

# Physical Activity and Wellbeing Survey 2021

Headline Findings from the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland (LLR) Resident Survey:  
Least Active Residents



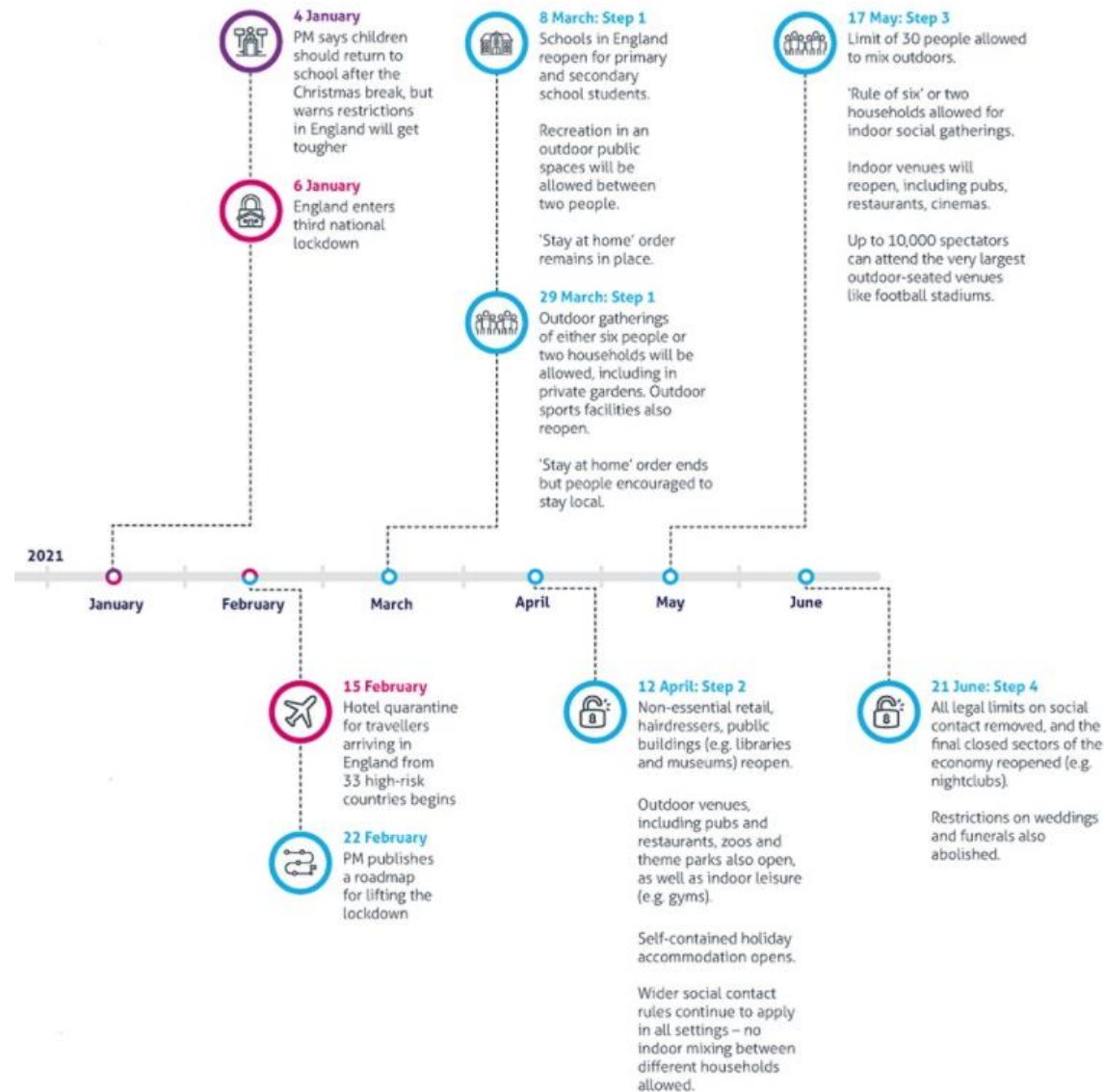
[www.active-together.org](http://www.active-together.org)

# Introduction

- **Aim:** To capture an updated picture on the attitudes, behaviours and intentions of our local community in relation to physical activity and sport, with a focus on reaching our least active residents.
- **Intended Outcome:** Provide valuable insight to support Active Together and locality partners plan future service delivery and messaging to best support residents' health and wellbeing.
- **Method:** Online survey targeting residents of LLR aged 18 and over. Promoted by Active Together and locality partners through user databases, newsletters, social media and website content. A social media promotion pack was created to support with the messaging and promotion of the survey.

# Context

- At the time the survey went live (26th May to 20th June), Covid-19 restrictions were in place. The timeline sets out the restrictions in the lead up to, during and after the survey closed.
- Some of the questions asked for responses based on the day of completion as well as future intentions (following the lifting of most restrictions after the 21<sup>st</sup> June).



# Data Summary

- Overall, the survey received 2,461 resident responses. This report focuses on the least active residents who either reported being active for 30 minutes on one day in the last week or on no days in the last week. This cohort of residents are a priority target audience for the work of the Active Together team and locality partners.
- The structure of this report is themed using the headline challenges as set out within the Active Together Covid-19 Recovery plan. This information will be used to inform the local response over the short to medium term.
- Please note:
  - Response rates are referenced in each chart.
  - Non-applicable responses have been removed from the qualitative data.
  - No tests for significance have been carried out on the data.

# Data Summary

- For a wider analysis of the full 2,461 responses, an interactive data spreadsheet of anonymised responses was shared with the Active Together team and locality partners.
- Three headline summary reports based on the number of days residents were active for in the last week, have been uploaded to the [Active Together Insight Hub](#). These can be accessed here:
  - [Physical Activity and Wellbeing Resident Survey 2021: Headline Summary for LLR \(30mins active on 0-7 days\)](#)
  - [Physical Activity and Wellbeing Resident Survey 2021: Headline Summary for LLR \(30mins active on 0-4 days\)](#)
  - [Physical Activity and Wellbeing Resident Survey 2021: Headline Summary for LLR \(30mins active on 0-1 days\)](#)

# Executive Summary

- When compared to the demographics of LLR, there was greater representation from females, those with a longstanding physical or mental condition or illness and those from a white ethnic background that completed the survey.
- Over half of the least active group are from the least deprived areas of LLR. Just under half are in full time employment.
- There is a clear intention from the least active residents to make healthy lifestyle changes over the next 6 months with over half thinking about increasing physical activity levels, losing weight and eating more healthily.
- Covid-19 has had a detrimental impact on the least active people across LLR with over half stating they now do less physical activity. Over half also stated that their physical capabilities and general strength has decreased since the Covid-19 outbreak.
- General motivation, working from home, closed facilities and health issues were cited as reasons for reductions in physical activity. Just under a third of residents cited time as one of the biggest challenges they face to being active alongside physical health, weight and motivation.
- Despite declines in physical activity, strength and capability, over half of the least active residents consider being physically active just as important as before the pandemic because of the health benefits it brings.

# Executive Summary

- Over two thirds of the least active residents stated they intend to do more physical activity and exercise once Covid-19 restrictions are fully lifted and over a third of these will feel more motivated to be active when restrictions are lifted. Over half of residents also intend to do more active travel. Intention to resume different activities was higher among the inactive group in comparison to all, who have already returned to activity.
- Over one third of respondents started walking over the past 12 months and continue to do so. The main purpose of this was for leisure, fitness or recreation. Walking was the most popular activity that least active respondents had resumed when restrictions began to ease, with over half returning to the activity.
- Team sports, mass participation events and indoor sports hall / outdoor gym activity did not appeal to the least active group as over two thirds stated that they did not intend to take part in these forms of activity.
- Residents preferred to take part in recreational / social and individual formats of activity, with over half stating that their favoured locations to take part were, indoor gyms and village halls or outside in parks and open spaces. They also prefer to participate with friends and family.

# Executive Summary

- Over a third of respondents stated that location was a factor that influenced their physical activity and exercise choices, alongside friends, family and cost. Cheaper activity options and free trials were stated as one of the top factors that would help the least active to overcome the challenges they face to being active.
- There is not a clear appetite for digital / online activity within this least active group with over half stating they are not or do not intend to take part in this type of activity.
- The majority of respondents were not aware of Active Together, This Girl Can or We are Undefeatable messaging. Of those that were aware, knowledge of the campaigns had been made through TV and social media.
- The best ways to make this least active group aware of physical activity opportunities in their local area is through social media, internet / online activity, email and newsletters or specifically Facebook and its 'Spotted' pages function.
- Amongst this least active group, there is recognition that exercise is important. However, over a third of residents do not feel motivated to be active and just under half stated that they do not know or are unsure whether there is the opportunity to be active.



# Key Considerations

- Future programme design and messaging should consider taking a holistic approach to encouraging more activity, that promotes a healthy lifestyle including diet and nutrition.
- Efforts need to be focused on helping residents build up their physical capabilities and general strength through a targeted and appropriate physical activity offer.
- Opportunities need to capitalise on the intention of two thirds of the least active residents to do more physical activity and exercise once Covid-19 restrictions are fully lifted.
- Local walking, running and cycling frameworks need to recognise and address that this cohort reported the lowest participation levels in these activities, yet acknowledge an increase in walking compared to their normal habits.
- Physical activity preferences identified by this cohort should be used to inform future programme design. These should have a recreational / social focus, encourage friends and family to take part together and include a variety of indoor and outdoor opportunities.

# Key Considerations

- Local and national campaigns need to find a more effective way of reaching least active audiences using a mixed communication method.
- Addressing low levels of motivation and raising awareness of opportunities needs to be a key consideration for future programmes and messaging when working with this least active cohort.
- Based on the wide application of the survey data at a local level, it is recommended that this becomes an annual survey and continues to inform programme delivery and builds our longer-term evidence base.
- An annual children and young person (CYP) survey should be considered.

# General Demographics



**604**  
RESPONDENTS

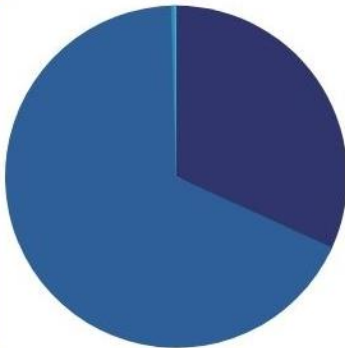
**58%**

DO NOT HAVE A  
PHYSICAL, MENTAL  
CONDITION OR ILLNESS

**38%**

HAVE A PHYSICAL,  
MENTAL CONDITION OR  
ILLNESS

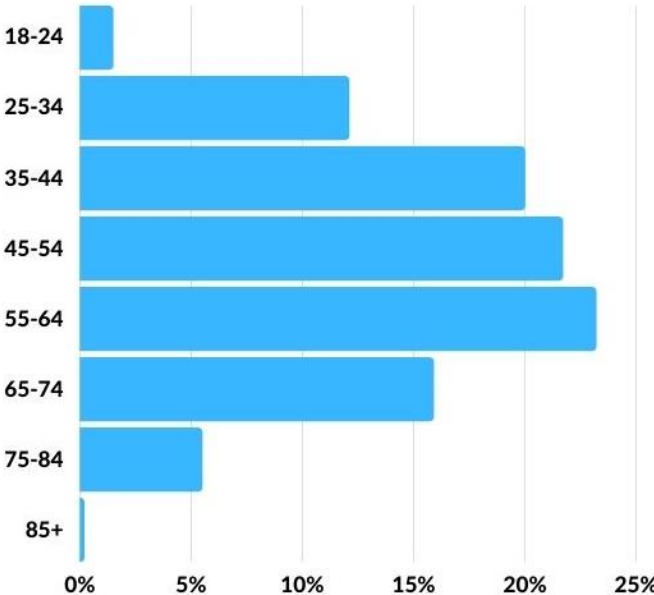
that has lasted or is likely to last 12 months and which has a substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out day-to-day activities



MORE FEMALES  
(68%) RESPONDED  
THAN MALES  
(32%).

**92%**

ARE FROM A WHITE ETHNIC  
BACKGROUND.



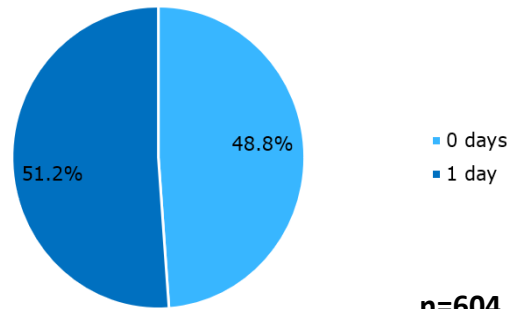
THE HIGHEST RESPONSE RATE WAS  
FROM THOSE AGED 55-64 (23%).

- THE MAJORITY OF PARTICIPANTS WERE HETEROSEXUAL/ STRAIGHT (89%).
- THE MAJORITY OF PARTICIPANTS EITHER HAD NO RELIGION (44%) OR WERE CHRISTIAN (48%).

# Physical Activity Habits

In the past week, on how many days have you done a total of 30 mins or more physical activity, which was enough to raise your breathing rate?

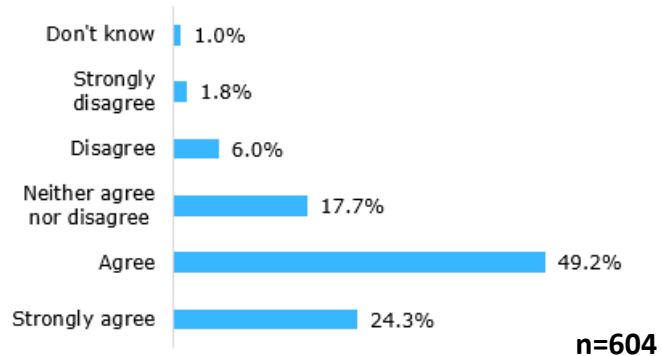
- 48.8% are deemed 'Inactive' (0 days)
- 51.2% are deemed 'fairly active' (1 day)



n=604

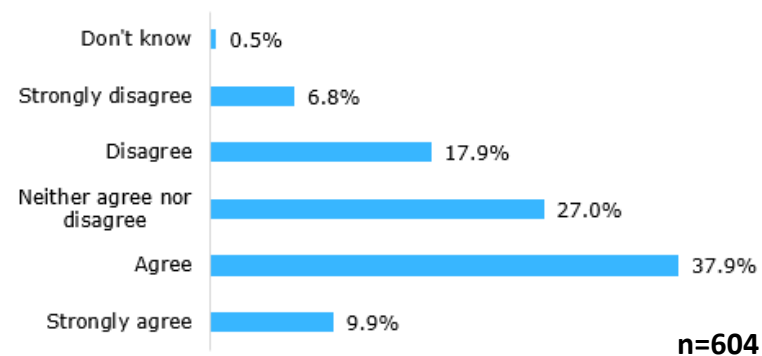
- It is important for 73.5% of respondents to exercise. Only 7.8% of people disagree that it is important for them to exercise regularly.
- 47.8% find exercise enjoyable and satisfying. 24.4% do not find exercise enjoyable and satisfying.

It is important to me to exercise regularly



n=604

I find exercise enjoyable and satisfying

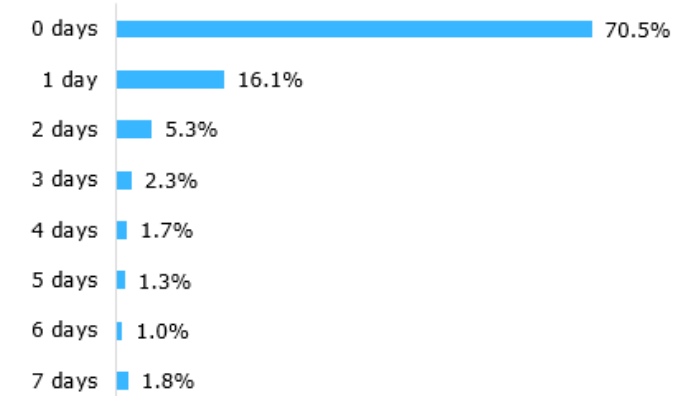


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## Strength Exercise

- 70.5% did not do exercise that strengthens muscles on any day in the past week.
- 86.6% of respondents did not meet CMO muscle strengthening guidelines.

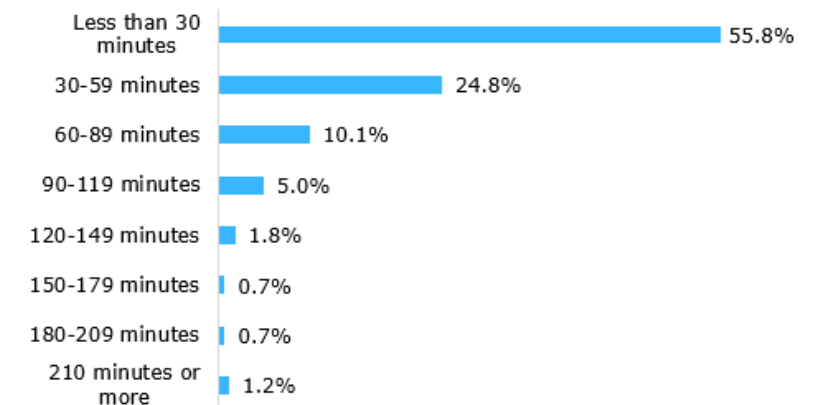
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## Moderate exercise

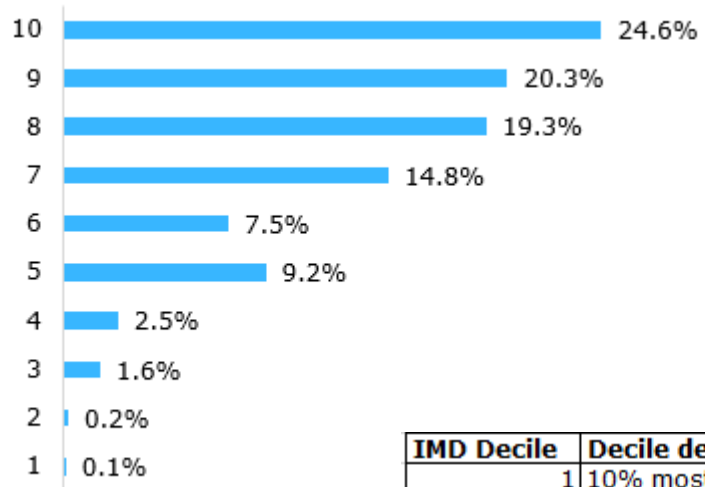
- 55.8% of respondents **typically** did less than 30 minutes of moderate activity a week.

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# The inequalities gap/ increases in unemployment/ IMD data

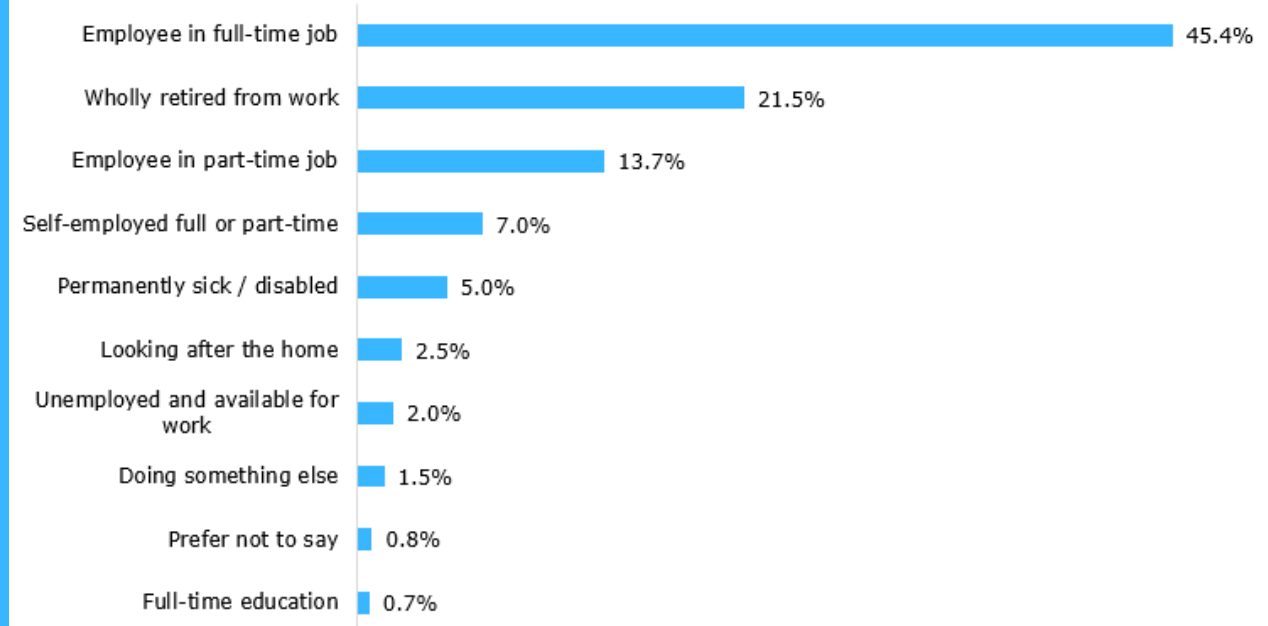
**Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Decile**  
n=604



IMD Decile	Decile description
1	10% most deprived
2	10% to 20%
3	20% to 30%
4	30% to 40%
5	40% to 50%
6	50% to 60%
7	60% to 70%
8	70% to 80%
9	80% to 90%
10	10% least deprived

- 64.2% of the least active respondents are from the top 30% least deprived areas across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

**Which of these activities best describes what you are doing at present?**  
n=604

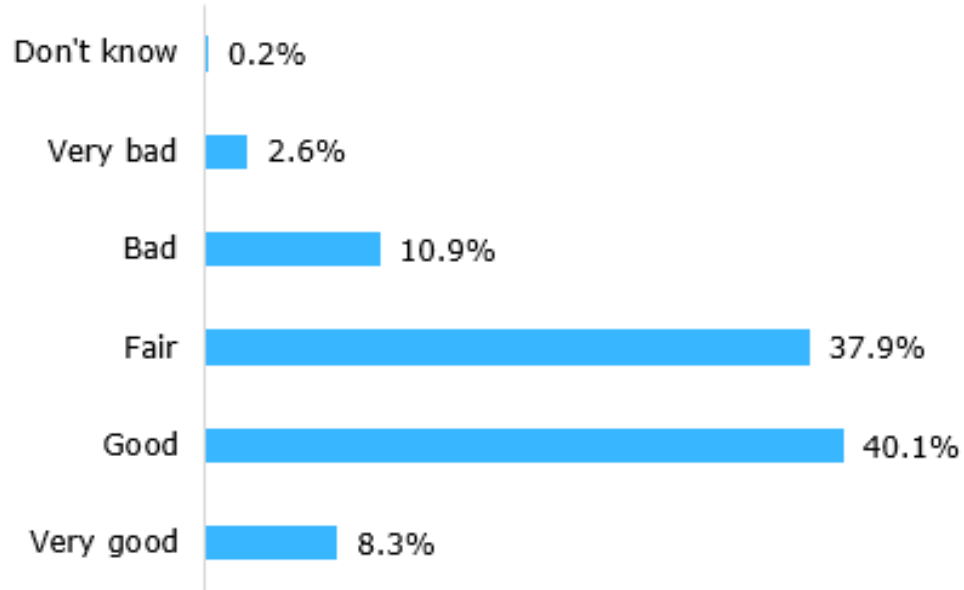


- 66.8% of the least active respondents were currently employed (full/part time, self employed) or in full time education.

# General Health of Individuals

How is your health in general? Would you say it is...?

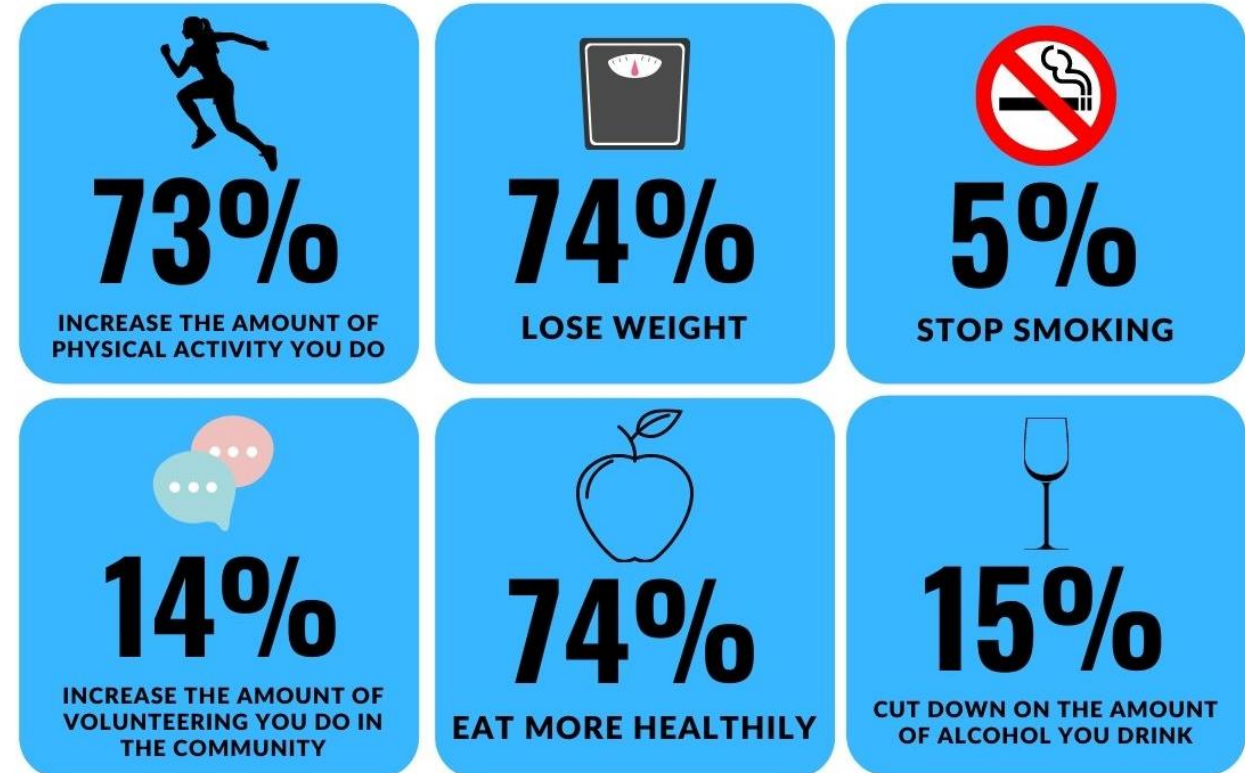
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- 48.4% stated that their general health was **good or very good**.
- 13.5% stated that their general health was **bad or very bad**.

Which, if any, of these changes to your lifestyle are you thinking of making in the next 6 months?

- There is a clear intention from the least active residents to make healthy lifestyle changes over the next 6 months, with over half thinking about increasing physical activity levels, losing weight and eating more healthily.

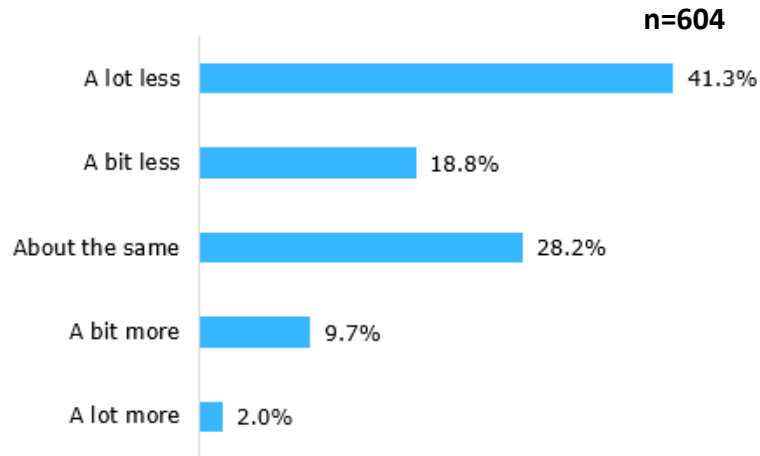


# Maintenance of PA/Deconditioning

Covid-19 has had a detrimental impact on the least active people across LLR as the majority identified they do less PA (60.1%) and their physical capabilities (66.2%) and general strength (51%) has decreased.

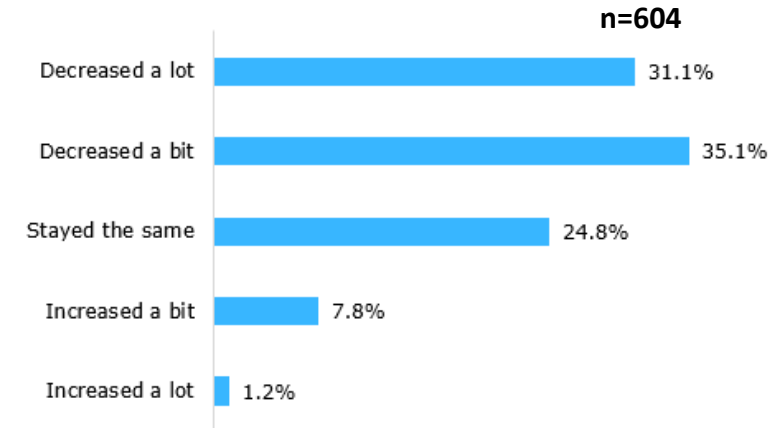
This impact is not only seen in the inactive group as noticeable declines in physical capability, fitness and strength were observed when looking at the full data set (2,461 responses).

## Do you think you generally do more, less, or the same amount of physical activity and exercise now compared to pre Covid-19 (pre-March 2020)?

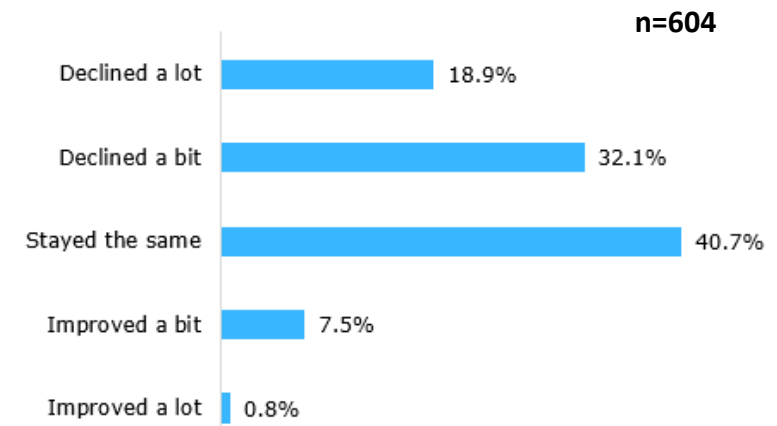


- The majority (60.1%) said that they now do less physical activity and exercise compared to pre Covid-19.

## Physical capability and fitness to undertake physical activity compared to March 2020 (pre Covid-19)



## Do you think your general strength has changed since the Covid-19 outbreak?

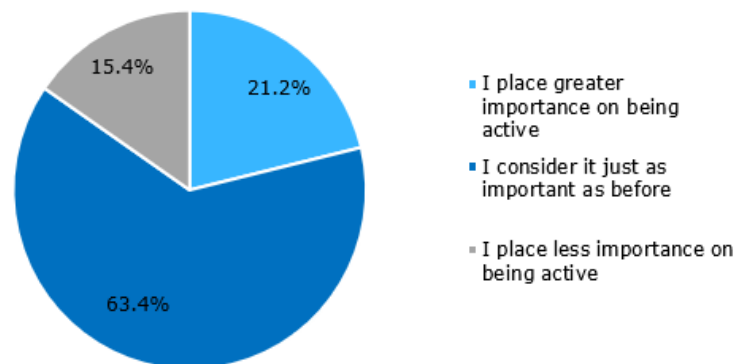




# Maintenance of PA/Deconditioning

Since Covid-19, how, if at all has your view of physical activity changed?

n=604



Please explain the reason for your answer above-

- **I consider it just as important as before (258 responses)** - aware that physical activity is important/view unchanged (57%) and acknowledge the mental and physical health benefits (19%).
- **I place greater importance on being active (98 responses)** - emphasis on physical and mental health benefits (32%), realise the increased importance of exercise now (21%) and use the benefits to prevent illness, reduce covid and fight illness (15%).
- **I place less importance on being active (68 responses)** - Covid has reduced activity levels and motivation (34%), worries/fears about Covid-19 (15%), no time to be active (13%) and mental health has deteriorated (13%).

**What has helped you to maintain or increase the amount of physical activity you have done?**

- Of 136 responses the top answers to this question were walking/being outdoors (24%), health benefits (16%) and having more time (15%).

**What have been the reasons that you have reduced your level of activity?**

- From 354 responses the top reasons that respondents had reduced their activity levels were motivation (16%), working from home (14%), closed facilities (14%) and health issues (13%).

**What if any, are the biggest challenges you face to being active right now?**

- The biggest challenges from 540 respondents were identified as time (30%), physical health/weight (24%) and motivation (19%). These barriers are similar to those identified by the full cohort of responses who stated that time, physical health/weight and limited availability to do things nearby were their biggest challenges currently.

**What would help you to overcome these challenges?**

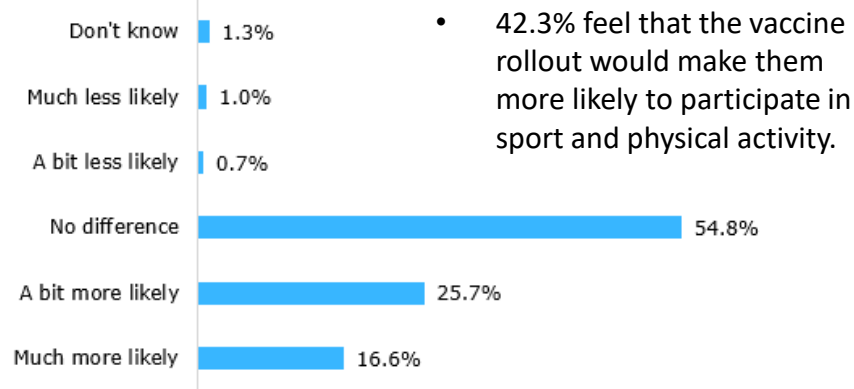
- The top 3 things that would help the least active (403 responses) to overcome their challenges to being active are cheaper options/free trials (18%), more opportunities/facilities (17%) and more time/work less hours (14%).



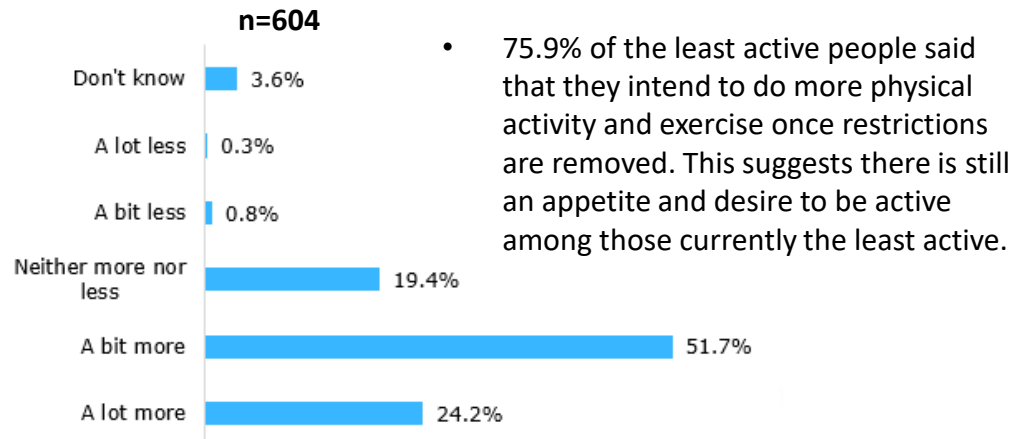
# Economic Impact (types of activities people are / intend to do)



Does the rollout of a vaccine for Covid-19 make you feel more or less likely to participate in sport and physical activity or does it make no difference? n=604



Once restrictions are fully removed and Covid-19 is under control, do you intend to do more, less or the same amount of physical activity and exercise (all types) n=604

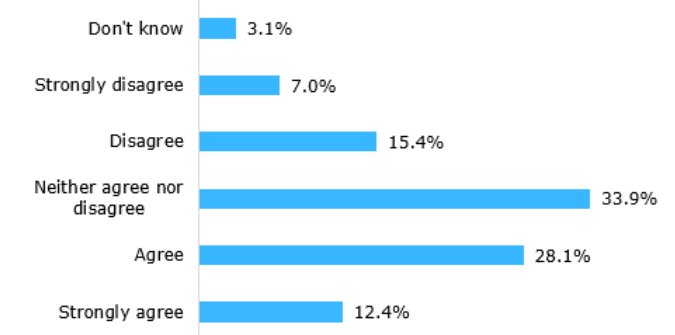


**New physical activities and sports that respondents have participated in over the last 12 months and continue to take part in (149 responses):**

- Walking (35%)
- Cycling (20%)
- Gardening (11%)
- Running (9%)

**'I will feel more motivated to be active when lockdown restrictions are fully lifted' n=604**

- 40.5% of people 'Strongly agree' or 'Agree' that they will feel more motivated to be active when restrictions are fully lifted.



**Future and current types of activity**

- **Walking** was the most popular activity to have already been resumed (56%) followed by **home activity, fitness or exercise classes viewed online** (12.1%) and **offline** (11.1%).
- **Swimming** was the most popular activity that respondents intended to take part in within the next 2 months (29.8%) followed by **indoor gym/fitness classes away from home** (24.5%) and **walking** (23.2%).
- The majority did not intend to take part in organised team sports (83.3%), mass participation events (74.2%) and indoor sports hall/outdoor gym activity (73.2%).

# Thinking differently to inspire change

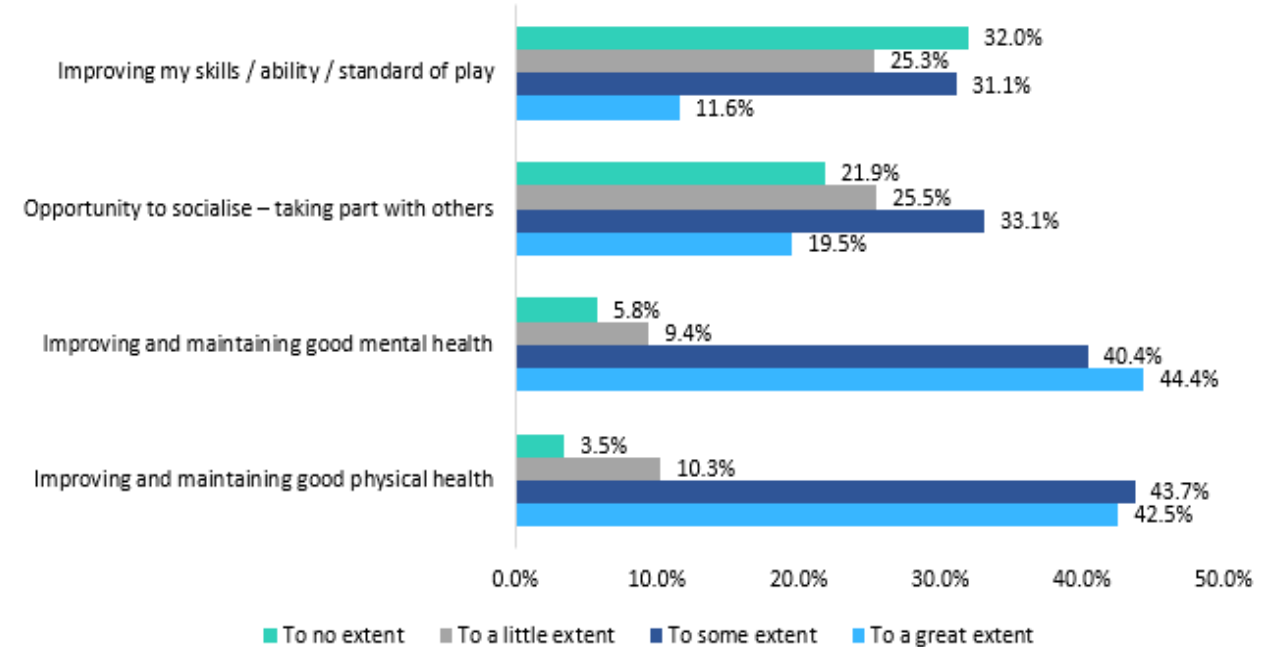
## Influence

### What things influence your physical activity and exercise choices?

- The top 4 identified highest influences on physical activity and exercise choices from 496 of the least active individuals were location (40%), friends (22%) and family (15%) and cost (15%).

## Motivations

- The least active group were motivated to a great extent by improving and maintaining good mental health (44.4%) and physical health (42.5%). They were less motivated by improving skills/ability/ standard of play (To no extent 32%).
- Those who had done 1 day of 30 minutes exercise or more were more motivated by the opportunity to socialise and take part with others when being active than those that did 0 days of activity.

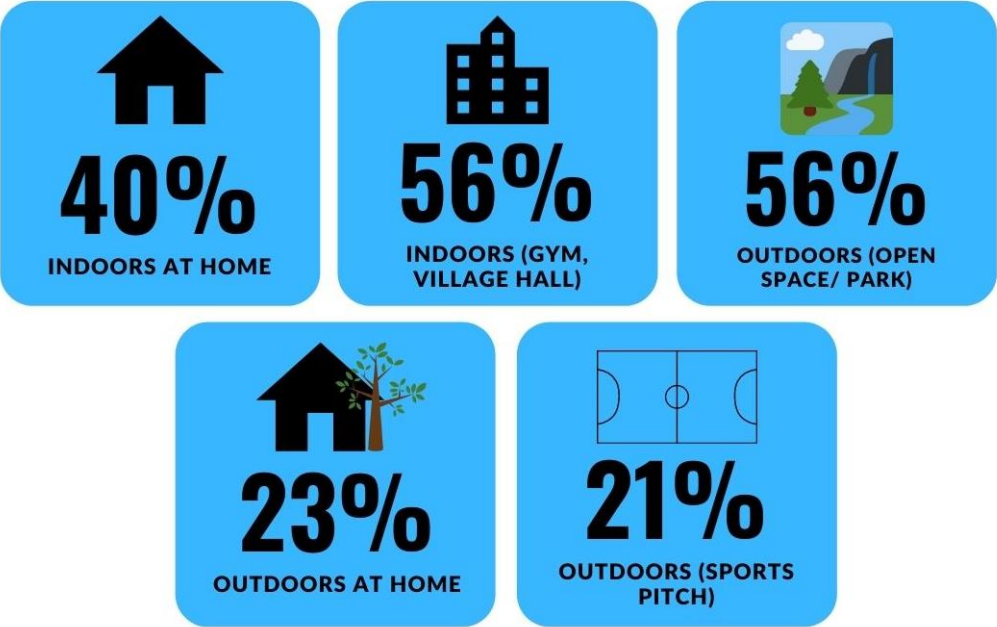


# Thinking differently to inspire change

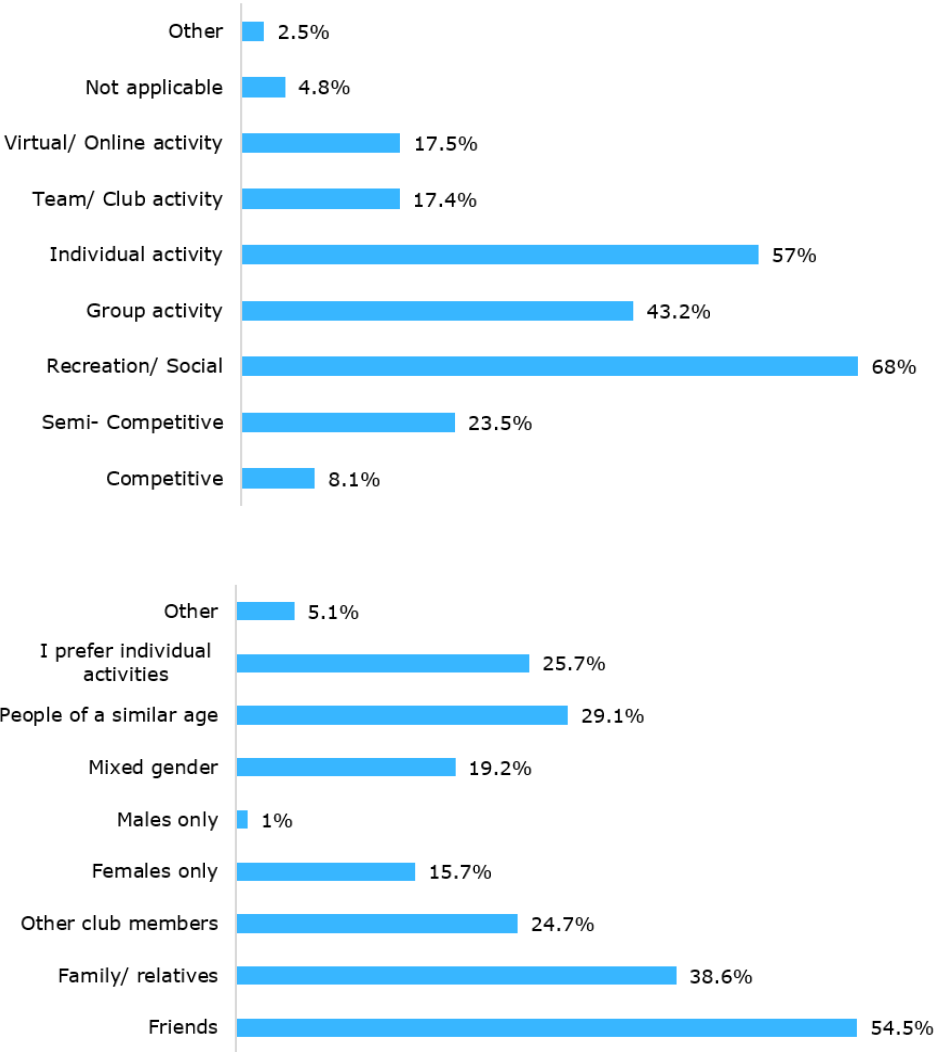


## Preference

- Recreational/social (68%) and individual formats (57%) of activity appeal most to the least active group. Respondents prefer to take part in physical activity indoors at gyms/ village halls and outdoors in parks and open spaces.
- This group prefer to participate in physical activity with friends (55%), family (39%) and people of a similar age (29%).
- Interestingly, these formats of activity, locations of activity and participation preferences were also the most popular across the full cohort of responses (2,461).



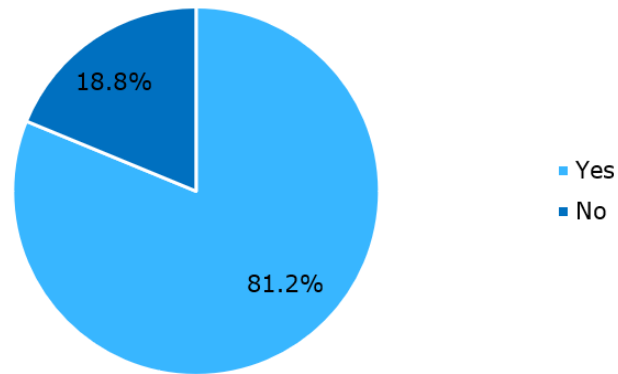
(Other 5%, N/A 4%)



# Walking, Running, Cycling following lockdown

## Walking

Have you walked in the last week? n=309



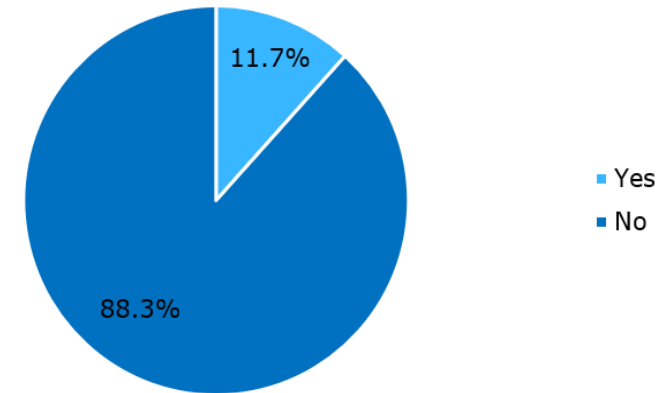
The main purposes people have walked for in the past week were:

- For leisure, fitness, or recreation (64.5%)
- To get to / from shops or supermarkets (42.2%)
- To visit friends or family (14.7%)

Of those who chose 'other' reasons (31) 68% stated that they had walked for dog walking purposes in the past week.

## Cycling

Have you cycled in the last week? n=309



The main purposes people have cycled in the past week were:

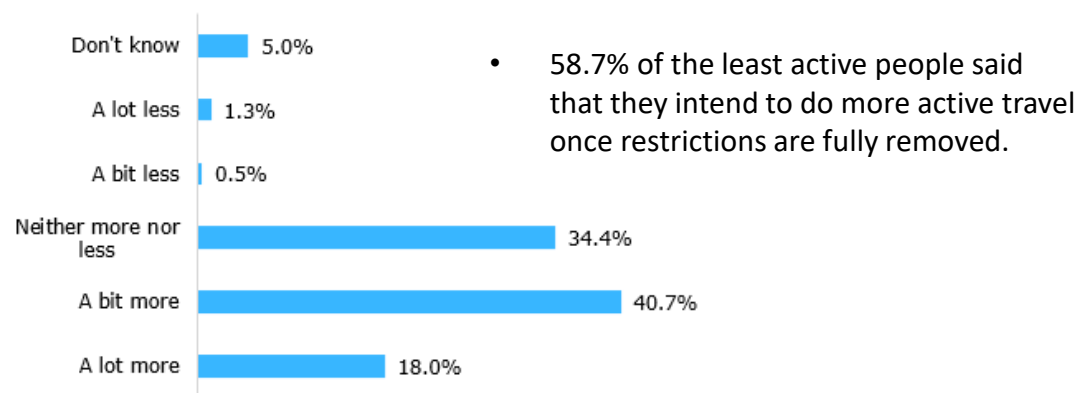
- For leisure, fitness or recreation (83.3%)
- To get to / from place of work (11.1%)



# Walking, Running, Cycling following lockdown

Once restrictions are fully removed, do you intend to do more, less or the same amount of Active travel: Walking, running or cycling for everyday journeys such as to work or to local shops and services?

n=604



What other types of physical activity have you done in the past week (if any)?

- 6.1% have taken part in running or jogging in the past week.

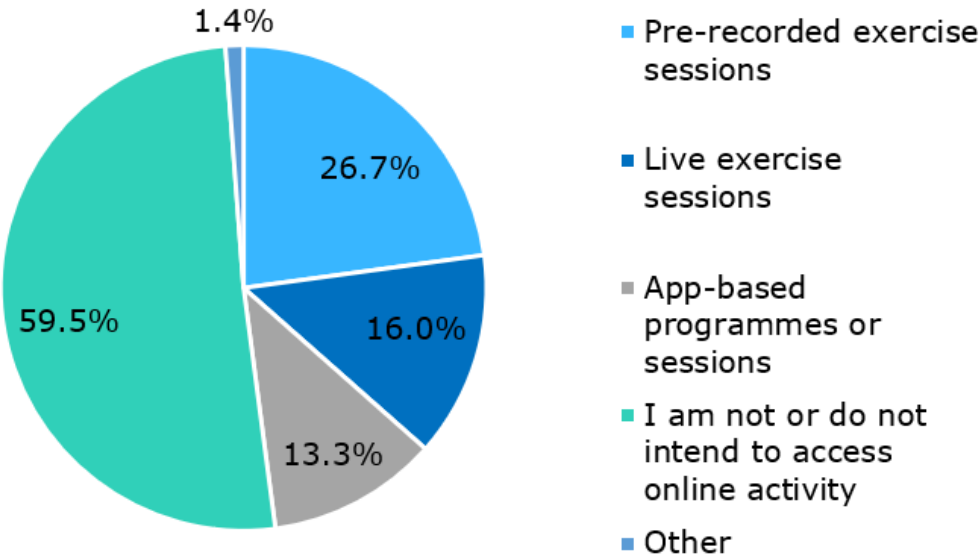
Which of these activities, if any, have you already taken part in or intend to resume as restrictions allow?

	Walking	Running	Cycling
I started this as soon as it resumed	56%	5.5%	10.9%
I haven't taken part yet but intend to within the next 2 months	23.2%	11.6%	19.5%
I do not intend to take part	8.1%	71.5%	56.3%
Don't know	12.7%	11.4%	13.2%

- Walking was the most popular activity with 79.2% of people having already resumed or intended to resume within the next 2 months. The majority did not intend to take part in running (71.5%) or cycling (56.3%).

# Focus on Digital Appetite

- The appetite for digital/virtual activities among the least active people across LLR is low.
- 18% of people said that virtual/online activity appealed to them.
- 12% of people said that they had taken part in home activity, fitness or exercise viewed online in the past week.
- The majority (60%) are not or do not intend to access online activity. Of those that are accessing online activity, pre-recorded exercise sessions are the most preferred format.

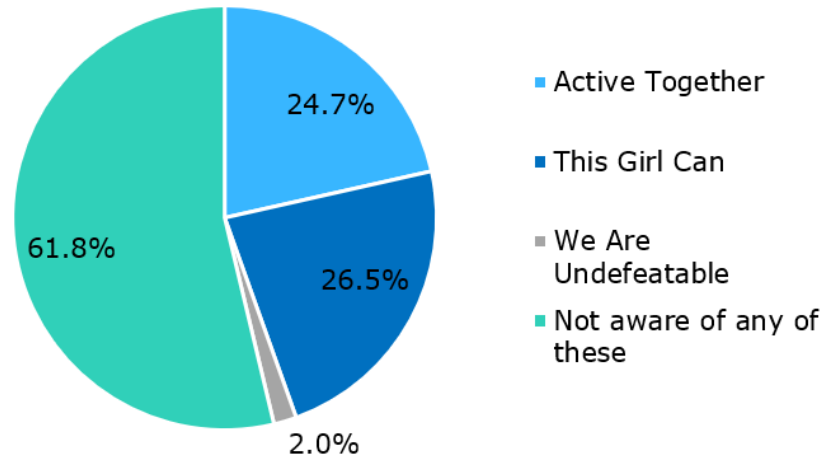


## Have you already taken part in or intend to resume this activity as restrictions allow?

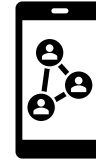
	Home activity, fitness or exercise class viewed online
I started this as soon as it resumed	12.1%
I haven't taken part yet but intend to within the next 2 months	22.5%
I do not intend to take part	49.3%
Don't know	16.1%

# Learning from Active Together and National Campaigns

- The majority (62%) of the least active residents were not aware of Active Together, This Girl Can or We Are Undefeatable compared with 48% of the active residents (5-7 days active).
- Of those that have seen or heard of these campaigns, they have been made aware of them via: TV (29%), Social Media (25%) and Online/Internet/Websites (18%).



What is the best way for you to find out about physical activity opportunities in your local area? (Top 4 answers provided)



**Social Media (generic inc. FB) – 34%**



**Internet/ Online – 33%**



**Email/Newsletters – 31%**

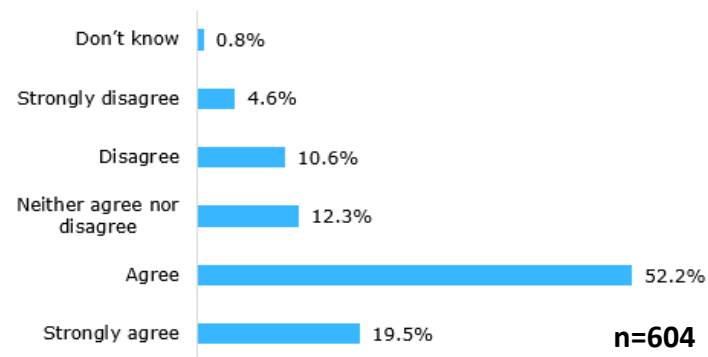


**Facebook (Specific)/Spotted groups/  
Community pages - 23%**

# Attitudes and behaviours

## Ability

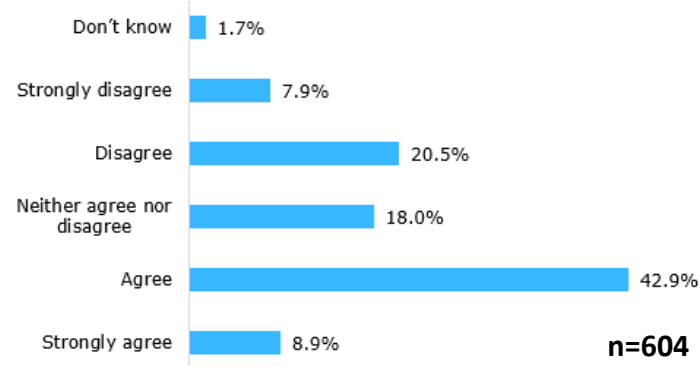
- 71.7% of people 'Strongly agreed' or 'Agreed' they have the ability to be physically active. Only 15.2% said that they did not have the ability to be physically active.



- The top 3 reasons given by those who do not or are unsure that they have the ability to be active were- 'I have a disability or long term health condition' (45%), 'I am embarrassed about my weight' (41.5%), 'I do not have the strength' (36.8%). From 37 'Other' answers the top reason was 'Time' (30%).

## Opportunity

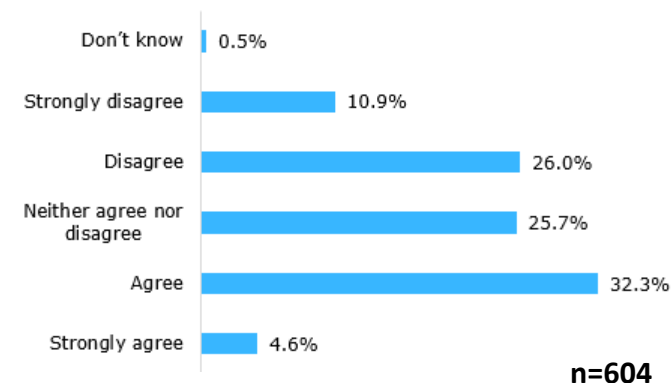
- 51.8% of people 'Strongly agreed' or 'Agreed' they have the opportunity to be physically active. 28.4% said that they did not have the opportunity to be physically active.



- The top reasons given by those who do not or are unsure that they have the opportunity to be physically active were - 'I do not have the time' (39.2%), 'I do not know anyone I can be active with', 'I am not able to afford certain activities' and 'I do not know about local opportunities' (all 34.4%).

## Motivation

- 36.9% of people agree that they feel motivated to be physically active. 36.9% disagree that they feel motivated to be physically active.



- The top 3 reasons given by those who do not feel or are unsure that they feel motivated to be physically active were - 'My mental health is a barrier' (33.9%), 'I do not look/feel like an active person' (33.3%) and 'Whenever I try I fail/ I can't keep it going' (30.2%).



# Attitudes and behaviours- future facing

## Ability

**What would help you to feel more confident in your ability?**

From 111 responses the top 3 answers to this question were:

- Medical procedures/medication/ appointments (17%)
- Improved health/ less pain (16%)
- Professional help/advice/support (14%)

## Opportunity

**What would help you to access more opportunities to be active?**

From 218 responses the top 3 answers to this question were:

- Increased local opportunities/new local facilities (28%)
- Affordable/cheaper activity (20%)
- More personal time/less work (11%)

## Motivation

**What would motivate you to be more active?**

From a total 253 responses the top 3 answers in response to this question were:

- Having an exercise buddy or exercising in a group (17%)
- Cheaper gyms and facilities (11%)
- Having no health issues/experiencing less pain (10%).