# Bristol Quality of Life survey 2023/24

## Quality of Life Survey 2023/24 Priority Indicators: Briefing Report (Jan 2024)

### 1. Introduction to Quality of Life 2023/24

Quality of Life is an extensive annual resident's survey for Bristol that has been running, in different formats, since 2001. 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.

The Bristol Quality of Life survey is a robust, randomised sample of the population. In 2023 (as since 2019) the survey was mailed to 33,000 Bristol households chosen at random, including a follow up mailing with a paper survey option, and a targeted third phase to boost numbers from low responding groups (see Methodology appendix). There were 4,700 total responses, with 3,928 final "useable" responses meeting the required criteria (slightly higher response than last year). Most (60.5%) of the final useable responses were submitted online (similar to 61% last year). The survey was open Sept-Oct 2023 to residents aged 16 and over in the selected households.

The 2023 survey had 73 questions that will produce over 200 indicators, on topics including health, lifestyles, community, local services and living in Bristol. Most questions have been kept unchanged, with some revisions reflecting new or changed priorities. The full range of 2023/24 indicators will be published in March 2024. The size of the survey enables us to compare results for wards, areas of deprivation and equalities groups, identifying issues to inform priorities and service provision.

### 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**, which looks at the results for Bristol overall from the 2023 survey, and how these changed compared to last year and also compares change with the pre-pandemic results from 2019.

The second page is the **Deprivation Summary**. In line with the BCC Corporate Strategy focus on inclusion and tackling inequality, the report 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 differ from the city average, and how they have changed compared to last year.

The colour-coding shows how responses changed over time, or where people in the most deprived areas differ from Bristol overall. Changes that are **significantly different** (via statistical t-test) are also highlighted, which may vary between indicators.

# Quality of Life 2023/24 Priority indicators: City-wide Summary

a) * = a new indicator in the 2023 survey (or change to existing question)
b) **Blue text** denotes BCC Corporate Business Plan 2023-24 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 previous surveys.
d) **Please note that gap figures are based on rounded data with whole percentages.**

**KEY**

↑ Increased %
● No change
↓ Decreased %

| | Statistically Significantly Worse |
| | Worse |
| | Better |
| | Statistically Significantly Better |

| Community and Living | 2019 | 2022 | 2023 | Since 2019 | Change last year |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| % satisfied with their local area | 79% | 75% | 74% | ↓ | -1 |
| % who feel they belong to their neighbourhood | 62% | 65% | 64% | ↑ | -1 |
| % who agree people from different backgrounds get on well together in their neighbourhood | 71% | 74% | 72% | ↑ | -2 |
| % who volunteer or help out in their community at least 3 times a year | 48% | 47% | 48% | ● | +1 |
| % who lack the information to get involved in their community | 28% | 27% | 26% | ↓ | -1 |
| % who have access to the internet at home | 95% | 96% | 97% | ↑ | +1 |
| **Health and Wellbeing** | | | | | |
| % satisfied with life | 75% | 62% | 66% | ↓ | +4 |
| % poor mental wellbeing | 15% | 21% | 20% | ↑ | -1 |
| % who see friends and family as much as they want to | 82% | 78% | 80% | ↓ | +2 |
| % who do enough regular exercise each week | 71% | 64% | 67% | ↓ | +3 |
| % who play sport at least once a week | 46% | 54% | 56% | ↑ | +2 |
| % households who bought less food high in sugar / fat / salt in the past year | | 39% | 43% | | +4 |
| % households with a smoker | 17% | 16% | 15% | ↓ | -1 |
| % at a higher risk of alcohol related health problems | 16% | 16% | 13% | ↓ | -3 |
| % households which have experienced moderate to severe food insecurity | 5% | 8% | 8% | ↑ | 0 |
| % households that used a 'food bank' during the last 12 months | 1% | 2% | 2% | ↑ | 0 |
| **Crime and Safety** | | | | | |
| % whose fear of crime affects their day-to-day lives | 16% | 17% | 21% | ↑ | +4 |
| % who feel police and public services successfully tackle crime and anti-social behaviour locally | 28% | 22% | 21% | ↓ | -1 |
| % victim of racial discrimination or harassment in last year | 6% | 5% | 6% | ● | +1 |
| % who think sexual harassment is an issue in Bristol | 27% | 35% | 33% | ↑ | -2 |
| % who have been sexually harassed or experienced unwanted sexual attention in the last year* | | | 13% | | |
| **Education and Skills** | | | | | |
| % who know where to get information, advice and guidance about employment and training | 61% | 65% | 63% | ↑ | -2 |
| % who have taken part in learning or training in the last year | | 52% | 52% | | 0 |
| **Sustainability and Environment** | | | | | |
| % satisfied with the quality of parks and green spaces | 72% | 73% | 71% | ↓ | -2 |
| % who visit Bristol's parks and green spaces at least once a week | 53% | 56% | 57% | ↑ | +1 |
| % who think street litter is a problem locally | 81% | 82% | 84% | ↑ | +2 |
| % satisfied with the recycling service | 68% | 73% | 71% | ↑ | -2 |
| % satisfied with the general household waste service | 71% | 74% | 73% | ↑ | -1 |
| % who think air quality and traffic pollution is a problem locally | 77% | 70% | 67% | ↓ | -3 |
| % concerned about climate change | 88% | 87% | 83% | ↓ | -4 |
| % who have reduced their household waste due to climate change concerns | 69% | 55% | 53% | ↓ | -2 |
| % concerned about the loss of wildlife in Bristol | | 85% | 84% | | -1 |
| % who have created space for nature | | 53% | 55% | | +2 |
| **Culture and Leisure** | | | | | |
| % satisfied with the range and quality of outdoor events | 74% | 53% | 55% | ↓ | +2 |
| % who participate in cultural activities at least once a month | 43% | 32% | 37% | ↓ | +5 |
| % satisfied with the range and quality of entertainment and hospitality venues and events at night | | 64% | 64% | | 0 |
| % satisfied with leisure facilities/services | 46% | 40% | 39% | ↓ | -1 |
| % satisfied with activities for children/young people | 37% | 38% | 35% | ↓ | -3 |
| **Transport** | | | | | |
| % who think traffic congestion is a problem locally | 77% | 74% | 74% | ↓ | 0 |
| % who walk or cycle to work *(active travel)* | 38% | 32% | 35% | ↓ | +3 |
| % who take the bus to work | 13% | 14% | 13% | ● | -1 |
| % satisfied with the local bus service | 48% | 38% | 41% | ↓ | +3 |
| **Housing** | | | | | |
| % satisfied overall with their current accommodation | 88% | 84% | 83% | ↓ | -1 |
| % satisfied with the cost of their rent or mortgage payments | 59% | 49% | 41% | ↓ | -8 |
| % extremely or moderately worried about keeping their home warm this winter | | 48% | 31% | | -17 |
| **Economy** | | | | | |
| % who find it difficult to manage financially | 9% | 10% | 10% | ↑ | 0 |
| % who shop in their local shopping street at least once a week | | 49% | 51% | | +2 |
| **Council and Democracy** | | | | | |
| % satisfied with the way Bristol City Council runs things | 43% | 39% | 34% | ↓ | -5 |
| % who feel Bristol City Council provides value for money | 28% | 26% | 23% | ↓ | -3 |
| % satisfied with the way BCC asks for their views before it makes changes that affect them | | 30% | 29% | | -1 |

# Quality of Life 2023/24 Priority indicators: Deprivation Summary

a) * = a new indicator in the 2023 survey (or change to existing question)
b) "2023 Deprived" shows results from households in the 10% most deprived areas *within* Bristol (based on the 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation)
c) "2023 Gap" is the difference between the "10% Most Deprived" and 2023 city average.
d) Blue text denotes BCC Corporate Business Plan 2023-24 performance indicators
   Green text denotes other PIs (on BCC Performance Management system)
e) Please note that gap figures are based on rounded data with whole percentages.

**KEY**

| | |
|---|---|
| Statistically Significantly Worse | |
| Worse | |
| Better | |
| Statistically Significantly Better | |

| | 2022 Deprived | 2023 Citywide | 2023 Deprived | 2023 Gap | Change in Deprived |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Community and Living** | | | | | |
| % satisfied with their local area | 48% | 74% | 47% | -27 | -1 |
| % who feel they belong to their neighbourhood | 50% | 64% | 42% | -22 | -8 |
| % who agree people from different backgrounds get on well together in their neighbourhood | 61% | 72% | 57% | -15 | -4 |
| % who volunteer or help out in their community at least 3 times a year | 38% | 48% | 39% | -9 | +1 |
| % who lack the information to get involved in their community | 31% | 26% | 27% | +1 | -4 |
| % who have access to the internet at home | 93% | 97% | 94% | -3 | +1 |
| **Health and Wellbeing** | | | | | |
| % satisfied with life | 46% | 66% | 53% | -13 | +7 |
| % poor mental wellbeing | 34% | 20% | 30% | +10 | -4 |
| % who see friends and family as much as they want to | 67% | 80% | 73% | -7 | +6 |
| % who do enough regular exercise each week | 52% | 67% | 57% | -10 | +5 |
| % who play sport at least once a week | 39% | 56% | 43% | -13 | +4 |
| % households who bought less food high in sugar / fat / salt in the past year | 40% | 43% | 53% | +10 | +13 |
| % households with a smoker | 26% | 15% | 25% | +10 | -1 |
| % at a higher risk of alcohol related health problems | 9% | 13% | 9% | -4 | 0 |
| % households which have experienced moderate to severe food insecurity | 16% | 8% | 19% | +11 | +3 |
| % households that used a 'food bank' during the last 12 months | 4% | 2% | 6% | +4 | +2 |
| **Crime and Safety** | | | | | |
| % whose fear of crime affects their day-to-day lives | 32% | 21% | 44% | +23 | +12 |
| % who feel police and public services successfully tackle crime and anti-social behaviour locally | 22% | 21% | 17% | -4 | -5 |
| % victim of racial discrimination or harassment in last year | 8% | 6% | 10% | +4 | +2 |
| % who think sexual harassment is an issue in Bristol | 40% | 33% | 41% | +8 | +1 |
| % who have been sexually harassed or experienced unwanted sexual attention in the last year* | | 13% | 15% | +2 | |
| **Education and Skills** | | | | | |
| % who know where to get information, advice and guidance about employment and training | 62% | 63% | 59% | -4 | -3 |
| % who have taken part in learning or training in the last year | 47% | 52% | 48% | -4 | +1 |
| **Sustainability and Environment** | | | | | |
| % satisfied with the quality of parks and green spaces | 46% | 71% | 44% | -27 | -2 |
| % who visit Bristol's parks and green spaces at least once a week | 40% | 57% | 40% | -17 | 0 |
| % who think street litter is a problem locally | 93% | 84% | 94% | +10 | +1 |
| % satisfied with the recycling service | 59% | 71% | 59% | -12 | 0 |
| % satisfied with the general household waste service | 58% | 73% | 61% | -12 | +3 |
| % who think air quality and traffic pollution is a problem locally | 63% | 67% | 67% | 0 | +4 |
| % concerned about climate change | 80% | 83% | 75% | -8 | -5 |
| % who have reduced their household waste due to climate change concerns | 43% | 53% | 44% | -9 | +1 |
| % concerned about the loss of wildlife in Bristol | 85% | 84% | 79% | -5 | -6 |
| % who have created space for nature | 49% | 55% | 48% | -7 | -1 |
| **Culture and Leisure** | | | | | |
| % satisfied with the range and quality of outdoor events | 35% | 55% | 37% | -18 | +2 |
| % who participate in cultural activities at least once a month | 24% | 37% | 31% | -6 | +7 |
| % satisfied with the range and quality of entertainment and hospitality venues and events at night | 45% | 64% | 49% | -15 | +4 |
| % satisfied with leisure facilities/services | 28% | 39% | 34% | -5 | +6 |
| % satisfied with activities for children/young people | 17% | 35% | 17% | -18 | 0 |
| **Transport** | | | | | |
| % who think traffic congestion is a problem locally | 63% | 74% | 61% | -13 | -2 |
| % who walk or cycle to work *(active travel)* | 23% | 35% | 25% | -10 | +2 |
| % who take the bus to work | 22% | 13% | 18% | +5 | -4 |
| % satisfied with the local bus service | 34% | 41% | 38% | -3 | +4 |
| **Housing** | | | | | |
| % satisfied overall with their current accommodation | 77% | 83% | 76% | -7 | -1 |
| % satisfied with the cost of their rent or mortgage payments | 44% | 41% | 48% | +7 | +4 |
| % extremely or moderately worried about keeping their home warm this winter | 62% | 31% | 44% | +13 | -18 |
| **Economy** | | | | | |
| % who find it difficult to manage financially | 18% | 10% | 21% | +11 | +3 |
| % who shop in their local shopping street at least once a week | 44% | 51% | 45% | -6 | +1 |
| **Council and Democracy** | | | | | |
| % satisfied with the way Bristol City Council runs things | 31% | 34% | 23% | -11 | -8 |
| % who feel Bristol City Council provides value for money | 23% | 23% | 15% | -8 | -8 |
| % satisfied with the way BCC asks for their views before it makes changes that affect them | 30% | 29% | 21% | -8 | -9 |

# 3. Key Findings 2023/24

Overall, results from the 2023/24 survey show a mixed picture. Of the 50 headline Priority Indicators shown, 21 are improved on 2022/23 results (9 by a statistically significant amount), 6 are unchanged, and 22 indicators are worse than last year (5 by a statistically significant amount); 1 is a new measure this year.

In the 10% most deprived areas all but 6 results for our most deprived communities are worse than the Bristol average, same as last year (and statistically significantly worse in 31 of the 50). However, 23 indicators do show at least slightly better outcomes than last year in the most deprived areas, with improvements especially in the Health & Wellbeing, Culture & Leisure, Transport and Housing Themes. 22 show a worsening picture in the most deprived areas (especially in the Crime & Safety, Sustainability & Environment and Council & Democracy Themes); 4 are unchanged and 1 is new.

- **Community and Living**

Results in this section are similar to last year overall, although a few have worsened slightly in the most deprived areas. Most have a significant "deprivation gap".

Satisfaction with "your local area" fell just 1% point to around 74% city-wide, and to 47% in the most deprived areas; the "Deprivation gap" (27% points) remains one of the starkest of the QoL indicators.

72% feel "people from different backgrounds get on well together" in their neighbourhood, a small decrease from last year, falling slightly more in the most deprived areas (57%). 64% feel they "belong to their neighbourhood", a slight decrease city-wide, with a bigger drop of 8% points in the most deprived areas (42%).

Close to half of people (48%) regularly volunteer or help out in their community, similar to last year, but significantly less in deprived areas (39%). Only 26% report they "lack the information to get involved in the community",

97% of people have access to the internet at home, similar to last year, and only slightly more than the most deprived areas (94%).

- **Health and Wellbeing**

Overall this section has significantly better results than last year (though most are still worse than before the Covid-19 pandemic) and also better in the most deprived areas.

People reporting being satisfied with life (66%) improved significantly in the last year and improved in the most deprived areas (53%). People reporting below average mental wellbeing (via a detailed suite of questions) remains around 20% (worse than 15% pre-pandemic); it's 30% in the most deprived areas, slightly better than last year.

Households experiencing "moderate or worse food insecurity" (via a detailed suite of questions) remains at 8% (worse than pre-pandemic, 5%), but rose further in the most deprived areas (19%). Households using a food bank remains 2%, but rose to 6% in the most deprived areas.

A positive result is people at higher risk of alcohol-related health problems has significantly improved (13%), and remains better in the most deprived areas (9%). Also more households have "bought less food high in sugar, fat or salt in the past year" (43%), especially in the most deprived areas (53%). The proportion living in a house where someone smokes (15%) is similar to last year (25% in the most deprived areas).

More people (80%) were able to see friends & family as much as they want, almost back to pre-pandemic results. People doing enough weekly exercise improved (67%) and also

in in the most deprived areas (57%). People playing sport each week (56%) slightly improved, and is significantly better than pre-pandemic results.

- **Crime and Safety**

Overall this section is worse than last year.  Significantly more people than last year feel "fear of crime affects their day-to-day life" (21%), and this doubles to 44% in the most deprived areas (a 12% point increase). 21% of people feel police and public services are "successfully dealing with issues of crime & anti-social behaviour".

A third of people (33%) think sexual harassment is an issue in Bristol, similar to last year. A new indicator shows 13% of people have been sexually harassed or experienced unwanted sexual attention in the last year; further analysis highlights 22% of women have experienced this in the last year, and 57% of young women aged 16-24.

The proportion of people who report being a victim of racial discrimination or harassment in the last year rose slightly to 6% (10% in the most deprived areas); further analysis highlights 28% of people from Black, Asian or minoritised ethnic groups have experienced this in the last year (up 2%), especially high for Asian / Asian British (35%).

- **Education and Skills**

The percentage of people who know where to get information or advice about employment and training fell slightly, both citywide (to 63%) and in the most deprived areas (to 59%). Over half of people (52%) have "taken part in any learning or training in the last year", the same as the previous year, whilst the proportion was slightly lower in the most deprived areas (at 48%).

- **Sustainability and Environment**

Results in this section show a mixed picture compared to last year, and to the 2019, pre Covid-19 pandemic. Satisfaction with Bristol parks and green spaces (71%) has trended down in the last couple of years citywide to pre-pandemic levels. With less than half (46%) satisfied in the most deprived areas, the "Deprivation gap" (27% points) continues to be one of the worst of all QoL indicators.  However, people visiting parks or green spaces at least once a week (57%) stabilized after last year's fall.

Satisfaction with Bristol's household waste (73%) and recycling services (71%) fell back slightly but remained above pre-pandemic levels. The proportion of residents who think street litter is a problem remains increased slightly (84%) and remained higher (94%) in the most deprived areas.

Those who think "air quality and traffic pollution is a problem locally" fell further to 67%, a 10% point improvement on pre-pandemic levels, whilst a rise in the most deprived areas erased the disparity with the city average seen previously.

Concern about the impact of climate change dropped significantly, 4% points to 83%, the lowest since 2017. A similar fall was seen in the most deprived areas (75%), maintaining the "Deprivation gap". Accordingly, slightly fewer (53%) report reducing their household waste due to such concerns, narrowing the difference with the most deprived areas (44%) where there was a slight increase. 84% of people are concerned about the loss of wildlife (or biodiversity) in Bristol, similar to last year, with a notable drop in the most deprived areas (79%). Conversely, there was a slight increase in the proportion of residents who "created space for nature"; with the "Deprivation gap" slightly widening.

- **Culture and Leisure**

On balance this section is better than last year, but still significantly worse than pre-

pandemic figures. Most indicators here have a significant "Deprivation gap".

The proportion who "take part in cultural activities once a month" significantly improved (37%), and also rose in the most deprived areas (31%).

Slightly more people are satisfied with outdoor events (55%), but slightly less with leisure services (39%). Satisfaction with activities for children/young people (35%) fell slightly citywide and remained the same in the most deprived areas (17%). The night-time economy indicator remains at 64% of people satisfied with "the range and quality of entertainment venues at night", but rose to 49% in the most deprived areas.

- **Transport**

The proportion of people using "active travel" (walk or cycle) to get to work rose in the last year (35%), though is still below pre-pandemic levels, and is 25% in the most deprived areas. 13% of people take the bus to work; 18% in the most deprived areas.

Satisfaction with the local bus service has improved in the last year (41%) and has improved in the most deprived areas (38%). 74% of people think "traffic congestion is a problem locally", same as last year but significantly better than pre-pandemic; this is down to 61% in the most deprived areas.

- **Housing**

The percentage of people satisfied with the cost of rent or mortgage has fallen significantly (41%), down 8% points in the last year and 18% worse than 2019. However, this metric is now better in the most deprived areas (48%).

Also, the proportion "worried about keeping their home warm this winter" (31%) has fallen significantly, 17% points less than last year (44% in deprived areas, down from 62%). 83% are satisfied with their current accommodation, similar to last year.

- **Economy**

1 in 10 people (10%) report they "find it difficult to manage financially", the same as last year, but this is double (21%) in the most deprived areas (last year was 18%).

Just over half of people (51%) in Bristol shop locally at least once a week, continuing a rise in recent years, and almost half in the most deprived areas (45%).

- **Council and Democracy**

Overall satisfaction with the council is significantly worse than last year, both city-wide and in the most deprived areas; partly this will be a reflection of frustrations with the national picture, cost of living and budget restrictions the council has to operate under.

Satisfaction with "the way the council runs things" is now 34%, significantly below recent years (39% in 2022 & 2021 and 43% in 2019). This fell further in the 10% most deprived areas (23% satisfied, from 31% last year) and the "deprivation gap" is now 11% points. For reference, 41% of people overall are dissatisfied with the council, and 25% don't feel strongly one way or the other.

23% of people feel the council provides value for money, down from 26% last year, and is 15% in the most deprived areas (overall 47% feel the council does not provide value for money and 30% don't have a strong opinion on this).

29% of people are satisfied with how "BCC asks for your views before it makes changes that affect you", similar to last year (30%). However, this fell significantly in the most deprived areas (21%, from 30% last year).

## 4. 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?". 3,500 responses were given, c100 more than last year, many of which raise multiple issues.

This section highlights that actions related to **transport** remain the top priority for the citizens of Bristol, particularly better **public transport** and more reliable **buses** - these issues are always the top concern, but the focus on them has intensified in recent years. Other transport-related concerns are **traffic** & congestion, **parking, cycling**, **road** maintenance, the **Clean Air** Zone and keeping **pavements** clear from parking.

In addition, other changes that feature highly include more **affordable housing**, **clean streets** and concerns over **air quality / pollution**.

Also financial concerns around **money** and the cost of **living**, wanting more **local services,** more **police**, less **litter** and less **council** tax.



Fig 1: Word cloud of the Top 30 individual terms that people noted (2023)

Further analysis is to be included in the final report due in May 2024.

## 5. Respondents

There were 4,705 responses in total (up from 4,423 in 2022), of which almost 200 didn't provide required details such as a Bristol post-code or age/sex info.  For the final analysis there were **3,928 final "useable" responses** that met the sample criteria.

Note - the primary focus of the survey is on responses to the random sample (of 33,000 Bristol addresses), with a targeted third phase to improve responses from under-represented areas and Equality groups; however, responses from the third phase are only included where needed (further details in the Methodology appendix).

The headline results are adjusted using population weights based on age and sex to help account for ward differences in response and population size.

3,928 responses was very slightly more than recent years (final "useable" responses were 3,905 in 2022 and 3,870 in 2021). Online responses (60.5%) was similar to 2022 (61%), and well above previous years (52% in 2021, 55% in 2020 & 47% in 2019).

This year, all wards bar one achieved the target of 100 responses[1]. The range in response by ward this year is from 96 in Central Ward to 135 in Ashley. As in the previous 4 years, this gives a relatively even distribution across the city, including from areas with historically low response rates, due to the additional resources put in to boost the sample to improve the representativeness of the survey.
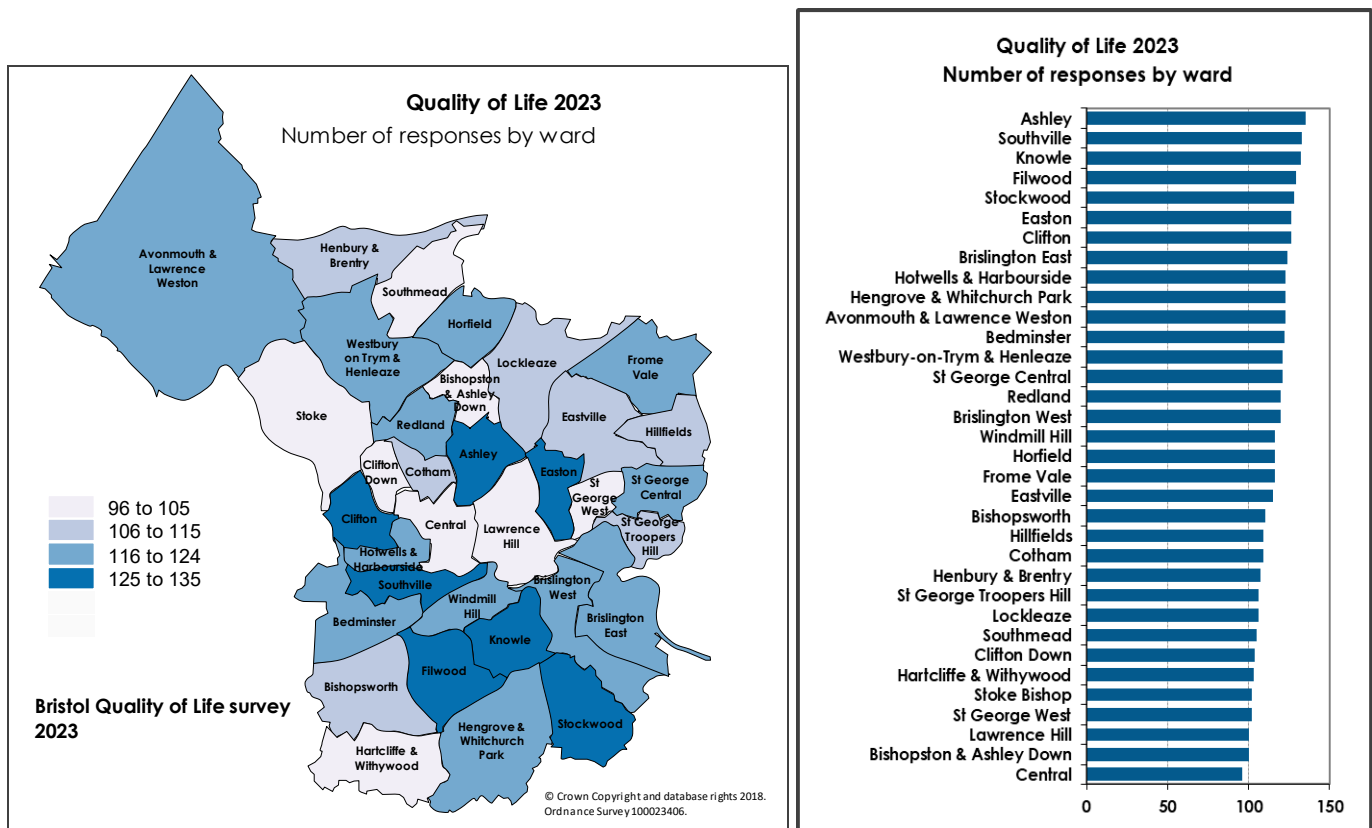
*See ward map and chart in Fig 2 for details:*



Fig 2: Ward map and chart of number of responses by Ward

Final responses from Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic groups represent 8.6% of respondents in the 2023 survey, above responses in previous years (7.6% in 2022, 6.5% in 2021, 7.4% in 2020 and 6.7% in 2019) but still well below the city average (16.6% of people 16+ are from Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic groups; Census 2021).

Further analysis, including on respondents to the Quality of Life survey by Equality Groups, will be included in the final report to be published in May 2024.

## 6. Further Information and contact details

The full range of Quality of Life 2023/24 indicators will be published in March 2024, including data at Ward level data and by Equality / Demographic 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.

---

[1]Central Ward ended just short of target with 96 responses. Responses for 4 others were boosted by the "third phase" in order to meet target (Brislington East, Henbury & Brentry, St George Troopers Hill and Lockleaze)

# Quality of Life survey – Methodology appendix

The [Quality of Life (QoL) survey](#) is a cross-sectional study that collects data annually in September / October. The target population are people, aged 16 years and over, resident within Bristol City Council boundaries.  The survey also produces estimates for specific sub-populations such as electoral wards, deprivation deciles, sexes, older people, younger people and ethnic groups.

**Random sample process**

Individuals are selected at random, from all residential properties listed on the Land and Property Gazetteer (LPG).  Student accommodation such as halls of residence are excluded.  The survey uses a probability sample to make inferences about the Bristol population, and results are analysed using the "Stata" statistical software package.

The survey is a single stage design with the LPG stratified by Lower Super Output Area (LSOA).  This means that the residential properties in the LPG are grouped into LSOAs and then separate random samples are taken from each LSOA.  The same number people are selected from every LSOA in a specific ward unless the LSOA crosses a ward boundary.  The response target is to obtain at least 100 responses from each ward.  The predicted response rate for each LSOA is the weighted moving average of the previous 3 years response rates for that particular LSOA.

**Invitation process**

Phase 1: Initially the selected households are mailed an invitation letter asking them to participate, with a link to the online survey.  Respondents are asked to enter a unique reference number, so that they can be removed from the reminder mailing to non-responders.

Phase 2: After approx. 2 weeks, those that have already completed the survey in Phase 1 and any that ask to be excluded (or are returned to sender) are removed from the mailing list.  A second mailing is then sent out, with an invitation letter (and online link) plus a paper copy of the survey.

Phase 3: After 1-2 weeks (to allow the peak of responses to the second mailing), targeted promotion of the survey (via social media and local groups) is done to low-responding wards (those at risk of not getting 100 responses); NB this is to *all residents* of those wards, not just the households from the random sample.  From previous experience it is known that younger people aged 16 to 24 years and black and minority ethnic groups are also routinely under-represented in the survey, so targeted promotion of the survey to *all members* of these groups is carried out at the same time.

[Note – if additional Phase 3 responses are received from people living in wards that are not under-represented in the final analysis, they are not included in the results; this is to retain focus on results from the random sample as much as possible].

**Result weighting**

An adjustment, called the finite population correction, is applied to reduce sampling variability due to sampling without replacement.  Poststratification is used to adjust sampling weights to sum to the poststratum sizes in the population and so reduce bias due to non-response.  The poststrata are ward, age (16-49 years, 50+ years) and sex.  The poststratum sizes are the ONS mid-year estimates.

Variance estimates, and thus the standard errors are calculated using a "bootstrap replication" method.  The bootstrap is more robust than linearization methods to non-response.

Occasionally missing data can leave only a single sampling unit (individual) in a stratum (LSOA).  In these cases the LSOA is merged with a neighbouring LSOA within the same ward.