

Derbyshire Citizens' Panel & Residents Survey March 2019

The Citizens' Panel and Residents' Survey are questionnaires that give an insight into the thoughts and feelings of the people of Derbyshire. Both questionnaires contained the same questions, relating to the local area, volunteering, social networks, community safety, transport, Derbyshire County Council, recycling, and equalities. They had different titles as the Citizens' Panel was sent solely to panel members who have volunteered to be involved in consultation, whereas the Residents Survey was open to any residents of Derbyshire who wished to take part. The surveys were completed in March 2019. 1862 people responded to the Citizens' Panel Survey, and 2484 to the Residents Survey, giving 4337 responses in total.

Deaf or Hard of Hearing Results

Three questions were asked relating to access to Council services for people who were deaf or hard of hearing (DHH). The first question was:

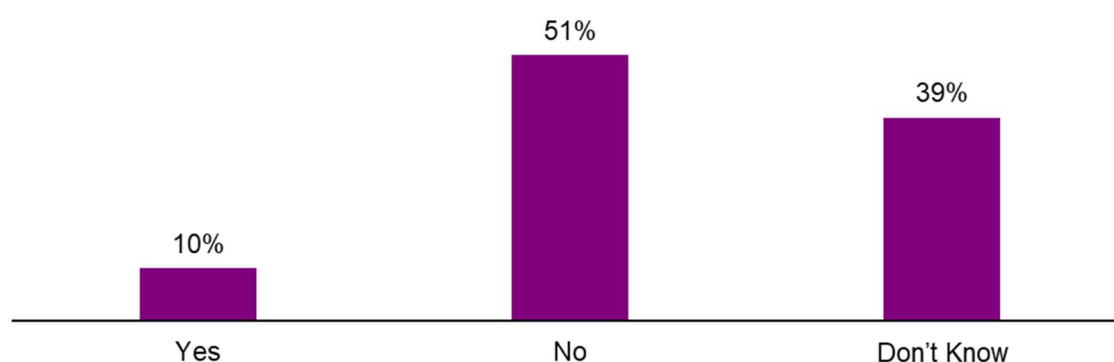
"If you are deaf or hard of hearing are there any Council services that you find difficult to access?"

This section will analyse the demographics of the response to this question.

Of the 3738 respondents to this question, **15% (559)** said they were deaf or hard of hearing (DHH), **85% (3179)** said they were not.

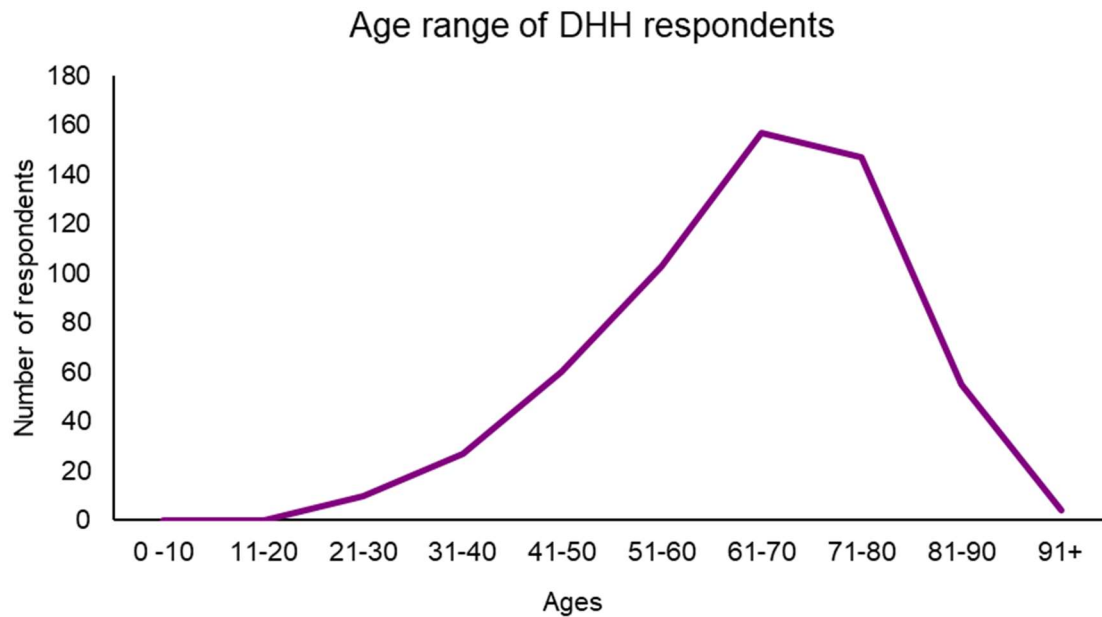
10% of DHH respondents found some Council services difficult to access, **51%** did not find any Council services difficult to access and **39%** answered 'don't know'.

If you are DHH, are there any Council services that you find difficult to access?

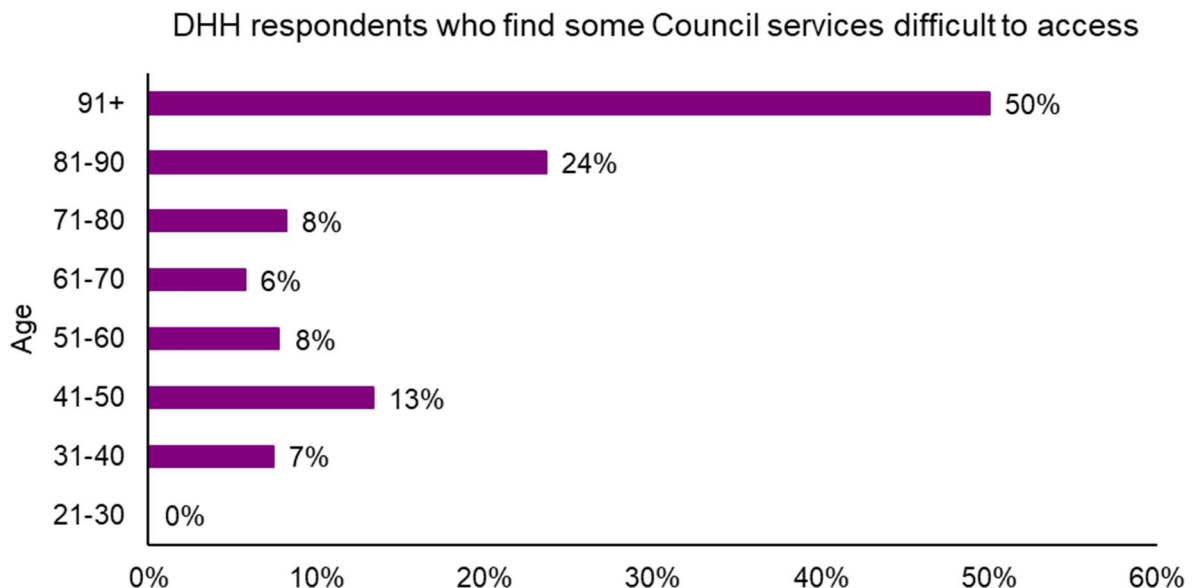


Age

The ages of respondents ranged from **age 22-97**.

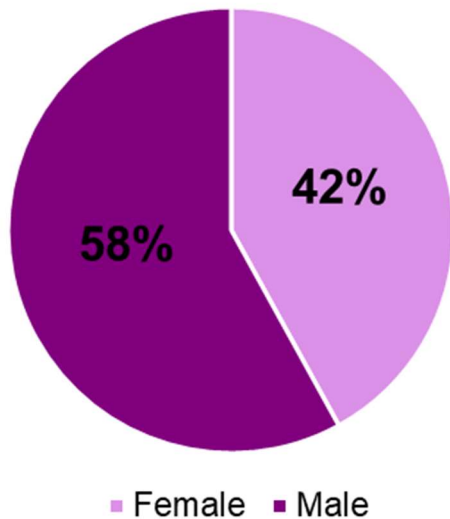


Of all the DHH age groups, those aged 91+ and 81-90 had the largest percentage of respondents saying they found it difficult to access some Council services. 50% of those over aged 91 found services difficult to access (although this figure is based on very low numbers), and 24% of those aged 81-90. No one under the age 21-30 who is DHH found Council services difficult to access.

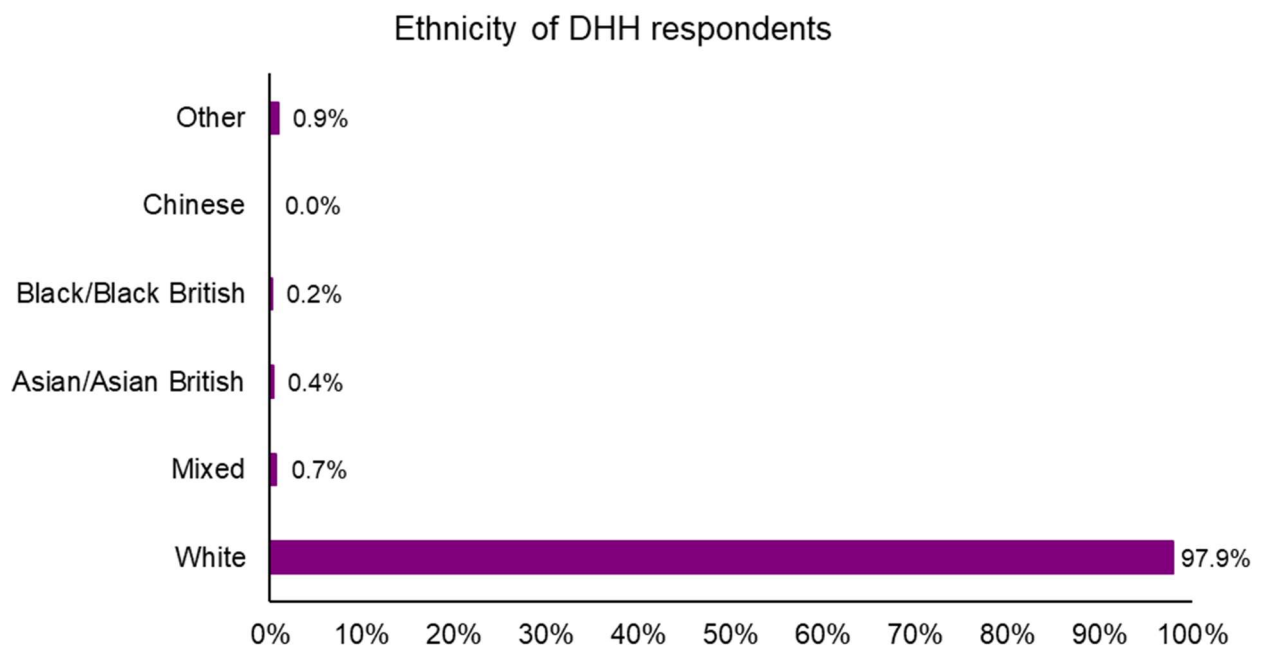


Gender

Of the DHH respondents, 58% were male and 42% were female. 8% of DHH males said they had difficulty in accessing some Council services, compared to 13% of females.



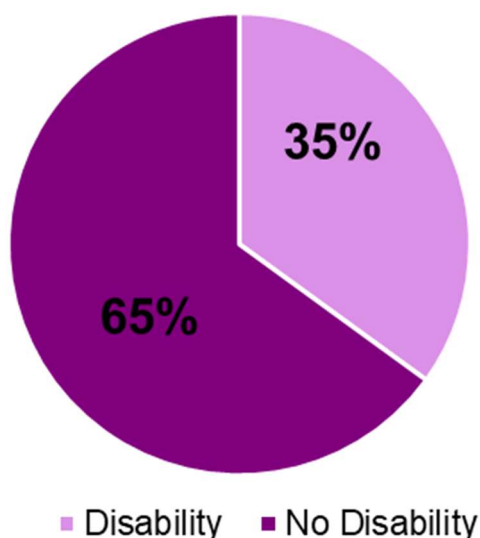
Ethnicity



Of those who identified as 'white', 10% of them found some Council services hard to access. This is compared to 0% of 'mixed', 50% of 'Asian British', 0% of 'Black British' and 20% of 'other' (but these percentages are based on very low numbers so must be used with caution).

Disability

Of the DHH respondents, 35% identified themselves as having a physical or mental disability, but 65% did not.



Of those DHH that also identified as having a disability, 18% found some council services hard to access compared to 6% of those who are not disabled.

Written responses

The other two questions about access to services for those who were deaf or heard of hearing required written responses. If respondents said they found some services difficult to access, by ticking 'Yes' on the first question, they were asked:

"If Yes, please state which services below", and

'If you have any suggestions on what would make these services more accessible to you please provide details below.'

This section shows a summary of the written responses to these two questions. The exact written responses can be provided if needed, this is just a summary of them.

The Council services outlined by respondents as difficult to access:

"All services"

Some respondents believe all services are difficult to access because staff are not trained to meet their needs. Often staff don't know how to deal with deaf or hearing-impaired people, and do not know sign language.

Telephone services

Respondents identified how anything that demands a phone call can be challenging. This includes ringing call centres to report problems or make enquiries. Staff can often mumble on the phone, talk quietly, talk too quickly, or not be accommodating of their needs. Background noise is also a problem on the phones. Residents described

how many online inquiries are often directed to a phone service, rather than having an online reporting facility or someone to email.

Meeting rooms

Meeting rooms in DCC buildings can be problematic due to the acoustics and layout. Some rooms mean people may not always be facing you when they talk. The council chamber was identified as an 'excellent' room due to the availability of individual microphones.

Loop systems

Respondents identified how loop systems are often not available, not used, or not adjusted properly in public and private buildings.

Adult Education

Residents highlighted how there is limited provision for lip reading and signed assisted speech, with it having patchy geographical availability.

General issues

- Background noise
- Respondents being unaware of help/services provided by the council (unaware of groups, support, where to get hearing aid batteries)
- The need for more sign-language courses for residents and staff (some residents do not know sign language so have to rely on lip-reading)
- Sports facilities difficult to access
- Difficulty in using the internet
- Some residents stated "Adult Social Care" as difficult to access
- Local recycling centre is not disabled friendly/knowledge of signs and logos.

The suggestions made by DHH people to make these Council services more accessible were:

Education & Training

Many residents identified the need for better training in sign language, lip reading, and deaf awareness for the public and DCC staff. They advocate for free sign language courses, bursaries for sign language interpreters and BSL being taught in schools and to all front-line staff.

A resident described the lip-reading class at Strutt's Mill Belper as excellent but short term and wished for more classes to be available.

Use of Makaton to communicate as it is useful and will include many more people, especially if first language isn't English.

They want staff to be aware of things that can help communication, including looking at people directly, repeating phrases, rephrasing things, reducing background noise, and ensuring faces are well lit. On the phone, it would help deaf or hard of hearing residents if staff used better diction, spoke slower, used plainer speech, and showed willingness to speak to relatives on someone's behalf.

Telephone & Internet Services

These services were commonly identified as problematic by residents. They advocate for better use of online reporting systems and forms, that avoid the need to speak to someone on the phone. They want online chat, text, email or video-conference based services. They also identified how it would be useful to have an extension number that increased the volume of a phone call, read out-loud contents on the DCC website, and subtitles on TV screens.

However, some residents identified how they find using the internet difficult. So they advocate for the maintenance of face-to-face interactions in receptions, help-desks and drop-in centres. They also identify how QR codes are not helpful for everyone. When in a face-to-face scenario, it may be good to use a tablet to communicate with the resident to give them more privacy.

Advertising of services

Many residents identified how they did not know what support services were available to them. They want better advertising, including in GP surgeries, by contacting them directly, on council tax bills, on park boards, on social media, at hearing centres (like Boots, Spec Savers, Hidden Hearing), libraries and Age Concern.

Buildings & meeting rooms

Residents identified how the acoustics of rooms could be improved. This includes sound absorbing ceilings, cloth curtains and floor coverings.

They want more availability of hearing loops in public buildings, or for them to be turned on where available. Ensure people with implants are catered for as well as hearing aids. Consider the use of portable hearing hubs.

Many want background music turning off in public places, and more quiet spaces. One resident identifies the need for a quiet area in Chesterfield library.

General points

- A deaf club for those who are deaf and those using sign language
- Also consider those with sight loss
- More local services so we don't have to travel (in the north of the region – Hope Valley)
- It was easier to call into the town hall for things, now they send you to CAB
- Roadshows or presence in libraries in Bolsover area
- Quarterly news letters
- Adequate funding for the group based in Matlock
- Improve areas like they are doing at Belper river garden

For more information please contact: 01629 538304.