



NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH CYBERCRIME SURVEY 2024



1.0 Introduction

2024 marks the fourth year that we have run this survey sponsored by Avast.

The purpose of the survey is to discover the levels of awareness amongst the public of various kinds of cybercrime, its effects on victims and the extent to which people report – or know how to report it.

Total of 24,604 people responded to the survey (around 2,000 more than the 2023 survey which received 22,989 responses) the completion rate was 66%, people typically took 8 minutes to enter their answers. We promoted the survey between 3 December and 20 December.

The Survey questions have been given a refresh, but we have kept some of the key questions are in line with the previous questionnaires.

We use the survey results to help shape our strategy regarding equipping our members – and Cyberhood Watch Ambassadors with the information and training they need. Avast, whose generous sponsorship ensures this survey is possible, may also use the (anonymous) results to help advance their knowledge of the public's awareness of cybercrime.

2.0 Methodology

The survey link was distributed via our main mailing lists, (900k + recipients) and through an article in our newsletter, Our News. The link was widely shared on Neighbourhood Watch and social media channels throughout the period.

Sampling bias is likely due to this sampling method, as it is highly possible that the respondents share the same traits and characteristics, thus, it is possible that this sample is only a small sub-group of the entire population.

It is not possible to determine the sampling error or make inferences about populations based on the obtained sample.

3.0 Executive Summary

Just over a third (33.57%) of respondents are members of Neighbourhood Watch. The remainder consist of 35% of people who do not currently associate themselves with NW, and the remainder receive information from us or didn't know – 28% and 4% respectively.

We asked where respondents lived – last year this was broken down by policing districts but this year we have used postcode analysis – giving us a more accurate picture of where people are in the country.

We consider that any difference of 5% or more to be of significance. The main questions where there is a divergence of opinion seems to be on the following questions:

3.1 Just over one third of respondents have personally been a victim of cybercrime, this is broadly similar to last year, Women are almost 5% more likely to be affected than men - 38% of women compared with 33% of men.

3.2 The biggest consequence of being a victim of cybercrime is feeling unsafe – just under a third (31%) reported this, which can have a catalogue of knock-on effects like being worried about using any online services, concerned about opening emails, texts or even answering the phone. This is one of the biggest reasons that our Cyberhood Watch Ambassadors exist. To help those who need it most, and to restore confidence.

3.3 59% of those who lost money, lost £500 and under. When comparing men and women on this question more women than men had lost under £500 but men had lost more in the £501-£2000 and £2000+ categories.

3.4 The majority of responders use some kind of cyber protection, with the most common being keeping their software and apps updated (84% compared with 79.5% in 2023) and using strong passwords (76% compared to 74% in 2023).

3.5 Neighbourhood Watch members tend to have more of a keen interest in seeking out information about cybercrime. They are more likely to have discussions about cybercrime and prevention strategies, with 8.06% (7.68% in 2023) stating this happens 'all the time' and 46% (36.23% in 2023) 'often' compared to non-members 6.09% (5.20% in 2023) and 43.88% (up from 29.81% in 2023) respectively.

4.0 Respondents to the Survey came from the following sources:

All but 2 responses came via the alert system/newsletter that we promoted the survey in.

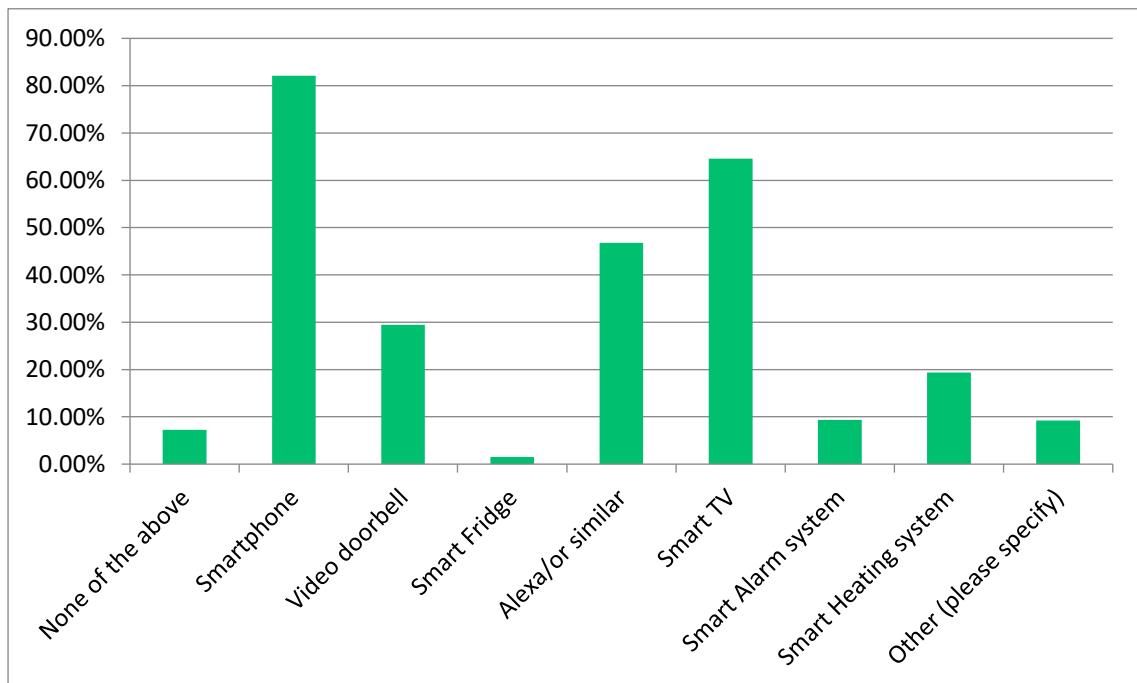
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Which of the following smart devices do you have in your home?

A smart device is any computer-controlled electronic apparatus that is not a desktop, laptop or tablet computer. e.g smartphone, smartwatch, smart appliance, video doorbell.

The majority of respondents (82%) owned a smartphone, and 65% a smart TV. Ownership of smart devices are all slightly up (1-3%) across all categories from the 2023 survey.

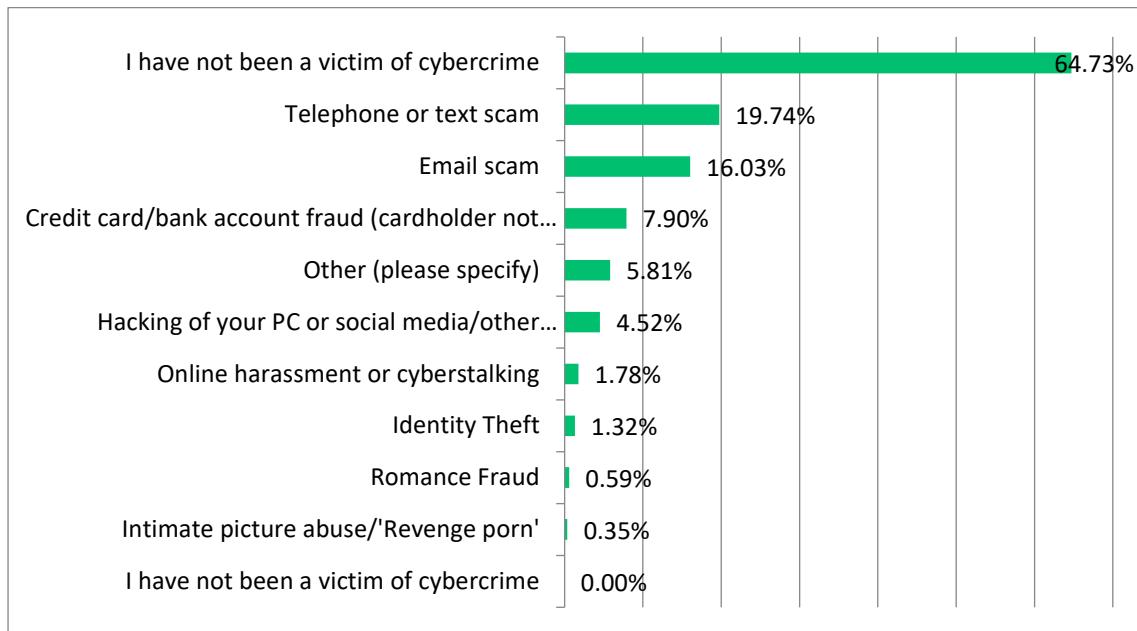


Men are more likely to own Smart Devices than Women, but it's close. (just 1% more) men more likely to own a smart tv then women (68% v 62%), a smart security alarm (11% v 7%) and also a smart heating system (23% v 16%).

Other items that were mentioned by respondents (and not listed) were:

- Washing machine
- Dishwasher
- Smartwatch
- Smart lightbulbs

Have you been a victim of any of the following within the last 12 months?

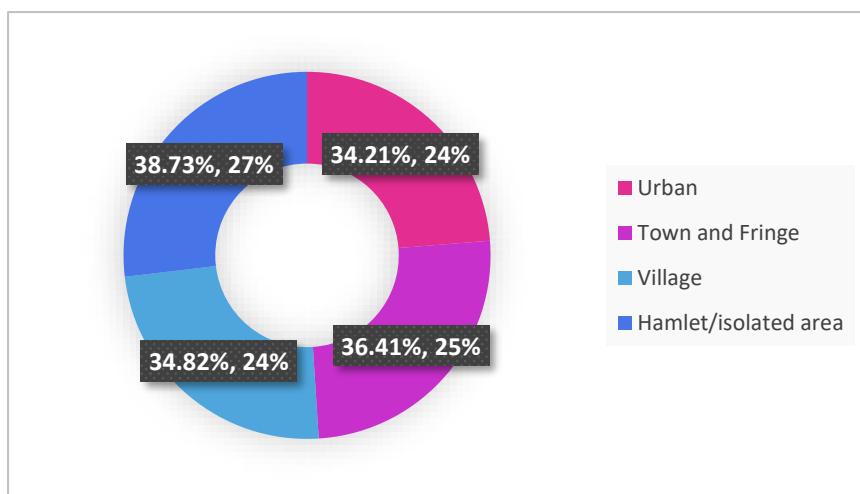


5% more women than men a victim of cybercrime or scams, although men are slightly more likely to experience romance fraud.

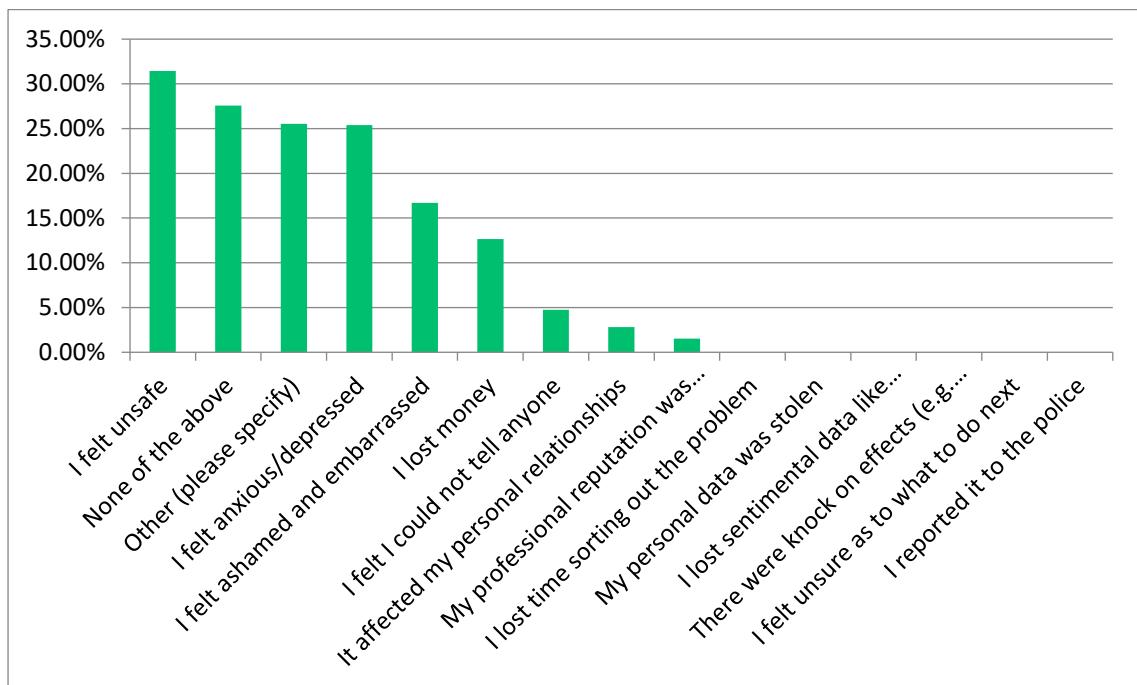
35.27% of responders had been a victim of some kind of online scam within the last 12 months this is a slight increase on last year (32.7%).

Within the 'other' category respondents mentioned the following:

- social media scams
- pension scam
- Doorstep prize winner scam
- Personal data sold (identity theft)
- Bank account hacked



As a victim of cybercrime, what were the consequences? (Select all that apply)



We found very minor differences between members or non-members on this question

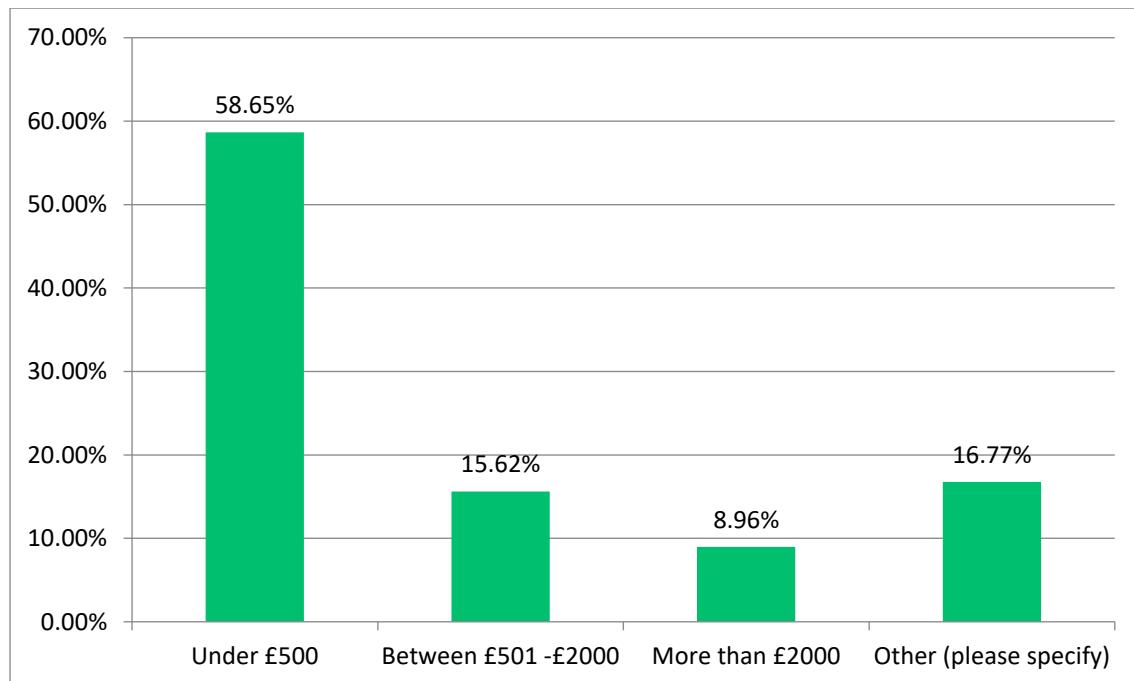
Differences between men and women on the emotional affects of cybercrime show the following:

Feelings	Men	Women
Felt unsafe	28%	35%
Felt anxious or depressed	22%	29%
Felt ashamed or embarrassed	15%	19%

from the 'other' category

- Affected level of trust
- worried about buying online anymore
- under threat
- Angry or annoyed
- Shocked and stressed

As you lost money as part of your experience of cybercrime, how much did you lose?



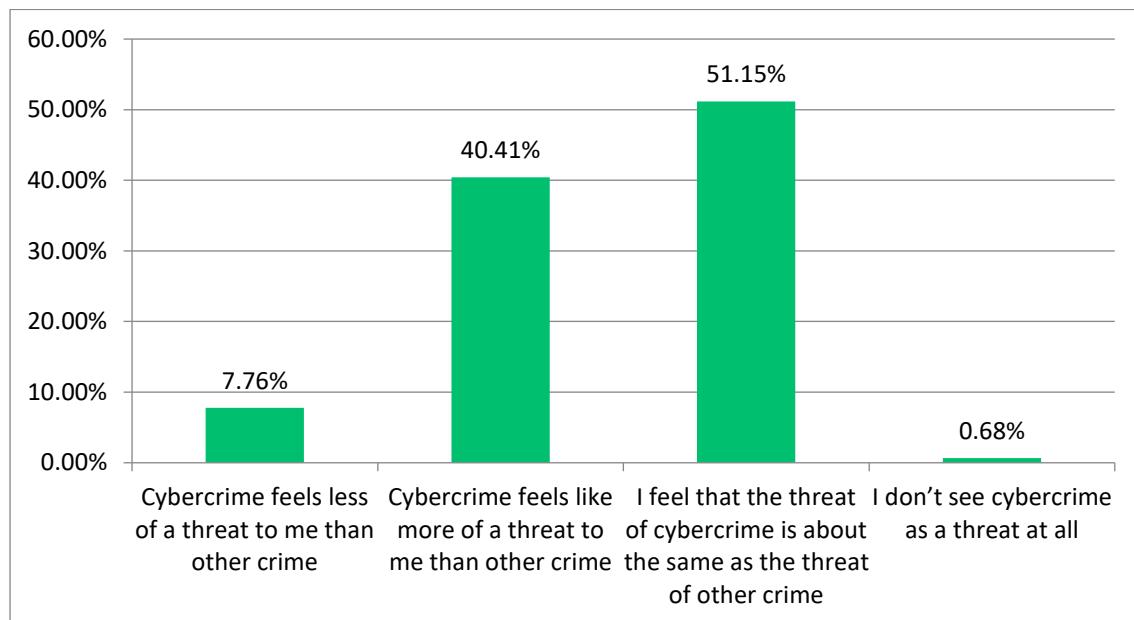
When comparing men and women on this question more women than men had lost under £500 but men had lost more in the £501-£2000 and £2000+ categories.

Amount lost	Men	Women
Under £500	53.9%	62.28%
Between £501-£2,000	15.97%	15.12%
More than £2,000	10.89%	7.80%

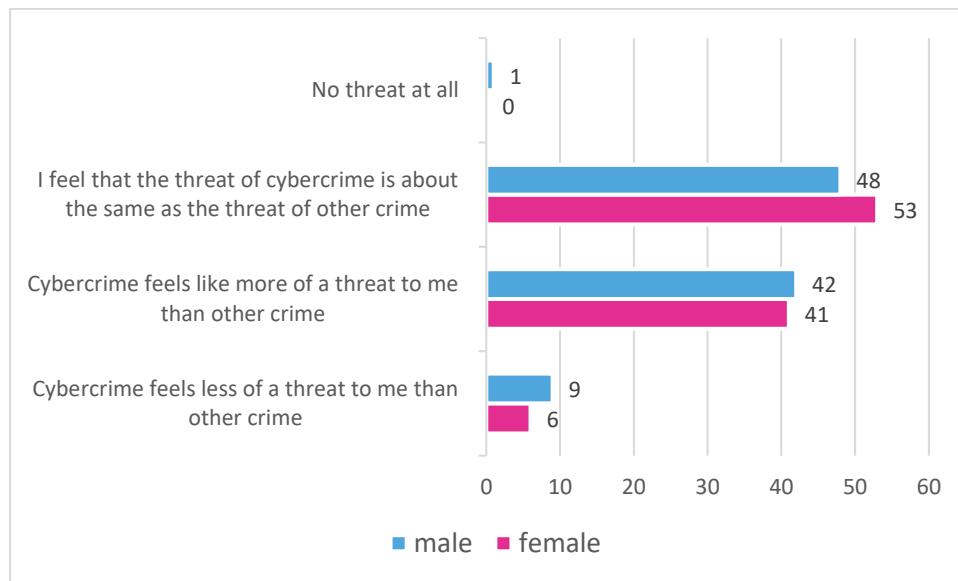
Worryingly, in our 'other amount' category respondents reported having lost large amounts up to £230,000:

- £44,919
- £50,000
- £230,000
- £132,000
- £75,000
- £80,000
- £27,000

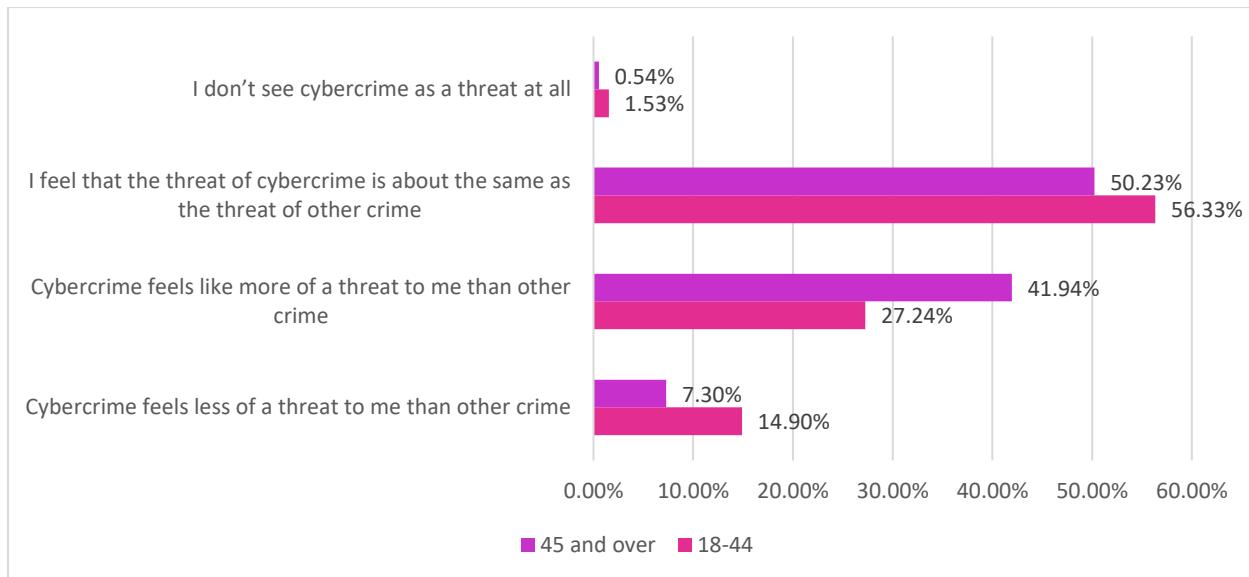
Which of the following statements do you agree with? (Select the most relevant)



Only 165 people felt that cybercrime did not present a threat to them, this is a reduction from the 2023 survey when 285 people expressed that opinion.



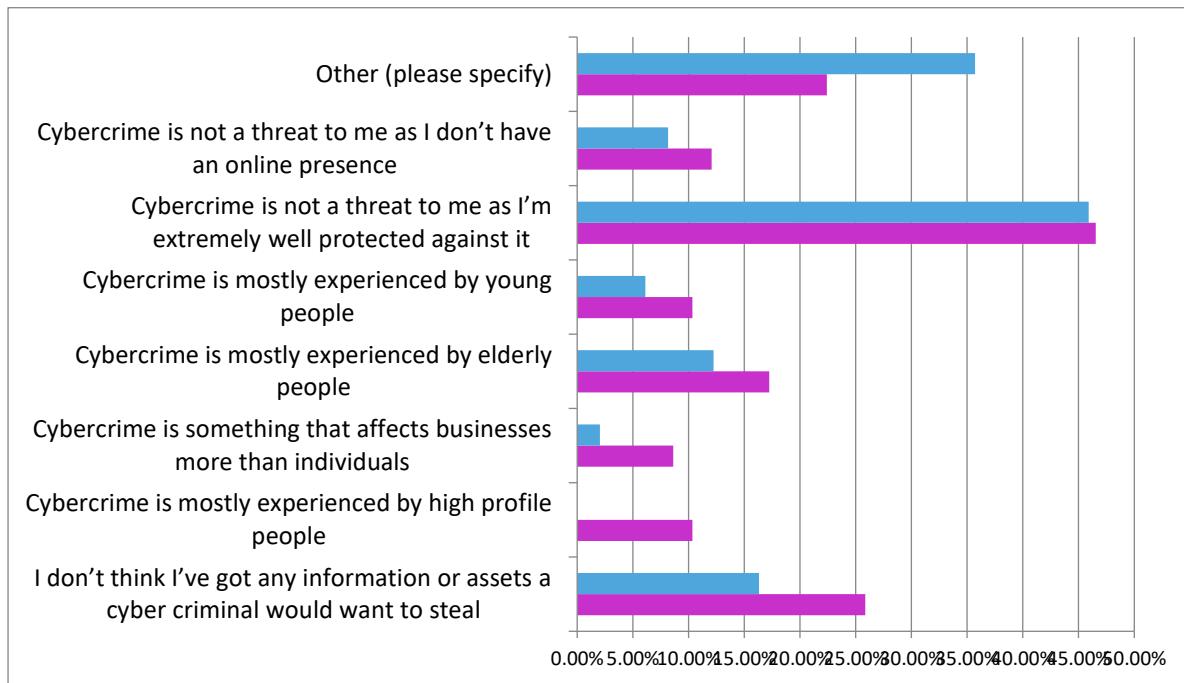
The majority of female responders felt the threat level was about the same (53% vs Men's 41%) – this is broadly in line with last year's results. More women than men felt that cybercrime was less of a threat than other crime but there was only 3% difference.



When we look at age for this question, only 27% of the 18-44s feel that Cybercrime is more of a threat than other crime, compared to 42% of the 45 and overs.

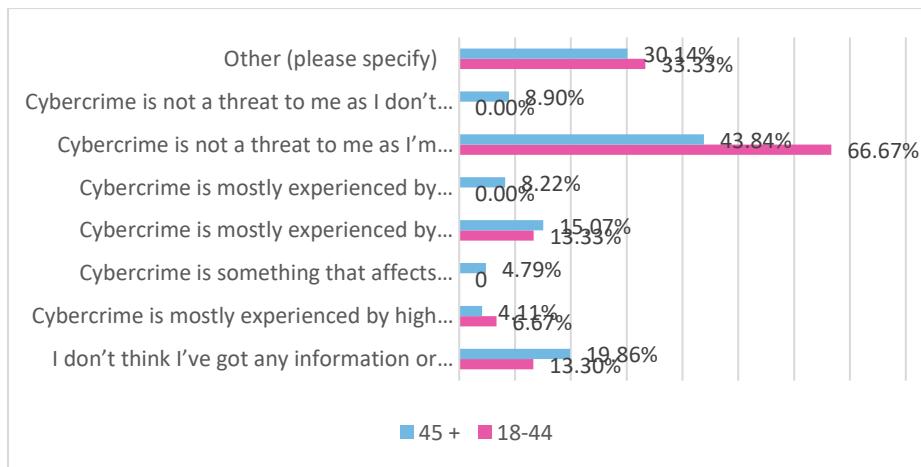
Why do you feel that cybercrime is not a threat to you? (Select all that apply)

Only 165 people felt that cybercrime did not present a threat to them, this is a reduction from the 2023 survey when 285 people expressed that opinion. The following are the reasons given for that:

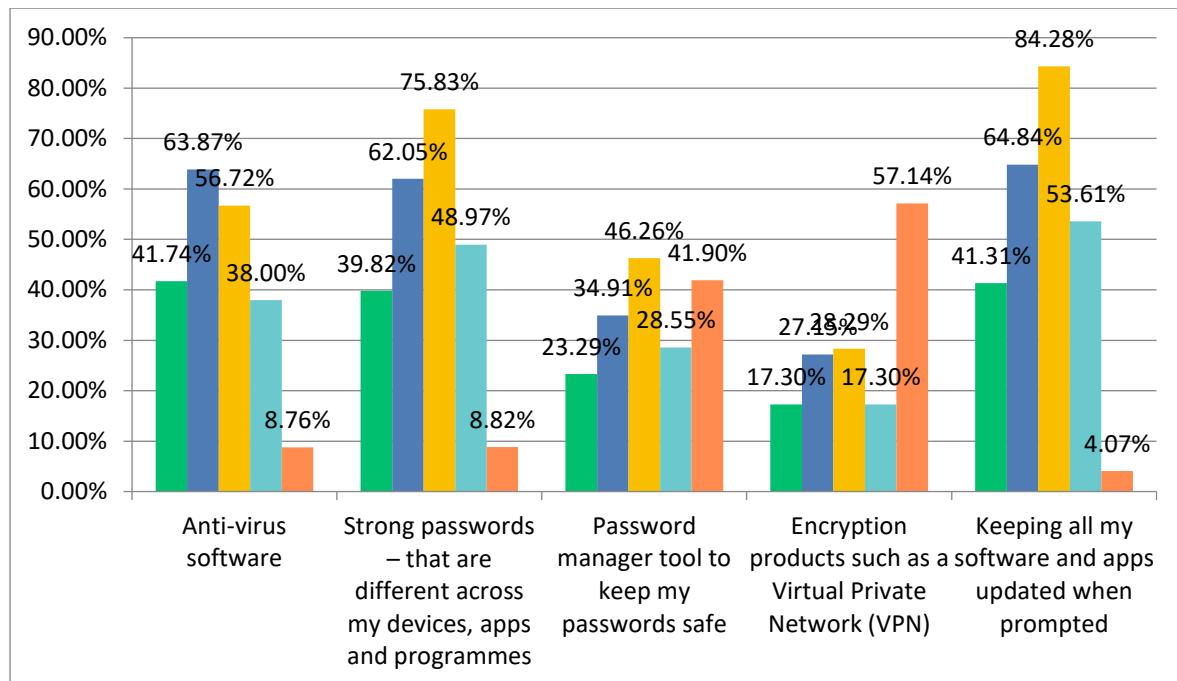


Of those who didn't see Cybercrime as a threat, the most common reasons given was that they felt well defended from it. Members are more likely to feel that they didn't have assets a criminal would want to steal, and felt it was something that elderly people were more likely to be targeted for.

54% of men say they are well protected against cybercrime compared with 37% of women. On age, the 18-44s felt much better protected at 23% more than the 45+ age group.



What protection for your home devices do you currently have in place against a cyber attack?



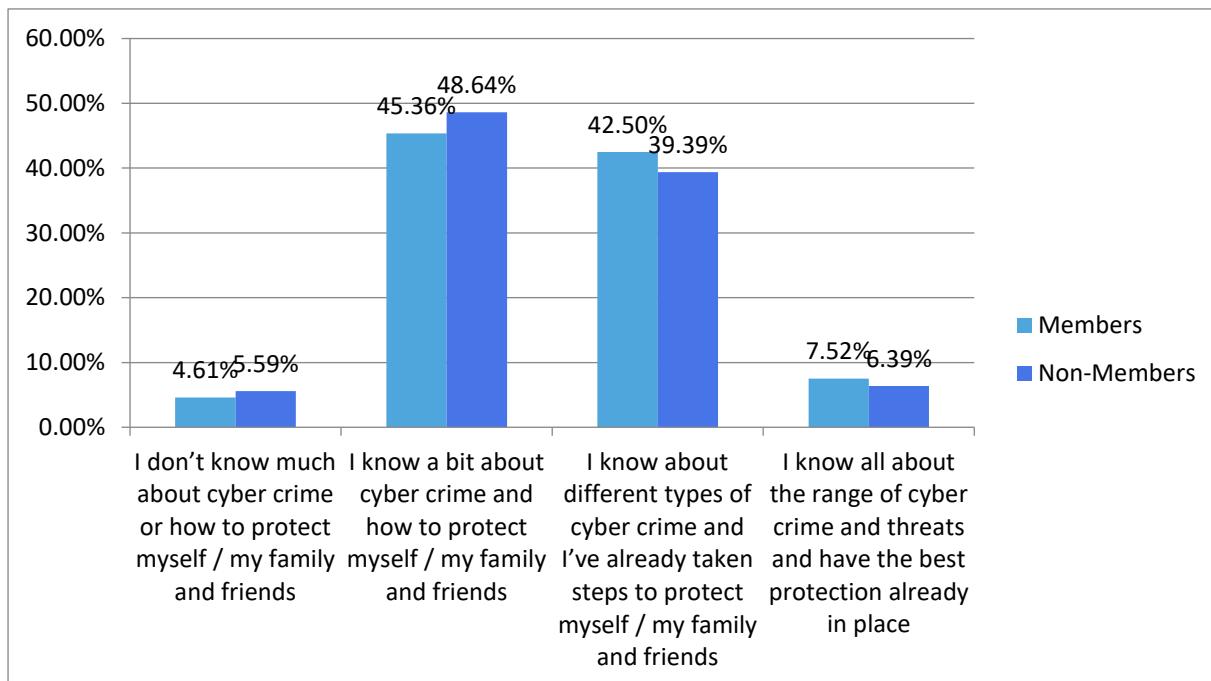
The results here show that the message about keeping apps and software versions updated has got through as most respondents report doing this on their devices. Strong passwords score well too.

VPNs (Virtual Protection Networks) scored lowest on the list of protection products that respondents use, closely followed by password managers.

Key

- Desktop PC
- Laptop computer
- Phone
- Tablet
- I don't have this

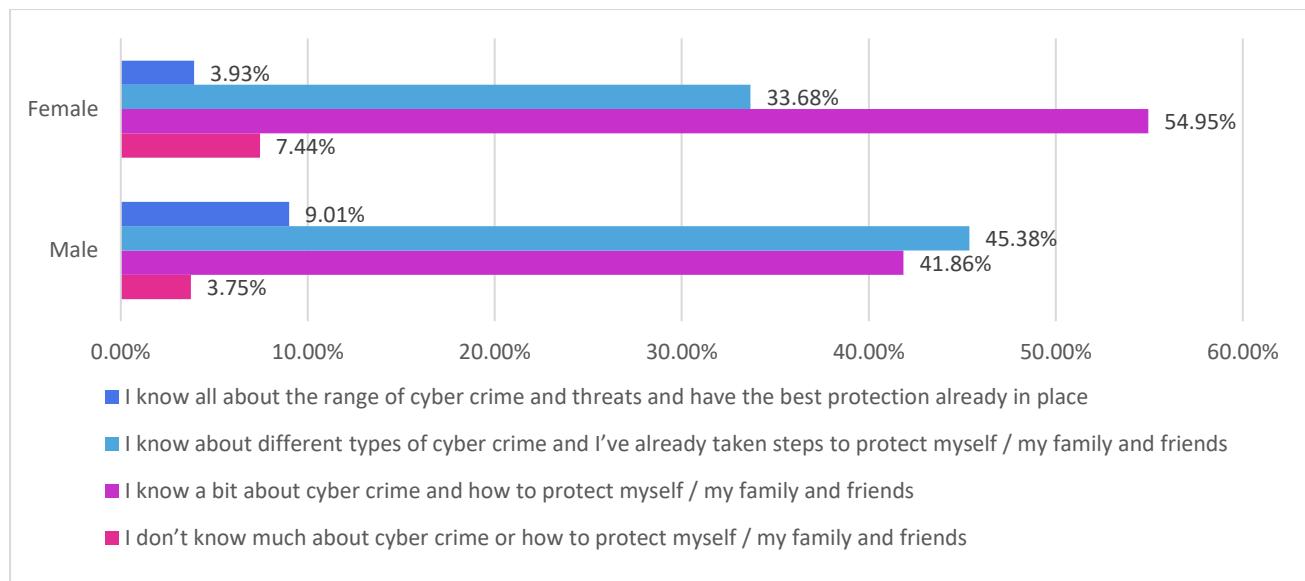
Which of the following statements best describes how you feel about cybercrime? (Select the most relevant)



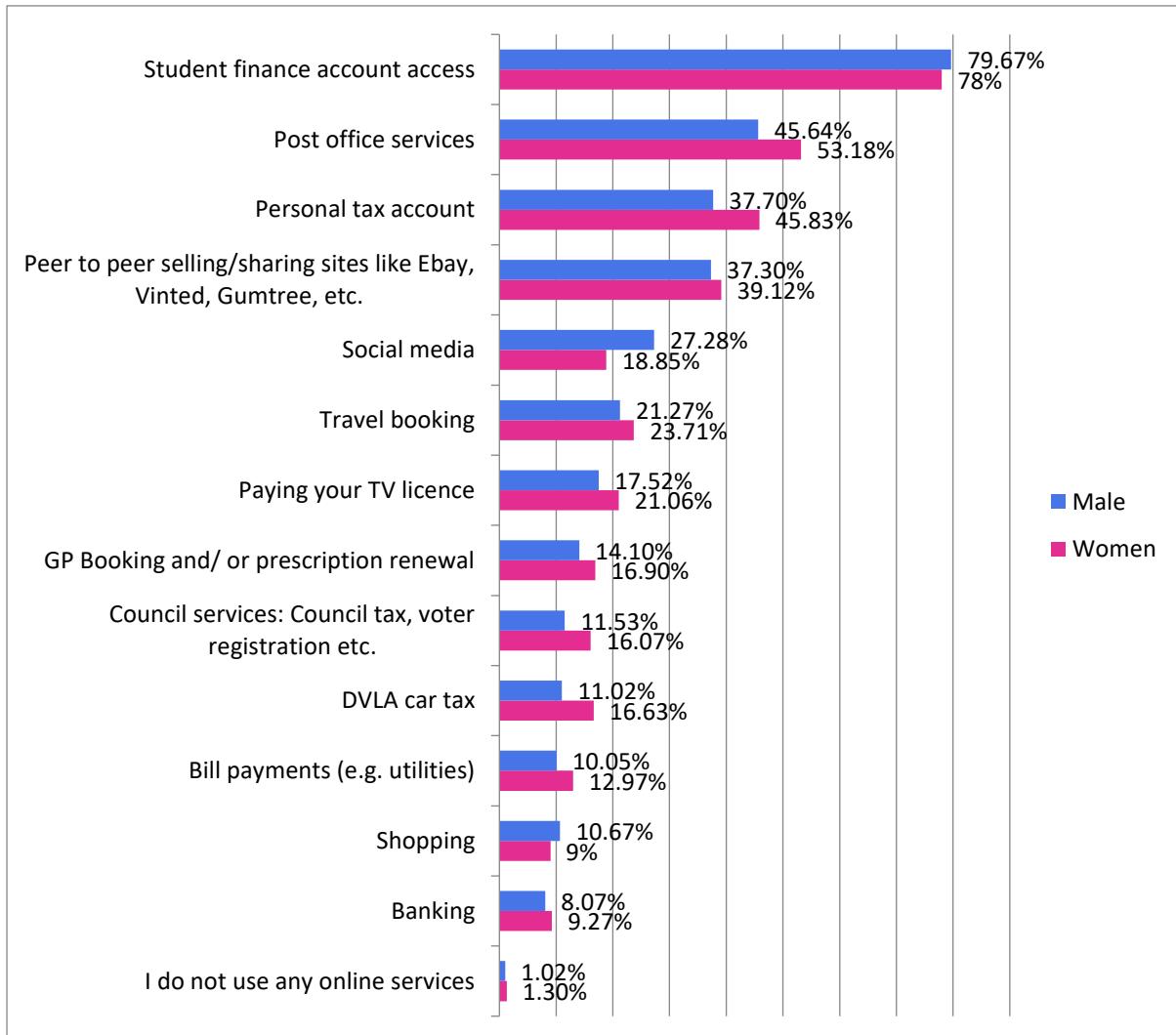
A reassuringly low number of responders said they didn't know much about cybercrime or how to protect themselves/family and friends. We know that there is still so much to do in the fight against cybercrime.

Neighbourhood Watch Members are more likely to have good knowledge of cyber-attacks and preventing them (8% “I know all about...”, 43% “I know about...” than Non-Members - 6% and 39% respectively). This is in line with last year’s survey on a similarly worded question.

Female responders were more likely to have lower understanding of cybercrime (7% and 55%) compared to Male responders (4% and 42%) This is in line with the 2023 survey.



Which services do you NOT access online via digital channels? (Select all that apply)

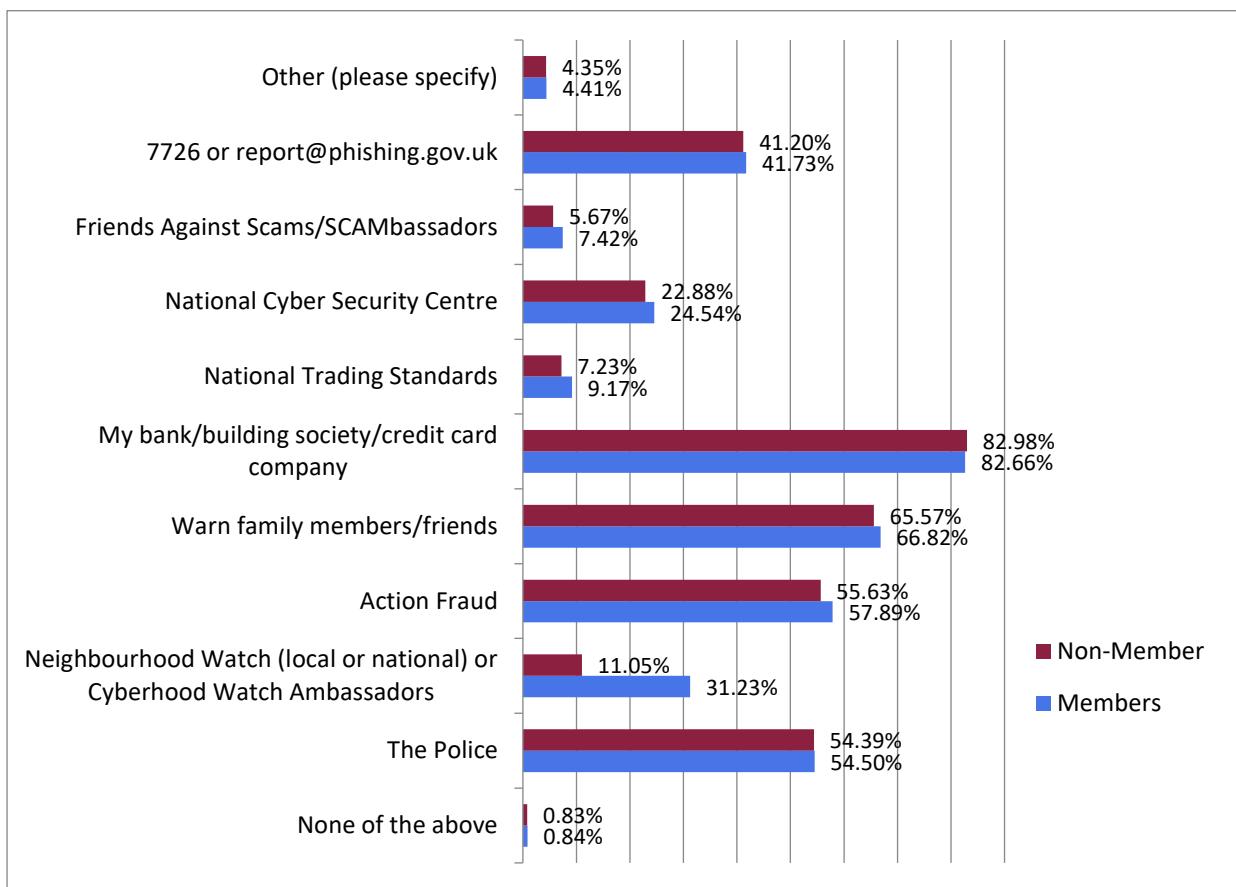


Last year we asked people which services they accessed online, rather than in person or on the phone. This year we reversed the question, asking instead which services were not accessed online:

A really tiny percentage of people now use no online services – 91% of all respondents now use internet banking (last year 88%). Banking, Shopping, Bills, DVLA and Council services rank highest in terms of accessing online.

Many people commenting that they have little choice in the matter, as more and more companies insist on customers using paperless billing and online payment. Some of the more elderly respondents reported their family members having to make arrangements online on their behalf.

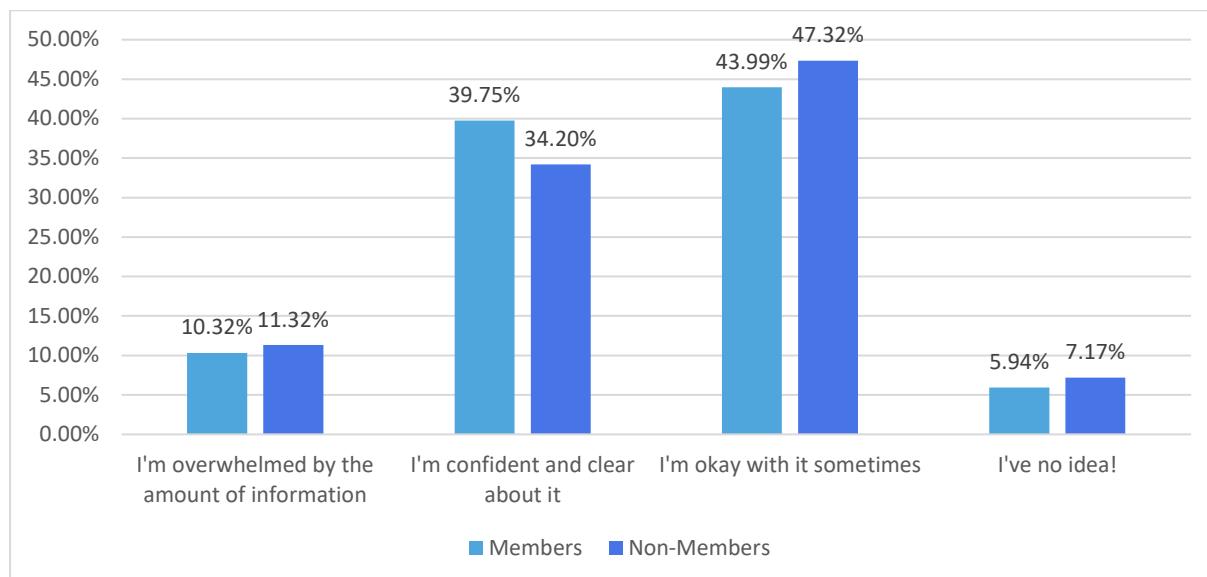
Who would you report cybercrime to? (select all that apply)



The most common organisation that responders would report Cybercrime to is their Bank 83% up 9% on 2023 (72%).

Neighbourhood Watch members demonstrate similar reporting levels to banks and the police as non-members, but higher reporting levels in every other category, indicating they feel more comfortable in reporting the crime.

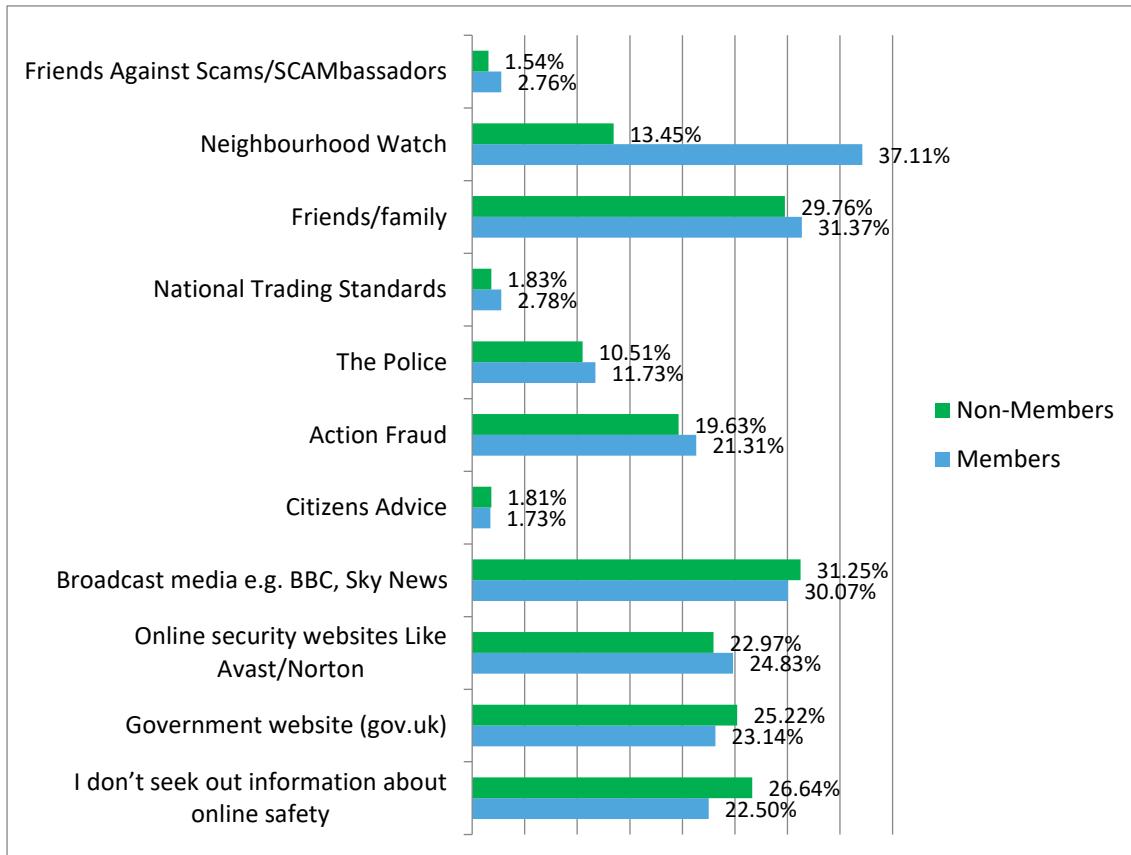
Which of the following statements describe how you feel about the resources available to help protect yourself against cybercrime?



Many more people feel confident and clear about the range of information available this year than last year 36% of all responders compared with just 22.5% in 2023.

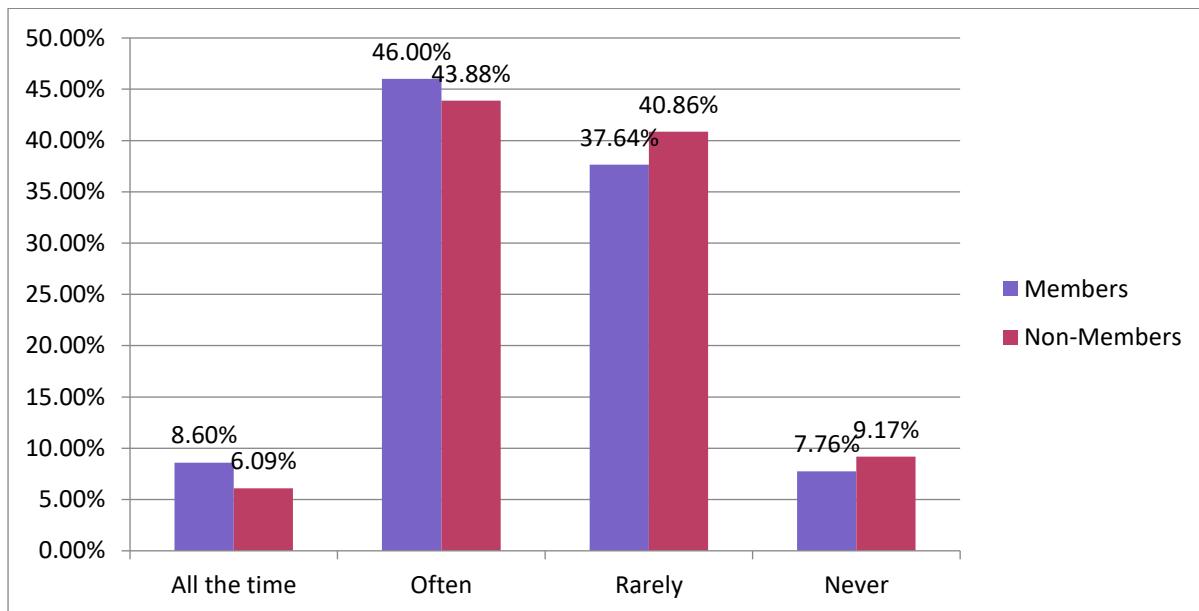
Members of Neighbourhood Watch were 6% more confident and clear than non-members at 40% and 34% respectively.

In the last 12 months where have you sought information about online safety? (Select all that apply)



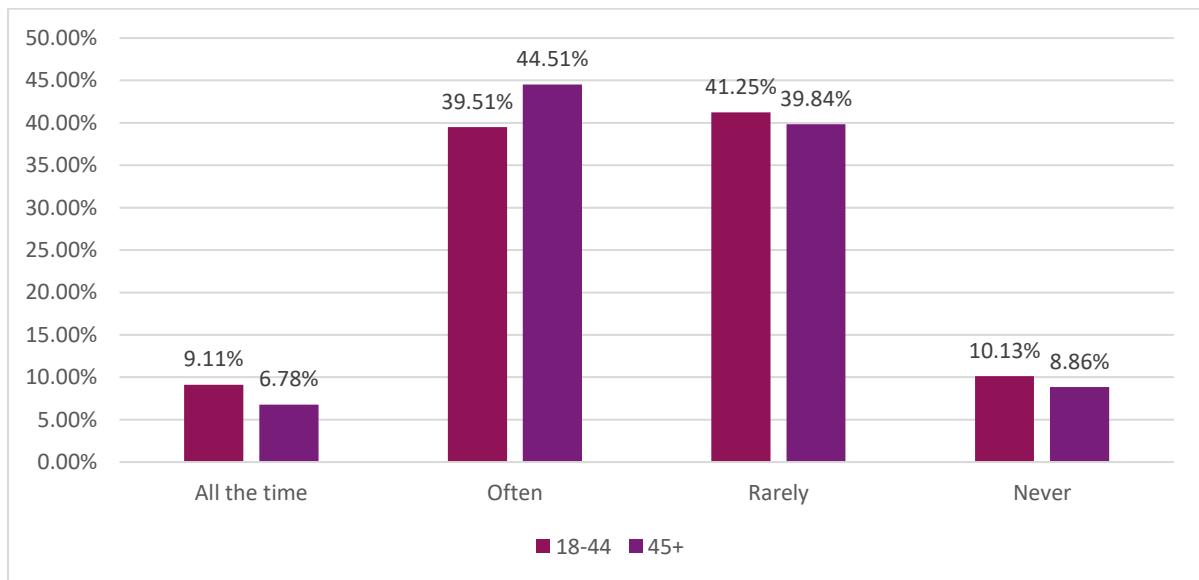
The most popular source of information for all respondents were Broadcast media or friends and family at 31% each. However, when we apply a filter of Neighbourhood Watch Members v Non-Members, we can see that 37% of members would look for advice from Neighbourhood Watch, and interestingly 13% of non-members too.

In the last 12 months how often have you discussed or shared advice on preventing cybercrime with other members in your community?

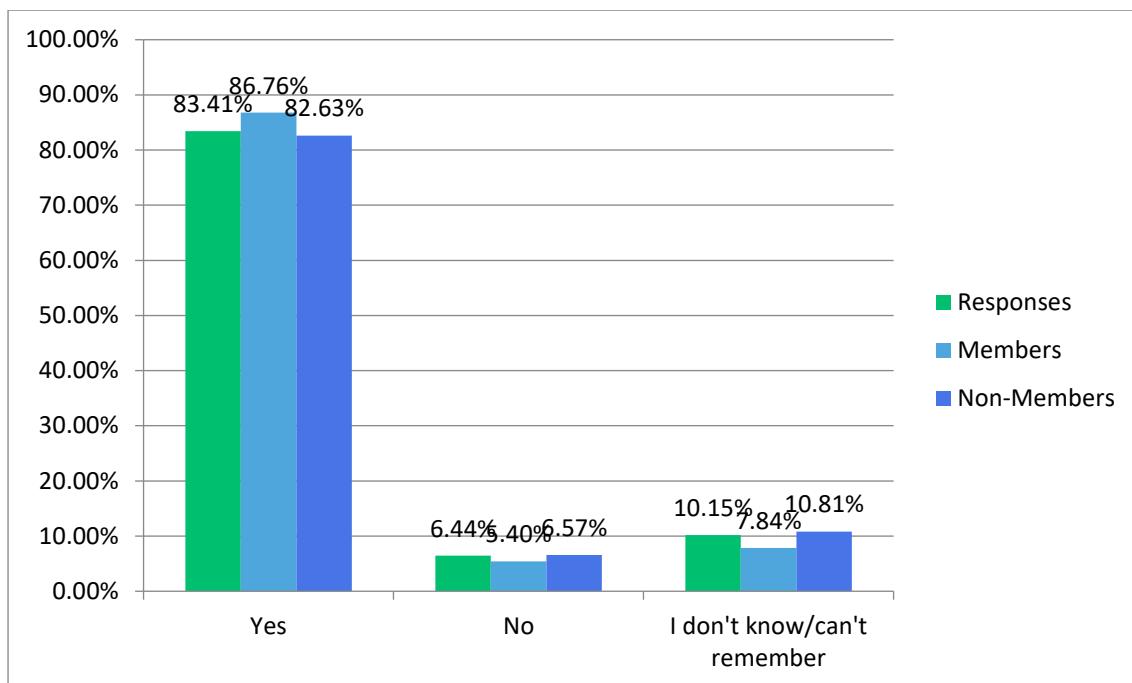


In a departure from the statistics of last year's survey, more than half of respondents are now talking about preventing cybercrime often or all the time, compared to roughly a third last year.

On this question, there are very few differences between male/female and age group responses – just a few percentage points. 49% of 18-44's discuss cybercrime either 'All the time' or 'often', compared to 51% of 45+.



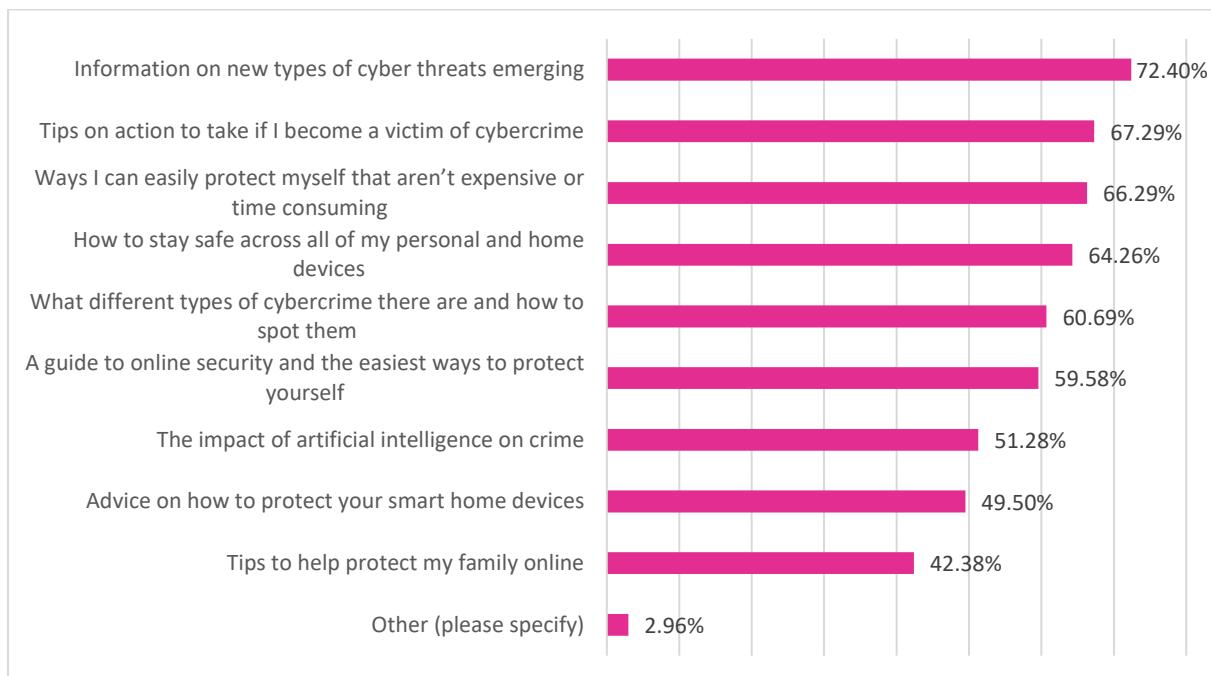
In the last 12 months have you seen or read advice or resources on preventing cybercrime?



So much information is now available to help people avoid becoming a victim of cybercrime - in magazines, on TV and radio as well as on the internet, it is an ever-present topic, and arguably hard to ignore. The results from this question show that:

- More respondents have seen or read information on preventing Cybercrime recently than the same time the previous year (83% compared 81%).
- Neighbourhood Watch members are more likely to have seen advice, with 87% (+2% on 2023) responding that they had compared to non-members at 83% (up 6% on 2023).

Which of the following articles would you be interested in? (Select all that apply)



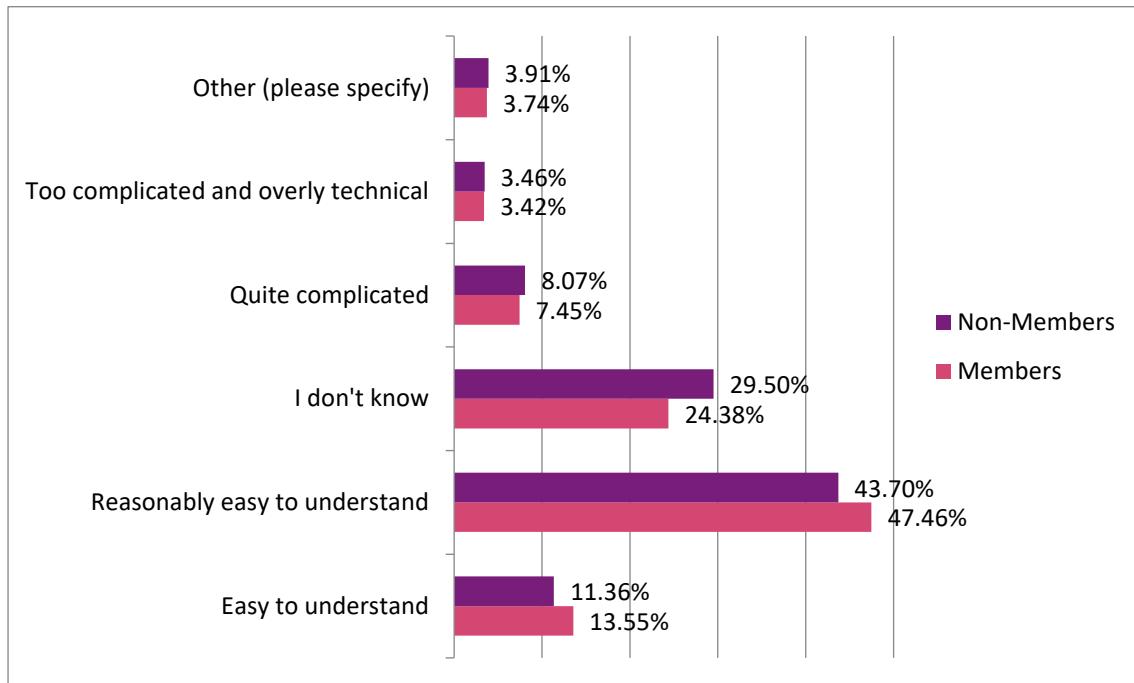
Respondents were able to select as many articles as they would be interested in for this question and the most popular were around detecting cybercrime and protecting home devices.

We will use this information to prioritise articles for our website and 'Our News' magazine as well as informing our Cyberhood Watch Ambassadors with their work in the community.

Other suggestions in the free text categories are:

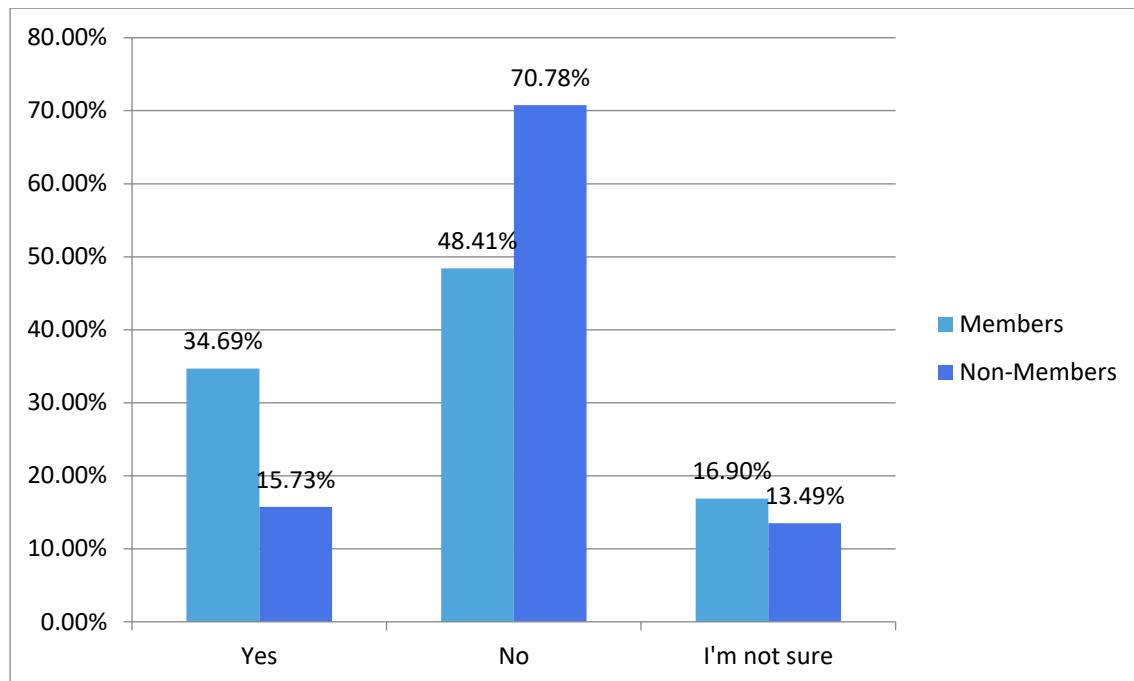
- Comparisons of anti-virus software
- I'm interested in any and every piece of information that may help me to keep myself and my family safe from cyber attacks.
- How to safely and securely dispose of old mobile phones and computers before selling them on/giving them to charities/recycling them. How to know who to trust to do this for me.
- How to retrieve your account when you are hacked
- "easier ways to report scams.
- So far you can only report scams to action fraud if you have lost money, not if you are smart and haven't gone through with it.
- We should be able to report ALL scams even if we didn't fall for it."
- Information that is explained in a straightforward way without jargon and technical terms

How do you feel about the information and advice offered by the government and their agencies on cybercrime? (please choose one)



We asked how easy to understand respondents thought information from Government agencies. We notice a difference between Members and Non-Members in that Members were more likely to feel that the information was 'easy' or 'reasonably easy' to understand – (61.01% v 55.06%).

Are you aware of Neighbourhood Watch's Cyberhood Watch initiative, supported by Avast?



As you might expect, members of Neighbourhood Watch are much more likely to know about Cyberhood Watch Ambassadors than non-members. However, at just over a third, it is clear that we need to put in place additional publicity to ensure that the initiative is better known generally.

AI image question

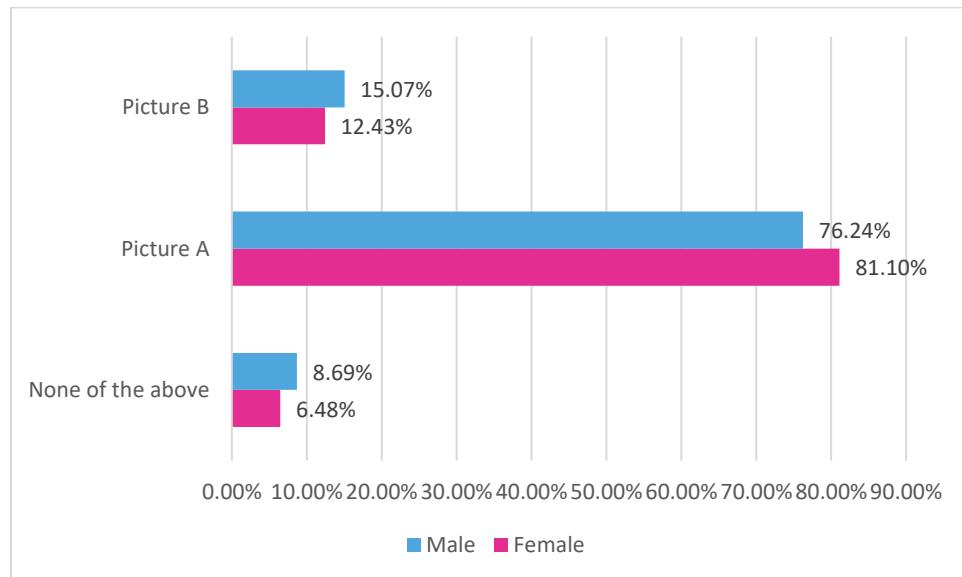
We asked if respondents could identify the image generated by AI

The two images of tabby cats below were offered, and respondents were asked if they thought either or none were generated by AI – the image on the left – Picture A was created by ChatGPT, Picture B is a photograph of a staff member's own cat.



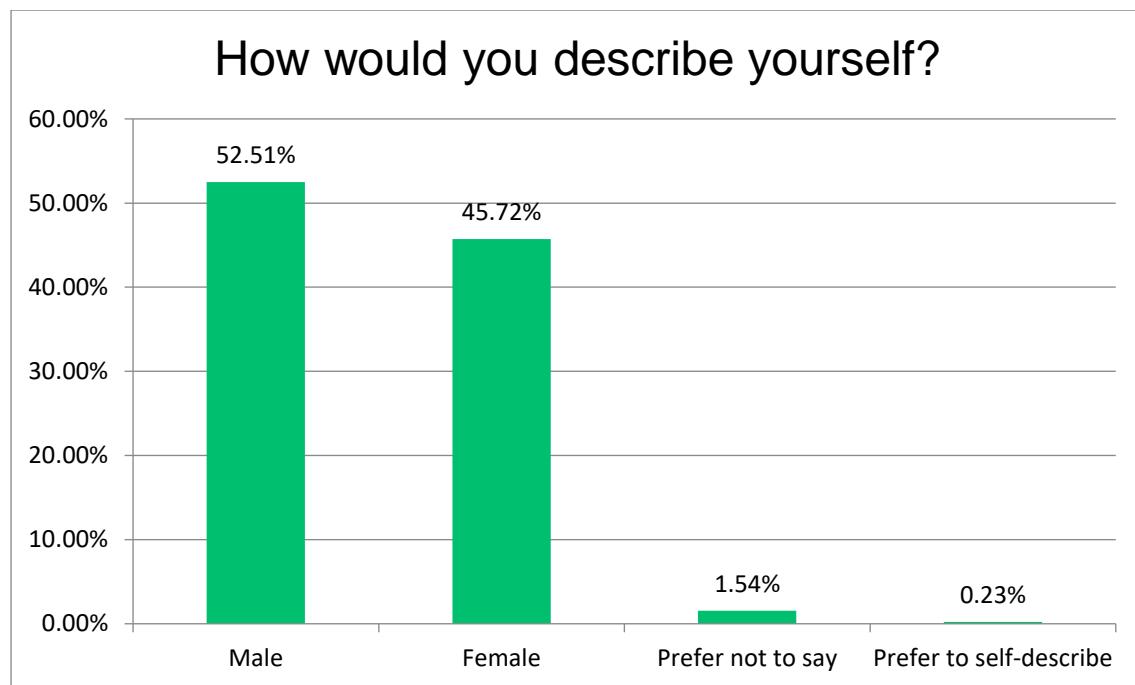
Altogether 4,730 people answered the question - 19,874 skipped it. In the fight against cybercrime it is going to be increasingly difficult, but important to be able to discern between real and computer generated images and video.

In this instance, more women than men correctly identified the AI image at 81% v 76%,

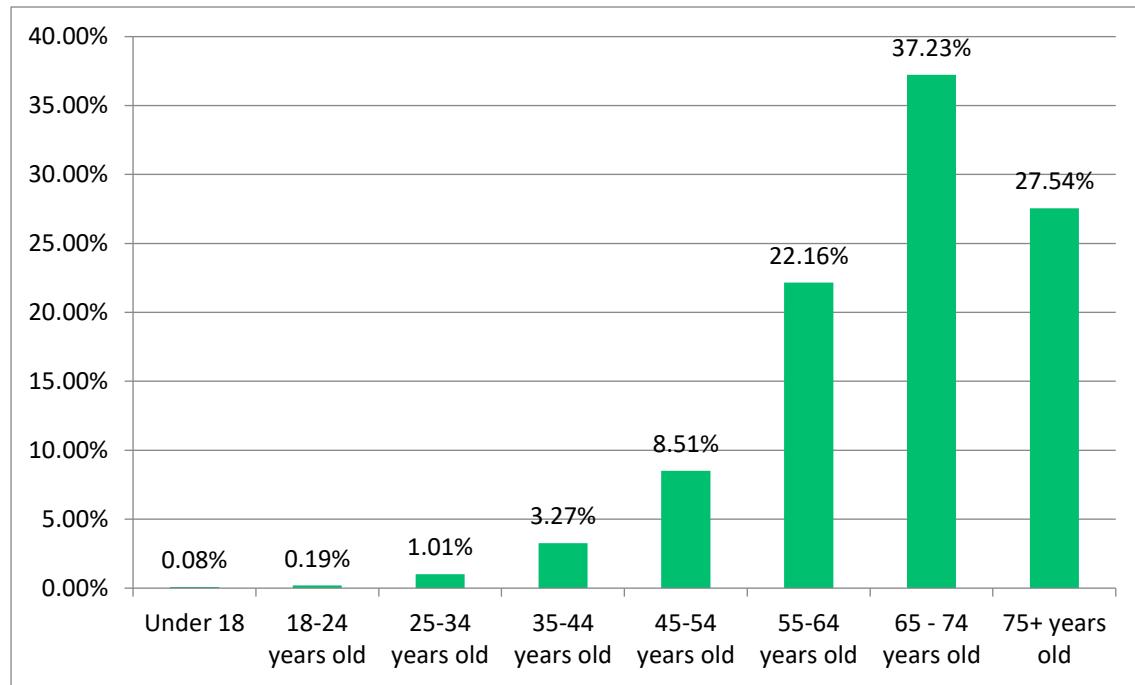


Demographics

Gender

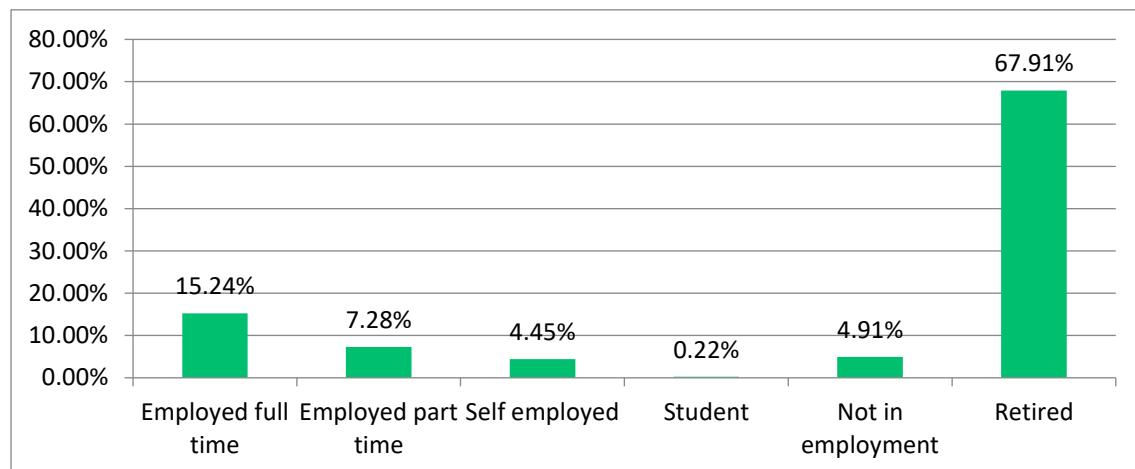


Age

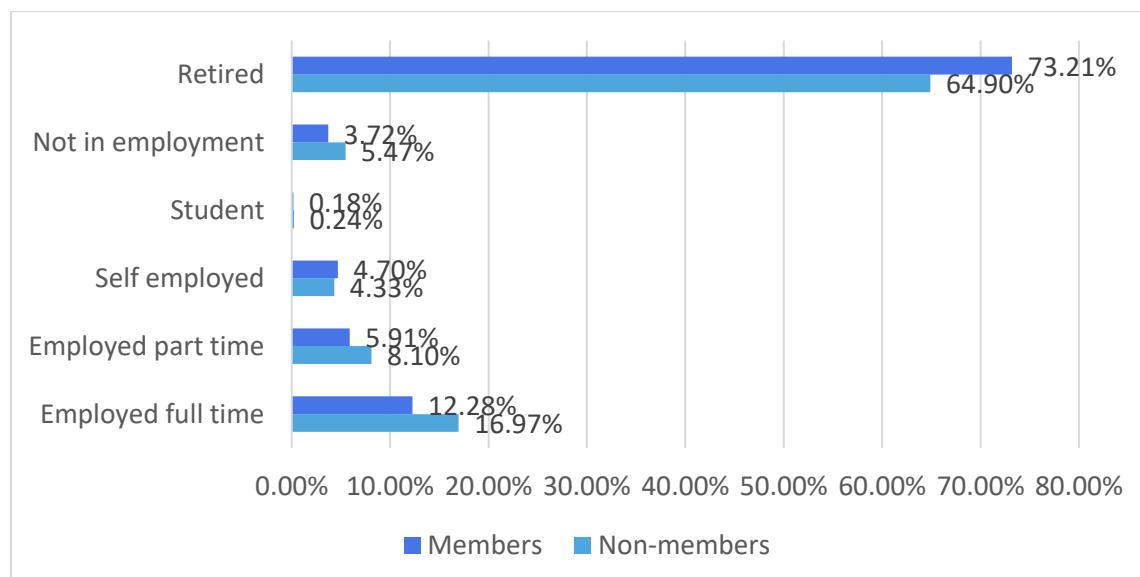


Employment Status

All members

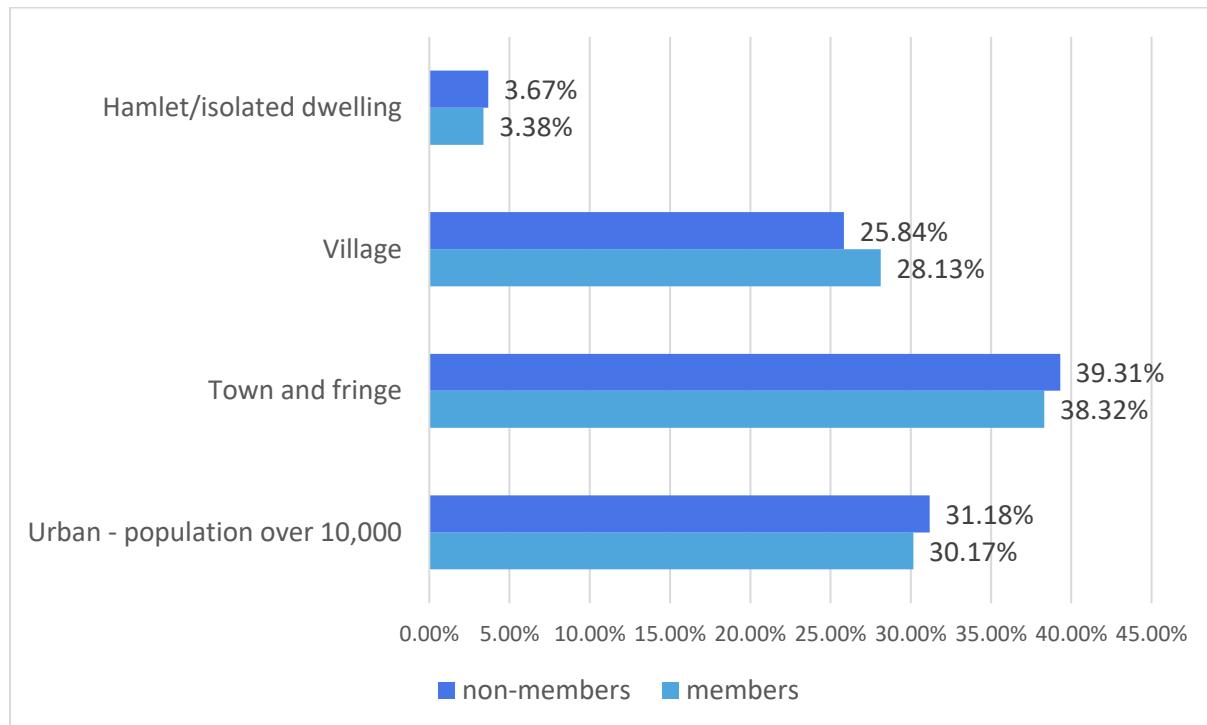


Members v Non-Members of NW - Of those who responded, almost 9% more members of NW are retired than non-members.



What kind of area do you live in?

There is very little difference between members and non-members as to the kinds of places they live.



Which region do you live in? (please choose closest area)

This year we asked respondents to give us the first few digits of their postcodes, so we have mapped them according to the density in each area.



Are you a member of Neighbourhood Watch?

Just over a third of respondents are members/volunteers and just over a quarter receive information from us but do not consider themselves to be members.

