



Draft Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2026-35

consultation summary report

southampton
dataobservatory



Strategy & Communications | *November 2025*

Introduction

- [Summary](#)
- [Consultation principles](#)
- [Promotion & methodology](#)
- [Background](#)
- [Respondent demographics](#)

Visions, principles & overall feedback

- [Vision & core principles](#)
- [Visions, principles & overall feedback summary](#)
- [Support for the vision](#)
- [Support for the core principles](#)
- [Support for the strategy overall](#)
- [Areas of focus summary](#)
- [Reading the draft strategy](#)
- [General/overall free-text comments](#)

Areas of focus

- [Starting Well](#)
 - [Draft summary](#)
 - [Importance of *starting well*](#)
 - [Ambition of *starting well*](#)
 - [Free-text comments on *starting well*](#)
- [Staying Well](#)
 - [Draft summary](#)
 - [Importance of *staying well*](#)
 - [Ambition of *staying well*](#)
 - [Free-text comments on *staying well*](#)
- [Connecting Well](#)
 - [Draft summary](#)
 - [Importance of *connecting well*](#)
 - [Ambition of *connecting well*](#)
 - [Free-text comments on *connecting well*](#)
- [Financially Well](#)
 - [Draft summary](#)
 - [Importance of *financially well*](#)
 - [Ambition of *financially well*](#)
 - [Free-text comments on *financially well*](#)



INTRODUCTION





Southampton City Council undertook a public consultation on a proposed new Health & Wellbeing Strategy for the period 2026 through 2035.

This consultation took place between **Monday 04 August** to **Sunday 26 October 2025** and received **195** responses.

The aim of this consultation was to:

- Clearly communicate the proposed plans to residents and stakeholders;
- Ensure any resident, business or stakeholder in Southampton that wished to comment on the proposals had the opportunity to do so, enabling them to raise any impacts the proposals may have, and;
- Allow participants to propose alternative suggestions for consideration which they feel could achieve the objectives of the plans in a different way.

This report summarises the aims, principles, methodology and results of the public consultation. It provides a summary of the consultation responses both for the consideration of decision makers and any interested individuals and stakeholders.

It is important to be mindful that a consultation is not a vote, it is an opportunity for stakeholders to express their views, concerns and alternatives to a proposal. This report outlines in detail the representations made during the consultation period so that decision makers can consider what has been said alongside other information.



Southampton City Council is committed to consultations of the highest standard and which are meaningful and comply with the *Gunning Principles*, considered to be the legal standard for consultations:

1. Proposals are still at a formative stage (a final decision has not yet been made);
2. There is sufficient information put forward in the proposals to allow 'intelligent consideration';
3. There is adequate time for consideration and response, and;
4. Conscientious consideration must be given to the consultation responses before a decision is made.



New Conversations 2.0
LGA guide to engagement



Rules: The Gunning Principles

They were coined by Stephen Sedley QC in a court case in 1985 relating to a school closure consultation (R v London Borough of Brent ex parte Gunning). Prior to this, very little consideration had been given to the laws of consultation. Sedley defined that a consultation is only legitimate when these four principles are met:

- 1. proposals are still at a formative stage**
A final decision has not yet been made, or predetermined, by the decision makers
- 2. there is sufficient information to give 'intelligent consideration'**
The information provided must relate to the consultation and must be available, accessible, and easily interpretable for consultees to provide an informed response
- 3. there is adequate time for consideration and response**
There must be sufficient opportunity for consultees to participate in the consultation. There is no set timeframe for consultation,¹ despite the widely accepted twelve-week consultation period, as the length of time given for consultee to respond can vary depending on the subject and extent of impact of the consultation
- 4. 'conscientious consideration' must be given to the consultation responses before a decision is made**
Decision-makers should be able to provide evidence that they took consultation responses into account

These principles were reinforced in 2001 in the 'Coughlan Case (R v North and East Devon Health Authority ex parte Coughlan²), which involved a health authority closure and confirmed that they applied to all consultations, and then in a Supreme Court case in 2014 (R ex parte Moseley v LB Haringey³), which endorsed the legal standing of the four principles. Since then, the Gunning Principles have formed a strong legal foundation from which the legitimacy of public consultations is assessed, and are frequently referred to as a legal basis for judicial review decisions.⁴

¹ In some local authorities, their local voluntary Compact agreement with the third sector may specify the length of time they are required to consult for. However, in many cases, the Compact is either inactive or has been cancelled so the consultation timeframe is open to debate

² BAILII, England and Wales Court of Appeal (Civil Division) Decisions, Accessed: 13 December 2016.

³ BAILII, United Kingdom Supreme Court, Accessed: 13 December 2016

⁴ The information used to produce this document has been taken from the Law of Consultation training course provided by The Consultation Institute



The agreed approach for this consultation was to use an online questionnaire as the main route for feedback. Questionnaires enable an appropriate amount of explanatory and supporting information to be included in a structured way, helping to ensure respondents are aware of the background and detail of the proposals.

Respondents could also write letters or emails to provide feedback on the proposals. Emails or letters from stakeholders that contained consultation feedback were collated and analysed as a part of the overall consultation.

Promotion, engagement and other comms activity included SCC corporate communications, including social media, newsletters and e-bulletins, as well as comms via relevant businesses and organisations.

All quantitative survey results have been analysed and presented in graphs within this report. Respondents were also given opportunities throughout the questionnaire to provide written feedback on the proposals.





“Creating a Health and Wellbeing Strategy is a statutory function of the Southampton Health and Wellbeing Board. The Board is a forum where political, clinical, professional and community leaders from across the care and health system come together to improve the health and wellbeing of the local population and reduce health inequalities.

The Health and Wellbeing strategy aims to improve the health and wellbeing of people living in Southampton during the period 2026 to 2035. It describes the vision, principles by which we will work, and four priority themes. For each priority theme there is an area of focus, statements of ambition, actions and the things we can measure to know we are making a difference.

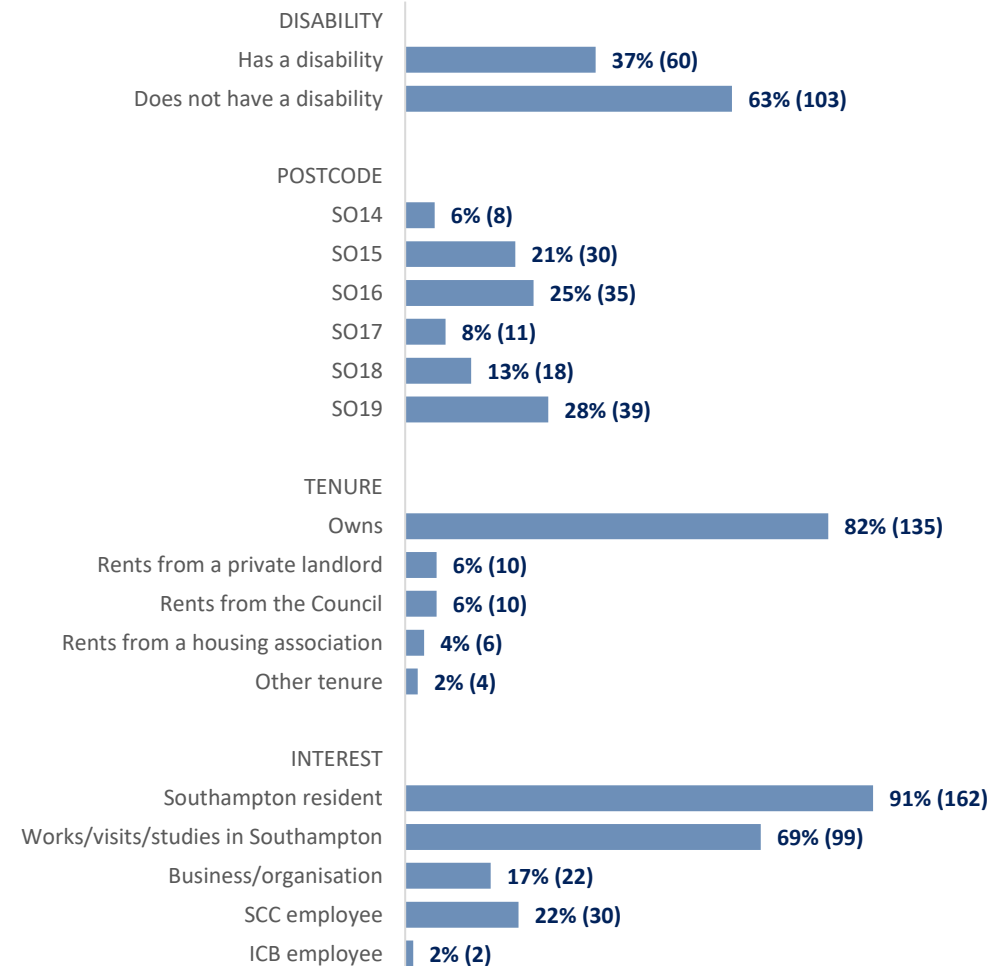
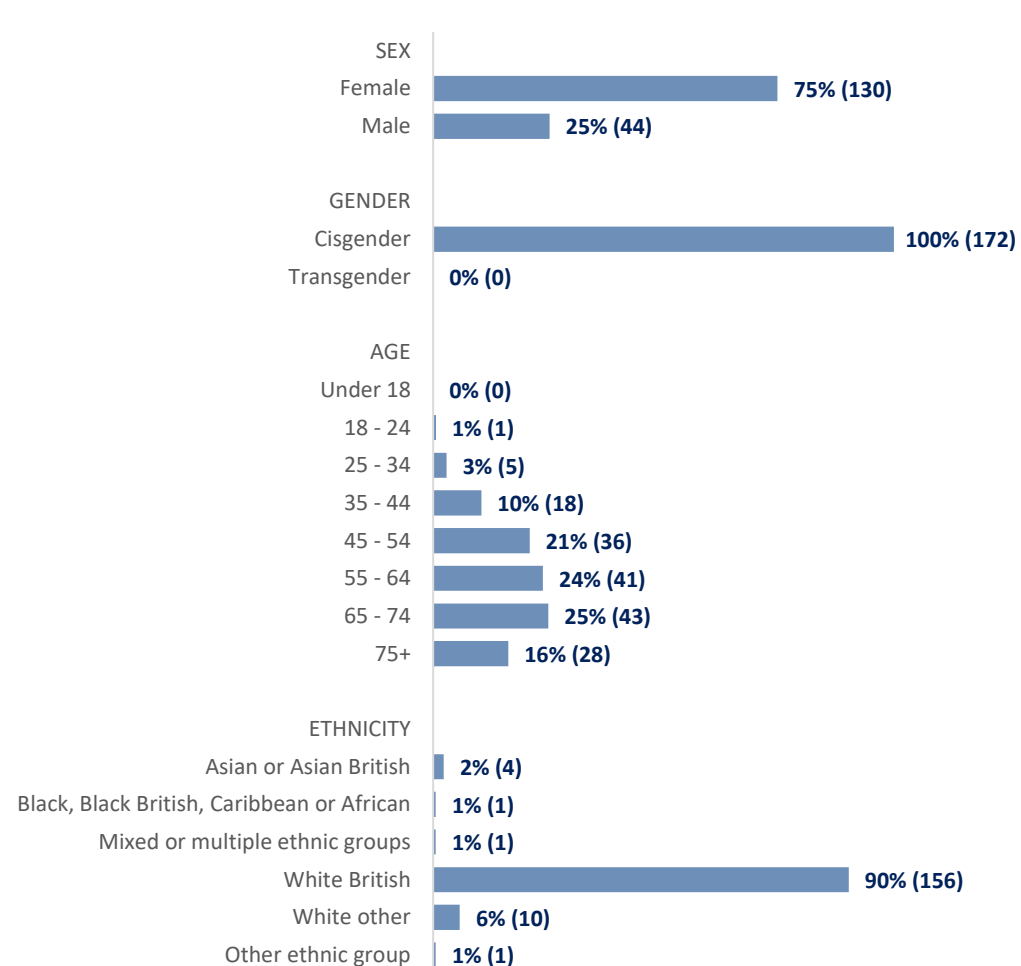
The board looked at lots of information and talked to many people to understand the health needs of the city. They used this information to create the draft plan and priority areas.

The Health and Wellbeing Strategy also supports delivery of the 10-year City Plan, a shared ambition across partners, which sets out five missions: to make Southampton a more equal, healthier, safer, greener and growing city. The Health and Wellbeing Strategy is Southampton’s commitment to delivering the Healthier Southampton mission.”



Respondent demographics

Total responses | 190 survey
5 email
195 total





VISION, PRINCIPLES & OVERALL FEEDBACK



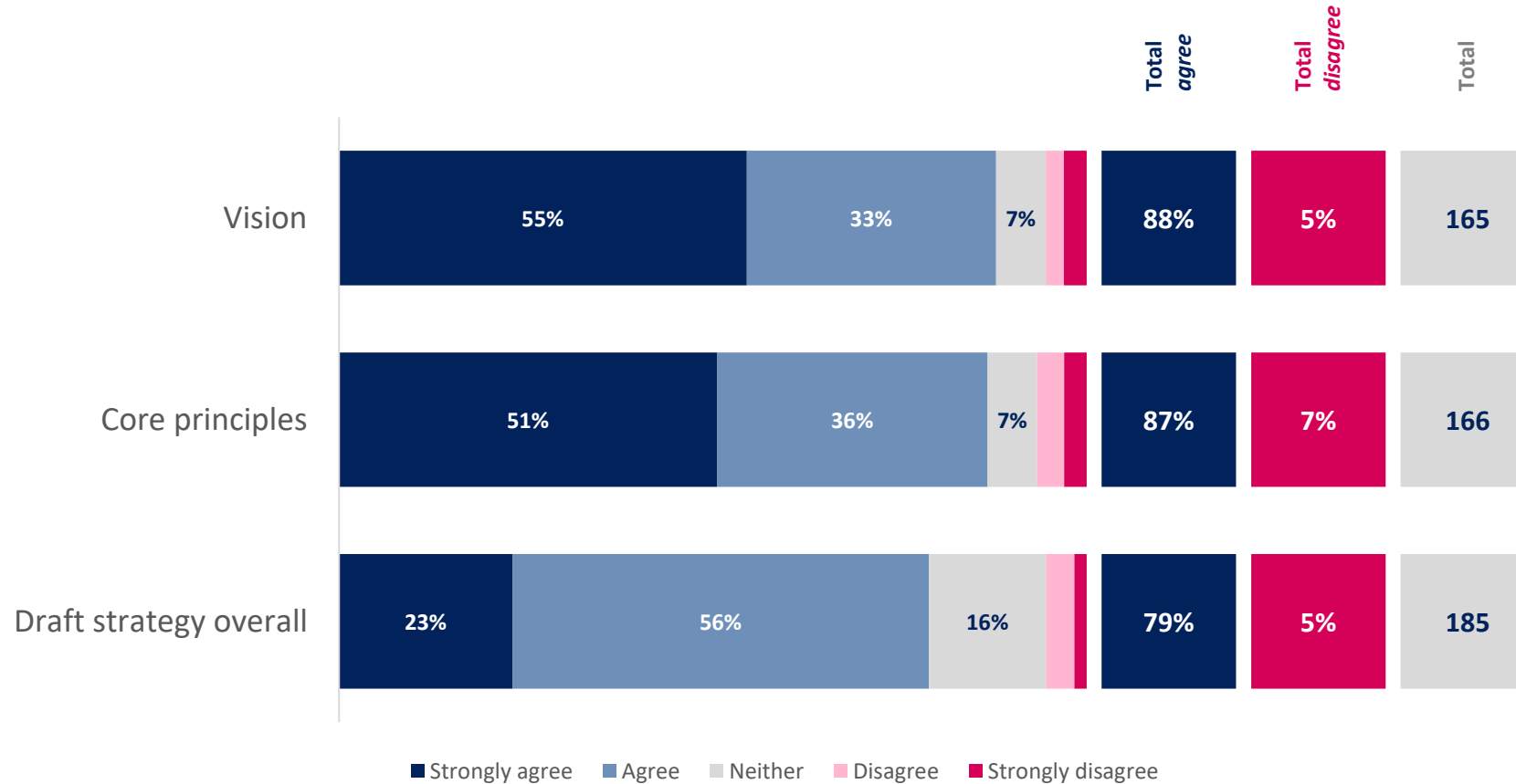


“Our vision is for Southampton to be a place where everyone can live healthy, active and independent lives, create positive social connections, and maximise financial wellbeing. We aim to foster a city where health and wellbeing is supported throughout life and when services are needed, they are integrated across sectors and are responsive to the needs of individuals.

We are proposing the following nine core principles that underpin our strategy and should be evidenced in everything that we do.”

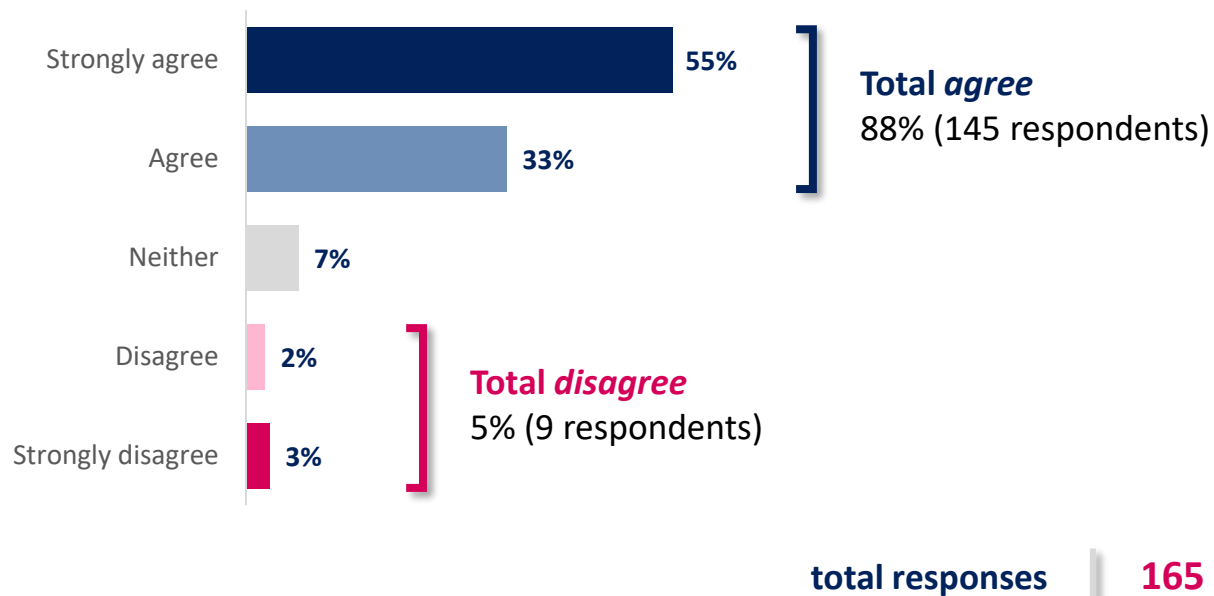
<i>Collaborative</i>	Partnership and integration across statutory, voluntary and community organisations
<i>Co-produced</i>	We will learn from and work with communities, building upon their strengths and lived experience
<i>Equitable</i>	An inclusive approach that considers different types of health inequalities and with an intensity and scale based on need
<i>Balanced</i>	Mental health is valued the same as physical health and gets the same recognition and support that physical health does (i.e. “parity of esteem”)
<i>Preventative</i>	Prevention and early intervention will be maximised
<i>Holistic</i>	High-quality and safe, integrated, pro-active and personalised care and support provided at the right time and place
<i>Sensitive</i>	Social, cultural and trauma-informed considerations in delivering actions, service and provision and support
<i>Evidence-based</i>	Using better evidence to make better decisions
<i>Sustainable</i>	Climate change and sustainability will be considered in all areas of focus

Questions 2, 4, 21 | To what extent do you agree or disagree with [...] for the strategy?





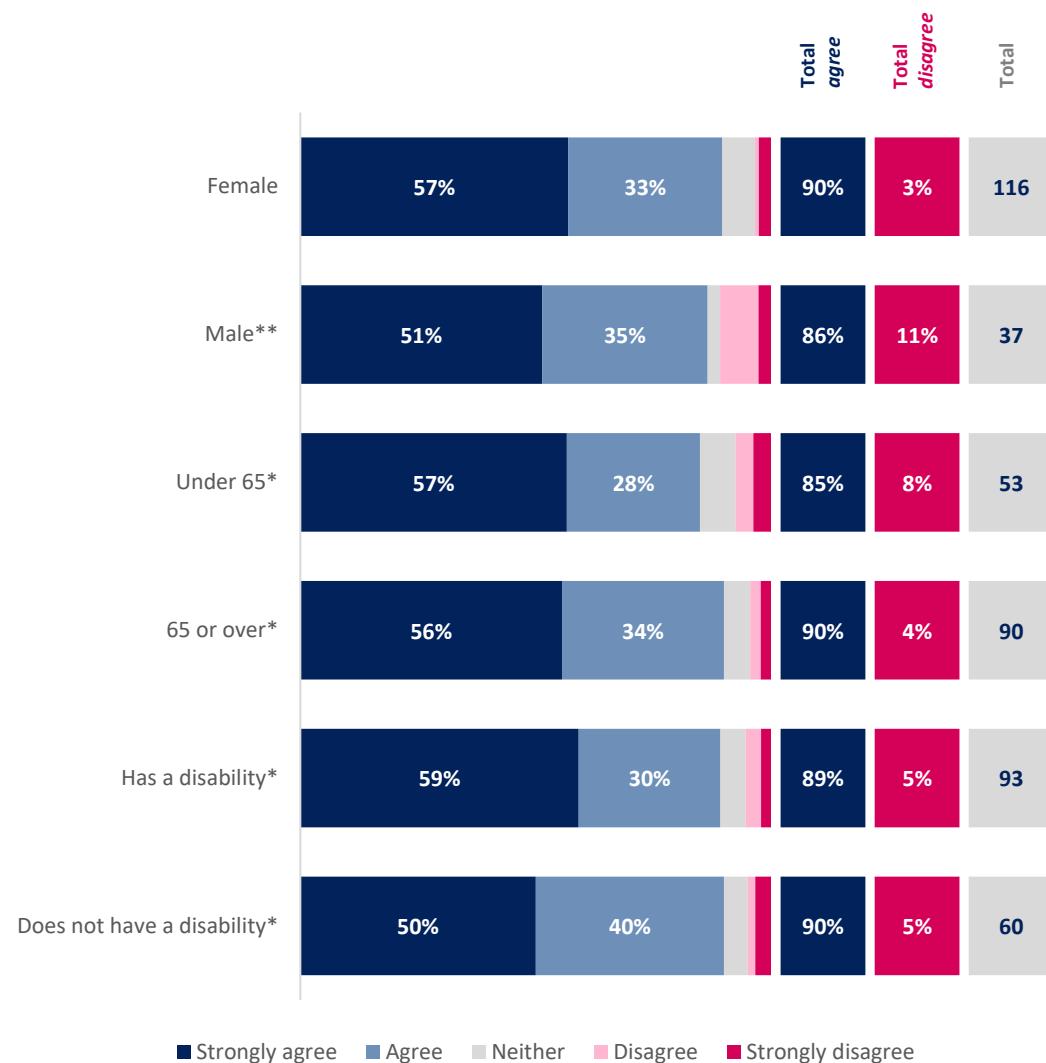
Question 2 | To what extent do you agree or disagree with our overall vision for the strategy?



Key findings

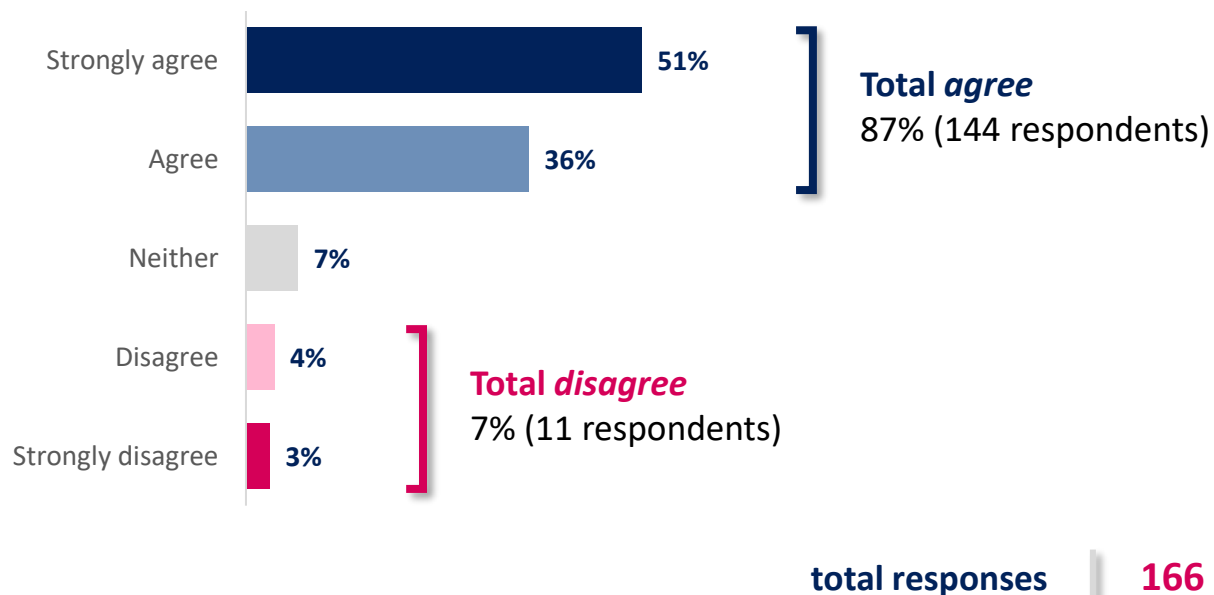
- 88% agreed with the overall vision for the draft strategy
- This includes over 50% that said they *strongly agree*
- All available breakdowns likewise responded overall agree by 85% or more

Breakdowns





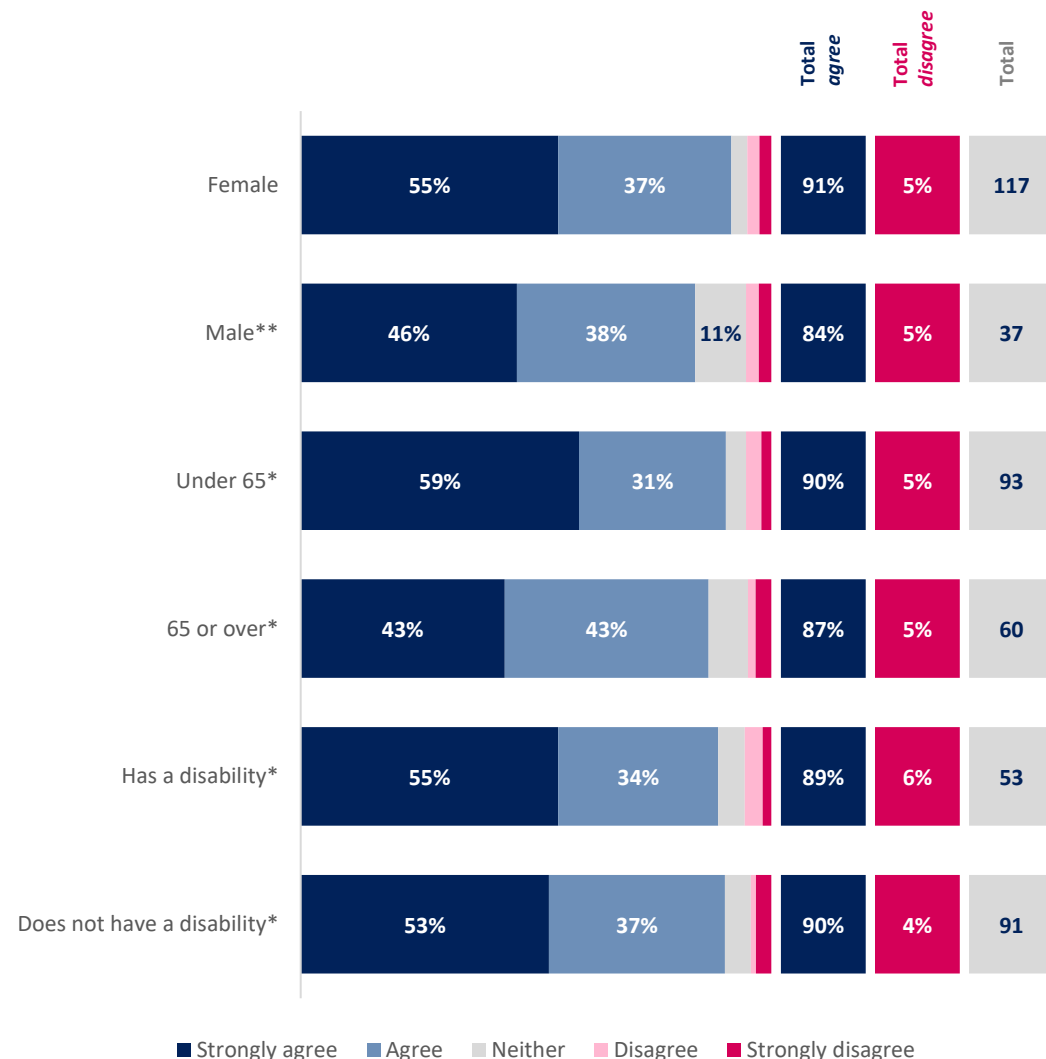
Question 3 | To what extent do you agree or disagree with the core principles that underpin our strategy?



Key findings

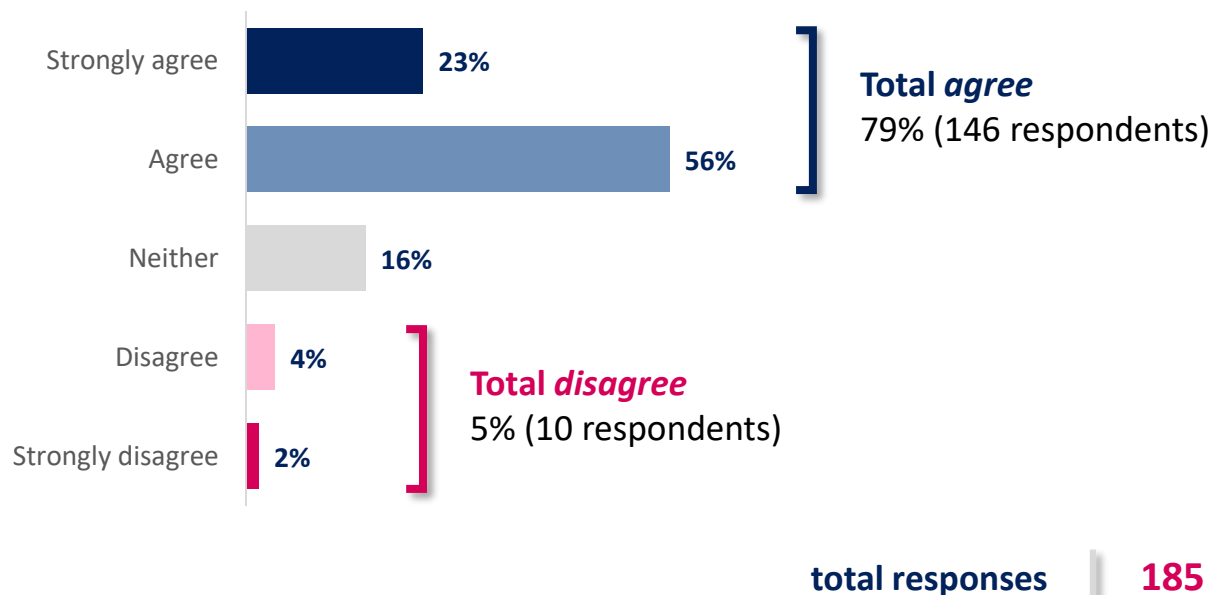
- As with the overall vision, respondents said they agreed with the core principles of the draft strategy by 87%, with more than 50% saying they strongly agree
- All available breakdowns responded agree by 84% or more

Breakdowns





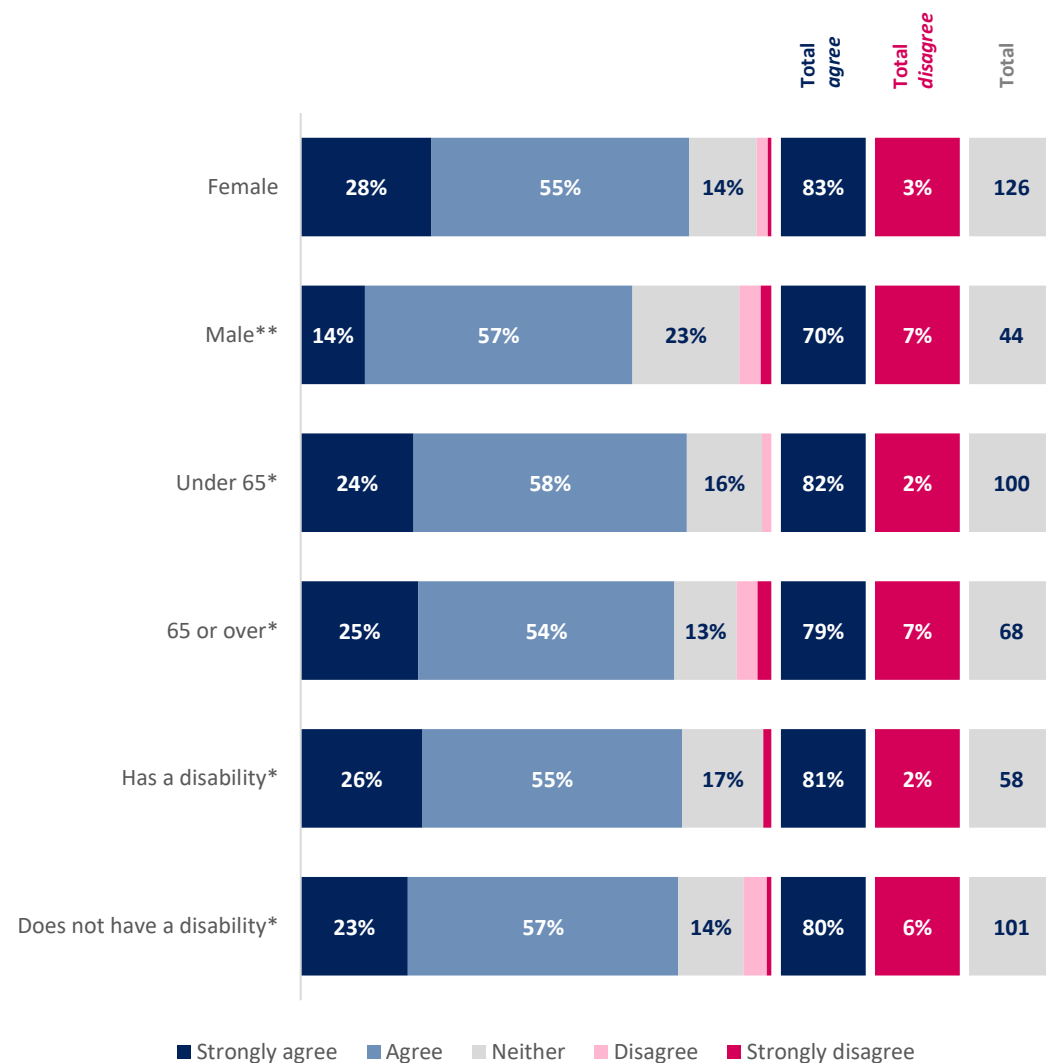
Question 21 | To what extent do you agree or disagree with the content of the proposed draft strategy overall?



Key findings

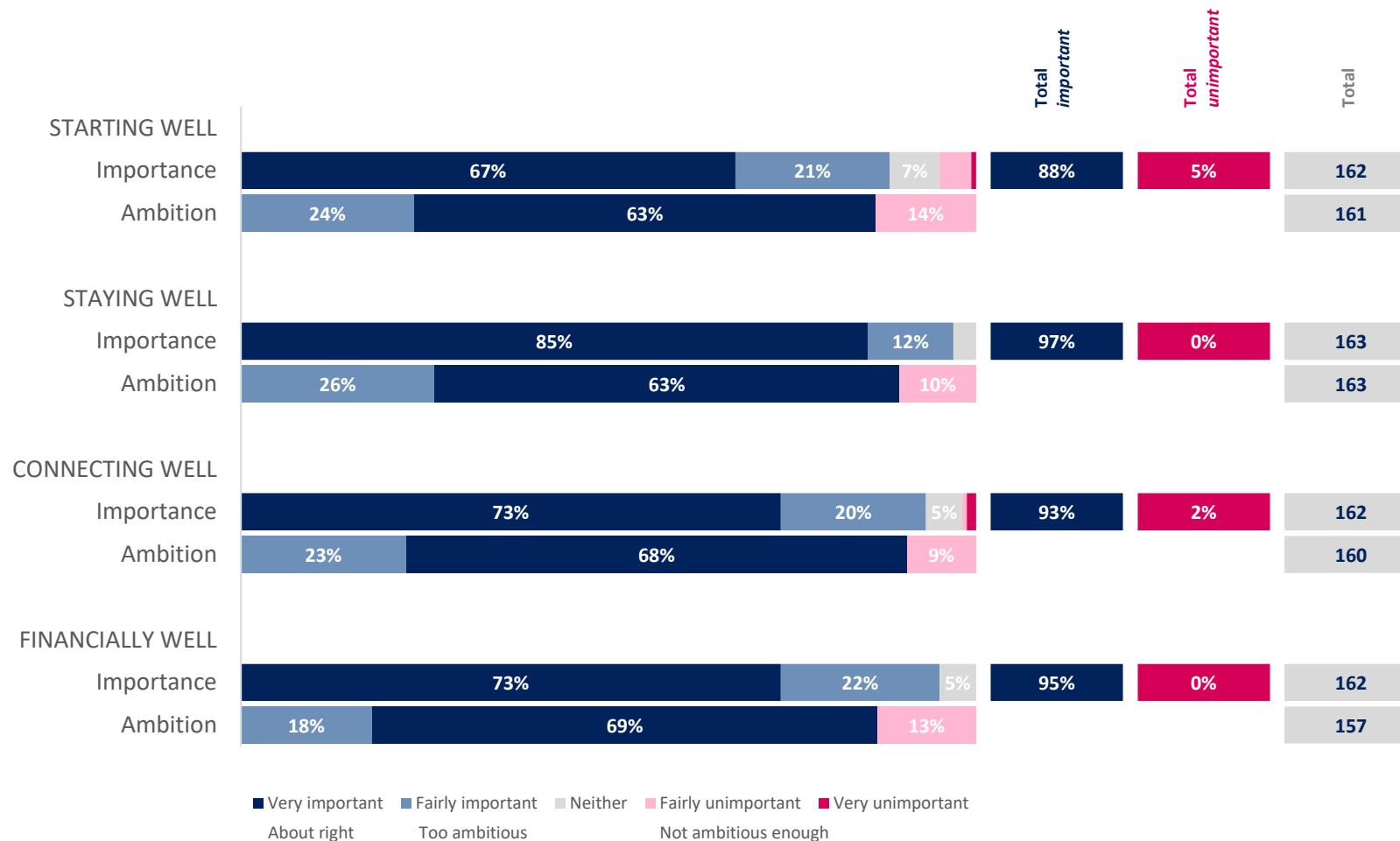
- In terms of the content of the proposed strategy overall (the vision, principles, and areas of focus), 79% of respondents said they agreed
- This includes all available breakdowns also responding agree by 70% or more

Breakdowns





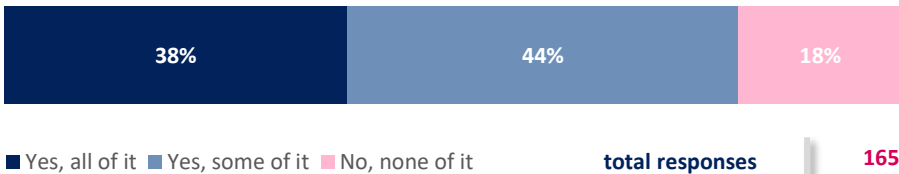
Questions 6, 9, 12, 15 | How important do you feel this proposed area of focus is?
 Questions 7, 10, 13, 16 | How ambitious do you feel the things we hope to do are?



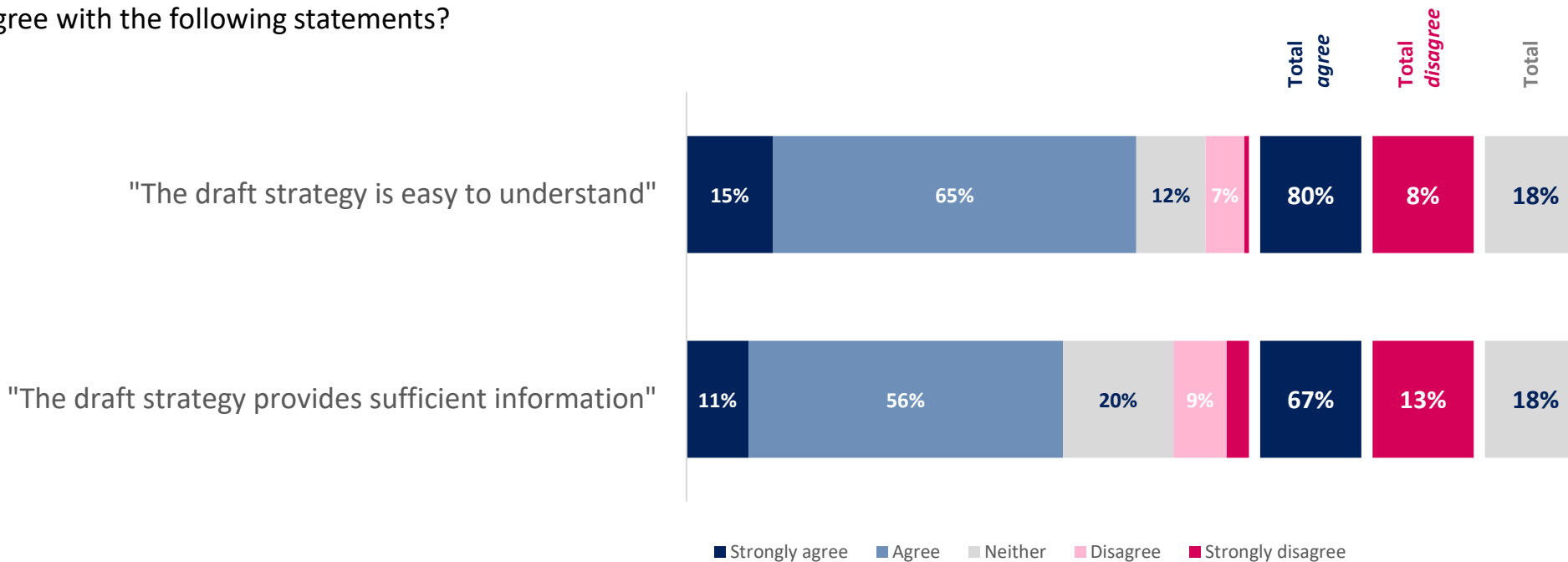


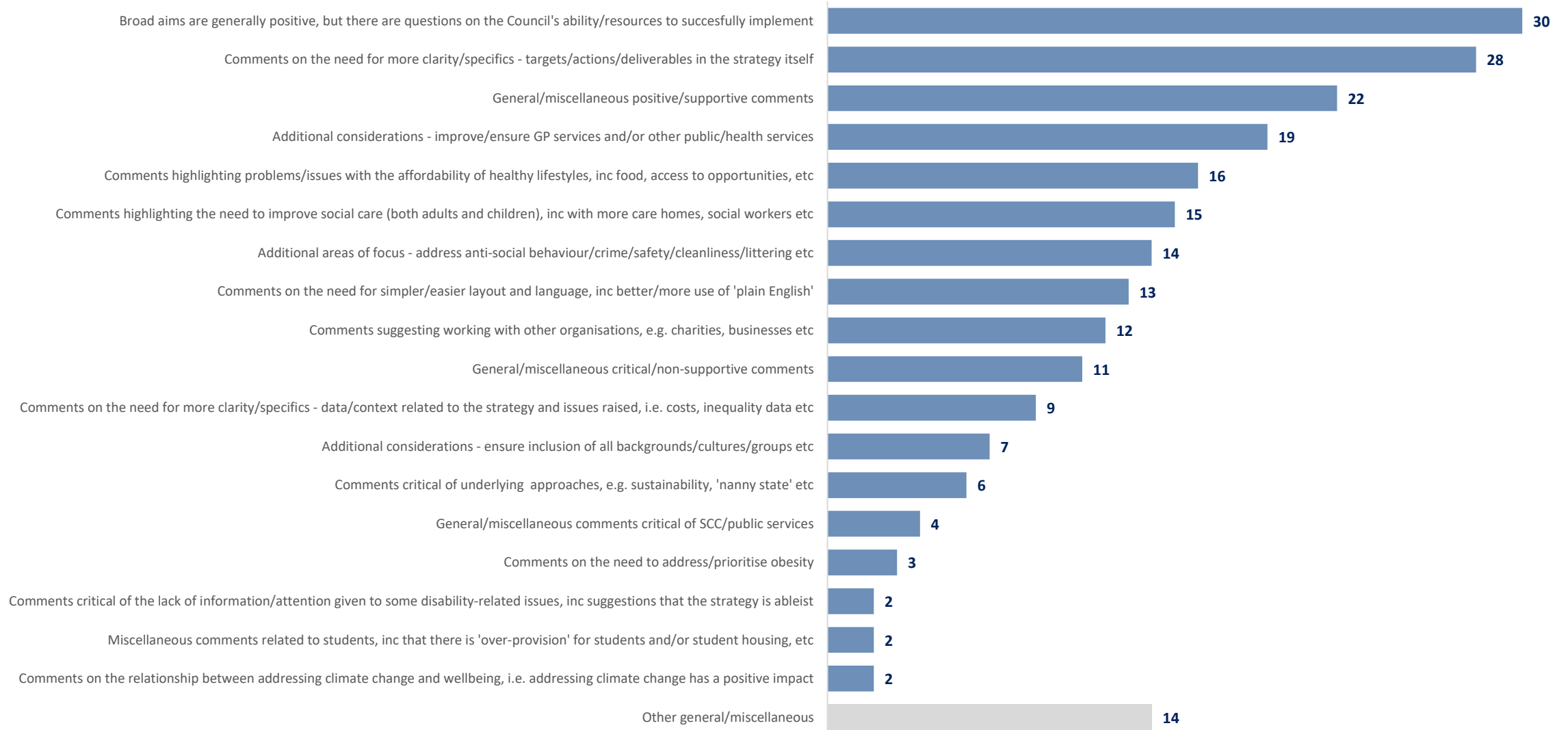
Question 18| Have you read the proposed draft strategy?

Additionally, 148 respondents chose to respond to the longer version of the survey, and 24 chose to respond to the shorter version.



Question 19| If you have read the proposed draft strategy, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?







AREAS OF FOCUS

Starting Well





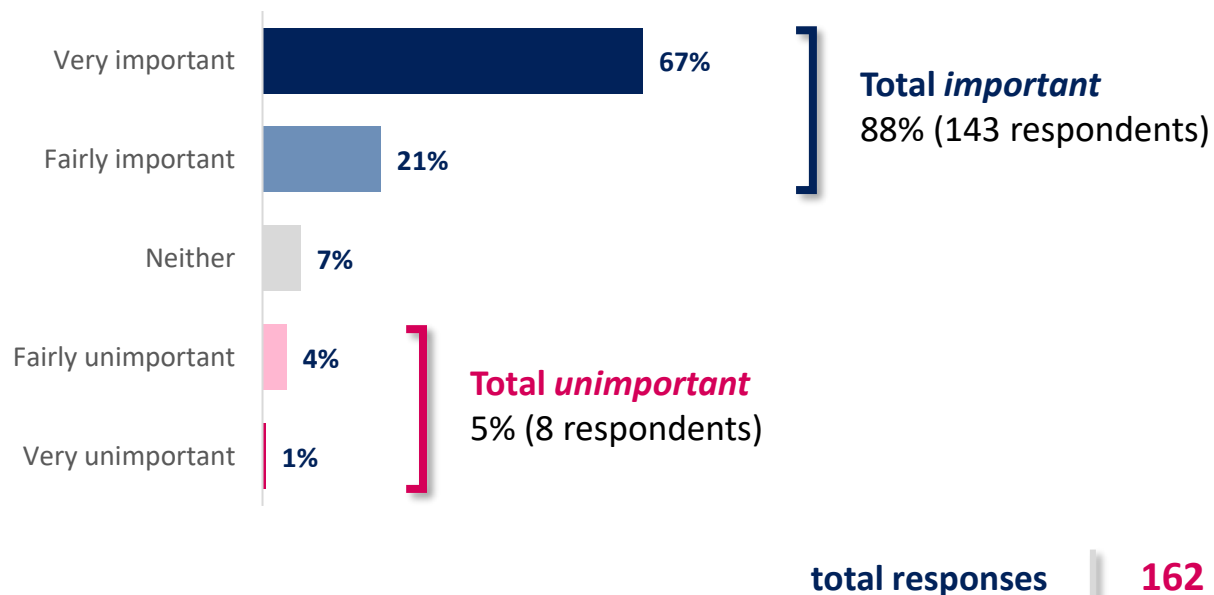
“We recognise that the foundations of good health begin before a child is born and during early childhood. Our proposed priority under this theme is to adopt a whole system approach to childhood obesity. A whole system approach moves us away from a focus on simply supporting individuals to make changes in the way they move and eat, since this will not be sufficiently powerful, preventative or sustainable at a population level. It is about understanding the complex environment that people live in and the wide variety of factors that influence population healthy weight and for everyone in every organisation doing their very best to lead, collaborate and advocate for change.”

Our proposed ambitions and the things we hope to do are:

- *Adopt a whole system approach to address childhood obesity with all parts of the system leading, collaborating and advocating for change*
- *Increase the proportion of children of all ages who are healthy weight*
- *Reduce the inequality in unhealthy weight experienced by children living in more deprived areas of the city*
- *Increase the proportion of children who maintain healthy weight as they grow between school year R and school year 6*
- *Increase the number of schools and early years settings recognised as being healthy*
- *Create a healthy, affordable, and sustainable food environment in the city”*



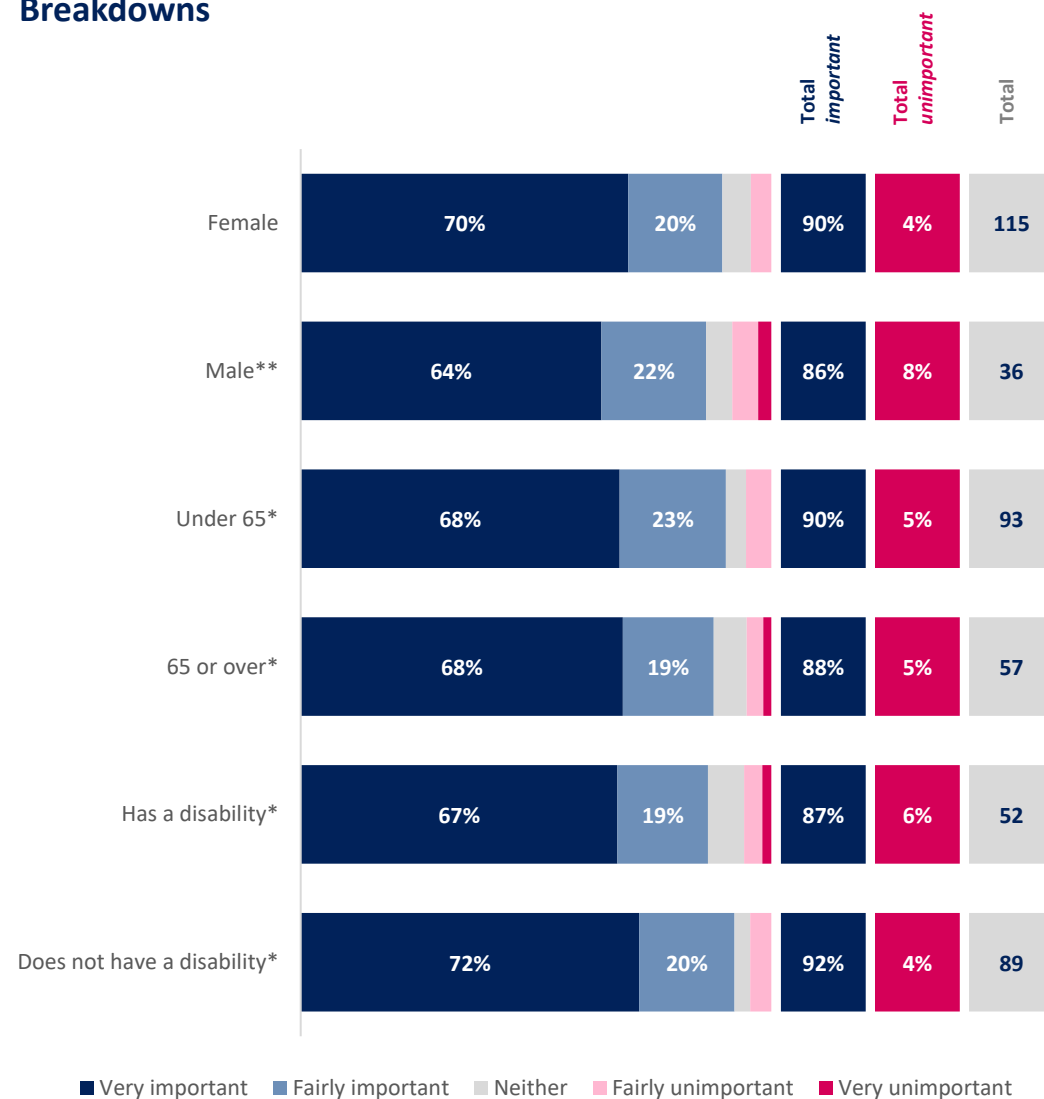
Question 6 | How important do you feel this proposed area of focus is?



Key findings

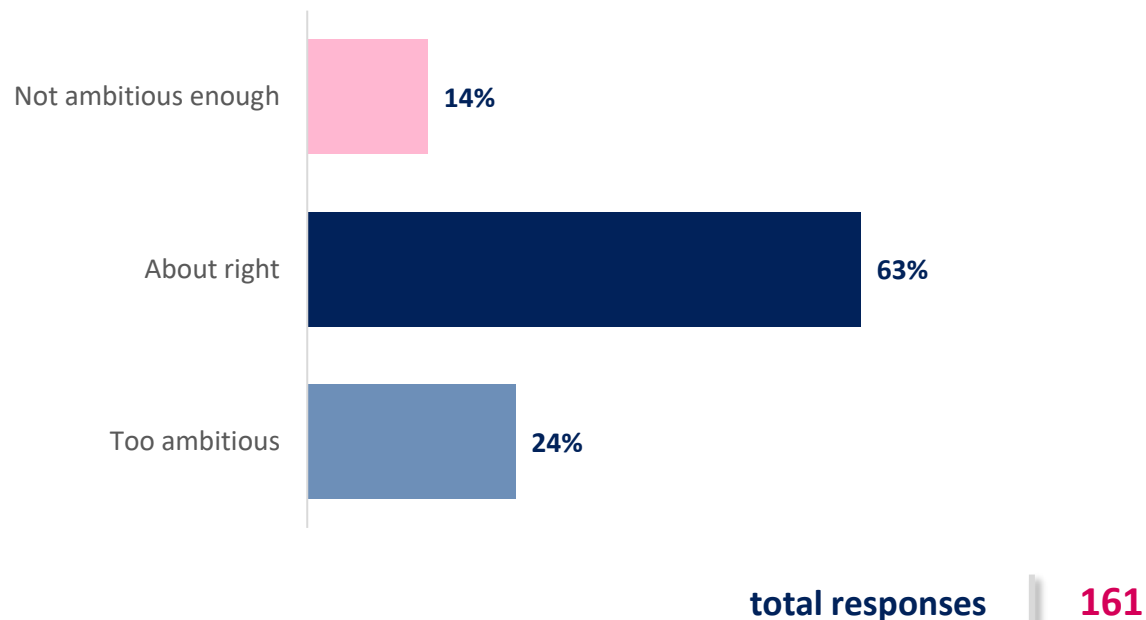
- 88% of respondents said that this area of focus is important
- 67% said that it is very important
- All available breakdowns responded *important* by 86% or more

Breakdowns





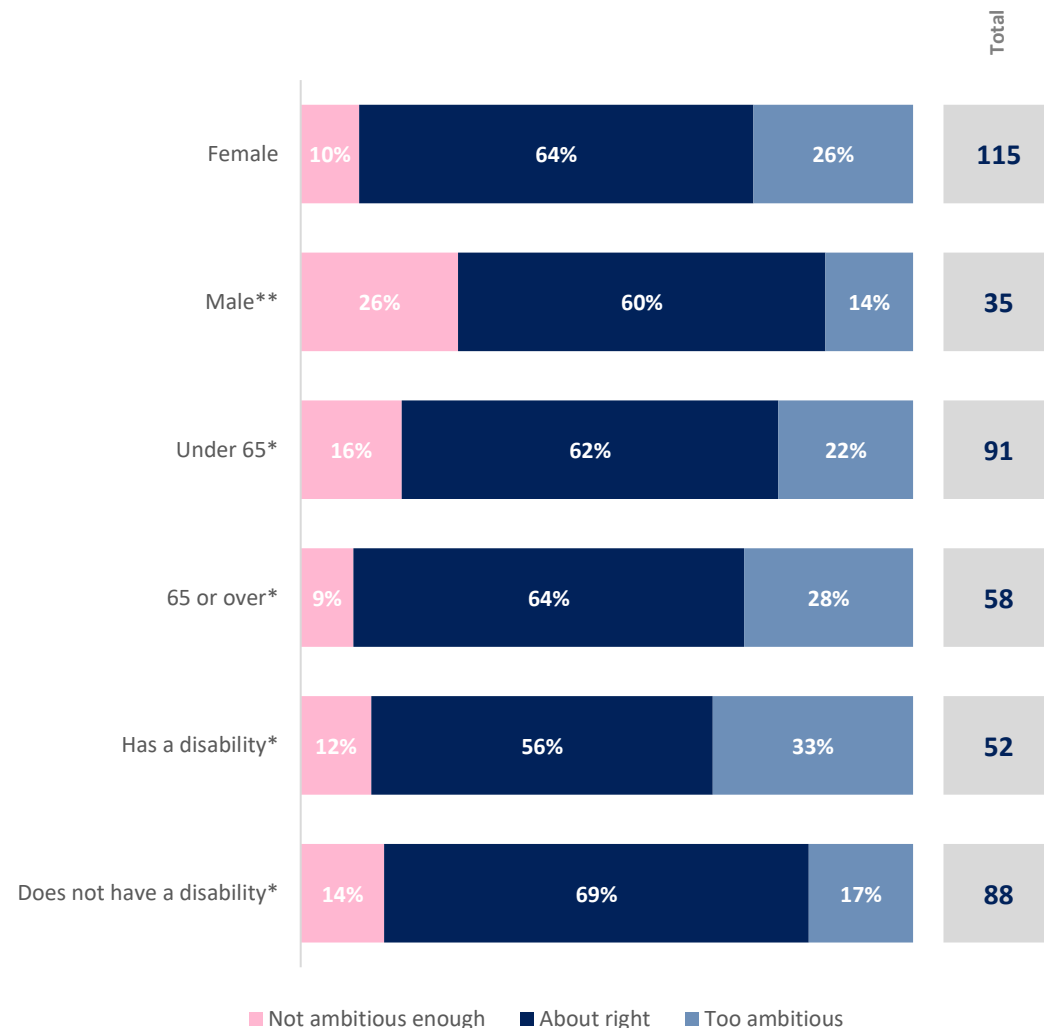
Question 7 | How ambitious do you feel the things we hope to do are?

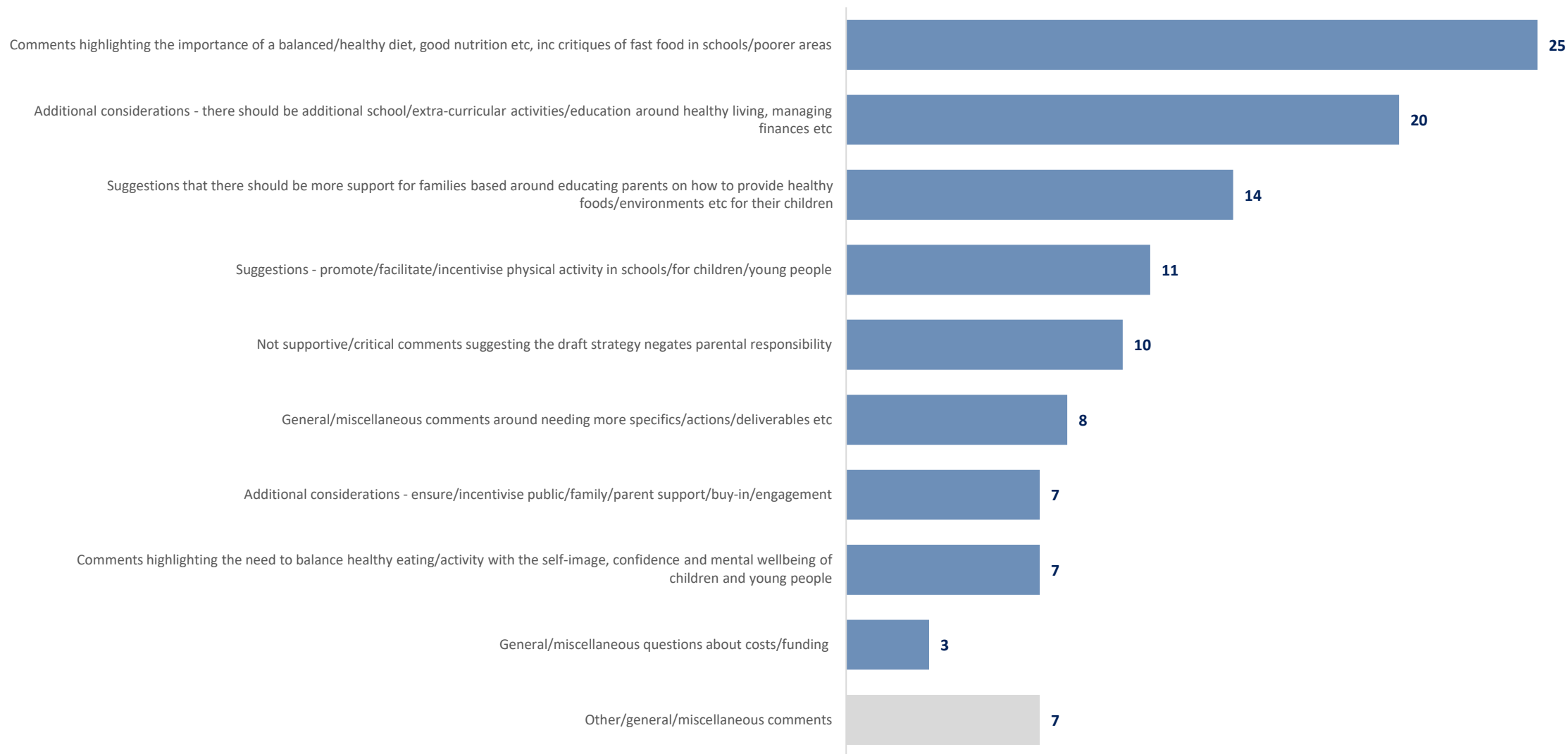


Key findings

- 63% of respondents said the ambition of this area of focus was about right, with 24% saying it is too ambitious
- All available breakdowns said the ambitions were about right by 50% or more

Breakdowns







AREAS OF FOCUS

Staying Well





“Maximising the opportunities for healthy ageing is vital to help people live longer lives and spend those years in better health. More people are living longer but with multiple long-term health conditions as they grow older. A preventative approach needs to start much earlier and address the building blocks (wider determinants) of health as well as health risks such as stress, smoking, alcohol and drug use, physical inactivity and unhealthy eating. This is important to help prevent some of the most common long-term health conditions that include cardiovascular and respiratory disease, diabetes, dementia, cancer and certain musculoskeletal conditions. Becoming frail with age is not inevitable, but when it does occur, it should be recognised early and an evidence-based approach used to slow down or reverse progression.

Approaches should be proportionate to the needs of the individual and address the physical, cognitive, psychological and social impacts. Maintaining independence can be achieved through integrated, proactive, and personalised care, which is the area of focus for this priority theme. A person-centred approach considers the full impact of living with frailty or multiple long-term conditions. This may include changes in everyday life, emotions and finances. Ensuring people are supported to live healthy lives and maintain health as they age should apply equally to everyone, proportionate to need, and include people living with mental health conditions.

This proposed area of focus is also closely interconnected to our strategic themes of connecting well and financially well. Physical activity can help improve your sleep, mood and help you to feel more positive. Activity that strengthens muscles, can help reduce age-related muscle loss and prevent falls. It also offers opportunity for social connectedness that can reduce loneliness. Financial wellbeing in older age is extremely important to help maintain access to good quality food and warmth during the winter, as well as for social connections, being active and maintaining purpose.”

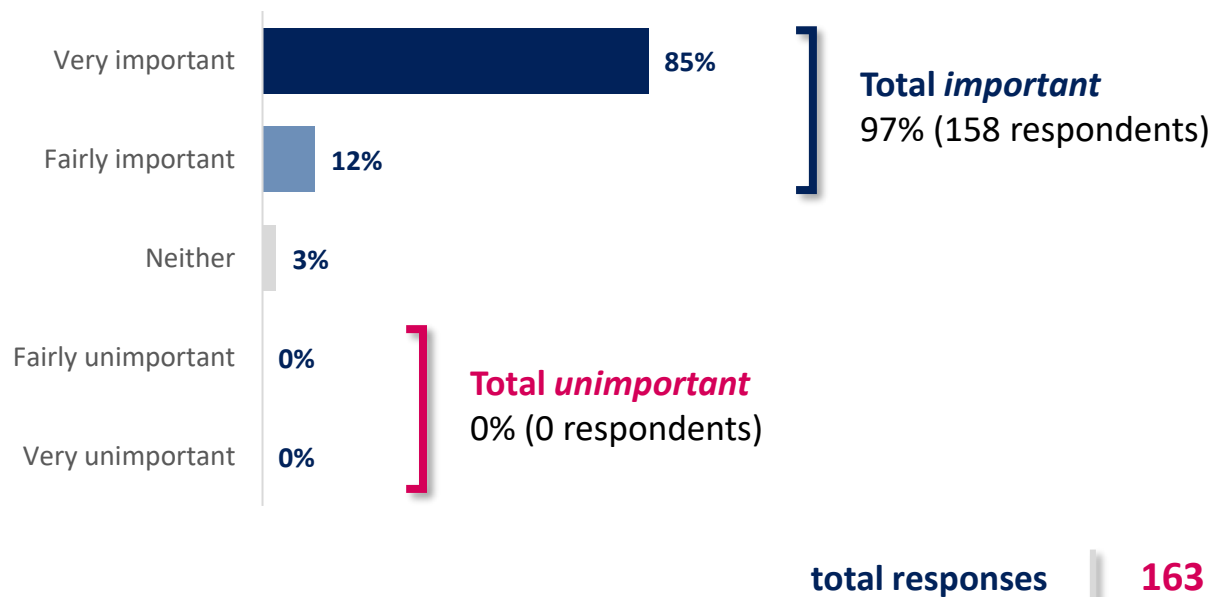


“Our proposed ambitions and the things we hope to do are:

- *Protect independence with integrated, proactive and personalised care so that people can live in the place they call home, with the people and things they love, in communities where people look out for each other, doing the things that matter to them*
- *Increase the number of eligible people living in Southampton who attend an NHS Health Check focusing on increasing attendance from those people living in the most deprived neighbourhoods whilst maintaining a universal offer*
- *Increase support available for people who find it hard to be physically active to access opportunities throughout their lives*
- *Decrease percentage of adults experiencing loneliness*
- *Work towards Smokefree 2030, ensuring that our smoking rate is less than 5% by 2030, including for people living in the most deprived neighbourhoods, people with severe mental illness and people with multiple long-term conditions*
- *Reduce alcohol and drug harm for people of all ages, including in middle and later life*
- *Increase the number of people identified with mild and moderate frailty and implement measures to slow progression*
- *Decrease the number of people developing multiple long-term conditions and increase the age of onset of sentinel (first) conditions*
- *Decrease the number of people experiencing a preventable hospital admission*
- *Decrease the number of older adults hospitalised after a fall*
- *Increase the proportion of people who can live independently in their communities*
- *Decrease the proportion of people who live in care homes (residential or nursing)*
- *Decrease the number of people dying early from preventable cardiovascular disease*
- *Decrease the number of people dying early from preventable respiratory disease”*



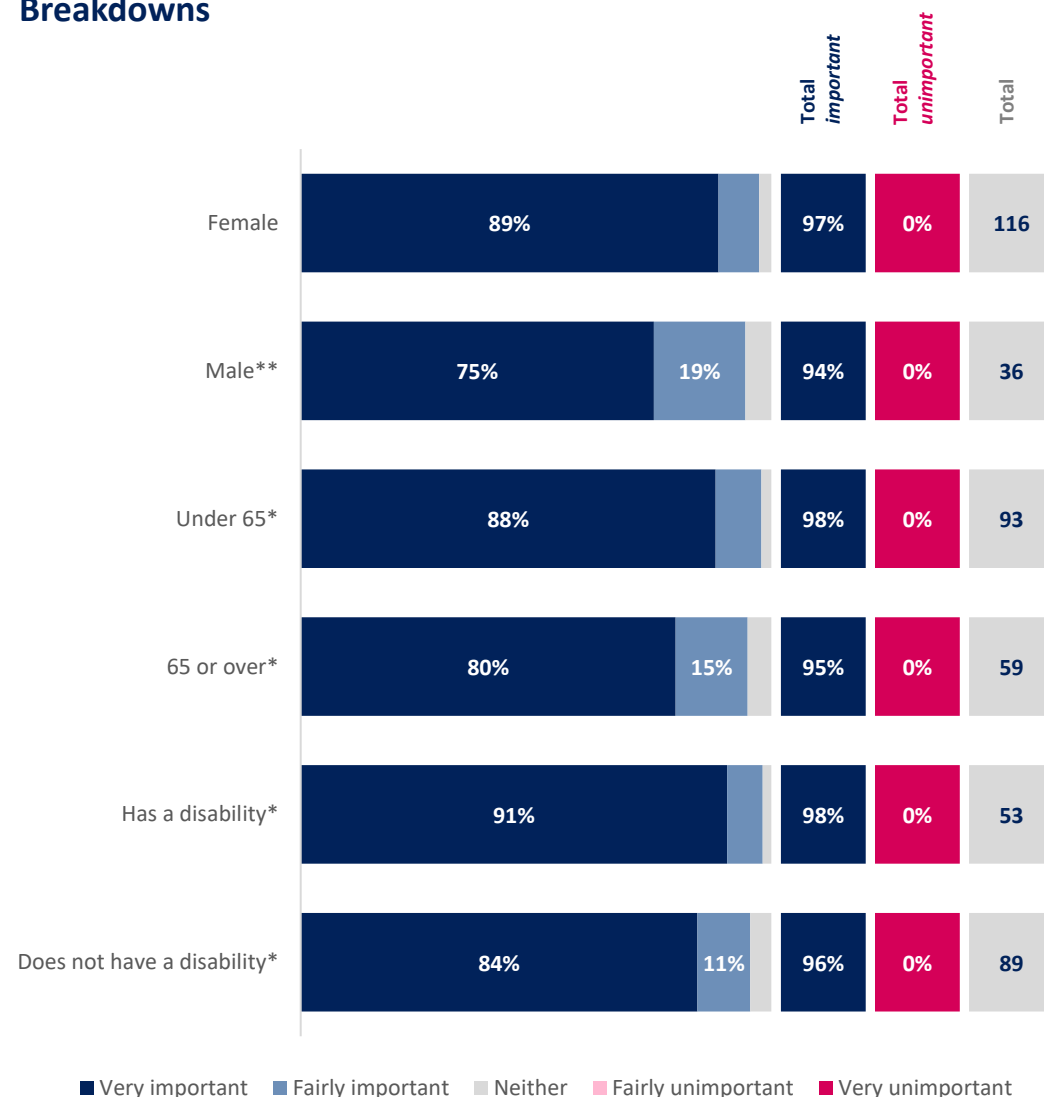
Question 9 | How important do you feel this proposed area of focus is?



Key findings

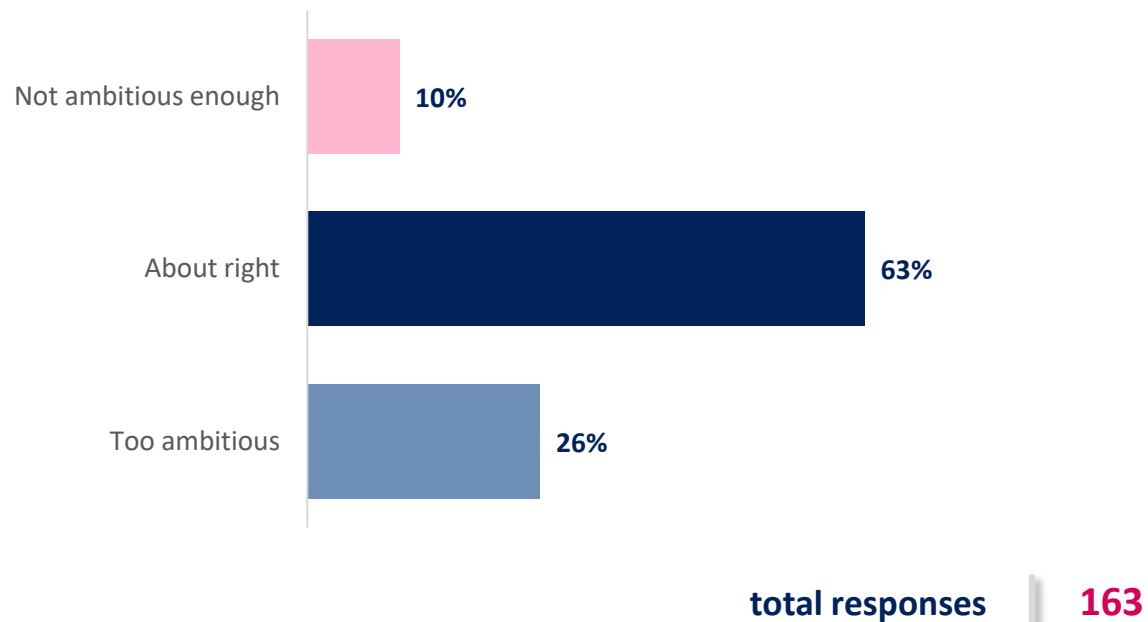
- 97% said that staying well was an important area of focus, with 85% saying it was very important and no respondents saying that it was unimportant
- Again, all available breakdowns responded important by 94% or more

Breakdowns





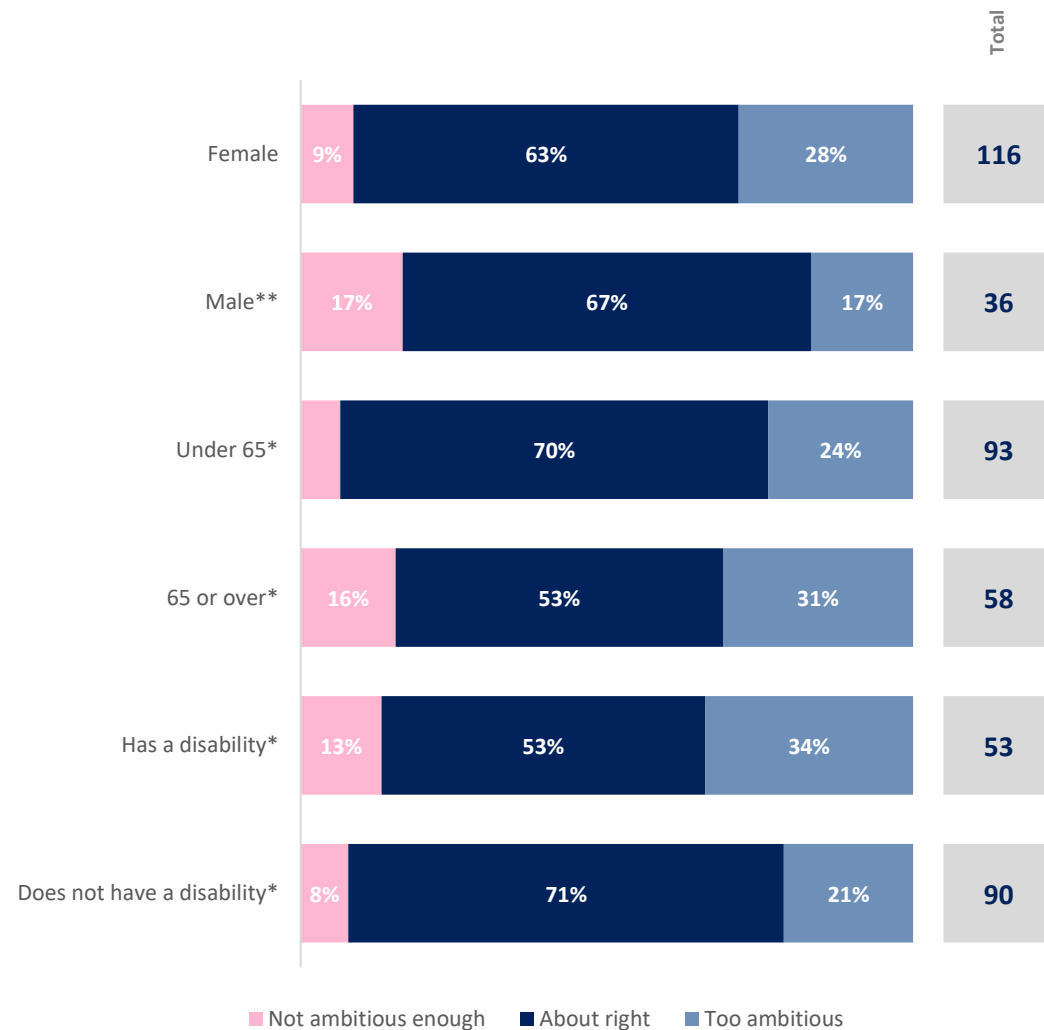
Question 10 | How ambitious do you feel the things we hope to do are?

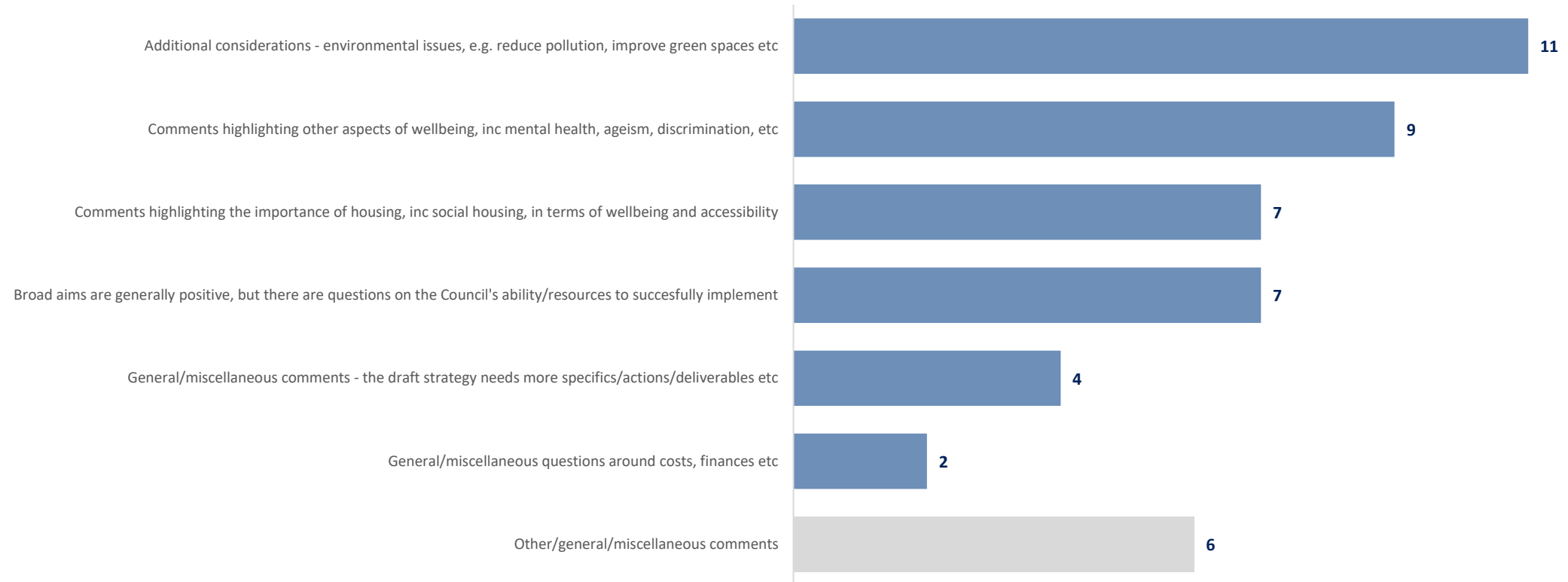


Key findings

- 63% of respondents said the ambition of this area of focus was about right, with 26% saying it is too ambitious
- All available breakdowns said the ambitions were about right by 50% or more

Breakdowns







AREAS OF FOCUS

Connecting Well





“The benefits of being physically active and less sedentary are widely acknowledged with a strong evidence base. These include improving mental wellbeing and social connectedness, prolonging independence, improving cognitive function, and decreasing childhood obesity, in addition to the prevention of chronic diseases such as Type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and some types of cancer. To gain these benefits we need to inspire and support active lives so that we can all be active in a way that suits us.”

Being creatively active is also valuable for long-term physical and mental health and wellbeing with evidence for benefit in prevention of ill health, management of long-term conditions, and treatment and recovery across the life course. Creative activity has many definitions and will mean different things to different people. One definition is any action that involves expressing oneself, generating new ideas, or solving problems in an imaginative and original way. It encompasses a wide range of pursuits, from visual arts like painting and sculpting to performing arts like music and dance, as well as activities like writing, storytelling, and even cooking.

Creative health refers to the use of arts, culture, and creativity to improve people's physical and mental wellbeing and this can help build social connectedness and social cohesion, reduce social isolation, and improve the conditions in which people live, grow, work and age. Access to creative activities and spaces to connect can support better mental health and wellbeing in young people.”

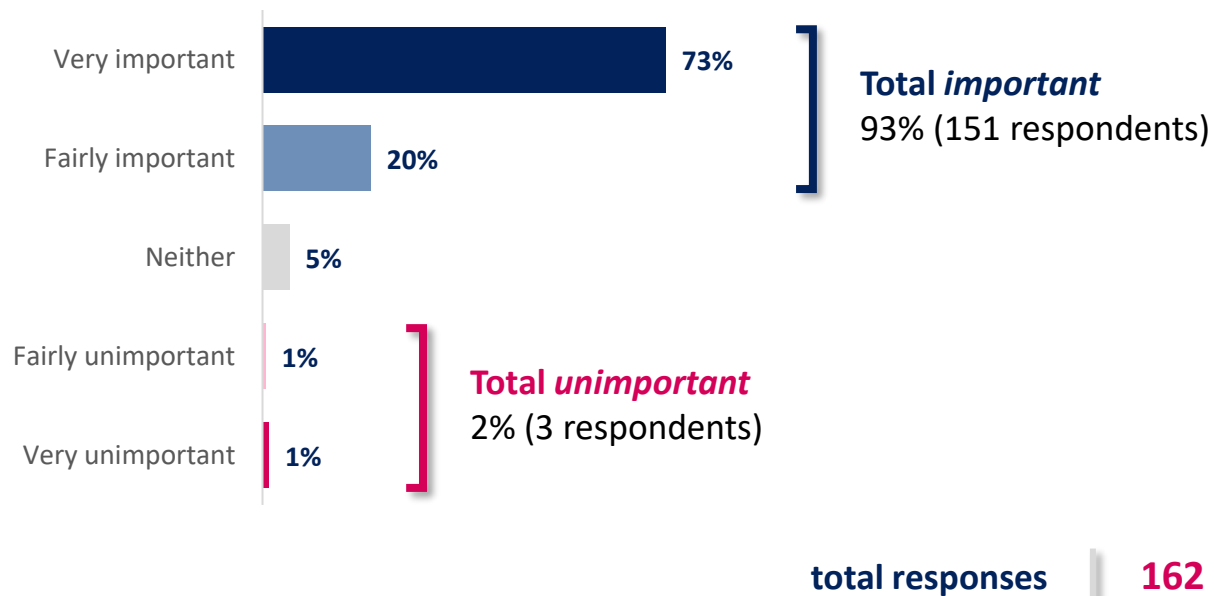


“Our proposed ambitions and the things we hope to do are:

- *Decrease the proportion of children and young people living in Southampton who are doing less than 60 minutes of physical activity per day on a regular basis*
- *Decrease the proportion of adults living in Southampton who are physically inactive on a regular basis*
- *Inspire and support residents to move in a way that suits them and to prioritise groups who are least likely to be active*
- *Work together to remove the barriers for accessing physical and creative activity especially for people experiencing inequalities*
- *Increase the proportion of people living in Southampton who participate in creative activity*
- *Increase the proportion of people in Southampton who feel socially connected*
- *Increase physical activity participation by underrepresented groups, including disabled people, minority ethnic groups, and low-income households through provision of tailored programmes*
- *Integrate physical activity into all aspects of school life, promoting health and wellbeing through arts, culture, and outdoor activities*
- *Transform local spaces and travel routes to make them safe, accessible, and appealing for physical activity*
- *Support people to change how they move around the city by widening their healthy and clean travel choices*
- *Develop support mechanisms to help individuals start and maintain physical activity, especially those who feel they cannot do it alone*
- *Foster bold leadership and collaboration among individuals and organisations to create happier and healthier communities*
- *Measure the impact of initiatives and continuously improve strategies based on feedback and data”*



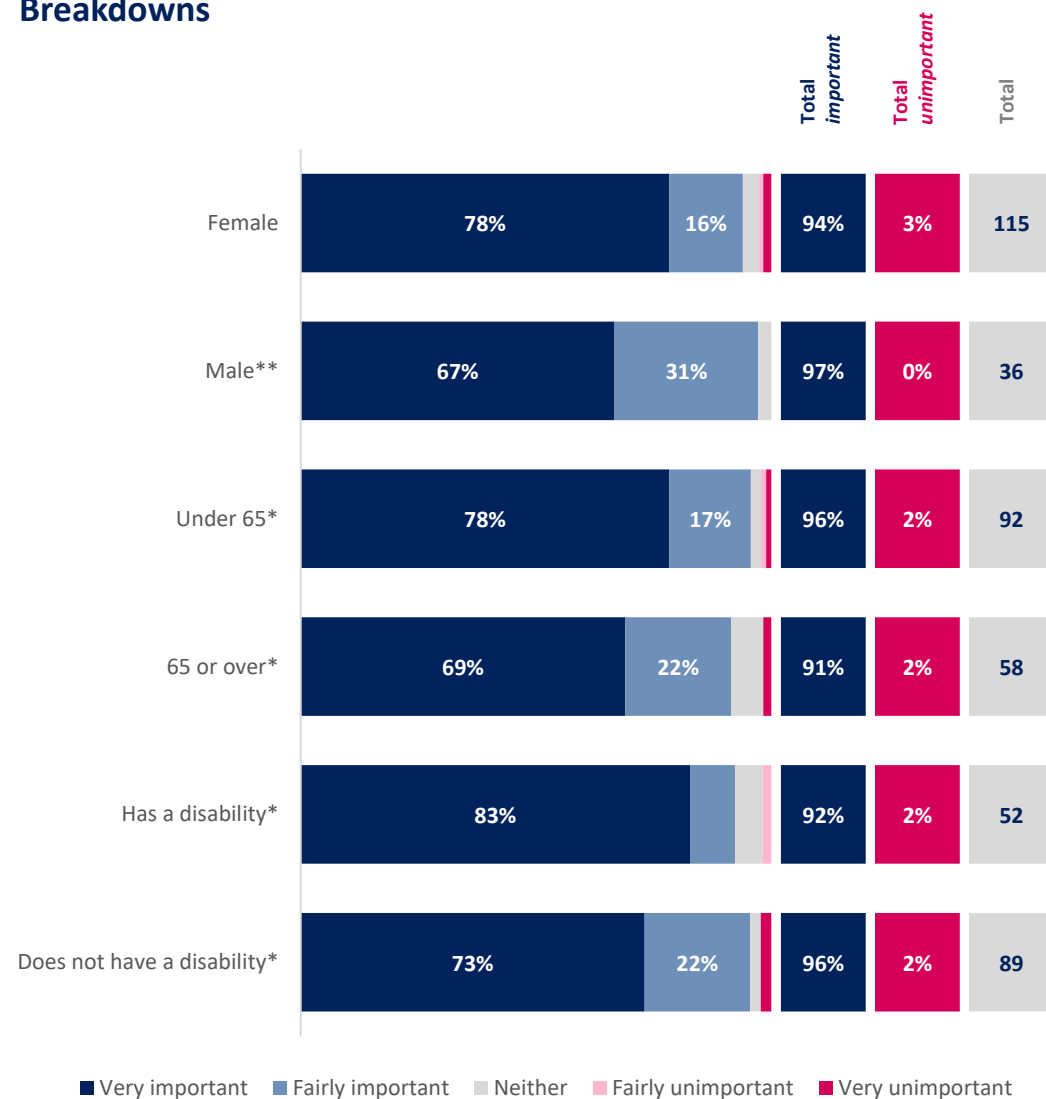
Question 12 | How important do you feel this proposed area of focus is?



Key findings

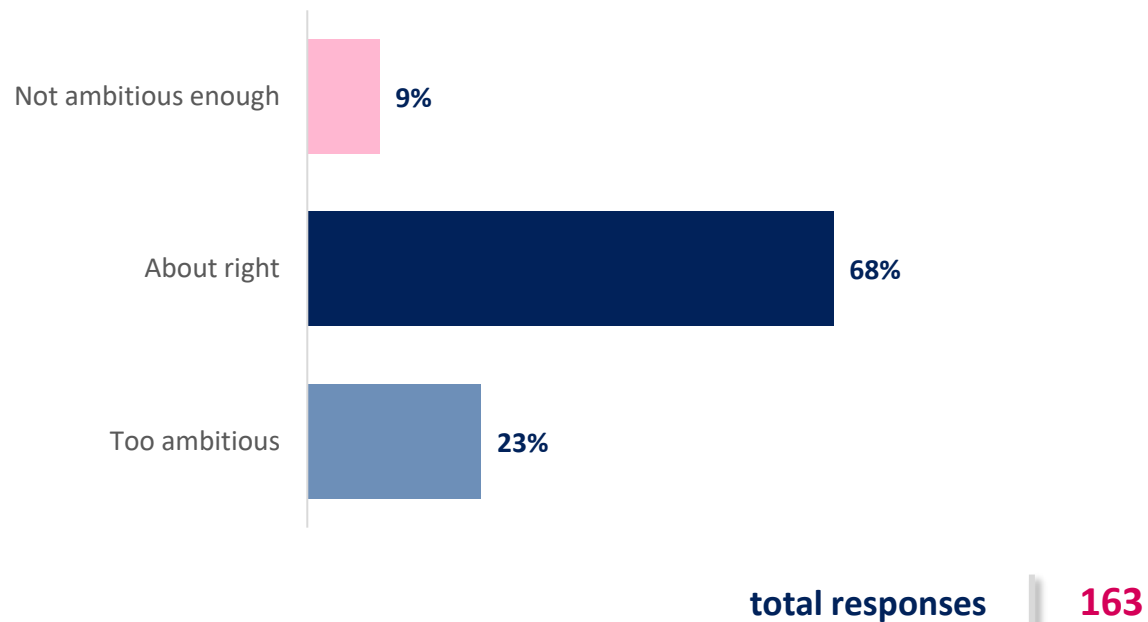
- 93% said that staying well was an important area of focus, with 73% saying it was very important
- Again, all available breakdowns responded important by 91% or more

Breakdowns





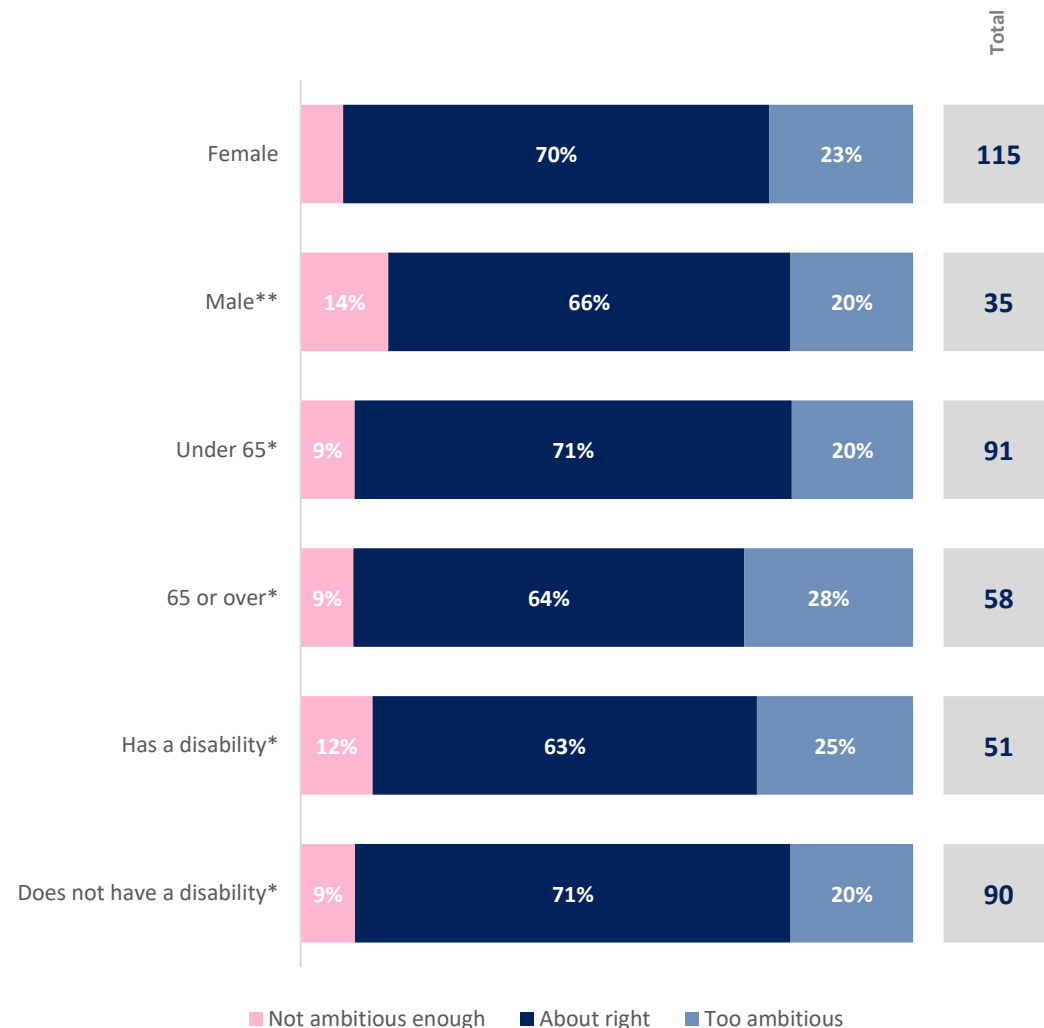
Question 13 | How ambitious do you feel the things we hope to do are?

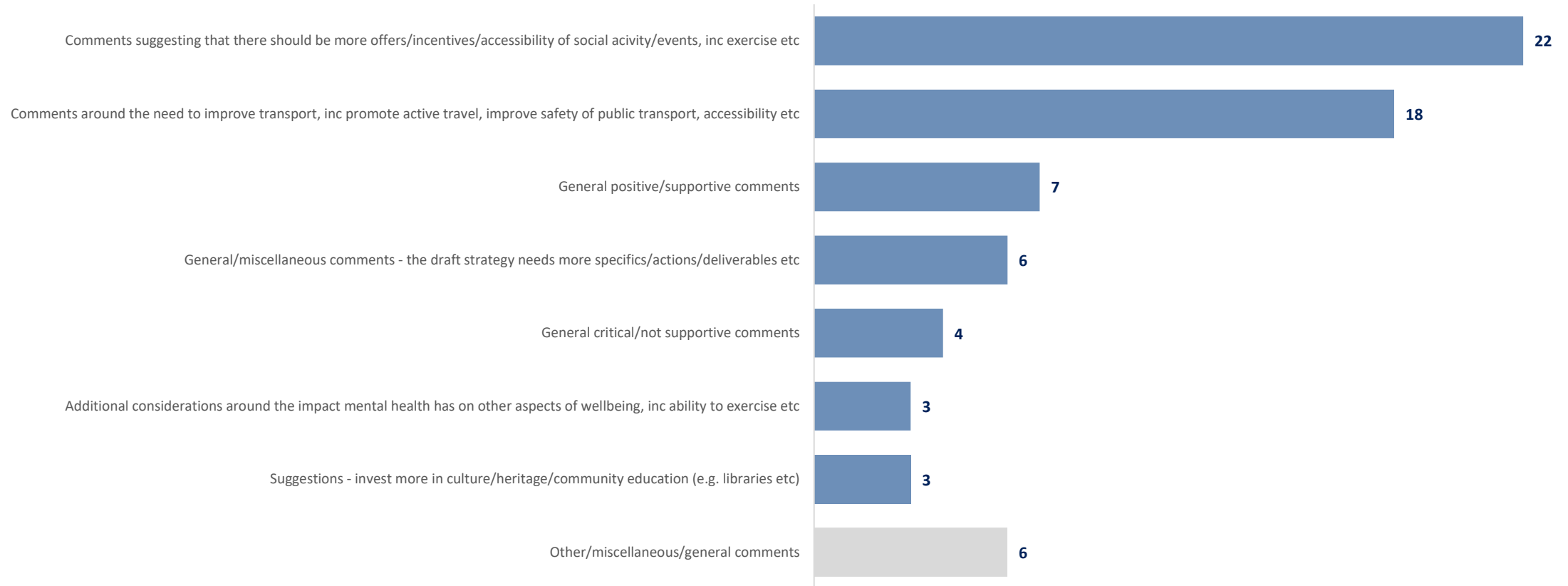


Key findings

- 68% of respondents said the ambition of this area of focus was about right, with 23% saying it is too ambitious
- All available breakdowns said the ambitions were about right by 50% or more

Breakdowns







AREAS OF FOCUS

Financially Well





“Financial wellbeing can be defined as feeling secure and in control of your finances, now and in the future. A life course approach is essential in addressing financial wellbeing - starting with financial literacy (how to manage money) and career awareness in schools, continuing through support for educational attainment (including opportunities for higher education), apprenticeships, and quality employment opportunities which would then support individuals in managing the financial demands of daily living and securing long-term stability. Alongside this is the importance of a whole life approach to developing and protecting good mental health and resilience.

The important relationship between good work and health is at the heart of the Great Britain Working White Paper and further highlighted within the NHS 10-year Health Plan. Good employment is closely linked to better health through psychological and financial wellbeing, providing income, purpose and stability. Helping people to maximise their potential for employment, or self-employment, is an important building block of health, can create other opportunities and improve life chances.

Supporting people who have additional needs such as neurodiversity, disabled people (including people with learning disabilities), long-term physical and mental health conditions, as well as people from ethnic minority backgrounds to enter the workforce and stay in employment is key to reducing health inequalities. Support to access eligible benefits for people unable to work is important for maximising financial wellbeing.

It is also important to help people stay in work when they experience ill health, through good access to healthcare services, timely treatment, and where required, suitable workplace adaptations. There are more people of working-age who are economically inactive due to ill-health and disability than ever before and the rate of increase in this group exceeds the increase in the growth of the overall working-age population. Work-limiting health conditions have particularly increased amongst younger people (aged 16 to 34), and are often due to mental health reasons, and amongst older people (aged 50 to 64), often due to musculoskeletal reasons. The impact of increasing economic inactivity seen in people with multiple long-term conditions and people affected by mental health or musculoskeletal conditions can be addressed through prevention, early identification and intervention, work support, job retention and rapid rehabilitation.

People with health challenges can also be encouraged to stay in employment through flexible working arrangement and workplace adaptations. Targeted initiatives and skills development pathways can be used to support younger people who have never worked in employment and those who have recently become economically inactive.

Financial wellbeing is closely linked with all other proposed priority themes in the strategy, supporting a good start in life, healthy ageing, and social connectedness.”

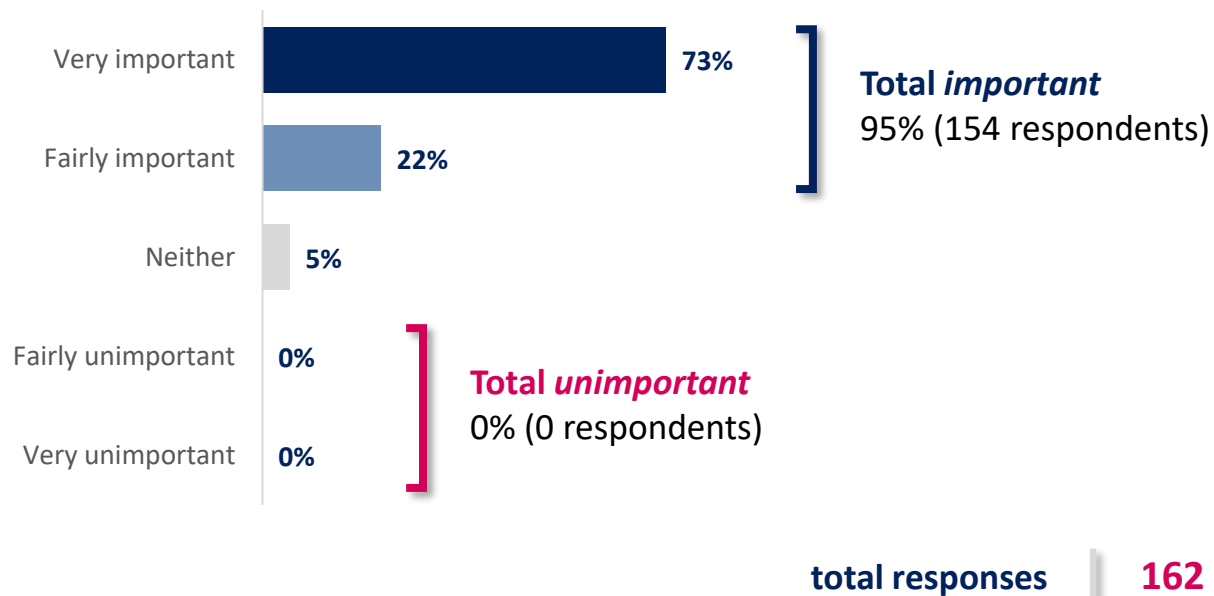


“Our proposed ambitions and the things we hope to do are:

- *Support all residents who want to work into employment*
- *Support all residents to receive the national benefits they are eligible for, particularly people facing multiple-disadvantage*
- *Increase the number of young people in Education Employment or Training*
- *Employers across sectors invest in employing people with additional needs such as those with learning disabilities, disabled people, long-term mental health conditions and/or who are neurodiverse*
- *Employers across sectors invest in supporting people who have life changes, develop long term conditions or become disabled, to remain in employment through better flexibility, job adjustments and timely support*
- *More children and young people living in Southampton are supported as they grow and develop to be ready for training and employment*
- *Employers supported to adapt to the new generation of young people entering the workplace*
- *Work experience for young people is made available across more sectors and more organisations and evolves to meet the needs of a new generation of young people*
- *Increase the range of flexible working opportunities across sectors innovating flexible options in roles not traditionally able to do so*
- *Support the growth of Small and Medium sized enterprises in the city*
- *Creating employment opportunities by supporting Green Growth initiatives*
- *Reduce gambling-related harm in Southampton by improving financial wellbeing, education, training and employment outcomes for vulnerable people through coordinated prevention, early intervention, and support systems.”*



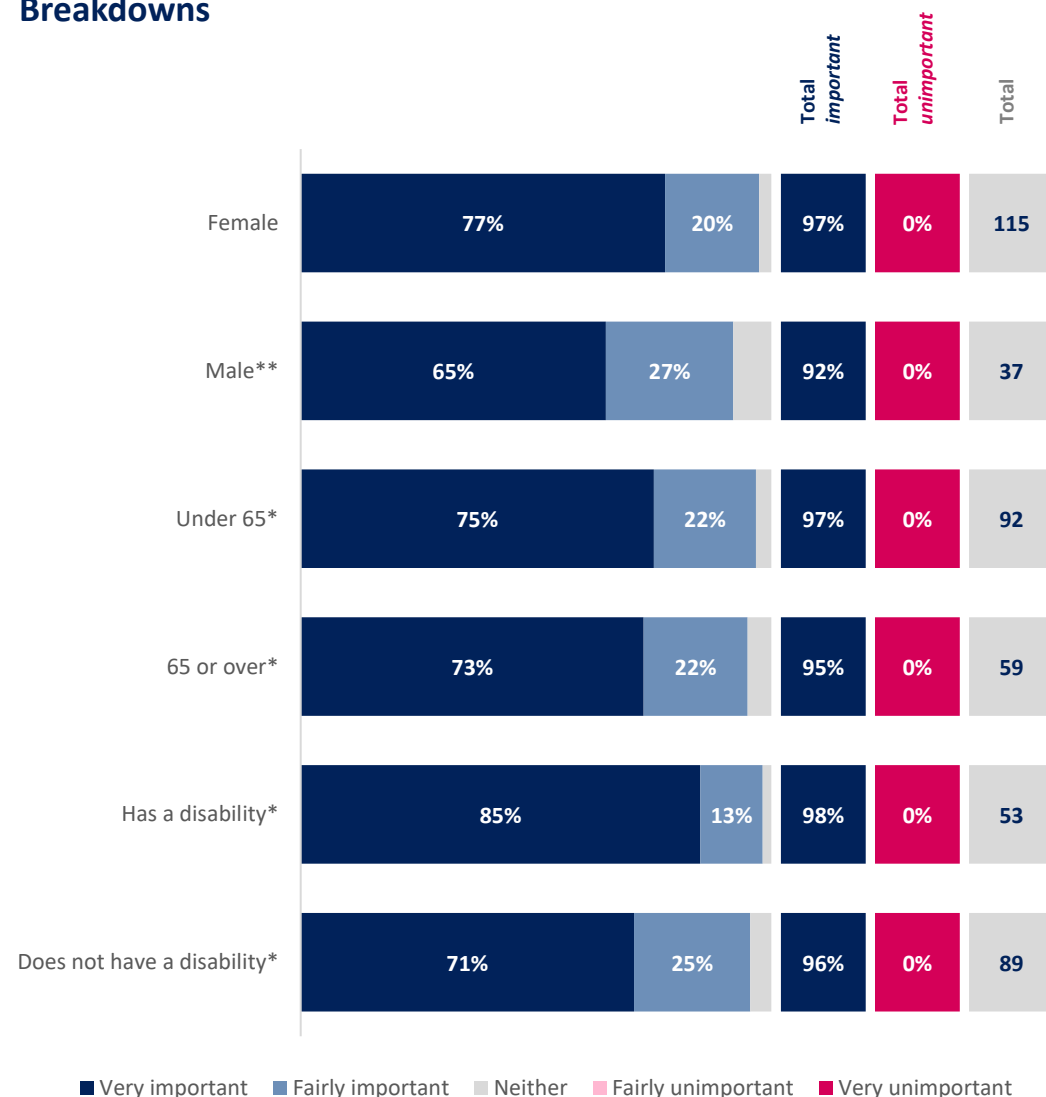
Question 15 | How important do you feel this proposed area of focus is?



Key findings

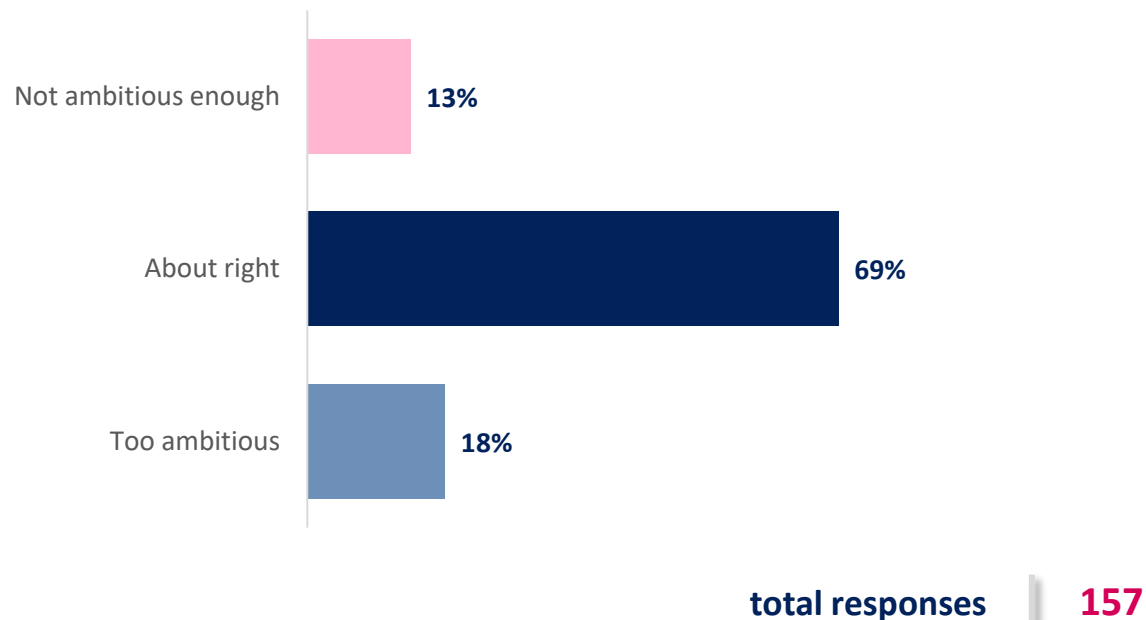
- 95% said that staying well was an important area of focus, with 73% saying it was very important and no respondents saying that it was unimportant
- Again, all available breakdowns responded important by 92% or more

Breakdowns





Question 16 | How ambitious do you feel the things we hope to do are?



Key findings

- 69% of respondents said the ambition of this area of focus was about right
- All available breakdowns said the ambitions were about right by 50% or more

Breakdowns

