

Stockroom Engagement Survey Stage 1 – Research Results

For Stockport Council



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1. Executive Summary

A broad mix of age bands (17% under 35, 60% 35-64 & 18% over 65), those with (37%) and without children at home (59%) (4% preferring not to say) and those who do (18%) or do not have (76%) a disability of long-term health condition (5% preferring not to say) completed the survey.

Participants used a variety of sources to gather information about the Stockroom proposal, with the top three being; through social media (55%), read display boards (17%), spoke to Council staff (15%), along with local newspaper (also 15%).

Those completing the quantitative survey, as well as those taking part in the stakeholder engagement presentations indicated a myriad of ways in which Stockroom could and should be used to benefit the people of Stockport.

In the survey the potential uses of Stockroom were split into four different zones, collectively across all the zones the top ten most beneficial aspects for the people of Stockport were considered to be:

- 80% - chance to enrol in a class or support group - from language and literacy classes to pottery, crafting and woodworking (Learning zone)
- 79% - relaxing in comfy seating in a modern café environment with friends, family or simply on your own (Family zone)
- 78% - Free access to computers, Wi-Fi, support to help you get online and use of a range of free digital resources (Learning zone)
- 75% - having access to facilities such as toilets that are accessible for all and buggy and mobility scooter hire (Community zone)
- 72% - accessing a range of help and advice services when you need support – such as advice about managing your money, your family's health and well-being, or aging well (Community zone)
- 70% - discovering music, theatre, poetry, story-telling, talent shows and more (Discovery zone)
- 70% connecting with other people and groups in your community in a modern, flexible space (Community zone)
- 68% - finding information about all that's on offer in Stockport Town Centre and access maps and tourist information (Discovery zone)
- 68% - finding out more about Stockport's heritage & history and how this has shaped Stockport as we know it today (Discovery zone)
- 67% - visiting a Sensory room (Family zone)

Out of the 22 prompted potential uses, all but three were selected as being beneficial to the people of Stockport by more than half (i.e. 50%) of those completing the survey. The option selected by the least number was *opportunity to*

host a party, business event, wedding or other celebration which was still chosen by a third (35%).

The findings suggest there is a demand for a space like Stockroom, with a lot of different desires for what it could offer.

The idea of Stockroom was seen as exciting and a great opportunity to enhance learning as well as being a place to socialise. Stockroom is seen as having the potential to provide a multi-use community space and bring services and organisations together in one central location.

The benefits of a development of this nature for the Town Centre were seen as being multi-faceted but with regeneration of the High Street the one most agreed with. In order the wider benefits were seen to be:

- 83% - breathing life back into empty retail space
- 70% - having community facilities in an accessible/central location
- 63% - creation of jobs
- 60% - better access to digital services and technology
- 57% - stronger sense of community spirit
- 53% - improved reading and literacy skills
- 11% - net - other

Within the stakeholder engagement presentation sessions feedback from organisations regarding the concept was positive, with a lot of interest in and support for the proposals. In many of the sessions there was a desire to see and hear about the plans as they develop going forward and for themselves to have further opportunities to input into these, providing advice especially in relation to the specifics around design to meet the needs of the groups they represent, as well as providing challenge as 'critical friends'.

Participants also had the opportunity to write in anything which they saw as being a disadvantage of the proposed plans via an open-ended verbatim question; 41% of participants left this question blank or wrote in the words nothing, no suggestions or similar.

Therefore, when given an opportunity to cite any disadvantages 41% left the question blank and 59% wrote in a response. Out of those writing in a response 23% gave a positive comment or wrote in no, none or no disadvantage.

Amongst those answering this question the top five disadvantages cited were:

- 20% - most or all resources will be taken away from the Central Library
- 16% - development will take away from local amenities and facilities

- 8% - parking charges and transport problems (including safety concerns)
- 7% - location not being easily accessible for all
- 7% - could cause gathering of disruptive groups or anti-social behaviour

However, nearly a quarter (23%) who gave an answer provided a positive comment rather than any perceived disadvantage. Most of these comments just answered with no, none or no disadvantages to the question do you see any disadvantages? but examples of longer answers have been provided in the report (see page 41).

2. Introduction

As town centres across the UK struggle to recover from the decline of High Street shopping and the huge economic shock of Covid-19, Stockport is pioneering an innovative plan to increase footfall and inspire a love of learning in children and adults.

Stockport has successfully bid for £14.5m of Government 'Future High Streets Fund' money to transform vacant retail units in the heart of the high street, Merseyway.

The Future High Streets Fund bid was for Stockroom.

Stockroom is an idea for a 21st century, universal learning and discovery space which could give the people of Stockport an opportunity to learn new skills, practice arts and crafts, enjoy live music and performances, use free services, and benefit from cutting-edge learning and IT facilities.

To help inform any future development, research has been undertaken to better understand what uses Stockroom could have and how those uses could benefit children, young people, adults and the town as a whole.

3. Aims & Objectives

The aims of this engagement were to:

- Understand what uses Stockroom could have
- Enable participants to have their say on the types of things they might like to see in Stockroom
- Identify any perceived disadvantages to the Stockroom idea
- Capture the perceived benefits a development of this nature may provide.

4. Methodology

A quantitative survey was designed by Qa Research and Stockport Council.

This could be completed in the following ways:

- As an online survey via the Stockport Council website
- As a paper survey available in all libraries and public buildings
- Via face to face on the street interviewing in the Town Centre

The engagement has been promoted extensively through the Council's networks, through social media, communicating via partners and to communities through mailouts and displays in public buildings across the borough.

In addition, display boards have been used to communicate the plans, with staff from Stockport Council engaging with people face to face in the town centre to encourage them to complete a survey. An interview team from Qa also conducted ten interview shifts to survey those looking at the display board information.

The engagement period was between 5th July and 1st August 2021.

In addition, various stakeholder groups and organisations have been shown a presentation about Stockroom and asked to provide feedback. They were also invited to complete the online quantitative survey, as well as share and cascade the survey link through their networks. Council staff undertaking these presentations have also completed a feedback form capturing questions raised, reactions and comments during these stakeholder engagement presentation sessions. The key feedback from these have been included in this report, shown in text boxes to separate the qualitative feedback from these sessions from the quantitative survey.

A list of groups and organisations attending the stakeholder engagement presentation sessions can be found in the appendix.

Background information

Before completing the survey, the following information was provided. The images and text are taken from the online survey hosted on the Stockport Council website.

Overview

As town centres across the UK struggle to recover from the decline of High Street shopping and the huge economic shock of Covid-19, Stockport is pioneering an innovative plan to increase footfall and inspire a love of learning in children and adults.

Stockport has successfully bid for £14.5m of Government 'Future High Streets Fund' money to transform vacant retail units in the heart of our high street, Merseyway.

The Future High Streets Fund bid was for Stockroom.

Stockroom is an idea for a 21st century, universal learning and discovery space which could give the people of Stockport an opportunity to learn new skills, practice arts and crafts, enjoy live music and performances, use free services, and benefit from cutting-edge learning and IT facilities.

Now we need your help to create something special!

We want to talk with you about what uses Stockroom could have and how those uses could benefit you individually as well as our children, young people, adults and the town as a whole.

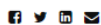
We really need your input to help us shape what Stockroom could be.

If you require the information in an alternative format, please email consultation@stockport.gov.uk

Give us your views

[Take part in the survey >](#)

Stockroom



As town centres across the UK struggle to recover from the decline of High Street shopping and the huge economic shock of Covid-19, Stockport is pioneering an innovative plan to increase footfall and inspire a love of learning in children and adults.

Stockport has successfully bid for £14.5m of Government 'Future High Streets Fund' money to transform vacant retail units in the heart of our high street, Merseyway.

The Future High Streets Fund bid was for Stockroom.

Stockroom is an idea for a 21st Century, universal learning and discovery space which could give the people of Stockport an opportunity to learn new skills, practice arts and crafts, enjoy live music and performances, use free services, and benefit from cutting-edge learning and IT facilities.

We want to talk with you about what uses Stockroom could have and how those uses could benefit you individually as well as our children, young people, adults and the town as a whole.

We've split the potential uses of Stockroom into four 'Zones' that we think reflect the potential for the space – **'Discovery', 'Community', 'Learning' and 'Family'**.

Have a look at the Stockroom information and complete the survey.

We really need your input to help us shape what Stockroom could be.

If you require the survey in an alternative format, please email consultation@stockport.gov.uk

Stockroom Survey

We want to talk with you about what uses Stockroom could have and how those uses could benefit you individually as well as our children, young people, adults and town centre businesses.

We want Stockroom to be designed around how you would use the space. We've split the potential uses of Stockroom into four 'Zones' that we think reflect the potential for the space – **'Discovery', 'Family', 'Community', and 'Learning'**.

- Have a think about the type of things you might like to see in Stockroom and complete the survey. If you think of something that isn't listed, please let us know as we need your input to help us shape what Stockroom could be.
- **Your input can help shape the future of Stockport town centre and the prosperity of people and businesses.**

Please carefully read the survey on the next few pages and let us have your views

Survey starts

Finish

All fields marked with an asterisk (*) are required.

Where would Stockroom be located?

Stockroom would be located in Merseyway on Adlington Walk.



What inspired Stockroom?

There are strong national and international examples of the benefits of library, heritage, cultural, education and other services moving into shared locations which are easy to access. We've looked elsewhere at how this can work:

- **Storyhouse in Chester has attracted more than one million visitors a year** to a multi-use facility in the city centre. It has become a new home to 150 local groups and driven a significant increase in reading among young people.
- After creating new mixed-use town centre libraries and cultural hub, visitor figures at **Tower Hamlets Idea Stores increased from 550,000 to more than 2 million**
- While Chester and Tower Hamlets have brought a huge increase in visitors to town centre locations, **nationally, libraries have struggled with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport identifying a 17% drop in usage between 2005 and 2020.**
- **Stockroom would inspire lifelong learning among children, young people and adults of all ages** and help the borough to address the underperformance of educational attainment, particularly at 'A' Level and among children in disadvantaged areas or with special educational needs or disabilities.
- **In addition there are 11,000 adults in Stockport who have real trouble reading.** For them, everyday tasks such as booking a doctors appointment, reading road signs or food shopping can be incredibly challenging.



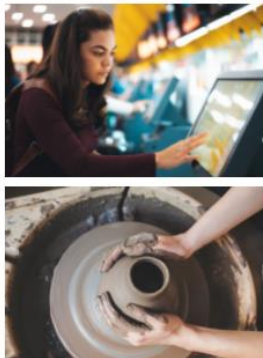
What could Stockroom be?

- **Stockroom - a 'learning and discovery space'** which could inspire, entertain and support the people of Stockport and drive people back into the town centre, better supporting shops and businesses.
- **Stockroom - bigger than a football pitch**, filled with great stuff to discover
- **Stockroom - a truly inclusive space for everyone** to use, fully accessible and with design features to help people with dementia or those on the autistic spectrum
- **Stockroom - a fantastic, convenient new arrival point** for the town centre, could **breathe new life into empty retail spaces** in the heart of Merseyway.
- **Stockroom - a place to celebrate** the rich culture, creativity and diversity of Stockport, where the past, present and future could come together.
- **Stockroom - a place to spend time exploring** with friends and family, children and grandchildren, parents and grandparents.
- **Stockroom - with brand new 'best in class' toilet facilities** with enhanced facilities for people with a disability.



What could Stockroom offer for the people of Stockport?

- **Greater prosperity**
 - Breathing life back into empty retail space bringing people back to the High Street
 - Create more and better jobs and good business growth
- **Helping everyone achieve their full potential**
 - Increase skills to get more people working
 - Providing research and study space with opportunities for lifelong learning
- **Healthier, happier lives**
 - Through learning, discovery, social connections and support when people need it
- **Stronger, more resilient communities**
 - A place for people of all ages and backgrounds to come together and celebrate our heritage
- **Improved reading and literacy**
 - Through improved access to a 21st Century library offer
- **Cultural and creative enrichment**
 - Through improved access to cultural services
- **Better access to digital services and technology**
 - Through access to top end IT hardware and software packages and support



The Central Library Building

If there is support to create a 21st Century library offer within Stockroom, this may result in library services being relocated from the existing Central Library Building on the A6.

However a formal consultation on the relocation of library services from the existing Central Library Building would be held before any decision was made. This would include consulting people about potential alternative uses for the current Central Library building.

No decision about the future of the Central Library building or the service it provides would be made without full consultation with the people of Stockport, including those people who currently use the library.

There may also be support for relocating other Council services to Stockroom and it should also be noted that this may also mean they might be relocated from their current location.

SAVE & CONTINUE

Sampling and statistical robustness

In total 1299 surveys were completed.

The overall sample of 1299 provides findings which in research terms means we can be 95% confident that the data at an overall level has a variance no more than +/- 2.7% accuracy.

Therefore, these findings are based on a sample size considerably within the +/-5% standard industry error rate required to provide a statistically robust results at an overall level.

A note on analysis and how the data is presented in the report

The base sizes (i.e. how many people answered the question) is also shown in the appendix. Those completing the survey could skip any questions they did not want to answer so the base sizes for each question will vary.

Please note that when interpreting results throughout this report not all percentages will equal 100% due to rounding (with any figures of 0.5 or higher being rounded up). Where the figure is shown as 0% at least one respondent gave this answer but the total count makes up less than 0.5% of the overall total; a blank shows no-one has given this answer.

Some questions were multiple response questions: respondents had the option of giving more than one response. These percentages may be higher than 100%.

Open-ended verbatim questions have been coded, grouped together and shown as percentages.

The analysis was run using Askia software. The questions have been cross-tabulated by different demographics, with relevant statistically significant differences being commented upon within the report, how useful or relevant this is needs to be determined by the reader.

The overall findings presented in the charts in chapter 6 & 7 are shown in ranked order, from the most to least given response.

5. Key findings – who completed the survey

The research findings are a reflection of who completed the survey. The survey asked a number of demographic questions with the profile of who completed the survey shown below. The findings in subsequent chapters have been cross tabulated with any statistically significant differences by demographics being highlighted.

Responding as an individual or as part of an organisation

2% were responding on behalf of an organisation and 98% as individuals.

The names of the organisations who completed a quantitative survey are listed in the appendix.

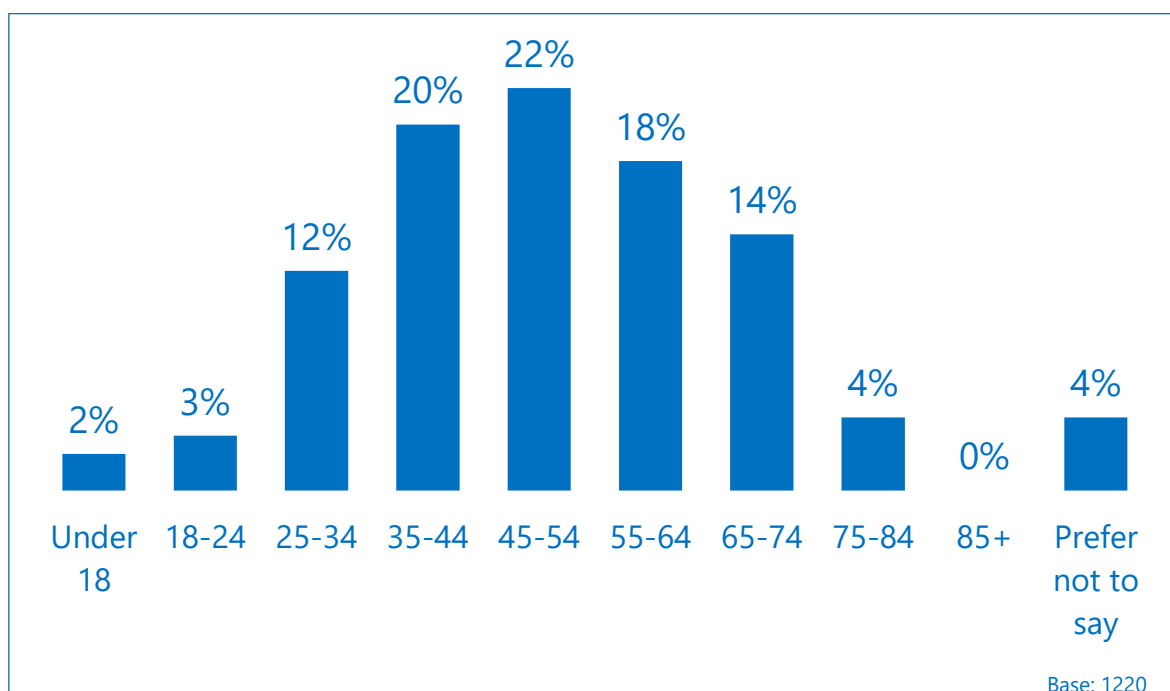
Gender

28% completing the survey were male, 68% female, 0% non-binary (4 respondents), 0% other (2 wrote in gender fluid & 1 wrote other), with 3% selecting 'prefer not to say'.

1208 people answered this question.

Age

The age bands of those completing the survey are shown below.

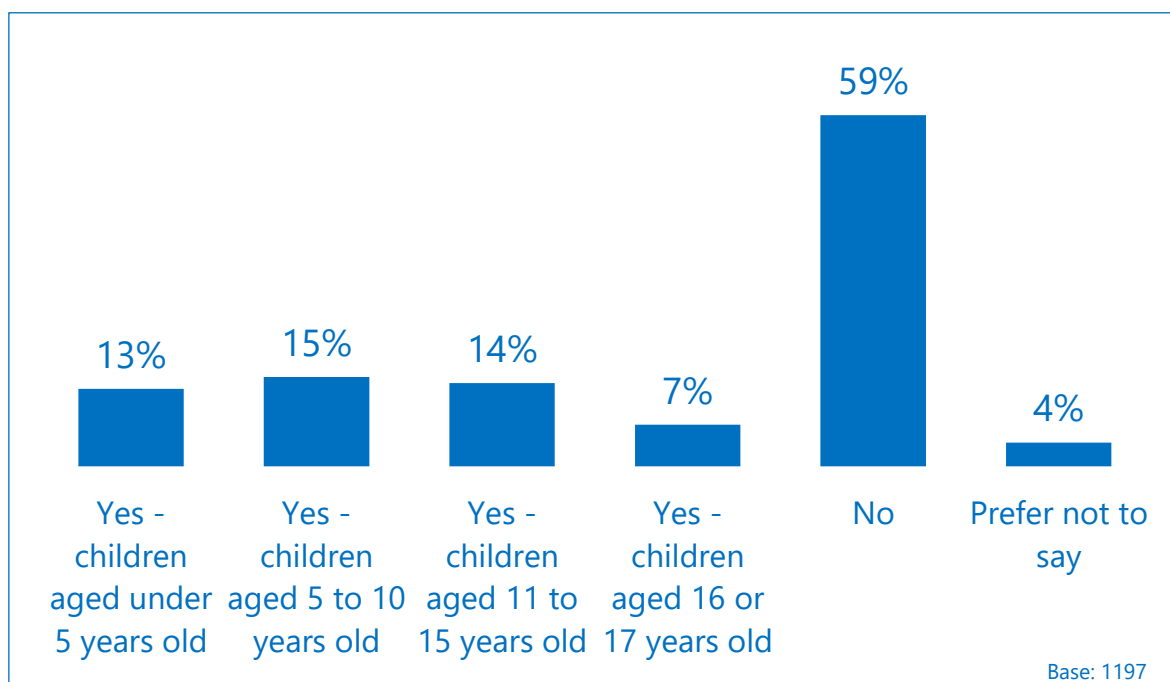


Children under 18 living at home

Participants were given various categories and asked if they had any children under the age of 18 in their household?

37% of participants had children under the age of 18 living at home.

The proportion who had children in different age bands is shown below.



Disability or long-term health condition

18% of participants have a disability or long-term health condition.

With 76% selecting 'no' and 5% 'prefer not to say'.

1212 people answered this question.

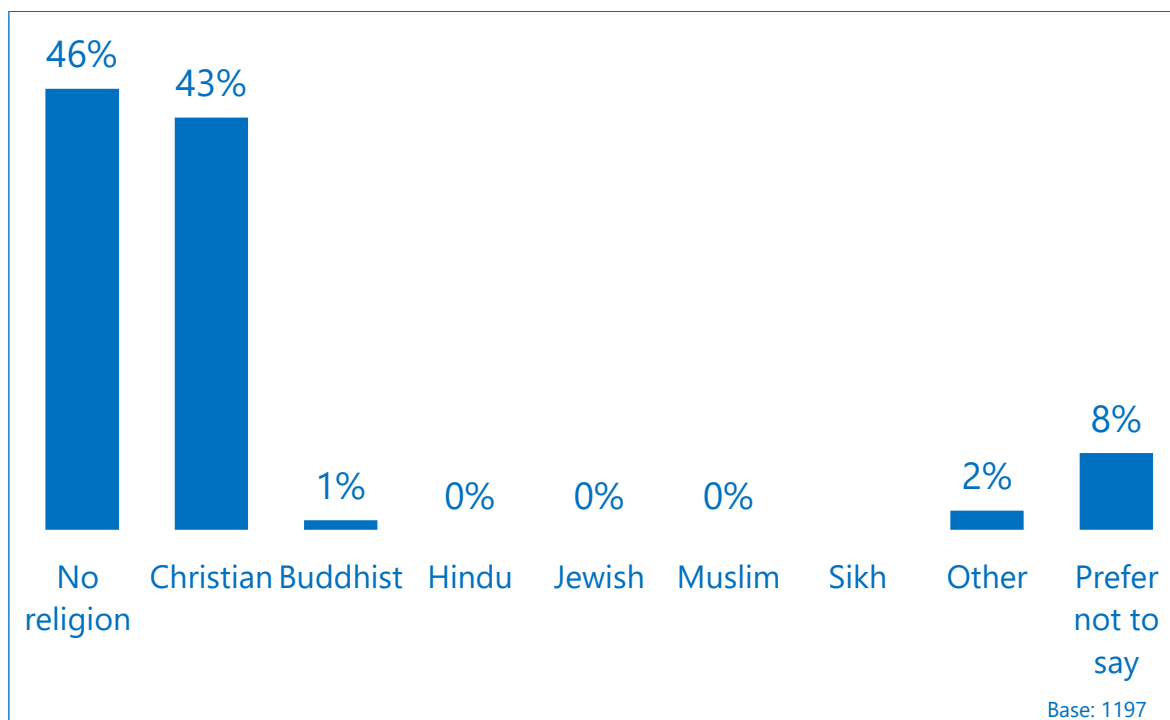
Ethnicity

Participants were presented a list and asked what is your ethnicity?

Ethnicity	%
Net - White	92%
White British	87%
White Irish	2%
Gypsy / Roma	-
Traveller of Irish Heritage	-
White Other	3%
Net - Black	0%
Black or Black British African	0%
Black or Black British Caribbean	-
Black Other	-
Net - Mixed	1%
Mixed White/Black African	0%
Mixed White/Black Caribbean	0%
Mixed White/Asian	0%
Mixed Other	0%
Net - Asian	1%
Asian or Asian British Indian	0%
Asian or Asian British Pakistani	0%
Asian or Asian British Bangladeshi	-
Asian or Asian British Chinese	0%
Asian or Asian British Other	0%
Net - Other	0%
Arab	-
Other ethnic background	0%
Prefer not to say	6%
Base	1205

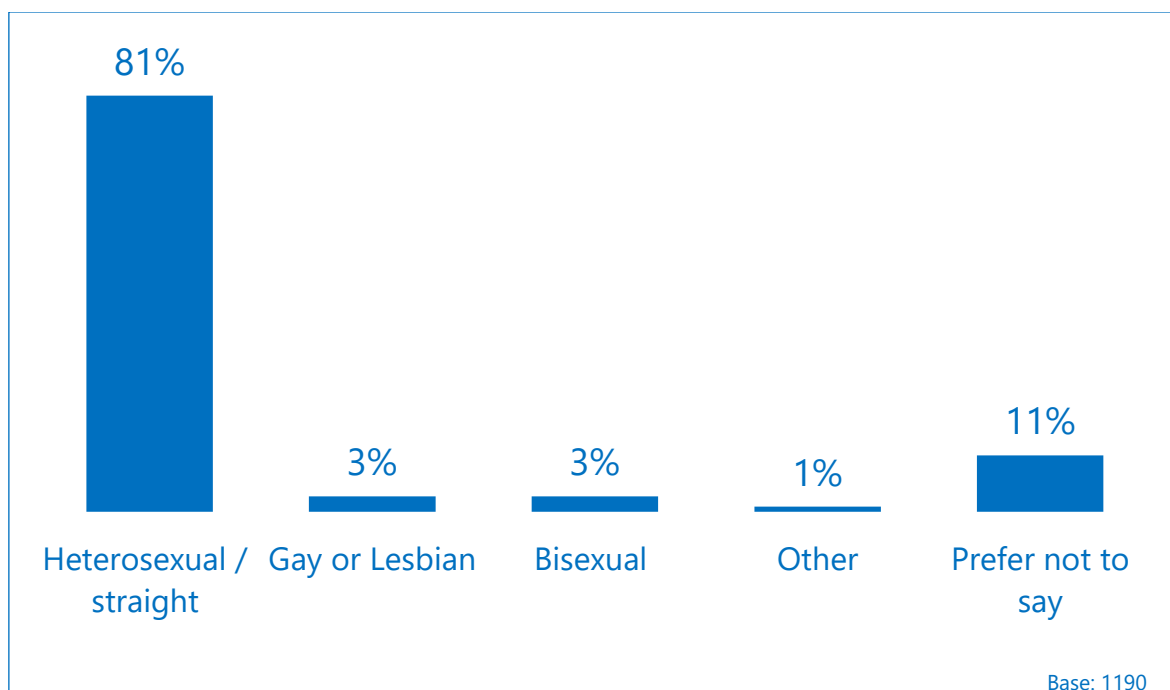
Religion or belief

Participants were presented a list and asked what is your religion or belief?



Sexuality

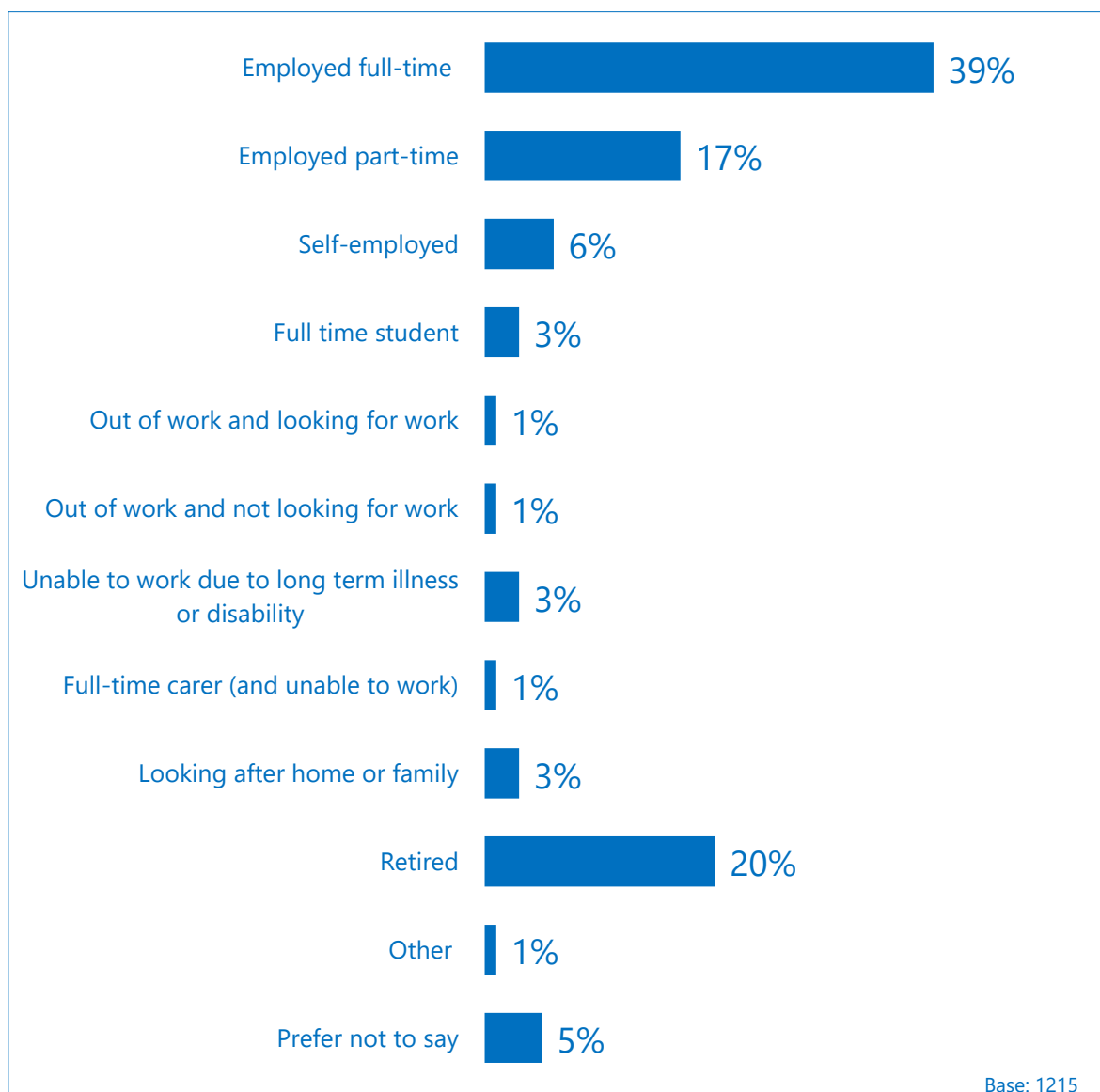
Participants were presented a list and asked what is your sexuality?



Employment status

Participants were presented a list and asked what is your employment status?

Nearly two thirds of participants were employed (62%), with a third (32%) not in employment (including retired) and 5% preferring not to say.



Amongst those in employment:

- 96% were not furloughed
- 1% were currently furloughed for all of their contracted hours
- 1% were currently furloughed for some of their contracted hours
- 2% said 'prefer not to say'

Postcode

Participants were asked to provide the first section and the first number of the second section of their postcode, with 80% providing at least the first part of their postcode. Those providing a postcode came from the following areas, with the majority (96%) coming from a SK area.

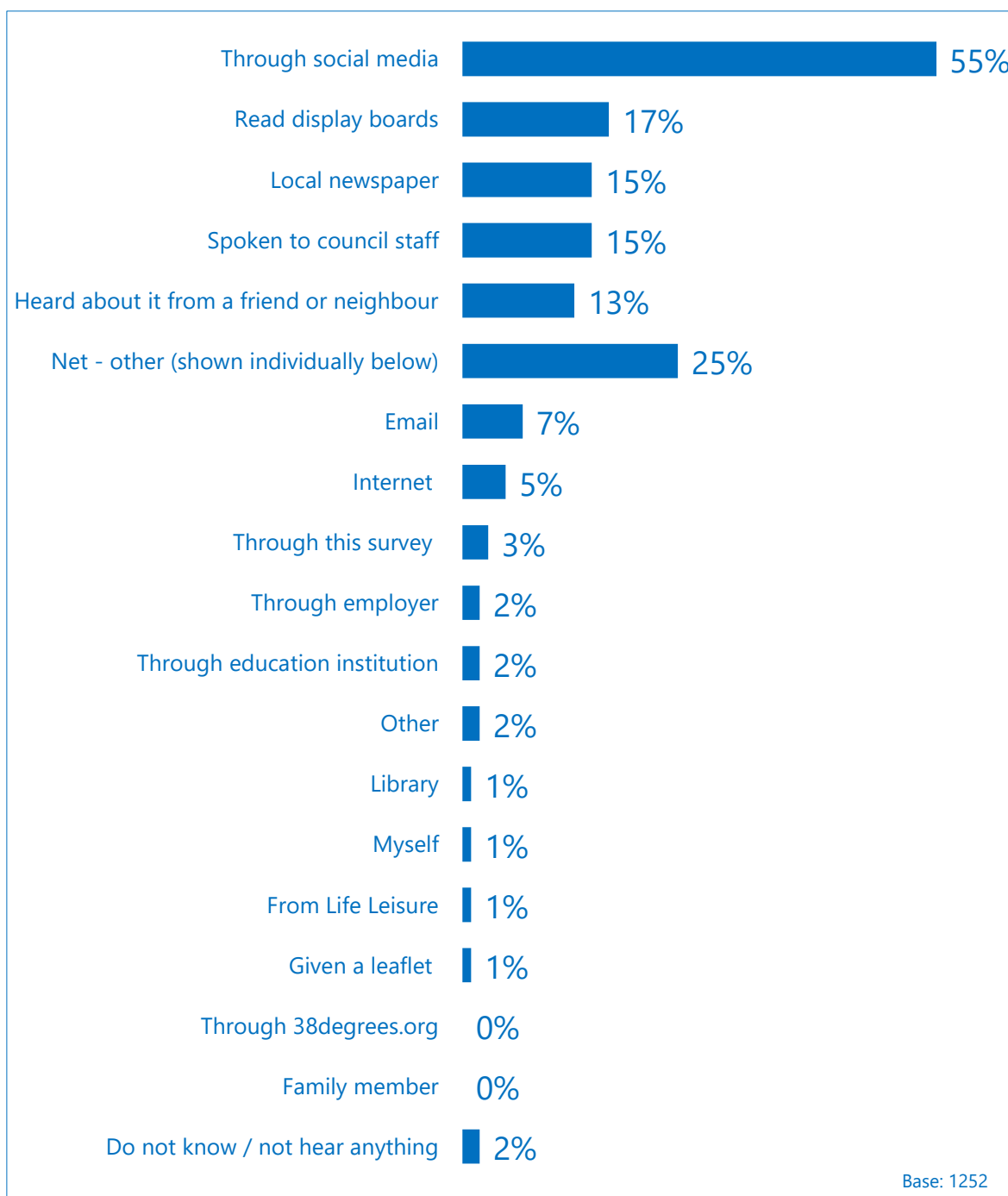
Postcode area	%
SK1	6%
SK2	12%
SK3	14%
SK4	15%
SK5	10%
SK6	14%
SK7	9%
SK8	10%
SK9	0%
SK12	0%
SK13	0%
SK14	0%
SK22	0%
SK25	0%
SK26	0%
SK27	0%
SK30	0%
SK38	0%
SK39	1%
SK42	0%
SK43	0%
SK44	0%
SK45	0%
SK57	0%
SK62	0%
SK63	0%
SK66	0%
SK67	0%
SK68	0%
SK71	0%
SK72	0%
SK74	0%
SK76	0%
SK81	0%
SK84	0%
SK85	0%
SK87	0%
M	3%
Other	1%
Base	1038

6. Sources used to gather information

Participants were presented with a list and asked which sources they had used to gather information about the Stockroom proposal.

The first five options in the chart were shown on a prompted list, with the option to add in another source, the answers of which have been shown individually below.

Multiple answers could be given, with the findings shown in ranked order.



A variety of different information sources have been used to gather information about the Stockroom proposal with just over half getting information via social media.

Those aged 35-64 were more likely to have gathered information about Stockroom via social media (60% of all those in this age band) than those aged under 35 (48%) and over 65 (also 48%).

Those over 65 were the most likely to have gathered information by reading the display boards (23%) compared to under 35s (16%) and 35-64 year olds (16% of them also did this).

Gathering information from local newspapers was statistically more likely to have been done by those over 65 (20%) than those under 35 (12%) and 35-64 years old (14%).

Hearing about it from a friend or neighbour was also more likely to have been selected by those over 65 (18%) than those aged 35-64 (11%).

7. Perceived benefits

The potential uses of Stockroom were split into four 'Zones' which reflected the potential for the space.

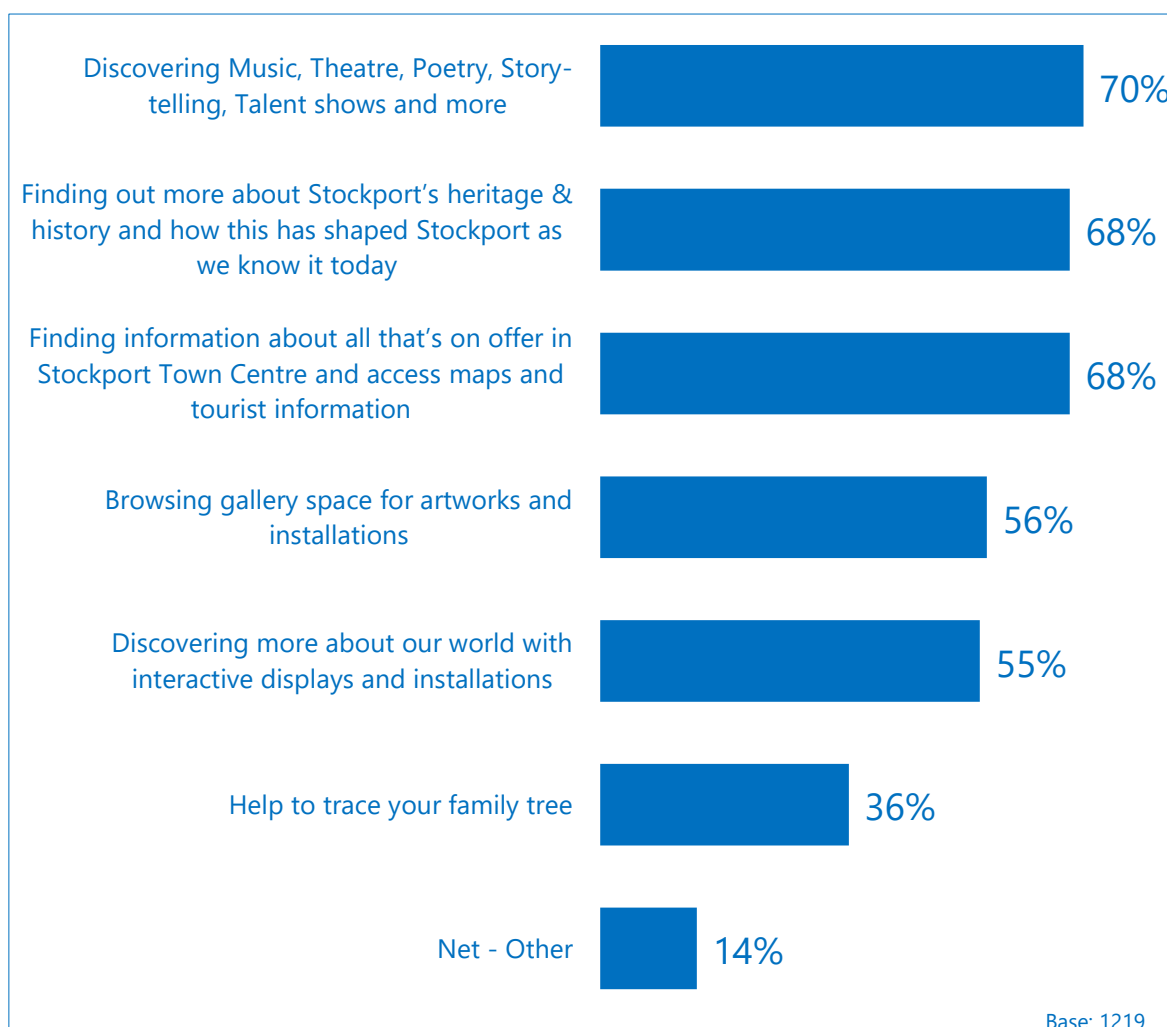
For each zone participants were given a list and asked to select any of these which they felt would be beneficial to the people of Stockport. The prompted options are shown in the charts for each of the four different 'zones'.

There was also the opportunity in each 'zone' to add in 'other' suggestions of what they would like to see in Stockroom. The net 'other' figure is shown in the chart, with the individual answers being coded and grouped together.

The additional suggestions are shown as a bullet point list after each chart.

Discovery Zone

Which of the following do you think would be beneficial to the people of Stockport?



The 'other' suggestions given, in ranked order were:

- Activities for children and adults 3%
- Stockroom is not needed, keep the library as it is 3%
- Educational facilities for children (science labs etc.) 2%
- A diverse space for everyone 1%
- A place for adult learning 1%
- Library services 1%
- Social activities 1%
- Space for charities and advice services 1%
- Mental health and wellbeing facilities 0%
- Sports facilities 0%
- The use of computers 0%
- Free meeting rooms for the community 0%

There were a few statistically significant differences by demographics. The categories are shown in the same order as the chart above.

Discovering Music, Theatre, Poetry, Story-telling, Talent shows and more was more likely to be selected by females (75% compared to 61% of males), those aged 35-64 (75% compared to 66% of under 35s and 64% of over 65s), those with no religious belief (75% compared to 69% with one), those who are bisexual (88% compared to 72% of heterosexuals) and those with children at home (76% compared to 69% without).

Finding out more about Stockport's heritage and history and how this has shaped Stockport as we know it today was more likely to be selected by those aged 65+ (75%) and 35-64 (69%) than those under 35 (59%), those with a religious belief (72% compared to 66% with none), those who are employed and those unable to work due to long term illness or disability (69% and 74% respectively compared to 47% of full-time students) and those with no children (72% compared to 63% with children at home).

Finding information about all that's on offer in Stockport Town Centre and access maps and tourist information was more likely to be selected by those aged 65+ (77%) and 35-64 (70%) than those under 35 (59%), those with a religious belief (73% compared to 66% with none), those working part-time (70% compared to 44% of those out of work and looking for work) and those who are retired (77% compared to those currently in employment 68% and out of work and looking for work 44%).

Browsing gallery space for artworks and installations was more likely to be selected by those aged 65+ (61%) and 35-64 (69%) than those under 35 (43%), those who are bisexual (78% compared to 57% of heterosexuals), full-time carers and the

retired (82% and 63% respectively compared to 56% of those currently employed) and amongst those without children or those with older children (57% no children, 57% children 5-10, 63% children aged 11-15 and 61% children 16-17 compared to 46% of those with children under 5).

Discovering more about our world with interactive displays and installations was more likely to be selected by those responding on behalf of an organisation (79% compared to 55% of individuals), females (57% compared to 47% of all males), full-time students (69% compared to 50% who are self-employed, 33% who are out of work and not looking for work and 44% of all those unable to work due to long term illness or disability) and those with children aged under 5 (68% compared to 57% of those with children aged 5-11 and 11-15).

Help to trace your family tree was more likely to be selected by females (39% compared to 27% of males), full-time students (47% compared to 19% of those out of work and looking for work) and those who are retired (43% compared to those currently in employment 34%).

Community Zone

Which of the following do you think would be beneficial to the people of Stockport?



The 'other' suggestions given, in ranked order were:

- These facilities already exist so are not needed 2%
- A space for music facilities 1%
- New food outlets 1%
- An inclusive environment 1%
- Shops 1%
- Keep the library open 1%
- Safe space for everyone 1%
- Better parking 0%
- Sports facilities 0%
- Toilet facilities 0%
- A space for young people 0%
- Somewhere for mothers to breastfeed 0%

There were a few statistically significant differences by demographics.

Having access to facilities such as toilets that are accessible for all and buggy and mobility scooter hire was more likely to be selected by females (78% compared to 69% of males), those aged 65+ (81% compared to 74% of both those aged under 35 and 35-64), those who are bisexual (88% compared to 76% of heterosexuals), those with a disability or long term health condition (81% compared to 74% who do not), full-time students and those unable to work due to long term illness or disability (84% and 87% respectively compared to 56% of all those out of work and looking for work).

Accessing a range of help and advice services when you need support was more likely to be selected by females (75% compared to 64% of males), those aged 35-64 and 65+ (75% and 74% respectively compared to 63% of those aged under 35), those who are bisexual (85% compared to 73% of heterosexuals), those out of work and not looking for work and those unable to work due to long term illness or disability and looking after home or family (89%, 87% and 83% respectively compared to 65% of self-employed).

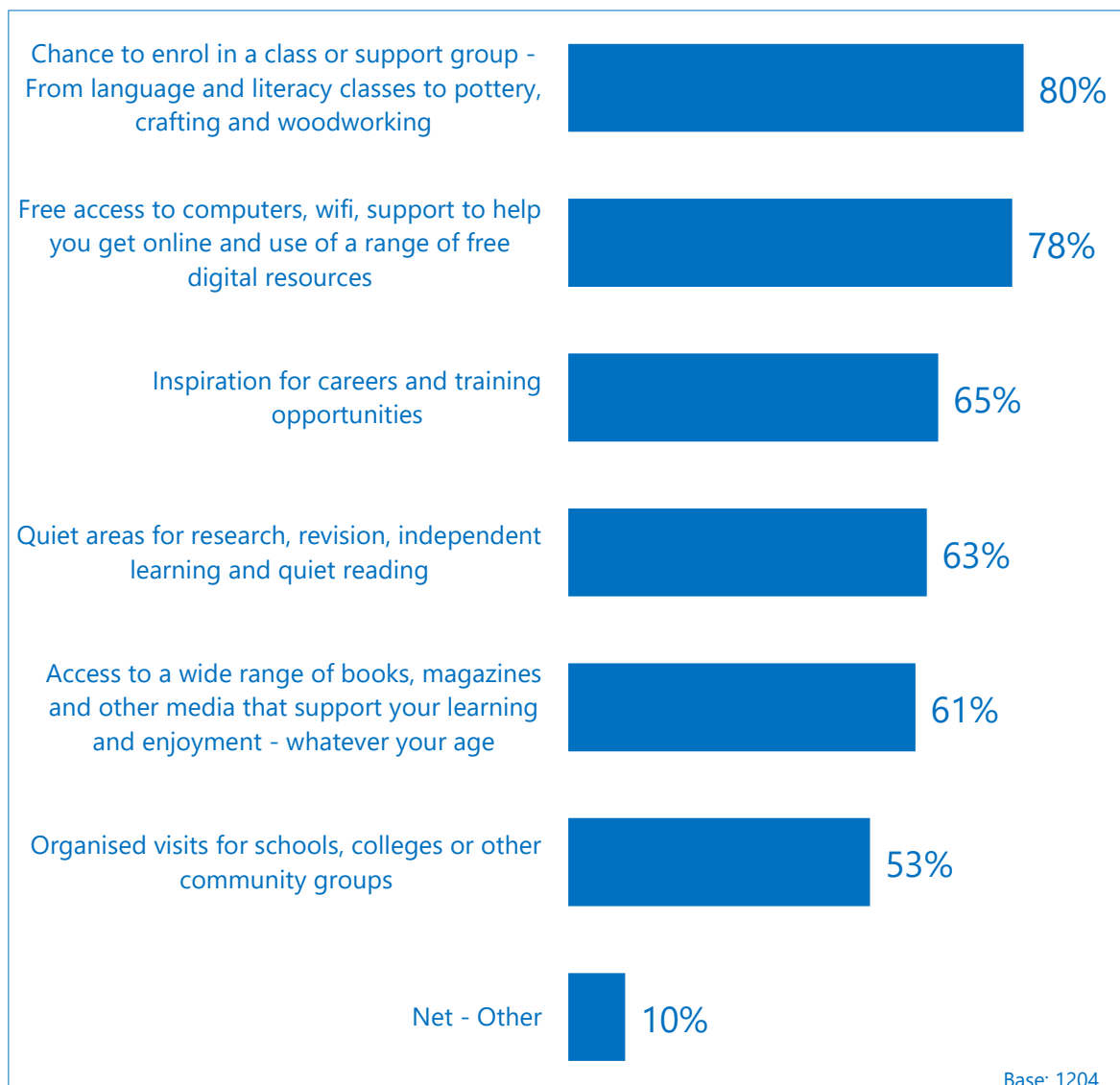
Connecting with other people and groups in your community in a modern, flexible space was more likely to be selected by those responding on behalf of an organisation (89% compared to 70% of individuals), females (73% compared to 67% of males), those aged 35-64 (75% compared to 62% of those aged 65+), those with no religious belief (76% compared to 67% with one), those who are bisexual (85% compared to 72% of heterosexuals), those who are currently employed (75% compared to 65% of all those who are retired) and those with children (75% compared to 69% with no children at home).

Chance to register life events, like births and marriages and access other council and community services was more likely to be selected by those aged 65+ (57% compared to 40% of those aged under 35 and 42% of those 35-64), those who are retired (57% compared to 42% who are currently employed) and those with no children (48% compared to 38% with children at home).

Opportunity to host a party, business event, wedding or other celebration was more likely to be selected by those aged under 34 and 35-64 (both 37% compared to 26% of those aged 65+) and those currently employed and also out of work and looking for work (38% and 56% respectively compared to 27% of those who are retired).

Learning Zone

Which of the following do you think would be beneficial to the people of Stockport?



The 'other' suggestions given, in ranked order were:

- I would use my local library or centre for these services 3%
- Education classes - tutoring & homework support for young people 1%
- Music & Arts centre - Equipment and Rehearsal rooms 1%
- Access to Mental Health and Wellbeing support 1%
- Accessible space and support for those with disabilities 1%
- Basic skill classes - such as maintenance, repairs and using tools 0%
- An ecology or environmental centre 0%
- Bookable space for groups 0%

There were a few statistically significant differences by demographics.

Chance to enrol in a class or support group was more likely to be selected by females (85% compared to 70% of males), those aged 35-64 (84% compared to 76% of both under 35s and over 65s), those with no religious belief (85% compared to 79% with one), those currently in employment, full-time students, those unable to work due to long term illness or disability, full time carers & looking after home or family (83%, 81%, 81%, 91% & 93% respectively compared to 44% who are out of work and not looking for work) and those with children aged 11-15 at home (86% compared to 79% of those with no children at home).

Free access to computers, wifi, support to help you get online and use of a range of free digital resources was more likely to be selected by those who are gay or lesbian (97% compared to 78% of heterosexuals and 83% who are bisexual) and full-time students and those unable to work due to long term illness or disability (92% and 90% respectively compared to 76% of those in employment).

Inspiration for careers and training opportunities was more likely to be selected by females (68% compared to 61% of males), those who are bisexual (80% compared to 66% of heterosexuals) and those with younger children aged 11-15 (74% compared to 64% amongst those without children at home).

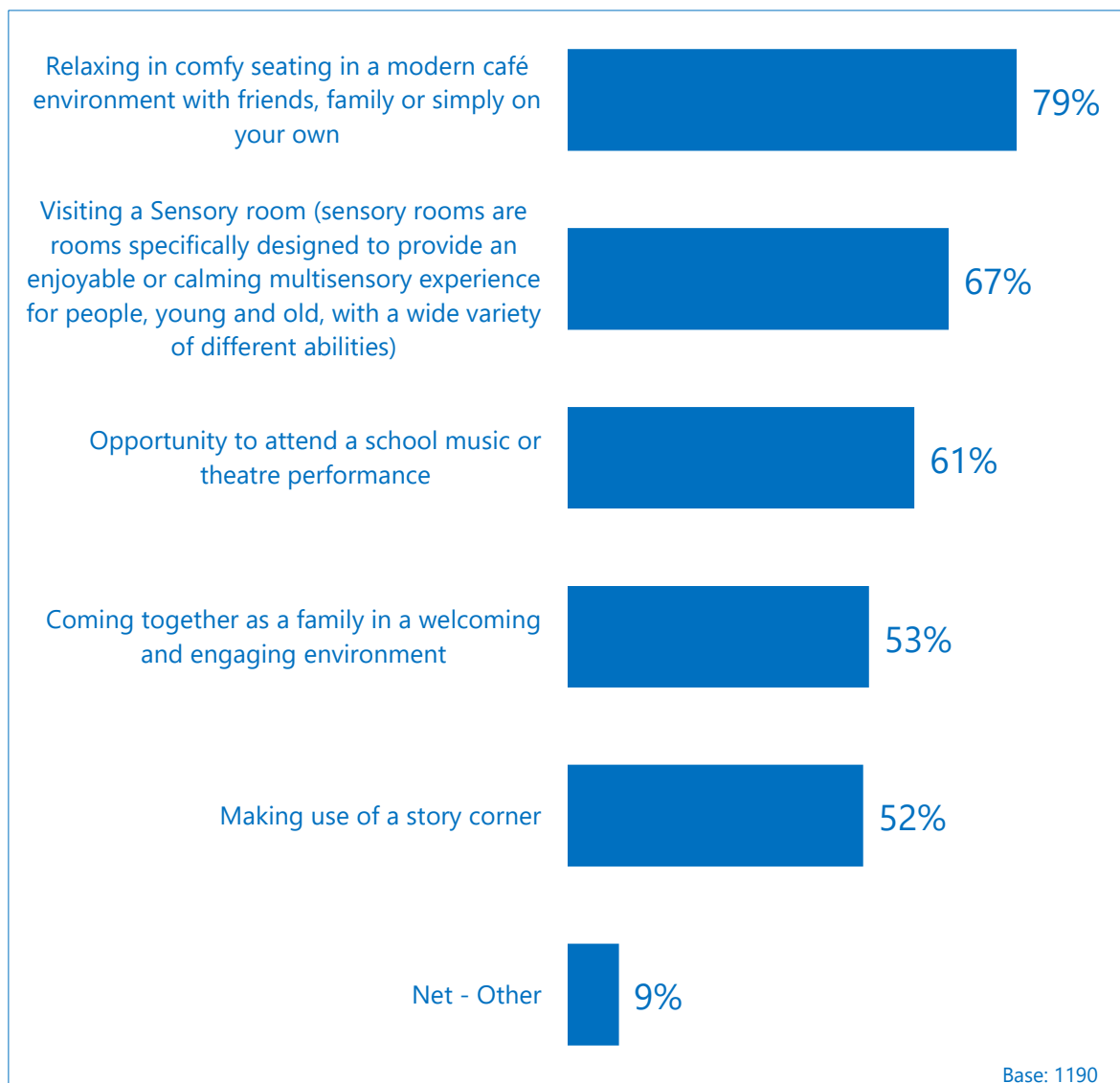
Quiet areas for research, revision, independent learning and quiet reading was more likely to be selected by those who are gay or lesbian (79% compared to 63% of heterosexuals), those with a disability or long term health condition (69% compared to 61% who do not), full-time students (81% compared to 61% of those in employment) and those with no children at home (65% compared to 59% of those with).

Access to a wide range of books, magazines and other media that support your learning and enjoyment was more likely to be selected by full-time students (81% compared to 59% of those in employment and 33% of those out of work and not looking for work) and those with children aged 16-17 & those with no children at home (70% and 64% respectively compared to 53% of those with children under 5).

Organised visits for schools, colleges or other community groups was more likely to be selected by females (58% compared to 47% of males), full-time carers (82% compared to 57% of those in employment, 43% of full-time students and retired and 31% of all those out of work and looking for work) and those with younger children aged under 5 and 5-11 (62% and 64% respectively compare to 52% amongst those without children at home).

Family Zone

Which of the following do you think would be beneficial to the people of Stockport?



The 'other' suggestions given, in ranked order were:

- I would use my local library or centre for these services 2%
- Support for parents - breastfeeding groups & parenting guidance 1%
- None of the above 1%
- Entertainment and play facilities for young children 1%
- Family classes and group activities 1%
- Activity groups - such as crafting 1%
- Wellbeing and Mental Health family support 0%
- Education facilities 0%

There were a few differences statistically significant by demographics.

Relaxing in comfy seating in a modern café environment with friends, family or simply on your own was more likely to be selected by females (81% compared to 75% of males), both heterosexuals and bisexuals (80% and 95% respectively compared to 61% of gay or lesbians), those employed part-time and out of work and looking for work (84% and 88% respectively compared to 63% of all those unable to work due to long term illness or disability).

Visiting a Sensory room was more likely to be selected by females (72% compared to 56% of males), full-time carers, those unable to work due to long term illness or disability and full-time students (92%, 84% and 84% respectively compared to 68% currently in employment, 50% who are out of work and looking for work, 25% of those out of work and not looking for work and 63% retired) and those with children under 5 and 11-15 years old (76% and 72% respectively compared to 59% of those with children aged 16-17 and 66% who have no children at home).

Opportunity to attend a school music or theatre performance was more likely to be selected by females (64% compared to 57% of males), those aged 35-64 (66% compared to 50% of under 35s) and those with children (67% compared to 58% of those with no children at home).

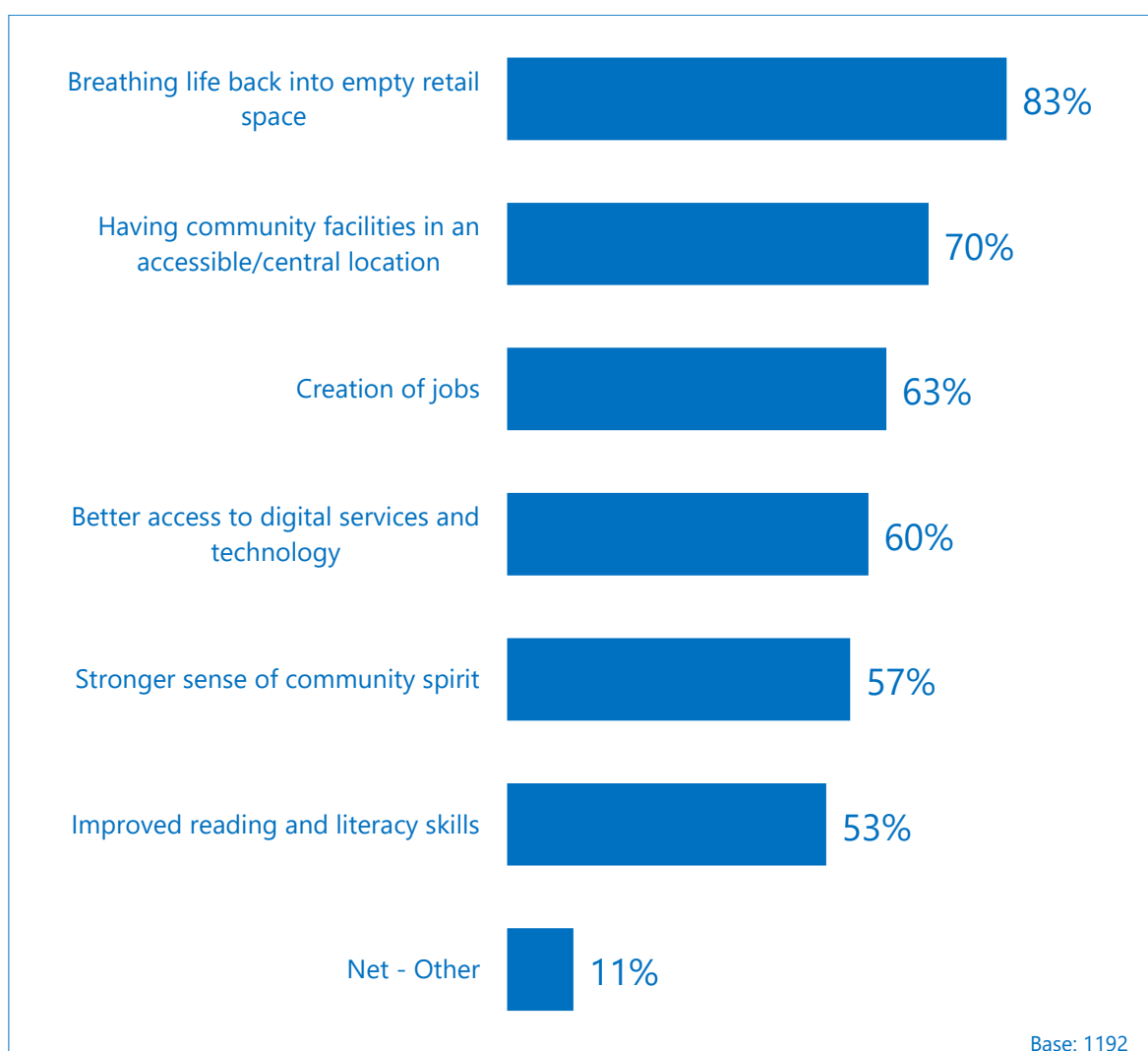
Coming together as a family in a welcoming and engaging environment was more likely to be selected those aged 35-64 (56% compared to 46% of over 65s), those with no religious belief (56% compared to 50% with one), those currently in employment (56% compared to 46% who are retired) and those with children under 5 (64% compared to 51% of those with no children at home).

Making use of a story corner was more likely to be selected by females (57% compared to 40% of males), those employed part-time (60% compared to 52% employed full-time and 45% self-employed) and those with children under 5 and 5-11 years old (71% and 58% respectively compared to 47% of those with children aged 11-15 and 49% who have no children at home).

Wider benefits to the Town Centre

After feeding back on the potential usages of Stockroom, participants were asked from the proposed plans for Stockroom, what do they see as the benefits of a development of this nature for the Town Centre. There were some prompted options listed, along with the opportunity to add in 'other' benefits in an open-ended verbatim section.

The table shows the percentage agreeing with each of the prompted potential benefits.



The 'other' suggestions given, in ranked order were:

- Negative comment 5%
- Will bring people into the town centre 2%
- Makes Stockport more appealing 1%
- A place for learning 1%
- Somewhere for Music or Arts 1%
- A place to receive support and advice 0%
- Somewhere to access Wellbeing and Mental Health support 0%
- Somewhere for leisure activities 0%
- Somewhere with free things to do 0%
- A place to meet people 0%
- Other 2%
- Do not know 0%

5% or 58 people gave a negative comment, with a variety of answers from the very short 'none' or 'no benefits' to comments relating to the Central Library, the current High Street and the cost. The quotes below illustrate the negative comments made:

Comments relating to the Central Library included:

"The empty retail space is an issue for all town centres. But it doesn't feel like a great solution to move existing services from existing (much more interesting) buildings which will then become empty!"

"House all of the above in the current Central Library, not in the store on Merseyway"

"The only benefit I can see is that it will enable the council to ditch a perfectly sound Grade II listed building earmarked specifically by Andrew Carnegie for use as a library in an egregious act of cultural and historical vandalism, replacing a structure of great significance to the architectural heritage of the area with the latest vanity project. Of course, one could reinvest in this historical entity, but why preserve the past when you can bulldoze it to make way for the future? Risible"

Comments relating to the state of the High Street included:

"None of the above. Offer incentives to bring retailers back instead of pricing them out of the area"

"Absolutely nothing! Stockport needs more shops"

"None - should be introducing new commercial opportunities. Bowling, craft beer and wine bars etc"

Comments relating to the state of the cost included:

"I find it disingenuous that rate payers money is being used to shore up a defunct privately owned retail complex"

"There are no benefits with this ridiculous money-wasting Stockroom proposal. All these facilities should be in Central Library ONLY; Stockroom is not wanted and a complete waste of ratepayers money to justify the white elephant of Merseyway which the foolishly council bought of the receiver"

"Would be a waste of time and money"

There were a few statistically significant differences by demographics but on the whole, there was a great deal of consensus in opinion over what participants saw as the benefits of a development of this nature.

Differences by audiences were:

Breathing life back into empty retail space was more likely to be selected by females (85% compared to 80% of males) and those from a white ethnic background (85% compared to 67% of those from a BAME background).

Having community facilities in an accessible/central location was more likely to be selected by females (74% compared to 63% of males), those aged 35-64 (72% compared to 65% of under 35s) and those currently employed, full-time students, full-time carers, looking after home or family and retired (71%, 78%, 83%, 77% and 72% respectively compared to 47% of those out of work and looking for work and 22% out of work and not looking for work).

Creation of jobs was more likely to be selected by females (65% compared to 55% of males) and those out of work and looking for work (87% compared to 63% of those currently employed, 58% of full-time students, 61% who are unable to work due to long term illness or disability, 57% who are looking after home or family and 65% who are retired).

Better access to digital services and technology was more likely to be selected by those aged 65+ (67% compared to 55% of under 35s and 60% of 35-64 year olds), those from a white ethnic background (61% compared to 42% of those from a BAME background), those unable to work due to long term illness or disability and the retired (79% and 67% respectively compared to 58% of those currently employed and 33% of full-time carers) and those with no children at home (62% compared to 49% of those with children under 5 and 53% of those with 5-11 year olds).

Stronger sense of community spirit was more likely to be selected by those with no religious belief (62% compared to 55% with one) and those with no disability or long-term health condition (59% compared to 51% with).

Improved reading and literacy skills was more likely to be selected by those currently employed, full-time students, those out of work and looking for work, those unable to work due to long term illness or disability and the retired (53%, 58%, 60%, 58%, 58% respectively compared to 25% of full-time carers) and those with no children at home (56% compared to 49% of those with children at home).

A negative comment within other was more likely to be given by males (9% compared to 3% of females).

Qualitative feedback from stakeholder engagement presentations

Feedback from organisation regarding the concept was positive, with a lot of interest in and support for the proposals.

In many of the groups there was a desire to see and hear about the plans as they develop going forward and for themselves to have further opportunities to input into these, providing advice especially in relation to the specifics around design to meet the needs of the groups they represent, as well as challenge as 'critical friends'.

Organisations representing those people with autism, dementia, special educational needs and disabilities were pleased to hear about plans to take into account and consult such audiences in order to make Stockroom as accessible as possible. Other organisations were pleased they had been shown the plans and asked for feedback, with a desire for them and the people they support to be able to continue to have an input.

Perceived benefits

Bringing different services together in one easily accessible location was seen as sensible.

For many groups and organisations liked the idea of somewhere different to go in the town centre, which has a community feel to it and being able to access a range of services/activities whilst there.

It was mentioned that currently there is no centrally-located venue that is affordable for community groups and charities to hire in order to host larger events in

Stockport. It was thought that events such as this would bring people into the centre of Stockport too, helping to re-invigorate the town centre.

The idea of Stockroom was seen as exciting and a great opportunity to enhance learning as well as being a place to socialise.

The potential Stockroom development was viewed as an opportunity to make the entrance into Merseyway more appealing, more welcoming and being much better than having lots of empty shops and units.

If the execution is done well, Stockroom is seen as providing a 'showpiece for Stockport' which if done right will bring a lot of people to the area, especially if it becomes a venue for events, activities and classes.

Overall, Stockroom is seen as having the potential to provide a multi-use community space and bring services and organisations together in one central location.

Suggestions for usage

Along with positive comments regarding the Stockroom proposal, the questions raised indicate how different audiences imagine the building being used. Those attending the sessions were very keen to share ideas of how the space could be used.

This included having adaptable and flexible community space in a central location for regular sessions / meetings organisations may want to hold, as well as booking it for large events and workshops. The need for this to be affordable was mentioned across different sessions.

Some organisations would like to use the space for interactive learning sessions, such as cookery classes and first aid training which they saw as being of benefit to the whole community.

Having a space where community groups and other organisations can book out a room, have a temporary pop-up stall (e.g. during Older People's Week) or hold events was seen as useful, especially for organisations that do not have a centrally-located location.

Many ideas and uses of Stockroom were suggested across the sessions including having local history displays, book groups, a Lego lending library, a toy lending library, somewhere to do homework, live streaming for events, video gaming room & clubs, virtual reality headsets, taster sessions for various adult and youth education classes, music lessons, access to film making and DJ equipment and a performance

space for local groups, along with having charity, council services and career advice centres.

An opportunity to have a centrally located venue and facilities for often isolated immigrant communities, providing a place to learn and get support, was seen as useful and appealing amongst organisations who represent or support such groups.

Qualitative feedback from stakeholder engagement presentations

Along with the positive feedback several questions and suggestions raised, some of which may need clarifying or addressing in any subsequent consultation. The questions raised reflect a desire to get the most out of the space, make it fully accessible and provide a real asset to different users.

Questions on costs

Across various sessions questions were asked if the facilities would be free for local residents or any hire charges at least discounted to charities and local groups.

Those wanting a sensory room asked if this would be bookable, something which is desired by potential users.

Questions about facilities and services

Some sessions asked if there would be a café, snack or juice bar.

Those representing older teens asked if there would be supervised organised activities like an inclusive youth group.

Questions were asked about toilets 'with enhanced facilities for people with a disability' such as will there be a changing bed and hoist available and will there be a lockable toilet with another lockable waiting space around it, suitable for a carer who needs to use the facility but also stop their charge wandering off.

Those representing the LGBTQ+ community asked if there will there be gender neutral toilets.

Questions were asked whether the Post Office will be linked to Stockroom, with a feeling that the footfall to one is likely to benefit the other.

Those representing age friendly networks and parents & carers asked if the One Stockport Hub will remain in place if Stockroom is built.

One session suggested all staff should be trained in interacting with LGBTQ+ people and neurodiverse people.

These groups also asked if there would be additional services and opportunities for those they support such as internships or volunteering to support employment chances.

Questions about accessibility

Amongst those representing residents with a disability, questions were asked about parking and accessibility to get to and within the building itself, whether disabled parking will be taken into account and would there be parking charges. The level of usage may depend on the answers to these questions.

Parking provision and/or the ease and cost of public transport was also raised by SEND groups, with financial along with physical accessibility being important factors in the ability to use the proposed facility, with accessibility not just about the building / venue but also about its surroundings and ease to travel to.

Specifically raised by disability groups was when doing consultations is an EQIA (Equality Impact Assessment) undertaken, who does them and is this available to see, how do the visually impaired get to feed into any consultation and how will any plans be made suitably accessible. This was a wider comment about council consultations - particularly public realm - rather than Stockroom per se.

Those representing children with SEND asked if those with autism and sensory needs will be catered for (e.g. is there a possibility of a sensory room) and how will sensory well-being be taking into account in the design.

8. Perceived disadvantages

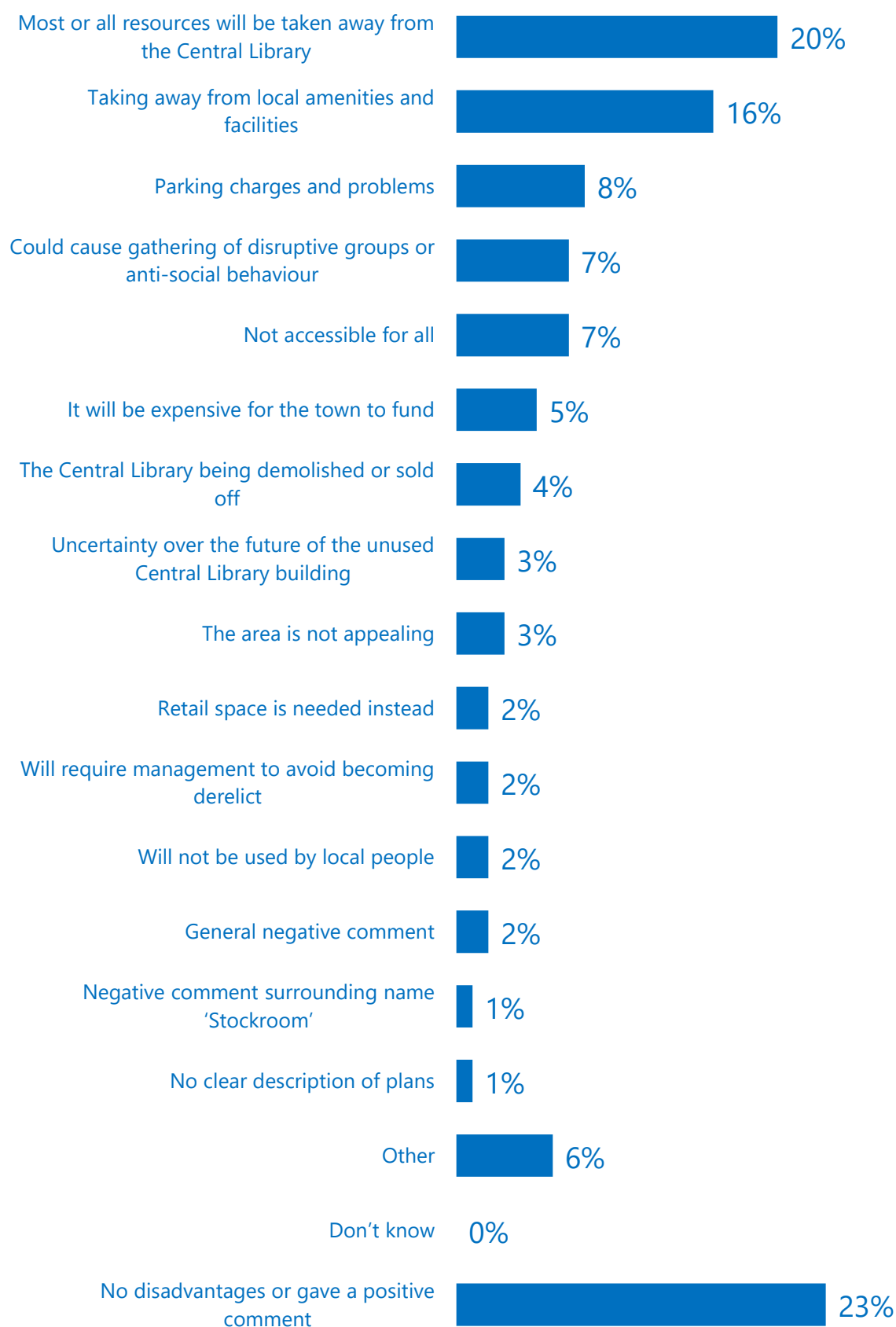
After answering specific questions about the different zones and one on the wider benefits of a development of this nature, participants also had the opportunity in a separate open-ended verbatim question to write in anything which they saw as being a disadvantage of the proposed plans.

The answers given have been coded, grouped together and shown overleaf.

Despite having the opportunity **41% of participants left this question blank.**

Amongst those answering this question the answers are shown overleaf, in ranked order. The percentages shown are of those who gave an answer to this question.

Nearly a quarter (23%) of those who gave a written answer to this question provided a positive comment rather than any perceived disadvantage.



Base: 770

Although very few, any statistically significant differences by demographics are listed below:

Most or all resources will be taken away from the Central Library was more likely to be given as an answer by males (27% compared to 18% of females), those not employed (24% compared to 16% of those employed) and those with children aged 16-17 (29% compared to 14% of all those with children aged 5-10).

Parking charges and problems was mentioned by more of those aged 35-64 (9% compared to 3% of under 35s) and those with children aged 11-15 (13% compared to 4% of all those with children aged under 5).

Could cause gathering of disruptive groups or anti-social behaviour was mentioned by more females (9% compared to 5% of all males who cited a disadvantage) and those employed full-time (11% compared to part-time 5%).

Not accessible for all was more likely to be given as a disadvantage by those with a disability of long-term health condition (13% compared to 6% without), those who are retired (10% compared to 4% of all those employed part-time) and those with no children and those aged 11-15 (8% for both compared to 1% of all those with children aged under 5).

To provide a feel and a flavour of the verbatim comments given for the top 5 disadvantages of the proposal (which have been coded and shown in percentage format in the chart above) a handful of quoted are shown below. Example of the positive comments being made have also been included after the verbatim disadvantages.

Most or all resources will be taken away from the Central Library (20% of those making a comment)

"I see no reason at all why, if this new development is to have library services in, why that then has to be at the expense of the central library remaining where it is and being invested in, why can't any library services provided by this development be in addition to the central library services, which would be improving our library services rather than just changing their location and also help create more jobs. Losing the central library as a library would be a massive disadvantage to this plan"

"The closer of our historic building and library at Central library, We must NOT lose this beautiful historic building"

"We will lose our lovely library. We need to keep Stockport heritage"

"If it means losing Central library this would be a huge mistake"

"Closing the beautiful purpose built Central library. Andrew Carnegie gave the town money for a library to be built for enjoyment of the whole Stockport community. The building itself was meant to be part of the enjoyment. I can't see why it can't be kept as a library. Have your multi-functional public space in Arlington Walk by all means but leave the Central library as it is!"

Taking away from local amenities and facilities (16% of those making a comment)

"It would be great to have community services easily accessible in town centre, but do not take out high street community settings i.e. local library and support centres on the local high street, as some can't travel for mobility or finance reasons, make this another string to the bow, god knows it a pretty sparse offering right now"

"My fear would be the demise of learning through books and the replacement of digital. Generally, this reduces the depth of knowledge and research in any subject"

"This scheme doesn't feel like a solution, rather it creates more problems. It feels like a rearranging of services that will threaten much loved buildings elsewhere in the town centre"

"It isn't addressing the real issues of Stockport. Stockport is well known for becoming a ghost town with empty units. People are not visiting Stockport for this reason, and filling units with this initiative will be fruitless until you have a vibrant town centre that residents want to visit. I would suggest concentrating on filling units with retailers first, and as a final step undertake this initiative to fill remaining space"

Parking charges and problems (8% of those making a comment)

"With the loss of the disabled parking at red rock due to the proposed hotel this venue is not particularly more accessible. The Central library building is in walking distance of the train station, town hall and bus stops on the A6 and has more passing traffic and footfall than Merseyside. Merseyway is closed and therefore deserted in the evenings and so feels unsafe to many members of Stockport's communities"

"You need free parking. No one will come if they cannot park up"

"Parking is expensive in the town centre"

"Parking charges may discourage people, especially if they are to be there for several hours. If open in the evening, there are no other shops open, this could possibly lead to it feeling unsafe for certain groups, such as people visiting on their own"

"There's already a lack of parking space in Stockport. With increased footfall, this problem could be exacerbated. Not everyone is able to walk or cycle! Those with young children certainly couldn't. Public transport is often unreliable or non-existent in some areas"

Could cause gathering of disruptive groups or anti-social behaviour (7% of those making a comment)

"Congregating younger people may make it off putting to older residents"

"Misuse. Would need to be organised with staff to ensure appropriate use of space so antisocial behaviour doesn't ruin it for those who want to use it for intended purpose"

"Wouldn't like to see it overtaken by yob culture or drug users"

"Possibly the encouragement to have people hanging around outside that might put other people off attending the site"

Not accessible for all (7% of those making a comment)

"Yes. The town centre is a dump. This location isn't accessible it's a walk from public transport & not easy by car either with parking issues in the town centre"

"Needs to be open in the evening as well as daytime. Stockport centre is not very safe in the evening, so work needs to be done to make it safe to get to"

"Infrequency of buses to and from the town centre"

"Unless the spaces by the Light are kept, there is no close parking for disabled people particularly those with larger, wheelchair adapted vehicles"

"Location may deter some people from attending the facility on say winter evenings without consideration being given to transport, car parking & town centre security"

"Please install proper toilet facilities which are accessible for all disabled people and disabled older children <https://www.changing-places.org/>"

Positive comment (23% of those making a comment)

Most positive comments just answered with *no, none* or *no disadvantages* to the question do you see any disadvantages?

Amongst those giving a longer answer comments included:

"I see the project as added value to the community as the Library service will be preserved essentially as it is but in a new more accessible location. So providing the range and scope of the Lending and Reference book offer is still there, there should not be any disadvantage"

"No, I think its fantastic that we are able to have a place like this in the town centre. I cant wait for it to open, especially the new library!"

"None at all, all services in a central and convenient location"

"No I have been to the one in Chester and I thought it was really good"

"No disadvantages to the new space, it sounds good. It would be sad to lose use of the old central library building, could it be used for something which the public can still access?"

"Amazing idea, as a young family we often go into Manchester so something engaging in Stockport would be great!"

Qualitative feedback from stakeholder engagement presentations

In these sessions there was an absence of any criticism of the proposed plans but as seen in the earlier qualitative feedback they did raise many questions, more than citing disadvantages.

There were however concerns raised that some groups of people do not find coming into the town centre safe, especially in the evenings – in particular BAME groups and people with learning disabilities.

Of itself this is not a criticism of Stockroom but making the town centre safe and also feel safe is required before some audiences may be comfortable to visit and use any new facility.

In one session with parents and carers, even though Stockroom was seen in a positive light, mainly due to the accessibility of the building, the opportunities for

learning and live streaming of events, there was concern that this could just be a re-location of the current library, rather than an opportunity for something new.

One session (Forward - Stockport LGBT+ Centre) asked what will happen with Central Library and could voluntary or community groups use this if it was going to be vacated.

9. Appendix

Q8a/b Are you responding on behalf of an organisation? – if yes, which organisation (base 23 yes with 16 specifying the organisation)

- Autisk
- Children Social Care
- Early Years Improvement Team Stockport Council Education Services
- First Steps Orrishmere Pre-school
- Hazel Grove Branch Royal Naval Association
- Life leisure
- Love Heaton Norris
- OmniMusic
- SMBC
- ST4ND
- Stockport
- Stockport College
- Stockport Credit Union
- Stockport MBC employee
- Stockport Poets
- The Merseyway shopping centre

Organisations & groups attending the stakeholder engagement presentations

Date of session	Group type	Organisations represented
Wednesday 7 July 2021	Forward (Stockport LGBT+ Centre)	
Wednesday 7 July 2021	Age Friendly Network	Age UK Stockport Stockport Homes
Thursday 8 July 2021	Stockport VCFSE Cross Sector Forum	Stockport Council Age UK Healthwatch Sector 3 Talk Listen Change NHS CCG EAICO Race Equality Partnership Disability Stockport Forward Stockport Make a Difference GM

			The Prevention Alliance Stockport Advocacy Supportability Seashell Trust
Wednesday July 2021	14	Disability Stockport	Disability Stockport RNIB Independent representatives
Wednesday July 2021	14	Stockport Family Partnership Board	SMBC NHS Schools representation College representation Public Health
Tuesday 20 July 2021		SEND Inclusion Community Group	SMBC Life Leisure Space Stockport Seashell Trust Great Minds Manchester Pennine Care NHS Trust Together Trust HAF Project Manager Stockport Local Offer Coordinator
Wednesday July	21	Pure Innovations (adults with learning difficulties)	Pure Innovations
Wednesday July	21	Youth Engagement Workshop	SAYS Autism Ambassadors Stockport Youth Council Children in Care Council
Wednesday July	21	'A Team', Adult Autism Advocacy Group	-
Wednesday July	28	Parent and Careers Together Stockport	Parent and Careers Together Stockport Independent parents of children with SEND
Wednesday July	28	The Proud Trust – Youth Group	-

Project details

Project number **Stake04-8868**

Location **[STAKE04-8868 Stockroom Stakeholder Engagement](#)**

Date **August 2021**

Report status **Final**

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This research has been carried out in compliance with the International standard ISO 20252, (the International Standard for Market and Social research), The Market Research Society's Code of Conduct and UK Data Protection law.

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