

Digital skills – Bolton Libraries & Museum Services Consultation findings

**Report by Consultation & Engagement Team
Bolton Council, September 2023**

Introduction & methodology

Objectives

- To ascertain demand for and raise awareness of Bolton Libraries & Museum Service's digital skills offer.

Methodology

- An electronic survey [appendix one] was sent directly to known contacts and promoted online and via a marketing campaign. A paper questionnaire was available on request.
- The Digital Skills team undertook engagement within the library service and beyond, completing questionnaires with people who were unable to do so themselves

Analysis notes

- Results are presented in the questionnaire format, with 'don't know' type responses removed unless otherwise stated. Response options may be abbreviated, omitted for null responses, and / or ranked in order of popularity.
- Total percentages may exceed 100% where multi-responses were allowed and / or when rounded. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number.
- Base: unless otherwise stated, percentages are based on respondents to a particular question. Care should be taken with bases due to low responses for some questions.
- Data has been validated e.g. comments moved into existing response options.

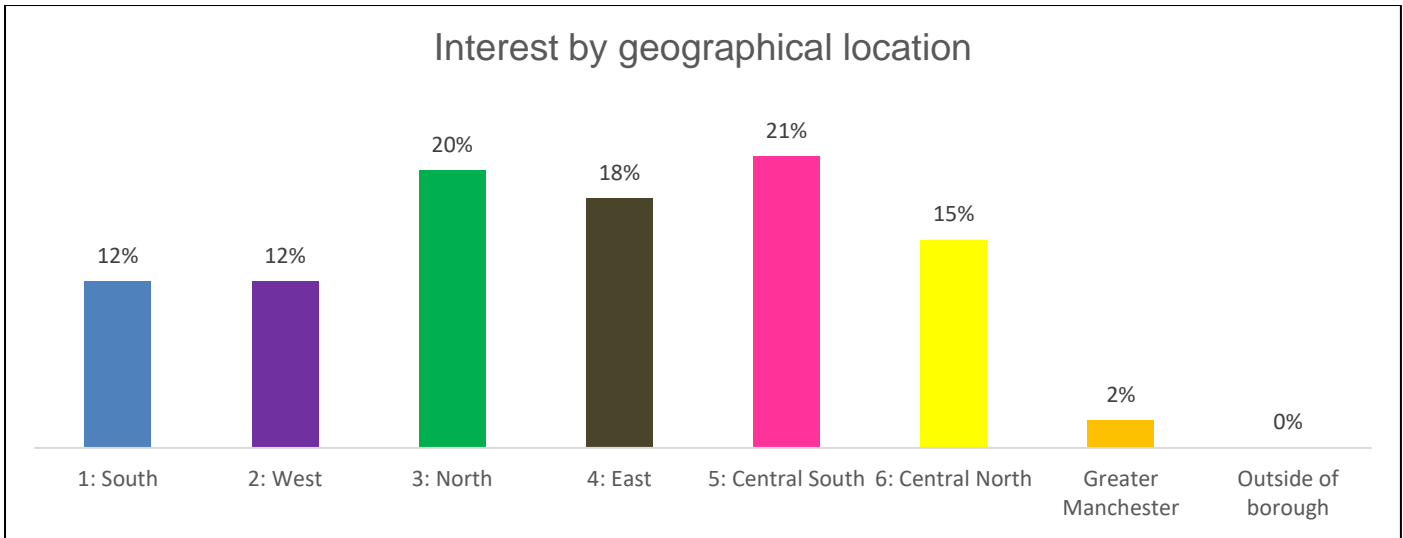
Responses

- 174 questionnaires were returned.
- 99 respondents consented to further contact from Bolton Libraries & Museums Service, regarding digital skills training and opportunities [Q14 to Q18]. Their contact details were shared with the relevant team shortly after the consultation closed.

Demographic summary

Detailed demographics are given in Appendix two. In summary:

- Respondents primarily lived within Bolton Council area [97%, Q19], predominantly Central South (21%), North (20%) and Bolton East (18%).
- The vast majority were fluent in English [95%, Q24].
- Seven out of ten were white British [68%, Q23].
- Two thirds were female [66%, Q20].
- Six out of ten were aged 45 or older [61%, Q22].
- 53% of respondents weren't economically active [in paid employment or self-employed] [Q21].



Consultation questions

Bolton library service

Q1: Before today, which of these did you know about Bolton libraries?

It's free to join Bolton libraries

- 66% of respondents already used the library service, and of the six services listed in Q1, awareness was greatest for this offer. 19% were aware of this service and planned to join in future, and 9% had been unaware but were interested.

Public computers can be used free of charge for an hour a day

- 41% of respondents already used the free public computer service, 16% were aware of the offer and planned to use it in future, and 20% had been unaware but were interested.

Public computers can be used for two / three hours a day for a small charge

- Only 23% of respondents currently paid for extra time, although 16% were aware and planned to use the service, and a further 28% had been were unaware but were interested.

Free wi-fi is available if you bring your own device

- 41% of respondents currently used the free wi-fi on their own devices, and 19% were aware and planned to this in future. At 31%, this offer had the highest percentage of respondents who were previously unaware but now planned to use it in future.

Library staff are available to help you get started or if you get stuck

- 46% of respondents knew about this and used it, 19% were aware and interested and 24% had been unaware but were interested.

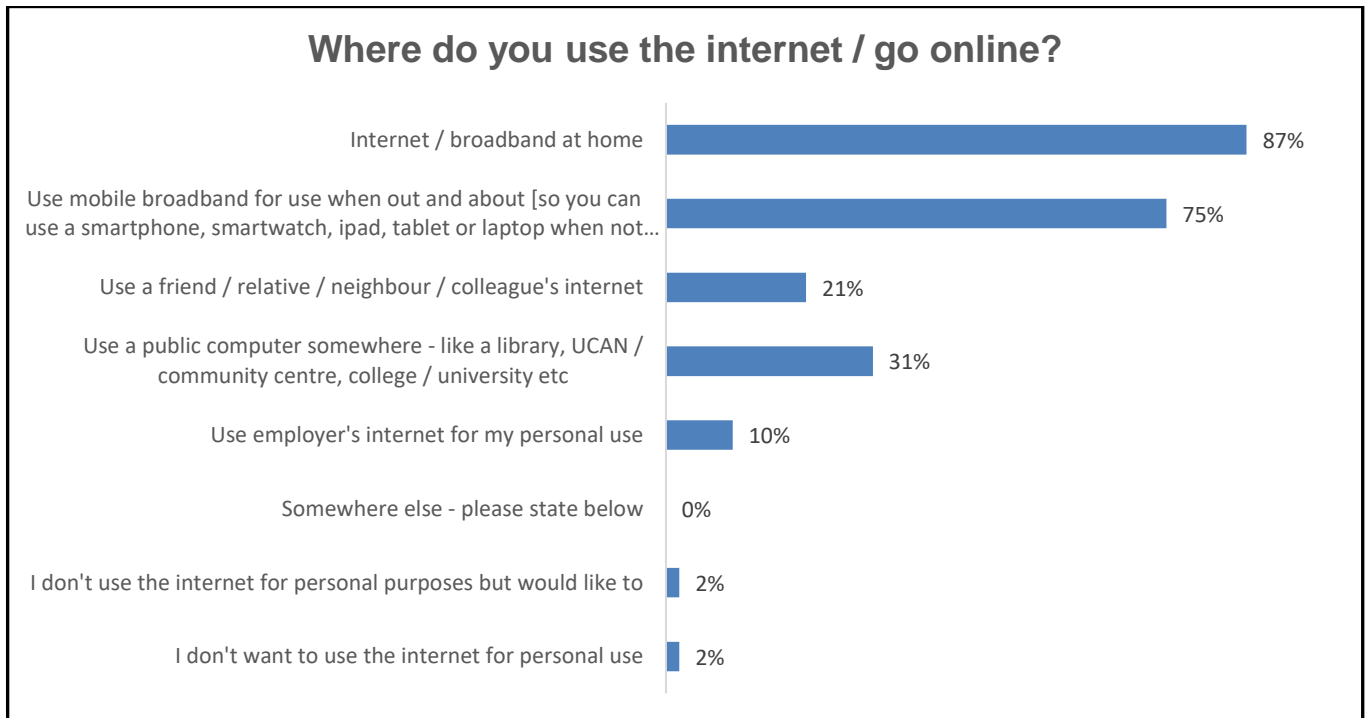
Low cost printing is available

- This was already used by 40% of respondents, with a further 18% aware and interested, and 28% unaware but interested.

Using the internet

Q2: Where do you use the internet / go online? (Please exclude any internet use that's just for work)

- 87% of respondents had internet / broadband at home.
- Three-quarters of respondents used mobile broadband, 31% used a public computer, 21% used the internet of someone they knew, and 10% used their employer's internet for personal use.
- 2% of respondents didn't use the internet for personal use but would like to.

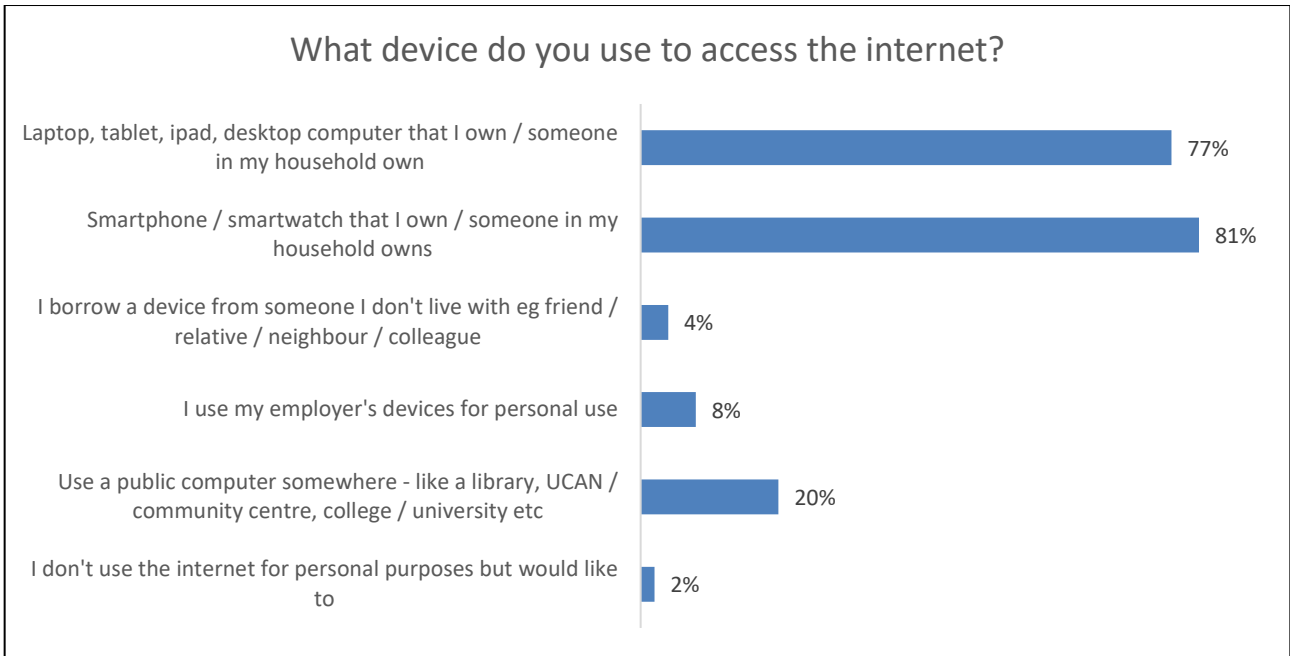


Q2: Base:173

Q3: What devices do you use to access the internet?

Please exclude any devices that you can only use for work

- 81% used a smartphone or smartwatch owned by themselves or someone in their household and 77% used a laptop, tablet, iPad or desktop computer owned by themselves or someone in their household.
- 20% used a public computer, 8% used their employer's device and 4% borrowed a device from someone outside their household.



Q3: Base:173

Respondents who indicated in Q2 or Q3 that they didn't use the internet for personal purposes, however would like to were routed to Q4.

Q4: What stops you using the internet?

- Five out of the six respondents to this question didn't have a device, three were unsure how to, and three were concerned about costs. Other responses are shown in the table.

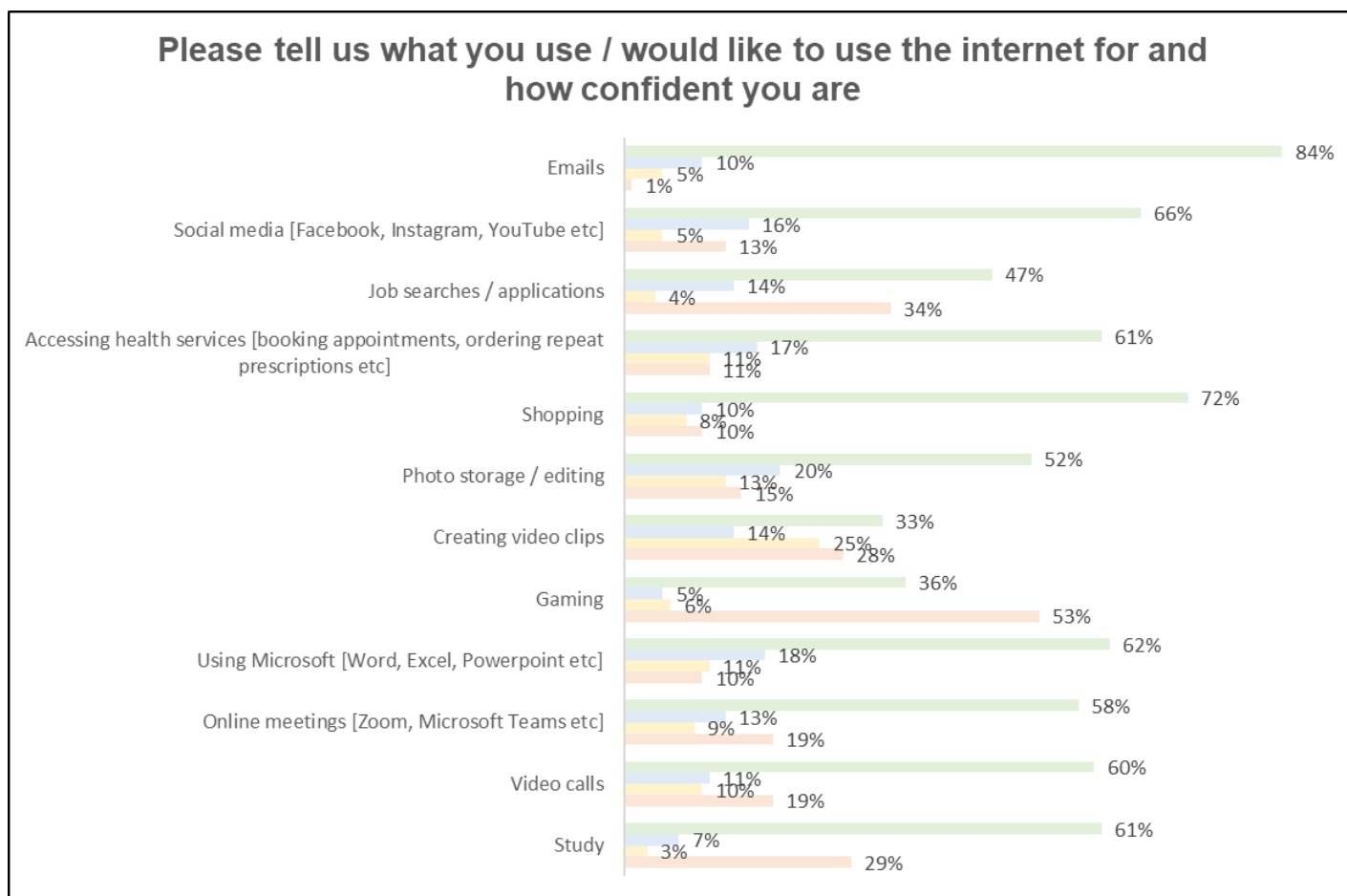
Q4: What stops you using the internet?	
Response	No. of respondents
Don't have a computer, laptop, tablet, smartphone, smartwatch etc	5
I'm not sure how to	3
Cost of broadband / cost of mobile data	3
Don't think my information is safe	2
My health / disabilities make it too difficult	1
Worry about cyber bullying	1
Nowhere private / quiet enough to use it	1
<i>Base</i>	6

Confidence and use

Q5: Please tell us what you use / would like to use the internet for and how confident you are.

We're just interested in your personal use - not things you do for work

- Respondents were using and most confident at emails [84%], shopping [72%] and social media [66%]
- When looking at the activities that they did but were not confident at, the top ones were photo storage / editing [20%], using Microsoft [Word, Excel, PowerPoint etc] [18%], and accessing health services [booking appointments, ordering repeat prescriptions etc] [17%].
- Turning to the activities respondents didn't do but would like to, the top ones were creating video clips [25%] photo storage / editing [13%], with accessing health services and using Microsoft products joint third at 11%.
- Half of respondents weren't interested in gaming.



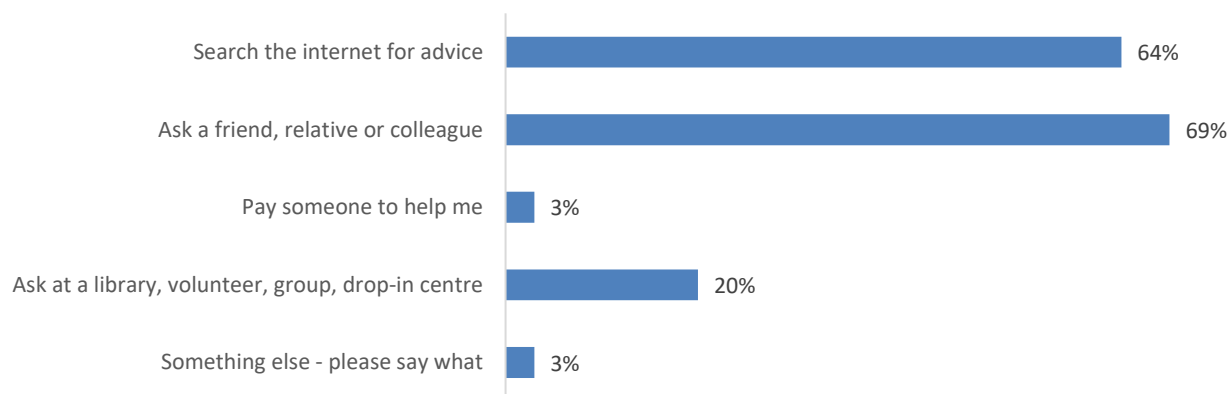
Q5: Bases: 151-169

Help and support

Q6: If you get stuck when using the internet, what do you do?

- Respondents who got stuck were most likely to ask a friend, relative or colleague for advice [69%] or to search the internet for advice [64%]. Only 20% would ask at a library, volunteer group or drop-in centre.
- Four respondents answered 'something else' one of these said they would "stay lost" with other seeking advice from other people / places or sorting it out for themselves.

If you get stuck when using the internet, what do you do?

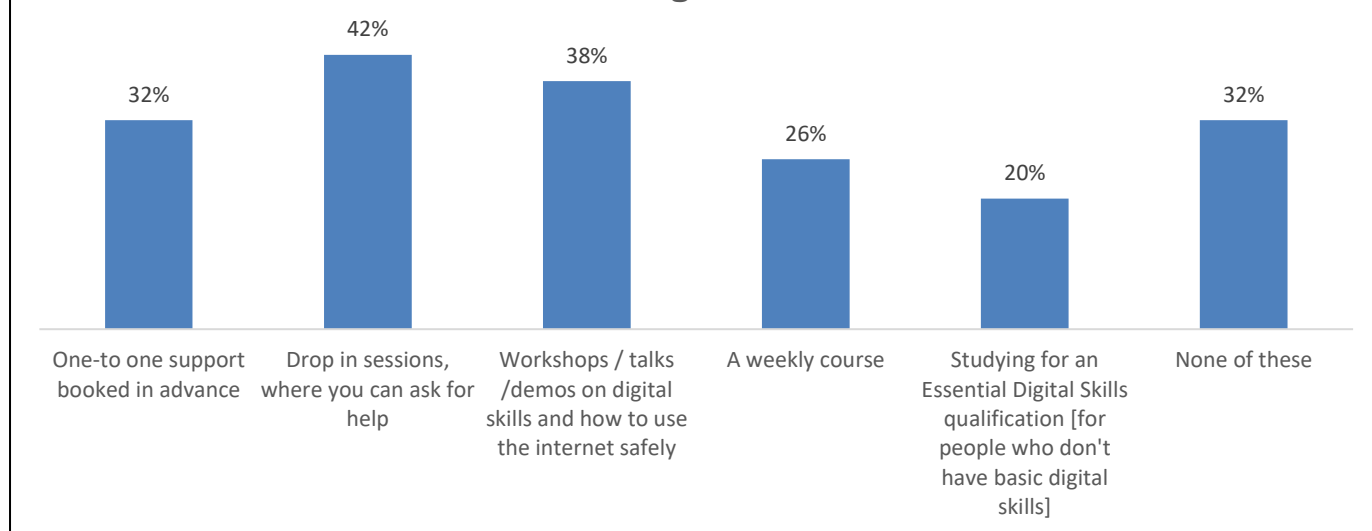


Q6: Base: 153

Q7: Which of these would you be interested in if they were offered free of charge at Bolton libraries?

- Of the offers listed, respondents were most interested in drop-in sessions [42%], workshops / talks / demos on digital skills and safe use [38%] and booked one-to-one support [32%]. A quarter of respondents were interested in a weekly course and a fifth were interested in an Essential Digital Skills qualification.
- 32% of respondents were not interested in any of these offers.

Which of these would you be interested in if they were offered free of charge at Bolton libraries?



Q7: Base: 168

Q8: If you don't have access to a digital device at home, would you be interested in borrowing a device with internet connectivity from Bolton Library and Museum Services?

- Of the 48 respondent who didn't have their own device, 60% expressed an interest in borrowing a device from the service.



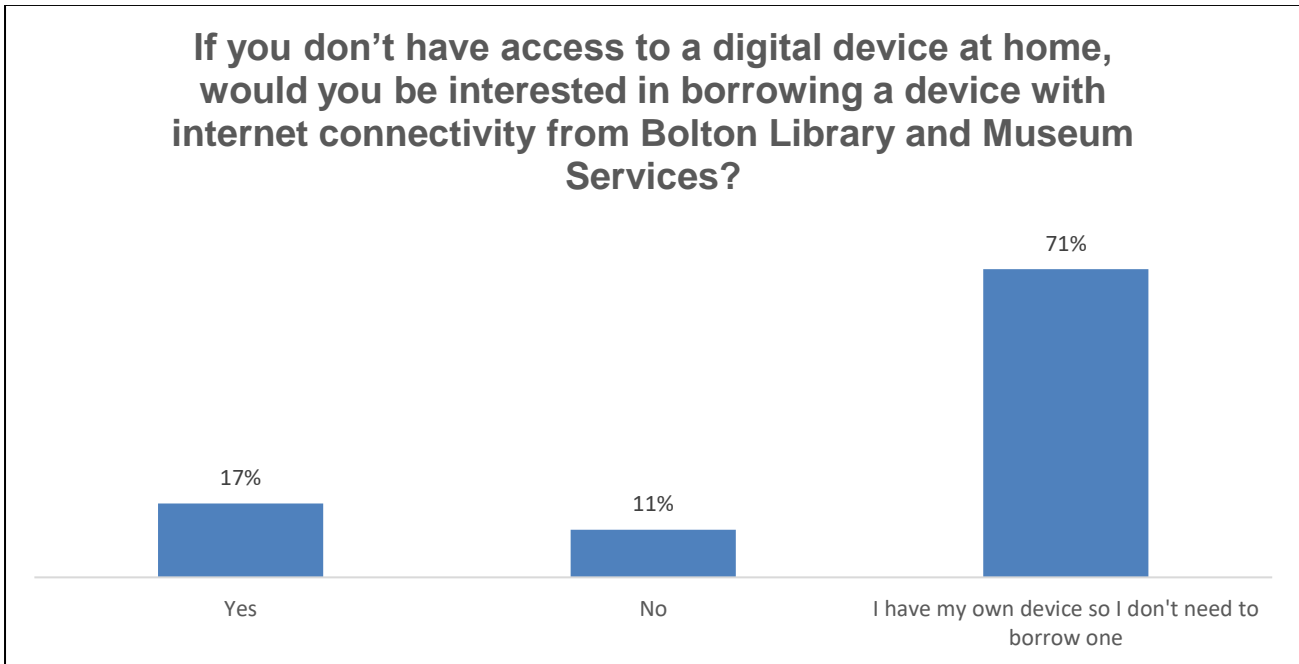
29
respondents

60%



19
respondents

40%



Q8: Base: 48

Q9: If you're on a low income you can apply for a free data, calls and texts SIM card via the National Databank.

Which of these apply to you?

- 43 [57%] of the 75 respondents who were on a low income were interested in this offer.



43
respondents

57%



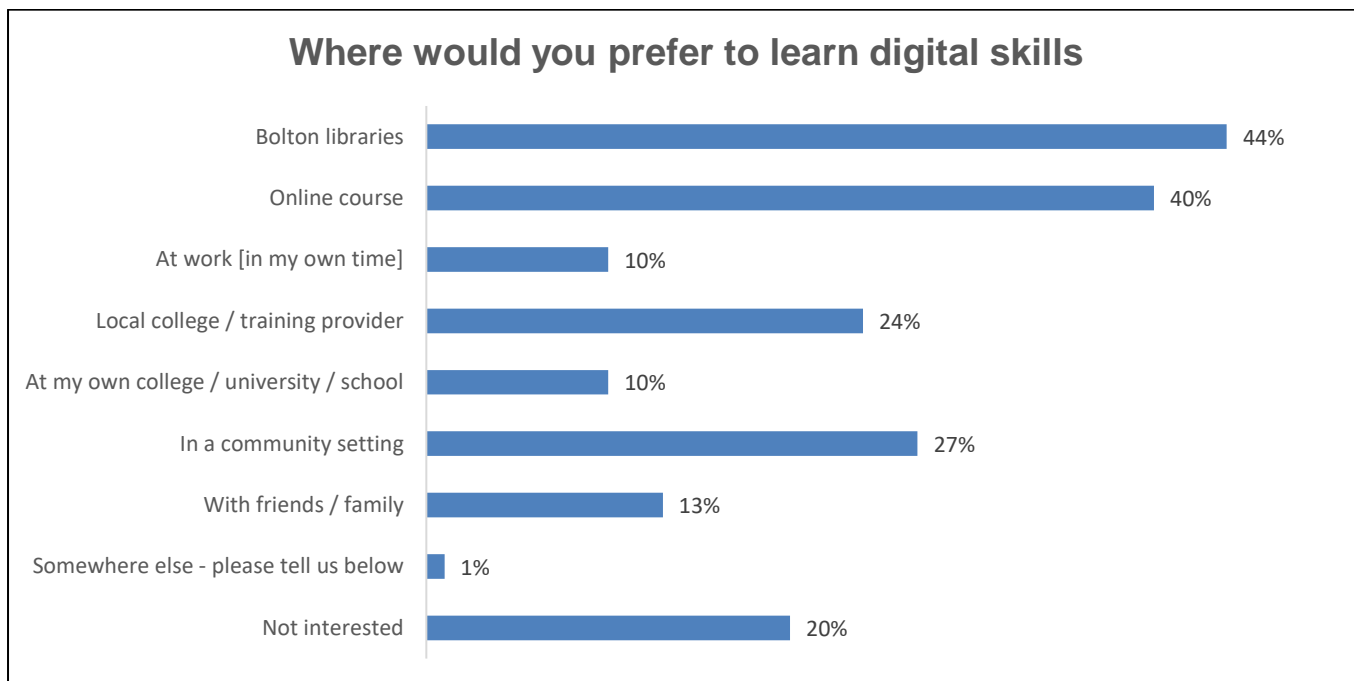
32
respondents

43%

Digital skills training

Q10: Where would you prefer to learn digital skills [for personal use not for work]?

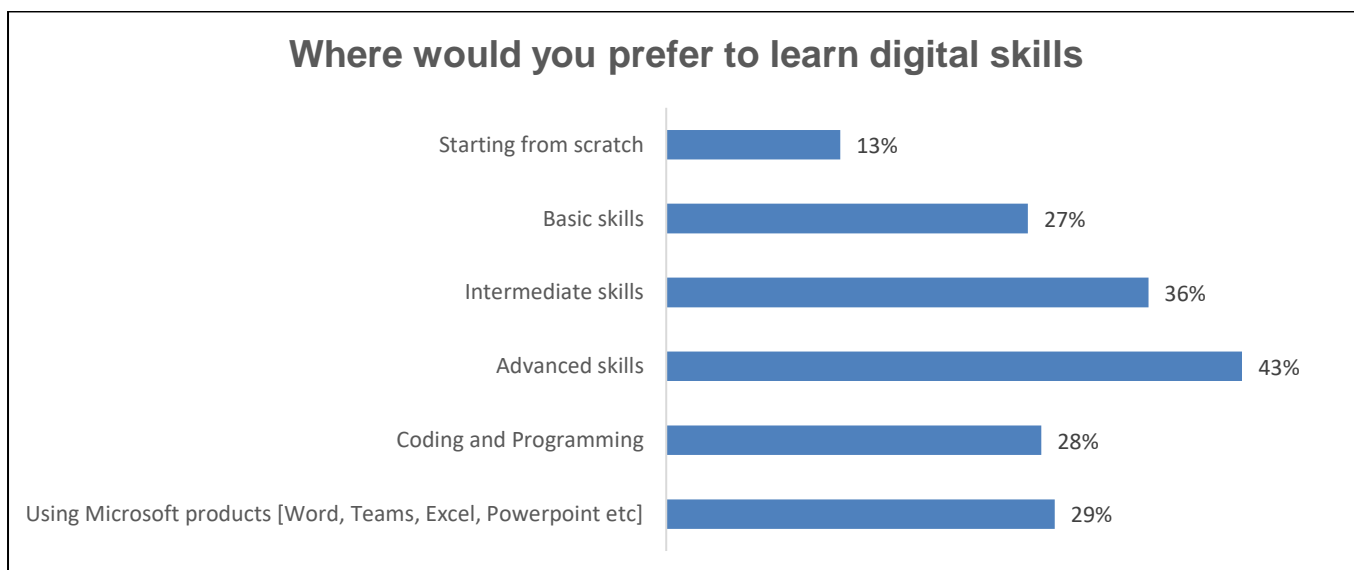
- 80% of respondents were interested in learning digital skills.
- The most popular places to learn were Bolton libraries [44%] or via an online course [40%].
- Both respondents who said 'somewhere else' wanted someone to visit them at home.



Q10: Base:169

Q11: What type / level of skills would you be interested in?

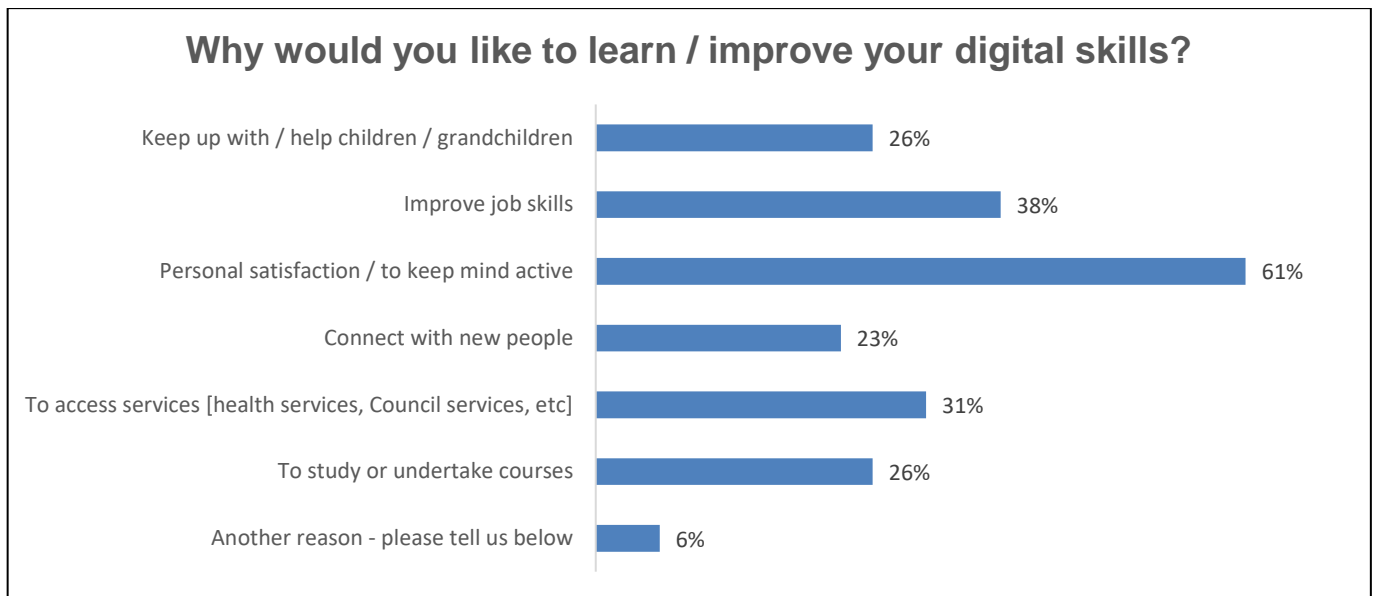
- The most popular offers were advanced skills [43%] and intermediate skills [36%].
- Only 19 respondents [13%] were interested in starting from scratch.



Q11: Base:148

Q12: Why would you like to learn / improve your digital skills?

- The vast majority of respondents [61%] wanted to learn for personal satisfaction / to keep the mind active. The next two most popular reasons were 38% who wanted to improve their job skills and 31% to have access to services.
- Of those saying 'another reason', two were struggling with Windows 11, one was struggling to keep up / learn at work, one felt these skills were “*essential skills for today*”. Other reasons included producing “*posters and advertising*”, “*photographic processing skills*” and “*testing software*”.



Q12: Base:150

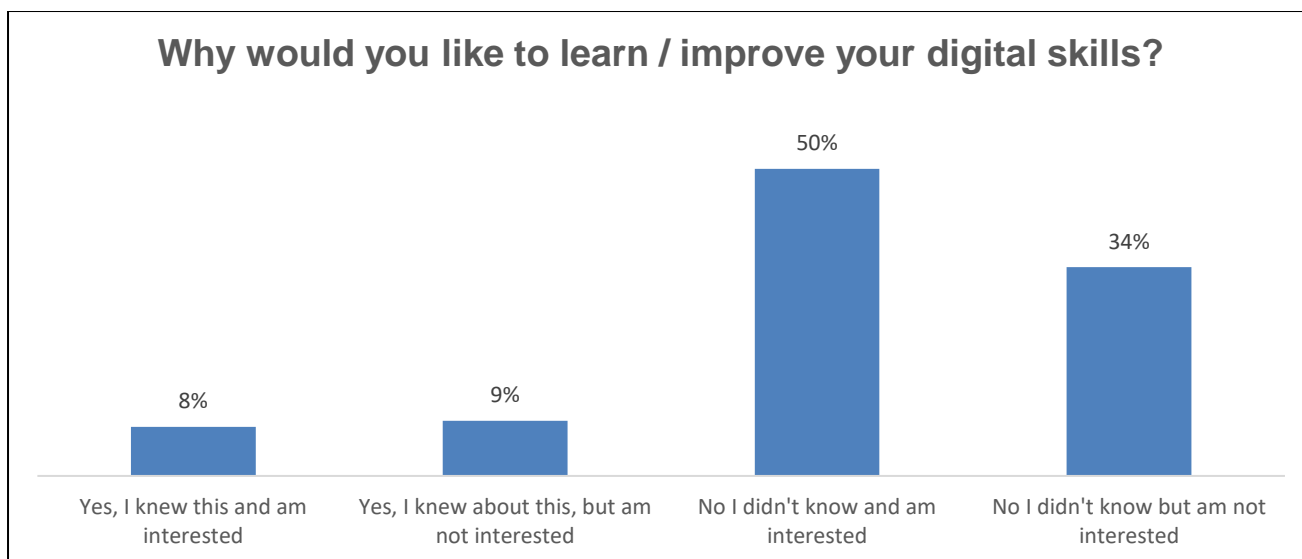
Level two digital skills training

All adults in Greater Manchester are entitled to free digital skills training from beginners to level two. That's equivalent to a GCSE / O Level pass. Bolton College are one of the places that offer a range of digital skills courses and qualifications up to this level.

Q13: Did you know about this entitlement to level two digital skills training?

- Only 29 respondents [17%] were aware of this offer, 99 respondents [58%] expressed an interest in level two training.

Why would you like to learn / improve your digital skills?



Q13: Base:171

Summary

The consultation has helped to raise awareness of the digital skills offer by Bolton Libraries & Museum Service. Whilst the number of respondents who don't currently use the internet for personal purposes is very low, there was an appetite for workshops, training and support from the Service.

Digital skills survey

It can be really useful to be able to use a computer and have digital skills. Emails and social media are great ways to keep in touch with friends and family, not to mention shopping and watching videos online. You might also want to use digital technology for looking for a new job or learn for pleasure.

Technology is changing rapidly though, and it can be hard to keep up - not to mention the cost of equipment and broadband.

Bolton Library and Museum Service can help. It's free to join our library service, and members can use our computers for up to three hours a day. The first hour is free, then just £1.10 an hour. We can help if you get stuck, have free wi-fi for people with their own device and offer low cost printing.

By giving your views in this survey you can help us make sure that we are providing the right sort of services and support to help people use digital technology and stay connected.

Your response - keeping your data safe

All questions are optional; just miss out any that you don't want to answer.

Whilst the results of this consultation may be made public you won't be identified in any report as your responses will be anonymised and grouped with those from other people.

Any personal data you provide will be held securely, in line with our retention schedule and privacy policy www.bolton.gov.uk/data-protection-freedom-information/privacy-notice
We use Snap Surveys professional software to collect and process your data. Their privacy policy can be found here www.snapsurveys.com/survey-software/privacy-policy-uk/. Snap Surveys Ltd. follow the UK General Data Protection Regulation.

Bolton library service

Q1. Before today, which of these did you know about Bolton libraries?

	Already use this	Aware of the service and plan to use in the future	Didn't know about this but interested	Not interested
It's free to join Bolton libraries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public computers can be used free of charge for an hour a day	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public computer can be used for two / three hours a day for a small charge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Free wi-fi is available if you bring your own device (laptop, smartphone, smartwatch, tablet etc)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Library staff are available to help you get started or if you get stuck	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Low cost printing is available	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Using the internet

Q2. Where do you use the internet / go online? Please exclude any internet use that's just for work

- Internet / broadband at home
- Use mobile broadband for use when out and about [so you can use a smartphone, smartwatch, ipad, tablet or laptop when not at home]
- Use a friend / relative / neighbour / colleague's internet
- Use a public computer somewhere - like a library, UCAN / community centre, college / university etc
- Use employer's internet for my personal use
- Somewhere else - please state below
- I don't use the internet for personal purposes but would like to
- I don't want to use the internet for personal use

If 'somewhere else' where do you use the internet?

Q3. What device do you use to access the internet? Please exclude any devices that you can only use for work.

A device is a laptop, tablet / iPad, desktop computer, smartphone or smartwatch.

- Laptop, tablet, ipad, desktop computer that I own / someone in my household owns
- Smartphone / smartwatch that I own / someone in my household owns
- I borrow a device from someone I don't live with eg friend / relative / neighbour / colleague
- I use my employer's devices for personal use
- Use a public computer somewhere - like a library, UCAN / community centre, college / university etc
- I don't use the internet for personal purposes but would like to
- I don't want to use the internet for personal use

Q4. What stops you using the internet?

- Don't have a computer, laptop, tablet, smartphone, smartwatch etc]
- I'm not sure how to
- Don't think my information is safe
- Worried about the effect on my physical / mental health
- My health / disabilities make it too difficult
- Worry about cyber bullying
- Cost of broadband / cost of mobile data
- Nowhere private / quiet enough to use it
- Don't have time
- Nothing stops me, just not interested
- Another reason - please state below

If 'another reason' please tell us more

Confidence and use

Q5. Please tell us what you use / would like to use the internet for and how confident you are. We're just interested in your personal use - not things you do for work

	Do this and confident	Do this but not confident	Don't do this but would like to	Not interested / not applicable
Emails	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social media [Facebook, Instagram, YouTube etc]	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Job searches / applications	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Accessing health services [booking appointments, ordering repeat prescriptions etc]	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Shopping	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Photo storage / editing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Creating video clips	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gaming	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Using Microsoft [Word, Excel, Powerpoint etc]	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Online meetings [Zoom, Microsoft Teams etc]	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Video calls	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Study	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Help and support

Q6. If you get stuck when using the internet, what do you do?

- Search the internet for advice
- Ask a friend, relative or colleague
- Pay someone to help me
- Ask at a library, volunteer, group, drop-in centre
- Something else - please say what
- I don't get stuck
- I don't use the internet

What do you do?

Q7. Which of these would you be interested in if they were offered free of charge at Bolton libraries?

- One-to one support booked in advance
- Drop in sessions, where you can ask for help
- Workshops / talks /demos on digital skills and how to use the internet safely
- A weekly course
- Studying for an Essential Digital Skills qualification [for people who don't have basic digital skills]
- None of these

Q8. If you don't have access to a digital device at home, would you be interested in borrowing a device with internet connectivity from Bolton Library and Museum Services?

- Yes
- No
- I have my own device so I don't need to borrow one.

Q9. If you're on a low income you can apply for a free data, calls and texts SIM card via the National Databank. Which of these apply to you?

Which of these apply to you?

- I'm not on a low income
- I'm on a low income and interested in this
- I'm on a low income but not interested

Digital skills training

Q10. Where would you prefer to learn digital skills [for your personal use not for work]
Digital skills includes using the computers, the internet, and programmes like Word,

- Bolton libraries
- Online course
- At work[in my own time]
- Local college / training provider
- At my own college / university / school
- In a community setting
- With friends / family
- Somewhere else - please tell us below
- Not interested

Where would you prefer to learn digital skills?

Q11. What type / level of skills would you be interested in?

- Starting from scratch
- Basic skills
- Intermediate skills
- Advanced skills
- Coding and Programming
- Using Microsoft products [Word, Teams, Excel, Powerpoint etc]

Q12. Why would you like to learn / improve your digital skills?

- Keep up with / help children / grandchildren
- Improve job skills
- Personal satisfaction / to keep mind active
- Connect with new people
- To access services [health services, Council services, etc]
- To study or undertake courses
- Another reason - please tell us below

If 'another reason' please tell us more

Level two digital skills training

All adults in Greater Manchester are entitled to free digital skills training from beginners to level two. That's equivalent to a GCSE / O Level pass. Bolton College are one of the places that offer a range of digital skills courses and qualifications up to this level.

Q13. Did you know about this entitlement to level two digital skills training?

- Yes, I knew this and am interested
- Yes, I knew about this, but am not interested
- No, I didn't know and am interested
- No, I didn't know, but am not interested

Keeping in touch

Q14. Please let us know how Bolton Libraries & Museums Service can contact you about with more information about the help and support we can offer. Your details will be held securely and only used to contact you about digital skills and learning opportunities. You can change your mind at any time by replying when we get in touch or emailing DES@bolton.gov.uk.

	Yes	No
Email	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Post	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Phone	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Text	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Email address

Q16. Name

Q17. Postal address

Q18. Telephone number

About you

Your answers in this section help us to make sure we are getting views from different types of people. They won't be used to contact or identify you.

Q19. Please give your full postcode

Q20. Are you...?

- Female Male Identify in another way

Q21. Which most closely describes you?

- Employed full time [30 hours or more a week] Full time student
 Employed part-time [up to 30 hours a week] At home, looking after family
 Self employed / freelance Retired
 Unemployed, available for work Other - please explain below
 Unable to work because of sickness / disability

If 'other' please explain

Q22. Which age group are you in?

- Under18 35 - 44 65 - 74
 18 - 24 45 - 54 75 - 84
 25 - 34 55 - 64 85 or over

Q23. What is your ethnic group?

- White British Asian or Asian British
 White other Black, Black British, Caribbean or African
 Mixed or Multiple ethnic group Other ethnic group

Q24. Are you fluent in English?

By this we mean that English is the language you normally use, or that you speak, read and write it well enough to get by in everyday life

- Yes No

Thanks! Please click 'submit' to send your response through to us

Detailed demographics

Q19: Please give your full postcode

- The vast majority of respondents [97%] lived within Bolton Council area.
- Of the four remaining respondents, 2 came under Rochdale Borough Council, 1 Bury Council and 1 Wigan Council.

Q19: Base:139

- The Borough breakdown of the 135 respondents from Bolton borough is as follows:
 - 11% Area 1 South
 - 12% Area 2 West
 - 20% Area 3 North
 - 18% Area 4 East
 - 21% Area 5 Central South
 - 15% Area 6 Central North.

Q20: Are you...?

- 66% of respondents were female, 32% Male and 2% 'identified in another way'.



66%



32%

Identify in
another way 2%

Q20: Base:168

Q21: Which most closely describes you?

- 53% of respondents weren't economically active [in paid employment or self-employed], a quarter were retired
- 42% of respondents were in paid employment.

Q21: Base:161

Q22: Which age group are you in?

- 61% of respondents were aged 45 or over.
- The age group with the largest number of respondents were: 55-64 [21%], 65-74 [19%], and 35-44 [19%].

Q23: What is your ethnic group?

- The majority of respondents were White British [68%]; the next largest group was Asian or Asian British [15%].
- Three quarters of respondent were White, with a quarter from other ethnic groups.

Q23: Base:166

Q24: Are you fluent in English?

- The vast majority [95%] of respondents were fluent, that is they normally used English or could speak, read and write it well enough to get by in everyday life.

Q24: Base:165