

HOMES

20 June 2019



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA

- 1.Minutes and Matters arising
- 2.Repairs Policy
- 3.Compensation
- 4.TCC terms of reference
- 5.HOMES terms of reference
- 6.Resident Engagement Strategy
- 7.AOB

Agenda



Housing Management Draft Repairs Policy Consultation

**Analysis of survey with residents of
Council owned properties**

May 2019

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**THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA**

Introduction

Introduction

The Council has a duty as a landlord to repair and maintain its properties. The Council is committed to providing safe, sound and comfortable homes which function and meet or exceed health and safety requirements and to delivering a high quality, responsive repairs service that provides value for money. During the past few months, a draft Repairs Policy has been developed with residents who were part of a Customer Services/Complaints Task and Finish Group. The group have reviewed all aspects of this draft policy and their feedback has been incorporated where appropriate. Once the draft policy was developed, we were keen to offer residents of Council owned properties the opportunity to give their views on the proposed policy.

Methodology and report

The draft policy was posted or emailed (dependant on residents' preferences) to all residents of Council owned properties. Alongside the policy, a survey was sent to capture residents' views. The survey was available in both paper and online formats. The survey took place in April and May 2019 and 792 responses were received by the closing date.

This report analyses those responses. Graphs show percentage figures. Where percentages do not add up to 100 per cent, this may be down to computer rounding, where respondents have chosen not to answer a particular question or where respondents have been able to select more than one answer.

Appendices

Appendix one contains data tables of results and appendix two contains details of all comments made by respondents in relation to open questions in the survey. This is available as a separate document.

Acknowledgements

The Council would like to thank residents that took the time to take part in the exercise and gave their views.



Survey Results: At a glance

A total of 792 respondents completed the survey by the closing date, a summary of responses can be seen below:

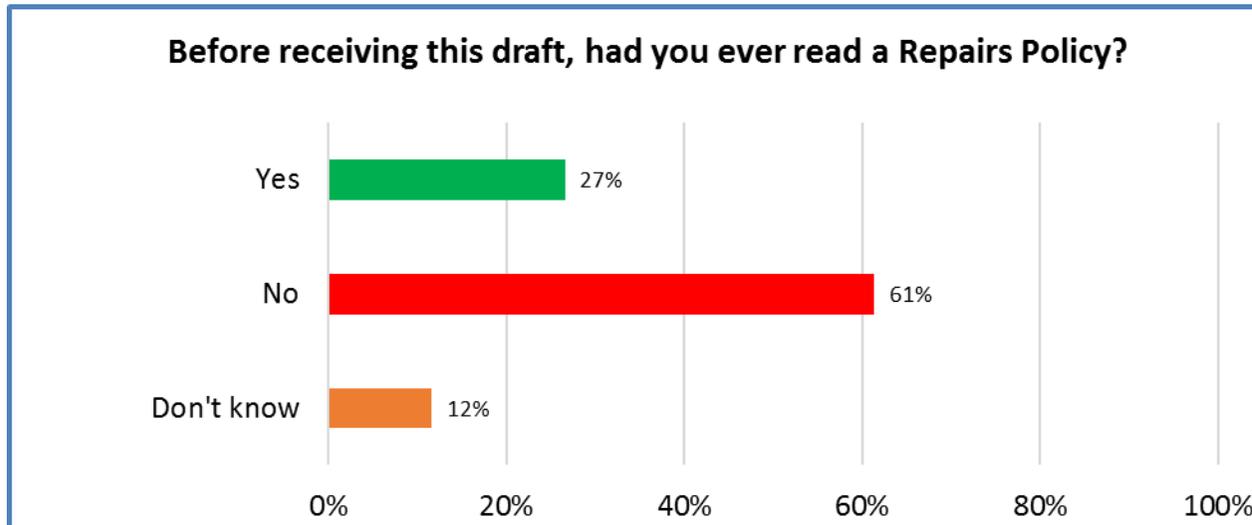
- **Previous repair policies:** Before receiving the current draft policy, just over a quarter (27 per cent) had read a repairs policy before.
- **Ease of understanding and finding information:** Over three-quarters (79 per cent) found the draft Repairs Policy *'clear and easy to understand'*. Almost three quarters (74 per cent) felt that *'it was easy to find the information they were interested in'*.
- **Obligations:** Just over three-quarters (77 per cent) indicated that they *'understood their repair obligations as a tenant'*. The majority (84 per cent) indicated that they understood *'the Council's repair obligations as a landlord'*.
- **Knowledge before reading the policy:** Around four in ten (39 per cent) knew that *'the Council could adapt their property to accommodate changing circumstances'*. Over a third (36 per cent) knew *'about the repair categories and response times'*. Under a quarter (23 per cent) knew *'which repairs the Council charges for'*. The majority (61 per cent) did know that *'they need permission to carry out home improvements and alterations'*. Around a fifth (19 per cent) knew about the *'Handy Person Service'*.
- **Support for the draft policy:** Over three-quarters (77 per cent) indicated that they support the introduction of the draft Housing Repairs Policy.
- **Reasons for not supporting the policy:** Respondents that did not support the introduction of the draft policy were asked why this was. Themes attracting the most comments included *'do not understand the policy/policy needs translating'* and *'responsibilities of tenant compared to Council'*.
- **Other comments:** Respondents were given the opportunity to comment further. The top themes of comments included *'suggested additions of aspects to be covered or clarifications needed in the policy'* and *'repairs are not completed or not completed satisfactorily'*.



Survey Results: Previously read a Repairs Policy

Respondents were asked if they had ever read a Repairs Policy before receiving the draft.

- Just over a quarter (27 per cent) indicated that they had read a Repairs Policy previously.
- However, the majority (61 per cent) had not and 12 per cent did not know if they had.



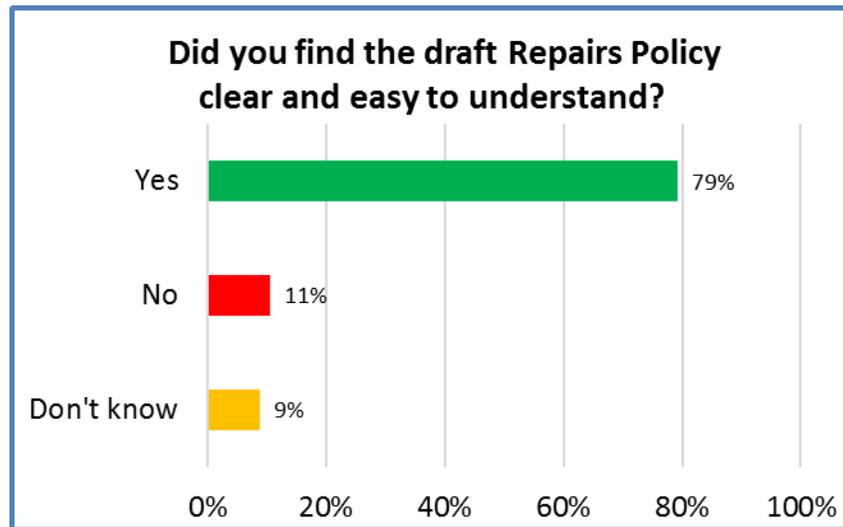
Base: All responses (792)



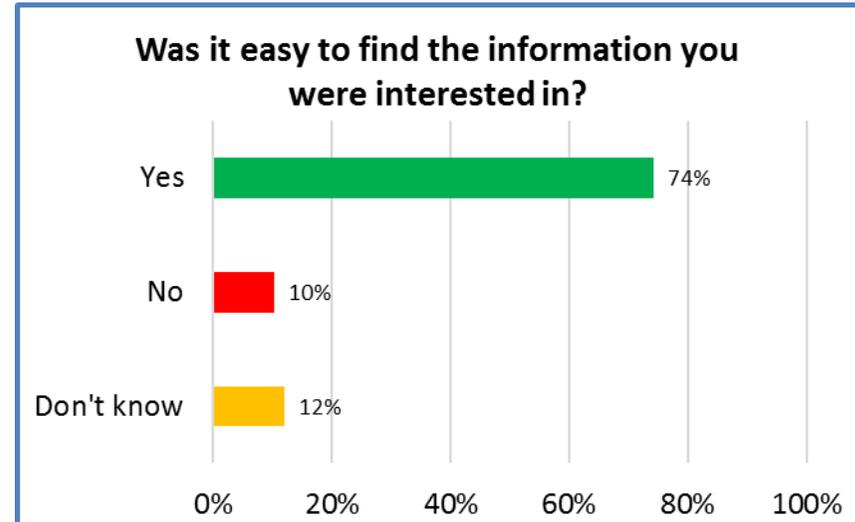
Survey Results: Ease of understanding and finding information

Respondents were asked about aspects of the policy.

- Over three-quarters (79 per cent) of respondents felt that the draft policy was *'clear and easy to understand'*.
- However, around one in ten (11 per cent) did not and nine per cent responded neutrally.
- Almost three quarters (74 per cent) of respondents felt that *'it was easy to find the information they were interested in'*.
- However, one in ten (10 per cent) did not and 12 per cent responded neutrally.



Base: All responses (792)



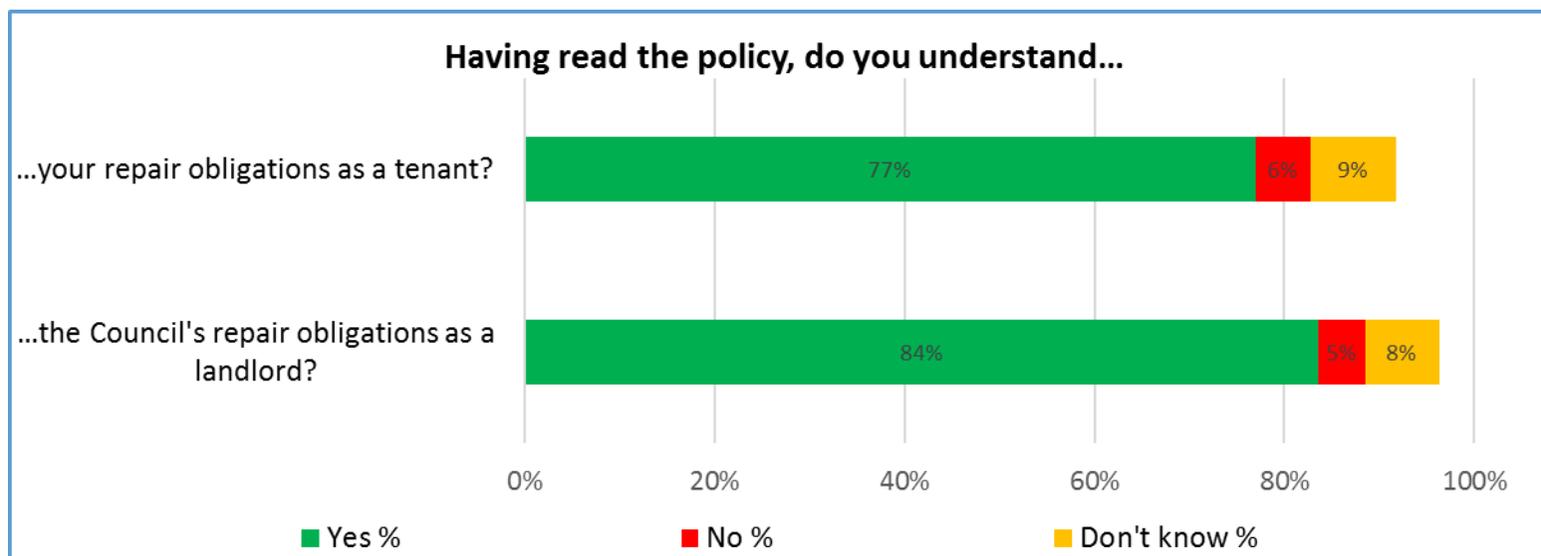
Base: All responses (792)



Survey Results: Obligations

Respondents were asked about their understanding of the draft policy.

- Just over three-quarters (77 per cent) indicated that they '*understood their repair obligations as a tenant*'.
- However, six per cent did not and nine per cent responded neutrally.
- The majority (84 per cent) indicated that they understood '*the Council's repair obligations as a landlord*'.
- However, five per cent did not and eight per cent responded neutrally.



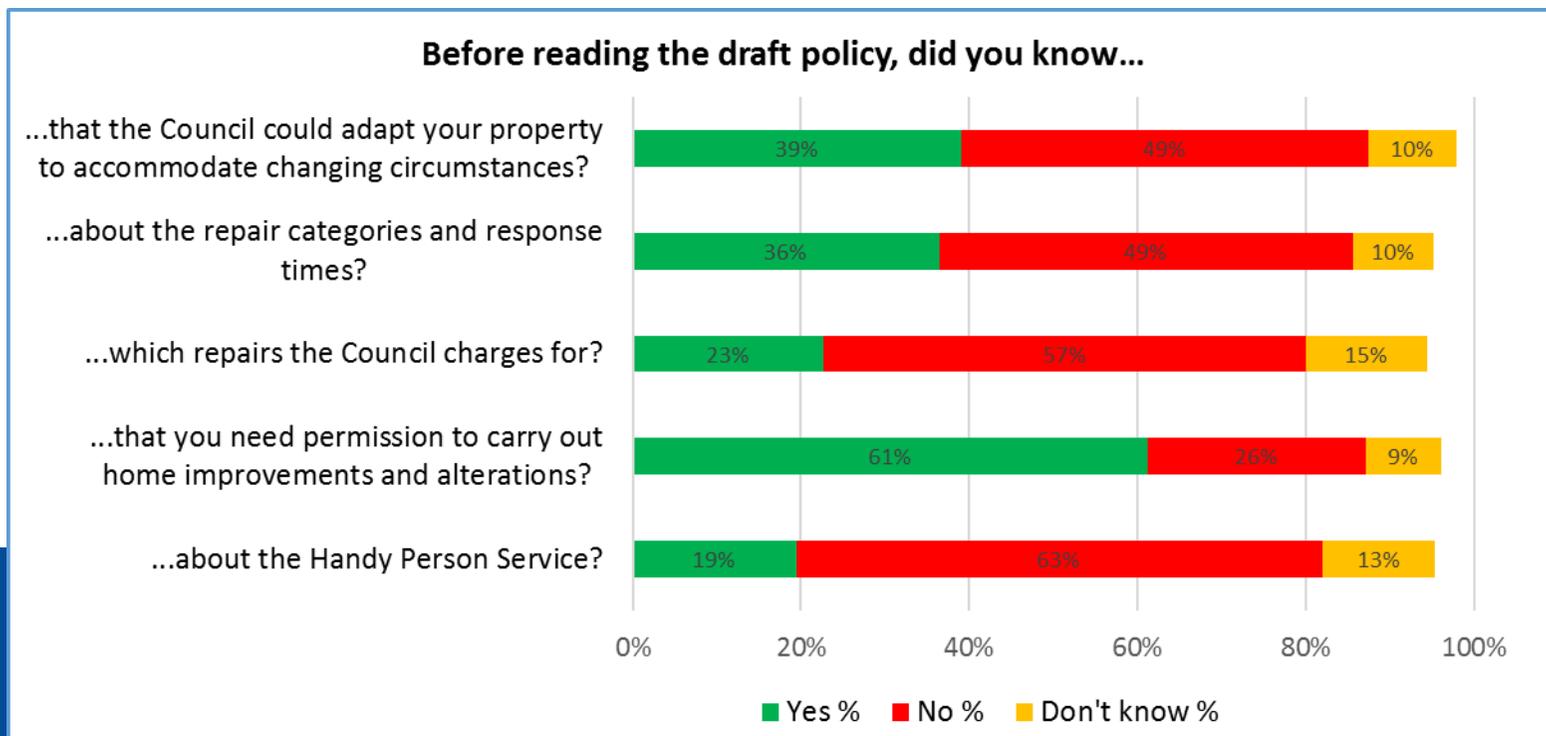
Base: All responses (792)



Survey Results: Knowledge before reading the policy

Respondents were asked, before reading the policy, did they know about various aspects of the service.

- Around four in ten (39 per cent) knew that *'the Council could adapt their property to accommodate changing circumstances'*. However, almost half (49 per cent) of respondents did not know this.
- Over a third (36 per cent) knew *'about the repair categories and response times'*. However, almost half (49 per cent) did not.
- Under a quarter (23 per cent) knew *'which repairs the Council charges for'*. Over half (57 per cent) did not.
- The majority (61 per cent) did know that *'they need permission to carry out home improvements and alterations'*. However, just over a quarter (26 per cent) did not.
- Around a fifth (19 per cent) knew about the *'Handy Person Service'*. However, almost two-thirds (63 per cent) did not.



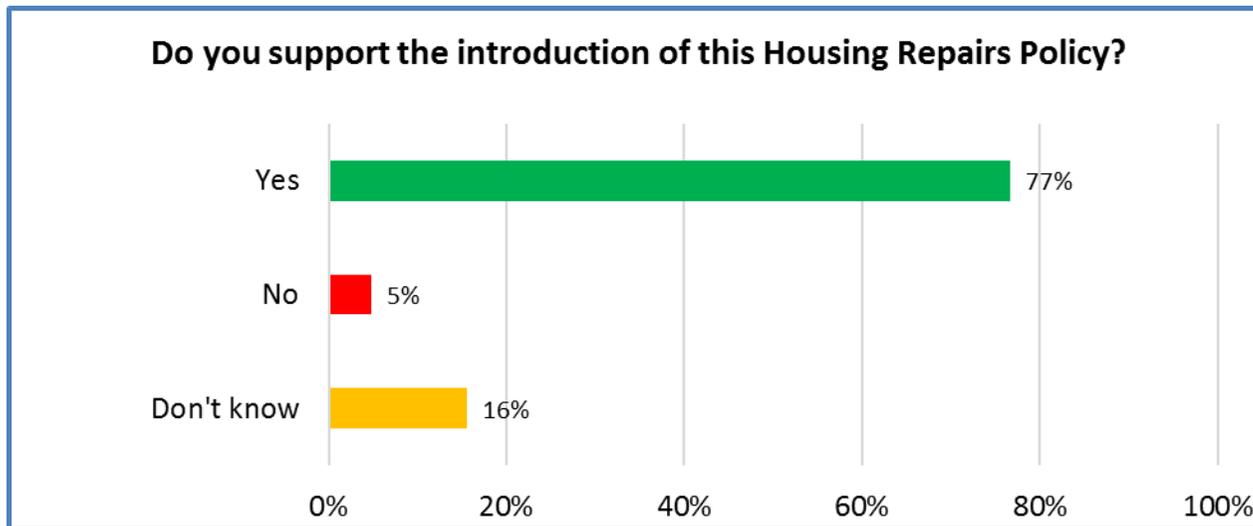
Base: All responses (792)



Survey Results: Support for the draft policy

Respondents were asked if they supported the introduction of the draft Repairs Policy.

- Over three-quarters (77 per cent) indicated that they support the introduction of the draft Housing Repairs Policy.
- However, five per cent did not and 16 per cent responded neutrally.



Base: All responses (792)



Survey Results: Reasons for not supporting the policy

Respondents that did not support the introduction of the policy were invited to explain why. The comments made have been grouped together by theme. The most common themes are presented in the table below.

All comments can be seen in appendix two. Some examples of comments made are provided on the following page.

Theme of comment*	Number of comments
Do not understand the policy/policy needs translating	9
Responsibility of tenant compared to Council	8
Repairs are not completed or not completed satisfactorily	7
Request for repairs/improvements	7
Council's obligation to repair	6
Waiting times for repairs is too long	4
Cost - cannot afford to pay	3
In favour of the policy	3
Regular Council inspections of properties/maintenance	3

* Themes shown with three or more comments

Survey Results: Reasons for not supporting the policy

Do not understand the policy/policy needs translating

I didn't understand this form, because I need it in Arabic, my English is very weak.

I have a brain injury and some of it is difficult to understand

It is not clear to me.

Repairs are not completed or not completed satisfactorily

I ask the housing association for repairs to my flat for years and nothing happened.

Because they never sort my problems.



Responsibility of tenant compared to Council

I am not opposed to this Policy but there appears to be a number of things which TMO completed as the Landlord, have now been passed to the tenant, however it should remain the role of landlord.

Request for repairs/improvements

TV aerial left laying on roof, after two major works.

Council's obligation to repair

I don't agree with this introduction. it should be the landlord's responsibility to carry out the works as tenants are already paying rent.



Survey Results: Other comments

Respondents were given further opportunity to comment on the draft Repairs Policy. The comments made have been grouped together by theme. The most common themes are presented in the table below.

All comments can be seen in appendix two. Some examples of comments made are provided on the following page.

Theme of comment*	Number of comments
Suggested additions of aspects to be covered or clarifications needed	24
Repairs are not completed or not completed satisfactorily	23
Request for repairs/improvements	22
In favour of the policy	10
Length of time taken to repair	10
Leaseholder responsibilities	8
Responsibility of tenant compared to Council	7
Timing of repairs to suit those that work/appointment slots too wide	5

* Themes shown with five or more comments

Survey Results: Other comments

Suggested additions of aspects to be covered or clarifications needed

One question, are the entrances of the buildings in the Worlds End Estate included in the repair policy.

Regarding planned maintenance, does it include boundary fences and walls?

Request for repairs/improvements

Gutters haven't been cleared in years. Roof never been cleared (water). Security doors in Darfield Way health and safety issue.

New windows - very draughty, wood rotten Danvers Street.

Length of time taken to repair

How long will the removal of aerial and redundant dishes take!



Repairs are not completed or not completed satisfactorily

At the moment the roof repairs contractors are not up to professional standards and very unreliable. I will not recommend them to anybody.

I have been waiting for a window to be replaced since last October 2018.

In favour of the policy

I am very grateful for the draft Repairs Policy and I am looking forward to the finalisation.

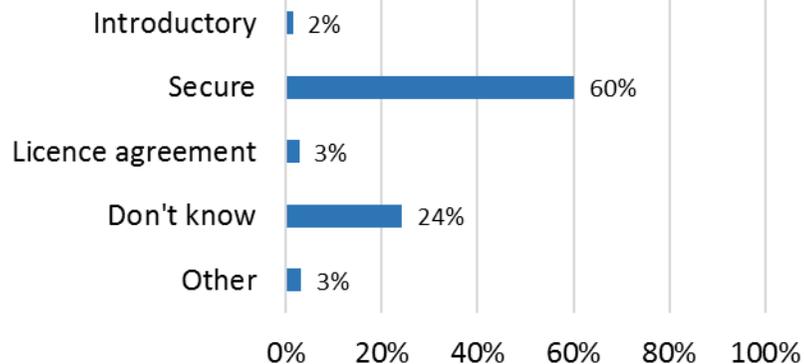
Leaseholder responsibilities

Please clarify long leaseholders vs Council tenants.



Survey Results: Demographic information

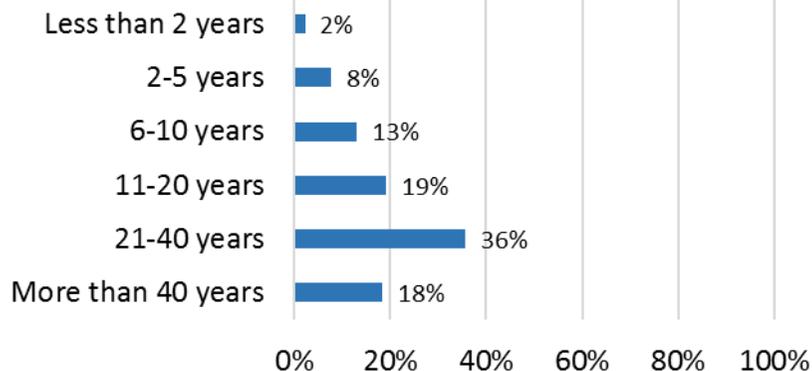
What type of council tenancy do you have?



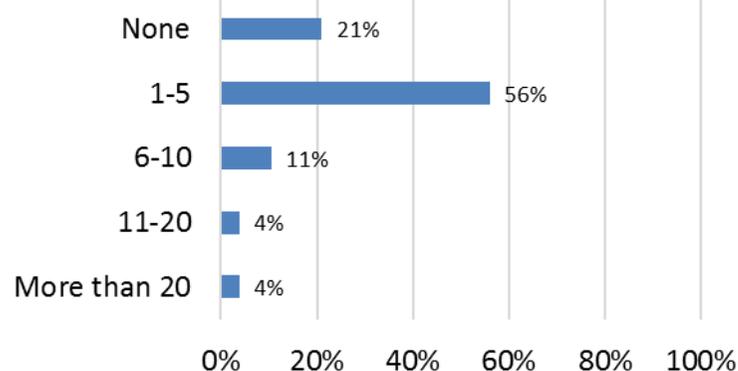
In order to monitor responses, respondents were asked some demographic questions. Results can be seen on the following pages. All additional comments can be seen in appendix 2.

- Six in ten respondents (60 per cent) have a secure tenancy. Almost a quarter (24 per cent) did not know.
- Over a third (36 per cent) had been a Council tenant for between 21 and 40 years and 18 per cent for more than 40 years.
- Over half (56 per cent) had called the repair service between one and five times in the last 12 months.

How long have you been a council tenant?



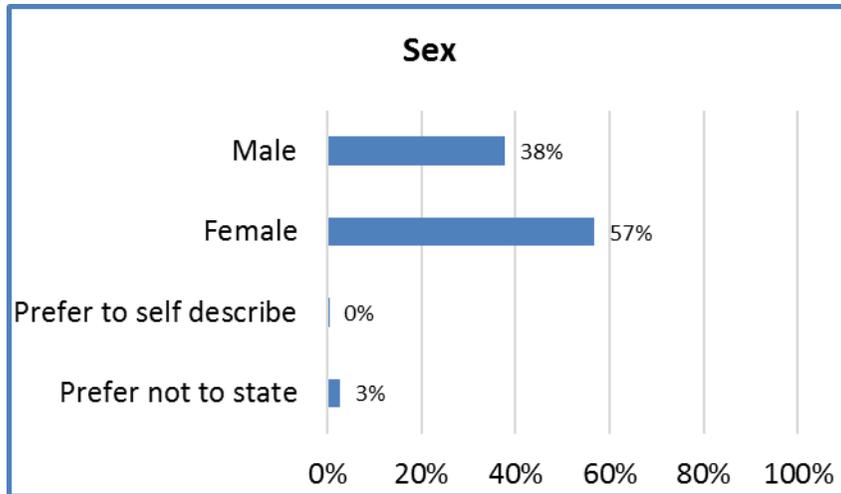
How many times have you called the repairs service in the past 12 months?



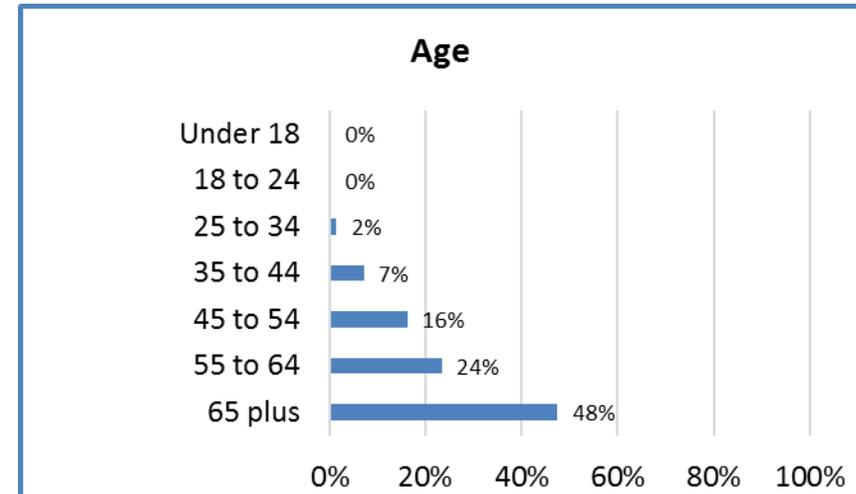
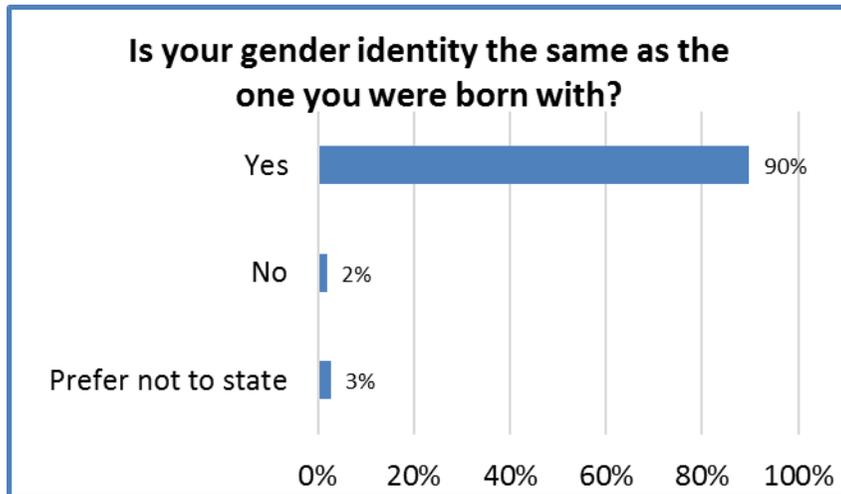
Base: All responses (792)



Survey Results: Demographic information



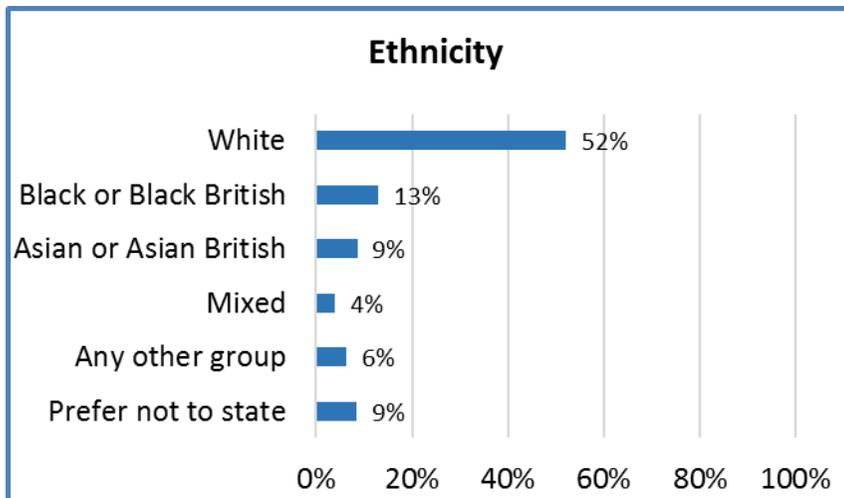
- Over half of respondents (57 per cent) were female, with 38 per cent male.
- The majority (90 per cent) indicated that their gender identity was the same as they were born with.
- Almost half (48 per cent) of respondents indicated that they were 65 or older. Almost a quart (24 per cent) were aged 55 to 64.



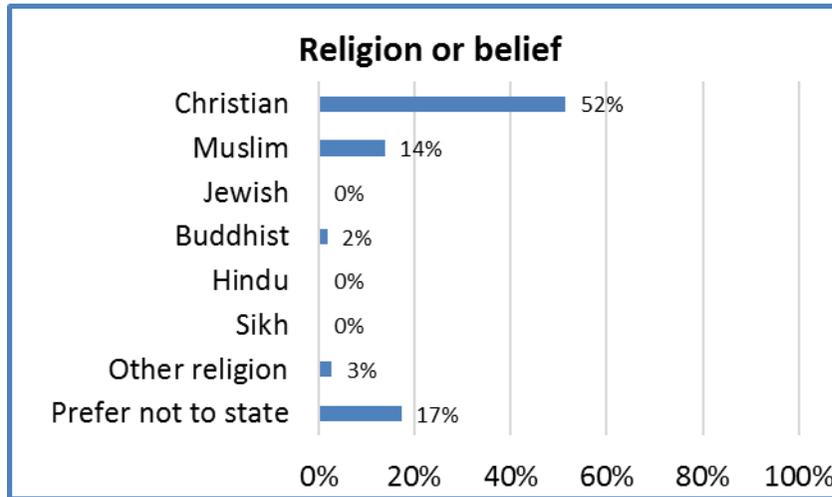
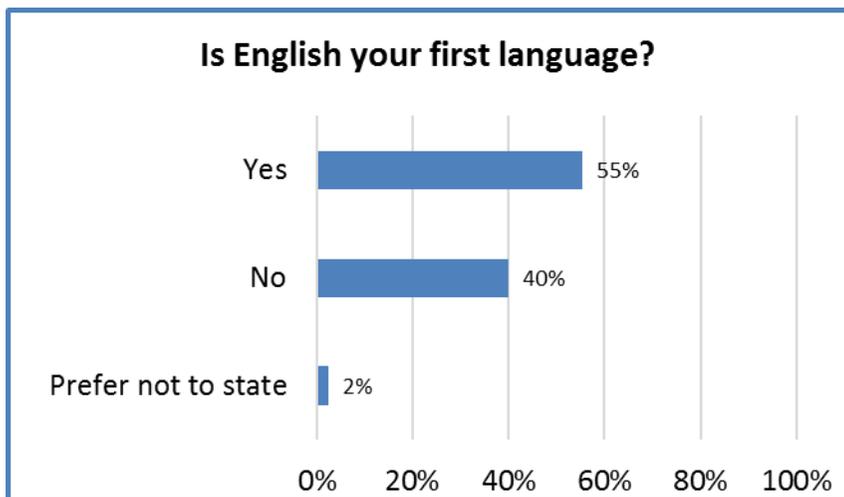
Base: All responses (792)



Survey Results: Demographic information



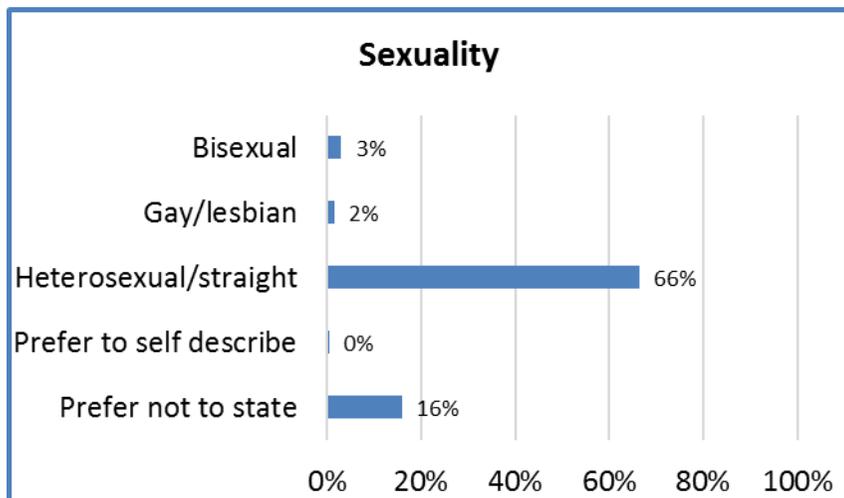
- Over half (52 per cent) of respondents indicated that they were White; 13 per cent indicated they were from a Black or Black British background.
- Just over half (55 per cent) indicated that English is their first language. However, this was not the case for 40 per cent of respondents.
- Over half (52 per cent) of respondents indicated that they are Christian with 14 per cent Muslim.



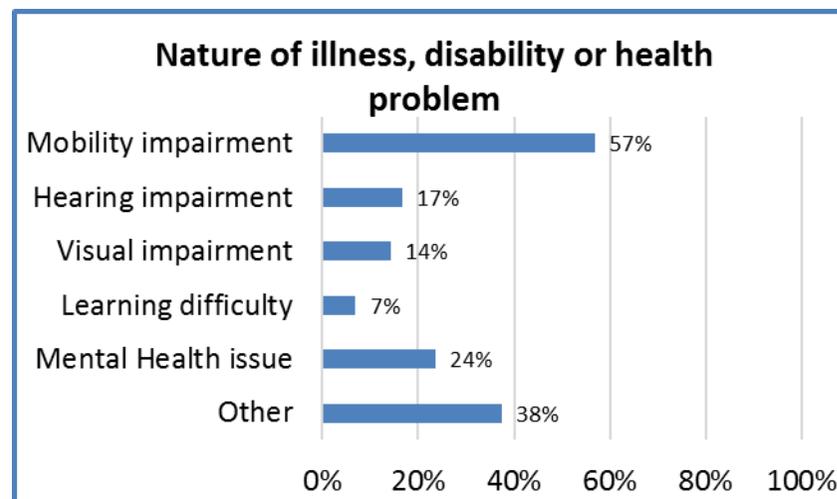
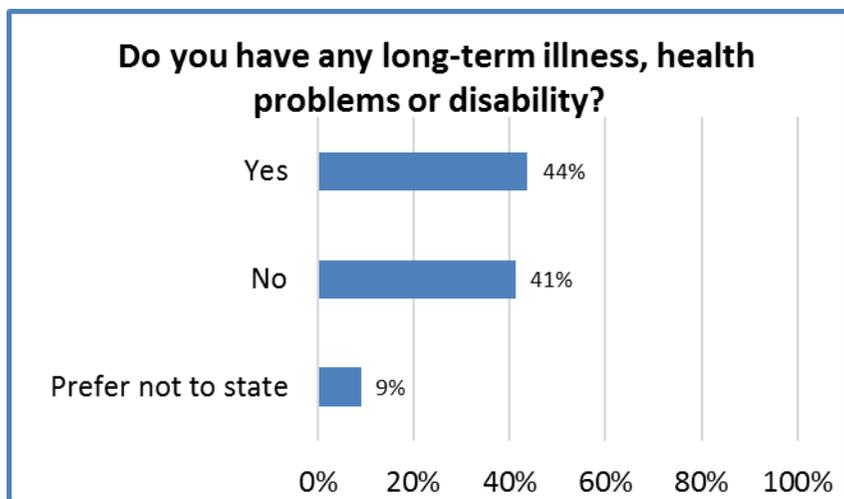
Base: All responses (792)



Survey Results: Demographic information



- Two-thirds (66 per cent) of respondents indicated that they were heterosexual/straight.
- A total of 44 per cent of respondents indicated that they had a long term illness, health problem or disability. Slightly less (41 per cent), do not.
- Of those answering 'yes', over half (57 per cent) indicated they had a mobility impairment and almost a quarter (24 per cent) indicated that they have a mental health issue.



Base: All responses (792)

Base: Those answering 'yes' to previous question (347)



Compensation Policy Review – Why?

- Last reviewed by TMO – November 2015
- Lack of clarity/guidance for staff and residents
- Inconsistent approach across service areas
- Seemingly high level of payments – responsibility for how residents' money is spent
- Housing Ombudsman – dispute resolution principles not reflected: Be fair, Put things right, Learn from outcomes
- Simplify the process for both residents and staff
- Put residents in the position they would have been in had no service failure occurred



How Did We Consult?

- TCC presentation
- Formal consultation Dec 2018
- Task & Finish Group: Oct 18 – May 19
- Local Meetings
- Housing Ombudsman
- Broad support for changes



KEY CHANGES

- Limit on discretionary payments reduced from £2000 to £1000 and criteria set
- Removed overall cap on compensation payments
- Policy now directly refers to major service failures and compensation for lift breakdowns, heating and hot water failures
- Policy now recognises distress to residents and is included in the criteria for discretionary payments



- Compensation payable to residents for lift failures regardless of what floor they live on
- Current timescales for claiming compensation restricted to 3 months – this remains the same but when linked to a formal complaint timescales are linked to the duration of the complaint
- Current policy states that any compensation payments should be offset against rent arrears - discretion should now be applied and actual costs reimbursed if not doing so would cause additional financial hardship.



- At the service manager's discretion, in some cases costs can now be paid in advance i.e. cost of running a dehumidifier or portable heater.
- Loss of rooms/utilities/amenities - the current calculations for compensating for loss of rooms, utilities or amenities are based on a set amount per day. This will now be changed to a percentage of the rent, which is fairer and reflects the different levels of rent charged.
- Betterment works now offered as an alternative to compensation payments.



- Current policy gives no qualifying period for what is 'reasonable' notice for cancelling an appointment – 2 working days will now be required – if this does not happen residents eligible for compensation
- Compensation for loss of only/all WCs higher than for loss of a second WC



TCC terms of reference – consultation questions

- Our ambition is to achieve world class engagement where:
 - Every resident will have opportunity to have their say
 - No major policy decisions will be made without being shaped by the views of residents
 - All services are co-designed with residents
 - Progress will be regularly reviewed and evidence collected to show improvements
- Consultation via individual residents and discussions at local meetings



TCC terms of reference – consultation questions

- What are the important issues that the TCC should be considering at meetings?
- What should be the council be doing to support the TCC?
- What should residents be doing to support the TCC?
- Residents associations will be entitled to send 2 delegates to TCC meetings, one of whom must be a tenant. Do you agree?
- Who should chair the TCC? Should this be a resident? A Councillor and a resident?
- How many representatives should the HOMES group have at TCC?



TCC terms of reference – consultation questions

- Who should chair the Homes Group? Should this be a resident? A Councillor and a resident?
- To be recognised by the council and to be entitled to send delegates to TCC local associations and compacts should:
 - Have an appropriate constitution
 - Operate in an open and inclusive manner
 - Hold at least 3 meetings and an AGM
 - Produce minutes of meetings and annual accounts and ensure that these are available to all residents
- What do you think?



TCC terms of reference – consultation questions

- Who should attend the Task& Finish groups?
- Should there be a maximum of 2 reps per association / compact as for TCC, one of whom should be a tenant?
- Should HOMES be subject to the same formula?
- Do you think that the minutes of the meeting should be a summary of the key issues and agreed actions or verbatim?
- Do you have any other comments?



HOMES terms of reference – (draft)

- Introduction
- Our Ambition
- Our Aims
- Our Values and Principles
- Our Joint Commitments
- Representation at TCC meetings
- The Work of the HOMES Group



Resident Engagement Strategy People and Communities



Our starting point.....

RBKC Leadership and Housing Management is committed to working with our residents to:

- shape high level strategic thinking and decision making
- co-design, deliver and improve services
- Influence and feedback on policies
- Must look and feel different from the past



Our ambition is to achieve 'best in class' engagement between Residents & council

- Closely aligned to the TCC terms of reference
- Every resident will have the opportunity to have their say in which ever way works best for them (menu)
- All major policy decisions will be shaped by the views of residents
- A commitment to detailed consultation on capital works programmes
- Opportunities to scrutinise and challenge performance
- All frontline services co-designed with residents
- Monitoring & evaluation – what difference have we made?



Engagement that

- Is part of our DNA.....its what we do...
- Is both local and strategic – and relevant
- Prioritises the things that matter most to residents
- Supports new and existing RA's and Compacts
- Meets regulatory requirements
- Puts effort into engaging with hard to reach groups
- Encourages meaningful & respectful conversations
- Has a positive impact on communities



Looking for new ways to consult & co-create with residents

- Online feedback
- Social media, text messaging, survey monkey etc – being more efficient & responsive
- Seal of approval (‘you said, we did’)
- Training along side staff as well as bespoke training (ASB training coming soon!)
- Making the most of residents skills, knowledge and talent



Looking for new ways to consult & co-create with residents

- Special Interest Groups e.g. Disability Forum, Procurement, Homeownership
- Topic specific surveys e.g. Void standards
- Task & finish groups - ASB, Repairs, Estate services
- Project Groups (e.g. Trellick Tower, Adair & Hazelwood)
- Looking outwards - sharing good practice, visiting other housing providers, conferences, workshops
- Resident Conferencecoming soon.....



Community Partnerships

- Using customer profile information to identify gaps in provision and reach all sections of the community
- Youth Offer (draft)
- Community Chest £££
- Peer support
- Identifying & supporting local entrepreneurs



Community Partnerships

- More emphasis on the education, wellbeing & the arts
- Extending partnerships to lever in benefits for residents (including employment and training)
- Works closely with other RBKC departments
- Obtain Value for money – do more with less



What happens next?

- New Head of Service joins us on 17 June
- Will work collaboratively with you to develop these themes into a strategy
- Induction planned – will meet RAs and partner organisations
- Top priorities – strategy, team restructure & outcome focussed performance



Any Questions



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
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Forward Plan

Report	TCC	Leadership/Key Decision
Commercial Properties	June	N/A
Heating charges Consultation	June	TBC
New Build	June	
Capital programme	June	
Annual Report	TBC	



Future Meetings

Monday 16 September 2019

Tuesday 26 November 2019

