

Alcohol in Public Spaces PSPO

Consultation Report

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Introduction

This report presents the findings of the consultation on the renewal of the borough-wide Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) prohibiting street drinking associated with anti-social behaviour (ASB). The consultation ran from 5 July 2024 to 16 August 2024.

The online survey was hosted on the Hackney Council's consultation web page whilst printed copies were also made available at request, as an alternative way to participate.

The consultation was promoted in Love Hackney, the Council's local magazine and through the Hackney Matters newsletter. In total, 91 completed responses were received.

Background

Hackney Council sought stakeholder views on the renewal of a borough-wide Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) prohibiting street drinking associated with anti-social behaviour (ASB). The current PSPO expires on 20 October 2024 and we're looking to renew it for 3 years until 20 October 2027.

The PSPO gives the police and authorised Officers of the Council borough-wide powers to confiscate alcohol from 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 20th October 2017, and this is required to be reviewed every three years.

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 emailing consultation@hackney.gov.uk and a member of the consultation team posted a copy of the consultation pack to them.
- The consultation was promoted via Facebook and Twitter on 6 July and 12 August.
- The consultation was also promoted via the Council's publications including Love Hackney, which reaches 120,000 residents, the Hackney News e-newsletter on 18 July, and the Community Champions Network.
- The consultation was also promoted via the Council's online citizen's panel, Hackney Matters.
- Statutory stakeholders were contacted individually with an invitation to participate in the consultation, including, the Met police, the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), neighbouring boroughs, the London Legacy Development Corporation, the Hackney Safer Neighbourhood Board, Hackney Council's Community Safety, Enforcement & Business Regulation Service, the Detective Chief Superintendent, Public Health and the Parks Service.

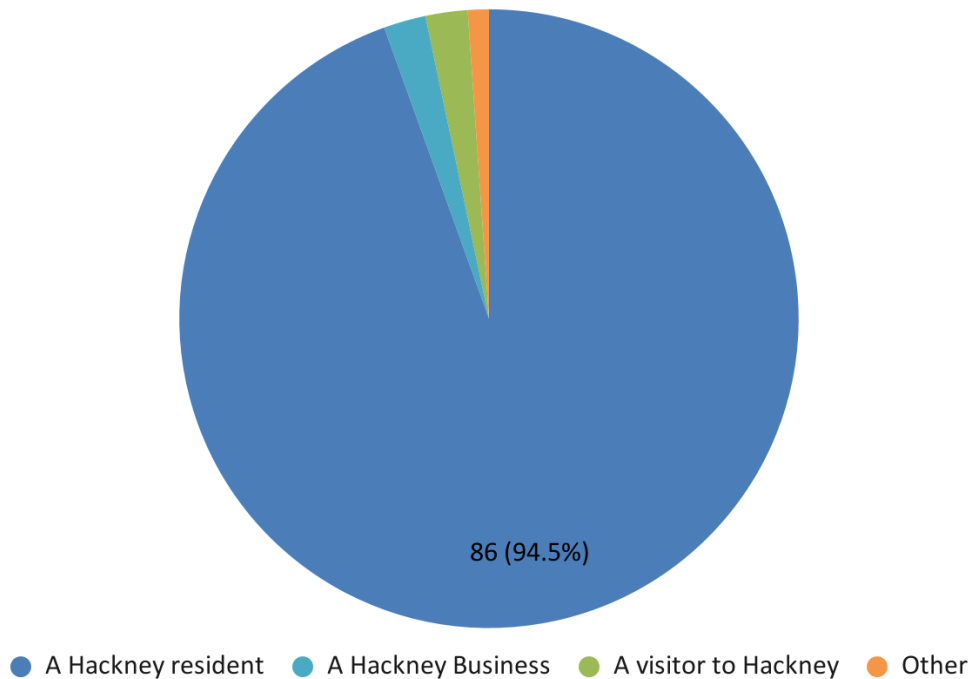
Response Rate

A total of 91 respondents took part.

Overview of results

Question 1: Are you...

There were 91 responses to this question.

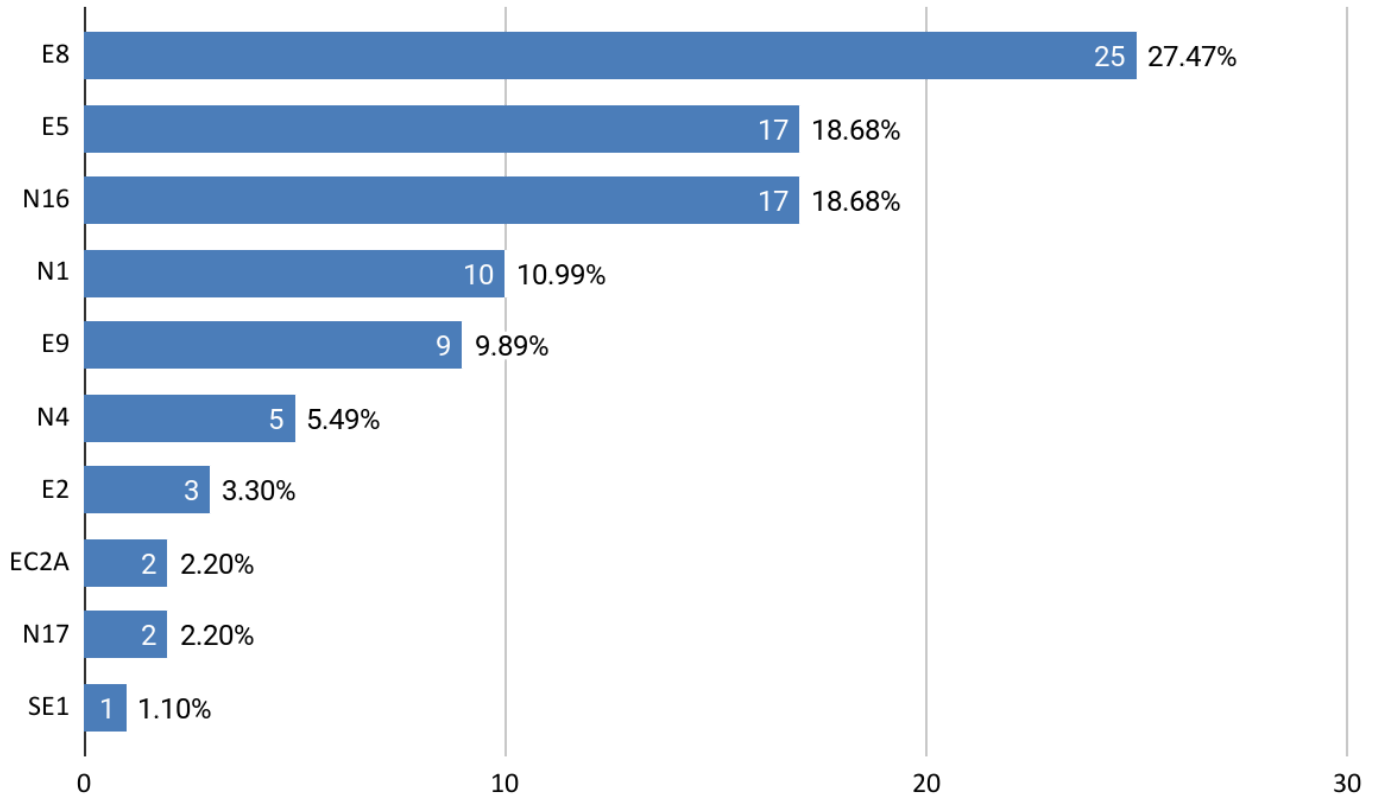


The majority of respondents stated that they were "a Hackney resident" (86, 94.51%), 2 shared they were "a Hackney Business" (2.20%), 2 were "a visitor to Hackney" (2.20%), and one responded as "Other" (1.10%).

Among the 4 respondents who used the "Other" box to add details, one identified as "an employer of Hackney council." The remaining three selected "a Hackney resident" but used the "Other" box to clarify that they are also business owners.

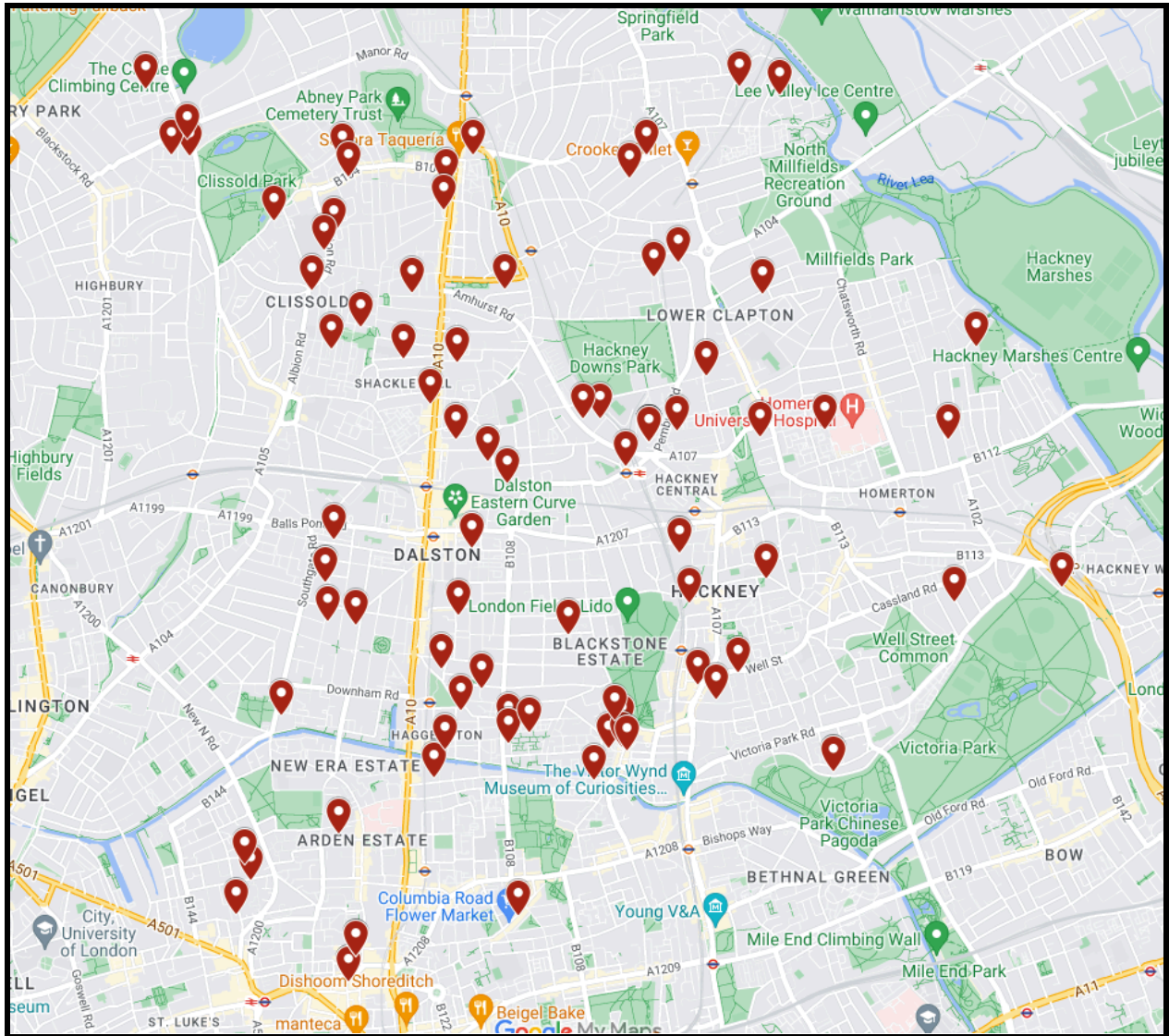
Question 2: Where do you live or where is your business located? (this information will help us to better understand the views of Hackney residents and businesses)

There were 91 responses to this question.



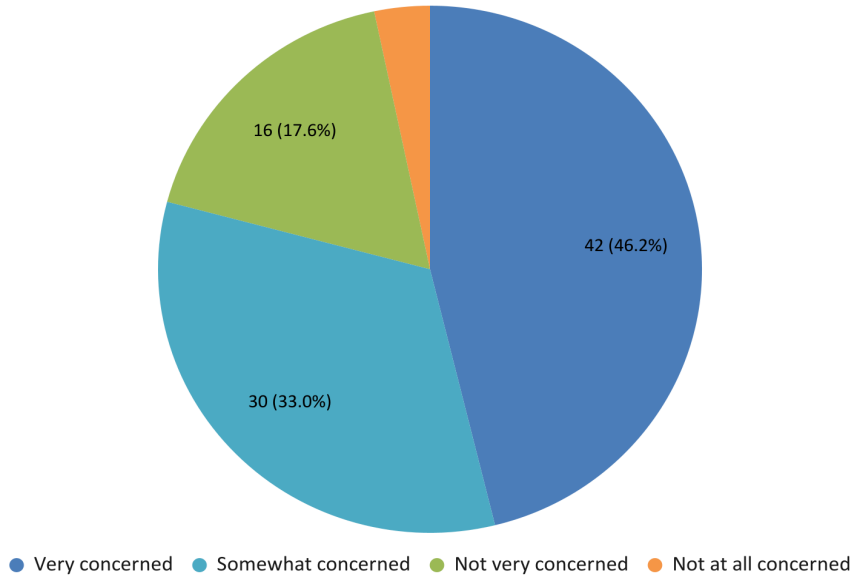
The majority of respondents live or run businesses in the E8 area (25, 27.47%), followed by E5 (17, 18.68%) and N16 (17, 18.68%). Other locations include N1 (10, 10.99%), E9 (9, 9.89%), and a few in N4 (5, 5.49%), E2 (3, 3.30%), EC2A (2, 2.20%), N17 (2, 2.20%), and SE1 (1, 1.10%).

The map below shows the areas identified by respondents, based on the postcodes they provided.



Question 3: How concerned or unconcerned are you about anti-social behaviour (ASB) resulting from street drinking?

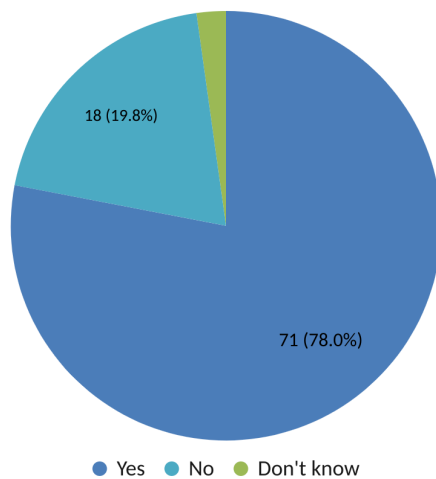
There were 91 responses to this question.



Most respondents are either very concerned (42, 46.2%) or somewhat concerned (30, 33.0%) about anti-social behaviour resulting from street drinking. Fewer are not very concerned (16, 17.6%) or not at all concerned (3, 3.30%).

Question 4: Have you witnessed anti-social behaviour that you believe was a result of street drinking in Hackney over the last year?

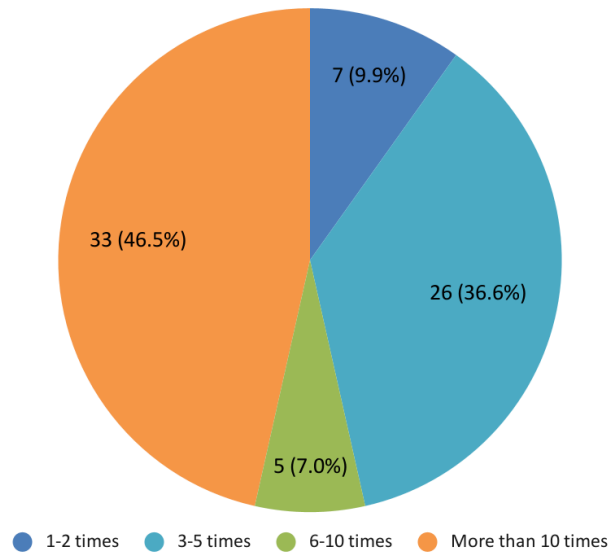
There were 91 responses to this question.



Most respondents have witnessed anti-social behaviour they believe was caused by street drinking in Hackney over the last year (71, 78.0%). Fewer have not witnessed such behaviour (18, 19.8%), and 2 (2.2%) are unsure.

Question 5: If Yes, how often have you witnessed this in the last year?

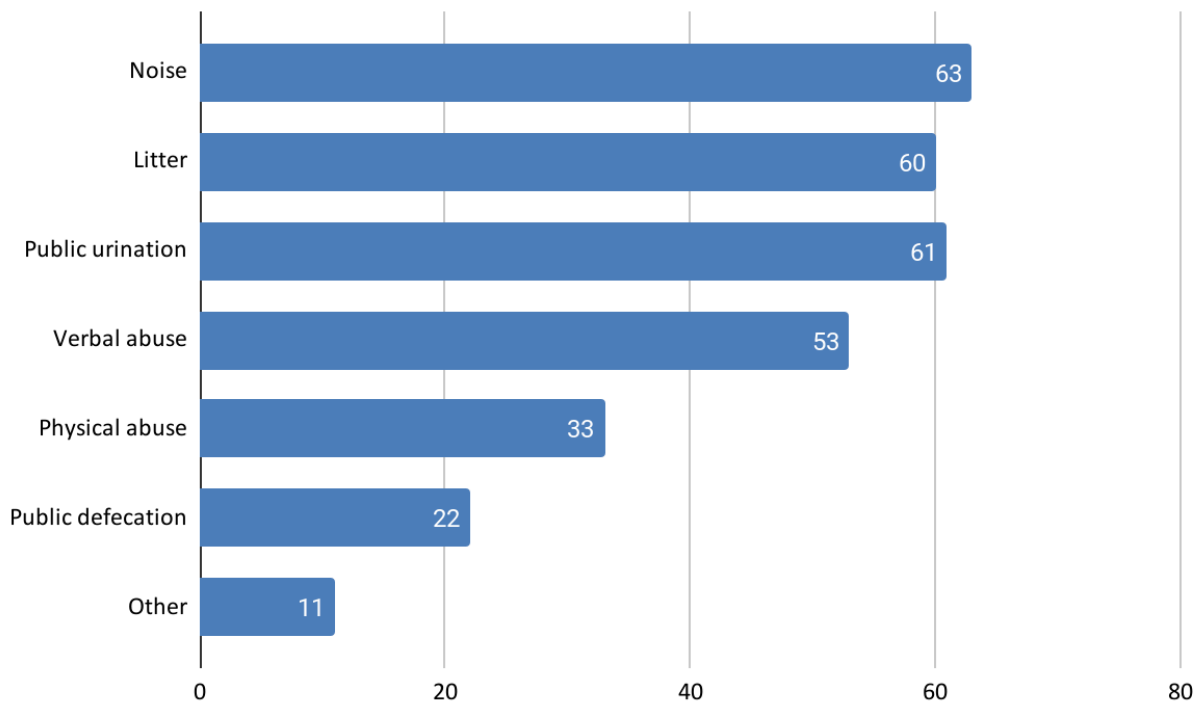
There were 71 responses to this question.



Among those who have witnessed anti-social behaviour due to street drinking in the last year, 33 (46.5%) have seen it more than 10 times, 26 (36.6%) have seen it 3-5 times, 7 (9.9%) have seen it 1-2 times, and 5 (7.0%) have seen it 6-10 times.

Question 6: If Yes, what types of anti-social behaviour have you witnessed? (tick all that apply)

There were 72 responses to this question.



Among those who have witnessed anti-social behaviour due to street drinking (72), the most common types reported are noise (63, 69.23%), litter (60, 65.93%), and public urination (61, 67.03%). Verbal abuse was reported by 53 respondents (58.24%), and physical abuse by 33 (36.26%). Public defecation was noted by 22 (24.18%), and other types of behaviour were mentioned by 11 (12.09%). Additionally, 19 respondents (20.88%) did not answer this question.

We asked respondents to specify other types of anti-social behaviour they have witnessed, there were 20 responses to this part of the question. The following themes emerged from responses:

Key theme	Count
Drugs - dealing/drug use	8
Fighting	5
Begging/Loitering	5
Harassment	4
Vomiting	4
Noise	3
Broken glass/litter	3
Other (ASB around betting shops; animal abuse)	2

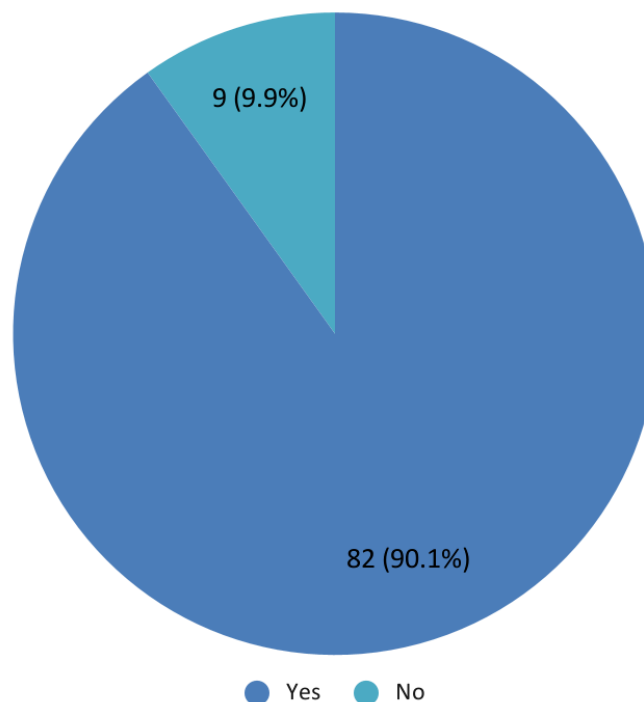
Areas of concern

- The Keith Miller Sports Pitch
- Hackney estates
- Lordship Rd/Church St corner

- Denman House
- Betfred on Mare Street
- St Mungo's on Mare Street
- Shoreditch
- Betting shops

Question 7: 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?

There were 91 responses to this question.



The majority of respondents “support” the renewal of the current PSPO powers (82, 90.1%), whilst 9 (9.9%) do not support it.

Question 8: Have you got any comments on the Council’s current approach for dealing with ASB associated with drinking in public spaces?

A total of 46 comments were made to this question, with the following key themes emerging:

Key theme	Count
Stricter enforcement	25
Witnessing ASB	15
More resources needed	8
Support for the alcohol PSPO	7
Request for specific actions	7
General criticism of council	4
Concerns over discrimination	2
Support for vulnerable people	2
Opposes the alcohol PSPO	1

Seven additional comments were coded into a miscellaneous category, often relating to concerns over non-alcohol-related issues, particularly drug-related activities. These included reports of open drug dealing, the smell of drugs in public spaces, and its impact on the community's sense of safety. Some comments highlighted drug use in public areas, with specific concerns about organised dealers in parks and estates, as well as the disruptive behaviour and criminal activity that accompanies it, such as verbal abuse, public disorder, and the misuse of communal spaces.

Areas of concern

- St Mungos
- Duncan Road and Broadway Market
- Clarence Road
- Hackney Downs
- Hoxton Square
- Pembury Circus
- Pembury Place
- Antony House, Pembury Place
- Hackney Wick
- Shoreditch Park
- Milton Gardens Community Hall
- White Post Lane
- Hackney Estates

Stricter enforcement

Many comments emphasise the need for stricter enforcement of public space protection orders (PSPOs) to manage alcohol-related anti-social behaviour (ASB). There is a perception that the current enforcement measures are insufficient and inconsistent.

One comment notes, "The Council and Police need to be consistent and proactive in enforcing the PSPO." Another highlights, "There's a significant lack of enforcement despite escalation of alcohol-related ASB issues."

Witnessing ASB

A significant number of comments describe witnessing anti-social behaviour linked to drinking in public spaces. This includes disturbances such as loud noise, visible intoxication and fighting.

As one resident shared, *“I have witnessed heavy drinking by groups of young men on the crossroads near Milton Gardens Community Hall. They play loud music and there is often shouting in the early hours, which is anti-social for a residential area.”*

More resources needed

There is a clear call for additional resources to effectively manage and address ASB related to alcohol consumption. Respondents suggest that more staff and resources are necessary to tackle the problem adequately.

A comment states, *“Enforcement officers are overwhelmed with tasks, particularly managing the behaviour of intoxicated individuals and addressing drug misuse.”*

Request for specific actions

There are requests for specific actions and improvements to address ASB more effectively. Comments suggest targeted measures based on detailed local knowledge and specific problem areas.

One comment suggests, *“No drinking in public places.”* Another recommends, *“Certain nuisance areas should be prohibited from drinking alcohol.”*

General criticism of council

There is criticism directed at the Council for perceived failures in addressing ASB effectively. Commenters express frustration with what they see as inadequate responses and lack of meaningful action.

As one resident mentions, *“The council never responds with enough action or thorough logic [when dealing with ASB].”*

Concerns over discrimination

A couple comments raise concerns about the potential for PSPOs to be used in a discriminatory manner. There is worry that vulnerable groups, such as ethnic minorities or people experiencing homelessness, might be unfairly targeted.

This comment reflects this concern: *“I am concerned that PSPOs such as the one proposed are likely to be used in a discriminatory way.”*

Support for vulnerable people

A couple of comments highlight the need for supportive measures for vulnerable individuals, such as street drinkers and people experiencing homelessness, rather than punitive actions alone.

One comment advocates for support, saying, *“Even though I support the Council’s current approach, vulnerable people including street drinkers and homeless should be offered support to access the help they need.”*

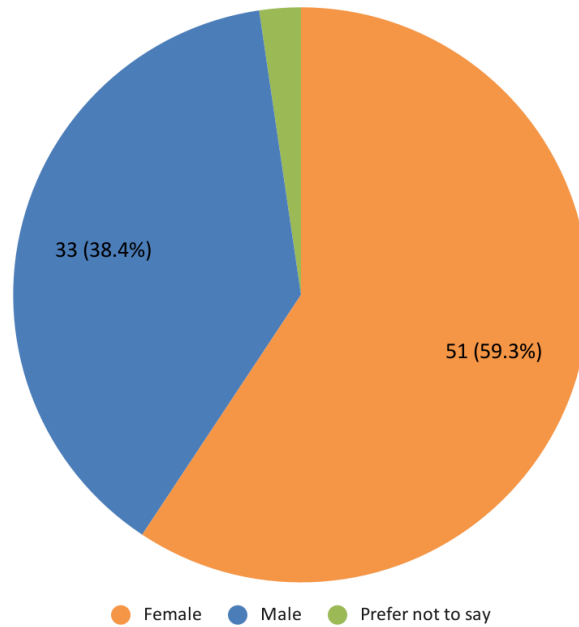
Oppose the alcohol PSPO

One comment explicitly opposed the current and proposed measures. Their comment stated, *“I feel that Hackney is becoming too strict. Overall, I don’t see that many issues around Hackney and therefore do not agree to these measures.”*

About you

Question 9: Gender - Are you...

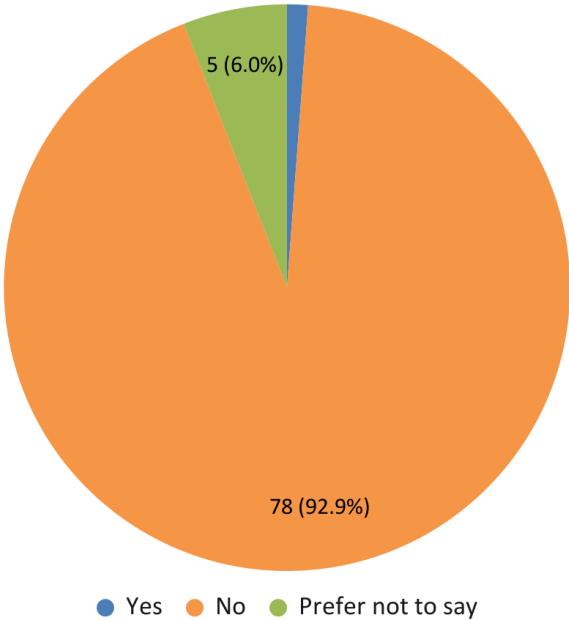
There were 86 responses to this question.



A higher percentage of respondents were female (51, 59.3%) compared to male (33, 38.4%), whilst 2 (2.3%) preferred not to state their gender.

Question 10: Are you transgender or have a transgender history?

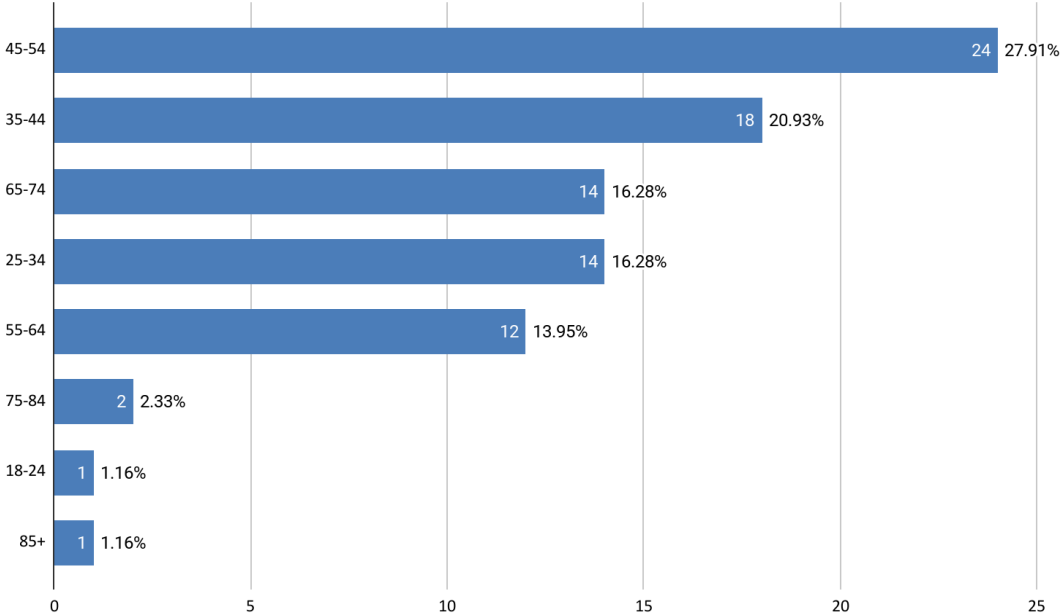
There were 84 responses to this question.



A higher percentage of respondents were not transgender or did not have a transgender history (78, 92.9%), compared to those who identified as transgender (1, 1.2%). Additionally, 5 (6%) preferred not to state.

Question 11: what is your age group?

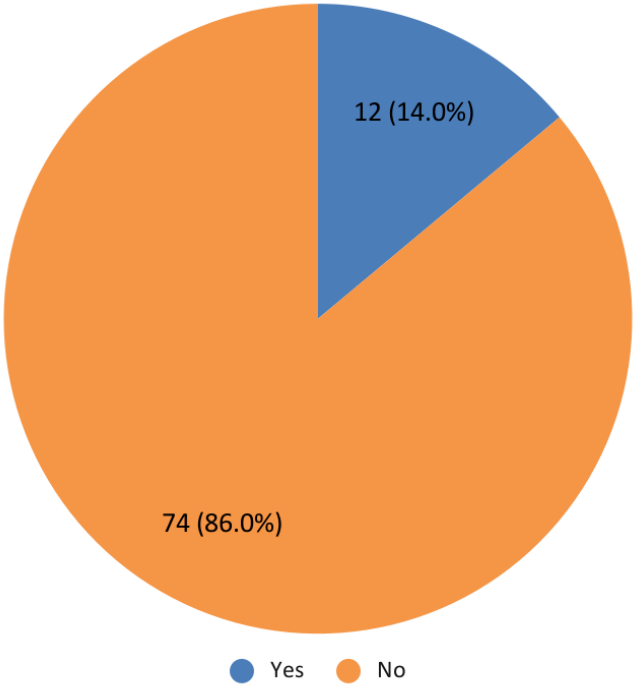
There were 86 responses to this question.



The majority of respondents were in the 45-54 age group (24, 27.9%), followed by 35-44 (18, 20.9%) and 65-74 (14, 16.3%). The same percentage of respondents were in the 25-34 age group (14, 16.3%). Other age groups included 55-64 (12, 14.0%), 75-84 (2, 2.3%), 18-24 (1, 1.2%), and 85+ (1, 1.2%).

Question 12: Disability - Under the Equality Act you are disabled if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities. Do you consider yourself to be disabled?

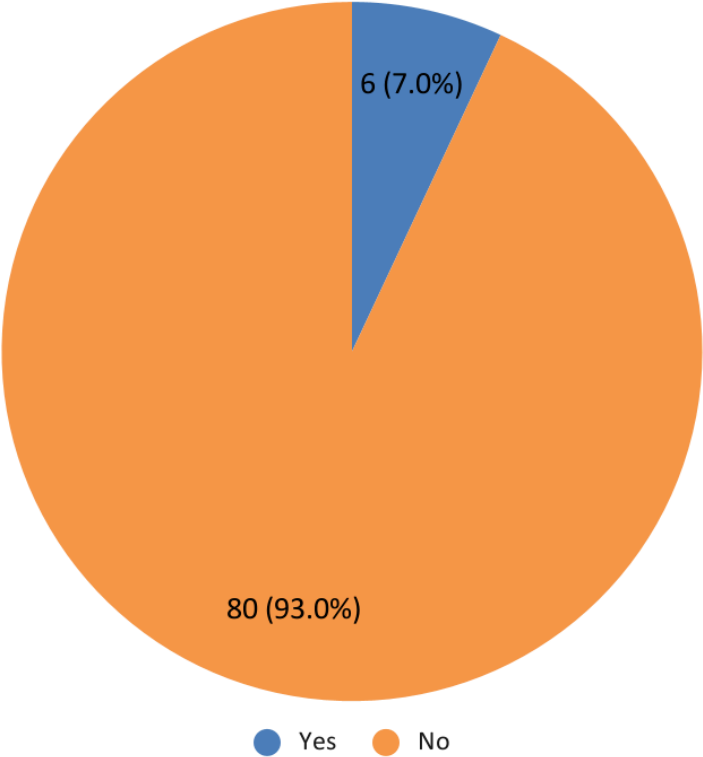
There were 86 responses to this question.



The majority of respondents stated that they did not have a disability (74, 86.0%), with a smaller percentage stating that they did (12, 14.0%).

Question 13: Caring responsibilities - A carer is someone who spends a significant proportion of their time providing unpaid support to a family member, partner or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or substance misuse problems. Do you regularly provide unpaid support caring for someone?

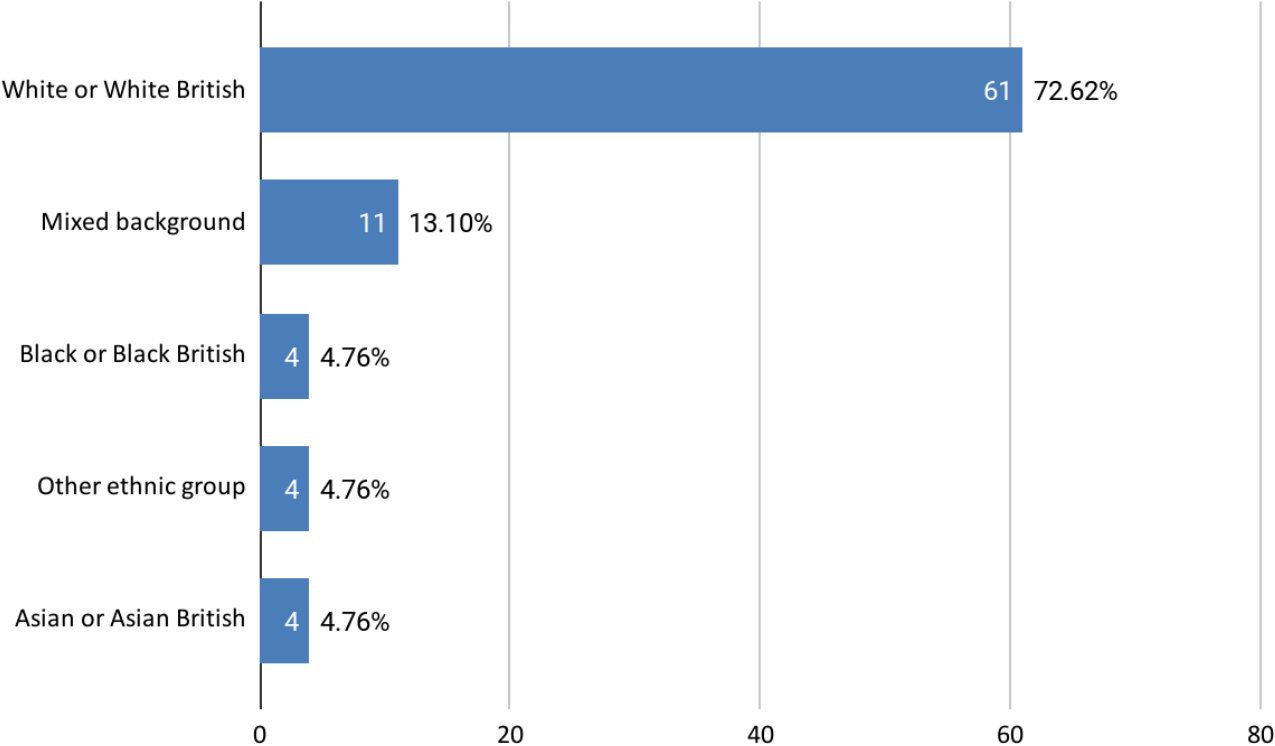
There were 86 responses to this question.



The majority of respondents stated that they do not regularly provide unpaid support caring for someone (80, 93.0%), with a smaller percentage stating that they do (6, 7.0%).

Question 14: Ethnicity - Are you...

There were 84 responses to this question.

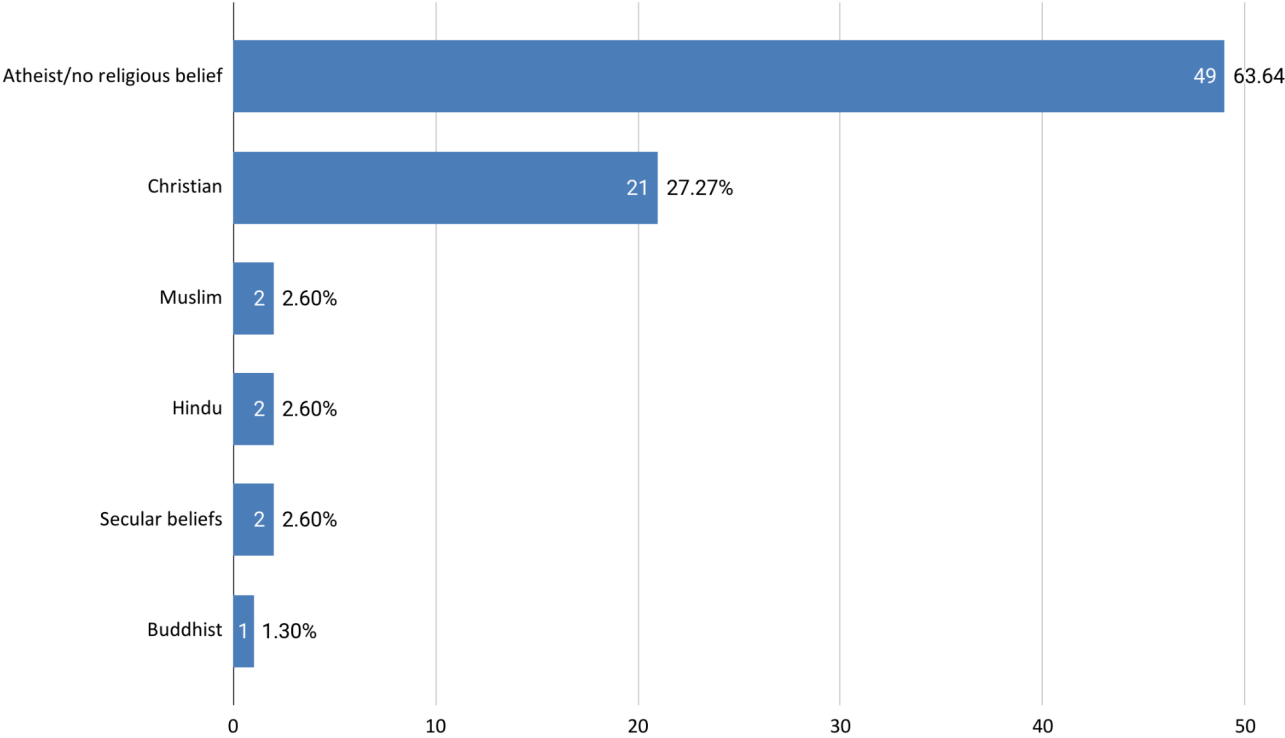


The majority of respondents were White or White British (61, 72.6%). Mixed background was reported by 11 respondents (13.1%), whilst Black or Black British, Other ethnic group, and Asian or Asian British each accounted for 4 respondents (4.8%).

Among those who selected "Other ethnic group," responses included Somali, Romano Celt, and Eastern European.

Question 15: Religion or belief - Are you or do you have...

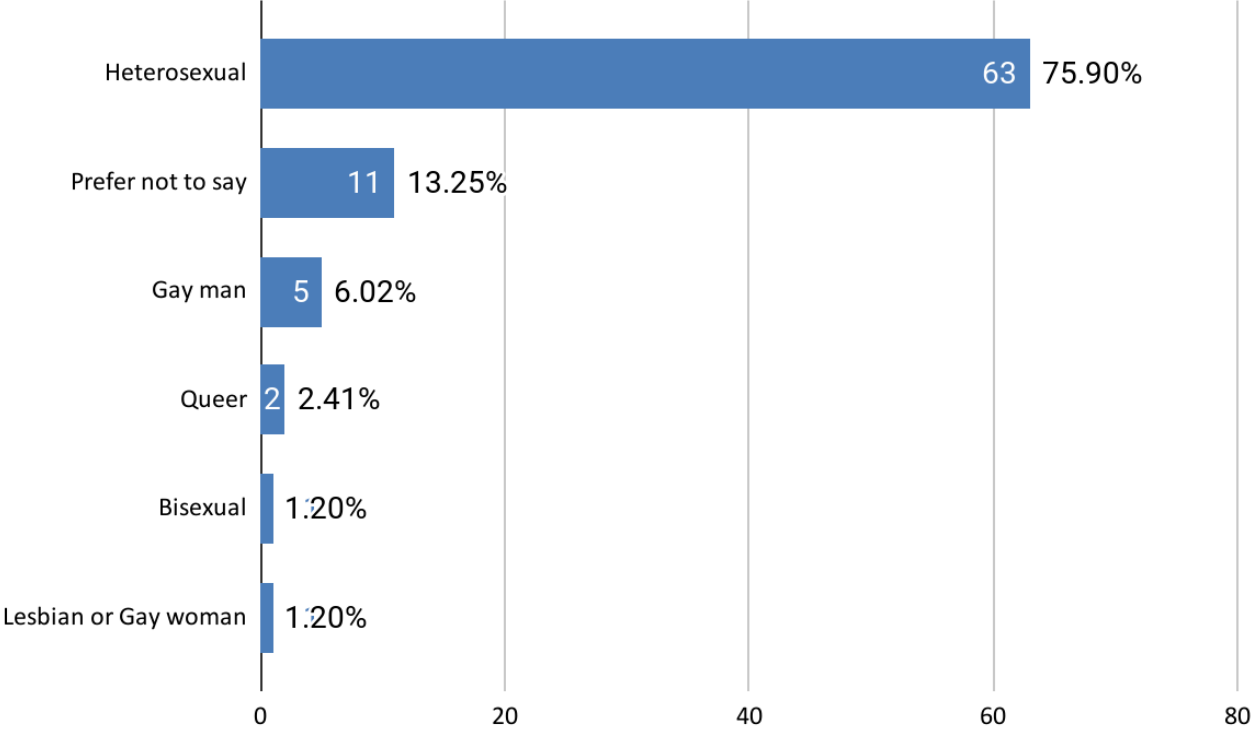
There were 77 responses to this question.



The majority of respondents identified as atheist or having no religious belief (49, 63.6%). Christian was the second most common response (21, 27.3%). Muslim, Hindu, and Secular beliefs were each reported by 2 respondents (2.6%), whilst Buddhist was reported by 1 respondent (1.3%).

Question 16: Sexual orientation - Are you...

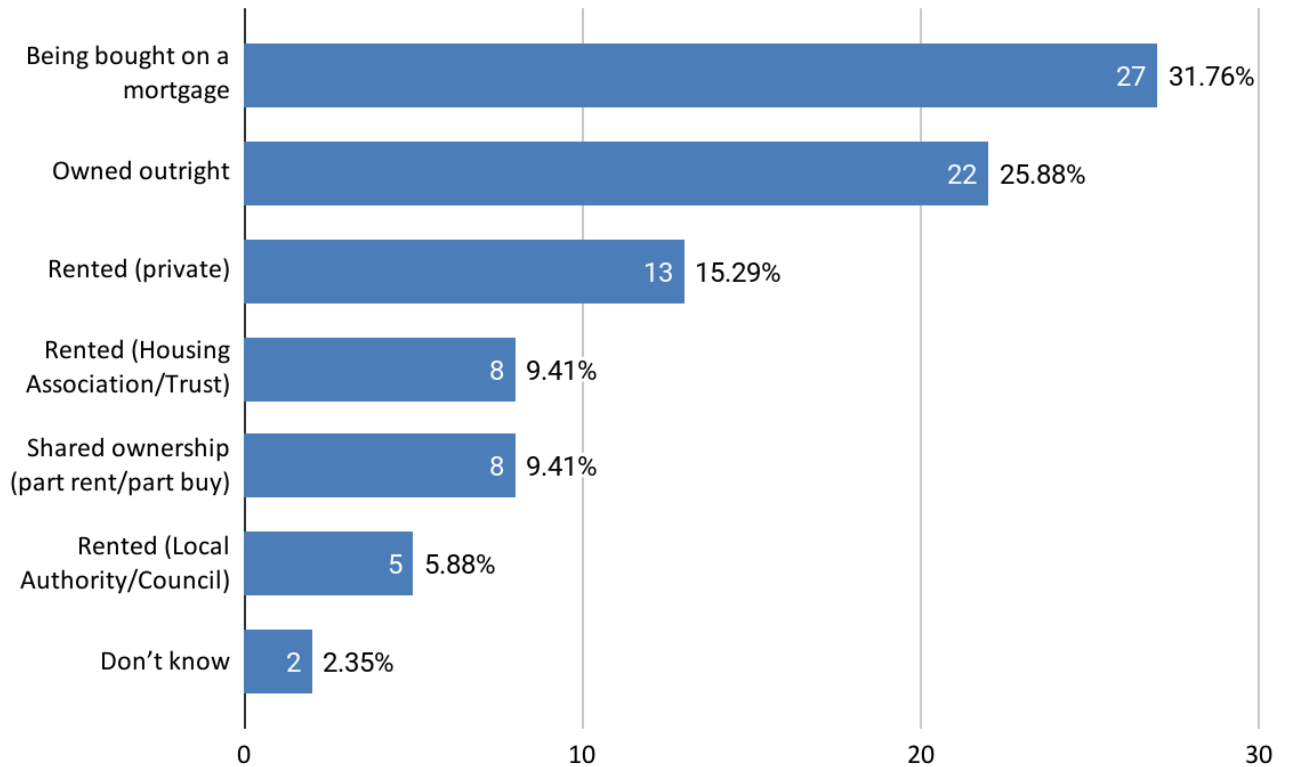
There were 83 responses to this question.



The majority of respondents identified as heterosexual (63, 75.9%). A smaller percentage preferred not to say (11, 13.3%). Gay man was selected by 5 respondents (6.0%), whilst Queer was chosen by 2 respondents (2.4%). Bisexual, and Lesbian or Gay woman, each accounted for 1 respondent (1.2%).

Question 17: Housing Tenure - Which of the following best describes the ownership of your home?

There were 85 responses to this question.



The majority of respondents indicated that their home is being bought on a mortgage (27, 31.8%), followed by those who own their home outright (22, 25.9%). Thirteen respondents (15.3%) rent privately, whilst 8 respondents (9.4%) each have homes rented from a Housing Association/Trust or through Shared Ownership (part rent/part buy). Homes rented from a Local Authority/Council were reported by 5 respondents (5.9%), and 2 respondents (2.4%) were unsure of their housing tenure.

Conclusion

A total of 91 respondents participated in the consultation regarding the Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) prohibiting street drinking associated with anti-social behaviour (ASB). The data reveals considerable concern among residents: 72 respondents (79%) expressed some level of concern, with 42 (46%) being very concerned. Of those who responded, 71 (78%) reported witnessing ASB linked to street drinking over the past year, and 33 (36%) reported seeing it more than 10 times.

The most frequently reported types of ASB include noise (63 respondents, 69%), litter (60, 66%), and public urination (61, 67%). Additionally, 82 respondents (90%) supported the renewal of the current PSPO powers, which allows for the confiscation of alcohol from those engaged in anti-social behaviour.

It must be noted that the total number of respondents to the consultation was relatively low, so this feedback may not fully represent the views of the broader Hackney population. Despite this, the responses indicate a strong demand for stricter enforcement and more proactive measures to address anti-social behaviour associated with street drinking in the borough.