



Community Survey August 2021

Survey Rationale

Coming out of what has been a challenging year, we are keen to understand how the Pandemic has impacted individuals and our community particularly, those living in Uppertorpe, Netherthorpe and Langsett as well as volunteers and service users from other areas. The findings from this survey will help us understand what steps we can take to enable the community to recover and flourish post Pandemic.

Report Headlines:

- 2/3 of those connected by digital mediums like Zoom found it effective and flexible during lockdown.
- 78% of Participants reported a decline in their mental wellbeing because of the Pandemic.
- 56% of Participants reported a decline in their physical wellbeing because of the Pandemic.
- People's sense of belonging to the community has declined because of the Pandemic.
- People feel less safe in public places since the Pandemic.
- 36% of Participants perceived something positive in their community during the Pandemic
- Participants have many gifts and ideas they want to develop or share with others in their community

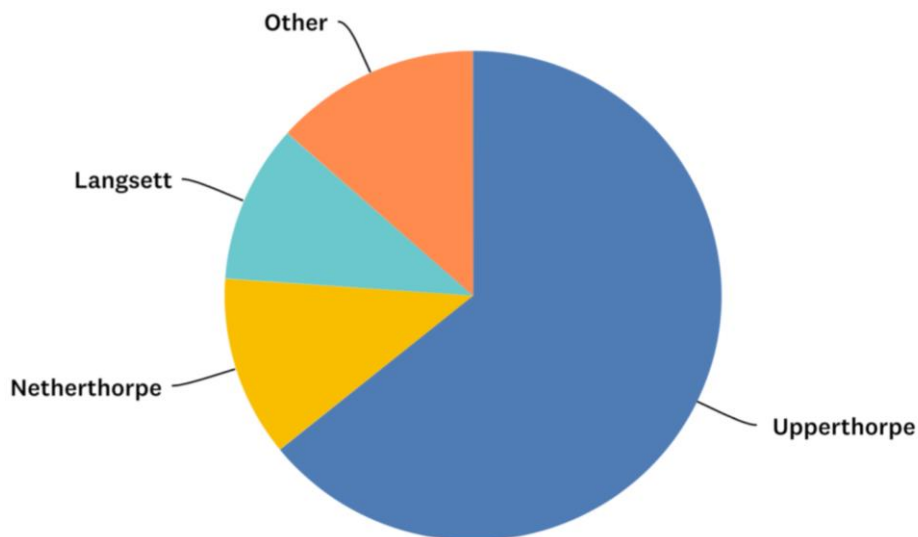
Method/design

The survey designer consulted with 10 members of the Zest community to discover what they felt were key issues coming out of the Pandemic. The survey was then created on Survey Monkey and made available online. The link and QR code were posted on the Zest website, Twitter, and Facebook. The survey designer and another person went out into the community to complete surveys face to face. Paper copies were also made available Zest's reception. The rationale behind a dual approach to completing the survey was to include as many Participants as possible.

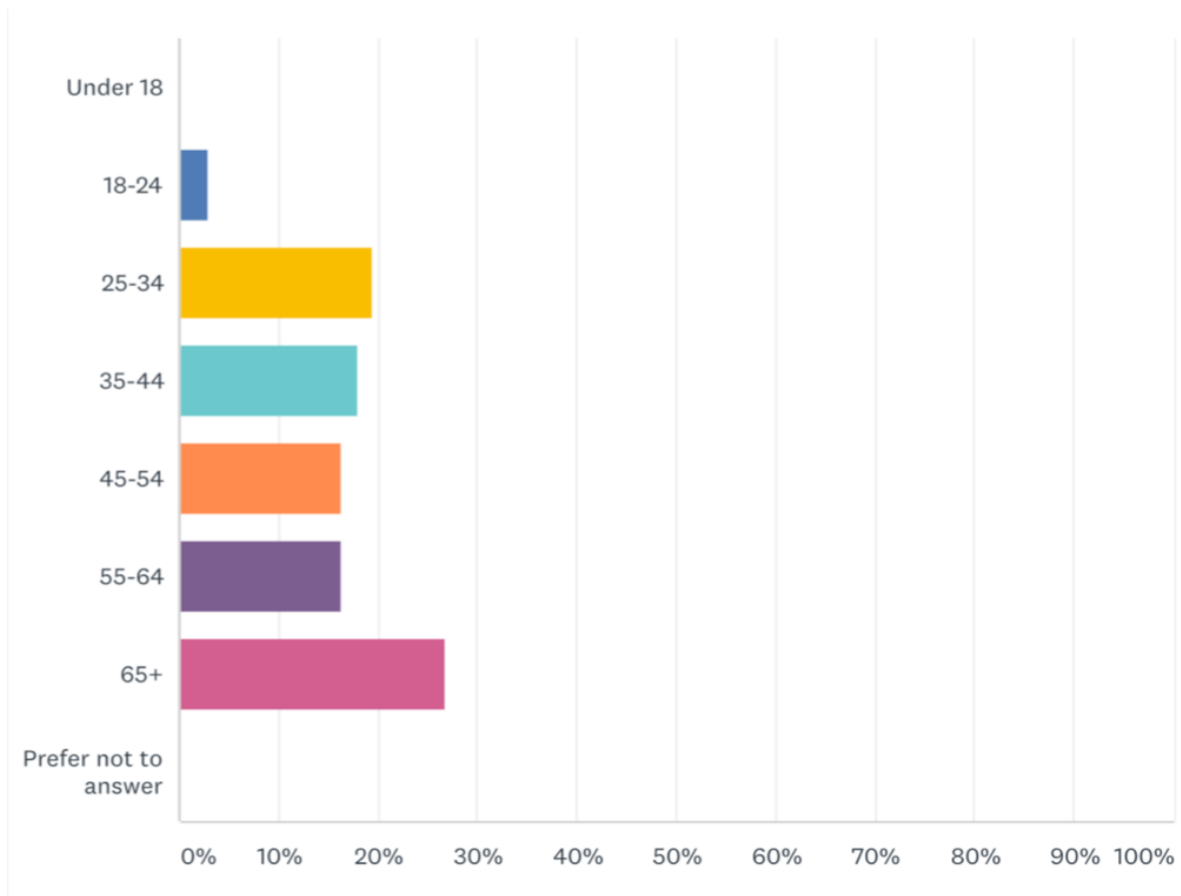
Participants

Sixty-seven (67) self-selected Participants completed the survey. The information below shows the demographic of survey Participants.

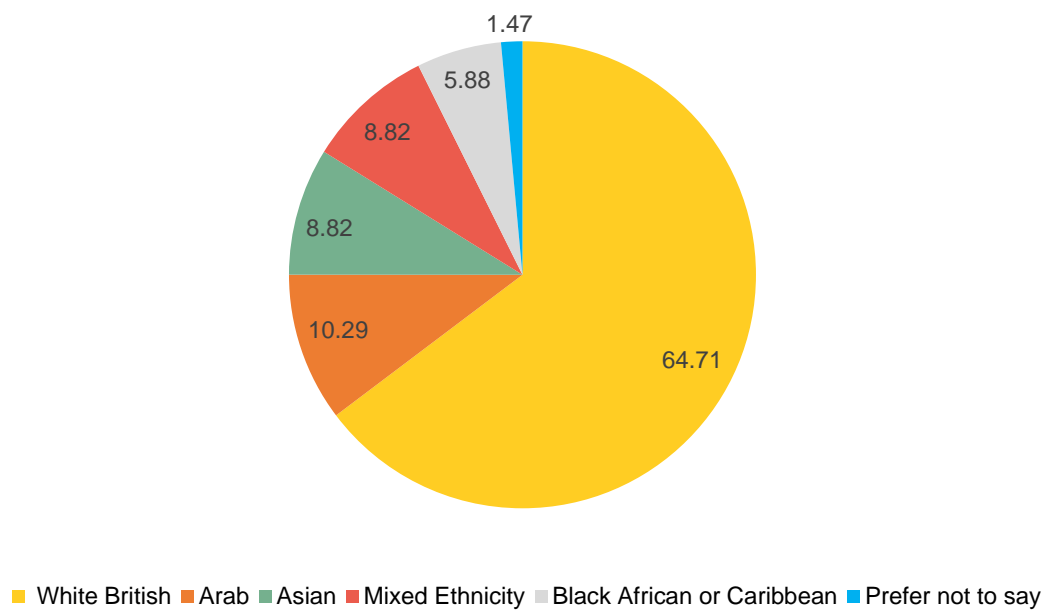
Area currently living in



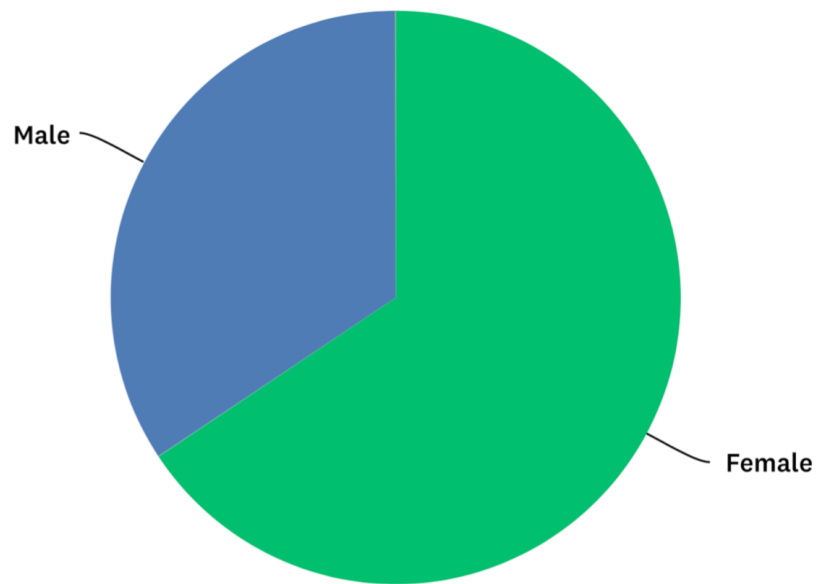
Age



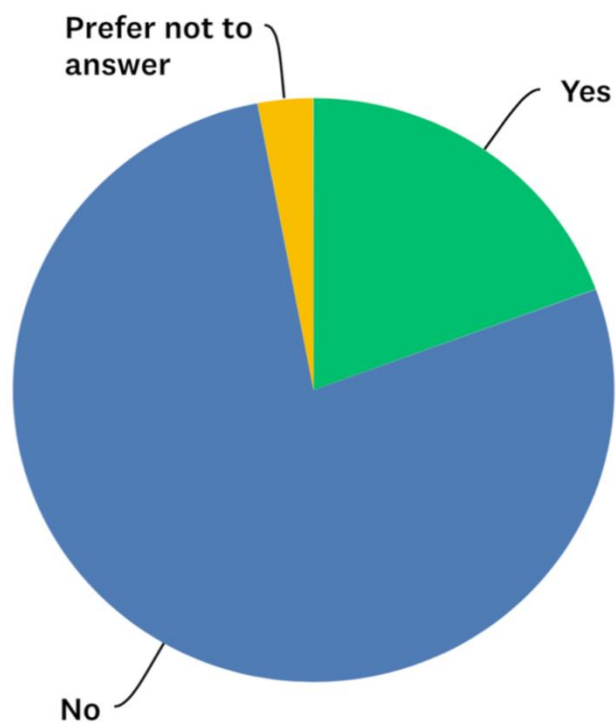
Ethnicity



Gender

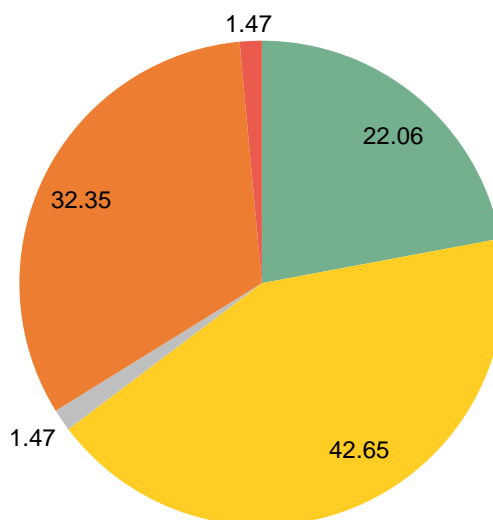


People with a Disability



Household makeup

- Live alone
- Live with 1 or more adults but no dependent children
- Live with 1 or more dependent children but no adults
- Live with 1 or more adults and 1 or more dependent children
- Prefer not to say



Reasons people come to Zest

Before the lockdown, 31% of Zest users surveyed visited *more than once a week*. Typical activities that they engaged in are reflected on this word cloud (the bigger the font, the more mentions).

Q12 Please comment on what activities or events you took part in if you did visit Zest



Frequency

Once Zest fully re-opens, 86% of survey Participants intend to visit as frequently as before the Pandemic. Some intend to visit more frequently.

Connecting digitally and by phone

Key Findings:

- Over 50% of Participants connected with family and friends by phone during the lockdowns.
- 30% used digital mediums such as Zoom to connect.
- Many Participants commented that digital mediums had been better than nothing during lockdown.
- “Better than nothing, not the same as face to face though.”
- “It was a mixed experience. It has been good in some ways but took its toll on my relationships.”

Wellbeing

Key Findings:

- The Pandemic had a detrimental effect on Participants' mental and physical wellbeing.
- 78% of Participants reported a decline in mental wellbeing.
- 56% reported a decline in physical wellbeing.

Participants identified the following might *improve their mental and physical wellbeing*:

- Resumption of pre-pandemic services.
- Community events, social gatherings, competitive games, crafts, healthy eating courses, games for the ‘older folk.’
- Ladies only gym, more adult swimming, Yoga, Zumba, Tai-Chi, pampering sessions.
- Counselling, adult further education, employment support.

“Pleased gym has reopened. Perhaps more directed challenges or advice rather than just the gym being open and being left to your own devices and motivation”

“Helped by keeping me more active and preventing boredom which makes me feel better within”

Community Belonging and Safety

Social Isolation

Interactions between people in the community have somewhat decreased since the pandemic. Participants reported less frequent interactions. Those reporting **never interacting** with others has **increased from 9% to 24%** since the Pandemic.

Key Findings:

- Participants' sense of belonging to their local community has decreased from 66% to 54%.
- They attribute this decline to a lack of local community activities, new sense of 'normal', not meeting new people, lack of information on Zest services and a general lack of hope.
- 94% of Participants felt safe using public places like Zest before the Pandemic.
- 88% feel safe using public places like Zest post Pandemic.
- Factors that would help Participants feel safer using public places included: regular cleaning, consistent advice from the Government, social distancing, one-way systems, limits to pool users, mask wearing, adequate ventilation, sanitisers, more staff presence.

Positive Community Action

Participants were asked to comment on whether they felt there was anything the community did during the Pandemic that highlighted a positive community action.

Key Findings:

- 22% of Participants did not feel that there was any positive community action during the Pandemic.
- 36% of Participants felt there was evidence of positive community action during the Pandemic.
- Responses included Zest as a hub, the Ponderosa Nature Group, litter picking, zoom meet ups, people offering to shop for neighbours, Neighbourhood WhatsApp group, meals for the elderly, clap for the NHS, giving food to those shielding, online support groups, crafts delivery, police presence, and street focused activities.

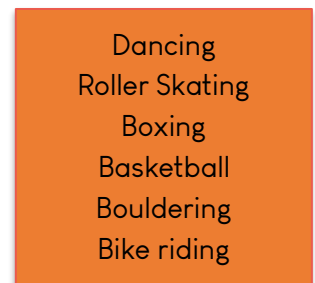
“Street WhatsApp and other social media networks was good. People shopped for each other. Street focused activities as Covid rules were relaxed was brilliant. It helped bring neighbours together and people now know and support each other”

“There was a sense of help within the community. Technology did rescue our loneliness. Lots of face-to-face activities and programmes moved online and as a result it helped so many people to stay connected virtually”

Looking to the Future

Community activities and interests

Interests and hobbies people were interested in within a community setting were many and varied.



Celebration

Participants also provided ideas for activities and celebratory events to help the community come together. Some of these ideas are:

- Art, picnics, music and singing in the Ponderosa
- BBQ and outdoor music
- Dog Show
- Car Boot
- Harvest Festival in the Community Orchard
- Community Choir
- Street Party
- Celebrate the Seasons: spring, summer, autumn winter

- Carnival on the Ponderosa
- Christmas and Eid celebrations
- Food Bazaar/Food event
- Mental Health awareness
- Nature/wildlife awareness
- Football Competition between the Tower Blocks

Community Offerings/Assets

Many participants said they were willing to contribute and get involved with community events. Here are some of the skills and resources offered.



Conclusion

Whilst restrictions are being lifted across England, the impacts from the Pandemic are far from over. The survey shows that Participants had a mixed response to connecting digitally on platforms such as Zoom. Whilst acknowledging the flexibility, some said it lacked the personal touch and much preferred face to face.

A decline in mental and physical wellbeing has been the most detrimental effect of the Pandemic. The survey shows that Participants acknowledge

this and are willing to engage in activities to counteract the negative impact.

The sense of belonging to their local community has reduced due to the Pandemic. Many Participants anticipate that when activities resume, their sense of belonging should increase. They will feel safe using public places like Zest provided there are adequate safety measures. Previous Zest users stated that they would happily return to Zest when services resume on the proviso that safety protocols are in place.

Some Participants acknowledged positives they saw in the community during the Pandemic. Although 22% could not think of any positives, others identified good things they had witnessed or experienced personally within their community.

Participants shared many interests and hobbies that they would either like to develop or share with the community. A celebratory event was welcomed by most after this difficult year. Many suggestions were made as well as offers to get involved with planning and organising. Participants agreed that a Celebratory Event would help bring people together as a community as well as create something to look forward to.

The survey has uncovered some harsh realities of living through the Pandemic affecting individuals and the community. Going forward, this survey offers useful insights to help shape future efforts and planning to enable individuals and the community to recover and rebuild.

“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.”