

Consultation and Engagement



Waste and Recycling Consultation 2025

Waste and Recycling Consultation 2025

Consultation Report v1.0

24 March 2025

Contents

Introduction.....	4
1. Highlights	5
1.1.1. Non-recyclable waste collection proposals	5
1.1.2. Additional support needed	5
2. Methodology.....	6
2.1. Online survey	6
2.1.1. Survey questions	6
2.1.2. Alternative formats	7
2.2. Publicity and briefings.....	7
3. Survey results	8
3.1. Views on priorities for improving the waste and recycling services	8
3.2. Respondents current housing and waste collection	10
3.2.1. Type of property.....	10
3.2.2. How non-recyclable waste is collected	11
3.2.3. Where non-recyclable waste bins and bags are stored	12
3.2.4. How often waste is collected.....	13
3.2.5. Improvements to mini-recycling centres and communal waste bins.....	16
3.3. Changes to non-recyclable waste collection frequency.....	17
3.3.1. Views on proposed changes to non-recyclable waste collection frequency	18
3.3.2. Free text comments on proposed changes to non-recyclable waste collection frequency	19
3.4. Additional support.....	22
3.4.1. Additional capacity.....	22
3.4.2. Additional support with waste and recycling.....	23
3.4.3. Ways to make recycling easier	30
3.4.4. Additional items to recycle at home	37
3.5. Educational campaigns and small service improvement priorities	42
3.6. Reuse and Recycling Centres and Bulky Waste Collection	43
3.6.1. Number of visits to Reuse and Recycling centres	43
3.6.2. Access to cars.....	44
3.6.3. Number of bulky waste collection bookings.....	44

3.6.4.	Reasons for not using bulky waste service.....	45
4.	Characteristics of survey respondents.....	46
4.1.	Geographic distribution of survey responses	46
4.1.1.	Responses by ward.....	47
4.2.	Deprivation	49
4.3.	Age.....	50
4.4.	Disability	51
4.5.	Ethnicity	52
4.6.	Religion/Faith.....	53
4.7.	Sex	54
4.8.	Gender reassignment	55
4.9.	Sexual orientation	56
4.10.	Pregnancy/maternity.....	56
4.11.	Carers.....	57
4.12.	Refugee/asylum seeker	57
5.	Appendix 1 – Views on waste collection frequency by different groups	58
5.1.	Views on waste collection frequency by respondents from more and less deprived areas	58
5.2.	Views on waste collection frequency by different age groups.....	60
5.3.	Views on waste collection frequency by Disabled and non-Disabled respondents ..	61

Introduction

Bristol is a city that recycles almost as much of household material as it sends to energy recovery. Bristol Waste collects over 45% of waste produced by homes across the city as recycling. The amount of household waste recycled in Bristol has more than tripled in the past 20 years. This places Bristol high on the recycling league table when compared to other cities.

Yet in recent years, the rate at which we recycle our household waste has seen little growth. This means we are still behind meeting the national target of 65% recycling by 2035.

We need to recycle more. Our analysis suggests that people could recycle up to half of what they currently throw away into black non-recyclable bins. This includes food waste, paper and card, glass, plastic, cans, textiles and small electricals.

Our aim is to increase the amount our city recycles to meet national targets and deliver benefits for our city. We asked the views of Bristol residents on how we can make this increase, deliver value for money, and meet the needs of households.

The consultation asked for views on:

- The current waste and recycling service
- Future service options we're considering for waste and recycling services.

1. Highlights

- There were 16,777 responses to the Waste and Recycling Collection consultation
- Over 94% of respondents had their non-recyclable waste collected by black wheelie bin and would be impacted by the proposed change in collection frequency
- The highest priority for improving the waste and recycling service was clean streets, with 90% of respondents saying it was high or very high importance.

1.1.1. Non-recyclable waste collection proposals

- Over 80% of respondents disagreed with changing non-recyclable waste collection to every 4 weeks
- Over 60% of respondents disagreed with changing it to every 3 weeks
- Over 70% agreed with no change to the non-recyclable waste collection.

1.1.2. Additional support needed

- 48% of respondents would need additional capacity for cardboard and brown paper if there were a reduction in the frequency of collection, and 47% would need additional plastic and metal recycling capacity
- 31% would need additional food waste capacity and 26% would need more glass and paper capacity
- 23% would need support with pet waste, 16% with nappy waste, 15% with adult hygiene products, and 10% would need support with managing and collecting their waste
- Over 40% of respondents said that more recycling box/bag capacity would make recycling easier. 38% said that using fewer recycling boxes would make recycling easier, while 25% said having recycling labels on packaging, and 23% said that clearer instructions from the council would make recycling easier
- 60% of respondents would like to be able to recycle soft plastic films and wrappers. 37% would like to be able to recycle clothing and shoes, 33% would like to be able to recycle small electrical items, and 29% small household batteries.

2. Methodology

2.1. Online survey

The Waste and Recycling consultation survey was available on the council's Consultation and Engagement Hub (www.ask.bristol.gov.uk/waste-consultation-2025) for six weeks between 27 January and 10 March 2025.

2.1.1. Survey questions

Respondents were asked the following questions:

- Views on how we should prioritise improving the waste and recycling services we provide to residents whilst balancing cost, performance and the need to reduce carbon emissions
- Current housing and waste collection, including type of property they live in, number of people living with them, how their non-recyclable waste is collected, where they store their non-recyclable waste bins/bags, how often they get different waste types collected, how full their waste boxes/bins/bags are on collection day, and how often they are full
- Views on proposed changes to how often we collect black non-recycling bins, with the three options being:
 - Four-weekly collection
 - Three-weekly collection
 - No change (staying at two-weekly collection).
- What additional support would be needed if the collection frequency was reduced, including additional recycling box, bag, or bin capacity, additional support with specific types of non-recyclable waste, and assistance with managing and collecting the waste
- What would make it easier to recycle more, with options including larger capacity, fewer boxes, clearer instructions from the council, recycling labels on packaging, and increasing the types of items that can be recycled at home
- Priorities for education campaigns and smaller service improvements we could deliver
- Respondents' usage of Reuse and Recycling Centres and bulky waste collection
- Respondents' postcode – this identifies if any parts of the city are under-represented in responding to the consultation and it can show if people from more deprived areas of the city have different views compared to people living in less deprived areas
- Equalities monitoring information – this enables the council to check if people with specific protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, carers, or refugees and asylum seekers are under-represented in the responses.

2.1.2. Alternative formats

An Easy Read version of the consultation was available on the Consultation and Engagement Hub.

Paper versions of the consultation were distributed with Freepost return envelopes to all libraries in Bristol and were available on request.

Other formats (braille, large print, other alternative formats, and translation to other languages) were available on request.

Our team also carried out a session at the Centre for Deaf and Hard of Hearing People with British Sign Language interpreters to assist deaf and hard of hearing people to understand and complete the consultation.

2.2. Publicity and briefings

The following activities were carried out to publicise and explain the Waste and Recycling Collection consultation. The objective was to engage residents across the city in decisions on the frequency of waste and recycling collection, and ways the service could be improved.

The consultation was promoted and shared via the following council and partner channels and networks:

- Ask Bristol e-bulletin on 6 February and 6 March 2025 with 7,481 recipients
- Regular posts on Bristol City Council's social media channels (X, Facebook, and LinkedIn) were made for the duration of the consultation. These organic posts had a potential reach of 81,483 people resulting in 5,795 consultation webpage link clicks
- Targeted paid-for Facebook advertising (with a budget of £407) were created to target areas of the city where responses were lower. This had a reach of 41,689 and resulted in 2,455 webpage link clicks.

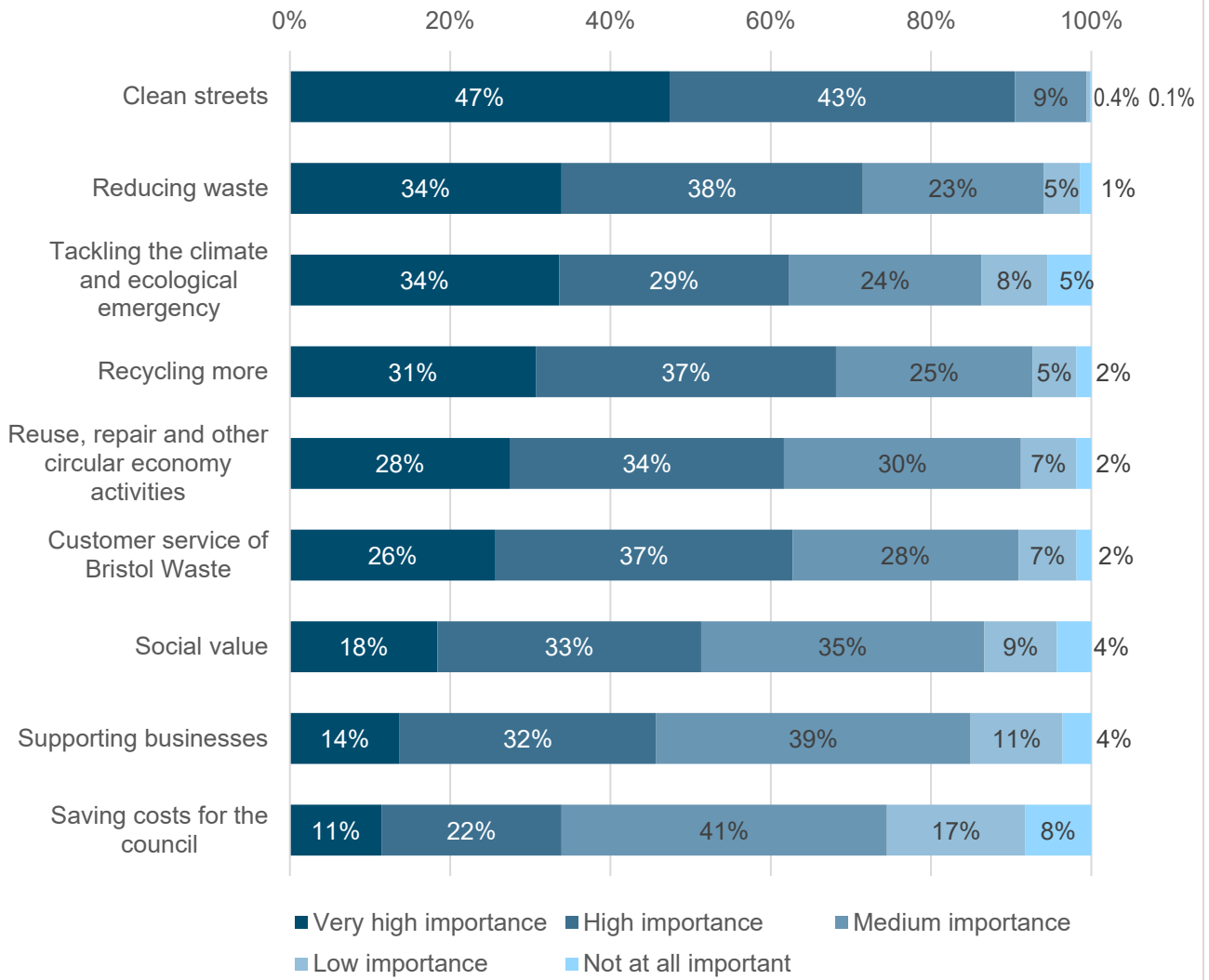
3. Survey results

3.1. Views on priorities for improving the waste and recycling services

Respondents were asked to provide their views on how waste and recycling services should prioritise improving the service they provide to residents whilst balancing cost, performance and the need to reduce carbon emissions.

- 90% of respondents said that clean streets were high or very high importance
- 72% said that reducing waste was high or very high importance
- 68% said that recycling more was high or very high importance
- 63% said that tackling the climate and ecological emergency was high or very high importance
- 63% said that the customer service of Bristol Waste was high or very high importance
- 62% said that reuse, repair and other circular economy activities were high or very high importance
- 51% said that social value was high or very high importance
- 46% said that supporting businesses was high or very high importance
- 33% said that saving costs for the council was high or very high importance

Waste and Recycling priorities

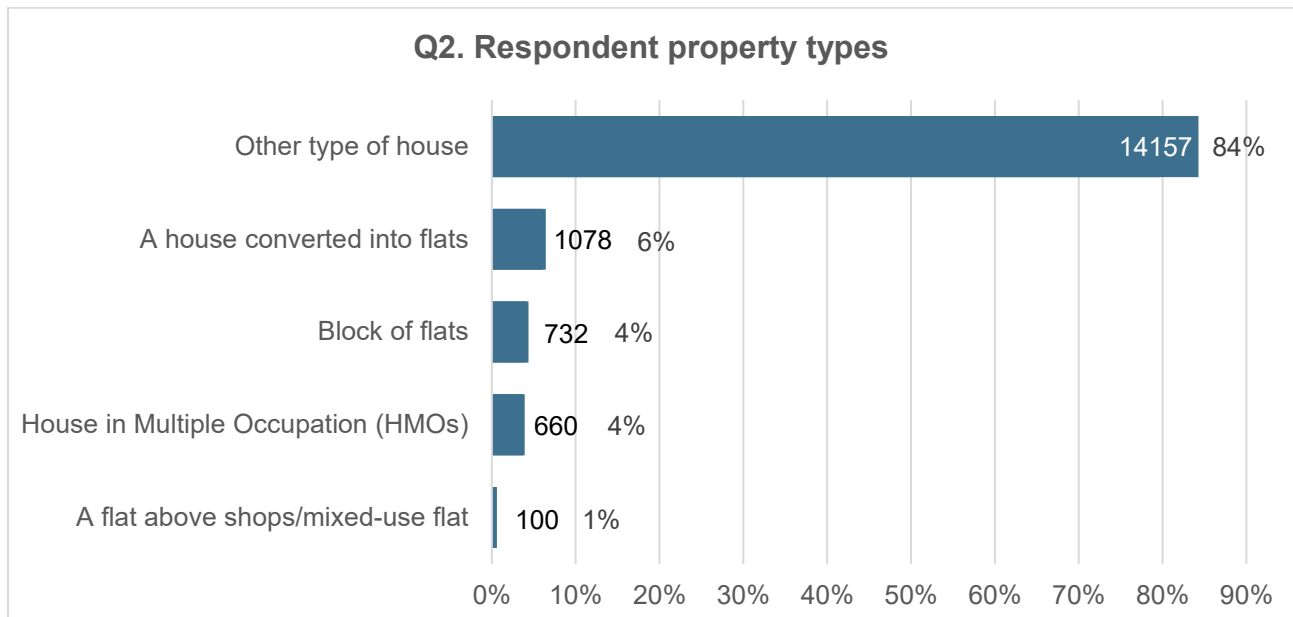


3.2. Respondents current housing and waste collection

Respondents were asked questions on the current waste and recycling collection service they receive.

3.2.1. Type of property

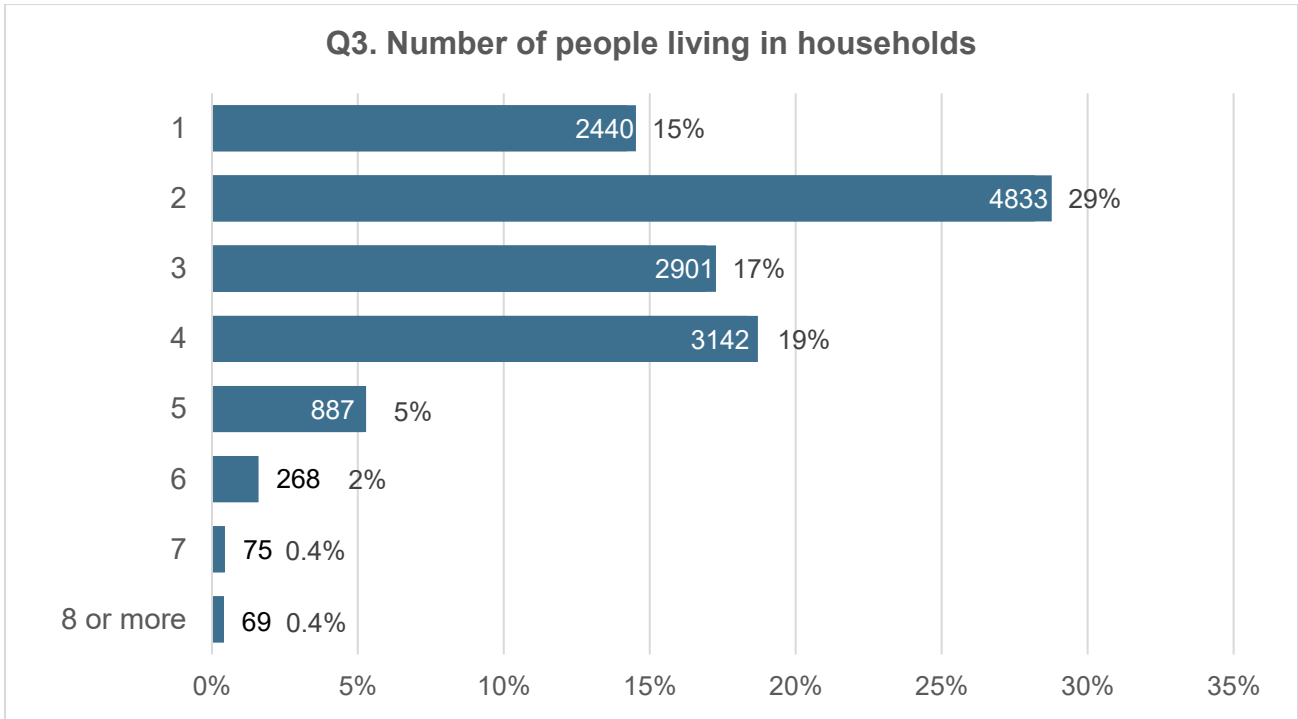
Respondents were asked what type of property they live in. The majority of respondents selected “other type of house”.



Number of people living in households

Respondents were asked how many people lived in their households.

- 15% said 1 person lived in their household
- 29% said 2 people
- 17% said 3 people
- 19% said 4 people
- 5% said 5 people
- 2% said 6 people
- 0.4% said 7 people
- 0.4% said 8 or more people

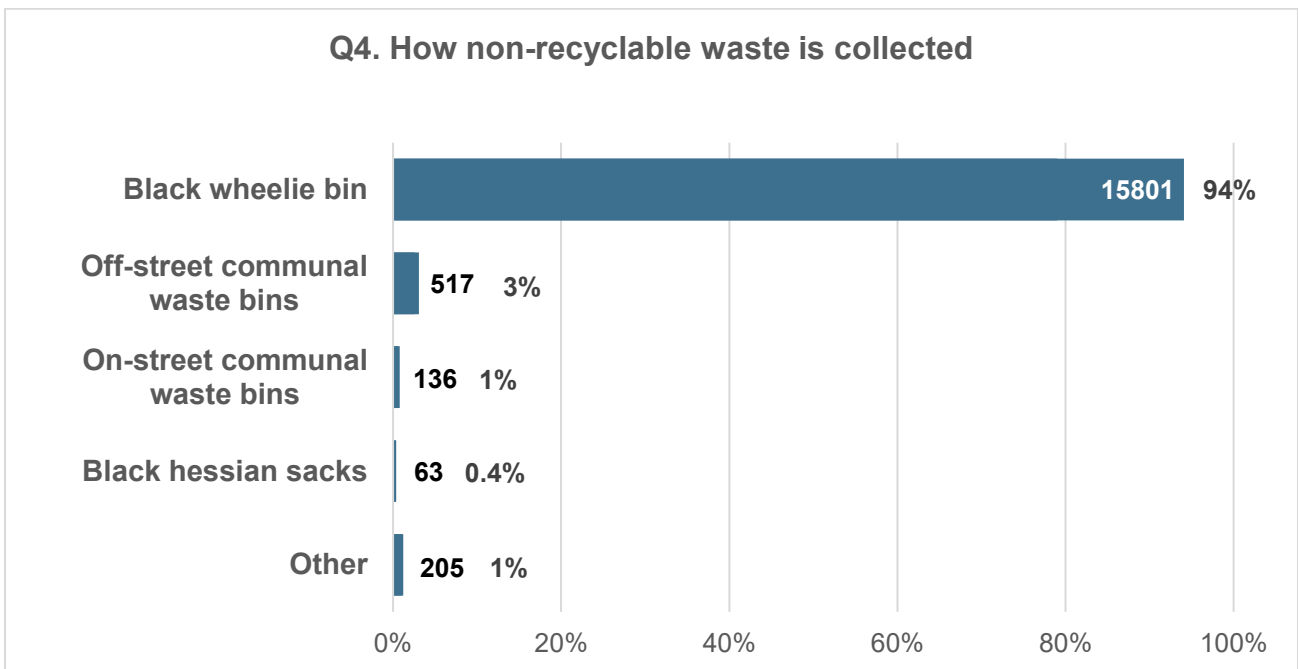


3.2.2. How non-recyclable waste is collected

Respondents were asked how their non-recyclable waste was collected. 16,722 respondents answered the question.

94% said that it was collected in a black wheelie bin, 3% in an off-street communal waste bin, 1% in an on-street communal waste bin, and 0.4% in a black hessian sack.

1% said it is collected in other ways, with the majority being in black bin bags.

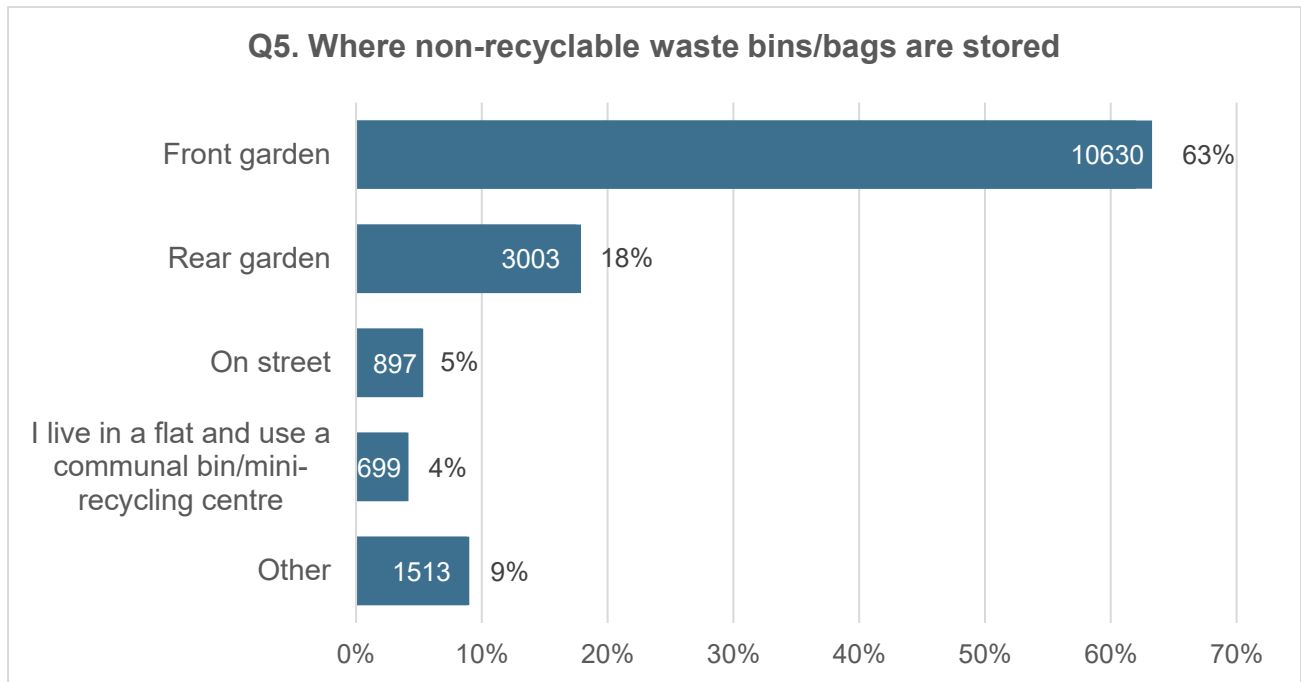


3.2.3. Where non-recyclable waste bins and bags are stored

Respondents were asked where they stored their non-recyclable waste bin or bags.

63% said front garden, 18% said rear garden, and 5% on street.

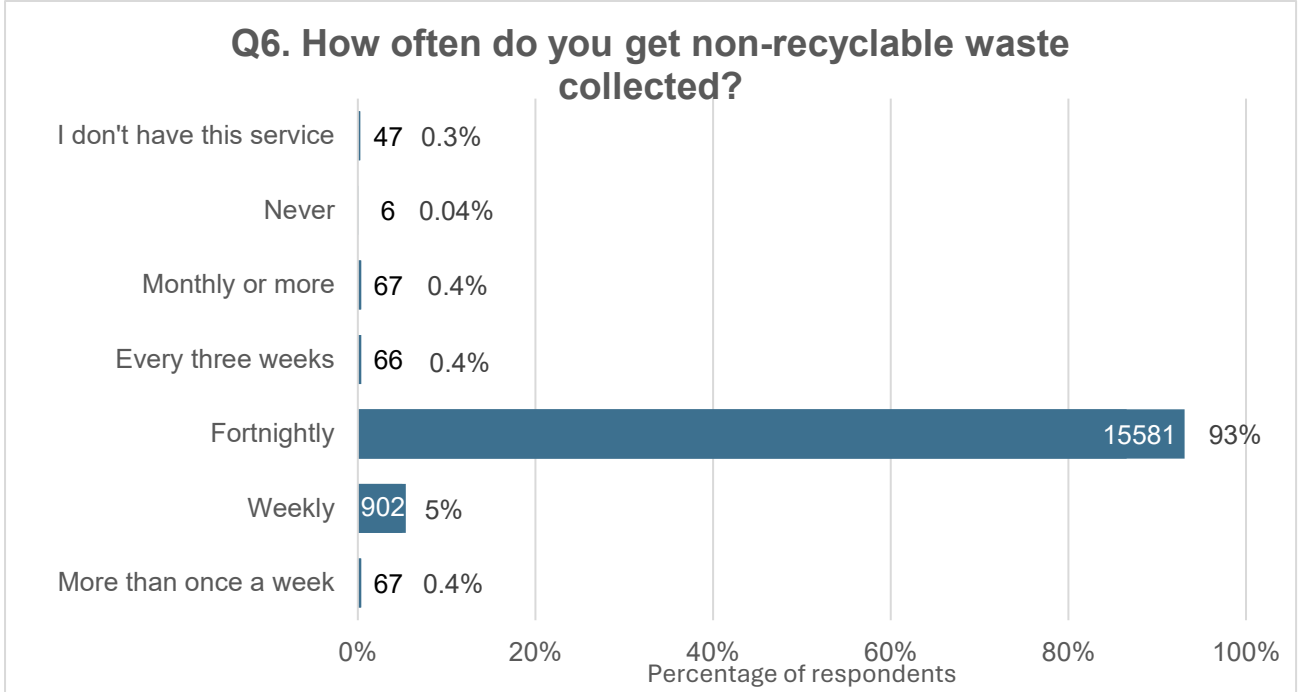
9% provided other areas, including in the garage, on their driveway, to the side of the house, and the area in the front of their house.



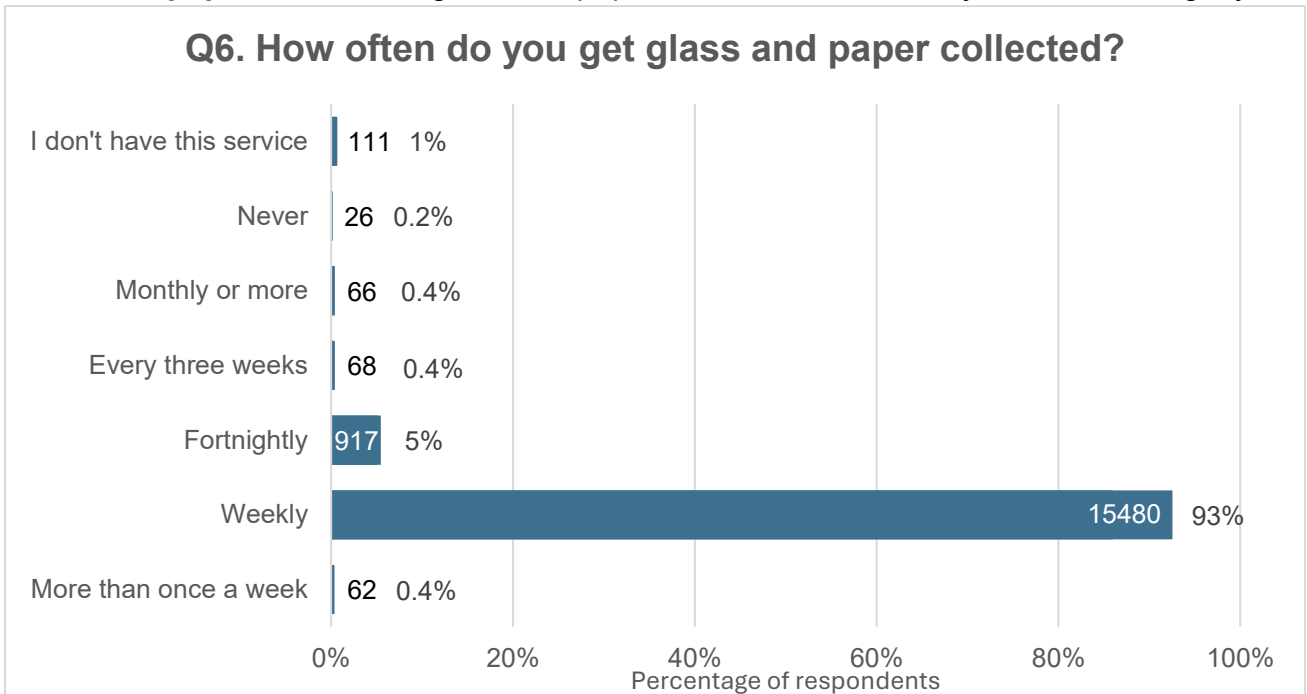
3.2.4. How often waste is collected

Respondents were asked how often their waste was collected.

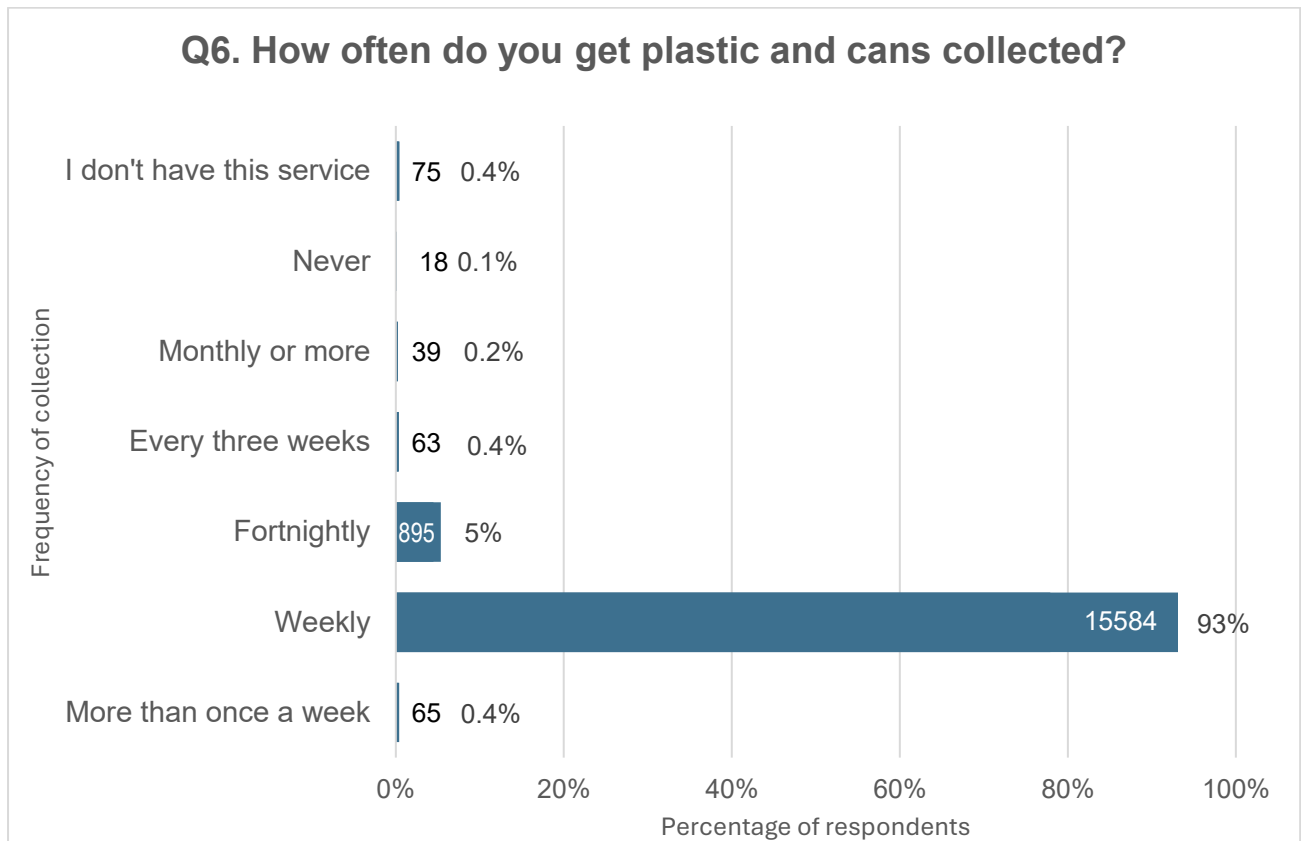
Non-recyclable waste - 93% of respondents said their non-recyclable waste was collected fortnightly, and 5% weekly.



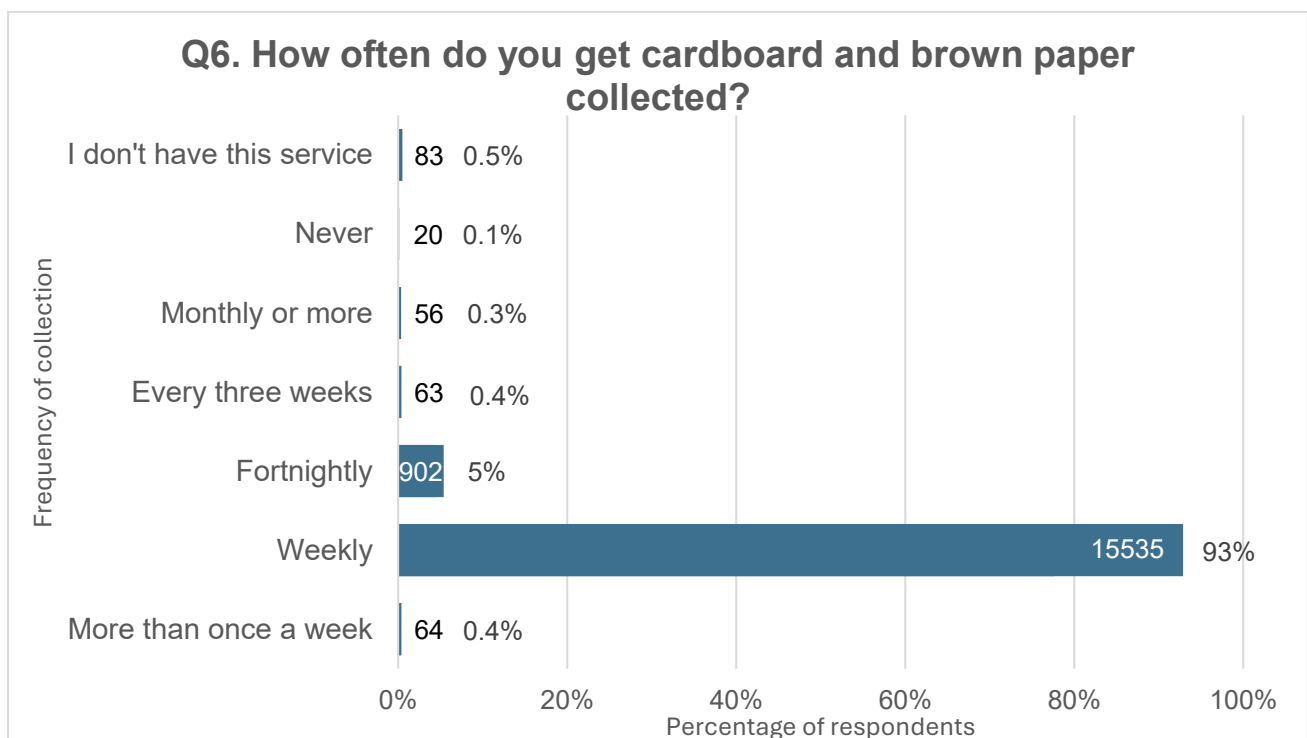
Glass and paper – 93% said glass and paper were collected weekly, and 5% fortnightly.



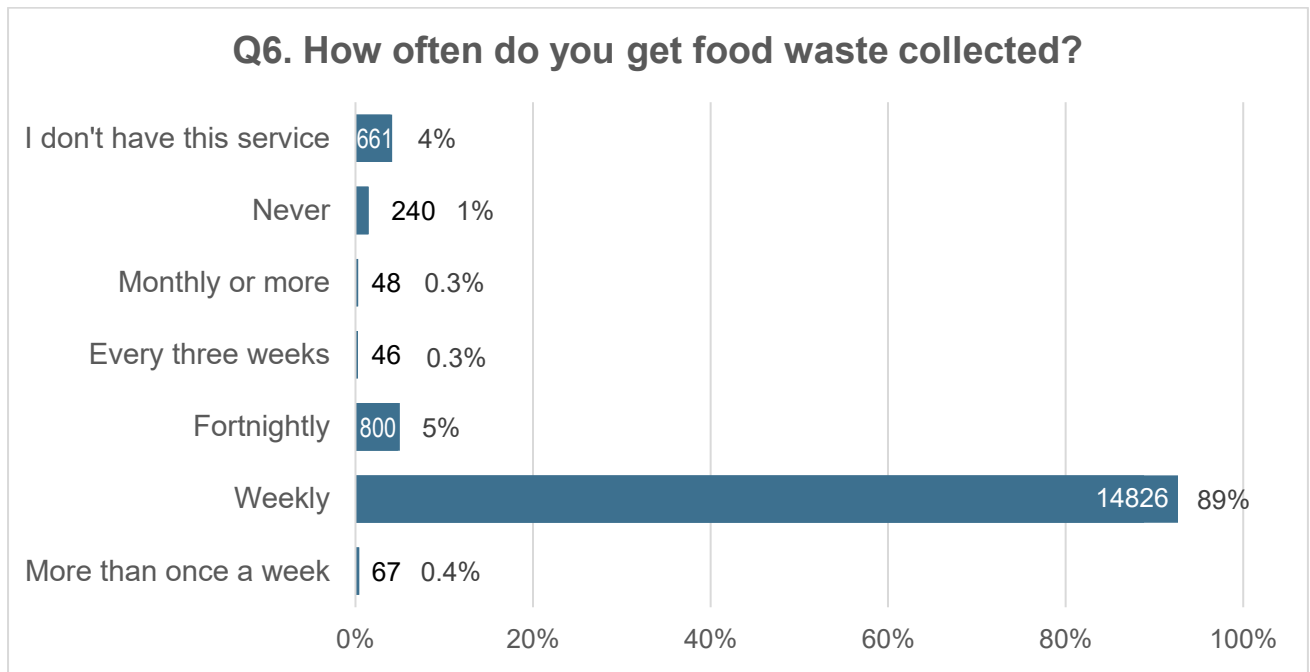
Plastic and cans – 93% said that plastic and cans were collected weekly, and 5% fortnightly.



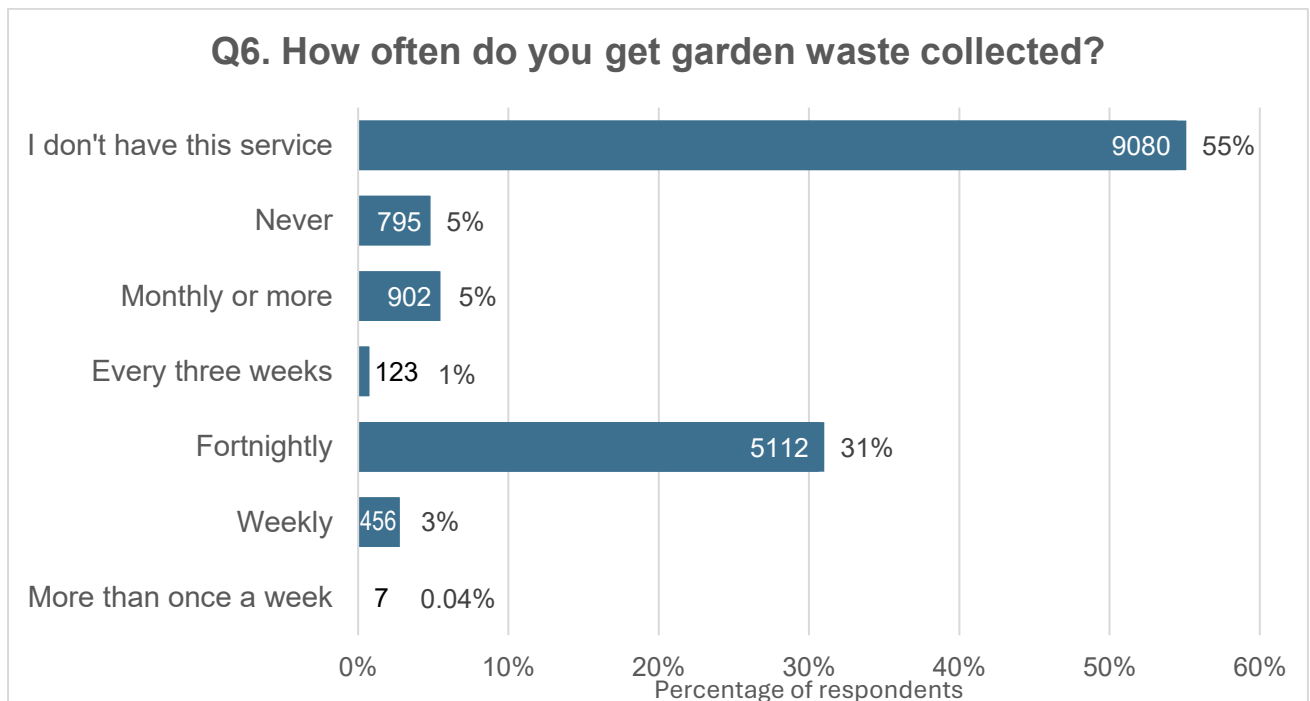
Cardboard and brown paper – 93% said that cardboard and brown paper were collected weekly, and 5% fortnightly.



Food waste – 89% said that their food waste was collected weekly, 5% fortnightly, and 4% said they did not have this service.



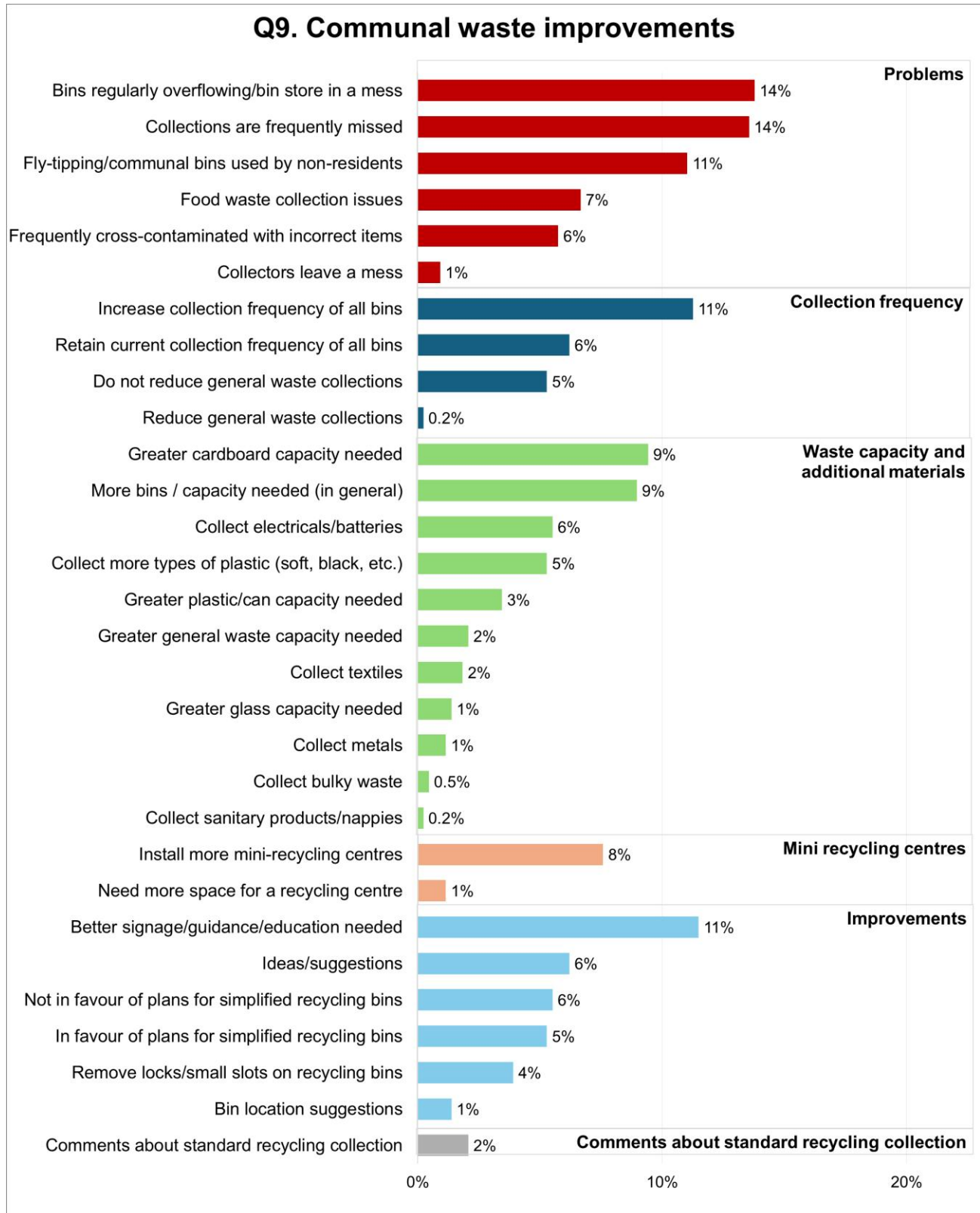
Garden waste – 55% of respondents said they did not have this service and 5% said never, 31% said it was collected fortnightly, 5% monthly, and 3% said weekly.



3.2.5. Improvements to mini-recycling centres and communal waste bins

Respondents were asked whether they had any suggestions for improvements to their local mini-recycling centre or communal waste bins.

The results are shown in the chart below.



3.3. Changes to non-recyclable waste collection frequency

We described three options for changes to collection of non-recyclable waste for households with black wheelie bins. We also describe the improvements to the recycling collection that we would make for the affected properties.

Option 1: Four-weekly collection

Service:

- Black wheelie bin (non-recyclable waste) – collected every four weeks
- Recycling collections – collected weekly
- Food waste collection – collected weekly
- Increased recycling capacity for plastic and cans
- For large households (more than 6 people) optional additional capacity for non-recyclable waste may be provided following an assessment.

Option 2: Three-weekly collection

Service:

- Black wheelie bin (non-recyclable waste) – collected every three weeks
- Recycling collections – collected weekly
- Food waste collection – collected weekly
- Increased recycling capacity for plastic and cans
- For large households (more than 6 people) optional additional capacity for non-recyclable waste may be provided following an assessment.

Option 3: No change – service stays the same

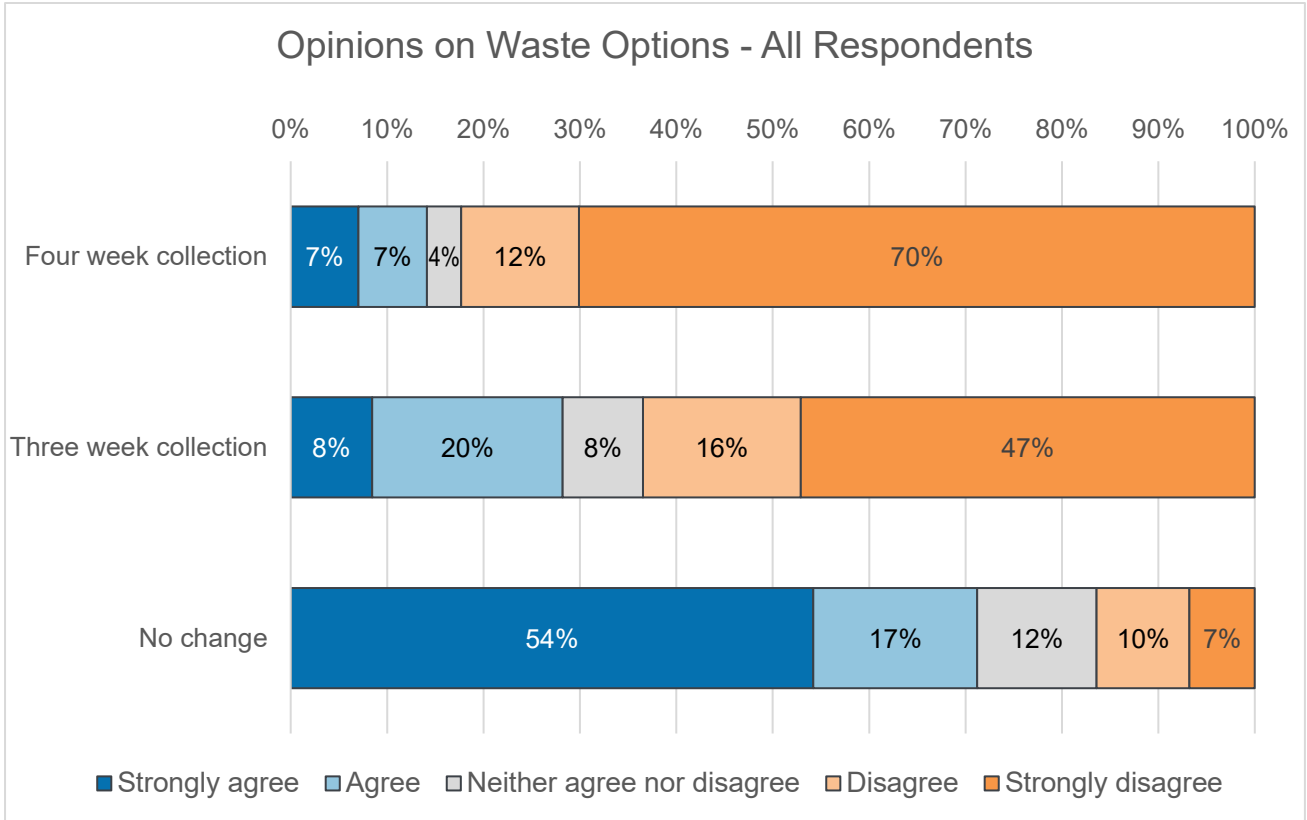
Service:

- Black wheelie bin (non-recyclable waste) – collected every two weeks
- Recycling collections – collected weekly
- Food waste collection – collected weekly
- No increase to recycling capacity for plastic and cans (there would be no cost saving to fund this).

3.3.1. Views on proposed changes to non-recyclable waste collection frequency

Respondents were asked to state whether they agreed or disagreed with the three options for how frequently black wheelie bins are collected.

16,488 respondents stated whether they agreed or disagreed with the proposals.



Option 1 - Collecting non-recyclable waste every four weeks

- 14% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with a change to non-recyclable waste collection to every four weeks
- 82% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Option 2 - Collecting non-recyclable waste every three weeks

- 28% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with a change to non-recyclable waste collection to every three weeks
- 63% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Option 3 - No change to non-recyclable waste collection every two weeks

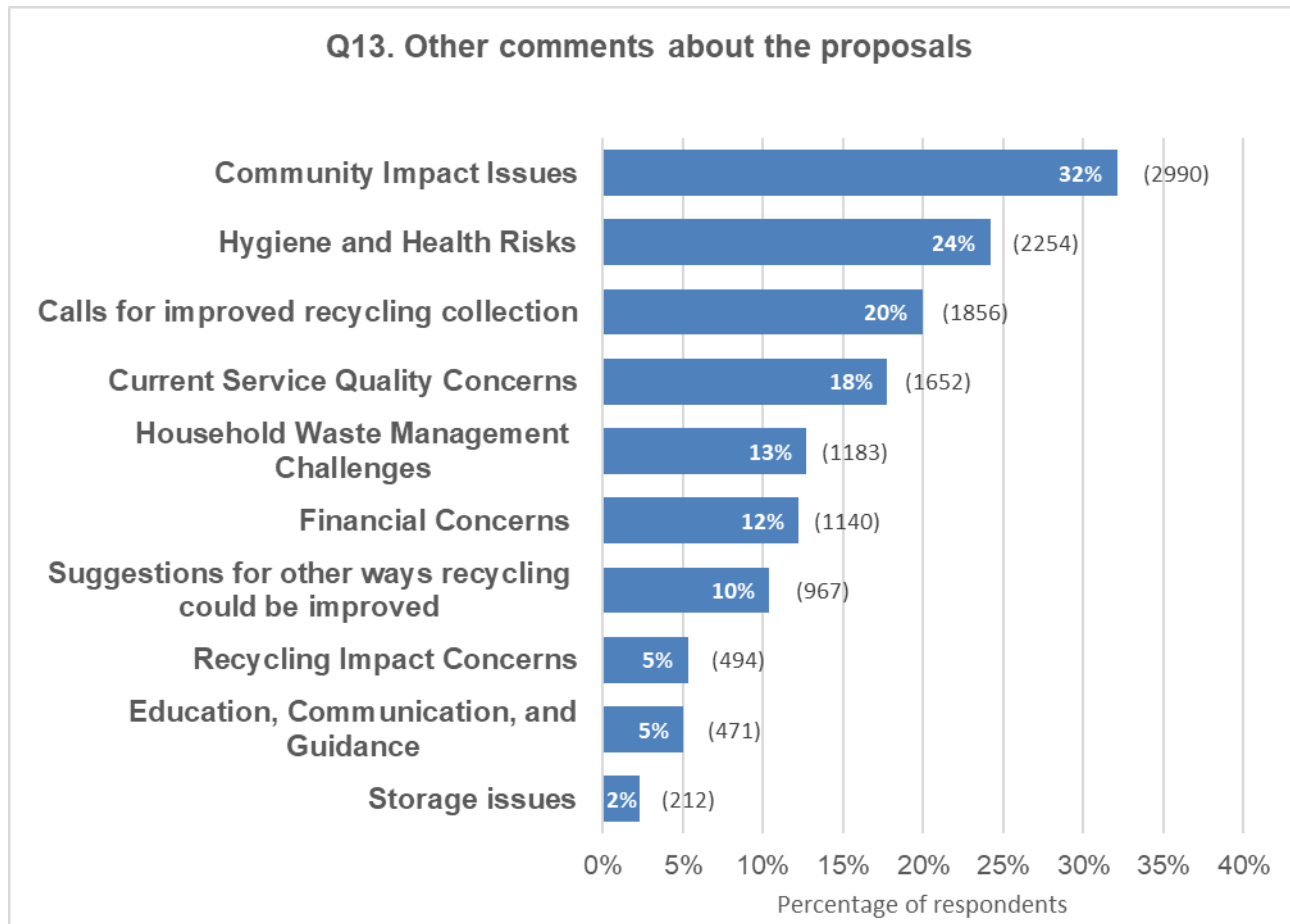
- 71% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with there being no change to the non-recyclable waste collection frequency
- 17% disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Appendix 1 contains a breakdown of the response to this question by different demographic groups.

3.3.2. Free text comments on proposed changes to non-recyclable waste collection frequency

Respondents were asked whether they had any other comments about the proposals.

9,311 respondents provided free text comments.



32% of comments were concerned about community impact issues, such as fly tipping, overflowing bins, and littering due to the proposed reduction in collection frequency.

24% were concerned about hygiene, smell, health hazards, and increase in pests and vermin caused by the proposed reduction in collection frequency.

20% called for improvements in recycling collection. These included the following:

- Increase the types of material that can be recycled (e.g. soft plastics, nappies, pet waste)
- Improve box and bag design
- Simplify recycling process/single stream recycling
- Improve missed waste collection system
- Automate mixed waste recycling facilities
- Make replacement boxes free

- Replace boxes quicker
- Improve reliability of service.

10% suggested other ways in which waste collection could be improved, including the following:

- Spot checks on waste and recycling and enforcement for people or businesses who do not recycle
- Learn from other councils and countries waste or recycling systems
- Legislate against supermarkets using excessive packaging/tax at source
- Make disposing of large items easier/make Reuse and Recycling centre cheaper and easier to access, including pedestrian access
- Don't waste money on education
- Get a new contractor/private company to carry out waste collection
- Additional resource for the transition period to less frequent collection to ensure issues are resolved
- Smaller non-recyclable waste bin
- Pilot scheme
- Communal bins/waste disposal pods for recycling
- Waste amounts are variable throughout the year
- Charge students or landlords of HMOs more to pay for additional waste collection
- Bespoke collection plan for different areas/households
- Low cost ad hoc additional non-recyclable waste collection
- Nationalised collections
- Reduce recycling collection frequency
- Increase Council Tax
- Cameras to look for fly tipping
- Improve street cleaning
- Incentives to compost at home
- Target areas which don't recycle
- Find out why people are not currently recycling
- Subsidised cloth nappies/free samples
- Campaign to drink tap water rather than bottled
- Introduce biochar recycling
- Hotline in case bins are full before collection date
- Bin sharing with neighbours - where people have space in their bins their neighbours can use if they have filled theirs
- Community litter picking
- Lobby highly polluting countries to reduce their waste and other pollution.

18% were dissatisfied with the current service provision, raising issues such as missed collections, bins being damaged, and litter being left in the streets after collection.

13% said that they currently did not have capacity in their non-recyclable waste bins to deal with a reduction in frequency, and/or that they would need larger or more non-recyclable waste bins.

12% provided comments around finance, including suggesting that the proposals would not save money due to having to deal with increases in fly tipping, providing alternative proposals for saving money, and suggesting that Council Tax should be lowered if the waste collection frequency was reduced.

5% of responses raised doubts around the effectiveness of the reduction in collection frequency having the desired impact on recycling rates, with suggestions that many households already recycle as much as possible, that it would increase fly tipping or people taking waste to the reuse and recycling centre.

5% suggested that people needed more education, communication and guidance about waste and recycling.

2% raised issues about bin storage.

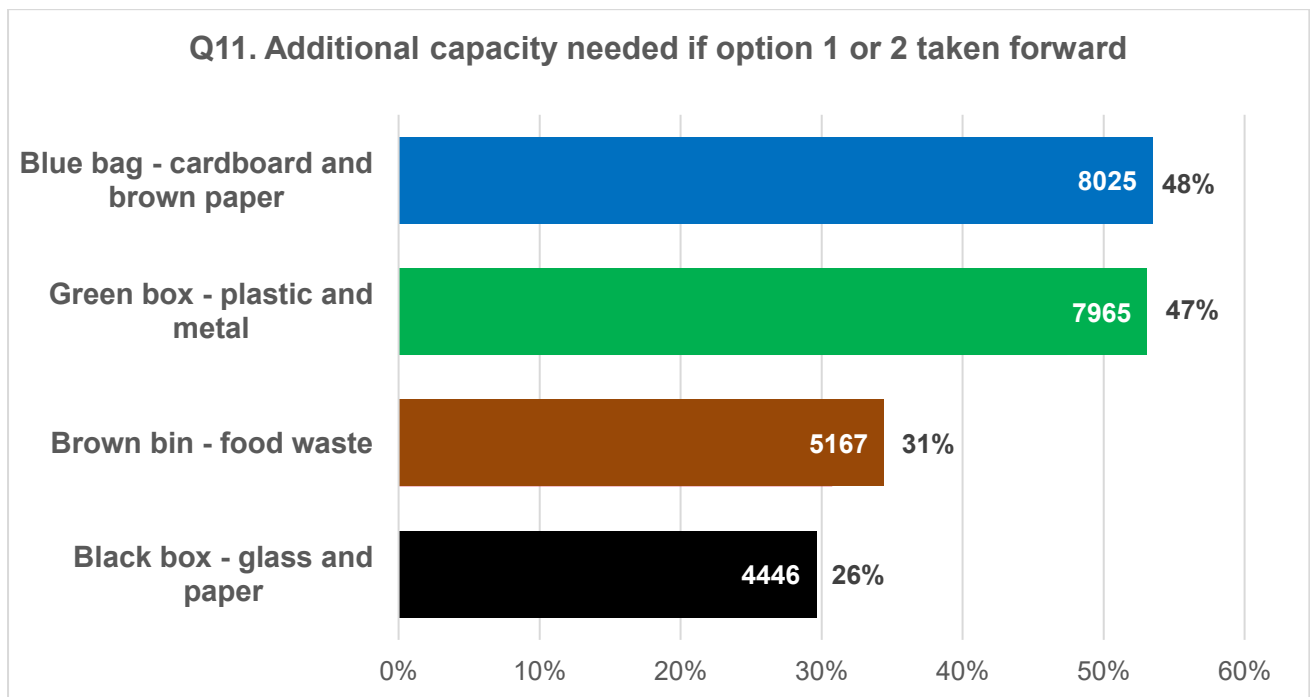
3.4. Additional support

It is understood that if the frequency on non-recyclable waste collection is reduced, that residents may need additional support to deal with this change. We asked a series of questions to identify what additional support would help them if the collection frequency was reduced.

3.4.1. Additional capacity

Respondents were asked what additional capacity would be needed in their existing waste boxes and bags if option 1 or 2 were taken forward.

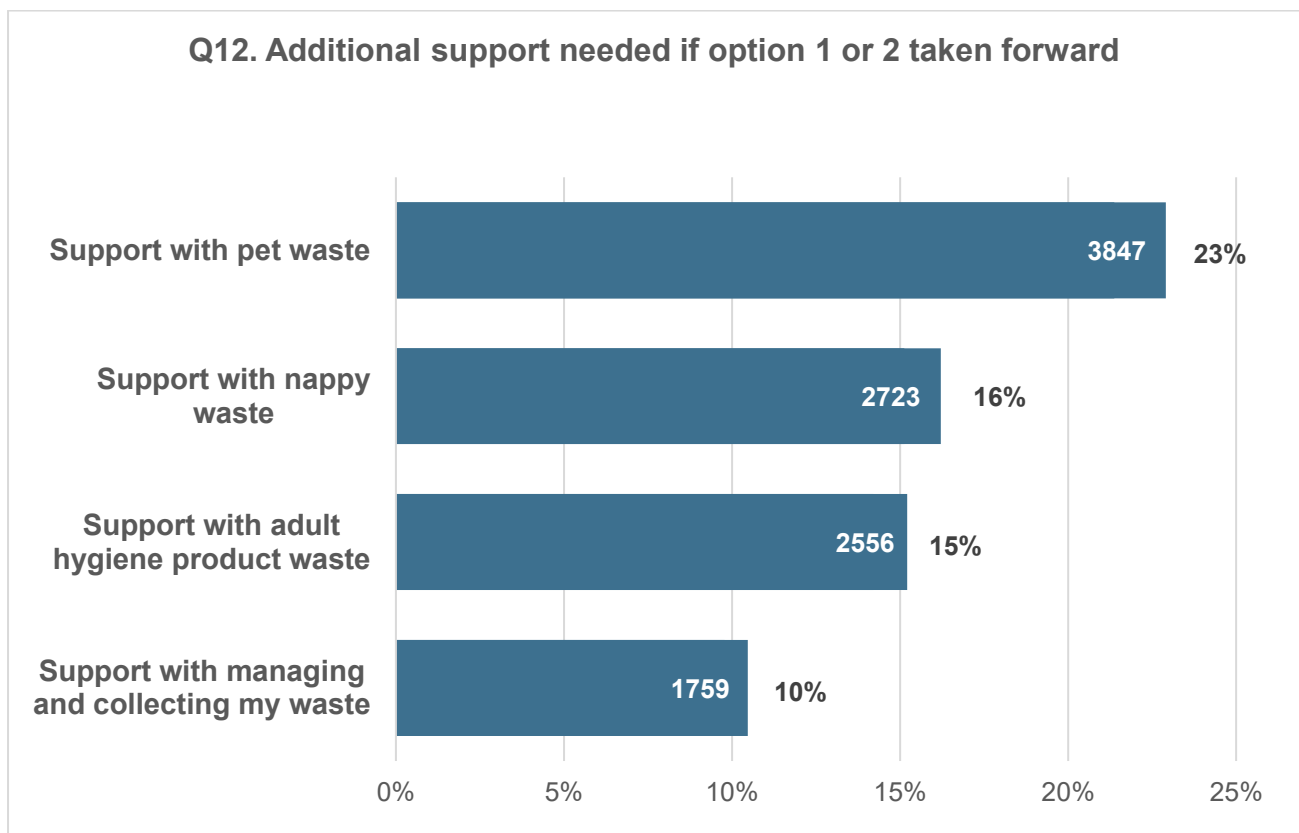
- 48% of respondents would need additional capacity for cardboard and brown paper if there were a reduction in the frequency of collection, and 47% plastic and metal recycling
- 31% would need additional food waste capacity and 26% would need more glass and paper.



3.4.2. Additional support with waste and recycling

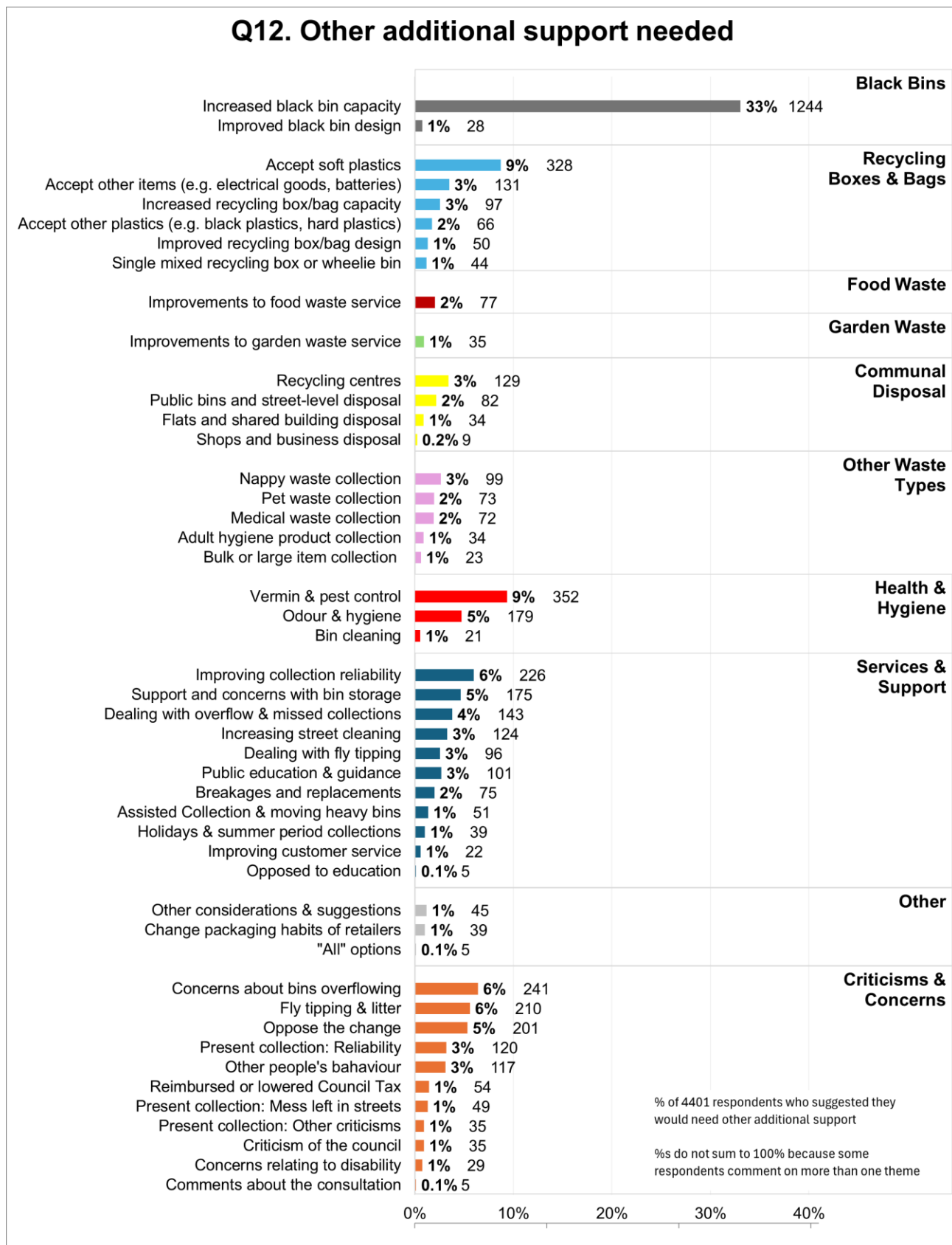
Respondents were asked what additional support with waste was needed if option 1 or 2 were taken forward.

- 23% would need support with pet waste
- 16% with nappy waste
- 15% with adult hygiene products
- 10% would need support with managing and collecting their waste.



Other types of support with waste and recycling

27% of responders left free text comments under the “Other (please specify)” option. The results in this section are based on 4,401 in scope responses coded.



Of those who said they needed other types of additional support if waste frequency reduced, the following themes emerged:

Black bins

- 33% suggested the need for additional non-recycling black bin capacity, including suggestions for larger black bins, or additional black bins for households
- 1% suggested the need for improved black bin design, including more secure bins, lockable lids a, stronger design, and more capable of containing smells.

Recycling boxes/bags

- 9% suggested the need for the collection of soft plastics (including food wrappers, crisp packets, bags, and packaging) kerbside to reduce non-recycling black bin waste
- 4% suggested the need for the collection of other items or materials, including electrical appliances, batteries, foil, contaminated cardboard, oil, textiles, wood, and more types of collection in general
- 3% suggested the need for increased recycling box/bag capacity, including requests for larger boxes and bags, and requests for more boxes and bags
- 1% suggested the need for improved recycling box/bag design, including more durable construction, secure lids, and wheels
- 2% suggested the need for the collection of other plastics, including hard plastics, black plastics, polystyrene, and “other plastics” in general
- 1% suggested that recycling should instead use a single, large mixed recycling bin, over separately sorted boxes and bags.

Food waste

- 2% suggested the need for improvements to food waste recycling, including free bags, bin cleaning, more secure, larger or durable food waste bins, access to the service through provision of bins, and concerns the present system is unhygienic and leads to mess in the streets.

Garden waste

- 1% suggested the need for improvements around garden waste collection, including ad hoc collections based on demand, a free service, more reliable collections, and more regular collections in summer months.

Communal disposal

- 3% suggested the need for support with, or improvements to, recycling centres, including more recycling centres, more accessible, pedestrian or supported access, removing the booking system, extended opening hours and to be open 7 days a week

- 2% suggested the need for support with, or improvements to, communal bins on streets or in neighbourhoods, including community drop off points, street-level communal recycling bins, more public bins, and underground communal bins
- 1% suggested the need for support with, or improvements to, communal bins for flats or apartments, including access to recycling provision, more regular collections, larger capacity, better storage facilities, and an improved waste collection system for flats in general
- 1% suggested the need for support with, or improvements to, communal bins for shops and businesses, including messy commercial bins and waste around them, more recycling facilities should be offered at supermarkets, and public bins near businesses not being emptied regularly.

Other collection types

- 3% suggested the need for support around the collection of nappy waste, including concerns about keeping nappies in the bin for extended periods, concerns about the amount of nappy waste for young families, and calls for a dedicated nappy waste collection service
- 2% suggested the need for support around the collection of pet waste, including concerns about keeping pet waste in the bin for three or four weeks, calls for more public pet waste bins and for them to be emptied more often, and requests for at home pet waste bins and collection
- 2% suggested the need for support around the collection of medical waste, including concerns about medical waste remaining in the bin for three to four weeks, that medical waste would mean the need for increased bin capacity, and not being able to access medical waste service
- 1% suggested the need for support around the collection of adult hygiene/sanitary product waste, including concerns regarding products remaining in bin for three to four weeks, and calls for weekly collections of female hygiene waste
- 1% suggested the need for support with the collection of bulky or large items, including free or easy to book at-home collection of large items and bulky waste.

Health and hygiene

- 9% expressed concerns about vermin and pests, including concerns about increases in foxes, rats, maggots and fly, calls for the council to increase pest control efforts
- 4% expressed concerns regarding odour and hygiene, particularly smells in the summer months and concerns about health knock-on effects due to decreased collection frequency
- 1% suggested they would require a bin cleaning service.

Services and support

- 6% suggested that collection reliability needs to be improved, that bins need to be collected as scheduled, and that currently collections are regularly missed
- 5% raised concerns and asked for support regarding bin storage, including concerns that increased rubbish and bin capacity would block pavements, and requests for areas to store bins
- 4% suggested the need for support and improvements to the collection of missed and overflowing bins, including bookable additional collections and the collection of additional waste beyond bin capacity
- 3% suggested support would be needed with increased street cleaning, including observations that street cleaning happens infrequently now and that reduction in waste collection frequency will increase the need for street cleaning
- 3% suggested the need for support and improvements for dealing with fly tipping, including dealing with present levels more effectively, clearing the increased levels which may accompany changes to collection frequency, and effective enforcement against offenders
- 3% called for greater public education and guidance on recycling and waste disposal, including clearer and simplified instructions on what can be recycled and what item should go in which receptacle, leaflets and text reminders of collection schedule, and communications around the importance of recycling and good waste management practices. (0.1% were opposed to education initiatives.)
- 2% suggested supports or improvements should be made regarding breakages and replacements of bins, including collectors taking more care to not damaging bins, and more readily available, cheaper or free replacements
- 1% suggested they would need help with moving heavy bins or access to a functioning Assisted Collection service
- 1% called for extra collections around the summer and winter holidays when more rubbish is produced
- 1% called for improved customer service from Bristol Waste, including being more contactable, and punctual to respond to and resolve queries and complaints.

Other

- 1% left comments with other considerations or suggestions, including smaller bins, waste compactors, impacts on mental health, time, and older residents, and calls for a different system entirely
- 1% suggested that the problem should be tackled at source, with businesses and product sellers using less packaging in general or more recyclable packaging
- 0.1% suggested they would need “all” options for support listed.

Criticisms and concerns

- 6% expressed concerns about overflowing bins, including that bins are already full at two-week collection frequency, and a reduction in collection frequency will lead to more overflow
- 6% expressed concerns and criticism of the present state of fly tipping and littering in Bristol, and that the proposals will lead to more fly tipping and dirtier streets
- 5% left comments opposing the proposals to change the frequency of collections
- 3% expressed concerns that the present service collection reliability is inadequate, with teams not turning up as scheduled
- 3% expressed concerns regarding the behaviour of others, including neighbours using others' bins without permission, not recycling properly, having poor waste habits, and that the proposals will make these situations worse
- 1% expressed concerns that the present collection service leaves mess scattered in the streets and that this is not picked up
- 1% left comments criticising the council, including that it is inefficient and that Council Tax is not value for money
- 1% expressed other concerns about the present collection service, such as not leaving bins and boxes where they were collected from, not collecting items they are supposed to, the need for more quality control, and that the service is poor in general
- 1% expressed concerns relating to disability which were not related to moving heavy bins or assisted collection, these included accessibility and feasibility of sorting recycling, that certain disabilities mean more waste is produced, and that the proposals would have greater effects on them because of disability
- 1% suggested the change should be met with a reduction or reimbursement of Council Tax
- 0.1% left comments about the consultation.

Selection of quotes highlighting additional support needed if waste frequency reduced

Increased black bin capacity: "Another bin - mine is already overflowing every fortnight even though I recycle everything I can."

Accept soft plastic: "Also start to take soft plastic for recycling, if supermarkets can do this, why can't the council - most household waste that isn't recyclable that ends up in the black bins is soft plastic!!"

Improved food waste service: "Our street are trying to make use of all the Councils recycling bins, but food waste cannot be left sitting to rot for extended periods of time. It's unhygienic and defeats the purpose of getting residents to collect food waste as it acts as a deterrent. Therefore, your claim of food waste in Black bins needs to be moderated against those who are putting food waste in black bins because their food waste has not been regularly collected or the bin needs to be replaced due to damage."

Improved garden waste service: "To reduce amount of green garden waste going into black bins, and therefore for environmental reasons, I would provide a green bin and green bin collection free of charge."

Recycling centres: "I don't own a car, which means I am barred from using the public tip. While I don't think it will be a major problem for me to survive with a 3-weekly bin collection for "normal" use, I have no way of accommodating one-off extra waste. I can't believe I'm the only one in that position."

Nappy waste collection: "Nappy waste - a recycling scheme is on trial in the city and was overwhelmed by the amount of people interested. So far we haven't been able to access this service due to too high demand. Would the council be supporting this type of recycling?"

Vermin & pest control: "Support with rat infestation. We have had rats in our property due to the spillage of waste on the street, not from our own bins."

Improving collection reliability: "I would need to be assured that recycling happens EVERY week and our street doesn't get 'missed', as has happened frequently recently. When recycling is not collected and boxes are overflowing, we have no option but to put this waste in the black bin! Not something we would wish to do."

Tackle at source: "I already recycle everything that is possible to be recycled, however I cannot control that the majority of goods are not sold in recyclable packaging. I feel that reducing large waste collection penalises ordinary people and puts the onus on us to alter things beyond our control, or that working families do not have the time to do (i.e., make packaging ready for recycling, separate packaging out)."

Concerns about bins overflowing: "We are a family of five, our black bin is full after two weeks so it would need to be bigger if collections were less frequent. We recycle as much as we can. It is frustrating that the recycling should be collected weekly but isn't always meaning it is overflowing and have nowhere else to store it."

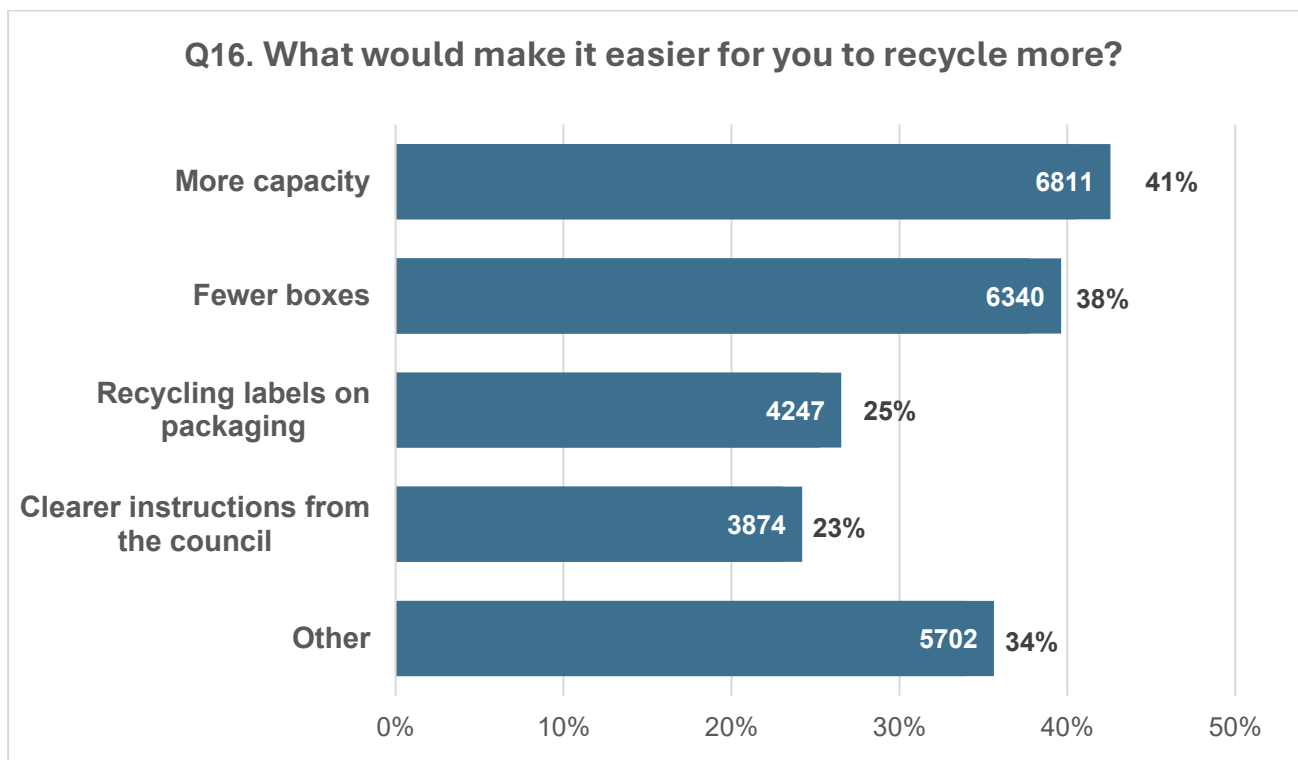
Reimbursed or lowered Council Tax: "I pay my council tax bill and I expect weekly (at the very most fortnightly collection). If not you owe every council tax payer a reduction for reduced service."

Oppose the change: "Shifting to one collection every 4 weeks is the stupidest idea I have heard in some time."

3.4.3. Ways to make recycling easier

Respondents were asked what would make it easier for them to recycle more.

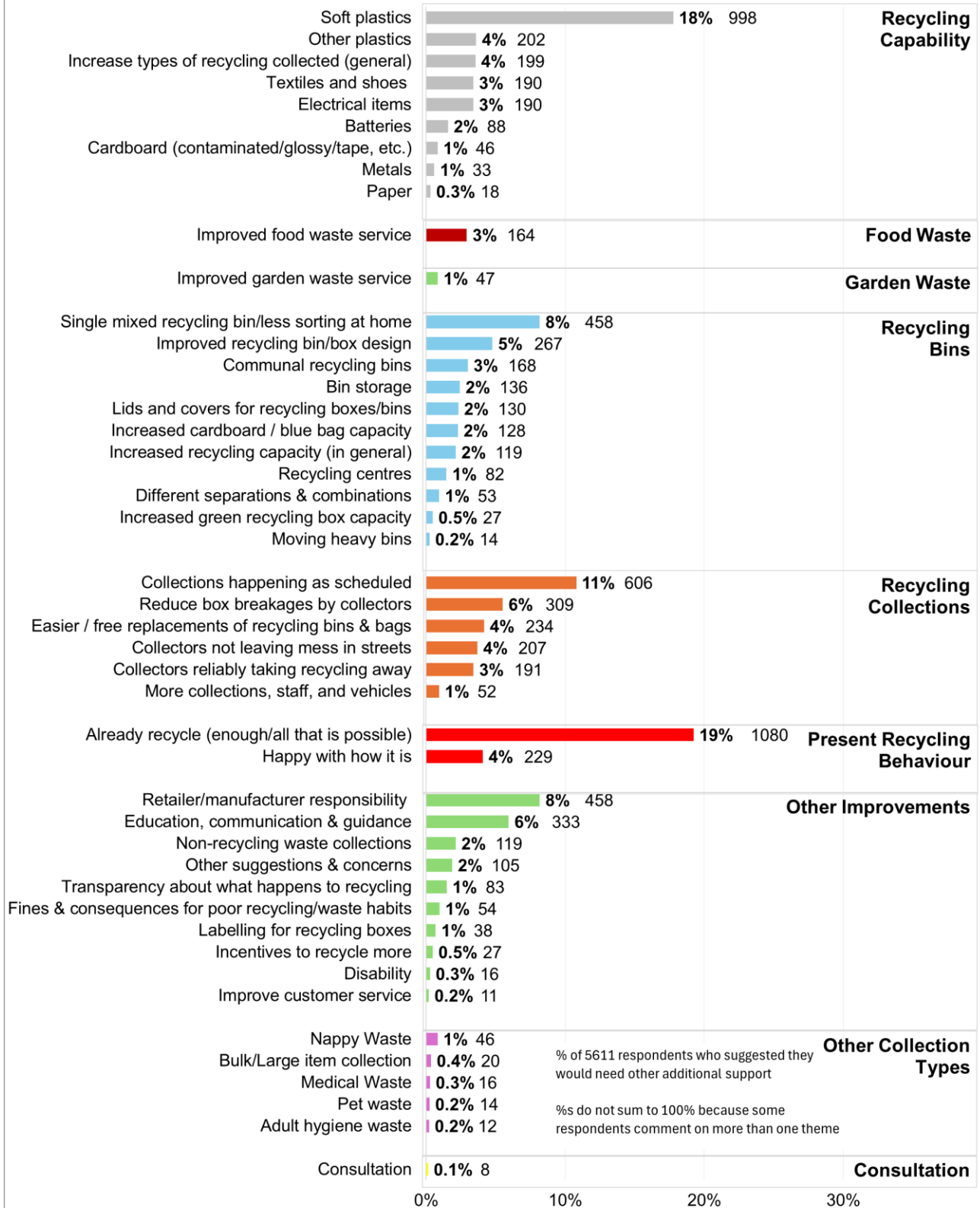
- Over 40% of respondents said that more recycling box/bag capacity would make recycling easier
- 38% said that using fewer recycling boxes would make it easier
- 25% said having recycling labels on packaging
- 23% that clearer instructions from the council would make it easier.



Other ways to make it easier to recycle more

34% left free text comments under the “Other (please specify):” option. The results in this section are based on 5,611 in scope responses coded.

Q16. Other ways to make it easier to recycle more



Of those who left comments regarding other ways to make it easier to recycle more, the following themes emerged:

Recycling capabilities

- 17% suggested soft plastics (food wrappers, crisp packets, plastic film etc.) should be collected kerbside because soft plastics make up a high proportions non-recycling black bin waste, and that supermarket soft plastic schemes are not convenient, accessible or effective
- 3% suggested other plastics should be collected kerbside, including black plastics, coloured plastics, hard plastics (such as plant pots and toys), polystyrene, foam, blister packs, and toothpaste tubes
- 3% suggested the need to collect a broader range of materials for recycling in general, including calls for recycling everything that can be recycled, and other items such as oil, wood or broken glass
- 3% suggested better collection of textiles, including that textiles and shoes are rarely collected even when packaged and left kerbside in line with council guidelines
- 3% suggested better collection of electrical items, including that electrical items are rarely collected even when packaged and left kerbside in line with council guidelines
- 3% suggested better collection of batteries, including that batteries are rarely collected even when packaged and left kerbside in line with council guidelines
- 1% suggested the need to collect more types of cardboard, including greasy cardboard, glossy cardboard, or cardboard with tape or stickers attached
- 1% suggested the need to accept more types of metals, including small metal items and scrap, saucepans, foil, paint tins, and more metals in general
- 0.3% suggested the need for better collection of paper, including clearer instructions on which

Food waste

- 3% suggested a need for improvements to the food waste collection service, noting issues like pests, small bin sizes, missed collections, and unpleasant odours. Improvements include calls for larger, animal-proof bins, more frequent collections, and free biodegradable bags, better bin designs, improved hygiene, education on food waste recycling, and communal collection options for flats and shared spaces.

Garden waste

- 1% suggested a need for improvements to the garden waste collection service, including dealing with missed collections, free, more frequent or simpler access to garden waste collections, especially during peak gardening seasons, and the provision of free and suitable garden waste bags.

Recycling bins

- 8% suggested that the council should change to a single mixed recycling bin, with less sorting at home, and separations of materials handled centrally
 - 4% suggested improvements are needed in recycling box or bag design, including that cardboard bags deteriorate too quickly, calls for sturdier, weather-resistant bins, clear labelling for contents, stackable containers, or wheelie bins for easier handling and more secure storage. Additionally, residents advocate for better-quality boxes that can withstand rough handling by collection teams, and lockable bins to prevent interference from animals
 - 3% suggested improvements are needed around communal bins, including more dedicated bins for cardboard, glass, and electronics, and food waste bins in communal spaces, easily accessible communal drop-off points such as street-side recycling hubs or bins at the end of roads, better communal recycling systems for flats and apartments, and the return of supermarket recycling stations
 - 2% expressed issues relating to bin storage, including limited space to store multiple bins and boxes both inside and outside houses, and concerns about bins cluttering the streets
 - 2% suggested the need for effective lids and covers for recycling boxes and bags to stop recycling from getting wet, to prevent it from blowing around the streets, and to protect it from animals
 - 2% suggested the need for increased blue bag capacity, noting they frequently have more cardboard than they can recycle, that the bags should be bigger, or that collectors should take away excess cardboard next to the bags
 - 2% suggested the need for increased recycling capacity in general, either through larger boxes or bins, or more bins, boxes and bags
 - 1% suggested the need for improvements to recycling centres, including having more recycling centres, opening recycling centres on more days and for longer hours, removing restrictions and improving access for non-drivers
 - 1% suggested different separations and combinations of materials for recycling, including simplifying the system by reducing bins and grouping similar materials; combining paper and cardboard together; putting plastic in blue bag and cardboard in a box to reduce damages; putting food waste with garden waste; and keeping glass and paper separate
 - 0.5% suggested the need to increase green recycling box capacity for plastic and tin recycling
- 0.3% suggested support would be needed for moving heavy bins if they either increased in size or they were fuller

Recycling collections

- 11% called for collection to happen reliably as scheduled, with many noting that presently collections are often missed, leading to confusion for residents, and waste littering the streets

- 5% requested for the reduction in box breakages by the recycling teams, and that boxes are roughly treated leading to breakages which then must be replaced by residents at no fault of their own
- 4% requested free or easier replacements for boxes & bags, including that it is hard to get a replacement when a box or bag is broken or stolen, and that it is unfair to charge for replacements when breakages are not the resident's fault
- 4% expressed concerns about collectors leaving mess in the street after collection and calls for more care to be taken to not leave rubbish scattered around
- 3% called for collectors to reliably take recycling away, including concerns that one or several receptacles are left with no explanation, that some are only half emptied, that collectors do not take away items that they should, that or a single misplaced item can result in non-collection, with a build-up eventually being put in the non-recycling bin
- 1% suggested the need more collections, vehicles, and staff, including calls for daily or twice weekly collections, more lorries with greater capacity to take rubbish away, and more staff to work the collection routes.

Present recycling behaviour

- 20% suggested that that already recycle enough or all that is possible, including suggestions that they are already doing everything they can within the current system
- 4% expressed that they are happy with the current system and that no changes are needed.

Other improvements

- 8% suggested it is retailer & manufacturers' responsibility to produce and sell products in less packaging, and not using non-recyclable packaging, including calls for products to be better labelled
- 6% called for more education, communication, and guidance, including clearer, simpler and more consistent communication on what can be recycled, educational campaigns on how to recycle and why we should recycle, leaflets and text reminders of the schedule and what goes in which receptacle, and guidance on handling hard-to-recycle items like batteries and textiles
- 2% suggested the need for support with non-recycling waste collection, including a bigger black bin, calls for no change to collection frequency, concerns about negative impacts of reducing frequency, and that non-recycling waste is the issue rather than recycling
- 2% shared other suggestions or concerns, including calls for a unified national recycling system, bin cleaning services, advocacy for local community initiatives like repair cafes and reuse centres, frustration over improper sorting and fly-tipping, promoting sustainability through reuse, repair, and composting, and a demand for better public space cleanliness and waste management in general

- 1% called for transparency about what happens to recycling, including information on whether waste, especially plastic, is actually recycled and not sent to landfills or incinerated, clearer communication about where recycling goes, the actual recycling rates, and the environmental impact of recycling processes, with suggestions for educational campaigns or reassurance that materials are properly recycled
- 1% called for fines and consequences for poor recycling and waste habits, including fines for households not recycling properly, penalties for fly-tipping and misuse of bins, spot-checking homes that do not recycle, waste collection for non-compliance, and holding landlords accountable for their tenants' waste management
- 1% suggested recycling boxes should be clearly labelled with the items and materials which should be placed in each
- 0.5% suggested people should receive incentive to recycle more, including financial rewards, such as council tax reductions or vouchers, implementing prize draws, cash-back systems for returning bottles
- 0.3% expressed concerns related to disability, including expressions of difficulty in sorting and moving recycling or having the time to recycle due to caring responsibilities
- 0.2% suggested the need to improve customer service, including proper remedying of missed collection, easier reporting of missed collections, and Bristol Waste being more easily contactable and responding by phone or email.

Other collection types

- 1% called for help and support for dealing with nappy waste, including access to a nappy collection service with a dedicated bin
- 0.4% called for support with bulky or large item collection, including a free on demand kerbside collection service.
- 0.3% called for support with medical waste, including the recycling of medicine blister packs and the collection of incontinence waste
- 0.3% called for support with pet waste, including a dedicated pet waste collection service
- 0.2% called for support with adult hygiene waste, including a dedicated bin or service for sanitary products.

Consultation

- 0.1% left comments about the consultation or consultations in general, including calls not to change bin size without consultation, concerns voices will not be listened to, calls for less surveys, and issues with how the question frames the issue as though people are not recycling or that waste failures are the residents' fault.

Selection of quotes highlighting what would make it easier to recycle more

Soft plastics: "Introducing recycling of soft plastics is the only thing which could help us. The impact would be massive, reducing our general waste by over 50%."

Food waste: "We do recycle our food waste but hate doing it, it's gross, and many people must feel the same which is why they don't do it. Not sure what the solution is to that! There will be lots of maggoty bins if you don't get people recycling food waste before reducing frequency of bin collections."

Garden waste: "I feel the additional cost of garden waste collection largely contributes to this type of waste being added to black bins where its need is infrequent. Having to book to take garden waste to the tip is often impractical when gardening is unplanned and you cannot book same day or within an hour slot - many people won't have the space to store such waste so it goes in the bin."

Single mixed recycling bin: "Encourage people to recycle by making it easier, in Hull where my Mum lives, all the recycling goes in a large brown wheelie bin and is collected once a week / fortnight. Everyone fills the bin because it is easy. As a species we are lazy and ignorant to the world around us. Make recycling easier!"

Improved box/bin design: "Bins that are fit for purpose and don't get smashed on first use. My cardboard bag is rags but I am unwilling to pay to have a new one so it stays in pieces."

Collection reliability: "What would help is if the recycling was actually collected on a weekly basis which it frequently isn't."

Reduce box breakages by collectors: "For the bin/recycle men to NOT throw our empty boxes which smashes them every week and then we're expected to pay to have them replaced!"

Easier / free replacements of boxes & bags: "Easier availability of replacements would help (we waited over a year for the blue bag to be in stock)"

Collectors not leaving mess in the streets: "Bristol Waste employees actually getting the recycling into the truck. There's nothing more dispiriting than carefully sorting one's recycling, and then finding loads of it strewn all over the street by the collection team. Please get them to pick it up, and it might actually encourage homeowners to bother to recycle."

Already recycle: "We are already recycling as much as we can, moving to 3 or 4 weekly collections wouldn't increase how much we recycle."

Retailer/manufacturer responsibility: "Far more input is needed from both the manufacturers and the shops and supermarkets to ensure all packaging is recyclable. The onus is on the end user to recycle where possible. This responsibility lies with manufacturing, packaging and supermarkets and shops. We can only recycle what we are allowed to by these organisations."

Education, communication, and guidance: "We also need to have recycling guidance (i.e. what is recyclable and what is not). I appreciate that such guidance can never cover any eventuality, but I have found useful information of this type on the websites of other councils, which I have never found on the one for Bristol Waste."

Transparency about what happens to recycling: "We keep being told (word of mouth and on social media) that a lot of the recycling is a lie and BCC just send it to landfill anyway. Some clear messaging around this would be helpful and would perhaps encourage us to do more."

3.4.4. Additional items to recycle at home

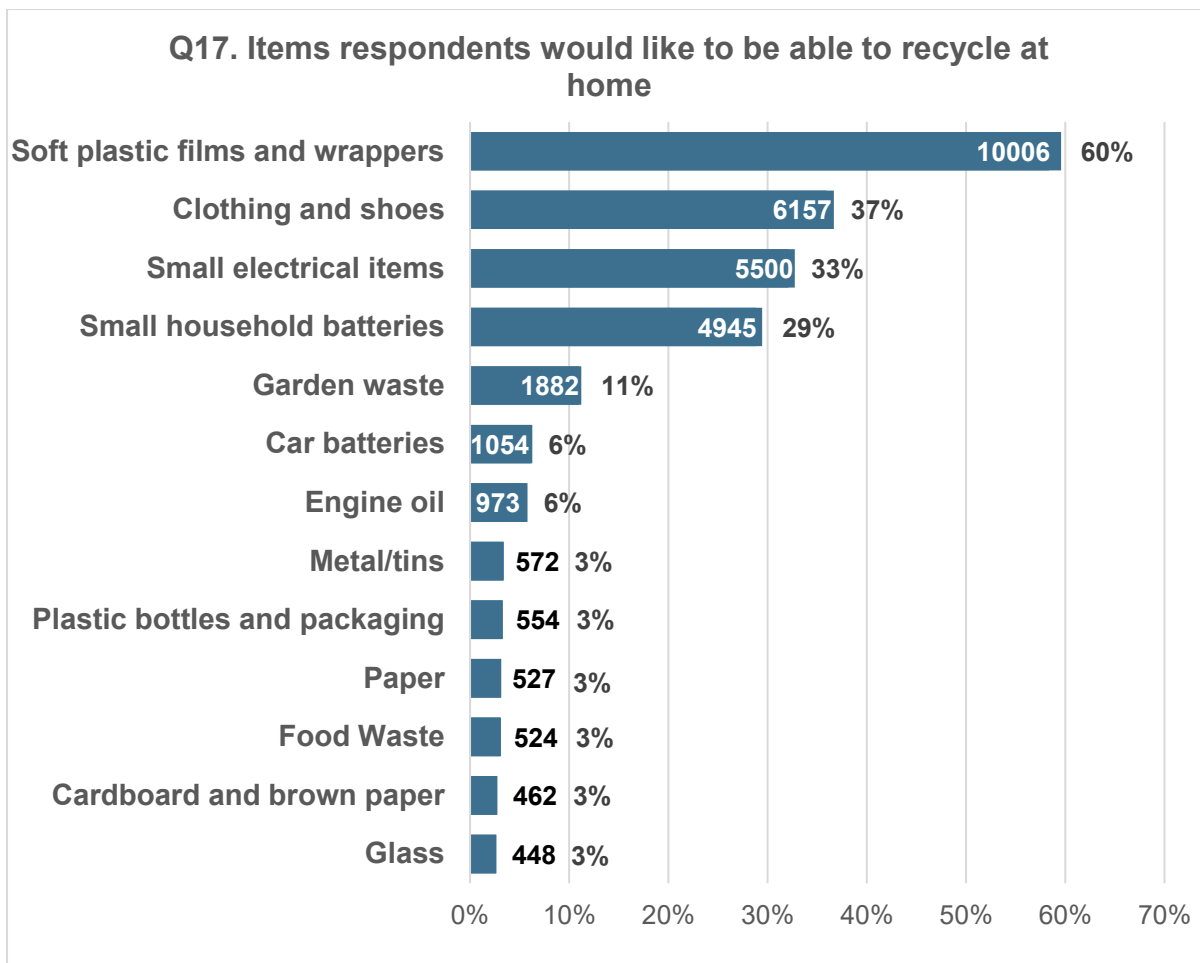
Respondents were asked which items they would like to be able to recycle at home.

- Soft plastic films and wrappers is the most popular item respondents wanted to be able to recycle from home, with 60% of respondents selecting it.

This is followed by:

- Clothing and shoes (37%),
- Small electrical items (33%)
- Small household batteries (29%)
- Garden waste (11%)
- Car batteries (6%)
- Engine oil (6%)
- Metal/tins (3%)
- Plastic bottles and packaging (3%)
- Paper (3%)
- Food waste (3%)
- Cardboard and brown paper (3%)
- Glass (3%)

This list of items respondents would like to be able to recycle at home is shown in the chart below.



2,336 respondents suggested other items they would like to be able to recycle at home.

Plastic

- 17% said hard or black plastic
- 15% said soft plastics
- 4% said polystyrene or packaging foam
- 3% said medicine packaging
- 2% said coffee pods
- 1% said pet food pouches
- 1% said printer cartridges
- 1% said water filters
- 0.2% said pens

Textiles

- 13% said clothing or shoes
- 8% said other types of textiles

Electrical waste

- 10% said electrical items
- 1% said vapes

Kitchen and dining waste

- 10% said cooking oil
- 1% said kitchen or dining ware

Hazardous waste

- 6% said batteries
- 6% said paint or paint tins
- 1% said chemicals or other hazardous waste
- 1% said broken glass
- 1% said engine oil
- 0.5% said medicine or medical waste
- 0.2% said aerosol cans
- 0.2% said lighters

Bulky or durable items

- 3% said large items, appliances or furniture
- 3% said wooden items
- 1% said DIY or builder's waste
- 0.2% said ceramics

Hygiene and medical products

- 3% said nappies
- 2% said toiletries
- 1% said adult hygiene products
- 0.3% said wet wipes

Paper and cardboard

- 1% said wrapping paper
- 1% said large cardboard boxes
- 0.5% said confidential or shredded paper
- 0.4% said glossy or embossed paper or card
- 0.3% said kitchen roll or paper towel
- 0.1% said wet cardboard or paper
- 0.4% suggested other types of paper

Reusables

- 1% said toys
- 0.4% said the waste service should collect items for reuse
- 0.2% said books
- 0.1% said CDs or DVDs

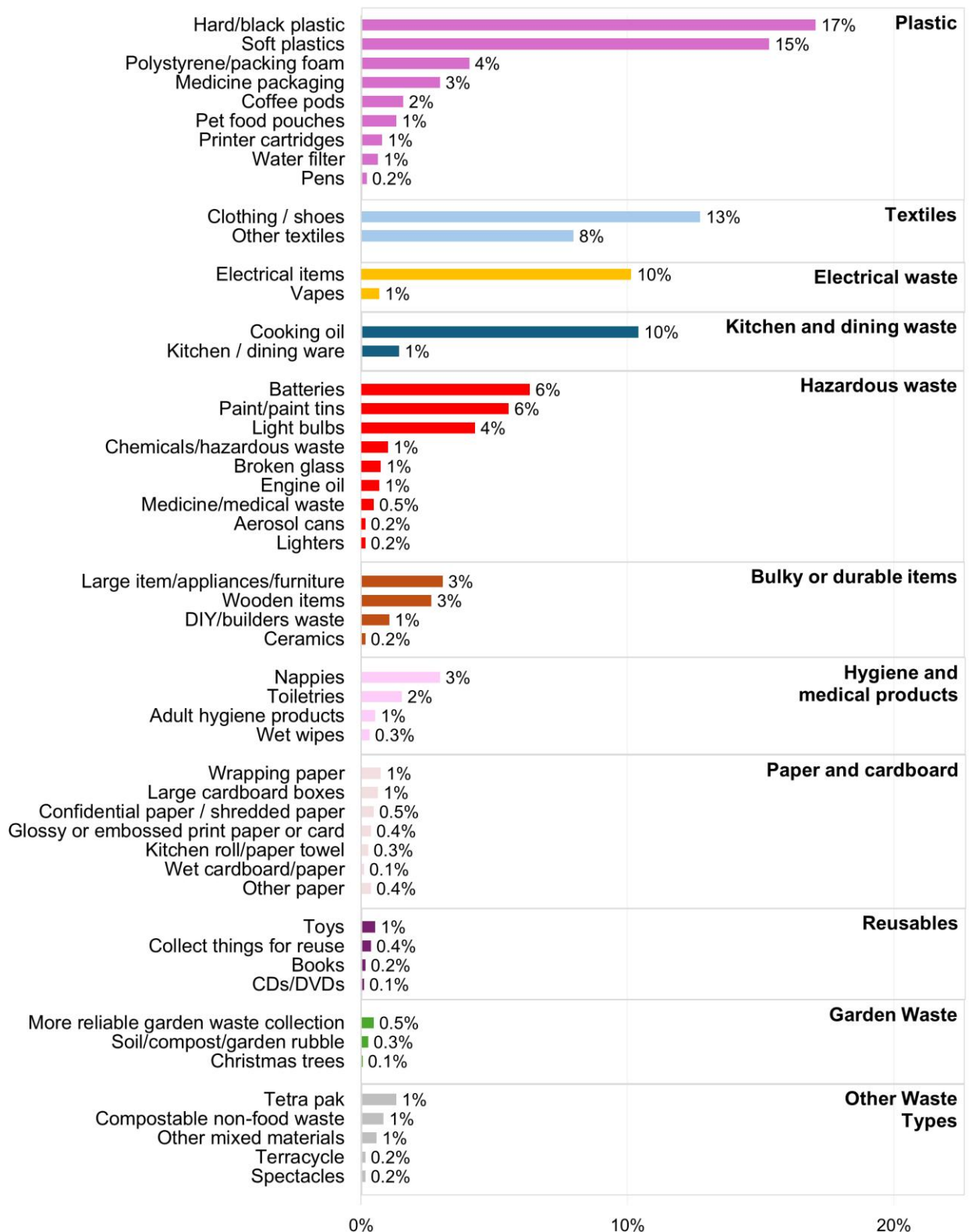
Garden waste

- 0.5% said more reliable garden waste collection
- 0.3% said soil, compost or garden rubble
- 0.1% said Christmas trees

Other waste types

- 1% said tetra pak waste
- 1% said compostable non-food waste
- 1% said other mixed materials
- 0.2% said Terracycle
- 0.2% said spectacles

Q17. Other items to recycle



3.5. Educational campaigns and small service improvement priorities

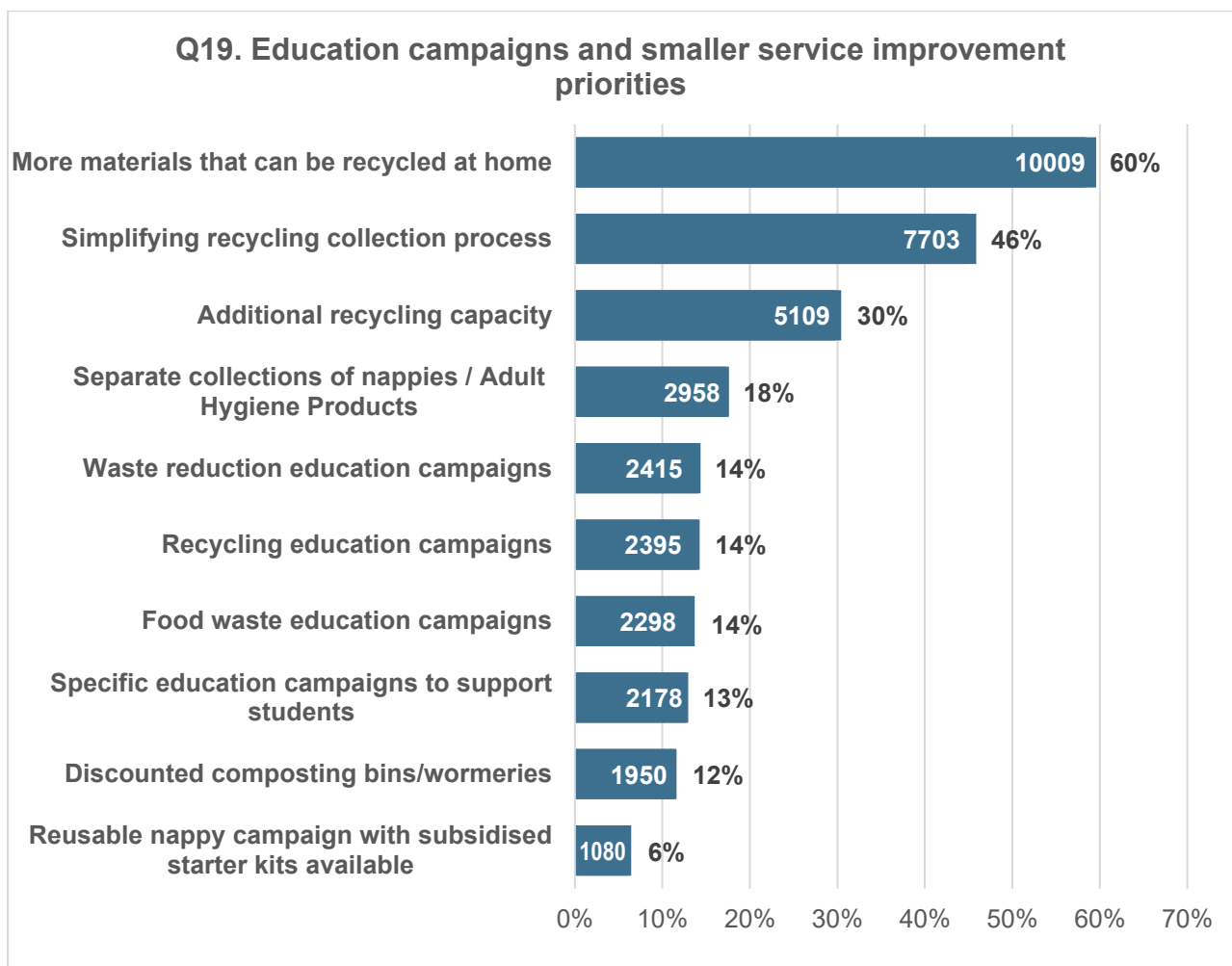
Respondents were asked to select their top three priorities for educational campaigns and smaller service improvements.

The top three priorities were being able to recycle more materials at home (60%), simplifying the recycling collection process (46%), and providing additional recycling capacity (30%).

The other priorities were as follows:

- Separate collections of nappies/adult hygiene products (18%)
- Waste reduction education campaigns (14%)
- Recycling education campaigns (14%)
- Food waste education campaigns (14%)
- Specific education campaigns to support students (13%)
- Discounted composting bins/wormeries (12%)
- Reusable nappy campaigns with subsidised starter kits available (6%)

The list of priorities is shown in the chart below.



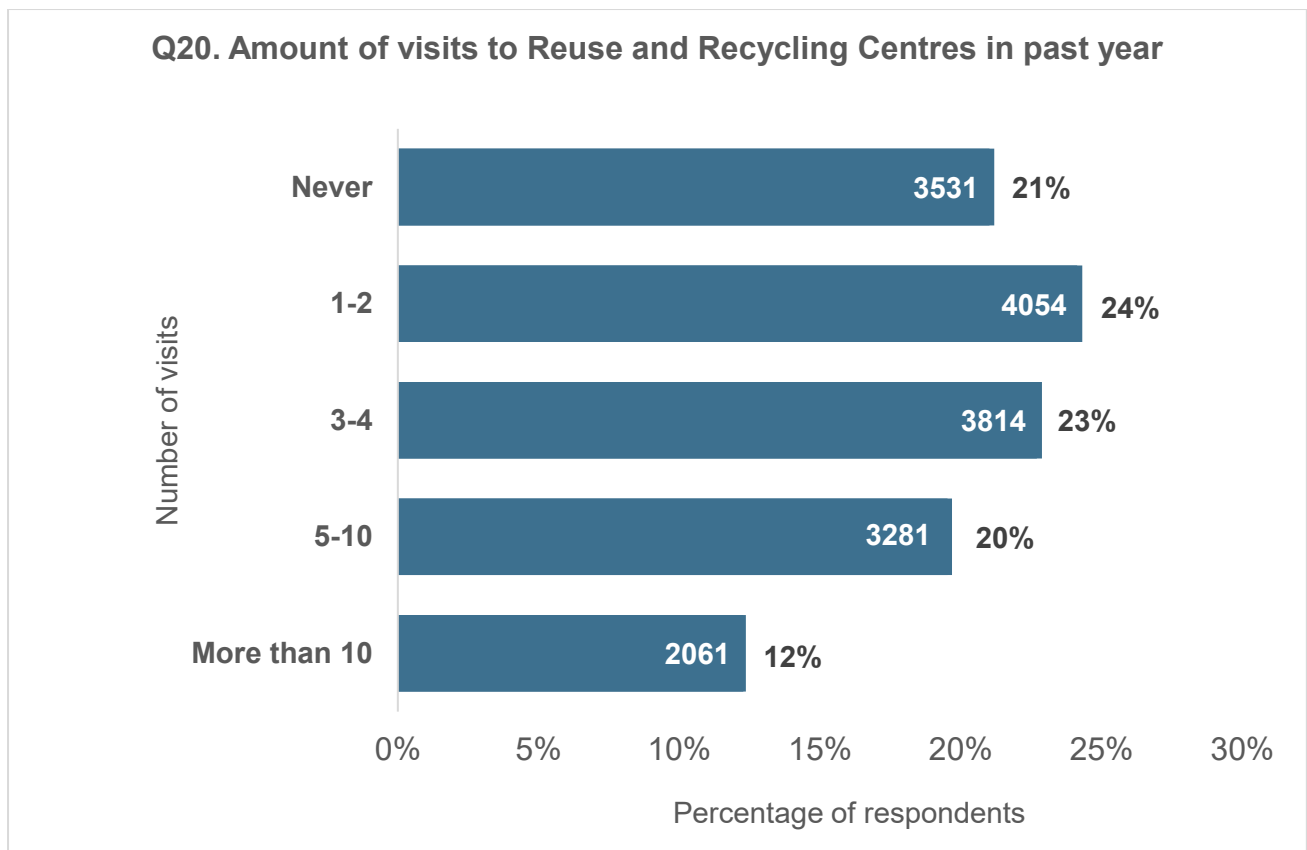
3.6. Reuse and Recycling Centres and Bulky Waste Collection

Respondents were asked questions to help us understand their usage of Reuse and Recycling Centres and bulky waste collection.

3.6.1. Number of visits to Reuse and Recycling centres

Respondents were asked the number of times they had visited Reuse and Recycling Centres in the past year.

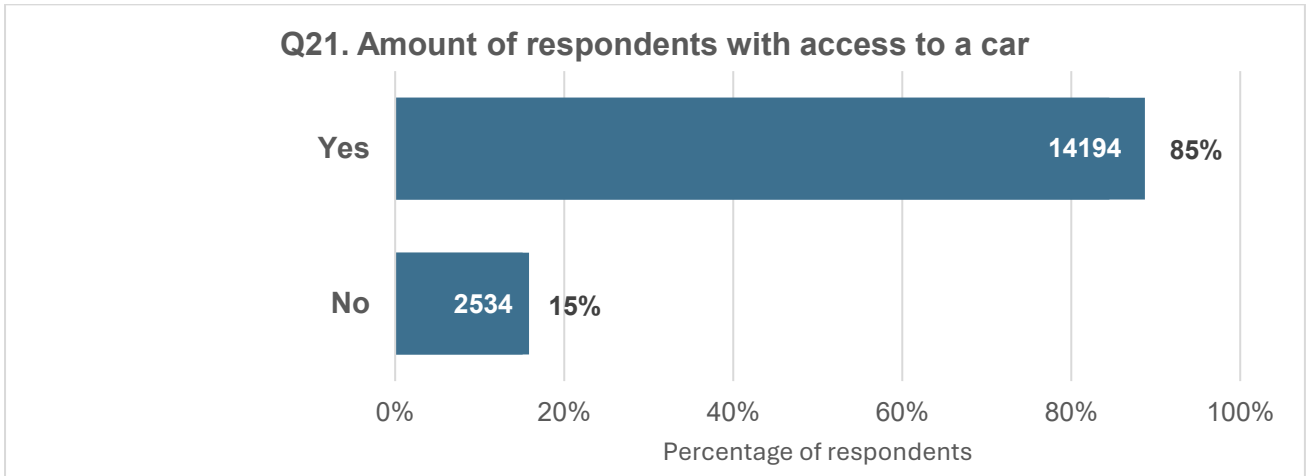
- 21% said they had never visited
- 24% said 1-2 visits
- 23% said 3-4 visits
- 20% said 5-10 visits
- 12% said more than 10 visits



3.6.2. Access to cars

Respondents were asked whether they had access to a car.

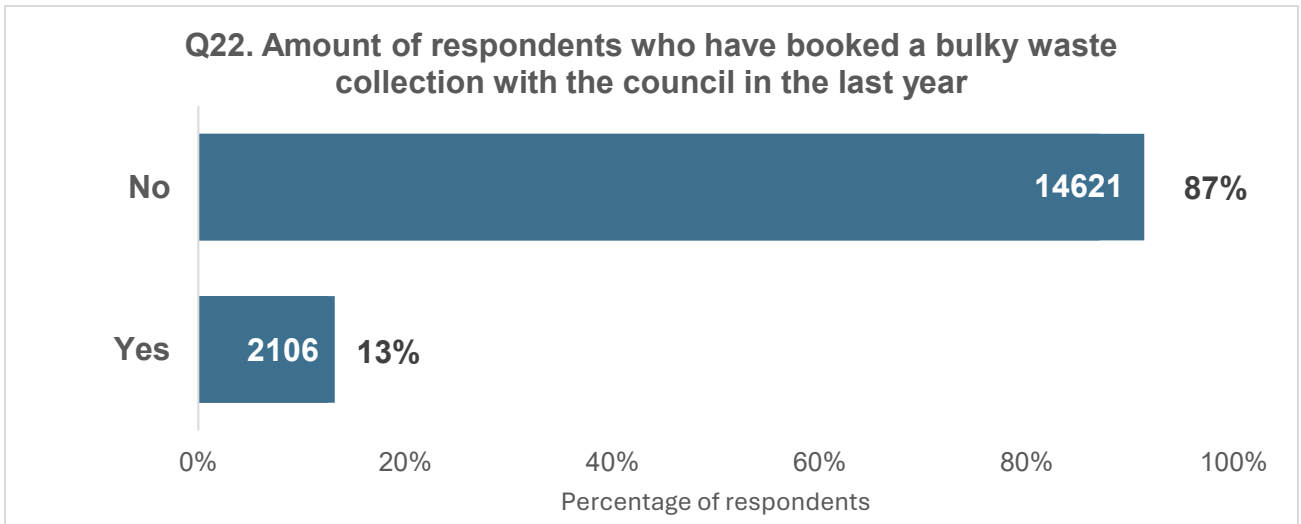
85% had access to a car, while 15% did not.



3.6.3. Number of bulky waste collection bookings

Respondents were asked whether they had booked a bulky waste collection with the council in the last year.

13% of respondents said they had booked a bulky waste collection in the past year, while 87% had not.



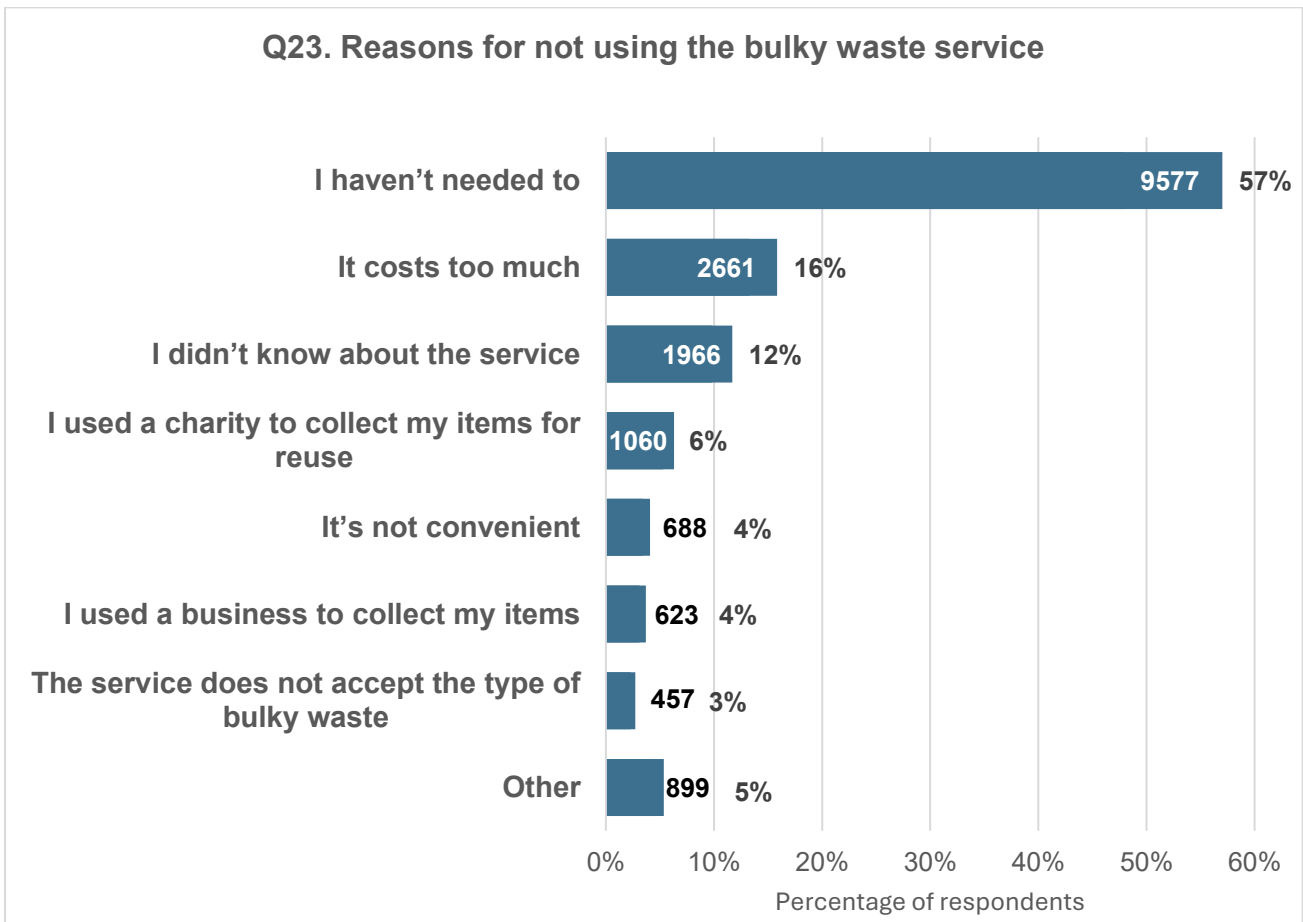
3.6.4. Reasons for not using bulky waste service

Respondents were asked for their reasons for not using the bulky waste service.

The majority (57%) said they had not needed to. This was followed by:

- the cost being too high (16%)
- not knowing about the service (12%)
- they used a charity to collect their items for reuse (6%)
- it's not convenient (4%)
- they used a business to collect their items (4%)
- the service does not accept the type of bulky waste they needed collecting (3%)

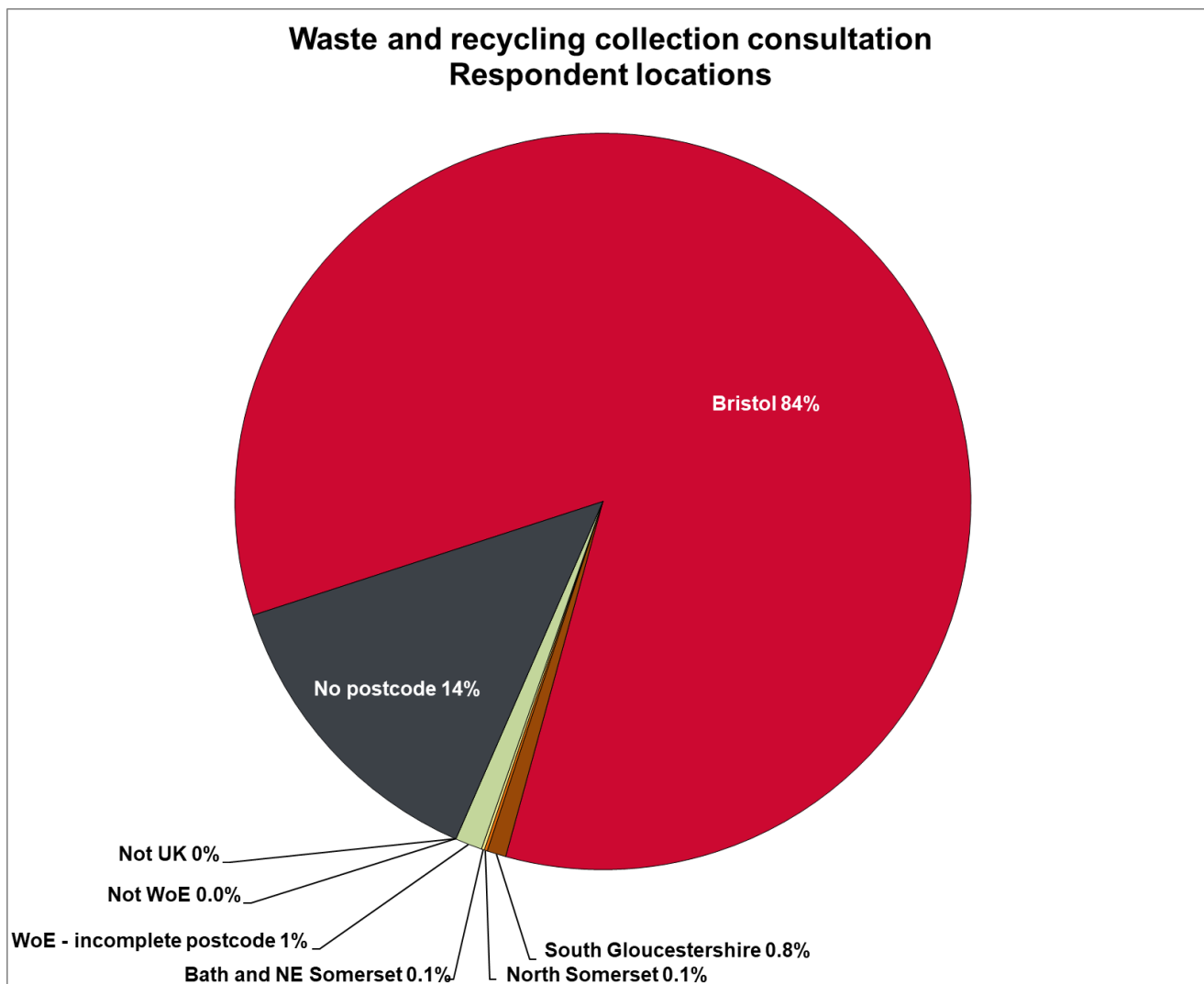
5% provided other reasons, e.g. they were able to take their bulky waste to the Reuse and Recycling Centre themselves, that they have had it collected by other means, e.g. Gumtree, scrap metal collectors, or private collection, or that they have used it in the past, but not in the last year.



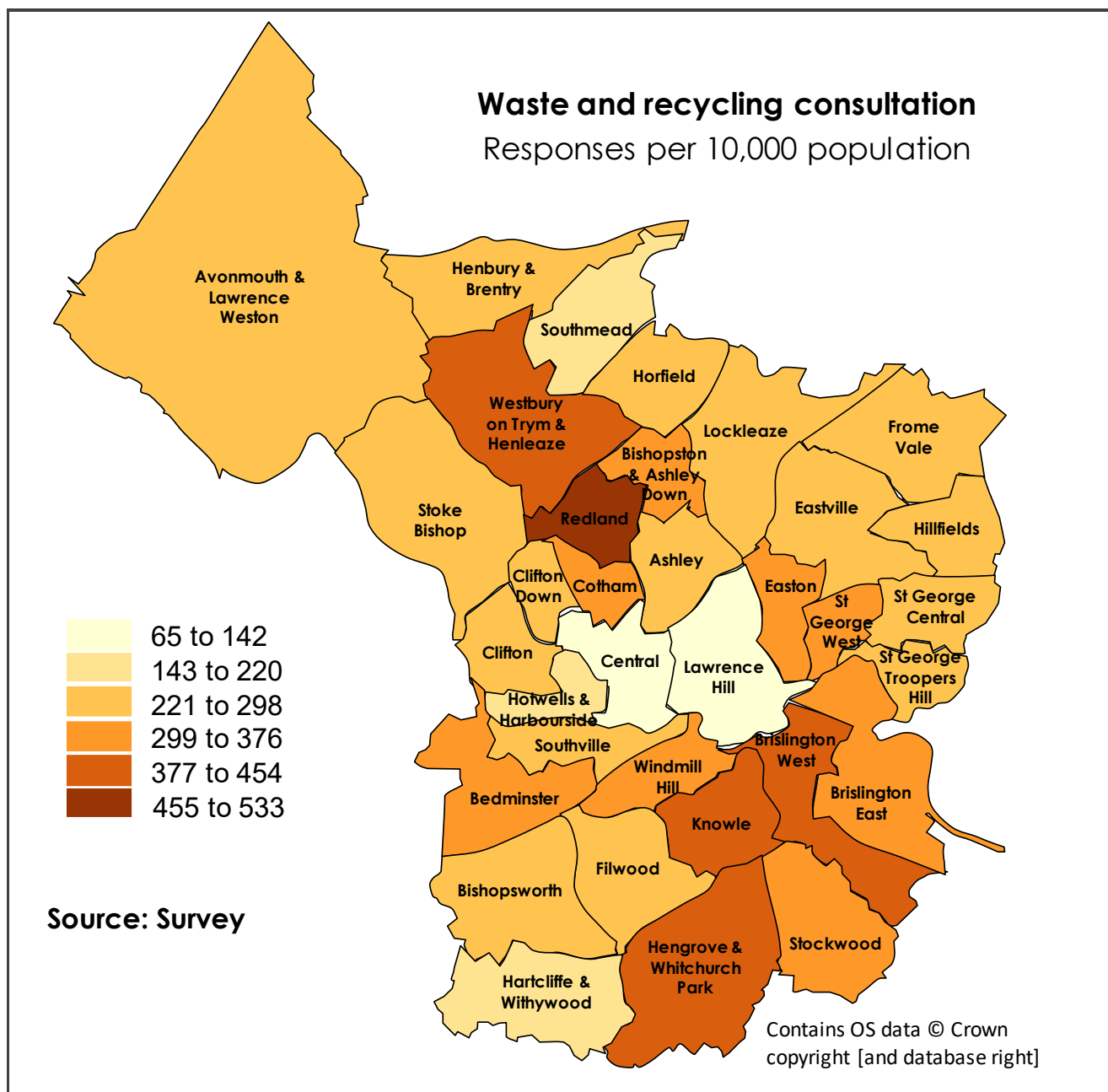
4.Characteristics of survey respondents

4.1. Geographic distribution of survey responses

13,933 responses (84%) were received from postcodes within the Bristol City Council area. 138 (0.1%) were from South Gloucestershire, 22 (0.1%) from North Somerset, and 21 (0.1%) from Bath and North East Somerset (B&NES).

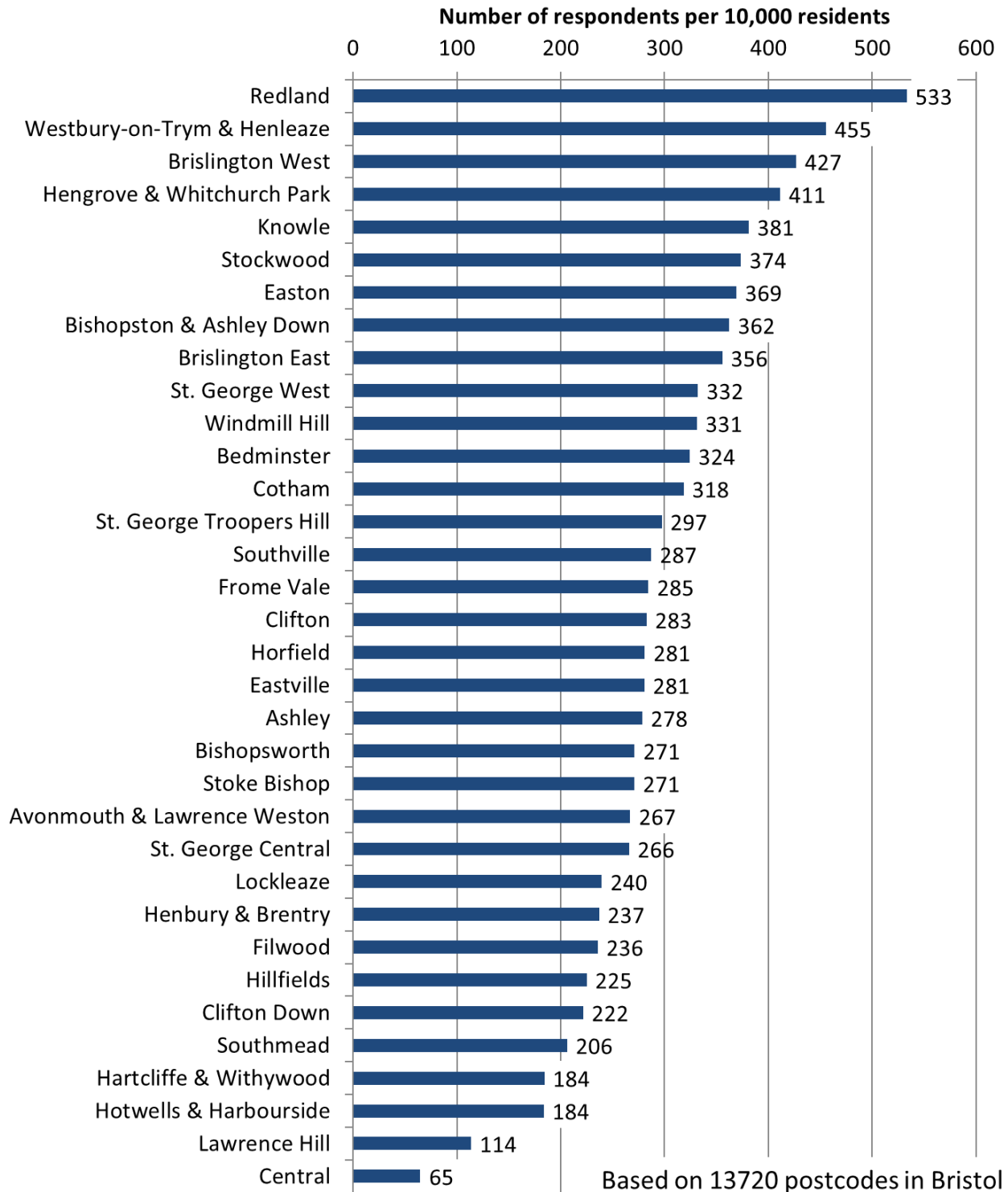


4.1.1. Responses by ward



The lowest responses were from Central Bristol and Lawrence Hill. These areas have a higher predominance of flats and apartments in these areas compared to whole houses (source: [Office for National Statistics](#)), meaning they are potentially less impacted by the proposals for reduction in black wheelie bin collection frequency, as these types of properties typically have a different form of non-recyclable waste collection.

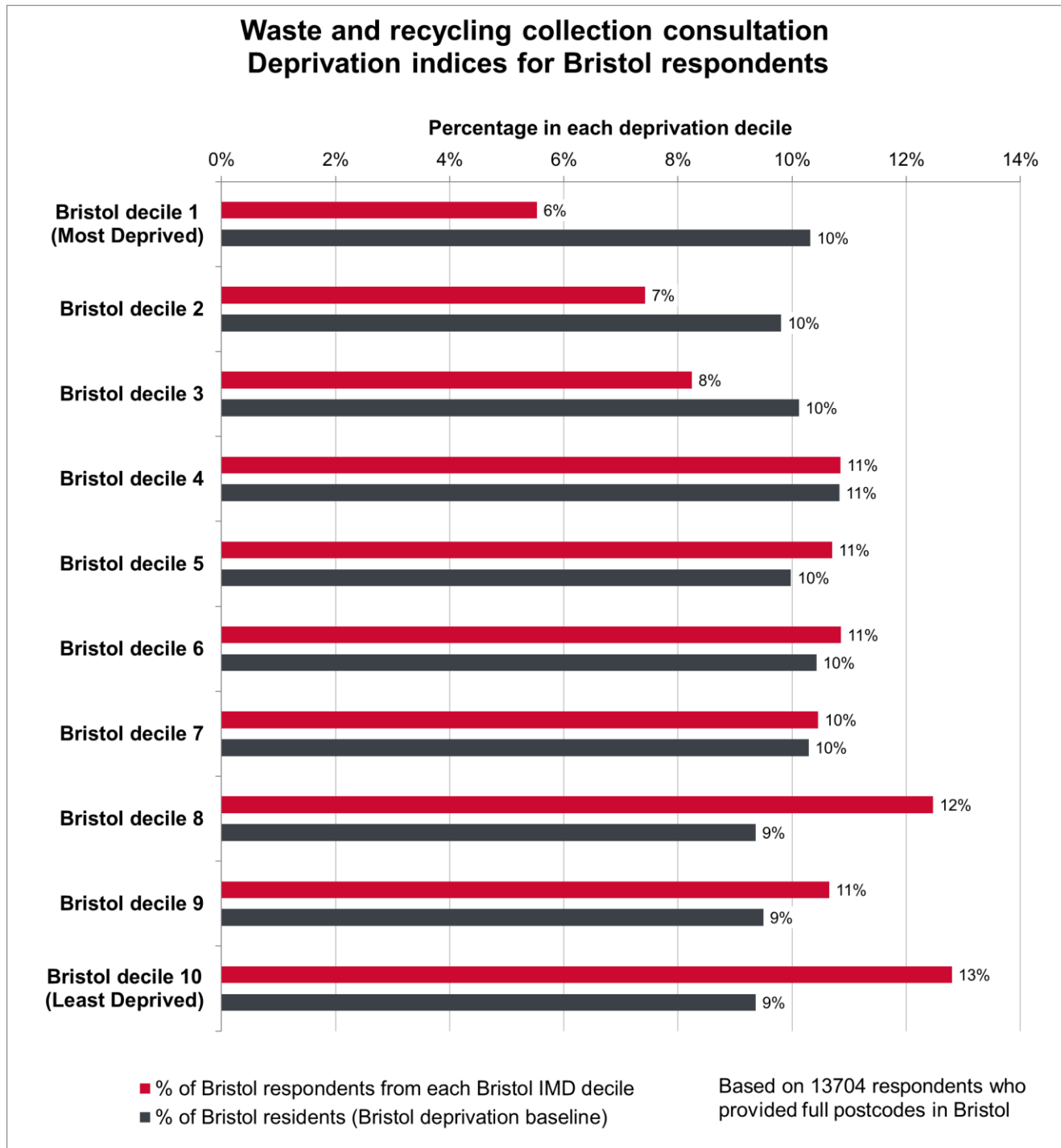
Waste and recycling collection consultation



4.2. Deprivation

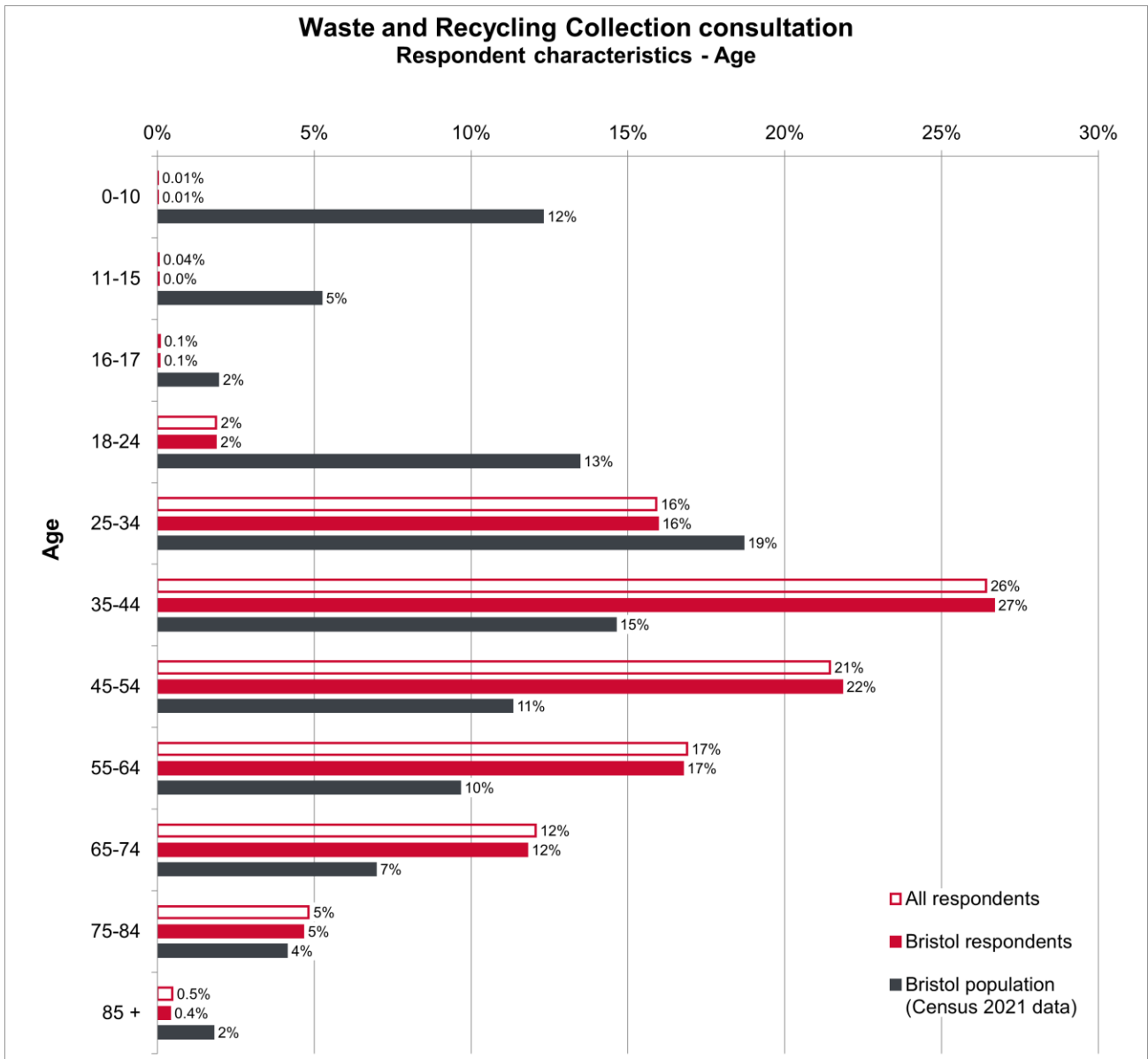
The Income Deprivation Domain measures the proportion of the population experiencing deprivation relating to low income. The definition of low income used includes both those people that are out-of-work, and those that are in work but who have low earnings (and who satisfy the respective means tests). Further details are provided in the [IoD2019 technical report](#).

Responses from the most deprived three deciles were underrepresented, particularly the most deprived decile, while those from the least deprived three were overrepresented.



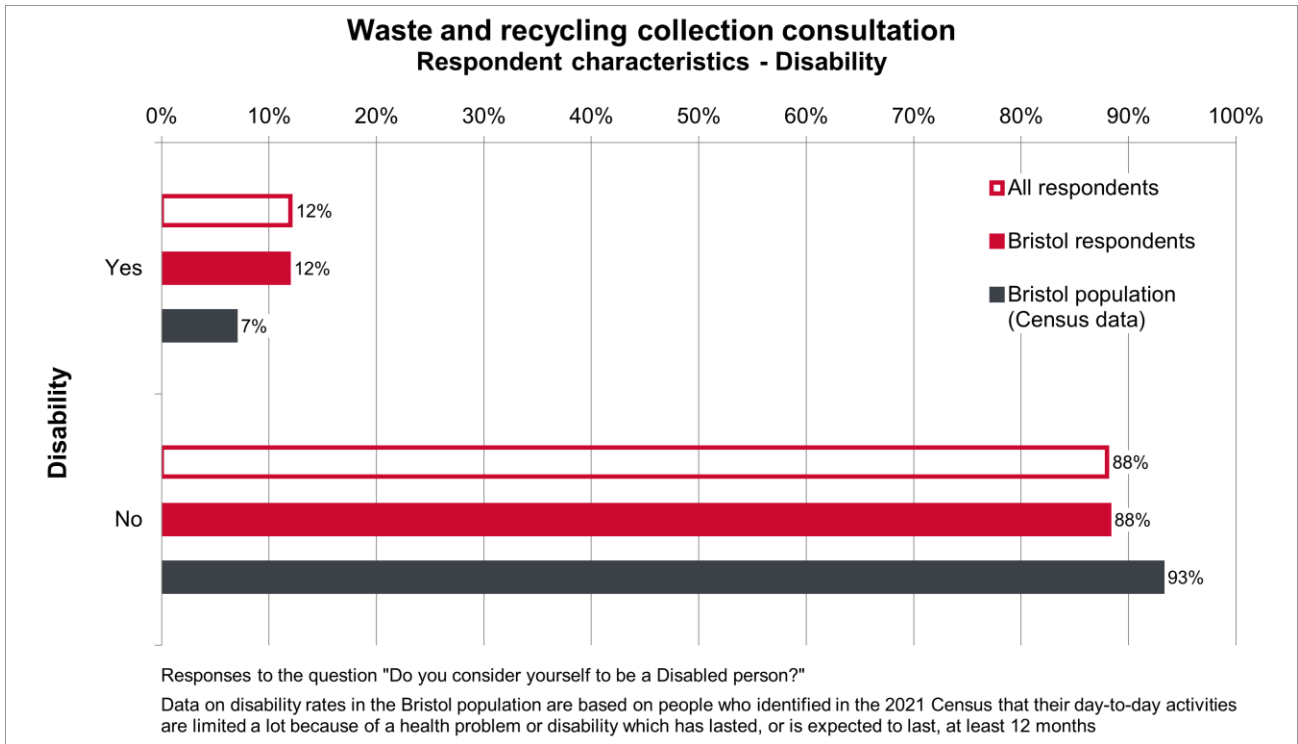
4.3. Age

Younger respondents aged 0-24 were underrepresented compared to other age groups. People aged 85 and over were also underrepresented.



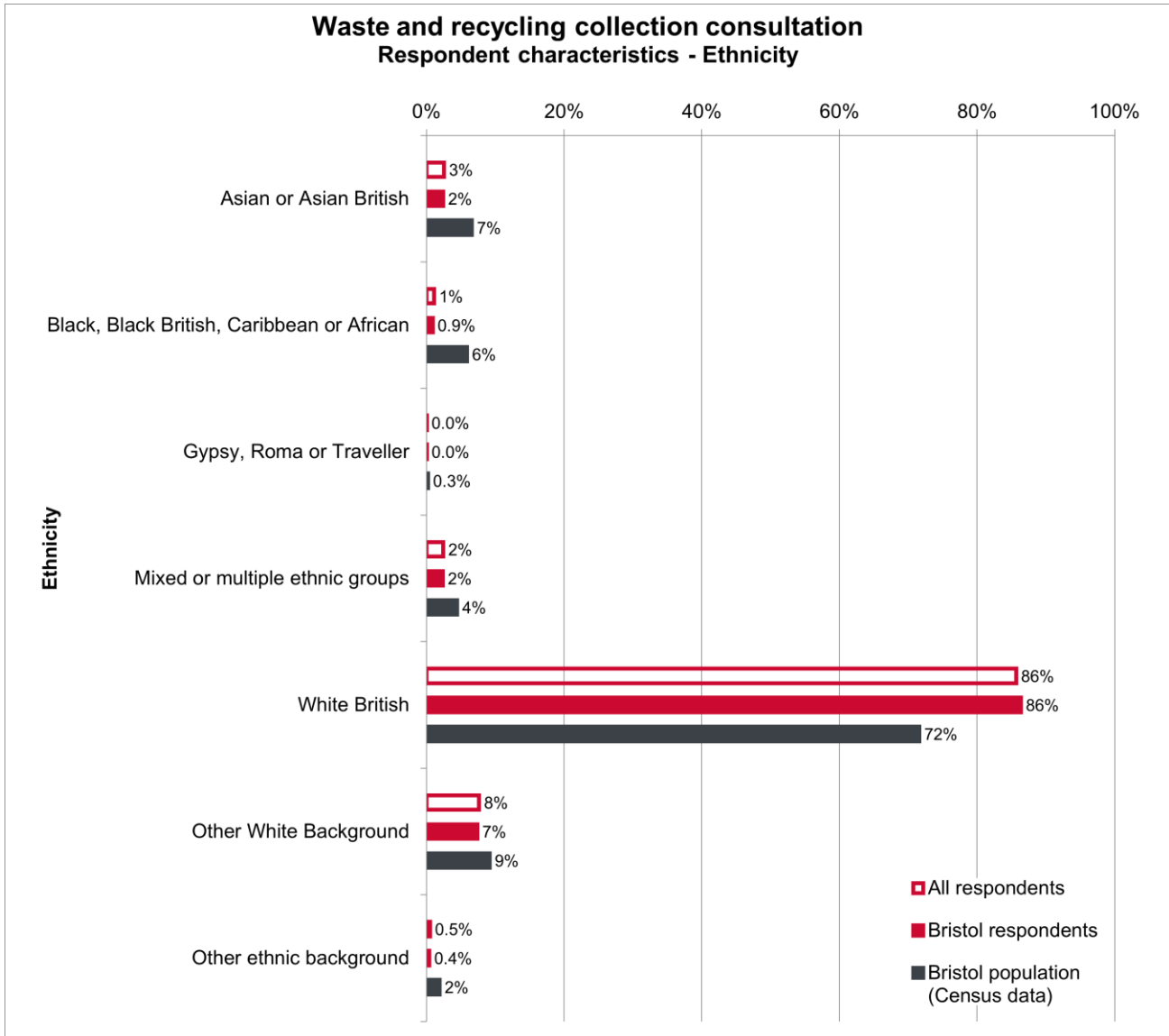
4.4. Disability

Disabled respondents were slightly overrepresented compared to the Bristol population.



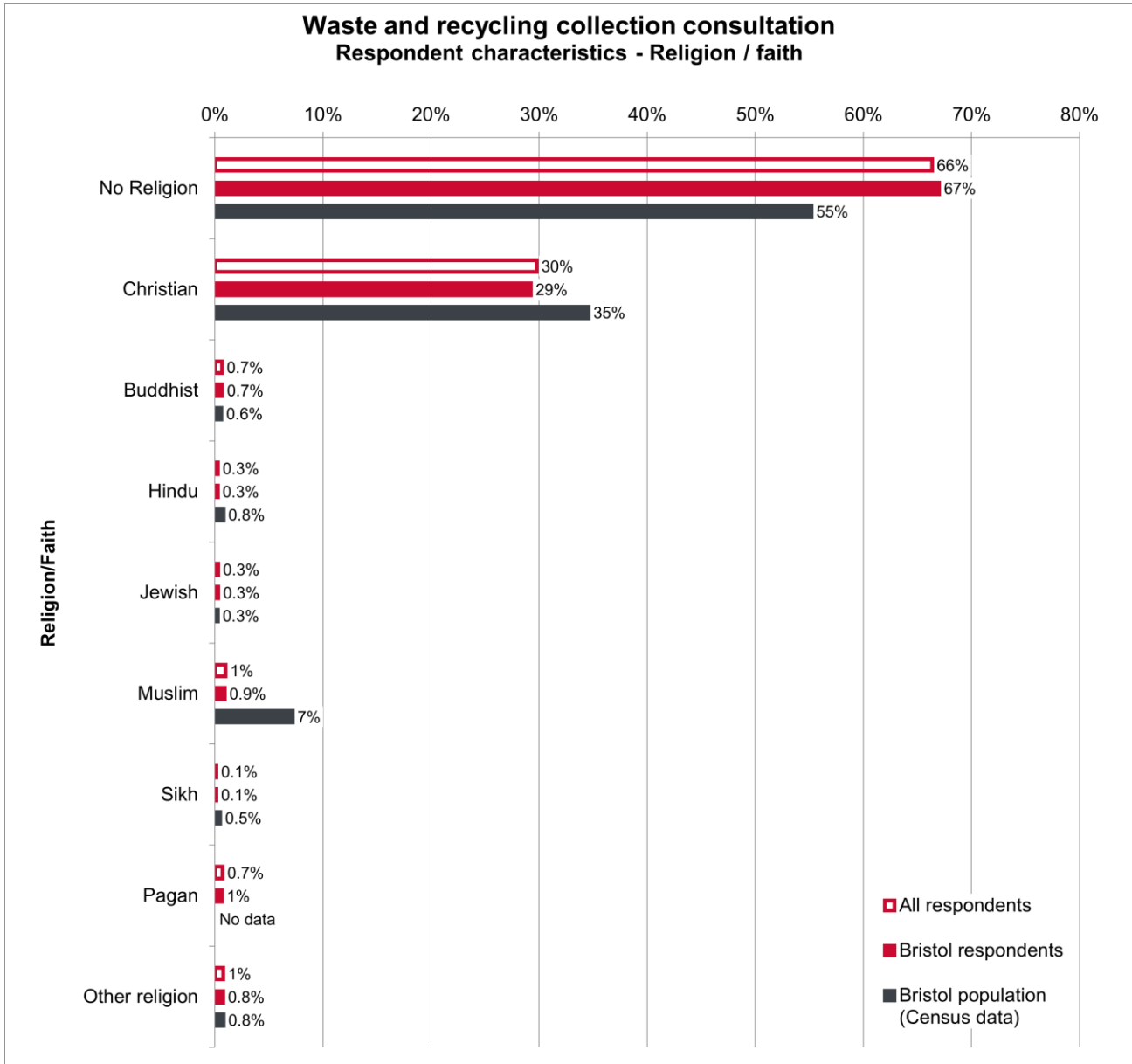
4.5. Ethnicity

Asian/Asian British, Black, Black British, Caribbean or African, and mixed or multiple ethnic groups were underrepresented compared to the Bristol population. White British respondents were overrepresented.



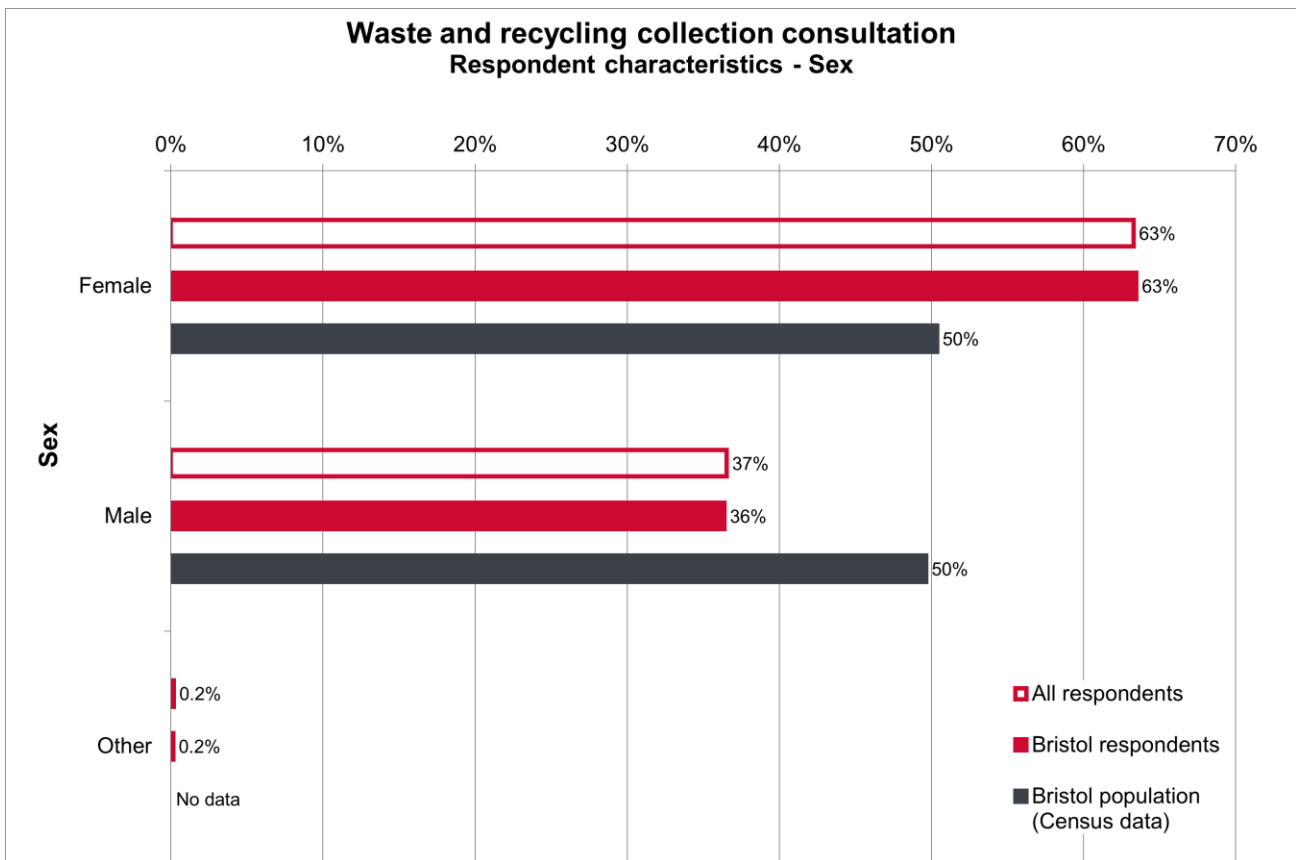
4.6. Religion/Faith

Christian, Hindu, Sikh and Muslim respondents were underrepresented compared to the Bristol population. 'No religion' was overrepresented. The others were broadly representative.



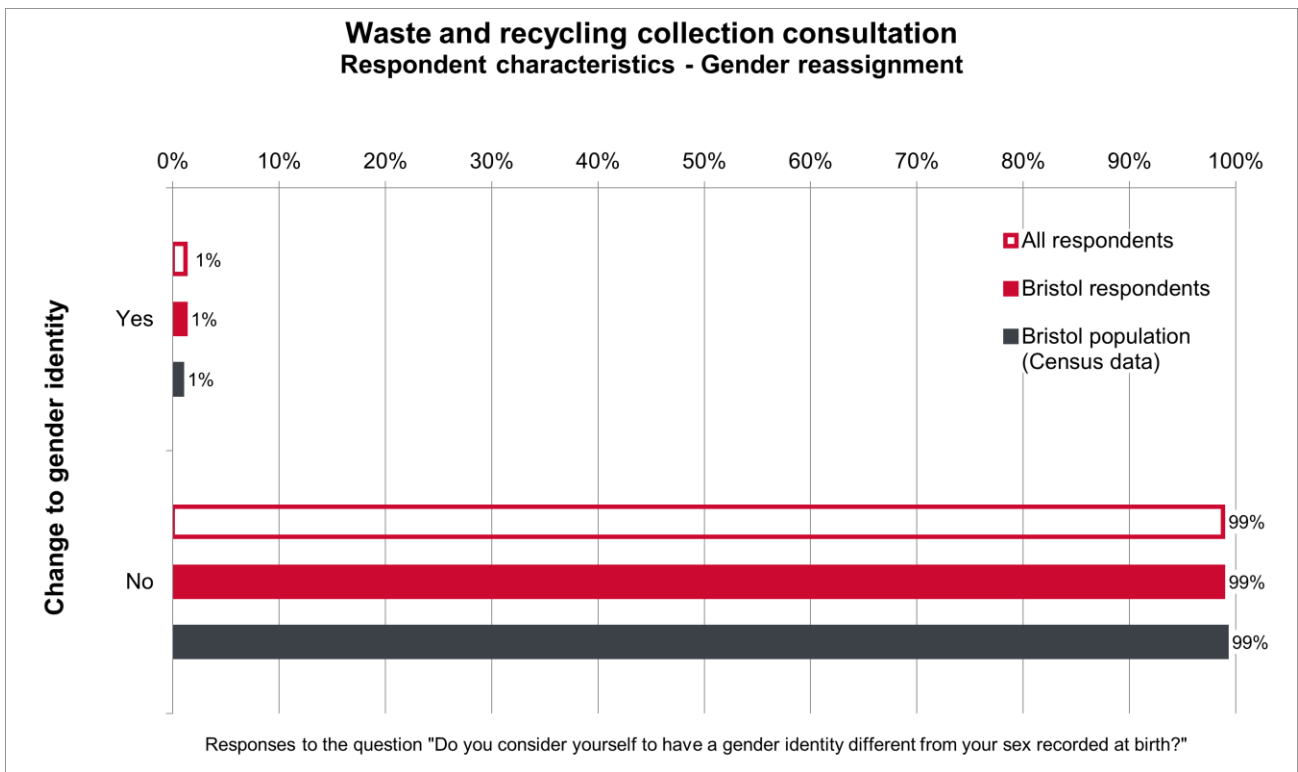
4.7. Sex

Male respondents were underrepresented, and female respondents were overrepresented compared to the Bristol population.



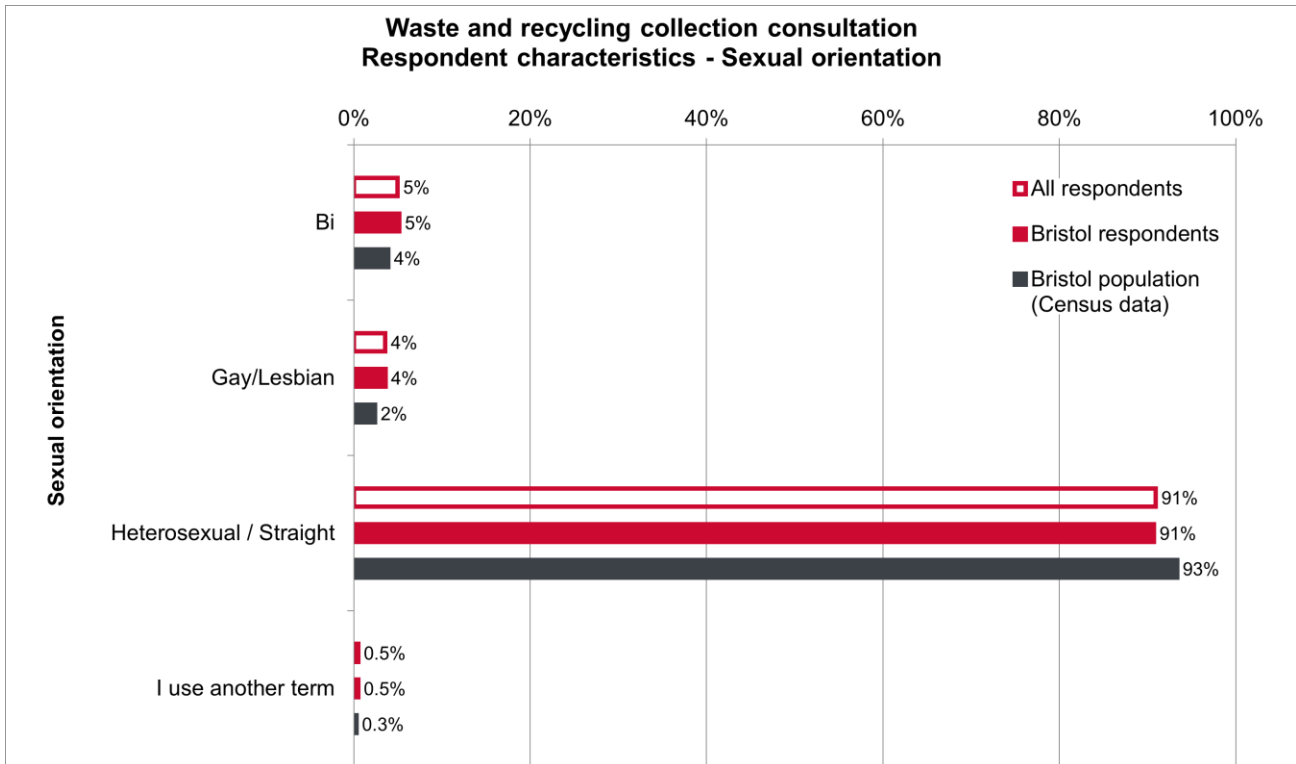
4.8. Gender reassignment

The number of respondents who said they have a gender identity different to their sex recorded at birth is the same as the proportion of the Bristol population in the 2021 Census.



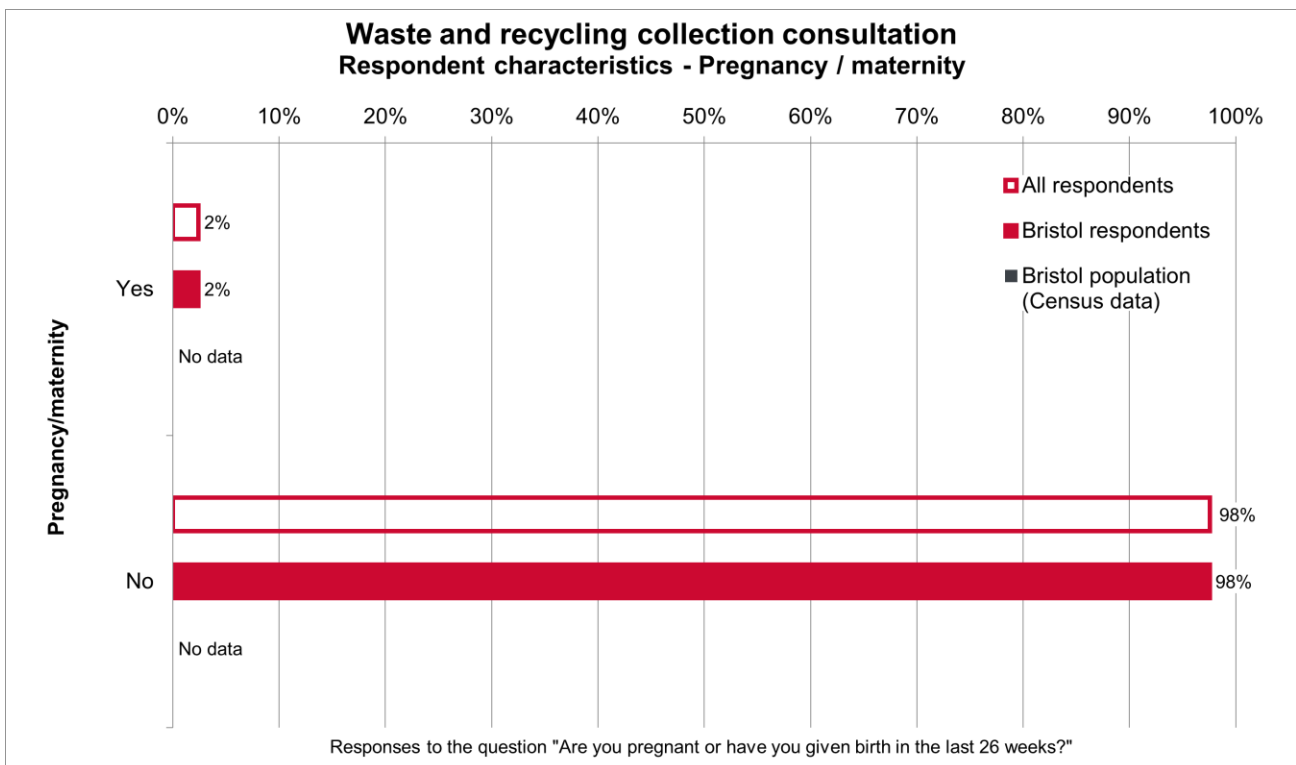
4.9. Sexual orientation

Responses from different sexual orientations were broadly similar to the Bristol population.



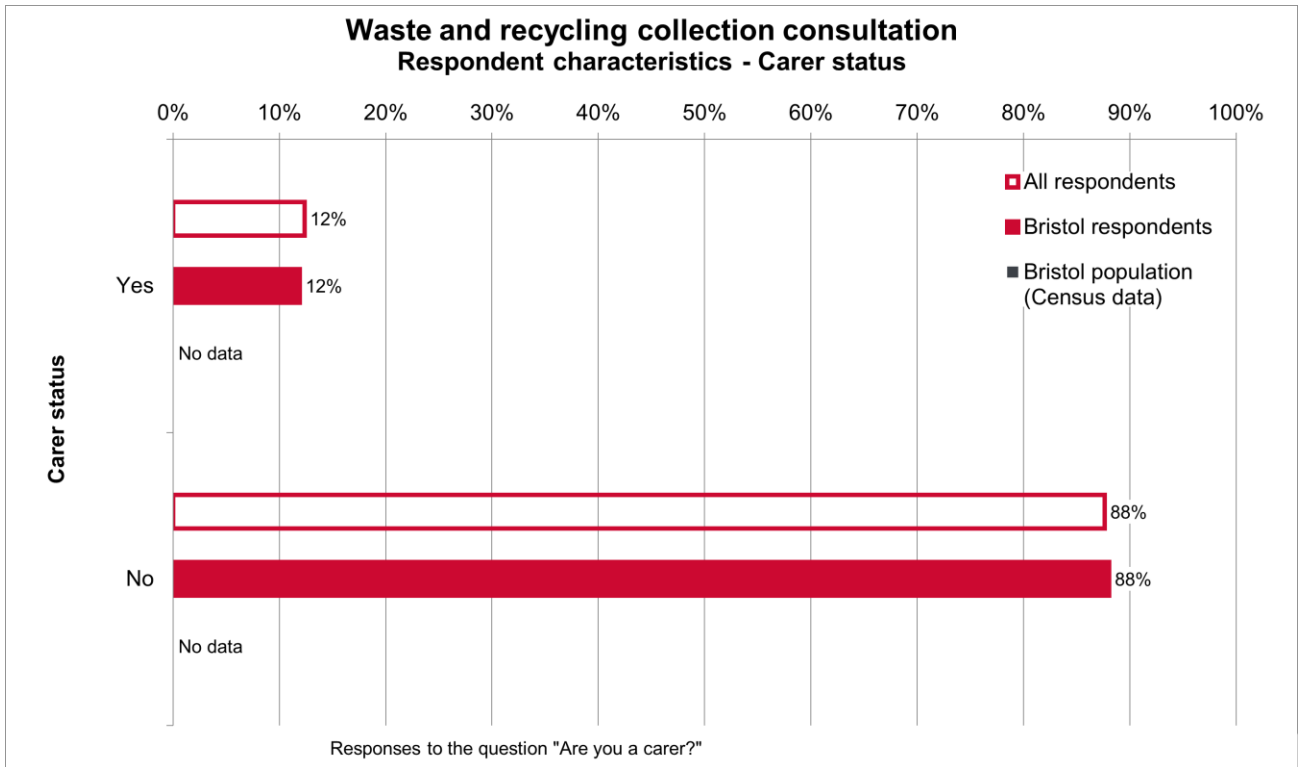
4.10. Pregnancy/maternity

2% of respondents said they were pregnant or had given birth in the last 26 weeks.



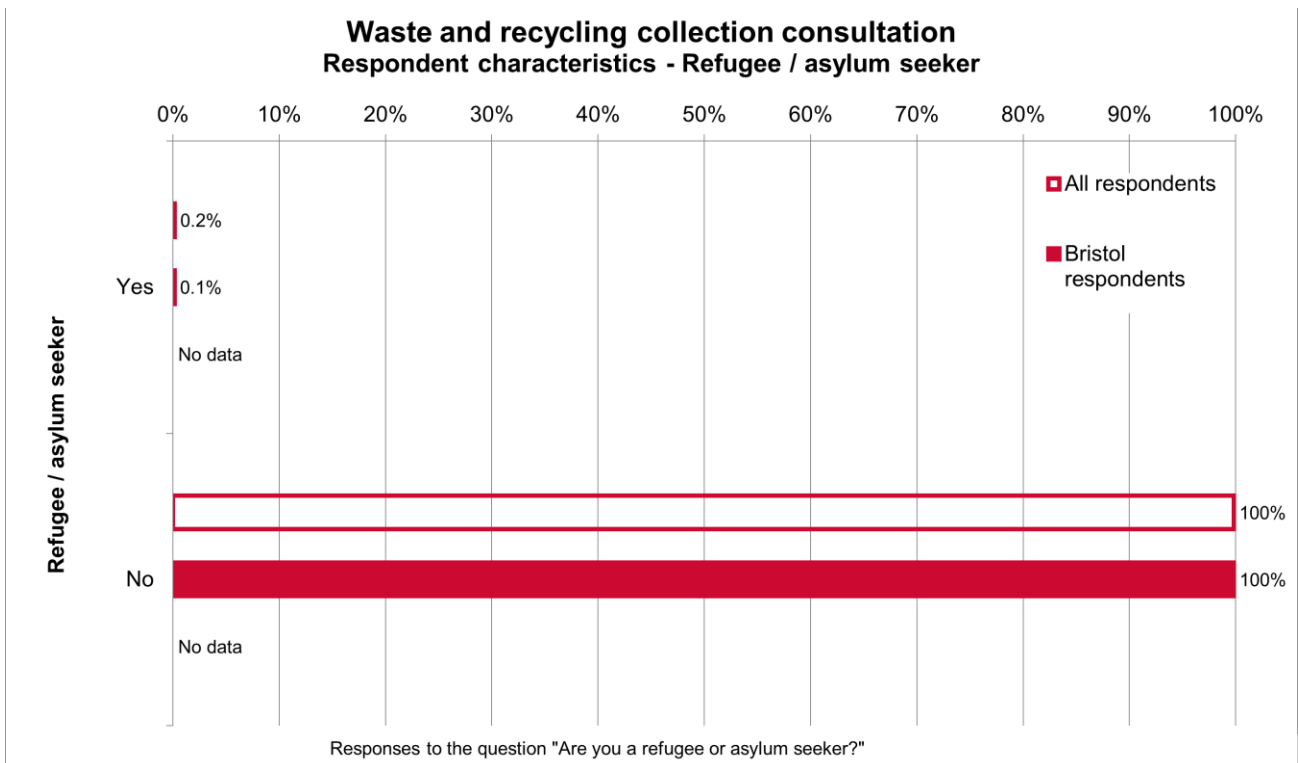
4.11. Carers

12% of respondents identified themselves as carers.



4.12. Refugee/asylum seeker

0.2% of respondents identified themselves as refugees or asylum seekers.



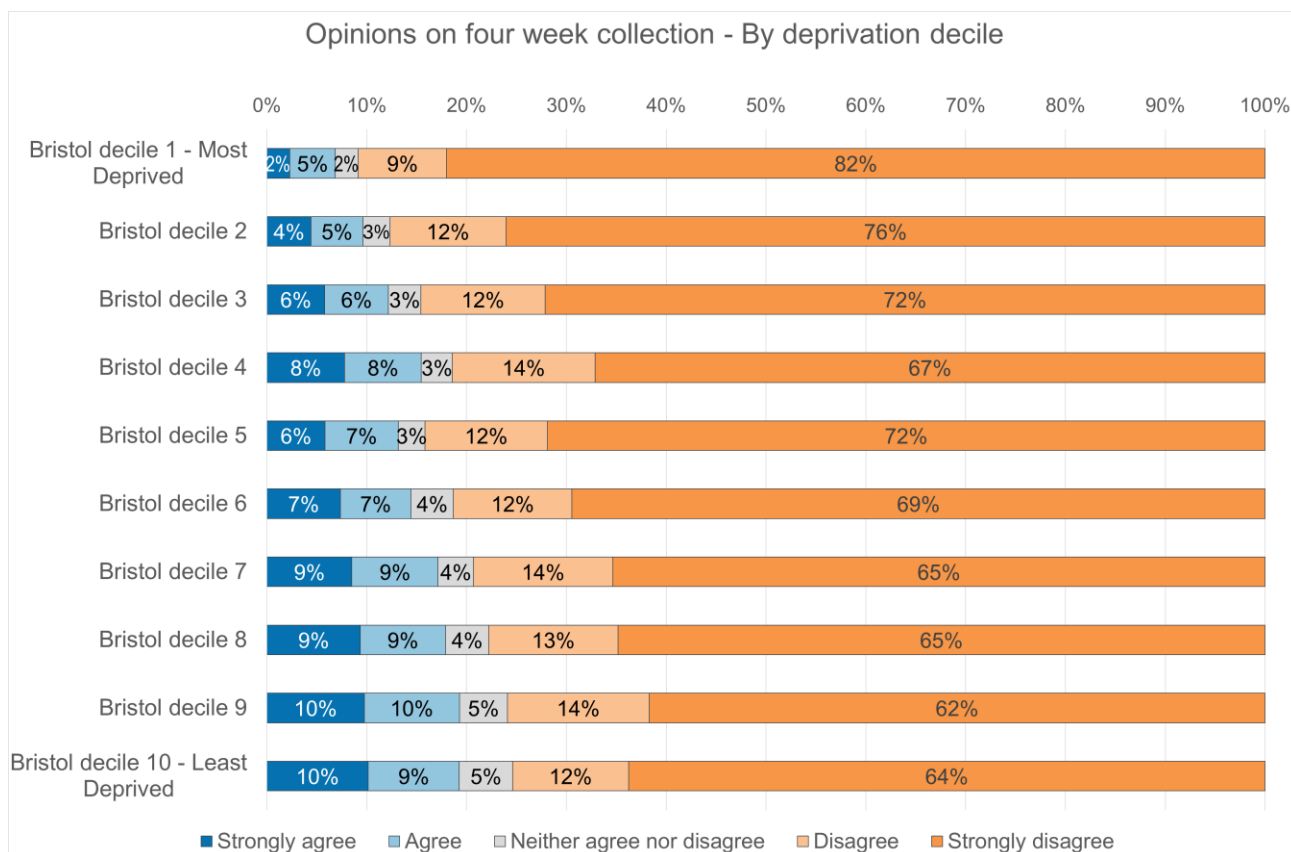
5. Appendix 1 – Views on waste collection frequency by different groups

In this section, the views on the different waste collection frequency options are broken down by different demographic groups to examine whether there are differences in opinion on the proposed changes.

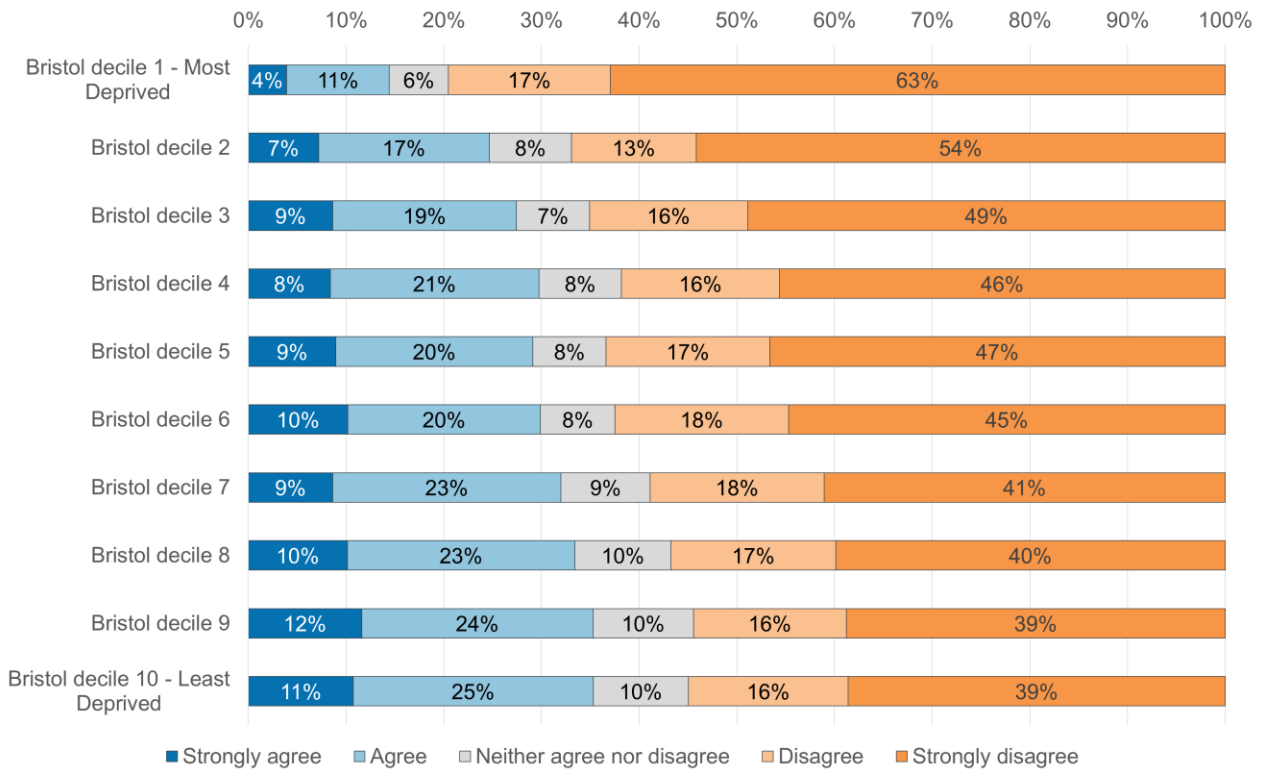
5.1. Views on waste collection frequency by respondents from more and less deprived areas

There is a pattern of a higher proportion of respondents from more deprived areas disagreeing and a lower proportion agreeing with the options that reduce the frequency of waste collection than those from less deprived areas.

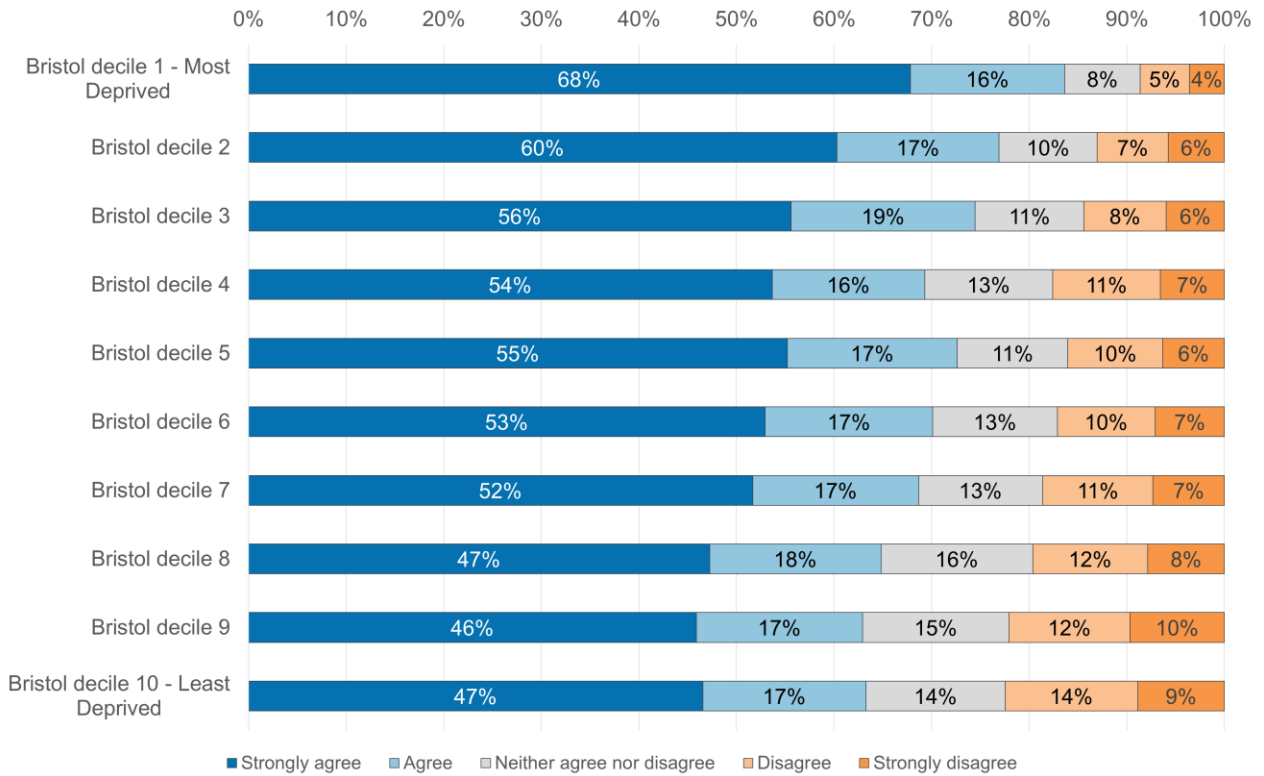
A higher proportion of respondents from more deprived areas agreed with making no change to the frequency of waste collection than from less deprived areas.



Opinions on three week collection - By deprivation decile



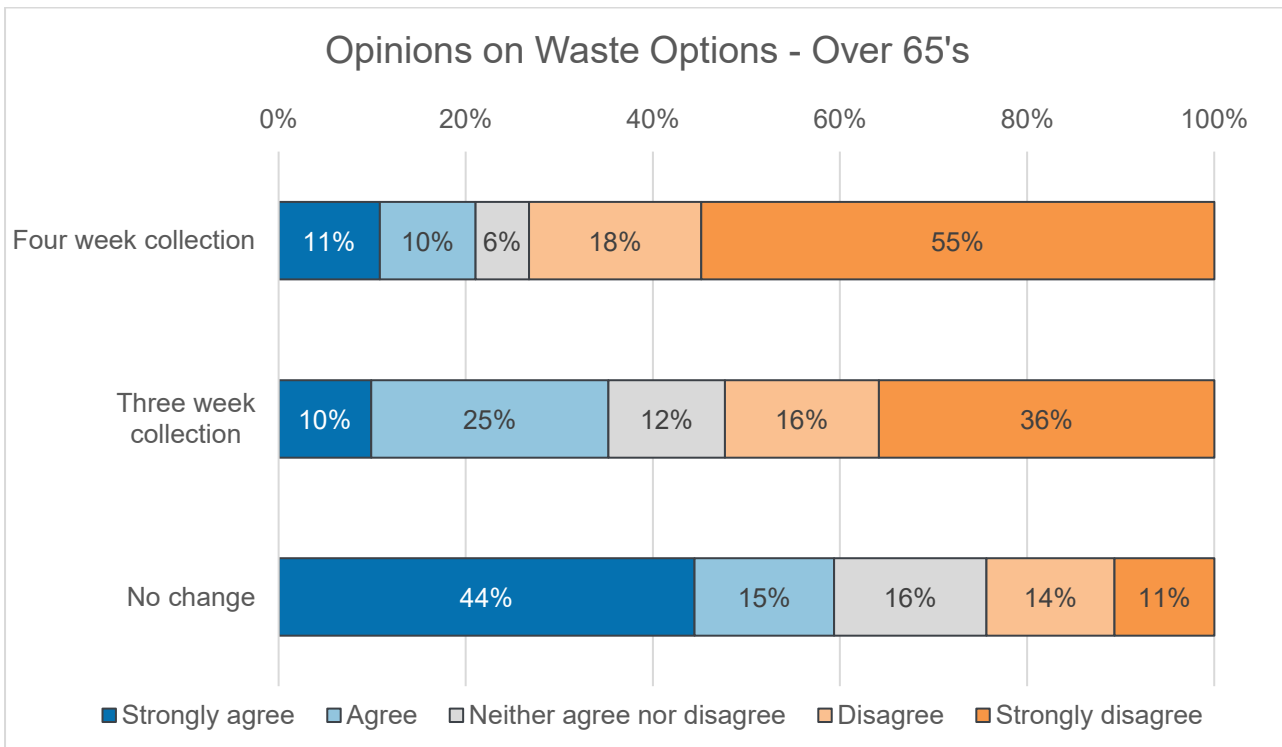
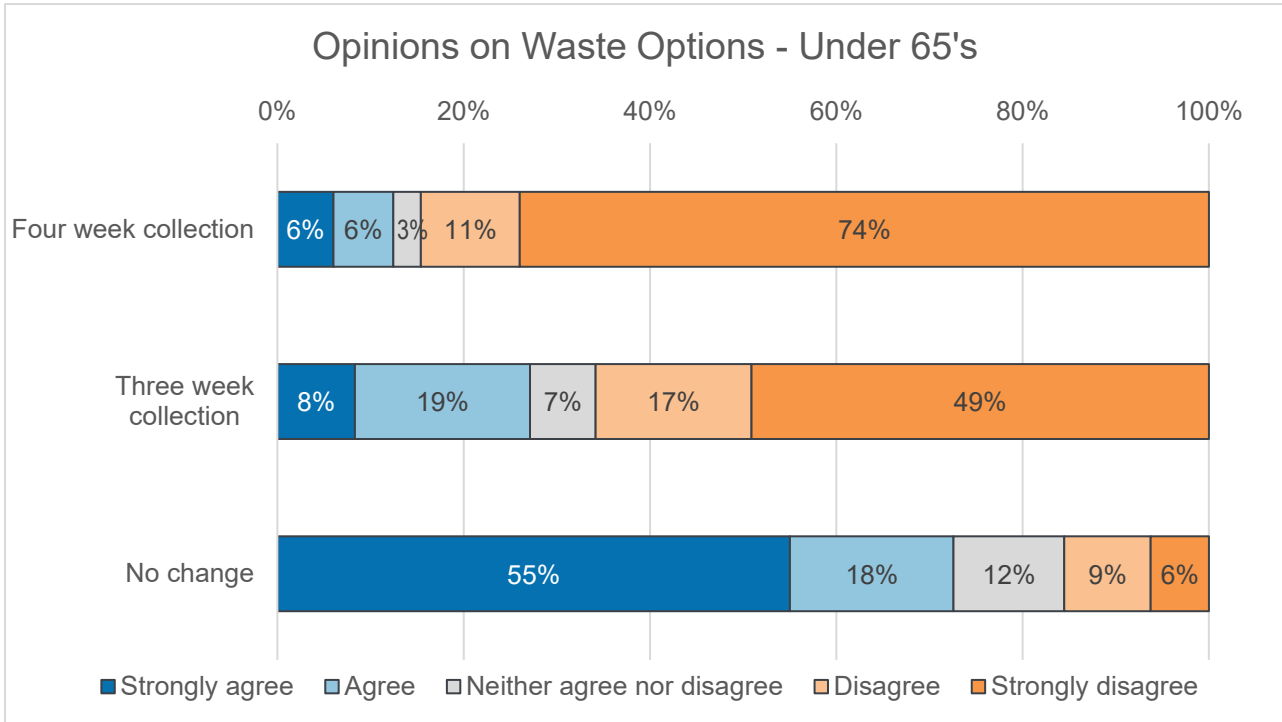
Opinions on no change to collection - By deprivation decile



5.2. Views on waste collection frequency by different age groups

A higher proportion of respondents over the age of 65 agreed with a reduction in the frequency of waste collection than those under 65

- 21% of over 65's agreed with four week collection vs 12% of under 65's
- 35% of over 65's agreed with three week collection vs 27% of under 65's



5.3. Views on waste collection frequency by Disabled and non-Disabled respondents

A larger proportion of Disabled respondents (87%) than non-Disabled respondents (81%) disagreed with both options that proposed a reduction in waste collection frequency. A larger proportion of Disabled respondents agreed with no change to the collection frequency (76% Disabled vs 69% non-Disabled).

