

**SCOTINFORM**



**Age Scotland  
Housing Survey 2023:  
Research Findings**

**April 2023**

Prepared by Sheena Muncie

**SCOTINFORM**

Scotinform Ltd, 21 Young Street, Edinburgh EH2 4HU  
0131 555 1104 | [www.scotinform.co.uk](http://www.scotinform.co.uk) | [info@scotinform.co.uk](mailto:info@scotinform.co.uk)

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# Executive Summary

## 1. Introduction

Age Scotland commissioned Scotinform Ltd to repeat a survey of residents of Scotland aged 50+, previously undertaken in 2018 and 2020, to capture insight into the views of older people on their current housing situation.

Whilst the 2023 questionnaire included many of the questions posed in 2018 and 2020, to enable comparison, this year's questionnaire also aimed to capture insight in relation to respondents' housing intentions, home accessibility needs, their local community, the cost of living and home energy efficiency measures.

Of the 1117 completed surveys received in 2023, the majority were completed online (832) with the remainder completed on paper (285). By offering a mixed approach – online and paper – Age Scotland ensures that it provides the opportunity for people aged 50+ to complete a questionnaire in the way that best suits them.

## 2. Profile of respondents

Respondents were most likely **female** (69%) reflecting the findings from 2018 and 2020. In terms of **age profile**, the 2023 sample was evenly spread, as in 2020, with 27% aged 55-64, 39% aged 65-74 and 26% aged 75+.

All 32 **Scottish local authorities** were represented within the sample. Respondents were most likely residents of the City of Glasgow, City of Edinburgh, Fife, South Lanarkshire and the Highlands. 22% of respondents lived in a large urban area (ie with a population of 125,000 people or more) and a further 22% in an 'other' urban area (ie with a population of around 10,000-124,999 people).

Over half the respondents (53%) had a **long-standing health problem and/or disability** and 22% lived with someone who had a health problem and/or disability.

The majority of respondents (92%) did not have someone in the household living with **dementia** but 3% of respondents had someone in their household who was living with the condition.

7% of respondents who completed the survey were **veterans** whilst 3% had a veteran within their household.

The majority of respondents were **retired** (67%) and 18% were in full-time and part-time employment. 9% had a volunteering role.

Respondents most likely described their **ethnicity** as 'white Scottish' and 'white other British' with 71% and 22% classified as such (76% and 18% in 2020).

Half the respondents (50%) had a household **total gross annual income** of less than £20,000, with 24% having less than £12,570 coming into their households on an annual basis. Total gross income was highest amongst those aged 55-64 and in employment.

23% of respondents stated that their **monthly accommodation costs** were zero (17% in 2020) whilst 15% were paying more than £500 a month on owning/renting their home (12% in 2020).

60% of respondents were in receipt of the State Pension and 27% had a partner who was in receipt of the State Pension. 31% of respondents said they were not in receipt of **benefits/entitlements**. Overall, respondents were most likely in receipt of the Winter Fuel Payment (43%). A fifth of those living with a health problem and/or disability were not in receipt of benefits/entitlements. However, respondents in this group were more likely to be in receipt of the Personal Independent Payment

(24%), the Attendance Allowance (24%) and Housing Benefit (21%).

### 3. Housing

46% of respondents lived in a **house** and 28% in a **flat, maisonette or apartment**.

The majority of respondents (61%) had **lived in their current home** for 10+ years with 4% having moved in the last year.

55% **owned their home outright** (60% in 2020), 12% were renting from a Housing Association/Registered Social Landlord and 11% were renting from their local authority (9% and 10% in 2020).

The majority of respondents felt that their home was **suitable for their current living needs** – 45% felt it was very suitable and 40% that it was fairly suitable. The main reason for respondents' homes not being suitable for their current needs was how expensive it was to heat (57%).

38% of respondents felt that their home would be **suitable for their needs in the next ten years**, 37% did not and 23% were unsure.



47% of respondents were **living alone** – they were most likely living in a flat, maisonette or apartment, female and aged 65+.

31% of respondents interacted with someone outside their household on a daily basis (53% in 2020) but 9% had no regular **social interaction** and this is an increase on the 2% reported in 2020.

40% of the sample said they never felt **lonely** (55% in 2020) but 7% always felt lonely (2% in 2020).

#### 4. Property adaptations

30% of respondents had made **adaptations** to their home since moving into it and this included respondents across the age ranges.

In keeping with the findings from previous research, the alterations most likely to have been made were the introduction of grab rails/handrails (57%), the installation of a specially designed or adapted bathroom/shower (46%) and having an outdoor light fitted (35%).

Respondents most likely **paid for the adaptations** with their own finance (53% in 2023, 40% in 2020) with 10% using a grant and 4% a loan or mortgage/remortgage.

The **impact of adaptations** was significant with over two thirds of respondents stating that they had had a positive impact on the quality of their lives, making life easier and safer.

24% of respondents had a **current requirement for adaptations** but over half had waited for more than four months for the alterations to be made. This delay was most commonly caused by cost concerns - either the respondent was unable to afford the adaptation or their landlord was querying the finances/reluctant to pay. Other issues included ill health, the impact of the pandemic and lack of available tradespeople.

#### 5. Private Rented Sector

10% of respondents lived in a **privately rented home** (ie not rented from the local authority or a housing association).

Over half of these respondents (57%) were aware of their specific rental rights under their **tenancy agreement** but a third (32%) were not. 30% had recently had a rent increase and 7% had been told by their landlord that it would be increasing this year.

## 6. Homelessness

Three respondents were **currently homeless** and five were currently **threatened with homelessness**. Seventeen respondents were homeless/threatened with homelessness in the past five years and 31 were in this position 6-10 years ago. The main reasons for either becoming homeless or being threatened by it was action taken by a landlord or lender. The majority of respondents who had been impacted by homelessness had encountered delays from their local authority determining eligibility for permanent or settled accommodation.

## 7. Future Plans

The majority of respondents considered that their home was *'very suitable'* (45% of respondents) and *'fairly suitable'* (40%) for their **current needs**. Respondents who felt that their home was not suitable were across the age ranges but most likely in the 55-64 age group.

38% of respondents felt that their property would be suitable in the **next ten years**, 37% did not and 23% were unsure.

Reasons why **current properties were unsuitable** were that they were expensive to heat, inaccessible and

required too much maintenance.

42% **did not intend to move home** (56% in 2020) but 12% were currently considering moving home. Respondents aged 65+ were less likely than respondents aged 50-64 to intend making a move.

The **main reasons for not considering moving home** were that respondents felt that their home met all their needs and that they were comfortable in their home. It should be noted that the majority of respondents had lived in their properties for 10+ years.

Respondents **considering a move** would choose a home that was cheaper to run (44%) and fully accessible (40%). Their preference was for a bungalow or a flat, maisonette or apartment ie a property on one level.

27% of respondents who were considering moving home in the future would rather move to a **new build property** which they perceived would be more energy efficient and good quality.

## 8. Local Community and Area

**Fuel poverty** and the **lack of affordable housing** were considered the key housing issues in respondents' local areas. Further feedback captured via an open-ended

question highlighted that respondents had concerns about the lack of appropriate housing for older people, antisocial behaviour of neighbours impacting on their lives, poor public transport and pressures on local health services.

In terms of what **local authorities could/should do to improve housing for older people**, respondents wanted more houses to be built including homes for those wishing to downsize, affordable housing, affordable assisted living and social housing. There was also an interest in the concept of retirement villages. Respondents were keen that local authorities fully engage with older residents to find out their housing needs.

35% of respondents felt that a **20 minute neighbourhood** was currently possible where they lived but 33% felt that it was not achievable. The services which respondents felt were essential to have in a 20 minute neighbourhood were a bank, a GP, Post Office and a mixture of housing types. In terms of facilities they felt it was essential that a 20 minute neighbourhood had accessible toilets, good digital connectivity/public Wi-Fi, buses and local bus stops, a supermarket and a greengrocer.

Two thirds of respondents (66%) were not aware of either the **Local Housing Strategy** or **Local Housing Plan**. Just 13% said that their local authority had engaged with them directly or via a local group to ask their views on local housing issues. Just 16% of respondents considered that their local authority actively takes the needs of its older population into consideration when developing new places, public facilities or transport.

62% of respondents considered themselves to **be part of a local community** and these were most likely to live in rural rather than urban areas. The majority (63%) considered that where they lived was a good place to grow older citing good neighbours, green spaces, good public transport, access to facilities and services, feeling safe and proximity to family.

## 9. Cost of Living

43% of respondents considered themselves to be living in **fuel poverty** based on the Scottish Government's definition. Annual fuel expenditure, when compared with the findings from 2020, have increased significantly and reflects the current energy crisis.

There is low awareness of **energy efficiency schemes** which is disappointing at a time when older people are often worried about paying their bills.

87% of respondents had experienced an increase in **energy costs**. In the past 12 months, 49% had also seen an increase in their home insurance.

## 10. Conclusions

Providing the opportunity to submit a **response to the Housing Survey** either online or on paper ensures that residents aged 50+ can respond in a way that best suits them. Age Scotland clearly works hard to distribute the survey across its networks. The fact that the survey also includes open-ended questions gives respondents the opportunity to share their own experience and concerns. This is invaluable in gaining a better understanding of how older people in Scotland feel about their current and future housing situation.

This research was undertaken during a **cost of living crises** and it is clear that respondents have concerns about energy prices. This was also evidenced through the median energy costs paid by respondents annually and which have increased significantly since 2020. Awareness of energy efficiency schemes, however, is

low and consideration needs to be given to how best this information can be shared more widely so that residents aged 50+ can find out what energy efficient assistance they are entitled to or could access. Similarly more consideration should be given to how best energy efficiency organisations can engage directly with older households.

The findings suggest that respondents show a clear preference as they get older to live in a property situated on one level, with smaller proportions of older households showing interest in wider property types ranging from houses to retirement communities. There were also perceptions that new build homes would be more energy efficient and of good quality. This evidence illustrates the need for local authorities to carefully plan for a mixture of property types to be delivered across their **housing stock** in the future.

The findings show that installing **adaptations** in older residents' households has an overwhelming impact on improving their overall quality of life, by making it safer and easier to access and move around their home. Given that the adaptations most commonly sought by older respondents are relatively minor in nature, such as grab rails and ramps, more action should be taken to ensure that older people know what adaptations services

are available to them, including funding options, available Care and Repair Services and simple application processes.

Respondents perceived that **fuel poverty and lack of affordable housing** were the key housing issues in their local areas. Qualitative feedback also identified a lack of appropriate housing for older people, antisocial behaviour of neighbours impacting on their lives, poor public transport and pressures on local health services. Local authorities need to give greater consideration to the housing requirements of older people which impacts on their emotional and physical needs.

Over half the respondents felt that **housing issues in their area had got worse** over the last five years. Qualitative feedback throughout the survey suggests that respondents were dissatisfied with the approach from local authorities who were not perhaps as proactive as they could be in engaging with older people and fully understanding their needs. Two thirds of respondents had not heard of the Local Housing Strategy or Local Development Plan and just 13% of respondents stated that their local authority had engaged with them directly or via a local group to ask their views on local housing issues. One respondent thanked Age Scotland for taking the time to ask their views and the charity has the

opportunity to share feedback from constituents captured through this research with each council.

The study has identified that respondents consider the most important services in a **20 Minute Neighbourhood** are a bank, GP, Post Office, and a mixture of housing types. In terms of facilities, respondents considered that accessible toilets, good digital connectivity and buses and local bus stops were important. Those living in remote local areas, however, did not feel that 20 Minute Neighbourhoods were achievable in their area.

Whilst the majority of respondents felt part of their local community this was less likely for those living in urban areas. Qualitative feedback has identified that what makes a **good area for growing old** is one that provides that feeling of being part of a community, good neighbours, green spaces, good public transport, access to facilities and services and feeling safe.

**Loneliness** continues to be a key issue for older people and this most recent survey has reported an increase in the percentage of older people who always feel lonely – (7% in 2023 in comparison with 2% in 2020). In addition 44% of respondents in 2023 sometimes feel lonely and this is an increase on the 38% reported in 2020. It is unclear whether this is a legacy from the pandemic but it

highlights the need for older people to live in areas where they feel safe, comfortable and part of a community that cares. This should be taken into consideration when designing 20 Minute Neighbourhoods making sure older people have access to others/local groups etc.

## 11. Recommendations

### 11.1 Accessible Housing Delivery

The Scottish Government and Local Authorities should set clear demand led targets for the delivery of age-friendly accessible properties to be met both nationally and locally. These targets should be based in demand and need led evidence that takes account of the proportion of older people living in unsuitable or inaccessible housing. These targets should be delivered alongside the national affordable housebuilding programme, with the accessibility standards these homes are being built too explicitly stated and enforced.

### 11.2 Energy Efficiency Support

#### 11.2.1 Raising Awareness and Utilisation of Energy Advice and Schemes

To drastically upscale the awareness and utilisation of energy advice and efficiency schemes in Scotland, we believe that the newly proposed National Public Energy Agency could act as a one stop shop to help streamline signposting and support referrals for older and vulnerable people to appropriate services and funding as part of its objectives to aid public understanding and awareness in accelerating transformational change in how we heat and use energy in buildings. It will be crucial that future public awareness campaigns and advertising are delivered in non-digital formats to take account of the significant number of older people without access to online services.

#### 11.2.2 Targeted Energy Efficiency Support

In addition, we are calling on the Scottish Government to use the database of low income household data it took receipt of in delivering the newly created Winter Heating Payment in Scotland to directly target households on the lowest incomes across Scotland with targeted energy efficiency support.

### 11.3 Adaptations Support

Local Authorities must meaningfully promote the availability of adaptations support in their local area whether this is through the Scheme of Assistance of Care and Repair services to older households. The promotion should clearly advertise what adaptations can be delivered, both minor or major, coupled with what appropriate financial support is available through grant funding or loans. Information should be made available in both accessible print and online formats, and disseminated through local services and support networks such as older people's groups, community networks or health services such as GP practices and link workers to help spread awareness.

### 11.4 Private Rented Sector

With the proportion of older people living in the private rented sector increasing, there is an urgent need for the Scottish Government to expand its housing evidence specifically considering the suitability of this tenure of independent living in later life. This area of housing has not been traditionally covered in existing housing research and we need to understand more about the implications of an increase in older people living in private rent, including their awareness of tenant rights

and their ability to request adaptations to their home with landlord consent.

### 11.5 Engagement with Older Households

Our evidence clearly illustrates that a majority of older households believe their Local Authority does not take the needs of its older people into consideration when developing new places, facilities or public transport. Local Authorities therefore need to clearly set out how they intend to engage with their older community and set explicit engagement targets when considering the evidence and needs of older people in developing future local housing strategies to ensure housing needs and issues are being met for everyone in the local community.



# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

Age Scotland commissioned Scotinform Ltd to repeat a survey amongst older people, previously undertaken in 2018 and 2020, to capture insight into the views of older people on their current housing situation. In addition, the survey captured insights relating to respondents' housing intentions, home accessibility needs, their local community, cost of living and home energy efficiency measures. Where relevant this report draws comparisons between the research findings reported in 2018 and 2020.

The feedback captured through Age Scotland's research is invaluable in providing local and national government with new evidence to inform future policies and ensure that the needs of Scotland's older population are considered.

This report presents the findings captured from 1,117 people aged over 55 resident in Scotland. Where relevant, comparisons have been made with the findings captured in 2018 and 2020.

## 1.2 Aims and objectives

The main aim of the study was to determine levels of satisfaction with housing amongst older people living in Scotland.

The study also sought to identify:


- To what extent respondents felt their current accommodation was suitable for their needs
- What adaptations respondents had made to their homes, and how this had been funded
- What plans respondents had for the future in terms of moving home or adapting their existing home
- The experiences of those who live in a property that is privately rented
- The experiences of older people who may have experienced homelessness
- Expenditure on fuel bills and how and when these are paid
- Important housing issues in respondents' local area
- Key services and facilities required in 20 minute neighbourhoods



- Whether older people felt lonely and whether they were living with disabilities including dementia

## 1.3 Reporting

Throughout this report please note the following

- 'Respondents' refers to those who completed a survey
- Where percentages do not add up to 100%, this is due to no-responses.
- Where percentages exceed 100%, this is due to multiple responses.
- Open-ended feedback from respondents which has been captured throughout the survey is identified with this symbol: 

In reporting this research it is important to consider the current context:

- In 2020-21, we experienced a global pandemic with periods of lockdown when residents were unable to leave their homes or with restrictions in place. This impacted significantly on the older population as evidenced in Age Scotland's Big Survey in 2021.
- The cost of living crisis continues to have an impact on household bills including food and energy.

## 2. Methodology and Sample

### 2.1 Methodology

In keeping with 2018 and 2020 the 2023 survey was designed in collaboration with Age Scotland and was informed by the previous studies. Many of the questions remained the same year on year in order that comparisons between the studies could be made. This most recent survey, however, also sought to capture feedback on cost of living, 20 minute neighbourhoods and to what extent older people felt part of a community and consulted with.

### 2.2 Sample

A total of 1,117 responses were returned to Scotinform: 832 responses were submitted online and 286 in paper format. The study highlights the need for a mixed approach ensuring that older people are able to complete the survey in a format that best suits them. Paper surveys were accompanied by a freepost address ensuring that respondents did not incur any postage costs when participating in the study.

## 3. Profile of Respondents

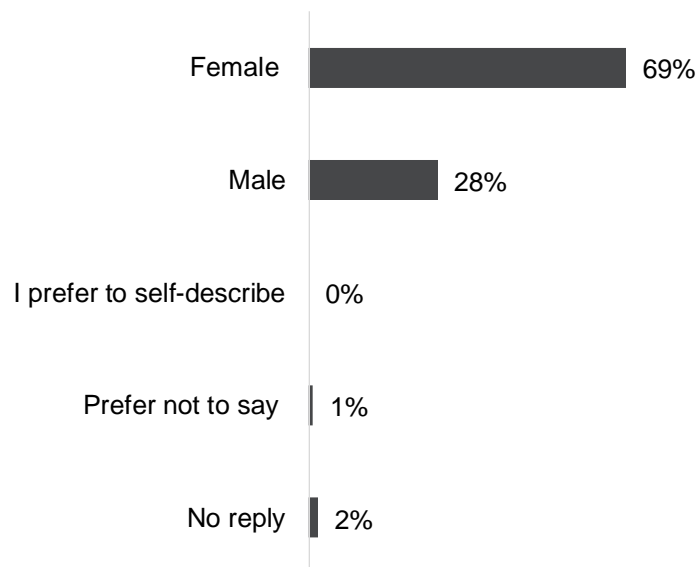
In this section of the report we detail the profile of those who completed the survey.

### 3.1 Gender and age range

The gender and age profile in 2023 is similar to that reported in 2018 and 2020 with respondents more likely to be female (69%) than male (28%). The gender split was 66% female/31% male in 2018 and 67% female/30% male in 2018.

#### Chart 3.1: Gender of respondents

Base = all respondents

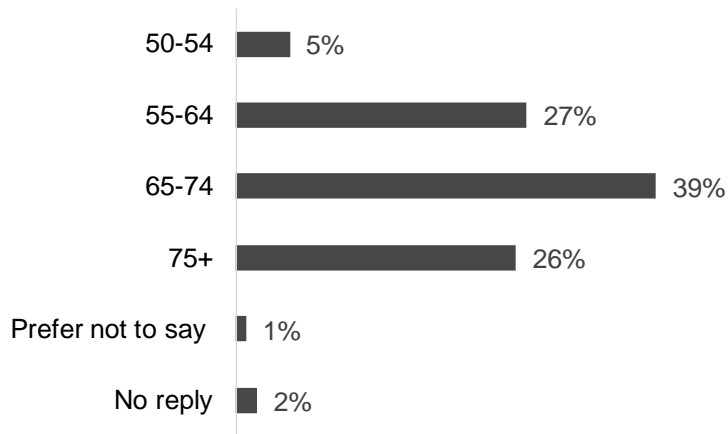


Over a third of respondents (39%) were aged 65-75, with approximately a quarter aged 55-64 (27%) and 75+ (26%).

In 2020, a third of respondents (34%) were aged 55-64, 38% were 65-74 and 24% aged 75+ and this represents a more evenly spread age mix than reported in 2018 when the split was 7%, 44% and 39%.

**Chart 3.2: Age of respondents**

Base = all respondents

**3.2 Location**

All of Scotland's 32 local authorities were represented within the 2023 sample. The authorities from which the most responses were received were City of Glasgow, City of Edinburgh, Fife, South Lanarkshire and Highland. In 2020, respondents were most likely residents of the Highlands, Dumfries and Galloway, Aberdeenshire, City of Edinburgh and Falkirk. Galloway and Aberdeenshire.

**Table 3.3: Location of respondents**

Base = all respondents

Local authority area	Number of respondents	% of respondents
City of Glasgow	88	8
City of Edinburgh	86	8
Fife	76	7
South Lanarkshire	63	6
Highland	62	6
Aberdeenshire	51	5
Perth and Kinross	56	5
North Lanarkshire	48	4
West Lothian	46	4
North Ayrshire	45	4
Dumfries and Galloway	43	4
Scottish Borders	37	3
Angus	36	3

Local authority area	Number of respondents	% of respondents
Renfrewshire	33	3
Dundee	31	3
Midlothian	30	3
Aberdeen	28	3
East Lothian	26	2
South Ayrshire	24	2
East Renfrewshire	22	2
Falkirk	22	2
Argyll and Bute	21	2
Moray	19	2
East Ayrshire	17	2
West Dunbartonshire	16	1
Stirling	15	1
East Dunbartonshire	13	1
Clackmannanshire	12	1
Shetland Islands	8	1
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	7	1
Orkney Islands	6	1
Inverclyde	4	0
No reply	26	2

Respondents were asked to identify which from a list of areas best described where they lived. In 2023, unlike 2018 and 2020, this question provided clear descriptions of each area type to assist respondents in identifying which was relevant to them. The descriptions were:

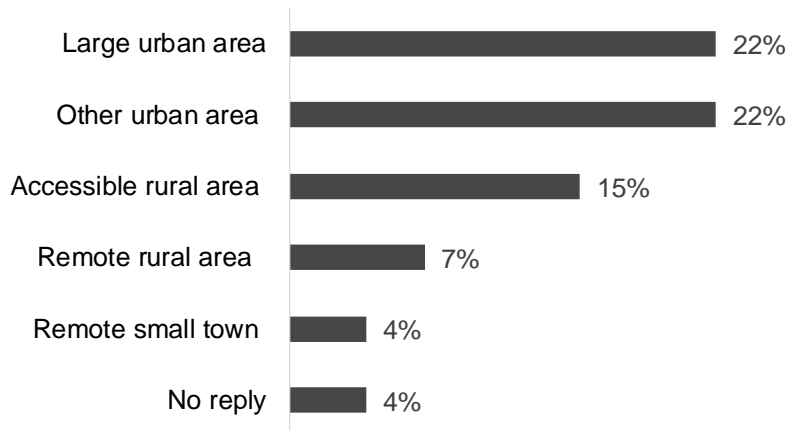
- Large urban area (settlements of 125,000 people or more)
- Other urban area (with a population of around 10,000-124,999 people)
- Accessible small town (settlements of 3,000-9,999 people and within a 30 minute drive of a settlement of 10,000 or more people)
- Remote small town (settlements of 3,000-9,999 people but within a drive longer than 30 minutes to a settlement of 10,000 or more people)
- Accessible rural area (areas with a population of less than 3,000 people and within a 30 minute drive to a settlement of 10,000 or more people)
- Remote local area (areas with a population of less than 3,000 people but with a drive longer than 30 minutes to a settlement of 10,000 or more people)

22% of respondents lived in a large urban area and a further 22% were residents of another urban area. 15% lived in an accessible rural area. In 2020, over a third of

respondents (38%) described where they lived in a small town, 29% lived in a rural area and 19% in a large urban area. The location of property in 2023, as in preceding years, has been used to analyse findings specifically when looking at housing needs, local communities and 20 minute neighbourhood areas.

### Chart 3.4: Location of property

Base = all respondents

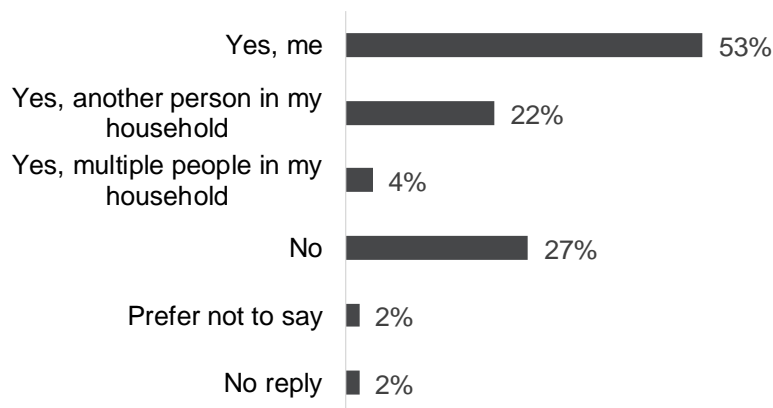


## 3.3 Disability

Over half the respondents (53%) had a long-standing health problem or disability and 22% lived with someone who had a health problem and/or disability. Of note is that 4% of respondents lived in a household where there were multiple people with a health problem and/or disability. (In 2020, 48% of respondents had a long-standing health problem and 21% had a disability.)

### Chart 3.5: Disability

Base = all respondents

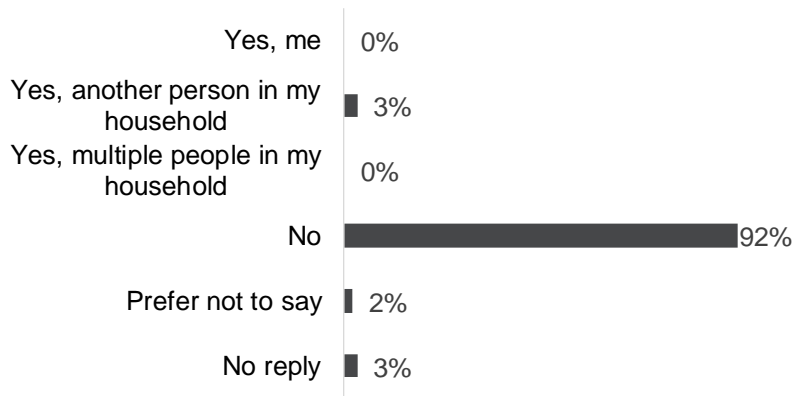


In 2020 a new question was added to the survey which sought to establish whether the respondent, or someone in their household, was living with dementia. This question was repeated in 2023.

The 2023 findings reflect those from 2020 with the majority of respondents not living a household where someone had dementia (92% in both years). 3% lived with another person in their household who had dementia.

### Chart 3.6: Living with dementia

Base = all respondents



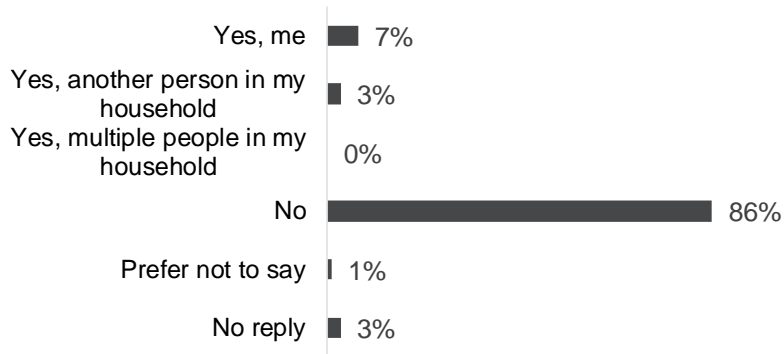
Another new question in the 2020 survey – and repeated in 2023 – sought to capture whether respondents, or someone within their household, was a veteran.

7% of respondents who completed the survey were veterans (6% in 2020) and 3% had a veteran in their household (3% in 2020).

The veterans who completed the survey (80 respondents) were primarily in the older age ranges but there was representation across them all. 1% were aged 50-54, 20% were aged 55-64, 35% were aged 65-74 and 44% were 75+.

**Chart 3.7: Veterans**

Base = all respondents

**3.4 Social interaction**

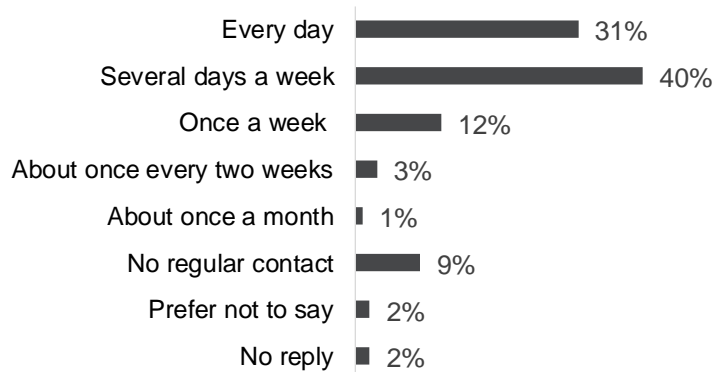
A new question added to the survey in 2020 – and repeated in 2023 - established how often respondents had social interaction outside of their household. 31% of respondents interacted with someone outside their household on a daily basis (53% in 2020) but 9% had no regular contact (an increase on the 2% reported in 2020).

28% of respondents who lived alone saw someone every day and 41% had social interaction several days a week. 12% of those living alone, however, had no regular contact/social interaction.

Those living in remote rural areas and remote small towns were more likely than those living in other locations to have no regular social interaction (12% respectively). 13% of respondents with a disability also had no regular social interaction.

**Chart 3.8: Social interaction**

Base = all respondents





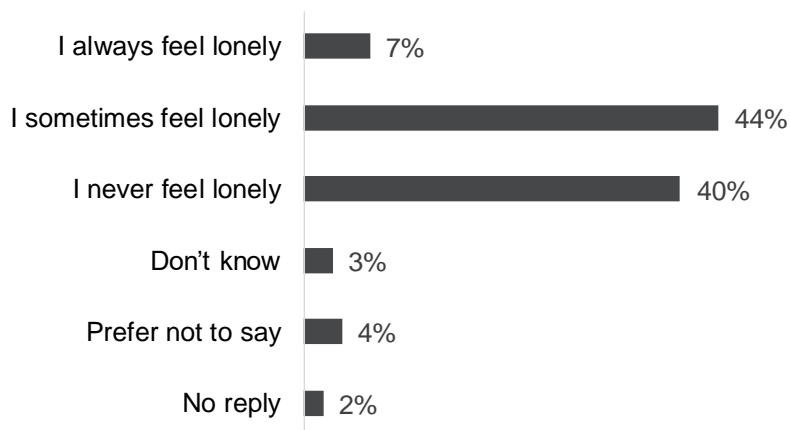
Another new question in 2020 – and repeated in 2023 -asked respondents whether they ever felt lonely. 7% of respondents always feel lonely (2% in 2020) and 44% sometimes feel lonely (an increase on the 38% reported in 2020).

12% of respondents living alone stated that they always felt lonely and 58% sometimes felt lonely (4% and 54% in 2020). 26% of those living alone, however, stated that they never felt lonely. Respondents who lived in a flat, maisonette or apartment were more likely to state that they always felt lonely (10%) in comparison with those who lived in a house or bungalow (5% and 8%).

There was little difference, however, in terms of loneliness when analysed by age and location.

### Chart 3.9: Loneliness

Base = all respondents

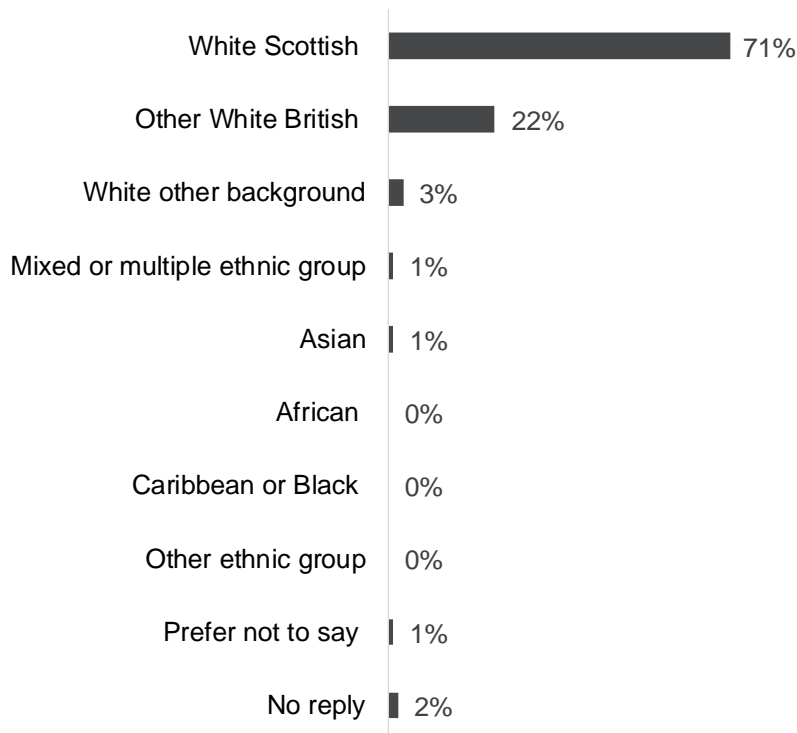


### 3.5 Ethnicity

Respondents most likely described their ethnicity as 'white Scottish' and 'white other British' with 71% and 22% classified as such (76% and 18% in 2020; 77% and 18% in 2018).

#### Chart 3.10: Ethnicity

Base = all respondents



### 3.6 Occupational status

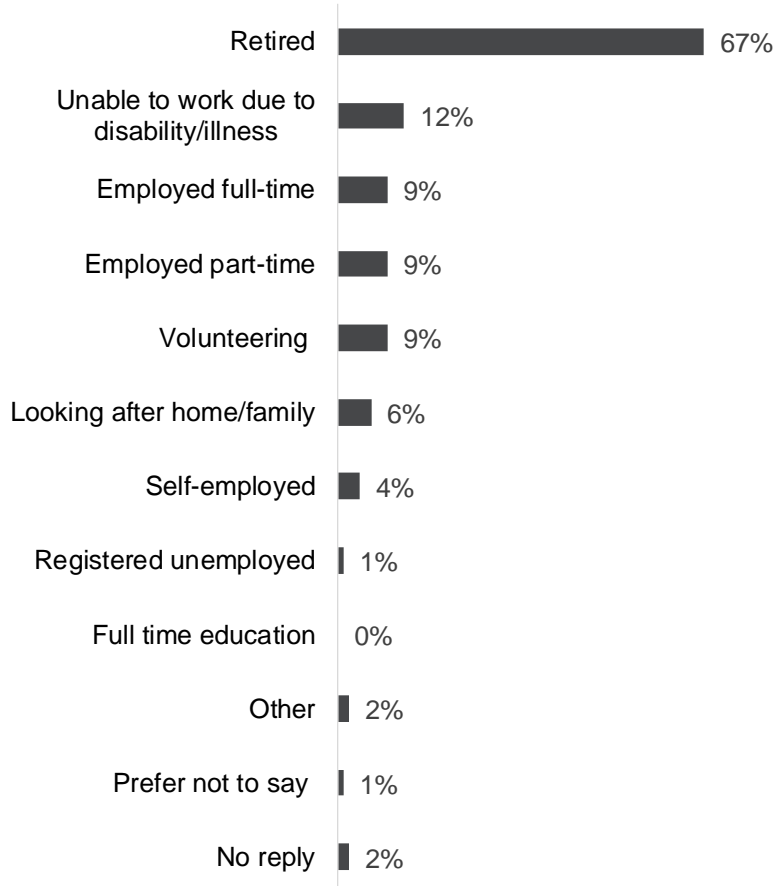
Reflecting the age profile, the majority of respondents (67%) were retired and 12% were unable to work due to disability. 9% of respondents were employed full-time, 9% were employed part-time and 9% had a volunteering role.

These findings are similar to those reported in 2020 when 65% of respondents were retired and 22% were working either full-time or part-time.

87% of respondents aged 65-74 and 98% aged 75+ were retired in comparison with just 4% of those aged 50-54 and 24% of respondents aged 55-64.

**Chart 3.11: Occupational status**

Base = all respondents

**3.7 Total gross annual income**

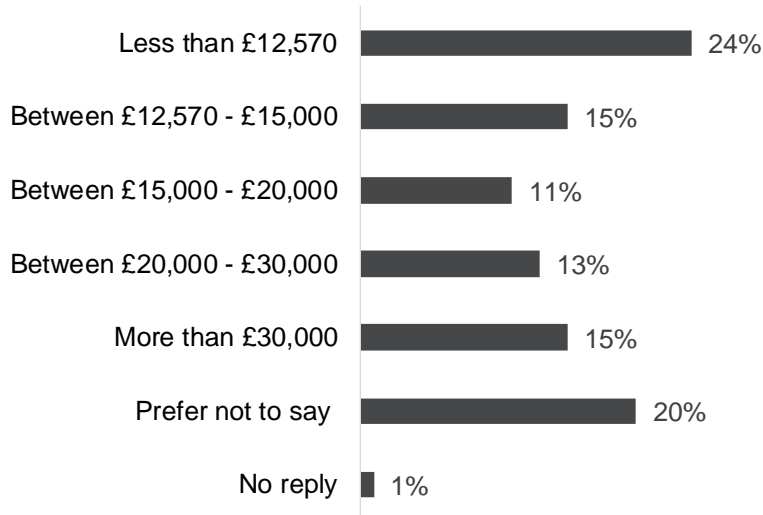
Half the respondents (50%) had a gross annual household income of less than £20,000, with a quarter (24%) having less than £12,570 coming into their households on an annual basis. A fifth of respondents (20%) selected the 'prefer not to say' option. These findings reflect those reported in 2018 and 2020.

Total gross annual income was highest amongst those aged 55-64 with 44% having a gross annual income of £30,000+. Respondents in employment were also more likely to have a gross annual income of £30,000+ than others (51%).

29% of respondents with a long-standing health problem or disability had a total gross annual income of less than £12,570 whilst 10% had a gross income of £30,000+ per year.

**Chart 3.12: Total gross annual income**

Base = all respondents

**3.8 Monthly cost of accommodation**

Respondents were asked to provide details of the approximate monthly cost of owning/renting their home once rent/mortgage plus regular management or maintenance costs were included (eg factoring fees).

23% of respondents stated that their monthly accommodation costs were zero (17% in 2020) whilst 12% were paying £500 or more a month in terms of rent/mortgage etc (12% in 2020).

**Chart 3.13: Monthly cost of owning/renting**

Base = all respondents

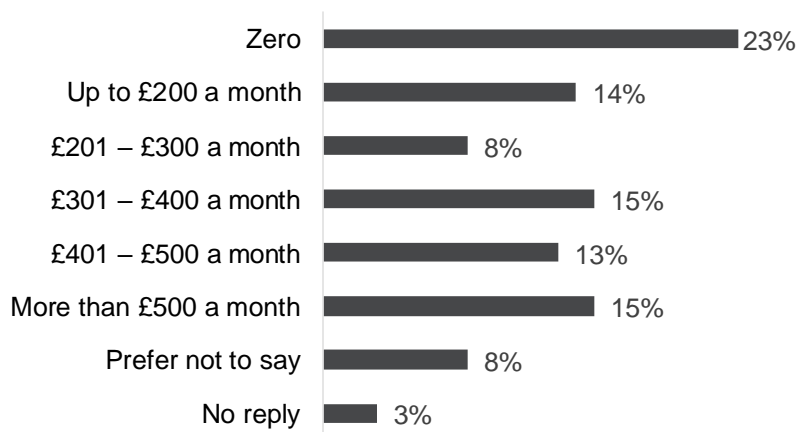


Table 3.14 details the respondents' monthly costs of owning/renting their accommodation based on total gross annual income of the household.

2% of respondents with an income of less than £12,570 had zero accommodation costs but 27% of respondents within this income range were paying £400+ per month on their property.

Please note that overall 8% of respondents preferred not to provide information about their total gross income and 3% did not respond.

**Table 3.14: Monthly cost of owning/renting by household income**

Base = all respondents

	Annual Household Income (Gross)				
	Less than £12,570	£12,570-£15,000	£15,000-£20,000	£20,000-£30,000	£30,000+
Base:	267	173	127	143	173
Monthly cost	%	%	%	%	%
Zero	23	18	28	29	27
Up to £200 a month	15	18	19	10	14
£200-£300 a month	10	6	9	9	7
£301-£400 a month	22	19	16	13	7
£401-£500 a month	13	20	9	15	13
£500+ a month	10	13	13	16	27
Prefer not to say	4	5	3	4	3
No response	3	1	3	3	2

Table 3.15 details the monthly payments on rent/mortgage by age range.

Respondents aged 50-54 were more likely than those in older age ranges to have higher monthly costs in terms of renting/owning their property. A third of respondents (33%) aged 75+ had zero outgoings in relation to their property but 11% had costs of £501+ per month.

**Table 3.15: Monthly cost of renting/owning property**

Base = all respondents

	50-54	55-64	65-74	75+
Base:	55	304	434	294
	%	%	%	%
Zero	7	18	23	33
Up to £200 per month	5	14	13	19
£201-£300 per month	9	9	8	8
£301-£400 per month	13	16	20	9
£401-£500 per month	11	16	15	8
£501+ per month	47	19	10	11
Prefer not to say	7	6	9	8
No response	0	1	2	5

Further analysis of the rent being paid by those who rented their homes from a private landlord, housing association/social landlord and their local council is detailed in Table 3.16.

Of note is the percentage of respondents who are paying £500+ per month on rent. Those renting privately had higher monthly rental outgoings in comparison with those who rented from a housing association/social landlord or their local authority.

**Table 3.16: Monthly cost of renting home**

Base = all respondents who rented their home (345 respondents)

	Private landlord	Housing association/ social landlord	Local Council
Base:	87	133	125
	%	%	%
Zero	3	5	9
Up to £200 per month	2	6	9
£201-£300 per month	1	5	13
£301-£400 per month	14	28	46
£401-£500 per month	34	35	14
£501+ per month	44	15	2
Prefer not to say	1	5	6
No response	0	2	2

The table below highlights the outgoing costs for those who owned their home with a mortgage/loan. Of note is that 44% were paying £501+ a month for their mortgage/loan and this is an increase on the 37% reported in 2020.

**Table 3.17: Monthly cost of mortgage/loan**

Base = all respondents who owned their home with a mortgage/loan (99 respondents)

	%
Zero	1
Up to £200 per month	10
£201-£300 per month	16
£301-£400 per month	13
£401-£500 per month	9
£501+ per month	44
Prefer not to say	4
No response	2

### 3.9 Benefits

60% of respondents were in receipt of the State Pension and 27% had a partner who was in receipt of the State Pension.

A third of respondents (33%) stated that neither they nor their partner were in receipt of the State Pension. These respondents were most likely aged 50-53 and 55-64.

Of the benefits with which respondents were prompted, 43% received the Winter Fuel Payment.

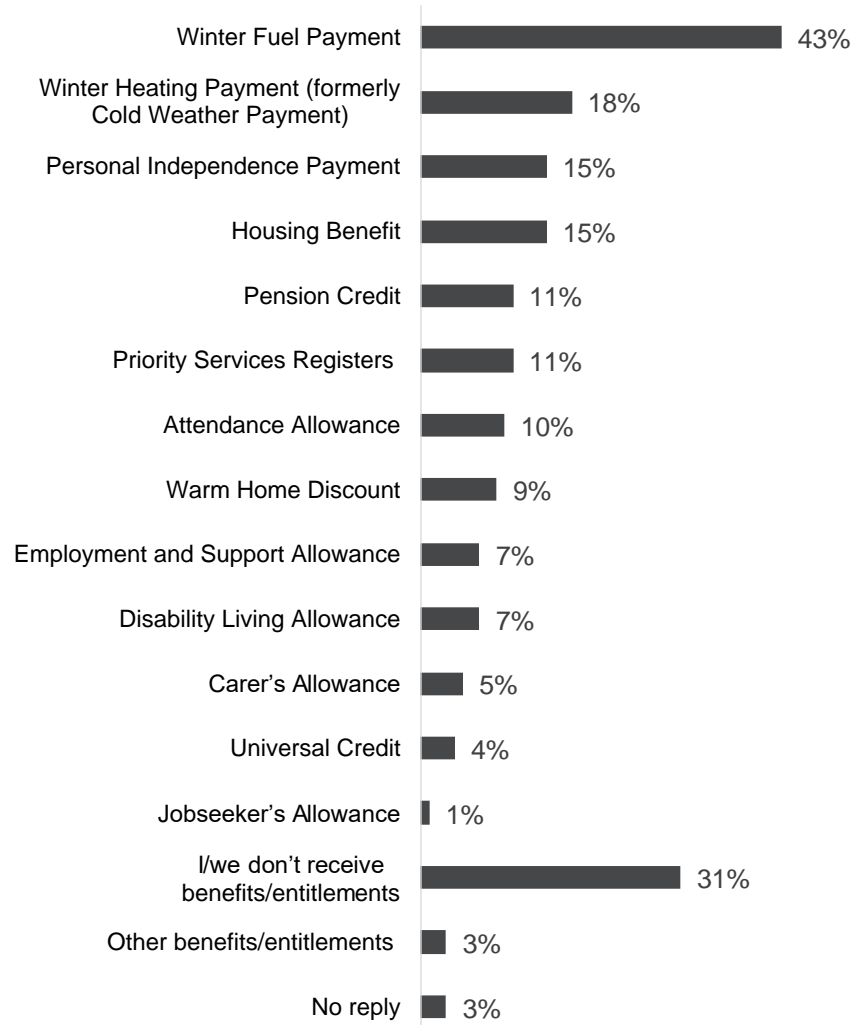
51% of respondents aged 50-53 and 53% aged 55-64 were not in receipt of any benefits/entitlements. Of interest is that 22% of those aged 65-74 and 17% of respondents aged 75+ were not receiving benefits/entitlements.

The three benefits/entitlements which respondents aged 75+ were most likely receiving (in comparison with those in younger age ranges) were the Winter Fuel Payment (65%), the Winter Heating Payment (27%) and Attendance Allowance (22%).

22% of respondents living with a long standing health problem and/or disability were not in receipt of benefits/entitlements. This group was, however, more likely to be in receipt of Personal Independent Payment (24%), Attendance Allowance (24%) and Housing Benefit (21%).

**Chart 3.18: Benefits**

Base = all respondents





## 4. Housing

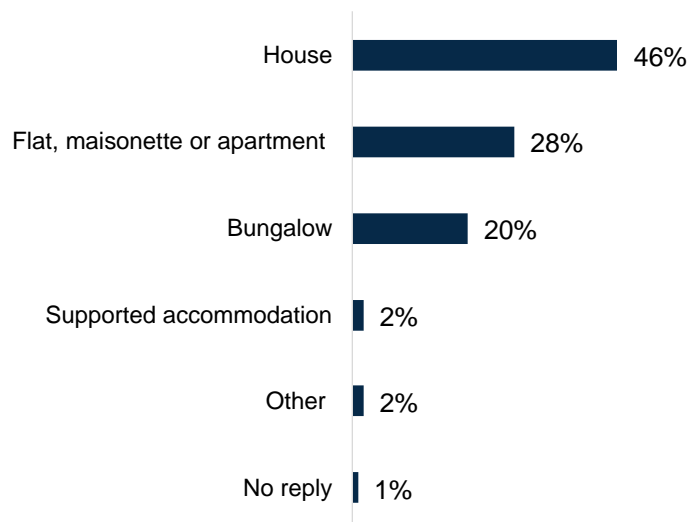
### 4.1 Type of property

46% of respondents were living in a house and a further 28% were living in a flat, maisonette or apartment.

41% of respondents who lived alone lived in a flat, maisonette or apartment along with 48% of respondents who lived in a large urban area. 51% of respondents who were residents of a small accessible town lived in a house in comparison with 37% of those living in a large urban area.

#### Chart 4.1 Type of property

Base = all respondents



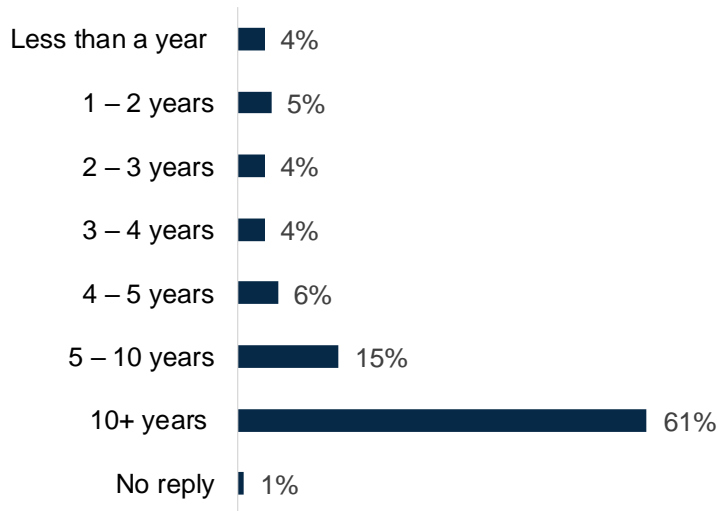
Just 2% of respondents were living in supported accommodation (6% in 2020 and 7% in 2018).

### 4.2 Length in current home

61% of respondents had lived in their current home for 10+ years. 4% had been at their current address for less than one year, 19% had been in their home for between 1-5 years and 15% for 5-10 years.

### Chart 4.2 Length of time in current home

Base = all respondents



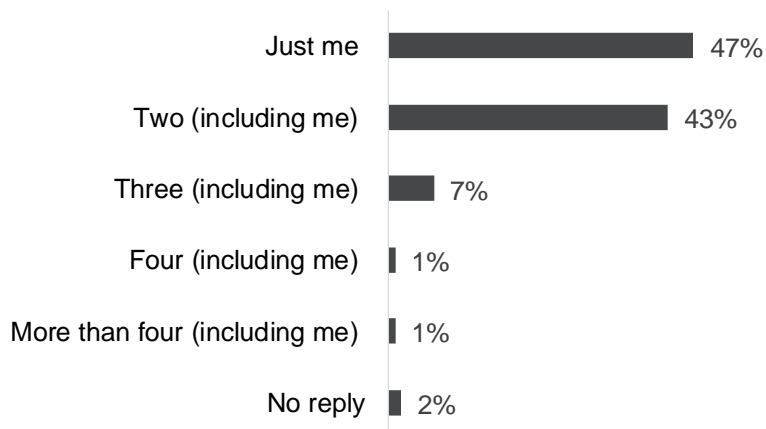
### 4.3 Number in household

47% of respondents were living alone and 43% with one other person (41% and 48% in 2020).

Respondents living alone were most likely residing in a flat, maisonette or apartment, female and aged 65+.

### Chart 4.3 Number in household

Base = all respondents



## 4.4 Ownership of property

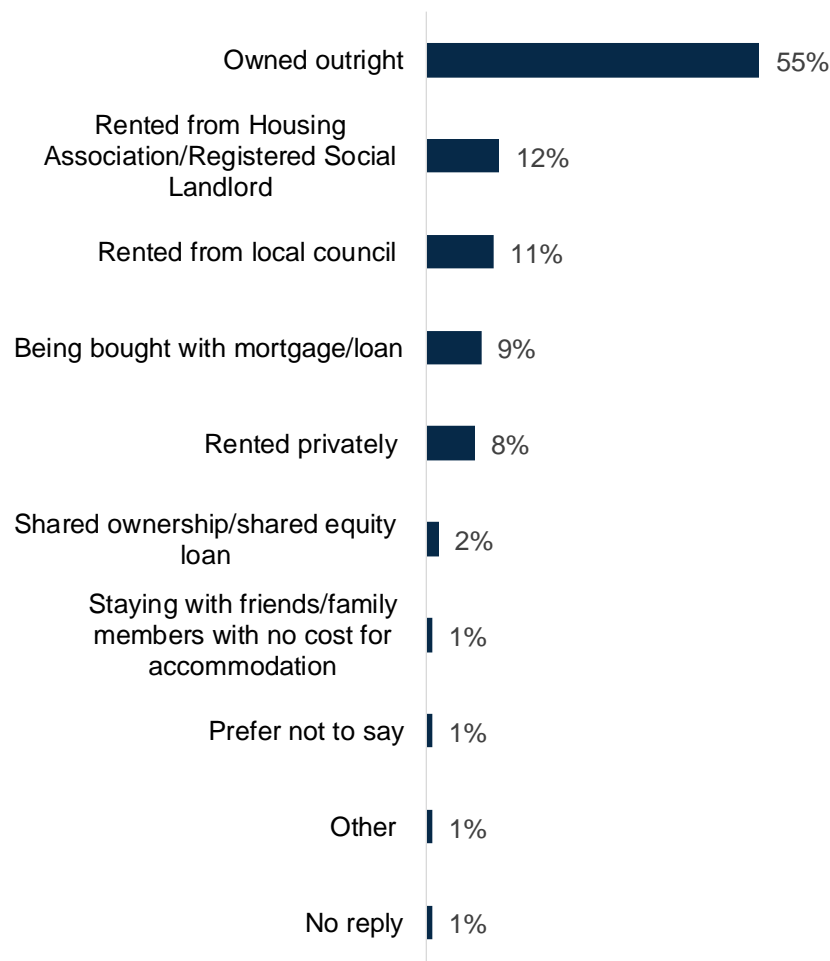
55% of respondents owned their property outright (60% in 2020). 12% were renting from a Housing Association/Registered Social Landlord and 11% were renting from their local authority (9% and 10% in 2020).

63% of respondents who were retired owned their property outright. Whilst 36% of respondents aged 50-54 owned their property outright they were the age range most likely to be buying their home with a mortgage/loan (31%).

46% of respondents with a long-standing health problem or disability owned their home outright but they were also more likely to be renting their homes. 16% rented from their local authority, 16% from a Housing Association/Registered Social Landlord and 7% rented privately.

### Chart 4.4: Property Ownership

Base = all respondents



## 4.5 Current suitability of home

The majority of respondents considered that their home was suitable for their current living needs – 45% felt that their home was very suitable for their current living needs and 40% that it was fairly suitable (54% and 34% in 2020).

14% of respondents considered that their home was not very suitable or not at all suitable. Table 4.5 presents the suitability of home by age group and shows that those aged 55-64 were more likely than others to feel that their home was not very suitable or not at all suitable (17%).

**Table 4.5: Suitability of home for current needs by age**

Base = all respondents

	All respondents	50-54	55-64	65-74	75+
Base:	1117	55	304	434	294
	%	%	%	%	%
Very suitable	45	51	42	44	49
Fairly suitable	40	42	40	41	38
Not very suitable	10	5	10	11	10
Not at all suitable	4	2	7	3	1
No reply	1	0	0	0	2

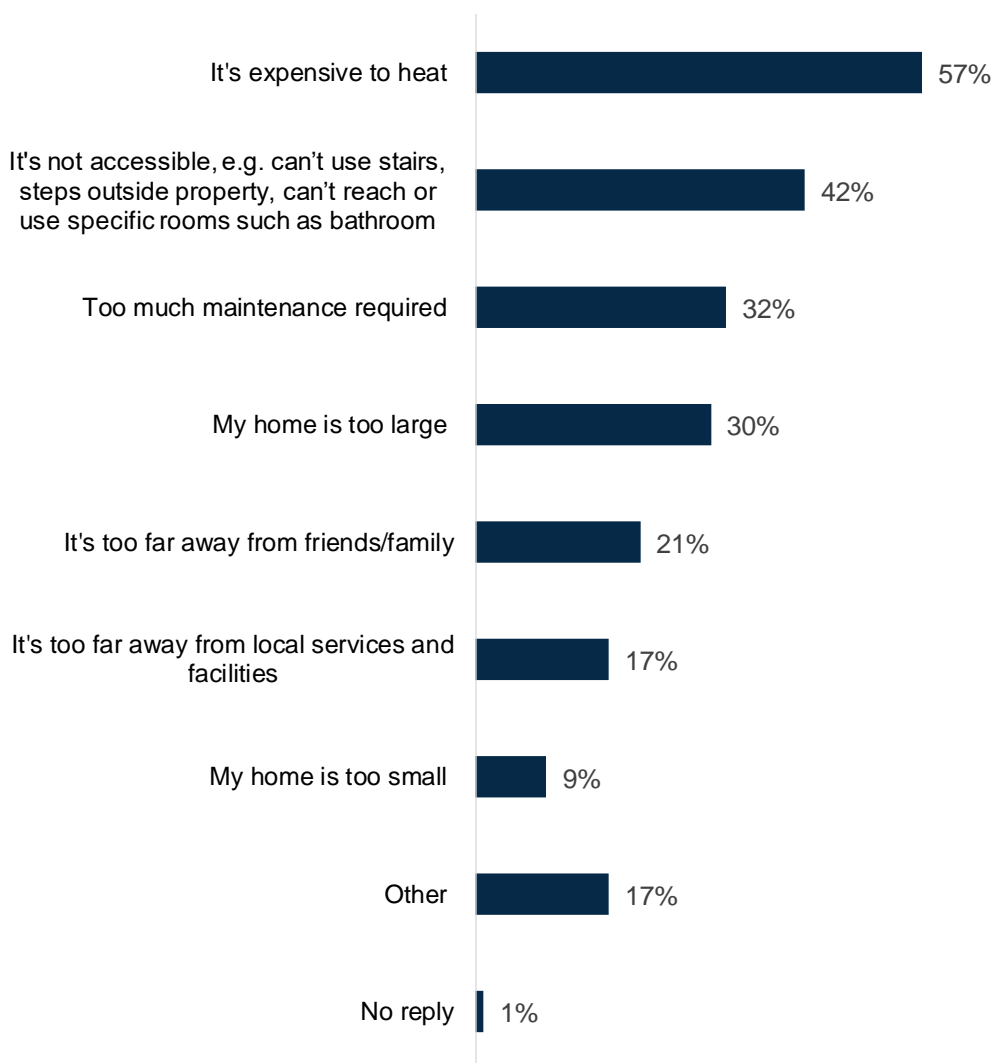
Of interest is that 20% of those living in a flat, maisonette or apartment felt their home was not very suitable or not at all suitable for their current needs in comparison with 13% living in a house and 6% living in a bungalow.

The 155 respondents who felt their current home was not suitable or not at all suitable were asked why they felt this was the case.

Over half (57%) felt their property was too expensive to heat and 42% had concerns around accessibility. This is indicative of the poor energy efficient housing stock that much of Scotland's older population currently lives in, as highlighted by the Scottish Government's House Condition Survey and helps illustrate the current challenges facing older households caused by the cost of living crisis.


**Chart 4.6: Why current home is not suitable/not at all suitable**


Base = 155 (respondents who stated their home was not suitable or not at suitable for their current living needs)





'Other' reasons provided by respondents in terms of the unsuitability of their homes included the following comments which highlight concerns around personal safety as


well as issues with the properties in which respondents live.

 *'Very poor construction and impact noise is a huge problem. I'm woken up by my upstairs and downstairs neighbours walking around. They are not noisy neighbours it's the very poor construction of this property, floors failed the sound test and yet no one would accept responsibility. I'm very shocked at the standard of construction in Scottish properties. I have lived in 14 flats and this is the very worst!'*

 *'It's a flat in a tenement, very old lead pipes. I've had 3 incidences of water leaks, one involving a ceiling coming down and the last leak involving me moving out for 4 months. Also difficulty getting communal repairs done, no support from council anymore. The building is falling into disrepair.'*

 *'I was attacked by a drug user in the same building I'm terrified to go out so feel like a prisoner.'*

 *'My daughter lives with me, she has physical disabilities and an electric wheelchair user, access problems to main door due to vandalism, access to/from car park we are unable to take direct route due to cars parking over dropped kerbs. Damp problems for 7 years. Geographically unsuitable.'*

 *'50+yr old sheltered housing, needs cavity insulation and soundproofing; needs new double glazing; needs an economical heating system (I have storage heating on Economy 7. Due to my health issues I have to keep my heaters set at 20/21c on coldest days just to get my rooms up to 19c)); garden is uneven, previously surfaced with garden stones which are not disability friendly; lower kitchen cupboards too deep and upper cupboards too high; needs second bedroom for carer.'*

## 4.6 Future suitability of home

All respondents were asked whether they felt their home would be suitable for their needs in the next ten years. 38% of respondents felt that their property would be suitable in the next ten years, 37% did not and 23% were unsure.

12% of respondents who felt their current home was very suitable for their needs did not feel it would be so in the next ten years and this was a view shared by 59% of those who felt their current home was fairly suitable.

## 5. Adaptations

This section of the questionnaire sought to capture what alterations, if any, respondents had made to their homes and how this had been funded.

### 5.1 Adaptations to home

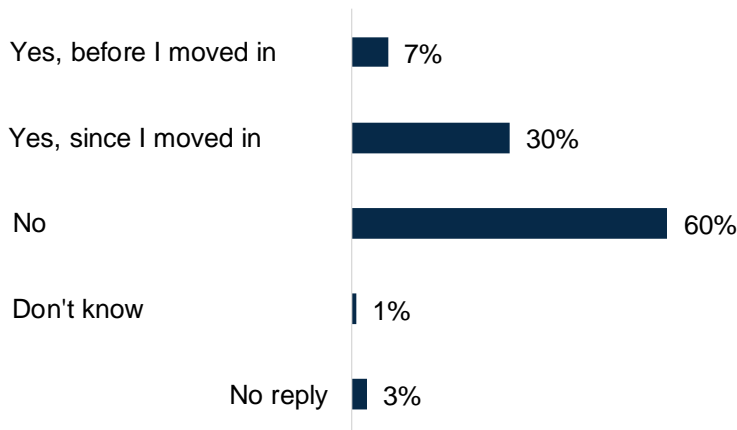
30% of respondents had made adaptations to their home since moving into it whilst 7% had adaptations made prior to moving in (20% and 7% in 2020).

Respondents across the age ranges had made alterations since moving into their home i.e. 31% of those aged 50-54, 27% of those aged 55-64, 26% of those aged 65-74 and 39% aged 75+.

34% of respondents who had lived in their home for 10+ years had made an alteration/s but 59% had not.

#### Chart 5.1: Whether homes adapted

Base = all respondents



### 5.2 Adaptations made

The top three alterations made to properties in 2023 were the same as those reported in 2020:

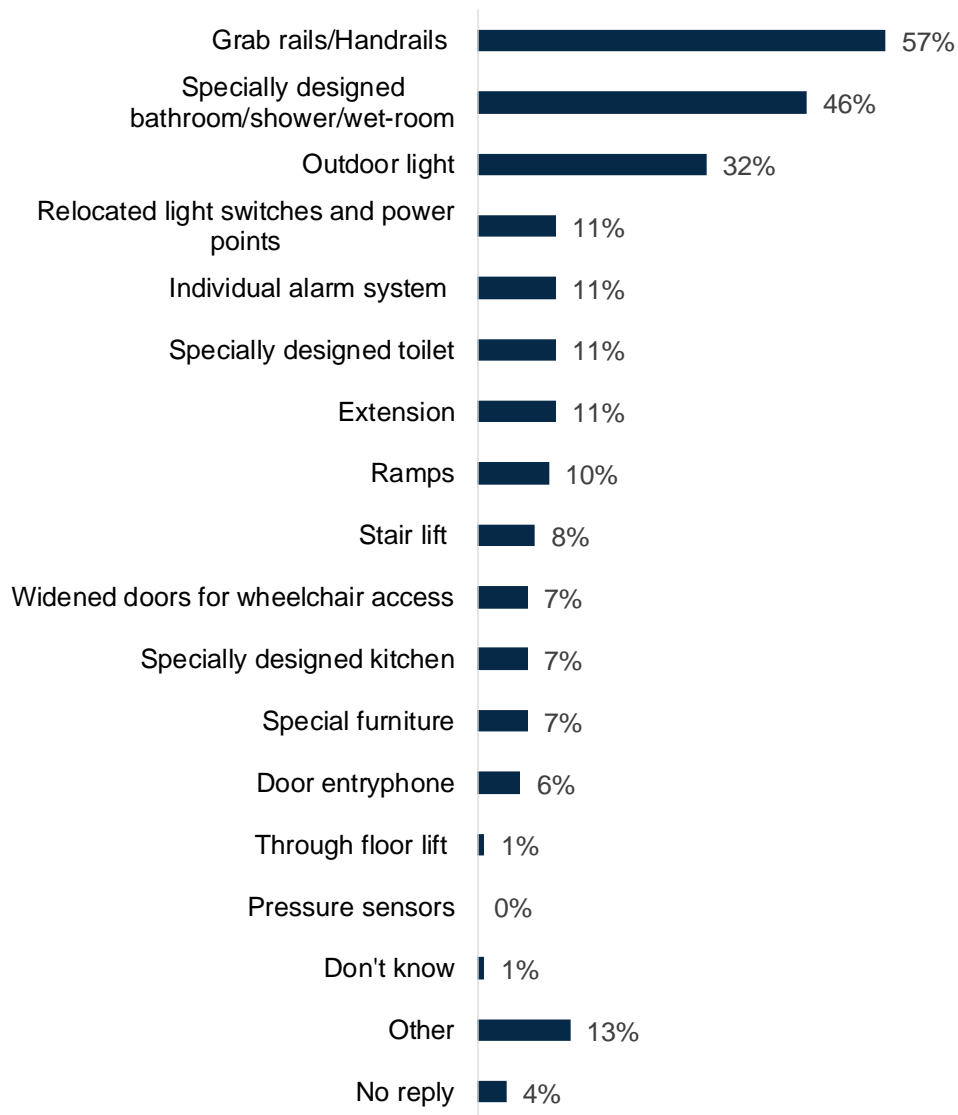
1. 57% had had grab rails/handrails fitted (60% in 2020),
2. 46% had a specially designed or adapted bathroom/shower (53% in 2020) and
3. 32% had had an outdoor light fitted (35% in 2020).



Not surprisingly, and in keeping with previous years, those respondents who had someone in their home with a disability or long-standing health problem were more likely to have had the majority of adaptations made in comparison with those households where no-one had a disability or long-standing health problem.

### Chart 5.2: Adaptations made

Base = all respondents whose homes had adaptations (399)

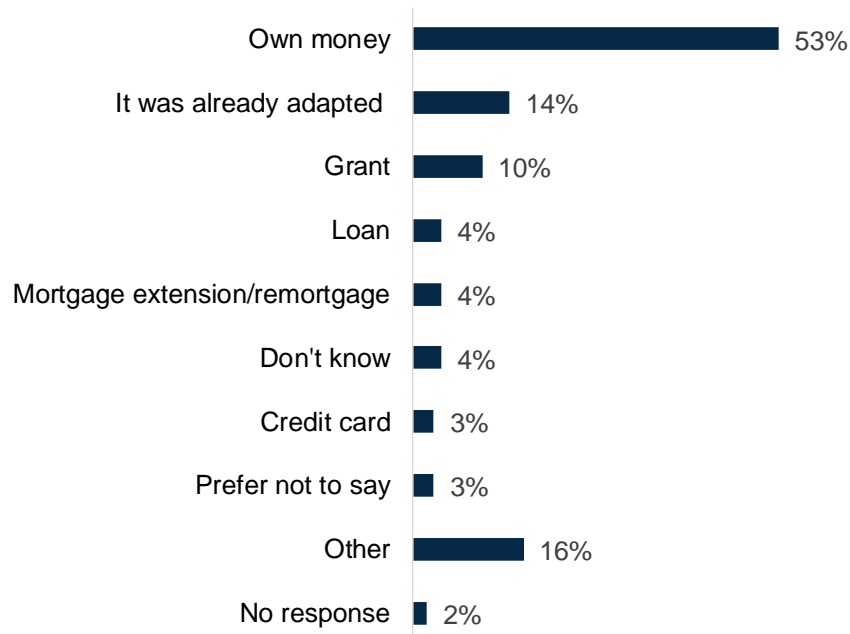


### 5.3 Funding of adaptations

Over half the respondents (53%) who had made adaptations to their home had financed this themselves. 14% had alterations made prior to moving and 10% had used a grant to subsidise the costs.

#### Chart 5.3: Funding of Adaptations

Base = all respondents who homes had adaptations (399)

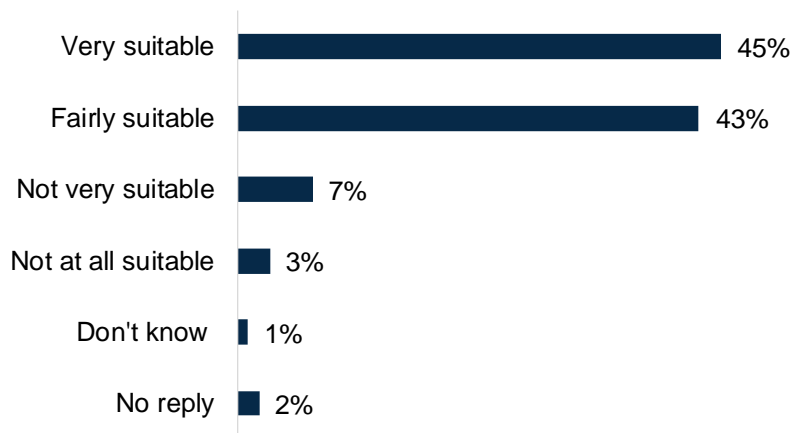


## 5.4 Suitability of home after adaptations

45% of respondents who had had alterations made to their home stated that their home was very suitable for their needs now and 43% that it was fairly suitable.

### Chart 5.4: Suitability of home

Base = all respondents whose homes had adaptations (399)



## 5.5 Impact of adaptations

68% of respondents who had had adaptations made said that they had had a positive impact on their quality of life. Their comments highlighted that the adaptations had made life easier (ie easier to use the shower, easier to use stairs, etc), had made respondents feel safer in their homes.



*'Removing bath and replacing with shower has allowed us to shower much more safely and avoid falls.'*



*'With my mobility issues they have enabled me to live more safely in my home.'*



*'With the outside ramp I can walk, hold on and not worry about slipping in the mud. The risers at the doors mean I can step up/down from the high threshold without falling. Same with shower riser.'*



*'The care call system gives peace of mind and the adaptations in kitchen and bathroom ensure I am safe when using them.'*



*'New kitchen, bathroom, windows, and heating made the house more comfortable.'*



*'Raised work surfaces have eliminated back and shoulder pain when preparing food etc.'*

4% stated that the changes had had a negative impact and their comments suggest that adaptations were not made to a high standard.



*'The alterations carried out by the Council are of the poorest quality and are unsightly. Makes me, and my husband who required the alterations to be done, feel depressed.'*



*'Poorly installed wet room with water running out the door. Door to bathroom that doesn't close properly.'*



*'Had nothing but problems with the drainage in wet floor shower room. I wish they hadn't taken bath out.'*

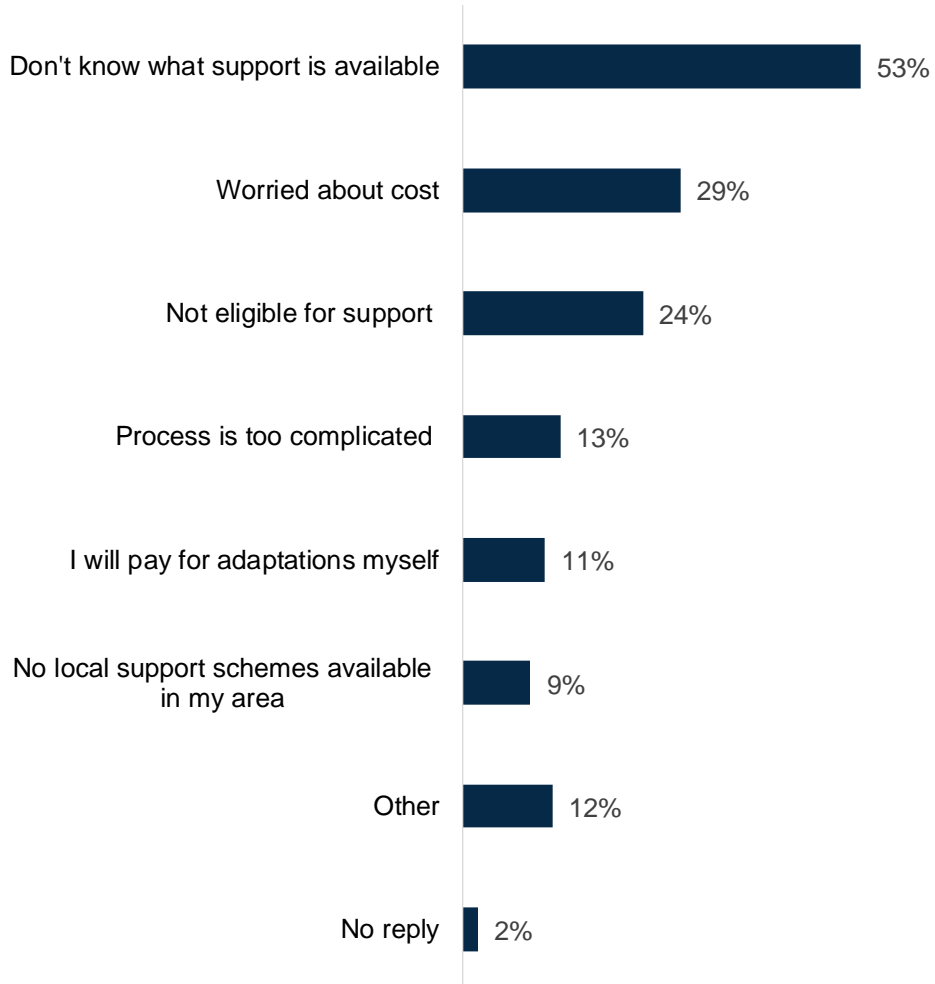
## 5.6 Current requirement for adaptations

24% of respondents lived in a property which currently required adaptations. 13% of these 269 respondents had applied for assistance to make alterations to their home and 20% had plans to do so.

Those who had not applied for any assistance (financial or otherwise) were asked why this was the case. Over half (53%) did not know what support was available and 29% were worried about the cost.

**Chart 5.5: Financing adaptations**

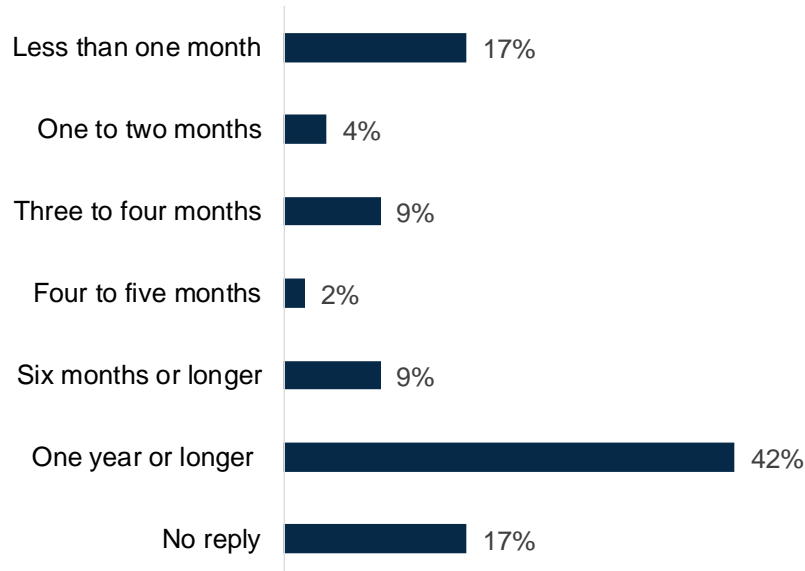
Base = respondents whose homes required adaptations but they had not applied for finance (174)



42% of respondents who had identified that their home needed an adaptation had waited one year or longer for this to take place.

**Chart 5.6: Length of time awaiting adaptations**

Base = respondents whose homes required adaptations (269)



Respondents who had been waiting for more than four months to have an alteration completed in their home were asked why there was a delay. Comments were captured via an open-ended question and highlighted that the key issue and reason for the delay was cost, either the respondent unable to afford the adaptation or their landlord querying the finances and/or reluctant/unable to pay. Other issues included ill health, the impact of the pandemic and lack of available tradespeople.



*'Landlord cannot budget for new double glazing which is over 30 years old.'*



*'Having to save for alterations plus availability of tradesmen.'*



*'Flat has no skirting boards or door frames (they were rotten and crumbled when we removed to fit laminate) informed council, was told we have to replace them ourselves, we don't have the money, time or ability, so draughts circulate round the flat all year worse in winter, so not energy efficient.'*



*'Planning permission has not been given yet, the paperwork was submitted about 2 years ago. The work that has been done remains incomplete, partly from Covid, but now retirement of some workers and competition with new building work so it's hard to find the right'*

*tradesmen at the right price, especially electricians and plumbers.'*



*'Lack of suitable tradespeople.'*



*'Lack of joiners after Covid.'*

## 6. Future Plans

### 6.1 Future suitability of home

All respondents were asked whether they felt their home would be suitable for their needs in the next ten years. 38% of respondents felt that their property would be suitable in the next ten years, 37% did not and 23% were unsure.

12% of respondents who felt their current home was very suitable for their needs did not feel it would be so in the next ten years and this was a view shared by 59% of those who felt their current home was fairly suitable.

Table 6.1 presents the findings by age group in terms of whether respondents felt their home would be suitable for them in the next ten years. Those aged 55+, and specifically aged 55=54, did not feel their homes would suitable in the next decade.

**Table 6.1: Suitability of home for future needs by age**

Base = all respondents

	50-54	55-64	65-74	75+
Base:	55	304	434	294
	%	%	%	%
Yes	38	36	38	39
No	29	44	35	34
Don't know	33	20	26	21
No reply	0	0	1	5

### 6.2 Move or adapt

Overall, two thirds of respondents (69%) would prefer to move home than make alterations (17%). A further 14% did not know what they would do in the future.

Respondents aged 75+ were less likely to say they would move but, even then, 57% said their preference would be to move with 21% preferring to adapt their current home.



### 6.3 Future property intentions

42% of respondents said they had no intentions of moving home (55% in 2020) when asked which from a list of statements best described their future intentions with regards to their current home.

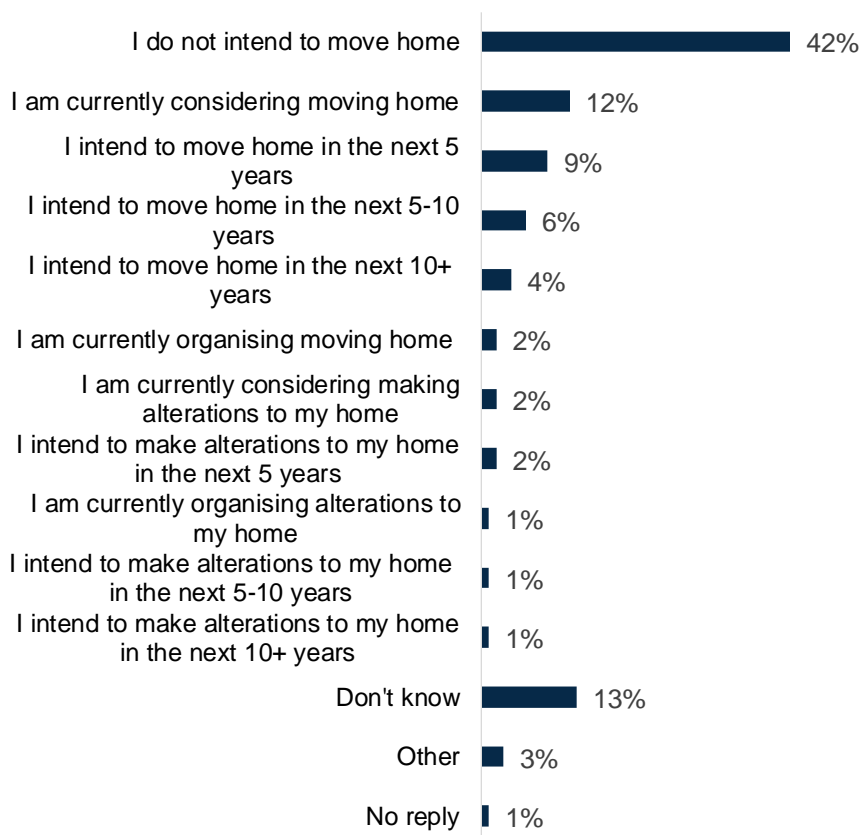
Respondents aged 65-74 and 75+ were less likely to intend to move home (49% and 44%) in comparison with those aged 55-64 (35%) and 50-54 (22%).

Not surprisingly, those who felt their current home was either very suitable or fairly suitable for their needs were less likely to consider moving home – 65% who described their home as very suitable and 29% who described it as fairly suitable did not intend to move home.

12% were currently considering home and they were across the age ranges from 9% aged 75+ to 11% of those aged 50-54.

#### Chart 6.2: Future property intentions

Base = all respondents

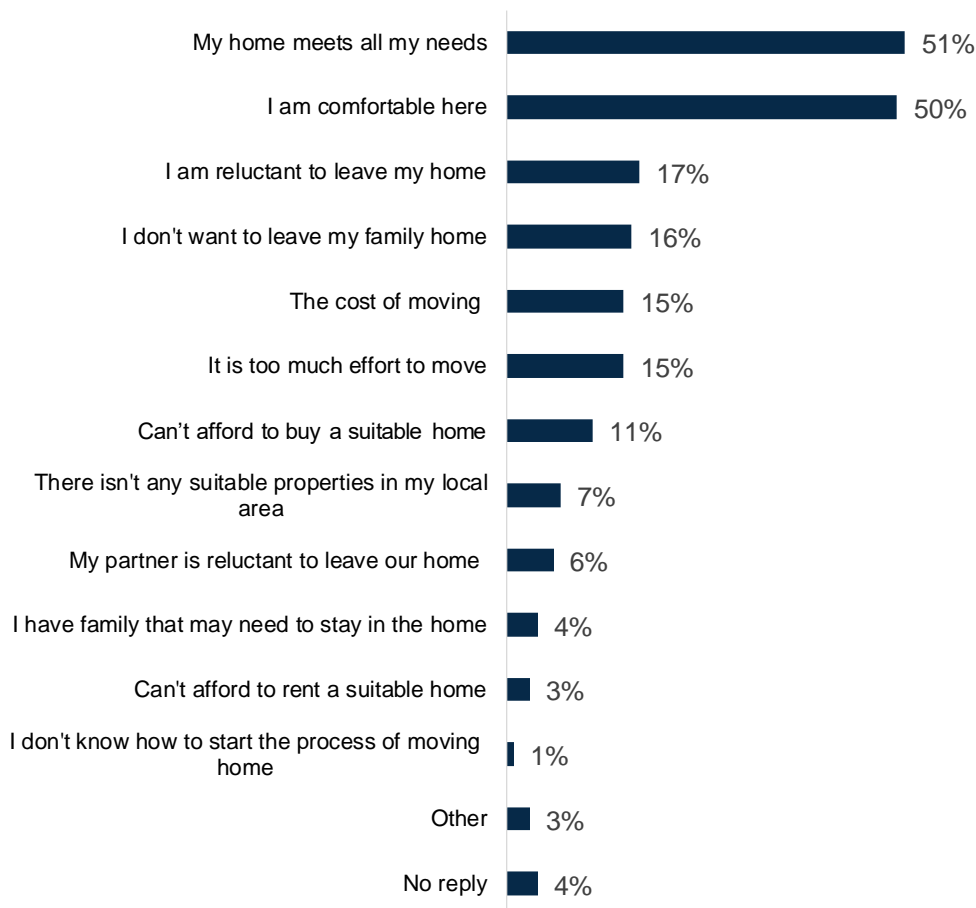


## 6.4 Reasons for not moving home

The main reasons for not moving home were the fact that respondents' current home met all their needs (51%) and because they were comfortable where they were (50%). Cost and effort of moving were each cited by 15% of respondents.

### Chart 6.3: Reasons for not moving home

Base = those with no intentions of moving (465)



Other responses provided by respondent highlighted concerns about age and ability to move and what the future may look like.



*'My wife is semi invalid and spends her time in one room she refuses to move to a smaller house.'*



*'I chose my ground floor flat because it will be hopefully suitable for me (I now live on my own) for the rest of my life (I am now 85).'*



*'I am 87 yrs. Have a local cleaner 2hrs/week but am suffering with increasing disabilities and cannot say what the immediate future may bring. I have no other help and pray that the end will be sudden!'*



*'I am 78 years old - the thought of moving again is not an option for me.'*

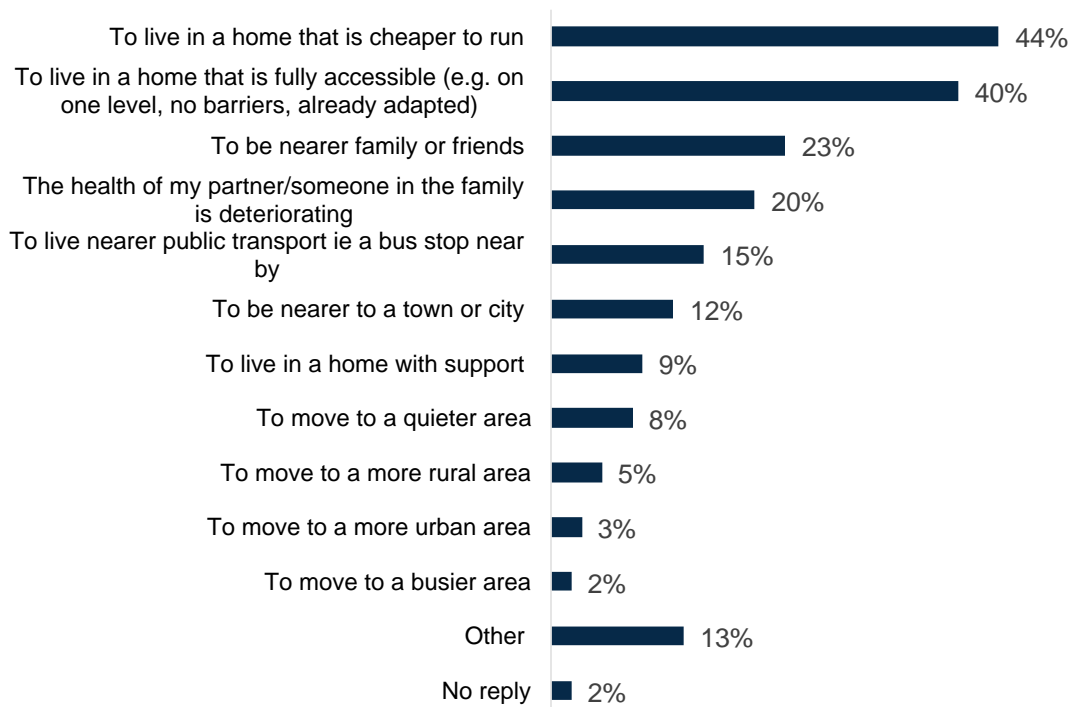
## 6.5 Reasons for moving home

The 368 respondents who had intentions at some stage of moving home were asked their main reasons for doing so. The cost of running their current home was clearly an issue with 44% stating that they want to live in a home that was cheaper to run. Accessibility was also key – 40% wanted to live in a home that was fully accessible ie on one level, no barriers, already adapted.

Proximity to family/friends was selected by 23% of respondents and public transport (15%) and nearer to a town or city (12%) were also reasons for moving.

### Chart 6.4: Reasons for moving home

Base = those with intentions of moving (368)



Comments regarding 'other' reasons for moving home are reported below.



*'I would love a little bungalow or OAP flat with a patio or a small garden (any outside personal space).'*



*'Cheaper heating system. Communal heating systems e.g. water heating - solar panels - communal laundry'*



*'Accessible outdoor area so I am not stuck indoors when less able - garden. I grow plants and would miss this.'*



*'Same size with own garden, close to granddaughter who is a carer, and access to her grandchildren.'*

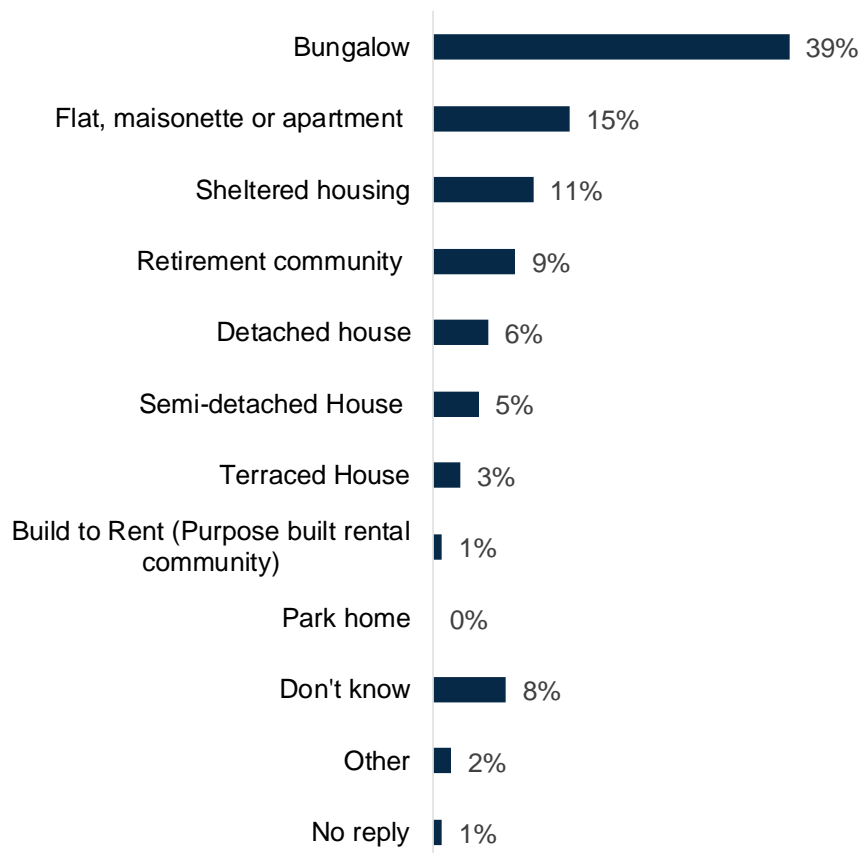
## 6.6 Type of property

Respondents with intentions of moving (368) were most likely to select a bungalow (39%) than any other property type. This reflects the findings from previous years.

Respondents' preferences suggest, as in previous years, a preference for a property without stairs.

### Chart 6.5: Preferred type of property

Base = those with intentions of moving (368)

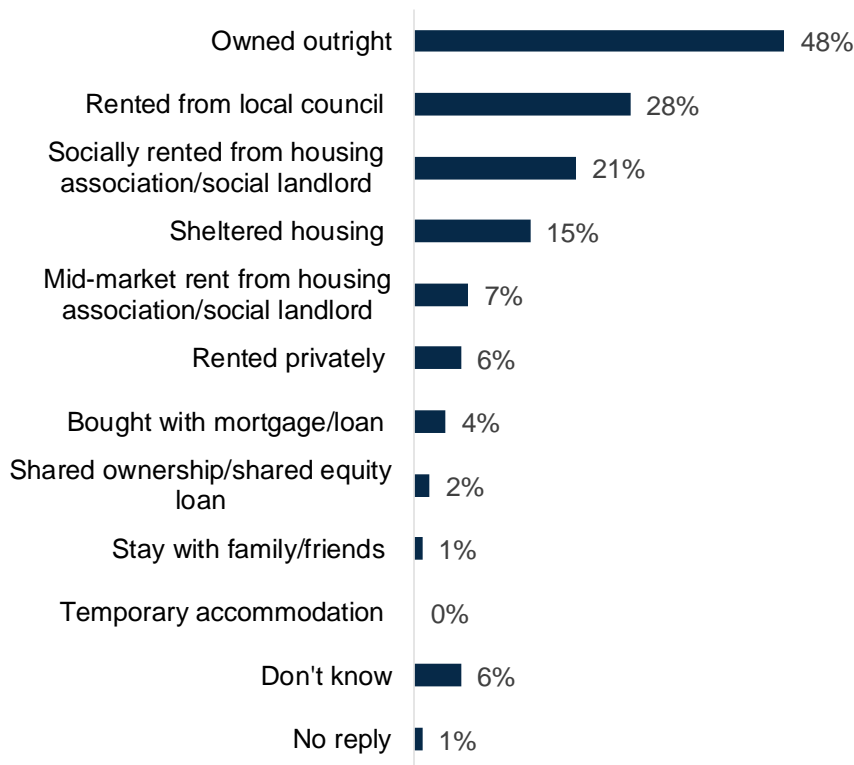


## 6.7 Property ownership

Looking ahead, respondents' preference was for a property they owned outright (48%) with 28% renting from the Council. 15% would be seeking sheltered housing.

### Chart 6.6: Type of property when moving

Base = those who intentions of moving (368)



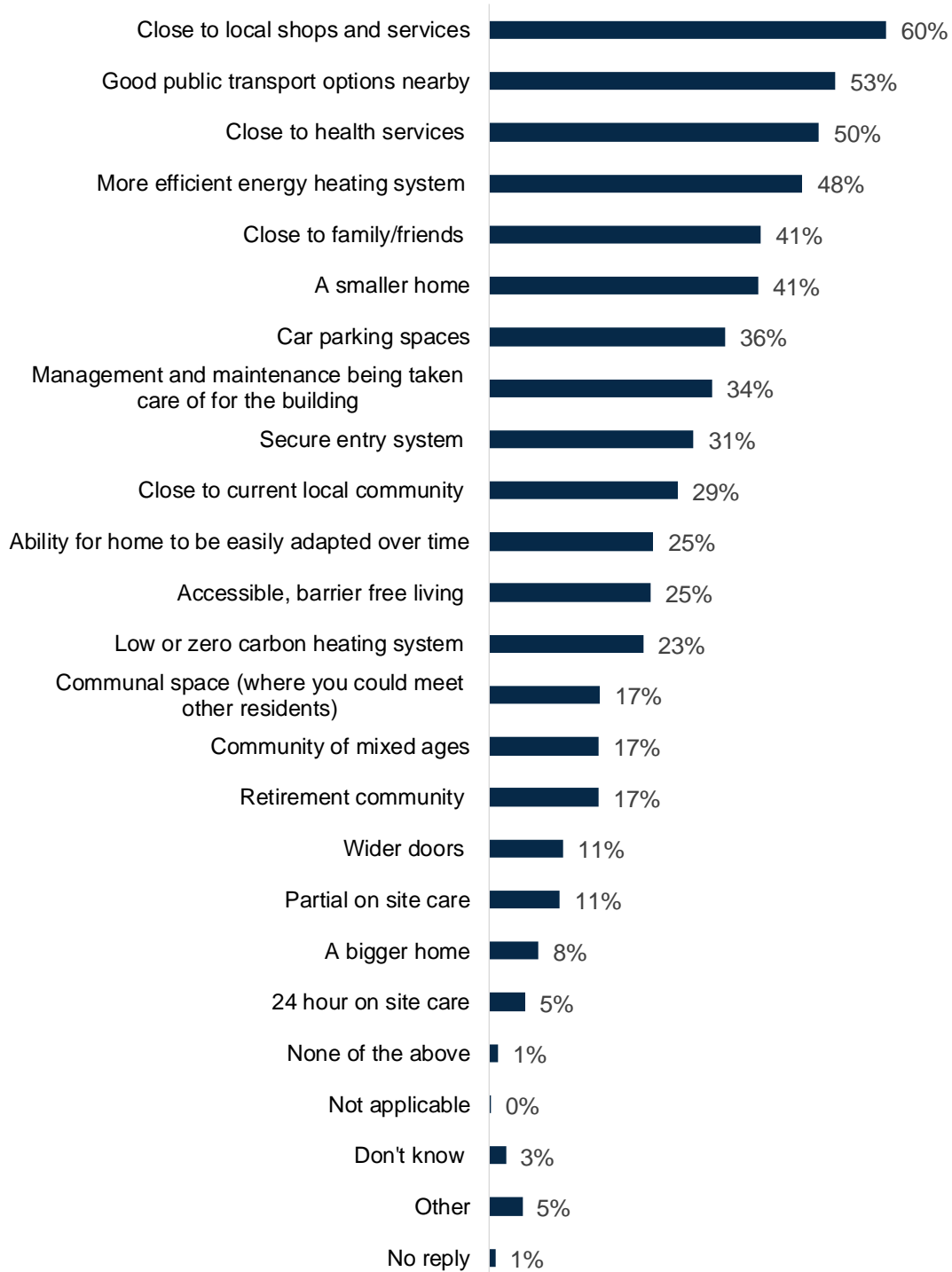
## 6.8 Features in new home

Amongst those respondents who would move because their home was currently unsuitable and/or they felt it would be unsuitable in the future, the feature they would most look for in a new home is that it would be close to local shops and services; 60% of respondents selected this option (41% in 2020), 53% would look for good public transport and 50% would want to be close to health services.

Once again, the findings suggest that social inclusion and accessibility (internally and externally) are key factors taken into consideration when considering what is required in a new home.

**Chart 6.7 Features in new home**

Base = those who stated that their current home was unsuitable and/or may become unsuitable in the future (440)



22 respondents provided 'other' responses to this question with comments included a desire to be close to family, to have space to work from home, to have a garden, to have draught free and mould free properties, for more energy efficient properties, for the property to be more accessible (ie one level, no stairs, access to garden).



*'I would love a little bungalow or OAP flat with a patio or small garden (any outside personal space).'*



*'Accessible outdoor area so I am not stuck indoors when less able. Garden, I grow plants and would miss this.'*



*'Cheaper heating system. Communal heating systems eg water heating, solar panels, communal laundry.'*



*'Damp and mould free.'*

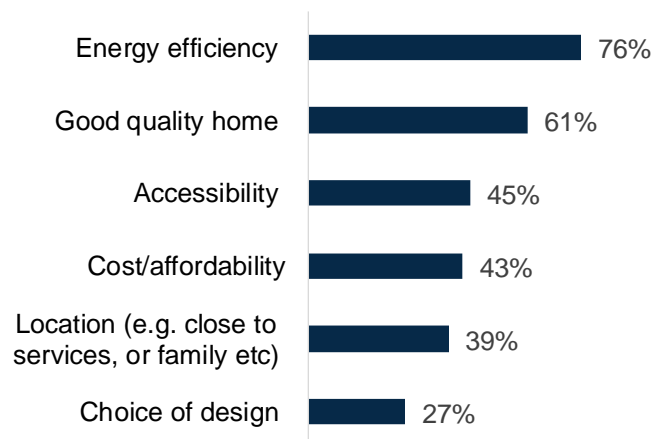
## 6.9 New build homes

27% of respondents who were considering moving home in the future would rather move to a new build property. 40% of respondents would rather move into existing housing stock and 23% responded 'don't know'.

Three quarters of respondents (76%) would choose a new build home because it was more efficient and 61% considered that it would be a good quality home.

### Chart 6.8: New builds

Base = those who would move home in the future and preference was for a new build property (99)





## 7. Private Rented Sector

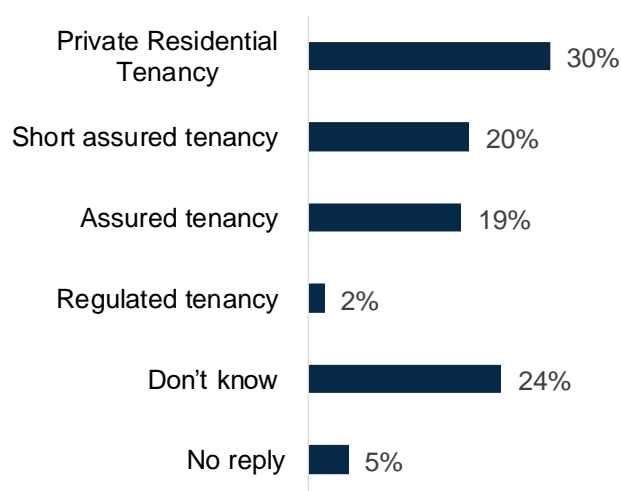
The 2023 Housing Survey featured a series of questions to be completed by respondents who lived in a privately rented home (ie not rented from the local authority or a housing association).

114 respondents lived in accommodation rented through the private sector. They were asked to select what type of private rental tenancy they had and were given a clear description of each one. In addition, respondents were asked a series of questions regarding their ability to pay rent and their experiences of any recent rent rises. It should be noted that the Cost of Living Tenant Protection Act 2022 was currently in force at time of the survey, which protected tenants from 'in tenancy' rent rises and evictions.

The majority of respondents renting within the private sector had a Private Residential Tenancy (30%) and a fifth (20%) has a Short Assured Tenancy. Of note, however, is that a quarter (24%) were unable to identify which type of tenancy they had, which illustrates a significant proportion of older tenants living in the private rented sector that may be unaware of the protections afforded to them under their tenancy agreement and therefore potentially vulnerable to poor treatment by their landlord or letting agent.

### Chart 7.1: Type of tenancy in private rented sector

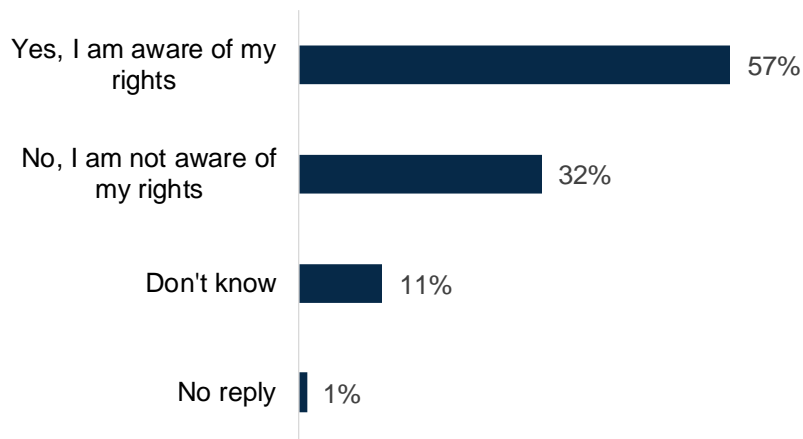
Base = respondents renting in the private sector (114)



Over half the respondents (57%) were aware of their specific rental rights under their tenancy agreement but a third (32%) were not.

### Chart 7.2: Awareness of specific rental rights

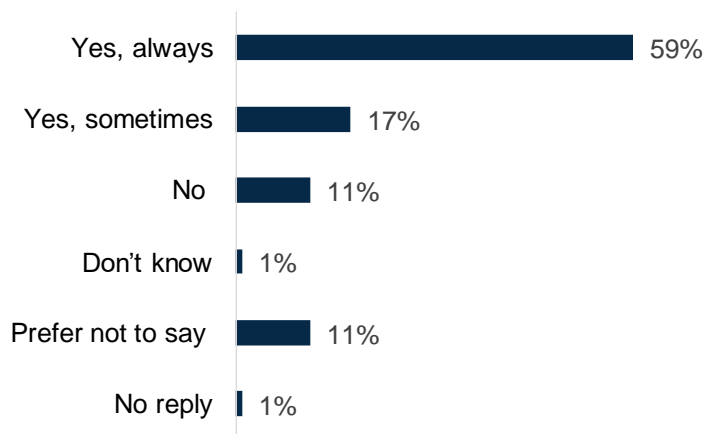
Base = respondents renting in the private sector (114)



59% of respondents renting within the private sector were always able to pay their rent and 17% are sometimes able to do so. Of note is that 11% were not able to pay their current rent.

### Chart 7.3: Ability to pay current rent

Base = respondents renting in the private sector (114)



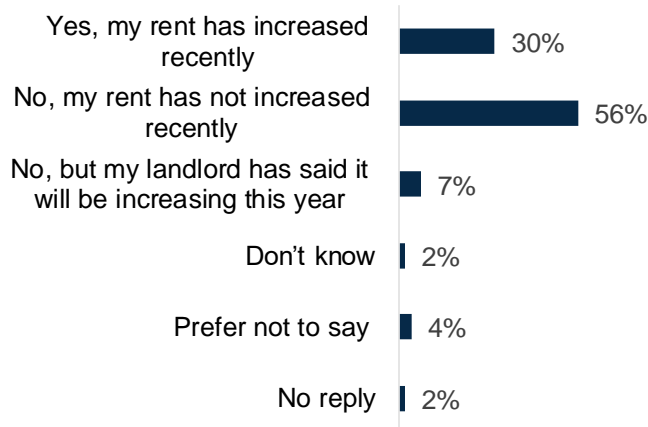
4% of respondents stated that they were currently in rent areas and 4% were worried that they may be in arrears soon.

30% had had a rent increase in the past 12 months and 7% had been told by their

landlords that their rent will be increasing this year. It should be noted that the question did not ask respondents specifically when the rent rise occurred within the last 12 months and therefore we cannot accurately determine the proportion of rent increases that occurred whilst the Tenant Protection Act was in force.

#### Chart 7.4: Increase in rent

Base = respondents renting in the private sector (114)



The 34 respondents who had had a rent increase in the past 12 months were asked if their landlord or letting agent discussed this with them in advance of the rent rise and whether they agreed with the increase.

- 20 respondents had been consulted with about the rent rise and agreed
- Seven respondents had been consulted with but they had not agreed the rent rise
- Five respondents were not consulted about the rent rise
- Two respondents provided a 'don't know' response

Of the seven respondents who disagreed with the proposed rent increase five did not take any action, two disputed the rent increase directly with their landlord and one disputed it with their letting agent. (Note: one respondent provided more than one response to this question.)

None of the respondents who disputed their rent increased reached a fair settlement (eg the rent was not raised, or the rent was raised less than initially proposed).

15% of those renting in the private sector had made alterations to their home to carry

out day to day activities. These alterations included hand rails/grab rails, installation of a wet room, changes to the bathroom, installation of a camera door bell, adding ceiling fans, adding carpets throughout, changes to the garden.

Of the 17 respondents who had made an alteration to their home 11 had the consent of their landlord or letting agent to do so but five had not asked their landlord/letting agent. One respondent did not provide a response. Sixteen of these respondents had self-funded the alterations to their property and one had financed it through grant funding, despite funding being available at a local authority level to help deliver major adaptations such as wet rooms for private tenants who require it either at an 80% or 100% grant level. In addition it should be noted tenants can apply to their landlord to install the provision of 'auxiliary aids' if they are disabled and these would help them use the facilities within the property with greater ease. Auxiliary aids include the replacement, provision or removal of furniture, furnishing or materials, and the replacement of taps, door handles and door entry systems.

## 8. Homelessness

A question added to the survey in 2020 and repeated in 2023 asked if respondents had ever been homeless, were at risk of becoming homeless, or worried about their future in terms of homelessness.

Three quarters of respondents (79%) had neither been homeless nor threatened with homelessness in that period. 16% provided a '*prefer not to say*' response or skipped this question.

Of note, however, is that:

- 17 of the respondents were homeless/threatened with homelessness in the last five years
- 31 were homeless/threatened with homelessness in the last 6-10 years
- Five were currently threatened with homelessness (three aged 55-64 and two aged 75+)
- Three were currently homeless (two were aged 55-64 and one aged 65-74).

The main reason for becoming homeless/threatened with homelessness was action by a landlord but seven selected action by their lender and dispute within their household.

Thirteen respondents provided other' respondents to this question which included:



*'Step children inherited home in my late husband's will. I was evicted despite being married 10+ years. Home currently sold.'*



*'I was ill, had to sell home with nowhere else to go.'*



*'Coming back from living overseas.'*



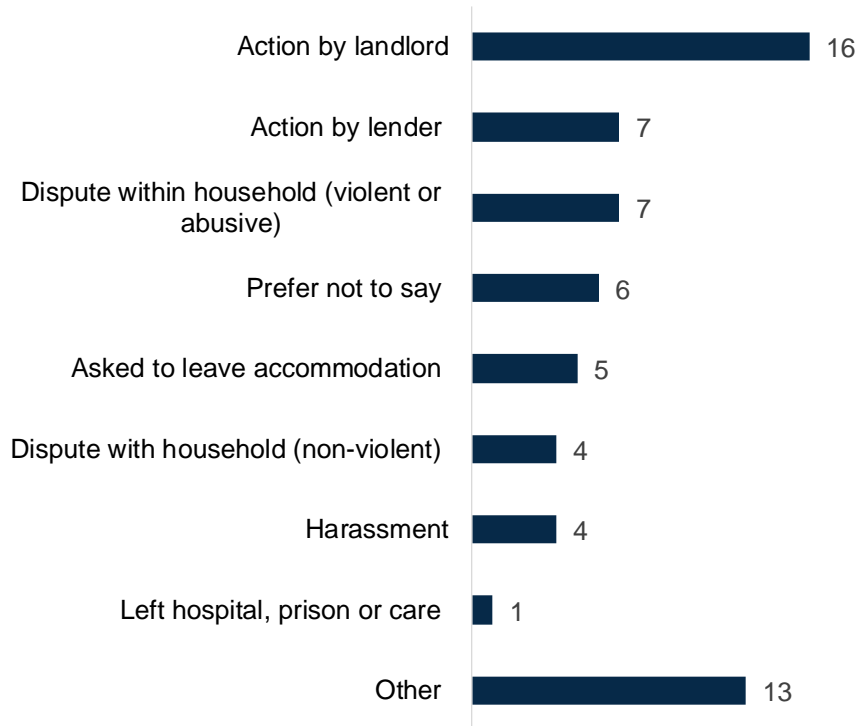
*'Bankrupt.'*



*'Mother-in-law threatened homelessness when husband got terminal cancer.'*

**Chart 8.1: Reasons for being homeless/threatened with homelessness**

Base = respondents who were homeless/threatened with homelessness (56)

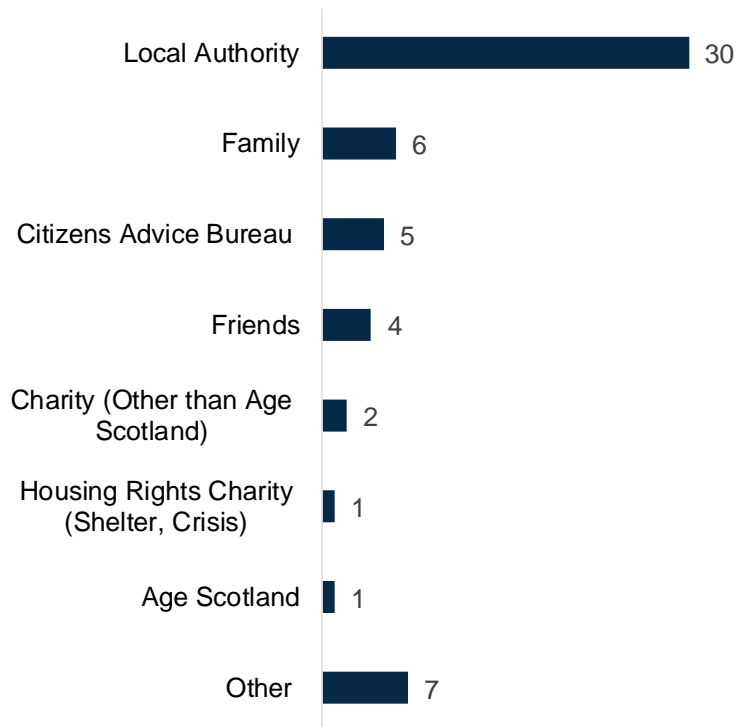


Respondents were asked who they first contacted for help when they became homeless/threatened with homelessness.

The majority (30 of the 56 respondents) had contacted their local authority. Charities contacted by respondents included Women's Aid (two respondents) and Cyrenians (one). Others contacted by respondents included the police, the Housing Officer at the Council, search engine for available housing/flats, the internet and rural estates.

### Chart 8.2: Point of contact when becoming homeless/threatened with homelessness

Base = respondents who were homeless/threatened with homelessness (56)



Eleven respondents had a decision made by their local authority regarding their eligibility for permanent accommodation and this came within 28 days. 30 respondents, however, had not had a decision made by their local authority, One respondent was still waiting for a decision (and it's within 28 days) whilst nine were still waiting for a decision and this exceeded the 28 days.

Eleven respondents were provided with suitable settled/permanent accommodation that met their needs within a reasonable time but 32 were not. Seven were still waiting for a decision (and this was longer than 28 days).

## 9. Local Community and Area

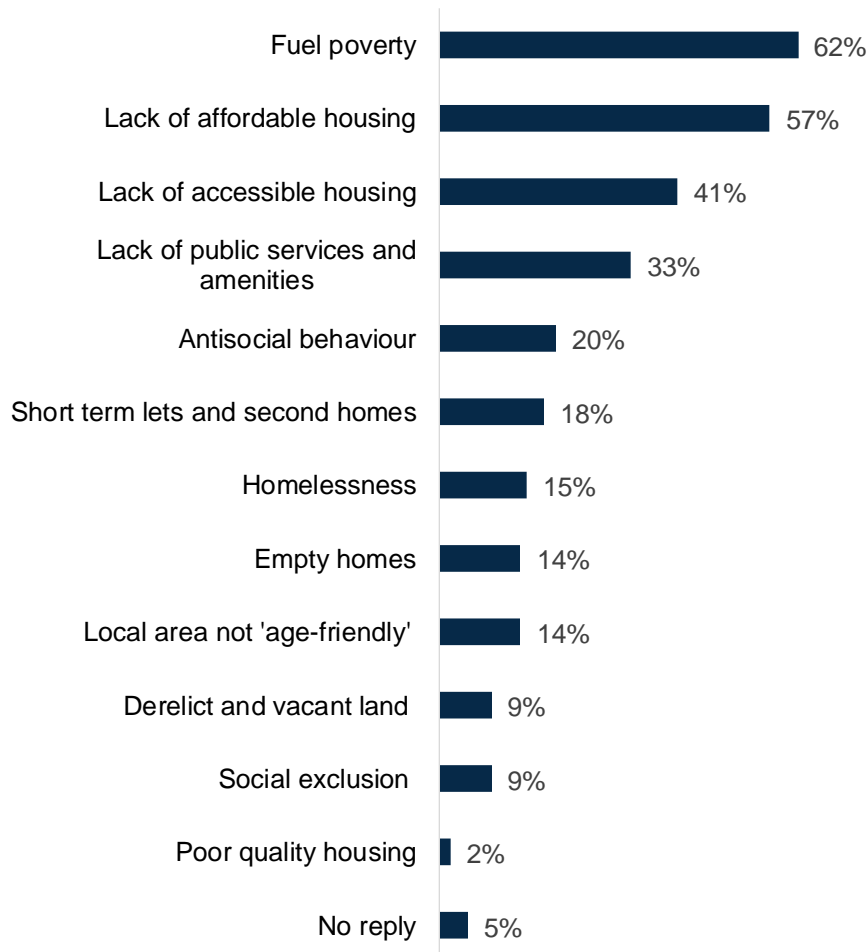
In this section, respondents were asked about local housing issues, 20 Minute Neighbourhoods and their local community.

### 9.1 Housing issues

Respondents considered that fuel poverty and the lack of affordable housing (62% and 57%) were the most important housing issues in their local area. Lack of accessible housing and lack of public services and amenities were selected by 41% and 33% of respondents.

#### Chart 9.1: Local housing issues

Base = all respondents

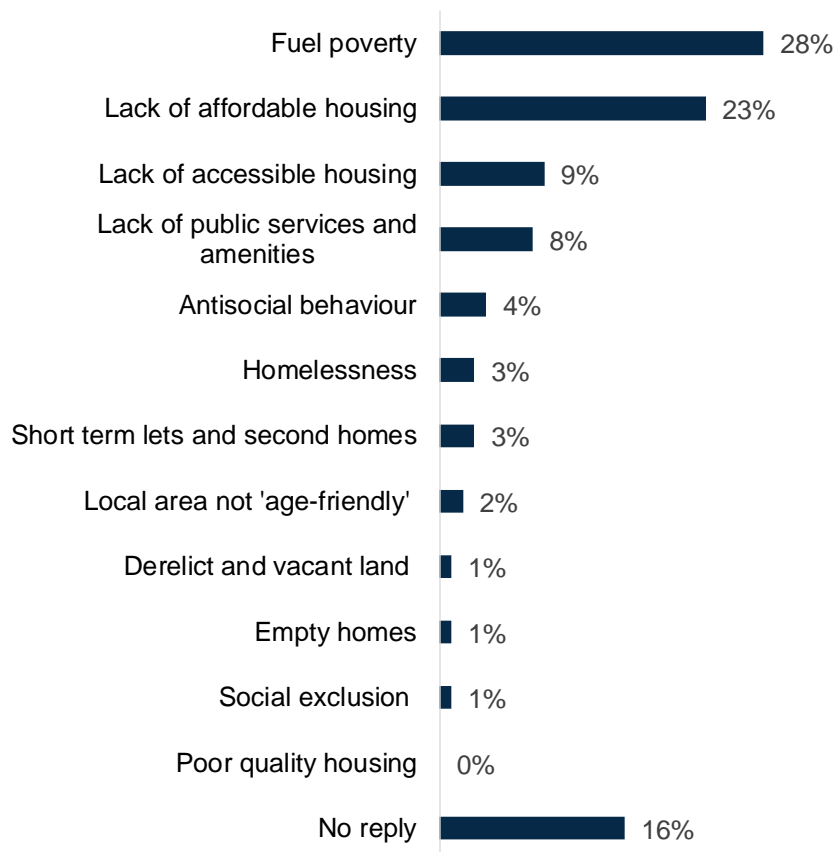




When asked to select the housing issue that was the most important to them – the top five issues highlighted in Chart 7.1 also appeared in Chart 7.2 below.

### Chart 9.2: Most important local housing issue

Base = all respondents



When analysing the most important housing issues by local authority we have specifically looked at those areas where the sample sizes were above 60 respondents. Of note, is that the level of importance tended to vary between urban and rural areas.

In City of Edinburgh Council area where 86 respondents resided, they selected the following as the most important housing issues in their area: lack of affordable housing (37%), fuel poverty (10%) and lack of accessible housing (7%). These were also seen as the key housing issues by those living in the City of Glasgow local authority area (88 respondents): fuel poverty (33%), lack of affordable housing (25%) and lack of accessible housing (9%). Similarly, those living in the South Lanarkshire area (63 respondents) chose these issues with 32% selecting fuel poverty, 14% lack

of affordable housing and 13% lack of accessible housing. Seventy-six respondents were located in Fife and considered the following to be the key housing issues in their local authority area: fuel poverty (29%), lack of affordable housing (26%) and lack of public services and amenities (12%). Lastly, 62 respondents from the Highlands area selected fuel poverty (29%), lack of affordable housing (27%), lack of public services and amenities as well as short-term lets and second homes (8% respectively).

An open-ended question captured concerns respondents had about the lack of appropriate housing for older people (ie sheltered), antisocial behaviour of neighbours impacting on their lives, poor public transport, pressures on local health services, the mix of neighbours in buildings with Council/non-Council tenants.



*All the above need to be looked at. All public services and environment need to be improved drastically. We are in an ageing society that have worked, paid out and supported our community to be undervalued and under-resourced and totally disrespected. Very sad indeed. Sad part of all is that the police are under-resourced and can't be counted on to treat a call urgently no matter how much they seem to say they try. Antisocial behaviour, litter and drug fuelled environments make it very unsafe to walk about on your own without feeling very highly anxious.'*



*'Management fees for pensioners when I bought my house they were £30 - they are now £192.'*



*'Not enough sheltered housing - affordable care homes.'*



*'Putting tenants who have antisocial behaviour problems in flats next to elderly people (especially lone females) making life difficult.'*



*'Single people living in 3 or more bedroom houses when they could downsize making houses available for families more in need.'*



*'Housing associations not interested in elderly.'*



*'Lack of retirement housing in the public sector. Day care facilities vastly reduced. Extensive building in the private market with no older people housing provision included.'*



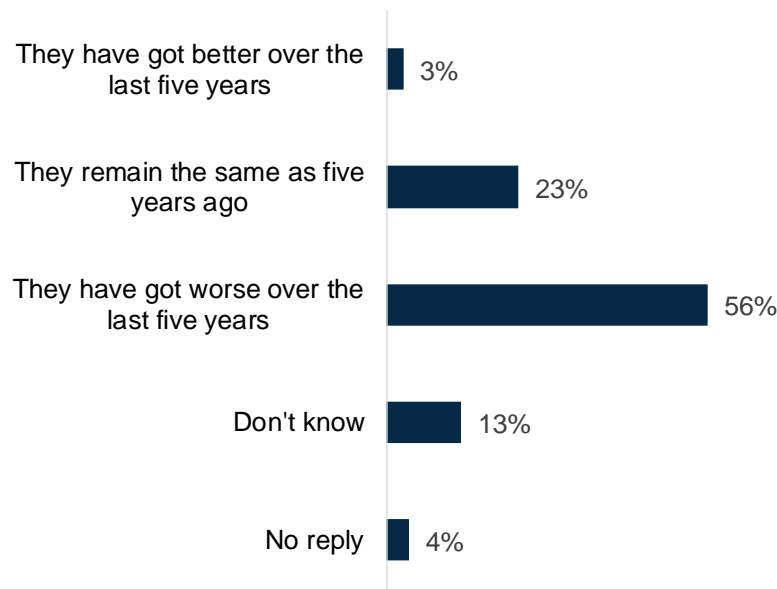
*'Council housing stock is very old with large gardens. Not fitting for those who can't manage gardening and want a smaller house but don't want to move from familiar area. Little incentive to move.'*

Respondents were then asked if they felt that the issues they had selected had got better or worse over the last five years.

Over half the respondents (56%) considered that housing issues had got worse over the last five years with just 3% selecting that they had got better in that time period.

### Chart 9.3: Whether housing issues had got better/worse

Base = all respondents



In terms of what local authorities could/should do to improve housing for older people, respondents wanted more houses to be built, homes for those wishing to downsize, affordable housing, affordable assisted living, more rental property and more social housing. There was also an interest in the concept of retirement villages and a request that repairs were carried out more quickly. Respondents are also keen that local authorities fully engage with their older residents to find out their needs. One respondent accused their local authority of staying at their desks rather than meeting with residents.



*'Listen to what older people want Maybe involve them in planning future projects. Imagine how they might want their older relatives to live.'*



*'Encourage the development of retirement villages with a full range of amenities and services similar to those that exist in many parts of England.'*



*'Drastically cut rent prices for council and housing association tenants. People that have paid rent on a property for 30+ years should not have to continue paying the full amount as they have paid for the price of the house in that time!'*



*'Retirement village and perhaps a 'trade in scheme' for sale of home when moving into one.'*



*'Provide smaller properties to enable older people to move to and allow growing families access to larger houses.'*



*'Build more affordable homes, with a small garden and outdoor space, in rural areas. Local Authorities should consider re introducing the Sheltered Housing schemes where a warden lives within the community housing. Many of the Wardens were got rid of a few years ago.'*



*'Look at more community housing models, age restrictions within an "area" with social outlets within to allow the ability to join in and not feel isolated.'*



*'When building new houses think about making all houses suitable for older people/people with disabilities. Older people will then not have to think about moving as needs change.'*



*'Ensure it's well insulated and as far as possible affordably heated. Do an annual maintenance check on access points, ramps, steps, rails. At the same time speak to the tenant to ensure they know how to operate heating and hot water to their best financial advantage.'*



*'Provide more social housing in rural areas. People like us who have lived and worked in rural areas often wish to continue to do so but have to move to urban areas often having to find new GP's Dentist, social networks etc.'*

Issues other than housing were also raised such as improving services, amenities, improving roads (ie potholes) and antisocial behaviour.



*'Have 'home' check-ups after a certain age i.e.70 to ensure appropriate signposting for any help.'*



*'Bring back cottage hospitals for recovery and physical therapy. Build more residential care homes where people can go to live without having to be unable to live alone. This care in the community programme does not work and creates loneliness.'*



*'You have to go to towns for services. Public transport is poor. Fuel is costly. Nothing available in villages. Older people are neglected. No bank facility. Involve in discussions. Send out information. We do get a library van and fish retailers van and milkman.'*



*'There is no care for older people. We seemed to be left out and just have to get on with it.'*

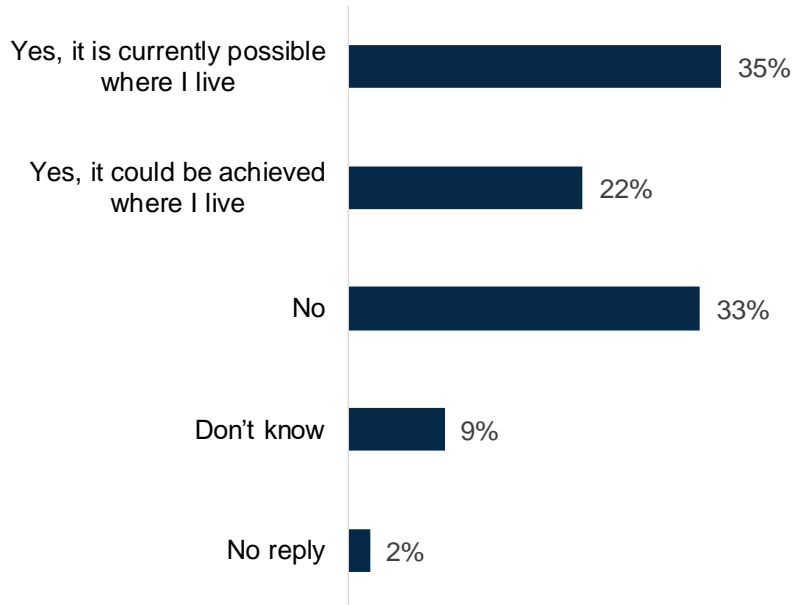
## 9.2 20 Minute Neighbourhoods

The Scottish Government has highlighted the concept of the 20 minute neighbourhood to facilitate the growth and sustainability of local places across Scotland. The main idea behind this is to ensure people can access all essential local services and facilities within a 20 minute journey, for example an accessible 10 minute walk to and from their home.

Respondents were asked if they felt this was currently possible where they lived, and if not, if they felt it could be. Whilst a third of respondents (35%) felt it was currently possible where they lived a further third (33%) felt it was not.

**Chart 9.4: 20 Minute Neighbourhoods**

Base = all respondents



41% of respondents living in other urban areas and 41% living in accessible small towns felt that 20 minute neighbourhoods were currently possible where they lived. 38% of those living in large urban areas also agreed that this was the case along with 24% of those residing in accessible rural areas. Just 13% of respondents living in remote local areas felt that it was currently possible where they lived.

76% of respondents living in remote rural areas and 55% in accessible rural areas did not think 20 minute neighbourhoods were possible where they lived.

The questionnaire then went on to ask what services and facilities respondents felt were required in a 20 minute neighbourhood. The responses feature in Charts 9.5 and 9.6 on the following pages. Not surprisingly, perhaps, respondents living in remote rural areas were less likely than those living in urban areas to have services such as a hospital, opticians or audiologists within a 20 minute journey from their home.

The services which respondents felt were essential to have in a 20 minute neighbourhood were a bank (34%), a GP (29%), Post Office (27%) and a mixture of housing types (27%). Please note the high percentage of respondents who did not provide a response to this question.

### Chart 9.5: Services in a 20 minute neighbourhood

Base = all respondents

Services	Already have within 20 minutes of where I live	Essential to have in a 20 minute neighbourhood	Not essential to have but useful	Not essential to have	No response
	%	%	%	%	%
Bank	28	34	20	5	16
GP	60	29	6	1	11
Post office	54	27	9	1	14
Mixture of housing types (private, rented, socially rented, retirement etc)	35	27	14	5	23
Hospital	22	25	24	8	23
Community spaces	37	25	13	3	27
Pharmacy	65	24	5	1	13
Dentist	44	24	17	3	17
Council offices and services	21	22	26	9	25
Library	43	18	16	5	22
Opticians	40	16	24	5	19
Nursery school	37	16	11	11	30
Primary school	45	15	8	9	28
Audiologist	15	12	31	13	31
Secondary school	30	13	18	12	31

The facilities which respondents considered to be essential to have in a 20 minute neighbourhood were accessible toilets (41%), good digital connectivity/public Wi-Fi (35%), buses and local bus stops (30%), supermarket (28%) and a greengrocer (27%). Please note the high percentage of respondents who did not provide a response to this question.

**Table 9.6: Facilities in a 20 minute neighbourhood**

Base = all respondents

Facilities	Already have within 20 minutes of where I live	Essential to have in a 20 minute neighbourhood	Not essential to have but useful	Not essential to have	No response
	%	%	%	%	%
Accessible toilets	17	41	17	4	22
Good digital connectivity/public Wi-Fi	34	35	8	2	24
Buses and local bus stops	61	30	2	0	15
Supermarket	47	28	12	2	16
Greengrocer	25	27	20	4	26
Local parks/green space	55	23	6	1	22
Convenience store	55	22	8	1	20
Cafes	43	20	17	4	21
Petrol station	39	20	19	5	22
Butcher	36	20	19	6	22
Trains	29	17	24	8	25
Sports facilities	31	16	21	8	27
Restaurants	38	14	22	7	25
Entertainment venues (theatres, cinemas etc)	15	14	34	12	27
Pubs	39	9	19	4	25
Trams	2	5	18	38	37

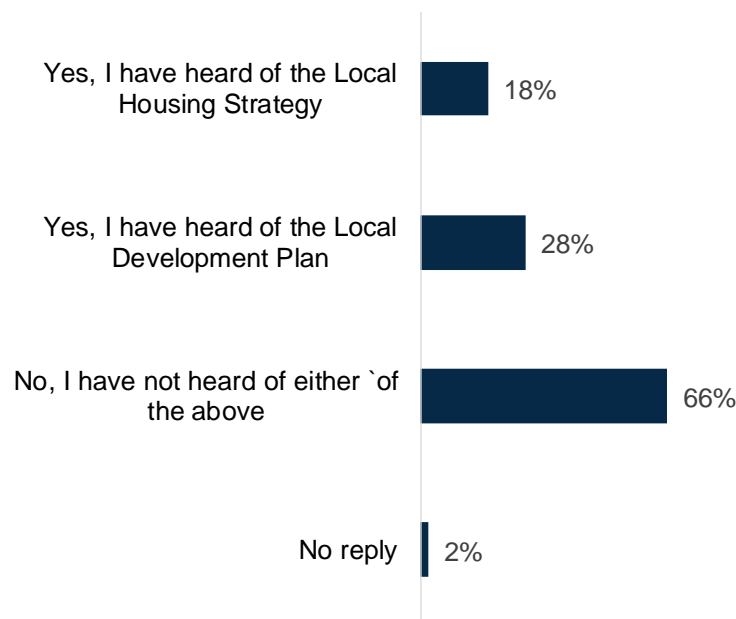


### 9.3 Statutory consultations

Before completing the survey two thirds of respondents (66%) were not aware of either the Local Housing Strategy or the Local Development Plan. The Housing Scotland 2001 requires that Local Authorities consult on their Local Housing Strategy which is to be developed approximately every five years and that engagement and consultation should be carried out with as wide a range of local residents and tenants and communities of interest as possible. It often offers local residents the best possible chance to help influence the future of their communities including the delivery of housing and housing related services.

#### Chart 9.7: Awareness of statutory consultations

Base = all respondents



### 9.4 Views on local housing issues

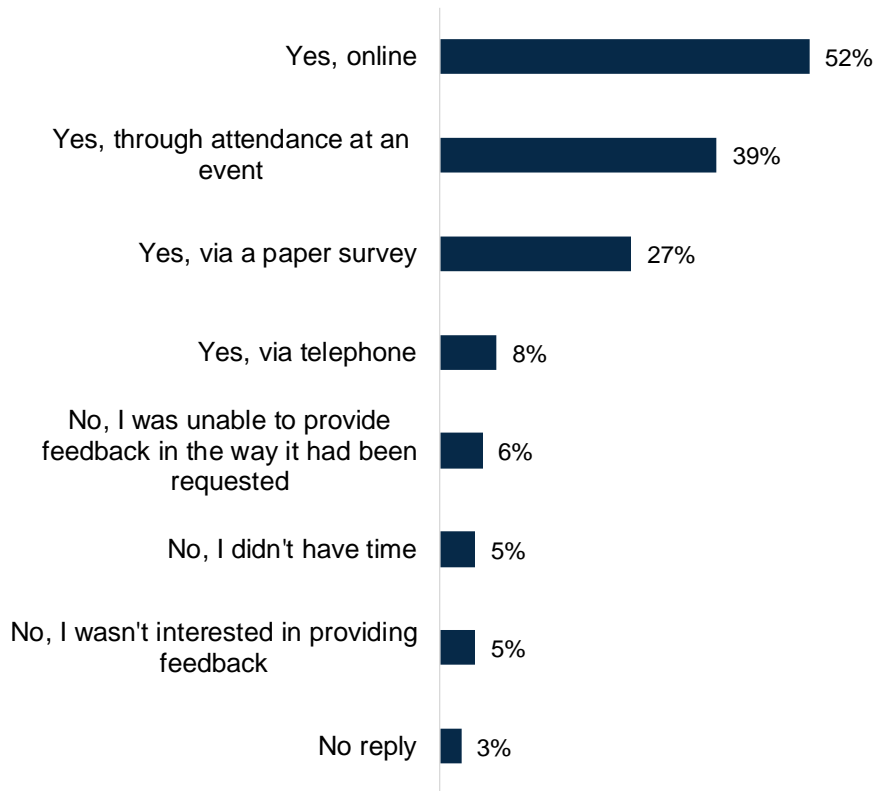
Just 13% of respondents stated that their local authority had engaged with them directly or via a local group to ask their views on local housing issues.

The majority of the 147 respondents who had been asked to provide feedback on local issues had done so online. The findings suggest that there were a number of ways in which feedback was sought but 6% of respondents were unable to provide

feedback in the way it had been requested.

### Chart 9.8: Feedback on local issues

Base = all respondents who had engaged with local authority (147)



## 9.5 Local authorities and needs of older population

Respondents were asked whether they thought that their local authority actively takes the needs of its older population into consideration when developing new places, public facilities or transport. 16% of respondents felt that their local authority did take into consideration their needs but 55% did not. A quarter of respondents (26%) responded 'don't know' and 2% provided no response to this question.

19% of respondents living in accessible small towns felt their local authority engaged with older people, 17% of those living in other urban areas shared this view along with 16% in large urban areas. 14% of respondents living in accessible rural areas and 12% of those in rural remote areas agreed that this was the case. Clearly there is more that local authorities could be doing to proactively engage with older people on the issues that matter most to them.

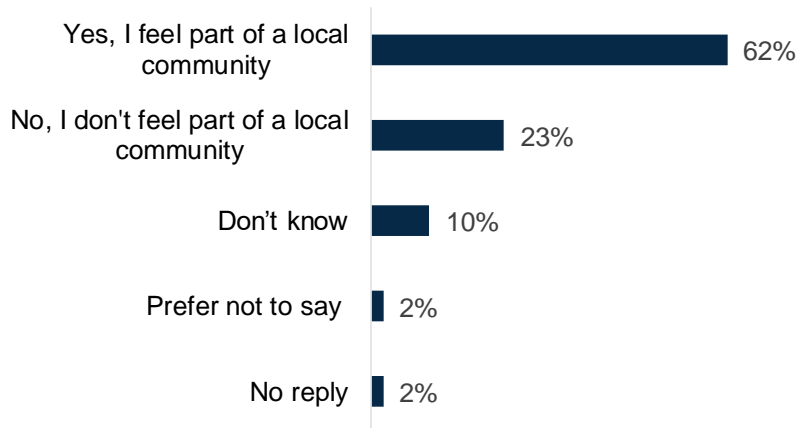
## 9.6 Local community

62% of respondents considered themselves to be part of a local community. 23% of respondents, however, did not feel part of their local community.

74% of respondents living in accessible rural areas, 73% in remote rural areas and 70% in remote small towns felt part of a local community in comparison with 62% residing in other urban areas, 61% in accessible small towns and 53% in large urban areas.

### Chart 9.9: Part of all local community

Base = all respondents



63% felt that their local area is a good place to grow older and would be happy/am happy to grow older there. Their reasons included: a feeling of being part of a community, good neighbours, green spaces, good public transport, friendly areas, access to facilities and services, feeling safe and proximity to family.



*'It has many facilities. It is a small enough community to provide a "friendly" environment. It provides possibilities (but not certainties!) for suitable accommodation if there is a need to "move-on".'*



*'There are like-minded people in my area. People from all age groups live nearby. The local convenience store is within easy reach. There is a local bus to nearby areas.'*



*'It's generally a quiet street where people say hello and I think it would be noticed if I wasn't seen for a few days. There are shops nearby (Lidl, Boots, Farmfoods, convenience store).'*



*'It is pretty safe, clean not too much traffic and I have good neighbours.'*



*'I have excellent neighbours and a local shop and takeaway within 5 minutes. Doctor surgery 10 minute walk.'*



*'Good because I feel safe and the housing association makes sure I am alright.'*



*'My local area is a good place to live as I grow older. We have all the all the necessary services and most facilities within walking distance.'*



*'Very active although relatively small community. Good generational mixing and social interactions. Plenty and various types of local groups.'*



*'It is in the countryside, and as long as one can walk, drive a car, taken a bus, one can access all the facilities and amenities one needs. We have an active local area with a village hall.'*



*'Livingston is a very nice place to be. As we have good roads, M8, A9, good shopping centre. There are many good aspects for Livingston.'*



*'Sandbank is a small village where most folk know and help one another. Life is much slower than big towns/cities, has beautiful scenery. The only thing is lack of shops, but Dunoon is only 3 miles away.'*



*'The local community is very good, always willing to help and tries to find ways to prevent loneliness. Certain people do a lot of good work.'*

22% of respondents, however, felt that their local area was not a good area in which to grow older and their reasons included: a lack of community spirit, anti-social behaviour, lack of infrastructure, limited access to services and facilities including health services, feeling isolated, poor housing stock and inability to have direct contact with local authority.



*'Few modern facilities and public buildings, difficult for people who need public transport to access hospital and other essential services, very poor walking route, lack of pavements and light controlled crossings. Shops hard to get into or get round, poor lighting and cramped. Quite a few have steps to get in and inside. Too few walks available off road and starting from the town. There's only three, only one links to another community. Lack of taxis only one firm. Nearest train station not accessible by public transport!'*



*Very poor public transport, no local council offices, in winter conditions no gritting or snow clearance facilities, no street lighting yet we still have to pay the same council tax as areas with all these facilities.*



*I am lonely. I don't like pubs or bingo. There is nowhere pleasant to meet people.*



*'I live up a hill I have shops close but everything else is down the hill. No one contacts about anything. All on Facebook nowadays. No other means of communication now seemingly. You have to annoy people to get blood tests. Getting doctor's appointment is through phone calls and maybe eventually a visit to the doctor. Never hear from anyone. Thankfully at this moment I am still not too bad although I do have health issues. God knows what's going to happen in the future as relatives do not stay close to help out quickly. So many terrible reports about care homes. I definitely don't want to go into one. Scary thought.'*



*'Not a great place due to lack of accessibility, lack of amenities, unreliable public transport, expensive taxis.'*



*'We are losing our shops - essentials for clothing and footwear. We have out of hours minor injuries building, but it's closed, so have to travel minimum 14 miles. No hospital, nearest is hour drive away. No more sheltered housing complexes - now referred to as Retirement instead. We need appropriate complexes with 24hr on call/on site wardens. We need better shops - shop local!'*



*'The Council are housing too many young antisocial tenants close to older vulnerable people.'*



*'Anti-social behaviour, lack of good policing.'*



*'Perth and Kinross council departments are poorly managed. Only one voice activated phone number for the whole council. Disgusting.'*



*'Too many undesirable violent people housed in what used to be pensioner houses, intimidating behaviour by drug dealers, too many speeding young motorists around so not safe at night. Too many undesirable people being housed out of city as they say there's nowhere else to put them. Older people are not listened too with their fears of feeling unsafe.'*



*'Glasgow is and has been developed recently mainly for the needs and requirements of the young. Which is a shame because those of us regarded as generation x, waited to be consulted about matters once we grew older, but boomers, seem to have then ignored this and passed the rights onto the young, which seems to be a relatively new concept, which is ok, but then everyone in every age group, should be consulted really. There are not a lot of restaurants, pubs or cafes or any other shops and facilities aimed at older people, and again Glasgow has a reputation of good night life opportunities for the young, which don't appeal obviously to older generations either. There are also few considerations to the requirements of older people, like taxis, which are currently being reduced due to early introduction of environment air emissions zones, and for seats, rest areas, shops with actual assistance, or cashiers, and the option of using cash. I do think that the short sightedness with which introductions are being placed, is negative, because we don't have any long term experiences of how it will on pan out, but trusted, tried and tested ways of doing things, seem to be like throwing all caution to the wind. You don't feel as valued, or important to the government as you age, and for a lot of us, this is also a new negative experience, which we just didn't see coming, and therefore could not prepare for. Older previous generations seemed to get automatic respect mainly, but this seems now to have evaporated somewhat, and I also think that the government policies can be contradictory in that they are cutting back on travel via twenty minute cities, but want over 50s back in employment, when there are no*

*suitable employment opportunities either. Obviously if jobs were an attractive prospect, people would tend to flock to them more. I think also that government financial mismanagement has led to severe cutbacks and this is not helping with becoming older, because adjustments and preventative measures for keeping well, do not always come cheap. I feel that if we had learned from history about investing in public health, eradication of poverty, etc, we would not be in the current precarious situation. Moreover, even now governments are determined to forge ahead with unwelcome imposing private developments, and cycle and green avenues, which seems rather decadent, when compared to the fundamental basic funding requirements which are being cutback. Thanks for this opportunity to explain these matters, and for taking an interest in the future of the older people.'*

## 10. Cost of Living

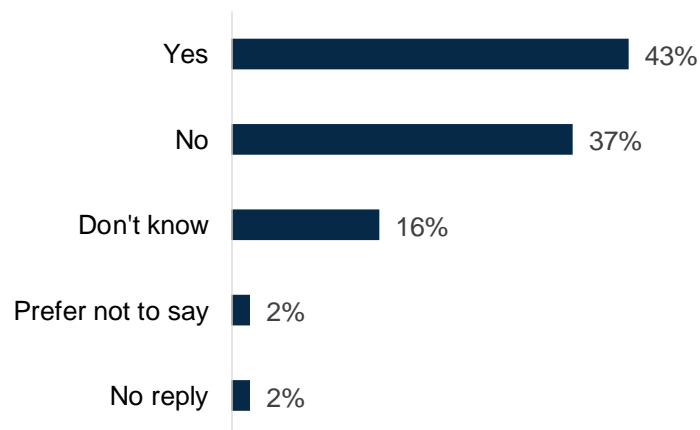
This section of the questionnaire asked questions about fuel poverty, how respondents heated their homes and how much this cost. Respondents were also asked about any increases in housing costs they had experienced in the last 12 months.

### 10.1 Fuel Poverty

In Scotland, the definition of fuel poverty is if someone is spending more than 10% of their household income in paying for energy costs to maintain an acceptable standard of living. Based on this description, 43% of respondents considered that they lived in fuel poverty and 16% were unsure. This level of self-defined fuel poverty has remained consistent with the findings of last year's energy survey which found that 42% of older people were living in fuel poverty, and illustrates the sustained pressures of the cost of living crisis.

**Table 10.1: Fuel poverty**

Base = all respondents



### 10.2 Heating the Home

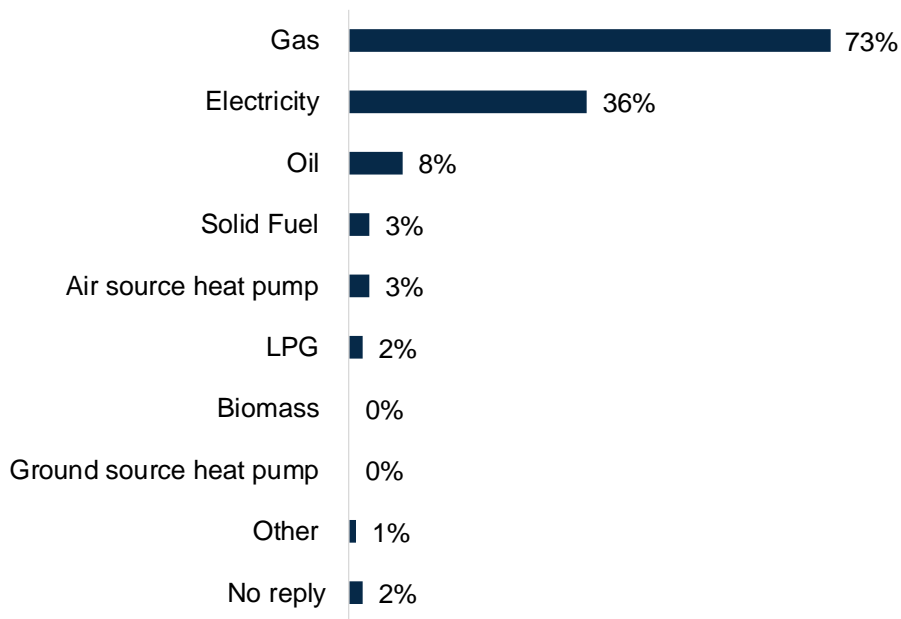
The primary heating source in most homes was gas with nearly three quarters of respondents (73%) citing this as the means by which they heated their homes. A third (36%) selected electricity. In 2020's Age Scotland Housing Survey, 65% of respondents cited gas as their primary heating source and 42% selected electricity. In the Age Scotland/SGN report, prepared in July 2022, 71% of respondents stated



that gas was their primary heat source (71% of respondents) and 25% selected electricity.

**Table 10.2: Heating of homes**

Base = all respondents



### 10.3 Cost of Fuel

The survey asked respondents to provide details of fuel bills and Table 7.1 below details the monies spent by type of fuel on a weekly, monthly or annual basis. All figures provided have been annualised for analysis purposes.

Scotinform has calculated the median annual figure based on those provided by respondents and these are detailed in Table 7.1 below. The findings should, however, be treated with caution given the response rate to this question and concerns that some of the data provided is potentially inaccurate ie annual statistics provided under the monthly column. In comparing the annual median costs from 2020 with 2023 it is clear to see that energy prices have increased significantly.

**Table 10.3: Annual Fuel Expenditure**

Base = those who provided a response to this question

Year	Gas	Electricity	Solid Fuel	Oil	Other
Median £					
Annual expense 2020 (Age Scotland Housing Survey)	600	612	160	930	90
Annual expense 2022 (Age Scotland/SGN Energy Survey)	1080	1644	600	1500	n/a
Annual expense 2023 (Age Scotland Housing Survey)	1304	1200	1200	1500	1067.50

In 2023, respondents also provided costs for other types of fuel and these include (along with their median costs):

Biomass: £3000

LPG: £1440

Air source heat pump: £1860

## 10.4 Awareness and use of energy efficiency schemes

Awareness of the Home Energy Scotland energy efficiency scheme was higher than the other two schemes with which respondents were prompted. Of note, however, is the percentage of respondents who provided no response to this question.

**Table 10.4: Awareness of energy efficiency schemes**

Base = all respondents

	Heard of but not used	Heard of and used	Neither heard of nor used	No response
	%	%	%	%
Home Energy Scotland	39	10	29	21
Warmer Homes Scotland	36	10	32	23
Local authority area based schemes	19	3	47	30

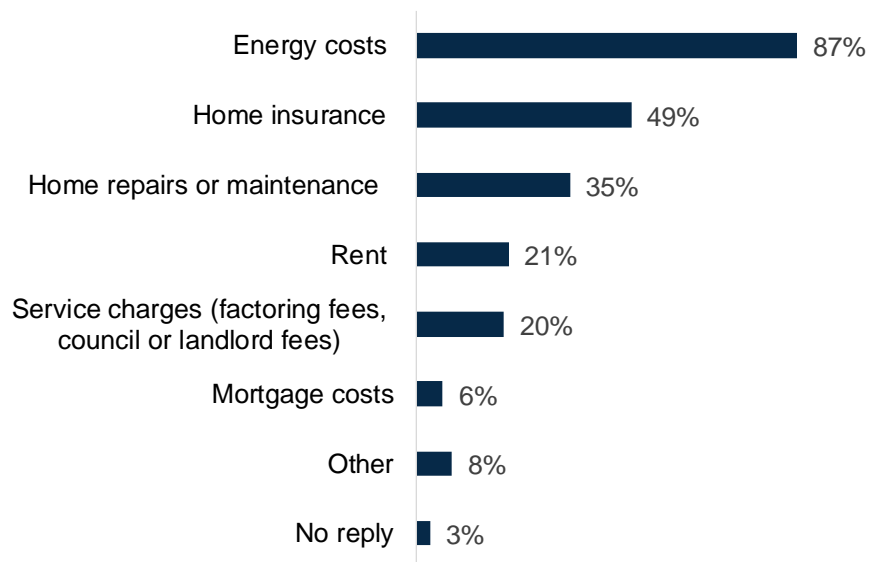
## 10.5 Increased housing costs

87% of respondents had experienced an increase in energy costs in the past 12 months. 49% had also seen an increase in their home insurance.

'Other' increases included Council Tax (mentioned by 11 respondents), broadband/telephone (three) and water rates (two).

### Chart 10.5: Increased housing costs

Base = all respondents



## 11. Conclusions

Providing the opportunity to submit a **response to the Housing Survey** either online or on paper ensures that residents aged 50+ can respond in a way that best suits them. Age Scotland clearly works hard to distribute the survey across its networks. The fact that the survey also includes open-ended questions gives respondents the opportunity to share their own experience and concerns. This is invaluable in gaining a better understanding of how older people in Scotland feel about their current and future housing situation.

This research was undertaken during a **cost of living crises** and it is clear that respondents have concerns about energy prices. This was also evidenced through the median energy costs paid by respondents annually and which have increased significantly since 2020. Awareness of energy efficiency schemes, however, is low and consideration needs to be given to how best this information can be shared more widely so that residents aged 50+ can find out what energy efficient assistance they are entitled to or could access. Similarly more consideration should be given to how best energy efficiency organisations can engage directly with older households.

The findings suggest that respondents show a clear preference as they get older to live in a property situated on one level, with smaller proportions of older households showing interest in wider property types ranging from houses to retirement communities. There were also perceptions that new build homes would be more energy efficient and of good quality. This evidence illustrates the need for local authorities to carefully plan for a mixture of property types to be delivered across their **housing stock** in the future.

The findings show that installing **adaptations** in older residents' households has an overwhelming impact on improving their overall quality of life, by making it safer and easier to access and move around their home. Given that the adaptations most commonly sought by older respondents are relatively minor in nature, such as grab rails and ramps, more action should be taken to ensure that older people know what adaptations services are available to them, including funding options, available Care and Repair Services and simple application processes.

Respondents perceived that **fuel poverty and lack of affordable housing** were the key housing issues in their local areas. Qualitative feedback also identified a lack of appropriate housing for older people, antisocial behaviour of neighbours impacting on

their lives, poor public transport and pressures on local health services. Local authorities need to give greater consideration to the housing requirements of older people which impacts on their emotional and physical needs.

Over half the respondents felt that **housing issues in their area had got worse** over the last five years. Qualitative feedback throughout the survey suggests that respondents were dissatisfied with the approach from local authorities who were not perhaps as proactive as they could be in engaging with older people and fully understanding their needs. Two thirds of respondents had not heard of the Local Housing Strategy or Local Development Plan and just 13% of respondents stated that their local authority had engaged with them directly or via a local group to ask their views on local housing issues. One respondent thanked Age Scotland for taking the time to ask their views and the charity has the opportunity to share feedback from constituents captured through this research with each council.

The study has identified that respondents consider the most important services in a **20 Minute Neighbourhood** are a bank, GP, Post Office, and a mixture of housing types. In terms of facilities, respondents considered that accessible toilets, good digital connectivity and buses and local bus stops were important. Those living in remote local areas, however, did not feel that 20 Minute Neighbourhoods were achievable in their area.

Whilst the majority of respondents felt part of their local community this was less likely for those living in urban areas. Qualitative feedback has identified that what makes a **good area for growing old** is one that provides that feeling of being part of a community, good neighbours, green spaces, good public transport, access to facilities and services and feeling safe.

**Loneliness** continues to be a key issue for older people and this most recent survey has reported an increase in the percentage of older people who always feel lonely – (7% in 2023 in comparison with 2% in 2020). In addition 44% of respondents in 2023 sometimes feel lonely and this is an increase on the 38% reported in 2020. It is unclear whether this is a legacy from the pandemic but it highlights the need for older people to live in areas where they feel safe, comfortable and part of a community that cares. This should be taken into consideration when designing 20 Minute Neighbourhoods making sure older people have access to others/local groups etc.

## 12. Recommendations

### 12.1 Accessible Housing Delivery

The Scottish Government and Local Authorities should set clear demand led targets for the delivery of age-friendly accessible properties to be met both nationally and locally. These targets should be based in demand and need led evidence that takes account of the proportion of older people living in unsuitable or inaccessible housing. These targets should be delivered alongside the national affordable housebuilding programme, with the accessibility standards these homes are being built too explicitly stated and enforced.

### 12.2 Energy Efficiency Support

#### 12.2.1 Raising Awareness and Utilisation of Energy Advice and Schemes

To drastically upscale the awareness and utilisation of energy advice and efficiency schemes in Scotland, we believe that the newly proposed National Public Energy Agency could act as a one stop shop to help streamline signposting and support referrals for older and vulnerable people to appropriate services and funding as part of its objectives to aid public understanding and awareness in accelerating transformational change in how we heat and use energy in buildings. It will be crucial that future public awareness campaigns and advertising are delivered in non-digital formats to take account of the significant number of older people without access to online services.

#### 12.2.2 Targeted Energy Efficiency Support

In addition, we are calling on the Scottish Government to use the database of low income household data it took receipt of in delivering the newly created Winter Heating Payment in Scotland to directly target households on the lowest incomes across Scotland with targeted energy efficiency support.

### 12.3 Adaptations Support

Local Authorities must meaningfully promote the availability of adaptations support in

their local area whether this is through the Scheme of Assistance of Care and Repair services to older households. The promotion should clearly advertise what adaptations can be delivered, both minor or major, coupled with what appropriate financial support is available through grant funding or loans. Information should be made available in both accessible print and online formats, and disseminated through local services and support networks such as older people's groups, community networks or health services such as GP practices and link workers to help spread awareness.

## 12.4 Private Rented Sector

With the proportion of older people living in the private rented sector increasing, there is an urgent need for the Scottish Government to expand its housing evidence specifically considering the suitability of this tenure of independent living in later life. This area of housing has not been traditionally covered in existing housing research and we need to understand more about the implications of an increase in older people living in private rent, including their awareness of tenant rights and their ability to request adaptations to their home with landlord consent.

## 12.5 Engagement with Older Households

Our evidence clearly illustrates that a majority of older households believe their Local Authority does not take the needs of its older people into consideration when developing new places, facilities or public transport. Local Authorities therefore need to clearly set out how they intend to engage with their older community and set explicit engagement targets when considering the evidence and needs of older people in developing future local housing strategies to ensure housing needs and issues are being met for everyone in the local community.

## Appendix One: Data Comparisons

In the following section we detail the data captured through surveys previously undertaken by Age Scotland to capture feedback from residents of Scotland age 50+. Across a series of surveys the same questions have been asked in order that comparisons may be drawn and trends identified although it should be noted that survey distribution methods may have differed.

The reports are:

Age Scotland, National Housing Survey 2018 (403 respondents)

Age Scotland, National Housing Survey 2020 (1,231 respondents)

Age Scotland, National Housing Survey 2023 (1,117 respondents)

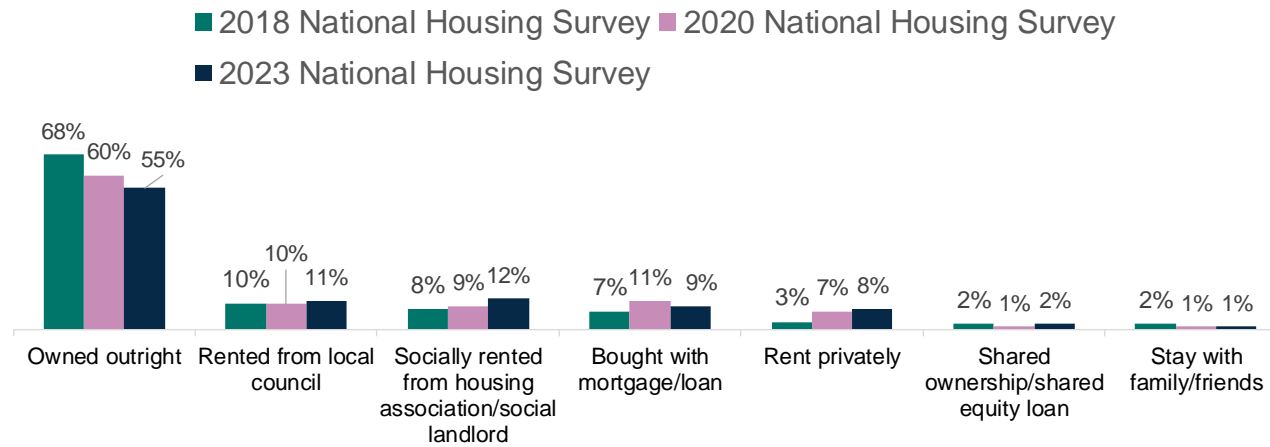
Age Scotland, Adaptations Survey 2022 2022 (277 respondents)

Age Scotland/SGN Energy Survey 2022 (1,015 respondents)



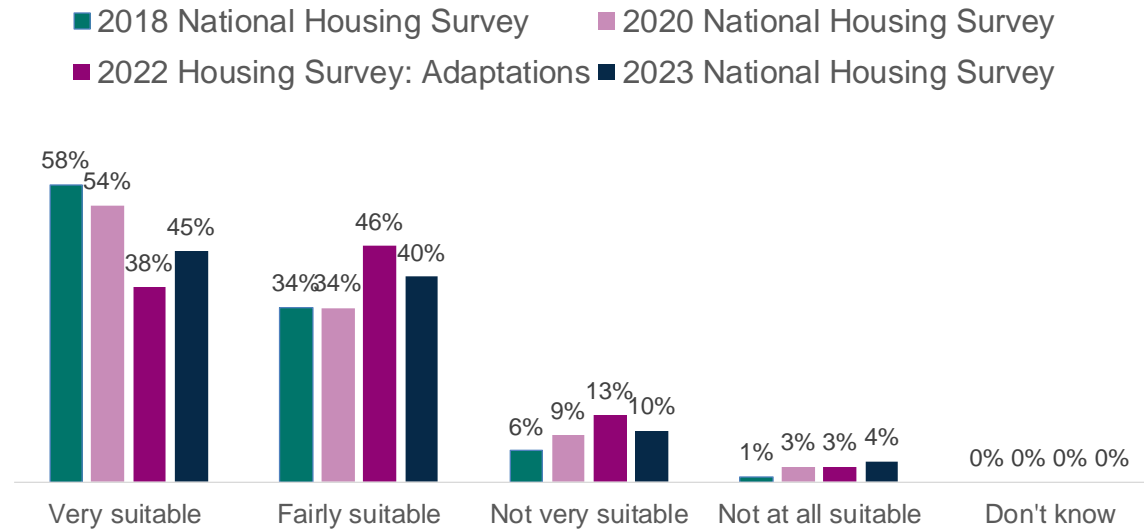
## Payment of Existing Home

The percentage of respondents who own their homes outright has decreased over the last three years and those renting is steadily increasing.



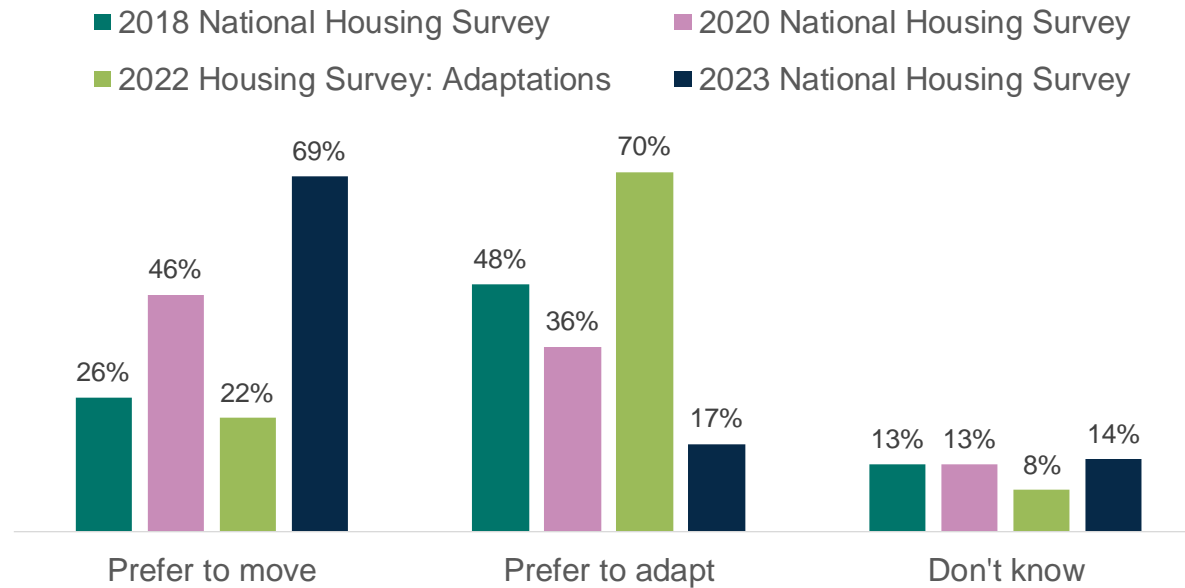
## Suitability of Home for Current Needs

Respondents across four surveys were asked how suitable their home was for their current needs. Over time we have seen a reduction in 'very suitable' responses and increase in 'not very suitable'



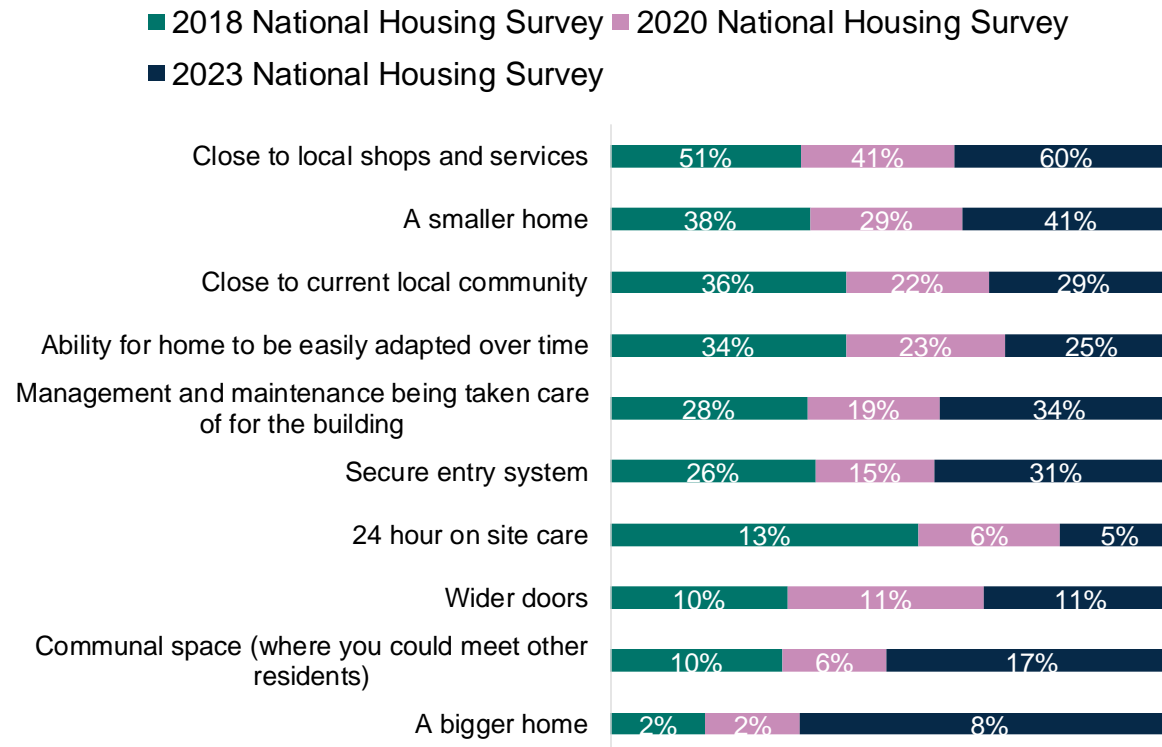
## Preference to move or adapt home

Across the three Housing Surveys, there has been an increase in the percentage of older people preferring to move home rather than adapt their existing property if their home becomes unsuitable for their needs. The Adaptations Survey conducted in 2022, however, indicated a preference for adapting rather than moving.



## Features in New Home

Increasingly older people are seeking to be close to local shops and services and close to their current community when considering moving home. They are also seeking smaller homes which can be easily adapted over time. (Base for 2018 National Housing Survey is 82, for 2020 National Housing Survey is 376 and for 2023 National Housing Survey is 368)



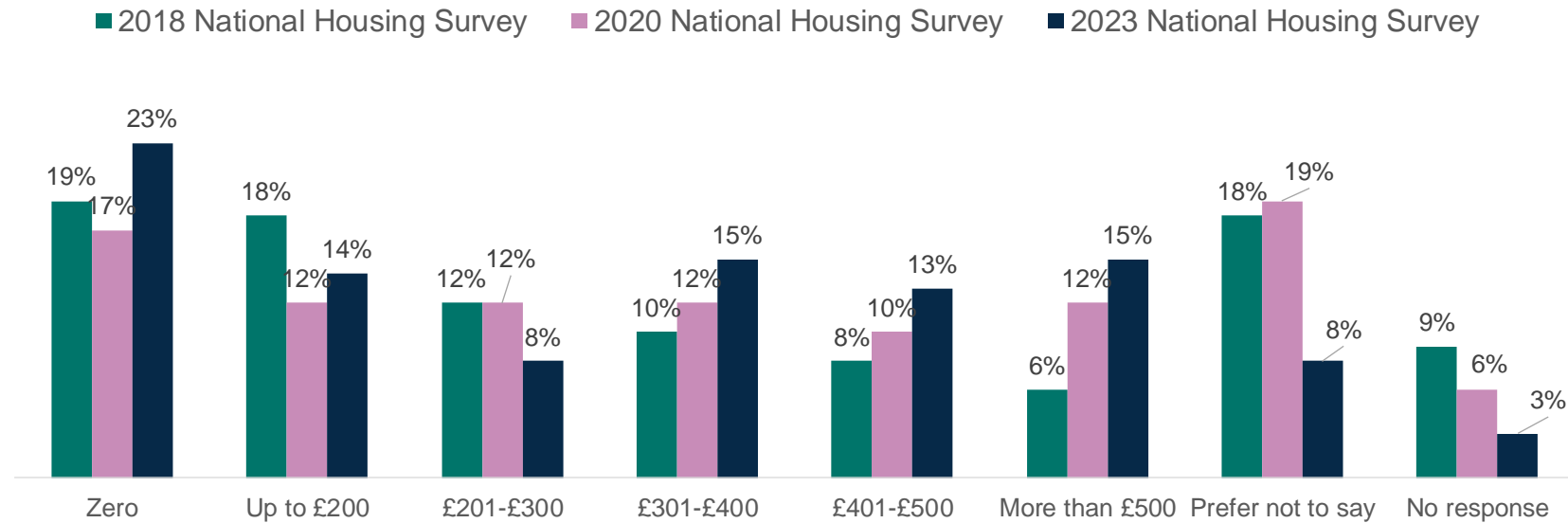
## Adaptations made to home

The most common adaptations made to homes across the three Housing Surveys are grab rails/handrails, specially designed bathroom/shower/wet-room, outdoor light, individual alarm systems, ramps and specially designed toilets. Across the three years, there has been an increase in respondents whose adaptation has included an extension.

	2018 National Housing Survey	2020 National Housing Survey	2023 National Housing Survey
Base: respondents who had made adaptations	121	333	399
Grab rails/handrails	68%	60%	57%
Specially designed bathroom/shower/wet-room	51%	53%	46%
Outdoor light	40%	35%	32%
Individual alarm system	28%	16%	11%
Ramps	17%	11%	10%
Specially designed toilet	16%	20%	11%
Widened doors for wheelchair access	13%	14%	7%
Relocated light switches and power points	13%	13%	11%
Door entryphone	12%	10%	6%
Specially designed kitchen	11%	6%	7%
Special furniture	9%	8%	7%
Stair lift	8%	9%	8%
Through floor lift	3%	3%	1%
Extension	3%	2%	11%
Pressure sensors	2%	2%	0%
Don't know	1%	1%	1%

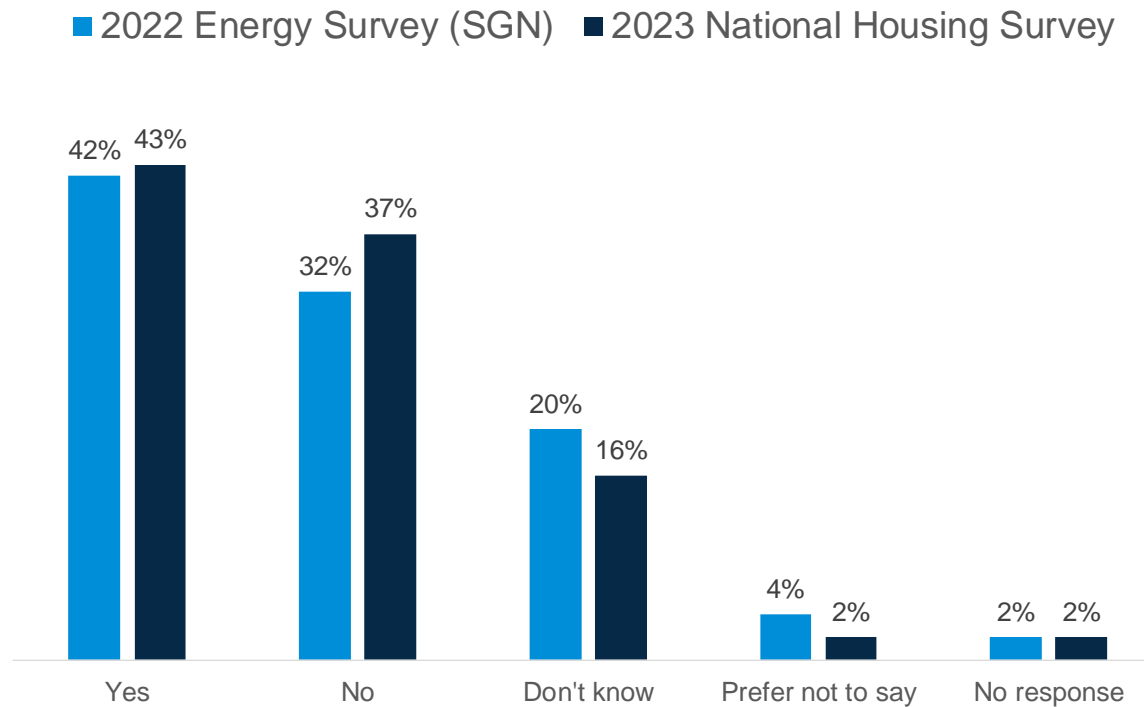
## Monthly cost of owning/renting home

Across the Housing Surveys conducted from 2018-2023 there has been an increase in the percentage of respondents spending over £300 per month on owning/renting their home.



## Living in a fuel poor household

The percentage of respondents who considered themselves to be living in a fuel poor household increased slightly from 42% in the Energy Survey conducted in 2022 to 43% in the 2023 National Housing Survey.



## Awareness of energy schemes

Awareness of energy schemes have increased over the three surveys (two Housing Surveys 2020 and 2023 as well as the Age Scotland/SGN Survey).

