



# Community insights on disabled residents and the Covid vaccine in Tower Hamlets

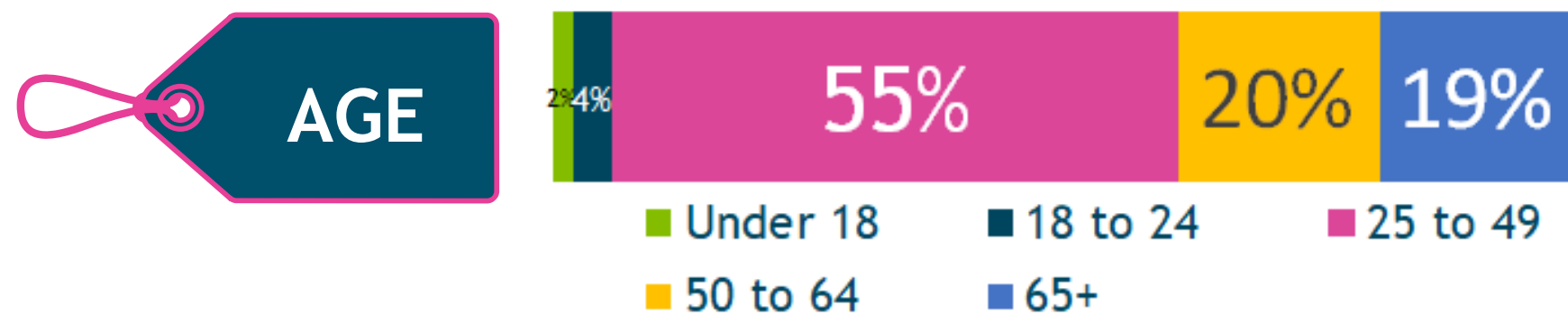
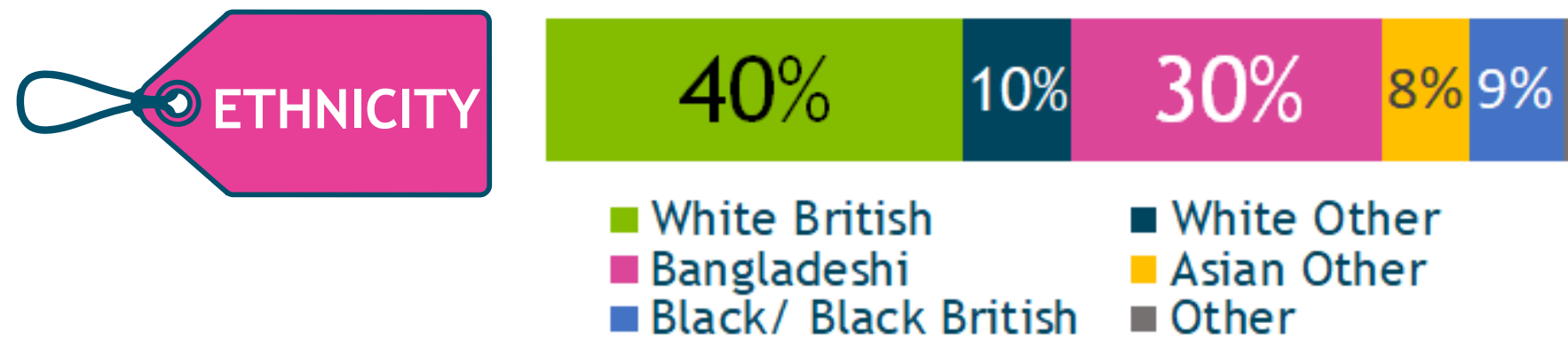
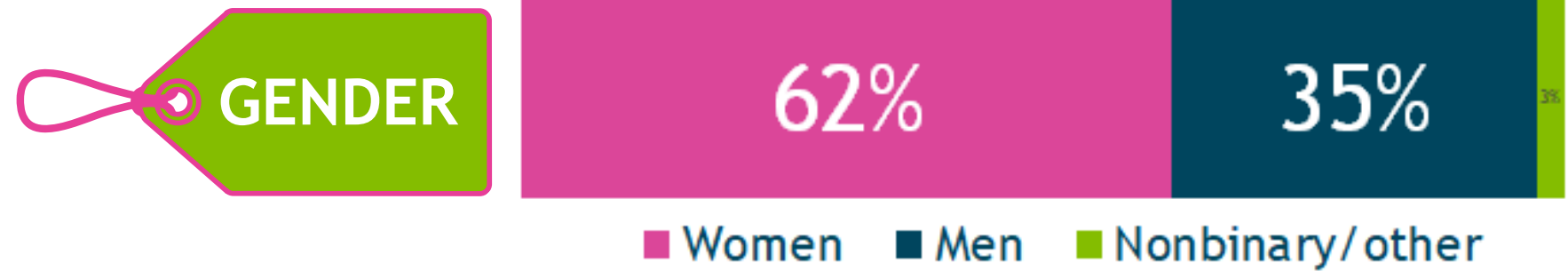
April 2021

**healthwatch**  
Tower Hamlets

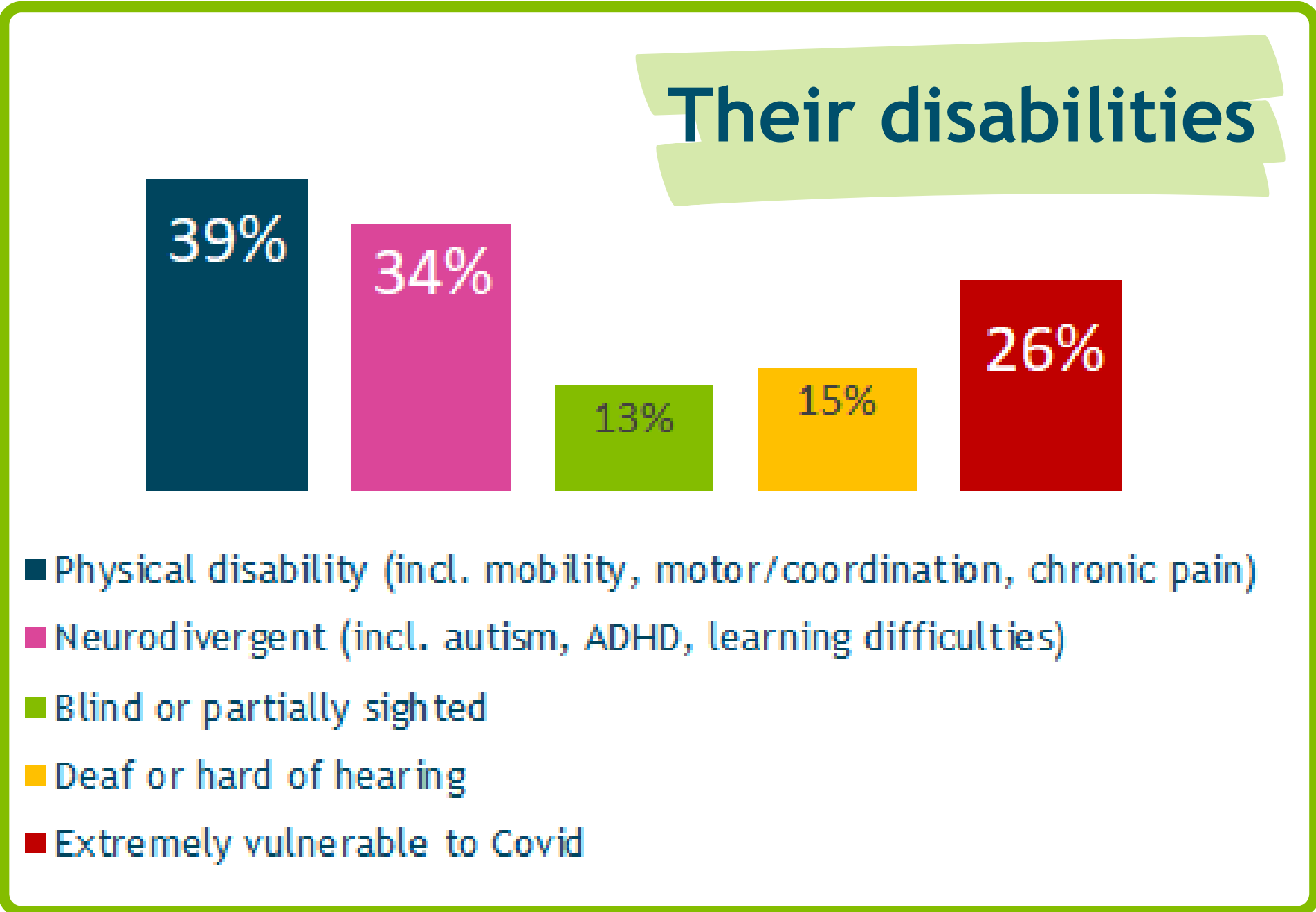


**Our engagement**

We carried out a survey with **182 residents** who are disabled or living with serious long-term conditions



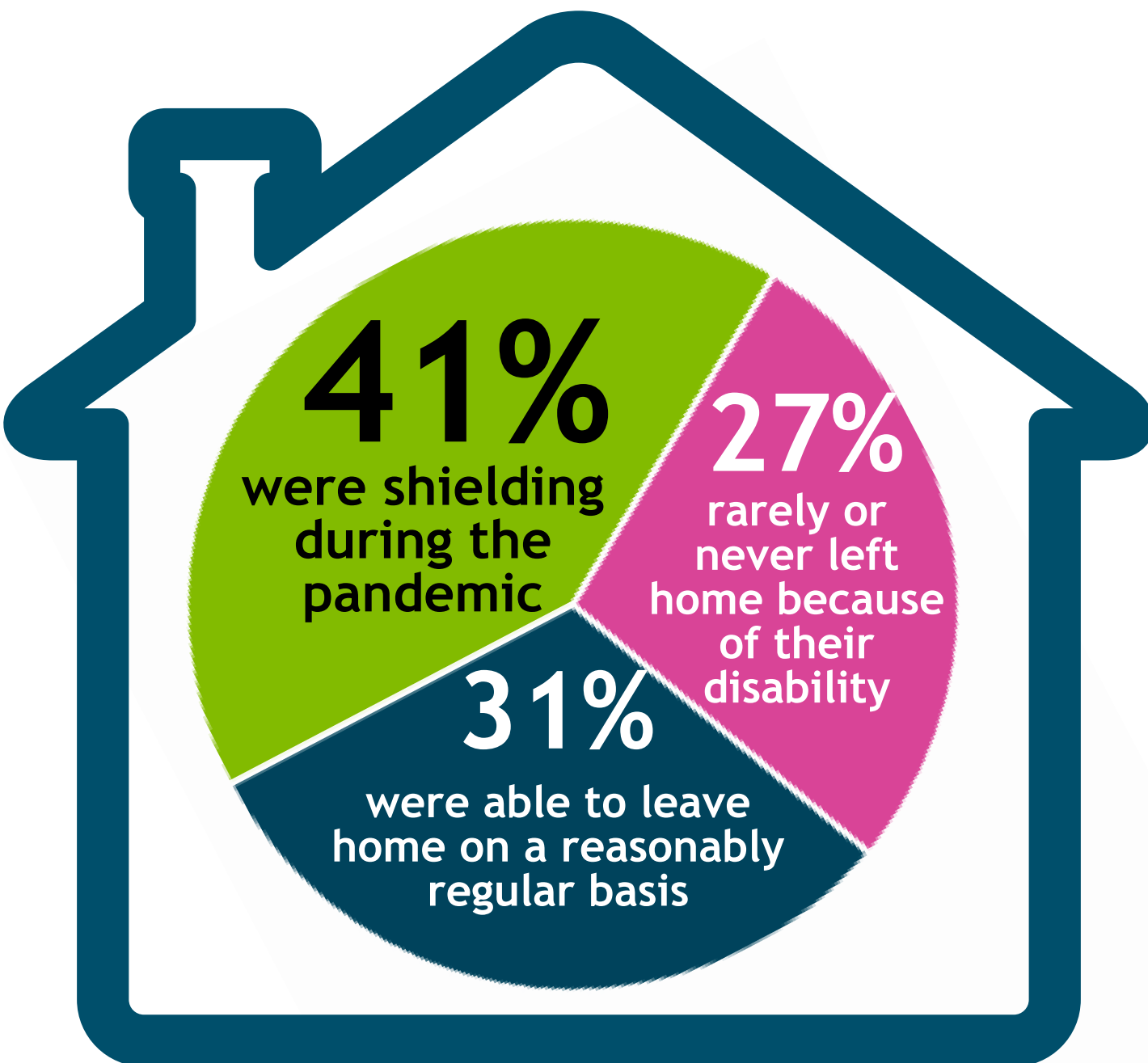
**Their disabilities**



**Our  
respondents**

## Living circumstances and wider context

- Respondents were diverse in terms of care needs and living circumstances, ability to work, leave the house and use online services.



**43%**  
received  
personal care:



**80%** from family members  
**39%** from paid carers

**19%**  
were working  
full-time or  
part-time

**11%**  
were studying,  
jobseeking or  
volunteering

**23%** were unable to work  
because of their disability

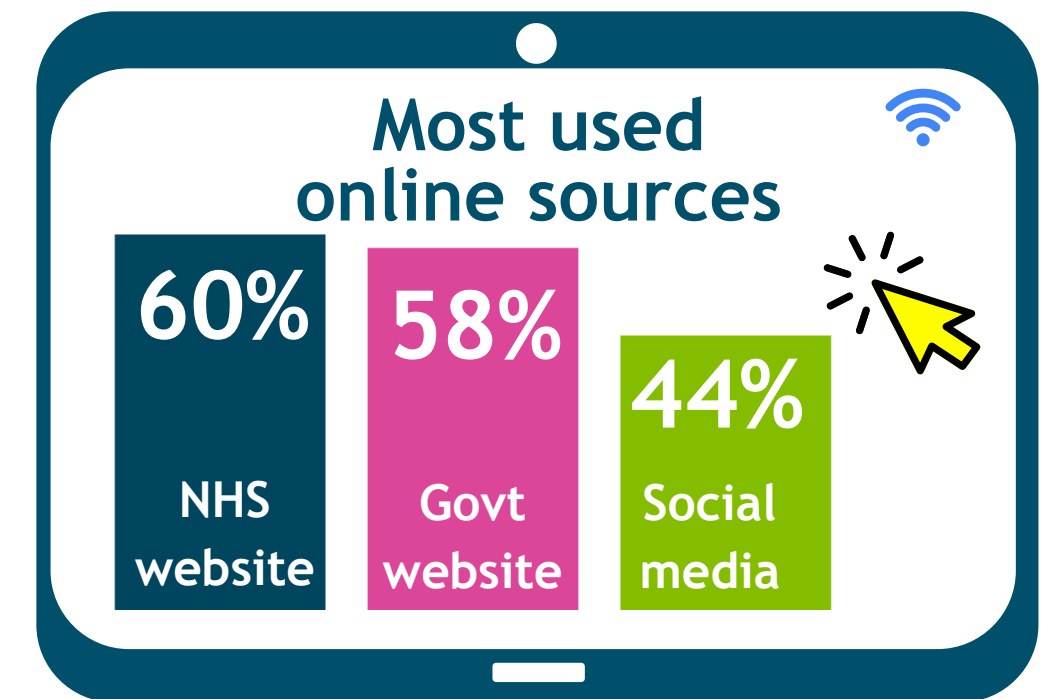
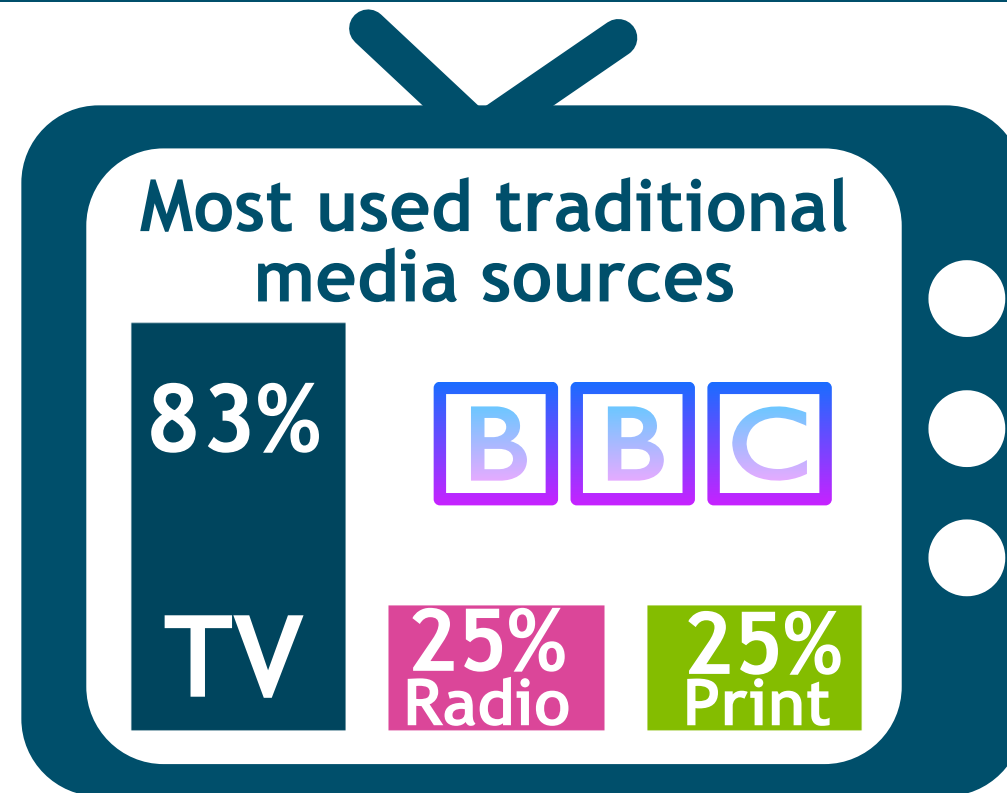
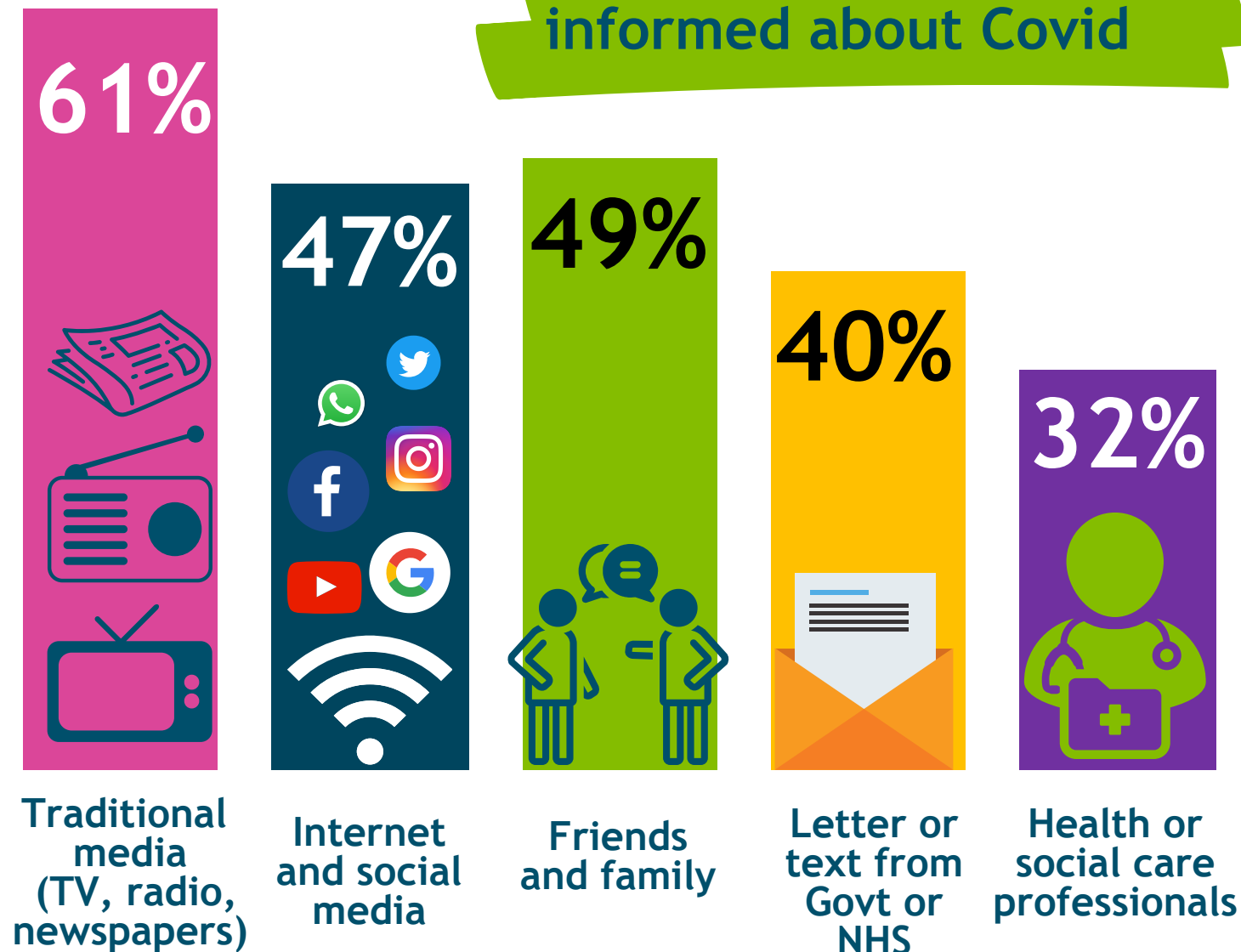
**35%**  
were digitally  
excluded

An icon of a Wi-Fi signal (three curved lines) inside a red circle with a diagonal slash through it, indicating digital exclusion.

### Staying informed

- Mass-media, friends/ family and the internet were the most popular sources of info about Covid-19
- TV news, the NHS website and Gov.uk were trusted sources of information.
- People with learning disabilities may struggle with online and mass media messages.
- BAME respondents rely more on word of mouth and less on online sources for staying informed.

### How respondents stayed informed about Covid



\* as % of those who said they use the respective source

**Neurodivergent/ learning difficulties :**

- ➔ Less likely to use media or online sources;
- ➔ More likely to receive info from health/ social care pros.

**Sight impaired:**

- ➔ More likely to use TV and radio;
- ➔ Less likely to use the Internet

**Hearing impaired:**

- ➔ More likely to use TV to stay informed
- ➔ Slightly more likely to use the internet

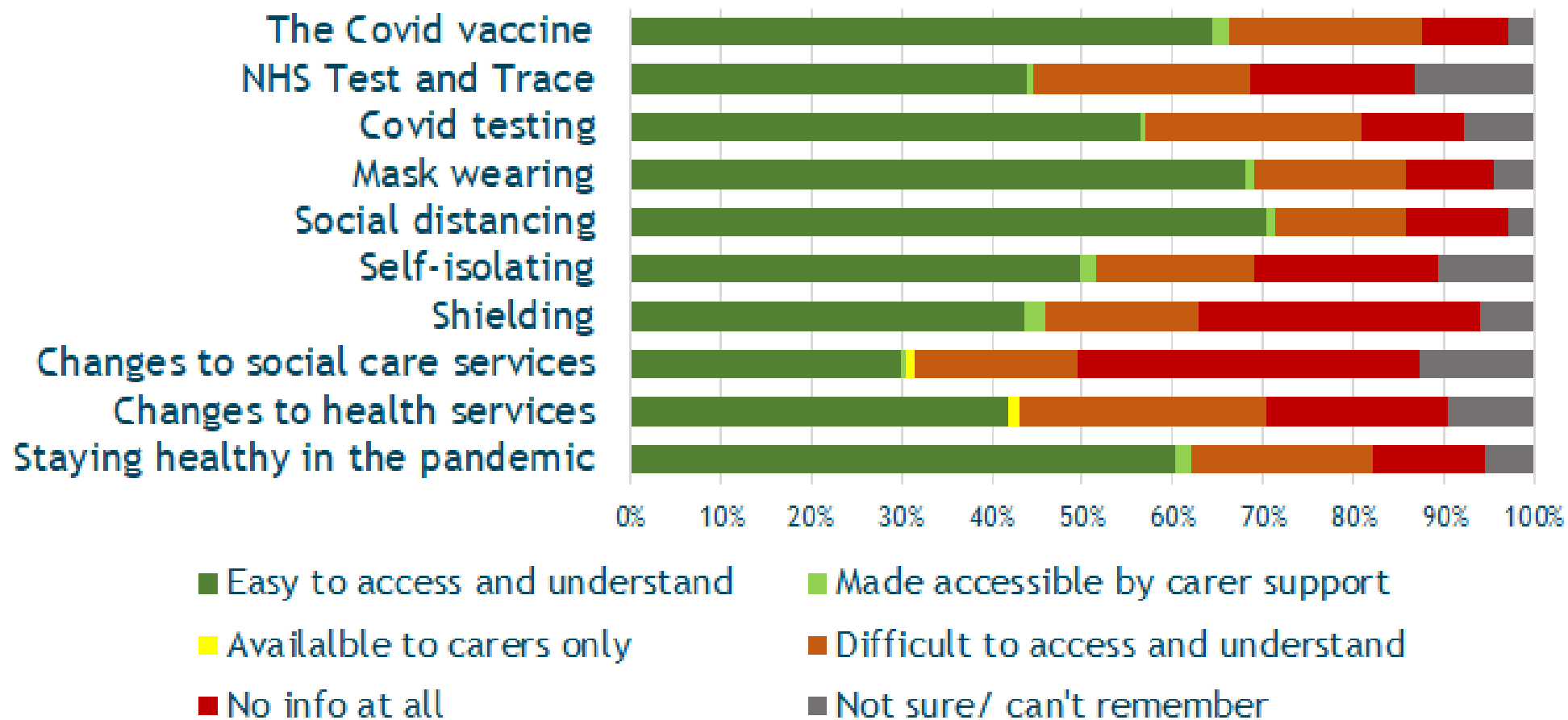
**BAME:**

- ➔ More likely to receive info from friends/ family
- ➔ Less likely to use the Internet

## Staying informed

- Respondents felt quite well-informed about social distancing and mask-wearing, but poorly informed about changes to their social care and about NHS Test and Trace.
- Respondents who were autistic, living with mental health-related disabilities or with sight impairments were less likely to find accessible information.

## Information about Covid-related topics



### Most likely to find accessible information:

- Women.
- Those who used the internet for Covid-19 info.
- Those in full-time or part-time work.
- Those living with a partner or children.



### Least likely to find accessible information:

- Men.
- Autistic respondents.
- Respondents with visual impairments.
- Respondents with mental health issues.
- Those who only had info from friends and family.

**19%** found the font in printed materials too small  
**12%** found the language too complicated  
**16%** felt there was too much information  
**16%** felt there was not enough information

# The Covid-19 vaccine

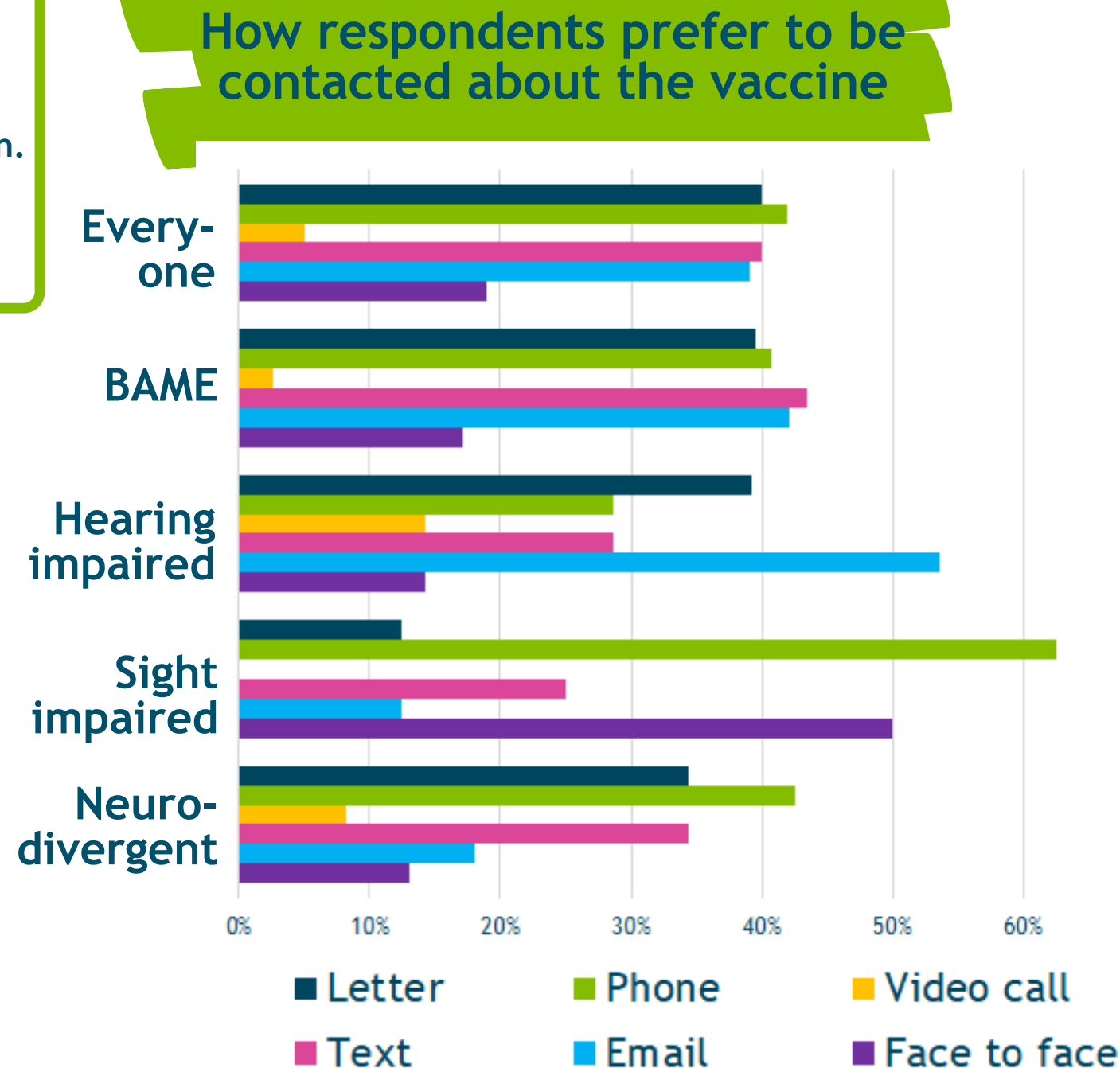
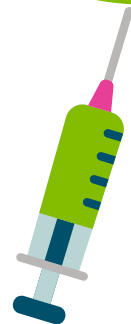
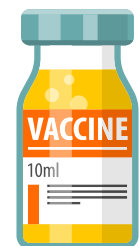
- Most respondents are willing to be vaccinated, and prefer to receive information from their GP.
- Many prefer to be contacted via phone, email, text or letter. However, written info is not accessible to all; some groups such as those who are sight impaired, Deaf or neurodivergent could benefit from alternative methods of communication. Vaccine info needs to be simple, use infographics and come in a variety of formats.

## MAKING VACCINE INFO ACCESSIBLE

- Provide multiple formats and languages.
- Work with BAME community leaders to challenge misinformation.
- Concise text, short sentences and infographics.
- Clear, simple language.
- Large, bold letters.

**84%**  
intend to have the Covid vaccine or have had it already

**67%**  
of those who intend to have the vaccine would prefer to be informed by **their GP**



## MAKING VACCINATION SITES ACCESSIBLE

- Avoid overcrowding.
- Allow carers to accompany patients.
- Keep them as local as possible.
- Allow rescheduling of appointments.
- Use ramps/ lifts/ wheelchair accessible.
- Disabled parking on site.
- Transport service.
- Home visits for those who can't travel.
- Clear signage in large text.
- Signage with images and symbols.
- Toilets on the same floor.
- Quiet waiting space.

*"It is difficult for me to read for any length of time, so any information should be clear and concise, with large text. I am worried that I will not be able to attend on the date, as I have several bad days per week, and I would like the possibility that it can be re-scheduled, and also it would help if the vaccination site is nearby due to mobility issues"*

*Patient with severe migraines and joint pain*