

What do Londoners think about climate change?

Results from London Councils' 2023 climate change polling



Introduction

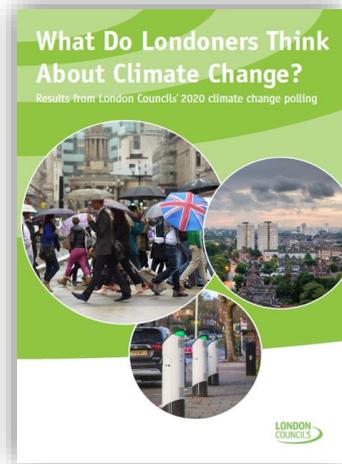
In December 2019, London Councils published a [Joint Statement on Climate Change](#). This statement made a commitment to “Act ambitiously to meet the climate challenge that the science sets out, and find political and practical solutions to delivering carbon reductions that also secure the wellbeing of Londoners”.

This statement also commits to collaborative action in seven key areas: retrofitting; new build/planning; transport; energy; consumption emissions; green economy; and resilience and adaptation. To deliver this work London Councils is working with the Boroughs to deliver a Climate Programme in these areas, effectively driving action around both mitigation and adaptation.

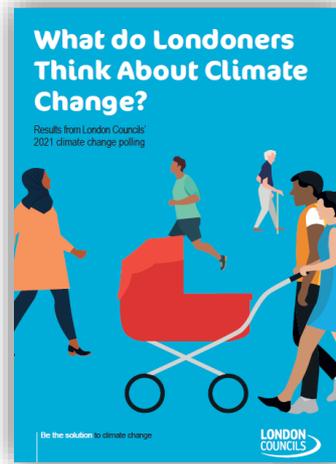
To most effectively drive that work forward, local government actors need to understand public opinion, and how that is shifting as climate change continues to be a key public priority. To support this, we are pleased to present the findings of London Councils’ fourth annual opinion polling of Londoners on the topic of climate change.

Fourth year

- We first carried out this annual polling of Londoners on the topic of climate change in 2020, and this is the fourth year of data we have collected.



2020



2021



2022

Methodology

KANTAR



- This study was conducted by Kantar in London via OnLineBus, an Internet omnibus survey
- A sample of 1001 London adults aged 16+ were interviewed. **WEIGHTING** – The sample has been weighted to represent the adult population of London 16+
- Dates: 1/9/23 – 6/9/23

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Key Messages

- Londoners right across the region are highly aware of climate change. They have consistently - across all years of our polling - been concerned about its effects, and are highly motivated to tackle it. This is true across all age groups, in inner and outer London, and social grades.
- The cost-of-living crisis is affecting most Londoners' ability to help tackle climate change.
- 68% of Londoners say their level of concern has increased over the past 12 months.
- Many Londoners are already undertaking sustainable choices, such as commuting by public transport and recycling old clothes and electronics. Cost is a key barrier to many sustainable behaviours, such as insulating the home, buying an electric vehicle, and installing solar panels and heat pumps. Preference is also a key issue in things like not reducing meat intake, walking and cycling more, using public transport, and buying second hand clothes

Key findings





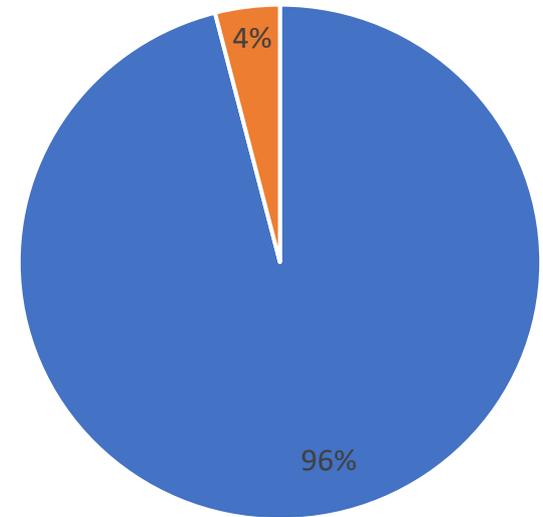
Awareness of climate change is very high among Londoners, with 96% of Londoners saying they are aware of climate change.



Awareness of climate change

- 52% of Londoners say they are very aware of climate change, 44% somewhat aware, 3% not very aware, and 1% not aware at all.
- Those in social grades ABC1 are more aware of climate change than those in C2DE, with 97% of ABC1s saying they're very or somewhat aware of climate change, compared with 93% of those C2DE.
- Awareness of climate change is very high across all the sub regions of London, with no significant differences between them.
- There has been no change in awareness of climate change across all four waves of polling.

Q.2 How aware are you of climate change? N=1001



■ Net: Aware ■ Net: Not aware

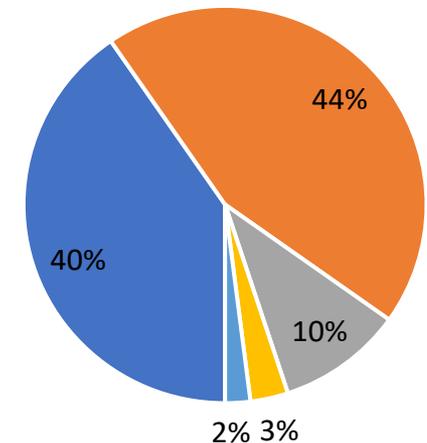
84% of Londoners say they are concerned about climate change, and concern is high across all age groups.



Concern about climate change

- 40% of Londoners are very concerned about climate change, and 44% are somewhat concerned about climate change, whilst 10% are not very concerned and 3% are not concerned at all by climate change.
- Concern about climate change is very high in all age segments, but there is some variation in concern by age group, with those aged 35-44 and 25-34 slightly more concerned than those 16-24 and 55-64.
- Londoners reject climate denial: only 2 per cent of Londoners responded that they do not believe in climate change when asked 'How concerned are you about climate change?' This matches all previous years' results.
- Concern about climate change has been consistently high across all years of the polling.

Q.3 How concerned are you about climate change?
N=1001



- Very concerned
- Somewhat concerned
- Not very concerned
- Not concerned
- Do not believe in climate change

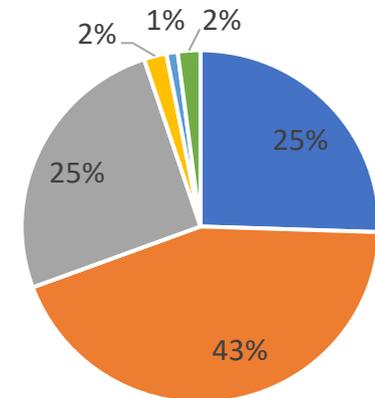
People are becoming more worried about climate change: 68% of Londoners say their level of concern has increased over the past 12 months



Increased concern about climate change

- Most Londoners say their level of concern has increased over the past 12 months. (See graph for breakdown.)
- Concern has increased more in the age groups 16-24, 25-34 and 35-44 than people who are older.
- There are also some other significant differences in how concern has risen among some groups. 77% of parents have become more worried about climate change in the past 12 months, versus 62% of non-parents.
- There is no significant difference in increase in worry between people in ABC1 and C2DE social grades, or inner vs outer London.

Q.4 Has your level of concern over climate change changed in the last 12 months?



- Increased a lot
- Increased slightly
- Not changed
- Decreased slightly
- Decreased a lot
- Don't believe in climate change

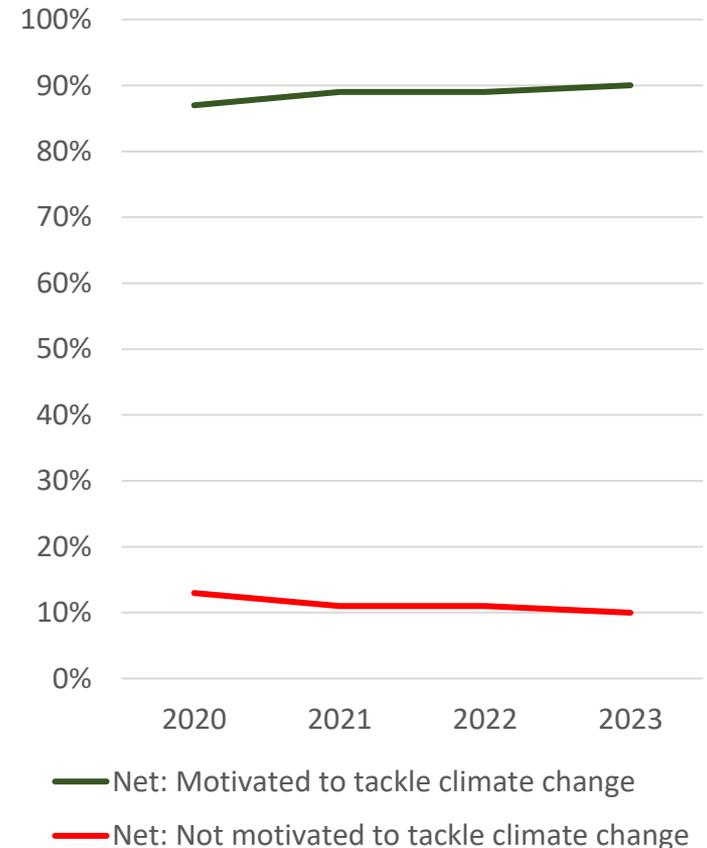
90% of Londoners are motivated to help prevent climate change, and there is high motivation to help across all age groups.



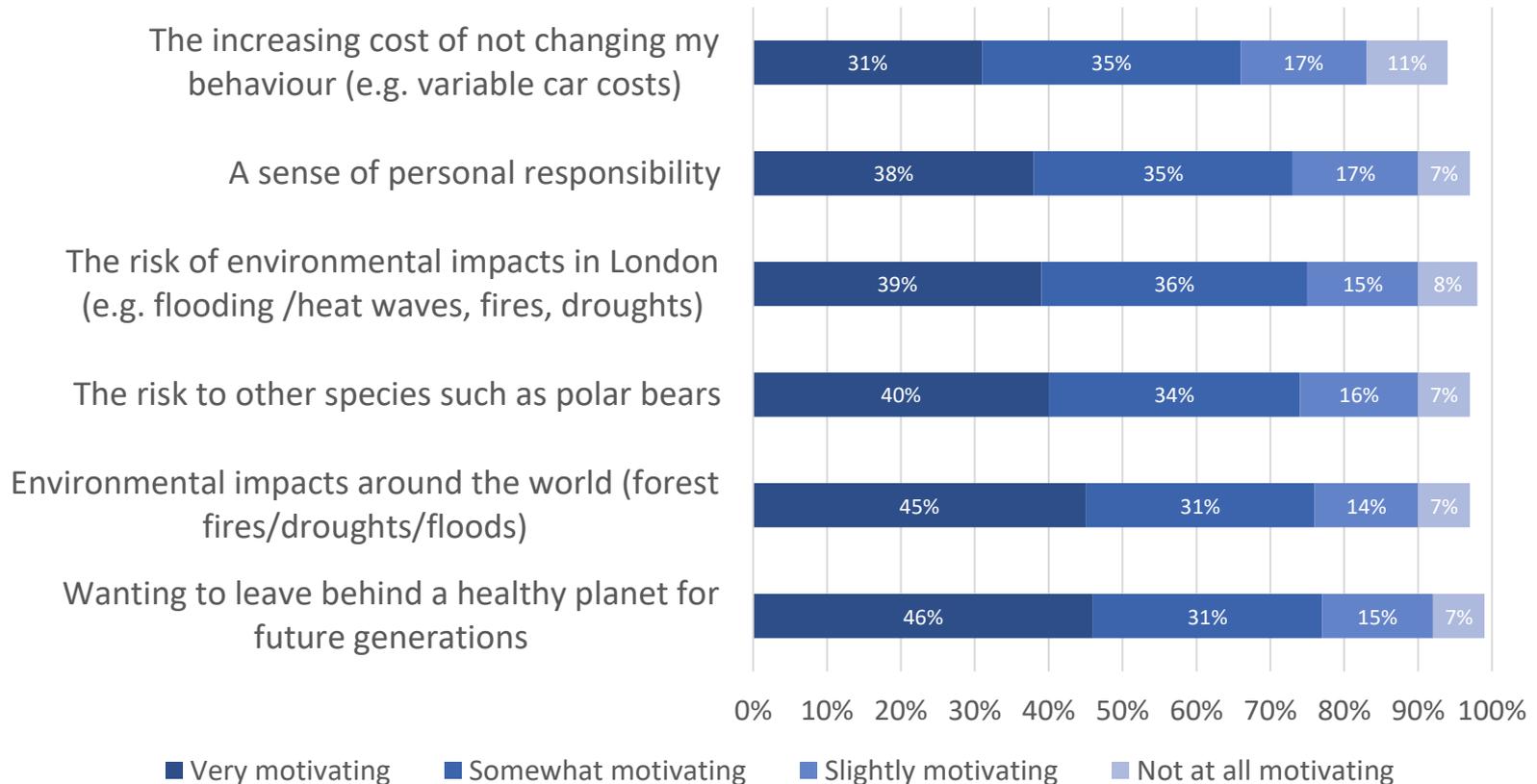
Motivation to prevent climate change

- High levels of concern around climate change are leading to strong motivation to act in Londoners, and motivation has been consistently high across all four years of polling.
- 33% of Londoners are very motivated to help prevent climate change, 41% are somewhat motivated, 16% slightly motivated, whilst 8% are not at all motivated.
- People aged 25-34 and 35-44 are slightly more motivated to help prevent climate change than all other age groups.
- People in social grades ABC1 are slightly more motivated (92%) to help prevent climate change than C2DEs (86%).

Q.5 How Motivated are you to help prevent climate change?
(Net figures, 2020-2023)



Drivers of motivation



Q6. How motivating are the following factors in making you determined to help prevent climate change?
N=1001

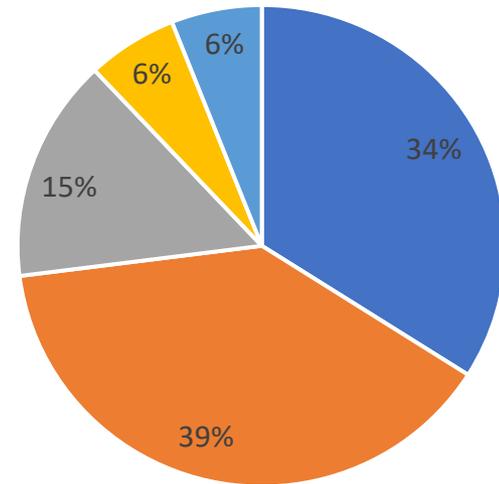
73% of Londoners think the cost-of-living crisis has made it more difficult for them to take action to help prevent climate change, and 60% of Londoners say the cost-of-living crisis motivates them to do more on climate change to reduce their costs.



The cost-of-living crisis

- 34% of Londoners think the cost-of-living crisis has made it greatly more difficult for them to take action to help prevent climate change (slightly lower than last year's 40%), with 39% saying it has made it slightly more difficult.
- 82% of people who are parents say the cost-of-living crisis makes it harder for them to take action to tackle climate change, higher than 68% of non-parents.
- There is no significant different between ABC1s and C2DEs, people who are white and BAME, or those in inner and outer London when asked about the cost-of-living crisis' impact on their ability to make changes.

Q.35 Do you think the cost-of-living crisis has made it more difficult for you to take action to help prevent climate change?
N=1001



■ Yes, Greatly ■ Yes, Slightly ■ No, not much
■ No, not at all ■ Don't know

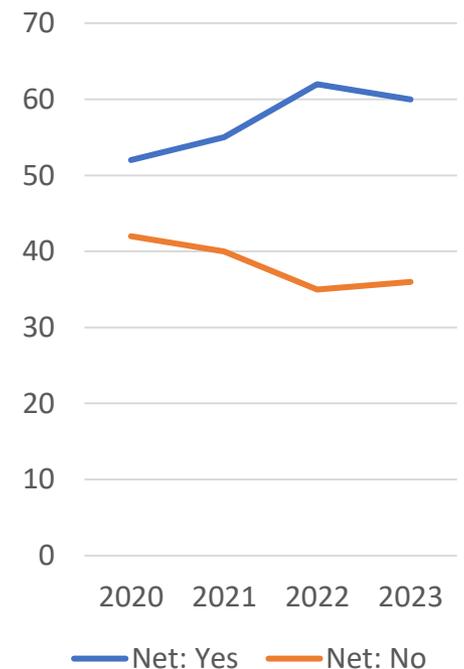
60% of Londoners say their day-to-day life in London has been impacted by the changing climate, higher than in 2020 and 2021.



Impact of climate change

- 19% of Londoners feel their day-to-day life in London has been greatly impacted by the changing climate, for example in terms of heatwaves or flooding, with 41% slightly impacted, whilst 22% say they are not much impacted and 14% not at all impacted.
- Last year's data saw no geographical difference between inner and outer London. However, in this year's data 69% of people in inner London have seen an impact verses 53% in outer London.
- People in the ABC1 social group are more likely to say they have been impacted by climate change than those in the C2DE social group (64% vs 54%), but there is no difference between white and BAME people.
- More people in 2022 and 2023 reported being impacted by climate change than in both 2020 and 2021.

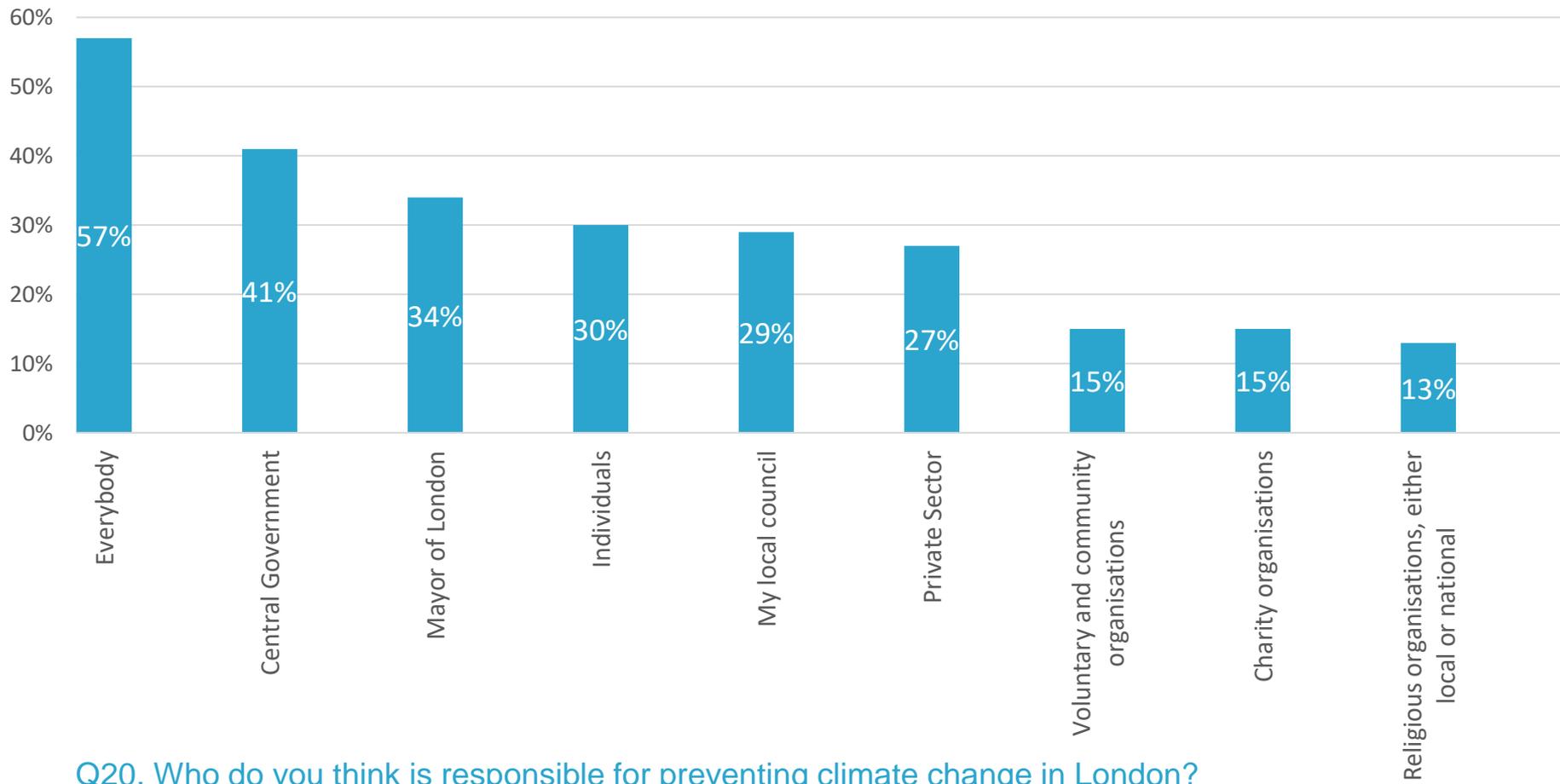
Q.19 Do you feel your day-to-day life has been impacted by the changing climate?



Other results



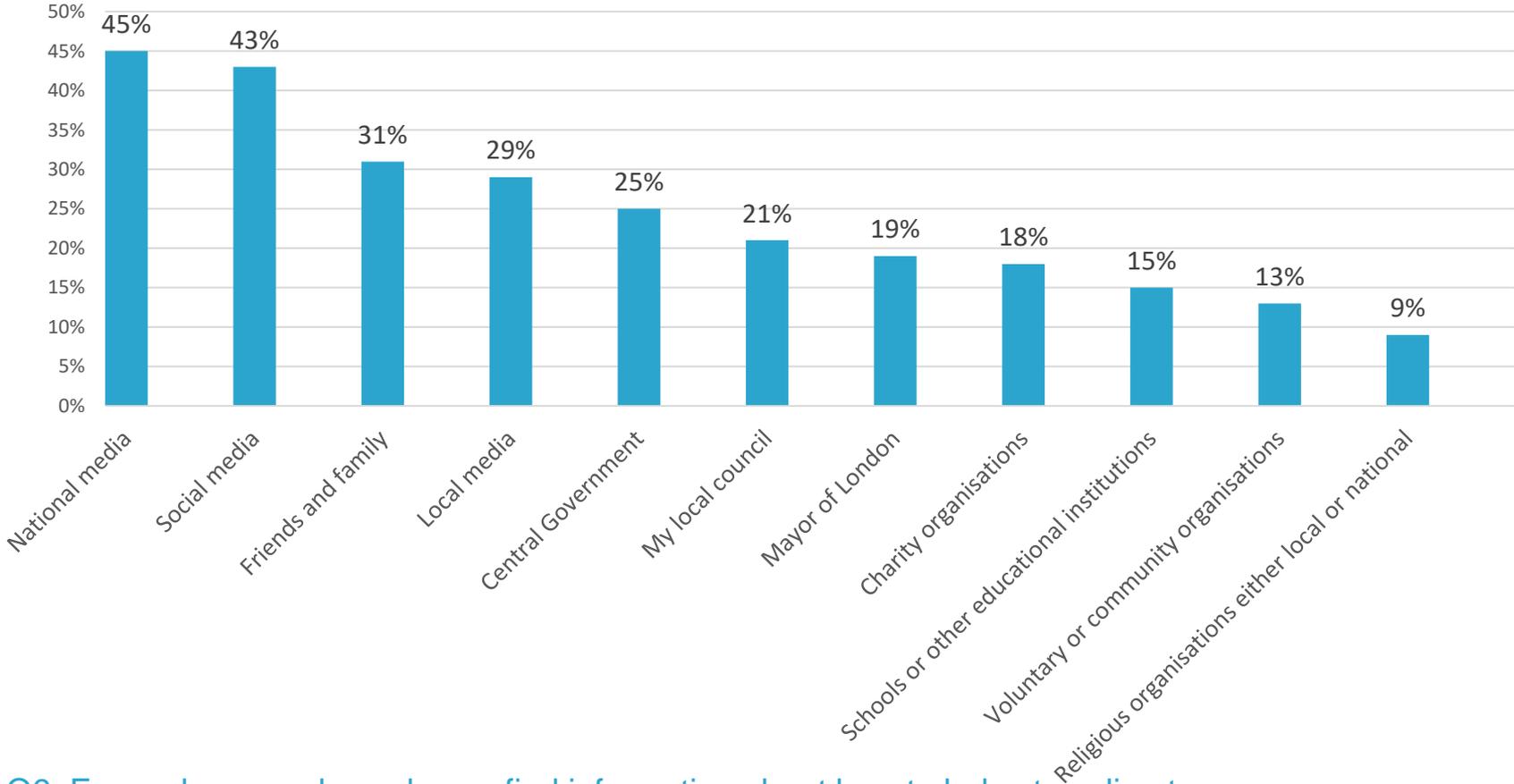
Londoners think everyone should have a role in preventing climate change



Q20. Who do you think is responsible for preventing climate change in London?
N=1001

Be the solution to climate change

Many Londoners find out about climate change from the media



Q9. From whom or where do you find information about how to help stop climate change? n=1001

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Council responsibility and resources

- Slightly more people (29%) now think that their local council has a role in tackling climate change than when we started the polling in 2020 (24%).
- 41% of Londoners think their local authority doesn't have enough resources to tackle climate change, whilst 32% think they do (more than the 22% in 2022 when we first asked this question). 27% don't know.

Changing behaviours



65% of Londoners say that climate change affects their day-to-day decision making



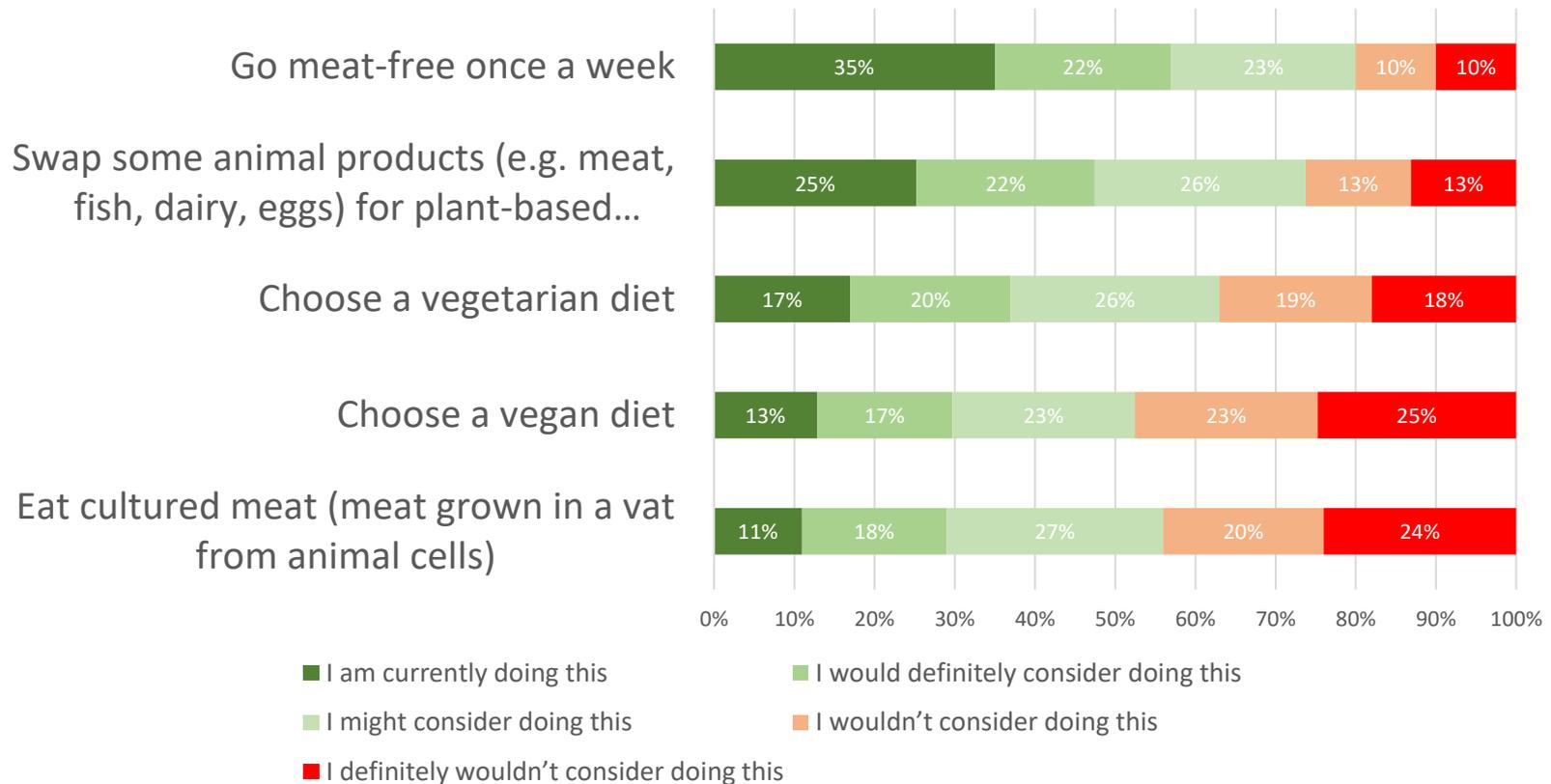
Changing behaviours

- 18% of Londoners say climate change greatly affects their day-to-day decision making, 47% say it affects some of their day-to-day decision making.
- In order to prevent climate change, scientists have said that the general public would need to change their behaviour alongside government and private sector action. So we have asked people to indicate which options they are doing currently and which you would consider doing in the future to help prevent climate change across the themes of:
 - What we eat
 - Transport
 - Energy and heating
 - Consumer choices
- We also asked people who weren't already doing something about the barriers to them doing it.

Changing behaviours – key findings

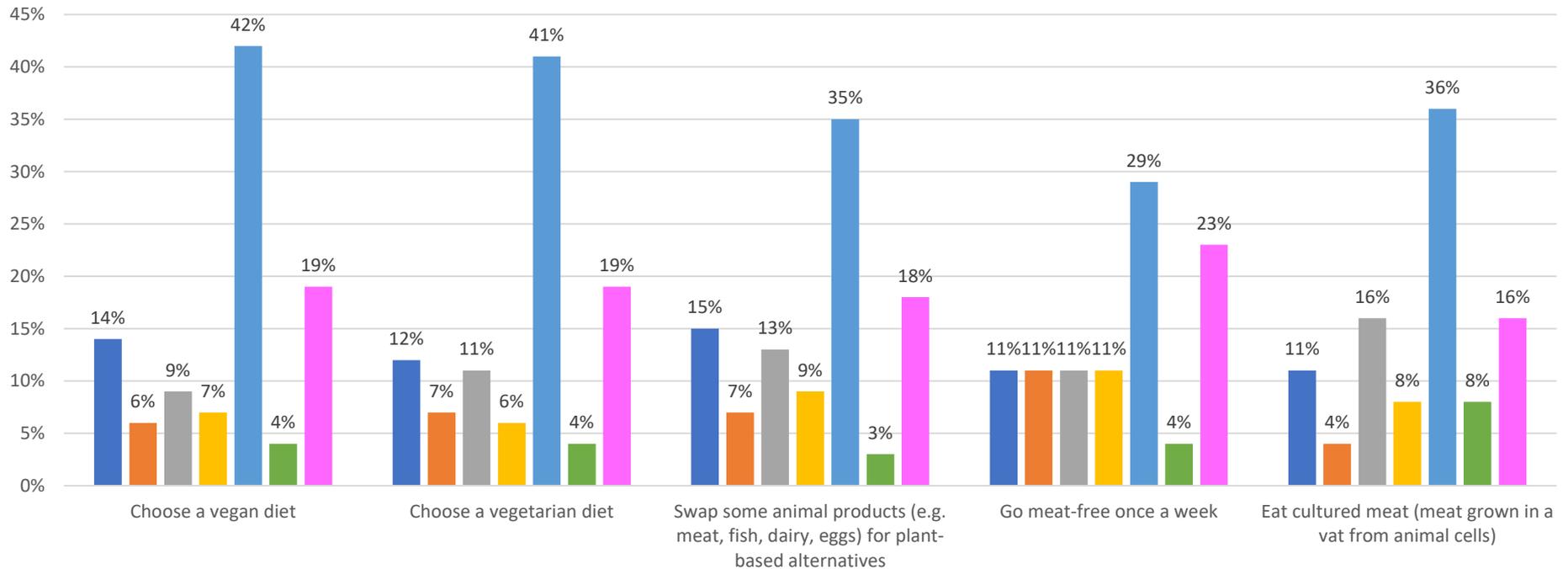
- We find are that lots of Londoners are already undertaking a lot of sustainable behaviours, from commuting by public transport, to insulating their homes.
- Unsurprisingly, cost is a key barrier to action in many areas, including in buying an electric vehicle, installing solar panels and heat pumps, and insulating homes.
- Preference is also a key issue in things like not reducing meat intake, walking and cycling more, using public transport, and buying second hand clothes.

Changing what we eat



Q11. Please indicate which options you are doing currently and which you would consider doing in the future to help prevent climate change. N=1001

Barriers to changing diets



- Cost – it is too expensive
- Time – I don't have time to do this
- Understanding – I don't understand what I would need to do
- Social – I don't know anyone else who does this
- Preference – I don't think I would like this/I don't want to do this
- Unavailable - this option isn't possible for me (e.g. no market availability/ too impractical/ someone else's responsibility/doesn't apply to me)
- Interest – it isn't a priority for me

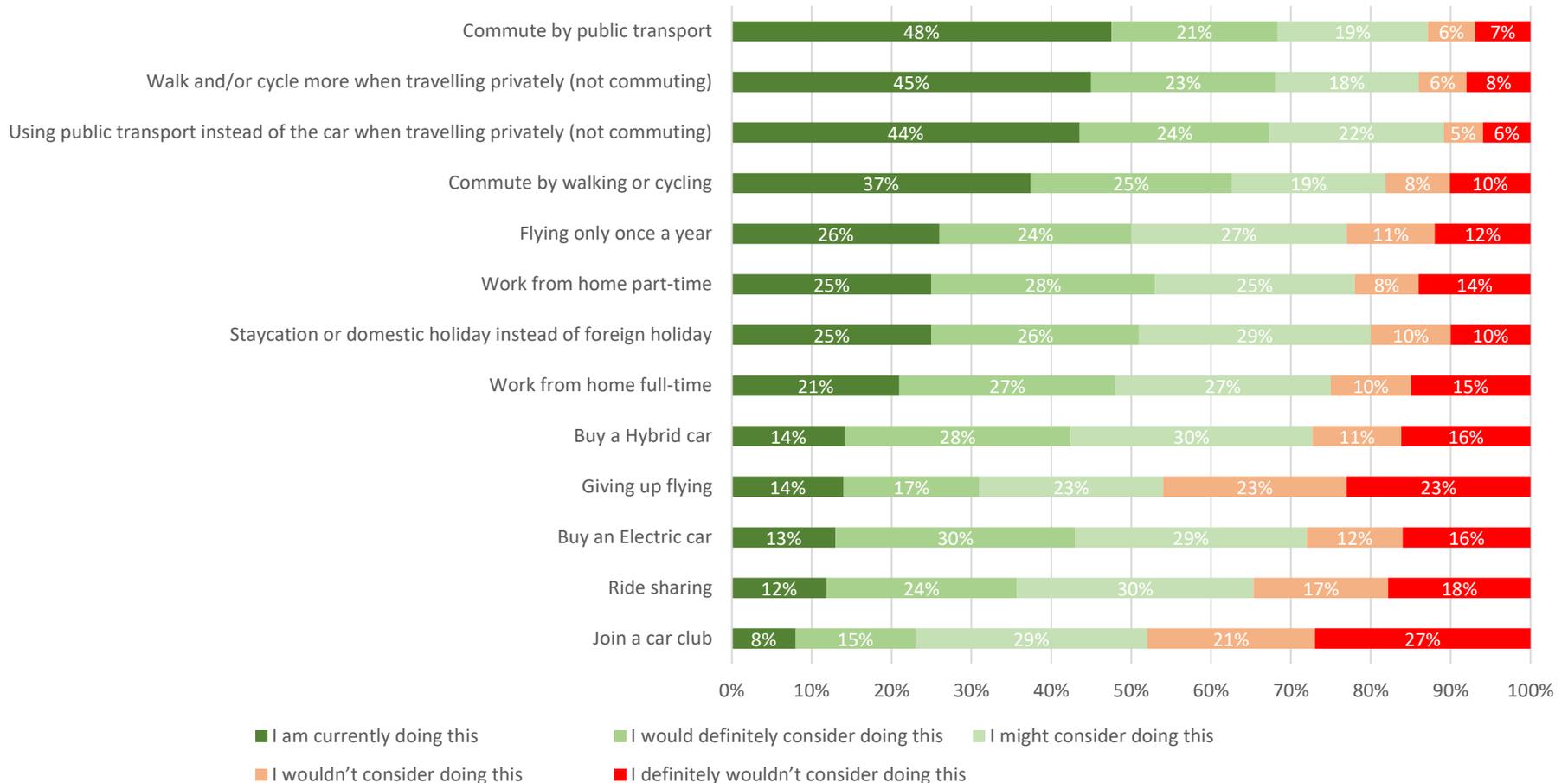
Q12. What is the main barrier to you doing this? Base = Q11 rejectors

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Changing diets - analysis

- Meat production is the main source of greenhouse gas emissions from food, and the average levels of meat consumption must be reduced for us to meet our emissions targets, so we asked Londoners if they would be happy to change their meat intake to help tackle climate change.
- As the graph on the previous slide shows, the main barriers to changing meat consumption were the same for each option: *preference*. Interest is also a key reason, suggesting people do not have enough information about the climate impact of meat.
- The cost of going vegan and choosing plant-based alternatives are also key reasons, suggesting the higher cost of some plant-based foods is an issue.
- Some people stated that they are already eating cultured meat, which is currently under development and not available to buy in the UK; it is viewed as a potential means to produce meat with a very low environmental impact and thereby enable meat eating to continue at current levels.

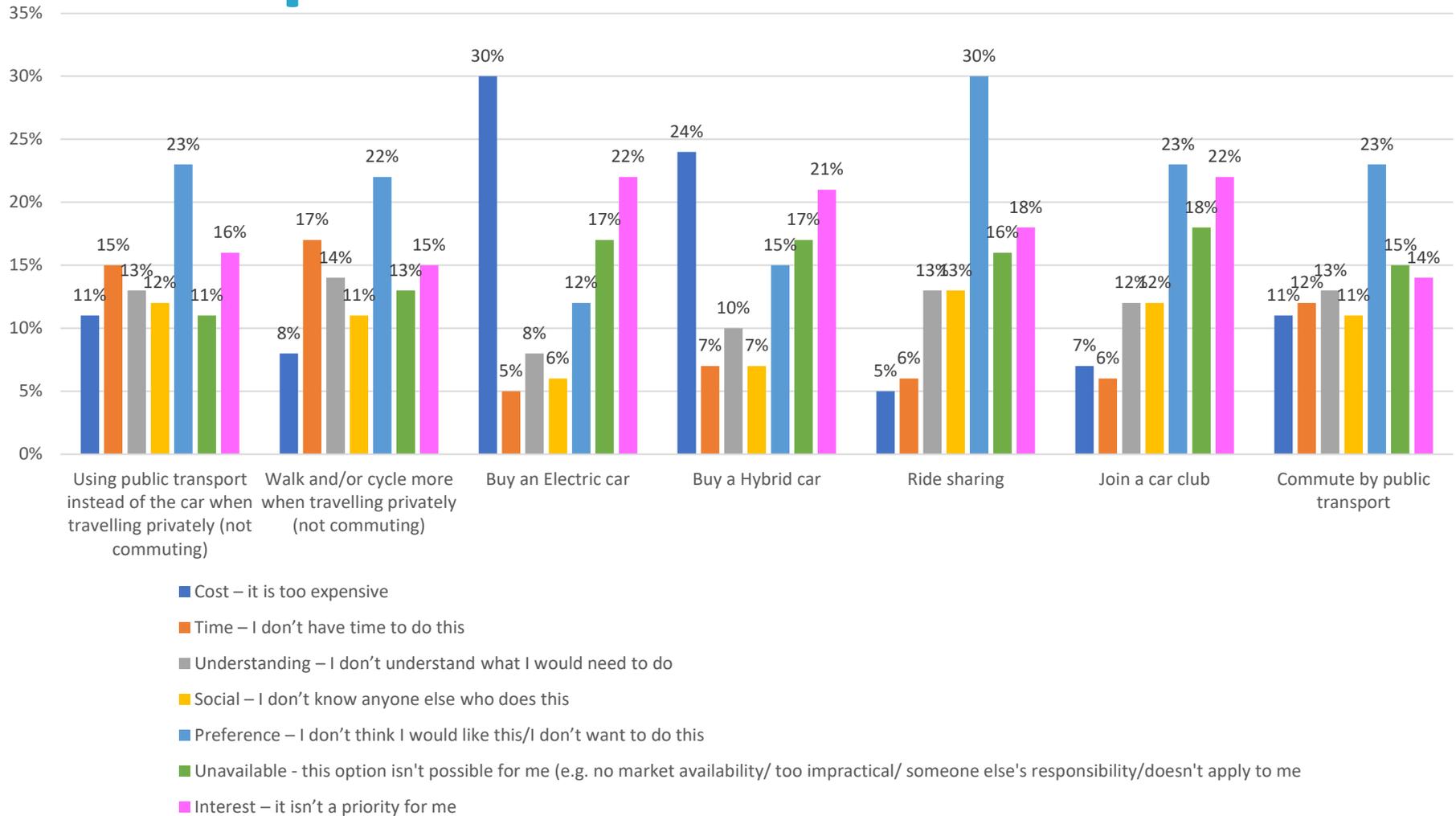
Transport changes



Q13. Please indicate which options you are doing currently and which you would consider doing in the future to help prevent climate change. N=1001



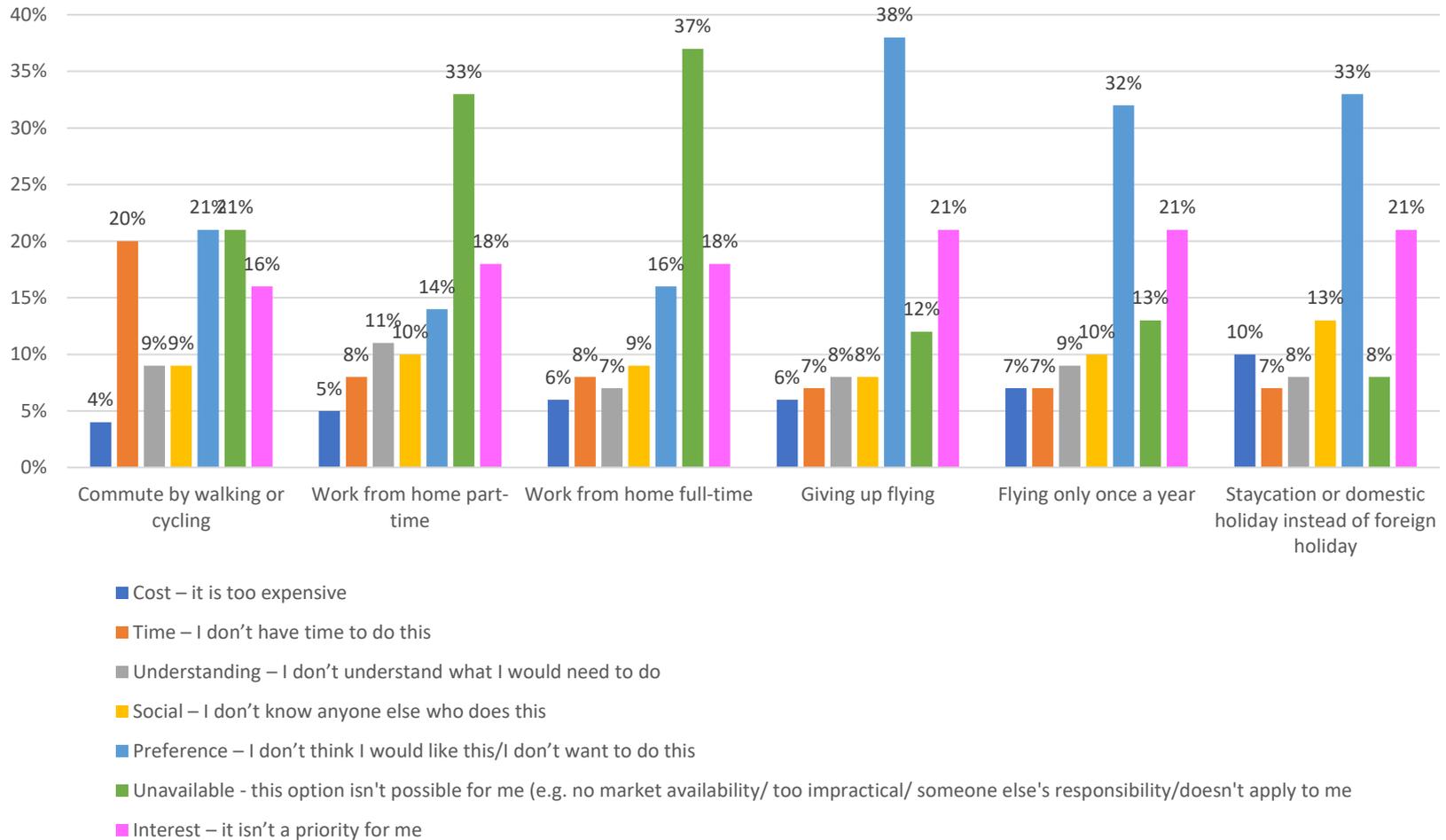
Transport barriers - 1



Q14. What is the main barrier to you doing this? Base = Q13 rejectors

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Transport barriers - 2



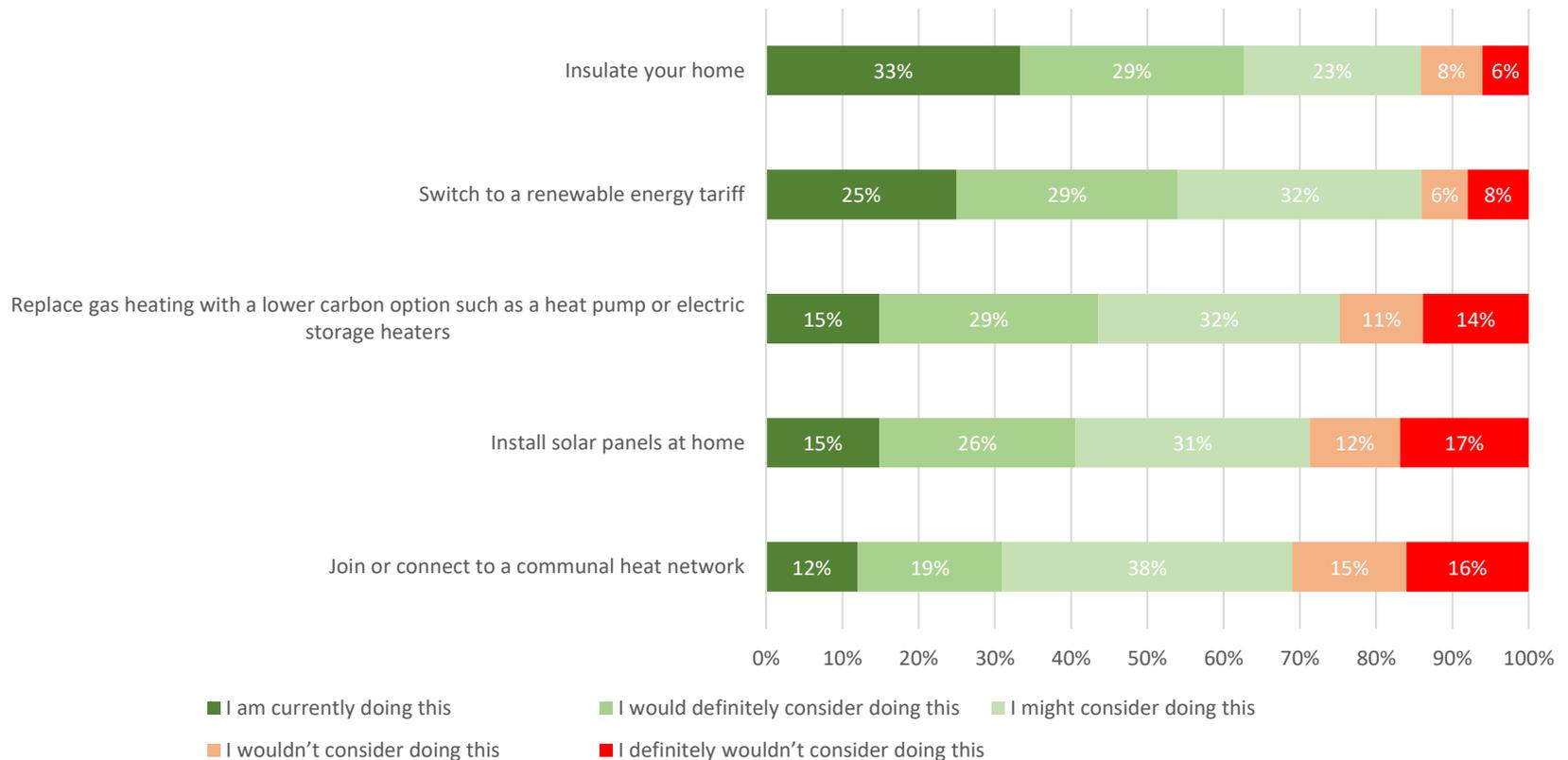
Q14. What is the main barrier to you doing this? Base = Q13 rejectors

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Transport changes - analysis

- Tackling transport emissions is a key part of tackling climate change, so people's willingness and ability to take more sustainable forms of transport is a crucial section of the net zero puzzle. These data show that many Londoners are already using or are willing to consider more sustainable modes of transport.
- When people are not travelling to work, preference is a clear main barrier to the use of public transport and walking and cycling.
- When it comes to purchasing a greener vehicle, either a hybrid or an electric car, cost is the clear main barrier. Many people also report not being interested in this – possibly people in inner London who have no need for a private car.
- When asked about why they wouldn't give up flying or only fly once a year, cost and time were the least cited barriers. Instead, people cited their preference and interest. This suggests that people might be happy to take more expensive train journeys for holiday, if this is promoted more as an option.

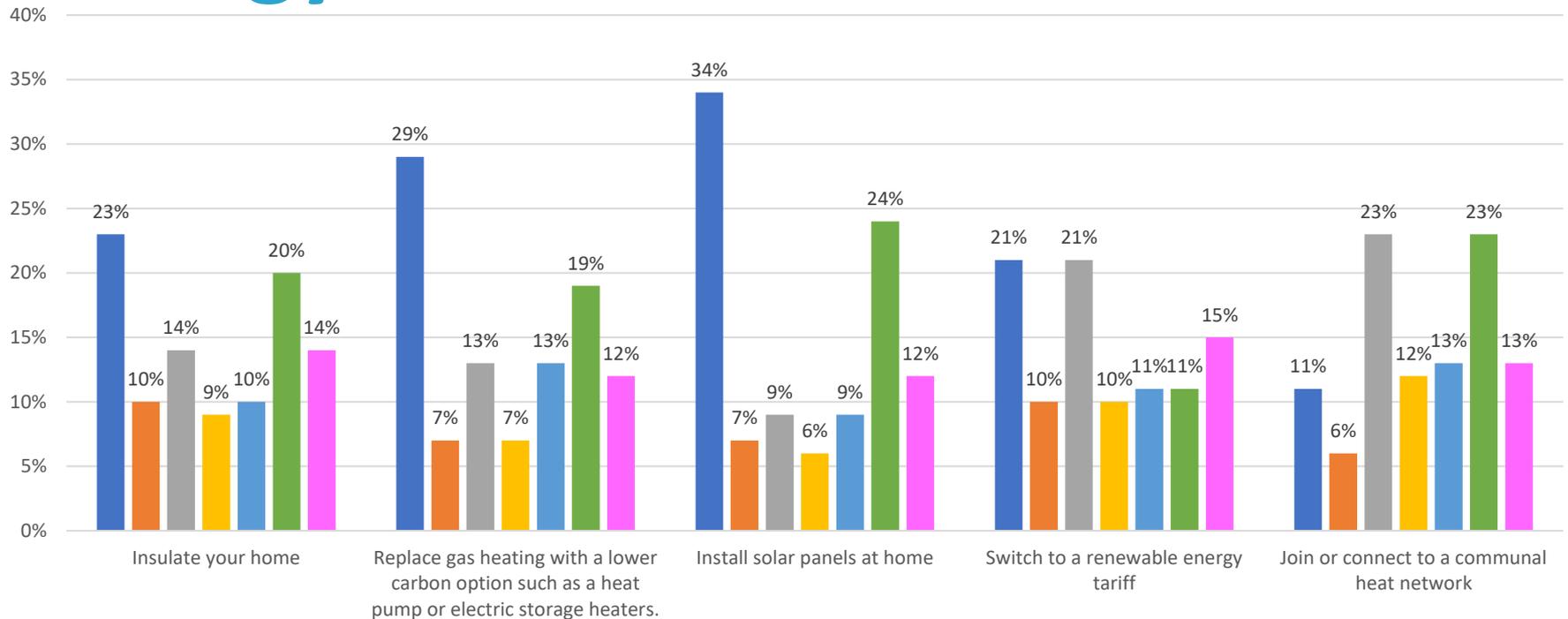
Energy & heat changes



Q15. Please indicate which options you are doing currently and which you would consider doing in the future to help prevent climate change. N=1001

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Energy & heat barriers



- Cost – it is too expensive
- Time – I don't have time to do this
- Understanding – I don't understand what I would need to do
- Social – I don't know anyone else who does this
- Preference – I don't think I would like this/I don't want to do this
- Unavailable - this option isn't possible for me (e.g. no market availability/ too impractical/ someone else's responsibility/doesn't apply to me)
- Interest – it isn't a priority for me

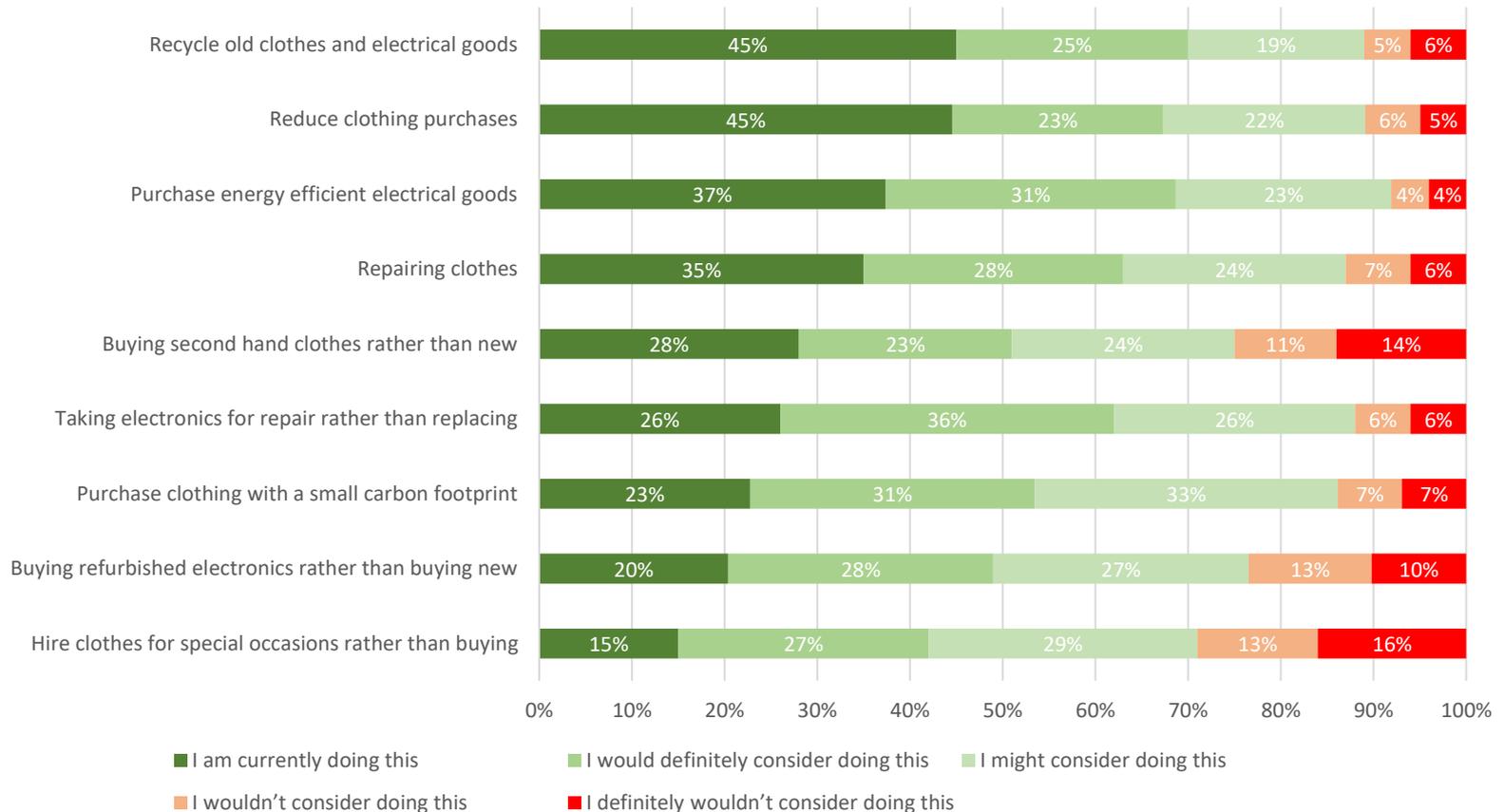
Q16. What is the main barrier to you doing this? Base = Q15 rejectors

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Energy & heat analysis

- Housing in London is a major source of the city's climate emissions, and many Londoners are already taking action in this area. The London Energy and Greenhouse Gas Inventory (LEGGI) shows us that in 2020 (the latest available data) 10.49 MtCO₂e (Metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent) came from domestic energy (7.64 from domestic gas, 2.77 MtCO₂e domestic electricity) a significant portion (37.8%) of the 28.13 MtCO₂e total emissions from across London.
- For replacing heating systems with lower carbon options, insulating homes and installing solar panels, cost is cited as the main barrier. For home insulation, this is a strong second.

Consumer choices

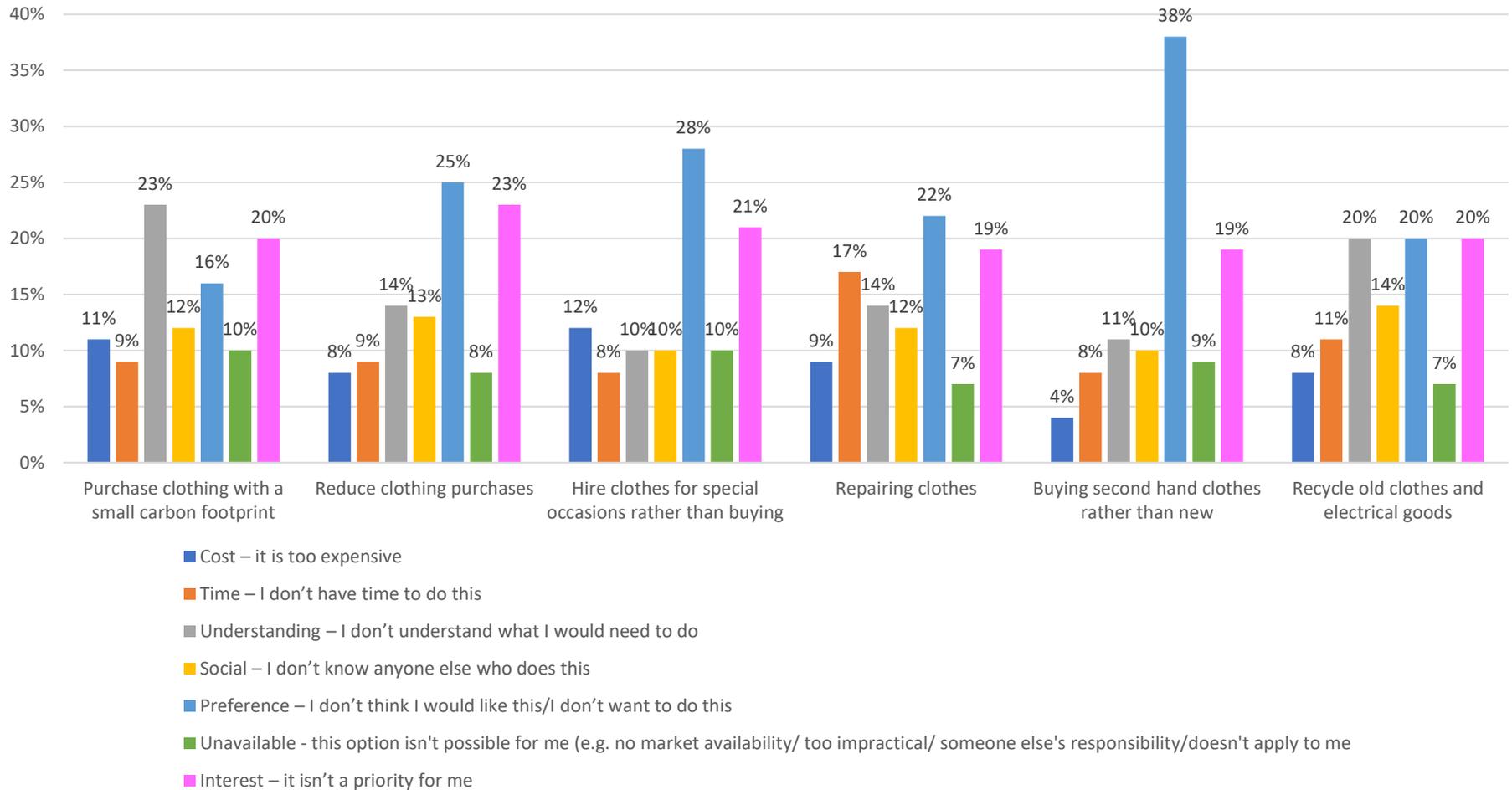


Q17. Please indicate which options you are doing currently and which you would consider doing in the future to help prevent climate change. N=1001

Be the solution to climate change



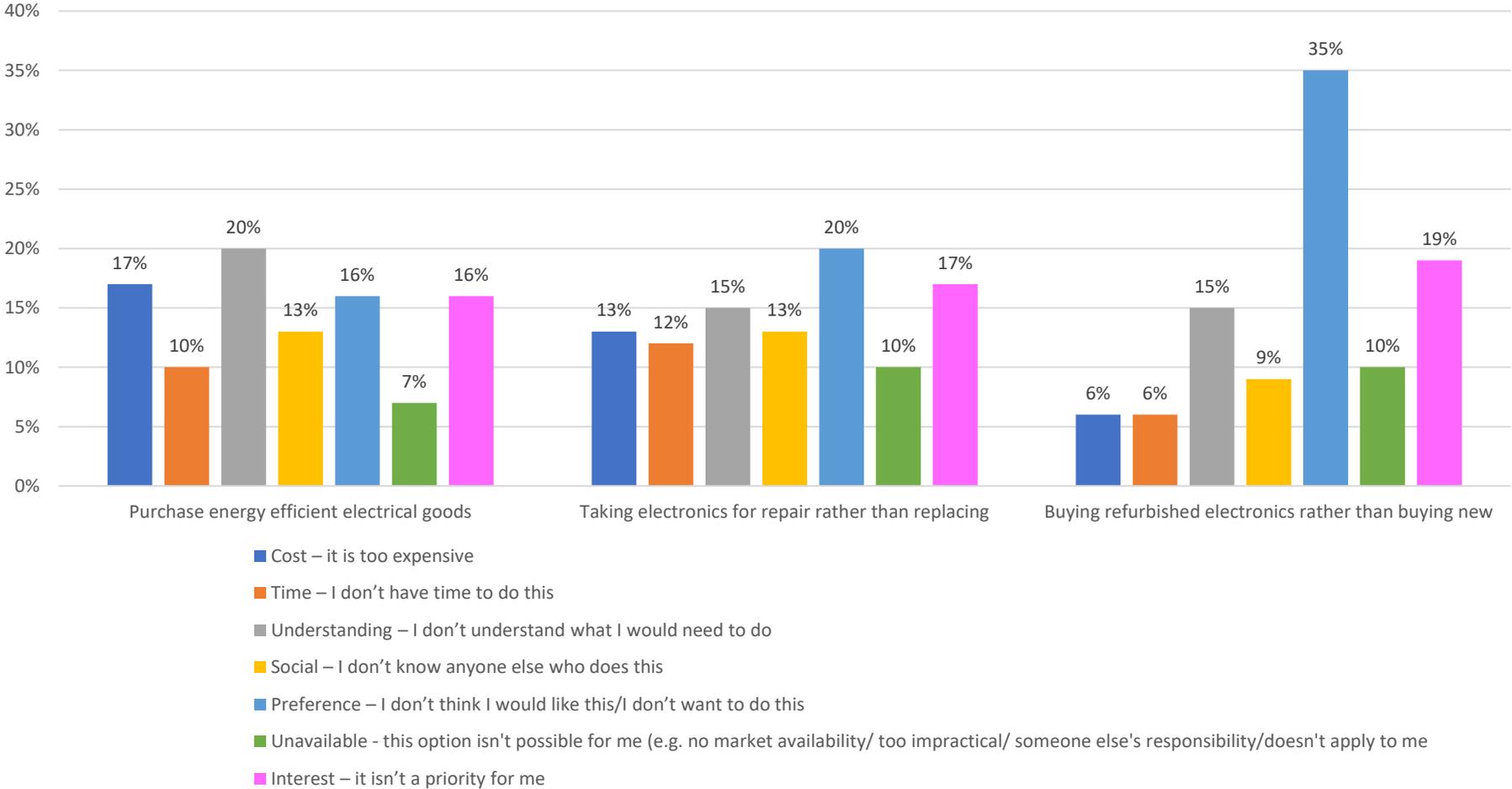
Consumer choice barriers - clothes



Q18. What is the main barrier to you doing this? Base = Q17 rejectors

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Consumer choice barriers - electronics



Q18. What is the main barrier to you doing this? Base = Q17 rejectors

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Consumer choices - analysis

- Consumer goods and services comprise a smaller proportion of Londoners' greenhouse gas footprints, but they do show how willing Londoners are to make lifestyle changes to help tackle climate change.
- Across most options, the reasons for not taking actions are fairly evenly split.
- When it comes to buying second-hand clothes, hiring clothes and buying refurbished electronics people cite preference as the reason they wouldn't do this or consider it.
- Understanding is also a key issue in purchasing clothing with a low carbon impact, recycling old clothes and electrical goods, and purchasing energy efficient electrical goods.

Behaviour Change Campaigns

- In London there are a number of behaviour change campaigns led by ReLondon aiming to drive behaviour change. These have been seen by the following percentages of Londoners:
 - Be that person: 16%
 - Eat like a Londoner: 22%
 - Repair week: 19%
 - Love Not Landfill: 11%
- Of people who saw a campaign:
 - 46% wasted less food or other household items
 - 44% said it helped them better understand how they as an individual can help with the climate crisis
 - 43% repair, reuse, share or recycle more
 - 38% have changed their diet to include more plant-based food
 - 34% buy more second-hand clothing rather than new
 - 15% were inspired to take other actions they had not previously thought of

Questions?

