

Housing Strategy Consultation 2015

Summary Report

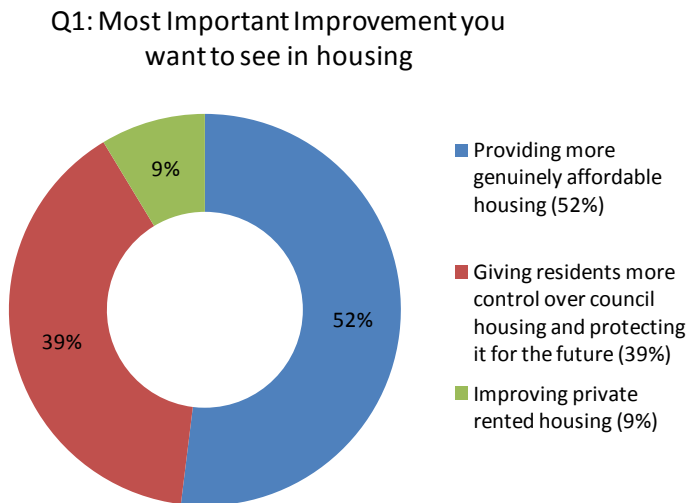
Overview

From 05/01/2015 to 09/03/2015, London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham ran a consultation entitled 'Housing Strategy 2015'. 387 people responded to the consultation. This report covers the online element of the consultation process, which was run from <http://lbhf.citizenspace.com/housing-and-regeneration/housing-strategy-2015> and it summarises the main comments received during the consultation. Additional comments were made through consultation meetings; letter and email responses which have been considered separately.

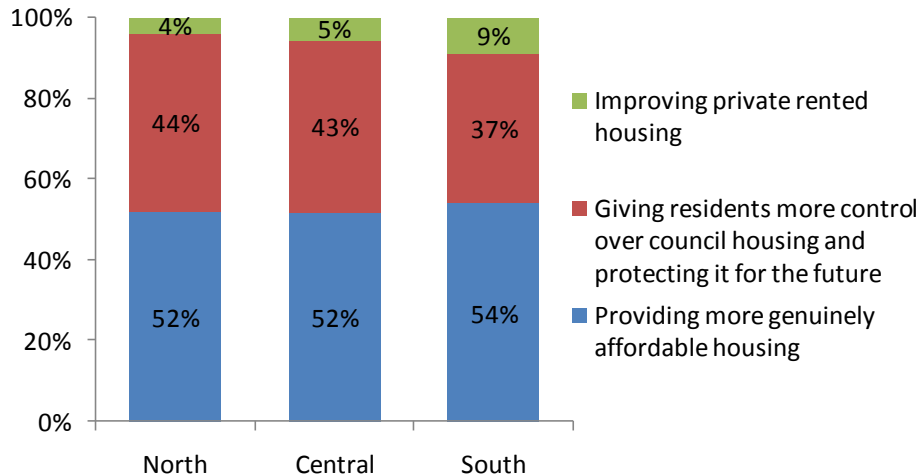
Questions summary

Q1: What is the most important improvement you want to see to housing in H&F?

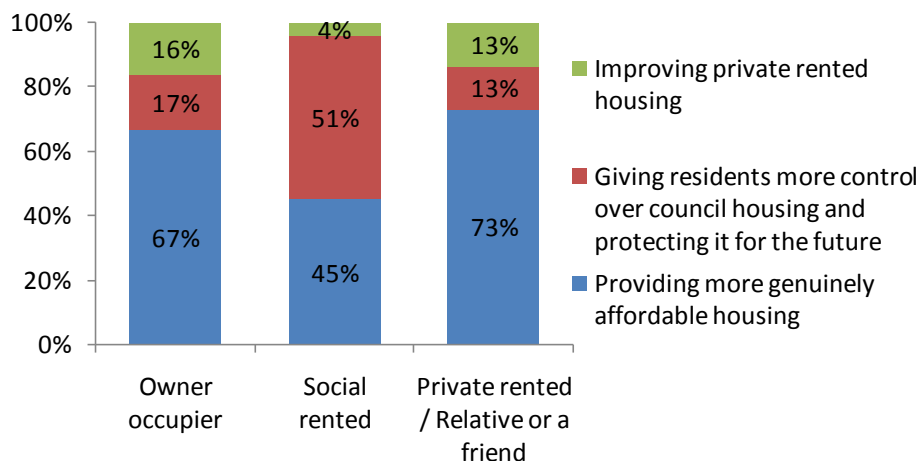
Just over half (52%) of the respondents stated that provision of more genuinely affordable housing is the most important, followed by 39% who stated 'giving residents more control over council housing and protecting it for the future'. The remaining 9% of respondents stated 'improving private rented housing' as the most important.



Area – 54% of respondents in the south and 52% in both the north and centre of the borough stated 'Providing more genuinely affordable housing' as the most important improvement they want to see. 44% of respondents in the north and 43% in the centre of the borough stated 'giving residents more control over council housing and protecting it for the future' as the most important; this compares to 37% of respondents in the south sub area.



Tenure – 73% of private renters and 67% of owner occupiers stated ‘Providing more genuinely affordable housing’ as the most important; this compares to 45% for social tenants. Conversely, over a half (51%) of social tenants want to see ‘giving residents more control over council housing and protecting it for the future’ compared to 17% for owner occupiers and 13% for private renters.

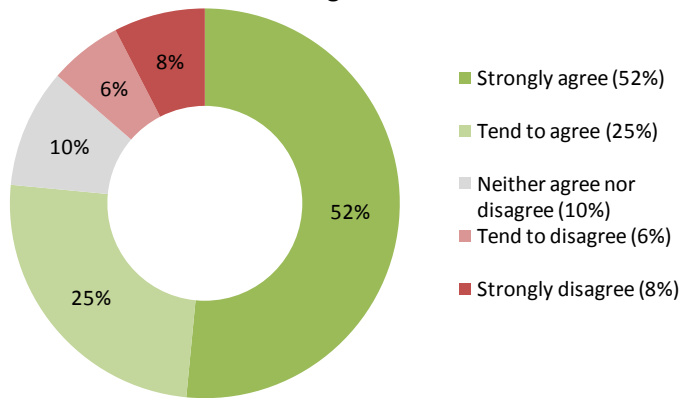


Question 2 relates to whether respondents wished to complete the detailed questionnaire. 162 confirmed that they did, comprising 42 % of total respondents out of 387.

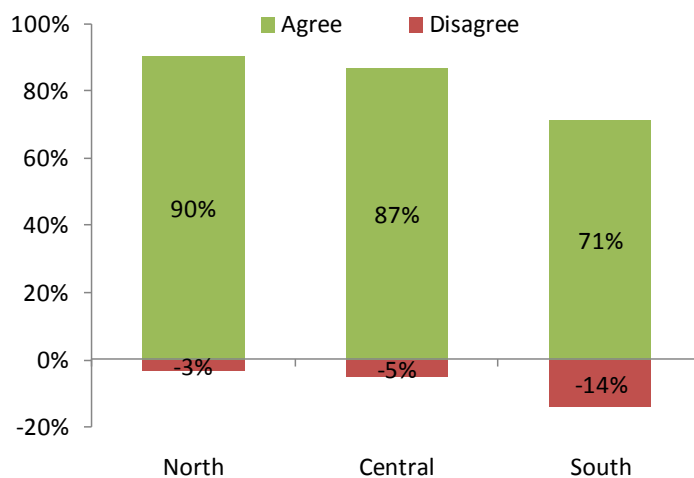
Question 3: To what extent do you agree with the following vision for affordable housing in the borough? “What this vision is about is identifying the change we need in housing, then developing and implementing a plan to make this happen. Our vision in simple terms is more and better, well-managed affordable housing in mixed income, mixed tenure successful places.”

Roughly three out of four respondents (77%) agreed with the vision while 14% disagreed.

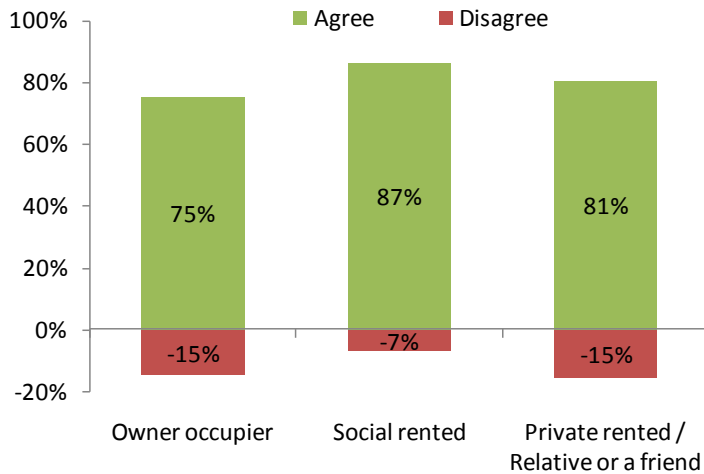
Q3: To what extent do you agree with the following vision for affordable housing in the borough?



Area – 90% of respondents in the north and 87% in the centre of the borough agreed with the vision for affordable housing. This is compared with 71% in the south of the borough.



Tenure – 87% of social rented tenants agreed with the vision; this is slightly higher than private renters (81%) and owner occupiers (75%).

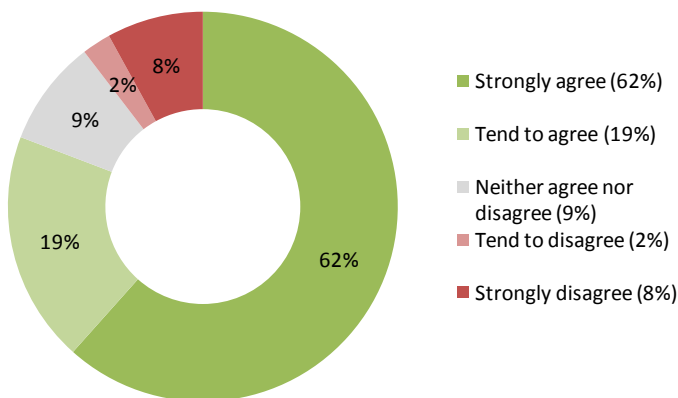


Question 4: To what extent do you agree that the following themes are the right ones for organising the council's housing strategy?

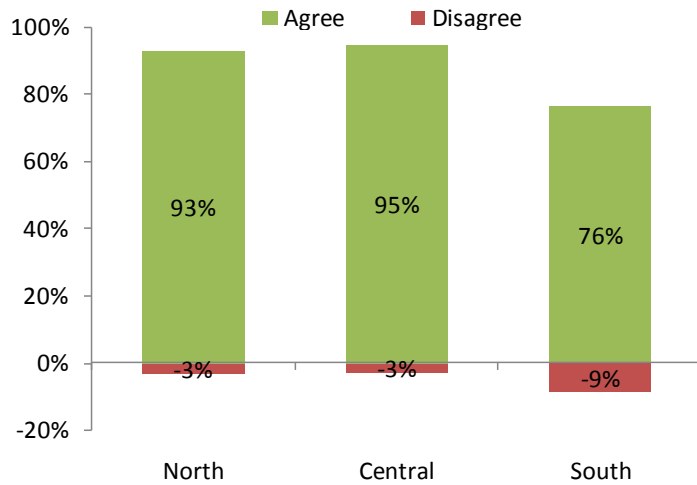
Regenerating Places and Increasing the Supply of Genuinely Affordable Housing

Over four out of five respondents (81%) agreed with the theme while 10% disagreed.

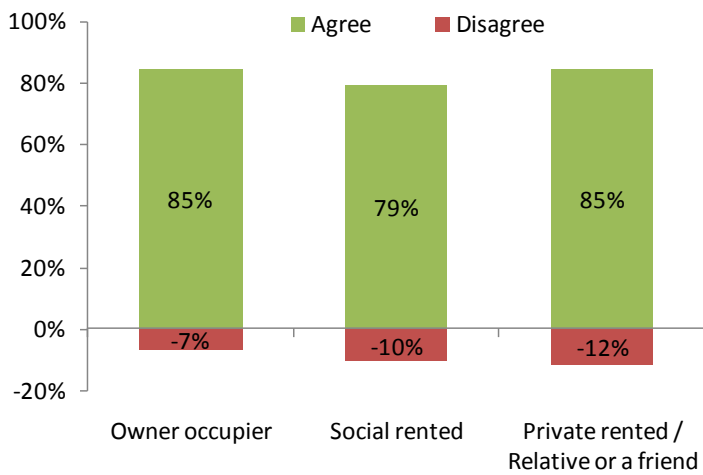
Q4: Regenerating Places and Increasing the Supply of Genuinely Affordable Housing



Area – 95% of respondents in the centre of the borough and 93% in the north agreed that regenerating places and increasing the supply of genuinely affordable housing is the right one. This is compared with 76% in the south of the borough.



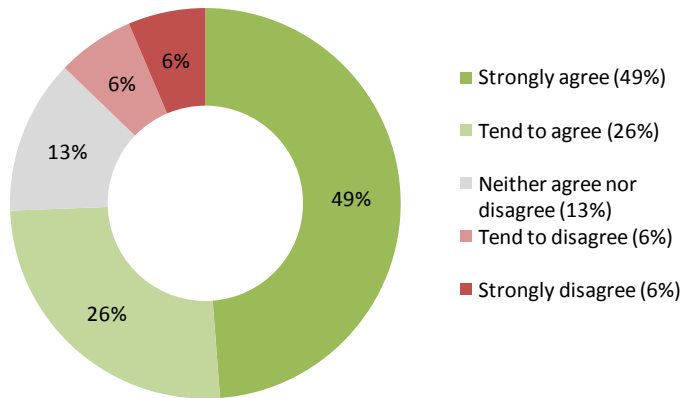
Tenure – 85% of both the owner occupiers and private renters agreed that regenerating places and increasing the supply of genuinely affordable housing is the right theme. This is compared with 79% for social tenants.



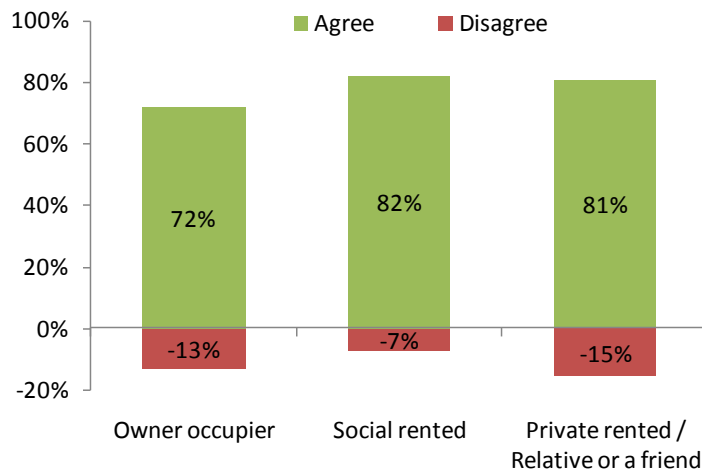
Meeting Housing Need and Aspiration

Three out of four respondents (75%) agreed with the theme while 12% disagreed.

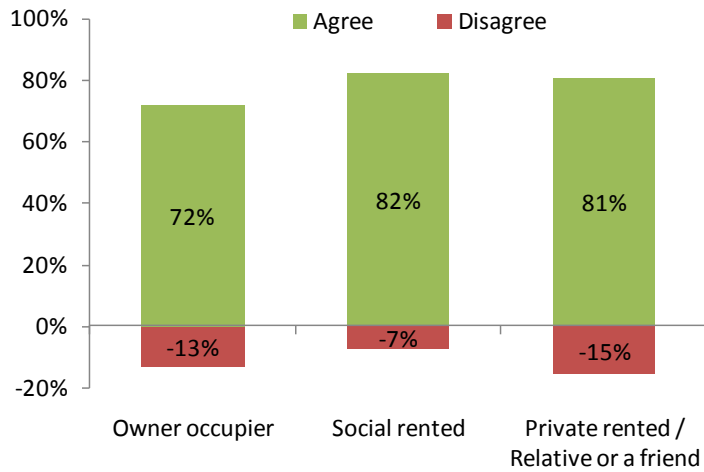
Q4: Meeting Housing Need and Aspiration



Area – 89% of respondents in the centre of the borough and 86% in the north agreed that meeting housing need and aspiration is the right one. This is compared with 60% in the south of the borough.



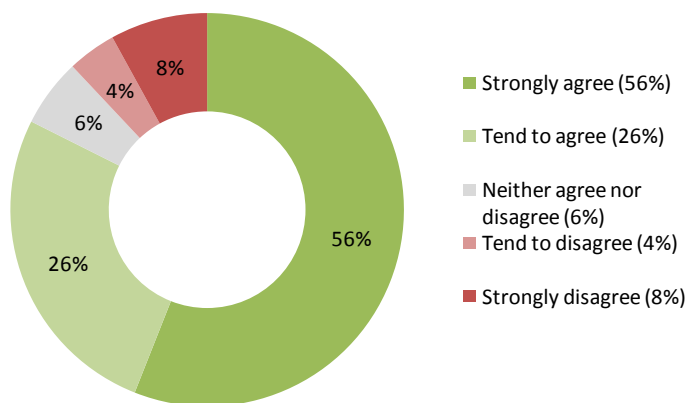
Tenure – 82% of social tenants and 81% of private renters agreed that meeting housing need and aspiration is the right theme. This is compared with 72% for owner occupiers.



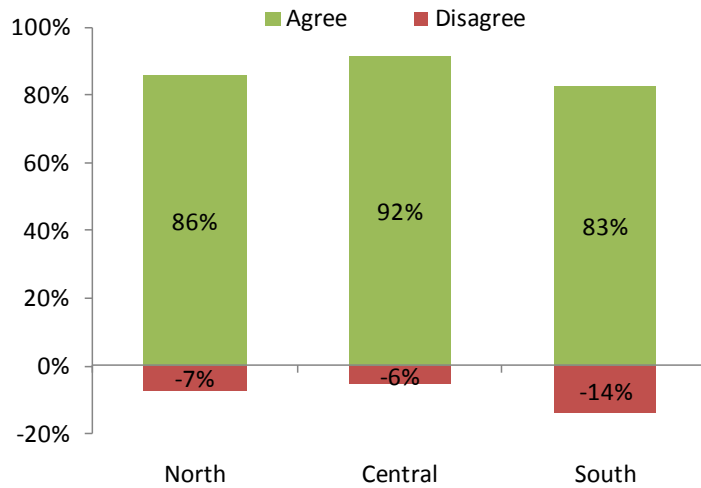
Excellent Services for All

Over four out of five respondents (82%) agreed with the theme while 12% disagreed.

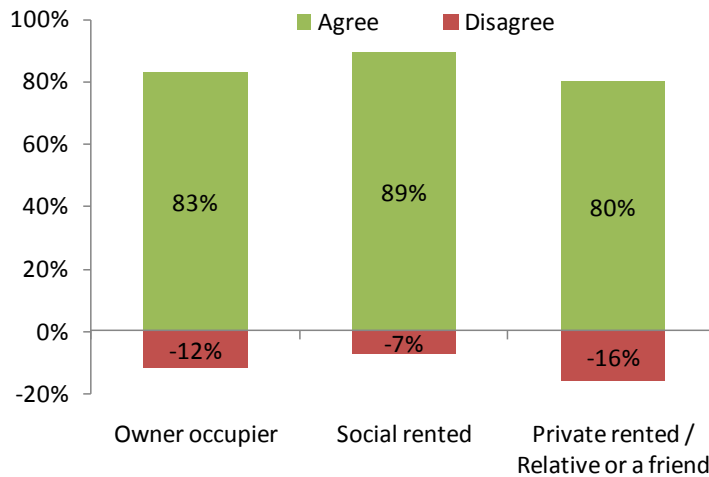
Q4: Excellent Services for All



Area – 92% of respondents in the centre of the borough agreed that ‘excellent services for all’ is the right theme. This is compared with 86% in the north of the borough and 83% in the south.



Tenure – 89% of social tenants agreed that ‘excellent services for all’ is the right theme. This is slightly higher than owner occupiers (83%) and private renters (80%).



Question 5: What kind of issues and options should the Residents' Commission consider?

Respondents could enter free text to comment on issues and options for the Residents’ Commission. There were 83 comments to this question and a broad analysis of the free text answers is shown below.

Comments included:

“Improving existing council housing for tenants”

“Council houses to be well maintained and tenants should be permitted to make reasonable improvements”

“Finance, building maintenance and management”

“Protect tenancies and affordable rents”

“Build safeguards into any stock transfer”

“Supporting residents in finding employment; helping those who may need further education before they are ready to seek work”

“Consideration of elderly people, disabled and people with mental health conditions”

“No sub-let, no under-occupancy, no dogs”

“Firmer with ASB tenants”

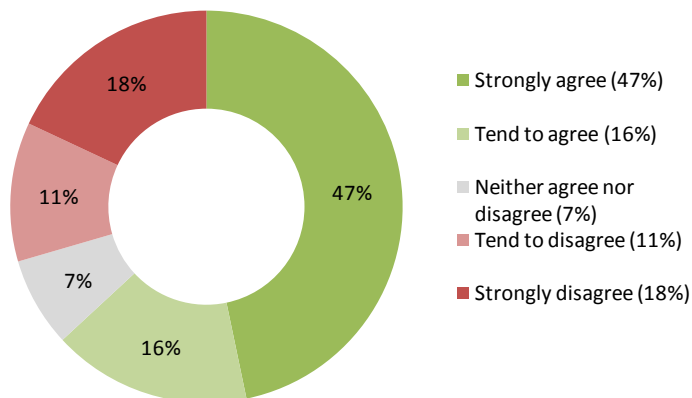
“Disposal of properties that are not suitable”

“Energy saving technologies, using recyclable materials”

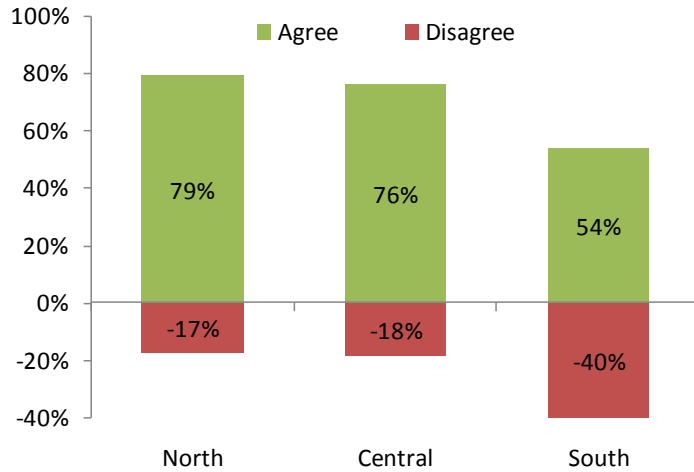
Question 6: To what extent do you agree with the affordable homes target of 40%?

63% of respondents agreed with the target while 29% disagreed.

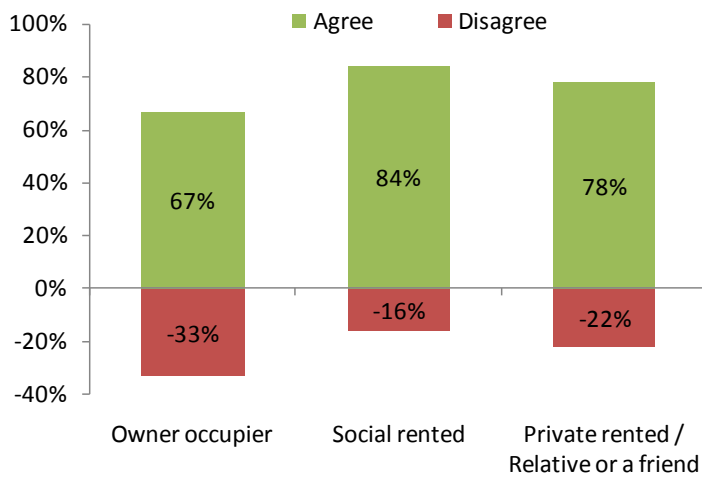
Q6: To what extent do you agree with the affordable homes target of 40%?



Area – 79% of respondents in the north and 76% in the centre of the borough agreed with the affordable homes target of 40%. This is compared with 54% in the south of the borough.



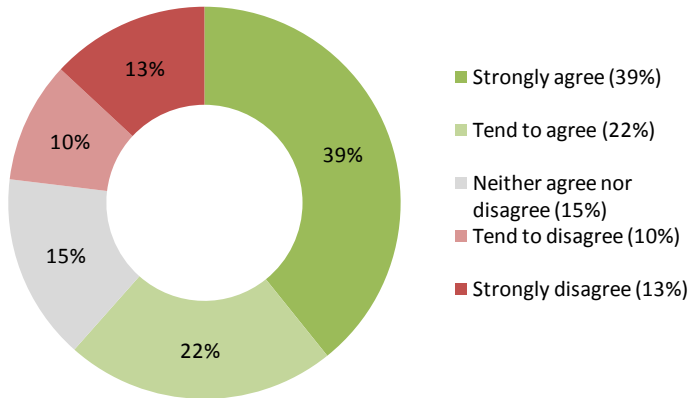
Tenure – 84% of social rented tenants agreed with the affordable homes target of 40%; this is slightly higher than private renters (78%). 67% of owner occupiers agreed with the target.



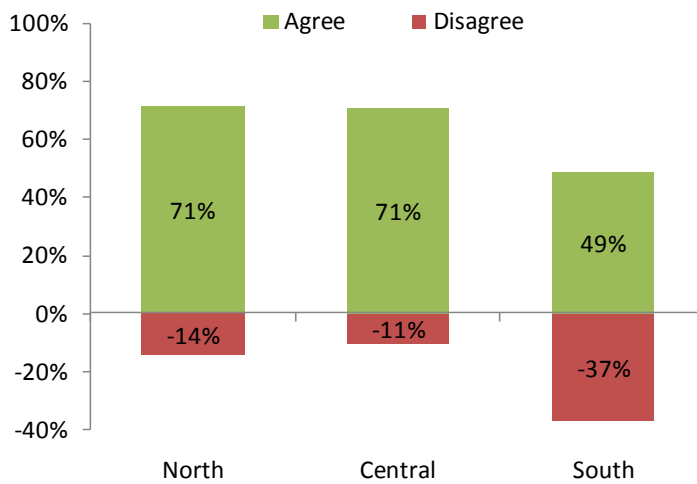
Question 7: To what extent do you agree with an enhanced role for Housing Associations in delivering affordable housing in the borough?

Over a half (55%) of respondents agreed with an enhanced role for Housing Associations in delivering affordable housing in the borough while 29% disagreed.

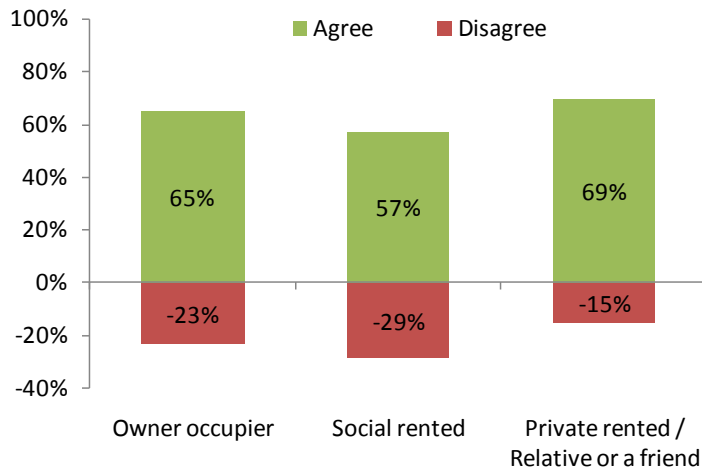
Q7: To what extent do you agree with an enhanced role for Housing Associations in delivering affordable housing in the borough?



Area – 71% of respondents in both the north and centre of the borough agreed with the role for Housing Associations. This is compared with 49% for the south sub area.



Tenure – 69% of private renters and 65% of owner occupiers agreed with the role for Housing Associations. 57% of social rented tenants agreed with the role.

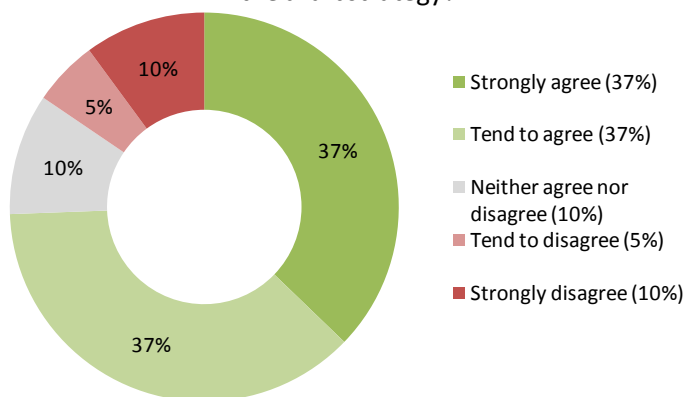


Question 8: To what extent do you agree with the Affordable Housing Standards of the draft strategy?

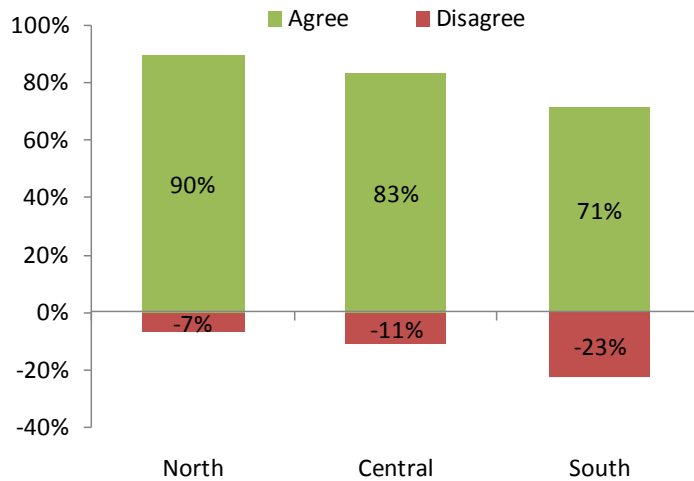
Standards included tenure mixes, i.e. what proportion of market rent, social/affordable rent & low cost home ownership housing there should be; Bedroom mixes (e.g., mix of 1 beds, 2 beds etc); what cost the social rented; space standards for new homes; how homes can be environmentally friendly; how much wheelchair accessible housing; levels of supported housing.

Nearly three out of four respondents (74%) agreed with the AH standards while 15% disagreed.

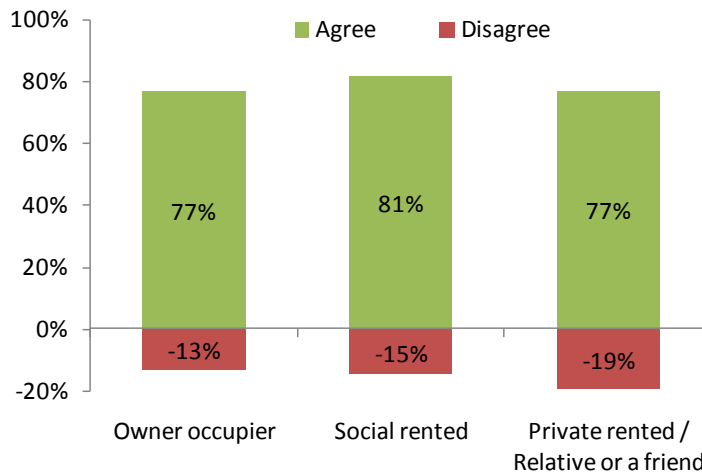
Q8: To what extent do you agree with the Affordable Housing Standards set out in Annex A of the draft strategy?



Area – 90% of respondents in the north and 83% in the centre of the borough agreed with the Affordable Housing Standards. This is compared with 71% in the south of the borough.



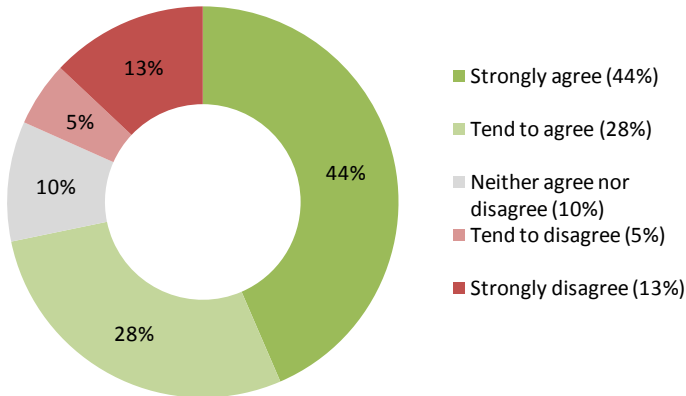
Tenure – 81% of social tenants agreed with the Affordable Housing Standards. This is compared with 77% for both the owner occupiers and private renters.



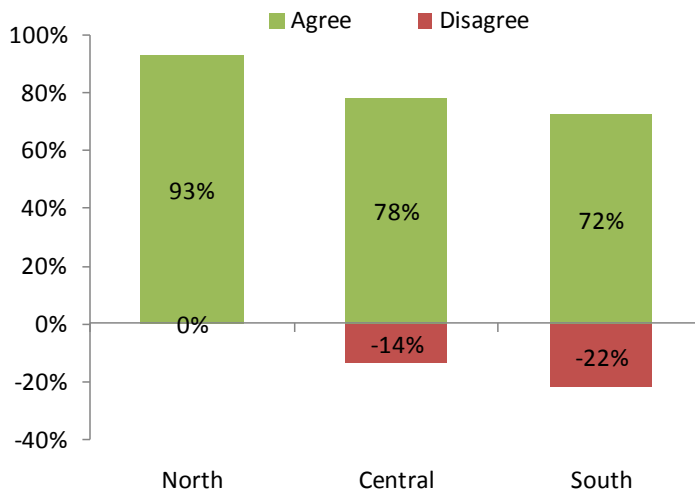
Question 9: To what extent do you agree that the council should review its land and buildings to increase affordable housing choices and opportunities?

The majority of respondents (72%) agreed with the statement while 18% disagreed.

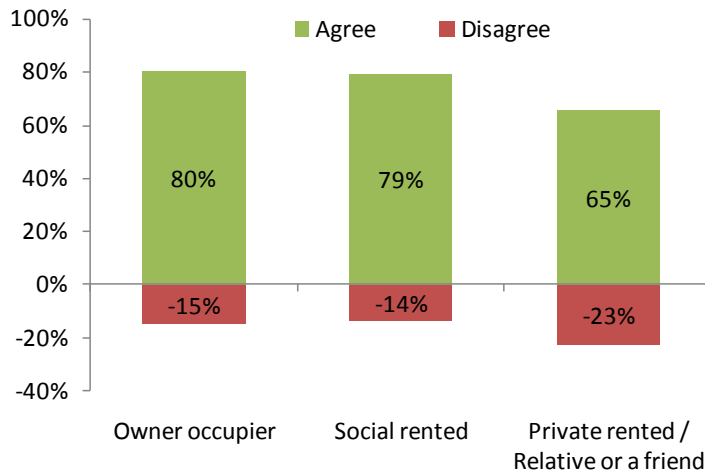
Q9: To what extent do you agree that the council should review its land and buildings to increase affordable housing?



Area – 93% of respondents in the north of the borough agreed that the council should review its land and buildings to increase affordable housing choices and opportunities. This is compared with 78% in the central sub area and 72% in the south sub area.



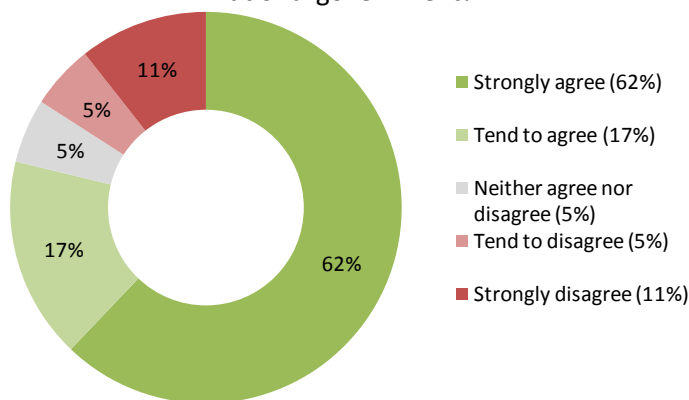
Tenure – 80% of owner occupiers and 79% of social renters agreed that the council should review its land and buildings to increase affordable housing choices and opportunities. This is compared with 65% for private renters.



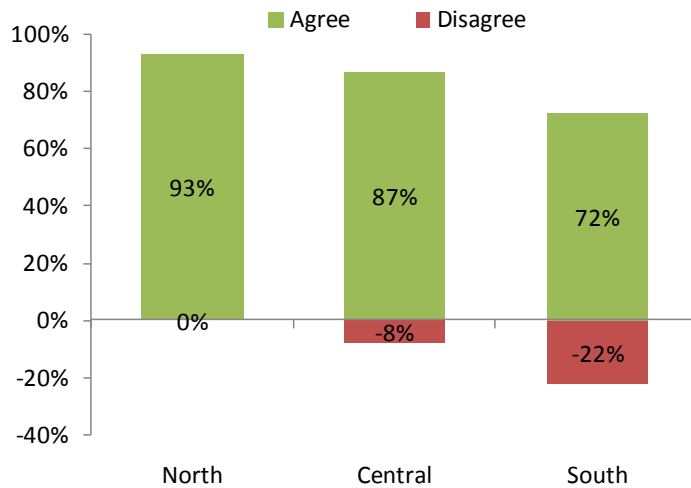
Question 10: To what extent do you agree that the council should engage with, and lobby, the Mayor of London and the national government to provide more resources and choice for genuinely affordable housing?

Nearly four out of five respondents (79%) agreed with the statement while 16% disagreed.

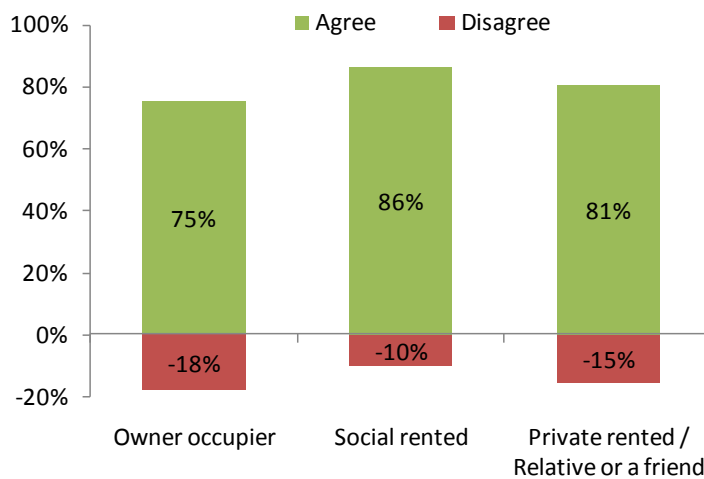
Q10: To what extent do you agree that the council should engage with the Mayor of London and the national government?



Area – 93% of respondents in the north and 87% in the centre of the borough agreed that the council should engage with the Mayor of London and the national government. This is compared with 72% in the south of the borough.



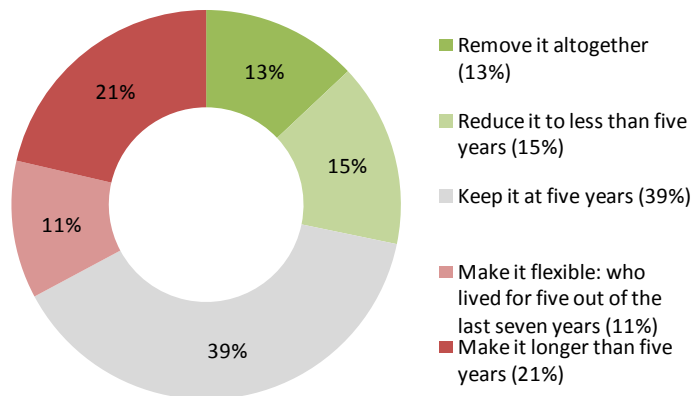
Tenure – 86% of social rented tenants agreed that the council should engage with the Mayor of London and the national government; this is slightly higher than private renters (81%) and owner occupiers (75%).



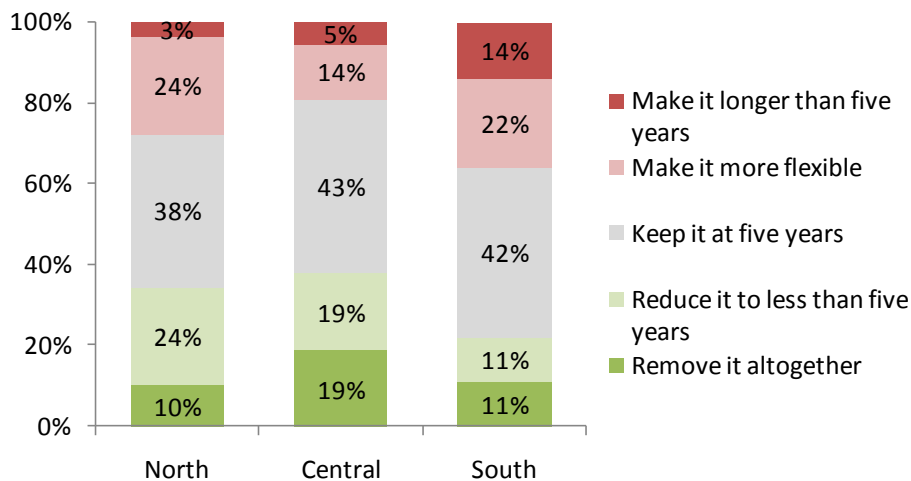
Question 11: What do you think we should do about the Housing Allocation Scheme five-year residency test?

39% of all respondents have stated ‘Keep it at five years’; this is followed by ‘Make it longer than five years’ (21%) and ‘Reduce it to less than five years’ (15%). 13% of the respondents would like to see it removed altogether while 11% would like to see it flexible.

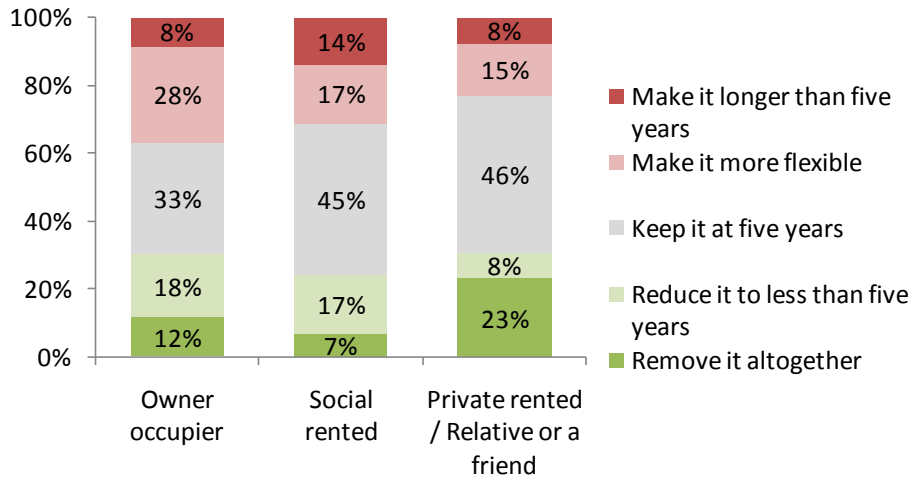
Q11: What do you think we should do about the housing allocation scheme five-year residency?



Area – 43% of respondents in the centre of the borough and 42% in the south would like to see the Housing Allocation Scheme kept at five years; this is slightly higher than in the north (38%). 19% of respondents in the central sub area would like to see it removed altogether (11% in south and 10% in north). Nearly a quarter (24%) of respondents from the north stated ‘Reduce it to less than five years’ (19% in central and 11% in south)



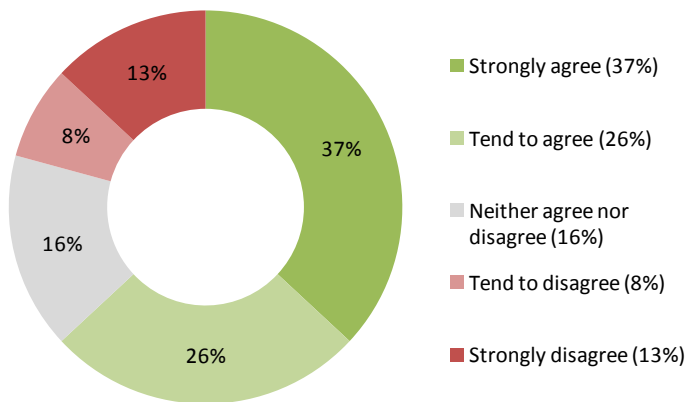
Tenure – 46% of private renters and 45% of social renters would like to see the Housing Allocation Scheme kept at five years; this is higher than for owner occupiers (33%). 23% of private renters would like to see it removed altogether (12% for owner occupiers and 7% for social renters). 18% of owner occupiers and 17% of social renters stated ‘Reduce it to less than five years’ (8% for private renters).



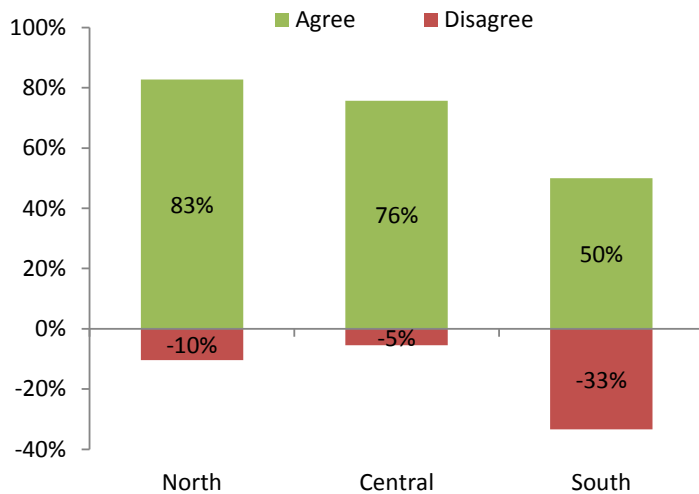
Question 12: Currently, applicants must have a need for an additional two bedrooms to qualify for the housing register. The council is considering reducing this requirement to one extra bedroom. Do you agree?

63% of respondents agreed with the proposal while 21% disagreed.

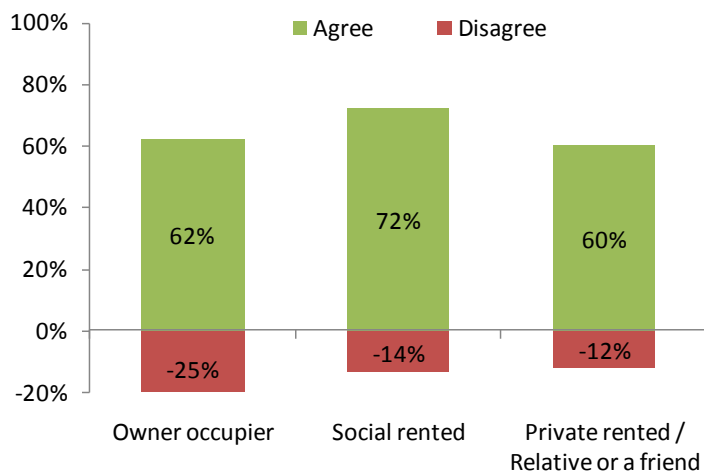
Q12: The council is considering reducing this requirement to one extra bedroom. Do you agree?



Area – 83% of respondents in the north and 76% in the centre of the borough agreed that the council should reduce requirement to one extra bedroom. This is compared with 50% in the south of the borough.



Tenure – 72% of social rented tenants agreed that the council should reduce requirement to one extra bedroom; this is higher than owner occupiers (62%) and private renters (60%).

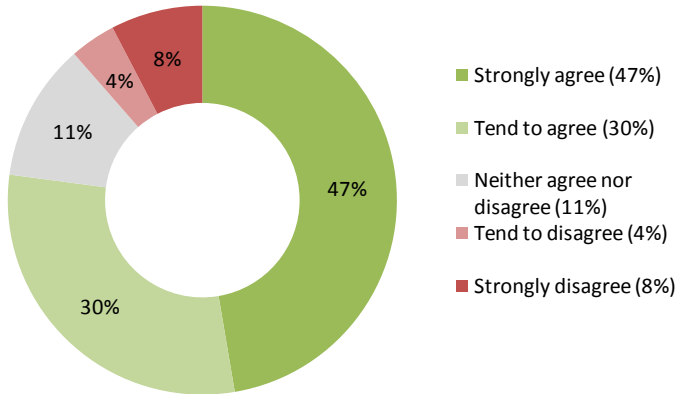


Question 13: To what extent do you agree that that council should continue to give greater priority to eligible applicants if they are from one of the following groups?

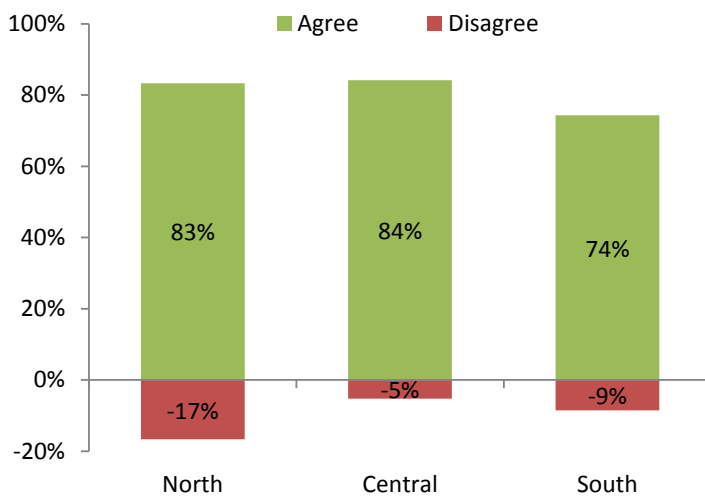
These are currently applicants who are working; volunteering; In training or education; ex-armed service personnel; registered foster carers and adopters; carers; people with disabilities; older residents; certain categories of young people 25 years old or under.

The majority of respondents (77%) agreed with the statement while 12% disagreed.

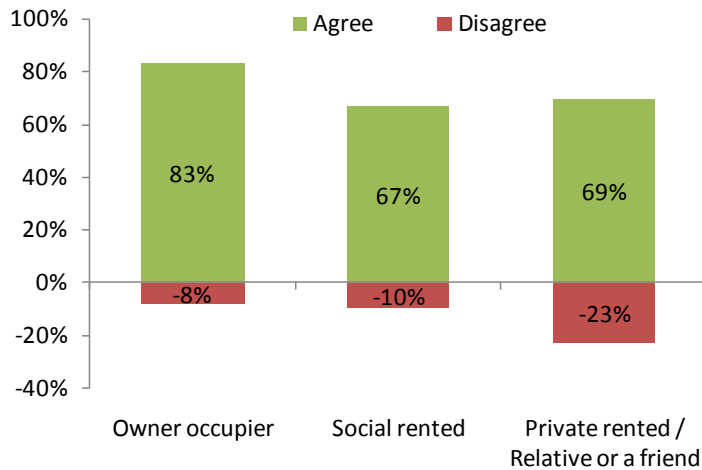
Q13: To what extent do you agree that that council should continue to give greater priority to eligible applicants?



Area – 84% of respondents in the centre of the borough and 83% in the north agreed that the council should continue to give greater priority to eligible applicants. This is compared with 74% in the south of the borough.



Tenure – 83% of owner occupiers agreed that the council should continue to give greater priority to eligible applicants; this is higher than private renters (69%) and social rented tenants (67%).



Question 14: What do you think the council could do in partnership with others to reduce homelessness?

There were 72 comments to this question and a broad analysis of the free text answers is shown below.

Comments included:

“Swift and effective referrals process”

“Underlying socio-economic factors that result in homelessness”

“House share, use garages, unused office blocks to make homes”

“Gather homeless information and statistics from other councils and successful programs in other global cities”

“More hostels could be built for the homeless”

“Provide or facilitate shared accommodation”

“Work with private sector landlords to prevent evictions”

“Work with third sector agencies more”

“Collaboration with Money/debt advice, Health and Wellbeing support services, local/neighbourhood groups, schools”

Question 15: To what extent do you agree with the proposal to allocate homes for low-cost home ownership equally between three income bands in future?

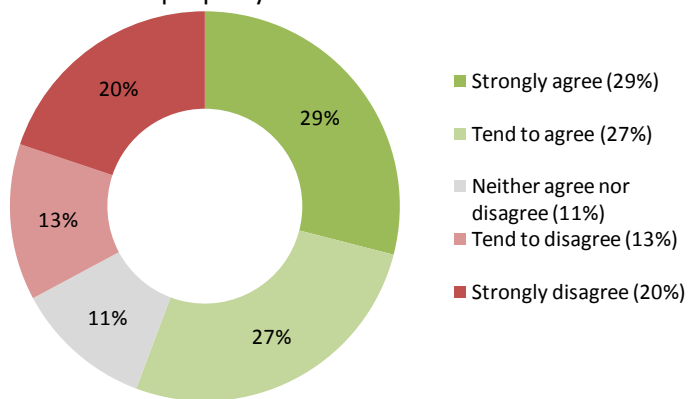
The Council intends to consult on changes to the Home Buy Allocation Scheme. This scheme allocates the homes available for low-cost ownership according to applicants’ income and priority ranking. The Mayor of London’s London Plan says

low-cost home ownership should be open to people earning between £21,100 and £66,000 (or £80,000 for 3-bed homes). In future, the council is proposing to allocate homes for low-cost ownership equally between three income bands:

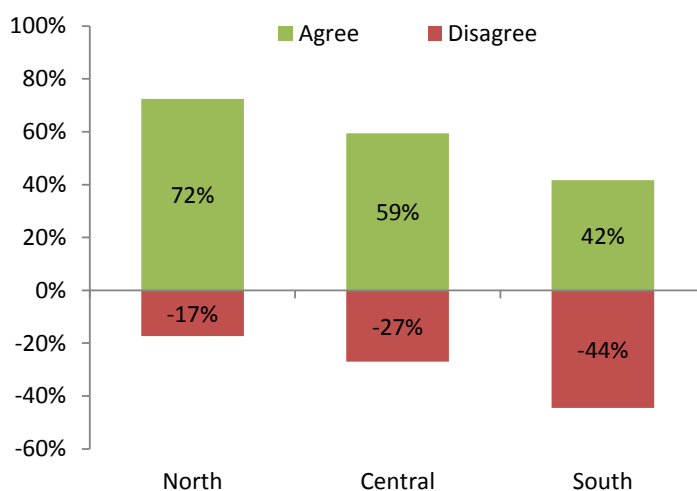
- Up to £29,000 gross income
- £29,001-£43,550 gross income
- £43,551-£50,550 gross income

Over a half (56%) of the respondents agreed with the proposal while a third (33%) disagreed.

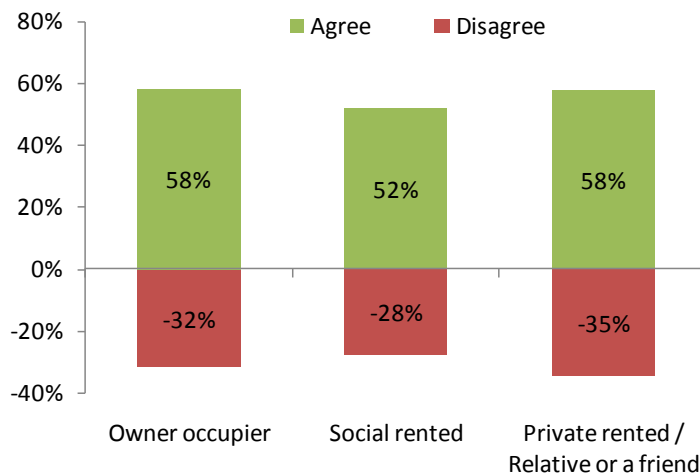
Q15: To what extent do you agree with the proposal to allocate homes for low-cost home ownership equally between three income bands?



Area – 72% of respondents in the north of the borough agreed with the proposal to allocate homes for low-cost home ownership equally between three income bands. This is compared with 59% in the central sub area and 42% in the south sub area.



Tenure – 58% of both the owner occupiers and private renters agreed with the proposal to allocate homes for low-cost home ownership equally between three income bands. This is compared with 52% for social renters.

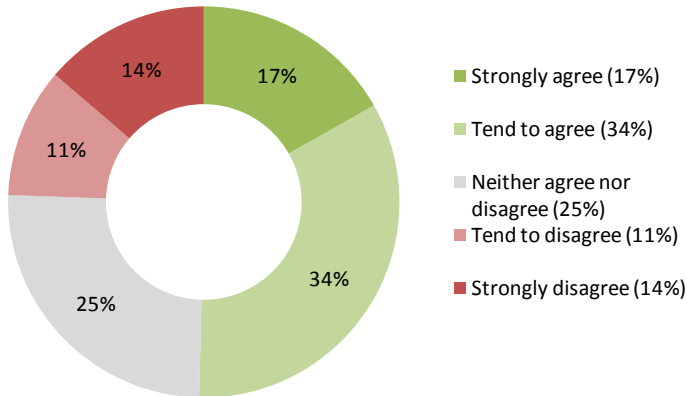


Question 16: To what extent do you agree with the current priority order in which the council ranks people seeking low-cost home ownership?

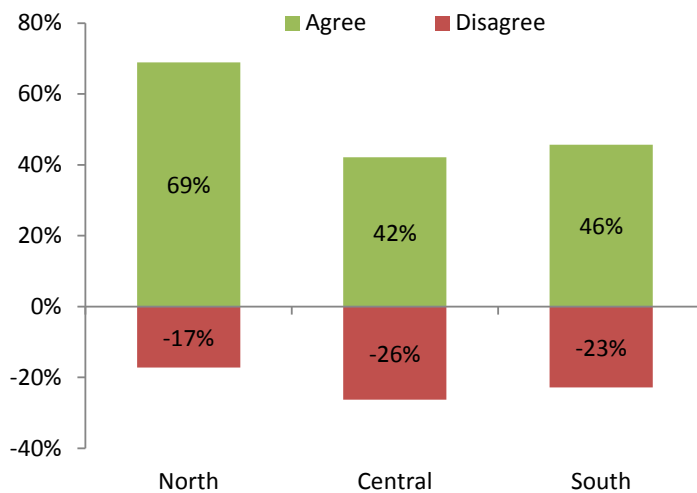
At the moment, the council ranks people seeking low cost home ownership in the following priority order: 1. social tenants (council or housing association who would be vacating their home); 2. armed services / (ex-armed services personnel; 3. police officers living or working in the borough; 4. homeless working households in temporary accommodation; 5. disabled applicants; 6. households living for 12 consecutive months in the borough; 7. households working for 12 consecutive months in the borough; 8. households living or working in the borough with an income within a certain limit; 9 households with an income above a certain limit.

Over a half (51%) of the respondents agreed with the current priority order while a quarter (25%) disagreed.

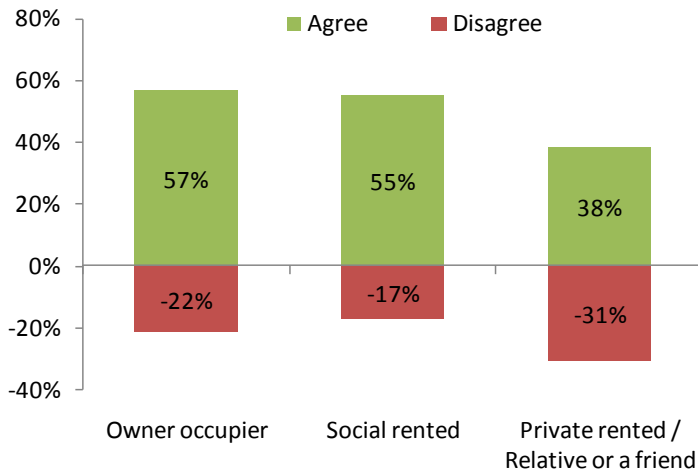
Q16: To what extent do you agree with the current priority order in which the council ranks people seeking low-cost home ownership?



Area – 69% of respondents in the north of the borough agree with the current priority order in which the council ranks people seeking low-cost home ownership. This is compared with 46% in the south sub area and 42% in the central sub area.



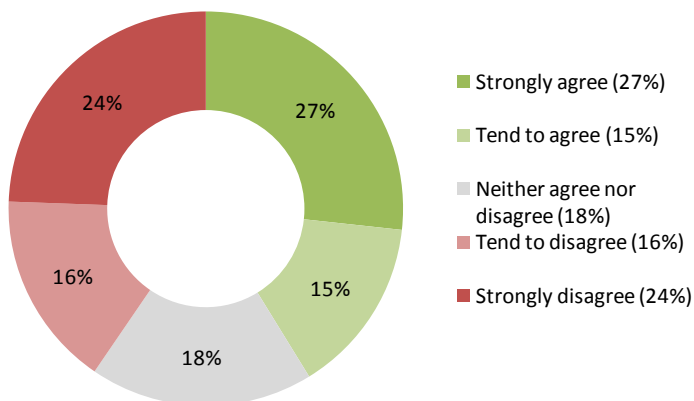
Tenure – 57% of owner occupiers and 55% of social renters agree with the current priority order in which the council ranks people seeking low-cost home ownership. This is compared with 38% for private renters.



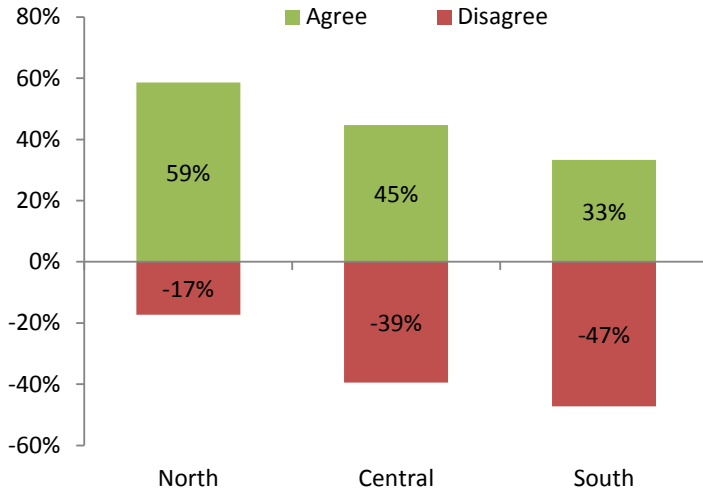
Question 17: To what extent do you agree that the council should return from fixed term tenancies to lifetime tenancies?

42% of the respondents agreed with the change while 40% disagreed.

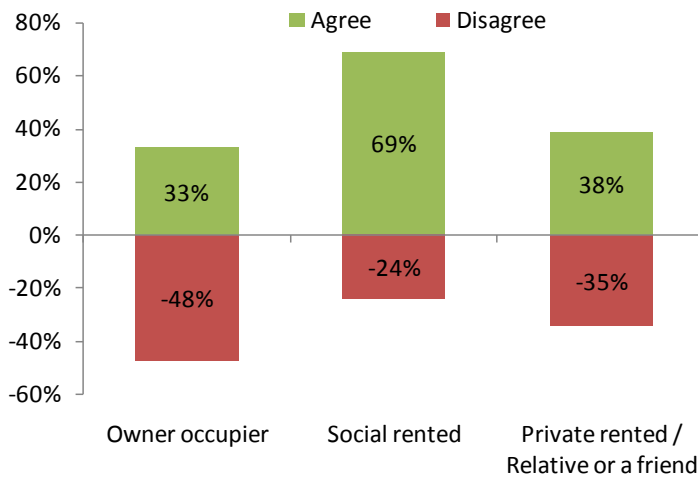
Q17: To what extent do you agree that the council should return from fixed term tenancies to lifetime tenancies?



Area – 59% of respondents in the north of the borough agree that the council should return from fixed term tenancies to lifetime tenancies. This is compared with 45% in the central sub area and 33% in the south sub area.



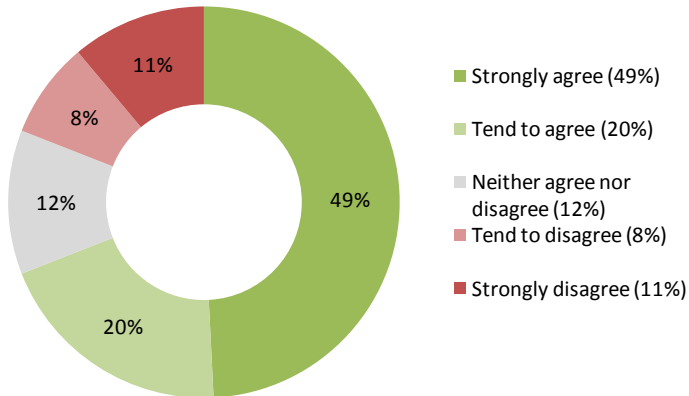
Tenure – 69% of social renters agree that the council should return from fixed term tenancies to lifetime tenancies. This is compared with 38% for private renters and 33% for owner occupiers.



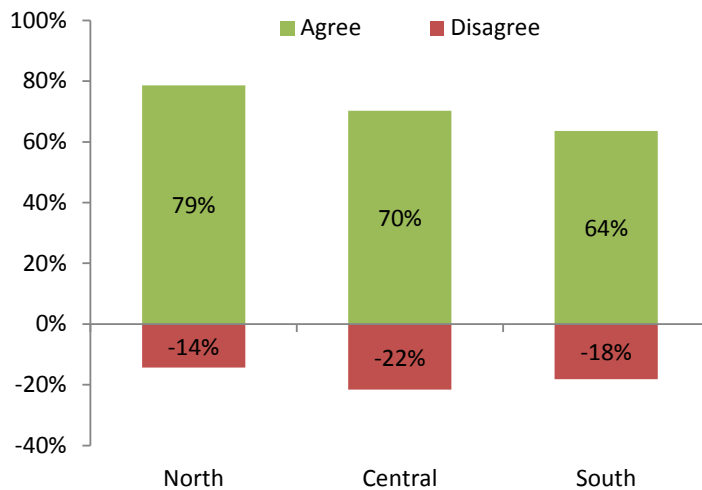
Question 18: To what extent do you agree that the council should keep fixed-term tenancies for certain categories of applicant?

69% of the respondents agreed with the statement change while 19% disagreed.

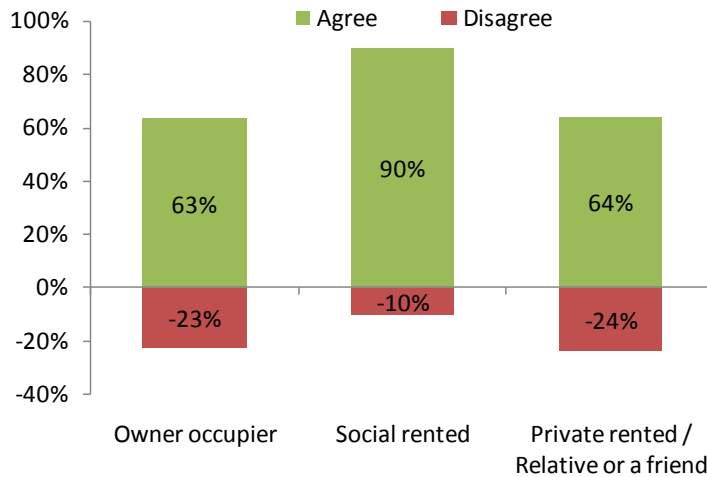
Q18: To what extent do you agree that the council should keep fixed-term tenancies for certain categories of applicant?



Area – 79% of respondents in the north of the borough agree that the council should keep fixed-term tenancies for certain categories of applicant. This is compared with 70% in the central sub area and 64% in the south sub area.



Tenure – 90% of social renters agree that the council should keep fixed-term tenancies for certain categories of applicant. This is compared with 64% for private renters and 63% for owner occupiers.



Question 19: How can greater housing choice for older people best be achieved?

There were 56 comments to this question and a broad analysis of the free text answers is shown below.

Comments included:

“Building bridges between the Council and the local NHS”

“Decanting all sheltered housing residents to housing associations or transfer them to a cooperative”

“Look for any “best practice” around the UK it could adapt”

“House-sharing for 65+ residents”

“Build new low rise small unit housing for elderly tenants to downsize into”

“Decent sheltered accommodation with wardens and good care homes for those who are in need”

“Volunteers could be sought from those not working to gain experience in care work”

“Give preference to ground floor or adapted accommodations to the elderly for existing and new accommodation”

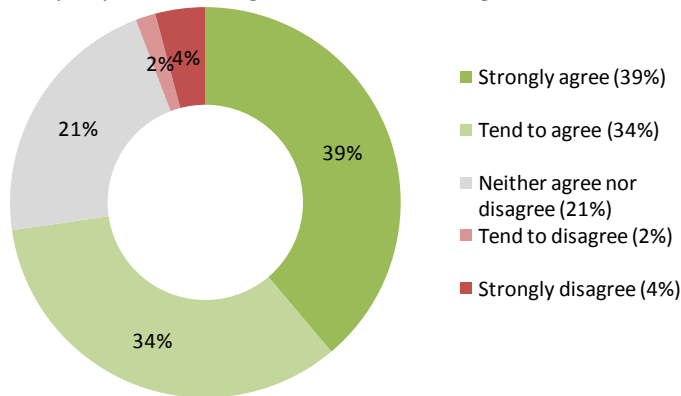
“Model for developing extra care housing for the frail elderly”

“Encourage the building of flexible homes that can be adapted as people's needs change”

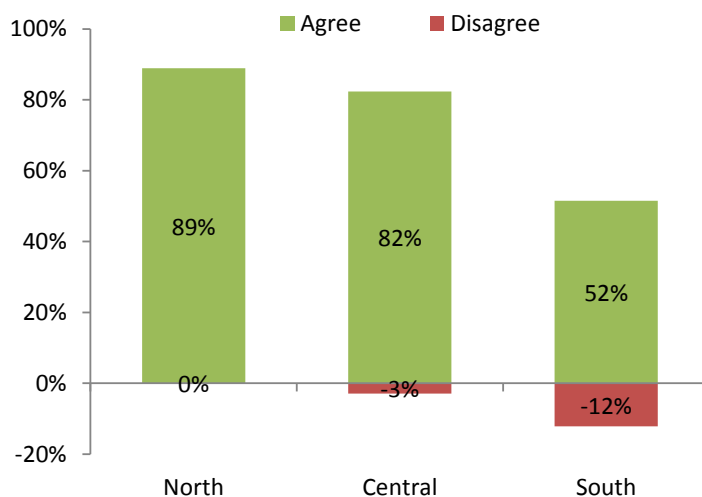
Question 20: To what extent do you agree with the actions the council proposes to take to meets needs of disabled people, including those with learning disabilities?

The majority of respondents (73%) agreed with the proposal while 6% disagreed.

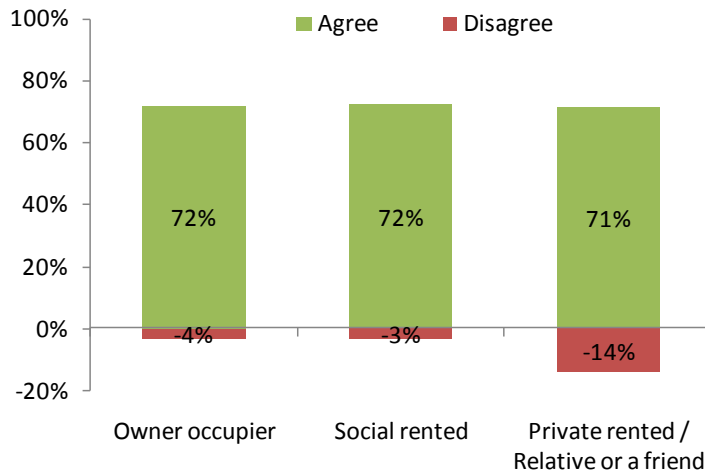
Q20: To what extent do you agree with the actions proposes to meets the needs of disabled people, including those with learning disabilities?



Area – 89% of respondents in the north and 82% in the centre of the borough agree with the actions the council proposes to meets needs of disabled people, including those with learning disabilities. This is compared with 52% in the south sub area.



Tenure – There was very little difference between tenures; 72% of both the owner occupiers and social renters and 71% of private renters agreed with the actions the council proposes to meets needs of disabled people.



Question 21: How could we improve advice and representation for council housing residents?

There were 69 comments to this question and a broad analysis of the free text answers is shown below.

Comments included:

“Residents scrutiny /monitoring panel working alongside the equivalent Cllr/officer panel”

“By advertising items thru twitter, email and a local radio station”

“Co-opt representatives onto management boards”

“Investing in a web based tenant portal”

“Form resident’s advisory boards that work closely with the borough”

“Letters, leaflets and news sheets - most information is shared with TRAs”

“More on the ground consultation where people feel comfortable about sharing their views”

“Engage with residents via panels and forums”

“Providing training for participation in forums”

“Polite friendly staff”

Question 22: How can we involve residents more in decision-making?

There were 72 comments to this question and a broad analysis of the free text answers is shown below.

Comments included:

“Regular email communication, and meetings”

“With a questionnaires and e-mails”

“Ask them by interview - face to face”

“Council members need to act as facilitators to establish feedback and review policy”

“Use flyers through doors with pre-paid envelope to return answers”

“By setting up workshops & meetings with them”

“Organising day activity; Plan focus groups”

“Hold meetings with residents outside working hours”

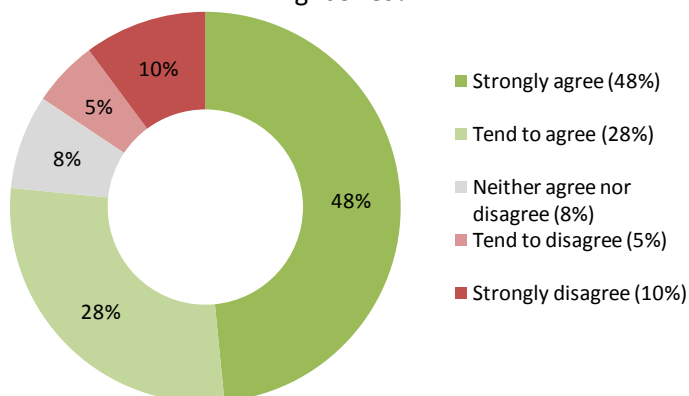
“Recruit, select and train the right residents for this important role”

“Written feedback (both online and by post) and hosting more outreach events”

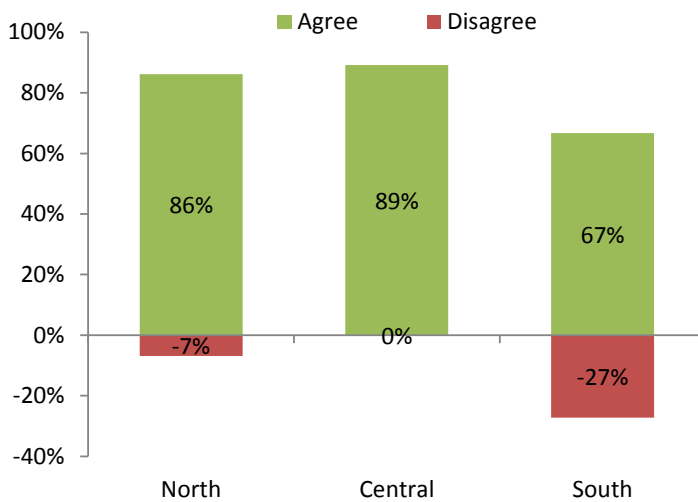
Question 23: To what extent do you agree that the actions we are proposing below, for improving the private rented sector, are the right ones?

Roughly three out of four respondents (76%) agreed that the actions are right while 15% disagreed.

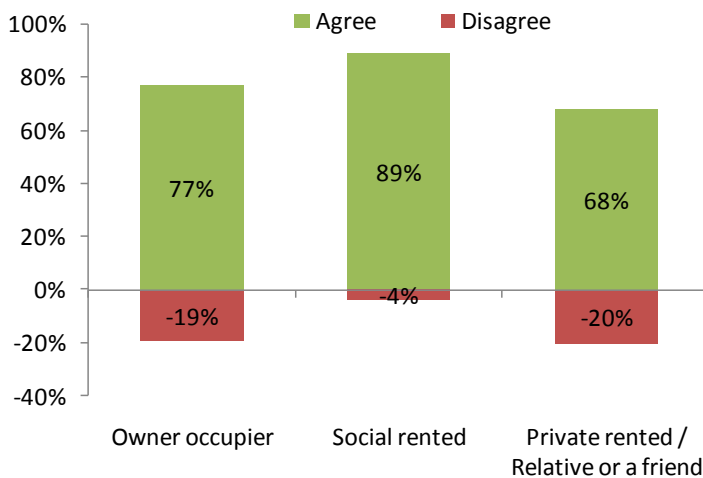
Q23: To what extent do you agree that the actions for improving the private rented sector, are the right ones?



Area – 89% of respondents in the centre of the borough and 86% in the north agreed that the actions for improving the private rented sector are the right ones. This is compared with 67% in the south of the borough.



Tenure – 89% of social rented tenants agreed that the actions for improving the private rented sector are the right ones; this is higher than owner occupiers (77%) and private renters (68%).



Question 24: What actions should the council take to improve personal and community safety in the borough?

There were 70 comments to this question and a broad analysis of the free text answers is shown below.

Comments included:

“More local Policing and improved CCTV”

“Better quality street lighting, friendlier landscaping”

“Regenerate run-down public spaces”

“Youth provision and support for young people to keep them off the streets”

“Neighbourhood policing”

“24 hour anti-social behaviour helpline”

“Zero tolerance of anti-social behaviour”

“Harsher punishments for offenders”

Question 25: Have we missed anything out? What else could the council do to improve current and future housing in the borough?

There were 70 comments to this question and a broad analysis of the free text answers is shown below.

Comments included:

“Discourage rogue landlords”

“Improve efficient delivery of repair and routine maintenance services”

“Offer incentives to prospective tenants for modernising properties”

“Rent controls”

“Encourage people to make choices about looking after their own needs”

“Enforce existing shops to utilise those floors above the ground floor”

“Encourage small house-builders over the PLCs or split sites”

“Schools need outside space - facilities for schools should be factored in to all development”

“More affordable parking for residents”

Question 26: Equalities Impact Assessment

There were 39 comments to this question and a broad analysis of the free text answers is shown below.

Comments included:

“Fairness requires all groups to be considered”

“Disabled and elderly yes but otherwise all others should be treated equally”

“Promote fairness and fight against racism and discrimination”

“Religion, sexual orientation, and ethnicity should not be relevant”

“Helping young people into work/ training and supporting them”

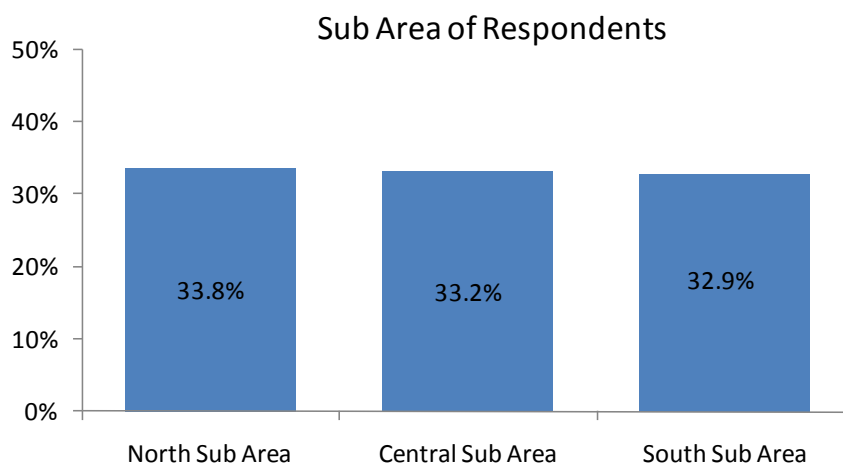
About you

Question 27: What is your name?

There were 329 responses to this question.

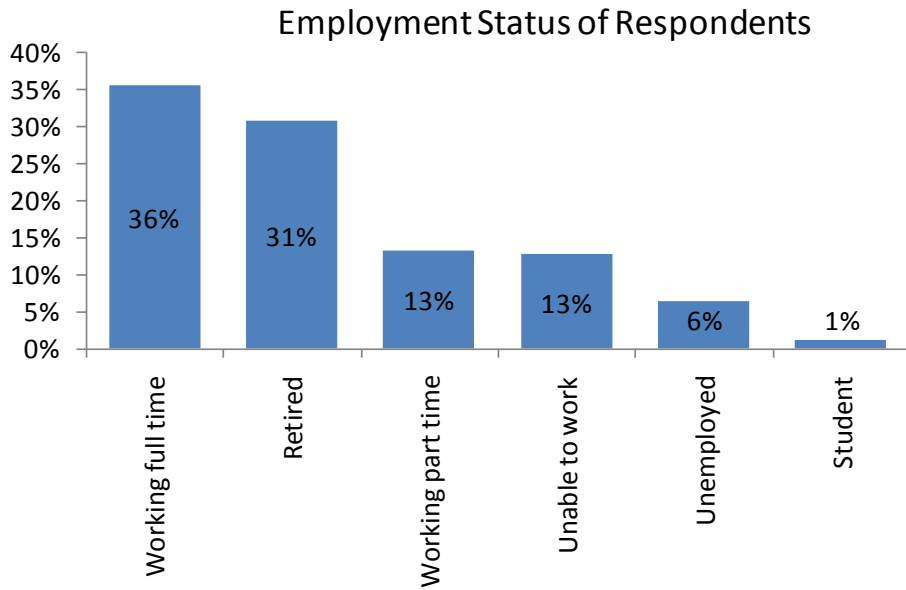
Question 28: What is your full postcode?

There were 340 responses to this question.



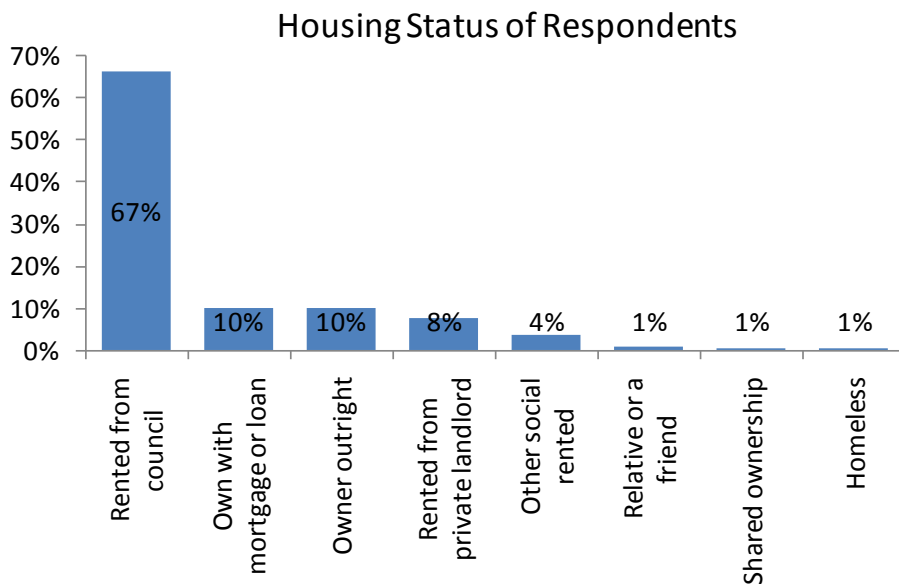
Question 29: Are you currently in employment?

There were 354 responses to this question.



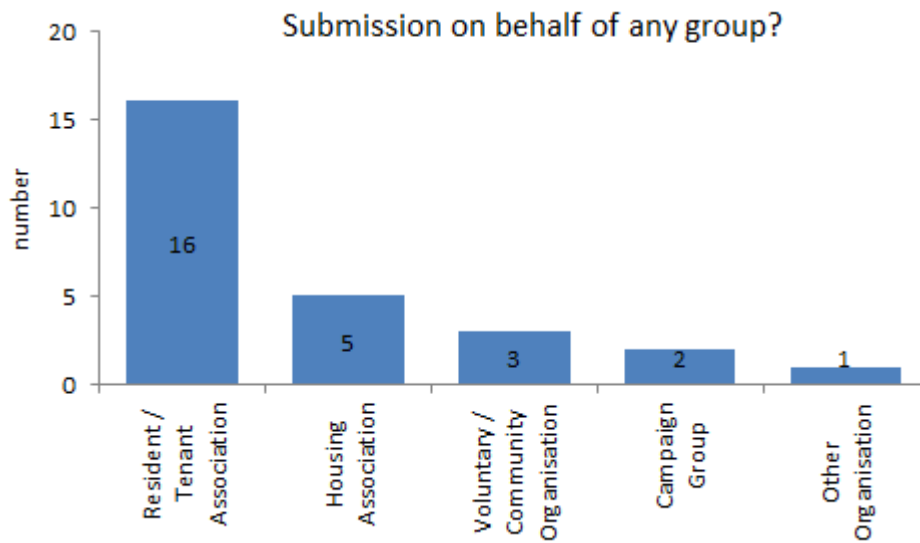
Question 30: Which of the following best describe your tenure type...?

There were 354 responses to this question.



Question 31: Are you making this submission on behalf of any group?

There were 27 responses to this question.



END

31st March 2015

Performance and Information Team (FCS, LBHF)