

# Alcohol in Public Spaces PSPO

## Consultation Report

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## **Overview**

Hackney Council would like your views on the renewal of a borough-wide Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) prohibiting street drinking associated with anti-social behaviour. The current PSPO expires on 20 October 2020 and we're looking to renew it for 3 years until 20 October 2023.

The PSPO gives the police and authorised Officers of the Council borough-wide powers to confiscate alcohol from a minority of drinkers whose excessive drinking causes problems for others in public spaces. The Borough wide Designated Public Place Order (DPPO) was introduced on 24 May 2010. The purpose of the DPPO was to ensure that the consumption of alcohol in a public place did not cause disorder, nuisance or annoyance to members of the Public. The 2014 Act automatically transitioned the existing DPPO into a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) on 20 th October 2017, and this is required to be reviewed every three years.

## **Background**

The PSPO is designed to ensure the law-abiding majority can use and enjoy public spaces without experiencing anti-social behaviour. These powers are not intended to disrupt peaceful activities and are used explicitly for addressing nuisance or annoyance associated with the consumption of alcohol in a public place. It is not a criminal offence to consume alcohol within a designated area. An offence is only committed if the individual refuses to comply with an authorised officer's request to stop drinking.

A PSPO cannot be used to restrict the consumption of alcohol where premises are licensed for the supply of alcohol as licensing law already includes safeguards against premises becoming associated with nuisance and anti-social behaviour.

The current Order is effective across all land to which the public have access across the borough.

Alcohol related anti-social behaviour can quickly escalate and have a significant and lasting impact upon communities. Whilst most residents, visitors or people living and working in the borough drink socially and behave responsibly, their right to enjoyment of our public spaces can be threatened by those who behave in anti-social manner,

The PSPO will allow Police and authorised officers to ask individuals to stop drinking and have their alcoholic drinks confiscated, if they are deemed to be acting antisocially. It is an offence to fail to comply with a request to stop drinking or surrender alcohol including any opened or sealed containers in the area covered by the PSPO.

## **Consultation & Engagement Approach**

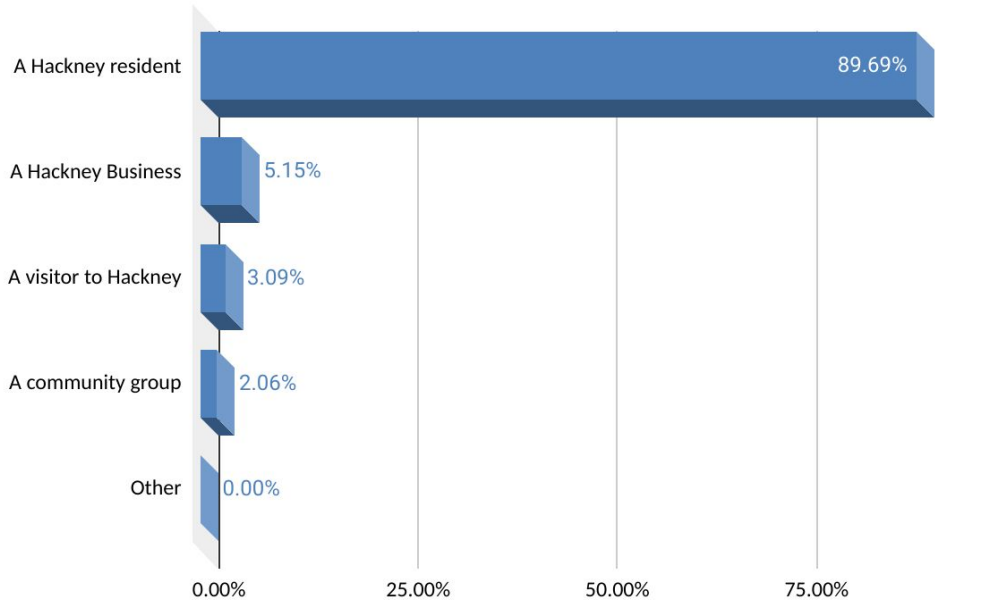
- The consultation summary explaining the purpose of the consultation and online questionnaire was included on the Council's online consultation platform, citizen space: <https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/>
- Consultees were able to request paper copies of the consultation pack (summary, questionnaire) by calling the switchboard and a member of the Enforcement team posted a copy of the consultation pack to them.
- The consultation pack was made available at public access points across the borough that were open to the public when the consultation was launched.
- The consultation was also promoted via the Council's publications: Hackney Today and Hackney Life.

## **Response Rate**

A total of 93 respondents took part.

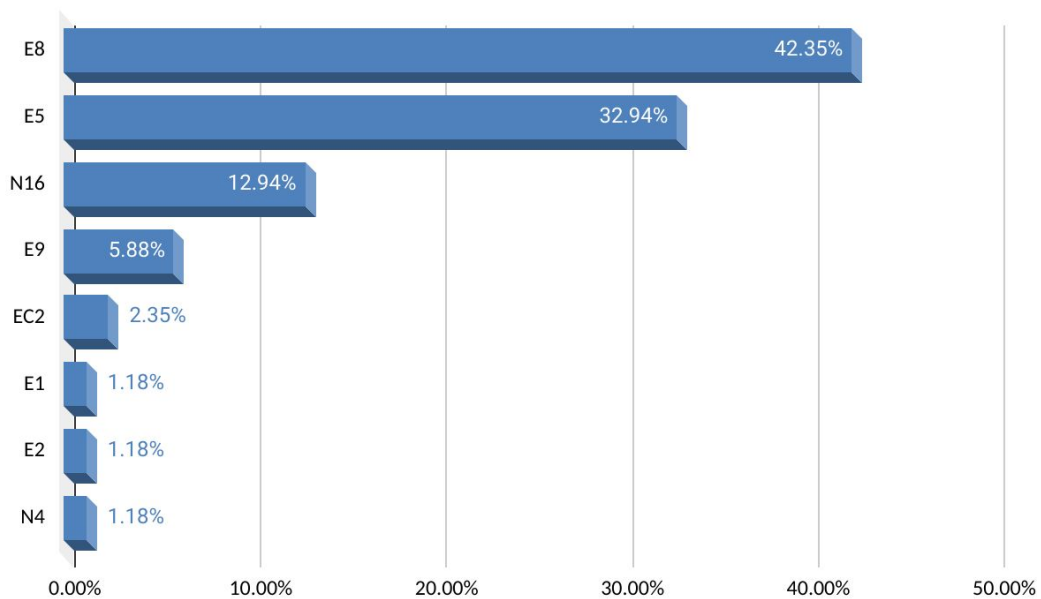
# Overview of results

## Are you: (Base 97 responses)



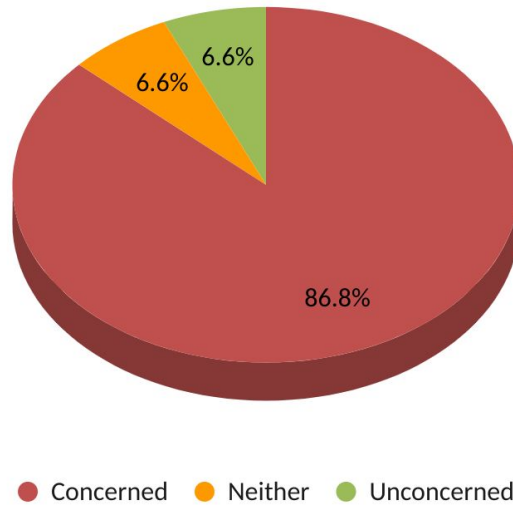
The majority of respondents stated that they were “a Hackney resident” (87). All others accounted for a very small proportion of respondents.

## Where do you live or where is your business located? (this information will help us to better understand the views of Hackney residents and businesses) (Base 67)



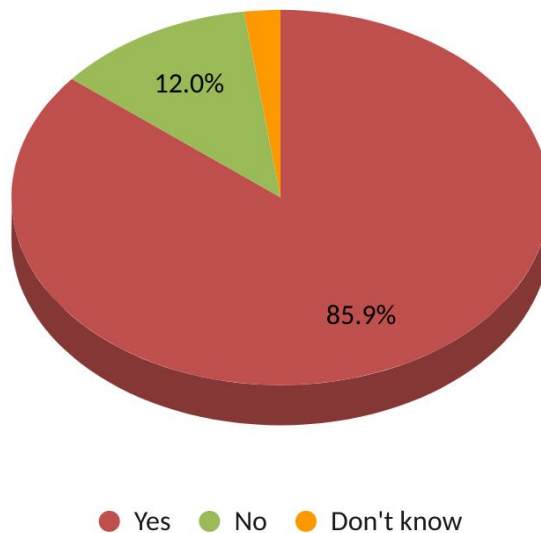
The highest percentage of respondents were from the “E8” postcode area (36). This was followed by “E5” (28), “N16” (11), “E9” (5), “EC2” (2), “E1”, “E2” and “N4” (1 each).

**How concerned are you about anti-social behaviour resulting from street drinking?**  
**(Base 91)**



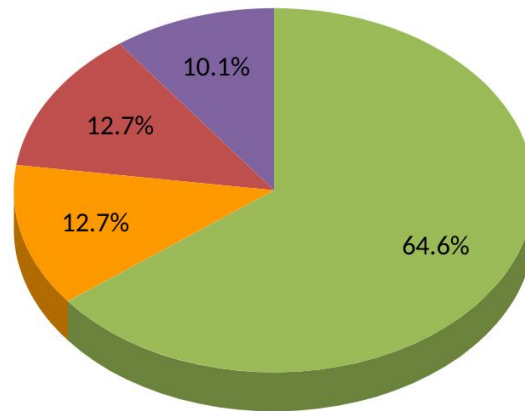
The majority of respondents stated that they were “concerned” about anti-social behaviour resulting from street drinking (79). A very small percentage of respondents stated that they were “neither concerned nor unconcerned” or “unconcerned” (6 each).

**Have you witnessed anti-social behaviour that you believe was a result of street drinking in Hackney over the last year? (Base 92)**



The majority of respondents stated that they have witnessed anti-social behaviour over the last year as a result of street drinking (79). 12% of respondents stated that they had not witnessed any (11), and two respondents stated “don’t know”.

**If Yes, how often have you witnessed this in the last year? (Base 79)**

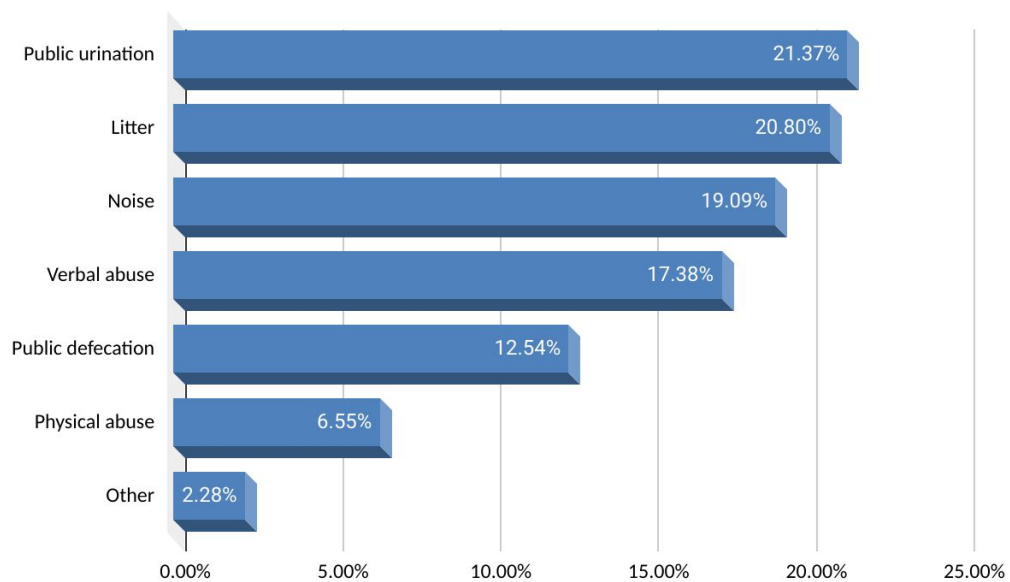


● More than 10 times ● 3 - 5 times ● 6 - 10 times ● 1 - 2 times

The majority of respondents, at almost two thirds, stated that they have witnessed this type of anti-social behavior “more than 10 times” (51). Just over 25% of respondents stated “3 - 5 times” and “6 - 10 times” (combined total - 12.66% each - 10 responses each). Just over 10% stated “1 - 2 times” (8).

It is clear that street drinking is a big concern for respondents, being witnessed 6 or more times accounting for over three quarters (61 - 77.22% - combined total).

**If Yes, what types of anti-social behaviour have you witnessed? (tick all that apply)**  
**(Base 351 responses)**

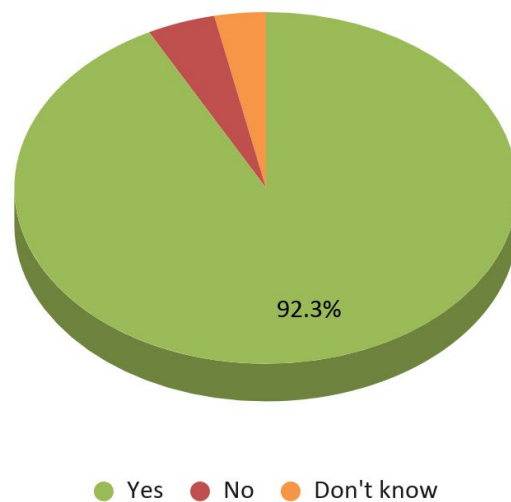


The highest percentage relates to “public urination” (75). This is followed by “litter” (73), “noise” (67) and “verbal abuse” (61), “public defecation” (44), “physical abuse” (23) and “other” (8).

We asked respondents to specify other types of anti-social behaviour they have witnessed, with the following themes below:

<b><u>Key theme</u></b>	<b><u>Count</u></b>
Drugs - dealing/drug use	7
Verbal abuse - racial/swearing/threats/intimidation	5
Drinking - streets/parks	4
Crowds of people	3
Homelessness	2
Nitrous oxide use	1
Urinating/Defecating	1
Attempted abduction	1
Vandalism	1
Weapons	1
Noise - loud music/groups of people	1
Lack of social distancing	1
Aggressive begging	1

**Do you support the renewal of the current PSPO powers (which permits consumption of alcohol in the borough, but allows authorised police and council officers to confiscate alcohol) from those that are engaged in ASB? (Base 91)**



The majority of respondents “support” the renewal of the current PSPO powers (84). 4% stated “no” (4) and 3% stated “don’t know” (3).



**Have you got any comments on the Council’s current approach for dealing with ASB associated with drinking in public spaces?**

A total of 53 comments were made to this question, with the following key themes:

<b><u>Key theme</u></b>	<b><u>Count</u></b>
Better preventative/enforcement measures	12
Large groups - verbal abuse/noisy/urination/defecation/threatening/intimidation/loitering	11
More security/enforcement patrols	7
Positive comments	7
Council should do more overall	7
Licensing laws to be changed/enforced	3
Homeless - Excessive drinking/verbal abuse/aggressive	2
Ban large gatherings	2
Class prejudice	2
Constant noise	2
Close off spaces at night	1

**Areas of concern**

London Fields - 14 mentions  
 Clapton Square - 5 mentions  
 Glenarm Road - 3 mentions  
 St. Johns - 2 mentions  
 Pembury Place - 2 mentions

**Better preventative/enforcement measures**

There is a general view that there needs to be greater enforcement rules in place to help prevent the excessive amount of street drinking around Hackney. This is not just in parks, but also estates and residential roads.

One comment made says *“The existing rules are not enforced. Most offenders are not caught or fined, as evidenced by the low numbers of recorded incidents. The number of instances of public urination I’ve personally witnessed is over 30 in a year.”*

**Large groups - verbal abuse/noisy/urination/defecation/threatening/intimidation/loitering**

Groups of people gather to drink, with some of these not causing a problem, but it seems the majority do. Verbal and aggressive behaviour which can be intimidating for passers-by, as well as families who may be using park areas or walking in residential areas.

Urination and defecation is a continuous issue, especially in parks and some mentions about estate grounds.

One comment about enforcement officers not doing their jobs in relation to large groups says *“The enforcement officers are not tackling the difficult groups who are causing the problems, in fear of retaliation. they walk past most large groups that are causing the problems.”*

### **More security/enforcement patrols**

Summer months are the most prominent times when street drinking is at its peak, and the comments state that more enforcement officers are needed to help prevent and control the situations.

One comment made says *“we need more enforcement officers in the borough, especially in the summer months, or security needs powers of enforcement.”*

### **Positive comments**

7 respondents gave positive comments about how Hackney Council is supporting and enforcing street drinking.

One comment made says *“London Fields was horrible in the first part of lockdown - my kids and I gave up even trying to walk across the park - and when the council took the behaviour on it was a massive relief to local people. Your security guys are brilliant. It's gone back to being a park, just a nice local space that all sorts of local people can use, and we'd really like to keep it that way.”*

### **Council should do more overall**

These comments are regarding the lack of enforcement from the Council, with one respondent saying that *“the Council does not care”*.

Another comment made says *“We have a daily, persistent problem with Alcohol abuse and associated verbal abuse & urination at the end of our street (Pembury Place E5) which goes unnoticed and unchecked by the council.”*

### **Licensing laws to be changed/enforced**

Mentions of taking away *“liquor licences from shops and restaurants on Broadway Market”*, and prohibiting alcohol sales after 10pm in general of convenience shops that are selling *“after all public houses have closed for the night.”*

### **Homeless - Excessive drinking/verbal abuse/aggressive**

Clapton Square and St. Johns Square/Narrow Way are areas of concern for homeless people and excessive drinking, as well as Pembury Place. They can become very rude and aggressive, and urinate openly without any regard for the public.

### **Class prejudice**

*One comment made says "It is class biased, targeting only poor and homeless people in "bottle schools", who are rarely any bother at all. "Respectable"" drinkers arrogantly and assertively blocking footways and preventing people from passing are allowed to be a much greater, and sometimes very noisy, nuisance. The class prejudice and incongruence in the application of this PSPO has been so extreme that the council cannot be trusted with these powers any further."*

### **Constant noise**

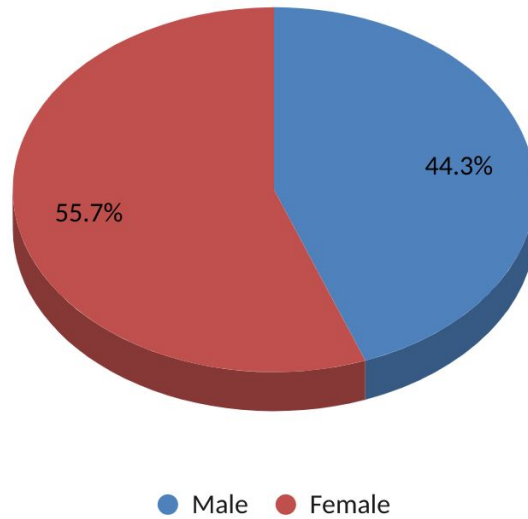
Mentions about loud and constant noise at night time with large groups, it would be apparent that this happens more often as the link between large groups and excessive drinking would cause a more rowdy and lively crowd of people.

### **Close off spaces at night**

The respondent commented about Clapton Square and St. John at Hackney Church gardens, but mentioned closing spaces at night as an enforcement measure.

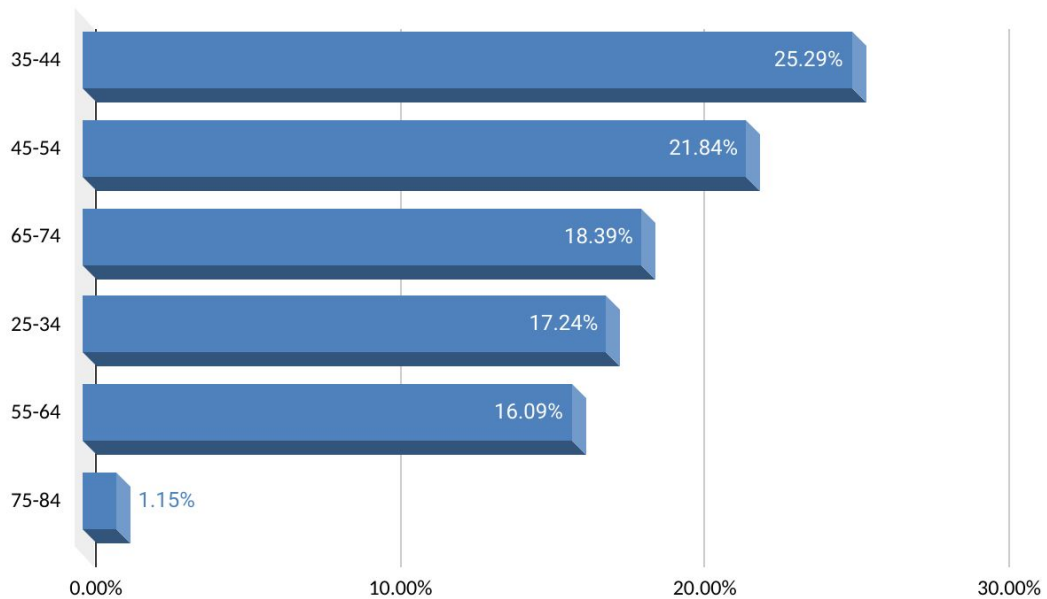
# About you

## Gender



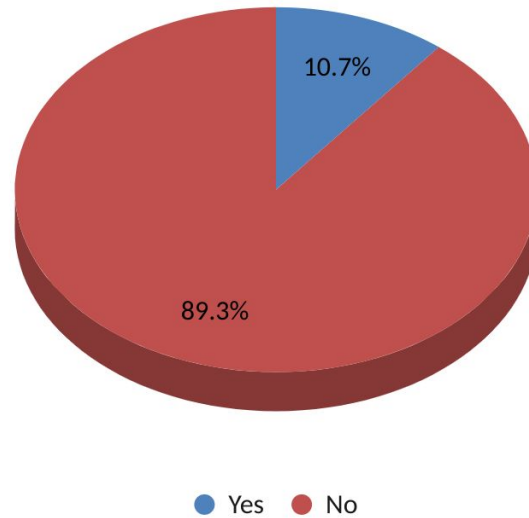
A higher percentage of respondents were female (49) than male (39).

## Age group



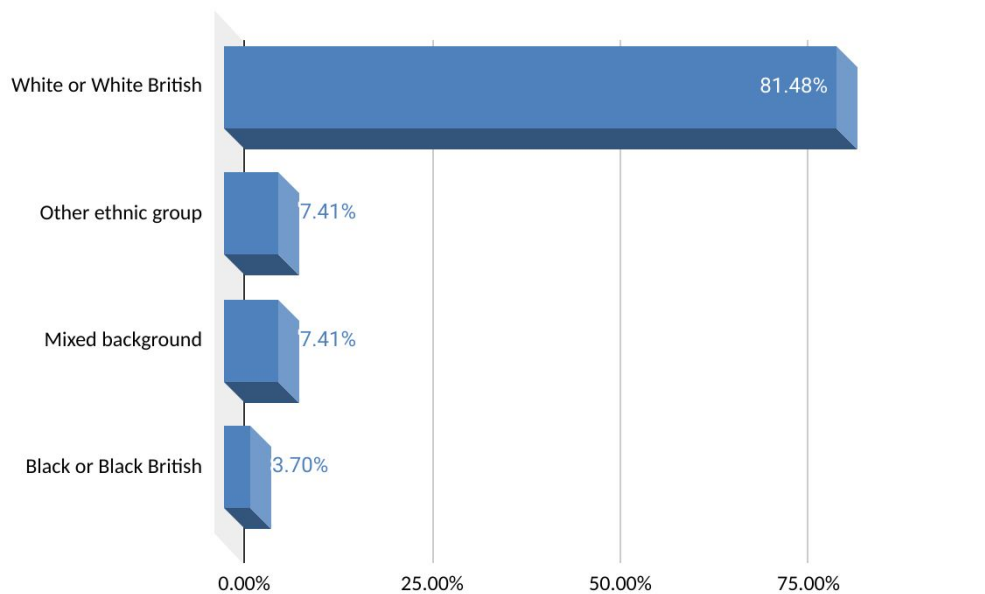
The highest percentage of respondents were in the 35-44 age group (22). This was followed by 45-54 (19), 55-64 (16), 65-74 (15), 25-34 (15), 55-64 (14) and 75-84 (1).

## Disability



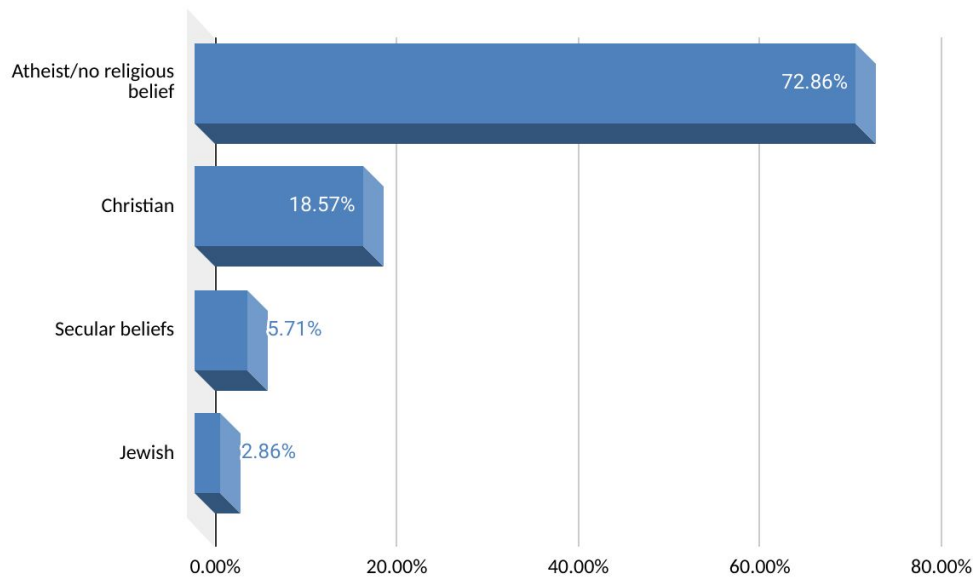
The majority of respondents stated that they did not have a disability (75), with a smaller percentage stating that they did (9).

## Ethnicity



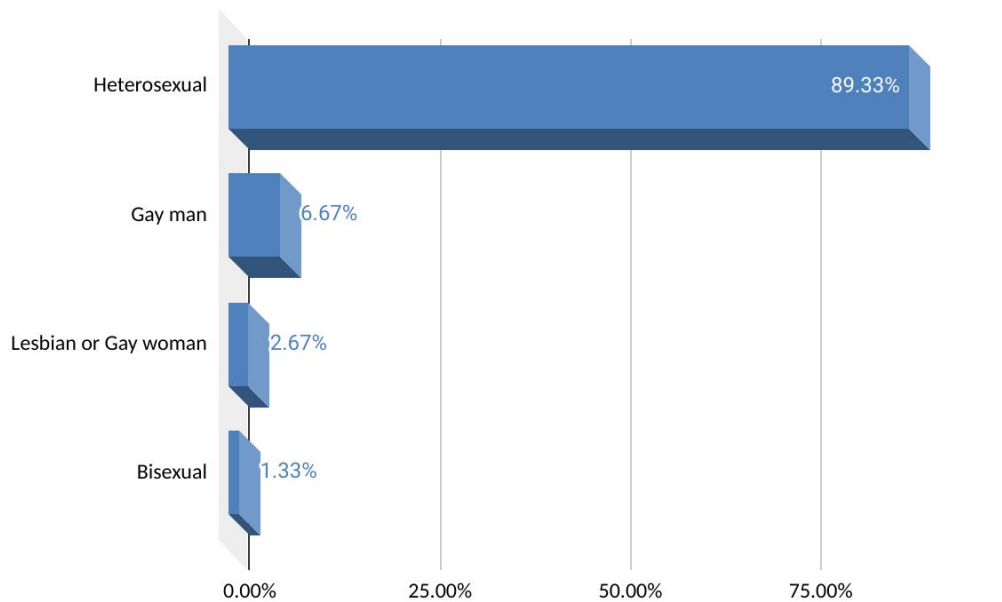
The majority of respondents stated that they were of “White or White British” ethnicity (66). All others accounted for a much smaller percentage.

## Religion



The majority of respondents stated that they were “Atheist/no religious belief” (51). The next highest was “Christian” (13) with all others accounting for a much smaller percentage.

## Sexual orientation



The majority of respondents stated that they were “heterosexual” (67). All others accounted for a much smaller percentage.

## Conclusion

A total of 93 respondents took part in this consultation, with the vast majority being Hackney residents.

The majority of respondents stated that they were concerned about anti-social behaviour resulting from street drinking, and the same number of respondents stated that they have witnessed anti-social behaviour. It must be noted that the total number of respondents to the consultation was very low, so this would not truly reflect the total population of Hackney.

Respondents stated that over the last year that they have witnessed anti-social behaviour many times. The majority of respondents, at almost two thirds, stated more than 10 times which probably indicates at least once a month on average but in reality this is likely to be much more.

When asked the types of anti-social behaviour respondents have witnessed, the response options that were given all relate to drinking in some way. Public urination had the highest number of responses, and litter was second which you would expect to be bottles and cans being left around as well as takeaway packaging. Other types witnessed which were specified in the comments included the use of drugs, whether dealing or taking, and verbal abuse which was specified as one of the answer responses to this question, but was mentioned again in the comments.

All but 7 respondents were in support of the renewal of the current PSPO powers, but as stated above the total number of respondents does not reflect the total population in terms of being representative enough.

Respondents were asked to provide any comments on the Council's current approach to dealing with ASB associated with drinking in public spaces, with the general view that more needs to be done to enforce and prevent this continuing. In terms of locations, London Fields was tagged as a hotspot for this type of ASB, and this links to the current London Fields ASB Conversation consultation (at the time of writing) which has addressed this type of anti-social behaviour as one of the issues.

The data suggests that the PSPO should be renewed, as street-drinking is an issue in Hackney and needs to be addressed and have better enforcement and preventative measures.