



Living in Lancashire Survey

Views about neighbourhoods

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1. Executive summary

This wave of the Living in Lancashire panel looked at views about neighbourhoods. The survey was sent by email or by post to all 3,240 members of the panel on 7 September and the fieldwork ended on 14 October 2011. In total 2,208 questionnaires were returned, giving an overall response rate of 68%.

1.1 Key findings

Neighbourhoods

- Nearly three quarters of respondents agree that the friendships and associations they have in their local area mean a lot to them (72%).
- Four fifths of respondents plan to remain a resident of their neighbourhood for a number of years (80%).
- Seven in every ten respondents think of themselves as similar to the people who live in their neighbourhood (71%).
- Together, these measures suggest that most people are satisfied with their neighbourhoods and local areas.

Provision of local services or facilities

- Respondents' views of what facilities and services are important closely match those that are available in their local area, and those that they have used in the last 12 months. This suggests that the provision of the majority of services and facilities is about right. This said, the figures suggest there might be a small gap in the provision of GPs, chemists/pharmacies, post offices and dentists.
- One fifth of respondents feel that they cannot go to their neighbours if they need advice, a similar proportion cannot borrow and exchange things with their neighbours (21% and 19% respectively).
- One in every ten respondents does not regularly stop and talk with people in their neighbourhood (9%).
- These figures suggest there is a small proportion of the Lancashire population which does not currently have strong social support networks in their neighbourhood.

Participate in local issues

- Two fifths of respondents agree that by working together, people in their area can influence decisions that affect the local area (62%).
- Two fifths of respondents agree that people in their neighbourhood pull together to improve the neighbourhood (43%).

- Opinion is divided over whether people in respondents' neighbourhoods could work together to run local services (32% agree, 35% not sure, and 22% disagree).
- Around half of respondents have taken some form of action in the last 12 months in an attempt to solve a problem affecting people in their local area (53%).

Participate in local groups

- Two thirds of respondents are involved in at least one social group/club at least once a month (67%).

1.2 Recommendations

The findings in this report show that the vast majority of respondents have social networks within their neighbourhoods, that they have access to the services and facilities that are important to them, and that they are willing participate in local issues. Although this indicates that there are no pressing issues for Lancashire and its districts as a whole there are a number of areas where further work may help provide an insight into issues at lower spatial levels.

Fewer people have GPs, chemists/pharmacies, dentists and post offices in their local area than say these services are important in making an area a good place to live. This highlights that there is a gap in provision of these services. Although this research doesn't find any indication that this is a particular issue for any specific districts, this research is limited as it cannot focus within districts to analyse if there are specific problems within smaller areas. It is therefore recommended that a mapping exercise be carried out to explore if the lack of provision is particularly acute in certain areas of Lancashire.

Levels of participation have not changed despite a continued focus, particularly at a national level, on the Big Society. It is unclear why levels of participation are unchanged but there are a number of contradictory factors that are likely to be influencing participation levels. While the Big Society has received much attention at a national level, the Localism Act was only given Royal Assent in November 2011. It also has to be noted that the budget cuts to the public sector have had an impact on the number of people working in locally in communities reducing opportunities for people to get involved. It is therefore recommended that continue to monitor this in conjunction with what we are doing.

Although levels of participation have not increased the number of people contacting the appropriate organisation to deal with a problem has increased. This may be due to improved engagement. However, due to the nature of this question it may be due to the panel becoming more engaged as a result of being a member of Living in Lancashire.

2. Introduction

Lancashire County Council has used Living in Lancashire regularly since August 2001 (formerly known as Life in Lancashire). A panel of willing participants is recruited and is approached on a regular basis to seek their views on a range of topics and themes. Panel members are voluntary participants in the research and no incentives are given for completion.

The panel has been designed to be a representative cross-section of the county's population. The results for each survey are weighted in order to reflect the demographic profile of the county's population.

The panel provides access to a sufficiently large sample of the population so that reliable results can be reported at a county wide level. It also provides data at a number of sub-area and sub-group levels.

Each wave of Living in Lancashire is themed. Firstly, it enables sufficient coverage on a particular topic to be able to provide insight into that topic. And secondly, it comes across better to the residents completing the questionnaires if there is a clear theme (or 2-3 clear themes) within each survey.

The panel is refreshed periodically. New members are recruited to the panel and some current members are retired on a random basis. This means that the panel remains fresh and is not subject to conditioning ie the views of panel members become too informed with county council services to be representative of the population as a whole.

3. Research objectives

The objective of this survey is to look at people's views about their neighbourhood. Questions looked specifically at:

- local friendships and social circles;
- local access to important services and facilities; and
- participation in local issues.

4. Methodology

This wave of Living in Lancashire research was sent to 3,240 members of the panel on 7 September. A reminder was sent on 28 September, with a final closing date of 14 October 2011.

The survey was conducted through a postal questionnaire, and an online version of the same questionnaire being emailed to members who had previously requested to take part online. The postal questionnaire was sent to 2,276 members and the online questionnaire was sent to 964 members.

In total, 2,208 questionnaires were returned, giving an overall response rate of 68%.

The data set is weighted by age, ethnicity and district to reflect the Lancashire overall population, and figures are based on all respondents unless otherwise stated. The weighted responses have been scaled to match the effective response of 1,567, which is the equivalent size of the data if it had not been weighted and was a perfect random sample.

4.1 Limitations

The table below shows the sample tolerances that apply to the results in this survey. Sampling tolerances vary with the size of the sample as well as the percentage results.

Number of respondents	50/50 + / -	30/70 + / -	10/90 + / -
50	14%	13%	8%
100	10%	9%	6%
200	7%	6%	4%
500	4%	4%	3%
1,000	3%	3%	2%
2,000	2%	2%	1%

On a question where 50% of the people in a sample of 1,000 respond with a particular answer, the chances are 95 out of 100 that the answer would be between 47% and 53% (ie +/- 3%), versus a complete coverage of the entire Lancashire population using the same procedure.

The following table shows what the percentage differences between two samples on a statistic must be greater than, to be statistically significant.

Size of sample A	Size of sample B	50/50	70/30	90/10
100	100	14%	13%	8%
100	200	12%	11%	7%
500	1,000	5%	5%	3%
2,000	2,000	3%	3%	2%

(Confidence interval at 95% certainty for a comparison of two samples)

For example, where the size of sample A and sample B is 2,000 responses in each and the percentage result in each group you are comparing is around 50% in each category, the difference in the results needs to be more than 3% to be statistically significant. This is to say that the difference in the results of the two groups of people is not due to chance alone and is a statistically valid difference (eg of opinion, service usage).

For each question in the survey, comparisons have been made between different sub-groups of respondents (eg age, gender, disability, ethnicity, geographic area) to look for statistically significant differences in opinion. Statistically valid differences between sub-groups are described in the main body of the report.

In charts or tables where responses do not add up to 100%, this is due to multiple responses or computer rounding.

5. Main research findings

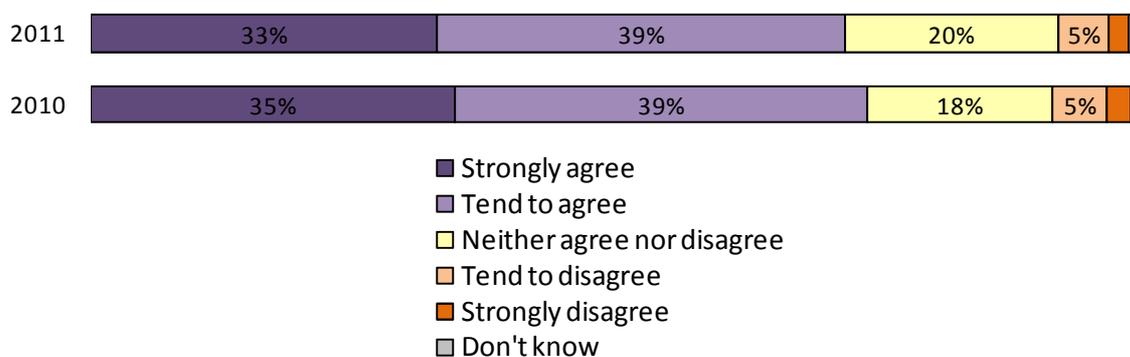
The questions asked in this wave of research were also asked in Wave 30 (September 2010). Where appropriate, the responses from both surveys have been included in this report's charts to highlight how opinions compare over time.

5.1 Neighbourhoods and local associations

Panel members were asked a series of questions about their neighbourhood.

Nearly three quarters of respondents agree that the friendships and associations they have in their neighbourhood mean a lot to them (72%).

Chart 1 - The friendships and associations I have with other people in my neighbourhood mean a lot to me



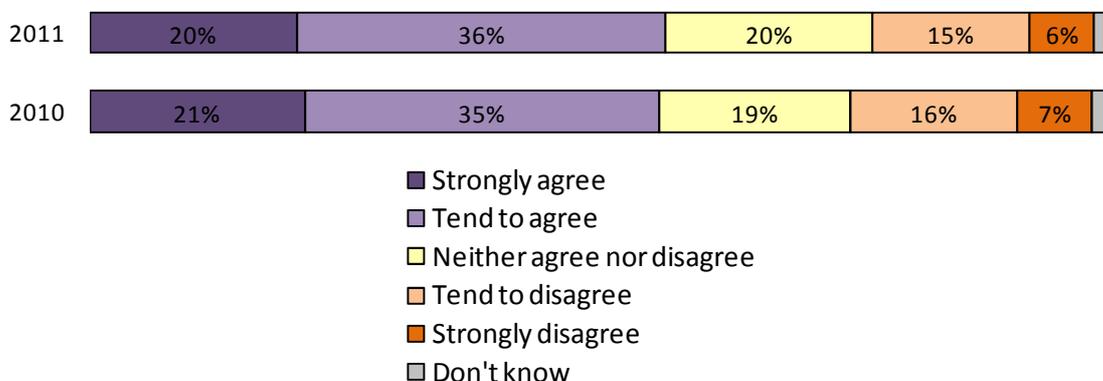
Base: 2011 All respondents (unweighted 2,158, weighted 1,601)
2010 All respondents (unweighted 2,736, weighted 2,066)

Respondents aged 60 and over, and those with a disability are more likely to agree that their friendships and associations mean a lot to them (80% and 77% respectively).

Full-time workers and respondents living in urban areas are less likely to agree that their friendships and associations mean a lot to them (63% and 64% agree respectively).

Just over half of respondents could go to someone in their neighbourhood if they need advice (56%), but one fifth feel that they cannot (21%).

Chart 2 - If I need advice I could go to someone in my neighbourhood



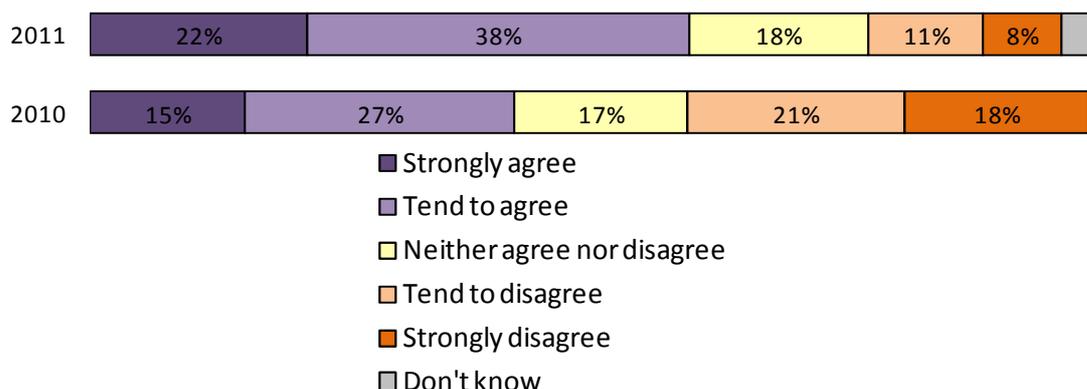
Base: 2011 All respondents (unweighted 2,141, weighted 1,588)
 2010 All respondents (unweighted 2,630, weighted 1,967)

Respondents from Ribble Valley and those aged 60 and over are more likely to agree they could go to someone in their neighbourhood if they need advice (64% and 63% respectively).

Full-time workers are less likely to agree they could go to someone in their neighbourhood if they need advice (48% agree).

The proportion of respondents who can borrow and exchange things with their neighbours has risen from two fifths in 2010 to three fifths in 2011 (42% and 60% respectively). However, a fifth of respondents feel that they cannot borrow and exchange things with their neighbours (19%).

Chart 3 - I can borrow and exchange things with my neighbours

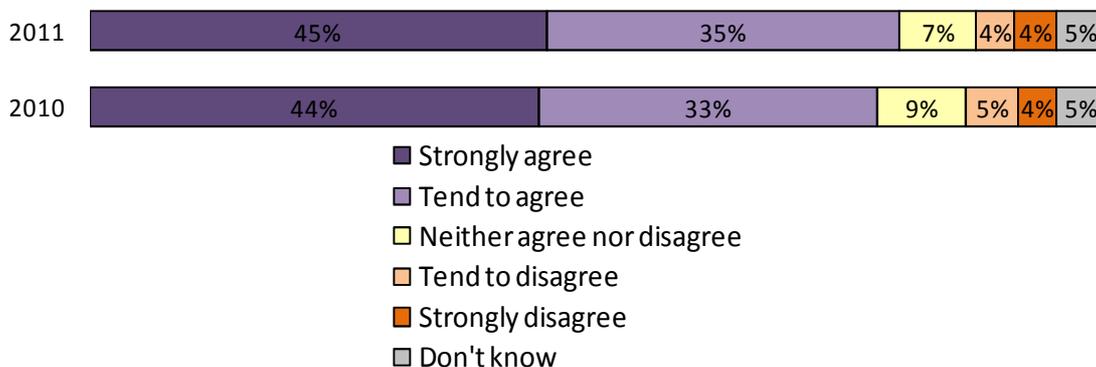


Base: 2011 All respondents (unweighted 2,124, weighted 1,586)
 2010 All respondents (unweighted 2,703, weighted 2,052)

Part-time workers, respondents living in rural areas and respondents from Ribble Valley are more likely to agree they can borrow and exchange things with their neighbours (64%, 69% and 65% respectively).

Four fifths of respondents plan to remain a resident of their neighbourhood for a number of years (80%).

Chart 4 - I plan to remain a resident of this neighbourhood for a number of years



Base: 2011 All respondents (unweighted 2,153, weighted 1,598)
 2010 All respondents (unweighted 2,765, weighted 2,084)

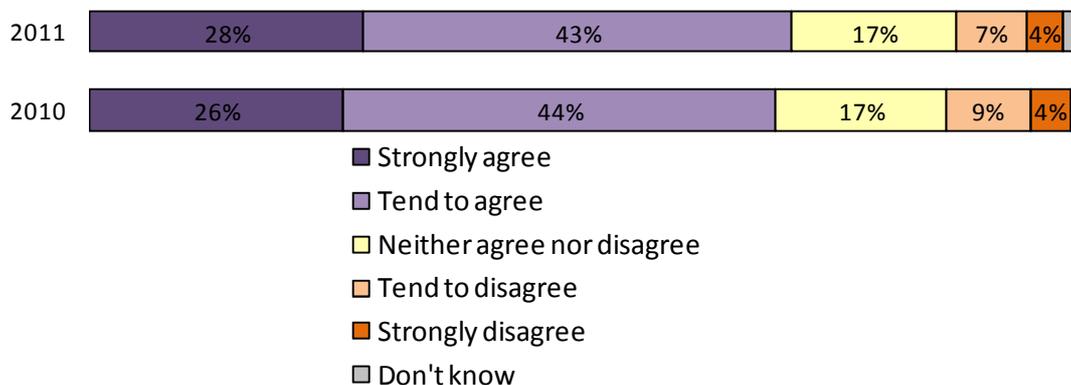
Respondents aged 60 and over are more likely to plan to remain a resident of their neighbourhood for a number of years (86%).

Respondents that privately rent their home are less likely to plan to remain a resident of their neighbourhood for a number of years (65% agree).

Respondents from Ribble Valley, South Ribble and Wyre are more likely to plan to remain a resident of their neighbourhood for a number of years (93%, 85% and 84% respectively), but respondents from Burnley are less likely to (67% agree).

Seven in every ten respondents think of themselves as similar to the people who live in their neighbourhood (71%).

Chart 5 - I like to think of myself as similar to the people who live in this neighbourhood



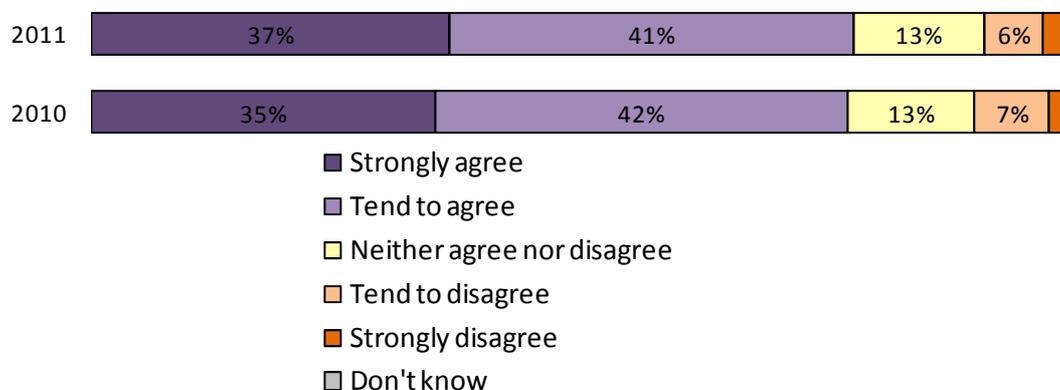
Base: 2011 All respondents (unweighted 2,152, weighted 1,597)
 2010 All respondents (unweighted 2,762, weighted 2,084)

Respondents who live in rural areas and those aged 60 and over are more likely to think of themselves as similar to the people who live in their neighbourhood (81% and 80% respectively).

Full-time workers and respondents who privately rent their home are less likely to think of themselves as similar to the people who live in their neighbourhood (64% and 55% agree respectively).

Over three quarters of respondents regularly stop and talk with people in their neighbourhood (78%), but one in every ten respondents does not (9%).

Chart 6 - I regularly stop and talk with people in this neighbourhood



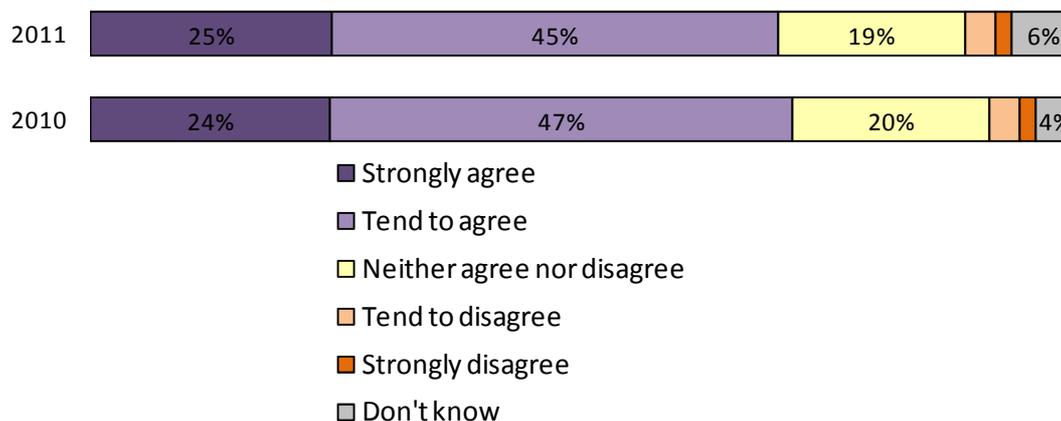
Base: 2011 All respondents (unweighted 2,148, weighted 1,594)
 2010 All respondents (unweighted 2,753, weighted 2,076)

Respondents who live in rural areas and respondents aged 60 and over are more likely to regularly stop and talk with people in their neighbourhood (both 85%).

Full-time workers and respondents who live in urban areas are less likely to regularly stop and talk with people in their neighbourhood (71% and 72% agree respectively).

Seven in every ten respondents would be willing to work together on something to improve their neighbourhood (70%).

Chart 7 - I would be willing to work together on something to improve my neighbourhood



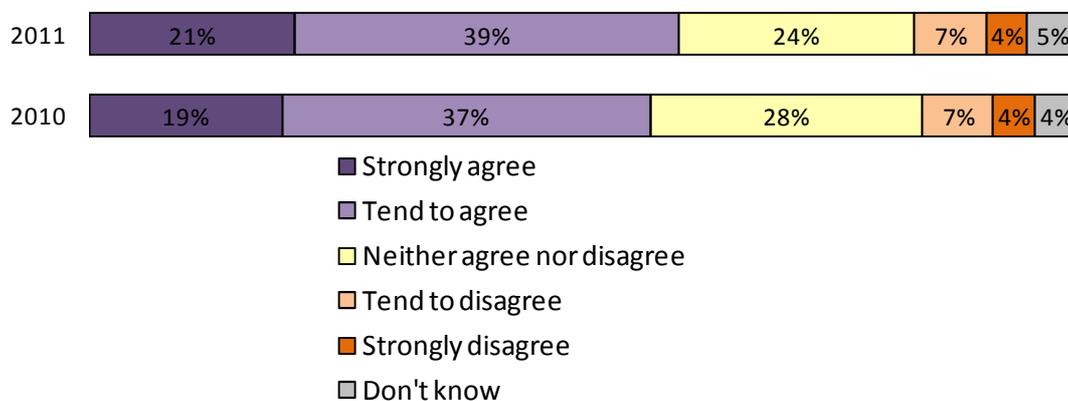
Base: 2011 All respondents (unweighted 2,117, weighted 1,582)
 2010 All respondents (unweighted 2,719, weighted 2,058)

BME respondents, respondents living in rural areas and respondents in the highest socio-economic group AB are more likely to be willing to work together on something to improve their neighbourhood (78%, 78% and 76% respectively).

Disabled respondents and those in socio-economic group C2 are less likely to be willing to work on something to improve their neighbourhood (65% and 62% agree respectively).

Three fifths of respondents agree that people in their neighbourhood help each other (60%).

Chart 8 - People in my neighbourhood help each other



Base: 2011 All respondents (unweighted 2,069, weighted 1,538)
 2010 All respondents (unweighted 2,754, weighted 2,072)

Respondents who live in rural areas, those from Ribble Valley, and respondents aged 60 and over are more likely to agree that people in their neighbourhood help each other (70%, 68% and 65% respectively).

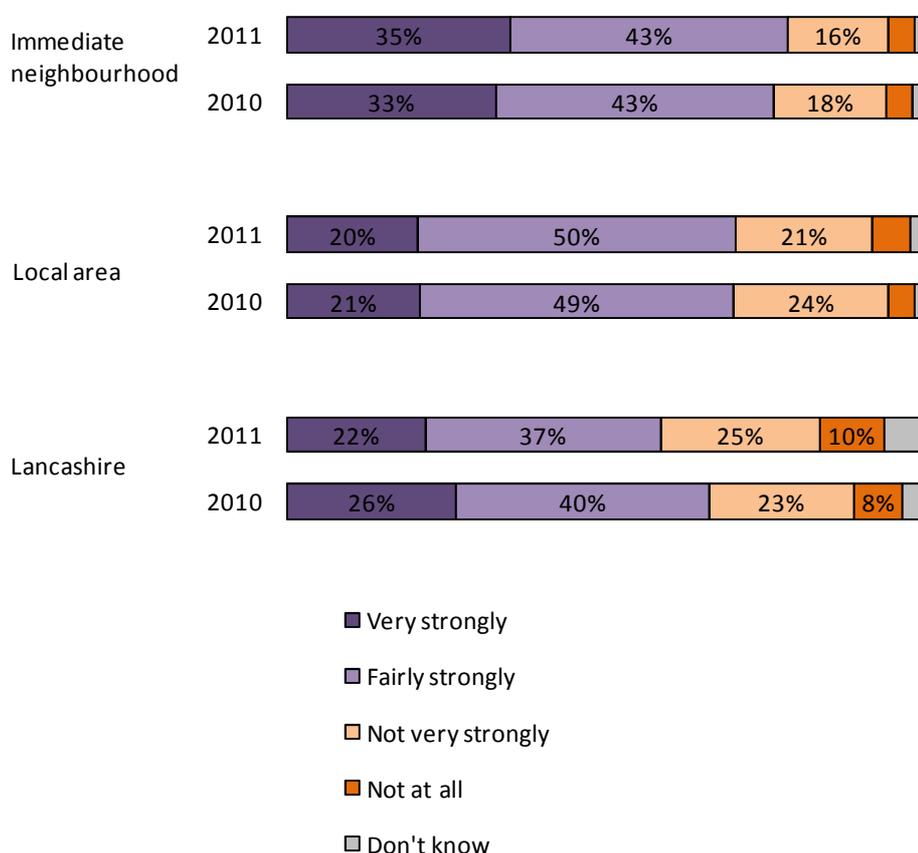
Full-time workers and respondents aged 45-59 are less likely to agree people in their neighbourhood help each other (54% and 55% agree respectively).

Respondents were asked if they feel they belong to their immediate neighbourhood, their local area, and Lancashire. Respondents were asked to consider their local area as the area within 15-20 minutes' walk from their home.

Nearly four fifths of respondents feel that they belong to their immediate neighbourhood (78%). The proportion of respondents that feel they belong to an area declines as the size of the area expands, with only three fifths of respondents feeling they belong to Lancashire (59%).

Chart 9 shows that between 2010 and 2011 there is a slight reduction in the proportion of respondents that feel they belong to Lancashire (59% in 2011, 66% in 2010).

Chart 9 - How strongly do you feel you belong to your immediate neighbourhood, your local area and Lancashire?



Base: 2011 All respondents (unweighted 2,020, weighted 1,511)
2010 All respondents (unweighted 2,472, weighted 1,881)

Respondents aged 60 and over are more likely to feel they belong to their immediate neighbourhood, their local area and to Lancashire (84%, 76% and 63% respectively).

Respondents who live in rural areas are more likely to feel they belong to their immediate neighbourhood and their local area (85% and 74% respectively).

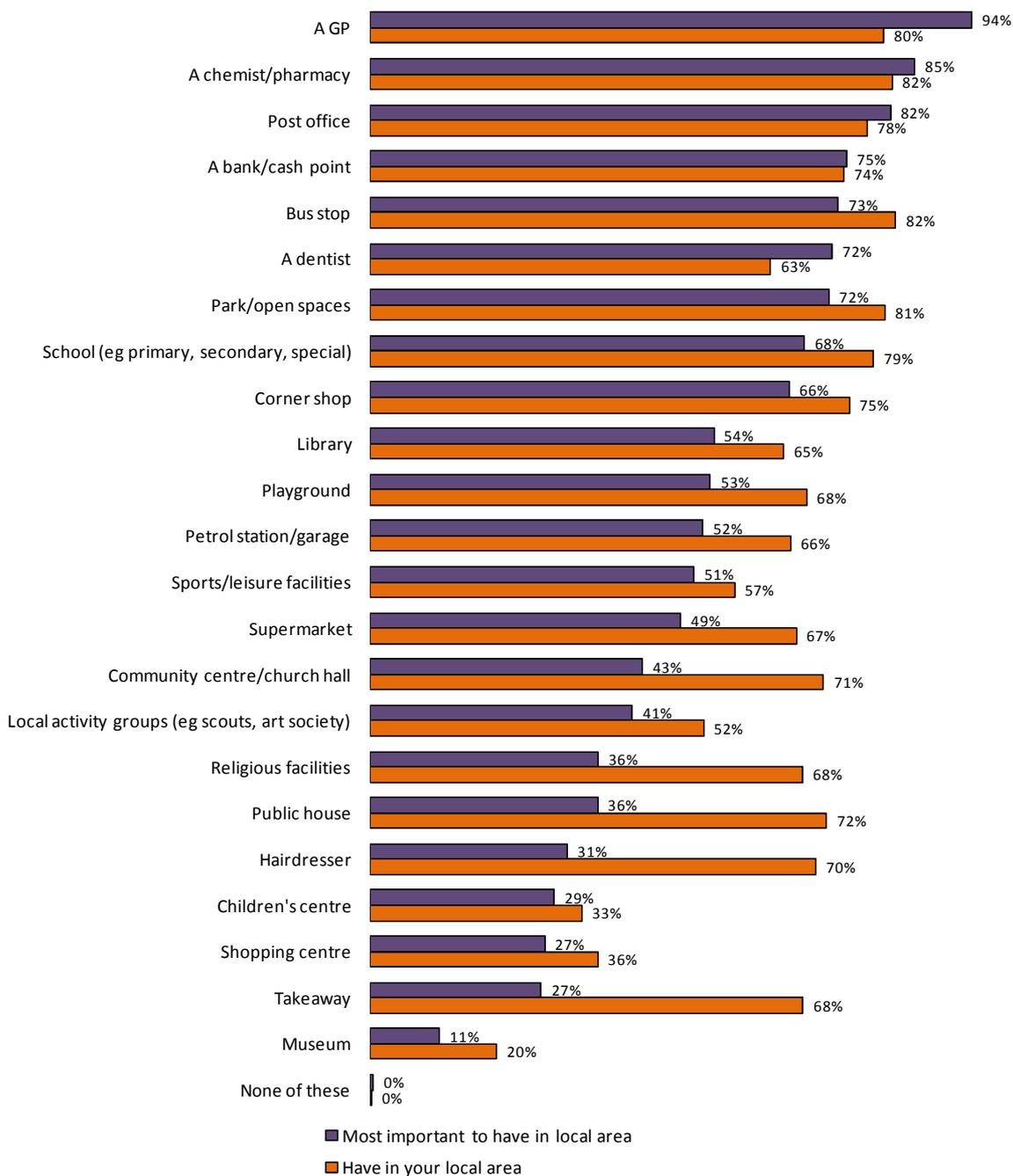
Respondents from Ribble Valley are also more likely to feel they belong to their immediate neighbourhood, their local area and to Lancashire (88%, 88%, and 71% respectively).

Respondents from Burnley are less likely to feel they belong to their immediate neighbourhood and to their local area (65% and 60% agree respectively).

5.2 Provision of local services or facilities

Chart 10 compares which services or facilities are the most important for respondents to have in their local area with which services or facilities they actually have. It shows that the majority of services and facilities that respondents feel are important are available to them. Notable exceptions include: a GP; a chemist/pharmacy; post office; and a dentist.

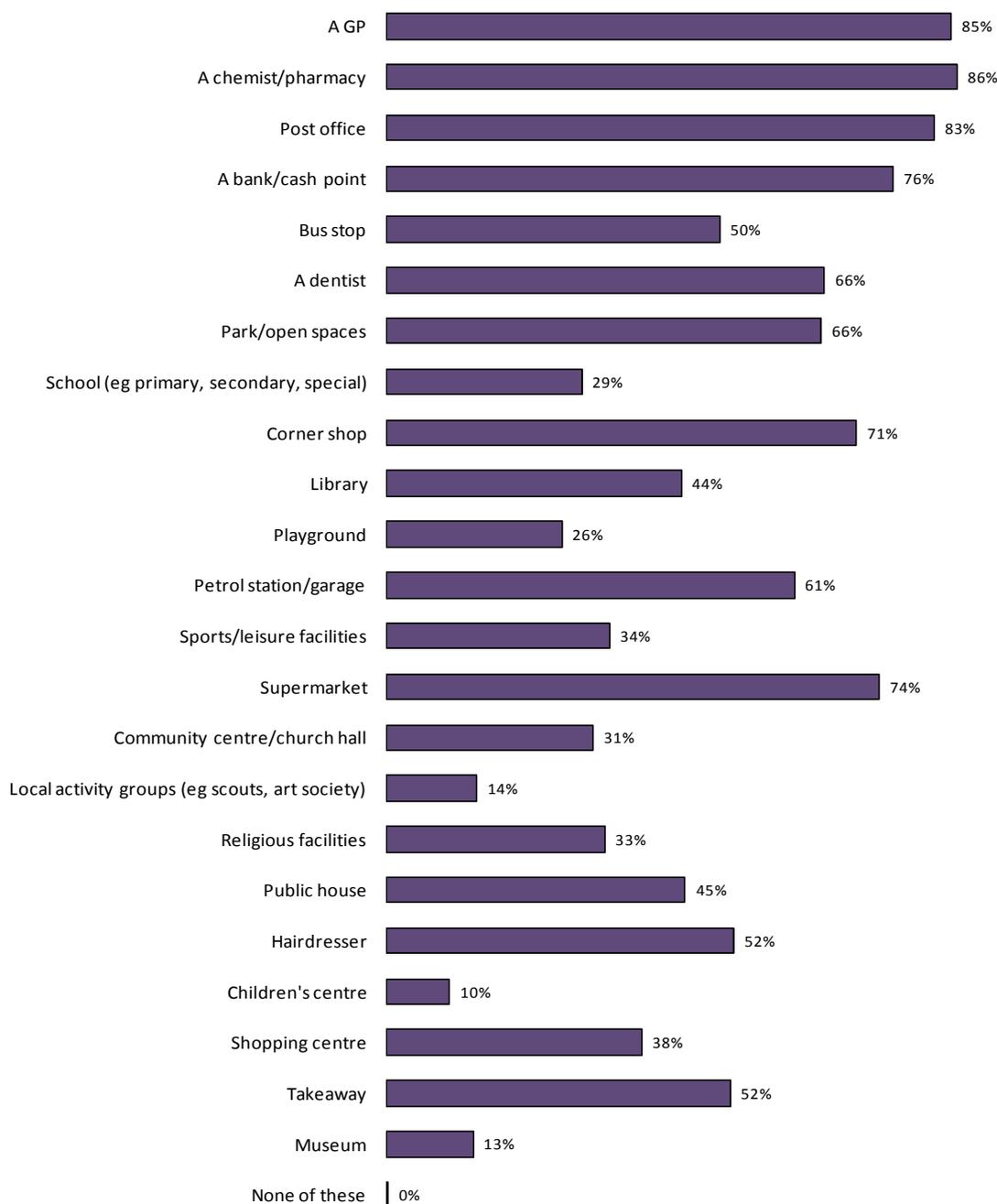
**Chart 10 - Which of the following services or facilities...
a) are the most important to have in your local area?
b) do you have in your local area?**



Base: All respondents (unweighted 2,161, weighted 1,604)

Chart 11 shows the services and facilities that respondents and their families have used in the last 12 months. The services are listed in the same order as they are in chart 10. Comparing chart 10 and chart 11 shows that the services that are most important to respondents align strongly to the ones they have used in the last 12 months.

Chart 11 - Which of the following services or facilities have you or your family used in the last 12 months?

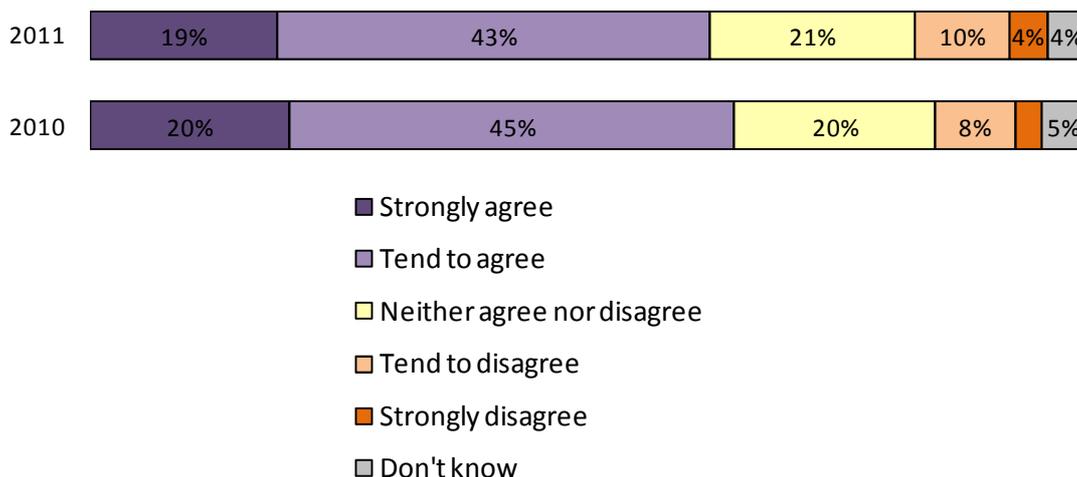


Base: All respondents (unweighted 2,006, weighted 1,491)

5.3 Participation in local issues

Two fifths of respondents agree that, by working together, people in their area can influence decisions that affect the local area (62%).

Chart 12 - By working together, people in my area can influence decisions that affect the local area

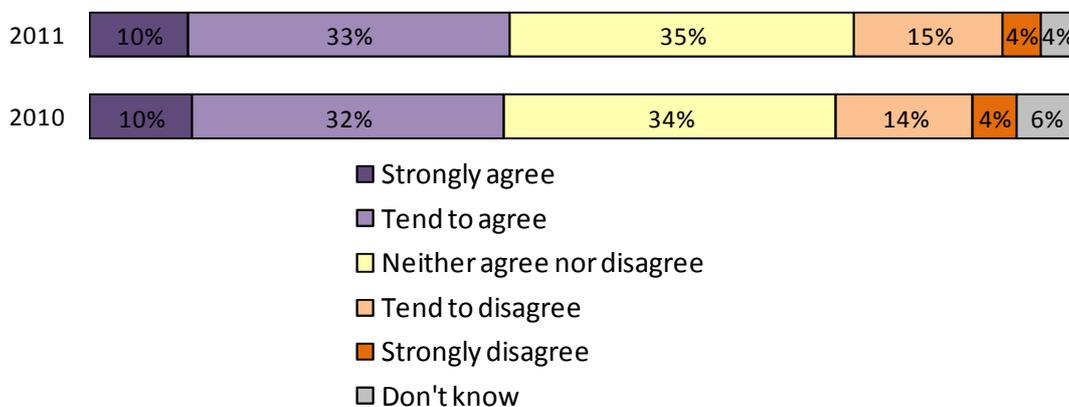


Base: 2011 All respondents (unweighted 2,145, weighted 1,597)
 2010 All respondents (unweighted 2,730, weighted 2,066)

BME respondents are more likely to agree that by working together, people in their area can influence decisions that affect the local area (73%).

Two fifths of respondents agree that people in their neighbourhood pull together to improve the neighbourhood (43%).

Chart 13 - People in my neighbourhood pull together to improve the neighbourhood



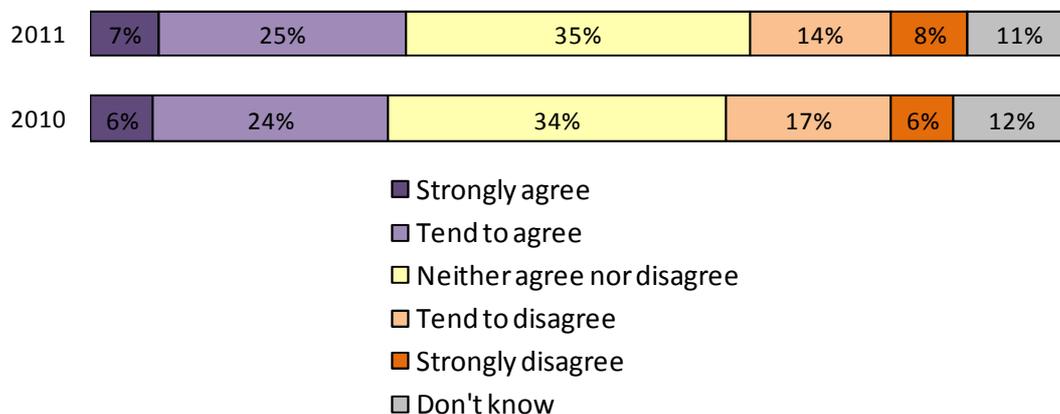
Base: 2011 All respondents (unweighted 2,130, weighted 1,585)
 2010 All respondents (unweighted 2,699, weighted 2,046)

BME respondents, respondents who live in rural areas and respondents from Ribble Valley are more likely to agree people in their neighbourhood pull together to improve the neighbourhood (56%, 54% and 57% respectively).

Full-time employees and respondents from Hyndburn are less likely to agree that people in their neighbourhood pull together to improve the neighbourhood (36% and 32% agree respectively).

Opinion is divided over whether people in respondents' neighbourhoods could work together to run local services (32% agree, 35% not sure, and 22% disagree).

Chart 14 - People in my neighbourhood could work together to run local services



Base: 2011 All respondents (unweighted 2,130, weighted 1,585)
 2010 All respondents (unweighted 2,647, weighted 2,011)

Again, BME respondents, those who live in rural locations and those from Ribble Valley are more likely to agree that people in their neighbourhood could work together to run local services (47%, 41% and 40% respectively).

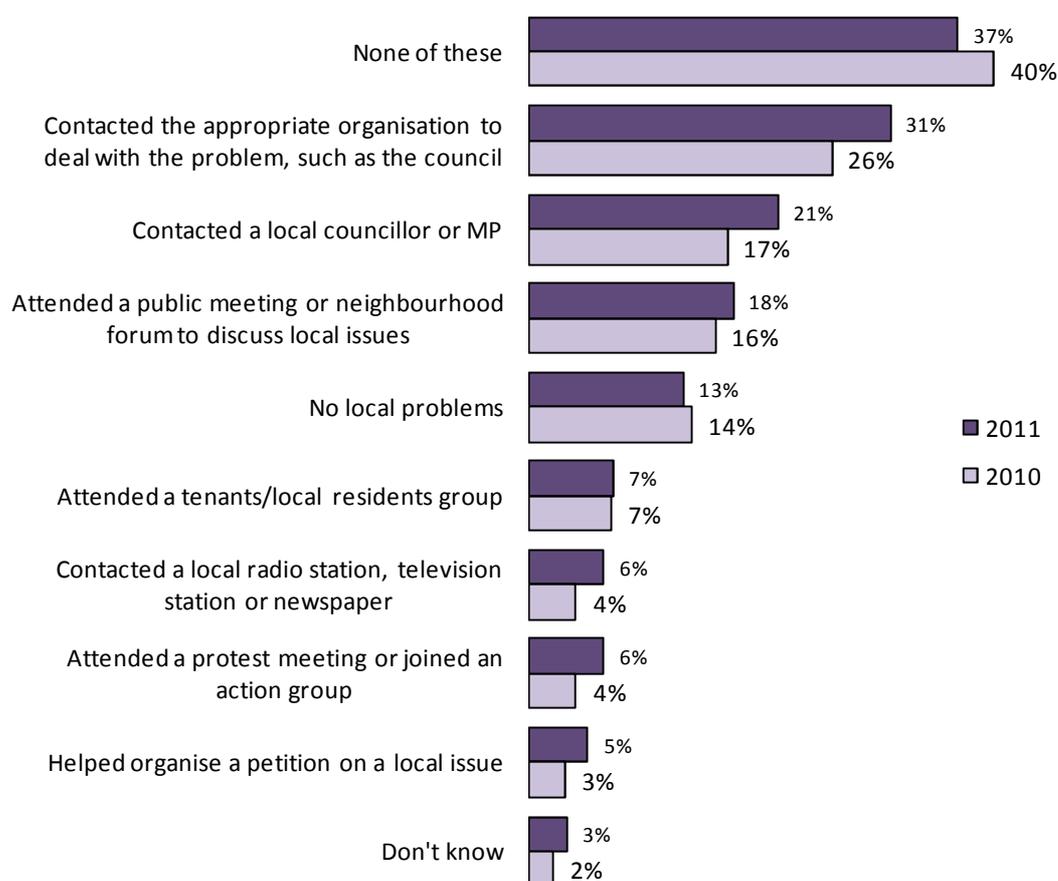
Respondents from Hyndburn are less likely to agree that people in their neighbourhood could work together to run local services (26% agree).

Just over half of respondents have taken action, in the last 12 months, in an attempt to solve a problem affecting people in their local area; this is a slight increase from when this question was asked in Wave 30 (53% in 2011, 48% in 2010¹).

Just under a third of respondents have contacted the appropriate organisation to deal with a problem (31%).

Around one in every seven respondents have no local problems (13%).

Chart 15 - In the last 12 months have you taken any of the following actions in an attempt to solve a problem affecting people in your local area?



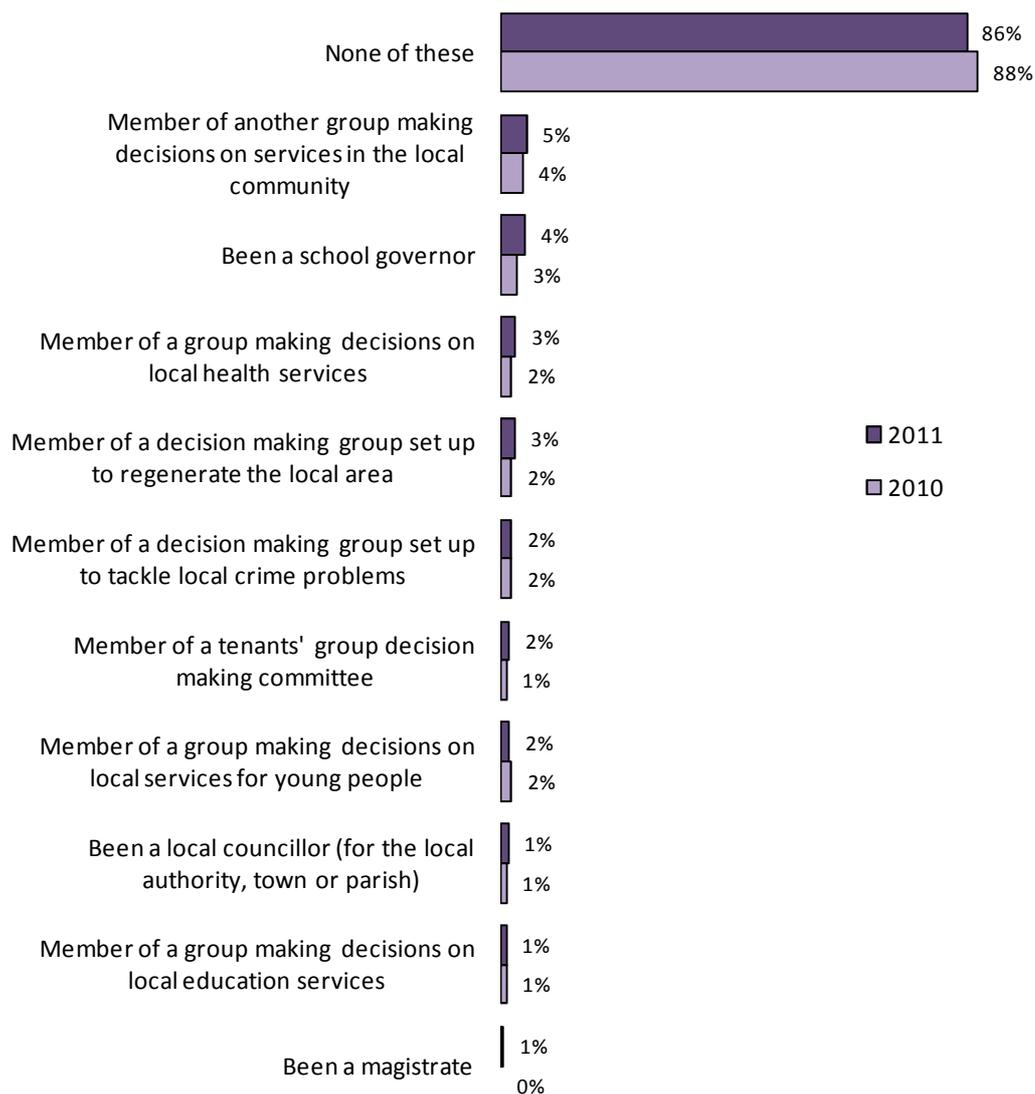
Base: 2011 All respondents (unweighted 2,110, weighted 1,566)
 2010 All respondents (unweighted 2,710, weighted 2,033)

BME respondents are more likely to have taken action in an attempt to solve a problem affecting people in their local area (only 28% answered 'none of these').

¹ This figure comes from taking the respondents who answered this question and subtracting those that answered 'none of these' and/or 'no local problems'.

In the past 12 months, only around one in every seven respondents have participated in more formal community groups, such as serving on committees, serving as a magistrate or school governor, or member of a decision-making group (14%).

Chart 16 - In the past 12 months, have you done any of the following things?

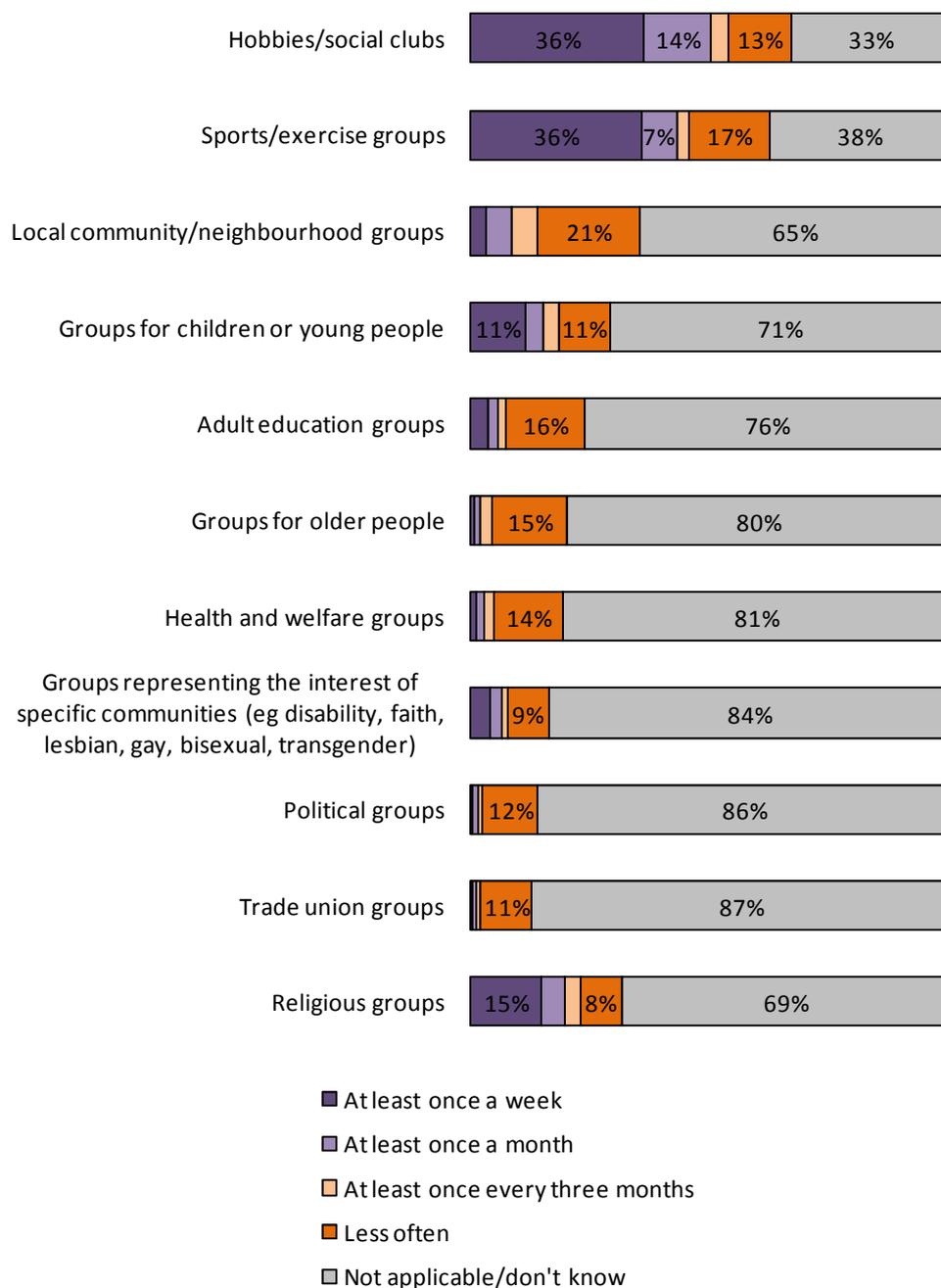


Base: 2011 All respondents (unweighted 2,037, weighted 1,506)
 2010 All respondents (unweighted 2,653, weighted 1,999)

5.4 Participation in local groups, clubs and organisations

Two thirds of respondents are involved in at least one social group/club or organisation at least once a month (67%).

Chart 17 - How often, if at all, do you take part in each of the following?



Base: All respondents (unweighted 1,538 weighted 1,175)

Respondents in the highest socio-economic groups (AB) are more likely to take part in a social group/club at least once a month (75%).

BME respondents and respondents in the lowest socio-economic groups (DE) are less likely to take part in a social group/club at least once a month (56% and 57% respectively).

6. Conclusions and recommendations

The findings in this report show that the vast majority of respondents have social networks within their neighbourhoods, that they have access to the services and facilities that are important to them, and that they are willing participate in local issues. Although this indicates that there are no pressing issues for Lancashire and its districts as a whole there are a number of areas where further work may help provide an insight into issues at lower spatial levels.

Fewer people have GPs, chemists/pharmacies, dentists and post offices in their local area than say these services are important in making an area a good place to live. This highlights that there is a gap in provision of these services. Although this research doesn't find any indication that this is a particular issue for any specific districts, this research is limited as it cannot focus within districts to analyse if there are specific problems within smaller areas. It is therefore recommended that a mapping exercise be carried out to explore if the lack of provision is particularly acute in certain areas of Lancashire.

Levels of participation have not changed despite a continued focus, particularly at a national level, on the Big Society. It is unclear why levels of participation are unchanged but there are a number of contradictory factors that are likely to be influencing participation levels. While the Big Society has received much attention at a national level, the Localism Act was only given Royal Assent in November 2011. It also has to be noted that the budget cuts to the public sector have had an impact on the number of people working in locally in communities reducing opportunities for people to get involved. It is therefore recommended that continue to monitor this in conjunction with what we are doing.

Although levels of participation have not increased the number of people contacting the appropriate organisation to deal with a problem has increased. This may be due to improved engagement. However, due to the nature of this question it may be due to the panel becoming more engaged as a result of being a member of Living in Lancashire.

Appendix 1: Socio-Economic-Group Definitions

These groups are based on Market Research Society definitions and on the respondent. They are graded as A, B, C1, C2, D and E.

Group A

- Professional people, very senior managers in business or commerce or top-level civil servants
- Retired people, previously grade A, and their widows

Group B

- Middle management executives in large organisations, with appropriate qualifications
- Principle officers in local government and civil service
- Top management or owners of small business concerns, educational and service establishments
- Retired people, previously grade B, and their widows

Group C1

- Junior management, owners of small establishments, and all others in non-manual positions
- Jobs in this group have very varied responsibilities and educational requirements
- Retired people, previously grade C1, and their widows

Group C2

- All skilled manual workers, and those manual workers with responsibility for other people
- Retired people, previously grade C2, with pensions from their job
- Widows, if receiving pensions from their late partner's job

Group D

- All semi skilled and unskilled manual workers, and apprentices and trainees to skilled workers
- Retired people, previously grade D, with pensions from their late job
- Widows, if receiving pensions from their late partner's job

Group E

- All those entirely dependent on the state long term, through sickness, unemployment, old age or other reasons
- Those unemployed for a period exceeding six months (otherwise classified on previous occupation)
- Casual workers and those without a regular income