



## **Waltham Forest Council Redesign of Sexual Health Services**

### **Consultation Report**

**October 2016**



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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 This report outlines findings of the consultation conducted by Waltham Forest Council on the proposed reorganisation of sexual health services in the borough. The consultation ran for four weeks from 6 September 2016 to 4 October 2016. People were asked for their views on how the proposed changes to services would impact on them.
- 1.1.2 The changes proposed are to:
- a. relocate the specialist Genito-Urinary Medicine (GUM) clinic at Whipps Cross Hospital to a larger centre of excellence that will be open for longer in Stratford. This new specialist clinic, together with GUM clinic at Whitechapel will serve residents of Waltham Forest, Tower Hamlets, Newham and Redbridge.
  - b. deliver community integrated contraceptive and sexual health (CaSH) services from Walthamstow (subject to finding a suitable site) and in the future, as part of the primary care agenda, another two in Chingford and Leyton/Leytonstone.
  - c. expand our online offer so that anyone aged 16 and over can order a self-testing kit online.

### Rationale for change

- 1.1.3 The proposals are part of the London wide Sexual Health Transformation Programme which came about due to the increasing demand and cost for sexual health services. Sexual health services already make up a large proportion of Public Health budgets. In the current climate of reduced Public health budgets, there is a need for London Councils to work together to transform services, share resources and address the financial challenges together, so that sexual health needs can be met.
- 1.1.4 We believe that the new model will lead to improvement in the quality of services due to better staff mix, better coordination between specialist and local services, robust training programme for primary care staff and clinical oversight of the whole sexual health pathway.
- 1.1.5 In consultation with clinicians, the Transformation programme has therefore taken the approach to have fewer specialist clinics across London, and invest in developing more local resources that can support people closer to home.
- 1.1.6 Waltham Forest is working with other North East London (NEL) boroughs including Newham, Tower Hamlets and Redbridge to re-commission sexual health services so that we have fewer specialist clinics to serve the four boroughs, and expand local services closer to people's homes. This model is intended to not only enhance cost effectiveness and quality, but also ensures that the more costly specialist services are used by those who need them the most, and that more services are available locally.

- 1.1.7 Stratford and Whitechapel were the preferred sites for hosting specialist GUM clinics because they serve the areas of highest STI prevalence across the four NEL boroughs.
- 1.1.8 While Whipps Cross Hospital is limited in capacity and can no longer be expanded to serve the growing sexual health need in Waltham Forest, the Stratford site has space to accommodate sufficient clinics to meet the needs of all 3 boroughs and is accessible, with good public transport links, from areas across all four boroughs with highest STI rates, including Leyton/Leytonstone.

**Previous Engagement:**

- 1.1.9 A number of engagement activities were carried out in 2015 and in 2016 across London and NEL. The key findings of the engagement were as follows:
- Key priorities for patients using sexual health services were confidentiality and ease of access to the clinic. Evening opening was important to patients.
  - A considerable percentage of patients using GUM clinics had no symptoms and were prepared to visit other healthcare providers, e.g. GPs or community clinics if it was easier to access those services.
  - There was a willingness to use home testing kits, with 45% of respondents in Waltham Forest saying they would use the online service.

## 2 Stakeholders and Methods of engagement

### 2.1 Stakeholders

2.1.1 A wide range of stakeholder groups contributed to the consultation, which are listed in table 1 below.

**Table 1: Audience and methods of engagement**

Target audience	Methods of engagement
Waltham Forest residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Briefings and presentations to key stakeholder groups</li> <li>• Health and wellbeing (Cllr Khan's) newsletter</li> <li>• Meetings with Partners</li> <li>• Regular email updates</li> <li>• Telephone conversations</li> <li>• Healthwatch newsletters</li> <li>• Leaflets at libraries and GP practices</li> <li>• Council and partner social media</li> <li>• Council website</li> </ul>
Service users at Whipps Cross and Oliver Rd Sexual Health clinics	
Young people and colleges	
Staff providing sexual health services at Whipps Cross and Oliver Road	
Community organisations - Healthwatch, YMCA, Women of Walthamstow	
People who have a disability	
Local Medical Committee	
Waltham Forest GP Locality meetings	
Health & Wellbeing Board	
Health Scrutiny Committee	
Patient Participation Groups	

## 2.2 Consultation activities

The following activities were carried out to ensure that the views of service users, general residents and key stakeholders were captured in this consultation:

- Online survey and consultation document were made available on Waltham Forest Council's sexual health consultation webpage. This was promoted through the Council's social media and emailed to a wide range of stakeholders.
- Paper copies of the survey were made available at Sexual Health clinics in the borough (Comely Bank, Oliver Road and Whipps Cross Hospital) so that service users had an opportunity to share their views.
- Leaflets were also circulated to libraries and GP practices to enable members of the public to share their views.
- A public meeting was held to engage with stakeholders and share information regarding the proposed new model and planned redesign process.
- A stall giving residents and staff information about sexual health services was hosted at the Waltham Forest CCG AGM.
- Active outreach was done in schools to inform students about the proposed changes to sexual health services and to get their views. Additionally, a presentation was given, and leaflets and surveys distributed at Young Advisers' meetings.
- Presentations to Waltham Forest Health & Wellbeing Board and Health Scrutiny Committee
- Face to face meetings were held with key stakeholders to discuss the proposed changes and consultation documents. These included meetings with:
  - Pre-Health & Wellbeing Board, Healthwatch Forum
  - the Local Medical Committee (LMC)
  - the three GP localities (Walthamstow, Chingford and Leyton/ Leytonstone)
  - Leyton sixth form students
  - NELFT Integrated Patient Experience Board and
  - Young Advisers groups

In addition, there were face-to-face discussions with service users at Whipps Cross Sexual Health clinic waiting area about the changes, and they were offered a copy of the survey to complete.

- Regular email updates about the consultation were sent directly to representatives from Healthwatch, Waltham Forest VCS, disability groups, Oliver Road clinic, CCG communications, Whipps Cross Hospital and Councillors. These emails were

followed up with phone calls particularly to disability groups, BME groups and sexual health clinics.

### 3 Consultation Findings

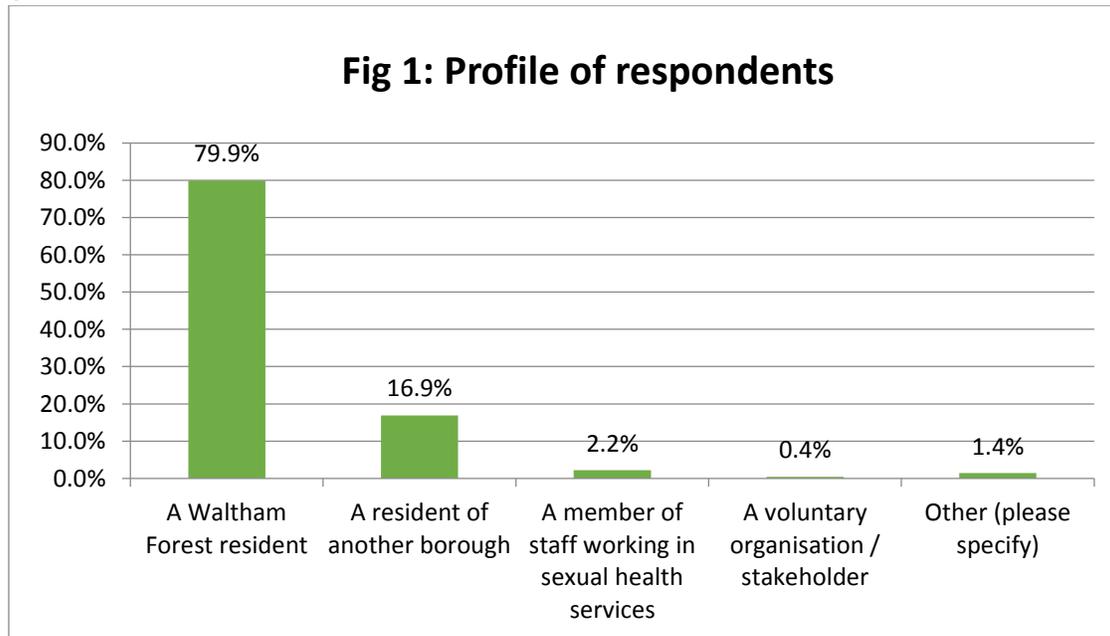
#### 3.1 Online survey

##### Breakdown of respondents

3.1.1 327 people responded to the online survey. When asked in what capacity one was responding, 278 answered this question:

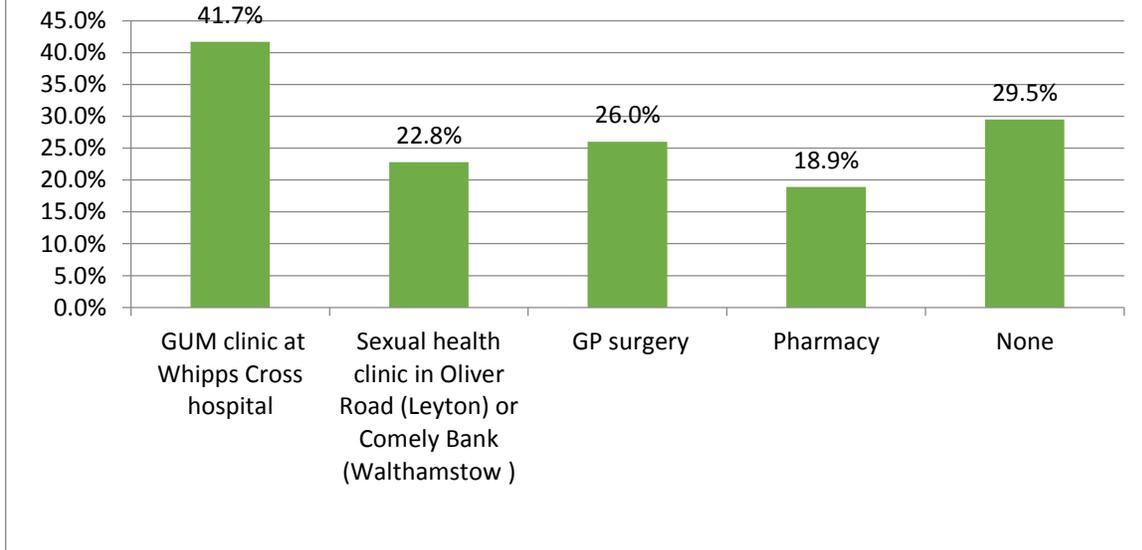
- 80% described themselves as Waltham Forest residents
- 17% were from another borough
- 2 % responded as employees of organisations which provide sexual health services, and
- 2% were representatives from a voluntary or community organisation or other

See figure 1.



3.1.2 The majority (70%) of respondents to the consultation had used a sexual health service in Waltham Forest. This is summarised in Fig 2 below.

**Fig 2: Percentage of people who have used sexual health services in Waltham Forest**



**Proposal 1: Relocation of specialist GUM clinic from Whipps Cross hospital to Stratford and Whitechapel**

3.1.3 Respondents were asked how the relocation of the specialist clinic at Whipps Cross would affect them.

3.1.4 317 people answered this question; more than half thought that the proposal to relocate Whipps Cross clinic would either have no impact on them or make it easier in terms of accessing the service. Response to this question can be summarised as follows:

- 29% of respondents said that this proposal will have no impact on them
- 39% said it would make it harder for them to access the GUM clinics 25% said it would make it easier
- 7% did not know

3.1.5 There were comments asking for more information on the exact location in Stratford for the specialist clinic in order to determine whether it would make it easier or not. In addition, some respondents who described themselves as having a disability wanted to know how the specialist clinic in Stratford would meet their accessibility needs.

3.1.6 The boroughs are developing a procurement strategy which will include details of the venue. More details will be available in the near future. The service specifications will require providers to deliver services from premises that are accessible. We will ensure that sites are assessed against national accessibility standards. This will include adequate accessibility of the sites by public transportation

- 3.1.7 Some respondents who described themselves as gay or lesbian welcomed the idea of a specialist GUM clinic in Stratford, as they currently have to go to central London due to Whipps Cross Hospital not meeting their needs.

### **Proposal 2: Impact of relocating the local CaSH clinic at Oliver Road to Walthamstow**

- 3.1.8 People were asked to give their views on how access to local sexual health clinics will impact them if the clinic at Oliver Road was relocated to Walthamstow, should a site in Walthamstow be available.
- 3.1.9 300 people responded to this question and over half of them said the proposal to relocate the local clinic from Oliver road to a site in Walthamstow would either make it easier or have no impact on them. Just under a quarter said it would make it more difficult.
- 37% said it will make it easier for them to access a site in Walthamstow compared to Oliver Road
  - 23% said it will make it harder to access
  - 20% said it will have no impact and
  - 20 % didn't know

### **Proposal 3: Use of online self-sampling kits**

- 3.1.10 Respondents were asked how likely they would be to use online self-testing kits for Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) if they needed a test for a possible STI.
- 3.1.11 313 people answered the question and over half of them said they would be very likely to use online self-testing kits for STIs if they needed such a test.
- 57% said it would be likely that they would use online self-testing for STIs
  - 27% said not likely and
  - 16% didn't know

Whilst people generally welcomed the idea of online testing, in the comments section there were some concerns, with suggestions around giving option to deliver self-testing kits in a discrete package, and at alternative locations away from people's homes. Comments from people with disabilities were received in support of the online service.

*'Make deliveries more convenient so that they can be picked up at GP or sexual health clinic'*

*'Would the packaging be discrete? That will be important'*

*'I do not want my family to see what I have ordered'*

3.1.11 There were some suggestions made for outreach for people who will not use online or face to face services:

*'... offer opportunistic testing with free incentives'  
'We need outreach to people who don't use them'*

3.1.12 A number of people asked about whether there will be provision for treatment and counselling if people decided to self-test online.

*'who will follow these patients up? Where will the treatment come from? Where is the accountability?'  
'who will give the counselling that is usually accessed through the nurses etc.?''*

3.1.13 Finally people suggested that other online self-sampling should cover more than just chlamydia testing.

3.1.14 Detailed breakdown of questions and responses can be found in Appendix 1

### 3.2 Targeted engagement

In addition to online and hand delivered surveys, presentations about the changes were delivered at various locations. Table 2 outlines issues that were raised:

**Table 2: Feedback from public and stakeholder meetings**

Meeting	Concerns raised
a. Leyton/ Leytonstone GP Locality meeting	<p>Queries were raised about whether local sexual health services would be able to cope with an increase in demand that might result from the closure of Whipps Cross Hospital sexual health clinic; and whether the two specialist clinics (instead of the current three) that will serve all four NEL boroughs would be able to cope with increased demand.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> <i>We will be modelling demand for the local services, to ensure that the planned Walthamstow Clinic is able to meet this. This, in addition to expanding access in GP practices and providing the ability to test online, will enable the whole system to absorb the increase in demand.</i></p> <p><i>The two specialist clinics will have larger capacity and designed to meet the needs of all four boroughs.</i></p>
b. Local Medical Committee	<p>Welcomes the proposal for a specialist clinic in Stratford. However, having another specialist clinic in Whitechapel will make the two very close to each other, leaving a large patch in the north of Waltham Forest without any specialist clinic.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> <i>During procurement we will work with providers to minimise the impact of not having a specialist clinic in the north of Waltham Forest by</i></p>

	<p><i>exploring how they could be creative in using staff effectively to meet this need. The Whitechapel clinic is primarily to meet the needs of Tower Hamlets residents. Stratford is the location best placed to meet the needs of Waltham Forest, Newham and Redbridge residents. It is also worth noting that STI prevalence and demand for specialist sexual health services is much lower in the north of the borough</i></p>
c. Walthamstow GP Locality meeting	<p>A huge geographical area in Waltham Forest is not being served with a specialist clinic.</p> <p>The two specialist services in Stratford and Whitechapel are in close proximity to one another, leaving a large patch in the north of Waltham Forest without any specialist clinic.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> <i>see (b) above</i></p> <p>What is being done to signpost the public to GP and local pharmacies that provide sexual health services locally?</p> <p><b>Action:</b> <i>Promotion of our services is a priority for us and we are developing our communications plan for 2017, which will aim to maximise opportunities to promote sexual health services, among our other public health priorities.</i></p>
d. Chingford GP Locality meeting	<p>GPs were supportive of the proposal to have a centralised GUM clinic in Stratford but thought having a second one in Whitechapel doesn't make sense as the two locations are close to one another.</p> <p>They were keen to know the exact location of the Stratford clinic and requested a list of pharmacies that provide sexual health services.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> <i>We are working with London Borough of Newham to secure the Sir Ludwig Guttmann Health &amp; Wellbeing Centre. The centre is very close to Leyton, where we have the highest rates of STIs in Waltham Forest. It is served by two buses from Waltham Forest</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Route 97, which has a stop (Chobham Academy) 4 minutes' walk from SLG and also serves the north of the borough all the way up to Chingford station, by the northern borough boundary.</i></li> <li>• <i>Route 158, which has a stop (Thornham Grove) 7 minutes' walk from SLG</i></li> </ul> <p><i>List of pharmacies has been sent.</i></p>
e. NELFT Patient experience group	<p>The group understands the need for change but concerned that once the specialist clinics are established, the local ones may not happen.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> <i>We will be procuring one local clinic at the same time as the specialist clinic. We will start discussions about the other two as soon as the new services start operation.</i></p>

	<p>Concerns raised about access for people facing mental health challenges</p> <p><b>Action:</b> <i>The service specification will require providers to ensure robust pathways are in place for vulnerable groups, including those with mental health challenges.</i></p>
<p>f. Women of Walthamstow</p>	<p>How would the local level 2 services cope if significantly more people started to use them instead of the GUM clinic?</p> <p><b>Action:</b> <i>See (a) above</i></p> <p>Find out reasons why patients are using the GUM clinic at Whipps Cross rather than the appropriate level 2 services before the Whipps Cross is closed.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> <i>We have done a number of engagements with patients attending Whipps Cross Hospital prior to and during this current work. In most cases, patients were not aware that the service they required could be provided at Oliver Road. This includes some patients who were referred by a GP, which suggests that some GPs are not aware either. We will develop a communications plan as part of the changes to ensure that changes are communicated appropriately. This will involve the Council and CCG communications teams; and providers.</i></p> <p>The group welcomed plans to move the Oliver Road clinic to a central Walthamstow location. Suggested that the Council look at new developments including the one at Walthamstow town square, Council and local health trusts' estates as options for locating the new clinics.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> <i>This work is ongoing, and we plan to keep the residents of Waltham Forest informed. We have been working with the Council's property team and NHS colleagues to identify suitable properties.</i></p> <p>Local residents should have a clear channel to input into the process of establishing sexual health services in GP hubs.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> <i>We will seek the views of local residents and consider those views during the process of establishing the primary care hubs. There will still be other alternatives to GP hubs, for example community pharmacies. The sexual health clinic in GP hubs would be separate from the 'usual' GP provision. It will be commissioned as a designated sexual health clinic with the same service specification as a level 2 service and be open access, <b>not</b> only for patients registered at that practice. It is therefore likely that Practices will have designated clinicians running those clinics.</i></p> <p>The clinic at Whipps Cross hospital should be maintained at least for the foreseeable future whilst the work above is conducted, and the impacts considered. It is not good enough to justify the closure on an inability to expand or greater need elsewhere, because clearly Whipps Cross clinic fulfils a need, even if it is not the one originally envisaged.</p>

	<p><b>Action:</b> <i>The inability of the clinic to expand, though important because we need a bigger clinic, is not the only reason for the closure. Clinicians believe that concentrating expertise in a larger centre of excellence will improve quality and patient outcomes. We do not intend to close the Whipps Cross clinic before the specialist clinic at Stratford is up and running. We will monitor any impacts during the first year of operation and take appropriate mitigating action.</i></p>
g) Waltham Forest Health Scrutiny Committee	<p>Given the scale of what is being proposed, we would like to suggest that the decision to proceed with the Sexual Health Transformation Plan is not made as an Executive Decision by the Deputy Chief Executive, as was agreed at Cabinet in November 2015. Instead we would urge that the authority to make this decision is passed back to Cabinet so that these significant proposals can be fully discussed before being formally agreed by the Cabinet rather than an individual.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> <i>This was taken back to Cabinet in November 2016 and Cabinet did not change its decision to delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Lead for Health and Wellbeing.</i></p>
h) Waltham Forest Health & Wellbeing Board	<p>The Board noted the report and asked that more work is done in communicating any changes to residents.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> <i>Promotion of our services is a priority for us and we are developing our communications plan for 2017, which will aim to maximise opportunities to promote sexual health services, among our other public health priorities. This will involve the Council and CCG communications teams; and providers to ensure that the changes are communicated appropriately.</i></p>

## 4 Recommendations

From the consultation feedback, the following should be considered when procuring new services

- All efforts should be made to secure a local clinic located in Walthamstow to minimise any negative impact of increased distance to Stratford for some Waltham Forest residents.
- A robust engagement plan should be developed and implemented to ensure the public and GPs are well informed about all sexual health services available to them and where to access them.
- Self-sampling kits for STI testing should be made available ‘off-line’ so people can pick them up, for example from a clinic or pharmacy. Service specifications should include details of how those who test positive using self-sampling kits will be followed up or receive treatment.

## **5 Next Steps**

We will be developing the service specifications and procurement documents, which will be informed by all the engagement and consultation feedback.

An Equality analysis was completed prior to the beginning of the programme in November 2015.

Following the current consultation we have undertaken a full Equality Impact Assessment and revised the service specification, for example strengthening the requirement for accessible premises.

## **6 Contact Details**

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## 7 Appendices

**Appendix 1- Table showing response to the questions about proposed changes**

Q No	Questions & Answer Options	Response%	Response Count
<b>1</b>	<b>What Sexual Health service in Waltham Forest have you used?</b>		
	GUM clinic at Whipps Cross hospital	41.7%	130
	Sexual health clinic in Oliver Road (Leyton) or Comely Bank (Walthamstow )	22.8%	71
	GP surgery	26.0%	81
	Pharmacy	18.9%	59
	None	29.5%	92
	Total Number of those who answered		312
	No. of respondents who skipped this question		15
<b>2</b>	<b>Impact of proposal to relocate the specialist GUM clinic at Whipps Cross hospital to Stratford and Whitechapel.</b>		
	It would make it a lot easier for me to access the service	18.6%	59
	It would make it a little easier for me to access the service	6.3%	20
	It would have no impact on me	29.0%	92
	It would make it a little harder for me to access the service	15.5%	49
	It would make it a lot harder for me to access the service	23.7%	75
	I don't know	6.9%	22
	Total Number of those who answered		317
	No. of respondents who skipped this question		10
<b>3</b>	<b>Impact of proposal to relocate the local clinic from Oliver Road to Walthamstow</b>		
	It would make it a lot easier for me	28.7%	86
	It would make it a little easier for me	8.0%	24
	It would have no impact on me	20.3%	61
	It would make it a little harder for me	11.0%	33
	It would make it a lot harder for me	12.3%	37
	I don't know	19.7%	59
	Total Number of those who answered		300
	No. of respondents who skipped this question		27
<b>4</b>	<b>How likely would it be for you to use online self-testing kit</b>		
	Very likely	32.9%	103
	Quite likely	24.6%	77
	Not very likely	12.8%	40
	Not likely at all	14.1%	44
	I don't know	15.7%	49
	Total number of those who answered question		313
	No. of respondents who skipped this question		14

## Appendix 2- Demographics of those that responded

No	Demographics	Response %	Response Count
<b>1</b>	<b>Gender</b>		
	Male	36.0%	100
	Female	64.0%	178
	Transgender	0.0%	0
	Total number of those who answered question		<b>278</b>
	No. of respondents who skipped this question		<b>49</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Age</b>		
	Under 18	6.5%	18
	18-24	25.0%	69
	25-29	25.7%	71
	30-39	22.8%	63
	40-49	10.9%	30
	50 and over	9.1%	25
	Total number of those who answered question		<b>276</b>
	No. of respondents who skipped this question		<b>51</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Ethnicity</b>		
	White: English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British	42.8%	116
	White: Irish	1.1%	3
	White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0.4%	1
	White: Eastern European	7.4%	20
	Any other White background	8.9%	24
	<b>Total White</b>	<b>60.6%</b>	<b>164</b>
	Mixed / Multiple ethnic group: White and Black Caribbean	5.9%	16
	Mixed / Multiple ethnic group: White and Black African	1.1%	3
	Mixed / Multiple ethnic group: White and Asian	0.7%	2
	Any other Mixed / Multiple ethnic background	3.3%	9
	<b>Total Mixed ethnic group</b>	<b>11.0%</b>	<b>30</b>
	Asian / Asian British: Indian	2.6%	7
	Asian / Asian British: Pakistani	4.1%	11
	Asian / Asian British: Bangladeshi	0.7%	2
	Asian / Asian British: Chinese	1.5%	4
	Any other Asian / Asian British background	1.1%	3
	<b>Total Asian</b>	<b>10.0%</b>	<b>27</b>
	Black / African / Caribbean / Black British: African	8.5%	23
	Black / African / Caribbean / Black British: Caribbean	8.9%	24
	Any other Black / African / Caribbean / Black British background	1.1%	3
	Other ethnic group	0.0%	0
	<b>Total Black African/Caribbean</b>	<b>18.5%</b>	<b>50</b>
	Total number of those who answered question		<b>271</b>
	No. of respondents who skipped this question		<b>56</b>
<b>4</b>			

No	Demographics	Response %	Response Count
	<b>Disability</b>		
	Yes	6.7%	18
	No	93.3%	250
	Total number of those who answered question		268
	No. of respondents who skipped this question		59
<b>5</b>	<b>Sexuality</b>		
	Heterosexual or straight	85.6%	238
	Gay or lesbian	6.5%	18
	Bisexual	5.0%	14
	Prefer not to say	1.8%	5
	Other (please specify)	1.1%	3
	Total number of those who answered question		278
	No. of respondents who skipped this question		49
<b>6</b>	<b>Postcode</b>		
	E4	12%	32
	E15	3%	8
	E17	39%	105
	E10	12%	33
	E11	18%	48
	IG8	2%	5
	Other	14%	39
	Answered		270
	No. of respondents who skipped this question		57