

Essex County Council Mobile Libraries Consultation

Written Report

Prepared by Lake Market Research for Essex County Council

14th December 2017

JOB REFERENCE 9170050-01



"This report complies to ISO 20252 and any other relevant codes of conduct."

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BACKGROUND, OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH CONTEXT

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Essex County Council's Libraries Service launched a public consultation on the future of the Mobile Libraries service on the 19th September. The Consultation document featured 10 pages of A4 detailing:

- Foreword and Introduction
- Proposal
- Background and Context
- Mobile Library Key Facts
- Costs and budget
- Alternatives available
- Options we have considered
- Impact of proposed changes

To understand opinion to the future of the Mobile Library Service, a public Consultation was undertaken amongst residents and organisations across the County. The Consultation encompassed an online questionnaire and self-completion paper questionnaire for adults aged 16 and over and children and young people aged under 16. Essex County Council commissioned Lake Market Research to manage the processing of the responses received, both online and on paper, including analysing all submissions and coding open ended data into themes to produce an independent and impartial report detailing the views of Consultees.

METHODOLOGY

Consultees were invited to submit their views on the proposals via each of the following channels:

1. Online questionnaires. The Consultation was promoted via a dedicated news page on Essex County Council's website with a live link from the homepage at www.essex.gov.uk throughout the Consultation period. The surveys for adults and children & young people were hosted on Essex Insight, the dedicated site for all official surveys and Consultations (From there people could view or download supporting documents (the draft needs and equality impact assessments, lists of current and potential stops) and an Easy Read version of the survey for people with learning disabilities/difficulties or communication difficulties).
2. Paper copies of the Consultation booklet and questionnaires were available at all libraries and mobile libraries and supporting documents could be printed on request or viewed via People's Network computers in libraries.

The survey comprised questions on proposals for the Mobile Library Service based on a five-point rating scale from 'Strongly Agree' to 'Strongly Disagree'. Consultees could also leave the question blank if they preferred. Throughout the questionnaire, Consultees were also given the opportunity to detail comments in their own words on the service changes being proposed. Lake Market Research has quantified these by grouping them into common themes.

The original consultation questionnaire was adapted slightly to produce an 'Easy Read' version. However, care was taken to avoid any alterations in wording that could change the meaning of questions. Copies of the 'Easy Read' questionnaire were available on request.

The consultation period ran for a period of 7 weeks from Tuesday 19th September to Monday 6th November (allowing a little extra time for postage). All paper questionnaires received by 9th November were reviewed and processed by Essex County Council. These questionnaires were then combined with the online responses received at Essex County Council to produce overall statistics for this report.

Emails / letters were also sent directly to Essex County Council by users as well as Groups / Councils / Organisations in response to this Consultation. 39 were received in total – 21 from Individuals and 18 from Organisations. These have been reviewed to ensure consistency with the findings of the questionnaire. All research conducted by Lake Market Research abides by the Code of Conduct and we are a member of the Market Research Society.

PUBLICITY AND PROMOTION OF CONSULTATION

To inform people about the consultation, letters were sent to all active mobile library card holders (people who joined Essex Libraries on a mobile library and had used their membership card in the previous year) with details of how they could respond. Leaders and key officers of the 12 District, Borough and City councils in Essex were notified by email, as were the 260 Town and Parish council clerks and more than 100 voluntary and community groups and library partners. All were sent a reminder as the deadline for the end of the consultation approached.

Press releases were issued at the start and half-way through the Consultation, the Council Leader was interviewed on BBC Radio Essex on the morning it started and news items and links to the consultation were published in council e-bulletins targeting different audiences, such as schools, parents, people in later life and job-seekers.

On the day the Consultation opened it was mentioned in introductory remarks at the annual conference of Essex Association of Local Councils, the member-led association of town and parish councils in the county.

Posters and flyers were displayed in all of the County's 74 library buildings and nine mobile library vehicles and in Essex County Council receptions. Posters and information were supplied to district, borough and city councils for display in their receptions and town and

parish councils were sent publicity material on request. FAQ briefings were provided to staff in libraries, ECC receptions and customer service centre, and to volunteer-run libraries.

Digital banners that linked to the survey appeared in ECC e-bulletins and were made available to other stakeholders to display on their websites or in newsletters.

The availability of the Easy Read survey, large print and Braille versions and a telephone helpline for people to complete the surveys over the phone were mentioned in the letters and emails sent out. The Easy Read survey was also promoted at meetings of local action groups for people with learning disabilities or communication difficulties and their families and support workers.

Social media posts on Essex Libraries' Facebook and Twitter feeds and repeated on the council's corporate feeds directed people to the news page or to a YouTube video encouraging people to respond (<https://youtube/EJaoUeVGOTM>). Towards the end of the Consultation period, the Children and Young People survey was promoted through targeted posts to parents, as there were only c50 responses to that survey.

The Consultation generated 25 items of local media coverage, reaching a potential audience of 170,000 (not counting repeat coverage in the same title and coverage for which circulation or listener figures are not available). The Consultation was featured in bulletins/web coverage by Essex Rural Partnership and Volunteer Essex. Essex County Council e-bulletins reached at least 80,000 separate inboxes (it is difficult to put a firm figure on this as individuals can subscribe to multiple e-bulletins). The video was viewed 99 times. Social media posts reached 41,105 people and generated 2,918 engagements (video views, link clicks, likes, comments or shares).

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

It should be noted that a sample of residents participated in this Consultation rather than all residents within the Essex County Council boundary. Results are therefore subject to sampling error, which means that not all differences observed are statistically significant.

Given the self-selecting nature of this Consultation, it was expected that the majority of those completing the Consultation document would be those who use the Mobile Library Service. This expectation was realised with the final profile of Individual / Family Consultees responding at 75% using the Mobile Library Service and 74% have used in the last month. It is therefore important to note that the findings of this Consultation are largely based on current active users of the Mobile Library Service and do not therefore represent Essex residents as a whole.

With these assumptions in mind and according to Essex County Council's figures in terms of active card holders (4,695 who have joined the library service on a mobile and have used their library card within the last year). For the purposes of estimating the accuracy of results, we have used this figure to calculate the confidence level and confidence interval that the Consultation results can be based on in terms of Mobile Library users' response. With a

sample size of 966 Individuals / Families with children under 11 responding for example, we can assume that results are broadly accurate to +/- 2.8% at a 95% confidence level. In the instance of for example 50% of those who indicated they use the Mobile Library Service in the last year picking a particular response code on a question (for example agree strongly), a confidence interval of +/- 2.8% means you can be 'sure' that if you had asked the question to the entire relevant population between 47% (50-2.8) and 53% (50+2.8) would have picked that answer. The 95% confidence level means that you can be 95% certain of the percentage shown is accurate to +/- 2.8%. It is worth noting however that it is likely that given the nature of this Consultation, the most positive and the most concerned residents have taken part at an overall level.

No weighting has been applied to the data received and all open questions were reviewed and coded into "themes" to provide quantitative analysis in this report, alongside residents' free text comments.

The following subgroups have been explored to identify significant differences in response amongst Individuals / Families with children under 11. For each question, this report identifies where significant differences occur across the following:

- Gender
- Age
- Disability
- District – please note results only districts with base sizes of n=50 or more have been included in this report. As such response from Castle Point, Harlow and Rochford have not been itemised separately. In addition, district percentages should be treated as indicative of response only.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank all those who took the time to complete the Consultation documentation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There is broad agreement with the proposal to 'withdraw or remove mobile library stops that consistently have no visitors over at least six months' – 82% agreement amongst Individuals / Families with children under 11, 72% agreement amongst Organisations.

Agreement is still in the majority in terms of 'increasing the minimum stop time to 30 minutes' but lower than observed for the 'no visitor' proposal – 68% agreement amongst Individuals / Families with children under 11, 55% agreement amongst Organisations. It should be noted, however, that the proportion of Organisations indicating neither to this proposal is relatively high; possibly indicating a lack of awareness of current stop lengths.

Agreement is also in the majority in terms of 'merging stops within the same community' – 63% agreement amongst Individuals / Families with children under 11, 53% agreement amongst Organisations.

Agreement is considerably lower for the proposal to 'remove mobile library stops if the stop is less than 2 miles from a library building' – 39% agreement amongst Individuals / Families with children under 11, 37% agreement amongst Organisations. It should be noting, however, that when excluding Individuals / Families with children under 11 who indicated they currently access a library building, agreement reduces to 33%.

For the proposals put forward for 'merging stops that service the same community' and 'removing mobile library stops if the stop is less than 2 miles from a library building', it is worth considering that a significantly lower proportion of those aged 81 and over and those who consider themselves disabled agreed.

In terms of the frequency and timings proposals put forward, 'visiting every three weeks' is preferred compared to 'visiting every four weeks'. Although it should be noted that agreement to either frequency proposal is relatively low – 'visiting every three weeks' at 56% agreement amongst Individuals / Families with children under 11, 44% agreement amongst Organisations; 'visiting every four weeks' at 38% agreement amongst Individuals / Families with children under 11, 31% agreement amongst Organisations.

In terms of the specific day of stops, response varies quite considerably with a high proportion selecting neither agree nor disagree; likely due to the reality of response depending on whether the revised stop timing proposed for their stop being known and/or suitable to them personally. 49% of Individuals / Families with children under 11 agree and 34% of Organisations agree to stops being available on different days than currently available (i.e. Sundays, Mondays and later in the day).

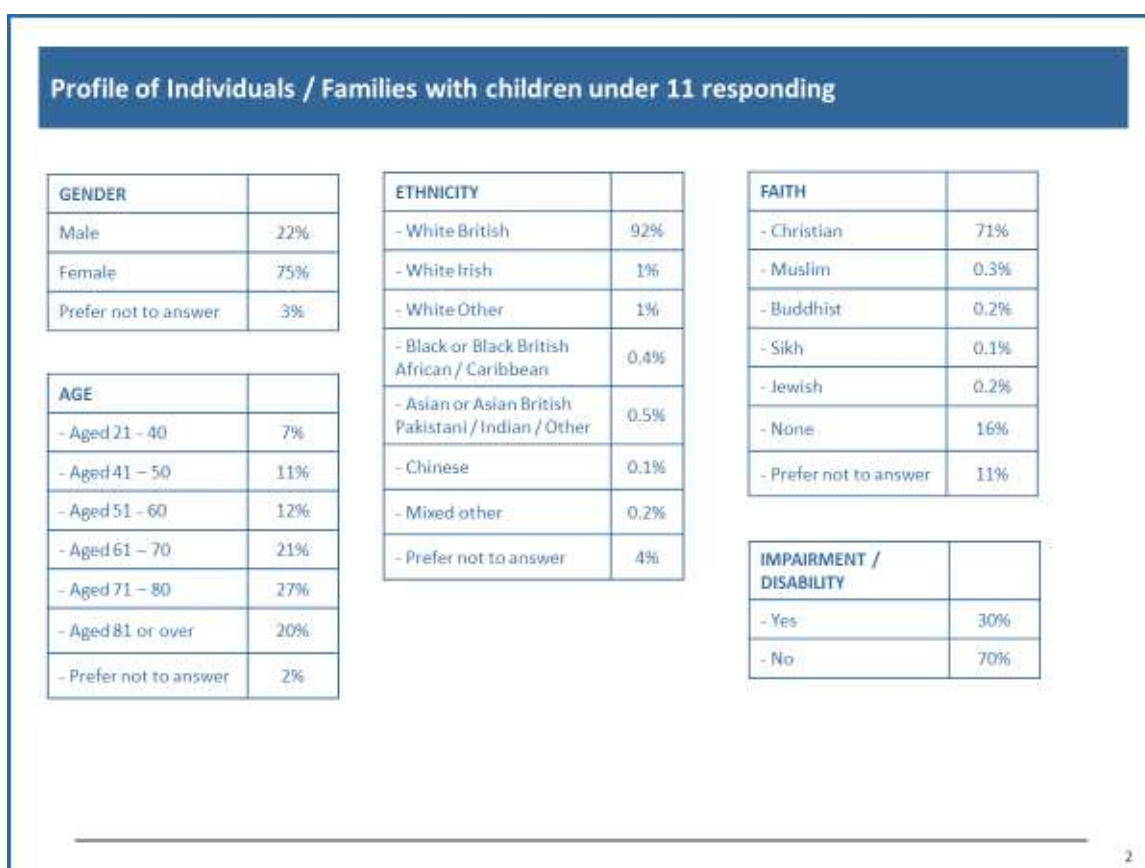
44% indicated they would be able to access other library services if their mobile library stop was withdrawn; 40% indicated they could not. The removal of Individuals / Families with children under 11 who indicated they currently access a library building increases the proportion able to access other library services to 46%. Consistent with the response to proposals, a significantly higher proportion of those aged 81 and over indicated they would not be able to access other library services (63%).

MAIN CONSULTATION: CONSULTATION RESPONSE PROFILE

In total, 1,386 responses have been recorded for the main Consultation across Individuals / Families who indicated they use the Mobile Library Service in the last year, those that do not as well as other groups – 1,128 Individuals, 160 Families with children under 11 and 68 Organisations. 30 Consultees answered the Consultation questionnaire but did not identify themselves as an Individual, Family with children under 11 and Organisations.

221 respondents opened the Consultation but only answered the first question, i.e. that they were over the age of 16.

The chart below provides an overview of the **Individuals and Families with children under 11** who responded to the Consultation:



The Consultee profile overleaf shows the breakdown of:

- The demographic profile of Individuals / Families with children under 11 responding to the Consultation compared to the known profile of Mobile Library Active card holders and 2011 Census Population Statistics. Gender profiles for the Consultation are in line with the Mobile Library Active card holder profile.

- The geographic profile of Individuals / Families with children under 11 responding to the Consultation compared to the known profile of Mobile Library Active card holders and 2011 Census Population Statistics.

Profile of Individuals / Families with children under 11 responding versus Census statistics (1)

| | Profile of known Mobile Library Active card holders *1 |
|-------------------|--|
| GENDER | |
| Male | 23% |
| Female | 77% |
| AGE | |
| - Aged 21 - 40 | 12% |
| - Aged 41 - 50 | 9% |
| - Aged 51 - 60 | 6% |
| - Aged 61 - 70 | 17% |
| - Aged 71 - 80 | 28% |
| - Aged 81 or over | 29% |

| | Profile of Mobile Library Service Consultation response amongst Individuals / Families *2 |
|-------------------|---|
| GENDER | |
| Male | 23% |
| Female | 77% |
| AGE | |
| - Aged 21 - 40 | 8% |
| - Aged 41 - 50 | 11% |
| - Aged 51 - 60 | 12% |
| - Aged 61 - 70 | 21% |
| - Aged 71 - 80 | 27% |
| - Aged 81 or over | 20% |

*1 Source: Mobile Library Active card holder profile supplied by Essex County Council. Please note unknowns and ages 0-20 have been removed from the calculation to provide a realistic comparison to those completing the Consultation.

*2 Please note Consultation response percentages have been recalculated to excludes non response / prefer not to answer.

3

Profile of Individuals / Families with children under 11 responding versus Census statistics (2)

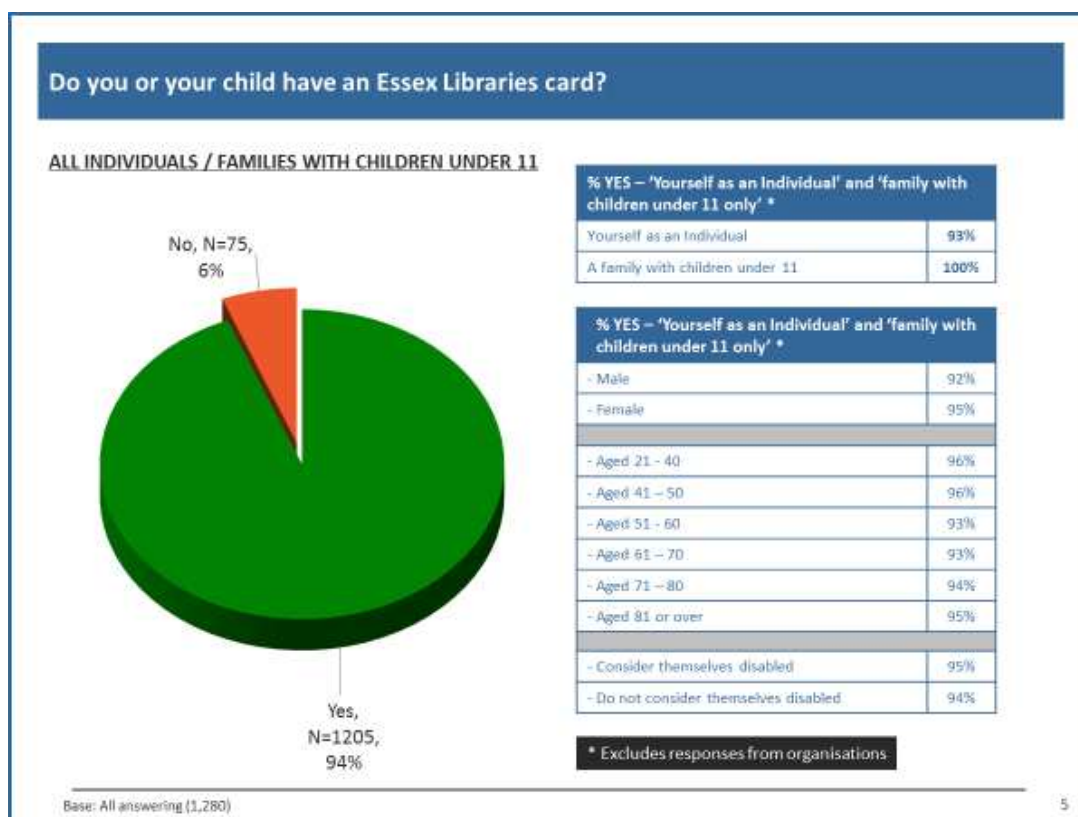
| | 2011 Census Population statistics | Profile of Mobile Library Service Consultation amongst Individuals / Families | |
|---------------|-----------------------------------|---|---------------|
| | | Number of responses | % of response |
| Basildon | 12% | N=60 | 5% |
| Braintree | 10% | N=192 | 15% |
| Brentwood | 5% | N=65 | 5% |
| Castle Point | 6% | N=18 | 1% |
| Chelmsford | 12% | N=183 | 14% |
| Colchester | 13% | N=229 | 18% |
| Epping Forest | 9% | N=69 | 5% |
| Harlow | 6% | N=15 | 1% |
| Maldon | 4% | N=136 | 10% |
| Rochford | 6% | N=33 | 3% |
| Tendring | 10% | N=195 | 15% |
| Uttlesford | 6% | N=108 | 8% |

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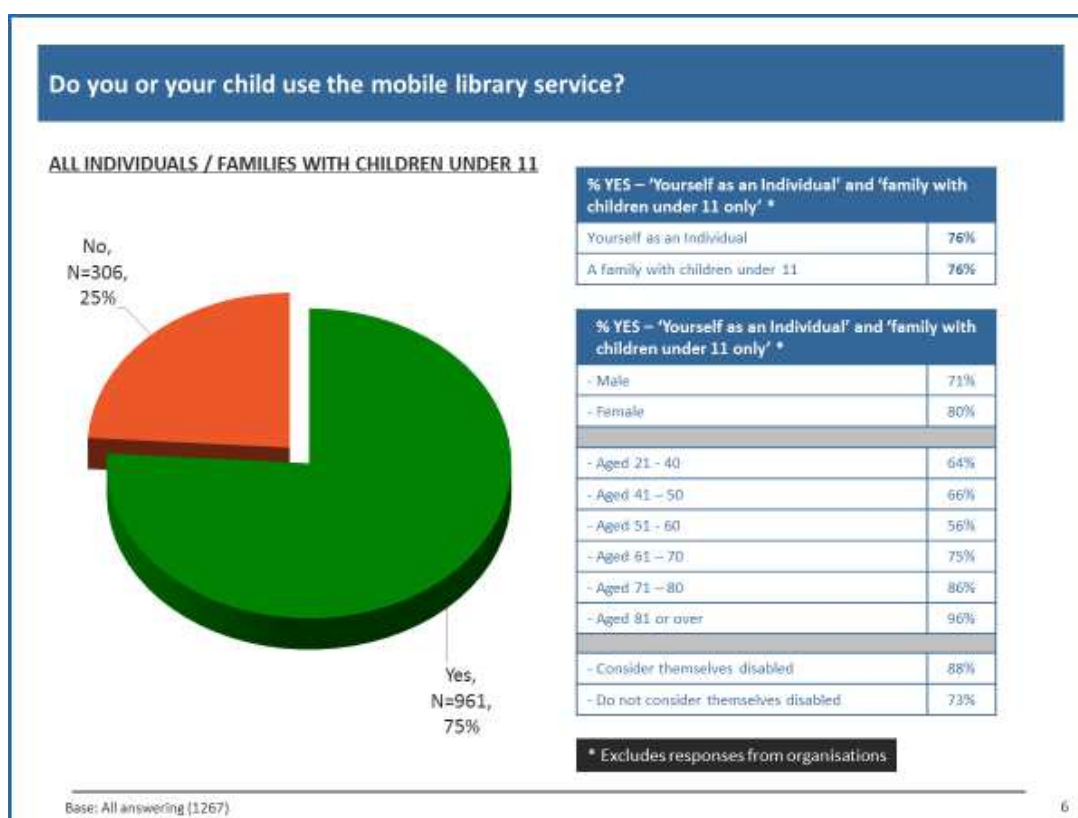
Of the organisations taking part, thirty identified themselves as Town or Parish Councils, four as District or Borough Councils, three as other Public bodies, nine as Community groups and eight as registered charities. Other organisations taking part included pre-schools, nurseries and reading groups.

MAIN CONSULTATION: CURRENT LIBRARY / MOBILE LIBRARY USE

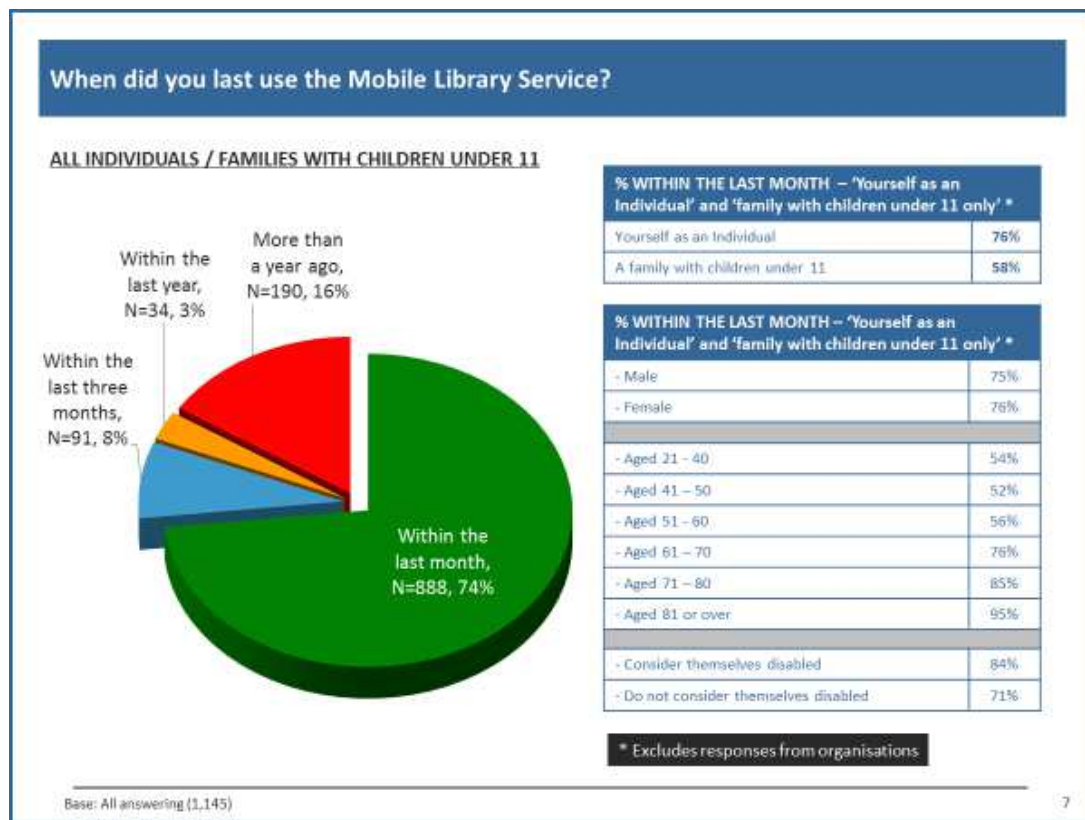
The majority of Individuals / Families with children under 11 indicated they have an Essex Libraries card (94%). There are no significant differences observed by subgroup.



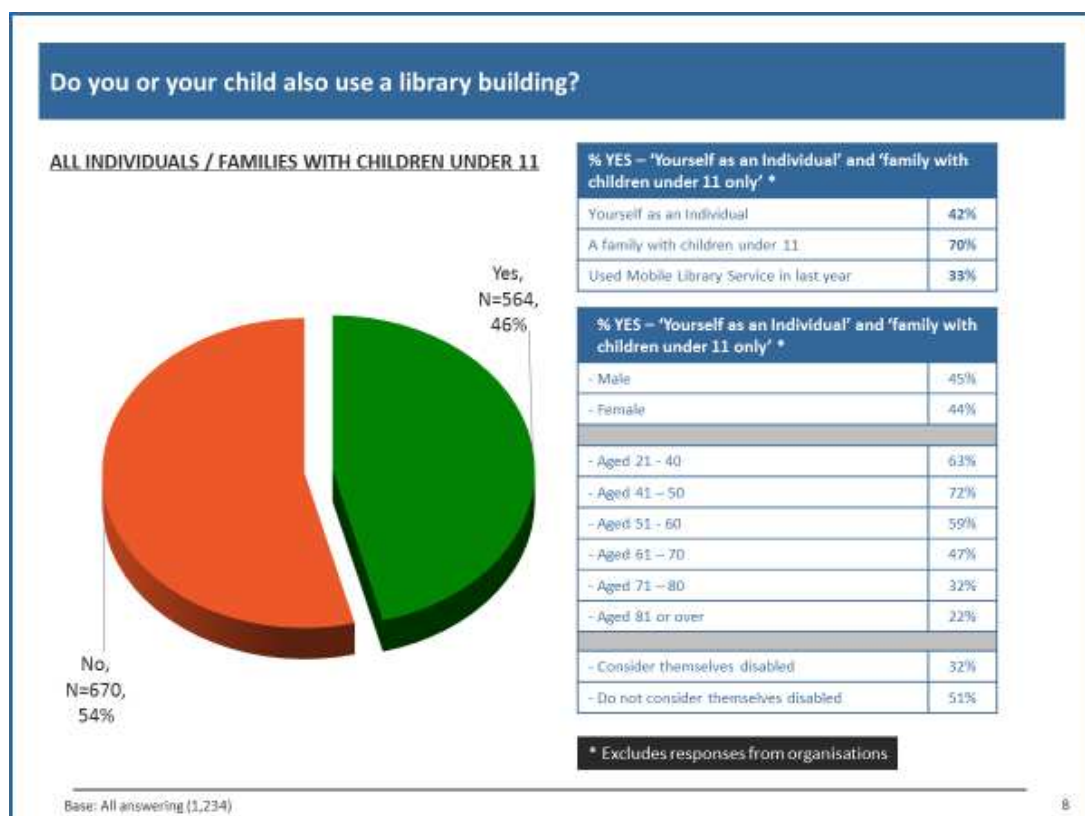
Three quarters of Individuals / Families with children under 11 use the Mobile Library Service. Usage is significantly higher amongst those aged 61 and over.



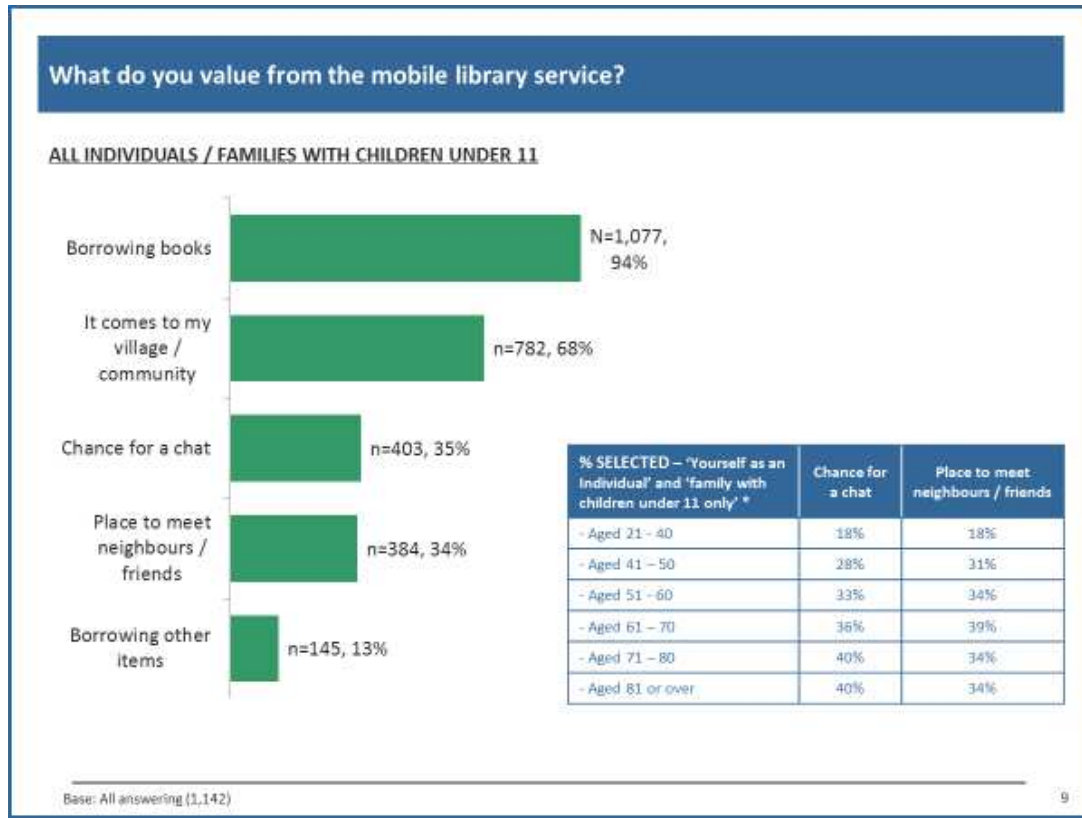
Just under three quarters (74%) of Individuals / Families with children under 11 that use the Mobile Library Service have done so in the last month.



Just under half (46%) of Individuals / Families with children under 11 use a library building.



As perhaps expected, the most common perceived value of the Mobile Library Service is the borrowing of books (94%). Just under seven in ten (68%) value that it comes to their village / community. Just over a third value it as a chance for a chat and a place to meet neighbours / friends (35% and 34% respectively). The perceived value of chance for a chat and a place to meet neighbours / friends increases with age.



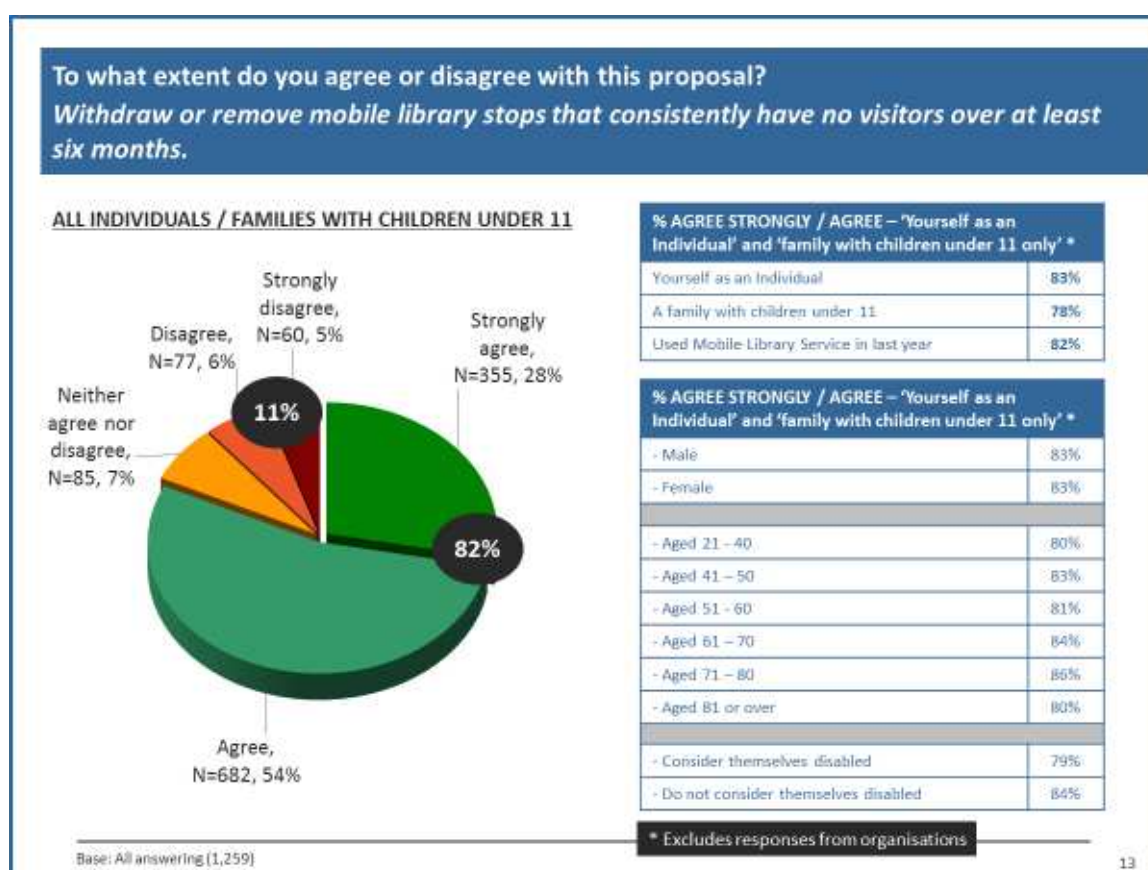
MAIN CONSULTATION: AGREEMENT WITH PROPOSALS

Consultees were first asked to indicate their level of agreement with the following elements of the proposals put forward, namely:

- Withdraw or remove mobile library stops that consistently have no visitors over at least six months
- Merge stops which service the same community
- Remove library stops if the stop is less than 2 miles from a library building
- Increase the minimum stop time to 30 minutes

The chart below depicts response amongst **Individuals and Families with children under 11 only, as well as demographic subgroups** to the proposal to:

‘Withdraw or remove mobile library stops that consistently have no visitors over at least six months’



The majority of Individuals / Families with children under 11 agreed (82%) that the Mobile Library Service should withdraw or remove mobile library stops that consistently have no visitors over at least six months. Just under three in ten (28%) strongly agreed and just over half (54%) agreed. 11% disagreed with the proposal to withdraw or remove these stops.

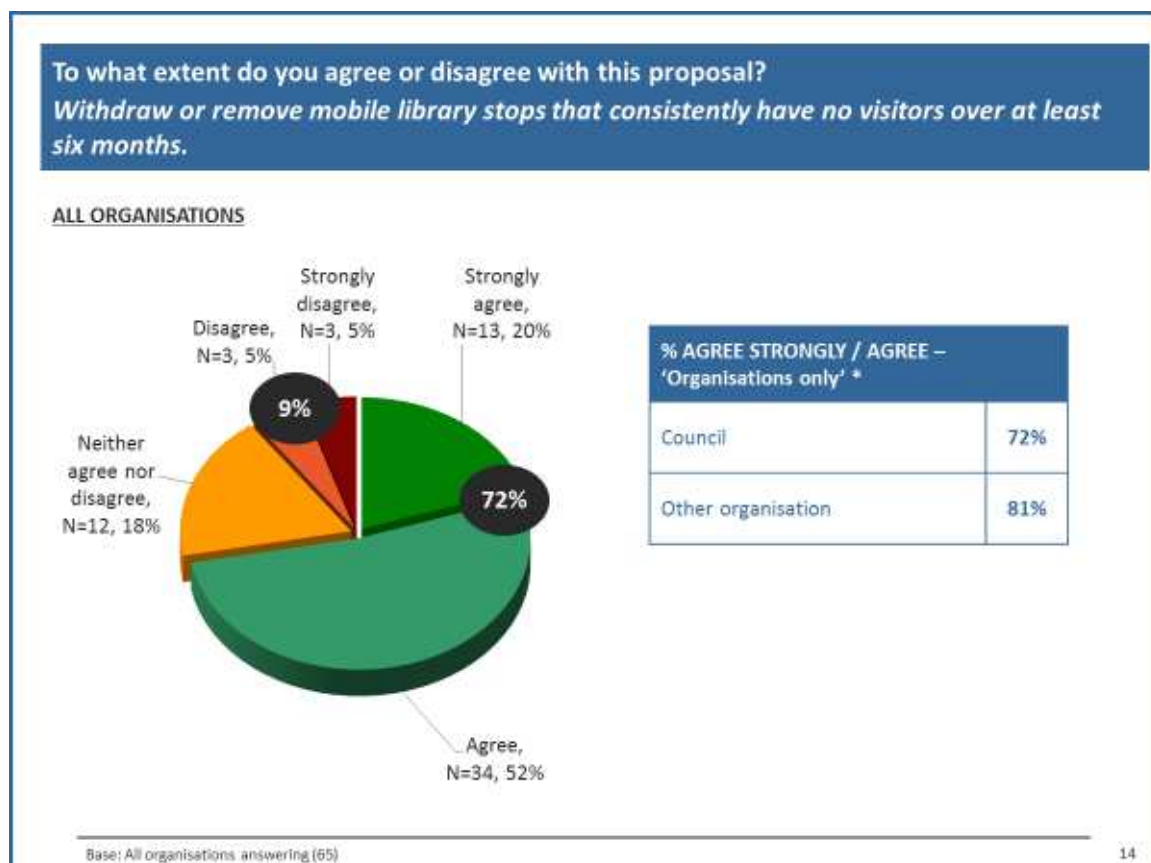
Agreement proportions are broadly consistent when comparing Individuals and Families, men and women, age groups and those who consider themselves disabled and not disabled. There are no significant differences in response.

Agreement proportions are also broadly consistent by district with the following percentages of Individuals / Families with children under 11 agreeing strongly / agreeing in each district:

- Basildon – 80%
- Braintree – 86%
- Brentwood – 92%
- Chelmsford – 82%
- Colchester – 83%
- Epping Forest – 76%
- Maldon – 77%
- Tendring – 82%
- Uttlesford – 86%

The chart below depicts response amongst **Organisations** to the proposal to:

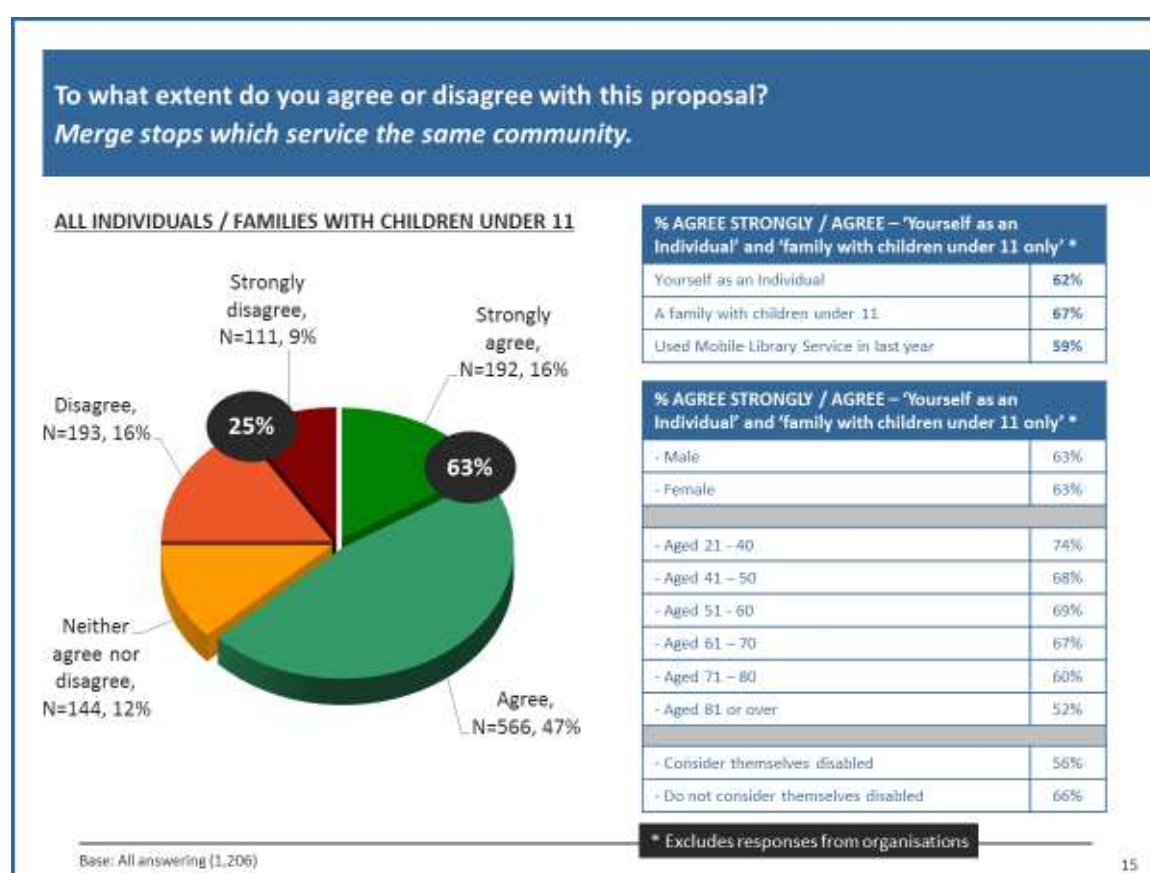
‘Withdraw or remove mobile library stops that consistently have no visitors over at least six months’



At an overall level, agreement is slightly lower than observed for Individuals / Families with children under 11. Just under three quarters of Organisations agreed (72%) that the Mobile Library Service should withdraw or remove mobile library stops that consistently have no visitors over at least six months. One in five (20%) strongly agreed and just over half (52%) agreed. 9% disagreed with the proposal to withdraw or remove these stops. Agreement is broadly consistent amongst Council organisations and other organisations responding.

The chart below depicts response amongst **Individuals and Families with children under 11 only, as well as demographic subgroups** to the proposal to:

‘Merge stops which service the same community’



In comparison to the proposal to withdraw / remove library stops with few visitors, a lower proportion of Individuals / Families with children under 11 agreed (63%) that the Mobile Library Service should merge stops which service the same community. Just under one in ten (16%) strongly agreed and just under half (47%) agreed. A quarter (25%) disagreed with the proposal to merge stops which service the same community.

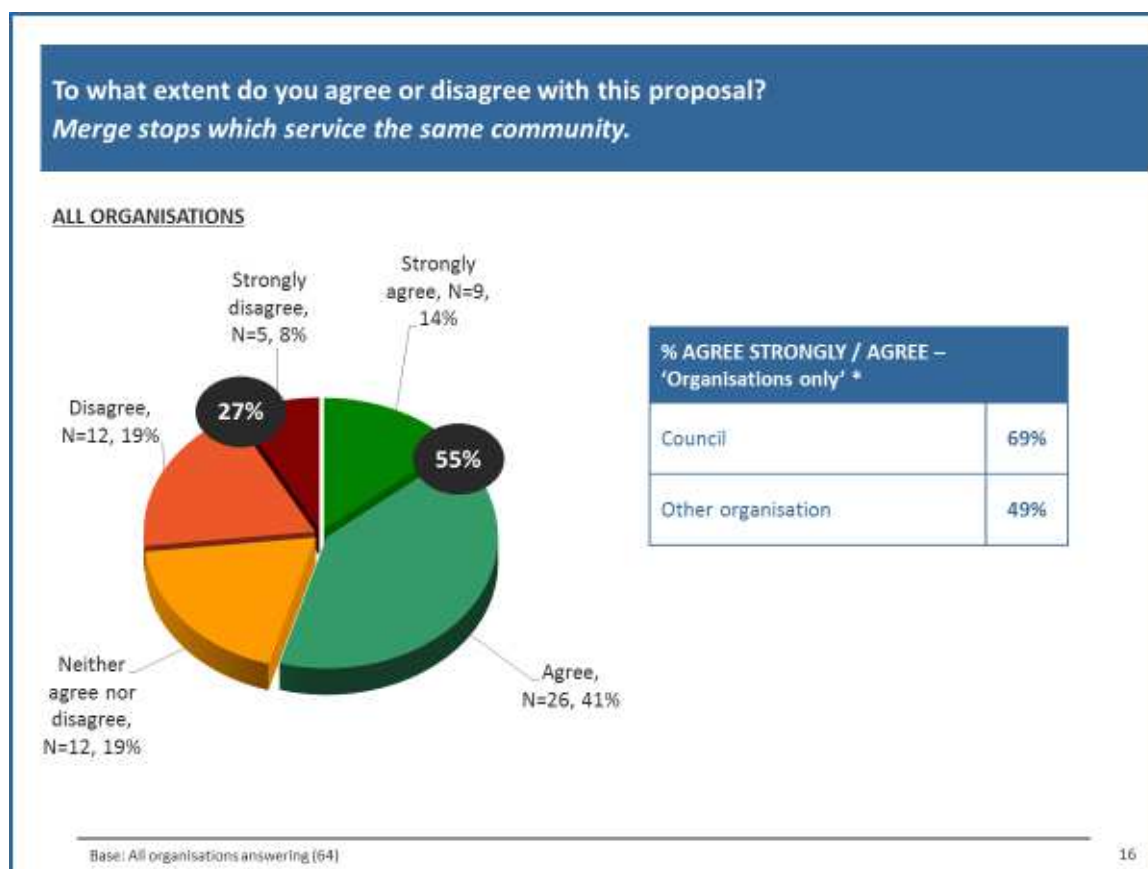
Agreement proportions are consistent amongst men and women responding. However, agreement with this proposal is significantly lower amongst those aged 81 or over (52%) compared to other age groups. Agreement is also significantly lower amongst those who consider themselves disabled (56%) compared to those who do not consider themselves disabled (66%).

Agreement proportions are broadly consistent by district with the following percentages of Individuals / Families with children under 11 agreeing strongly / agreeing in each district. It should be noted, however, that agreement is significantly lower amongst those who live in Epping Forest:

- Basildon – 62%
- Braintree – 69%
- Brentwood – 69%
- Chelmsford – 50%
- Colchester – 62%
- Epping Forest – 49%
- Maldon – 62%
- Tendring – 61%
- Uttlesford – 67%

The chart below depicts response amongst **Organisations** to the proposal to:

‘Merge stops which service the same community’

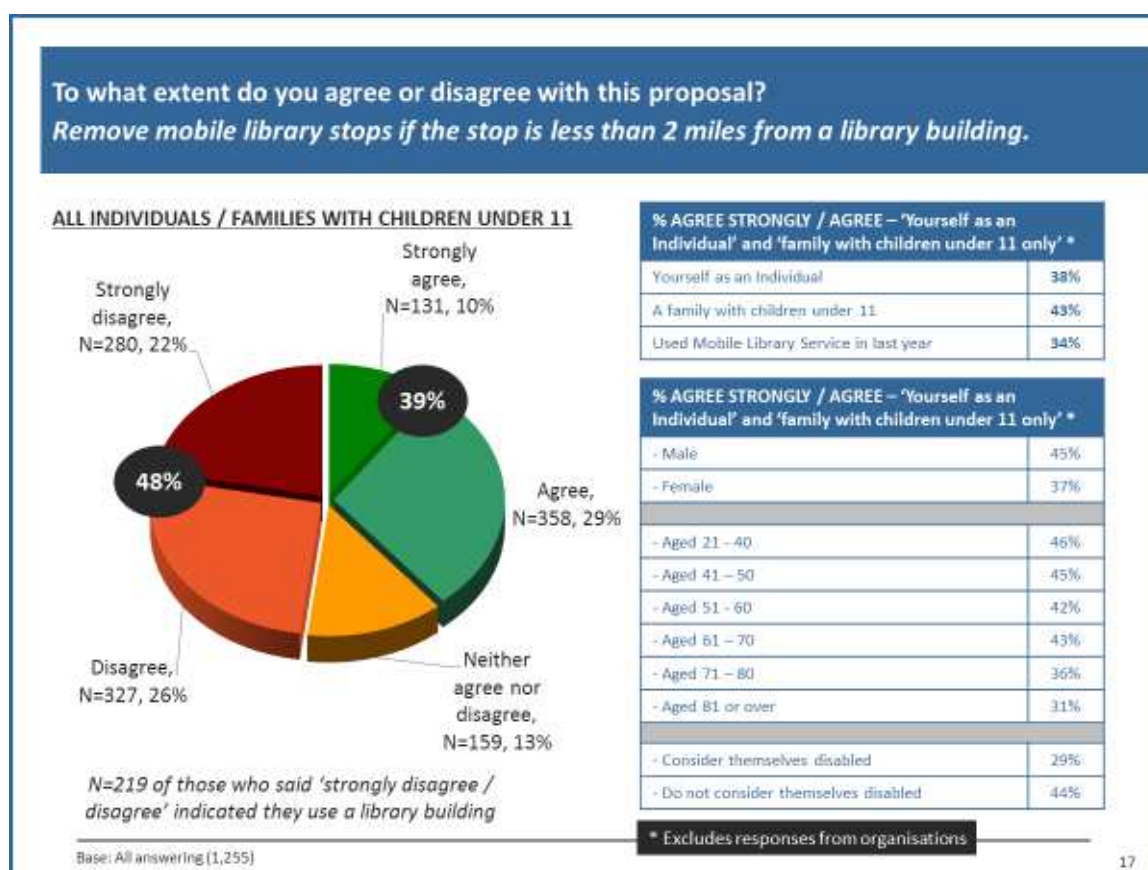


At an overall level, agreement is slightly lower than observed for Individuals / Families with children under 11. Just over half of Organisations agreed (55%) that the Mobile Library Service should merge stops which service the same community. 14% strongly agreed and just under four in ten (41%) agreed. Just over a quarter (27%) disagreed with the proposal to

merge stops which service the same community. Whilst base sizes are low (n=26/28), agreement is higher amongst Council organisations compared to other organisations responding.

The chart below depicts response amongst **Individuals and Families with children under 11 only, as well as demographic subgroups** to the proposal to:

‘Remove library stops if the stop is less than 2 miles from a library building’



Of the proposals put forward to Consultees, agreement proportions are lowest for the proposal to remove mobile library stops if the stop is less than 2 miles from a library building. Just under four in ten (39%) agreed with this proposal. Only one in ten (10%) strongly agreed and just under three in ten (29%) agreed. Just under half (48%) disagreed with the proposal to remove stops if the stop is less than 2 miles from a library building; 22% strongly disagreed.

Agreement with this proposal is consistently lower across demographic subgroups compared to other proposals put forward. There are significant differences in response observed however, with agreement significantly higher amongst men (45%) compared to women (37%). Consistent with that observed for merging stops, agreement with this proposal is significantly lower amongst those aged 81 or over (31%) compared to other age groups. Agreement is also significantly lower amongst those who consider themselves disabled (29%) compared to those who do not consider themselves disabled (44%).

Agreement proportions are broadly consistent by district with the following percentages of Individuals / Families with children under 11 agreeing strongly / agreeing in each district. It should be noted, however, that agreement is significantly higher amongst those living in Braintree and Maldon and lower amongst those who live in Epping Forest:

- Basildon – 34%
- Braintree – 52%
- Brentwood – 40%
- Chelmsford – 32%
- Colchester – 37%
- Epping Forest – 16%
- Maldon – 54%
- Tendring – 34%
- Uttlesford – 44%

The chart below compares the profile of all answering the Consultation and those who indicated they disagreed with removing stops if they are less than 2 miles from a library building and do not currently use a library building.

Gender proportions are broadly consistent but as perhaps expected there is a higher proportion of those aged 71 and over who disagreed with removing stops if they are less than 2 miles from a library building and do not currently use a library building, compared to the profile of all answering the Consultation. Likewise, there is a higher proportion who consider themselves disabled.

Profile of all answering Consultation vs. those who disagree with removing stops if they are less than 2 miles from a library building & do not currently use a library building.

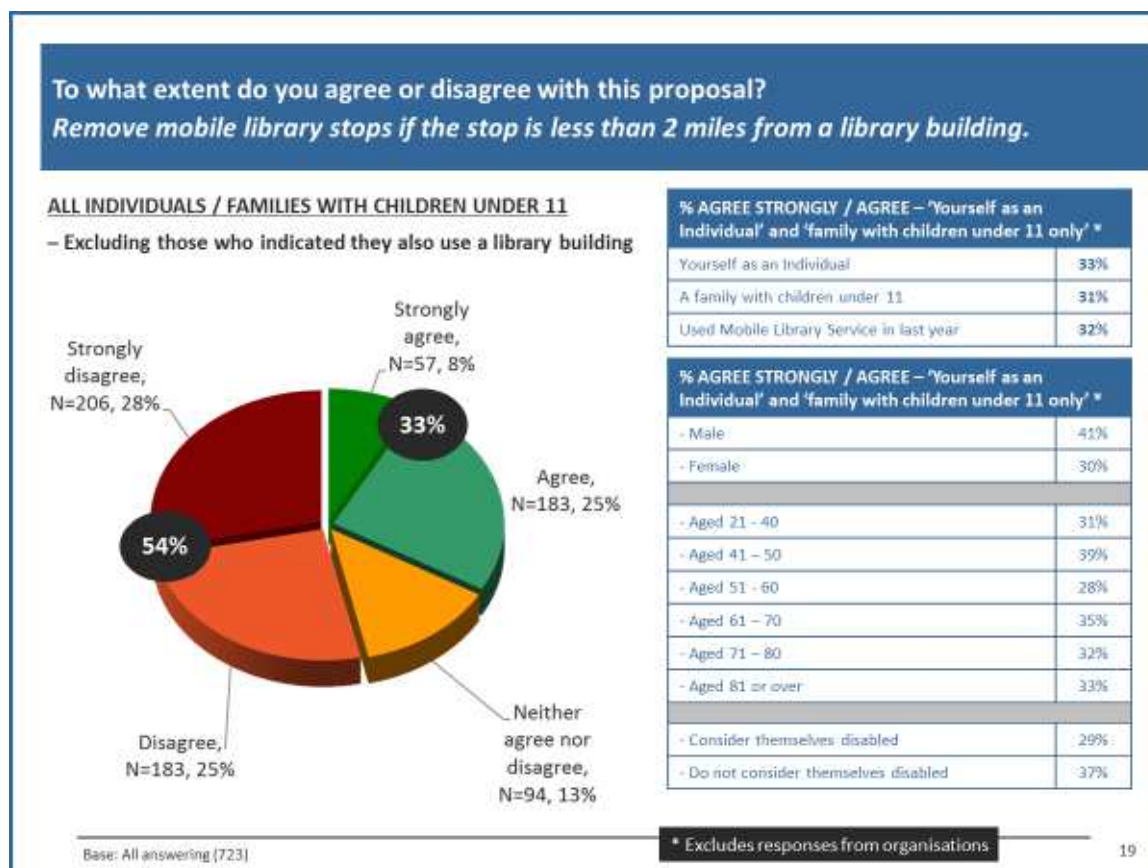
ALL INDIVIDUALS / FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN UNDER 11

| DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE | All answering Consultation | Disagree with 2 miles proposal and don't use library building currently |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| - Male | 22% | 19% |
| - Female | 75% | 79% |
| - Prefer not to answer | 3% | 2% |
| - Aged 21 - 40 | 7% | 6% |
| - Aged 41 - 50 | 11% | 5% |
| - Aged 51 - 60 | 12% | 9% |
| - Aged 61 - 70 | 21% | 20% |
| - Aged 71 - 80 | 27% | 31% |
| - Aged 81 or over | 20% | 28% |
| - Prefer not to answer | 2% | 2% |
| - Consider themselves disabled | 30% | 44% |
| - Do not consider themselves disabled | 40% | 56% |

Base: All answering (1,255)

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For the purposes of clarity, the chart below depicts response amongst **Individuals and Families with children under 11 only**, as well as **demographic subgroups** to the same proposal but excludes those who indicated they also use a library building.

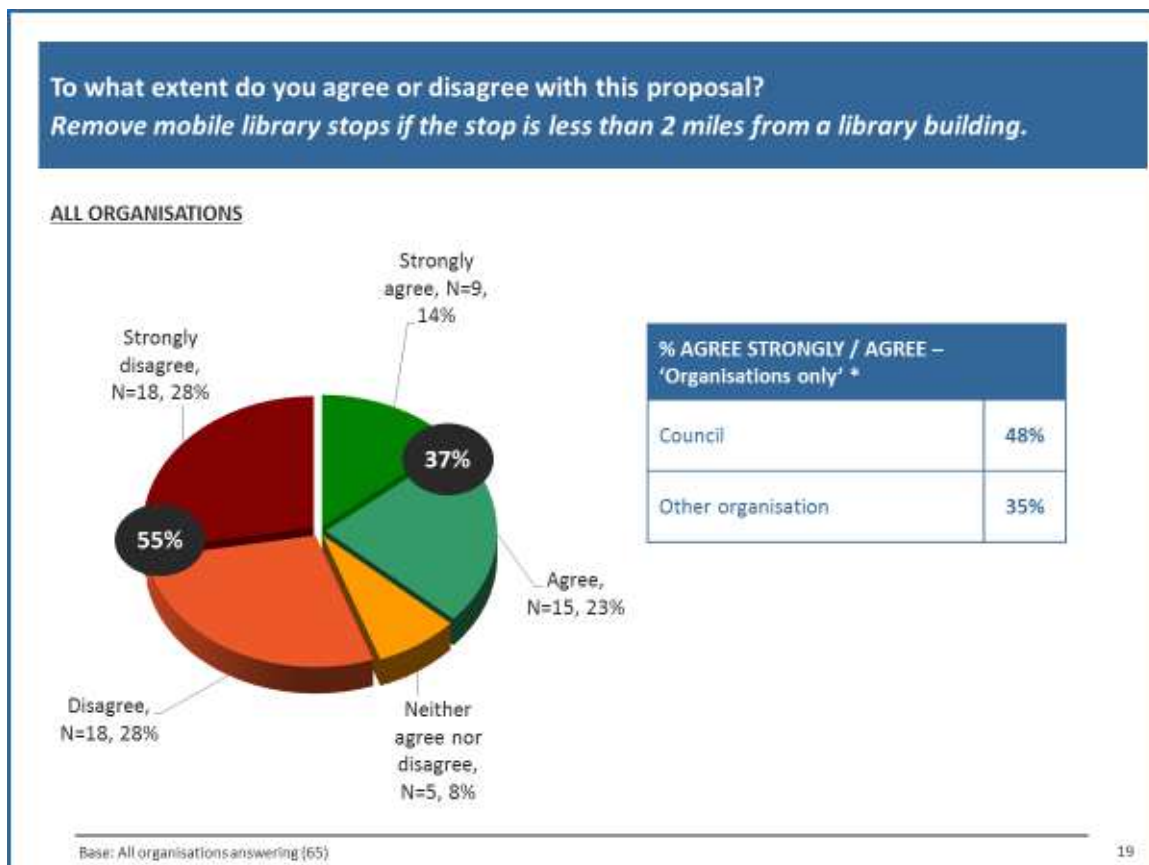


Filtering results on these Consultees only results in a third (33%) agreeing with the proposal to remove mobile library stops if the stop is less than 2 miles from a library building; just over half (54%) disagreed.

Agreement proportions by demographic group are broadly consistent with that observed previously. Agreement with the proposal is significantly higher amongst men (41%) compared to women (30%). Agreement is also significantly lower amongst those who consider themselves disabled (29%) compared to those who do not consider themselves disabled (37%).

The chart below depicts response amongst **Organisations** to the proposal to:

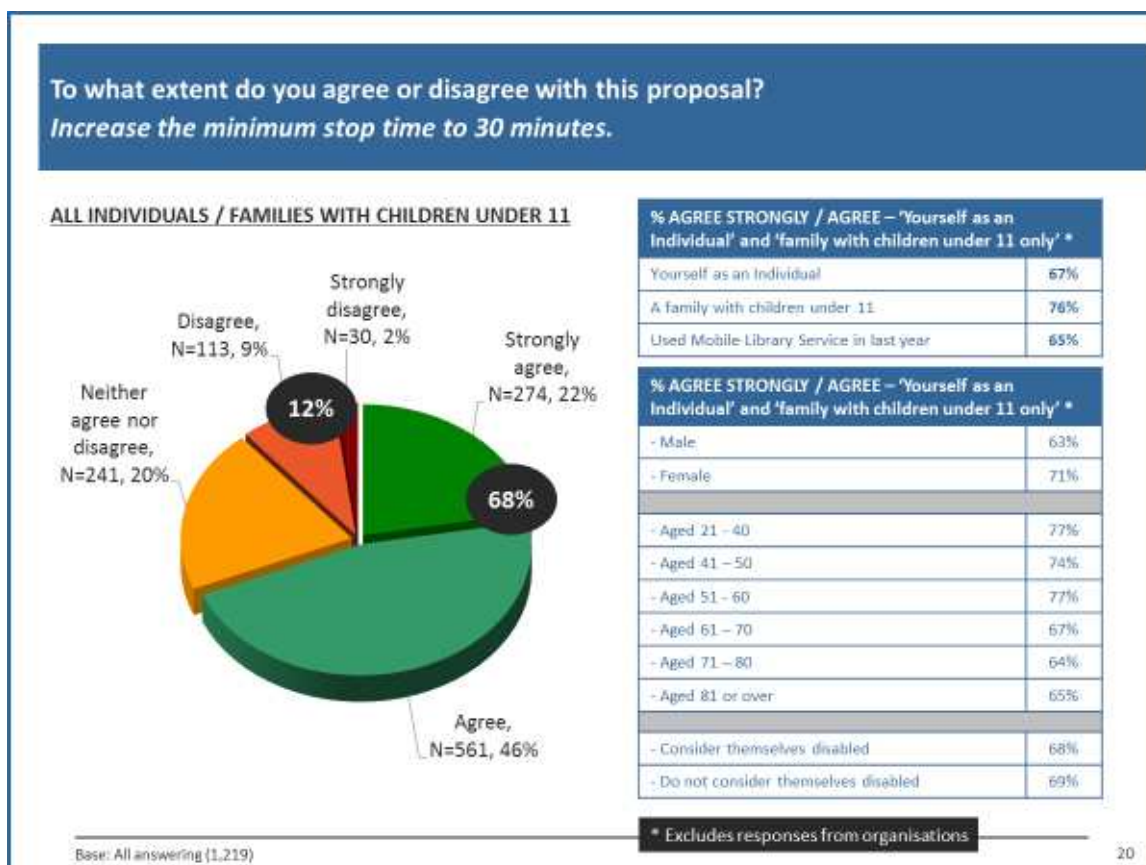
'Remove library stops if the stop is less than 2 miles from a library building'



Response is broadly consistent to that observed (at an unedited level) for Individuals / Families with children under 11. Just over a third of Organisations agreed (37%) that the Mobile Library Service should remove mobile library stops if the stop is less than 2 miles from a library building. 14% strongly agreed and just under a quarter (23%) agreed. Just over half (55%) disagreed with the proposal. Whilst base sizes are low, agreement is higher amongst Council organisations compared to other organisations responding.

The chart below depicts response amongst **Individuals and Families with children under 11 only, as well as demographic subgroups** to the proposal to:

'Increase the minimum stop time to 30 minutes'



Response to this proposal is broadly in line with response to merging stops which service the same community. Just over two thirds (68%) of Individuals / Families with children under 11 agreed that the Mobile Library Service should increase the minimum stop to 30 minutes. Just over one in five (22%) strongly agreed and just under half (46%) agreed. One in five (20%) neither agreed nor disagreed and just over one in ten (12%) disagreed.

Agreement with the proposal is significantly higher amongst Families with children under 11 (76%) compared to those responding as Individuals (67%). Agreement with the proposal is significantly higher amongst women (71%) compared to men (63%). There are no significant differences to this proposal by age or when comparing those who consider themselves to have a disability and those who do not.

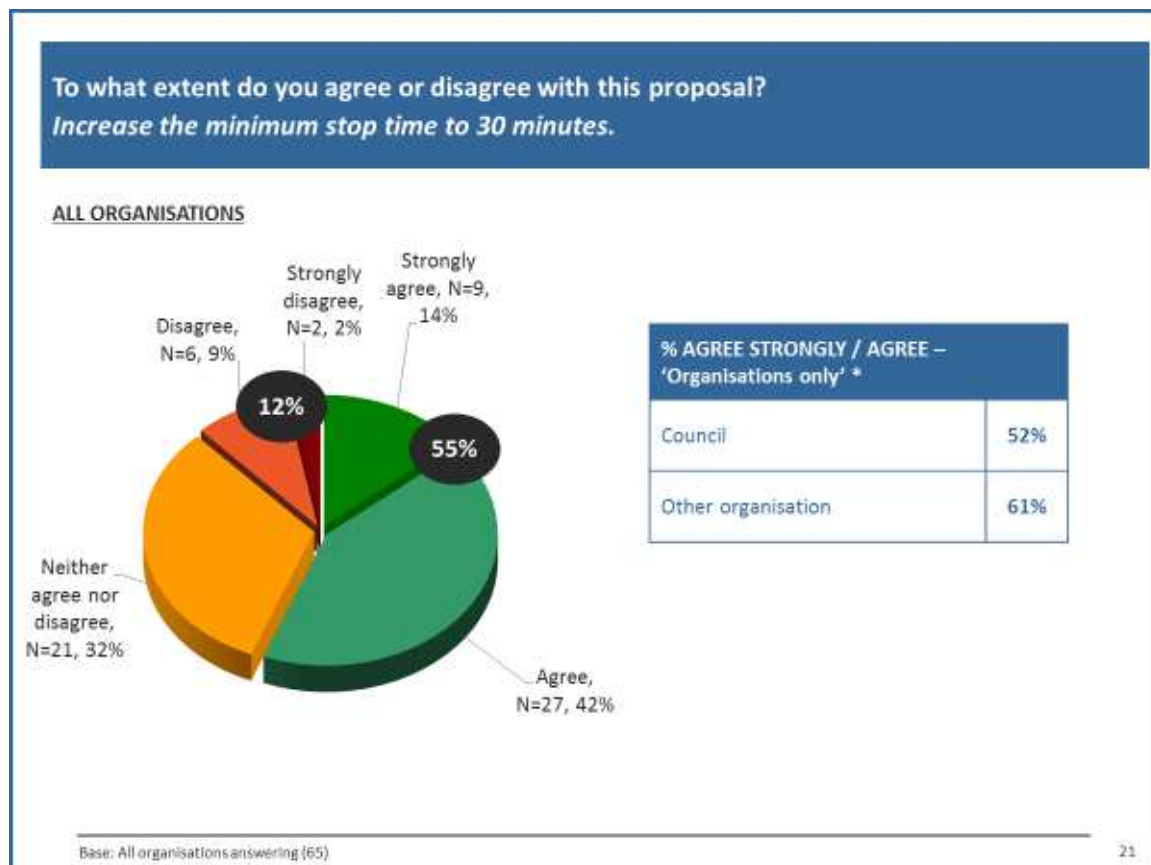
Agreement proportions are broadly consistent by district with the following percentages of Individuals / Families with children under 11 agreeing strongly / agreeing in each district. It should be noted, however, that agreement is significantly higher amongst those who live in Basildon and lower amongst those who live in Braintree:

- Basildon – 82%
- Braintree – 60%
- Brentwood – 78%
- Chelmsford – 66%
- Colchester – 70%

- Epping Forest – 73%
- Maldon – 61%
- Tendring – 73%
- Uttlesford – 61%

The chart below depicts response amongst **Organisations** to the proposal to:

‘Increase the minimum stop time to 30 minutes’

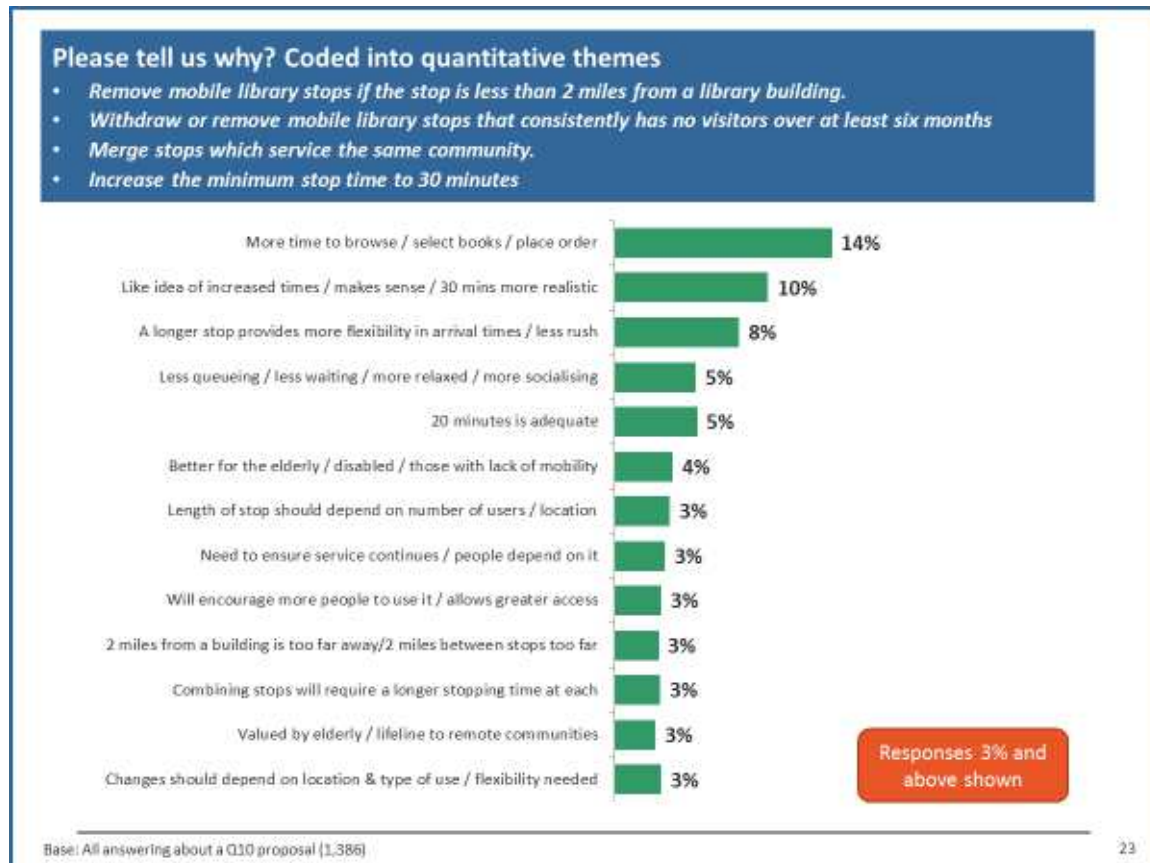


At an overall level, agreement is slightly lower than observed for Individuals / Families with children under 11. Just over half of Organisations agreed (55%) that the minimum stop time should be increased to 30 minutes. 14% strongly agreed and just over four in ten (42%) agreed. Just over one in ten (12%) disagreed with the proposal. The proportion of Organisations indicating they neither agree nor disagree is relatively high at 32%. Whilst base sizes are low, agreement is higher amongst other organisations compared to Council organisations responding.

After asking Consultees to indicate their level of agreement with each of the proposals, Consultees were given the opportunity to comment on **their reasons for their level of agreement in their own words**. Lake Market Research have reviewed the free text

comments that Consultees provided and have developed a codeframe to group together common themes, to quantify the feedback received.

The chart below summarises the comments made by at least 3% or more **Individuals / Families with children under 11** who gave an agreement score to at least one of the proposals:



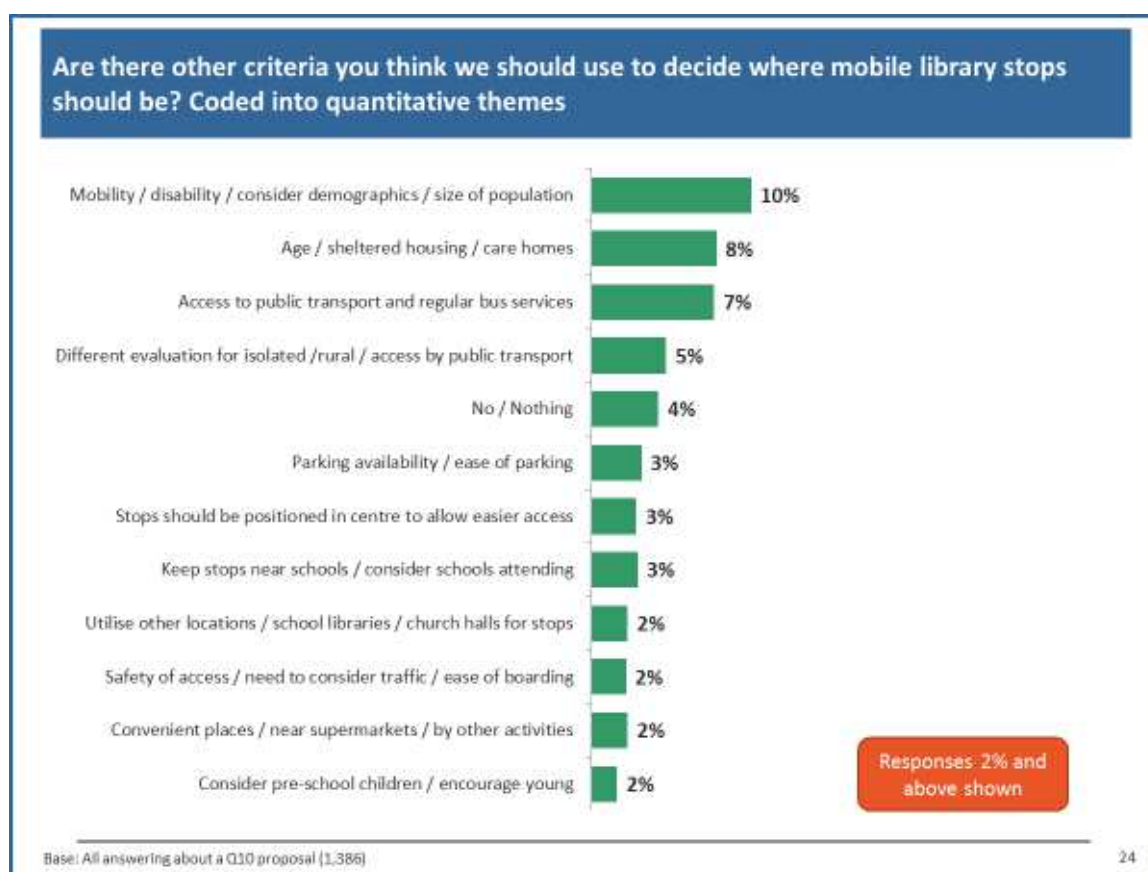
The most common factors noted concern increasing the minimum stop time to 30 minutes as follows:

- **‘More time to browse / select books / place order’** – an example comment given by a Consultee is as follows *‘This would give people more time to browse and choose books, especially if they want to take enough to read for 3-4 weeks.’*
- **‘Like idea of increased times / makes sense / 30 minutes is more realistic’** – an example comment given by a Consultee is as follows *‘15 minutes is too short a window to remember that the library vehicle is there and get to it browse the book selection; especially if it's cold or raining and people don't want to hang around waiting for library to turn up.’*
- **‘A longer stop provides more flexibility in arrival times / less rush’** – an example comment given by a Consultee is as follows *‘There are elderly people who find it difficult to remember to get to the van in time and take a while to get there.’*

- **‘Less queueing / less waiting / more relaxed / more socialising’** – an example comment given by a Consultee is as follows *‘To allow an unrushed enjoyable occasion where books can be looked at and choices made.’*
- **‘20 minutes is adequate’** – an example comment given by a Consultee is as follows *‘20 minutes is long enough otherwise people hang about chatting.’*

Consultees were then given the opportunity to comment on **any other criteria you think Essex County Council should use to decide where mobile library stops should be**. Lake Market Research have reviewed the free text comments that Consultees provided and have developed a codeframe to group together common themes, to quantify the feedback received.

The chart below summarises the comments made by at least 2% or more **Individuals / Families with children under 11** who gave an agreement score to at least one of the proposals:



The most common factors noted echo previous comment made with regard to the demographic make-up of the surrounding population, e.g. age and ability, as well as transport access / availability:

- **‘Mobility / disability / consider demographics / size of population’** – an example comment given by a Consultee is as follows *‘I think the age of the population needs to be looked at. Many of the people on my estate which the Martinsdale and Craigfield avenue stops cater for are elderly and when they meet in the library van it is very social and an important part of our community.’*
 - **‘Age / sheltered housing / care homes’** – an example comment given by a Consultee is as follows *‘Close to old people’s homes or sheltered housing, where there is poor public transport. Areas of Colchester like Highwoods that don’t have library facilities.’*
 - **‘Access to public transport and regular bus services’** – an example comment given by a Consultee is as follows *‘Location in relation to public transport. If public transport cannot get to a library location that is nearby then mobile library should be maintained.’*
 - **‘Different evaluation for isolated / rural / access by public transport’** – an example comment given by a Consultee is as follows *‘A small rural community may have small population so fewer numbers will be inevitable on the bus but the visit will be extremely valuable.’*
-

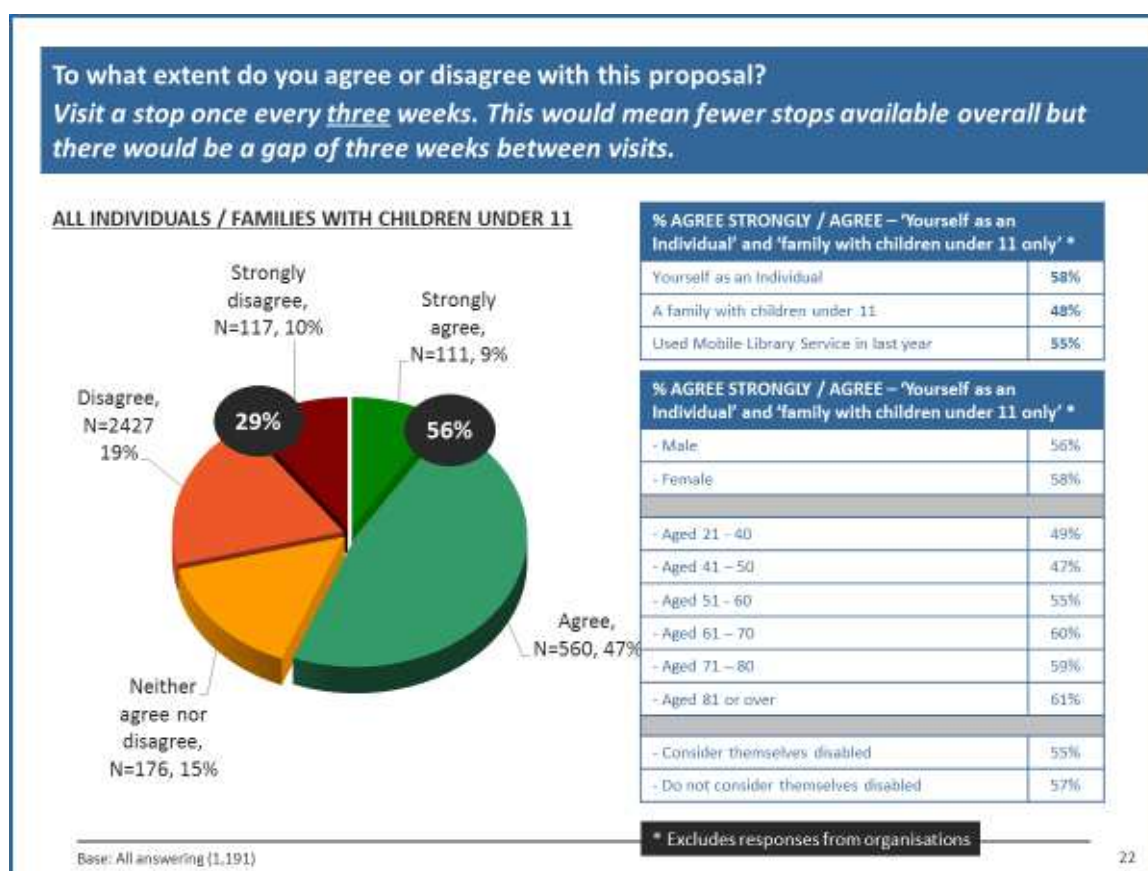
MAIN CONSULTATION: AGREEMENT WITH FREQUENCY AND TIMING PROPOSALS

Consultees were then asked to indicate their level of agreement with the frequency and timing elements of the proposals put forward, namely:

- Visiting a stop once every three weeks. This would mean fewer stops available overall but there would be a gap of three weeks between visits.
- Visiting a stop once every four weeks. This would mean fewer stops available overall but there would be a gap of three weeks between visits.
- Stops available on different days than currently available. This could mean stops available on Sundays, Mondays or later in the day.

The chart below depicts response amongst **Individuals and Families with children under 11 only, as well as demographic subgroups** to the proposal to:

‘Visiting a stop once every three weeks. This would mean fewer stops available overall but there would be a gap of three weeks between visits.’



Just under six in ten (56%) of Individuals / Families with children under 11 agreed with the proposal for the Mobile Library Service to visit a stop once every three weeks. Just under

one in ten (9%) strongly agreed and just under half (47%) agreed. Just under one in five (19%) neither agreed nor disagreed and one in three (29%) disagreed.

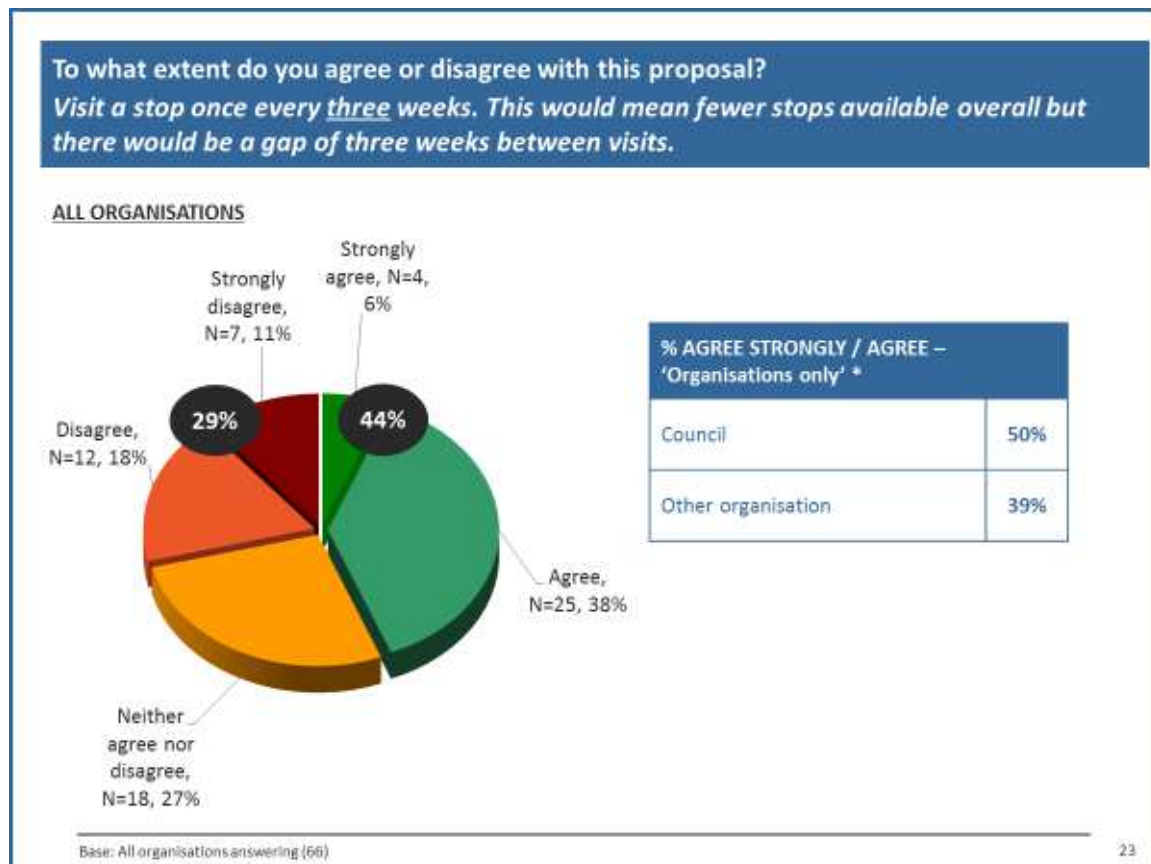
Agreement with the proposal is significantly higher amongst those responding as Individuals (58%) compared to Families with children under 11 (48%). Whilst there are no significant differences to this proposal by age, a higher proportion of those aged 61 or over agreed with the proposal. Response is broadly consistent comparing men and women, and those who consider themselves to have a disability and those that do not, with no significant differences observed.

Agreement proportions are broadly consistent by district with the following percentages of Individuals / Families with children under 11 agreeing strongly / agreeing in each district. It should be noted, however, that agreement is significantly lower amongst those who live in Epping Forest:

- Basildon – 57%
 - Braintree – 56%
 - Brentwood – 54%
 - Chelmsford – 57%
 - Colchester – 59%
 - Epping Forest – 43%
 - Maldon – 64%
 - Tendring – 55%
 - Uttlesford – 52%
-

The chart below depicts response amongst **Organisations** to the proposal to:

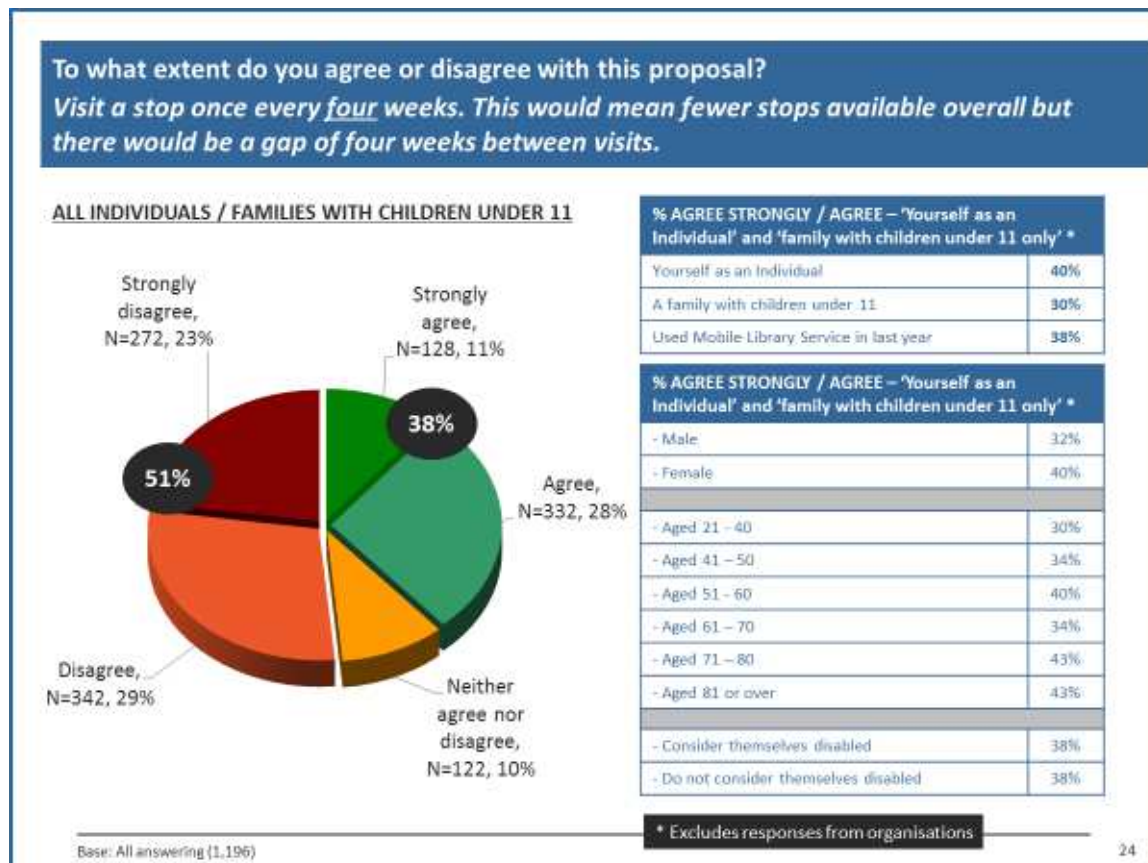
‘Visiting a stop once every three weeks. This would mean fewer stops available overall but there would be a gap of three weeks between visits.’



At an overall level, agreement is slightly lower than observed for Individuals / Families with children under 11. Just over four in ten Organisations agreed (44%) with visiting a stop every three weeks. 6% strongly agreed and just under four in ten (38%) agreed. Just under a third (29%) disagreed with the proposal. The proportion of Organisations indicating they neither agree nor disagree is relatively high at 27%. Whilst base sizes are low, agreement is higher amongst Council organisations compared to other organisations responding.

The chart below depicts response amongst **Individuals and Families with children under 11 only**, as well as demographic subgroups to the proposal to:

‘Visiting a stop once every four weeks. This would mean fewer stops available overall but there would be a gap of four weeks between visits.’



As perhaps expected, agreement proportions are significantly lower than observed for stopping every three weeks. Just under four in ten (38%) of Individuals / Families with children under 11 agreed with the proposal for the Mobile Library Service to visit a stop once every four weeks. Just over one in ten (11%) strongly agreed and just under three in ten (28%) agreed. One in ten (10%) neither agreed nor disagreed and just over a half (51%) disagreed; 23% strongly disagreed.

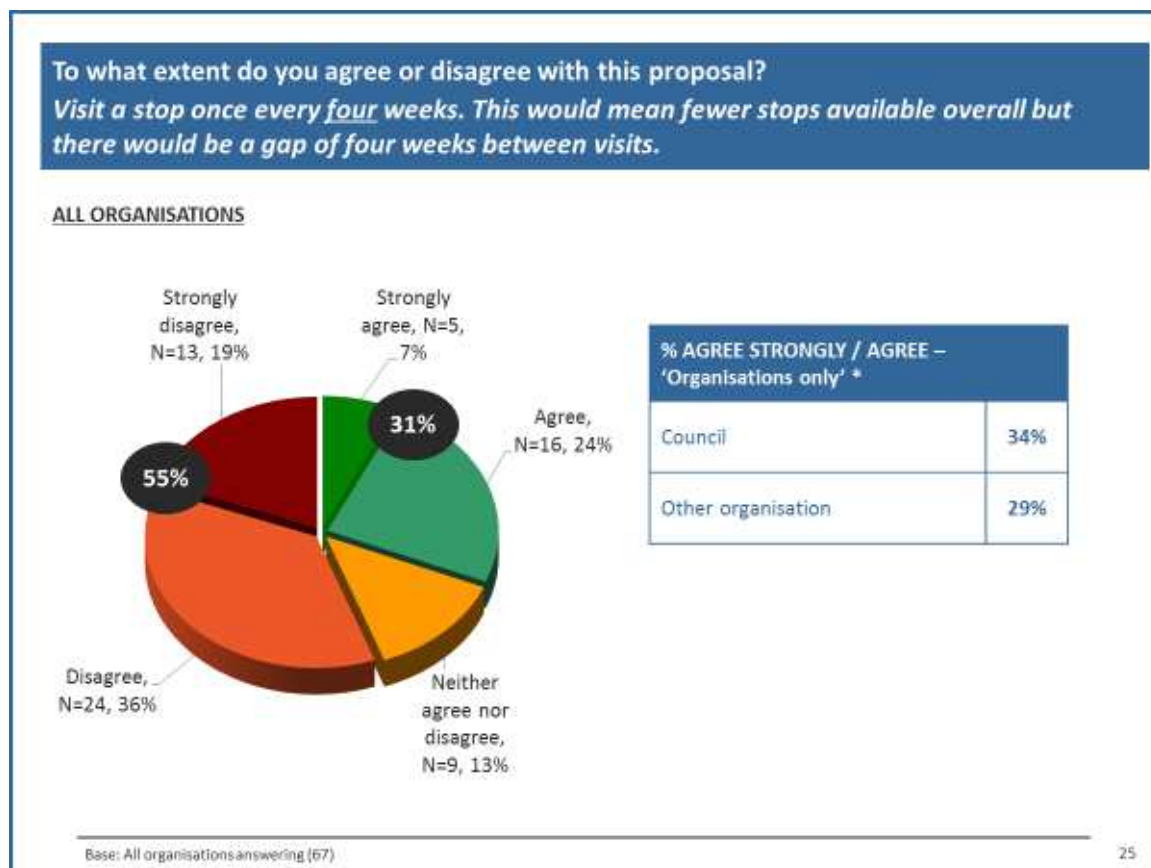
Agreement with the proposal is significantly higher amongst those responding as Individuals (40%) compared to Families with children under 11 (30%). Whilst there are no significant differences to this proposal by age, a higher proportion of those aged 61 or over agreed with the proposal. Agreement is significantly higher amongst women (40%) compared to men (32%). Response is broadly consistent comparing those who consider themselves to have a disability and those that do not with no significant differences observed.

Agreement proportions are broadly consistent by district with the following percentages of Individuals / Families with children under 11 agreeing strongly / agreeing in each district. It should be noted, however, that agreement is significantly higher amongst those who live in Braintree and Tendring and lower amongst those who live in Epping Forest:

- Basildon – 27%
- Braintree – 48%
- Brentwood – 43%
- Chelmsford – 41%
- Colchester – 33%
- Epping Forest – 19%
- Maldon – 28%
- Tendring – 50%
- Uttlesford – 48%

The chart below depicts response amongst **Organisations** to the proposal to:

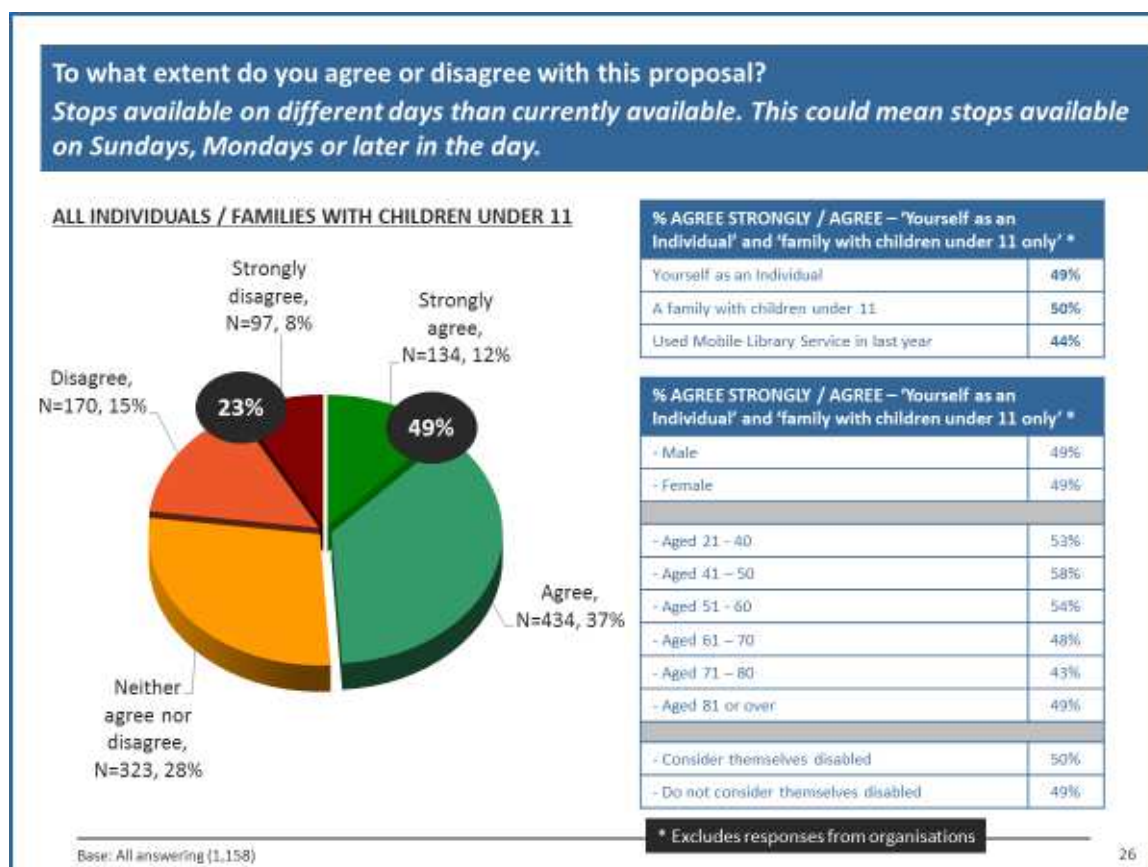
‘Visiting a stop once every four weeks. This would mean fewer stops available overall but there would be a gap of four weeks between visits.’



At an overall level, agreement is slightly lower than observed for Individuals / Families with children under 11. Just over three in ten Organisations (31%) agreed with visiting a stop every four weeks. 7% strongly agreed and just under a quarter (24%) agreed. Just over half (55%) disagreed with the proposal, with a lower proportion that observed for three weeks indicating they neither agreed nor disagreed.

The chart below depicts response amongst **Individuals and Families with children under 11 only**, as well as demographic subgroups to the proposal to:

‘Stops available on different days than currently available. This could mean stops available on Sundays, Mondays or later in the day.’



Response varies quite considerably for this element of the proposal, compared to all others. This is in part due to the proportion indicating they neither agree nor disagree (28%). This is likely due to the reality of response depending on whether the revised stop timing proposed for their stop (e.g. time of day and chosen day) being known and/or suitable to them personally.

Just under half of Individuals / Families with children under 11 agreed with stops being available on different days than currently available. Just over one in ten (12%) strongly agreed and just under four in ten (37%) agreed. Just under a quarter (23%) disagreed.

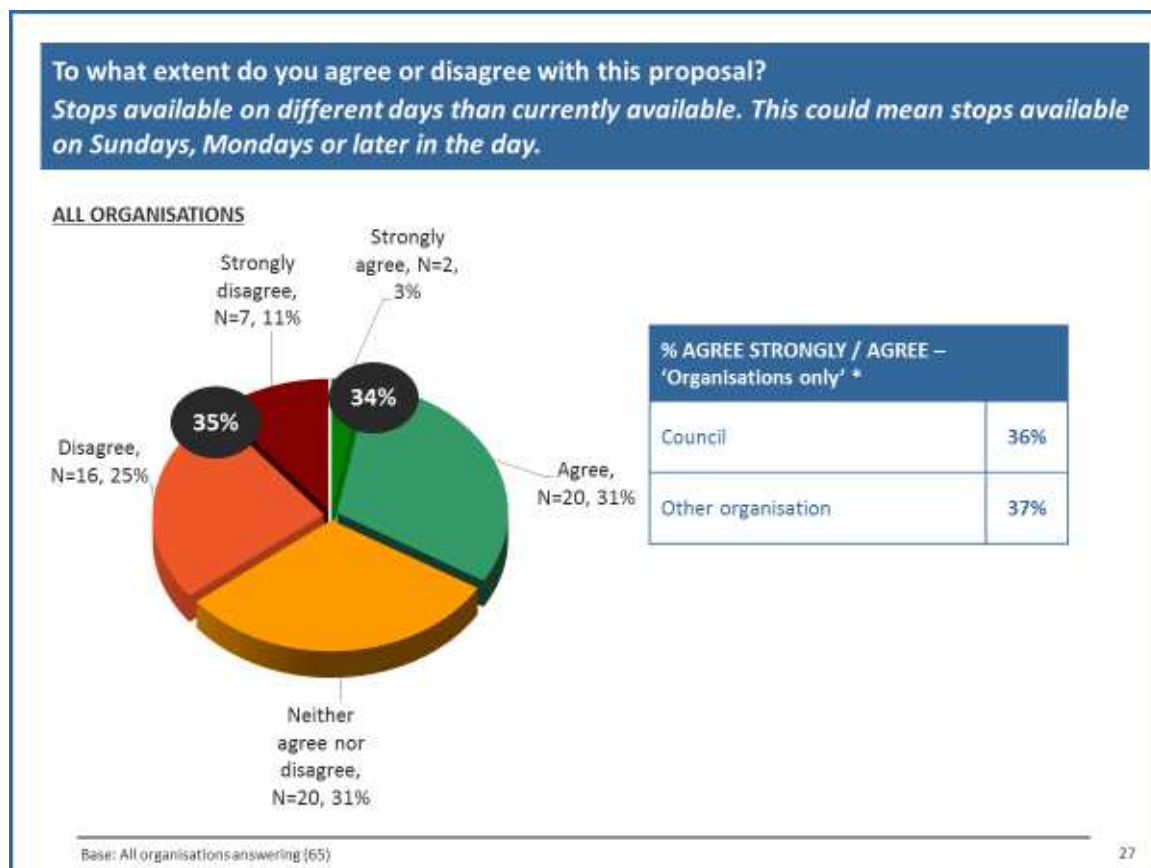
Agreement proportions are broadly consistent comparing men and women with no significant differences observed. Whilst there are no significant differences to this proposal by age, a higher proportion of those aged 60 or under agreed with the proposal. Response is broadly consistent comparing those who consider themselves to have a disability and those that do not with no significant differences observed.

Agreement proportions are broadly consistent by district with the following percentages of Individuals / Families with children under 11 agreeing strongly / agreeing in each district. There are no significant differences observed:

- Basildon – 50%
- Braintree – 54%
- Brentwood – 41%
- Chelmsford – 46%
- Colchester – 48%
- Epping Forest – 50%
- Maldon – 45%
- Tendring – 51%
- Uttlesford – 47%

The chart below depicts response amongst **Organisations** to the proposal to:

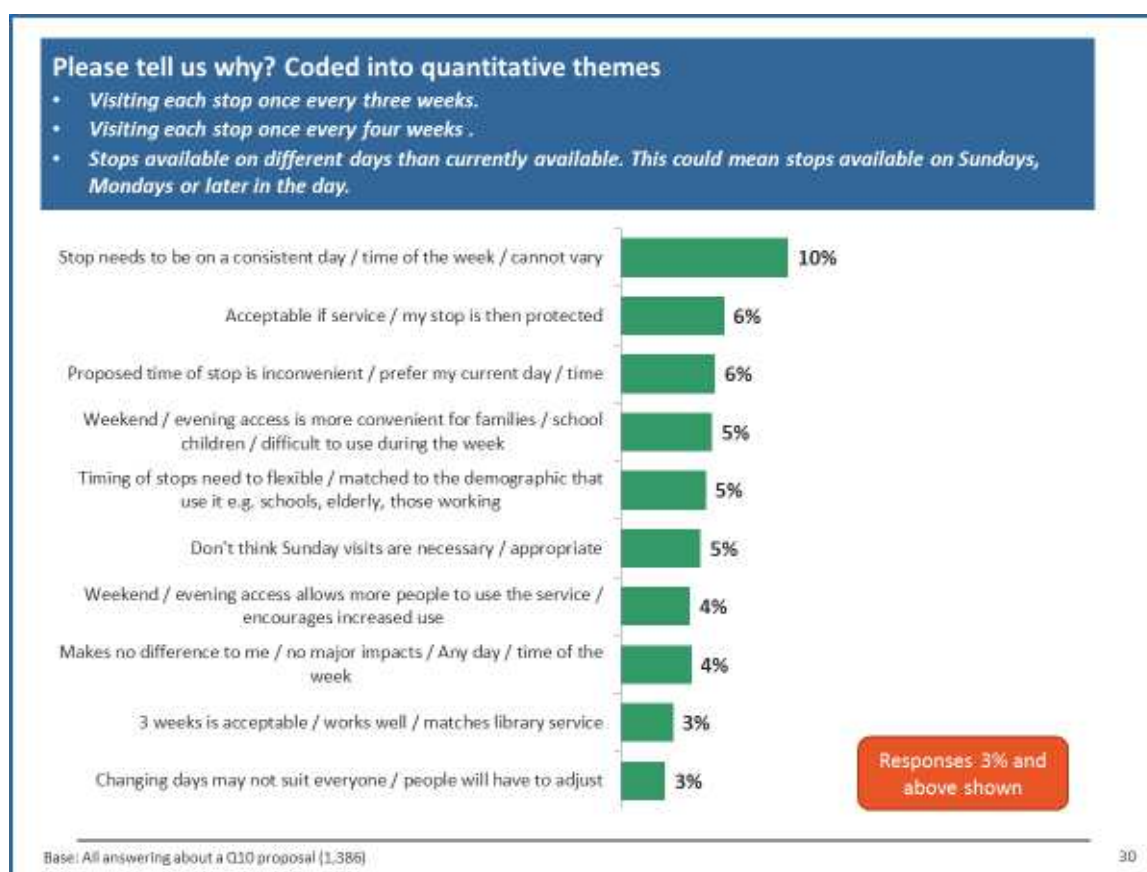
‘Stops available on different days than currently available. This could mean stops available on Sundays, Mondays or later in the day.’



At an overall level, agreement is lower than observed for Individuals / Families with children under 11. Just over a third of Organisations agreed (34%) with stops being available on different days than currently available. 3% strongly agreed and just under a third (31%) agreed. Just over a third (35%) disagreed with the proposal. The proportion of Organisations indicating they neither agree nor disagree is relatively high at 31%.

After asking Consultees to indicate their level of agreement with each of the frequency and timing proposals, Consultees were given the opportunity to comment on **their reasons for their level of agreement in their own words**. Lake Market Research have reviewed the free text comments that Consultees provided and have developed a codeframe to group together common themes, to quantify the feedback received.

The chart below summarises the comments made by at least 3% or more **Individuals / Families with children under 11** who gave an agreement score to at least one of the proposals:



The most common factors noted concern the timing of the stop. A proportion of Consultees within the most common mention believe their stop day could vary (which is unlikely to be the case in reality):

- **‘Stop needs to be on a consistent day / time of the week / cannot vary’** – an example comment given by a Consultee is as follows *‘As long as the day is the same regular one it would be OK but it has to be always on the same day. If you vary the day people will get confused as to which day and not bother coming.’*
- **‘Acceptable if service / stop is then protected’** – an example comment given by a Consultee is as follows *‘I don't mind how it is arranged but I feel passionately that I just couldn't manage without the mobile library.’*
- **‘Proposed time of stop is inconvenient / prefer my current day / time’** – an example comment given by a Consultee is as follows *‘Being flexible to keep the*

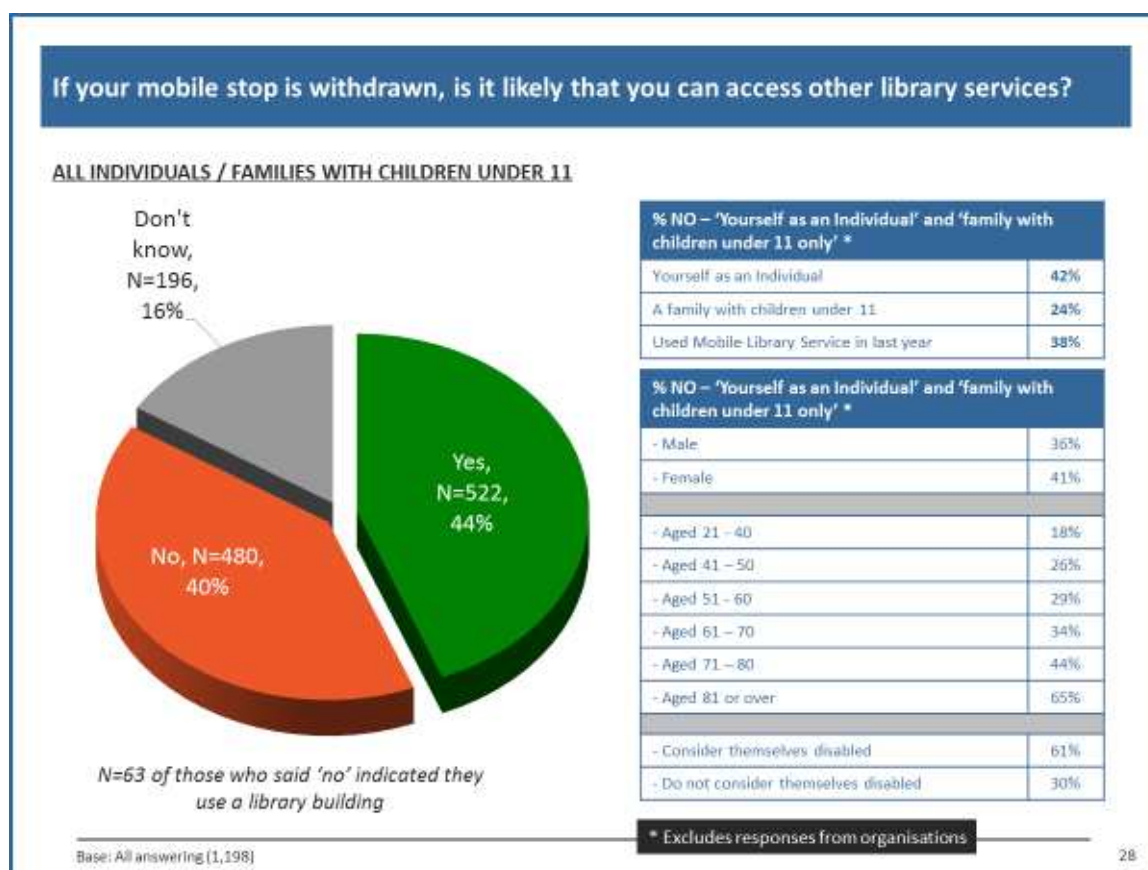
service. However, I would prefer to keep to the present day and time also it is established in the community.'

- **'Weekend / evening access is more convenient for families / school children / difficult to use during the week'** – an example comment given by a Consultee is as follows *'Increasing the days available I feel would allow for the service to be used more. Weekend stops would enable those who work during the week to access the library service as the current opening hours of our local Frinton branch do not consider working families.'*
 - **'Timing of stops need to be flexible / matched to the demographic that use it e.g. schools, elderly, those working'** – an example comment given by a Consultee is as follows *'Our current service (and in the surrounding villages) arrives at a time accessible for children (after school hrs) and if this would to be changed then I don't think children in my local rural community would have the opportunity to visit a library!'*
 - **'Don't think Sunday visits are necessary / appropriate'** – an example comment given by a Consultee is as follows *'Don't agree with Sunday working, there is too much of it at the moment. I wouldn't use it if only came on Sunday.'*
-

MAIN CONSULTATION: FUTURE ACCESS TO LIBRARY SERVICES

Consultees were then asked to indicate whether it is likely they will be able to access other library services if their mobile library stop was withdrawn.

The chart below depicts response amongst **Individuals and Families with children under 11 only, as well as demographic subgroups** to this scenario:



Just over four in ten (44%) of Individuals / Families with children under 11 indicated they would be able to access other library services if their mobile library stop was withdrawn. Four in ten (40%) indicated that they would not and 16% indicated they were unsure whether they could or not.

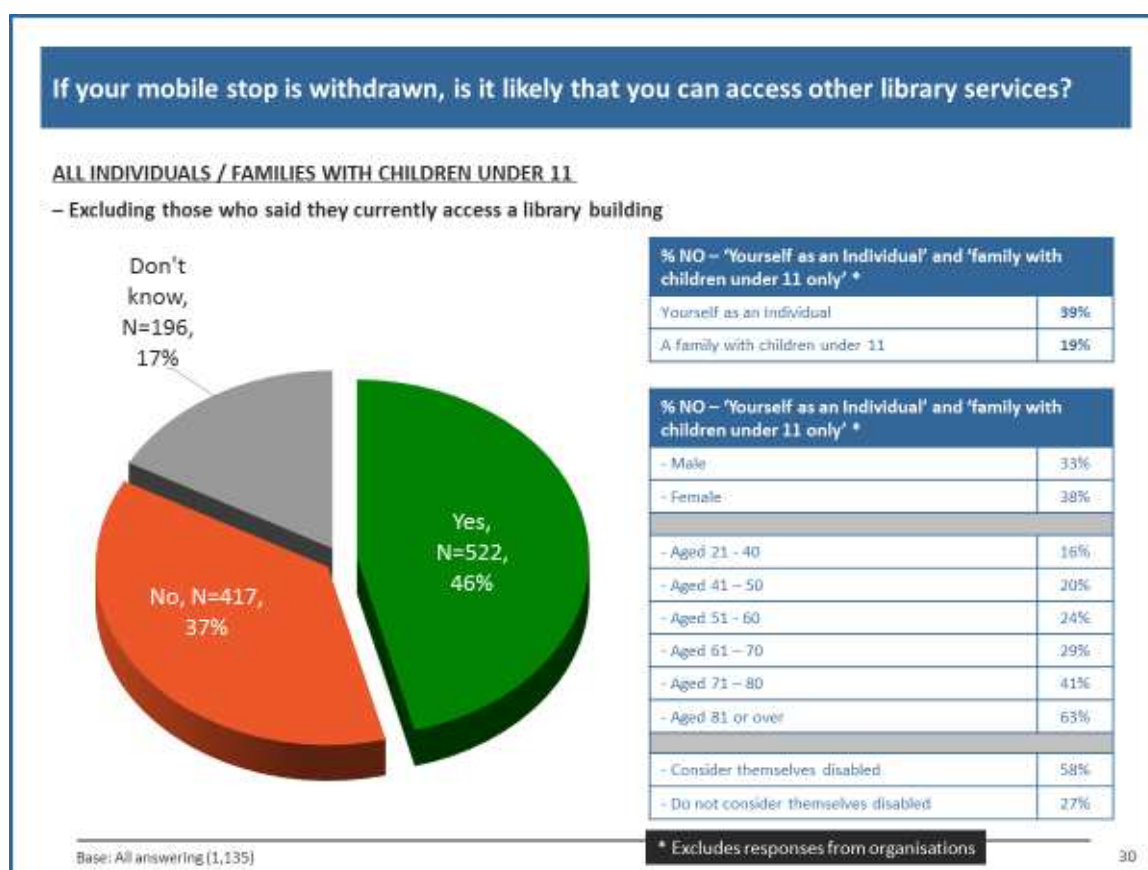
A significantly higher proportion of those responding as Individuals indicated they would not be able to access library services (42%) compared to Families with children under 11 (24%). There are marked significant differences by age with a significantly higher proportion of those aged 81 or over indicating they would not be able to access library services (65%). There are also marked significant differences by disability with a significantly higher proportion of those who consider themselves disabled indicating they would not be able to access library services (61%).

Agreement proportions are broadly consistent by district with the following percentages of Individuals / Families with children under 11 indicating they would not be able to access library services if their mobile library stop was withdrawn. It should be noted, however, that a significantly higher proportion of those living in Epping Forest and a significantly lower

proportion of those living in Braintree and Colchester would not be able to access library services:

- Basildon – 33%
- Braintree – 30%
- Brentwood – 38%
- Chelmsford – 42%
- Colchester – 34%
- Epping Forest – 61%
- Maldon – 45%
- Tendring – 45%
- Uttlesford – 40%

For the purposes of clarity, the chart below depicts response amongst **Individuals and Families with children under 11 only, as well as demographic subgroups** to the scenario but excludes those who said they currently access a library building from the base answering.



The removal of these Consultees results in just under half (46%) indicating they would be able to access library services if their mobile stop was withdrawn; 37% indicated they would not be able to access and 17% indicated they were unsure.

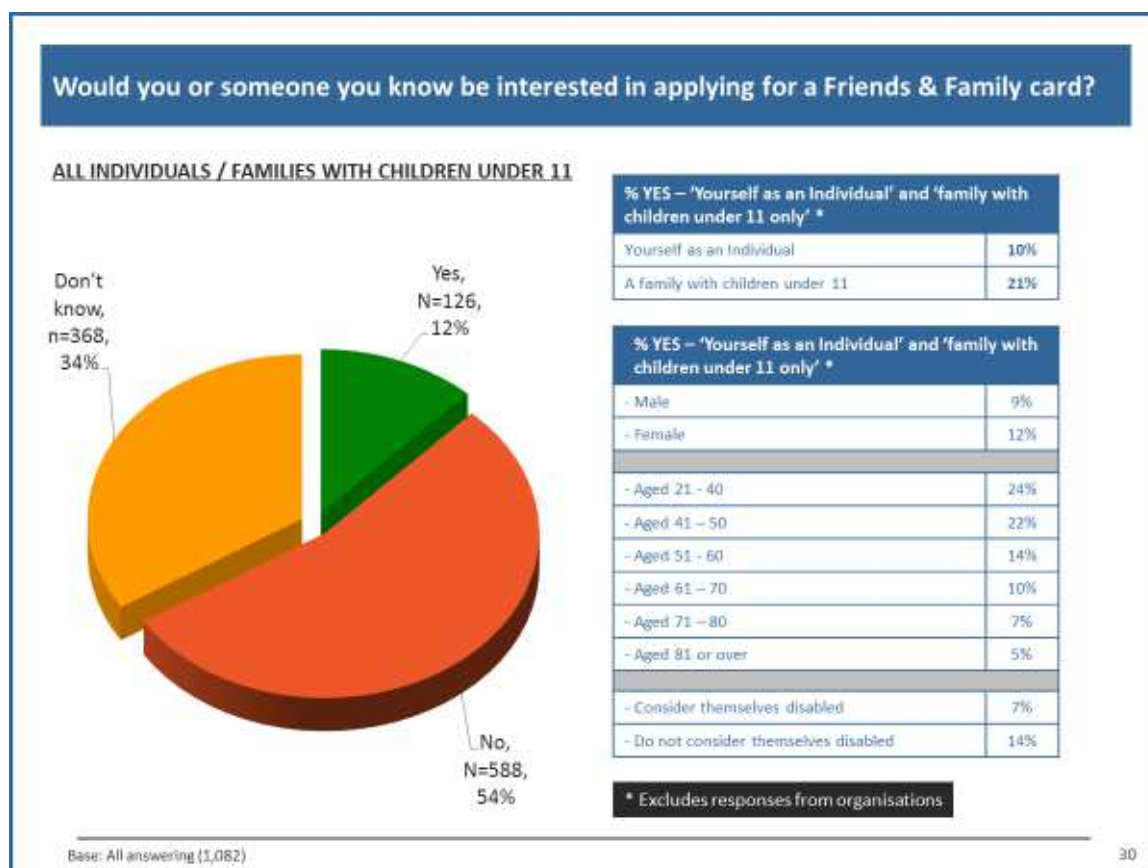
The proportions indicating they would not be able to access library services by demographic group are broadly consistent with that observed previously. A significantly higher proportion

of those responding as Individuals indicated they would not be able to access library services (39%) compared to Families with children under 11 (19%). There are marked significant differences by age with a significantly higher proportion of those aged 81 or over indicating they would not be able to access library services (63%). There are also marked significant differences by disability with a significantly higher proportion of those who consider themselves disabled indicating they would not be able to access library services (58%).

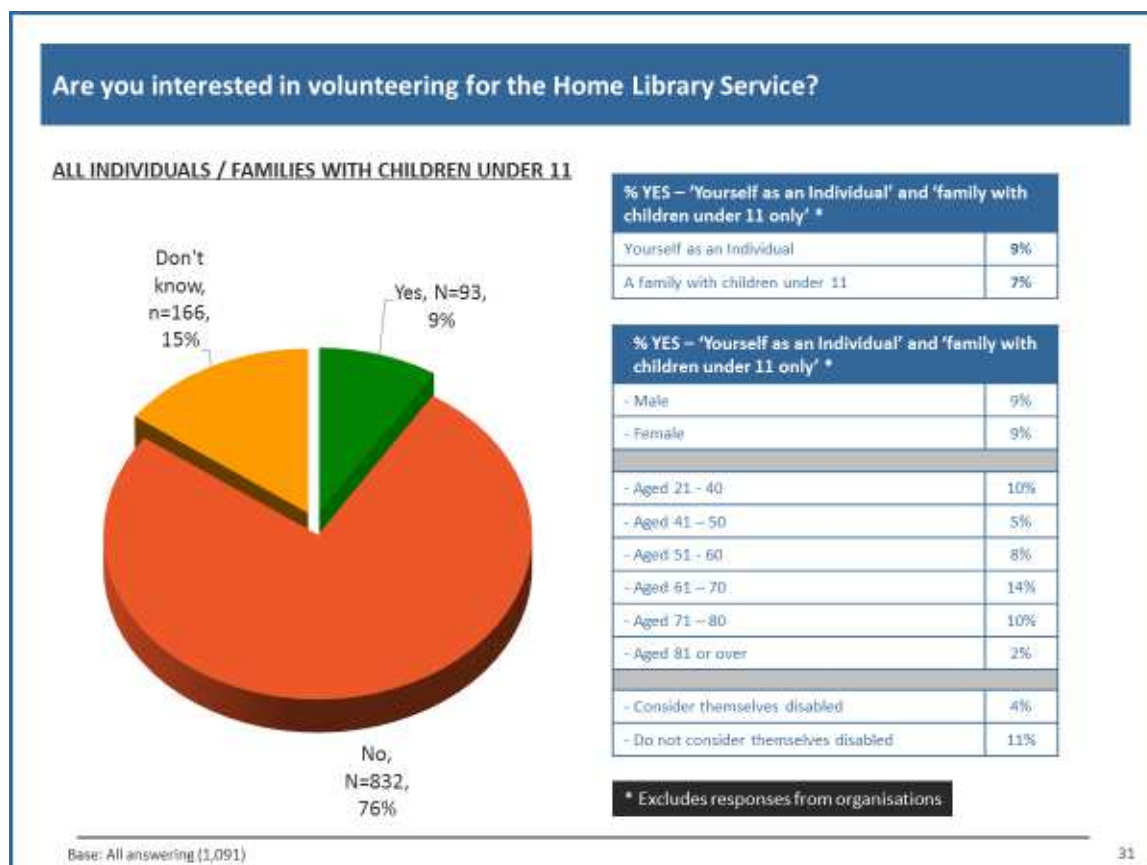
Following questions concerning the proposals put forward for the Mobile Library Service, Consultees were then asked:

- Would you or someone you know be interested in applying for a Friends and Family card?
- Are you interested in volunteering for the Home Library Service?
- Are you interested in getting involved in setting up a community library?

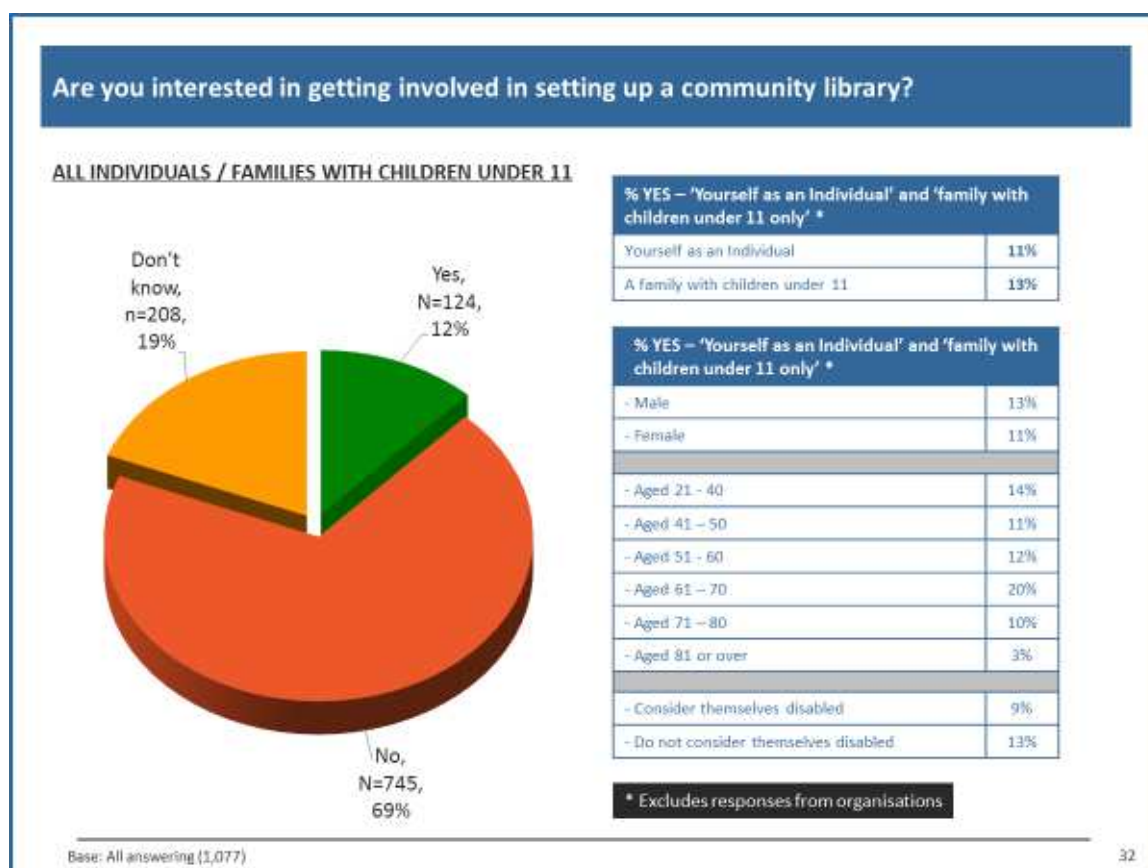
Just over one in ten Individuals / Families with children under 11 (12%) indicated they would be interested in applying for a Friends & Family card. Just over a third (34%) are unsure; likely due to limited awareness of the card itself. As perhaps expected, interest is higher amongst those responding as a Family with children under 11 (21%) compared to those responding as Individuals (10%). In addition, interest is higher amongst those aged 21 and 40 (24%) and 41 and 50 (22%).



Just under one in ten Individuals / Families with children under 11 (9%) indicated they would be interested in volunteering for the Home Library Service; three quarters (76%) indicated they would not be interested. Interest varies across the demographic subgroups with no clear pattern of response and no significant differences observed.



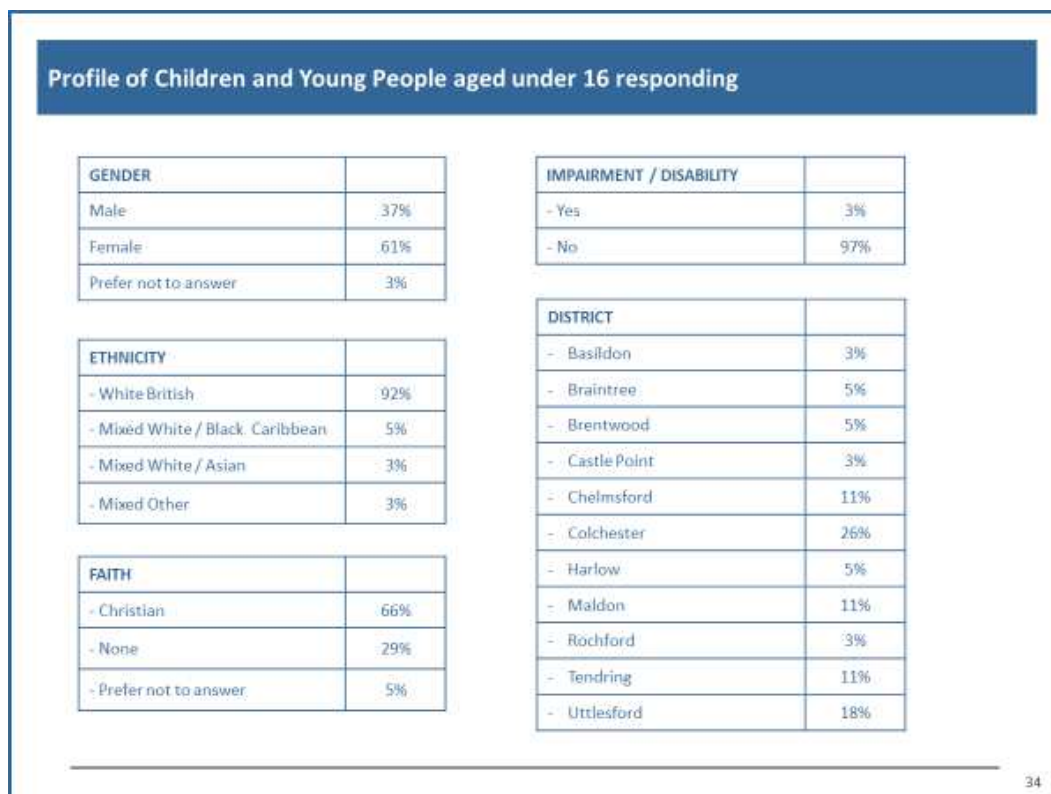
Just over one in ten Individuals / Families with children under 11 (12%) indicated they would be interested in getting involved in setting up a community library; just over two thirds (69%) indicated they would not be interested. Interest varies across the demographic subgroups with no clear pattern of response and no significant differences observed.



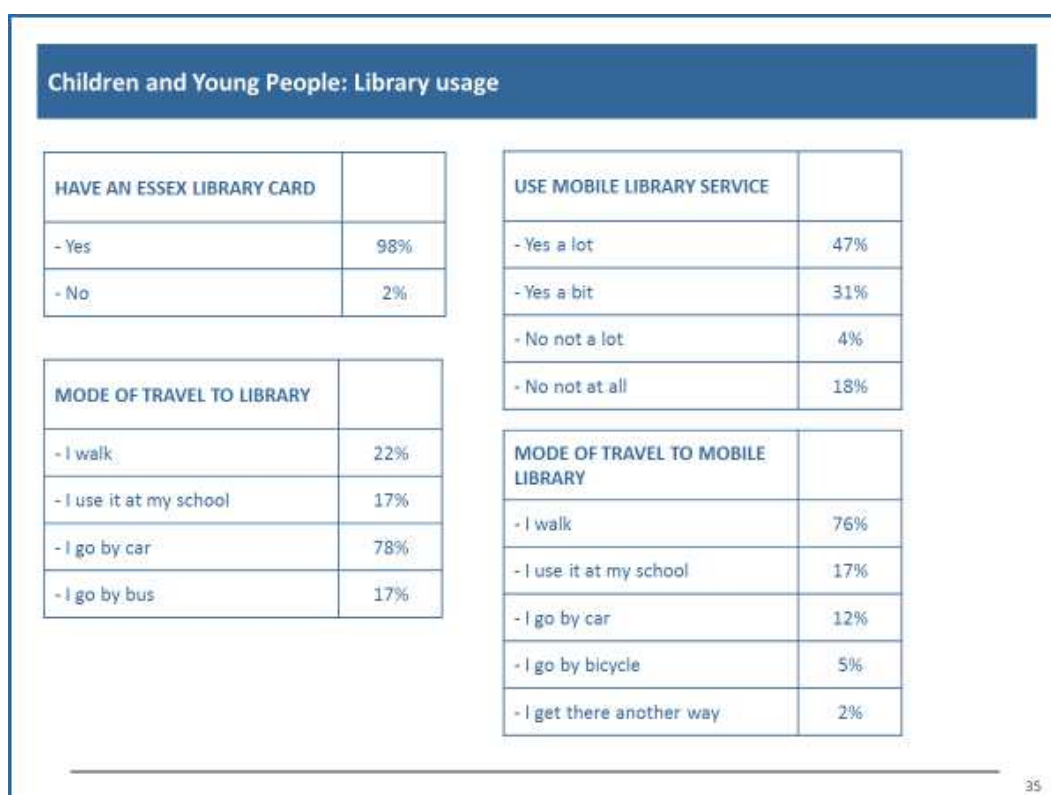
Finally, Consultees were asked whether there is a venue near them that they think would make a good venue for a community library. The most common mention is a village / community hall (263 mentions – 159 named a specific village hall and 104 referenced a village / community hall as an appropriate venue. There were few other specific suggestions made.

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE CONSULTATION: RESPONSE SUMMARY

40 responses have been recorded for the Children and Young People Consultation. 63 respondents opened the Consultation but didn't answer any questions or only answered the first question. The chart below provides an overview of the **Children and Young People aged under 16** who responded to the Consultation:

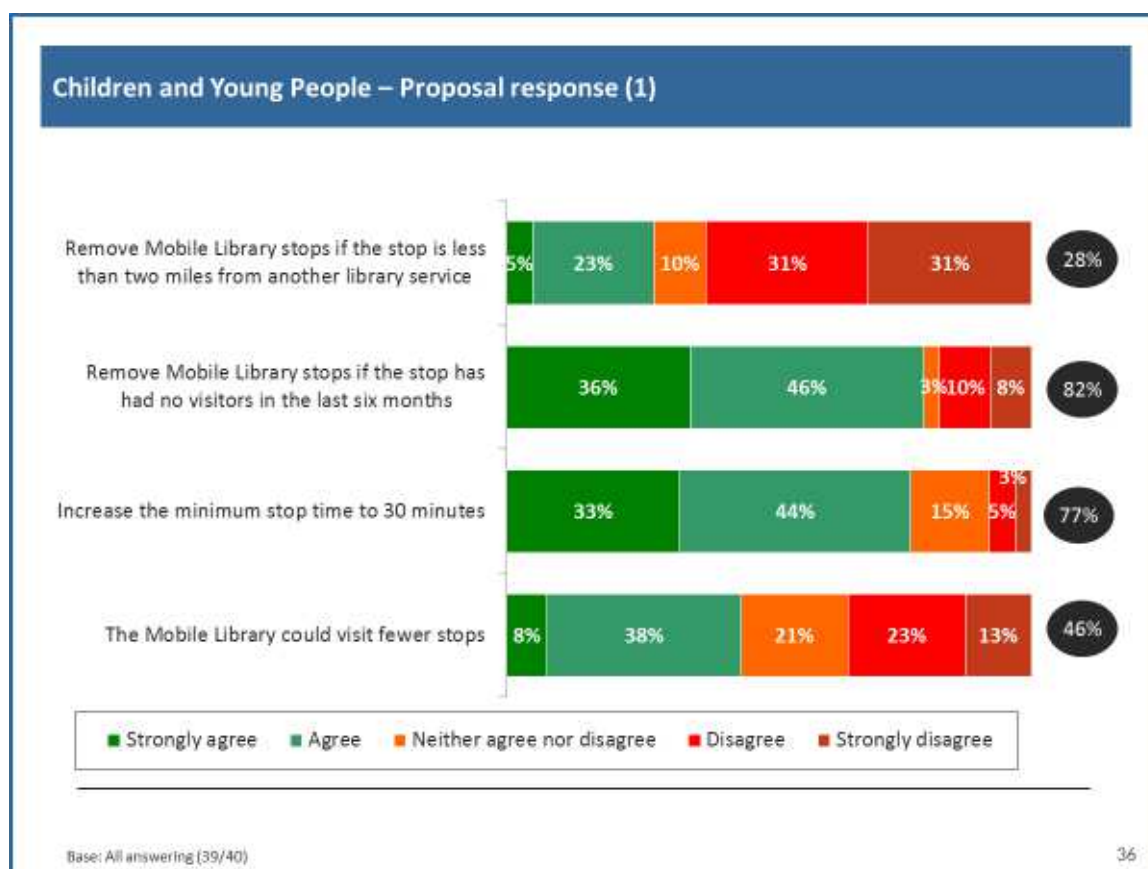


Just over three quarters (78%) use the Mobile Library Service.



The chart below summarises response amongst **Children and Young People aged under 16** to the proposals to:

- **‘Remove Mobile Library stops if the stop is less than two miles from another library service.’**
- **‘Remove Mobile Library stops if the stop has had no visitors in the last six months.’**
- **‘Increase the minimum stop time to 30 minutes.’**
- **‘The Mobile Library could visit fewer stops.’**



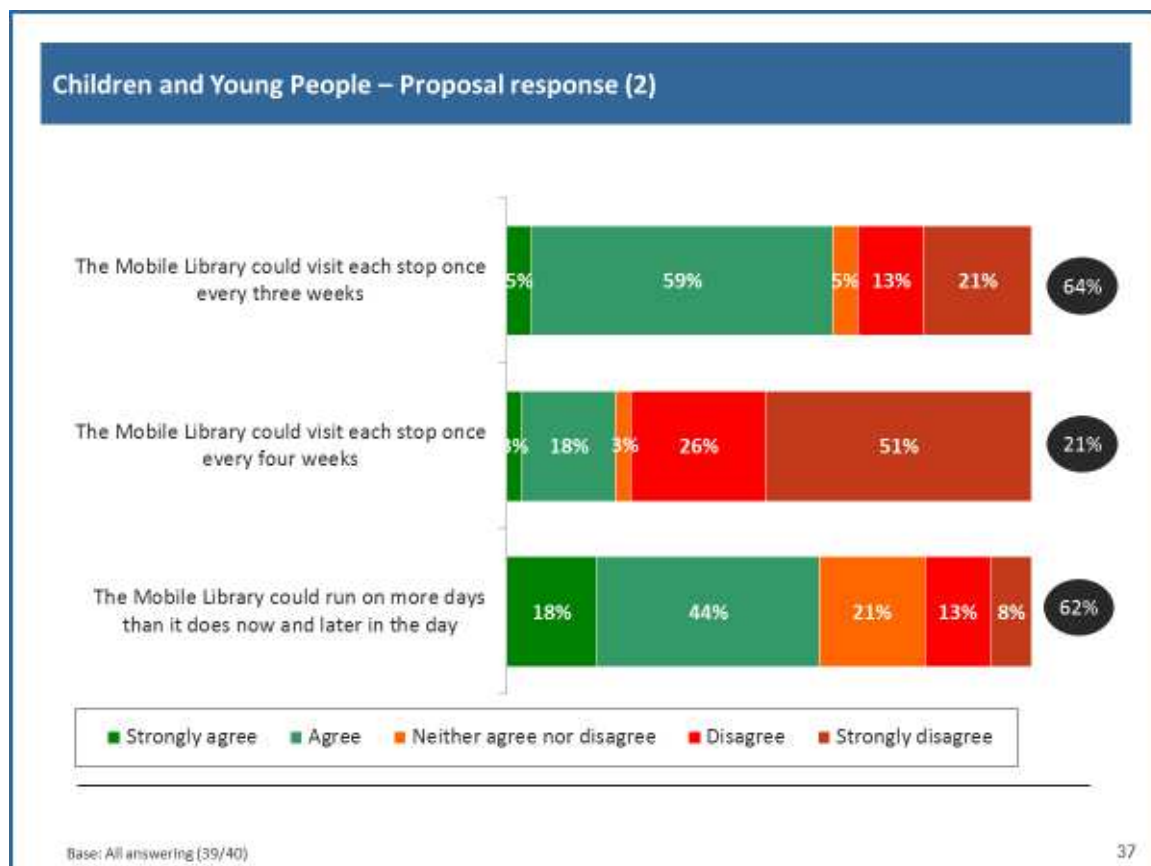
Response to removing Mobile Library stops if the stop has had no visitors in the last six months is consistent with that observed in the main Consultation at 82% agreement (82% also observed for the main Consultation). Response to increasing the minimum stop time to 30 minutes is higher than the main Consultation at 77% (compared to 68% observed for the main Consultation).

Response to removing Mobile Library stops if the stop is less than two miles from another library service is lower at 28% (compared to 39% observed for the main Consultation).

Just under half (46%) agree the Mobile Library could visit fewer stops.

The chart below summarises response amongst **Children and Young People aged under 16** to the proposal:

- **‘The Mobile Library could visit each stop once every three weeks.’**
- **‘The Mobile Library could visit each stop once every four weeks.’**
- **‘The Mobile Library could run on more days than it does now and later in the day.’**

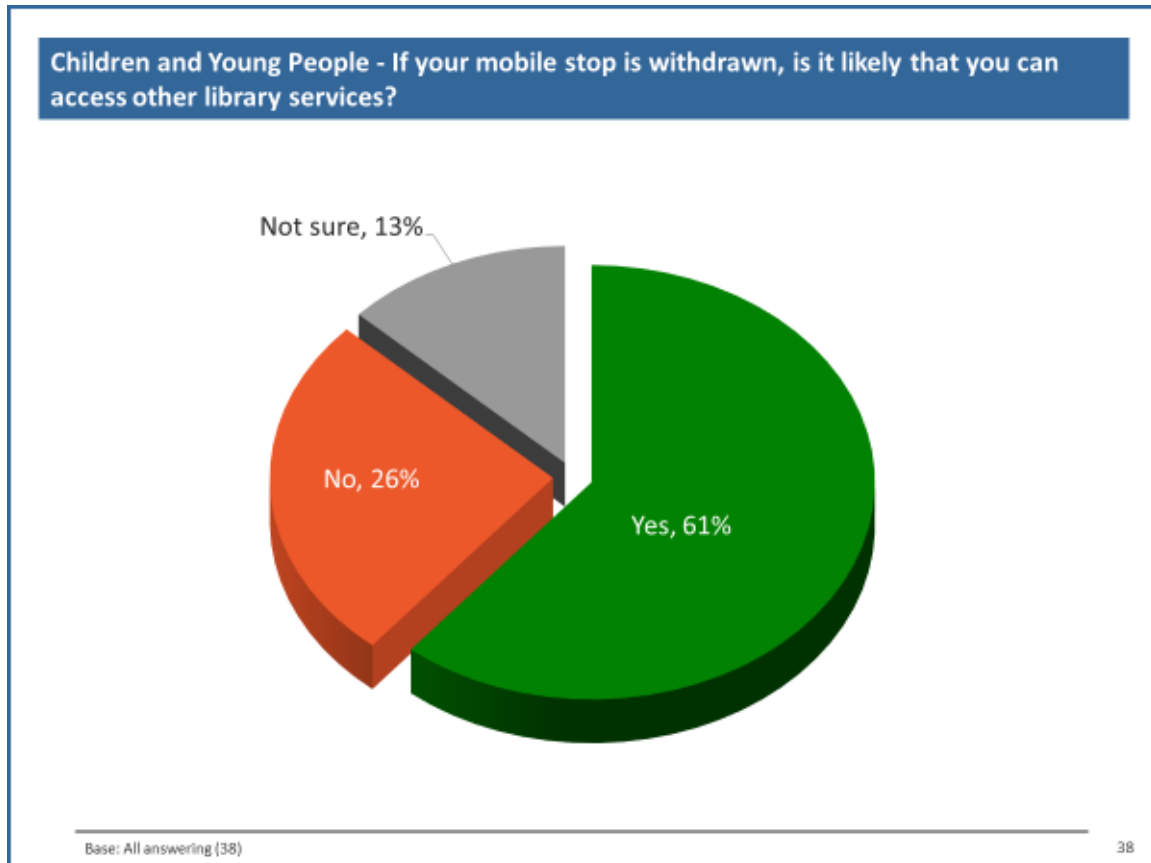


Response to the Mobile Library could visit each stop once every three weeks is higher than the main Consultation at 64% (compared to 56% observed for the main Consultation). Conversely, response to the Mobile Library could visit each stop once every four weeks is lower than the main Consultation at 21% (compared to 38% observed for the main Consultation).

Just over six in ten (62%) agree the Mobile Library could run on more days than it does now and later in the day.

Consultees were then asked to indicate whether it is likely they will be able to access other library services if their mobile library stop was withdrawn.

The chart below depicts response amongst **Children and Young People aged under 16** to this scenario:



Just over six in ten (61%) indicated it is likely that they can access other library services if their mobile stop was withdrawn. Just over a quarter (26%) indicated it was not likely.