

### CHEQUES: ANNUAL TRACKING MARKET RESEARCH 2019

Conducted August 2019



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – WHY, WHO AND HOW

- Why we carry out our annual market research\*. We consider it important to understand
  - who uses cheques
  - what they use them for (writing and receiving)
  - why they use them
  - the extent to which cheques are still valued and
  - users' understanding of the future of cheques
     Also
  - users' awareness of cheque imaging with its faster clearing timescale
  - availability of cheque image deposit apps

#### Who we survey

- Consumers 2,150 face-to-face interviews by Kantar
- Businesses 500 phoned by BVA BDRC
- Charities 1,000 phoned by Ipsos MORI

#### How we use the results

- Inform our communication campaigns on what cheque users need to know about
- Inform the industry and our participants in planning their cheque clearing services

<sup>\*13</sup>th year for consumers, 12th year amongst businesses, 4th year amongst charities



#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – LEVELS OF USE

#### Consumer Use

- Dropping away for the first time, less than half (44%) of UK account holders write or receive cheques.
- Since 2014, no change to the propensity that over 65s (followed by 55 64 year olds) write the most cheques but people are using them less in each age group.

#### Business Use

- Still buoyant, with 82% of businesses still writing or receiving cheques in the past year.
- However, whilst 57% said that they had made payments by cheque in the past year, it comes as no surprise that the average number of cheques written per month by businesses has fallen from 12 in 2014 to three in 2019.

#### Charity Use

- Almost all charities (94%) said they wrote or received cheques in the past year.
- Just over half (51%) received donations by cheque.
- Nearly three quarters (71%) said they had made a payment by cheque.
- Cheque usage still very strong in this sector.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – WHAT CHEQUE PAYMENTS ARE USED FOR

- What cheque payments are used for: The three main reasons for writing cheques have not changed amongst our three audiences since 2014 (2016 for charities, the first year of their survey)
  - Consumers
    - paying a bill by post
    - gifts by post; services in the home
    - paying a club or society
  - Businesses
    - ad-hoc business payments
    - paying a trade supplier
    - regular business commitments
  - Charities
    - paying a trade supplier
    - ad-hoc business payments
    - expenses to non-salaried staff
- Considerably fewer businesses and charities are citing these purposes, underlining that cheques, whilst still used, are being used less and less. There is less change in the percentage of consumers citing these purposes, perhaps indicating a cohort more resistant to change



### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – REASONS FOR USE

- Why cheques are used for payments by businesses: the top reasons have changed considerably in the last 10 years, from sound business reasons to rather more faute de mieux\*
  - In 2009, three top reasons
    - managing cash flow 47%
    - tradition "always have used cheques" 33%
    - sending a remittance by post (30%) and controlling who can pay (29%)
  - In 2019, three top reasons
    - payee request the top reason by a long way (48%), followed by
    - managing cash flow (a lot fewer citing this at 29%)
    - no payee account details (26%)
- Why cheques are used for payments by charities: Trends in four surveys have seen less change
  - In 2016, three top reasons
    - control who can pay (59%), always have used cheques (55%) and need a paper trail (54%)
  - In 2019, three top reasons
    - payee request, as with businesses, in first place at 41%, control who can pay (37%) and need a paper trail (34%)



### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY - A PROXY FOR CONFIRMATION OF PAYEE?

Purposes for which cheques are received by consumers have not changed in five years

The two most common purposes cited are

- Gifts 35% in 2019 vs. 34% in 2014
- Refunds 26% in 2019 vs. 31% in 2014
- Are cheques being used as a proxy for confirmation of payee?

In the wake of APP scams, research by Pay.UK in 2018 and ourselves, as well as anecdotal evidence, we wanted to find out if there was any evidence of this. We think there is

- Sending a cheque provides reassurance that the payment goes to the right person: More than one in four consumers (43%), half of businesses (49%) and half of charities (50%) agreed with this statement
- Do banks provide enough relevant information about cheques?
  - Well over half of charities (60%) and businesses (57%) think that their banks provide enough relevant information about cheques
  - Getting on for half of consumers (42%) think the same
- And yet awareness of the faster cheque clearing timescale could be said **not** to reflect that confidence



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – CHEQUES STILL A VALUED PAYMENT CHOICE

#### Cheques are still a valued payment choice

- Consumers 53%
- Businesses 54%
- Charities 74% would have problems if they were unable to write cheques

#### Importance of having a cheque book with a new bank account

- Consumers 47%
- Businesses 49%
- Charities 51% attach importance to having a cheque book if they were to have a new bank account

#### Yet confidence in the future of cheques is low (on the whole)

- Only 1 in 3 of consumers (35%), businesses (35%) and charities (34%) think that they will be able to use cheques for as long as they want to
- Only 32% of consumers and 27% of businesses think that cheques will continue as a payment instrument
- However, 56% of charities think this will be the case. Such a difference in their answer probably reflects the importance of cheques to this group



### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – CHEQUE IMAGING AWARENESS

Awareness of the faster cheque clearing timescale: This has increased by an average of 10 percentage points amongst each of our audiences since our survey in 2018

Even so, awareness is still not high

- Consumers 26%
- Businesses 40%
- Charities 53%
- Awareness of cheque imaging apps and scanners linked to online banking
  - This is greatest amongst charities (43%) with consumers at 22% and businesses at 31% but again, this is not high, though this is as likely to relate to the availability of these services as much as it does to actual awareness.
- Likelihood of using cheque imaging apps and scanners to deposit cheques
  - Consumers 41%
  - Businesses 50%
  - Charities 59%
- We hope this encourages more participants to offer these services



# CONSUMER REPORT - FULL ANALYSIS





#### **USE OF CHEQUES**



 92% of those questioned have a personal account with a bank or building society



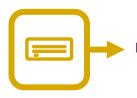
29% of UK account holders made payments by cheque

- (60% in 2009; 45% in 2014)



33% of UK account holders received payments by cheque

- (53% in 2009; 41% in 2014)

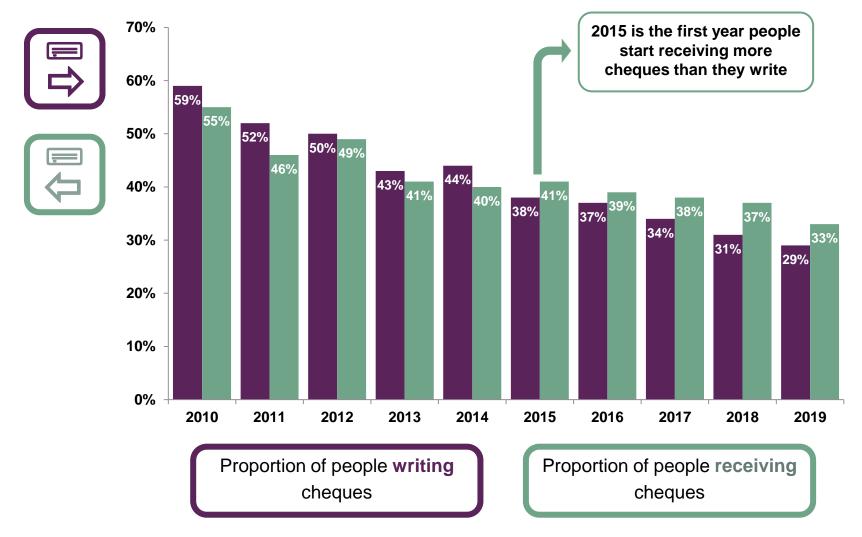


44% of UK account holders said that they had either made or received a payment by cheque in the past year

- (57% in 2014)

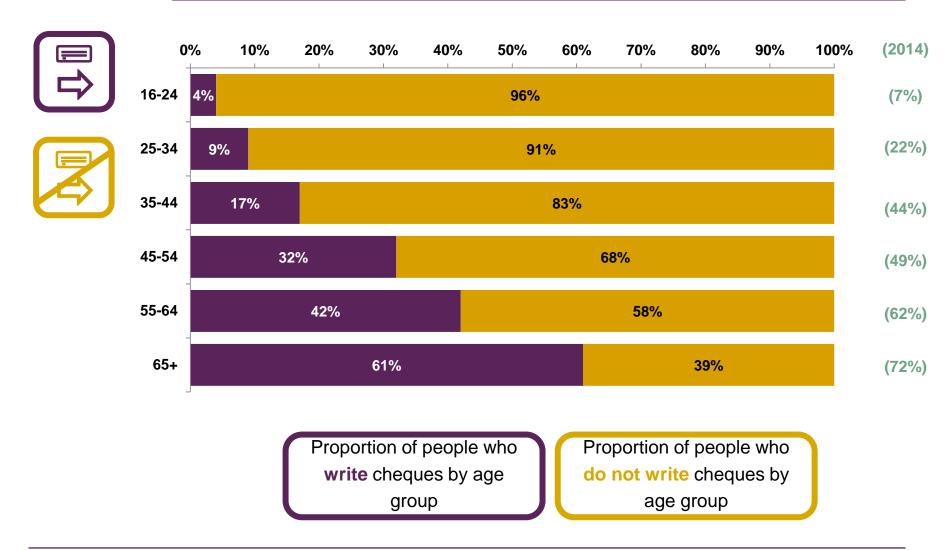


#### CONSUMER CHEQUE USE





# PROPORTIONS WRITING AND NOT WRITING CHEQUES, BY AGE





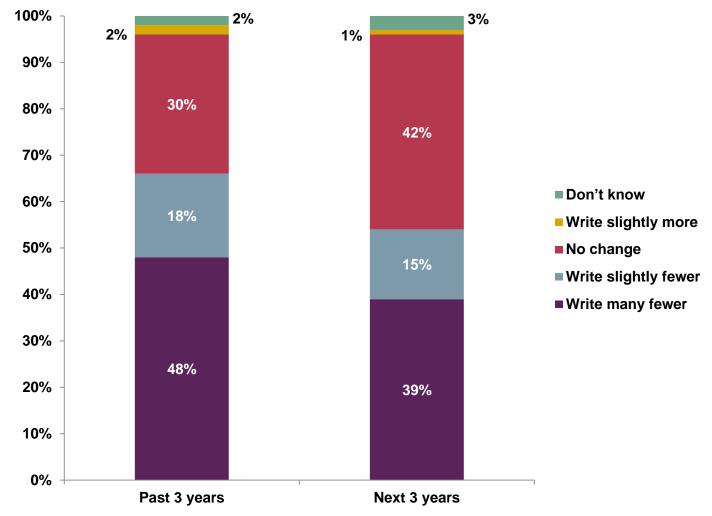
### WHAT ARE CHEQUES WRITTEN FOR?

		2014				2014
Pay bill by post	23%	24%	X	Donation to charity	11%	11%
Service in the home	16%	21%		Pay friend / individual	12%	12%
Pay a club or society	16%	12%		Child's School or leisure	7%	10%
Other by post (e.g. gift)	16%	12%		Bill at a counter	7%	10%
Personal services	8%	10%	£	Retail Payment	7%	7%



# HOW PROPORTION OF PAYMENTS MADE BY CHEQUE CHANGES OVER TIME

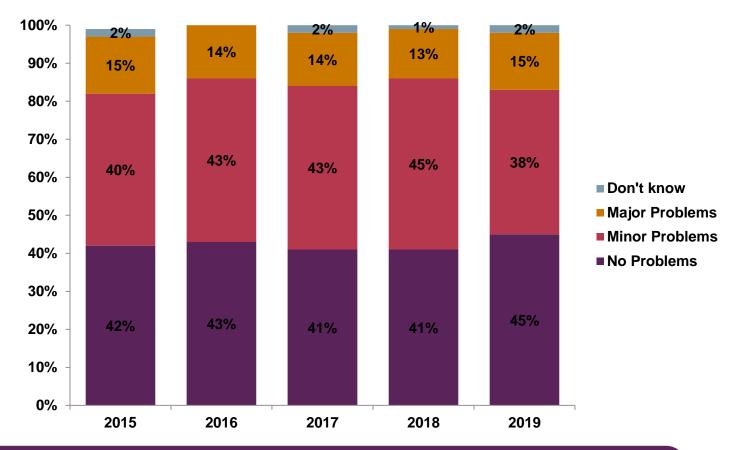






### PROBLEMS IF UNABLE TO WRITE CHEQUES

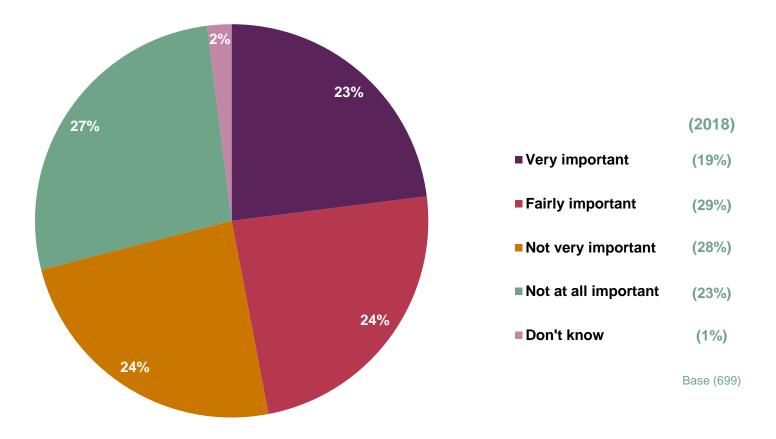




Consumers still worried – 53% would have problems if unable to write cheques (60% in 2014, 57% in 2009)



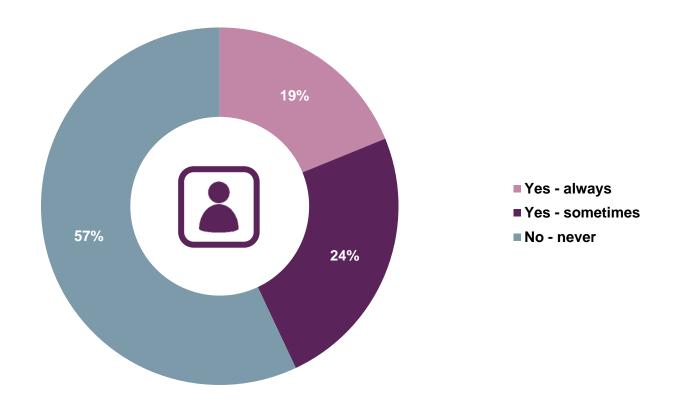
### CHEQUE BOOK WITH A NEW ACCOUNT



For nearly **half (47%) of the consumers** it is important to receive a cheque book with their new account



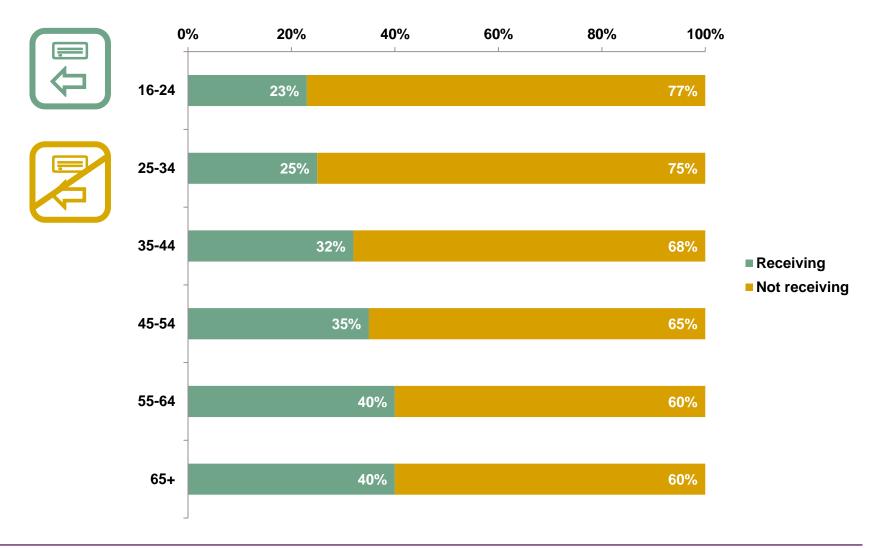
## REASSURANCE ON RECIPIENT OF CHEQUE PAYMENT



Nearly **half (43%) the people** who use cheques for payments do so because it reassures them that the money will go to the right person or business



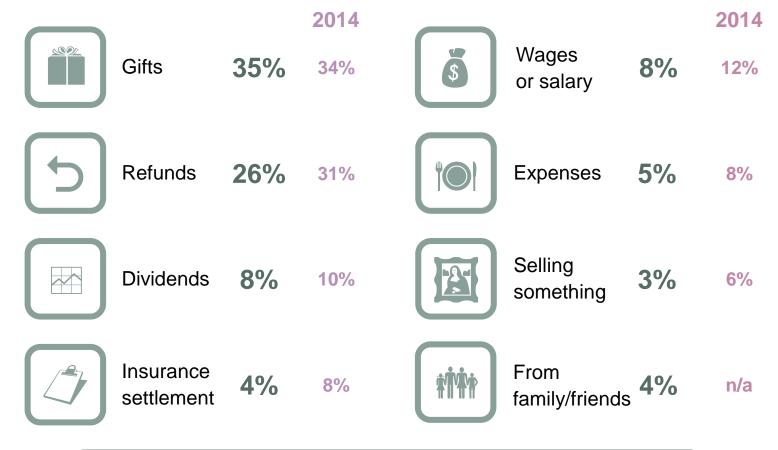
# PROPORTIONS RECEIVING AND NOT RECEIVING CHEQUES, BY AGE





#### WHAT ARE CHEQUES RECEIVED FOR?



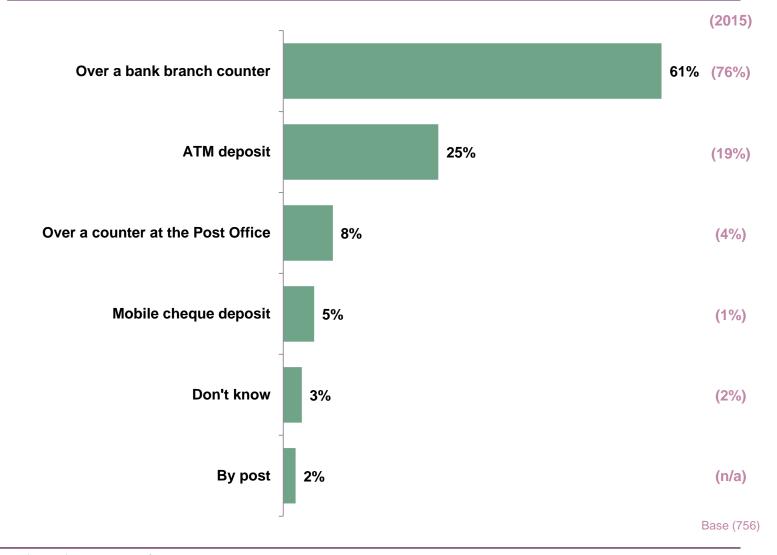


Gifts and refunds are most common purposes for receiving cheques



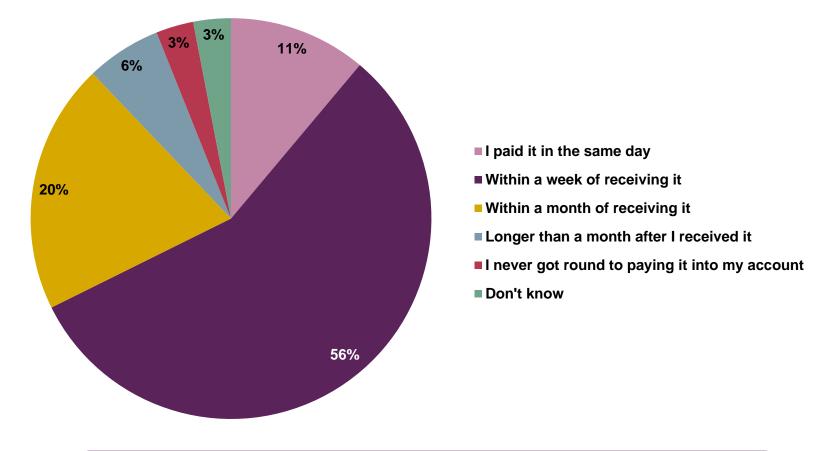
### METHODS USED TO PAY IN CHEQUES







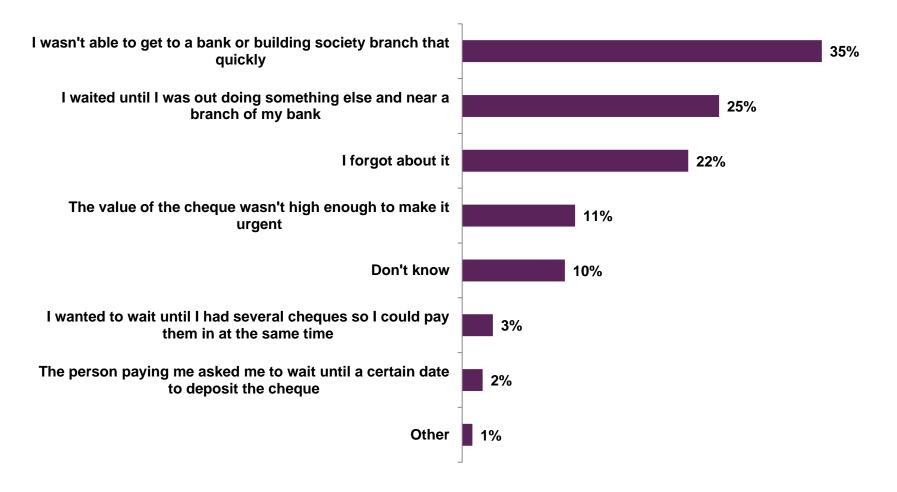
### TIME TAKEN TO DEPOSIT CHEQUES



Nearly 7 in 10 people who receive a cheque deposit it within a week of receiving

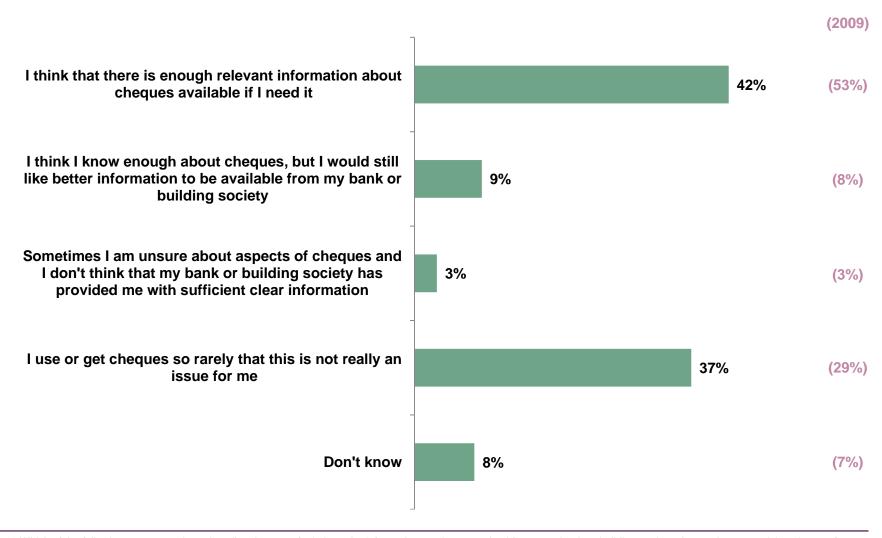


# REASONS PEOPLE TAKE MORE THAN A WEEK TO DEPOSIT CHEQUES





## INFORMATION ABOUT CHEQUES RECEIVED FROM BANKS OR BUILDING SOCIETIES

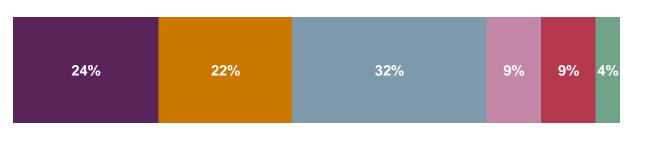


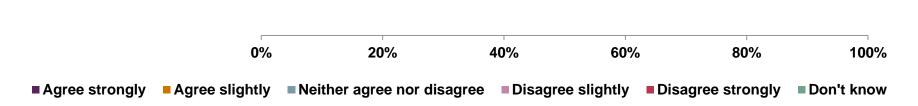


### ATTITUDES TOWARDS CHEQUES



I'm wary of accepting cheques from people or organisations I don't know, because I can't be sure that they won't bounce





Q.15\_ Please tell me how much you agree or disagree with the statement...

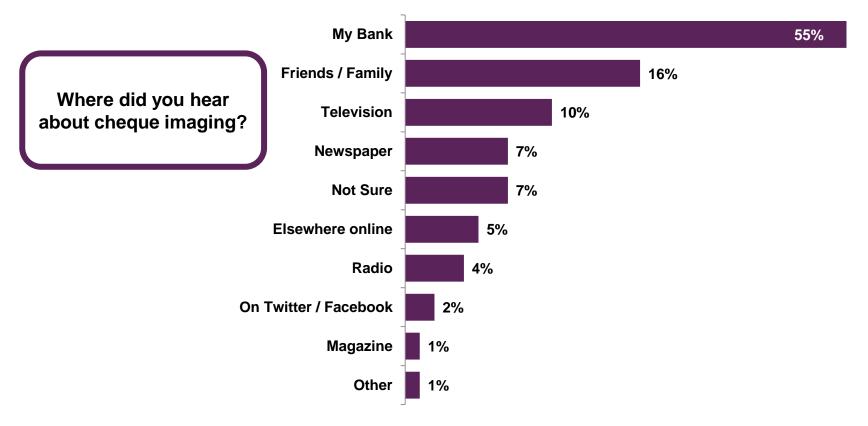
\_01: I'm wary of accepting cheques from people or organisations I don't know, because I can't be sure that they won't bounce Base: All adults with a personal account (1959)



#### CHEQUE IMAGING

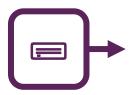


**26%** of consumers are aware that the banking industry is in the process of introducing cheque imaging, which will make the cheque clearing process faster - an increase of 9% from 2018

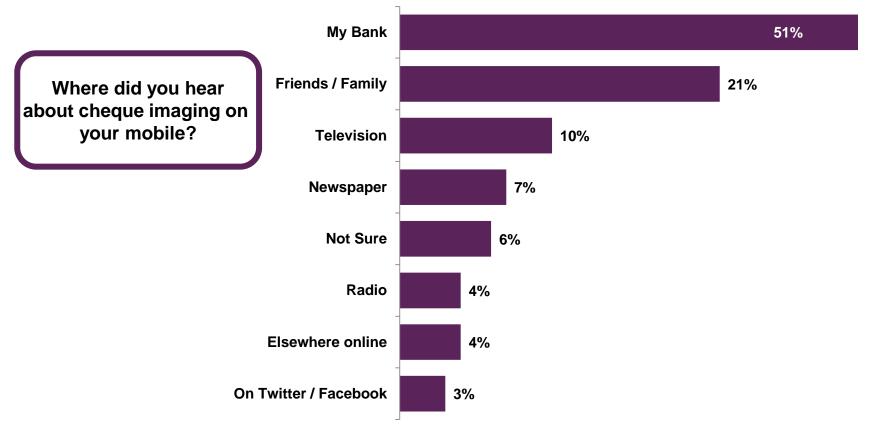




#### **CHEQUE IMAGING - MOBILE**



**22%** of consumers are aware that the banking industry is in the process of introducing cheque imaging, which may allow people to pay in cheques via their mobile banking app.

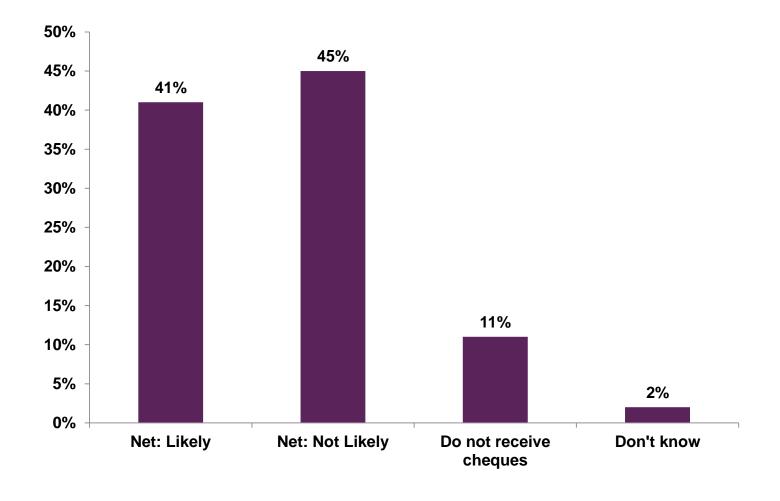


Q.16c Are you aware the Banking industry is in the process of introducing cheque imaging which may allow people to pay in cheques by taking images of the cheques using their mobile banking app?

Q.16d Where did you see/hear about the introduction of using smartphones to deposit cheques? Base: All aware that cheque imaging allowing cheques to be paid in via mobile banking app may be introduced (397)

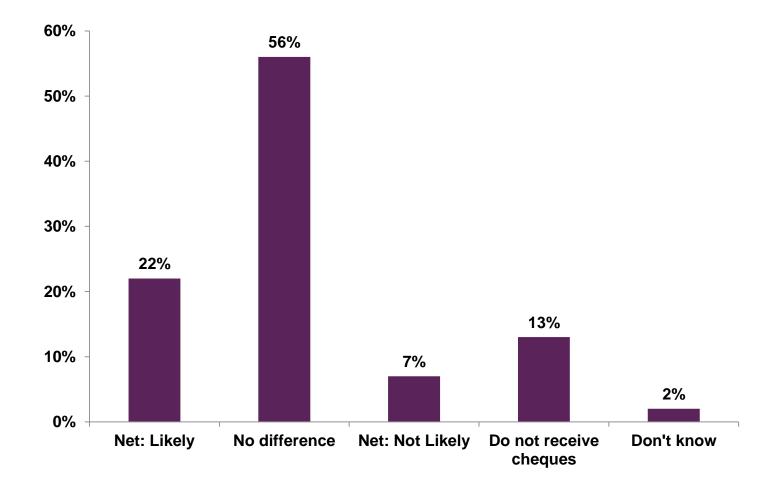


# LIKELIHOOD OF DEPOSITING CHEQUES WITH AN APP, IF BANKS OFFERED THIS FACILITY



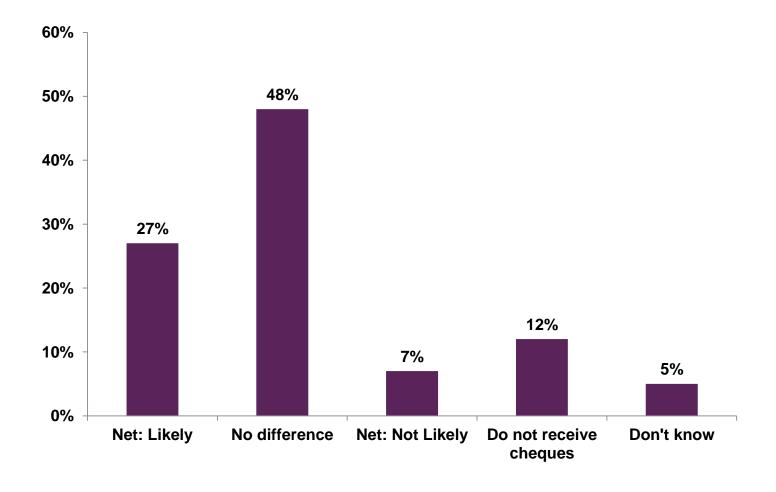


# LIKELIHOOD OF ACCEPTING MORE CHEQUE PAYMENTS WITH QUICKER CLEARING TIME





# LIKELIHOOD THAT CHEQUE IMAGING WILL INCREASE CHEQUE USAGE



Q.19 And more generally, do you think the new cheque imaging system will make people more or less likely to use cheques as a method of payment in their everyday lives, or will it have no impact?



### UNDERSTANDING THE FUTURE OF CHEQUES





Cheques will continue as a payment method

32% believe this is true

People will be able to use cheques for as long as they want to

35% believe this is true



# **BUSINESS REPORT – FULL ANALYSIS**





#### CHEQUES WRITTEN BY BUSINESSES



57% of UK businesses said that they had made payments by cheque in the past year

- 59% in 2018



 37% of UK businesses said that they had made payments by cheque in the past month

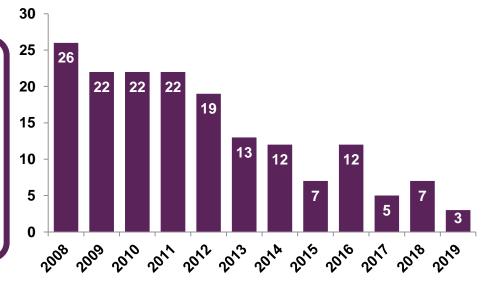
- 65% in 2014, 89% in 2009



Average number of cheques written per month by businesses:

3

(12 in 2014, 22 in 2009)



**Market Research Year** 

Q.1 How many payments by cheque do you think your organisation has made in the past month?

Q.1B And how many payments by cheque do you think your organisation made in the past twelve months?

Base: All respondents (500)



### WHAT ARE CHEQUES WRITTEN FOR?

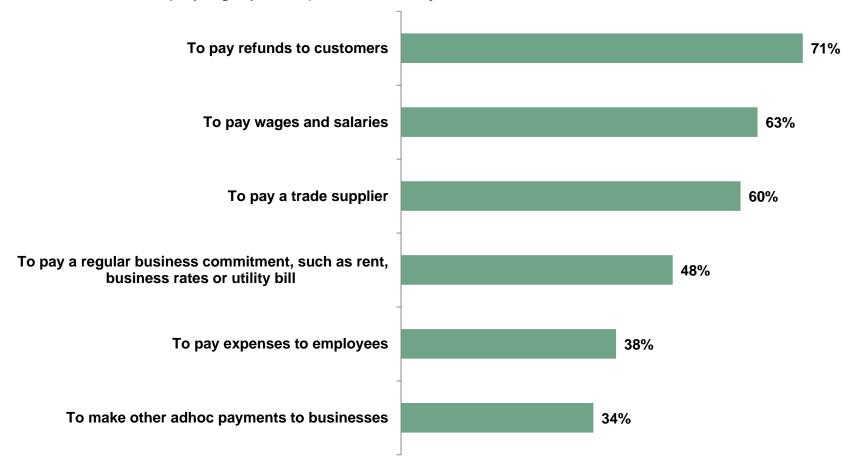


Pay a trade supplier	49%	(2014) 71%	(2009) 84%
Regular business commitment	21%	28%	47%
<b>£</b> → Wages & salaries	9%	11%	35%
Other ad-hoc payments to businesses	53%	32%	61%
Refunds to customers	7%	9%	n/a
Employee expenses	9%	9%	n/a



#### ALTERNATIVE TO WRITING CHEQUES

Businesses think that there is a convenient alternative for their organisation to paying by cheque when they need to ...



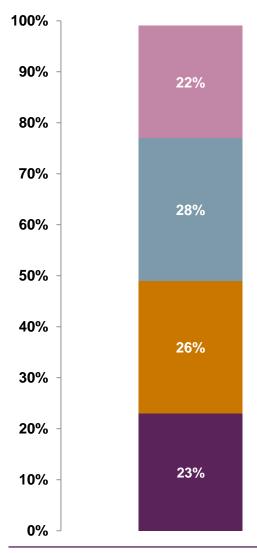


### REASONS WHY BUSINESSES USE CHEQUES

		(2014) (2009)		(2009)		Must sond	(2014) (2009)		
Payee request	·	48%	29%	25%		Must send by post - remittance advice needed	8%	10%	30%
	Always have used cheques	21%	21%	33%		Money leaves account slowly	18%	10%	n/a
	Manage cash flow	29%	28%	47%	£	Cheaper than other methods	2%	7%	13%
	No payee account details	26%	17%	13%		Payee may not cash cheque	2%	3%	4%
✓	Control who can pay	18%	18%	29%		Reassures that money will get to right person	10%	n/a	n/a



## REASSURANCE ON RECIPIENT OF CHEQUE PAYMENTS

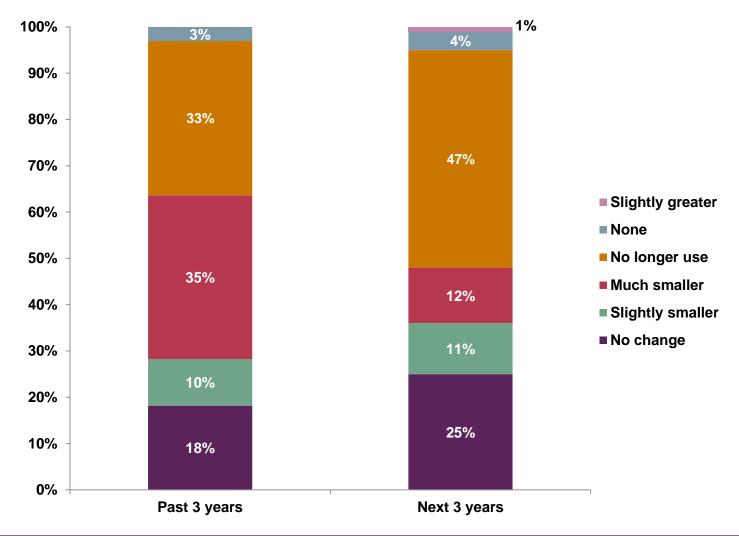


- Don't Know
- By using cheques, I am no more reassured that the payment is going to the right person than with any other payment method
- By using cheques, I feel reassured that the payment goes to the right person, but this is not a very important reason why I use cheques
- By using cheques, I feel reassured that the payment goes to the right person, and this is an important reason why I use cheques



# CHANGE IN PROPORTION OF PAYMENTS MADE BY CHEQUES, OVER TIME

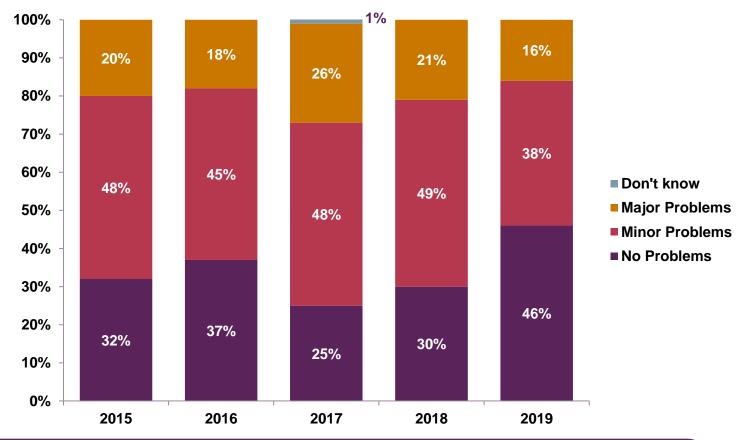






### PROBLEMS IF UNABLE TO WRITE CHEQUES

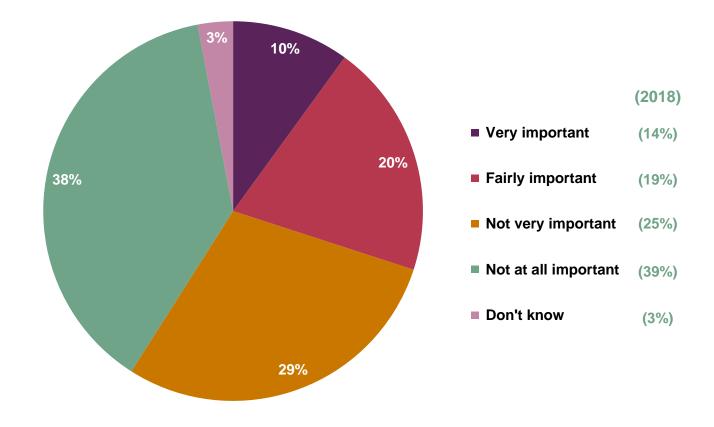




**54%** of business would have problems if unable to write cheques (70% in 2018)



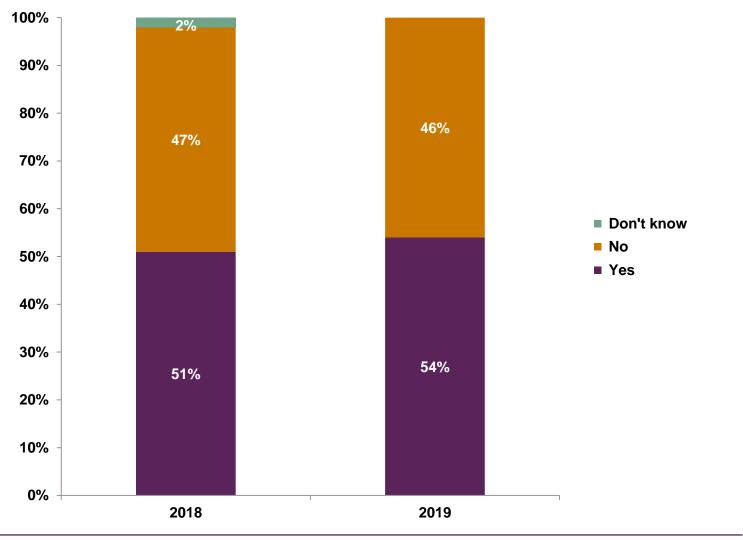
#### CHEQUE BOOK WITH A NEW ACCOUNT



For 1 out of 3 business it is important that their new bank account comes with a cheque book

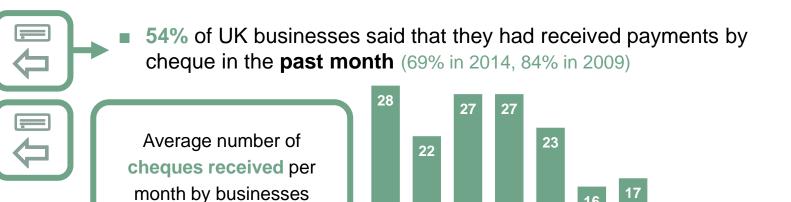


### NUMBER OF BUSINESS ACCEPTING DEBIT/CREDIT CARDS



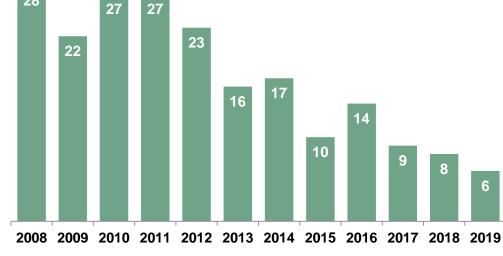


#### CHEQUES RECEIVED BY BUSINESSES



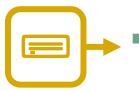
6

(16 in 2014, 22 in 2009)





■ 64% of UK businesses said that they had either made or received payments by cheque in the **past month** (83% in 2014, 93% in 2009)



82% of UK businesses said that they had either made or received payments by cheque in the **past year** (86% in 2018)



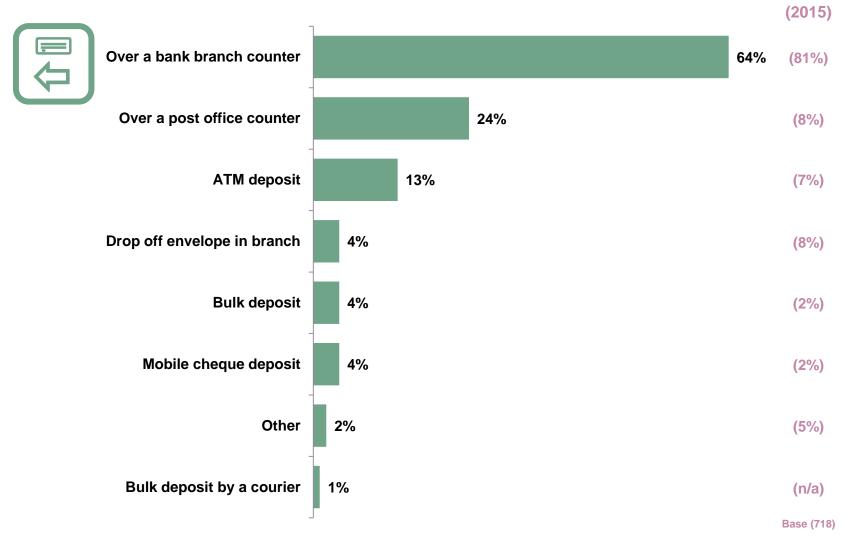
### WHAT ARE CHEQUES RECEIVED FOR?



Ad-hoc payments for goods and/or services	77%
Other ad-hoc payments	13%
Regular commitments	12%
Refunds	15%
Dividends	2%

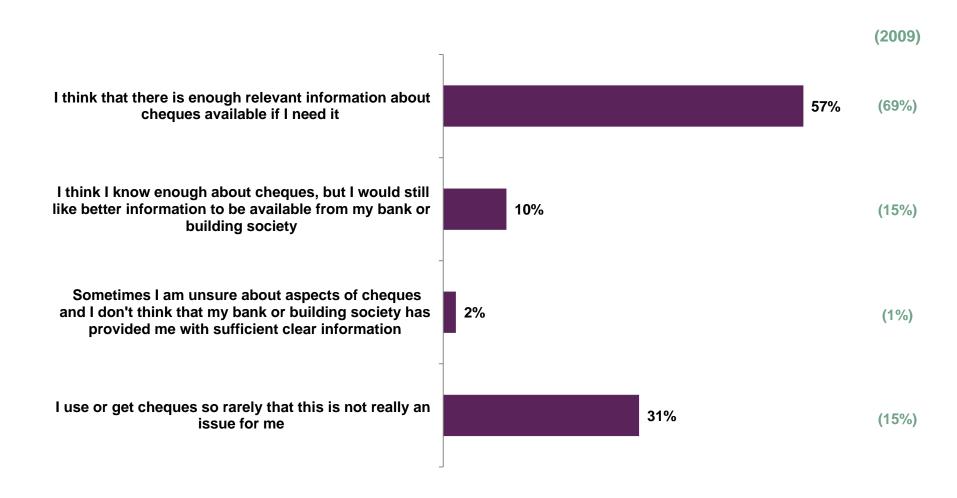


### METHODS USED TO PAY IN CHEQUES





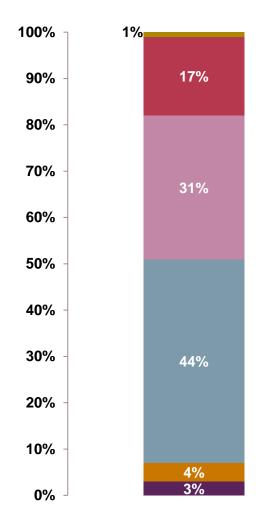
### INFORMATION ABOUT CHEQUES RECEIVED FROM BANKS OR BUILDING SOCIETIES

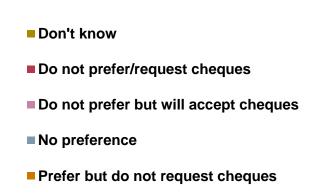




### ATTITUDES TOWARDS RECEIVING CHEQUES







■ Prefer and request cheques



#### WIDER ATTITUDES TOWARDS CHEQUES



Q.15 Please tell me how much you agree or disagree with the following statements

Q.15A My business is wary of accepting cheques from people or organisations we don't know because we can't be sure that they won't bounce [Base: Base: All respondents (500)]

Q.15B As a business, when we receive cheques, it is irritating that we have to take them to the bank to be deposited [Base: All who receive payments by cheque at Q.9 (358)]

Q.15C As a business, when we receive cheques, it is irritating that we have to wait to get the money into the business bank account so that it can be used [Base: All who receive payments by cheque at Q.9 (358)]
Q.15D As a business, when we write cheques, we feel that the money has left the business bank account as soon as the cheque is written [Base: All who make payments by cheque at Q.1 (238)]

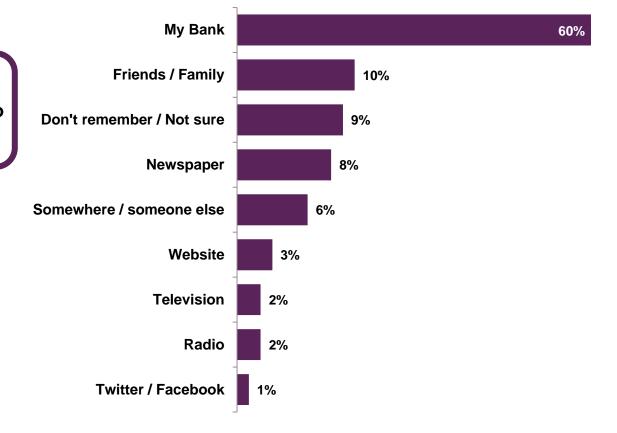


### CHEQUE IMAGING



**39%** of businesses are aware that the banking industry is in the process of introducing cheque imaging, which will make the clearing process faster. *This is an increase of 8% from 2018.* 

Where did you hear about cheque imaging to make clearing faster?



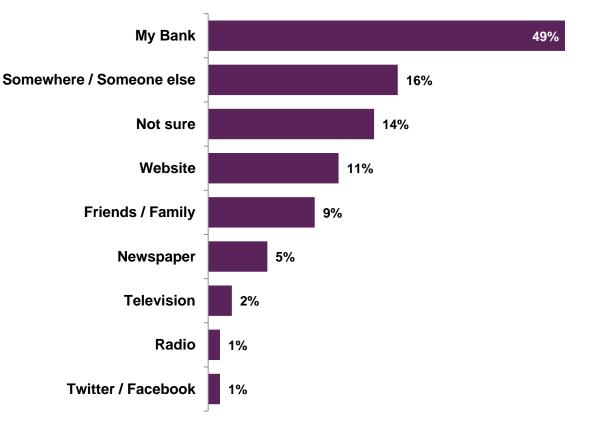


#### CHEQUE IMAGING - MOBILE



**31%** of businesses are aware that the banking industry is in the process of introducing cheque imaging, which may allow businesses to deposit cheques via their mobile banking app or using a desktop scanner. *This is an increase of 8% from 2018* 

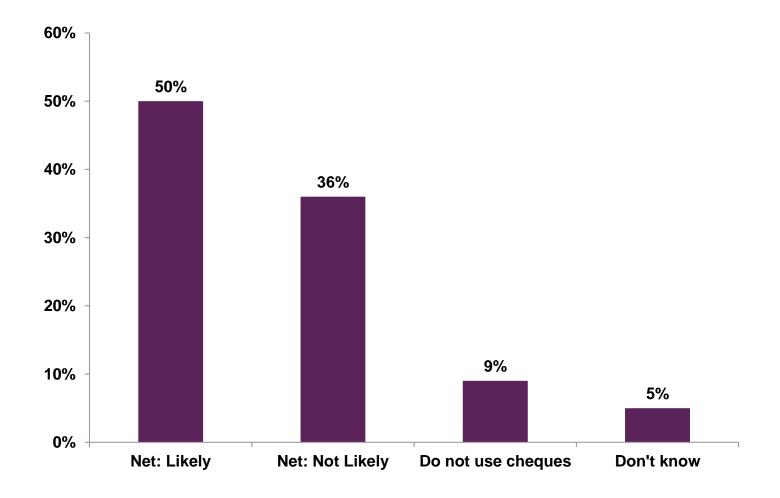
Where did you hear about deposit by cheque imaging?





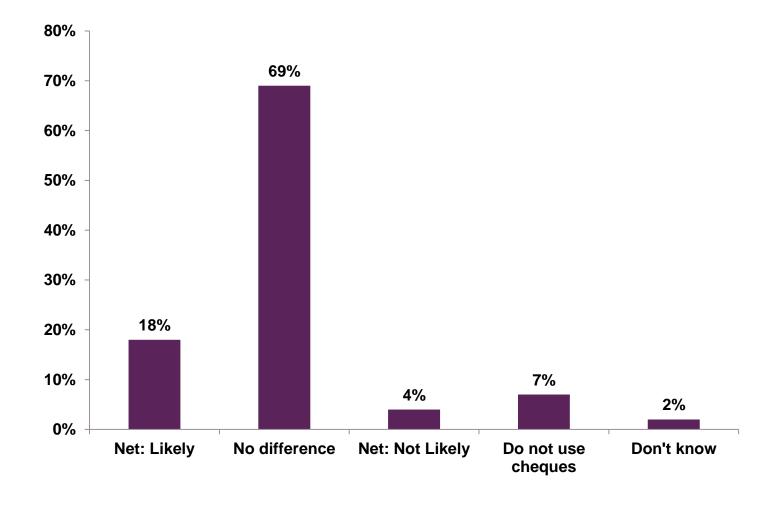
### LIKELIHOOD OF DEPOSITING CHEQUES WITH AN APP/SCANNER, IF BANKS OFFERED THIS FACILITY

Businesses research conducted by BVA BDRC



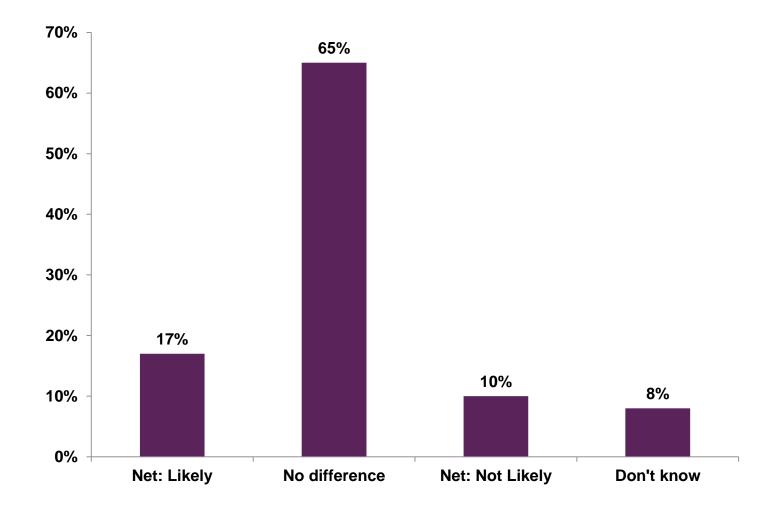


### LIKELIHOOD OF ACCEPTING MORE CHEQUE PAYMENTS WITH QUICKER CLEARING TIME





### LIKELIHOOD THAT CHEQUE IMAGING WILL INCREASE CHEQUE USAGE





### UNDERSTANDING THE FUTURE OF CHEQUES





Cheques will continue as a payment method

27% believe this is true

People will be able to use cheques for as long as they want to

35% believe this is true



### **CHARITY REPORT – FULL ANALYSIS**





#### **USE OF CHEQUES**



55% of charities said they had made a payment by cheque in the past month



78% of charities said they had received a cheque in the past month



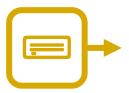
■ 85% of charities had either made or received a payment by cheque in the past month (83% in 2016)



71% of charities said they had made a payment by cheque in the past year



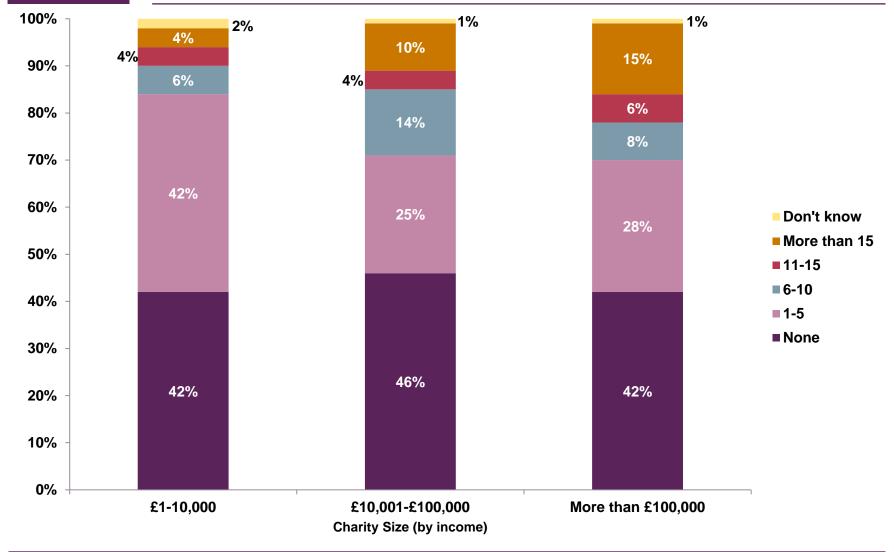
89% of charities also said they had received a cheque in the past year



94% of charities had either made or received a payment by cheque in the past year (93% in 2017)



### SIZE OF CHARITIES (BY INCOME) MAKING CHEQUE PAYMENTS IN THE PAST MONTH





### WHAT ARE CHEQUES WRITTEN FOR?



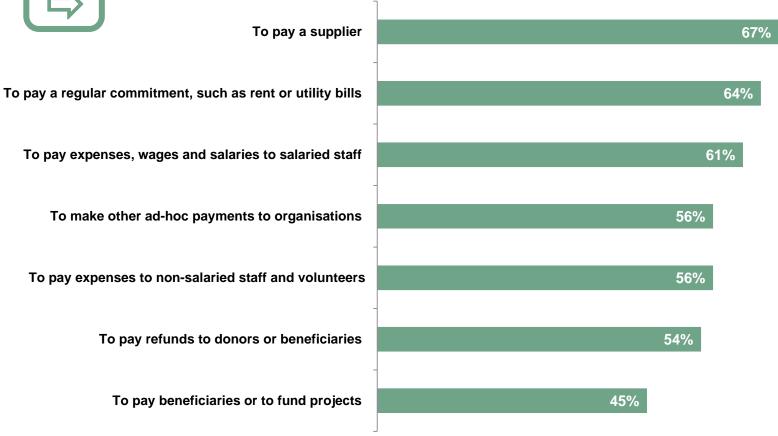
<b>₽</b>	Pay a supplier	59%	(2018) <b>62%</b>
<b>                                      </b>	Other ad-hoc payments to organisations	46%	58%
	Expenses to non salaried staff and volunteers	33%	37%
<b>★</b>	Pay beneficiaries or fund projects	31%	
<b>(</b> )→	Regular commitment e.g. rent	26%	28%
£	Employee expenses	21%	19%
	Refunds to donors or beneficiaries	21%	17%



#### ALTERNATIVE TO WRITING CHEQUES



Charities think that there is a convenient alternative for their organisation to paying by cheque when they need to ...



Q.3 Do you think that there is a convenient alternative for your organisation to paying by cheque when you need...



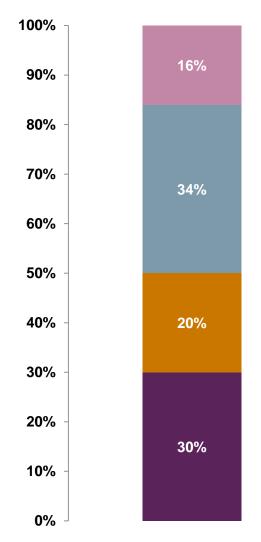
### REASONS WHY CHARITIES PAY BY CHEQUE



	Payee request	41%	2016 <b>43%</b>	No other method available	30%	2016 <b>38%</b>
$\boxed{\checkmark}$	Control who can pay	37%	59%	No payee account details	29%	33%
	Need clear paper trail	34%	54%	Manage cash flow	25%	42%
	Always have used cheques	28%	55%	Money leaves account slowly	16%	18%
	Must send remittance advice by post	27%	43%	Payee may not cash cheque	8%	11%
£	Cheaper than other methods	7%	16%	Reassures that money will get to the right person	26%	n/a



#### REASSURANCE ON CHEQUE PAYMENTS

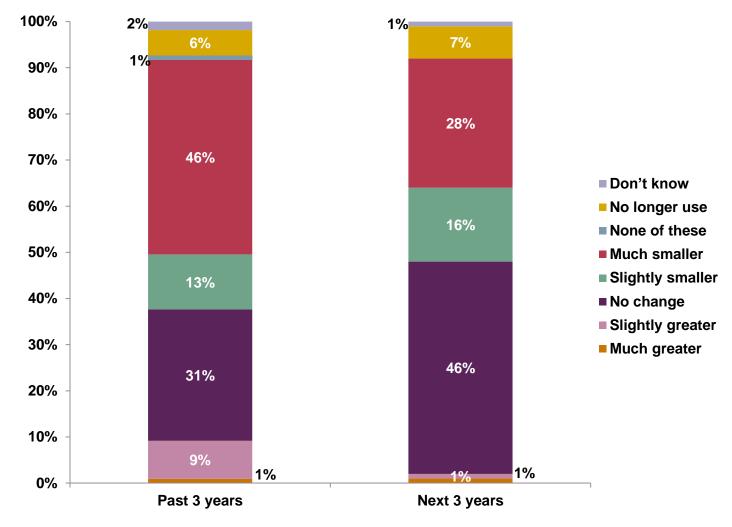


- Don't Know
- By using cheques, I am no more reassured that the payment is going to the right person than with any other payment method
- By using cheques, I feel reassured that the payment goes to the right person, but this is not a very important reason why I use cheques
- By using cheques, I feel reassured that the payment goes to the right person, and this is an important reason why I use cheques



## CHANGE IN PROPORTION OF PAYMENTS MADE BY CHEQUES, OVER TIME

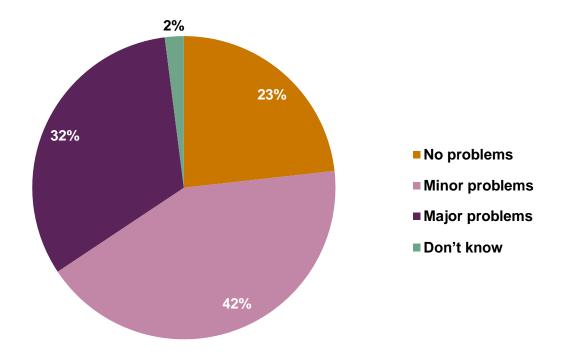






### PROBLEMS IF UNABLE TO WRITE CHEQUES

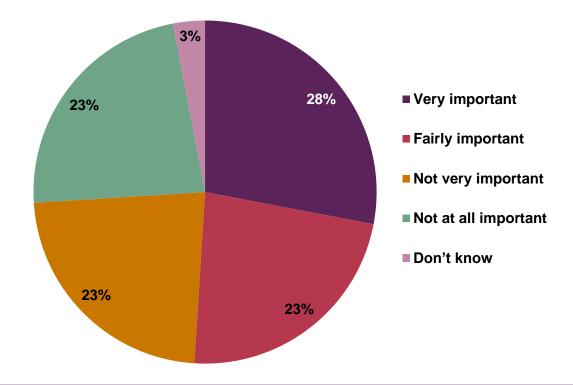




74% of charities would have problems if unable to write cheques (77% in 2018)



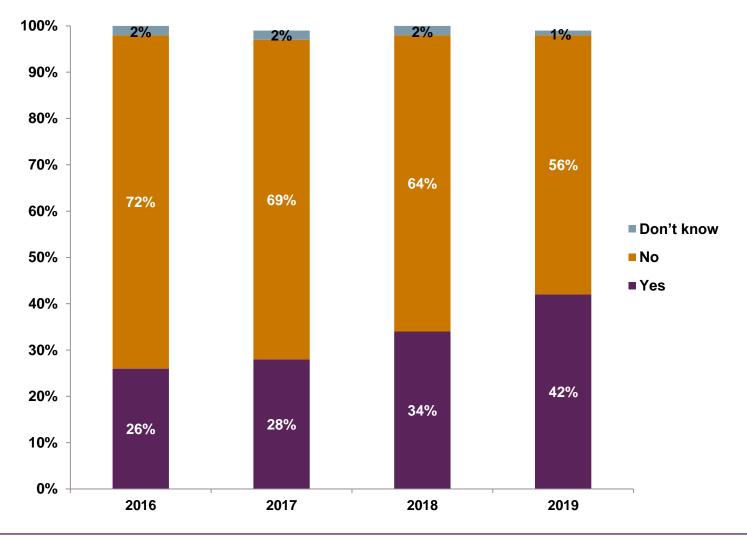
### CHEQUE BOOK WITH A NEW ACCOUNT



Just over half the charities say it is important that their new bank account comes with a cheque book

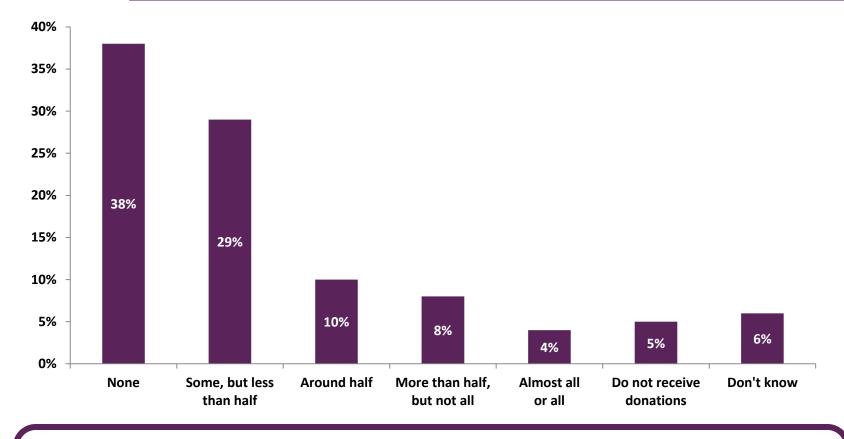


## NUMBER OF CHARITIES ACCEPTING DEBIT/CREDIT CARDS





### PROPORTION OF ANNUAL DONATIONS RECEIVED BY CHEQUES

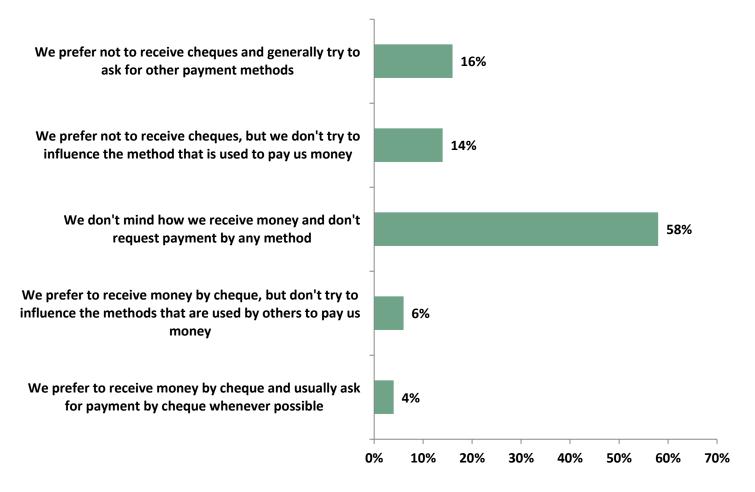


22% of charities say they receive half or more of their donation income by cheque (27% in 2018)



### ATTITUDES TOWARDS RECEIVING CHEQUES

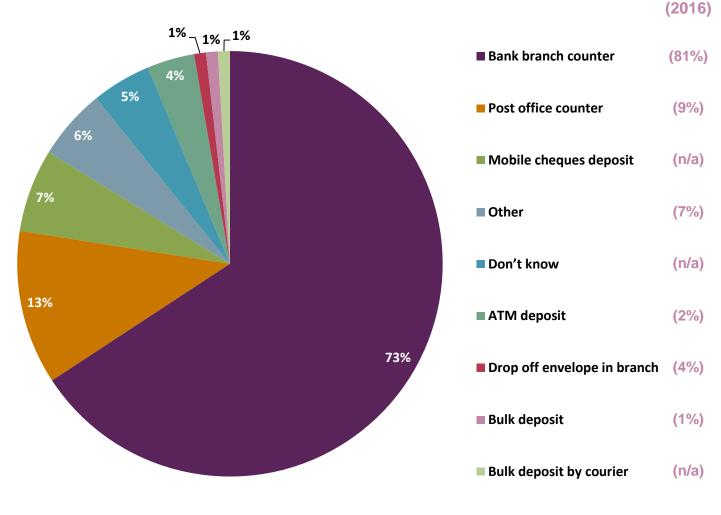






### METHODS USED TO PAY IN CHEQUES

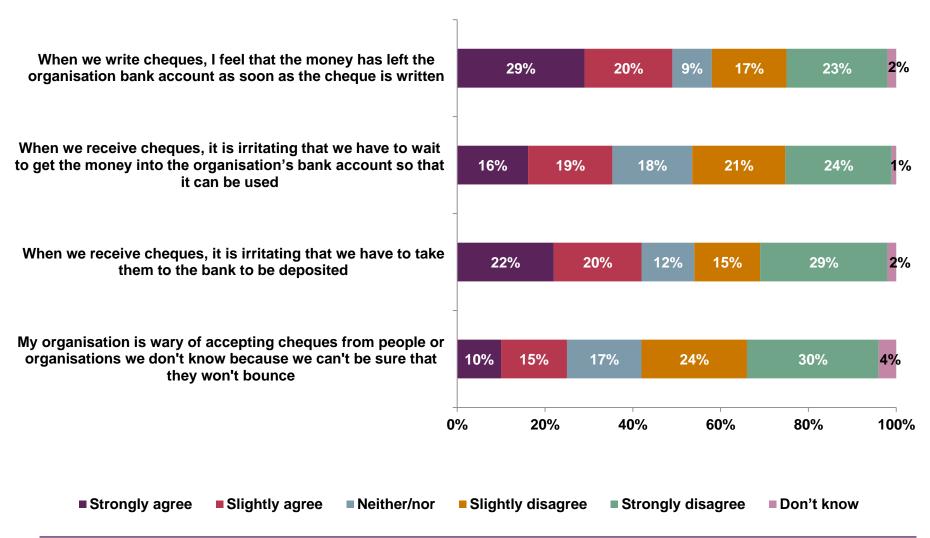




Base (807)



#### WIDER ATTITUDES TOWARDS CHEQUES



Q.18 Please tell me how much you agree or disagree with each one

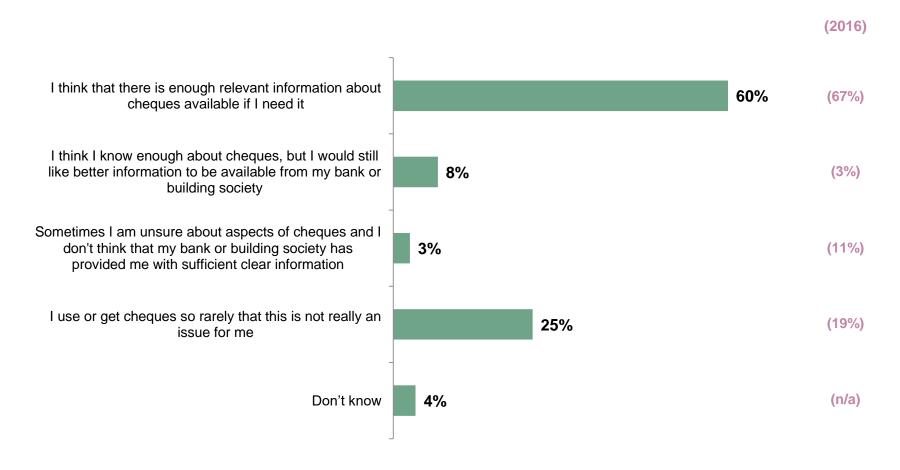
Q.18A Would you say... My organisation is wary of accepting cheques from people or organisations we don't know because we can't be sure that they won't bounce [Base: All Respondents (1000)]

Q.18B Would you say... When we receive cheques, it is irritating that we have to take them to the bank to be deposited [Base: All who have received a payment by cheque in the past year (927)]

Q.18C Would you say... When we receive cheques, it is irritating that we have to wait to get the money into the organisation's bank account so that it can be used [Base: All who have received a payment by cheque in the past year (927)] Q.18D Would you say... When we write cheques, I feel that the money has left the organisation bank account as soon as the cheque is written [Base: All who have made a payment by cheque in the past year (744)]



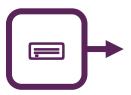
### INFORMATION ABOUT CHEQUES RECEIVED FROM BANKS OR BUILDING SOCIETIES



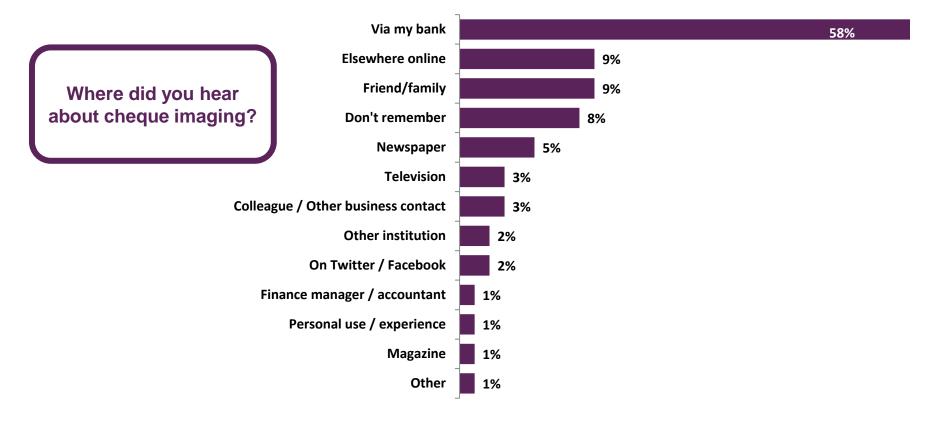
Base (899)



### CHEQUE IMAGING



**53%** of charities are aware that the banking industry is in the process of introducing cheque imaging, which will make the cheque clearing process faster. *This is an increase of 14% from 2018* 

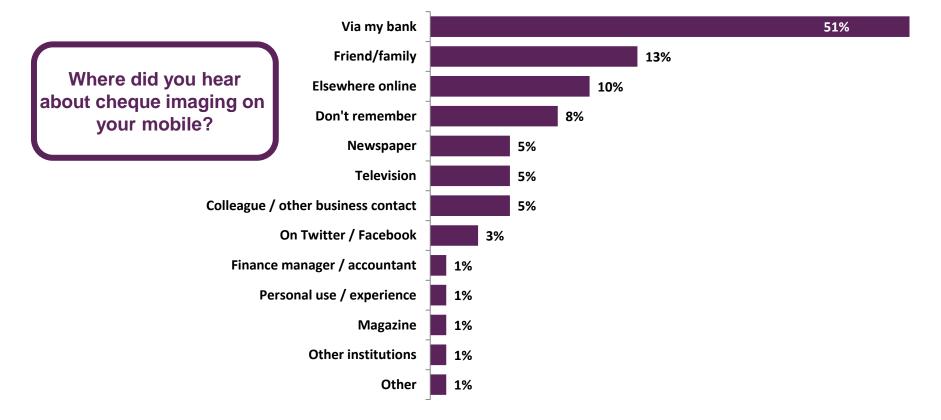




### CHEQUE IMAGING - MOBILE



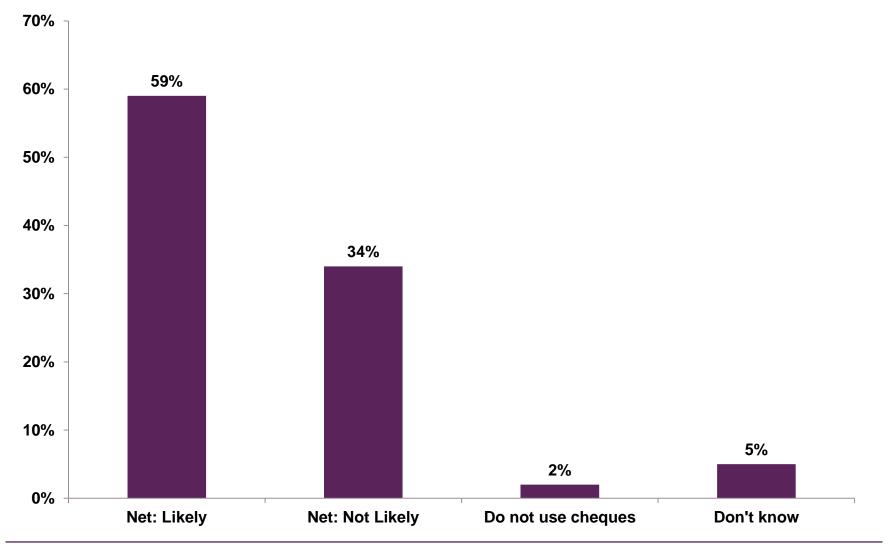
**43%** of charities are aware that the banking industry is in the process of introducing cheque imaging, which may allow people to pay in cheques via their mobile banking app. *This is an increase of 22% from 2018* 



Q.17C Are you aware the banking industry is in the process of introducing cheque imaging which may allow people to pay in cheques by taking images via their mobile banking app? Base: All Respondents (1000)



# LIKELIHOOD OF DEPOSITING CHEQUES WITH AN APP, IF BANKS OFFERED THIS FACILITY

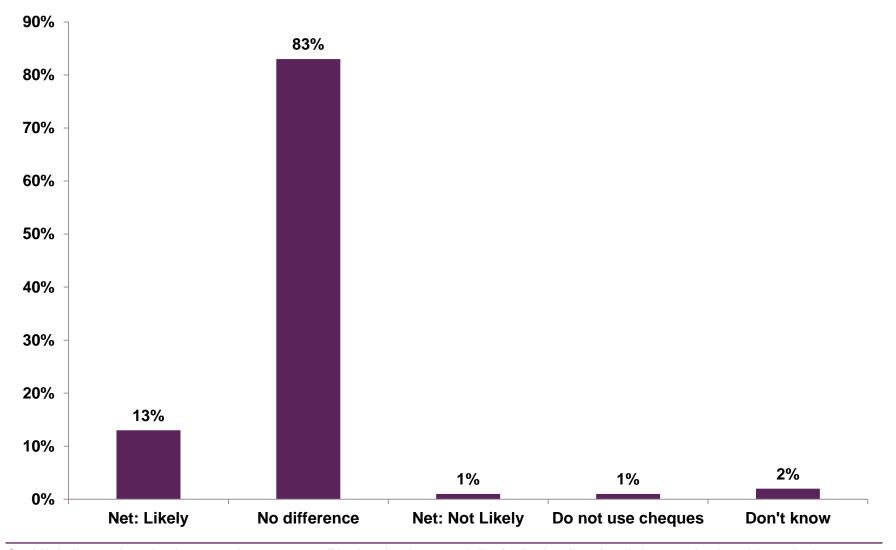


Q.19 If your bank were to offer your organisation the ability to deposit cheques through a mobile banking app, or a service to use a desktop scanner linked to online banking, how likely if at all would you be to deposit cheques in this way?

Base: All Respondents (1000)

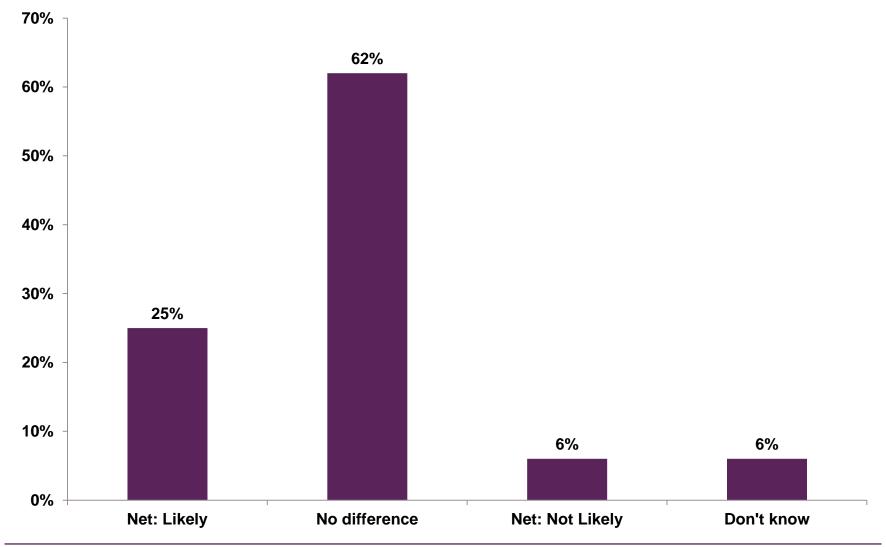


### LIKELIHOOD OF ACCEPTING MORE CHEQUE PAYMENTS WITH QUICKER CLEARING TIME





### LIKELIHOOD THAT CHEQUE IMAGING WILL INCREASE CHEQUE USAGE



Q.20B And more generally, do you think the new cheque imaging system will make people more or less likely to use cheques as a method of payment in their everyday lives, or will it have no impact?

Base: All Respondents (1000)



### UNDERSTANDING THE FUTURE OF CHEQUES





Cheques will continue as a payment method

56% believe this is true

People will be able to use cheques for as long as they want to

34% believe this is true



#### RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY



Market research conducted annually - Q3 in 2019



#### Consumer research

- Kantar
- Around 2,150 consumers surveyed face-to-face\*



#### **Business research**

- BVA BDRC
- Around 500 businesses surveyed by telephone\*



#### **Charity research**

- Ipsos MORI
- Around 1,000 charities surveyed by telephone\*

<sup>\*</sup>For more information on the base data for each question, please contact <a href="mailto:enquiries@wearepay.uk">enquiries@wearepay.uk</a>