

21st Century Evangelicals

A snapshot of the beliefs and habits of
evangelical Christians in the UK - Summer 2014

Are we good neighbours?



Research by the Evangelical Alliance

21ST CENTURY EVANGELICALS

What is a typical evangelical Christian? What contributions do they make to society? What do they believe? What is distinctive about their lifestyle? What opinions do they hold about the most pressing issues of the day?

These are just some of the questions that the Evangelical Alliance is exploring as part of an ongoing study into the beliefs, habits and practices of evangelical Christians in the UK. The answers will help Christian leaders and the Church at large to understand their social context, and to make more effective plans for mission and ministry in the world today.

In January 2011 our groundbreaking *21st Century Evangelicals* research reported on our survey of more than 17,000 people. Since then more than 3,000 have agreed to join our panel. In partnership with seven other Christian organisations, we ask this panel questions on different themes to produce regular reports, and usually have more than 1,500 responses each time.

These are our reports so far, containing fascinating information on evangelicals' beliefs, opinions and experiences. We hope that you will find the reports interesting and that they will spark conversations and ideas.

- *Time for discipleship?* (April 2014)
- *Working faithfully?* (October 2013)
- *Life in the church?* (May 2013)
- *Do we value education?* (February 2013)
- *Confidently sharing the gospel?* (November 2012)
- *Does money matter?* (September 2012)
- *The world on our doorstep?* (May 2012)
- *How's the family?* (February 2012)
- *Are we communicating?* (December 2011)
- *Does belief touch society?* (September 2011)
- *21st Century Evangelicals* (January 2011)

“Once again, through precise analysis and helpful insight, the Evangelical Alliance has provided us with a reliable lens through which we can better understand the context in which we seek to serve – and so enabling us to focus with clarity on issues we should prioritise.”

John Glass, general superintendent,
Elim Pentecostal Churches

“These are such fantastic little booklets, jam-packed with fascinating and thought-provoking information. We plan to encourage our cell groups to use them for prayer and discussion in the ‘witness’ section of their meetings, and to that end we are making a copy available for each church member, along with some discussion-starter questions and suggestions for prayer.”

Louise Chick, Network Church
St Albans

At eauk.org/snapshot you can:

- download all the reports and order paper copies
- access free downloadable Powerpoint presentations and discussion questions to further explore the issues raised
- get involved by joining the research panel.

TOP 10 KEY STATISTICS

45% prayed for their neighbour in the last week



27% are regularly supporting a neighbour who is lonely, ill or otherwise in need



91% said they almost always vote in local council elections



58% are involved in at least one local church social action project (though fewer than 21% are involved in a local secular community project)



48% could recall doing an act of kindness for a stranger within the last week



42% would give a neighbour a spare key or ask them to look after their home when they are away



23% welcomed a neighbour in for a cuppa during the last week



43% sponsor a child in a less developed country



82% of churches partner with other local churches on projects or activities in their community



23% regretted not helping someone they saw in need in the past week



Icons used in this booklet



Younger people



Church leaders

Where you see these icons it will highlight a higher or lower than average response from those listed. 'Younger people' signifies a group born after 1980, with 'Older people' signifying those born before 1960.

This online survey was carried out in February 2014 and a total of 1,669 took part. Among these 1,497 self-defined as evangelicals and the statistics presented in this report are based on this group. More detailed information about the sample is available from g.smith@eauk.org

WHAT HAVE WE FOUND?

This research explores whether evangelicals are loving their neighbours, and how they relate to others both in their community and further afield.

Neighbours across the world

When asked “who is my neighbour?” Jesus responded with the story of the Good Samaritan who cared for someone who was not from the same people group as him. We’ve found a huge 43 per cent sponsor a child in a less developed country, and a third are actively involved in campaigning on an international justice issue (page 20). A quarter specifically support the persecuted Church, and development or overseas mission are the church projects evangelicals are most likely to be involved in. Almost half (46 per cent) say they regularly pray with others for international issues.

Time to consider: Would you say you are a good neighbour to people overseas?

Looking out for strangers?

It seems evangelicals look out for people. Almost half (48 per cent) recall having done an act of kindness to help a stranger in the past week – from one-off events such as redecorating someone’s home, to more regular acts including mentoring ex-offenders and providing emergency accommodation for the homeless. Even so, almost a quarter regret not helping someone they saw in need in the last week (page 9).

Time to consider: Do you look out for ways to bless strangers?

Should we know our next-door neighbours?

While Jesus’s command to “love your neighbour as yourself” does not specifically refer to our next-door neighbours, it is clear we are called to be a blessing to those around us.

But the reality is we may not even know the names of those who live beside us. Although two thirds of our panel think people in the UK are not as good neighbours as they used to be, most feel that despite the busyness of life it is still reasonable to expect you would know your neighbours well (page 12).

*Time to consider: Do you know your next-door neighbours?
Is it important to?*

Do we know our neighbours?

More than 40 per cent know a neighbour well enough to trust them to look after their home. One in four are regularly supporting a neighbour who is lonely, frail or otherwise in need, while another one in four are actively welcoming newcomers to their area (pages 10-11). While it’s great that many are loving their neighbours in this way, just two per cent would turn to neighbours first for advice (whereas 65 per cent would turn to a church friend).

Two thirds say most of their friends are Christian, and another 22 per cent say at least half are. Our panel were also likely to have friends of the same ethnic group and social class as themselves (page 18). This indicates we may need to make more of an effort to have friends unlike us.

Time to consider: Are there ways you can get to know your neighbours more? Does anything hold you back?



Are we sharing our faith?

Virtually all of our panel said being a Christian was very important to their sense of who they are, and 80 per cent said it was the most important aspect of their identity (page 17).

Three-quarters have prayed for their neighbour in the last three months, with a third letting their neighbour know they were doing so. Almost two thirds have also made it clear to a neighbour in the last three months that they are a committed Christian (pages 10-11).

Time to consider: Do your neighbours know you are a Christian? How did/might they respond? How can you creatively show God's love to your neighbours?



Do we care about our local communities?

Where we live obviously determines who our neighbours and local community will be. Most of our panel are happy where they live, with some adding that despite problems in their area they feel called by God to be part of that local community.

A massive 91 per cent say they vote in local elections, indicating a much higher level of engagement in local issues than the national average (35 per cent in 2014). Issues or social groups seen as important for Christians to prioritise locally include poverty, foodbanks, the elderly, youth, families and homelessness (pages 14-15).

More than a third are regularly joining with others to pray for their local community and the majority are involved in at least one church social action or community project.

Time to consider: How have you come to live where you do? Are you involved in the local community? Being honest, do you care about your neighbourhood?

Is the Church involved in the neighbourhood?

We've discovered a wide range of community activities being run by churches, including money advice services, foodbanks, sports ministries, village shops and prayer rooms. Some churches are also partnering with secular and statutory groups to deliver services to the community, including youth work, social enterprises, lunch clubs and work with prisoners (pages 22-23).

It's great that a huge 82 per cent partner with other churches on projects or activities in their community – something the Alliance is encouraging through Gather, our network of unity for mission movements across the country (www.wegather.co.uk). But a much smaller proportion (34 per cent) partner with secular projects to serve their community.

Time to consider: Is your church actively involved in the wider community? Do you volunteer with a secular or church-run project? Would you consider volunteering with a secular project?

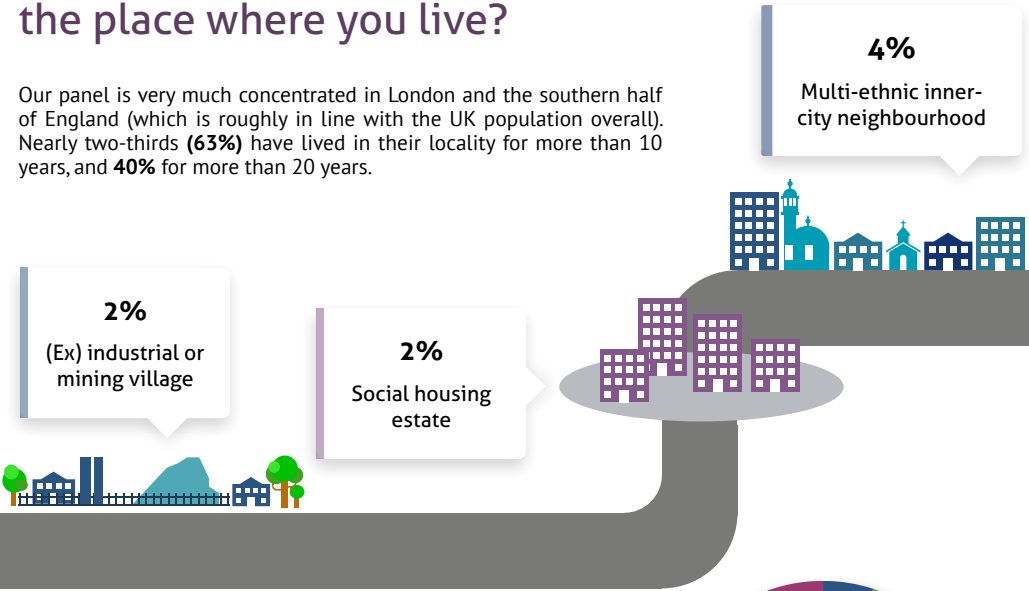
Ways your church can encourage neighbourliness:

- Encourage people to get to know their neighbours and be generous to them
- Ask people to sign up to the Neighbourhood Prayer Network, which aims to see every street in the UK covered by prayer – www.neighbourhoodprayer.net
- Encourage people to use opportunities such as the Big Lunch to host parties on their street – www.thebiglunch.com
- Engage with the online community Streetbank which helps neighbours connect with each other – www.streetbank.com/church
- Visit the Contextual Theology Centre's online resources – www.theology-centre.org.uk

WHERE DO WE LIVE?

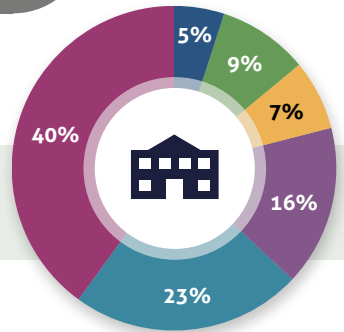
Which of the following best describes the place where you live?

Our panel is very much concentrated in London and the southern half of England (which is roughly in line with the UK population overall). Nearly two-thirds (**63%**) have lived in their locality for more than 10 years, and **40%** for more than 20 years.

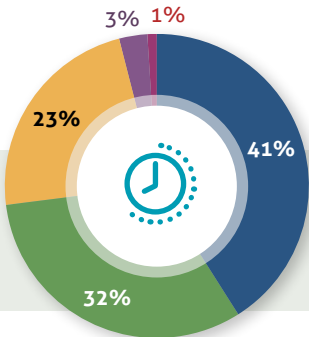


How long have you lived there?

- Less than a year
- 1-3 years
- 4-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-20 years
- More than 20 years



How much time do you spend in the immediate locality where you live?



- Almost all my time there
- More than half of my waking time there
- Less than half of my waking hours there
- I only return there to sleep at night
- Other

22%

City or large town centre



32%

Small town

14%

Rural village



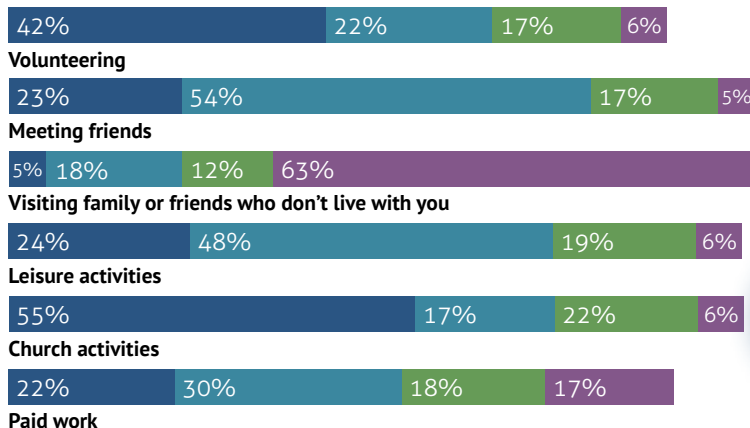
21%

Suburban neighbourhood



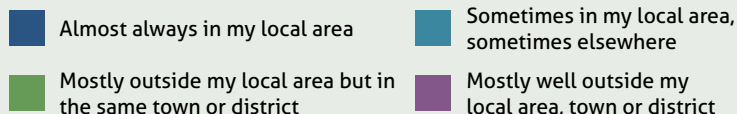
It is relatively affluent but this masks significant problems with drug abuse, domestic violence, neglect, self-harm, low self-esteem and lack of hope.

Where do you tend to do each of the following activities?



I love living here - I know it is the place God has called me to in spite of issues and problems.

It is really striking that **63%** (and **73%** of younger respondents) say they need to travel well outside of their locality when visiting relatives who don't live with them (the rate for this was significantly lower in the north of England, Scotland, and Northern Ireland). This indicates a scarcity of extended families living near to one another, and is similar to the pattern in the wider population, particularly among the professional middle class. This emphasises the importance of local church communities who can fulfil the role of an extended family, providing emotional and practical support.



Add your voice to the biggest evangelical movement in the UK

We're looking for more voices.

We're looking for more people who want to **shape** the evangelical movement across the UK, people who want to help us **speak** to government and make sure that the Evangelical Alliance brings real, lasting **change** to people and communities.

Will you support us? You'll also get a free bi-monthly copy of **idea** (the biggest Christian magazine in the UK), access to members-only **resources** and much more.

Support us. We're better together.

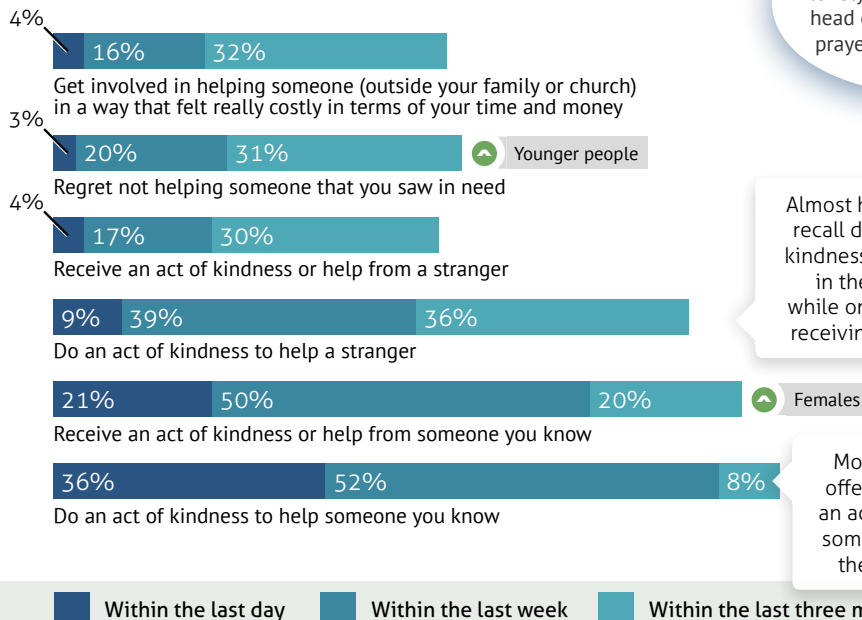
eauk.org/support

evangelical alliance
better together



RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS

When did you last...?



On Sunday I prayed for a lady who was feeling lonely and she rested her head on my shoulder as I prayed. It can be simple.

Almost half (48%) can recall doing an act of kindness for a stranger in the last week, while only 21% recall receiving such an act.

Most can recall both offering and receiving an act of kindness from someone they know in the last week or so.

Regret for not helping someone when the opportunity or need arose appears to be slightly more common (23% in the past week) than getting involved in helping someone in a way that felt costly (20% in the past week). **A significantly higher proportion of church leaders said they recently helped someone in a costly way.**

After going through chemotherapy seven years ago I now visit three days a week and hope to encourage other patients coming through treatment.

What it means to be a Good Samaritan

*"To show compassion and be involved with individuals we meet on life's road, at their point of need."
"To go the extra mile to look for ways to help rather than just responding to an obvious need."*

An elderly gentleman gave me his spare shopping bags at the supermarket when he realised I had none. He didn't speak English, just smiled.

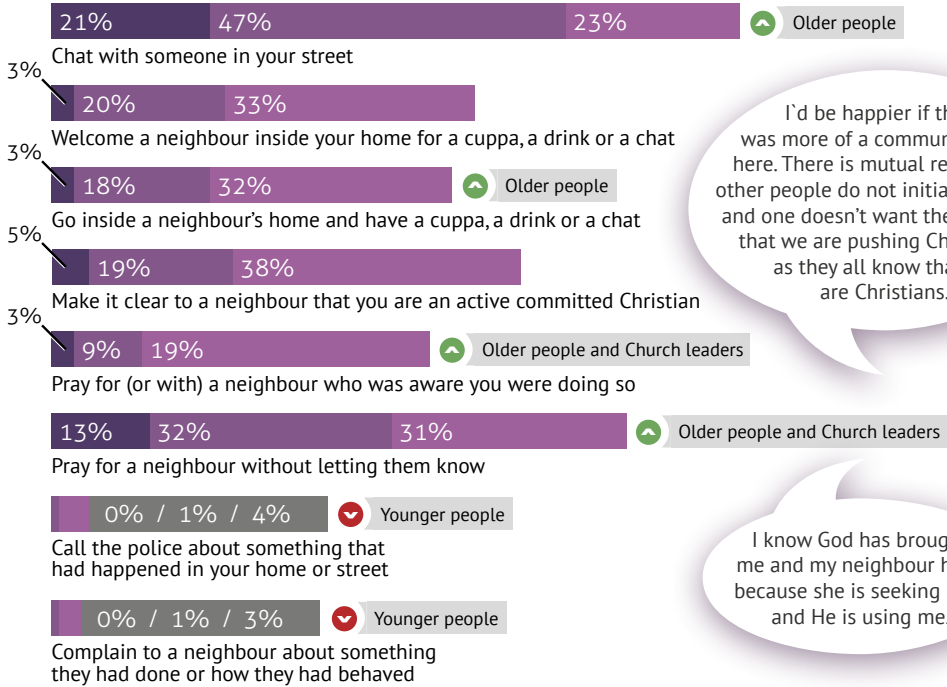
I am a Street Pastor so have the privilege of coming across many people who could use a helping hand.

I take someone who might be lonely/hard up out for coffee or treat them to a meal out.

I see homeless people quite a lot near my workplace. Sometimes I give them food or money or stop for a quick chat, but more often than not, I walk by.

DO WE KNOW OUR NEIGHBOURS?

When did you last...?



I'd be happier if there was more of a community spirit here. There is mutual respect, but other people do not initiate anything and one doesn't want them to think that we are pushing Christianity as they all know that we are Christians.

I know God has brought me and my neighbour here, because she is seeking Him, and He is using me.

Within the last day
 Within the last week
 Within the last three months

It seems that the majority know at least some of their neighbours, with **two-thirds** stopping to chat with a neighbour in the last week, **more than half** welcoming a neighbour in for a drink within the last three months, and **nearly half** (secretly) praying for a neighbour in the past seven days.

In the last three months almost **a third (31%)** had prayed for or with a neighbour who was aware they were doing so, with 12% doing this in the last week. Very low numbers had complained to a neighbour or called the police to their street recently.

The community has pulled together very strongly over recent years to help local people affected by flooding.

I actively pray for my local neighbours and pray for opportunities to meet them, and use the local shops to build relationships. Friendliness is crucial to this.

In completing these answers I have learned how isolated I am and need to get to know my neighbours.

Who do you turn for help when...

You need advice or a listening ear



You need emergency services to your car (or bike)



You need someone to look after your home, your plants or your pet while you are away



A parcel is to be delivered while you are out



You lock yourself out and need to get a spare key

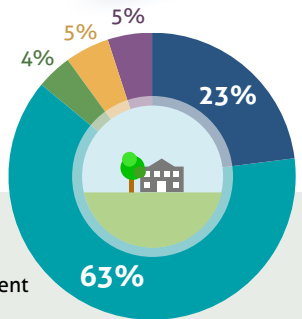
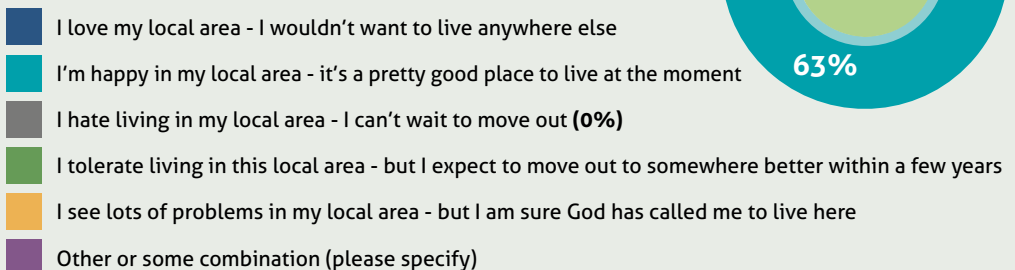


It seems that while many trust their neighbours to take in a parcel (**86%**) or look after a spare key (**over 40%**), very few turn to a neighbour when they need advice or a listening ear (**2%**, compared to **65%** turning to a fellow church member).

Even though I'm wheelchair-bound, I know others less able than myself, so I call them and sometimes visit. I organise the neighbours' children, we bake and after school they pass through, tell me about school and even invite me to their school activities

Which of the following statements best describe your feelings towards the neighbourhood where you live?

The majority are happy living in their local area. **Only 5%** say they see lots of problems in their local area but feel called to live there – does this low figure indicate Christians are avoiding areas with lots of problems?



I'm actively involved in...

34%  Older people & church leaders

Praying regularly with others in my local community (not just in church services)

27%  Older people


Regularly supporting a neighbour who is lonely, ill or otherwise in need

25%  Older people


Looking out for new people moving in and making sure they are welcomed to the area

16%  Women & older People

A local club or group based around a hobby or shared interest

16%  Middle aged & church leaders


Managing or supporting a local school

15%  Older people & church leaders

A local residents association, neighbourhood group or community forum

12%

A Neighbourhood Watch or other police and community group

 Older people, church leaders & people from London, the South-West and East Midlands.

More than a third said they often pray with others for their local community, and around **a quarter** are regularly supporting a neighbour in need or welcoming newcomers to their area. Much lower numbers are involved in clubs or community groups outside of church.

I think...

65%  Younger people

People in the UK are not such good neighbours as they used to be

61%  Men & Church Leaders

The only hope for any local community is to see large numbers of people converted to Christ and well established in local churches

45%

It's a bad thing that so many neighbourhoods are full of people of one social class, ethnic group or age group

36%

The main motivation for acting as a good neighbour is that people can have a chance to find out about Jesus

25%

In our busy society you can't expect people to get to know their neighbours very well

3%

I don't want the neighbours to get involved in my life – they should mind their own business

 Agree or Strongly agree

The nearest comparable national statistic is very similar – 29% in the government's citizenship survey said they help their neighbour by doing shopping, collecting their pension or paying bills.

I actually feel guilty that I don't have time for my own elderly mother and in-laws. I feel tired and overworked most of the time and have little energy left for the projects you talk about. In theory I know they are very important.

Almost two thirds (65%) feel that people in the UK are not such good neighbours as they used to be...

...but the majority believe in our busy society it is still reasonable to expect to get to know your neighbours.

I have found that the neighbours are not as friendly as when we lived in a less affluent area – apart from the next door folk who are lovely. Others are rather insular.



Making a Christian difference for the sake of the future

- equips individual and the local church for prayer and action
- impacts the political world
- provides research and briefings for parliamentarians
- trains Christian graduates through the Leadership Programme
- supports the vulnerable through caring initiatives



www.facebook.com/careorguk



www.twitter.com/careorguk
www.twitter.com/careprayerdiary



Edinburgh



Belfast



Cardiff



Brussels

POLITICS IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

It seems our panel are very engaged with local politics. An extremely high proportion vote in local council elections – **91%** compared to a turnout of **35%** at the 2014 local elections. And **over half** say they know the names of local councillors, with **38%** contacting them in the last year.

33% 

33% 

34% 

Our local community is suffering because of the recession and cuts in government spending

27% 

43% 

30% 

Our local environment is in danger because of plans for unsuitable developments

58% 

15% 

27% 




I think our local council on the whole does a very good job for our community

44% 

13% 

43% 

Our local council has a good, helpful relationship with the Christian churches in the area

 Agree
 Disagree
 Don't Know

More than half (58%) think their council is doing a very good job and **44%** believe there is a good, helpful relationship between local councils and churches (only 13% disagreed).

56% 

31% 

13% 

I know the names of our local councillors

38% 

57% 

5% 

In the last year I have contacted a local councillor or council department about a local issue

91% 

7% 

2%

I almost always or always vote in elections for local councillors

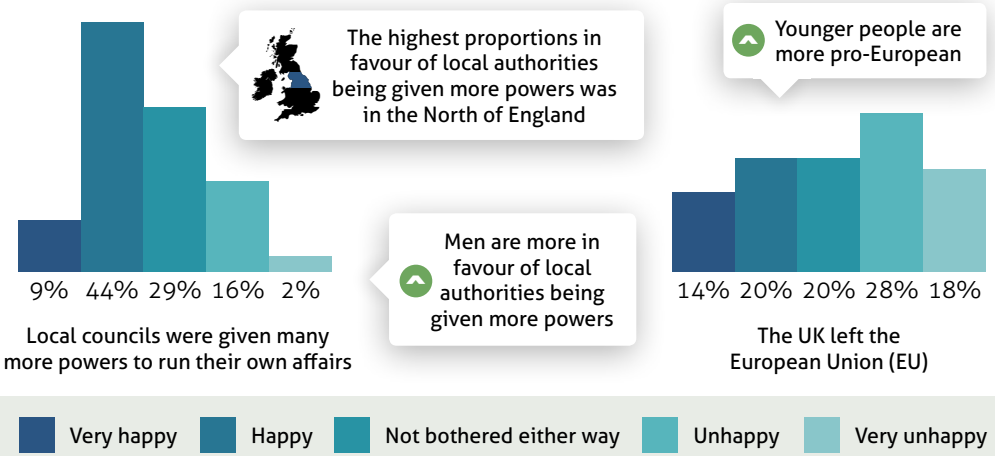
I set up both a Neighbourhood watch and a Residents' Association after I moved in to my area 20 years ago as a means of getting to know people and drawing them into community.

Michelle's story

Michelle Swallow's church in Bradford encourages people to get involved in meeting local needs. Michelle successfully stood as a Labour councillor in May 2012, and has been encouraged and supported by her church. She is enjoying blessing people around her, listening to what the community wants and helping in practical ways. She says: "I look at other Christians around and think 'why are they not all getting involved, putting their hand to the plough?' I'm an ordinary woman raising my family in the area – I never in a million years thought of myself as political! If more people stepped out in faith we would see God moving in ways never seen before."

Read more at www.thepublicleader.com/stories

How I'd feel if...



The highest proportions in favour of local authorities being given more powers was in the North of England

Younger people are more pro-European

Men are more in favour of local authorities being given more powers

Almost three quarters (74%) of our respondents from across the UK said they would be unhappy or very unhappy if Scotland were to become independent, while 73% felt the same way about Wales. A slightly lower 64% said the same about Northern Ireland.

I'm involved in the local branch of a moderate political party and I feel it is important for evangelical Christians to have a voice in the political process.

I help run the community library.

There is a strong sense of community through community groups run by dedicated volunteers. It is great to be involved these as we get changes made to improve the area rather than complaining to no effect.

The most frequently mentioned issues were poverty, the elderly, youth, food banks, families and the homeless.

FOODBANKS MONEY
FAMILY EVANGELISM PEOPLE POOR HELPING
LONELY CAP ENVIRONMENT WORK NEED POLITICS GROUPS SUPPORT
DEBT HOMELESS ELDERLY FAMILIES
ADVICE LOCAL HEALTH MARRIAGE PASTORS AREA OLD CHILDREN COMMUNITY CARE ADVICE COUNSELLING YOUTH PARENTS FOOD
SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES VULNERABLE

The social groups or issues which our panel would like to see Christians in their local area making a priority this year

Faithful

Support

Debt couns

easing

Solution

Compassionate

ering

we believe
in your church

Life-o

Hope

partner with us

Love

CAP Debt Centres

New!

CAP Release Groups

CAP Money Course

CAP Job Clubs

ldwide

Mission

Salvation

Ch

We believe in the local church because it has the only message that will truly transform lives. We empower churches to give practical answers to the poverty and debt they see in their communities.

Find out more at capuk.org/partnership

christians
against
poverty

CAP

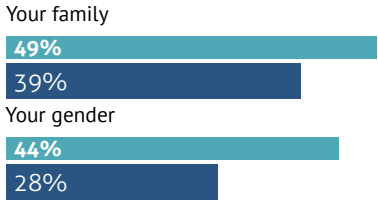
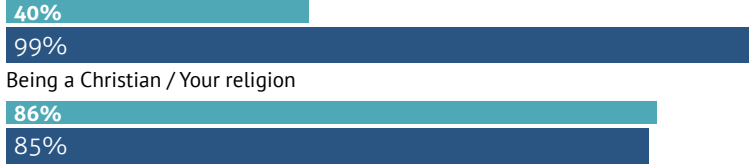
Lifting people out of debt and poverty

Registered Office: Jubilee Mill, North Street, Bradford, BD1 4EW e info@capuk.org t 01274 760720.
Registered Charity N°: 1097217, Charity Registered in Scotland N°. SC038776, Company Limited by Guarantee, Registered in England and Wales N°. 4655175, CAP is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Registration N°. 413528

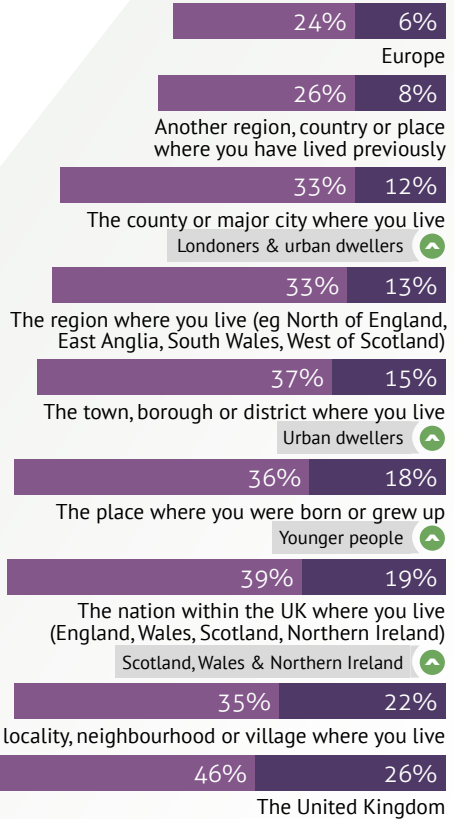
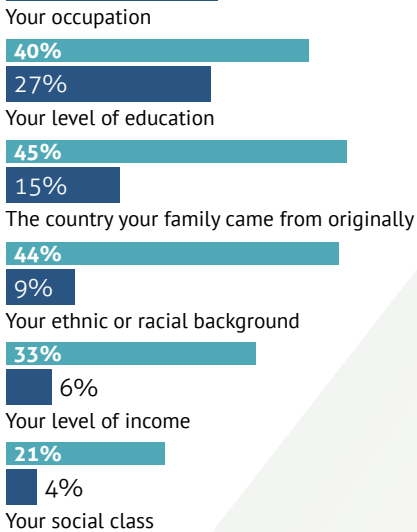
WHAT MAKES US WHO WE ARE?

How important are each of the following to your sense of who you are?

Almost all of our panel (**99%**) say their Christian faith is very important to their personal identity, with family at a close second at **85%**.



Social class, level of income and ethnic background were all much less important than the national average, and level of education, occupation and gender were also comparably less important.



In terms of geography, the UK seems to be important to our panel's sense of identity, stronger than any other geographical levels. Immediate residential locality takes second place and Europe is the least important of the options given.

■ National Citizenship Survey
■ Evangelicals

Quite important ■ Very important ■

WHO ARE OUR FRIENDS?

What proportion of your friends would you say...



Are the same ethnic group as you



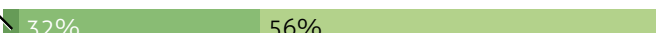
Are committed Christians



Are the same age group as you



Are the same social class or status as you



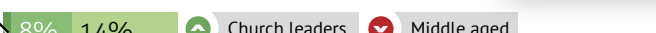
Are of the same gender as you



Live in the same village, town or district of your city



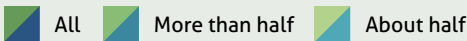
Attend the same church as you



Live within a 10 minute walk of your home



Only connected with you over the last year by electronic media (eg phone, facebook, Skype)



I need to make more of an effort to spend as much time with our immediate neighbours as with church members.

National Citizenship Survey

Younger people

Women

Older people, Charismatics, Pentecostals, Church of Scotland & Baptists are more likely to have friends who attend the same church

Christians have to get out of their 'safe' ghettos (on the road to Samaria!) to befriend and help those in need, whoever they are.

How is it possible to love someone as yourself if you struggle to love yourself?

Despite being a village, our experience is that there is not much community. People are more likely to get in their car and drive to the city than interact locally.

I have chosen to be involved in non-church leisure activities so that I can be "salt and light".

“And who is my neighbour?”

Luke 10:29 NIV

To the surprise of those around him, Jesus welcomed every kind of person. Everyone was shown love and respect. And he told his followers to do the same.

He said, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you do for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you do for me.’

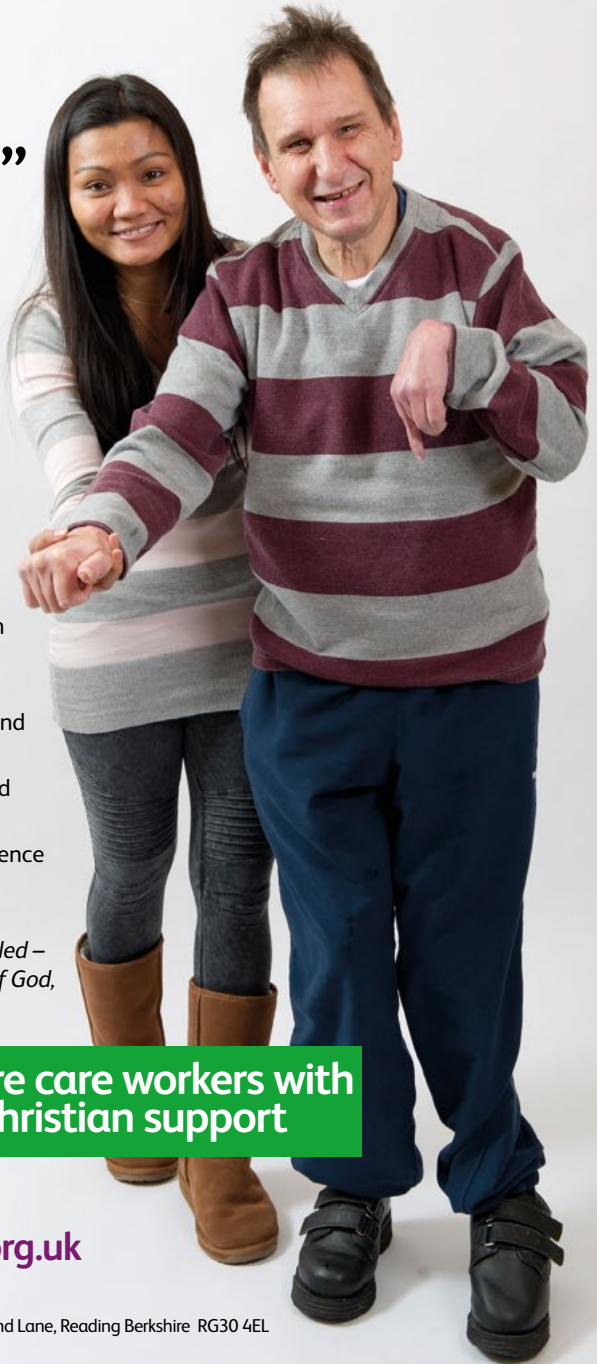
Through developing the work of Prospects in the UK, Prospects is committed to:

- enabling more people with learning disabilities to enjoy wider acceptance and inclusion,
- delivering high quality care services and support, and
- more opportunities to share and experience God’s love in Christ.

“God doesn’t look at people as able or disabled – but as people. People made in the image of God, and people for whom Jesus died.”

We are looking for more care workers with a heart for providing Christian support

Find out how you can get involved www.prospects.org.uk



GLOBAL NEIGHBOURS

Are you involved personally in any of the following international activities?

More people are praying regularly for international situations (46%) than for their local community (34%, page 12).



A huge 43% sponsor a child in a less developed country.

- 55% Supporting ethical consumerism by the way you buy goods or invest money
- 46% Praying regularly with others for international situations or ministries (not just in church services)
 - Older people more likely
- 43% Sponsoring a child in a less developed country
 - Middle aged people
- 32% Taking an active part in campaigning activities on an international justice issue (eg trafficking, international debt)
- 24% Taking an active part in campaigning and support activities for prisoners of conscience or the persecuted Church
 - Older people more likely
- 20% Organising fundraising or educational activities for an aid agency or development charity
 - Older people & church leaders
- 20% Organising fundraising or educational activities for an international mission group
 - Men, older people & church leaders

I manage an anti-trafficking project and encourage churches locally to get involved through prayer, awareness raising and direct support.

Our panel would like UK Christians to prioritise these overseas issues and social groups this year...

TRAFFICKING **FREEDOM**
HUMAN RIGHTS **WATER** **SYRIA** **WAR** **CLEAN**
REFUGEES **CHURCH**
RELIGIOUS CHRISTIAN
DEVELOPMENT
PEOPLE **SLAVERY** **CHANGE**
CORRUPTION **CHRISTIANS** **EDUCATION**
PERSECUTED **RELIEF** **JUSTICE** **POVERTY**
SUPPORT

AID TRADE
CHILDREN **HEALTH**



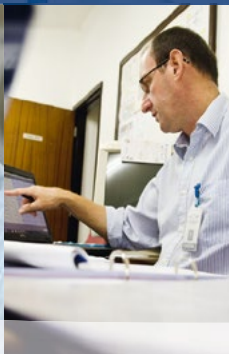
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CHURCH IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

The relationship between your church and the neighbourhood in which it meets

39%

Our church is a local neighbourhood church seeking to reach and serve everyone in the immediate area



Smaller churches, village churches, churches on social housing estates, Anglican and Free Churches

26%

Our church is a gathered group of believers from a wide area but is actively seeking to reach and serve everyone in the immediate area around our meeting place

19%

Our church is in a local neighbourhood church and seeks to be a resource to the whole town, city or region

10%

My church is a mixture of types listed, or just doesn't fit any of the descriptions.

6%

Our church is a gathered group of believers from a wide area and does not have strong relationships with its immediate local community

Is your church involved in any projects or activities where it is working in partnership with any of the following?



Charismatic, Pentecostal and Free churches



82%

Other local churches



75%

Churches or missions overseas



59%

Christian charities or para-church organisations



34%

Secular voluntary organisations or charities



30%

The local council



20%

The police



14%

A church in a less affluent neighbourhood in your city or region



13%

Local umbrella bodies such as Council for Voluntary Service



13%

Other public sector bodies (eg NHS or Job Centre Plus)



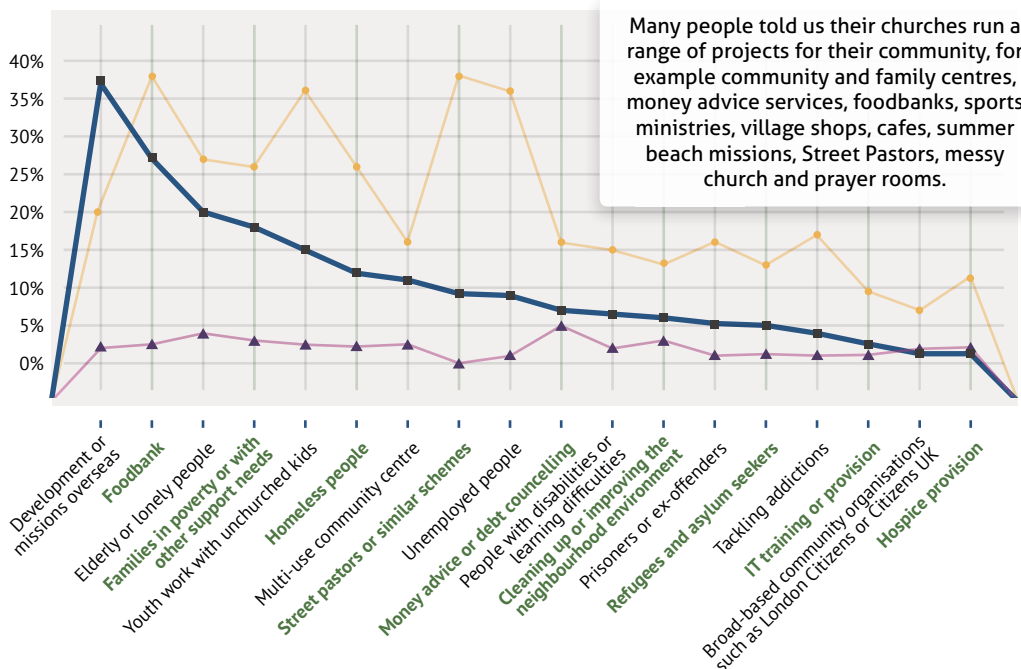
3% I don't know



2% None of these

The likelihood of partnership with the local council increased as the size of the church increased.

Involvement in local projects



I'm involved in a church project

I'm involved in a secular project

There is a local church project but I'm not involved in it

Lots more people were involved in church-run projects than secular ones.

As a church we encourage every member ministry so tend not to have many initiatives for the whole church.

The local council asks us to do things it cannot do itself, because it knows we will do it well.

Some **58%** of our respondents said they were actively involved in at least one church social action or community outreach project. The most common types of projects were development or mission overseas, foodbanks or work with elderly people.

However only **21%** were actively involved in a secular project or activity, among which work with people with disabilities or learning difficulties was the most common. (We must note this does not include people's involvement in social or community work through their paid employment)

Many of our respondents were involved in numerous different projects – the mean average number of church projects or activities was **1.57** projects. Church leaders tended to be involved in more projects (their average number was **2.6**). The most commonly mentioned local church projects were foodbanks, youth work, Street Pastors and money/debt advice.

Most of the churches our panel attend partner with other churches on projects, both locally (**82%**) and overseas (**75%**). While partnerships with Christian organisations is also frequent (**59%**), only about a third go to a church which partners with secular charities or the local council. Combined with the low individual involvement in secular projects, this suggests that evangelicals are less likely to be involved in volunteering with non-Christians, preferring to work with other Christians in church-led projects.

AFTERWORD

When asked “which is the greatest commandment in the Law”, Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.” This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: “Love your neighbour as yourself” (Matthew 22:36-38).

This research, the latest in our 21st Century Evangelicals series, explores how we relate to others, both in our neighbourhoods and further afield, asking whether we as evangelicals really are loving our neighbours.

The findings present a mixed picture, with some remarkable illustrations of churches and individuals proactively building relationships in local communities and meeting people's needs. But others admit they struggle to find time to relate with their neighbours, and regret not helping out when they've seen a need.

We've heard about the wide range of community activities being run by their churches, including money advice services, foodbanks, sports ministries, village shops and prayer rooms. Churches are also partnering with secular and statutory groups to deliver services to the community. It's wonderful that a huge 82 per cent partner with other churches on projects or activities in their neighbourhoods – something the Alliance is encouraging through Gather, our network of unity for mission movements across the country (www.wegather.co.uk).

As we all continue to live out these commandments of Jesus, let's be proactive about getting to know those around us and showing them God's love. Turn to page five to see some suggestions of ways your church can encourage people to get involved in their neighbourhoods.

Steve Clifford, general director
Evangelical Alliance

Discussion questions and a Powerpoint presentation of key findings can be downloaded free on our website.

For more detailed information about the research, and to join our research panel, visit eauk.org/snapshot

A fuller data report is also available on request from g.smith@eauk.org

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