

**Survey of Londoners  
Headline findings**

June 2019



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## Foreword



We are lucky in this country to benefit from a strong set of national statistics which inform many aspects of the Mayor's work. Statistics show that we are one of the world's richest and most diverse cities, but we have the highest rate of child poverty in the UK, with long-standing and growing inequality.

Yet when we came to look in detail at issues such as social integration, equalities and fairness, and even access to food, we found that much of the data needed to design strategies to support our complex and rapidly-changing city was lacking.

We have become so used to having detailed evidence to support policy making in other areas of our lives such as economics and the physical development of the city. We wanted to make sure that our support for London's communities is underpinned by the same high-quality data, reflecting our diversity.

That's why we commissioned this survey – to deliver on the Mayor's commitment to measure these important aspects of Londoners' daily lives so we can develop the right interventions to tackle the impact of inequality.

This report offers a valuable, and in some cases disturbing, insight into the lives of seven million adult Londoners and how their lives vary. It has provided new data on the extent of social mixing among Londoners and how these experiences are related to their sense of belonging to the city, to the local areas in which they live, and their personal wellbeing. It has highlighted levels of loneliness and social isolation and how inequality is making it more difficult for Londoners to build positive relationships. It has demonstrated for the first time the true extent of food insecurity across London. And it has allowed us to measure debt among Londoners and those who are struggling to keep afloat.

The Mayor has pledged to do everything in his power to tackle poverty. He has already frozen transport fares, championed the London Living Wage, and delivered thousands of affordable homes. And in my area, we are tackling different areas of social integration through programmes like our Workforce Integration Network which supports underrepresented groups into living wage employment; and Sport Unites and the London Family Fund which are bringing together people from different backgrounds to help Londoners to develop meaningful relationships.

There is a role for local leaders to play, and we are pleased to have collaborated with Southwark and Croydon councils who will be using the findings for their boroughs to support their own public health and community policies.

By publishing this analysis, we want all Londoners, to be able to make use of this evidence in their decision-making. Whether you are working for a London borough planning services for your residents or are part of civil society bidding to improve outcomes for vulnerable groups, this report will provide you with the insight you need to work with us to make the city a better place for us all.

**Debbie Weekes-Bernard**  
**Deputy Mayor for Social Integration, Social Mobility and Community Engagement**

## **Acknowledgements**

We would like to thank those people who have contributed their time and expertise to input into the Survey, the 6,601 Londoners who gave their time to answer this in-depth survey, and especially the 2,000 who left many more detailed comments on their experience of the city in the section at the end, some of whose comments are included here. Also to the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) who carried out the sampling, question-testing, fieldwork and data preparation; the GLA analysts, policy experts and colleagues in the Mayor's Office (current and former) who managed the survey from start to finish; and to Southwark and Croydon Councils for boosting the sample.

# 1 Executive summary

## 1.1 Introduction

The Mayor of London has placed a high priority on improving social integration, equality, diversity and inclusion, economic fairness and food security across the city.

Recognising the need for better evidence in these areas to ensure that policy and programmes have maximum impact, the GLA conducted the Survey of Londoners in 2018/19, an online and paper self-completion survey of adults aged 16 and over in London.

The Survey, which received responses from 6,601 Londoners, aims to fill evidence gaps and help improve analysis and policy making in these areas. It uses questions that allow for comparison with existing London and national data, and has a larger sample size than regular opinion polling. This offers a more accurate picture of society in London and allows for analysis of sub-groups within London's population.

This initial report provides descriptive results for the key headline measures and supporting demographic data collected by the Survey. The data will be subject to more detailed analysis in key policy areas in future.

## 1.2 Social Integration

The Mayor of London's approach to social integration is about how all Londoners live together.

**The Mayor's social integration strategy has three pillars:** Londoners' **relationships** with each other, their **participation** in society and the level of **equality** between Londoners. These three pillars interact to determine broader social integration **outcomes** in the city – the effects of social integration in terms of belonging and personal well-being.

Alongside the publication of *All of us: The Mayor's strategy for social integration*, the GLA published a draft set of social integration measures, designed to give a snapshot of the state of social integration in London using existing data. The Survey of Londoners has collected further data, allowing us to update and broaden the GLA's set of social integration measures.

### Social Integration – outcomes:

- **Belonging to London:** Most Londoners exhibit high levels of belonging to London, with 81 per cent saying they belong to the city. Belonging varies by ethnicity: Black and Asian Londoners have the highest rates of belonging to London. White British Londoners have a higher rate of belonging than Londoners of a White Other ethnic background<sup>1</sup>.
- **Local area belonging:** Almost three quarters of Londoners (73 per cent) say they belong to their local area. Muslim and Hindu Londoners report higher rates of belonging than other groups of Londoners. Younger Londoners are less likely to say they belong to their local area.
- **Personal well-being:** 60 per cent of Londoners report high personal well-being. High well-being is associated with economic advantage, with Londoners who own their own homes or have higher incomes more likely to report high personal well-being.

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<sup>1</sup> In the Survey of Londoners, 'White Other' refers to Londoners who identify as having a White ethnic background that is not White British

## Social Integration – relationships:

- **Diversity within Londoners' friendship groups:** Relatively few Londoners, just 15 per cent, say that all their friends are from the same ethnic background as themselves. Almost twice as many Londoners say that all their friends are a similar age (31 per cent) or have a similar level of education (28 per cent). Eleven per cent say that all their friends have a similar level of income. Younger Londoners are more likely to have friends of a similar age group. White British Londoners are more likely to say that all their friends are from the same ethnic background.
- **Londoners' wider social networks<sup>2</sup>:** The survey also explores social mixing in Londoners' wider social networks, excluding close friends. Thirty per cent of Londoners report positive social mixing with others of a different ethnicity, and 26 per cent with others who are older or younger than them. A much smaller proportion of Londoners, only 9 per cent, report positive social mixing with others of a different social class. Younger Londoners are less likely to mix positively with others of a different age than Londoners in older age groups. Londoners with more diversity in their network of close friends are more likely to report positive social mixing with others of a different background in their wider network.
- **Loneliness:** Eight per cent of Londoners often or always feel lonely. Loneliness is more common among younger and single Londoners, as well as Londoners with low incomes and those who are social housing tenants.
- **Social isolation:** Over a quarter of Londoners are socially isolated (27 per cent), defined as not having someone they can rely on a lot in an emergency. Social isolation is more common among Black Londoners and Londoners who do not speak English well. In addition, both loneliness and social isolation are more common among LGBT Londoners.
- **Relationships with neighbours:** Almost half of Londoners borrow things and exchange favours with their neighbours (45 per cent). Londoners aged 25-34 and those who are newer to their local area are substantially less likely to interact with their neighbours than other groups.
- **Social cohesion:** Three quarters of Londoners agree that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together (75 per cent). Londoners who interact with their neighbours are more likely to have positive views of social cohesion.
- **Frequency of social media and messaging use:** Forty-four per cent of Londoners use their social media and messaging accounts several times a day. Unsurprisingly, frequent usage is more common among younger Londoners.

## Social Integration – participation:

- **Formal volunteering:** Twenty-eight per cent of Londoners have participated in formal volunteering in the last 12 months. Young Londoners are the age group most likely to engage in formal volunteering.
- **Informal volunteering:** Around half (52 per cent) of Londoners have participated in informal volunteering, defined as giving unpaid help to a person who is not a family member in the last 12 months.
- **Civic participation:** Twenty-four per cent of Londoners have participated in civic activity in the last 12 months, such as campaigning on behalf of a political party, running or trying to set up a local service or organising a community event. Londoners who are in insecure work have higher rates of civic participation.
- **Voter registration:** Eighty-eight per cent of the eligible 16+ population report that they are registered to vote. Groups less likely to be registered to vote include young people and those renting in the private

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<sup>2</sup> Social mixing in the Survey of Londoners is defined as having positive and frequent interactions with others of a different ethnicity, age group or social class, excluding close friends

or social rented sector. Non-British nationals who have lived in London for less than five years are also less likely to be registered to vote.

- **Formal culture and events:** Two-thirds of Londoners (66 per cent) have engaged in activities such as going to the theatre, cinema or live music and attending local community festivals and events in the last month. Women are more likely to engage in formal culture and events than men. Middle-class Londoners are also more likely to engage in formal culture and events than working-class Londoners.
- **Sport:** Almost a quarter of Londoners have played sport in the last month (23 per cent). Men are more likely to play sport than women. Sport participation also declines with age.
- **Links between participation and relationships:** Civic participation, informal or formal volunteering is associated with having more diverse relationships. Participation in culture and sport is not consistently associated with having more diverse relationships, although it is associated with lower rates of loneliness and social isolation.

### Social Integration – equality:

- **Unfair treatment:** More than one-third of Londoners (35 per cent) have been treated unfairly in the last 12 months because of one or several protected characteristics<sup>3</sup> or because of their social class. Londoners are most likely to have been treated unfairly because of their ethnicity, followed by age, sex, social class and religion. Londoners who have been treated unfairly are also less likely to agree that their local area is a place where people of different backgrounds get on.
- **English language proficiency:** Of those Londoners for whom English was not a first language, 91 per cent are proficient in English. Londoners who are not proficient in English are much less likely to participate.
- **Security of private rented sector accommodation:** Among London's private renters, 29 per cent are classified as being affected by housing insecurity, having had to leave their previous accommodation due to issues related to cost, conditions or their relationship with their landlord.
- **Financial resilience:** A third of Londoners do not have £1,500 in savings (33 per cent)<sup>4</sup>. Black, disabled and young Londoners are less likely to have £1,500 in savings. Londoners living in the most disadvantaged areas are more than twice as likely to not have savings than those Londoners living in the least disadvantaged areas. In addition, those without savings are much less likely to engage in formal culture and events.

## 1.3 Economic Fairness

The Mayor of London published his first set of economic fairness measures in September 2018, defining 'Economic fairness' as a situation when all Londoners benefit from the city's success, so that opportunity and prosperity are shared.

The Survey of Londoners collected data on several measures of economic fairness so that the findings could be broken down to understand which groups are most affected by economic unfairness:

- **Perceptions of fairness:** Fifty-four per cent of Londoners think that London is a fair city. Men are more likely to agree that London is fair than women, while Londoners aged 50 and over are more likely to believe London is fair than younger Londoners. Black and Asian Londoners are more likely to agree that London is fair than White British Londoners.

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<sup>3</sup> The Equality Act provides legal protection for individuals when they are discriminated against because of nine 'protected characteristics', including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation

<sup>4</sup> £1,500 has been selected as a measure which provides a buffer for unexpected costs such as boiler breakdowns, car MOT repairs and loss of income

- **London as a meritocracy:** Forty-four per cent of Londoners agree that if they work hard they will get ahead. Forty-three per cent say that their hard work is no guarantee of this. Belief in London as a meritocracy falls with age. Men and owner-occupiers are more likely to believe that they will get ahead in London if they work hard. White British, Black and Mixed ethnicity Londoners are more likely to agree that their hard work and determination will be no guarantee of getting ahead in London, compared with Asian Londoners.
- **Insecure employment:** Ten per cent of working Londoners are in insecure employment, that is being employed on a temporary contract, working through an employment agency or self-employed in low-skilled occupations. The groups most likely to be in insecure employment include Londoners on low incomes and those with no qualifications.
- **Debt:** Just under 4 in 10 Londoners (37 per cent) owe money on unsecured debt, including personal loans, credit cards, household bills and other forms of consumer credit. Twenty-four per cent of Londoners who owe money find keeping up with that debt a heavy burden, equivalent to around 600,000 Londoners. Low income Londoners, social renters, single parents and disabled Londoners are more likely to find their debts a heavy burden.
- **Self-reported fuel poverty:** Twelve per cent of Londoners are not able to keep their home warm in winter. Black Londoners are more likely to self-report fuel poverty than White Londoners. Low income Londoners, single parents, social renters and disabled Londoners were also more likely to have struggled to keep their homes warm.
- **Bank accounts:** Two per cent of Londoners do not have a bank or building society account. Londoners who are students, who have never worked or are long-term unemployed are more likely to not have a bank account.

## 1.4 Food Security

Being food insecure means that at times a person's food intake is reduced and their eating patterns are disrupted because of a lack of money and other resources for obtaining food.

The Mayor of London committed to measuring food security in London in his Food Strategy. The Survey of Londoners collected this data, which will be used to support the development of long-term solutions to the causes and impacts of food insecurity.

Household food security status is measured by the responses to a series of questions about adults' and children's behaviours and experiences associated with difficulty in meeting food needs.

- **Adults' food security:** Around one in five (21 per cent) of adults in London have low or very low food security, equivalent to 1.5 million adults. Unsurprisingly, Londoners with low incomes are more likely to report food insecurity. Single parents, disabled Londoners and Black Londoners are also more likely to experience low or very low food security.
- **Children's food security:** Around one in six (17 per cent) parents in London have children living in low or very low food security. This equates to around 400,000 children. Households with more children are more likely to experience food insecurity among children. Also, children of low income or disabled parents are more likely to experience food insecurity.
- **Parents' food security:** The proportion of these parents themselves living in low or very low adult food security is 27 per cent (higher than the 17 per cent who have children living in low or very low food security). A majority of these parents have less than £1,500 in savings, and around one-third have household bills arrears, as well as being more likely to experience a range of other economic issues.

## **1.5 Conclusion**

The Survey of Londoners has collected data on many of these measures for the first time in London. It gives the Mayor of London, London boroughs and other leaders an accurate picture of social challenges in London that can be used to improve policymaking. Often issues uncovered by the Survey, such as food insecurity and social isolation, are dealt with in isolation. The Survey of Londoners gives us the opportunity to draw links between these issues and policy priorities.

This headline report is just the start. Following publication, City Intelligence will work with the Mayor of London, civil society, boroughs and others to share the survey data and to shape future strategy and inform policy design.

## 2 Introduction

The Mayor of London has placed a high priority on improving social integration, equality, diversity and inclusion, and economic fairness and food security across the city. Relevant new strategies launched by the Mayor include the Social Integration strategy<sup>5</sup>; the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy<sup>6</sup>; the Economic Development Strategy<sup>7</sup>; and the Food Strategy<sup>8</sup>. In addition, the London Assembly's Economy Committee has highlighted the need to better understand London's financially excluded<sup>9</sup>. The Survey of Londoners (the Survey) aims to fill evidence gaps and improve analysis and policy making in these areas.

### 2.1 Objectives of the Survey of Londoners

The objectives of the Survey are:

- To provide a set of measures of social integration based on the GLA's framework for social integration, for both the London population as a whole and key sub-groups
- To provide measures of economic fairness and financial inclusion not available from other sources
- To provide data to support our understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion, including groups with protected characteristics for whom we lack evidence from existing sources
- To provide a robust measure of food insecurity in London
- To provide an understanding of how Londoners' social integration and economic fairness are affected by their demographic and socio-economic characteristics

The Survey of Londoners is part of a wider programme to improve the Social Evidence Base for London. The evidence base is an open online resource for the GLA, central and national government, civil society organisations, other international cities, and Londoners themselves, to understand social issues in London, their causes and their impact on the lives of Londoners<sup>10</sup>.

Data from the Survey of Londoners will be deposited in the UK Data Archive for further analysis by academics and others in early 2020.

### 2.2 Survey Methodology

The Survey of Londoners is a self-completion survey of 6,601 adults aged 16 and over living in London. The Survey ran from October 2018 to March 2019. The Survey used an online first methodology, followed by paper questionnaires, with a small number of face-to-face reminders to boost response. The sample was drawn from addresses in the Postcode Address File across the whole of London and was designed to provide estimates for major demographic groups in London by age, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation etc. Southwark and Croydon Councils paid for a boosted sample in their Boroughs to enable them to report their results separately.

The questions used were taken from other established surveys where possible, and new ones were designed and tested prior to inclusion by NatCen, the survey organisation contracted for the sample design, questionnaire testing, fieldwork and data preparation.

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<sup>5</sup> GLA (2018) [All of Us: The Mayor's strategy for social integration](#).

<sup>6</sup> GLA (2018) [Inclusive London: The Mayor's equality, diversity and inclusion strategy](#).

<sup>7</sup> GLA (2018) [The Mayor's Economic Development Strategy for London](#).

<sup>8</sup> GLA (2018) [The London Food Strategy: Healthy and sustainable food for London](#).

<sup>9</sup> London Assembly Economy Committee (2018) [Short changed: the financial health of Londoners](#).

<sup>10</sup> GLA (2019) [London's Social Evidence Base](#). This initial version will be added to as more evidence becomes available.

## 2.3 This Report

This report from the Survey provides the key headline measures and supporting demographic results. It is being published so that these can be used publicly for a range of policy purposes. This initial analysis is primarily descriptive in nature and reports statistics in terms of their correlation rather than reporting causation. This is the first stage of a longer programme to analyse and disseminate the survey findings. Figures in this report are reported to illustrate statistically significant differences either from the average for all Londoners or between two or more highlighted groups. A more complete set of tables can be found on the London Datastore<sup>11</sup>. For this report, the geographic analysis is limited to where there is a significant variation by area either according to the Indices of Multiple Deprivation, or by London Assembly electoral constituencies. An explanation of the terms and definitions used in this report can be found in Appendix 2.

Quotations illustrating analysis in this report are taken from spontaneous free-text responses to a question at the end of the Survey asking 'is there anything else you want to say?' The quotations have been chosen to illustrate the main issues covered in the Survey and to present a balance of views.

The Survey provides a rich dataset for further detailed analysis of how outcomes in the policy areas covered are shaped by the characteristics of Londoners and the places in which they live. Further analyses following this publication will support the development and delivery of a variety of policies relating to the relevant strategies in these areas. These will include more detailed analysis of topics covered in this report and statistical modelling designed to develop small area classifications and typologies, as well as estimating the most significant factors influencing social integration.

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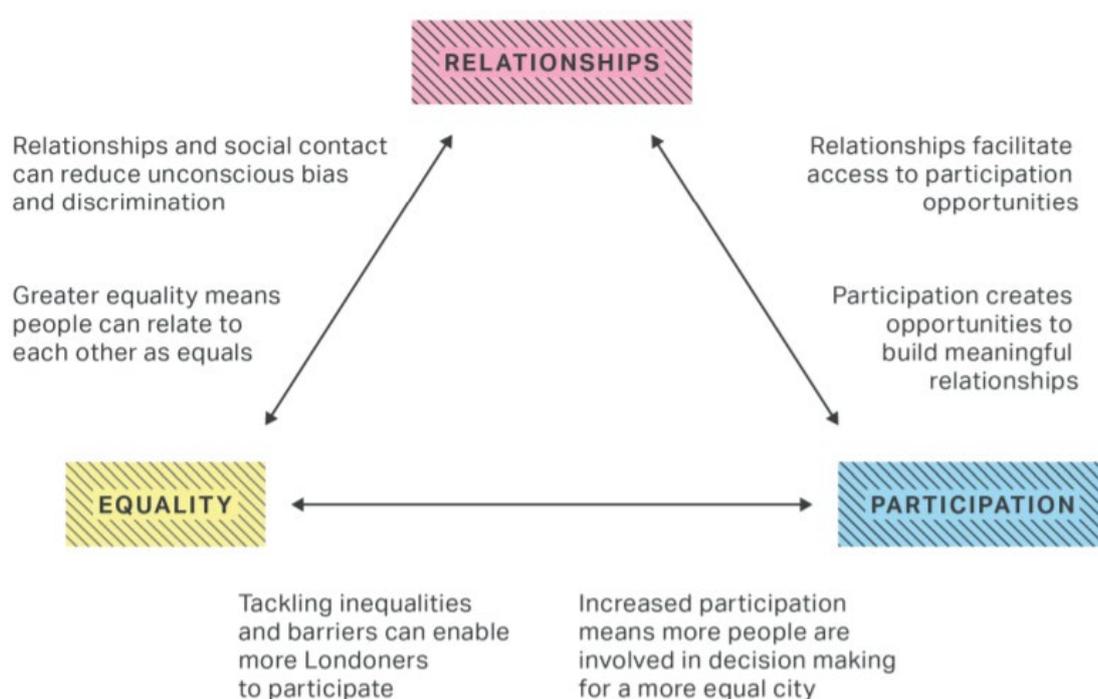
<sup>11</sup> GLA (2019) [London's Social Evidence Base](#).

### 3 Social integration

The Mayor of London’s approach to social integration understands this to be about how all Londoners live together<sup>12</sup>. This approach recognises that London’s rapid pace of social and economic change comes with challenges as well as opportunities. But it argues that by forging deeper connections and reducing inequalities between all Londoners, the city will be better placed to ensure growing diversity and change is a strength rather than a source of division.

The Mayor’s approach looks at the different aspects of how Londoners interact with each other and the city they live in that are key to social integration. It has three pillars: the nature of Londoners’ relationships with each other, their participation in society and the level of equality between people. Figure 3.1 summarises how these three dimensions interact to determine overall social integration in the city.

**Figure 3.1: Understanding social integration**



Alongside the Strategy, the GLA published a draft set of social integration measures, designed to give a snapshot of the state of social integration in London using existing data. This identified several gaps in the evidence. In some cases, data for key social integration issues was not available at all, whereas in others the London sample size within national datasets was too small to provide a detailed understanding of the issue in question.

The Survey of Londoners set out to fill these gaps, allowing us to understand social integration as a whole, to see how Londoners’ relationships interact with their participation and experience of equalities issues. It also measured the influence of these pillars to determine broader social integration ‘outcomes’, measures used by the GLA to understand the overall level of social integration in London.

<sup>12</sup> GLA (2018) [All of Us: The Mayor’s strategy for social integration](#).

This section presents the headline results for measures of social integration covering relationships, participation, equality and outcomes. The purpose of this section is to understand the overall level of social integration in London; which groups of Londoners are more or less integrated, and to start to identify links between the different domains of social integration.

### 3.1 Social Integration – Outcomes

The Survey of Londoners asked three questions designed to capture important outcomes of social integration:

**Belonging to London:** the Survey asked respondents how strongly they feel they belong to London. Those who answered ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ strongly were coded as belonging to London.

**Local area belonging:** the Survey defined a respondent’s local area as being within 15-20 minutes walking distance from their home. It asked how strongly respondents feel they belong to this area. Those who answered ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ strongly were coded as belonging to their local area.

**Personal well-being:** the Survey asked respondents to rate, on a score of 1 to 10, how satisfied they are with their life nowadays. Those that rated their life satisfaction as 7-10 were coded as having high life satisfaction, in line with the Office for National Statistics guidance on measuring personal well-being.

This section presents the headline results for these measures, as well as highlighting sub-groups in London’s population with particularly high or low belonging and well-being.

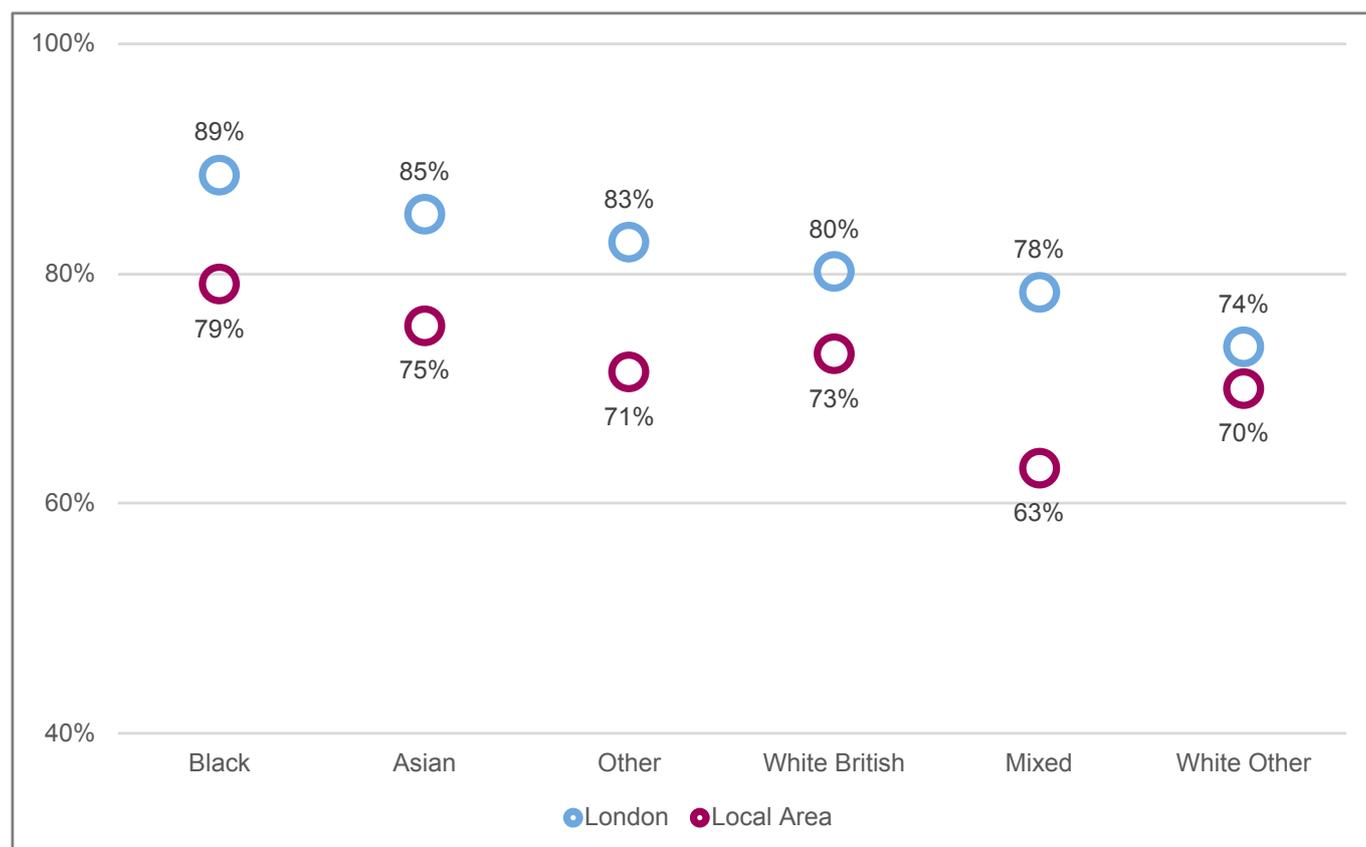
#### 3.1.1 Belonging to London

**Most Londoners exhibit high levels of belonging to London, with 81 per cent saying they belong ‘very’ or ‘fairly strongly’ to the city.** Very few Londoners, just four per cent, say that they belong to London ‘not at all strongly’.

Belonging to London is related to length of time in the city. Londoners who are newer to the city are less likely to feel they belong. Sixty-three per cent of Londoners who have lived in London for less than five years feel they belong to the city. By contrast, 89 per cent of those who have always lived in London feel they belong to the city.

Belonging also varies by ethnicity. Black and Asian Londoners have the highest rates of belonging to London (89 per cent and 85 per cent respectively). Londoners of a White Other ethnic background exhibit lower rates of belonging to London (74 per cent) than those of a White British ethnicity (80 per cent).

**Figure 3.2: Belonging to London is highest among Black and Asian Londoners**

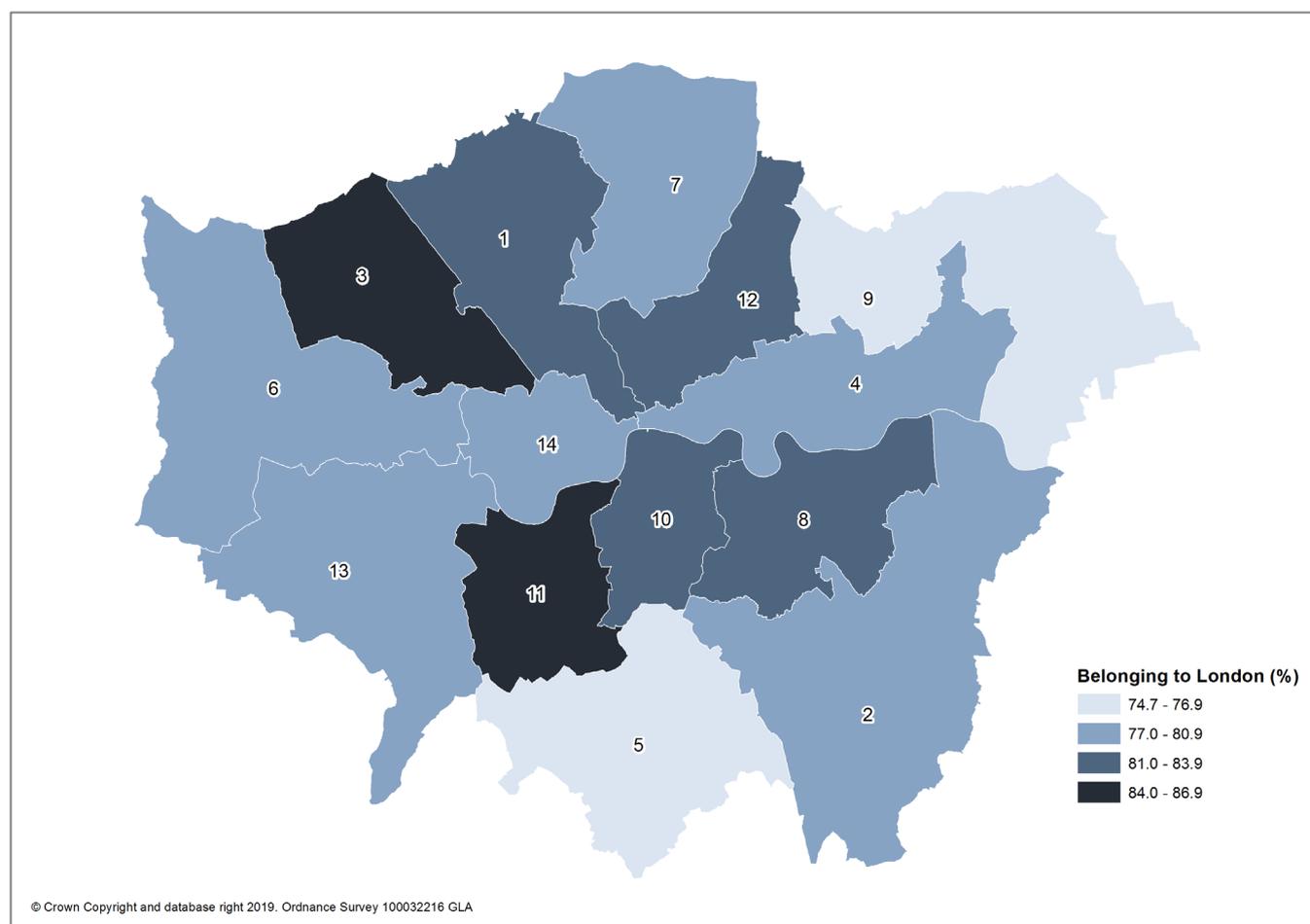


Base: Black (543), Asian (994); Other (234); White British (3,252); Mixed (199); White Other (1,014)

Londoners with a non-British nationality are less likely to belong than British Londoners (75 versus 83 per cent respectively). Belonging to London is also much lower among those who are not proficient in English (66 per cent).

Belonging varies by area. 63 per cent of those who say they do not belong live in outer London. By area, belonging to London is lowest in Havering & Redbridge (77 per cent), and Croydon & Sutton (75 per cent), contrasting with Brent & Harrow (87 per cent) and Merton & Wandsworth (85 per cent).

**Figure 3.3: Belonging to London by London Assembly constituency (per cent)**



Base: Barnet & Camden (407); Bexley & Bromley (316); Brent & Harrow (423); City & East (620); Croydon & Sutton (817); Ealing & Hillingdon (445); Enfield & Haringey (337); Greenwich & Lewisham (464); Havering & Redbridge (306); Lambeth & Southwark (918); Merton & Wandsworth (339); North East (564); South West (341); West Central (304)

A key to the numbered constituencies can be found in Appendix 2.

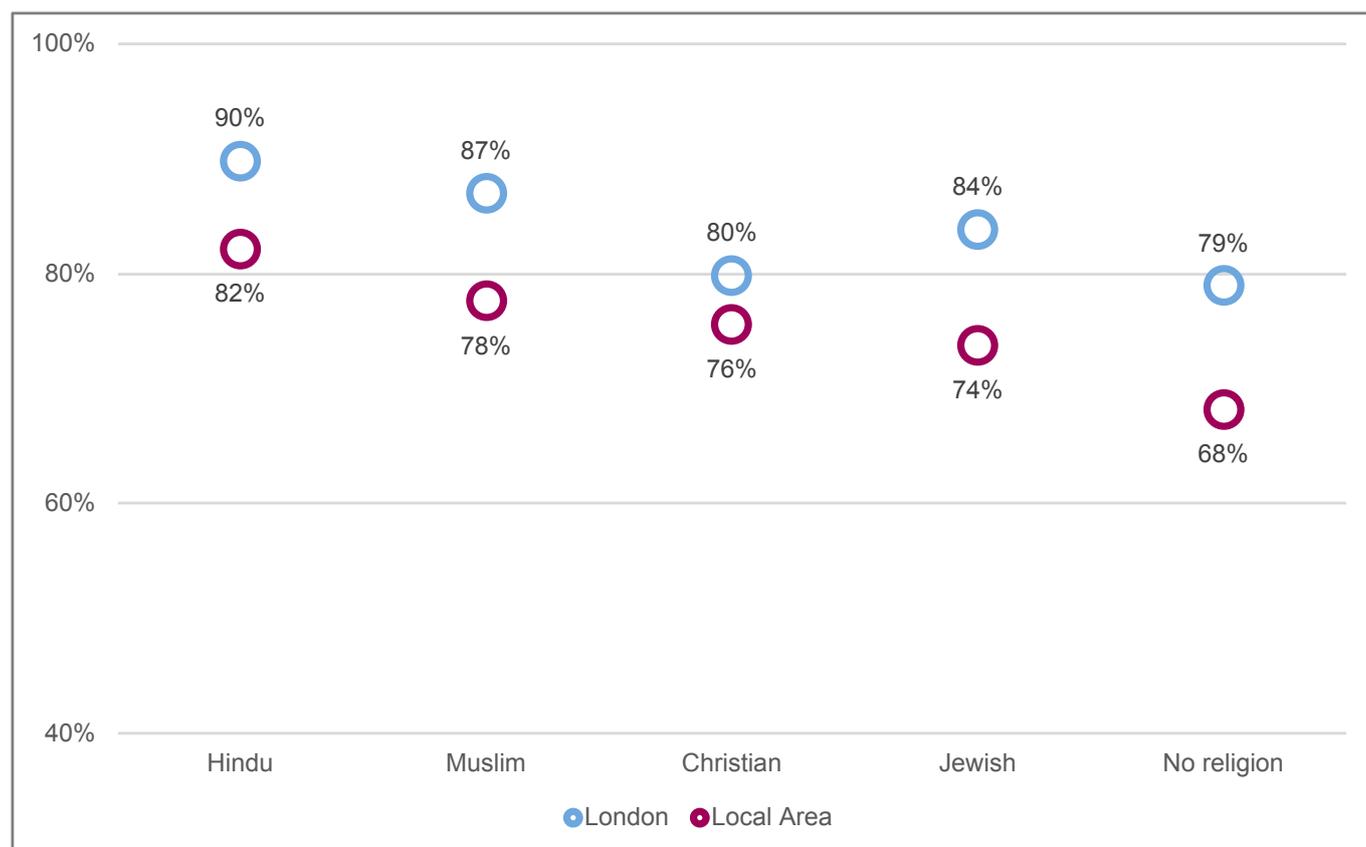
### 3.1.2 Local area belonging

**Almost three quarters of Londoners (73 per cent) say they belong to their local area** (within 15-20 minutes walking distance of their home). Again, very few Londoners (six per cent) say they belong ‘not at all strongly’ to their local area.

**As with belonging to London overall, Londoners who are newer to their local area are less likely to feel they belong.** Sixty per cent of Londoners who have lived in their local area for less than five years feel they belong.

But there are differences in other factors behind belonging to London and local area. Groups with the highest rates of local area belonging include Hindu and Muslim Londoners (82 per cent and 78 per cent respectively), compared with 68 per cent of those with no religion (see Figure 3.4).

**Figure 3.4: Hindu and Muslim Londoners have high rates of belonging to their local area**



Base: Hindu (280), Muslim (575); Christian (2,835); Jewish (117); No religion (2,194)

Groups with rates of local area belonging lower than the average include smaller, more geographically dispersed groups such as LGBT+ Londoners (65 per cent), and Londoners of a Mixed ethnic background (63 per cent). It is also lower for couples without children (68 per cent). While these groups are less likely to belong to their local area than the average, their rates of belonging to London are similar to the overall average for all Londoners.

Finally, local area belonging is less prevalent among younger Londoners aged 25-34 (63 per cent), those aged 16-24 (66 per cent), and Londoners living in private rented accommodation (64 per cent).

Local area belonging varies less across London Assembly Areas than London belonging – it is lowest in the City & East and Croydon & Sutton (both 69 per cent) and is highest in Ealing & Hillingdon and the South West (77 per cent).

### Quotes from Londoners with positive experiences of Belonging to London and their Local Area

"I love London and am never happier than when I hear lots of different languages being spoken around me. Love the multiculturalism, the diversity and the buzz!"

"I love living in multicultural London and consider myself a Londoner despite growing up in the north east. I love the friendliness, respect and diversity."

"I love being part of the community and I am always happy to help others. I love when we celebrate Royal occasions - it brings us all together."

"I love my local area. People are friendly and supporting. In extension, I enjoy all the benefits of London and the diversity of its population is a great richness."

"Faith based organisations seem to work really well and in harmony with each other to make the local communities a better place to live in."

### Quotes from Londoners about difficulties in Belonging to London and their Local Area

"It has taken me ten years to make a lot of friends in my block of flats (and I am very friendly!). Needs to be more opportunities and encouragement to build a local community."

"I feel increasingly isolated and I rarely hear English being spoken. When I am out and about when shopping or on a bus, and feel I am in a different country."

"I love that London is a vibrant and diverse city, but I often feel I am not a part of it. I would love to feel more community, but I am not religious and would prefer to avoid religion in my activities, so it's sometimes difficult to find things to be involved in."

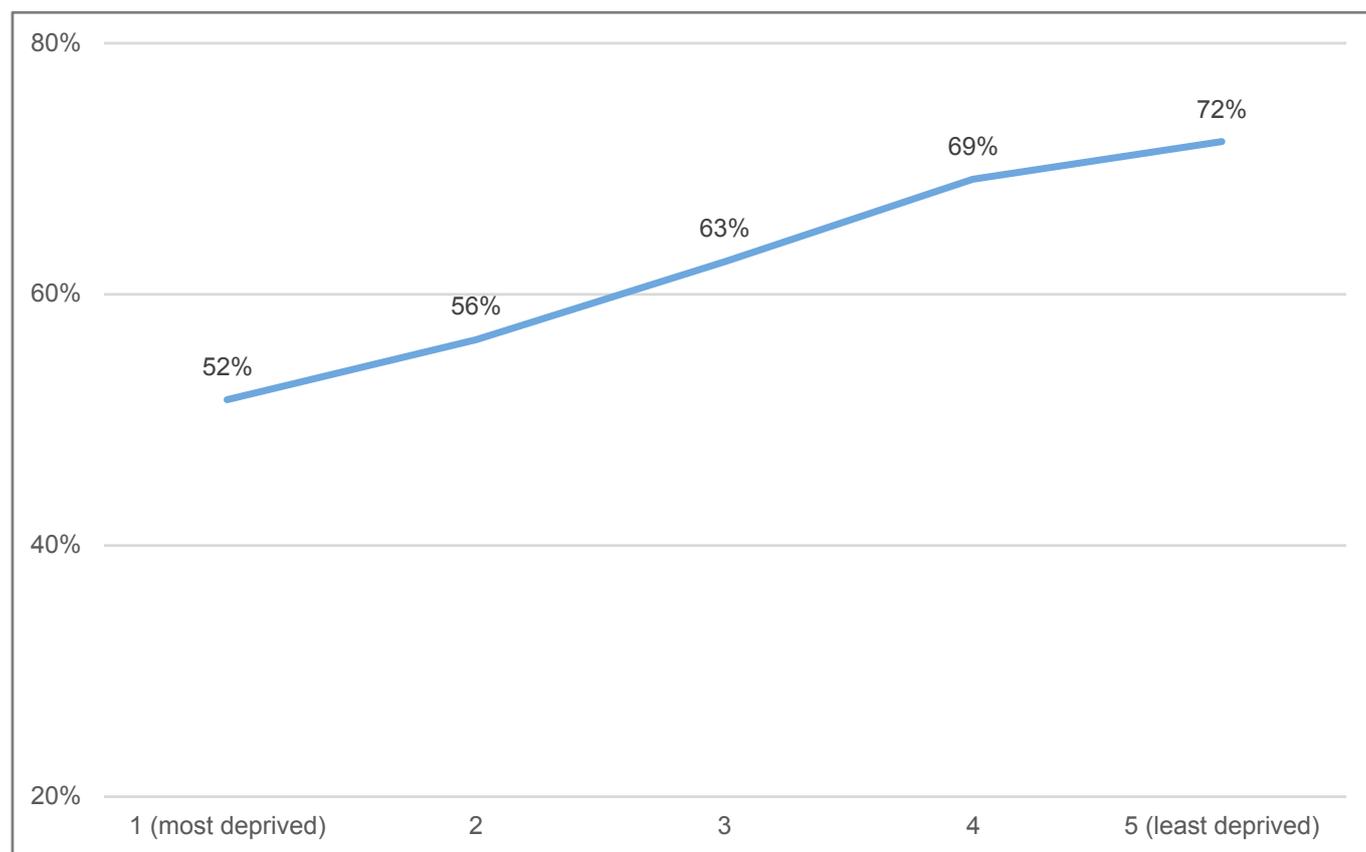
### 3.1.3 Personal well-being

#### Sixty per cent of Londoners report high personal well-being.

**High well-being is closely associated with economic advantage.** Londoners are more likely to have high personal well-being if they live in less deprived areas (72 per cent) or own their homes (70 per cent) and have higher incomes (76 per cent among Londoners with a household income over £58,900). In contrast, group who generally face disadvantage are far less likely to have high well-being such as disabled Londoners (38 per cent), social renters (41 per cent) and single parents (43 per cent). Londoners who are of a Black ethnic background also report low rates of high personal well-being (47 per cent).

Figure 3.5 below shows the proportion of Londoners reporting high personal well-being, by the deprivation of the neighbourhood in which they live (as measured by the Indices of Multiple Deprivation – IMD). It shows that there is a 20-percentage point gap in high well-being between the most and the least deprived areas.

**Figure 3.5: Londoners living in more deprived areas are less likely to report high personal well-being**



Base: 1 (most deprived) (1,863), 2 (1,997); 3 (1,336); 4 (829); 5 (least deprived) (576)

Other groups with higher than average rates of high personal well-being include pensioner couples (74 per cent), and Londoners living in Bexley & Bromley and Merton & Wandsworth (both 67 per cent).

Belonging to London and the local area is associated with higher personal well-being. Eighty-five per cent of Londoners with high personal well-being say they belong to London, against 75 per cent of those with medium or low well-being. Seventy-eight per cent of Londoners with high well-being report belonging to their local area, versus 65 per cent of those with medium or low well-being.

Some groups have low well-being but high belonging. For example, Black Londoners are more likely than the average to say they belong to London (89 per cent) but are less likely to report high personal well-being (47 per cent).

### 3.2 Social integration – relationships

The nature of Londoners' relationships with one another is an important component of the Mayor's strategy for social integration in London. More frequent, positive connections with others from different backgrounds has been shown to reduce prejudice, promote economic inclusion and facilitate access to participation opportunities<sup>13</sup>. A lack of strong social connections can lead to social isolation and loneliness, with consequences for an individual's mental and physical health<sup>14</sup>.

<sup>13</sup> IBID.

<sup>14</sup> Campaign to End Loneliness (2019) [Threat to health](#).

The Survey of Londoners measures Londoners' relationships in five ways:

**Diversity within Londoners' friendship groups:** the Survey includes several questions which measure diversity among respondents' friends. The characteristics measured are age, ethnicity and socio-economic status (education and income).

**Social mixing among Londoners' wider social networks:** the Survey includes several questions which focus on Londoners' wider social network, measuring the frequency of interaction with others of a different background, excluding close friends. These include colleagues at work, other parents at the school gate and neighbours spoken to regularly. Respondents are also asked to report how positive or negative these interactions are overall. The characteristics measured are age, ethnicity and social class.

**Loneliness and social isolation:** Two questions in the Survey measure whether respondents are socially isolated (not having someone else they can rely on a lot in an emergency) and the frequency with which they feel lonely.

**Relationships with neighbours and social cohesion:** the Survey includes a question asking respondents whether they agree or disagree with the statement 'this local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together'. It also asks them to what extent they agree or disagree with the statement 'generally, I borrow things and exchange favours with my neighbours'.

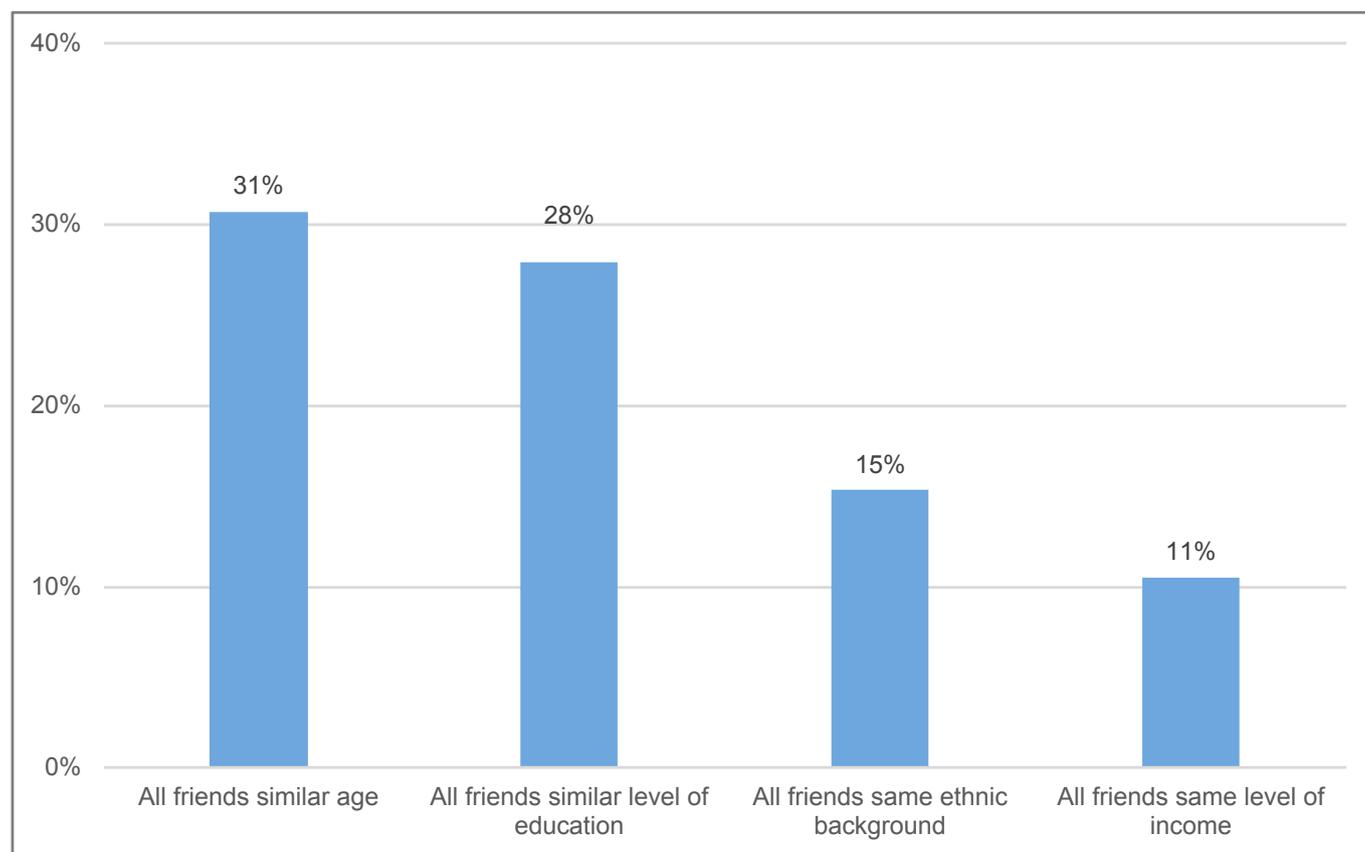
**Frequency of social media and messaging use:** the Survey asked respondents whether and how often they use their social media and their social messaging accounts. Those respondents who answered 'several times a day' for both social media and social messaging are coded as frequent users.

Taken together, these measures provide a new view of the state of Londoners' relationships with one another, measuring the strength and diversity of their social networks, the prevalence of loneliness and social isolation, how Londoners of different backgrounds are getting on in the places where they live and their use of social media and messaging to connect with others.

### 3.2.1 Diversity within Londoner's friendship groups

Relatively few Londoners, **just 15 per cent, say that all their friends are from the same ethnic background. Twice as many Londoners say that all their friends are a similar age** (31 per cent) **or have a similar level of education** (28 per cent). 11 per cent say that all their friends have a similar level of income.

**Figure 3.6: Londoners' friendship groups are more likely to be diverse by ethnicity and income than by education and age**



Base: Londoners aged 16+ (6,601)

Young Londoners aged 16-24 are most likely to say that all their friends are a similar age (54 per cent), and this falls by age to 22 per cent among those aged 50 or older.

The proportion of Londoners who say all their friends have a similar level of education does not vary a great deal by the level of qualifications held by Londoners. Other education-related characteristics are relevant, however. For example, 36 per cent of those who went to an independent or fee-paying school say all their friends have a similar level of education. This falls to 30 per cent among those who attended a state-funded school and 21 per cent among those who attended school outside the UK.

Turning to ethnicity, 20 per cent of White British Londoners state that all their friends share the same ethnic background, higher than other ethnic groups, including Asian Londoners (13 per cent) and Black Londoners (11 per cent). This is partly to be expected, as White British Londoners are the largest ethnic group in the population.

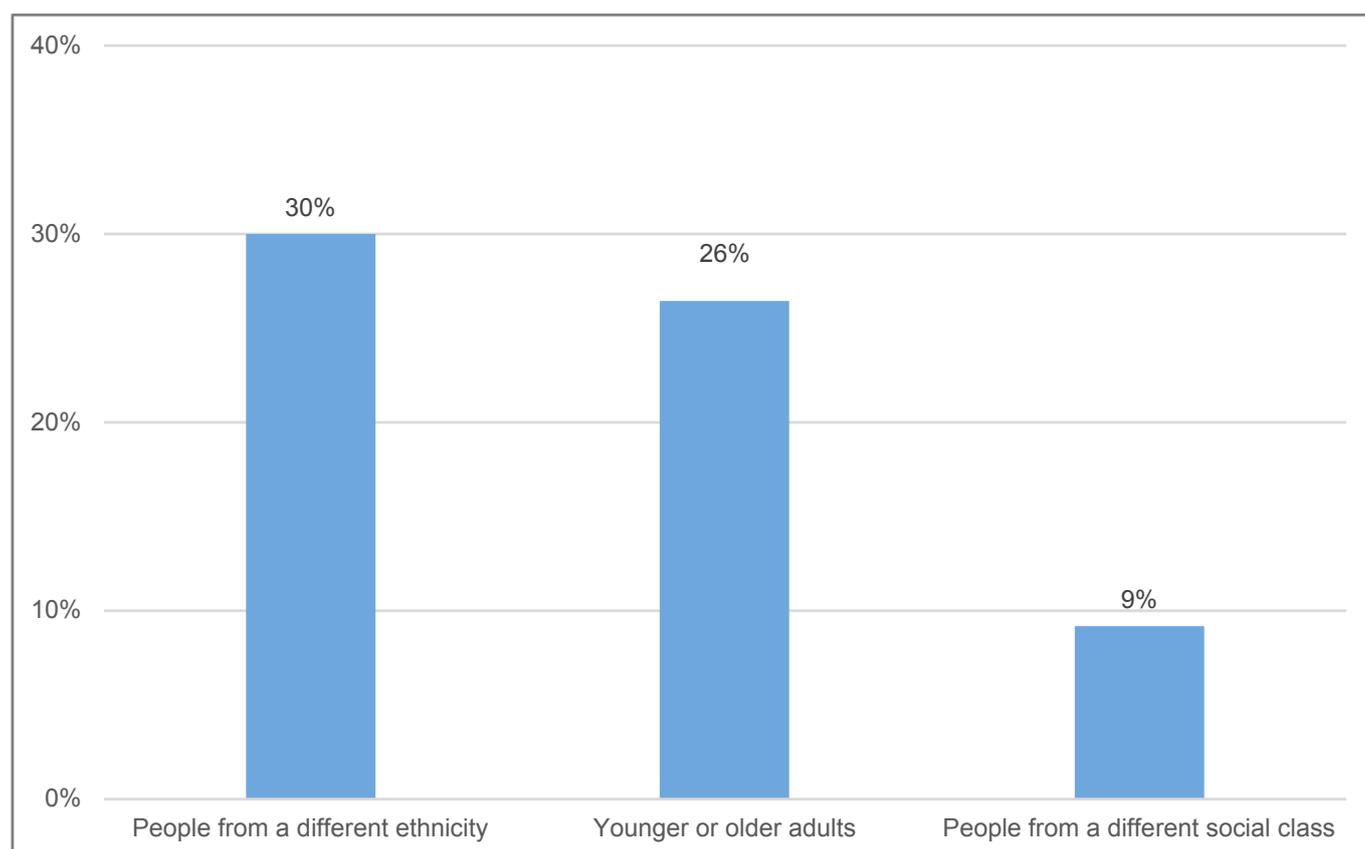
Finally, the Survey finds that younger adults and those who are newer to London are more likely to have friends with a similar level of income. For example, 15 per cent of those who have lived in London for less than five years have friends who all have a similar income, and 15 per cent of those aged 16-24, versus 11 per cent overall.

Londoners living in Bexley & Bromley are particularly likely to say that all of their friends are a similar age (40 per cent), from the same ethnic background (25 per cent) or have a similar level of education (35 per cent). Bexley & Bromley is an outlier, being the only London Assembly area with a significantly higher proportion of residents reporting that all their friends are similar for each of these characteristics.

### 3.2.2 Londoners' wider social networks

Looking at wider networks excluding close friends, **30 per cent of Londoners report positive and frequent interactions with others of a different ethnicity**, and **26 per cent with others who are older or younger than them**. A much smaller proportion of Londoners, **only nine per cent, report positive and frequent interactions with others of a different social class**.

**Figure 3.7: Londoners are more likely to interact positively and frequently with others of a different ethnic background or age than a different social class**



Base: Londoners aged 16+ (4,030)

Although these figures look low overall, it should be noted that the wording of the social mixing question explicitly excludes close friends, and the networks referred to in the previous section are distinct from those referred to in these wider social mixing questions.

Londoners with more diversity in their network of close friends are also more likely to report positive and frequent contact with others of a different background in their wider networks. For example, only 11 per cent of Londoners who say that all of their close friends are of the same ethnic background report positive frequent contact with others of a different ethnicity in their wider interactions with people. But this is 52 per cent among those Londoners who say that less than half of their close friends are from the same ethnic background.

Londoners from a Mixed ethnic background (52 per cent) are significantly more likely than other groups to report positive social mixing by ethnicity, including Asian (29 per cent), Black (31 per cent), White Other (34 per cent) and White British Londoners (26 per cent).

Other groups with lower reported rates of positive social mixing with others of a different ethnic background include Londoners living in the least deprived local areas (22 per cent) and those who are 65 or older (15 per cent).

Turning to interactions across age groups, younger Londoners are less likely to report positive social mixing by age. Twenty-three per cent of 16-24 year-olds and 24 per cent of 25-34 year olds are mixing inter-generationally, compared to 36 per cent of those aged 50-64.

In general, there is not large variation by demographic or area characteristics in reported rates of positive social mixing by age, although some groups have higher than average rates of mixing. These include those aged 50-64, as reported above, and Jewish Londoners (49 per cent).

Looking at interactions across social classes, groups with higher than the average rate of positive social mixing (which is nine per cent) include Londoners who attended independent or fee-paying schools (13 per cent), those who are aged 16-24 (12 per cent), of an Other ethnic background (16 per cent) and Jewish Londoners (19 per cent).

By area, Londoners living in the Ealing & Hillingdon and Merton & Wandsworth London Assembly Areas were less likely to report mixing frequently and positively by ethnicity (23 and 24 per cent respectively). Londoners living in the West Central London Assembly Area were less likely to report mixing frequently and positively by age and by social class (18 and five per cent respectively).

### 3.2.3 Loneliness and social isolation

Two questions in the Survey measure whether respondents are socially isolated (not having someone else they can rely on a lot in an emergency) and the frequency with which they feel lonely, a subjective measure of the gap between a person's desired and actual level of social contact<sup>15</sup>.

**Eight per cent of Londoners are lonely**, stating that they feel lonely often or always. More than half of Londoners feel lonely occasionally, some of the time or often/always, and only 19 per cent of Londoners never feel lonely.

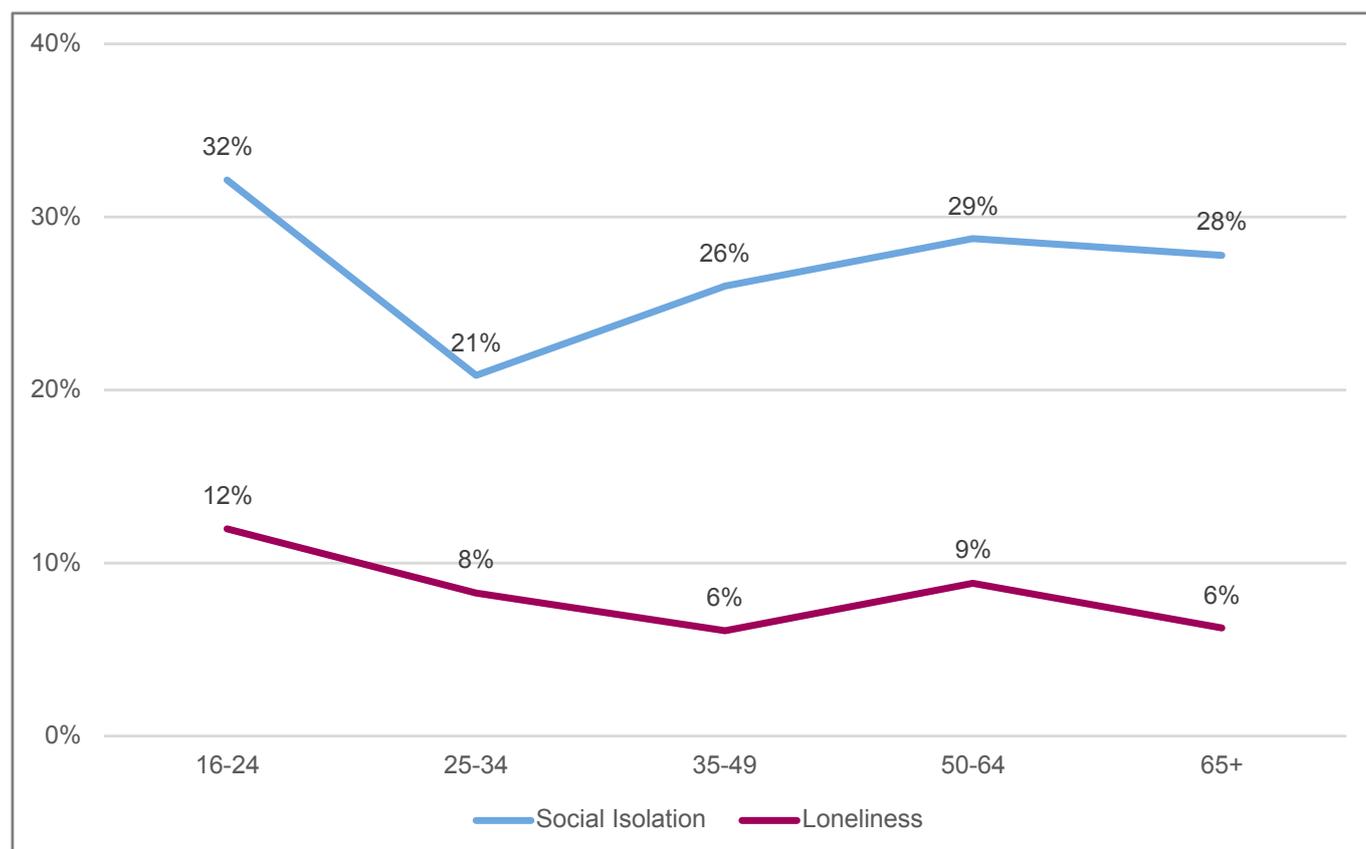
**Over a quarter of Londoners are socially isolated** (27 per cent), not having someone they can rely on a lot in an emergency. Within this group, there are differences in the extent to which Londoners are socially isolated, with 15 per cent of Londoners having someone they can rely on 'somewhat', six per cent 'a little' and three per cent not having someone they can rely on at all.

**Loneliness and social isolation are more common among young Londoners**, with almost a third of 16-24 year-olds (32 per cent) experiencing social isolation and 12 per cent feeling lonely often or always. Social isolation was lowest among 25-34-year-olds (21 per cent), and rates of reported loneliness were lowest among 35-49-year-olds and those aged 65 or older (both six per cent).

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<sup>15</sup> AgeUK (2019) [Loneliness and isolation - understanding the difference and why it matters](#).

**Figure 3.8: Social isolation and loneliness are more common among 16-24-year-olds**

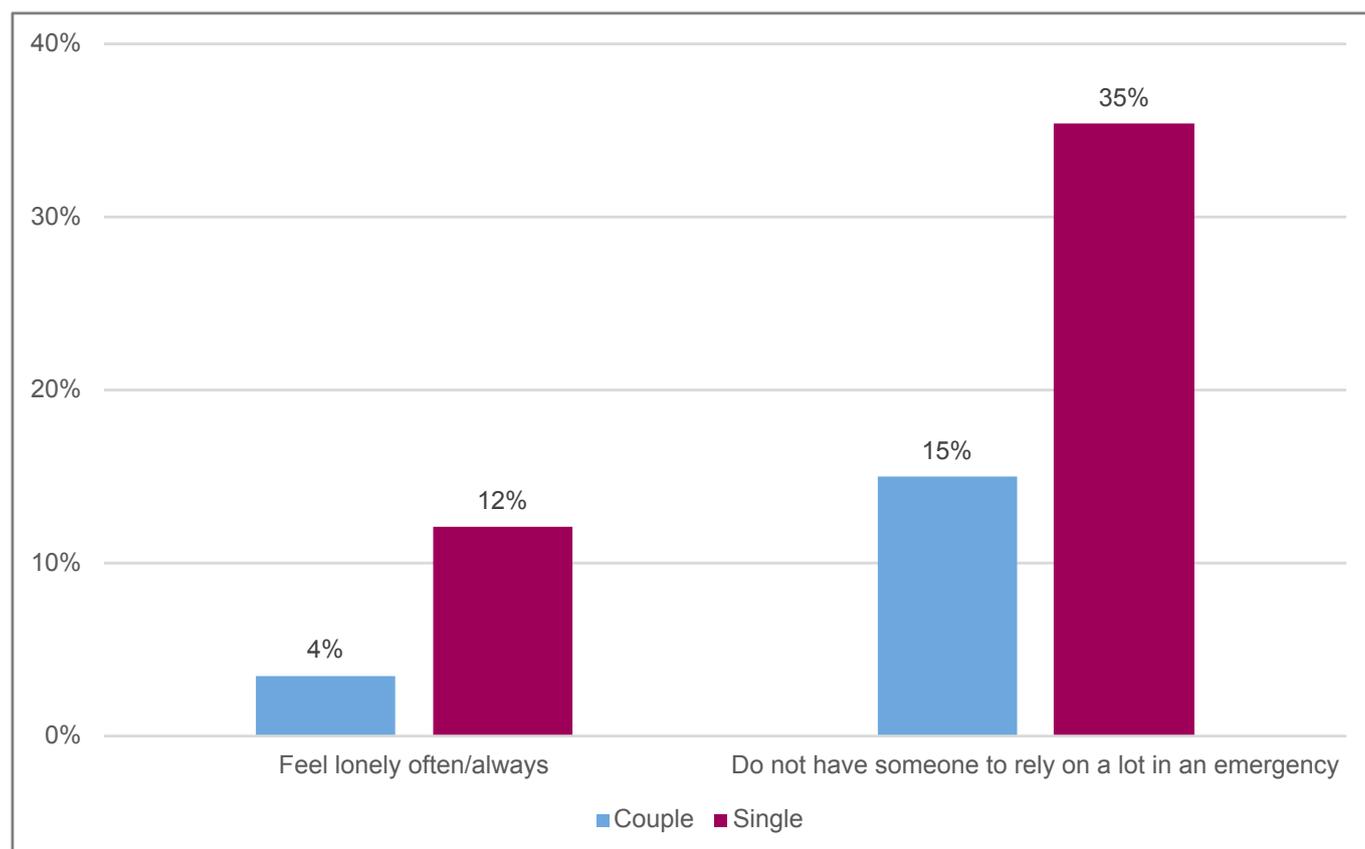


Base: 16-24 (536), 25-34 (1,317); 35-49 (1,827); 50-64 (1,496); 65+ (1,224)

While both loneliness and social isolation are more prevalent among 16-24-year-olds, this does not tell us how the impact of these issues on those affected varies by age. It also masks variation in the depth of social isolation: more than two-thirds of socially isolated 16-24-year-olds (70 per cent) have someone they can rely on 'somewhat'. This falls with age to 49 per cent among those aged 65 or older, indicating that social isolation is deeper among older Londoners on average.

Loneliness and social isolation are closely related to Londoners' living situation. Rates of social isolation and loneliness are much lower among those living in a couple than single Londoners. Thirty-five per cent of single Londoners are socially isolated, versus 15 per cent of those who are in a couple. Among single Londoners, single parents were most likely to be socially isolated (41 per cent). Similarly, 12 per cent of single Londoners feel lonely often or always, around three times the rate observed among Londoners who live in a couple (three per cent).

**Figure 3.9: Social isolation and loneliness are more prevalent among single people**



Base: Couple (3,260); Single (2,534)

Loneliness and social isolation are also more common among those facing wider disadvantage. For example, high rates of loneliness are observed among Londoners with a disability (18 per cent), those on the lowest incomes (18 per cent), and social renters (14 per cent). The Survey also finds that LGBT+ Londoners have higher rates of both social isolation and loneliness (36 and 15 per cent respectively).

Black Londoners are more affected by social isolation (38 per cent), although their rates of loneliness are similar to the overall average.

A third of Londoners living in the City & East London Assembly area are socially isolated (33 per cent), significantly higher than in areas such as Merton & Wandsworth (22 per cent) and Bexley & Bromley (19 per cent).

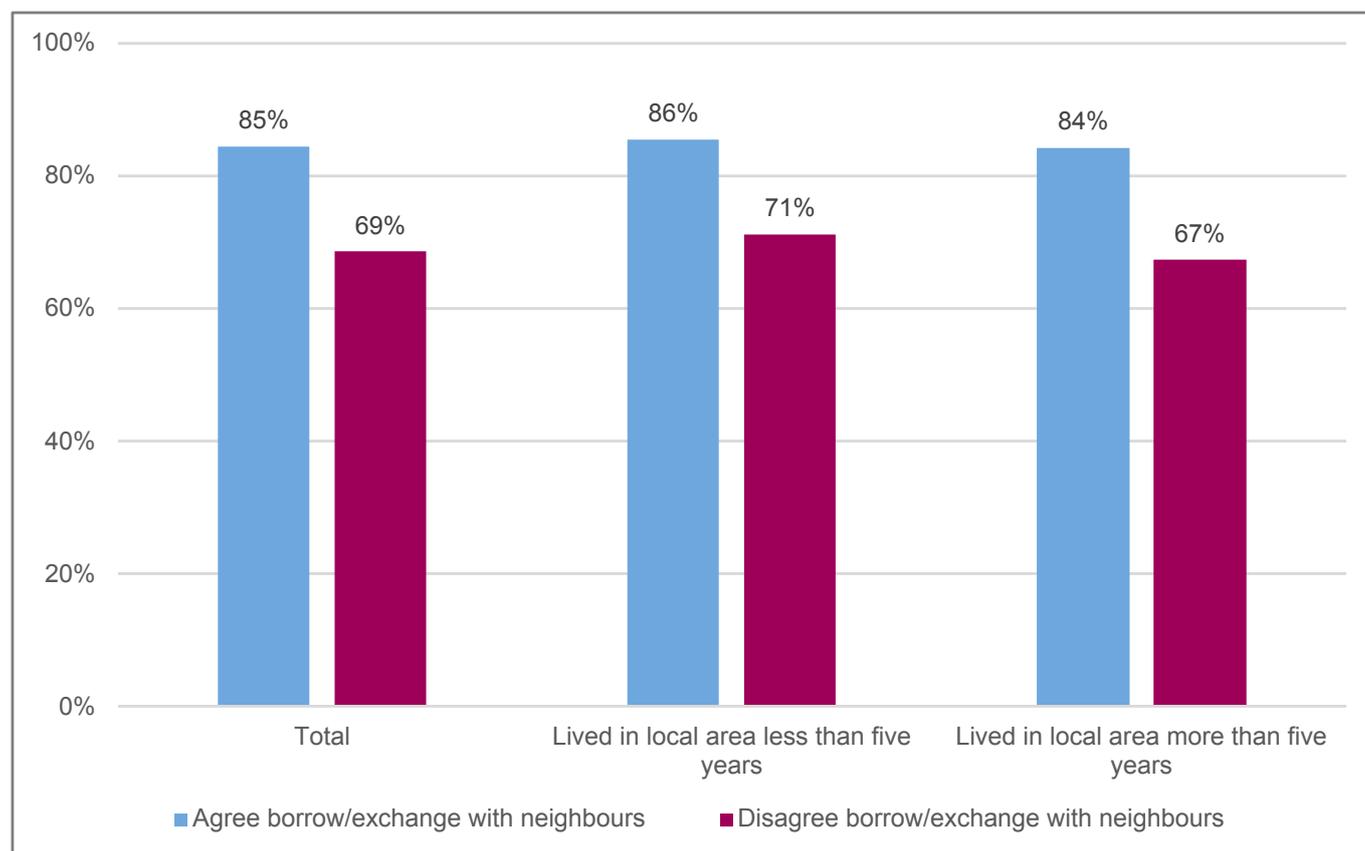
### 3.2.4 Perceptions of social cohesion and relationships with neighbours

**Almost half of Londoners borrow things and exchange favours with their neighbours** (45 per cent). Londoners aged 25-34 and those who are newer to their local area are substantially less likely to interact with their neighbours (32 per cent and 35 per cent respectively).

**Three quarters of Londoners agree that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together** (75 per cent). There is less variation in this measure by age and length of time living in London or the local area, although some groups are less likely to agree. Outer Londoners living in particular boroughs are less likely to agree that people from different backgrounds get on well in their area, including Havering & Redbridge (69 per cent) and Brent & Harrow (70 per cent).

Views of cohesion in the local area correlate with interactions with neighbours: **85 per cent of those who borrow things and exchange favours with their neighbours agree that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together.** This falls to 69 per cent among those who do not borrow or exchange things. This relationship is clear, regardless of how long someone has lived in the local area (see Figure 3.10).

**Figure 3.10: Those who borrow things and exchange favours with neighbours are more likely to have a positive view of social cohesion in their local area**

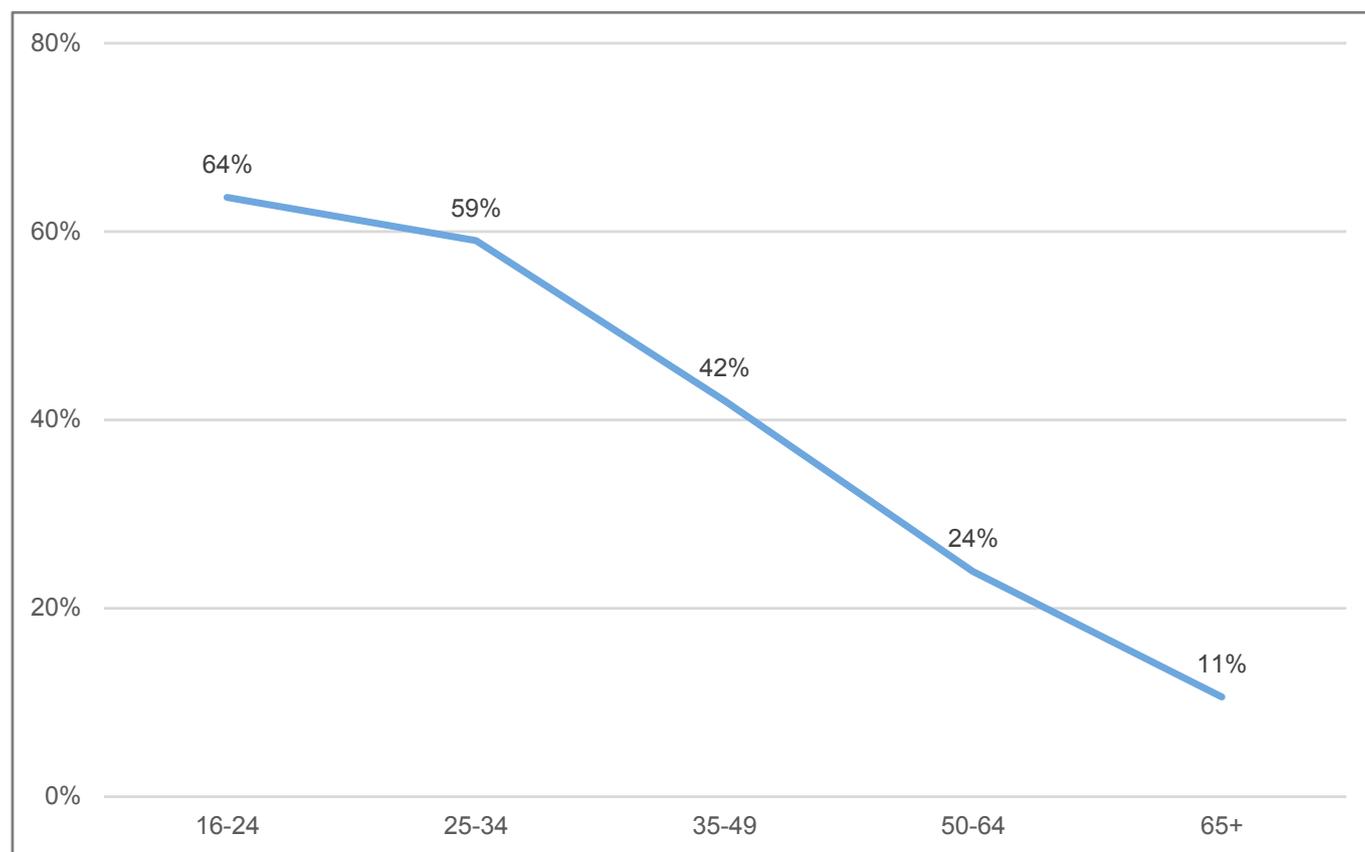


Base: Total, agree borrow/exchange with neighbours (3,121), Total, disagree borrow/exchange with neighbours (3,145), Less than five years, agree borrow/exchange with neighbours (701), Less than five years, disagree borrow/exchange with neighbours (1,084), More than five years, agree borrow/exchange with neighbours (2,409), More than five years, disagree borrow/exchange with neighbours (2,046)

### 3.2.5 Frequency of social media and messaging use

The use of social media and social messaging are an increasingly important aspect of social integration, in addition to other forms of relationships. Forty-four per cent of Londoners use their social media and messaging accounts several times a day. Unsurprisingly, frequent usage is more common among younger Londoners: 64 per cent of 16-24 year-old Londoners, and 59 per cent of 25-34 year-old Londoners, are frequent users of their account. This falls to less than a quarter of 50-64 year-olds (24 per cent) and 11 per cent of Londoners aged 65+.

**Figure 3.11: Proportion of Londoners using social media and messaging account several times a day, by age**



Base: 16-24 (437), 25-34 (932); 35-49 (1,184); 50-64 (820); 65+ (509)

Other groups of Londoners who are more likely to be frequent users of their social media and messaging accounts include LGBT+ Londoners (57 per cent), Londoners who have lived in the city for less than five years (59 per cent), single working-age Londoners without children (54 per cent) and private renters (53 per cent). These findings are also partly related to age, as all these groups have populations that are younger than the London average.

### 3.2.6 How do Londoners' relationships relate to their social integration outcomes?

Londoners who borrow and exchange things with their neighbours are more likely to say that they belong to London than those who do not (86 versus 77 per cent). Londoners with more diverse relationships, particularly by ethnicity and social class, are also more likely to say they belong to London.

On the other hand, Londoners who are lonely are much less likely to say they belong to the city, with only 70 per cent agreeing.

Londoners who mix by age, whether through their friendship groups or wider social networks, are more likely to say they belong to their local area. The Survey of Londoners also finds that those who are lonely are much less likely to say they belong to their local area (a difference of 17 percentage points), as are those who do not interact with their neighbours (a difference of 18 percentage points).

There is a clear relationship between people feeling socially isolated and poor well-being. For example, just 16 per cent of Londoners who feel lonely often or always report high personal well-being, compared to 81 per cent among Londoners who are hardly ever or never lonely. In addition, Londoners who borrow things or

exchange favours with their neighbours are 11 percentage points more likely to report high personal well-being (66 per cent versus 55 per cent).

Londoners who are more active users of social media and social messaging accounts are not particularly more or less likely to feel they belong to either London or their local area. Frequent users are, however, four percentage points more likely to report high personal well-being than Londoners who are not frequent users (62 versus 58 per cent respectively).

### Quotes from Londoners on relationships

“My experience of London within community groups (such as church) is of everyone mixing together, helping each other out, regardless of race/background/age.”

“Living in London gave me an opportunity to meet people from variety of backgrounds and cultures. Some of them are good friends of mine.”

“London can be a lonely place. I live on a very long road and we don't know anyone, no one speaks to anyone ... The only social interaction I have, outside of home is when I go to work, two nights per week.”

“I think the main problem with London is because there are so many, many people it can be very lonely as no small community if you don't belong to a church, temple or mosque.”

“I'm from China. I came here in 2004 ... London is my second home, however sometimes I do feel im excluded from british ppl although I want to get involved. Maybe its because of the language barrier.”

“Although London is diverse, this diversity does not mean different groups interact. I'm white, gay and middle class and most of my friends are the same.”

### 3.3 Social integration – participation

The Mayor's social integration strategy highlights the degree of Londoners' participation in the communities in which they live as an important dimension of social integration. It argues that supporting Londoners to be active citizens will offer them greater involvement in the decisions that affect them, with volunteering as an important route through which Londoners can become involved.

The strategy also argues that promoting shared experiences, including through sport and cultural opportunities, can promote the formation of meaningful and diverse relationships between Londoners.

The Survey of Londoners measures six forms of participation among Londoners:

**Sport:** the Survey included a question asking respondents to look at a list of free-time activities and select all those that the respondent has done in the last month. One of the options is 'play sport'. If a respondent answers yes to this category, they are coded as having played sport. Note that there is a separate code for 'exercise', ensuring that we are capturing sports participation rather than wider physical activity.

**Formal culture and events:** within the free-time question, the Survey included several options relating to culture, including visiting museums/galleries, going to the theatre/music concerts, going to the cinema and attending local community festivals and events. If a respondent answered yes to any of these, they are coded as having participated in formal culture and events, which is distinct from wider cultural activity such as watching television, playing computer games etc.

**Formal volunteering:** the Survey included a question asking respondents whether they have participated in any formal volunteering in the last 12 months.

**Informal volunteering:** the Survey included a question asking respondents whether they have given any unpaid help to a person, such as a friend, neighbour or anyone else who is not a family member, in the last 12 months.

**Civic participation:** the Survey included a question asking respondents to look at a list of five activities, including campaigning on behalf of a political party, running or trying to set up a local service and organising a community event. Respondents were asked to select all those that they have been involved in over the last 12 months.

**Voter registration:** the Survey included a question asking respondents to say whether they are registered to vote.

The results show that **two-thirds of Londoners have engaged in formal culture and events** in the last month (66 per cent). **Almost a quarter of Londoners have played sport** in the last month (23 per cent).

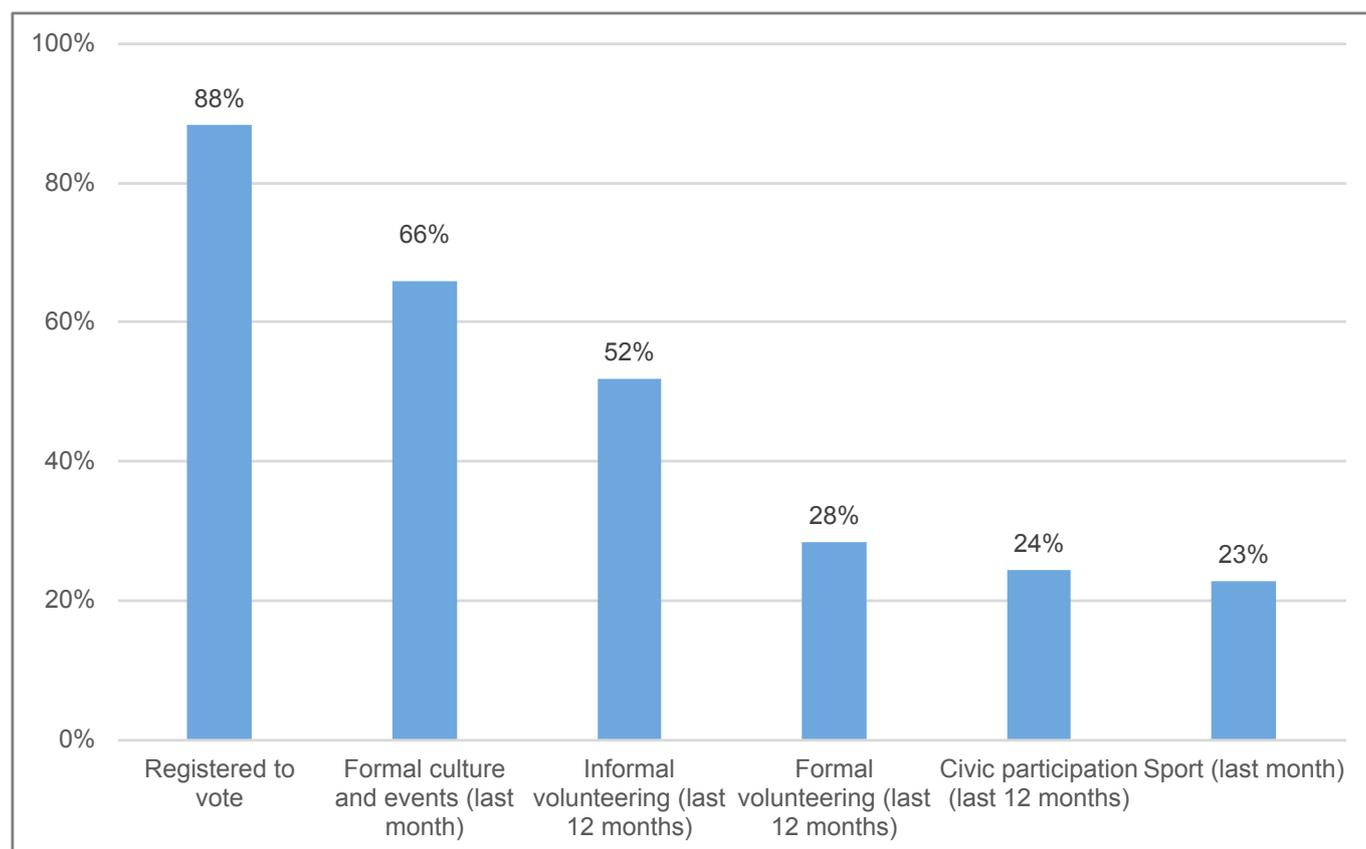
**Twenty-eight per cent of Londoners have participated in formal volunteering** in the last 12 months. **More than half (52 per cent) have participated in informal volunteering** and **24 per cent in civic participation** such as campaigning or organising a community event. Around six in ten Londoners (61 per cent) have participated in at least one of these three forms of participation in the last 12 months<sup>16</sup>.

Many Londoners are involved in more than one of these forms of participation. For example, 23 per cent of Londoners have volunteered both formally and informally. Thirteen per cent of Londoners have volunteered formally and informally as well as engaged in civic participation. Finally, **88 per cent of eligible Londoners are registered to vote.**

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<sup>16</sup> The figures for formal volunteering is similar to those published using London data from the 2017-18 Taking Part Survey, which found 27 per cent of Londoners participate in formal volunteering. The figure for informal volunteering is similar to those published using London data from the 2017-18 Community Life Survey, which found 52 per cent of Londoners participate in informal volunteering.

**Figure 3.12: Rates of participation among Londoners**



Base: Londoners aged 16+ (6,601), except for voter registration where the base is all Londoners aged 16+ who are eligible to vote, based on their nationality (3,750)

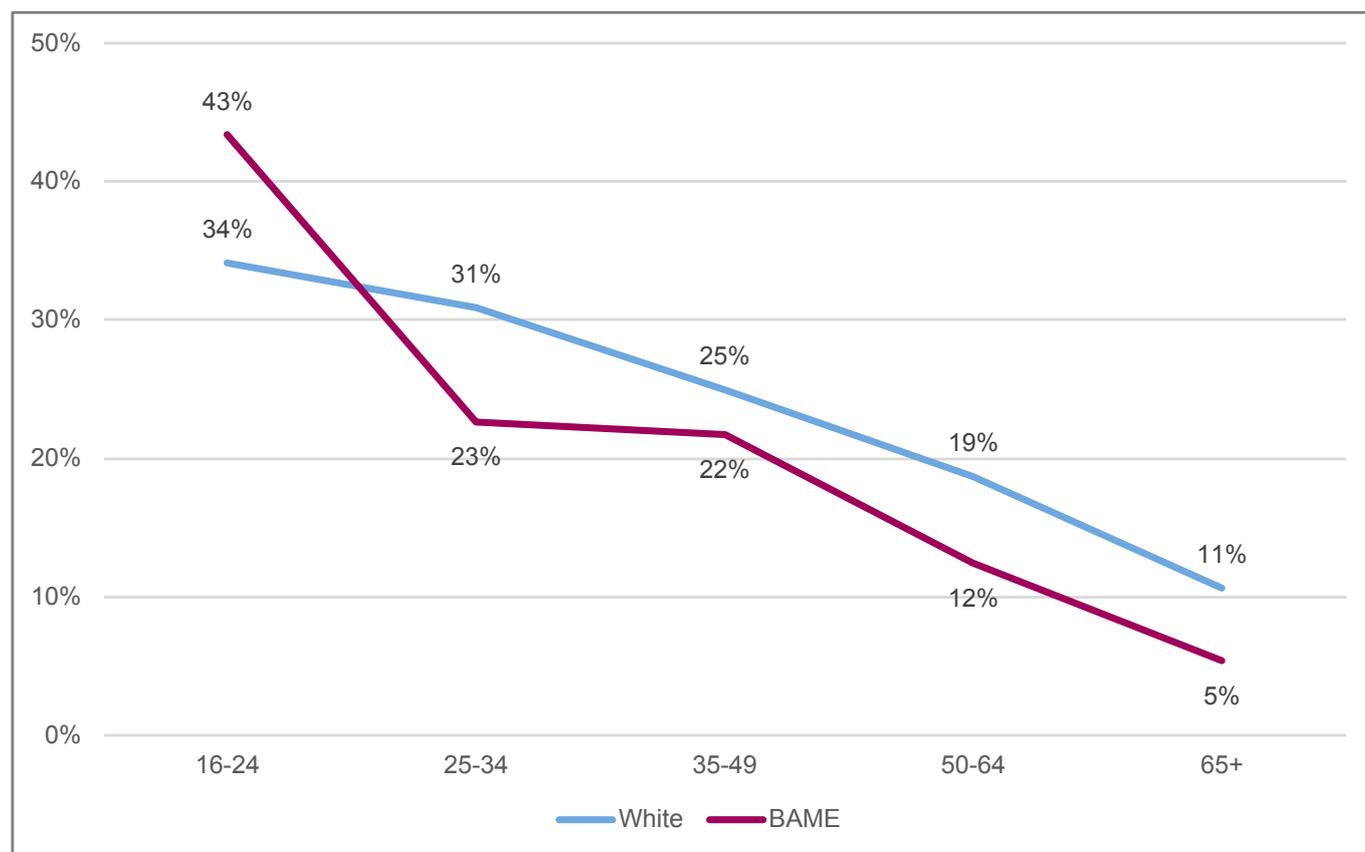
### 3.3.1 Sport, formal culture and events

Twenty-three per cent of Londoners played sport in the previous month. **Men were almost twice as likely as women to have played sport** (31 versus 16 per cent). **Sport participation declines with age:** 39 per cent of 16-24-year-olds and 28 per cent of 25-34-year-olds had played sport, falling to 16 per cent among Londoners aged 50-64 and nine per cent among those aged 65 or older.

Londoners of a Black, Asian and Minority ethnic (BAME) background have a similar rate of sports participation as White Londoners (23 per cent), but this masks variation by age<sup>17</sup>. Figure 3.13 shows rates of sports participation by age and ethnicity. It shows that **young BAME Londoners are more likely to play sport than young Londoners of a White ethnic background, but this pattern reverses at older ages.**

<sup>17</sup> BAME groups were combined for this analysis to avoid small sample sizes for the 16-24 age group for individual ethnic groups.

**Figure 3.13: Young BAME Londoners have higher rates of participation in sport than young White Londoners**



Base: White 16-24 (267); White 25-34 (850); White 35-49 (1,090); White 50-64 (1,052); White 65+ (956); BAME 16-24 (249); BAME 25-34 (406); BAME 35-49 (658); BAME 50-64 (385); BAME 65+ (219)

Participation in formal culture and events showed a different pattern. **Women were more likely to have engaged than men** (69 versus 64 per cent respectively). In addition, **those with a degree had higher participation than those without** (77 versus 57 per cent).

**Social class is related to both sport and participation in formal culture and events:** those in a managerial and professional occupation class were more likely to have participated in sport and formal culture and events (for example, 42 per cent of managers and professionals had been to the theatre or live music in the previous month, compared with 18 per cent of those in routine and manual occupations).

Bexley & Bromley and Brent & Harrow have rates of participation in formal culture and events below the average (both 58 per cent), while West Central (81 per cent) and Merton & Wandsworth (76 per cent) have higher rates.

### 3.3.2 Civic participation, formal and informal volunteering

**More than half of Londoners have engaged in informal volunteering in the last 12 months** (52 per cent). Defined as giving unpaid help to someone who is not a family member, **informal volunteering is more common than formal volunteering**, engaged in by 28 per cent of Londoners, **or wider civic participation** (24 per cent).

Young Londoners were most likely to engage in formal volunteering (38 per cent). Groups less likely to volunteer formally included those in routine and manual occupations (24 per cent), and Londoners who

were not proficient at English (nine per cent). Londoners living in the Merton & Wandsworth and West Central London Assembly areas were more likely to engage in formal volunteering than the average (34 and 33 per cent respectively).

Informal volunteering and engagement in civil action was similar across the age groups. Groups of Londoners less likely to volunteer informally included those not proficient in English (42 per cent), single pensioners (42 per cent), and those with no qualifications (28 per cent). Londoners living in Ealing & Hillingdon were more likely than the average to participate in informal volunteering (58 per cent).

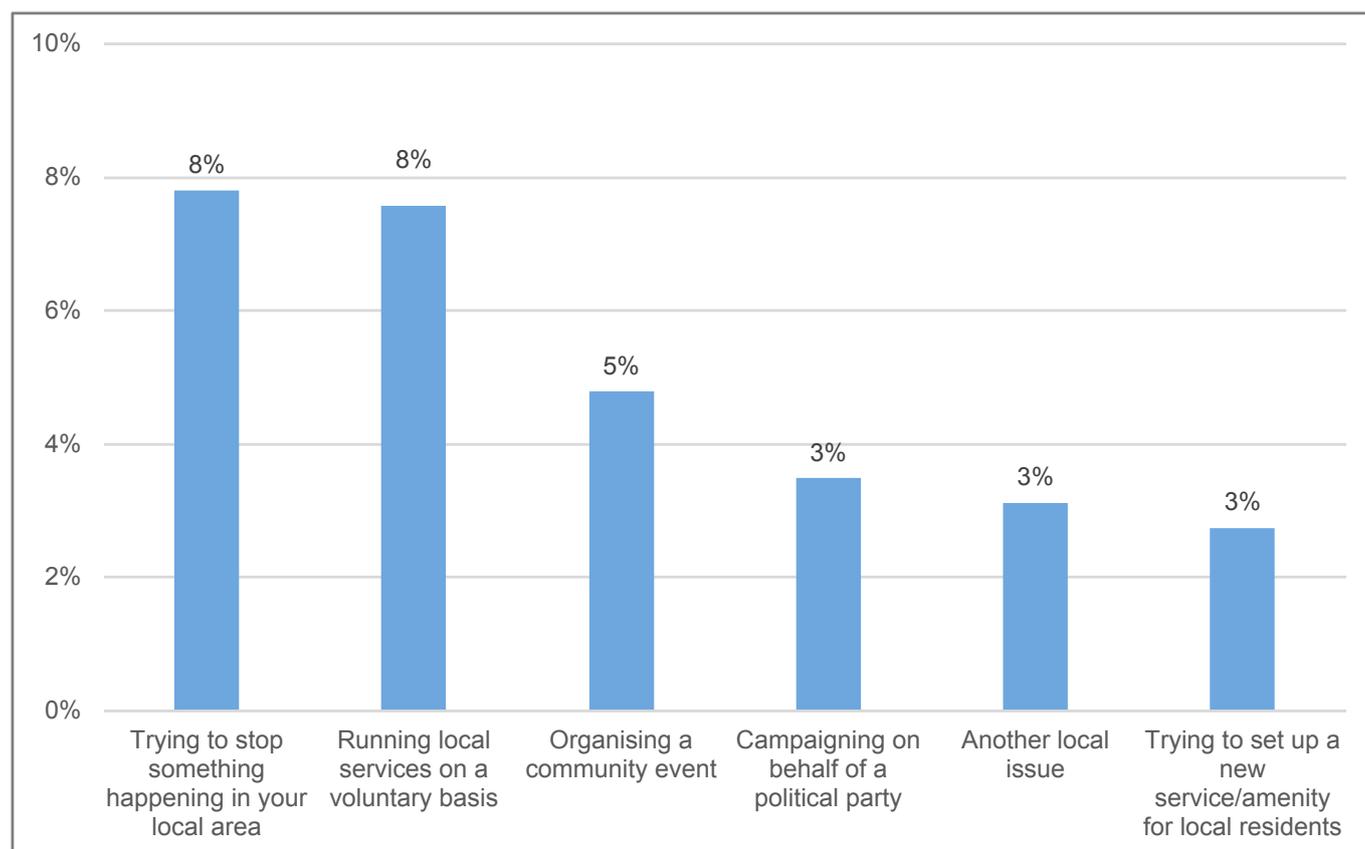
Just under a quarter of Londoners participated in civic activities in the last 12 months (24 per cent). The most common forms of civic participation among Londoners were 'trying to stop something happening in your local area' and 'running local services on a voluntary basis' (both eight per cent).

Five per cent of Londoners had organised a community event in the last year. Around three per cent campaigned for a political party or tried to set up a new service or amenity for local residents. Three per cent engaged in different local issue.

There is not a great deal of variation between groups of Londoners in civic participation, but some groups with slightly lower participation include Londoners in intermediate or routine and manual occupational class (18 and 19 per cent respectively), Londoners who are unemployed (18 per cent) and Londoners who are not proficient in English (13 per cent). Londoners who are in insecure work tended to have higher rates of participation in civic participation than those in permanent jobs (32 per cent, compared with 24 per cent of those in other forms of employment).

There was no significant area variation in civic participation.

**Figure 3.14: Civic participation among Londoners**



Base: Londoners aged 16+ (6,601)

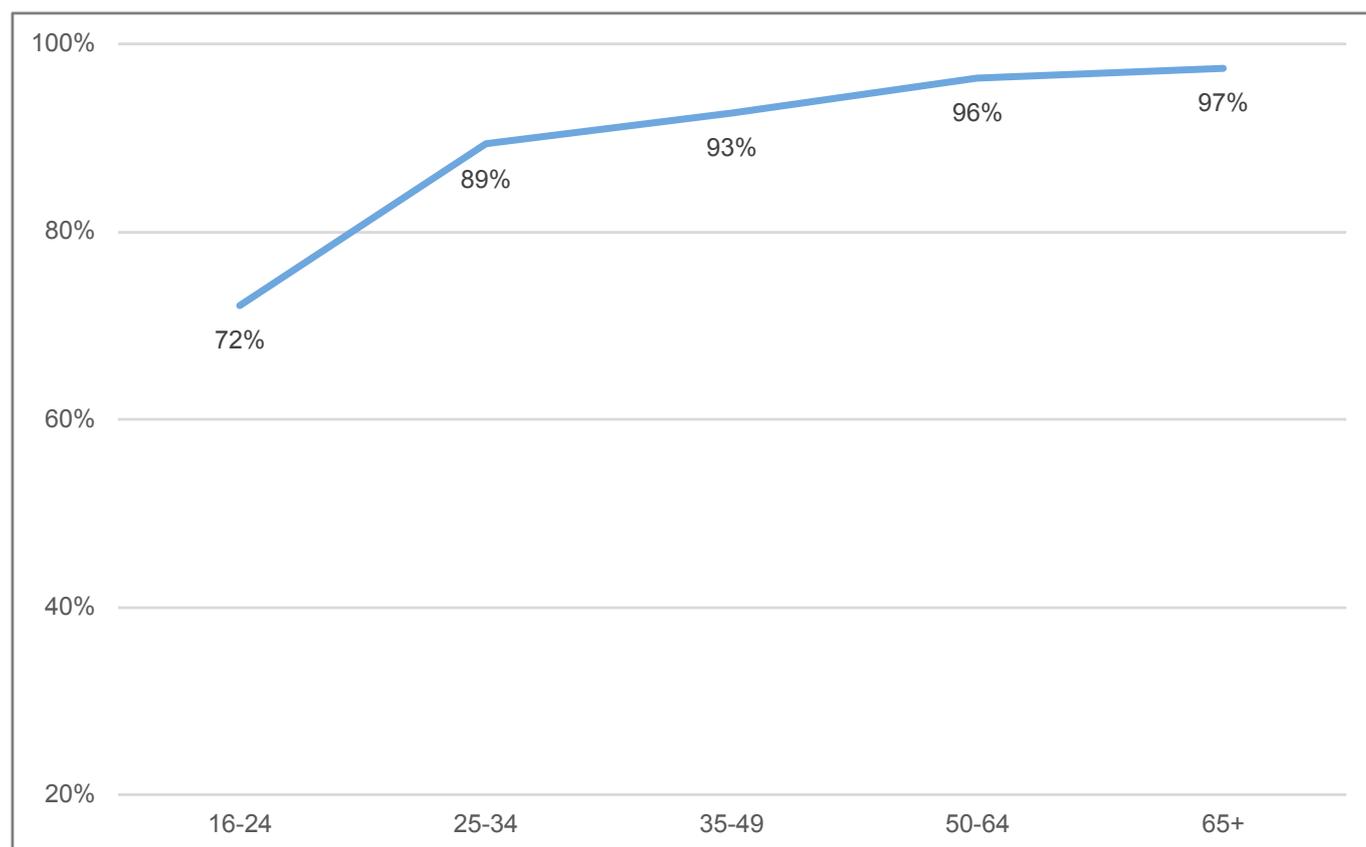
### 3.3.3 Voter registration

**Eighty-eight per cent of London’s eligible population are registered to vote<sup>18</sup>.**

Seventy-two per cent of eligible 16-24-year-olds are registered to vote, a much smaller proportion than at older ages (see Figure 3.15). Note that while 16 and 17-year-olds are not eligible to vote, they are able to register.

<sup>18</sup> Residents aged 16 or older who are citizens of The United Kingdom or any EU or Commonwealth country are eligible to register to vote. Eligibility is measured in the Survey of Londoners by using respondents’ answers to a question asking them their nationality. Respondents who stated their nationality as either the UK or any EU or Commonwealth country were coded as eligible. Where respondents provided more than one nationality e.g. British and American, if any country provided was the UK, an EU or Commonwealth country they were coded as eligible. This rate is similar to the ‘completeness of electoral registers’, which measures the number of people with an entry on the electoral register, as a proportion of those entitled. A study published in 2019 by the Cabinet Office found that 85 per cent of 16+ adults in London, irrespective of eligibility, were registered. See Cabinet Office (2019) [Atlas of Democratic Variation](#).

**Figure 3.15: Voter registration increases with age**



Base: Londoners aged 16+ who are eligible to vote, based on their nationality; 16-24 (403); 25-34 (842); 35-49 (1,098); 50-64 (796); 65+ (499)

Voter registration also varies by ethnicity. Among those eligible to vote, 83 per cent of Londoners from a black ethnic background are registered, compared to 94 per cent of eligible White British Londoners.

Eighty per cent of eligible non-British nationals are registered to vote. This is likely to be related to eligibility to vote in different elections. For example, European Union citizens resident in London can vote in local and European but not in Westminster parliamentary elections.

Eighty-two per cent of those who have lived in London for less than five years are registered to vote. The low voter registration rate among this group is even lower among those with a non-British nationality. Among Londoners who have lived in the city for less than five years, 91 per cent of British nationals are registered to vote, versus 74 per cent of non-British nationals.

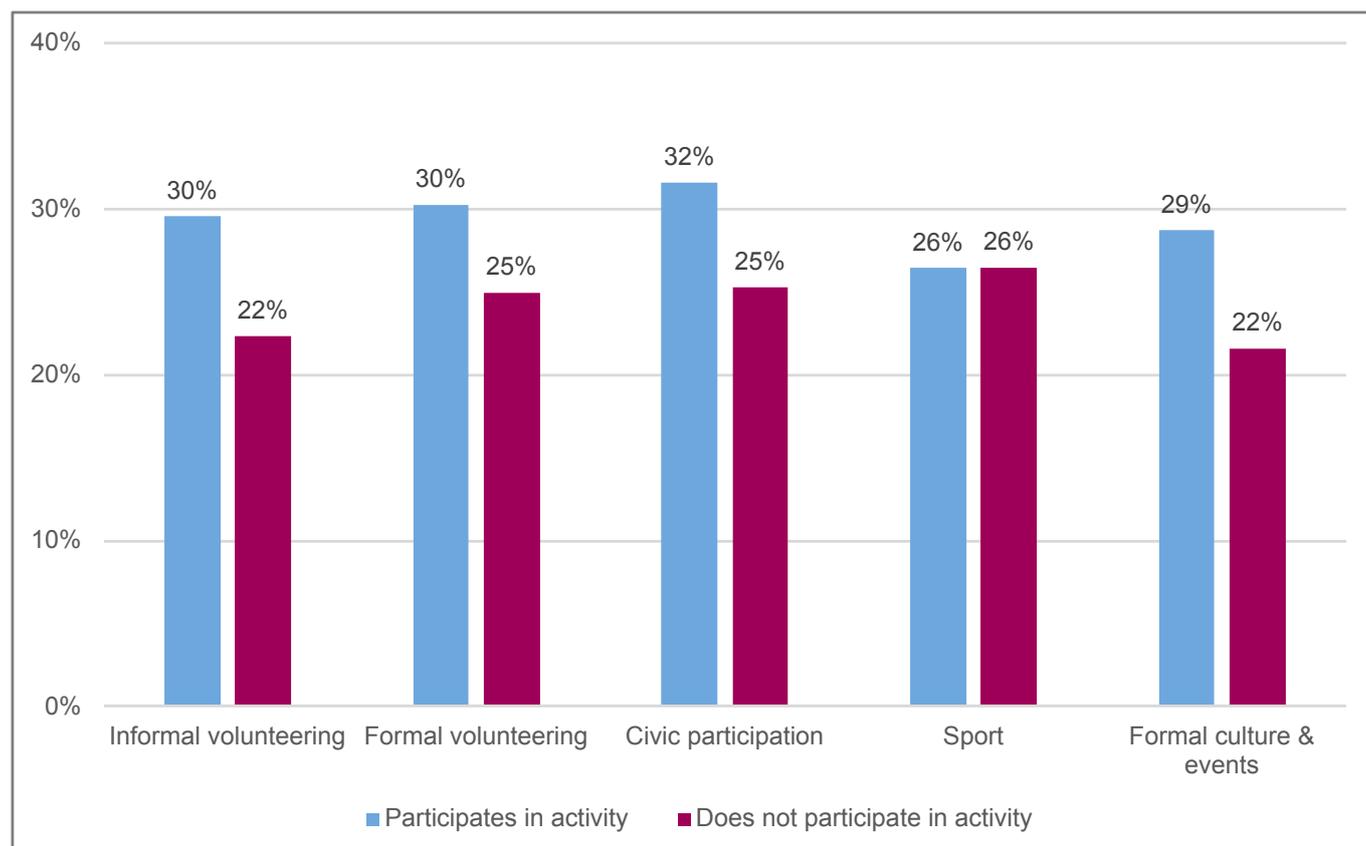
Social and private renters in London are less likely to be registered to vote (85 and 86 per cent respectively) than owner-occupiers, 93 per cent of whom are registered to vote. Despite being more likely to register, owner-occupiers account for 33 per cent of all those Londoners eligible but not registered to vote. Private renters account for 40 per cent, and social renters 20 per cent.

Finally, voter registration is lower among Londoners living in the City & East London Assembly area (84 per cent). It is noticeably higher than the average in the West Central constituency (96 per cent).

### 3.3.4 How do Londoners' participation relate to their relationships and to their social integration outcomes?

**Civic participation and participation in formal and informal volunteering is associated with having more diverse relationships.** For example, Londoners taking part in informal volunteering are seven percentage points less likely to say all their friends are a similar age than those who not taking part, and seven percentage points more likely to mix positively and frequently with others of a different age group (see Figure 3.16).

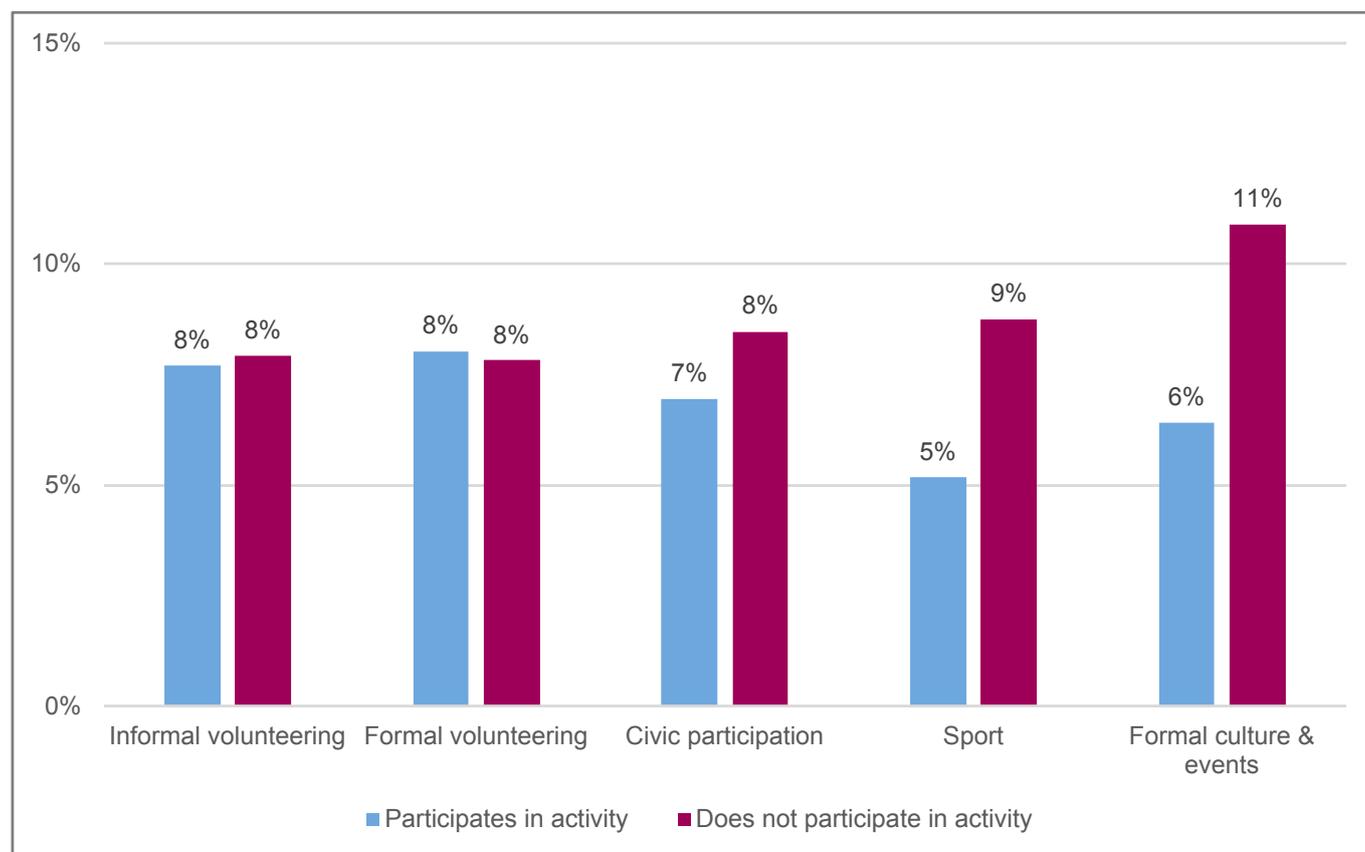
**Figure 3.16: Participation in activities is associated with higher rates of positive social mixing by age**



Base: Londoners aged 16+ who have participated in; informal volunteering (2,206); formal volunteering (1,217); civic participation (1,047); sport (894); formal culture & events (2,792). Who have not participated in; informal volunteering (1,668); formal volunteering (2,732); in civic participation (2,810); sport (3,136); formal culture & events (1,238)

**Participation in culture and sport is not consistently associated with having more diverse relationships, although it is associated with lower rates of loneliness and social isolation (see Figure 3.17).** For example, Londoners who participate in formal culture and events are 13 percentage points less likely to report social isolation. And five per cent of Londoners who play sport feel lonely often or always, versus nine per cent among Londoners who do not play sport.

**Figure 3.17: Participation in sport and formal culture and events is associated with reduced loneliness**



Base: Londoners aged 16+ who have participated in; informal volunteering (3,447); formal volunteering (1,904); civic participation (1,671); sport (1,374); formal culture & events (4,413). Who have not participated in; informal volunteering (2,824); formal volunteering (4,546); in civic participation (4,546); sport (5,227); formal culture & events (2,188)

All forms of participation measured are associated with higher well-being, although this is clearest for participation in sport and in formal culture and events. Londoners who engage in these activities are 15 and 17 percentage points more likely, respectively, to report high personal well-being.

A number of forms of participation are positively linked to belonging to London, including formal volunteering and registering to vote. Civic action and informal volunteering are linked to local area belonging. We also see a positive relationship between voter registration and belonging to the local area: 73 per cent of Londoners who are registered to vote state that they belong strongly or very strongly to their local area, versus 55 per cent among Londoners who are not registered to vote.

### Quotes from Londoners on participation

"I love the free spaces in London where everyone meets people who are not like them - the parks, the South Bank, the museums and festivals which are open to all."

"I have been volunteering for the past 10 years for a charity called Contact the Elderly. There are a lot of old lonely people in London who do not see many people at all. ... With all the issues with young gangs in London facilitating meetings between the young and the old generations could be an invaluable asset."

"I think a greater drive to encourage those with spare time to volunteer as I think mass-people power is the best power we've got."

### 3.4 Social integration – equality

#### **Reducing inequality is an important dimension of the Mayor’s strategy for social integration.**

High levels of inequality generate large gaps in people’s everyday experience of living in London, and act as a barrier to understanding between communities and individuals.

Although existing statistics already provide a lot of data on equality issues relating to social integration e.g. education, the Survey measured a range of issues where there were gaps in existing data:

- **Unfair treatment:** the Survey includes several questions asking if respondents have been treated unfairly in the last 12 months because of 10 different characteristics, referring to the characteristics protected under the Equality Act, as well as social class. If a respondent selects any of these 10 characteristics, they are coded as having been treated unfairly.
- **English language proficiency:** the Survey includes a question asking respondents whether the main language they speak at home is English or another language. Where respondents say they speak another language, they are then asked to say how good they are at speaking English when they need to. Those that select ‘not very’ or ‘not at all good’ are coded as not being proficient at English.
- **Insecurity of privately-rented accommodation:** survey respondents who are private renters are asked why their last tenancy ended. If they were asked to leave, left due to a rent increase, because of poor conditions or because of a poor relationship with their landlord, they are coded as having insecure accommodation.
- **Savings:** survey respondents are asked if they hold at least £1,500 in savings.

These measures are designed to capture aspects of material inequality, including savings and housing insecurity, as well as equality issues that affect an individual’s ability to relate to others, such as having been discriminated against and not being proficient in English.

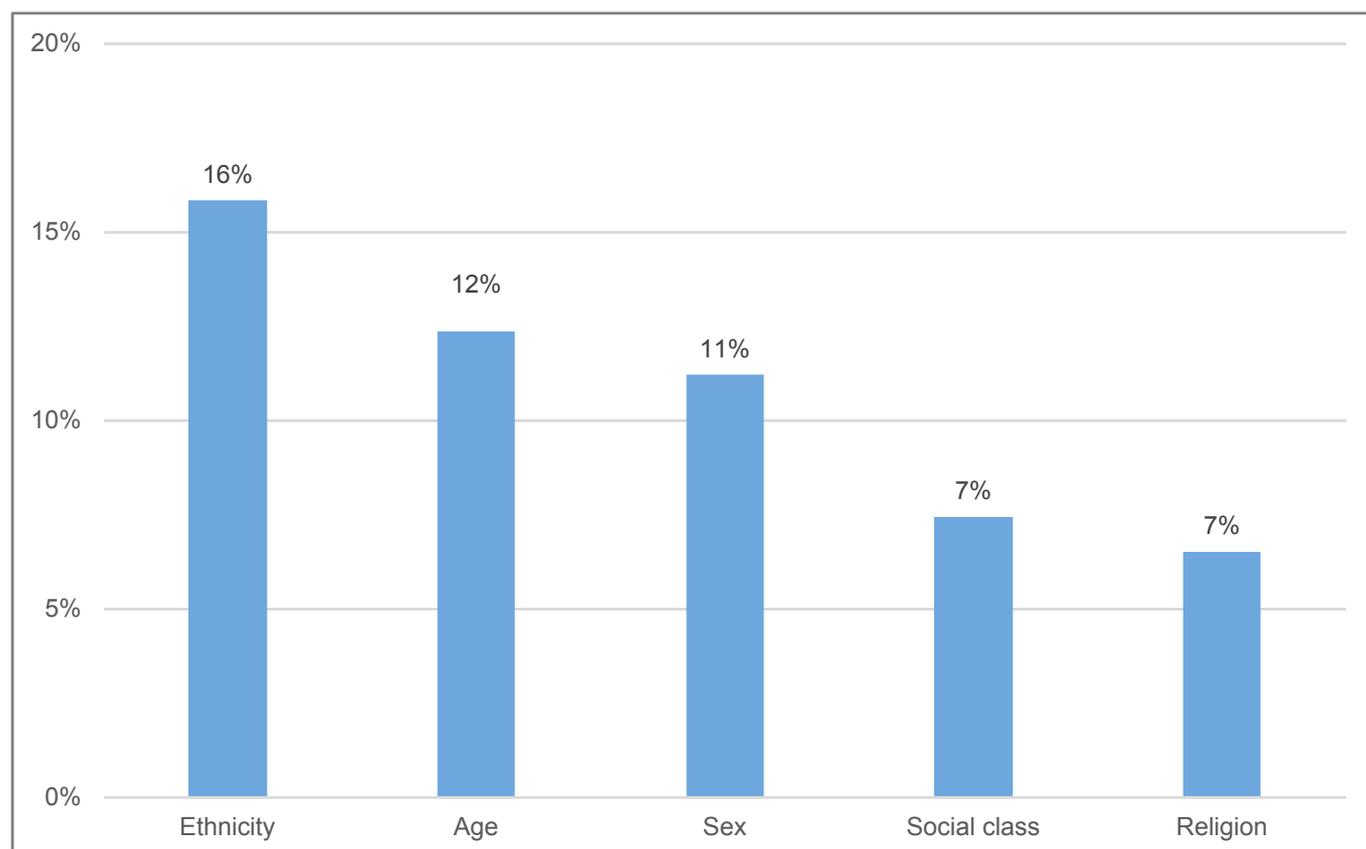
In addition to the measures above, the dimensions of economic fairness described in the next chapter of this report are also important to an understanding of inequality in London and should be considered alongside the findings presented below.

#### 3.4.1 Unfair treatment

#### **More than a third of Londoners (35 per cent) have been treated unfairly because of one or several protected characteristics or because of their social class.**

Looking at the characteristics by which Londoners are most likely to be treated unfairly reveals that ethnicity is the most common (16 per cent), followed by age (12 per cent), sex (11 per cent), social class (seven per cent) and religion (seven per cent).

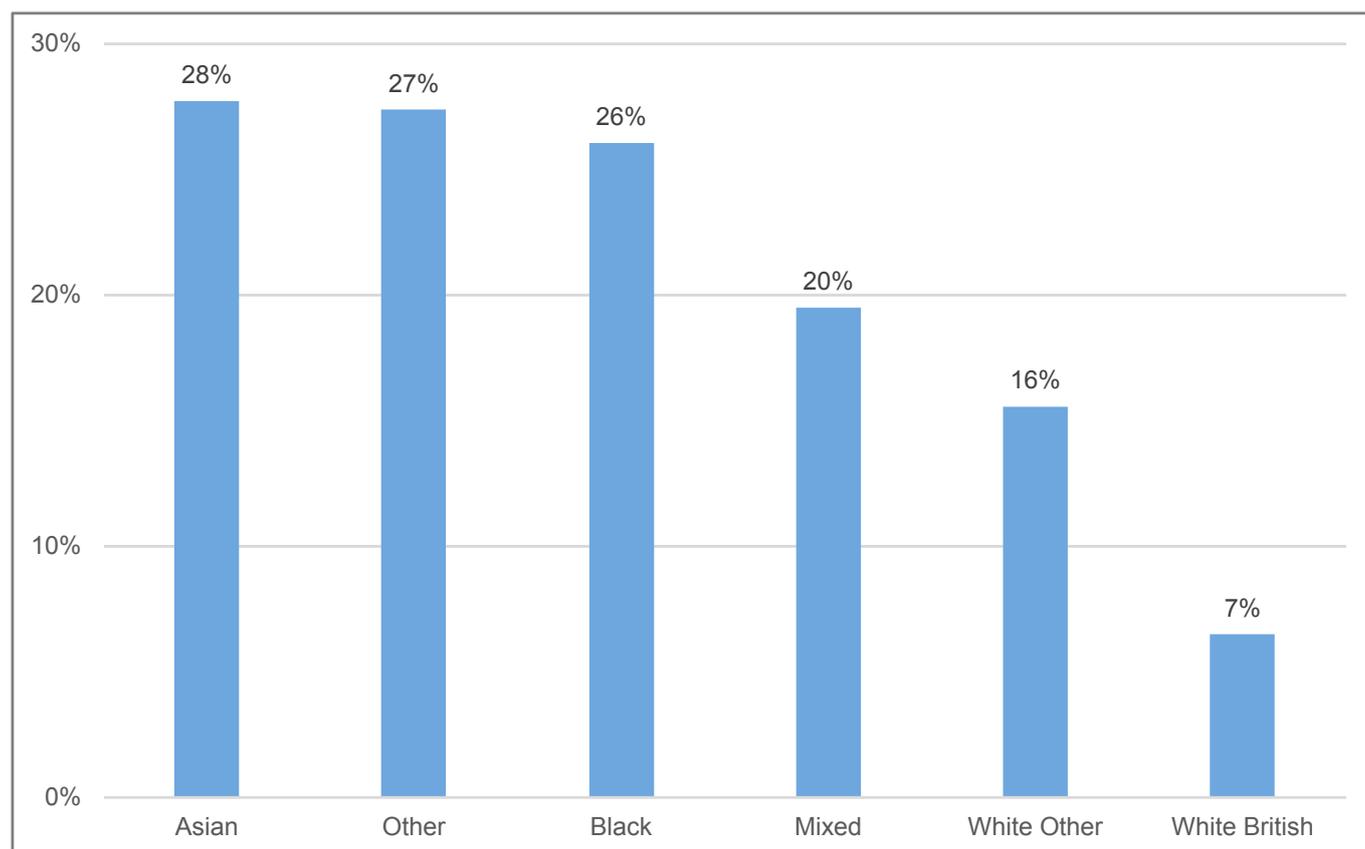
**Figure 3.18: Proportion of Londoners treated unfairly, by characteristic**



Base: Londoners aged 16+ (6,601)

Londoners of an Asian, Black or Other ethnic background are more likely to have been treated unfairly because of their ethnicity, reaching 28 per cent among Asian Londoners (see Figure 3.19). White British Londoners are significantly less likely to have been treated unfairly because of their ethnicity: Seven per cent of White British Londoners, versus 16 per cent among White Other Londoners (similar to the average).

**Figure 3.19: Proportion of Londoners treated unfairly, by ethnicity**



Base: Asian (994); Other (234); Black (543); Mixed (199); White Other (1,014); White British (3,252)

**Women are much more likely than men to report being treated unfairly because of their gender** (18 versus four per cent respectively).

**Young Londoners aged 16-24 are twice as likely to report being treated unfairly because of age than the overall average** (24 versus 12 per cent respectively). Other age groups are similar to the overall average except for 35-49-year-olds, who report being treated unfairly because of their age at half the rate (six per cent) of Londoners overall. **Muslim and Jewish Londoners are much more likely to be discriminated against because of their religion** (25 and 24 per cent respectively).

**Seven per cent of Londoners report being treated unfairly because of their social class.** Generally, those Londoners who experience wider disadvantage are more likely to be unfairly treated due to class. These include Londoners living in social rented accommodation (10 per cent), those not working because they are looking after their home or children (12 per cent) and disabled Londoners (11 per cent).

A number of other characteristics measured affect smaller groups in London's population. For example, **over a third of LGBT+ Londoners report being discriminated against because of their sexual orientation (36 per cent), and 16 per cent of disabled Londoners report being treated unfairly because they are disabled.**

Two per cent of women report that they had been treated unfairly in the last 12 months due to pregnancy or maternity. Although this figure is low it should be noted that only a small proportion of women will experience pregnancy and maternity in any given year. This corresponds to around 70,000 women in London.

Londoners living in the City & East London Assembly Area are more likely to report being treated unfairly because of their ethnicity (24 per cent) and by religion (15 per cent) than the overall average. Overall, 43 per cent of Londoners living in the City & East report that they have been treated unfairly because of one or several protected characteristics, or because of their social class.

### **3.4.2 English language proficiency**

**Of those Londoners for whom English was not a first language, 91 per cent were proficient in English.**

English language proficiency for Londoners who do not speak English is much lower among older age-groups. Eighty-three per cent of those aged 50 or older were proficient, rising to 97 per cent among those aged under 35.

There are also notable differences by ethnicity, with 89 per cent of Asian Londoners for whom English was not a first language proficient in English, versus 94 per cent among white Other Londoners.

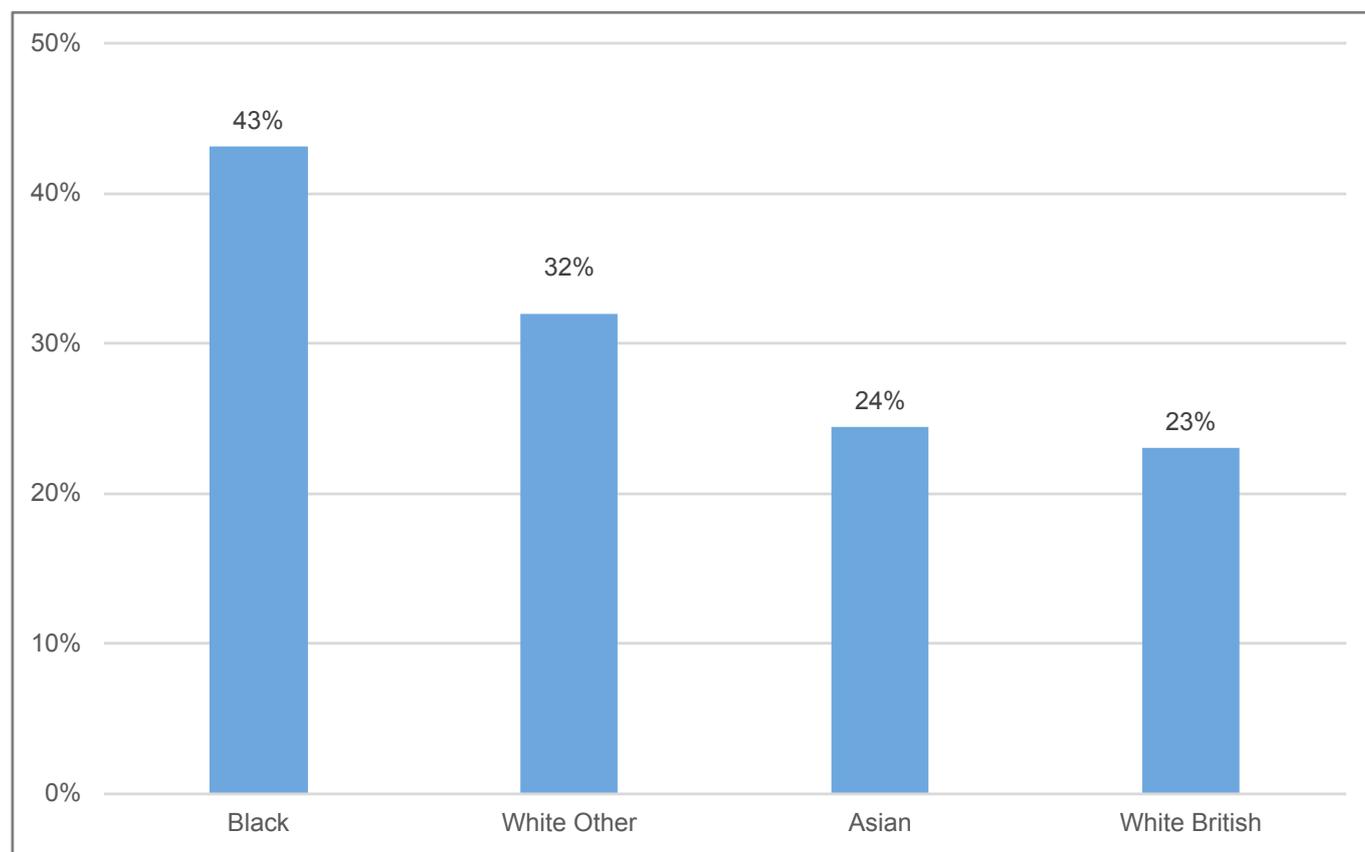
Finally, those Londoners for whom English was not a first language and were not born in the UK are less likely to be proficient in English than Londoners born in the UK for whom English is a second language (91 versus 95 per cent respectively). This also suggests that there are a very small number of Londoners born in the UK who are not proficient in English.

### **3.4.3 Insecurity of private-rented sector accommodation**

**Among London's private renters, 29 per cent had been affected by an issue in their last private-rented sector accommodation that caused them to leave.**

Renting issues are much more likely to affect some groups of private renters. **43 per cent of Londoners of a Black ethnic background say they left their last rented accommodation due to an issue.**

**Figure 3.20: Black Londoners who rent are more likely to be affected by private-rented sector issues than Asian or White British Londoners**



Base: Londoners aged 16+ who live in the private rented sector; Black (60); White Other (396); Asian (233); White British (440)

London’s renters who live in the Croydon & Sutton Assembly Area (38 per cent) also face a substantially higher risk of issues with private rented sector accommodation.

### 3.4.4 Londoners with savings

#### A third of Londoners do not have £1,500 in savings<sup>19</sup>.

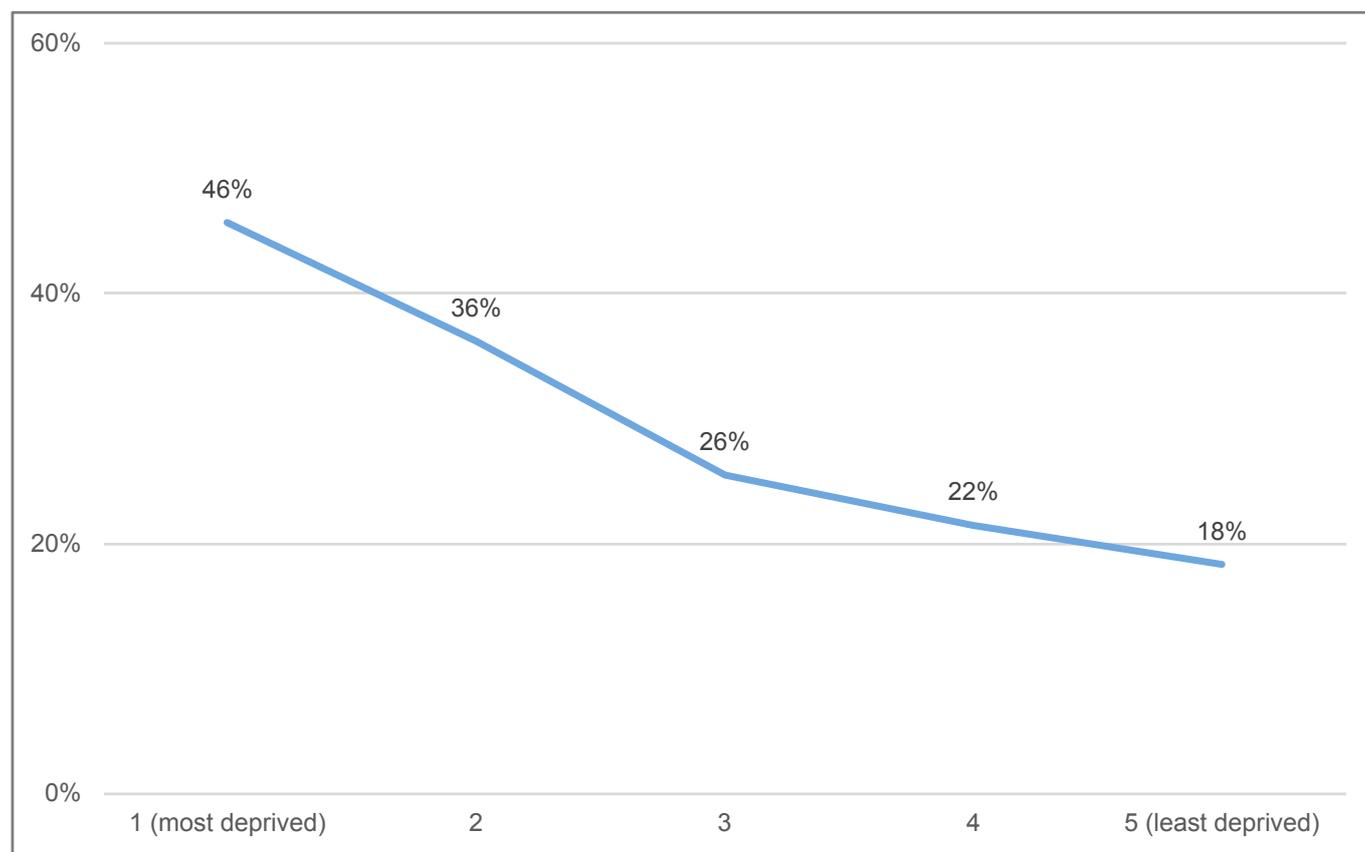
Groups of Londoners who are more likely to not have £1,500 in savings include Black Londoners (57 per cent) and Londoners of Mixed ethnicity (45 per cent – partly related to the younger age profile of this group), 16-24-year-olds (49 per cent), disabled Londoners (46 per cent) and Londoners who do not have a degree (43 per cent).

Unsurprisingly, lacking savings is clearly linked to wider disadvantage. There is a 27 percentage point gap in the proportion of Londoners without £1,500 savings between the most and the least deprived local areas by quintile based on the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (46 per cent compared with 18 per cent) (see Figure 3.21).

Londoners living in the City & East are less likely to have £1,500 in savings (45 per cent) compared with the average.

<sup>19</sup> £1,500 has been selected as a measure which provides a buffer for unexpected costs such as boiler breakdowns, car MOT repairs and loss of income

**Figure 3.21: Londoners living in more deprived areas are much more likely to not have £1,500 in savings**



Base: 1 (most deprived) (1,863), 2 (1,997); 3 (1,336); 4 (829); Mixed (576); 5 (least deprived) (870)

### 3.4.5 How do equality issues relate to Londoners’ participation, their relationships and their social integration outcomes?

Experience of unfair treatment is correlated with perceptions of social cohesion: **Londoners who have been treated unfairly because of a protected characteristic and/or their social class are less likely to agree that their local area is a place where people of different backgrounds get on.** Sixty-eight per cent of this group agree, compared with 81 per cent among Londoners who have not been treated unfairly. Experience of unfair treatment is also correlated with reduced local area belonging.

**Londoners who lack savings of £1,500 are more likely to be affected by loneliness and social isolation than those who do have savings:** 14 per cent of Londoners who lack savings feel lonely often or always, and 35 per cent do not have someone they can rely on a lot in an emergency.

Equality issues are also related to participation. **Londoners who are not proficient in English are much less likely to participate.** Only six per cent of this group play sport, and around three in ten (28 per cent) have been/participated in a formal cultural activity or event in the last month. They are also less likely to volunteer or engage in civic participation.

**But Londoners who lack savings are less likely to engage in formal culture and events,** with only 57 per cent participating in these activities, versus 75 per cent among Londoners with at least £1,500 in savings.

Finally, being affected by one of the equality issues discussed in this chapter, such as not having £1,500 in savings or being unfairly treated, is associated with lower likelihood of reporting high personal well-being of more than 20 percentage points.

### Quotes from Londoners on equalities

“Less islamaphobia please.”

“Brexit worries me enormously as it has fostered a level of division in London which I have not experienced since the 1960's/1970's.”

“London sadly feels very divided as a direct result of Brexit. I have definitely notice intolerance and particularly racism on the increase.”

“The sexual harrassment and discrimination against women, especially young girls, is a really worrying problem here. Myself and friends often feel targeted wherever we go.”

“I wish employers were treating employees as fair as their equality procedures states. I believe I was discriminated on several occasion based on my ethnicity and had no opportunities to be promoted on this basis.”

“I feel I am being discriminated against as I have been forced to live in a tiny bed sit with my daughter who is now 16 years old.”

“My wife does not speak English at all. For that reason, she has some difficulties to live in London. I always should explain everything because of lack of her speaking skills. Could you organise free English courses (speak classes) for new Londoners (foreigners) if it is possible?”

“I enjoy living in London as there is so much to see and do and I have many friends here, but feel it's hard to really put down roots in a community as we are moving so often due to the state of the rental market. Lets are too short, too unstable and properties are often in poor condition and landlords and estate agents are often unscrupulous.”

“I moved 17 times in 10 years due to landlords.”

## 4 Economic fairness

‘Economic fairness’ is defined as when all Londoners benefit from the city’s success, so that opportunity and prosperity are shared. The Mayor of London published a first set of economic fairness measures in September 2018<sup>20</sup>.

These measures are grouped into three broad themes:

- **A labour market that works for everyone** – these measures relate to fair employment practices and representation, including pay differentials
- **Equal opportunities** – these measures relate to accessing employment and measures related to life chances such as school readiness, school achievement, skills as well as some related to inequality and perceptions of fairness.
- **Raising living standards** – a broad range of topics relating to lowering the costs of living, reducing poverty and financial inclusion.

The Survey of Londoners collected a number of additional measures of economic fairness and the key findings are presented in this section.

### 4.1 Perceptions of fairness

The Survey of Londoners included two questions that explored the attitudes of Londoners towards issues of fairness in their city.

The first question focused on Londoners’ general perception of fairness<sup>21</sup>, and the second asked about London as a meritocracy with Londoners asked to choose between two statements as to which was closest to their opinion: ‘I will get ahead in London if I work hard’ or ‘My hard work and determination is no guarantee of getting ahead in London’.

#### 4.1.1 London as a fair city

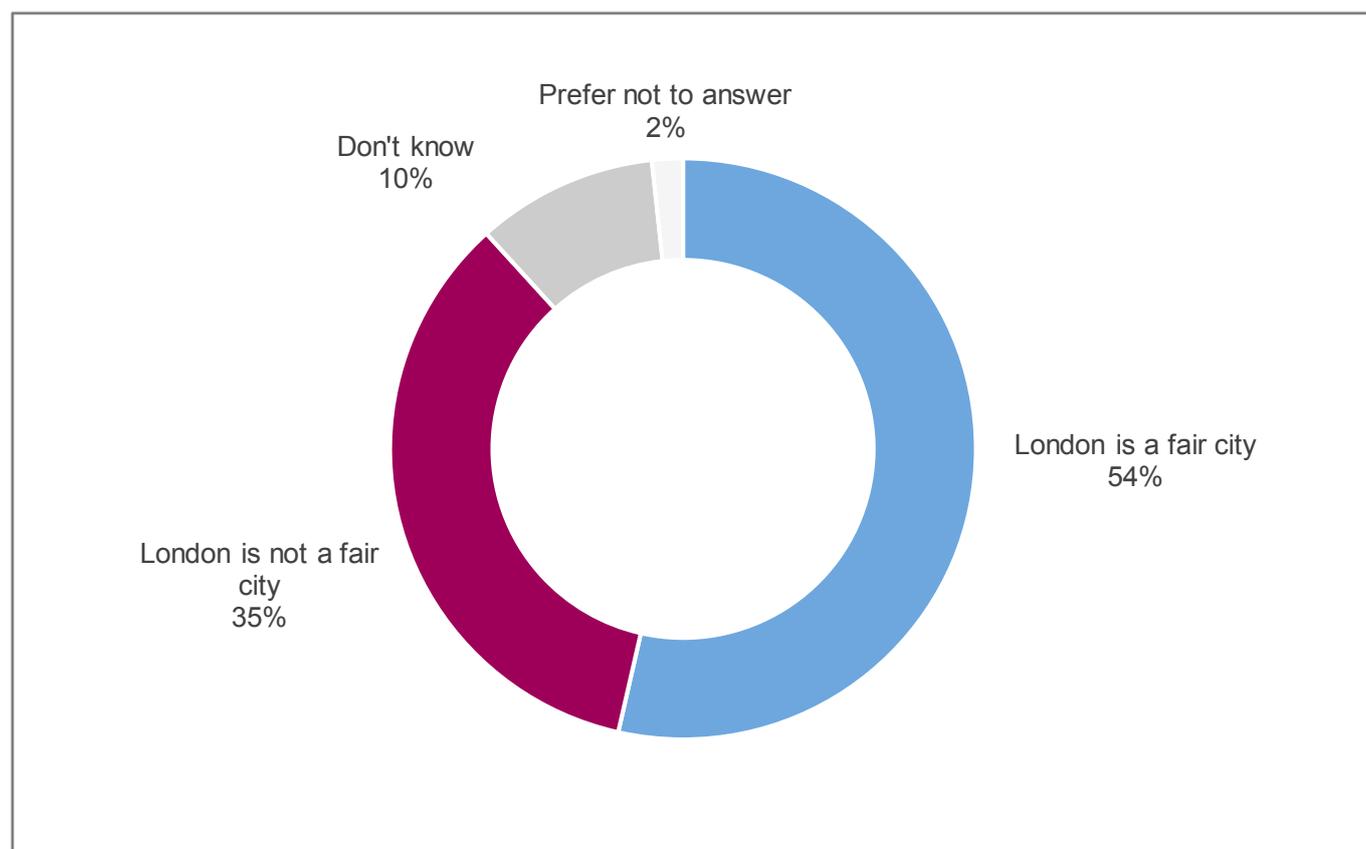
Overall, 54 per cent of Londoners think that London is a fair city (see Figure 4.1). This is the same as the percentage reported by the London Fairness Commission in 2016. A lower proportion in our survey said London was not fair (35 per cent), with the remaining 12 per cent who said they did not know or preferred not to say.

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<sup>20</sup> GLA (2018) [Economic Fairness](#).

<sup>21</sup> Replicating the measure used by the London Fairness Commission in their 2016 Final Report. The question was also tested to check that respondents had a consistent understanding of what was meant by fairness before inclusion in the questionnaire.

**Figure 4.1: Over half of Londoners think that London is a fair city**



Base: Londoners aged 16+ (6,601)

A greater proportion of men believe London is fair compared with women (56 per cent and 51 per cent respectively). Londoners aged 50 and over are most likely to believe London is fair (58 per cent), and those aged 25-34 the least likely (48 per cent).

Around two-thirds (66 per cent) of Asian Londoners believe London is fair compared with around half (48 per cent) of White British Londoners. Black Londoners are also more likely to believe London is fair compared with White British Londoners (59 per cent)

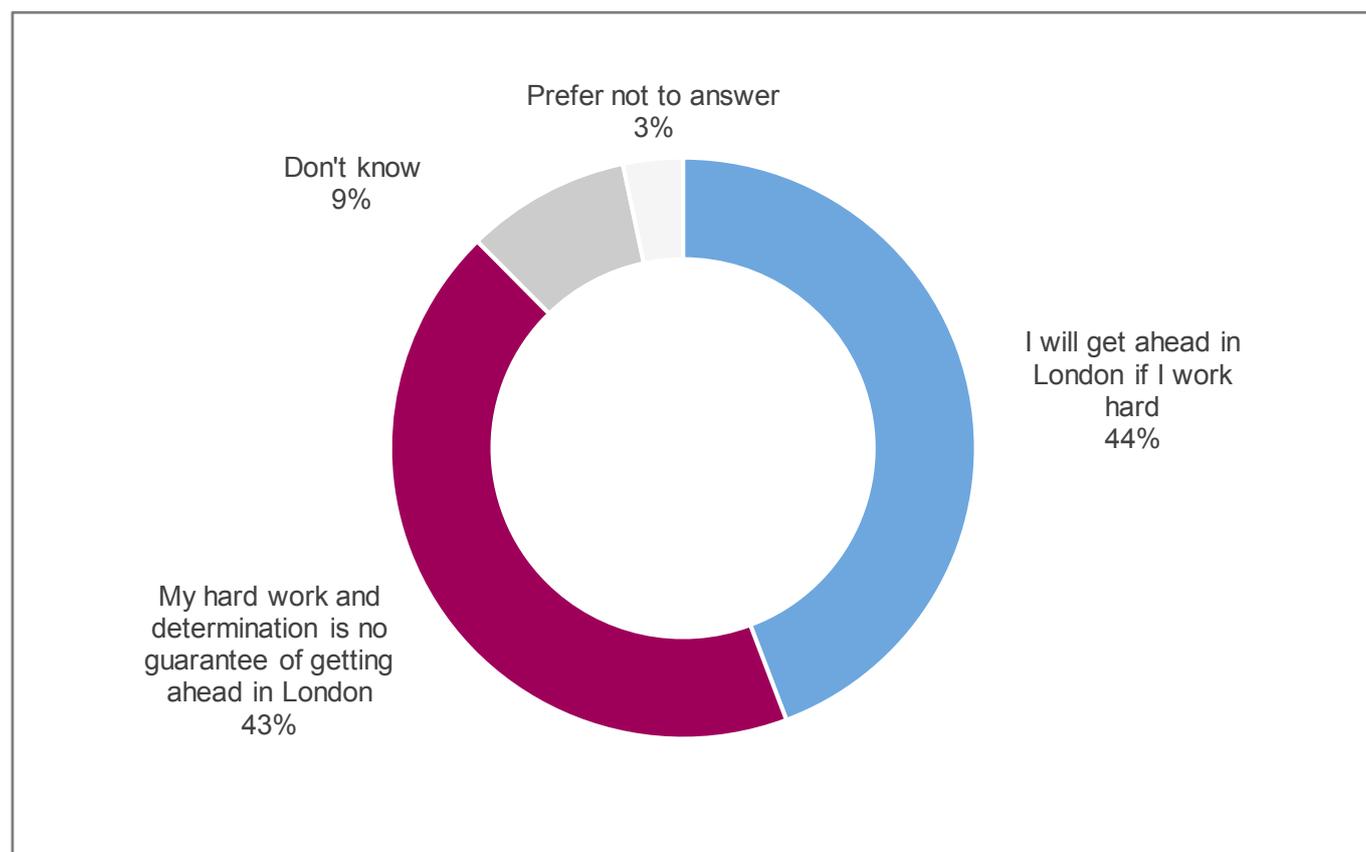
Londoners who are treated unfairly because of one or several protected characteristics or because of their social class are less likely to believe London is fair (44 per cent) compared with those who have not been treated unfairly (60 per cent).

Londoners living in the London Assembly constituency area of Brent & Harrow are more likely to believe London is fair (62 per cent) compared with Londoners living in the neighbouring constituencies of Enfield & Haringey (48 per cent) and North East (44 per cent).

#### **4.1.2 London as a meritocracy**

Views on London as a meritocracy are evenly split, with 44 per cent agreeing that if they worked hard they would get ahead and 43 per cent saying their hard work was no guarantee of this (see Figure 4.2).

**Figure 4.2: Opinion is split regarding whether Londoners think they will get ahead in London if they work hard**



Base: Londoners aged 16+ (6,601)

Belief in London as a meritocracy is closely related to age, with younger Londoners aged 16-24 most likely to agree and then agreement falling as age group increases. Only 33 per cent of those aged 65+ agree. Fifty-seven per cent of Londoners who were students agree.

Other groups who are most likely to agree with London as a meritocracy include those in the highest income quintile (58 per cent) and owner occupiers buying their accommodation with a mortgage (51 per cent).

A greater proportion of men believe they will get ahead in London if they work hard compared with women (50 per cent and 40 per cent respectively).

Londoners with a degree are more likely to believe they will get ahead in London if they work hard compared with those without a degree (49 per cent and 39 per cent respectively).

Having more friends with a greater variety of incomes appears to temper attitudes. Londoners who reported that all of their friends had a similar income to them are more likely to believe that they will get ahead in London if they work hard (54 per cent) compared with Londoners where less than half of their friends have a similar income (41 per cent).

The distribution of Londoners across the city with these characteristics results in some large differences by area. Areas where Londoners are least likely to agree are the constituency areas of Enfield & Haringey (37 per cent) and Bexley & Bromley (39 per cent), compared with South West and West Central (50 per cent and 51 per cent respectively).

Turning to the alternative view that their hard work and determination will be no guarantee of getting ahead in London, disabled Londoners (53 per cent), single parents (52 per cent) and women (45 per cent) are more likely to agree with this statement.

White British, Black and Mixed ethnicity Londoners are also more likely to agree that that their hard work and determination will be no guarantee of getting ahead in London (46 per cent, 47 per cent and 58 per cent respectively), compared with Asian Londoners (36 per cent).

### Quotes from Londoners on fairness

“London is a great place to live if you have money & a career. The rich poor divide is widening and I believe it is very unfair.”

“London is a great city, full of opportunities but it's quite unfair too.”

“Full of opportunity if you work hard. But the level of work required is enormous.”

“I love the meritocratic system and the fact that people who work hard are rewarded.”

“London is a great city to grow up in and I feel proud and privileged to come from here. However, London is a cruel city. It's a dog-eat-dog place and I feel like it doesn't care about me.”

“I feel that London has too much of a social economic divide. It is much too apparent with people having to access foodbanks in the same community as the wealthy.”

“Where is the equality in London gone? Why are there super super rich people with several houses in London which are left empty all year round and people living on the streets without shelter and food?”

“Living in London can feel like treading water. You work hard and get nowhere even on a decent salary due to the high cost of rent, bills and travel.”

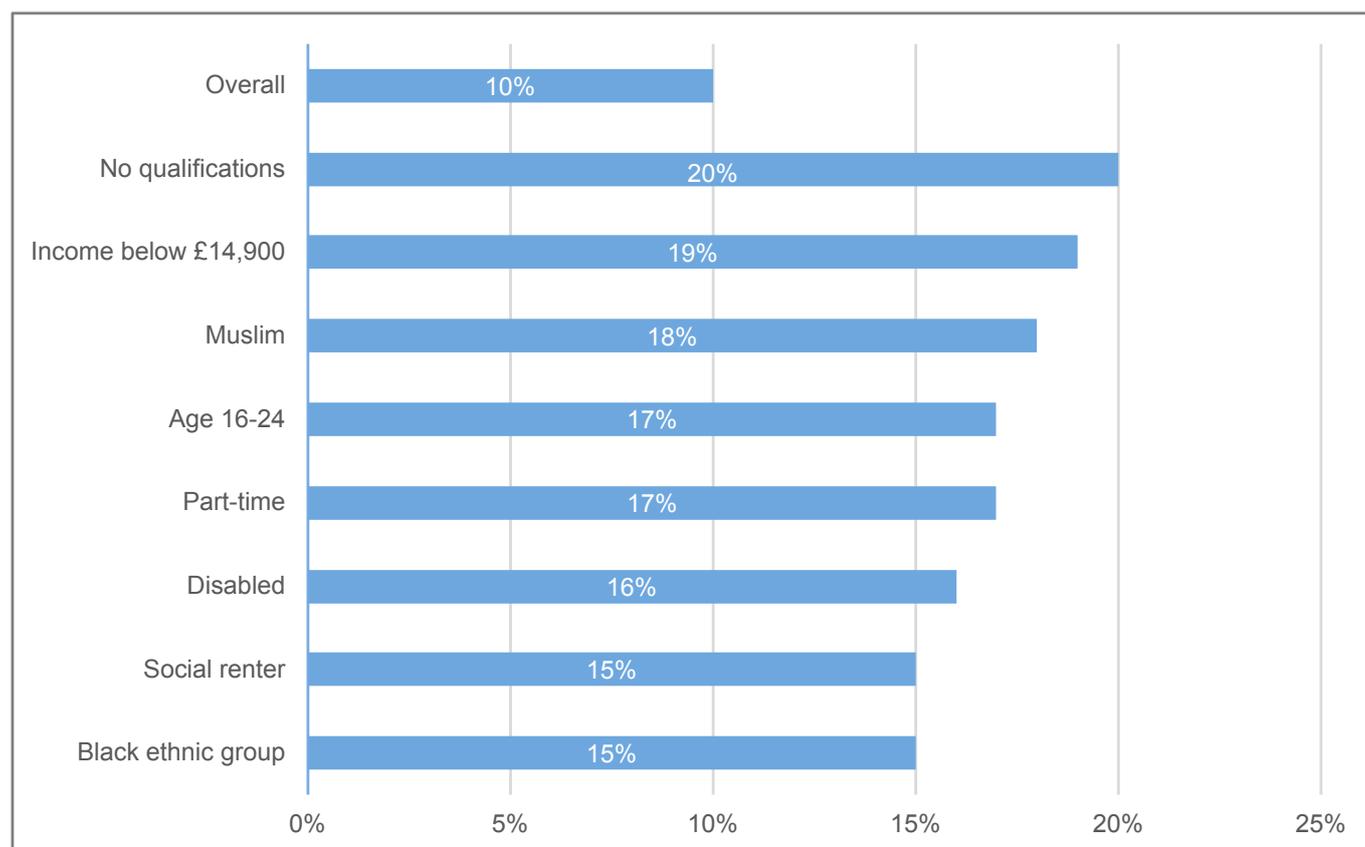
## 4.2 Insecure employment

Insecure employment is where a person is employed in a job with a temporary contract, working through an employment agency or self-employed in occupations considered insecure<sup>22</sup>. In London, ten per cent of the working-age population in work is in insecure employment (see Figure 4.3).

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<sup>22</sup> For the Survey of Londoners, occupations classed as ‘Semi-routine manual and service occupations’ and ‘Routine manual and service occupations’ were deemed insecure.

**Figure 4.3: One in ten working-age Londoners in work are in insecure employment**



Base: Working Londoners aged 16-64 (3,882); No qualifications (109); Income below £14,900 (229); Muslim (323); Age 16-24 (218); Part-time (870); Disabled (426); Social renter (527); Black ethnic group (319)

Focusing on the working-age population in work, groups who are most likely to be in insecure employment include those with no qualifications (20 per cent), those in the lowest income quintile (19 per cent), Muslim workers (18 per cent), young working Londoners aged 16-24 (17 per cent), those working part-time (17 per cent), disabled workers (16 per cent), workers living in social rented accommodation (15 per cent) and workers with a Black ethnic background (15 per cent).

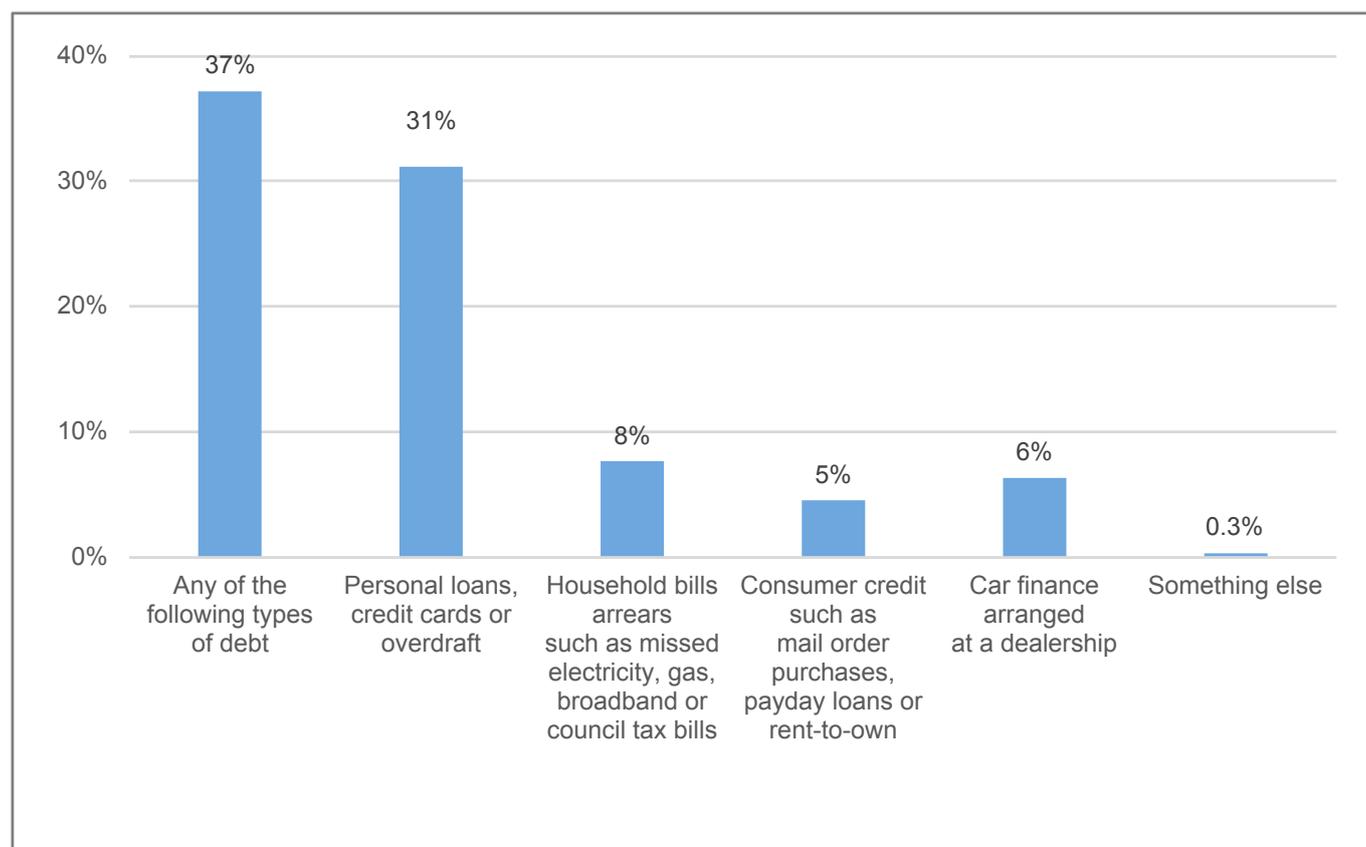
Thirteen per cent of non-British nationals are in insecure employment compared with nine per cent of British nationals.

### 4.3 Debt

The Survey of Londoners asked Londoners whether they had any of the following types of debt (excluding mortgages and student loans):

1. Personal loans, credit cards or overdraft
2. Household bills arrears such as missed electricity, gas, broadband or council tax bills
3. Consumer credit such as mail order purchases, payday loans or rent-to-own
4. Car finance arranged at a dealership
5. Something else

**Figure 4.4: Just under four in ten Londoners owe money**



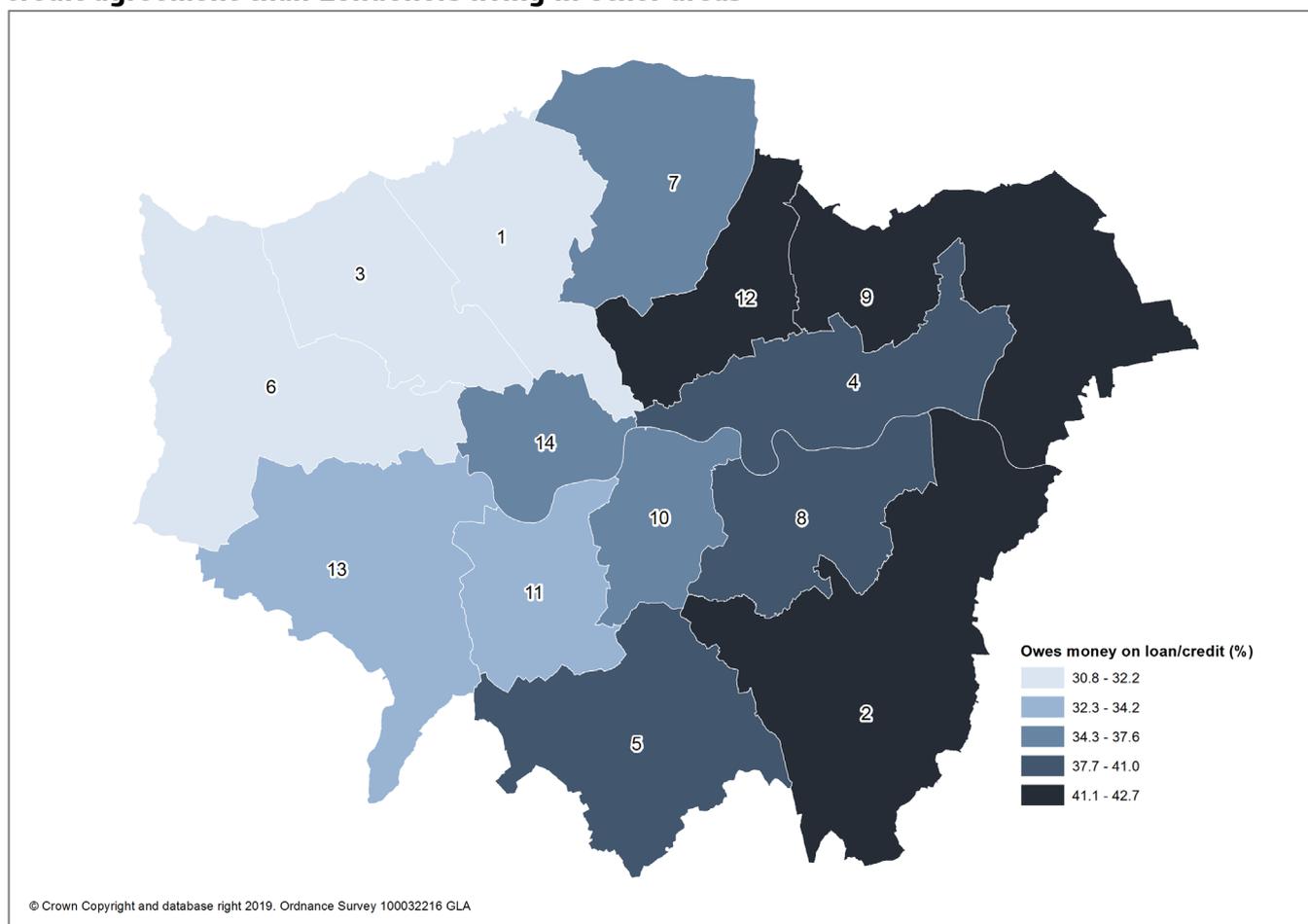
Base: Londoners aged 16+ (6,601)

Just under four in ten Londoners (37 per cent) owe money on one of these types of debt, which is around 2.7 million Londoners. Most debts are in the form of personal loans, credit cards or overdrafts: around three in ten (31 per cent) of Londoners have this type of debt. Eight per cent have household bills arrears, six per cent have car finance, and five per cent some form of consumer credit, such as mail order purchases, payday loans or rent-to-own purchases.

Londoners with children are most likely to owe money on one or more of these forms of debt: 63 per cent of single parents and 51 per cent of parents living as a couple. Forty-four per cent of Londoners working full-time owe money, 46 per cent of Londoners aged 25-49, 44 per cent of those who were social renters and buying their property with a mortgage.

Londoners living in the constituencies of Havering & Redbridge (43 per cent), Bexley & Bromley (42 per cent), and North East (42 per cent) are more likely to owe money than Ealing & Hillingdon (31 per cent), Brent & Harrow, and Barnet & Camden (both 32 per cent).

**Figure 4.5: Londoners living in outer East London are more likely to owe money on a loan or credit agreement than Londoners living in other areas**



Base: Barnet & Camden (407); Bexley & Bromley (316); Brent & Harrow (423); City & East (620); Croydon & Sutton (817); Ealing & Hillingdon (445); Enfield & Haringey (337); Greenwich & Lewisham (464); Havering & Redbridge (306); Lambeth & Southwark (918); Merton & Wandsworth (339); North East (564); South West (341); West Central (304)

### 4.3.1 Household bills arrears

Eight per cent of Londoners owe money on household bills arrears such as missed electricity, gas, broadband or council tax bills, which is around 500,000 Londoners.

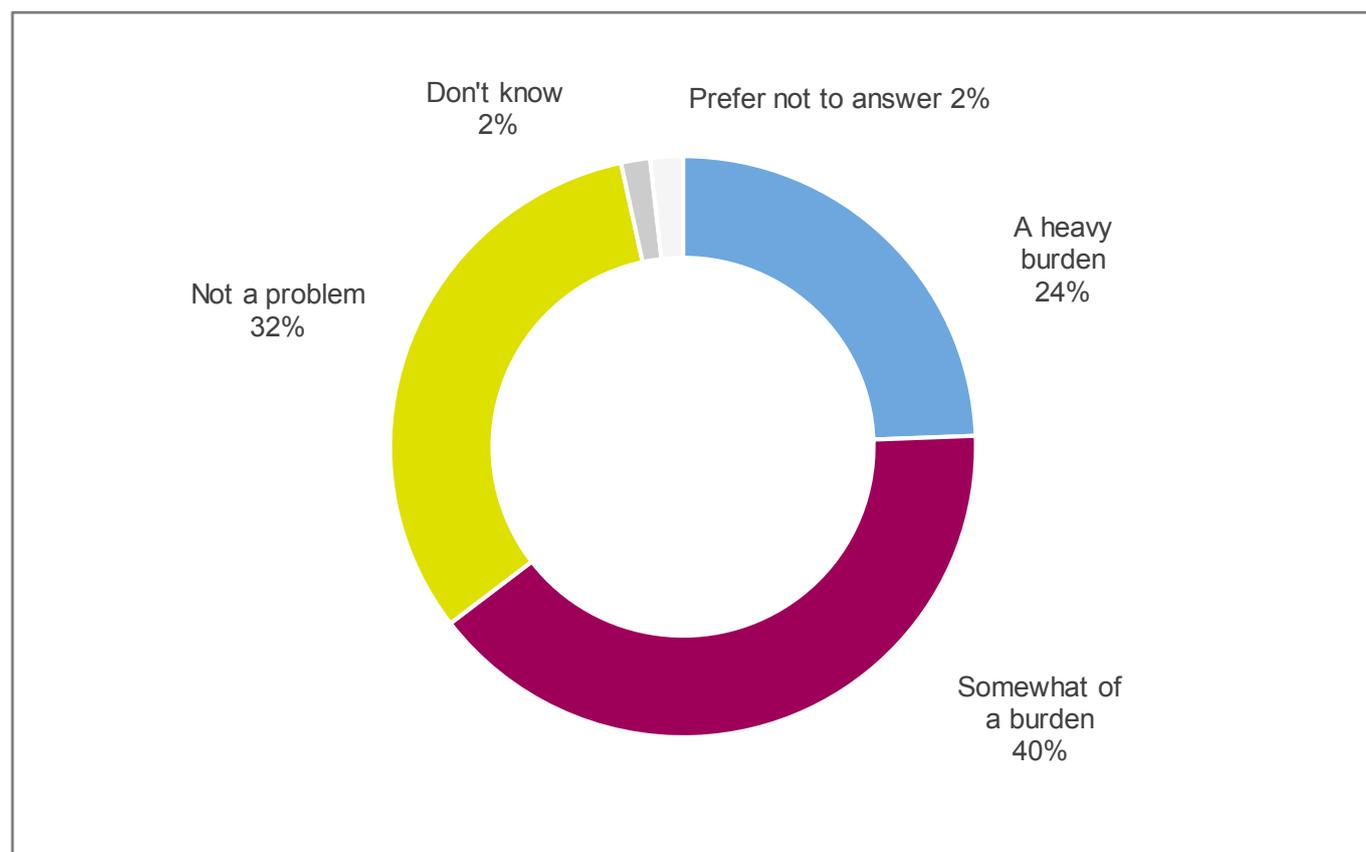
The groups most likely to have household bills arrears are single parents (22 per cent), Black Londoners (22 per cent) and disabled Londoners (14 per cent).

### 4.3.2 Debt burden

Having debt in itself is not necessarily a problem. Problems arise when people are unable to keep up with that debt and it becomes a burden. The Survey of Londoners asked those who owed money whether keeping up with repayment was a financial burden.

Around one quarter of Londoners who owe money (24 per cent) said that keeping up with that debt is a heavy burden, equivalent to around 600,000 Londoners (see Figure 4.6).

**Figure 4.6: Keeping up with debt obligations is a heavy burden to around one quarter of Londoners who owe money**



Base: Londoners aged 16+ who owe money on one of the forms of loan or credit agreement from the Survey (2,305)

Groups most likely to report that their debt repayments are a heavy burden include those in debt in the lowest income quintile (48 per cent), those renting their housing from a local authority or housing association (39 per cent); single parents (40 per cent), Londoners with a disability (37 per cent), and Muslim Londoners (34 per cent).

The extent to which debt repayments are a heavy burden is highly related to deprivation.

Londoners living in the most deprived Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) quintile are around twice as likely to report that their debt repayments are a heavy burden, compared with Londoners living in the least deprived quintile (36 per cent and 19 per cent respectively).

Feeling the heavy burden of debt is also highly related to Londoners' social isolation and loneliness. Four in ten (40 per cent) Londoners who feel a heavy burden of debt are socially isolated, while around one quarter (24 per cent) of this same burdened group feel lonely often or always<sup>23</sup>.

Londoners living in the London Assembly constituency areas of City & East, Enfield & Haringey and West Central are around twice as likely to feel that their debt repayments are a heavy burden (30 per cent, 35 per cent and 30 per cent respectively) compared with Londoners living in the constituency areas of Barnet & Camden (17 per cent), Bexley & Bromley (15 per cent) and Merton & Wandsworth (13 per cent).

<sup>23</sup> See Social Integration chapter for definitions of social isolation and loneliness.

### Quotes from Londoners on debt

“After my debt is paid I am left with no money at all for food.”

“I am in debt and struggling to pay my bills as I'm a single parent ... My parents help me to buy uniforms and things for my children as I don't have any spare money.”

“In the system as a single parent you end up in debt when you are on a low income and they (children) have long term illnesses with special dietary requirements.”

“Rent and other household expenses are very high, you are always struggling to pay resulting on debt constantly.”

“As a pensioner I am in more debt due to utility bills as I find their charges unfair, unclear and misleading.”

## 4.4 Perception of fuel poverty

Fuel poverty in England is officially measured using a Low Income High Costs (LIHC) measure, with three elements important in determining whether a household is fuel poor<sup>24</sup>. This was not possible to measure in The Survey of Londoners, so fuel poverty is defined based on Londoners' answer to the question 'whether they are able to keep their home warm enough in winter'.

Around one in eight (12 per cent) Londoners say they are not able keep their home warm enough in winter.

Londoners most likely to report not being able to keep their home warm in winter include those in the lowest income quintile (31 per cent), single parents (27 per cent), those living in social rented accommodation (27 per cent) and disabled Londoners (25 per cent).

Again, Black Londoners are more likely to report not being able to keep their home warm in winter (22 per cent), compared with ten per cent of White British Londoners.

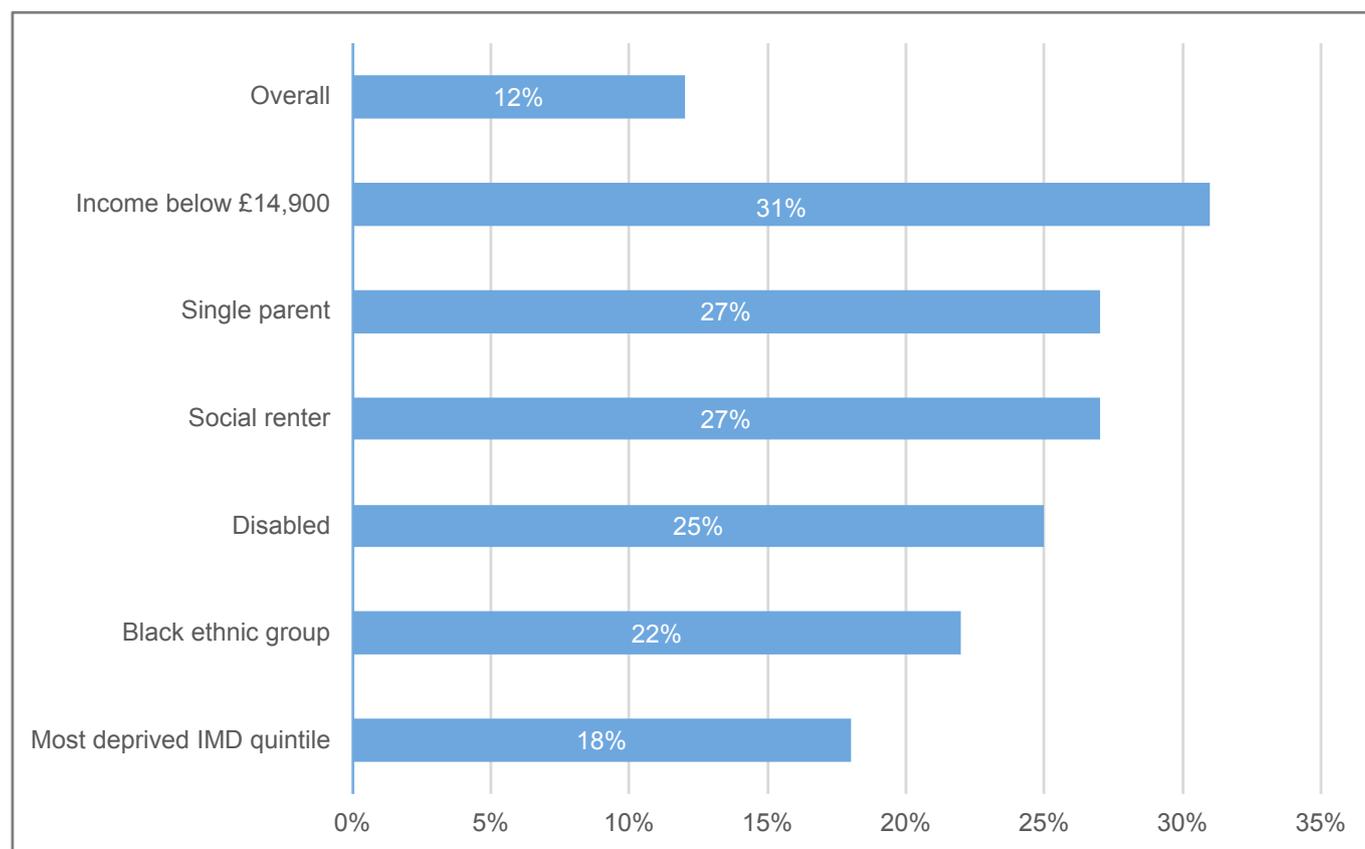
Londoners living in the most deprived IMD quintile are more likely to report not being able keep their home warm enough in winter, compared with Londoners living in the least deprived quintile (18 per cent and 5 per cent respectively).

The constituency area most likely to report high fuel poverty was City & East (19 per cent).

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<sup>24</sup> Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (2018) [Collection: Fuel poverty statistics](#).

**Figure 4.7: Keeping their home warm enough in winter is a problem for one in eight Londoners and a larger problem for low-income Londoners**



Base: Londoners aged 16+ (6,601); Income below £14,900 (661); Single parent (343); Social renter (1,194); Disabled (1,191); Black ethnic group (543); Most deprived IMD quintile (1,863)

### Quotes from Londoners on fuel poverty

“I am also concerned how expensive London has become as I cannot heat my home and am actually scared of how I will survive another winter.”

“People have real problems such as using less heating in winter due to affordability, shopping at cheaper places such as Aldi, petrol costs, costs of children etc.”

## 4.5 Bank accounts

Bank accounts and other financial services, like pensions and payment cards, are essential for people to play a full part in modern society. A lack of access to financial services can undermine people’s ability to take responsibility for their own financial well-being and resilience. If people are shut out or choose not to access mainstream financial services they will be more likely to use the cash economy and alternative providers, putting them at risk of exploitation and scams.

Two per cent of Londoners do not have a bank or building society account. Although a small proportion, this translates to around 200,000 adults in London not having an account.

Londoners who have never worked or are long-term unemployed are most likely not to have a bank or building society account (15 per cent). Young Londoners aged 16-24 and students are also more likely not to have one (seven per cent and nine per cent respectively). In addition, Londoners with no qualifications

are also less likely to have a bank or building society account (seven per cent), as well as those living in social rented accommodation from a Housing Association/Trust (six per cent). Five per cent of non-British nationals do not have a bank or building society account compared with two per cent of British nationals.

Londoners who have not registered to vote are less likely to have a bank or building society account (seven per cent) compared with those who have registered.

The London Assembly constituency area with the highest proportion of Londoners without a bank or building society account is West Central (five per cent).

#### **4.6 Which groups of Londoners are most affected by economic fairness issues?**

One of the strengths of the Survey is that it has provided a detailed picture of how economic fairness varies across London and the groups who are experiencing consistently worse outcomes.

Disabled Londoners fare poorly on all economic fairness measures from the Survey. Single parents also have poor outcomes for many economic fairness measures. Both groups are less likely to agree that London is a meritocracy than other Londoners, are more likely to be in arrears with their household bills; to have debt repayments that are a serious burden; and less likely to be able to heat their homes in winter or have an emergency financial buffer of £1,500 in savings.

Black Londoners are another group more likely to be in insecure employment; and have household bills arrears, and less likely to have £1,500 savings, and to be able to keep their home warm in winter.

Although still young enough to be optimistic for progression, those 16-24-years-olds who are working are more likely to be in insecure work and less likely to have £1,500 savings. This is perhaps understandable given that they are at the start of their working life, but still indicates a lack of financial resilience should there be an unexpected financial emergency. They are also less likely to have a bank account than Londoners in older age groups.

Insecure work is an economic fairness measure in its own right and, as a result, it is also a telling characteristic in the outcomes of other measures. Those in insecure work are less likely to agree London is fair and this is reflected in higher than average levels of having household bills arrears, and not being able to keep their home warm in winter.

The IMD provides a good indicator to where Londoners with poor economic fairness outcomes live in London, with more deprived areas having a greater proportion of Londoners with poor outcomes. This is also reflected in some of the London Assembly constituency areas that had better or worse outcomes. City & East was the area in London that had poor outcomes on a number of measures: levels of insecure work, not having £1,500 savings, repayment of debt being a heavy burden and not being able to keep their home warm in winter. On the other end of the scale, Londoners in Merton & Wandsworth are more likely to fare better on these measures.

Compared with social integration where there was little gender difference except in experience of unfair treatment, men are more likely than women to think that London is fair and a meritocracy. This reflects women's experience of low-paid work and subsequent knock-on effects of debt and household bills, outcomes that were worse for the 72 per cent of single parents who were women.

## 5 Food security

Having food security means having access at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life. Being food insecure means that at times a person's food intake was reduced and their eating patterns were disrupted because of a lack of money and other resources for obtaining food.

The Mayor of London committed to measure food security in London using the Survey of Londoners, to support the development of long-term solutions to its causes and impacts in his Food Strategy, published in December 2018<sup>25</sup>.

Household food security status is measured by the responses to a series of questions about behaviours and experiences associated with difficulty in meeting food needs. The Survey of Londoners used five questions to assess London adults' food security and seven questions to assess London children's food security (asked of parents in the Survey). The questions are the ones recommended by the United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service<sup>26</sup>.

These figures report a range of types of low food security, not just foodbank usage, for instance, running out of money to buy food, cutting the size of meals or skipping them, and not being able to afford balanced meals. Foodbank usage is not a good overall measure of low food security<sup>27</sup>.

### 5.1 London Adult Food Security

Around one in five (21 per cent) adults in London have low or very low food security, which is around 1.5 million adults (see Figure 5.1)<sup>28</sup>.

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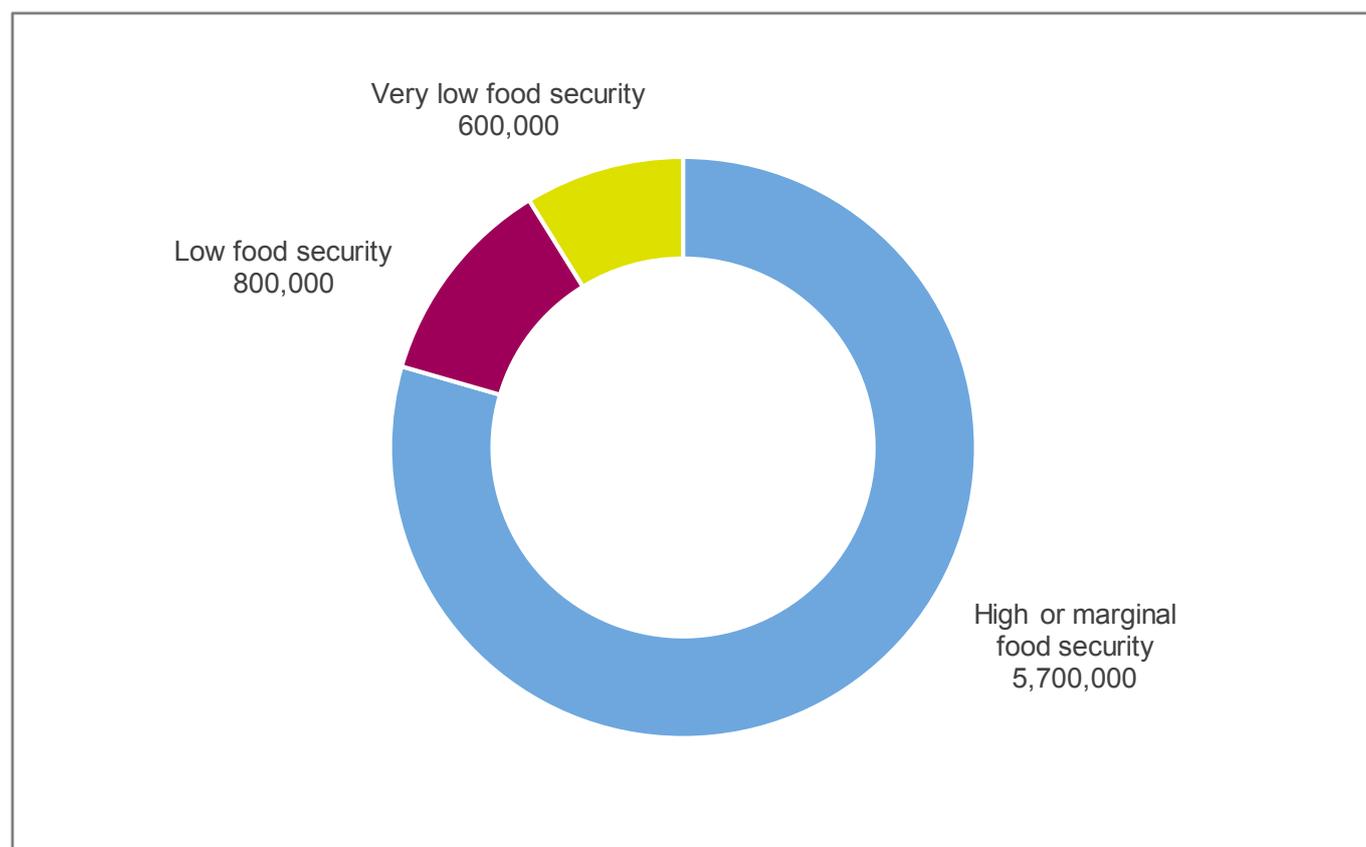
<sup>25</sup> GLA (2018) [The London Food Strategy: Healthy and sustainable food for London](#).

<sup>26</sup> United States Department of Agriculture (2017) [Survey Tools](#). The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) announced in February 2019 that they would include the ten-question food security module from the United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service in the Family Resources Survey (FRS) from April 2019. The data will be reported publicly in March 2021. See Butler (2019) [UK hunger survey to measure food insecurity](#).

<sup>27</sup> According to the Food Foundation, some people who are food insecure do not use emergency food aid for a variety of reasons: stigma, access, or they may think their situation is not as bad as it could be, and the service should be reserved for those who are even worse off. See The Food Foundation (2016) [Measuring household food insecurity in the UK and why we must do it](#).

<sup>28</sup> See Appendix 1 for a comparison of this estimate with those from other surveys.

**Figure 5.1: Food insecurity affects around 1.5 million adults in London**



Base: Londoners aged 16+ (6,601)

In the analysis below the categories of 'low food security' and 'very low food security' have been combined and will be reported as 'low food security'.

Looking at the composition of all those who have low food security, the majority are in work (60 per cent working either full-time or part-time). Seventy one per cent live in the two most deprived IMD quintiles. Forty per cent are Black or Asian Londoners, and 32 per cent are White British. Thirty-six per cent are single Londoners with no children.

In terms of the groups who were most likely to experience low food security, these were similar to other Economic Fairness measures – Single parents (46 per cent), Londoners in the lowest income quintile (44 per cent), unemployed Londoners (40 per cent), Black Londoners (39 per cent) and disabled Londoners (34 per cent).

Adult Londoners in households with a greater number of children aged under 16 in the household were more likely to experience low food security. Eighteen per cent of Londoners living with no children under 16 were in low food security, compared with 23 per cent of Londoners with one child under 16 in the household, 27 per cent of Londoners with two children under 16 in the household, and 36 per cent of Londoners with three or more children under 16 in the household.

Low food security was highest in City & East (31 per cent) and lowest in the constituency areas of Merton & Wandsworth (12 per cent) and South West (13 per cent).

Given the importance of food as a basic human need, it comes as no surprise that Londoners with low food security also have worse outcomes on a number of other economic fairness measures. One quarter of

Londoners (25 per cent) in low food security have household bills arrears compared with three per cent of those with high/marginal food security. A large majority (72 per cent) of those in low food security do not have £1,500 in savings, compared with 23 per cent of those with high/marginal food security.

Around six in ten (60 per cent) low food-secure Londoners owe money on a loan or credit agreement compared with 31 per cent of Londoners with high/marginal food security. Of those low food-secure Londoners around half (47 per cent) find their repayment obligations a heavy burden.

Londoners with low food security are less likely to be able to keep their home warm in winter (36 per cent) compared with those with high/marginal food security (six per cent).

Living in low food security is also a socially isolating and lonely experience. 45 per cent of Londoners living in low food security are socially isolated, while around one in five (22 per cent) of this same group feel lonely often or always.

## 5.2 London Children's Food Security

The United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service module also includes questions used to assess children's food security. The Survey of Londoners asked seven questions to Londoners who responded to the Survey to say that they were the parent or guardian of any children aged under 16 currently living in the household.

Around one in six (17 per cent) parents in London have children living in low food security. This equates to around 400,000 children<sup>29</sup>.

The proportion of these parents themselves living in low adult food security is 27 per cent (higher than the 21 per cent for all adults). This difference between adult and child food security within the household provides evidence that parents are more likely to protect their children's food security at the expense of their own. A comparison of responses to some of the individual questions used to assess parents' and children's food security where they asked about similar behaviours provides further evidence of this (see Figure 5.2).

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<sup>29</sup> See Appendix 1 for details of how this figure was calculated.

**Figure 5.2: Parents are more likely to experience food insecure behaviours compared with their children**

Adult food security questions	Children's food security questions
<p>Couldn't afford to eat <b>balanced meals</b>.</p> <p>Often/sometimes true = 26 per cent</p>	<p>(I/We) couldn't feed (my/our) child/the children) a <b>balanced meal</b>, because (I/we) couldn't afford that.</p> <p>Often/sometimes true = 16 per cent</p>
<p><b>Cut the size of your meals or skip meals</b> because there wasn't enough money for food</p> <p>Yes = 22 per cent</p>	<p><b>Cut the size</b> of (your child's/any of the children's) meals because there wasn't enough money for food?</p> <p>Yes = 7 per cent</p> <p><b>Skip meals</b> because there wasn't enough money for food?</p> <p>Yes = 7 per cent</p>
<p><b>Eat less than you felt you should</b> because there wasn't enough money for food</p> <p>Yes = 19 per cent</p>	<p>(My/Our child was/The children were) <b>not eating enough</b> because (I/we) just couldn't afford enough food.</p> <p>Yes = 9 per cent</p>
<p><b>Hungry but didn't eat</b> because there wasn't enough money for food</p> <p>Yes = 12 per cent</p>	<p><b>Hungry but you just couldn't afford more food?</b></p> <p>Yes = 5 per cent</p>
<p><i>Base: Londoners aged 16+ who are the parent or guardian of any children aged under 16 currently living in the household (1,710)</i></p>	

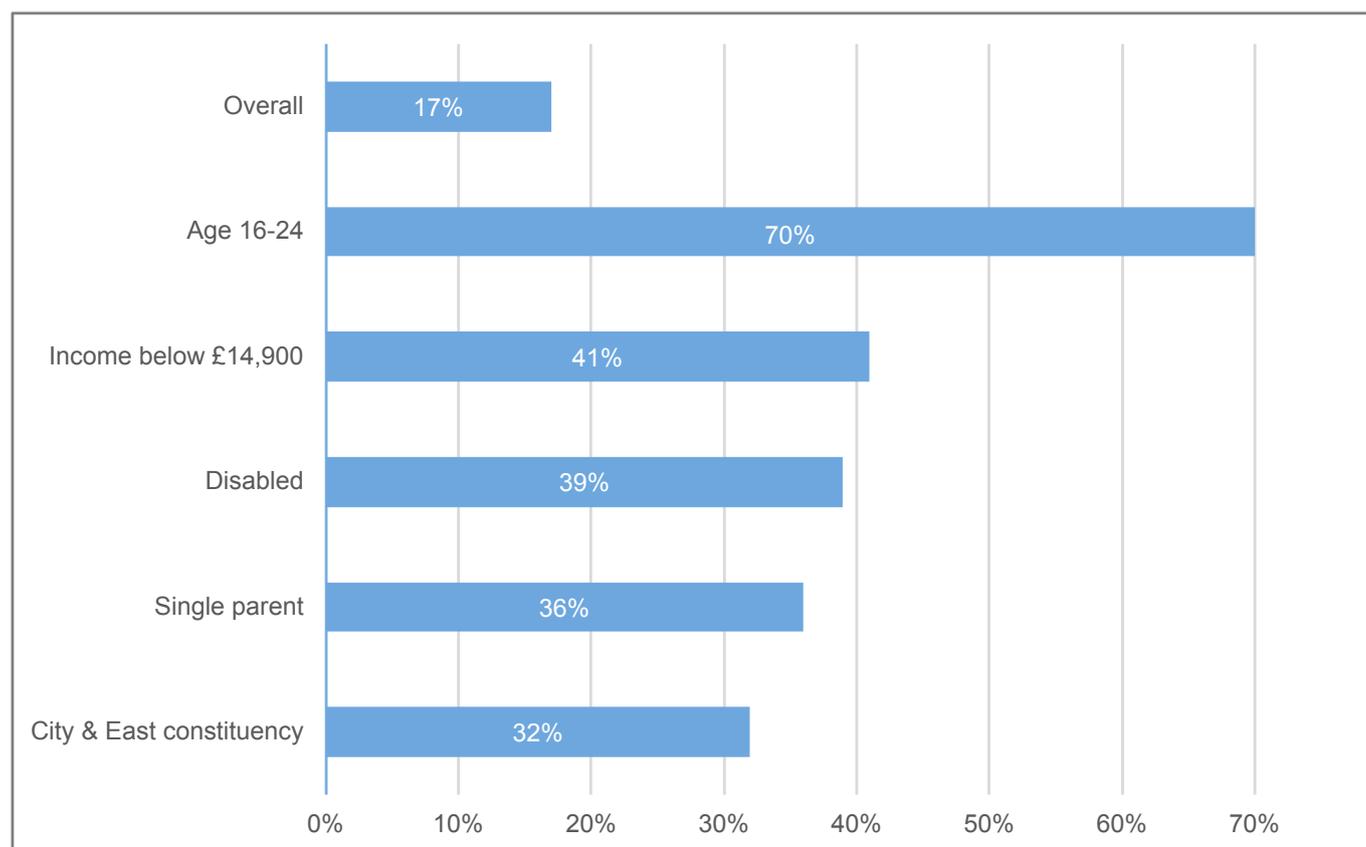
For all four of the measures common across parents and children, parents are more likely to report these behaviours compared with their children. For example, around one in five parents in London (19 per cent) are eating less than they felt they should because there is not enough money for food, compared with only around one in ten parents (nine per cent) who said that their children were not eating enough because they could not afford enough food.

The characteristics of parents whose children had low food security were similar to all adults with low food security with high rates for children whose parents are in the lowest income quintile (41 per cent), children of disabled parents (39 per cent), and children of single parents (36 per cent). Another group with a significantly high rate of 'low food security' despite being a very small group in terms of size, were the children of parents aged 16-24 (70 per cent).

Similar to adult food security, a greater number of children in the household lowers children's food security status. Of parents in London with one child under 16 in the household 15 per cent had children living in low food security, compared with those with two children (16 per cent) and 27 per cent of parents with three or more children under 16 in the household.

And the area pattern was also similar, with parents living in the London Assembly constituency area of City & East most likely to have children living in low food security (32 per cent) , and those in Merton & Wandsworth (seven per cent) and South West (10 per cent) least likely.

**Figure 5.3: The groups in London whose children are most likely to live in 'low food security'**



*Age 16-24 (35); Income below £14,900 (171); Disabled (194); Single parent (343); City & East constituency (177)*

As with adult food security, parents with children living in low food security also experience worse outcomes on a number of economic fairness measures. Around one third (35 per cent) of parents with children in low food security have household bills arrears. A large majority (73 per cent) of parents with children in low food security do not have £1,500 in savings.

Around eight in ten (77 per cent) parents with children living in low food security owe money on a loan or credit agreement. Of those parents with low food-secure children around six in ten (58 per cent) find their repayment obligations a heavy burden.

Four in ten (40 per cent) of parents of children living in low food security are not able to keep their home warm in winter compared with 10 per cent of parents with children living in high/marginal food security.

Working parents of children living in low food security are more likely to be in insecure work (14 per cent) compared with working parents of children living in high/marginal food security (eight per cent).

As with adult food security, parents with children living in low food security are more likely to be social isolated or lonely - around half (49 per cent) of parents with children living in low food security are socially isolated, while 18 per cent of this same group feel lonely often or always.

## Quotes from Londoners on food security

“My concern is for those who are struggling and those with families. Via voluntary work at Crisis and the local Foodbank, I see both homelessness and poverty on the rise.”

“Sometimes I can’t afford to pay for the school meals and survive on our wages until the end of the month. I work part time as I am a carer for my father but because i earn enough according to the state working one day, I don’t get carers allowance and my family has to survive on basic money by buying reduced priced food items.”

“I’m a single lady who has worked most of her life. I’ve had to cut back on my working hours because of health problems. I’ve been told by my doctor that I should cut back even more but I can’t afford to. I’ve got a mortgage to pay which is very hard on the hours I do plus all the other bills to pay for. My budget for food gets less and less every year. I get no benefits at all to help me. Single people with a mortgage need help too.”

“Yes the cost of rent has financially crippled me. There is no need for rent to be so high as it is due to pure greed. As a result I cannot save any money and I struggle for food and heating costs at times.”

## 6 Conclusions

The Survey of Londoners has shed light on the state of social integration in London, filled gaps in our understanding, and provided the first comprehensive estimates of food security among Londoners. The rich detail that the Survey has provided will be used to inform the design of programmes in these areas and will provide an evidence base that will shape future strategy.

The Survey has shown the complexity of social integration in a city the size of London. On the one hand, high levels of belonging are very encouraging, but digging deeper into the detail shows improvement is needed in the way we mix socially, and more serious issues on aspects of integration such as social isolation and unfair treatment. Different aspects of integration vary by different groups of Londoners – the Survey demonstrates that integration issues are not confined to any one group.

It is clear that Londoners' perceptions of fairness are related to their economic reality. This report has also shed light on some of the other existing measures of economic fairness and filled evidence gaps (e.g. around financial inclusion and debt). Notably, around 600,000 Londoners say that keeping up with repayments of their debt is a heavy burden. The Survey has highlighted groups who experience consistently worse outcomes across a range of economic measures.

The level of adult food insecurity in London is high. Around one in five (21 per cent) adults in London have modified their buying and/or eating practices negatively for financial reasons in the last 12 months. This corresponds to around 1.5 million adults living in low food security. The level of children's food insecurity in London is also high. Around one in six (17 per cent) parents in London have children living in low food security. This corresponds to around 400,000 children in London living in low food security.

In future, further findings from the Survey of Londoners will be developed to improve the social evidence base for London and improve policy-making at the Greater London Authority. City Intelligence will also work with partners in London boroughs, Central Government and civil society to share findings and improve our shared understanding of social policy issues in London.

## Appendix 1 Food security scoring and categorisation

The Survey of Londoners measured Londoners' food security status with a set of questions used by the United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service. The six-item short form of the food security survey module was adapted for use in The Survey. This short form six-item scale provides a reasonably reliable substitute where surveys cannot implement the full 10-item measure (like the Survey of Londoners). The advantages and limitations of this version is detailed on the USDA's website<sup>30</sup>.

Five questions were used to assess adult Londoners' food security (two of the recommended questions were combined into one in this survey):

1. Please say whether the statement was OFTEN true, SOMETIMES true, or NEVER true for (you/your household) in the last 12 months:  
**The food that (I/we) bought just didn't last, and (I/we) didn't have money to get more.**
2. Please say whether the statement was OFTEN true, SOMETIMES true, or NEVER true for (you/your household) in the last 12 months  
**(I/we) couldn't afford to eat balanced meals.**
3. In the last 12 months, did you ever **cut the size of your meals or skip meals** because there wasn't enough money for food?
4. In the last 12 months, did you ever **eat less than you felt you should** because there wasn't enough money for food?
5. In the last 12 months, were you ever **hungry but didn't eat** because there wasn't enough money for food?

Points were given as follows:

- 1 point for a response of "often" or "sometimes" at question 1
- 1 point for a response of "often" or "sometimes" at question 2
- 1 point for a response of "yes, only 1 or 2 months" at question 3
- 2 points for a response of "yes, almost every month" or "yes, some months but not every month" at question 3
- 1 point for a response of "yes" at question 4
- 1 point for a response of "yes" at question 5

The sum of points to the five questions is the raw score on the scale.

Adults' food security status is assigned as follows:

- Raw score 0-1 — High or marginal food security
- Raw score 2-4 — Low food security
- Raw score 5-6 — Very low food security

Seven questions were used to assess London children's food security. Again these were recommended measures from the United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service.

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<sup>30</sup> United States Department of Agriculture (2017) [Survey Tools](#).

The questions were only asked of Londoners who, in the Survey, responded that they were the parent or guardian of any children aged under 16 currently living in the household.

1. Please say whether the statement was OFTEN true, SOMETIMES true, or NEVER true in the last 12 months for your (child/children) living in the household who are under 16 years old:  
**(I/we) relied on only a few kinds of low-cost food to feed (my/our child/the children) because (I was/we were) running out of money to buy food.”**
2. Please say whether the statement was OFTEN true, SOMETIMES true, or NEVER true in the last 12 months for your (child/children) living in the household who are under 16 years old:  
**(I/We) couldn't feed (my/our) child/the children) a balanced meal, because (I/we) couldn't afford that.**
3. Please say whether the statement was OFTEN true, SOMETIMES true, or NEVER true in the last 12 months for your (child/children) living in the household who are under 16 years old:  
**(My/Our child/The children were) not eating enough because (I/we) just couldn't afford enough food.**

The remaining questions were only asked if parents had said 'often' or 'sometimes' true to one of the previous questions.

4. In the last 12 months, did you ever **cut the size of (your child's/any of the children's) meals** because there wasn't enough money for food?
5. In the last 12 months, did (your child/any of the children) ever **skip meals** because there wasn't enough money for food?
6. In the last 12 months, (was your child/were the children) ever **hungry but you just couldn't afford more food?**
7. In the last 12 months, did (your child/any of the children) ever **not eat for a whole day** because there wasn't enough money for food?

Points were given as follows:

- 1 point for a response of “often” or “sometimes” at question 1
- 1 point for a response of “often” or “sometimes” at question 2
- 1 point for a response of “often” or “sometimes” at question 3
- 1 point for a response of “yes” at question 4
- 1 point for a response of “yes, only 1 or 2 months” at question 5
- 2 points for a response of “yes, almost every month” or “yes, some months but not every month” at question 5
- 1 point for a response of “yes” at question 6
- 1 point for a response of “yes” at question 7

The sum of points to the seven questions is the raw score on the scale.

Children's food security status is assigned as follows:

- Raw score 0-1 — High or marginal food security
- Raw score 2-4 — Low food security
- Raw score 5-8 — Very low food security

## Comparison with other surveys

The most recent example of food security being measured in London comes from the Food Standard Agency's Food and You consumer survey in 2016, though results were presented at the national level only<sup>31</sup>. It used ten questions from the United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service to measure food security. Within selected households of the Survey, one adult aged 16 years and over was selected to take part in the Survey and answer questions about their and other adults in their household's food behaviours with regards to food security, to give a measure of food security for their household. This Survey found that eight per cent of adults in England lived in low food secure households.

Though the Food and You survey does not provide a breakdown for London, we can still look at why there might be differences between this estimate and the Survey of Londoners' estimate. Firstly, there could be a real difference in the food security status of adults in the whole of England compared with London. Secondly, there may have been real changes in the food security status of people in the country in the two years that had passed between the Food and You survey and the Survey of Londoners. Thirdly, methodological differences might account for some of the differences in two estimates. The Food and You survey was an interviewer-administered survey whereas the Survey of Londoners was self-completed by respondents online or on a paper questionnaire. As such, the risk of social desirability bias may be higher in the interviewer-administered survey compared with the self-completed version and lead to lower estimates i.e. respondents tend to answer questions based on what they think they should say, rather than answering what they actually do. The food security questions are also quite sensitive and so may elicit more honest responses from respondents when the survey mode does not involve having an interviewer present. Finally, The Survey of Londoners used the six-item short form of the food security survey module, rather than the full ten-item module. Thus, the questions used to derive the food security score and groupings are slightly different in the Survey of Londoners, albeit a subset of the full module.

## Number of children in London living in low food security

The Survey of Londoners collected a lot of important information about Londoners but collected only limited information about their household's make-up, notably not collecting details of relationships between household members in the household. As a result, it is difficult to provide a precise estimate of the number of children in London living in low food security.

It is possible to provide an estimate, but a few assumptions have to be made along the way. The first is that all children under 16 living in the household are under the guardianship of the parent answering the child food security questions. This is not explicitly asked about in the Survey, so is a presumption.

The second assumption is that the answers provided by parents to the food security questions apply to all children in the household when, in principle at least, some children may experience low food security while others do not.

The other assumption relates to the Survey of Londoners seeking responses from up to four adults living in the household. As more than one parent could respond to the Survey and, therefore, answer questions about the children in the household's food security, they could potentially give different responses. So, in determining the answers to a household's children where more than one parent answered, one parent was chosen at random as giving the definitive answer to the children's food security status. An alternative approach might be to use the response of the mother only when there are conflicting responses from mother and father, as mothers are generally more responsible for the provision of food to children compared to fathers.

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<sup>31</sup> Food Standards Agency (2018) [Food and You – Wave Four](#).

The final caveat in producing the number of children in London living in low food security relates to the sensitivity of the child food security questions. Sensitive topics in surveys can elicit less truthful responses to real-life behaviours i.e. social desirability bias. The survey mode can alleviate this to some extent, but the true scale of under-reporting of risky behaviours will not be known.

Given these caveats, the Survey of Londoners estimates that there are around 400,000 children in London living in low food security.

## Appendix 2 Terms and definitions used in this report

Several standard demographic and area-based classifications are used in this report to understand how issues affect different groups of Londoners. Those that require further definition are explained below.

### Individual classifications

**Londoners:** Adults aged 16 and over who live in London.

**Disability:** in this report, Londoners are classified as disabled if they have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses which are expected to last for 12 months or more and their condition and/or illness reduces their ability to carry out day to day activities.

**LGBT+:** Londoners who describe their sexual orientation as either Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Other, or describe their gender as Transman, Transwoman or Non-binary, are referred to as LGBT+.

**Ethnicity:** Londoners self-classified into the following ethnic groups using the official ONS ethnicity questions. This report uses following high level groupings for which the sample size was sufficient to report separately.

White British / White Other / Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups / Asian/Asian British / Black/African/Black Caribbean/Black British / Other ethnic group

**Social class:** social class is reported using the official ONS NS-SEC classification based on occupation. A four-category classification is used:

Upper-middle class: Managerial, administrative and professional occupations

Lower-middle class: Intermediate occupations, small employers and own account workers

Working-class: Lower supervisory and technical occupations & Semi-routine and routine occupations

Never worked and long-term unemployed

**Income quintiles:** Londoners have been classified into five income quintile groups based on their individual/household income, and the income distribution for the UK in 2018:

Lowest income quintile: annual income less than £14,900

Second income quintile: £14,901 - £23,900

Third income quintile: £24,301 - £27,900

Fourth income quintile: £37,901 - £58,900

Highest income quintile: over £58,900

## Area-based measures

There are two main area-based measures used in this report.

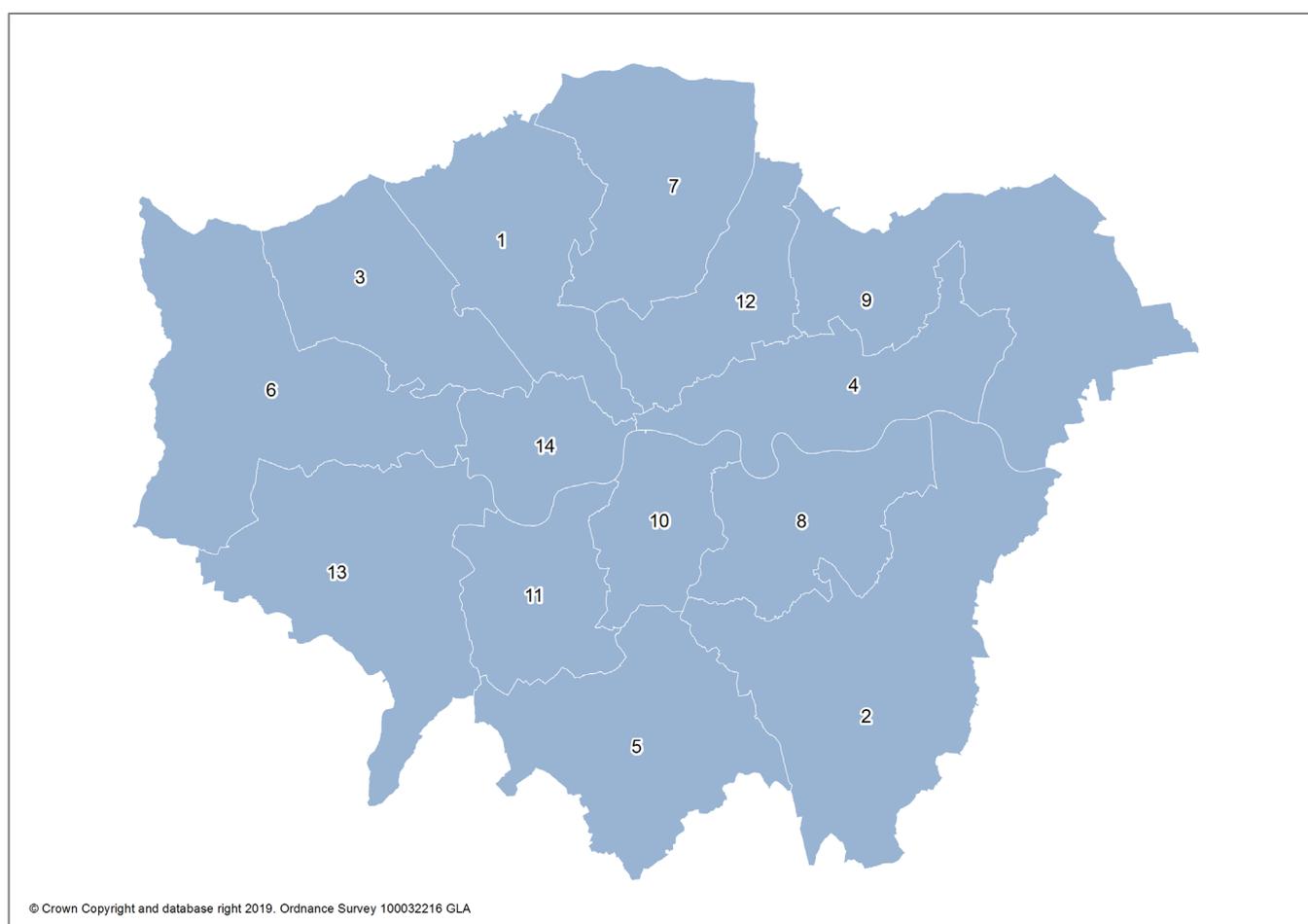
### Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)

The Index of Multiple Deprivation, commonly known as the IMD, is the official measure of relative deprivation for small areas in England. This is calculated using several measures such as income deprivation, crime and living environment deprivation. The Index of Multiple Deprivation ranks every small area in England from 1 (most deprived area) to 32,844 (least deprived area). In this publication, we have clustered these areas into 'IMD Quintiles' with 1 being the most deprived areas and 5 being the least deprived areas.

### London Assembly constituencies

London's boroughs are aggregated into 14 constituency areas served by a member of the London Assembly. These have been used to compare area variation across the different measures in this report.

**Figure A2.1: London Assembly constituencies**



Code	Name	Boroughs	Code	Name	Boroughs
1	Barnet & Camden	Barnet Camden	8	Greenwich & Lewisham	Greenwich Havering
2	Bexley & Bromley	Bexley Bromley	9	Havering & Redbridge	Havering Redbridge
3	Brent & Harrow	Brent Harrow	10	Lambeth & Southwark	Lambeth Southwark
4	City & East	Barking & Dagenham Newham Tower Hamlets City of London	11	Merton & Wandsworth	Merton Wandsworth
5	Croydon & Sutton	Croydon Sutton	12	North East	Hackney Islington Waltham Forest
6	Ealing & Hillingdon	Ealing Hillingdon	13	South West	Hounslow Kingston Richmond
7	Enfield & Haringey	Enfield Haringey	14	West Central	Hammersmith & Fulham Kensington & Chelsea Westminster

### Statistical significance

Differences between groups are only reported on in this publication where they are statistically significant, i.e. where we can be confident that the differences seen in the sampled respondents are reflective of the population. A significant difference at the 95 per cent level means we can be confident that if we carried out the same survey on different random samples of the population, 95 times out of 100 we would get similar findings.

### Rounding

Where findings are shown in terms of the number of Londoners, these are rounded to the nearest one hundred thousand.

### Population estimates used to estimate numbers of Londoners

The population data used where the findings are presented in terms of numbers rather than proportions are the GLAs [2016-based Housing-led projections for 2018](#).

All data quoted in this report is from the Survey of Londoners unless otherwise specified.

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