

# National Noise Survey 2008

## Final report



# Introduction

- This report presents a summary of findings from the 2008 National Noise Survey, conducted by Ipsos MORI on behalf of Environmental Protection UK.
- The objectives of the research were to explore people's experience of and attitudes towards neighbour and neighbourhood noise.
- This survey follows two previous surveys, conducted by Ipsos MORI in spring 2006 and 2007. Where appropriate, comparisons have been made with results from these surveys.
- Questions were placed on the Ipsos MORI Public Affairs Monitor – an omnibus survey of c.2,000 adults aged 16+ across Great Britain. A total of 2,131 interviews were conducted face-to-face in people's homes, across 198 sampling points, between 17-22 April 2008.
- Data are weighted to the known national profile of the population of Great Britain.

# Introduction

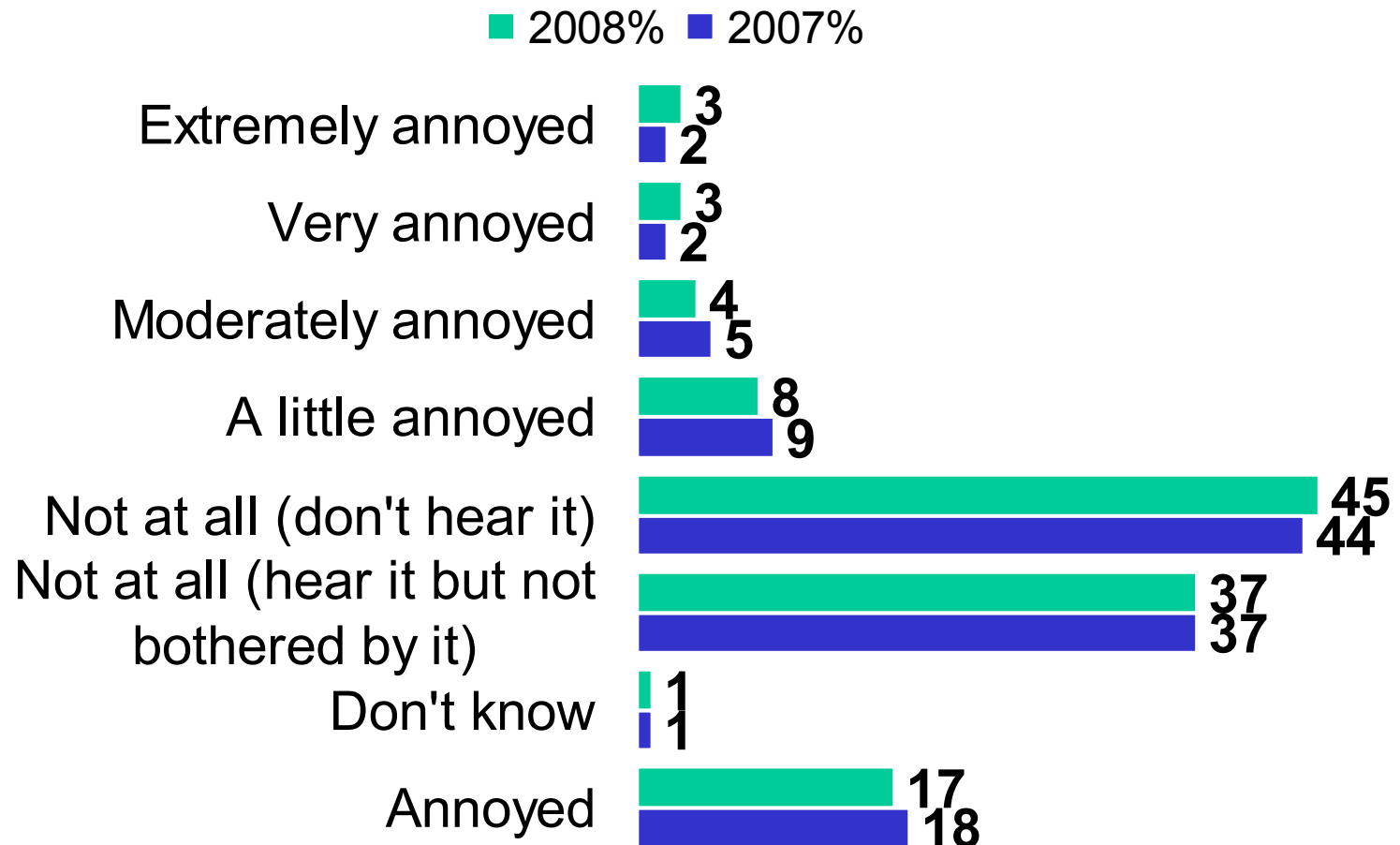
- Interpreting the data
  - It should be noted at all times that a sample, and not the entire population has been surveyed. As such, all results are subject to sampling tolerances, which means that not all differences are statistically significant. A guide to the statistical reliability of the findings is appended.
- Publishing the data
  - As with all our studies, these findings are subject to Ipsos MORI's Standard Terms and Conditions of Contract. Any press release or publication of findings requires the advance approval of Ipsos MORI. Such approval will only be refused on the grounds of inaccuracy or misrepresentation.

# How much does noise affect people at home?

- Survey participants were asked to what extent they are affected by noise when they are in their homes.
- One in six (17%) are bothered, annoyed or disturbed by noise from neighbours inside their homes – a similar proportion to that found in 2007 (18%).
- One in five people are bothered, annoyed or disturbed by noise from their neighbours outside their homes – significantly fewer than in 2007 (20% and 25% respectively).
- Just over a quarter of people are bothered, annoyed or disturbed by their neighbours either inside or outside their homes (26%), compared to 30% in 2007.
- One in ten are bothered, annoyed or disturbed by noise from pubs/clubs/entertainment venues (9%) and commercial premises (10%), as in 2007 (10% and 9% respectively).

# Noise from neighbours inside their homes

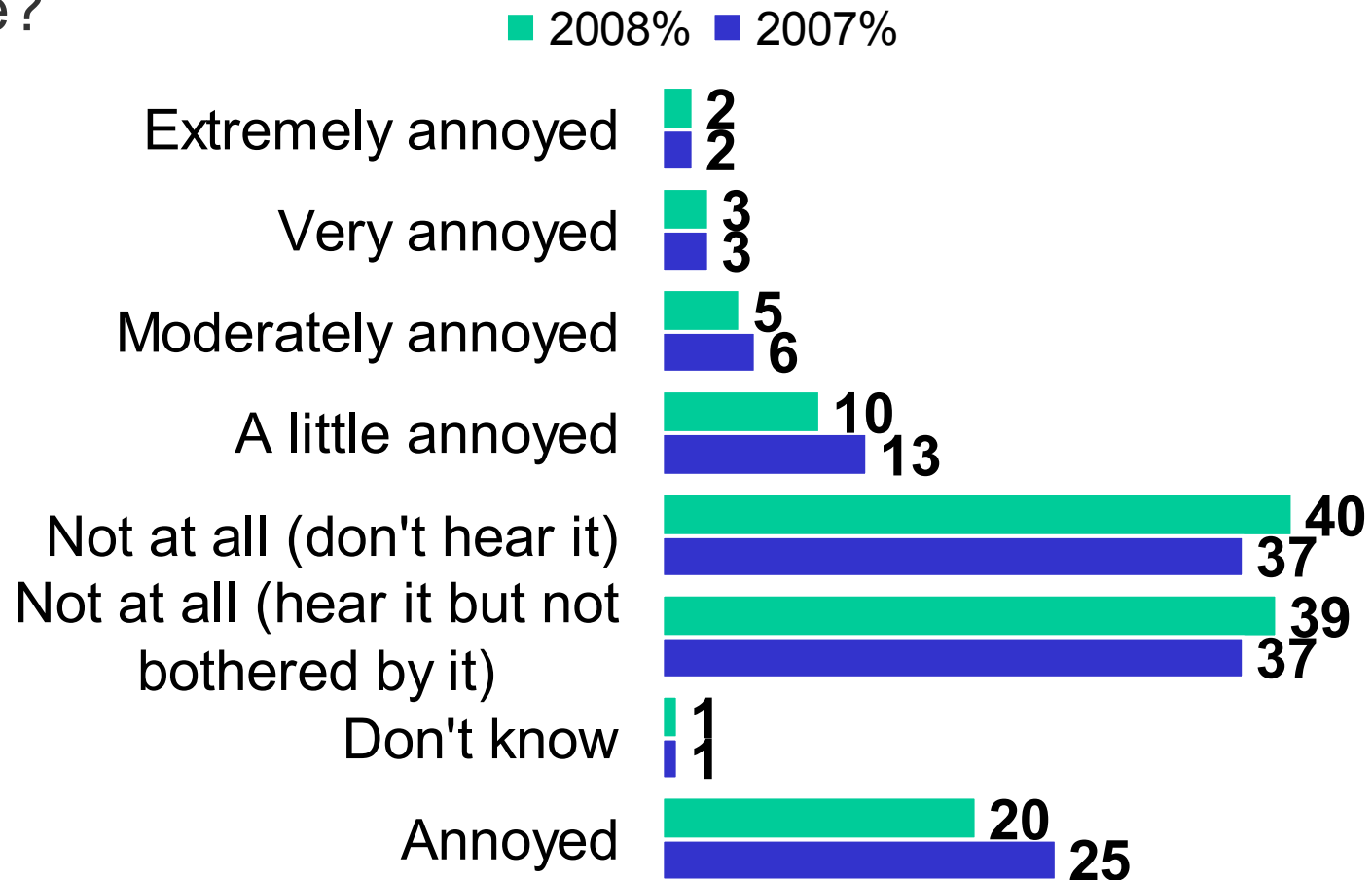
To what extent, if at all, are you personally bothered, annoyed or disturbed by neighbours (inside their homes) when you are in your home?



Base: 2,131 British adults, 17-22 April 2008; 2,138 British adults, April 2007

# Noise from neighbours outside their homes

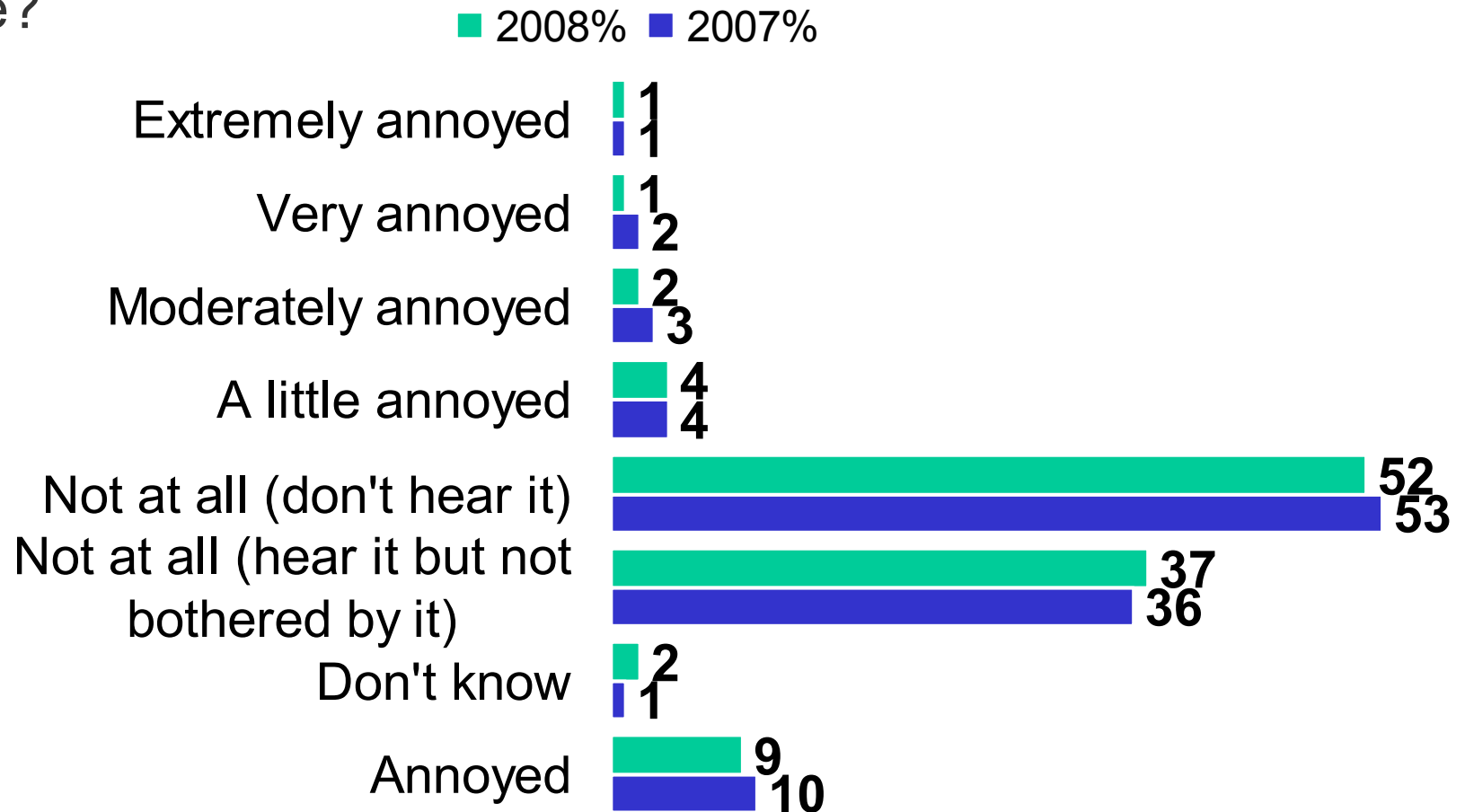
To what extent, if at all, are you personally bothered, annoyed or disturbed by neighbours (outside their homes) when you are in your home?



Base: 2,131 British adults, 17-22 April 2008; 2,138 British adults, April 2007

# Noise from pubs/clubs/entertainment venues

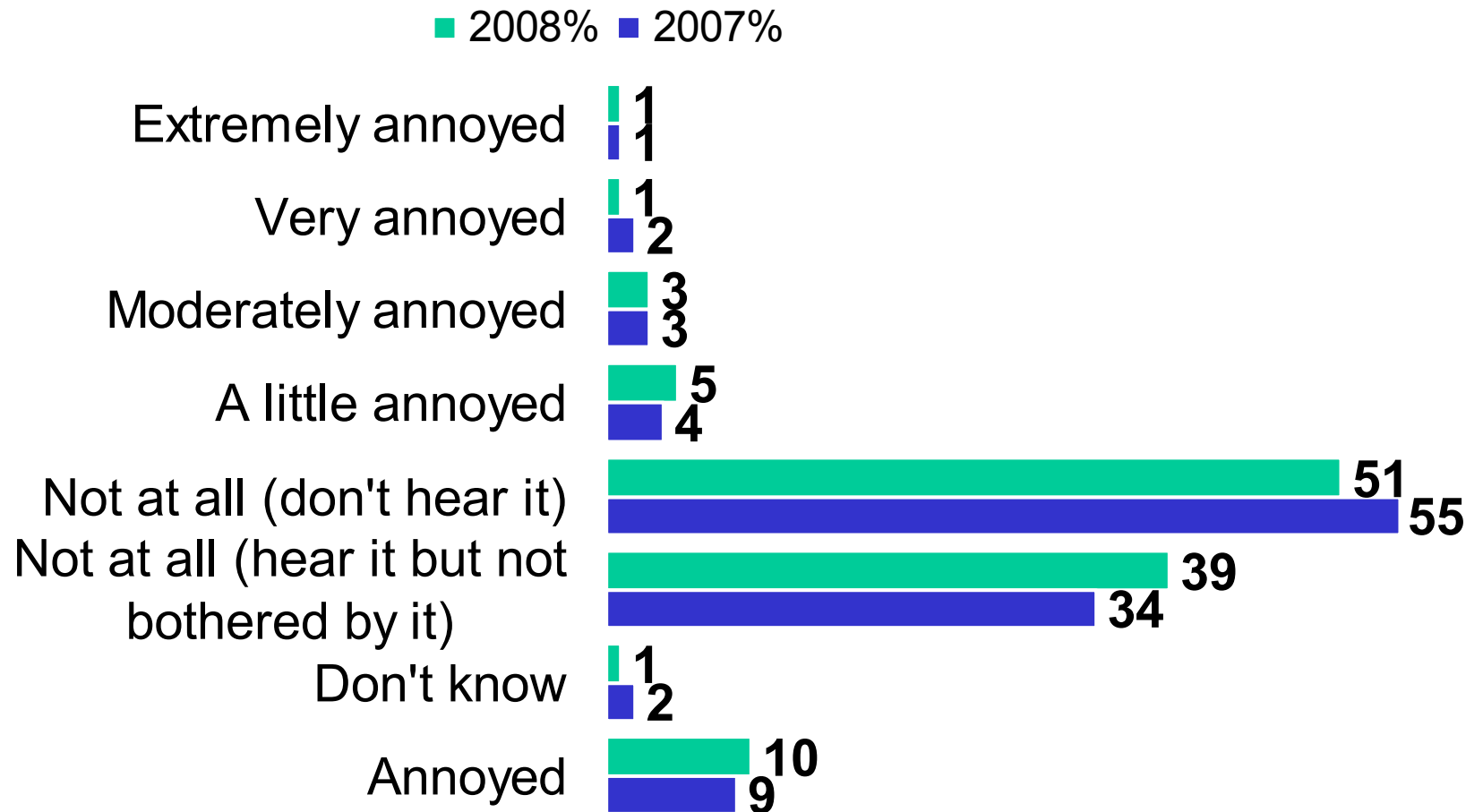
To what extent, if at all, are you personally bothered, annoyed or disturbed by pubs/clubs/entertainment venues when you are in your home?



Base: 2,131 British adults, 17-22 April 2008; 2,138 British adults, April 2007

# Noise from commercial premises/activities

To what extent, if at all, are you personally bothered, annoyed or disturbed by commercial premises/activities when you are in your home?



Base: 2,131 British adults, 17-22 April 2008; 2,138 British adults, April 2007

# Sub-group differences

- The following groups are more likely to say they are bothered, annoyed or disturbed by neighbour noise, inside or outside their homes:
  - Young people aged 15-34 (32%, compared with 26% overall).
  - Londoners (33%) and those in the North East (40%).
  - People living in private or social rented housing (31% and 35% respectively, compared with 23% of owner occupiers).
- Those living in Wales are more likely to say they are bothered, annoyed or disturbed by noise from pubs/clubs/entertainment venues whilst at home (14%, compared with 9% overall).
- The following groups are more likely to say they are bothered, annoyed or disturbed by noise from commercial premises whilst at home:
  - Londoners (16%, compared with 10% overall)
  - Private renters (14%, compared with 10% overall).

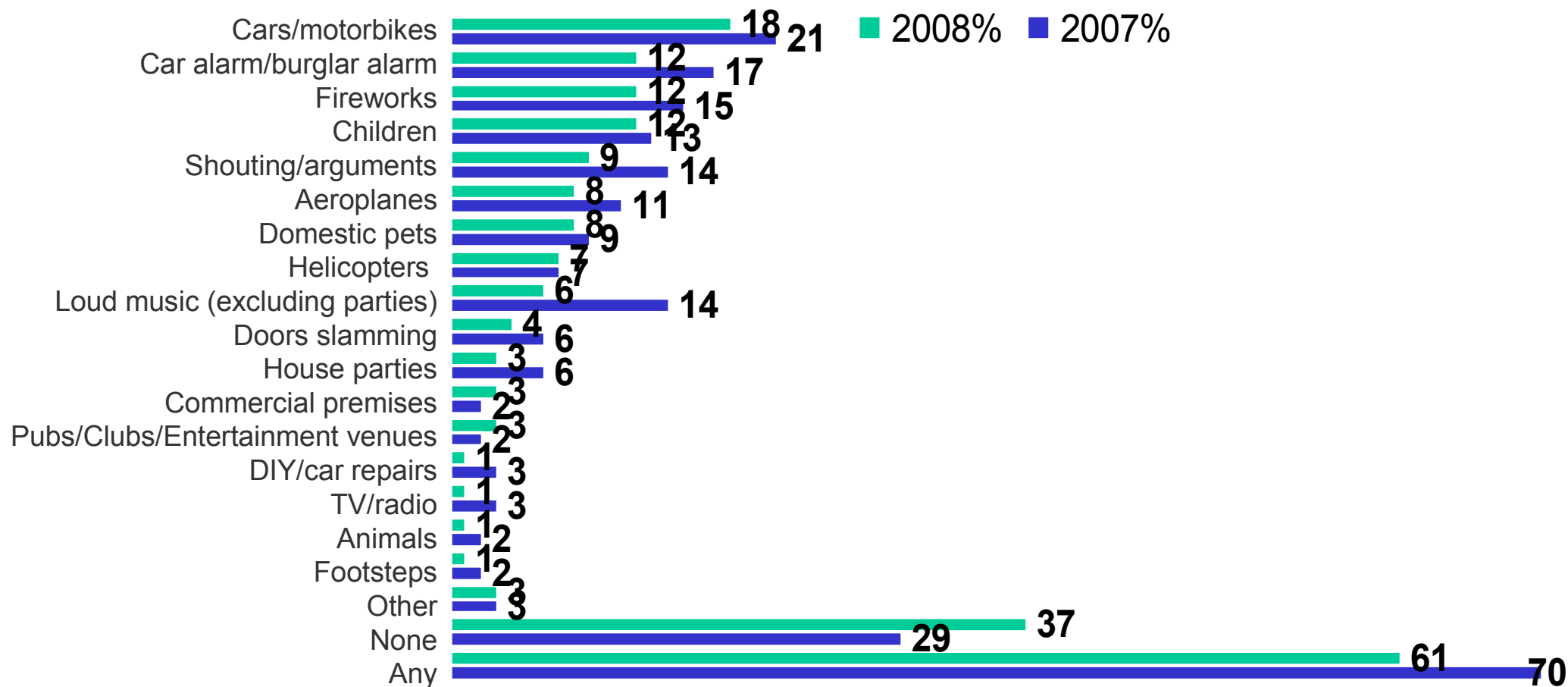
# Sources of noise

- Participants were asked about the sources of noise that bother them in their neighbourhood\*.
- As in 2007, 'cars/motorbikes' was the source cited most frequently (18%). This is followed by 'car/burglar alarms' (12%), 'fireworks' (12%) and 'children' (12%).
- Significantly fewer people say they are bothered by noise from any of these sources than in 2007 (61% and 70% respectively).
  - Reflecting this, there has been a significant drop in the proportion bothered by aeroplanes, fireworks and house parties (down 3 percentage points), car/burglar alarms and shouting/arguments (down 5 percentage points), and loud music - excluding parties - (down 8 percentage points).

\*To allow for tracking since 2006 and to add new sources of noise to the showcard list, two versions of this question were asked to each half of the total sample.

# Sources of noise (1)

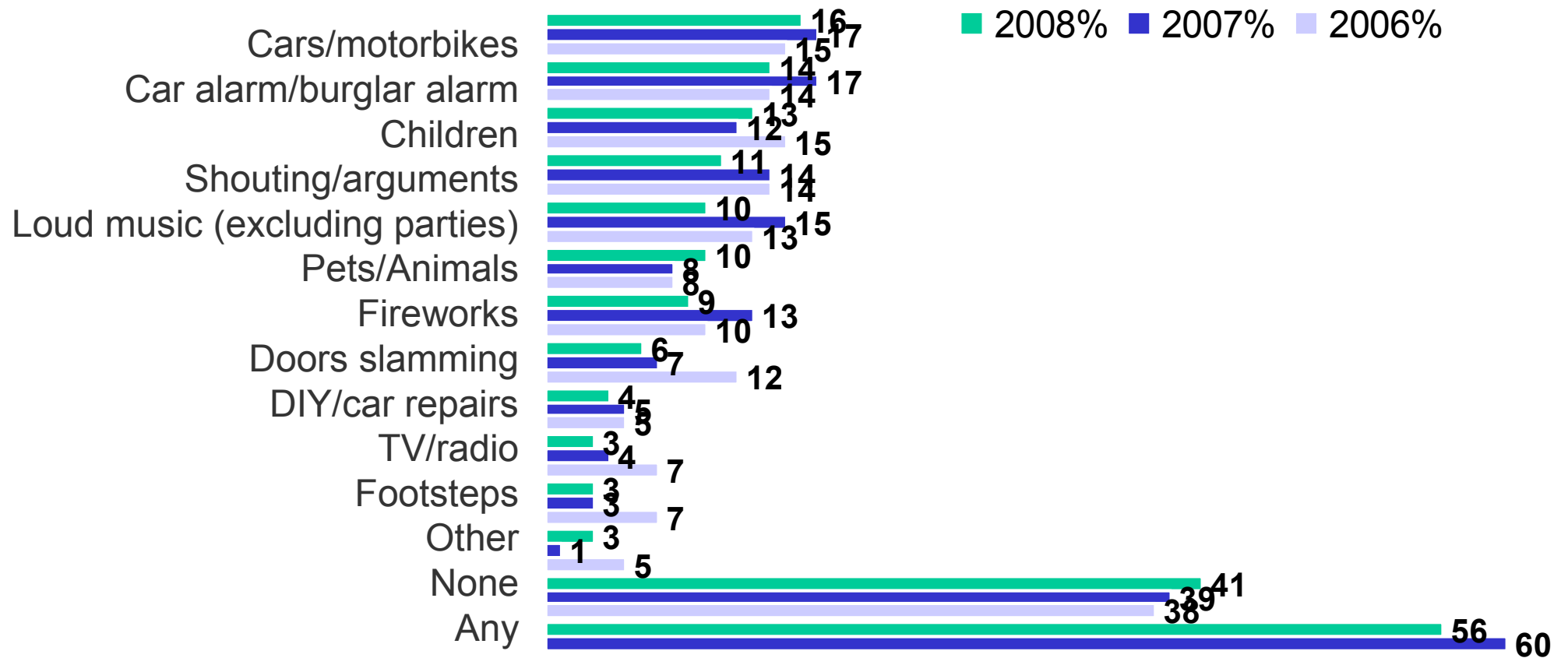
Thinking about any noise or noises that bother you in your neighbourhood, which of the following, if any, is the source or sources of the disturbance?



Base: 1,053 British adults, 17-22 April 2008; 1,060 British adults, April 2007

# Sources of noise (2)

Thinking about any noise or noises that bother you from your neighbours, which of the following, if any, is the source or sources of the disturbance?



Base: 1,078 British adults, 17-22 April 2008; 1,078 British adults, April 2007; 1,962 British adults, March 2006

# Sub-group differences

- Those in the South of England are more likely to say that aeroplanes are the source of noise disturbance (10%, compared with 8% overall).
- People in Wales are more likely to be disturbed by animals such as sheep, cows, ducks and geese (5%, compared with 1% overall).
- Those living in the South of England are most likely to identify one or more of these sources of noise (65%, compared with 61% overall).

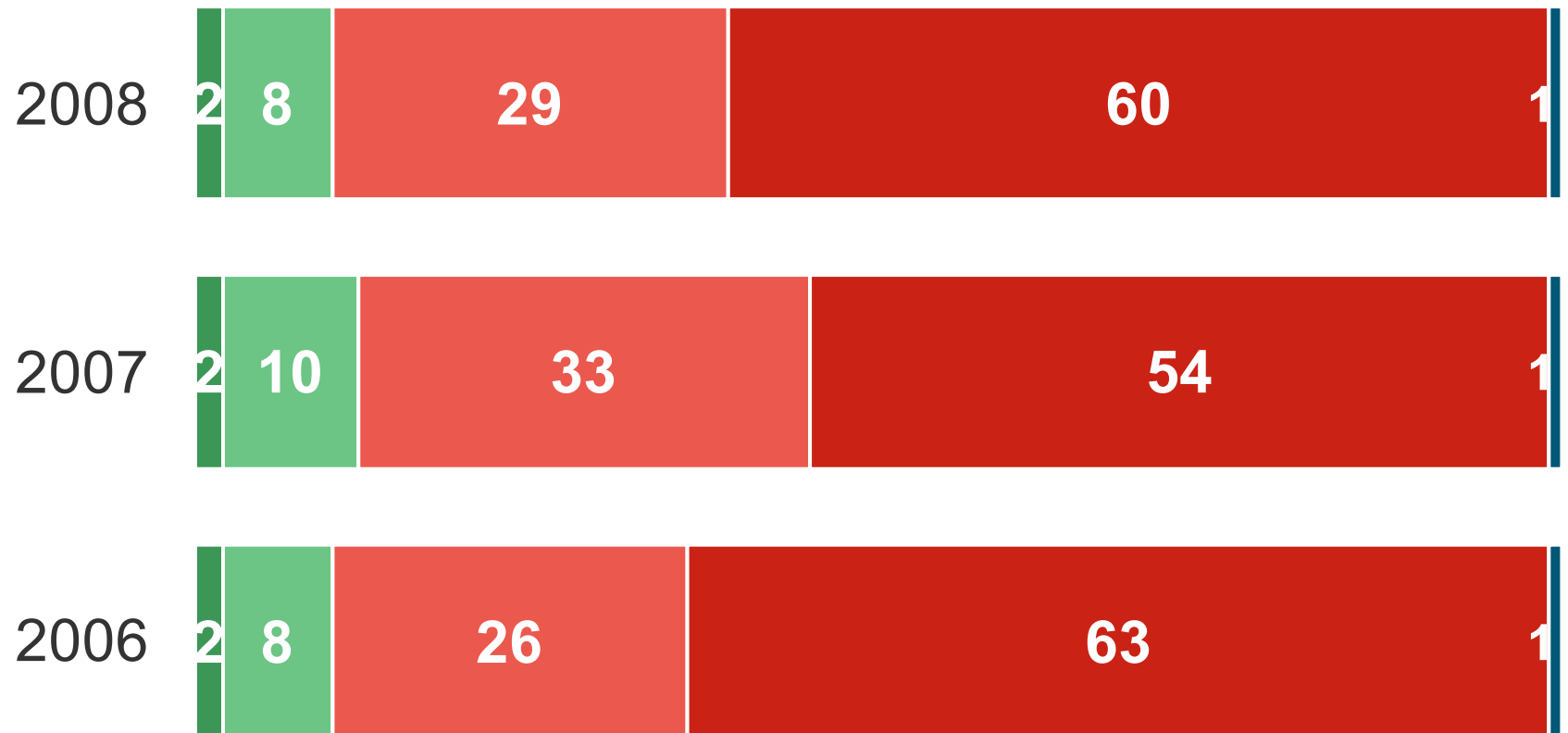
# The effect of noise on quality of life

- Following an increase in the proportion whose quality of life was affected by noise in general between 2006 and 2007, the overall proportion who say their quality of life suffers from noise has fallen from 45% to 39%.
- The proportion who say their quality of life suffers *a great deal* or *a fair amount* remains in line with findings from 2006, but is significantly lower than findings from 2007 (10%, compared with 12% in 2007 and 10% in 2006).

# Suffering from noise

Overall, to what degree, if at all, does your quality of life suffer from noise when you are at home?

■ % A great deal ■ % A fair amount ■ % Not very much ■ % Not at all ■ % Don't know



Base: 2,131 British adults, 17-22 April 2008; 2,138 British adults, April 2007; 1,962 British adults, March 2006

# Sub-group differences

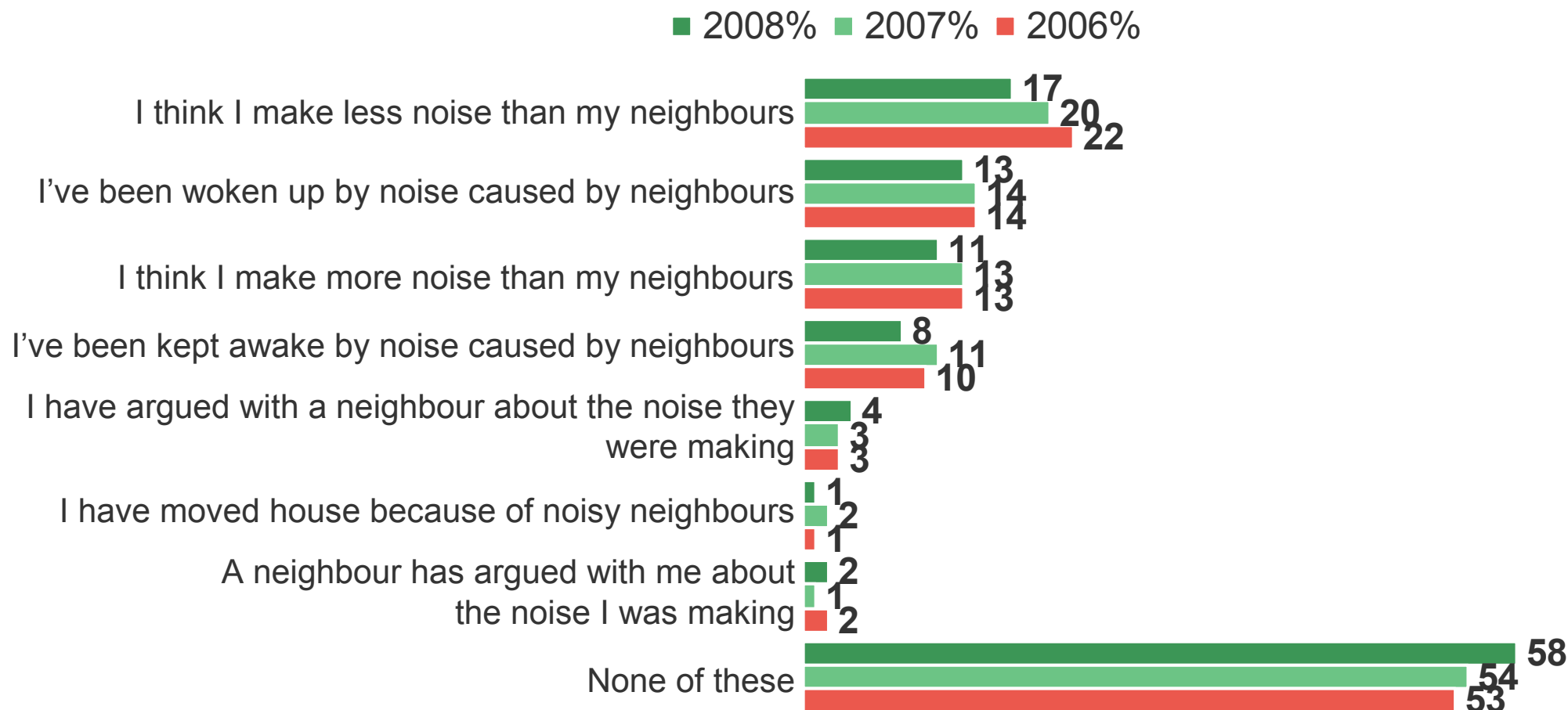
- Those with children in their household are more likely to say their quality of life suffers from noise when they are at home (44%, compared with 37% without children).
- Those living in England are more likely to say their quality of life suffers from noise than those in Scotland (41% and 31% respectively).
- Londoners are most likely to say their quality of life suffers from noise (50%, compared with 39% across Great Britain overall).
- Council tenants are also more likely to say their quality of life suffers from noise (46%, compared with 39% overall).

# The effects of neighbour noise

- Whilst 4% of the public say they have argued with a neighbour about the noise they were making, only 2% say that a neighbour has argued with them about the noise they were making. These findings are in line with those from 2006 and 2007.
- Most people (by default) do not think they make more or less noise than their neighbours (72%), whilst 17% think they make *less* noise than their neighbours and 11% think they make *more* noise.
- One in eight (13%) say they have been woken up by noise caused by neighbours in the past year and one in 12 (8%) say they have been kept awake by neighbour noise.
- A small but substantial number of people have moved house because of noisy neighbours (1%), reflecting the serious impact that neighbour noise can have on people's quality of life.

# The effects of neighbour noise

Thinking about the past year, which, if any, of the following apply to you?



Base: 2,131 British adults, 17-22 April 2008; 2,138 British adults, April 2007; 1,962 British adults, March 2006

# Sub-group differences

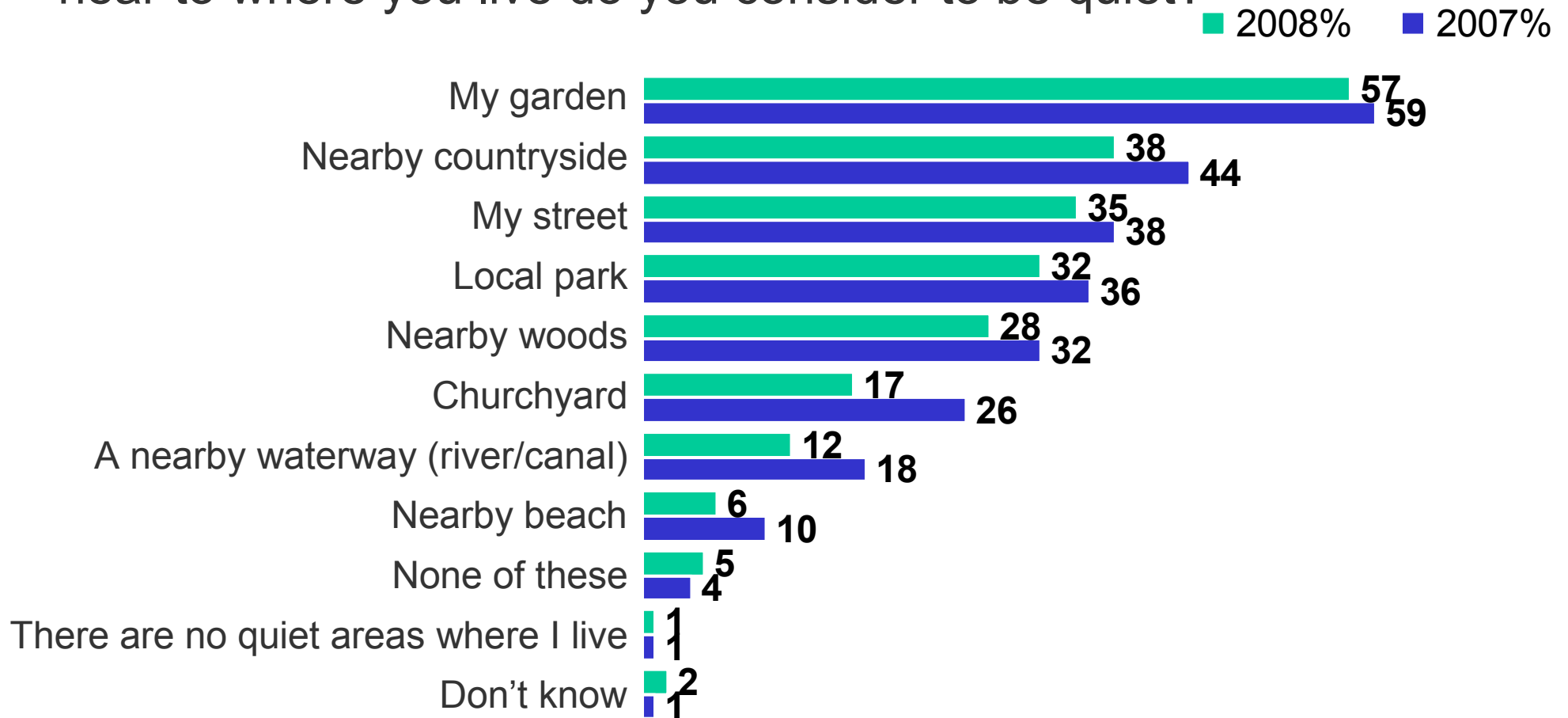
- Reflecting the bigger impact that noise has on council tenants, this group are more likely to say that they have been woken up by noise caused by neighbours (19% vs. 13% overall), kept awake by noise from neighbours (16% vs. 8% overall), and argued with a neighbour about the noise they were making (9% vs. 4% overall).
- Private tenants are more likely to say they have moved because of noisy neighbours, (4% vs. 1% overall) perhaps reflecting the greater ease with which they are able to do so.

# Quiet places

- Only 1% say there are no quiet areas where they live.
  - Over half (57%) have a quiet garden
  - Around a third consider nearby countryside (38%) or their local park (32%) to be quiet, while 35% say their street is quiet.
- However, fewer people this year consider the following places near to where they live to be quiet: nearby countryside (38%, compared with 44% in 2007), woods (28%, compared with 32% in 2007), local park (32%, compared with 36% in 2007), churchyard (17% compared with 26% in 2007), waterway (12%, compared with 18% in 2007) and beach (6%, compared with 10% in 2007).
- In addition, fewer people say their street is quiet (35%, compared with 38% in 2007).

# Quite areas

Using this card, which, if any, of the following open outdoor areas near to where you live do you consider to be quiet?



Base: 2,131 British adults, 17-22 April 2008; 2,138 British adults, April 2007

# Sub-group differences

- Older people (aged 55+) are more likely to have access to a quiet garden (69%), churchyard (23%), woods (32%), and countryside (45%).
- Those in the managerial and professional social classes (A&B) are also more likely to have access to quiet places, including a quiet garden (63%), local park (35%), churchyard (21%), woods (38%), countryside (49%), beach (9%), and waterway (18%). They are also more likely to live on a quiet street (39%, compared with 35% overall).
- Council tenants are most likely to have no access to quiet places (3%, compared to 1% overall say there are no quiet areas where they live and one in eight (12%) do not have access to a quiet garden, local park, street, churchyard, wood, countryside, beach or waterway).

# Appendices

**Ipsos MORI**