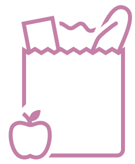
City Voice - Newsletter No. 46

Welcome to the 46th citizens' panel newsletter. This newsletter gives you a brief summary of the results of the 46th questionnaire which you received in December 2022.

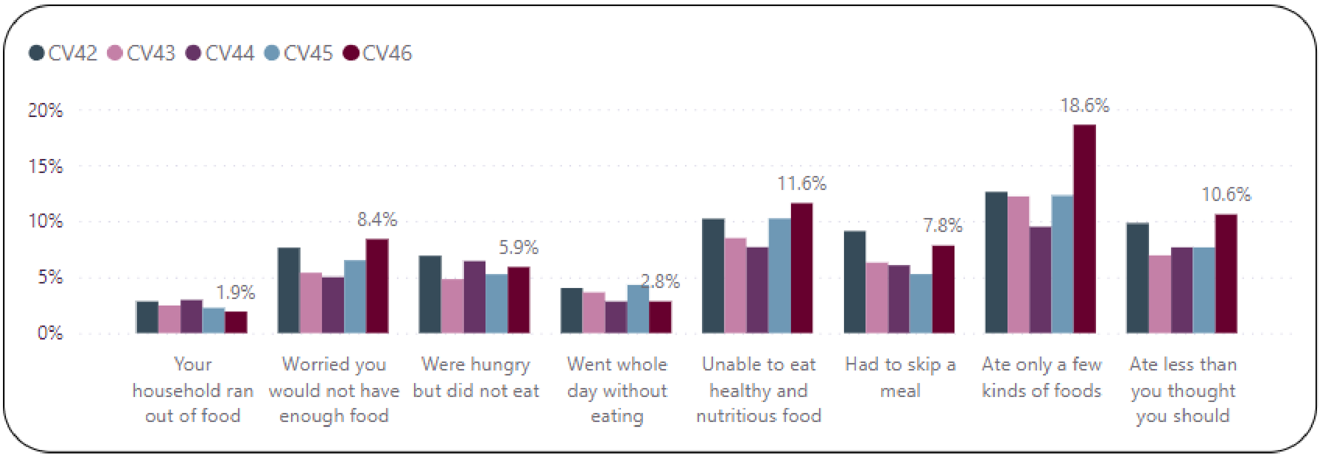
A total of 781 questionnaires were sent out to panellists and we received 479 completed questionnaires – equivalent to a response rate of 61.3%. This is considerably higher than the response rate achieved in the 45th City Voice questionnaire (30.7%) and almost certainly linked to the refresh of the panel which was carried out during 2022.

Access to Food

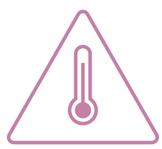


While most respondents did not report concerns around their ability to access healthy or nutritious food due to money or lack of other resources, 18.6% of respondents reported they ate only a few kinds of food, 11.6% that they were unable to eat healthy and nutritious food, 10.6% that they ate less than they thought they should and 8.4% that they were worried they would not have enough food to eat.

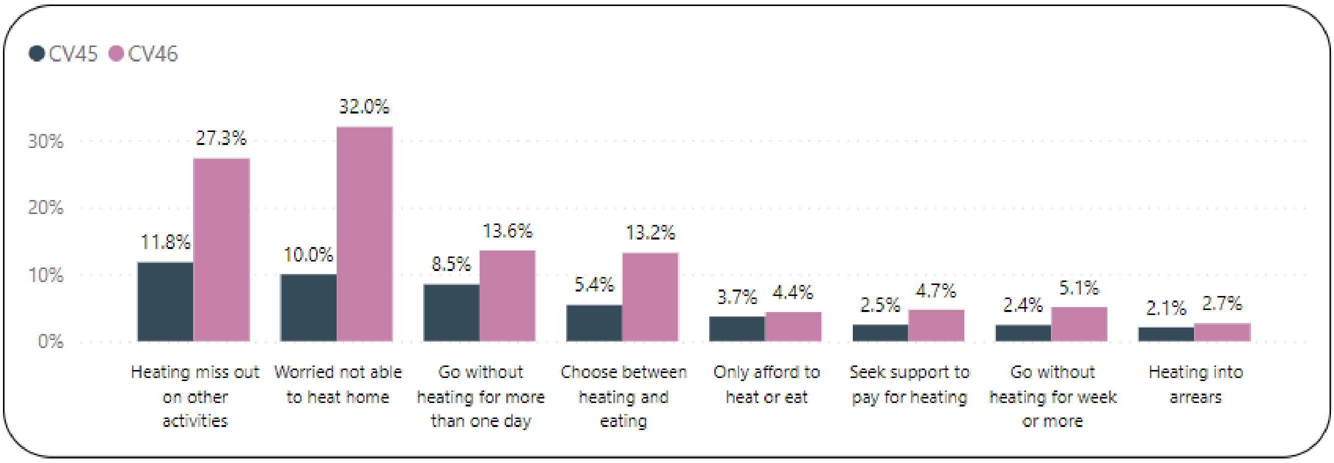
These questions were also asked in City Voice 43 (2019), City Voice 44 (2020) and City Voice 45 (2021). The chart below shows the percentage of respondents who answered 'yes' to each question. Since 2021, the proportion of respondents who answered 'yes' has increased in most categories, with the largest increase being in the proportion who reported they ate only a few kinds of food (from 12.3% to 18.6%).



Your heating

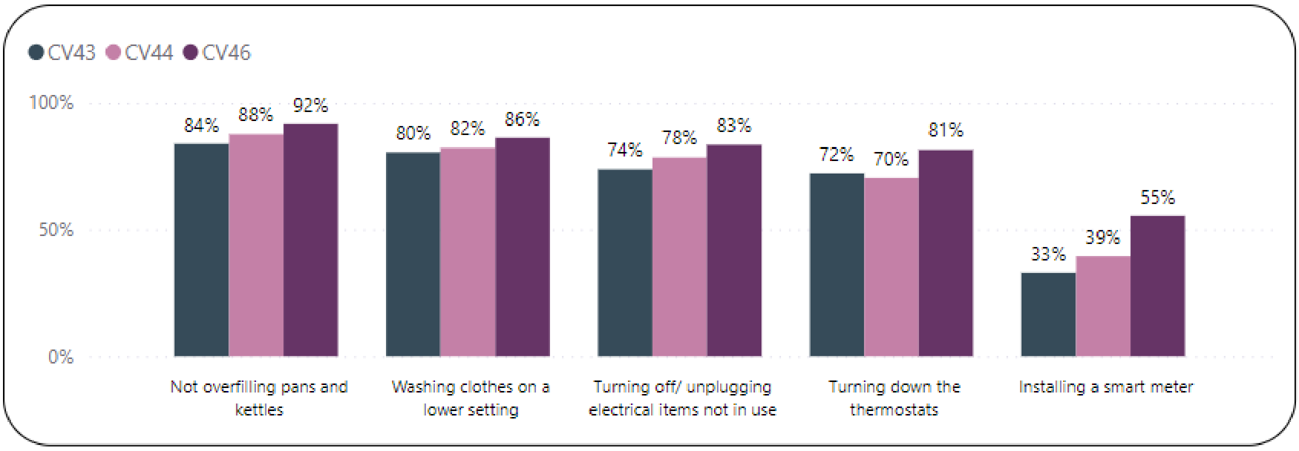


Almost a third (32%) of survey respondents said they were worried that they would not be able to heat their homes and over a quarter (27.3%) reported that paying for heating meant them missing out on other activities. Since these questions were first asked in City Voice 45, there have been increases across all categories, with the most notable being increases in the proportion of respondents who report being worried about not being able to heat their home (from 10% to 32%) as well the proportion who say that paying for heating has meant they have had to miss out on other activities (increase from 11.8% to 27.3%).

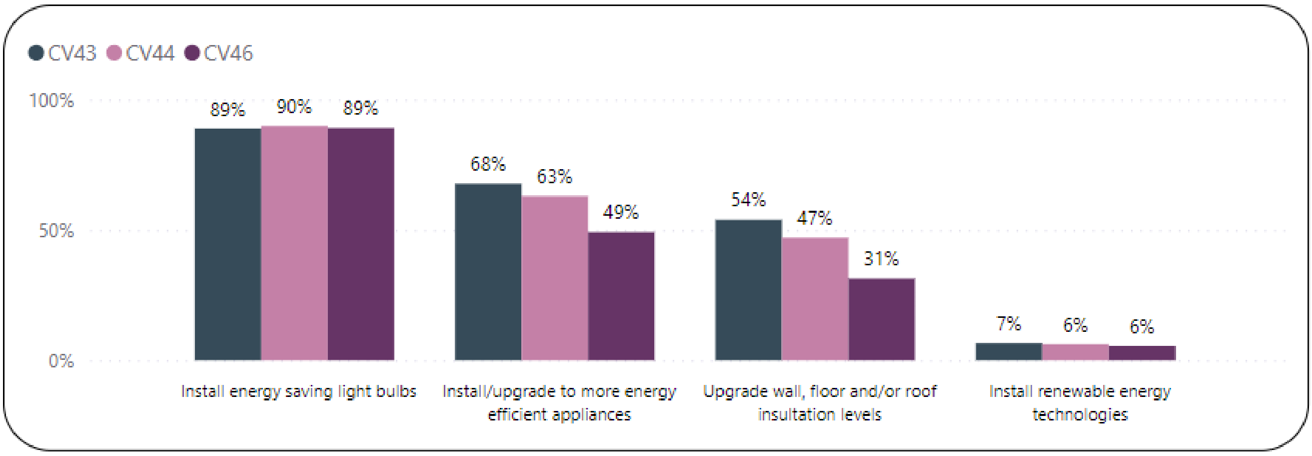


Climate change – energy use and demand

Reducing energy use: Overall the results suggest that most respondents are already taking steps to reduce the amount of energy they use e.g. turning down heating thermostats or switching off/ unplugging electrical items not in use. Common other ways of reducing energy use reported included wearing extra layers of clothing and reducing use of appliances such as ovens, dishwashers or tumble driers. These questions have been asked in previous City Voice questionnaires. The chart below shows the percentage of respondents who answered ‘currently do’ to the actions.



Reducing energy demand: Most respondents also reported that they currently are, or would be prepared to, undertake actions which would reduce energy demand. The exception to this is installing renewable energy technologies such as solar panels, where over half of respondents (55.4%) reported either they were not prepared to do this, or that this option was not applicable (e.g. those living in rented accommodation). Other common methods reported by respondents included only heating rooms being used or using more energy efficient methods such as slow cooker or air frier rather than the oven. These questions have been asked in previous City Voice questionnaires. The chart below shows the percentage of respondents who answered ‘currently do’ to the actions.



Climate change – extreme weather

Panellists were asked to rate their agreement or disagreement with several statements regarding their own and their community's readiness in the event of a major weather event. Over half (59.9%) of respondents agreed that they were worried about their home and community being vulnerable to severe weather events. While 66.6% of respondents agreed that they could be relied upon by their neighbours or community to provide support if anything were to happen, only 39.3% agreed that their community would support them if anything were to happen. Over a quarter (28.4%) of respondents reported they had taken steps to protect their home against severe weather and only 6.3% thought that their community had taken steps to prepare against severe weather with the most common response to this final statement being don't know (41.5% of respondents).

Panellists were also asked to provide comments on steps they, or their community have taken. A sample is given below.

Steps I have taken:

- Stocked up on dry/tinned food
- Alternative heating/lighting purchased in case of power outages
- Bought sandbags for flood protection
- General maintenance on house/roof/cleared gutters
- Arrange for grit bags for icy or snowy weather/cleared pavements for neighbours
- Cut down/trimmed trees in garden in case they blow down
- Insulated pipes

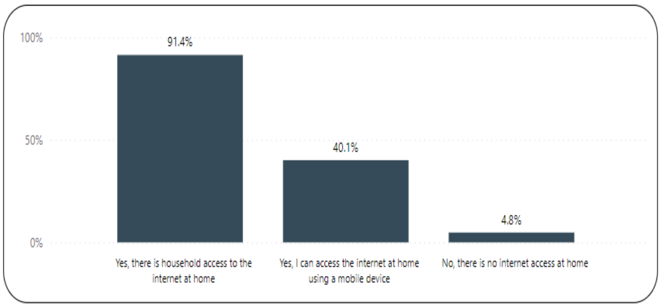
Steps my community has taken:

- Not aware of any
- Sand and salt bags made available
- Local resilience committee formed
- Creation of warm spaces
- Neighbourhood WhatsApp group/community Facebook page
- Flood defences improved

Digital access and skills

Digital devices: Firstly, panellists were asked if they owned or had easy access to a smart phone, a tablet or a laptop/PC. Most respondents reported owning or having easy access at home to each of the devices with 88.3% having access to a **smart phone**, 78.5% having access to a **laptop or PC** and 67.6% having access to a **tablet**. Overall, 95.8% of respondents reported having access to at least one of the devices.

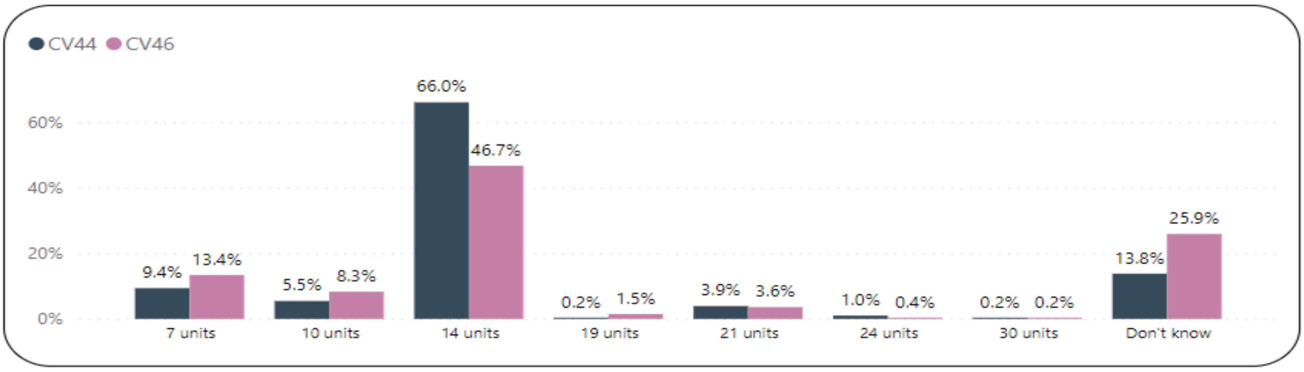
Internet access at home: Panellists were then asked if they had access to the internet at home. Most (91.4%) said there was household access to the internet at home, 40.1% said they could access the internet at home using a mobile device and 4.8% said there was no internet access at home.



Digital skills: The next set of questions asked about foundation digital skills. Participants were given a list of statements relating to digital tasks and asked to select one of three options – ‘I can do this’, ‘I can’t do this’ and ‘I want to learn to do this’. For every item on the list, 90% or over or respondents reported ‘I can do this’. Those who answer ‘I can do this’ to all seven of the foundation skills are categorised as having **basic digital skills**. On that basis, 80% of respondents were identified as having basic digital skills – slightly higher than when these questions were asked in City Voice 44 (78.8%) and almost 10% higher than when asked in City Voice 42.

Alcohol consumption

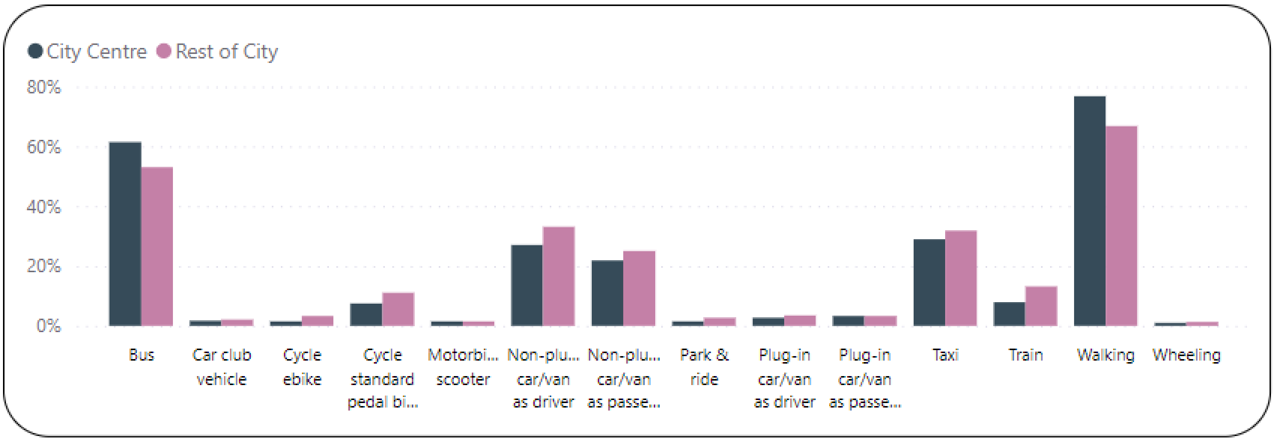
The questions in this section were aimed at helping to understand the knowledge of the population regarding drinking in a responsible way. The first question asked participants if they knew the maximum number of units of alcohol recommended over a week and gave a list of options. Less than half (46.7%) of respondents correctly choose 14 units. The next most common response was don’t know at 25.9%. These questions were asked previously in City Voice 44. At that time, the proportion who correctly identified 14 units as the maximum recommended number of units was higher at 66%.



When asked if they know how many units are in the alcoholic drinks they consume, most respondents (52.7%) said yes and 22.2% said no, they didn’t know. A quarter (25.1%) of respondents reported that they don’t drink alcohol. The next question asked participants: do you think about how many units you are drinking before, during or after you drink alcohol or not at all? The most common response was not at all (33.4%) followed by don't drink alcohol (26.7%). 21.4% of respondents said they thought about how many units they were drinking before they drank alcohol.

Travel and transport

Participants were asked which modes of travel they had used in the last year either within the City Centre or in the rest of the city. For travel within the City Centre, walking (76.8%) and bus (61.4%) were the most common choices, with taxi (29.0%) and non-plug-in car as driver (27.1%) being the next most common. Walking was also the most common choice for travel in the rest of the City at 66.8%, with bus (53.0%) and non-plug-in car as driver (33.2%) being the next most used forms of transport.



Your neighbourhood

In this section of the questionnaire, participants were asked to rate their different aspects of their neighbourhood on a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 = lots of room for improvement and 7 = very little room for improvement. A 'don't know' option was also given. The average (mean) scores for each question were then calculated. The questions were:

- Does your neighbourhood have a positive identity, and do you feel that you belong? (**Identity and belonging**)
- Do you feel able to participate in decisions and help change things for the better? (**Influence and sense of control**)

Identity and belonging had a mean score of 4.2 – slightly lower than the figure of 4.5 in City Voice 45. **Influence and sense of control** had a mean score of 3.3 – the same as when this question was asked in City Voice 45.

Table 1 breaks the responses down in more detail, showing the proportion of respondents who chose each score, as well as the proportion who answered don't know for CV45 and CV46. It also gives the mean scores and the number of respondents who answered each question.

Table 1: Your neighbourhood – percentages and mean scores

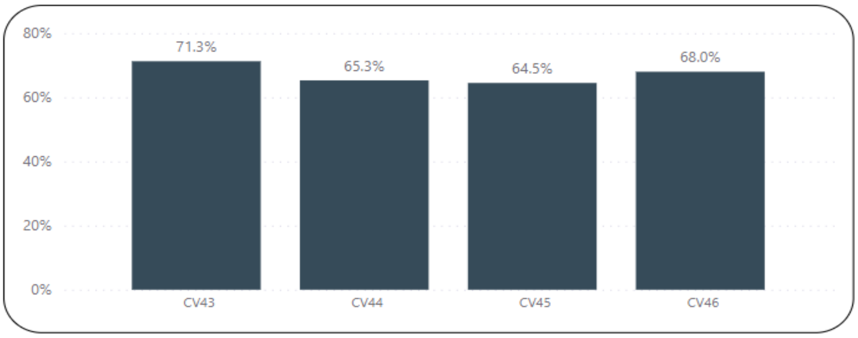
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Don't know	Mean Score	Base	Base excluding 'don't knows'
Does your neighbourhood have a positive identity and do you feel that you belong? (CV45)	6.0%	10.3%	10.3%	17.2%	17.4%	18.3%	13.2%	7.5%	4.5	536	496
Does your neighbourhood have a positive identity and do you feel that you belong? (CV46)	10.5%	5.9%	11.1%	18.9%	22.5%	15.5%	6.7%	8.8%	4.2	476	434
Do you feel able to participate in decisions and help change things for the better? (CV45)	20.1%	14.5%	12.5%	16.7%	11.2%	9.7%	3.5%	11.9%	3.3	538	474
Do you feel able to participate in decisions and help change things for the better? (CV46)	19.3%	13.4%	13.6%	18.9%	11.9%	7.5%	3.4%	11.9%	3.3	477	420

Percentages are based on all responses to each question (shown in the 'Base' column). Mean scores are calculated excluding 'Don't Knows' with the base number for these given in the final column.

Green space

The final set of questions asked about satisfaction with green spaces in the City. Green space includes a wide variety of different environments from parks, playing fields, play areas, allotments and community gardens, woodland and more natural areas, canal paths and riversides. Panellists were asked about their satisfaction with the quality of both their local green/open space and the overall quality of green/open spaces in the City. In both cases, most respondents reported being satisfied or fairly satisfied with the quality of green/open space (66.9% and 68.0% respectively).

Comparison with previous City Voice questionnaires suggests that the proportion of respondents who report being satisfied (satisfied or fairly satisfied) with the overall quality of green/open spaces in the city increased slightly in City Voice 46 compared to City Voice 44 and 45 but is not quite at the level seen in City Voice 43.



User panel

As part of the review conducted early last year, it was recommended that a City Voice User Panel be established. The final question asked participants if they would be interested in being part of a user panel. There was a positive response with over half (52.8%) of respondents indicating that they may be interested in joining the panel.

How we will use these results……

We provide a full service response to how we will use these results to make improvements within the full report of the 46th questionnaire. This is available to view on the Community Planning website https://communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk/cityvoice/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Report-46.pdf
Find out more about Community Planning Aberdeen at https://communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk/
If you have any queries or comments, please contact: cityvoice@aberdeencity.gov.uk