



Period Dignity

Consultation Results
MARCH 2022

Report by:
Education Services,
Strategic Support Services



1. Introduction.

- 1.1 This report provides details on the recent findings of the Period Dignity consultation as completed by the general public, pupils and organisations.
- 1.2 The consultation was launched on Wednesday 12th January 2022 and closed on Wednesday 9th February 2022, following an extension of one week. It was an online consultation, publicised via Social Media and the GCC website. There were 3 aspects of the consultation where we hoped to capture the views and experiences of the general public, pupils and private or third sector organisations providing services to citizens of Glasgow.

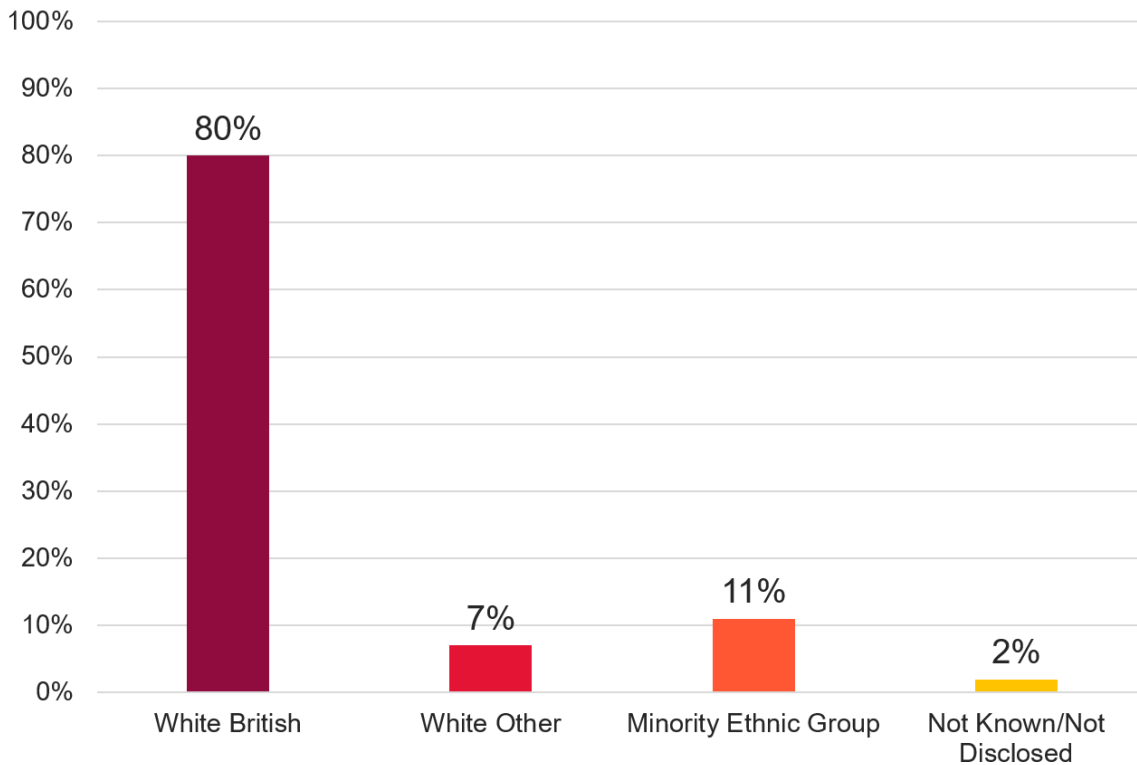
2. Background.

- 2.1 The Period Products (Free Provision) Act 2021 was passed by the Scottish Parliament on 24th November 2020 and gained royal assent on 12th January 2021. It is the world's first legislation to make it mandatory for all public institutions to provide free and easily obtainable products for those who menstruate. The aim of the act is to support the rights and dignity of those who menstruate whilst reducing the stigma associated with requiring/using products.
- 2.2 As a Local Authority, Glasgow City Council is required to ensure that products are available in all GCC run public spaces (libraries, museums, sports centres etc.), all GCC run education facilities (primary, secondary and ASL schools) and all publicly accessible GCC workspaces. Local Authorities are required to produce and communicate a Statement on Exercise of Functions to summarise the arrangements in place to meet the legal duties, which includes carrying out 1 or more public consultation(s).
- 2.3 In line with the legal requirements, GCC launched a consultation process in January 2022.

3. Findings of Consultation (Public).

- 3.1 The consultation questionnaire for the general public comprised of 16 questions and was open to anyone who wished to contribute, regardless of whether they themselves menstruated. 1186 people contributed to the consultation process.
- 3.2 Of the 1186 participants, 872 (74%) were people who currently menstruate, with 63 participants (5%) being people who will begin to menstruate in future. This meant there were 251 participants (21%) who do not currently, and will not in future, menstruate who contributed to the consultation.
- 3.3 The ethnicity of participants is illustrated below.

Figure 1: Ethnicity of Participants



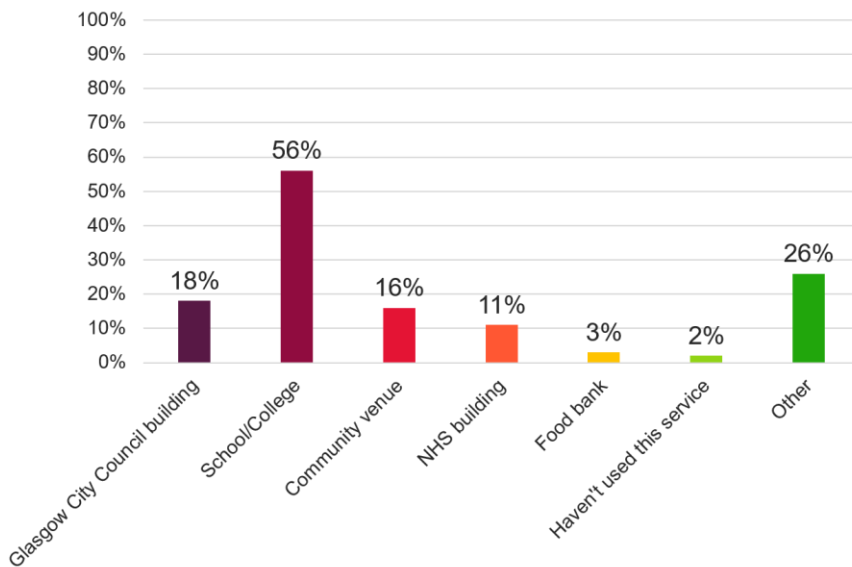
- 3.4 Out of 1186 participants, 567 (48%) were aware of free products being available in Glasgow, with 619 (52%) being unaware of the provision of free products.



3.5 Looking at the 568 people who were aware, 185 (**33%**) had previously used free products.

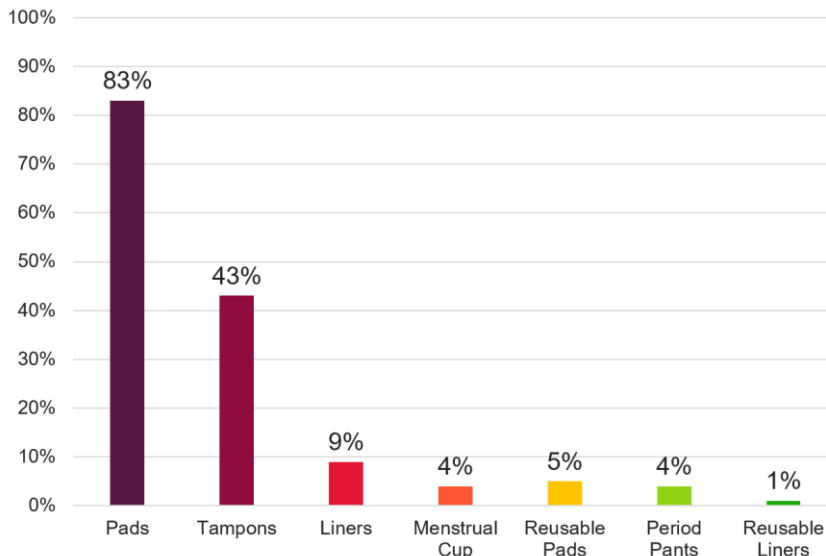
3.6 If we look more closely at those who were aware and had used the products before, we can see that most had previously obtained products from their school/college, with smaller numbers accessing products via a community facility, NHS building, Glasgow City Council building or from a foodbank. A significant number of people listed other venues such as private bars/restaurants, football stadiums, universities and shopping centres.

Figure 2: Locations Products Obtained



3.7 We can also see that pads and tampons were the most used products, with a smaller number having accessed reusable items.

Figure 3: Products Accessed

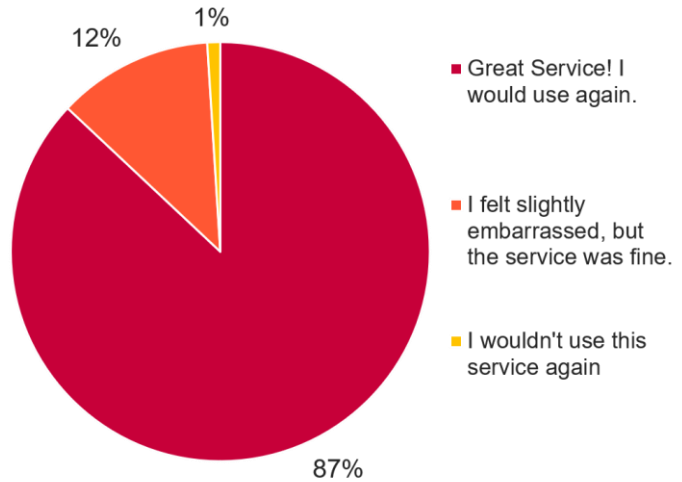


3.8 Still looking at those who were aware and had accessed products, respondents stated that they had mainly accessed these for themselves (**94%**), with some accessing for family members (**11%**) and a smaller number (**8%**) obtaining them for a service user / person they support in their job and a friend or partner.

3.9 We also asked those who had accessed products about their experience and whether they'd use again. Only 1 respondent out of 181 people said that they would not use again, with 157 saying it was a positive experience and they would definitely use again. 23 people said that they were slightly embarrassed, but overall the service was fine and they would probably use again.

Figure 4: Experience

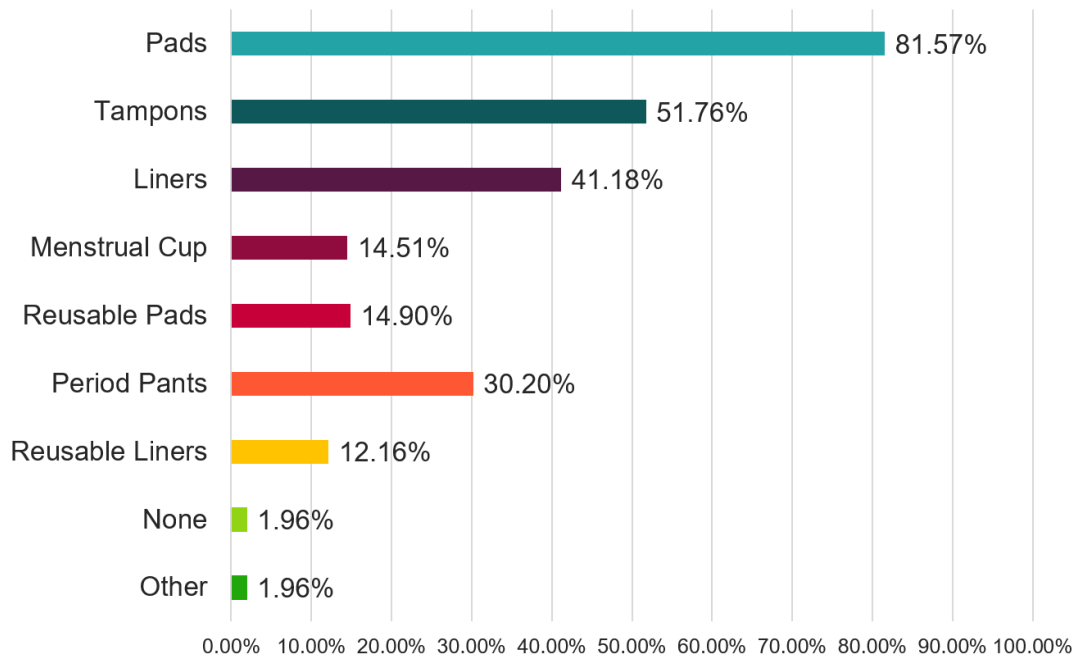
Based on your experience, please rate the process of accessing free period products?



3.10 There were 383 who people were aware that products were available but had not accessed products before. Of those, 257 people (**67%**) stated that they would be interested in doing so and selected one or more product(s) they would potentially use, as shown below.

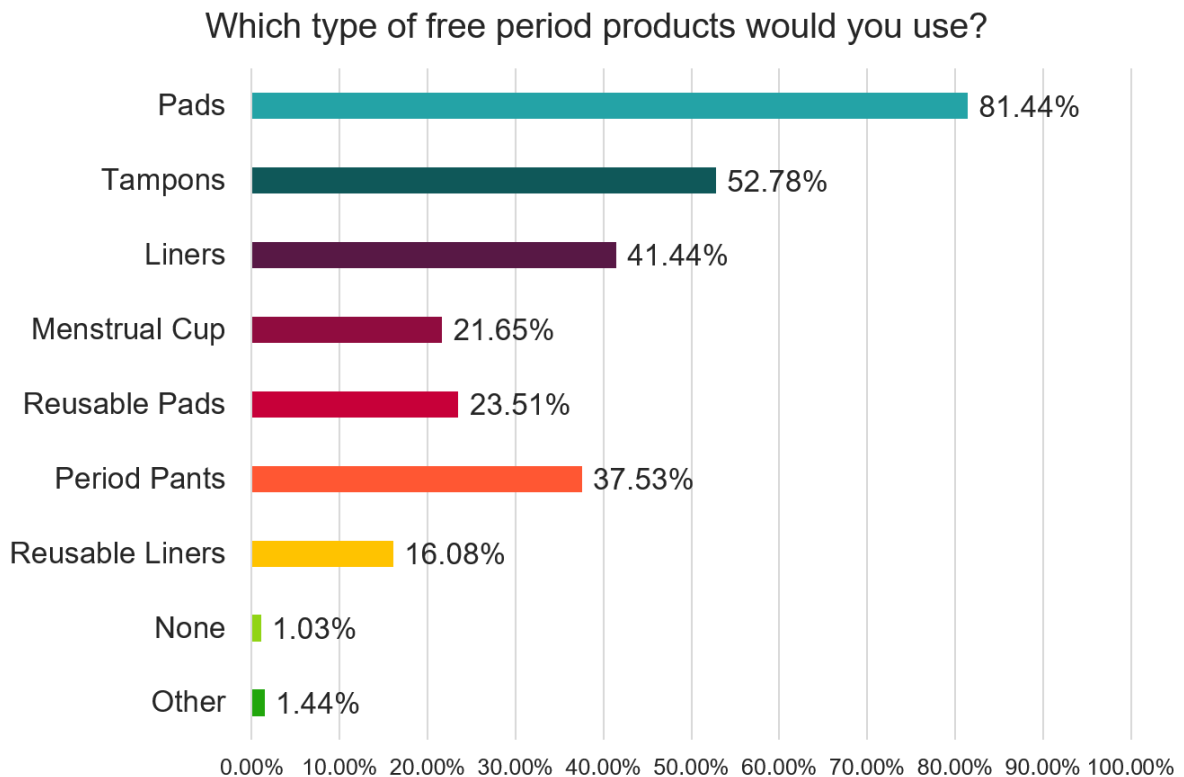
Figure 5: Product Preference (Aware)

Which type of free period products would you use?



3.11 There were 619 respondents who were not aware of free products being available in Glasgow. Of those who were not aware, the majority (**78%**) said that they would they be interested in accessing free products. The products highlighted as the ones they would most like to see available were pads, tampons and liners, however 182 respondents chose period pants as one of the options they'd like to see, with period cups and reusable liners also highlighted by a smaller number of people, as shown below.

Figure 6: Product Preference (Unaware)



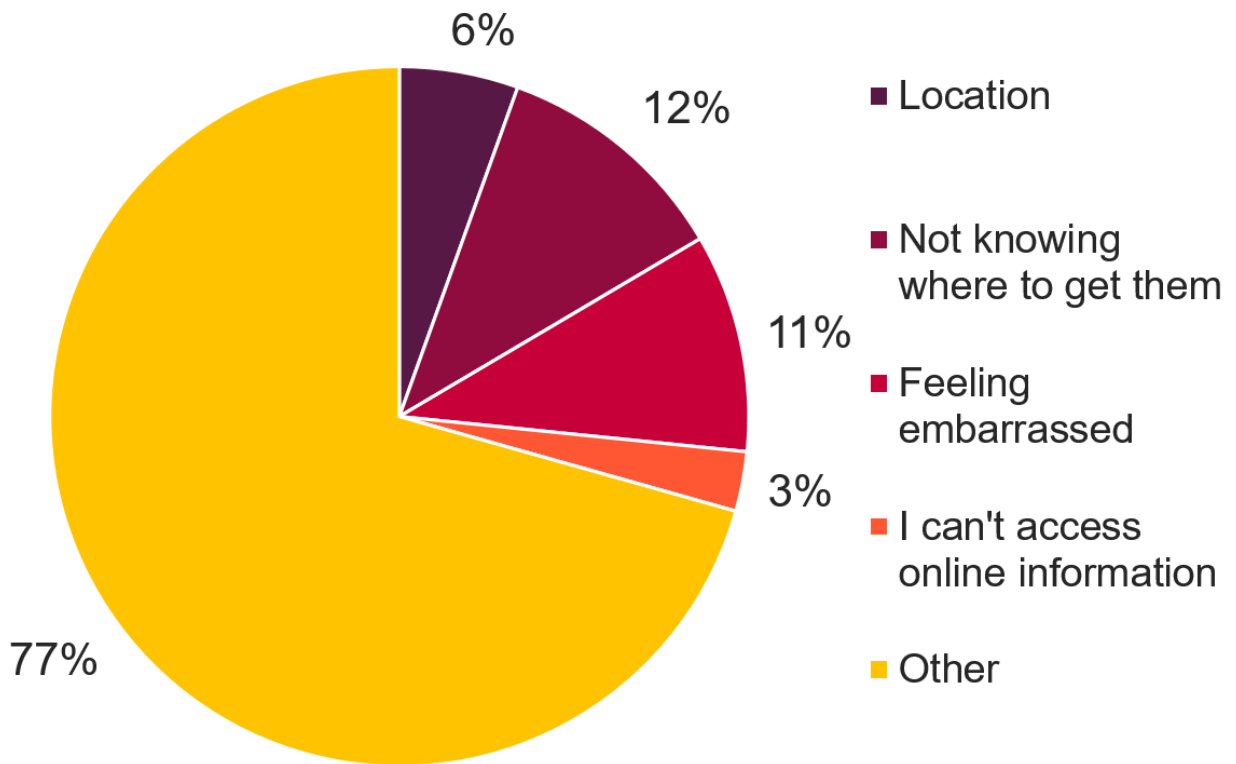
3.12 Of those who were not aware, but were interested in accessing products, **82%** would be interested in accessing for personal use, **45%** would be interested in accessing for a family member and **8%** would be interested in accessing products for another person.

3.13 When those who were not aware of free products in Glasgow but were interested were asked where they thought the best place to access products would be, schools and colleges was the most popular answer (**80%**). A high number of respondents (**80%**) chose online ordering service as an option. GP surgeries / health centres and hospitals were also popular in choice (**75%**), and over half (**57%**) also named community venues as appropriate places. Those who selected “other” gave suggestions such as train/bus stations, shops/restaurants and pharmacies.

3.14 Most respondents who were not aware of products but were interested stated that the best location within these buildings would be within the toilets (**89%**) or within a discreet location (**59%**). A smaller number suggested in the reception area (**32%**) or at a display stand (**30%**).

3.15 Looking at the reasons given for not being interested in accessing free products (for both those who were aware of the service and those who were unaware), we can see that **11%** cited feeling embarrassed a reason. For **12%** it was being unsure where to access products and for 6% it was location which was the deterrent. A small number (**3%**) were put off by not being able to access online information. However, it should be noted that the majority of respondents picked “other” as a reason.

Figure 7: Not Interested Reasoning



3.16 Respondents who had selected “other” were asked to elaborate on that reason. Many stated that they did not require products due to age, or because they were male, however a high number of respondents stated that they felt the service was not suitable for them as they could afford to buy period products. Below is a selection of comments pertaining to the financial aspect:

“I don’t need this service as I can afford to buy the products.”

“I can afford to buy my own but think it’s a fantastic service to offer.”

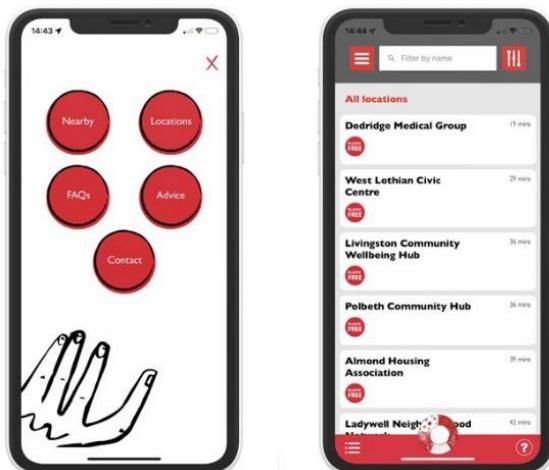
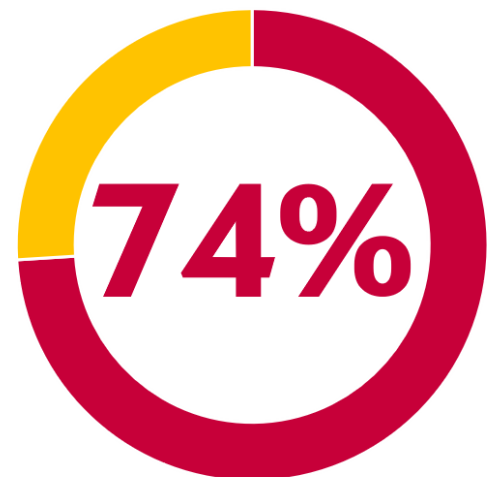
“I feel that there are many more people who need access to these products more urgently than I do.”

“I would want them to be available to those who need them most - I can currently afford them so wouldn't want to use the resources and take them away from those most in need.”

“I’m fortunate enough to be able to afford them myself and would leave them for women who really cannot afford them.”

3.17 Finally, all participants were asked if they would be likely to use the PickupMyPeriod app which has been launched to show the location and availability of free period products. Nearly three quarters of all 1186 participants (**74%**) stated that they would use the app.

Figure 8: Likelihood of Using App



4. Findings of Consultation (Pupils)

- 4.1 The consultation questionnaire for pupils was open to attendees of both primary and secondary education facilities, including ASL facilities, in Glasgow. It was comprised of 15 questions and was open to pupils of any gender. 1,425 pupils completed the consultation questions. Of the 1,425 pupils to complete, 251 (18%) were primary school pupils and 1,174 (82%) were secondary school pupils.
- 4.2 Overall, 1,055 pupils (75%) were aware of period products being available in school. Breaking those figures down into primary and secondary pupil responses, we saw that 177 primary pupils out of 242 were aware, compared with 837 out of 1,106 secondary pupils. Both rates as a percentage are relatively similar at 72% for primary pupils and 76% for secondary pupils.

Figure 9 (A): Awareness Overall

Are you aware of free period products available in your school?
(Primary & Secondary combined)

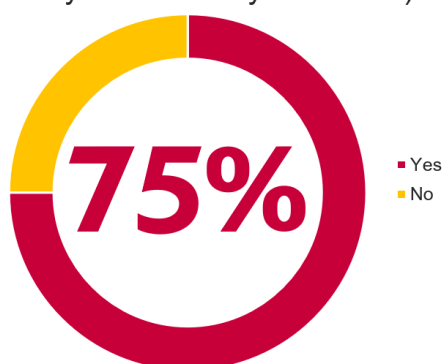
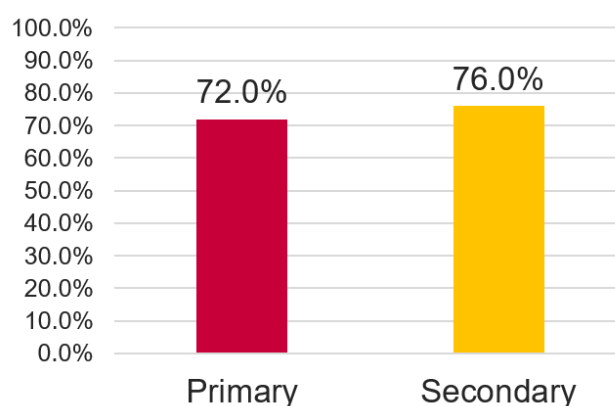


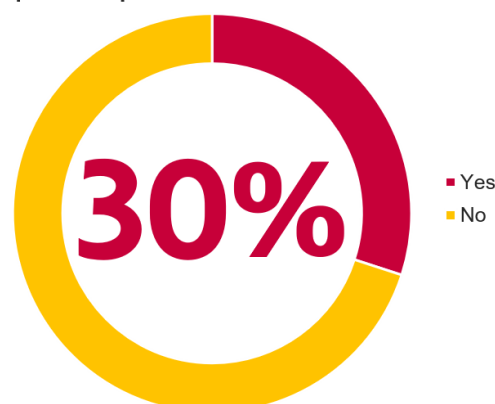
Figure 9 (B): Awareness Primary / Secondary



- 4.3 The consultation asked all pupils if they had ever accessed free period products in school. The number of pupils who had accessed free products was 421 (30%), with 960 pupils (70%) stating that they had not.

Figure 10: Product Usage

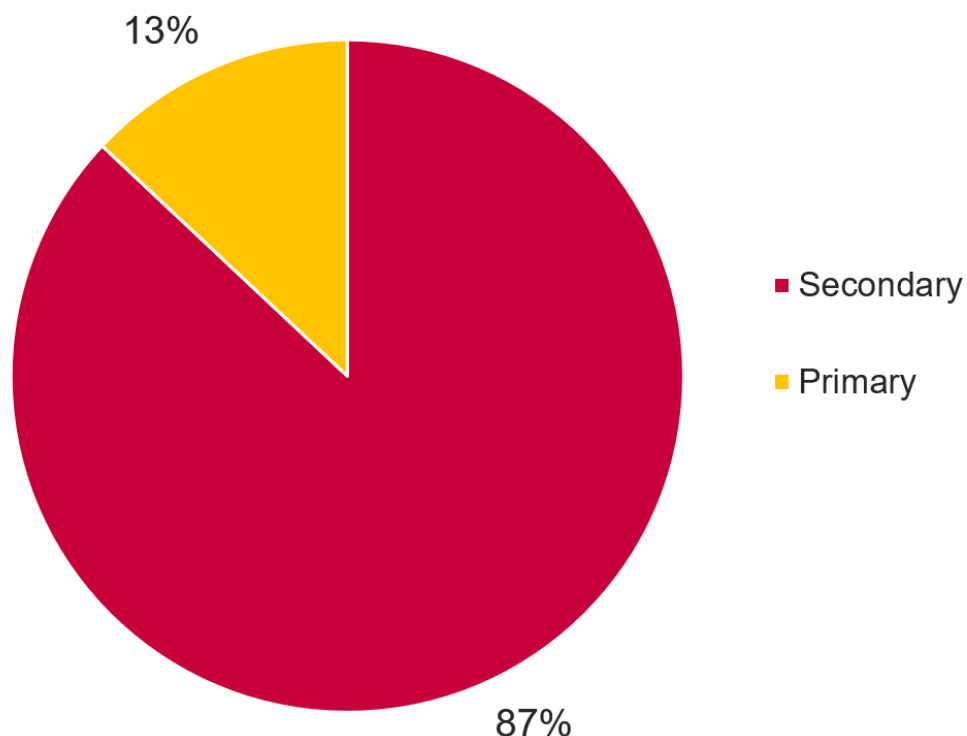
Have you ever accessed free period products in school?



4.4 If we break this statistic down into primary and secondary pupils, we can see that most of the pupils who have previously accessed products were secondary pupils (**87%**) with only 53 primary pupils of the 421 pupils (**13%**) having previously accessed free products.

Figure 11: Usage (Primary/Secondary)

Of the 421 pupils who had accessed products:



4.5 It should be noted that fewer primary pupils contributed to the questionnaire, as converting this into individual percentage rates shows us that the gap is less dramatic with **22%** of primary school respondents having accessed free products compared to **33%** of secondary school respondents. We should also be aware that fewer primary pupils may require products.

4.6 When asked if they brought products to school, 104 primary pupils out of 246 (**42%**) said that they did. Comparatively, 822 secondary pupils out of 1,113 (**74%**) stated that they brought their own products. This again could be attributed to the smaller percentage of primary school pupils who are likely to menstruate.

Figure 12 (A): Primary

Do you bring period products to school?
(Primary)

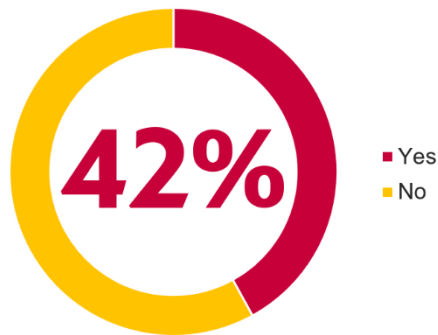
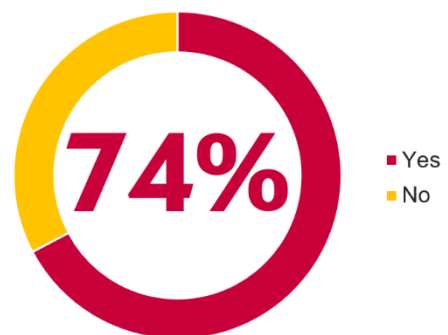


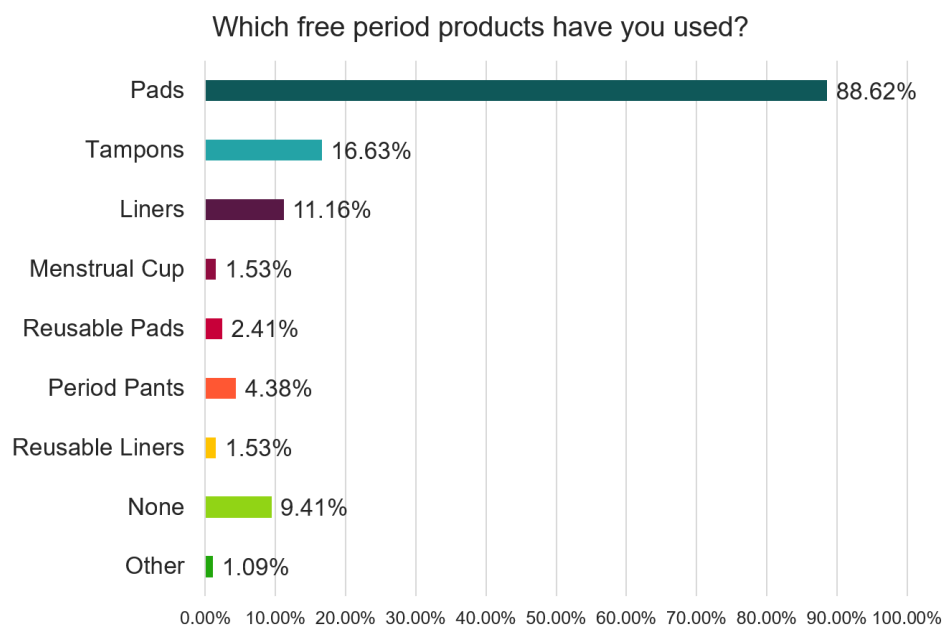
Figure 12 (B): Secondary

Do you bring period products to school?
(Secondary)



4.7 For those who had accessed products previously, we were interested to learn what type of products they had accessed. Out of 421 pupils, 373 stated that they accessed pads, 70 had also / instead accessed tampons, and 47 pupils had also / instead accessed liners. A smaller number of pupils had accessed reusable items, as shown below.

Figure 13: Accessed Product Type



4.8 There was very little difference in these results when split between primary and secondary pupils. Pads were the most used product by a substantial margin for both sets of pupils.

4.9 The products pupils would like to use was significantly different to those that pupils had used. It should be noted that this question was answered by both those who had accessed products previously as well as those who hadn't, and that pupils were able to select as many options as they were interested in. Pads were the still the most popular choice, especially for primary pupils, however over half of all secondary pupils also/instead chose tampons as a product they would like to see available. A quarter of both primary and secondary pupils picked period pants as an option.

Figure 14 (A): Preferred Products (Primary)

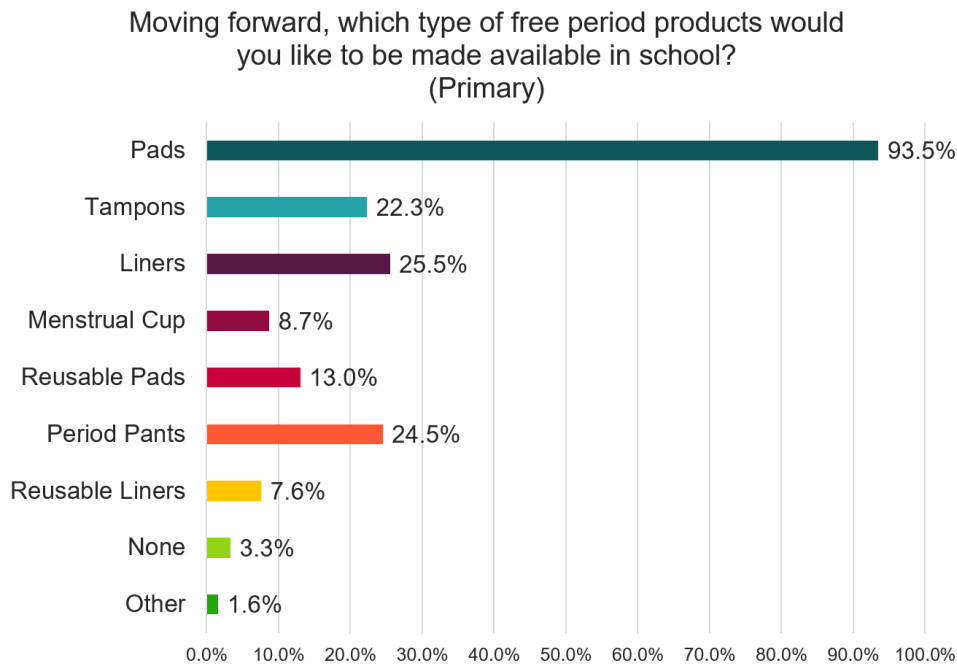
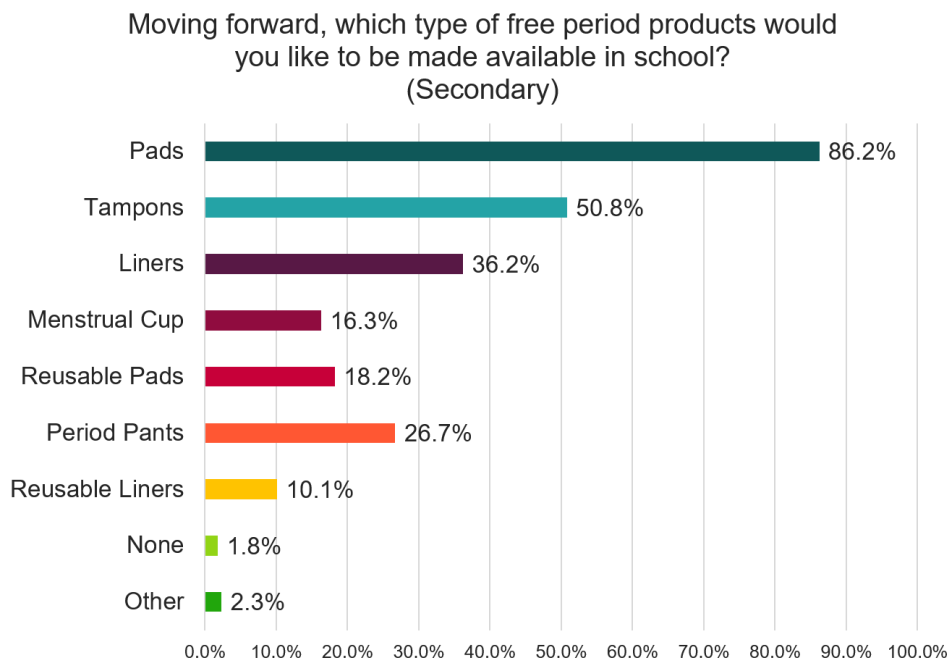
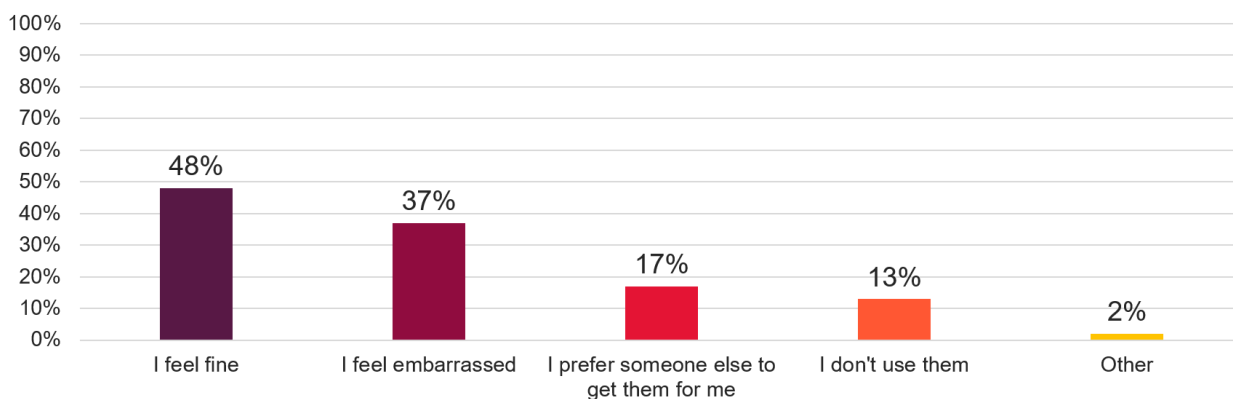


Figure 14 (B): Preferred Products (Secondary)



4.10 We asked pupils how they felt about looking for / accessing products at school. Overall, nearly half of pupils stated that they felt fine, with over a third saying that they felt embarrassed. A smaller number felt more comfortable with someone else obtaining products for them. Primary pupils were far more likely to feel embarrassed (**49%**) compared to secondary pupils (**35%**). Those who chose the “other” option mostly listed not requiring products at this time as their reason.

Figure 15: Attitude to Accessing Products



4.11 In terms of where period products should be available, both primary pupils (**87%**) and secondary pupils (**90%**) stated in the toilets as the most appropriate place. A smaller number stated the school office (**23%**) and the third most popular choice was asking a member of staff (**19.4%**).

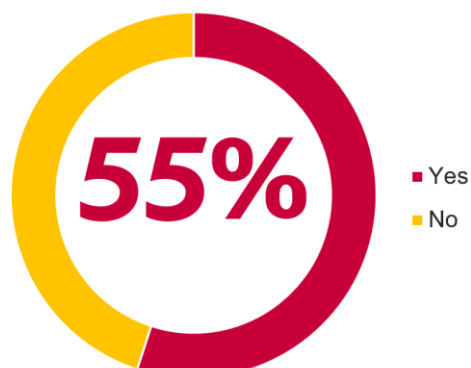
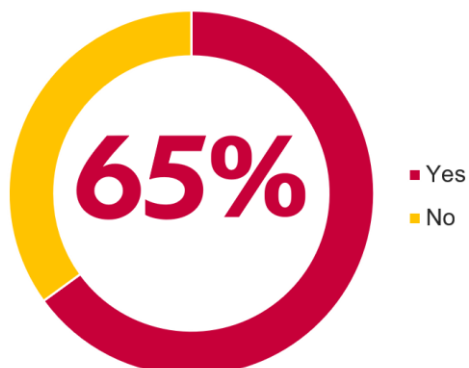
4.12 Overall, over **50%** of pupils who hadn't accessed products previously said they would be interested in accessing products in future. Primary pupils were more enthusiastic, with **65%** stating that would be interested. Again, this could be down to age and stage of those pupils.

Figure 16 (A): Interest (Primary)

Figure 16 (B): Interest (Secondary)

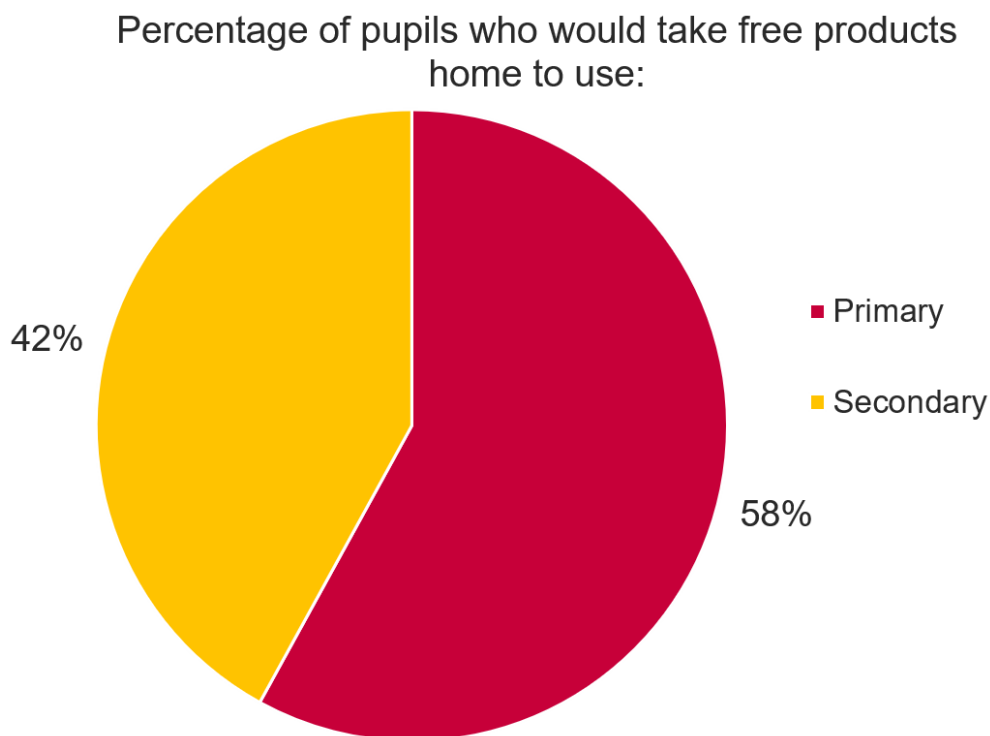
If you haven't previously accessed free period products, is this something you would be interested in?
(Primary)

If you haven't previously accessed free period products, is this something you would be interested in?
(Secondary)



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- 4.13 90% of all pupils asked stated that they had access to products at home, with 10% stating that they do not. Of that **10%** however we know that a significant number do not access products as school either. We therefore feel this could be because they do not currently menstruate and potentially won't in future – i.e. those respondents were younger pupils or male.
- 4.14 We asked pupils if they would be likely to take products home to use out with school. **58%** of primary pupils said they would take products home compared to **42%** of secondary pupils. Pupils were most likely to take products home for themselves, followed by for a family member.

Figure 17: Interest in Home Use



- 4.15 Pupils were asked if they would like to know more about free period products available at school. Looking at pupil responses as a whole, **50%** stated yes. When we separated responses into primary and secondary responses, we can see that primary pupils were more keen to have further information (**66%**) compared with secondary pupils (**47%**).

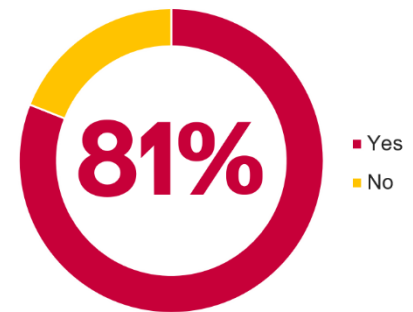
5. Findings of Consultation – Organisations.

5.1 The consultation questionnaire for organisations comprised of 11 questions and was open to private, public and 3rd sector organisations. 31 organisations in total completed the questionnaire. 30 participants were public or 3rd sector organisations with 1 participant not stating which sector/organisation they were from.

5.2 Of the 31 organisations who responded, 25 (81%) were aware of period products being available for free within Glasgow. Whilst the percentage of awareness was high, the actual number of respondents was fairly low which could suggest that an organisation was more likely to respond to the consultation if they were already aware of period dignity activity in Glasgow.

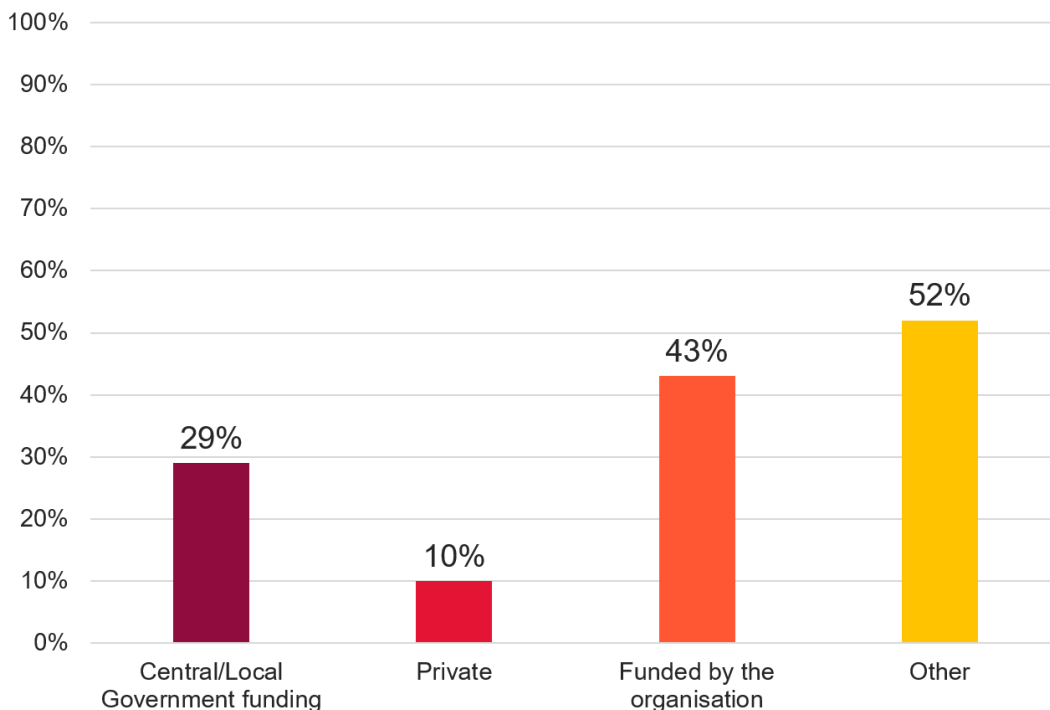
Figure 18: Awareness

Are you aware of the current availability of free period products in Glasgow under the Period Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Act 2021?



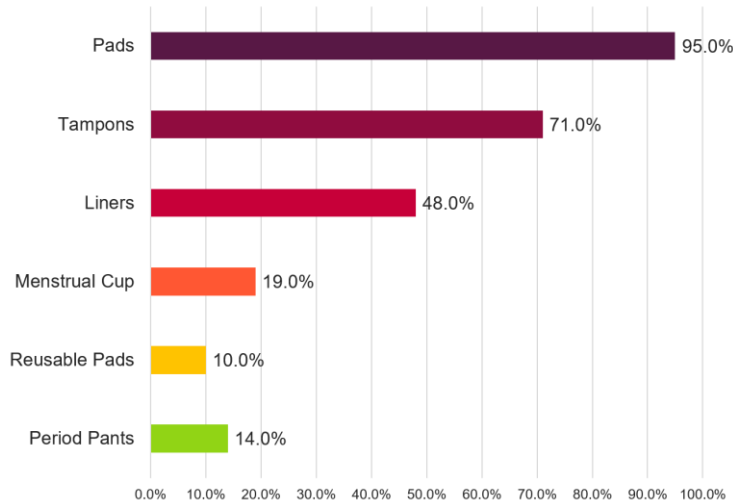
5.3 The majority of respondent organisations already provided period products, however 10 did not. Of the 21 who did provide products, there were different funding streams used. Those who chose “other” were asked to specify, and over half of the organisations stated that they relied on donations of products or collected/received these from other organisations/schools or Period Friendly Points.

Figure 19: Source of Funding for Products



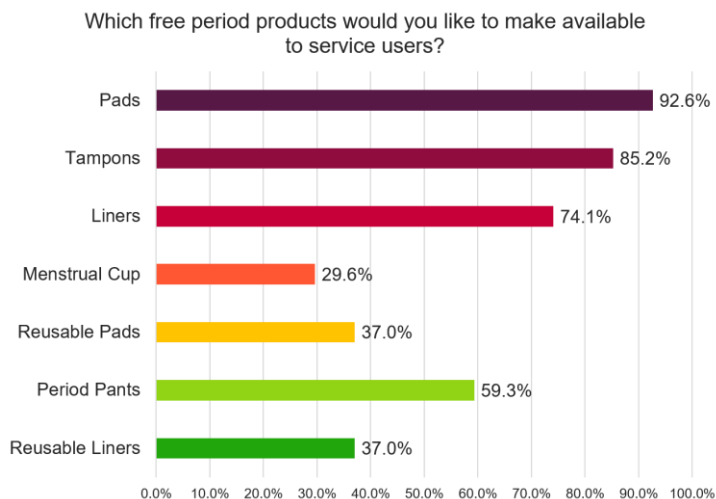
5.4 Respondents who were already providing products were asked to detail which type of products they offered. It was determined that single use sanitary pads and tampons were provided in the main, however 4 organisations stated that they had at least one reusable product, such as a menstrual cup or period pants, available. No organisation stated that they provided reusable liners, and no organisations chose the “other” option.

Figure 20: Products Provided



5.5 The majority of respondents (27 out of 31 organisations) said they would be interested in providing products. When asked which products organisations would like to make available to service users, it wasn't surprising to see sanitary pads and tampons as the standard and most popular items again. It was however encouraging to see that 16 organisations (nearly **60%**) were interested in period pants, with 10 organisations also interested in reusable pads and liners. Given only 4 organisations currently provide any form of reusable products, this shows real interest in more sustainable options.

Figure 21: Product Preference



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- 5.6 When asked where they would like to make period products available, the overwhelming majority of organisations stated the female and accessible toilets. Other suggestions included male toilets, designated areas within the building, and pantry/foodbank facilities.
- 5.7 The last question asked for any additional comments or feedback. 16 participants provided a response. The majority of comments were positive, with some quotes given below:

“I think the provision of the free period products is fantastic for young people. As well as not having the expense of having to purchase these products.”

“We feel this is an amazing thing & will be such a help within Glasgow especially with many families living in poverty.”

“I think this is a great idea and so needed.”

“We already provide some free period products, but we are keen to shift to providing sustainable products for our service users.”

“This is a fantastic resource for young people ensuring they can access period products easily and without any stigma.”

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 Just over half (**52%**) of respondents to the public consultation were unaware that Glasgow currently had free period products in venues across the city, suggesting that engagement and publicity should be continued. It is encouraging to see that the majority of respondents who were unaware (**78%**) were interested in accessing free products and gave an insight into what products they would prefer and where they would like to see them available.
- 6.2 Disposable pads, tampons and liners are the more popular choices by the public for products they would like to see available, regardless of whether they were aware or unaware of the service. A smaller, but still significant, number of participants also listed reusable products such as period pants and period cups as items they would like to see as an option. Most participants listed venues/buildings where products are currently available as suitable locations to house products.

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- 6.3 We are pleased to see the vast majority of those who had accessed free period products before had a positive experience and would use the service again, and that nearly three quarters of respondents would use the PickupMyPeriod app to identify locations and availability of free products.
- 6.4 It should be noted that many respondents to the public consultation saw this as a service more geared towards those who were economically or financially disadvantaged as opposed to a universal service to support period dignity for all. It should also be noted that there was a low response rate from ethnic minority groups.
- 6.5 Approximately three quarters of school pupils, across both primary and secondary schools, are aware they are able to access free period products, however only 30% of pupils had previously accessed this service. This tells us that more engagement work is needed by schools to inform pupils they have access to products.
- 6.6 Pads were the most accessed as well as requested product. Around half of secondary pupils also listed tampons as a product they would like to see available. Reusable products were less likely to be chosen by both groups, however of the reusable product choices, period pants were the product pupils would most like to see available. Most pupils said that the toilet was the most appropriate place to access products showing that pupils would prefer for a discreet location.
- 6.7 In terms of attitude towards accessing free products, 48% of all pupils said that they felt fine, with 37% stating that they felt embarrassed. For primary pupils, the rate who felt embarrassed was almost 50%. More education is therefore needed around breaking the stigma of having periods and using products.
- 6.8 For those who hadn't accessed products, over 50% said that they would be interested in accessing products in future and, overall, 50% of pupils were interested in hearing more about free products available in school. Pupils require further information from their school if the uptake is to improve.
- 6.9 Despite there being no legislative requirement for Glasgow City Council to engage with third sector or private organisations, we are keen to be inclusive and have a flourishing city with regard to Period Dignity, so a consultation to gather organisational views was carried out in tandem with the consultations for the general public and pupils.
- 6.10 There was a relatively small number of respondents to the organisational consultation, however the findings show on the whole that organisations are already, or are interested in, providing free period products.

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- 6.11 The findings of the organisational consultation do offer some encouragement around sustainable products and the willingness of organisations to provide these, as well as offer an insight into where products would be best placed.
- 6.12 It is reassuring to see that most organisations had positive comments to make around the free provision of products in Glasgow and were happy to engage in further discussion.

7. Recommendations

7.1 It is recommended that

- (1) Glasgow City Council continue engaging with the general public of Glasgow to
 - (a) Inform the public of the Period Products (Free Provision) Act 2021 and its requirements of GCC;
 - (b) Inform the public of venues offering free products and of the PickupMyPeriod app;
 - (c) Publicise that this service is not purely for those who are financially disadvantaged and promote the importance of period dignity for all;
 - (d) Encourage and promote the use of free products;
 - (e) Encourage and promote the use of reusable products;
- (2) Glasgow City Council carry out specific engagement with ethnic minority groups;
- (3) Glasgow City Council explore further location / venue options to increase availability of products;
- (4) Glasgow City Council run Education Facilities engage further with their pupils to
 - (a) Inform pupils that free products are available and how/where to access products within their school;
 - (b) Encourage and promote the use of free products;
 - (c) Help reduce embarrassment around having periods / using free products; and
 - (d) Encourage pupils to download the PickupMyPeriod app to access free products out with school;
- (5) Glasgow City Council run Education Facilities stock period pants, as the most requested reusable product; and

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- (6) Despite no legislative obligation to engage with third sector and private organisations, Glasgow City Council continue to engage with organisations in Glasgow to:
- (a) Inform organisations of the Period Products (Free Provision) Act 2021 and its requirements of GCC;
 - (b) Inform organisations of venues offering free products, and of the PickUpMyPeriod app;
 - (c) Encourage and support organisations to provide products; and
 - (d) Encourage and promote the use of reusable products