

Bristol Quality of Life survey 2018/19



Quality of Life Survey 2018/19 Priority Indicators: Briefing Report (March 2019)

1. Background

The [Quality of Life](#) is an extensive annual resident's survey for Bristol. It provides key indicators including measures of inequality, and is a core source of performance metrics for the [Bristol City Council \(BCC\) Business Plan](#) as well as the [One City Plan](#), [Bristol Joint Strategic Needs Assessment](#) and other [BCC intelligence and statistics products](#).

In 2018 the survey was a random sample mailed to 29,000 Bristol residents, including a follow up mailing with paper survey option, and a third phase to boost numbers from low responding groups. There were approx. 3,800 responses (with 3,500 final "usable responses" with all required fields). The survey was open for two months (Sept – Oct 2018) to residents aged 16 and over in selected households. The methodology was a return to seeking a robust randomised sample of the population, following a 2017 'self-selecting' methodology.

The 2018 survey consisted of 70 questions that produce over 200 indicators, on topics such as health, lifestyles, community, local services and living in Bristol. The size of the survey enables us to compare results for wards, areas of deprivation and equalities groups, identifying relevant issues to inform decisions about priorities and service provision. The full range of indicators is being published at the end of March 2019, via [Open Data Bristol](#).

2. Priority Indicators briefing

This briefing covers 50 Priority Indicators highlighting headline issues across key Themes. There are two pages of data results, each highlighting different aspects.

The first page is the City-wide Summary, and this looks at the results for Bristol overall from the 2018 survey, and how these changed over the last year and last three years.

The second page is the Deprivation Summary. In line with the Corporate Strategy commitment to be a Fair and Inclusive city, the survey also captures the sentiment of people who live in the 10% most deprived areas of the city in order to highlight issues of inequalities. This page focuses on how results for people in the most deprived areas have changed over the last year, and how these differ from the city average.

The colour-coding shows how responses have changed over time, or where people living in the 10% most deprived areas differ from Bristol overall. Where these changes are significantly different (using a statistical t-test) this is highlighted (*note – no significance test was applied to the final "Change in Gap" column*). Due to different response patterns, the threshold for significance may vary slightly between indicators.

Quality of Life 2018/19 Priority indicators: City-wide Summary

- a) * = a new indicator in the 2018 survey
 b) **Blue text** denotes BCC Corporate Business Plan 2018-19 performance indicators
Green text denotes other PIs (on BCC Performance Management system)
 c) Cells are greyed out where comparisons are not possible due to question not being included in 2015 or 2017 surveys.

KEY	
↑ Increased %	Statistically Significantly Worse
● No change	Worse
↓ Decreased %	Better
	Statistically Significantly Better

	2015	2017	2018	Change last year	3 year trend
Community and Living					
% satisfied with their local area	82%	76%	77%	+1	↓
% who feel they belong to their neighbourhood	62%	60%	59%	-1	↓
% who agree people from different backgrounds get on well together in their neighbourhood	63%	67%	68%	+1	↑
% who volunteer or help out in their community at least 3 times a year	52%	66%	68%	+2	↑
% who lack information to get involved in the community		28%	29%	+1	
% who have noticed their local area changing due to impacts of "gentrification" *			27%		
% who find it difficult to manage financially	12%	12%	11%	-1	↓
% who think noise from residential neighbours is a problem	32%	37%	33%	-4	↑
Health and Wellbeing					
% satisfied with life	74%	69%	68%	-1	↓
% in good health	88%	84%	84%	0	↓
% who report below average Mental Wellbeing	13%	18%	20%	+2	↑
% who see friends and family as much as they want to	82%	80%	80%	0	↓
% who do enough regular exercise each week (at least 150 mins moderate or 75 mins vigorous exercise)	65%	64%	66%	+2	↑
% who play sport at least once a week	48%	45%	44%	-1	↓
% households with a smoker	18%	22%	19%	-3	↑
% people who drink alcohol 4 times a week or more*			13%		
% who eat at least five portions of fruit or vegetables per day	50%	55%	54%	-1	↑
Crime and Safety					
% whose fear of crime affects their day-to-day lives	12%	10%	18%	+8	↑
% who feel crime and safety has got worse in their area in the last 3 years	17%	24%	28%	+4	↑
% who feel police & public services successfully tackle crime and anti-social behaviour locally	30%	32%	25%	-7	↓
% who think domestic abuse is a private matter	7%	5%	7%	+2	●
Education and Skills					
% who need to develop at least one of their skills	33%	38%	35%	-3	↑
% who know where to get information, advice and guidance about employment and training	61%	70%	63%	-7	↑
% satisfied with adult learning opportunities		32%	32%	0	
Sustainability and Environment					
% satisfied with the quality of parks and green spaces	82%	71%	68%	-3	↓
% who visit a park or green space at least once a week	55%	56%	50%	-6	↓
% who think street litter is a problem locally	74%	80%	82%	+2	↑
% satisfied with the recycling service	77%	70%	66%	-4	↓
% satisfied with the general household waste service	73%	69%	67%	-2	↓
% concerned about climate change	74%	82%	86%	+4	↑
% who have reduced their household waste due to climate change concerns	56%	58%	65%	+7	↑
% who have reduced energy use at home due to climate change concerns	51%	53%	54%	+1	↑
% who have changed the way they travel due to climate change concerns	22%	31%	30%	-1	↑
Culture and Leisure					
% satisfied with the range and quality of outdoor events	81%	77%	77%	0	↓
% who participate in cultural activities at least once a month		50%	46%	-4	↓
% satisfied with libraries	60%	52%	51%	-1	↓
% satisfied with leisure facilities/services	52%	44%	44%	0	↓
% satisfied with activities for children/young people	47%	38%	35%	-3	↓
Transport					
% who think traffic congestion is a problem locally		74%	80%	+6	
% who think air quality and traffic pollution is a problem locally		72%	77%	+5	
% who ride a bicycle at least once a week		28%	26%	-2	
% satisfied with the local bus service	50%	40%	43%	+3	↓
Housing					
% satisfied overall with their current accommodation		83%	84%	+1	
% satisfied with the state of repair of their home	78%	74%	78%	+4	●
% satisfied with the cost of their rent or mortgage payments		56%	57%	+1	
Council and Democracy					
% satisfied with the way the Council runs things	36%	27%	35%	+8	↓
% who feel Bristol City Council provides value for money	38%	32%	24%	-8	↓
% who feel an elected mayor is improving the leadership of the city	38%	35%	24%	-11	↓
% who agree they can influence decisions that affect their local area	25%	25%	18%	-7	↓
% who agree they can influence decisions that affect the public services they use	18%	18%	14%	-4	↓

Quality of Life 2018/19 Priority indicators: Deprivation Summary

- a) * = a new indicator in the 2018 survey
 b) "'yyyy' Deprived" shows results from households in the 10% most deprived areas within Bristol, based on the 2015 Index of Multiple Deprivation., for the year 'yyyy'.
 c) "2018 Gap" is the difference between the "10% Most Deprived" and 2018 city average.
 d) **Blue text** denotes BCC Corporate Business Plan 2018-19 performance indicators
Green text denotes other Pls (on BCC Performance Management system)

KEY	
↑ Gap is bigger	Statistically Significantly Worse
● No change	Worse
↓ Gap is smaller	Better
	Statistically Significantly Better

	2017 Deprived	2018 Deprived	Change in deprived	2018 Gap	Change in Gap
Community and Living					
% satisfied with their local area	56%	46%	-10	-31	↑
% who feel they belong to their neighbourhood	53%	42%	-11	-17	↑
% who agree people from different backgrounds get on well together in their neighbourhood	55%	54%	-1	-14	↑
% who volunteer or help out in their community at least 3 times a year	68%	59%	-9	-9	↑
% who lack information to get involved in the community	32%	33%	+1	+4	●
% who have noticed their local area changing due to impacts of "gentrification" *		24%		-3	
% who find it difficult to manage financially	21%	19%	-2	+8	↓
% who think noise from residential neighbours is a problem	59%	53%	-6	+20	↓
Health and Wellbeing					
% satisfied with life	57%	54%	-3	-14	↑
% in good health	75%	77%	+2	-7	↓
% who report below average Mental Wellbeing	28%	28%	0	+8	↓
% who see friends and family as much as they want to	79%	74%	-5	-6	↑
% who do enough regular exercise each week (at least 150 mins moderate or 75 mins vigorous exercise)	59%	56%	-3	-10	↑
% who play sport at least once a week	32%	36%	+4	-8	↓
% households with a smoker	29%	30%	+1	+11	↑
% people who drink alcohol 4 times a week or more*		8%		-5	
% who eat at least five portions of fruit or vegetables per day	58%	45%	-13	-9	↑
Crime and Safety					
% whose fear of crime affects their day-to-day lives	25%	33%	+8	+15	●
% who feel crime and safety has got worse in their area in the last 3 years	33%	35%	+2	+7	↓
% who feel police & public services successfully tackle crime and anti-social behaviour locally	32%	20%	-12	-5	↑
% who think domestic abuse is a private matter	10%	14%	+4	+7	↑
Education and Skills					
% who need to develop at least one of their skills	45%	39%	-6	+4	↓
% who know where to get information, advice and guidance about employment and training	81%	60%	-21	-3	↓
% satisfied with adult learning opportunities	34%	31%	-3	-1	↓
Sustainability and Environment					
% satisfied with the quality of parks and green spaces	53%	47%	-6	-21	↑
% who visit a park or green space at least once a week	52%	41%	-11	-9	↑
% who think street litter is a problem locally	94%	94%	0	+12	↓
% satisfied with the recycling service	63%	56%	-7	-10	↑
% satisfied with the general household waste service	60%	61%	+1	-6	↓
% concerned about climate change	76%	80%	+4	-6	●
% who have reduced their household waste due to climate change concerns	50%	61%	+11	-4	↓
% who have reduced energy use at home due to climate change concerns	44%	52%	+8	-2	↓
% who have changed the way they travel due to climate change concerns	23%	25%	+2	-5	↓
Culture and Leisure					
% satisfied with the range and quality of outdoor events	67%	66%	-1	-11	↑
% who participate in cultural activities at least once a month	39%	35%	-4	-11	●
% satisfied with libraries	48%	43%	-5	-8	↑
% satisfied with leisure facilities/services	40%	38%	-2	-6	↑
% satisfied with activities for children/young people	28%	24%	-4	-11	↑
Transport					
% who think traffic congestion is a problem locally	57%	69%	+12	-11	↓
% who think air quality and traffic pollution is a problem locally	67%	74%	+7	-3	↓
% who ride a bicycle at least once a week	22%	20%	-2	-6	●
% satisfied with the local bus service	33%	40%	+7	-3	↓
Housing					
% satisfied overall with their current accommodation	76%	76%	0	-8	↑
% satisfied with the state of repair of their home	68%	69%	+1	-9	↑
% satisfied with the cost of their rent or mortgage payments	54%	60%	+6	+3	↑
Council and Democracy					
% satisfied with the way the Council runs things	25%	26%	+1	-9	↑
% who feel Bristol City Council provides value for money	28%	21%	-7	-3	↓
% who feel an elected mayor is improving the leadership of the city	25%	20%	-5	-4	↓
% who agree they can influence decisions that affect their local area	24%	17%	-7	-1	●
% who agree they can influence decisions that affect the public services they use	20%	15%	-5	+1	↓

3. Key Findings 2018/19

A 2018 national survey by the Local Government Association recorded the lowest ever numbers for people's satisfaction with local authorities, both generally speaking and across seven out of eight defined areas. We would suggest that this is symptomatic of the national mood and exacerbated by the growing awareness and impact of difficult cuts made by councils during a period of prolonged austerity. It is therefore unsurprising that a similar mood is prevalent in the results of this survey, where overall perception has deteriorated in spite of pockets of more positive movement.

Inequality and deprivation, which are both high strategic priorities for the council, continue to be a challenge for the city and affect people's satisfaction in almost every element measured by the survey. Nearly all themes show that experiences in our most deprived communities are worse than those expressed by the average Bristol resident, and investment made by the council following its new strategic direction adopted in February 2018 has yet to be reflected in the views expressed. Given the complex and long-standing issues involved in addressing inequality, this is perhaps unsurprising.

- **Community and Living**

Over 3 in 4 people (77%) are satisfied with their local area in Bristol, about the same as the previous year (76%). However satisfaction is 31 percentage points (p.p.) lower in the most deprived communities (46%), a bigger gap than in 2017, when a 20 p.p. difference was recorded. Overall, 59% feel they belong to their neighbourhood, similar to last year, but people's attachment to their local area is significantly lower in the most deprived areas (42%), a deprivation gap of 17 p.p..

Over 2 in 3 people (68%) feel "people from different backgrounds get on well together" in their neighbourhood, having risen over the last 3 years, although the proportion who agree in the most deprived areas is 14 p.p. lower, at 54%. Similarly 68% regularly volunteer or help out, rising over 3 years, but is now significantly lower (59%) in the most deprived areas

A new question for the survey has around a quarter (27%) of people perceiving signs of gentrification in their local area (24% in the most deprived). People having problems with noise from neighbours fell 4 p.p. to 33%; noise is still a much bigger problem in deprived areas (53%), but this 20 p.p. gap is smaller than last year.

- **Health and Wellbeing**

For the following indicators there was little change from 2017: 68% of people are satisfied with life, though significantly fewer are in the most deprived areas (54%). 84% report being in good health, but 77% in the most deprived areas, whilst 1 in 5 people (20%) report below average mental wellbeing, rising to 28% in the most deprived communities. 44% of people in Bristol participate in sport every week, but only 36% of those in the most deprived areas. Similarly two-thirds of residents (66%) take regular exercise compared with 56% in deprived areas.

For a couple of indicators inequalities appeared to increase: The proportion of people living in a house where someone smokes rose from a city average of 19% (slightly down from 22% in 2017) to 30% in the most deprived areas, so the gap increased from 7 to 11 p.p.. City-wide the percentage of people eating "5-a-day" fruit & veg (54%) rose over the last 3 years, but in the most deprived areas it fell 13 p.p. to 45%.

A new question on alcohol consumption shows that fewer people in deprived areas drink alcohol regularly each week (13% citywide vs. 8% deprived areas). There will also be new indicators on Food Poverty included in the full release.

- **Crime and Safety**

The proportion of people whose “fear of crime affects their day-to-day life” increased significantly to 18% in 2018. There was a similar rise in the most deprived areas (now 33%). The percentage of residents who feel crime and safety had got worse over the last 3 years also rose significantly to 28%, and is 35% in the most deprived areas. Only a quarter (25%) of people feel police and public services are “successfully dealing with issues of crime & anti-social behaviour”, a significant fall, and an even bigger fall in the most deprived areas (to 20%). More people think “Domestic abuse is a private matter” (7% in 2018) and is double in deprived areas (14%).

- **Education and Skills**

Overall, 35% report needing to develop some aspect of their skills and 63% know where to access relevant support. In the most deprived areas though this figure has fallen by 21 p.p. to 60%. About 1 in 3 people are satisfied with adult learning opportunities, both citywide and in deprived areas.

- **Sustainability and Environment**

There has been a rise in the % of people concerned about the impact of climate change (now 86%). Increased concern prompted significantly more residents to reduce their waste (now 65%) and an even larger increase in deprived areas (now 61%). People who reduced their energy use (54%) or changed how they travelled (30%) due to climate change concerns remained broadly similar to the previous year.

50% of people visited parks at least once a week, down 6 p.p. in the last year and even lower in deprived areas (41%). Satisfaction with the quality of parks (68%) also fell, and is much lower in deprived areas (47%), the deprivation gap now 21 p.p.

The proportion of residents who think street litter is a problem has risen over three years to 82% citywide, whilst most people in deprived areas (94%) feel it is a problem. Satisfaction with the household waste and recycling services has fallen to two-thirds, and satisfaction with recycling is even lower in deprived areas (at 56%).

- **Culture and Leisure**

77% of people are satisfied with the range of outdoor events in Bristol, and just under half (46%) take part in cultural activities at least once a month, though this figure fell last year. However, these and all Culture and Leisure measures show a significantly lower % for people living in the most deprived areas, and in most cases the deprivation gap is bigger.

- **Transport**

4 in 5 people (80%) now report traffic congestion as a problem in their local area, and a similar number (77%) are concerned about air quality and traffic pollution. Both of these measures show a significant rise in the last year. Traffic congestion is less of a problem in deprived areas (69%), but even so has risen by 12 p.p. there.

Satisfaction with the local bus service has risen in the last year (up 3 p.p. to 43%), and rose more in deprived areas (up 7 p.p. to 40%).

- **Housing**

Overall 84% are satisfied with their current accommodation, but is significantly lower in the most deprived areas (76%). Satisfaction with state of repair of homes rose in the last year (to 78%), but is significantly lower in the most deprived areas (69%).

- **Council and Democracy**

Overall satisfaction with how the Council run things rose significantly in the last year (to 35%), but is significantly lower in the most deprived areas (26%). For reference, 38% of people were dissatisfied with the Council, and 27% had no opinion on this.

Perception of whether the Council provide Value for Money has fallen significantly to 24% (44% feel the Council does not), as has perception of whether having an elected Mayor is improving leadership of the city (24% agree, 39% disagree). As noted above, these issues mirror trends seen nationally.

There were also significant falls in the last year in people feeling they can influence decisions that affect their local area (now 18%) or affect their public services (now 14%). These figures are broadly similar for people in the most deprived areas.

4. Bristol in three words

People were also asked to describe Bristol in three words, and the most popular words chosen were:

- **Vibrant**
- **Diverse**
- **Friendly**



5. Actions to improve quality of life in Bristol

In addition to the many indicators, an open text question was asked: “What action or change do you feel would most improve your overall quality of life in Bristol?”. Almost 3,500 responses were given, with over 5,600 issues raised.

Transport related issues remain the area of most concern, accounting for 2,200 of all the points raised. Within the transport issues, improvements to public transport and congestion levels remain top priorities. There is also a concern over both the provision and the effects of parking, along with improvements for cyclists and pedestrians.

There has been a noticeable shift in some of the concerns raised since the 2017 survey. In particular; concerns over decision-making within the council, the level of observed homelessness and the visibility / performance of the Police have all attracted more comments in 2018 than the previous year. Rent Affordability and Affordability of Public Transport have both fallen out of the “top 10 issues” list, but are still noted.

The top 10 single issues noted are listed below, followed by illustrative examples:

Category 2018	Sub-category 2018	Issues raised	2018 Ranking	2017 Ranking
Transport	Improve Buses and/or Public Transport	699	1	1
Transport	Reduce Congestion	458	2	2
Environment	Air/Noise Pollution	285	3	3
Waste and Street cleanliness	Litter and/or Street Maintenance	258	4	4
Council Services	Democracy and Governance	248	5	10
Housing	Social Housing Access and Availability	186	6	17
Transport	Improve Traffic Management	184	7	9
Crime and Safety	Police Visibility and Performance	159	8	21
Transport	Improve Cycle/Pedestrian Facilities	159	9	6
Transport	Parking	158	10	5

Transport and Environment

a) Improve Buses and/or Public Transport

Many comments reflect frustration with the bus service; eg regularly late or fails to turn up. As a result, some said they had to use their car but would prefer to use public transport. Many comments noted more buses as a solution for traffic congestion and pollution in the city, and some further request more public transport alternatives such as an underground or tram service, and especially a train service that integrates with the bus (eg timetables) and the re-opening of previously closed stations/ railway lines.

Other main concerns were cost, lack of bus services and dissatisfaction with bus routes. A number complained of altered bus routes that no longer serve their needs. Others question the number of routes through the city centre, as opposed to around it.

b) Reduce Congestion and Pollution

Air and noise pollution from traffic congestion are as much a concern as increased journey times. Many noted reducing car use in favour of tram, train, underground, walking, cycling or bus. The bus was the most popular suggestion but often mentioned with a need for cheaper fares and increased reliability to entice people from their car.

Many comments stated a need for improved traffic management and the flow of traffic. Other comments focus on a traffic-free city centre and/or a centre restricted to delivery vehicles. Also noted were implementing congestion charging or car-free zones.

c) Improve Cycle/Pedestrian Facilities

Cyclists main concerns are for safety and for a joined up infrastructure of cycle lanes. A number suggest separation from traffic to avoid danger and conflict with drivers, and some suggest physical separation from pedestrians on shared space.

d) Parking

Parking issues in residential areas is a main concern. Residents complain of a lack of parking, dangerous parking (eg on the pavement or corners) and parking on double yellow lines. Resident parking zones are seen as a solution by some, and a problem by others, especially those that live close to but outside a resident parking zone. Some would like cheaper parking or free parking on a Sunday in the city centre.

Waste and Street Cleanliness

Comments are about both street cleaning and street litter. Most are not specific but some mention weeds, overgrown vegetation, graffiti and general rubbish. Comments are about the state of cleanliness in the city and local residential areas. Remarks are made about the streets, pavements, gutters, parks, playgrounds and open spaces.

In terms of solutions; more street cleaning and litter collection by council (i.e. street/residential bins, street/open spaces litter), more bins in the street/parks, educate people about littering, campaign to encourage pride in the city, volunteers to clean up litter and fines/action for littering.

Democracy and Governance

A number of comments noted decisions taking a long time to be made, decisions made but then changed or a perception of inefficiency. Some question the mayoral role and how this fits with democratic decision-making. Some challenge the ability of the mayor and/or councillors to make decisions for the good of the people of Bristol, as opposed to 'party politics'. Others expressed a need to reduce recent cuts to services.

For those who feel the Council does not offer value for money, some note the costs of changed decisions, some suggest a need for better management of contracts, and others feel money should be focussed on core services rather than projects (such as Metrobus, underground, Temple Meads). Many raised concerns re the planned Arena.

Housing

The biggest concern is the perceived increase in homelessness witnessed through rough sleepers and beggars in the city. The majority of comments were sympathetic and would like relevant support provided (eg housing plus drug/alcohol, mental health).

Where people are less tolerant is the rise in caravans/vehicles being used as permanent accommodation. For some it's the waste, hygiene or behavioural issues of "van dwellers" and for others it's lost parking or that it ruins their street.

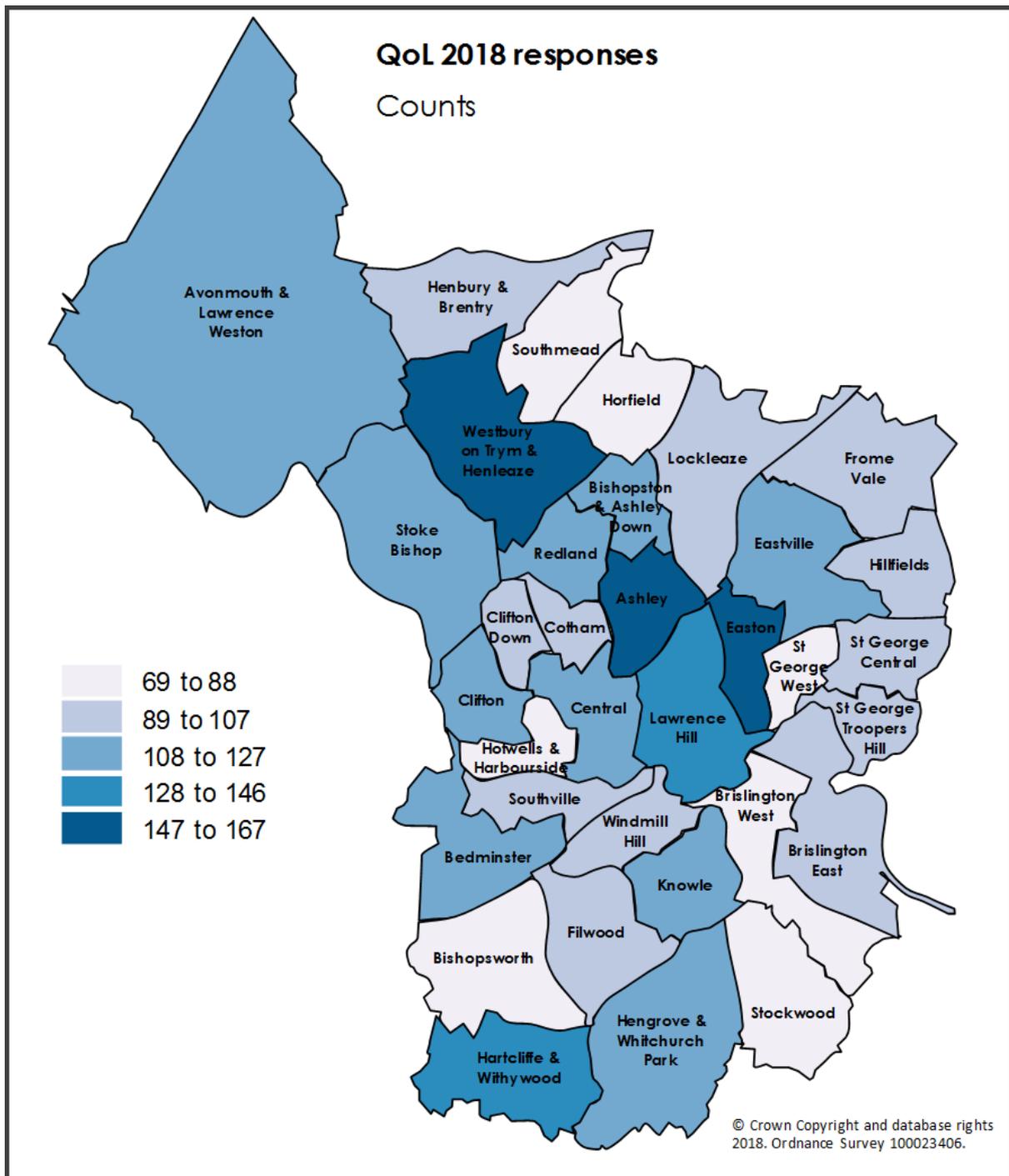
Crime and Safety

Those that commented would like a bigger police presence on the street. Partly for safety, especially at night, but also to deal with a perceived increased in crime. People want a better deterrent and response to crime (noting burglary, criminal damage, drug dealing, street violence & stabbings) and to anti-social behaviour & underage drinking.

6. Respondents

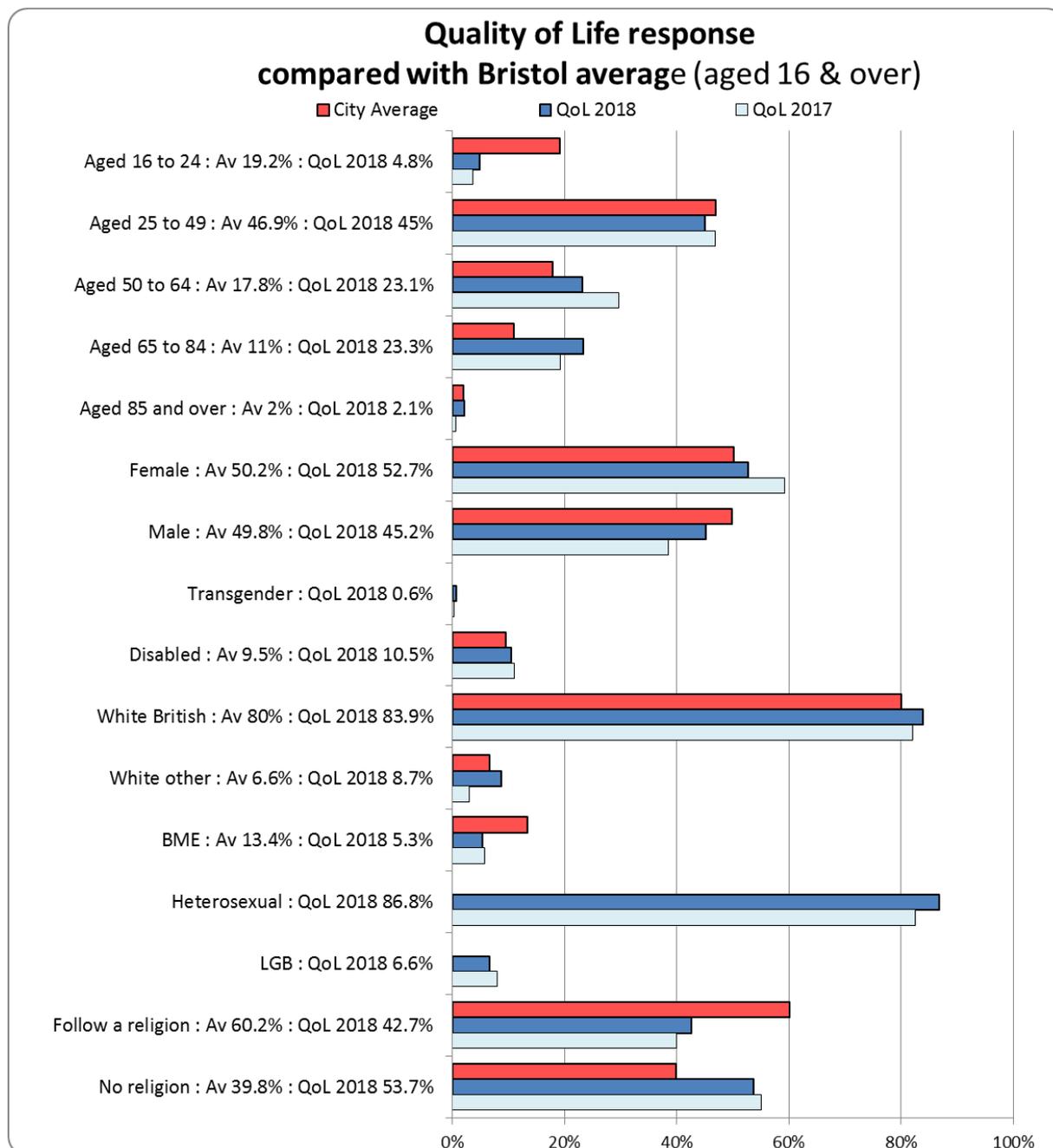
All wards exceeded the minimum requirement of at least 50 respondents. The range in response by ward was from around 70 in Southmead and Bishopsworth, to over 160 in Ashley, Easton and Westbury-on-Trym & Henleaze – see ward map. [Note – some wards have bigger populations than others so some difference in response is expected].

The ward map shows that some areas, especially in less-deprived areas, were over-represented in the final questionnaire, but weighting of the results allows us to account for this in the headline results.



The following table shows respondents to the Quality of Life survey by Equality Groups, and compares to the Bristol population (over 16) where feasible.

In the survey there was a lower % response from younger people (aged 16 to 24) and a higher proportion aged 50+ than the city-wide average, and more women than men responded, but these gaps were less than in 2017 and the final results are weighted for age and sex to help adjust for these discrepancies. Ethnicity however remains an area to address, despite additional steps taken to try to bolster BME responses.



7. Further Information and contact details

The full range of Quality of Life 2018/19 indicators will be published in March 2019, including data at Ward level data and by Equality groups and Deprivation deciles, via: www.bristol.gov.uk/qualityoflife

Results are weighted on ward, sex and age. For further information, on the data releases or the background and methodology, please contact research@bristol.gov.uk.