Cabinet Office

Community Life Survey: Q2 2012-13

(August - October 2012)

Statistical Bulletin

This release provides headline findings from the Community Life Survey for Q2 2012-13 (August-October 2012). The findings presented here are broken down into sections covering trust, neighbourhood, civic engagement, volunteering and charitable giving. This release provides an overview covering key areas from the Community Life Survey, with further analysis to be released in due course.

The Community Life Survey incorporates key measures from the previous Citizenship Survey (run by the Department for Communities and Local Government), in order that trends in such measures can be tracked over time. Where applicable, time series data is included in this release and accompanying outputs.

Headline Findings

Trust

- In August-October 2012, 42 per cent of people thought that most people could be trusted, similar to 2010-11 levels.

Neighbourhood

- Over half of people (53%) agreed that they borrow things and exchange favours with their neighbours.

  Nearly eight in ten people (79%) had a strong sense of belonging to their neighbourhood, unchanged from 2010-11 but significantly higher than levels between 2003 and 2007-08.

  Eighty four per cent of people were satisfied with their local area as a place to live, broadly unchanged from 2010-11 levels but significantly higher than levels in 2008-09.

  Sixty two per cent felt that people in their neighbourhood pulled together to improve the neighbourhood, a significant decrease from 67 per cent in 2010-11.

  Nearly nine in ten people (87%) said they lived in an area where people from different backgrounds get on well together, no significant change from 2010-11 but significantly higher than all other levels since 2003.

Civic engagement

- Around one in five (19%) had taken part in some form of civic consultation about local services or problems in the last year, with 2 per cent of people engaging in some form of civic consultation at least once a month.

  Just under half (48%) of people said they would like to be more involved in decisions made by their local council, a significant increase from 44 per cent in 2010-11.

Volunteering and charitable giving

- Seventy one per cent of people had volunteered at least once in the last 12 months, with 45 per cent of people volunteering formally and 61 per cent volunteering informally, significant increases from 2010-11 (65%, 39% and 55% respectively). Just under half (49%) of people had volunteered at least once a month in the past year, a significant increase from 41 per cent in 2010-11.

  74 per cent of people had given money to charity in the four weeks prior to being interviewed, unchanged from 2010-11 levels.

Trust

In August-October 2012, just over a third (34%) of people trusted Parliament either 'a lot' or 'a fair amount'. This is broadly the same level as in 2010-11.
In the same time period, 65 per cent of people said they trusted their local council, not significantly different to 2010-11 but significantly higher than levels from 2001 to 2008-09. Eighty-four percent of people trusted the police, unchanged from 2010-11.
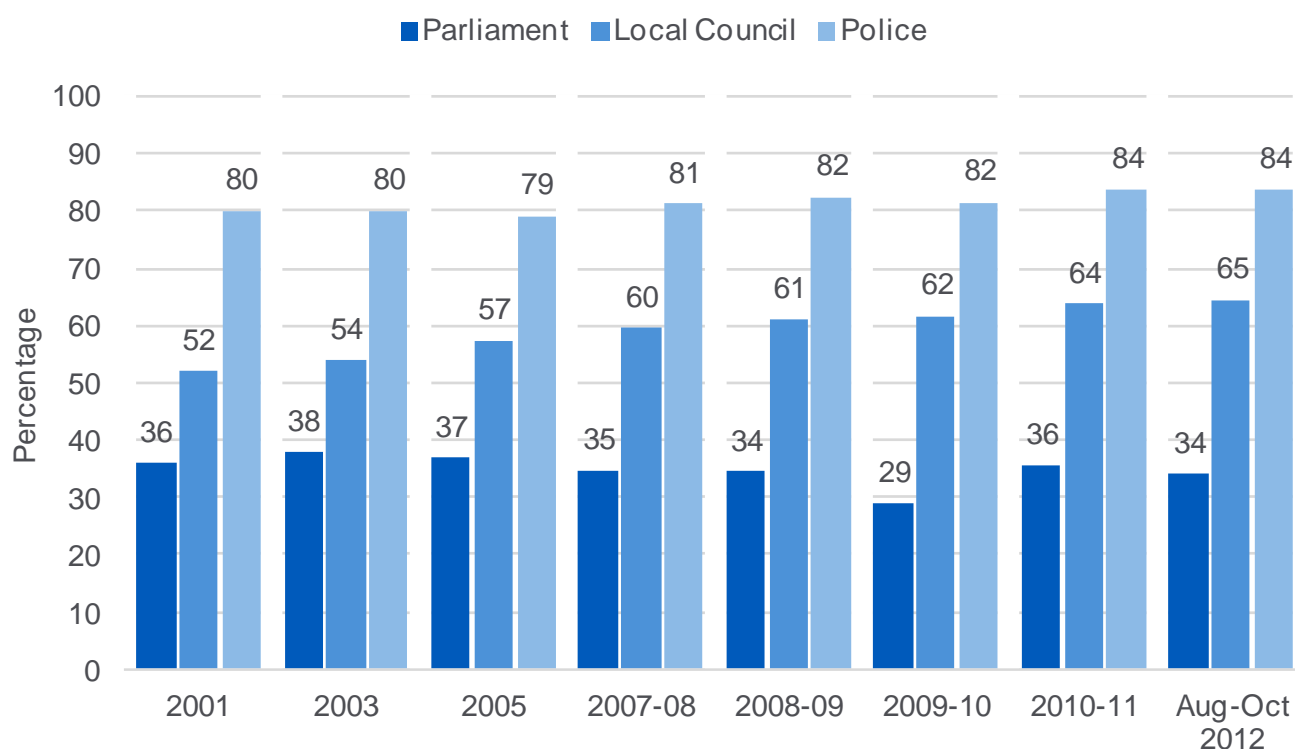

Figure 1: Proportion of people who trust institutions 'a lot' or 'a fair amount', 2001 to August-October 2012

Forty-two per cent of people said that most people can be trusted, showing similar levels to previous years but a significant increase to the level seen in 2007-08 (39%).
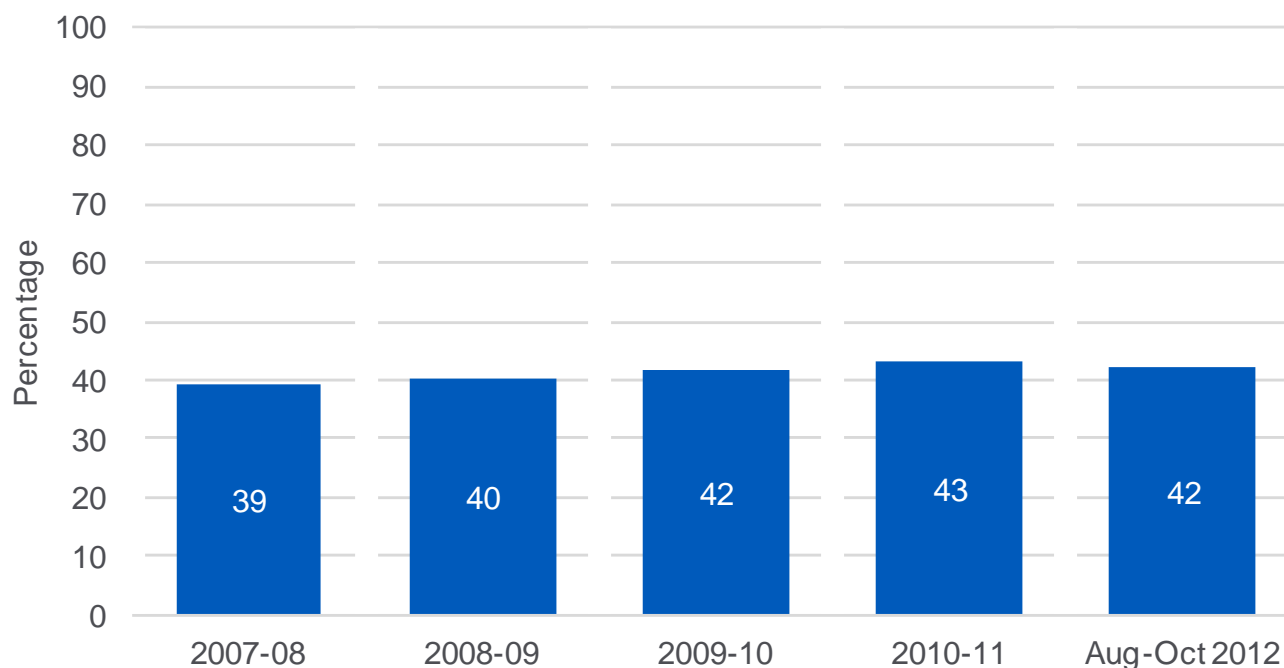

Figure 2: Proportion of people who feel that most people can be trusted, 2007-08 to August-October 2012

Table 1: Trust in institutions (a lot or a fair amount) and in people in general, 2001 to August-October 2012

Neighbourhood

Neighbourliness

In August-October 2012, over half of people (53%) agreed that they borrow things and exchange favours with their neighbours, with 22 per cent of people definitely agreeing with this statement.
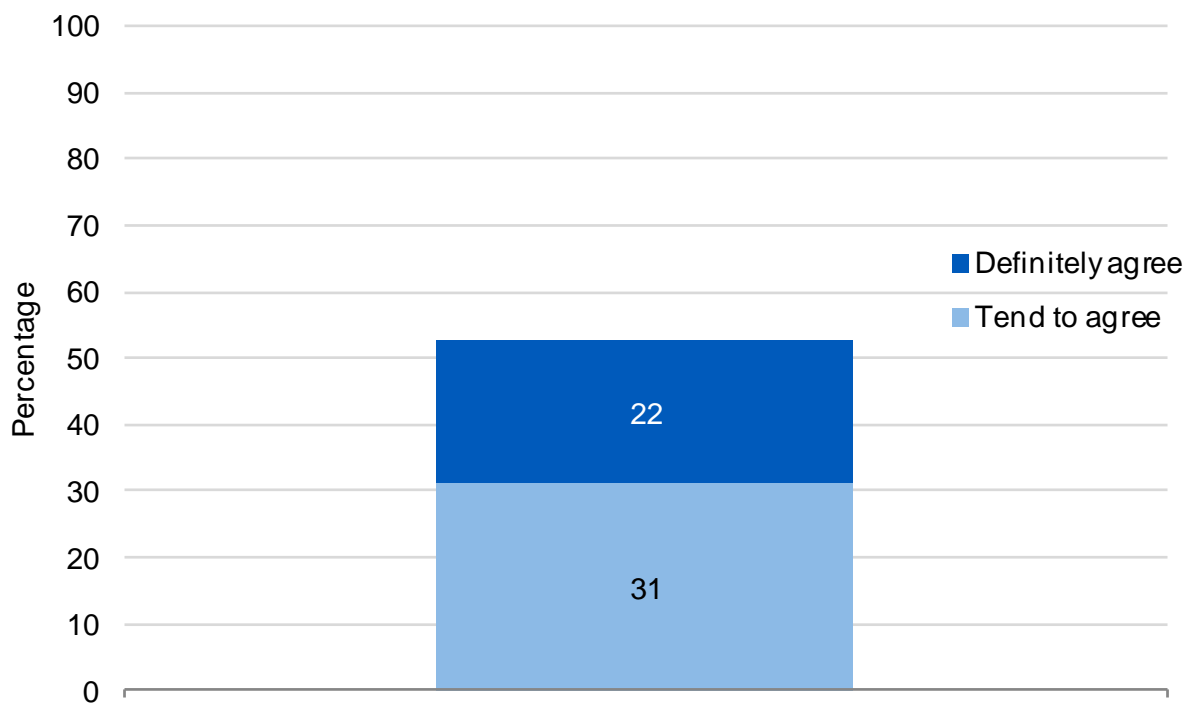

Figure 3: Proportion of people who agree that they borrow things and exchange favours with their neighbours, August-October 2012

In August-October 2012, 62 per cent of people agreed that people in their neighbourhood pull together to improve the neighbourhood. This has fallen from 67 per cent in 2010-11 and is significantly lower than all previous years.
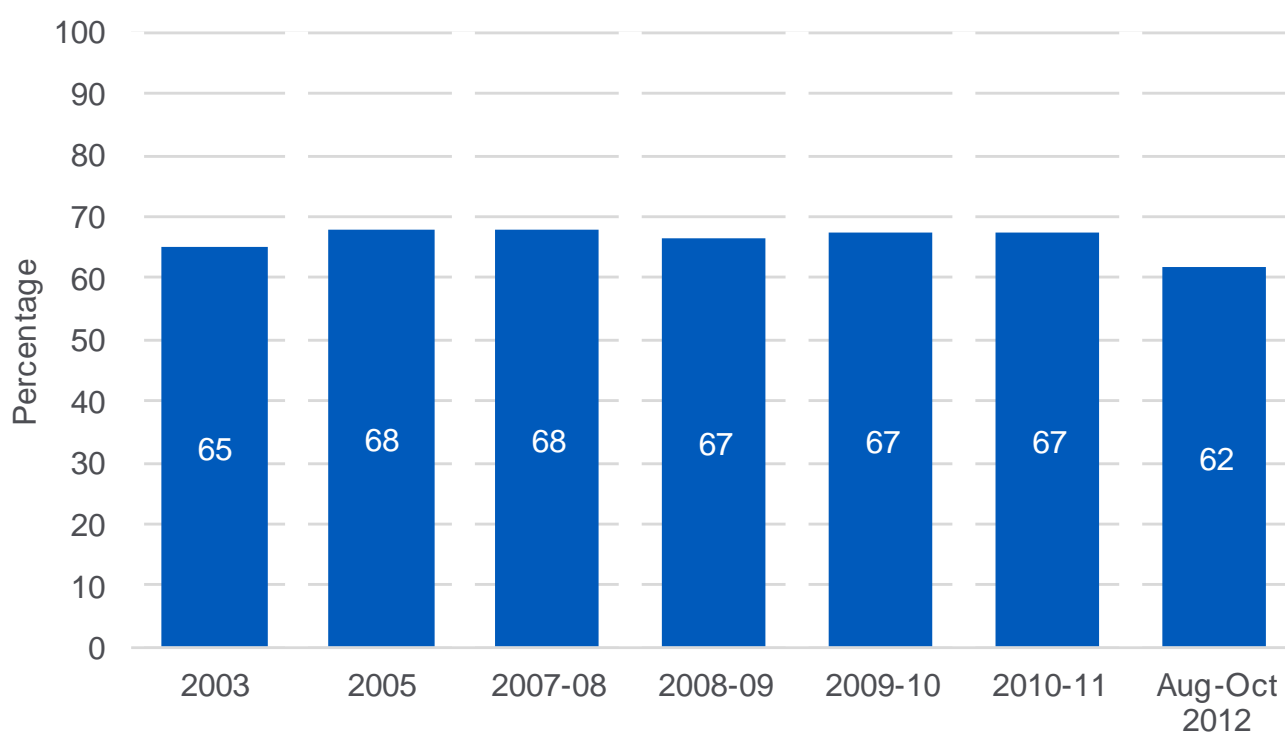

Figure 4: Proportion of people who agree that people in their neighbourhood pull together to improve the neighbourhood, 2003 to August-October 2012

The proportion of people who 'definitely agree' that people in their neighbourhood pull together remained unchanged from 2010-11 whilst the proportion of people who 'tend to agree' significantly decreased from 47 per cent in 2010-11 to 42 per cent in August-October 2012.

The proportion of people who 'tend to disagree' increased significantly from 23 per cent in 2010-11 to 26 per cent in August-October 2012, whilst the proportion of people who 'definitely disagree' also significantly increased from 9 per cent to 12 per cent.
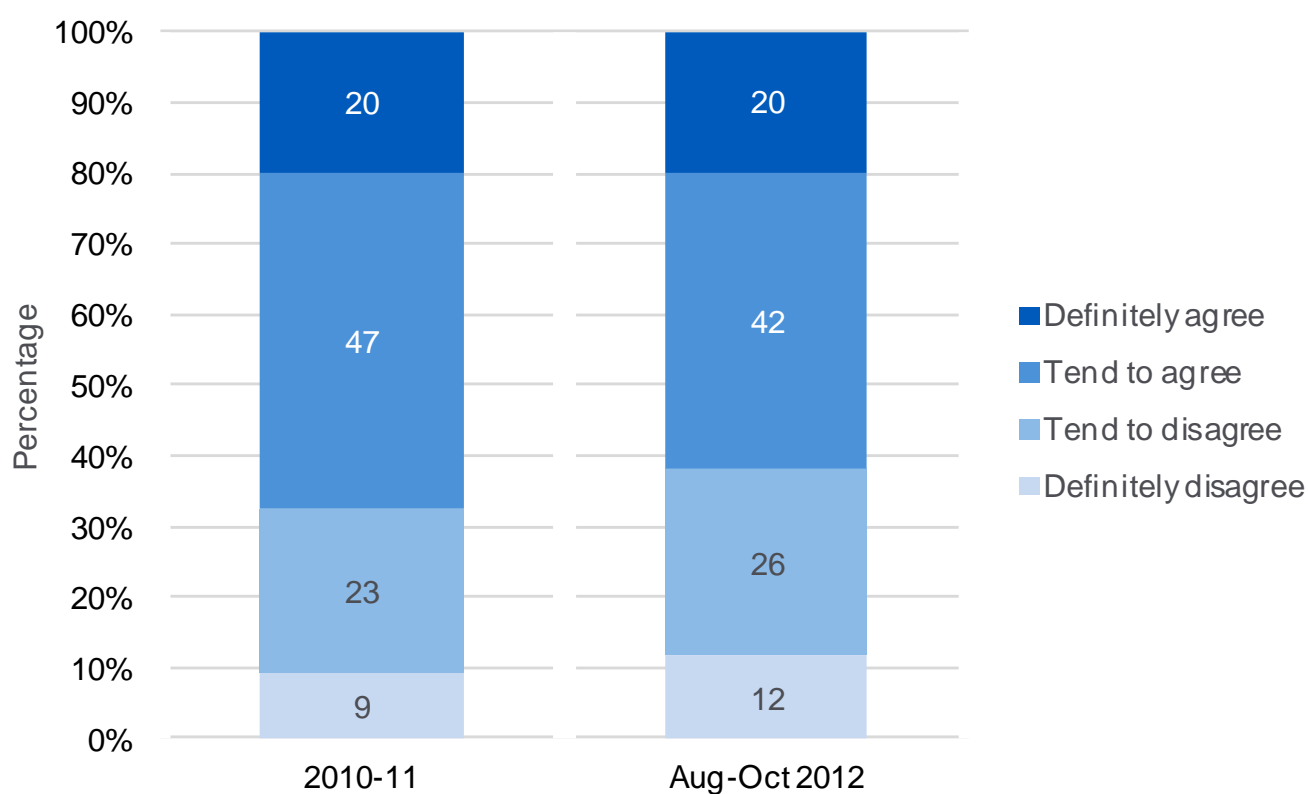

Figure 5: Extent to which people agree that people in their neighbourhood pull together to improve the neighbourhood, 2010-11 to August-October 2012

- Table 2: Extent to which people in the neighbourhood pull together to improve the neighbourhood, 2003 to August-October 2012

In August-October 2012, two-thirds of people (67%) thought that their local area had not changed much over the past two years. Fifteen per cent of people thought their local area had got better and 18 per cent thought it had got worse. These levels are broadly unchanged from 2010-11. However since 2007-08, the proportion of people thinking that their local area had got worse over the last two years had significantly fallen from 27 per cent to 18 per cent whilst the proportion saying it had not changed much had significantly increased from 56 per cent to 67 per cent.
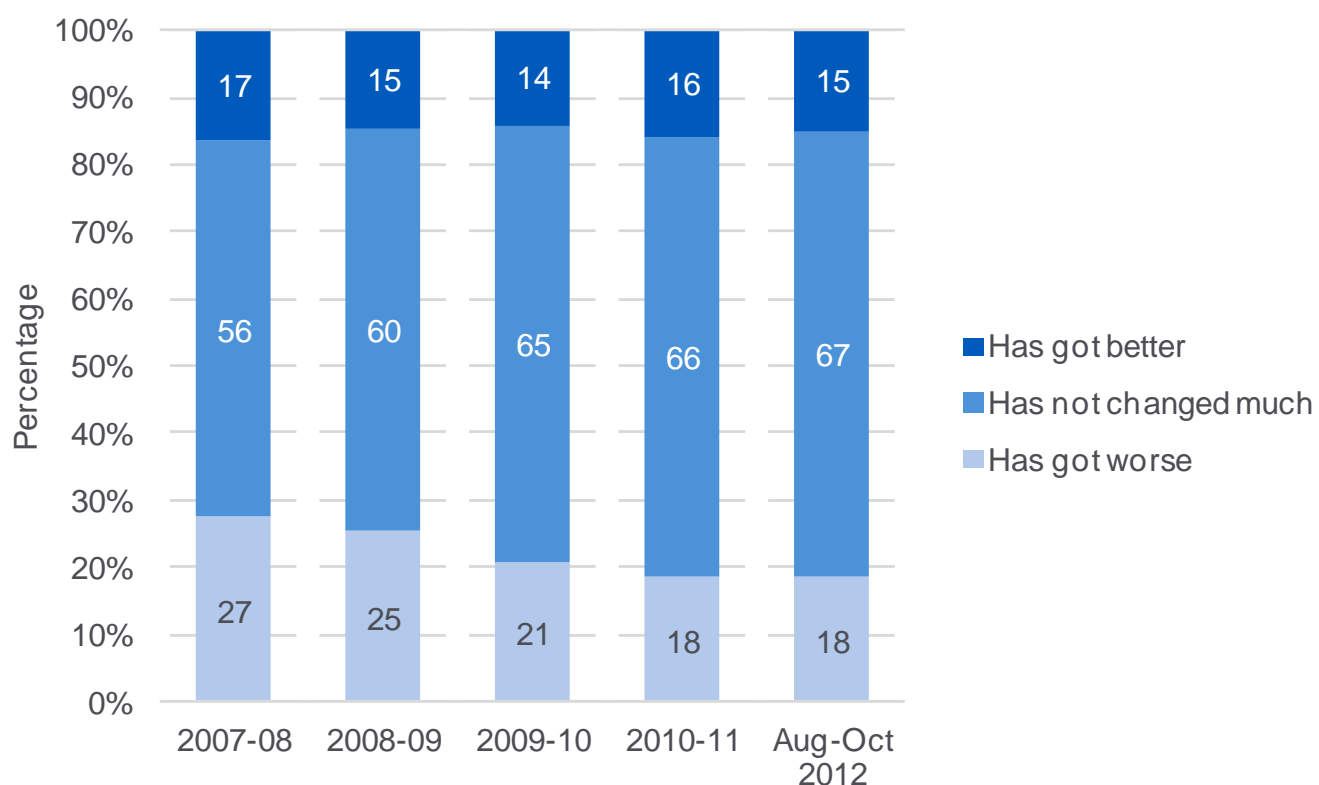

Figure 6: Proportion of people who think their local area has got better, worse or stayed the same over the last two years, 2007-08 to August-October 2012

- Table 3: Whether the local area has got better or worse in the past two years, 2007-08 to August-October 2012

Belonging

In August-October 2012, 79 per cent of people felt that they belonged strongly to their neighbourhood. This consisted of 35 per cent of people who felt they belonged 'very strongly' to their neighbourhood and 43[1] per cent who belonged 'fairly strongly'. The proportion of people who belonged strongly (either 'very' or 'fairly') to their neighbourhood remained at the same level as 2010-11, but significantly increased from levels in 2003 to 2007-08.
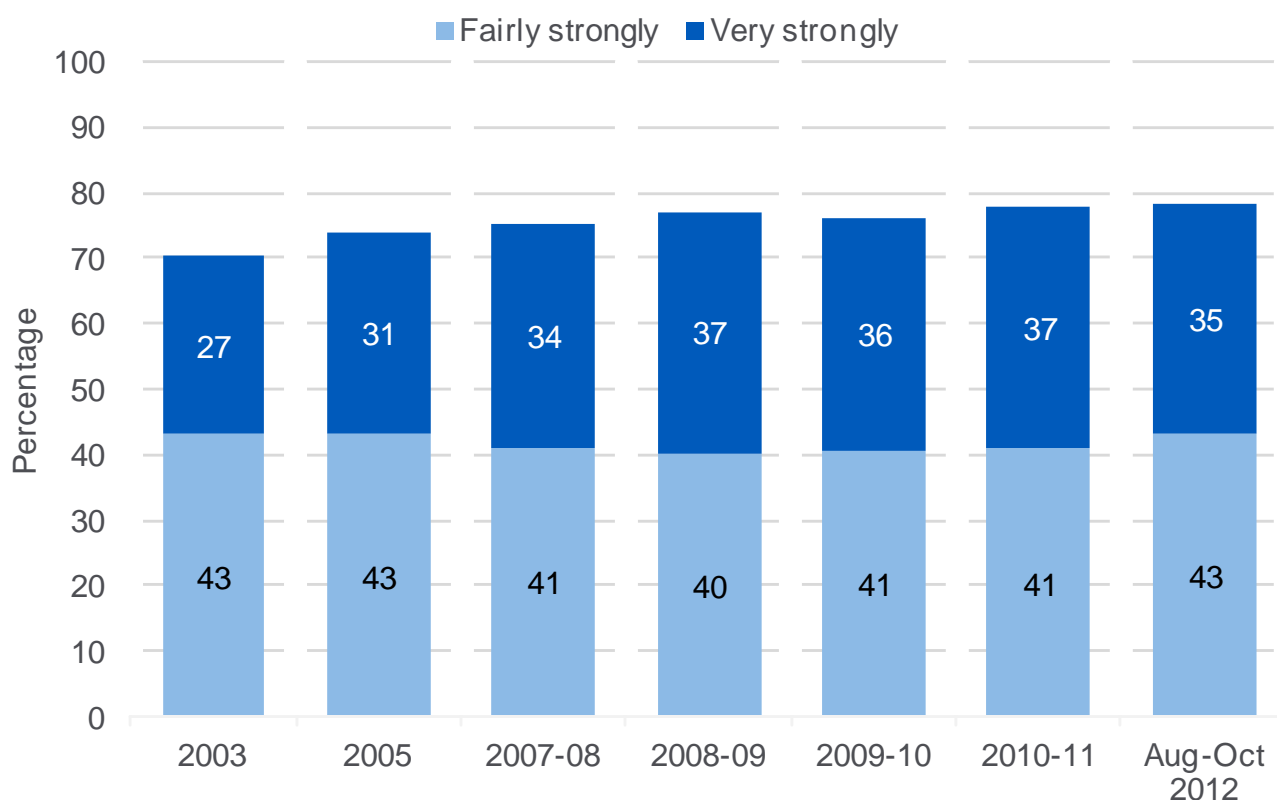

Figure 7: Proportion of people who feel they belong strongly to their neighbourhood, 2003 to August-October 2012

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[1] Numbers may not always add up to totals shown due to rounding

In August-October 2012, 88 per cent of people felt that they belonged strongly to Britain, the same level as in 2010-11. Fifty five percent of people said that they belonged 'very strongly' to Britain, a significant increase from 51 per cent in 2010-11.
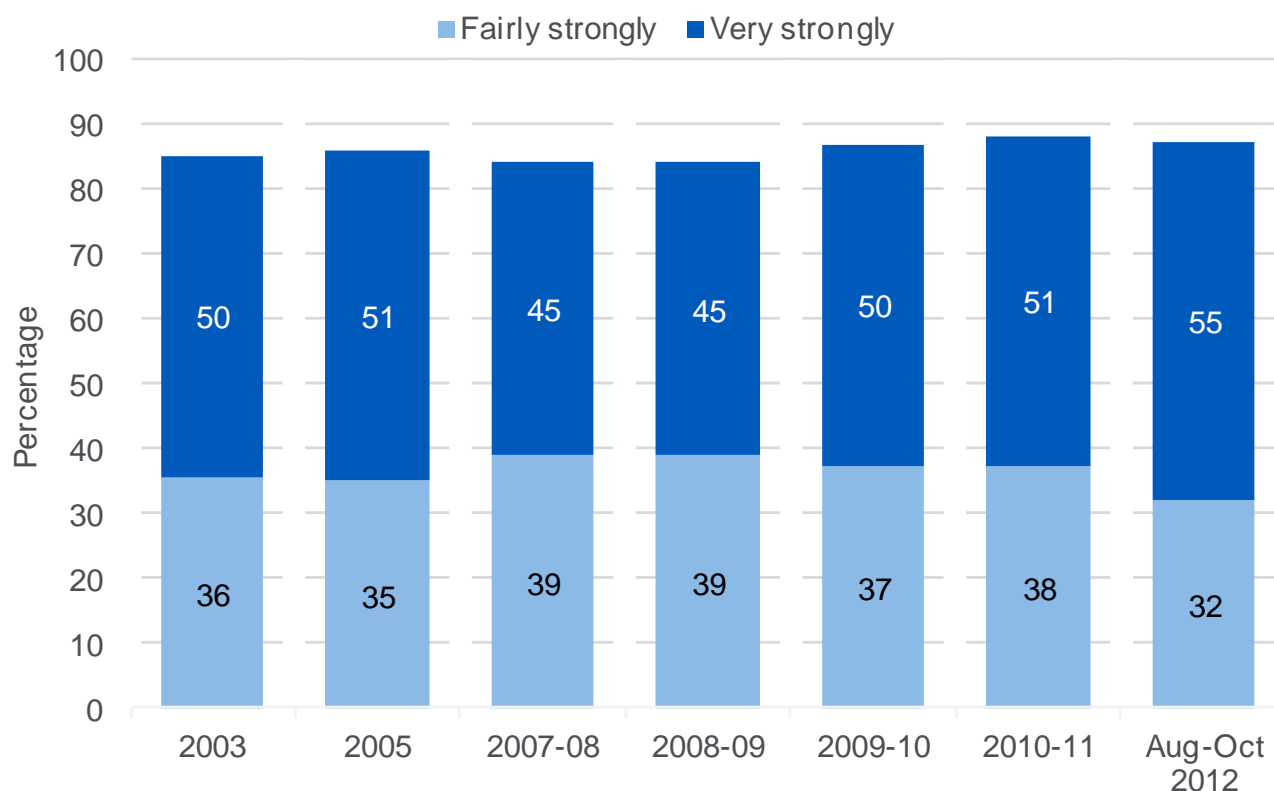

Figure 8: Proportion of people who feel they belong strongly to Britain, 2003 to August-October 2012

Seventy-seven per cent of people felt that they belonged strongly to their local area. Whilst this has not changed since 2010-11, levels have significantly increased from 2008-09 (72%).

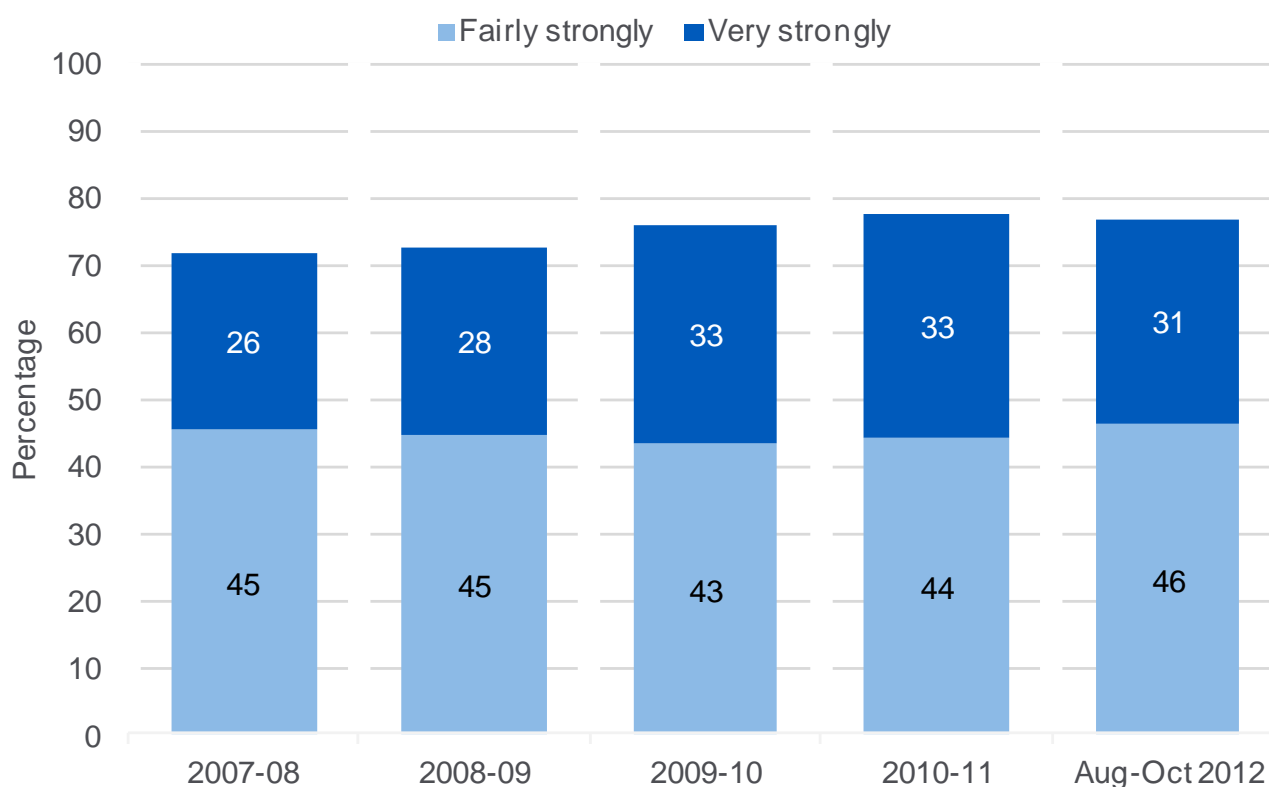**Figure 9: Proportion of people who feel they belong strongly to their local area, 2007-08 to August-October 2012**

- Table 4: Whether people feel that they belong strongly to their neighbourhood, local area and Britain, 2003 to August-October 2012
- Table 5: Whether people feel that they belong strongly to their neighbourhood, local area and Britain, by sex, age and ethnicity, 2009-10 to August-October 2012

Satisfaction with local area

In August-October 2012, 84 per cent of people were either 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied with their local area as a place to live. This is at a similar level to 2010-11 but has significantly increased from the 2008-09 level of 82 per cent.

Forty per cent of people said they were 'very satisfied' with their local area as a place to live. This is the same level as seen in 2010-11 but has significantly increased from levels in 2008-09 and 2009-10. Forty four per cent of people said they were 'fairly satisfied' with their local area as a place to live. This is also at a similar level to 2010-11 but has significantly decreased from levels in 2008-09 and 2009-10.
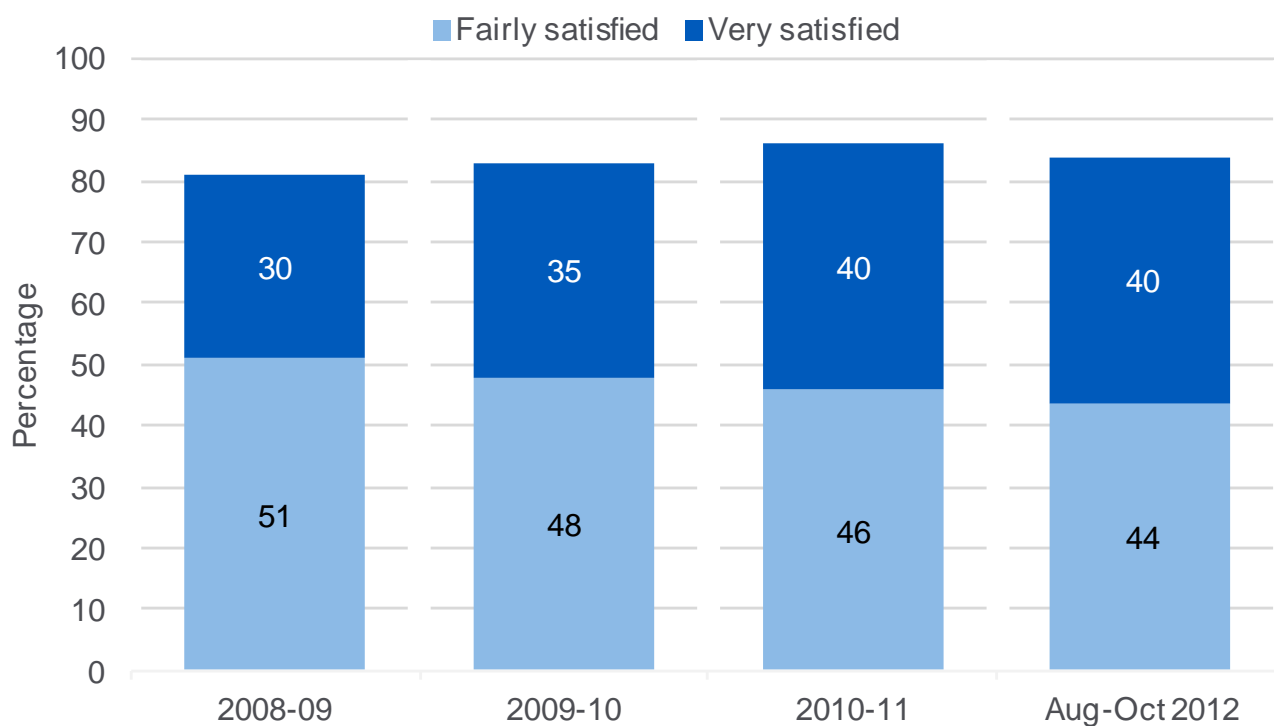

Figure 10: Proportion of people who are satisfied with their local area as a place to live, 2008-09 to August-October 2012

- Table 6: Satisfaction with local area, by sex, age and ethnicity, 2008-09 to August-October 2012

Community Cohesion

In August-October 2012, 87 per cent of people thought that their community was cohesive, agreeing that their local area was a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together. This is a similar level to 2010-11 but is significantly higher than all previous years.
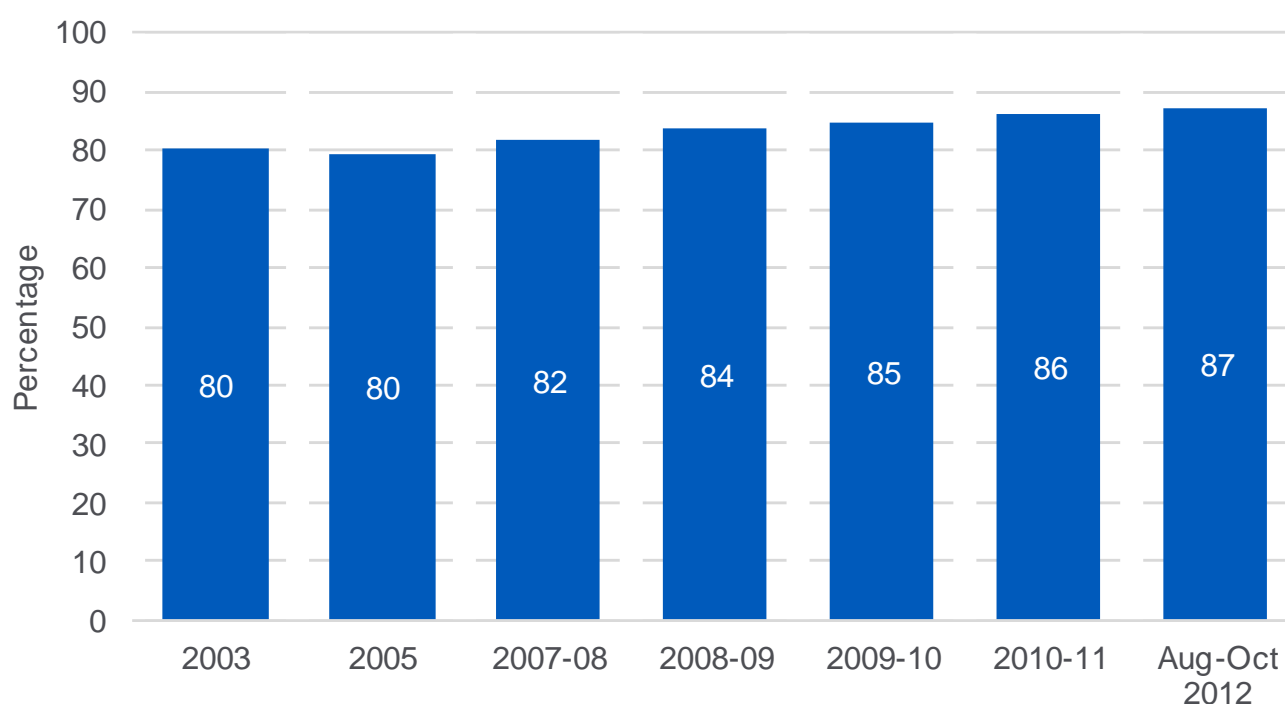

Figure 11: Proportion of people who agree that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together, 2003 to August-October 2012

- Table 7: Community cohesion by sex, age, ethnicity and region, 2003 to August-October 2012

Civic engagement

Influencing decisions

In August-October 2012, 39 per cent of people felt that they could influence decisions affecting their local area, similar to previous years apart from in 2001 when this figure was significantly higher at 44 per cent. This is higher than the proportion of people who felt that they could influence decisions affecting Britain which stood at 22 per cent, unchanged from levels since 2003 but significantly lower than in 2001, when a quarter of people felt that they could influence decisions affecting Britain.

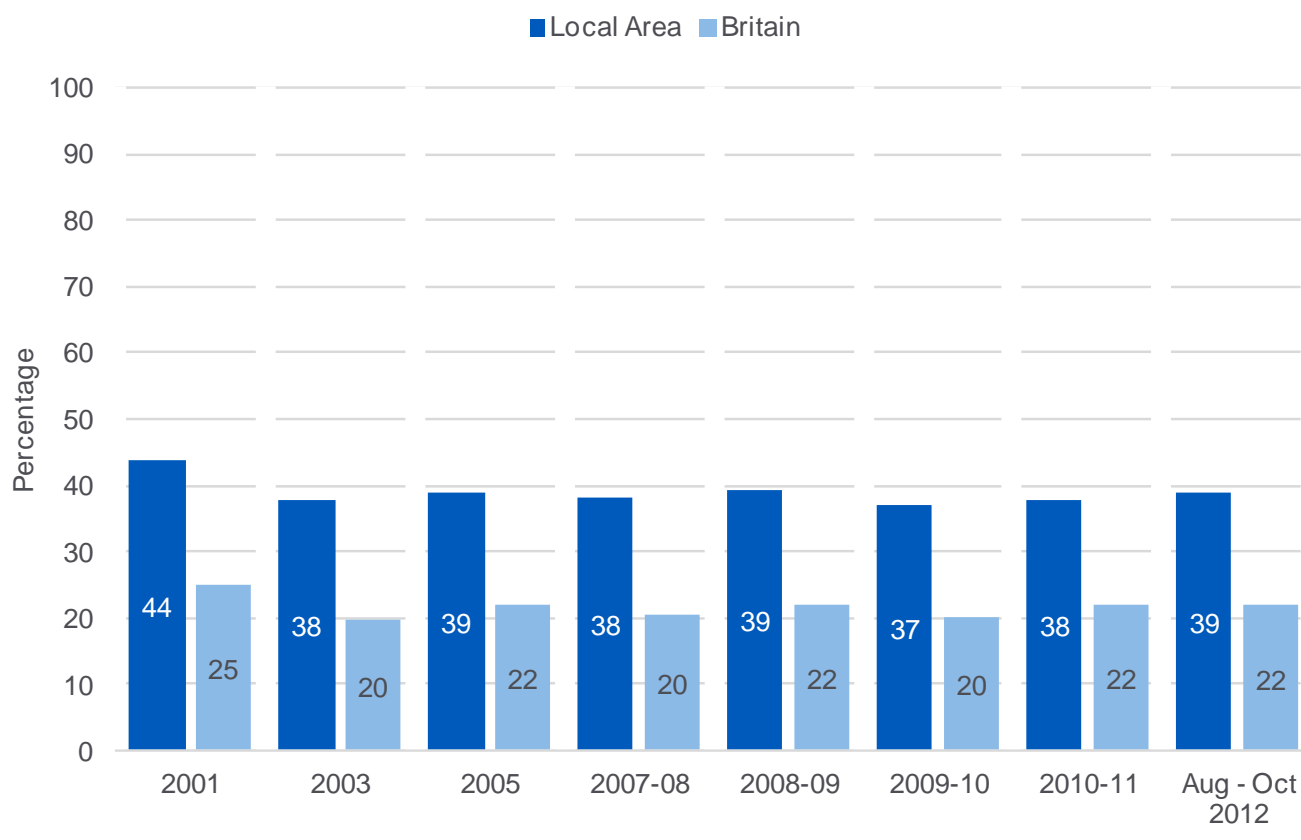**Figure 12: Proportion of people who feel they can influence decisions affecting their local area and Britain, 2001 to August-October 2012**

- Table 8: Whether people feel able to influence decisions affecting their local area and Britain, 2001 to August-October 2012
- Table 9: Whether people feel able to influence decisions affecting their local area and Britain, by sex, age and ethnicity, 2010-11 to August-October 2012

In August-October 2012, three quarters of people (75%) felt that it was important for them personally to feel that they could influence decisions in their local area. This level has remained relatively stable over the last few years but shows a significant decrease from the level seen in 2008-09 (78%).
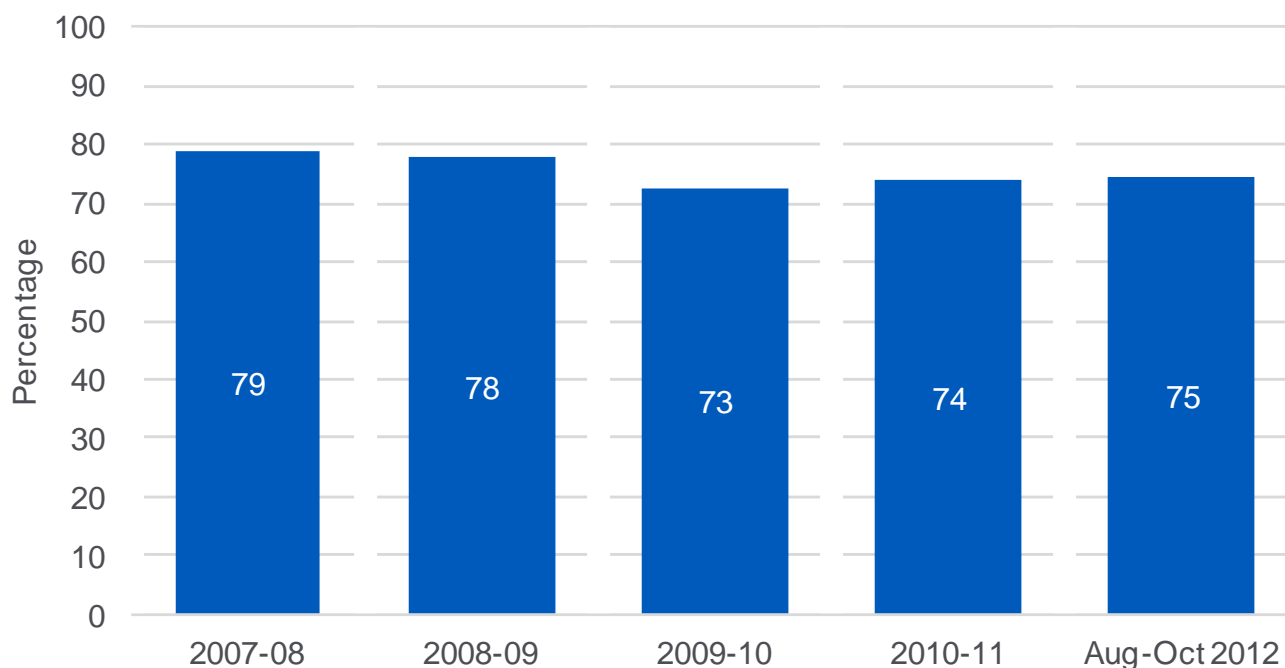

Figure 13: Proportion of people who think it is important to feel that they can influence decisions in their local area, 2007-08 to August-October 2012

- Table 10: How important is it for you personally to feel you can influence decisions made in your local area, 2007-08 to August-October 2012

Just under half of people in England (48%) said they would like to be more involved in decisions made by their local council, a significant increase from 44 per cent in 2010-11. Thirty-six per cent said they would not like to be more involved and 16 per cent said it would depend on the issue.
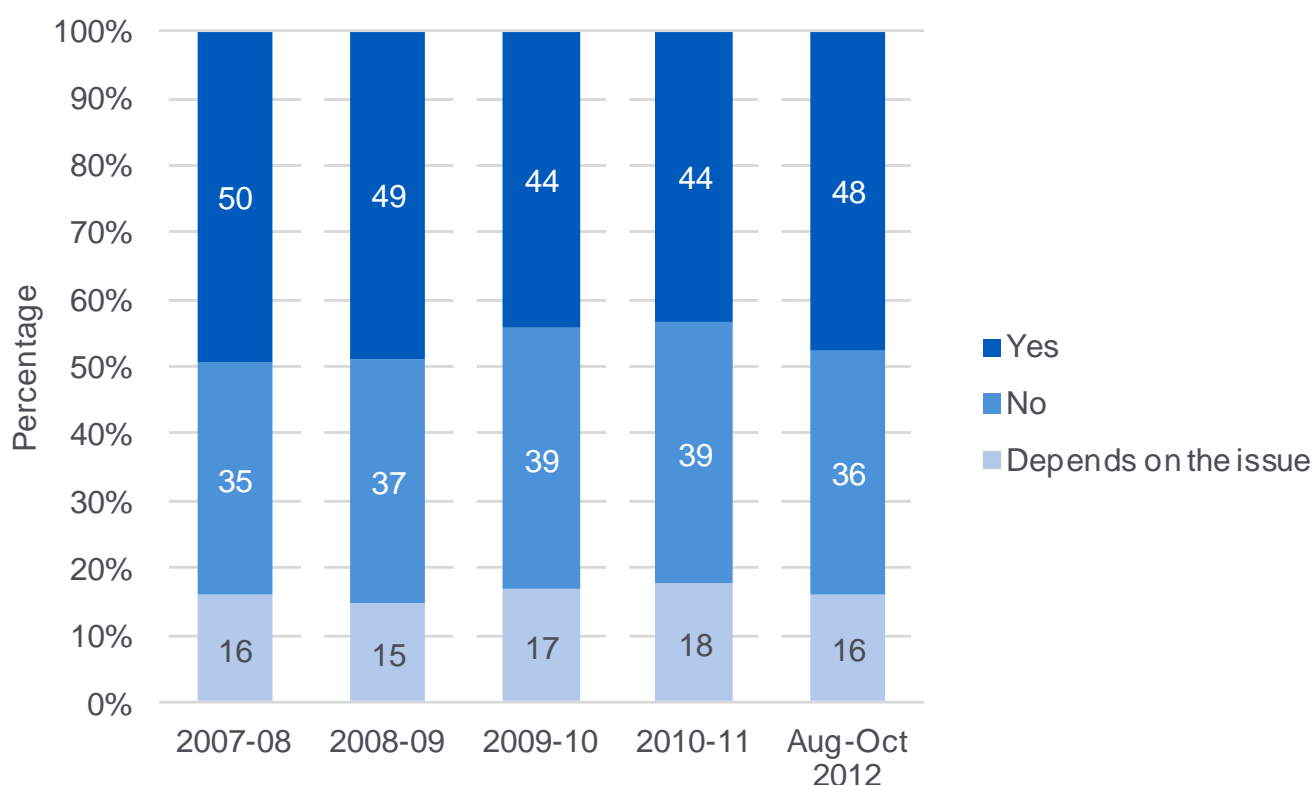

Figure 14: Whether people would like to be more involved in decisions made by the council affecting their local area, 2007-08 to August-October 2012

- Table 11: Whether people would like to be more involved in decisions made by their local council, 2007-08 to August-October 2012

Civic engagement

Civic engagement[2] covers three measures captured within the survey:

Civic participation – engagement in democratic processes (both in person and online), such as contacting an elected representative or attending a public demonstration

Civic consultation – taking part in consultations about local services such as completing questionnaires, attending public meetings or being involved in discussion groups (both in person and online)

Civic activism – involvement in decision-making about local services or in the provision of these services (both in person and online) such as being a school governor or magistrate

Civic participation was the most common form of civic engagement in August-October 2012, with 42 per cent of people engaging in some form of civic participation at least once in the 12 months prior to being interviewed. In August-October 2012, 3 per cent of people had taken part in some form of civic participation at least once a month in the year prior to being interviewed.

Around one in five people (19%) took part in some form of **civic consultation** at least once in the 12 months prior to being interviewed in August-October 2012, with 2 per cent of people engaging in some form of civic consultation at least once a month.

One in ten people (10%) had participated in some form of **civil activism** in the twelve months prior to being interviewed.

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[2] Civic engagement data is not comparable to Citizenship Survey data as the questions covering these measures were updated in the Community Life Survey to include online participation and are therefore not directly comparable
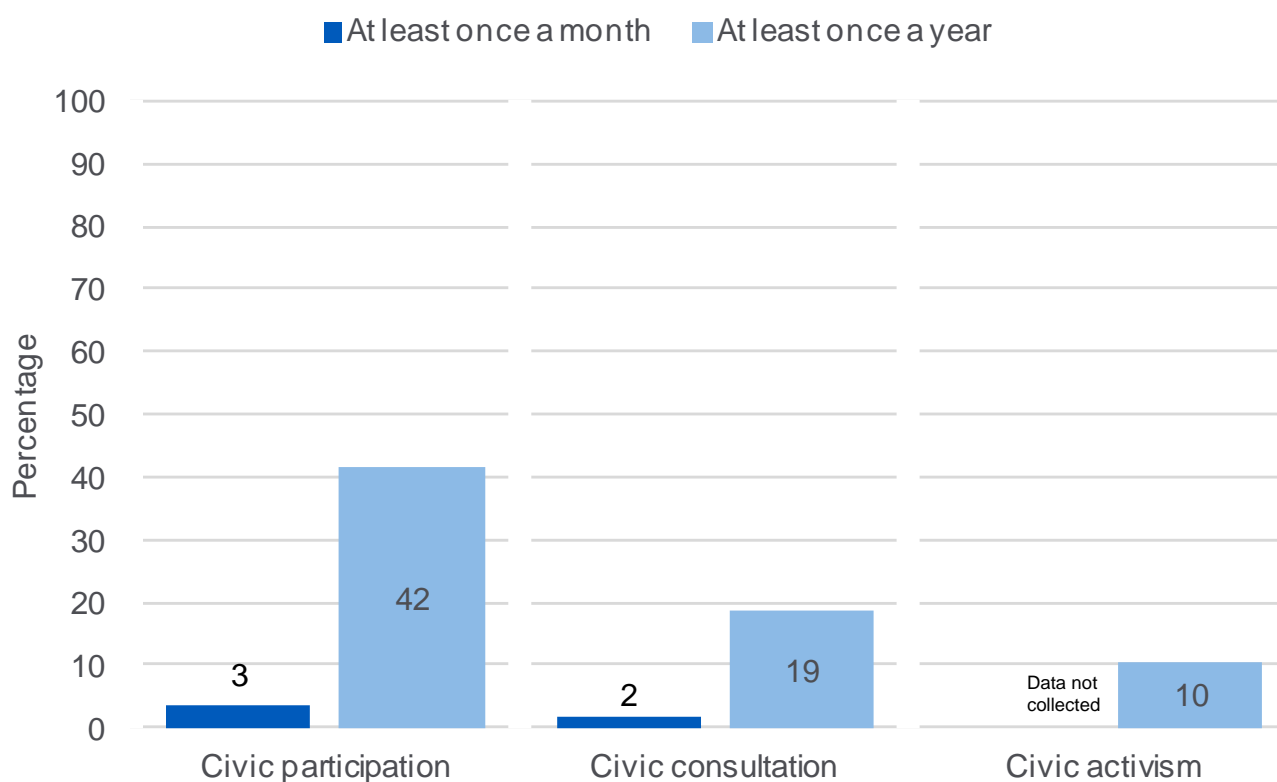
Figure 15: Whether people engaged in civic participation, civic consultation or civic activism, August-October 2012

- Table 12: Participation in civic engagement and voluntary activities, 2001 to August-October 2012
- Table 13: Participation in civic engagement and formal volunteering at least once in the last year, by sex, age, ethnicity and disability, 2007-08 to August-October 2012

Volunteering

Volunteering covers two measures captured within the survey:

Formal volunteering – giving unpaid help through groups, clubs or organisations

Informal volunteering – giving unpaid help as an individual to people who are not relatives

Formal volunteering

Thirty per cent of people said they had volunteered formally at least once a month in the 12 months prior to being interviewed. This is significantly higher than the level seen in 2010-11 (25%) and in all years from 2007-08, having reversed the downward trend seen since 2005.

In August-October 2012, 45 per cent of people said that they had volunteered formally at least once in the 12 months prior to being interviewed. This has significantly increased from 39 per cent in 2010-11 and is significantly higher than levels in 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11.
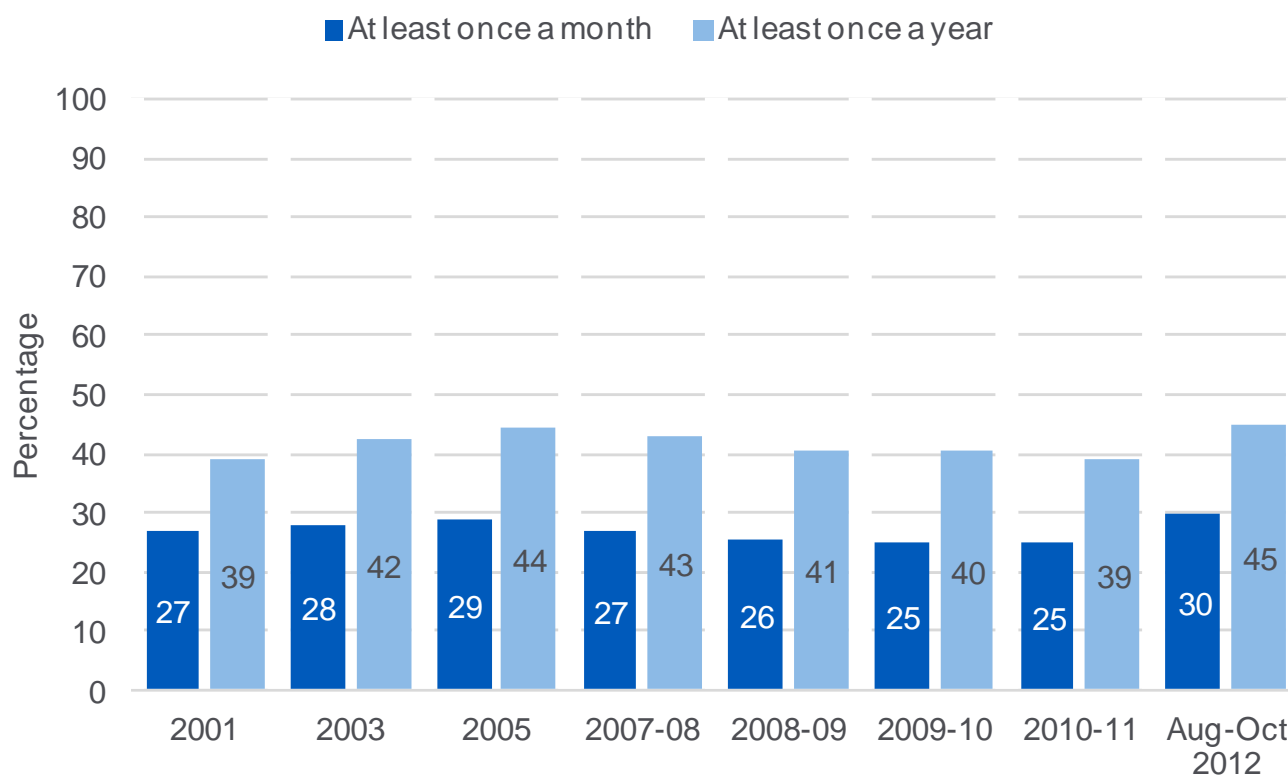

Figure 16: Whether people had participated in formal volunteering, 2001 to August-October 2012

Informal volunteering

Just over a third (35%) of people said they had volunteered informally at least once a month in the 12 months prior to being interviewed. This has significantly increased from 29 per cent in both 2009-10 and 2010-11.

In August-October 2012, 61 per cent of people said they had volunteered informally at least once in the 12 months prior to being interviewed. This has significantly increased from 55 per cent in 2010-11 and is also higher than the level seen in 2009-10 (54%).
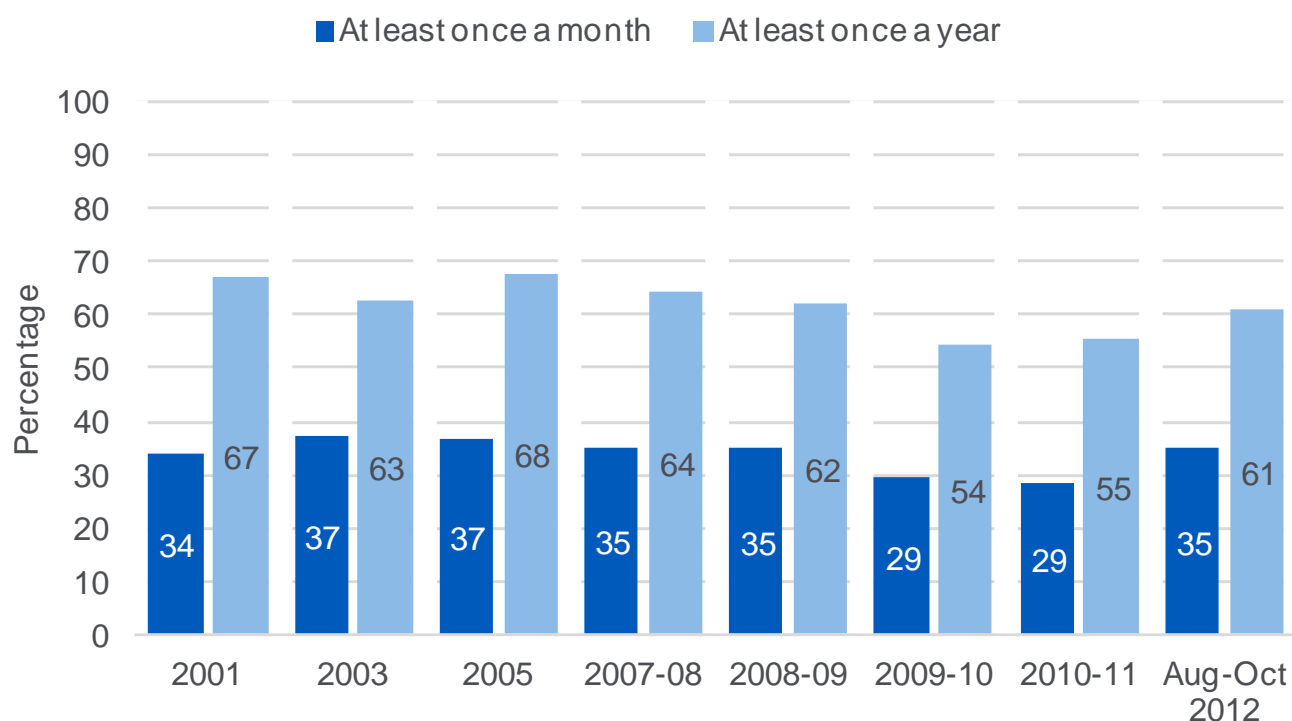

Figure 17: Whether people had participated in informal volunteering, 2001 to August-October 2012

Any volunteering

Nearly half of people (49%) participated in formal and/or informal volunteering at least once a month in the twelve months prior to being interviewed. This is significantly higher than levels in both 2009-10 and 2010-11 (42% and 41% respectively).

In August-October 2012, 71 per cent of people took part in formal and/or informal volunteering at least once in the twelve months prior to being interviewed. This is significantly higher than levels seen in 2009-10 and 2010-11 (66% and 65% respectively).
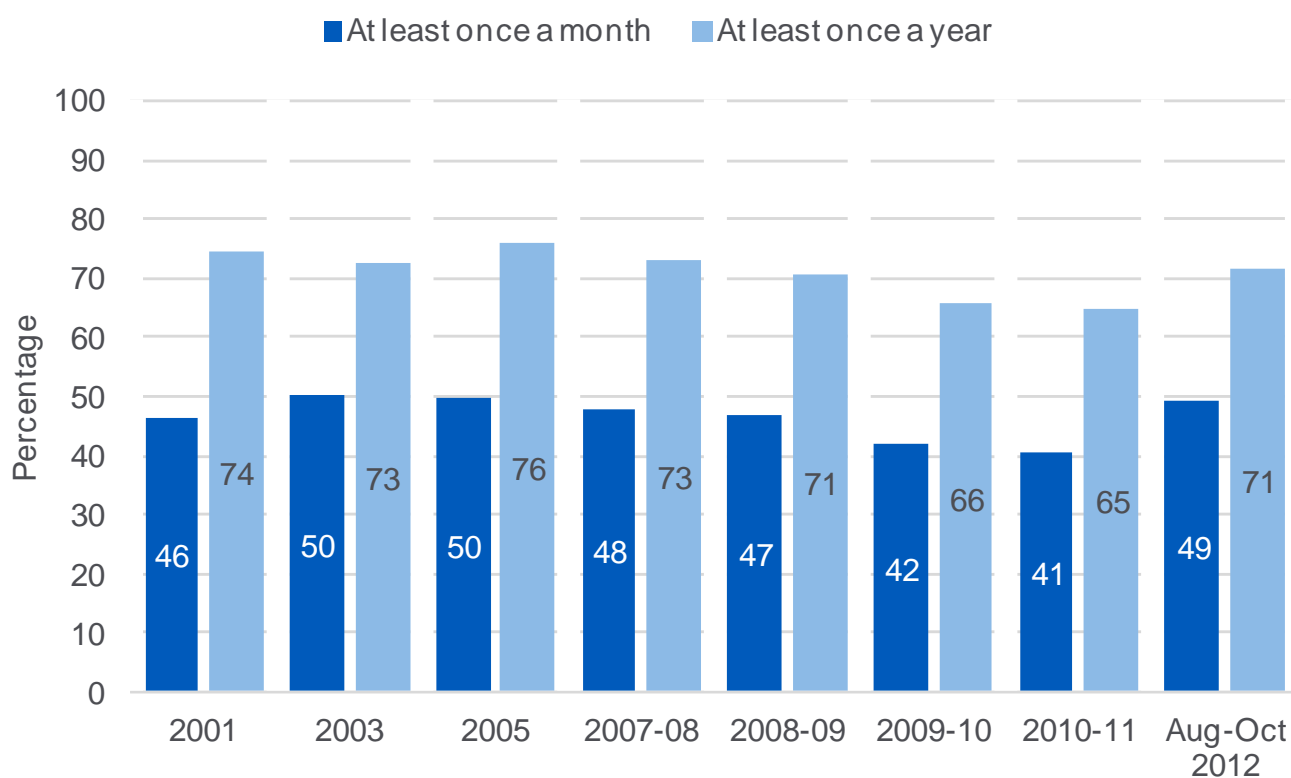

Figure 18: Whether people had participated in any volunteering, 2001 to August-October 2012

Table 14: Participation in voluntary activities, by age, ethnicity, employment status and region, 2010-11 to August-October 2012

Charitable Giving

In August-October 2012, nearly three-quarters (74%) of people had given money to charity in the four weeks prior to being interviewed, a similar level to 2010-11 (72%) and to all previous years apart from 2005, when 79 per cent of people gave to charity in the four weeks prior to being interviewed.
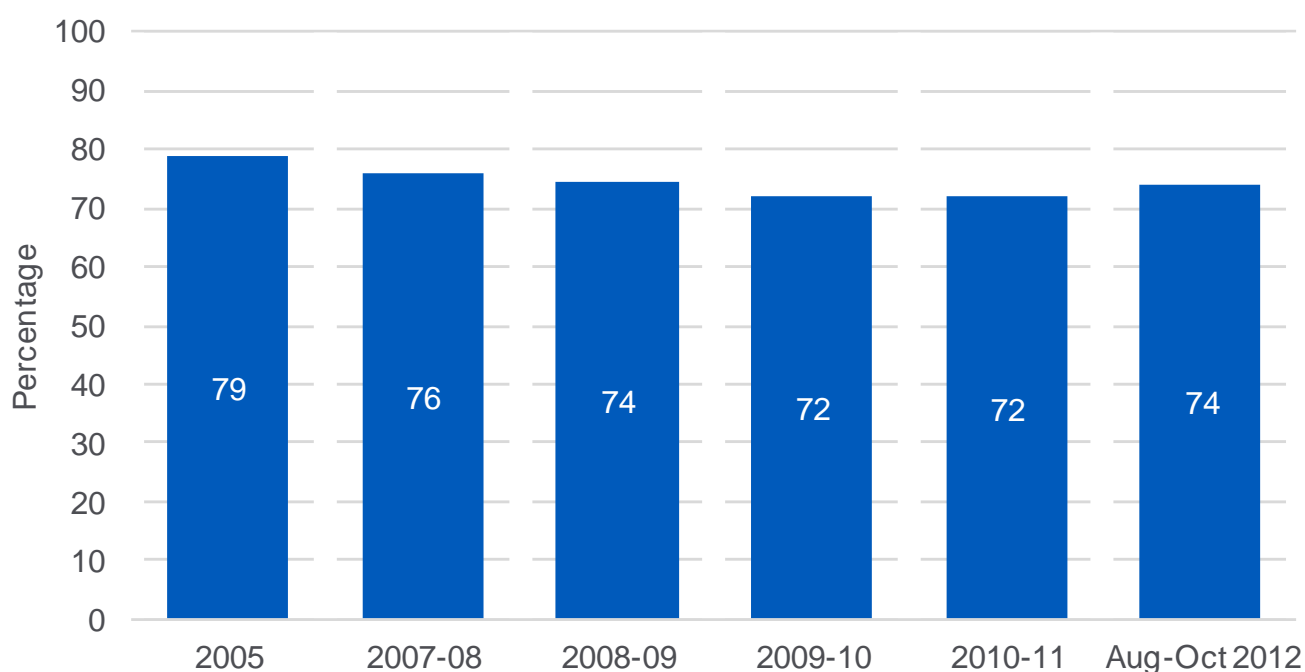
Figure 19: Whether people had given money to charity in the four weeks prior to being interviewed, 2005 to August-October 2012

- Table 15: Charitable giving by sex, age and ethnicity, 2005 to August-October 2012

In August-October 2012, on average[3] people gave £18.68 to charity in the four weeks prior to being interviewed. This is in line with adjusted[4] figures in all previous years.
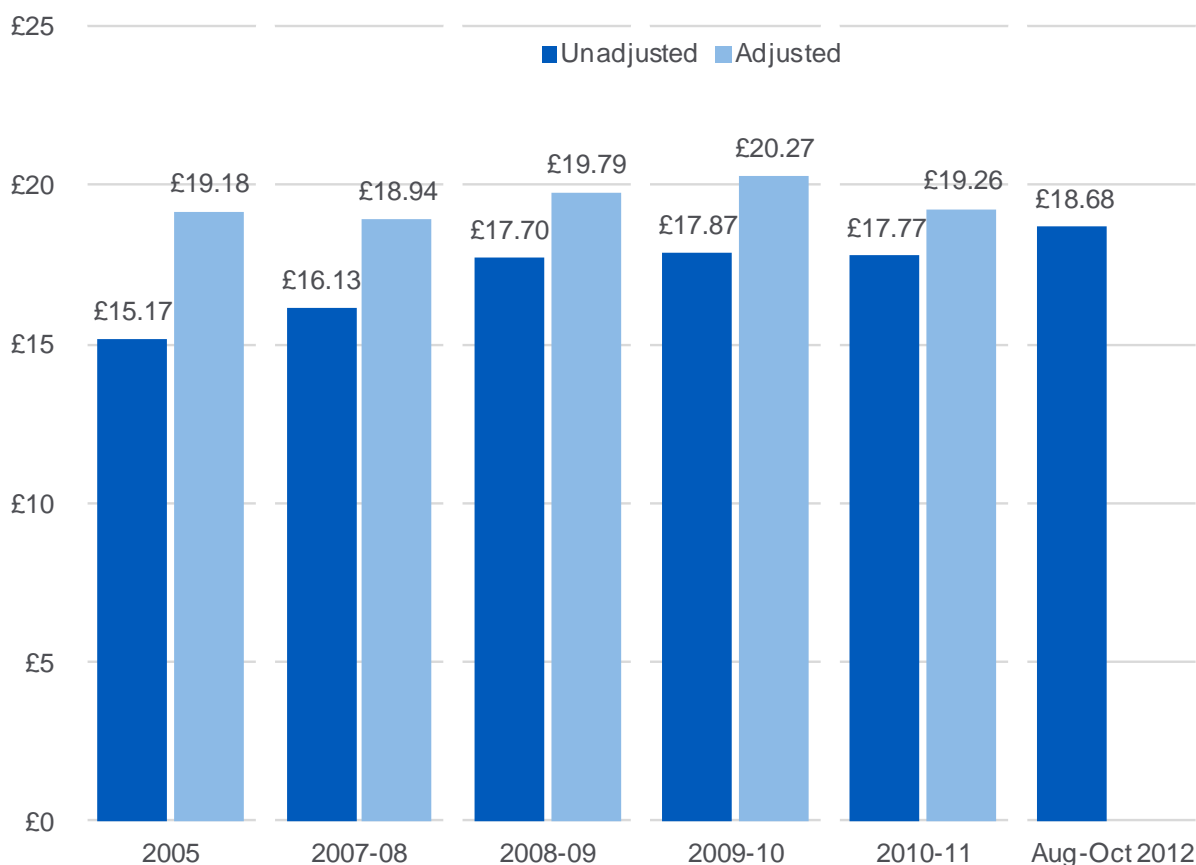
Figure 20: Average amount given to charity in the four weeks prior to interview, adjusted for inflation and unadjusted, 2005 to August-October 2012

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[3] Average (mean) excludes those who gave £300 or more and those who responded 'don't know' or for whom the figure was missing
[4] Inflation adjusted figures calculated using RPI measure of inflation

Fifty-nine per cent of those who gave money gave £10 or more, a significant increase on 2010-11 where this figure was 54 per cent. Over one in ten people (11%) gave £50 or more.
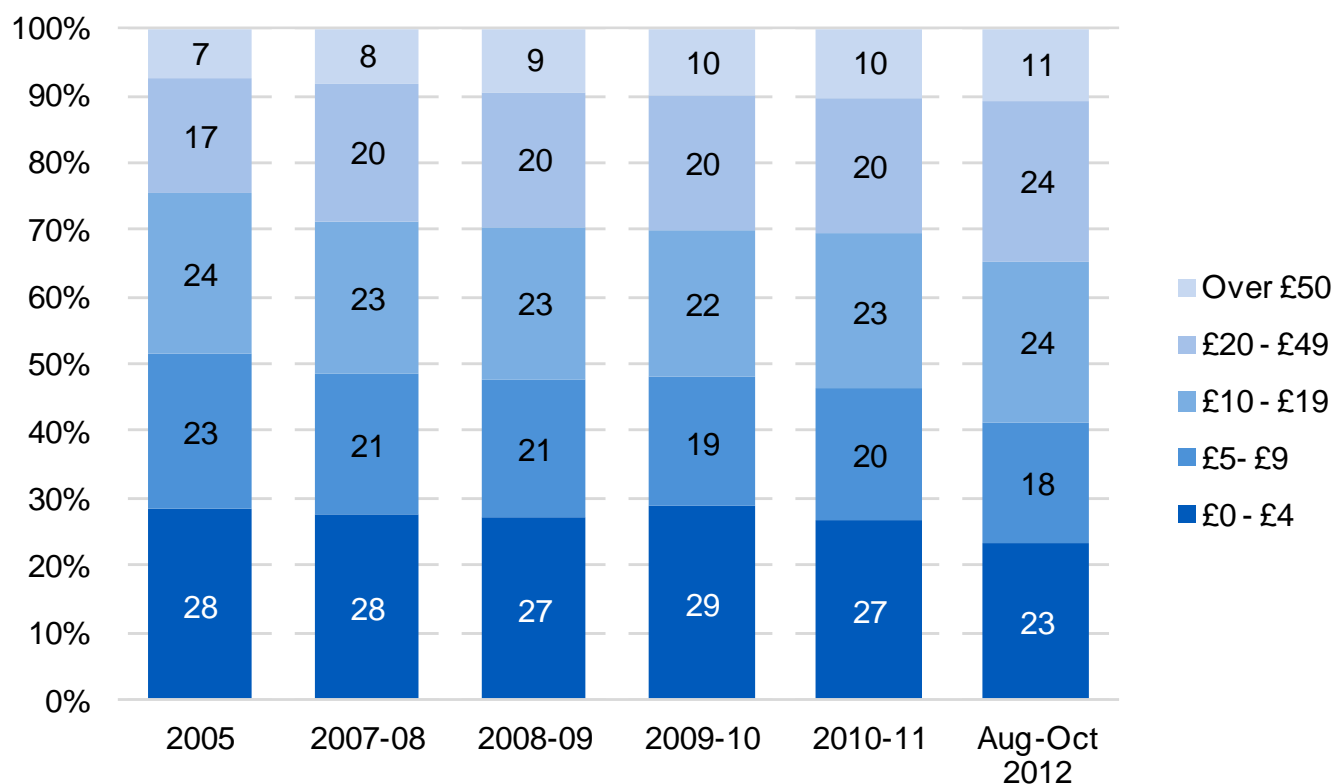
Figure 21: Amount given to charity in the four weeks prior to interview, 2005 to August-October 2012

- Table 16: Amount given to charity in the past four weeks, 2005 to August-October 2012

Well-being

In August-October 2012, the average[5] rating for overall life satisfaction was 7.5[6]. The average rating for whether people felt the things that they do in their lives are worthwhile was 7.8.
When asked about their day to day emotions, the average rating for 'happiness yesterday' was 7.4 and the average rating for 'anxiousness yesterday' was 2.9.

Figure 22: Average ratings for well-being measures, August-October 2012

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[5] Average=mean
[6] All measures use a 0 to 10 scale where 0 is 'not at all' and 10 is 'completely'

Annex A

Key terms and definitions

1. **Community cohesion** – local area (defined as 15-20 minutes walking distance) is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together.
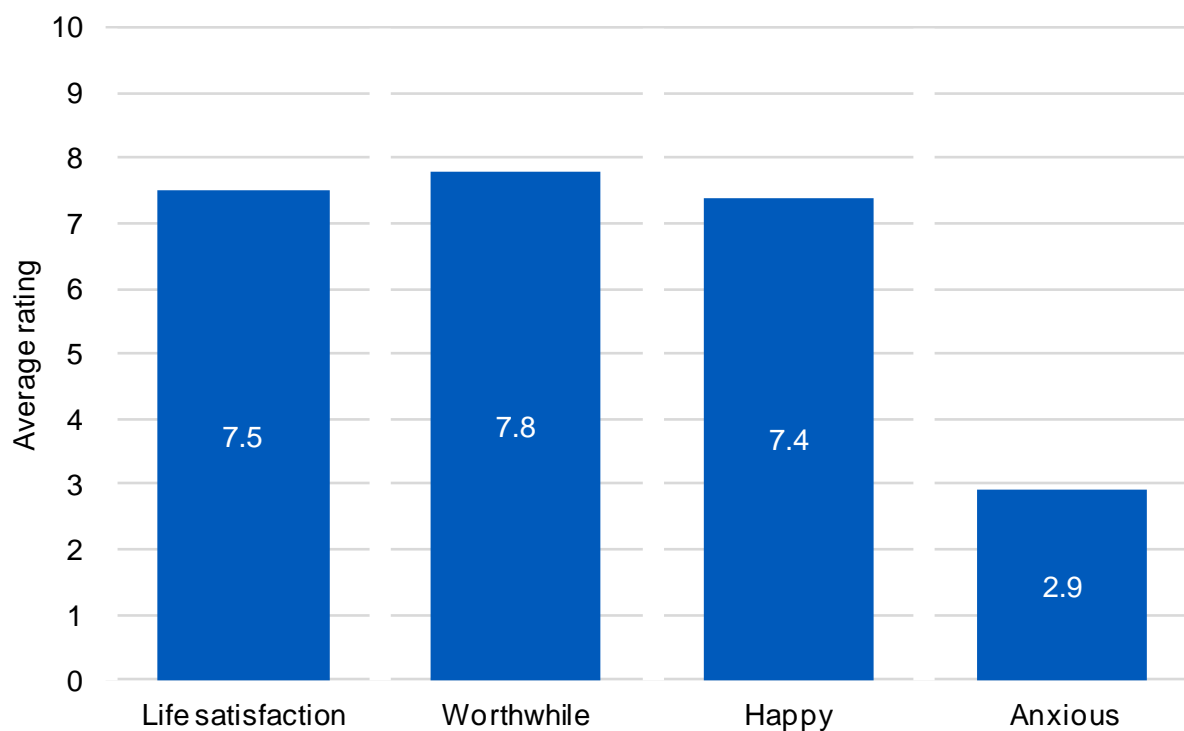
2. **Formal volunteering** – giving unpaid help through groups, clubs or organisations.

3. **Informal volunteering** – giving unpaid help as an individual to people who are not relatives.

4. **Civic engagement** – covers the following three separate measures:

   - Civic participation – engaging in one of the following activities:

     - contacting a local councillor, Member of Parliament, member of the Greater London Assembly
     - contacting a public official working for a local council, central Government, Greater London Assembly
     - attending a public meeting or rally
     - taking part in a public demonstration or protest
     - signing a petition (either paper petition or e-petition/online petition)

   - Civic activism – involvement (in person or online) either in direct decision-making about local services or issues, or in the actual provision of these services by taking on a role such as a local councillor, school governor or magistrate.

   - Civic consultation – active engagement (in person or online) in consultation about local services or issues through activities such as attending a consultation group or completing a questionnaire about these services.

5. **Local area** – area within a 15-20 minute walk from home.

Content of Report

6. The quarterly Statistical Releases are designed to report on the key topic areas within the Community Life Survey and includes data supporting the Cabinet Office's and Other Government Departments' key priorities. However the Community Life Survey covers many other topics which cannot all be incorporated into a Release such as this, so the underlying data will be made available through the University of Essex data archive.

7. Anonymised data for the full survey year will be available to download through the University of Essex Data Archive (www.data-archive.ac.uk) in Autumn 2013.

Background notes

8. The Community Life Survey is a new survey commissioned by the Cabinet Office and fieldwork for the survey is conducted by TNS-BMRB. It is a household survey covering a representative sample, which in 2012-13 will consist of 6,600 adults over three quarters, aged 16+ in England. The survey covers a range of topics including volunteering, charitable giving, social action, community cohesion and civic engagement.

9. The survey is carried out via face-to-face interviews. It has a continuous design which allows for headline findings to be published on a quarterly basis. This release covers the first quarter's worth of data, based on interviews carried out between August and October 2012 (Q2 2012-13). The total sample size for this period was 2,262. The median interview length was 31 minutes 8 seconds.

10. This release is an Official Statistic produced by the Cabinet Office to standards specified in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. More information can be found at http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/code-of-practice-for-official-statistics.pdf .

11. In accordance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, the statistics in this release match up to the six dimensions of quality defined by the European Statistical System (ESS). These are relevance, accuracy, timeliness, accessibility, comparability and coherence. More information on these quality indicators will be available in the full technical report for the Community Life survey, which will be published in Summer 2013.

12. The data are weighted to ensure the representativeness of the Community Life sample by compensating for differences in sampling probabilities and non-response by sub-group. Weighting is based on 2001 census population figures in terms of age, sex and regional distribution.

13. For more information about the Cabinet Office's revision policy and how revisions are handled for the Community Life Survey, please see Cabinet Office's statement of compliance on our website at http://communitylife.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/

14. All differences and changes reported in the release, both between groups and over time, are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level, unless otherwise specified. This means that the probability of any observed change happening by chance is low (1 in 20). The number of respondents the percentage is based on and the percentage observed will affect whether an observed change is statistically significant or not. A 'ready reckoner' has been provided alongside the Excel tables which can be used to test for statistical significance between percentages in the tables at the 95% confidence level. An overall design factor of 1.3 has been applied to the dataset. More information on design factors will be available in the full technical report for the Community Life Survey, which will be published in Summer 2013.

15. The Community Life Survey incorporates key measures from the previous Citizenship Survey (run by the Department for Communities and Local Government), and has used a comparable methodology in order that trends in such measures can be tracked over time. Where applicable, time series data is included in this release and accompanying outputs. Any statistically significant differences are based on a comparison between 2012-13 and 2010-11 data unless otherwise specified. The Citizenship Survey was commissioned by the Department for Communities and Local Government and ran from 2001 to 2010-11 (more information can be found at http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20120919132719/www.communities .gov.uk/communities/research/citizenshipsurvey/).

16. The Cabinet Office has consulted with end users on a number of different issues to inform and shape the future of the survey. A written response to this consultation will be published in due course and will be available at http://communitylife.cabinetoffice.gov.uk

17. The statistical contact for this release is Rebecca Wyton. Any comments on issues relating to this release or the survey in general are welcomed – please contact us at:

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18. The fieldwork for this survey is being conducted by TNS-BMRB. More information can be found at http://www.tns-bmrb.co.uk