

European Football for



Development Network



WEXFORD FC



FAN-LED CLIMATE SOLUTIONS

SEPTEMBER/2024



TOGETHER WE ARE #Morethanfootball



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WELCOME TO THE CLIMATE CAPTAINS PROGRAMME

Welcome to the Climate Captains programme, an innovative initiative spearheaded by the European Football for Development Network (EFDN) in partnership with the Football Association of Ireland. Our goal is to empower football fans to be at the heart of climate action, using the immense influence of football to inspire meaningful environmental change.

This report is based on a survey conducted with Wexford FC fans to understand their priorities and needs when it comes to climate action. By listening closely to the voices of supporters, we aim to design climate solutions that not only tackle environmental challenges but also deeply resonate with the local community.

Our Approach

The survey results from Wexford FC supporters highlight an important insight: while there is a strong enthusiasm among fans to engage in climate action, barriers like affordability and accessibility often hinder their ability to make changes. The Climate Captains programme aims to address these challenges by helping football clubs lead the way in creating inclusive and accessible climate solutions.

Football's Transformative Potential

We believe football has the power to be a force for transformation, especially when it comes to addressing the climate crisis. By equipping fans with practical and impactful climate solutions, we can work together to make a meaningful difference. However, to truly unlock this potential, it is critical that these solutions are accessible to all, regardless of economic background.

Creating Enabling Conditions at Wexford FC

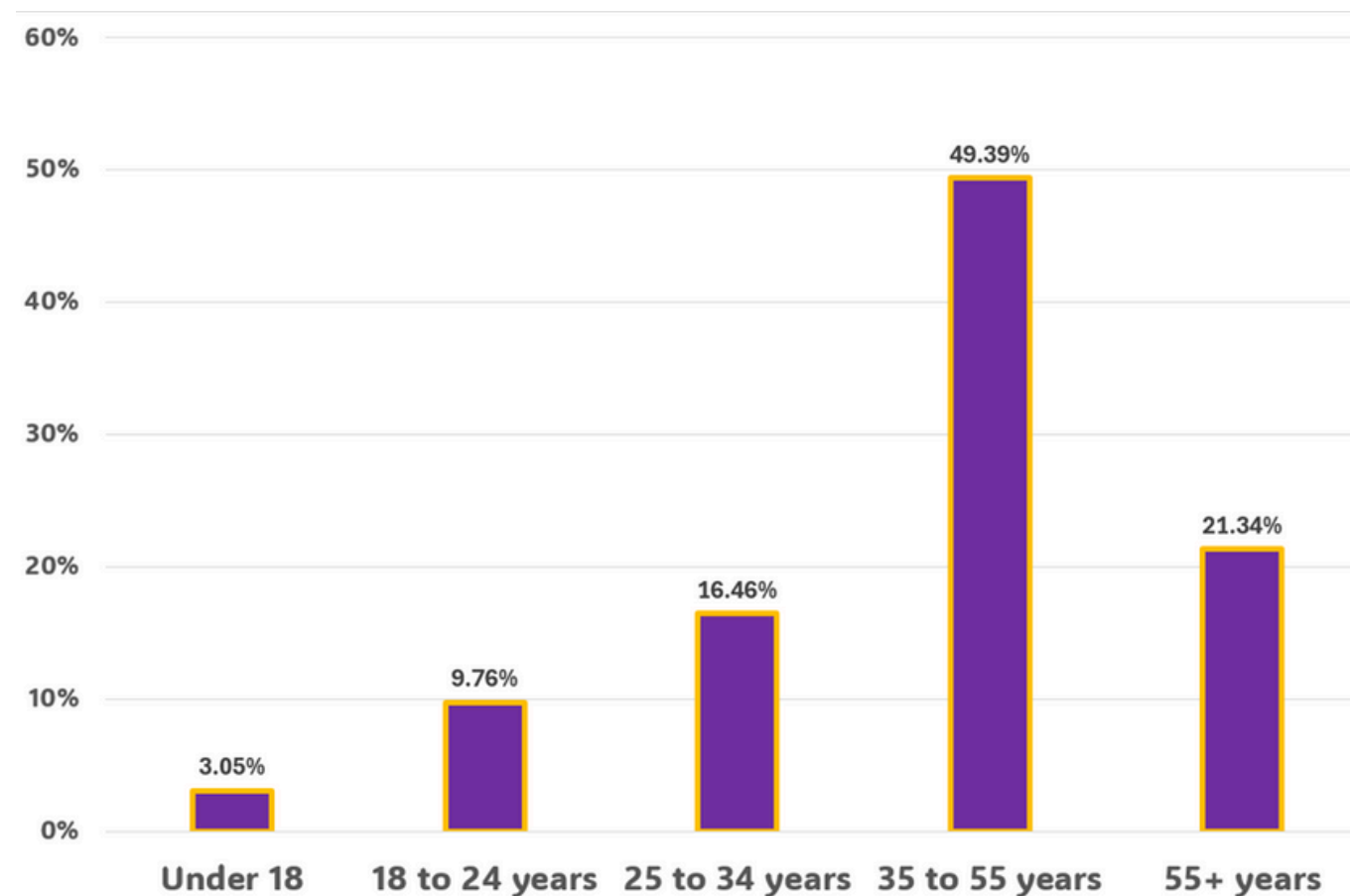
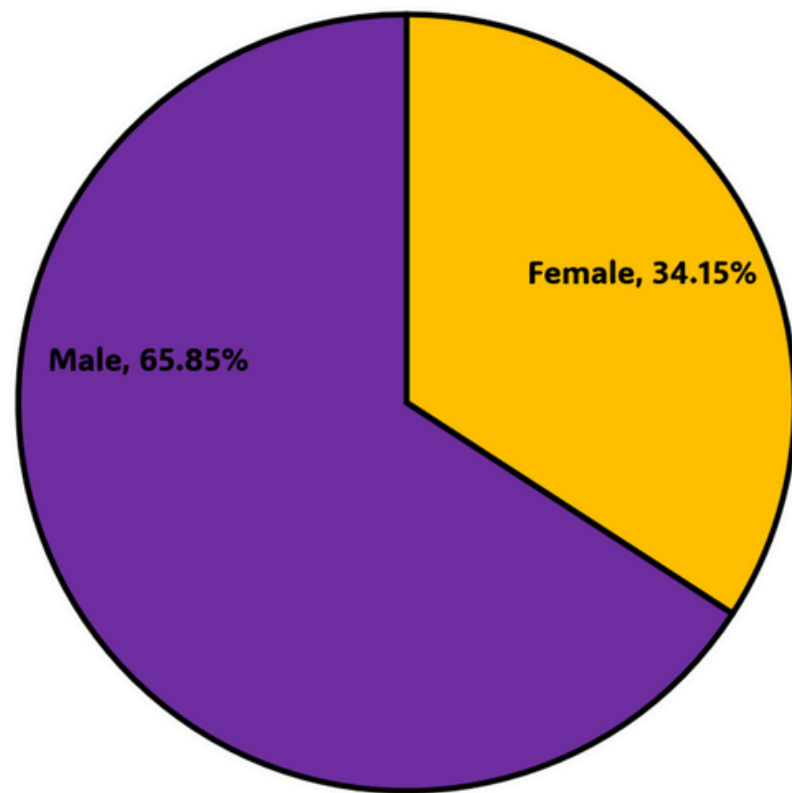
Climate Captains is not about telling fans how to live their lives or make them change their behaviours. Instead, our focus is on creating the right conditions that allow fans to actively participate in climate action. This starts with listening to fans and the wider Wexford community. From the supporters and communities around Ferrycarrig Park, we received 164 responses to our survey (August 2024). The insights from these responses will guide the development of solutions, ensuring that Wexford FC's climate initiatives are inclusive, relevant, and impactful.





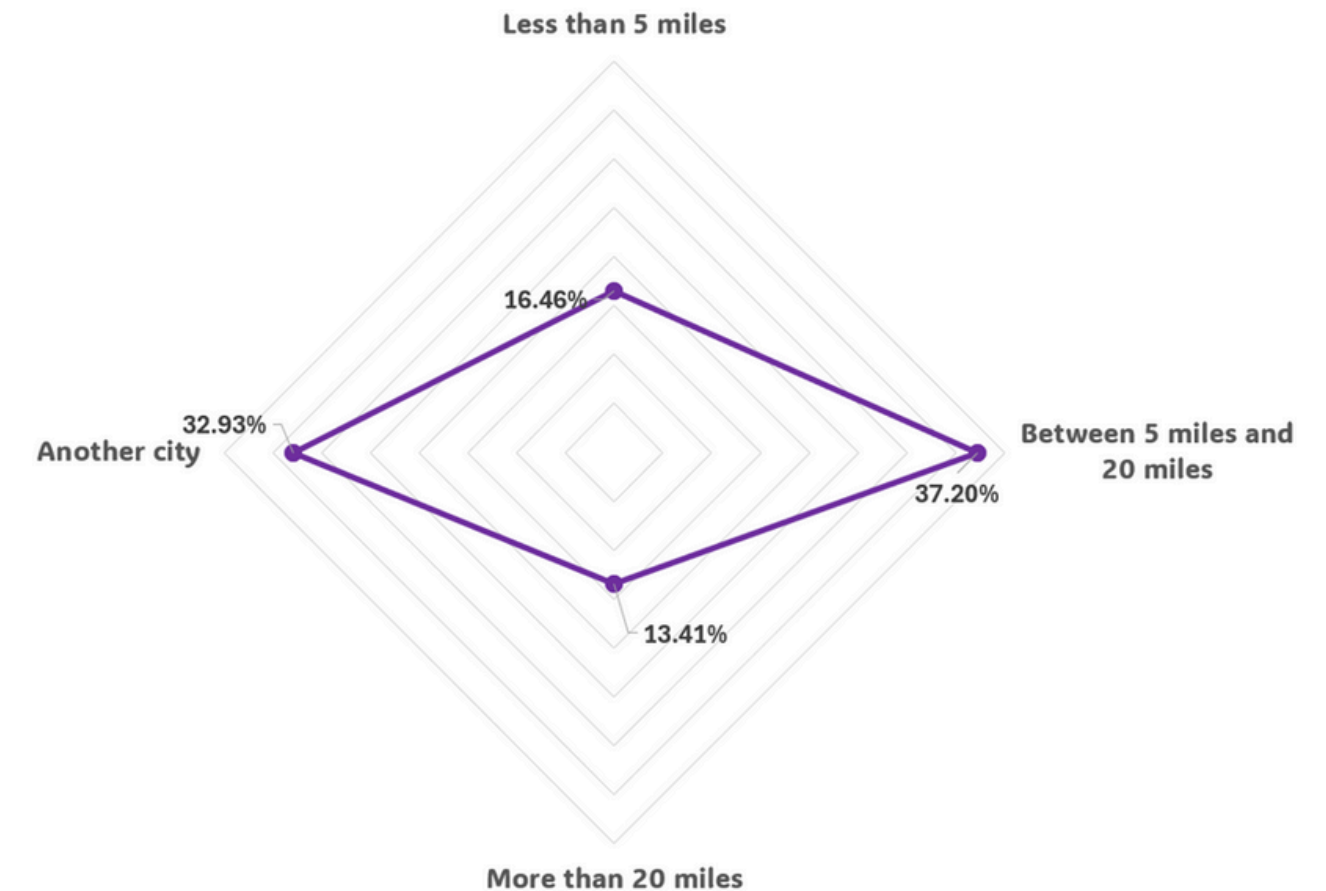
DEMOGRAPHICS

The demographic data from the Wexford FC Climate Captains survey provides key insights into the fan base, highlighting some trends and potential biases in the results. The age distribution reveals that nearly half (49.39%) of respondents fall within the 35 to 55 age bracket, indicating a strong representation of middle-aged adults. Older adults, aged 55 and above, make up 21.34% of the sample, while younger age groups are less represented, with just 3.05% under 18 and 9.76% aged 18 to 24. This suggests that the survey responses largely reflect the views of middle-aged and older fans, potentially overlooking the perspectives of younger supporters. The gender distribution shows that 65.85% of respondents identify as male, with 34.15% identifying as female. While this reflects a healthier gender balance than many other football fan surveys, the data still indicates that male perspectives dominate. Ensuring more gender-inclusive initiatives could help address the needs of the broader fan base.



DISTANCE FROM FERRYCARRIG PARK

Geographically, there is a diverse spread among respondents. While 16.46% live within 5 miles of Wexford's Ferrycarrig Park, a larger proportion (37.20%) reside between 5 and 20 miles away. Interestingly, a significant portion of fans, 32.93%, are from another city, suggesting that Wexford FC's fan base extends beyond the immediate local area. This geographical diversity may affect the types of climate initiatives that would be most suitable for fans based on their distance from the club.



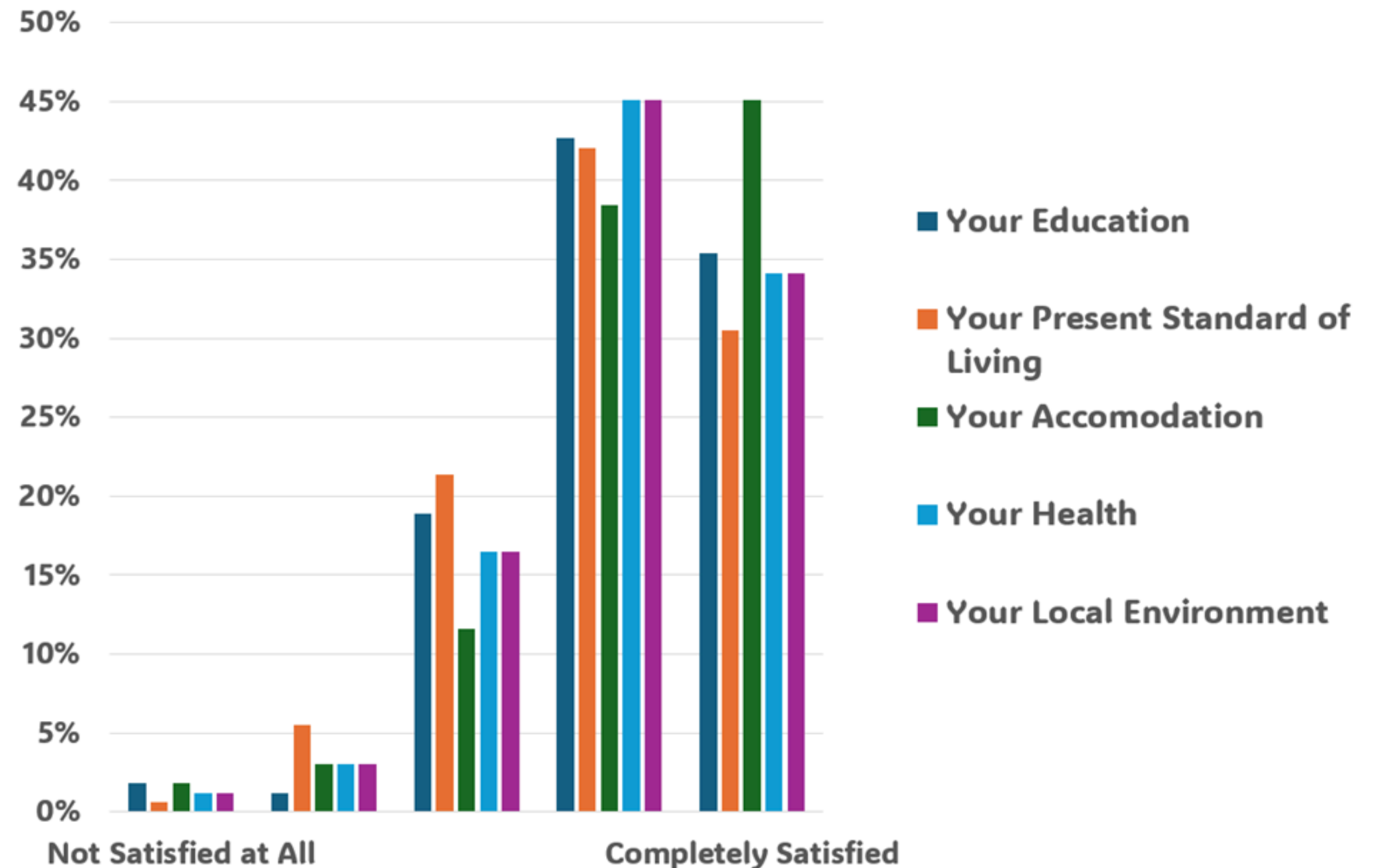


QUALITY OF LIFE PERCEPTIONS

The survey responses from Wexford FC fans provide valuable insights into their satisfaction with various aspects of their quality of life. In terms of education, satisfaction levels are notably high, with 78.1% of respondents rating their satisfaction at 4 or 5, reflecting a general sense of contentment with educational experiences. Similarly, the present standard of living is rated positively by 72.6% of respondents, though 21.3% indicate a moderate satisfaction level of 3, suggesting that while many are content, a sizable portion of fans see room for improvement in their economic situation.

Satisfaction with accommodation is quite strong, with 83.5% of respondents rating their living conditions at 4 or 5. However, health satisfaction, while still positive, shows a slight drop-off, with 79.2% of respondents giving it a high rating and 16.5% rating their health satisfaction at a moderate level of 3. This points to a potential need for initiatives focused on improving health and well-being within the community.

When it comes to the local environment, 79.2% of respondents report satisfaction, with 45.1% rating it a 4 and 34.1% giving it a 5. However, a notable 16.5% of respondents remain moderately satisfied, rating it at 3. These results indicate that while many fans feel positively about their local environment, there is still a significant portion of the fan base that would benefit from improvements in environmental quality.

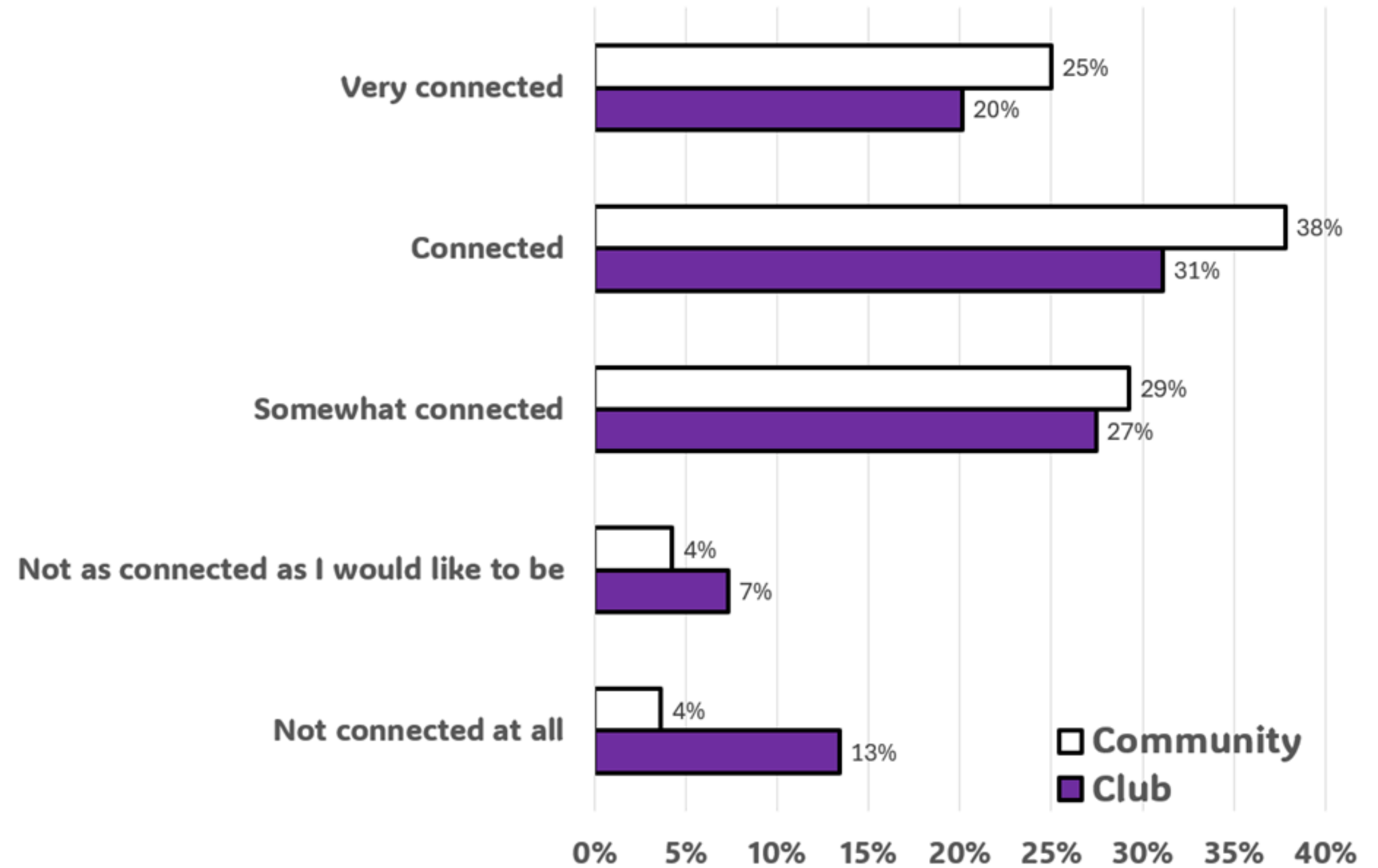




CONNECTION

The survey responses indicate that Wexford FC fans have a solid connection to both the club and their community, although their connection to the community is slightly stronger, which is somewhat unusual compared to other Climate Captains surveys. While 51% of respondents feel either connected (31%) or very connected (20%) to Wexford FC, 63% feel similarly connected to their local community (38% connected, 25% very connected). However, 27% of respondents feel only somewhat connected to the club, with 20% feeling somewhat connected to the community, suggesting there is room for improvement in strengthening ties with supporters.

Notably, 13% of fans report feeling no connection to the club, which is a more significant disconnect than the 4% who feel the same way about their community. This gap presents an opportunity for Wexford FC to build a deeper relationship with its fan base, possibly through enhanced community engagement initiatives and broader fan outreach efforts. By fostering stronger ties, the club can further integrate itself as a central pillar of the local community.





PERCEPTION OF CLUB ACTIVITIES

The survey data reveals that Wexford FC fans generally perceive the club’s involvement in social and environmental initiatives positively, though there is a need for greater awareness and communication, especially regarding environmental activities. A strong 80.87% of fans either agree (54.94%) or completely agree (25.93%) that the club is involved in good social initiatives, with just 0.62% disagreeing. This aligns with the widespread sentiment that such initiatives are important, with 92.64% of fans agreeing or completely agreeing on their importance. This data highlights the club’s positive standing in terms of social responsibility.

However, perceptions regarding the club's environmental efforts are more mixed. While 53.65% of fans feel the club is involved in good environmental activities, a substantial 41.46% neither agree nor disagree, suggesting many fans may be unaware of these initiatives. Encouragingly, 90.85% of fans believe it is important for the club to engage in environmental activities, demonstrating that even with lower awareness, fans see sustainability as a priority. This indicates a clear opportunity for the club to increase visibility around its environmental efforts and to engage fans in sustainability-focused projects.

	My clubs is involved in good social initiatives.	I think it is important for my club to be involved in social initiatives.	My club is involved in good environmental activities.	I think it is important for my club to be involved in environmental activities.
Completely Disagree	0.00%	1.23%	1.83%	1.83%
Disagree	0.62%	0.00%	3.05%	0.61%
Neither Agree or Disagree	18.52%	6.13%	41.46%	6.71%
Agree	54.94%	45.40%	39.63%	53.05%
Completely Agree	25.93%	47.24%	14.02%	37.80%



CHALLENGES

Responses show us that there are several pressing challenges facing the community. A notable 24.05% of respondents report difficulties in heating or cooling their homes, reflecting potential issues related to home energy efficiency. Additionally, 17.72% of fans mention frequent issues with dampness and mould in their homes, which may pose both health and structural concerns. Financial anxiety is also a common theme, with 29.78% of respondents expressing concern about paying their bills, highlighting a need for financial relief programs. Food security is a less widespread but still important issue, with 13.92% of fans occasionally running out of money for food. These challenges underscore the importance of targeted interventions to improve energy efficiency, offer financial support, and address food insecurity within the Wexford FC community.

	I find it difficult to heat/cool my home	I often have issues with dampness and mould in my home	I am concerned about paying my bills	I eat healthy food often	Sometimes I run out of money for food
Totally Disagree	11.59%	28.66%	14.63%	0.61%	35.37%
Disagree	34.15%	35.37%	29.27%	8.54%	40.24%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	24.39%	10.37%	15.85%	22.56%	9.15%
Agree	24.39%	22.56%	31.10%	51.83%	12.80%
Totally Agree	5.49%	3.05%	9.15%	16.46%	2.44%

CONCERN FOR THE FUTURE

Survey data reveals a divide between optimism for the future and concerns about climate change. A significant 49.37% of respondents are not optimistic that children today will grow up in a better world, with 34.18% disagreeing and 15.19% totally disagreeing. On the other hand, concern about climate change is prevalent, with 74.68% of fans expressing worry, including 26.58% who totally agree and 48.10% who agree. This contrast suggests that while Wexford FC fans are deeply concerned about environmental issues, there is a sense of pessimism regarding the future.

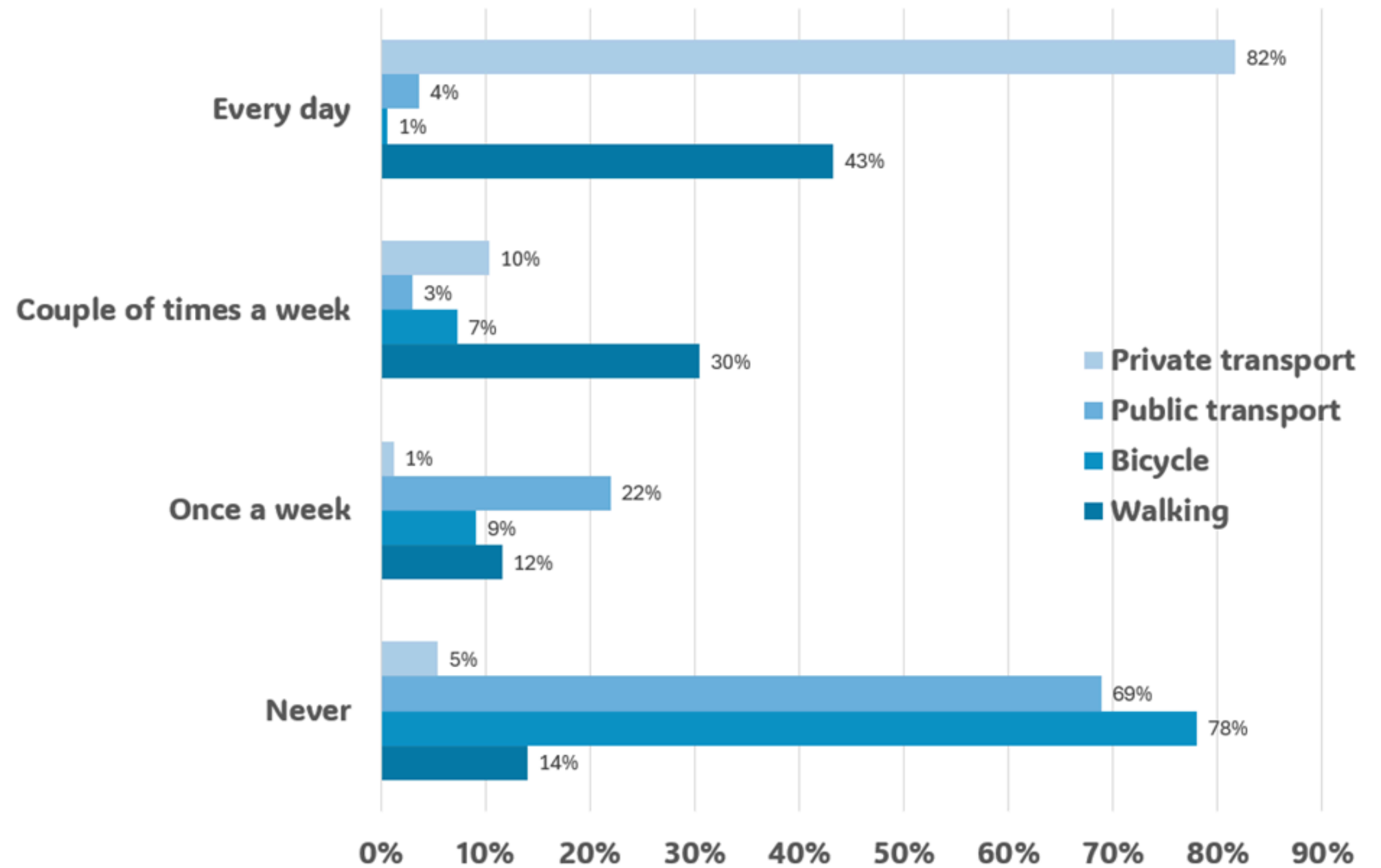
	I am optimistic that children today will grow old in a better world	I am concerned about climate change
Totally Disagree	15.24%	3.66%
Disagree	35.37%	3.66%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	24.39%	17.07%
Agree	21.34%	51.83%
Totally Agree	3.66%	23.78%

TRANSPORT

The survey responses offer valuable insights into transportation habits. Walking remains a common mode of transport, with 43% of respondents walking every day and another 30% walking a couple of times per week. However, the dominant mode of transport is private vehicles, with a significant 82% of fans relying on private transport every day.

On the other hand, cycling and public transport are scarcely used by the majority of fans. A striking 78% of respondents never use bicycles, and 69% never use public transport. These figures indicate that cycling and public transport infrastructure may be inadequate or inaccessible, which limits the adoption of more sustainable travel options.

Only small percentages of fans report using bicycles (9%) or public transport (22%) even once a week. This represents a considerable opportunity for Wexford FC to advocate for and promote more sustainable transport options, such as bike-sharing programs, better cycling facilities, and improved public transport services. Encouraging these changes could have both environmental benefits and improve the accessibility of the club for a broader audience.

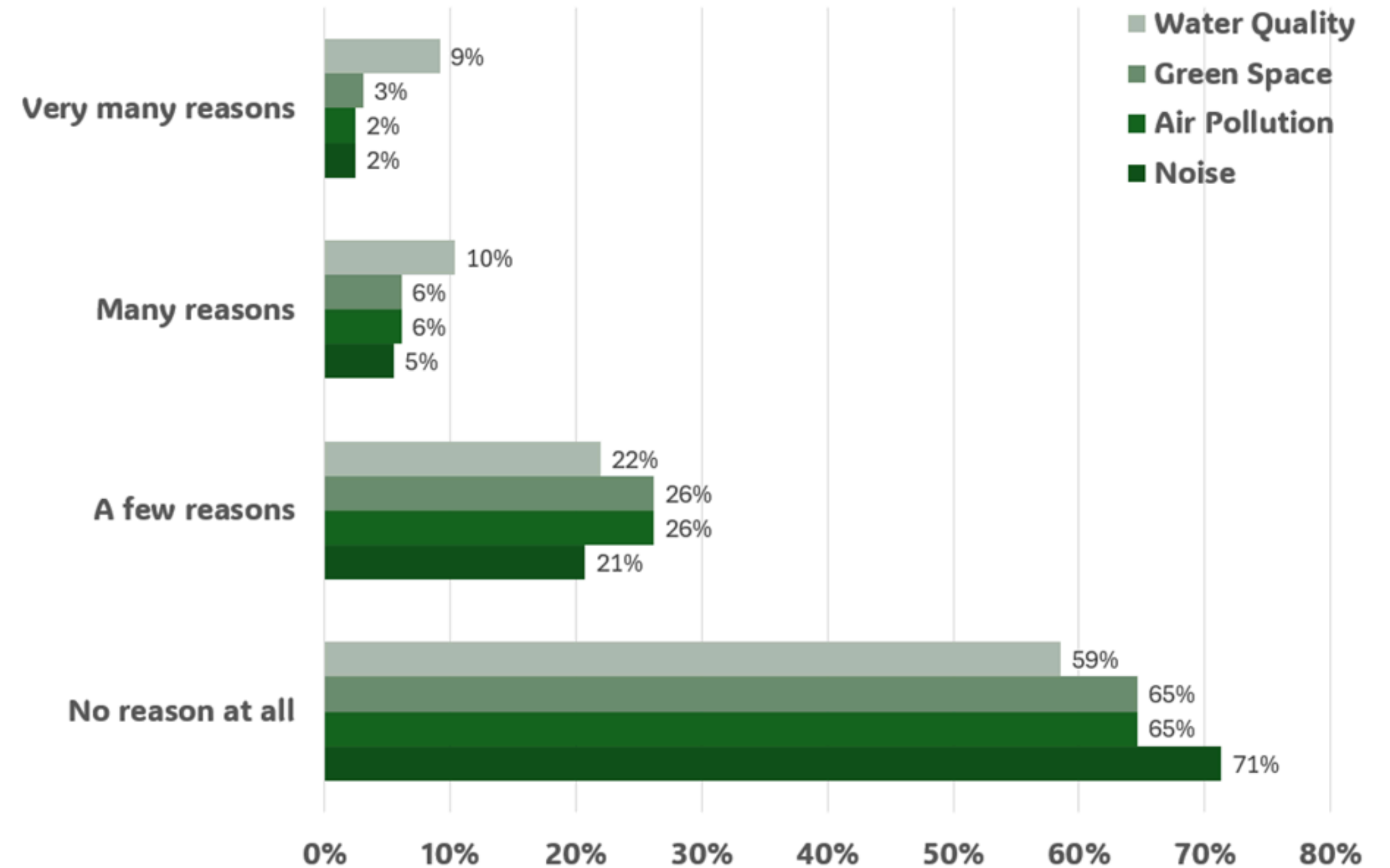




LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

The survey responses highlight several local environmental concerns that warrant attention. While the majority of respondents report no significant issues, a notable portion of the fan base does experience problems. Specifically, 29% of respondents have at least a few reasons to complain about noise, and 35% express concerns about air pollution. Smaller but significant percentages report more substantial dissatisfaction, with 7% citing many or very many reasons to complain about noise and 8% with similar levels of concern regarding air pollution.

Concerns about green space and water quality, while affecting fewer fans, are still present. In particular, 22% of respondents have reasons to complain about water quality, and 17% express concerns about the availability or quality of green space. This data suggests that a meaningful segment of the community faces environmental challenges, particularly related to noise, air pollution, and water quality.



ACCESS TO SOLUTIONS

The survey reveals several barriers to accessing climate solutions, particularly related to affordability and awareness. A significant proportion of fans find many climate-friendly solutions to be financially out of reach. Specifically, 37.80% of respondents cannot afford solar panels, and 45.12% find electric mobility options, such as e-cars and e-bikes, too expensive. Heat pumps also present a challenge, with 39.02% of fans citing them as unaffordable, while 18.29% say the same about organic food.

In addition to financial constraints, there is a clear gap in awareness. A notable 33.54% of fans are unaware of retrofitting options, and 29.27% do not know about heat pumps. Awareness is also lacking regarding organic food, with 28.66% of respondents uninformed, and 21.34% unaware of electric mobility options. This lack of knowledge suggests the need for more comprehensive education and outreach on the benefits and availability of these solutions.

Despite these barriers, there is evident interest among some fans in adopting climate-friendly practices. For instance, 37.80% of respondents intend to acquire energy-efficient appliances, and 31.10% are interested in solar panels. Additionally, 28.05% of fans are looking into organic food options, showing a growing inclination toward sustainable living. However, the actual adoption rates are still relatively low, with only 17.07% already having retrofitted their homes and 11.59% using heat pumps.

	Retrofitting	Energy efficient appliances	Heat Pumps	Solar Panels	Organic food	Electric mobility (e-cars, e-bikes)
Can't afford the solution	27.44%	20.12%	39.02%	37.80%	18.29%	45.12%
Don't know about the solution	33.54%	16.46%	29.27%	13.41%	28.66%	21.34%
Intend to get the solution	21.34%	37.80%	18.29%	31.10%	28.05%	20.12%
I already have the solution	17.07%	25.00%	11.59%	16.46%	23.17%	12.20%

THE PATH FORWARD

Wexford FC fans demonstrate a strong consensus on the need to make climate solutions more affordable. An overwhelming 92.08% of respondents either agree (35.37%) or completely agree (56.71%) that climate solutions should be more financially accessible. Only a small fraction (1.22%) completely disagree, with 5.49% remaining neutral.

	I would like for climate solutions to be made more affordable so I could access them.
Completely Disagree	1.22%
Disagree	0.00%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	5.49%
Agree	35.37%
Completely Agree	56.71%

THE PATH FORWARD

Wexford FC fans show strong support for football to take decisive action on climate change, similar to how it addresses other key issues like racism. A significant 82.92% either agree (40.24%) or completely agree (42.68%) that the football world should act on climate change. Only a small proportion (5.49%) disagree or completely disagree.

Additionally, 55.49% of fans say they would be happier attending football matches if they were sustainable, although a substantial 35.98% remain neutral, signaling room for better communication on the benefits of sustainable events.

When asked about the role of footballers in raising climate awareness, 48.17% of fans would pay more attention to climate change if their favorite footballers spoke about it, while 35.98% remain neutral. This suggests that while players can inspire fans, a broader range of engagement strategies may also be needed.

	The world of football should act on climate change the way it takes action on other issues (eg. Racism)	I would be happier attending a football match if I knew the event was sustainable.	I would pay more attention to climate change if my favourite footballers were speaking about the issue.
Completely Disagree	1.83%	2.44%	6.10%
Disagree	3.66%	5.49%	9.15%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	10.37%	35.98%	35.98%
Agree	40.24%	33.54%	34.76%
Completely Agree	42.68%	21.95%	13.41%



THE PATH FORWARD

Wexford FC fans show a keen interest in participating in the club’s sustainability initiatives, with 60.36% of respondents agreeing or completely agreeing that they would like to know more and engage with these programs. However, 30.49% remain neutral, indicating the potential for more outreach to increase fan involvement.

In terms of guidance on living more sustainably, 49.39% of fans would welcome such support from the club, although 35.98% are neutral. This highlights an opportunity for Wexford FC to offer educational resources to help fans adopt more sustainable lifestyles.

Additionally, 49.39% of respondents would like the club to enable collective climate action with other fans. However, 37.80% remain neutral, suggesting that further efforts to foster a sense of collective climate action could strengthen community engagement and further the club’s environmental goals.

	I would like to know about and take part in the clubs sustainability initiatives	I would like the club to give me guidance on how to live more sustainability	I would like football clubs to enable me to work with other fans to act collectively on climate change.
Completely Disagree	4.88%	4.88%	5.49%
Disagree	3.05%	9.15%	6.10%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	30.49%	35.98%	37.80%
Agree	45.73%	40.85%	39.63%
Completely Agree	14.63%	8.54%	9.76%



SOLUTION 1 SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT AND ACCESS INITIATIVE

Wexford FC can address transportation-related environmental challenges by launching a Sustainable Transport and Access Initiative. This program will aim to reduce private vehicle reliance, encourage more eco-friendly modes of transport, and make matchday access easier for fans. The initiative brings together carpooling, bicycle infrastructure, and public transport advocacy to create a more sustainable and accessible travel experience for fans. Given the survey results showing a high reliance on private vehicles, this initiative offers a practical, low-cost solution to encourage more active and sustainable travel habits.

Sub-elements of the Solution

- **Carpooling and Ride-Sharing Network**
 - Wexford FC can establish a fan-led carpooling network to encourage supporters traveling from nearby areas to share rides to the stadium. The club could set up a simple online platform or integrate it into social media where fans can connect and arrange shared transportation for match days. Incentives, such as reserved parking spots for carpoolers or matchday discounts, could motivate participation.
- **Cycling Infrastructure and Bike Mechanics**
 - To encourage cycling, Wexford FC can work with local authorities or cycling groups to improve bike storage facilities at Ferrycarrig Park and provide secure parking on match days. Additionally, the club could host pop-up bike mechanic services at the stadium, offering fans low-cost or free bike repairs and maintenance advice. This would make cycling a more viable option for short-distance travel to matches.
- **Public Transport Advocacy and Matchday Specials**
 - Recognizing the limited use of public transport, Wexford FC can advocate for improved bus services on matchdays. This could include liaising with local authorities and transport providers to increase bus frequency to the stadium and negotiate matchday discounts. The club could also share public transport information on its website and social media, making it easy for fans to plan their journey.

Benefits and Impact



- **Reduced Environmental Impact:**
 - Carpooling, cycling, and increased public transport use would help reduce matchday emissions, supporting Wexford FC's environmental goals.
- **Increased Accessibility:**
 - By enhancing transport options, more fans could attend matches, including those from surrounding towns or cities, thereby increasing community engagement.
- **Healthier Fans:**
 - Cycling or walking to matches would promote active lifestyles, improving fans' overall health and well-being.





SOLUTION 2

ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND SUSTAINABLE HOME INITIATIVE

Wexford FC can help tackle home energy inefficiency by launching an Energy Efficiency and Sustainable Home Initiative. Many fans report issues with heating and energy costs, and this initiative would provide practical support to help fans reduce their bills and improve home comfort. The club can partner with local energy agencies, such as the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI), to offer workshops, resources, and assistance in accessing grants. The aim is to empower fans with the knowledge and tools they need to make cost-effective home energy improvements.

Sub-elements of the Solution

- Energy Awareness Workshops
 - In partnership with SEAI and local experts, Wexford FC can host free energy efficiency workshops for fans. These workshops would provide practical advice on how to reduce home energy consumption, make simple changes like draught-proofing, and upgrade to energy-efficient appliances. Fans would also receive information about local grants and subsidies that can help fund larger home improvements, such as insulation or solar panel installation.
- Home Retrofitting and Renewable Energy Information Support
 - To address the survey's indication of a lack of awareness about retrofitting, the club could establish an information hub, both online and in the stadium, offering easy-to-understand guides on retrofitting homes. This would include step-by-step information on how to access available grants, like those from SEAI, and practical tips on low-cost retrofitting solutions to improve heating efficiency and reduce dampness. The club could also facilitate group applications for grants, enabling fans to apply collectively and increase their chances of success.

Benefits and Impact



- Financial Relief for Fans:
 - Fans who improve the energy efficiency of their homes could benefit from reduced energy bills, helping alleviate financial strain, especially for those concerned about the cost of heating.
- Healthier Living Conditions:
 - The initiative would help address dampness and poor heating, creating more comfortable and healthier homes, particularly reducing respiratory health issues linked to poor ventilation.
- Lower Environmental Footprint:
 - Fans who retrofit their homes and adopt energy-saving measures will reduce their personal carbon footprint, contributing to the club's wider climate goals.






**COMMUNITY
CLIMATE
CAPTAINS**

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