

Department of Environment, Science and Innovation

Littering and Illegal Dumping

Research Report

April 2024



Queensland
Government

Summary of Findings (1)

This report is underpinned by an online survey involving 2,000 Queensland residents aged 18 and over. This is the second wave of this research, with the baseline being conducted in 2020.

ATTITUDES

The Queensland public's attitudes towards littering, illegal dumping and protecting the environment have significantly shifted over the past four years.

Compared to 2020, the public is significantly more likely to feel that their actions, such as putting rubbish in the bin and recycling, will positively affect the environment. They are also more likely to feel that waste items left behind or dumped in public places greatly impact the overall environment. The public is very intolerant of most forms of illegal dumping and has become significantly less tolerant of littering, finding most types of littering acts unacceptable.

Many of these changes are driven by a significant shift in the attitudes of males under the age of 40. This group is traditionally the least likely to be pro-environment, compared to females and those over 40, and their behaviour was the least environmentally friendly. This shift in their attitudes over the past four years is a very positive step forward.

LITTERING

Behaviour

There has been a significant decrease in all littering behaviours measured over the past four years. The frequency of littering most items has significantly declined, especially plastic items such as plastic bags, packaging, drinking straws, utensils and stirrers.

This change in littering behaviours is mainly driven by a significant change in the behaviours of males under 40.

The reduction could also be influenced by the phasing out of certain Single Use Plastic Items (SUPI) over the past four years.

Getting Caught

When it comes to what is illegal, areas of confusion include:

- The releasing of balloons at a celebration or memorial
- Food scraps

Some people feel it is reasonable to leave food waste in a park, bushland or national park because it is biodegradable. To change this behaviour, these people would need to be educated about the negative impact food scraps can have on the environment.

Fear of getting caught is not a strong deterrent, as Queenslanders do not believe people will likely be caught and fined for littering. At most, a third (31%) think someone might get caught and fined for dropping rubbish from a moving vehicle. The main motivations for not littering have remained consistent, with aesthetic and social factors being the key reasons.

ILLEGAL DUMPING

Behaviour

Significantly more people are disposing of their clothes at a charity shop or donation bin, and more are using the council kerbside collection to remove green waste. There has also been a significant increase in people disposing of bulky items through kerbside collection and selling and donating them. Very few people (2%) admit to deliberately illegally dumping.

Getting Caught

The main areas of confusion with illegal dumping include:

- Leaving household items outside a charity shop or next to a donation bin
- Leaving items on the side of the road with a 'free' sign
- Leaving furniture on the side of the road outside their homes, outside of kerbside pickup times.
- Leaving green waste in a park, bushland or national park

Summary of Findings (2)

Getting Caught (continued)

People are either unaware that these actions are against the law or do not see the harm in leaving items in these locations.

Concern about being fined for dumping illegally has significantly increased since 2020 and is now one of the main motivations for not dumping items illegally. This change is likely due to increased awareness through signage and advertising campaigns. Social factors have also significantly increased as deterrents, with not wanting someone else to have to pick it up and concerns about being seen by others being stronger motivations in 2024.

Interestingly, while people are more concerned about being fined, around half of Queenslanders feel people are unlikely to be caught. It is important to inform the public not only that fines apply but also that they are being imposed.

REPORTING

The public's knowledge of what can be reported and who to report to is low. Less than half of Queenslanders know that they can report incidences of littering from a vehicle (37%) or report illegal dumping without the vehicle details (33%). Few people surveyed are aware that fines are issued based on reports provided by the public (20%).

People are confused about who to report incidents to, with many assuming they should report littering or illegal dumping to their local council.

Regarding reporting tools, most people would prefer to report via an online tool (59%), followed by an app (46%). Awareness of the Littering and Illegal Dumping Online Reporting (LIDORS) is low, with only one in ten (9%) currently aware of the tool.

Reporting Littering

Since 2020, significantly more people have considered reporting a littering act (44%). However, fewer have actually made a report (7%).

Barriers include a lack of knowledge of how to report an offence (49%), being unable to obtain details at the time (48%) and feeling that nothing will happen if a report is made (38%). This last one is understandable, given that few people are aware that fines are issued based on reports from the public. Most people (78%) who reported an incident were unaware of this.

While many say they are likely to report littering (74%), most are selective about what actions they consider reportable. Around three in five are likely to report someone flicking a cigarette butt onto the road, footpath or gutter (61%) or someone emptying their car waste onto a car park or roadside (58%). People are less likely to report other littering actions, such as leaving rubbish behind on a public picnic table, chair or bench (23%) or at an event, stadium or concert (16%). People are very unlikely to report littering relating to food scraps in a park (8%), bushland or national park (7%).

Reporting Illegal Dumping

As with littering, significantly more people have previously considered reporting dumping (43%) since 2020. Barriers to reporting include being unable to obtain details about the offender at the time (48%), not knowing how to report the offence (48%) and feeling that nothing will happen if a report is made (36%).

The public views dumping as more severe than littering, and most (96%) are likely to make a report if they see someone dumping illegally. Actions people are the most likely to report include the dumping of tyres, chemical drums and paint tins, and someone leaving household goods in a park, bushland or national park. The public is less likely to report someone leaving household goods on the side of the road, car park or footpath (54%), green waste being dumped in a park (35%), bushland or national park (36%) or someone leaving goods beside a charity donation bin or outside a charity shop (22%).

Recommendations: Littering

Leverage the public's concerns about the environment to promote responsible waste disposal.

Relying on fines to deter littering will be challenging. Many people perceive the likelihood of someone being fined as low, and they are unlikely to report others for littering. Emphasising the importance of protecting the environment and how littering can be harmful may be a more promising approach to changing behaviour.

Leverage the social norms around the unacceptability of littering to promote responsible waste disposal.

Along with environmental concerns, there is strong social disapproval towards people who litter. This behaviour is seen as unacceptable, and this could be leveraged to encourage people to do the right thing.

Increase awareness of what is illegal and educate the public about how these actions harm the environment at the same time.

Merely increasing awareness that certain acts are illegal may not sufficiently alter behaviour. Educating the public on how these actions harm the environment is also important. Without a clear understanding of the harm they may be causing, people will be less motivated to cease their littering habits.

Increase awareness and educate people about placing litter beside an overflowing bin.

People are confused about whether putting litter next to an overflowing bin is illegal, with half (48%) thinking it is not. They also feel that people are unlikely to be fined for this action. Informing the public that close enough is not good enough and educating them on how their litter can travel into the environment may assist in changing this behaviour. It may also be beneficial to provide suggestions on what people can do if they come across an overflowing bin in their area.

Increase awareness and education about food scraps.

Food scraps are one of the most littered items, with one in five (22%) occasionally leaving food scraps in public places and a quarter (26%) saying they would leave food waste in a park, bushland, or national park because it is biodegradable. Educating people on the negative impact leaving food scraps can have on the environment may help to change this behaviour.

Increase awareness about the illegalities of releasing balloons at celebrations or memorials.

This is less of a priority as few people are littering this way.

Recommendations: Illegal Dumping

Continue to raise awareness of illegal dumping and the fines that apply.

The illegal dumping campaign has been reasonably successful in increasing concerns about being fined for dumping illegally and raising awareness about certain actions being against the law.

Increase awareness and education on dumping actions that the public is confused about.

The public is unsure about the illegality of certain actions, including:

- Leaving household items outside a charity shop or next to a charity donation bin
- Leaving items on the side of the road with a 'free' sign
- Leaving furniture on the side of the road outside the home (outside of kerbside pickup times)

Discouraging these behaviours may be challenging as people are likely to feel they are doing the right thing by donating their items. These actions are also considered more acceptable than other dumping behaviour and people are unlikely to report them. In fact, people may not even consider these actions to be a form of illegal dumping.

To change these behaviours, it is crucial that the public understands not only that they are illegal and the fines that apply but also the harm they can cause to the environment. Emphasising the environmental impact may encourage some people to reconsider their actions.

Increase education about the dumping of green waste.

Most people know that dumping large amounts of green waste in a park, bushland, or national park is illegal. However, like food scraps, some are unsure why dumping green waste is harmful to the environment. Education in this area may help increase the public's aversion to this practice and their likelihood of reporting it.

Capitalise on concerns about the environment and social norms around the unacceptability of dumping to promote responsible disposal.

The public's concern for the environment is very high, and there is very strong social disapproval towards people who dump illegally. This behaviour is considered extremely unacceptable, and the public's passion could be leveraged to encourage them to do the right thing and dispose of their waste legally.

Recommendations: Reporting

Capitalise on concerns about the environment and social norms around the unacceptability of dumping to encourage reporting.

As well as leveraging the public's strong disapproval of illegal dumping to prevent the action, this passion could potentially be capitalised on to encourage people to report illegal dumping as well.

Educate the public on what can be reported.

The public has limited knowledge of what can be reported and one of the main barriers is feeling that not enough information could be gathered to report the incident. Raise awareness that vehicle details are not needed to report illegal dumping and that people can report piles of dumped waste in a public place without knowing who put it there. Educate people about the minimum information needed to report an illegal act.

Education the public on who to report to and how.

People are confused about who to report incidents to, with many assuming they should report to their local council. Increasing awareness of LIDORS may help, as very few know about the tool. Most people would prefer to report using an online tool, so LIDORS is well positioned.

Make it easy for people to report when they are out and about.

Consider developing an app that complements the online tool and makes it easy for people to report incidents while they are out in public.

Assure people that action will be taken based on their reports.

Another barrier to reporting involves feeling that nothing will happen if a report is made. While increasing awareness that fines are issued based on reports from the public may address this, conversely it may also result in others shying away from reporting.

Inform the public that people are being caught and fined.

While people are more concerned about being fined, around half still feel people are unlikely to be caught for illegal dumping. It is important to inform the public, not only that fines apply, but also that they are being imposed. Increasing the public's awareness of the number of people caught and fined may further deter people and help to demonstrate that action is being taken.

Address concerns about retribution and offenders finding out who reported them.

Some people hesitate to report because they fear retribution from those committing the act. The public needs to be reassured of their safety and that their involvement will not be known to the offender in any way.

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Report Overview & Interpretation

RESEARCH BACKGROUND & OBJECTIVES

The Department of Environment, Sciences and Innovation (DES) has previously undertaken surveys of the public to determine their attitudes towards general waste management and, more specifically, elements associated with litter and illegal dumping.

In 2020, targeted research on litter and illegal dumping was conducted with the Queensland adult public to determine their knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes towards littering and illegal dumping.

This work was undertaken in part to support the development of Keeping Queensland Clean: the Litter and Illegal Dumping Plan, an awareness and education campaign designed to reduce the incidence of littering and illegal dumping.

The research covered in this report involves a Queensland-wide survey that will allow the department to identify any changes in knowledge or attitudes. A firm understanding of Queenslanders' current attitudes and awareness towards littering, illegal dumping, and community-based reporting will assist with building effective community-focused messages and campaigns.

METHODOLOGY & SAMPLE

An online survey of n=2000 Queensland adult residents was conducted between March 7 and 15, 2024. To ensure the sample was representative of the Queensland population, demographic quotas were applied on age, gender and location.

The data was subsequently weighted to reflect the distribution of gender, age, and location in Queensland based on the 2021 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) census data.

GENERAL INTERPRETATION

Please note the following when interpreting this report.

- Where questions do not sum to 100%, this is due either to rounding or multiple responses.
- In some cases, results <5% have been excluded from charts to assist in emphasising the important information.
- Please be cautious in interpreting data with base sizes of < 30.
- The base note included at the bottom of each slide represents the sample size (the number of participants who have answered the relevant question) as well as the question/s asked.

SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES

A statistically significant difference is one that is large enough to be a 'real' difference and not just a by-product of the margin of error associated with the sample size of surveys completed.

Impactful significant differences have been outlined on the relevant charts and are indicated as shown below:

GREEN figures are significantly greater than RED figures

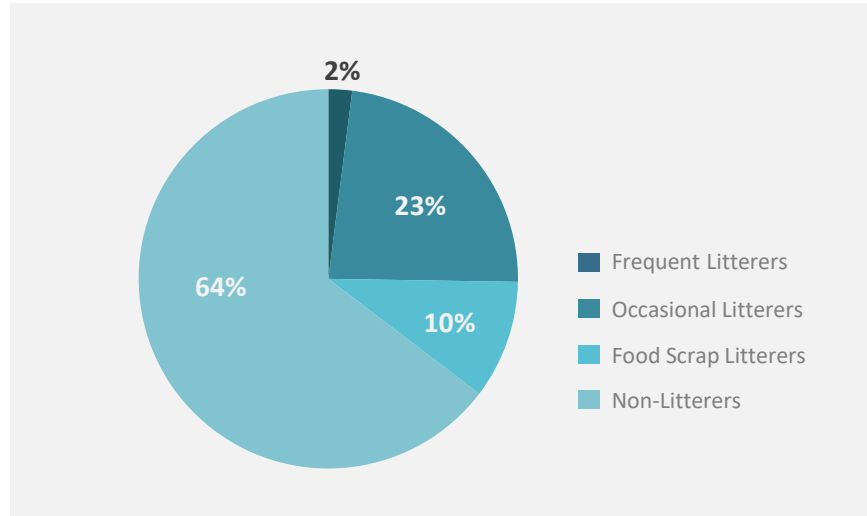
- ▲ figures are significantly greater than previous wave
- ▼ figures are significantly lower than previous wave

Litterer & Illegal Dumper Profiles

Litterers Profiles

Litterers Profile

Overall, 2% of the Queensland population are Frequent Litterers, a significant decline from 2020. A quarter (23%) are Occasional Litterers, whilst one in ten (10%) are Food Scrap Litterers. Two-thirds of Queenslanders (64%) claim they do not litter, which has significantly increased over the past four years.



Frequent Litterers (2%)

Frequently disposing of small waste items without placing them in the bin (excluding only food scraps).

Occasional Litterers (23%)

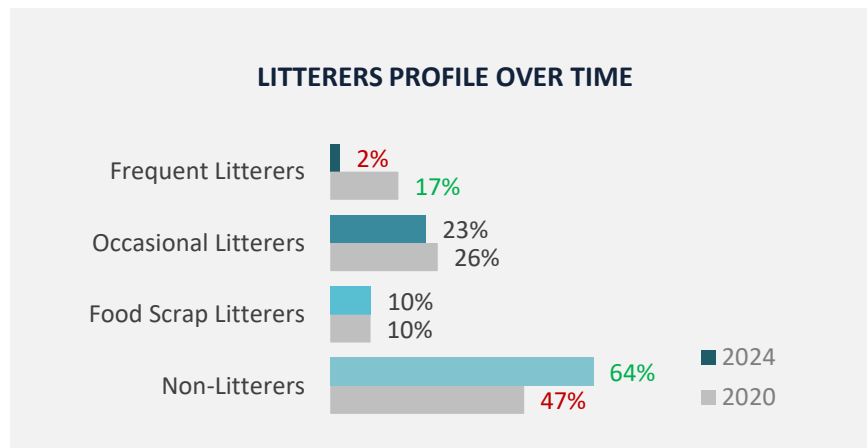
Occasionally disposing of small waste items without placing them in the bin, but not frequently (excluding only food scraps).

Food Scraps Litterers (10%)

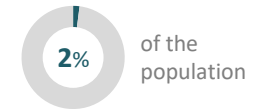
Occasionally or frequently disposing of food scraps without placing them in the bin, but not any other waste items.

Non-Litterers (64%)

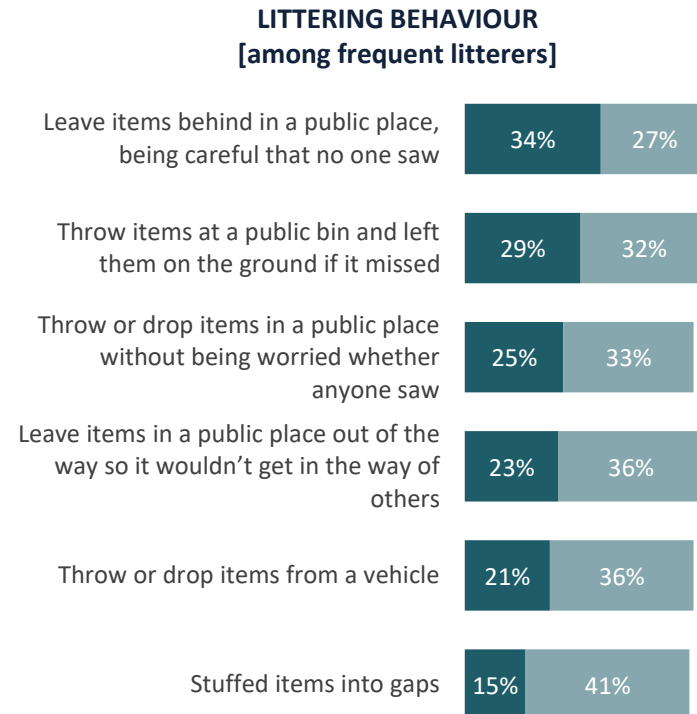
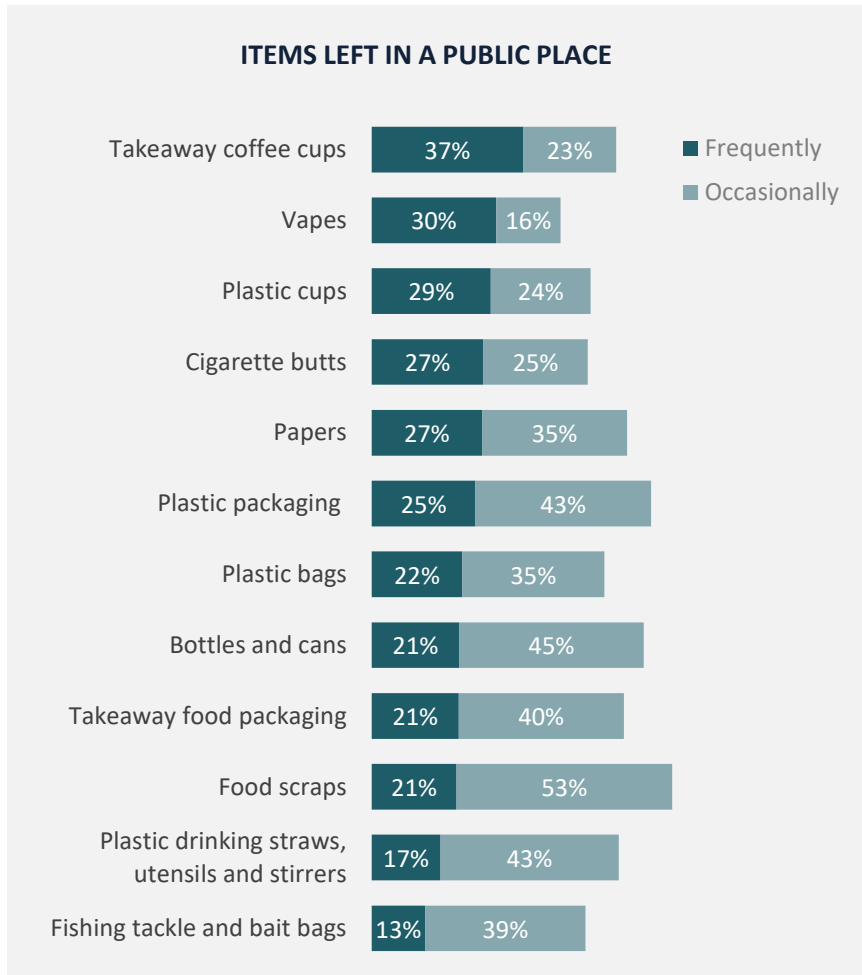
Do not dispose of any small waste items illegally.



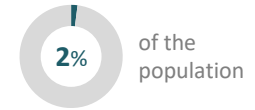
Profile: Frequent Litterers (1)



A third of the Frequent Litterers group frequently leaves waste items behind in a public place, being careful that no one sees (34%), or throws or drops items in a public place without being worried whether anyone sees (29%). Takeaway coffee cups (37%), vapes (30%), and plastic cups (29%) are the items that are most frequently incorrectly disposed of.



Profile: Frequent Litterers (2)



This group's reasons for littering are mixed. Some just do not care or are lazy, some do not think what they are doing is wrong, and others do not feel that their littering will make much of a difference when others are doing much worse to the environment, or on a larger scale.

Attitudes

Most of this group understand the negative consequences littering has on the environment (68%), and many believe that recycling and putting their rubbish in the bin can make a positive impact (82%).

They are significantly less likely to find some littering behaviours unacceptable, and a reasonable proportion feel the following is acceptable:

- Leaving behind fishing tackle in fishing spots (41%)
- Putting rubbish beside an overflowing public bin (40%)
- Dropping cigarette butts out of a vehicle (35%)
- Leaving rubbish under the seat at a cinema or sports stadium (33%)
- Leaving food scraps in a park (32%)

Motivation

Social and aesthetic concerns are less likely to deter this group from littering than other types of littering groups and worries about being fined are unlikely to discourage them.

Getting Caught

Interestingly, this group is more likely to think that someone can get caught for littering. This is possibly because some people in this group have been fined for littering in the past.

Reporting

Another point of interest is that this group is significantly more likely to have reported littering acts (25%) and have significantly higher awareness of the LIDORS online tool (38%). This may be explained by some of this group having received a fine in the past and, therefore, being more aware of the reporting system.

Demographics

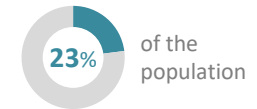
This group is more likely to be male (65%) and under 40 (64%).

How to Target

It will be a challenge to change the behaviour of some people in this group. For many, external pressure, rather than internal, may be the only option. Their concern for the environment is unlikely to persuade them to change and being fined may be the only way to get them to reconsider their actions.

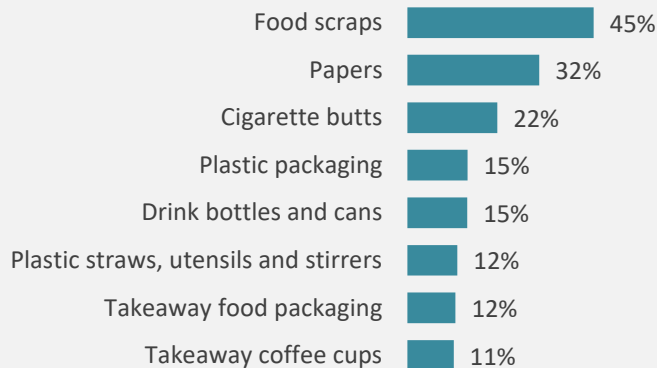
It may also be advantageous to inform this group of the number of people fined in the past year, showing them that people are getting caught and fines are being issued.

Profile: Occasional Litterers



Occasional Litterers litter every now and then when they are in a rush, have their hands full or are not paying attention to what they are doing. They know it is wrong, but something else is more important at the time.

ITEMS OCCASIONALLY LEFT IN A PUBLIC PLACE



OCCASIONAL LITTERING BEHAVIOUR

- 22%** Throw items at a public bin and leave it on the ground if it misses
- 21%** Throw or drop items from a vehicle
- 19%** Leave items in a public place out of the way so it won't get in the way of others
- 17%** Leave items behind in a public place, being careful that no one sees
- 14%** Stuff waste items into gaps
- 12%** Throw or drop items in a public place without being worried whether anyone saw you

Attitudes

These people find most littering unacceptable, but they are a little more accepting of someone placing rubbish beside an overflowing public bin.

They understand that littering has a big negative impact on the environment (79%) and believe they can make a positive impact by recycling and putting their rubbish in the bin (90%).

Motivation

Their main motivations for not littering include not wanting to ruin the aesthetic appeal of the public space (80%) and not wanting others to have to pick it up (75%). Concerns about being fined are only a deterrent for about half of these people (55%).

Getting Caught

Few feel that someone is likely to get fined for littering. At the most a third (34%) think people are likely to get caught and fined dropping rubbish out of a vehicle. Less than half think leaving rubbish beside a public bin if the bin is full is illegal (43%).

Reporting

Few in this group have reported littering in the past (6%), although some have considered it (41%). Their likelihood to report littering and their barriers to reporting are similar to most Queenslanders.

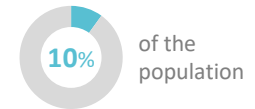
Demographics

A mix of genders. Half (50%) are under 40.

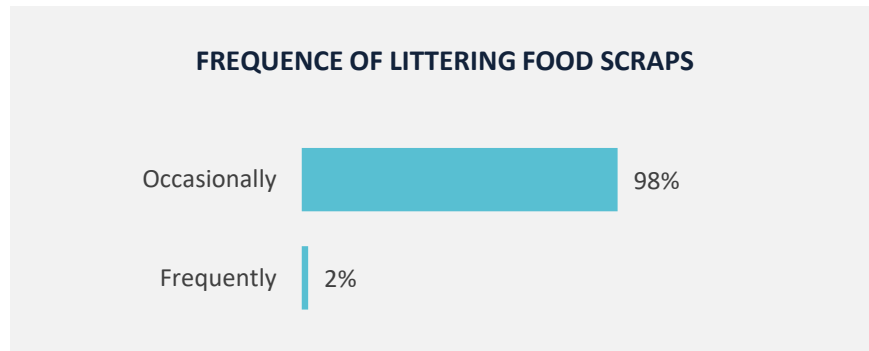
How to Target

This group cares about protecting the environment, and this could be leveraged to encourage them to think about their actions. Emphasizing that even the smallest amount of litter can cause harm, or that if everyone brushes off a small amount of littering that equates to a lot of environmental waste, may persuade this group to think twice. Concerns about fines are unlikely to result in behaviour change as these people do not think they are the problem.

Profile: Food Scraps Litterers



This group's only littering behaviour is leaving behind food scraps in public places, without placing them in the bin. This is because they believe these items are biodegradable and not harmful to the environment.



Attitudes

These people comprehend the negative consequences littering in general has on the environment (87%) and believe that recycling and putting their rubbish in the bin can make a positive impact (94%).

They find most littering unacceptable but are a little more tolerant of someone placing rubbish beside an overflowing public bin and leaving food scraps in a park, bushland or national park.

Motivation

Their main motivations for not littering include not wanting others to have to pick it up (86%) and not wanting to ruin the aesthetic appeal of the public space (78%). Concerns about fines are only a deterrent for half of these people (51%).

Half (56%) feel comfortable leaving food waste in a park, bushland or national park because it is biodegradable.

Getting Caught

Few feel that people are likely to be fined for littering. At most, a quarter (27%) think people are likely to get caught and fined for dropping rubbish out of a vehicle.

Only half (47%) think it is illegal to leave rubbish beside a public bin if it is full.

Reporting

Few in this group have reported littering in the past (3%), although almost half have considered it (48%). Their likelihood to report littering and their barriers to reporting are similar to the majority of Queenslanders.

Demographics

A mix of genders. Half (51%) are under 40.

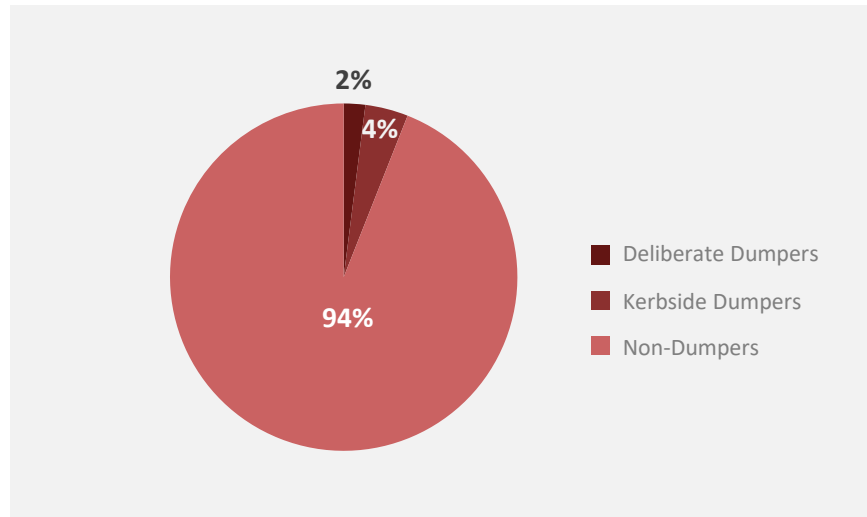
How to Target

Education is the key for this group. If they learn that leaving food scraps behind harms the environment, they are likely to rethink their actions.

Dumpers Profiles

Illegal Dumpers Profile

Overall, 2% of the Queensland population are Deliberate Dumpers, and 4% are Kerbside Dumpers, which is a significant decline from 2020. Most Queenslanders (94%) report not dumping any waste illegally, a figure that has significantly increased in the past four years.



Deliberate Dumpers (2%)

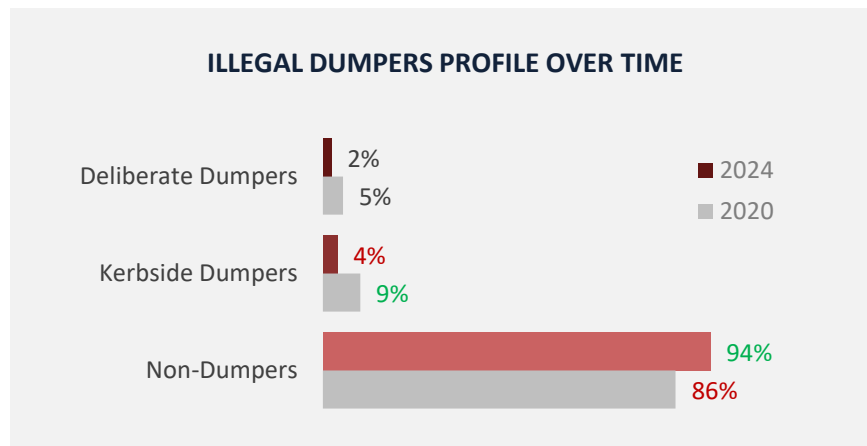
Dispose of large waste volumes or items by dumping them in a public place, on someone else's land, or the side of the road (not outside their house).

Kerbside Dumpers (4%)

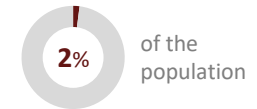
Dispose of large waste volumes or items on the kerb outside their house (outside of the designated council collection periods), but do not undertake any other illegal dumping behaviours.

Non-Dumpers (94%)

Do not dispose of large waste volumes or items illegally.



Profile: Deliberate Dumpers



Most feel it is easy to take waste to their nearest landfill, rubbish tip or transfer station (72%) and their awareness of waste services is in line with the rest of the population. These do not appear to be barriers to them disposing of their waste correctly.

Motivation

This group is more likely to leave large volumes of waste in a public place because of the cost of taking it to the rubbish tip (37%) or because they know it will not damage the environment (35%).

Fines are somewhat of a deterrent as three in five (58%) will not leave large volumes of waste in a public place because they would be worried about being fined.

Getting Caught

Few think leaving green waste in a park (25%), bushland or national park (35%) is illegal.

Less than half feel that people are likely to get fined for leaving large waste items in a business' rubbish bin (41%) or leaving large waste items in a park (40%).

Reporting

Several members of this group have reported littering in the past (19%), and half have considered it (54%). They also have significantly higher awareness of the LIDORS online tool (29%) than other Dumper groups.

This group are significantly less likely to report illegal dumping because they do not see it as a problem (22%).

Demographics

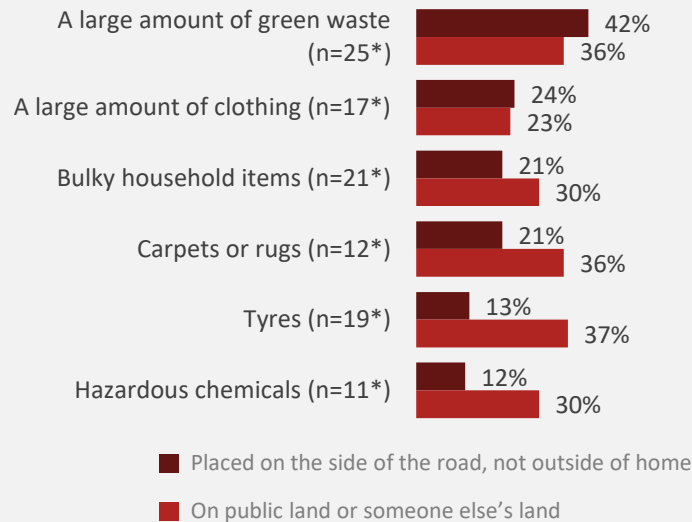
A mix of genders. Two-thirds (66%) are under 40.

How to Target

The continued advertising of the fines associated with illegal dumping is one way to discourage this group from breaking the law. It may also be beneficial to inform them of the number of people fined in the past year, demonstrating to this group that fines are actually being issued.

Education about how dumping large amounts of green waste harms the environment may also encourage some of them to rethink their actions.

ITEMS DUMPED ILLEGALLY



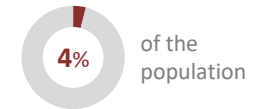
Attitudes

Most of this group understand the negative consequences items dumped in public places can have on the environment (67%), and many believe they can personally make a positive difference to the environment (90%).

They are significantly less likely to find some dumping behaviours unacceptable, and some feel the following is acceptable:

- Leaving household goods in a park (32%)
- Leaving a large amount of their household waste in a park (incl. appliances, toys, furniture) (30%)

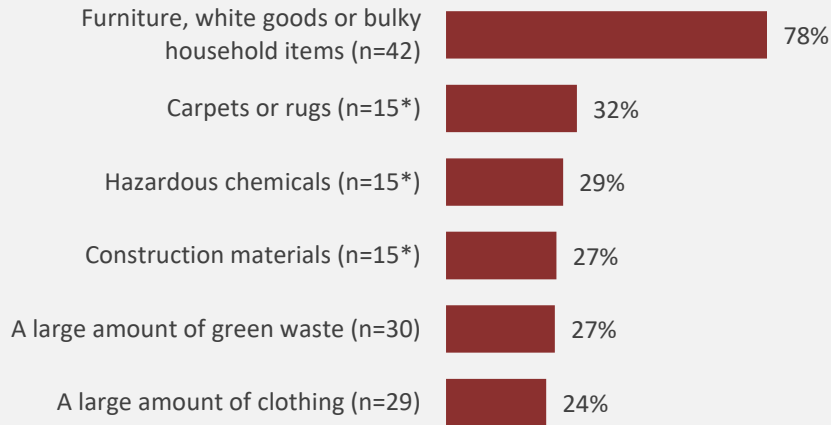
Profile: Kerbside Dumpers



Kerbside Dumpers are unintentional dumpers who do not mean to break the law or hurt the environment. They are just confused about what is considered illegal dumping. This group is trying to do the right thing and give their items another life by donating them to others instead of taking the items to the landfill.

ITEMS PLACED OUTSIDE THEIR HOUSE

[outside of the scheduled council collection]



Attitudes

Many in this group understand the negative consequences items dumped in public places can have on the environment (75%), and most believe they can personally make a positive difference (90%).

These people find most dumping unacceptable, but they are a little more accepting of someone leaving goods on the side of the road (not for scheduled collection), leaving a large amount of green waste in bushland or national park, and leaving goods beside a charity donation bin or outside a charity shop.

Motivation

Their main motivations for not dumping include social and aesthetic reasons, and concerns about being fined.

Many in this group do not think leaving furniture on the side of the road outside their home, outside of the scheduled collection periods (46%), leaving items outside a charity shop or next to a donation bin (29%), or leaving items on the side of the road with a 'free' sign (19%) is illegal.

Getting Caught

While they are concerned about fines, more than half do not feel that a person is likely to get caught and fined for illegal dumping.

Reporting

A few members of this group have reported littering in the past (16%), and some have considered doing so (40%). Their likelihood to report illegal dumping and the barriers to reporting are relatively consistent with most Queenslanders

Demographics

A mix of genders. Two-thirds of Kerbside Dumpers (63%) are under 40.

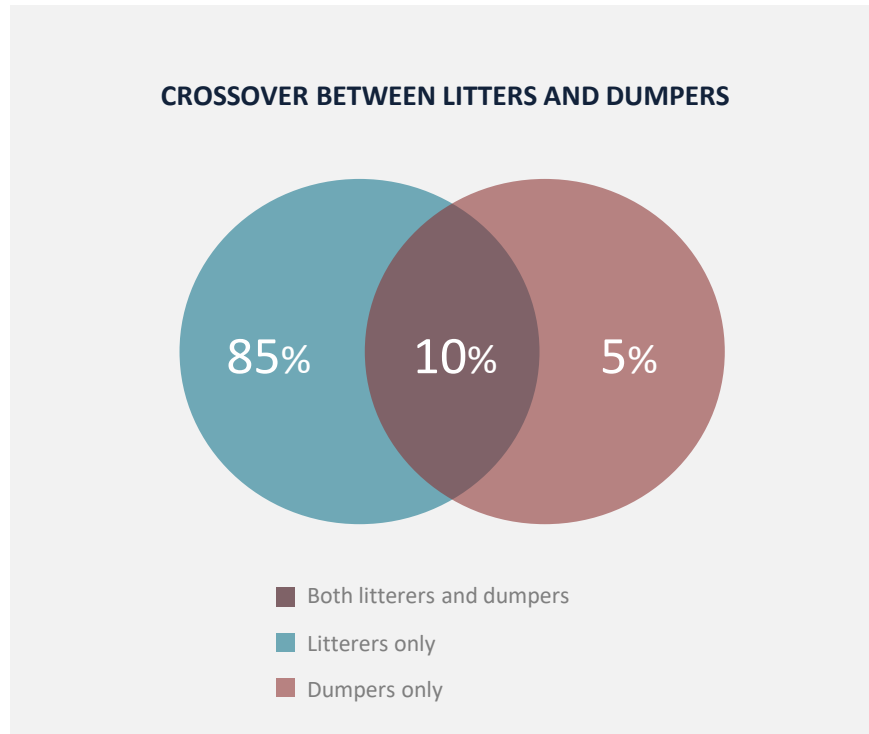
How to Target

Educating this group about what is considered illegal dumping may encourage them to rethink their actions, as they are concerned about fines.

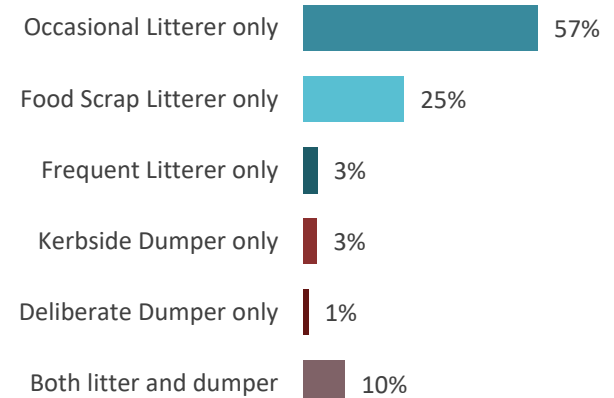
It is also important for these people to understand how kerbside dumping hurts the environment. If they cannot see the harm in their actions, they may be less inclined to stop.

Litterer and Dumper Crossover

There is minimal crossover between litterers and illegal dumpers. Only one in ten (10%) of those who are doing the wrong thing are doing both.



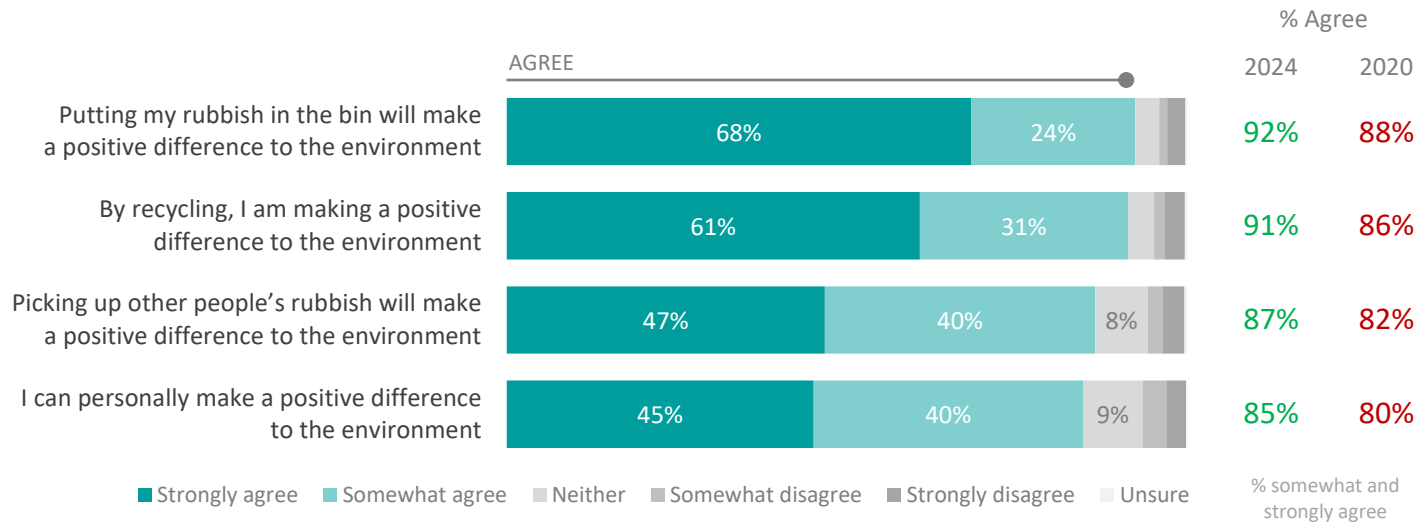
Of those who are littering or illegal dumpers...



Attitudes & Perceptions

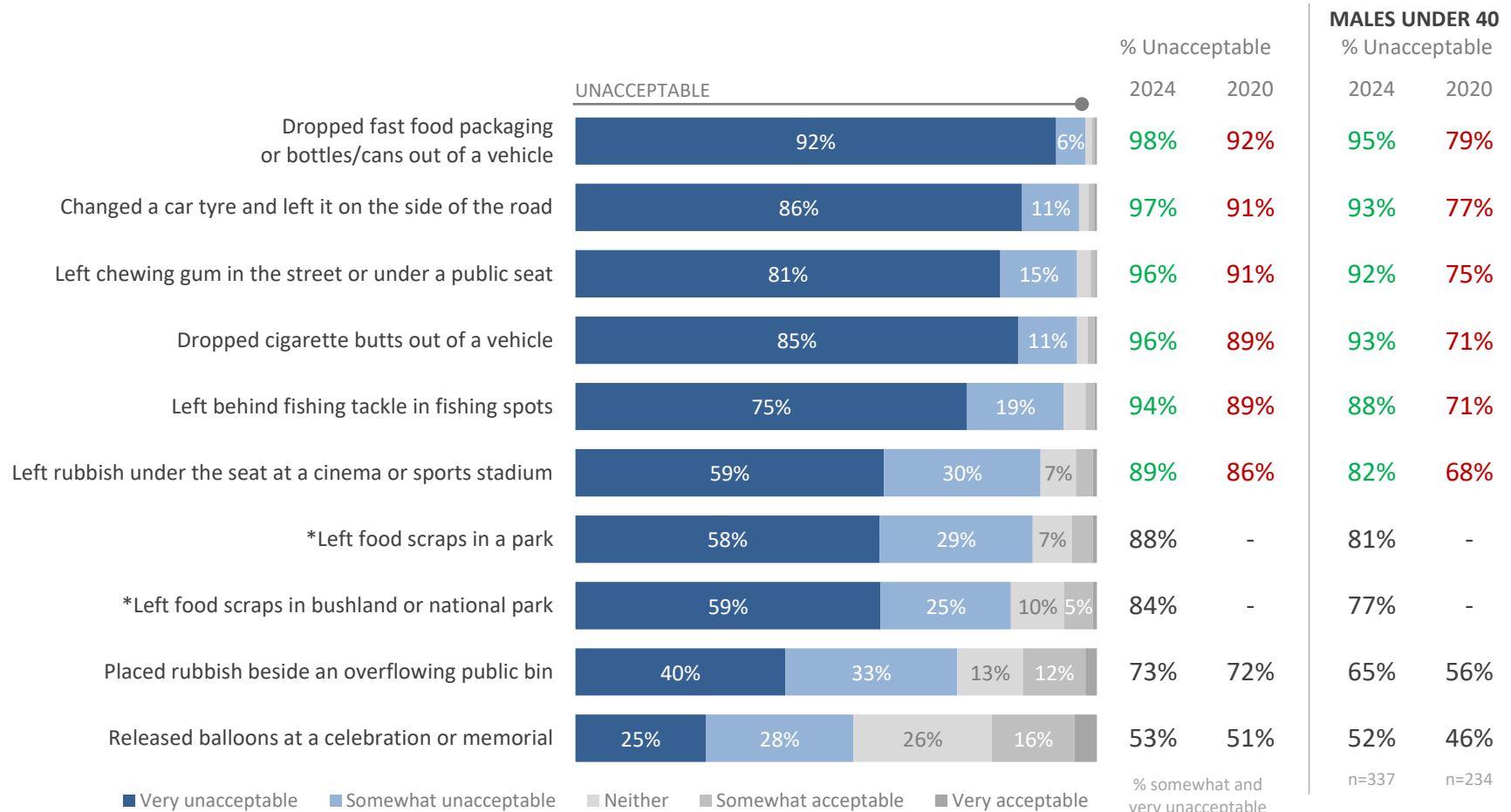
Motivations for Pro-Environmental Behaviours

Compared to 2020, the public is significantly more likely to agree that their actions, such as putting their rubbish in the bin, recycling, and picking up other people’s rubbish, will positively affect the environment. This change is consistent across genders, regions and among those under 60 years old.



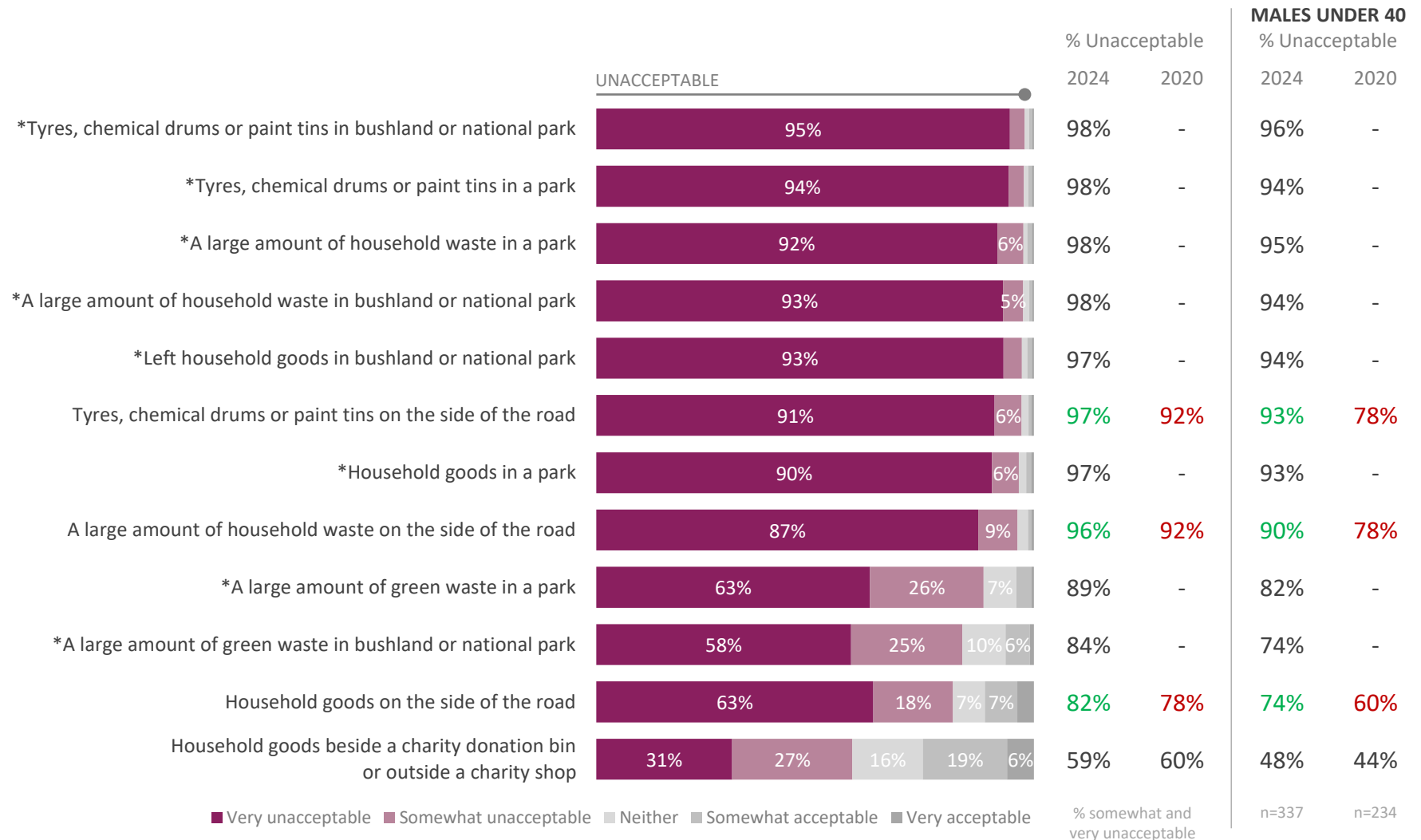
Social Acceptability of Littering

Over the past four years, the public has become significantly less tolerant of littering and are more likely to find littering unacceptable, apart from releasing balloons at a celebration or memorial. Contributing to this is the significant change in attitudes among males under 40.



Social Acceptability of Illegal Dumping

The Queensland public is very intolerant of most forms of illegal dumping, with the exception of household goods being placed beside a charity donation bin or outside a charity shop. Again, this shift is partially due to a significant change in attitudes among males under 40.



Base: All respondents (2020 n=2,000, 2024 n=2,000)

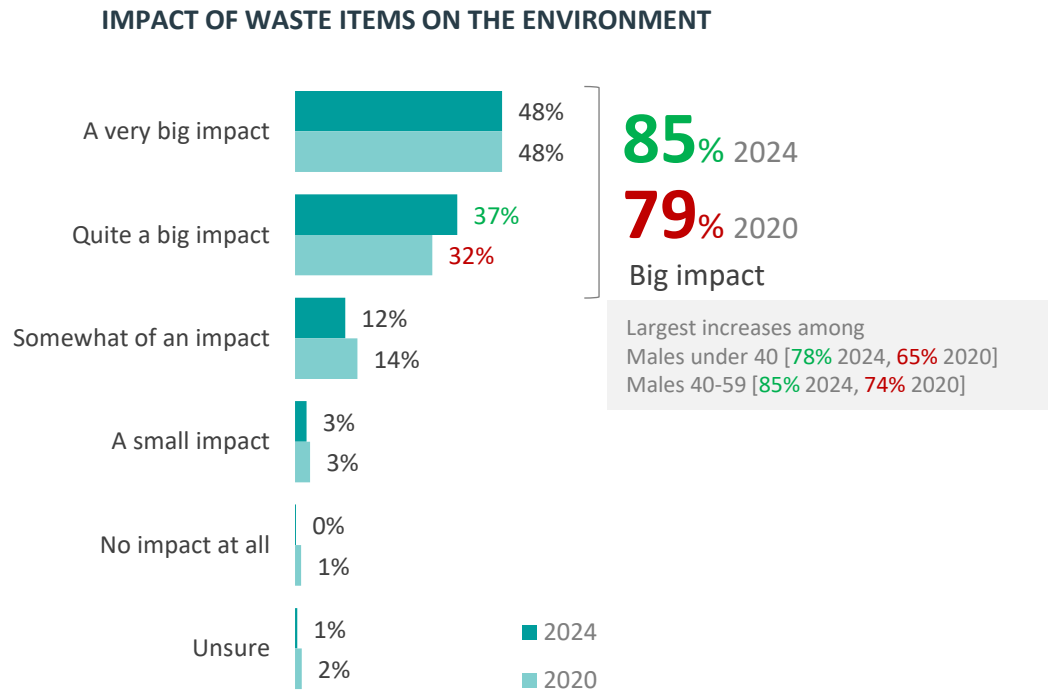
q10 How acceptable would you find another person's behaviour if they...?

*Question added in 2024

GREEN figures are significantly greater than RED figures

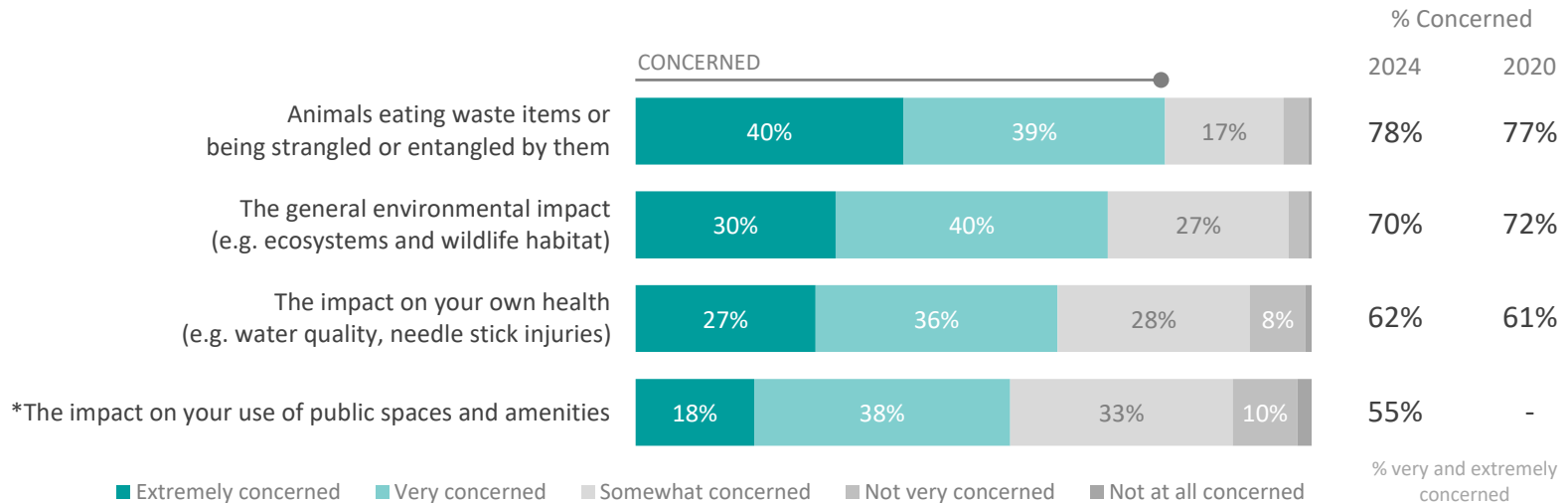
Environmental Impact of Waste Items

Since 2020, the public are significantly more likely to feel that waste items left behind or dumped in public places have a big negative impact on the overall environment. In particular, the view of males under 60 have significantly changed over the last four years.



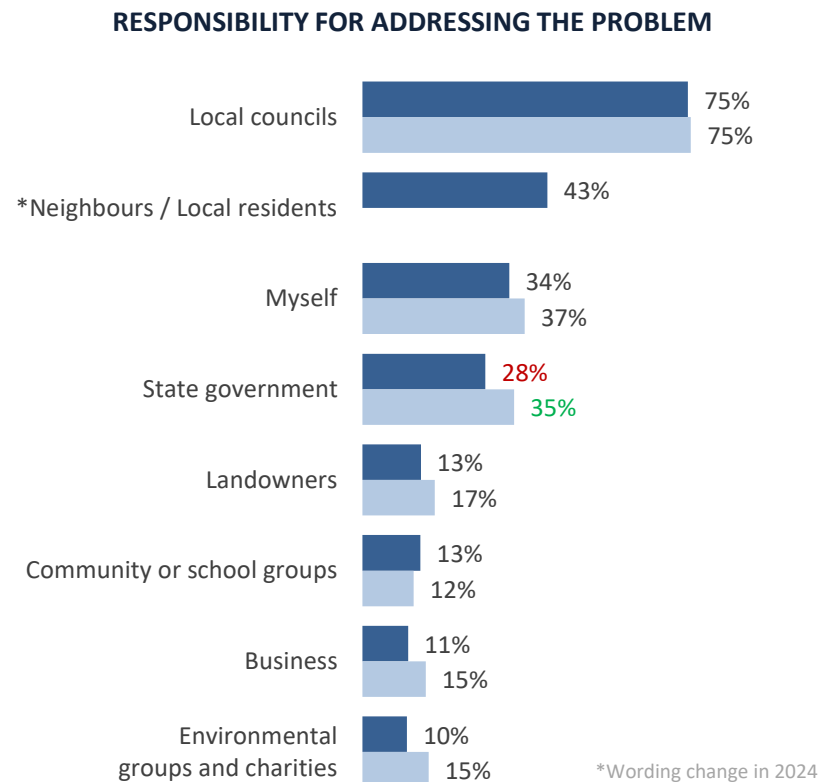
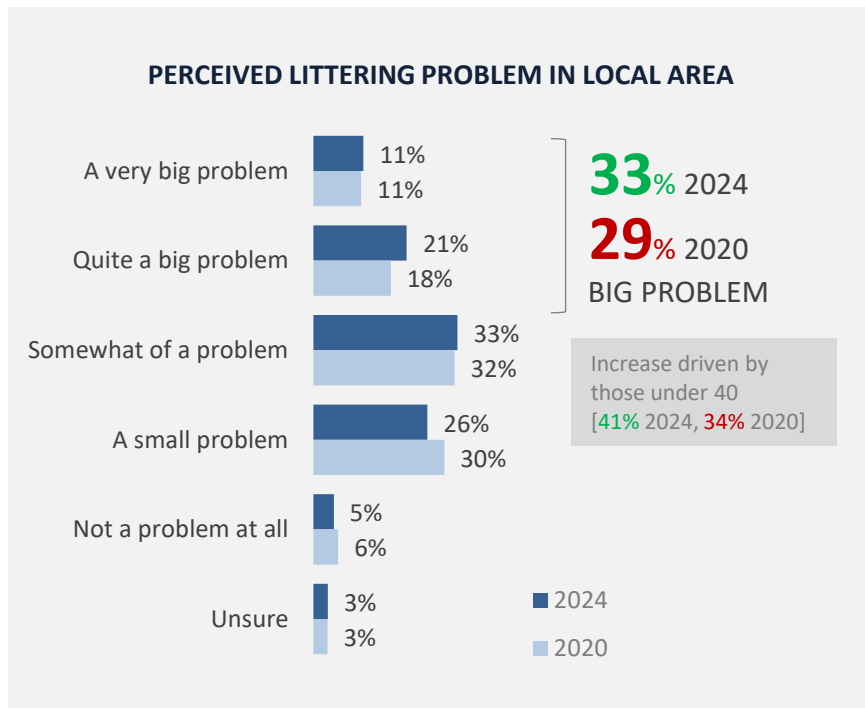
Concerns About the Environment

Most people are concerned about animals eating waste items or being strangled or entangled by them (78%) and the impact of waste items on the general environment (70%). Three in five (62%) worry about the waste items' impact on their health. These views have remained consistent over the past four years. Around half (55%) are concerned about the impact of waste items on their use of public spaces and amenities. There are no significant differences across age, gender or regions.



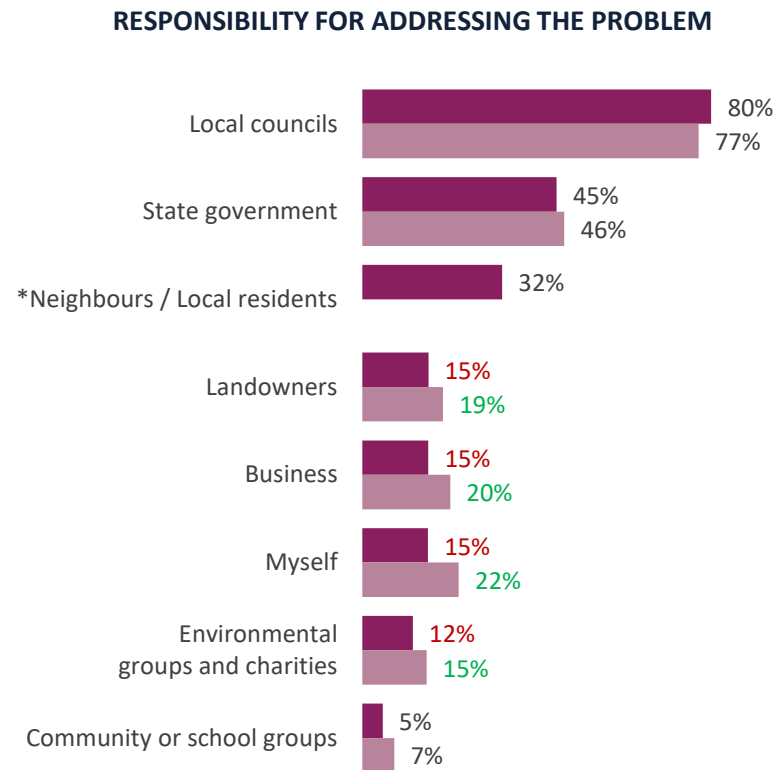
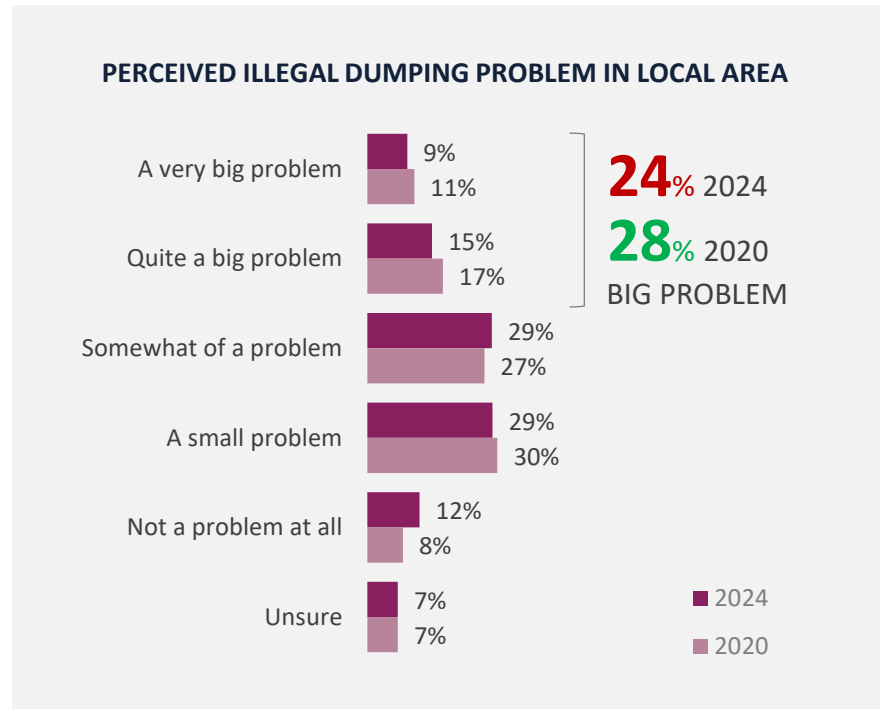
Perceptions of Littering Problem

Most Queenslanders do not consider littering a serious problem. Only a third (33%) consider it a big problem in their local area. This has increased significantly since 2020, particularly among those under 40. Many feel that local councils are the most responsible for addressing the issue of littering, followed by individuals. This is in line with the 2020 results. There are no significant changes across gender or regions.



Perceptions of Illegal Dumping Problem

Most Queenslanders do not consider illegal dumping a serious problem. Only one in four (24%) consider it a big issue in their local area. This has declined significantly since 2020. People feel that local councils are the most responsible for addressing the issue of illegal dumping, followed by the state government. There are no significant changes across age, gender or regions.



*Wording change in 2024

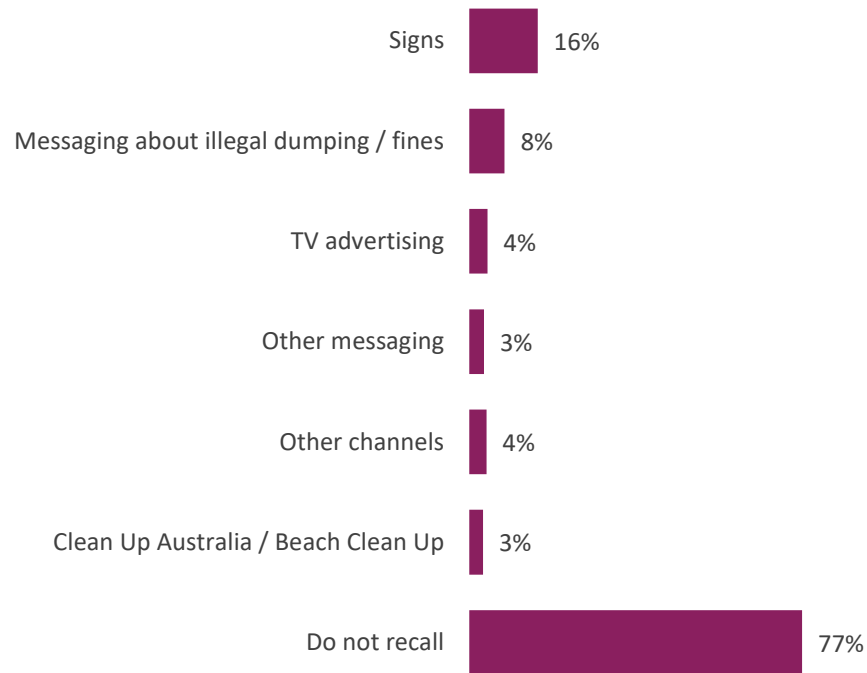
Base: All respondents (2020 n=2,000, 2024 n=2,000)
q19 How much of a problem do you consider illegal dumping to be in your local area?
q20b Who do you think is most responsible for addressing the issue of illegal dumping?

GREEN figures are significantly greater than RED figures

Littering or Illegal Dumping Advertising

Most people do not recall seeing littering or illegal dumping advertising in the past 12 months. Those that do recall ads, remember signs and messaging about illegal dumping and fines.

RECALL OF LITTERING OR ILLEGAL DUMPING ADVERTISING

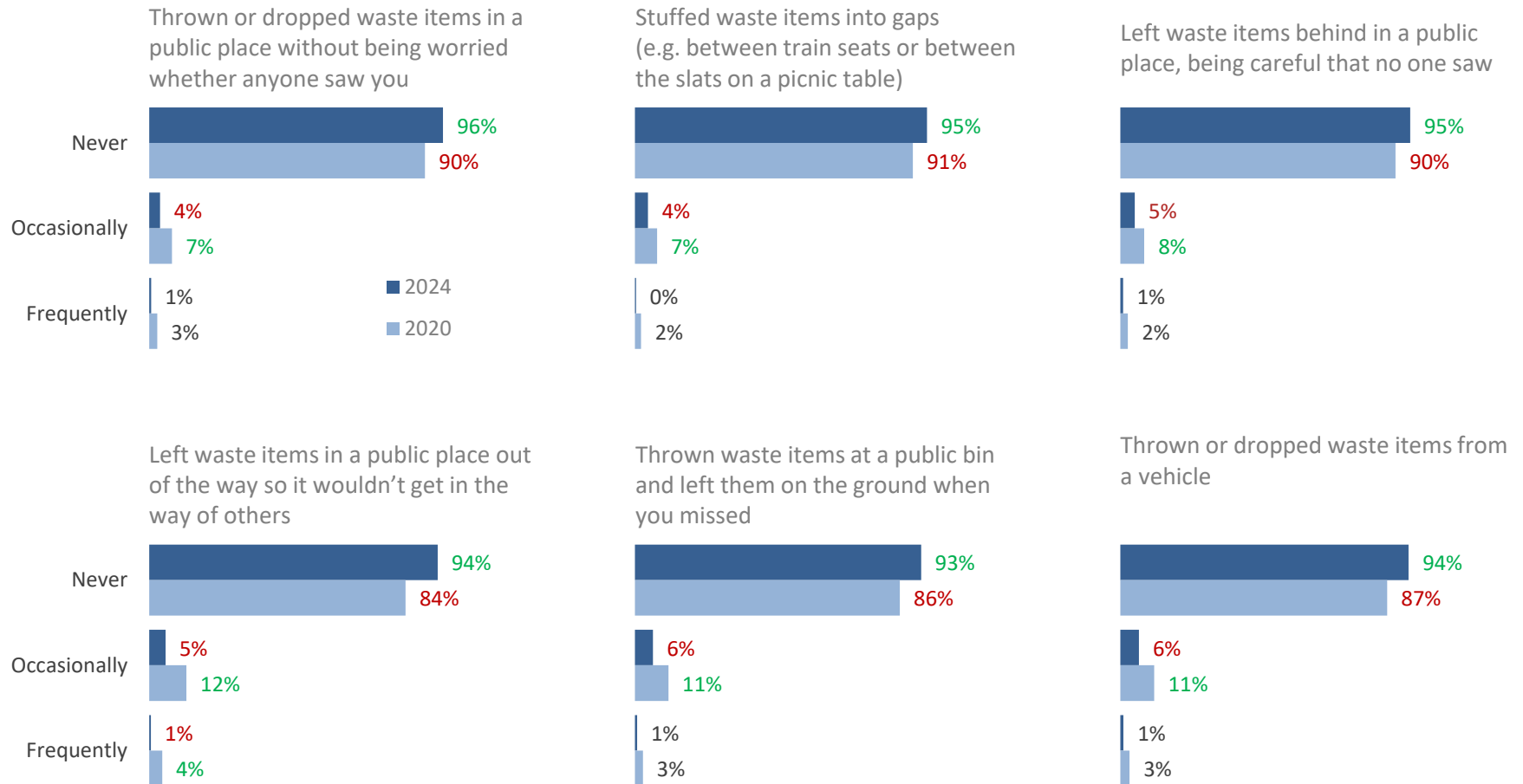


Behaviours

Littering Behaviour

Littering Behaviour in Past 12 Months (1)

There has been a significant decrease in all littering behaviours measured over the past four years, particularly with leaving items in a public place somewhere out of the way so it wouldn't get in the way of others.



Littering Behaviour in Past 12 Months (2)

A significant change in the littering behaviours of males under 40 drives this change in littering behaviours. Older males, and females under 40 have also improved their behaviour since 2020.

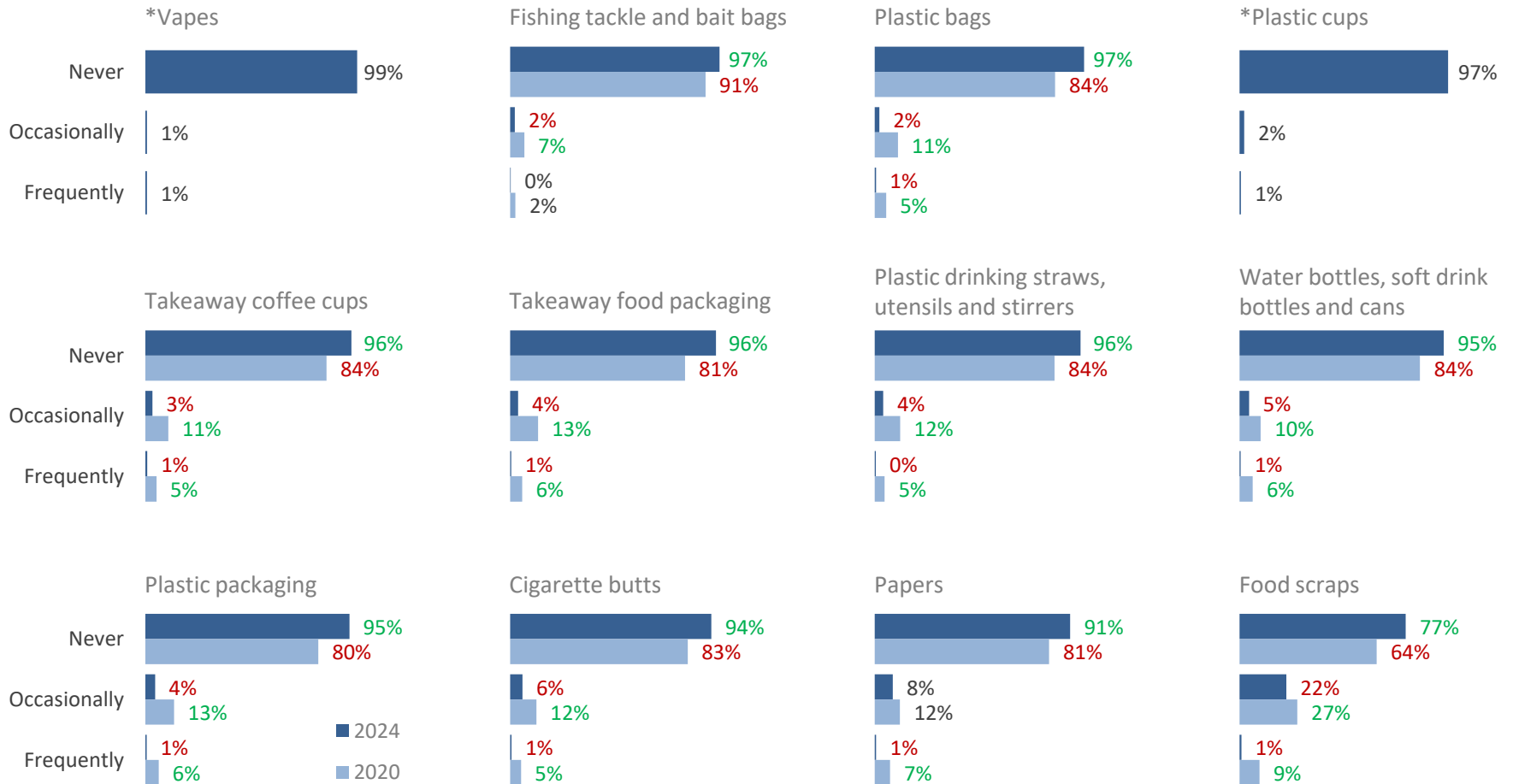
Changes of more than 10% are highlighted

	Males Under 40		Females Under 40		Males 40-59		Females 40-59		Males 60+		Females 60+	
	2024	2020	2024	2020	2024	2020	2024	2020	2024	2020	2024	2020
% Never in the past 12 months												
Thrown or dropped waste items from a vehicle	92%	73%	93%	84%	92%	81%	94%	95%	97%	95%	95%	98%
Thrown or dropped waste items in a public place without being worried whether anyone saw you	91%	70%	95%	90%	96%	86%	97%	96%	99%	98%	99%	99%
Stuffed waste items into gaps (e.g. between train seats or between the slats on a picnic table)	90%	73%	96%	89%	95%	88%	96%	97%	97%	98%	99%	99%
Left waste items behind in a public place, being careful that no one saw	88%	77%	92%	86%	96%	86%	97%	96%	99%	98%	99%	99%
Left waste items in a public place somewhere out of the way so it wouldn't get in the way of others	87%	68%	93%	77%	96%	81%	96%	90%	97%	95%	97%	96%
Thrown waste items at a public bin and left them on the ground when you missed	85%	69%	91%	83%	95%	81%	96%	95%	97%	95%	99%	97%
	n=337	n=234	n=409	n=492	n=320	n=379	n=341	n=330	n=316	n=369	n=271	n=185

Changes of more than 10% are highlighted

Frequency of Littering (1)

In the past four years, the frequency of littering most items has significantly declined, especially plastic items such as plastic bags, packaging, drinking straws, utensils and stirrers. One in five people (22%) occasionally leave food scraps in public places. The reduction could be influenced by the phasing out of certain Single Use Plastic Items (SUPI) over the past four years.



Base: All respondents (2020 n=2,000, 2024 n=2,000)

q3 How often do you leave behind any of the following items in public places without placing them in the bin?

*Code added in 2024

GREEN figures are significantly greater than RED figures

Frequency of Littering (2)

Again, the greatest changes in these behaviours are among males, particularly those under 40. Older males and females under 40 have also significantly improved their behaviour over the past four years.

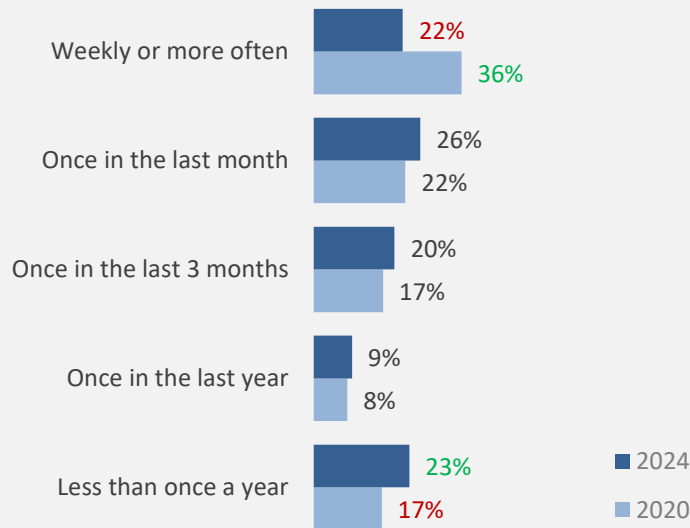
Changes of more than 10% are highlighted

	Males Under 40		Females Under 40		Males 40-59		Females 40-59		Males 60+		Females 60+	
	2024	2020	2024	2020	2024	2020	2024	2020	2024	2020	2024	2020
% Never in the past 12 months												
Fishing tackle and bait bags	96%	83%	97%	92%	98%	93%	97%	98%	100%	96%	100%	99%
Plastic bags	96%	80%	99%	88%	98%	87%	98%	94%	99%	93%	98%	96%
Takeaway coffee cups	95%	82%	97%	86%	96%	88%	97%	93%	98%	95%	98%	95%
Cigarette butts	92%	74%	94%	86%	94%	89%	96%	90%	92%	93%	98%	93%
Plastic drinking straws, utensils and stirrers	92%	82%	97%	87%	96%	85%	96%	92%	98%	91%	98%	93%
Plastic packaging	91%	78%	95%	87%	96%	84%	97%	90%	97%	88%	98%	95%
Takeaway food packaging	91%	76%	96%	84%	97%	87%	98%	92%	98%	91%	99%	96%
Water bottles, soft drink bottles and cans	89%	78%	96%	88%	97%	91%	96%	94%	99%	94%	98%	97%
Papers	87%	76%	88%	87%	92%	84%	94%	93%	96%	94%	95%	96%
Food scraps	70%	64%	66%	66%	80%	70%	80%	75%	91%	81%	87%	91%
	n=337	n=234	n=409	n=492	n=320	n=379	n=341	n=330	n=316	n=369	n=271	n=185

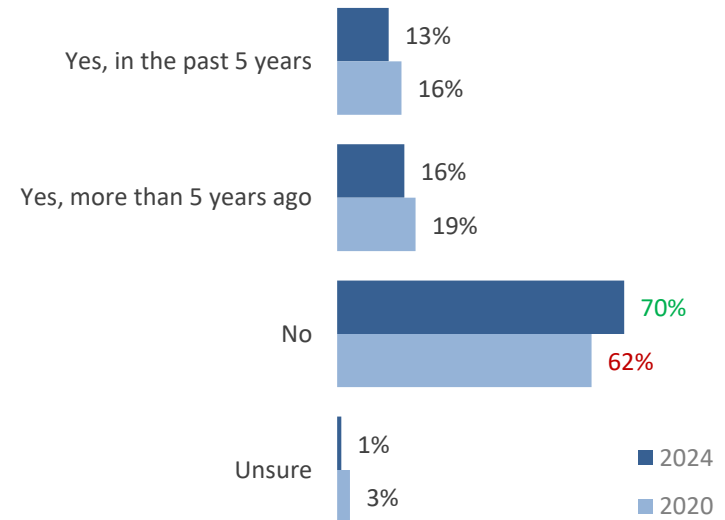
Picking Up Litter

One in five people (22%) pick up litter they see in public, that is not theirs, weekly or more often. This has significantly declined since 2020. In the past five years, just over one in ten (13%) have participated as volunteers in a waste clean-up event, such as Clean Up Australia Day.

FREQUENCY OF PICKING UP LITTER



PARTICIPATED IN WASTE CLEAN-UP EVENTS



Base: All respondents (2020 n=2,000, 2024 n=2,000)

q30 How often do you pick up litter that you see in public places that is not yours

q31 Have you ever participated as a volunteer in a waste clean-up event (e.g. Clean up Australia day)?

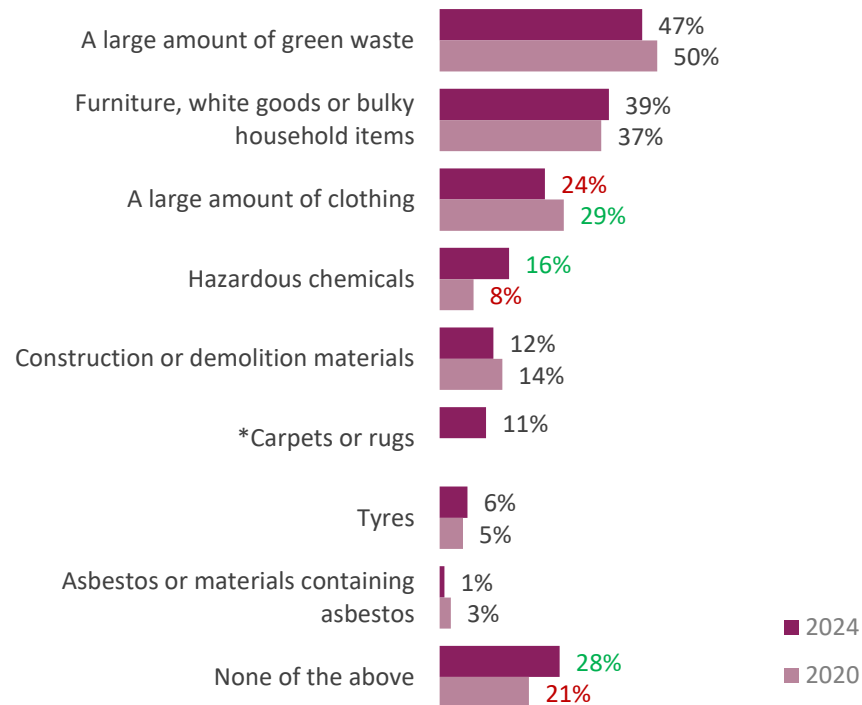
GREEN figures are significantly greater than RED figures

Dumping Behaviour

Disposal of Large Volumes of Waste

Around half of Queenslanders (47%) disposed of a large amount of green waste in the past 12 months. Two in five (39%) got rid of furniture, white goods, or bulky household items and a quarter (24%) got rid of a large amount of clothes.

ITEMS DISPOSED OF IN LAST 12 MONTHS



Disposal Location of Large Volumes of Waste

Most people's main disposal methods are landfills, rubbish tips, or transfer stations. Since 2020, significantly more people are disposing of their clothes at a charity shop or donation bin, and more are using the council kerbside collection to remove green waste. There has also been a significant increase in people disposing of bulky items through kerbside collection and selling or donating them.

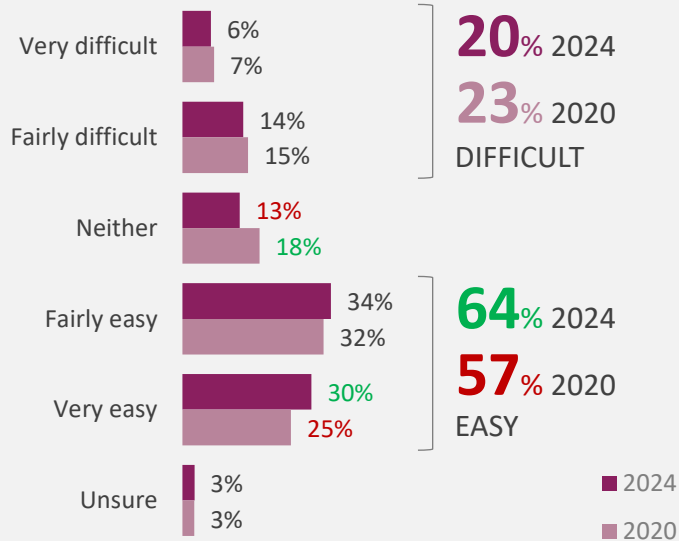
<u>Top disposal methods for each is highlighted</u>	Bulky household items	A large amount of clothing	Hazardous chemicals	Construction or demolition materials	Asbestos	A large amount of green waste	Tyres	*Carpets or rugs
Landfill, rubbish tip or transfer station	▲ 57%	16%	64%	72%	37%	56%	53%	54%
Taken to a charity shop or donated in a bin	▲ 29%	▲ 88%	1%	3%	21%	1%	6%	11%
A waste removal service	12%	5%	20%	21%	48%	12%	13%	13%
Sold it, gave it away, had someone pick it up	▲ 43%	24%	6%	6%	5%	2%	23%	15%
Weekly/fortnightly council kerbside collection	12%	10%	9%	14%	24%	▲ 38%	4%	12%
Council kerbside collection of large items	▲ 25%	3%	2%	8%	12%	4%	6%	13%
Placed on roadside road outside your house	6%	3%	2%	2%	9%	1%	5%	4%
Disposed on your own land	2%	1%	3%	2%	5%	11%	3%	2%
Placed on the side of the road elsewhere	1%	1%	0%	0%	12%	1%	2%	1%
On public land or someone else's land	1%	1%	1%	0%	6%	1%	6%	2%
	n=782	n=481	n=318	n=250	n=22**	n=951	n=121	n=221

*Code added in 2024

Accessing Landfill, Rubbish Tip or Transfer Station

Since 2020, more people have found it easy to access their nearest landfill, rubbish tip, or transfer station. However, one in five (20%) still find it difficult to get to the landfill. Key reasons for this include not having access to a suitable vehicle and the nearest landfill being too far away.

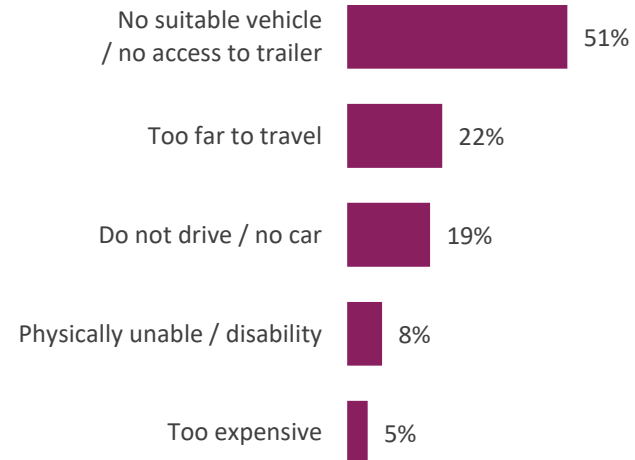
EASE OF ACCESSING LANDFILL, RUBBISH TIP OR TRANSFER STATION



There has been a significant increase in the ease of taking waste to the landfill, rubbish tip or transfer station for **those living outside SEQ** (69% 2024, 59% 2020).

In 2024 significantly more people living outside of SEQ agree that **it costs too much to take large waste to the rubbish tip** these days (50% 2024, 39% 2020).

REASONS TAKING WASTE TO THE LANDFILL, RUBBISH TIP OR TRANSFER STATION IS DIFFICULT



Base: All respondents (2020 n=2,000, 2024 n=2,000) q6 How easy is it for you to take waste to your nearest landfill, rubbish tip or transfer station?

q15_1 How much do you agree that it costs too much to take large waste to the rubbish tip these days?

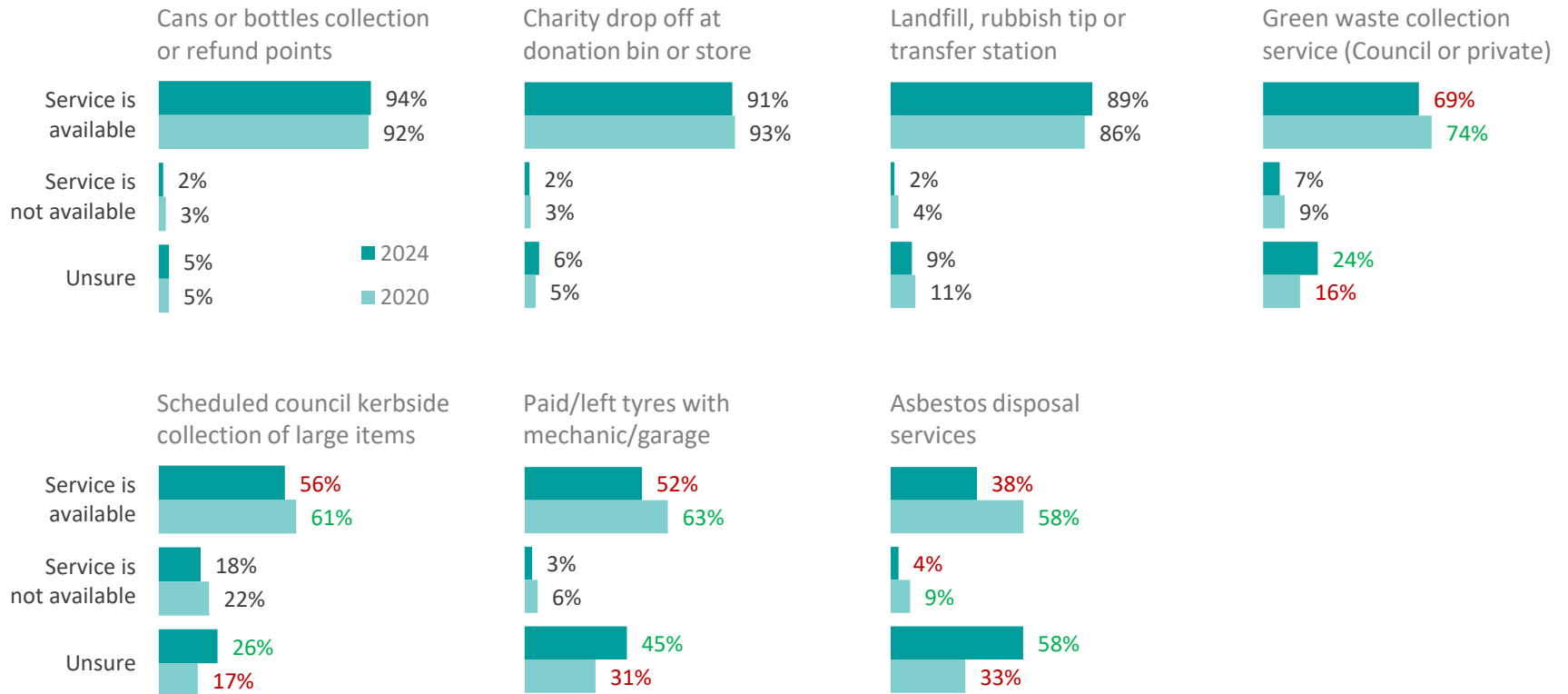
Base: Respondents who have difficulty accessing landfill, rubbish tip or transfer station (2024 n=402)

q7 Why is taking waste to your nearest landfill rubbish tip or transfer station difficult?

Waste Services

Awareness of Waste Services in Their Area (1)

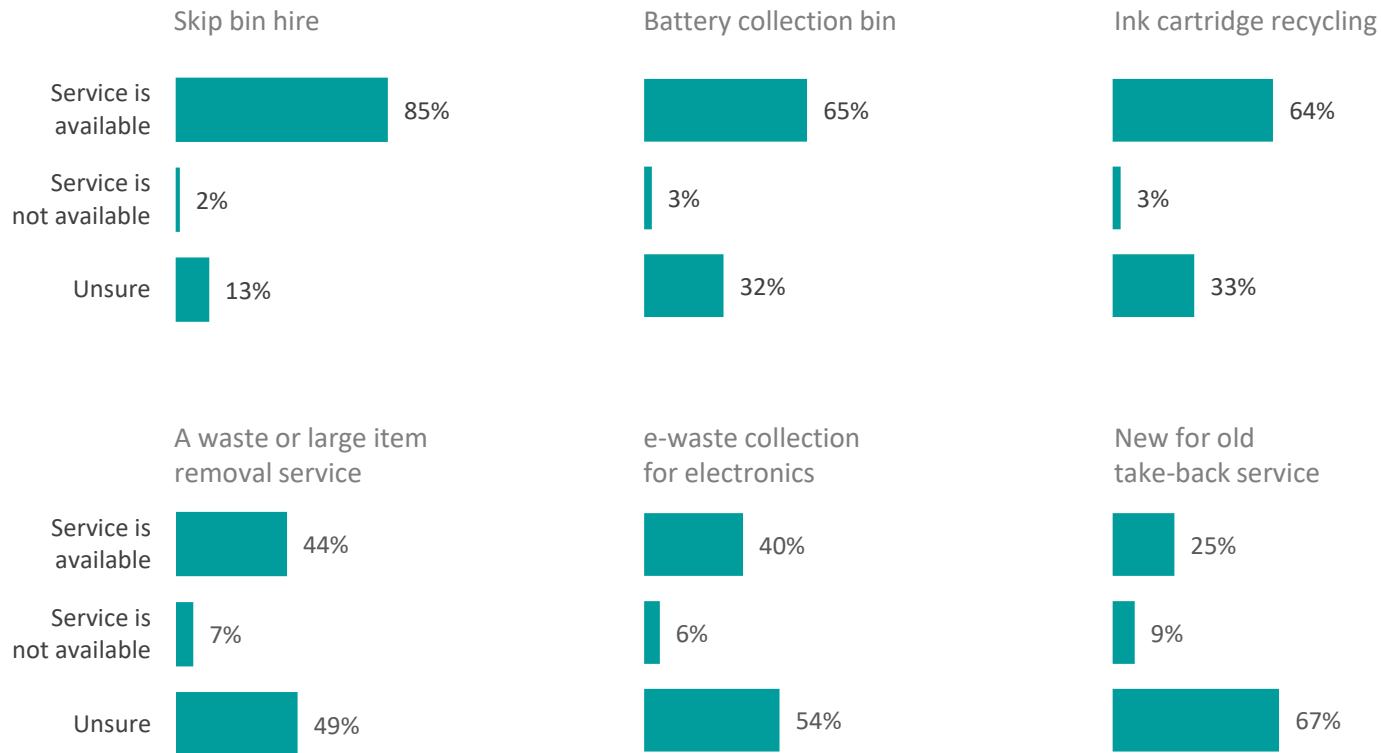
Compared to 2020, significantly fewer people are aware of green waste collection services, scheduled council kerbside collection of large bulky items, the option to leave tyres with a mechanic or a garage, and asbestos disposal services. These results are influenced by peoples' need to use these services in the past year.



The increase in unsure is driven by people who live outside of Brisbane

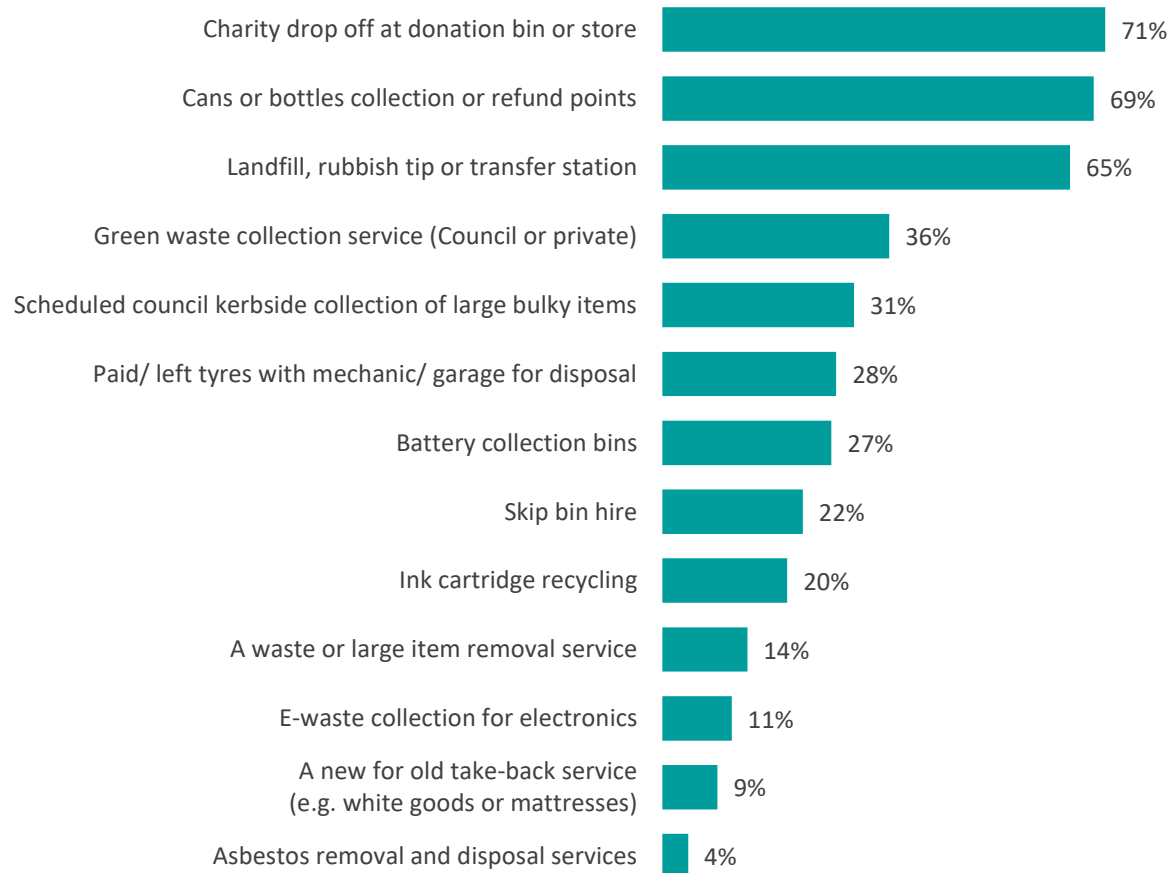
Awareness of Waste Services in Their Area (2)

Two-thirds of people are aware that their local area has battery collection bins (65%) and/or ink cartridge recycling (64%). Half (54%) are unsure whether they have e-waste collection, and two-thirds (67%) do not know if their local area has a new for old take-back service for items such as mattresses and white goods. These results are influenced by peoples' need to use these services in the past year.



Use of Waste Services in Local Area

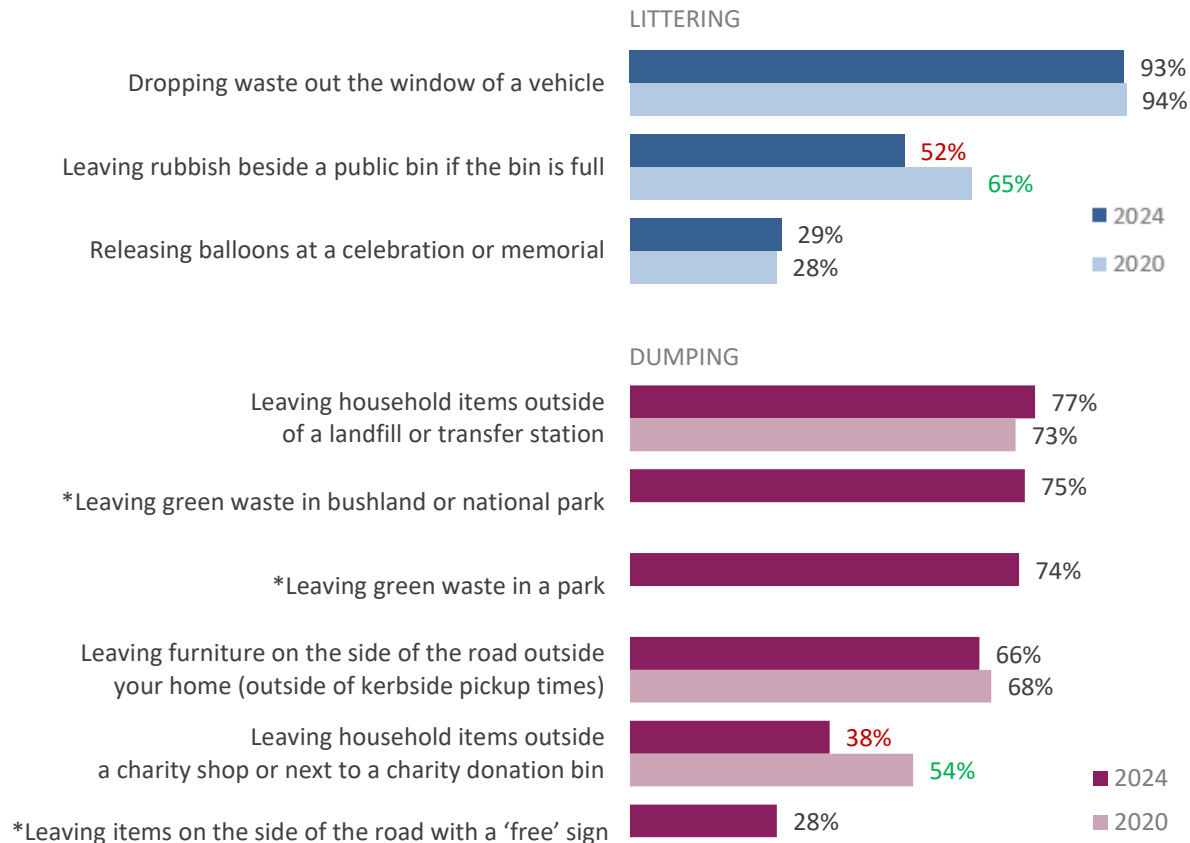
Many Queenslanders have used charity stores and donation bins (71%), cans or bottles collection or refund points (69%) and landfills, rubbish tips or transfer stations to dispose of their waste in the past 12 months. These results are influenced by peoples' need to use these services in the past year.



Getting Caught & Fines

Perception of Legality

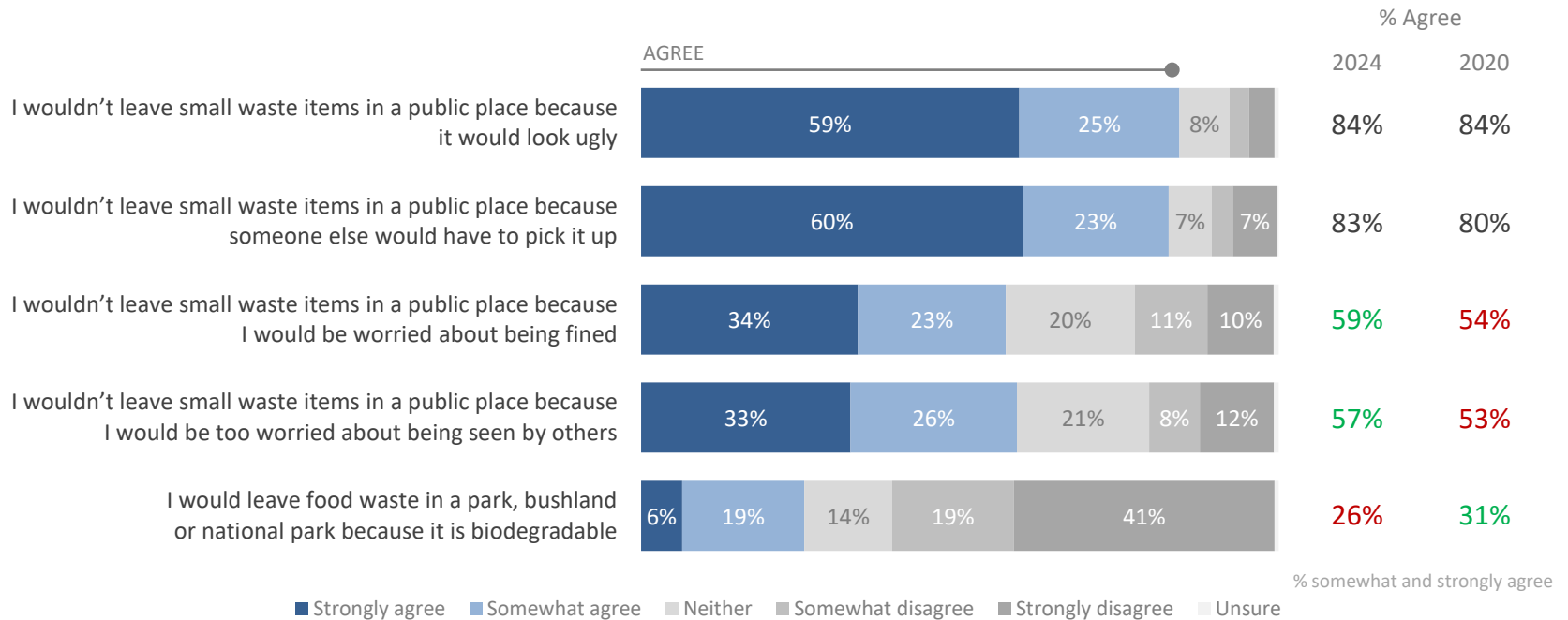
Fewer than two in five Queenslanders are aware it is illegal to leave household items outside a charity shop or next to a donation bin (38%), release balloons at a celebration or memorial (29%) and leave items on the side of the road with a 'free' sign (28%). A third are unaware that leaving furniture on the side of the road outside their homes, outside of kerbside pickup times, is illegal. Some are also confused about the legality of leaving green waste in a park, bushland, or national park.



Getting Caught

Motivations For Not Littering

The public's main motivations for not littering have remained consistent, with aesthetic and social factors being the key reasons. Concerns about being caught and fined remain less of a motivation. A quarter of people (26%) feel it is okay to leave food waste in a park, bushland, or national park because it is biodegradable. To change this behaviour, these people would need to be educated about the negative impact leaving food scraps can have on the environment.



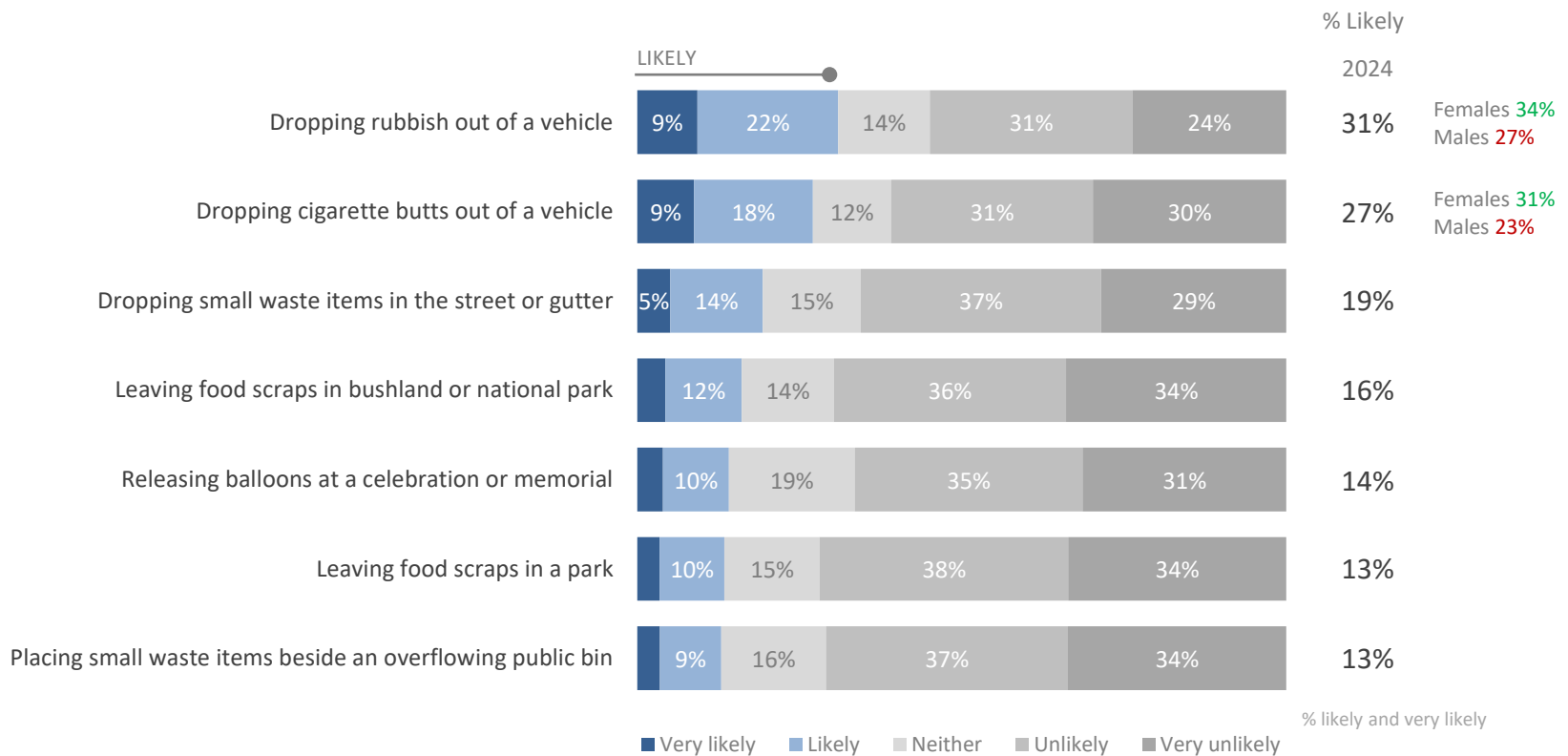
Base: All respondents (2020 n=2,000, 2024 n=2,000)

q14 For items smaller than a wheelie bin load (e.g. drink bottles, cups, packaging), how much do you agree with each of the following statements?

GREEN figures are significantly greater than RED figures

Likelihood of Being Caught and Fined for Littering

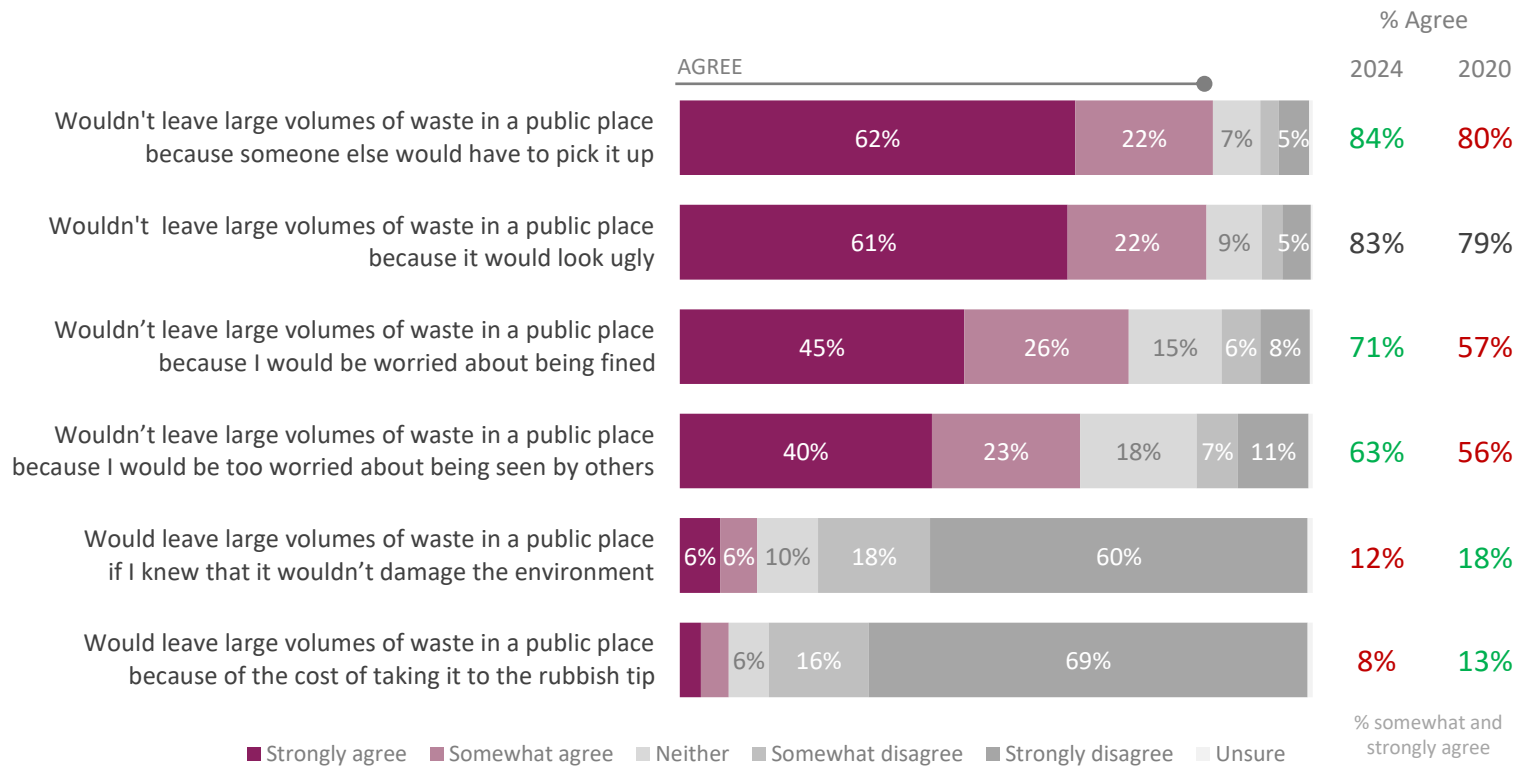
Fear of getting caught is not a strong deterrent, as Queenslanders do not feel people are likely to be caught and fined for littering. At most, a third (31%) think someone might get caught and fined for dropping rubbish from a moving vehicle. This again, suggests that a fear of getting caught for littering is not a strong deterrent. There are no regional or age differences.



Question was modified in 2024 and is not comparable to the 2020 figures

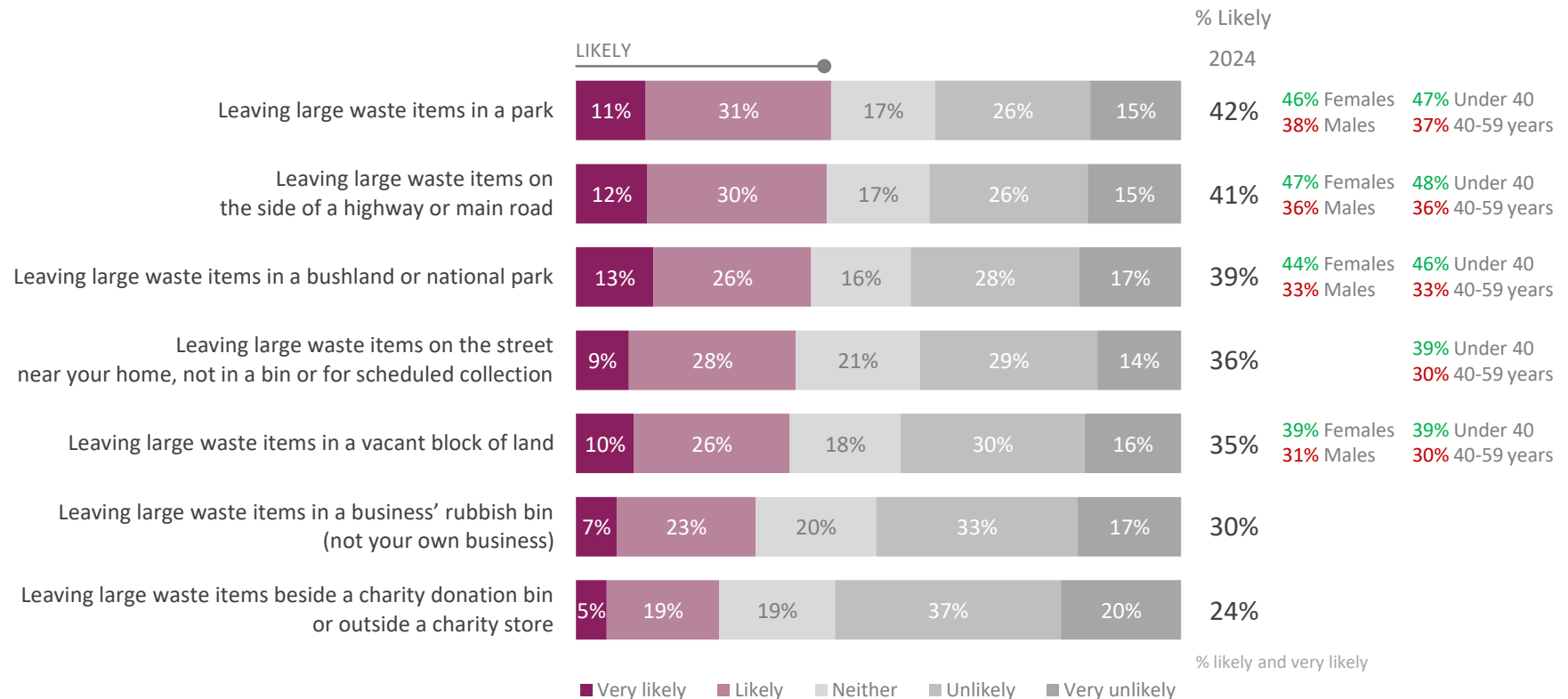
Motivations For Not Illegal Dumping

Concerns about being fined for dumping illegally have significantly increased since 2020. This is likely due to increased awareness through signage and advertising campaigns. The influence of social factors has also significantly increased, with not wanting someone else to have to clean it up and concerns about being seen by others being stronger motivation in 2024.



Likelihood of Being Caught and Fined for Illegal Dumping

Despite an increase in concern about fines, less than half of Queenslanders believe that people are likely to be caught and fined for illegal dumping. Females and those under the age of 40 are the more likely to think that people will be fined, however, it is still less than half. There are no regional differences.

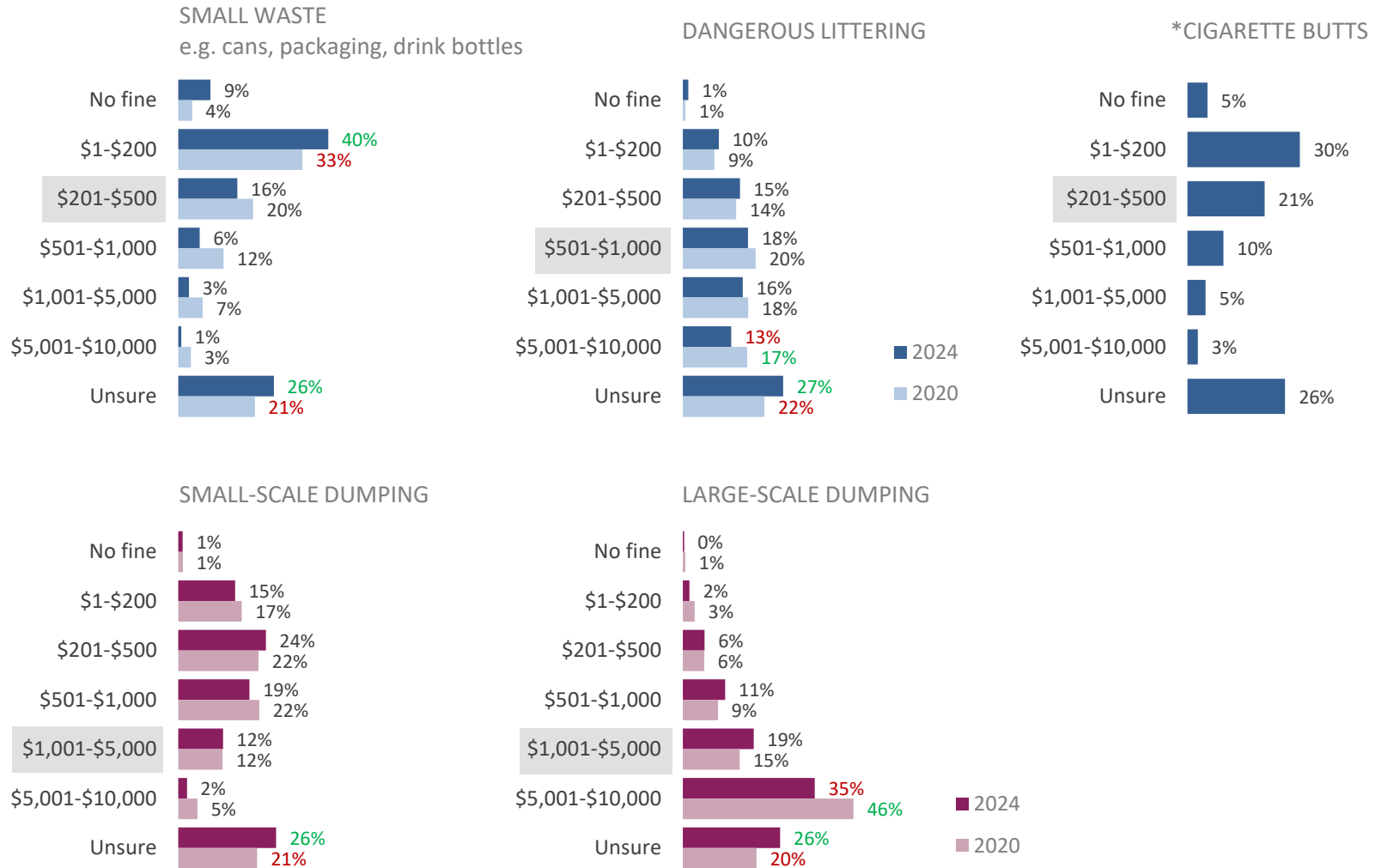


Question was modified in 2024 and is not comparable to the 2020 figures

Fines

Assumptions of Minimum Fines

There is a limited understanding of minimum fines. Most people either underestimate or are unsure about the minimum fines for small waste and small-scale dumping. Others either overestimate or are uncertain about the minimum fines for large-scale dumping.



Base: All respondents (2020 n=2,000, 2024 n=2,000)

q27 How much do think the minimum fine is for incorrectly disposing of the following types of waste in a public place?

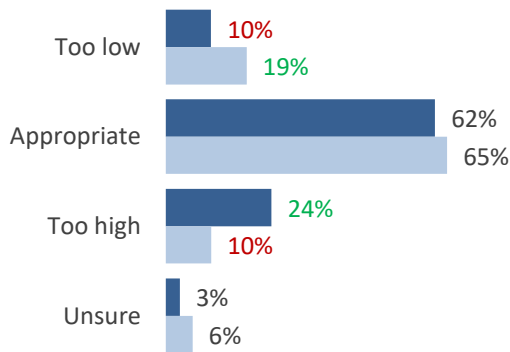
*Code added in 2024

GREEN figures are significantly greater than RED figures

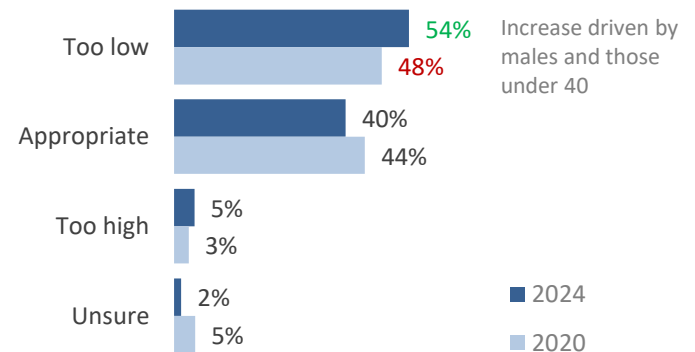
Appropriateness of Minimum Fines

In 2024, most (74%) feel the minimum fine for small-scale illegal dumping is appropriate, and two-thirds (62%) think the minimum fine for general littering is acceptable. Around half of Queenslanders (54%) feel the minimum fine for dangerous littering and large-scale dumping (55%) is too low.

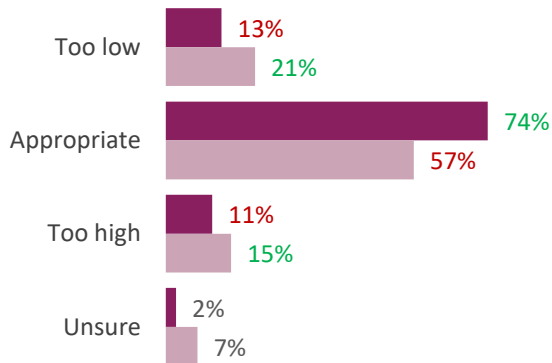
\$309 FINE FOR GENERAL LITTERING
[\$266 in 2020]



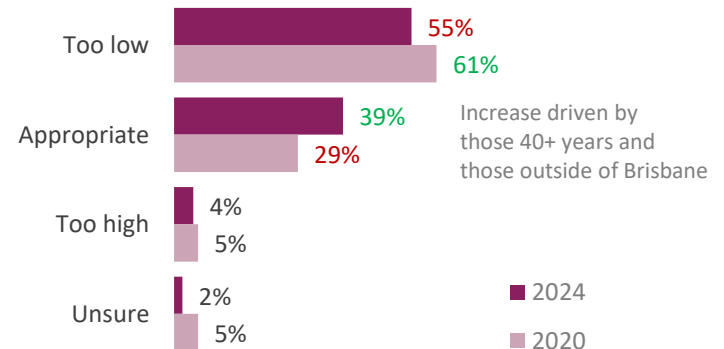
\$619 FINE FOR DANGEROUS LITTERING
[\$533 in 2020]



\$2,476 FINE FOR SMALL-SCALE DUMPING
[\$2,135 in 2020]



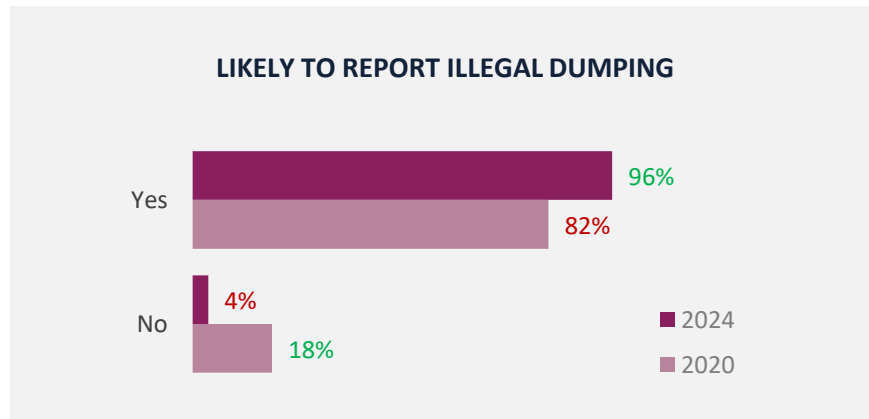
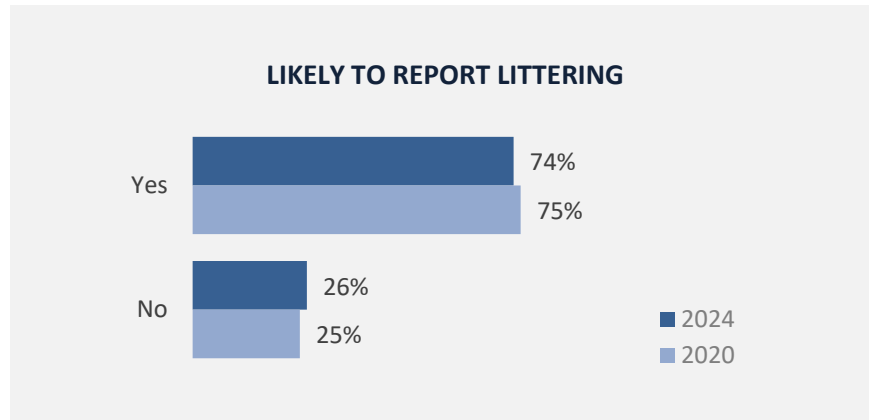
\$3,096 FINE FOR LARGE-SCALE DUMPING
[\$2,669 in 2020]



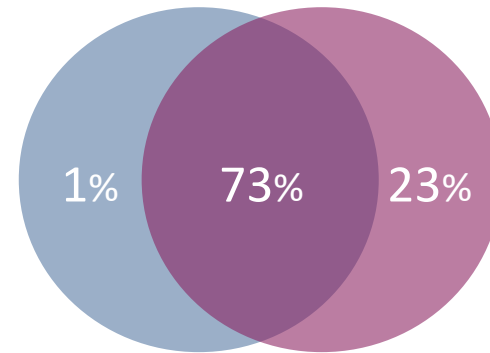
Reporting

Likelihood of Reporting Littering

Three in four people (74%) say they are likely to report littering, and most (98%) say they would report illegal dumping in the future, a significant increase from 2020. However, the public is more likely to report certain types of littering and dumping. This is discussed further on the next page.



CROSSOVER BETWEEN REPORTING LITTERING AND ILLEGAL DUMPING



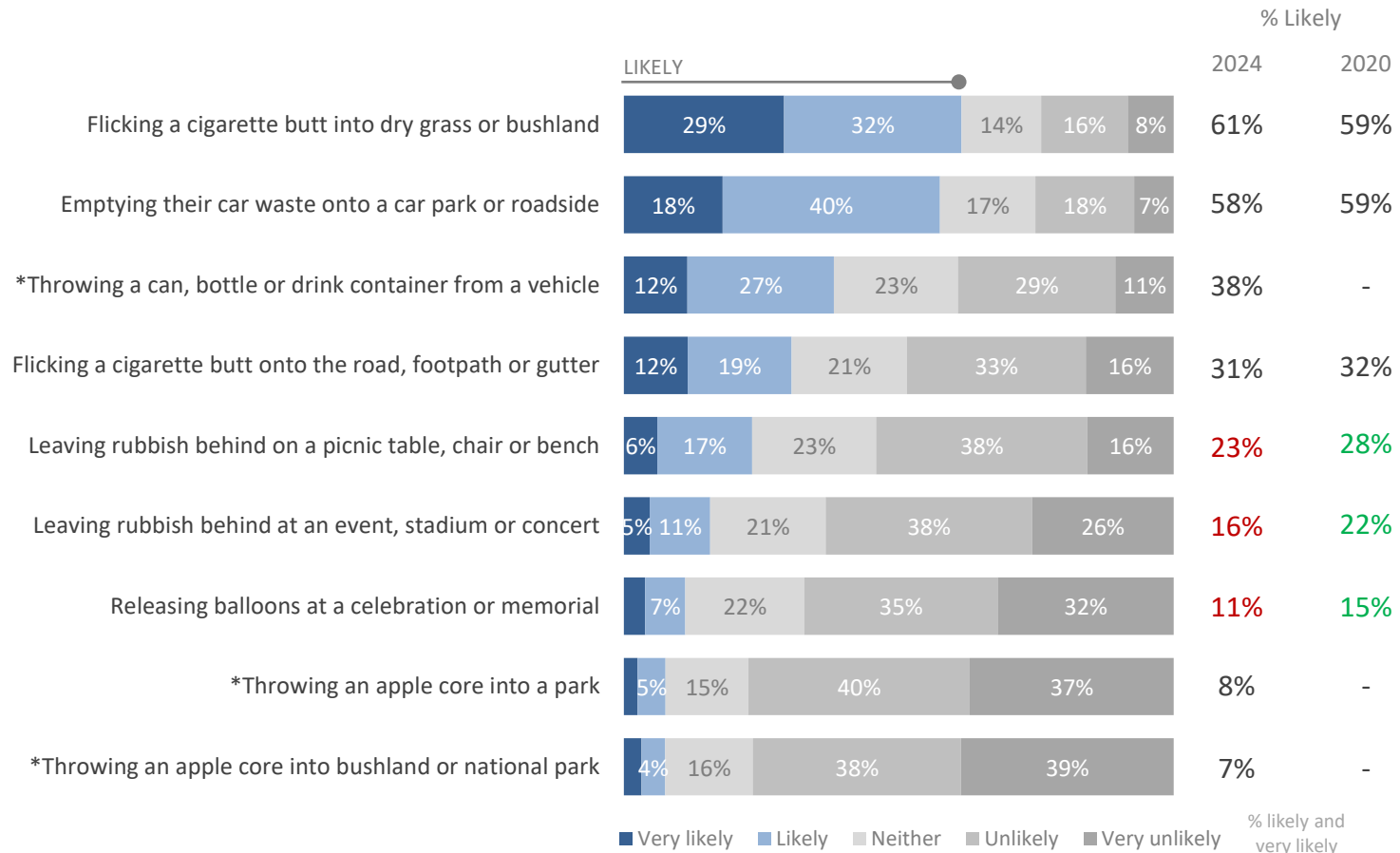
- Report both littering and illegal dumping
- Report littering only
- Report illegal dumping only
- Report none (3%)

Base: All respondents (2020 n=2,000, 2024 n=2,000)
 q23 How likely would you be to report someone if you saw them doing the following?
 q24 How likely would you be to report someone if you saw them doing the following?

GREEN figures are significantly greater than RED figures

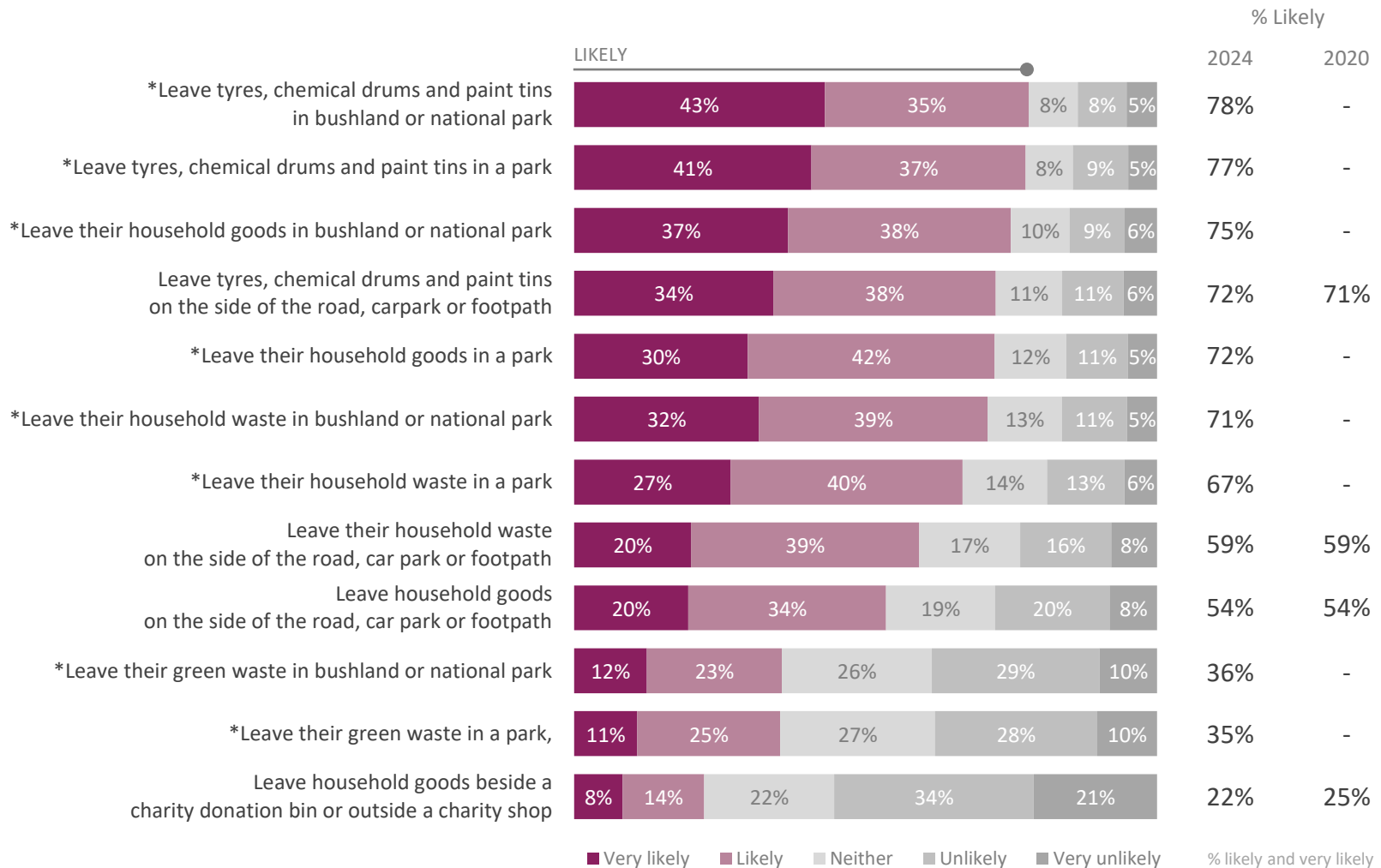
Likelihood of Reporting Littering

Around three in five Queenslanders are likely to report someone flicking a cigarette butt onto the road, footpath or gutter (61%) or someone emptying their car waste onto a car park or roadside (58%). People are less likely to report other littering actions, especially those related to food scraps. Queenslanders are also significantly less likely to report someone leaving rubbish behind on a public picnic table, chair or bench or at an event, stadium or concert than four years ago.



Likelihood of Reporting Illegal Dumping

People are the least likely to report the dumping of green waste in parks (35%), bushland or national parks (36%) or items left beside a charity donation bin or outside a charity shop (22%). Just over half are likely to report people leaving household waste (59%) or goods (54%) on the side of the road, car park or footpath.



Base: All respondents (2020 n=2,000, 2024 n=2,000)

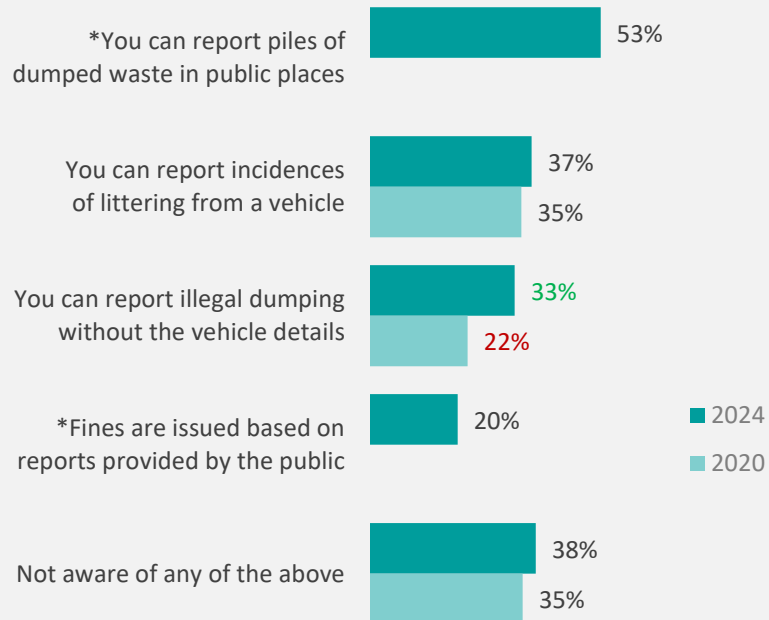
q24 How likely would you be to report someone if you saw them doing the following?

*Question added in 2024

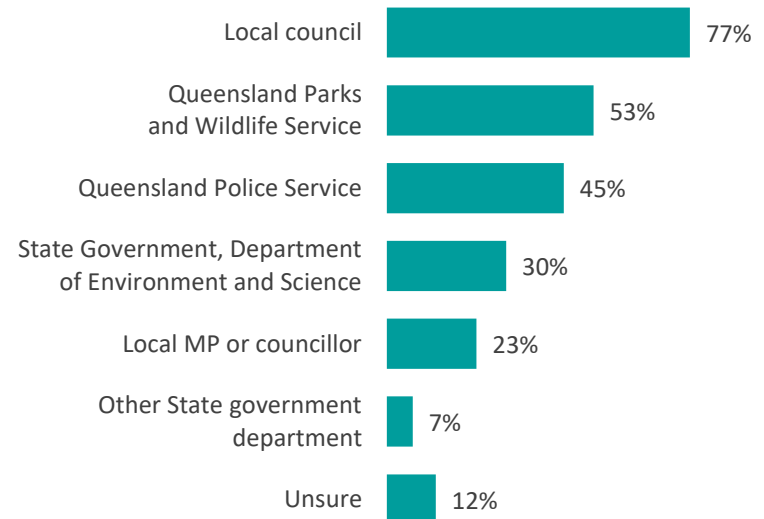
Knowledge About Reporting

The public's knowledge about what can be reported and who to report to is low. Only half of Queenslanders (53%) know that people can report piles of dumped waste in public places, and only one in five people (20%) know that fines are issued based on reports provided by the public. There has been a significant increase in the number of people aware that people can report illegal dumping without the vehicle details.

KNOWLEDGE OF REPORTING LITTERING AND ILLEGAL DUMPING



ORGANISATION TO REPORT LITTERING AND ILLEGAL DUMPING TO



Base: All respondents (2020 n=2,000, 2024 n=2,000) q29 Before today, were you aware of any of the following?

Base: Respondents who are aware you can report someone (2024 n=1,247) q22a Do you know which organisations people can report littering or illegal dumping to?

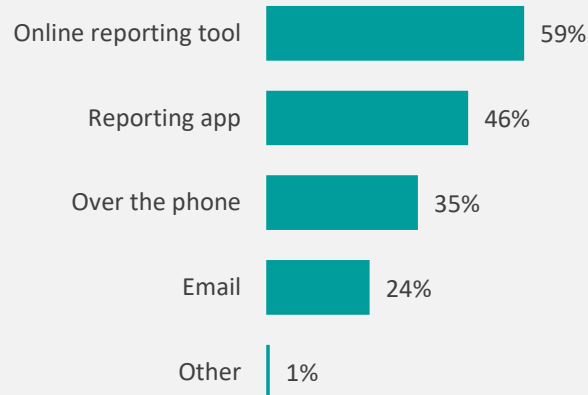
*Code added in 2024

GREEN figures are significantly greater than RED figures

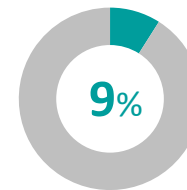
Reporting Tools

Most people would prefer to report littering or illegal dumping via an online tool, followed by an app. Awareness of LIDORS is low, with only one in ten (9%) currently aware of the online tool.

PREFERRED REPORTING METHOD



Those 60 years and older are more likely to prefer reporting via an online tool (50%) or over the phone (53%) rather than via an app (30%).

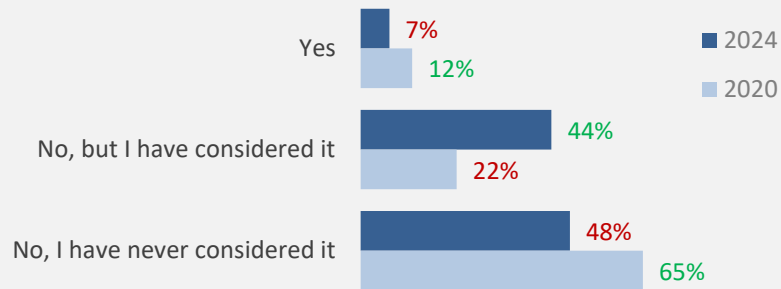


Are aware of the Queensland Government's Litter and Illegal Dumping Online Reporting tool (LIDORS)

Littering Reporting Behaviour

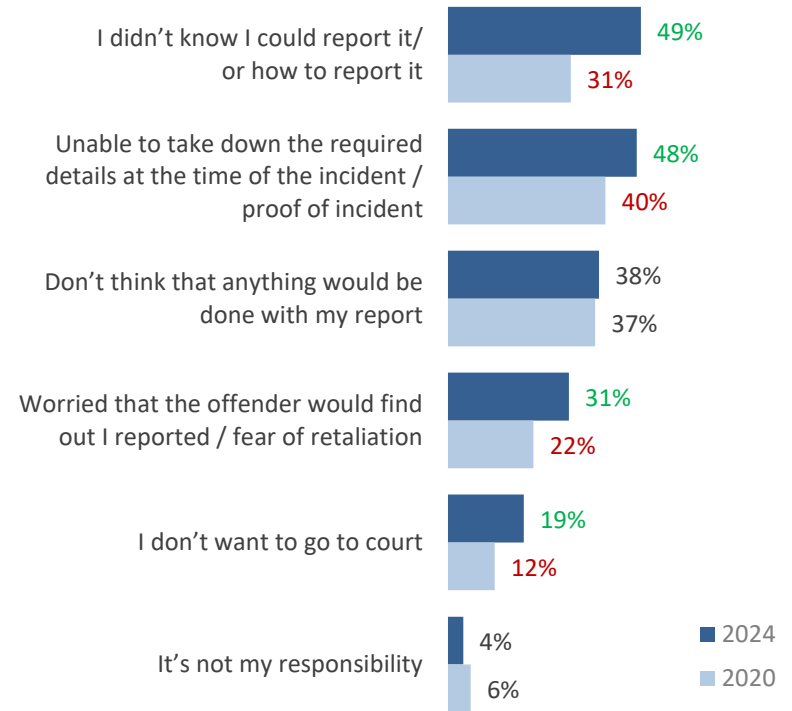
Since 2020, the proportion of people who have considered reporting a littering act has significantly increased. However, fewer have actually made a report. Barriers to reporting include a lack of knowledge of how to report the offence (49%), being unable to obtain details about the offender at the time (48%) and feeling that nothing will happen if a report is made (38%). Barriers for those who have considered reporting littering are similar to those who have not.

REPORTED A LITTERING ACT



Four in five (78%) people who have reported a littering offence were unaware that fines are issued based on reports provided by the public

BARRIERS TO REPORTING LITTERING ACTS

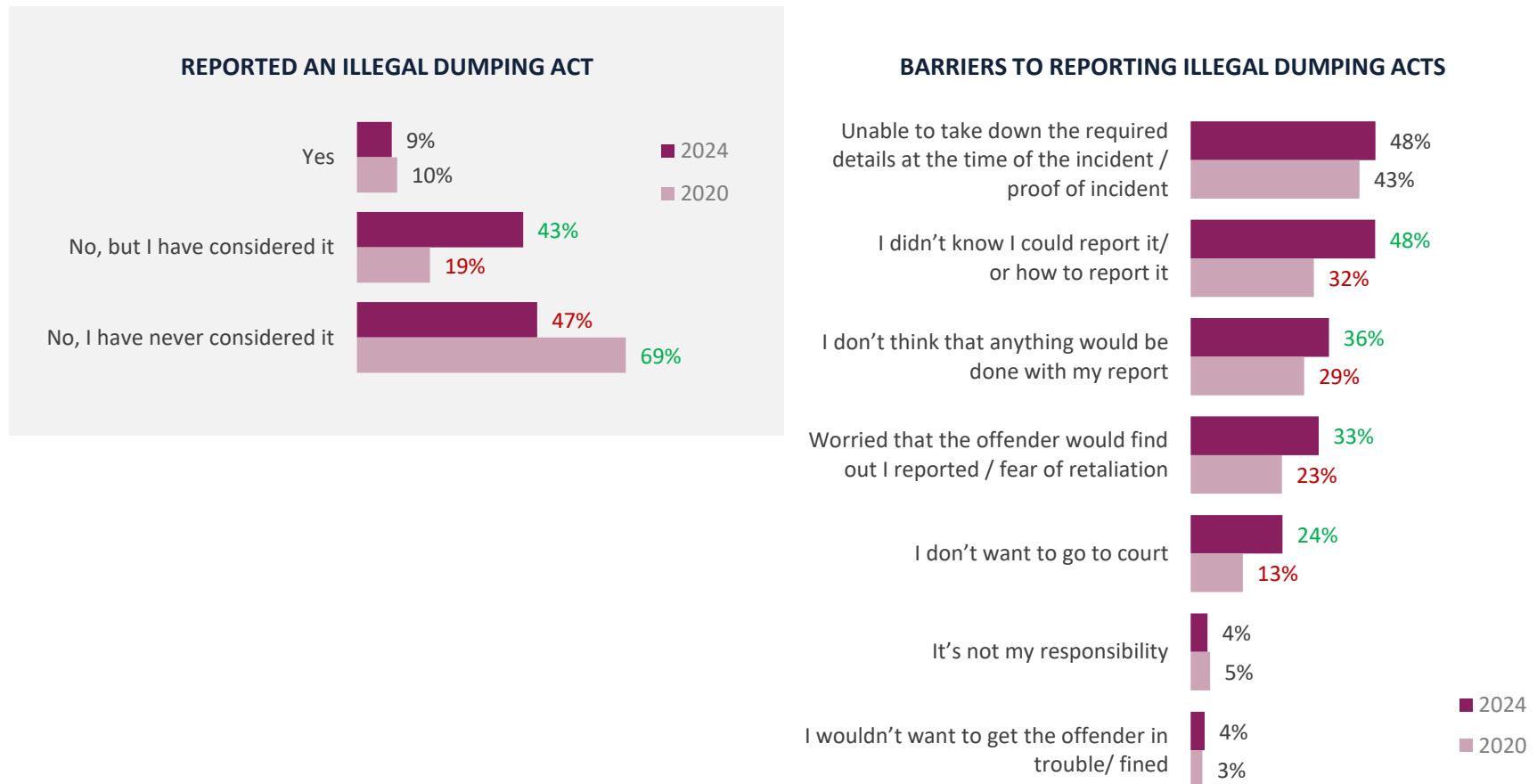


Base: All respondents (2020 n=2,000, 2024 n=2,000) q25_1 Have you ever reported a littering act?
 Base: Respondents who have not reported a littering act (2020 n=1,830, 2024 n=1,738)
 q26_1 What are the main reasons you would not report a littering act?

GREEN figures are significantly greater than RED figures

Illegal Dumping Reporting Behaviour

As with littering, more people have considered reporting dumping since 2020. Barriers to reporting illegal dumping include being unable to obtain details about the offender at the time (48%), not knowing how to report the offence (48%) and feeling that nothing will happen if a report is made (36%). Barriers for those who have considered reporting illegal dumping are similar to those who have not.



Base: All respondents (2020 n=2,000, 2024 n=2,000) q25_2 Have you ever reported an illegal dumping act?

Base: Respondents who have not reported an illegal dumping act (2020 n=1,783, 2024 n=1,765)

q26_2 What are the main reasons you would not report an illegal dumping act?

GREEN figures are significantly greater than RED figures

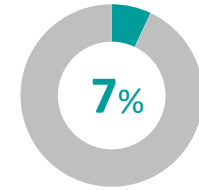
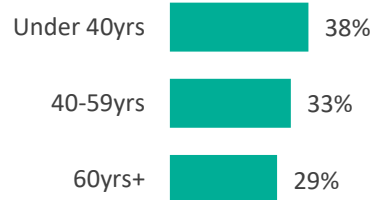
Respondent Profile

Respondent Profile (1)

GENDER

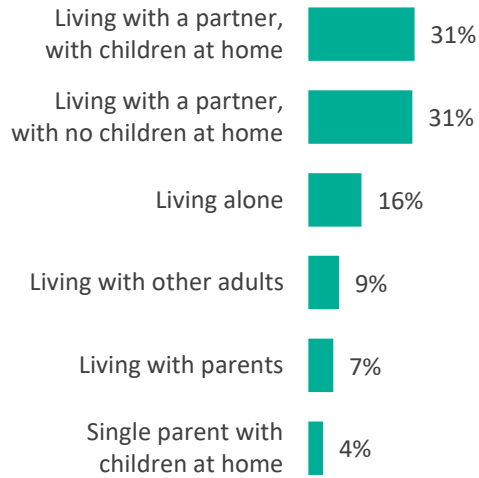


AGE

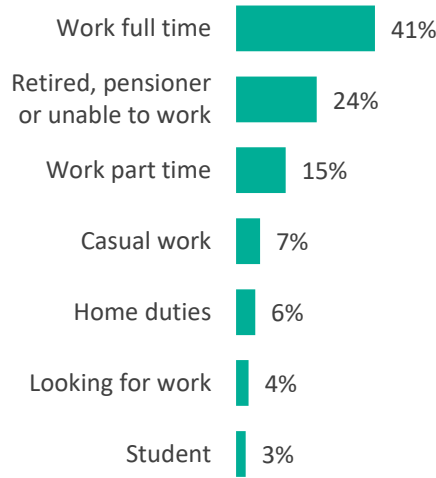


Speak a language other than English at home

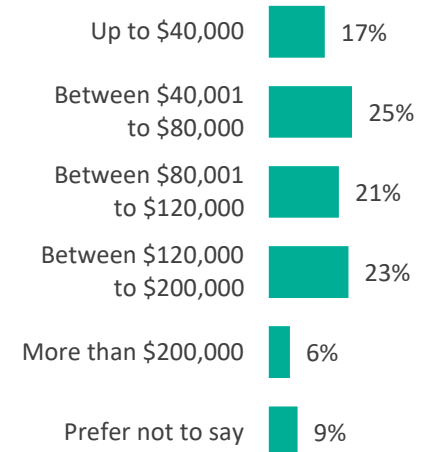
HOUSEHOLD



EMPLOYMENT STATUS

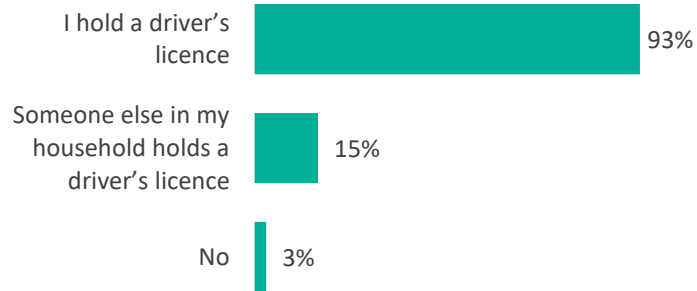


HOUSEHOLD INCOME

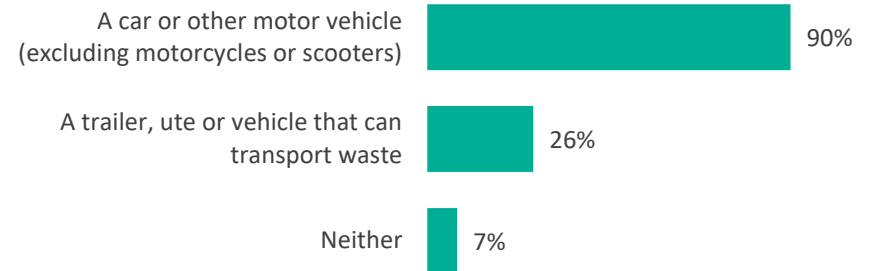


Respondent Profile (2)

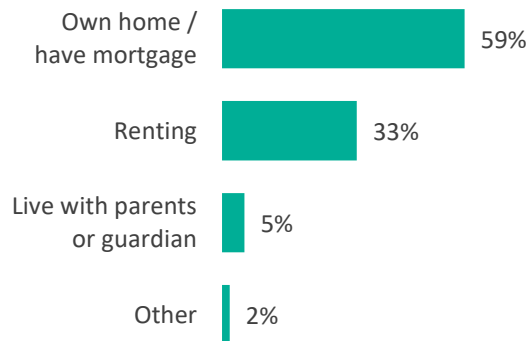
CURRENT DRIVER'S LICENCE



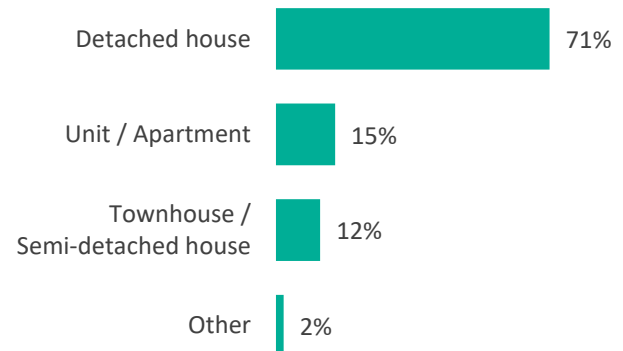
VEHICLE / TRAILER OWNERSHIP



LIVING SITUATION



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