



# Beyond Imagination Life Survey

Blackburn with Darwen vs. Lancaster comparison report

## Beyond Imagination Life Survey

- A wide ranging survey of Lancaster District and Blackburn with Darwen residents undertaken by BMG Research during 2021 on behalf of ImaginationLancaster - a design-led research lab at Lancaster University.
- The Life Survey is a collaboration between ImaginationLancaster, Lancaster City Council and Blackburn with Darwen Council. The Life Survey was funded by UKRI Research England as part of the Beyond Imagination project.
- The Life Survey questionnaire was co-developed with researchers from ImaginationLancaster and officers across Lancaster City Council and Blackburn with Darwen Council and BMG Research. Further information on ImaginationLancaster and the Life Survey can be found at:  
<https://imagination.lancaster.ac.uk>  
<https://imagination.lancaster.ac.uk/project/beyond-imagination-life-survey/>
- Please see slide 55 for a Data Access Statement.
- **Cite this report**  
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<https://doi.org/10.17635/lancaster/researchdata/551>

## Background & methodology

- Objective of survey was to provide a baseline and evidence base for Local Strategy, Policy and Intervention Development and improve understanding of four themes:
  - Health and Wellbeing
  - Wealth and Opportunity
  - Sustainability, Transport and Travel
  - Connected Communities and Services
- The research used an online and face-to-face methodology to achieve this.



- The fieldwork took place during August and September with a pilot conducted in May and early June 2021.

## Background & methodology (continued)

- The survey took 25 to 30 minutes to complete.
- The following interviews were conducted:



=

Online  
1,439



=

Face-to-face  
1,504

- For the face-to-face survey targets were set by ward, gender and age to ensure representative of the LA
- Rim weights were applied to the data for collection mode, area (based on grouped wards) and age by gender.



# Analysis

- For the purpose of reporting and weighting the wards were grouped in to areas as follows:

Blackburn with Darwen				Lancaster		
Area 1 – Darwen and rural	Area 2 - Blackburn West	Area 3 – Blackburn North	Area 4 – Blackburn East	Area 1	Area 2	Area 3
West Pennine	Livesey with Pleasington	Shear Brow & Corporation Park	Blackburn Central	Bulk	Bare	Bolton & Slyne
Darwen South	Billinge & Beardwood	Bastwell & Daisyfield	Audley & Queen's Park	Castle	Harbour	Carnforth & Millhead
Darwen West	Mill Hill & Moorgate	Roe Lee	Blackburn South East	Ellel	Heysham Central	Halton-with-Aughton
Darwen East	Ewood	Little Harwood & Whitebirk		John O'Gaunt	Heysham North	Kellet
	Blackburn South & Lower Darwen			Marsh	Heysham South	Lower Lune Valley
	Wensley Fold			Scotforth East	Poulton	Overton
				Scotforth West	Torrisholme	Silverdale
				University & Scotforth Rural	Westgate	Skerton East
						Skerton West
						Upper Lune Valley

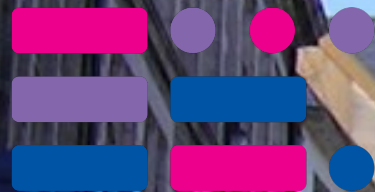
- Rim weights were then applied to the data for collection mode, area and age by gender.

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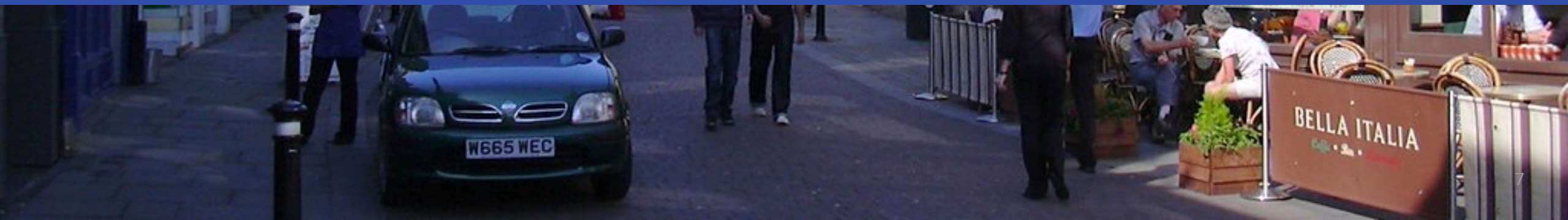




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# Local area and priorities





## Local and area priorities summary

Residents of both Blackburn with Darwen and Lancaster feel a strong sense of belonging to their area, rating it as a place where neighbours look out for each other and different backgrounds get on together. A large proportion of both residents have been in the local area for over 10 years

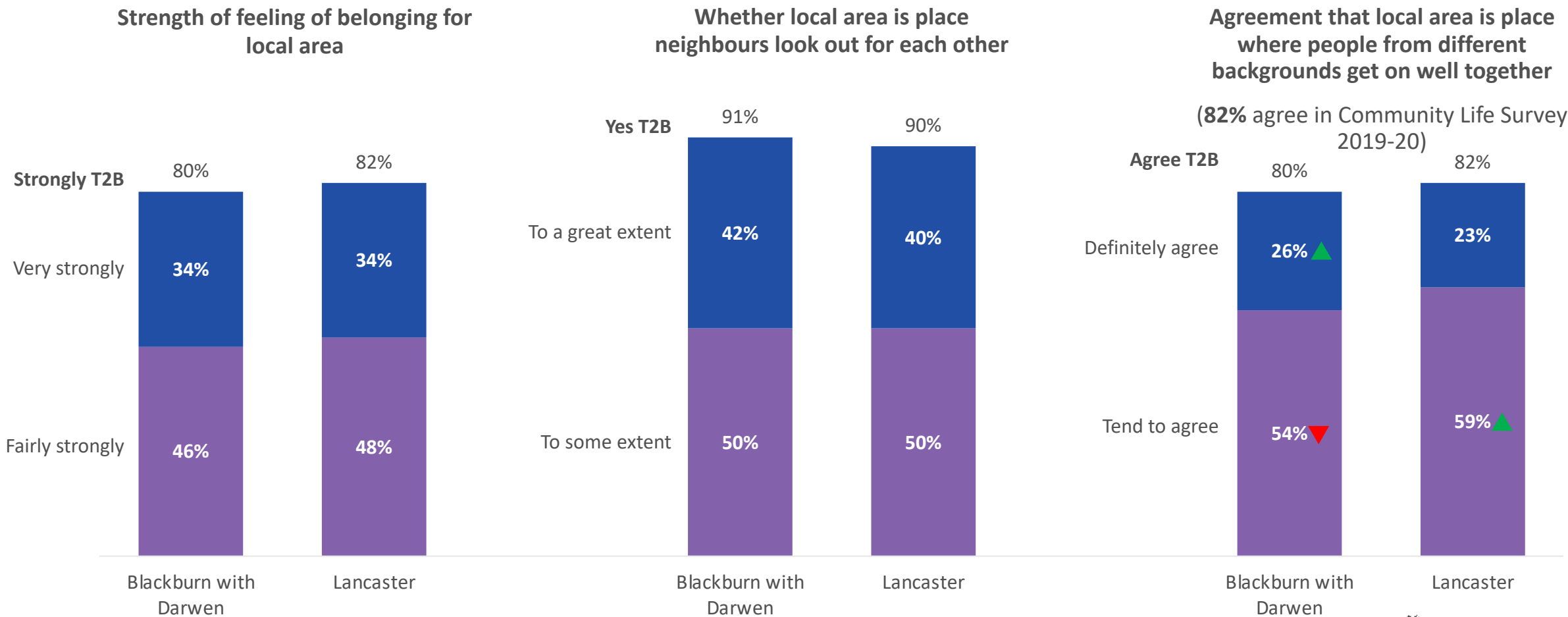
Despite this, Blackburn with Darwen are less satisfied with their local area and amenities. They have a younger population that see fewer services in their area than Lancaster do. They are more likely to cite the level of crime as needing improvement, which leads to them feeling less safe than their Lancastrian counterparts.

Between 1 in 4 and 1 in 3 residents from both districts are satisfied with their ability to influence local council. There is some appetite to increase their participation in local pro-social activities – with the main barrier for this being time.

While online methods are preferred for both districts in contacting the council, there is also a need to still provide an offline avenue, whether that is face-to-face, letter or telephone.

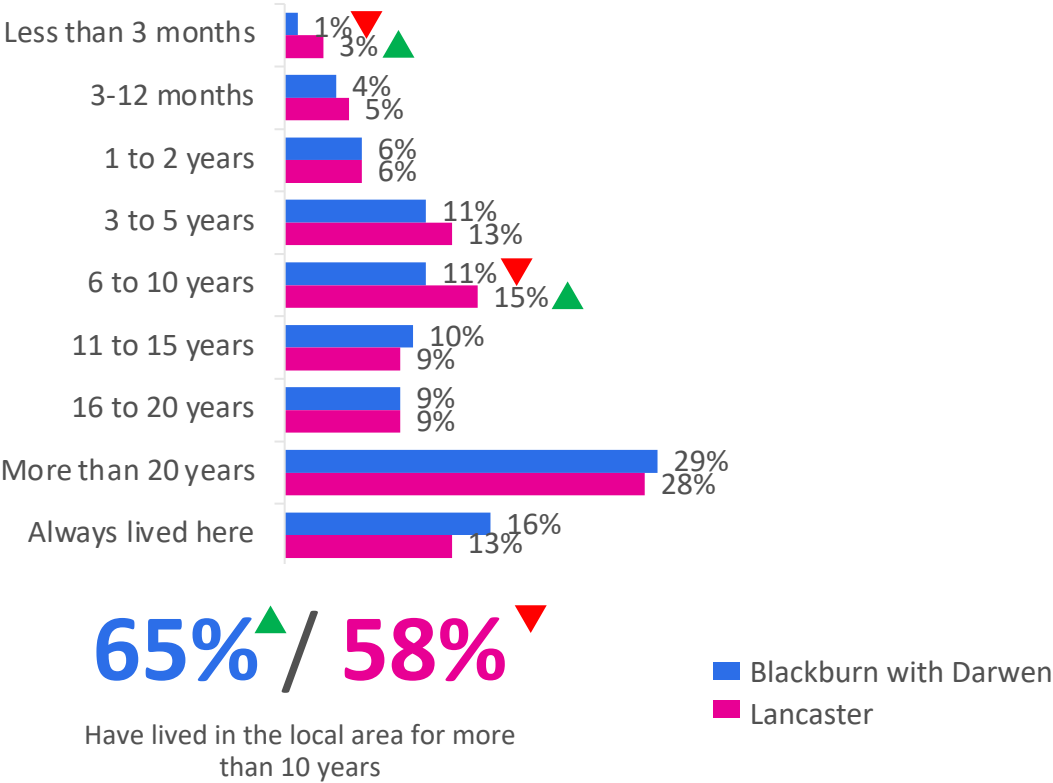


# Both districts have a strong feeling of belonging and sense of community – Blackburn with Darwen are slightly more enthusiastic

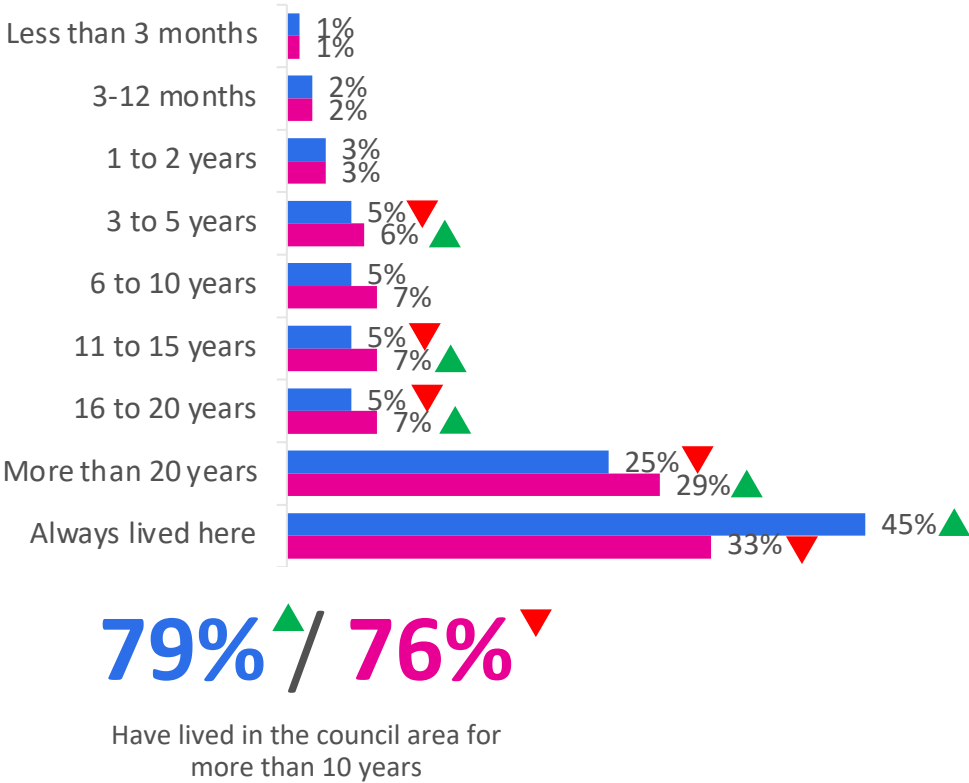


# Blackburn with Darwen residents are more likely to have lived in the local area and council area for more than 10 years

Length of time in local area

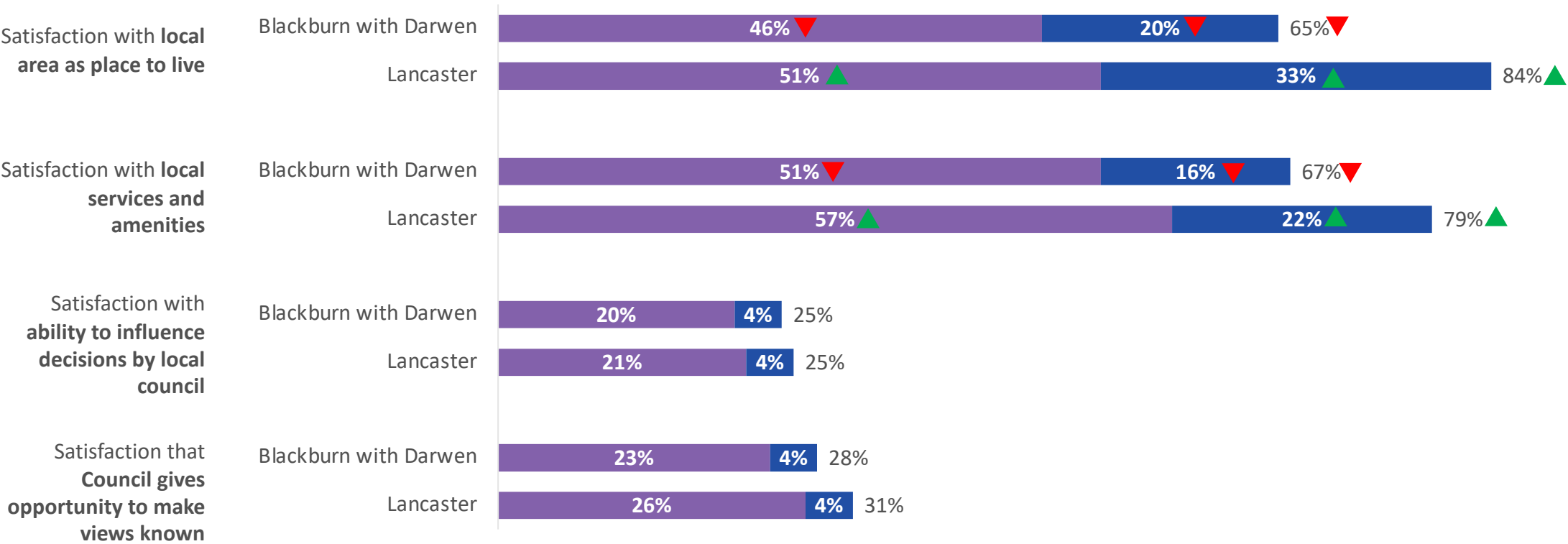


Length of time in council area



# Despite this there are differences between Lancaster and Blackburn with Darwen around satisfaction measures

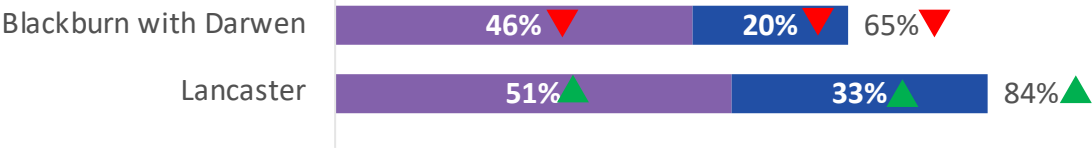
## Satisfactions measures



# This is particularly true around satisfaction with the local area as a place to live

## Satisfactions measures

Satisfaction with **local area as place to live**



**78%**  
Of respondents in the October 2021 Polling on resident satisfaction with councils were very or fairly satisfied with their local area as a place to live

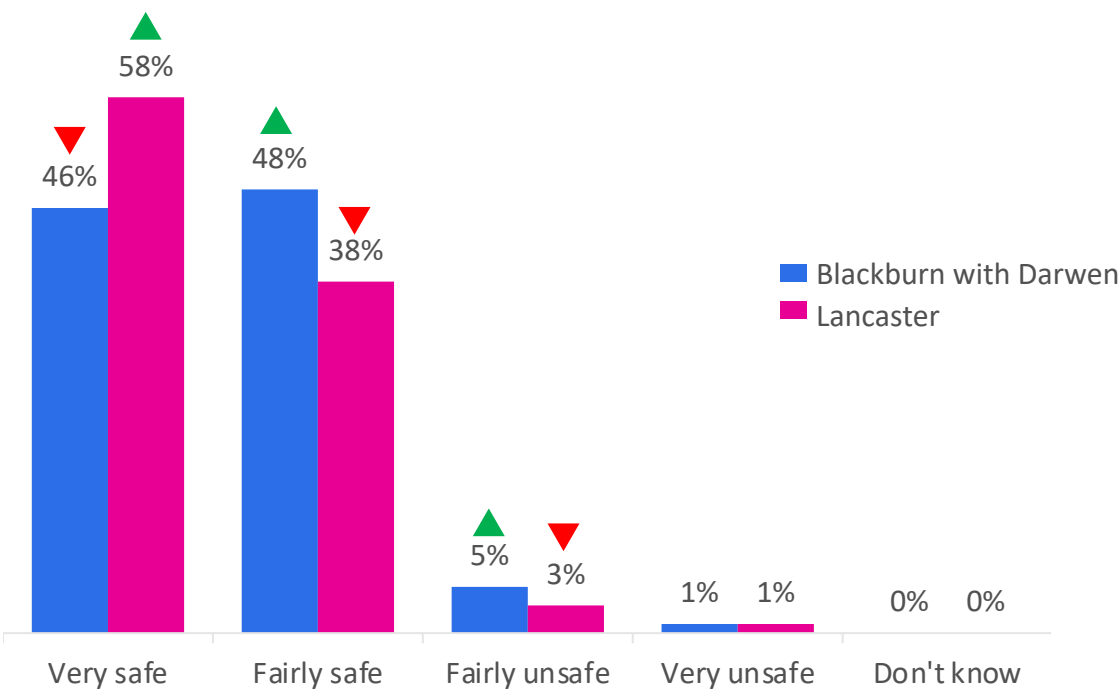
Groups more likely to be dissatisfied with each measure (in both districts)	
Local area as place to live	35-64 (11%), White (9%), most deprived IMD quintile (14%)



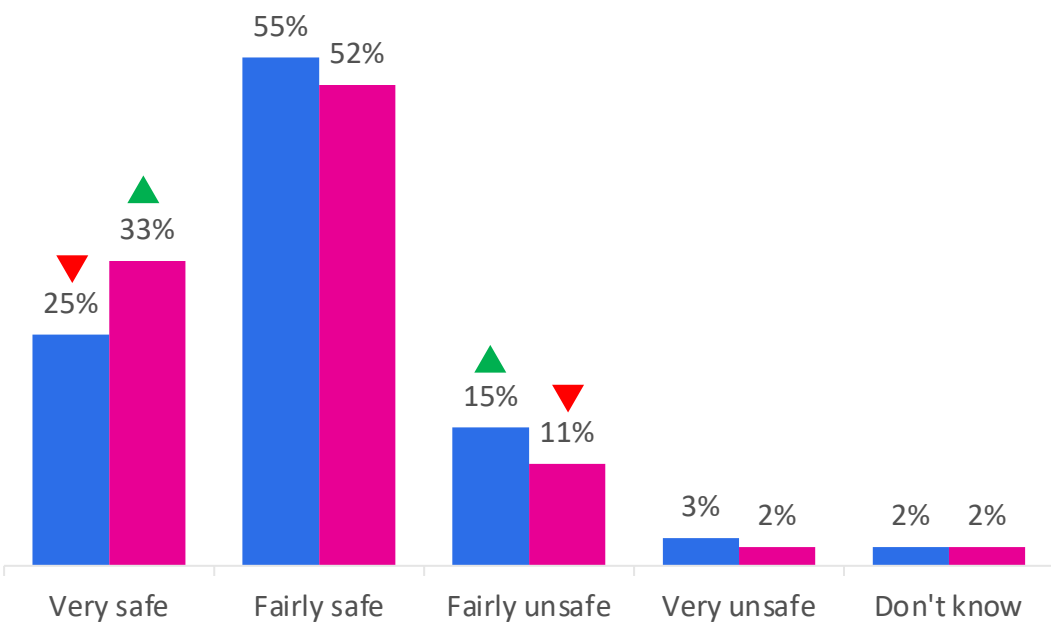
# Blackburn with Darwen residents are significantly more likely to feel unsafe in their local area during both day and night

## Local area safety in different periods of the day

Day

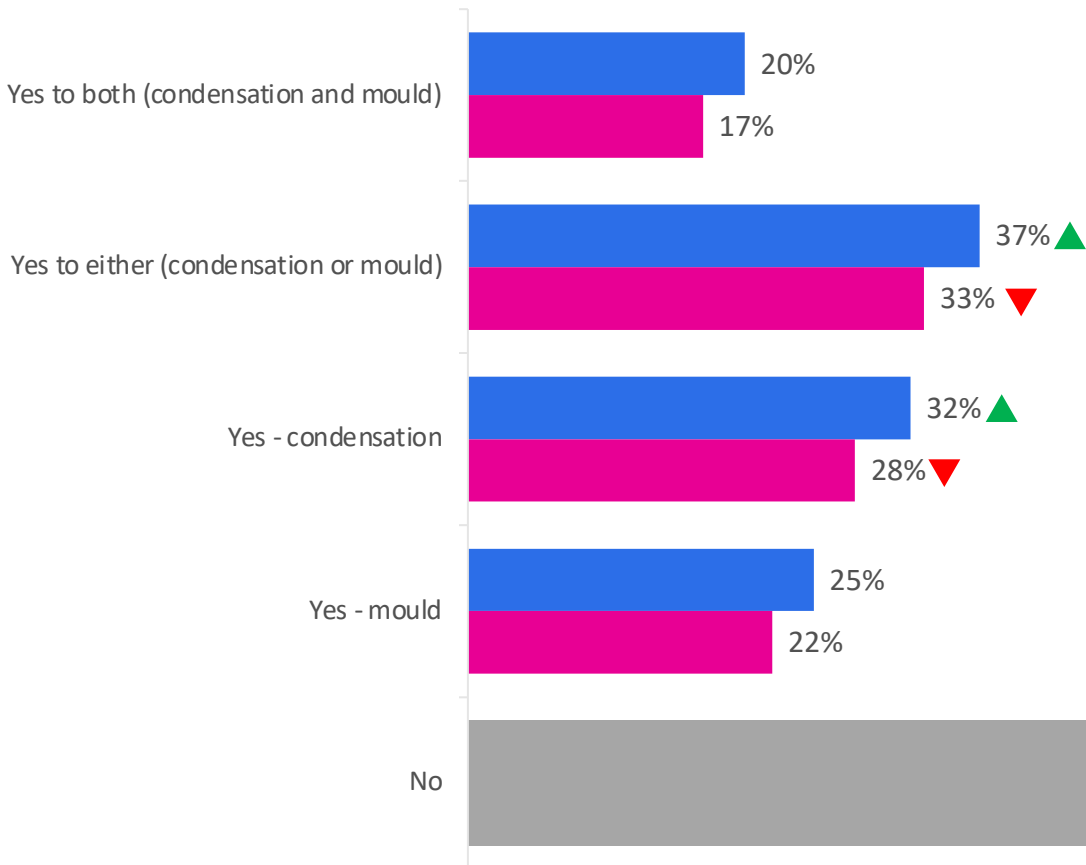


Night



# Blackburn with Darwen residents are also significantly more likely to have either condensation or mould during the winter months – especially those renting

## Whether condensation or mould during winter months

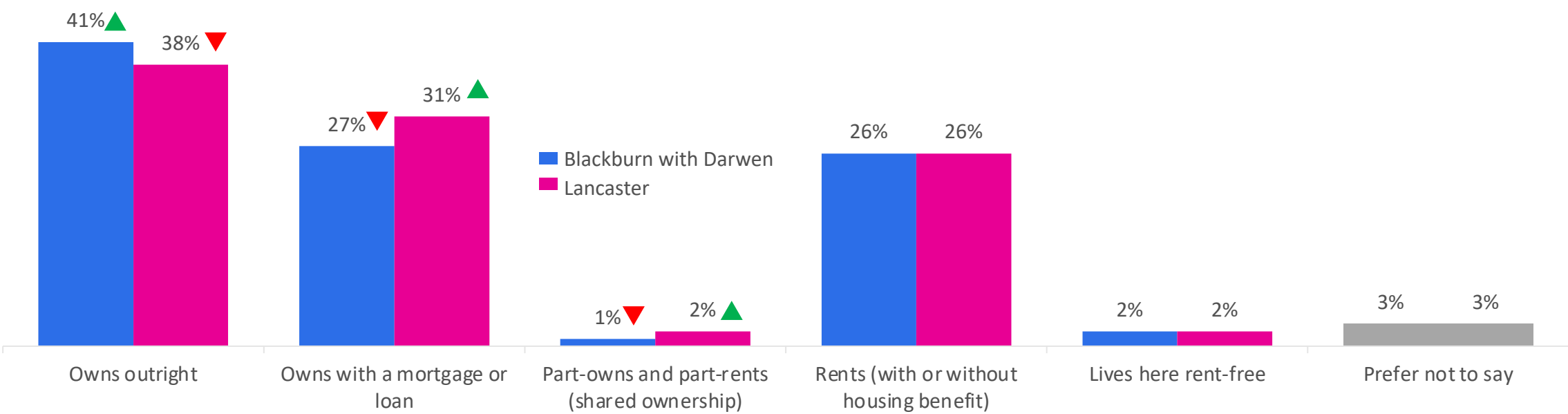


**Groups more likely to have both mould and condensation (in both districts)**

- 18 to 34 (24%)
- Female (20%)
- BME (25%)
- Most deprived (26%)
- Out of work (29%)
- **Renting or part renting (27%)**
- Have children in household (26%)
- Those with a physical/ mental health condition that limits their activities (28%)

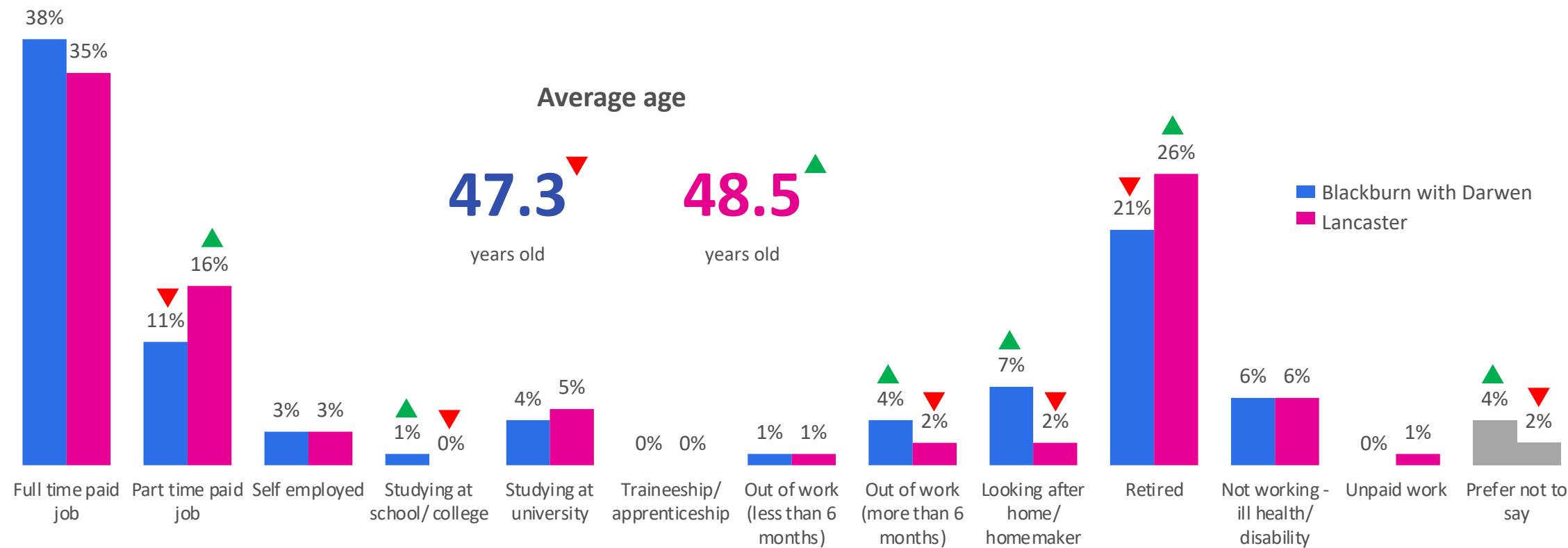
# Despite renters being more likely to say they have problems with mould or condensation - those in Blackburn with Darwen are actually more likely to own outright

Whether household owns or rents accommodation

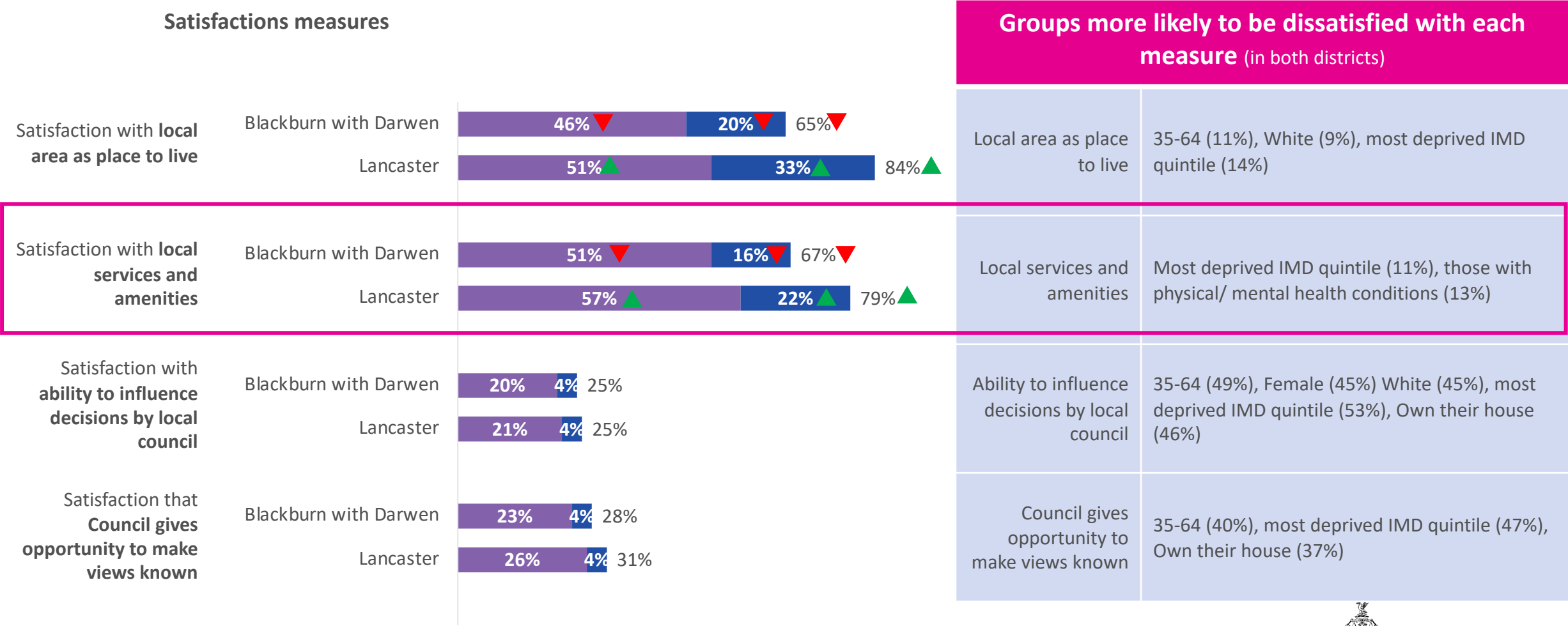


# More people in Lancaster are retired – while more in Blackburn and Darwen are out of work or homemakers

Whether household owns or rents accommodation



# Satisfaction is also lower in Blackburn with Darwen when it comes to local services and amenities

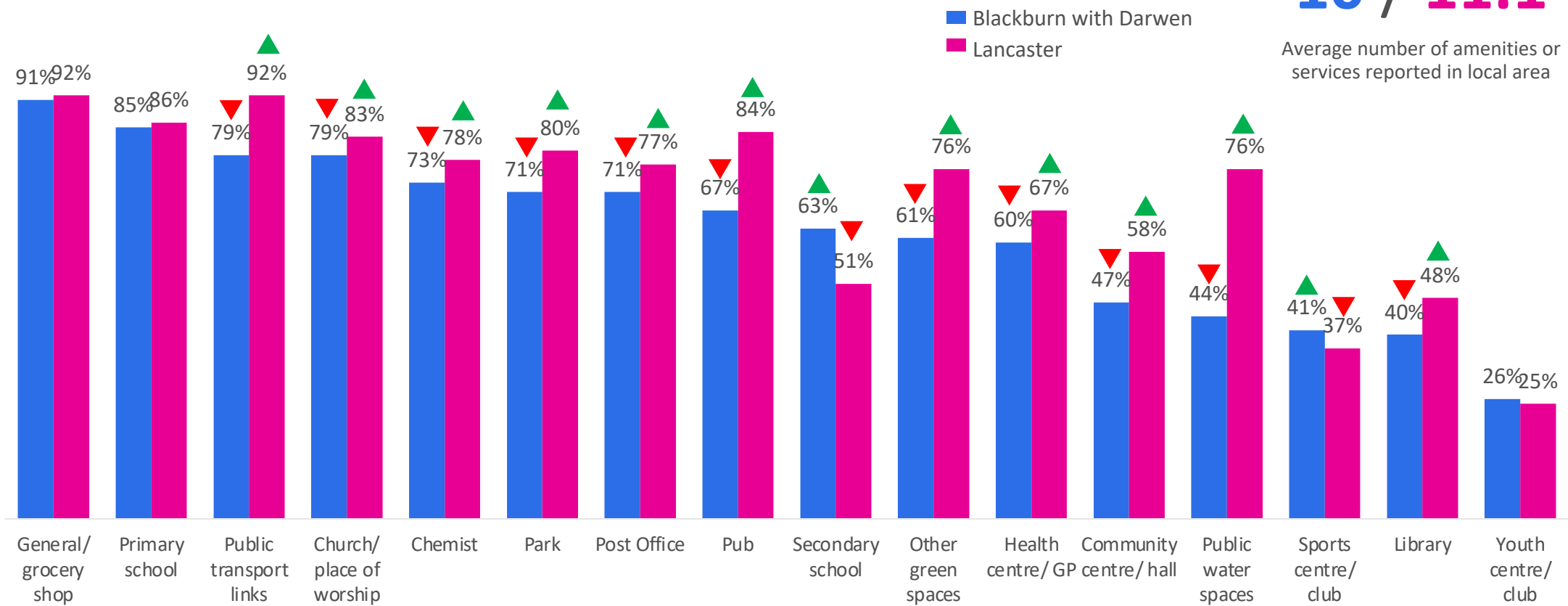


# Residents in Lancaster are significantly more likely to report public transport links, green spaces, parks, public water spaces and pubs in their area

Located within local area

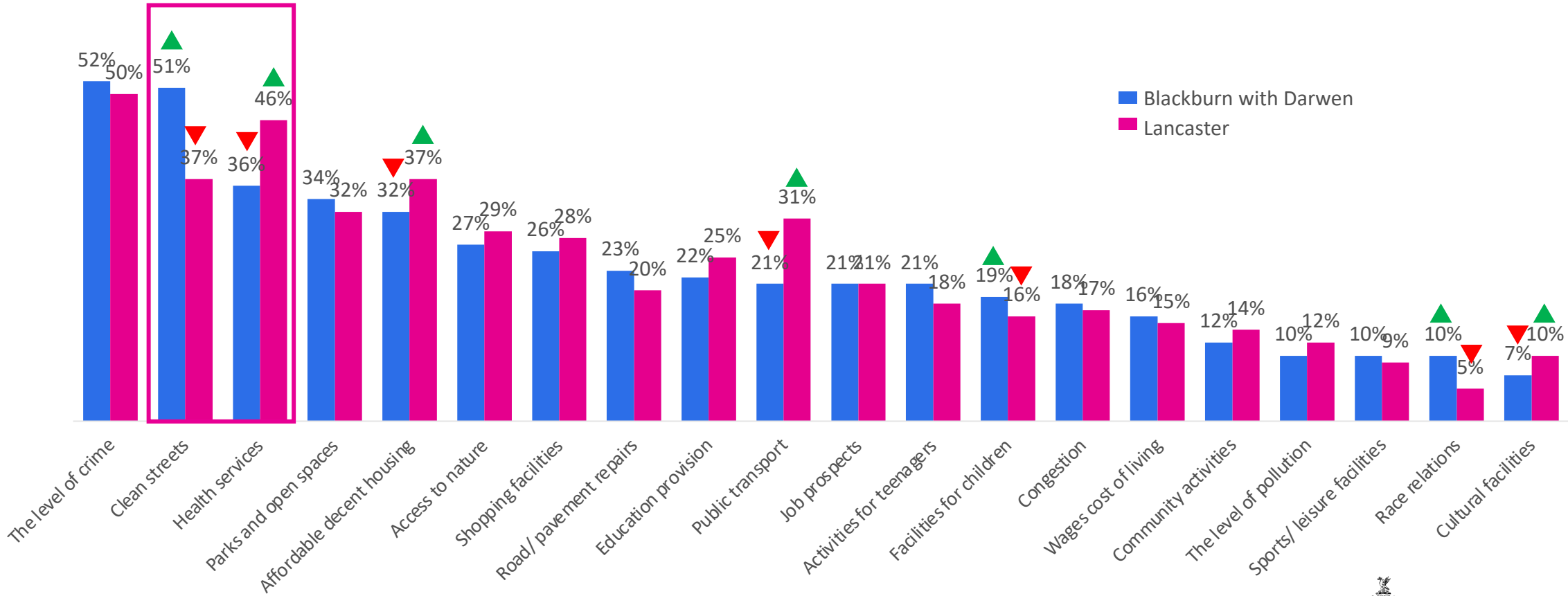
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Average number of amenities or services reported in local area



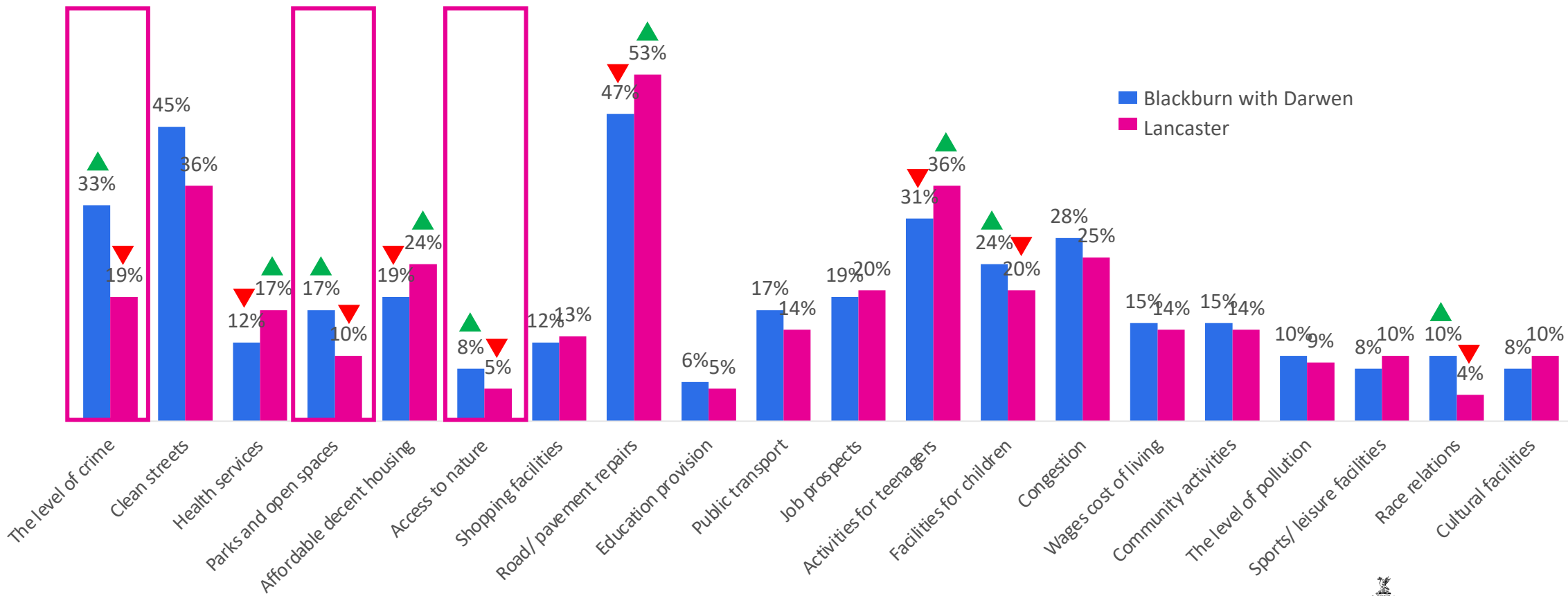
# Lancaster prioritises health services, public transport and cultural facilities, Blackburn with Darwen prioritise clean streets, facilities for children, and race relations – reflecting the age and life stage differences

Most important aspects of local area



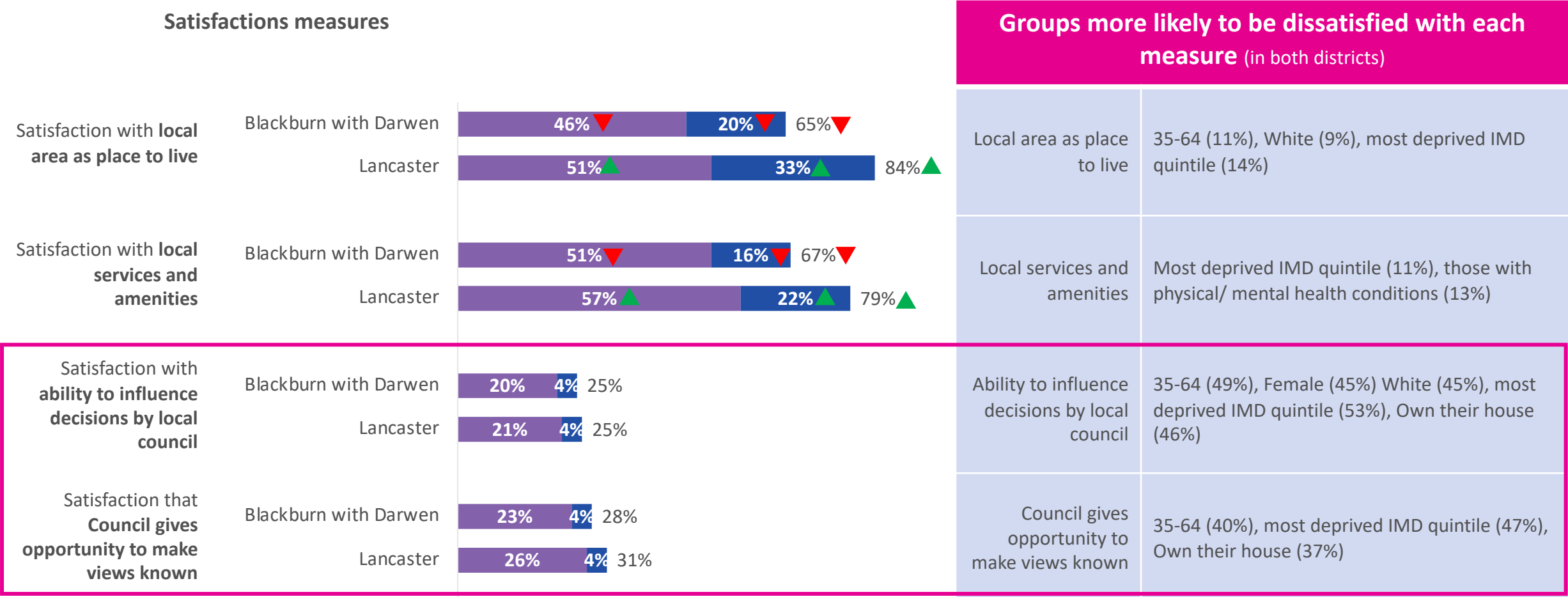
# Blackburn with Darwen residents are significantly more likely to believe the level of crime, parks and open spaces and access to nature need improvement

Areas of improvement in local area



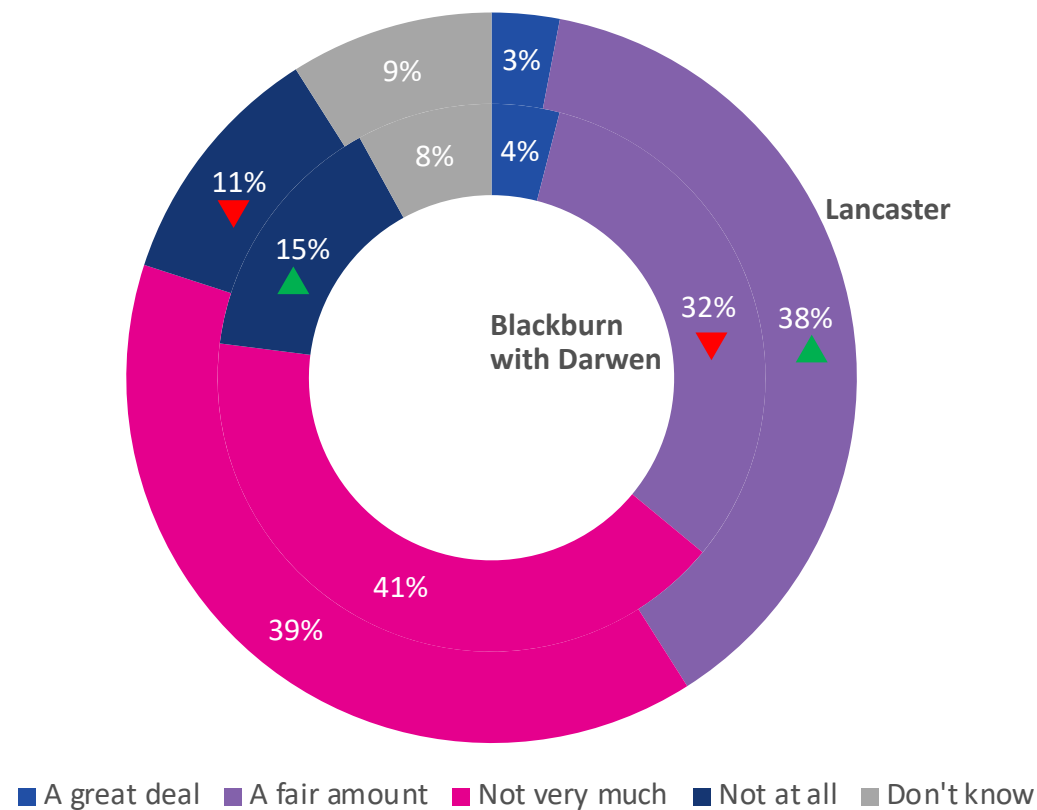


# While there is no significant difference – satisfaction with ability to influence council decisions and the council giving opportunity to make views known is low



Around 4 in 10 in both districts believe the Council acts on the concern of residents – although older and more deprived residents particularly disagree

Whether the Council acts on the concern of residents

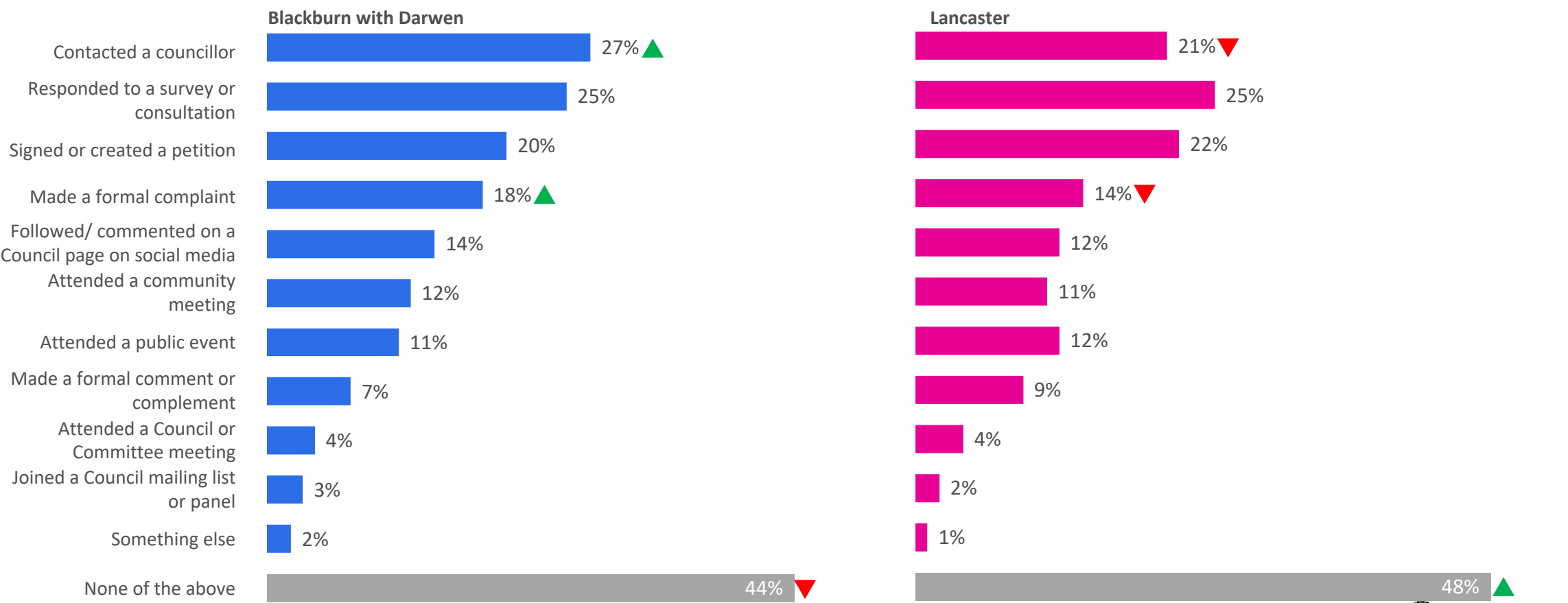


**Groups more likely to believe their Council doesn't act on the concerns of residents (in both districts)**

- Darwen and rural (63%) / Blackburn East (61%)
- Area 2 in Lancaster (62%)
- 35 to 64 (58%) and 65+ (56%)
- White (55%)
- Most deprived (66%)
- Those who have some form of higher education (59%)
- Those without children in their household (55%)
- Those who own their own house (56%)
- Those with a physical/ mental health condition that limits their daily activities (67%)
- Those with low mental wellbeing (66%)
- Those not satisfied with local services/ amenities (72%)

# Residents in Blackburn with Darwen are more likely to have contacted a councillor or made a formal complaint

## Ways of sharing views with local council

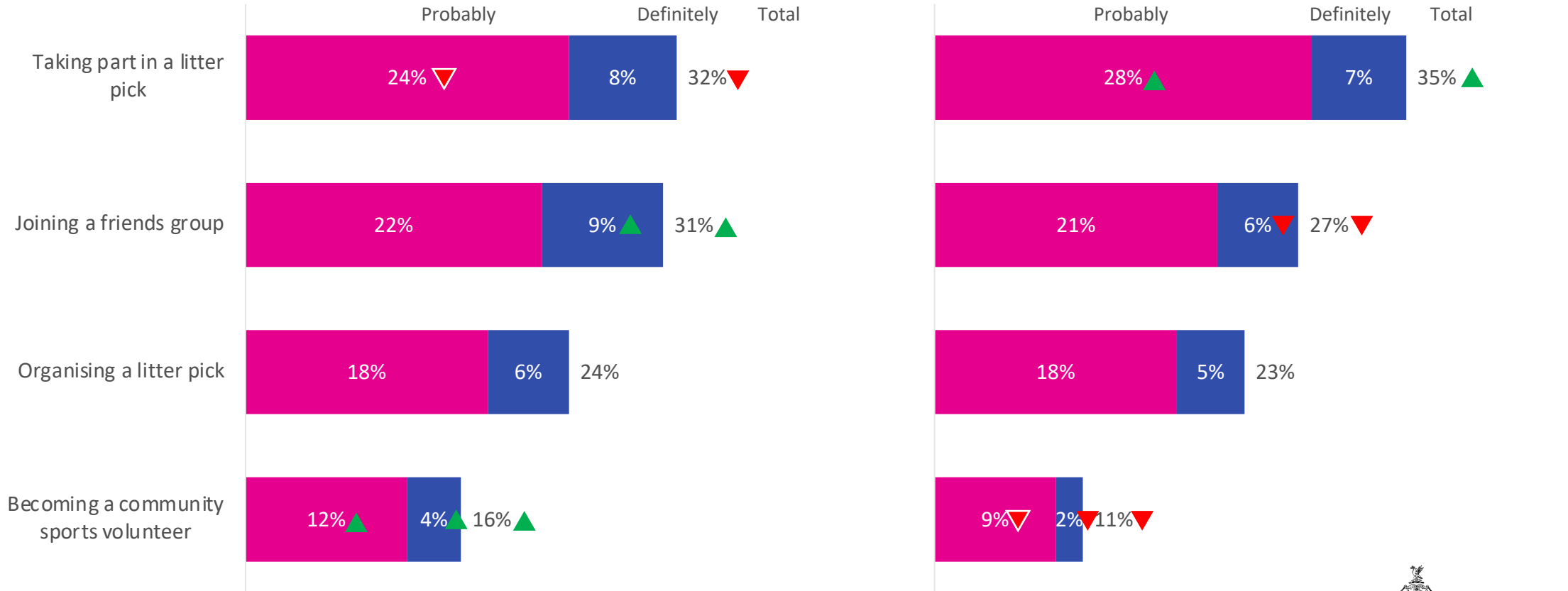


# Blackburn with Darwen residents are more likely to be interested in taking a more active role in community efforts such as joining a friends group and becoming a community sports volunteer

Level of interest in taking a more active role in local activities

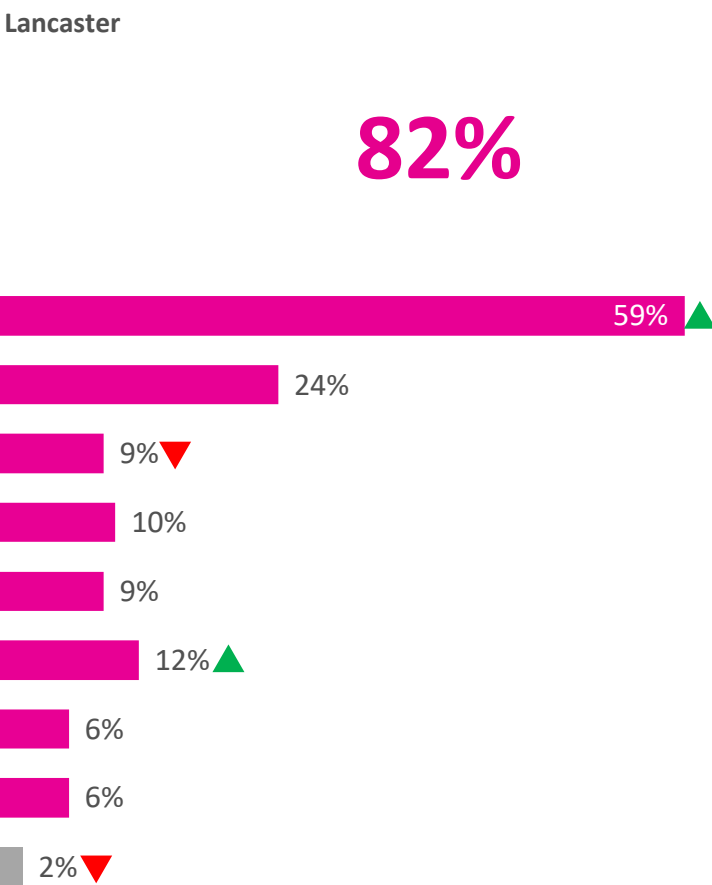
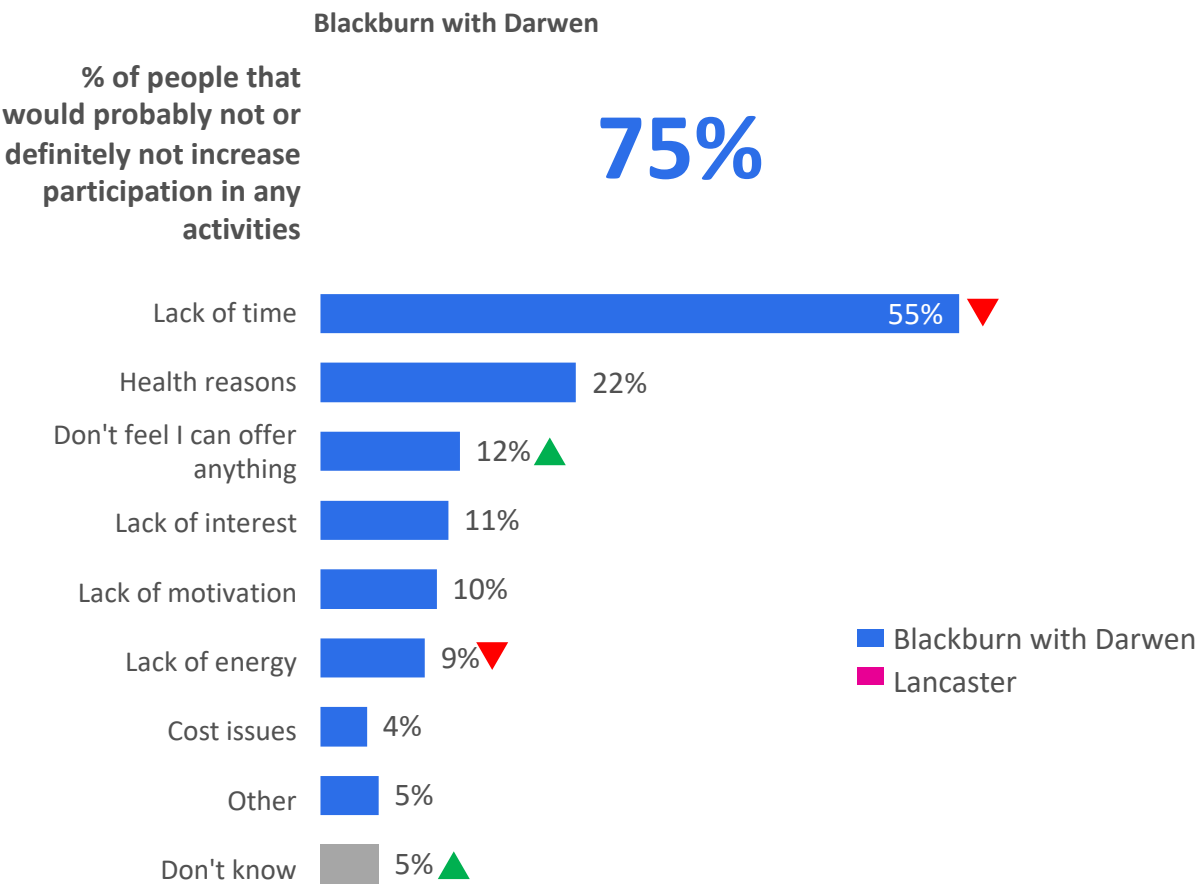
Blackburn with Darwen

Lancaster



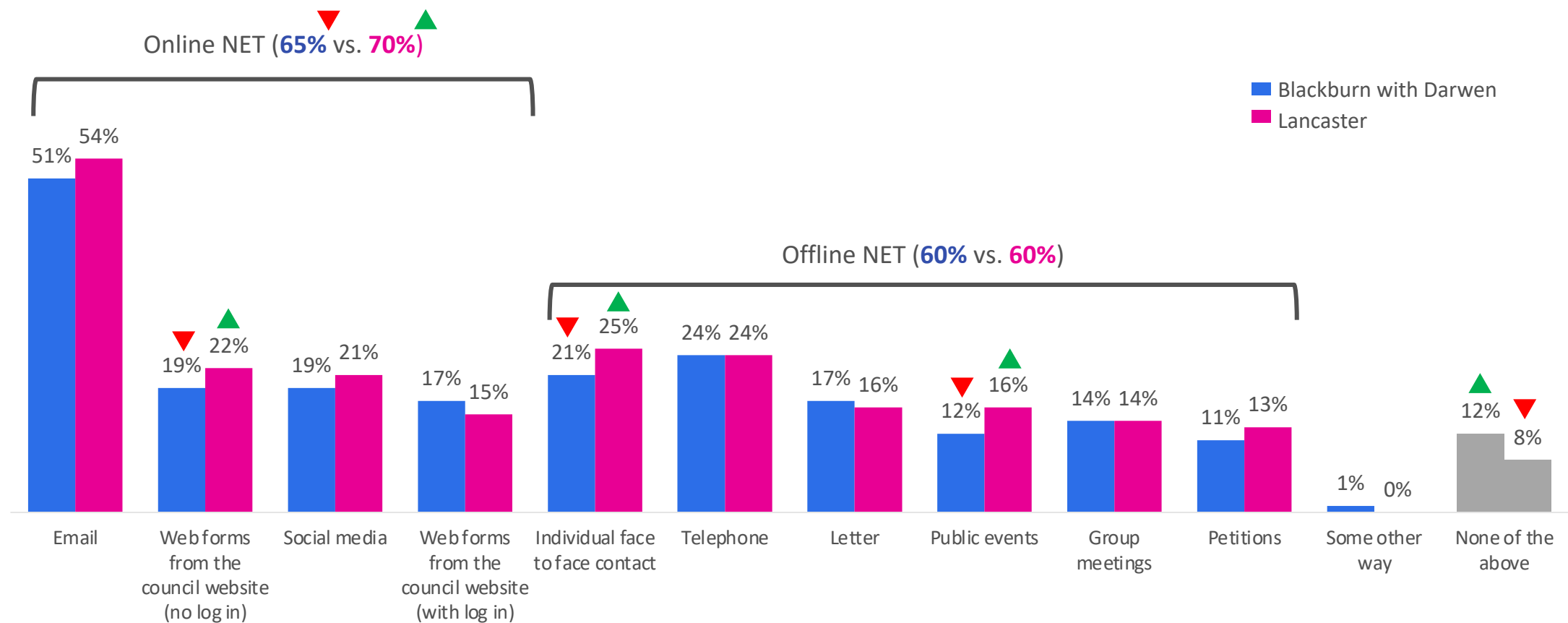
# Blackburn with Darwen residents are more likely to feel like they can't offer anything – while Lancaster residents are more likely to cite time constraints

## What would prevent you from increasing participation in activities

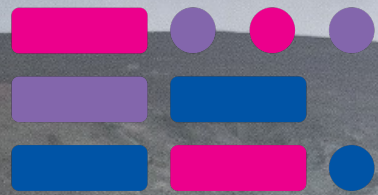


# Lancaster residents are more likely to prefer to share their views online

## Preference for sharing views with the Council







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# Sustainability



## Sustainability summary

Residents in Lancaster are more concerned about climate change than those in Blackburn with Darwen. This is especially true of those living in Area 1 in Lancaster.

Lancaster residents are therefore more likely to always do environmentally friendly activities such as recycling, composting and not driving for short distances.

Lancaster residents are also significantly more likely to own a bike and use it weekly – due to this there is more of a focus on cycle paths and cyclist safety as a way to reduce travel by car.

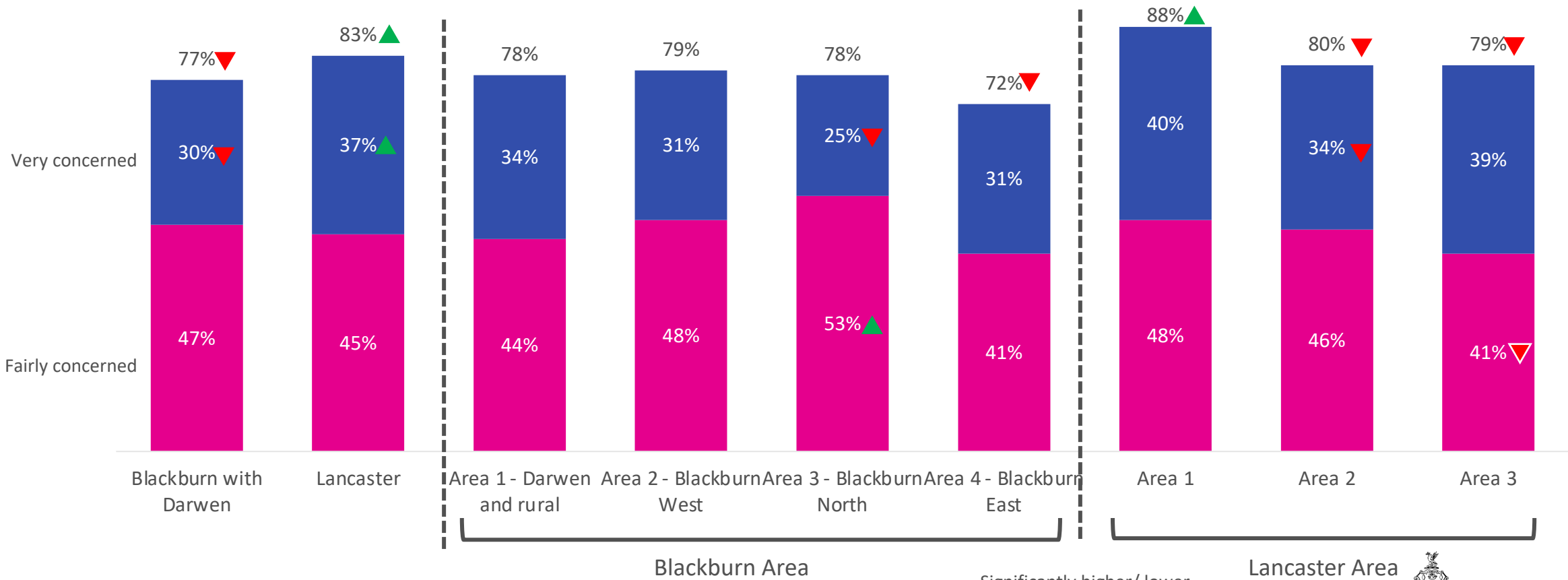
There is no significant difference between Lancaster and Blackburn when it comes to owning a car/ van, although Lancaster residents are more likely to cite cost and worries about batteries as barriers to EV use.





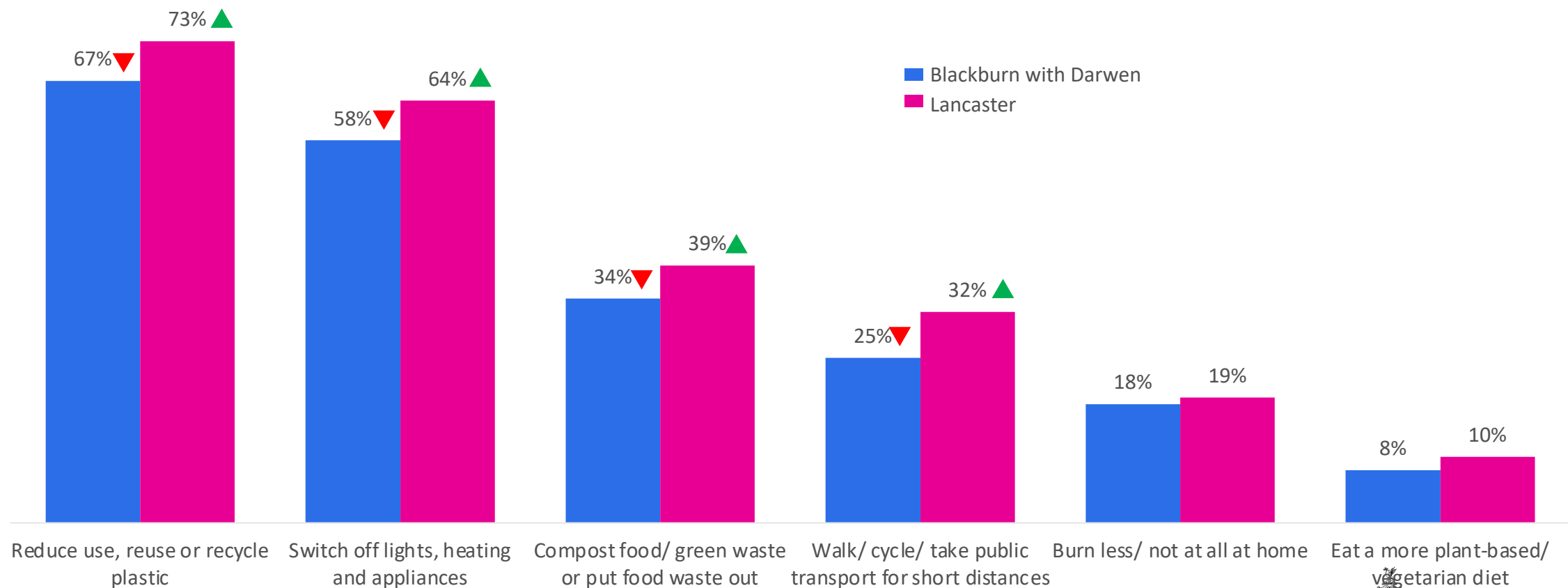
# There is more concern about climate change in Lancaster – especially centred around Area 1

Level of concern about climate change



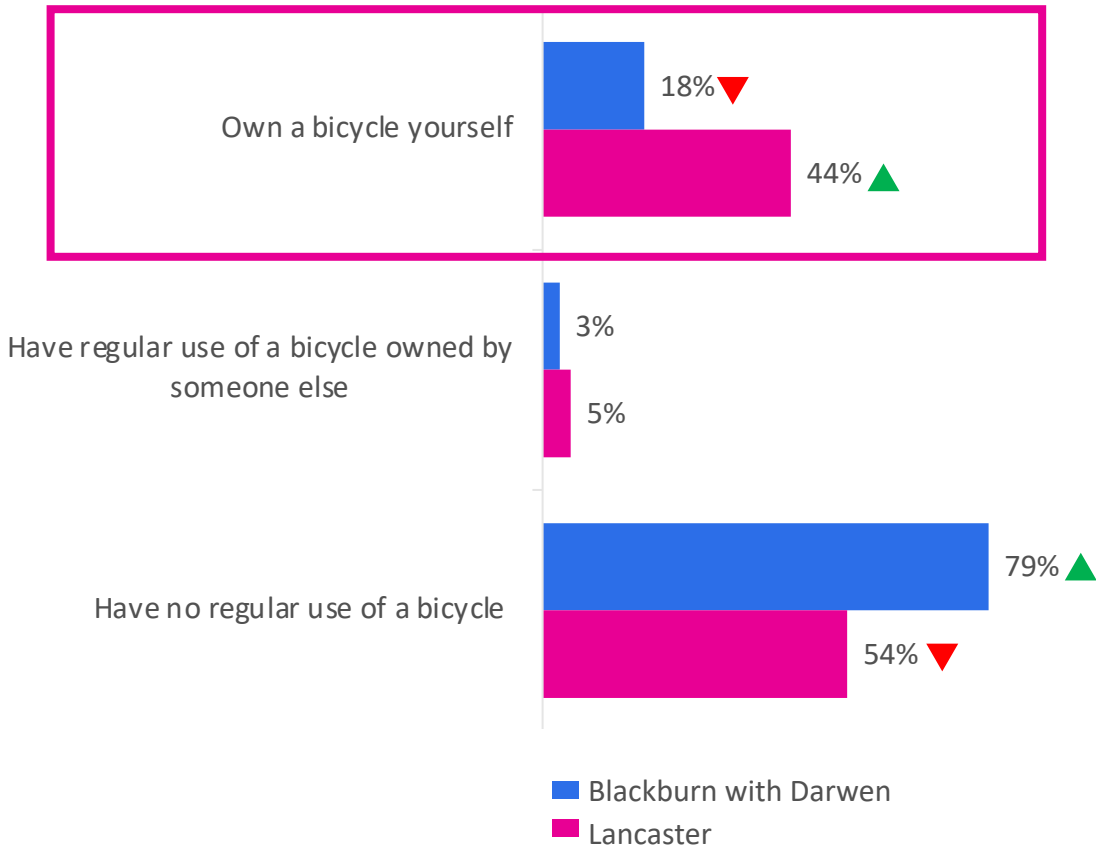
Perhaps due to the higher level of concern more Lancaster residents are likely to always undertake environmentally friendly activities

Environmentally friendly activities - % doing always

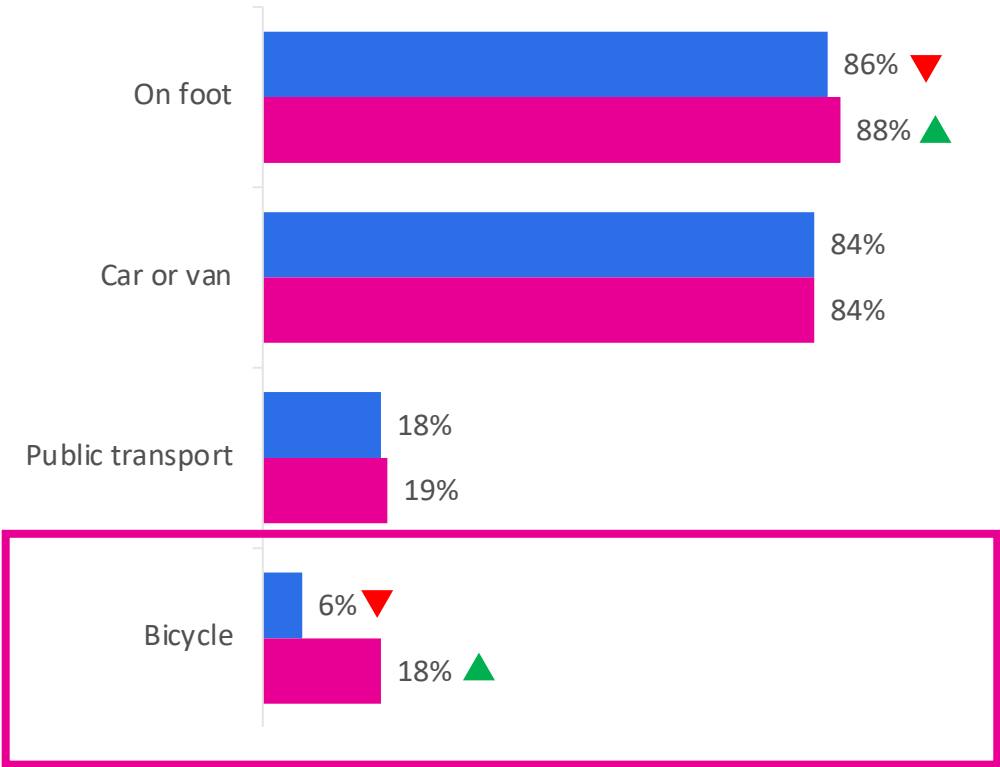


# Lancaster residents are significantly more likely to own a bicycle and cycle at least once a week compared to Blackburn with Darwen

Bike ownership

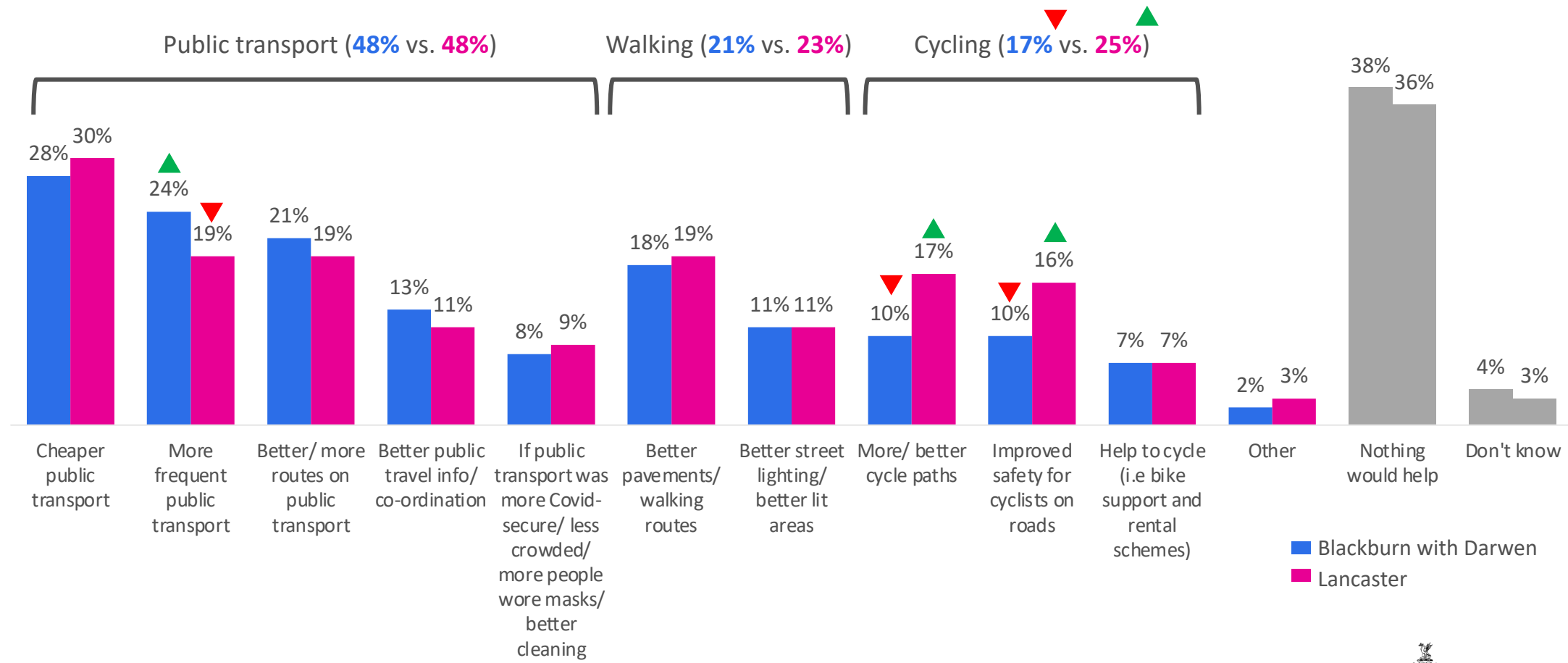


Weekly vehicle usage



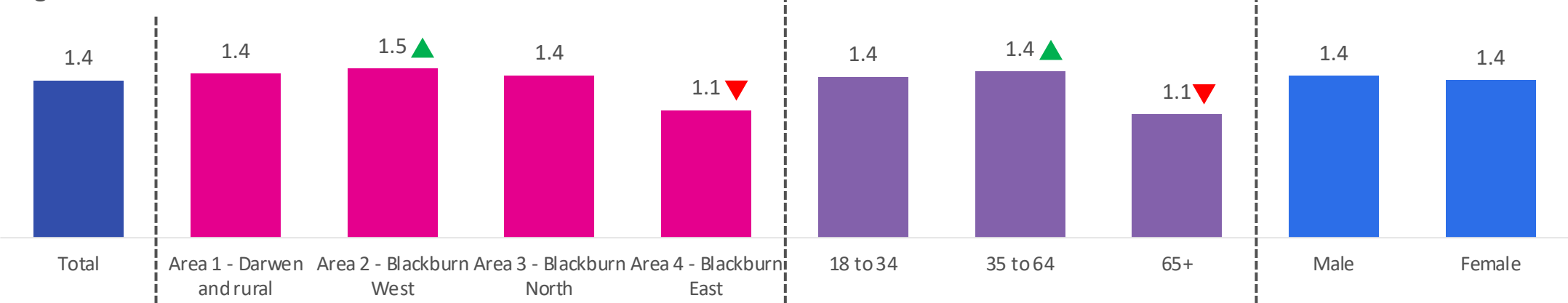
They are also more likely to cite cycling improvements as a way to reduce car/ van travel  
– Blackburn with Darwen residents are more likely to cite more frequent public transport

Things that would reduce travelling by car/ van (among regular drivers)

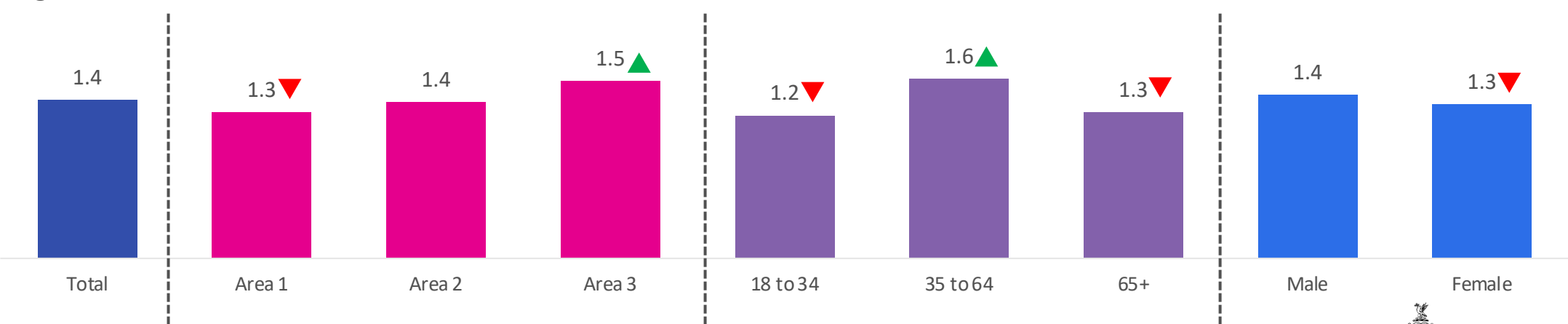


# The average number of cars per household is similar in both districts

Average number of cars or vans in household in Blackburn with Darwen

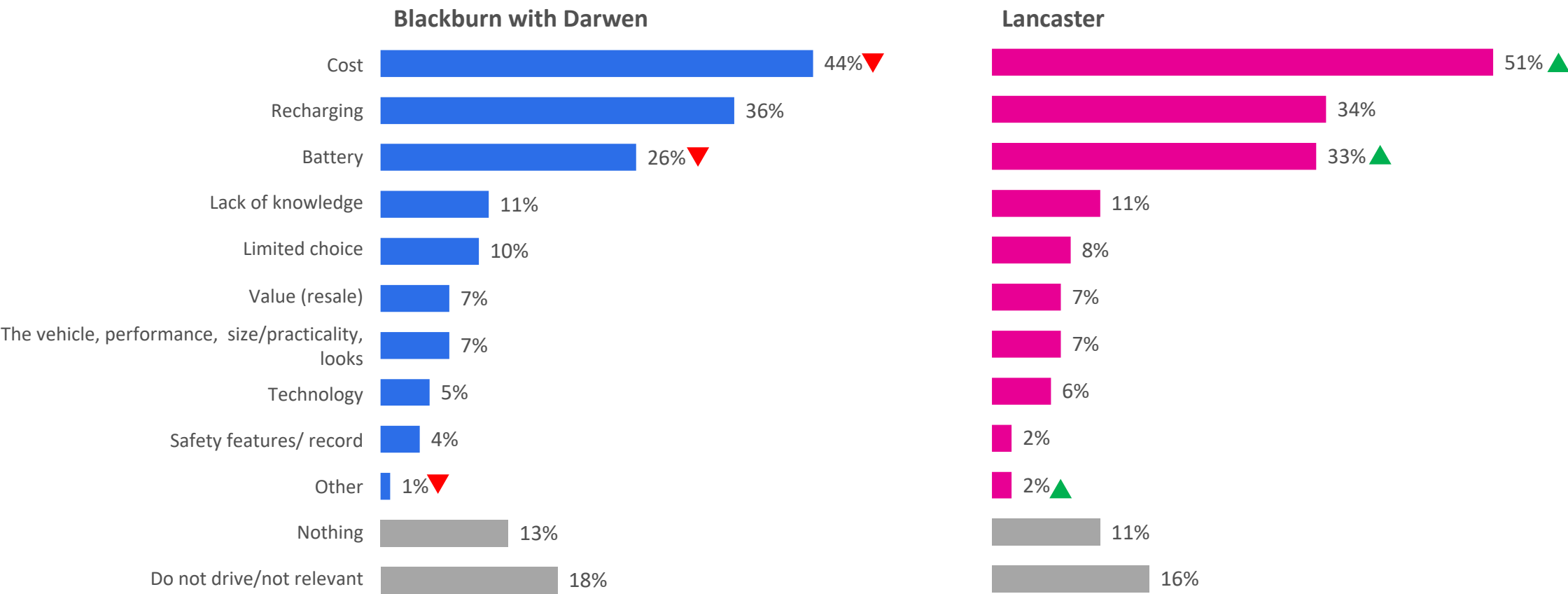


Average number of cars or vans in household in Lancaster



# The main barrier to EV use for both districts are cost, difficulties recharging, and worries about battery time

## Barriers to electric vehicle use







# Physical/mental health



## Physical/ mental health summary

While measures around mental wellbeing and feelings about aspects of life aren't significantly different between Lancaster and Blackburn with Darwen, significantly more Lancastrians have a long term condition or illness (possible reflecting the different age profiles of the districts).

Lancaster residents are more likely to drink often – but are almost more likely to exercise frequently and for longer periods of time.

Residents from Blackburn with Darwen are significantly more likely to score on the food poverty scale for measures around a varied and healthy diet and skipping meals.





# Warwick Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale (WEMWBS)

## What is WEMWBS?

WEMWBS is a scale which has been validated for the measurement of mental wellbeing among people aged 13 to 74 in the UK. It comprises 14 positively worded statements with five response categories from 'none of the time' to 'all of the time'. The scale was developed to enable the monitoring of mental wellbeing in the general population, as well as for the evaluation of projects, programmes and policies which aim to improve mental wellbeing. A higher score indicates a higher level of mental wellbeing.

## What does WEMWBS measure?

Mental wellbeing is one aspect of overall wellbeing (others include physical and social aspects of wellbeing). Mental wellbeing is often divided into two perspectives: one which includes states of happiness and life satisfaction, and the other which includes positive psychological functioning, good relationships with others and self-realisation/acceptance. Mental wellbeing and mental health are different terms. 'Mental wellbeing' describes positive states of being, thinking, behaving and feeling, whilst 'mental health' is a term often used to incorporate a range of states from excellent mental health to severe mental health problems.

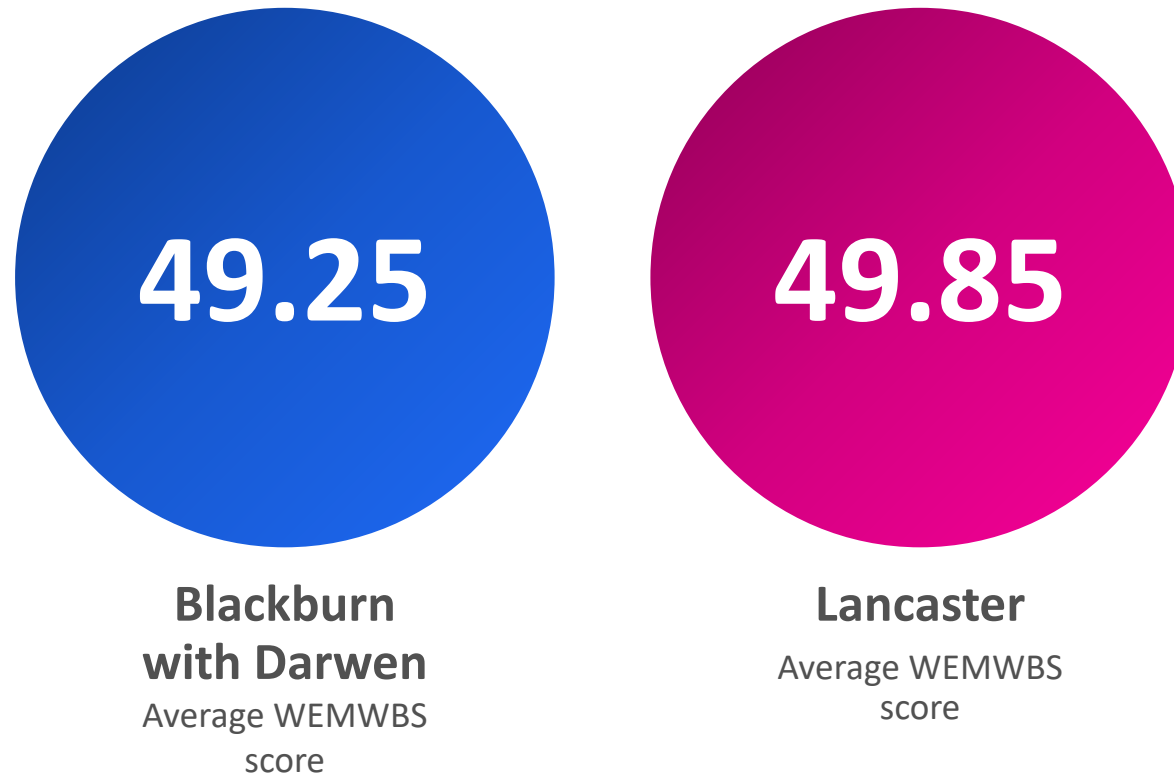
Further information about how to score, analyse and interpret WEMWBS can be found here:

<https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/sci/med/research/platform/wemwbs/using/howto/>

©University of Warwick, 2006, all rights reserved. WEMWBS was developed by the Universities of Warwick, Edinburgh and Leeds in conjunction with NHS Health Scotland

Despite there being no significant difference in WEMWBS score – Lancaster residents are significantly more likely to feel a number of positive attributes “often”

#### WEMWBS scores



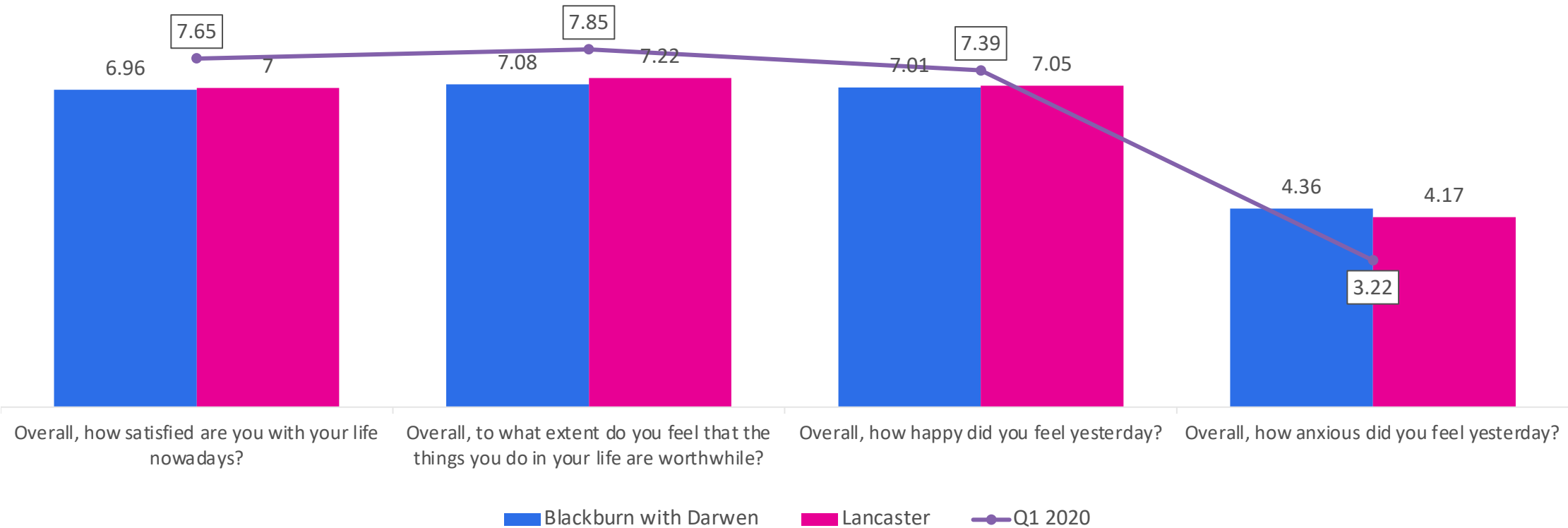
#### Analysis

Despite there being no significant difference in total WEMWBS score, Lancaster residents are significantly more likely to say they feel the following “often” (among those who answered):

- Optimistic about the future (36% cf. 30%)
- Useful (41% cf. 36%)
- Good about themselves (40% cf. 35%)
- Close to other people (37% cf. 32%)
- Able to make up their own mind about things (45%)
- Cheerful (44% cf. 37%)

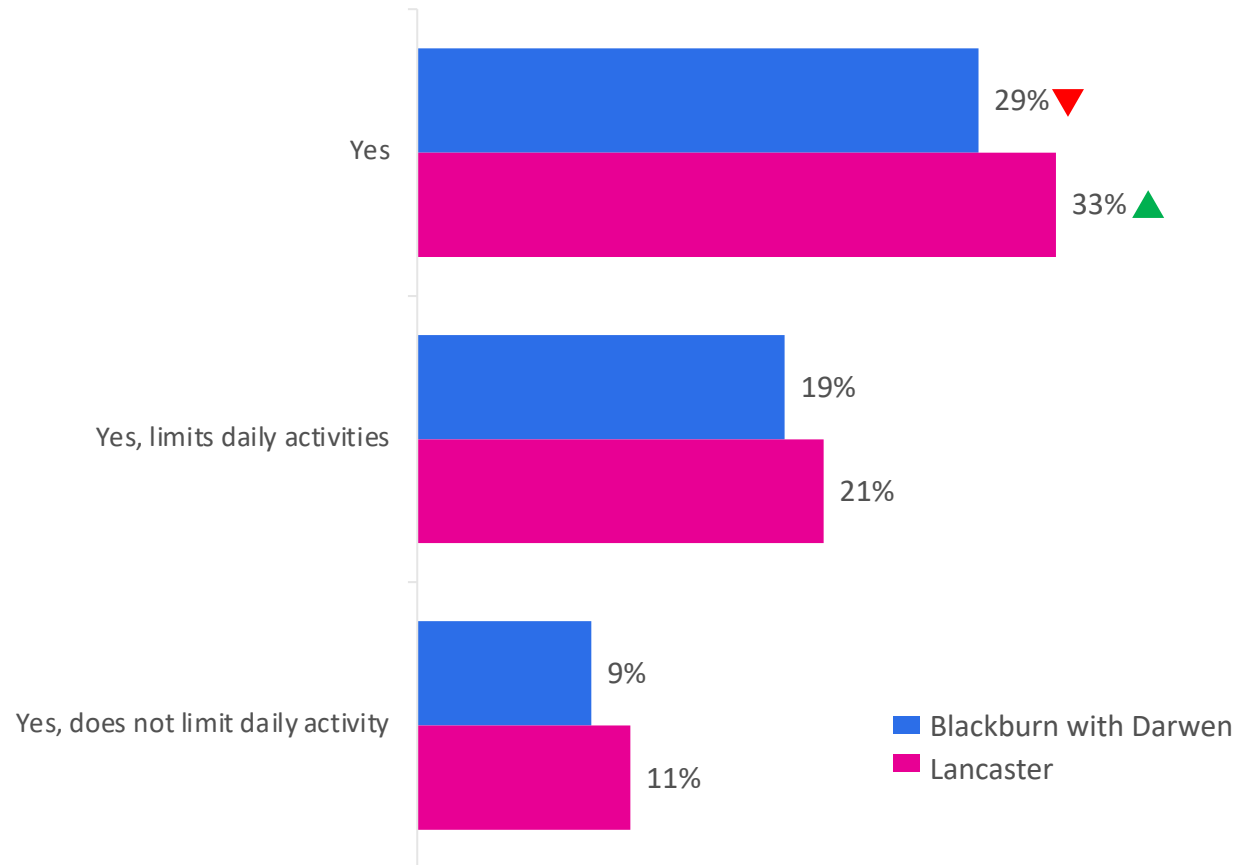
Both districts fall slightly below the UK average for personal well-being – although the last measure was from the beginning of 2020

Feelings about aspects of life (mean score)



# Lancaster residents are significantly more likely to have a condition or illness expecting to last 12 months or more – this could be due to the higher average age of residents

Whether has condition or illness expecting to last 12 months or more

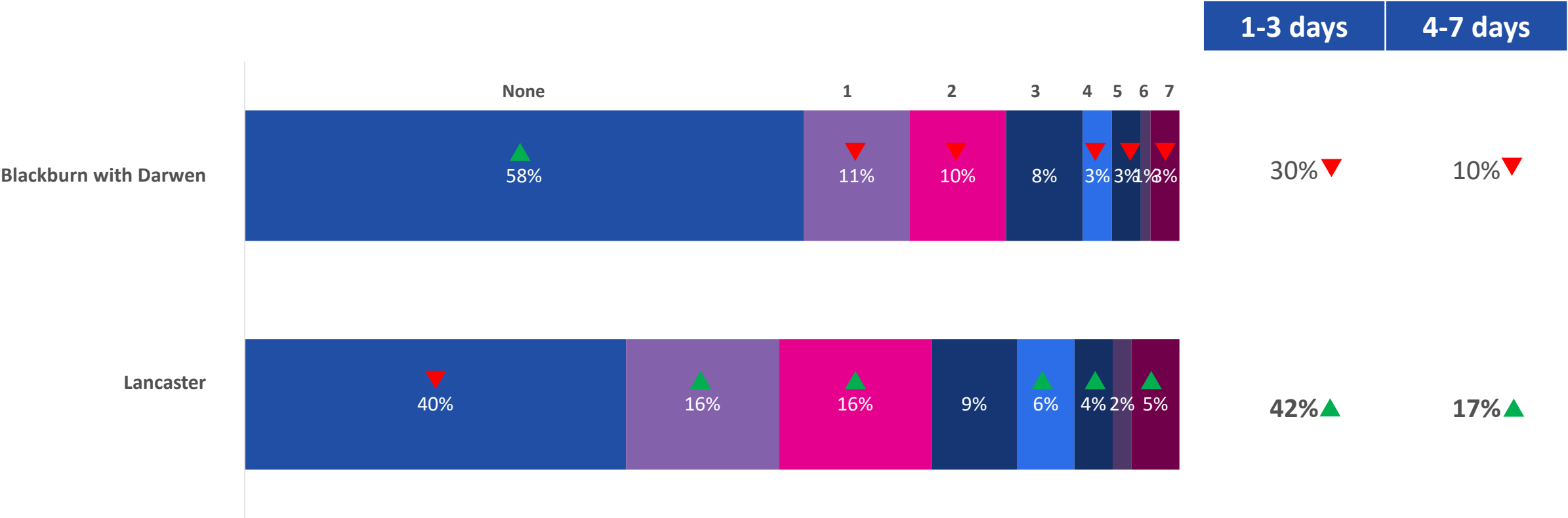


**Yes, limits daily activities**  
Over-indexing groups (across both districts)

- 65+ (28%)
- Female (23%)
- White (22%)
- Most deprived IMD quintile (30%)
- Those not working (32%)
- Those with no qualifications (30%)
- Those without children in the household (23%)
- Those who rent/ part rent their house (28%)

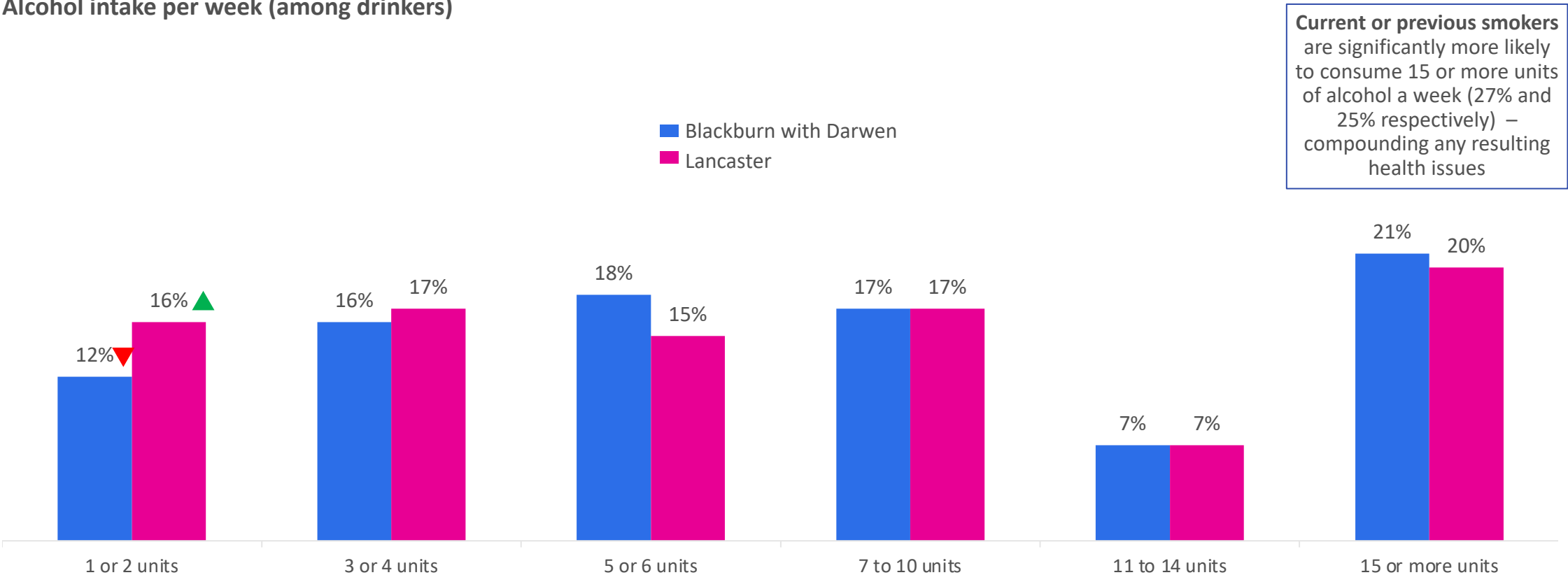
# Lancaster residents drink more often than their Blackburn with Darwen counterparts

Drinking (days a week)



While those drinking more than 7 units a week are evenly separated between districts – smokers are more likely to be high on alcohol intake

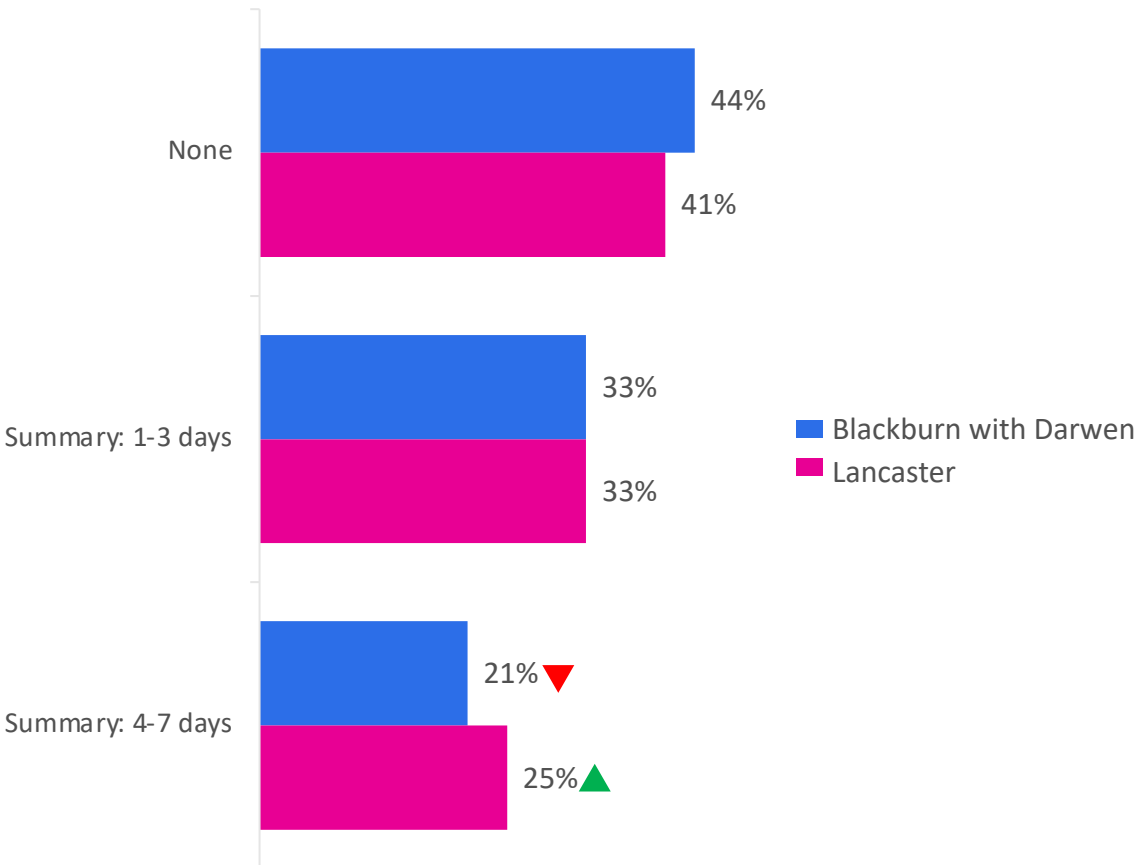
Alcohol intake per week (among drinkers)



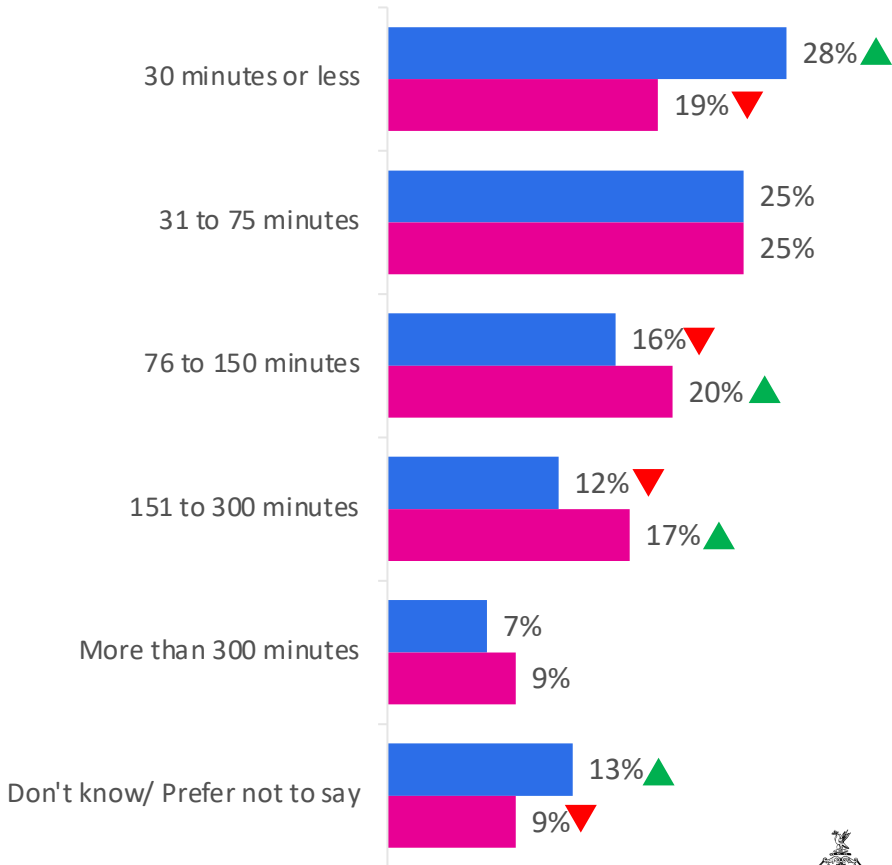


# Despite this Lancaster residents also exercise more often a week and for a greater length of time than those in Blackburn with Darwen

Exercise (days a week)

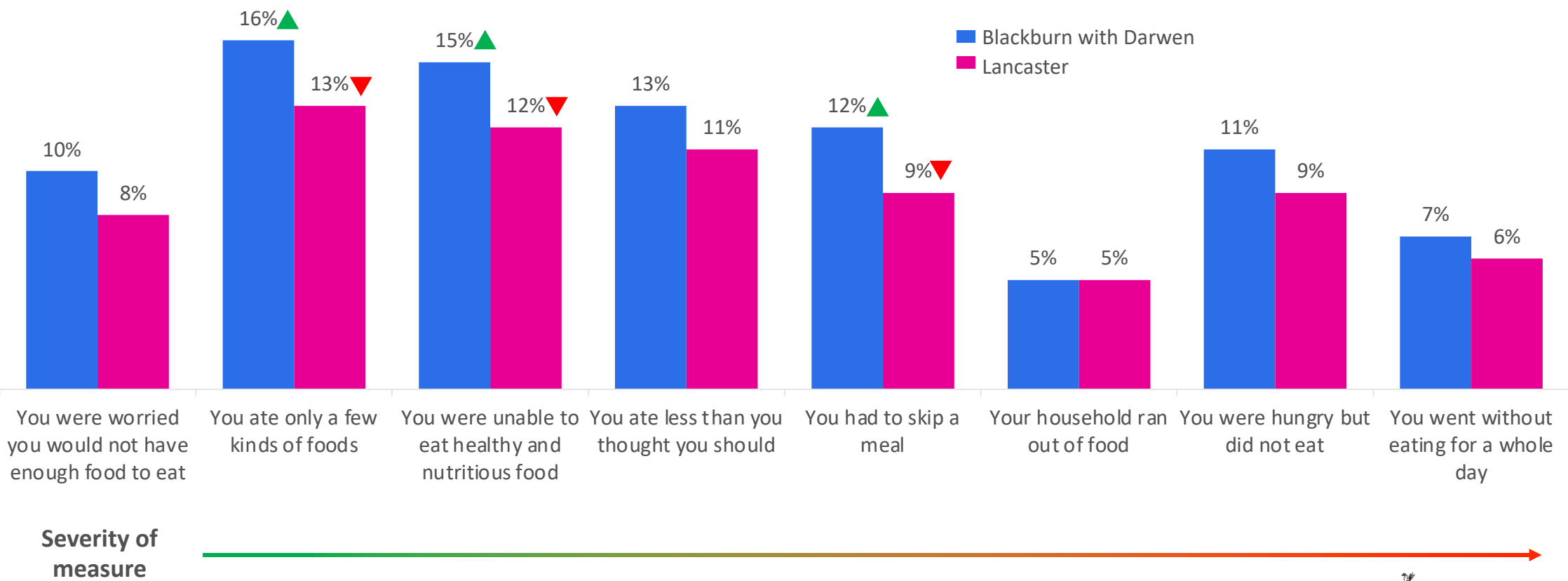


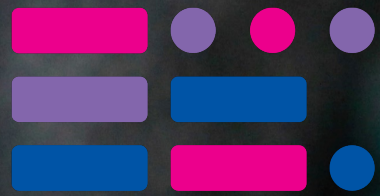
Exercise length (among those who exercise)



# Blackburn with Darwen residents are significantly more likely to be scoring on the lower rungs of the food poverty scale

% doing the following because of lack of money or resources in the last 12 months





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# Digital



## Digital summary

Despite the older age profile of Lancaster residents they are more likely to access the internet with a number of devices weekly, and have more devices per household. They also access the internet in a higher number of locations/ channels.

Lancaster residents are also more confident around key online activities, and more comfortable sharing most types of information.

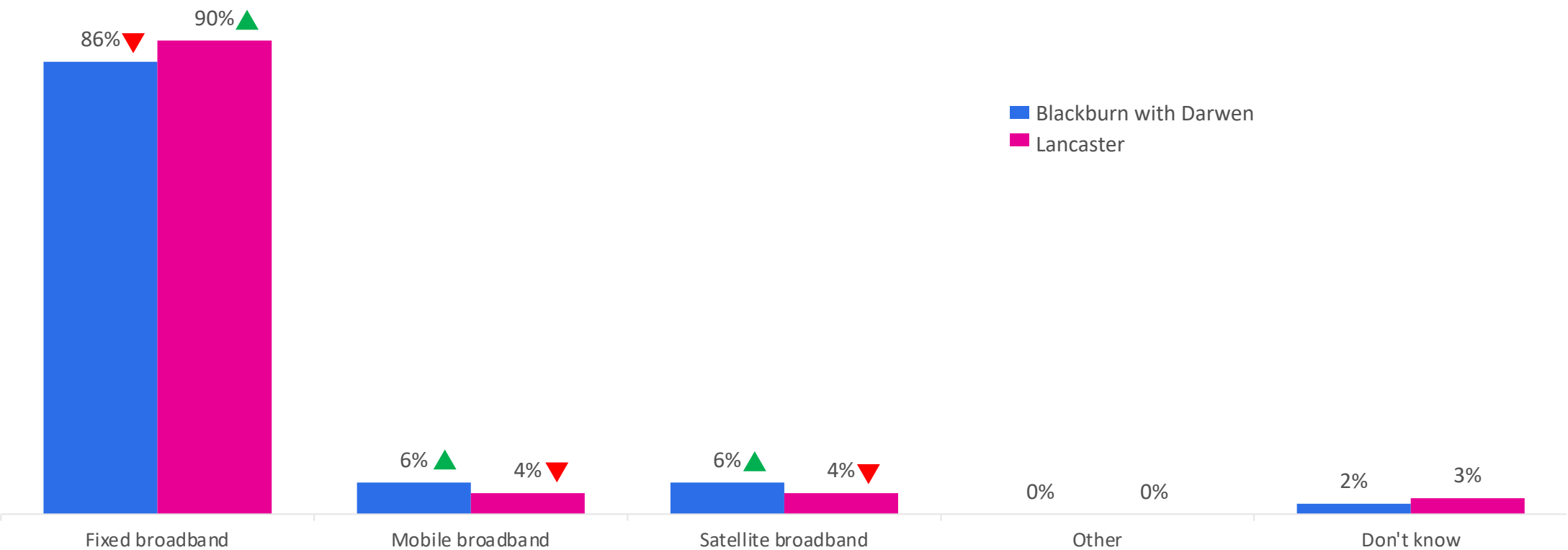
Despite this, residents from Blackburn with Darwen are actually more likely to list the council website as a source for news or information, with Lancaster residents more likely to find out by word of mouth and through social media outside of the council.

When actually using the website, Blackburn with Darwen residents are more likely to be active by making payments or reporting a problem, while Lancaster residents are more likely to find information about council services or find out about events in the local area.



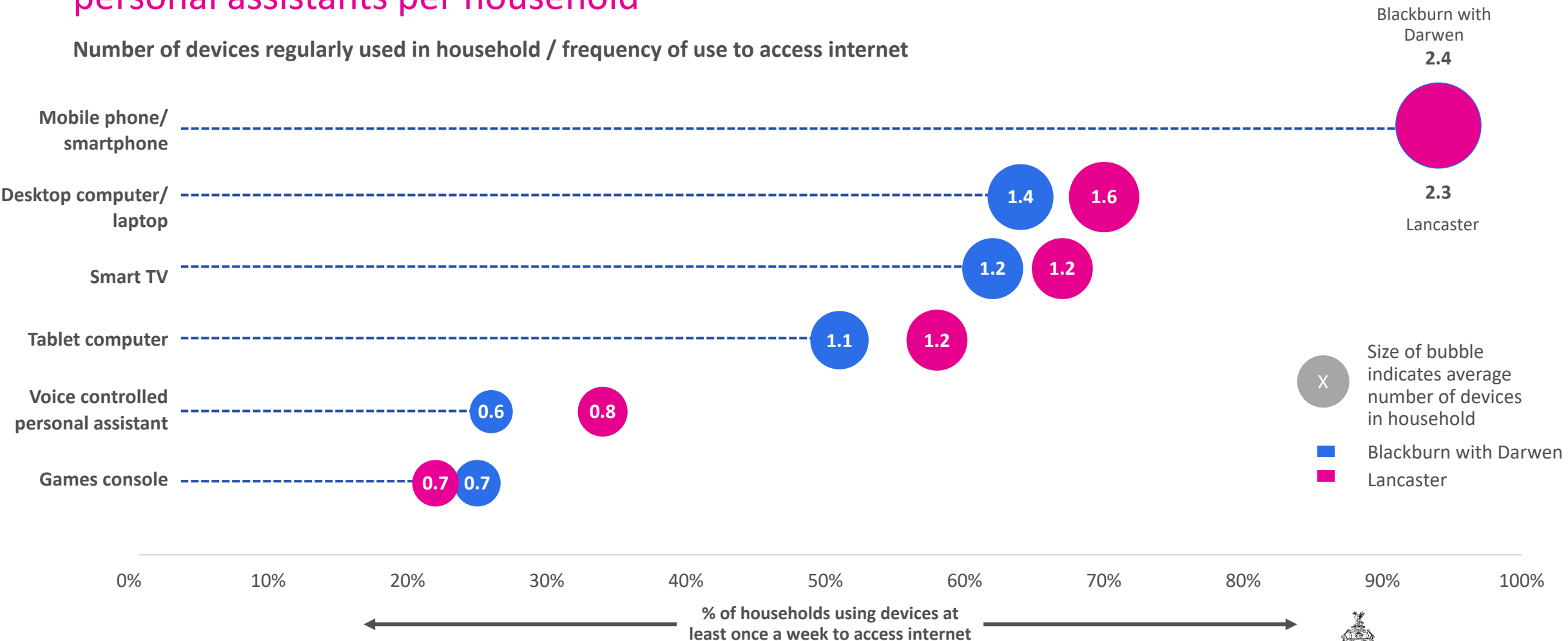
# Blackburn with Darwen residents are more likely to have mobile or satellite broadband compared to Lancaster residents

Type of internet connection (among those with internet access)



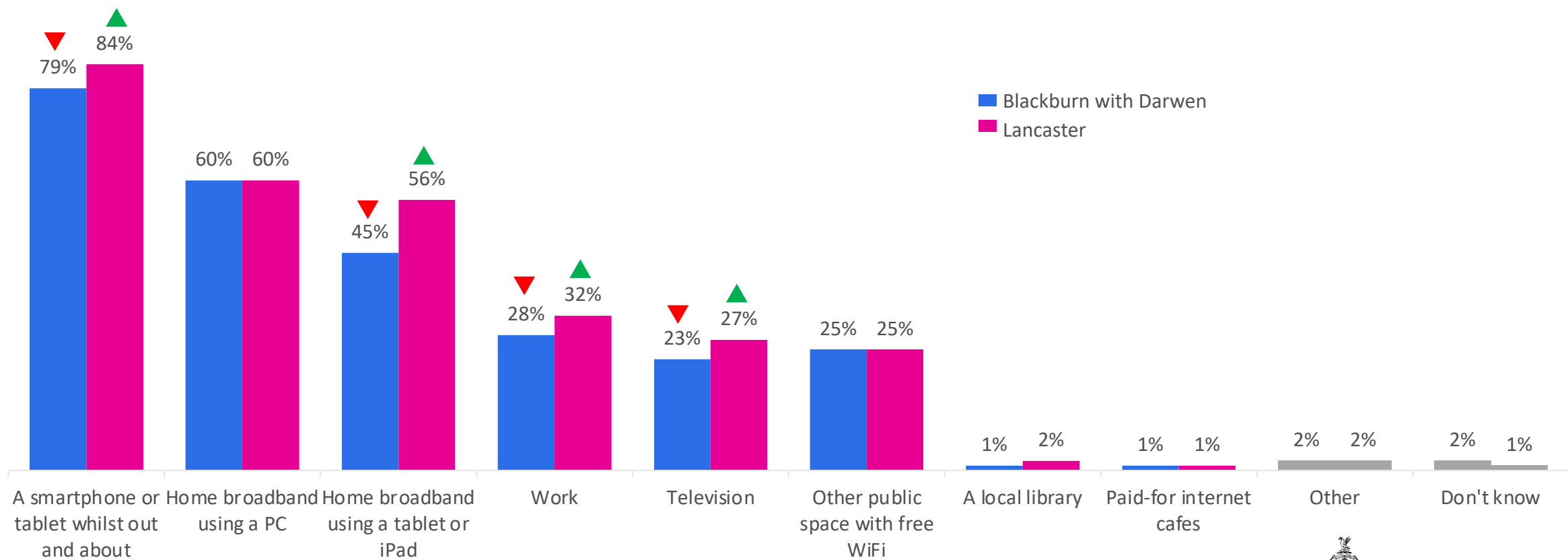


As well as using most devices more frequently to access the internet Lancaster residents are also more likely to own a higher number of computers, tablets and voice consoled personal assistants per household



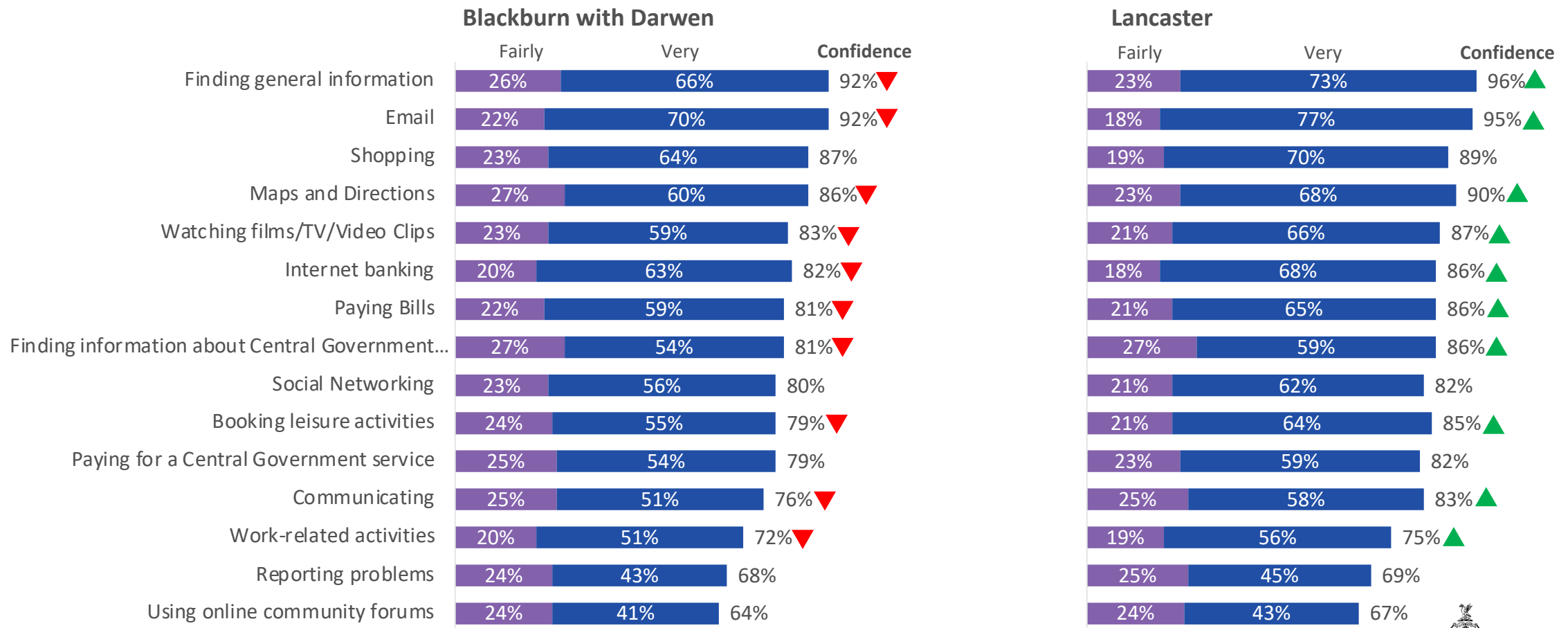
# Lancaster residents are more likely to access the internet out and about, at home using a tablet, at work and through the television

Ways of accessing the internet



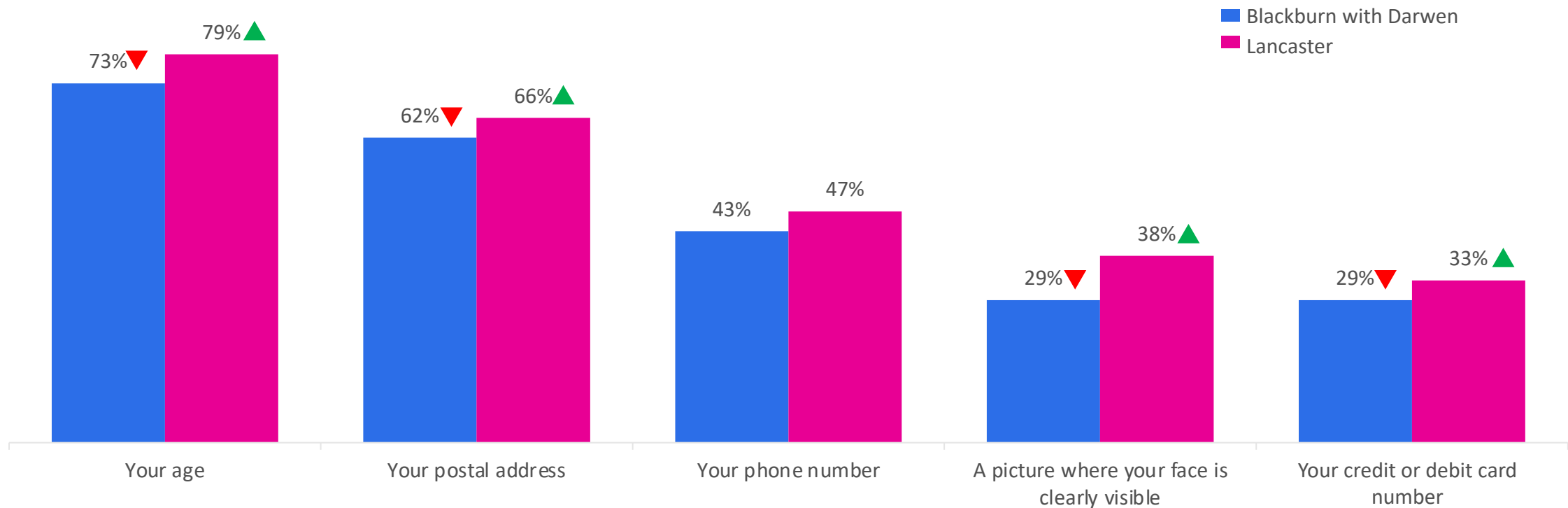
# Lancaster residents feel more confident around a number of key online activities

## Confidence in activities using the internet



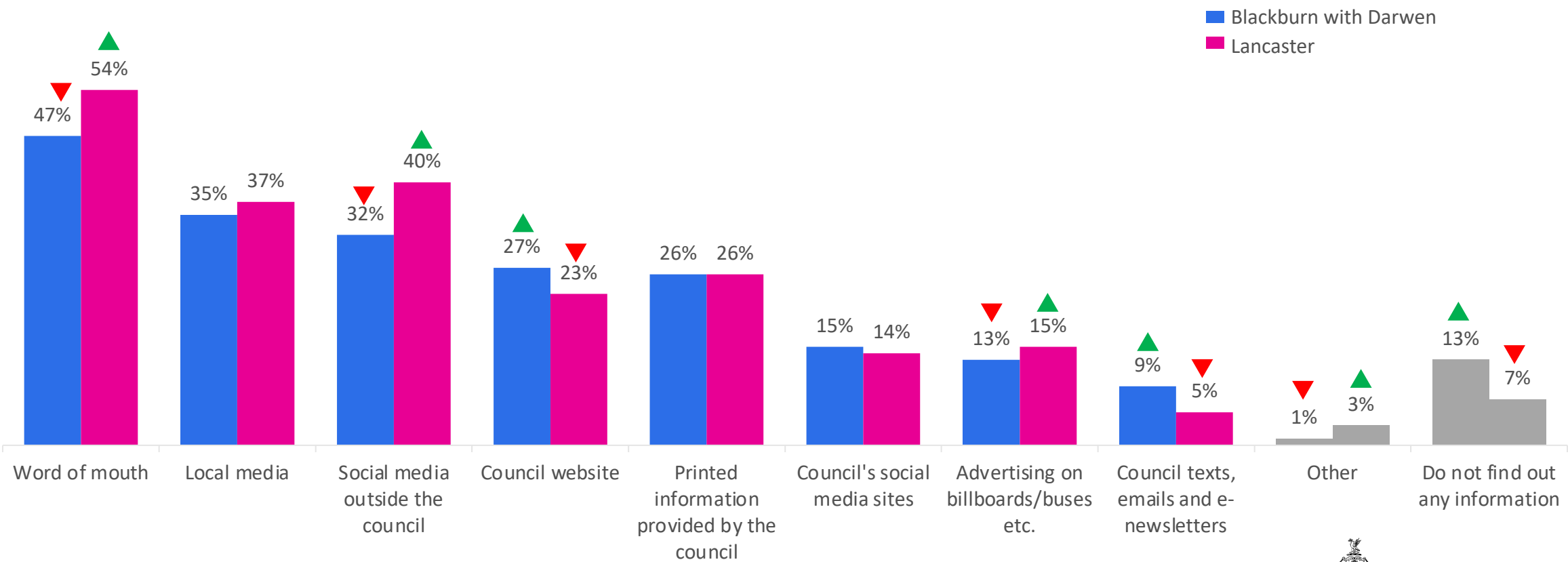
# Lancaster residents are more comfortable sharing their details online

Comfort in providing types of information online



# While word of mouth is the most popular way of finding out local news, Lancaster residents are more likely to pick up news from social media

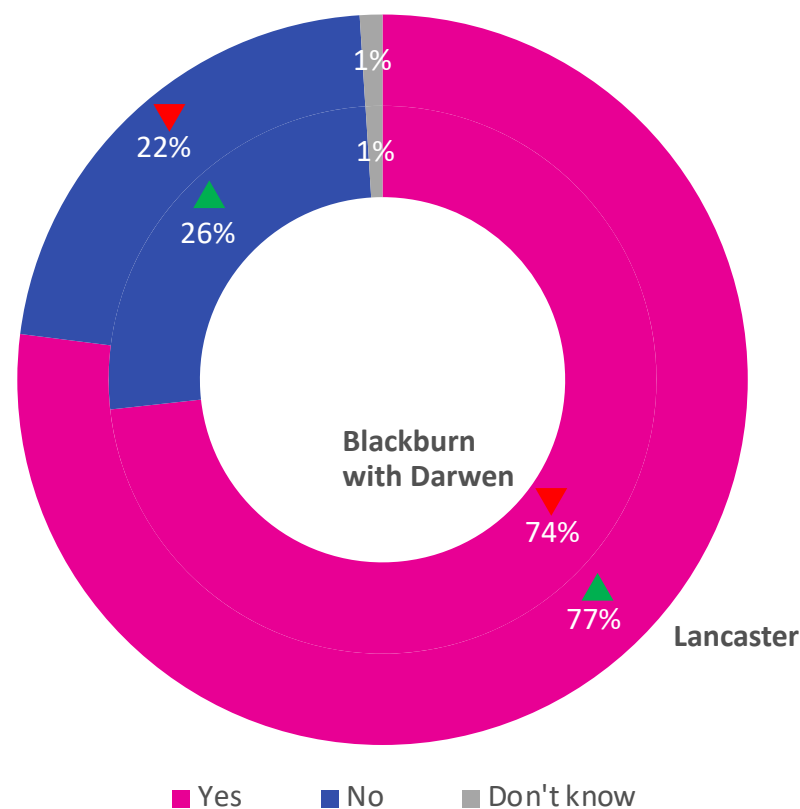
Ways of finding news/ information about things happening in local area





# Lancaster City Council website use is high among all groups – almost 8 in 10 have ever used it

% saying they have ever used local Council website

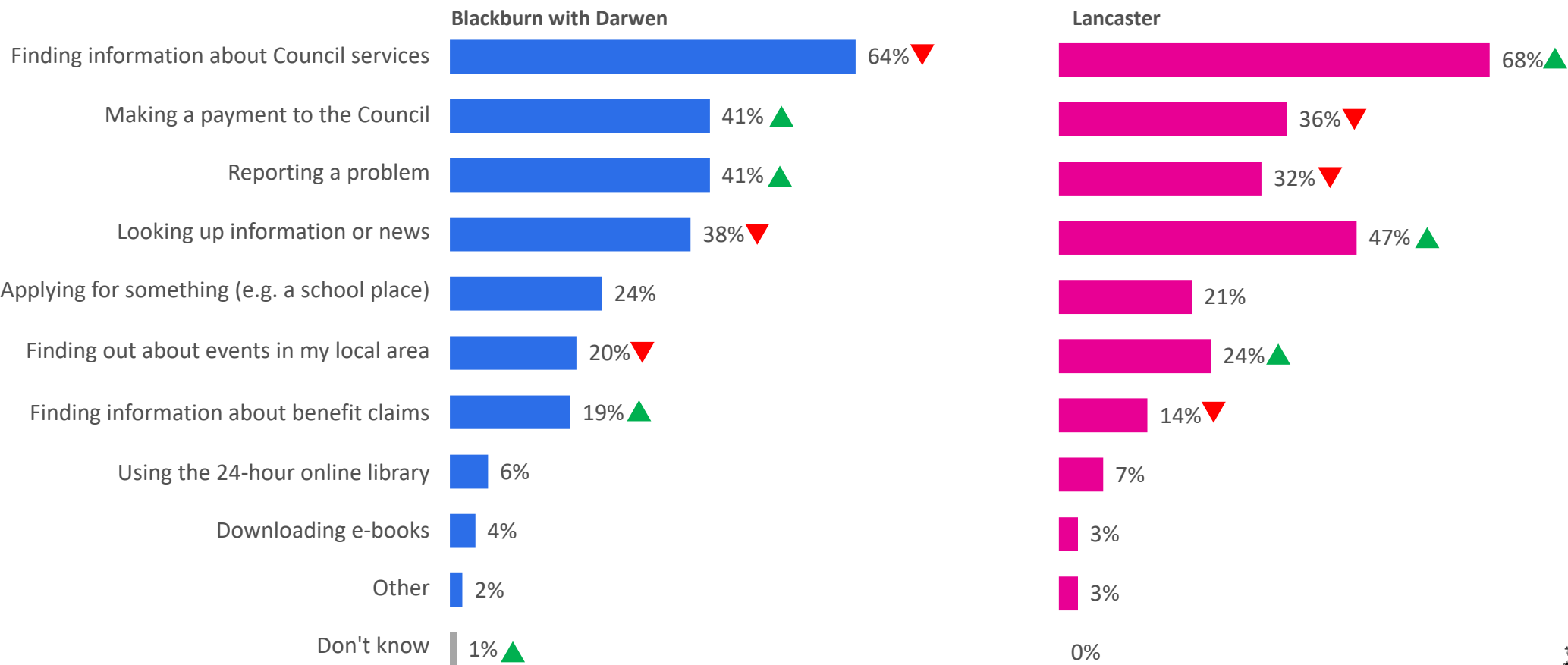


**Groups more likely to have used their council website** (in both districts)

- 35 to 64 (83%)
- Female (79%)
- White (78%)
- Working (full time, part time or self employed) (81%)
- Those with a bachelor’s degree of equivalent (89%)
- House owners (81%)
- Those who undertake vigorous activity at least once a week (81%)
- Those with physical/ mental health conditions (83%)
- Those with low mental wellbeing (84%)

# While Lancaster residents are more likely to use the website passively to find information/ news – Blackburn with Darwen residents are more likely to actively interact

## Use of council website (among users)



# Data Access Statement

- **Beyond Imagination Life Survey: Topline Reports and Case Studies**

Topline Reports of the Life Survey findings and six case studies created in collaboration with Connected Places Catapult are available to download from Lancaster University's Research Directory at: <https://doi.org/10.17635/lancaster/researchdata/547>

- **Life Survey: Data Dashboard**

A data visualisation dashboard for the Life Survey has been created in collaboration with [Connected Places Catapult](#). Access to the data dashboard is restricted to Lancaster University researchers and officers in Lancaster City Council and Blackburn with Darwen Council. Lancaster University host and manage the data dashboard with access granted on a role-based basis. Conditions for access and a password protected log on to the dashboard can be requested by emailing [lifesurvey@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:lifesurvey@lancaster.ac.uk)

- **Life Survey Dataset**

Access to the anonymised Life Survey dataset is restricted to researchers within UK universities. The dataset is available on request with an appropriate Data Access Agreement. To request access and receive further information about the dataset and conditions for access please email [lifesurvey@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:lifesurvey@lancaster.ac.uk)

- **Local Authority Officer requests to access the dataset**

An Information Sharing Agreement between ImaginationLancaster, Lancaster City Council and Blackburn with Darwen Council permitted the sharing of the Life Survey dataset with the local authorities. Access will be granted to officers on a role-based basis.

- Officers within Lancaster City Council should contact Kirsty Chekansky with dataset access requests.

Email: [kchekansky@Lancaster.gov.uk](mailto:kchekansky@Lancaster.gov.uk)

- Officers within Blackburn with Darwen Council should contact Elise Carroll with dataset access requests.

Email: [elise.carroll@blackburn.gov.uk](mailto:elise.carroll@blackburn.gov.uk)



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