

Defend Council Homes Policy Consultation Analysis of Feedback Results

Background

Since the outbreak of coronavirus, Hammersmith & Fulham has seen an amazing response from residents to support their communities and become volunteers. Mutual Aid Groups (MAGs) formed in the majority of the borough's sixteen wards.

H&F has worked in partnership with the MAGs, tenants and residents associations, and other third sector organisations to deliver help and support to those who need it most. It has been driven from grass roots ideas and involvement and is a powerful example of community empowerment.

What it means to be part of a community has taken on a very practical new purpose. Despite the separation of social distancing and the stay at home advice, many people now feel closer together and better connected.

Connecting and Protecting Communities

The Defend Council Homes Policy consultation connected with this message of what it means to be part of a community and the importance of nurturing and safeguarding this.

The Defend Council Homes Policy is about protecting communities by giving residents a voice and a key role to work with us to deliver change as and when there is an identified need for this in a particular area.

The consultation reflected the council's aim of working with residents and key stakeholders to co-produce new approaches and to keep listening and responding to feedback.

Consultation Channels

Consultation activities included:

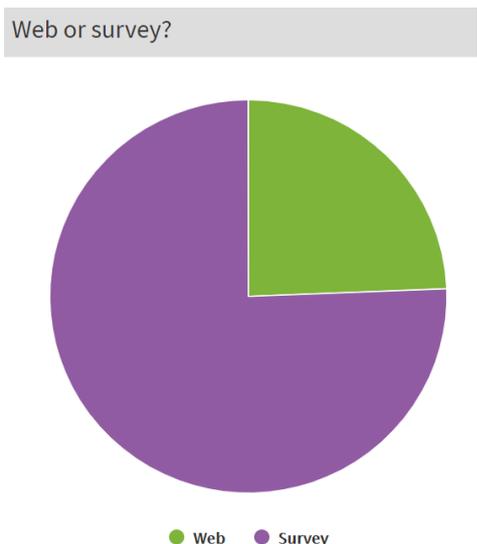
- A consultation pack was sent to all 17,500 council housing households with freepost return envelope for hard copies of the survey.
- A consultation page was launched on Commonplace, with links from the Council's website. This page contained all of the key documents, such as the policy, one-page summary, frequently asked questions, Residents Voice meeting videos, and consultation survey.
- Dedicated telephone helpline and facility to provide consultation feedback by phone.
- Promotion through the Get Involved mailing list and TRA and service improvement group mailing lists.
- Promotion through housing notice boards and on Nextdoor, sent to only residents with H&F borough boundaries.
- Four online information sessions.
- Online attendance at Housing Representatives Forum.

The Defend Council Homes Policy consultation was open for feedback between 1 September 2020 – 2 October 2020. A consultation pack was sent to every council housing household in Hammersmith & Fulham.

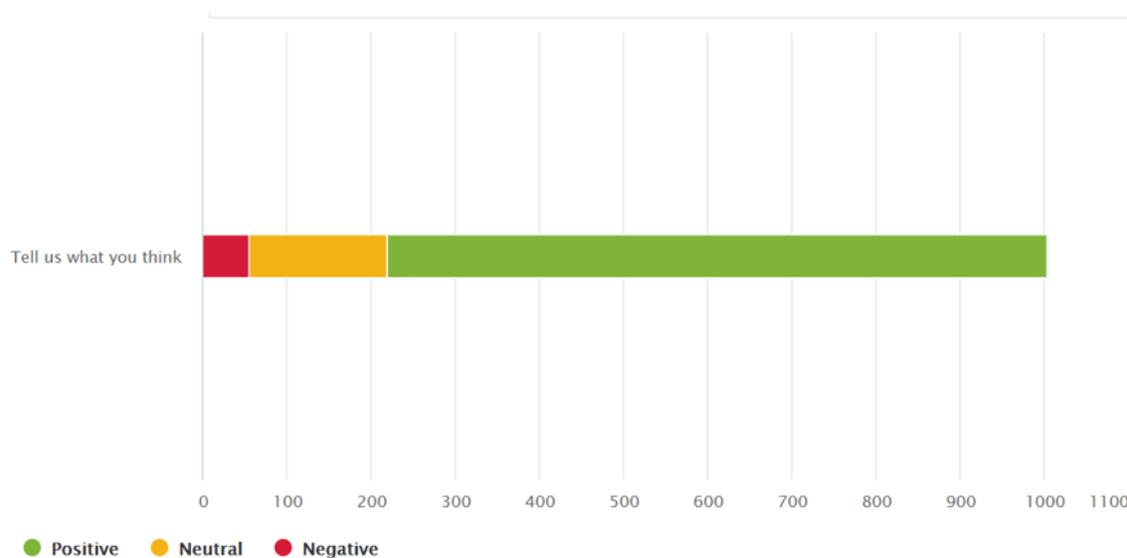
1003 individual responses were received either directly online to the Commonplace consultation platform, or by postal return which was then inputted onto Commonplace.

Three of total responses have not been included as part of this analysis because the respondent has declared they are not a council tenant, leaseholder, freeholder, or private tenant of a council leaseholder.

Over 75% of responses were by postal return and under 25% were online.

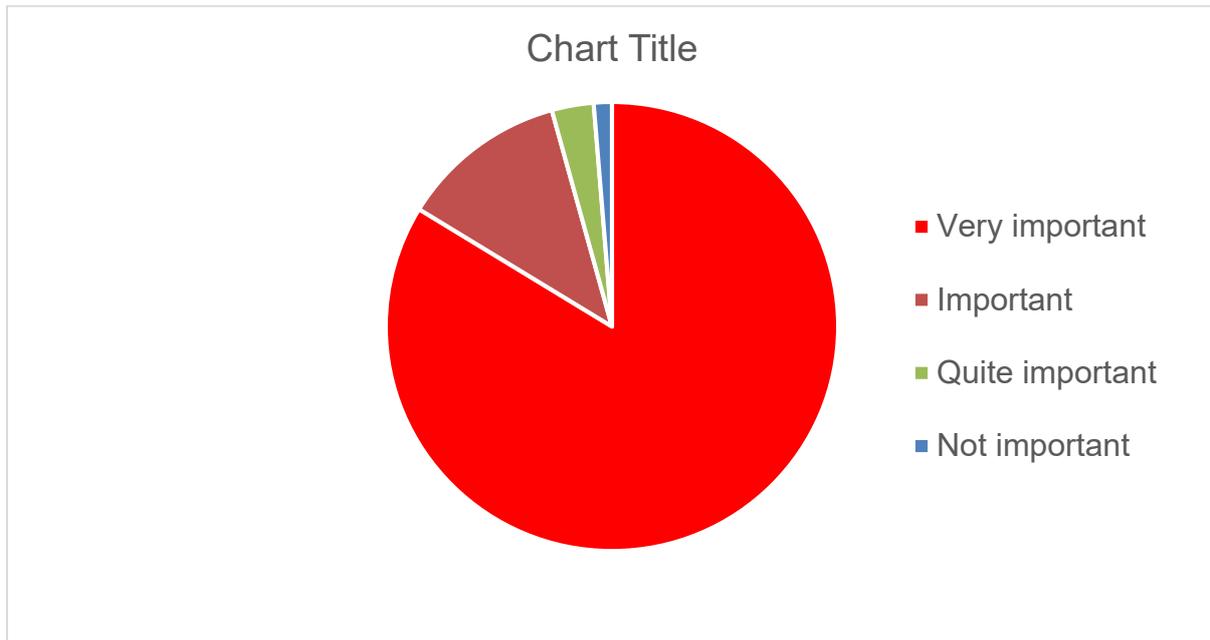


On the first consultation question of how much do residents like living in their home, 78% of those who responded positively, a further 16% were neutral and 6% responded negatively.



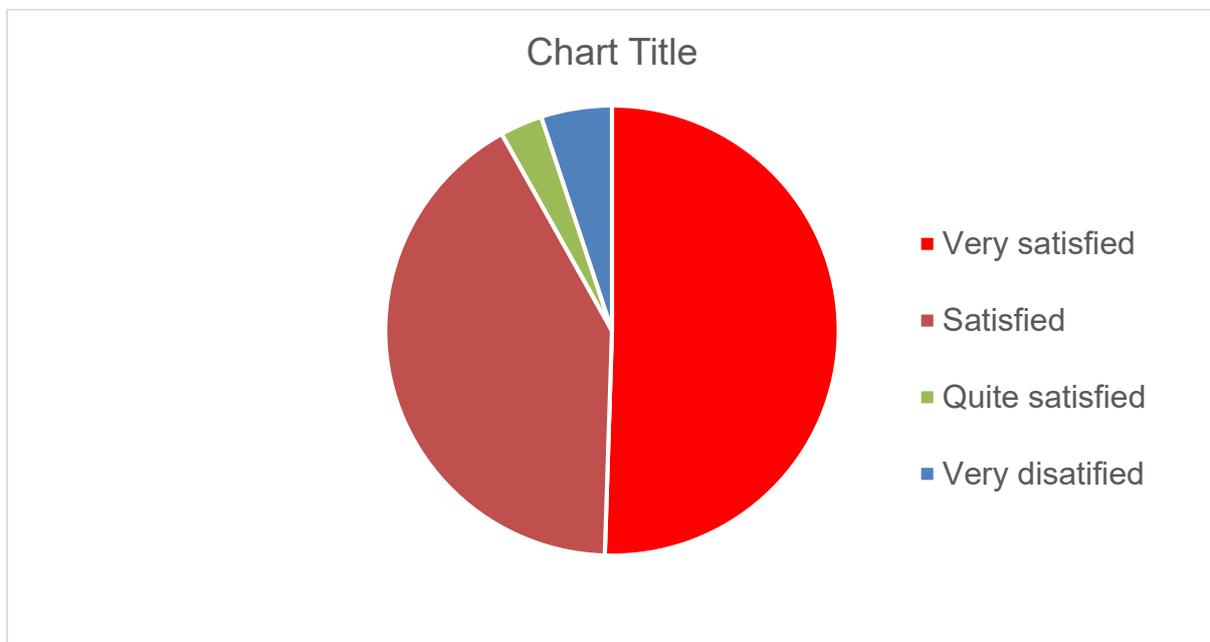
How important it was to residents to be involved in redevelopment decisions that could affect their homes.

99% of respondents said important or very important.



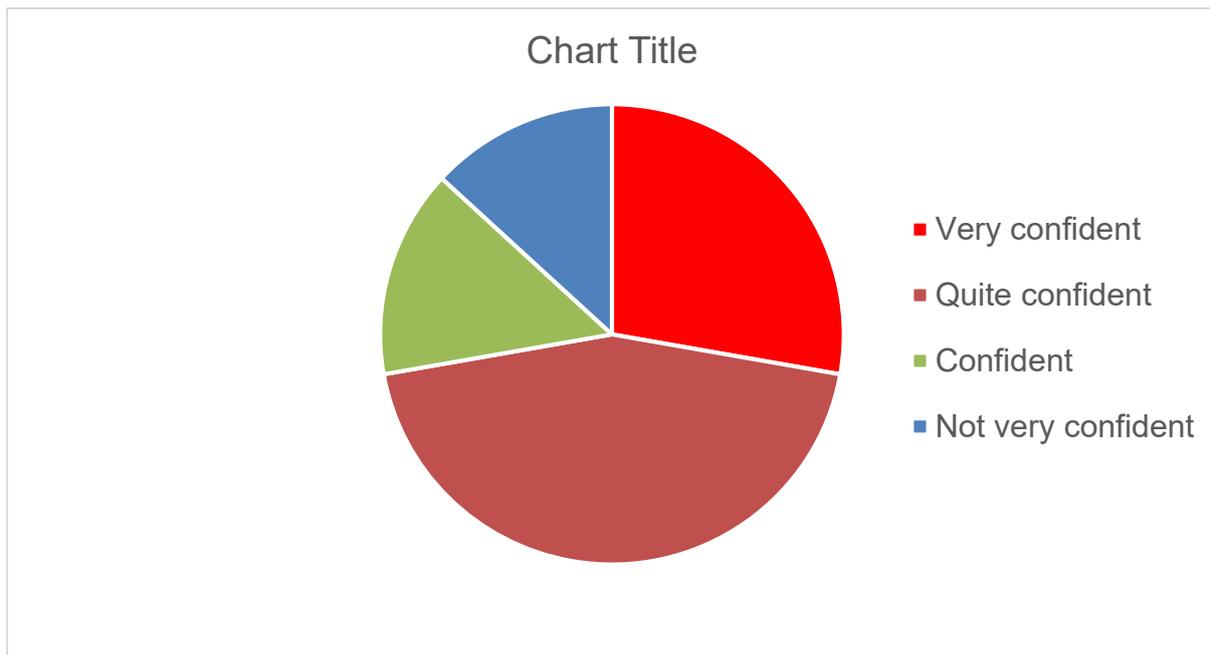
How satisfied residents were that the DCH Policy would mean the Council must involve them in such decisions.

91% were satisfied or very satisfied.



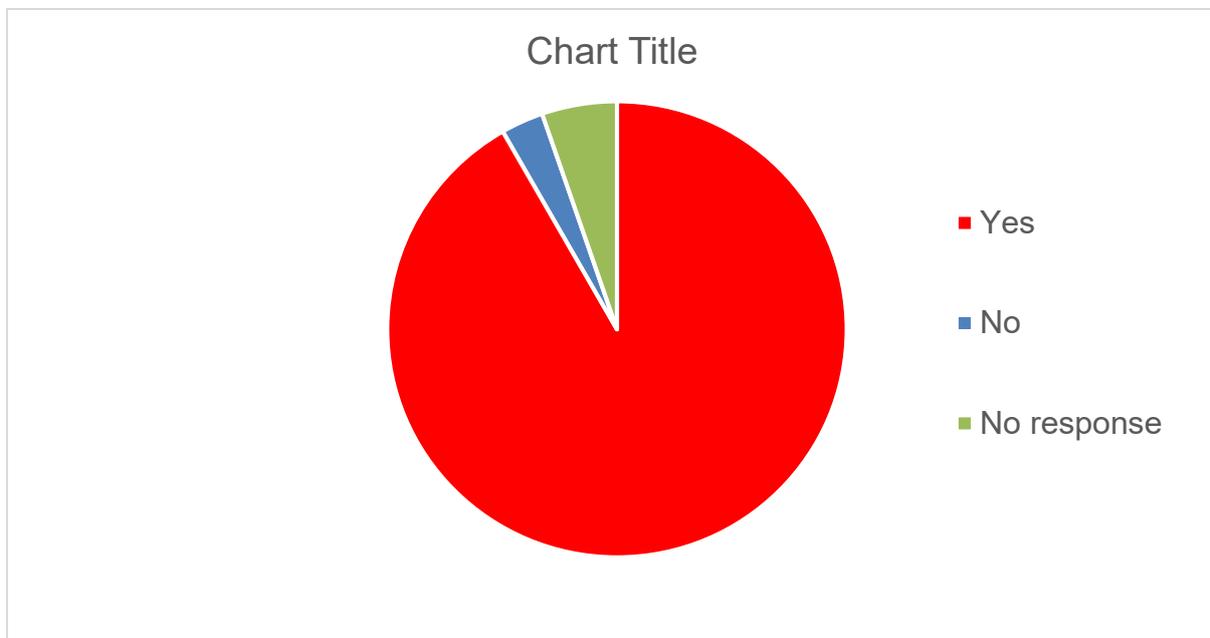
How confident residents were that the DCH Policy would protect their homes and ensure the Council would meet very high standards in any redevelopment.

87% were confident or very confident



Whether residents supported the introduction of the DCH Policy.

92% supported its introduction.



Most additional comments were positive:

Here is a snapshot of comments by common theme:

“Council homes must stay as council homes, to support generations after me.”

“As a Council tenant, the DCH policy gives me a sense of being valued and security regarding the involvement in any decisions making of my home.”

“We as a community must not go through the selling off of council estates / land and property. If this Policy is implemented for the protection of our future rights, then I am for it.”

Key questions and concerns raised by residents in terms of themes, with our responses:

Q. *Whether the Policy would be fully implemented in practice.*

- The Council will develop a DCH Policy Implementation Guide, subject to Cabinet approval, in order to embed the Policy in redevelopment processes. Already talking to the Regeneration Team about this.
- Made a Policy amendment to require that a copy of the Policy and plain English summary is sent to residents in a proposed redevelopment area, to make them fully aware of the Policy.

Q. *How the term ‘redevelopment’ might be interpreted.*

- The definition of “redevelopment” to be further clarified in the Policy to reduce the risk of future ambiguities.

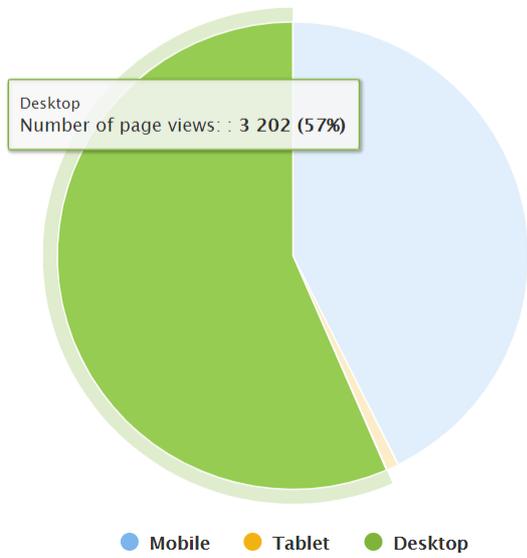
Q. *How Residents’ Steering Groups that would be established to represent the interests of all residents.*

- Policy amendment to clarify the role of Residents’ Steering Groups and require the Council to properly resource and train such groups to carry out their role.

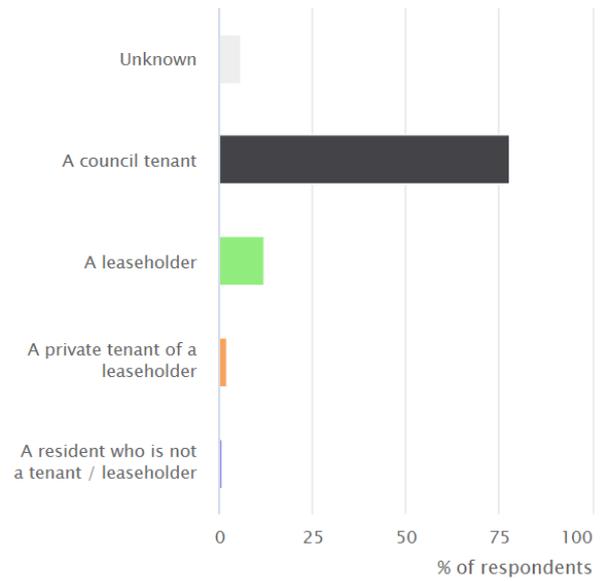
The full list of all the comments can be found on the Commonplace consultation platform at: [Look Back At | Tell Us What You Think \(commonplace.is\)](#)

Analysis of Respondents

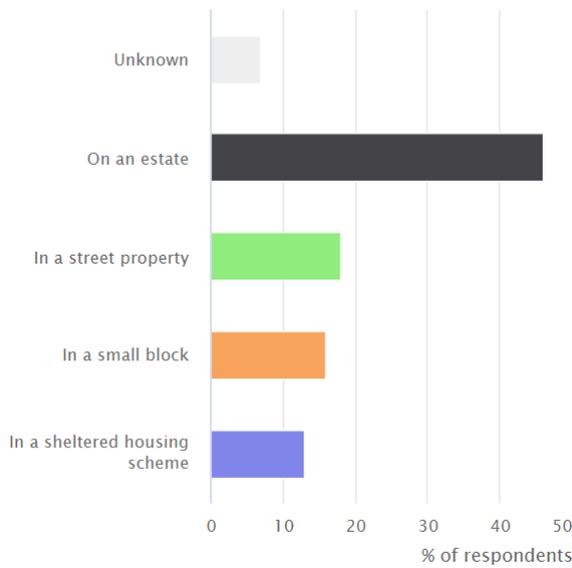
Devices



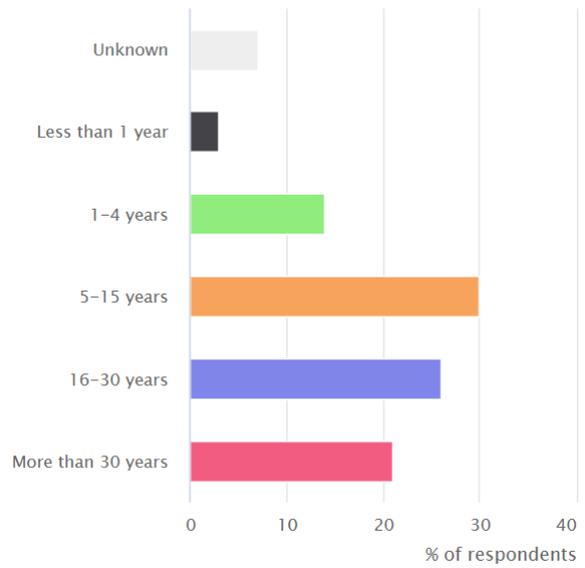
Are you.....?



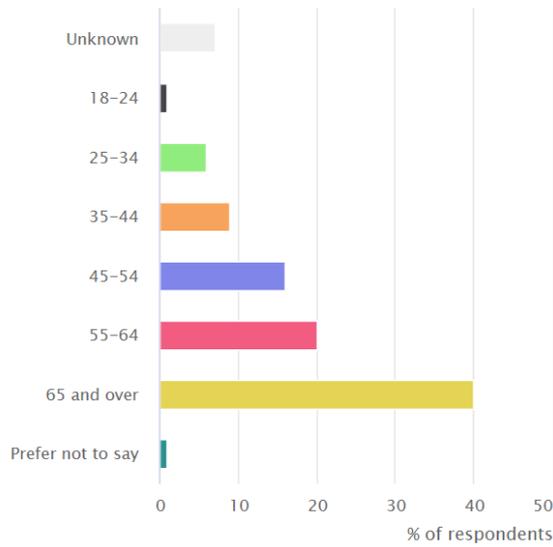
Where do you live?



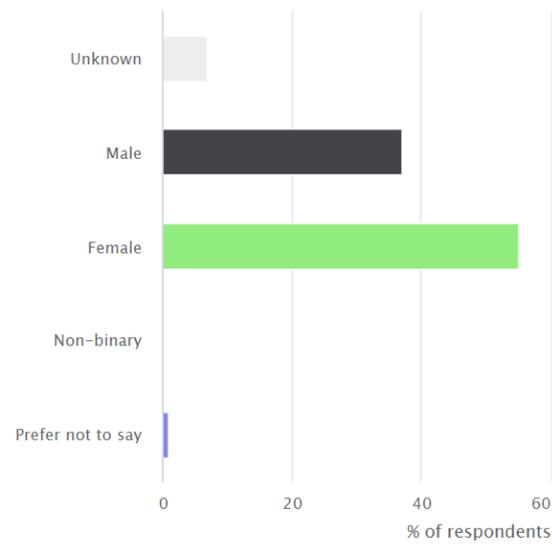
How long have you lived in your home?



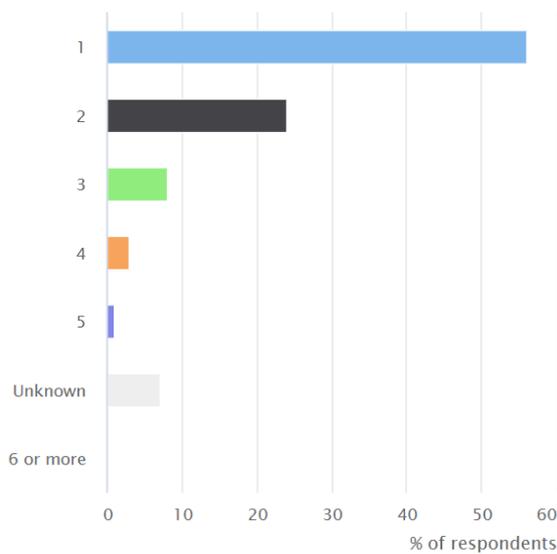
What is your age group?



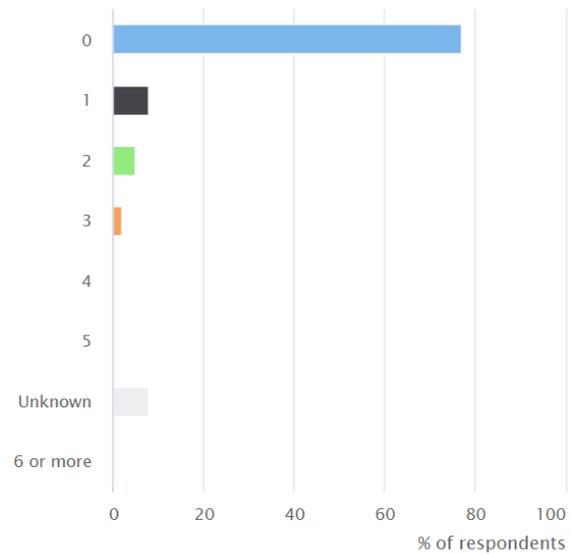
What is your gender?



How many adults aged 18 or over live in your household?



How many children under 18 live in your household?



Endorsements for the Policy from the Housing Representatives Forum

The Housing Representatives Forum endorsed the consultation process that was used to consult residents about the DCH policy.

The Housing Representatives Forum strongly endorsed the DCH policy and recommended its introduction by H&F Council.

Endorsements from Tenants & Residents Associations & Sheltered Housing Tenant Representatives

*Dear Fellow Residents, it is with real pride that I express my wholehearted support for the **Defend Council Homes Policy** as presented and distributed on 4th August 2020. Significantly this policy was the culmination of years of consultation and discussion throughout the many Resident Working Groups within the Borough's commitment to involve residents in any future policies that would affect the Leaseholders and tenants in the Borough.*

As Chairman of the Housing Representative's Forum, I can confirm that the DCH Policy is unique in that it protects us all for the future whereby no administration can impose a policy of purchase, change in our estates without our agreement and approval, and this is enshrined with legal protection for us all. I recommend this DCH Policy to all residents and ask for your support in making this a legally binding obligation on the Council, to consult with us as residents.
Adriaan van Zyl

Chair Housing Representative's Forum

To the London Borough of Hammersmith,

We, on behalf of Wormholt Residents Association, support the Defend Council Homes Policy's adoption by Council as soon as possible. We are of the opinion that the Policy will provide residents with additional safeguards in the event of redevelopment proposals that affect their homes. It will also ensure that some level of essential, affordable housing is preserved for future generations in the borough.
Wormholt Tenants & Residents Association

We, on behalf of Queen Caroline TRA, support the DCH Policy's adoption by Council as soon as possible. We are of the opinion that the Policy will provide residents with additional safeguards in the event of redevelopment proposals that affect our homes. As Resident and Vice chair of Queen Caroline Estate TRA, we have lived through the uncertainty and worry when our estate was offered to developers and I know that our Residents will whole heartedly welcome this policy if it provides some assurance that our homes and community will not be taken away and any needed redevelopment will be undertaken only after proper and thorough consultation.