

The background of the slide is a photograph of a large, ornate fountain at St Mary's Leisure Centre. The fountain has multiple tiers and jets of water spraying upwards and outwards. The water is illuminated, creating a bright, shimmering effect. The fountain is set against a dark, stone wall. The overall scene is captured in a low-angle shot, emphasizing the height and grandeur of the fountain.

St Mary's Leisure Centre Consultation

Full results summary

Data, Intelligence & Insight Team – January 2022.



Introduction and Methodology



- Southampton City Council undertook public consultation on the proposed discontinuation of leisure services at St Mary's Leisure Centre (SMLC).
- The consultation took place between **30 November 2021** and **24 January 2022**.
- The aim of this consultation was to:
 - Communicate clearly to residents and stakeholders the proposed discontinuation of leisure services at St Mary's Leisure Centre.
 - Ensure any resident, business or stakeholder who wished to comment on the proposals had the opportunity to do so, enabling them to raise any impacts the proposals may have.
 - Allow participants to propose alternative suggestions for consideration which they feel could achieve the objectives in a different way.
- This report summarises the aims, principles, methodology and results of the public consultation. It provides a summary of the consultation responses both for the consideration of decision makers and any interested individuals and stakeholders.
- It is important to be mindful that a consultation is not a vote, it is an opportunity for stakeholders to express their views, concerns and alternatives to a proposal. Equally, responses from the consultation should be considered in full before any final decisions are made. This report outlines in detail the representations made during the consultation period so that decision makers can consider what has been said alongside other information.



Southampton City Council is committed to consultations of the highest standard, which are meaningful and comply with *The Gunning Principles (considered to be the legal standard for consultations)*:

1. Proposals are still at a formative stage (a final decision has not yet been made)
2. There is sufficient information put forward in the proposals to allow 'intelligent consideration'
3. There is adequate time for consideration and response
4. Conscientious consideration must be given to the consultation responses before a decision is made



New Conversations 2.0
LGA guide to engagement



Rules: The Gunning Principles

They were coined by Stephen Sedley QC in a court case in 1985 relating to a school closure consultation (R v London Borough of Brent ex parte Gunning). Prior to this, very little consideration had been given to the laws of consultation. Sedley defined that a consultation is only legitimate when these four principles are met:

- 1. proposals are still at a formative stage**
A final decision has not yet been made, or predetermined, by the decision makers
- 2. there is sufficient information to give 'intelligent consideration'**
The information provided must relate to the consultation and must be available, accessible, and easily interpretable for consultees to provide an informed response
- 3. there is adequate time for consideration and response**
There must be sufficient opportunity for consultees to participate in the consultation. There is no set timeframe for consultation,¹ despite the widely accepted twelve-week consultation period, as the length of time given for consultee to respond can vary depending on the subject and extent of impact of the consultation
- 4. 'conscientious consideration' must be given to the consultation responses before a decision is made**
Decision-makers should be able to provide evidence that they took consultation responses into account

These principles were reinforced in 2001 in the 'Coughlan Case (R v North and East Devon Health Authority ex parte Coughlan²)', which involved a health authority closure and confirmed that they applied to all consultations, and then in a Supreme Court case in 2014 (R ex parte Moseley v LB Haringey³), which endorsed the legal standing of the four principles. Since then, the Gunning Principles have formed a strong legal foundation from which the legitimacy of public consultations is assessed, and are frequently referred to as a legal basis for judicial review decisions.⁴

¹ In some local authorities, their local voluntary Compact agreement with the third sector may specify the length of time they are required to consult for. However, in many cases, the Compact is either inactive or has been cancelled so the consultation timeframe is open to debate

² BAILII, [England and Wales Court of Appeal \(Civil Decision\) Decisions](#), Accessed: 13 December 2016.

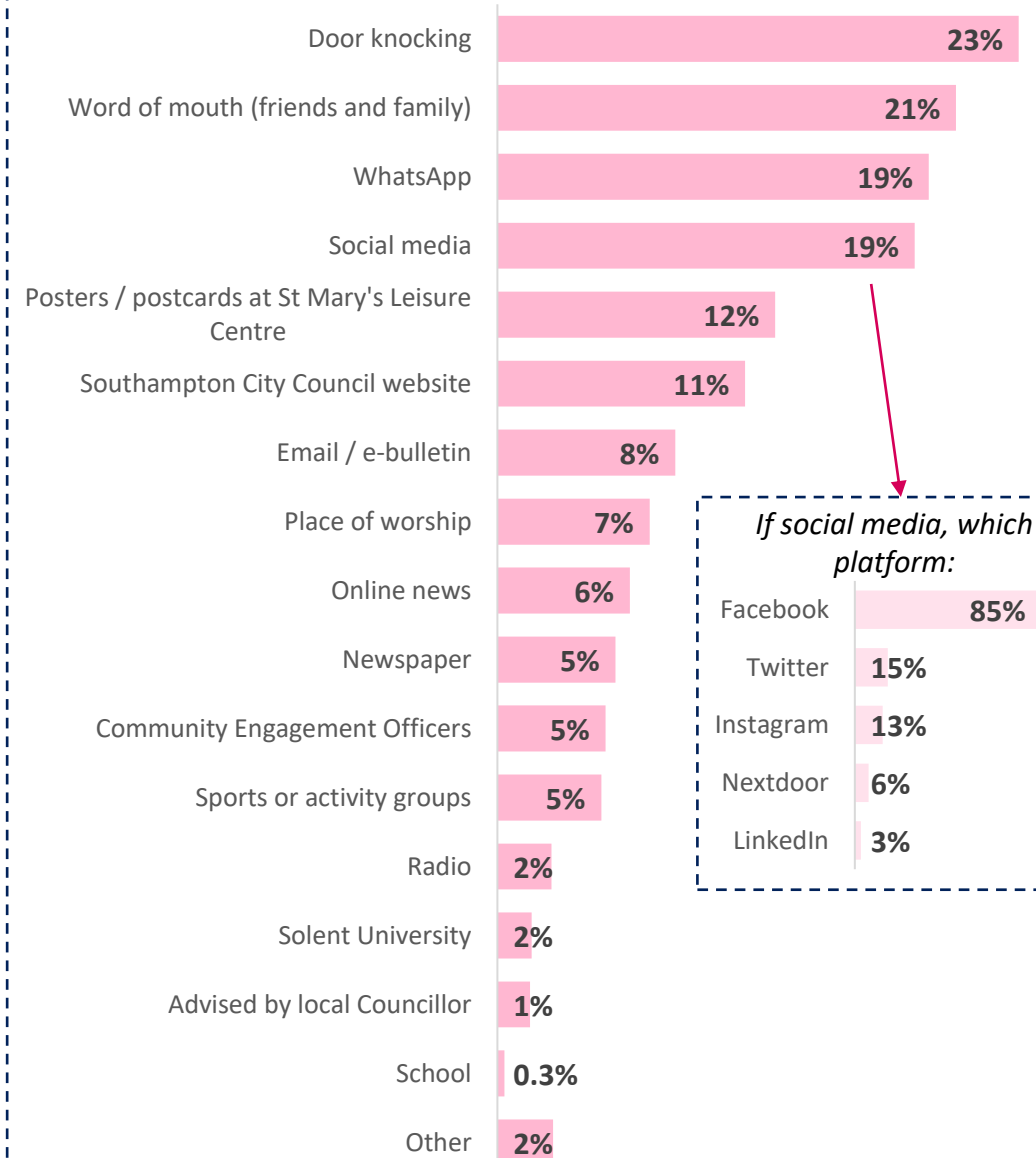
³ BAILII, [United Kingdom Supreme Court](#), Accessed: 13 December 2016

⁴ The information used to produce this document has been taken from the Law of Consultation training course provided by The Consultation Institute



- The agreed approach for this consultation was to use a questionnaire as the main route for feedback. Questionnaires enable an appropriate amount of explanatory and supporting information to be included in a structured questionnaire, helping to ensure respondents are aware of the background and detail of the proposals. Translated copies of the questionnaires were made available in Farsi and Polish.
- Respondents could also write letters or emails to provide feedback on the proposals. Emails or letters from stakeholders that contained consultation feedback were collated and analysed as a part of the overall consultation.
- The consultation was promoted in the following ways:
 - Press release
 - SCC website news story
 - Social media (Facebook, Twitter and Nextdoor)
 - City News e-bulletin
 - Your City, Your Say e-bulletin
 - Posters and Postcards at the venue
 - Community engagement team promoted the consultation through community contacts
- All questionnaire results have been analysed and presented in graphs within this report. Respondents were given opportunities throughout the questionnaire to provide written feedback on the proposals. In addition anyone could provide feedback in letters and emails. All written responses and questionnaire comments have been read and then assigned to categories based upon similar sentiment or theme.

Where the consultation was heard:



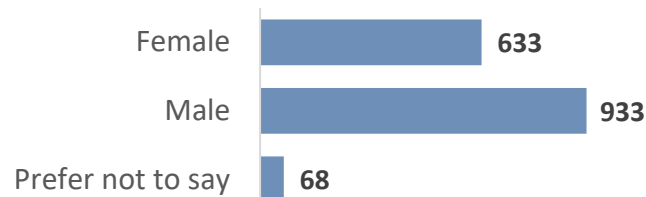


Who were the respondents?

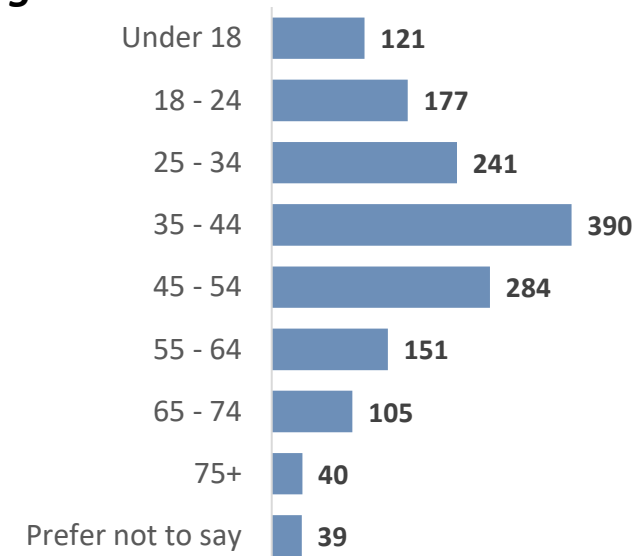
Total respondents: 1758

	Total number of responses
Questionnaire	1749
Emails / letters	9
Total	1758

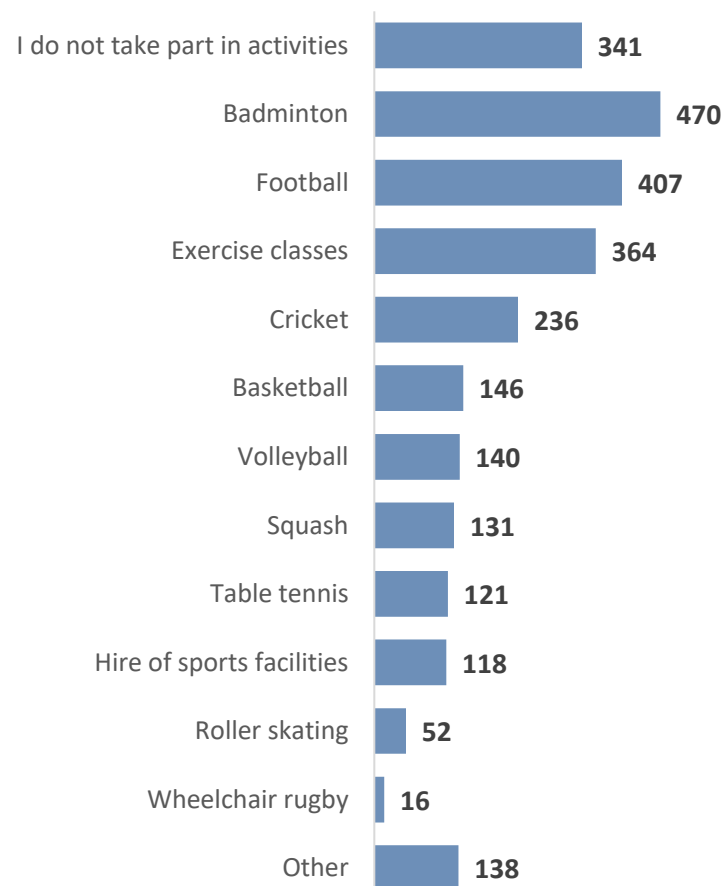
Sex:



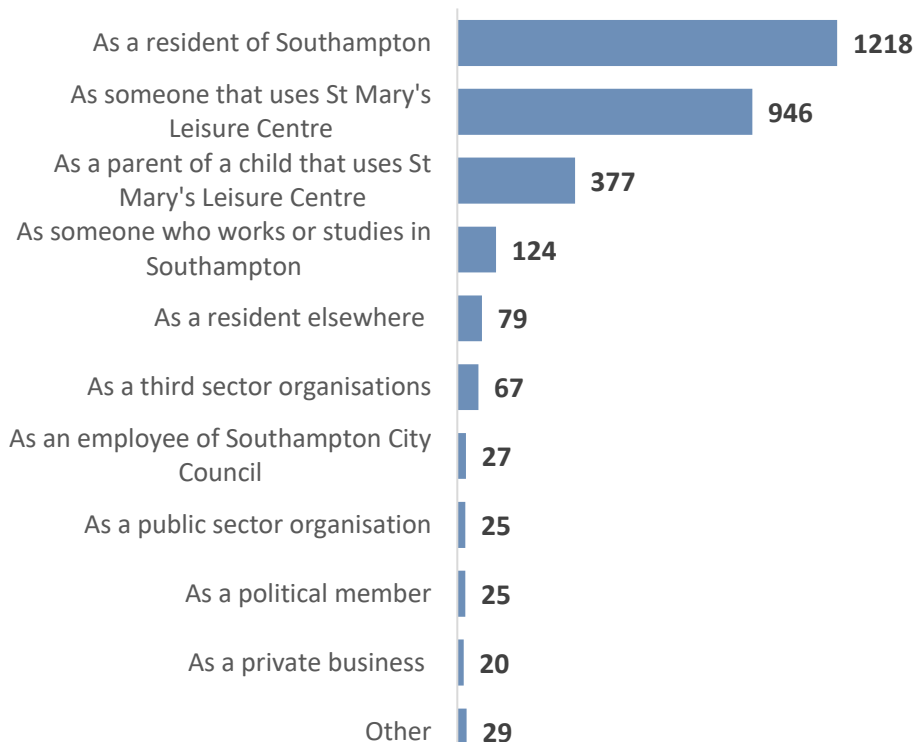
Age:



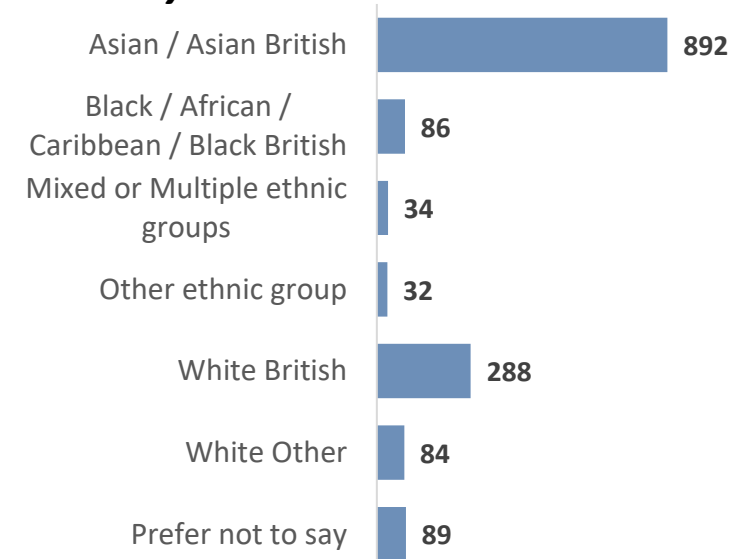
Use of St Mary's Leisure Centre:



Reason for interest in consultation:



Ethnicity:

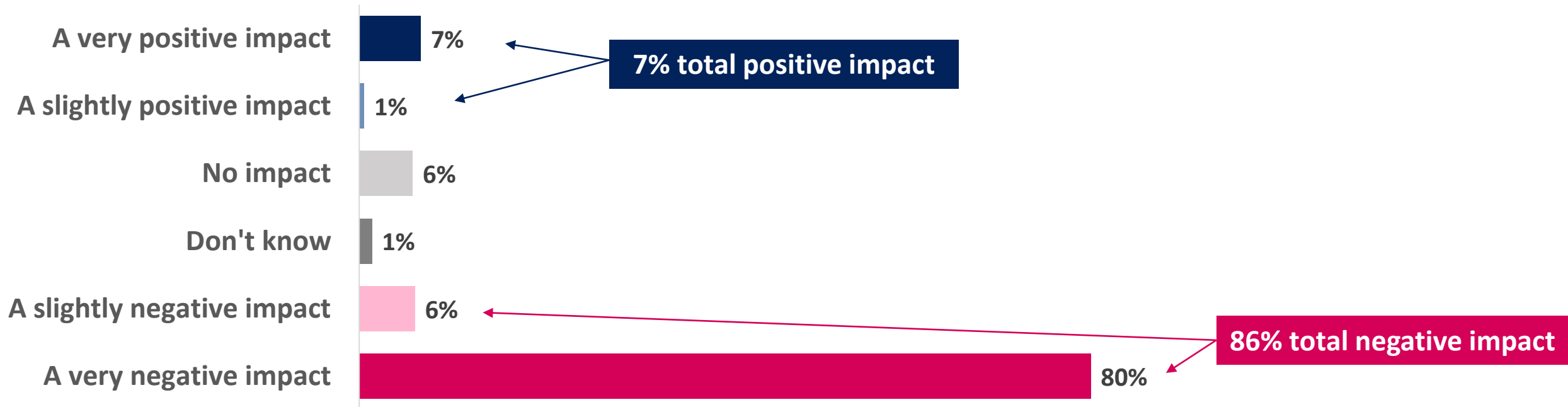




Consultation feedback



Question: What impact would ending leisure services at St Mary's Leisure Centre have on you, your family or business?



Total respondents to question: 1688

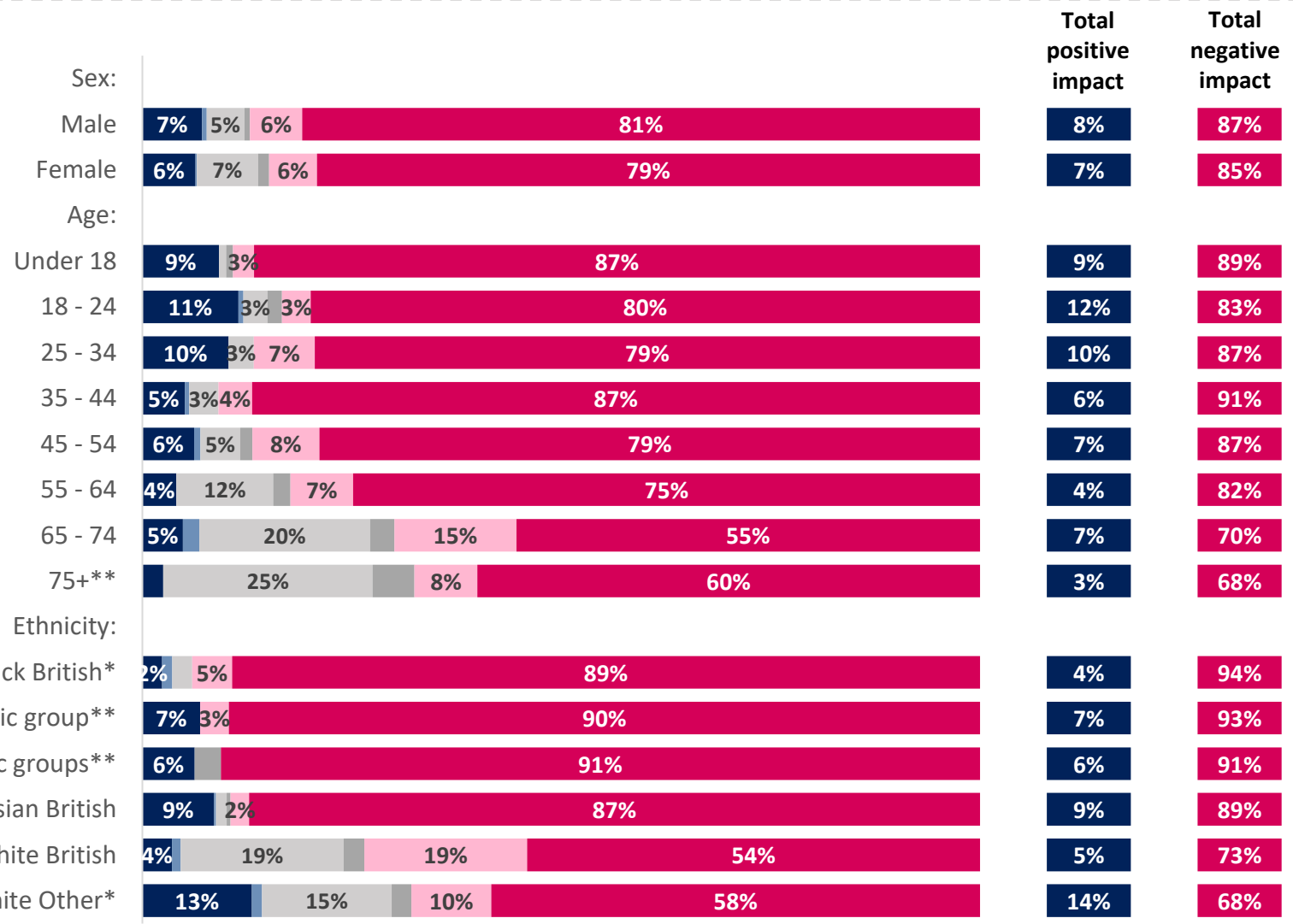
Key findings:

- The majority of respondents felt that the impact of the proposals would be negative (86% total negative impact) compared to 7% of respondents that thought the impact would be positive.
- A small proportion felt there would be no impact (6%) or didn't know what the impact would be (1%).



Impact of the proposal – by demographics

Question: What impact would ending leisure services at St Mary’s Leisure Centre have on you, your family or business?



Key findings:

- Across all demographics, more respondents felt the impact would be negative rather than positive.
- There was little observed difference between males and females.
- There was an indication that younger age groups felt the impact would be slightly more positive when compared to older age groups.
- White British and Other White ethnicities reported higher levels of ‘no impact’ and lower levels of negative impact than average.

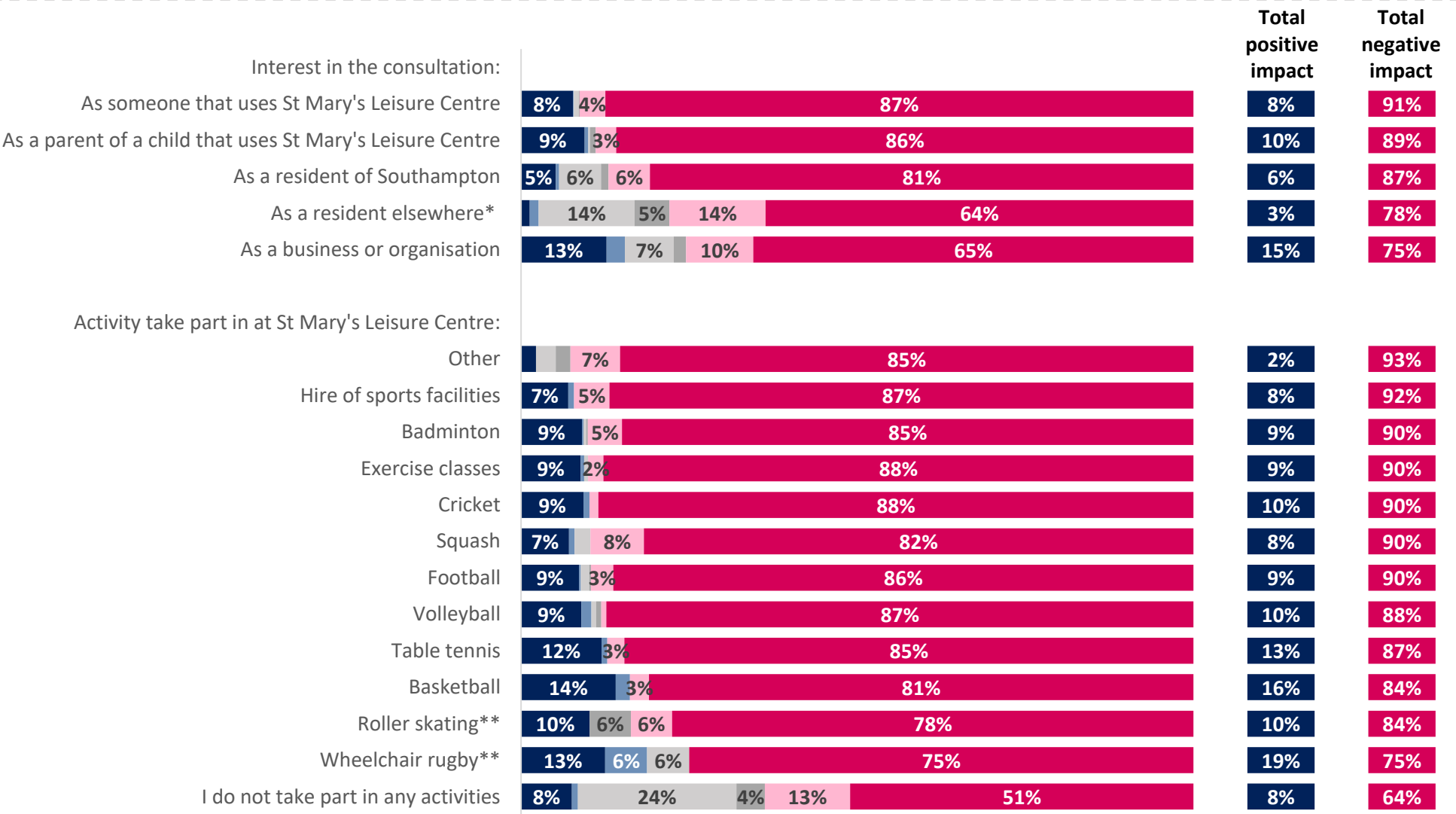
■ A very positive impact ■ A slightly positive impact ■ No impact ■ Don't know ■ A slightly negative impact ■ A very negative impact

* Fewer than 100 responses ** Fewer than 50 responses



Impact of the proposal – by characteristics and activities

Question: What impact would ending leisure services at St Mary’s Leisure Centre have on you, your family or business?



Key findings:

- Across all characteristics and activities, more respondents felt the impact would be negative rather than positive.
- Those that use St Mary’s Leisure Centre reported higher negative impacts than those that do not use the Centre.
- Businesses and organisations reported a lower negative impact than average.
- Those that take part in Table tennis, Basketball and Wheelchair Rugby reported still higher levels of positive impacts than other activities.

■ A very positive impact ■ A slightly positive impact ■ No impact ■ Don't know ■ A slightly negative impact ■ A very negative impact

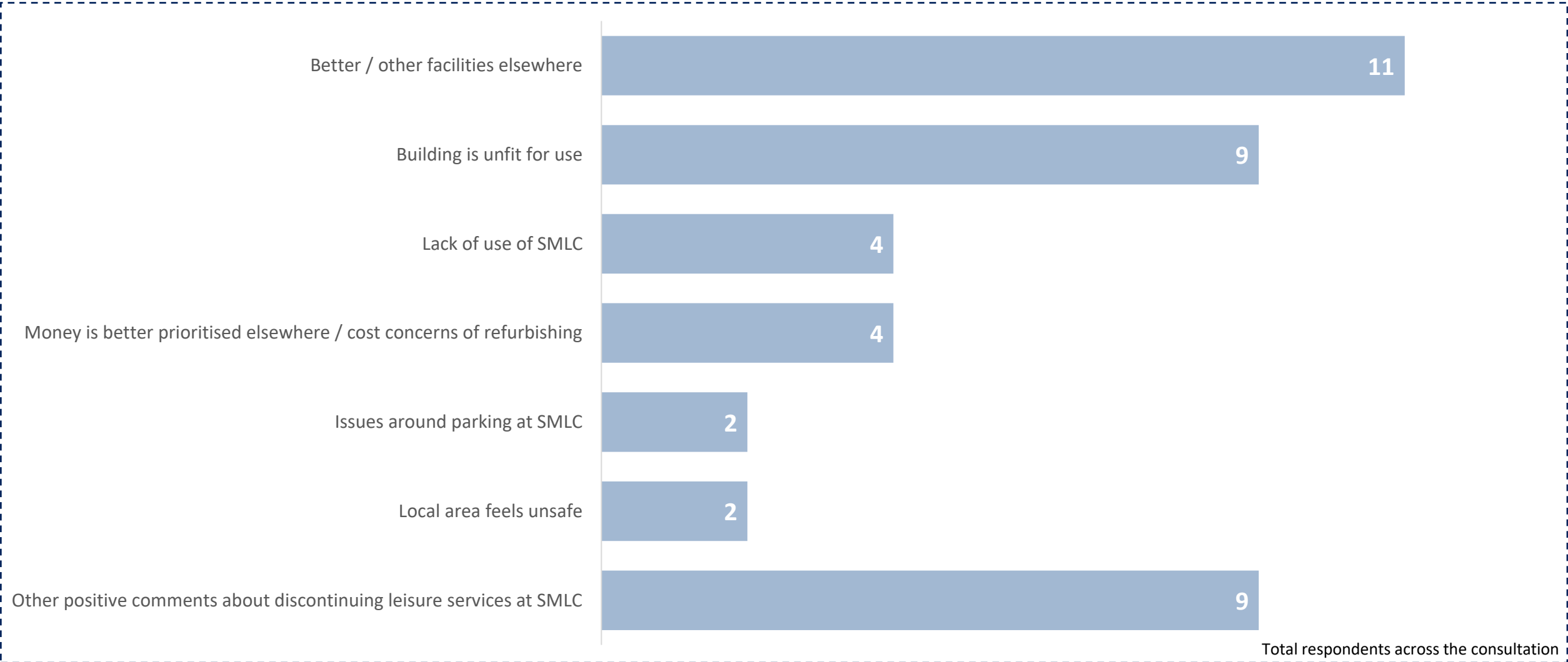
* Fewer than 100 responses ** Fewer than 50 responses



Free text responses in favour of discontinuing leisure services at SMLC.

A total of **29** respondents provided a comment in favour of discontinuing leisure services at SMLC.

The following graph shows the total number of respondents by each theme of comment.

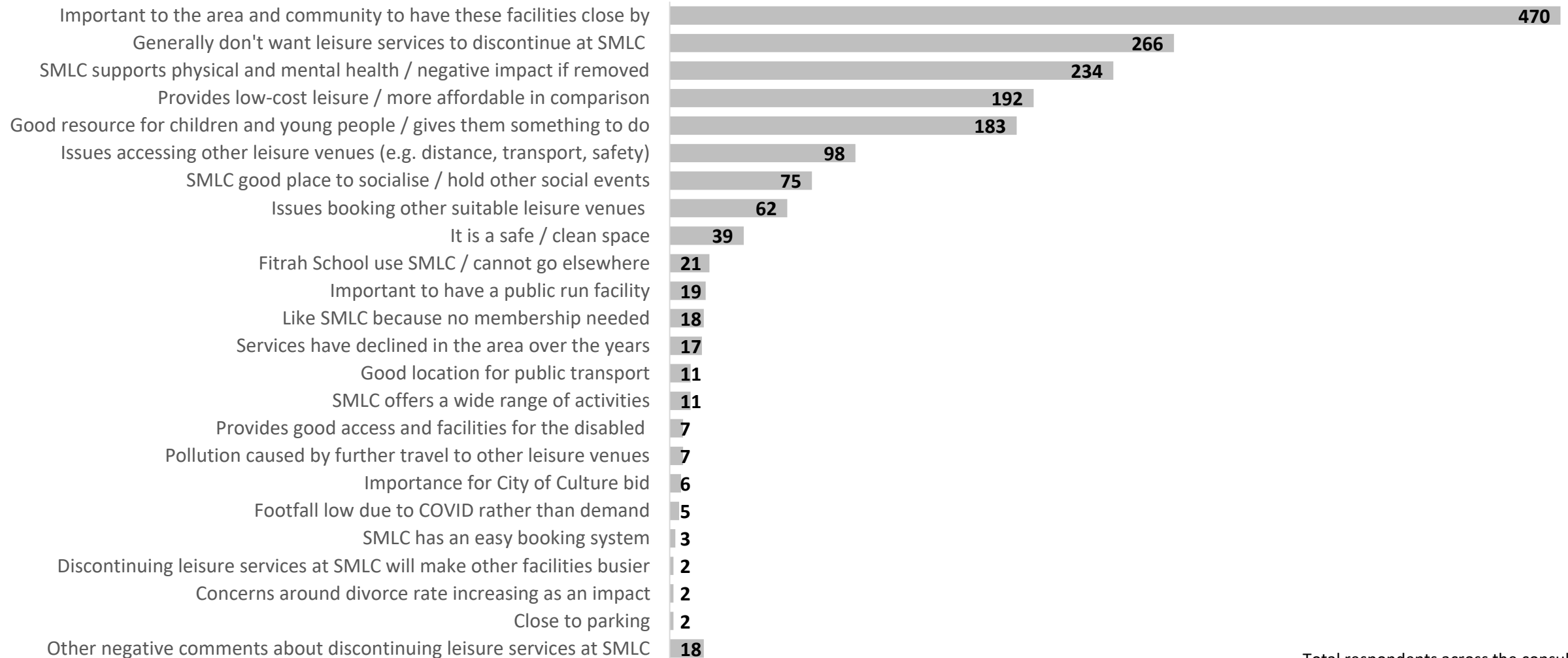




Free text responses not in favour of discontinuing leisure services at SMLC.

A total of **1071** respondents provided a comment not in favour of discontinuing leisure services at SMLC.

The following graph shows the total number of respondents by each theme of comment.



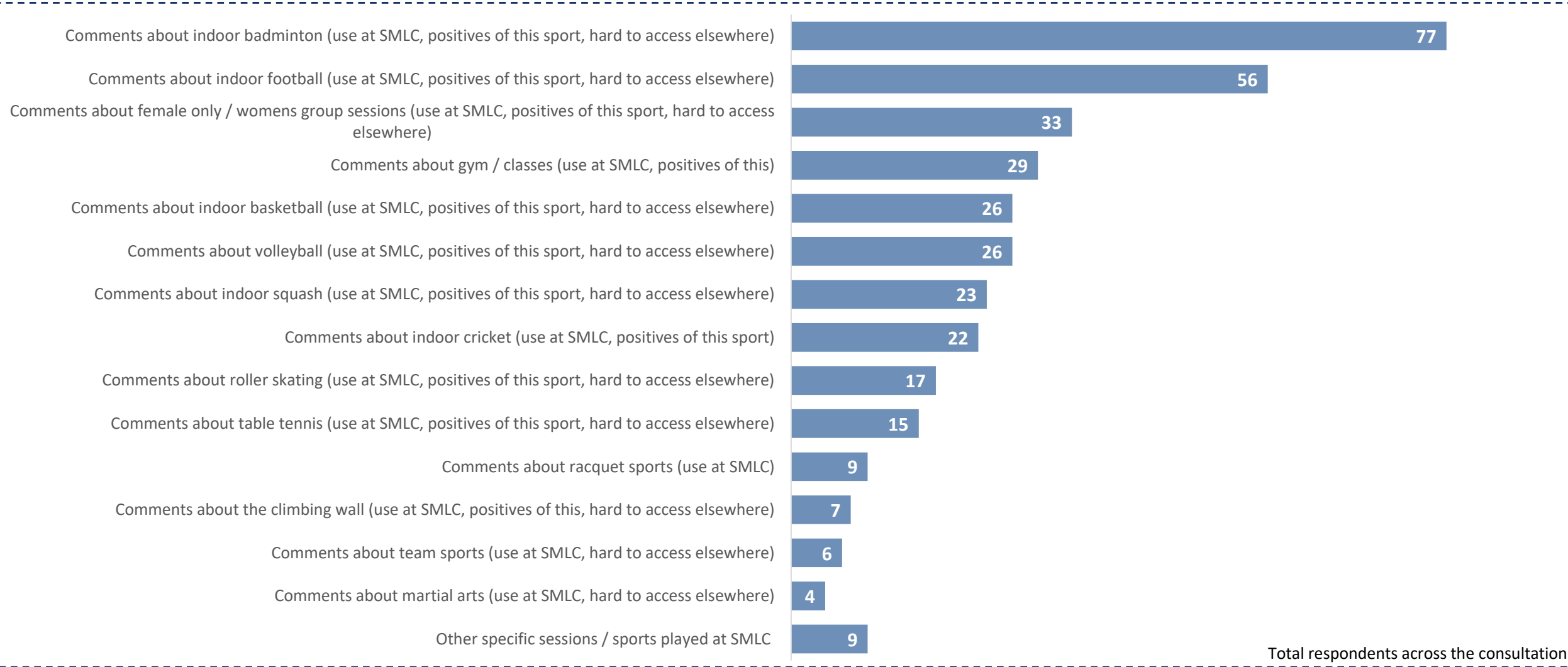
Total respondents across the consultation



Free text responses on specific sessions / sports played.

A total of **289** respondents provided a comment on specific sessions / sports played .

The following graph shows the total number of respondents by each theme of comment.

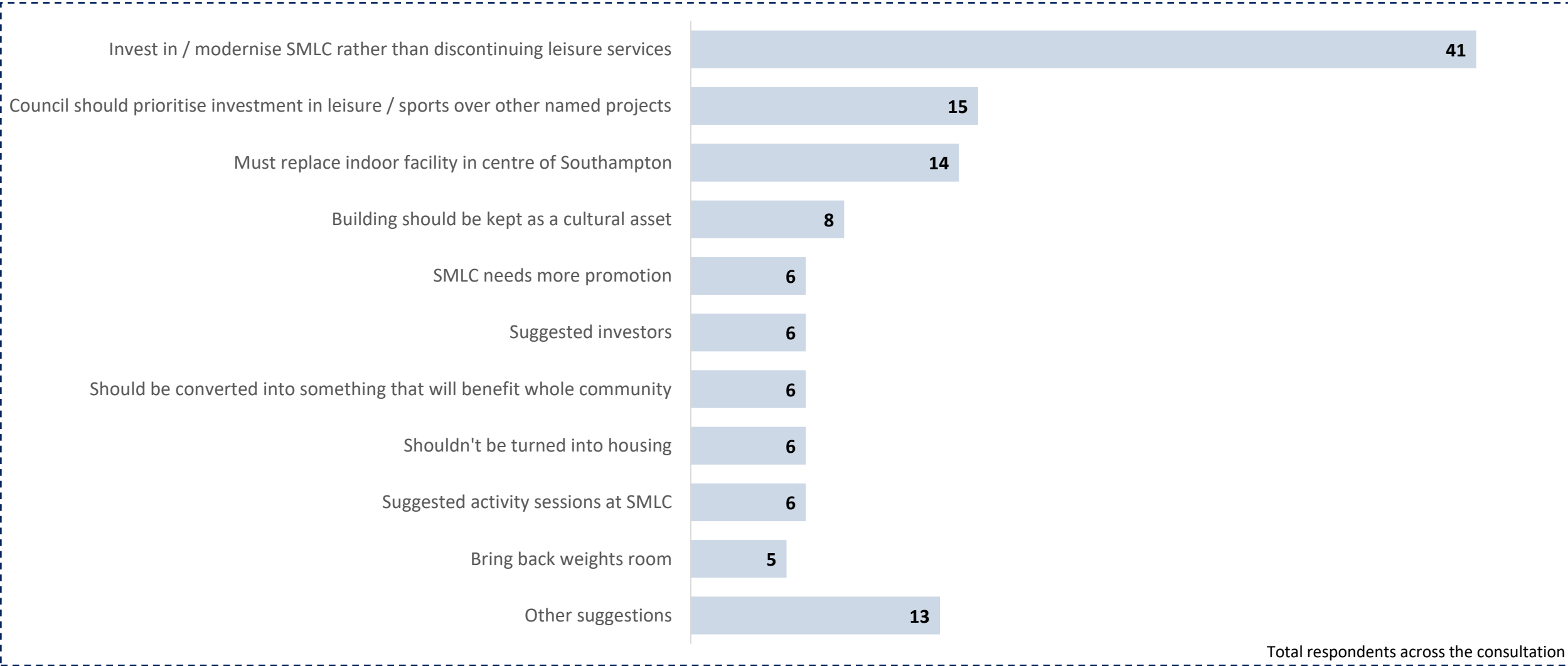




Free text responses on suggestions.

A total of **114** respondents provided a comment on suggestions.

The following graph shows the total number of respondents by each theme of comment.





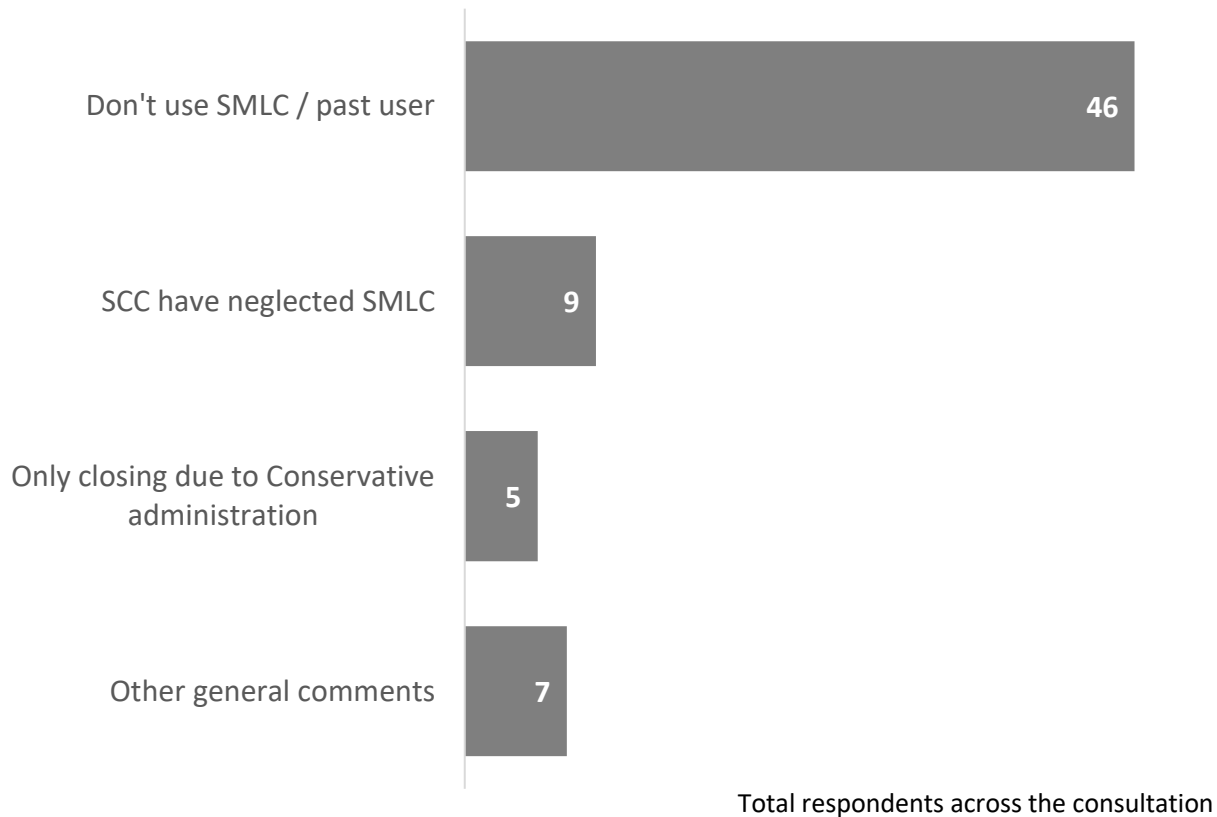
Free text responses on general comments and consultation process.

A total of **67** respondents provided a comment on general comments.

A total of **17** respondents provided a comment on the consultation process.

The following graphs shows the total number of respondents by each theme of comment.

General comments



Consultation process

