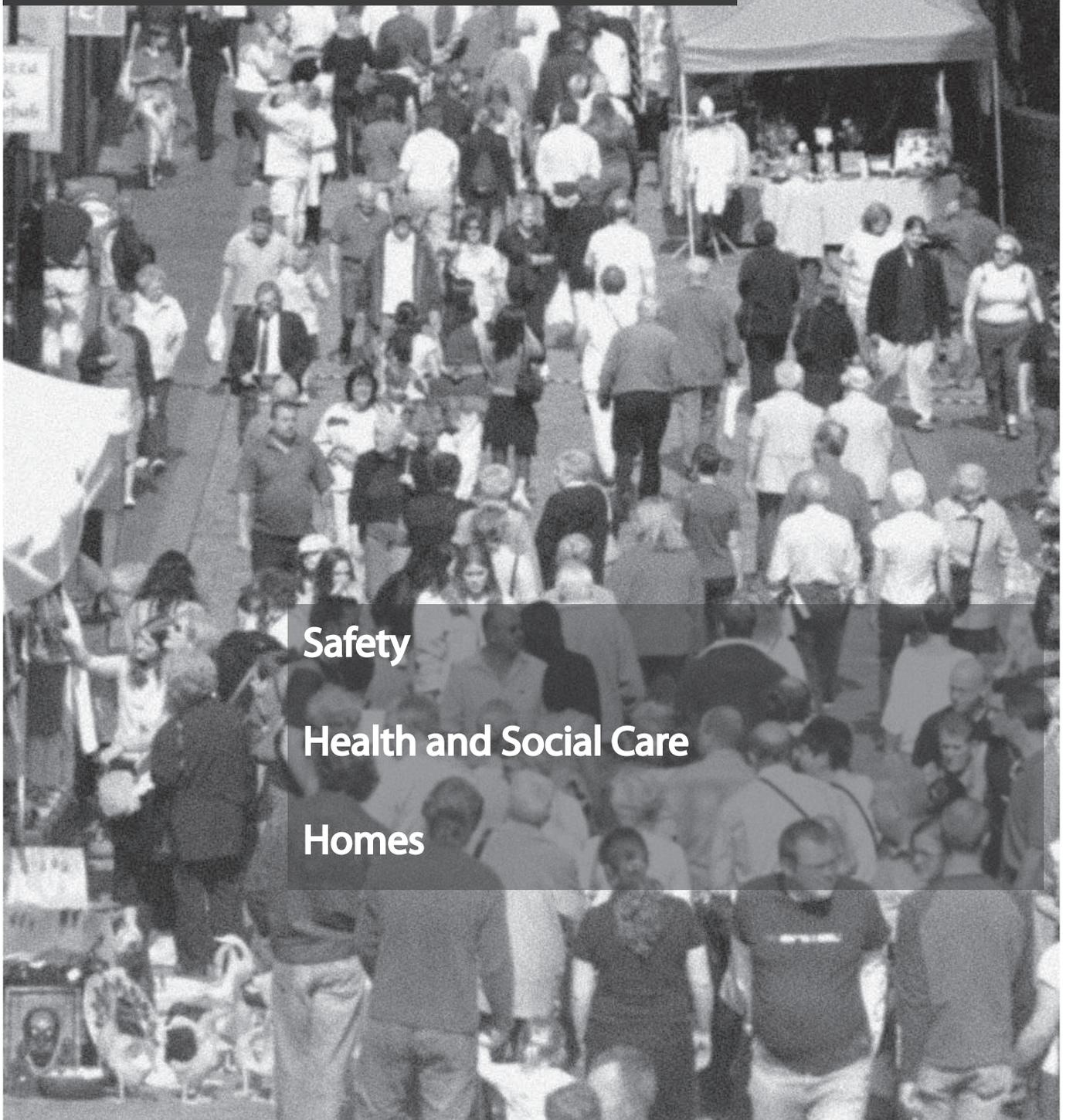




Aberdeen City **voice**

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Aberdeen's Citizens' Panel Report on the 16th Questionnaire



Safety

Health and Social Care

Homes

Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	1
Table of Figures.....	1
Table of Tables.....	2
INTRODUCTION.....	3
SAFETY.....	4
Home Fire Safety.....	4
Wilful Fire Raising.....	12
HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE.....	20
MRSA Screening.....	20
'Looked After Children'.....	28
HOMES.....	35
Good Apple Homes.....	35

Table of Figures

Figure 1: Before reading about it in the City Voice, did you know that Grampian Fire and Rescue Service offered free fire safety visits at home?.....	4
Figure 2: Have you had a home fire safety visit in the last 2 years?.....	6
Figure 3: How satisfied were you with the visit?.....	8
Figure 4: Did you make changes to your home fire safety following the visit?.....	9
Figure 5: Did you know that Grampian Fire and Rescue Service can fit free smoke detectors where needed?.....	9
Figure 6: Do you have a smoke detector (or a number of smoke detectors) in your home?.....	10
Figure 7: If yes, how often do you check it?.....	10
Figure 8: Has there been a wilful fire in or around your home or local area in the last 2 years?.....	12
Figure 9: If yes, do you know if the fire service attended to deal with the incident? .	13
Figure 10: Over the last 2 years, have you noticed a change in the number of wilful fires in your local area?.....	14
Figure 11: Do you think that increasing our presence in the community at weekends would help prevent fire raising?.....	17
Figure 12: Before reading about it in the City Voice, had you heard of MRSA?.....	20
Figure 13: Did you know that MRSA is mainly spread by hand contact?.....	21
Figure 14: Did you know that the risk of spreading MRSA can be reduced by simple things like hand washing?.....	22
Figure 15: Generally, how concerned are you about the risk of MRSA in our City's hospitals?.....	23
Figure 16: Before reading about it in the City Voice, were you aware of the NHS Grampian MRSA Screening programme?.....	24
Figure 17: Does the fact we are screening patients for MRSA, generally change your views about MRSA?.....	26
Figure 18: Before reading the information above, had you ever heard of the term 'looked after children'?.....	28
Figure 19: Before reading the information above, were you aware that children could be 'looked after' but still living at home?.....	31
Figure 20: Are there any children's services in your local area that provide support to 'looked after children'? This may include children's homes, counselling or drop in services, fostering services, family centres or accommodation for formerly looked after children.	32
Figure 21: Before reading about it in the City Voice, had you heard of goodapple homes?.....	35

Figure 22: If yes, did you know that goodapple homes is the name of Aberdeen City Councils' housing service?..... 37

Table of Tables

Table 1: If yes, how did you find out about home fire safety visits?	5
Table 2: If no, is there a reason why you have not arranged a home safety visit?	6
Table 3: If yes, how did you make contact to ask for the visit?	7
Table 4: Grampian Fire and Rescue Service do some work specifically with young people to inform them of the dangers and consequences of wilful fire-raising.	15
Table 5: Grampian Fire and Rescue Service aims to make all our residents aware of the dangers and consequences of wilful fire-raising.	16
Table 6: If yes, how did you find out about the MRSA Screening programme?.....	25
Table 7: Out of the following list, please tick which you think are the 2 most likely reasons for a child/ young person to become 'looked after'.....	29
Table 8: Please tick which of the following services/ organisations you think has a responsibility to care for 'looked after children'.	30
Table 9: If yes, how did you hear about goodapple homes?.....	36

INTRODUCTION

The final survey sample consisted of 744 responses from members of the citizens' panel. The total panel comprises some 900 citizens of Aberdeen City and so the response rate amounts to approximately 83 per cent. The 744 responses are, in the first instance, considered as a whole. Further analysis will be conducted on those results which provoke further investigation and where the various project partners direct further investigation. The further analysis will take the form of targeted analysis on the basis of the personal information of the respondents. This information allows breakdown on the basis of the following variables:

- Gender
- Area
- Age
- Employment
- Home Ownership
- Health Issues
- Ethnicity

Beyond this it is also possible to cross tabulate the various results in order to see if any interesting relationships can be established between the various responses to the different issues covered in the questionnaire.

The analysis presented here is split into the following main topics:

- Safety
- Health and Social Care
- Homes

SAFETY

Home Fire Safety

Smoke alarms are the first line of defence against fire. They are designed to detect fire in its early stages and can give you those precious few moments to get out safely. Grampian Fire and Rescue Service can provide a FREE home fire safety visit and if required, can provide and fit a free smoke alarm, including smoke alarms for the deaf or hard of hearing. This safety check is carried out by firefighters from your local fire station and will take approximately 20 minutes. It can be conducted at a time convenient to you and is free to all residents of the City of Aberdeen.

Figure 1: Before reading about it in the City Voice, did you know that Grampian Fire and Rescue Service offered free fire safety visits at home?

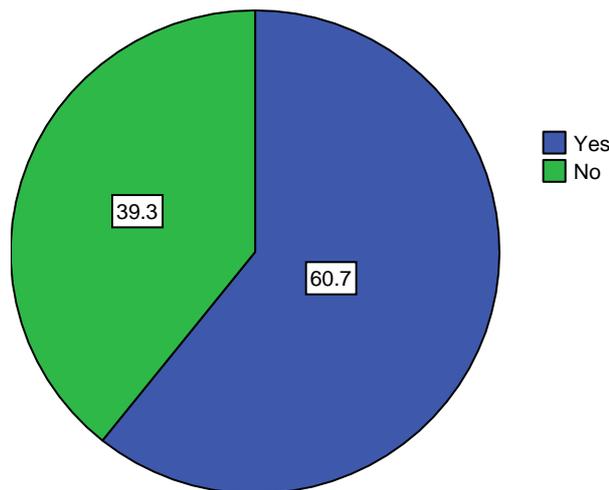


Figure 1 shows that approximately 61% of respondents indicated that they did know that Grampian Fire and Rescue Service offered free fire safety visits at home prior to having read about it in the City Voice. The remaining 39% indicated that they were not aware that Grampian Fire and Rescue Service offered free fire safety visits at home prior to having read about it in the City Voice. When the results were broken down by gender of panellist it was discovered that 63% of female panellists were aware that Grampian Fire and Rescue Service offered free fire safety visits compared with 53% of male panellists.

Table 1: If yes, how did you find out about home fire safety visits?

	Yes	
	Count	%
At a local community event	61	14.1%
From a Home Fire Safety Visit leaflet	88	20.3%
From a website	10	2.3%
Radio advertising	26	6.0%
Television advertising	30	6.9%
Newspaper	107	24.7%
From merchandising such as shopping bags, mugs and water bottles	7	1.6%
Word of mouth	110	25.4%
Other [Please specify]	49	11.3%

Table 1 shows that the most popular way which respondents had found out about home fire safety visits was by word of mouth (25.4%). This was closely followed by newspapers with 24.7%. Approximately 20% of respondents had found out about home fire safety visits from a Home Fire Safety Visit leaflet and a further 14% of respondents had found out at a local community event. Approximately 11% of respondents indicated that they had found out by another means. Approximately 7% of respondents had found out about home fire safety visits by television advertising and a further 6% had found out via radio advertising. 2.3% of respondents had found out from a website and 1.6% from merchandising such as shopping bags, mugs and water bottles.

Please note that some respondents selected more than one option for this question.

The most popular other ways in which respondents indicated that they had heard about home fire safety visits are listed below:

- Promotion/Talk at work
- Health visitor or support worker
- Local Supermarket
- School visit or talk
- Report/brochure through the door
- Family connection to the fire service
- During car wash at North Anderson Drive Fire Station

Further sources of information that were indicated by respondents included:

- Event at Music Hall
- Barnardos
- Police
- Information at the Eco Challenge
- Group visit Mounthooly Fire Station.

Figure 2: Have you had a home fire safety visit in the last 2 years?

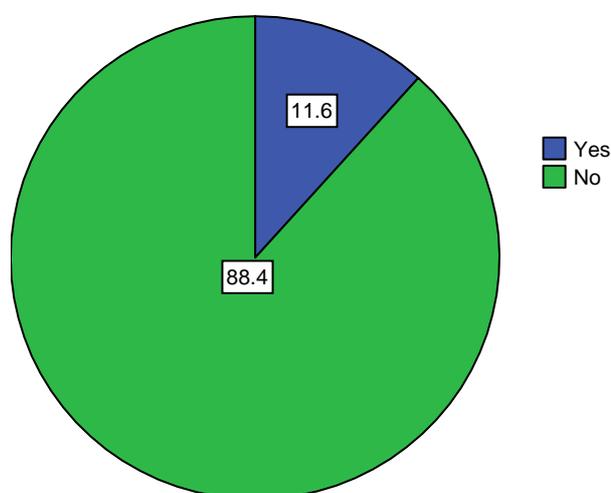


Figure 2 shows that 11.6% of respondents indicated that they had had a home fire safety visit in the last two years. The remaining 88.4% of respondents indicated that they had not had a home fire safety visit in the last two years. There were no significant differences when the results were broken down by age or gender of panellist.

Table 2: If no, is there a reason why you have not arranged a home safety visit?

	Yes	
	Count	%
I didn't know I could have one	4	1.1%
I feel that my home is safe enough	222	59.7%
I intend to, but I've not got round to it yet	64	17.2%
I'm not interested	7	1.9%
I am too busy	6	1.6%
I had a visit, but it was more than 2 years ago	16	4.3%
I live in a rented property and didn't know if I was entitled to one	6	1.6%
I don't know how to arrange one	18	4.8%
Other [Please specify]	25	6.7%

Table 2 shows that the most popular reason given by respondents for not arranging a home safety visit was that they feel that their home is safe enough (59.7%). A further 17.2% of respondents indicated that they had intended to arrange a home safety visit, but have not got round to it yet. Approximately 7% of respondents indicated that there was another reason that they had not arranged a home safety visit. 4.8% of respondents stated that they did not know how to arrange a visit and a further

4.3% of respondents indicated that they had had a home safety visit, but that it was more than 2 years ago. Approximately 2% of respondents indicated that they were not interested in a home safety visit, 1.6% indicated that they were too busy for a visit and another 1.6% of respondents stated that they live in a rented property and didn't know if they were entitled to a visit.

It is worth noting that a small percentage (1.1%) of respondents did not answer this question.

Other reasons given by respondents for not arranging a home safety visit included:

- Never thought about it.
- I tried to organise one but they said they could not do it as I was not in the area.
- My call requesting one was not returned.
- Nervous that this may end up costing me money.
- Private work contractor advised and fitted.
- Live in Grampian Housing Association accommodation where smoke alarms are installed connected to mains supply.
- Visits such as this are stressful.
- My smoke detector is wired into electric meter.
- Feel I might be wasting their time.
- I am fire safety aware.
- I thought it was a sales call.
- School visits.
- I already have fire extinguisher/smoke/gas alarms.

Table 3: If yes, how did you make contact to ask for the visit?

	Yes	
	Count	%
By phone	18	36.7%
By email	1	2.0%
By text	1	2.0%
By website	0	0.0%
By request form	6	12.2%
By Home Fire Safety Visit leaflet	9	18.4%
Other [Please specify]	6	12.2%

Table 3 shows that of the respondents who indicated that they had had a home safety visit in the last two years the most popular method of making contact to arrange their visit was by phone (36.7%). A further 18.4% indicated that they had made contact to ask for their visit by using a Home Fire Safety Visit leaflet and approximately 12% of respondents had made contact by a request form. Approximately 12% indicated that they made contact to ask for their visit by another method. 2% of respondents had made contact to ask for a home safety visit by email

and a further 2% indicated they had made contact by text. None of the respondents indicated that they had used a website to make contact to arrange their home safety visit.

Further comments from respondents included:

- Personal contact at a promotional event
- Spoke directly with Grampian Fire and Rescue
- My support worker contacted Grampian Fire and Rescue
- Housing Association

Figure 3: How satisfied were you with the visit? (1=very satisfied, 5= very dissatisfied)

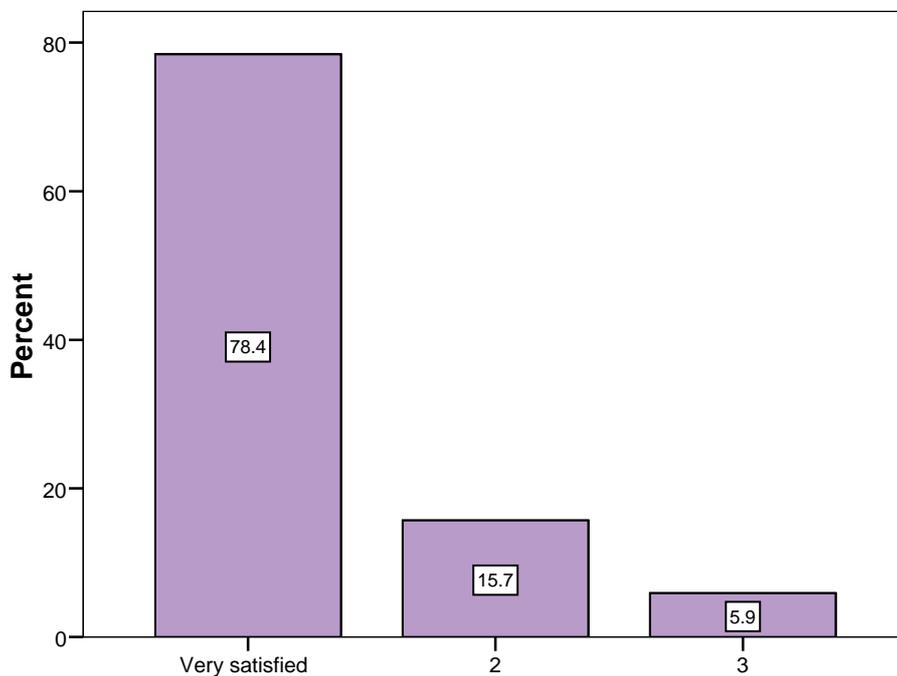


Figure 3 shows that over 78% of respondents indicated that they were very satisfied with the visit and a further 16% (approx) indicated that they were satisfied. No respondents indicated that they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied and so these are not shown on the chart and there were no comments from respondents indicating that they were dissatisfied.

Figure 4: Did you make changes to your home fire safety following the visit?

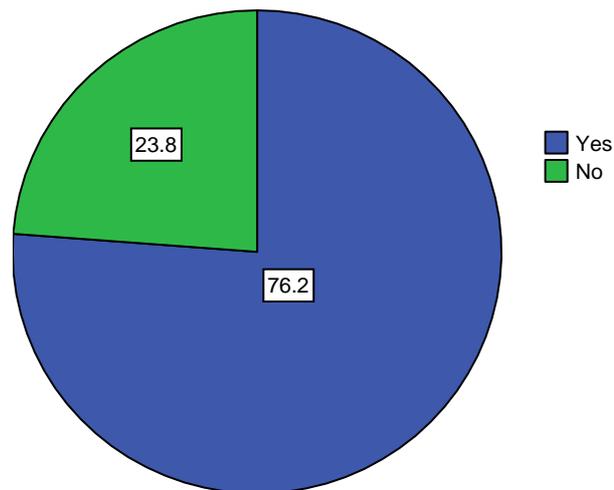


Figure 4 shows that approximately 76% of respondents who had had a home fire safety visit in the last two years indicated that they had made changes following the visit. The remaining 24% indicated that they had not made any changes following the home fire safety visit.

Figure 5: Did you know that Grampian Fire and Rescue Service can fit free smoke detectors where needed?

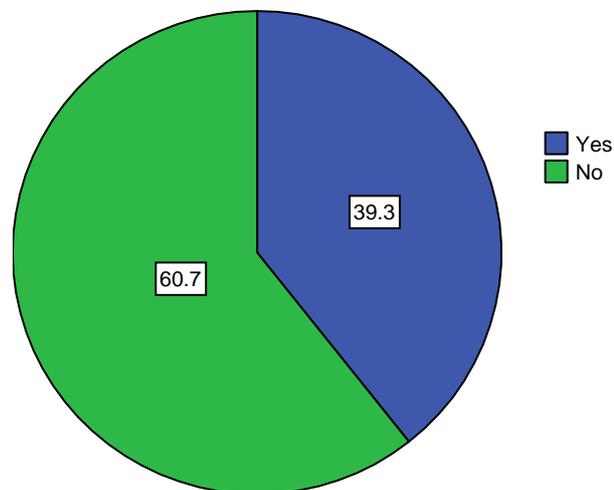


Figure 5 shows that 39.3% of respondents indicated that that they did know that Grampian Fire and Rescue Service can fit free smoke detectors where needed. The remaining 60.7% of respondents did not know that Grampian Fire and Rescue Service can fit free smoke detectors where needed.

Figure 6: Do you have a smoke detector (or a number of smoke detectors) in your home?

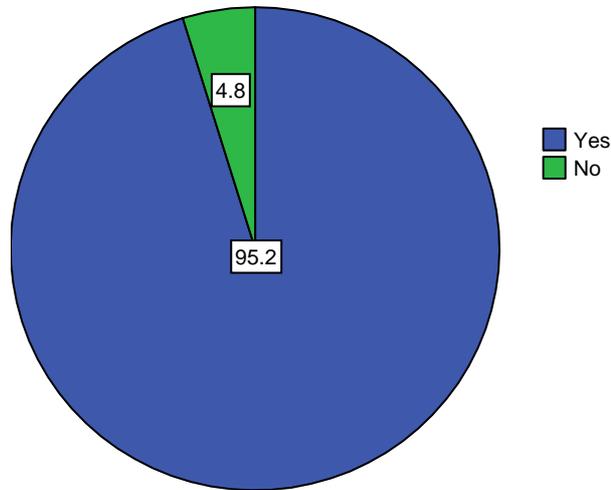


Figure 6 shows that 95.2% of respondents indicated they have a smoke detector or a number of smoke detectors in their home. 4.8% of respondents indicated that they do not have any smoke detectors in their home. All age groups indicated a high level of smoke detector ownership although the ownership was slightly lower in the 25-34 age bracket (89.5%) than in the other age brackets.

Figure 7: If yes, how often do you check it?

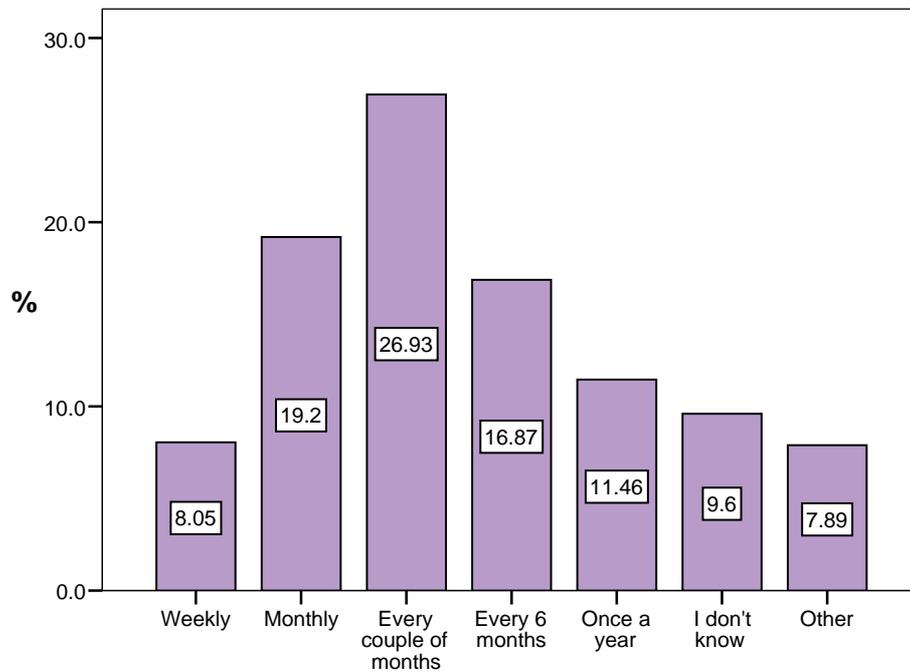


Figure 7 shows that of the 95.2% of respondents who indicated they have a smoke detector or a number of smoke detectors in their home approximately 8% check it on a weekly basis. A further 19% of respondents indicated that they check their smoke alarm(s) on a monthly basis. The most popular answer from respondents was that they check their smoke alarm(s) every couple of months (26.93%). A further 17% of respondents indicated that they check their smoke alarm(s) every six months and approximately 11% indicated that they check their smoke alarm(s) once a year. 9.6% of respondents did not know how often they check their smoke alarm(s). Approximately 8% of respondents indicated that they check their smoke alarm(s) on another basis.

Further answers from respondents included:

- When it beeps that the battery is running low.
- Mains connected
- Never
- When I remember
- Sheltered housing manager arranges
- When it goes off
- Fortnightly
- It goes off regularly when cooking certain things in the kitchen
- I don't but change the battery every year
- Not at regular intervals
- Smoke detector installed 3 years ago

Wilful Fire Raising

Wilful fire raising is the deliberate or malicious starting of fires to cause damage and destruction or endanger life. These fires put lives at risk, destroy property and wildlife, damage our environment and have a direct impact on our resources. Most wilful fires are started in piles of rubbish or wheelie bins, on open grassland or in unsecured areas of property (shared storage rooms or communal hallways).

Grampian Fire and Rescue Service aims to reduce the number of wilful fires occurring in Aberdeen City. We do this by speaking to the public at community events and using advertising. We also work with the Council to arrange the free collection of large refuse items, provide home fire safety visits, and work in partnership with our Community Planning Partners including Grampian Police.

Figure 8: Has there been a wilful fire in or around your home or local area in the last 2 years?

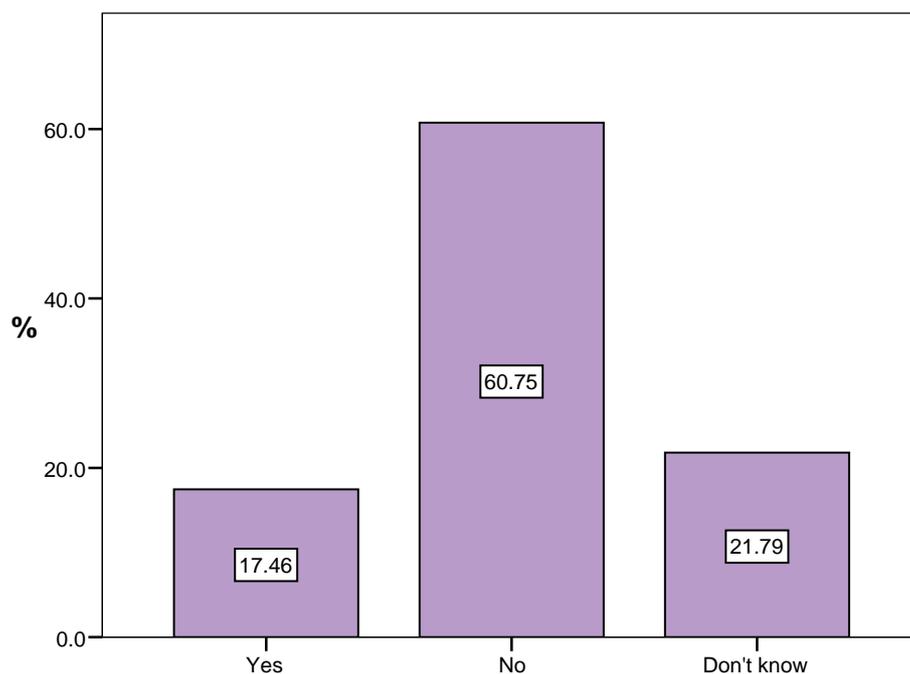


Figure 8 shows that approximately 17% of respondents indicated that there has been a wilful fire in or around their home or local area in the last two years. A further 61% indicated that there has not been a wilful fire in or around their home or local area in the last two years. The remaining 22% of respondents indicated that they

did not know if there had been a wilful fire in or around their home or local area in the last two years. Panellists living in the South areas of the city were most likely to indicate that there had been a wilful fire in their area (21%) compared with 16.5% of panellists in North areas and 13.7% of panellists in Central areas.

Figure 9: If yes, do you know if the fire service attended to deal with the incident?

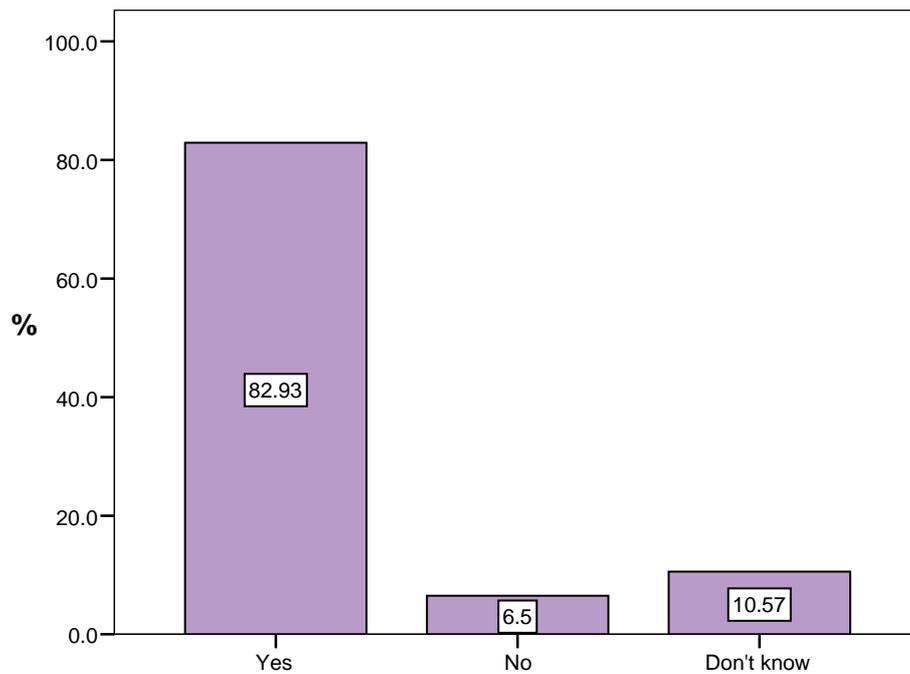


Figure 9 shows that of those respondents who indicated that there had been a wilful fire in or around their home or local area in the last two years approximately 83% stated that the fire service attended to deal with the blaze. A further 6% indicated that the fire service had not attended to deal with the blaze and the remaining 11% indicated that they did not know if the fire service attended to deal with the blaze.

Figure 10: Over the last 2 years, have you noticed a change in the number of wilful fires in your local area?

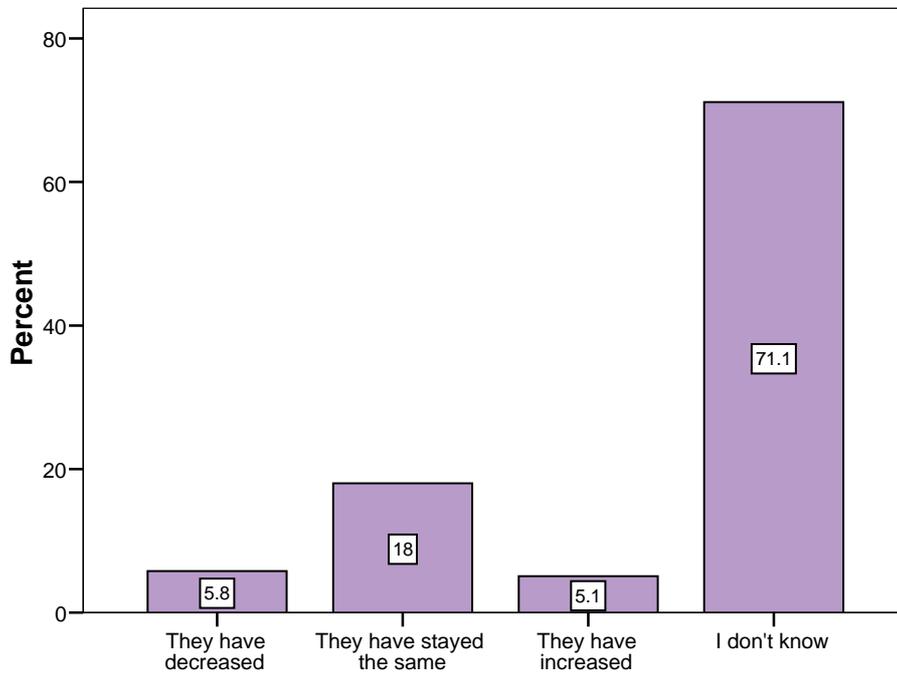


Figure 10 shows that 5.8% of respondents have noticed that over the last two years the number of wilful fires in their local area has decreased. A further 18% indicated they the number of wilful fires in their local area have stayed the same over the last two years and approximately 5% indicated that the number of wilful fires in their local area have increased. The majority of respondents (71.1%) indicated that they did not know if there had been a change in the number of wilful fires in their local area over the last two years.

Table 4: Grampian Fire and Rescue Service do some work specifically with young people to inform them of the dangers and consequences of wilful fire-raising.

	Yes	
	Count	%
Through regular visits by firefighters to primary and secondary schools as part of subjects in the curriculum	670	90.1%
Through visits from firefighters to youth groups such as brownies, cubs, after-school clubs or youth clubs	301	40.5%
Through social networking sites such as Bebo or MySpace	174	23.4%
Through advertising aimed specifically at young people — radio, television, press, billboards	225	30.2%
Other [Please specify]	14	1.9%

Panellists were asked to look at the list and tell us which 2 options they think would be most effective for reaching and informing young people.

Table 4 shows that approximately 90% of respondents believe that regular visits by firefighters to primary and secondary schools as part of subjects in the curriculum would be one of the most effective methods for reaching and informing young people about the dangers and consequences of wilful fireraising. A further 40.5% of respondents indicated that that they believe one of the most effective methods for reaching and informing young people is through visits from firefighters to youth groups such as brownies, cubs, after-school clubs or youth clubs. Approximately 30% of respondents believe that one of the most effective methods for reaching and informing young people is through advertising aimed specifically at young people — radio, television, press, billboards. Approximately 23% indicated that social networking sites such as Bebo or MySpace would be one of the most effective methods for reaching and informing young people about the dangers and consequences of wilful fireraising. Approximately 2% of respondents indicated that they think another method would be the most effective for reaching and informing young people.

Other ideas given by respondents as effective methods for reaching and informing young people about the dangers and consequences of wilful fireraising included:

- Well publicised punishments for those who are caught
- By ensuring that known fire raisers are not allowed into flats
- Educating people caught starting fires
- Meet them where they traditionally gather, for example Summerhill Court shopping centre, Mastrick (Greenfern Shops)
- Show consequences and costs

- Show the effect of real life fires
- Nothing will stop them
- More responsibility should be the parents and schools
- Make the sentence for wilful fire raising harder

Table 5: Grampian Fire and Rescue Service aims to make all our residents aware of the dangers and consequences of wilful fire-raising.

	Yes	
	Count	%
TV advertising	413	55.5%
Radio advertising	85	11.4%
Press advertising	121	16.3%
Billboards and bus adverts	226	30.4%
Distribution of leaflets to homes and communities	265	35.6%
Use of websites	62	8.3%
Specific community events — either organised by or attended by the fire service	218	29.3%
Other [Please specify]	13	1.7%

Panellists were asked to select 2 options that they think would be most effective for reaching the wider community.

Table 5 shows that the option which respondents think would be most effective for reaching the wider community with regard to the dangers and consequences of wilful fire-raising is TV advertising (55.5%). The option selected as the second most effective was distribution of leaflets to homes and communities (approximately 36%). Approximately 30% of respondents indicated that they think billboards and bus adverts would be effective in reaching the wider community with regard to the dangers and consequences of wilful fire-raising, while a further 29% indicated that they think specific community events (either organised by or attended by the fire service) would be most effective. Approximately 16% indicated that they believe press advertising would be most effective and 11% believe that radio advertising would be most effective. A further 8% indicated that they think the option which would be most effective for reaching the wider community with regard to the dangers and consequences of wilful fire-raising is using websites. Approximately 2% of respondents indicated that they believe another option would be most effective.

Other ideas given by respondents as effective means for reaching the wider community with regard to the dangers and consequences of wilful fire-raising included:

- School visits
- Use of local newsletter, e.g. Brig

- Local Community Centre
- Notices in pubs
- Direct contact with fire raisers
- By severely prosecuting wilful fire raisers, i.e. custodial sentences
- All of the above and show them the results of their actions, i.e. fire getting out of hand – risk of death, loss of personal treasures etc. Also the consequences to these fires on the Grampians which are an almost annual event.

Figure 11: Do you think that increasing our presence in the community at weekends would help prevent fire raising?

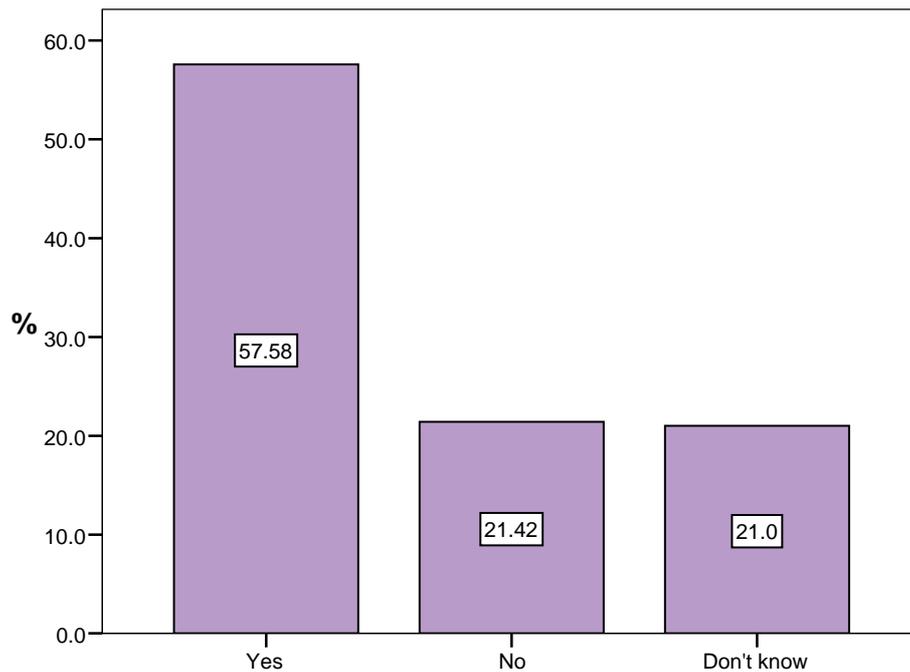


Figure 11 shows that approximately 57% of respondents indicated that they think increasing the presence of Grampian Fire and Rescue Service in the communities where wilful fires are most likely to occur will help the prevention of wilful fire raising. Approximately 21% of respondents indicated that they do not think it will help the prevention of wilful fire-raising. The remaining 21% indicated that they do not know if increasing the presence of Grampian Fire and Rescue Service in the communities where wilful fires are most likely to occur will help the prevention of wilful fire raising.

In Question 7a respondents were asked if they did not think increasing the presence of Grampian Fire and Rescue Service in the communities where wilful fires are most likely to occur will help the prevention of wilful fire raising why this was the case. A summary of responses is provided below:

- I am guessing the fire raisers would move elsewhere and start their fire there.
- It may have the opposite effect with youths thinking it'll be fun watching them deal with the fire.
- Their presence would be a challenge to youths and create a "them and us".
- Might give them the idea to get a fire once the vehicle has driven away.
- It may encourage it; individuals may take delight in seeing fire brigade in action.
- A possibility that this would encourage wilful fire-raising.
- The fire raisers would simply wait until Grampian Fire and Rescue left the area.
- Would help if more was done to stop people dumping furniture etc in the streets or when this happens if the council could remove items quickly.
- The mentality of someone who wilfully fire raises may think "they're out and about - let's give them something to do".
- If they are intent on doing it, they will. If not one place it will be another.
- Might entice situation more as kids may feel they have to see the fire fighters in action.
- Arsonists know exactly where the fire service will be before starting fires.
- These idiots! Would laugh and deliberately set fire to whatever they feel like.
- Vehicles may become targets for those involved. I cannot see this as a deterrent.
- I think the sight of fire and rescue service vehicles in a locality would increase the temptation and even give an idea where none had been before.
- I think the malevolent elements in the communities will regard their presence as a challenge and will be encouraged by it, to see if they get a reaction.
- Might entice fire raisers to start a fire.
- Wilful arsonists love to see chaos. Touring their area will inflate their egos.
- Might be viewed as an invitation to start ones (a challenge). Fire raisers do so secretly anyway.
- Kids will find it's like a game and likely to start more fires.

Respondents were asked if they had any suggestions for other ways we can work towards reducing the number of wilful fires. Suggestions from respondents included:

- By educating the young people in schools and even in primary schools.
- CCTV
- Police presence on the street
- Police and fire service working together to bring high profile prosecutions against those caught, as deterrent to others.
- Stiff sentence(s) should be handed out to fire raisers - this may have some effect on others who may consider fire-raising.
- Initiatives like the one in Kincorth Hill aiming to reduce the number of gorse bushes.
- Harsher sentences/naming and shaming in local press.
- Education of the damage caused by fire would help. Society should encourage people to have plenty of activities which they can enjoy and thus avoid thrill seeking by fire raising.

- I think a lot of wilful fires stem from boredom. Dundee successfully trialled free buses from a "troubled" estate to swimming pools - crime fell considerably.
- Showing videos of the effects of fire raising in schools.
- May not be just youngsters - alcohol may be an influence. May need to target a wider group.
- Open up halls and community centres to keep the kids amused.
- Have less unused building/properties and be sure any are properly boarded up.
- Patrols to prevent fly tipping.
- Restricting sales of matches and lighters.
- The public should do more in reporting things to the police.
- Make them repay cost of the damage.
- Have fly tipping sites cleared regularly and punish offenders.
- Get the council to pick up items quickly instead of leaving them lying in the streets for two weeks.
- Graphic demonstration of the consequences of wilful fire-raising.
- Our fire service does a brilliant job! Keep it up lads.
- Wheelie bins - left out in the open cause lots of fire in the community. We have metal bins lock-up in a secure area. Only residents have keys.
- School programmes- I think the emergency services, how important they are, should be considered as part of the school curriculum. Perhaps highlight the devastation caused in Australia each year by wilful fires.

Health and Social Care

MRSA Screening

Since August 2008, NHS Grampian has been taking part in a Scottish study to screen (test) all patients for MRSA when they are admitted to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary or the orthopaedic wards in Woodend Hospital. MRSA stands for Meticillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus. This is a bacterium that lives on the skin and can cause a number of common infections. This study will help the NHS decide if a national screening programme for people coming into hospital would be of benefit. We want to find out your views on MRSA, how it spreads and your awareness of the MRSA screening programme. The information you give us will contribute to helping the NHS improve the healthcare services offered to the residents of Aberdeen City and across Scotland.

Figure 12: Before reading about it in the City Voice, had you heard of MRSA?

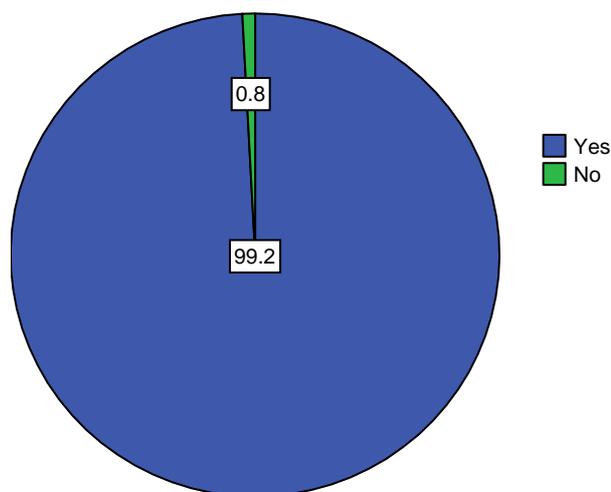


Figure 12 shows that 99.2% of respondents indicated that they had heard of MRSA before they read about it in the City Voice and the remaining 0.8% indicated that they had not heard of MRSA before they read about it in the City Voice.

Figure 13: Did you know that MRSA is mainly spread by hand contact?

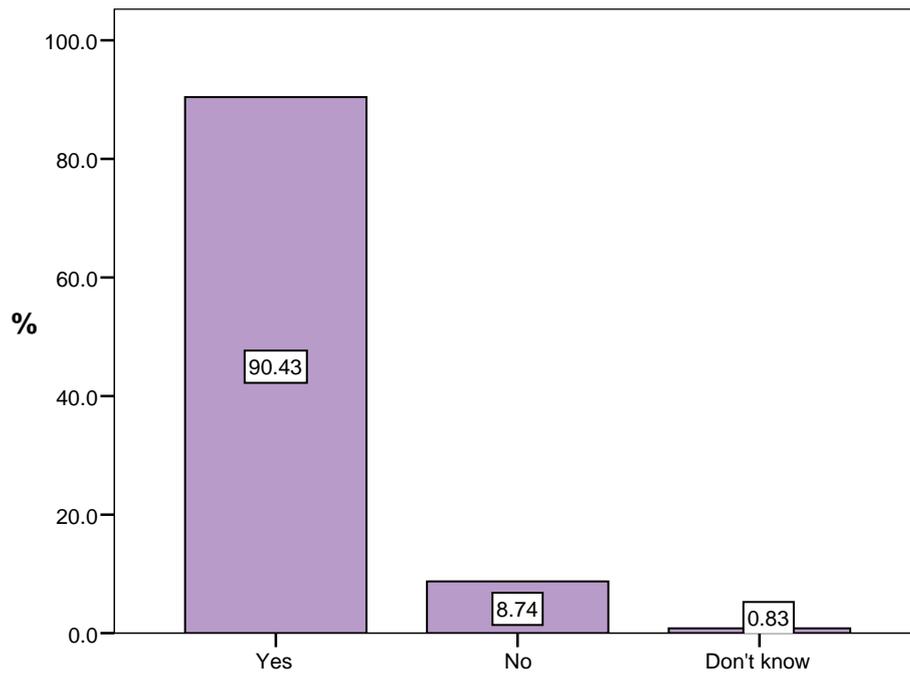


Figure 13 shows that approximately 90% of respondents knew that MRSA is mainly spread through hand contact. A further 9% indicated that they did not know that MRSA is mainly spread through hand contact and the remaining 1% of respondents indicated that they did not know if they knew that MRSA is mainly spread through hand contact.

Figure 14: Did you know that the risk of spreading MRSA can be reduced by simple things like hand washing?

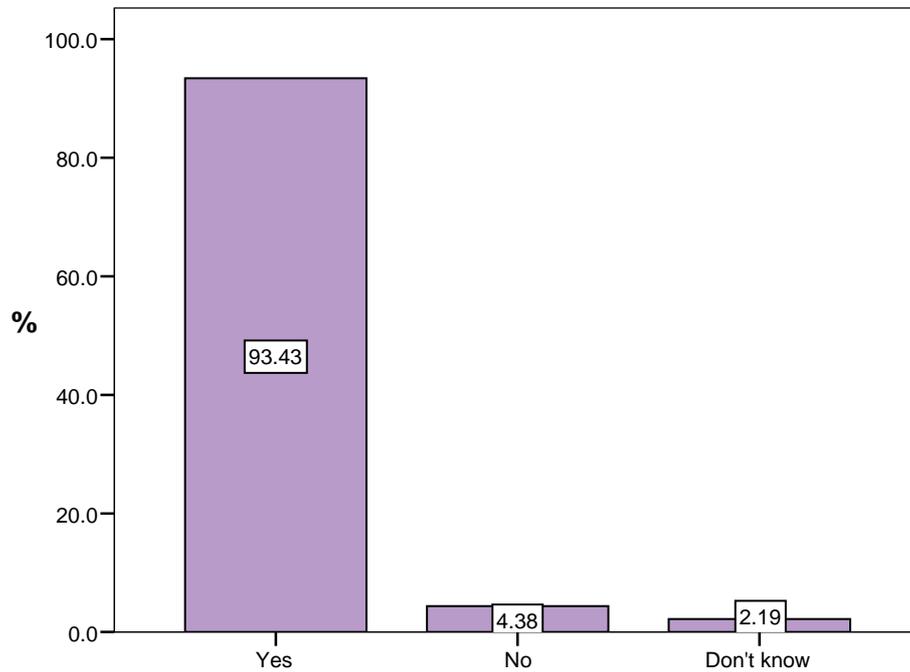


Figure 14 shows that approximately 93% of respondents did know that the risk of spreading MRSA can be reduced by simple things like hand washing and approximately 4% indicated that they did not know. Approximately 2% of respondents indicated that they did not know if they knew that the risk of spreading MRSA can be reduced by simple things like hand washing.

Figure 15: Generally, how concerned are you about the risk of MRSA in our City's hospitals?

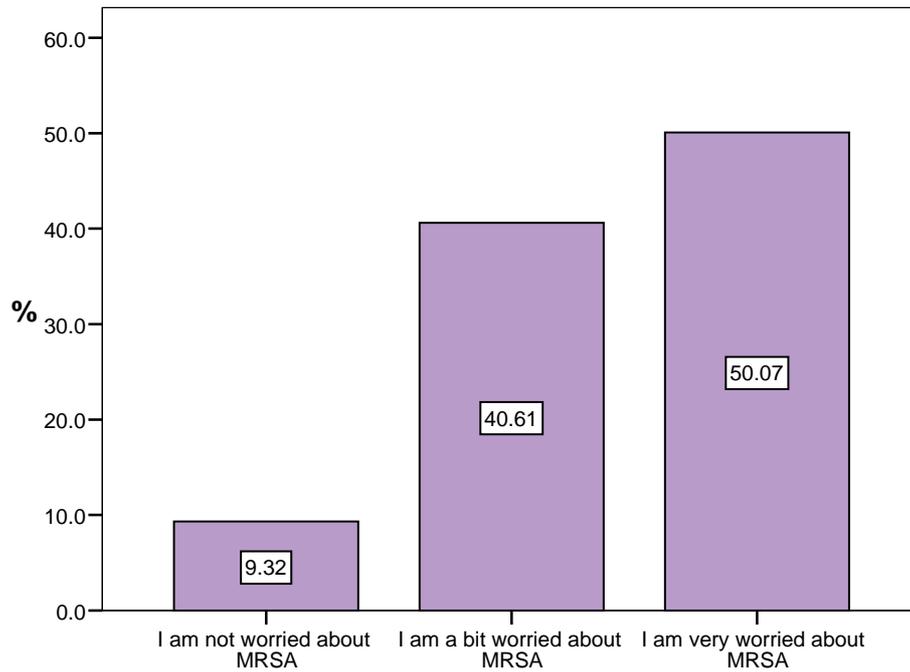


Figure 15 shows that approximately 9% of respondents are not worried about the risks of MRSA in Aberdeen's hospitals. Approximately 41% indicated that they are a bit worried about the risks of MRSA in Aberdeen's hospitals and the remaining 50% of respondents indicated that they are very worried about the risks of MRSA in Aberdeen's hospitals. When the results were crosstabulated by gender it was discovered that female panellists were more likely to indicate that they were worried about MRSA (55% indicating that they were 'very worried') than male panellists (44% indicated that they were 'very worried'). Older panellists also indicated a higher level of concern about MRSA; 61.3% of 55-64 year olds and 57% of over 65s indicated that they were 'very worried' compared with 18.5% of 25-34 year old panellists.

Figure 16: Before reading about it in the City Voice, were you aware of the NHS Grampian MRSA Screening programme?

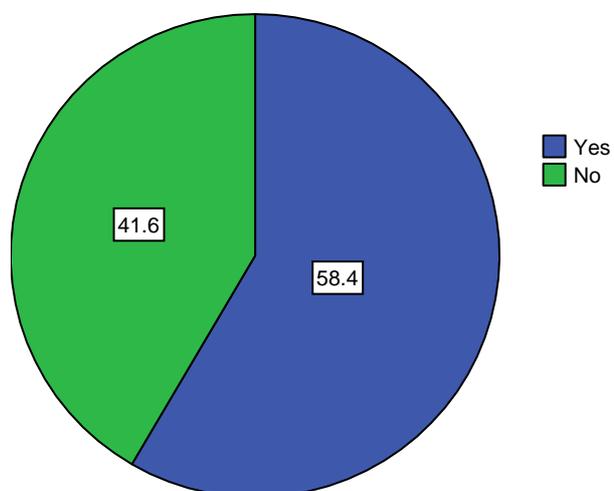


Figure 16 shows that approximately 58% of respondents were aware of the NHS Grampian MRSA Screening programme before reading about it in the City Voice and the remaining 42% of respondents indicated that they were not aware of the NHS Grampian MRSA Screening programme before reading about it in the City Voice.

Table 6: If yes, how did you find out about the MRSA Screening programme?

	Yes	
	Count	%
I was screened when admitted to the hospital	60	14.2%
Posters in hospital	124	29.2%
MRSA Screening Leaflet	43	10.1%
I was told by a doctor (or other healthcare professional)	45	10.6%
Media (Newspaper, TV, radio)	172	40.6%
Word of mouth	105	24.8%
Other [Please specify]	51	12.0%

Table 6 shows that of the respondents who were aware of the NHS Grampian MRSA Screening programme before reading about it in the City Voice approximately 41% found out about the screening programme from the media (newspaper, TV, radio). A further 29% of respondents indicated that they had found out via posters in hospital and approximately 25% indicated that they had found out by word of mouth. 14% of respondents had found out about the MRSA Screening programme when they were screened on admittance to the hospital. 12% of respondents indicated that they had found out in another way. Approximately 11% were told by a doctor or other healthcare professional and 10% found out from an MRSA Screening leaflet.

The most popular other ways in which respondents had found out about the MRSA Screening programme are listed below:

- I work in a hospital
- Family member/friend screened on admission to hospital
- Visiting patients in hospital
- Family member caught this in hospital and died of it

Other, less popular, ways in which respondents had found out about the MRSA Screening programme included:

- Web research/occupational health and safety group presentation
- Saw stand in trinity centre
- My neighbour does that job
- Anti-bacterial hand wash available at ward door - not everyone used it despite posters on ward door.
- By witnessing first hand a dr. leaving a patient who had MRSA and not washing his hands upon leaving the patient.
- I was told I would be screened when admitted to hospital. I was not.

Figure 17: Does the fact we are screening patients for MRSA, generally change your views about MRSA?

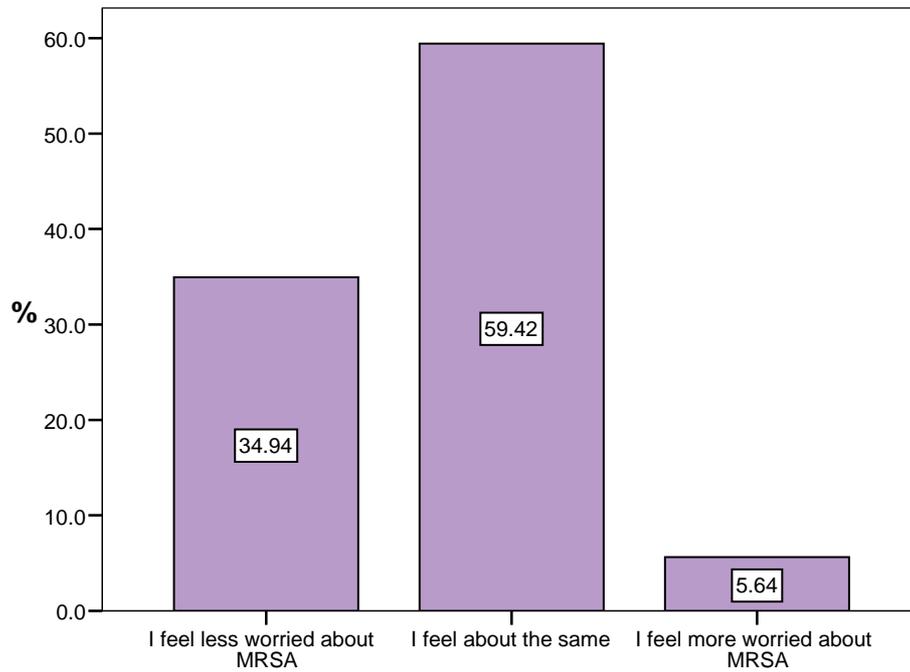


Figure 17 shows that 35% of respondents indicated that the fact that patients are being screened for MRSA made them feel less worried about MRSA. A further 59% indicated that the fact that patients are being screened for MRSA did not generally change the way that they felt about MRSA and the remaining 6% indicated that they feel more worried about MRSA as a result of this.

Respondents were asked if they said that they felt 'the same' or 'more worried' in question 8, could they give the reasons why. Their responses are listed below:

- I am NHS staff.
- Family member/friend screened on admission to hospital.
- Visiting patients in hospital.
- Family member caught this in hospital and died of it.
- Web research/occupational health and safety group presentation.
- Saw stand in trinity centre.
- My neighbour does that job.
- Anti-bacterial hand wash available at ward door - not everyone used it despite posters on ward door.
- By witnessing first hand a dr. leaving a patient who had MRSA and not washing his hands upon leaving the patient.
- I was told I would be screened when admitted to hospital. I was not.

'Looked After Children'

Some children and young people have difficult life experiences that may require some sort of intervention from the Local Authority, the Law Courts or Children's Hearings. This can sometimes lead to that child or young person becoming 'looked after' by their local authority. The term 'looked after' means that the council takes on the responsibility to look after these children in the same way a good parent would. This is also known as 'corporate parenting'. Aberdeen City Council currently looks after about 670 children. As well as taking on the day to day responsibilities, the council also has a role in developing these children and young people into responsible and independent adults who go on to have successful and productive lives.

Later this year, the Council is planning to raise awareness of the difficulties sometimes faced by looked after children. Before we do this, we want to know about your knowledge, perceptions and experiences.

Figure 18: Before reading the information above, had you ever heard of the term 'looked after children'?

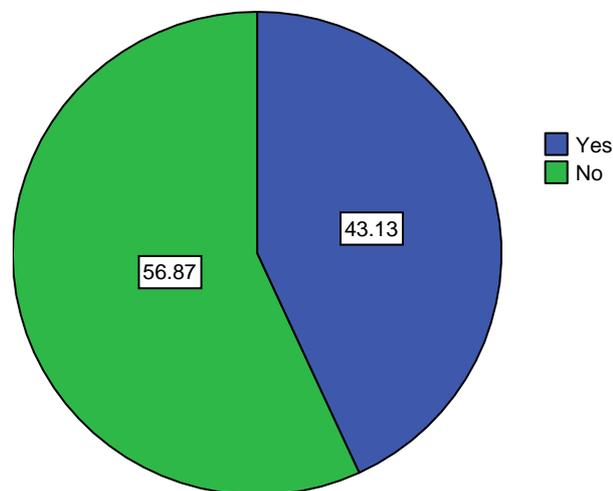


Figure 18 shows that 42% of respondents indicated that prior to having read the information in the City Voice they had heard of the term 'looked after children', while the remaining 57% had not heard of the term previously. Awareness was higher among female panellists than male panellists

Table 7: Out of the following list, please tick which you think are the 2 most likely reasons for a child/ young person to become ‘looked after’.

	Yes	
	Count	%
Lack of parental care (this can include failing to feed or clothe a child properly, allowing a child to wander the streets unsupervised late at night, allowing/ providing a child access to harmful substances etc)	608	81.7%
Victim of a serious offence (including ill treatment, abandonment, neglect, exposure, incest, sexual offence, burning or bodily injury)	342	46.0%
They have committed an offence	26	3.5%
Truancing from school	19	2.6%
Misusing alcohol, drugs and/or solvents	73	9.8%
Beyond the control of a relevant person (i.e. parent/ carer)	216	29.0%
The child has been abandoned/ orphaned or the parent is no longer able to look after the child due to illness.	175	23.5%
Other [Please specify]	10	1.3%

Table 7 shows that respondents think the most likely reason (approximately 82%) for a child/ young person to become ‘looked after’ is that there is a lack of parental care (this can include failing to feed or clothe a child properly, allowing a child to wander the streets unsupervised late at night, allowing/ providing a child access to harmful substances etc). 46% of respondents indicated that they think the most likely reason is that the child/ young person is the victim of a serious offence (including ill treatment, abandonment, neglect, exposure, incest, sexual offence, burning or bodily injury). A further 29% of respondents believe that the most likely reason for a child/ young person to become ‘looked after’ is that they are beyond the control of a relevant person (i.e. parent/ carer), while 23.5% indicated that they think it is because the child has been abandoned/ orphaned or the parent is no longer able to look after the child due to illness. Approximately 10% of respondents indicated that they believe that misusing alcohol, drugs and/or solvents is the most likely reason for a child/ young person to become ‘looked after’ and 3.5% think it is because the child/ young person has committed an offence. Approximately 3% indicated that they believe it is because the child/ young person has been truancing from school, while a further 1% of respondents indicated that they believe there is another reason more likely reason for a child/ young person to becoming ‘looked after’.

Other reasons that respondents thought were most likely for a child/ young person to become 'looked after' included:

- Uneducated parents themselves bought up in the same circumstances as all, or any, of the above and think it is the norm.
- Lack of direct parenting, insufficient back-up by social services.
- Physically disabled

Table 8: Please tick which of the following services/ organisations you think has a responsibility to care for 'looked after children'.

	Count	
	Yes	No
Social Work department	572	172
Education department	298	446
Councillors/ Elected Members	103	641
Health Services (NHS)	258	486
Voluntary Organisations (e.g. Barnardos)	269	475
Independent Organisations (e.g. some residential schools)	205	539
The Police	180	564
Housing Services department	98	646
Further education organisations — e.g., Colleges and Universities	45	699
All of the above	175	569

Table 8 shows that 572 respondents think that the Social Work department have a responsibility to care for 'looked after children' and a further 298 respondents indicated that they believe the Education department have a responsibility. 269 respondents believe that Voluntary Organisations, such as Barnardos, have a responsibility to care for 'looked after children'. The Health Services (NHS) were the fourth most popular service/ organisation that respondents indicated they think have a responsibility to care for 'looked after children' with 258 panellists ticking this option. A further 205 respondents indicated that they think Independent Organisations (e.g. some residential schools) have a responsibility.

Figure 19: Before reading the information above, were you aware that children could be 'looked after' but still living at home?

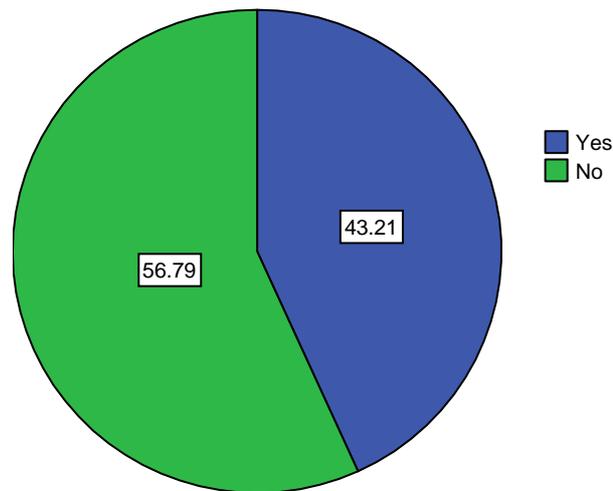


Figure 19 shows that 43% of respondents were aware that children could be 'looked after' but still living at home before they had read the information in the City Voice. The remaining 57% indicated that before reading the information in the City Voice they were not aware that children could be 'looked after' but still living at home. Once again awareness was higher in female panellists with 51.4% indicating that they were aware that children could be 'looked after' but still living at home compared with 35% of male panellists.

Figure 20: Are there any children’s services in your local area that provide support to ‘looked after children’? This may include children’s homes, counselling or drop in services, fostering services, family centres or accommodation for formerly looked after children.

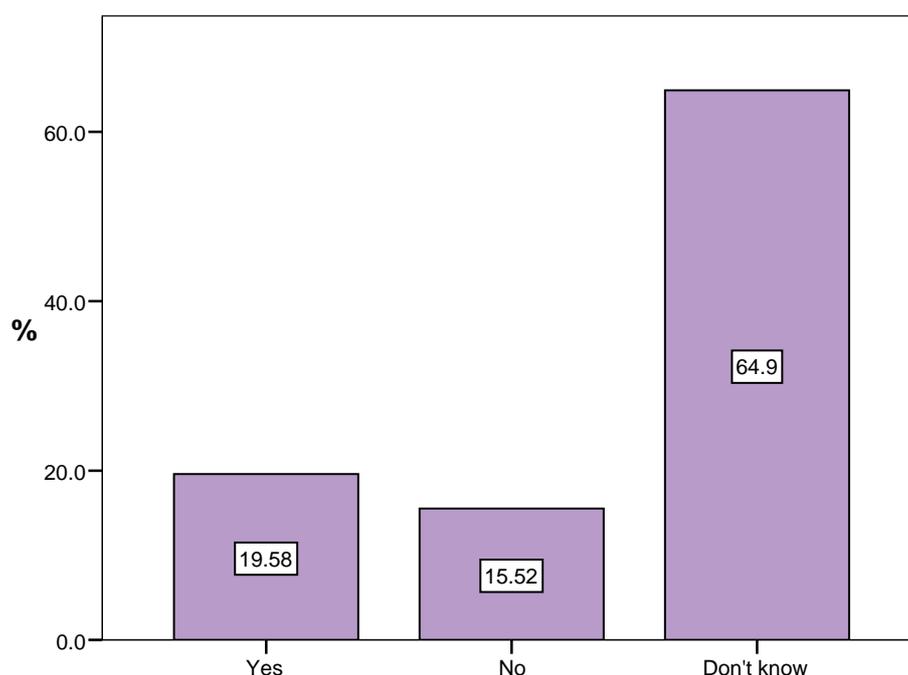


Figure 20 shows that approximately 20% of respondents indicated that there are children’s services in their local area that provide support to ‘looked after children’. Approximately 16% stated that there are not children’s services in their local area that provide support to ‘looked after children’. The majority of respondents (65%) indicated that they do not know if there are such services in their area.

Respondents were asked if they indicated ‘yes’ how they felt about having the services in their area. The most common answers from respondents were:

- Fine.
- Doesn’t bother me.
- Great to know that they are there.
- Fine, but it is essential that they operate without affecting local people's lives.
- It is these services that are vital to the wellbeing and safety of children.

Other comments made by respondents on how they feel about having these services in their local area included:

- I do not mind. I do not see why these children should not live in residential areas; in fact they should be in a normal environment and live where we all live.
- Too many concentrated in one small area.
- Ok, but I think it is time they were developed further.
- Concerned about them attracting antisocial characters.

- Depends on category of support required. I would not want residential behaviour services or formerly looked after children in my area. Such centres lead to undesirable characters finding excuses to visit area.
- I feel angry when these units are closed.
- All areas should have access to services provided by the Cyrenians and Aberdeen Foyer.
- I feel this is a good thing as we have a duty to care to children and to guide them to lead a normal life.
- It is a community responsibility.
- I am quite happy about these services in my local area as long as I feel confident the right people are in charge.
- There could be more, especially for the older children.
- No objection. The children deserve as much help from the community as is possible.
- There has been increased criminal activity (theft from cars). Normally child is moved to other home to solve the problem.
- Feel unsafe. Ages of children are mixed and so are their problems. They cause trouble - wrong role models for younger ones in home.
- Children can be out of control with lack of respect for anyone including themselves; however, are not unlike children who are not "looked after".
- There is an increase in minor crime in the area around the home. Other than that I have no objections.
- Very important to have these working and well funded in our area.
- Good we need more in deprived areas.
- The ones I am aware of are supported living - one of which is run by a charity. I have no objection to this and feel it is very worthwhile.
- They need to be in the area where these people live.
- Excellent ideal. Still require more social services through the town in general.
- There should be more of them. This is a vital service and there should be further links to those organisations e.g. universities, college, golf clubs, Aberdeen FC, etc., to give these children a chance.

Respondents were asked if they had any additional comments to make about children's services in Aberdeen City. The most frequently made additional comments on children's services in Aberdeen City (including children's homes) made by respondents were:

- Not enough funding is allocated to children's services.
- Lack of resources (e.g. social work staff) is a problem.
- The services provider should all be operating under one organisation and not several coming together e.g. social services, education dept, the police.
- Social workers are very caring but due to shortage of staff they do not always have time to do the job as it should be done.
- I feel that they are over stretched and underfunded.

Other additional comments included:

- There needs to be more free activities and events to keep them occupied and off the streets.
- It is very important to encourage children by providing them with sporting and social opportunities to develop into responsible adults, e.g. youth groups, hockey teams, sports centres.
- Not enough homes.

- Concerned that 'looked after children' are more likely to have more problems later in life.
- I think, as in practically all areas, social services are mostly staffed by academics who have no practical experience therefore it should be a prerequisite that all staff should have at least 5 years experience in the field after leaving university.
- The local authority needs to support these young people and do everything they can to help them move on from school into positive/sustainable destinations. This may need real continuity of staff involved that young people can trust.
- Children's services should also include parents services of a confidential nature - drop-in sessions.
- Why can volunteers not be made available to help some of these children? I am sure many people would like to help with no commercial gain looked for.
- Aren't many children sent to homes in England at great expense to an already "skint" council due to residential places here being closed?
- There should be more information publicised I am aware of Foyer, Befriend a Child and children's panel but not the range of provision or services around this.
- I am concerned about social services and the lack of support they offer.
- The siting of children's homes should be carefully considered to prevent "bad apples" from disrupting communities that do have stable environments.
- We used to live near a children home but the children get too much freedom and caused my children upset we moved house.
- I question the high cost of sending children to residential schools out with the authority.
- Stop closing residential children's homes and capitalising on the sale of property and land for private enterprise.
- It appears children both victims and culprits are placed together in homes. Fostering should take the place of these homes.
- More support for these children and the staff who care for them.
- Improved parental/extended family care must be supported to maintain family groups if at all possible.
- I favour a child first not parent first policy. I support early adoption as a very good answer to many problems.
- Aberdeen social services need to be trained a bit better when it comes to looking out for children.
- More positive guidance for undervalued children. Value children. Don't always believe adults.
- As I haven't heard of the services offered maybe a raised awareness in the area is required i.e. in local press and TV.
- It is vital that when the council take on this responsibility that it is not just paper work and promises. These children need commitment which can sometimes be expensive.

HOMES

Good Apple Homes

Aberdeen City Council owns and manages approximately 23,000 homes. Since 2002, the housing service has been promoted as 'goodapple homes'. The new name and branding was designed to provide a positive and modern image of council houses in our City. We are interested in assessing if the marketing and branding of goodapple homes has been effective and are looking at ways to improve this in the future.

Figure 21: Before reading about it in the City Voice, had you heard of goodapple homes?

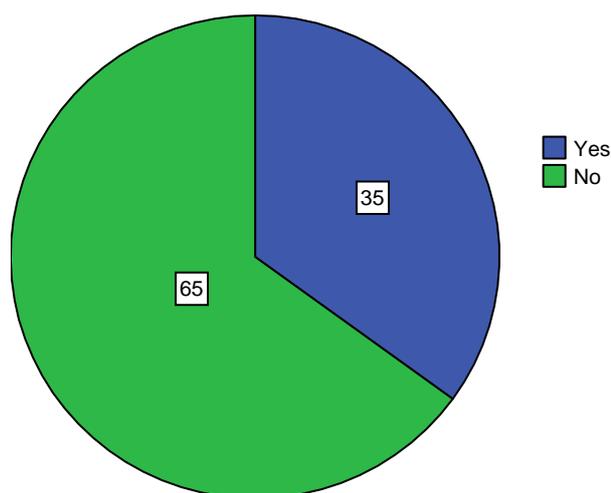


Figure 21 shows that 35% of respondents had heard of goodapple homes before they read about it in the City Voice. The remaining 65% stated that before reading about it in the City Voice they had not heard of goodapple homes. Female panellists were more likely to indicate that they had heard of goodapple homes with 42% indicating that they were aware of the organisation compared with 27% of male panellists.

Table 9: If yes, how did you hear about goodapple homes?

	Count	
	Yes	No
In my local housing office	70	175
In the local newspaper	58	187
Word of mouth	75	170
Council website	38	207
Other council building (sports centre, library)	35	210
The Point	23	222
Access Points (Mastrick or Kincorth)	11	234
I don't know	4	241
Other (please specify)	55	190

Table 9 shows that of those respondents who indicated that they had heard of goodapple homes prior to having read about it in the City Voice, 75 panellists indicated that they had heard by word of mouth. This was closely followed by the local housing office, which 70 panellists indicated that they had heard of goodapple homes through. The third most popular way in which respondents heard of goodapple homes was the local newspaper (58 respondents). A further 55 respondents indicated that they had heard of goodapple homes prior to having read about it in the City Voice due to another method which was not listed.

The most frequently given answers by respondents about how they heard about goodapple homes were:

- Advert
- Relative / friend is a goodapple tenant
- The council newsletter/correspondence
- Building sites
- Volunteer at the citizens advice bureau
- Work for the council
- Music hall event

Other responses given included:

- I am in a goodapple home.
- Tenants association.
- Through my work
- I used to be a council tenant.
- Why not call it council homes and then people don't have to find out.
- Age concern.
- From housing officer at a neighbourhood meeting.

Figure 22: If yes, did you know that goodapple homes is the name of Aberdeen City Councils' housing service?

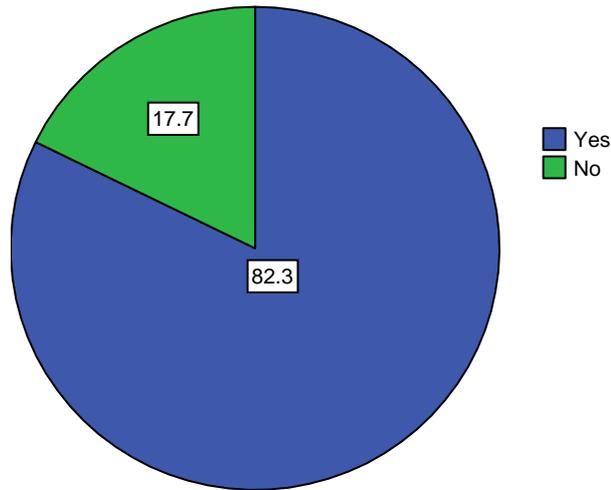


Figure 22 shows that of those respondents who indicated that they had heard of goodapple homes prior to having read about it in the City Voice 82% knew that goodapple homes is the name of Aberdeen City Councils' housing service. 18% indicated that they were not aware that goodapple homes is the name of Aberdeen City Councils' housing service.