

East Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership

EQUALITY OUTCOMES 2025-2029

EAST AYRSHIRE

**Health &
Social Care**
Partnership

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1. INTRODUCTION

East Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) is fully committed to promoting fairness, dignity and respect while delivering services which provide equal opportunity for all in the East Ayrshire area. We also recognise that by promoting equality, dignity and human rights, our services, supports and staff will enable our service users to meet their personal outcomes and support communities.

NOTE: East Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) will be described as 'the Partnership' throughout the remaining pages in this Report.

The Partnership is legally obliged to ensure equity and fair treatment for all who have a protected characteristic, including service users and members of our workforce.

The characteristics that are protected by the Equality Act 2010 are:

- Age
- Race or Ethnicity
- Religion or Belief
- Disability
- Sex
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Gender reassignment

This obligation is embedded into our day-to-day business as directed by the General and Specific duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010. As part of these duties, we publish an annual report detailing our progress in mainstreaming equalities practice into our day-to-day practices and how we put equality, diversity and inclusion at the heart of how we operate as a service provider and in our collaborative work with partners.

Every four years we must publish a set of Equality Outcomes, which will direct our focus on a range of priority areas that we have identified as an organisation to help address and promote equality of opportunity for people with a protected characteristic. These outcomes are also expected to bring improvements in outcomes of those who experience discrimination and disadvantage.

This report presents our new set of Equality Outcomes covering the period 2025 to 2029 and these will be kept under review with the potential that there may be an opportunity to develop additional outcomes during this period. Our Equality Outcomes have been developed by considering evidence, examining the positive and negative impacts on protected characteristics, and engaging with our stakeholders and service users on the issues most pertinent to them.

We are confident that our new set of Equality Outcomes will help us take actions which will reduce discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good

relations between persons with Protected Characteristics. This will ensure that the services we deliver and the care we provide is person-centred, human rights based, and places Equality at the heart of everything we do.

2. BACKGROUND TO THE PARTNERSHIP

The Partnership places equality at the centre of our strategic planning and in the design and implementation of the supports and services we provide for our communities across East Ayrshire. We are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity and social inclusion for all our service users, visitors and employees and through delivery of our services, we aim to support all people living in East Ayrshire to live the healthiest life possible.

The role of the Partnership is to help improve and maintain the health and wellbeing of all people in East Ayrshire and in undertaking this duty, we endeavour to work towards the nine [National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes](#) set out by the Scottish Government.

Services delivered by the Partnership include the full range of community-based health and care services and the Partnership is also the Lead Partnership across Ayrshire and Arran for Primary and Urgent Care Services. Details of the service provided by the HSCP are shown in the table below:

Community-based health and care services				
Allied Health Professionals	Children's Health, Care and Justice	Locality Health and Care	Primary Care	Wellbeing and Recovery
Dietetics	Children and Families Social Work	Older People's Social Work	General Medical Services – GP practices	Adult Social Work
Occupational Therapy	Children's Health Services (Health Visiting and School Nursing)	Day Services	Community Pharmacies	Day Services
		Elderly Mental Health Team		
Orthotics	Justice Social Work	Care at Home	Community Optometry Practices	Adult Care at Home
Physiotherapy	Prison and Police Custody Health Services	Care Homes	Dental Practices	Adult Care Homes
Podiatry	Public Protection and Learning	Sensory Impairment		Physical Disabilities (Residential)
Speech and Language Therapy	Ayrshire Out of Hours Social Work Service	District Nursing		Mental Health Services
Musculoskeletal Service		East Ayrshire Community Hospital Services		Learning Disability Services
		Hospital Social Work		Alcohol and Drug Services
		Community Equipment and Adaptations		

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

In June 2024, the Partnership published its new three-year [Strategic Plan 2024-27](#), which sets out our strategic direction and the priorities we will pursue to help improve the health and wellbeing of the people of East Ayrshire. The plan sets out the vision for the Partnership, which is:

Working together with our communities to improve and sustain health, wellbeing, care and promote equity.

Our Strategic Plan is focussed on addressing inequalities that exist in East Ayrshire as a result of a range of factors including poverty and deprivation, which can place people at increased risk of mental illness, chronic disease, higher mortality and lower life expectancy. We also know that members of our communities with protected characteristics also face a range of challenges and barriers which can have a negative impact on their health, and wellbeing and which can prevent them from achieving positive outcomes. A key aspect of the Strategic Plan is to focus support on all those groups who need it most and this is clear throughout our six strategic priorities:

	Starting Well, Living Well and Dying Well	More people and families have better health and wellbeing and we have fairer outcomes.
	Caring for East Ayrshire	Health and social care is delivered in a way that promotes wellbeing and suits people and families.
	People at the Heart of What We Do	People, unpaid carers, families and communities achieve their outcomes through seamlessly joined up support- they are at the centre of all we do and support is a positive experience.
	Caring for Our Workforce	The health and social care workforce is well and we have the right people with the right skills in the right place at the right time, to support people, families and communities to achieve their goals.
	Safe and Protected	East Ayrshire is a safe place for people to live, work and visit.
	Digital Connections	Digital technology has improved local wellbeing and transformed health and care.

3. PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT

The Partnership's [Participation and Engagement Strategy 2023-2026](#) sets out our key principles for participation and engagement to ensure that people are involved, consulted with, and actively engaged in the design and development of health and social care within East Ayrshire.

The Partnership is aware that effective community engagement is a way to build and sustain relationships between public services and communities and to do so in a way that helps us to understand and take action on the needs or concerns experienced by communities.

When the Partnership participates in community engagement we do so with a full understanding that our communities are diverse and can be defined in various ways including communities of identity i.e. a group of people defined by how they are identified by themselves or by a society.

In recognition of the diversity of our communities, the Partnership identified a priority outcome as part of its Participation and Engagement Strategy that targeted those members of our communities who can be under-represented or who may encounter multiple barriers to engaging. This outcome is highlighted below.

Outcome 4: We will take additional measures to involve groups with protected characteristics and people who are excluded from participating due to disadvantage relating to social or economic factors.

In our work towards achieving this outcome we hope to achieve more meaningful engagement that breaks down the barriers currently experienced by those with a protected characteristic and to encourage participation, build trust and provide further opportunities for development with our communities of identity.

4. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The Equality Act

The [Equality Act 2010](#) is the principal legal framework in the UK that protects the rights of individuals, advances equality of opportunity for all and protects people from discrimination, harassment and victimisation. Integration Joint Boards (IJBs) were added to the public bodies listed in the Equality Act (general and specific duties) in June 2015.

The Public Sector Equality Duty

The Public Sector Equality Duty (or General Duty) came into force in 2011 and its purpose is to ensure that public authorities consider how they can positively contribute to a more equal society. Specifically, the Public Sector Equality Duty requires public authorities, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Equality Duty also requires public bodies to consider how their activities as employers affect people who share different protected characteristics and to publish a set of equality outcomes, which they considered would enable it to better perform the equality duty.

The Equality Duty states that in preparing their equality outcomes public bodies:

- Take reasonable steps to involve persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and any person who appears to the authority to represent the interests of those persons; and
- Consider relevant evidence relating to persons who share a relevant protected characteristic.

Specific Equality Duties

In addition to the general duties as listed above, the Act also places specific duties on public bodies:

- Publish a report on how it has mainstreamed equality into the day-to-day operations of the organisation.
- Publish a report on progress towards its equality outcomes.

- Make any reports published fully accessible to all.
- Assess relevant policies, procedures and practices through Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) in terms of our current reporting obligations, IJBs need not.
- Gather and use employee information.

Fairer Scotland Duty

The Fairer Scotland Duty came into force in Scotland in 2018 and places a legal responsibility on particular public bodies, including IJBs, to actively consider how they can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage, when making strategic decisions. As part of the Fairer Scotland Duty, public bodies are also required to publish a written assessment showing how they have done this.

5. DEVELOPMENT OF OUR EQUALITY OUTCOMES 2025-2029

National guidance on the establishment of equality outcomes states that they are required to be both proportionate and relevant to the functions and strategic priorities of the organisation which is setting them. Guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission also advises that an organisations Equality Outcomes be focused on overcoming challenges to groups with protected characteristics and also be aligned with the organisations overarching strategic goals and ambitions.

The new equality outcomes presented in this document are the third set of outcomes developed and monitored by the Partnership, and these will build on the previous set of equality outcomes which covered the period 2021-2025. By reviewing, revising and publishing equality outcomes on a four-year basis the Partnership aims to make better, fairer decisions and show that they are bringing tangible benefits for our communities and our employees.

These Equality Outcomes will be introduced in April 2025 and will no longer be based on a shared Pan-Ayrshire approach as was previously the case between 2015 and 2024 with our public sector partners across Ayrshire. Instead, the new set of Equality Outcomes will be focused on reflecting the diverse health and social care needs of the population of East Ayrshire and the range of services delivered by the Partnership.

In developing our new set of equality outcomes, we applied the shared definition of an 'outcome' that was used by partners in the development of the 2021-2025 Pan-Ayrshire Equality Outcomes. This helped to ensure consistency and rigour in our approach to identifying the Partnership's Equality Outcomes for 2025-2029.

Outcomes are not what we do, but the beneficial change or effect which results from what we do. These changes may be for individuals, groups, families, organisations or communities. Specifically, an Equality Outcome should achieve one or more of the following, eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and/or foster good relations.

We also developed and adhered to a set of core criteria in the development of our outcomes, which are highlighted below. Each Equality Outcome will:

- Align with and represent the IJB's priority areas for equality
- Link with longer term national outcomes.
- Be achievable over the next 4 years

We also adopted a structured approach to the research and development we undertook to help us identify our new set of Equality Outcomes. These stages and each of the activities that were undertaken during these different stages are highlighted below.

1. **Evidence and data review** - Desk-based research to form a database of evidence and establish a baseline of key facts, figures and key issues.
2. **Engagement with stakeholders** - Engagement with key partner organisations to help identify key equality priorities.
3. **Engagement with equality groups** - Engagement with East Ayrshire Equality Forum and attendance at equality group events and forums.
4. **Equalities Survey** - Survey for service users and staff from across the HSCP, to gather views on equality priorities, both as a workforce and for delivering services to patients and service users.
5. **Staff Engagement sessions** - Sessions with staff from across the HSCP, to share examples of good practice and discuss equality priorities moving forward.

Provided below is a summary of the different stages and approaches we undertook and the evidence and findings we were able to review and assess as part of the development process that allowed us to identify our new set of Equality Outcomes for the HSCP.

East Ayrshire Equality Data: Workforce

Information on the levels of Partnership staff with a protected characteristic was provided by our HR Department. This information provided us with the latest (August 2024) data on the numbers of our staff who possessed one of five of the nine protected characteristics. This information helped to provide us with a more detailed insight of our staff demographics and ensured that we gave important consideration to identifying outcomes that would ensure appropriate protection from discrimination for staff with a protected characteristic and for growing and nurturing an inclusive workplace.

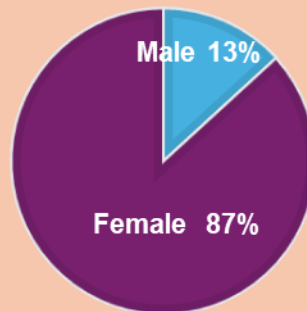
The information on protected characteristics workforce data provided by HR Research included staff breakdowns of:

- Age
- Ethnicity
- Disability
- Marital Status
- Sexuality

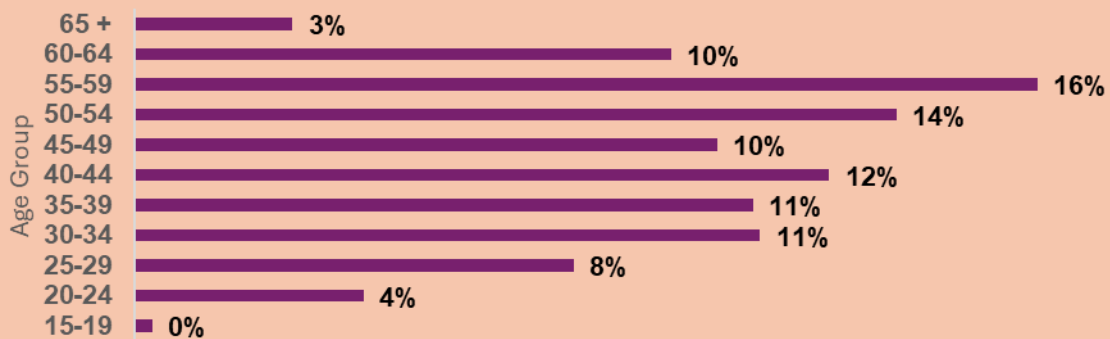
Detailed graphs highlighting these key staff demographics are highlighted below.

EAST AYRSHIRE HSCP WORKFORCE: GENDER PROFILE

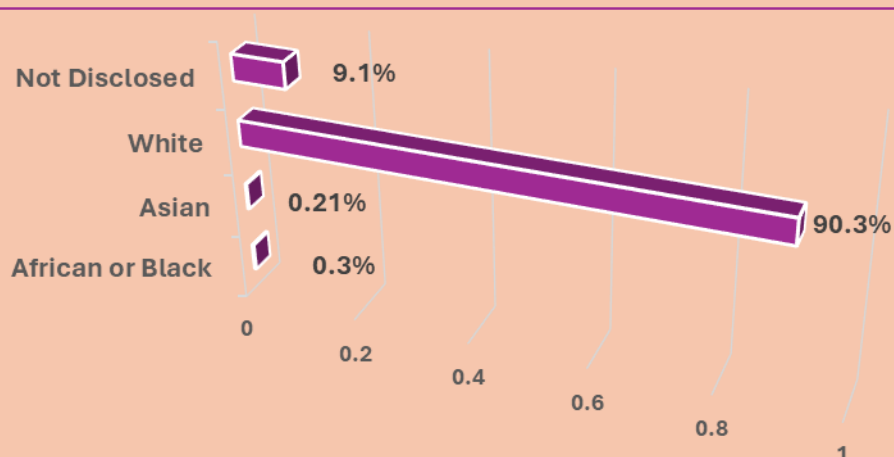
Male Female



EAST AYRSHIRE HSCP WORKFORCE: AGE PROFILE

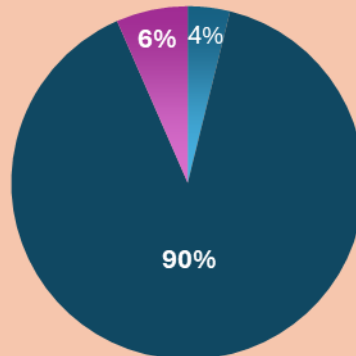


EA HSCP WORK PROFILE: RACE DISTRIBUTION



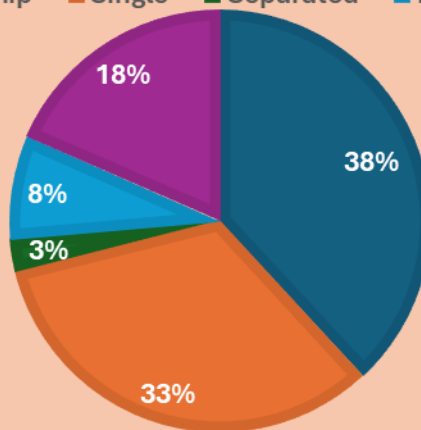
EA HSCP WORKFORCE: STAFF DISABILITIES PROFILE

■ With Disability ■ Without Disability ■ Prefer not to say



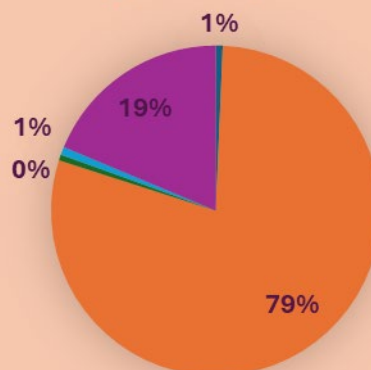
EA HSCP WORKFORCE: MARITAL STATUS

■ Married/Civil Partnership ■ Single ■ Separated ■ Prefer not to say ■ Other



EA HSCP WORKFORCE: SEXUAL ORIENTATION

■ Bisexual ■ Heterosexual/ Straight ■ Gay ■ Lesbian ■ Prefer not to say



East Ayrshire Council Employee Engagement Survey 2023

East Ayrshire Council also undertook an employee engagement survey in November 2023 with the aim of discovering employee views on feeling supported, empowered, and valued in the work that they undertook. As employees of the Council this survey was also completed by staff of the Partnership and the overall response rate to the survey was very positive with approximately 1,800 employees taking the time to respond to the questionnaire.

As part of the survey staff were asked for their experiences of Equality and Diversity within their area of work, their understanding of the importance of diversity across the workforce, and their awareness of the Equally Safe at Work accreditation and programme delivered by the Council is involved with. The key findings from the Equality and Diversity section of the survey were as follows:

- 74% of employees stated that they had completed equality and diversity training
- 68% of employees stated they were aware of Equally Safe at Work
- 97% stated that they understood the importance of equality in the workplace
- 88% of employees agreed that East Ayrshire Council encouraged equal opportunities.
- 13% of employees felt that equality concerns are not handled well
- 13% of employees don't feel safe reporting equality concerns

In response to feedback from employees feeling safe to report equality and dignity at work matters, the Council developed and implemented the Support and Report Hub where employees can now access support in relation to any form of harassment or inappropriate behaviour experienced in the workplace. Employees are also now able to report incidents anonymously to allow the Council to monitor any areas of concern across the Council and provide that feeling of safety.

East Ayrshire Census 2022 Results

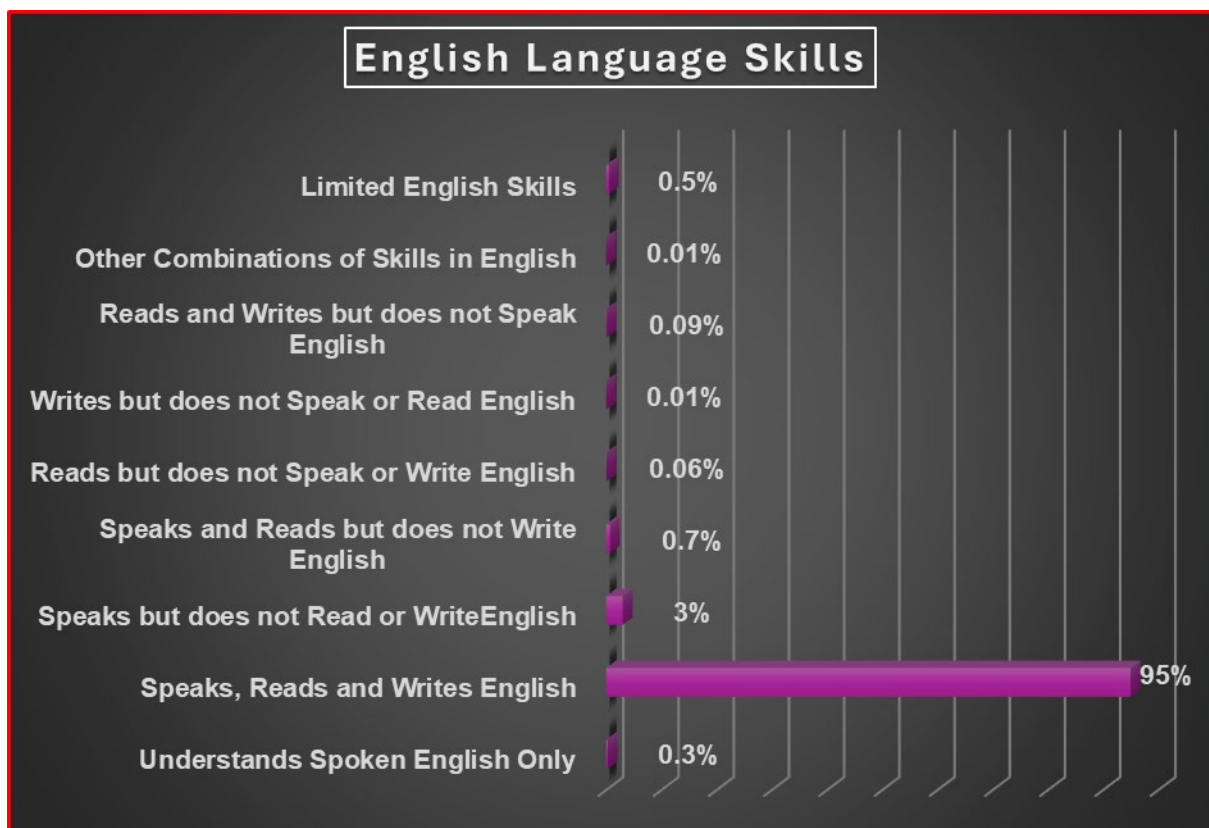
The census is the official count of every person and household in Scotland that takes place every 10 years and which provides the most complete statistical picture of the demographic characteristics of people in Scotland. The results of the census in terms of the data produced is used by public services to meet local needs across a range of areas including in health, education, transport, planning, and community care services and is also applied by public authorities and third sector organisations to inform a wide range of equality-based issues.

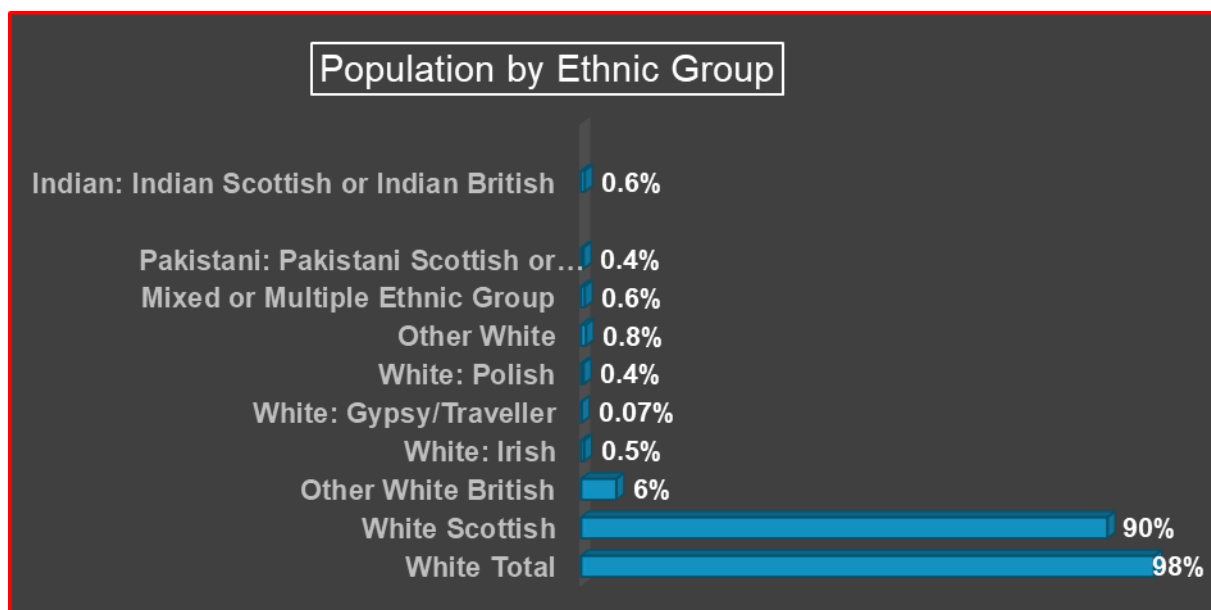
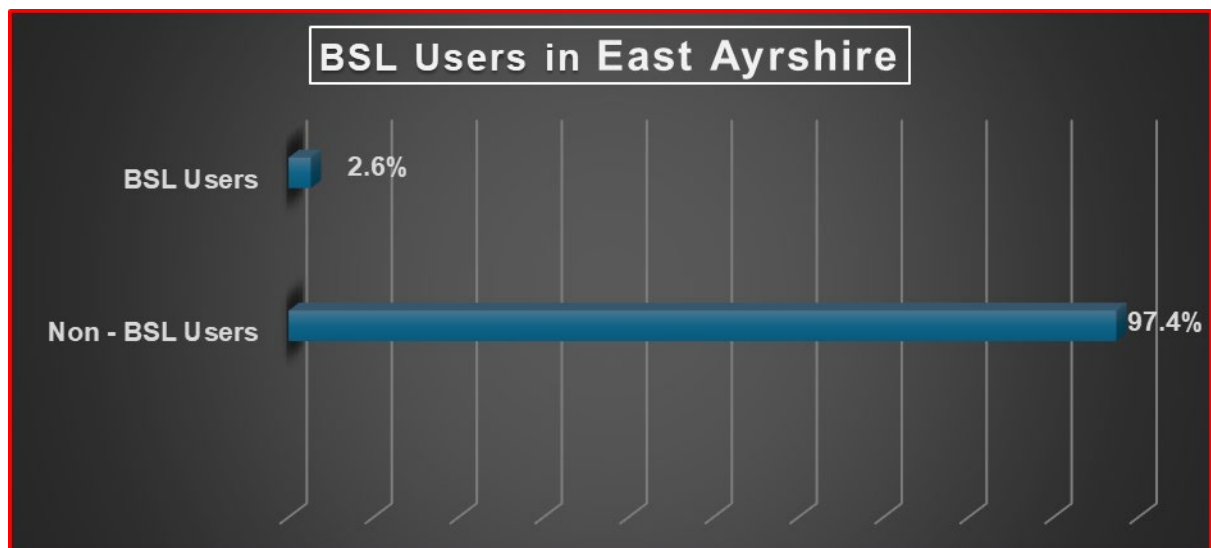
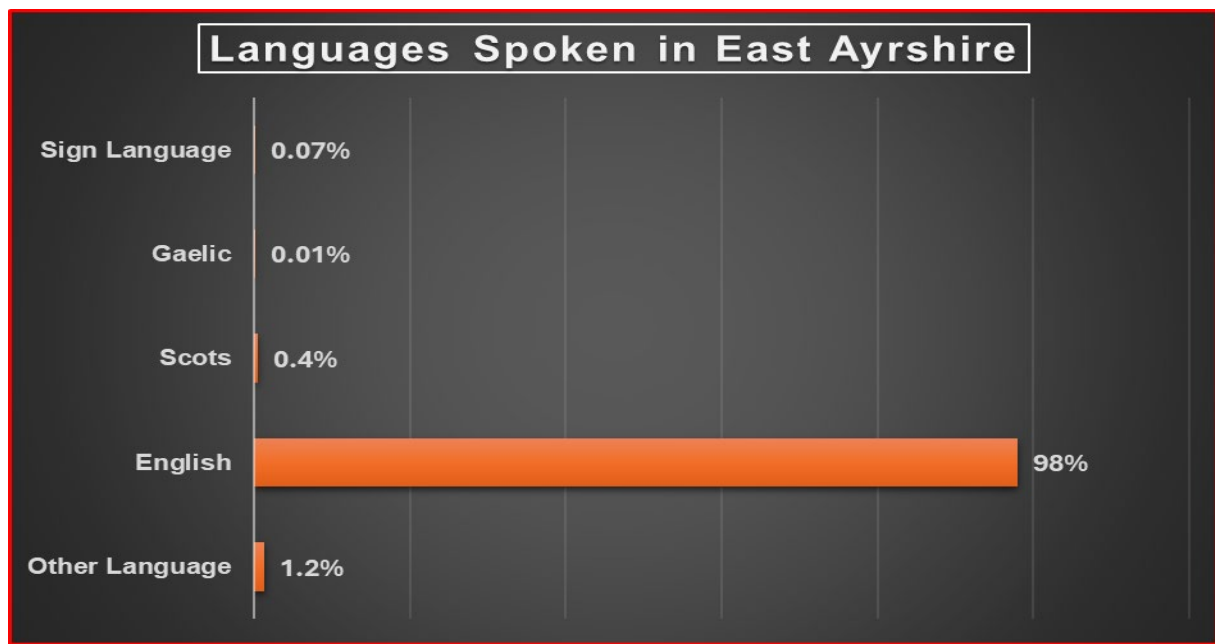
The 2022 census collected information relevant to several of the protected characteristics and included questions relevant to the protected characteristics of sex, age, disability, marriage and civil partnership, religion, and race and for the first time the 2022 census also ask new questions about sexual orientation and Trans status or history.

The East Ayrshire results from the 2022 census allowed us to review and analyse a very rich source of demographic information in respect of the levels of the East Ayrshire population with a protected characteristic. This data provided us with a very detailed representation of East Ayrshire's population, which included percentage population breakdowns of the following equality-based characteristics:

- Sexual Orientation
- Religion
- Multiple Ethnic Groups in Household
- Main Language
- Ethnic Group
- English Language Skills
- Country of Birth
- Combined National Identities
- BSL Users Direct

A range of graphs showing the results in respect of each of these characteristics are provided below.

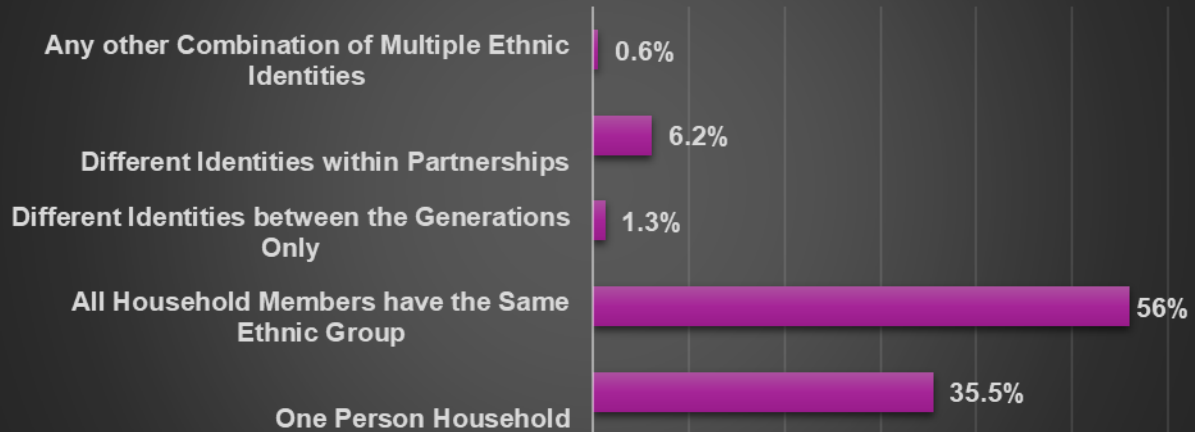




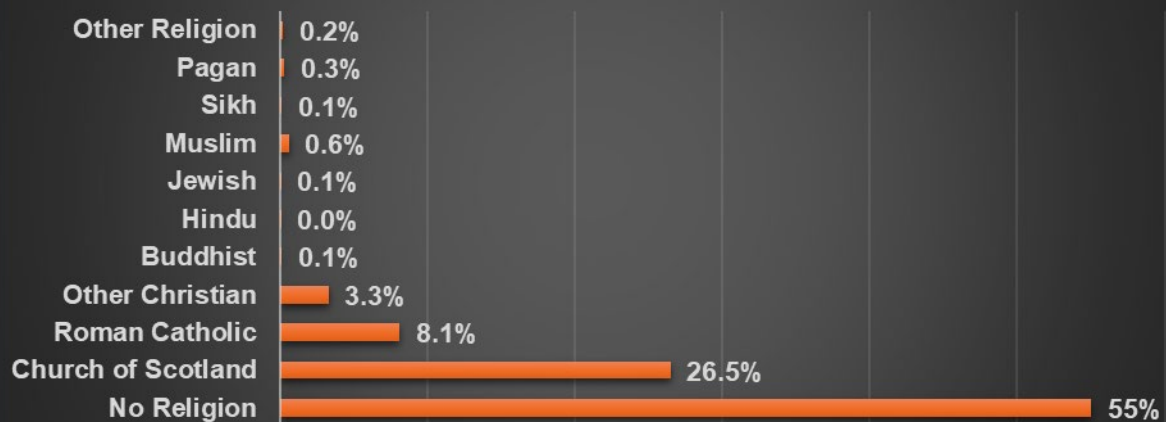
National Identities in East Ayrshire

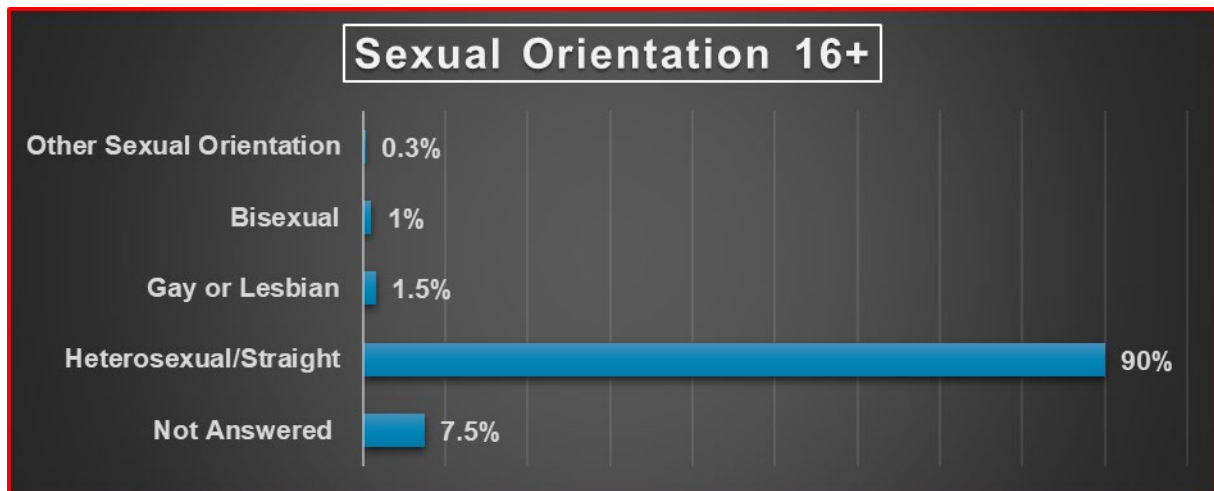


Multiple Ethnic Groups in Households



Religions in East Ayrshire





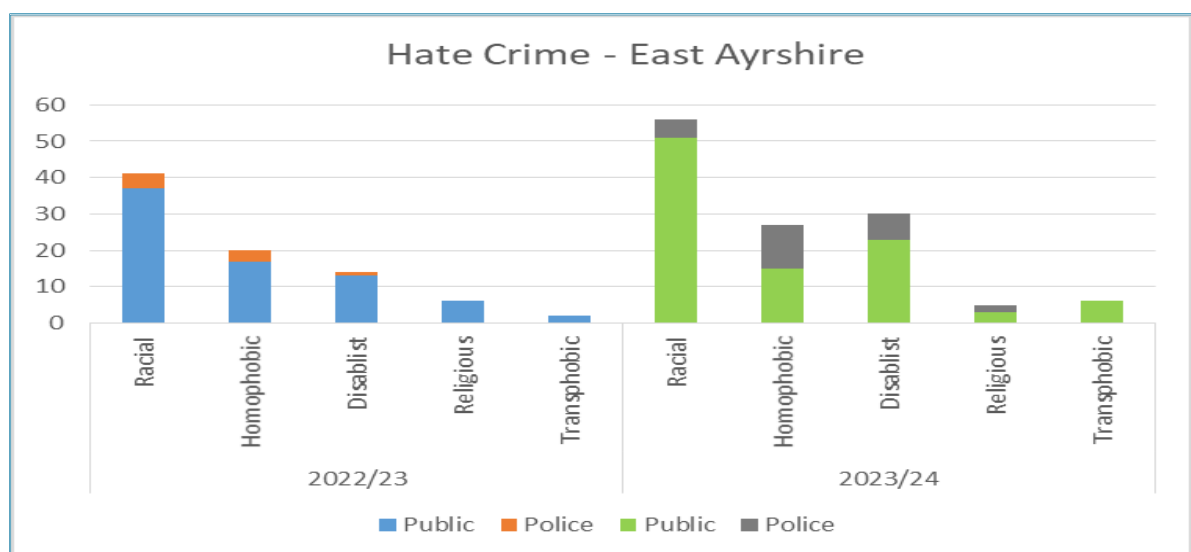
The 2022 Census results have provided us with an enhanced understanding of the range and size of groups with protected characteristics across East Ayrshire.

In addition, as part of the process of identifying relevant demographic information, this data also allowed us to consider and reflect on the desired impact of our equality outcomes on the different communities who shared protected characteristics across East Ayrshire.

Hate Crime

A hate crime is defined as 'any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person's race or perceived race; religion or perceived religion; sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation; disability or perceived disability and any crime motivated by hostility or prejudice against a person who is transgender or perceived to be transgender.'

A comparison of hate crime across East Ayrshire between 2022/23 and 2023/24 show that Racial, Homophobic and Disablist hate crimes have increased.



Whilst responsibility for addressing the issue of hate crime lies with Police Scotland it is nonetheless crucially important that all public bodies consider the impact of incidents motivated by hate and how these can have a devastating impact on the victim and their family. We know that victims who suffer such incidents can suffer severe emotional damage and long-term trauma and can be made to feel like they don't belong within our communities, leading to them changing their lifestyles or questioning their identities to try and avoid further incidents.

Stakeholder Engagement

In respect of our engagement and consultation programme we were able to hold sessions with a wide range of groups representing those with protected characteristics and key themes were identified.

- **Employee Equalities Network:** improve digital access, GP access, men's health, non-visible disabilities, improve access to HSCP services.
- **Partner agencies and organisations:** greater visibility of services, stigma, accessible information, better support for service users to express their views, support for people to navigate the health and care system, mental health.
- **Refugee Community:** support networks, social isolation, school transport, GP access, intersectionality issues (i.e., combination of race, language and mental health).
- **Things Tae Dae (Learning Disability) Group:** accessing services (including via digital means), social isolation, transport issues.
- **Communities of Practice Groups:** Enhance opportunities for co-production, access of digital services.
- **East Ayrshire Alcohol and Drugs Partnership – Recovery Network:** stigma, accessing services.
- **LGBTQ+ East Ayrshire Youth Group:** awareness raising of LGBTQ+ issues, stigma, mental health, opportunities needed to share positive experiences, issues of trusting services.

Service Based Events and Activities

Across the Partnership in 2023 and 2024 a range of strategically focussed events and engagement activities have been undertaken within East Ayrshire, which provided us with opportunities to capture the views and opinions of service users and community members who attended these events. These responses from provided us with a greater insight into a range of key equity-based concerns and issues and proved to be a very rich source of information in the development of our equality outcomes. An outline of these events and key themes highlighted in the feedback of attendees is highlighted below.

AGE

- **Senior Care Home Olympics:** Importance of accessible and tailored ways to exercise and keep healthy.

- **Getting It Right for Everyone:** Frailty Workstream: Stigma that older people experience when using our services.
- **Play Days:** Importance of accessible play activities for children.
- **Review of Children with Disabilities Services:** Awareness of supports available, advocacy, information for carers.

DISABILITY

- **Visually Impaired Groups:** Challenges accessing and navigating services i.e. public transport; venues; GP and podiatry services
- **Dementia Local Conversations:** Stigma experienced; impact of finances and digital supports; challenges accessing and navigating services.
- **Community Consultation on Independent Advocacy Strategic Plan 2024-27:** Gap in advocacy support for children and young people, issues with the child protection process.
- **Community Consultation on HSCP Strategic Plan 2024-27:** Access to services, accessible information, mental health
- **Review of Mental Health and Learning Disability Services:** Communication and consistency from services.

GENDER REASSIGNMENT

- **Trans Pride:** Not easy to access a range of services; challenges of waiting times; smear test letters on pink paper.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

- **Silver Pride:** Issues around community acceptance and inclusion.

RACE AND ETHNICITY

- **Ayrshire Muslim Education Centre Funday:** Difficulty in accessing specific services i.e. GPs; Dentists; Housing, Need exists for more community hubs, need to make accessing services easier

OTHER GROUPS

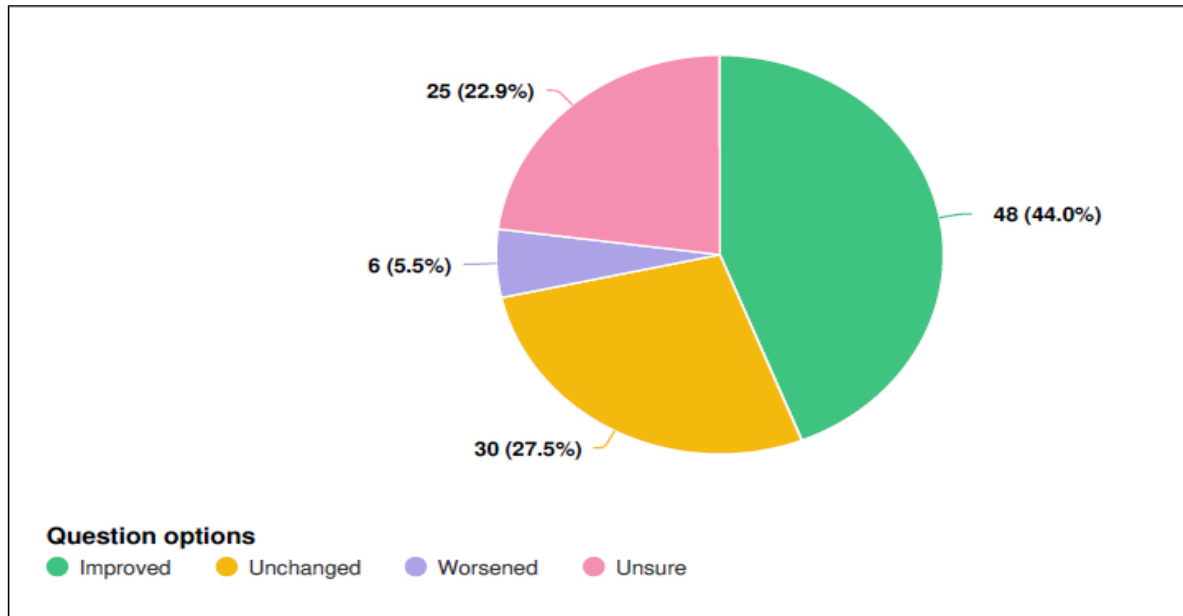
- **VOICES session with NEST Wellbeing group:** Stigma, rural impact on accessing centrally delivered services, poor communication.
- **Community Kinship Carers Event:** Need for clearer information and better supports.
- **GIRFE Justice and Recovery Workstreams:** Lack of communication; No consistency in support workers.

Equality Outcomes Survey

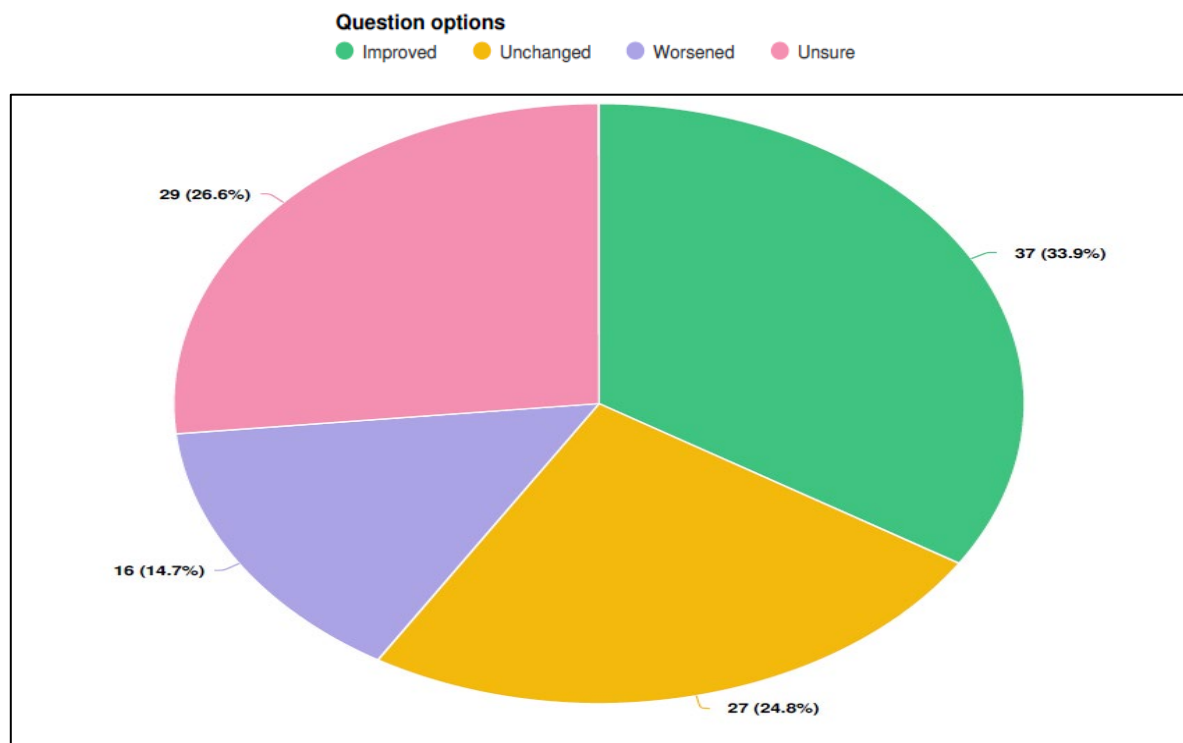
An online survey was also provided for staff and service users which we publicised across a range of different platforms and shared with a wide range of respondents. The response rate to the survey was very positive with 109

respondents completing the survey in the period 15th November to 25th November 2024. An overview of the key results are provided below.

1. In relation to East Ayrshire HSCP, do you believe there is an understanding of those

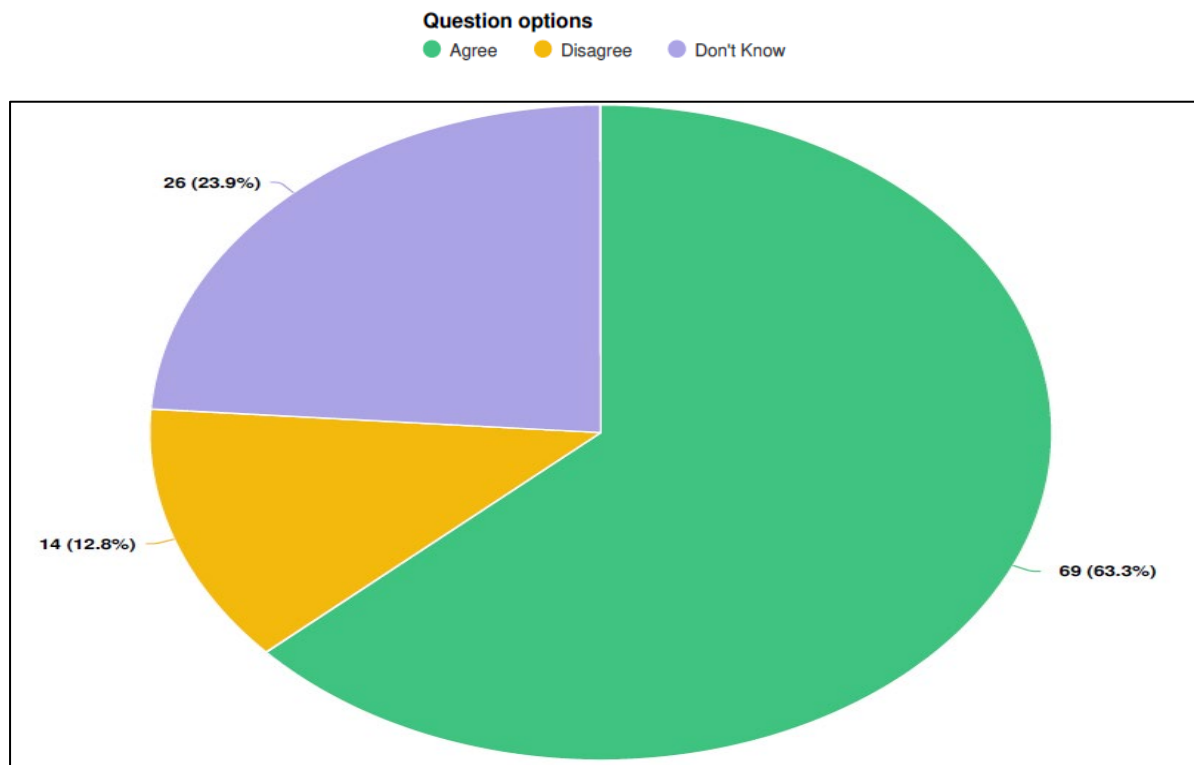


2.



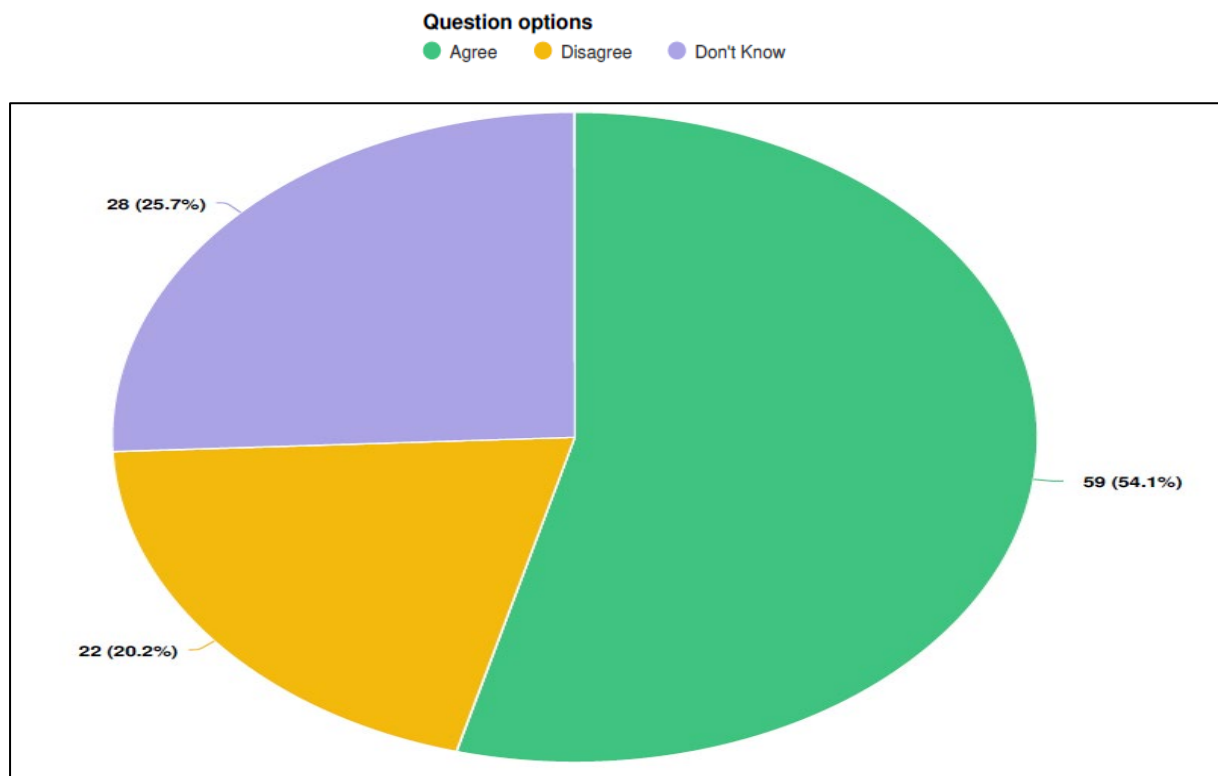
3. Do you agree with the following statement?

EA HSCP recognises the challenges facing those with protected characteristics in East Ayrshire.

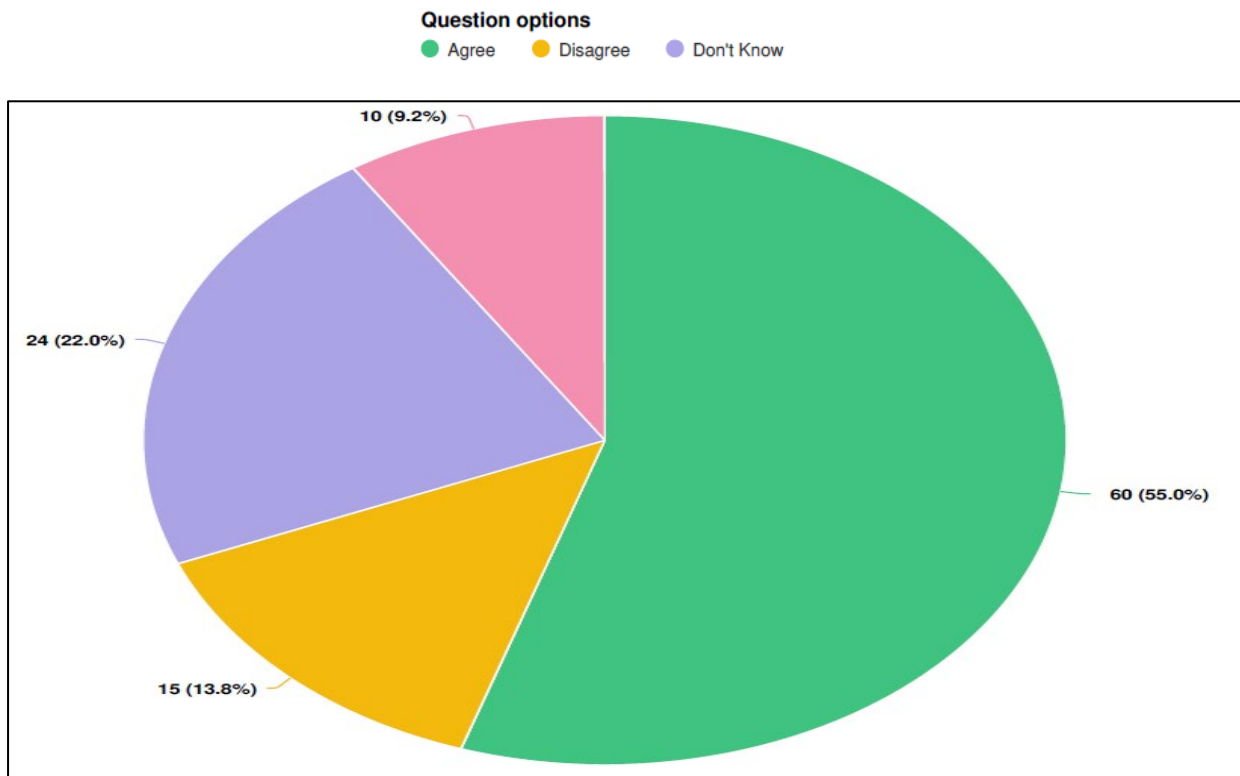


4. Do you agree with the following statement?

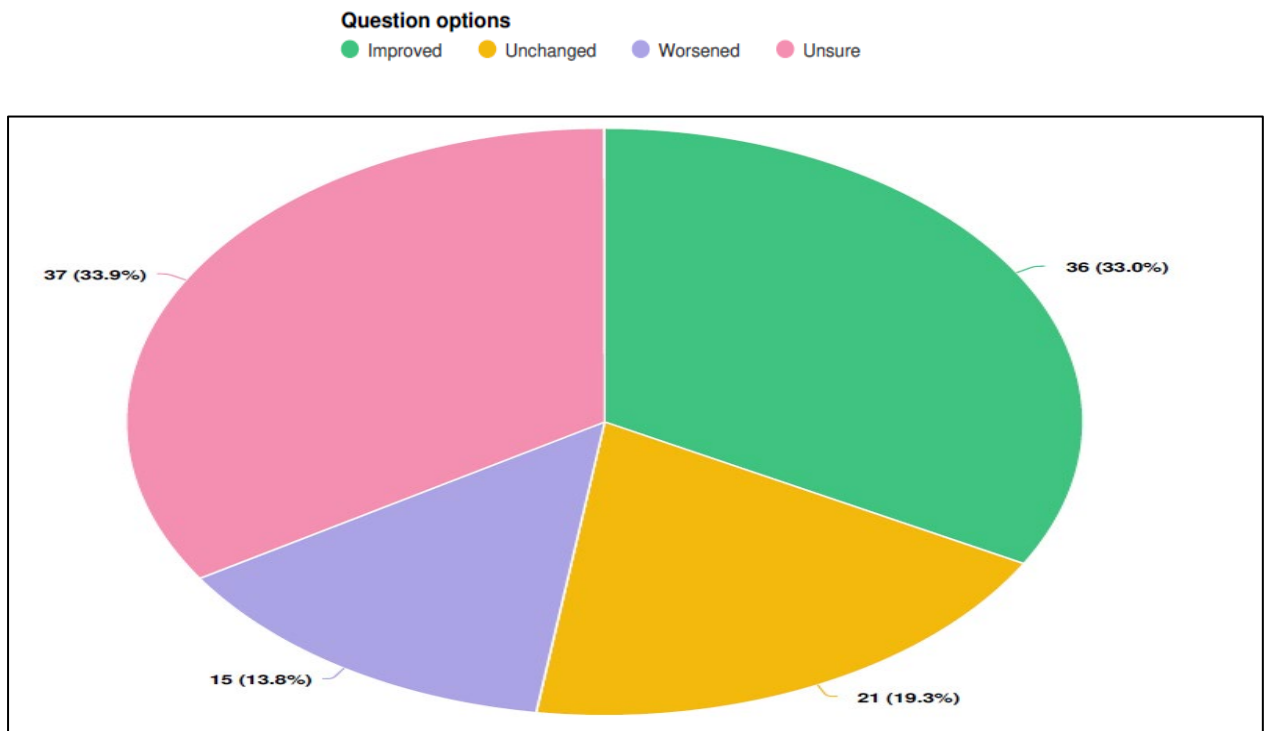
EA HSCP considers and demonstrates equality and diversity in decision making.



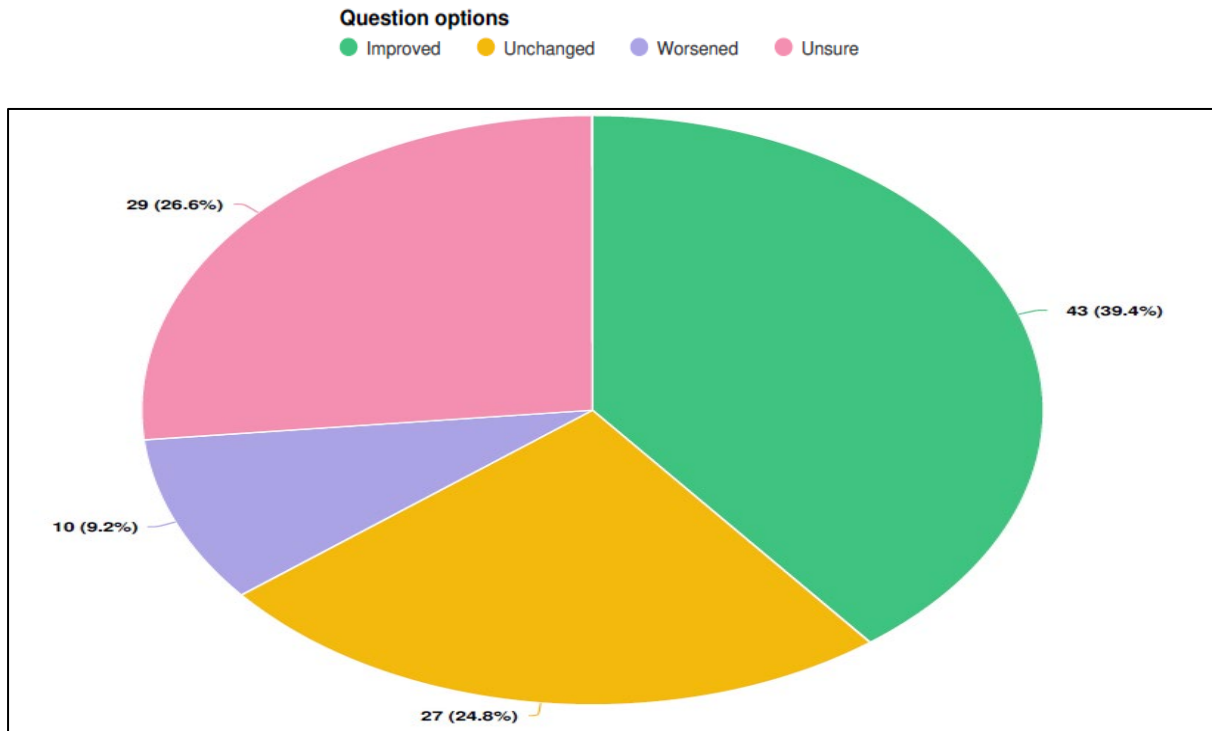
5. Do you believe EA HSCP employees understand and respect equality and diversity across our communities?



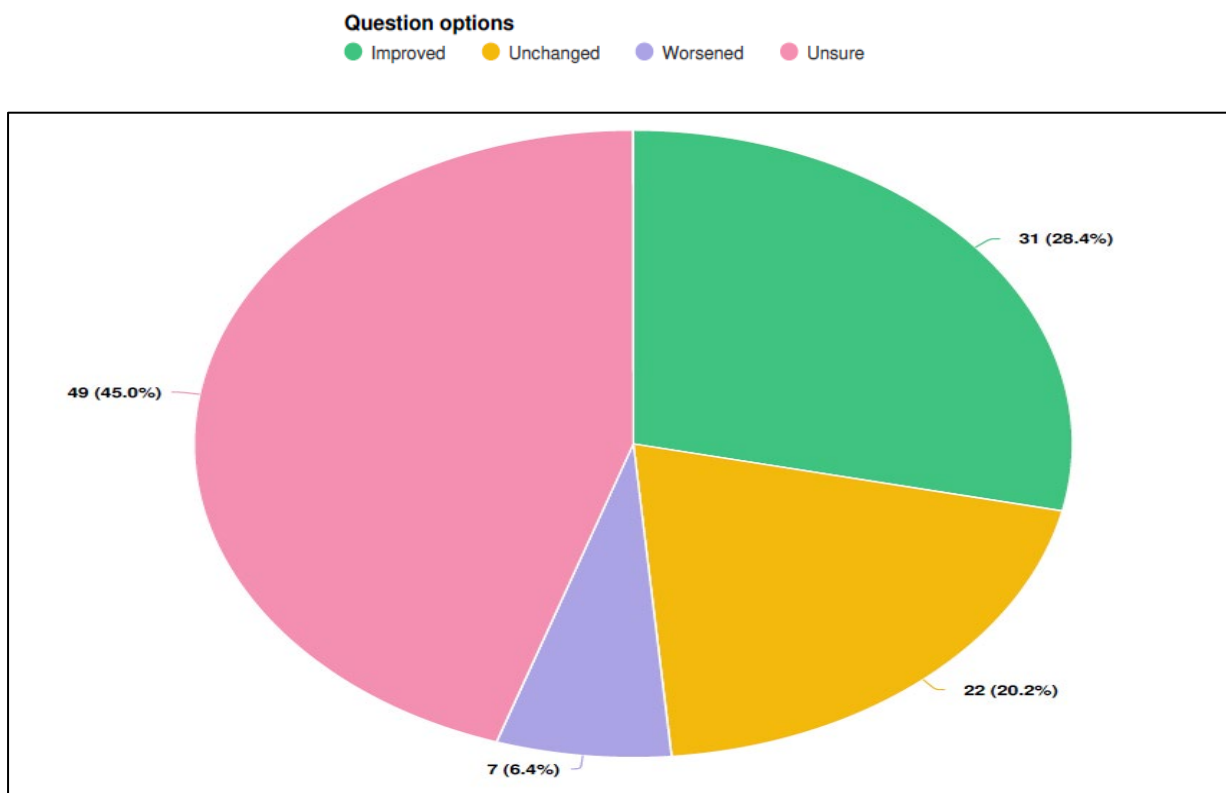
6. How do you believe disabled people's experiences are currently when using EA HSCP services as they are more regularly and systematically involved in designing these services across East Ayrshire?



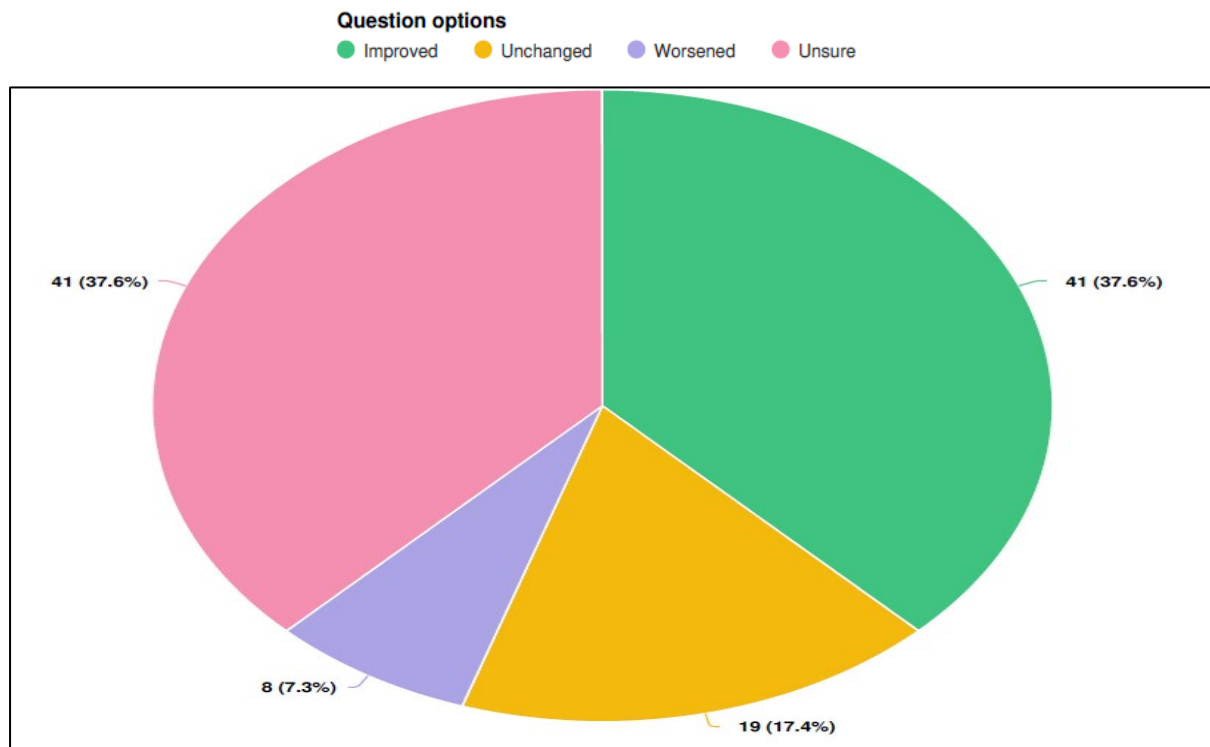
7. In the EA HSCP, has the experience of service users who face barriers through disability and language improved i.e. are more being provided with accessible information on services and being supported to access these digitally or via alternate channels where appropriate?



8. Do you believe the confidence of members from the LGBTQ+ community, disabled, religious, and black and minority ethnic people has increased in reporting hate crimes in East Ayrshire?



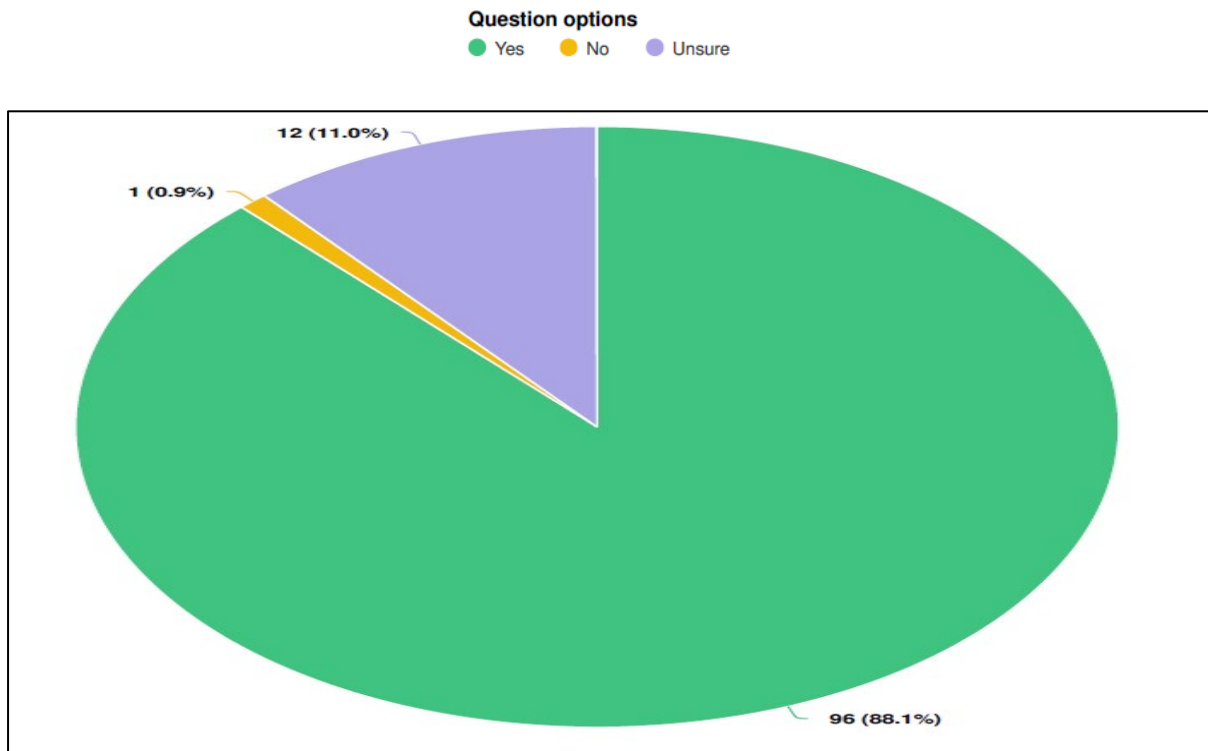
9. An increased proportion of women, black and minority ethnic people, younger people, disabled people and LGBTQ+ people are supported to enter employment or training in East Ayrshire



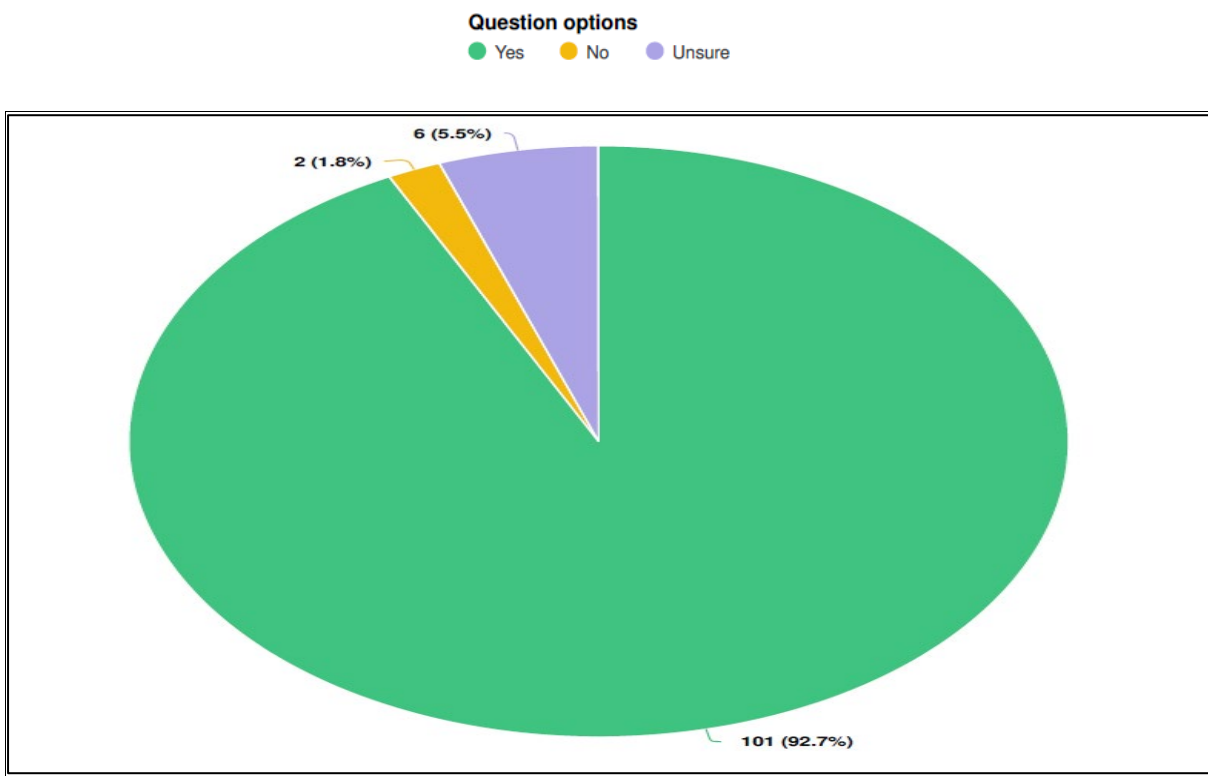
10. If you have experienced prejudice and discrimination in East Ayrshire, what was the impact on?



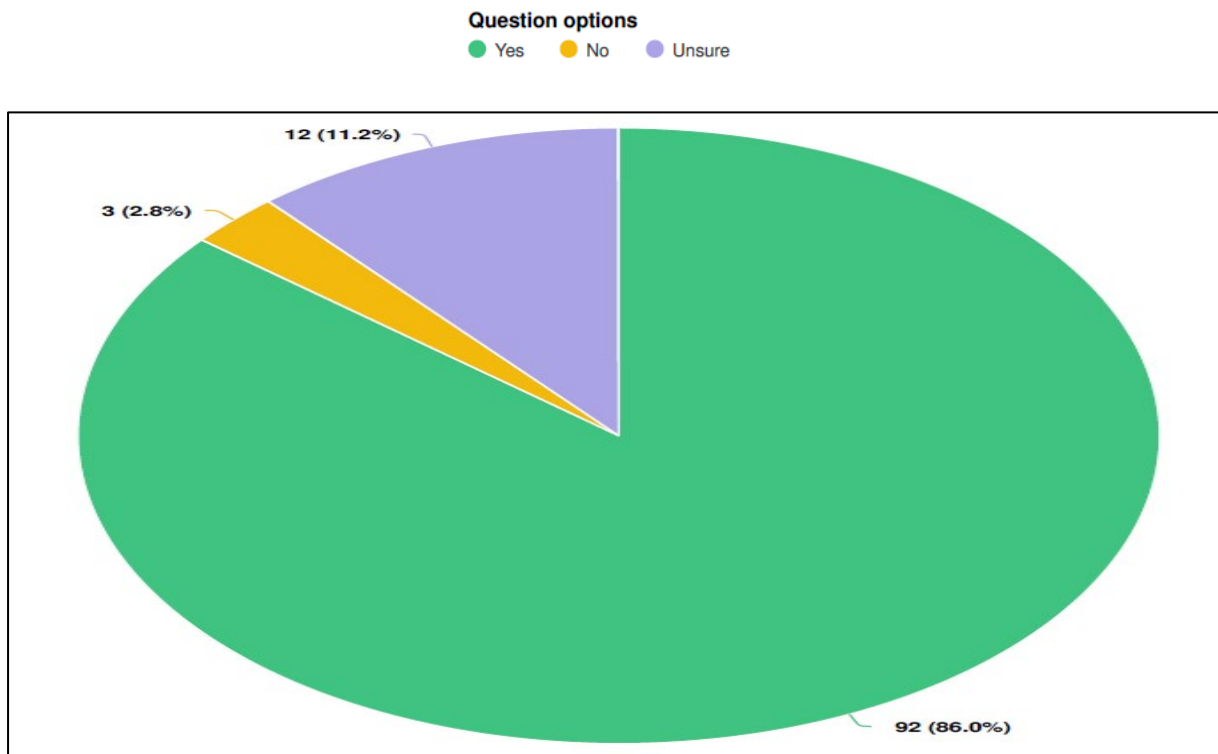
11. As part of our Equality Outcomes for 2025-2029, should one of our key outcomes be Improve access to services?



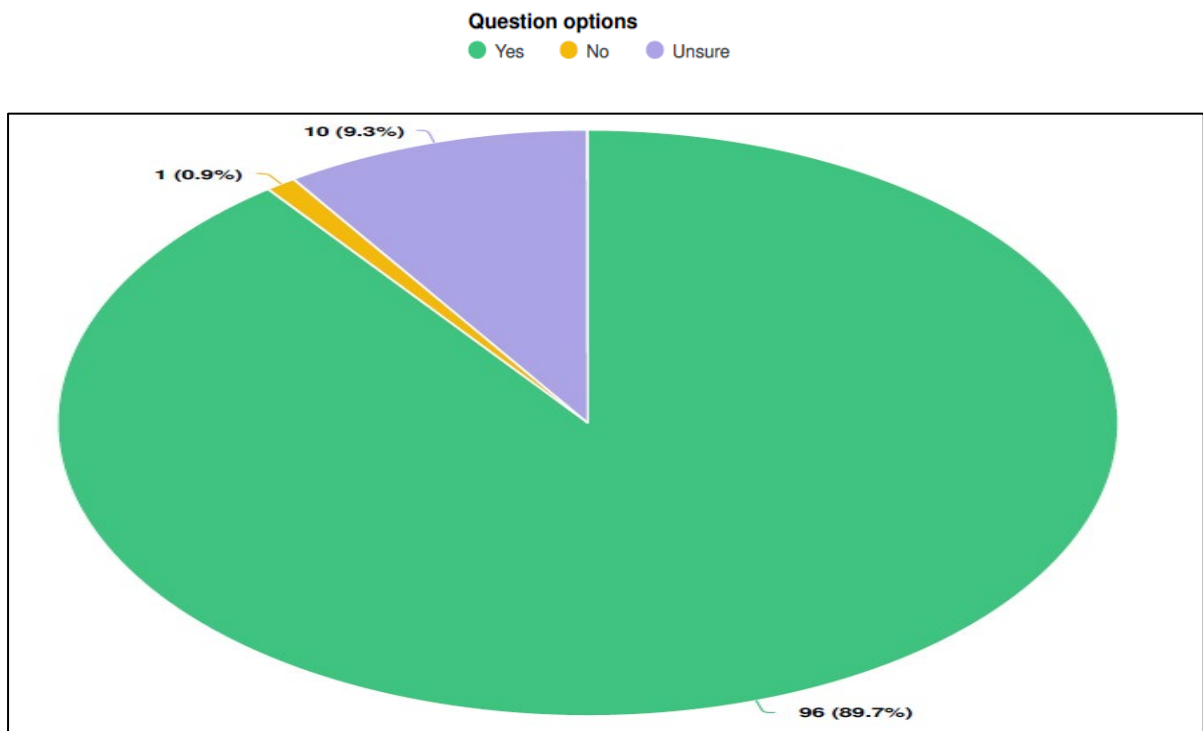
12. As part of our Equality Outcomes for 2025-2029, should one of our key outcomes be Promote mental health and wellbeing in our communities, schools, and the workplace?



13. As part of our Equality Outcomes for 2025-2029, should one of our key outcomes be Information and communications about our services and how to access them are inclusive and accessible to everyone?



14. As part of our Equality Outcomes for 2025-2029, should one of our key outcomes be: We deliver care in a way that makes our services more accessible, flexible, person centred, and a better experience for patients?



The results from the survey indicated that most respondents believed that the Partnership showed a clear understanding of the needs and challenges faced by service users and staff with a protected characteristic. In addition, a majority of respondents also believed that the Partnership had improved access to its services for people with a protected characteristic and that the Partnership demonstrated respect for equality and diversity in its decision making.

In other aspects of day-to-day life, a significant number of respondents highlighted that they had experienced prejudice and discrimination and many stated that they did not have confidence in reporting hate crimes.

The survey also sought to gauge levels of support for a number of potential equality outcomes and a significant majority indicated support for outcomes focused on access to services, promotion of mental health and wellbeing, inclusive and accessible information and flexible and person-centred services.

Similar to the other engagement exercises we undertook as part of our evidence gathering the findings from the service user and staff survey provided us with a greater insight into a range of key equality-based concerns and issues and proved to be a very rich source of information in the development of our equality outcomes.

6. HSCP EQUALITY OUTCOMES 2025-2029

As highlighted in the section above, the different stages and approaches we undertook in the development process allowed us to review a range of research findings, analyse a range of feedback from key stakeholder groups and review census and workforce data. In doing so we applied the findings from this evidence base to establish a set of equality outcomes that we are confident reflect the main equality-based issues and concerns impacting on protected characteristic groups across our communities.

In establishing our new set of Equality Outcomes for the next four years we believe as a public body we have been able to reaffirm and demonstrate our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion and have shown how we will place this at the heart of how we operate as a provider of health and social care services and supports for the people of East Ayrshire.

These new outcomes also show how we are remaining steadfast in our commitment to promoting equality and diversity amongst our workforce and also in our aim to foster a culture that promotes wellbeing and mental health and support that will enable our workforce, regardless of background, to thrive, feel valued and perform professionally at their very best.

The new set of **Equality Outcomes** that we will progress over the next four years are:

1. Information and communications about our services and how to access them are inclusive and accessible to everyone, in particular those who may face barriers because of disability, language and digital exclusion.
2. People with protected characteristics and the organisations that represent them, are regularly and systematically supported to actively participate in design and delivery of the services they use.
3. LGBT+, Disabled and Black and Minority Ethnic People of all ages can access Mental Health and Wellbeing support which better meets their needs.
4. Adults with a disability are supported and empowered to access services, travel safely and live actively within their community.

7. NEXT STEPS - EQUALITY OUTCOMES ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan below provides a detailed outline of the actions, activities and initiatives that are expected be undertaken by the Partnership and our partners over the next four years to achieve the Equality Outcomes that we have identified. The Plan also provides the evidence that was used to help validate the selection of each of the outcomes identified and contains a range of actions that will support the delivery of the outcomes.

Following approval of the Equality Outcomes we will present the Integration Joint Board with our Equality and Human Rights Mainstreaming Report and Interim Review of Outcomes on a bi-annual basis. This report will provide an update on progress towards the Partnership's equalities outcomes and the findings will also provide an opportunity for the Partnership to strengthen our identified outcomes and activities.

Equality Outcomes Action Plan 2025-2029

OUTCOME 1: Information and communications about our services and how to access them are inclusive and accessible to everyone, in particular those who may face barriers because of disability, language and digital exclusion.

General Duty: Promote Equality of Opportunity

HSCP Strategic Plan Priority: Digital Connections

Local Outcome: Digital technology has improved local wellbeing and transformed health and care.

Why have we prioritised this outcome?

Through the research and engagement, it was highlighted that there is more we can do to ensure that people get the advice and support they need, when they need it. One way we will do this is by working to ensure people have access to information about our services in a way that meets their needs. The known barriers that can prevent people from accessing information are highlighted below and these are the groups that this outcome will focus upon.

- Lack of digital/internet skills
- People for whom English is not their first language
- Deaf BSL Users
- People with learning disabilities
- People with physical and mental health

How will we deliver this outcome?

Actions

1. Increase awareness of the BSL Video Relay Interpreting app within the local BSL community and across services.

2. Develop specific projects with our own workforce and partner agencies to help take the fear out of technology for service users.
3. Develop targeted campaigns aimed at improving information sharing and communications around digital supports

OUTCOME 2: People with protected characteristics and the organisations that represent them, are regularly and systematically supported to actively participate in design and delivery of the services they use.

General Duty: Foster Good Relations

HSCP Strategic Plan Priority: People at the Heart of What We Do

Local Outcome: People, unpaid carers, families and communities achieve their outcomes through seamlessly joined up support.

Why have we prioritised this outcome?

We are committed to listening to what people who use our services tell us about the lives they can and want to live. We will work together with our partners and stakeholders, across all types of care, to provide the conditions required to empower them to actively participate in design and delivery of the services they use.

How will we deliver this outcome?

Actions

1. Work with partners to establish a proactive approach to engagement and consultation opportunities.
2. Review our reach to people with protected characteristics who we engage with and evaluate if this engagement continues to be meaningful.
3. We will develop communication and engagement activities to reach and encourage people with a protected characteristic to be involved in service design and delivery planning at the earliest stage.

OUTCOME 3: LGBT+, Disabled and Black and Minority Ethnic People of all ages can access Mental Health and Wellbeing support which better meets their needs.

General Duty: Advance Equality of Opportunity

HSCP Strategic Plan Priority: Caring for East Ayrshire

Local Outcome: Health and social care is delivered in a way that promotes wellbeing and suits people and families.

Why have we prioritised this outcome?

There is evidence that members of the LGBT+, Disabled and Black and Minority Ethnic communities face greater inequalities in respect of accessing appropriate support to address their mental health issues and in achieving positive outcomes.

Mental health and wellbeing can have a powerful negative effect on physical health and life chances and will work with partners to improve access to mental health supports that can prevent ill-health and social isolation among the people of East Ayrshire.

How will we deliver this outcome?

Actions

1. Working with partners we will create a digital resource that will support access to information on available mental health supports.
2. Deliver wellbeing inputs to community groups and third sector organisations.
3. Undertake a detailed review and evaluation of community health and wellbeing needs.

Outcome 4: Adults with a disability are supported and empowered to access services, travel safely and live actively within their community.

General Duty: Advance Equality of Opportunity

HSCP Strategic Plan Priority: People at the Heart of What We Do

Local Outcome: People, unpaid carers, families and communities achieve their outcomes through seamlessly joined up support.

Why have we prioritised this outcome?

We know that people with disabilities continue to experience barriers to services and this can be quite isolating. Feedback from our engagement activities was that people with disabilities would like to be able to live in their own community, have choices of meaningful and sustainable day activities including peer support and social activities.

How will we deliver this outcome?

Actions

1. We will ensure that everyone in East Ayrshire has access to appropriate disability information and advice that allows them to better utilise local services.
2. We will undertake a review of current services and resources being offered to enable people with a disability to live actively within their local communities.
3. Working with partners we will develop local supports and services to allow adults with complex needs to remain living in East Ayrshire.