more sustainable solutions. We should be encouraging cremations, donating bodies to science and using available space for housing or recreation."*

*"Don't agree with deepening the graves."*

- Those who disagree are most concerned about the prioritisation of space for cemeteries in Portsmouth, either commenting that green space is already at a premium in the city or feeling that space should be used for other purposes
- Whilst some respondents disagree as they feel the future should look toward alternative (more sustainable) methods of disposal, others would not like to see existing graves disturbed



# Improvements to the first priority

Q: *'What, if anything, could the council do to improve things in this area?'* | Base: Total sample (270)

## *'Address capacity for existing cemetery space and identify new cemetery provision'*

Key themes	%
<b>Create more cemetery space</b> e.g. using space outside the city, using brownfield and repurposing old sites	7
<b>Investigate use of old/ derelict graves or vacant/ unused plots</b>	6
<b>Maximise layout of existing cemeteries</b> e.g. filling gaps or using current paths	4
<b>Offer more alternatives to standard burials</b> e.g. ash plots, vaults, upright burials, family plots	4
<b>Encourage alternative (more sustainable or space saving) methods of disposal</b> e.g. cremation, natural burials	3
<b>Improve general maintenance and preservation of existing cemeteries</b>	3
<b>Maintain headstones/ memorials to respect existing graves</b>	3
<b>Agree with/ support the suggestions made</b>	2
<b>Acknowledgement that space is scarce in the city</b>	1
<b>Other</b>	3
<b>N/A / No relevant comment</b>	68

*"Purchase some land on the outskirts of the city; or perhaps consider re-using some of the older graves which are no longer visited or considered to be 'in use'."*

*"Making full use of closing the gaps between Graves for instance a small walk through may be a better option, rather than a muddy path. The mud paths are always avoided winter time, and people walk across the grass anyway."*

*"Have separate area for cremated remains and allow smaller flat stones for these - this will result in the best use of available space."*

- Whilst some respondents feel that new cemetery space should be created, others feel that current cemetery space should be explored first, either investigating the use of old or vacant plots, or by maximising the existing cemetery layout
- Another common theme addresses the need for traditional burial plots, with respondents feeling that space saving alternatives should be encouraged and provided for, such as cremation and woodland burials, or providing options like family vaults or upright burials
- Maintenance of both existing cemeteries and memorials within them is also important to respondents

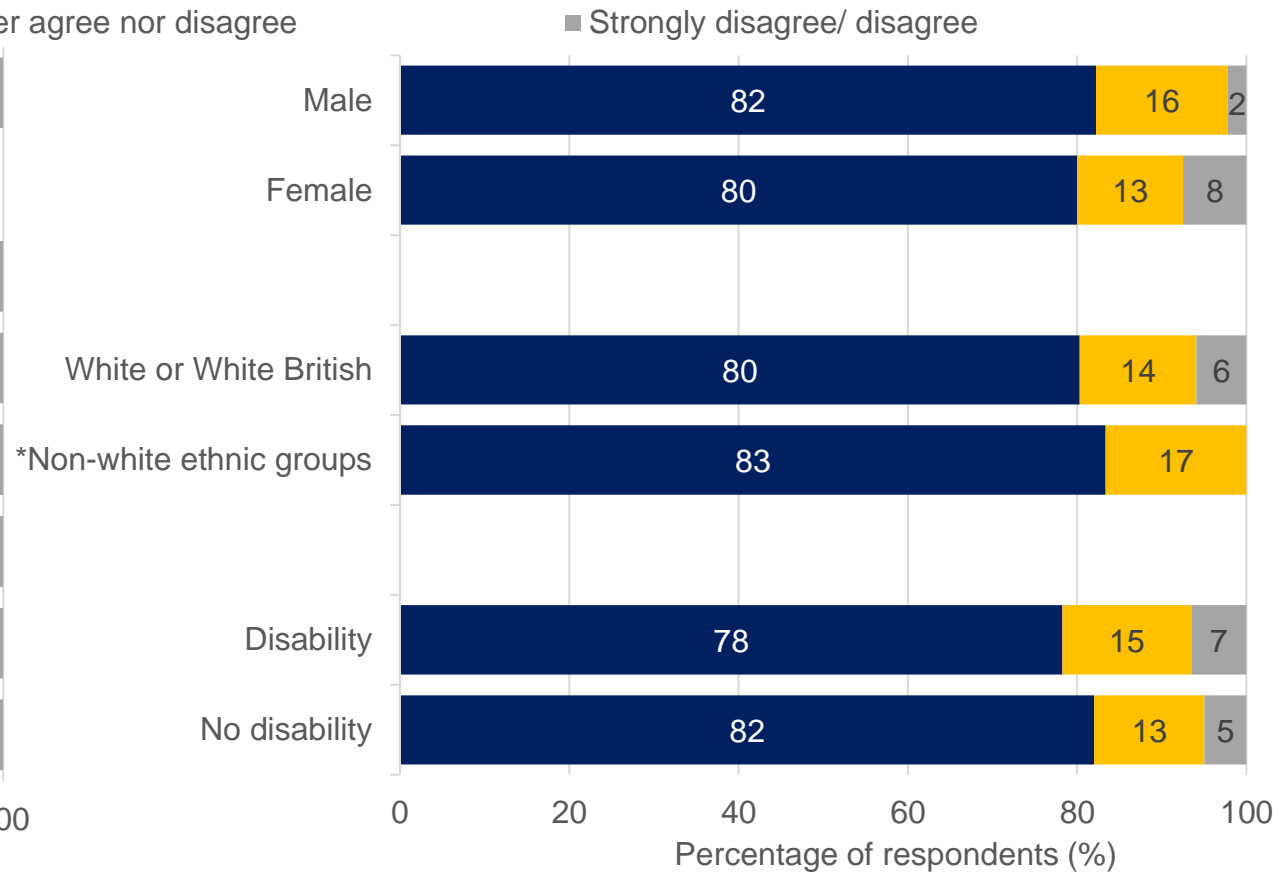
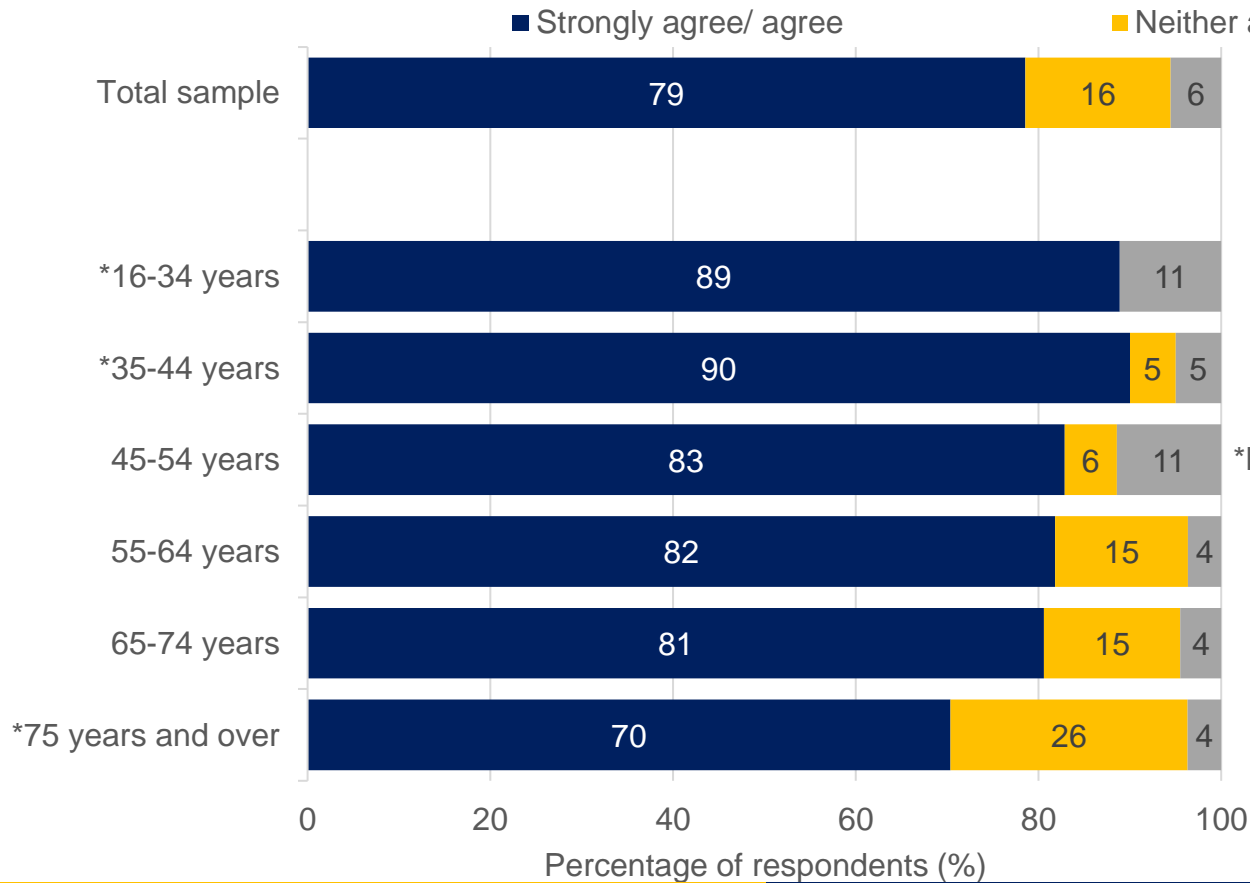


# Enhance cemetery green space

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# Levels of agreement with the second priority

Q: **'How much do you agree or disagree with the second priority 'Enhance cemetery green space'?** | Base: left chart, top to bottom – Total sample: 252 | Age: 9\*, 20\*, 35, 55, 67, 27\* | right chart, top to bottom – Sex: 90, 120 | Ethnicity: 203, 6\* | Disability: 46, 161 | \*Caution small base



- Most respondents agree/strongly agree with the second priority (79%), whilst 16% neither agree nor disagree and 6% disagree/strongly disagree
- Support for this priority appears to correlate with age, with younger age groups expressing slightly higher levels of support than older age groups
- Agreement is fairly consistent between different sexes, ethnic groups, and those with or without a disability

# Disagreement with the second priority

Q: **'Why do you disagree with this priority?'** | Base: Those who disagree with the second priority (14\*) \*Caution small base

## 'Enhance cemetery green space'

Key themes	%
Space is limited and should be prioritised for burials	36
Existing green space in cemeteries is fine as it is	14
Cemeteries are a place of respect and reflection – this should be the focus	14
Other e.g. should build another cemetery, pathways are needed too	21
N/A / No comment	14

*"Will this be at the expense of space for burials?"*

*"It's a cemetery. The current green space is adequate."*

*"Cemeteries are to pay respects for the departed. Headstones taking up green space is a given."*

- Those who disagree with this priority are most concerned about space, either feeling that space is limited in cemeteries and should be used for burials (36%), or feeling that the existing provision of green space is fine as it is (14%)
- Others comments that cemeteries should be primarily considered as a place of respect and reflection, not as green space provision (14%)

# Improvements to the second priority

Q: *'What, if anything, could the council do to improve things in this area?'* | Base: Total sample (252)

## *'Enhance cemetery green space'*

Key themes	%
<b>Improve maintenance (of greenery, paths, and graves)</b> e.g. employ more gardeners/ groundskeepers, encourage volunteers	14
<b>Encourage wildlife and diversify foliage</b> e.g. trees, wildflowers, encourage bees	11
<b>Generally agree with the priority/ happy with what the council already does in this area</b>	6
<b>Provide areas and benches for quiet reflection</b>	6
<b>Rewild areas</b>	5
<b>Improve education and engagement</b> e.g. information boards on flora and fauna, work with schools, volunteer groups	5
<b>Better enable travel and exercise through these green spaces</b> e.g. by maintaining paths	4
<b>Portsmouth is limited for green space this should be a priority</b>	2
<b>Integrate greenery with burials</b> e.g. natural woodland burials	2
<b>Regulate how space is used</b> e.g. reduce size of headstones and mementos, create specific areas for dogs	2
<b>Other</b>	5
<b>N/A / No comment</b>	54

*"Keep cemetery neat and tidy. Use of volunteers, community groups and community payback scheme."*

*"Wildlife friendly evergreen hedging along fenced borders where possible. Less rigorous mowing in summer in the open, drier areas to allow wild flowers to bloom."*

*"I think the green space provided by the cemeteries is welcome in a crowded city like Portsmouth."*

*"A thought garden where people can sit and think of the loved one."*

- Some respondents feel that the council can improve on the second priority by implementing measures to encourage the public to use these spaces, such as improving cemetery maintenance, providing places to sit and enjoy the space/ reflect, improving education and information, and promoting travel and exercise in these areas
- Others encourage the prioritisation of nature, suggesting the council encourage wildlife and diversify foliage, implement rewilding in some areas, and integrating greenery with burial processes

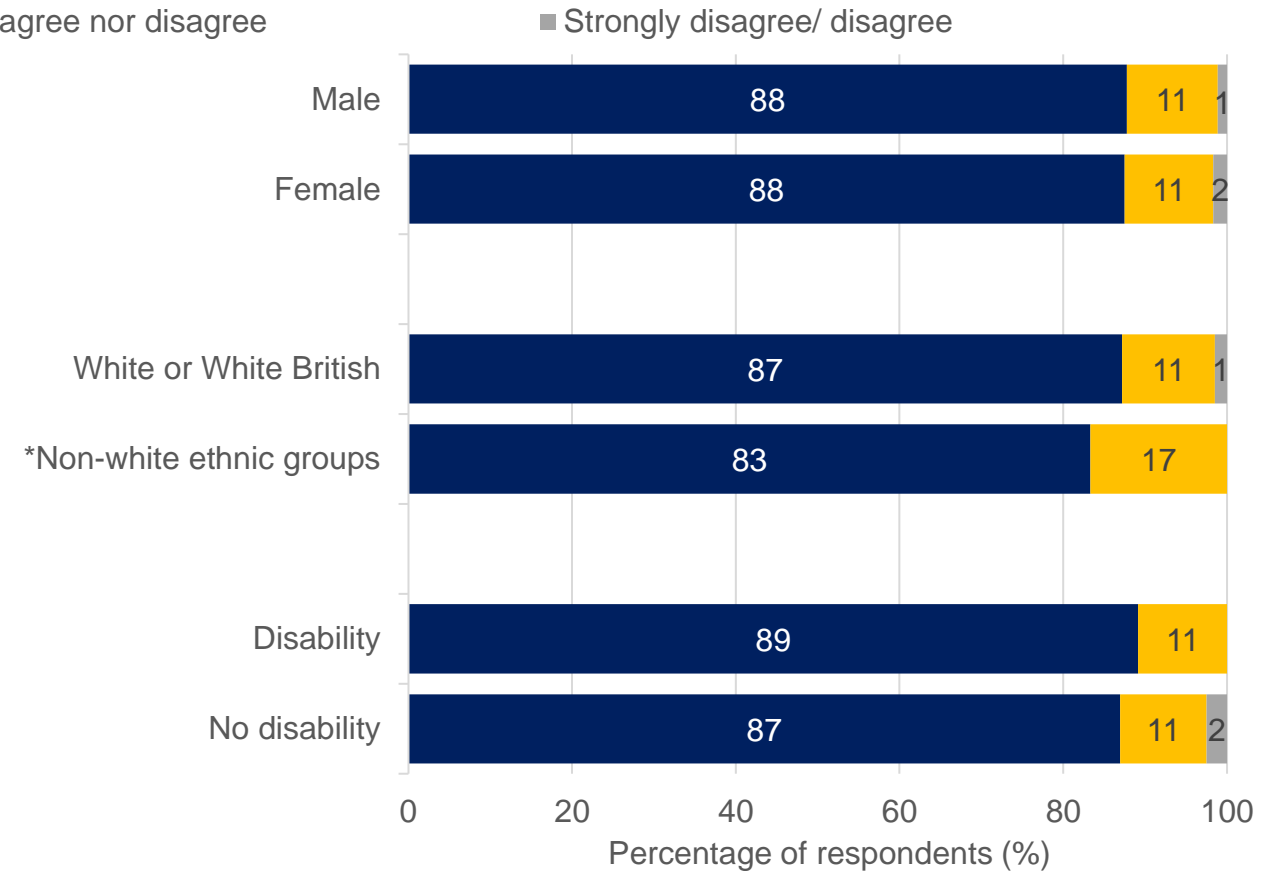
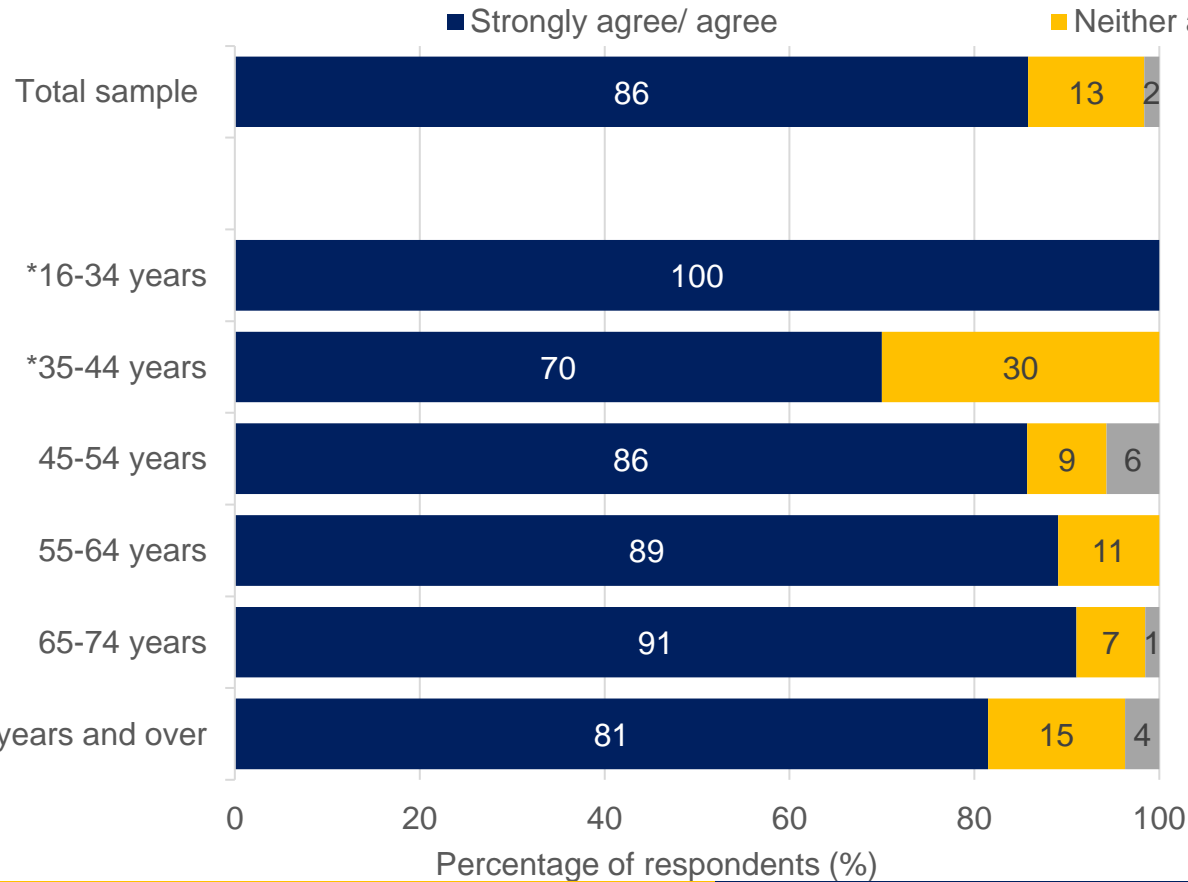


# Review management of assets (buildings)

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# Levels of agreement with the third priority

Q: **'How much do you agree or disagree with the third priority 'Review management of assets (buildings)''? This is about reviewing how we can best use and regenerate disused cemetery buildings.'** | Base: left chart, top to bottom – Total sample: 247 | Age: 9\*, 20\*, 35, 55, 67, 27\* | right chart, top to bottom – Sex: 90, 120 | Ethnicity: 203, 6\* | Disability: 46, 161 | \*Caution small base



- The majority of respondents agree/strongly agree with the third priority (86%), whilst 13% neither agree nor disagree, and 2% disagree/strongly disagree. Agreement is consistently high among varying demographics (81%-100%), although slightly lower for those aged 35-44 (70%)
- Those who disagree with the third priority feel that the buildings belong to the cemetery and should be used as such, or feel that this is not an important focus

# Improvements to the third priority

Q: *'What, if anything, could the council do to improve things in this area?'* | Base: Total sample (247)

## *'Review management of assets (buildings)'*

Key themes	%
<b>Generally feel that old buildings should be used or restored</b>	11
<b>Should be used for historical/ educational purposes</b> e.g. museum, cemetery/ burial information	9
<b>Create/ restore places for cemetery related services</b> e.g. places of reflection, funerals, religious buildings	9
<b>Use for facilities</b> e.g. toilets, café, cemetery purchases like flowers	9
<b>Improve building maintenance and preservation</b>	8
<b>Use buildings to generate income</b> e.g. let to businesses	6
<b>Repurpose buildings for residential use, either for a groundskeeper or open to public</b>	5
<b>Offer buildings for public/ social use</b>	4
<b>Remove the buildings to maximise burial space</b>	4
<b>Other</b>	6
<b>N/A / No relevant comment</b>	49

*"It is a shame to see these beautiful buildings fall into disrepair; to bring them up to an acceptable standard and use them for learning and discovery purposes about the history of the cemeteries and the people buried in them would be very worthwhile and interesting."*

*"Bring the chapels back into use or consider alternative, relevant uses. Eg space for quiet contemplation and reflection."*

*"Tea room and shop selling flowers and items related to burials along with information on the history of the said cemetery."*

- Largely, respondents offer suggestions for various uses of existing buildings in cemeteries, including for historical or educational purposes, spaces related to the cemetery experience (e.g. for reflection, funerals), facilities like toilets or a café, income generating lets, residential use, or as public/ social spaces
- Others generally express that the buildings should be used or restored, or would like to see maintenance and preservation improved, although some feel that the buildings should be removed to free up cemetery space



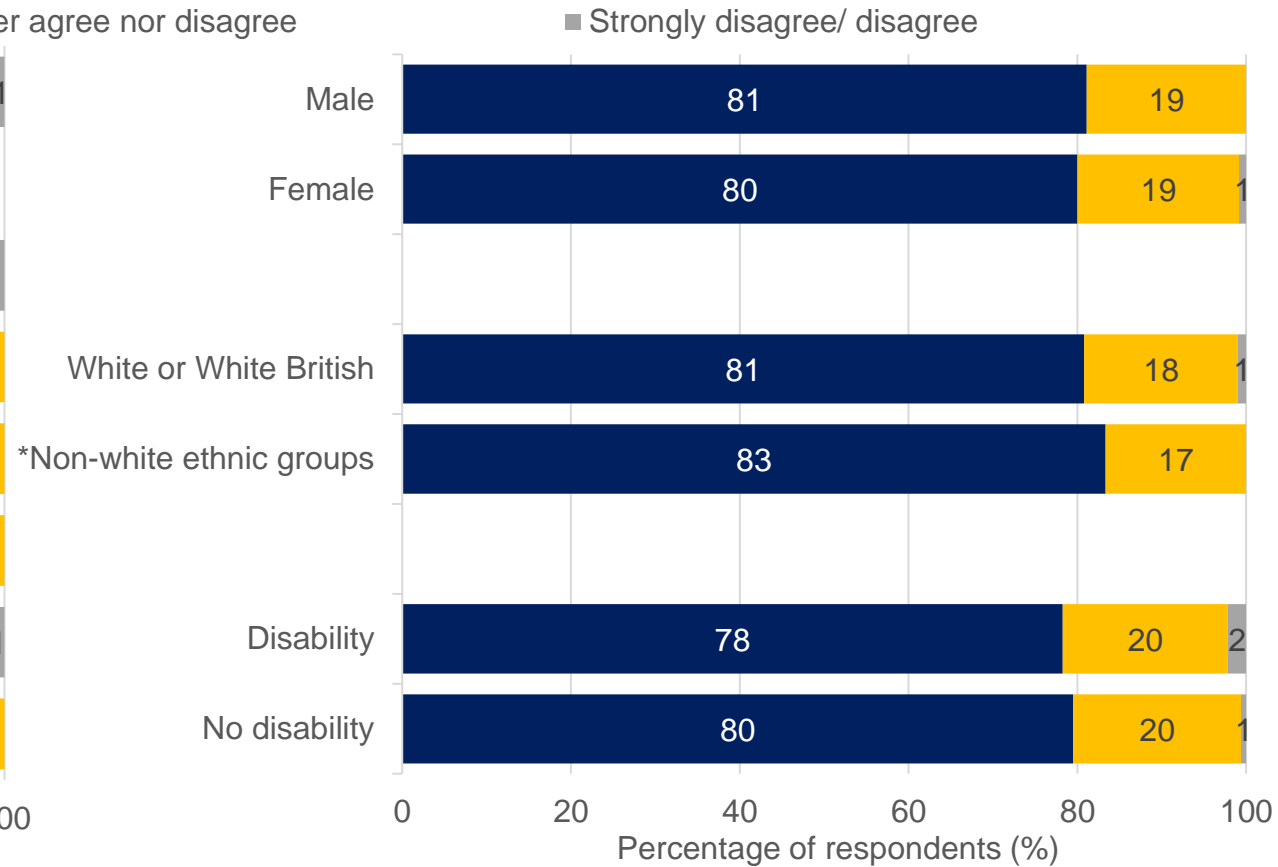
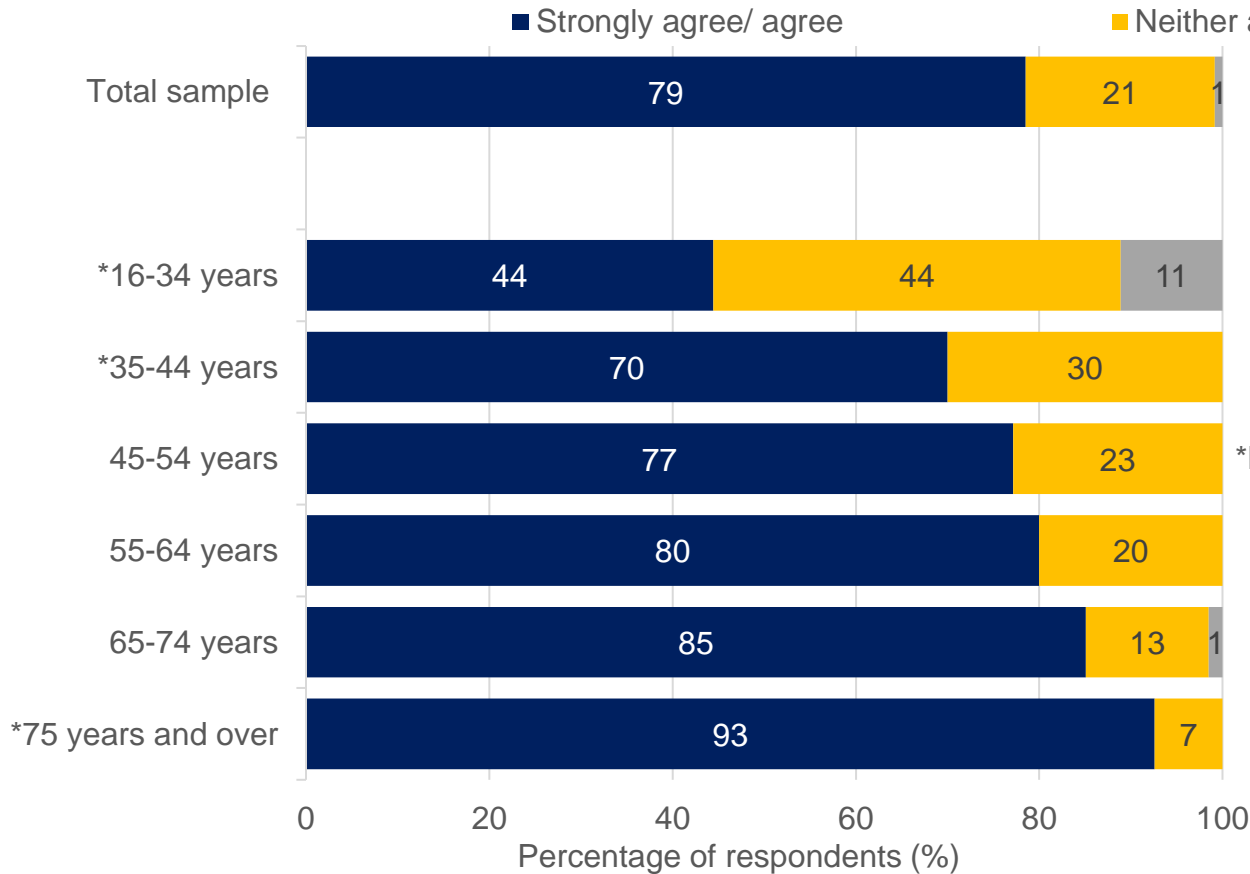


# Review memorials management

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# Levels of agreement with the fourth priority

Q: **'How much do you agree or disagree with the fourth priority 'Review memorials management'? This is about making sure the memorials are reviewed and inspected as required.'** | Base: left chart, top to bottom – Total sample: 242 | Age: 9\*, 20\*, 35, 55, 67, 27\* | right chart, top to bottom – Sex: 90, 120 | Ethnicity: 203, 6\* | Disability: 46, 161 | \*Caution small base



- The majority of respondents agree/strongly agree with the fourth priority, whilst 21% neither agree nor disagree and just 1% disagree
- Agreement appears to correlate with age group, with 93% of those aged 75 and over agreeing compared to 44% of those aged 16-34 agreeing, although there is a small base size for this group
- Those who disagree are concerned about graves being disrespected due to the removal of headstones, or as they feel care for graves should fall to those who visit the plot (e.g. family)

# Improvements to the fourth priority

Q: *'What, if anything, could the council do to improve things in this area?'* | Base: Total sample (242)

## *'Review memorials management'*

Key themes	%
<b>Should carry out regular inspections and maintenance, acting on inspections</b>	18
<b>Ensure good communication with plot leaseholders</b> e.g. clarifying responsibility, approach sensitively, work with them to maintain	6
<b>Enforce (stricter) regulations</b> e.g. time for plot leaseholder to respond when issue raised, how long items can be left at graves, more eco-friendly regulations	5
<b>Preserve/ prioritise cultural memorials</b> e.g. graves from the war	5
<b>Work with the public/ charities/ volunteers</b>	3
<b>Review memorials to decide if they should be kept or removed and maximise space in cemetery</b>	3
<b>Should not just remove graves/ should be sensitive about memorials</b> e.g. create list of memorials if removing headstones	3
<b>Safety should be a priority</b>	3
<b>Other</b>	5
<b>N/A / No relevant comment</b>	62

*"Occasional inspections and reviews are necessary to ensure disrepair or dangerously positioned memorials (leaning over / about to fall / damaged in storms etc) are worked on if needed."*

*"Make sure that plot lessees [sic] are informed of any work necessary and told of the result if this work isn't completed within a reasonable time."*

*"Graves of a cultural interest should be preserved for local residents, tourism, etc."*

- Some respondents feel that the council should implement a higher level of involvement in this priority area, suggesting that they carry out and act on the findings of regular inspections, enforce (stricter) regulations, and reviewing memorials more efficiently
- Others suggest areas of engagement for improvement, such as communication with plot leaseholders and working with the public/ charities/ volunteers
- A sensitive and considered approach is also suggested here, ensuring that the council preserves and prioritises important cultural memorials or refrains from simply removing memorials

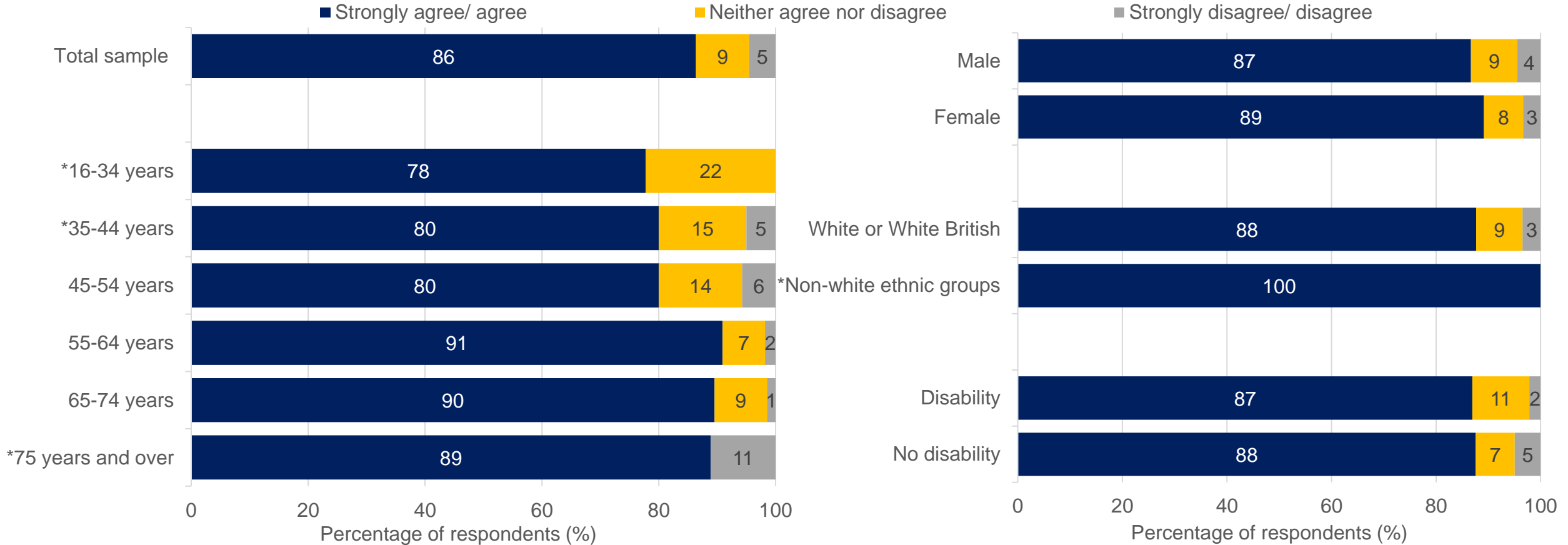


# Engaging with the community - history / heritage opportunities

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# Levels of agreement with the fifth priority

Q: **'How much do you agree or disagree with the fifth priority 'Engaging with the community - history / heritage opportunities'? This is about offering history and heritage focussed guides / walks.'** | Base: left chart, top to bottom – Total sample: 242 | Age: 9\*, 20\*, 35, 55, 67, 27\* | right chart, top to bottom – Sex: 90, 120 | Ethnicity: 203, 6\* | Disability: 46, 161 | \*Caution small base



- The majority of respondents agree/ strongly agree with the fifth priority (86%), whilst 9% neither agree nor disagree and 5% disagree/strongly disagree
- Those aged 16-54 express slightly lower levels of agreement (78-80%) compared to those aged 55 and over (89-91%)
- Agreement is consistent between different sexes and those with or without a disability, although those from non-white ethnic groups express higher levels of agreement than those from White ethnic groups

# Disagreement with the fifth priority

Q: **'Why do you disagree with this priority?'** | Base: Those who disagree with the fifth priority (11\*) \*Caution small base

## **'Engaging with the community - history / heritage opportunities'**

Key themes	%
<b>Cemeteries should be a place for respecting the dead, not for this purpose</b>	27
<b>Not a good use of council resources/ concerned about costs</b>	27
<b>Not a necessity/ priority</b>	18
<b>Not the role of the council</b>	9
<b>Not sure there would be enough interest for this</b>	9
<b>N/A / No comment</b>	9

*"People go to cemeteries to visit there [sic] loved one in peace and quiet. Not sure having groups of people walking by while they are grieving."*

*"Waste of council resources."*

*"Not necessary and a diversion from the other priorities [sic] which are core to this initiative."*

- Those who disagree comment that this should not be a priority, feeling that cemeteries should be focused on respecting the deceased, or generally feeling that this is not a necessity
- Others do not feel the council should provide this, expressing that this is not the role of the council or feeling concerned about the use of council resources to support this

# Improvements to the fifth priority

Q: *'What, if anything, could the council do to improve things in this area?'* | Base: Total sample (242)

## *'Engaging with the community - history / heritage opportunities'*

Key themes	%
<b>Would like guided walks and talks</b> e.g. focus on history like the wars, famous graves, make regular	13
<b>Generally feel that this a good idea – history is important and should be preserved</b>	12
<b>Work with community to achieve</b> e.g. volunteers, history related organisations, libraries, schools	11
<b>Make information easily accessible</b> e.g. information boards, online/social media, leaflets	8
<b>Advertise these walks and heritage events</b>	5
<b>Utilise buildings in cemeteries (related to priority three)</b>	4
<b>Maintain cemeteries and their integrity in relation to this</b> e.g. keep old monuments, generally improve upkeep	2
<b>Could be useful to boost revenue/ fundraising opportunities</b>	2
<b>Other</b>	5
<b>N/A / No comment</b>	50

*"I think it would be a great idea to do historical walks round the various cemeteries as it would encourage interest in local history. It would be a good way of raising a small amount of money for their upkeep in the long run."*

*"Absolutely! This is a great opportunity to enable people to reconnect with the city's history and their community story."*

*"Engage with local volunteers. There must be people with historical knowledge whose expertise could be utilised at nominal cost."*

- Besides generally feeling that this is a good idea to promote and preserve history, respondents appreciate and support the opportunities for engagement and education, such as guided walks and talks and ensuring information is easily accessible to all, suggesting collaboration with the community to achieve this (e.g. volunteers, historical organisations)
- Respondents also note that the physical space of cemeteries needs to be considered in relation to this priority, ensuring they are properly maintained along with their integrity (as spaces of respect/ memorial) and utilising cemetery buildings to improve engagement



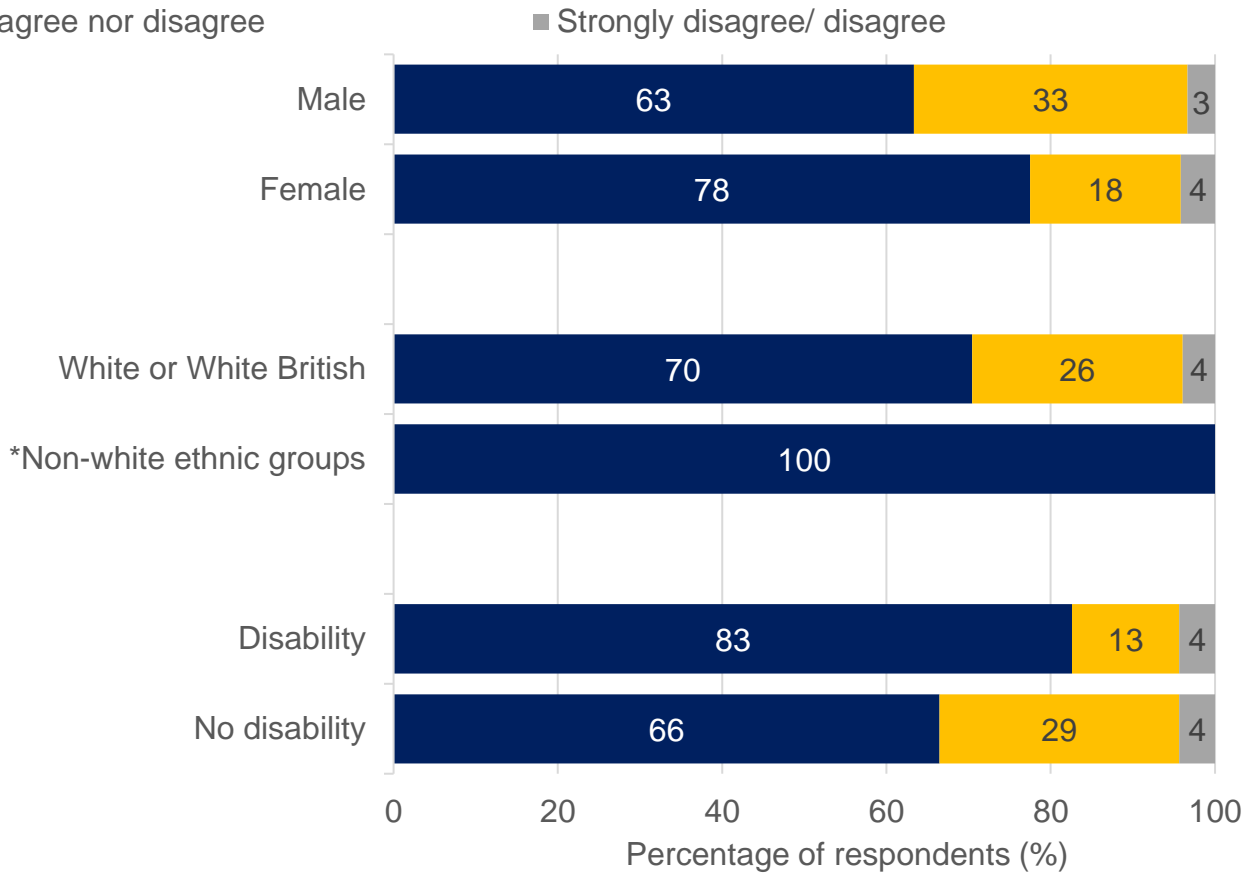
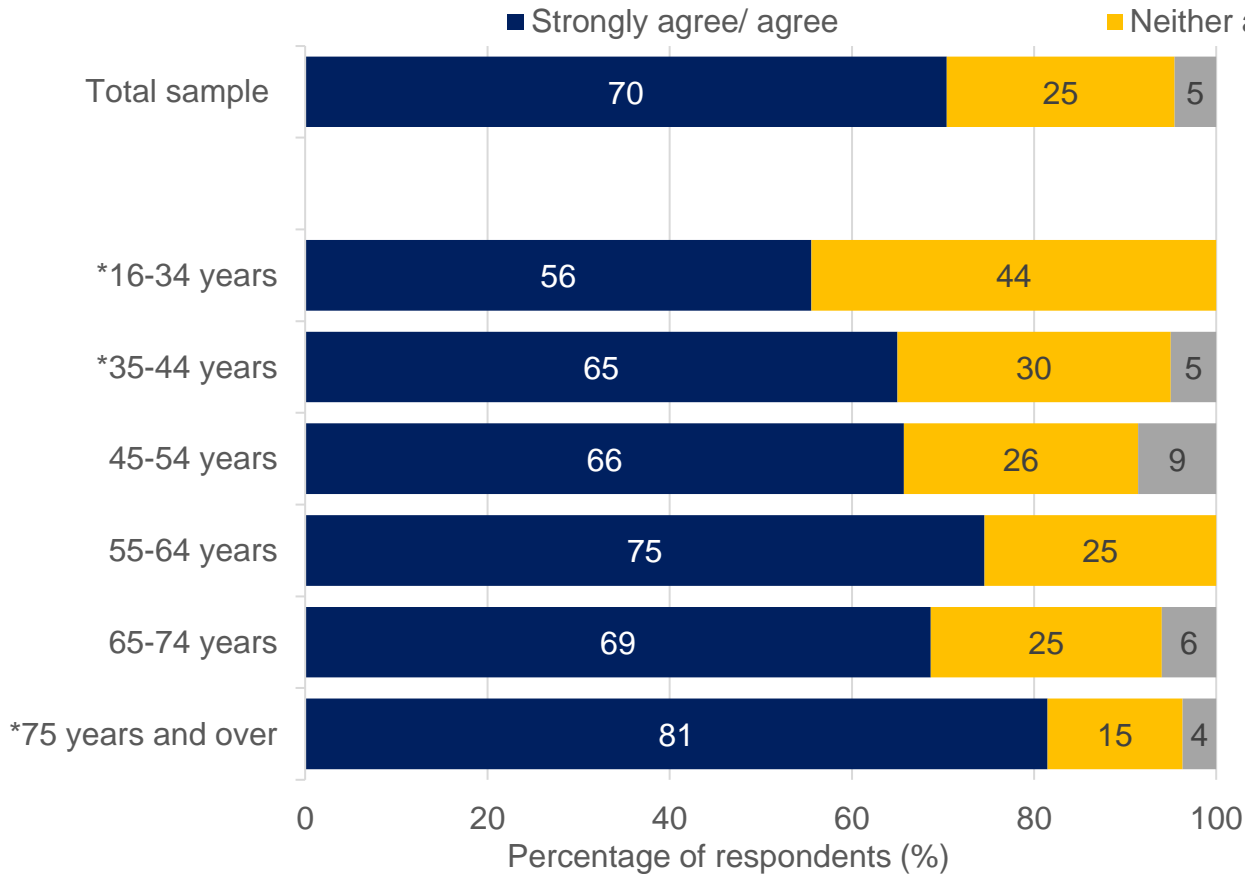
# Development of customer experience

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# Levels of agreement with the sixth priority

Q: **'How much do you agree or disagree with the sixth priority 'Development of customer experience'? This is about making sure the experience is customer-focussed.'** | Base: left chart, top to bottom – Total sample: 240 | Age: 9\*, 20\*, 35, 55, 67, 27\* | right chart, top to bottom – Sex: 90, 120 | Ethnicity: 203, 6\* | Disability: 46, 161 | \*Caution small base



- Most respondents agree/strongly agree with the sixth priority (70%), whilst a quarter neither agree nor disagree and 5% disagree/strongly disagree
- Agreement seems to generally increase with age, and is higher among female respondents, those from non-white ethnic groups, and those with a disability

# Disagreement with the sixth priority

Q: **'Why do you disagree with this priority?'** | Base: Those who disagree with the sixth priority (11\*) \*Caution small base

## 'Development of customer experience'

Key themes	%
Not sure about the wording	36
Do not think customer experience is a necessary priority	27
Not sure if there is really a 'customer' in a cemetery	18
Other	27
<i>N/A / No comment</i>	9

*"Customer focus in this circumstance would inevitably be ill defined. Cemeteries are often personal places, and do not have a universal expectation."*

*"A cemetery is not a shop. People go there to visit their loved ones. What customer focus would they need. Just peace and quiet."*

- Whilst some of those who disagree find issues in the wording of this priority or the use of the term 'customer' in relation to a cemetery, others feel that the experience of customers is not really a priority, particularly in comparison to the other priorities highlighted in this policy

# Improvements to the sixth priority

Q: *'What, if anything, could the council do to improve things in this area?'* | Base: Total sample (240)

## 'Development of customer experience'

Key themes	%
<b>Issues with wording/ the term 'customer' – can mean so many different groups of people</b> e.g. the deceased, mourners, walkers	8
<b>Improve maintenance</b> e.g. to graves, paths, greenery	7
<b>Engagement with community is key</b> e.g. through consultation and communication, school engagement	5
<b>Provision of facilities/ comfort to improve experience</b> e.g. toilets, benches, bins	5
<b>Accessibility</b> e.g. even pathways, encourage visitors	5
<b>Ensure information is available</b> e.g. online, information boards	5
<b>Not sure what this priority means</b>	3
<b>Safety</b> e.g. lighting, discouraging anti-social behaviour, wardens or CCTV	3
<b>Utilise buildings on cemetery sites</b>	3
<b>Agreement with the approach</b>	2
<b>Need to be respectful</b>	2
<b>Other</b>	4
<b>N/A / No comment</b>	3

*“The experience of visiting a cemetery differs depending on whether you are a mourner, someone looking for somewhere quiet to sit and reflect, someone who enjoys looking at the old gravestones and inscriptions so the 'customer experience' will be very different for all of these individuals.”*

*“I think getting the basics right. Maintain everything, make the space accessible and attractive, find alternative uses for the buildings, advertise the opening hours.”*

*“To encourage the community to get involved local schools groups etc.”*

- Some respondents query the phrasing used in this priority, particularly the use of the term 'customer' as this can have various meanings with various requirements; some are also not sure what this priority means
- For suggested implementations, some respondents focus on improving the physical space/ appeal of cemeteries, such as improving maintenance, the provision of facilities or comfort features, accessibility, and safety, whilst others focus on social elements of customer experience, such as engaging with the community, providing easily accessible information, and ensuring the approach is respectful of cemeteries



# Further comments

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# Further comments

Q: *'Do you have any further comments to make about the draft Portsmouth cemeteries delivery plan?'* | Base: Total sample (240)

Key themes	%
<b>General praise for the policy and consultation</b>	9
<b>Improve maintenance and preservation</b> e.g. of headstones, greenery	5
<b>Cemeteries are an important part of communities and should maintain free access</b>	4
<b>Nature and woodland should be protected and promoted in these spaces</b>	3
<b>Better information availability/ signage</b> e.g. online information, map of cemetery	3
<b>Communication and consultation with the public/ stakeholders should continue</b>	3
<b>Utilise and maintain buildings in cemeteries</b>	2
<b>Maintain cemeteries as a place of respect/ do not disturb the deceased</b>	2
<b>Maximise income opportunities</b> e.g. fundraising/ donation boxes, shops or cafes on sites	1
<b>Provide facilities to improve experience of cemeteries</b> e.g. bins, café, lighting	1
<b>Praise for maintenance of Kingston Cemetery</b>	1
<b>Other</b>	3
<b>N/A / No comment</b>	71

*"I think it is a comprehensive and well balanced plan and takes into account the sensitivity of the subject."*

*"Protect our cemeteries please and the wildlife, plants trees, flora and fauna within them."*

*"Portsmouth's cemeteries need to be green, calm spaces where people can pay their respects to loved ones. These spaces are used also used for other purposes, walking, jogging, dog walking. We regularly take our children to not only visit past relatives but to walk in the green space, something that portsmouth is lacking."*

- Most frequently, respondents leave comments expressing general praise for the policy and its consultation. Many respondents also feel that cemeteries are important community spaces and free access should be prioritised throughout the policy implementation
- Some respondents suggest improvements to the physical space of cemeteries, such as maintenance and preservation, promoting nature and woodland, making better use of existing buildings in cemeteries, and providing facilities like bins, café and lighting
- Communication, engagement, and information dissemination is also a common area respondents suggest improvement or prioritisation

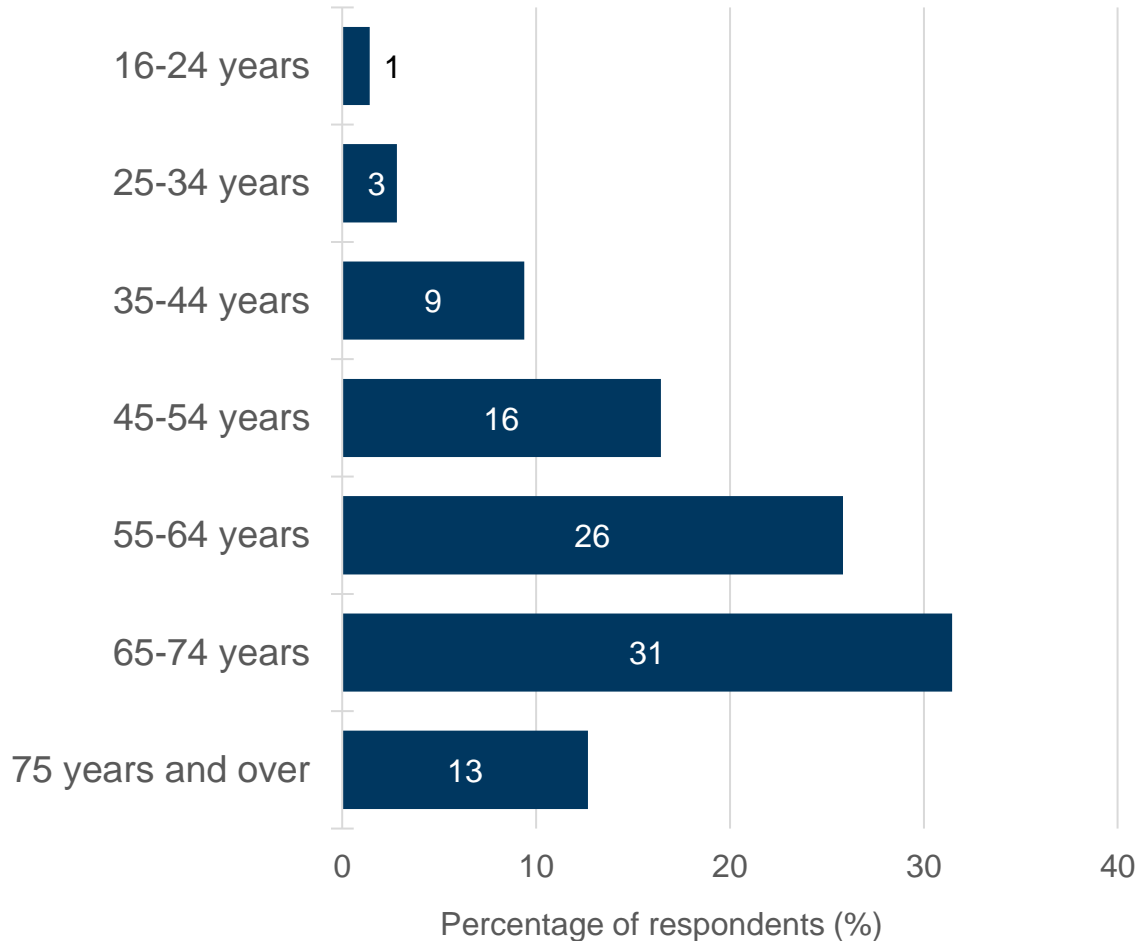


# Sample demographics

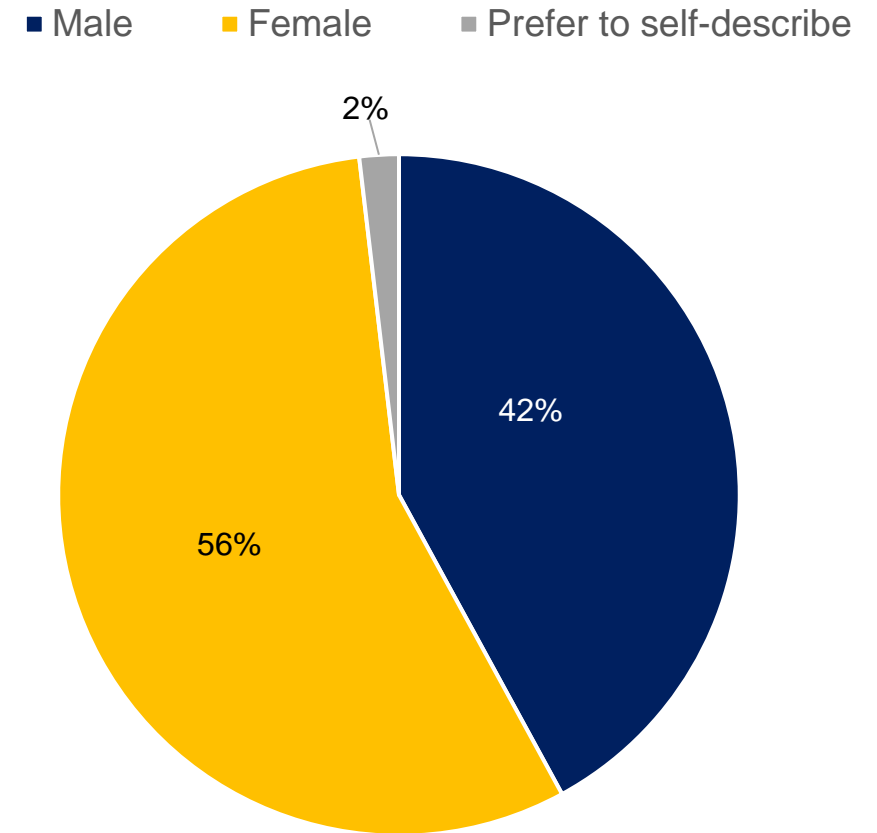
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# Age and sex

Q: **'What is your age group?'** | Base: Total sample (213)



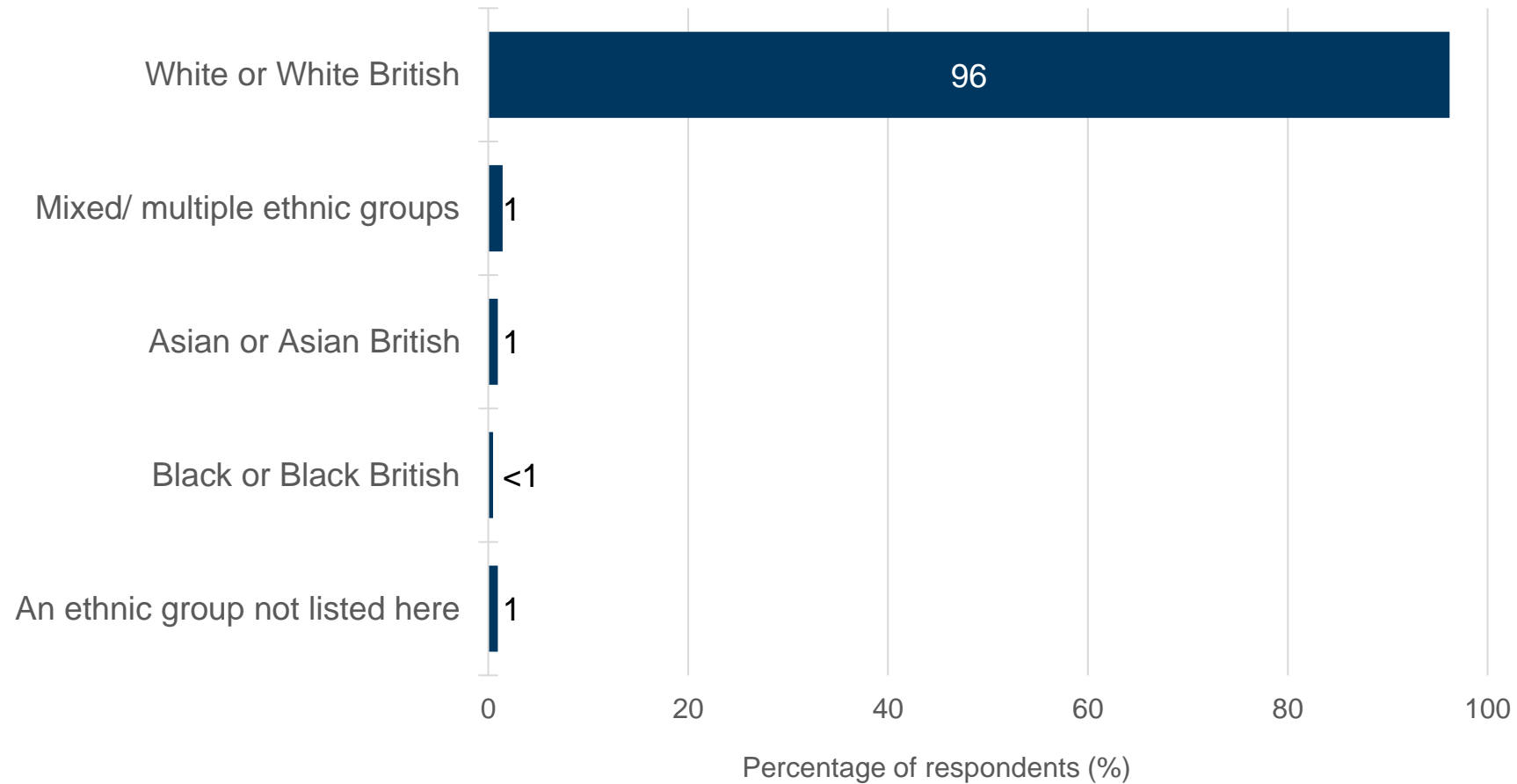
Q: **'What is your sex?'** | Base: Total sample (214)



- The majority of respondents are over the age of 55 (70%), whilst just 4% are younger than 35
- A higher proportion of respondents are female (56%), whilst 42% are male and 2% prefer to self-describe

# Ethnicity

Q: *'Which of the following ethnic groups do you belong to?'* | Base: Total sample (210)

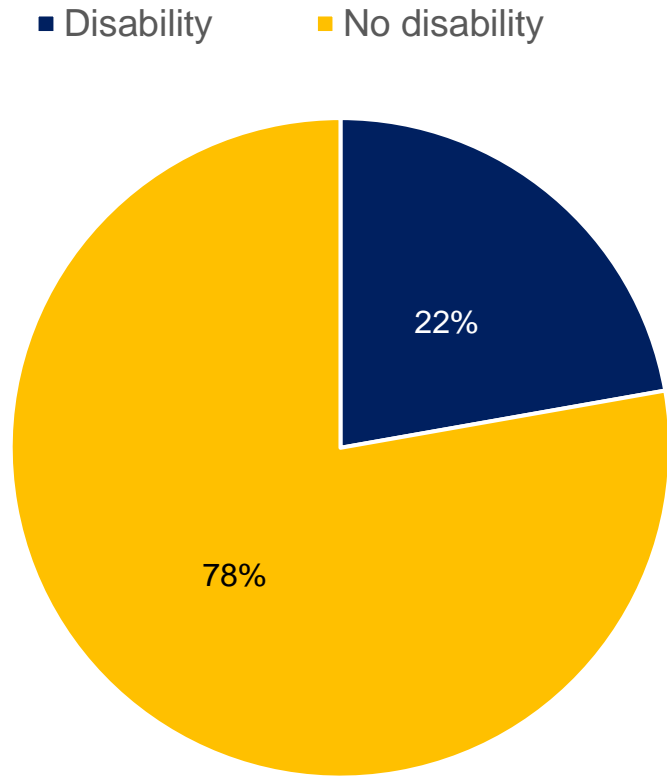


- The vast majority of respondents are White or White British (96%), whilst 1% each are from mixed/multiple ethnic groups, Asian or Asian British ethnic groups, or an ethnic group not listed. Less than 1% are Black or Black British

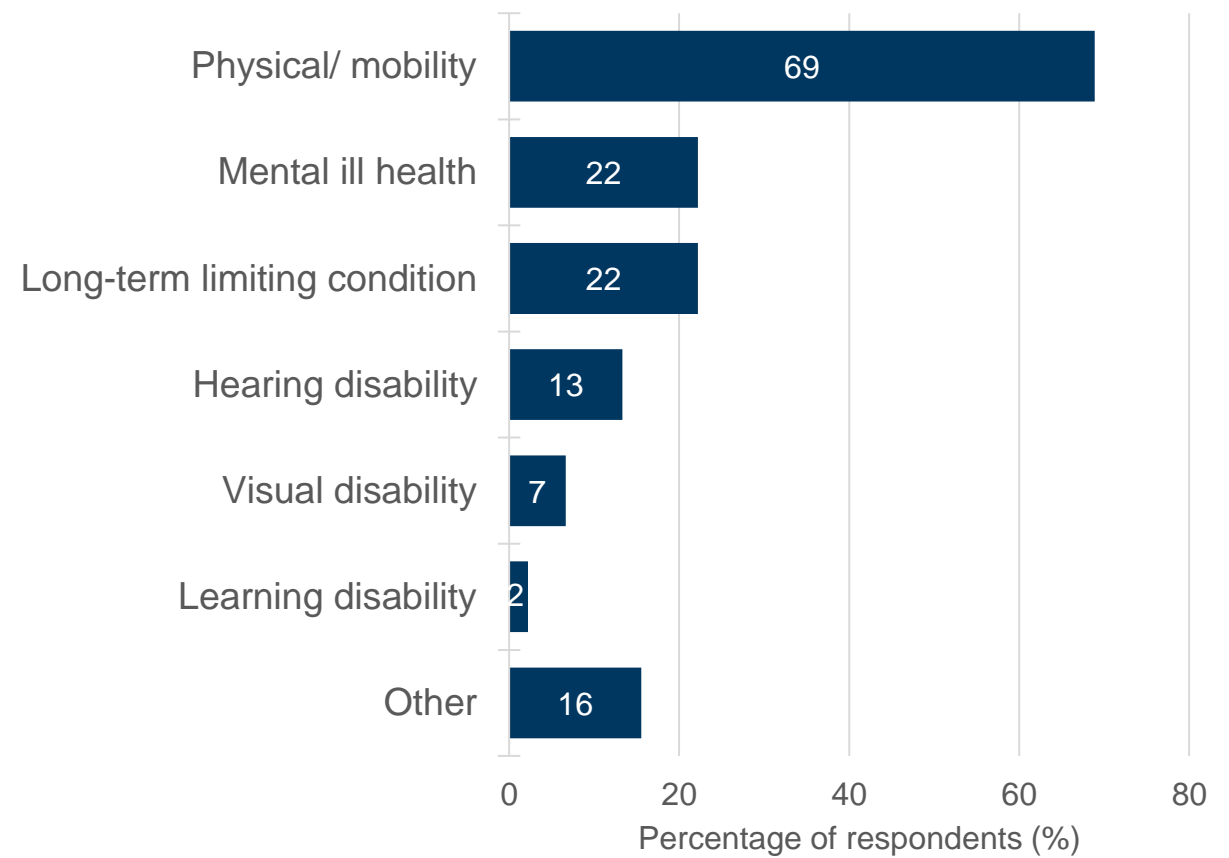


# Disability

Q: 'Do you consider yourself to have a disability, or a long-term illness, physical or mental health condition that reduces your ability to carry out day-to-day activities?' | Base: Total sample (207)



Q: 'What type of disability, long-term illness, physical or mental health condition do you have?' | Base: Those with a disability (45)



- The majority of respondents do not have a disability or a long-term illness, physical or mental health condition (78%), whilst 22% do
- The most common disability type is physical/ mobility (69%), whilst 22% each report mental ill health or a long-term limiting condition