Tower Hamlets
Annual Residents' Survey 2017
Topic report

Digital inclusion and communications

TOWER HAMLETS

Contents

Summary of key findings

The Annual Residents' Survey captures the views of 967 Tower Hamlets residents and the results were recently published on the Council's [website](#). This briefing analyses the results relating to communications and digital inclusion in more detail. Key findings include:

- **Internet access**: 92 per cent of residents surveyed said they had access to the internet. Access levels varied by:

  - **Age:** Levels of internet access are strongly related to age: all those surveyed who were aged 18-34 had access to the internet compared with just over half of those aged 60 and over (100 vs. 54 per cent).

  - **Disability:** Those with a disability or health problem were far less likely to have internet access compared with those without a disability or health problem (67 vs. 95 per cent) - this is consistent with findings on age (as the prevalence of disability increases with age).

  - **Social grade:** Households from social grades DE (typically lower income households) had lower levels of internet access compared with other groups: 77 per cent of DE households had internet access compared with 99 per cent of AB households.

  - **Tenure:** those living in social housing had lower levels of access than private renters or owner occupiers (84 vs. 95-99 per cent).

- **Internet use**: Age and affluence were particularly associated with the way people use the internet. Once online, younger and better off households (ie AB households and those in full-time work), typically engaged in a wider range of online activities than older or lower income households. For example, 51 per cent of AB households said they paid for council services online compared with just 18 per cent of those from DE households.

- **Internet use and ethnicity**: While levels of internet access were the same for both White and Bangladeshi residents (both 92 per cent), patterns of use were quite different: typically White residents were far more likely than Bangladeshi (and other BME residents) to use the internet for most activities. For example, 72 per cent of White residents with internet access used internet banking compared with 45 per cent of Bangladeshi residents (and 59 per cent of those from other BME groups). The findings underline the distinction between having access to the internet, and the degree to which residents feel able or willing to use it for different purposes.

- **Contact with the Council**: Almost two-thirds of residents surveyed said they had made contact with the Council over the last year. Groups most likely to be in contact with the Council include disabled people, those in social housing and those in part-time work.

- **Ease of contact**: Four in five residents (80 per cent) said they found it very, or fairly, easy to contact the Council. Views were similar across all population groups with no marked differences.

- **Telephone contact**: Telephone is the predominant method of contact (used by 78 per cent of those who made contact), and is the most popular contact method across all population groups. However, almost half of all those surveyed (47 per cent) agreed with the statement 'My Council is difficult to get through on the telephone'. This view was fairly consistent across all population groups although those who had made contact over the last 12 months by phone were more likely to agree with the statement than those who had not (57 vs. 37 per cent).

- **Online contact:** Around one fifth had used online methods to contact the Council. There were marked differences across population groups in terms of use of, and preference for, online contact methods:

  - **Social grade:** AB households were four times more likely than DE households to make contact using the Council website (32 vs. 7 per cent). AB households were also more likely to make contact by email (25 vs. 11 per cent).

  - **Age:** Older residents were far less likely to use, and prefer, online methods. Just 5 per cent of those aged 60 and over said they had made contact via email compared with 20 per cent of those aged 18-34. In contrast, older residents were more likely than younger residents to say they had made contact in person (at a council office, one stop shop / Idea Store or library): 23 vs. 9 per cent.

  - **Housing tenure:** Housing tenure: those in social housing were less likely to use, and prefer, online methods of contact compared with private renters and owner occupiers - just 10 per cent of social tenants contacting the Council had done so via email compared with 24 and 26 per cent of private renters and owner occupiers.

  - **Ethnicity:** While White and Bangladeshi residents were equally likely to have access to the internet, their contact preferences were quite different - with White residents have a far stronger preference for online methods. For example, White residents were almost three times more likely than Bangladeshi residents to have used email to make contact (25 vs.9 per cent).

- **Methods of getting information about the Council:** Residents were asked to say how they preferred to receive information about the Council and its services. Similar patterns emerged in terms of preferences for online versus more traditional methods such has print or face to face contact. For example, those most likely to favour the Council website as a key information source, were typically younger, White and from social grade AB households. Conversely, those most likely to prefer printed information were typically those who were older, Bangladeshi, and in C2DE households.

Introduction

Survey background and methodology

The Annual Residents' Survey is designed to collect data on resident perceptions about the Council, local services and the area.

The survey was carried out by an independent market research company - Westco Trading - on behalf of the Council, and comprised 967 face to face interviews during 12th January to 16th March 2017. The methodology is designed to ensure that the sample drawn is representative of the borough's population generally. Residents were interviewed at 123 different sample points across the borough to ensure a good cross section by area. Also, sampling quotas were set on age, gender, ethnicity and working status to ensure that the sample reflected the characteristics of the population.

A report summarising the 2017 survey results was published on the Council's website in July 2017. This presented the headline findings and explored trends over time.

Demographic analysis

This topic briefing aims to analyse the results relating to communications and digital inclusion in more detail, by exploring how views of residents vary by population and household characteristics. Topics explored include:

- Internet access and use;
- Current methods of contacting the Council;
- Preferred future methods of contact;
- Preferred ways to get Council information.

The key characteristics explored include: gender, age, disability, work status, ethnicity, tenure, social class and area (Table 1). The extent to which the sample can be broken down is limited by sample size, so for analytical purposes, some population groups have been combined to ensure the samples being compared are large enough. For example, different ethnic group populations in the sample have been grouped together into three groups: White groups, the Bangladeshi group, and other Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups. Similarly, comparisons by geographical areas are restricted to four areas: North, East, South and West (each made up of five wards as shown in Appendix A).

Interpretation of survey data

All figures presented are survey estimates, not precise measures, and as such, they have a degree of sampling variability attached to them. The concept of 'statistical significance' is used here to highlight those differences that are likely to reflect 'real' differences between a particular population and the population generally, as opposed to those which may be simply reflecting sampling volatility.

Confidence intervals attached to individual survey estimates for sub-groups within the population can be quite wide. Moreover, for a statistic for a particular group to be 'significantly' different to the average (or indeed to other groups), the difference between the two percentages often needs to be in the region of 6 points or more. This varies depending on the group in question. Notably, confidence intervals are

particularly wide for data relating to older and disabled people as the sample sizes are modest (ie 112 and 92). This means, that for these groups to stand out as having a rating that is significantly different to the average, the size of the difference often needs to be wider than for other groups.

It is important to bear in mind that, even when a highlighted difference is statistically significant, it may be only just be within the bounds of significance, so some caution is required on interpretation of findings based on survey data. Generally speaking, the larger the percentage point differences, the more confident we can be that the difference is reflecting reality.

All percentage figures presented are rounded to the nearest percentage point.

On all the charts that follow, a red circle denotes a rating that is significantly different both to the average (as well as to other groups within the same population category).

Table 1 : Composition of sample by population / household characteristics		Sample size (unweighted)	% total
All persons		**967**	**100**
Gender	Male	500	52
	Female	467	48
Age	18-35	470	49
	35-60	385	40
	60+	112	12
Work status	Full time	490	51
	Part time	141	15
	Not working (excludes retired)	258	27
Ethnicity	White ethnic groups	498	51
	Bangladeshi group	268	28
	Other BME groups[1]	201	21
Housing tenure	Owner occupier	173	18
	Social Housing	486	50
	Rent privately/other	308	32
Social grade[2]	AB	285	29
	C1	280	29
	C2	173	18
	DE	225	23
Disability/ Health problem	Yes	92	10
	No	873	90
Area	North	249	26
	East	232	24
	South	255	26
	West	231	24

Source: Tower Hamlets Annual Residents Survey 2017 (Westco Trading)
1. All other BME groups: Indian, Pakistani, Other Asian, Chinese, Black African, Black Caribbean, Black Other, Mixed ethnic groups, Arab, and Other groups
2. See Appendix B for more information on social grade categorisations.

Internet access and use: overview

The majority (92 per cent) of respondents said they had access to the internet.

Figure 1 shows what residents use the internet for. The most popular activities are: email (84 per cent), web browsing (75 per cent) and social media (71 per cent).

Around one in four internet users said they used the internet to pay for Council services online.

The charts that follow explore how internet access and use vary by population and household characteristics.

Figure 1: Internet use, Tower Hamlets, 2017

What do you use the internet for ?
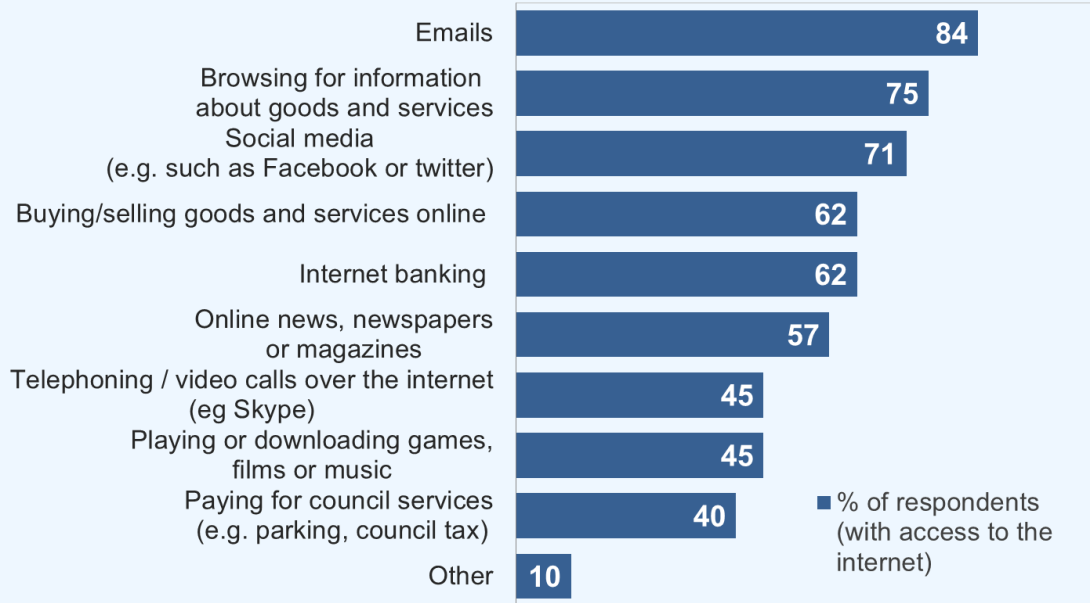
Source: Tower Hamlets Annual Residents' Survey, Westco Trading   Sample base = 881 (those with access to the internet)

Internet access

Levels of internet access are strongly related to age: on average, 92 per cent of the population have access, but this drops to just over half (54 per cent) of those aged 60 and over. Disabled residents also had lower access levels (67 per cent), consistent with findings on age (as the prevalence of disability increases with age). Households from social grades DE (typically lower income households) had relatively low levels of internet access: 77 per cent of DE households had access compared with 99 per cent of AB households.

Figure 2: Internet access by population group, Tower Hamlets, 2017

Question: Do you have access to the internet?

■ % with internet access

Group	%
All persons	92
Male	93
Female	91
Age 18-34	100
Age 35-59	93
Age 60+	54
Disability/health problem	67
No disability/health problem	95
In full-time work	99
In part-time work	99
Not working (exc. retired)	90
White groups	92
Bangladeshi	92
Other BME groups	93
Owner occupier	95
Social housing	84
Rent privately/other	99
Social grade: AB	99
Social grade: C1	96
Social grade: C2	92
Social grade: DE	77
North	90
East	91
South	96
West	92

◯ = these figures are significantly different to the average

Source: Tower Hamlets Annual Residents Survey 2017, Westco Trading (sample size = 967 residents)

Internet use: Email

More than eight out of ten online residents use email (84 per cent). While email use was relatively popular across the board, AB households, those in full-time work and those from other BME groups were a bit more likely than average to use it (all 89 per cent), while, older residents, DE households, Bangladeshi residents and those living in the West of the borough were less likely to do so (68-76 per cent).

Figure 3: Email use by population group, Tower Hamlets, 2017

Question: What do you use the internet for?
(Sample base: those with internet access, 881 respondents)

■ % emails

Group	%
All persons	84
Male	87
Female	81
Age 18-34	86
Age 35-59	83
Age 60+	(68)
Disability/health problem	73
No disability/health problem	85
In full-time work	(89)
In part-time work	78
Not working (exc. retired)	78
White groups	87
Bangladeshi	(74)
Other BME groups	(89)
Owner occupier	84
Social housing	80
Rent privately/other	86
Social grade: AB	(89)
Social grade: C1	85
Social grade: C2	79
Social grade: DE	(76)
North	88
East	88
South	85
West	(74)

◯ = these figures are significantly different to the average
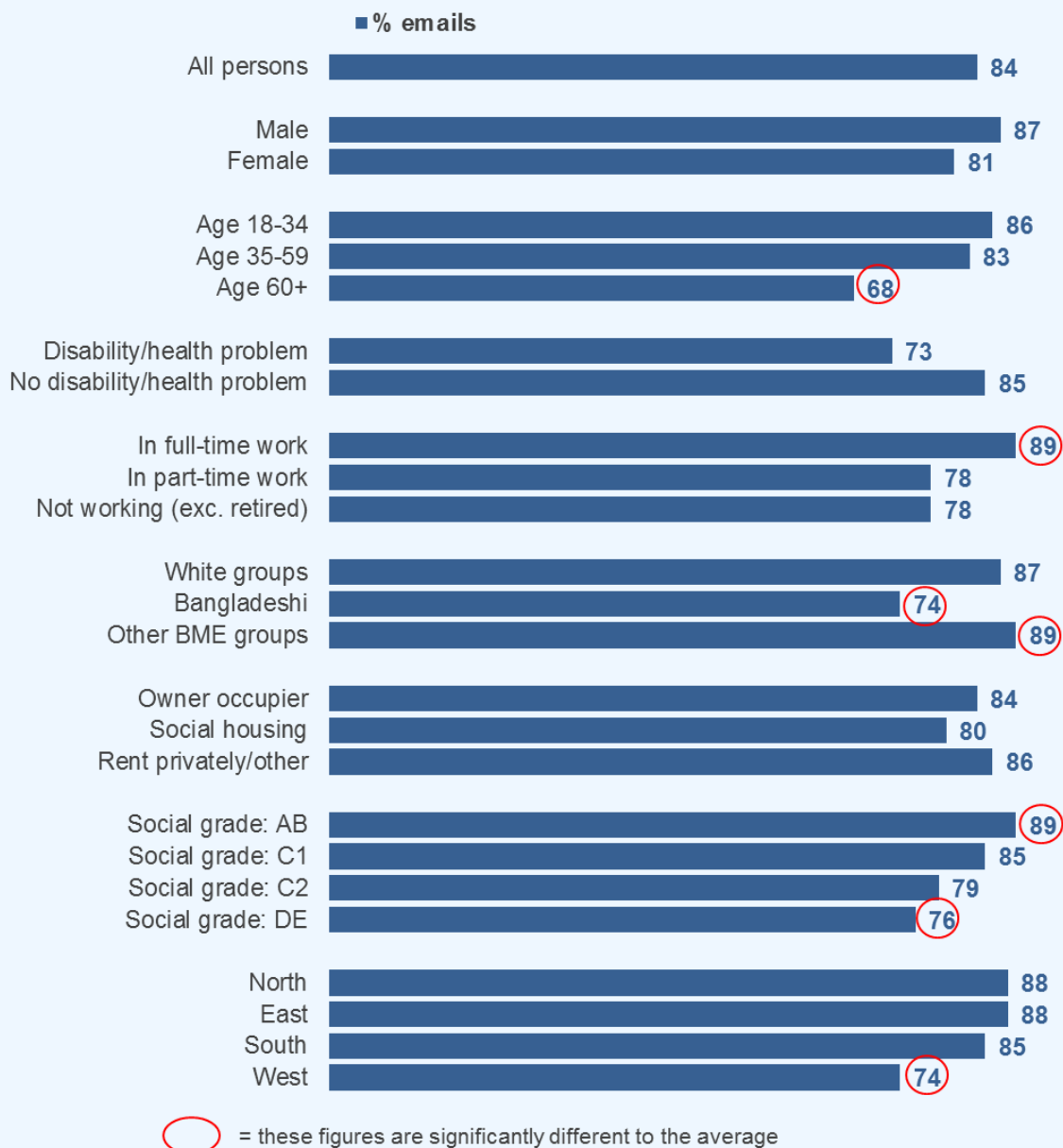
Source: Tower Hamlets Annual Residents Survey 2017, Westco Trading

Internet use: Web browsing

Three quarters of residents used the internet for browsing for information about goods and services. There were strong patterns by social grade and ethnicity: AB households were more likely than DE households to browse the web (82 vs. 62 per cent) and White residents were more likely than Bangladeshi residents to do so (82 vs. 63 per cent). Disabled people were the least likely to use the internet for web browsing (59 per cent).

Figure 4: Web browsing by population group, Tower Hamlets, 2017

Question: What do you use the internet for?
(Sample base: those with internet access, 881 respondents)

■ % browsing for information about goods and services

Group	%
All persons	75
Male	77
Female	74
Age 18-34	78
Age 35-59	71
Age 60+	72
Disability/health problem	(59)
No disability/health problem	77
In full-time work	79
In part-time work	74
Not working (exc. retired)	69
White groups	(82)
Bangladeshi	(63)
Other BME groups	73
Owner occupier	80
Social housing	71
Rent privately/other	76
Social grade: AB	(82)
Social grade: C1	74
Social grade: C2	77
Social grade: DE	(62)
North	76
East	80
South	79
West	(65)

◯ = these figures are significantly different to the average
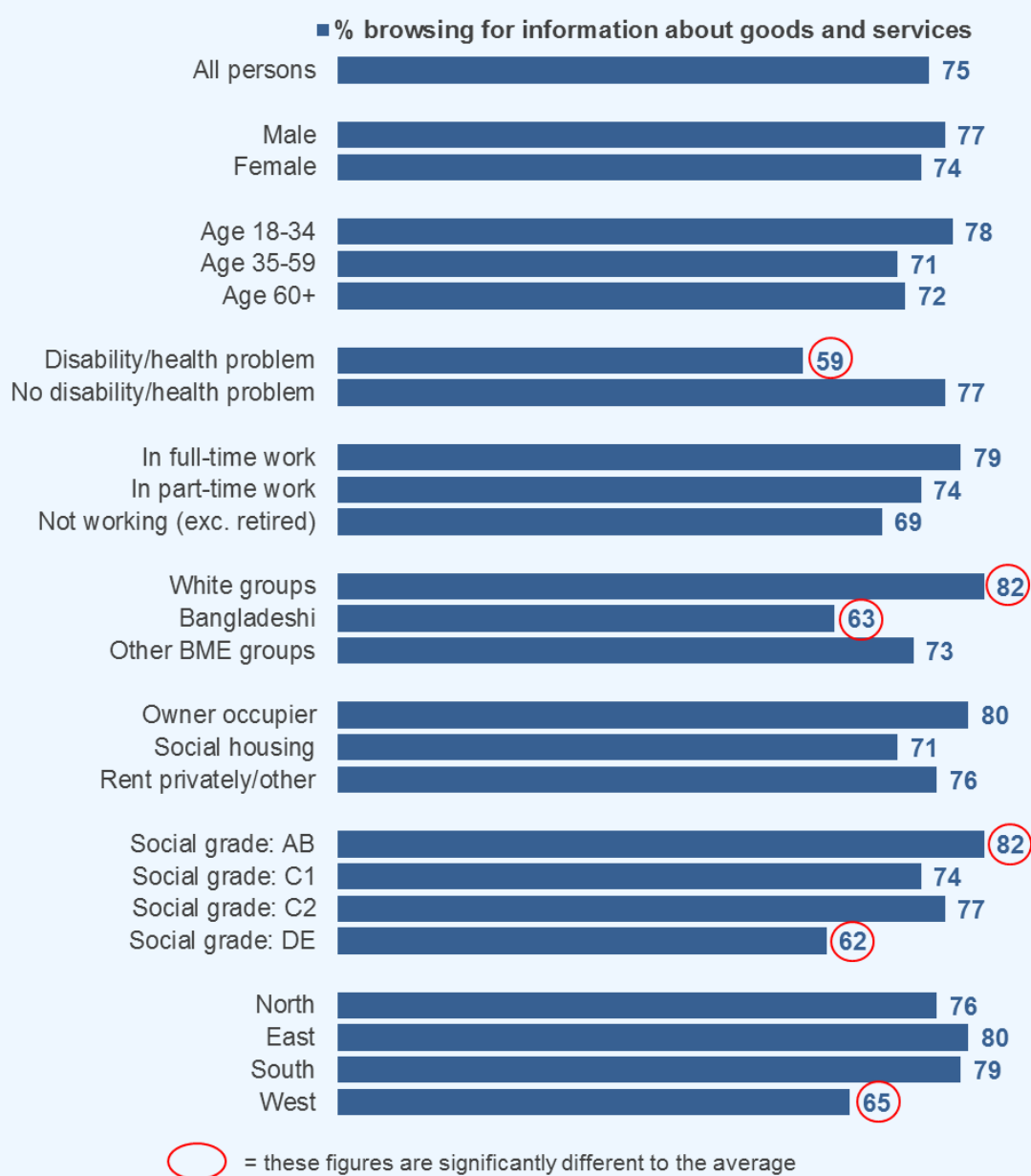
Source: Tower Hamlets Annual Residents Survey 2017, Westco Trading

Internet use: Social media

Around seven in ten residents used the internet for accessing social media. Social media was most popular among young people, those in work, AB households and those living in the North of the borough (78-80 per cent). It was least popular among: older and disabled residents, Bangladeshi residents and those living in the West of the borough.

Figure 5: Social media use by population group, Tower Hamlets, 2017

Question: What do you use the internet for?
(Sample base: those with internet access, 881 respondents)

■ % social media (e.g. such as Facebook or twitter)

Population group	%
All persons	71
Male	73
Female	70
Age 18-34	79
Age 35-59	65
Age 60+	40
Disability/health problem	43
No disability/health problem	74
In full-time work	78
In part-time work	64
Not working (exc. retired)	68
White groups	76
Bangladeshi	62
Other BME groups	71
Owner occupier	73
Social housing	67
Rent privately/other	74
Social grade: AB	80
Social grade: C1	67
Social grade: C2	74
Social grade: DE	60
North	78
East	71
South	74
West	62
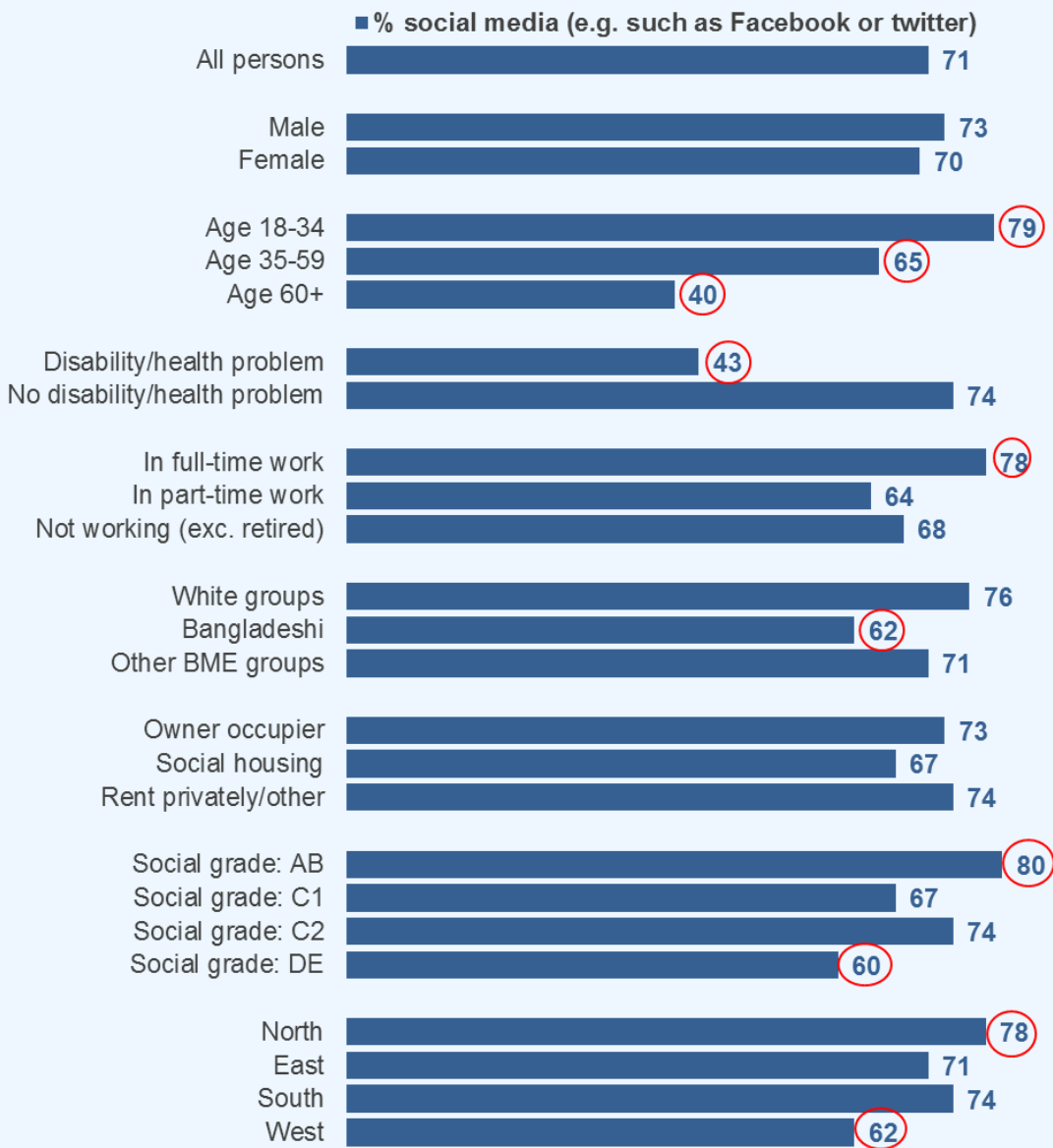
◯ = these figures are significantly different to the average

Source: Tower Hamlets Annual Residents Survey 2017, Westco Trading

Internet use: Internet banking

Around six in ten residents used the internet for online banking. Younger residents were twice as likely as older residents to bank online (71 vs. 34 per cent). There were also large differences by social grade: AB households were twice as likely as DE households to be bank online (78 vs. 40 per cent). Internet banking was less popular among: disabled people (36 per cent); Bangladeshi residents (45 per cent); those in social housing (48 per cent) and those living in the West of the borough (52 per cent).

Figure 6: Internet banking by population group, Tower Hamlets, 2017

Question: What do you use the internet for?
(Sample base: those with internet access, 881 respondents)

■ % internet banking

Group	%
All persons	62
Male	66
Female	58
Age 18-34	71
Age 35-59	53
Age 60+	34
Disability/health problem	36
No disability/health problem	64
In full-time work	76
In part-time work	48
Not working (exc. retired)	47
White groups	72
Bangladeshi	45
Other BME groups	59
Owner occupier	71
Social housing	48
Rent privately/other	69
Social grade: AB	78
Social grade: C1	64
Social grade: C2	51
Social grade: DE	40
North	68
East	63
South	65
West	52

◯ = these figures are significantly different to the average
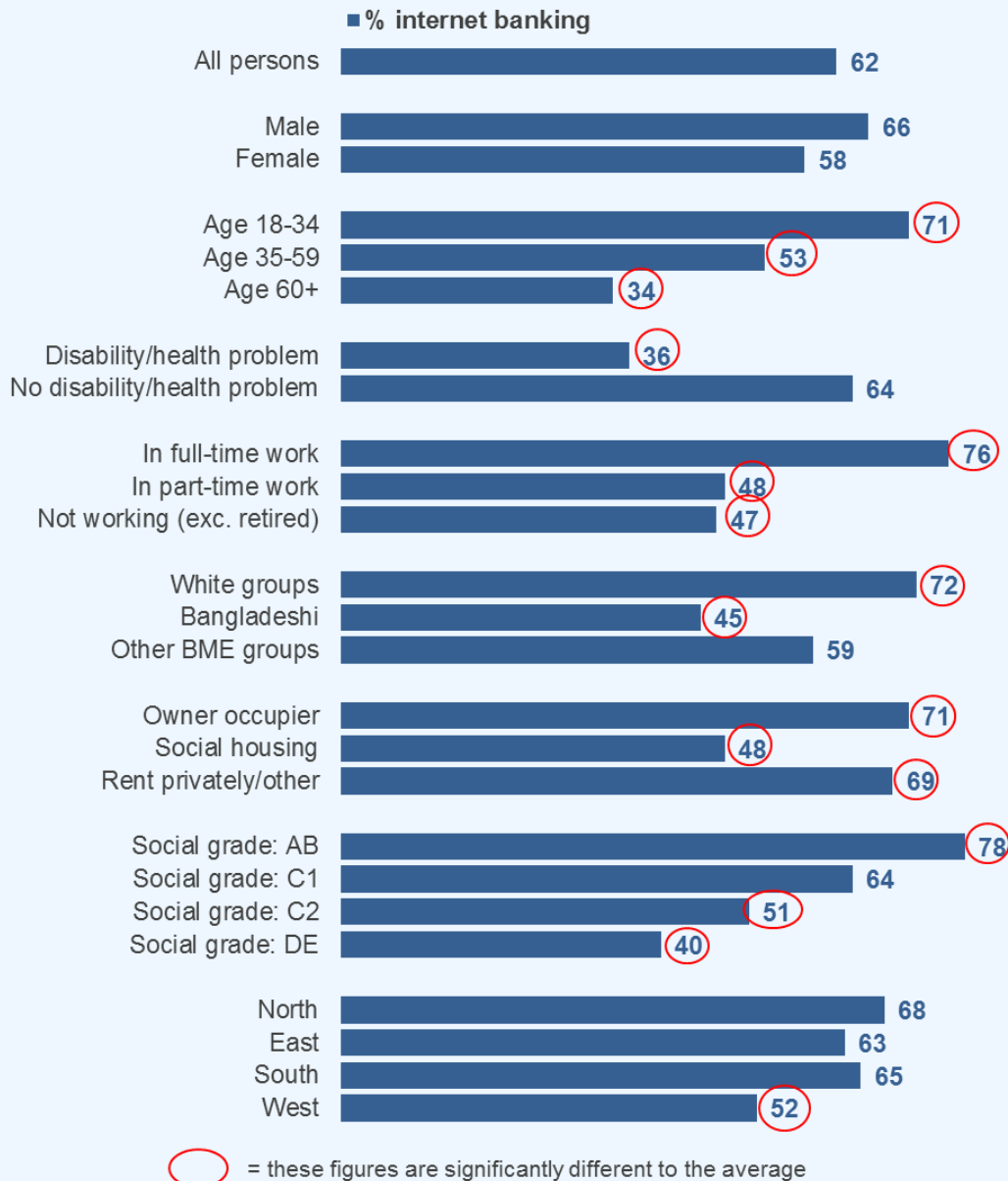
Source: Tower Hamlets Annual Residents Survey 2017, Westco Trading

Internet use: Online shopping/selling

Just under two thirds (62 per cent) of residents used the internet to buy or sell goods or services online. Those most likely to shop online included: AB households (75 per cent), White residents (70 per cent) and those in full-time work (69 per cent). Those less likely to do so included: older residents, disabled residents, DE households, Bangladeshi residents, part-time workers and those living in the West of the borough (46-53 per cent of users in these groups bought or sold goods online).

Figure 7: Online shopping/selling by population group, Tower Hamlets, 2017

Question: What do you use the internet for?
(Sample base: those with internet access, 881 respondents)

■ % buying or selling goods and services online

Group	%
All persons	62
Male	62
Female	61
Age 18-34	66
Age 35-59	58
Age 60+	46
Disability/health problem	46
No disability/health problem	63
In full-time work	69
In part-time work	50
Not working (exc. retired)	56
White groups	70
Bangladeshi	50
Other BME groups	54
Owner occupier	63
Social housing	57
Rent privately/other	64
Social grade: AB	75
Social grade: C1	57
Social grade: C2	56
Social grade: DE	49
North	62
East	65
South	66
West	53

◯ = these figures are significantly different to the average

Source: Tower Hamlets Annual Residents Survey 2017, Westco Trading

Internet use: Online news

More than half of those (57 per cent) surveyed said they used the internet to access online news, newspapers or magazines. Those most likely do so included: AB residents, young adults and, those in full-time work, White residents, owner occupiers, and those living in the North of the borough - around two thirds of residents in each of these groups accessed online news/media.

Figure 8: Online news by population group, Tower Hamlets, 2017

Question: What do you use the internet for?
(Sample base: those with internet access, 881 respondents)

■ % online news, newspapers or magazines

Group	%
All persons	57
Male	61
Female	54
Age 18-34	65
Age 35-59	47
Age 60+	49
Disability/health problem	38
No disability/health problem	59
In full-time work	67
In part-time work	48
Not working (exc. retired)	46
White groups	66
Bangladeshi	44
Other BME groups	53
Owner occupier	69
Social housing	45
Rent privately/other	62
Social grade: AB	70
Social grade: C1	53
Social grade: C2	57
Social grade: DE	41
North	67
East	61
South	61
West	40

◯ = these figures are significantly different to the average

Source: Tower Hamlets Annual Residents Survey 2017, Westco Trading

Internet use: Video/telephone

Less than half (45 per cent) of those surveyed said they used the internet for making telephone or video calls (eg Skype). Those most likely to do so included: young adults, those in full-time work, White residents, private renters, AB households and those living in the North of the borough (51-58 per cent). Older and disabled residents were the groups least likely to do so (21-24 per cent).

Figure 9: Internet video/telephone by population group, Tower Hamlets, 2017

Question: What do you use the internet for?
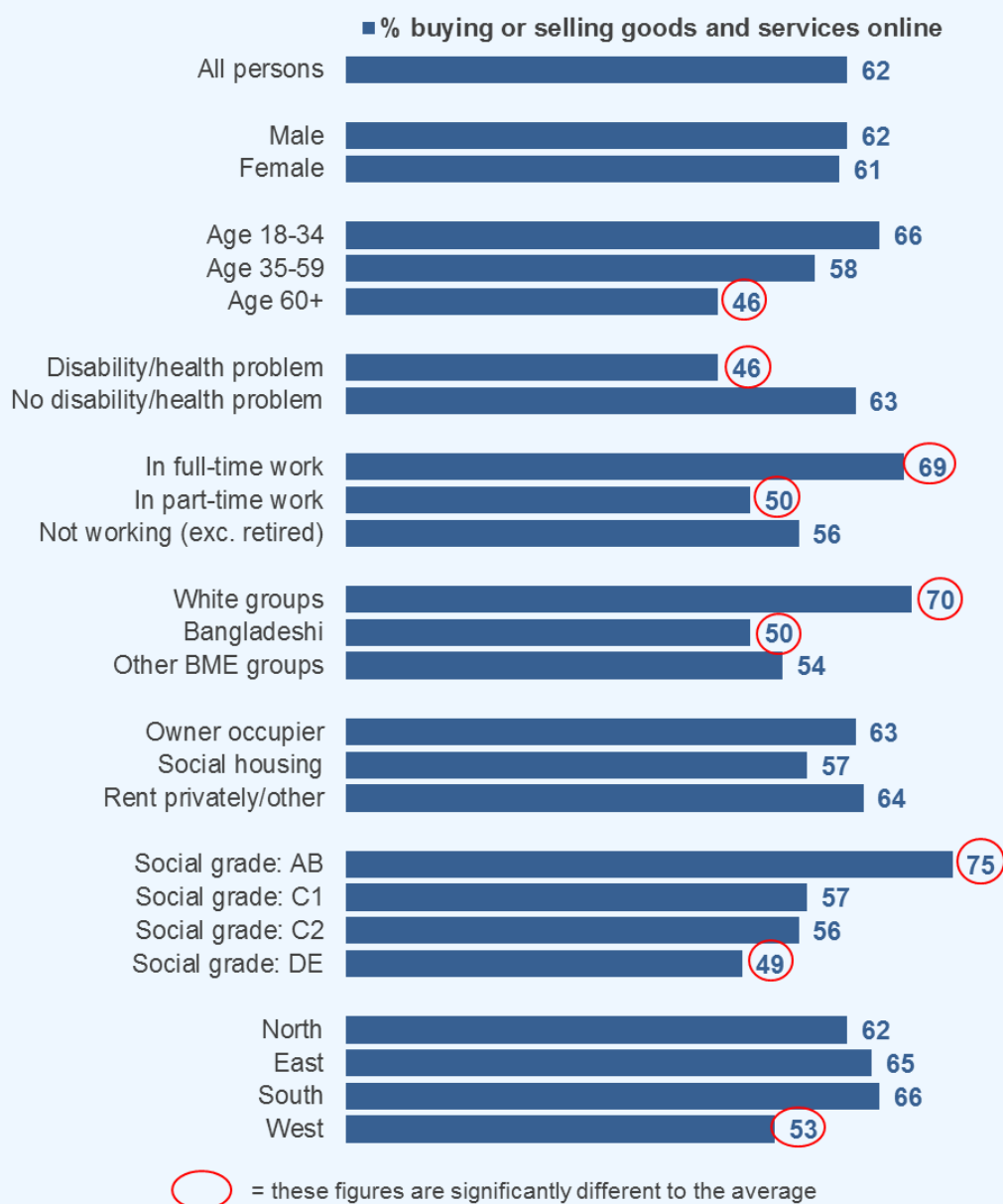*(Sample base: those with internet access, 881 respondents)*

■ % telephoning or making video calls over the internet (e.g. SKYPE)

Group	%
All persons	45
Male	49
Female	42
Age 18-34	54
Age 35-59	36
Age 60+	21
Disability/health problem	24
No disability/health problem	47
In full-time work	53
In part-time work	34
Not working (exc. retired)	41
White groups	51
Bangladeshi	35
Other BME groups	43
Owner occupier	47
Social housing	37
Rent privately/other	52
Social grade: AB	54
Social grade: C1	44
Social grade: C2	45
Social grade: DE	32
North	58
East	47
South	46
West	30

○ = these figures are significantly different to the average

Source: Tower Hamlets Annual Residents Survey 2017, Westco Trading

Internet use: Gaming, film and music

Less than half of those surveyed said they used the internet for playing or downloading games, films or music. Age was a strong predictor of use: younger residents were far more likely than older residents to use the internet for these activities (56 vs.16 per cent). These activities were less popular among: disabled people, those in part-time work, DE households, those living in the West of the borough, Bangladeshi residents and those in social housing.

Figure 10: Online games/films/music by population group, Tower Hamlets, 2017

Question: What do you use the internet for?
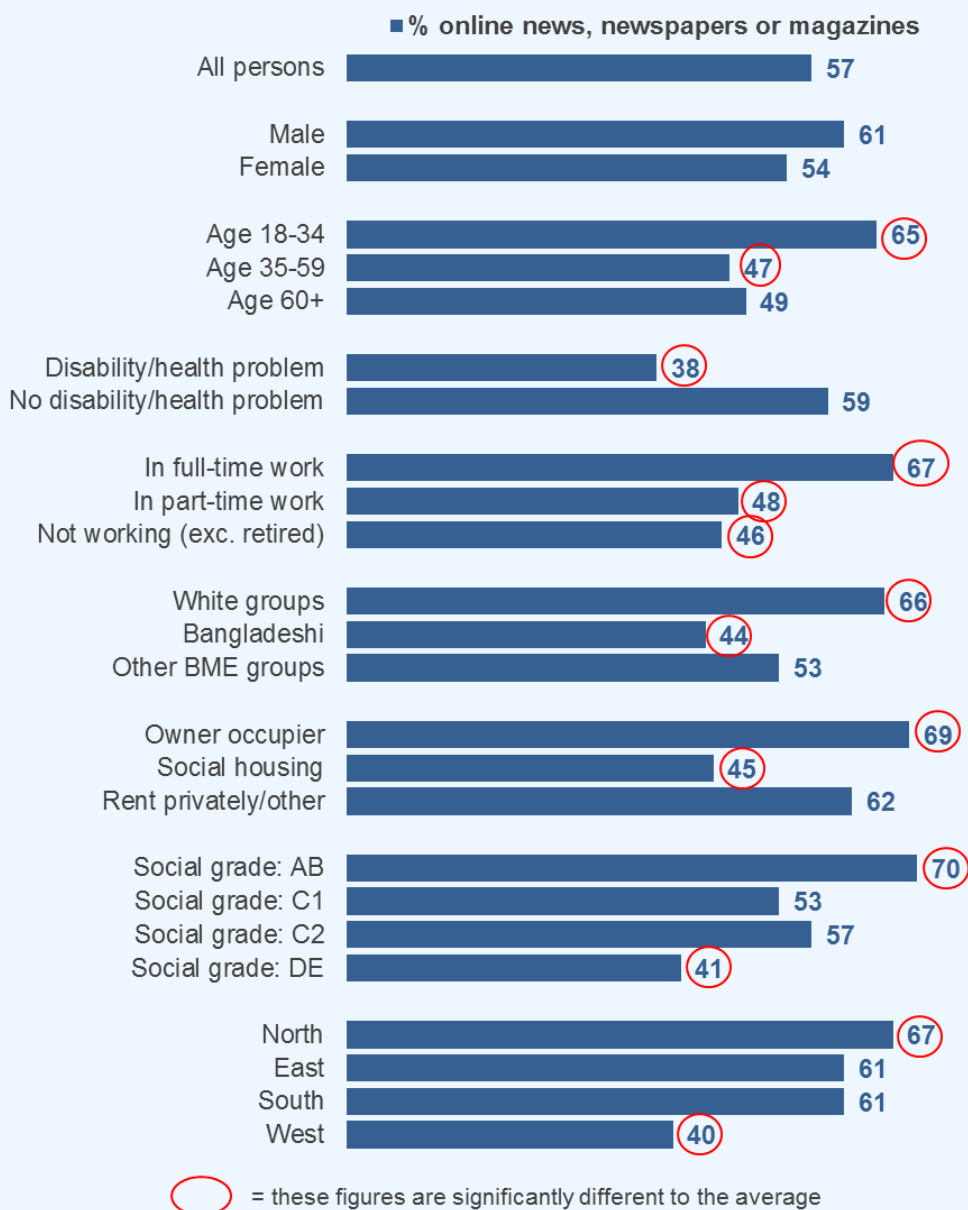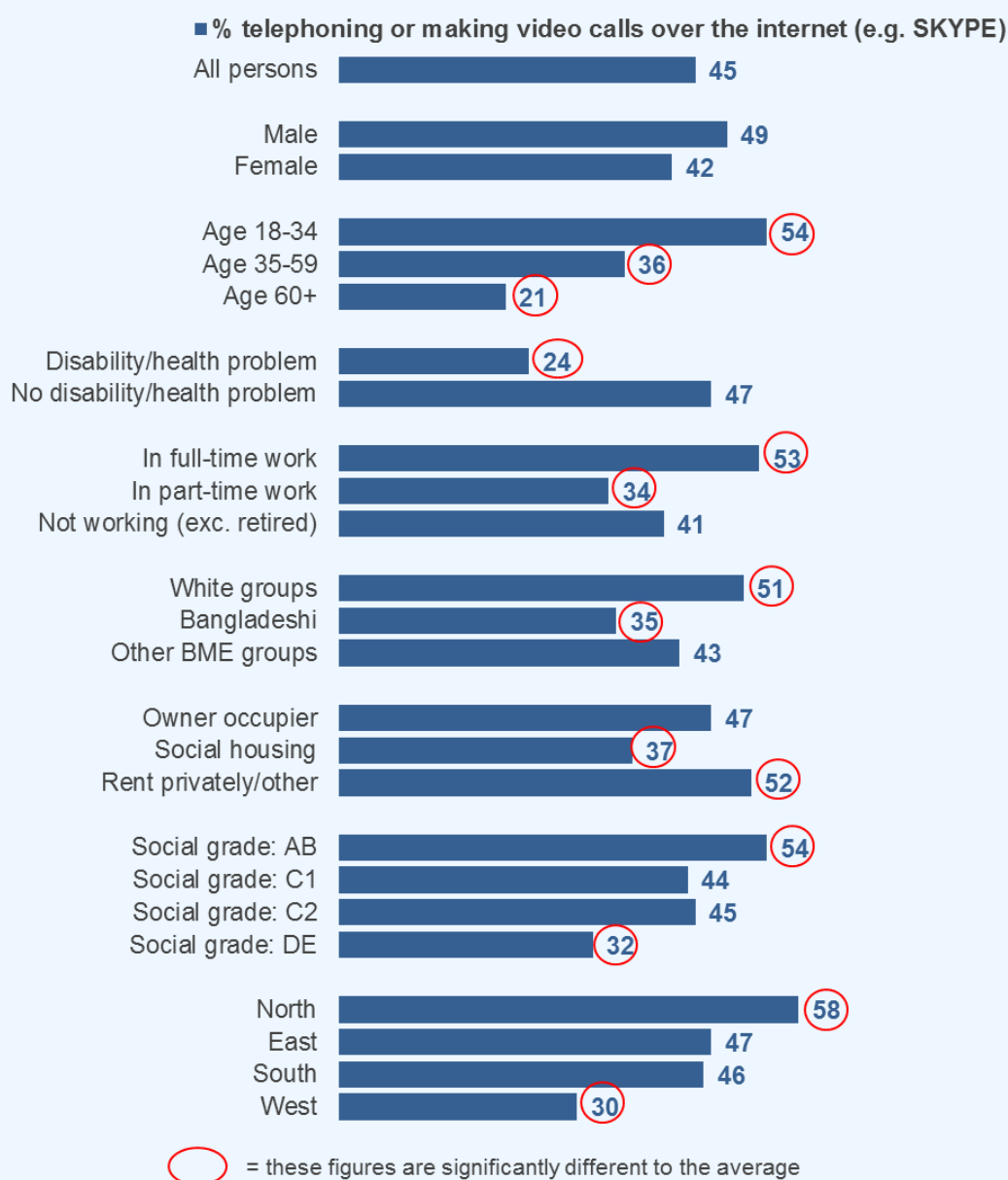(Sample base: those with internet access, 881 respondents)

■ % playing or downloading games, films or music

Population group	%
All persons	45
Male	50
Female	39
Age 18-34	56
Age 35-59	33
Age 60+	16
Disability/health problem	11
No disability/health problem	47
In full-time work	52
In part-time work	32
Not working (exc. retired)	43
White groups	52
Bangladeshi	36
Other BME groups	39
Owner occupier	44
Social housing	38
Rent privately/other	51
Social grade: AB	50
Social grade: C1	47
Social grade: C2	46
Social grade: DE	33
North	54
East	47
South	45
West	34

◯ = these figures are significantly different to the average

Source: Tower Hamlets Annual Residents Survey 2017, Westco Trading

Internet use: Paying for Council services

Four in ten internet users said they paid for Council services online (eg parking or council tax). AB households were far more likely to do so than DE households (51 vs. 18 per cent). Other groups, who were less likely to pay for Council services online, included: disabled people (18 per cent); those working part-time (25 per cent); those living in the West of the borough (26 per cent); those not in work (30 per cent); Bangladeshi residents (30 per cent); and those in social housing (32 per cent).

Figure 11: Paying for Council services online by group, Tower Hamlets, 2017

Question: What do you use the internet for?
(Sample base: those with internet access, 881 respondents)

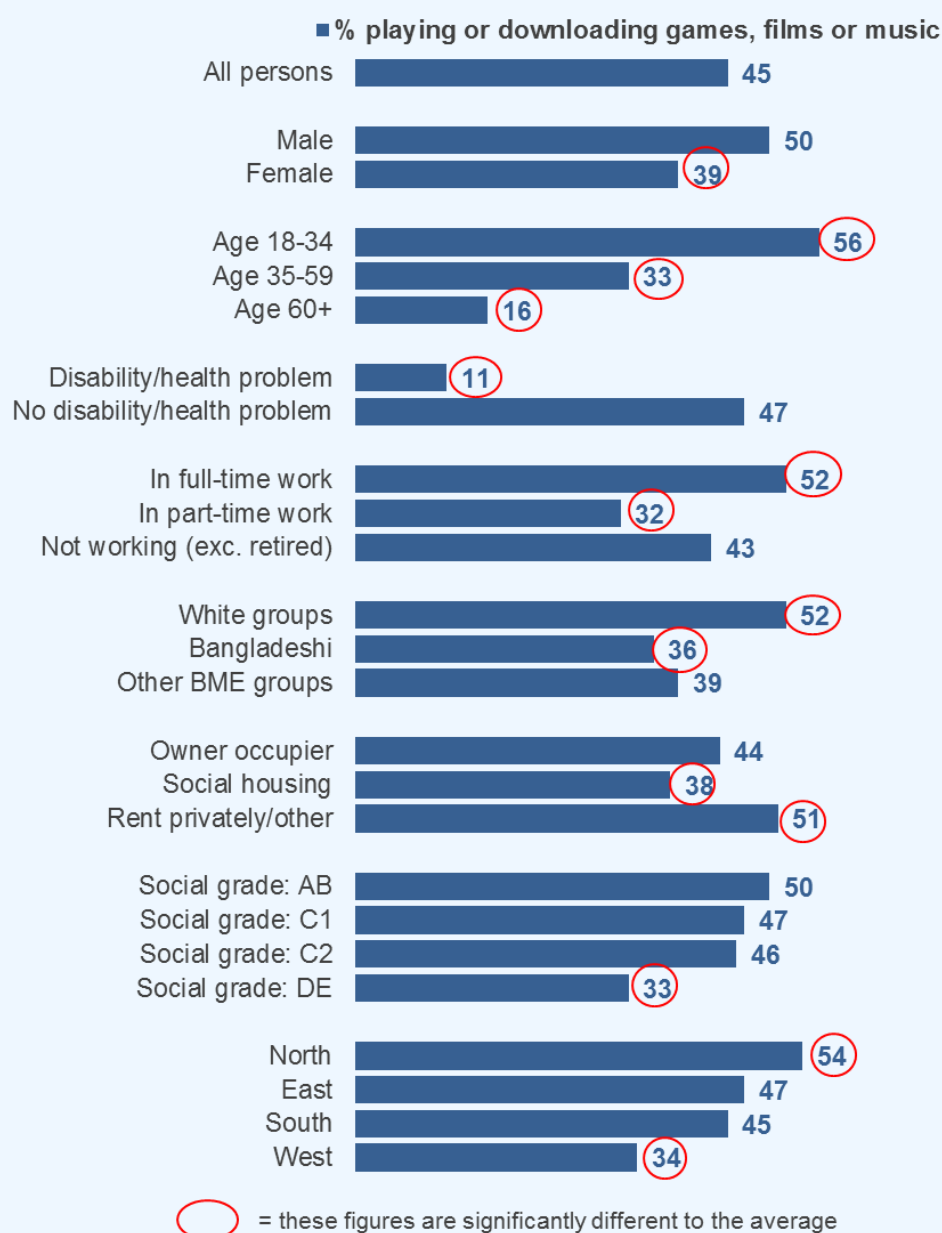■ % paying for council services (e.g. parking, council tax)

Group	%
All persons	40
Male	44
Female	35
Age 18-34	44
Age 35-59	36
Age 60+	29
Disability/health problem	18
No disability/health problem	42
In full-time work	50
In part-time work	25
Not working (exc. retired)	30
White groups	47
Bangladeshi	30
Other BME groups	33
Owner occupier	49
Social housing	32
Rent privately/other	42
Social grade: AB	51
Social grade: C1	40
Social grade: C2	42
Social grade: DE	18
North	46
East	44
South	44
West	26

◯ = these figures are significantly different to the average
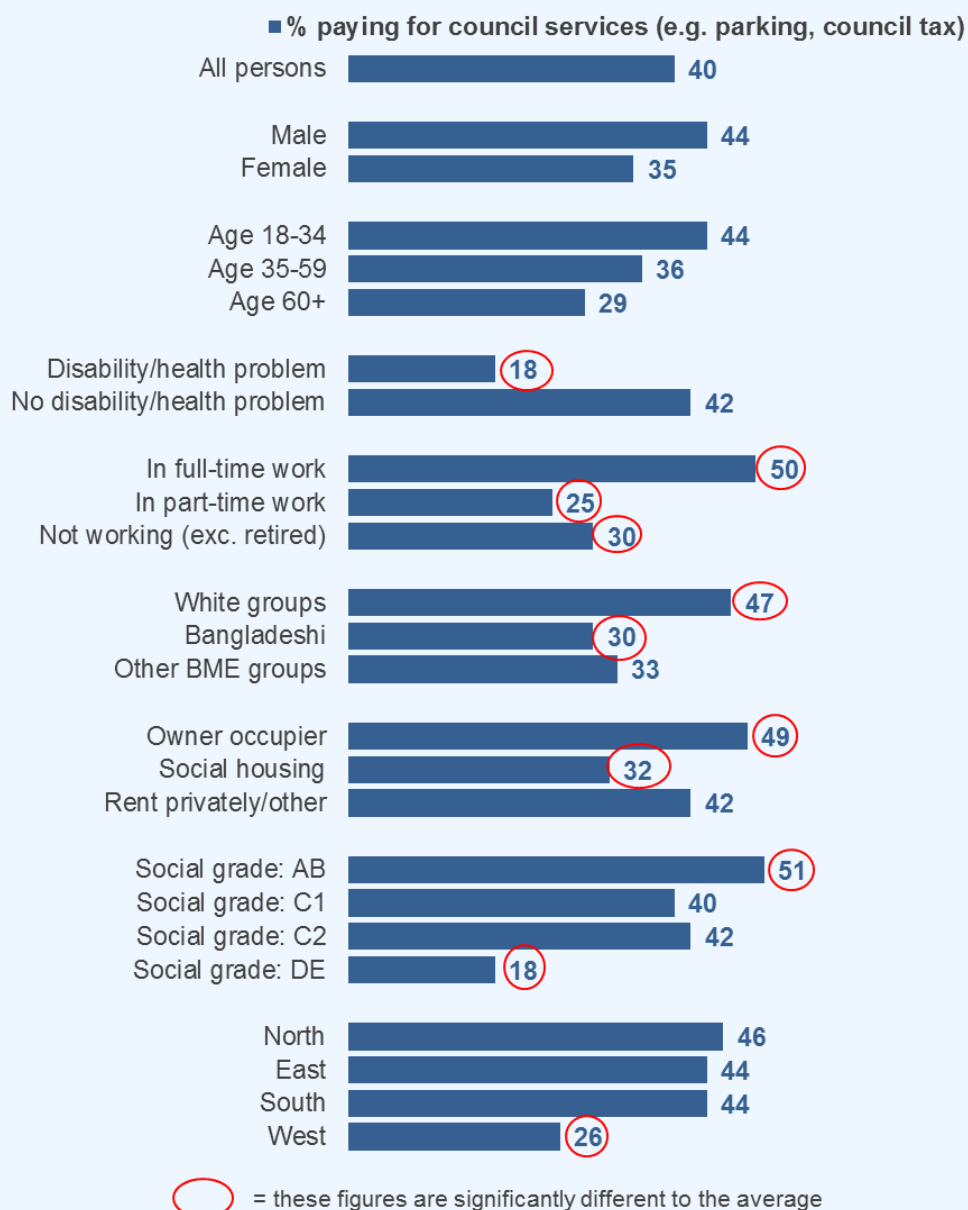
Source: Tower Hamlets Annual Residents Survey 2017, Westco Trading

Contact with the Council: overview

Residents were asked about their recent contact with the Council.

Around two-thirds of those surveyed said they had made contact with the Council over the last year. When asked about ease of contact, the majority (80 per cent) said they found it very or fairly easy to contact the Council.

Telephone remains, by far, the most popular method of contact, used by 78 per cent of those who had contacted the Council over the last year. It is also the most popular preferred future method of contact (69 per cent).

Just over one in five residents (22 per cent) had made contact using the Council's website and around 18 per cent said they had used email.

A significant proportion (13 per cent) of residents continue to make contact in person - by visiting a council office (or one stop shop/Idea Store/library), and a similar proportion would prefer to do so in the future.

Around one in ten contact the council via letter[1].

Figure 12: Current and preferred methods of contacting the Council, Tower Hamlets, 2017 (contact over last 12 months)
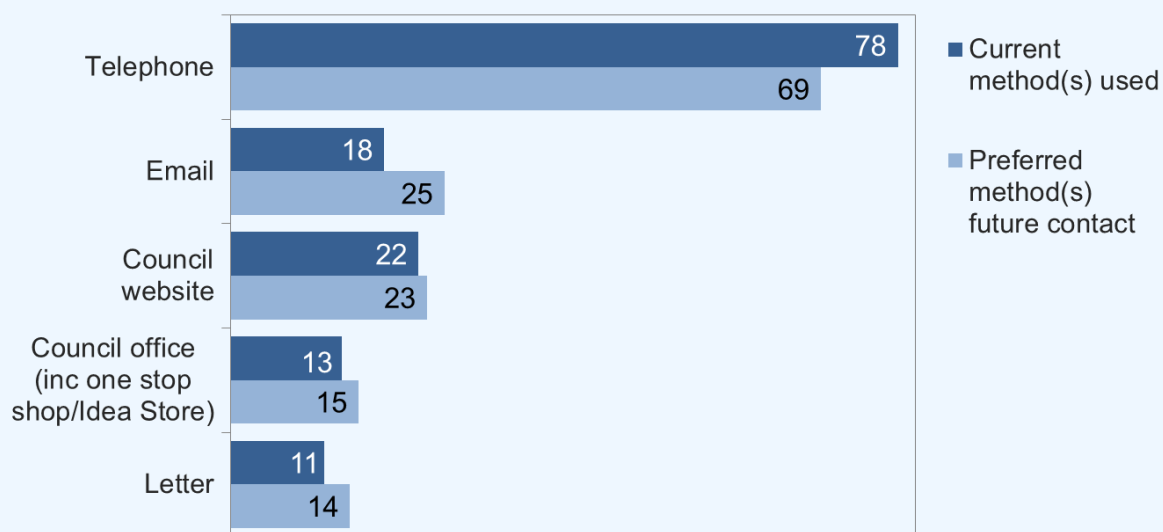
Source: Tower Hamlets Annual Residents' Survey 2017, Westco Trading.
Current method figures relate to percentage of those who had contacted council (base 656), while future contact relate to all respondents (base 967).

The charts that follow explore how contact patterns vary by population and household characteristics.

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[1] Percentages relating to different contact methods sum to more than 100 per cent as residents could have used more than one method to make contact over the year.

Contact with the Council

Almost two-thirds of residents surveyed said they had made contact with the Council over the last year. Groups most likely to be in contact with the Council include disabled people, those in social housing and those in part-time work.

Figure 13: Contact with the Council by population group, Tower Hamlets, 2017

Question: *If you have contacted the Council in the last year, which method did you use?*

■ % contacted the Council in last year

Group	%
All persons	65
Male	64
Female	67
Age 18-34	60
Age 35-59	72
Age 60+	71
Disability/health problem	84
No disability/health problem	64
In full-time work	64
In part-time work	75
Not working (exc. retired)	61
White groups	64
Bangladeshi	68
Other BME groups	66
Owner occupier	63
Social housing	76
Rent privately/other	56
Social grade: AB	66
Social grade: C1	64
Social grade: C2	62
Social grade: DE	69
North	57
East	70
South	64
West	71
Internet access	65
No internet access	67
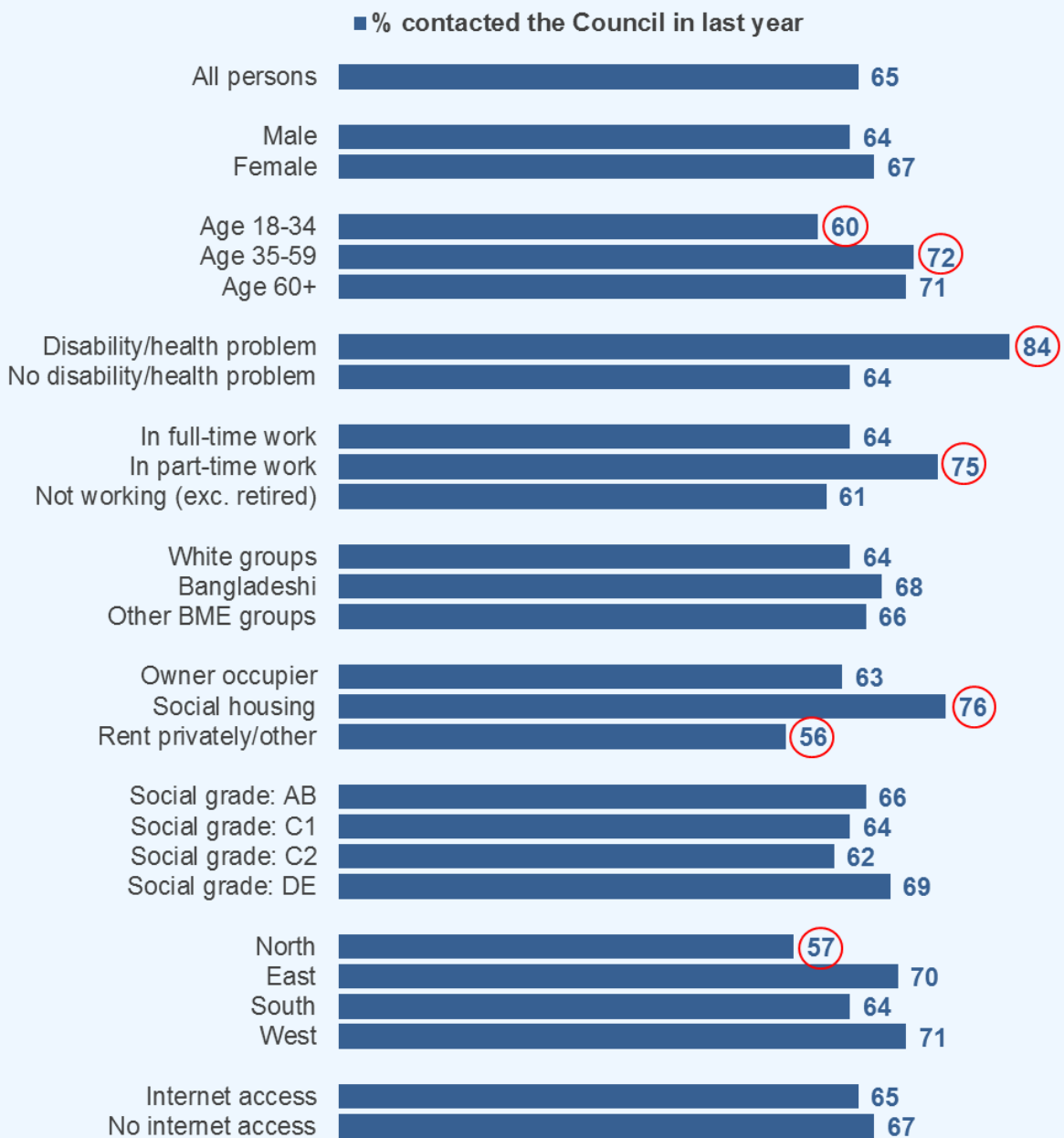
◯ = these figures are significantly different to the average

Source: Tower Hamlets Annual Residents Survey 2017, Westco Trading (sample size = 967 residents)

Ease of contact

When asked about ease of contact, the majority (80 per cent) said they found it very, or fairly, easy to contact the Council. Views were fairly similar across all population groups - that is, there were no (statistically) significant differences from the average.

Figure 14: Ease of contact by population group, Tower Hamlets, 2017

Question: How easy did you find it to contact the council?
(Sample base: those who made contact, 656 respondents)

■ % very/fairly easy

Population group	% very/fairly easy
All persons	80
Male	76
Female	84
Age 18-34	81
Age 35-59	78
Age 60+	82
Disability/health problem	78
No disability/health problem	80
In full-time work	80
In part-time work	75
Not working (exc. retired)	82
White groups	82
Bangladeshi	74
Other BME groups	83
Owner occupier	75
Social housing	82
Rent privately/other	80
Social grade: AB	78
Social grade: C1	78
Social grade: C2	81
Social grade: DE	83
North	78
East	81
South	83
West	76
Internet access	79
No internet access	89

◯ = these figures are significantly different to the average

Source: Tower Hamlets Annual Residents Survey 2017, Westco Trading

Difficulty in getting through on the phone

Just under half of those surveyed agreed that the Council was difficult to get through to on the phone. This view was consistent across different population groups, though those who had made contact over the last 12 months by phone were more likely to agree than those who had not made contact (57 vs. 37 per cent).

Figure 15: Agreement with the statement 'My Council is difficult to get through to on the phone' by population group, Tower Hamlets, 2017

' My Council is difficult to get through to on the phone'

■ % agree (a great deal/some extent)

All persons	47
Male	45
Female	49
Age 18-34	44
Age 35-59	50
Age 60+	49
Disability/health problem	41
No disability/health problem	47
In full-time work	49
In part-time work	45
Not working (exc.retired)	43
White groups	46
Bangladeshi	53
Other BME groups	41
Owner occupier	54
Social housing	46
Rent privately/other	44
Social grade: AB	42
Social grade: C1	48
Social grade: C2	55
Social grade: DE	46
North	43
East	52
South	44
West	49
Had telephone contact over year	57
Had no telephone contact over year	37

◯ = these figures are significantly different to the average

Source: Tower Hamlets Annual Residents' Survey 2017, Westco Trading (sample size = 967 residents)

Current contact methods: Telephone

Telephone remains the predominant method used to contact the Council: of those who had made contact with the Council in the last year, 78 per cent had done so 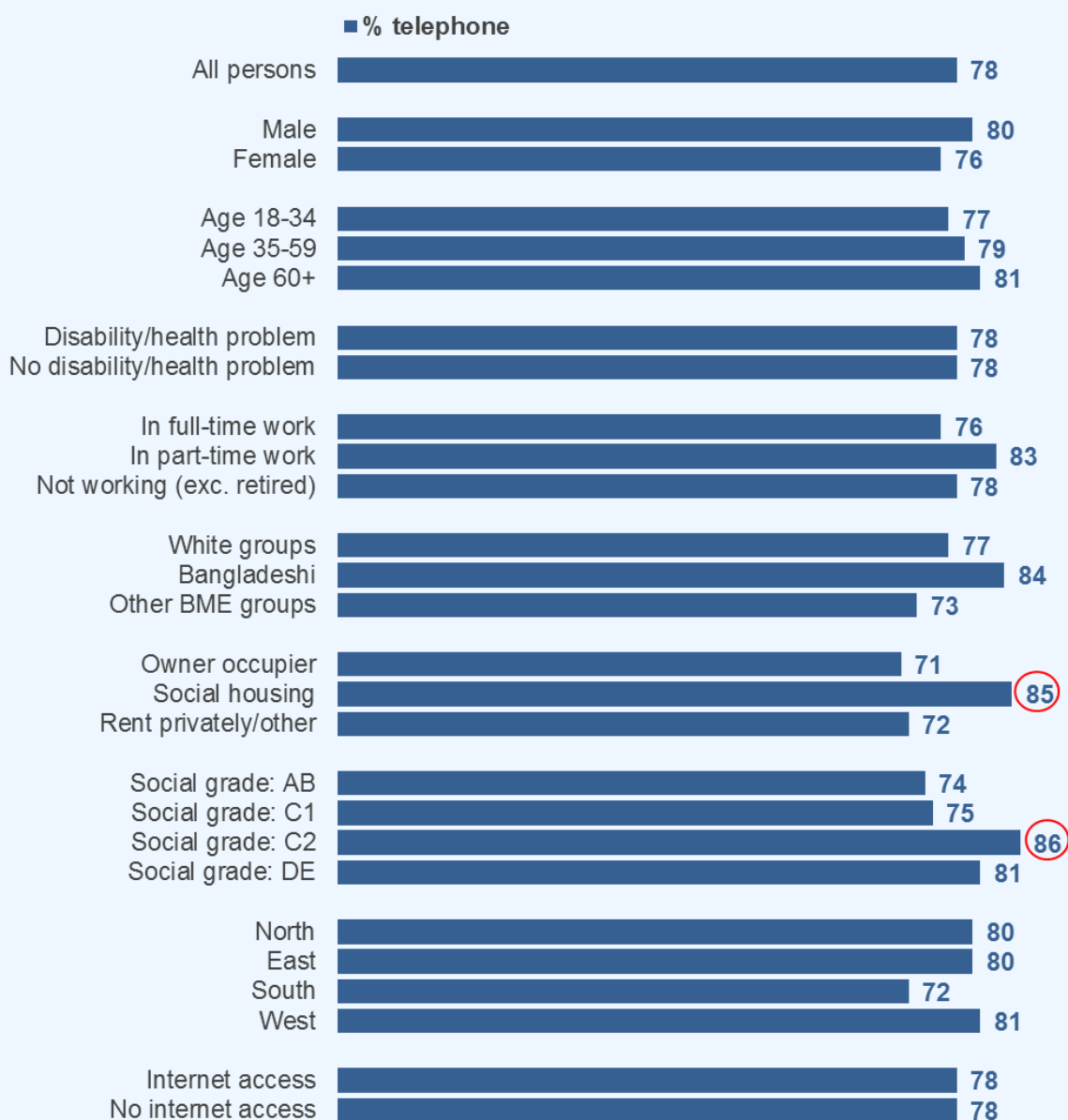by telephone. Telephone is the most popular contact method across all population groups, though those in social housing and social grade C2 households were a bit more likely than average to use phone contact.

Figure 16: Contact by telephone by population group, Tower Hamlets, 2017

Question: If you have contacted the Council in the last year, which method did you use? (Sample base: those who made contact, 656 respondents)

■ % telephone

Population group	% telephone
All persons	78
Male	80
Female	76
Age 18-34	77
Age 35-59	79
Age 60+	81
Disability/health problem	78
No disability/health problem	78
In full-time work	76
In part-time work	83
Not working (exc. retired)	78
White groups	77
Bangladeshi	84
Other BME groups	73
Owner occupier	71
Social housing	85
Rent privately/other	72
Social grade: AB	74
Social grade: C1	75
Social grade: C2	86
Social grade: DE	81
North	80
East	80
South	72
West	81
Internet access	78
No internet access	78

⬭ = these figures are significantly different to the average
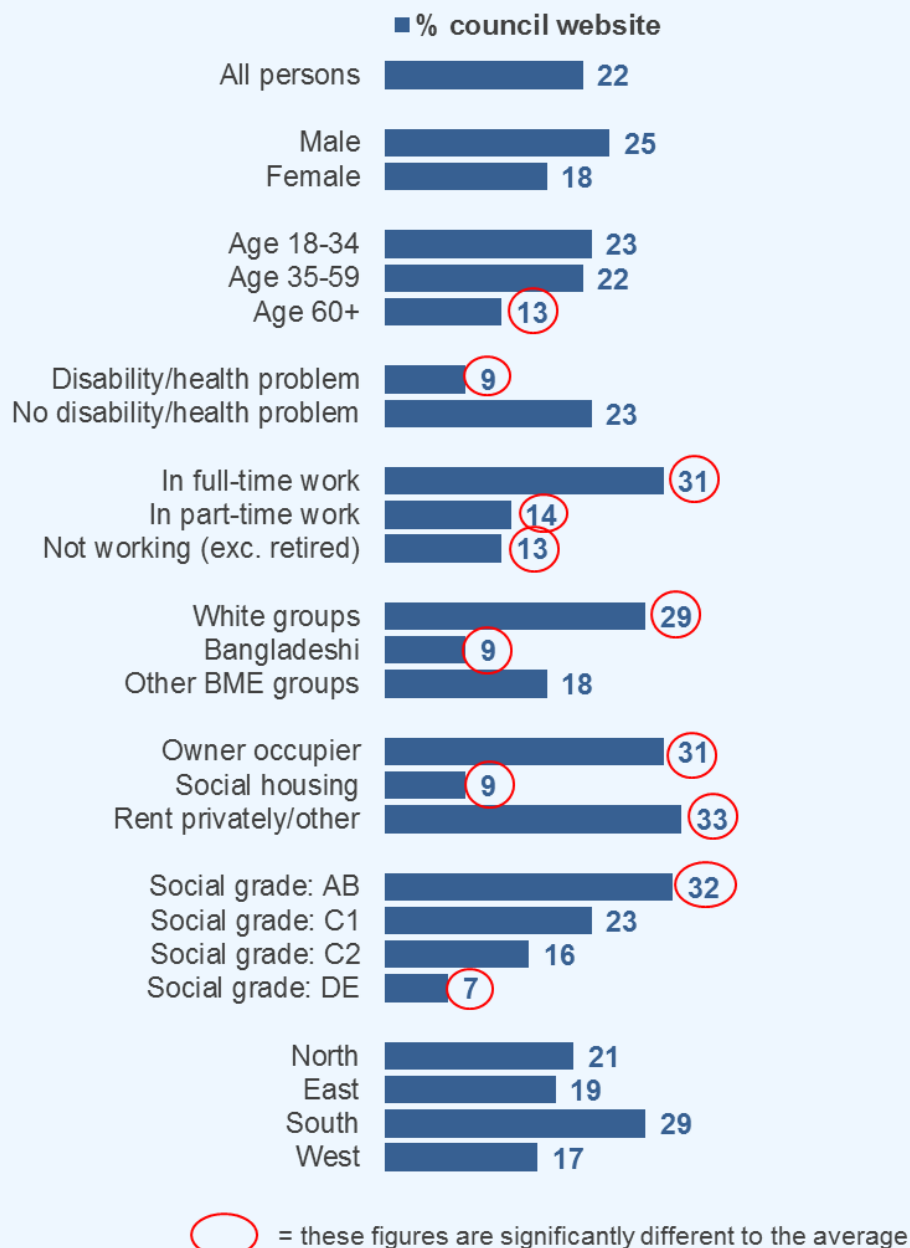
Source: Tower Hamlets Annual Residents Survey 2017, Westco Trading

Current contact methods: Council website

Around one fifth (22 per cent) of residents made contact with the Council via the website. There were marked differences across population groups in the use of online contact methods. Those most likely to use the website include: those in AB households; those in full-time work; White residents; owner occupiers and private renters. The website was least popular with: disabled/older residents, Bangladeshi residents, DE households and social housing tenants.

Figure 17 Contact via Council website by population group, Tower Hamlets, 2017

Question: If you have contacted the Council in the last year, which method did you use? (Sample base: those who made contact, 656 respondents)

■ % council website

All persons	22
Male	25
Female	18
Age 18-34	23
Age 35-59	22
Age 60+	(13)
Disability/health problem	(9)
No disability/health problem	23
In full-time work	(31)
In part-time work	(14)
Not working (exc. retired)	(13)
White groups	(29)
Bangladeshi	(9)
Other BME groups	18
Owner occupier	(31)
Social housing	(9)
Rent privately/other	(33)
Social grade: AB	(32)
Social grade: C1	23
Social grade: C2	16
Social grade: DE	(7)
North	21
East	19
South	29
West	17

◯ = these figures are significantly different to the average
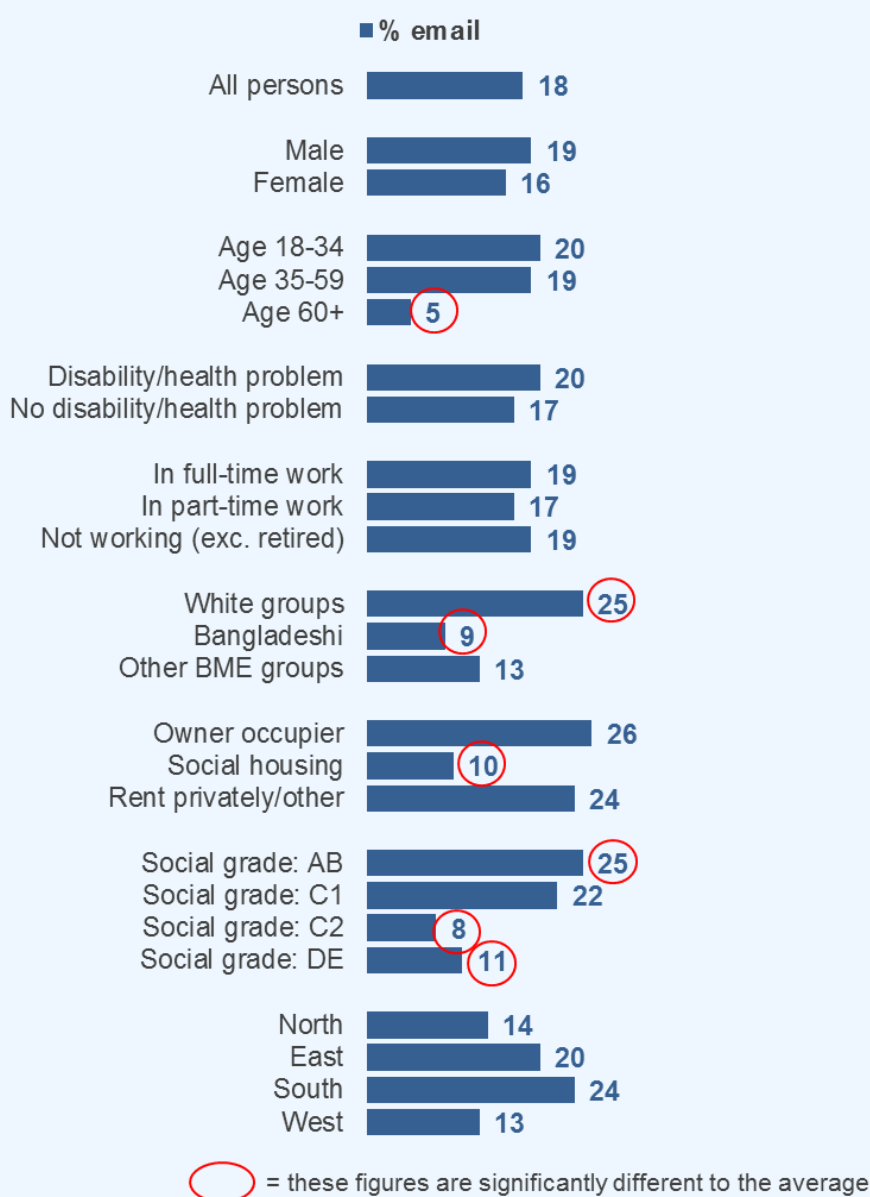
Source: Tower Hamlets Annual Residents Survey 2017, Westco Trading

Current contact methods: E-mail

Just under one fifth (18 per cent) of residents made contact with the Council via email. Again, there were marked differences across population groups. Those most likely to make contact via email include those in AB households and White residents (both 25 per cent). Email was least popular with: older residents (5 per cent); Bangladeshi residents (9 per cent); those in social housing (10 per cent); and C2/DE households (8 and11 per cent).

Figure 18: Contact by email by population group, Tower Hamlets, 2017

Question: If you have contacted the Council in the last year, which method did you use?
(Sample base: those who made contact, 656 respondents)

■ % email

Group	%
All persons	18
Male	19
Female	16
Age 18-34	20
Age 35-59	19
Age 60+	5
Disability/health problem	20
No disability/health problem	17
In full-time work	19
In part-time work	17
Not working (exc. retired)	19
White groups	25
Bangladeshi	9
Other BME groups	13
Owner occupier	26
Social housing	10
Rent privately/other	24
Social grade: AB	25
Social grade: C1	22
Social grade: C2	8
Social grade: DE	11
North	14
East	20
South	24
West	13

◯ = these figures are significantly different to the average

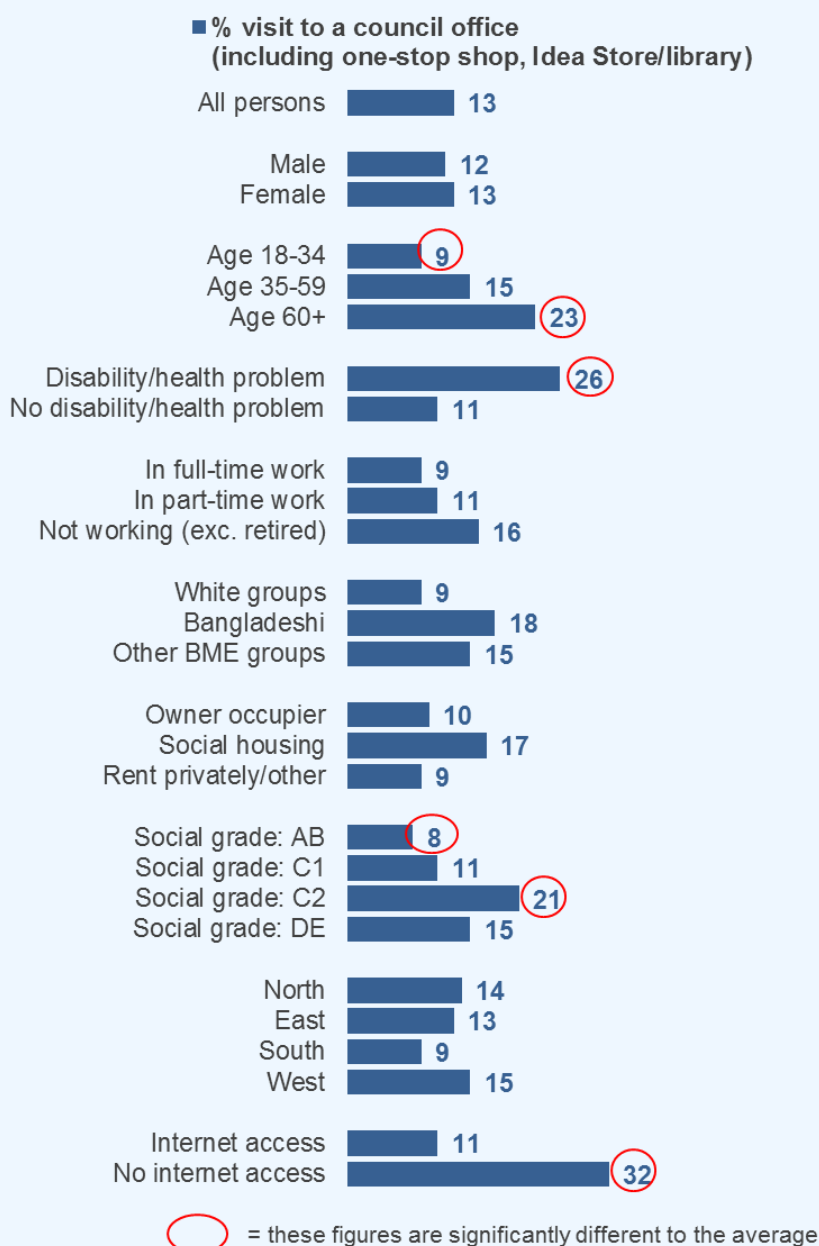Source: Tower Hamlets Annual Residents Survey 2017, Westco Trading

Contact with the Council: Visiting a Council office

One in eight residents (13 per cent) contacted the Council by visiting a council office (or one stop shop, Idea Store or library). Groups most likely to visit in person include: older people, disabled people, those without internet access and those from social grade C2 households.

Figure 19: Contact by visiting a council office by population group, Tower Hamlets, 2017

Question: If you have contacted the Council in the last year, which method did you use? (Sample base: those who made contact, 656 respondents)

**■ % visit to a council office
(including one-stop shop, Idea Store/library)**

Group	%
All persons	13
Male	12
Female	13
Age 18-34	9
Age 35-59	15
Age 60+	23
Disability/health problem	26
No disability/health problem	11
In full-time work	9
In part-time work	11
Not working (exc. retired)	16
White groups	9
Bangladeshi	18
Other BME groups	15
Owner occupier	10
Social housing	17
Rent privately/other	9
Social grade: AB	8
Social grade: C1	11
Social grade: C2	21
Social grade: DE	15
North	14
East	13
South	9
West	15
Internet access	11
No internet access	32

◯ = these figures are significantly different to the average

Source: Tower Hamlets Annual Residents Survey 2017, Westco Trading

Preferred future contact methods

The survey also explored how residents would prefer to contact the Council in the future. For the most part, preferences by group broadly mirrored existing contact patterns:

- Telephone tops the list and is by far, the most popular method (chosen by 69 per cent as one of their preferred methods). Telephone was most popular among Bangladeshi residents (77 per cent), those in social housing (76 per cent), C2 households and those living in the North of the borough.

- Almost one quarter (23 per cent) of residents chose the Council website as one of their preferred modes of future contact. Those most likely to prefer using the website include: younger residents, those in AB households; those in full-time work; White residents; private renters and those living in the South of the borough.

- One quarter of residents said they would prefer to make contact in the future via email. Again, there were marked differences across population groups. Email was most popular among AB households, White residents and private renters. It was less popular among: older people; Bangladeshi residents; those in social housing; social grade DE households; and not surprisingly, those without internet access.

- Almost one in seven residents (15 per cent) said they would prefer to make future contact by visiting a Council office in person. Those most likely to favour face to face contact included: those without internet access, DE households, Bangladeshi residents, social housing tenants and those living in the West of the borough.

Table 2: Preferred ways to contact the Council in the future				
If you need to contact the council in future, what would be your preferred method(s? (top four listed)				
	Telephone	Email	Council website	Visit to a council office*
				% of residents
All persons	**69**	**25**	**23**	**15**
Male	71	27	24	13
Female	68	23	22	17
Age 18-34	66	29	28	12
Age 35-59	72	25	21	18
Age 60+	77	7	7	21
Disability/health problem	70	19	9	20
No disability/health problem	69	26	25	15
In full-time work	69	30	32	11
In part-time work	69	20	12	17
Not working (exc. retired)	69	26	18	18
White groups	69	32	29	11
Bangladeshi	77	14	14	21
Other BME groups	61	22	19	19
Owner occupier	68	31	29	9
Social housing	76	15	11	20
Rent privately/other	63	32	32	14
Social grade: AB	62	34	36	9
Social grade: C1	65	29	21	11
Social grade: C2	82	19	20	22
Social grade: DE	75	13	9	25
North	78	24	22	11
East	70	26	23	18
South	70	26	31	12
West	59	25	15	21
Internet access	69	27	25	13
No internet access	76	0	2	38

Source: Tower Hamlets Annual Residents Survey 2017, Westco Trading (sample size = 967 residents)

Notes: Shaded figures are significantly different to the average (ie Difference is statistically significant)
*Includes one-stop shop, Idea Store/library

Preferred ways to get Council information: overview

Residents were asked to identify their top three ways to get information about the Council. While the results show a strong preference for online sources, there is also still a strong interest in getting information via print methods and face to face contact (Figure 20).
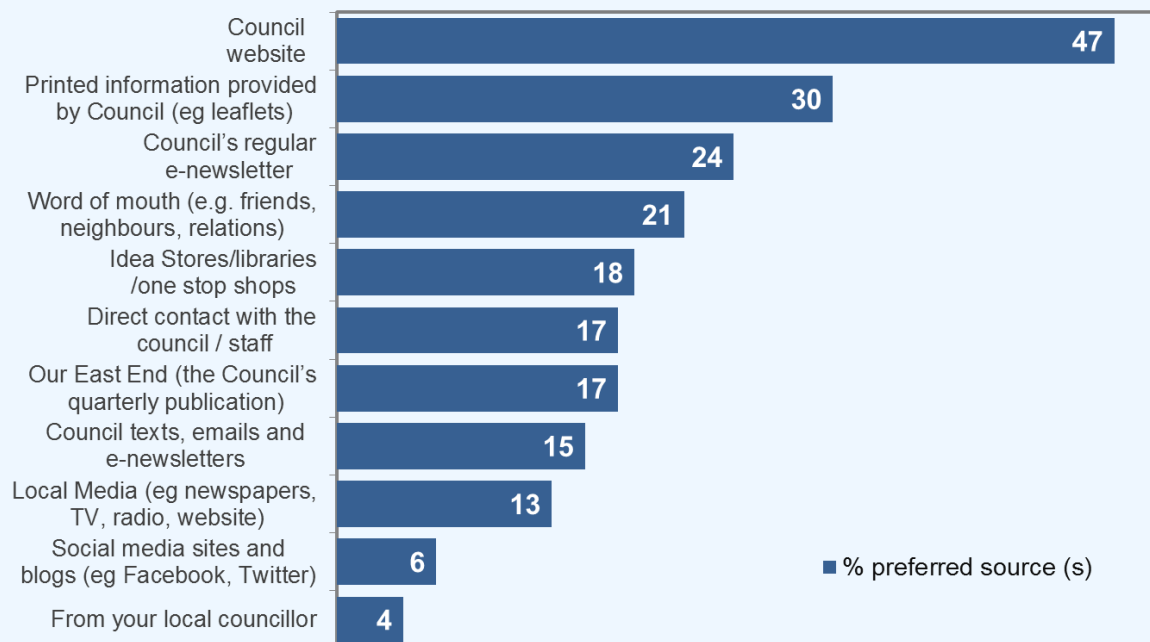
Almost one half said they would like to source information via the Council website and one quarter (24 per cent) said they would like to get information via a regular e-newsletter.

However, 30 per cent favoured printed information provided by the Council. Around one in six residents favoured getting information from Idea Stores/libraries/one stop shops and a similar proportion said they would like to get information through direct contact with Council staff (including meetings and events).

The charts that follow explore how views vary across population groups - these show very marked differences in preferences between groups in terms of the way people would like to obtain, and receive, information about the Council and its services.

Figure 20: Preferred ways to get Council information by population group, Tower Hamlets, 2017

Thinking about ways you get information about the Council, which of these sources of information would you prefer to use to find out about Tower Hamlets Council and the services it provides?, you can pick up to three'.
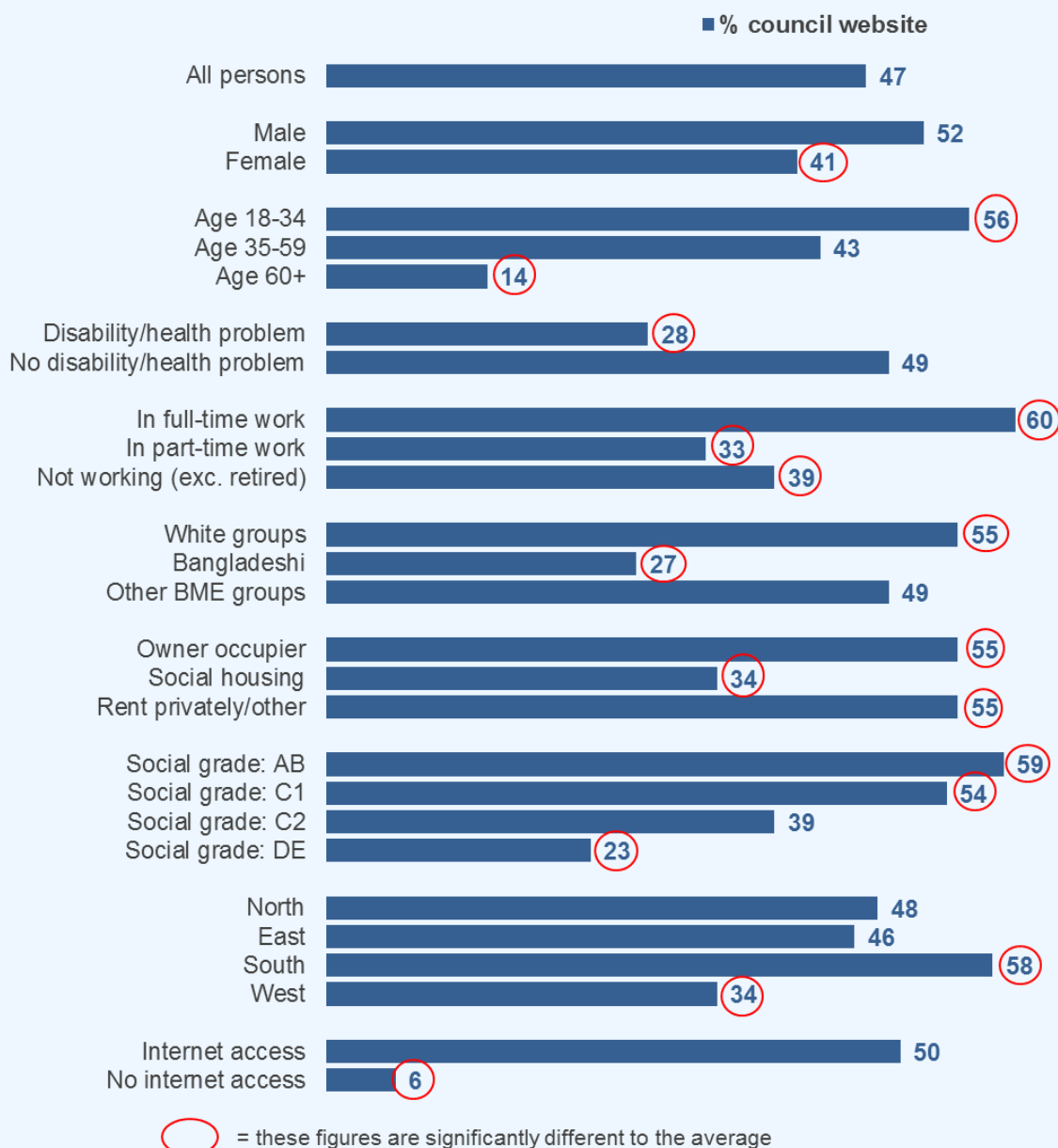

Source: Tower Hamlets Annual Residents' Survey 2017, Westco Trading (sample size = 967)

Preferred ways to get information: Council website

Almost half (47 per cent) of the residents surveyed said they would like to source information about the Council via its website. While this was the most popular method chosen - preferences varied markedly across population groups. Those with a strong preference for the website included: younger residents; those in full-time work; those in ABC1 households; owner occupiers and renters; White residents and those living in the South of the borough.

Figure 21: Preference for website by population group, Tower Hamlets, 2017

Question: Thinking about ways you get information about the Council, which of these sources of information would you prefer to use to find out about Tower Hamlets Council and the services it provides? You can pick up to three.

■ % council website

Group	Value
All persons	47
Male	52
Female	41
Age 18-34	56
Age 35-59	43
Age 60+	14
Disability/health problem	28
No disability/health problem	49
In full-time work	60
In part-time work	33
Not working (exc. retired)	39
White groups	55
Bangladeshi	27
Other BME groups	49
Owner occupier	55
Social housing	34
Rent privately/other	55
Social grade: AB	59
Social grade: C1	54
Social grade: C2	39
Social grade: DE	23
North	48
East	46
South	58
West	34
Internet access	50
No internet access	6

◯ = these figures are significantly different to the average

Source: Tower Hamlets Annual Residents Survey 2017, Westco Trading (sample size = 967 residents)

Preferred ways to get information: Printed information

Just under one third of residents (30 per cent) said they would like information about the Council in printed form (eg leaflets, flyers etc) - this was the second most popular preference. Those most likely to prefer print information were older residents, C2DE households and Bangladeshi residents.

Figure 22: Preference for printed information by group, Tower Hamlets, 2017

Question: Thinking about ways you get information about the Council, which of these sources of information would you prefer to use to find out about Tower Hamlets Council and the services it provides? You can pick up to three.
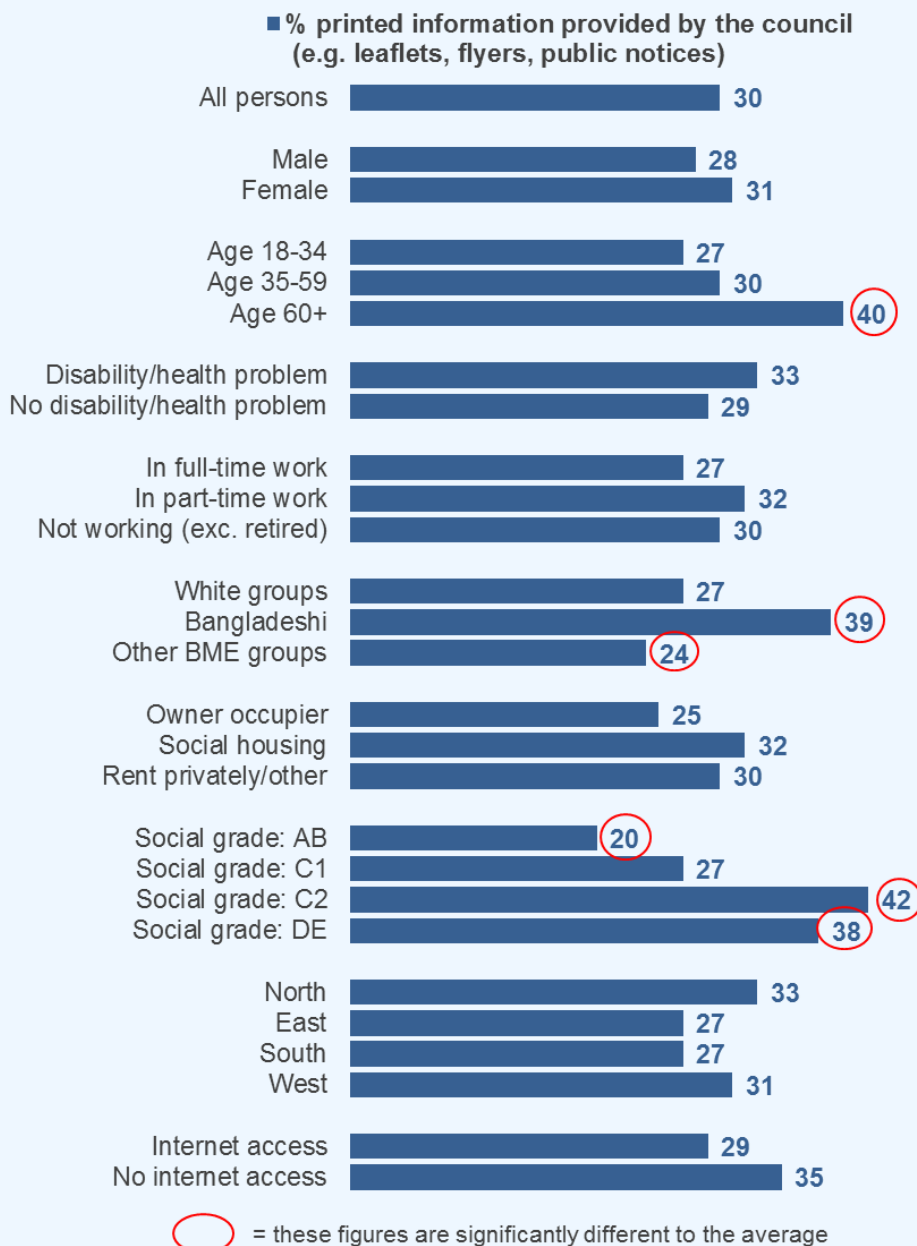
■ **% printed information provided by the council (e.g. leaflets, flyers, public notices)**

Group	%
All persons	30
Male	28
Female	31
Age 18-34	27
Age 35-59	30
Age 60+	(40)
Disability/health problem	33
No disability/health problem	29
In full-time work	27
In part-time work	32
Not working (exc. retired)	30
White groups	27
Bangladeshi	(39)
Other BME groups	(24)
Owner occupier	25
Social housing	32
Rent privately/other	30
Social grade: AB	(20)
Social grade: C1	27
Social grade: C2	(42)
Social grade: DE	(38)
North	33
East	27
South	27
West	31
Internet access	29
No internet access	35

◯ = these figures are significantly different to the average

Source: Tower Hamlets Annual Residents Survey 2017, Westco Trading (sample size = 967 residents)

Preferred ways to get information: Council's regular e-newsletter

Around one quarter (24 per cent) said they would like information about the Council via a regular e-newsletter. Those most likely to prefer this method were AB households and those in social housing.

Figure 23: Preference for e-newsletter by population group, Tower Hamlets, 2017

Question: Thinking about ways you get information about the Council, which of these sources of information would you prefer to use to find out about Tower Hamlets Council and the services it provides? You can pick up to three.
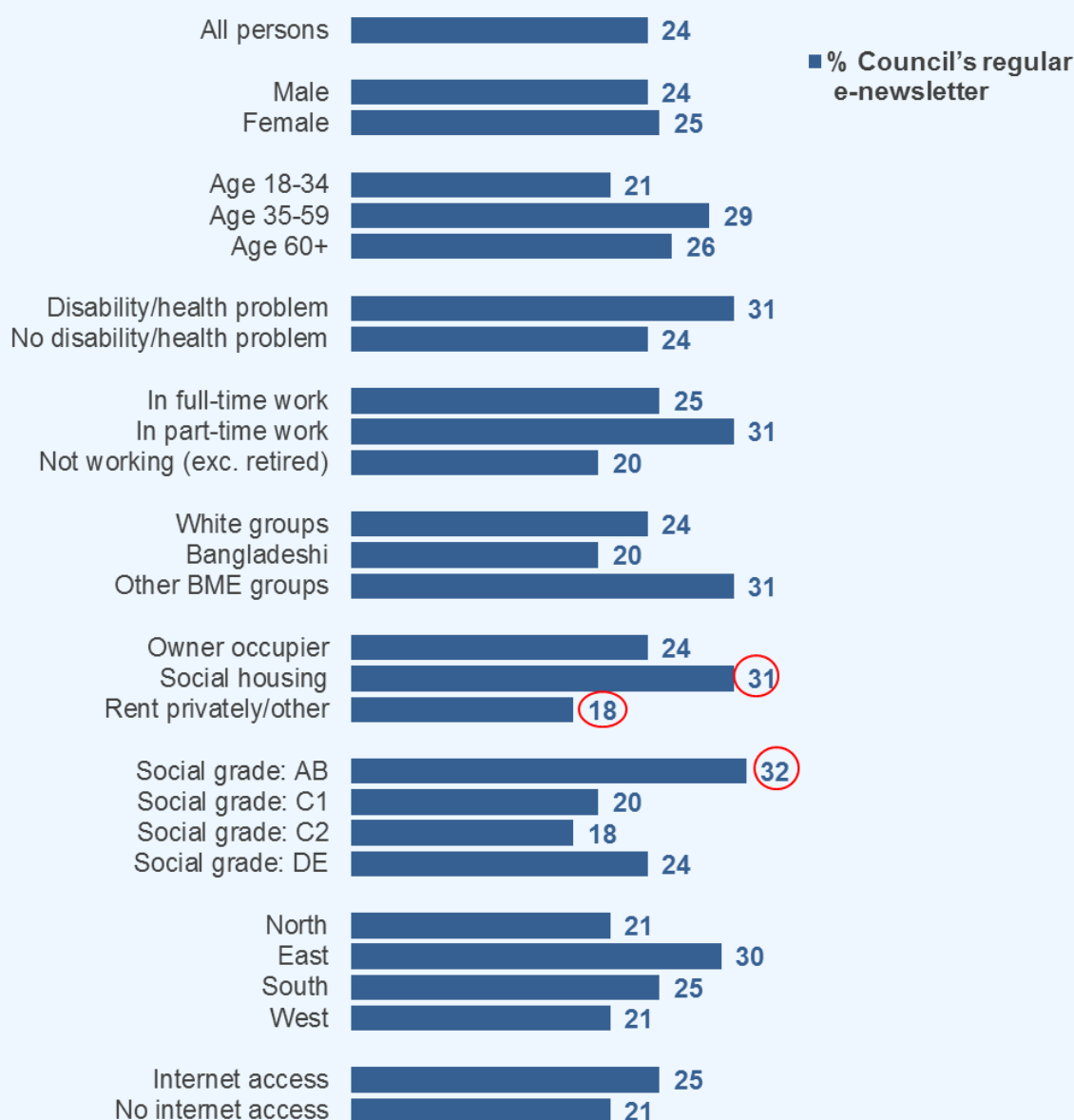
Population group	% Council's regular e-newsletter
All persons	24
Male	24
Female	25
Age 18-34	21
Age 35-59	29
Age 60+	26
Disability/health problem	31
No disability/health problem	24
In full-time work	25
In part-time work	31
Not working (exc. retired)	20
White groups	24
Bangladeshi	20
Other BME groups	31
Owner occupier	24
Social housing	31
Rent privately/other	18
Social grade: AB	32
Social grade: C1	20
Social grade: C2	18
Social grade: DE	24
North	21
East	30
South	25
West	21
Internet access	25
No internet access	21

○ = these figures are significantly different to the average
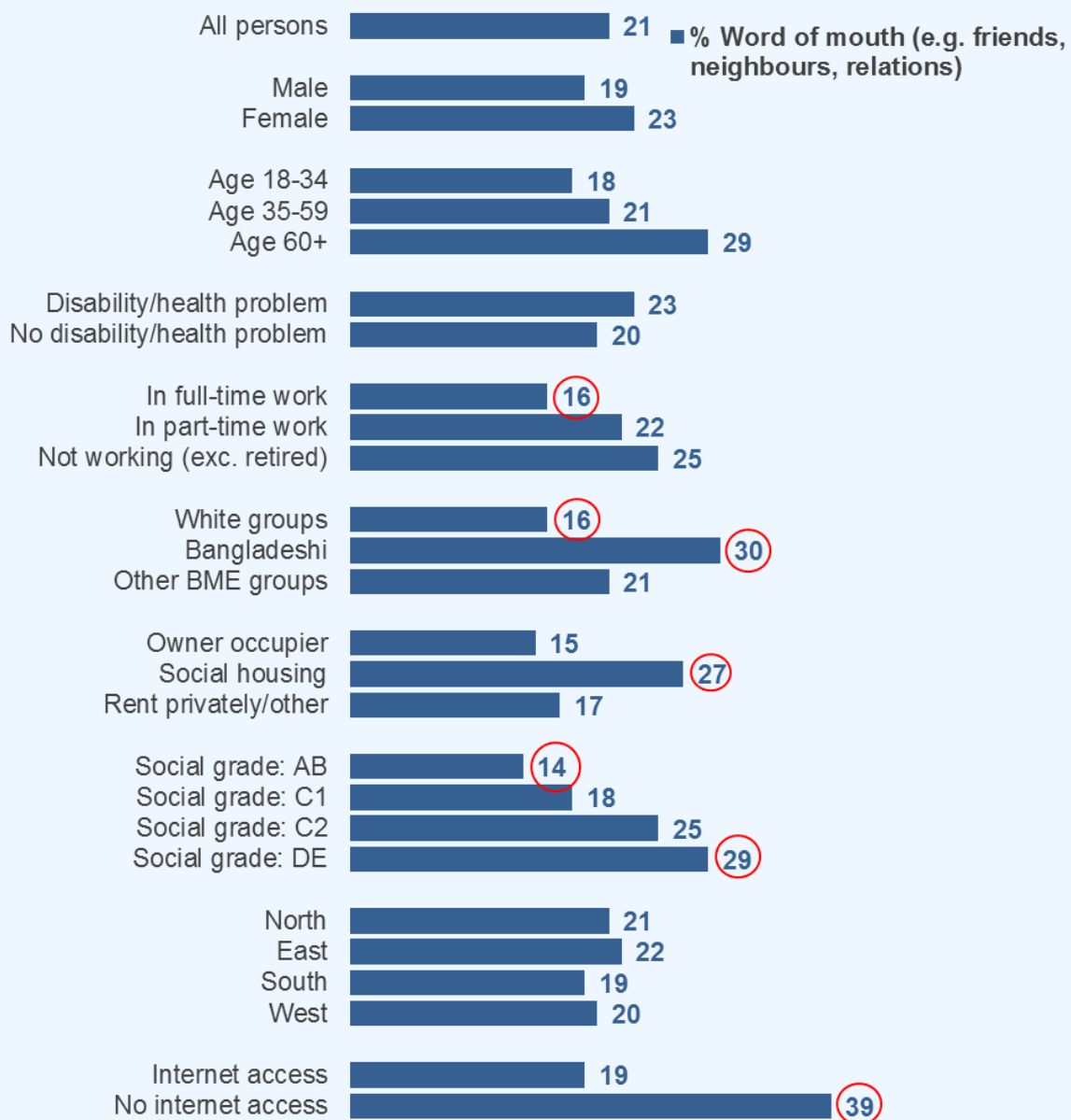
Source: Tower Hamlets Annual Residents Survey 2017, Westco Trading (sample size = 967 residents)

Preferred ways to get information: Word of mouth

Around one in five residents (21 per cent) said they would like information about the Council via word of mouth (eg through friends, neighbours and relations). Those most likely to prefer this method were Bangladeshi residents (30 per cent), those in social housing (27 per cent), social grade DE households (29 per cent) and those without internet access (39 per cent).

Figure 24: Preference for word of mouth by population group, Tower Hamlets, 2017

Question: Thinking about ways you get information about the Council, which of these sources of information would you prefer to use to find out about Tower Hamlets Council and the services it provides? You can pick up to three.

Group	% Word of mouth (e.g. friends, neighbours, relations)
All persons	21
Male	19
Female	23
Age 18-34	18
Age 35-59	21
Age 60+	29
Disability/health problem	23
No disability/health problem	20
In full-time work	16
In part-time work	22
Not working (exc. retired)	25
White groups	16
Bangladeshi	30
Other BME groups	21
Owner occupier	15
Social housing	27
Rent privately/other	17
Social grade: AB	14
Social grade: C1	18
Social grade: C2	25
Social grade: DE	29
North	21
East	22
South	19
West	20
Internet access	19
No internet access	39

◯ = these figures are significantly different to the average

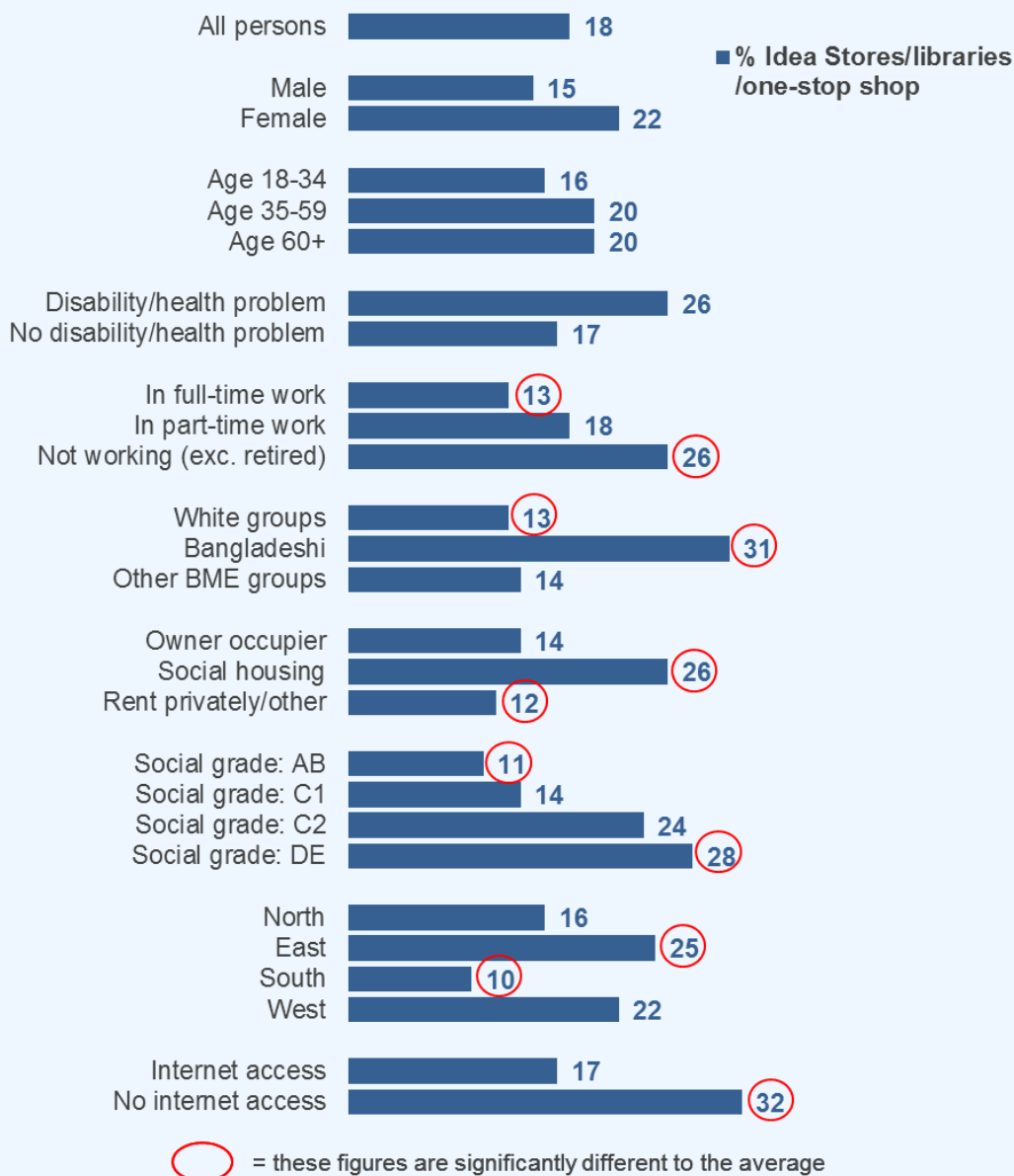Source: Tower Hamlets Annual Residents Survey 2017, Westco Trading (sample size = 967 residents)

Preferred ways to get information: Idea Stores/libraries/one stop shops

Around one in five residents (18 per cent) said they would like information about the Council via Idea Stores/libraries or one stop shops. Groups most likely to prefer this method included: those without internet access (32 per cent), Bangladeshi residents (31 per cent), DE households (28 per cent) and those in social housing (26 per cent)

Figure 25: Preference for Idea Stores/libraries/one stop shops by population group, Tower Hamlets, 2017

Question: Thinking about ways you get information about the Council, which of these sources of information would you prefer to use to find out about Tower Hamlets Council and the services it provides? You can pick up to three.

■ % Idea Stores/libraries /one-stop shop

Group	%
All persons	18
Male	15
Female	22
Age 18-34	16
Age 35-59	20
Age 60+	20
Disability/health problem	26
No disability/health problem	17
In full-time work	13
In part-time work	18
Not working (exc. retired)	26
White groups	13
Bangladeshi	31
Other BME groups	14
Owner occupier	14
Social housing	26
Rent privately/other	12
Social grade: AB	11
Social grade: C1	14
Social grade: C2	24
Social grade: DE	28
North	16
East	25
South	10
West	22
Internet access	17
No internet access	32

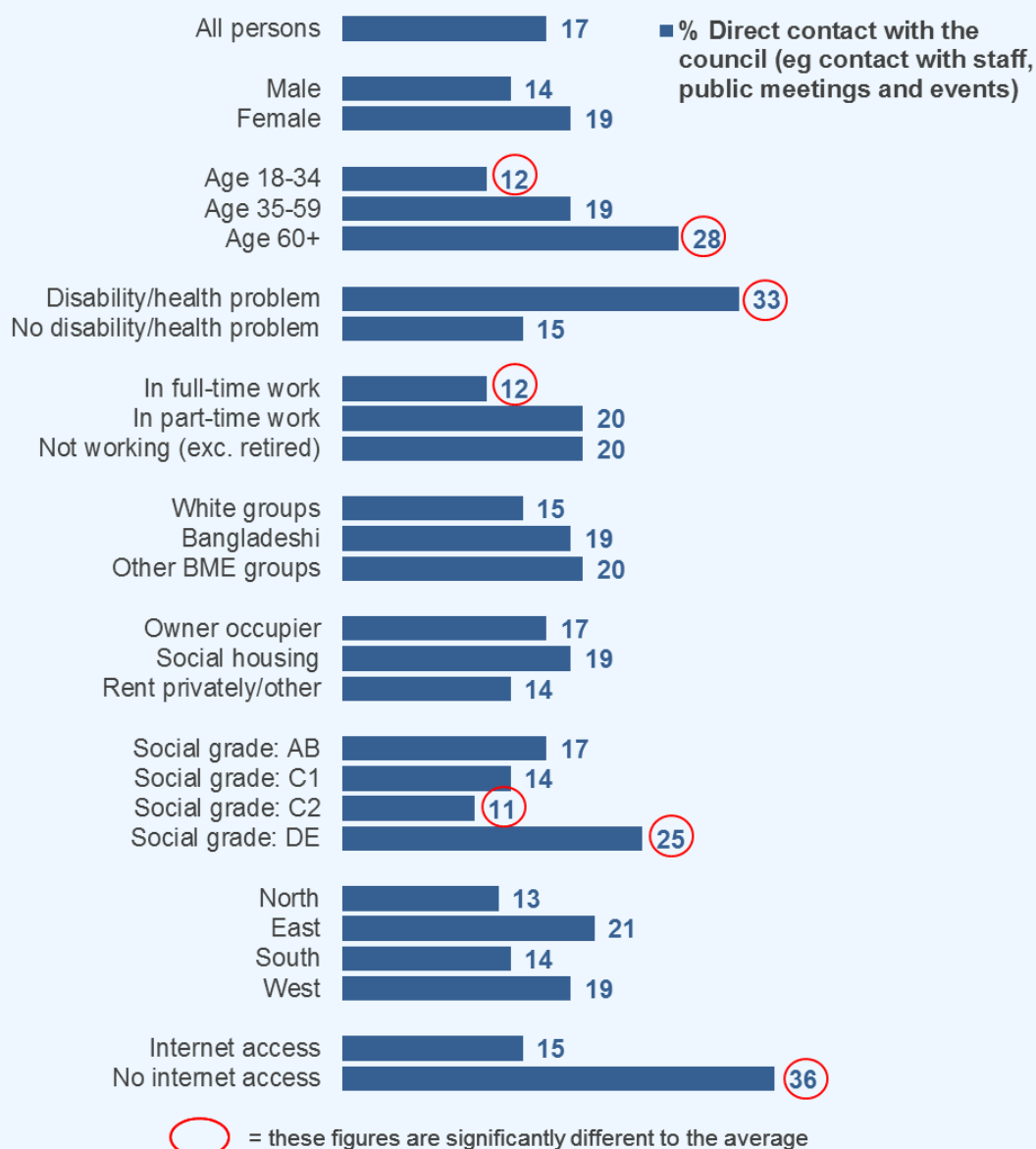◯ = these figures are significantly different to the average

Source: Tower Hamlets Annual Residents Survey 2017, Westco Trading (sample size = 967 residents)

Preferred ways to get information: Direct contact with council/staff

Around one in six residents (17 per cent) said they would like information via direct contact with the Council (eg contact with staff, public meetings and events). Groups most likely to prefer this method included: those without internet access (36 per cent), disabled people (33 per cent), older people (28 per cent), and social grade DE households (25 per cent).

Figure 26: Preference for direct contact with the council by population group, Tower Hamlets, 2017

Question: Thinking about ways you get information about the Council, which of these sources of information would you prefer to use to find out about Tower Hamlets Council and the services it provides? You can pick up to three.
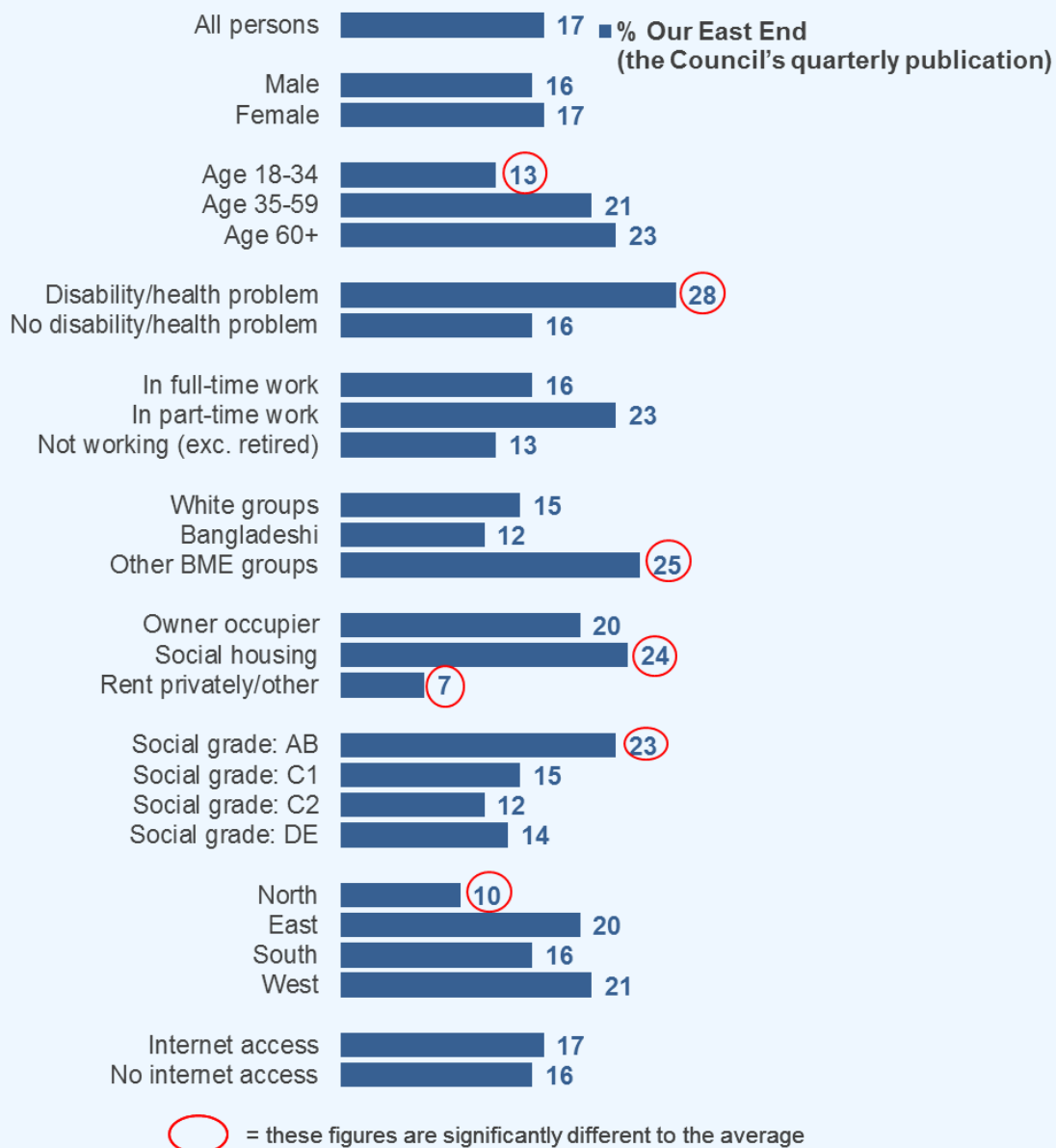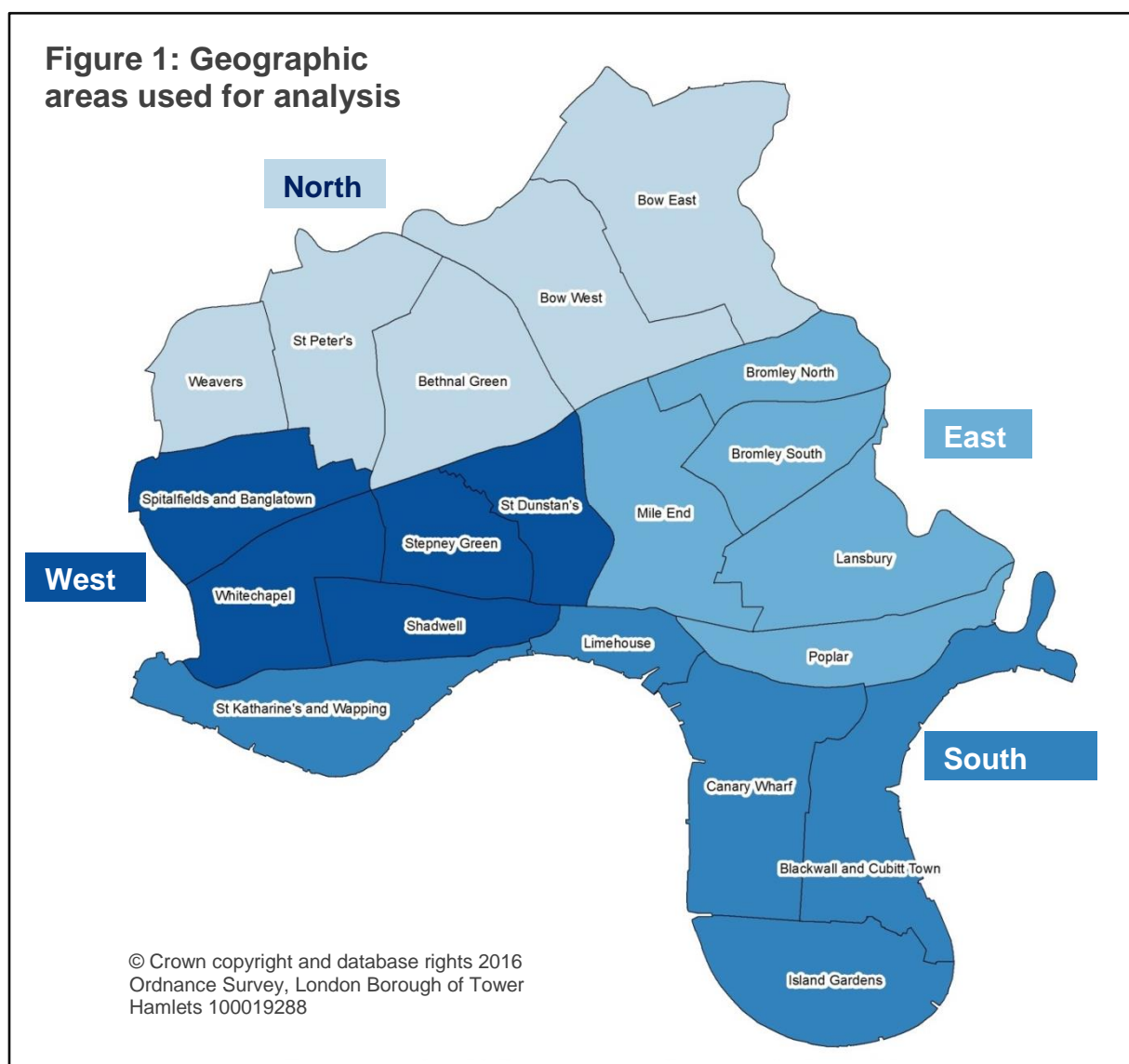

■ % Direct contact with the council (eg contact with staff, public meetings and events)

Group	Value
All persons	17
Male	14
Female	19
Age 18-34	12
Age 35-59	19
Age 60+	28
Disability/health problem	33
No disability/health problem	15
In full-time work	12
In part-time work	20
Not working (exc. retired)	20
White groups	15
Bangladeshi	19
Other BME groups	20
Owner occupier	17
Social housing	19
Rent privately/other	14
Social grade: AB	17
Social grade: C1	14
Social grade: C2	11
Social grade: DE	25
North	13
East	21
South	14
West	19
Internet access	15
No internet access	36

◯ = these figures are significantly different to the average

Source: Tower Hamlets Annual Residents Survey 2017, Westco Trading (sample size = 967 residents)

Preferred ways to get information: Our East End

Around one in six residents (17 per cent) said they would like information via the Council's quarterly newspaper 'Our East End'. Groups most likely to prefer this method were: disabled people (28 per cent), residents from other BME groups (25 per cent), social housing tenants (24 per cent) and social grade AB households (23 per cent).

Figure 27: Preference for Our East End by population group, Tower Hamlets, 2017

Question: Thinking about ways you get information about the Council, which of these sources of information would you prefer to use to find out about Tower Hamlets Council and the services it provides? You can pick up to three.

Group	% Our East End
All persons	17
Male	16
Female	17
Age 18-34	13
Age 35-59	21
Age 60+	23
Disability/health problem	28
No disability/health problem	16
In full-time work	16
In part-time work	23
Not working (exc. retired)	13
White groups	15
Bangladeshi	12
Other BME groups	25
Owner occupier	20
Social housing	24
Rent privately/other	7
Social grade: AB	23
Social grade: C1	15
Social grade: C2	12
Social grade: DE	14
North	10
East	20
South	16
West	21
Internet access	17
No internet access	16

◯ = these figures are significantly different to the average

Source: Tower Hamlets Annual Residents Survey 2017, Westco Trading (sample size = 967 residents)

Appendix A: Map of geographic areas used for analysis

Area comparisons are restricted to four areas: North, East, South and West (each made up of wards). The demographic and socio-economic profile of residents living in each area varies and this is reflected in the survey samples being compared. Most notably, those surveyed in the South of the borough have a very different profile compared with those in the other three areas. They are far more likely to be in employment (and to be social grade ABC1 households) compared with those living in the rest of the borough. Conversely, they are far less likely to live in social housing.

Figure 1: Geographic areas used for analysis

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Appendix B: Social grade groups

Social grade groups (market research classification system)	Groups used for analysis
A High managerial, administrative or professional • Professional people, very senior managers in business or commerce or top civil servants. Retired people, previously grade A, and their widows. **B Intermediate managerial, administrative or professional** • Middle management executives in large organisations, with appropriate qualifications. Principal officers in local government and civil service. • Top management, owners of small business concerns, educational & service establishments. • Retired people, previously grade B, and their widows.	AB
C1 Supervisory, clerical and junior managerial, administrative or professional • Junior management, owners of small establishments, and all others in non-manual positions. Jobs in this group have very varied responsibilities and educational requirements. • Retired people, previously grade C1, and their widows.	C1
C2 Skilled manual workers • All skilled manual workers, and those manual workers with responsibility for other people. • Retired people, previously grade C2, with pensions from their job. • Widows, if receiving pensions from their late husband's job.	C2
D Semi and unskilled manual workers • All semi-skilled and un-skilled manual workers, apprentices and trainees to skilled workers. • Retired people, previously grade D, with pensions from their job. • Widows, if receiving a pension from their late husband's job. **E State pensioners, casual workers, long term unemployed/workless** • Those entirely dependent on the state long-term, through sickness, unemployment, old age or other reasons. • Those unemployed for more than six months (otherwise classified on previous occupation). • Casual workers and those without a regular income. • Households without a Chief Income Earner.	DE