







What would help you and your family to live well here?



Healthcare and mental health support • Activities and facilities for young people  
• Housing and affordability • Transport and infrastructure • Community and social spaces















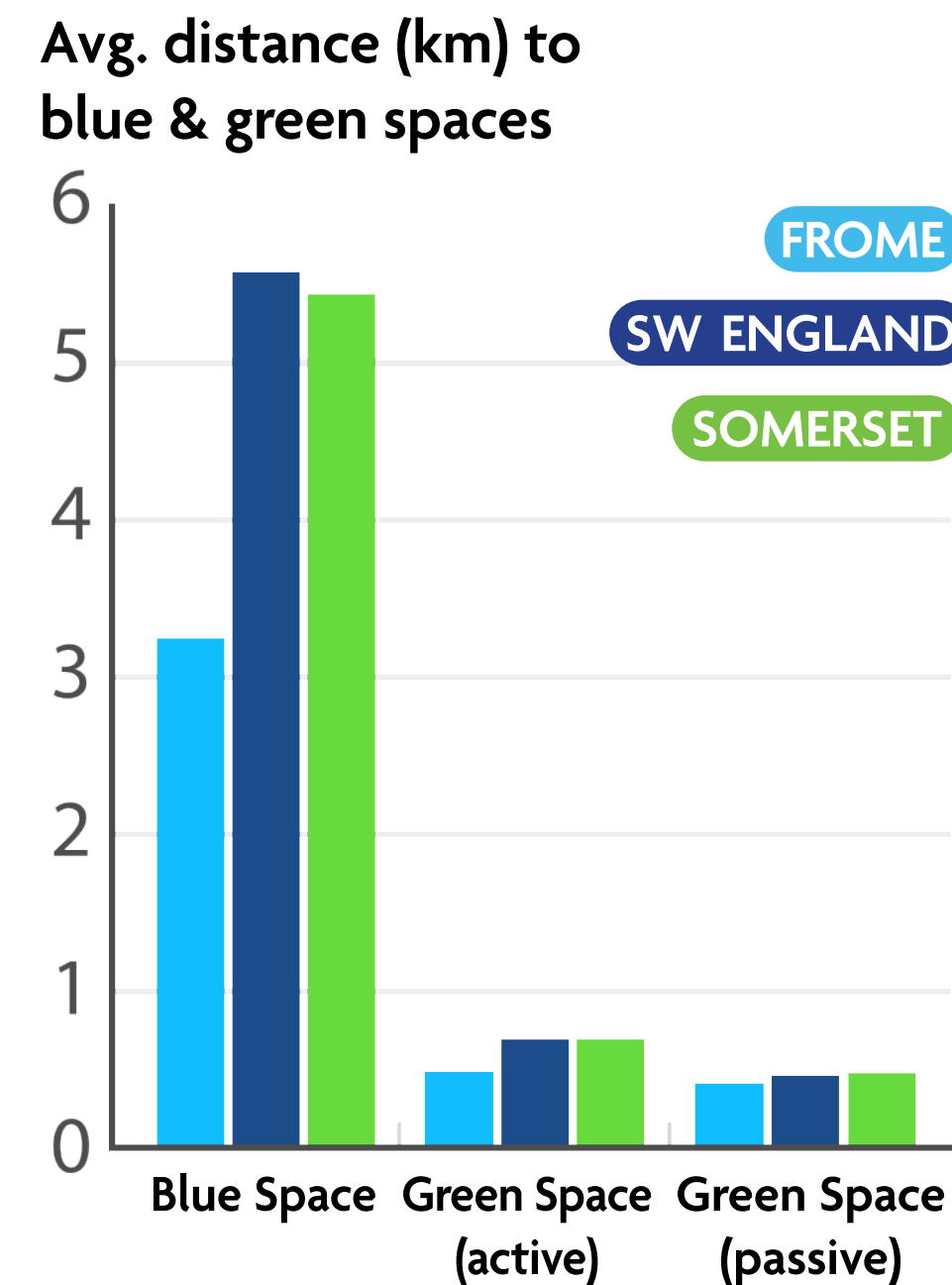
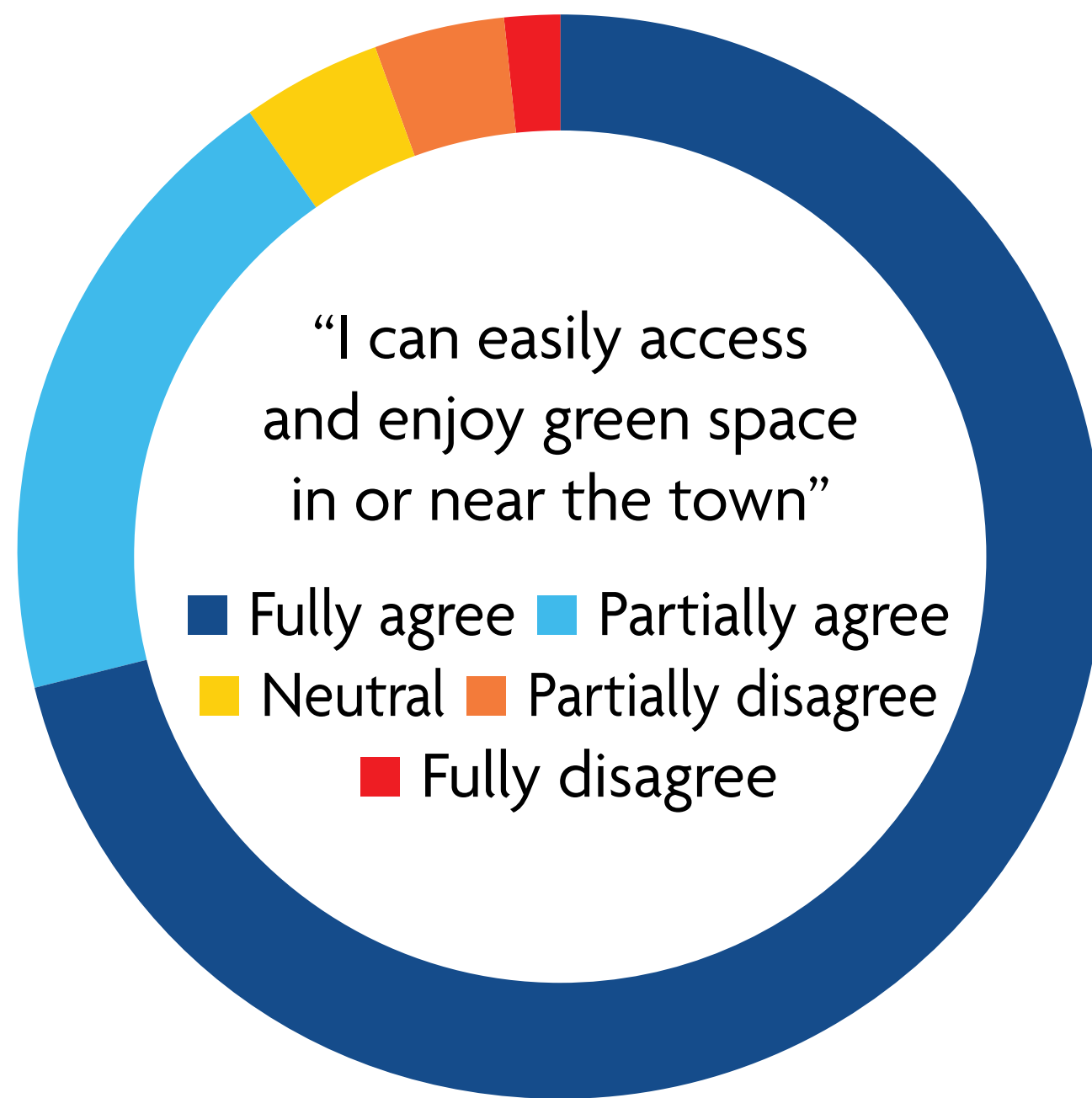
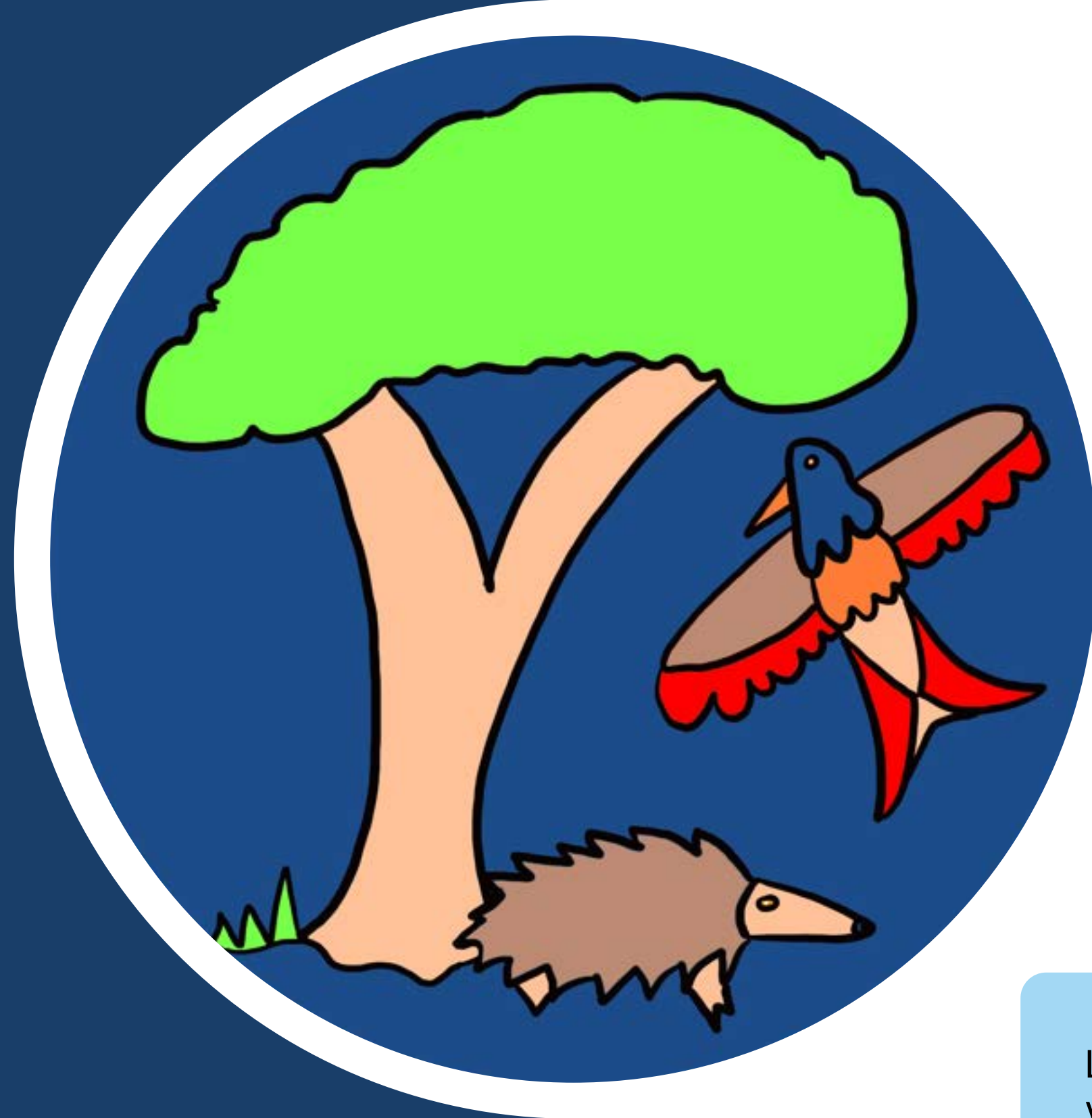


**Think about theatre, music, art and other cultural activities. Where do you (and your family) go to enjoy these things locally?**



The Cheese and Grain, Merlin Theatre, and Memorial Theatre are the most mentioned. Local pubs, the Westway Cinema, and Black Swan Arts are also valued for their contributions to cultural life in Frome.





### BIGGER PICTURE: Comparing Frome to Somerset and the South West

**HIGHER** Total green space  
Frome has significantly more green space\* (3.01%) than the Somerset (1.01%) and the South West (1.33%).

**CLOSER** Blue & green spaces  
Compared to the wider area, Frome residents live much closer on average to blue spaces (e.g riversides) and slightly closer to both active and passive green spaces†.

**HIGHER** Parks & play spaces  
Frome has an average of 4 parks, public gardens, or playing fields within a 1,000 metre radius. compared to 3 in Somerset and 2 in England.

\* includes community growing spaces, cemeteries, religious grounds, play spaces/fields, public parks or gardens and outdoor sports facilities e.g. tennis courts.  
† active includes green spaces conducive to physical activity/play while passive includes green spaces with recreational opportunities in a natural setting. There is some overlap, e.g. playing fields.

# Access to Nature

Frome's open spaces are popular with residents. Many use Frome parks for exercise and enjoyment.

People also value the River Frome and being able to access surrounding countryside.

- 30% mentioned walking and engaging with nature.
- 15% mentioned safety, feeling safe at night, and anti-social behaviour.
- 25% mentioned dog walking
- 20% mentioned using play facilities, the river and parks with their family.
- 10% mentioned cleanliness and maintenance, including cleanliness of the River Frome, and emptying bins.

Like to walk through Rodden Meadow/Whatcombe Fields and along the river to enjoy the wildlife and nature found there.

We wouldn't live anywhere else. We're close to countryside. There's a bit of everything here.

More safe paths/cycle routes so you can leave town and get out. There's too much private land that you can't walk through. Not got the freedom of the countryside.

We are surrounded by beautiful countryside.

Lovely parks after recent investment.

Victoria Park is a very lovely space, always with people to talk to.

Grassy areas are well looked after and lovely.

I love it here. Moved down from Lancashire in 1973. When I come home from holiday I just love coming back to Frome, to the beautiful greenery everywhere.

I have been to Victoria park but am concerned about several recent incidents. Security seems to be an issue there.

I use all the spaces for walking or exercise. And sometimes just sitting and contemplating. Rodden Meadow - absolutely lovely but the bins need emptying more frequently.

I love the river, but why doesn't the town make more of it? Rivers draw people to them for leisure, nature, sports, work. The river could be a cultural centre.

Our lovely green spaces are so enhanced by the ranger team; Welshmill Woods and park, the wildlife pond, Rodden meadow and Millennium green, the Old Showfield.

Love the policy of not cutting the grass.

Would like to access more open spaces but feel vulnerable alone, and not mobile enough to join organised walks.

I'm grateful for all the green space, it's so important for our mental and physical health. I'd like to see cleaner rivers and less litter.

## Which parks & open spaces do Frome residents use most?

From 345 responses, here's where people get outdoors:



Others include Brunel Green, Broadway Community Garden, St John's Park, Feltham Lane & Rodden Nature Reserve





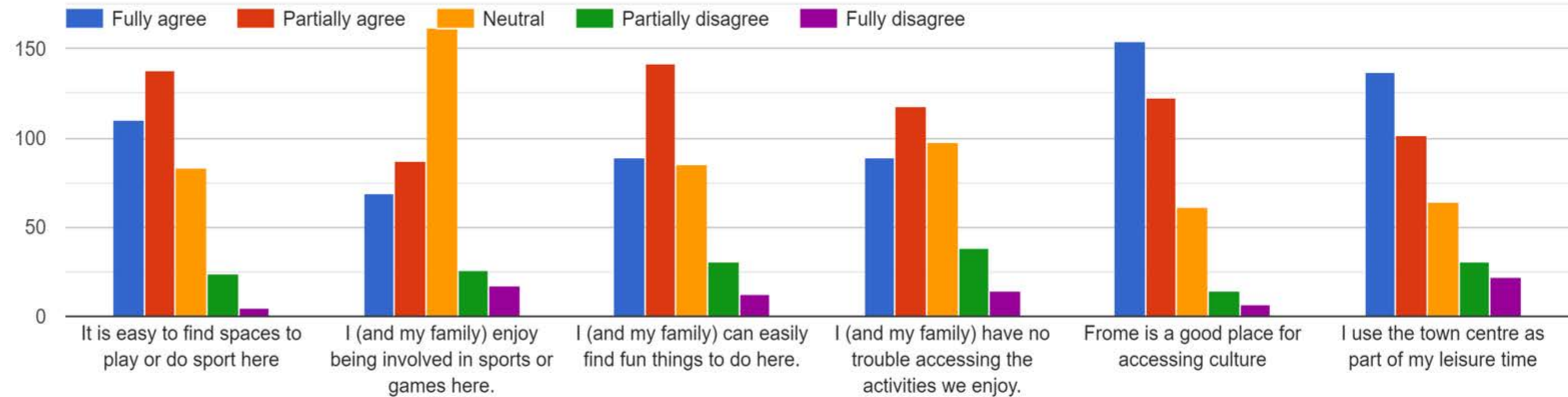
# Art & Play

We asked people what play and cultural experiences they and their families enjoy, and where they go in Frome to engage in those things.

The responses mentioned:

- Parks and green spaces: 45%
- Sports and leisure facilities: 20%
- Cultural and community Centres: 15%
- Outdoor activities and countryside: 10%
- Dining and socialising places: 5%
- Challenges and barriers: 5%

These themes highlight the importance of parks, sports facilities, cultural centres, and the natural environment. They also indicate some challenges to be addressed to improve play and arts experiences for families in Frome.



Cinema, Cheese and Grain, pizza night at the station.

For a town of its size it's culturally above its weight.

I love everything about Frome. There is so much to do. Arts scene, music, places to eat.

I don't like the atmosphere of Victoria Park and don't feel I can give my kids independence when we go there and so I tend to avoid.

Shops, Frome Festival, coffee in the sun at the Black Swan, the planting in the park, Hidden Gardens, Friday evening in the summer with all the bars open on Palmer Street, street music, Frome Buses, Frome Facebook page (makes me laugh), the streets being so higgledy, the chair at Parsons which says Hugh Grant sat here, the fact my family live here, the Frome Fridge, Vallis Vale, the Frome Independent, the Cheese & Grain being so cool, the Frome Tunnels tour + much more.

Victoria Park. It's a wonderful space, despite those few that ruin it for others. We also often walk to Tytherington. The cinema and theatres are fantastic also.

More welcoming and inclusive spaces.

I love all the different events we have here, two theatres, cinema, pop-up events.

There needs to be more play stuff for little ones where they can climb on things independently and manage risk themselves, more stuff where they can play using their own imagination. Welshmill is great, but need more natural play.

Town events, market, Cheese and Grain, Silk Mill.

Artistic creative community with physical spaces to show work/gather. Initiatives to improve community well-being, open minded and forward thinking.

Picnics in parks - Qi Gong in Blue House garden.

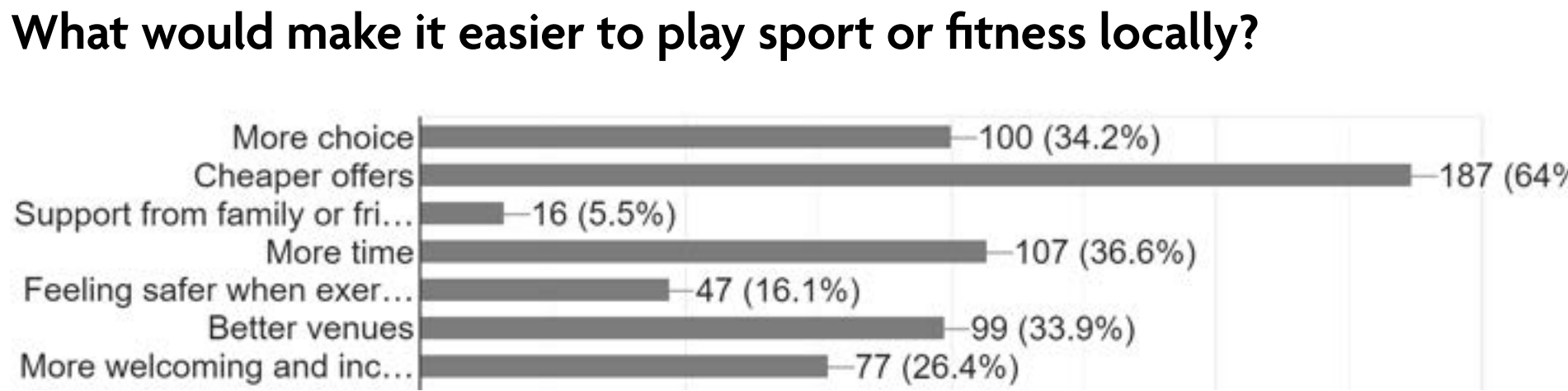
### BIGGER PICTURE: Comparing Frome to Somerset and the UK

**LOWER**  
People in Frome have less access to civic assets compared to people in Trowbridge, Warminster and England according to the Community Needs Civic Assets Rank (12187). The Somerset average is 11823, but lower than England (~17060), Trowbridge (19003) and Warminster (17229).

**HIGHER**  
Frome has 450 jobs in arts, entertainment, recreation and other services. This is a rate of 6% of all employment, which is slightly higher than the average in Somerset (5%) and the South West (4%).

There were a huge number of positive comments about the cultural, creative and active offer in Frome. People love the venues and events that happen here, the creative and independent spirit, and the 'things to do'. 399 positive comments - second to community spirit.

Suggestions for improvements or priorities in this area were around affordability, accessibility and inclusivity of these offers.



There were 38 other answers. The main recurring theme was cheaper and higher quality swimming facilities. Several people mentioned wanting better public transport links to sports facilities or better parking provision.



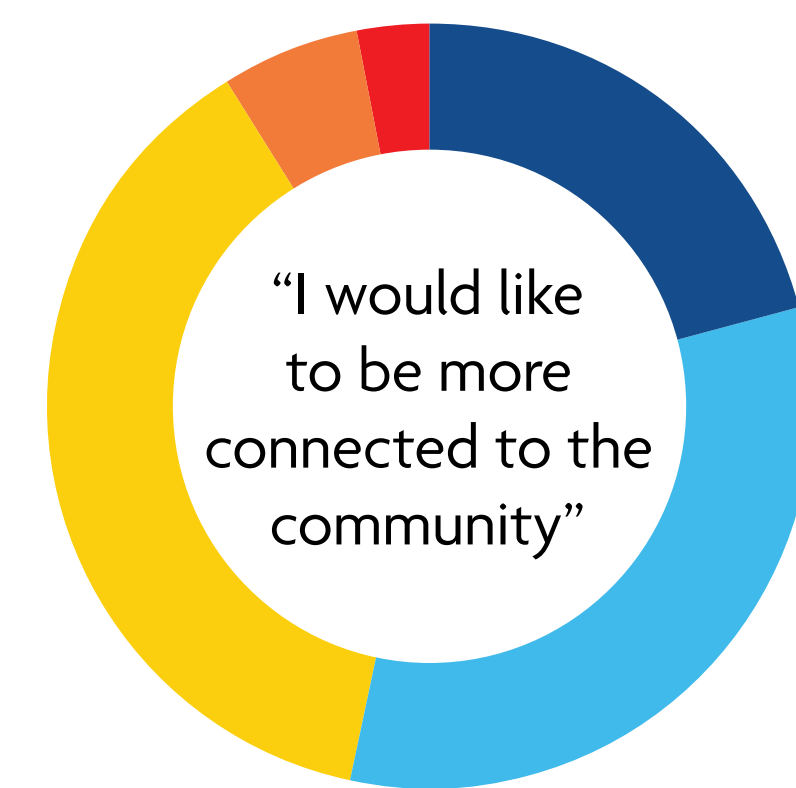
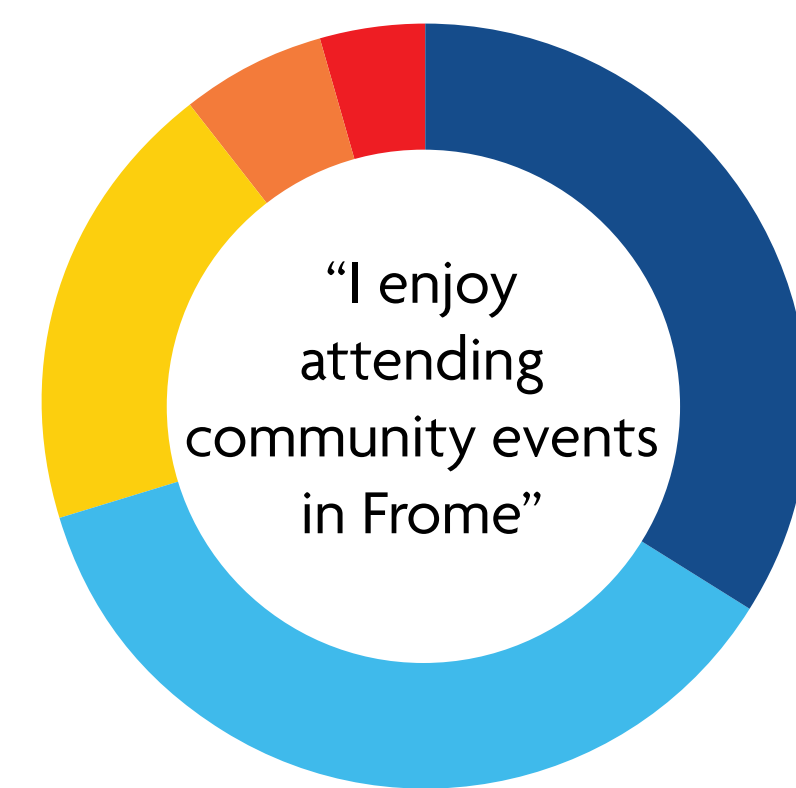
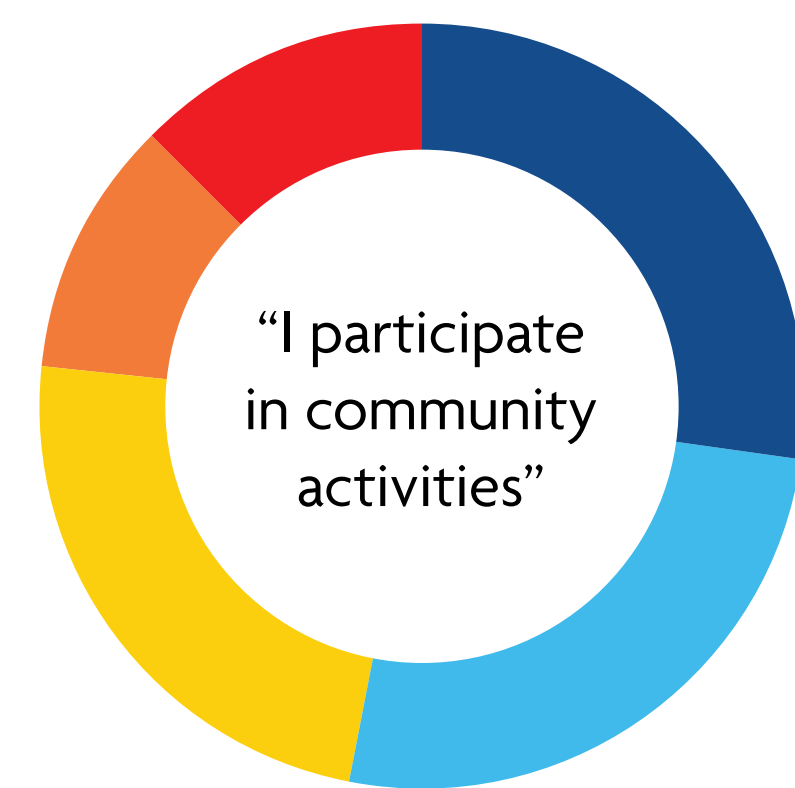
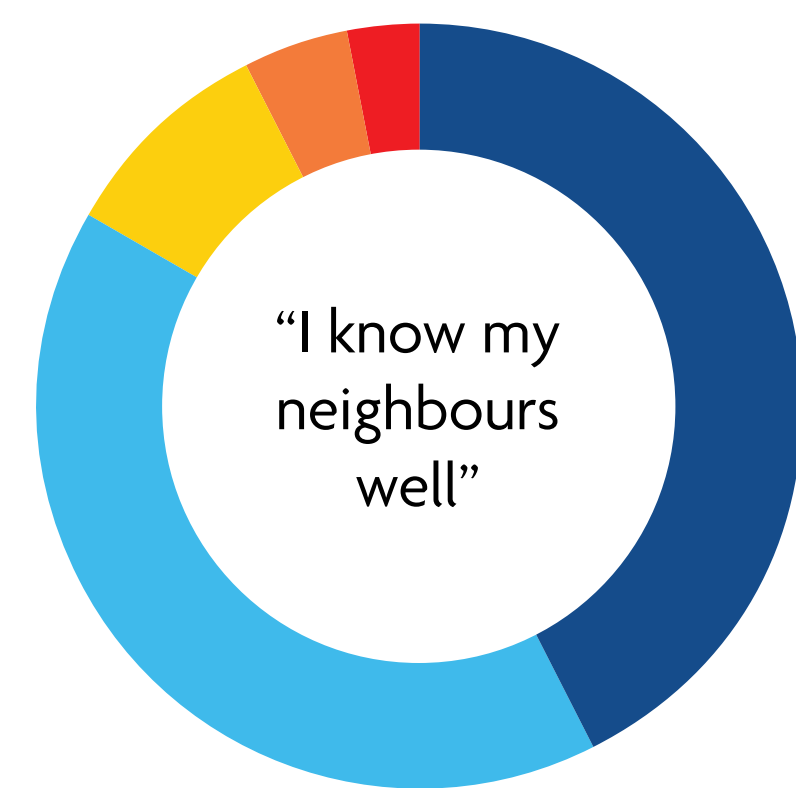
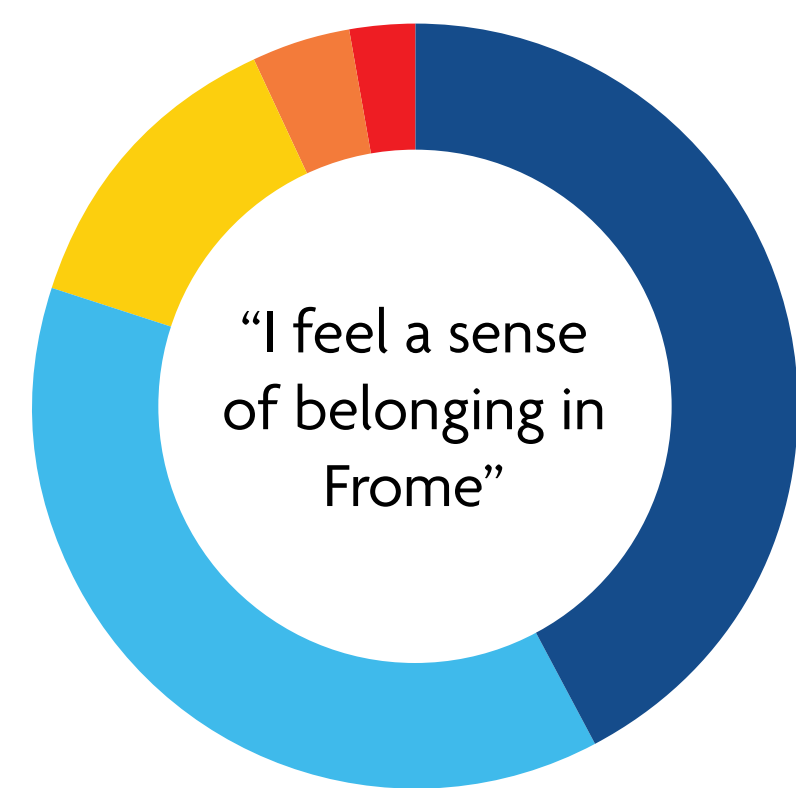
# Community Connections

We asked people what would help them feel a greater sense of belonging in Frome.

- 33% mentioned community events and social activities, or volunteering.
- 27% wanted to see more inclusive and accessible events, including for single people, neurodivergent people and teenagers.
- 20% said enhanced sharing of information would.
- 10% mentioned feeling safe, police presence and antisocial behaviour.
- 10% said they would feel a greater sense of belonging if they could afford to buy a home in Frome, or have more disposable income.



■ Fully agree ■ Partially agree ■ Neutral ■ Partially disagree ■ Fully disagree



Some places and activities where people said they experience a strong sense of community

- Regular & Independent Markets
- Frome Festival & Frome Carnival
- Christmas switch-on & parade
- Street parties & neighbour groups
- Music at e.g. Cheese & Grain, 23 Bath St
- Kindness Festival
- Sport/exercise groups & clubs
- Receiving help & helping others

Lockdown was amazing when neighbours and community helped one another to survive through tough unknown times.

I have lived in Frome all my life I definitely felt a better sense of community when I was younger.

I love the community spirit here. It really feels like people support each other where they can.

Feeling out priced - low income family cannot afford to go to events locally as no extra income.

I think renting makes it difficult as nothing feels permanent.

More activity aimed at single people - currently seems strong focus on people with kids/family set up.

Many groups now no longer appear to be inclusive or are expensive to attend.

People are willing to give up their time to run groups. Need to keep that passion going.

I love the community fridges and there are so many groups to get involved with if you want to.

I wish the interaction between Frome Town Council & Somerset CC was more seamless. While it may be perfectly clear to each authority what they can & cannot do, to the public this often appears as if nobody takes responsibility.

More for teenagers to do.

A lot of activities are during my working week so I cannot attend.

We came here from London and opened a business. I love the community, we've been welcomed.

More events giving a chance to new locals to meet and make friends.

I have lived here for 14 years. I think Frome is a supportive place to live. It has things like the Pantry and the Fridge which are universal, so they don't discriminate. People are supported.

You can't get a taxi but if you put it on Facebook someone will give you a lift. That's the kind of community we are.

### BIGGER PICTURE: Comparing Frome to Somerset and SW

Frome scores above the regional average for community cohesion in many areas, though data shows Frome has fewer charities, receives less major grant funding, and has fewer community-owned assets.

**LOWER Charities & funding**  
Frome has 3.14 charities per 1,000 residents, similar to the UK figure but lower than the regional figure of 3.52. Frome organisations have historically received less major grant funding than the surrounding area.

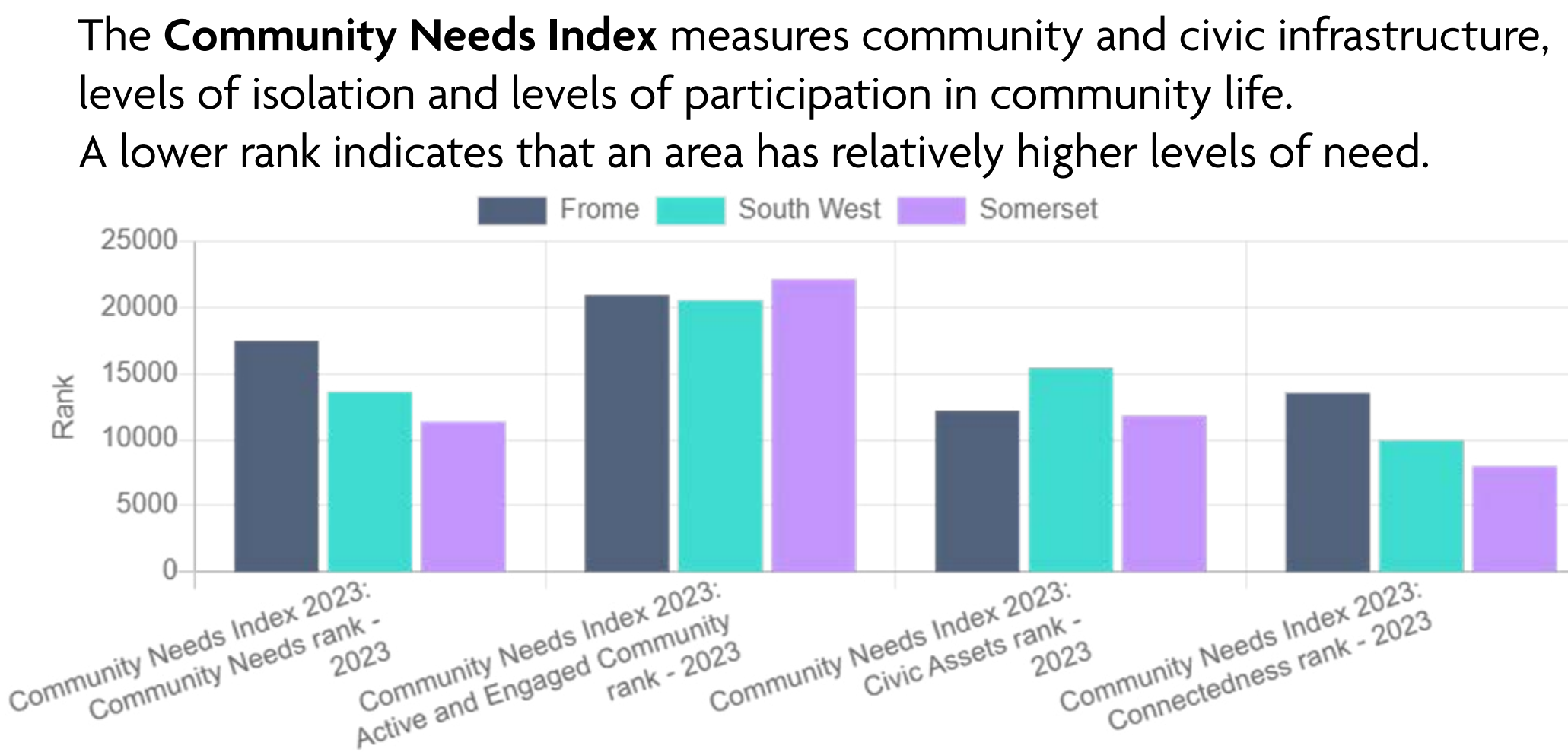
**LOWER Community need**  
According to the Community Needs Index, Frome's level of community need is below the average in the South West and in Somerset.

**LOWER Community ownership**  
Frome has 843 community-owned assets per 100,000 population. This is less than the amount per 100,000 in the Southwest (1,031) and in Somerset (1,431).

### Big Lottery funding

The Big Lottery awarded £55,057 per 1000 people in Frome, roughly £15,000 lower than Somerset and £25,000 lower than the South West overall, according to data from the Big Lottery Community Fund, 2021.

Area	Funding per 1000 people
Frome	£55,057
Somerset	£70,669
South West	£80,304







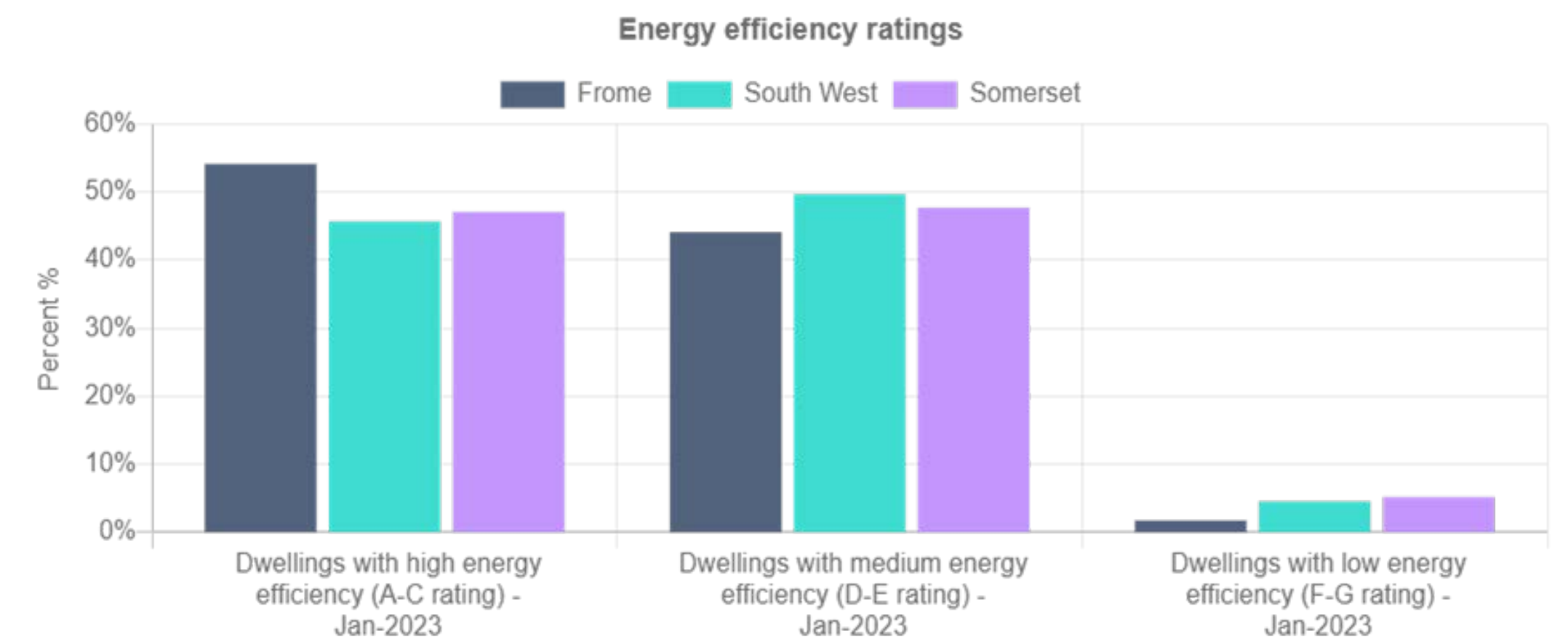
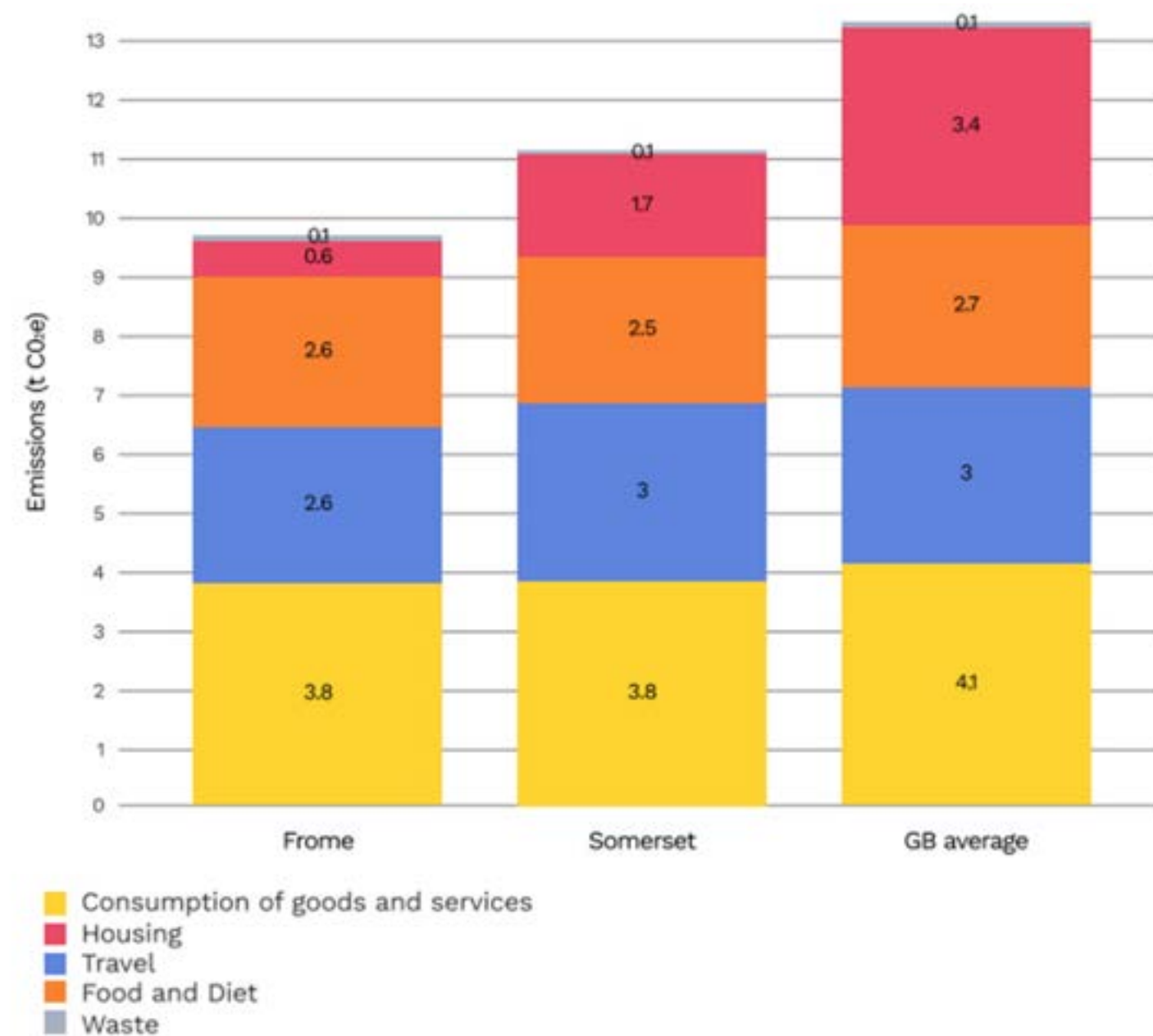
# Environment

Wide ranging community-driven initiatives and policy changes are suggested to support climate action. This includes supporting local environmental groups, making town centre car-free, and implementing local regulations to reduce carbon emissions.

- Improving public transportation and reducing car use
- Promoting renewable energy
- Recycling and waste management
- Protecting green spaces
- Local food production
- Awareness campaigns
- Sustainable building

Other suggestions for actions include:

- Improved public transport and infrastructure
- Financial incentives and assistance
- Access to information and education
- Sustainable products and services
- Community and policy initiatives



Indicator	Frome	Southwest	Somerset
Est. annual domestic electricity consumption per household in megawatt hrs (MWh)	2,980.3MWh	3,444.4MWh	3,566.6MWh
Est. annual domestic gas consumption per household in megawatt hours (MWh)	9,635.0MWh	9,835.3MWh	9,534.5MWh

More action and proactive initiatives on climate change. Protection and management of green spaces for nature and biodiversity

Plant more trees

The state of our world politically, climatically, environmentally - THE FUTURE for us and our kids and our kids' kids.

The river water quality could be improved. I would feel more confident wild swimming.

Create more green spaces and protect the ones we have...I'd love to see a community farm in town. Public awareness campaigns about why weeds in pavements help nature and roundabouts...as well as creating these spaces and allowing them to thrive. Putting up live trail cams so the town residents can watch and enjoy nature who can't get out of the house.

More pro-activeness to help educate young people about being kind to each other and the environment.

Too much traffic goes through town centre.

Worrying about climate change and the ecological emergency and the impact it will have on my family.

It has so much potential. There is a distinct lack of a central pedestrian-friendly space (for example a central green).

More action and proactive initiatives on climate change. Protection and management of green spaces for nature and biodiversity, not for mass housing.

I still find crossing the road on foot safely tricky. The lights are in the wrong place!

We like the progressiveness and the focus on sustainability.

**BIGGER PICTURE: Comparing Frome to Somerset and the UK**

Carbon footprint per person in Frome is 7680kg.

**▲ LOWER**  
This is lower than the average in England (8133kg), Trowbridge (8088kg) and Warminster (8443kg), but similar to the average in Somerset (7657kg).

**▲ LOWER**  
Frome's consumption footprint per household is lower than the average household in Somerset and Great Britain.

In addition:

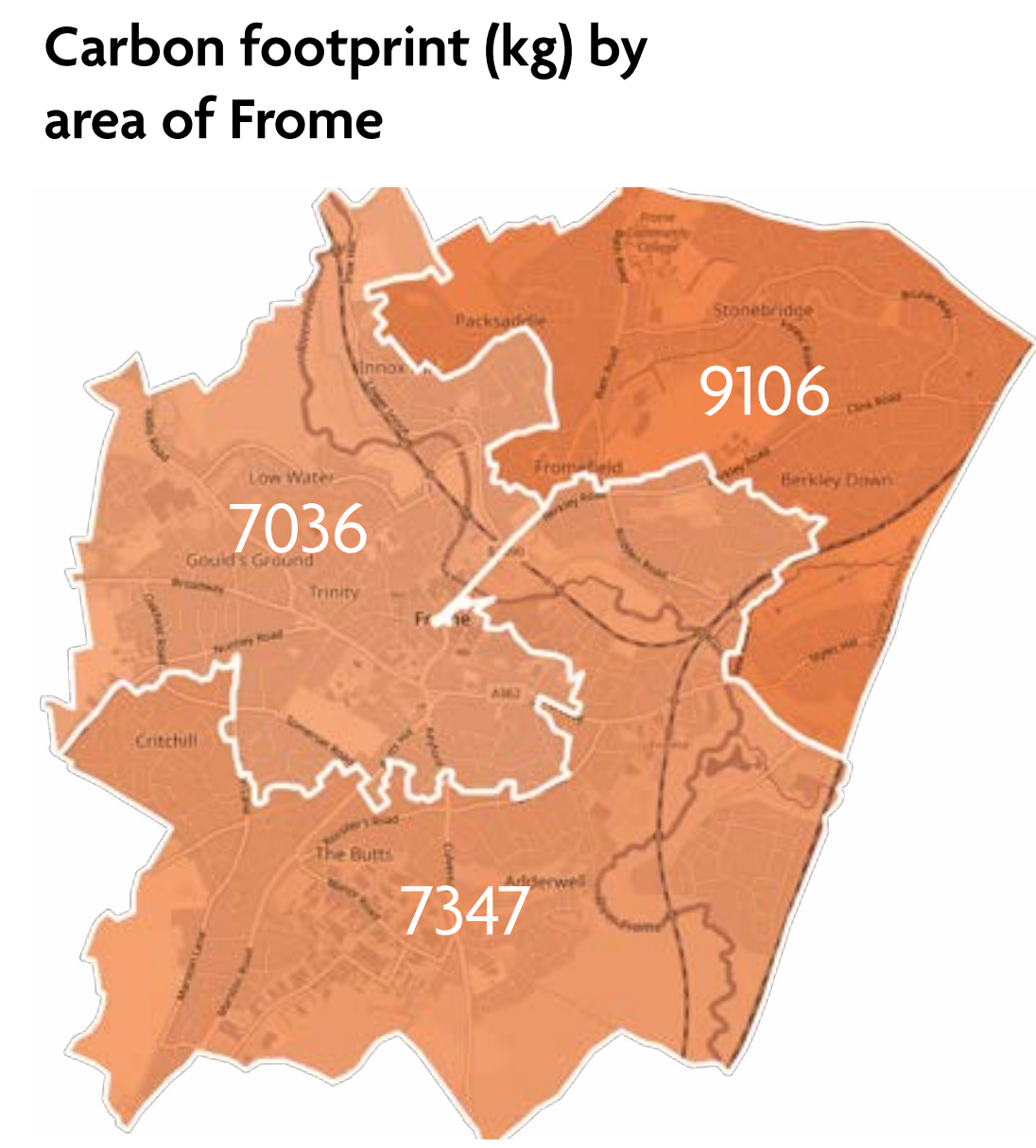
There were a significant number of comments about environmental maintenance: litter, dog poo and weeding etc.

Many comments about appreciating our natural and built environment, particularly the river and historical architecture.

And significant concern about the impact of new housing developments on the environment.

**▲ HIGHER**  
Air quality is better in Frome (-0.55) compared to the average in England (0.28) and Trowbridge (-0.26) but worse than the average in Somerset (-0.68) and Warminster (-0.89).

**▲ HIGHER**  
There are differences across town - energy consumption is higher in the north-east side of town.





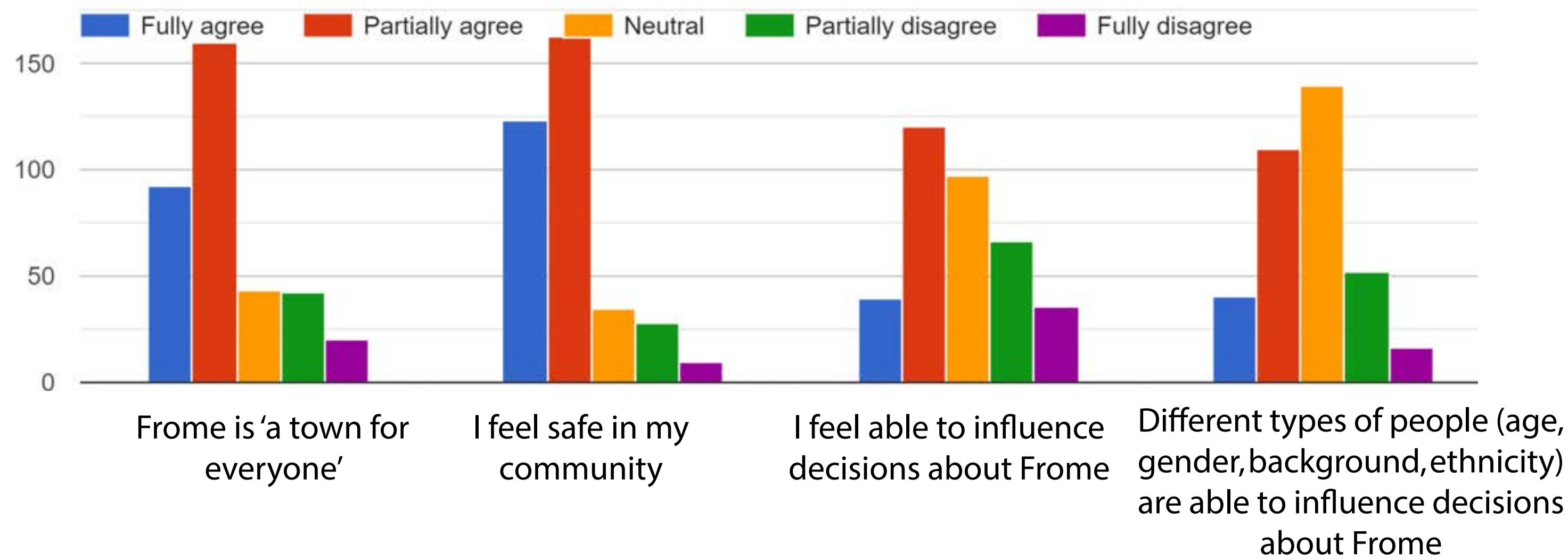


## Feeling Welcome, Feeling Heard

We asked people what would help them get their voices heard about what matters to them in Frome.

- Improved communication and transparency: 25%
- More public forums and meetings: 20%
- Better access to councillors and representatives: 20%
- Increased use of surveys and polls: 15%
- Enhanced online and digital platforms: 10%
- Community involvement and outreach: 5%
- Anonymous feedback options: 5%

This is a big theme that covers diversity, inclusivity, accessibility, agency/influence and voice, safety and conflict.



## We asked disabled people about barriers to feeling included in the town, and potential improvements

- Better infrastructure (crossings, ramps, smooth pavements) for wheelchair and mobility aid users.
- More understanding of invisible disability and neurodivergence.
- More blue badge parking.
- Increased public transport and more accessible timetable information.
- More public, accessible toilets.
- Information shared in less text-heavy ways e.g. by video.
- Subtitled events and film screenings.

Tension between the people who have lived here for generations and the newly moved in (who are also perceived as having more money). Is it real? Feels like it is. We should look for ways to come together.

Town has changed so much. I don't know anyone anymore.

Opportunities to have a say in decision making that is local to Frome, co-design on projects with the community particularly reaching out to people who don't often get heard.

Policing in Frome isn't adequate. People don't report crimes and there aren't enough police to deal with them anyway.

Children's clothes are expensive. The charity shops are good but don't have much children's clothing. Clothes swaps are a great idea but parents don't feel comfortable. They also said that the clothes swaps that happen are not for us. It's for the well off. I'd feel too uncomfortable to walk through the door.

Shops in town are fashionable, but where can I buy a mop?

I use a wheelchair some of the time and it's impossible to get into places and the hills are too steep. I'm going to have to move.

Local people should have more say in planning and development.

Drugs are an obvious issue, but not as bad as Taunton where we came from.

This place is not for us. The community is changing and doesn't feel as mixed as it used to. It's not our town. Accessibility is a huge problem, not enough dropped kerbs and the parking is terrible (person in a wheelchair).

By letting older children like me have a voice. We have so many great ideas just let them be heard and do something about them.

Something like a citizen's panel to offer the opportunity for people to have a representative input into significant issues.

Always anti-Londoners. Gets boring. Also, we do not recognise or celebrate the strong traveller links in our town.

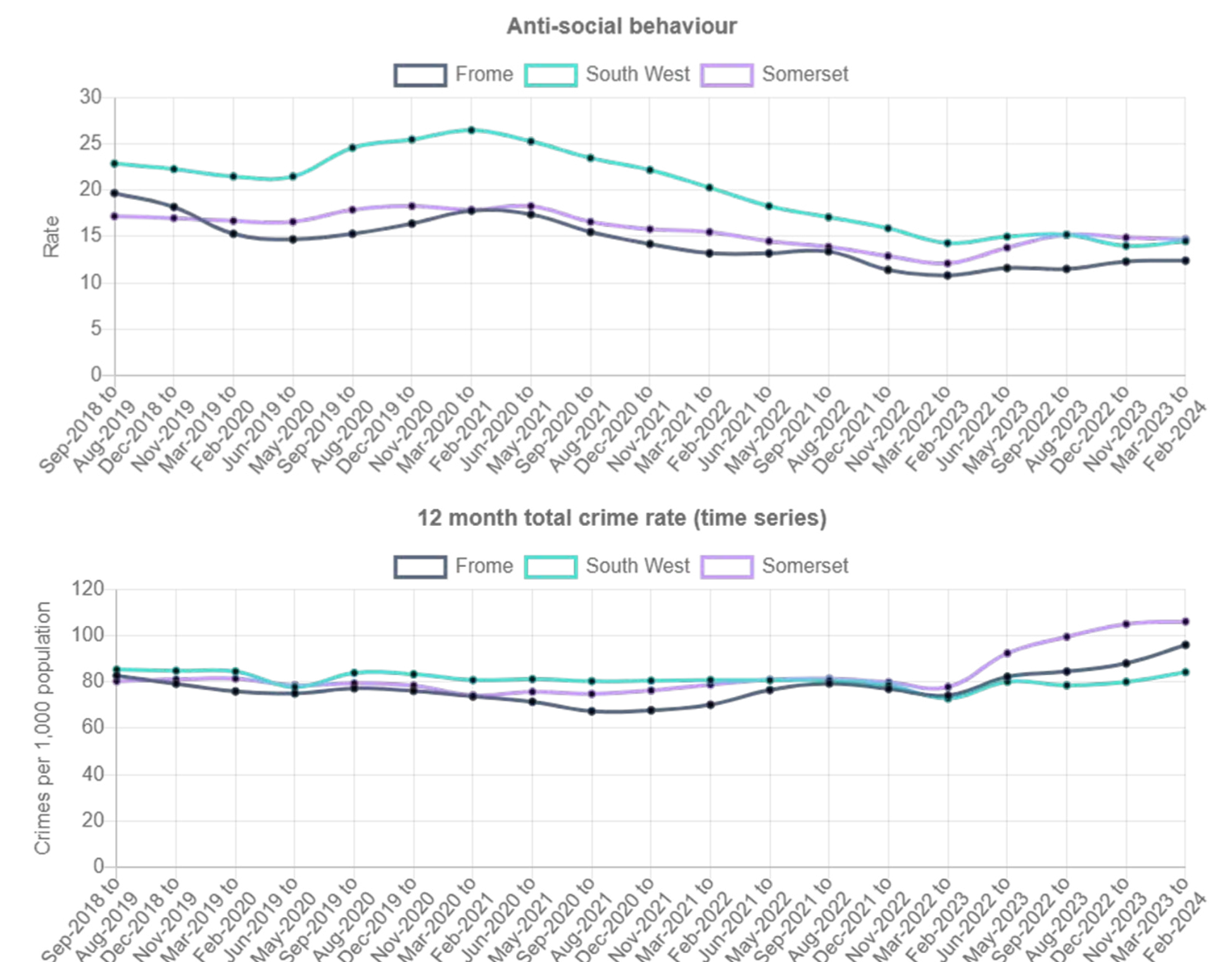
## BIGGER PICTURE:

The secondary data looked at civic engagement as well as crime and ASB data. The comments that came from this theme were also around the accessibility and inclusivity of the town.

There were lots of comments about how much the town centre feels like a space with an offer that feels inclusive - 148 positively compared to 41 negatively (and 56 comments for suggestions in this area).

There were a significant number of suggestions or comments about not feeling safe in town, often in the parks, and about finding the town or its venues physically inaccessible.

There is a strong perception of high levels of ASB and low level crime in the town - combined with concern about police capacity and presence (163 comments in total). The ASB data conflicts with this perception.





# Family

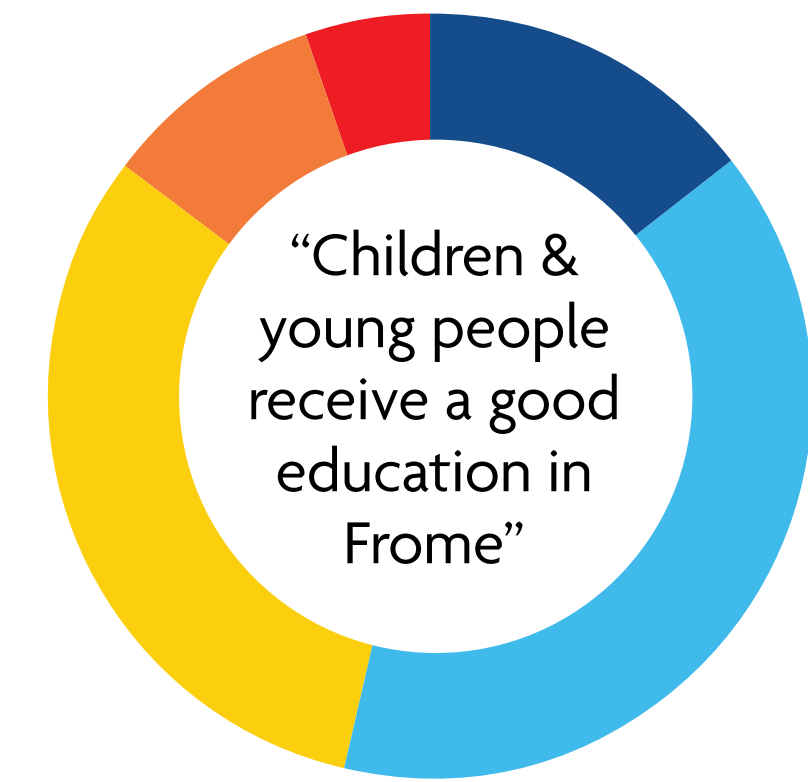
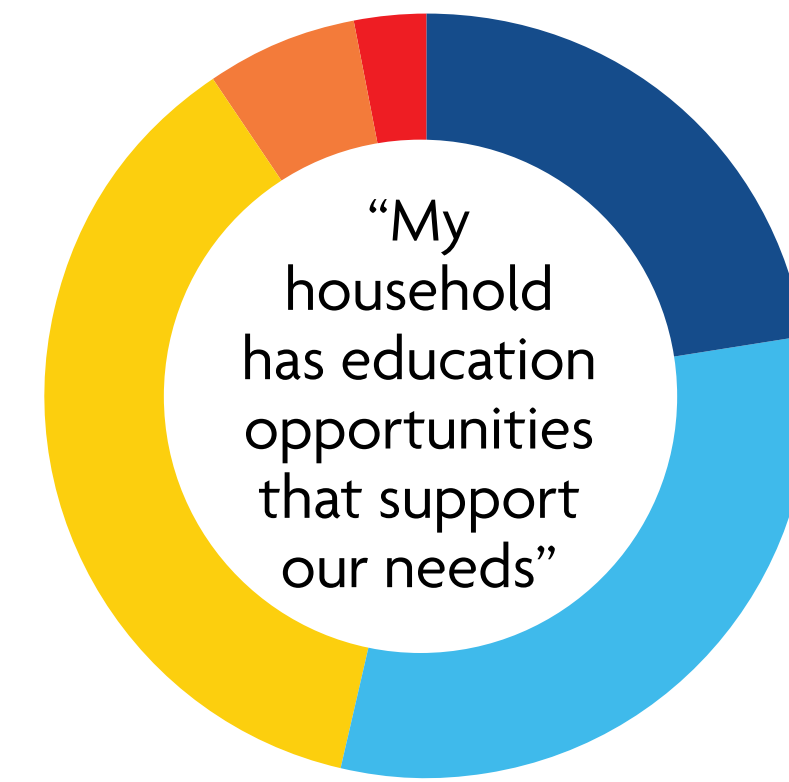
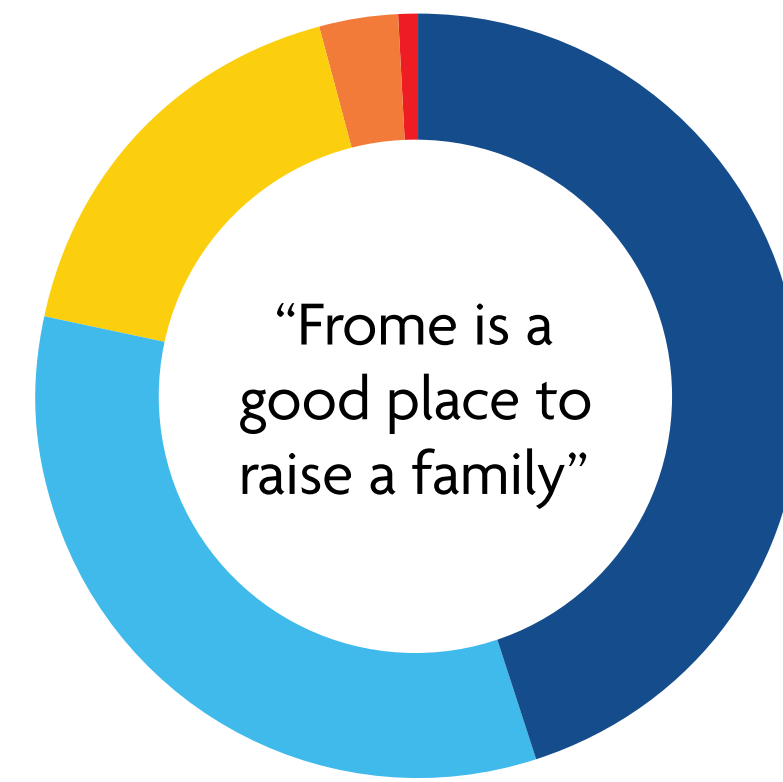
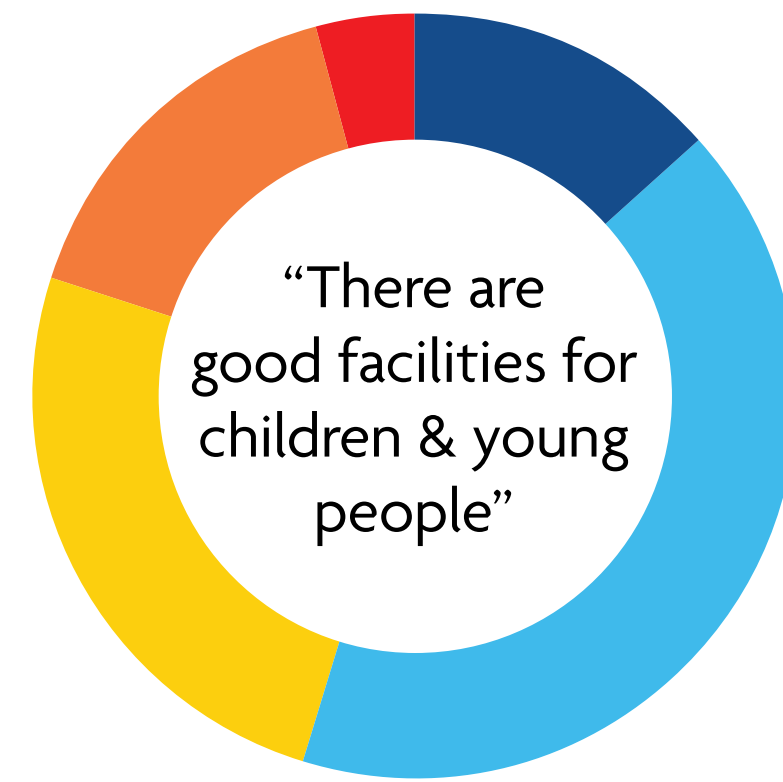
Frome is often described as a close-knit community where families can build strong connections. Many families feeling welcomed and supported. Events and community groups play a vital role here.

The most significant factors for families in Frome are:

- Community and friendly environment: 30%
- Availability of activities and facilities: 25%
- Safety and security: 20%
- Education challenges: 10%
- Issues with teen and youth services: 10%
- Impact of cost of living: 5%



■ Fully agree ■ Partially agree ■ Neutral ■ Partially disagree ■ Fully disagree



Some services for children, young people & families people said they find valuable

- Purple Elephant Toy Library
- Frome Library
- Frome Learning Partnership
- Health Visitors
- Baby & Parent Groups
- SEND support groups
- Young People Mental Health drop-in
- Little Hearts group

Lockdown has impacted on all the kids - socially, emotionally - and it's impacted them educationally far more than we realise.

More childcare provision. More support for self employed mums back into work.

Better information, More accessible services for young people and neurodivergent young people.

The majority of other parents one meets in Frome are really lovely people - plenty of support and fun stuff to do with kids and families.

There are so many SEND families in Frome who are home educating and they feel isolated and unsupported.

It is very family friendly.

[CYP] need spaces that are ours. We want to get together and hang out. We try to mind our language around little kids but it's not the same as having our own space.

It's a safe and healthy place. Our children have had a great childhood here.

Behaviour of teenagers is not good - bad language, aggressive behaviour, cruelty to animals.

Outside of school, there's nothing for them. All the facilities we had when I grew up here such as youth clubs are gone. Sports facilities are limited and expensive.

Education Services were good in Frome until they needed to go to college then there was no choice.

It was lovely when they were younger but the 3 tier school system put a lot of pressure on them and the exposure to drugs from a young age is stark.

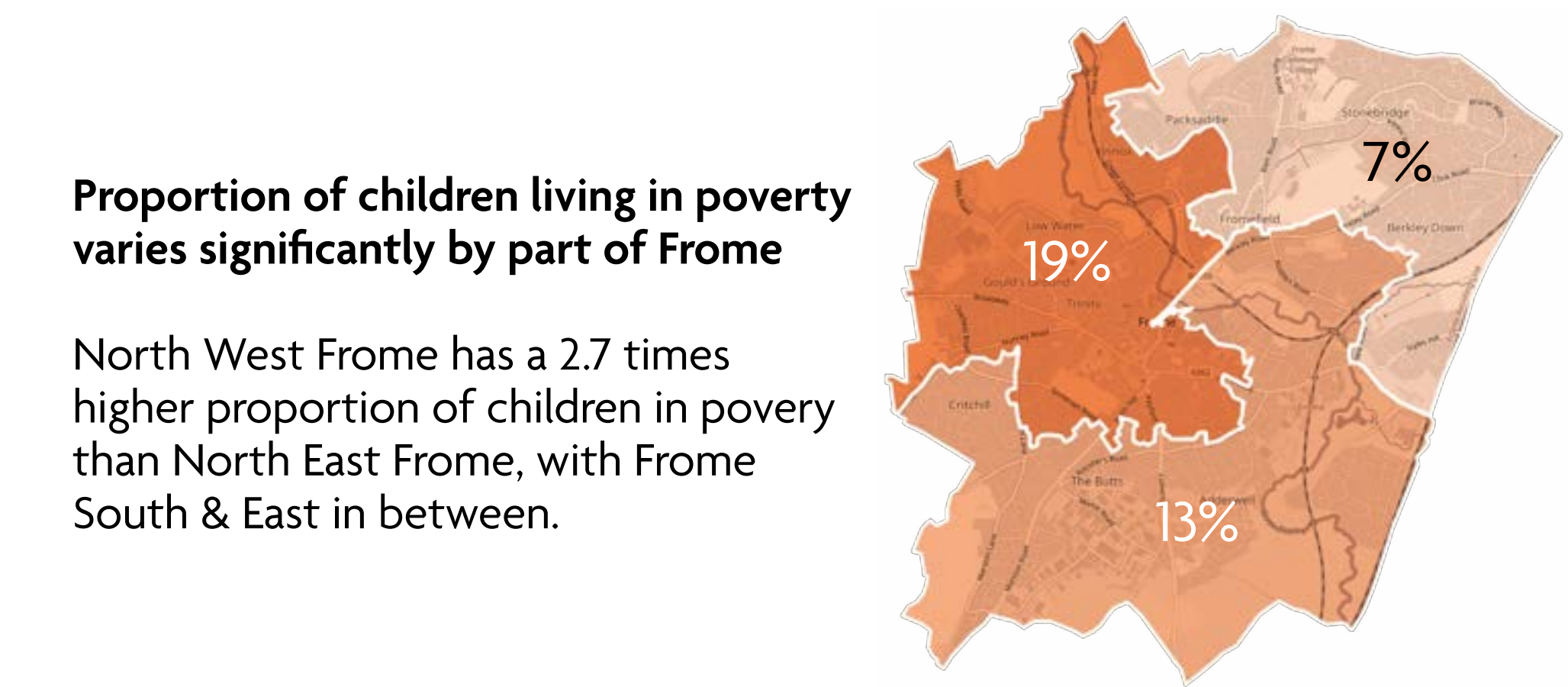
It's ok but too many children running riot and left to behave as they please which can be very intimidating to adults and children.

### BIGGER PICTURE: Comparing Frome to Somerset and the South West

15% of children in Frome are income deprived. This is slightly higher than the proportion in the South West (14%) and higher than the proportion in Somerset (14%).

The rate of state school pupils in Frome participating in higher education is 29%. This is lower than the South West (36%) and lower than Somerset (33%).

Child A&E visits are significantly higher in Frome with (742 visits per 1,000 children, 2017-2020) than the South West (492) and higher than Somerset (605). Attendances in children aged under five are often preventable, caused by accidental injury or by minor illnesses which could have been treated in primary care.



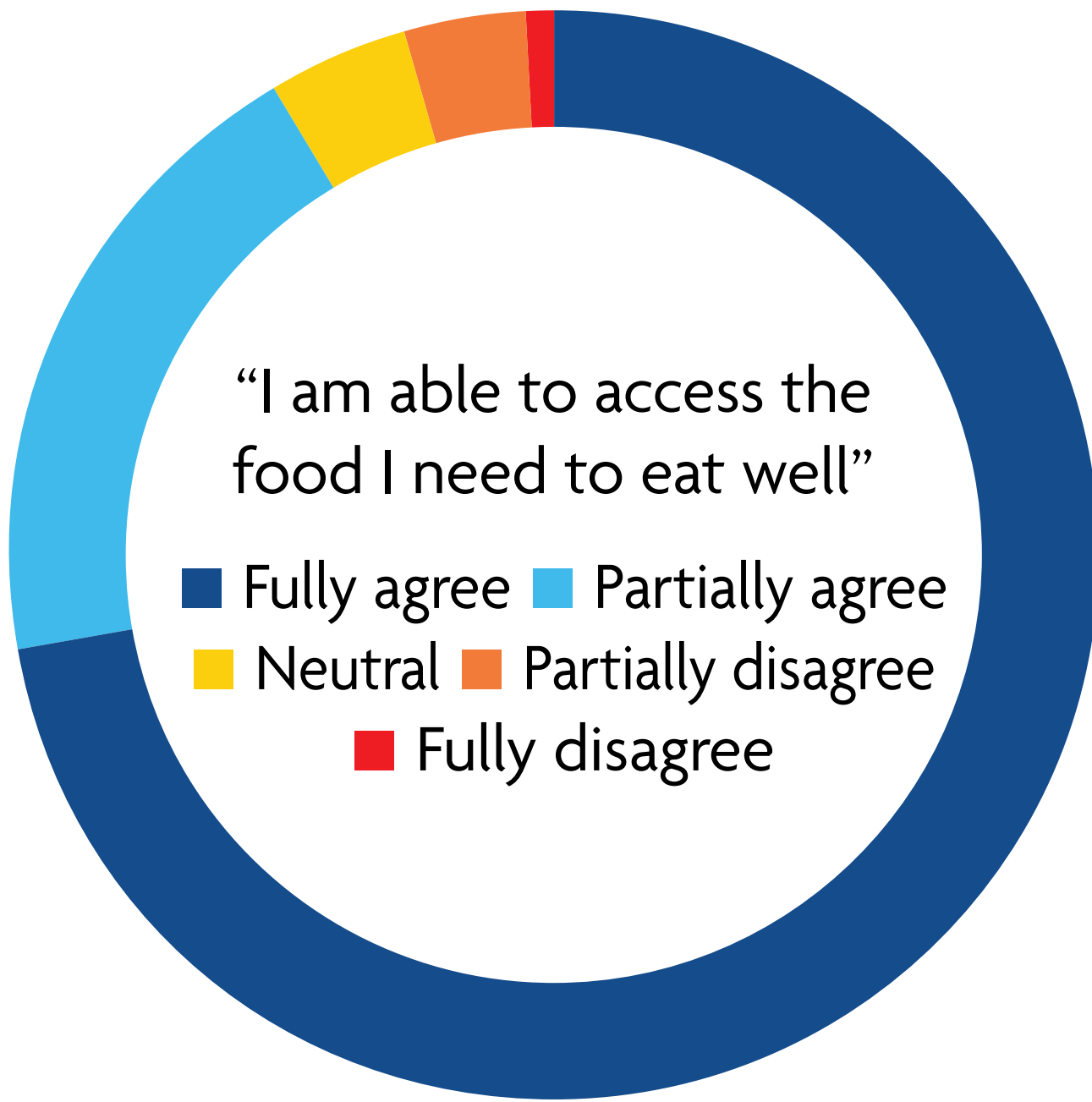


# Food

Food, including access, cost and ideas for sustainable and local food sources was a common theme for many people who answered our survey, with responses falling mainly into 4 categories:

- Cost of living and food prices: 30%
- Access to food: 20%
- Food scarcity: 30%
- Growing projects and community initiatives: 20%

Food was also a recurring topic at pop-up events, with the rise in cost of living and the cost of food mentioned frequently.



I've started growing veg to try to help. There are lots of people who are newly poor because of how much everything costs now.

The cost of living is making feeding everyone difficult. Supermarket prices have gone up significantly.

My parents and my brother contribute to paying for my groceries.

Food costs have changed what we can afford and the quality of food we eat.

Using the community fridge has been a great help in managing food costs.

I am fortunate to have a good pension and savings. I always try and buy some stuff for Frome food bank when I go shopping.

Difficult to make healthy school lunch choices.

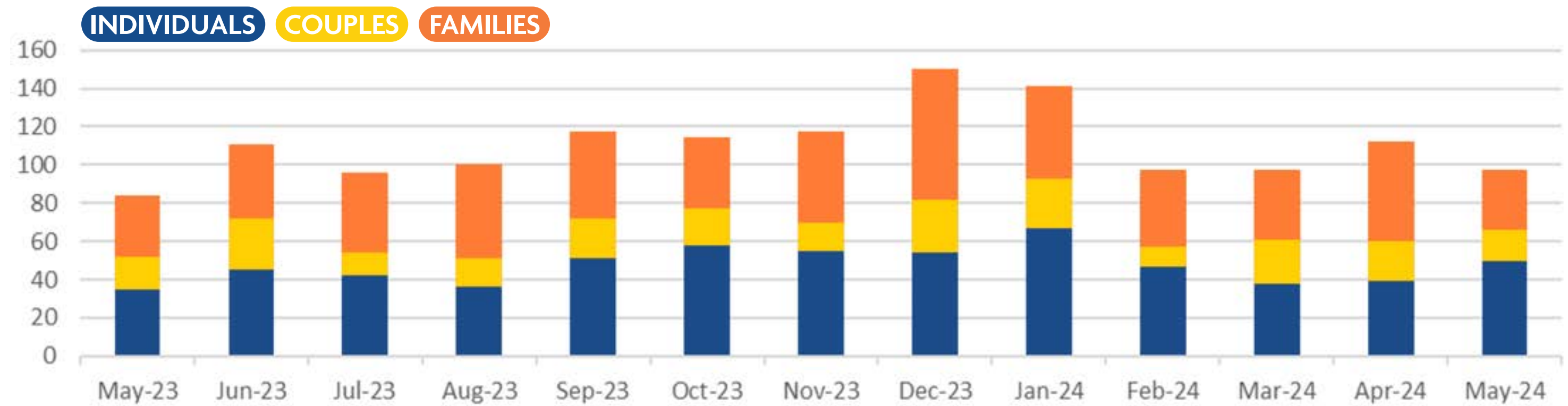
Mainly the soaring costs of groceries have affected us. We also eat and drink out much less than we used to as it's simply too expensive.

I run the Frome Food Feast at the Cattle Market - all types of Frome people attend, there is something for everyone and it's not expensive.

We enjoy street food opportunities in Frome.

## Food Parcels issued at Fair Frome food bank

This graph shows the number of food parcels given out each month over a year, to families, couples and individuals. December is the busiest time for the food bank. Parcels for families in 2023 generally rose in months with school holidays - almost half of all food parcels in August, December and April were for families.



## BIGGER PICTURE: Comparing Frome to Somerset and the South West

Frome performs better on average than Somerset and the South West on some food-related metrics, such as distance to food outlets and food insecurity. However, more families are in need of additional food support in Frome.

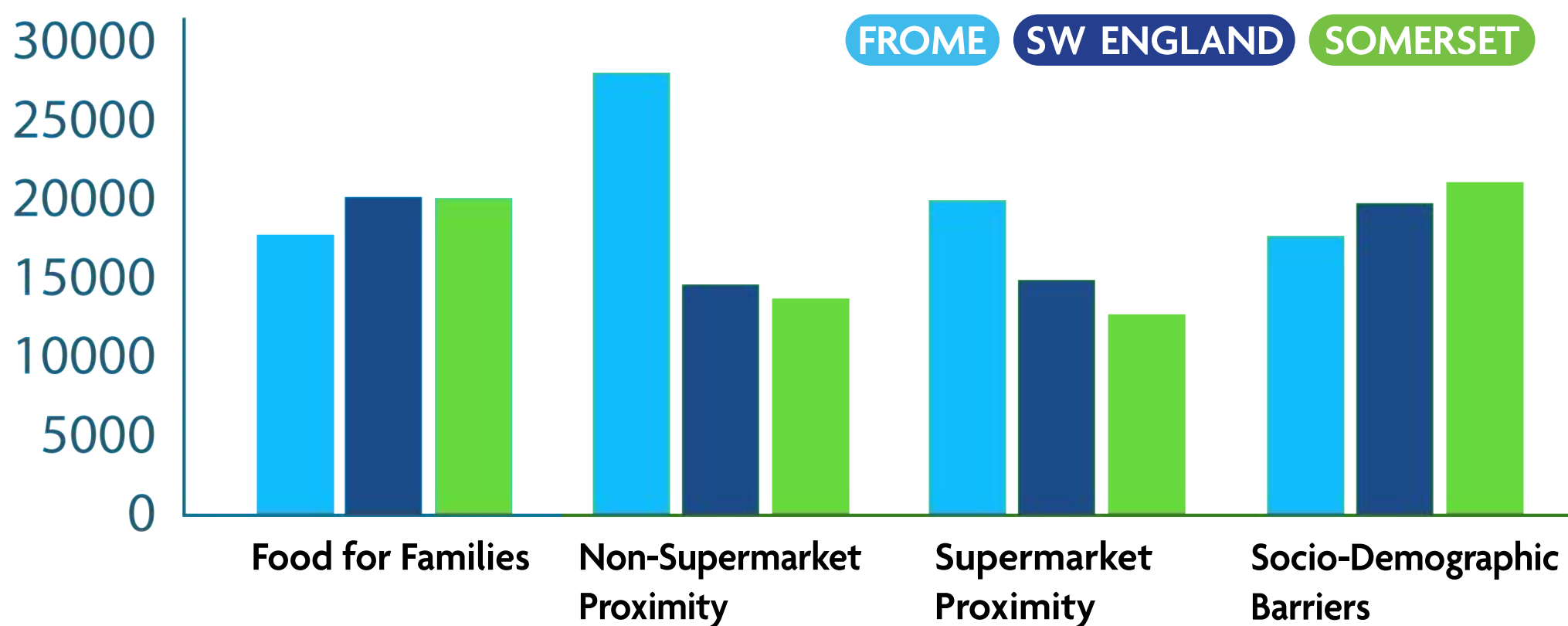
**▲ LOWER** Overall food insecurity  
However, food insecurity is much higher in SW Frome than NE.

**▲ CLOSER** Food shopping outlets  
Frome is well served for food shops and supermarkets.

**▼ HIGHER** Family support needed  
The Food for Families rank shows that Frome families have a higher need for food support. This rank uses measures including children in relative low-income families and Healthy Start voucher uptake.

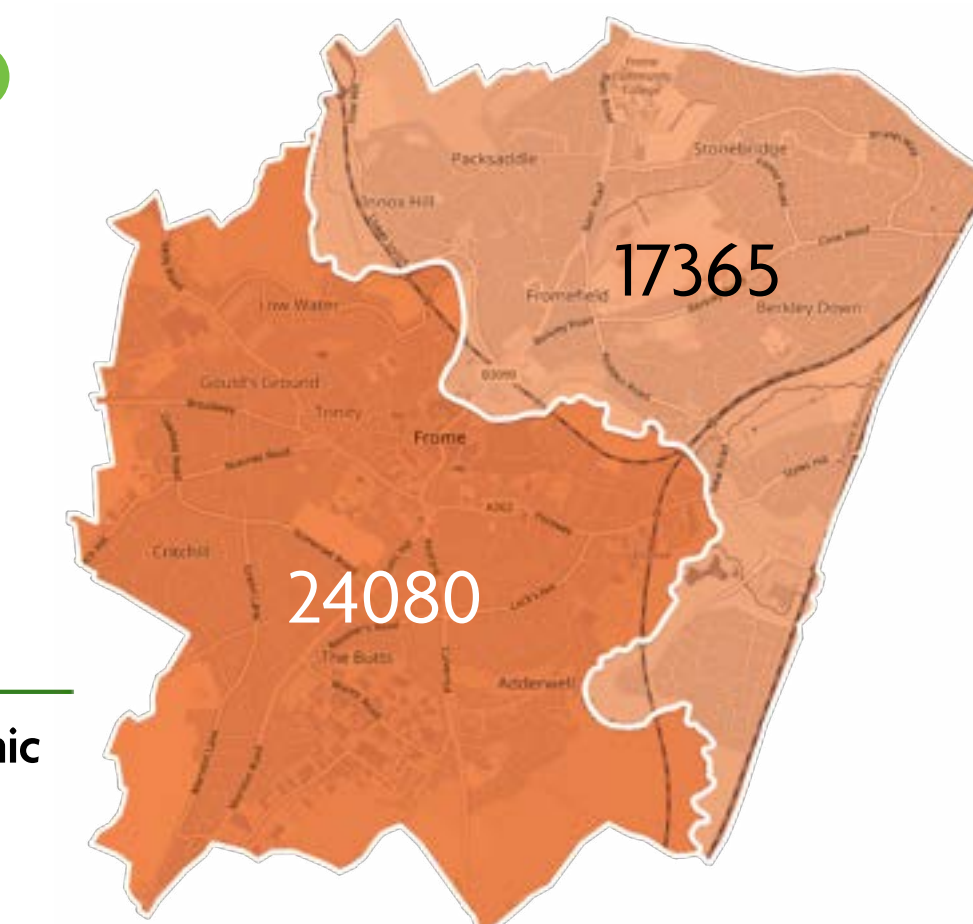
## Priority Places for Food Index (PPFI) - Comparing Frome to the wider area

A higher rank indicates more favourable performance on those measures, e.g. a higher Supermarket Proximity rank means less distance and/or more nearby supermarket options.



## Food insecurity within Frome

SW Frome has higher overall levels of food insecurity than NE Frome, shown by a lower PPFI rank.



People also shared ideas and things they would like to see.

Cheaper places to go out to eat as a family with young children such as Wetherspoons.

I'd love to see a community farm in town.

A greasy spoon cafe style place for cheaper and basic food alternative.

Open a food hub in the centre.  
More [Fair Frome] Food At Five.





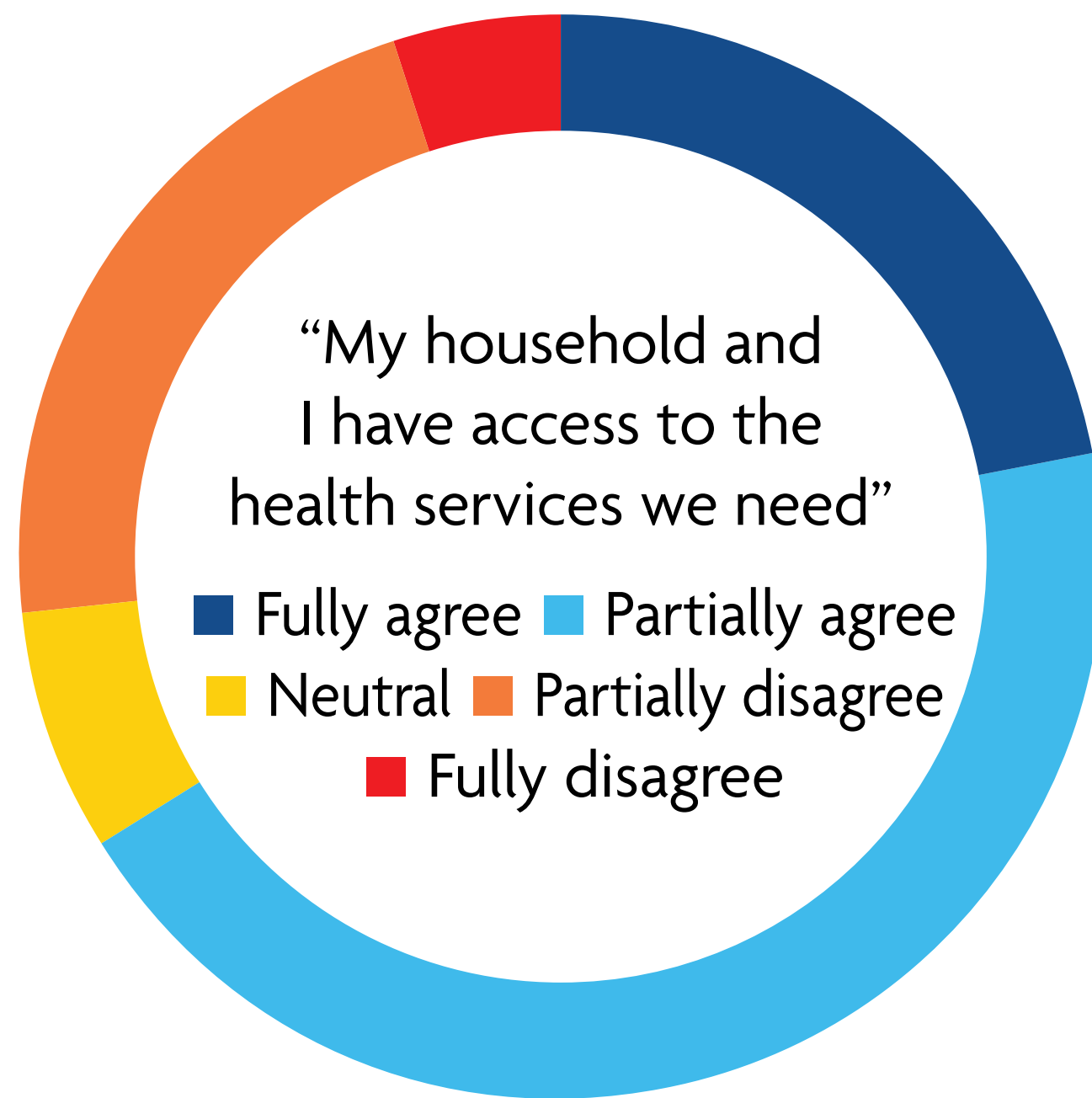
# Health

We asked Frome residents about their experiences accessing healthcare for them and their families.

Across hundreds of open responses, dental care was the top priority, highlighted by 30% of people.

- Other big topics were:
- Wait times and availability
  - Quality of services
  - GP appointment system
  - Specialist services
  - Mental health support
  - Pharmacies

We also looked at national data to get a picture of how Frome compares to the county and country.



My NHS dentist left over 2 years ago and they have been unable to recruit a replacement. For the first time in my life I have no dentist.

Have had to go private for emergency dental treatment.

I have to wait sometimes but when I've really needed attention more quickly it has always been available.

I would like to see more availability of GP appointments. Also for those with mental health conditions - such a long wait for appointments. Need a walk-in mental health hub.

Long wait times for complex chronic issues. Pharmacy often doesn't have wife's prescription causing multiple visits/long queues. But very pleased to have excellent community hospital and maternity support.

Long waiting list for ASC (Autism) and ADHD assessments.

Healthcare provision is generally good when accessed but lack of continuity due to such a huge GP practice and lack of holistic thinking for dealing with health conditions.

Long wait times but always lovely and efficient staff.

The medical practice online booking helps, so you don't have to wait in phone queues.

I don't like the idea that I can't talk to a doctor without filling in a form. A lot of older people won't be able to, and they might not make a fuss even if they are really ill.

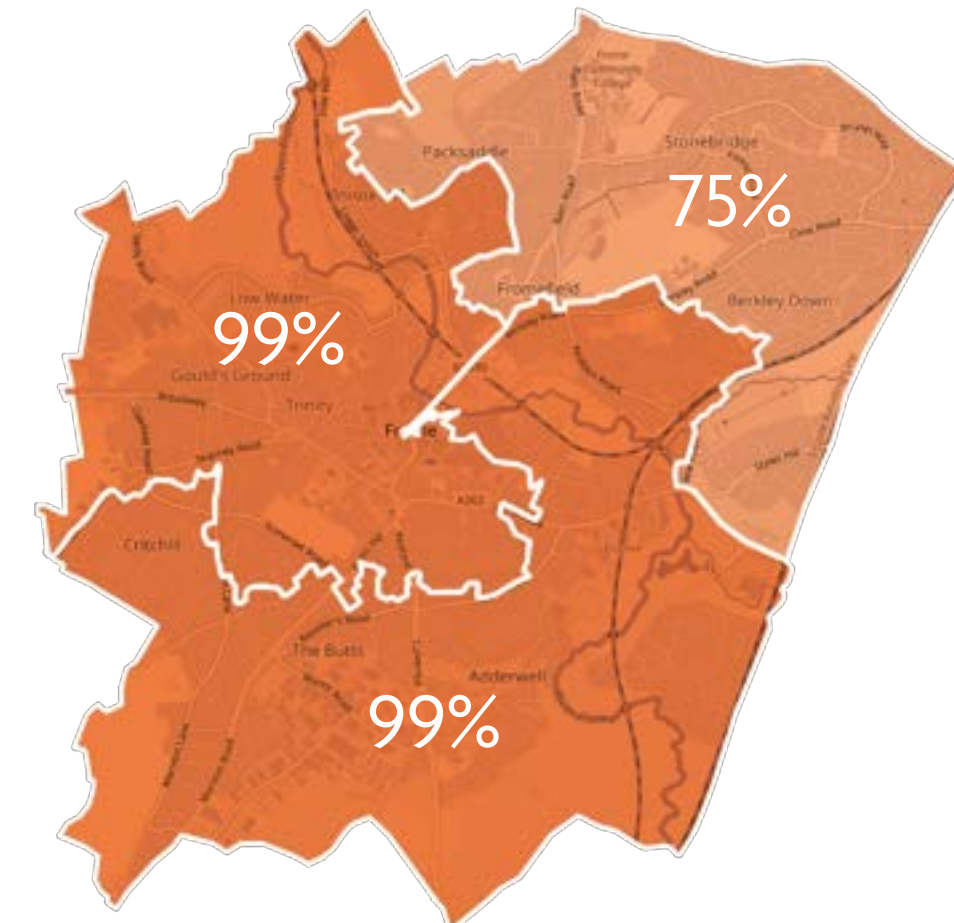
Community transport is a challenge, especially to hospitals. You get offered appointments far away in Somerset, not RUH, but you can't get there.

People can't get the mental health support they need. They get 8 sessions of CBT ... then the sessions end and there's no more help.

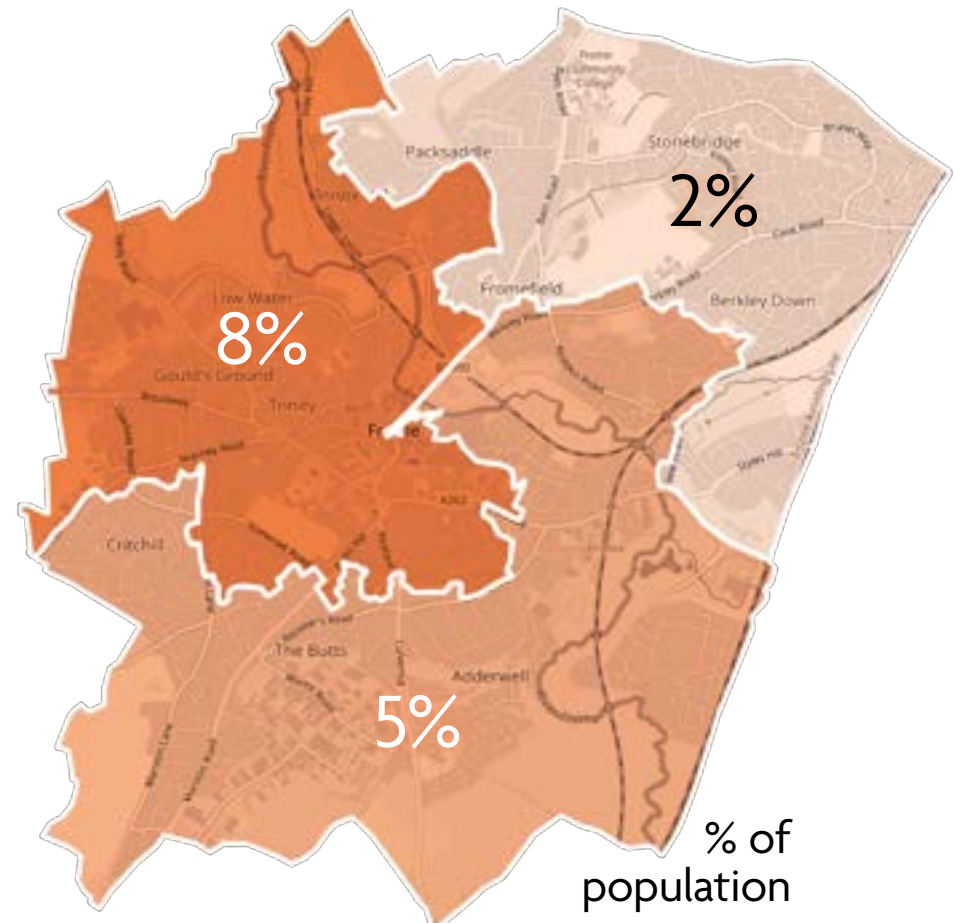
Both me and my husband have experienced mental health crises this year and had to borrow money/accrue debt to get support.

## These maps show some of the more notable variations between different areas of Frome.

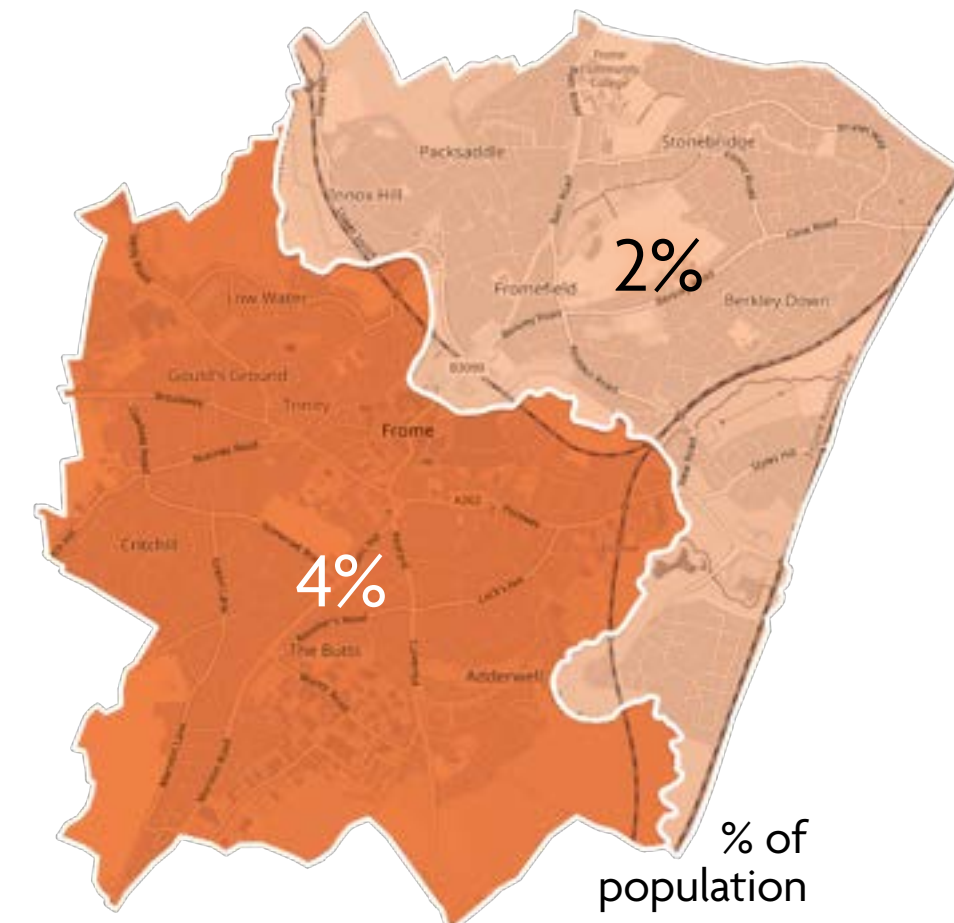
Emergency hospital admissions vs. average national expectation (2016-2021)



Universal Credit claimants on a Health Journey (health condition/disability restricting ability to work)



Personal Independence Payments (PIP) for mental health reasons



### BIGGER PICTURE: Comparing Frome to Somerset and the UK

Frome compares favourably across multiple health-related outcomes compared to national and county averages:

- ▲ **FEWER** Deaths under 65 *See graph ▶*
- ▲ **HIGHER** Life expectancy 1 year higher than England average: 80.5 for males/84.5 for females, compared to 79.5 and 83.4 respectively.
- ▲ **HIGHER** Physical activity *See graph ▶*

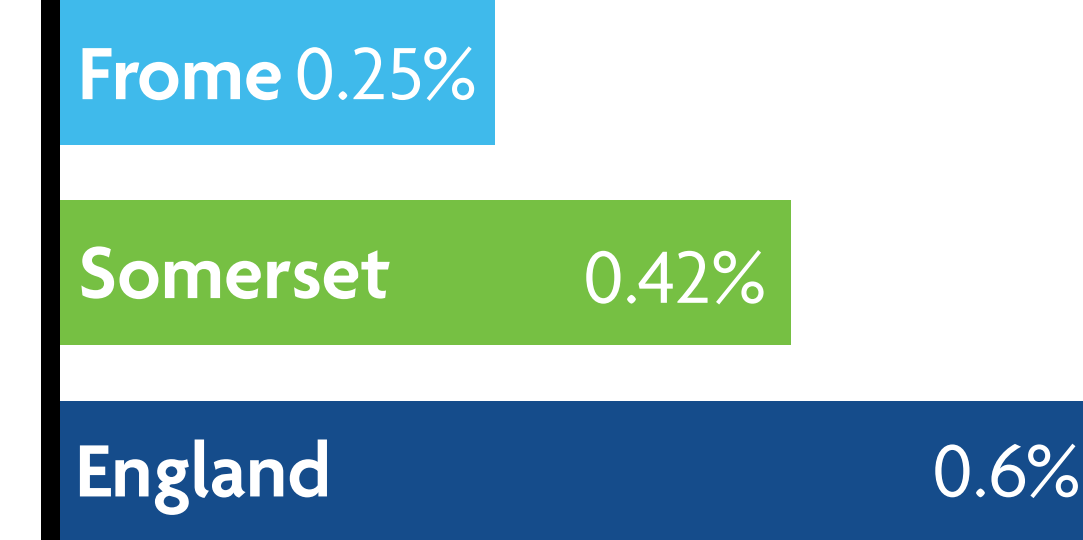
Frome is equal to national and county on some things:

- **EQUAL** Good health 82% of people self-report good or very good health.
- **EQUAL** Bad health over 65 2,246 over 65s with bad or very bad health in Frome, a rate similar to Somerset and the Southwest.

With some notable outliers:

- ▲ **HIGHER** Intentional self-harm *See graph ▶*
- ▲ **HIGHER** Rates of depression 15.9% of people in Frome are recorded as having depression, compared to 13.4% in England.
- ▲ **HIGHER** High blood pressure *See graph ▶*

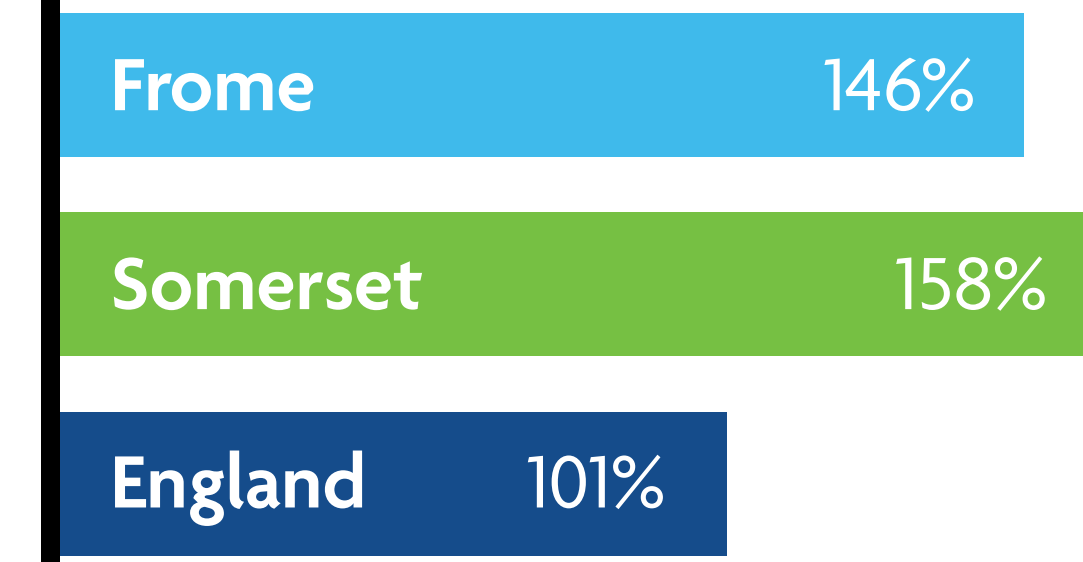
### Deaths under 65 (from all causes)



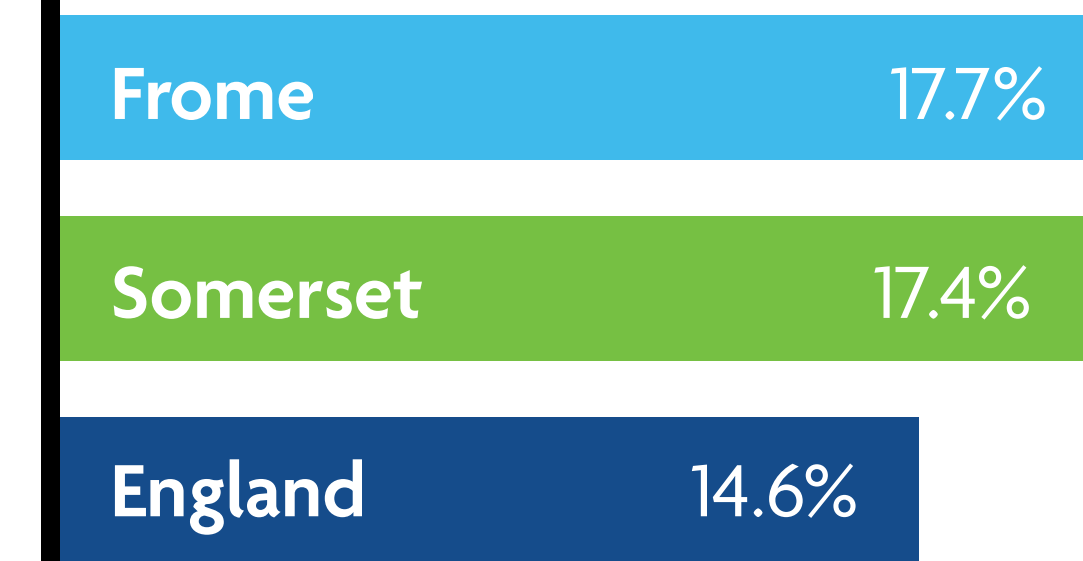
### Adults classed as physically active



### Hospital stays for intentional self harm Compared to NHS England predictions



### People with high blood pressure

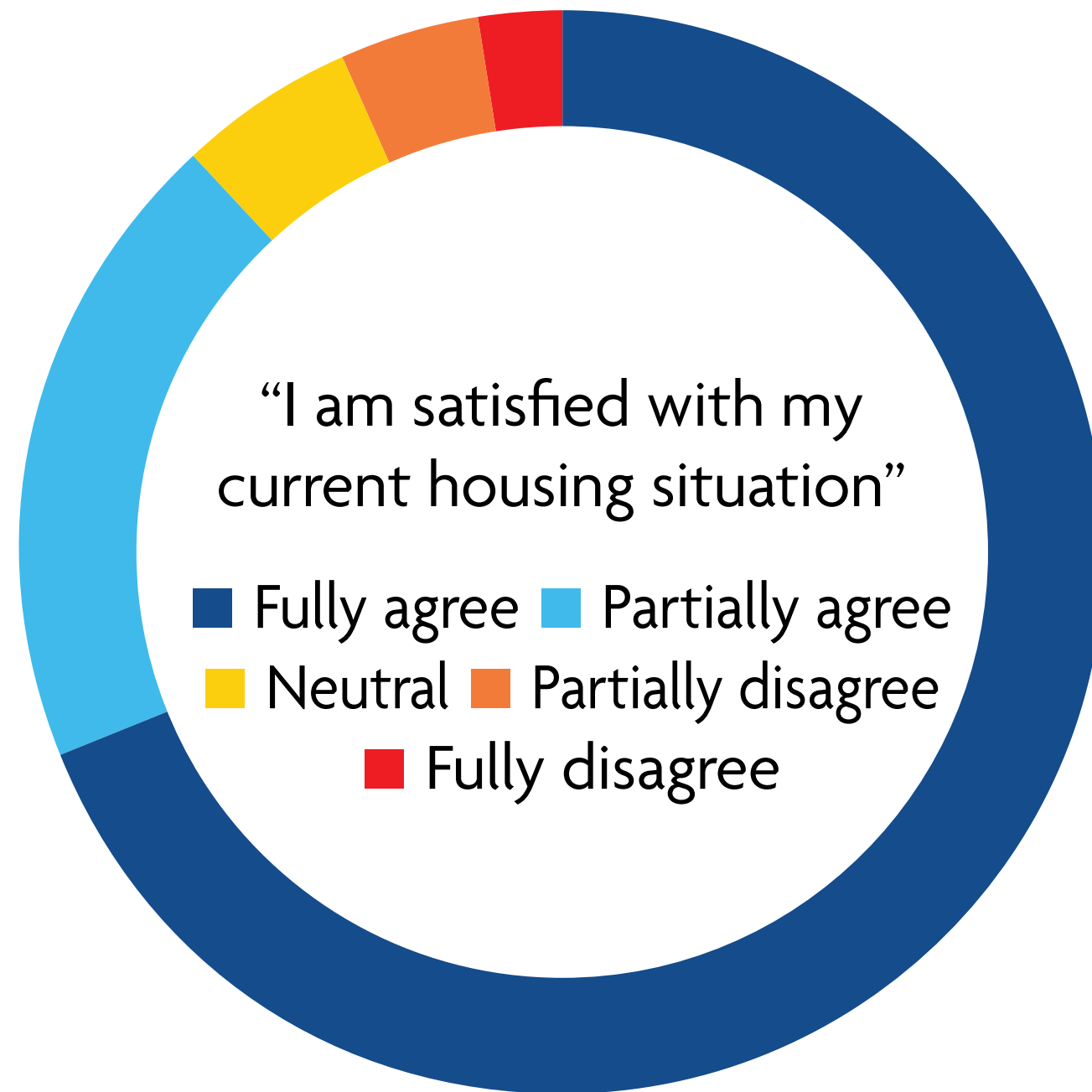




# Housing

Housing was a popular topic across the board. People had a lot to say about their own experiences and housing in Frome in general.

- 40% mentioned affordability.
- 25% shared ideas and concerns about supply, affordable & social housing, and the rental market.
- 15% mentioned quality, including insulation, repairs and maintenance.
- 10% mentioned parking and traffic impacts.
- 5% mentioned safety and crime.
- 5% mentioned the environment, including the potential loss of green spaces for housing.



Rent and house prices should be proportionate to your wages. The words ‘affordable housing’ don’t mean anything. Rents should be no more than a third of what you earn. People are priced out.

More support and permissive planning permission to upgrade listed houses.

My kids would have loved to have lived here but they can’t afford it. The town is losing the younger generation.

Good to see new homes being built but we need medical and dental services which can deal with the expansion. More social housing would be helpful.

For a town this size there are a lot of Airbnbs, often smaller properties young families could use. There should be more benefit to town in having so many, such as increased taxes for them, or a local cap.

Too many second homes and greedy landlords.

My mum is finding it hard to get housed by the council. She lives on a traveller site and is gold-banded but nothing seems to come up.

Acute shortage of social housing; too many Airbnb type rentals.

The mortgage is very high and leaves me with nothing every month.

I have a house far too big for our needs but the council won’t rehouse me as I’m not homeless. It would make more sense to put a family in my property with an affordable private rent and give me a council property which I would not need housing benefit for.

Frome is a beautiful place but it’s a challenge to find somewhere to live. Rents are so high and not many places available.

Selwood Garden Community - the infrastructure can’t support it; the town centre wouldn’t be able to sustain it.

New developments need to be designed with all the required infrastructure (shops, schools, doctors, etc.) in mind and within easy walking reach.

## BIGGER PICTURE: Comparing Frome to Somerset and the UK

Properties in Frome compare favourably to the South West average for condition and energy efficiency. However, the data shows that the affordability gap is wider here than elsewhere.

Frome has a slightly higher proportion of social housing and similar levels of home ownership but more homeowners paying mortgages and loans.

**▲ HIGHER Energy efficiency**  
54.17% of houses in Frome have an energy efficiency rating of A-C, above the regional average of 45.72%

**▲ FEWER Poor condition homes**  
Fewer houses in Frome are judged to be in poor condition than in the South West as a whole, and in Somerset.

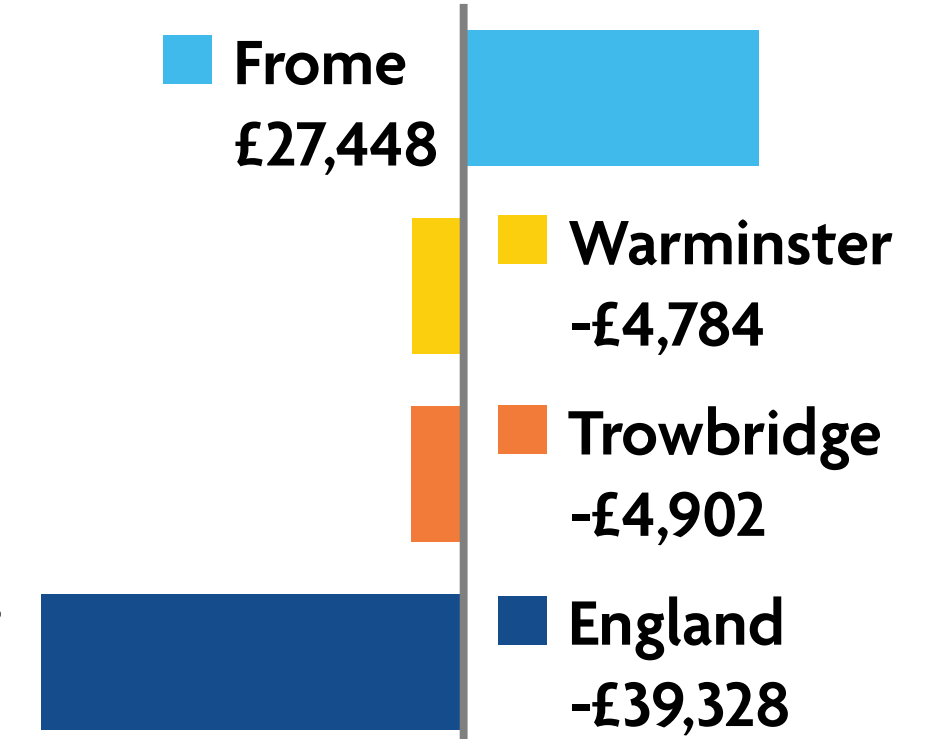
**▼ HIGHER House prices v salaries**  
The housing affordability gap (comparing average salary and average entry-level house price) is much higher in Frome than the UK average and exceeds that of Trowbridge and Warminster.

The housing affordability gap is much higher in south-east Frome than in the north-west of the town.

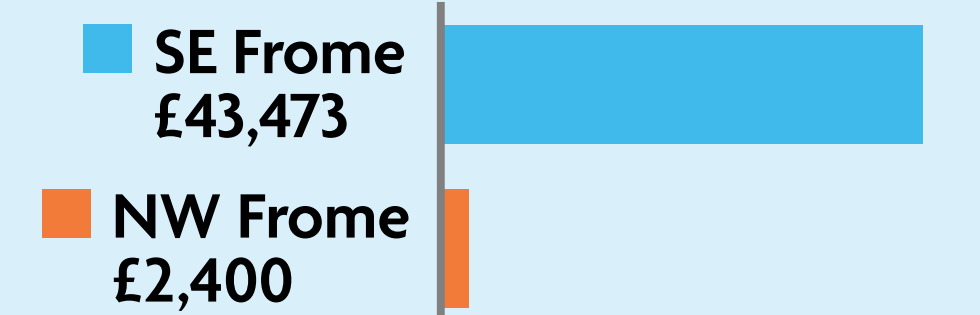
### Housing affordability gap

The gap between the average entry level house price and 4.5 times average annual salary. Negative figures mean, on average, individuals need to borrow less than 4.5 times their salary to afford a house.

This data indicates housing in Frome is less affordable and requires bigger deposits.



The housing affordability gap is much higher in south-east Frome than north-west Frome.

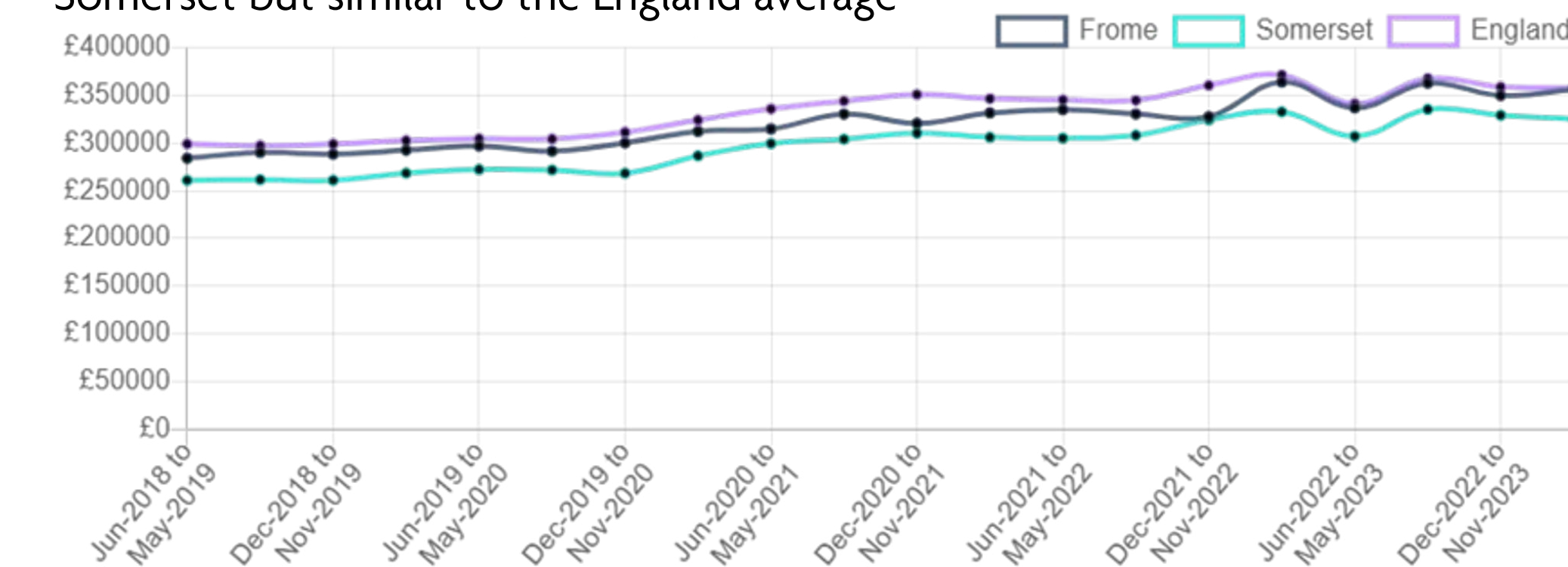


### Housing tenure percentages



### Change in property prices over time

Average prices increased 25% between 2018-2023, consistently higher than Somerset but similar to the England average





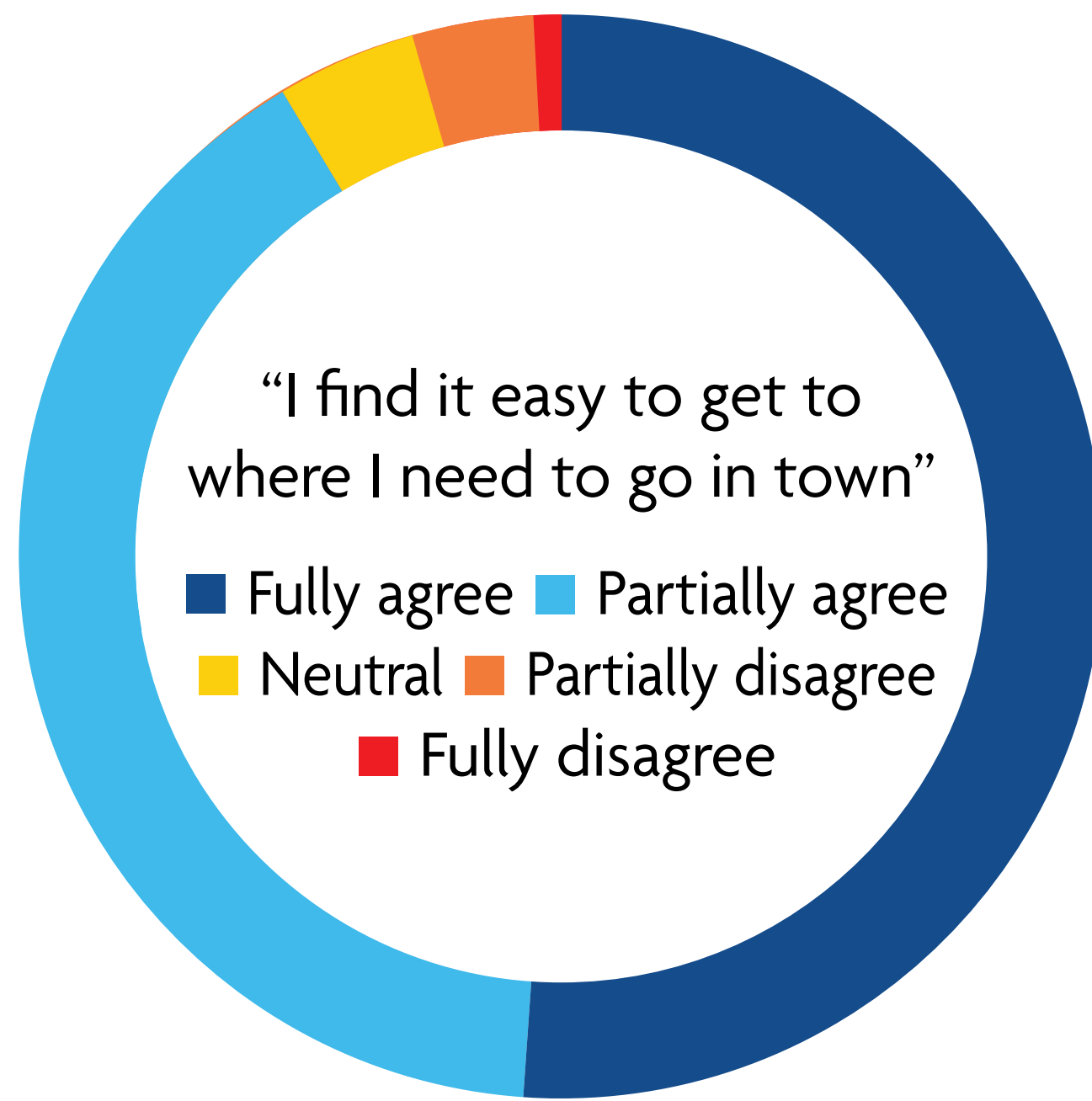
# Travel

We asked people how they usually travel and what influences their travel choices.

Key topics:

- Walking and health benefits: 35%
- Cycling and safety concerns: 20%
- Car use and parking: 20%
- Public transport and reliability: 15%
- Environmental considerations: 5%
- Accessibility and mobility issues: 5%

Road & traffic safety and parking were recurring topics at the pop-ups.



Walking is a good way for me to keep fit although walking home up three hills can be a challenge!

Would prefer to use electric bike, but few safe cycling routes.

Like to be active and walk as much as possible. Would like to use trains/bus more but times too infrequent.

We own one car. I like to cycle to work and now walk. I want to use my car less. The cost of fuel is scary.

Being a pedestrian here is very difficult and dangerous. There is a lot of traffic moving at speed. Cars race up Bath Street in the day like it's a game.

Need some free parking in town. It's so expensive it puts you off going.

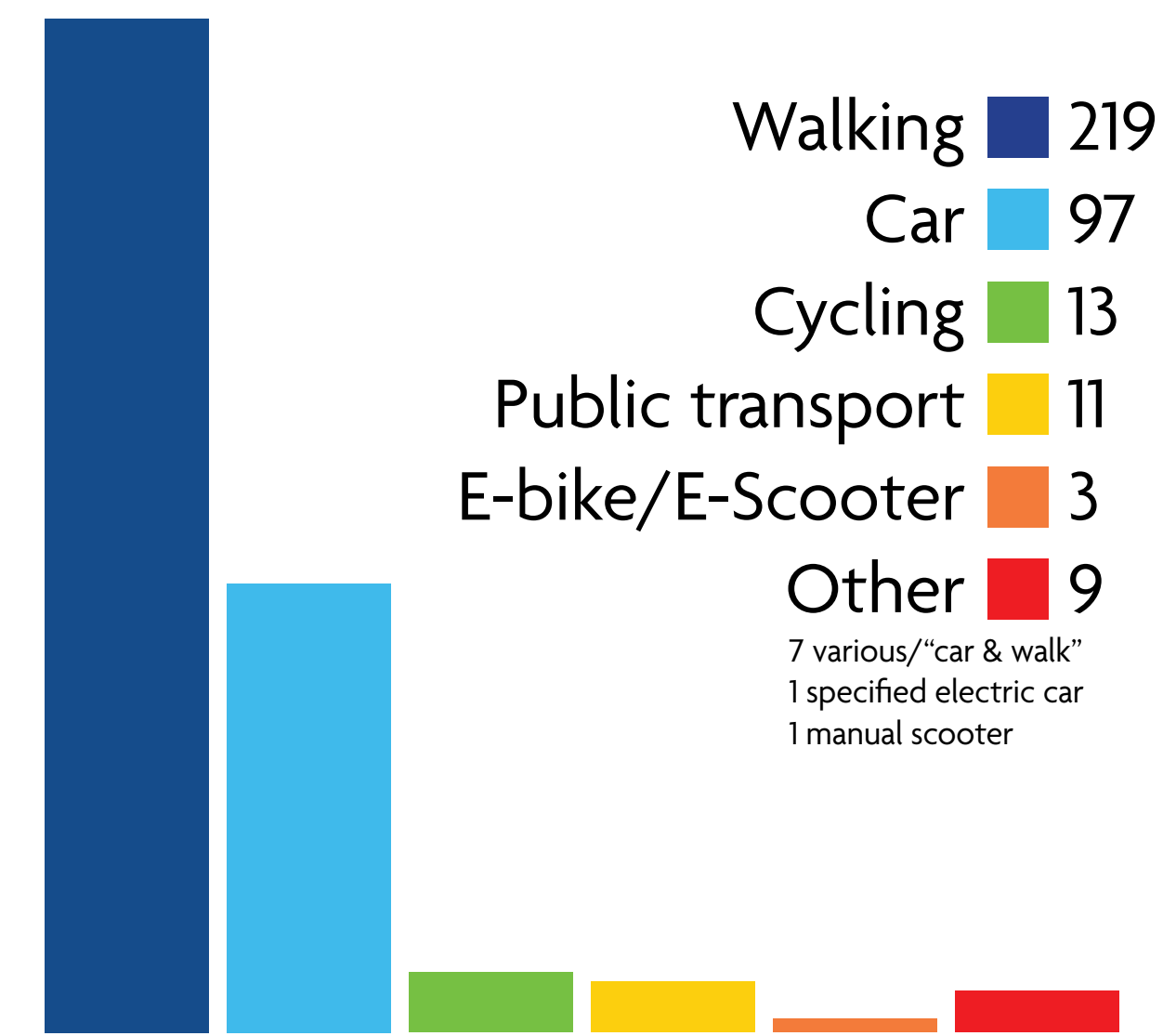
Taxis are non-existent (all booked up by Somerset for school runs etc), I live on the edge of town and everything is focused on being in the centre of town, so I have to travel there.

I just wish the road layout & infrastructure were better geared towards both walking & cycling.

I have health issues that make walking difficult. I used to walk most places but can't anymore.

Prefer to travel more sustainably. Want to have exercise when travelling. Don't want to use car as it creates an anti-social environment as well as pollution, health problems and congestion in town. It's more fun, I can chat with my kids whilst cycling.

## How do you get around town most of the time? (352 responses)



## Walking to the town centre 10 & 20 minute walking zones



## BIGGER PICTURE: Comparing Frome to Somerset and the South West

Frome benefits from quicker access to key services than Somerset and the South West, with a couple of notable exceptions. (See table.)

It has a higher number of accessible jobs than average for the wider area, but significantly less than the average for the whole of England.

Car ownership is lower, and has increased more slowly, than in Somerset but is in line with the SW.

**HIGHER Job access score**  
The number of jobs accessible by car and public transport within 30, 60 & 90 minutes. Frome scores 347k which is higher than Somerset on 291k, and the South West on 293k. The overall average for England is 699k.

Factors like public transport links, job density, congestion and links to the motorway network all contribute to the scores.

**HIGHER No-car households**  
There are more households with no cars in Frome (16.7%) than Somerset (14%) and equal to the South West (16.8%). Car ownership in Frome increased 1.1% from 2011-2021, slightly slower than Somerset. Households may not have a car because they cannot afford one, can meet their needs with public transport, are not able to drive for health reasons, or by personal choice.

### Travel times to key services by walking and public transport

This table shows that while people in Somerset have a longer average travel time to their nearest key services than the South West, people in Frome have a shorter average travel time than both for most services. The 2 exceptions are large employment centres, with Frome's average slightly longer than the SW, and general hospital, taking 17 minutes longer than Somerset and almost 30 minutes longer than the SW overall. Frome's nearest general hospital is Bath RUH - which requires 2 buses or a train then bus to reach via public transport.

Service type	Frome (avg. minutes to nearest)	South West (avg. minutes to nearest)	Somerset (avg. minutes to nearest)
Employment centre (more than 500 jobs)	7.5	11	11.5
Employment centre (more than 5000 jobs)	21.9	20	24.4
Further Education institution	16.9	26	28.9
GP	16	17	17.9
General hospital	82.5	54	65.1
Primary school	8.6	11	11.4
Secondary school	12.9	22	24.5
Supermarket	6.4	8	7.8
Town centre	12.1	23	25.7



# Work and Money

We asked people if they've been affected by the rising cost of living, and to tell us about work, skills training and adult learning in Frome.

The cost of living question was 2nd most answered of the survey. Impacts mentioned:

- 30% Higher living costs and less disposable income
- 20% Housing and rent costs
- 20% Energy and utility bills
- 15% Changes to shopping and consumption habits
- 10% Savings and financial stability
- 10% Mental/emotional stress
- 5% Social and leisure activities

Many people expressed frustration around finding local work, lack of work spaces as a self-employed or remote worker, lack of commercial space and low pay. Local adult education providers SS&L, Edventure and Frome Community College were valuable assets, but many asked for more skills-based training and apprenticeships, especially for young people.



## ◀ Where do you work?

- Workplace in Frome
- Workplace outside of Frome
- Work from home all the time
- Mix of home/outside Frome
- Mix of home/in Frome
- Retired
- I don't work
- Other

Responses include volunteer, unpaid carer, travel all over, work in cafes/library, student

Things are more expensive but we have good income. It has made me more conscious of food requirements and contributing to Fair Frome.

Too many part-time jobs: not enough full time work available.

We can live here only because I can work remotely. If that changed, we would have to leave as it's too far to commute and there aren't the jobs in IT here.

My income is not keeping up with inflation. Despite being further along in my career than a few years ago I now save less. I feel my financial position is more precarious.

Its not easy to get a job in Frome. Unless you look 100 dollars and meet there every box your not wanted. Making it harder to stay living here. Again we are not London we are Frome this needs to stop!

Good support for small businesses.

Small businesses are struggling. The rents are so high they can't cover their overheads. Places like Rosa's Deli, Burrito Boy, closed down.

I like that I can live and work in the same place.

We need more job opportunities for young people.

Landlords of commercial premises are not looking after the buildings. Businesses will stop trading because the buildings are in such poor repair. The yarn shop on Catherine Hill had leaks; the bakers on Cheap Street say the roof leaks and there is a problem with mould.

There is a lot of poverty in Frome that nobody seems to notice.

I just don't do any activities my money covers my bills and food very little to spare.

I would love to work in Frome but bigger businesses like the one I work for aren't here.

I have benefited from Edventure courses and Somerset Skills and learning courses.



- Fully agree
- Partially agree
- Neutral
- Partially disagree
- Fully disagree

## BIGGER PICTURE: Comparing Frome to the wider area and UK

The unemployment to available jobs ratio is 5 unemployed people to every 1 job. This is higher than South England (3) as well as Trowbridge (4) and Warminster (3).

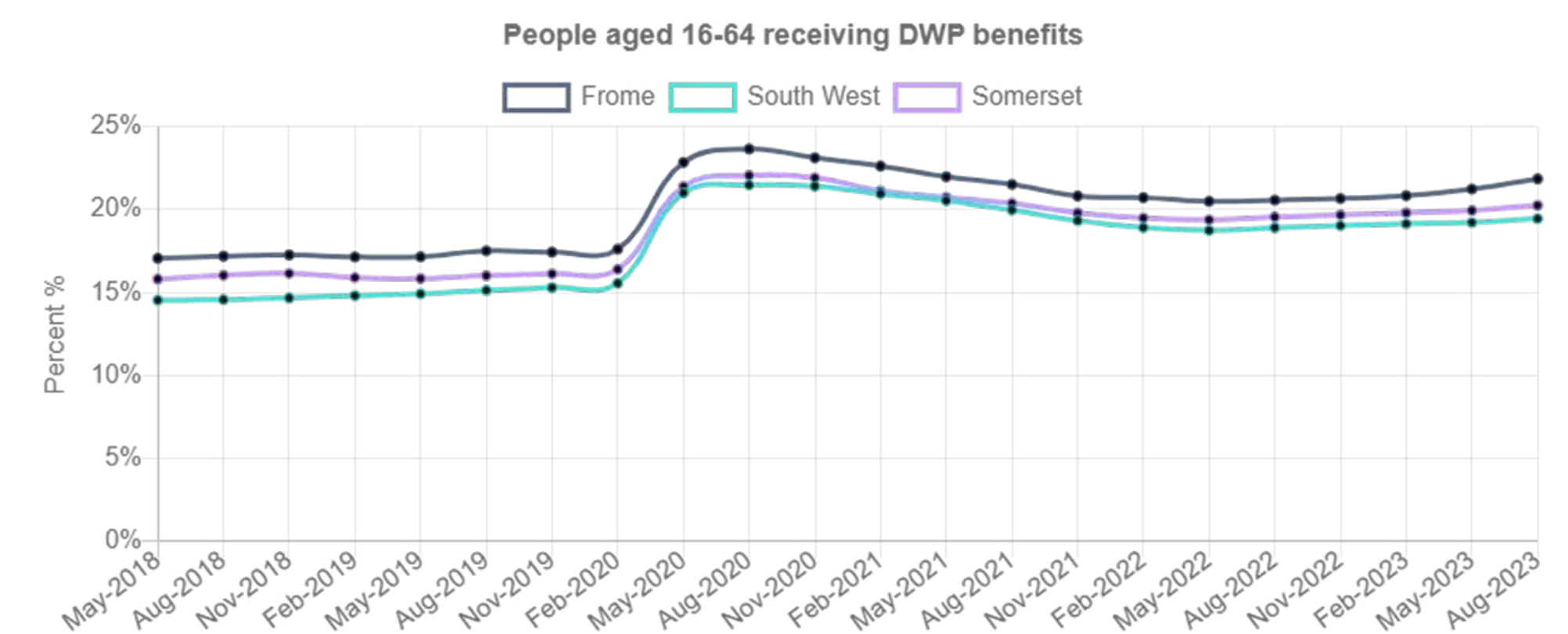
Jobs density has decreased, changing from 51% in 2009 to 48% in 2022. This is lower than the proportion in the South West (77%) and lower than the proportion in Somerset (72%). Jobs density is the number of jobs as a percentage of the working age population.

Frome contributes significantly less to the economy (GDP) per head than the average in England, Warminster and Trowbridge.

In Frome, retail jobs are 17% of all jobs. This is significantly higher than the proportion in the South West (8%) and in Somerset (9%). It is also higher than Trowbridge (13%) and Warminster (9%).

There are more private sector v public sector employees (87% and 13%) compared to the average in England (83% and 17%), and 42% of employees in Frome are part-time, compared to 31% in England, 37% in Trowbridge and 39% in Warminster.

Need for DWP benefits is greater, and levels of debt relatively low.



Indicator	Frome	SW	Somerset
Mortgage debt per household	£33,889	£38,208	£32,512
SME lending debt per person 18+	£2,285	£2,450	£3,055
Personal debt (unsecured loans) per person 18+	£485	£540	£584