

# **PATIENT ENGAGEMENT REPORT**

## **KING STREET AND ST JOHN'S SURGERIES**

### **INTRODUCTION**

King Street and St John's Surgeries in Kempston have applied to merge from 1 April 2021. The 2 practices have a combined patient list (at of 10<sup>th</sup> February 2021) of 21,400 with 7 GP Partners.

The GP partners have been in discussion for some time about working together and agreed last year that we would explore a partnership merger.

A merger means that the 2 practices will share resources and clinical systems, and staff will be able to access the patient records regardless of which site the patient attends, the 2 practices operate from 3 locations; King Street, St John's Street and Cater Street, all of these will remain open. (King Street acquired the Cater Street surgery, staff and 75% of the patient list in April 2020).

Both practices share the same passion for providing high quality services and believe it is the most logical way forward to strengthen the resilience of GP services in Kempston, especially with the recent departure of one GP partner at St John's Surgery.

The merger will help us to maintain and improve the care we provide as we manage the pressures of General Practice, it will also give us access to more opportunities in the future; we are particularly keen to explore the possibility of finding new and improved premises in the future.

We believe that our registered patients and staff will benefit from:

- Our continued commitment to delivering high quality patient care.
- A larger team working together to maintain and improve the quality of care.
- More choice about where to access care from all our existing sites.
- A wider range of services at one or more local sites.
- The shared skills and expertise of staff from the three sites.
- More coordinated care that draws on skills from all practices to develop teams to support people with long-term and complex conditions.
- Improved training and development opportunities for our staff across the new organisation.
- Reduction of duplication in administrative processes.

The new partnership will deliver services from all of our existing three sites and there will be no reduction in the services we currently provide. As part of the application to NHS England for approval of the merger the practices undertook a patient engagement programme from 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2021.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Patients were contacted where possible by text message (14,600 SMS were sent on 1<sup>st</sup> December and again on 4<sup>th</sup> January as a reminder) notifying them that the practices were planning to merge and signposting them to each practice website for more information and opportunity to take part in a survey. Due to the current Covid-19 situation we were unable to host any face-to-face engagement sessions, however, posters were sent out to all local Pharmacies; a notice was placed in the Kempston edition of the monthly Newsletter (Kempston Calling) a free local newsletter delivered to 9,500 homes in Kempston; letter sent to each household for patients with no mobile number available (1,375 letters were sent 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020); detailed information published on the website for each practice (copy of the letter and link to survey).

The website explained the reasons for the application to merge and a link to the patient survey. The survey was compiled using Survey Monkey, paper copies were available and posted out when requested for patients to complete manually if they had no access to the internet; the paper copies also contained the background information.

## **SURVEY RESULTS/ANALYSIS**

A total of 1751 surveys were completed on-line plus an additional 48 paper copies, the results of which were manually added to the platform in order for a detailed analysis to be obtained via the survey monkey programme. Overall total 1799 which was a response rate of 8.4%.

1. Please rate the following in terms of importance to you at your GP practice.

	Extremely Important		Very Important		Moderately Important		Slightly Important		Not at all Important		Total
Access to the same clinician (continuity of care)	48.12%	857	30.26%	539	16.11%	287	3.14%	56	2.36%	42	1781
<b>Access to any clinician for urgent same day problems</b>	<b>73.50%</b>	<b>1309</b>	<b>21.22%</b>	<b>378</b>	4.38%	78	0.22%	4	0.67%	12	1781
<b>Being able to book an appointment in advance</b>	<b>58.89%</b>	<b>1050</b>	<b>31.07%</b>	<b>554</b>	7.85%	140	1.51%	27	0.67%	12	1783
<b>Having a call back (telephone triage) system for urgent problems</b>	<b>61.57%</b>	<b>1096</b>	<b>29.10%</b>	<b>518</b>	7.13%	127	1.12%	20	1.07%	19	1780
Being able to book an appointment for an evening or weekend	35.75%	636	28.39%	505	22.54%	401	6.52%	116	6.80%	121	1779
Being able to contact the practice in a variety of new ways e.g. via online messaging through our website	38.71%	684	31.13%	550	19.35%	342	4.92%	87	5.89%	104	1767
Access to a clinician of the same gender	12.81%	227	14.16%	251	31.49%	558	10.10%	179	31.43%	557	1772

Core areas highlighted from this question; 78% rate same clinician/continuity of care as either extremely or very important compared with almost 95% rating urgent access on the day from any clinician and nearly 90% the ability to be able to book in advance as either extremely or very important. 90% of respondents considered telephone call backs/triage as either extremely or very important, this is an area developed since covid-19 and one that both surgeries will continue.

70% of respondents thought that it was either extremely or very important for the practices to be able to contact them in a variety of new ways, e.g. via the website – both surgeries use Footfall via their websites and also the eConsult. A combined website that is up to date and can sign post patients will be developed.

**Q2. In addition to the above are there any specific services that the practices currently provide that you consider important, please list them below**

688 people responded and 1111 skipped this free-format question (38% response). The responses have been grouped into the emerging topics / themes.

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>%</b>
Nurse clinics/chronic disease management/specific clinics	209	30.38
Blood Tests on site	90	13.08
Online Services	63	9.16
Appointments	78	11.34
Phones / receptionists (Customer Service)	47	6.83
Mental Health Services	10	1.45
Queries re hearing aid batteries / deaf people	8	1.16
Concerns about the merger	22	3.2
Parking at surgery / Home visits	21	3.05
Miscellaneous responses	49	7.12
Not applicable (for example person answered that they had no comments)	94	13.66

**Common Themes** – as the figures above reveal, nearly 1/3 of replies related to Nurse led clinics, appointments, chronic disease management, specific clinics. Being able to have Blood Tests on site (13%) which St John's surgery currently offer, a lot of people mentioned that due to Covid-19 having to travel across Bedford to Gilbert Hitchcock House has been an issue. Online services particularly around prescriptions was nearly 10%

**Q3. Do you have any suggestions as to how we could improve the services we offer to our patients as a merged practice in the future? Please add your comments below**

832 people responded (46%) and 967 skipped this free format question. The responses have been grouped into emerging topics / themes.

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>%</b>
Appointment Availability	174	20.91
Attend any site post-merger	45	5.41
Not relevant (answered no etc)	69	8.29
Online services	66	7.93
Phones / receptionists (Customer Service)	134	16.11
Attend as you do now	21	2.52
Blood Tests on site	119	14.30
Clinics/Services	34	4.09
Communication	10	1.20
Continuity of Care	26	3.13
Premises / Parking	38	4.57
Admin Services	5	0.60
Miscellaneous responses	83	9.98

Of the 832 responses the most common 3 themes were appointment availability, telephone systems/receptionists and blood tests on site. Around the appointment availability this included more urgent appointments being available on the day, evening and weekend appointments, being able to book in advance (since covid-19 this had not been so accessible), not being able to book online appointments, less face to face, 7 day openings.

Comments on telephones had a common theme of the engaged tone, needing more telephone lines. It was interesting that at the start of the survey King Street had its' old phone system and migrated to the new integrated system; people who replied in January were a lot more positive about the new phone system, knowing their position in a queue, being able to receive a call back via the queue buster, more options to select from the main greeting.

Blood tests at the surgery currently provided by St John's but not at King Street. Again, due to covid-19 having to travel across Bedford for a test, the elderly having concerns regarding travel.

**Q4. Do you have any concerns about the merger? Please add your comments below**

910 people responded (50.5%) and 889 skipped this free-format question. The responses have been grouped into emerging topics / themes.

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Appointment Availability</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>18.79</b>
<b>Patient choice / services</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>10.22</b>
Clinical Resources	37	4.07
Communications across all sites	6	0.66
<b>Continuity of Care</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>11.87</b>
Internet / online access and services	2	0.22
Negative Views	14	1.54
Positive Views	47	5.16
Phones	13	1.43
Premises / Parking	49	5.38
Standard of Care	26	2.86
Too Big / Impersonal	33	3.63
Miscellaneous	58	6.37
<b>No concerns or not applicable – (for example person answered that they had no comments)</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>27.80</b>

Of the 910 responses, 253 did not have any concerns.

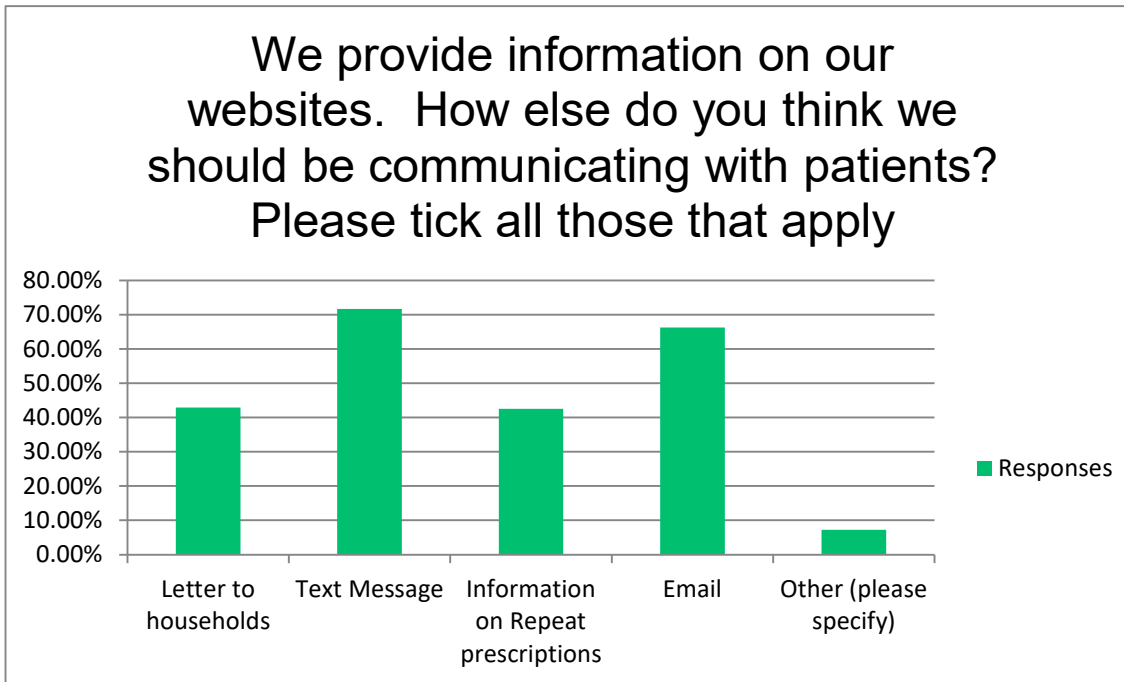
Themes evolved around availability of appointments, a lot of patients expressed concerns that increased number of patients would mean far fewer appointments available. The information we provided did not make it clear that services would not be reduced and the same number of clinical and non-clinical staff will continue delivering services to the same number of patients.

Continuity of care where patients wanted to continue to received treatment from clinical staff as they do now whilst others welcomed the possibility of being able to access other sites closer to them.

Premises and parking, recognising that current sites have little or no parking and a purpose built surgery with sufficient parking would be welcomed.

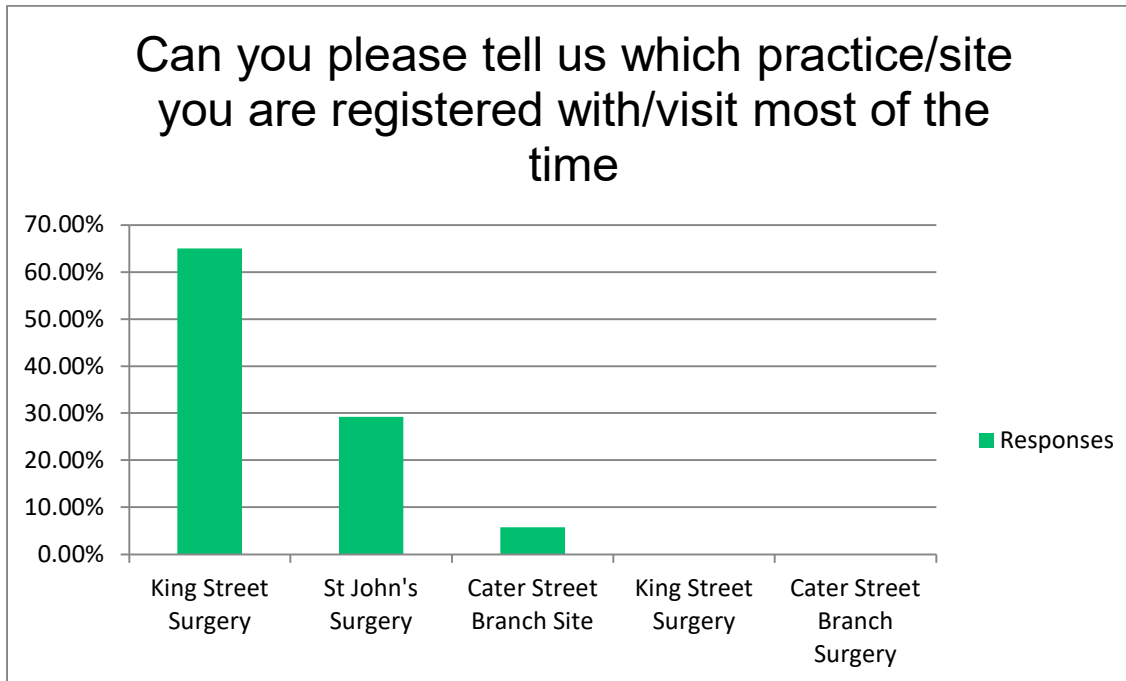
**Q5. We provide information on our websites. How else do you think we should be communicating with patients? Please tick all those that apply**

Answer Choices	Responses	
Letter to households	42.90%	737
<b>Text Message</b>	<b>71.65%</b>	<b>1231</b>
Information on Repeat prescriptions	42.49%	730
<b>Email</b>	<b>66.24%</b>	<b>1138</b>
Other (please specify) Phone calls, face to face, posters, all 4 of the above	7.22%	124
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>1718</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>81</b>



**Q6. Can you please tell us which practice/site you are registered with/visit most of the time**

Answer Choices	Responses	
King Street Surgery	65.04%	1170
St John's Surgery	29.24%	526
Cater Street Branch Site	5.73%	103
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>1799</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>0</b>



Even representation across the 2 practices in relation to list sizes

**Q7. Do you have any other comments? Please provide these below.**



Answered 487  
 Skipped 1312  
 The responses have been grouped in to emerging topics / themes

Topic	Responses	%
Appointment Availability	36	7.39
Attend as they do now	18	3.7
Blood Test provision	12	2.46
Clinical Continuity of Care	17	3.49
Communications	5	1.03
Covid related comments/Lockdown	7	1.44
King Street Surgery related	31	6.37
Miscellaneous	74	15.2
Online Services	10	2.05
<b>N/A – No – None etc</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>20.12</b>
General negative comments regarding merger	12	2.46
No Internet	12	2.46
Phones	25	5.13
<b>General positive comments regarding merger</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>14.78</b>
Premises / parking	34	6.98
Receptionists/customer service	12	2.46
St John's surgery related	12	2.46

37% (487) of people completing the survey responded to this question. Of the 487 who responded, 98 of these put their comment as “no concerns, none, n/a” etc. 74 submitted miscellaneous comments, these were in the main not relevant about the merger

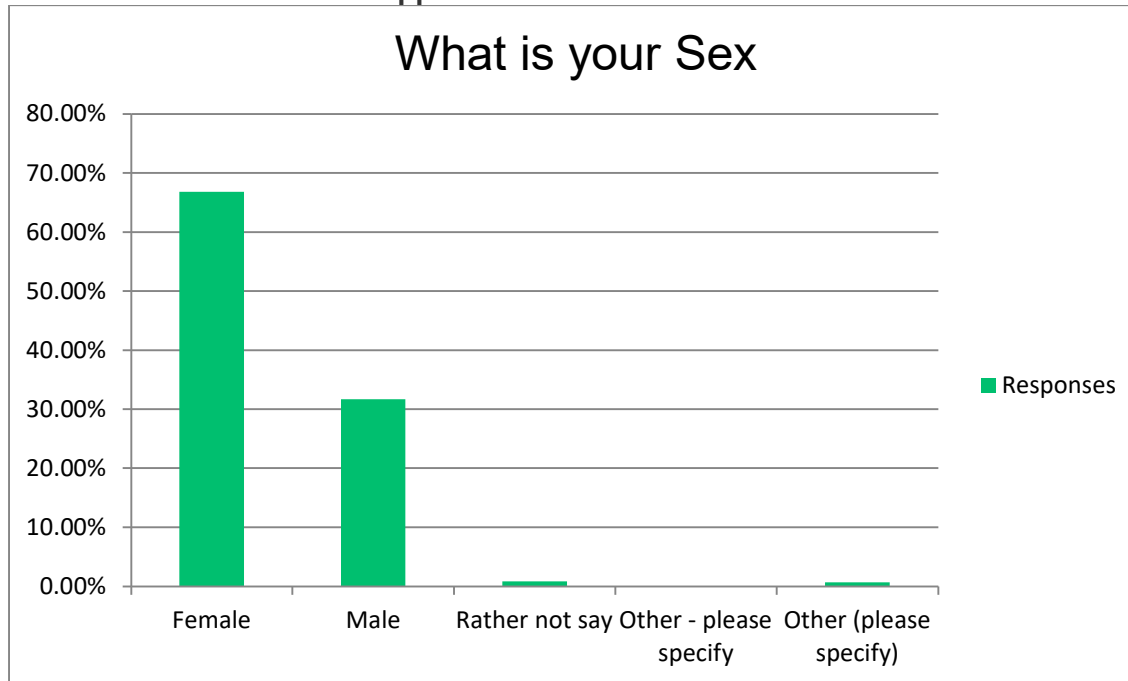
72 people (14.78%) felt positive about the merger, wished the practices success, stated they felt it was needed and the way forward whereas 12 were against the merger.

As has been seen in other questions, common themes evolved around appointment availability from a merger, would it suffer, be less than now, continuity of care for patients alongside wanting to attend sites they currently do whereas many were happy to visit a site closest to them.

Premises / parking and disabled access – patients want a combined surgery under one roof with adequate parking for everyone and full disabled access. Car parking is an issue at all 3 existing sites with no car parking offered at either St John's or King Street and only 4 spaces at Cater Street site.

### Q8. What is your Sex

Answer Choices	Responses	
Female	66.80%	1189
Male	31.69%	564
Rather not say	0.84%	15
Other - please specify	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	0.67%	12
<b>Answered</b>	<b>1780</b>	
<b>Skipped</b>	<b>19</b>	

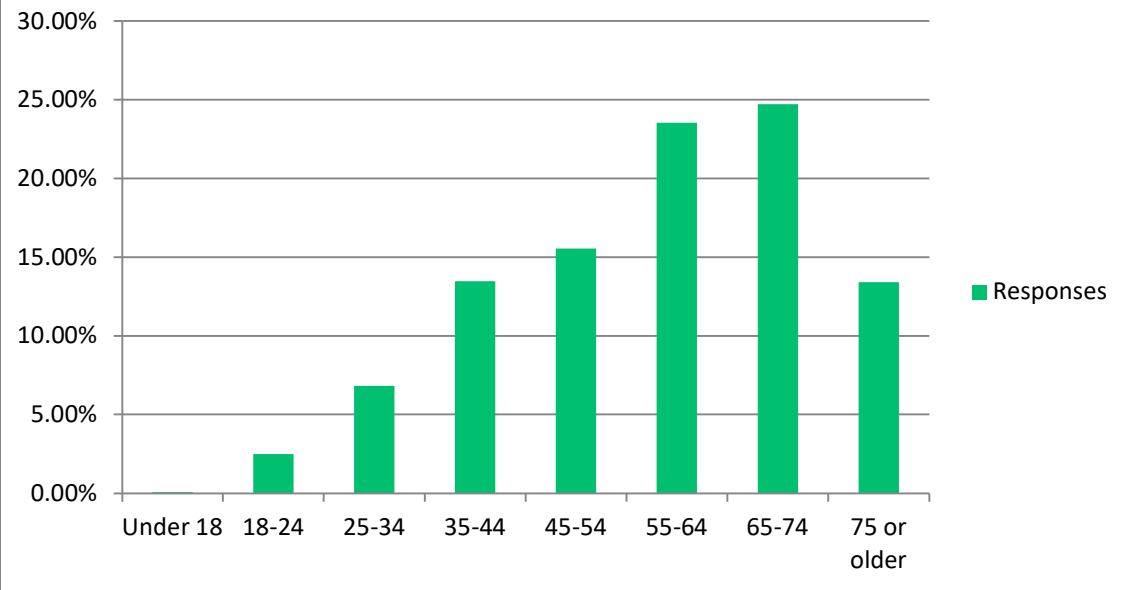


### Q9. What is your Age?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Under 18	0.06%	1

18-24	2.48%	44
25-34	6.81%	121
35-44	13.46%	239
45-54	15.54%	276
55-64	23.54%	418
65-74	24.72%	439
75 or older	13.40%	238
<b>Answered</b>		<b>1776</b>
<b>Skipped</b>		<b>23</b>

### What is your Age?



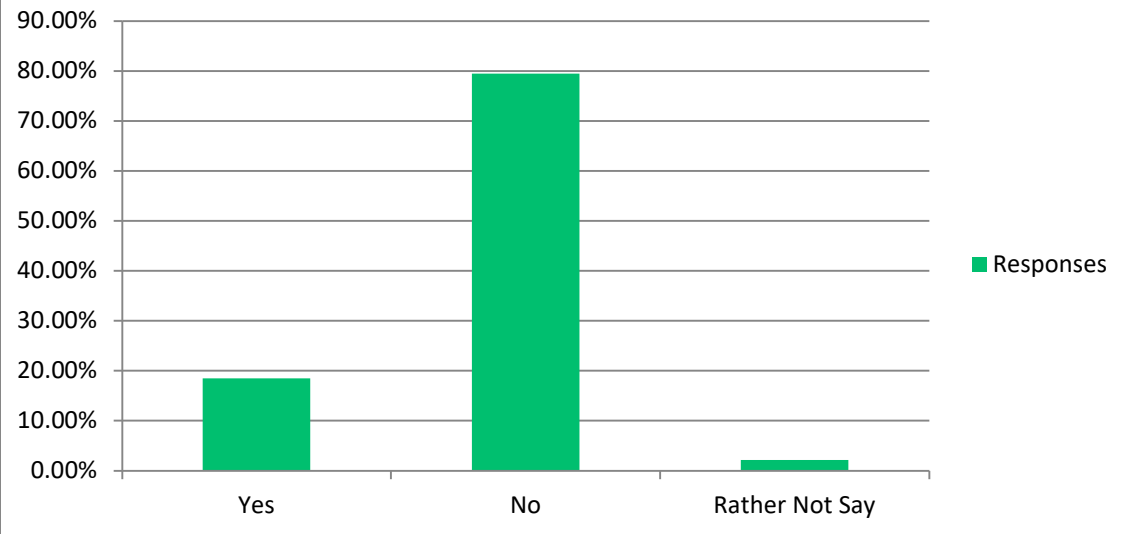
### Q10. Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	18.47%	326
No	79.43%	1402

Rather Not Say

2.10%  
37  
**Answered 1765**  
**Skipped 34**

### Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

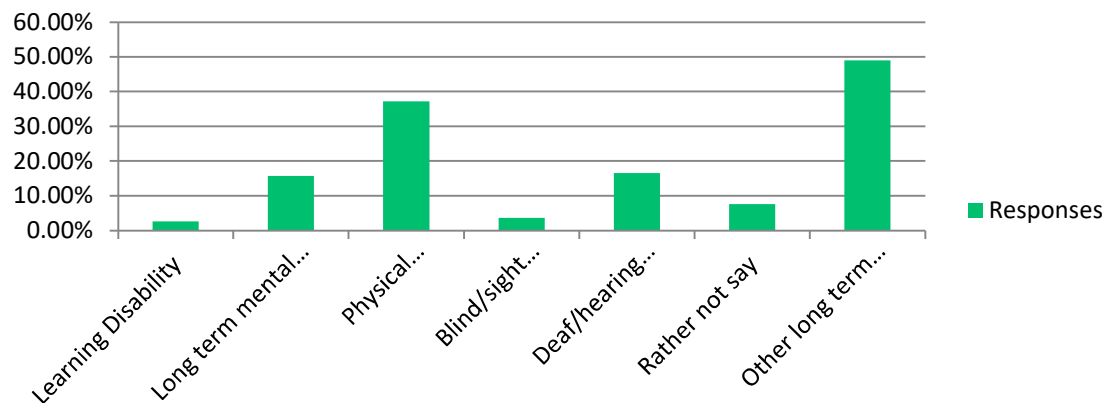


**Q11. If you answered yes to Question 10 please specify the nature of the disability (if you answered no, please leave this question blank)**

Answer Choices	Responses
Learning Disability	2.62% 10

Long term mental health condition	15.71%	60
Physical impairment (mobility)	37.17%	142
Blind/sight impairment	3.66%	14
Deaf/hearing impairment	16.49%	63
Rather not say	7.59%	29
Other long term condition (please specify) diabetes, COPD, mobility, cancer, arthritis, heart problems were mentioned	48.95%	187
<b>Answered</b>		<b>382</b>
<b>Skipped</b>		<b>1417</b>

If you answered yes to Question 10 please specify the nature of the disability (if you answered no, please leave this question blank)



### Q12. How would you describe your Ethnic Origin

Answer Choices	Responses
English/Scottish/Welsh/Northern Irish	83.15% 1466

Irish	1.02%	18
Indian	4.08%	72
Bangladeshi	0.28%	5
Pakistani	0.17%	3
Chinese	0.11%	2
Any other Asian Background	0.85%	15
Caribbean	0.74%	13
African	0.74%	13
Any other Black/African/Caribbean background	0.74%	13
Gypsy/traveller	0.11%	2
Arab	0.06%	1
Any other White background	3.74%	66
Rather not Say	2.72%	48
Other (please specify)	1.47%	26
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>1763</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>36</b>

