

FINDINGS FROM THE COUNCIL'S BUDGET PROPOSALS 2026/27 CONSULTATION

February 2026

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Background

Between December 2025 and January 2026, the Council undertook a six-week period of consultation on priorities for 2026/27, prior to making the final decisions on its budget.

For the first time in about 15 years, the council anticipates being able to meet its legal duty of setting a balanced budget for 2026/27 without requiring significant service reductions, thanks to expected improvements from the Government's Fair Funding reform.

In 25/26 the council was able to invest, on a one-off basis, money in services for the first time in many years. We would like to build on that in 2026/27 and the feedback collected will shape the way we plan our budget for 2026-2027.

Consultation Methodology

The Council hosted a survey on its engagement platform Let's Talk Coventry asking for people's views on our proposed priorities. This survey was publicised through the Council website, newsletters and social media.

Posters publicising the survey and engagement sessions were in libraries and family hubs. Hard copies of the survey were available in all our libraries, alongside a dedicated phone number to request more information.

Online and face to face workshops were held. These sessions were open to all stakeholders and provided further opportunities to engage and comment on the proposed priorities.

In addition as part of the consultation process, members from Scrutiny Board 1 provided their feedback on January 14.

Responses

3,300 people visited the Let's Talk Coventry page, with 1,400 of them downloading a document and 917 respondents completed the survey.

2 email responses were received.

The following sections summarise the main findings and comments that were raised through the public consultation. All feedback has been consolidated and summarised in the following report.

Appendix 7

A full list of comments from the online survey and written feedback can be received by contacting budgetsetting@coventry.gov.uk

Feedback from the on-line survey

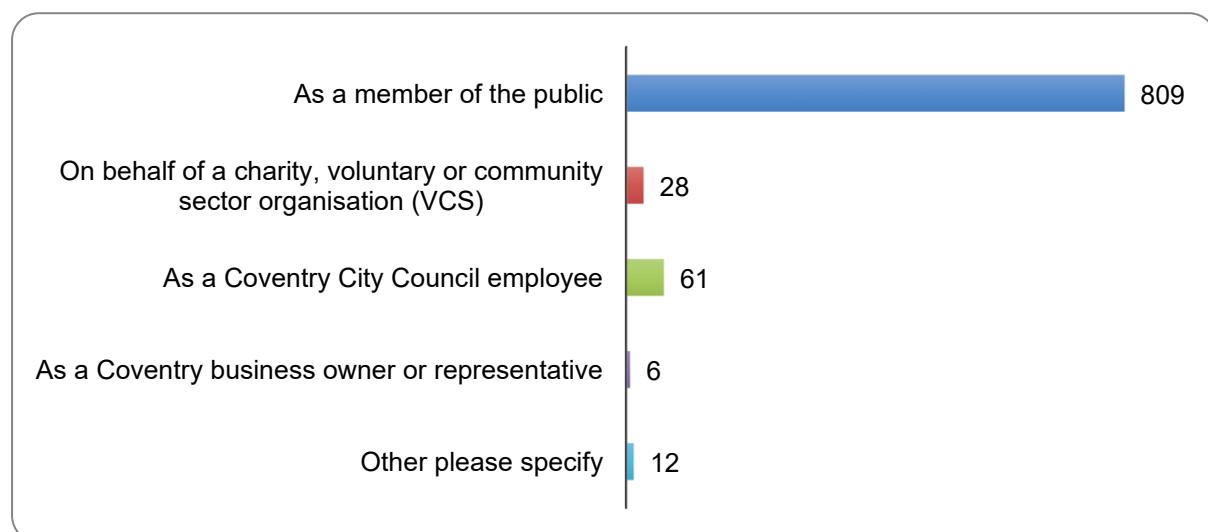
Response Rate

917 responses were received overall. We received 3 hard copy surveys and 914 online responses.

The majority of respondents were from members of the public, 809

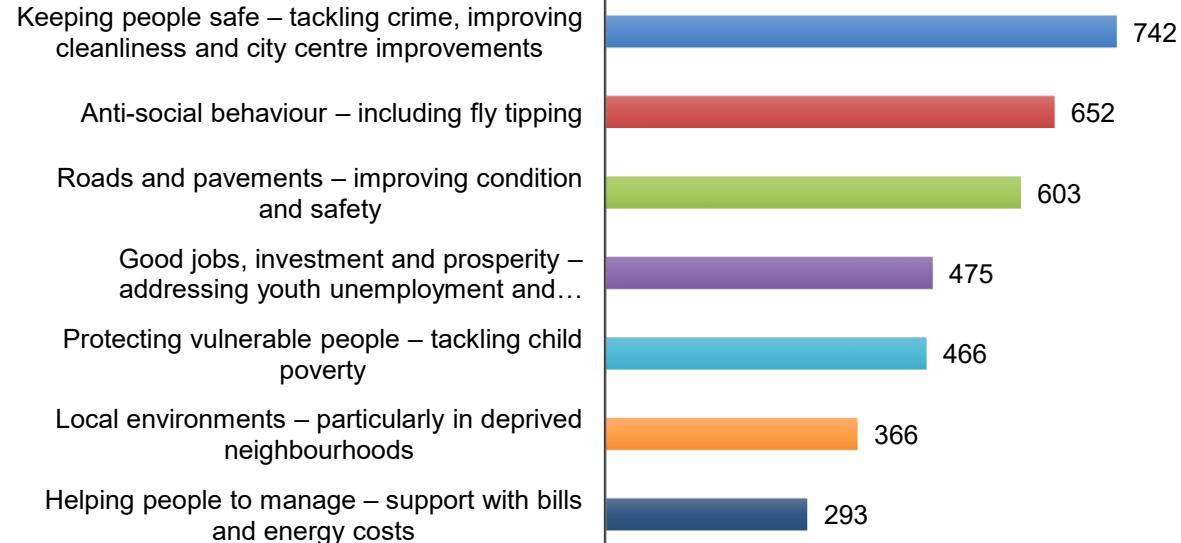
Responses were received from the following organisations:

Local charities (Carriers of Hope, Hope Coventry, Alzheimer's Society), Residents' groups (Poppy Court Residents) Faith-based groups (Walsgrave Baptist Church), Community projects (SPONGATE Community Project, Clifford Bridge Community Association), Cultural organisations (The Coventry Music Museum, Historic Coventry Trust), Education providers and schools (Sidney Stringer Academy, Hereward College, Grace Academy Coventry), Other community hubs (Tile Hill Community Food Hub, Voluntary Action Coventry) and local businesses (Avrona Media, D T & A LTD / MATRIX Safety Training, The Ultimate Phonic Sonic Treat Studio's)



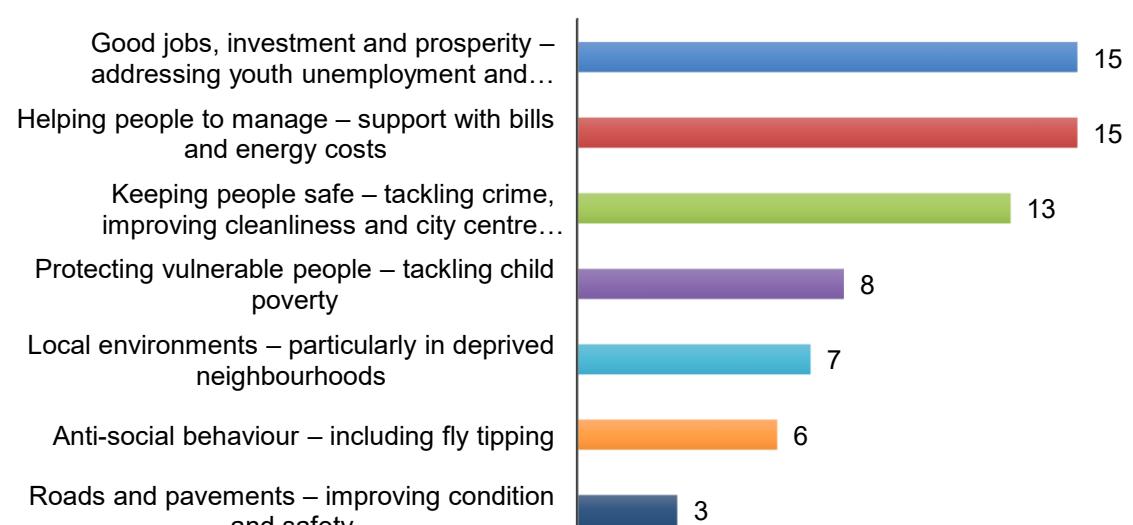
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Which are the most important priorities to you? Tick all that apply



Keeping people safe, tackling crime and improving cleanliness and the city centre was felt to be the most important priority, followed by anti-social behaviour including fly tipping and then improving roads and pavements.

Interestingly the feedback from the session with young people showed different priorities were more important to them.



Good jobs – including youth employment and education and helping people to manage were the top two priorities, followed by keeping people safe.

How Coventry Can Deliver Its Key Priorities

Respondents were asked to give suggestions how the council can deliver on the proposed key priorities. The following shows the major themes against each of our seven priorities.

Good Jobs and Prosperity

- Residents consistently emphasised practical routes into work and local economic regeneration
- Expand apprenticeships, especially within the Council—residents repeatedly asked for the return of a strong apprenticeship pipeline
- Partner with businesses, Chamber of Commerce, universities, and SMEs to unlock work experience and career entry for under-25s
- Regenerate local high streets (e.g., Riley Square, Ball Hill, Foleshill Rd) and support independent traders with lower rents/business incentives
- Improve links between schools and employers, including early work-readiness, mentoring, and vocational pathways

Helping People Manage Costs

- Many residents asked for simple, direct support—targeted, accessible, and easy to claim
- Better-coordinated welfare advice, including in Family Hubs, libraries and community venues
- Expand access to the Household Support Fund, ensuring processes don't penalise larger families or those who need repeat help
- Promote energy-saving and insulation schemes—some residents suggested solar installations or local panels of support
- Support grassroots charities, especially those mentioned frequently such as Hope Coventry, CAB, Good Neighbours and food support networks

Community Safety & Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour

- This was one of the most mentioned theme: more presence, faster response, stronger enforcement
- Re-establish neighbourhood wardens, not just one or two posts—residents explicitly compared Coventry to nearby councils with larger teams
- Increase visible policing and joint patrols with the Police in known hotspots (Broadgate, Foleshill Rd, Spon End, Jubilee Crescent)
- Enforce illegal e-scooter/bike use, pavement riding, and dangerous driving—one of the most frequent complaints
- Create a direct ASB reporting pathway to the Council, which residents repeatedly said is currently missing
- Install more CCTV (including covert) in fly-tipping and ASB hotspots

Protecting Vulnerable People

- Respondents highlighted mental health, SEND, elderly isolation, refugees/asylum support, and domestic abuse
- Increase capacity in Community Safety and Community Warden teams to better support vulnerable victims of ASB
- Strengthen early-help services, especially in schools, Family Hubs, and youth settings
- Invest in SEND services, EHCP pathways, and early assessment—as delays were a major recurring concern
- Support elderly people through schemes like Good Neighbours, which were praised heavily
- Increase ESOL provision to help refugees integrate socially and economically

Improving Local Environments & Tackling Fly-Tipping

- Residents expressed high levels of frustration with waste, fly-tipping, neglected areas and maintenance
- Daily fly-tipping response teams (many residents explicitly suggested this)
- Targeted CCTV + faster prosecution using “name and shame” approaches where legally appropriate
- Open access to the recycling centre or remove booking requirements—cited by many as a barrier driving fly-tipping
- Work with landlords and enforce HMO standards, particularly waste management
- Regular street cleaning, especially in hotspots such as Hillfields, Foleshill, Spon End, Radford, and Willenhall
- Community volunteering schemes, litter-picks, local ambassadors, and pride-in-place programmes

Roads and Pavements

- This topic had a large level of feedback—residents feel repairs are too slow, too temporary, or poorly done
- Shift from patching to full-surface repairs, especially in high-traffic residential areas
- Audit and enforce utility company reinstatement standards, which many blamed for recurring defects
- Publish a public repair schedule, so residents can see when repairs are coming
- Prioritise accessibility, ensuring pavements are safe for disabled and elderly residents—many cited hazards and trip risks
- In summary the following are key themes that have emerged very strongly from the comments.

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Visibility – officers on the streets, not behind screens.

Speed – faster response times for ASB, waste, and road reports.

Enforcement – consistent consequences for waste, driving, parking, and ASB.

Partnerships – with Police, charities, employers, schools, universities.

Community involvement – co-creation, volunteering, neighbourhood forums.

Communication – clearer reporting, updates, and transparency about action.

Additional Priorities Raised by Residents

In addition to the Council's stated priorities, residents highlighted several further areas requiring attention.

Priority	Frequency
Environment, Climate & Green Spaces	61
SEND, Disability Support & Inclusion	54
Health, Social Care & Wellbeing	48
City Pride, Cleanliness & Public Realm	46
Transport, Traffic & Public Transport	44
Arts, Culture, Heritage & Events	42
Housing Supply, Affordability & Standards	38
Leisure, Sport & Community Wellbeing	35
Community Cohesion, Integration & Anti-Hate Work	30
Policing, Enforcement & Visible Presence	29
Homelessness, Rough Sleeping & Support for Vulnerable Adults	25
Youth Provision	22
Business Support, Local Economy & High Streets	21
Cost of Living	19
Council Engagement & Accountability	15
Voluntary & Community Sector Support	13
Digital & Customer Services	12

Environment, Climate & Green Spaces

Environmental concerns were wide-ranging: from flooding and drainage to renewable energy support for low-income households. Residents called for increased biodiversity, tree planting, green-belt protection, improved air quality and better maintenance of parks and natural spaces.

SEND, Disability Support & Inclusion

A major and repeated theme was the need for significantly improved SEND and disability provision. Residents called for more specialist school places, reduced waiting times, improved transport, and better support for disabled adults and children. Accessibility, both physical (pavements, crossings, leisure facilities) and digital was also emphasised as a priority.

Health, Social Care & Wellbeing

Concerns around access to GPs, urgent care and mental health support featured strongly. Residents highlighted the need for more support for carers, isolated older adults and people at risk of entering social care, alongside improving training and capacity within social work.

City Pride, Cleanliness & Public Realm

Street cleanliness, graffiti, maintenance of signage and lighting, and visible improvements to public spaces were seen as essential to restoring pride and improving perceptions of the city.

Transport, Traffic & Public Transport

Beyond road maintenance, residents raised issues with bus frequency and affordability, cycling infrastructure, congestion management, coordination of roadworks and enforcement around parking and school-gate safety.

Arts, Culture, Heritage & Events

Communities identified culture as important for identity, pride and economic vitality. Priorities included supporting arts organisations, protecting heritage buildings and reinstating popular events such as Christmas activities and city-wide celebrations.

Housing Supply, Affordability & Standards

There was strong concern about housing affordability, availability of social housing and quality issues linked to HMOs and rogue landlords. Many also raised issues around overdevelopment and infrastructure pressures.

Leisure, Sport & Community Wellbeing

Residents valued investment in parks, sports centres, swimming facilities, tennis courts and community-based wellbeing spaces. They also emphasised outdoor play and accessible leisure opportunities.

Community Cohesion, Integration & Anti-Hate Work

Residents expressed concern about rising tensions linked to racism, hate crime, misogyny and homophobia. They highlighted the role of culture, arts and events in strengthening cohesion, while stressing the need for more community hubs and action on symbols seen as intimidating.

Policing, Enforcement & Visible Presence

Concerns extended beyond crime to include dangerous driving, fireworks, noise, illegal vehicles and fly-tipping. Residents consistently requested more visible policing and enforcement, including licensing for food delivery riders.

Homelessness, Rough Sleeping & Support for Vulnerable Adults

There was a strong call for action on homelessness, rough sleeping, street drug use and begging—particularly in the city centre. Residents also emphasised the importance of fairer emergency accommodation and tailored support for care leavers and vulnerable people.

Youth Provision

The loss of youth clubs and safe spaces was highlighted across communities. Residents called for more activities for teenagers, inclusive facilities and support for young people at risk.

Business Support, Local Economy & High Streets

Residents highlighted the need to support small businesses, strengthen the high street, encourage investment and improve the city centre's retail and leisure offer. Barriers within council processes were also cited.

Cost of Living

Residents asked for council tax not to be increased, concerns about fees such as garden-waste charges, and support for households who fall just outside benefit eligibility.

Council Engagement & Accountability

Residents want more direct engagement from councillors, better reporting on outcomes, and clearer information on council decisions and spending.

Voluntary & Community Sector Support

The crucial role of VCSE organisations was repeatedly noted. Residents asked for stable funding, reduced bureaucracy and stronger partnership working.

Digital & Customer Services

Improvements were requested in communication, responsiveness and accessibility of council services, including fixing issues with the council app and reducing unnecessary bureaucracy.

Social Media Comments

Approximately 200 comments were made in response to our social media posts across all channels. The main themes were:

Topic	Frequency
Roads & potholes / pavements	30
Street cleaning, litter & fly-tipping	26
Council tax & funding / finance	20
Consultation trust & listening	15
Parks & play / public spaces	13
Cycle lanes & road schemes / VLR	12
SEND & education / school transport	8
Housing & homelessness / HMOs	8
Business & high street regeneration	8
Bins & waste services reliability	7
Policing, ASB & CCTV / safety	6
Drains & flooding	5
Parking & enforcement	5
Speeding & traffic management	4

Residents consistently highlight issues such as potholes, poor road surfaces, damaged pavements, and confusing or unpopular road layouts (e.g., fly-tipping, litter, weeds, street cleanliness, dog fouling, and drainage problems). There are repeated frustrations about unreliable bin collections, insufficient street cleaning, and maintenance issues across neighbourhoods, with several commenters citing specific streets or long-standing unresolved reports. Many believe Coventry feels “dirty” or poorly maintained and want more visible, consistent upkeep and enforcement.

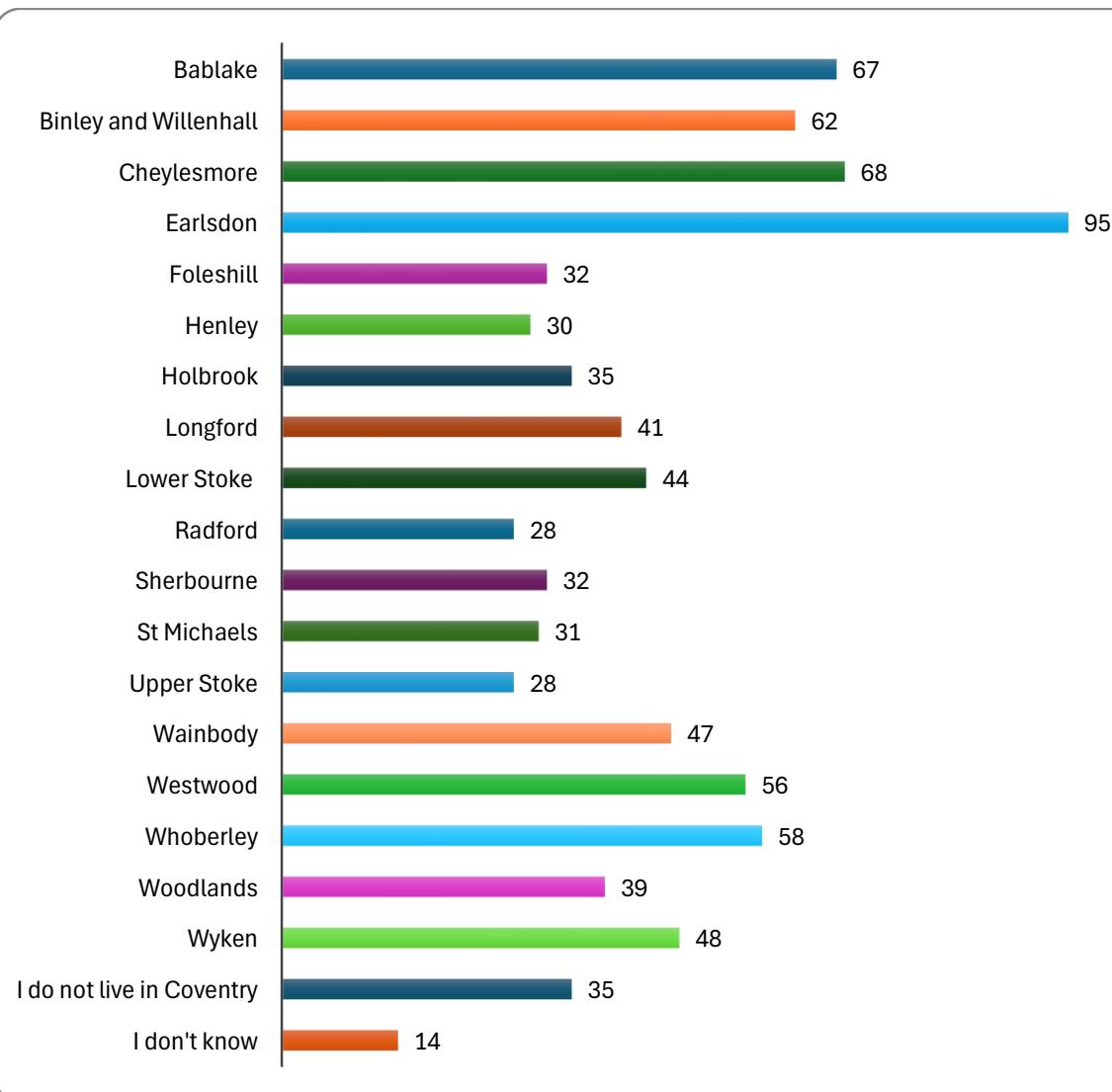
Another major theme is scepticism about council decision-making, spending priorities, and trust in the consultation process. Multiple residents express doubt that their input will be considered, accusing the council of being out of touch or acting only because elections are approaching. Concerns arise about perceived waste—cycle lanes, the Very Light Railway, and road schemes are frequently cited as unnecessary or poorly justified investments. Several comments also reference financial mismanagement (e.g., City of Culture issues) and question whether council tax should rise given new funding.

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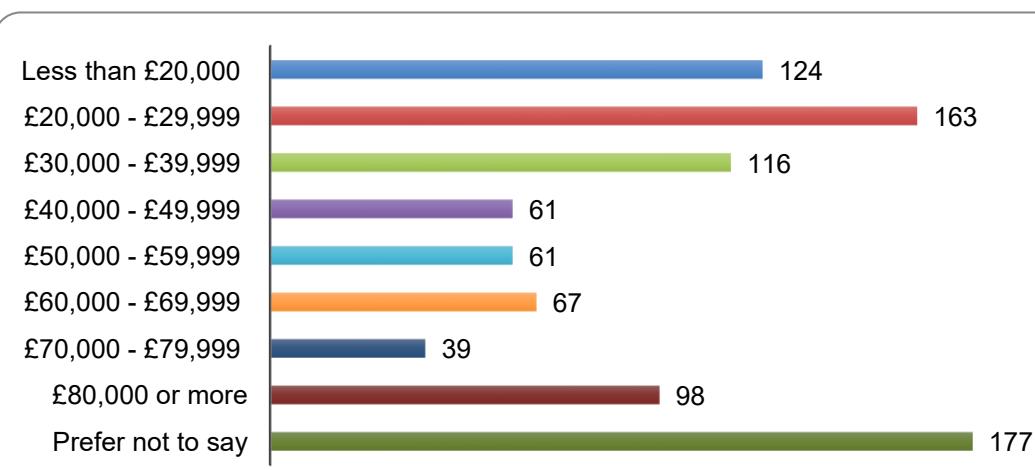
Residents call for more social housing, better SEND provision, improved school transport, increased policing, action on anti-social behaviour, and support for young people through apprenticeships or youth hubs. Others ask for regeneration of local shopping areas, support for small businesses, improved parks and public spaces, and community-focused improvements like CCTV or zebra crossings outside schools. Alongside this are calls for more transparency—on infrastructure contributions, financial savings, and how reports or issues are handled by the council.

Profile of Survey Respondents

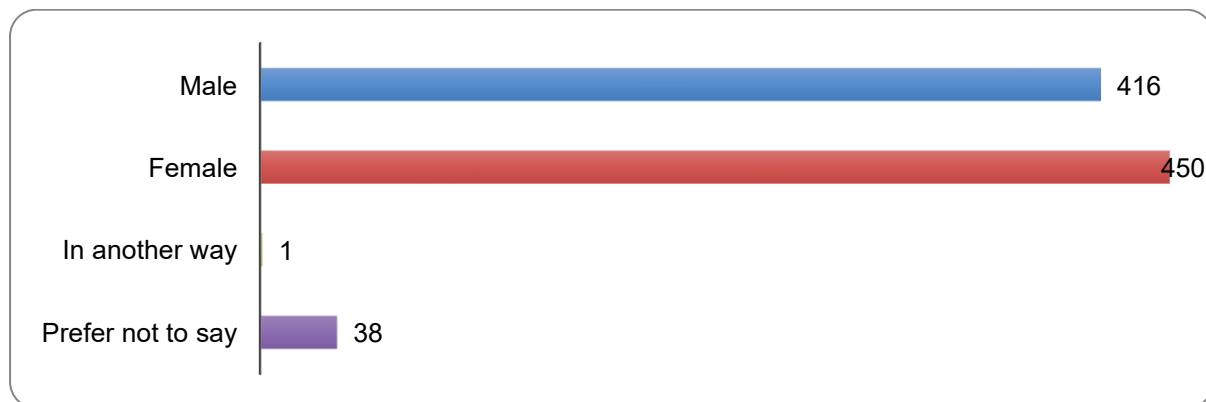
Which area of Coventry are you from?



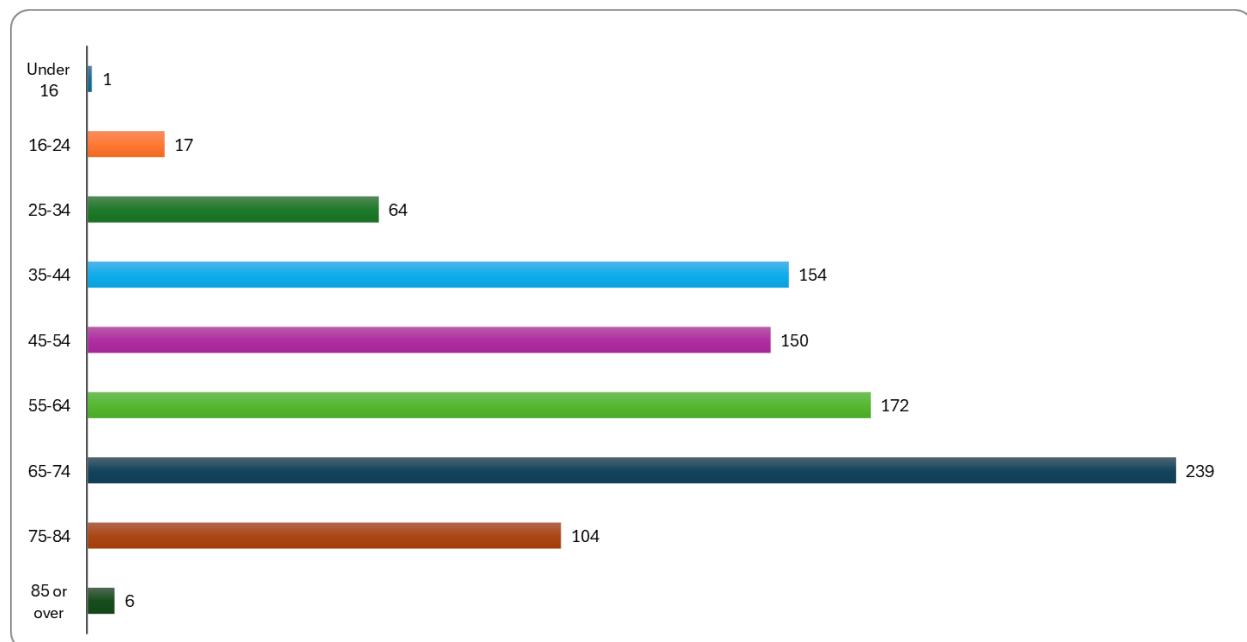
What is your household income?



How would you describe yourself?

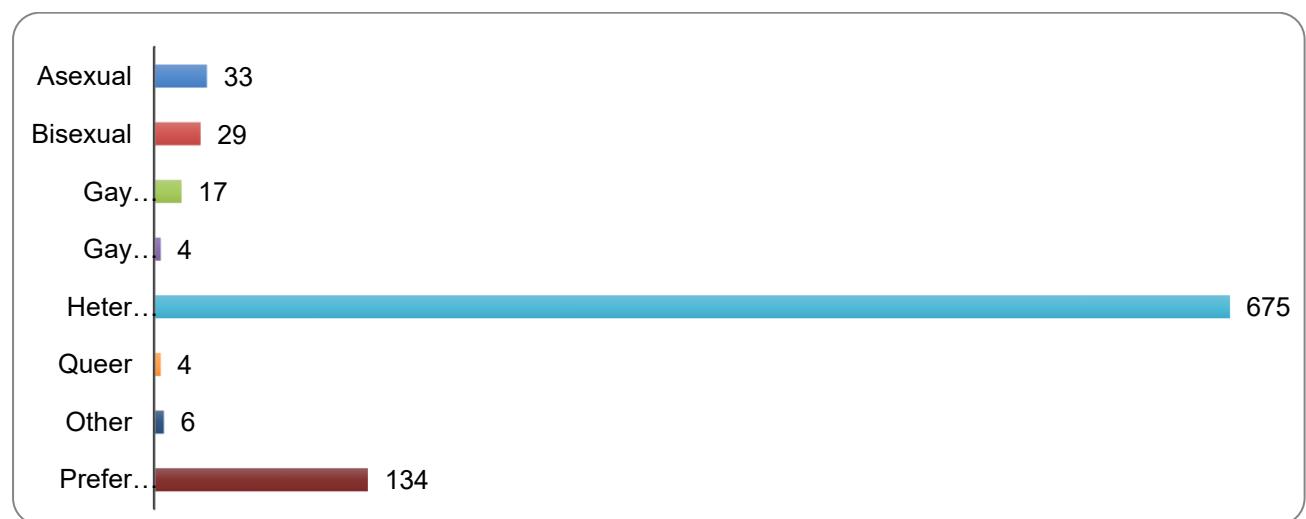


What age group are you in?

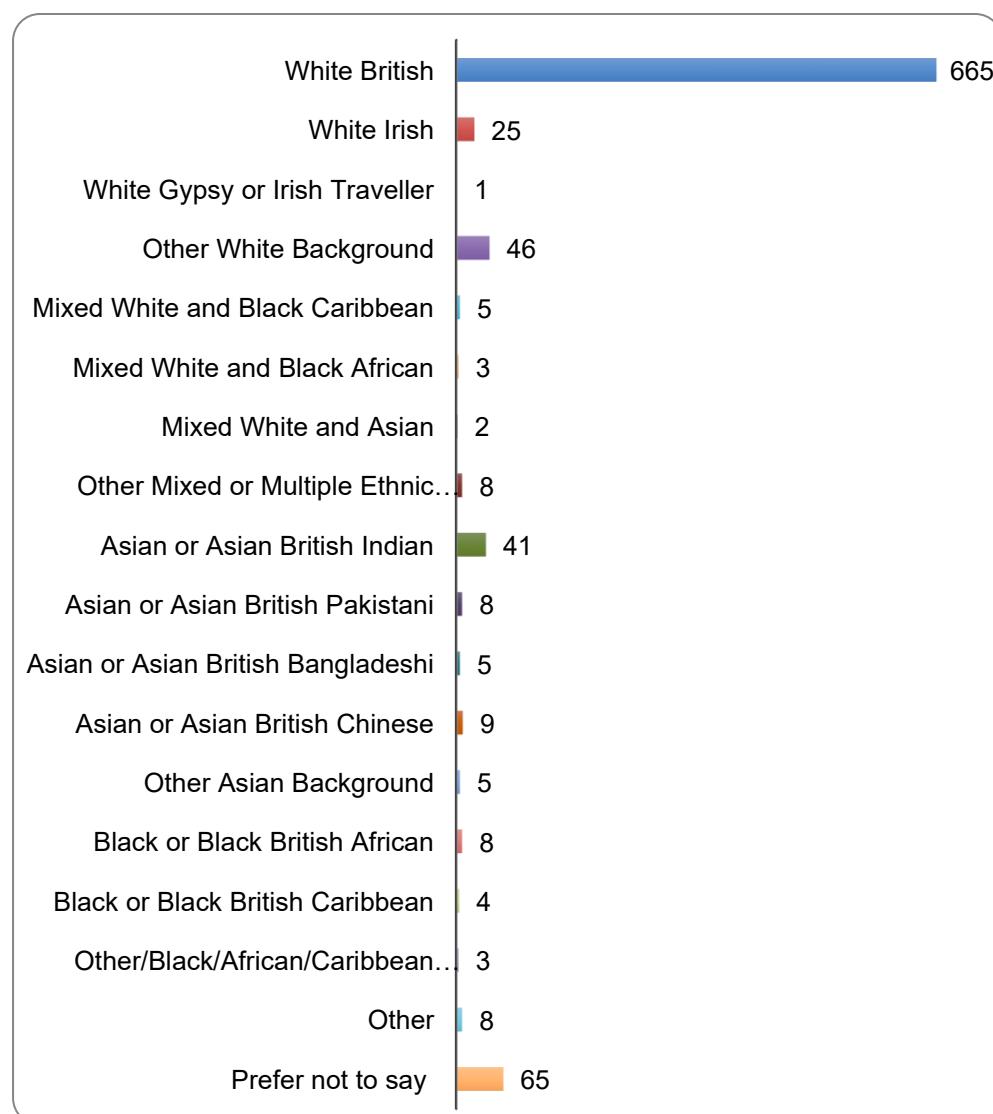


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What is your sexual orientation?

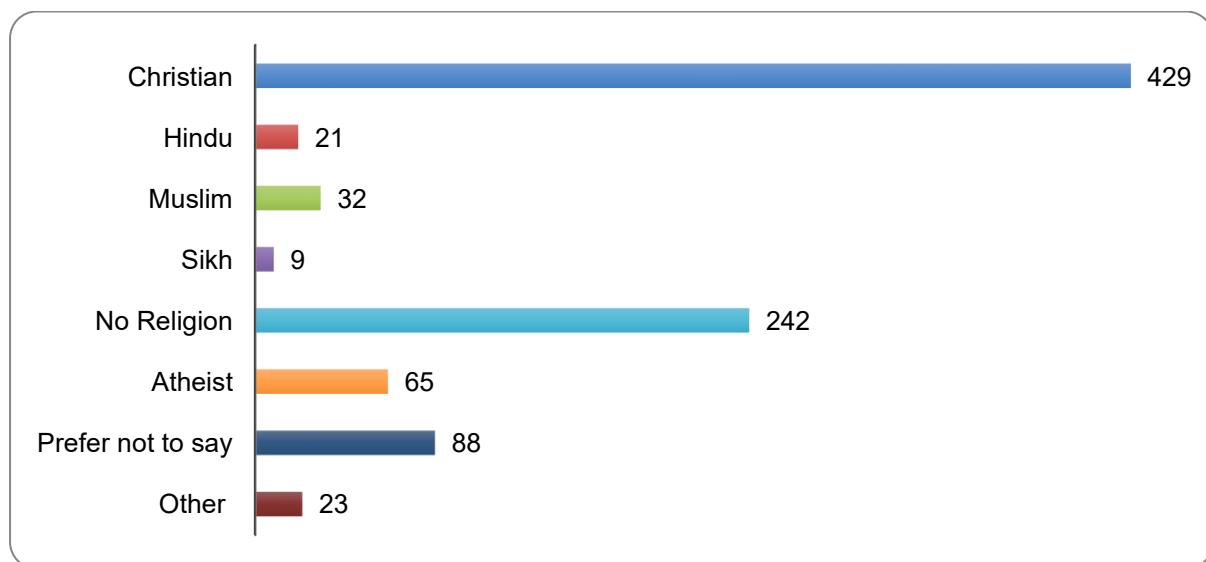


Which of the following best describes your ethnic background?



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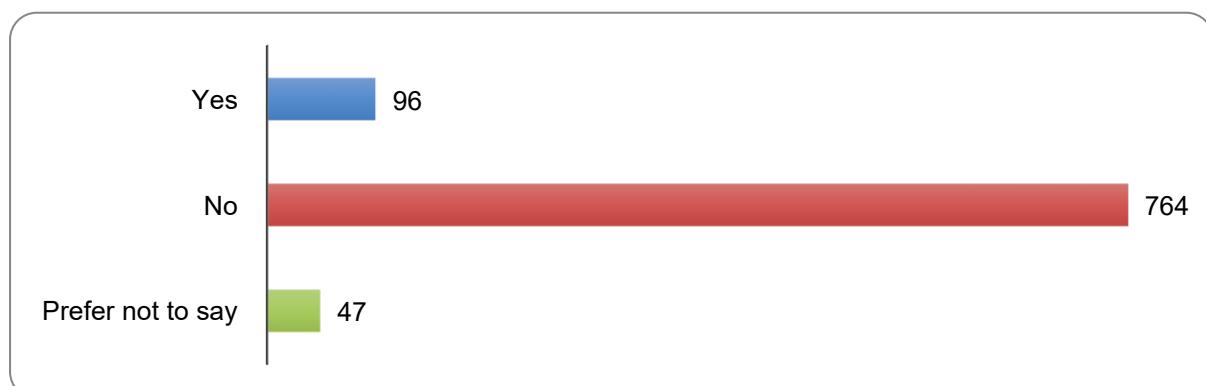
What religion do you consider yourself to be?



Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?



Do you, or a member of your immediate family, currently serve, or have previously served, in the armed forces?



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Email Responses

2 responses were received.

CELC's

Coventry's most vulnerable residents are under increasing pressure from reduced welfare support, rising living costs, and high sanction rates. The statement urges the Council to prioritise these groups in the 2026/27 budget. It highlights that strong, independent advice and support services are essential to preventing hardship and must be reinvested in, especially as new national policies come into force.

Joint statement CELC and CIAS

“Coventry Citizens Advice and Central England Law Centre work in partnership to support Coventry residents facing the greatest inequalities, rising pressure from housing insecurity, debt and welfare issues.

We are committed to a coordinated advice system that is easy to access, resolves problems early where possible and escalates promptly to specialist legal support where needed.

We will continue to share intelligence on emerging issues, strengthen referral pathways and work alongside the Council to deliver prevention that reduces crisis demand, protects vulnerable residents and improves outcomes for communities across the city.”

From a member of the public:

Coventry could lead the way by requiring new estates to be adopted by the Council, ending unfair private “fleecehold” charges and giving residents fairer, capped management costs.

Better management of affordable housing is also essential: agencies need proper funding and clear processes to tackle anti-social behaviour and protect neighbourhoods.

Feedback from Face to Face Session 15 January 2026

23 members of the public attended the session alongside 10 Council representatives.

Questions asked covered the following areas of concern:

Council Finance & Funding

- How much of the council's total budget comes from national government vs. council tax?
- Is there a time limit for spending the "headroom" funding (April 2027)?
- What is the social care precept and how does it work?

Local Area Issues (Primarily Foleshill, Coundon, Ball Hill, Willenhall, City Centre)

- Why is there little enforcement around double parking, speeding, and disorderly traffic?
- Why has street cleaning declined—why so much rubbish and neglect?
- What is the plan for improving health hazards caused by waste and overflowing bins?
- Why is street cleaning insufficient on roads with too many parked cars?
- Are restrictions in certain areas being reviewed?
- What powers does the council have (or need) from DfT regarding footway parking?
- Why is fly-tipping so different between areas like Coundon vs others?
- What is the timescale for resolving ongoing signage issues (e.g., Clifford Bridge Road)?
- Why is there stricter enforcement in other places (e.g., Barnsley) and at events (e.g., Ricoh) but not elsewhere?
- What is the process for reporting bins left out, and can it include GPS/photos?
- What is going to happen about serious issues in the city centre (violence, drugs, assaults)?

Youth Provision, Education & Skills

- What is being done to support young people aged 16–24, given gaps in provision?
- What apprenticeships or internships are being developed with organisations like PET-Xi?

- What is being done to expand SEND provision?
- How will schools be supported when they are “at breaking point”?
- How will the council work with faith groups or breakfast clubs to improve youth services?
- How will rising numbers of home-educated young people be supported?
- Could the youth service be brought back in-house rather than delivered via partners?
- How can better youth provision be created in both deprived and non-deprived areas?
- How can job-readiness funding and skills training be aligned with industry needs?

Housing, Growth & Infrastructure

- How will two schools cope with 600–700 new homes in Binley and Willenhall?

Parking & Street Management

- What is the council doing with additional revenue from parking charges?
- Why isn’t there visible benefit from parking charge income?
- Why isn’t leaf sweeping prioritised, given its impact on gullies and flooding?
- Could cameras be used to enforce red routes?

Feedback from Online Session 20 January 2026

10 people attended alongside 8 Council representatives.

Questions asked covered the following areas of concern:

Street Cleaning, Littering & Enforcement

- Concerns about ongoing littering problems.
- Questions on current cleaning efforts and enforcement levels.
- Interest in how to influence or change public behaviour

Waste & Recycling Policy Changes

- Clarification sought on new government recycling rules.
- Queries about separate food waste collections.
- Use of biodegradable bags.
- Introduction of new household waste containers.

Coventry Market & City Centre Redevelopment

- Concerns about how redevelopment will affect Coventry Market.
- Questions about support available to traders during transition.

Council Spending & Asset Purchases

- Questions around a £7.5m waste disposal item.
- Increased house purchases by the council.
- Whether these relate to specific acquisitions or funded programmes.

Home-to-School Transport Costs

- Concern over rising transport costs.
- Use of taxis.
- Exploration of alternative transport models.

Pavement Parking Enforcement

- Queries about enforcement plans and when new local authority powers will come into effect.

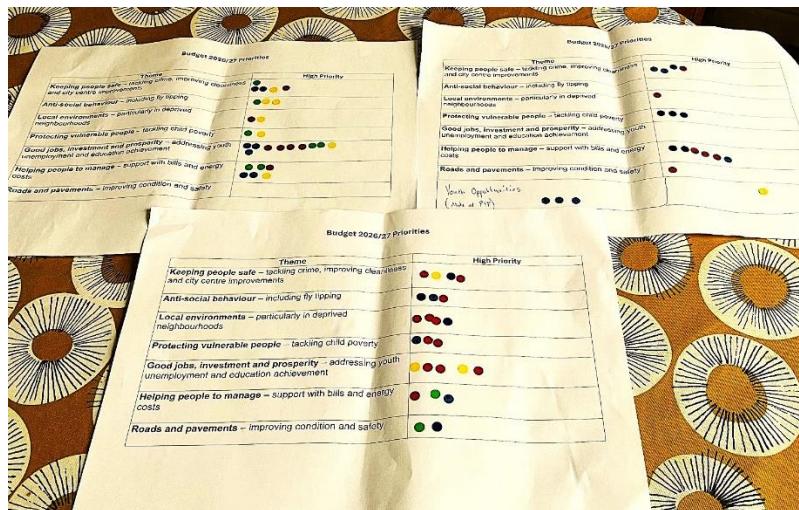
Software Licensing & Procurement

- Concerns about a reported overpayment on Microsoft licence contracts via Phoenix Software.

Feedback from Young People Session January 22 – Diamond Room 2

11 young people attended the session alongside Cllr Brown

Officers from, Childrens Services, Communications, Community Safety, Environmental Services, Finance and Performance and Planning



Theme	Number of Dots
Keeping people safe – tackling crime, improving cleanliness and city centre improvements	13
Anti-social behaviour – including fly tipping	6
Local environments – particularly in deprived neighbourhoods	7
Protecting vulnerable people – tackling child poverty	8
Good jobs, investment and prosperity – addressing youth unemployment and education achievement	15
Helping people to manage – support with bills and energy costs	15
Roads and pavements – improving condition and safety	3

Comments about proposed priorities:

Protecting vulnerable people, support for post 18 year olds

Prepare people moving from care – huge increase in Council Tax moving on from care (post 21)

Supporting people into work

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City centre improvements

Don't feel safe after 7pm – Council will never be able to influence anti-social behaviour

Gangs

Council tax, energy and gas bills – people not putting heat on - people might not be confident to come to the Council for help – need to go to families/mosques/WATCH

Energy providers charging more than they should

If you miss one council tax payment you have to pay for the whole year in one go

Fly tipping/littering Walsgrave Rd/CV1

Hillfields has neglected areas

Parts of city not clean – "Dirty Hill" – instead of Foleshill

City centre safety – need safer spaces, lots of older men sitting on benches

Attitudes towards different groups – violence against women, public transport

Help with bills and energy

Immigrants struggle to use online forms – need to move away from online options

Information about how to get rid of big items of rubbish if no car or money

Shopping in the city centre – rather go to Birmingham better shops – more make up shops not just Boots and Superdrug

What is missing from our priorities

Education

Youth provision – give young people somewhere to go to rather than into town

Need more youth groups – safe spaces to be with friends

Stuff to do apart from HAF

Online access is an issue for certain communities – especially if English is a second language need help navigating systems

Shout more about safe space and child friendly cov

City Council programmes in secondary schools to encourage extra-curricular activities outside the syllabus

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Abolish the Eurocentric curriculum Invest in social workshops in academic institutions

More investment in arts in secondary schools – drama/fine art/music – people are too academically focused to try and find a living

Cost of transport – transport between Coventry and Warwickshire is so expensive

Public transport too much congestion during rush hour need more buses for efficiency – delays impact on employee pay on the clock

Question areas asked at the Youth Budget Session

1. Cost of Living & Support for Care Leavers

- Strong concern about council tax increases for care leavers and a desire for a gradual transition into payments.

2. Lack of Youth Opportunities & Activities

- Young people feel there is little to do, leading to increased vulnerability to gang involvement and crime.
- Calls for more youth clubs, accessible parks, and seasonal activities—especially in winter.

3. Safety & Crime Concerns

- High-profile areas (e.g., McDonald's, The Burges) viewed as unsafe.
- Desire for more safe spaces, better promotion, and stronger preventative approaches rather than just policing.
- Increased police presence sometimes seen as escalating tension.

4. Awareness, Education & Early Intervention

- Need for early education in schools about gangs and safety—current interventions come too late (Yr 8/9).
- Requests for engaging external speakers, including those with lived experience.
- Calls for hotlines/services for care leavers and earlier, more accessible support.

5. Reaching Young People Not in School

- Significant gaps in provision for those not attending school, home-schooled, or socially isolated.
- Suggestions for HAF programme diversification, enrichment opportunities, and structured socialisation.

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6. Neurodiversity & Mental Health in Schools

- Concerns that schools often ostracise children with behavioural or mental health needs.
- Positive examples exist, but provision is inconsistent across schools.

7. Social Media Harm & Family Dynamics

- Recognition of the destructive impact of social media, extremist content, and online drug dealing.
- Mixed views on banning social media; challenges around what parents know about social media and online risks