

We Will Be Heard

2021 UK Black Pride Survey Report

Stonewall

UK BLACK PRIDE

NYX
PROFESSIONAL MAKEUP

Introduction

I know firsthand the racism and discrimination faced by LGBTQI+ Black people and people of colour in the UK. 16 years ago, UK Black Pride was founded to create a much-needed space for our communities to escape and to breathe, to celebrate who we are, where we come from and the cultures we represent and love. UK Black Pride is not the only space, and none of the brilliant spaces created for us and by us are a fix-all for larger, structural and societal wrongs that continue to blight the lives of LGBTQI+ Black people and people of colour. As much as we'd like to live in a world that celebrates and loves us, too, we don't – and I am absolutely heartbroken to read how LGBTQI+ Black people and people of colour are treated.

We continue to be concerned at the erasure of and disregard for the lived experiences of LGBTQI+ Black people and people of colour. In two prominent examples, the Government's 2017 National LGBT Survey and the 2021 Sewell Report, the impact of racism and discrimination on LGBTQI+ Black people and people of colour was completely overlooked, but the intersection of race, sexuality and gender identity is one that demands examination. In the past 12 months, 47% of all respondents have been insulted, pestered, intimidated or harassed in person; of respondents who had experienced violence or harassment, over 56% felt that it had been motivated by their race or ethnicity, and 47% felt that it had been motivated by their sexuality.

These findings offer insights into two phenomena: the increasing anti-LGBTQI+

discrimination across British society, and the racism experienced by LGBTQI+ Black people and people of colour within the LGBTQI+ communities. The refusal to acknowledge the particular and specific harm caused LGBTQI+ Black people and people of colour in this country continues to exacerbate violence and discrimination against our communities. And well-publicised and long-running failures by organisations "committed" to providing safe spaces for the LGBTQI+ community continue to reveal a consistent lack of meaningful actions to address racism, transphobia, Islamophobia and discrimination among our own ranks.

Hostile coverage about trans people in British media continues to contribute to challenges for trans and non-binary people in our communities. A general feeling of unsafety in public has impacted the mental health and wellbeing of our trans and non-binary siblings, as they continue to avoid public bathrooms, gyms and sports groups. Islamophobia in the media and across British society is impacting our Asian and Asian British siblings, and those who are read as Muslim whether or not they are: 70% avoid certain streets because of feeling unsafe and 55% adjust the way they dress in public.

Nevertheless, we were delighted to read about a high level of openness about sexuality and gender identity among our respondents: 99% are open about their sexual orientation with at least one person in their lives, and 95% of trans and nonbinary respondents are open about their gender identity. It seems, though,



that our communities feel less confident about showing up as themselves in the workplace and with their colleagues: 46% of respondents aren't open about their gender identity and 39% aren't open about their sexuality. This perhaps speaks to the questionable efficacy of diversity and inclusion initiatives, particularly when the experiences of LGBTQI+ Black people and people of colour are routinely treated as less important. Crucially, we have some intracommunal work to do: 84% of respondents aren't open with any of their family members about their sexuality, and 59% are not open about their gender identity.

The question I'm asked most often, ad absurdum, is "Why is UK Black Pride necessary?" Despite me having answered this question for 16 years, it still requires explaining, though not to those who need, enjoy and participate in the spaces we build. UK Black Pride is both an escape from the reality of racism, sexism and discrimination in this country and a much-needed space to celebrate together the depth, breadth and diversity of our communities. When asked what brings our respondents joy, one response stood out for me: "Being celebrated for who I am and being with my chosen family who I know will support and uplift me. Being with others and just breathing, existing and thriving. Being seen and held."

The findings presented in our inaugural survey offer much to be considered, for us as UK Black Pride and for those who care at all about how LGBTQI+ Black people and people of colour

are treated. Each of us deserves respect, safety and acceptance. Each of us deserves to have our experiences counted and to inform the provision of services. Each of us deserves to have our voice heard. The work ahead of us at UK Black Pride is the building of our first Community Action Plan, through which we'll distribute funding to organisations working in service of LGBTQI+ Black people and people of colour, and which address some of the key findings within this report. Our hope is that other organisations will join us in committing to addressing and redressing some of the disparities made clear here.

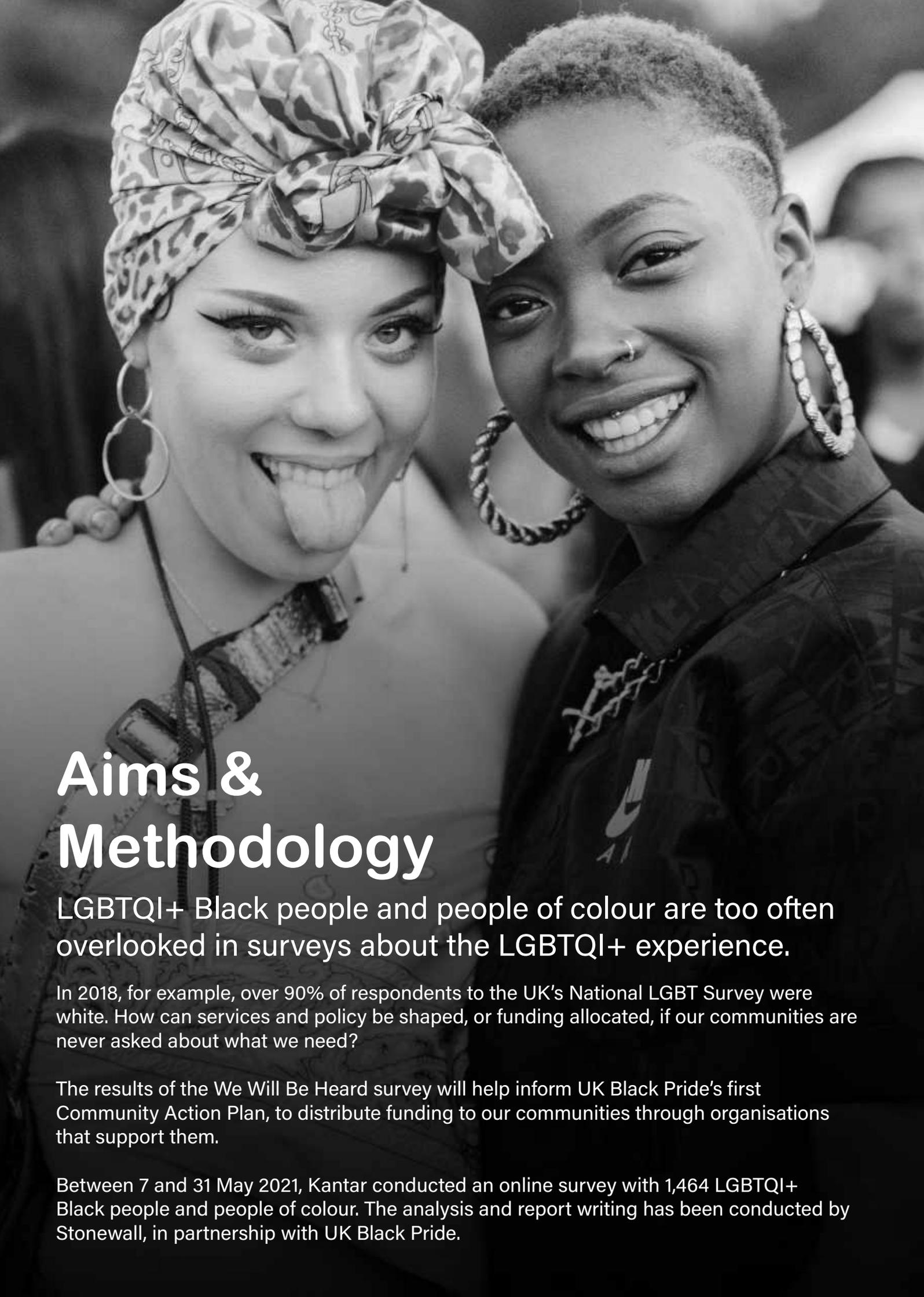
I'd like to thank Kantar and Stonewall for their work in the delivery and analysis of our survey, and to NYX Professional Makeup for their funding of this report and support of our Community Action Plan. I'd also like to extend a special thank you to our volunteers, Aisha Shaibu and Josh Rivers, who spent a great deal of their time making this survey and Community Action Plan a reality.

Finally, thank you to our respondents. 1,464 of you raised your voices and shared with us your experience of life in the UK. We have heard you and we will take action.

In love, unity and solidarity

Lady Phyll

Co-founder and executive director,
UK Black Pride



Aims & Methodology

LGBTQI+ Black people and people of colour are too often overlooked in surveys about the LGBTQI+ experience.

In 2018, for example, over 90% of respondents to the UK's National LGBT Survey were white. How can services and policy be shaped, or funding allocated, if our communities are never asked about what we need?

The results of the We Will Be Heard survey will help inform UK Black Pride's first Community Action Plan, to distribute funding to our communities through organisations that support them.

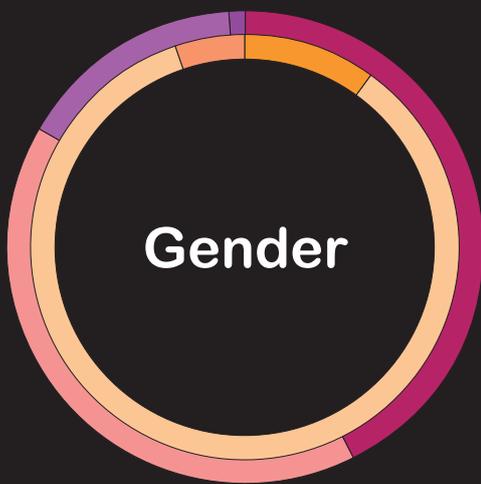
Between 7 and 31 May 2021, Kantar conducted an online survey with 1,464 LGBTQI+ Black people and people of colour. The analysis and report writing has been conducted by Stonewall, in partnership with UK Black Pride.



- 44% of respondents were Black / Black British (23% Caribbean and 16% African)
- 30% of respondents were from mixed or multiple ethnic backgrounds
- 18% of respondents were Asian / Asian British (11% Indian, 4% Pakistani, 2% Chinese and 1% Bangladeshi)
- 3% of respondents were Latinx and 1% Arab



- 51% of respondents were gay or lesbian
- 20% were queer
- 15% were bi
- 7% were pansexual
- 2% were ace



- 41% of respondents were women
- 39% were men
- 15% were non-binary
- 84% were cis or non-trans
- 10% of respondents were trans
- 5% were unsure whether or not they were trans
- 1% were intersex



- 21% of respondents were aged 16-24
- 42% were aged 25-34
- 22% were aged 35-44
- 15% were aged 45 and over

Key Findings

UKBP Actions

Respondents were eager for UK Black Pride to increase its range of activities – they were looking for support through more regular events and support services. They also stressed that they wanted these activities to be more inclusive, especially of Asian and Asian British respondents and those who live outside of London.

Impact of COVID

Respondents were particularly concerned about the impact of COVID and lockdown on their mental health, with over half (53%) saying that decreased mental wellbeing was a major concern. Almost half (47%) of respondents said that they had a mental health condition.

Discrimination & Harassment

In the past 12 months, nearly half of all respondents (47%) have been insulted, pestered, intimidated or harassed in person. Of respondents who had experienced violence or harassment, over half (56%) felt that it had been motivated by their race or ethnicity, and just under half (47%) felt that it had been motivated by their sexuality.

LGBTQI+ Spaces

The survey highlighted the importance of welcoming and inclusive LGBTQI+ spaces. Over 85% of respondents had attended an LGBTQI+ space near them, and before COVID over half had attended at least once per month.

At the same time, the survey also highlighted how many general LGBTQI+ spaces are still failing to include and protect the whole community. A third of respondents (33%) had experienced discrimination or harassment in an LGBTQI+ space due to their race or ethnic origin.







Inclusion

Joy

Our survey asked respondents what sparks joy for them as a Black person or person of colour.

Their answers emphasised the importance of accepting and inclusive communities. Nearly half (46%) of respondents said that a sense of community and seeing the community thrive brought them joy.

“Community, getting together with people who understand you and your identity.”

“Being with other people who identify as LGBTQI+ or person of colour – it’s easy, like a sigh of relief.”

“The kaleidoscope of vibrant beauty of our community. The fact that more of us are telling our stories and becoming more visible. The sense of belonging.”

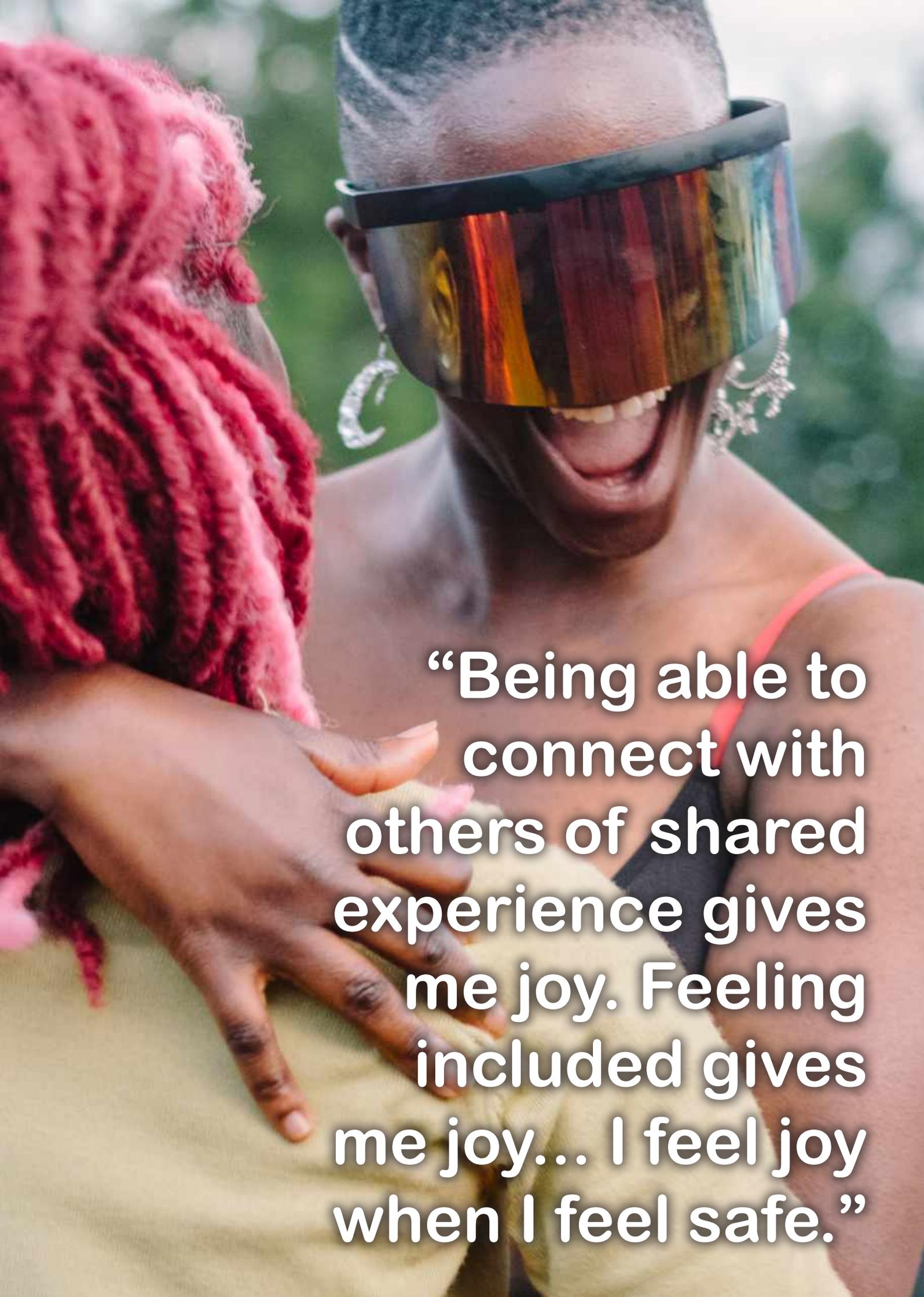
Respondents also emphasised the importance of a community that is accepting and inclusive (12%).

“Recognition that there are differences in our experiences within the community and we need to recognise that.”

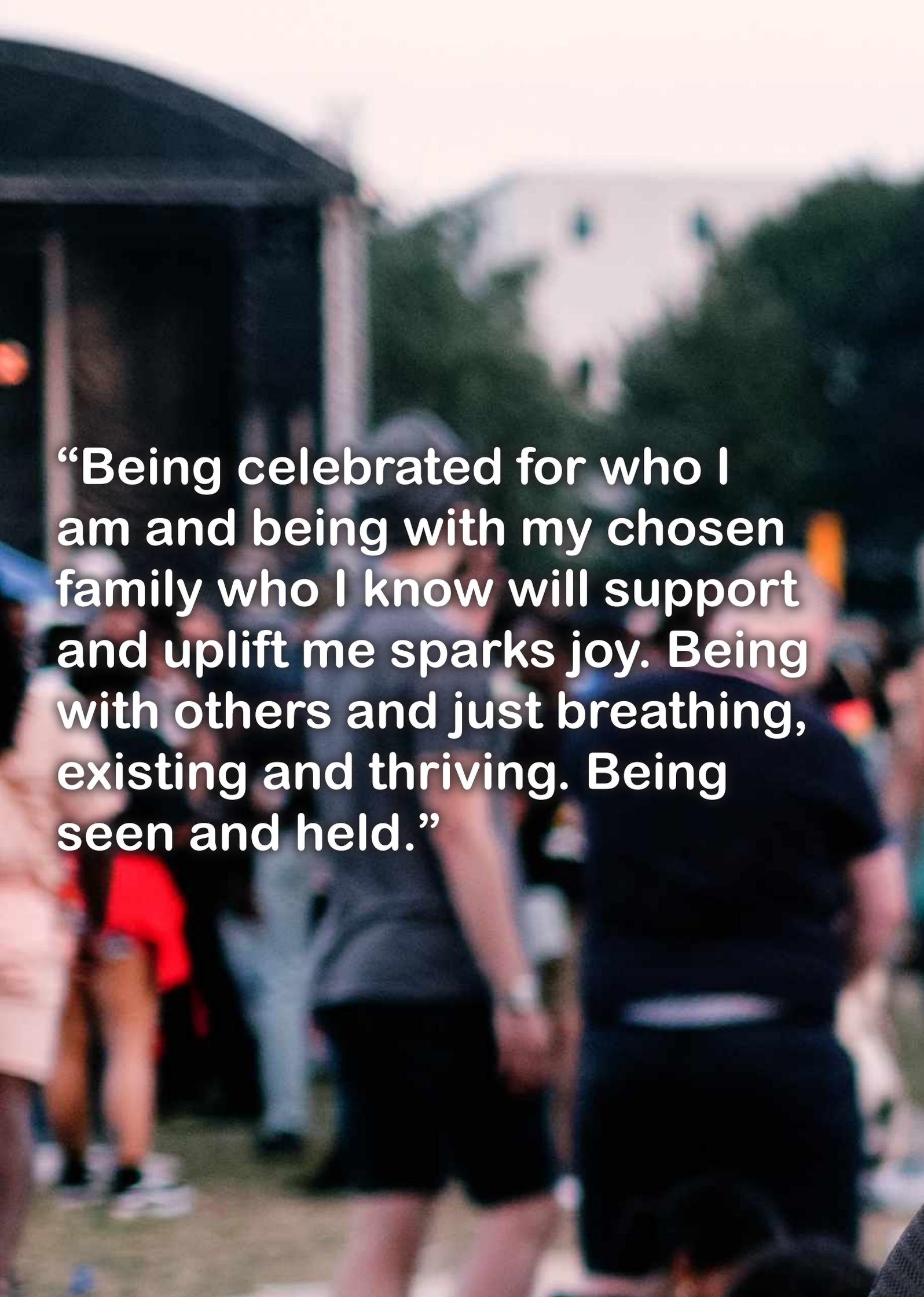
Other things that sparked joy for respondents included simply being themselves (19%), and spending time with their family and chosen family (11%).

These responses demonstrated that when communities are inclusive and welcoming for LGBTQI+ Black people and people of colour, they can be essential to their sense of wellbeing and joy.





“Being able to connect with others of shared experience gives me joy. Feeling included gives me joy... I feel joy when I feel safe.”



“Being celebrated for who I am and being with my chosen family who I know will support and uplift me sparks joy. Being with others and just breathing, existing and thriving. Being seen and held.”





“As a QPOC, for me, true joy is being with other people like me. When I first went to a gay bar with my queer friends I realised for the first time in my life I didn’t feel out of place.”



Community and Connection

Even during lockdown, the vast majority of respondents said they felt able to connect with people that they did not currently live with.

This suggests that the connections to friends and community experienced by many respondents remained strong.

Eight in ten respondents (80%) said they felt able to connect with people that they did not currently live with.

However, this was not the same across all groups. Non-binary and trans respondents were more likely to say that they would like to connect with others, but felt unable to do so (19% of non-binary and 21% of trans respondents, compared to 13% overall). This was also more common amongst young people: 15% of 16-24 year olds, and 16% of 25-34 year olds, also said that they felt unable to connect with others despite wanting to.

"It's difficult as an immigrant without my family here. The pandemic has prevented me seeing friends and forming new friendships. Increase sense of loneliness."

"Knowing others like me are around, but still a struggle to find them and have face to face interaction."

Many respondents said that being open with others about their sexuality or gender identity made them feel more connected. Levels of openness were high: 99% of respondents were open about their sexual orientation with at least one person in their lives, and 95% of trans and nonbinary respondents were open about their gender identity.

"I don't have to hide who I am to my friends and family and I am in a strong 13 year relationship."

"Moving beyond feelings of shame. Connecting with family as my full self."





Respondents were most likely to be open with their close friends: 98% of respondents were open with one or more close friends about their sexuality, and 92% were open with at least one close friend about their gender identity.

They were also very likely to be open with their romantic or sexual partners (93% were open with partners about their sexuality, and 82% were open with partners about their gender identity).

People were least likely to be open with work colleagues: 61% were open with work colleagues about their sexuality, and 54% about their gender identity.



They were also generally less likely to be open with family members: 84% weren't open with any of their family members about their sexuality, and 59% about their gender identity.

Bi respondents were half as likely to be out to all their family (13% compared to 26% of all respondents).

This is in line with other research which suggests that bi people are less likely to be out than their lesbian or gay counterparts, as in Stonewall's Bi Report which found that 20% of Bi respondents were out to all their family, compared to 63% of gay and lesbian people.

Asian and Asian British respondents were also less likely to be open with their family members: 17% were open with all of their family members, compared to 26% of all respondents.

"Seeing others live freely, authentically and full of love. I'm unable to do that at the moment unless I live a double life or cut myself off completely from my family, it breaks my heart but seeing others so proudly living their truth makes me warm."

Over two in five (42%) of respondents said that they visit family less often because they don't feel accepted for who they are. This was particularly high amongst Pakistani respondents (78%), as well as trans and non-binary respondents (67% and 64%).





“I like and enjoy being different, I also enjoy being part of a different and diverse community. Diversity is such a rich and vital aspect of society. Although it is a shame that I am still seen as different in many ways, but that’s the way it is for now and I do my best to embrace this.”



Where connection and openness with families of origin can be difficult for many respondents, chosen families and LGBTQI+ communities are particularly important.

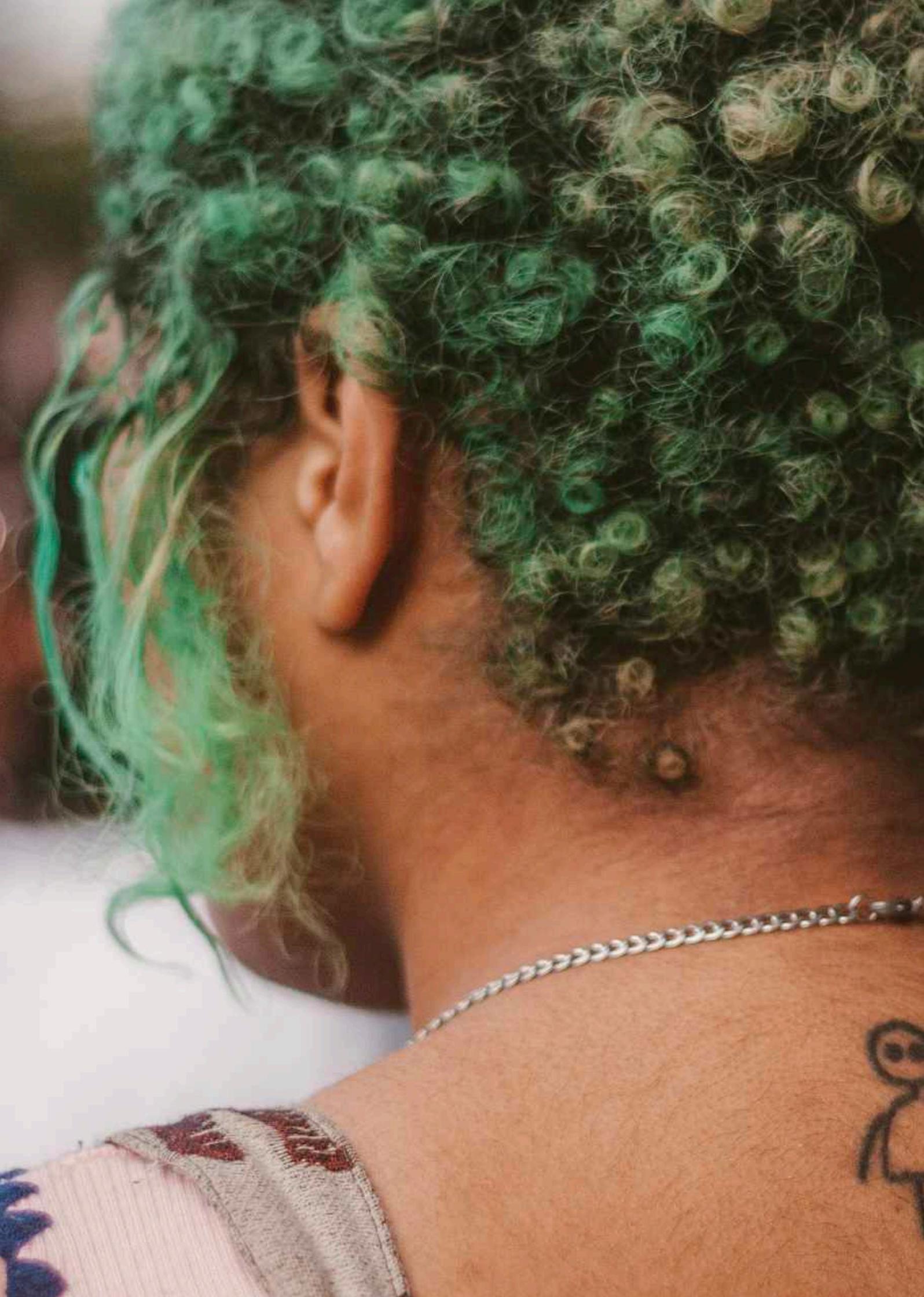
Nearly half (49%) of respondents were not aware of any LGBTQI+ spaces in their local area. However, of those who were aware, over 85% had attended one of these spaces. These findings show the continued lack of LGBTQI+ spaces. Those that do exist are often geographically concentrated, making them less accessible for people who live elsewhere. At the same time, the high rates of attendance amongst people who do live near these spaces shows the enthusiasm for LGBTQI+ spaces where they do exist. Before COVID, over half (57%) of respondents who knew of a local LGBTQI+ space had attended at least once a month.



This is higher than among white LGBTQI+ survey respondents, suggesting again that LGBTQI+ communities are particularly important for LGBTQI+ Black people and people of colour: Stonewall's LGBT in Britain research found that 21% of white respondents attended LGBTQI+ spaces at least once a month. 36% of white LGBT in Britain respondents had never attended any LGBTQI+ spaces, compared to 15% of We Will Be Heard respondents.

"For me, being able to go to voguing classes and ballroom events now that things are opening up has made me feel part of a community. I have a lot of POC queer friends and hanging out with them is nice, but it's feeling part of a scene which has a history of survival and resistance for queer people of colour that makes me feel like I belong and am understood."







Exclusion

Discrimination and Exclusion in LGBTQI+ Spaces

Unfortunately, despite the importance of accepting and supportive spaces for LGBTQI+ Black people and people of colour, many respondents did not find general LGBTQI+ spaces to be inclusive or welcoming.

4 in 5 (82%) respondents said they do not feel represented by LGBTQI+ media in the UK. This was particularly high amongst non-binary (91%) and trans (92%) respondents, as well as for Asian and Asian British respondents (88%).

"In media there are a lot of white LGBTQI+ people but rarely any Black or PoC, and if so they are most likely to be lesbians."

Just one quarter (25%) of respondents felt that their local LGBTQI+ spaces are welcoming for Black people and people of colour. This is far less than the 67% of white LGBT people, surveyed by LGBT in Britain, who found their local LGBT community welcoming.

One third (33%) of respondents had experienced discrimination or harassment in LGBTQI+ spaces based on their race or ethnic origin.

"Pride in London racism scandal and BLM movement highlighted the constant disregard and exclusion of black LGBTQIA people from liberation movements. This has had a negative impact on my mental health because it is a constant reminder that black LGBTQIA+ lives do not matter to people and we are constantly othered in society. Constantly having to defend our identity and humanity feels like a losing battle. It gets me down and angry because we deserve a lot more."





“Being able to relate my experiences which are intersectional to people and characters in media just makes me so happy.”

A close-up photograph of a person's ear, showing several silver hoop earrings stacked vertically. The person has short, dark hair. The background is blurred, suggesting an outdoor setting. The text is overlaid on the lower half of the image.

“The UK is feeling more and more inhospitable to Black/Black mixed race and South Asian bodies. I’ve heard many Islamophobic comments including in LGBTQ+ spaces.”



LGBTQI+ Black people and people of colour are far more likely to experience discrimination and harassment in LGBTQI+ spaces.

"I attended online BiCon 2020 for the first time. It became quickly apparent that as an organisation they were having significant issues regarding racism within their community and organising team. Despite introducing anti-racism training to some attendees (for those without lived experience of racism) attending that year, it felt forced and awkward for me attending as one of very few PoC. The only space I felt comfortable in was the Bi-POC only session."

Asian and Asian British respondents were particularly likely to find their local LGBTQI+ spaces unwelcoming (32% found them unwelcoming, compared to 24% of all respondents), and disproportionately likely to have experienced racist discrimination in these spaces.

49% of Asian British respondents had experienced harassment or discrimination in an LGBTQI+ space because of their race or ethnicity, rising to 59% amongst specifically Pakistani respondents.

"As someone with Chinese heritage, I do feel isolated even within LGBT POC circles. I fully acknowledge my privilege as a 'model minority' and that Asians don't experience the same barriers as Black people do. But it doesn't mean that we don't have barriers. LGBT Chinese women are often fetishised. Casual racism and microaggressions even amongst the LGBT community, is rife. The complexities and nuances of Chinese culture mean that many of us are disowned by our families. The shooting of Asian-American women in the last year didn't cause a stir, and I think it reinforces that message of, we're invisible. We're invisible even to LGBT POC groups, and that makes me feel really disappointed."

19% of non-binary and 22% of trans respondents had experienced discrimination or harassment in LGBTQI+ spaces based on their gender identity. Only 22% of respondents had not experienced any discrimination or harassment in these spaces. Again, this is significantly lower than for white respondents surveyed for LGBT in Britain, 55% of whom had not experienced any discrimination or poor treatment from others in their local LGBT community.

Discrimination and Exclusion in Public Spaces

Many respondents have found public spaces to be unsafe for them, and have been forced to adjust their behaviour as a result.

Over half (54%) of respondents agreed that they would feel uncomfortable walking down the street while holding their partner's hand. 3 in 5 (61%) agreed that they avoid certain streets because they do not feel safe there, and nearly half (45%) said they adjusted the way they dress in public because of fear of discrimination and harassment.

This suggests much higher levels of discomfort than experienced by the white LGBTQI+ people surveyed for LGBT in Britain, 36% of whom would not feel comfortable walking down the street holding their partner's hand, 28% avoided certain streets due to feeling unsafe, and 20% adjusted the way they dress in public.

Asian and Asian British respondents are particularly likely to feel unsafe in public spaces.

64% said they would not feel safe walking down the street while holding their partner's hand, 70% avoid certain streets because of feeling unsafe, and 55% adjust the way they dress in public. This is particularly the case for Pakistani respondents – for example, 78% of Pakistani respondents would avoid certain streets because they do not feel safe there – suggesting that this may be as a result of public Islamophobia, or hostility towards people perceived as Muslim.

Trans and non-binary people are particularly likely to feel uncomfortable using public toilets: 70% of trans and 62% of nonbinary respondents said they would feel uncomfortable, compared to 27% of all respondents.

They are also more likely to avoid using the gym or participating in sports groups, due to fear of discrimination or harassment: 64% of trans and 49% of non-binary respondents feel unsafe while at the gym or in sport groups, compared to 28% of all respondents.

This demonstrates the devastating effect of hostile media coverage focussing on trans people's, particularly trans women's, participation in sport and use of toilets. The US Transgender Survey (2015), the largest survey of its kind, found that 12% of respondents had been verbally harassed, physically attacked or sexually assaulted when using a public toilet in the year prior to being surveyed. 32% of respondents said they avoided drinking or eating to minimise their use of public toilets, and 8% had developed a urinary tract infection or other kidney-related problems due to avoiding using public toilets.

This suggests much higher levels of discomfort than experienced by the white LGBTQI+ people surveyed for LGBT in Britain, 36% of whom would not feel comfortable walking down the street holding their partner's hand, 28% avoided certain streets due to feeling unsafe, and 20% adjusted the way they dress in public.

Trans and non-binary respondents were also more likely to say that they do not feel safe in the street or area where they live (29% of trans and 30% of non-binary respondents, compared to 17% of all respondents).

Nearly half of all respondents (47%) have been insulted, pestered, intimidated or harassed in person at least once in the past year, compared to 27% of white respondents to the LGBT in Britain survey.





“I feel scared at increased anti-Asian violence, angry at being gaslighted and hopeless as no sign of any real change.”

“These have been distressing and frightening, more so because we, as a species seem to be devolving. Trump’s overt and obvious racist rhetoric has pushed civil rights and race relations back decades. My personal experience of fear was when UKIP were running in the last election and my immediate neighbours had UKIP posters in their windows.”

39% of respondents have been insulted, pestered or harassed online in the past year. This was higher amongst Pakistani respondents (59%), trans respondents (57%) and non-binary respondents (54%).

A quarter of respondents (25%) said that they have experienced unwanted sexual contact in the past year.

22% of respondents had been threatened with violence, and 10% had been physically assaulted.

“Feel scared at increased anti-Asian violence, angry at being gaslighted and hopeless as no sign of any real change.”

Of respondents who had experienced one or more of these violent or threatening incidents, over half (56%) felt that this had been motivated by their race or ethnicity, and just under half (47%) felt that it had been motivated by their sexuality.

84% of trans respondents and 63% of non-binary respondents felt that incidents they experienced had been motivated by their gender identity or expression.

Nearly half of Pakistani respondents (43%) felt that the incident was motivated by their religion or religious beliefs, compared to 8% of all respondents. Although of course not all Pakistani respondents are Muslim, this suggests again that Islamophobia or hostility towards people perceived as Muslim was also a significant factor in these incidents.

20% of disabled respondents felt that the incident had been motivated by their disability.

Mental Health

Mental health issues were particularly prevalent amongst survey respondents.

This aligns with existing studies that show poorer mental health outcomes for marginalised groups, including LGBTQI+ people and people of colour, in part as a result of the exclusion and discrimination these groups experience.¹

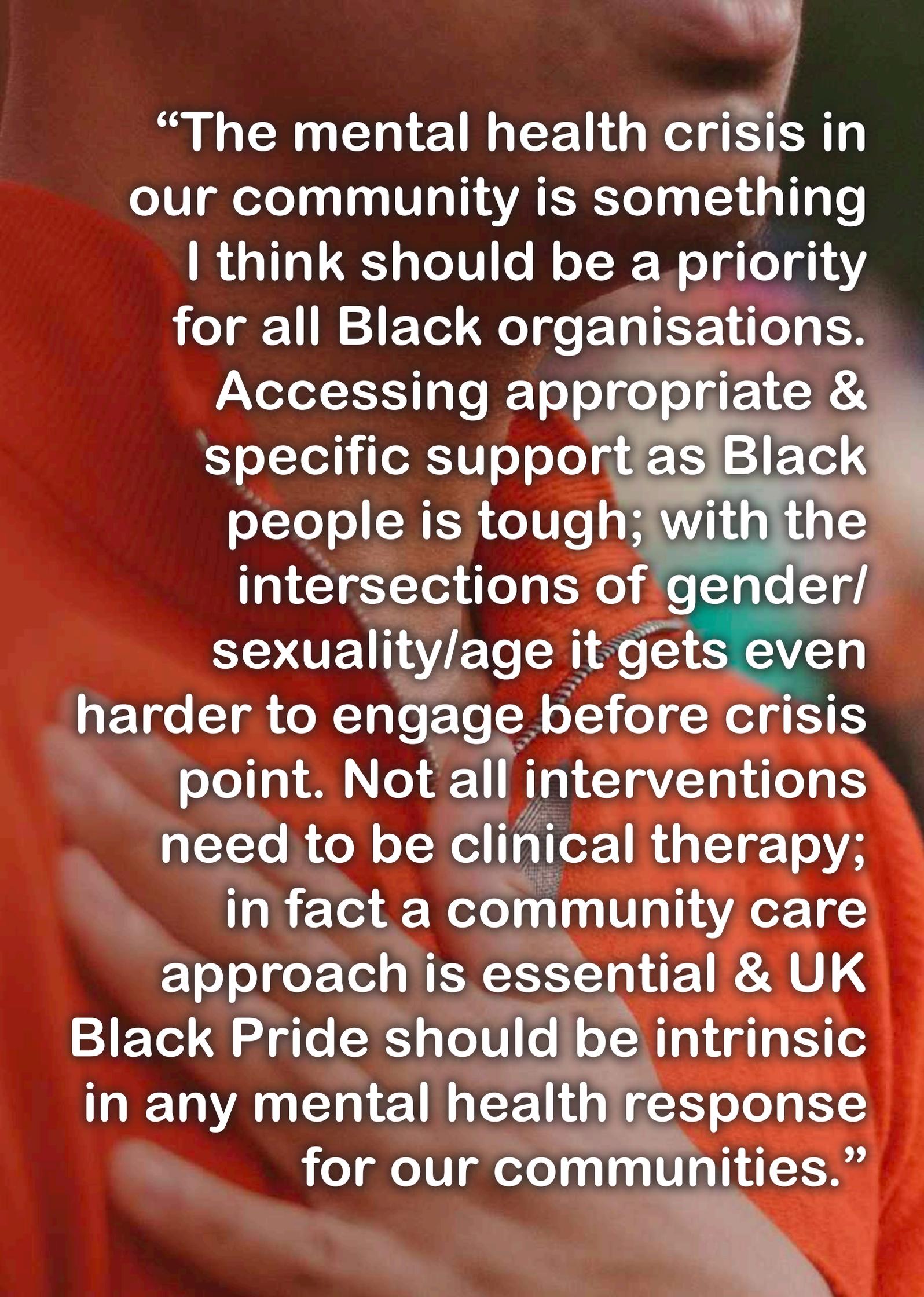
Almost half (48%) of respondents said that they have a mental health condition.

This was higher among young people, with 61% of 16-24 year olds reporting that they have a mental health condition. The figures were also higher amongst non-binary (73%) and trans respondents (77%).

Of those who had a mental health condition, just over half (53%) had accessed mental health services. 16% had tried to access services, but had been unsuccessful, while three in ten (30%) had not tried to access services.

Of those who had accessed or tried to access mental health services, over four in five (86%) had experienced barriers in doing so. The most commonly-reported barriers were too long waiting times (55%), too high costs (38%) and a belief that mental health services did not understand their specific needs (33%).

¹ Health Survey England Additional Analyses: Health and health-related behaviours of Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual adults (2021); American Psychiatric Association, Mental Health Disparities: Diverse Populations (2021)



“The mental health crisis in our community is something I think should be a priority for all Black organisations. Accessing appropriate & specific support as Black people is tough; with the intersections of gender/sexuality/age it gets even harder to engage before crisis point. Not all interventions need to be clinical therapy; in fact a community care approach is essential & UK Black Pride should be intrinsic in any mental health response for our communities.”

Queer (41%), non-binary (44%) and trans (48%) respondents were particularly likely to feel that mental health services did not understand their specific needs, as were disabled respondents (39%).

In addition to increased low-cost mental health provision, education for mental health professionals about the specific circumstances and needs of LGBTQI+ Black people and people of colour is clearly needed to remove some of the most common barriers to accessing mental health care.

7% of non-binary and 15% of trans respondents had also experienced harassment or discrimination from mental health professionals based on their gender identities.

"An online database of QTIPOC therapists/counsellors. If I want to find such mental health professionals, I do not know where to go. I accept that accessing mental health privately is expensive, but some of us can afford to pay. The next step is to encourage donations (or seek funding) to then offer these services free for people on low incomes."



Impact of COVID

The COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns have affected everyone in some way, but the impact has been particularly devastating on communities that were already marginalised.

Existing research has shown that Black people and people of colour are more likely to die of the virus.² People with lower incomes (which also disproportionately include Black people and people of colour) have also been the hardest hit in terms of socio-economic deprivation as a result of the crisis.

Over a year into the pandemic, respondents said that they were most concerned about the impact of the crisis on their mental health, and feelings of isolation.

Over half (53%) of respondents were particularly concerned about decreased mental wellbeing due to COVID and lockdown. This was particularly high amongst young people – 7 in 10 16-24 year olds (70%) said that they were particularly worried about declining mental health.

“Big decline in mental health, I have been in therapy since the pandemic has started which leaves me vulnerable and unstable most days. I limit the amount of news I watch and I am no longer on social media. It reminds me that I have much work to do in activism and I will continue to work on unlearning bias.”

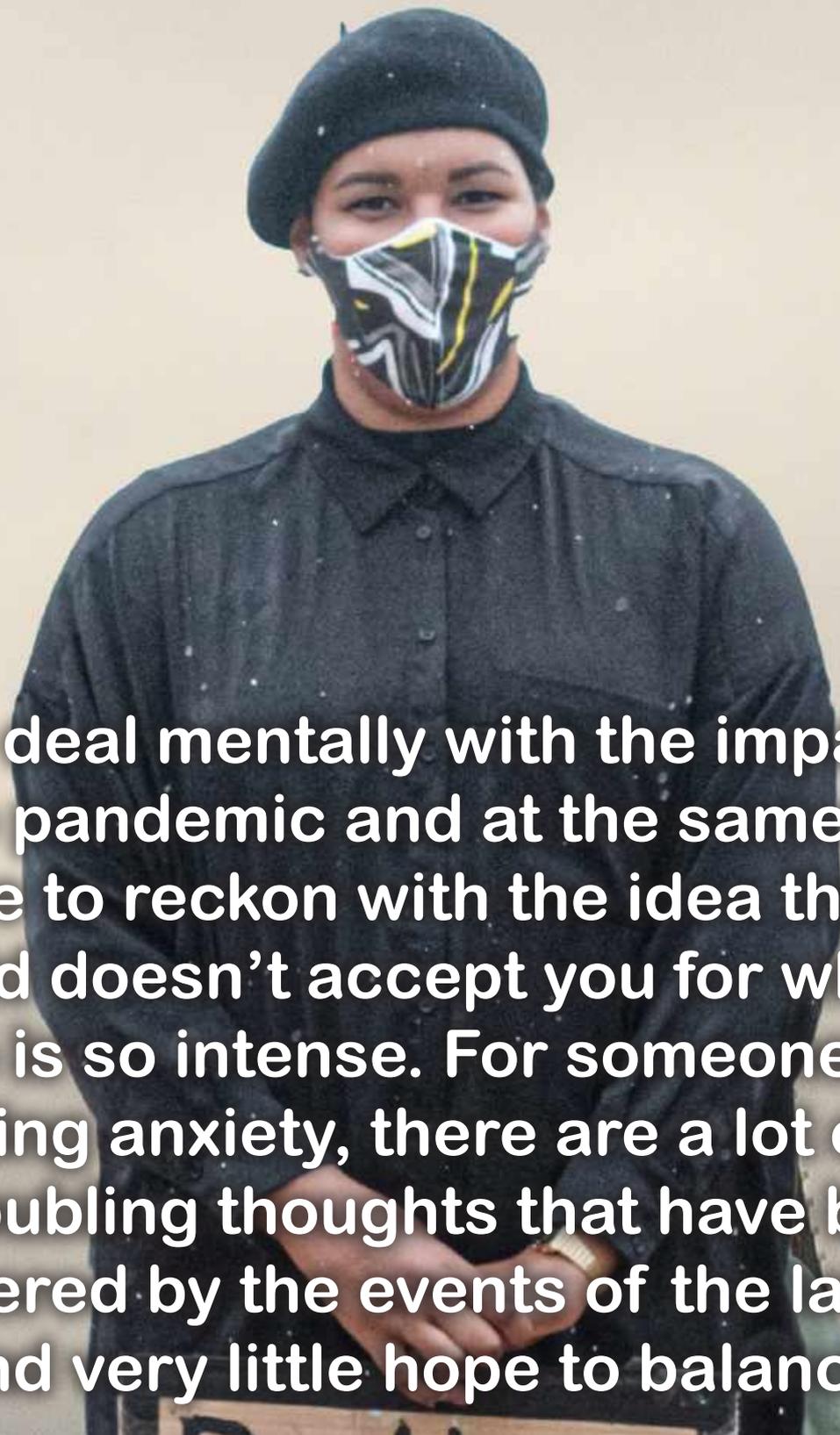
Other major concerns included being unable to see family and friends (43%), being worried about the health of family and friends (36%), and increased isolation (36%).

“The impact has been debilitating. The threat of illness or death from the COVID-19 pandemic terrified me. I was worried for my family, parents and close friends. [...] I have felt trapped by my inability to join protests because of the pandemic. I have suffered from depression throughout the period of the pandemic and self-harmed for the first time in my life. I have sought psychological therapy in the past 2 months and fortunately feel safer now and no longer feel at risk of harming myself.”

25% of respondents were particularly concerned about the financial impact of COVID and lockdown, compared to 10% of white respondents to Stonewall’s January 2021 COVID survey. This reflects the more precarious employment and financial situation of many people of colour: half of respondents saw some change in their employment over the course of the pandemic, primarily being placed on furlough (9%) or made redundant (6%).

² Public Health England, Disparities in the risk and outcomes of COVID-19 (2020), p. 39

Trans respondents were particularly likely to be concerned about decreased access to healthcare: 24% of trans respondents cited this as a major concern, compared to 11% of cis (non-trans) respondents. This reflects inadequacies in trans healthcare provision, which have worsened during the pandemic as many Gender Identity Services suspended all of their services.



“To deal mentally with the impact of the pandemic and at the same time have to reckon with the idea that the world doesn’t accept you for who you are is so intense. For someone with existing anxiety, there are a lot of very troubling thoughts that have been triggered by the events of the last year - and very little hope to balance it.”

Even aside from the pandemic, 2020 and 2021 have been periods of enormous upheaval for our communities.

Respondents were asked about the impact of events such as the Black Lives Matter movement after the murder of George Floyd, the Government's Sewell Report denying institutional racism in the UK, and other recent events. Most said that these events had had a negative impact, with 12% saying they had caused a decline in their mental health.

"My mental health has been really bad and I'm definitely more withdrawn. I don't engage with news/media as much and as much as I want to learn I find it almost impossible to read books that include black trauma or discrimination because it's triggering of my own experience. I felt overwhelmingly trapped. You couldn't escape."

Respondents said that events made them feel concerned for the future, and felt that work was still needed:

"It's made me realise that we still have a very long way to go. Britain is still in denial about racism and in general the west. It also feels as if there is a general backlash against movements that have fought for people like me who are marginalised"

"It highlights the division, and the emboldenment of the right, which is exacerbated by the media. During the 90's/early 2000's it felt like we were still making progress on issues such as racism and homophobia. Now it feels like rather than change those views, these people just hid their thoughts and behaviours out of sight until a time when they felt empowered enough to bring them out again."

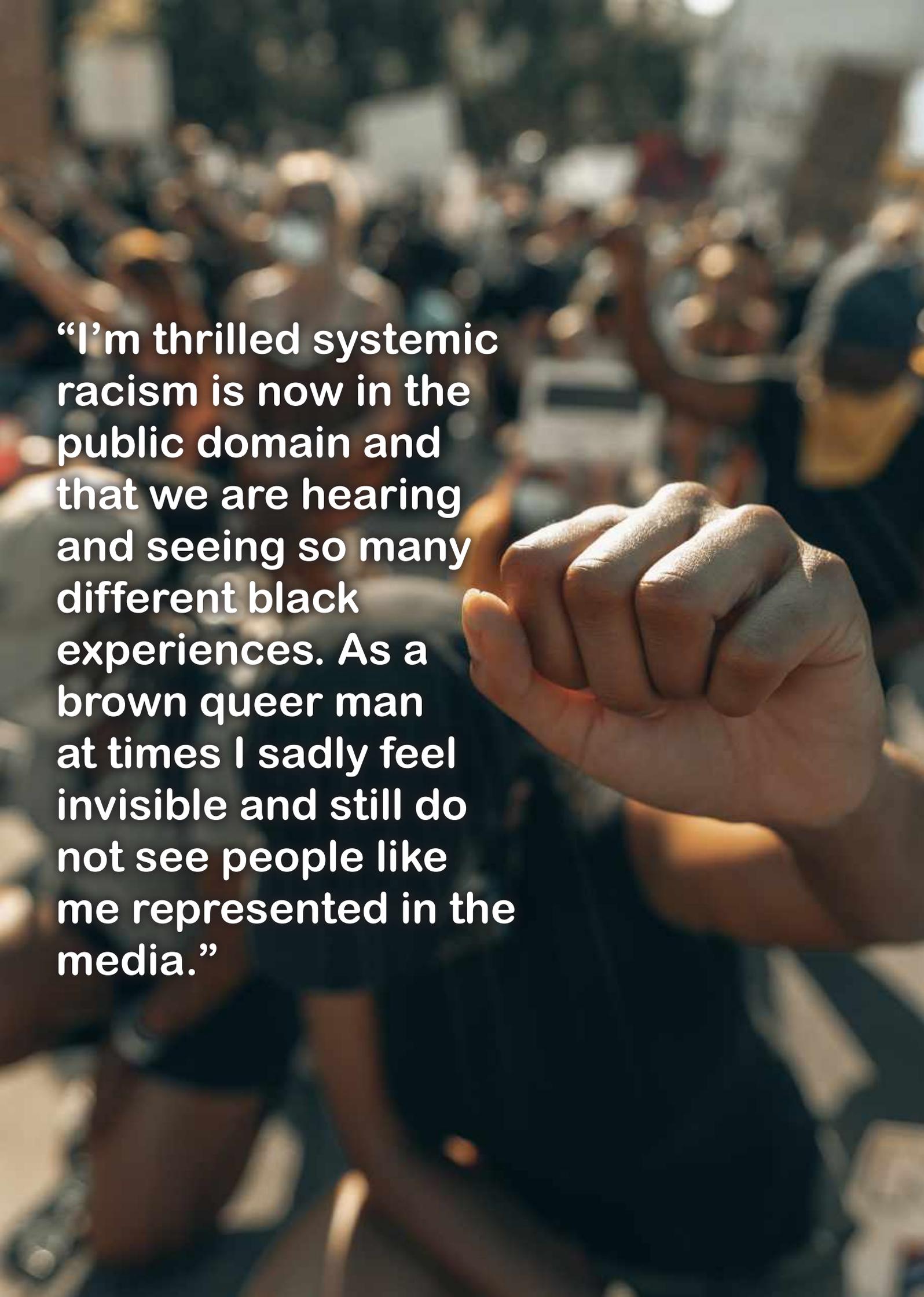
Many respondents also specifically cited the coverage of events by the media and on social media as a source of distress:

"I avoided consuming too much media because it was impacting my mental health. Seeing images of death, violence towards Black people and hearing the BBC using the N-word multiple times caused trauma and built up anger within me."





“I have grieved for many people I did not personally know, but they’re Black like me so it hurts. I am Black, I am bi, I am non-binary. I have so many people discriminating against me for one of my identities, let alone multiple. It’s emotionally, mentally, and physically tiring. I just want to live but the government, police, and mainstream society have shown me that I’m not wanted. I have no where to go on this earth where I am completely safe.”



“I’m thrilled systemic racism is now in the public domain and that we are hearing and seeing so many different black experiences. As a brown queer man at times I sadly feel invisible and still do not see people like me represented in the media.”



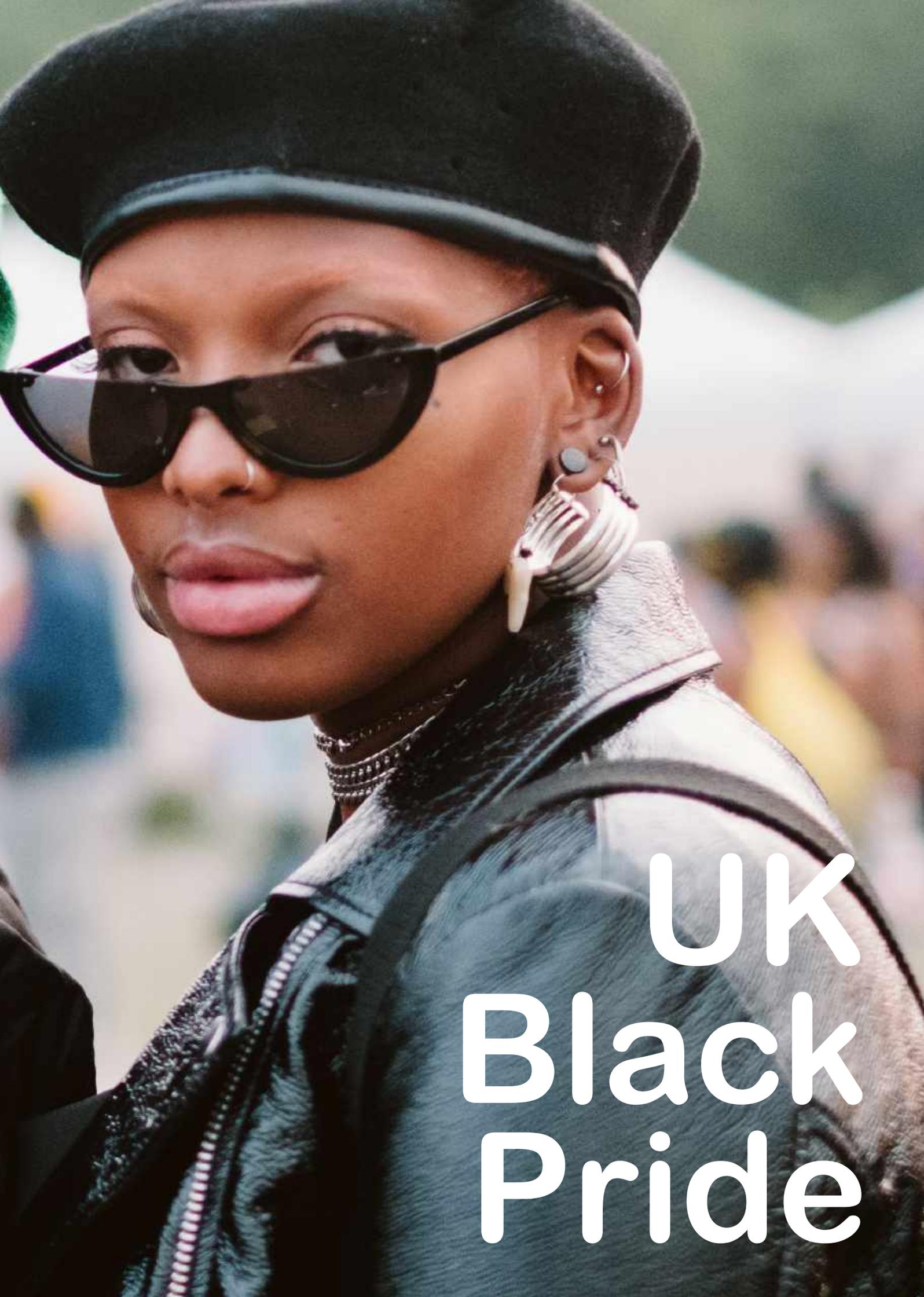
"As an activist, it's been incredibly draining and triggering. To have to watch multiple, consecutive examples of Black trauma (as George Floyd was just one of the lives taken by US law enforcement last year... there are too many to name here) was devastating. I found myself in tears, almost daily. [...] After about 3 or 4 weeks of just continuous emotional turmoil, I made the decision to turn off all of my notifications, I stopped watching mainstream media, demanded a fee for presentations, panel discussions and speeches (which meant turning down opportunities that only offered 'profile') and I set up a WhatsApp group for Black leaders and influencers so that I had everyone in one place... and so that they could form a community of sorts too.

Only 13% of respondents thought that the events of 2020 and 2021 had had a positive impact, generally citing increased awareness and conversation (5%) or feeling inspired to take action (5%).

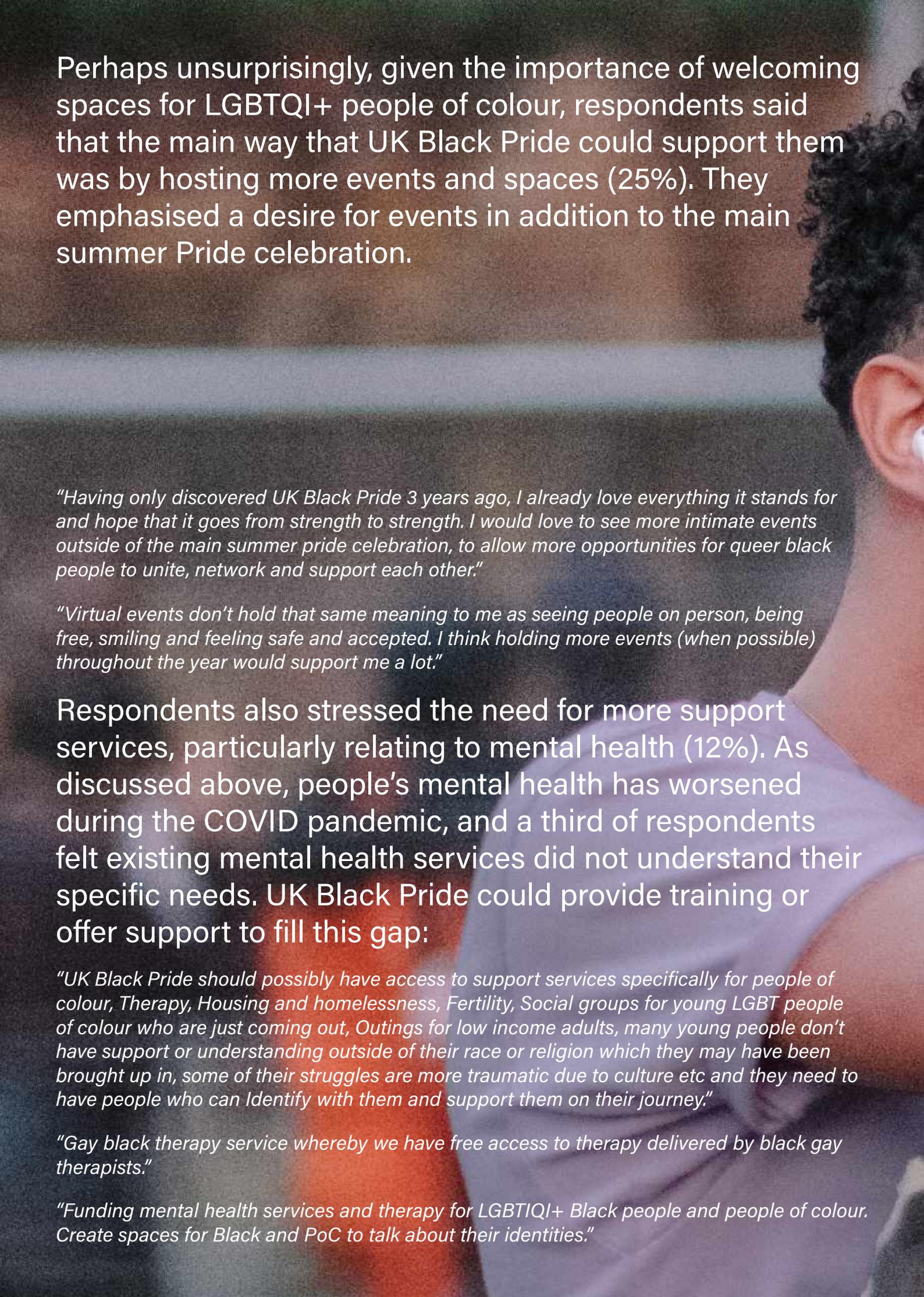
"The only way I don't get disillusioned with life is direct action, I do mutual aid work with Trans Aid Cymru, and community groups like Glitter Cymru make me like there is hope in community and solidarity. That's all I have on this rotten island."

"These events have highlighted what has been dormant beneath the surface. It's clear that, although there has been some social process since the Windrush era, there is clearly at least unconscious racial bias and institutional racism. Though it was saddening to see certain events, I feel there was a significant shift in the tone of conversations around race which I think is a really positive thing. The focus now is more on awareness of our thoughts and actions and accountability for the two. It's really important that stay open and compassion to all so that these conversations don't run the risk of going underground again."





UK
Black
Pride



Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the importance of welcoming spaces for LGBTQI+ people of colour, respondents said that the main way that UK Black Pride could support them was by hosting more events and spaces (25%). They emphasised a desire for events in addition to the main summer Pride celebration.

"Having only discovered UK Black Pride 3 years ago, I already love everything it stands for and hope that it goes from strength to strength. I would love to see more intimate events outside of the main summer pride celebration, to allow more opportunities for queer black people to unite, network and support each other."

"Virtual events don't hold that same meaning to me as seeing people on person, being free, smiling and feeling safe and accepted. I think holding more events (when possible) throughout the year would support me a lot."

Respondents also stressed the need for more support services, particularly relating to mental health (12%). As discussed above, people's mental health has worsened during the COVID pandemic, and a third of respondents felt existing mental health services did not understand their specific needs. UK Black Pride could provide training or offer support to fill this gap:

"UK Black Pride should possibly have access to support services specifically for people of colour, Therapy, Housing and homelessness, Fertility, Social groups for young LGBT people of colour who are just coming out, Outings for low income adults, many young people don't have support or understanding outside of their race or religion which they may have been brought up in, some of their struggles are more traumatic due to culture etc and they need to have people who can identify with them and support them on their journey."

"Gay black therapy service whereby we have free access to therapy delivered by black gay therapists."

"Funding mental health services and therapy for LGBTQI+ Black people and people of colour. Create spaces for Black and PoC to talk about their identities."



“I know for some Black and PoC queer people UK Black Pride is sometimes the one time of year where you can breathe and unclench. So to have multiple events or support spaces, or groups or something happening across the year would be amazing.”

Respondents emphasised that they would like any future events, spaces and services organised by UK Black Pride to be more inclusive (19%), especially of Asian and Asian British respondents, and those living outside London and other major urban areas.

"We should forge a strong community that is radical, multi-racial, multi-generational, multi-ability."

"Spotlight and educate specific cultures and backgrounds. It's time we stop framing black and POC as a counter to white and just have conversations amongst ourselves. We are all more clued up on white privilege and injustice we face as POC in the UK but I'd love to see more dialogue which celebrates diversity within black and brown local population. Sometimes even I need a reminder that being Brown is beautiful and there are more people like me who understand and empathise with my experiences than don't."

"If the organisation wants to demonstrate that it is genuinely meant to support other people of colour then it needs to make clear what our role is: as an East Asian bi person, am I an ally at Black Pride, a supporter, a bystander, a participant, one of the family? I would love to see more solidarity between our communities but 100% understand the desire to create your own space. I'm sick of being used as a wedge, as a model minority, so will vociferously support Black Pride where I can."

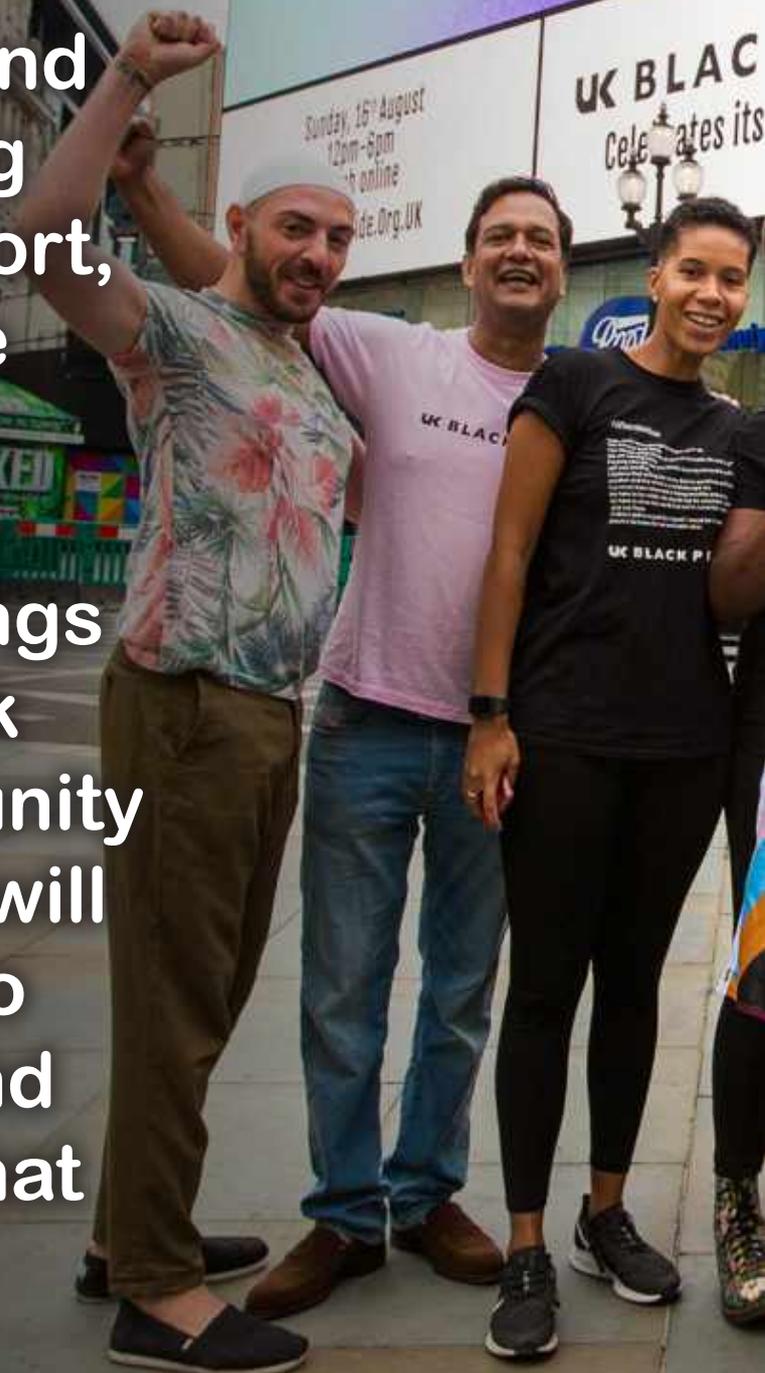
"Black Pride feels very focused on supporting the London community - there are many of us around the UK living in very white areas who may appreciate the support."



“I think it is time that Black Pride does fully embrace the UK in its name and serve all their communities more equally and not just spend most energy on London - there are many of us in these areas that would immensely benefit from this representation.”



This survey shows the importance of accepting and inclusive spaces for LGBTQI+ Black people and people of colour. It also highlights the particular needs of our community, such as for better and more understanding mental health support, especially given the specific impact of COVID and recent events. These findings will inform UK Black Pride's first Community Action Plan, which will distribute funding to our communities and the organisations that support them.



BLACK PRIDE
15th birthday

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