



PUBLIC ATTITUDES TO COMMUNITY BUY-IN FOR WASTE AND RESOURCE INFRASTRUCTURE

Prepared by



NOTES FOR USE

The research in this report uses the social grade system to segment people who took part in the research. Social grade is the 'common currency' social classification used by the advertising industry and employed throughout marketing and market research.

The classification assigns every household to a grade, usually based upon the occupation and employment status of the chief income earner, but in some cases using other characteristics.

The table below illustrates this in more detail:

Social grade	Approximate proportion of the population	Social status	Chief income earner's occupation
A	3.20%	Upper Middle Class	Professionals, very senior managers in business or commerce.
B	17.35%	Middle Class	Intermediate managerial executives.
C1	30.23%	Lower Middle Class	Supervisory or clerical and junior managerial.
C2	21.75%	Skilled Working Class	Skilled manual workers.
D	13.19%	Working Class	Semi and unskilled manual workers.
E	14.28%	Those in receipt of the lowest levels of subsistence.	State pensioners or widows (no other earner), casual or lowest grade workers.

BASE DATA FOR GRAPHS

Figure	Base
1	Total (843)
2	Total (843), Male (405), Female (438), 16-24 (108), 25-34 (131), 35-44 (146), 45-54 (126), 55-64 (137), 65+ (195), AB (198), C1 (262), C2 (156), DE (227)
3	Total (843), Male (405), Female (438), 16-24 (108), 25-34 (131), 35-44 (146), 45-54 (126), 55-64 (137), 65+ (195), AB (198), C1 (262), C2 (156), DE (227)
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8	Those not aware of fact, Total (449), Male (213), Female (236), 16-24 (77), 25-34 (84), 35-44 (74), 45-54 (71), 55-64 (60), 65+ (83), AB (91), C1 (151), C2 (85), DE (122)
9	Total (843), Male (405), Female (438), 16-24 (108), 25-34 (131), 35-44 (146), 45-54 (126), 55-64 (137), 65+ (195), AB (198), C1 (262), C2 (156), DE (227)
10	Those not aware of fact, Total (488), Male (246), Female (242), 16-24 (87), 25-34 (92), 35-44 (82), 45-54 (71), 55-64 (64), 65+ (92), AB (107), C1 (158), C2 (87), DE (136)
11	Total (843), Male (405), Female (438), 16-24 (108), 25-34 (131), 35-44 (146), 45-54 (126), 55-64 (137), 65+ (195), AB (198), C1 (262), C2 (156), DE (227)
12	Those not aware of fact, Total (337), Male (152), Female (185), 16-24 (59), 25-34 (71), 35-44 (50), 45-54 (50), 55-64 (32), 65+ (75), AB (54), C1 (101), C2 (69), DE (113). Warning small base size, results are indicative only.
13	Total (843), Male (405), Female (438), 16-24 (108), 25-34 (131), 35-44 (146), 45-54 (126), 55-64 (137), 65+ (195), AB (198), C1 (262), C2 (156), DE (227)
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INTRODUCTION

We live in changing times. Yet in some respects, the challenge the UK faces in dealing with the need to reduce the amount of waste we send to landfill, recycle more and recover more renewable energy-from-waste does not change that rapidly.

We have made significant strides forward in the last decade to reduce landfill and recycle and reuse more waste. However, the UK still faces a major challenge to embed waste prevention, intensify our recycling activity and fill the gap where we once previously depended on landfill with treatment technologies that will complete the objective of reducing landfill to almost zero.

The barriers that remain a constant challenge to this objective are still strong, most notably in the lack of willingness of the general public to accept new waste and resource infrastructure – whether these be energy-from-waste facilities, composting facilities, anaerobic digestors or materials recovery facilities. It has often been stated that the planning system also often hinders rather than facilitates the development of the resource management infrastructure the country needs to meet European obligations and improve our country's resource efficiency.

SITA UK has long advocated engaging with local communities from the early stages of an intended development, working together as a partnership to ensure that the facility is a good neighbour, and that any benefits that the facility might bring can be shared with the host community. Much policy thinking has gone into the potential options available to developers and waste planning authorities that would encourage community buy-in, most notably work done by the Associate Parliamentary Sustainable Resource Group last year. However, little research has been done to find out what the public understand by community buy-in and their attitudes to waste in the context of being asked about community incentives for waste infrastructure.

To address this, SITA UK commissioned a research project from Ray Georgeson Resources, in collaboration with GfK NOP, to examine the public attitudes to 'community buy-in' in England. The overall aim of the research was to explore public attitudes to, and understanding of, the concept of 'community buy-in' for new infrastructure developments to manage waste and resource.

Specific objectives of the research were to:

Qualitatively

- + Understand how the public evaluate and value the concept of community buy-in.
- + Review current and new waste management techniques.
- + Inform the quantitative research design – wording and approach to the concept of 'community buy-in' (using the language of the public).

Quantitatively

- + Establish a baseline to evaluate the views of the general public regarding community buy-in for waste resource infrastructure.

The findings of this research are presented in this report. They present new insights into public understanding of and attitudes to an issue that has previously been the preserve of policy makers and analysts.

We are living in the context of a changing policy landscape. The Conservative and Liberal Democrat Coalition Government is pursuing a strong theme of decentralisation of decision making, localism, support for an incentive-based approach to policy rather than fines, bans or other regulation, decentralised energy generation and boosting renewable and low-carbon energy to meet our climate change targets.

We hope that the findings of this research encourage Government and local waste planners to look afresh at how community buy-in could be effectively used as a tool to support open and transparent delivery of new infrastructure with everyone gaining – the communities, the country and the climate.

THE RESEARCH

A BRIEF OUTLINE AND KEY FINDINGS ON GENERAL WASTE AWARENESS AND ATTITUDES

The research for this project was conducted in two stages during January and February 2011. Firstly, a short series of deliberative focus groups were held across England in January 2011. Deliberative focus groups were chosen as they run for a longer than usual time period (two hours), allowing the opportunity to explain new and complex issues to participants for the first time and then inviting the participants to express opinions and explore the issues from a more knowledgeable position.

The insights generated by these focus groups were then analysed by the Ray Georgeson Resources and GfK NOP teams and used to construct a short quantitative survey. This was conducted in February 2011 in face-to-face format in the participant's home, using the GfK NOP omnibus survey method. On this occasion, 985 adults aged 16 or over across the UK were interviewed. The quantitative data shown in this report uses the England only sections of data, for which there is a sample size of 843.

The full detail of the methodology used for this research is outlined in appendix one.

Given the very limited amount of public information available on community buy-in, the approach outlined above was chosen to ensure that enough time in both the focus groups and the household survey was made available. This was in order to explain the concept and also to build up towards asking specific questions about community buy-in by first focusing on some general contextual questions about public understanding of the current waste situation and attitudes to energy-from-waste facilities.

This section of the report provides a summary of the research findings and goes into more detail on the aspects relating to community buy-in as the focus of this report. However, the full detail of the research focussing on general contextual questions about public understanding of the current waste situation and attitudes to energy-from-waste facilities are described in appendix two.

In summary, the key findings in these contextual elements of the research were:

RECYCLING ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS

Residents' general knowledge about recycling facilities is very local, but they receive media influence from national press and television.

CURRENT WASTE DISPOSAL KNOWLEDGE

People typically did not think about what happened to their waste once it was collected from their doorstep. On reflection, they assumed recyclable materials went to a recycling plant and other waste to landfills.

LEVELS OF RECYCLING

In the focus groups, participants were surprised that as much as 39 per cent of household waste was sent for recycling and composting. This was repeated in the residents survey, where less than half (45 per cent) were aware that "nearly 40 per cent of household waste was sent for recycling, reuse and composting last year". Among those not aware of this fact, almost a quarter (23 per cent) were "surprised a lot" that this was the case.

LIMITED LANDFILL SPACE

Focus group participants found the fact that parts of the UK may only have enough landfill space to last six years as sobering and on reflection soon concluded that it made sense that landfill was no longer a sustainable method of waste disposal. In the residents' survey, the majority of respondents (60 per cent) were unaware of the limited availability of landfill space, and when asked if they were surprised by this fact over two thirds (67 per cent) said they were, with 38 per cent expressing a lot of surprise.

EU TARGETS FOR WASTE

When presented with the fact that we need to find alternatives to landfill to meet EU targets and encourage waste minimisation, recycling and energy recovery, the response of the focus groups was to seek more information about those alternatives.

There was high awareness of the role of the EU in setting targets, with the residents survey showing three in five (58 per cent) were aware of this, with some emphasis towards higher awareness amongst higher social grades (AB – 71 per cent, DE – 49 per cent).

ENERGY-FROM-WASTE FACILITIES

In the focus groups, using the deliberative approach, most participants had not heard of the term 'energy-from-waste'. Using explanation and illustration, most participants were interested to learn more about the various technologies available and were interested to know whether energy generated at a local facility could financially benefit the local community and local residents in the facility's vicinity.

When asked in the residents' survey, a strong majority (79 per cent) felt that energy-from-waste was a good idea, with only six per cent believing it to be a bad idea.

BUILDING WASTE DISPOSAL FACILITIES LOCALLY

The focus group discussions highlighted the contrast between most people's general support for the idea of energy-from-waste and their attitudes to local siting of facilities. The rural focus groups (in Yattendon, Berkshire) expressed strong local concern, while our urban focus groups (in Leeds) expressed more openness to the idea, especially if sites in industrial areas are chosen.

Participants expressed interest in the aesthetics of facility design and were positive about the use of modern design to blend facilities in to their local environment.

Of greater concern were issues related to perception of pollution, property values and traffic. Participants seek reassurances from developers and local waste planners about health risks, odours and noise.

These insights chime strongly with previous research and understanding in these areas. When asked in the residents' survey about support for locally sited waste treatment facilities (based on the acceptance that waste should not be transported too far from where it is generated so new facilities are needed across the country), a quarter of respondents (25 per cent) strongly supported the idea, with just 12 per cent strongly opposed. Overall, 58 per cent said they would support the idea (strongly or slightly).

COMMENTARY ON THIS PART OF THE RESEARCH

Much of the insight generated on general waste awareness, recycling attitudes and knowledge, and attitudes to energy-from-waste are very similar to previous research in this area. We understand that the public seldom thinks about waste and has limited understanding of what happens to waste resources. The public generally are supportive of the idea and principle of energy-from-waste as a concept, but express concerns about local siting and perceptions of pollution, risk and property values. All of this is important context to the introduction of the idea of community buy-in, which will be reported in more detail in the next section. The use of deliberative focus groups and 'lead-in' general questions on waste (in the residents' survey) effectively prepared the ground for introducing the idea of community buy-in, explaining the options and seeking the public's view. This is the heart of the new insight generated by this research.

KEY FINDINGS ON COMMUNITY BUY-IN

This section of the report provides full detail on our findings about the public's views on community buy-in. We have included in the commentary the facts and statements presented to focus group participants and residents interviewed in their homes **highlighted in green** and short descriptions of the options available for community buy-in **highlighted in orange**.

These options were chosen to mirror the key options outlined in the policy research undertaken in 2010 by APSRG, **Waste Management Infrastructure: Incentivising Community Buy-in**, available at <http://www.policyconnect.org.uk>

It should be noted that where full quotation marks are used, this represents words used by participants in both the focus groups and in the face-to-face home surveys.

COMMUNITY BUY-IN: THE BASIC IDEA

Firstly, the public were asked about the basic idea that local communities that agree to an energy-from-waste facility should receive something in recognition.

FACT SHOWN TO RESIDENTS AND FOCUS GROUPS

It has been suggested that local communities who agree to an energy-from-waste treatment facility in their local area should receive something in recognition of this from the waste management organisation.

This idea of community buy-in received mixed responses across the focus groups. Across the focus groups, participants noted that they expected some kind of local investment from new developments and resultantly did not find this surprising or out of the ordinary.

Some participants expressed suspicion towards community buy-in, and saw this idea as a "bribe" or "sweetener".

 *"It's another form of bribery isn't it? All these ideas are all well and good if they can give us 100 per cent guarantee that we're not going to be affected, apart from having to look at a big building."*  LEEDS, SCEPTIC

 *"The reason they're giving us sweeteners is because they know nobody wants it at all."*  YATTENDON, ADOPTERS

Others viewed community buy-in more positively, as a form of compensation.

 *"I think I would not expect something, but it would be nice to get, you know. Even if it's just lower council tax – they're not collecting rubbish. Or we get cheaper electricity or something."*  LEEDS, SCEPTIC

 *"At the end of the day you may as well go along with it because they're going to build it anyway. So you may as well go along and benefit from it rather than getting nothing out of it because they've got to be built, and they will push planning permission through and they will build them."*  YATTENDON, ADOPTER

 *"It's just a deal isn't it at the end of the day? They're giving something to get what they want and we give in to what they want to get something off them that we want."*  LEEDS, BELIEVER

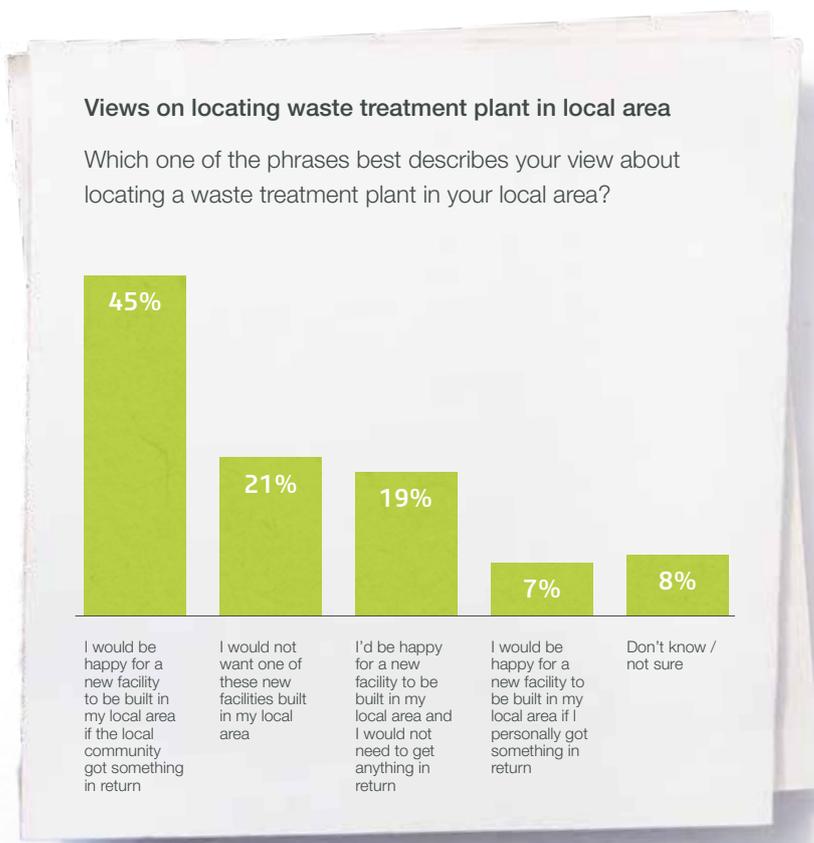
Participants were keen to note that public opinion regarding building local waste facilities was likely to be greatly affected by people's knowledge of the current waste situation in the UK. It was suggested that people were more likely to be open to the idea of a local facility if they understood the limitations of landfill and what a facility would do and look like.

 *"I think that they just need to educate us that it's not going to be a bad thing. When we first heard about it we were imagining this great sort of landfill site, the smells and everything, so I think the community needs to be educated first before they then say 'well, this could be on your doorstep'."*  YATTENDON, SCEPTIC

In the residents' survey, it was found that just under half (45 per cent) would be happy for a new facility to be built locally if the local community got something in return. A further fifth (19 per cent) would be happy to have a waste treatment plant in their local area and would not need to get anything in return. However, a fifth (21 per cent) would not want a facility in their local area whether they personally or the local community got something in return. Those against a local facility were slightly skewed towards females (female; 23 per cent, male; 19 per cent) and those in the highest social grade group (AB; 26 per cent).

This evidence indicates a strong core of resistance to the building of any new facilities in a locality, regardless of improved knowledge of the need to meet EU targets, the diminishing landfill capacity or even the prospect of an individual or community incentive. However, it also indicates a good degree of support for the idea of accepting a new facility if the community got something (52 per cent supporting community or individual benefits) with an altruistic one in five happy to accept facilities without anything in return – almost exactly asymmetrical with the level of core opposition.

FIGURE ONE



MODELS OF COMMUNITY BUY-IN

The research then asked participants to examine several models of community buy-in, as identified in the APSRG report: the use of community funds; utility discounts; and community ownership of facilities. In each case, participants were presented with the basic idea behind each model and asked for their views and reactions, which are discussed in the following sections.

COMMUNITY FUNDS

SHORT DESCRIPTION SHOWN TO RESIDENTS AND FOCUS GROUPS

Community funds

- + The waste management facility gives an annual sum of money to the community.
- + A local committee representing community interests plans how this fund is invested and used.
- + Examples for how the fund could be used includes: local community centre, local library, local services such as transport for the elderly.

Local investment was in fact seen as a normal activity for any large organisation building and entering a community.

 "I almost feel like it's going to become part and parcel of large companies in local areas."

 YATTENDON, SCEPTIC

With this in mind, participants envisaged that the types of activities the waste facility company could carry out as part of general local investment included:

- + Improved waste collection
- + Landscaping of the immediate area surrounding the facility
- + Regeneration of local amenities
- + Improved infrastructure such as local roads that will be used by the facility
- + Generating local jobs and guaranteeing to employ percentage of staff from the local area

 "I see it more as possibly something like, you know, tart up the town centre a bit and put some money back in."

 LEEDS, BELIEVER

 "It would create jobs as well for the local people."  LEEDS, BELIEVER

These ideas and suggestions were typically informed by experiences of how other companies had made local investments.

 "I know when they opened up a Tesco superstore in Seacroft...they did some improvements close by. I think that they did something like made some more play areas for the kids and also did some road improvements. They just made the area look a bit nicer."

 LEEDS, BELIEVER

When considering the idea of community funds, participants found it easy to generate ways in which funds could be used in their local area. Suggestions included:

- + Supporting local charities
- + Social events and activities for local groups
- + School investment

 "The school my son is at, whenever they raise money Vodafone match it, so we have a like for like contribution...something like that is invaluable."  YATTENDON, SCEPTIC

- + Community facilities such as:
 - » Park and play area for children
 - » Sports centre / leisure centre
 - » Health walk-in centre
 - » Library
 - » Community centre

 "Something that the whole community could benefit from."  LEEDS, BELIEVER

- + Local infrastructure
 - » Improved public transport
 - » Local bus station
 - » Footpaths
 - » Defences for bad weather such as flood defences and salt trucks

Some participants also suggested that community funds could be used to resurrect local projects that the local council had stopped due to financial cuts. However, participants were keen to note that the community fund should not be used to finance council activities still within the remit of the council.

Across the focus groups there was discussion regarding who would be in control of the community funds and some concern about how fair spending decisions would be. Participants sought reassurances that the committee in charge of funding decisions would be representative of the community, and it was suggested that committee include representatives from the waste facility company. Participants also sought reassurances that the community buy-in would be a long-term arrangement.

 *"I think it's quite good the way that it's done with annual sum of money so it's sustained and you can look at different areas of community year on year."*  LEEDS, BELIEVER

 *"It needs to be a long term thing that ties them into the community."*  YATTENDON, ADOPTER

Across the qualitative research participants considered a community fund to be a good idea and could easily see the benefits of the method.

 *"If they spend it the right way, the community would benefit."*  LEEDS, SCEPTIC

However, some queried to what extent they would benefit from it.

 *"To be honest I'm unmarried, no children and how much I use community facilities is a bit minimal."*  LEEDS, BELIEVER

 *"Lots of people don't join in the community things."*  LEEDS, SCEPTIC

Participants, particularly those in Yattendon, also queried whether community benefits were enough to compensate the personal impact of a local facility.

 *"That doesn't directly help the people who have lost a lot of value in their house."*

 YATTENDON, ADOPTER

 *"I'm not bothered at all. Why should I be? If it's going to disrupt my life then I want some cash... that wouldn't affect me [community fund]... I don't get involved in anything locally."*

 YATTENDON, SCEPTIC

For these participants, personal benefits were preferred.

In the residents' survey, the idea of a community fund managed by a local committee was tested and levels of agreement with the idea gauged. Overall, 75 per cent agreed with the idea (strongly or slightly), and 37 per cent agreed strongly. Levels of agreement were highest among those living in rural areas (rural, strongly agree, 50 per cent and those aged 55+, 43 per cent).

FIGURE TWO

Level of agreement with the energy-from-waste proposal – community fund

It has been suggested that local communities who agree to have an energy-from-waste facility in their area should receive money from the waste management company in recognition of their contribution to waste management. The waste management company would give an annual sum of money to the community, and a local committee representing community interests would plan how this fund is invested and used.

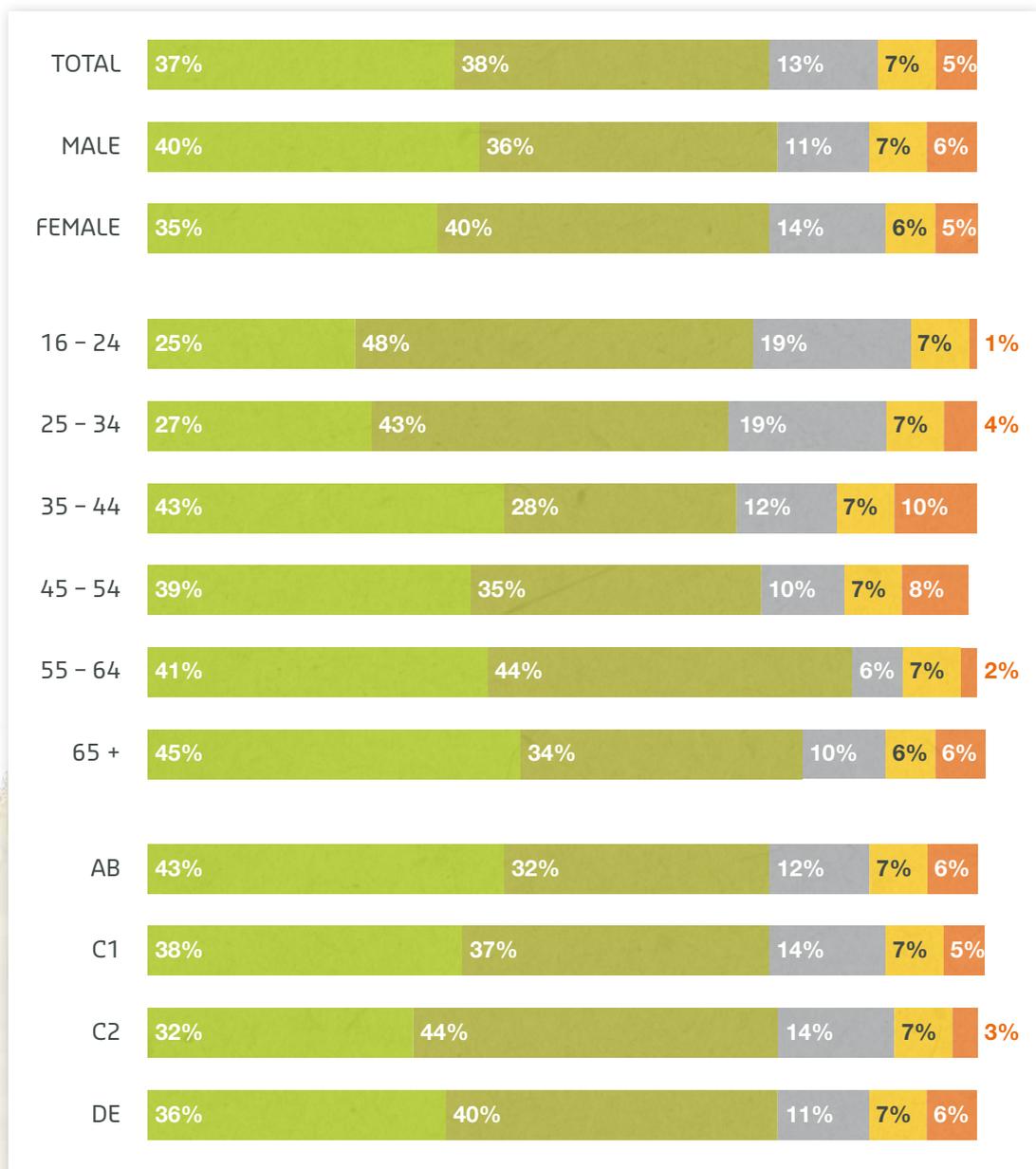
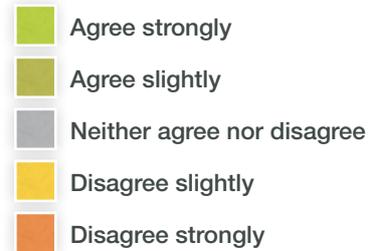
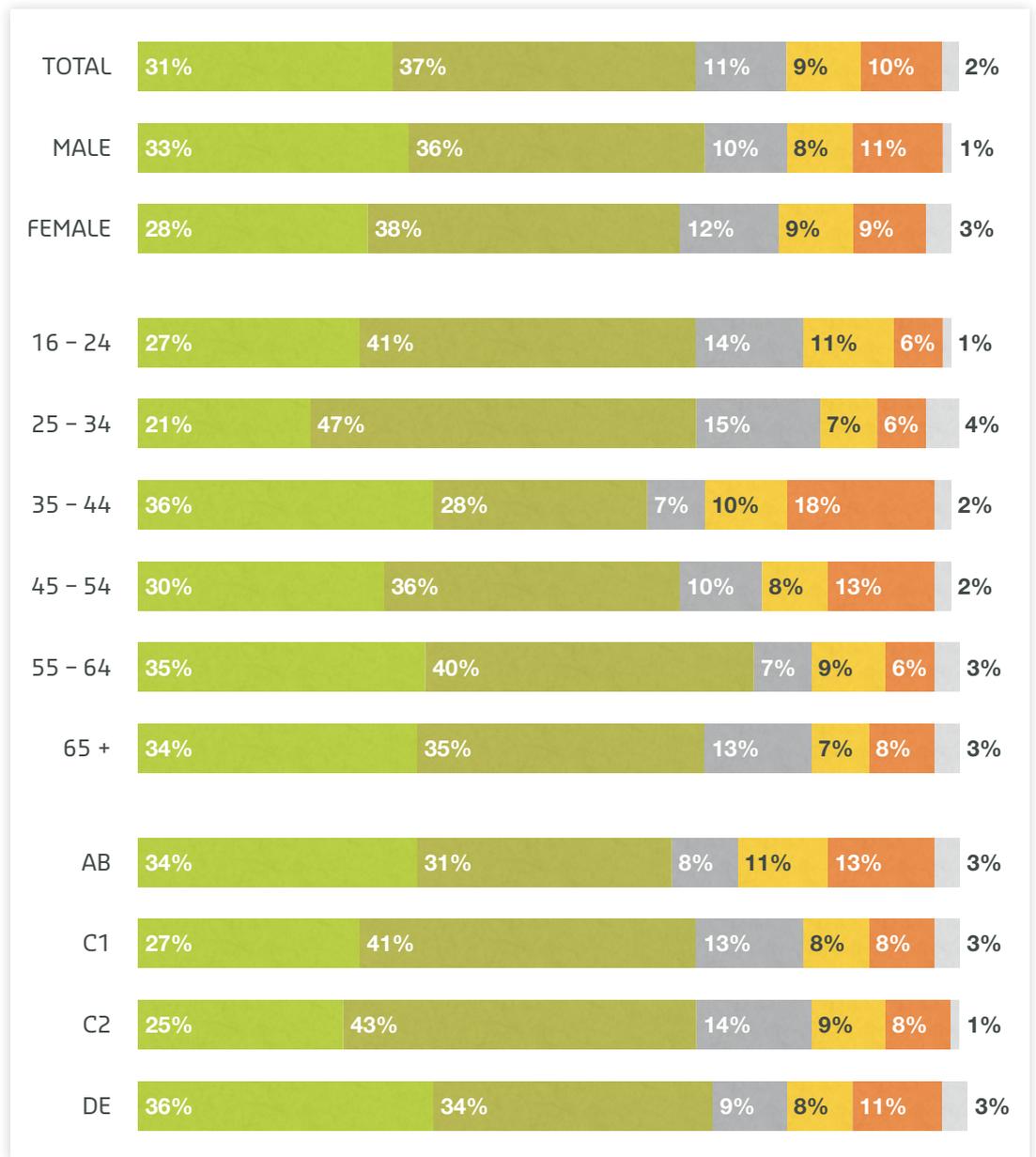


FIGURE THREE

Level of support for the energy-from-waste proposal – community fund

It has been suggested that local communities who agree to have an energy-from-waste facility in their area should receive money from the waste management company in recognition of their contribution to waste management. The waste management company would give an annual sum of money to the community, and a local committee representing community interests would plan how this fund is invested and used.



Support for a waste management facility if a community fund was provided was positive with two thirds (68 per cent) saying that they would support having a waste management facility in their local area on this basis. This level of support was 10 per cent higher than when the idea was presented without a community fund earlier in the interview.

Levels of opposition to an energy-from-waste facility being built locally even if a community fund was offered were highest amongst the higher social grade groups (AB; 24 per cent oppose slightly or oppose strongly) and those aged 35 - 54 (25 per cent).

UTILITY DISCOUNTS

The second community buy-in proposal that was tested both qualitatively and quantitatively was the idea of local residents being offered a discount on their energy bills.

SHORT DESCRIPTION SHOWN TO RESIDENTS AND FOCUS GROUPS

Utility discounts

- ⊕ Local residents to use energy from local energy-from-waste facility.
- ⊕ Local residents are given a discount on household utility bills including gas and electricity.
- ⊕ Where a waste management facility generates energy, local residents can buy this energy at a discounted cost.

Across all of the focus groups utility discounts were spontaneously mentioned as a benefit of having a local facility.

💬 *"If we can produce energy from some of it, it could hold costs down and / or produce jobs."*
 👤 YATTENDON, ADOPTER

Some participants had read in the news that individuals could supply their own energy via sustainable technologies such as solar panels, and so had immediately assumed that a local energy-from-waste facility could provide energy for local residents.

💬 *"It's creating energy, cheaper electricity, cheaper gas."* 👤 LEEDS, BELIEVER

💬 *"If you said to them that we're going to build this...we're going to produce this amount of energy, we're going to make our money by selling 90 per cent of the energy but 10 per cent is going back to you as a community."* 👤 LEEDS, BELIEVER

When considering the idea of utility discounts participants noted that it would be important to ensure that the basic cost, before discount, was comparable and benchmarked against the prevailing energy costs.

💬 *"If you're buying it [energy] from British Gas and all of a sudden E.ON are doing it cheaper then you're going to be ripped off and you don't want to think that you have to check, you want to think that they're looking after your own interests so they're going to check and if it [the price] drops, then they drop [the price of energy sold to the community]."* 👤 YATTENDON, SCEPTIC

Across the research there was strong support for utility discounts. It was seen as a fair option that was financially beneficial to everyone in the local area.

💬 *"Money's like the bottom line isn't it...a financial benefit, obviously it's going to make a large proportion of people happy."*
 👤 LEEDS, BELIEVER

💬 *"Everyone uses gas and electricity don't they... so everybody is going to benefit."*
 👤 LEEDS, SCEPTIC

Participants felt that the discount should be substantial for those with a facility in close proximity to their home, and suggested that a tiered approach based on distance to facility would be a fair way to put this method into practice.

💬 *"I think it would have to be a substantial discount for those with it on their doorstep."*
 👤 YATTENDON, ADOPTER

Quantitatively, discounts on energy bills were viewed extremely positively with over four in five (83 per cent) agreeing with this idea and over half (53 per cent) agreeing strongly.

FIGURE FOUR

Level of agreement with the energy-from-waste proposal – discounts on energy bills

It has been suggested that local communities who agree to have an energy-from-waste facility in their local area should be given discounts on their energy bills funded by the government, in recognition of their contribution to waste management. Local residents would buy energy from the local energy-from-waste facility and receive a discount on their gas and electricity bills.

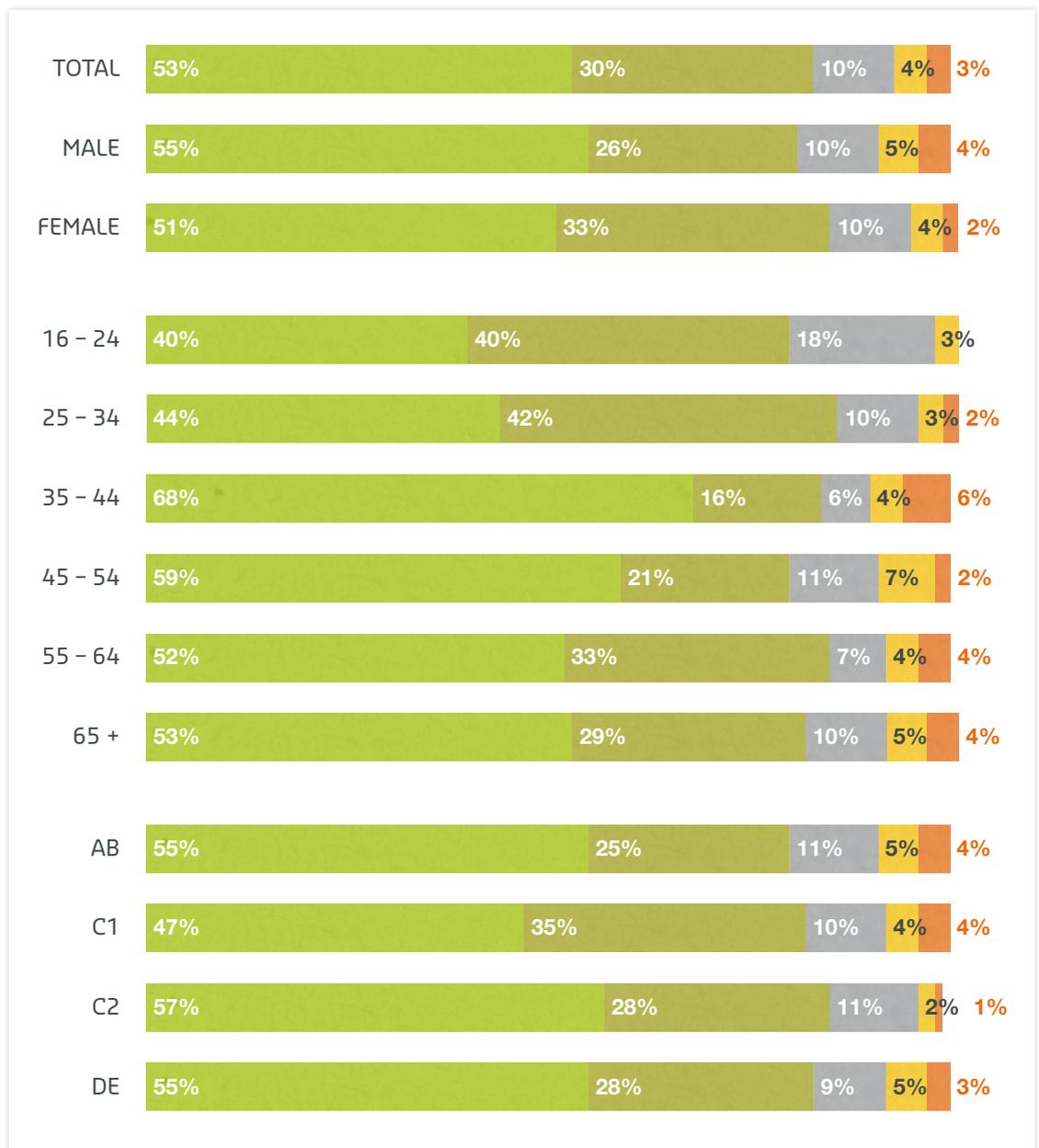
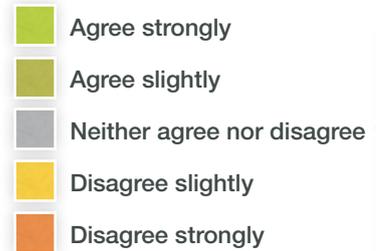
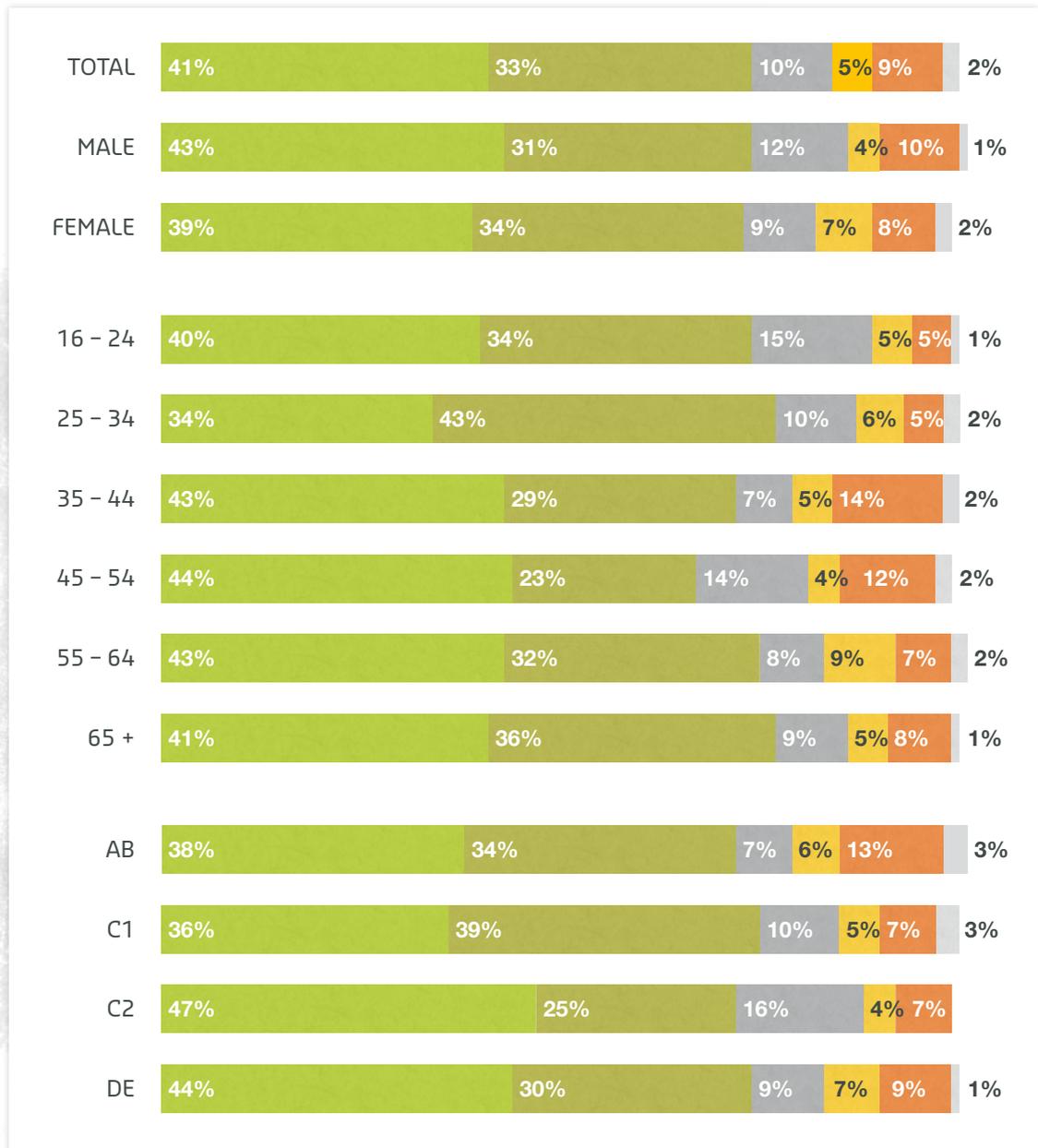


FIGURE FIVE

Level of support for the energy-from-waste proposal – discounts on energy bills

It has been suggested that local communities who agree to have an energy-from-waste facility in their local area should be given discounts on their energy bills funded by the government, in recognition of their contribution to waste management. Local residents would buy energy from the local energy-from-waste facility and receive a discount on their gas and electricity bills.



When asked whether they would support having a waste facility located locally on this basis, three in four (74 per cent) supported the idea. This was six per cent higher than the proportion supporting local waste management facilities with a community fund. Just one in seven (14 per cent) opposed the idea. However, this rose to a fifth amongst the highest social grade group (AB; 19 per cent).

COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP

The third community buy-in proposal that was tested qualitatively was the idea of local residents being offered an element of community ownership of the waste management facility.

SHORT DESCRIPTION SHOWN TO RESIDENTS AND FOCUS GROUPS

Community ownership

- + Local residents own shares in the energy-from-waste facility.
- + If there is a profit, local residents receive an annual payout from their shares.
- + A percentage of the profits are also spent on community and local environmental initiatives.

Across the focus groups, community ownership was the least appealing method of community buy-in. Only a couple of participants spontaneously suggested the idea of the community having some kind of ownership in a local facility and this was often driven by a desire for facility profits to be spent on local investment (as per the community fund method).

When compared to utility discounts, community ownership was considered more of an 'unknown quantity' and participants expressed concerns that shares did not guarantee a financial payout. Further to this, participants disliked that the financial benefit was unknown.

 *"I think people want something quite quick and quite fast, something that might or might not be good. Something tangible...instead of hanging around for something that might or might not be good."*  YATTENDON, SCEPTIC

It was clear across the focus groups that not all participants fully understood how community ownership would work; the word 'shares' often generated confusion as participants associated this with high level financial dealings. As a result a number of participants remarked that they would not trust this scheme.

 *"I'd be very nervous of it, I don't trust it."*
 LEEDS, BELIEVER

 *"You're a bit of a risk taker because obviously they can go up as well as down or you could get like maybe a lower rate, maybe not as much of a saving on your energy."*  LEEDS, BELIEVER

Community ownership was particularly disliked in Leeds. In Yattendon, a couple of participants in each focus group were positive towards the idea of shares. These participants tended to be more familiar with the idea of shares and confident in how the scheme would work.

As a result of the focus group findings relating to community ownership the decision was taken not to test this proposal at the quantitative stage.

PERSONAL VERSUS COMMUNITY BENEFITS

When considering their overall preference for the community buy-in methods, qualitative participants tended to focus on whether they would prefer personal benefits (such as utility discounts) or community benefits (such as use of a community fund).

Across the groups, the preferred method of community buy-in was compensating local residents with personal benefits.

 *"It's much nicer to have help paying the bills."*
 YATTENDON, ADOPTER

 *"Personally I'd choose the free heat and power."*
 YATTENDON, ADOPTER

 *"At the end of the day I think utility discounts are going to win. If you asked the community what do you want – a library or do you want cheaper electricity – I think people as a whole will go for cheaper fuel, cheaper energy."*
 LEEDS, BELIEVER

 *"My main concern would be if it was like a community buy-in and the money went to the community that I wouldn't personally get any benefit whatsoever."*  LEEDS, BELIEVER

Preference for personal benefits was heightened when participants considered the proximity of the facility to their home. Participants generally agreed that if a facility were to be sited in their direct local neighbourhood, or in view of their home, they were more likely to favour personal compensation.

 *"If it's five miles away I won't even know that it's there and neither will anyone looking at my house ... but if it's 500 yards up the road then those are the people who need to be compensated for that stress."*
 YATTENDON, ADOPTER

Participants felt that those closer to the facility should receive greater compensation compared to those living further away as they envisaged that those close by would be greater affected by the presence of the facility.

 *"It [the community] should benefit in some way but those closer to the facility should benefit more than those further away."*
 YATTENDON, ADOPTER

 *"It's a good idea but they'd have to do something a bit more special for those closer to it."*  YATTENDON, ADOPTER

 *"I live in a built up area. I mean if it was one or two miles away I wouldn't see it so it wouldn't really bother me I don't think."*
 LEEDS, BELIEVER

Overall, participants agreed that any personal compensation should be tiered so that those closer to the facility received greater compensation compared to those living further away.

 *"If you're living close to it you want some compensation for you – for loss of money on your house, for loss of quality of life in a way."*
 YATTENDON, ADOPTER

Community benefits were popular, but considered less of an attractive method of community buy-in when compared to personal financial benefits. Some participants agreed that those living further away from the facility would be less affected by the facility, and as a result felt that community benefits would be more of an appropriate and satisfactory method for these people.

 *"If I had something like this [referring to the site from the Isle of Man, see appendix two] a couple of miles down the road then it really wouldn't bother me at all so I think my preference would be towards the community. But if I had this humungous thing [referring to Teesside facility, see appendix two] down the end of my road then yes, I would want money back for that because I'd have to see that."*
 YATTENDON, SCEPTIC

In Leeds, a couple of participants were extremely community minded and expressed a preference for community benefits. These participants were able to identify specific community facilities that they strongly believed the community needed. This included a local health walk-in centre.

 *"I'd much rather build it, build a school, build a health centre that everybody can benefit from."*
 LEEDS, SCEPTIC

Community benefits were also popular among parents, who felt that school investment would be an extremely valuable use of community funds.

It should be noted that across the qualitative research, participants assumed that any new company building in the local area would provide some element of local investment as a matter of course. They envisaged that this would be separate from any community buy-in for local residents.

OTHER COMMUNITY BUY-IN METHODS

Across the qualitative research participants were asked to suggest alternative methods of community buy-in and all focus groups suggested Council Tax reduction. This was very popular and seen as an attractive personal financial benefit.

 *“People would be a lot more willing to accept it as well if you could make money out of it...£20 off your Council Tax or whatever.”*

 LEEDS, BELIEVER

 *“If we as a community are supplying them with that waste to create energy and earn money, then there must be, not free Council Tax, but some sort of benefit.”*  YATTENDON, SCEPTIC

 *“[With a] Council Tax [reduction] you can decide what you use that money for, so if you want cheaper energy, take the saving from the Council Tax and get better insulation, get better double glazing...”*  LEEDS, BELIEVER

 *“Maybe cheaper Council Tax because there is a charge on your Council Tax for waste removal, if that could be taken off because it’s a local thing.”*  LEEDS, BELIEVER

As with utility discounts, a Council Tax reduction was seen as fair and something that all residents would benefit from. Some also suggested that the level of Council Tax reduction should be tiered and greater for those living closest to the facility.

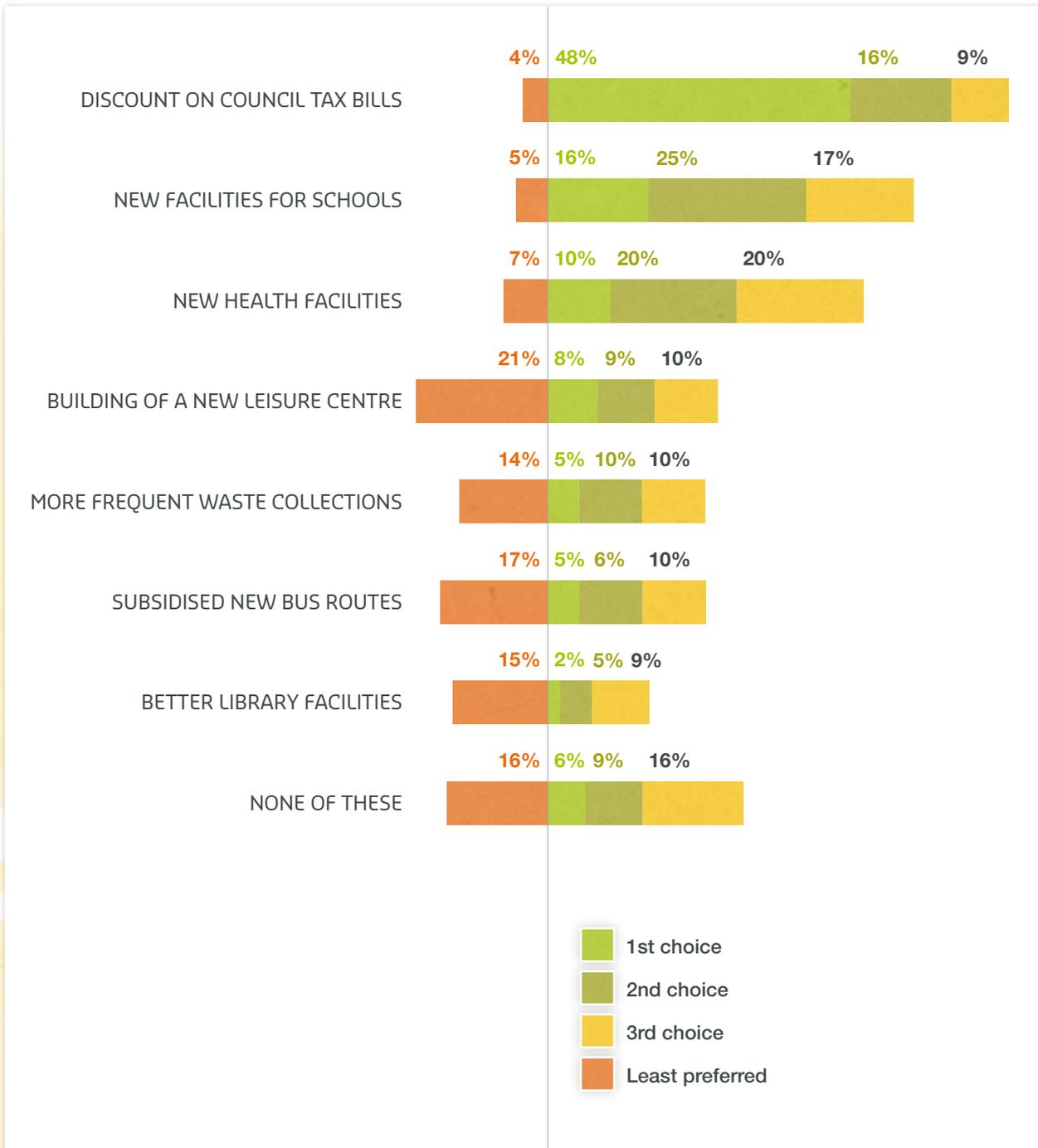
These qualitative findings were confirmed at the quantitative stage. Respondents were presented with a number of different ways in which local communities could benefit from having a waste management facility located in their local area and asked to rank them in order of preference. Almost half (48 per cent) chose discounts on Council Tax bills as their most preferred option (from the list presented) for supporting the local community if an energy-from-waste facility was to be built in the local area.

New schools (16 per cent first choice) and health facilities (10 per cent first choice) were the next most preferred options, whilst building a new leisure centre or subsidising a new bus route were the least preferred options.

FIGURE SIX

Preferred method of supporting local communities who adopt an energy-from-waste facility in their area

The government is considering different ways in which it could support local communities that agree to have an energy-from-waste facility in their area. Here is a list of different options. Please could you tell me which option you would most prefer if an energy-from-waste facility was located in your area?



CONCLUSIONS

The overall aim of the research was to explore public attitudes to the concept of 'community buy-in' for new infrastructure developments to manage waste and resources.

Whilst there was some awareness that landfill space is limited and that EU targets are in place to encourage waste minimisation, awareness of the term energy-from-waste was new to many. However, once the concept had been described the vast majority agreed that burning waste to produce energy was a good idea.

The majority supported the idea of having a facility built locally so that waste would not need to be transported far from where it was generated, although only a quarter strongly supported the idea. Qualitatively, concerns were raised regarding aesthetics, pollution, impact on property prices and associated increases in traffic.

The level of support for a local facility increased when a community fund was proposed, and even more so with discounts off utility bills. The latter was seen as a fair option that was financially beneficial to all those living locally. The importance of fairness was also highlighted when alternative methods of community buy-in were considered, and of these a discount on council tax bills was by far the preferred option.

In conclusion, it is clear that support for a local waste facility increased significantly when community buy-in was offered, notably with personal benefits such as discounts off energy bills or reduction in council tax bills.

This research has produced evidence that, for the first time, has assessed and quantified public views about community buy-in for waste infrastructure. It shows that, when presented with information about the options available, the need to reduce landfill and the limits to future availability of landfill, the public is largely willing to support the use of energy-from-waste technology as part of our drive to recycle more and recover value from waste – but with the addition of a benefit for the community and the householders living in the vicinity of a facility.

It also shows that the public continue to require reassurance, information and transparency about perceived pollution risks, noise, fumes and traffic concerns. These ‘disamenity’ issues have not diminished in prominence in the public’s thinking.

What is different though is a strong indication that specific community buy-in models – particularly the use of community funds and especially the use of personal incentives such as utility discounts – do encourage the public to be more accommodating about the need for infrastructure, even within their own locality. It is interesting that, even in the era of the ‘big society’, it is the individual householder benefit which carried most support, with a certain amount of scepticism shown about the role of community leaders in allocating funds for community benefit.

We consider this to be an important evidence-based message for politicians and policy makers. Adoption of a community buy-in approach to delivering new infrastructure does not remove the need for high-quality public and community engagement, good impartial information about technologies, risks and benefits, or the need for clarity and openness in the development of waste plans and the identification of sites for new facilities. What it does do is inject a note of realism into the complex pirouette that is the relationship between waste facility developers, local authority waste planners, local politicians and the general public. In the spirit of the ‘localism’ agenda that is starting to influence future policy, it offers the prospect of a strong injection of real localism into any local debate about what should be done with the communities’ waste within that community.

It could have the potential to completely turn on its head the way that local authority waste planners approach the issue of community engagement and community buy-in to their proposals by consulting with the community and securing community buy-in at the early stages of waste planning, long before proposals are brought forward from competing technology providers.

In that spirit, we conclude by offering the following policy recommendations:

1. Further detailed research is needed to establish appropriate levels of community buy-in incentive such as utility bill discounts and qualification through proximity to a facility. Our research has established levels of support for the principle, but consciously did not attempt to extend to the level of detail needed on costs, incentives and proximity that will be needed.
2. Where a utility discount approach to community buy-in is established, this should be retained with the property that is in proximity to a facility, not to the property owner or tenant at the time the plant is developed. The addition of established, long-term utility bill discounts at properties should be a feature of property descriptions when on the sales market, and may prove to be a value stabiliser or enhancer.
3. Local authorities should seek to engage their community on the principle and detail of community buy-in at the early stage of consultation about waste plans. This has the potential to be a positive feature of waste planning and consultation and the principle of establishing the requirement for community buy-in should be delivered before going to procurement for facilities. Leaving potential bidders to vie for contracts using community buy-in as a potential lever would be counterproductive and run the risk of diminishing the real value of the community buy-in approach.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND MORE INFORMATION

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The research elements of this report were written by Heather Bredee of GfK NOP, with introduction, research summary, commentary and policy recommendations written by Ray Georgeson of Ray Georgeson Resources. Editing of the report was done by Ray Georgeson of Ray Georgeson Resources.

If you would like to discuss the findings of this research in more detail, you are welcome to contact:

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APPENDIX ONE

Methodology

A two-stage qualitative and quantitative programme was conducted, allowing the qualitative findings to feed into the development of the quantitative work.

QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY AND SAMPLE

Two deliberative focus groups were held across England, each lasting two hours. Two focus groups were held in a rural South location (Yattendon) and two focus groups were held in an urban North location (Leeds). Up to eight participants attended each group.

The focus groups were 'deliberative' in style, running for longer than traditional focus groups in order to explain a number of new and complex issues to participants for the first time. Once explained, participants were invited to debate and explore the issues from a more knowledgeable position.

The structure of the focus groups was the same in each group, initially putting household waste into context and discussing current behaviour and knowledge, before moving on to look at the current situation for waste disposal in the UK, alternative methods of waste disposal including energy-from-waste and finally, focussing on reactions to community buy-in.

QUALITATIVE SAMPLE

The sample for the qualitative research was defined by participant's age (24 - 44 years and 45+) and their green attitudes and behaviours – including both green adopters and green sceptics. On the right is a table outlining the sample:

Yattendon (South, rural)	Leeds (North, urban)
Group one	Group three
+ Green adopters	+ Green adopters
+ 25 - 44 years	+ 45+ years
+ All to be homeowners / lived for 3+ years in their local area	+ All to be homeowners / lived for 3+ years in their local area
+ Spread of BC1C2D	+ Spread of BC1C2D
Group two	Group four
+ Green sceptics	+ Green sceptics
+ 45+ years	+ 25 - 44 years
+ All to be homeowners / lived for 3+ years in their local area	+ All to be homeowners / lived for 3+ years in their local area
+ Spread of BC1C2D	+ Spread of BC1C2D

QUANTITATIVE METHODOLOGY AND SAMPLE

Interviews were undertaken face to face, in residents' homes, interviewing was conducted using Computer Aided Personal Interviewing (CAPI) from 17 - 22 February 2011. Interviewing was conducted on the GfK NOP Random Location Omnibus (RLO). A Random Location sample methodology with adults aged 16+ across the UK was adopted. This means that each interviewer must interview within an output area and the quotas are different for each area in order to reflect the demographic profile of that area. The quotas are set in terms of age and sex within working status. No quota is set for social class, as the selection of output areas ensures that the sample is balanced in this respect. Minor weighting is then applied to the data to ensure that it is fully representative of the UK population. Due to the weighting of data, graph totals vary from 99 per cent to 101 per cent.

Government Office Region (GOR)	Number of interviews completed	Weighted number of interviews
Scotland	70	84
North East	42	41
North West	105	110
Yorkshire & Humber	83	84
Ulster	14	28
East Midlands	75	71
West Midlands	110	86
Wales	58	48
Eastern	86	92
London	141	123
South East	114	134
South West	87	85
Total	985	985

A total of 985 interviews were completed and the table on the left shows the number of interviews conducted within each Government Office Region (GOR) and the weighted number of interviews upon which the data in the report is based.

Please note that all quantitative data shown in this report is based on England data only for which there is an unweighted sample size of 843 (with a weighted sample size of 825).

Not all differences in the data are real and it is therefore necessary to view the confidence limits of this data. The confidence limits of this data (if assumed a purely random sample) are the chances of 95 in 100 that the observed percentage, being estimated by the survey, lies within a range equal to this percentage plus or minus the number of percentage points shown in the table below.

Sample size	Observed percentage							
	5 or 95	10 or 90	15 or 85	20 or 80	25 or 75	30 or 70	40 or 60	50
1000±%	1.4	1.9	2.3	2.5	2.8	2.9	3.0	3.1

For example, if 20 per cent of the total sample of 1,000 adults agree with a statement, you can be 95 per cent certain that the figure for the population lies between 17.5 per cent and 22.5 per cent (20%±2.5%).

APPENDIX TWO

Public responses to opening questions: current waste situation and energy-from-waste facilities, attitudes and awareness

RECYCLING ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS

Qualitatively it was found that research participants had differing attitudes towards recycling and varied levels of recycling behaviours. There was much discussion about what could and could not be recycled in different local areas, and participants listed the types of recycling facilities available to them. Whilst most participants were recycling something, those less committed to recycling cited the lack of convenience in recycling and separating out different recyclable materials.

Participants based their knowledge of recycling and waste disposal on the recycling facilities available in their local area and the communications that their local authority provided regarding this. The media also played a large role in shaping knowledge regarding recycling and waste. Sources of information frequently mentioned across the focus groups included documentaries such as Panorama, Undercover Boss and programmes on the Discovery channel. Local press was also a key source of information.

CURRENT WASTE DISPOSAL KNOWLEDGE

Participants noted that they typically did not think about what happened to their rubbish once it was collected from their doorstep. Upon reflection, they assumed that recyclable materials went to a recycling facility and other waste went to landfill.

 "I assume it goes to landfill but it may be sorted, may be recycled, I don't know."

 YATTENDON, ADOPTER

 "It goes into landfill doesn't it?"

 YATTENDON, SCEPTIC

 "I believe it goes to landfill because there was a big article in the local paper last night."

 LEEDS, SCEPTIC

A few participants had heard that some waste was disposed of in landfills outside of the UK.

 "I know it just goes into the landfills and there are actual big ships that are actually taking landfills to other countries to fill in landfills out of the UK as well."  LEEDS, BELIEVER

The qualitative research found that knowledge regarding the current situation with UK waste disposal differed depending on whether there had been recent high profile coverage of this in the national or local press.

In Leeds, there had been recent coverage regarding proposals for a local facility.

As a result of this coverage, most participants in Leeds had some knowledge or had recently heard a fact about waste disposal.

 "I believe it [waste] goes to landfill because there was a big article in the local paper last night."

 LEEDS, SCEPTIC

Only a couple of participants in Yattendon had come across waste disposal related coverage in the local press recently. A couple of participants mentioned coverage in Newbury Today about plans for an energy-from-waste facility near Chieveley.

LEVELS OF RECYCLING

To further explore participants' knowledge and awareness of the current waste disposal situation in the UK, each focus group was presented with some facts; responses to these are discussed below.

FACT SHOWN TO RESIDENTS AND FOCUS GROUPS

According to DEFRA, 39 per cent of household waste was sent for re-use, recycling and composting in 2009-10.

Across the focus groups participants were surprised that as much as 39 per cent of household waste was sent for re-use, recycling and composting.

"It's higher than I would have thought."

YATTENDON, SCEPTIC

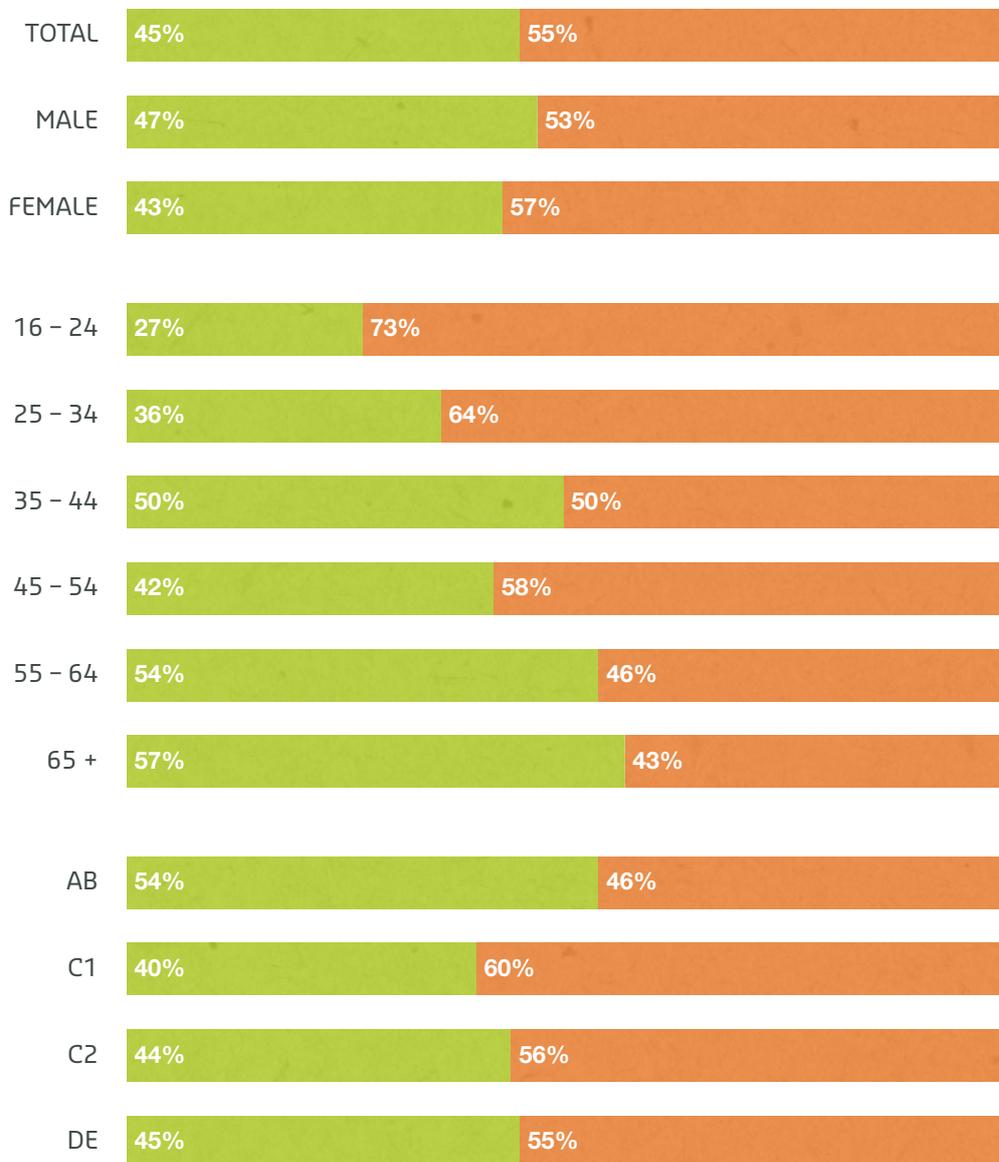
This was also found quantitatively where less than half (45 per cent) were aware that "nearly 40 per cent of household waste in the UK was sent for recycling, re-use and composting last year". There were significant variations in levels of awareness by age with the younger less aware (16 - 24; 27 per cent, 65+; 57 per cent). Differences were also observed by social grade (AB; 54 per cent, C1C2DE; 43 per cent) and Government Office Region (GOR) (South West; 50 per cent, Eastern; 39 per cent).

FIGURE SEVEN

Nearly 40 per cent of our household waste in the UK was sent for recycling, re-use and composting last year

Were you aware of this fact about the current waste situation in the UK before today?

Yes – aware
No – not aware

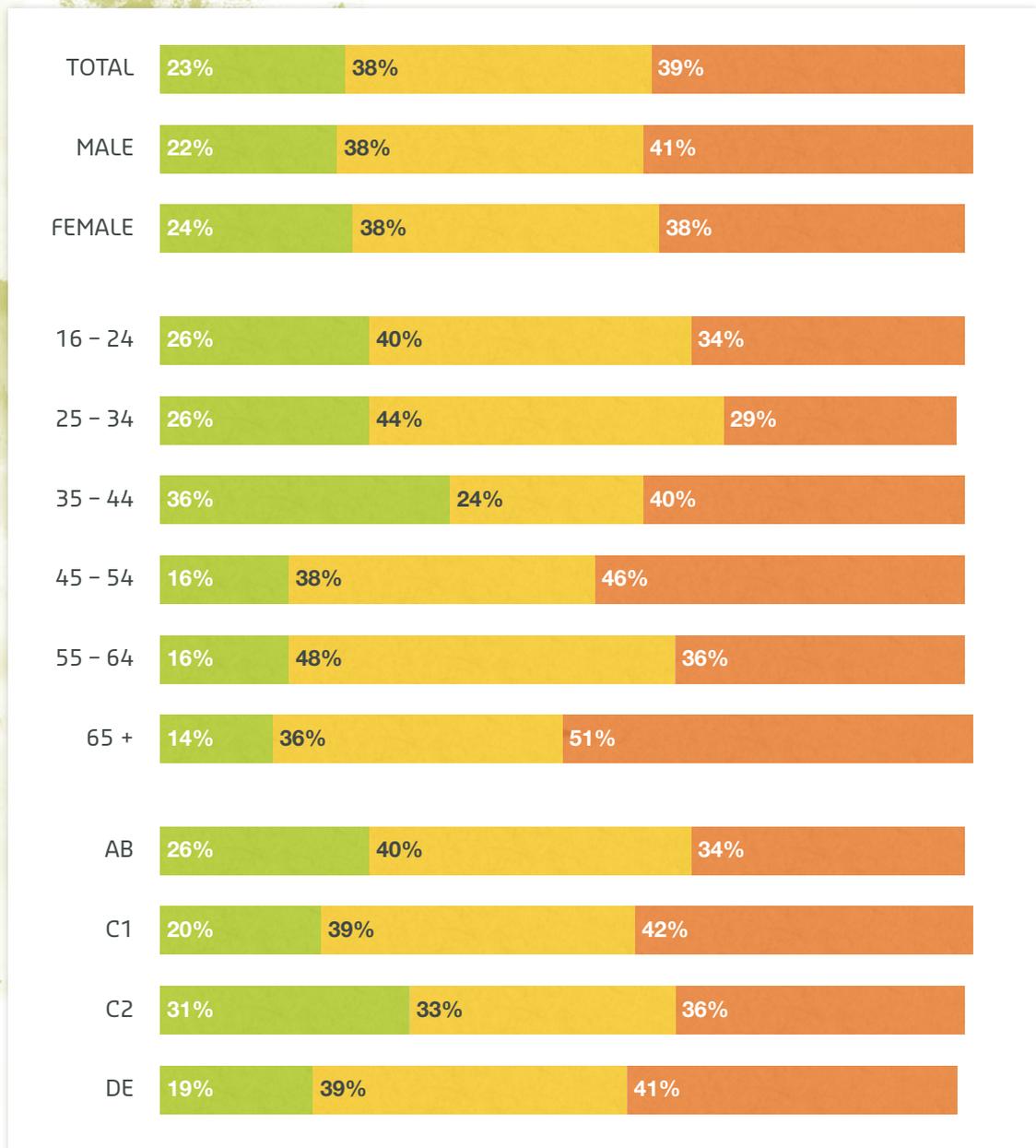
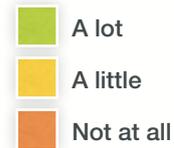


Among those not previously aware, just under a quarter (23 per cent) were surprised a lot by this fact, 38 per cent a little surprised and 39 per cent were not at all surprised. Households with children under 16 (32 per cent) and those of the younger age groups (16 - 44 years; 29 per cent) were more surprised a lot by this fact.

FIGURE EIGHT

Nearly 40 per cent of our household waste in the UK was sent for recycling, re-use and composting last year

Does this surprise you a lot, a little, or not at all?



LIMITED LANDFILL SPACE

FACT SHOWN TO RESIDENTS AND FOCUS GROUPS

In parts of the UK there is only enough landfill space to last for six years.

Qualitative participants found this fact rather sobering.

 *"I'm not surprised but gosh, what a fact, I'm taken back by it."*  YATTENDON, ADOPTER

It reminded one participant of a Simpsons' episode titled Trash of the Titans where the fictional town of Springfield had run out of landfill and decided to move the town to a new site rather than deal with the waste problem.

 *"What do you do, just keep piling it in thinking that it will just go away?"*
 YATTENDON, SCEPTIC

Upon reflection, participants concluded that it made sense that landfill was not a sustainable method of waste disposal.

 *"There's only so many acres they can use at a time."*  YATTENDON, ADOPTER

In Leeds, a couple of participants had read about lack of landfill space in local papers.

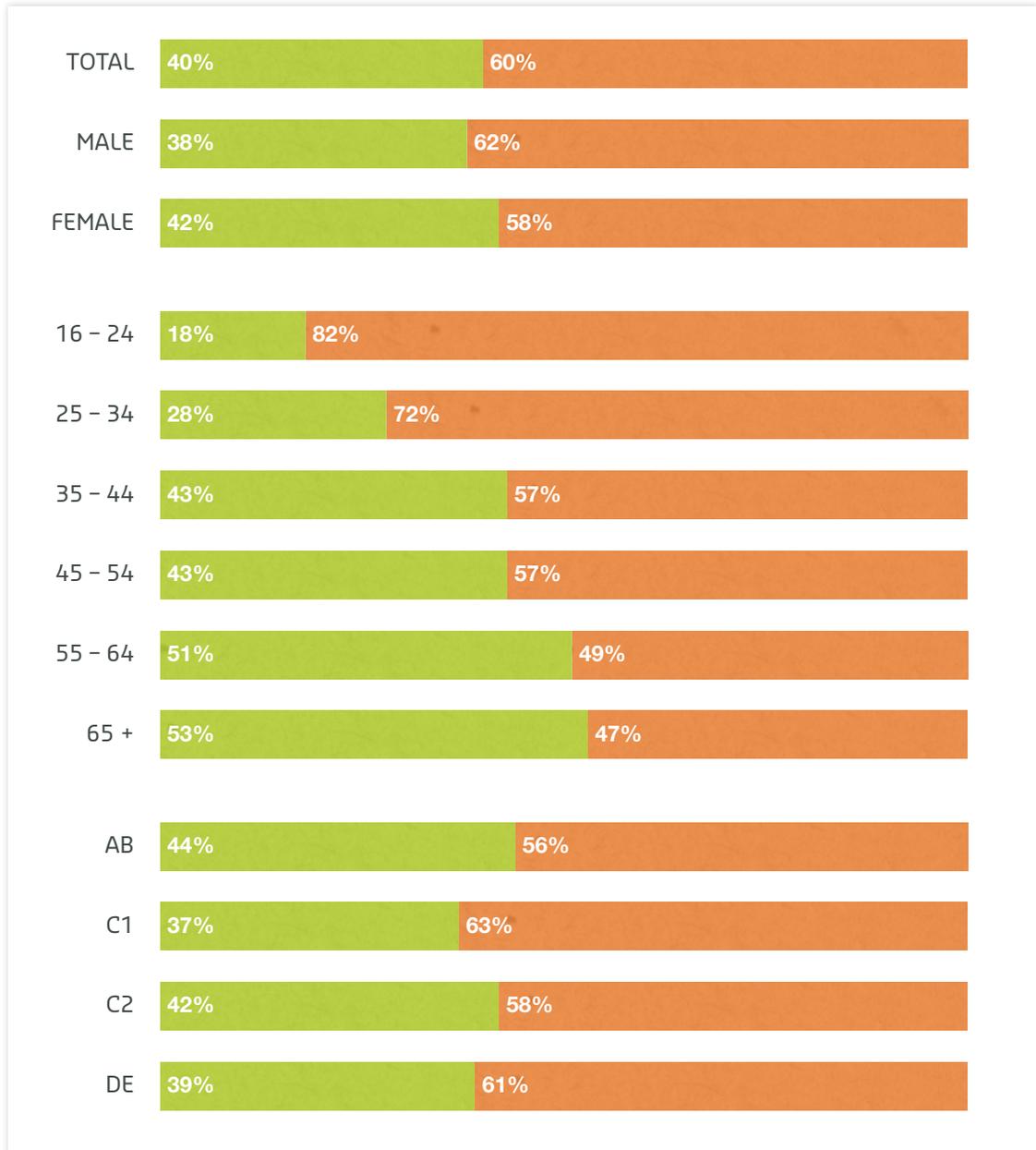
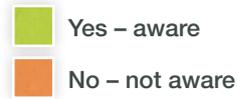
 *"I'd read...somewhere in the papers that we were running out of landfill space and that's why there'll be a lot more incinerators to get rid of the waste in the next sort of ten years."*
 LEEDS, BELIEVER

When asked quantitatively, awareness of facts regarding the current waste situation within the UK varied significantly by demographic subgroup. Just two fifths (40 per cent) of all respondents were aware that in parts of the UK there is only enough landfill space to last for another six years. Awareness varied from just 18 per cent amongst the youngest age group (16 - 24) to over half (53 per cent) among those aged 65+ years.

FIGURE NINE

In parts of the UK there is only enough landfill space to last for six years

Were you aware of this fact about the current waste situation in the UK before today?

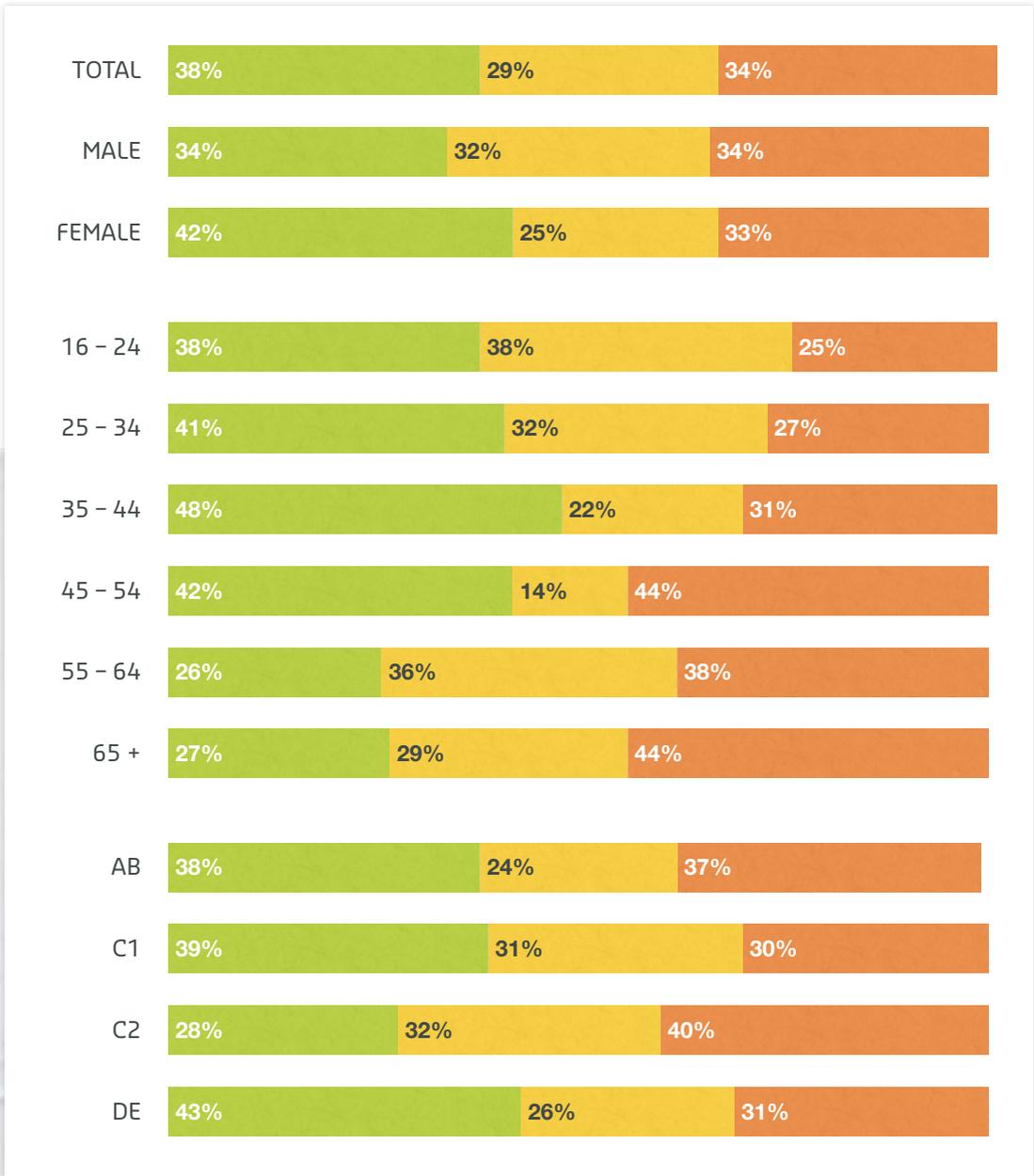


Among those not previously aware, a third (34 per cent) were not at all surprised, and just over a third (38 per cent) surprised a lot by the fact. Females (42 per cent) and the younger age groups (16 - 44 age group; 42 per cent) were more likely to be surprised a lot.

FIGURE TEN

In parts of the UK there is only enough landfill space to last for six years

Does this surprise you a lot, a little, or not at all?



EU TARGETS

FACT SHOWN TO RESIDENTS AND FOCUS GROUPS

We must learn to view waste as a resource and to find alternatives to landfill to meet EU targets and encourage waste minimisation, recycling and energy recovery.

Across the focus groups qualitative participants were keen to know about alternatives to landfill.

 *"I think fundamentally what's happening at the moment is unsustainable ... we need to think of ways where it will last and we can keep doing it."*

 LEEDS, BELIEVER

Spontaneously, many thought about the role that they themselves could personally play in increasing recycling behaviour. There was some discussion regarding the provision of recycling facilities, and whether these could be increased to enable and encourage people to recycle more.

Participants also looked towards the role companies and manufacturers play in creating packaging. Many felt that manufacturers could play a key role in reducing the amount of waste generated in the UK.

 *"I think a lot of companies could reduce their packaging and stuff to make less waste...that would be a start."*  YATTENDON, SCEPTIC

 *"It needs to be manufacturers as well. It needs the manufacturers on board as well because there's so many things that, it's like double or triple wrapped."*  LEEDS, BELIEVER

 *"Less packaging to start off with, there'd be a lot less to throw away."*  LEEDS, SCEPTIC

 *"But all of my waste is generated through companies that I'm buying stuff from ... I'm buying a product that I want and it's coming with this much waste."*  YATTENDON, SCEPTIC

When thinking about different ways to deal with waste, participants in Yattendon struggled to think of alternatives. In particular, the sceptics group had very little knowledge of any alternatives.

 *"You don't know enough about it...it makes you think about what we could do but until they come up with that solution you're just going to keep on going with what you do."*  YATTENDON, SCEPTIC

A couple of Yattendon participants, in the adopters focus group, had read about plans for a local energy-from-waste facility and recalled that they could produce energy and by-products.

 *"It's more permanent isn't it, than using a landfill. Because it's permanent; once it's burned and gone, it's gone hasn't it. It's not still somewhere underneath us."*  LEEDS, SCEPTIC

 *"A lot of them produce power, electricity...they use the ash as a building material that they have at the bottom of the incinerator."*

 YATTENDON, ADOPTER

Similarly, news coverage in Leeds meant that most Leeds participants had heard about using energy-from-waste facilities as an alternative to landfill. One participant recalled mention of anaerobic digestion.

 *"There's been stuff on the news recently about turning food waste into a kind of compost, a new thing."*  LEEDS, BELIEVER

In Leeds, much of the coverage seen by participants focussed on opposing the building of an energy-from-waste facility and the lack of available sites for waste facilities.

 *"It's in the papers; I think it's been on television. About sites wanted, and there aren't any available."*  LEEDS, SCEPTIC

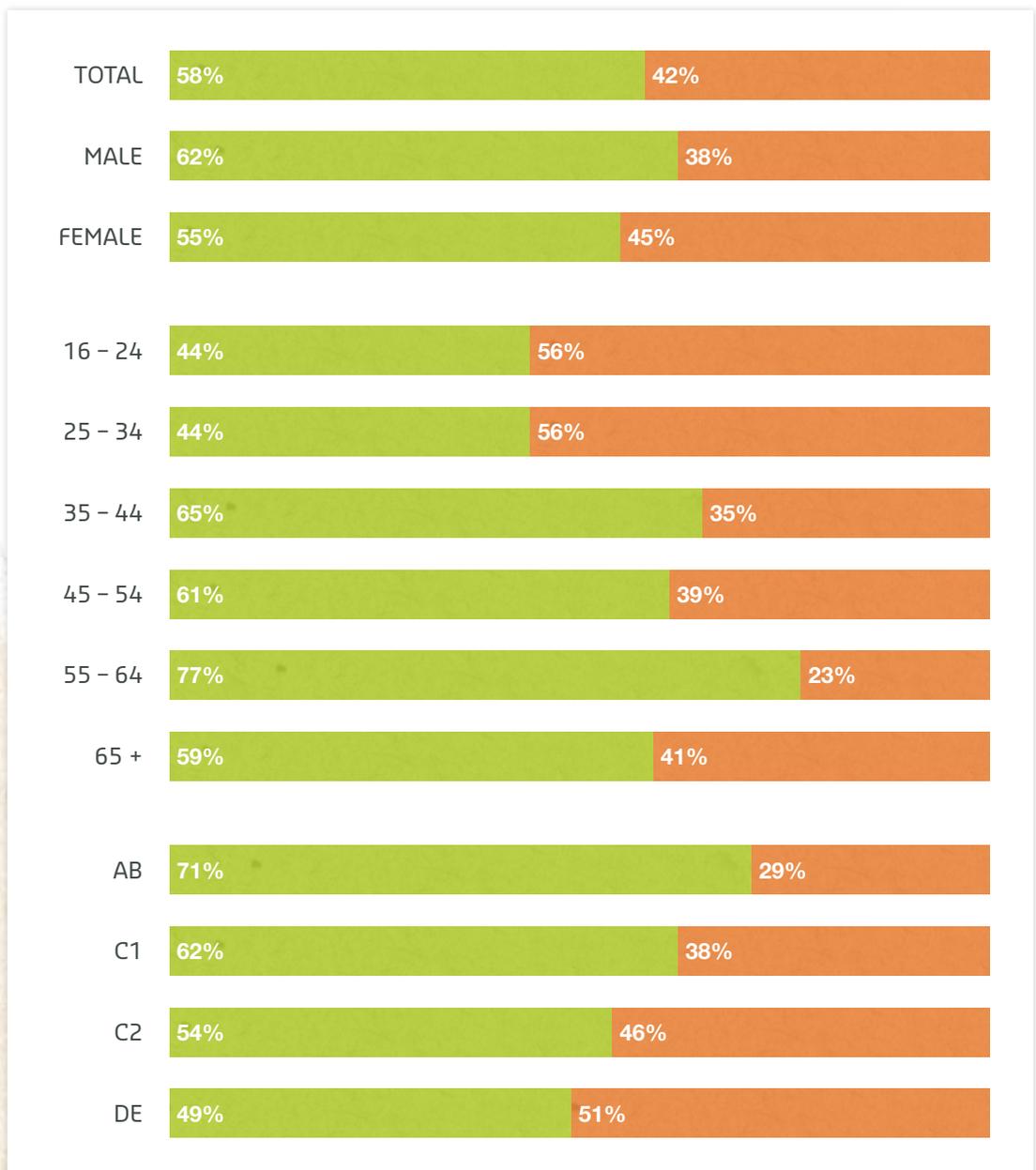
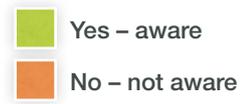
 *"I know they were fighting against an incinerator."*
 LEEDS, SCEPTIC

Quantitatively the final fact posed to respondents was whether they were aware that “the European Union has set targets which we must meet on waste minimisation and reduced use of landfill”. Three in five respondents (58 per cent) were aware of this fact. However, this was skewed towards those of a higher social grade (AB; 71 per cent, DE; 49 per cent).

FIGURE ELEVEN

The European Union has set targets which we must meet on waste minimisation and reduced use of landfill

Were you aware of this fact about the current waste situation in the UK before today?

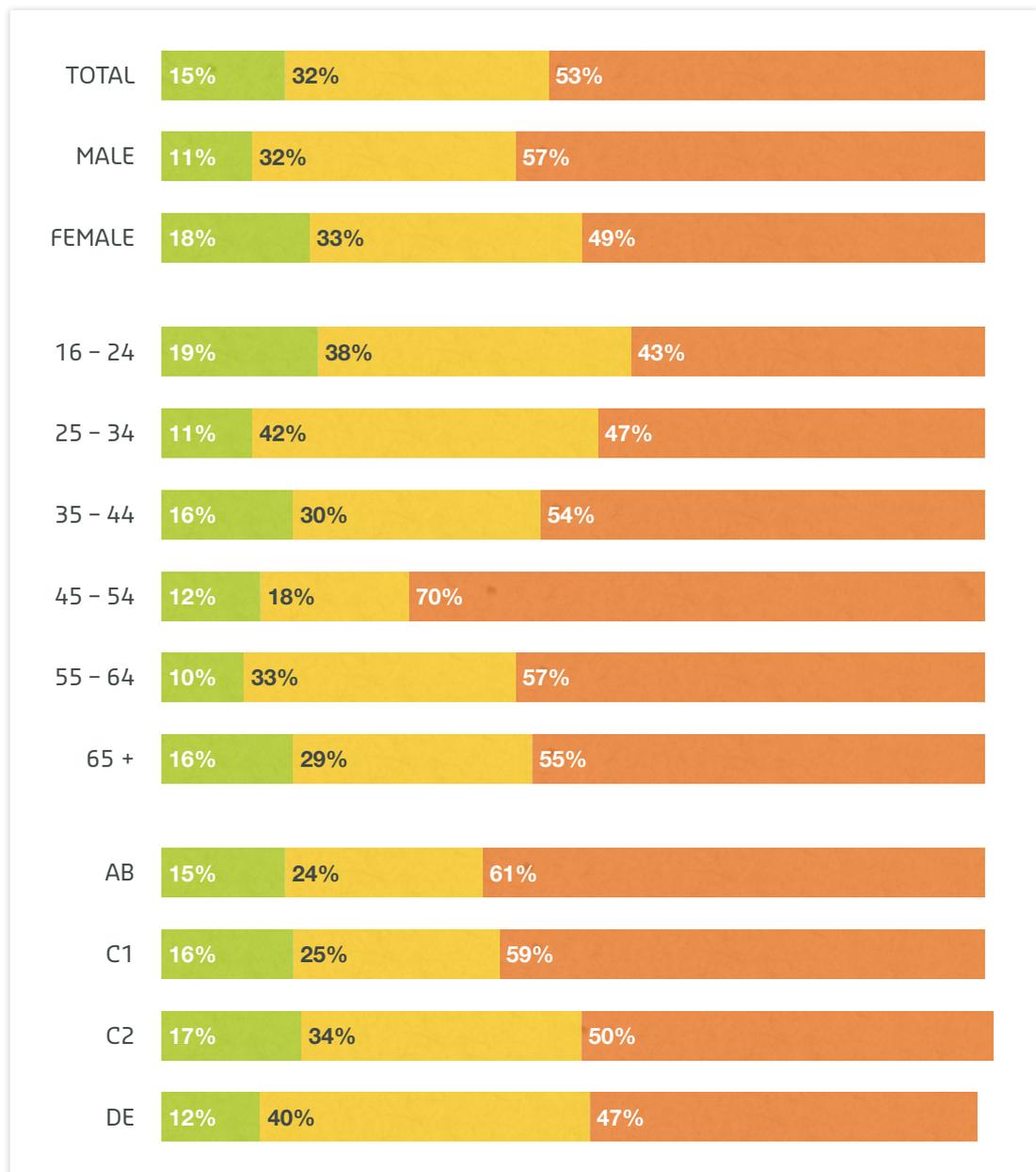


There was little surprise that the EU has set targets on waste minimisation with over half of those not aware of this fact not at all surprised by it. Levels of 'not at all' surprised were highest amongst males (57 per cent) and those of high social grade (AB; 61 per cent).

FIGURE TWELVE

The European Union has set targets which we must meet on waste minimisation and reduced use of landfill

Does this surprise you a lot, a little, or not at all?



ENERGY-FROM-WASTE FACILITIES

FACT SHOWN TO RESIDENTS AND FOCUS GROUPS

New waste treatment facilities can turn food and non-recyclable waste into a source of energy in one of two ways.

1. Food waste treatment – anaerobic digestion

This technology works just like people. It takes in food and digests it. It is a natural process that breaks down food to create energy.

2. Non-recyclable waste – energy-from-waste

The main way that non-recyclable waste can be treated is to burn or heat the waste in controlled conditions to create energy.

Both of these treatment facilities will produce heat / power / electricity.

A couple of participants had heard of the term energy-from-waste in the press, but most had not come across this term.

“Rather than burning coal they talk about energy-from-waste.”  LEEDS, SCEPTIC

Overall, participants were most interested to hear about the energy that these facilities could produce.

“If they could use the rubbish to generate power, I think it’s a no-brainer really.”  LEEDS, SCEPTIC

“You can make money out of it. If you’re talking about facilities, these sort of facilities that’s the impression I get is that “where there’s muck there’s brass.”  LEEDS, BELIEVER

In particular, they were interested to know whether energy generated at a local facility could financially benefit the local community and people living close to the facility.

“Is there any benefit to the local communities from this? Do they get their electricity cheaper if the incinerator produces a certain amount of power?”

 YATTENDON, ADOPTER

“It would soften the blow of having a stinking incinerator two miles from your door!”

 YATTENDON, ADOPTER

“It would be interesting to see if it could be linked back into the community in terms of the output.”  YATTENDON, SCEPTIC

“If it’s going to produce some sort of power or electricity... why don’t we benefit from having some of that back, whether it’s reduced bills or something.”

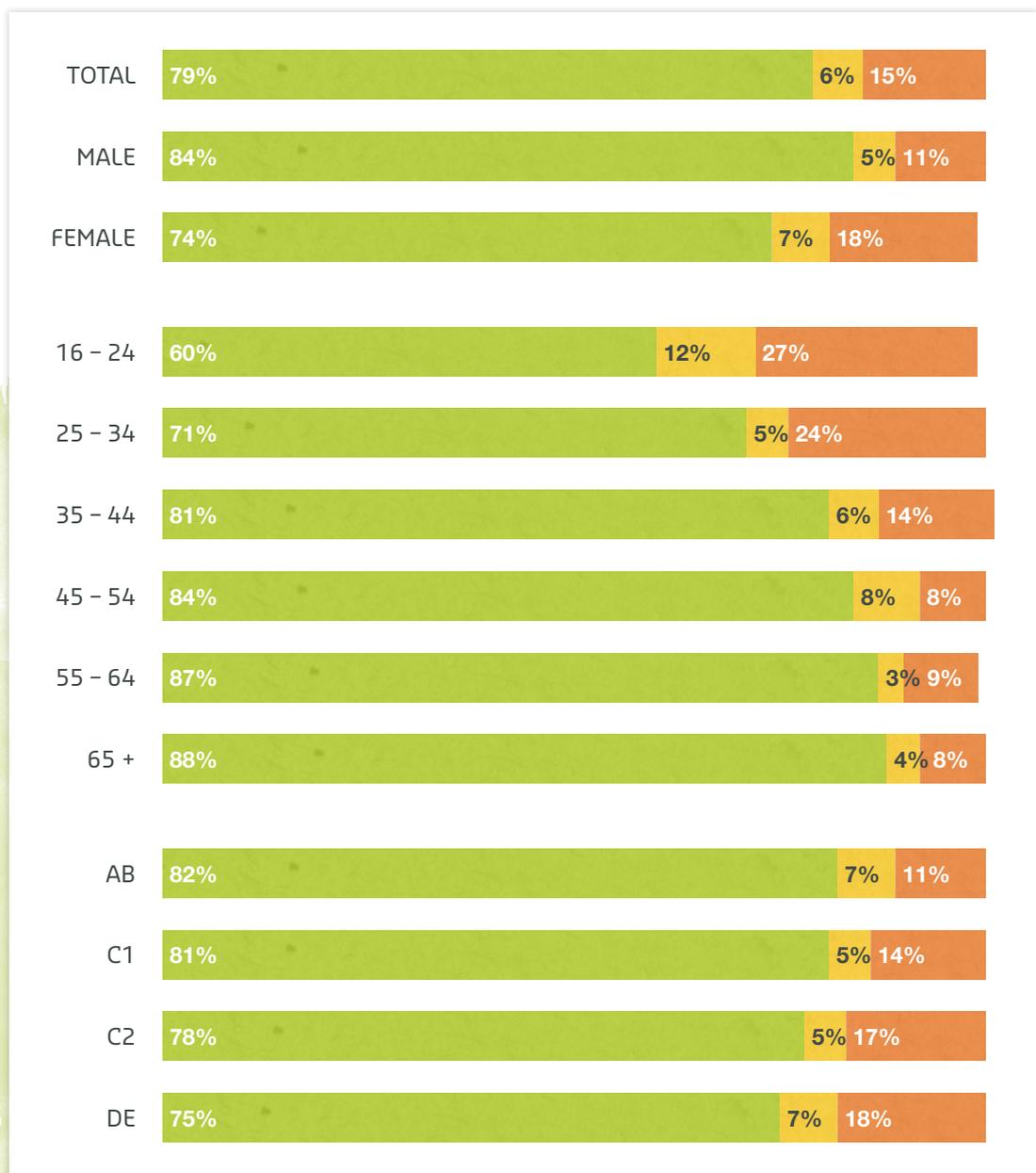
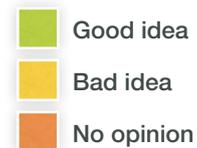
 YATTENDON, SCEPTIC

Quantitatively the vast majority (79 per cent) of those questioned felt that burning waste in a controlled environment to produce energy was a good idea. Just six per cent believed that energy-from-waste facilities was a bad idea. 15 per cent had no opinion, although this increased to 27 per cent amongst the 16 – 24 age group and 18 per cent amongst those in the lowest social grade groups (DE).

FIGURE THIRTEEN

Energy-from-waste facilities

Instead of being sent to landfill, waste that's left over after recycling can be burnt in a controlled environment to produce energy. These 'modern incinerators' are called energy-from-waste facilities and they are used to manage waste and produce energy. Do you think this is a good idea, a bad idea, or do you have no opinion either way?



BUILDING WASTE DISPOSAL FACILITIES LOCALLY

FACT SHOWN TO RESIDENTS AND FOCUS GROUPS

Whilst the UK needs additional waste facilities it is generally accepted that waste should not be transported very far from where it was generated. Therefore, new treatment facilities will need to be built close to the community where the waste is created.

Whilst participants felt that alternative methods for waste disposal were a good idea, and agreed that new waste facilities were required, there was much debate regarding whether people would be happy to have one in their immediate vicinity around their home. Participants recognised that local facilities would have both financial and environmental benefits.

“That’s what we need to keep costs down and keep things environmentally friendly...but nobody wants it next to them.”  LEEDS, BELIEVER

“If you’re not transporting it as far, maybe there’s a cost saving.”  LEEDS, SCEPTIC

However, it was also noted that people were unlikely to want a facility built close to their home.

“The trouble is that we’re going to need things like that but nobody is going to want these things near them, so there’s going to be a conflict.”  YATTENDON, ADOPTER

“That’s the thing though, not many people want these building near where they live.”  LEEDS, SCEPTIC

“I think that [plants] are very viable and that’s why people are [investing]. The problem is where they are situated in the country”.  YATTENDON, ADOPTER

Participants in Yattendon were far more opposed to a waste facility in their local area compared to those in Leeds. Those living in Yattendon were concerned that any facility would need to be built on green field sites. Those in Yattendon had specifically chosen to live in a rural part of the country, and did not want a waste facility near their home.

“I don’t want it on my doorstep.”  YATTENDON, SCEPTIC

A couple of Yattendon participants also questioned whether there was space to build new facilities in urban areas, and expressed concerns that the lack of space in cities and towns could mean that more facilities would be sited in rural locations.

Attitudes towards a nearby facility were much more mixed in Leeds. Whilst some similarly to Yattendon rejected the idea, there was generally more openness towards the idea of a local facility. Leeds participants were keen to note that the facility should be positioned away from houses and in an industrial estate.

“There’s one not far from me and it’s like in the middle of an industrial estate so that’s not near really anyone’s house...so that would be alright.”  LEEDS, BELIEVER

“As long as they do it in a discreet place, and not near houses or anything like that.”  LEEDS, SCEPTIC

Leeds participants tended to live in more built-up urban areas and felt that a facility would not overly stand out aesthetically. However, it should be noted that Leeds participants spontaneously mentioned that if they lived in a rural area they would feel less positive towards a local facility.

“If I lived in the Yorkshire Dales I wouldn’t want one because of the environment.”  LEEDS, SCEPTIC

Aesthetics played a key role in shaping people's attitudes towards a local facility. Specifically in Yattendon, they envisaged that the facility would look out of place. Participants were shown a number of images of existing facilities across the UK.

For many participants these images reinforced their perceptions of what a facility would look like. In particular the Teesside facility matched expectations. Participants felt that this type of building would blend in with an industrial estate, but not in a rural setting.



← ISLE OF MAN FACILITY

↓ TEESSIDE FACILITY



“It's going to be horrendous...it's going to be in the middle of the wilds in the country and it's not going to look very good.”
 👤 YATTENDON, ADOPTER

“I don't think they're eyesores. No worse than any factory or warehouse.”
 👤 LEEDS, SCEPTIC

“We've an awful lot of industrial places round here anyway, so it would blend in quite well I think.” 👤 LEEDS, SCEPTIC

Participants tended to be more positive towards the design of the Isle of Man facility. They felt that a modern design that was sympathetic to the local environment would be important when developing and planning placement of facilities.

“I think if they do look like that, they blend in with the environment that you live in, and they don't generate a smell that's uncomfortable to live with, or bad chemicals – I don't think it would really matter how far they are...as long as it's not next door.” 👤 LEEDS, SCEPTIC

“If they could come to you and say actually we can guarantee that it won't smell and you won't see it...a fancy building at the front that looks fantastic and behind all the stuff going on...if you could guarantee that and that it wouldn't smell then I don't see why that would be a problem.” 👤 YATTENDON, SCEPTIC

A couple of participants suggested that facilities could be designed in collaboration with the local community to help develop an aesthetic that local people were positive towards.

“If you had the community giving an input into what they wanted it to look like as well.”
 👤 LEEDS, BELIEVER

A key concern for participants when considering a local facility was the associated pollution. Participants expected that any facility would generate fumes, smell and noise. Often this represented a key barrier to the idea of a local facility.

“They could make them look nice and attractive possibly, but they wouldn't be able to get rid of the noise and the fumes.”
 👤 YATTENDON, ADOPTER

“Well I think there is bound to be something – fumes from them. So personally I'd prefer them as far away as possible.” 👤 LEEDS, SCEPTIC

“It's the smell that you associate with the fact that it's your waste ... you're getting rid of it for a reason, because you don't want it on your doorstep.” 👤 YATTENDON, SCEPTIC

Participants suggested that pollution was likely to be a key area of concern for any local community, and that they would need clear and definite reassurances about any pollution.

 *"I would want some sort of assurance of health risks."*  LEEDS, SCEPTIC

 *"I think they need to prove to the communities out there that it's not going to smell."*  LEEDS, BELIEVER

Another vital concern for participants was the impact that a local facility would have on property values. This was cited in each focus group and was a top-of-mind awareness, and serious concern for property owners.

 *"I'm not sure about having that on my doorstep I must admit ... I've just spent £350,000 on my house and if someone says they're going to build one of those on my doorstep..."*
 YATTENDON, SCEPTIC

 *"I wouldn't be happy if something like that came in my area and the value of my house went down."*  LEEDS, SCEPTIC

 *"If I thought it would devalue my property then that would be a concern."*  LEEDS, BELIEVER

Only a couple of participants felt that a local facility would have a positive impact on property prices and attract people to the area. These participants assumed that a local facility would mean generation of local jobs, which would attract people, and that energy costs would be lower than in other areas or there would be a reduction to Council Tax.

 *"A lot of people would want to move into the area ... I mean if you've got half price Council Tax because they don't need to come and pick your bins up because it's right near you."*
 LEEDS, BELIEVER

Finally, increased traffic was seen as a negative impact of having a local facility. Participants assumed that the number of lorries on local roads would increase creating more traffic, noise and pollution.

 *"I'm concerned about the traffic because they've got to transport the stuff haven't they."*
 LEEDS, BELIEVER

 *"Just like any general building like a new business or new supermarket ... you want to know if that's going to generate a whole new stream of traffic past your house."*
 YATTENDON, SCEPTIC

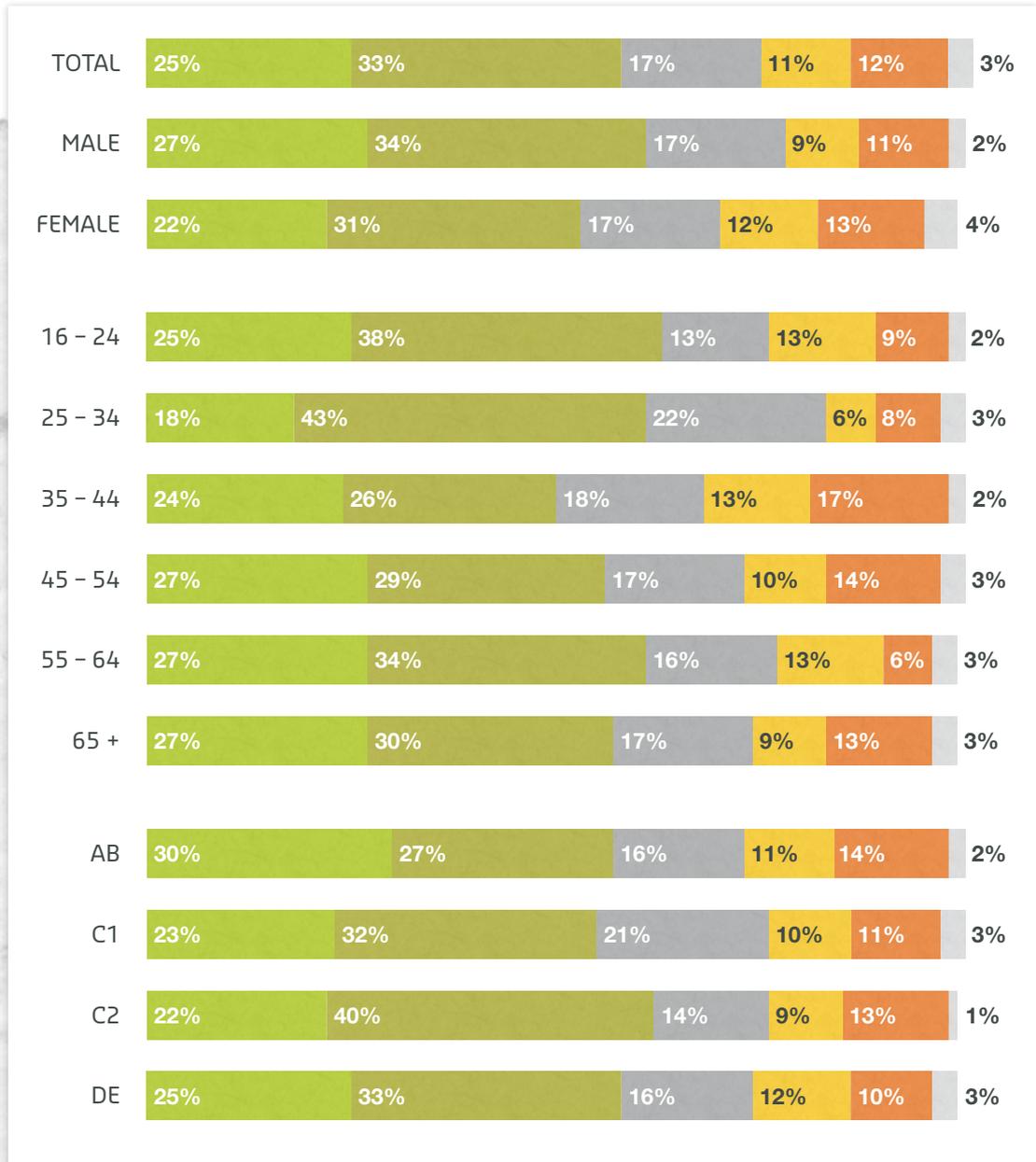
During the quantitative interview respondents were told that "it is generally accepted that waste should not be transported very far from where it was generated, so new waste treatment facilities to create energy would need to be built in each county. This would inevitably mean that facilities would need to be located near some communities in each county". Levels of support for the facilities based on this knowledge were positive overall: a quarter (25 per cent) would strongly support a waste treatment facility in their local area versus just 12 per cent that would strongly oppose it, and overall 58 per cent said they would support the idea (strongly or slightly).

Support for an energy-from-waste facility locally was highest in the East Midlands (34 per cent support strongly) and lowest in the South East (16 per cent support strongly). Males and those without children under 16 in the household were also more supportive of a treatment facility being located in the local area.

FIGURE FOURTEEN

Level of support for waste treatment facility being located in local area

It is generally accepted that waste should not be transported very far from where it was generated, so new waste treatment facilities to create energy will need to be built in every county. Inevitably, this means that facilities will need to be located near some communities in each county. Would you support or oppose having a waste treatment facility located in your local area?



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