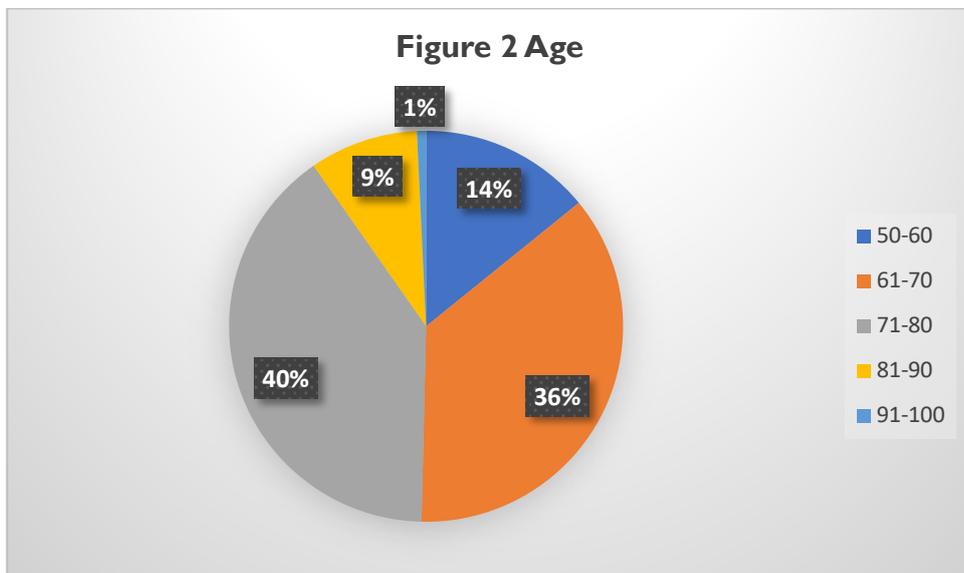
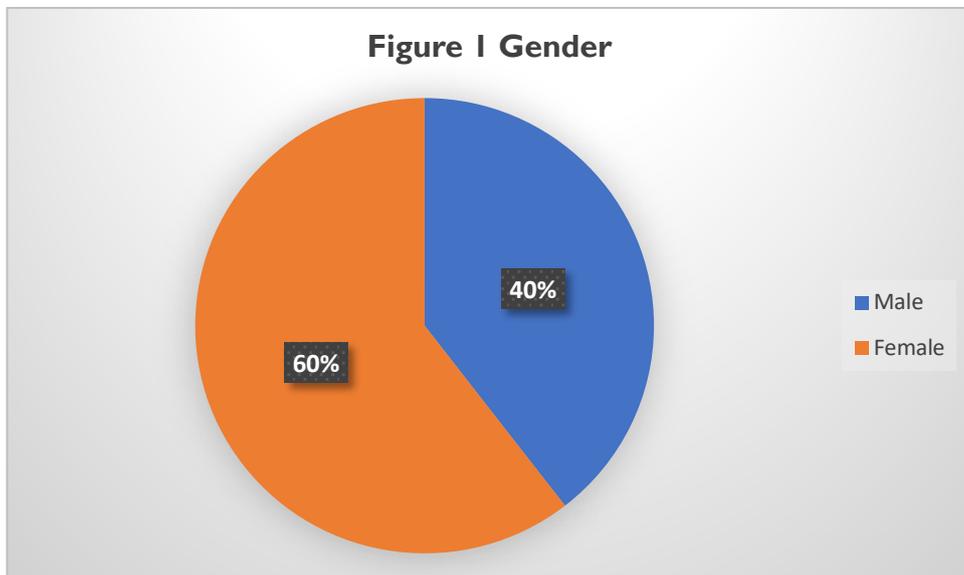


Summary Analysis of Responses to the Covid-19 Survey

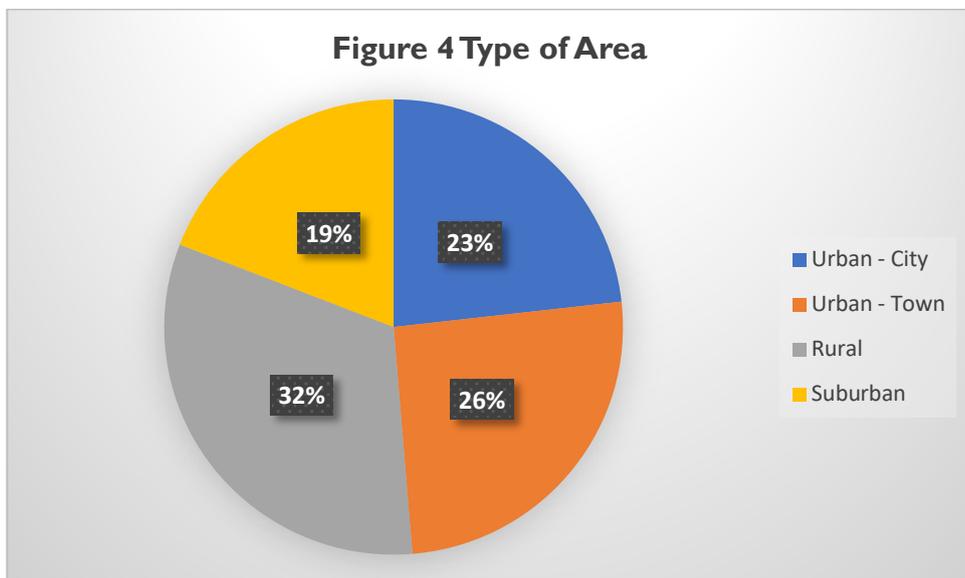
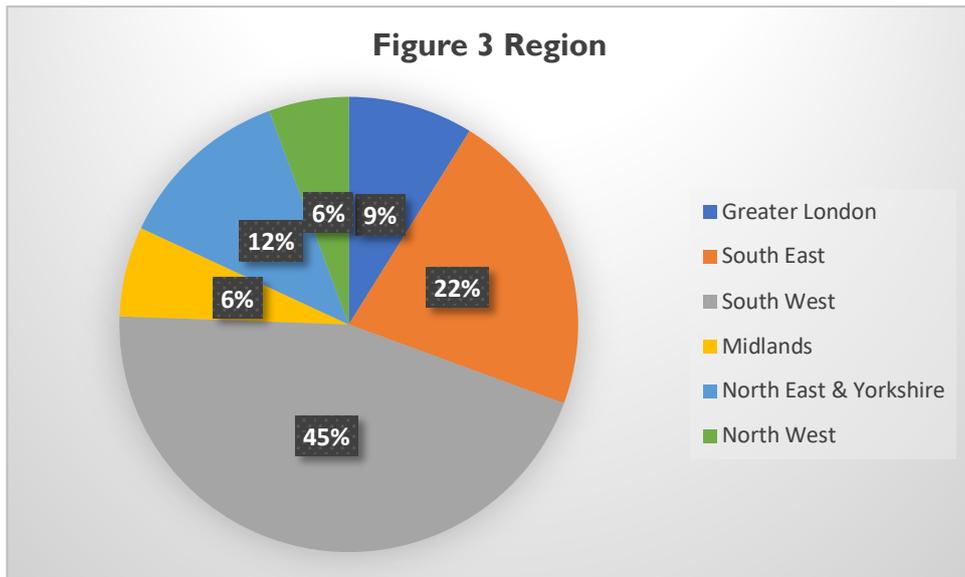
Five hundred and forty people responded to a survey conducted by EngAgeNet in partnership with Legal & General that was circulated nationally in early March. The survey was designed to examine the impact of the pandemic on the lives of older people. This summary presents the main findings of the survey, all of which are presented in graphic format with limited commentary where appropriate.

Who responded?

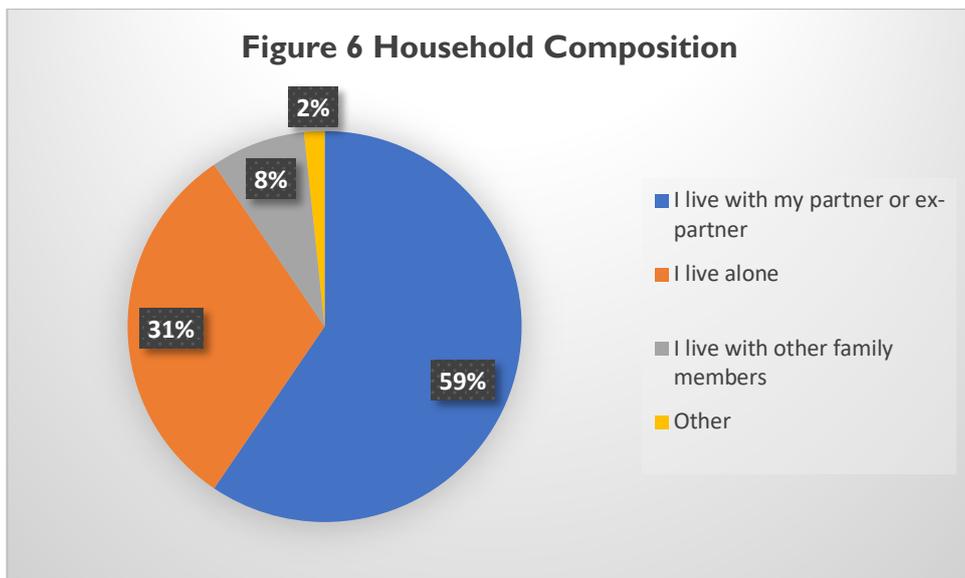
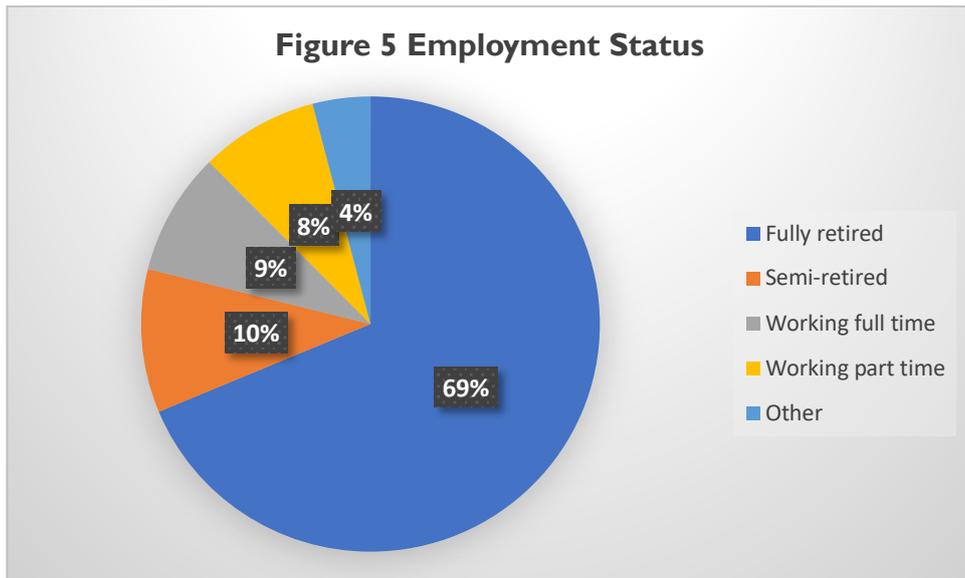
The majority of respondents were female (Figure 1); half of all respondents were aged over 70 (Figure 2).



The survey, while conducted across all the EngAgeNet Regions, does not, however, represent a complete national picture: a number of Regions had limited capacity in terms of optimising the response from their networks. Results are, therefore, skewed as two thirds of responses originated in the South East and South West Regions (Figure 3). Nevertheless, there was an even response across the type of area people live in, so potential differences from those is in, for example, urban or rural areas will have been accommodated (Figure 4).



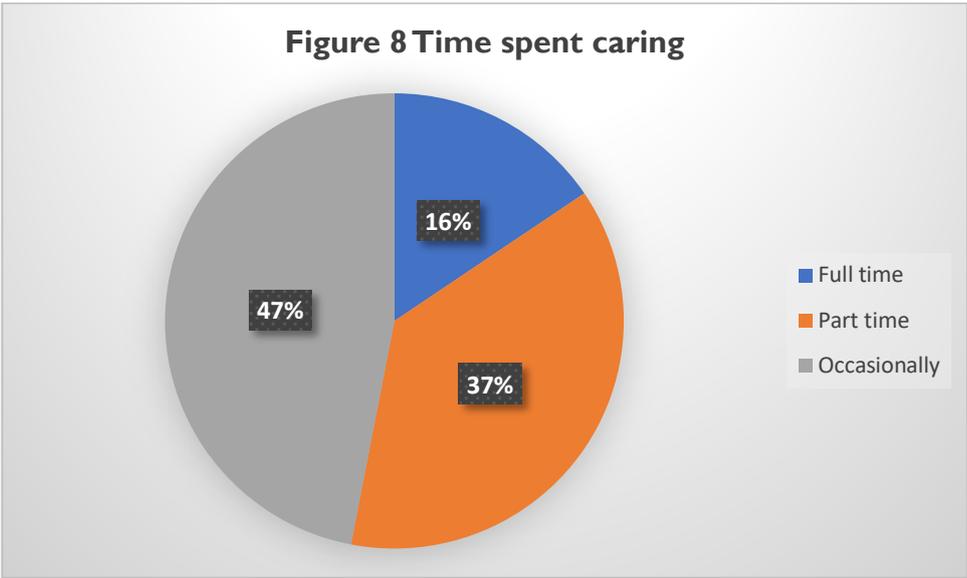
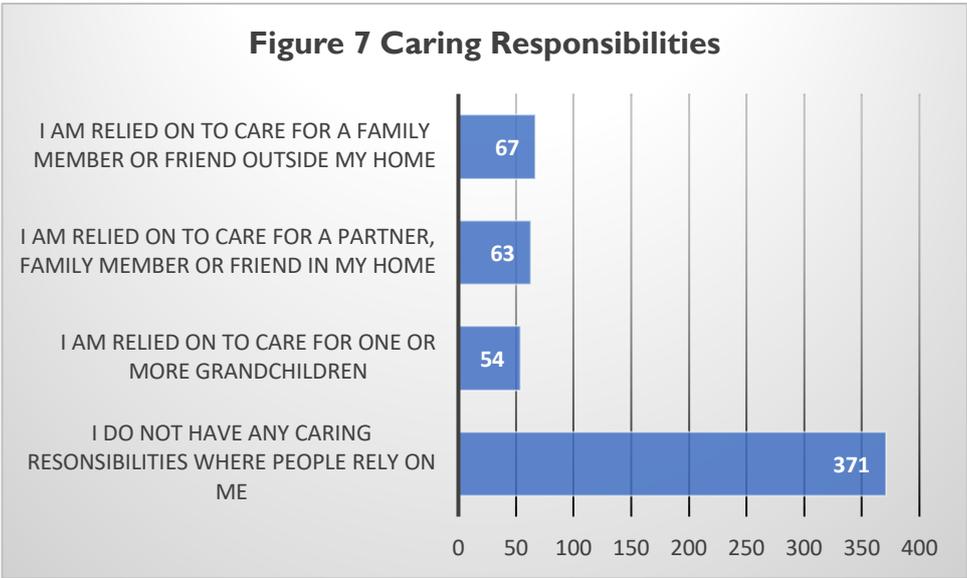
Nearly eight out of ten respondents are fully or semi-retired (Figure 5). 67% of respondents live with a partner or other family members (Figure 6) which is significantly higher than the national average of 52%.

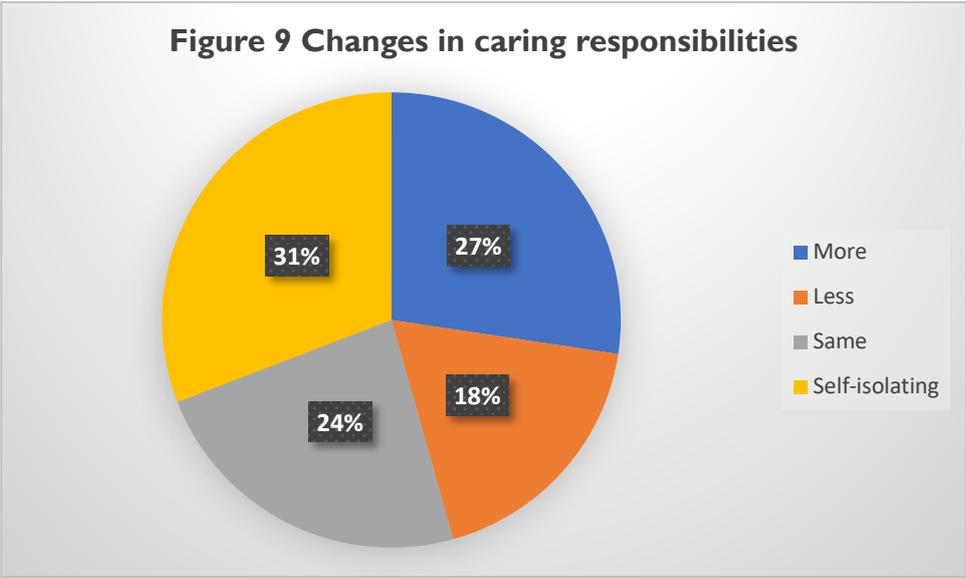


Caring Responsibilities

While the majority of respondents (67%) did not have any caring responsibilities, one third of people who took part in the survey were relied on to look after a partner, grandchildren, other family members or friends (Figure 7). This suggests that the lockdown is likely to have had a significant impact on the support regularly provided by older people. In particular, as Figure 8 shows, over half of older people with caring responsibilities are providing support on a full or part time basis. Just under half of those older people with caring responsibilities are either self-isolating or providing less care than they were prior to the lockdown, while more than a quarter are having to provide more care (Figure 9). In both cases, the measures taken in response to the pandemic have highlighted the

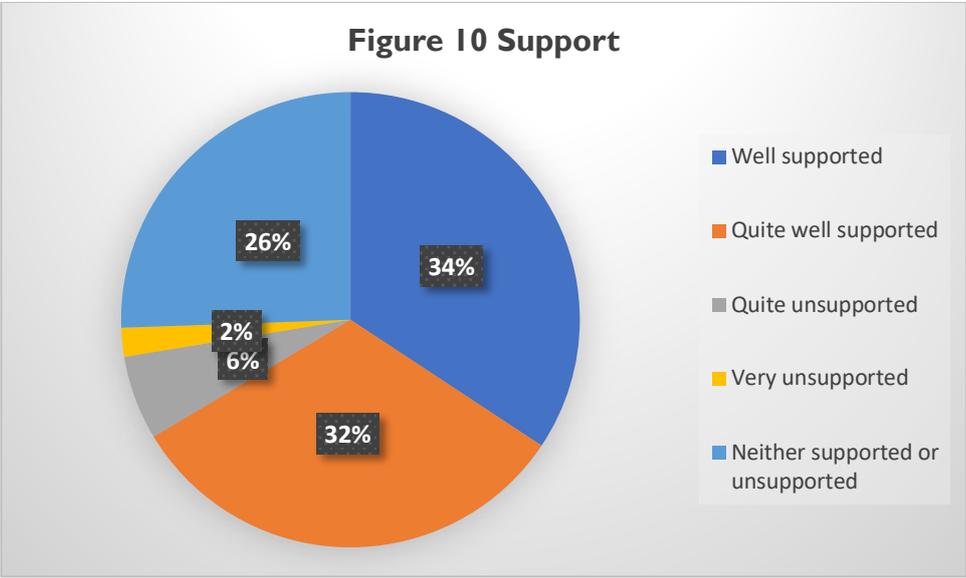
contribution older people make in terms of caring for others: some families and friends will no longer be receiving the support they normally rely on, while some older people are having to provide more support in the absence of other resources that may no longer be accessible as a result of the lockdown.





The impact on older people

Older people appear to be coping well through the pandemic: only 8% felt that they were unsupported and almost two thirds felt well or quite well supported (Figure 10). This suggests that there is a high level of resilience among older people in the community.



Twenty per cent of respondents were in the 'high risk' category and were therefore self-isolating in line with Government advice; a further 16% were self-isolating by choice, presumably reflecting concern about catching the virus. Sixty one per cent of all respondents, however, were continuing to go out, but only when necessary (Figure 11). Almost three quarters of all respondents were

spending more time keeping in touch with friends and family (Figure 12); other major lockdown activities included: more reading (54%), more gardening (54%), more cooking (32%) and more TV viewing (36%).

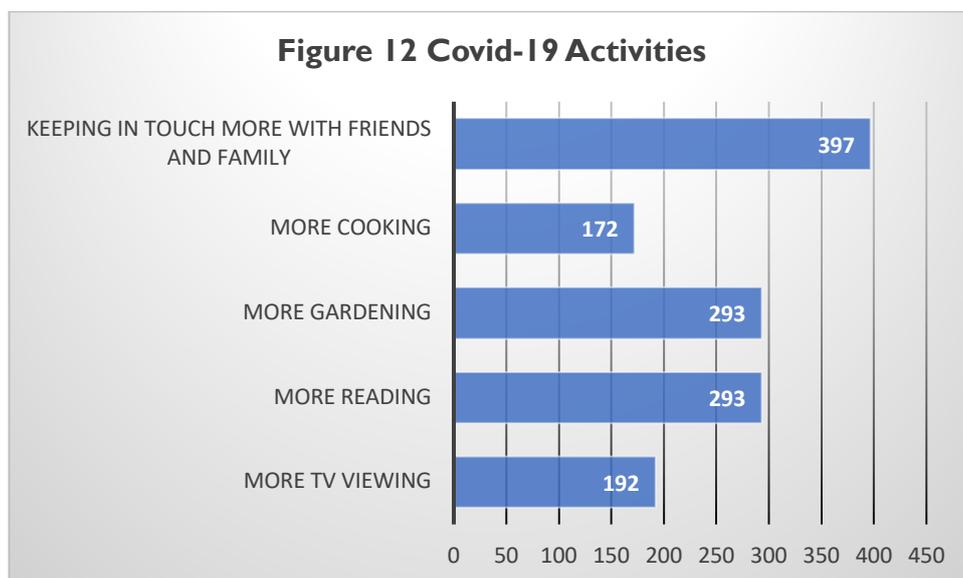
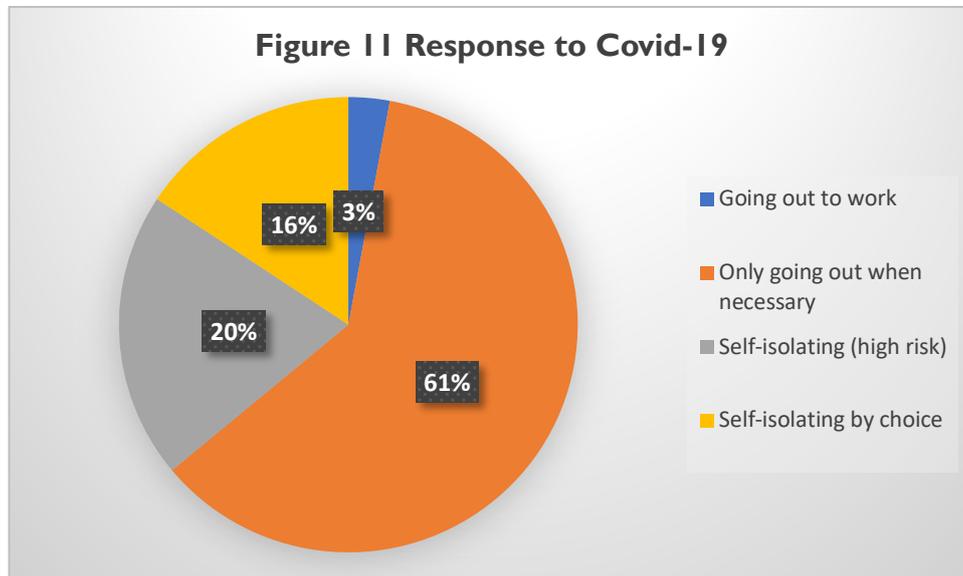


Figure 13 shows that 56% of respondents felt that they were coping well in response to the measures taken to control the pandemic. Only a very small percentage felt they were not coping, although more than one in ten people reported that their ability to cope was diminishing as time went by. Again, this suggests a significant level of resilience among older people.

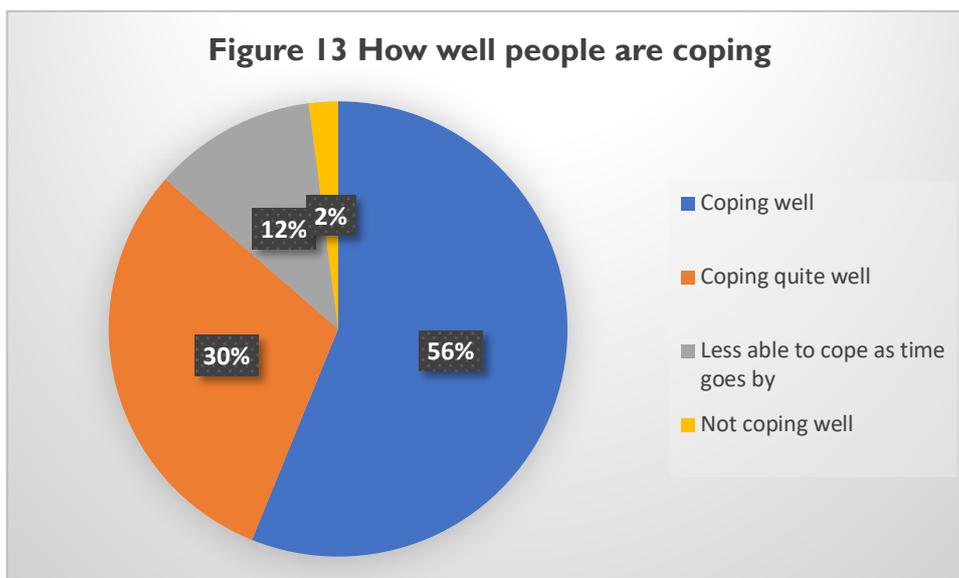
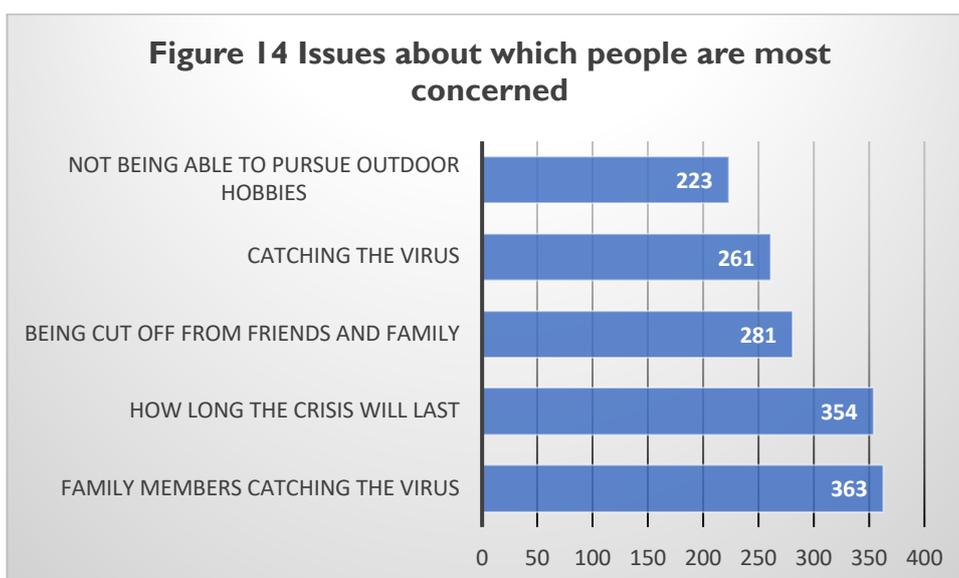


Figure 14 lists the five issues that are of most concern to people. Fewer than half of all respondents are concerned about catching the virus themselves. Two thirds, however, are concerned about the risk to their families. Isolation is also a concern, over half of respondents reported concerns about being cut off from friends and family. There is also concern about the uncertainty surrounding the pandemic; approximately 66% of respondents are concerned about not knowing how long the crisis will last (Figure 14).



There appears to be little concern about the potential financial impact of the pandemic. While this is reassuring, the survey sample is unlikely to be representative in terms of including older people who

may be facing financial difficulty. Unsurprisingly, given the fact that most respondents are retired, being unable to work is the issue about which they are least concerned (Figure 15).

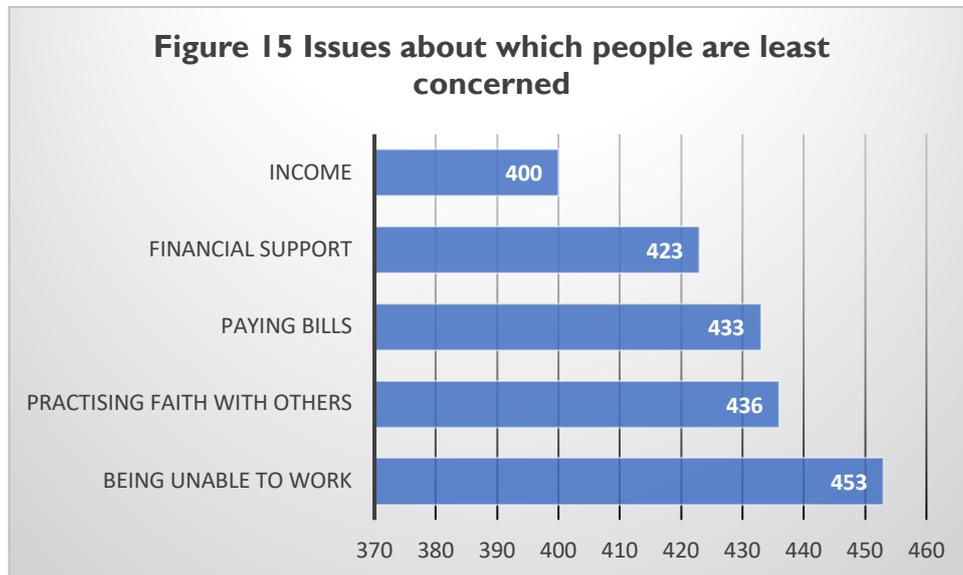


Figure 16 shows that a significant proportion of older people (38%) are unhappy about the way in which they have been portrayed in the media. The survey was completed before reports of a prolonged lockdown for older people began to circulate and also before the full picture of what had been happening in care homes emerged.

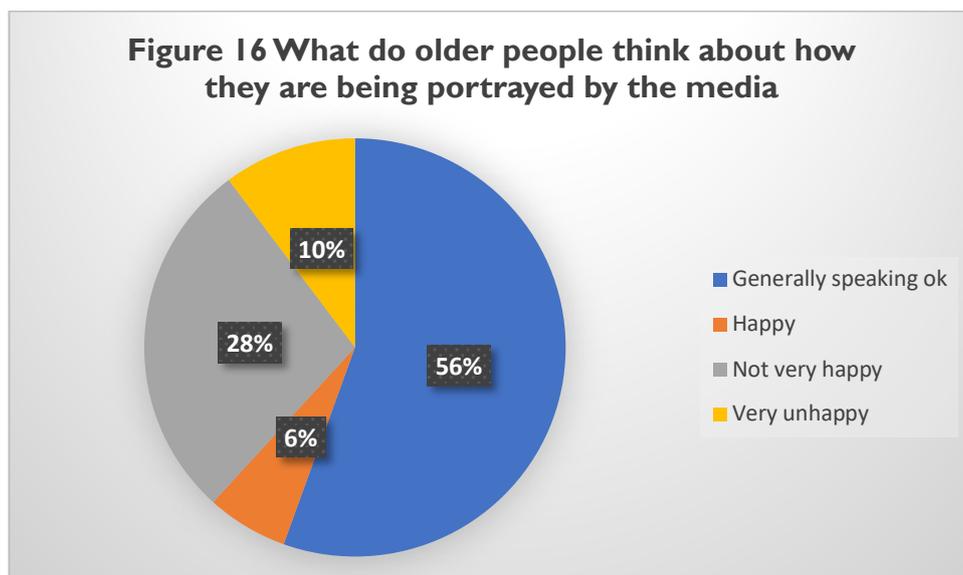
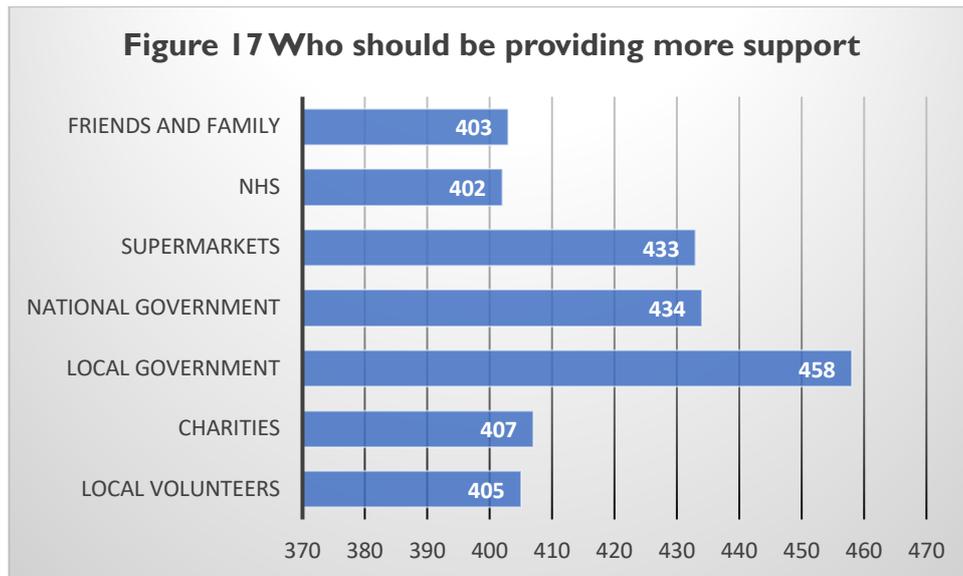


Figure 17 shows that a significant proportion of respondents felt that a wide range of support was needed to enable older people to manage through the crisis. At the top of the list 85% of

respondents identified local government as needing to provide more support. Approximately 80% of respondents felt that more support should be provided by national government. While it might be assumed that the need for more support related to the broad range of measures being taken by national and local government to mitigate the impact of the pandemic, 80% of respondents identified the specific role of supermarkets in supporting older people. At the beginning of the crisis panic buying and empty supermarket shelves were a major concern and older people clearly felt that they needed more support to ensure that they were able to access food supplies.



The social impact of the virus

The majority (82%) of respondents felt that their experience of social isolation would cause them to reflect on how they lead their lives (Figure 18). Ways in which such reflection might result in change included are shown in Figure 19: spending more time outdoors (54%); spending more time with friends and family (52%); spending less on shopping (32%); and simplifying life (31%). Overall, Figure 19 appears to suggest that the crisis has helped people to identify 'the important things in life'.

Figure 18 Will social isolation cause us to reflect on how we live our lives?

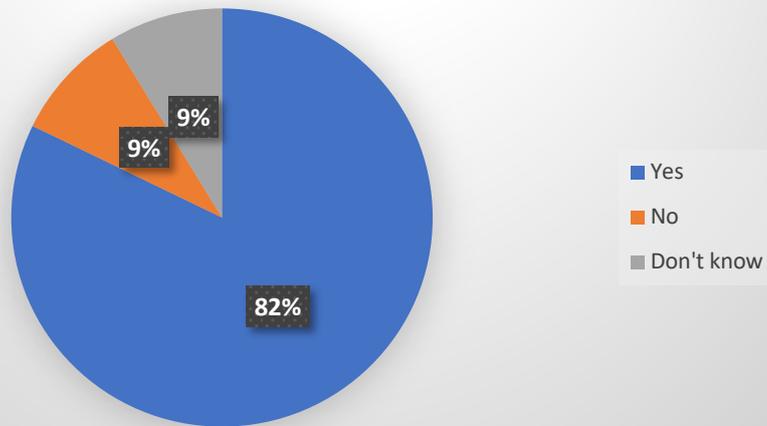
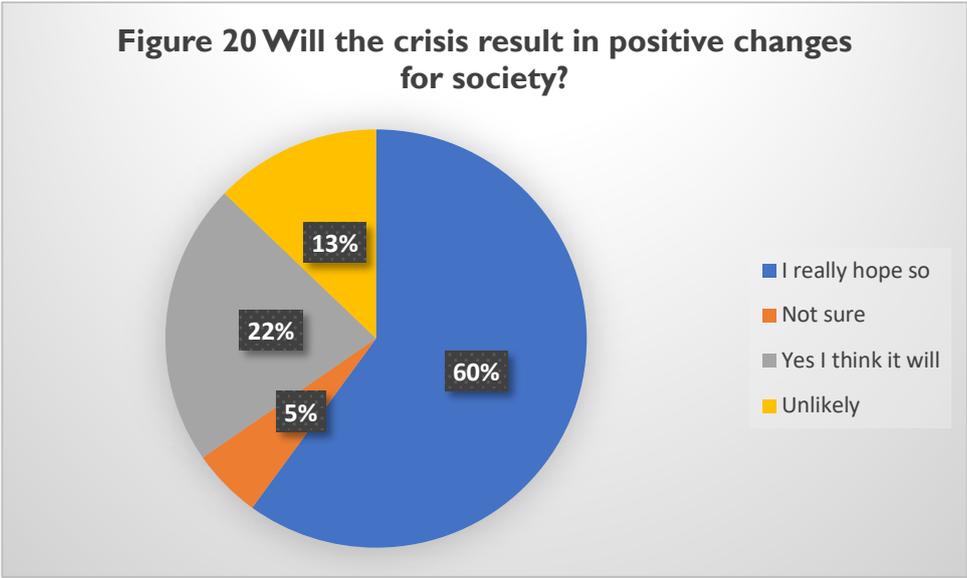


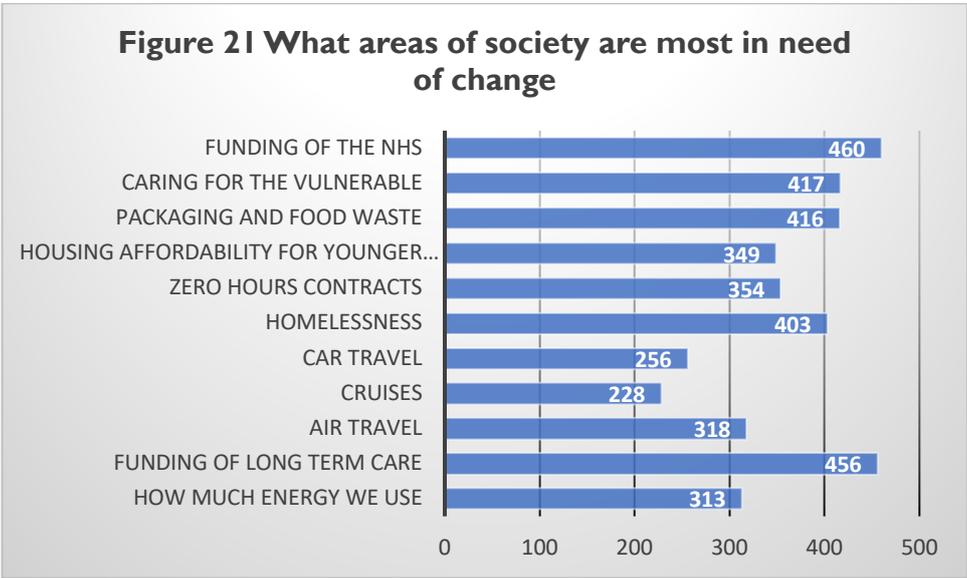
Figure 19 How will day to day life change post crisis



Figure 20 shows that there is a high degree of hope and optimism that society will change for the better as a result of people's experience of the crisis: 82% of respondents hope or believe that positive changes in society will result from the crisis.

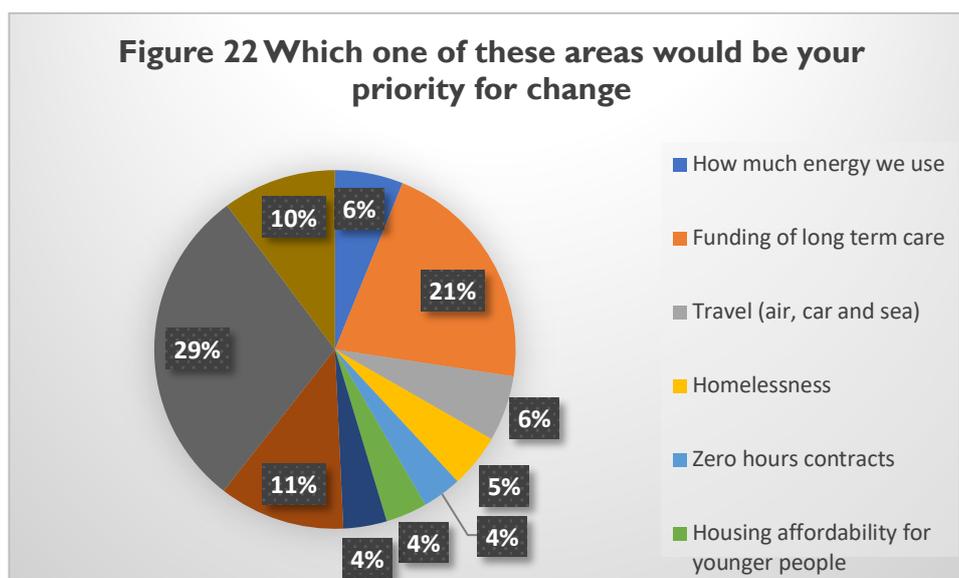


Funding the NHS and social care for older people are both identified in Figure 21 as areas that are most in need of change. It is clear also that the crisis has exposed a number of key social issues where change is needed including packaging and food waste (an issue for 77% of respondents), homelessness (75%) and zero hours contracts (66%).



Respondents were asked to identify their number one priority for change (Figure 22); half chose the funding of the NHS (29%) and long-term care for older people (21%) as their top priority. Care for vulnerable people was also a significant priority (11%). Other priorities for change included: how much energy we use (6%); travel by air, sea and car (6%); homelessness (5%); packaging and food waste (4%); zero hours contracts (4%); and housing affordability for younger people (4%). A wide range of other priorities for change are included in the 'other' category (10%).

Figure 22 Which one of these areas would be your priority for change



Conclusion

While the survey responses contain few if any surprises, they present a picture that many ‘non-older’ people may not have been expecting. Overall, older people appear to have been coping well with the measures imposed on all sections of society. Indeed, their main concern has not been so much about themselves as for their families. It is also clear that while the majority of respondents did not have regular caring responsibilities, one third did, and that the lockdown has restricted this important contribution to the well-being of others. The survey shows that once again the narrative of older people as vulnerable and always in need of help is inaccurate.

Uppermost in the minds of older people is the need for the NHS and social care to be funded and supported in their respective roles in combating the virus and protecting vulnerable older people. There is also concern among older people for younger members of society, particularly in terms of the impact on the ‘gig economy’ and on homeless people.