

Whitburn Neighbourhood Forum: report on equality and diversity

Introduction

To comply with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011), a neighbourhood forum is required to meet certain conditions, including that its membership includes a minimum of 21 individuals each of whom:

- lives in the neighbourhood area concerned,
- works there (whether for a business carried on there or otherwise), or
- is an elected member of a county council, district council or London borough council any of whose area falls within the neighbourhood area concerned.

In addition, local planning authorities must have regard to the desirability of designating the forum organisation or body:

- that has taken reasonable steps to secure membership that includes at least one person from each of the three membership groups identified,
- that has membership drawn from different places in the area and different sections of the community in the area.

This report explains the current membership¹ of Whitburn Neighbourhood Forum according to six factors: membership type, location, gender, age, ethnicity and disability. It also shows the representativeness of membership by comparing these factors to the overall population of Whitburn.

Data collection

Membership of the Whitburn Neighbourhood Forum (WNF) is open to everyone living or working in Whitburn, or those who are elected members for the Whitburn area. Members complete a membership form, which collects contact data and membership type (resident, working, or both, or councillor).

Membership forms until 13 October 2016 did not collect data on equality and diversity. Therefore, the members who already signed up prior to this date (117 members), were requested to fill in an online survey. All current members were contacted by email and on the Forum's Facebook page on 15 October 2016. In total, 75 people responded to the survey, whilst 11 new members had filled in the same questions in the new membership form, which is a total response rate of 67%². We are expecting more people to respond as the survey has only been live for 3 days.

We also collected data from the 2011 Census on similar factors as captured in the survey. We used the LSOAs that form part of the area that we applied for to become the Whitburn Neighbourhood Area³, with the exception of the LSOA that captures the Academy of Light training grounds, but also

¹ Evening of 17 October 2016

² Evening of 17 October 2016

³ South Tyneside 018C, D and E.

a residential area of Cleadon⁴. We excluded this LSOA, as very few residential dwellings in this area are part of Whitburn, and many more so of Cleadon, which might generate false results.

Results

Membership groups

Whitburn Neighbourhood Forum currently has 128 members. Of those 123 live in Whitburn, 1 works in Whitburn and 4 both live and work in Whitburn. One member who lives in Whitburn is also a councillor of the Whitburn area. Therefore, all three membership types are represented in the WNF.

Location of members within Whitburn

See maps below for the geographical spread of members in Whitburn⁵.

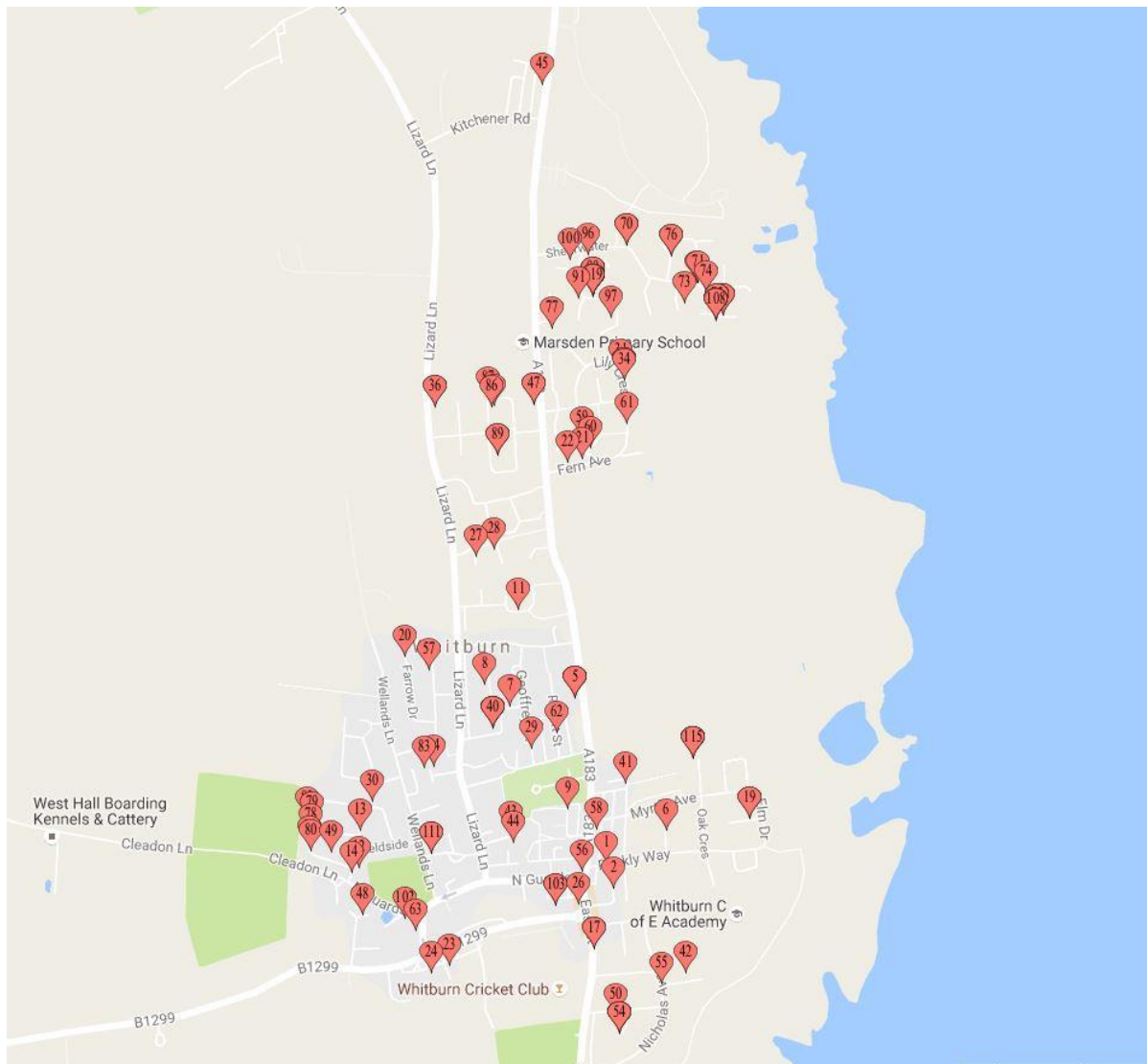


Figure 1 Membership map

⁴ South Tyneside 023C

⁵ One member only works in Whitburn; their residential address is not in the Whitburn area and was therefore omitted.

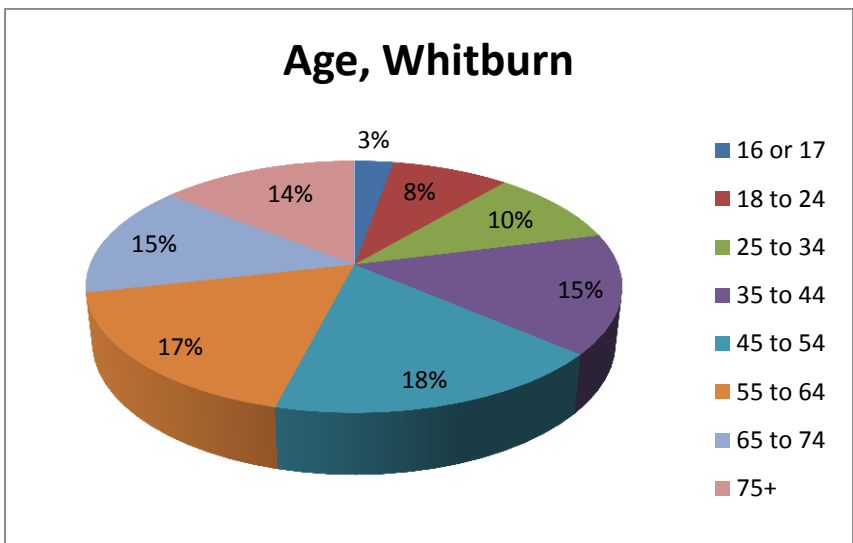


Figure 2 Membership satellite map

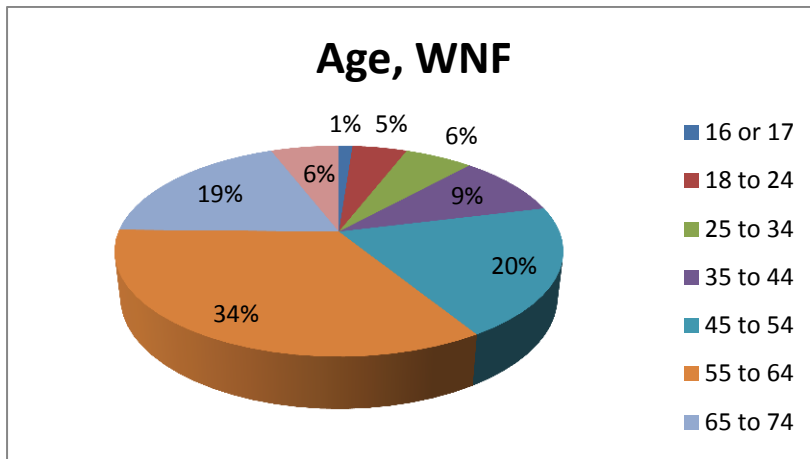
Sections of the community

Gender in the Whitburn area is divided as follows: 52% is female and 48% is male. Members of WNF are 58% female and 42% male.

Age groups are as follows in the Whitburn area:



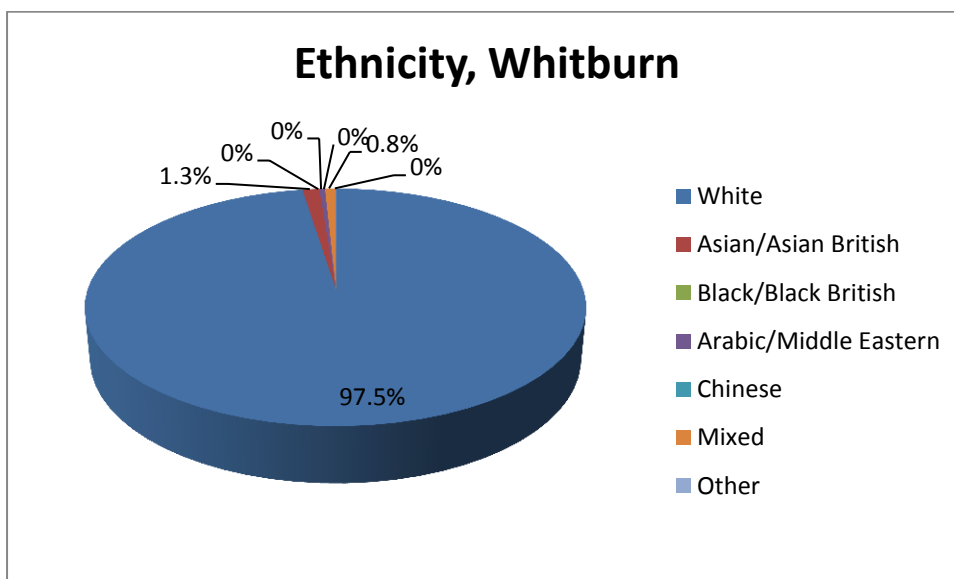
Age groups in WNF:



Measure of representativeness⁶:

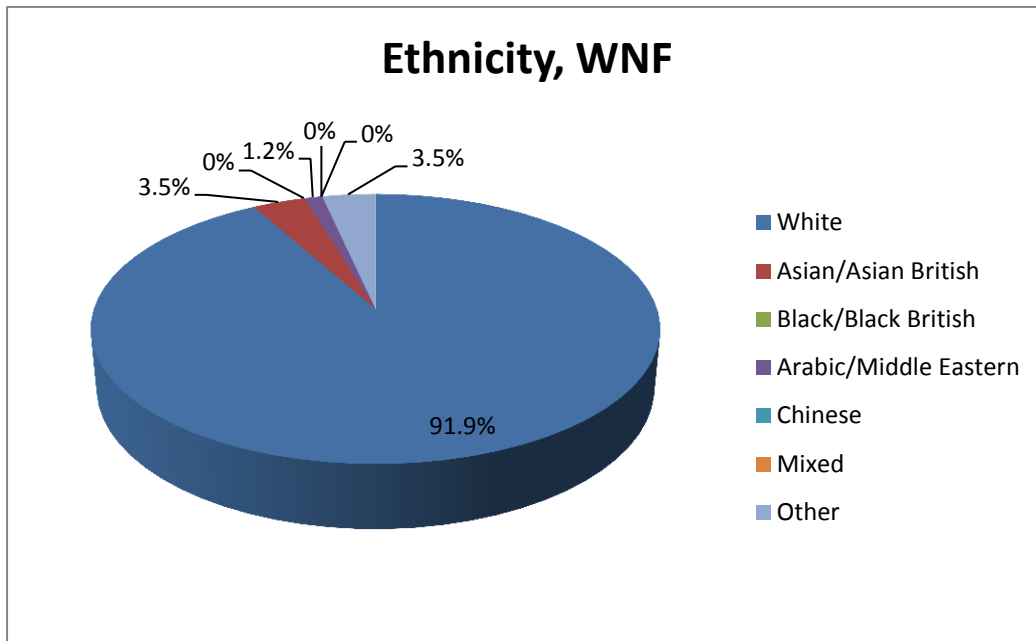
Age	Representative number	Number WNF
16 or 17	3	1
18 to 24	7	4
24 to 34	9	5
35 to 44	13	8
45 to 54	15	17
55 to 64	15	29
65 to 74	13	16
75+	12	5
Total	87	86

Ethnic groups in Whitburn:

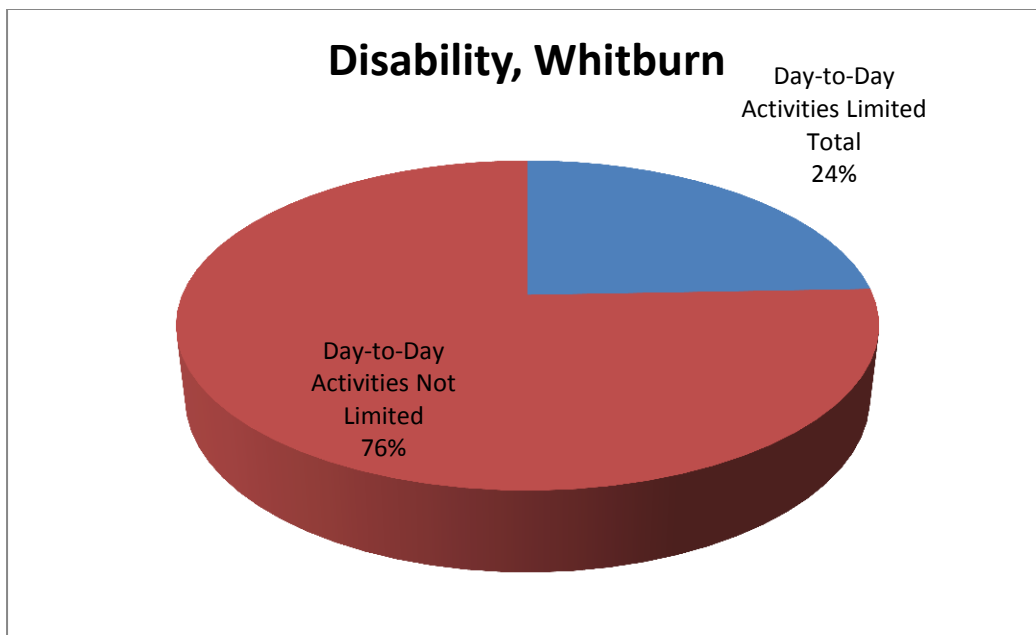


⁶ Calculated by using the percentage of the measured variable from the 2011 Census from the Whitburn area and comparing it to the data received from the survey and membership forms from WNF members. Representative number rounded to nearest whole number.

Ethnicity in WNF:

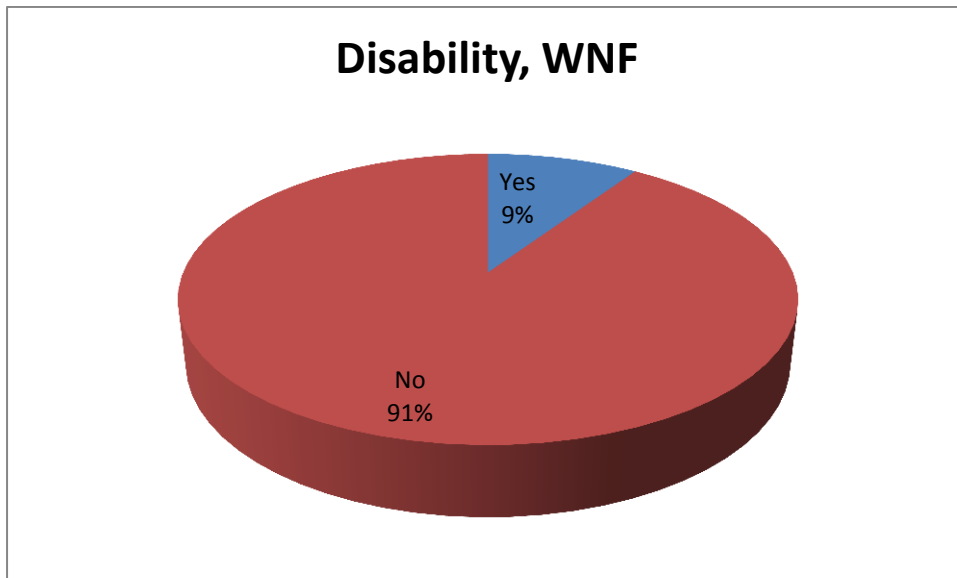


Disability in Whitburn has been determined by using data on 'day-to-day activities limited'⁷:



⁷ 'Day-to-day activities limited a little' and 'limited a lot' were added up.

Data on disability within the WNF is as follows:



Conclusion

We argue that membership of Whitburn Neighbourhood Forum is diverse and representative of the Whitburn area. Firstly, the forum has more than 21 members from each of the membership types. Secondly, WNF has a representative for each of the sections of the community that are also present in Whitburn. Lastly, members have an excellent geographical spread within the proposed Whitburn neighbourhood area.