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Colchester Central Engagement Highlight Report

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Engagement Overview - Since September 2021

- ✓ Over 100 responses received including 85 online surveys
- ✓ Over 200 comments were collected
- ✓ Over 30 people were engaged with either 1-1 or in groups
- ✓ Worked with C360, CBC and Healthwatch to reach out to community leaders and members

A Colchester Central Neighbourhood Project Page was created on the EHQ platform.

A survey was created online as well as accessible versions.

The questions were based on the turning the curve exercise and addressed the wider determinants of health as well as health and social care.

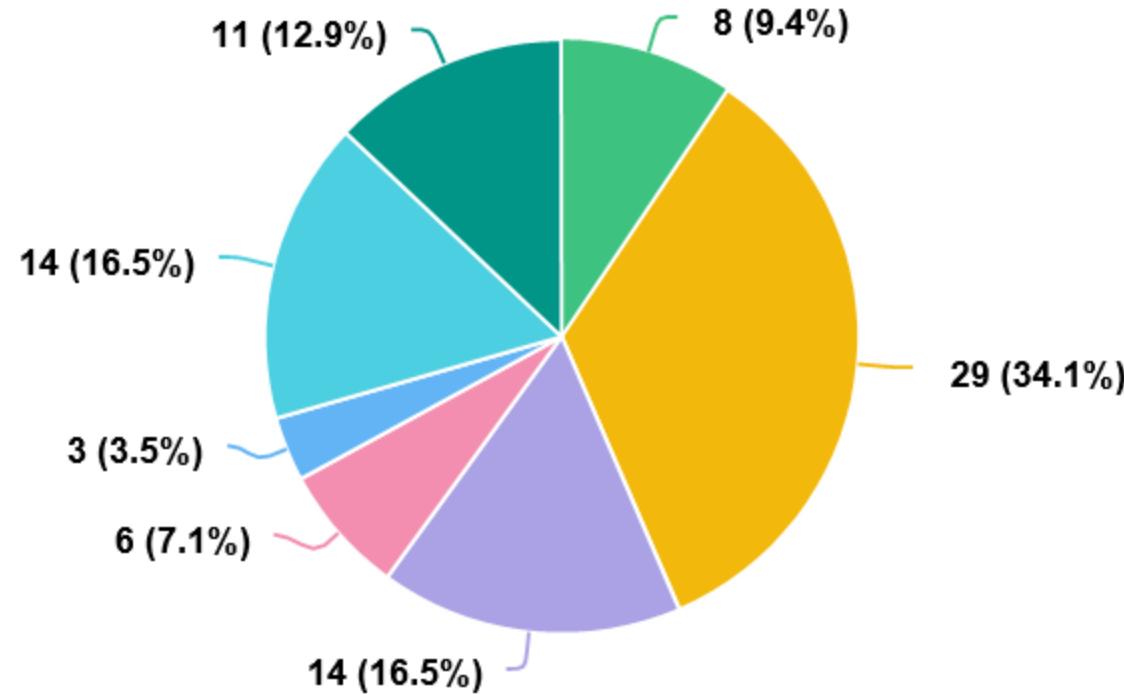
Citizens were asked to share their lived experiences with accessing services and ideas on how to improve their own health and wellbeing.

Highlight report is focused on Colchester Central but the information can be drilled down to Ward level.

We have listened to members of ethnic minority communities, carers, people with disabilities, LGBTQ+ community and people of all ages.

Still to do – further engagement with ethnic minority groups, younger and older age groups, the armed forces and other underrepresented groups.

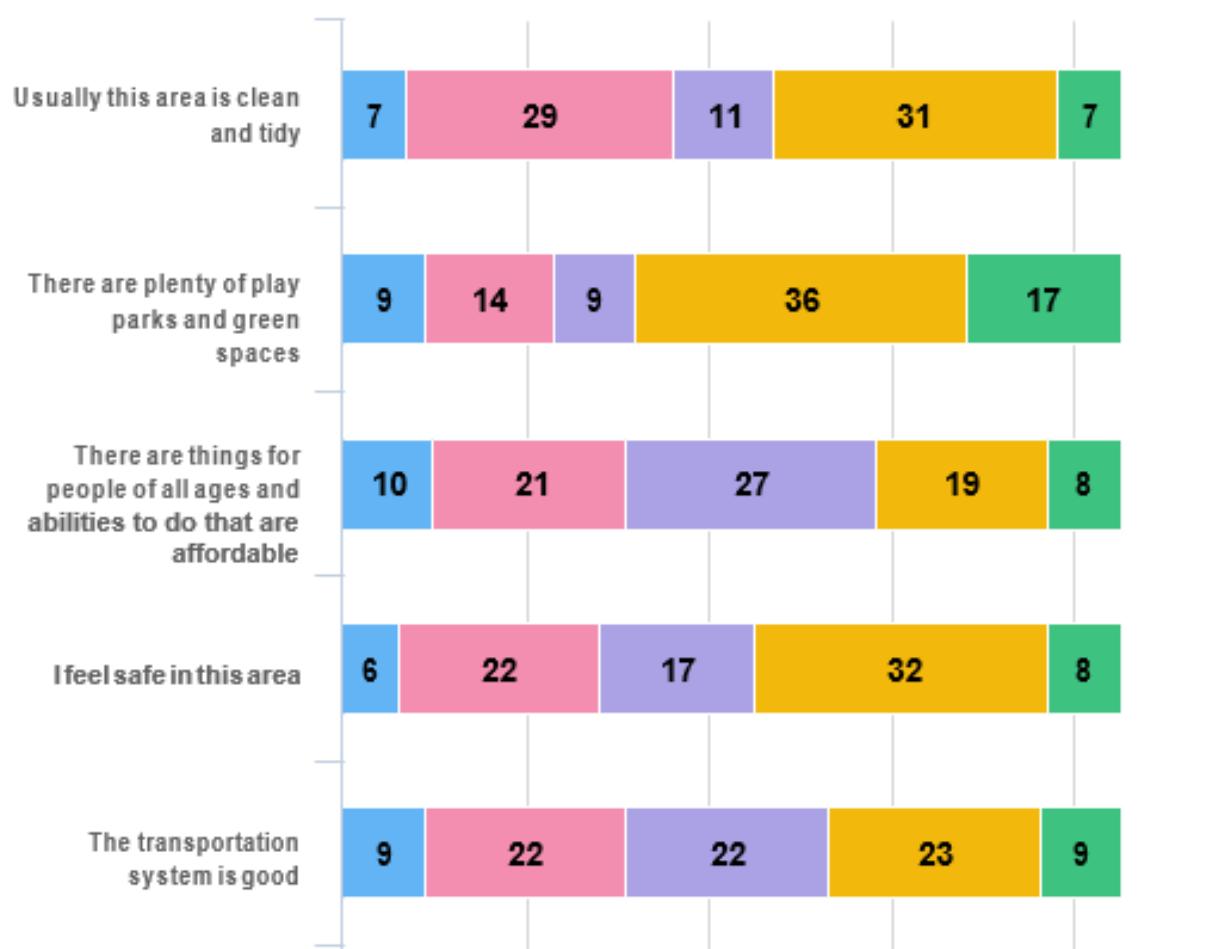
Q1 | Which areas do you mostly live, work or visit?



Question options

- Berechurch
- Castle (Town Centre)
- New Town and Christchurch
- Prettygate
- Shrub End
- Stanway
- visit more than one of the above

Q2 What do you like about living, working or using amenities in Colchester Central? Please mark the following statements from strongly agree to strongly disagree.



Question options

- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly agree

85 responses in total - this shows the number people who agree/disagree with the statement.

Focus on the wider determinants of health.

Colchester Central results but can be drilled down to individual wards.

Relatively even split for these sections.

Over 60% agreed there were plenty of open spaces.

Q2 Continued

85 responses in total

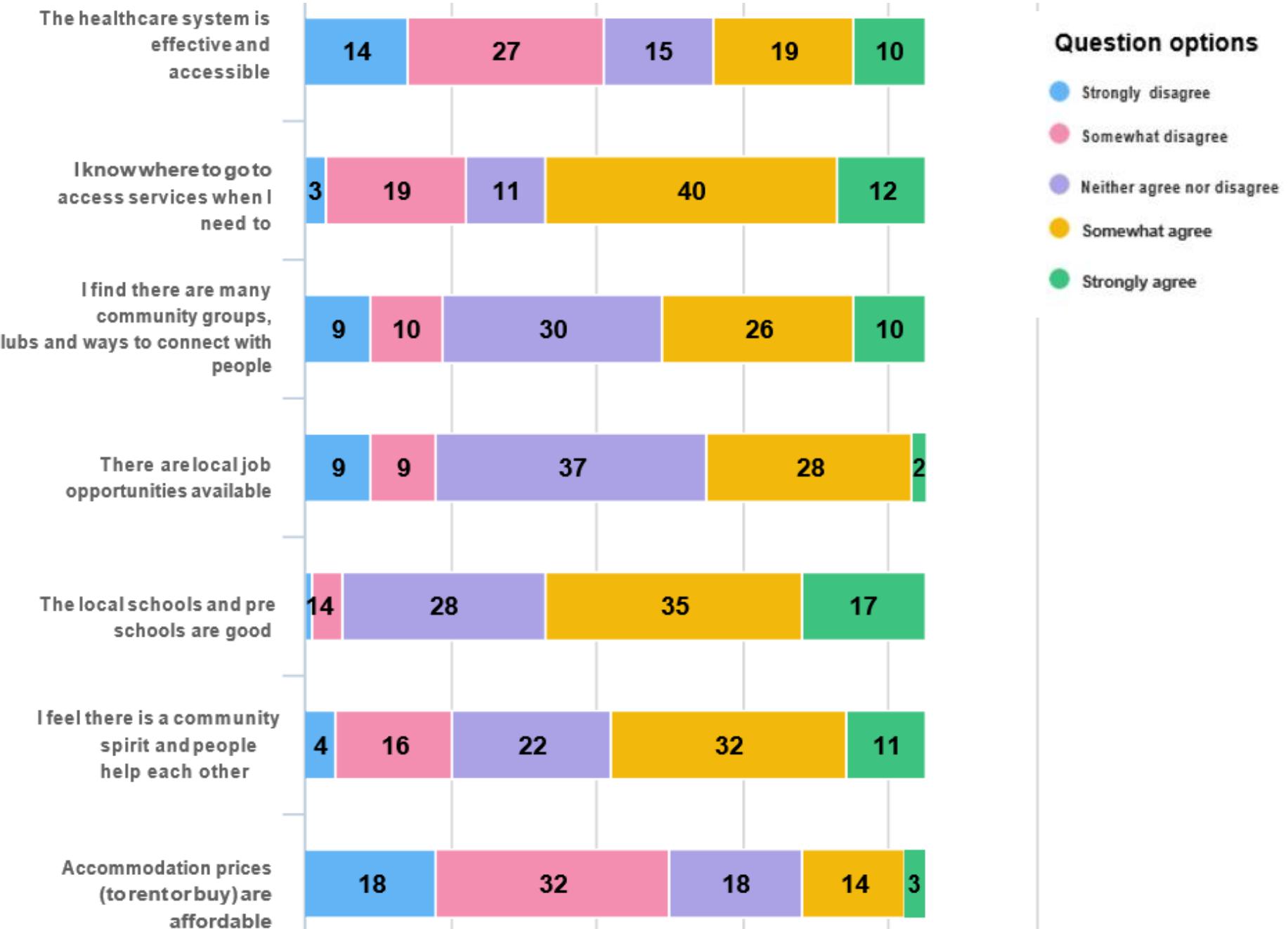
34% thought healthcare was effective or accessible

61% said they knew how to access services when they need to

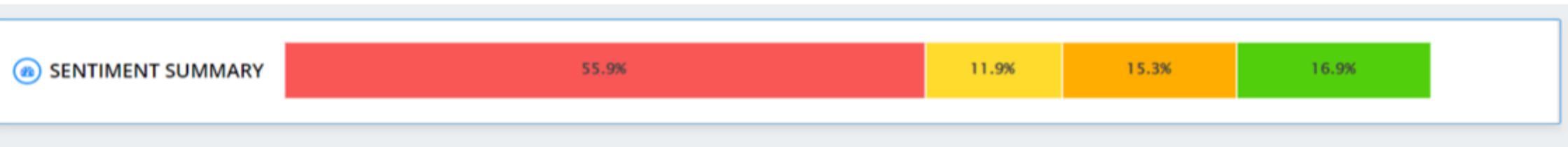
62% agree local schools are good

50% agree there is a community spirit

20% thought that accommodation was affordable



Q3 | Is there anything else you like or dislike about this area or would like to share?



Top 3 Topics (% of responses for this question)

Transport 35% - Open spaces 25% - Safety 15%

Transport and Infrastructure

Comments that Colchester is being over developed and the infrastructure is unable to support it. Concerns there is too much traffic and the effect on air quality, especially around schools. Public transport is reported as infrequent in some areas, and many find it too expensive.

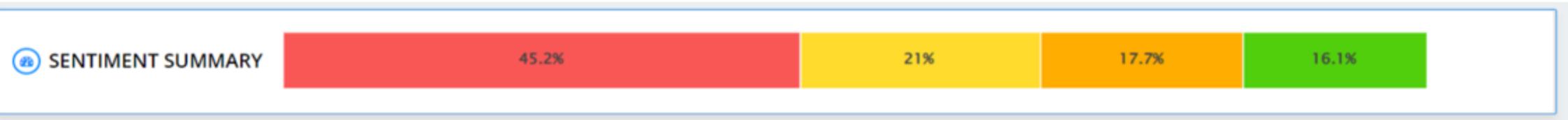
Open Spaces / Environment

Many people reported enjoying their local green open spaces but there were also concerns that these areas should be protected and not used for development such as Middlewick Ranges in Berechurch.

Safety and Cleanliness

Concerns about crime rates, feeling safe at night, ASB and general cleanliness. These were particularly concentrated around Castle and New Town and some ASB in Stanway.

Q4 | Can you tell us about your experience of accessing services in this area? This could include healthcare, voluntary or local authority.



Top 3 Topics (% of responses for this question)

Health 32% - Services 16% - Transport 11%

Health

The main focus of comments is regarding access to GPs and dentists and the difficulty with getting through to surgeries and booking appointments. Mental Health provision is also highlighted, with many frustrated at the lack of support and long waiting times.

Services

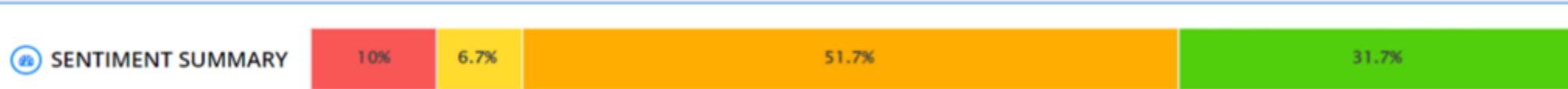
A mixed response to accessing services. Some comments on difficulty knowing who and how to contact organisations. There was praise for the VS organisations.

Transport

Some difficulty reported on being able to access services due to infrequent and expensive public transport.

Q5

What support would help you to improve your own health & wellbeing?



Top 3 Topics (% of responses for this question)

Health 36% - Transport 15% - Fitness 8%

Health

Better access to GPs, Dentists and Mental Health Support. Mutual support groups would be useful as would better access to advice on lifestyle choices, including a suggestion of a hub in the town. Also providing children and families with health and wellbeing strategies to create positive lifelong habits.

Transport and Infrastructure

A focus on a greener environment with less litter and pesticides and more trees and wildflowers. Less pollution by reducing traffic and cars from idling. Improved public transport, cycle/walking routes and mobility scooter access.

Fitness and Activities

Better access to information on local events. More affordable activities, especially for children. Feeling safer at night. More communal areas to allow people to meet and connect.

Q6 | Can you think of any improvements that would help to create a healthier and happier environment?



Top 4 Topics (% of responses for this question)

Transport 31% - Open spaces 21% - Building 18% / Community 18%

Transport

Further comments on improving links and affordability. Suggestion to improve public transport links to Leisure World. Lower speed limits and improve cycle lanes particularly in New Town.

Open Spaces / Building Development

Requests for green space not to be used for housing development and instead to be used for activities and country parks. Also, more sports centres and day centres for vulnerable/older people. Improved facilities for teenagers.

Community

Ideas on how to build on and improve community assets, including sharing information, connecting older and younger generations and creating neighbourhood projects to improve community spirit and wellbeing.

Summary

Main concerns impacting on health and wellbeing and access to services across Colchester Central are:

- Over development and an infrastructure that can't support it.
- Green space being used for development instead of being utilised by the community.
- Too much traffic and pollution and how this effects health.
- Infrequent and expensive public transport that impacts on people moving around the Borough to access services or make connections to avoid social isolation.
- Some concerns about crime rates, feeling safe at night, ASB and general cleanliness. These were particularly concentrated around Castle and New Town.
- Difficultly accessing doctors, dentists, and mental health support.
- Lack of understanding about where and how to access information on services and local events.

Citizens would like:

- Improved public transport links, cycle/walking routes and mobility scooter access.
- Roads and pavements to be repaired so they are safe, and more traffic calming measures.
- Green spaces and playparks across the neighbourhood for all to use.
- More sports centres and day centres for vulnerable/older people with improved facilities for teenagers.
- More outside communal areas to allow people to meet and connect.
- Improved access to health professionals and a choice as whether its online or in person. To be treated holistically.
- To know what's on locally within their communities and for activities to be affordable.
- To understand how to access services and obtain the information they need.

Assets Identified:

Open spaces	Volunteering Opportunities	Faith Groups
Local libraries	Communal Areas	Local Councillors
Voluntary Sector	Community Leaders	Community Groups