

## **Summary**

Eight events were organised and took place during late September/early October 2014 with a targeted group of stakeholders to engage on three key issues:

- the council's financial position and possible savings ideas and views on key services
- community delivery including the potential and any concerns around this approach
  - proposed changes to the eligibility criteria for adult social care

The events were organised in conjunction with Powys teaching Health Board who gave participants an insight into their financial position. PAVO offered their support by facilitating the community delivery workshops.

Over 100 workshops took place over this period allowing interested stakeholders like town and community councils, third sector representatives, volunteers and service users to hold conversations and contribute their thoughts and ideas around the three key issues listed above. Powys teaching Health Board also ran a workshop to capture views around their savings programme.

Cllr Dai Davies chaired every event as the Cabinet Lead for finance and at each event the Chief Executive or a Strategic director took it in turns to head up and give a presentation to set the scene and answer questions before participants were invited to join a workshop of their choice. Each participant had the opportunity to take part in two workshops during the session.

Day time attendance was better than attendance for the evening drop in sessions. Approximately 200 people attended the day time events while a further 100 (approximate) attended the evening sessions; **Budget Workshops**

After the lead facilitator had given the context three key questions were raised with participants at some of the workshops to help begin a dialogue/conversation. Please note: the purpose of the workshops was to have a dialogue with participants and the findings are more of a qualitative nature and give an indication of views expressed but are not robust or representative of the county as a whole. The questions which acted as a prompt and that were asked at some events are listed below with their answers.

**Q1 Knowing that savings to the tune of £70m have to be made by the council by the end of the decade which services do you feel are the most crucial for your community?**

The answers given by those taking part in the workshops were as follows:

<b>Service</b>	<b>Number</b>
<b>Education/Schools</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Adult Social Care including care in the community</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Childrens Services/ Child Protection</b>	<b>12</b>
Leisure centres	12
Waste – recycling and refuse collection services	12
Libraries	11
Highways/Road maintenance	8
Toilets	5
Arts	5
Health care services including hospitals, dentists, minor injury units	5
Support services (empowering people to help themselves, advice services)	3
Transport	3
Planning	2
Regeneration and job creation opportunities	2
Youth Services	2
Day care centres	2
Playgrounds	1
Environmental Health/Trading Standards	1
Community garden	1
Litter bins	1
Mental health	1

The top three services resonate with the findings of our last budget telephone survey conducted in October last year. This telephone survey was conducted with a robust countywide sample of 383 residents which makes the results representative of the

county as a whole. The specific question asked people to prioritise the six service areas which were listed in our then Powys Change Plan. The results showed that:

- 73% placed Children and Family Services as a high priority and
- 70% placed Adult Social Care as a high priority too
- 61% placed learning and community (including schools) in a high category

The other priorities were regeneration, housing transformation and climate change. All of these were classed as lower priorities.

## Q2 Who could deliver these services if the council can no longer afford to do so?

Provider Ideas	Number
Private companies	10
Voluntary/third sector / charities	8
Town and community councils	6
PCC/PtHB joint approach	5
Volunteers	5
Co-location/one stop shop with mix of partners/providers	2
Communities	2
Social enterprises	2
Joint working/collaboration with other local authorities	2
Community centres	1
Education trusts (school specific)	1
Local historical societies (library specific)	1
Police (child protection specific)	1
Tourism Association (tourism specific)	1
Friends of Services like libraries, social services etc.	1
Foundations	1
Guilds	1

Interestingly although a number of town and community councils attended the events and contributed to the workshops the top answer given by participants on the budget workshop table was that private companies could deliver the services that the council

could no longer afford to. The top three providers link in with our current commissioning strategy which is about delivering services in a mix of different ways with the key aim to providing better outcomes, best value and reduce council spending.

A couple of respondents who obviously had a lot of knowledge had gone into great detail about the potential for the council to investigate the use and scope of alternative service provision like foundations, guilds and social enterprises to delivery services or raise additional income streams. More information on the comments given will be provided to Finance.

### Q3 Which services could you live without?

Service	Number
Library (one person wrote that the library is not as important as the day centre)	8
Leisure/recreation	5
Translation services	3
The no of county councillors	3
Tourism	2
Information sent out via the post (email instead) /paper based services	2
Museums	2
Adult education	2
A weekly refuse collection service – go fortnightly	2
Door-to-door recycling – people can take to recycling banks	2
Small primary schools	1
Housing	1
Street lights	1
Free swimming (lobby Welsh Government to stop the offer)	1
De-adopt roads	1
Multiple buildings – change use and share with others	1
Youth Service – depending on the actual cost to run it?	1
Adult services	1
Grass cutting	1
Funded nursery places (government funded)	1
Sports fields	1

Schools (but I don't have children)	1
Oriel Davies Gallery (Newtown)	1
It's possible to live without certain services but it impacts on our quality of life.	1

The table above shows that although a decision has just been made by Cabinet to reduce the library opening hours by 20% so as to ensure all libraries remain open in the short term there is an acceptance and willingness from some people that they could survive without their library. ***Please note however that when asked which services are most crucial eleven people said libraries.***

Please note – the numbers are not significant enough to be robust and we need to be aware of the profile of the stakeholders attending these meetings. The information gained is useful in terms of getting a feel for these residents' views. The online budget simulator will provide us with more detailed profile information which we can cross reference with our population to see how robust the data is. In January 2014 we had over a thousand comments which was deemed robust for a population the size of Powys.

#### **Total number of additional comments/ideas logged**

Alongside the three questions which were used in some of the workshops, a further 615 comments/ideas were logged by officers. Brecon, Llandrindod Wells and Llanidloes were the events that captured the most comments. (115, 113 and 113 respectively). People coming to the evening events had the opportunity to write in the comments book, on the exhibition panel via post-it notes or complete a comments form and post it in a comments box. A few residents also emailed in their ideas and these have been included in the overall figures. 31 comments were recorded from these methods.

From the 615 comments, 251 were around cost savings and ideas that the council could consider to generate income, 150 were specific to community delivery and 50 related to education and schools. Comments regarding the refuse collection service and recycling totalled 27.

The key areas for savings / income generation were as follows:

- Be more efficiency focused – consider outcome not inputs, work in collaboration/partnership with others, outsource, commission
- Engage communities in discussions to provide the right services.
- Consider statutory versus discretionary services and how to cut costs in both even if not PCC delivered
- Consider income generation ideas and be more creative in our approach. Sell the services we excel at to other authorities.
- Change the approach and think long term (Some comments were : Current approach feels like a death by a thousand cuts/Won't find libraries provided for 500-1000 people anywhere else in the country/ Central services - role will have to

change. Have to get the balance right. Have to come up with a different model for Powys as the investment isn't there) □  
Procurement – find the cheapest provider.

- Improve grant process for funding so potential for smaller organisations to succeed □ Lobby Welsh Government for more money.
- Tackle fraud to lever back monies owed to us.
- Reduce duplication of services (e.g. Welfare and Benefits advice given out by Social Services and Citizens Advice Bureau)  
□ Get it right first time ethos will save money in the long term.
- Focus on working together to solve problems - systems - SWOT's look at the strengths and opportunities

A further 85 comments were more general and focused on comments, questions or concerns raised by participants. These included issues like:

- Providing people with information and explaining what services are at risk
- Undertaking an audit of skills and using skill sets of employees better
- Lack of understanding of which services people really value and need
- Geographical issues and rural nature of Powys means different communities need different services and different communities feel they are left out re- service delivery.
- Subsidies – should we be running things at a loss?
- Social values need to be considered re- service delivery not just cost. **Community Delivery Issues**

Finally there were a number of conversations about community delivery as a mechanism to save money. The key comment around community delivery was allowing enough time and information for other organisations/town and community councils/third sector etc. to be able to understand the context, costs and consequences of taking over a traditional council ran service and what support would be provided by the local authority to help this process.

## Key Findings from Online Budget Consultation Held January / February 2015

An on-line consultation exercise was conducted during late January 2014 and early February 2015 that presented the new and / or significant savings proposals for 2015/16. Not all the proposals were consulted upon as some were continuing projects and had been consulted upon during the 2014/15 consultation round. Consultees were asked simply whether they agreed or disagreed with each savings proposal. 366 responses were received however, not all consultees chose to answer every question posed. The results of the consultation are presented below:

Proposal	Yes (%)	No (%)	Number of people who answered Yes or No
Continue the transformation of the way we operate our fleet of vehicles. This will save us some £1.7m.	96	4	249
Continue the programme to move customer contact points to libraries, using existing library staff. This will save £100,000.	92	8	243
The £215k Resources directorate savings will be achieved by sharing services with other organisations and through further efficiencies (last year the directorate saved £1.9m) generated by improving systems and processes.	88	12	225
Reorganising the provision of the Pupil Referral Unit Service to make it more cost effective. The Support being given will not be reduced. We have identified and removed some historic funding anomalies where some schools have received funding in excess of requirements. This is expected to save some £335,000.	86	14	239
Continue the transformation of our waste collection services. This will save £300,000.	85	15	251
Reduce our spending with third parties (suppliers of goods and services) by some £743,000.	85	15	219
Discontinue paying the lease for the dance centre in Llandrindod Wells (Powys Dance is currently in the process of moving to a Trust status) and lease out the drama centre in the town (or share its use with others) to save £22,500.	80	20	231
Continue the process of modernising school provision in the county. This is expected to save some £350,000.	77	23	239
Outsource our "Facilities Management" service (which looks after council properties). This will save the council some £74,000.]	73	27	241
Asset transfer sports pavilions to the community and establish sports associations to maintain pitches with a view to saving £68,000.	73	27	244

Remodel Learning Disability Respite Care Services - To enable customers to have greater choice in the type of respite they receive and ensure that the provision of respite service is cost effective. This will save some £25,000.	71	29	212
Transform our Highways, Transport and Waste services to save some £2m. This saving will include increasing income generated through Trade Waste, Parking, Highways and Enforcement, efficiencies such as contract review, staff reductions and reviews of working practices across many services. Service delivery may change in terms of frequency, levels of service and how the service is delivered.	70	30	235
Lease or asset transfer play areas to town and community councils to save £20,000.	67	33	244
Outsource the management of our leisure centres to save £450,000.	65	35	253
Implement Fairer Care Policy. This policy would introduce a maximum threshold for care services delivered in the community. The exact threshold would be individual to each customer, based on their assessed need. This is expected to save some £380,000.	65	35	216
Reduce spending on transport by some £1.4m.	56	44	220
Increase our income (through fees and charges) raising some £250,000	55	45	220
Save some £250,000 through the closure of a number of public buildings across Powys.	54	46	234
Continue to reconfigure Day Time Opportunities for Older People AND increase charges for attendance at Day Centre Provision to full cost recovery at £36 per attendance up to a maximum of £50 p/w. This will save some £300,000.	36	64	222

Consultees were asked if they had any further comments to make on the proposals. The most frequently raised issues are described below. (Numbers in brackets are the number of times a particular issue has arisen)

The most common comment was a criticism of a lack of detail in the proposals within the survey (18) while others called on the council to protect spending on education (6) or reduce the number of councillors (6).

Others described existing council practices as inefficient (5) or that outsourcing services may cost more (5). The most vulnerable in society are being affected most, particularly the young and elderly, thought some (5).

Some felt that the council should reduce the senior management pay bill (4) or reduce the council's pay bill generally (4). There was also a call to reduce spending on consultants (2).

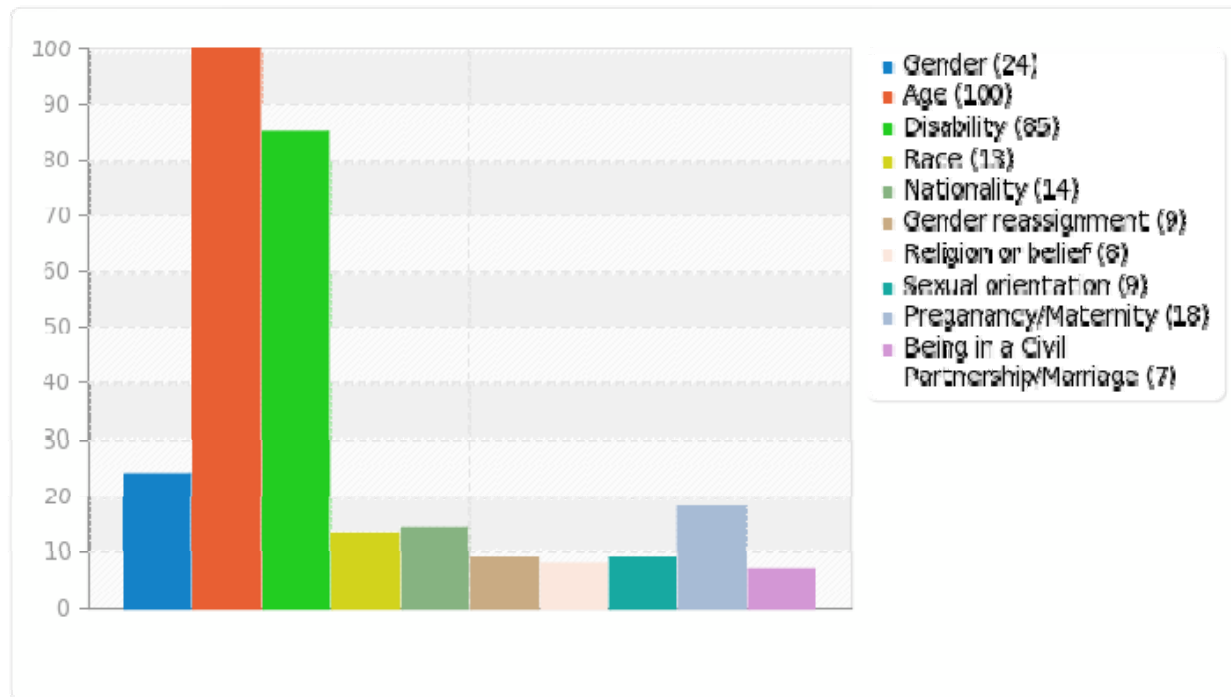
There was a recognition that Powys County Council was not responsible for its reduced budget (austerity policies) (3) while others felt that the council needed to recognise the economic benefits of windfarms. (3)



There was a call to protect spending on Powys Dance and support for theatres (2) and to engage more with staff regarding potential change (2).

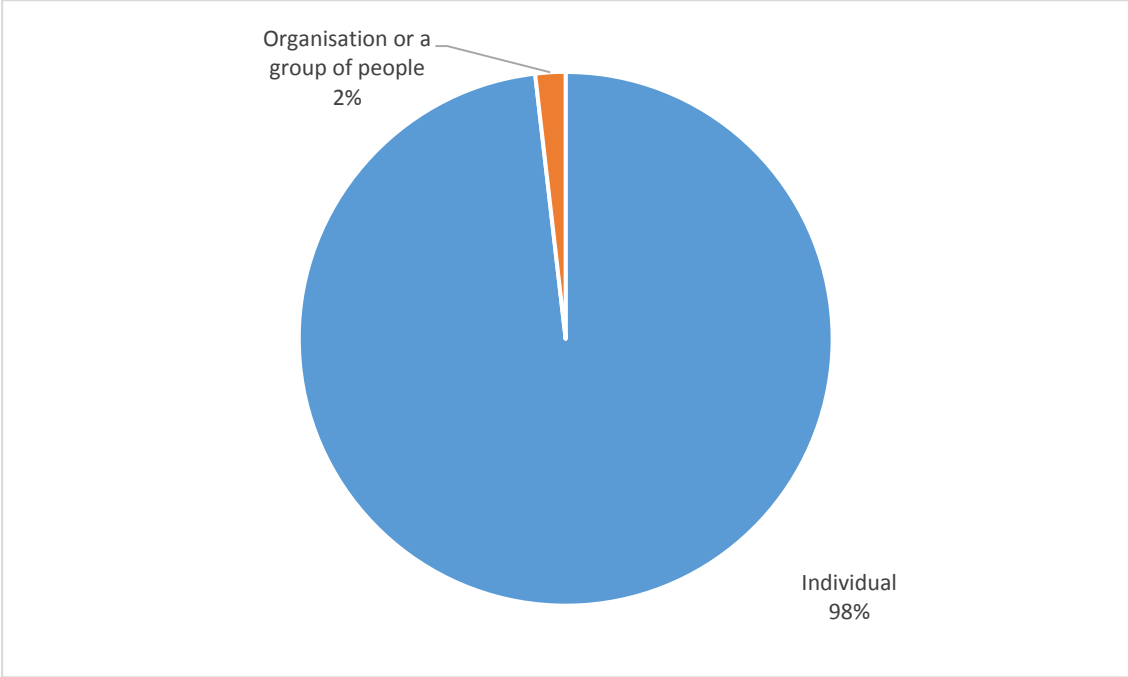
Some asked why the proposals had not been implemented before (2). Others called on the council not to close any ALN provision/units (2) while there were also call to close unviable schools (2).

Consultees were asked, when considering the proposals listed, if any of the described characteristics that people have, in their view, would put a service user at a distinct disadvantage because of the changes being proposed as opposed to anyone else wanting to access the service. The following table presents the responses to this question.

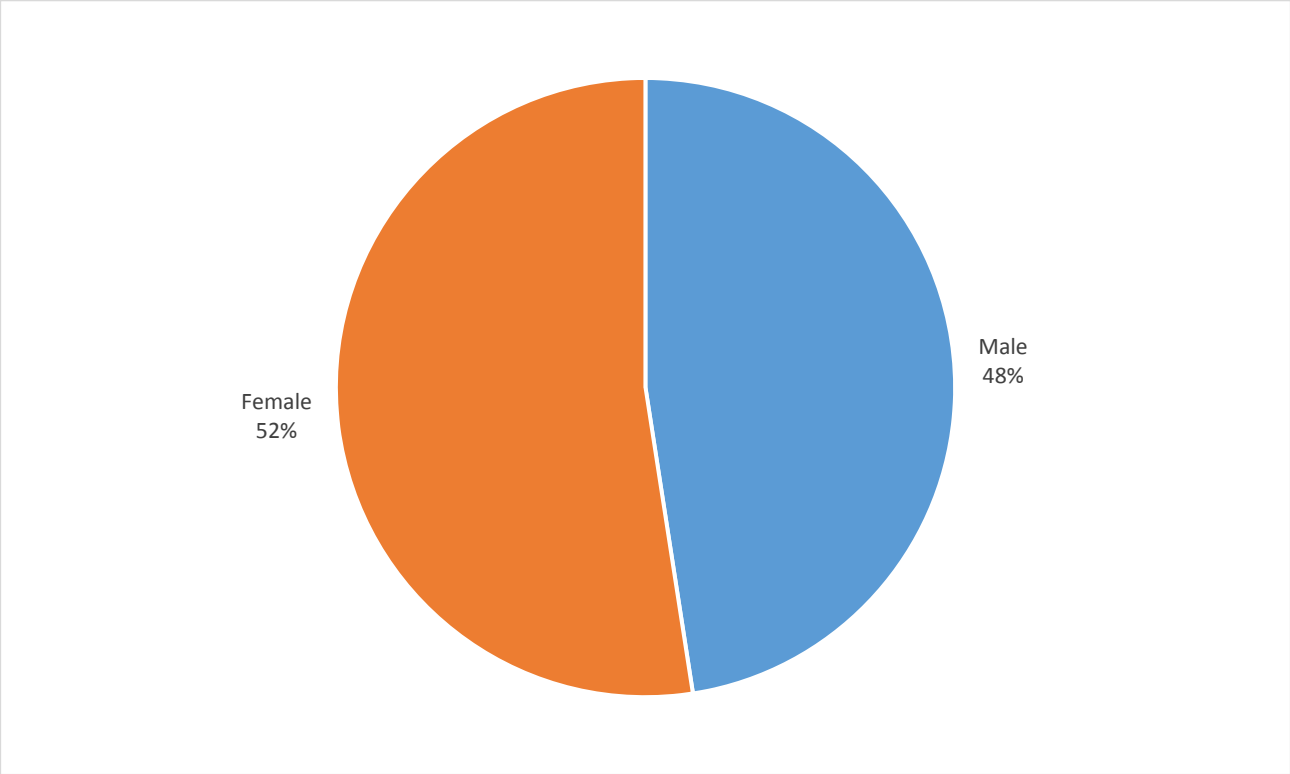


The following questions and response tables present details about the consultees including their age, gender and location of residence.

**QA1a Have you answered this survey as an individual or on behalf of an organisation or a group of people?**

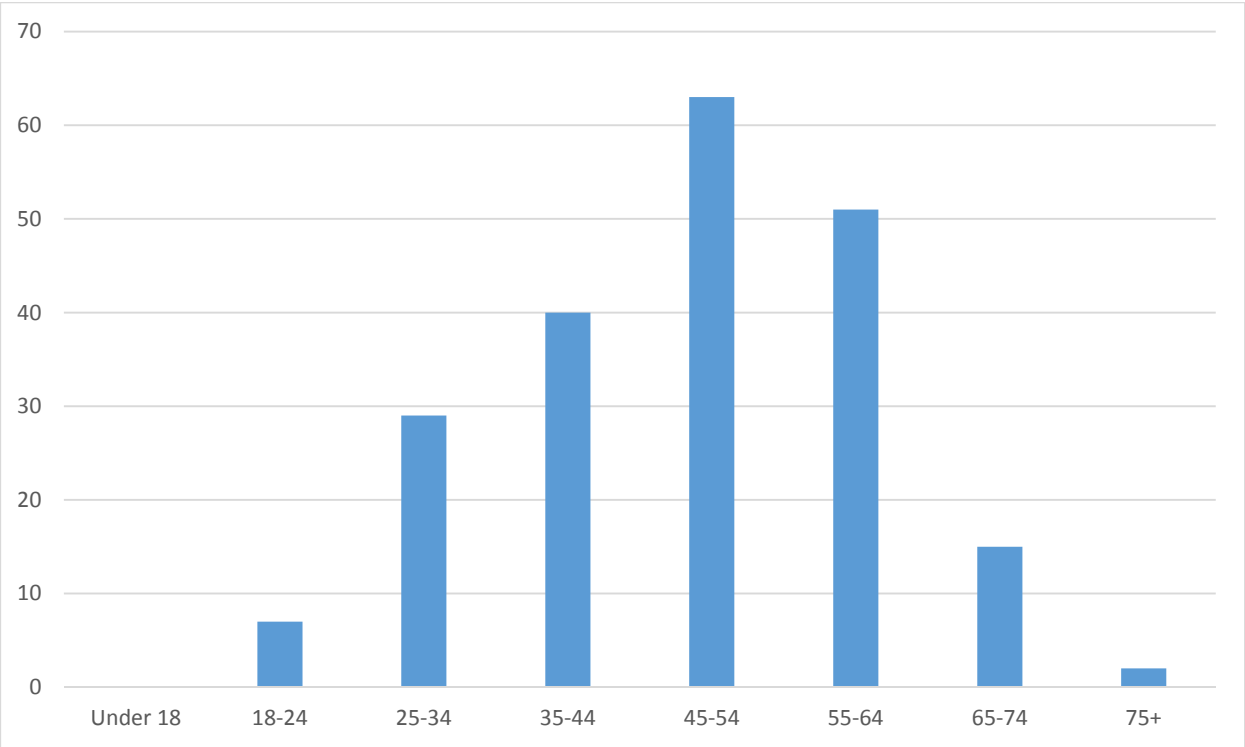


**QA2 What is your gender?**

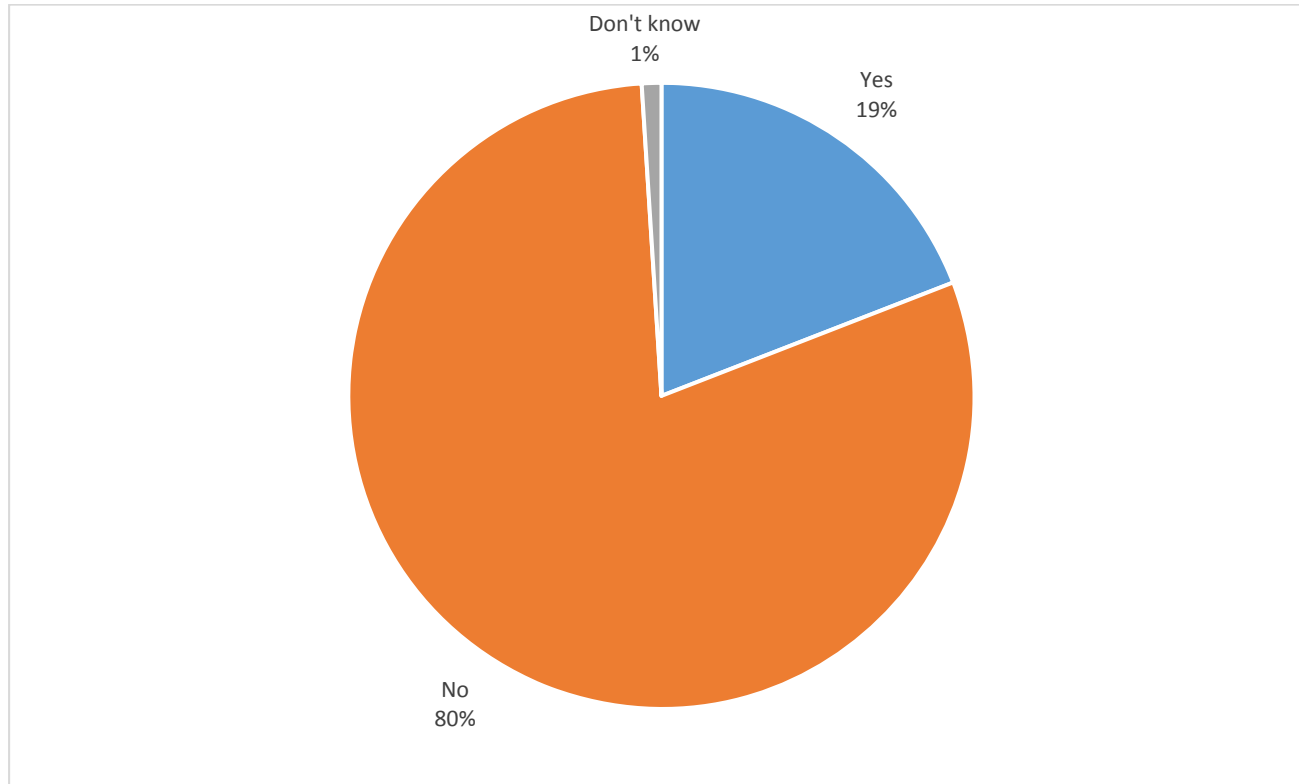


(Base = 204)

**QA3 What is your age?**

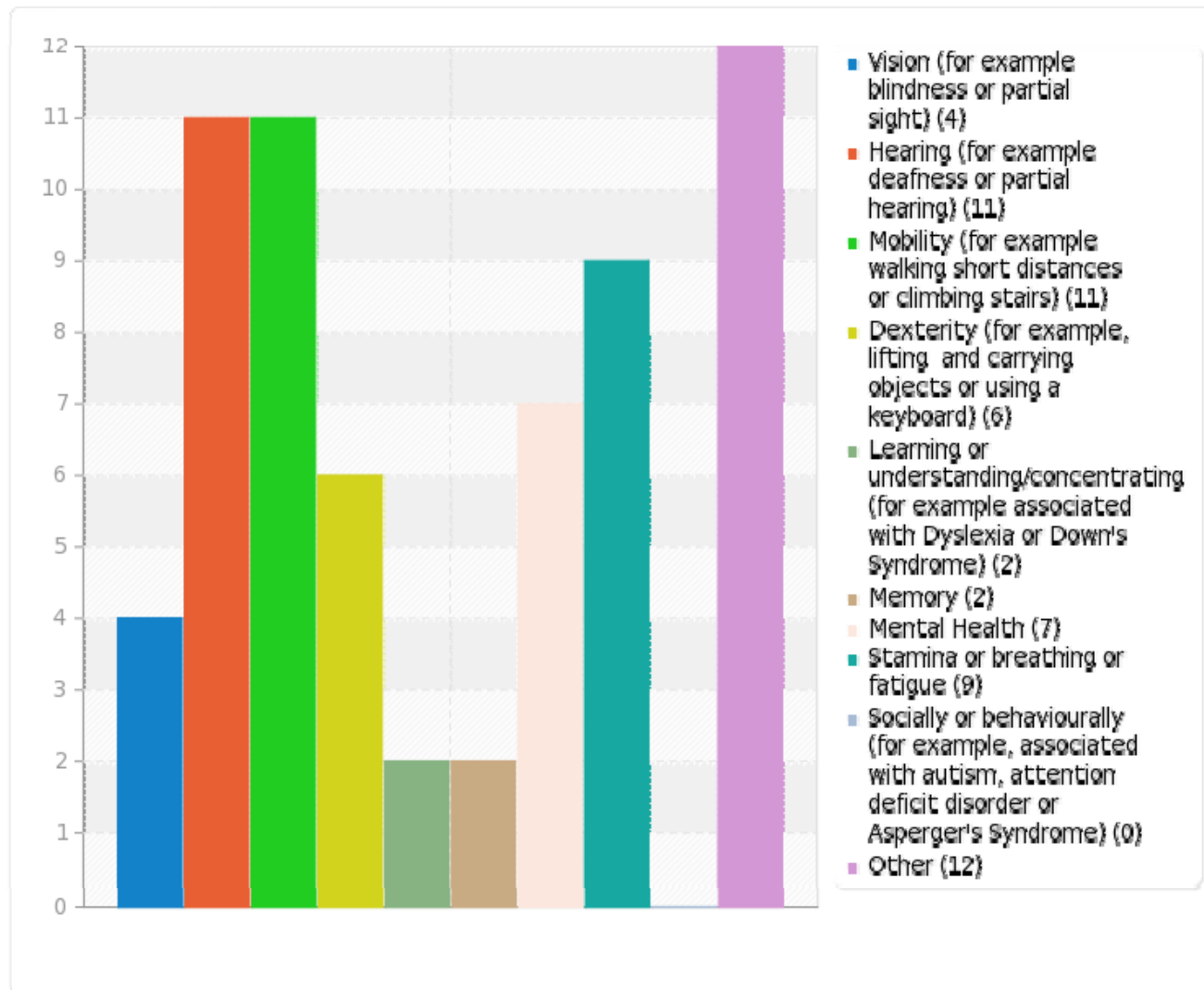


**QA4 Do you have any physical or mental health conditions, illnesses or impairments, lasting, or expected to last, 12 months or more?**



**(Base = 199)**

**QA5 If yes, please indicate what these are:**

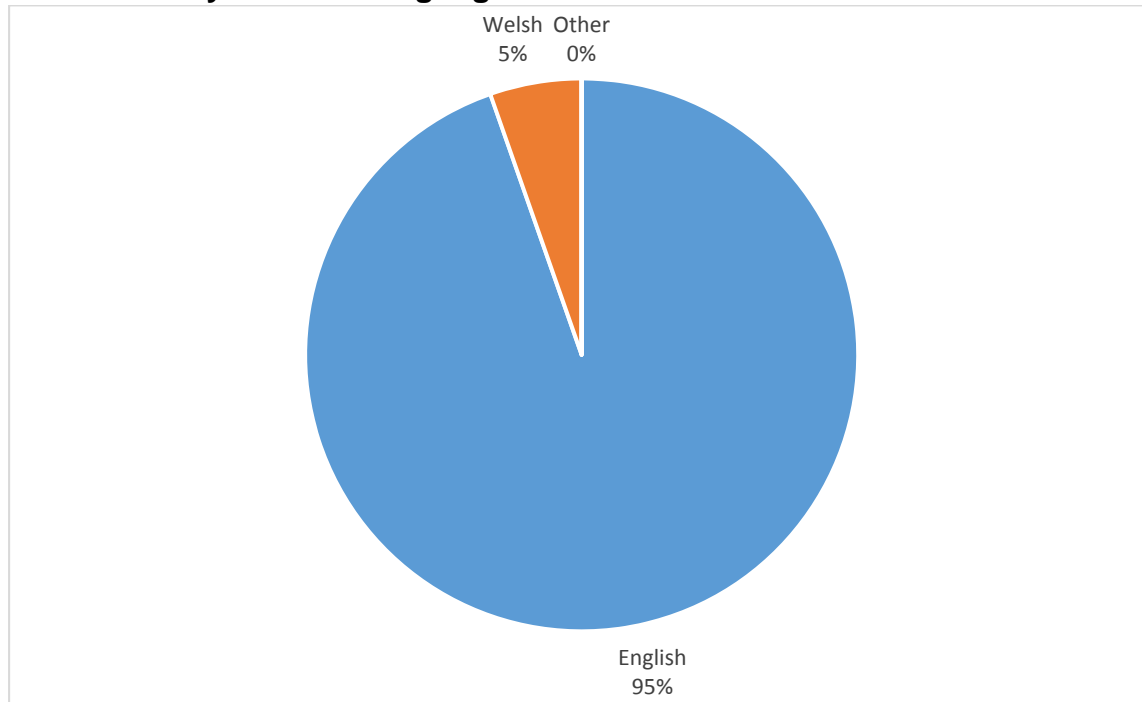


**Other responses:**

- Hay fever, dermatitis, peanut allergy
- Hypertension
- Cancer

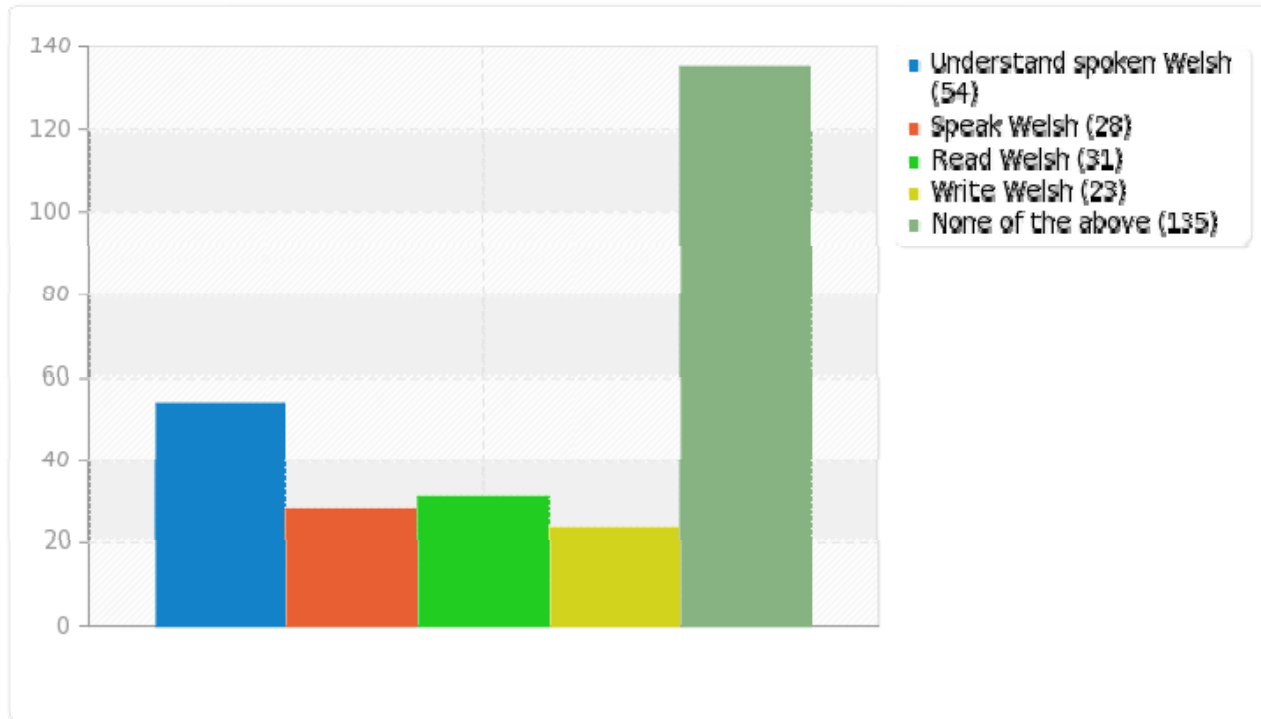
- Enlarged heart
- Hay fever.
- Diabetes
- Arthritis
- Physical
- Pain
- Diabetes

**QA6 What is your main language?**



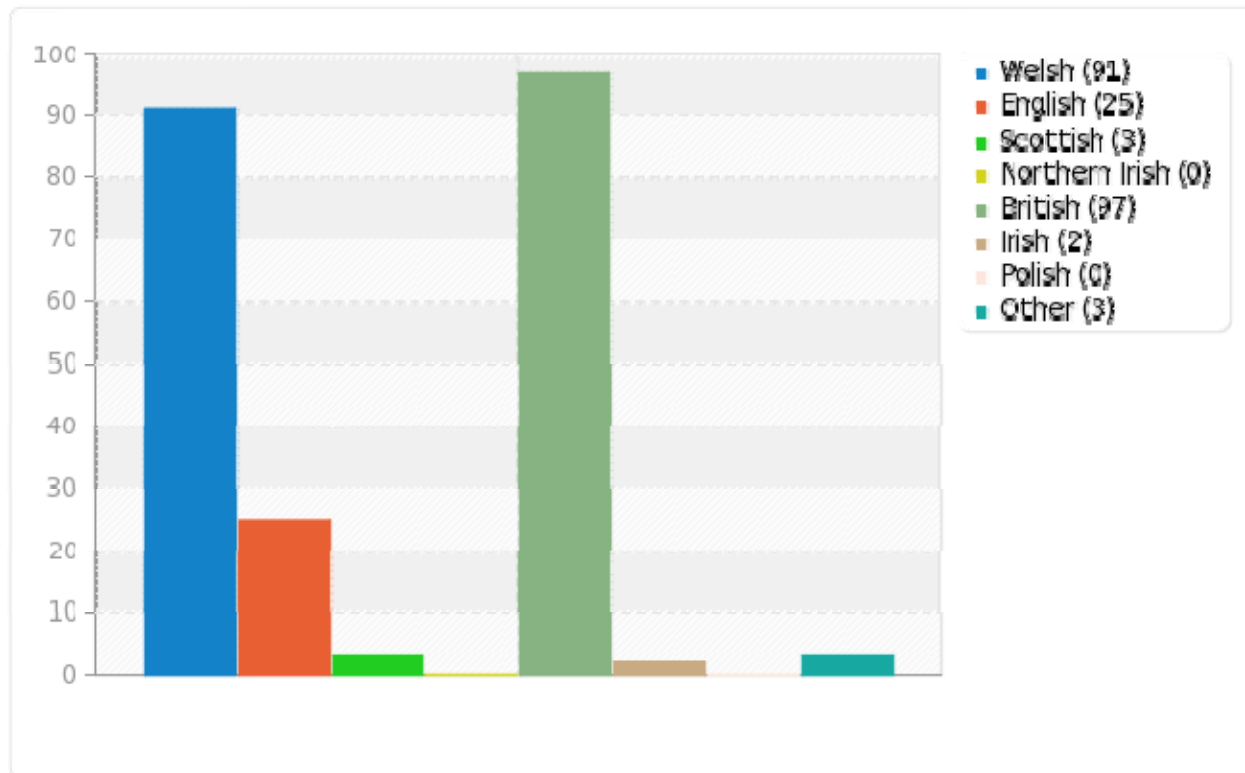
(Base = 205)

### QA7 Can you understand, speak, read or write Welsh?





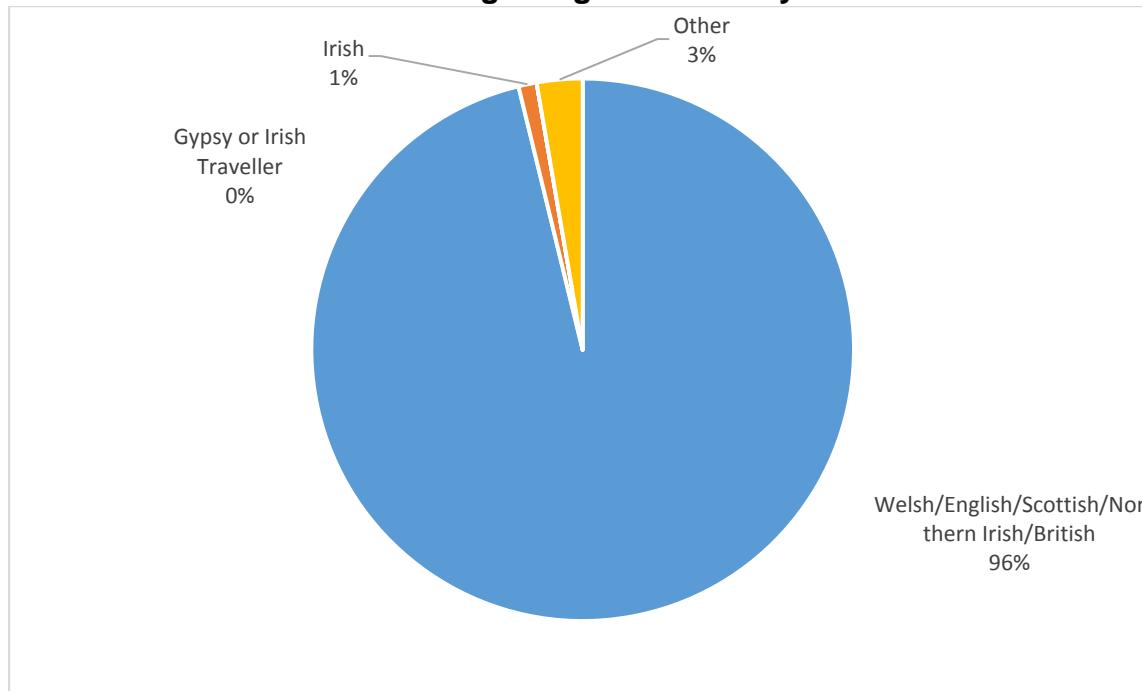
**QA8 How would you describe your national identity?**



**QA9 What is your ethnic group?**

All respondents who answered this question answered White.

**QA9i Which one of the following categories would you use to further define your ethnicity?**

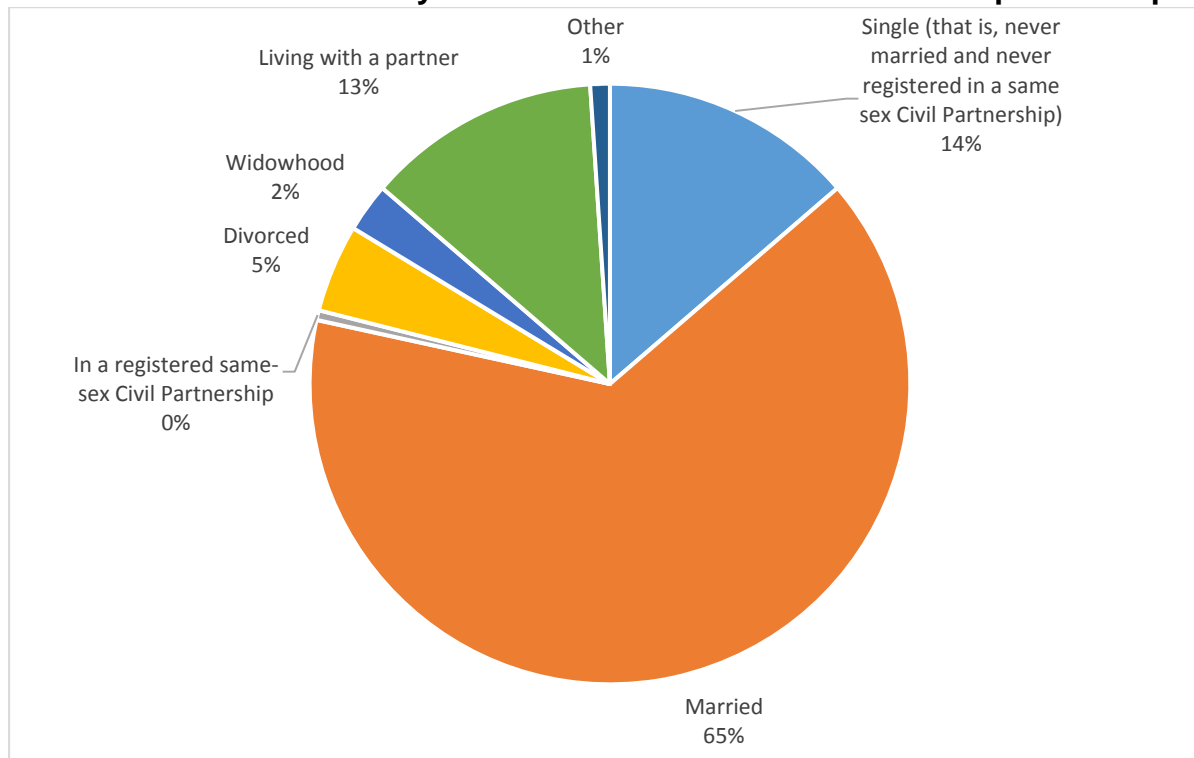


(Base = 184)

Other answers:

- Of English and Greek ancestry
- American
- European
- European
- Radnor

**QA10 IF OVER 16: What is your current marital or same-sex civil partnership status?**

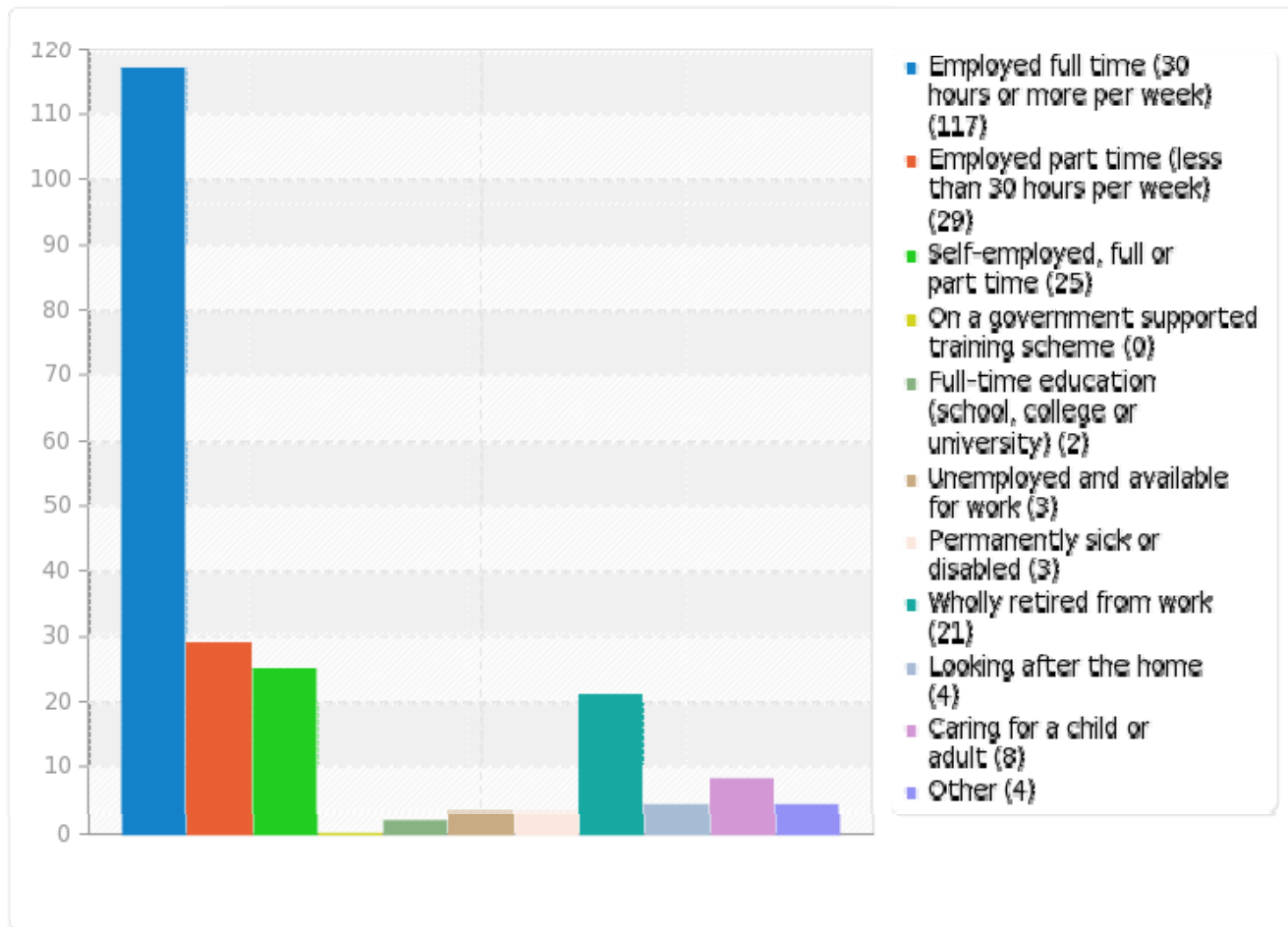


(Base = 190)

Other answers:

- Married but separated
- Separated

**QA11 Which of the following best describes what you are doing at the present?**



**Other answers:**

- Disabled Volunteer
- Voluntary work
- Retired, but volunteering extensively
- Caring for 2 adults

**QA11a Please describe the organisation or group of people on whose behalf you have responded.**

- People using 3rd sector mental health services
- Third Sector
- Powys Carers service (for unpaid/family Carers)

**QA11b What is your postcode?**

