

Appendix 2 - Public consultation and engagement on the future of Rotherham Libraries and proposed changes to Brinsworth Library analysis report 2020

## **Public consultation and engagement on the future of Rotherham Libraries and proposed changes to Brinsworth Library analysis report 2020**

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## Introduction

This report provides an analysis of the findings from the final phase of public engagement and consultation which was undertaken by Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC) between 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2020 and 26<sup>th</sup> April 2020 for a period of 12 weeks.

Two separate consultations carried out at the same time:

- The future of Rotherham Libraries

The purpose of the Rotherham libraries consultation followed on from the summer 2019 consultation in order to obtain views from the public on a refreshed draft library strategy that offers a robust vision with clear priorities for the library service going forward

- Proposed changes to Brinsworth Library

This consultation followed on from the summer 2019 consultation in order to obtain views from Rotherham residents regarding Brinsworth Community Trust running the library service at Brinsworth following an expression of interest in the Charity, Brinsworth Community Trust to run the library.

To ensure full engagement with Rotherham residents several methods were utilised;

- Online and paper based surveys, a dedicated mailbox for enquiries, and drop-in sessions were planned at each of the 15 libraries within the Borough.
- Engagement was also carried out either face to face or via email with voluntary and partner services including Parish Councils. Guided sessions with local schools were

cancelled due to the closure of schools, which limited the level of engagement with this target group.

- Correspondence was sent to senior officers within the Council, Elected Members, and MPs, offering an invite to meet, should they have any questions with regards to either of the consultations.

### **Impact of Covid-19**

Library buildings closed to the public on Tuesday, 24<sup>th</sup> March following the lockdown measures announced by the Prime Minister on Monday, 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 2020. The closure of the library service was enforced by the introduction of the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restriction) Regulations 2020.

**This directly impacted the engagement plan, meaning that some of the targeted engagement sessions had to be cancelled. This included 13 of the 31 drop-in sessions in Libraries and Guided sessions with local schools.**

Following analysis of the final 12 weeks of engagement between 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2020 to 26<sup>th</sup> April 2020, it was concluded that the Rotherham Library Strategy consultation would need to carry out targeted consultation in two key areas identified where engagement was lower than anticipated:

- BAME community
- Schools (Under 25's)

Whilst there is more to be done, some of this work has begun and is detailed within this report.

Data collected through the online web survey was gathered and has been collated into this final summary report, together with additional data captured through different methods for the targeted areas.

### **Key Findings**

#### **The future of Rotherham Libraries**

- A total of 365 responses were received. 320 of these were from current library users.
- Of the 365 respondents who answered the question "Do you use Rotherham Libraries" 331 answered yes (91%)., 27 of the respondents don't use Rotherham libraries (7%)
- 302 (83%), of the 365 respondents agree with the new vision for Rotherham Libraries. 289 (79%) agreed with the proposed core offer.
- 322 respondents (88%) agree for 15 libraries to remain open and invest capital funding to make improvements to the buildings and technology
- 134 respondents (37%) would like to see more services or activities take place in libraries that are not offered already
- 291 respondents (80%) agreed that the Council should implement the new Library Strategy

- When asking the question “Would you like to see anything in addition as part of the Library Strategy” 235 said no (64%) whilst 92 answered yes (25%). Of those who answer yes, key themes included: ensuring books, e-books and materials were updated, keep libraries open and maintain opening hours, creating more quiet space, providing more groups, introducing café facilities
- 268 (73%) agree with the intention to better support professional library staff by volunteers, partners and community groups to help deliver services
- When respondents were asked if there are any building improvements or additional equipment that they would like to see in libraries that hasn't been proposed already 93 said yes (25%). Key themes included; IT Equipment, Toilet Facilities and café facilities.

### **Proposed changes to Brinsworth library**

- A total of 88 responses were received, 56 of the 88 respondents (64%) currently use Brinsworth library
- When asking the question “ What impact would the proposal for Brinsworth community trust to deliver the library offer have on you” 43 (49%) feel this will have a positive impact and 21 (24%) feel it will have a negative impact, whilst 24 (27%) selected ‘don't know’. Of the 21 that selected ‘no’, 18 left a further comment. The key theme from these comments highlighted that they would lose confidence in the library if run by volunteers
- 13 of the 88 respondents (15%) would like to get involved in the running or delivery of Brinsworth library.
- Respondents were asked if there any activities or services they would like to see delivered in the new Brinsworth Library, **35** (40%) of the respondents selected yes of which 33 supplied further details. Key themes included; more activities, such as book clubs for children, Local History groups, Craft clubs and author visits.
- Respondents were asked if they support the implementation of technology allowing self- service access outside normal hours. **60** of the 88 respondents (68%) agreed with the implementation.

### **The future of Rotherham libraries – results and findings**

Section 1, ‘Overview of responses’, provides details around the number of responses by week. Section 2, ‘Online data form response analysis and key themes analysis’, breaks down the responses to the questions asked within the online survey followed by a key

themes analysis of the free-form comments provided by the respondents. Section 3, 'discusses the equality and diversity responses from the respondents'.

### Section 1 - Overview of responses

#### Number of online form responses

Week	Dates	Total
1	03/02/20 – 09/02/20	74
2	10/02/20 – 16/02/20	50
3	17/02/20 – 23/02/20	17
4	24/02/20 – 01/03/20	157
5	02/03/20 – 08/03/20	36
6	09/03/20 – 15/03/20	11
7	16/03/20 – 22/03/20	5
8	23/03/20 – 29/03/20	2
9	30/03/20 – 05/04/20	1
10	06/04/20 – 12/04/20	3
11	13/04/20 – 19/04/20	3
12	20/04/20 – 26/04/20	6
<b>Total consultation responses</b>		<b>365</b>

Table 1

Table 1 shows the number of responses captured weekly, with an overall response of **365** for the future of Rotherham libraries

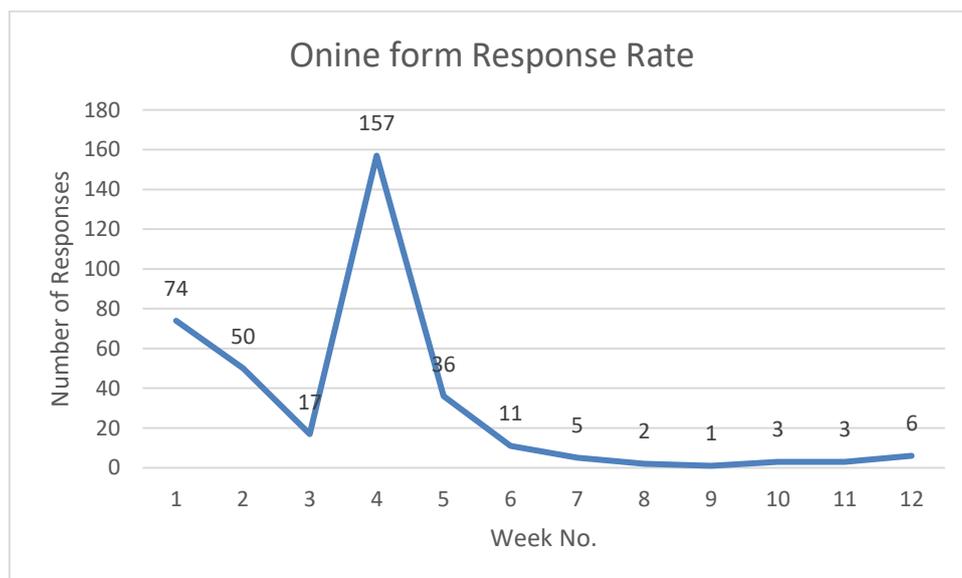


Figure 1

Figure 1 (above) shows that the highest number of responses was received in **week four** with a total of **157** responses. This was followed by a sharp decline in **week five** with **36**

responses, then a steady decline over the next four weeks. The responses remained low for the final 3 weeks. This decline is likely to be due to the COVID-19 outbreak, with safety measures introduced to limit the infection rate and eventually libraries being closed.

## Section 2 - Online data form response analysis

The tables below are based on a total response rate of **365**. Some of the questions allowed users to select more than one answer. The percentage figures are rounded up or down to the nearest decimal place and the 'No Response' segment represents where the question has been left blank. Most questions asked were followed with a secondary question providing free text space for respondents to provide an explanation as to why they had selected the answer on the previous question. This enables the service to identify Key Themes which is also detailed below as part of this analysis.

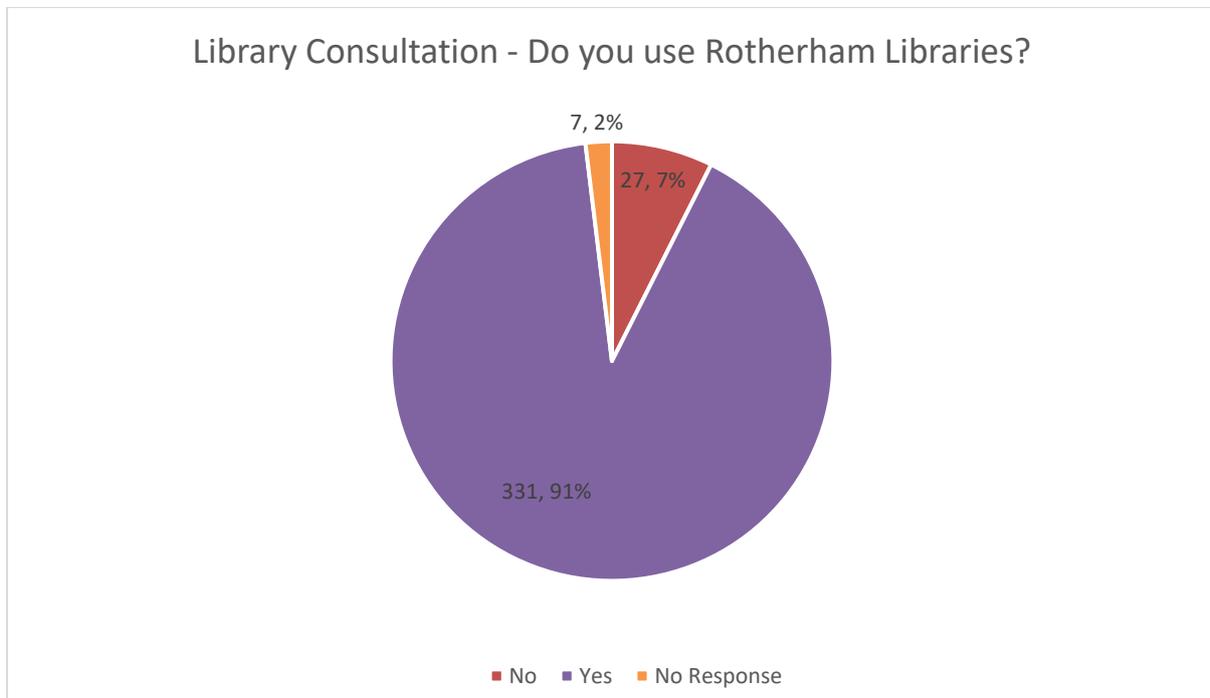


Figure 2

The above chart (figure 2) shows that of the **365** respondents, **331** use Rotherham libraries (**91%**), **27** don't use Rotherham libraries (**7%**) and **7** didn't select a response (**2%**).

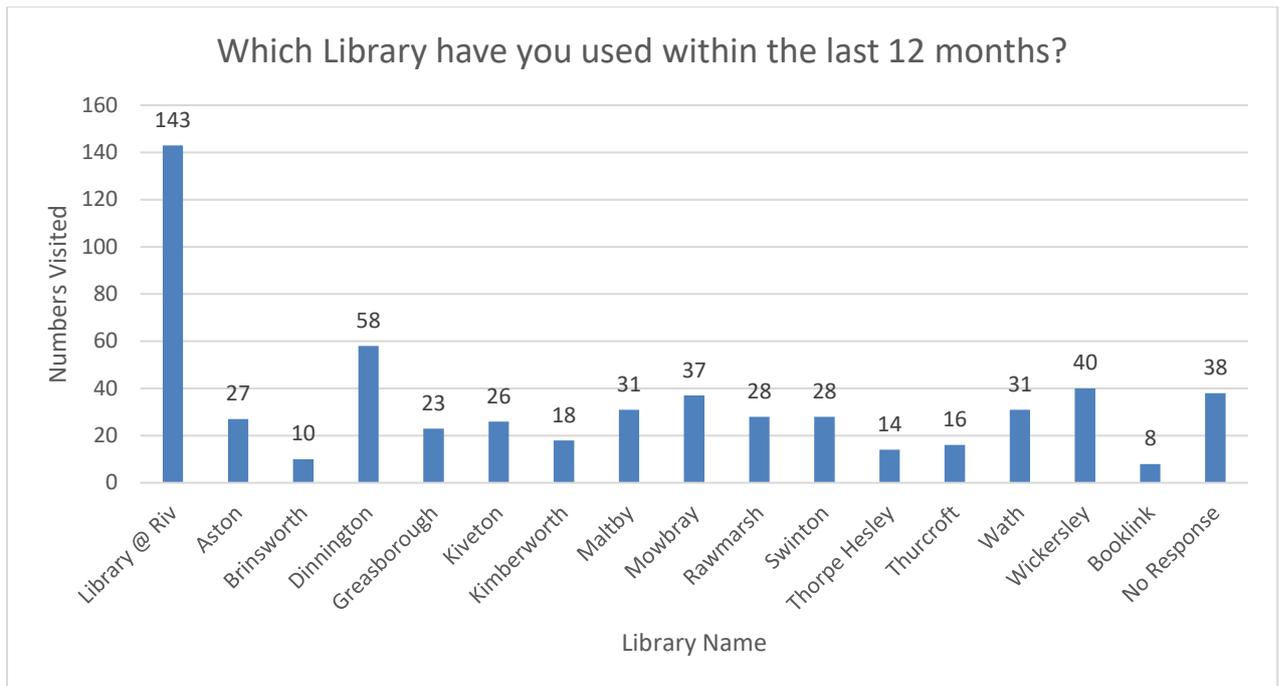


Figure 3

Figure 3 shows the number of visits to each library self-reported by the individual completing this survey. Responses to this question total **576**, which includes the **38** blank responses, this is significantly higher than the total number of respondents for the whole consultation. This response rate is a result of the respondents being provided with the option of selecting multiple answers and demonstrates that some respondents have visited more than one library within the last 12 months.

The most visited library was Riverside Library which, with **143** visits, had more than double the number of visits than the second most visited library, which was Dinnington Library with **58** visits. The least used library of the respondents was the Booklink mobile service, with **8** respondents having used this service.

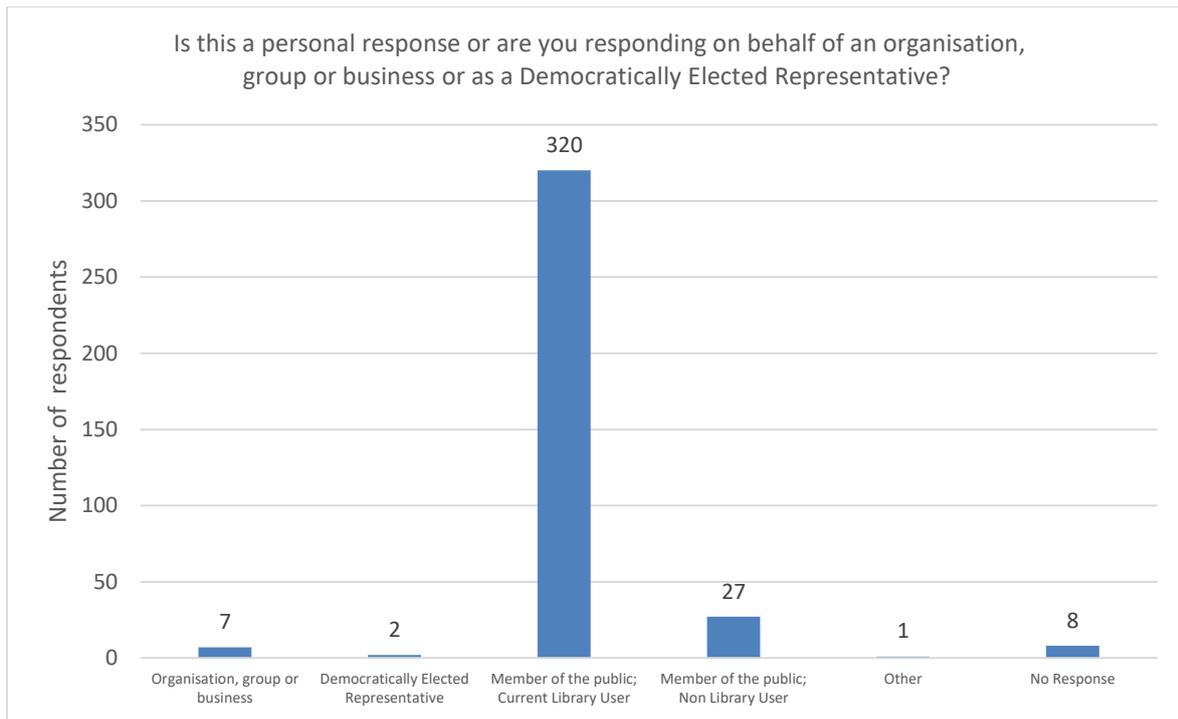


Figure 4

Figure 4 demonstrates who was completing the survey. A multiple choice was provided as to whether the consultation was completed by; An organisation, group or business; Democratically elected representative; Member of the public current library user; member of the public non library user or other. The highest group was completed by **320** members of the public current library users, whilst 'other' was the lowest with just **1**. Respondents were asked to provide detail when 'other' was selected stating 'what or who you are responding on behalf of' however for this **1** return there was no detail and this was left unanswered.

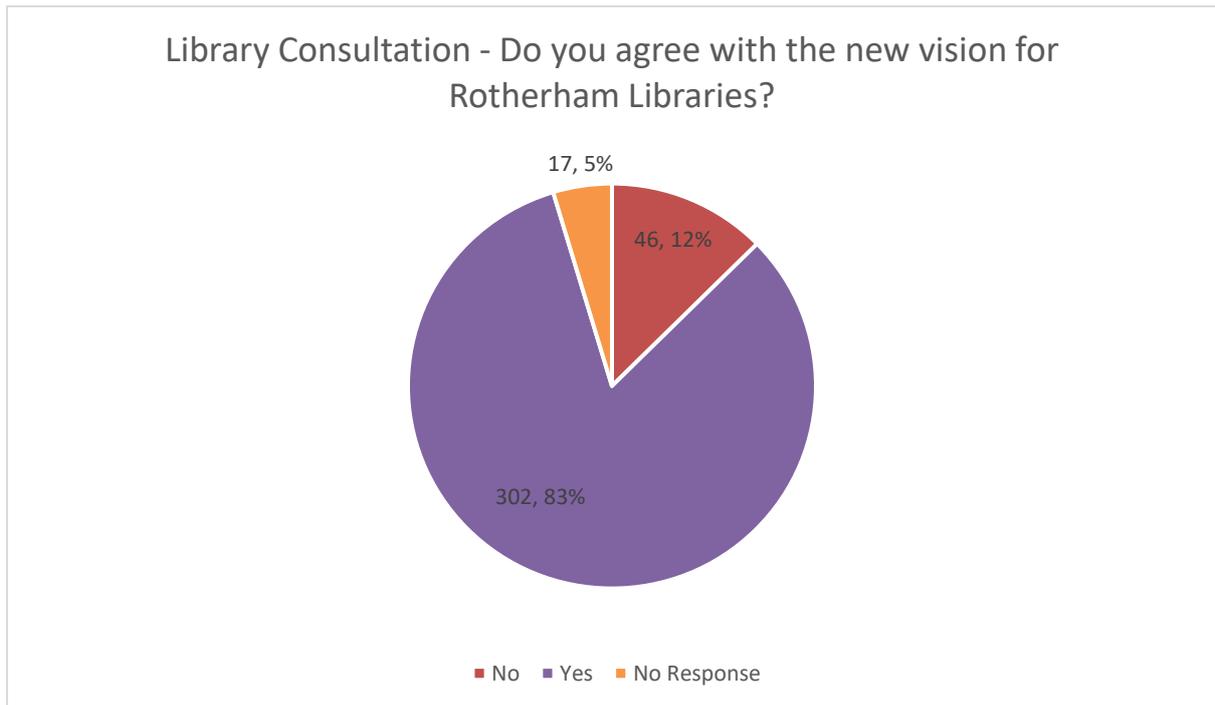


Figure 5

Figure 5 demonstrates that **302** of the 365 respondents (**83%**), agree with the new vision for Rotherham Libraries. Of the 365, **46** disagree (**12%**), and **17** respondents (**5%**) provided no response.

Respondents were asked to give reasons as to why they agree or disagree with the new vision. From the **365** respondents, **205** provided further comments with regards to the answer they provided, whilst the remaining **160** left blank. By providing this free text space we were able to identify some key themes.

These are as follows:

- **Community** – 76 of the 205 comments recorded stated that they feel libraries are an important part of the community . Comments included:
  - ‘I think libraries are a valuable resource for the whole community’
  - ‘I agree with the plans to improve services and widening of opportunities to bring communities together’
  - ‘Libraries are an essential part of our neighbourhood strategy and provide a hub around which the community can come together.’
  - ‘Libraries are a key part of the community, especially as so many other community services have now gone’
  
- **Books** – 30 comments recorded mentioned books, it varied with regards to using funding to get more books or commenting on the positive impact of reading books. Comments included;
  - ‘the local community would find themselves isolated and without access to books, internet facilities and various local amenities’

- ‘Libraries are such a local asset, providing not only books, but a meeting place and hub for the community’.
  - ‘Yes, providing that more new books are provided and finance is not diverted to other activities’
  - ‘I feel strongly that our libraries should not only remain but be improved with a greater selection of books and services’
- **Children** – 18 comments recorded stated the importance of libraries for children, comments were as follows;
- ‘You should specifically include provision for under school age children in terms of the toddler sessions run which encourages children to get into reading’
  - ‘I want my children to appreciate the written word and the wide variety of books and activities that can come from them’
  - ‘Libraries should be central to communities. It’s really important that all children have access to books.’
  - ‘I agree that the libraries should be central hubs for encouraging children and enabling adults to read’

Some comments captured from the 12% that disagree with the vision are as follows;

- ‘I believe that all libraries should be run with professional staff who are salaried and responsible to the local authority’
- ‘In part but I think the libraries could offer more services to the public as the Council are reducing face to face assistance’
- ‘I partly agree with the way libraries have to move forward. I don’t like the use of volunteers’.

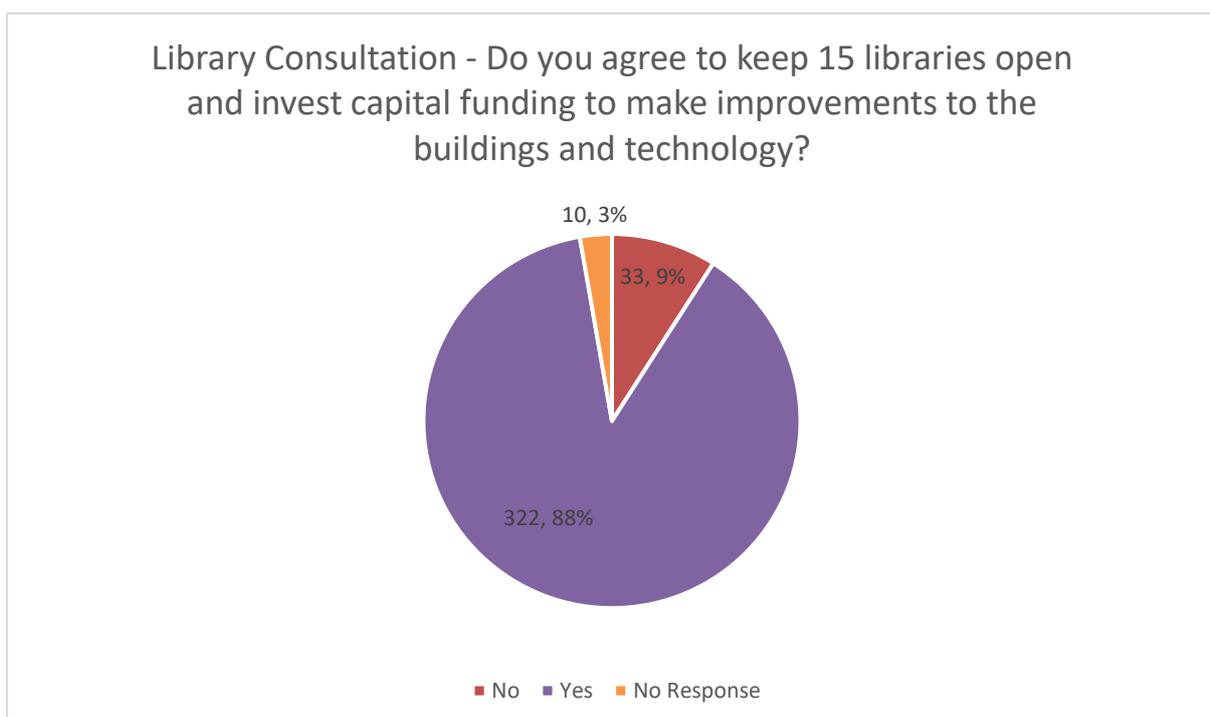


Figure 6

Figure 6 shows that **322** respondents of the **365 (88%)** agree for 15 libraries to remain open and invest capital funding to make improvements to the buildings and technology, whilst **33** selected that that they disagree (**9%**). 10 respondents (**3%**) didn't answer.

Respondents were asked why they either agree or disagree with keeping 15 libraries open, **238** provided further comments whilst **127** of the **365** left this blank. By providing this free text space for respondents to complete we were able to identify key themes from the answers provided. For the **33** that disagreed they felt libraries weren't used, with some comments as follows;

- 'People don't use libraries. Information is available at your fingertips nearly everyone has a smart phone or tablet'
- 'Too many and many underutilised. Have one central library.'

Of the **322** that agreed to keep libraries open comments included;

- 'It is imperative for all our residents to have access to a local library'.
- 'Definitely the technology as it is very slow at the moment and very out of date, Ideally Bluetooth / WiFi printers etc'.
- 'A worthwhile asset to the community. The heart of the village, really useful'.

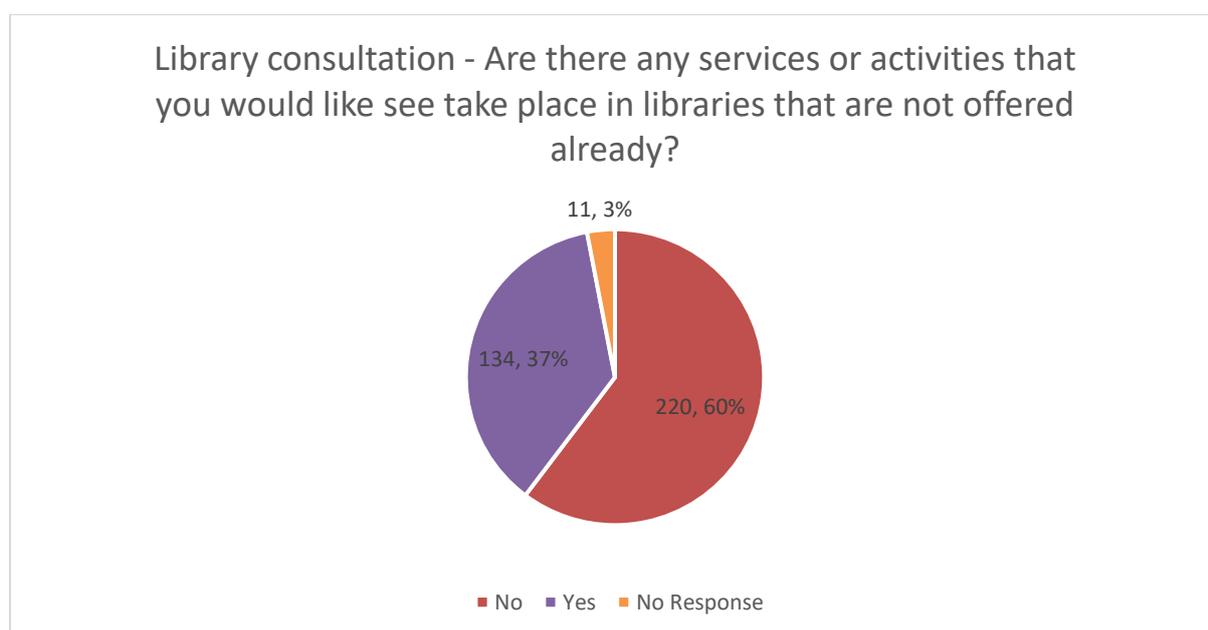


Figure 7

The above chart (figure 7) shows that **134** respondents (**37%**) would like to see more services or activities take place in libraries that are not offered already with **220 (60%)** that don't want to see anymore service or activities. **11** respondents (**3%**) left this unanswered

Respondents were asked to provide further details about activities and services they would like to see. **131** comments were provided, whilst the remaining respondents left this blank. By providing this free text space for respondents to complete, we were able to identify key

themes as to what activities and services they would like to see within Libraries, these were as follows:

- **Children** – 14 comments were around providing a wider range of activities for children or making them more frequent, some comments were;
  - ‘More activities for children as these often get booked up quickly and they are great’
  - ‘Much more emphasis on children’s activities, they are the future users, entice them in !!’
  - ‘More children's activities, perhaps based around specific books.’
- **Clubs and Groups** – 15 comments suggested more groups and clubs, this included varied suggestions such as; author events, poetry, crafts, yoga and photography. Some comments included were;
  - ‘Evening activities that people who work full time can attend e.g. book clubs, craft sessions author sessions or even making the library buildings available to other groups such as Scouts’
  - ‘Hobby based activities e.g. photography club, yoga sessions, language group’

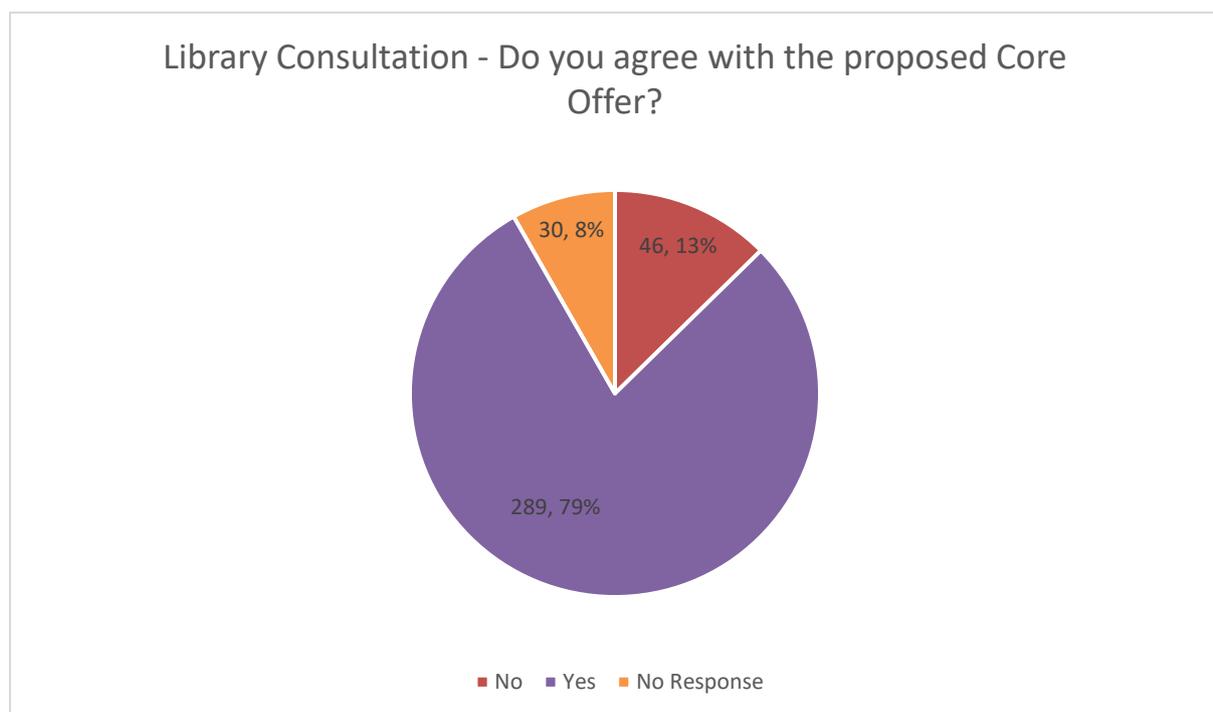


Figure 8

Figure 8 shows that when asked if agreed with the proposed core offer, **289** of the **365** respondents (**79%**) did agree. **46** did not agree (**13%**) and **30** did not respond (**8%**)

Respondents were asked to give reasons as to why they agree or disagree with the proposed Core Offer. By providing this free text space we have been able to identify some key themes from the reasons that were provided. **125** comments were provided, whilst remaining respondents left this blank. These comments varied and most were positive, some comments included;

- 'It will benefit all the community'
- 'I like the idea of them becoming hubs and accessible.'
- 'They seem reasonable and will hopefully play a role in the community and bring an increase in library use.'
- 'Volunteers/staff need more recognition for the work they do. I agree with making libraries more communal and making them provide a variety of activities'

Of the 13% that do not agree with the proposed core offer, some comments provided were as follows;

- 'It probably makes sense to Council people but again it seems mostly just flashy words. Hard to tell what it actually means. But I might have been reading the wrong bit. There's quite a lot of information.'
- 'The Core Offer is PC speak and meaningless.'
- 'I do not agree with proposals to have other organisations run libraries with unpaid workers'

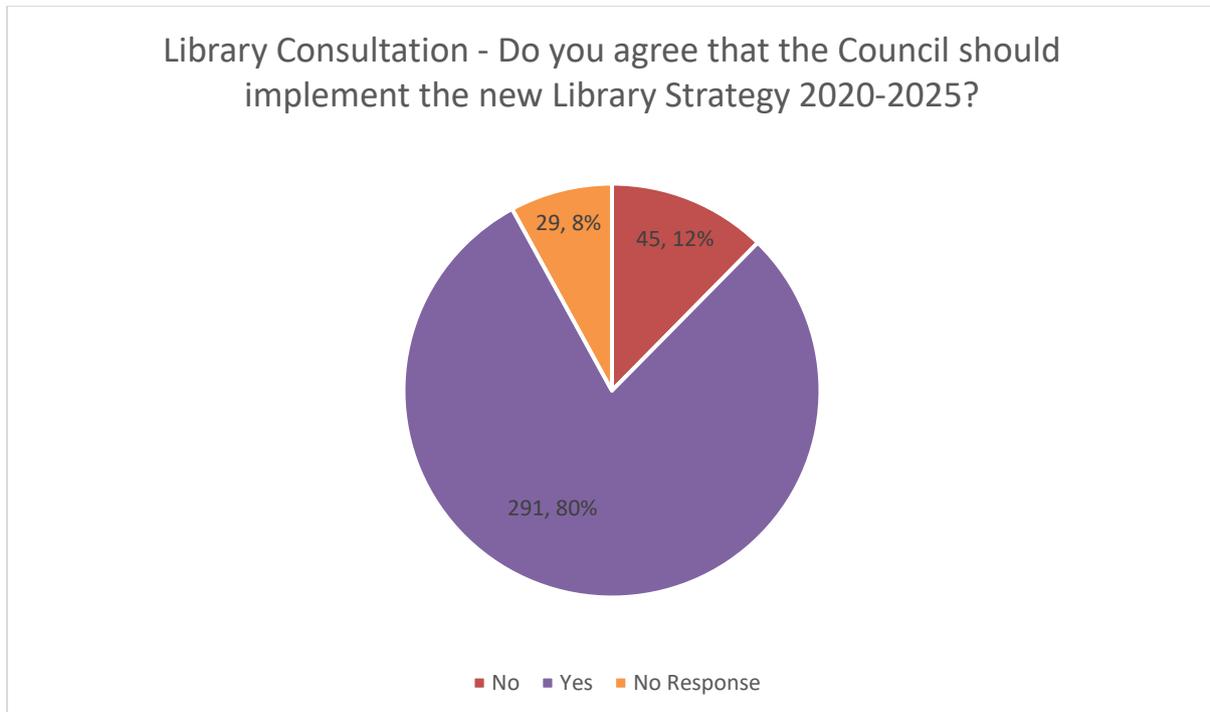


Figure 9

Figure 9 shows if respondents agree that the Council should implement the new Library Strategy **291** out of the **365** responses (**80%**) agreed yes, **45** respondents did not agree (**12%**) and **29** did not answer (**8%**).

Respondents were asked to explain why they had selected their answer. The online survey included a free text field where respondents could advise of the reason as to why they agree or disagree with implementing the new library strategy. There were **150** comments provided out of the **365** respondents that completed the survey. These comments varied and most were positive, comments that included;

- ‘Especially the aim of keeping local libraries open and accessible’.
- ‘The more use libraries get, the better’.
- ‘Anything to improve library services would be a plus.’
- ‘To ensure that Rotherham meets its statutory responsibility, to ensure that libraries continue to play their vital role within local communities’

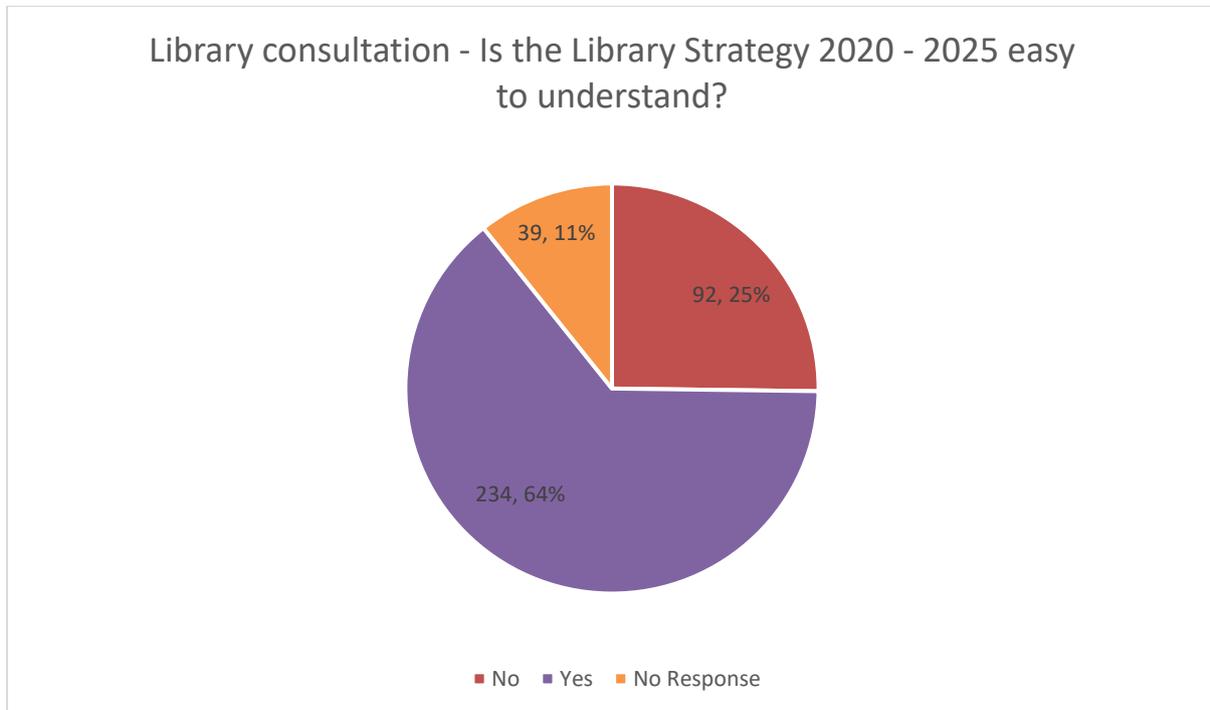


Figure 10

The above chart (Figure 10) demonstrates when asked if the Library Strategy 2020 – 2025 is easy to understand **234** of the **365** respondents agree (**64%**), **92** respondents disagree (**25%**) and **39** did not answer this question (**11%**)

Of the 92 respondents that disagree that Library Strategy 2020 – 2025 is easy to understand, 54 left further comments to explain their answer. The key theme of these comments is the wording and amount of information there is to read. Some comments are as follows;

- ‘Too wordy and hard to find which libraries are remaining open and which not.’
- ‘In some ways it is, but it may need to be more simplified and straight to the point’
- ‘It is too long and overcomplicated. Should have been produced as a number of simple statements.’

59 of the 234 respondents that agree the Library Strategy 2020 – 2025 is easy to understand left further comments. Some comments mentioned the length of the document however, the consensus is that the document is clearly set out and easy to understand. Comments included were as follows;

- 'Once you sit down and read it properly but I dare say a lot of people won't have the time.'
- 'It is very easily presented, and it is easy to understand how libraries can evolve to make them much more accessible to everyone and more utilised so that they are able to stay open in the communities they serve'
- 'Quite a lot to digest which may put people off reading it!'
- 'I am very lucky in that I'm literate, not sure it's brief or bite sized enough for all service users'

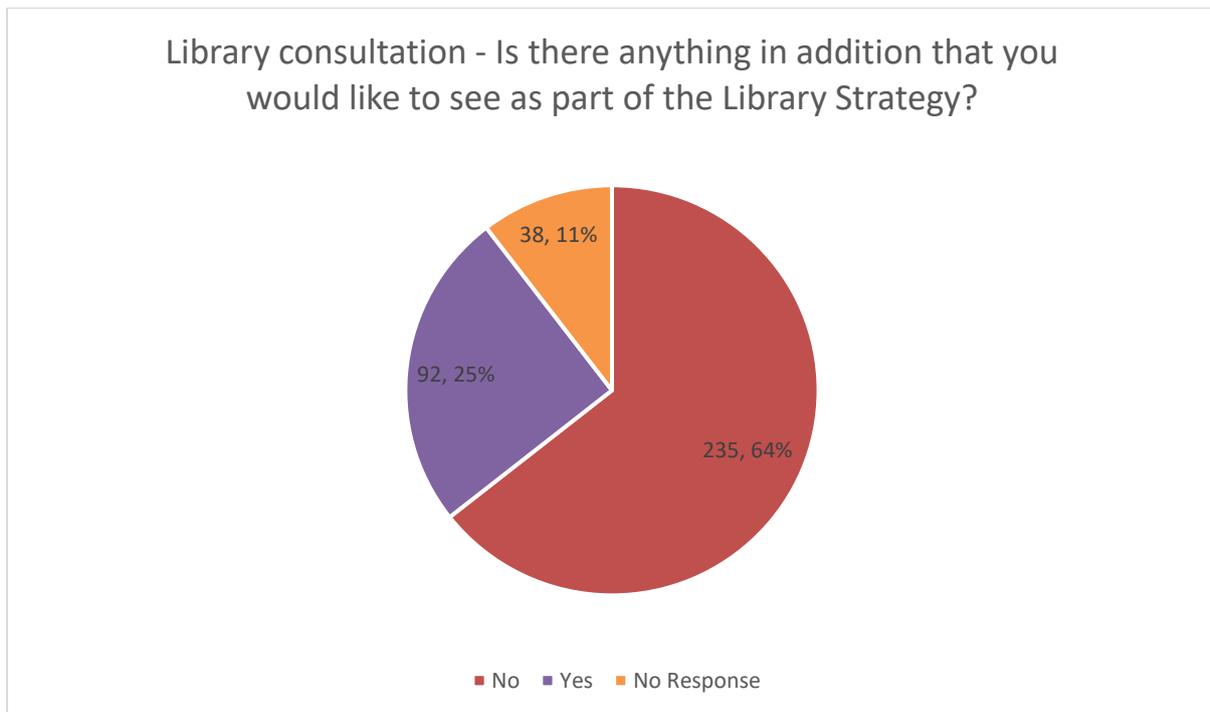


Figure 11

Figure 11 shows whether respondents would like to see anything in addition as part of the Library Strategy of the **365** responses **235** said no (**64%**) whilst **92** answered yes (**25%**) and **38** did not provide a response (**11%**)

Respondents were provided with free text space to add further details to their answer. From the **365** respondents, **116** provided further comments, whilst the remaining respondents left this blank. From this we could establish some key themes as follows:

- **Books** – 16 comments were based on ensuring books, e-books and materials were updated, they were as follows;
  - 'For the library to have more up to date material available'
  - 'Libraries often offer particular services for the visually impaired, large print and e books that can be read in various formats spring to mind'
  - 'A larger e-book and audiobook selection, possibly such as Overdrive. Keeping the IT and books section separate as much as possible'
- **Opening Hours**– 8 comments were encouraging to keep libraries open and maintain opening hours. Some comments included are;

- 'I like my library as it is but this does not mean i will not enjoy change as long as it stays open'
  - 'All local libraries to remain open'
  - 'More opening hours, not less'
- A lot of individual comments were around creating more quiet space, providing more groups, introducing coffee or café facilities, with one respondent who provided persistent comments throughout the whole survey all relating to Skateboarding.

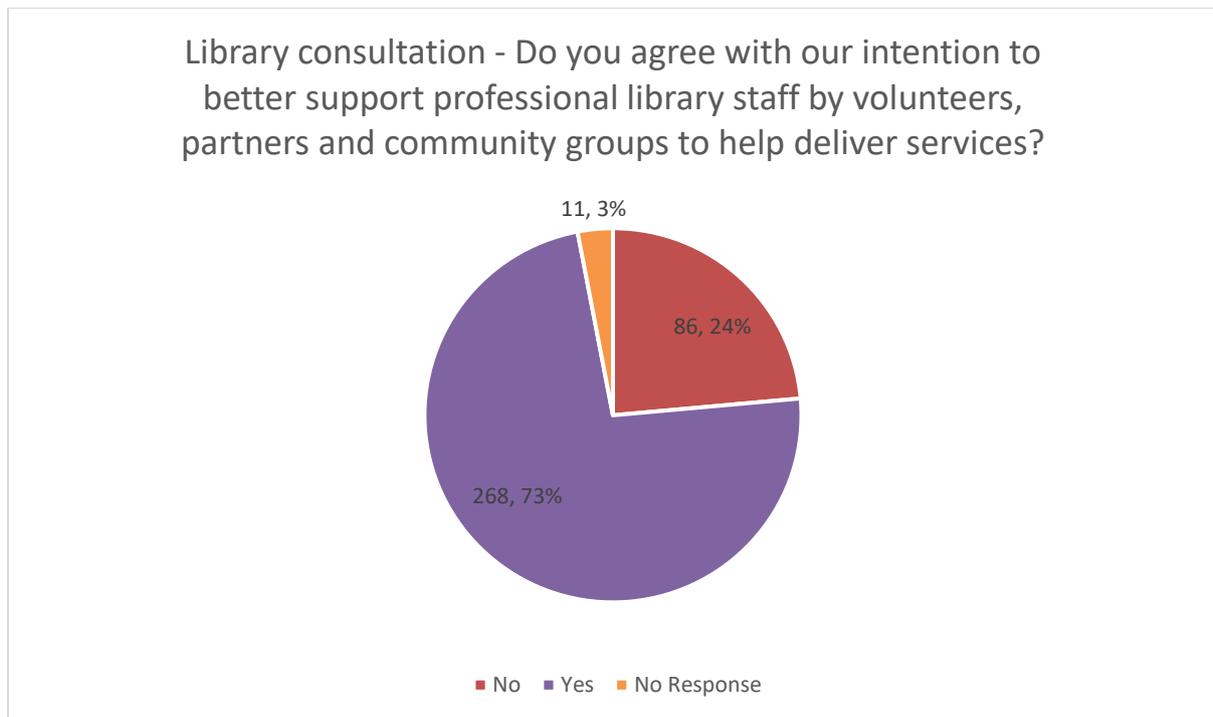


Figure 12

The above chart (figure 12) demonstrates that **268** of the **365** agree (**73%**) with our intention to better support professional library staff by volunteers, partners and community groups to help deliver services, whilst **86** disagree (**24%**) with **11** leaving this unanswered (**3%**)

Respondents were asked to provide reasons as to why they agreed or disagreed with our intention to better support professional library staff with volunteers, partners and community groups. **193** respondents provided further comments, by providing this free text space we were able to identify key themes. Some comments relating to agreeing with utilising volunteers were as follows;

- 'Yes if volunteers help keep library open, no if it's the thin end of a wedge to close libraries'
- 'Generally yes but all activities and services should be run by qualified staff.'
- 'As long as there are sufficient qualified paid librarians in all locations.'

Further comments from those who disagree with utilising volunteers included;

- ‘Although I've put ‘no’, this is difficult to answer as it is a good thing to involve people mentioned above, but not at the expense of removing paid staff who have valuable experience.’
- ‘Volunteers are unreliable, stick to well trained dedicated library staff. Ownership of the service promotes enthusiasm and loyalty.’
- ‘It is a worry that volunteers are not able to give as good a service as a trained employee and will eventually replace employees’

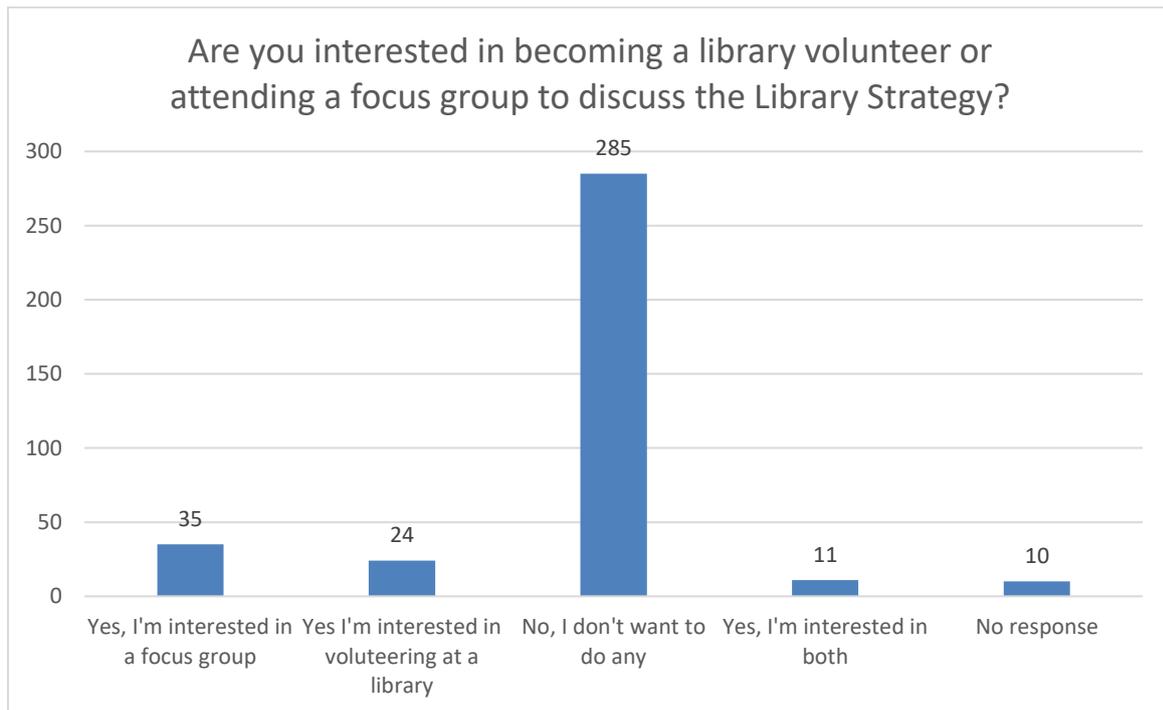


Figure 13

Respondents completing the survey were asked if they are interested in becoming a library volunteer or attending a focus group to discuss the Library Strategy. Figure 13 demonstrates that from the **365** respondents, **285** didn't want to be involved (**78%**). Whilst **35** would like to be involved within a focus group (**10%**), **24** would like to volunteer at a Library (**6%**) and **11** expressed an interest to be involved with both (**3%**). **10** people left this blank (**3%**).

A dedicated space was provided for respondents to provide their Name, telephone number and email address where they expressed an interest to be a volunteer, involved in a focus group or both. In addition, it was asked if there was a specific library they would like to be involved in, all respondents left this blank.

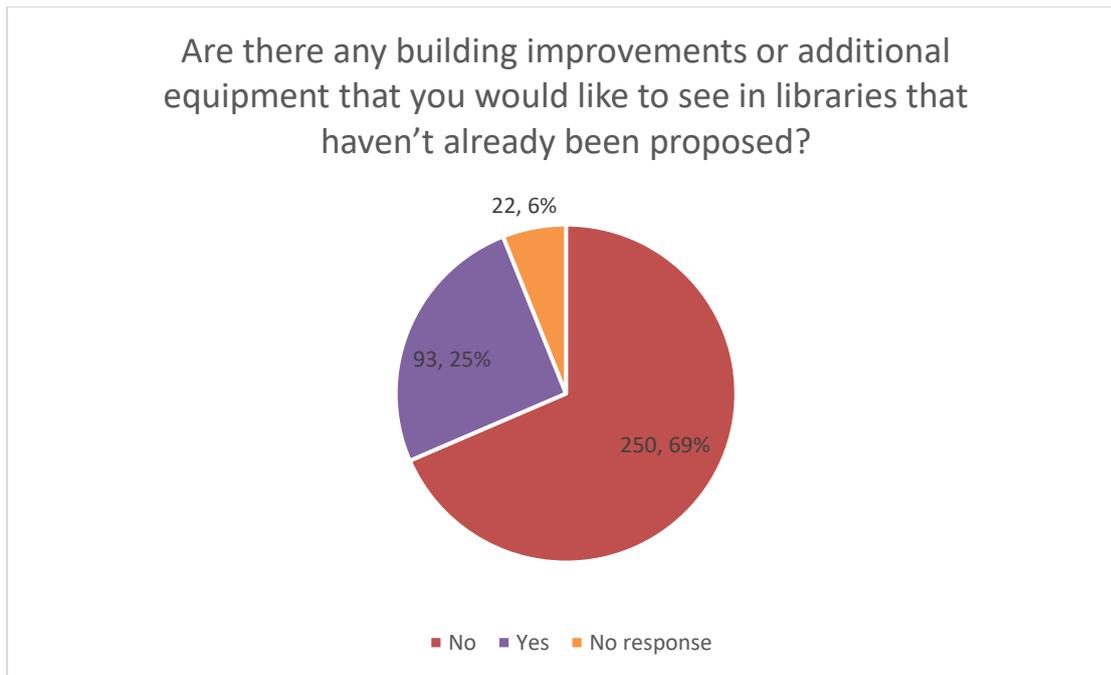


Figure 14

Figure 14 demonstrates that when respondents were asked if there are any building improvements or additional equipment that they would like to see in libraries that has been proposed already. **250** of the **365** respondents said no (**69%**) whilst **93** said yes (**25%**), the remaining **22** left this question blank (**6%**).

127 respondents provided further comments within the free text space that followed this question. This gave the opportunity for respondents to give reason for their answer and allows us to identify key themes from the comments provided, some of these were as follows;

- **IT Equipment** – 17 comments referred to having better IT equipment or up to date technology such as providing Kindles for people to read E-books in the library, comments included;
  - ‘New PCs, Tablets, Cafe facilities’
  - ‘Maybe have some iPads or kindles to borrow to read on too’
  - ‘Increased innovative use of technology to improve access and support the use of services (e.g. for people with dementia, visual problems)’
- **Toilet Facilities** – 14 comments suggested having better toilet facilities within Libraries, some included;
  - ‘All libraries need to be refurbished to a high standard and should provide public toilets and cafe's or at least a hot drink machine.’
  - ‘A better baby changing area at Dinnington library would be welcomed. The current facilities are within a rather tired disabled toilet’
  - ‘The toilet facilities need some updating and improvement.’

The final question as part of the consultation included a free text space giving the opportunity to provide any additional comments with regards to the Library service. **88** respondents provided further commentaries. Overall a lot of comments showed gratitude for the service provided by Libraries, some of those included were;

- 'They provide such a marvellous service and anything that can be done to continue this service, must be given adequate and open-minded consideration.'
- 'Thank you to the library services. I hope it grows and develops to be better suited to users and opens opportunities for all.'
- 'Excellent service, staff and facilities that I appreciate tremendously and would not like to lose.'
- 'I would like to thank the staff in libraries who continue to provide excellent support in a time of financial constraint.'

In addition, a lot of individual comments had a similar theme to those seen throughout the consultation which includes, supporting libraries to stay open, better technology, better IT equipment, more groups, more books and hot drinks facilities. Some further comments are as follows:

- 'Focus on them being community centres and places of gathering is important as well as access to books.'
- 'Please don't close libraries they are valuable for encouraging young children to read and access books they wouldn't be able to.'
- 'Rotherham Library has brilliant facilities - shout about them far and wide so people know what is available to them.'
- 'I visit many libraries across Rotherham and have been impressed with how well Mowbray is run. Approachable friendly staff, a variety of Community groups, facilities, toilets, tables and am impressed with the drinks machine, more libraries should have this facility'

### Section 3 - Equality and diversity analysis

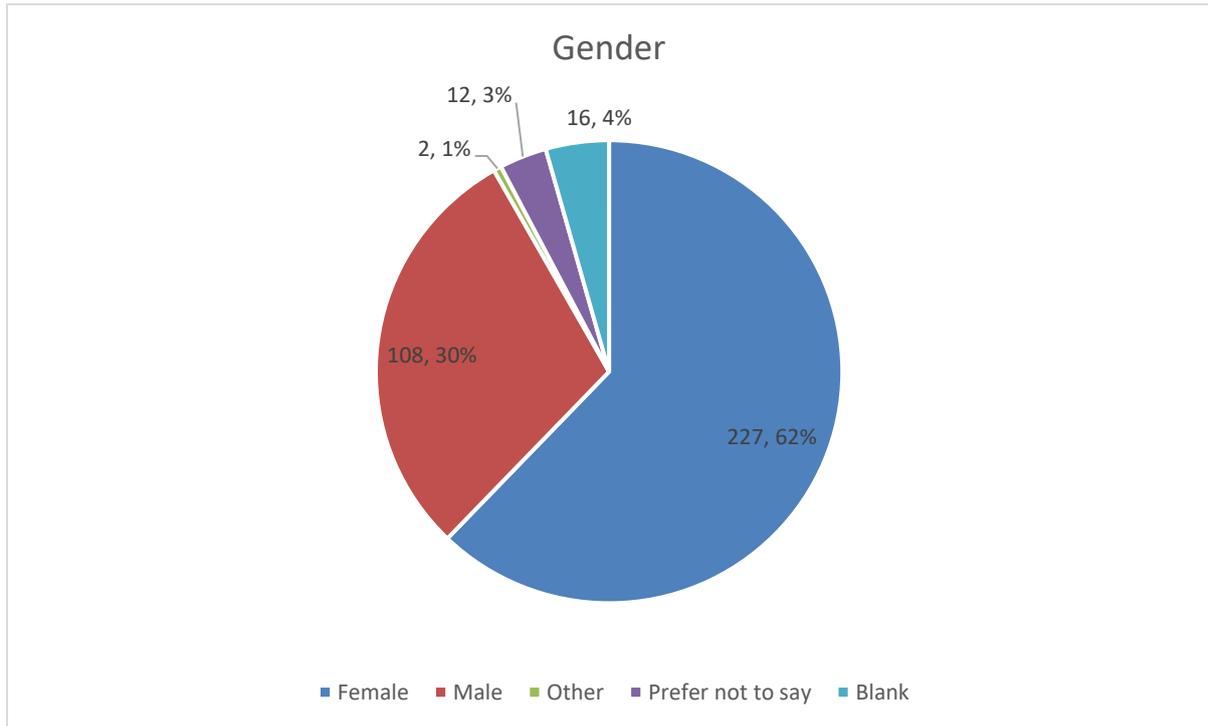


Figure 15

Figure 15 shows that from the **365** respondents for this consultation, **227 (62%)** were Female, **108 (30%)** were Male, **2** people (**1%**) selected other, **12 (3%)** chose not to say whilst **16 (4%)** left this question blank. When other was selected, respondents had the opportunity to provide further details, however from the (1%) shown, this was left blank.

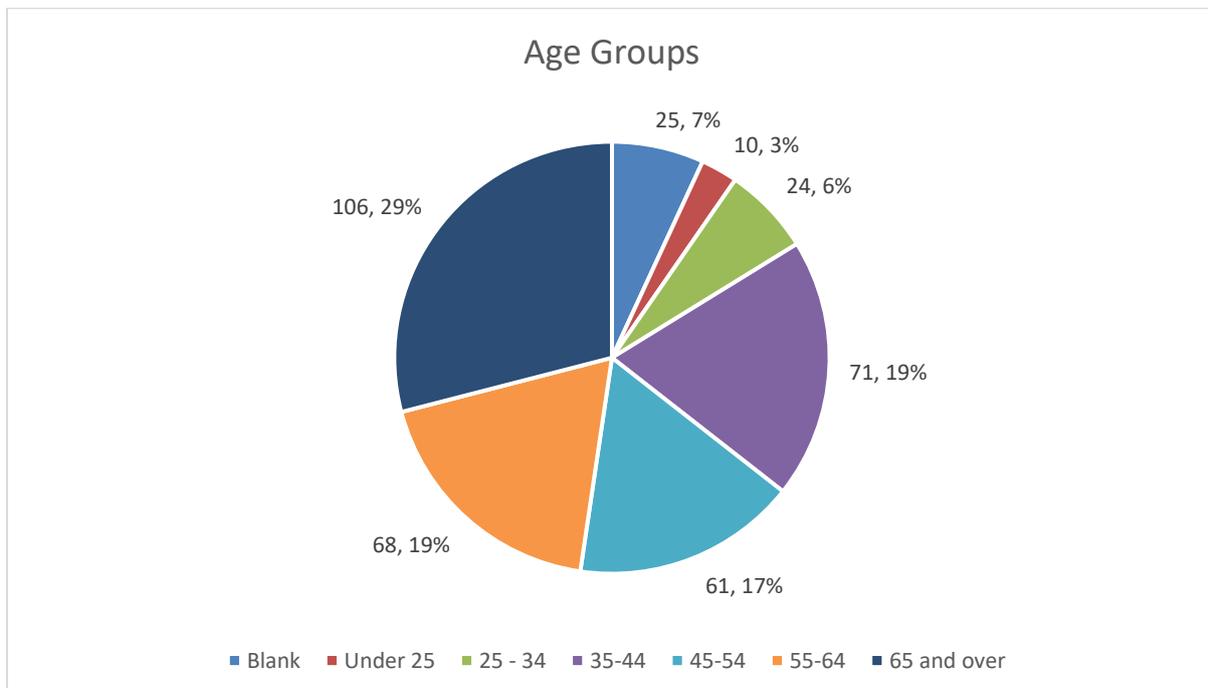


Figure 16

The above (figure 16) shows that the age range that completed this consultation varied from under 25 to over 65. The largest age group captured was '65 and over' with **106**, which is **29%** of the **365** respondents. The smallest age group captured was the Under 25's with **10** (**3%**) of the **365** respondents falling into this age group. **25** people (**7%**) left this question blank. The remaining data shows that **24** people (**6%**) were aged '25-34', **71** (**19%**) were aged '35 – 44', **61** people (**17%**) were aged '45-54' and **68** (**19%**) were 55-64.

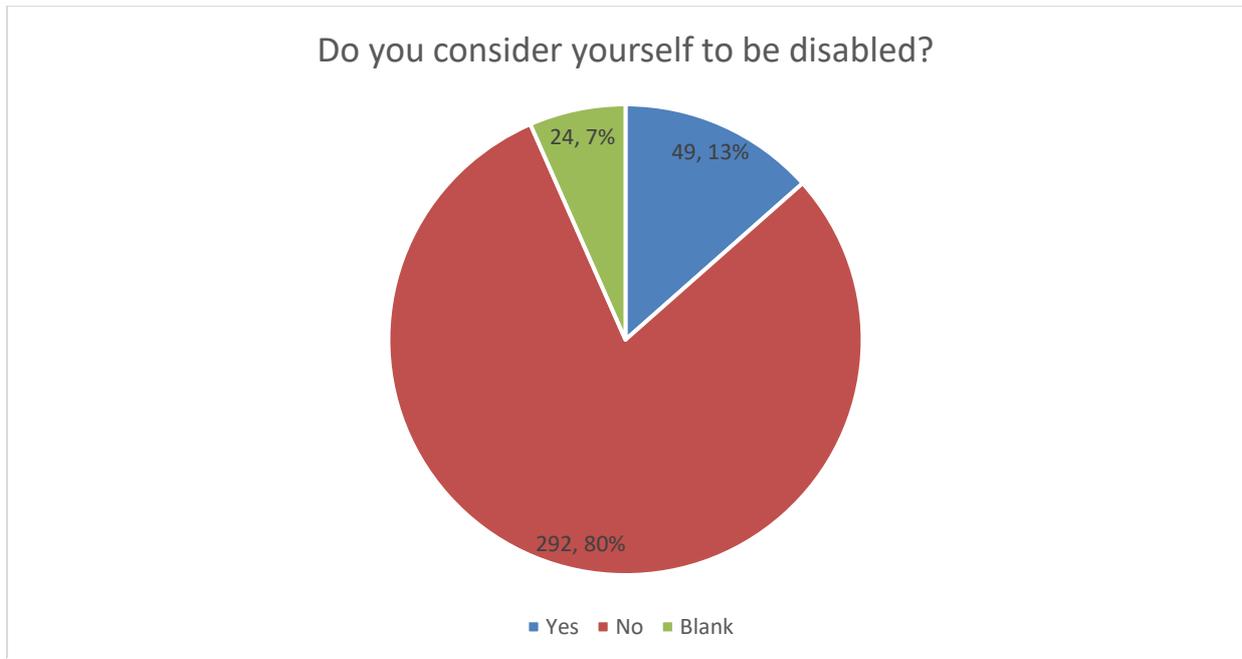


Figure 17

Respondents were asked if they considered themselves to have any disabilities. Figure 17 shows that **292** of the **365** respondents (**80%**) did not consider themselves to be disabled, **49** (**13%**) considered themselves disabled and **24** (**7%**) left this question blank.

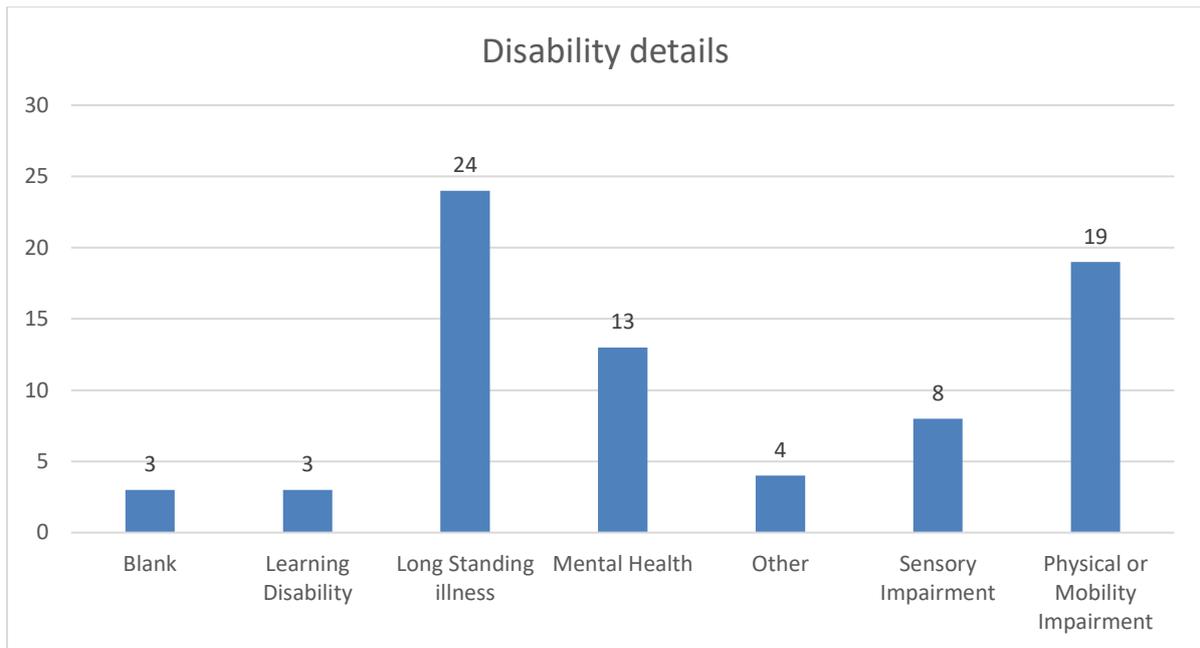


Figure 18

When yes was selected, a box was provided for respondents to provide further information with regards to their disability. Respondents were able to select multiple options when answering this question. Figure 18 enables us to see that of the **49** respondents that selected yes some have multiple disabilities.

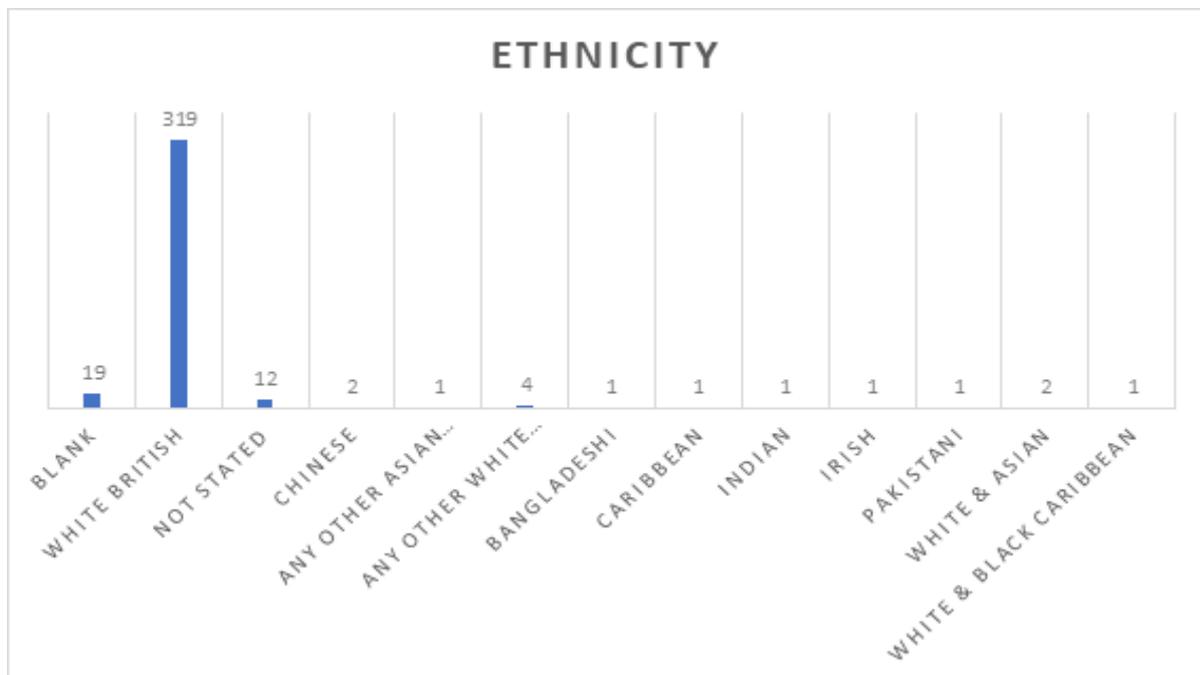


Figure 19 demonstrates a breakdown of the ethnic groups that took part in this consultation. Of the 365 respondents, this graph shows that **319** were White British, **19** people left this question blank and **12** who chose not to disclose their ethnicity with the remaining **15** which is made up of various ethnic backgrounds outside of the White British category.

## **Section 4 - Other findings**

The drop-in sessions that did take place across libraries in Rotherham revealed that respondents wanted the number and range of books available to be improved. This is also reflective of the online survey, which demonstrated that a good range of books is a priority for most library users. Customer also expressed their need for better IT equipment and a faster Wi-Fi, again this can be noted from the online survey where the comments provided are very similar.

Following the analysis from the initial consultation of Future of Rotherham Libraries it was recognised that there were two main areas of low engagement and further work took place between 25th June – 9th July to allow time to specifically target these areas. As aforementioned these groups included Under 25's and BAME community.

The closure of the face to face library provision has limited the way in which the service could target the above groups. Therefore, the response rate during the consultation was considerably low. This also impacted the way in which we could address these gaps as part of further consultation.

Contact was made with relevant services that were identified as having suitable groups that could assist with targeting these identified gaps.

### **Additional analysis - Under 25's**

The Library team worked with the early help participation voice & influence Coordinator in order to set up a Skype meeting with youth cabinet members. In addition, a follow up email sent out to all secondary schools on 12<sup>th</sup> June encouraging further feedback from young people. The feedback received from Schools was due to COVID-19 this was not on their list of priorities. Young people had previously responded in the last phase of consultation with regards to what they wanted to see in libraries and could be used to form the future service offer.

A skype call took place with some Youth Cabinet Board Members in order to obtain further verbal feedback. Although only 4 individuals attended the age range was varied which included; Year 6, Year 7, Year 10 and 6<sup>th</sup> form. Although no specific details on the strategy, comments were provided with regards to libraries needing to be more modern as they can appear daunting to kids and that activities need to be publicised more to children in schools. Whilst the group informed that they don't always use the libraries for books, they find libraries peaceful and somewhere to do their school work.

A request was all sent to encourage skype calls with Special Education Needs groups (SEND) lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community (LGBT) and Rotherham United Under 25's.

Feedback from SEND group following a virtual session found that they would like to see more open spaces for wheelchairs, Interesting displays, Anime, cosplay ,cartoon content (displays and figures of popular characters ), Interesting objects on display/cupboard and theme book events for teenagers. Another suggestion from a young person in the group, who has a sight impairment, recommended Libraries having the ability to offer different forms of communication where possible such as Makaton / sign language.

No further feedback was obtained from LGBT and Rotherham united under 25's as they informed us participation within groups had been low due to COVID-19 with no participants at all for the LGBT group.

### **Additional analysis - BAME community**

14 of the 365 respondents were of a BAME background, and it's possible that a percentage of BAME individuals could make up part of the 31 respondents who chose 'not to state' or 'leave blank'. BAME individuals make up 6% of the active library users, therefore 3.8% of the 365 respondents to our consultation were of BAME background. These figures were discussed with the community engagement team, who agreed that considering current BAME library users it was a fair representation. The service also identified that, this audience was engaged with in the same way as the previous phase of the consultation and the analysis from Phase 2 identified that 4.8% of respondents were from a BAME background, therefore a similar response rate to this final phase (1% difference which is to be expected due to global pandemic and the cancellation of face to face drop in sessions at some sites).

The library service did attempt to further engagement communication was made with REMA however due to the methods of engagement available not being suitable no further information could be obtained. Working is still ongoing to address this gap.

## Proposed changes to Brinsworth Library – results and findings

Section 1, 'Overview of responses', provides details around the number of responses by week. Section 2, 'Online data form response analysis and key themes analysis', breaks down the responses to the questions asked within the online survey followed by a key themes analysis of the free-form comments provided by the respondents. Section 3, 'discusses the equality and diversity responses from the respondents.'

### Section 1 - Overview of responses

#### Number of online form responses

Week	Dates	Total
1	03/02/20 – 09/02/20	14
2	10/02/20 – 16/02/20	13
3	17/02/20 – 23/02/20	4
4	24/02/20 – 01/03/20	18
5	02/03/20 – 08/03/20	28
6	09/03/20 – 15/03/20	7
7	16/03/20 – 22/03/20	1
8	23/03/20 – 29/03/20	3
9	30/03/20 – 05/04/20	0
10	06/04/20 – 12/04/20	0
11	13/04/20 – 19/04/20	0
12	20/04/20 – 26/04/20	0
	<b>Total consultation responses</b>	<b>88</b>

Table 1

Table 1 shows the number of responses captured weekly, with an overall response of **88** for the proposed changes to Brinsworth library.

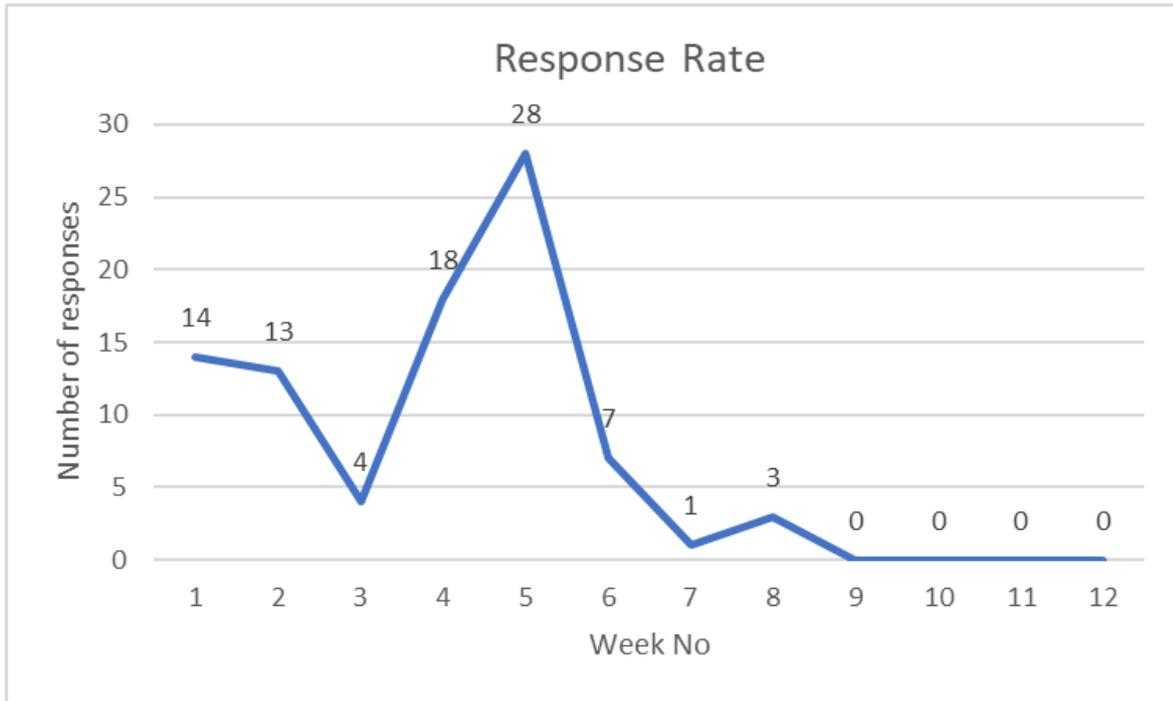


Figure 1

Figure 1 (above) shows that the highest number of responses was received in **week five** with a total of **28** responses. This was followed by a sharp decline in **week six** with **7** responses, this declined further in **week seven** with just 1 response. The responses remained low for the final 5 weeks, with no responses at all in the last four weeks. This decline is likely to be due to the COVID-19 outbreak, with safety measures introduced to limit the infection rate and eventually libraries being closed.

### Section 2 - Online data form response analysis

The tables below are based on a total response rate of **88**. Some of the questions allowed users to select more than one answer. The percentage figures are rounded up or down to the nearest decimal place and the **No Response** segment represents where the question has been left blank. Most questions asked were followed with a secondary question providing free text space for respondents to provide an explanation as to why they had selected the answer on the previous question, this enables us to identify Key Themes which is also detailed below as part of this analysis.

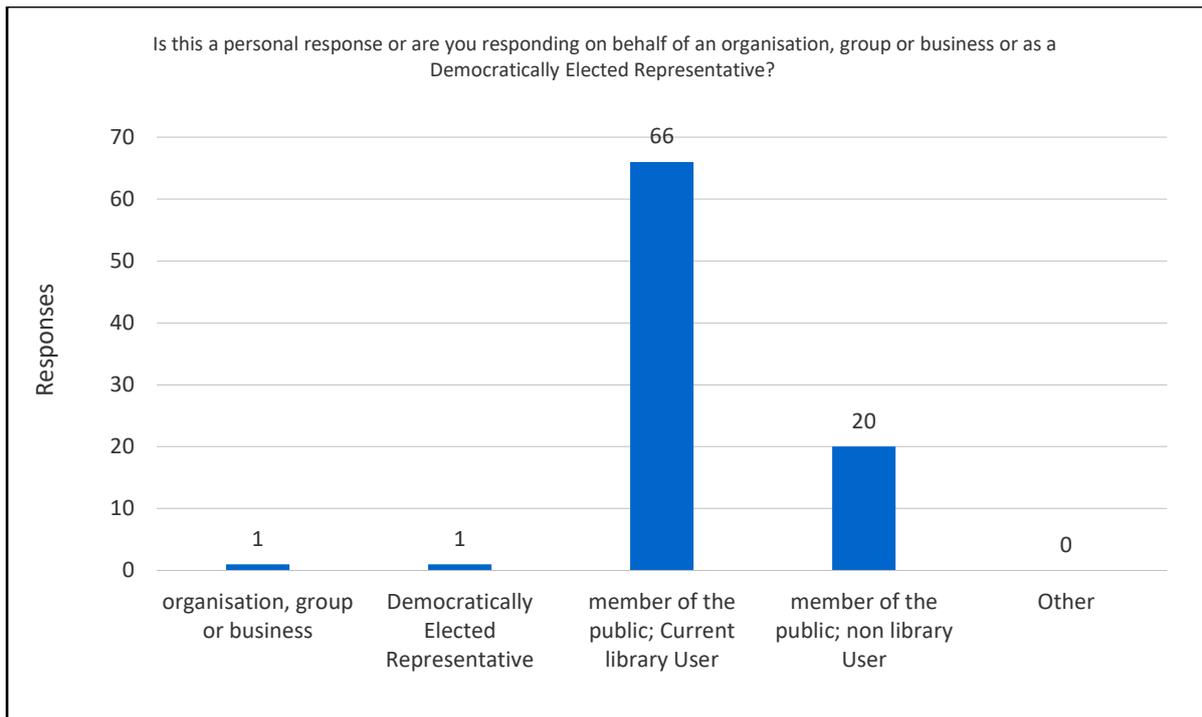


Figure 2

Figure 2 demonstrates who was completing the survey. A multiple choice was provided to select whether the consultation was completed by; An organisation, Group or Business; Democratically elected representative; Member of the public current library user; Member of the public non library user or Other. The highest group was completed by **66** members of the public current library users, whilst both 'organisation, group or business' and 'Democratically elected representative' both had **1**. Respondents were asked to provide detail when 'other' was selected stating 'what or who you are responding on behalf of' there was **0** selected for other.

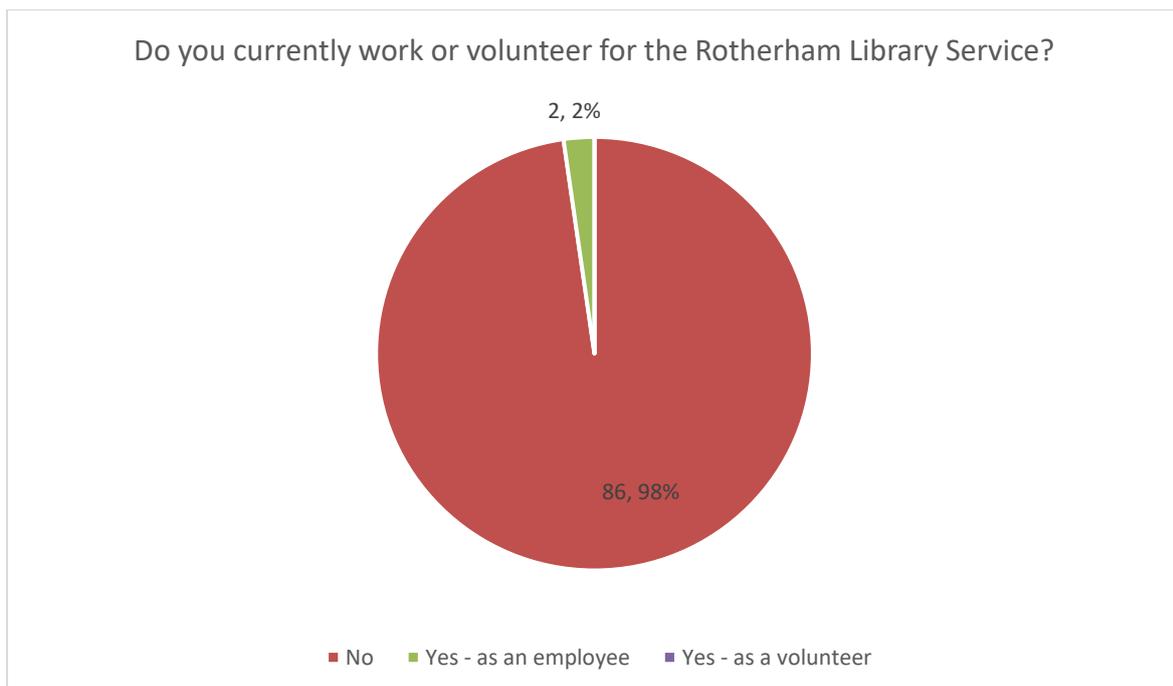


Figure 3

Figure 3 demonstrates that **86** of the 88 respondents (**98%**) do not currently work or volunteer for the Rotherham library service. **2 (2%)** selected that they are a current employee. There was a **0** return from any volunteers for the Rotherham library service.

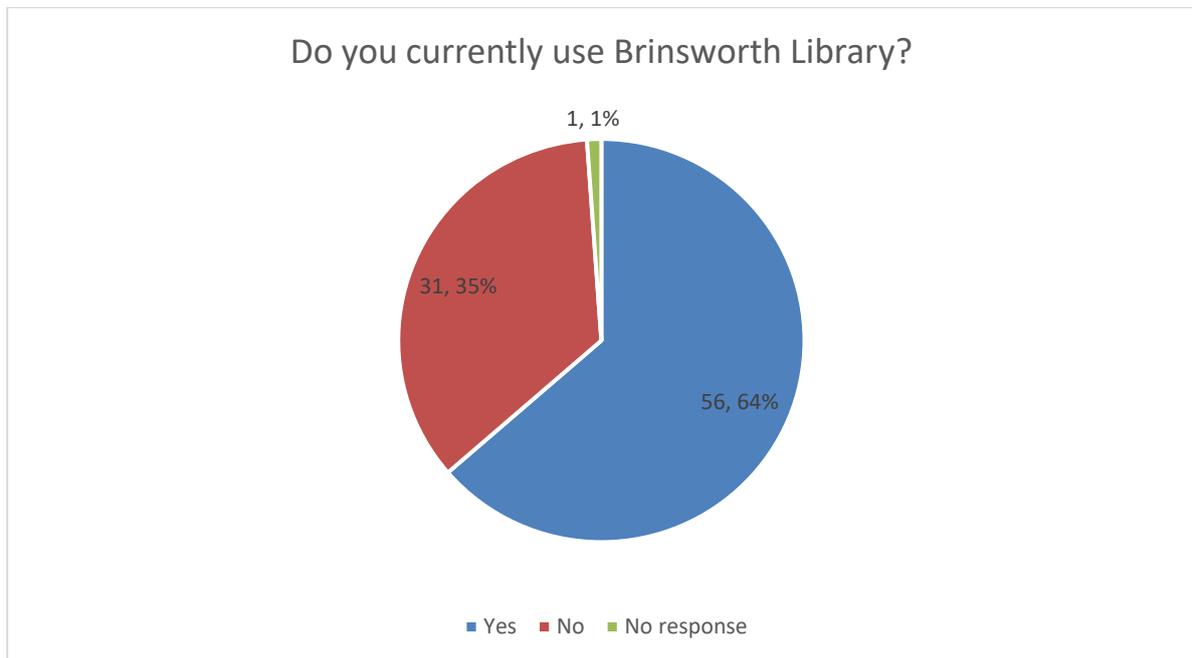


Figure 4

Respondents were asked if they currently use Brinsworth library. Figure 4 (above) demonstrates that **56** of the 88 respondents (**64%**) currently use Brinsworth library. Of the 88, **31** do not use Brinsworth Library (**35%**), and **1** respondent (**1%**) provided no response.



Figure 5

Following on from the question in Figure 4; When **yes** was selected respondents were then asked how often they use Brinsworth library. Figure 5 shows that **13 (15%)** attend Brinsworth library monthly, **22 respondents (25%)** selected occasionally, whilst **20 (23%)** use it weekly. From the 88 respondents no one selected the option for daily and **33 (37%)** left this question blank.

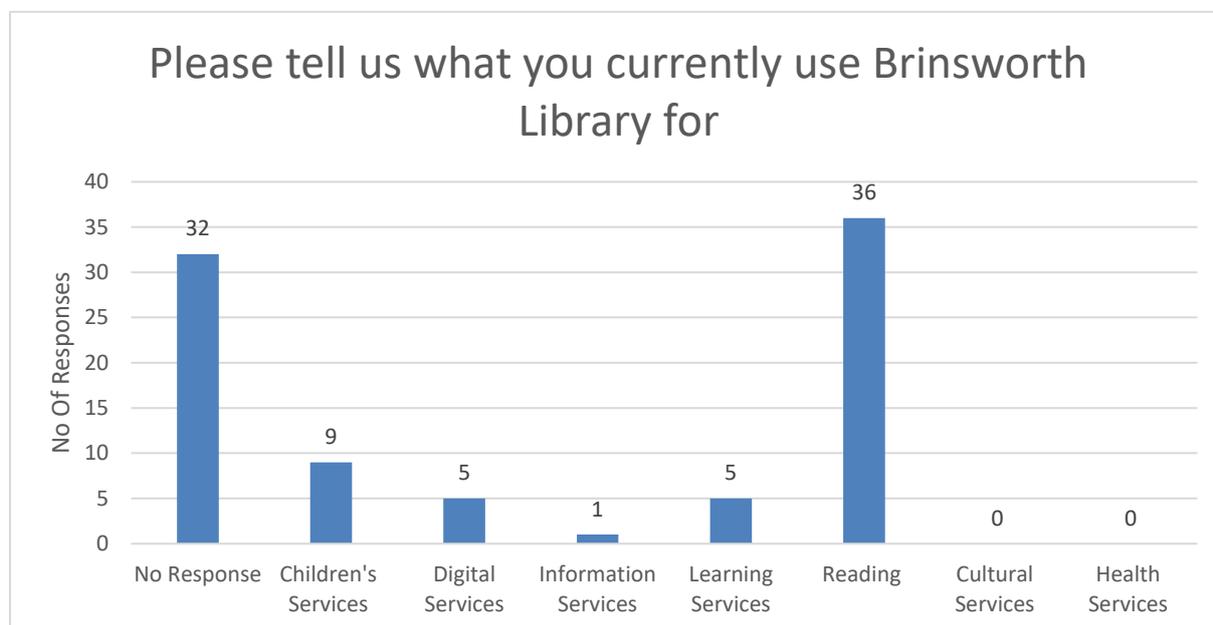


Figure 6

In addition, respondents who selected **yes** were also asked to choose from a list of options what they use Brinsworth library for. The multiple-choice options were;

'Children's Services - to attend activities such as a Rhymetime session or half term activity'; 'Digital Services - to learn basic IT skills, access public computers, photocopying, printing or to use our free Wi-Fi'; 'Information Services - to find out about starting your own business, applying for/ renewing a concessionary bus pass/Blue Car Badge'; 'Health Services - to access information and advice regarding health, lifestyle and wellbeing; 'Cultural Services - to visit local art displays, attend an author visit or visit a mini museum exhibition; 'Learning Services - to access digital support to help with job searching or to take part in regular skills development activities such as Knit and Natter' or 'Reading - to access our range of books or e-books or to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge'

Figure 6 (above) shows that reading is the most popular use for Brinsworth library, with **36** of the 88 respondents selecting this. **32** left this question blank. Cultural Services and Health Service was the least use for Brinsworth library with no one selecting this option.

**If No:** Following on from the question asked (shown in figure 4.) When no was selected, respondents were asked to explain why they don't currently use Brinsworth library. By providing this free text space for respondents to complete we were able to identify key themes from the answers provided. Of the 31 that answered no, **28** left further comments.

11 of the comments referred to the old building being outdated and the location, in addition some then went on to add that they will use/join Brinsworth library when the new building opens. Some comments as to why they didn't use Brinsworth library were as follows;

- 'Because it's in a temporary location. I cant wait to join the new improved library'
- 'Never really found the need and found it daunting to attend the old building due to its position'
- 'I feel uncomfortable with the area it is in and would rather not go, so I was over the moon to hear it was moving, will be perfect to just have a walk down without being made to feel uncomfortable.'
- Further comments stated that it wasn't their local library or they preferred to use the town centre location.

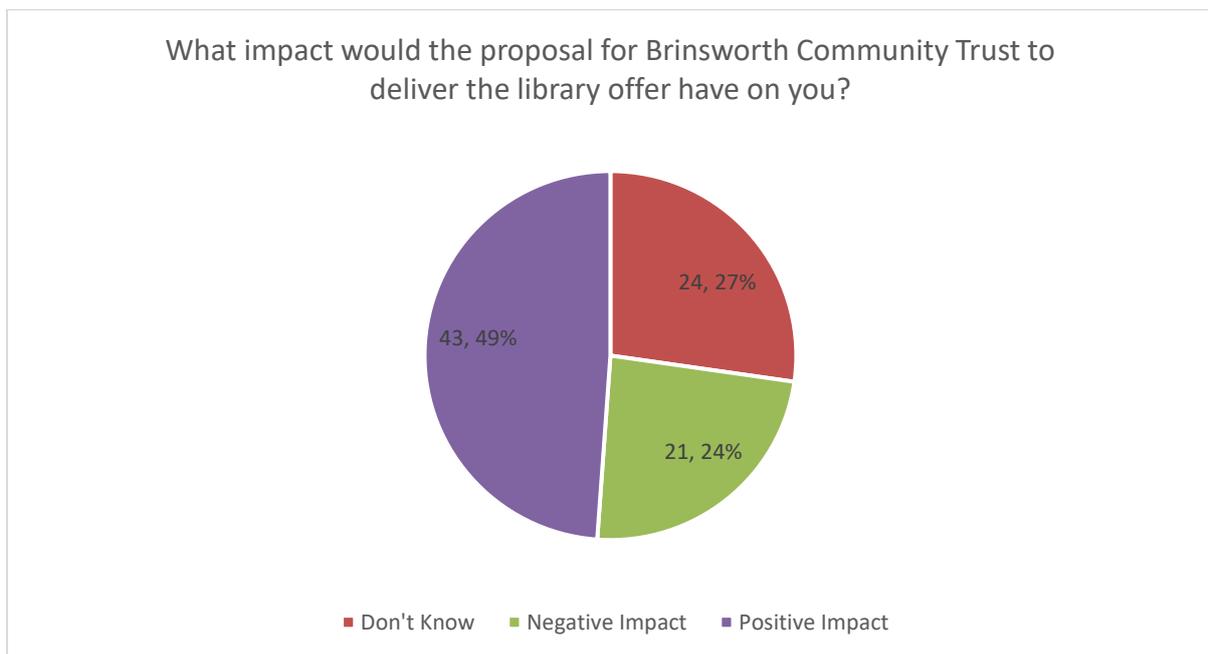


Figure 7

Figure 7 demonstrates what type of impact respondents felt the proposal for Brinsworth community trust to delivery the library offer will have on them. **43 (49%)** feel this will have a positive impact and **21 (24%)** feel it will have a negative impact, whilst **24 (27%)** selected 'don't know'

Respondents were then asked to explain the reasoning for their answer. By providing this free text space we were able to identify key themes from the answers provided.

Of the 21 respondents who selected negative impact, 20 left comments all based around the concerns of losing paid staff, some of these were as follows;

- 'We need trained staff with experience, not volunteers or staff from the Trust with no experience'
- 'I don't think using volunteers can work. The library needs trained, dedicated staff who have experience of working in libraries, Volunteers are likely not to relied upon to keep the library open at the designated times, not have the IT experience.'

24 respondents of the 43 that felt this would be a positive impact for them left further comments, most commended the new building and the new location, some other comments included are;

- 'Input from local community to the running of the library and ideas of what the local community would like and would hopefully support.'
- 'To share on social media when it's open, easy to access in the new location. Bringing in into the community would give the village sense of ownership.'

10 respondents left comments of the 24 that selected 'don't know' some of these comments are as follows;

- 'Worry about loss of jobs but think good opportunity for Trust.'
- 'Depends on level of service and continued support from RMBC.'

34 of the 88 respondents left no further comments.

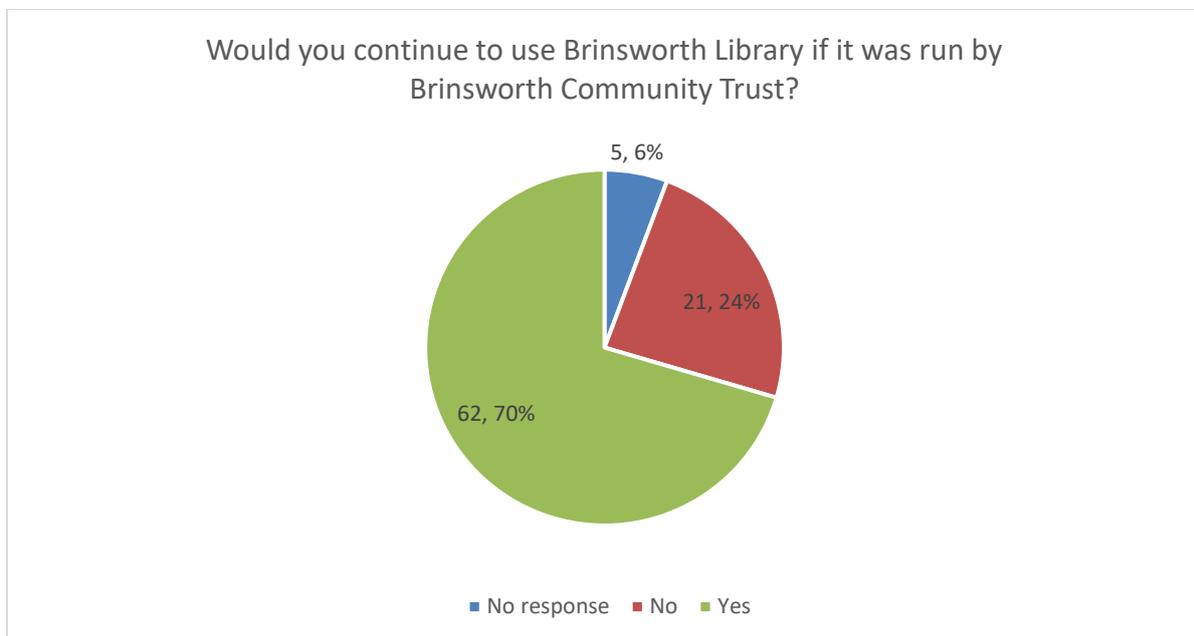


Figure 8

Respondents were asked if they would continue to use Brinsworth Library if it was run by Brinsworth Community Trust. Figure 8 shows that **62 (70%)** would still attend Brinsworth library, however **21 (24%)** said this would stop them attending whilst **5 (6%)** left this blank.

Respondents were then asked to explain the reasoning for their answer. By providing this free text space we were able to identify key themes from the answers provided.

Of the 21 that selected no, 18 left a further comment. The key theme from these comments highlighted that they would lose confidence in the library if run by volunteers. Some of these comments were as follows;

- 'Lack of confidence in the people running it. Too many issues - confidentiality, GDPR, not being reliable.....'

- ‘The service given by staff is outstanding. Volunteers wont have the training or the experience that staff have gained over years of work experience.’

18 of the 62 respondents that selected yes, 18 left a further comment. These highlighted that as long as there was no impact on the service and activities provided they would be happy for the library to be run by Brinsworth community trust, however some of these comments, although selected yes, did add concerns on the impact on paid staff. Some comments included are;

- ‘Not sure what Brinsworth Community Trust is, or how they would run it, but as long as the same range of books was available I would still use it.’
- ‘Not sure this would be a good thing for staff who are currently employed. I would hope this wouldn't result in redundancies. I can see how this would affect the availability of services currently provided.’



Figure 9

Figure 9 demonstrates that **13** of the 88 respondents (**15%**) would like to get involved in the running or delivery of Brinsworth library. **73 (83%)** do not want to get involved. Whilst **2 (2%)** did not respond.

A dedicated space was provided for respondents to provide their Name, telephone number and email address where they expressed an interest to be involved with Brinsworth Library.

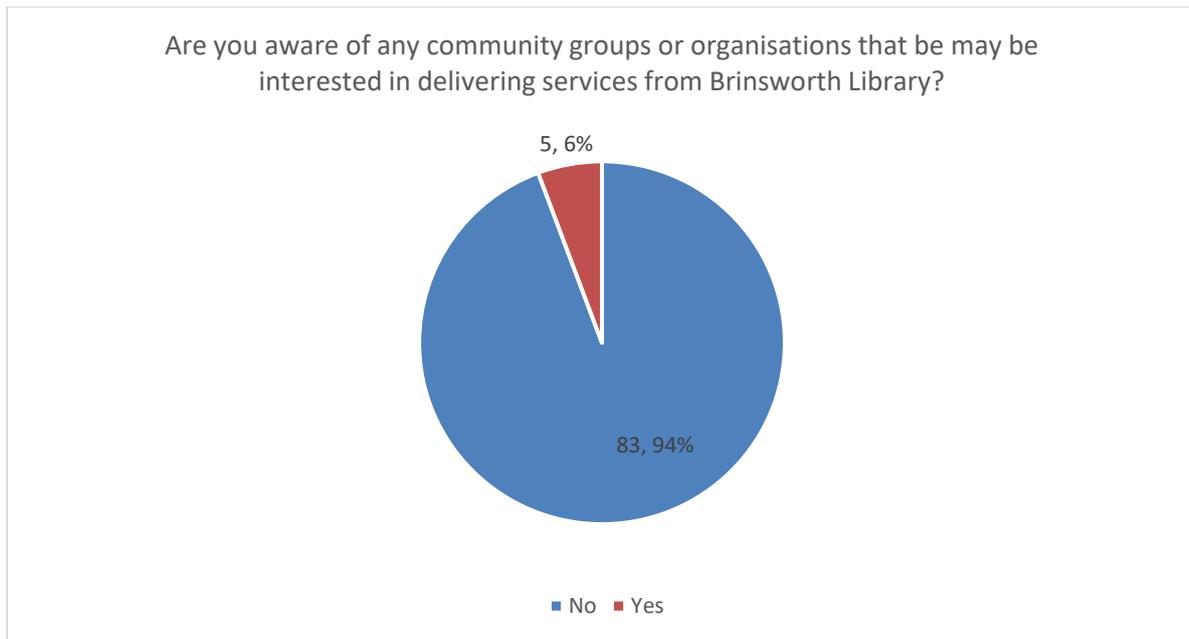


Figure 10

Figure 10 shows that **5 (6%)** of respondents are aware of a community group or organisation that may be interested in delivering services from Brinsworth library, the remaining respondents **83 (94%)** selected no.

When yes was selected, respondents were asked to provide details of any community groups or organisations. Of the 5 that selected yes, they all left further information, these were as follows;

- 'Brinsworth Neighbourhood Watch'
- 'I don't know any services but I think delivery is an excellent idea to get books to people who are less able'
- 'I would reset my community craft group up using the library as its better located for me and is in a safe place.'
- 'Local History group'
- 'Rotherham creative network. That Looks Queer! Social Arts Network. Arts Catalyst.'

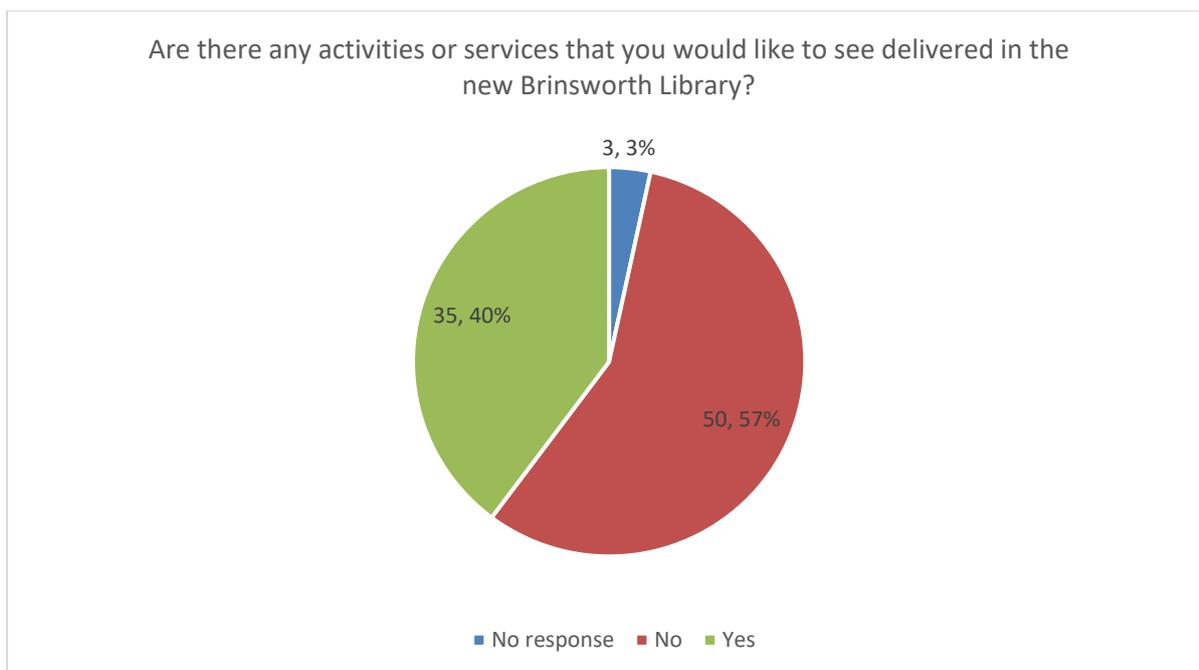


Figure 11

Respondents were asked if there any activities or services they would like to see delivered in the new Brinsworth Library. Figure 11 (above) demonstrates that **50** of the 88 respondents (57%) selected no, with **35** (40%) responding yes, whilst **3** (3%) left this blank.

Respondents were provided with a free text space to offer further details when yes was selected. Of the 35 that selected yes, 33 supplied further details.

11 of these comments were based on providing more activities, such as book clubs for children, further suggestions included Local History groups, Craft clubs and author visits. One suggestion was using the space for drop in sessions. Some of the comments were as follows;

- 'The use of the space for drop-in consultations regarding issues locally and around the borough, as well as potentially the use of the area for councillor surgeries.'
- 'Children's activities and Book clubs.'
- 'Display of artefacts, Local History group'
- 'More availability of craft lessons of an evening'

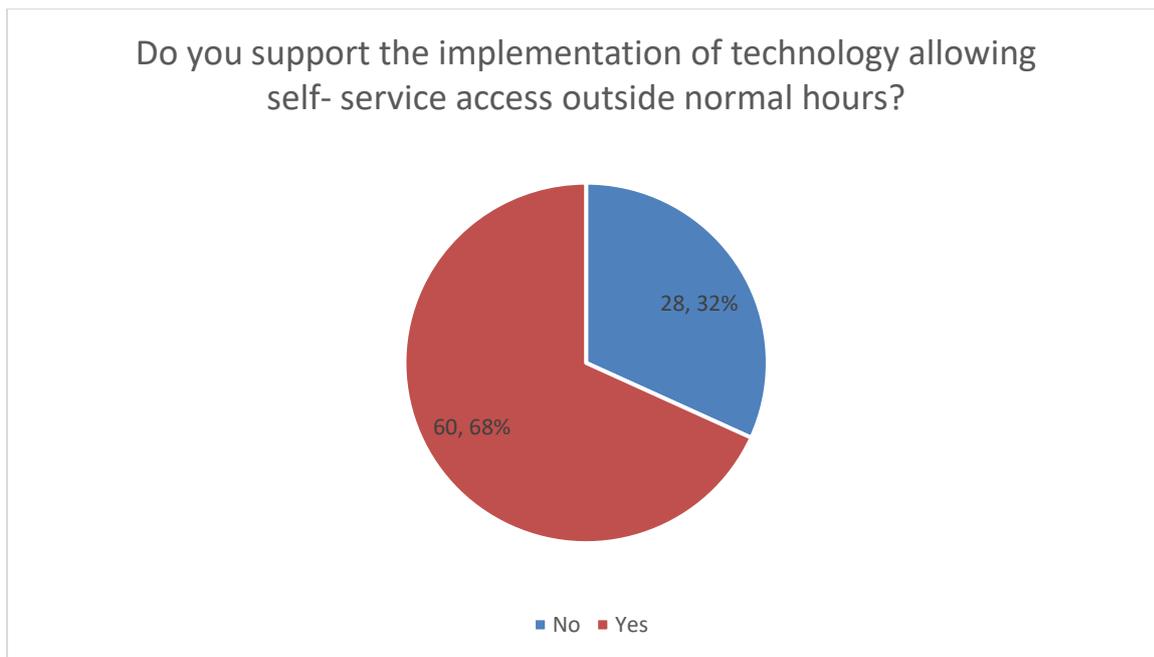


Figure 12

In order to increase the current opening times of Brinsworth Library, respondents were asked if they support the implementation of technology allowing self- service access outside normal hours. **60** of the 88 respondents (68%) agreed with the implementation, whilst **28** (32%) disagreed.

Respondents were provided with a free text space for respondents to provide an explanation as to why they agree or disagree with the implementation of technology. **51** provided further details, with 37 leaving this blank.

Of the 28 respondents that selected no, 21 of these provided comments, some key themes were as follows;

- **Staff** – 5 comments mentioned staff and stated that they wouldn’t want to see a reduction of staff by introducing this technology, comments included
  - ‘Part of the library experience is having staff there to help if and when you need this. I wouldn’t want this to be lost.’
  - ‘The staff would lose their jobs, If you need help with services there will be nobody there.’
  
- **Security** – Remaining comments were based on the lack of security, and concerns around vandalism or not feeling safe being in the library alone, some comments were as follows;
  - ‘If there isn’t enough security the books will get stolen and the premises will be vandalised.’

- 'It would be open to abuse and vandalism and it should be manned by at least one salaried member of staff'

From the 60 respondents that selected yes, **30** provided further comments, some key themes found were;

➤ **Opening Hours** – 7 comments were positive for accessing the library at any time to support those who work unsociable hours, some comments included;

- 'I think this is a good idea for people to access libraries who otherwise can't because of work commitments'
- 'If I'm able to access out of standard working hours I'll be able to use it more.'

➤ Additional comments encouraged having the technology in place to support more opening hours and making libraries more convenient for everyone, as well as not having to worry about the building being closed when they need to return a book.



Figure 13

Respondents were asked to provide us with details as to when it is most convenient to visit Brinsworth Library. A check box answer was provided for respondents to complete, this included options of, Monday – Sunday; morning, lunch, afternoon or evening.

Figure 13 demonstrates that of the **56** that responded to this question, Thursday afternoon and Saturday morning is the most convenient time to visit with **10** responses on each, whilst Monday lunch and evening, Tuesday lunch, Wednesday lunch, afternoon and

evening, Thursday lunch and evening, Friday evening, Saturday lunch and Sunday morning, lunch, afternoon and evening were the least convenient as these options were all nil response, therefore are not included within Figure 13. **32** of the overall 88 respondents left this question blank.

Day and Time	No of responses
Monday morning	6
Monday lunch	0
Monday afternoon	6
Monday evening	0
Tuesday morning	2
Tuesday lunch	0
Tuesday afternoon	3
Tuesday evening	1
Wednesday morning	1
Wednesday lunch	0
Wednesday afternoon	0
Wednesday evening	0
Thursday morning	9
Thursday lunch	0
Thursday afternoon	10
Thursday evening	0
Friday morning	1
Friday lunch	1
Friday afternoon	1
Friday evening	0
Saturday morning	10
Saturday lunch	0
Saturday afternoon	4
Saturday evening	1
Sunday morning	0
Sunday lunch	0
Sunday afternoon	0
Sunday evening	0
No response	32

Table 2

Table 2 shows an overall breakdown for all the options that could have been selected. As previously mentioned, 32 respondents left this question blank. Whilst the 56 that did complete this question selected options as shown above in Table 2.

The final question as part of the consultation included a free text space giving the opportunity for respondents to provide any additional comments with regards to the Brinsworth library. **29** of the **88** respondents provided further commentaries. Some of those included praised the new library with some comments as follows;

- 'It is wonderful to see the new library up and running and I wish all involved every success. A great asset to the community'
- 'The new library is an exciting and good thing for the community. It is situated in a lovely setting and we look forward to its future.'
- 'Any positive change to the library is welcome and should be aimed at encouraging children into reading and then working it's way up to adults'

Some respondents utilised this section to express their concerns of losing staff, some comments were as follows:

- 'I strongly feel that the running of Brinsworth library should remain within the remit of Rotherham MBC rather than transferring some responsibility to a new voluntary organisation that does not have democratic oversight.'
- 'I feel saddened that we now have a bright, clean facility that is going to become less effective because of the loss of paid staff who know their job.'
- 'This community has needed a new building for decades. I am pleased this has finally happened, But I don't want the service then to suffer due to lack of professional staff.'

In addition, one comment made, suggested that the access for wheelchair users needs to be better.

### Section 3 - Equality and diversity analysis

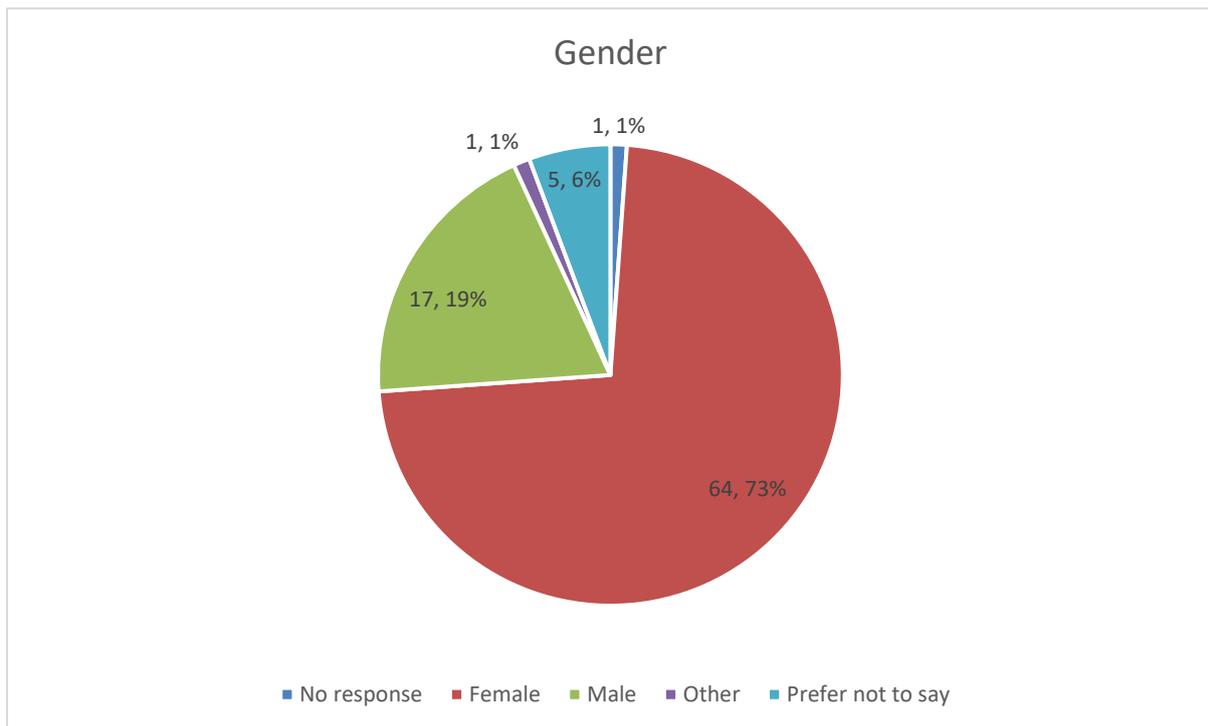
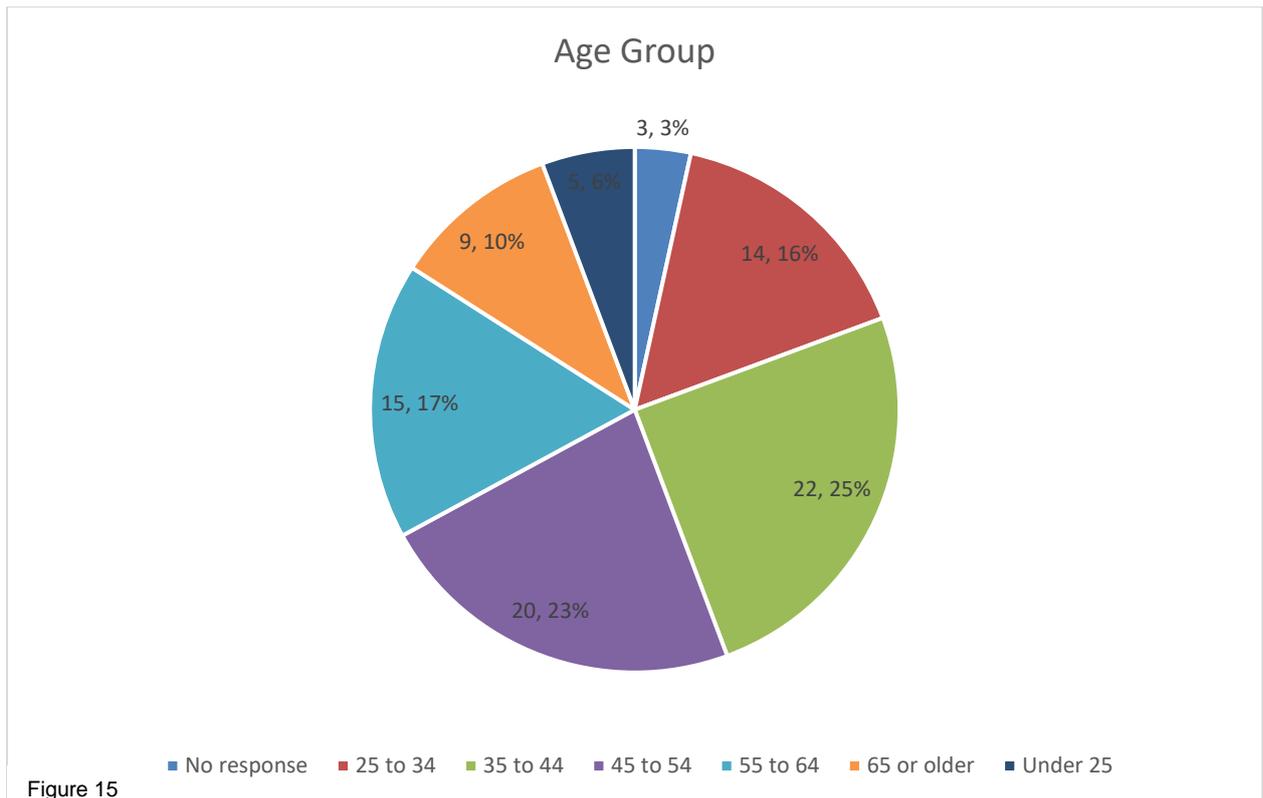


Figure 14

Figure 14 shows that from the **88** respondents for this consultation, **64 (73%)** were Female, **17 (19%)** were Male, **1** respondent (**1%**) selected other, **5 (6%)** chose not to say whilst **1 respondent (1%)** left this question blank. When other was selected, respondents had the opportunity to provide further details, however from the (1%) shown, this was left blank.



The above (figure 15) shows that the age range that completed this consultation varied from under 25 to over 65. The largest age group captured was '35-44' with **22** respondents, which is **25%** of the **88** respondents. The smallest age group captured was the Under 25's with **5 (6%)** of the **88** respondents falling into this age group. **3 people (3%)** left this question blank.

The remaining data shows that **14 people (16%)** were aged '25-34', **20 (23%)** were aged '45 – 54', **15 people (17%)** were aged '55-64' and **9 (10%)** were 65 or older.

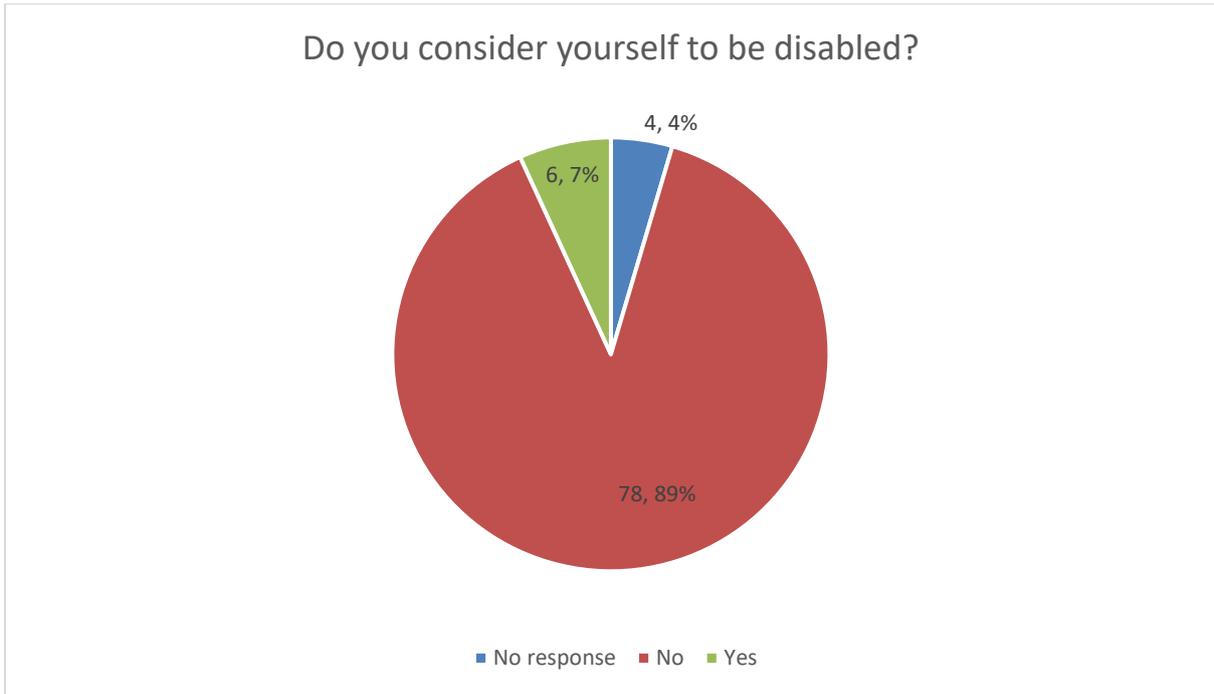


Figure 16

Respondents were asked if they considered themselves to have any disabilities. Figure 16 shows that **78** of the **88** respondents (**89%**) did not consider themselves to be disabled, **6** (**7%**) considered themselves disabled and **4** (**4%**) left this question blank.

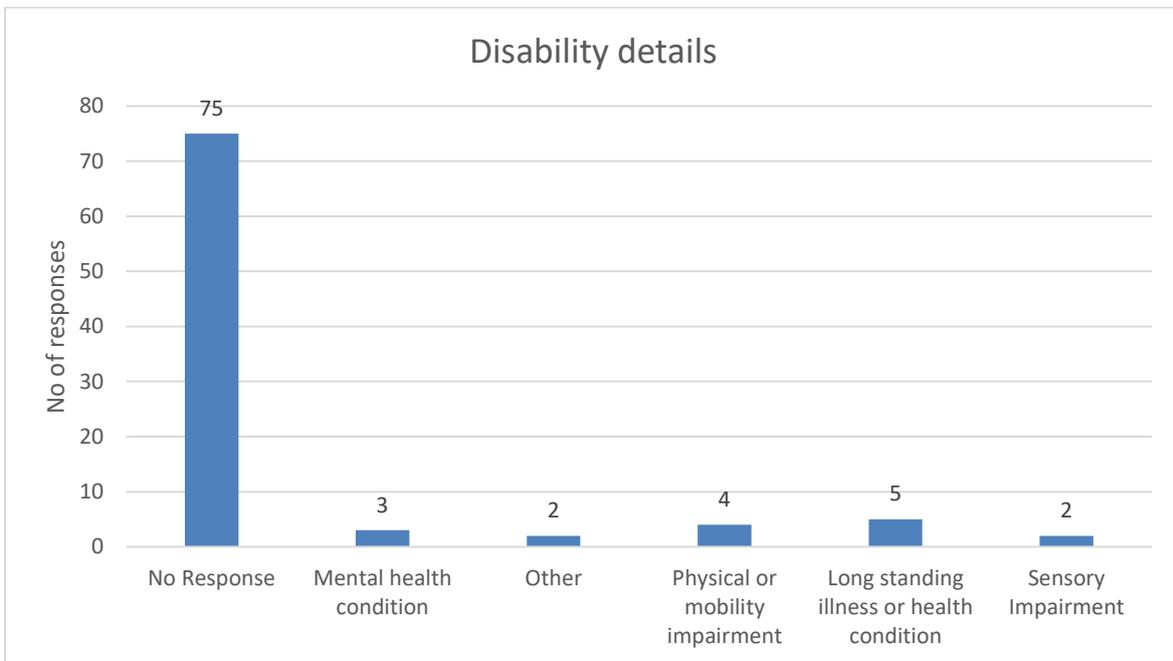


Figure 17

When yes was selected, a box was provided for respondents to provide further information with regards to their disability. Respondents were able to select multiple options when

answering this question. Figure 17 enables us to identify, of the 6 respondents that selected yes some have multiple disabilities.

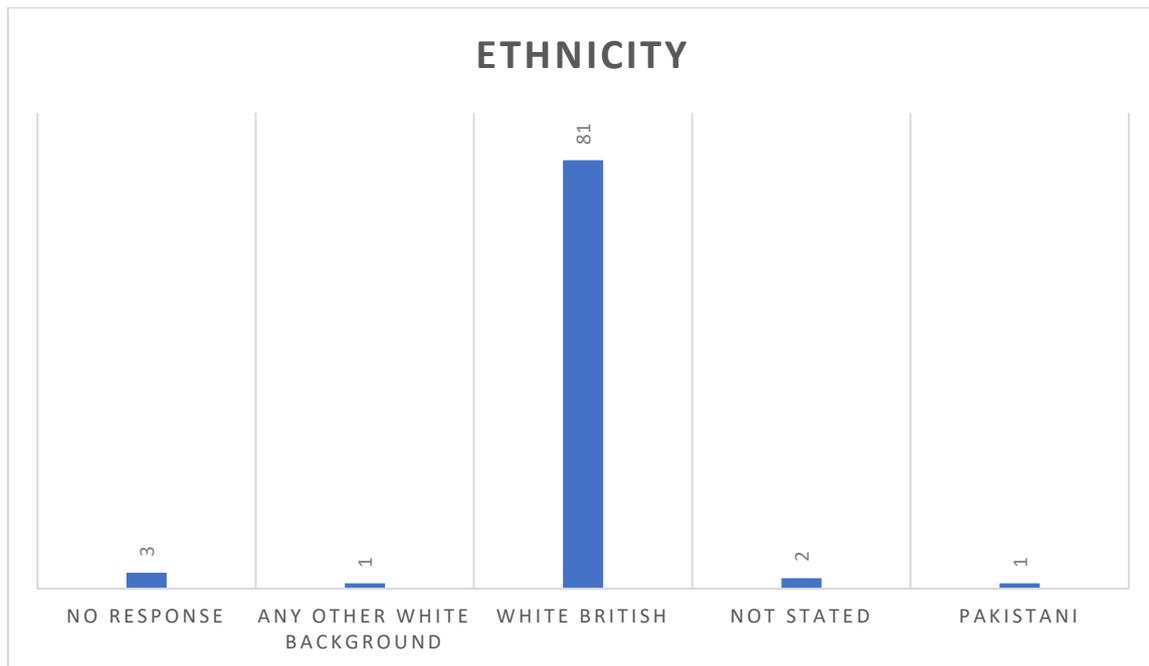


Figure 18

Figure 18 demonstrates the ethnic groups that took part in this consultation. Of the 88 respondents this graph shows a break down which also includes 3 people who left this question blank.

#### Section 4 - Other findings

The drop-in sessions revealed that respondents wanted the number and range of books available to be improved.. Customer also expressed their need for better IT equipment and a faster Wi-Fi, again this can be noted from the online survey where the comments provided are very similar.

Further questions raised were around the proposal for the library to be delivered by the Community Trust, some customers in full support whilst others expressing their opinion that the library delivery should remain with Rotherham MBC.. Respondents were also keen to understand if the proposed change would result in job losses.

Customers were also keen to understand how the self service technology in order the access the building without the need for staff would operate.