



**NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH
CYBERCRIME SURVEY 2025**



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1.0 Introduction

This is the fifth 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 effect on victims and the extent to which people report – or know how to report it.

A total of 23,427 people responded to the survey. Responses with only a small number of completed questions were removed, leaving **21,003** valid respondents included in the analysis. The completion rate was **88%**, and participants typically took around **five minutes** to complete the survey. The survey was promoted between **22 December and 5 January**.

Questions have been updated, but we have kept some of the key questions which are in line with 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). The link was also shared through some of our social media channels.

This sampling method is likely to introduce **sampling bias**, as respondents may share similar traits and characteristics. As a result, the sample probably represents only a small subset of the overall population.

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

3.0 Executive Summary

When we first launched the Cybercrime Survey in 2021, just under a fifth of respondents had been a victim of cybercrime. That figure has steadily increased to 38% - close to the 40% national statistic for reported cybercrime.

The *Cybercrime Survey 2025* gathered **21,003 valid responses** to assess public awareness, experiences, and behaviours related to cybercrime. We reduced the number of questions this year, to make the questionnaire quicker to complete and improve the flow.

Cybercrime remains widespread and growing, with 38% of respondents reporting victimisation in the past year, continuing a multiyear upward trend. Telephone and text scams were the most common and many also encountered fake parcel messages, AI assisted scams, and impersonation attempts-year upward trend. Telephone and text scams were the most common, and many also encountered fake parcel messages, AI-assisted scams, and impersonation attempts

Awareness of cyber risks is improving, with most respondents recognising that **smart devices can be hacked** and reporting high ownership of connected devices across age groups. Emotional impacts such as anxiety, embarrassment, and feeling unsafe remain significant, particularly among women.

Among those who lost money, most losses were **under £500**, with men more likely to experience higher value losses. A growing number reported that banks or merchants refunded their losses. -value losses. A growing number reported that banks or merchants refunded their losses.

Most respondents felt they had **mid-level cybercrime knowledge**, though younger people showed lower uptake of antivirus protection. Reporting behaviour remains inconsistent, with many unsure who to contact, despite Report Fraud being the national reporting service.

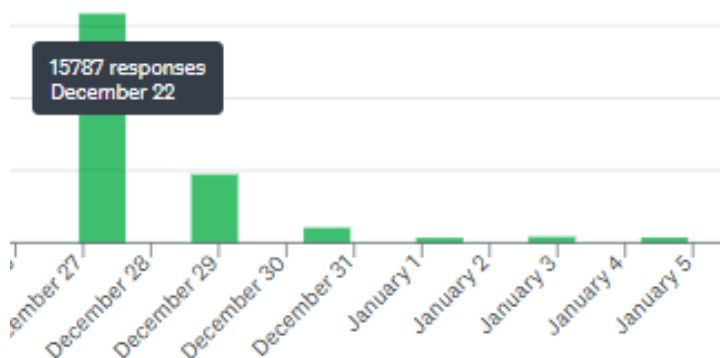
Information seeking habits vary women tend to rely on friends and family, while men more often consult official websites. Awareness of the Cyberhood Watch Ambassador scheme remains low outside the Neighbourhood Watch community. -seeking habits vary women tend to rely on friends and family, while men more often consult official websites. Awareness of the

Only a small proportion could correctly identify an AI generated image, highlighting challenges around misinformation and synthetic media. -generated image, highlighting challenges around misinformation and synthetic media.

Overall, cybercrime continues to rise, with significant emotional and financial impacts. While awareness and protection behaviours are improving, gaps remain around reporting, preparedness, and recognising sophisticated scams.

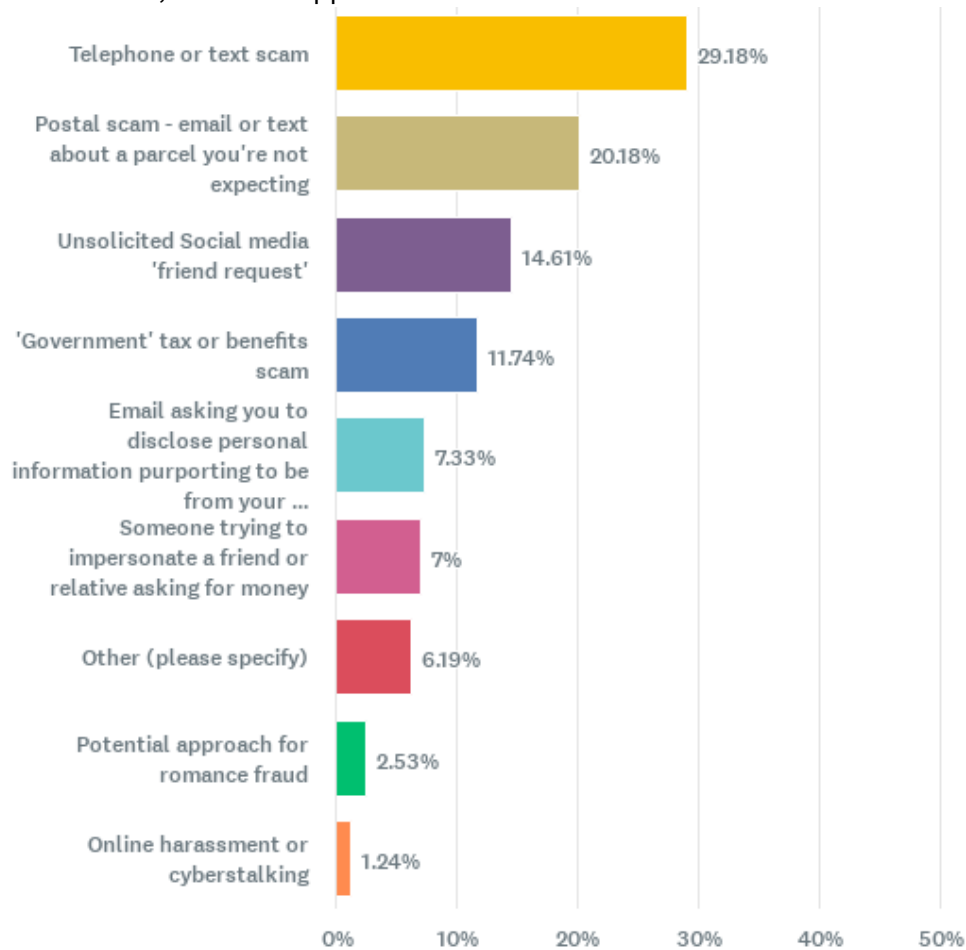
4.0 Respondents

All but 6 responses came via the alert system/newsletter that we promoted the survey in. All except six responses were received through the alert system and newsletter in which the survey was promoted. On the first two days after the survey launched, we received more than 15,000 responses, rising to 20,000 in the first week.



Q1 Have you been sent any of the following scams in the past 12 months?

Answered: 21,003 Skipped: 0



By far the biggest category of scams received by respondents was the telephone or text scam. This encompasses things like the 'Hey mum, I've changed my number' text, along with fake Microsoft, bank and Amazon calls, asking for money.

Among respondents aged 24 and under, **35.71%** reported receiving an email requesting personal information, compared with **18%** across all age groups.

More than half of respondents had received the fake parcel scam texts and emails.

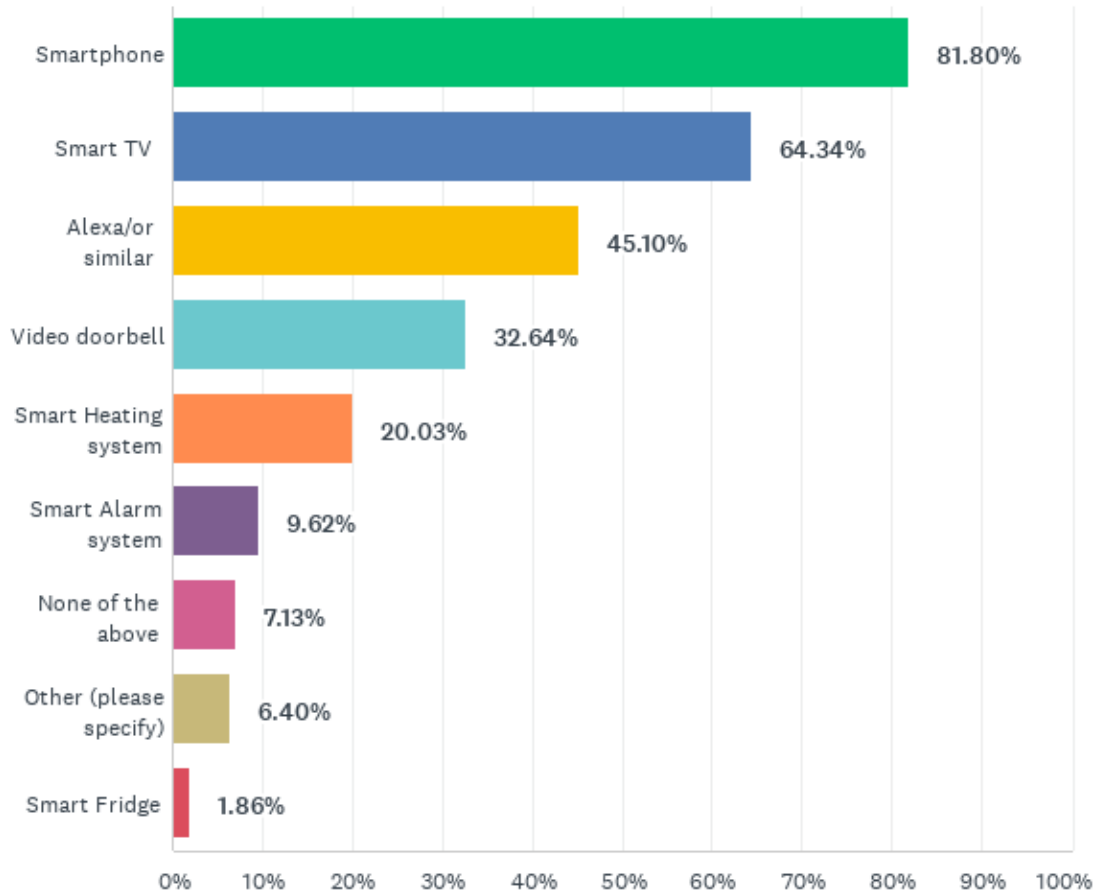
A slightly larger percentage of male respondents had received an approach for romance fraud than women (2.94% v 2%).

Online harassment or cyberstalking affected a higher proportion of younger respondents (34 and under) at 3.83% while fewer in this younger category were targeted by those trying to impersonate a friend or relative (4.41% v 7.1% of respondents over 34).

Within the 'other' category we found a wide range of other cybercrime like fake job offers, asking for money up-front, AI voice scams fake DVLA and TV License approaches.

Q2 We asked respondents which smart devices they had in their homes:

Answered: 20,384 Skipped: 619

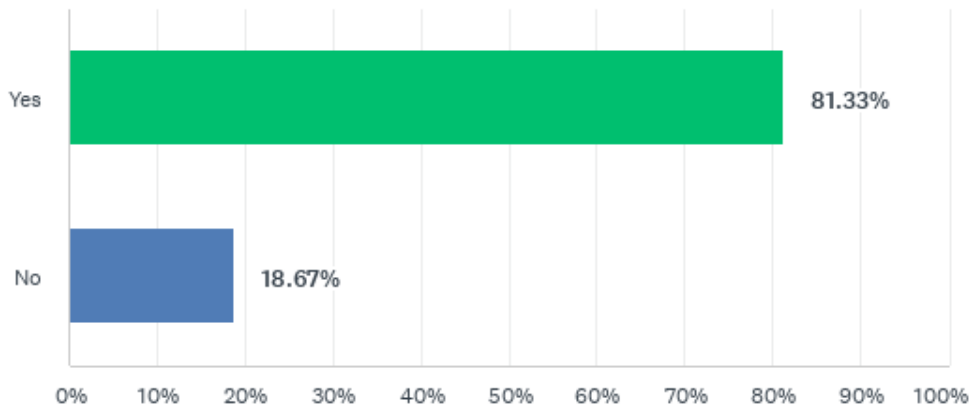


Smartphone ownership remains steady compared with last year, rising to **86.67%** among those aged 24 and under. Among respondents aged 65 and over, smart device ownership has only declined by **2-3%** across the board, indicating that the older generation is largely keeping pace with technology.

Video doorbell ownership is slightly up on last year (+3%).

Q3 We asked respondents if they realised that smart devices can be hacked

Answered: 20,396 Skipped: 607

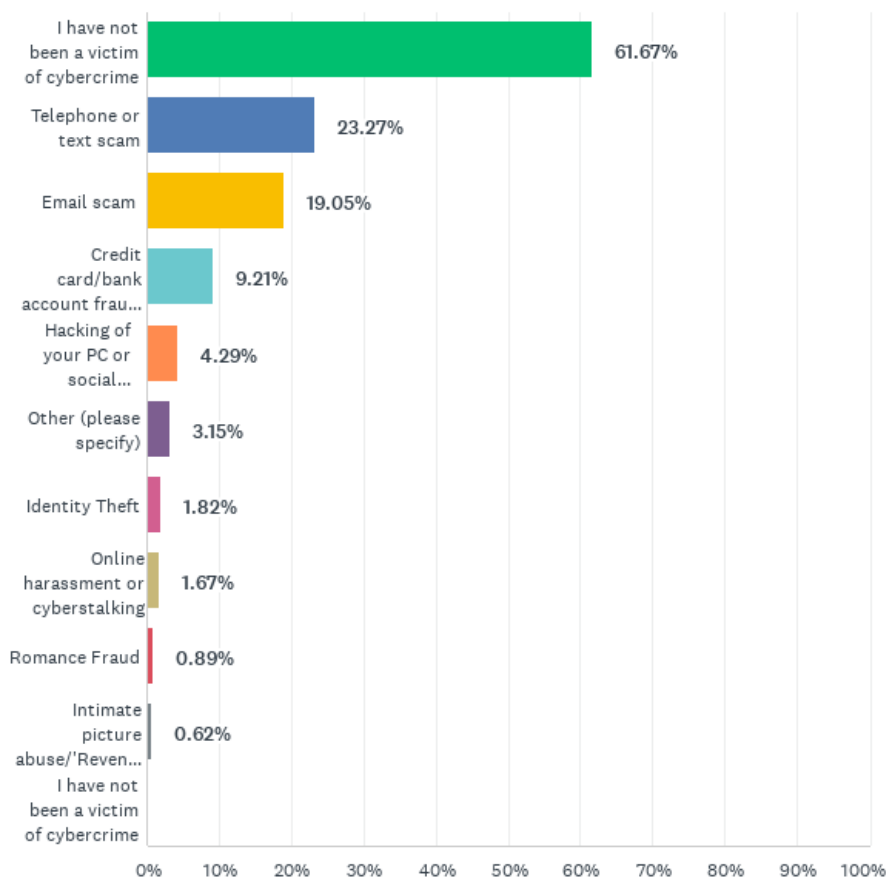


This question is new this year, so no previous data is available for comparison. It is encouraging that a significant percentage of respondents recognize that smart devices are vulnerable to hackers and opportunistic scammers.

Q4 Victims of cybercrime in the past year

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

Answered: 20,485 Skipped: 518



20,485 people responded and over a third of them had been a victim of some kind of cybercrime (38.33%). This is marginally more than last year (35.27%). Slightly more women than men have been a victim of Cybercrime (40.37% v 36.19%). This represents a similar change to last year, decreasing from **5% in 2024** to **4% in 2025**.

In the 'other' category respondents talked about having Nectar points stolen, QR code scam, investment scam, fake speeding fine and similar.

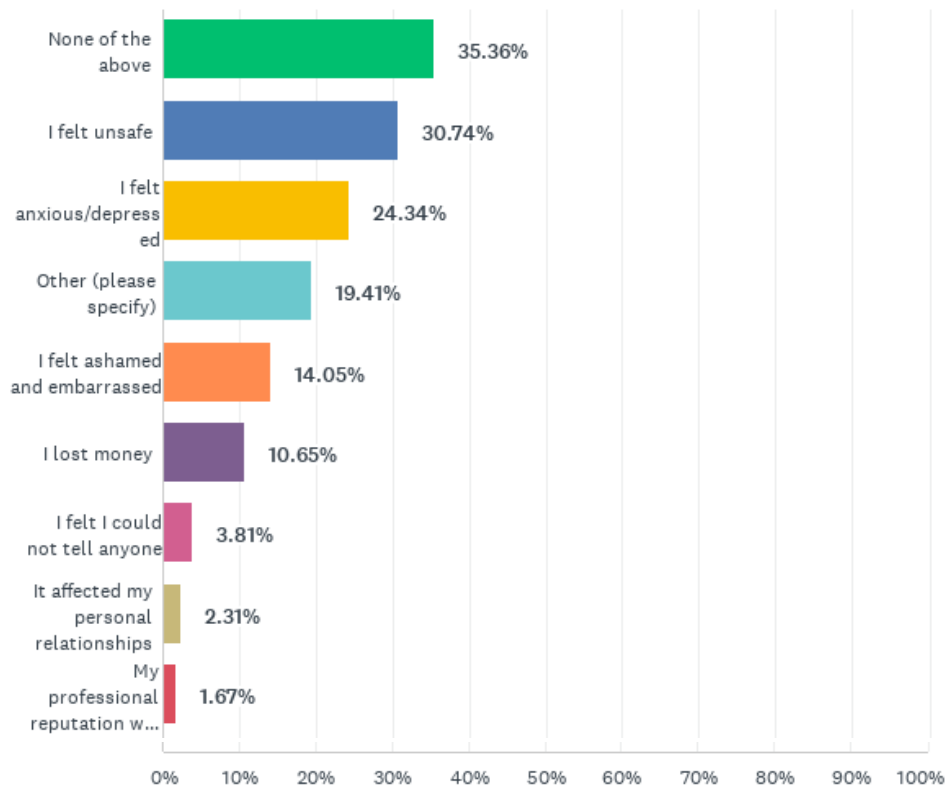
Looking at our previous surveys, we can see that becoming a victim of cybercrime is growing:

38.33%	2025
35.27%	2024
32.7%	2023

Q5 Non-financial consequences of cybercrime

Answered: 7,709 Skipped: 13,294

We asked respondents what the consequences were of the cybercrime they suffered



Previous surveys have shown that women tend to experience stronger negative feelings than men regarding this issue. The table below provides a comparison, showing a slight decline—exactly the trend we hope to see.

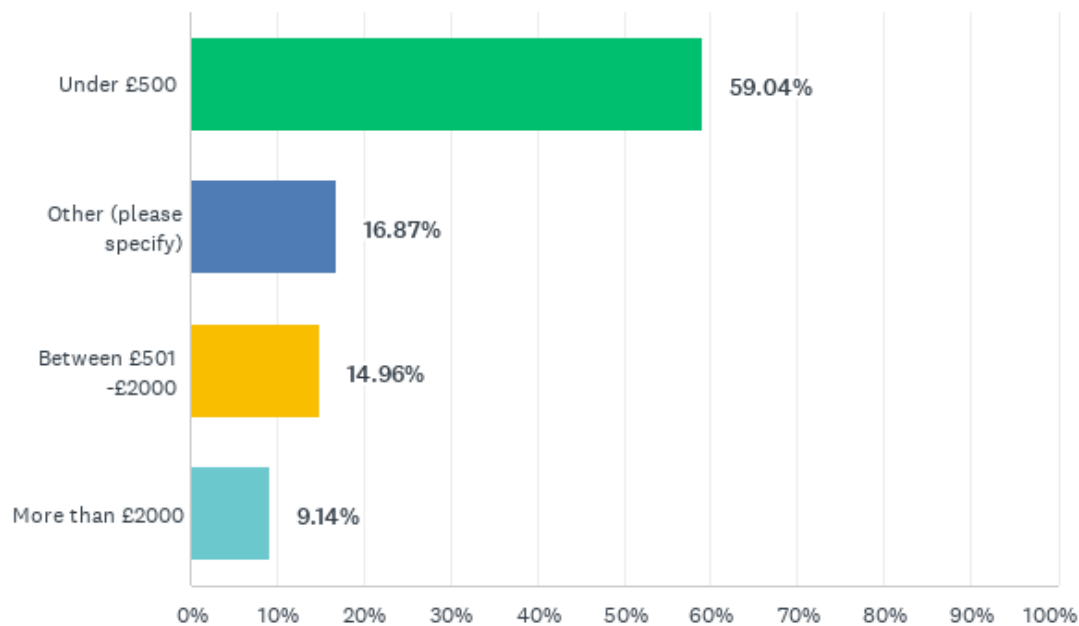
Countless news articles, TV shows and influencer pieces and of course the work we do through Cyberhood Watch, should play its part in showing people that these scams are sophisticated and anyone can fall victim at any time. That only by being informed and aware can you protect yourself and telling family and trusted friends can help.

Feelings	Men	Women
Felt unsafe	27% (28% in 2024)	35% (35% in 2024)
Felt anxious or depressed	22% (22% in 2024)	28% (29% in 2024)
Felt ashamed or embarrassed	13% (15% in 2024)	16% (19% in 2024)

Q6 We asked how much those who lost money to cybercrime lost

Answered: 996

Skipped: 20,007



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.

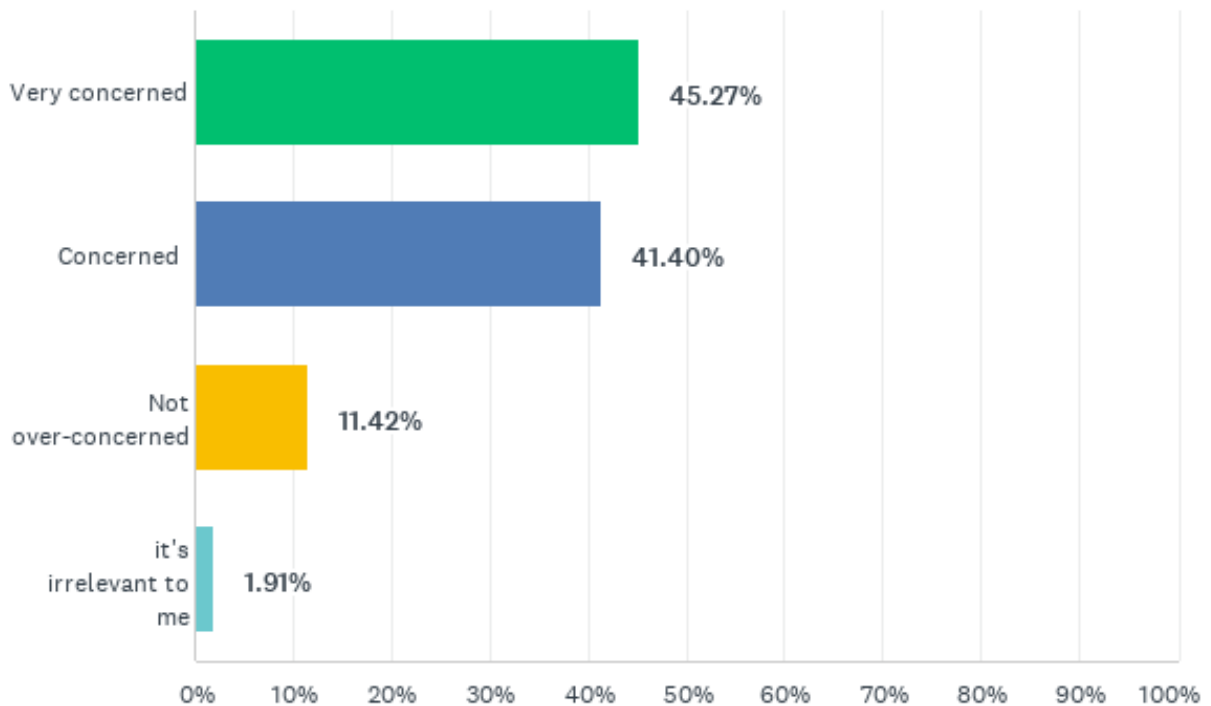
Amount lost	Men	Women
Under £500	58% (54% in 2024)	61% (62% in 2024)
Between £501-£2,000	15% (16% in 2024)	14% (15% in 2024)
More than £2,000	11% (11% in 2024)	6% (8% in 2024)

Looking at the 'other' category, more people than ever before are reporting that money has been restored to their accounts either by their bank or the merchant involved.

Q7 Corporate Data Breaches – we ask about how important they are

Corporate Data Breaches: How concerned are you about your personal data being compromised by businesses, in light of recent cyber-attacks on companies such as M&S and Coop that exposed customer information?

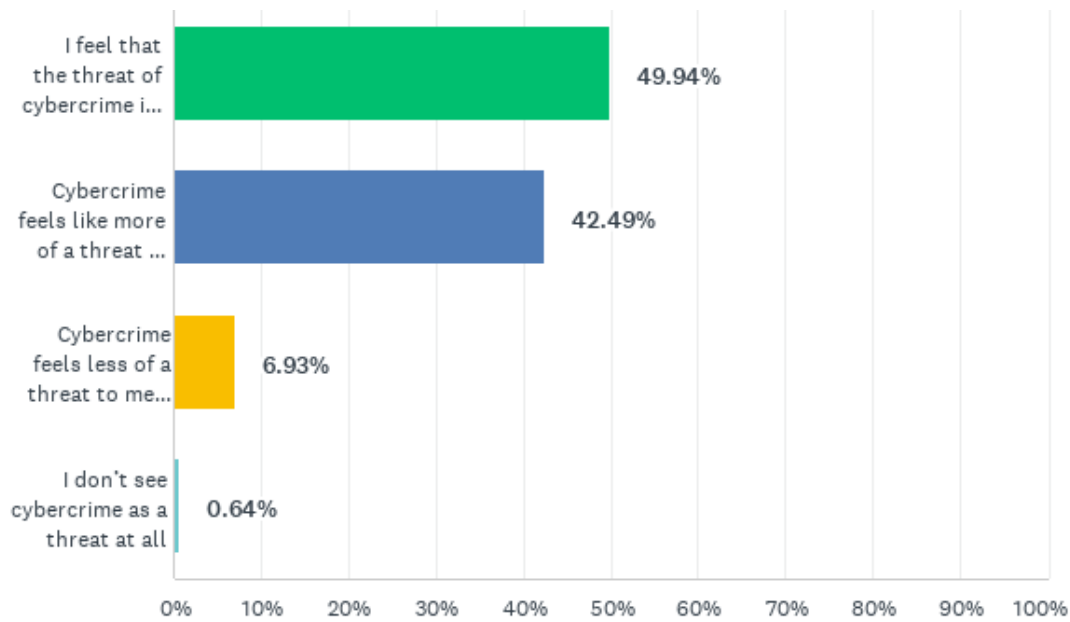
Answered: 7,712 Skipped: 13,291



Roughly one third of respondents answered this question, with the vast majority being very concerned or concerned. Running a household and conducting day to day tasks increasingly demands that we share data with merchants, local government, health providers and more, meaning that data security is a huge issue for all of us.

Q8 Views on how safe respondents felt about Cybercrime

Answered: 20,213 Skipped: 790

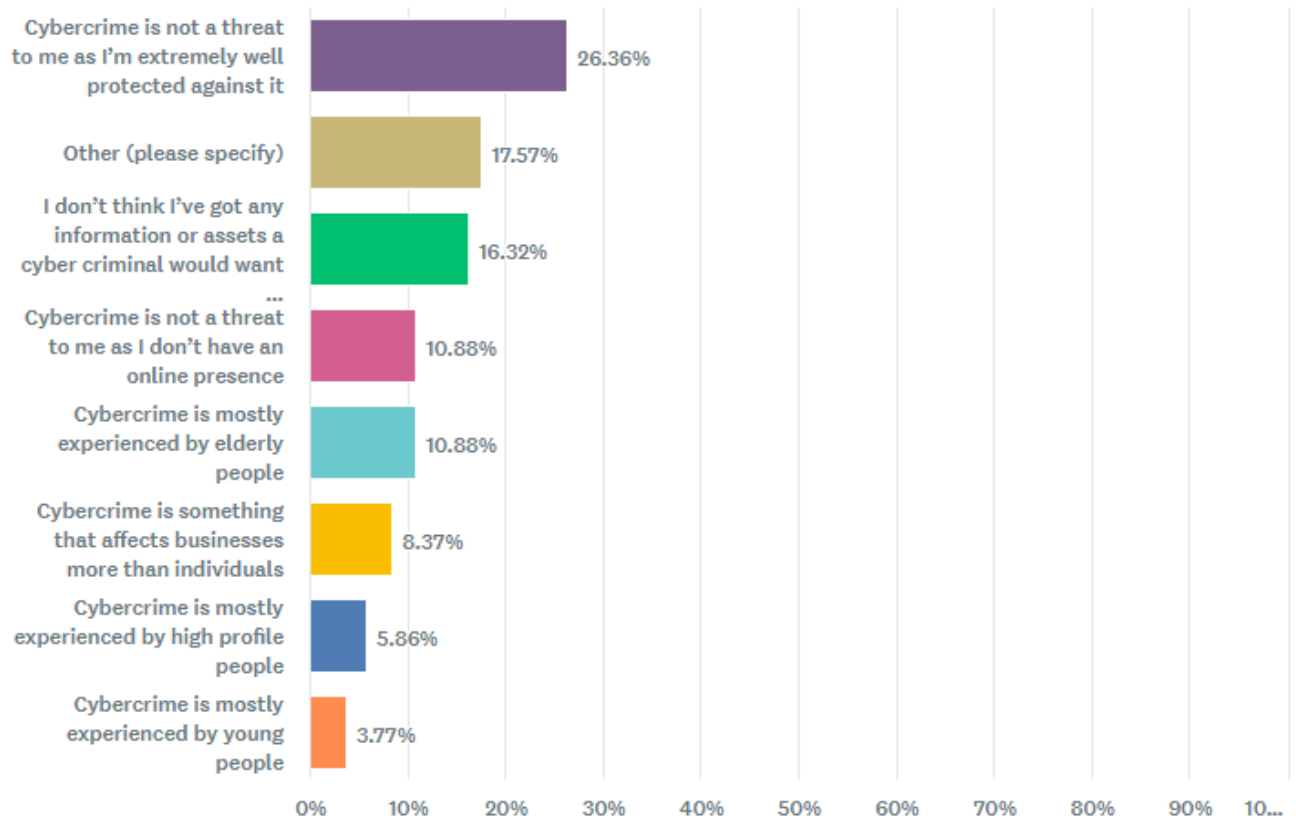


8.3% of men feel that cybercrime is less of a threat than other crime, compared to 5.11% of women. It is reassuring to know that only a few people see cybercrime as no threat at all, since it now accounts for over 40% of all reported crime.

Q9 For those who didn't think Cybercrime was a threat, we asked why:

Answered: 174

Skipped: 20,829



Only 174 people responded to this question, which is a decrease on previous years and shows that only a small percentage of respondents feel that cybercrime is not a threat to them with 36% feeling that they are well protected against it.

Q10 Device protection

Answered: 19,236 Skipped: 1,767

We asked what protection people have for their home devices against a cyber-attack?

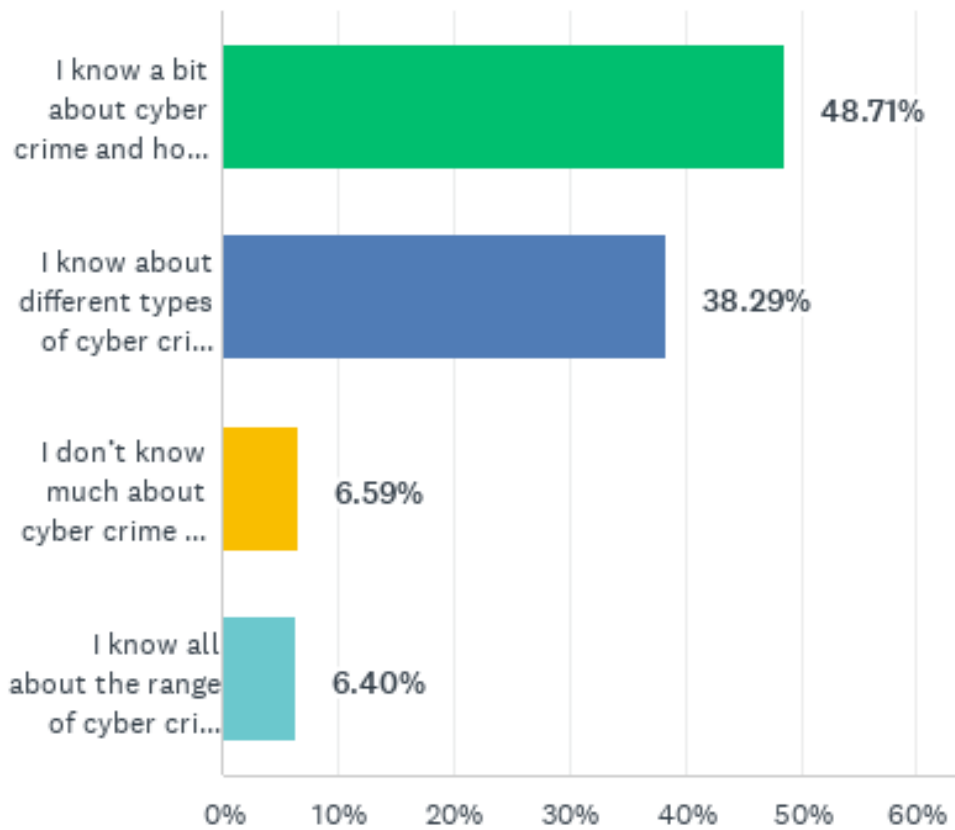
	LAPTOP OR DESKTOP COMPUTER	PHONE	TABLET	I DON'T HAVE THIS	TOTAL RESPONDENTS
Anti-virus software	80.89% 15,264	56.06% 10,578	37.74% 7,122	9.84% 1,857	18,869
Strong passwords - that are different across my devices, apps and programmes	79.21% 14,871	76.43% 14,348	48.91% 9,181	7.61% 1,429	18,773
Password manager tool to keep my passwords safe	46.86% 8,330	49.08% 8,724	29.62% 5,265	38.78% 6,894	17,775
Encryption products such as a Virtual Private Network (VPN)	36.31% 6,206	30.52% 5,216	18.35% 3,137	54.89% 9,382	17,091
Keeping all my software and apps updated when prompted	80.44% 15,106	83.38% 15,659	52.07% 9,778	4.64% 871	18,780

We looked at the mid (25-64 years) and older age groups age 65+ to see if adoption of security protection was as well developed as the overall group, and it is pleasing to see that there are just a few percentage points of difference.

Looking at the 24-and-under group, software updates are maintained at levels similar to the overall sample; however, antivirus adoption is lower, with 66% reporting antivirus on laptops compared with 81% of the main group. It should also be noted that the sample size for this question was relatively small with only 182 answering the question

Q11 We asked how prepared respondents felt about cybercrime

Answered: 19,142 Skipped: 1,861

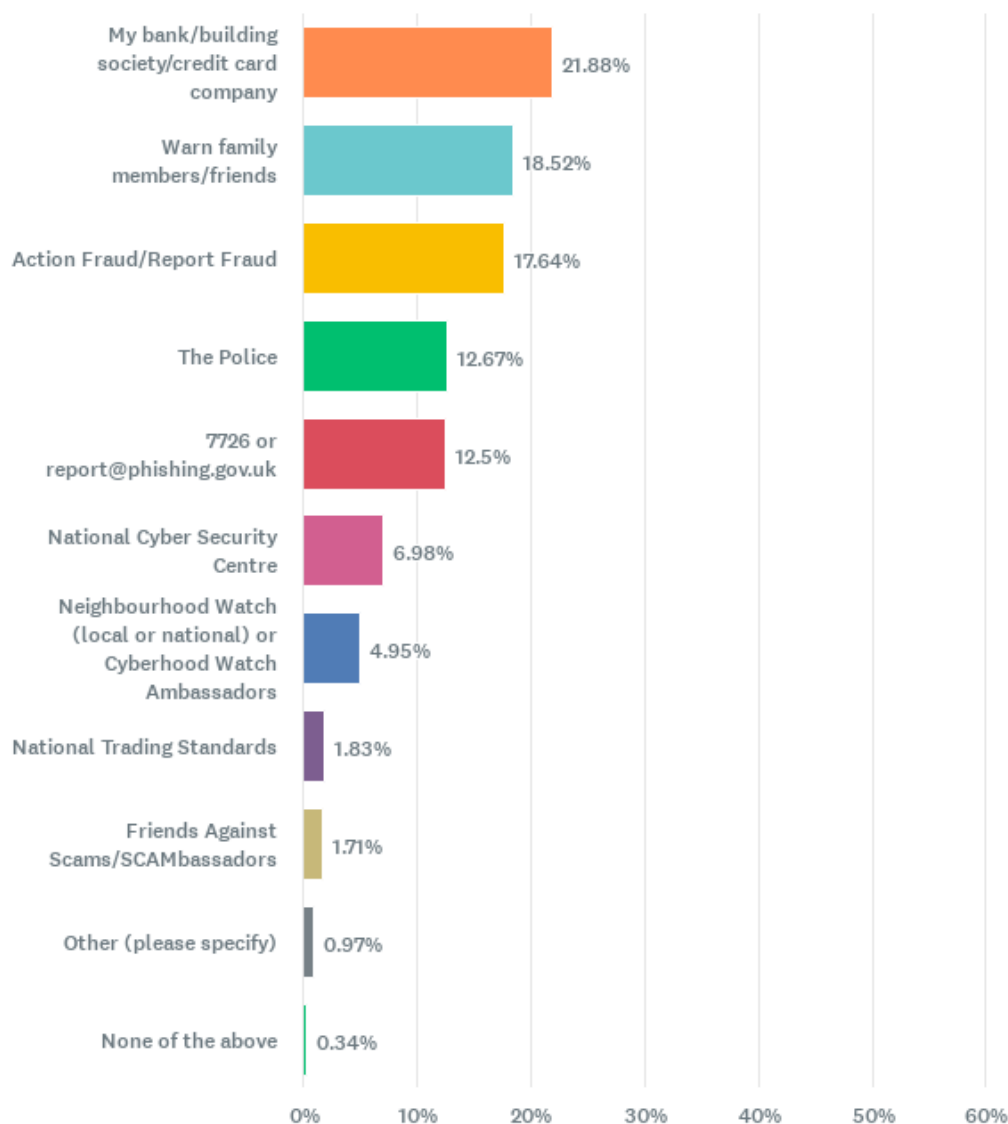


	ALL	Men	Women
Low level knowledge	6.59%	4.66%	8.71%
Mid-level knowledge	87%	86.75%	87.65
High-level knowledge	6.40%	8.59%	3.64%

The table above demonstrates that women are typically a little less confident about their knowledge of cybercrime but the mid-level knowledge figures for men and women is really very similar.

Q12 Who would you report cybercrime to? (select all that apply)

Answered: 19,229 Skipped: 1,774



In the moment of discovering you have been a victim of cybercrime, it is sometimes difficult to know how to respond. Where recovering money is the primary goal, then it is logical that people will tend to go first to the bank/building society or relevant sales channel involved, but Report Fraud is now the place to report crime.

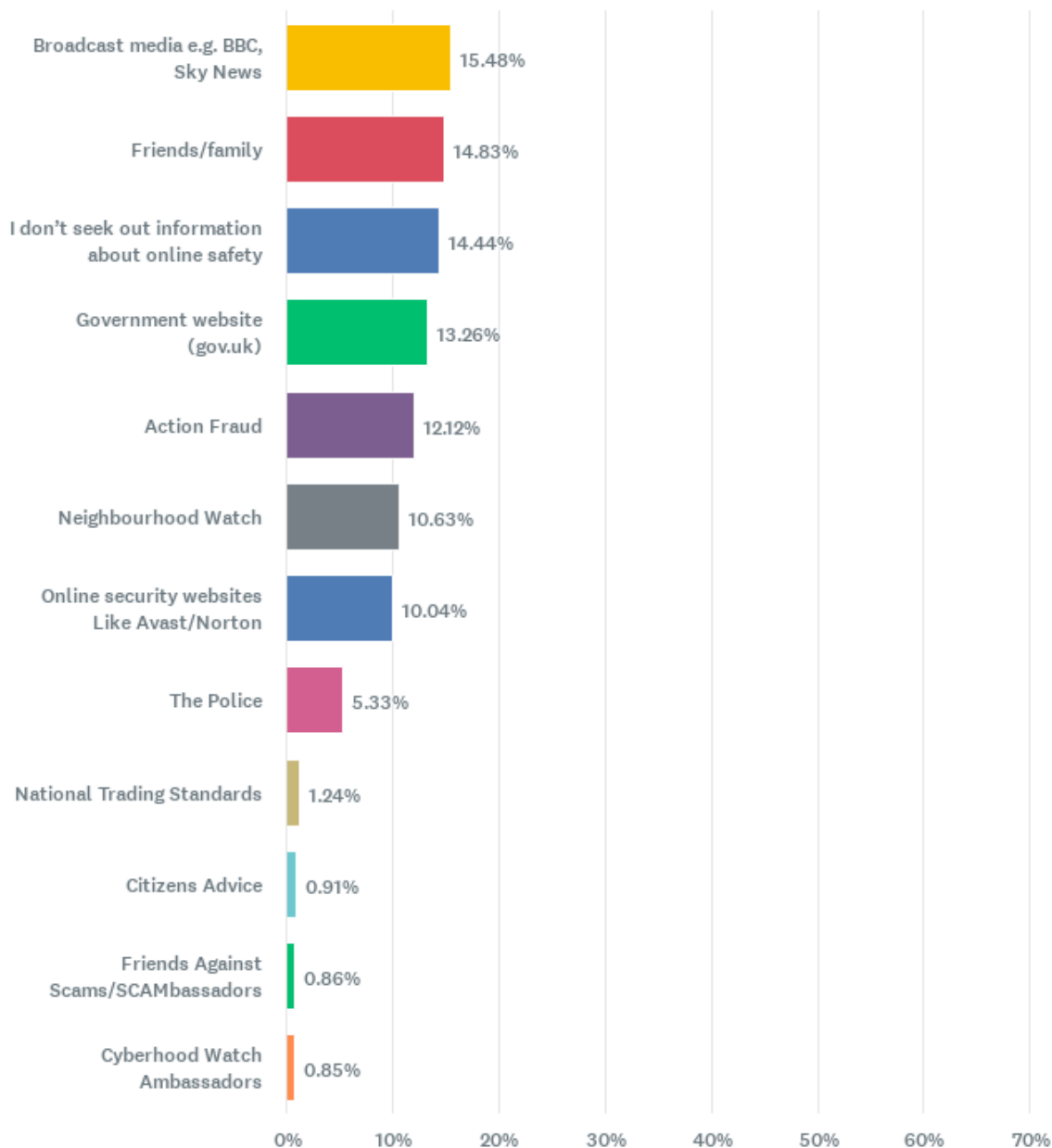
[Reporting online crime](#)

If you think you've been the victim of online fraud or identity theft contact [Report Fraud](#) through their online reporting tool or by phone on [0300 123 2040](#). Please note, it's no longer possible to report fraud to your local police station. Report Fraud is the national fraud reporting service and is the starting point for any police investigation into your loss. If you want to report any other sort of online crime, such as stalking, harassment, or fears about sexual grooming, contact the police.

Q13 Information on cybercrime

Answered: 17,992 Skipped: 3,011

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

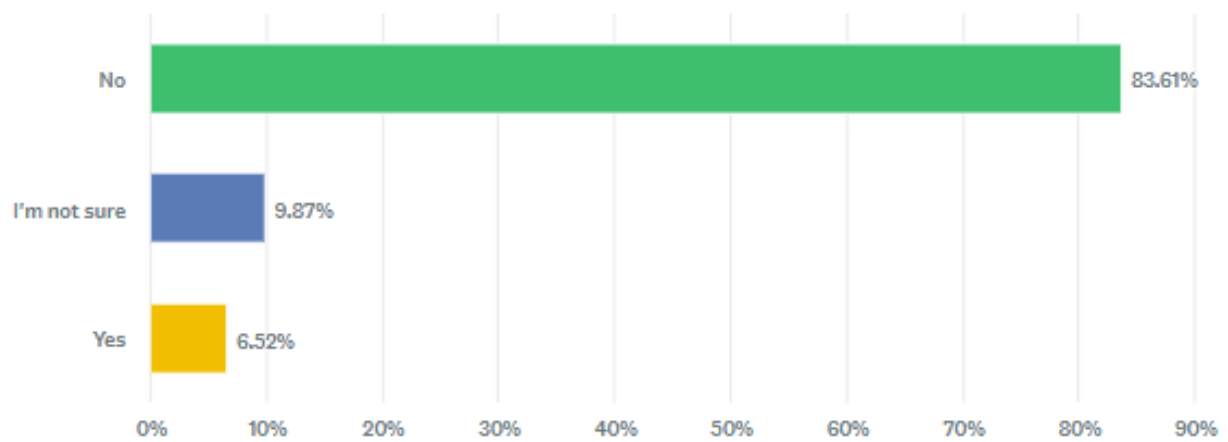


For women, friends and family are the go-to people for information on cybercrime with 18% consulting them. 15% trust broadcast media, and another 15% never seek out information about it at all. 12% of men consult friends and family, but this sits in 5th place after online security sites and the government website.

Q14 Are you aware of our Cyberhood Watch Ambassadors, supported by Avast?

Answered: 19,172

Skipped: 1,831



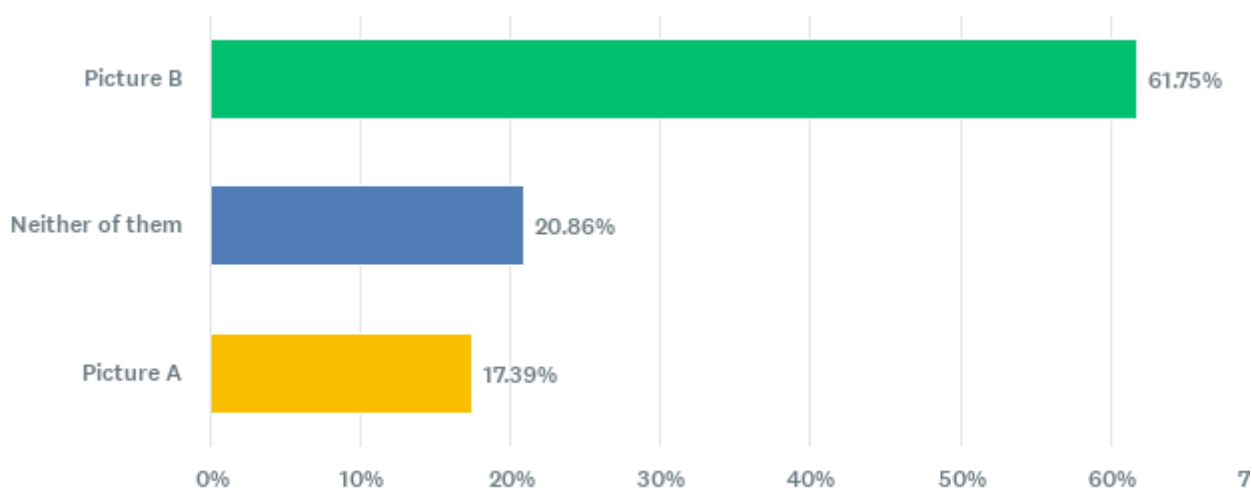
Our Cyberhood Watch Ambassador scheme is growing year on year, but we are keenly aware that it is not well known outside of the Neighbourhood Watch movement.

Q15 Identifying an AI image

15. Can you identify which of these two images have been generated by AI?



Neither of them



Only 1,213 people out of more than twenty thousand respondents chose to answer this question, which may relate to the fact that people recognise that it is increasingly difficult to tell AI from the real thing.

Only 17% of respondents chose the correct answer which was Picture A*. Far more people chose Picture B which was the AI creation. A further 21% felt that neither image was generated by AI.

*Picture A was generated by Google's Gemini AI assistant when we asked for a photograph of a mixed-race toddler sitting cross-legged.

**Picture B – is Kyra, the two and a half year old granddaughter of one of our staff members.

Demographic information

Q16 Where in the country our respondents live

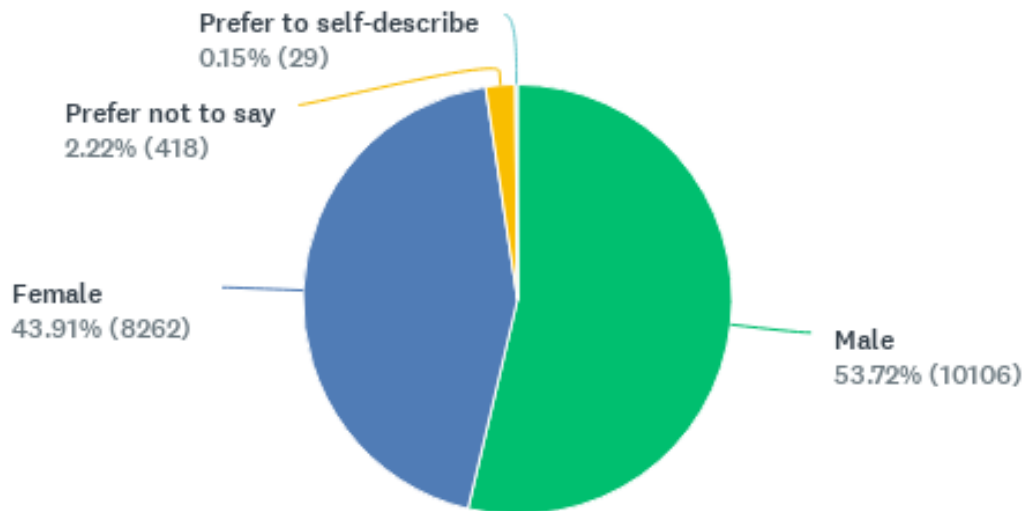
Answered: 18,607 Skipped: 2,396

We asked for the first four digits of respondents' postcodes so that we could map where they live. This shows fairly even coverage across the country, with the possible exception of North Wales and the East of England region. Neighbourhood Watch covers England and Wales and not Scotland and NI.



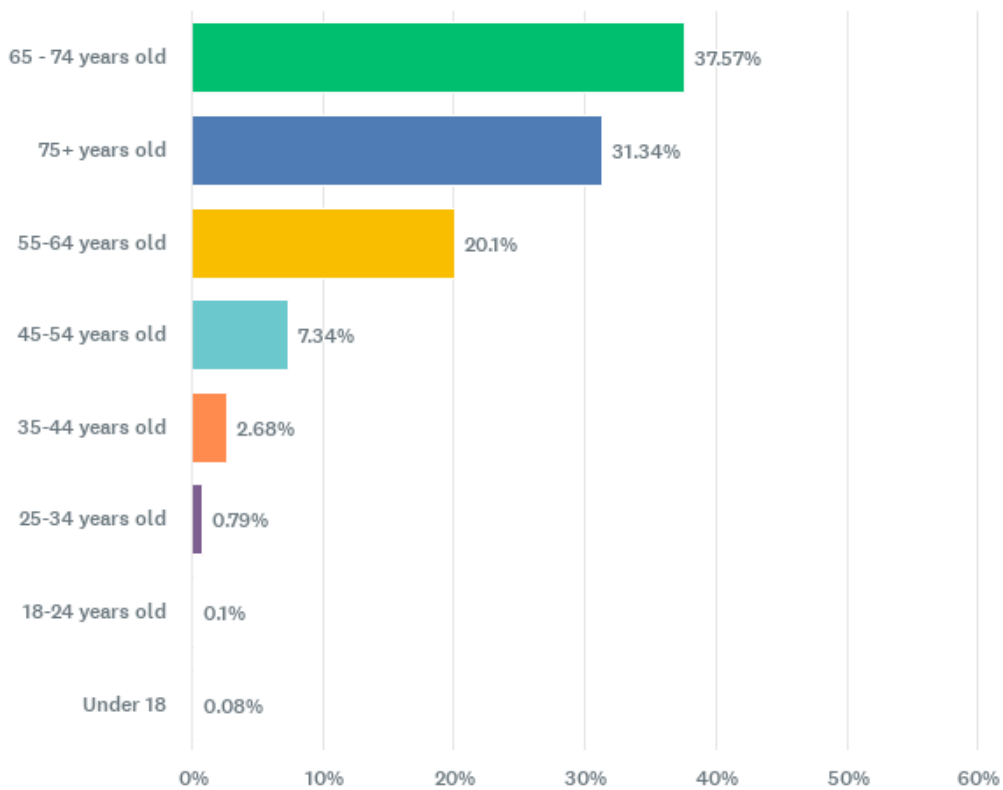
Q17 Gender

Answered: 18,815 Skipped: 2,188



Q18 Age

Answered: 18,721 Skipped: 2,282

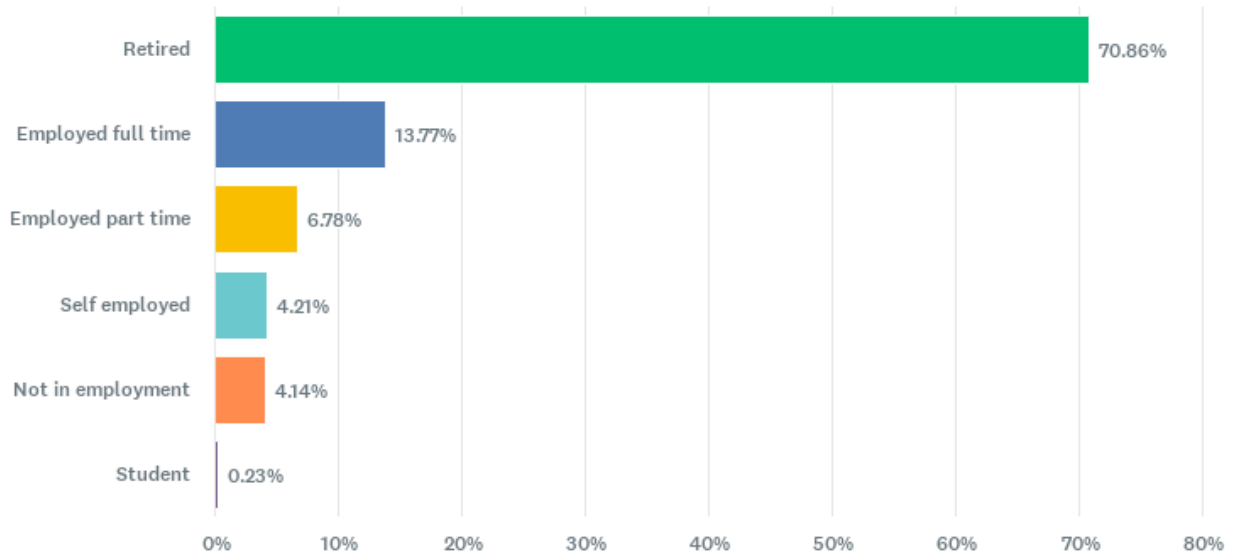


69% of respondents were aged 65 and older.

Q19 Employment status

What is your employment status?

Answered: 18,724 Skipped: 2,279



Q20 Neighbourhood Watch Membership

Answered: 18,825 Skipped: 2,178

We asked whether or not respondents were Neighbourhood Watch Members.

