

Tenancy Strategy Consultation Report

June 2023

1. Aim of the consultation

- 1.1 Barnet Council is revising its Tenancy Strategy in line with the statutory requirement to keep it under review and to take into account the priorities of the administration and set out the matters to which the registered providers of social housing for its district, including the council itself, are to regard in formulating policies relating to:
- the types of tenancies they will grant;
 - the circumstances under which different types of tenancies will be granted;
 - where they elect to grant fixed-term tenancies, the length of the fixed term; and
 - the circumstances in which they will grant a further tenancy when the fixed term expires.
- 1.2 The main change introduced in the revised strategy is a move to the council issuing secure periodic (“lifetime”) tenancies for all new council tenants, instead of 2- and 5-year flexible tenancies.
- 1.3 As part of this process, a consultation was held to seek residents’ and other stakeholders’ feedback on the draft strategy.
- 1.4 The Tenancy Strategy consultation ran for eight weeks, from 5 April 2023 to 31 May 2023. It primarily consisted of an online survey on Engage Barnet. Supporting documents were also available on Engage Barnet, allowing interested parties to view the draft strategy on there.

2. Methodology

- 2.1 The questionnaire was available on the council’s consultation webpage Engage Barnet, with paper copies available on request. The questionnaires asked respondents how much they agreed with the individual proposed changes to the strategy. There were also free text boxes which allowed respondents to add in comments if they disagreed with any of the proposed changes. Private Registered Providers also were offered a free text box to add in comments about why they believed or did not believe the strategic context included in the strategy was comprehensive.
- 2.2 In total, 177 responses were received through Engage Barnet.
- 2.3 The consultation was well publicised through various mediums including:
- Letter / email sent to all council tenants with a flexible tenancy or introductory tenancy that will become a flexible tenancy, encouraging them to review the proposals and respond to the consultation.
 - Email sent to all Private Registered Providers operating within the borough, encouraging them to review the proposals and respond to the consultation.
 - The council’s social media channels, primarily on Twitter where the council has over 25,000 followers.
 - The Barnet Group’s and its subsidiaries’ social media channels, primarily on Twitter and Instagram where The Barnet Group has over 3,000 followers.

- Prominent feature on the council's website and promoted in a press release following the review by the Housing and Growth Committee.
- Promoted in the council's Barnet First magazine, which is sent to all residents in the borough.
- Promoted in the council's Barnet Together CTN community news e-bulletin.
- Promoted in the Barnet Homes resident magazine atHome, which is distributed to over 13,000 homes.
- Promoted through a signature block in the emails of key frontline staff of the council and Barnet Homes.
- Promoted at several consultation focus groups that were held during the same period for the new Housing Strategy and Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.
- Key council departments, managers, and staff from a range of stakeholder service areas were briefed on the proposed changes to the Tenancy Strategy and were given opportunity to provide feedback.

3. Summary of key findings

3.1 The full results can be seen in section 5.

3.2 The response rate for the entire consultation period was **177 respondents**, including 91 flexible tenants, 13 secure tenants, 39 other Barnet residents, 5 registered providers and 29 non-residents. There is **very good overall agreement** with the new Tenancy Strategy: on average, 90% of respondents agreed with the 10 questions in the survey.

- The questions with the **lowest level of agreement** were question 2 on continued use of introductory tenancies, question 3 on continuing to grant lifetime tenancies to tenants transferring from another landlord, and question 8 converting existing flexible tenancies to secure tenancies. Nonetheless, agreement was still very high at 88.2%, 89.2%, and 89% respectively.
- The questions with the **highest level of agreement** were questions on the council's decision to discontinue granting flexible tenancies (92.6%), the key aims of the strategy (92.5%), and the council's intention to allow current flexible tenancies that are within 9 months of their review date to change to a secure period tenancy (92.4%).
- The questions which prompted the **most uncertainty** were question 8 on converting introductory tenancies to secure tenancies rather than flexible tenancies and question 9 on sustainment measures.

3.3 **Barnet residents** represented the main group of respondents (143) to the survey and responded very favourably to the new strategy with those agreeing or strongly agreeing representing 88% and above.

- **Flexible tenants** welcomed this initiative and mentioned that it will bring them 'peace of mind', 'security' and give them the 'chance to settle'. There were 91 respondents. They strongly agreed with all questions, except where the strategy indicates that tenants already on lifetime tenancies will be granted a lifetime tenancy provided there have been no breaches of their previous tenancy.
- **Secure tenants** on the other hand showed slightly more disapproval with the new strategy. However, the sample was smaller, with only 13 respondents. Where they disagreed with a question it represented less than 10% of the sample, except for the council's continued intention to grant introductory tenancies to new tenants where 15% disagreed. Secure tenants agree with converting flexible tenancy to secure tenancies, but only after a trial period, suggesting that they did not fully understand the question (6 months to a year, depending on the suggestion). Some also want Barnet council to make sure all tenants are aware of their responsibilities as council tenants to ensure the best living conditions for everyone.

3.4 A small group of **registered providers in Barnet** answered the survey (5 respondents). 60% either agreed or strongly agreed with the new tenancy strategy. 40% disagreed with the council's intentions to continue granting introductory tenancies to tenants who have never held a social tenancy, 40% also disagreed with the strategic context of the strategy. Further detail on this is included in section 4. The sample is small and not necessarily indicative of all registered providers.

3.5 In terms of **sub-group analysis by certain demographics**, the only relevant change in responses is for respondents from different age groups. In general, older respondents (aged 55 to 74) showed more disagreement with key questions than young ones (aged 18 to 34).

4. Free text responses

4.1 Respondents were given the opportunity to provide comments about why they disagreed with any of the proposed changes. This produced a range of responses, with a number of key words and phrases emerging repeatedly. These are summarised in the word cloud below.

4.2 Examples of comments included:

- I'm very glad that the council is introducing this new tenancy strategy, I strongly agree and support this strategy.
- I feel that this strategy is good for council tenants' security and peace of mind. Strongly agree.
- Fantastic very pleased and pray this comes into effect.
- Speed up is the best strategy rather than waiting for review 2 or 5 years.
- Flexible tenants should have right to secure tenancy especially if they pay their rent and maintain the house. After 12 months all tenancies should become secure lifetime tenancies, and this will ensure the tenants are not worried about becoming homeless after 5 years.



4.3 Private Registered Providers (PRPs) were also given the opportunity to provide comments about why they agreed or disagreed that the strategic context included in the strategy was comprehensive. There were two main points raised regarding information PRPs believed was missing:

- *“The strategic context might also mention the recently closed consultation from DLUHC on directions to the Social Housing Regulator on mutual exchange and tenant involvement. This could have implications for the Regulator’s Tenancy Standard affecting local authorities and registered providers.”*
 - Response: The Department for Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities’ consultation on revised directions to the regulator regarding mutual exchange and tenant involvement took place following the initial drafting of the Tenancy Strategy; however, the subjects of mutual exchange and tenant involvement do not fall under the scope of the Tenancy Strategy, and therefore will not be incorporated into the final version.
- *“The strategic context might also mention any implications of the Renters’ Reform Bill, which has just been introduced to Parliament.”*
 - Response: The Renters Reform Bill was introduced to Parliament on 17 May 2023, after the initial drafting of the Tenancy Strategy; however, the Bill is relevant to the private rented sector and its proposals do not fall under the scope of the Tenancy Strategy. It will therefore not be incorporated into the final version.

5. Consultation results summary and demographic characteristics

The results are presented as dashboards; an overall one with the combined results and then dashboards for flexible tenants, secure tenants, registered providers and others. Demographic characteristics included are living situation (tenure type), age, disability, gender, sex, sexuality, religion, and ethnicity.

Tenancy strategy consultation

Main Dashboard

Consultation period:
From 06/04/2023 to
01/06/2023



Total respondents:

177

Barnet residents:

143

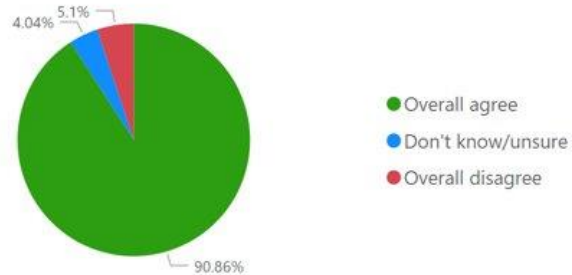
Flexible tenants:

91

Registered providers:

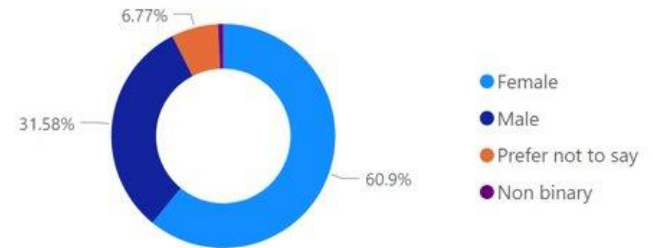
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Overall agreement with the new tenancy strategy:

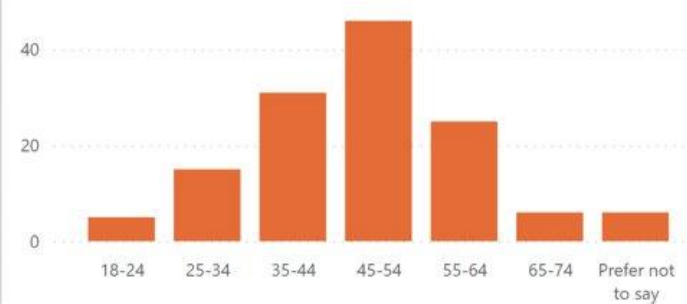


Questions	Overall agree	Don't know/unsure	Overall disagree
Q1	92.49%	4.05%	3.47%
Q2	88.17%	5.33%	6.51%
Q3	89.16%	4.22%	6.63%
Q4	95.12%	0.61%	4.27%
Q5	92.55%	1.86%	5.59%
Q6	92.41%	1.27%	6.33%
Q7	89.03%	5.81%	5.16%
Q8	88.96%	6.49%	4.55%
Q9	90.26%	6.49%	3.25%
Q10	90.26%	4.55%	5.19%

Respondents' gender:



Respondents' age:



Answers from all respondents to the survey (1)

Number of respondents:

177

Responding as:

A Barnet resident (143)

PRP in Barnet (5)

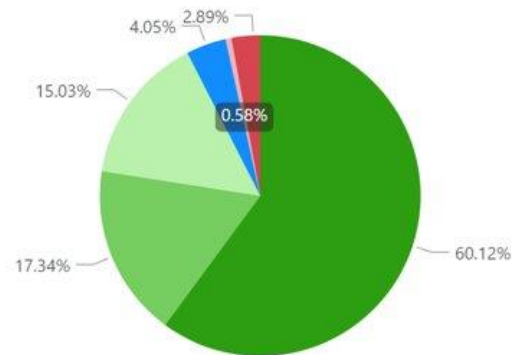
Other (2)

Councillor (1)

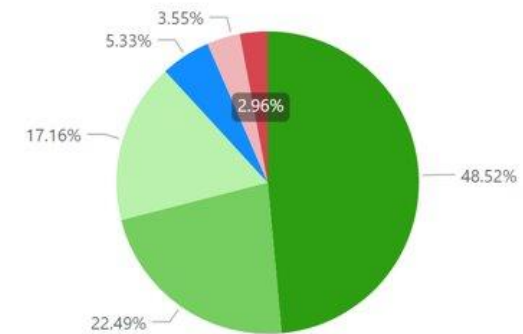
Working in Barnet (1)

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Tend to agree
- Don't know / not sure
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

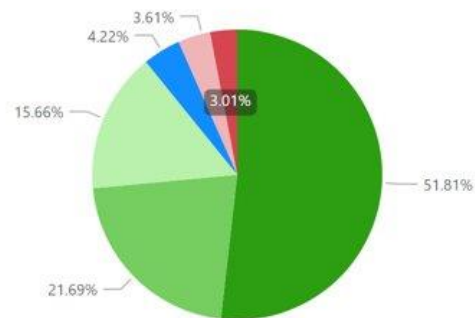
Q1. Agreement with the key aims in this strategy:



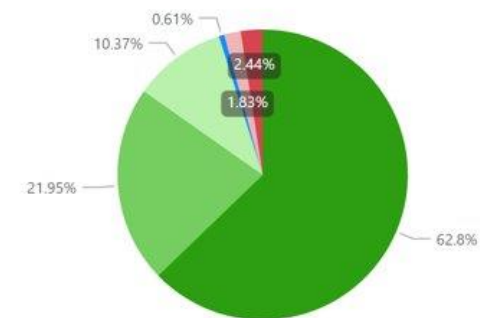
Q2. Agreement with the council's intention to continue to issue introductory tenancies to new tenants:



Q3. Agreement with the council's intention to continue to issue periodic tenancies to tenants transferring from another social landlord:



Q4. Agreement with the council's intention to continue to issue secure periodic tenancies to tenants transferring from another social landlord:



Answers from all respondents to the survey (2)

Number of respondents:

177

Responding as:

A Barnet resident (143)

PRP in Barnet (5)

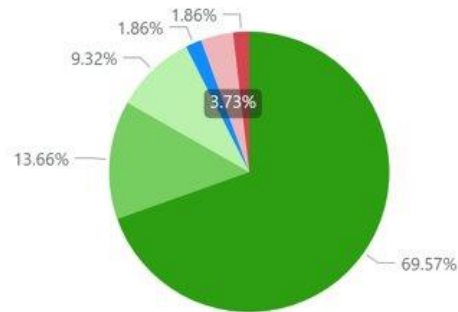
Other (2)

Councillor (1)

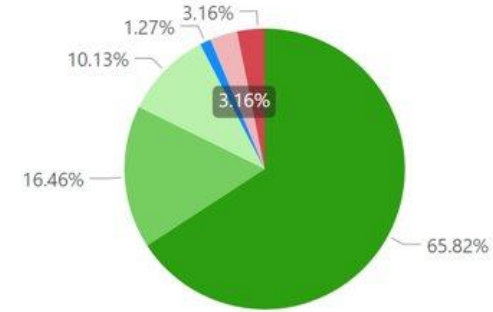
Working in Barnet (1)

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Tend to agree
- Don't know / not sure
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

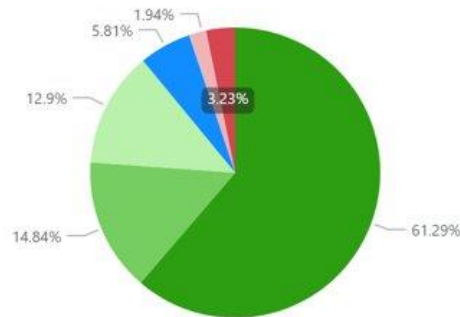
Q5. Agreement with the council's intention to cease to issue flexible tenancies to new tenants, and instead to issue secure periodic (lifetime) tenancies:



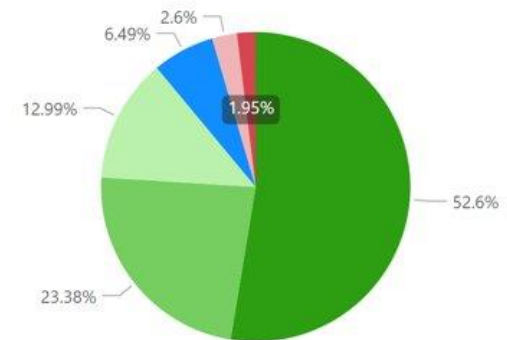
Q6. Agreement with the council's intention to allow current flexible tenancies that are within 9 months of their review to change to a secure periodic tenancy without review:



Q7. Agreement with the council's intention to serve a Notice of Variation for flexible tenancies within longer than 9 months until their review date:



Q8. Agreement with the council's intention to serve a Notice of Variation for introductory to flexible tenancies:



Answers from all respondents to the survey (3)

Number of respondents:

177

Responding as:

A Barnet resident (143)

PRP in Barnet (5)

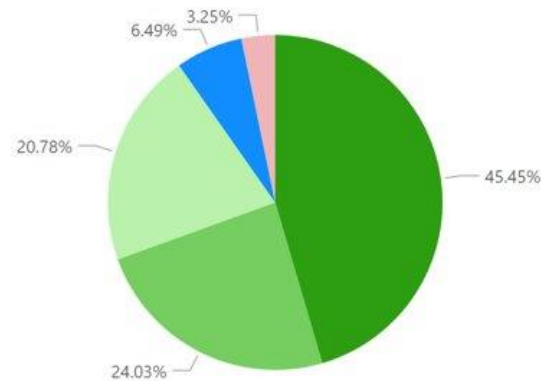
Other (2)

Councillor (1)

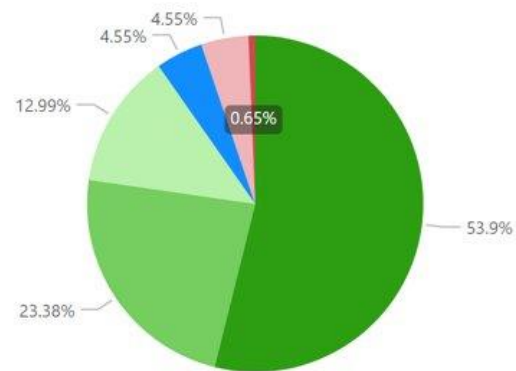
Working in Barnet (1)

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Tend to agree
- Don't know / not sure
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q9. Agreement with the council's proposed expectations for tenancy sustainment measures:



Q10. Agreement with the council's proposed expectations regarding rent in advance:



Answers from Barnet residents (1)

Number of respondents:

143

Respondents renting
from the council:

Flexible tenants (91)

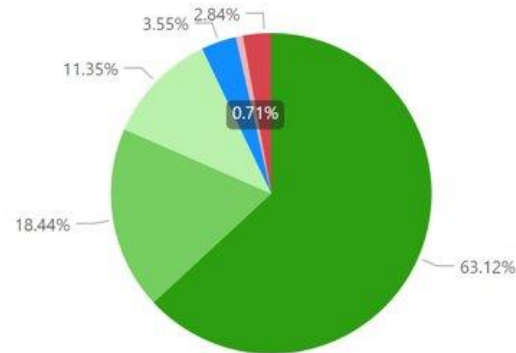
A secure periodic tenancy
(13)

Introductory tenancy to
become flexible (10)

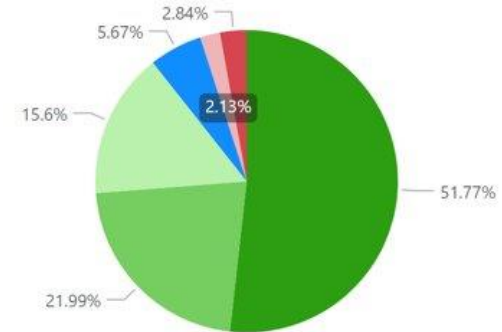
Introductory tenancy to
become secure (2)

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Tend to agree
- Don't know / not sure
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

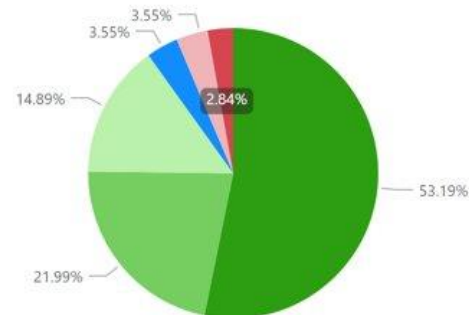
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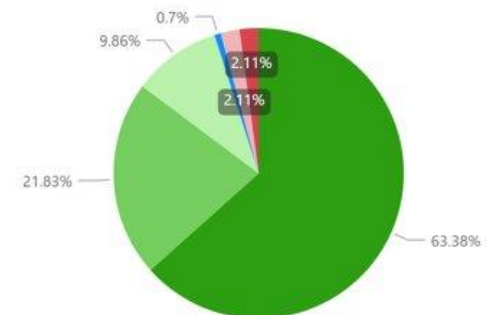
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Q3. Agreement with the council's intention to continue to issue periodic tenancies to tenants transferring from another social landlord:



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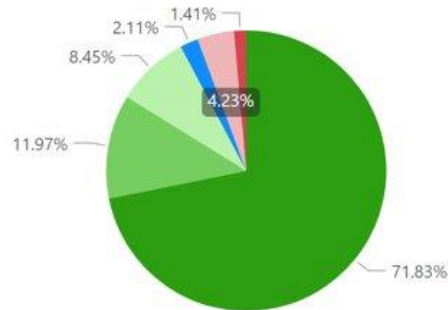
A secure periodic tenancy
(13)

Introductory tenancy to
become flexible (10)

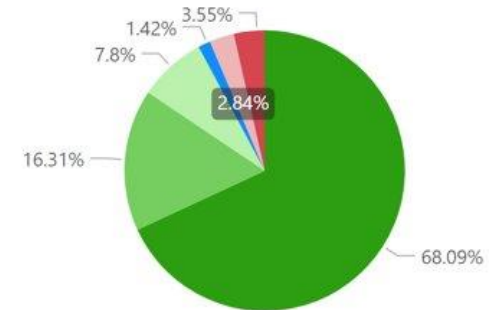
Introductory tenancy to
become secure (2)

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Tend to agree
- Don't know / not sure
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

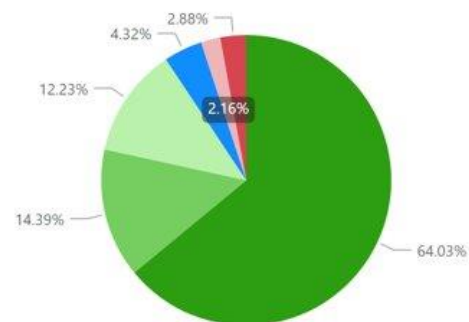
Q5. Agreement with the council's intention to cease to issue flexible tenancies to new tenants, and instead to issue secure periodic (lifetime) tenancies:



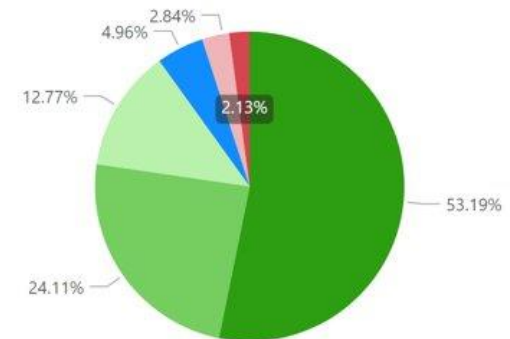
Q6. Agreement with the council's intention to allow current flexible tenancies that are within 9 months of their review to change to a secure periodic tenancy without review:



Q7. Agreement with the council's intention to serve a Notice of Variation for flexible tenancies within longer than 9 months until their review date:



Q8. Agreement with the council's intention to serve a Notice of Variation for introductory to flexible tenancies:



Answers from Barnet residents (3)

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143

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from the council:

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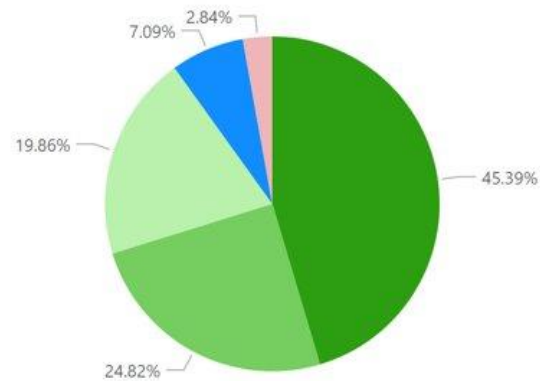
A secure periodic tenancy
(13)

Introductory tenancy to
become flexible (10)

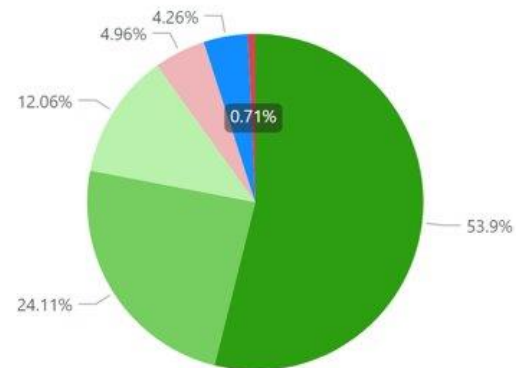
Introductory tenancy to
become secure (2)

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Tend to agree
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- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q9. Agreement with the council's proposed expectations for tenancy sustainment measures:



Q10. Agreement with the council's proposed expectations regarding rent in advance:



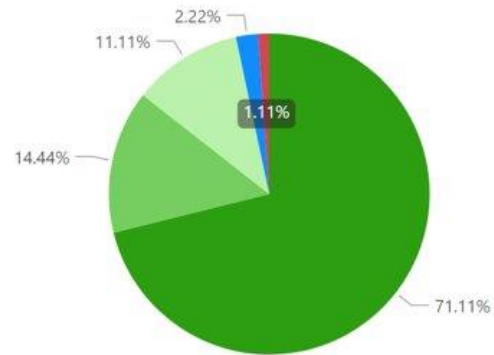
Answers from Flexible tenants in Barnet (1)

Number of respondents:

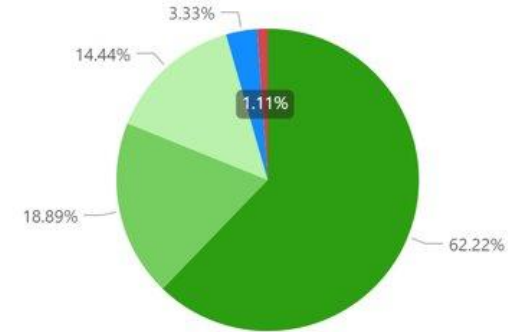
91

- Strongly agree
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- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

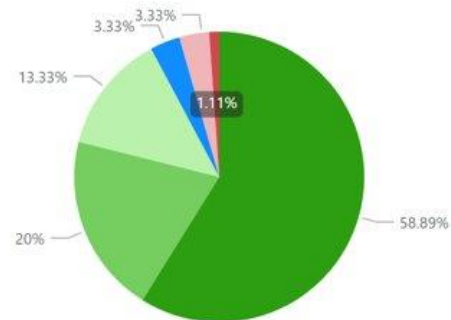
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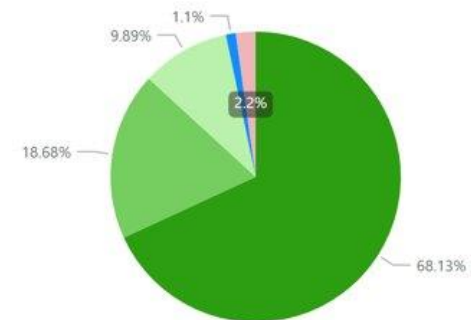
Q2. Agreement with the council's intention to continue to issue introductory tenancies to new tenants:



Q3. Agreement with the council's intention to continue to issue periodic tenancies to tenants transferring from another social landlord:



Q4. Agreement with the council's intention to continue to issue secure periodic tenancies to tenants transferring from another social landlord:



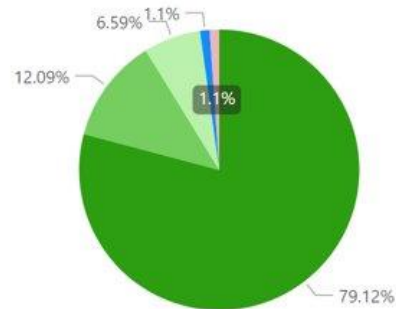
Answers from Flexible tenants in Barnet (2)

Number of respondents:

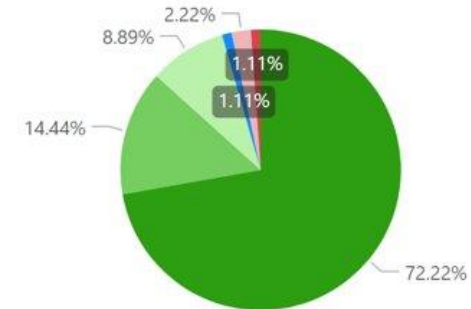
91

- Strongly agree
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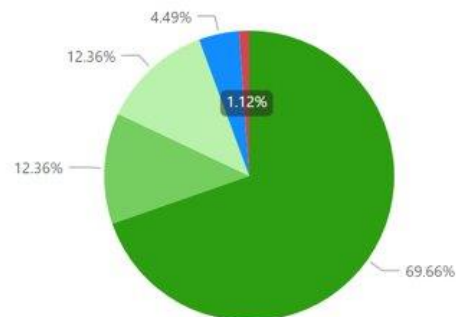
Q5. Agreement with the council's intention to cease to issue flexible tenancies to new tenants, and instead to issue secure periodic (lifetime) tenancies:



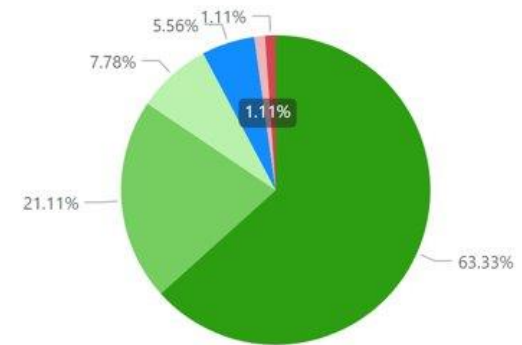
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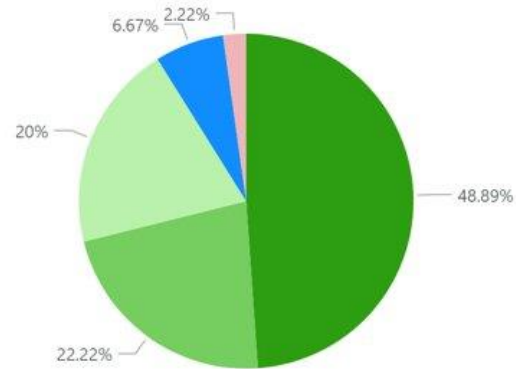
Answers from Flexible tenants in Barnet (3)

Number of respondents:

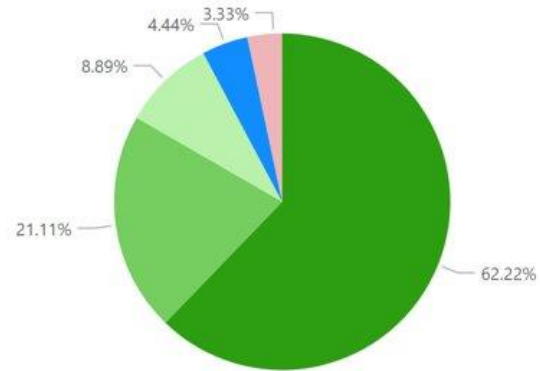
91

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Tend to agree
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- Tend to disagree
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Q10. Agreement with the council's proposed expectations regarding rent in advance:



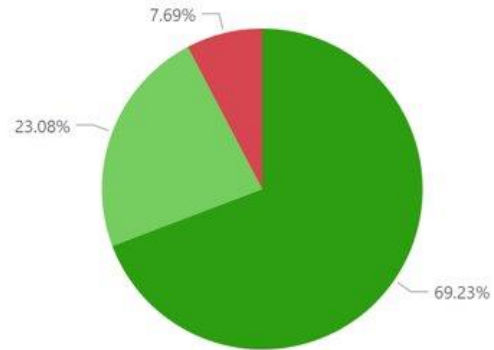
Answers from Secure tenants in Barnet (1)

Number of respondents:

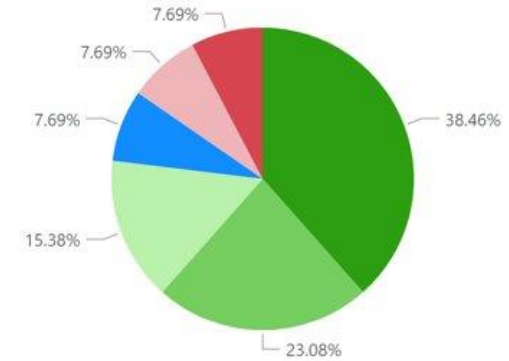
13

- Strongly agree
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- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

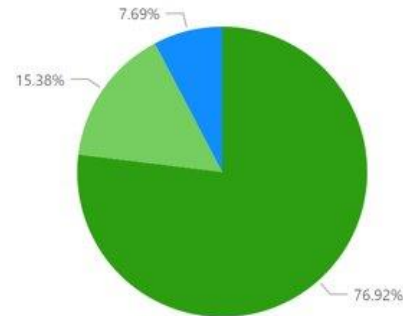
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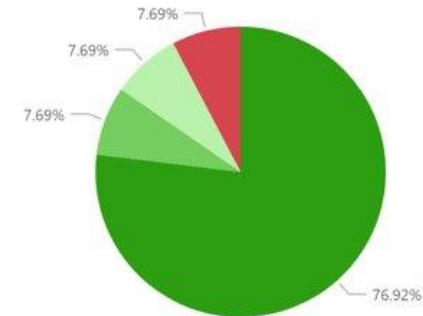
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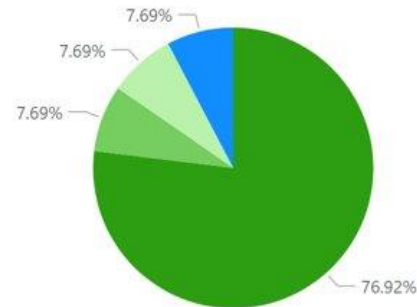
Answers from Secure tenants in Barnet (2)

Number of respondents:

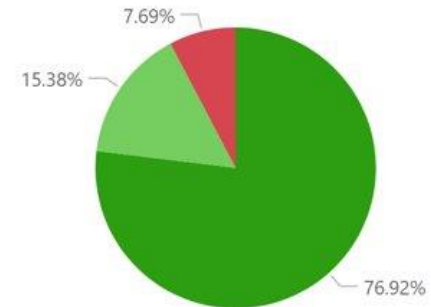
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- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

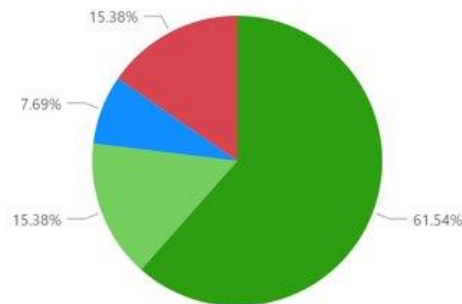
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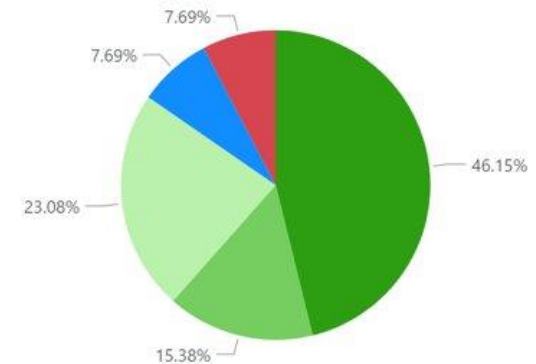
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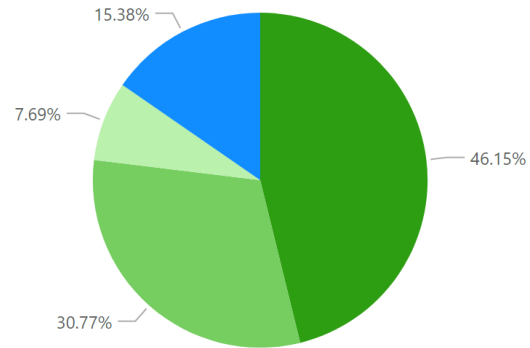
Answers from Secure tenants in Barnet (3)

Number of respondents:

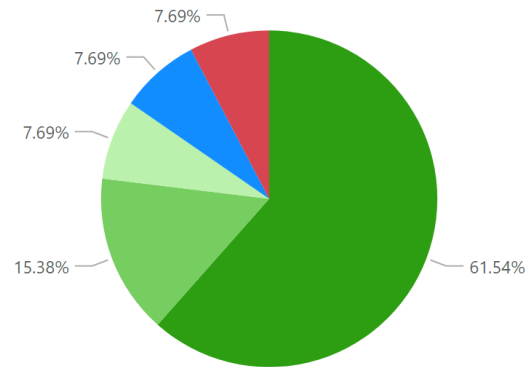
13

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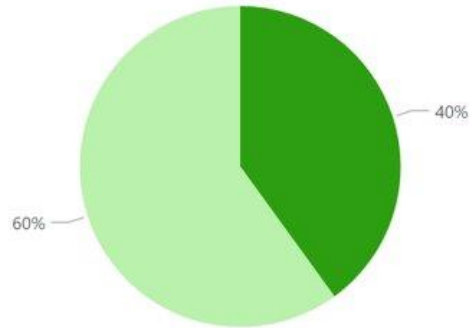
Answers from Private Registered Providers in Barnet (1)

Number of respondents:

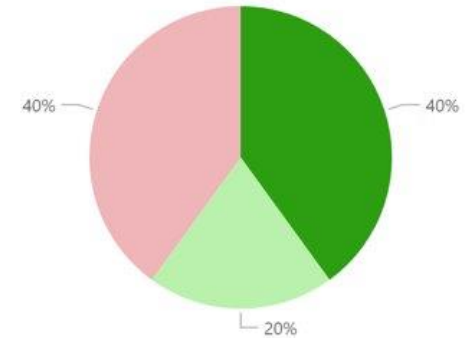
5

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Tend to agree
- Don't know / not sure
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

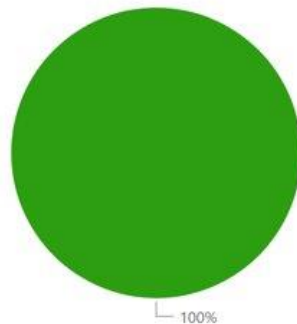
Q1. Agreement with the key aims in this strategy:



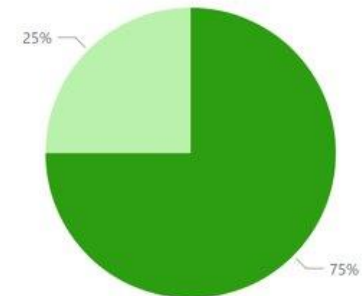
Q2. Agreement with the council's intention to continue to issue introductory tenancies to new tenants:



Q3. Agreement with the council's intention to continue to issue periodic tenancies to tenants transferring from another social landlord:



Q4. Agreement with the council's intention to continue to issue secure periodic tenancies to tenants transferring from another social landlord:



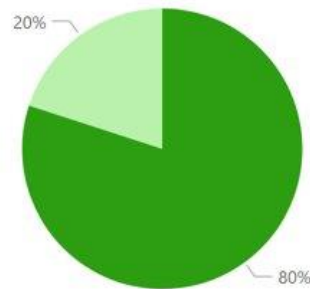
Answers from Private Registered Providers in Barnet (2)

Number of respondents:

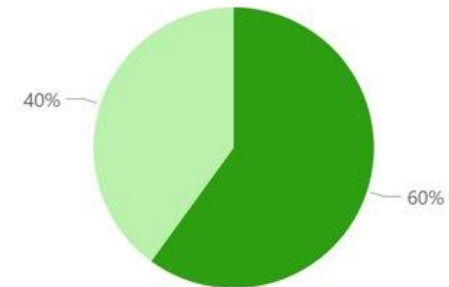
5

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Tend to agree
- Don't know / not sure
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

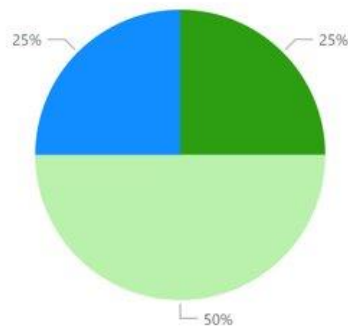
Q5. Agreement with the council's intention to cease to issue flexible tenancies to new tenants, and instead to issue secure periodic (lifetime) tenancies:



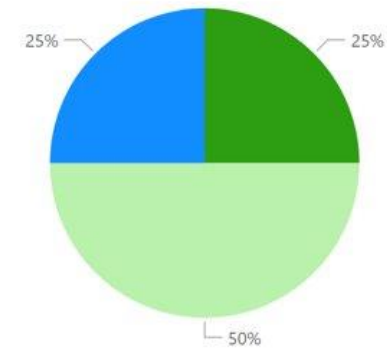
Q6. Agreement with the council's intention to allow current flexible tenancies that are within 9 months of their review to change to a secure periodic tenancy without review:



Q7. Agreement with the council's intention to serve a Notice of Variation for flexible tenancies within longer than 9 months until their review date:



Q8. Agreement with the council's intention to serve a Notice of Variation for introductory to flexible tenancies:



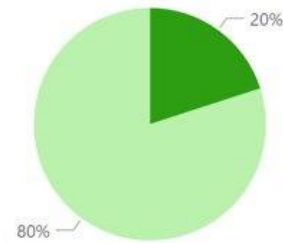
Answers from Private Registered Providers in Barnet (3)

Number of respondents:

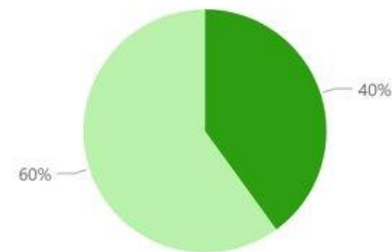
5

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Tend to agree
- Don't know / not sure
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

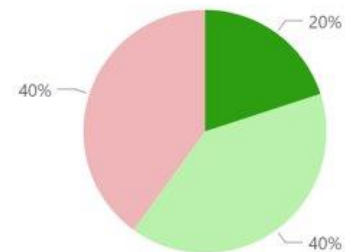
Q9. Agreement with the council's proposed expectations for tenancy sustainment measures:



Q10. Agreement with the council's proposed expectations regarding rent in advance:



Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the strategic context in the strategy is comprehensive?



Answers from other types of respondents (1)

Number of respondents:

29

Responding as:

Blank (25)

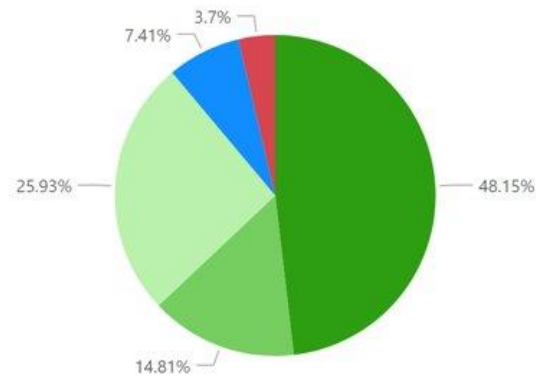
Other (2)

Councillor (1)

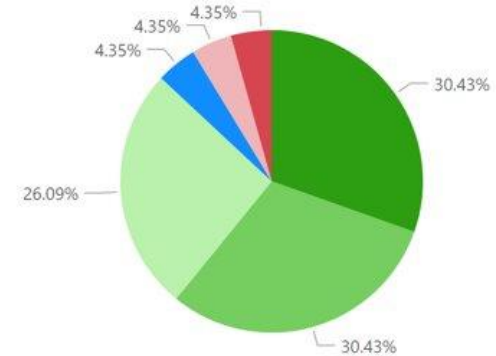
Working in Barnet (1)

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Tend to agree
- Don't know / not sure
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

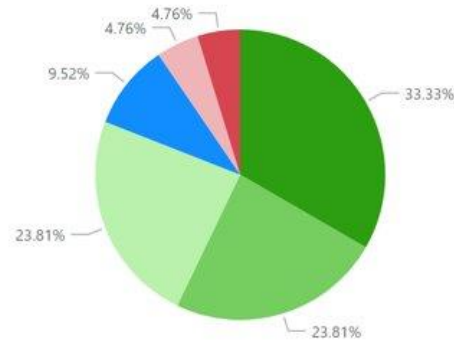
Q1. Agreement with the key aims in this strategy:



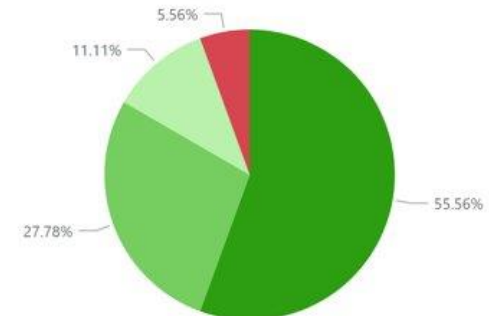
Q2. Agreement with the council's intention to continue to issue introductory tenancies to new tenants:



Q3. Agreement with the council's intention to continue to issue periodic tenancies to tenants transferring from another social landlord:



Q4. Agreement with the council's intention to continue to issue secure periodic tenancies to tenants transferring from another social landlord:



Answers from other types of respondents (2)

Number of respondents:

29

Responding as:

Blank (25)

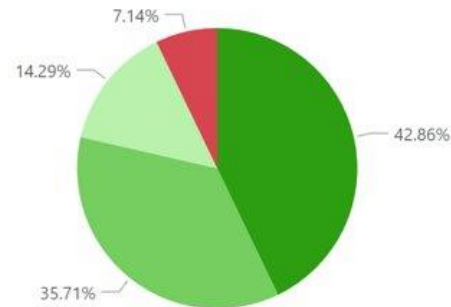
Other (2)

Councillor (1)

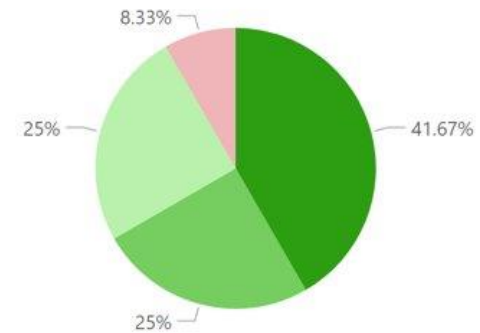
Working in Barnet (1)

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Tend to agree
- Don't know / not sure
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

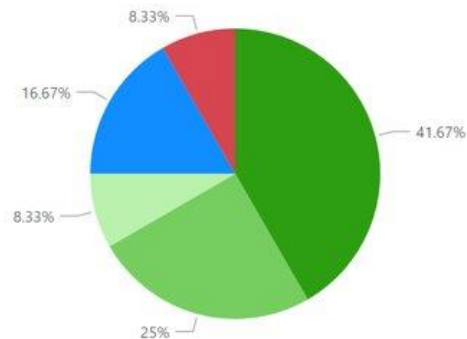
Q5. Agreement with the council's intention to cease to issue flexible tenancies to new tenants, and instead to issue secure periodic (lifetime) tenancies:



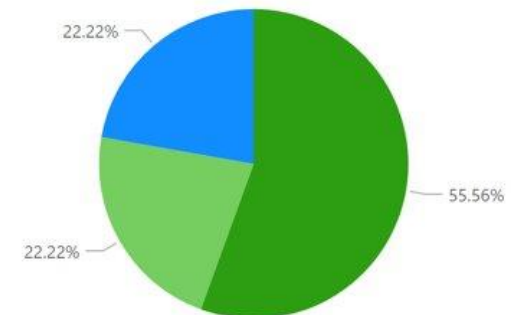
Q6. Agreement with the council's intention to allow current flexible tenancies that are within 9 months of their review to change to a secure periodic tenancy without review:



Q7. Agreement with the council's intention to serve a Notice of Variation for flexible tenancies within longer than 9 months until their review date:



Q8. Agreement with the council's intention to serve a Notice of Variation for introductory to flexible tenancies:



Answers from other types of respondents (3)

Number of respondents:

29

Responding as:

Blank (25)

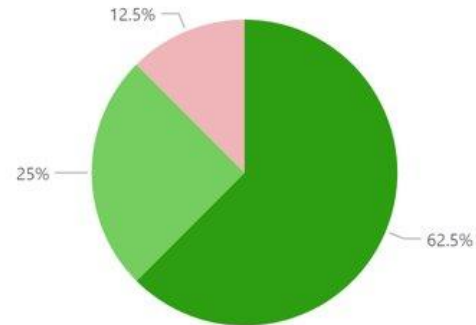
Other (2)

Councillor (1)

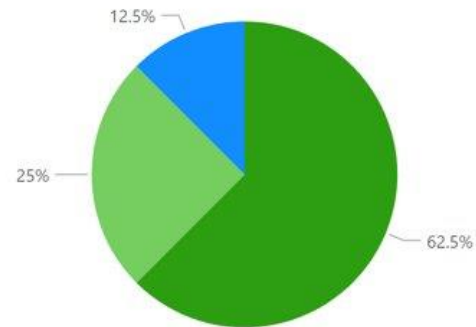
Working in Barnet (1)

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Tend to agree
- Don't know / not sure
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q9. Agreement with the council's proposed expectations for tenancy sustainment measures:



Q10. Agreement with the council's proposed expectations regarding rent in advance:



Answers from sub group

Sub-group 1:

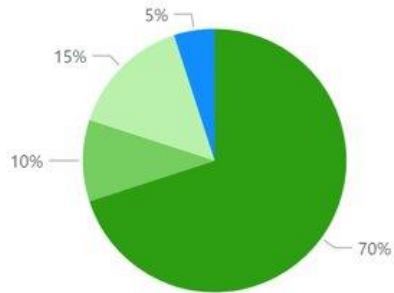
Respondents aged 18 to 34 (20)

Sub-group 2:

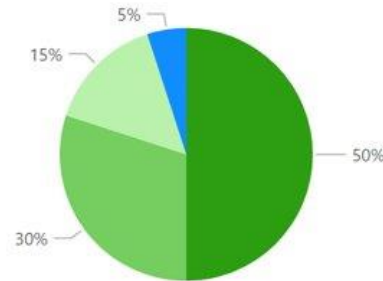
Respondents aged 55 to 74 (31)

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Tend to agree
- Don't know / not sure
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

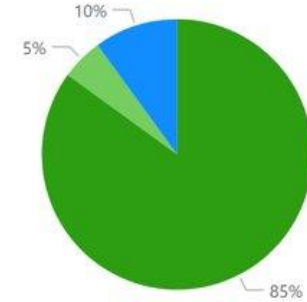
Q1. Agreement with the key aims in this strategy:



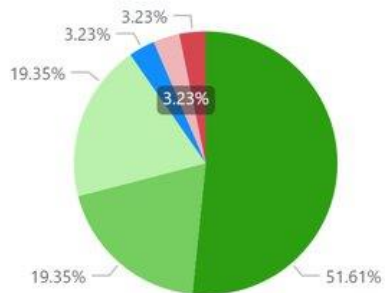
Q2. Agreement with the council's intention to continue to issue introductory tenancies to new tenants:



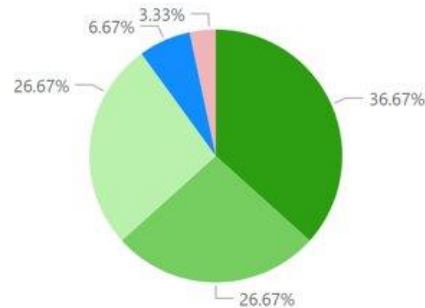
Q5. Agreement with the council's intention to cease to issue flexible tenancies to new tenants, and instead to issue secure periodic tenancies:



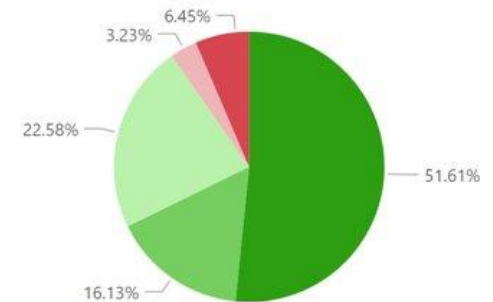
Q1. Agreement with the key aims in this strategy:



Q2. Agreement with the council's intention to continue to issue introductory tenancies to new tenants:

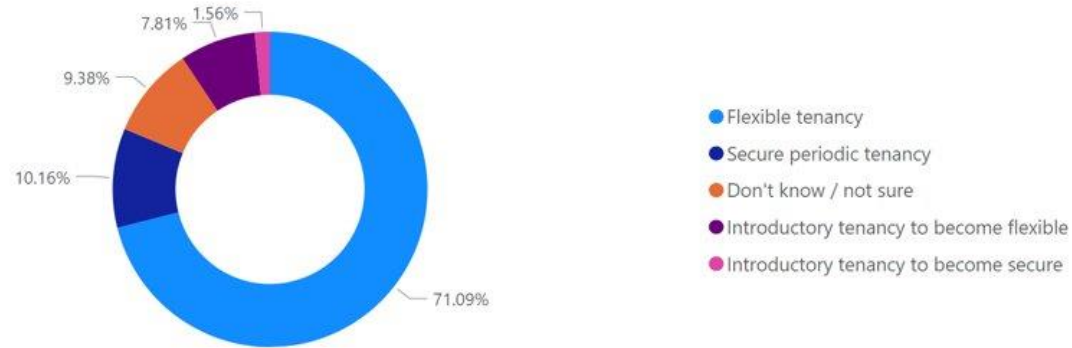


Q5. Agreement with the council's intention to cease to issue flexible tenancies to new tenants, and instead to issue secure periodic tenancies:

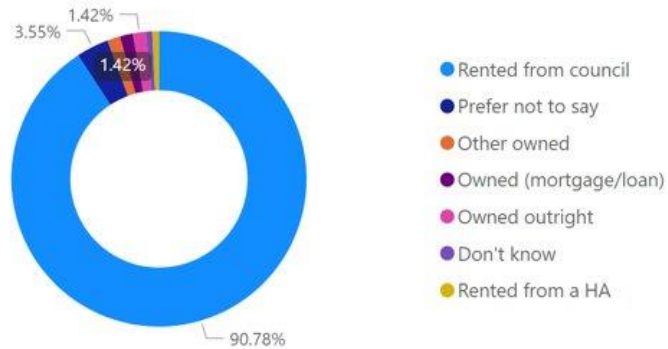


Respondents' profile (1) - Living situation

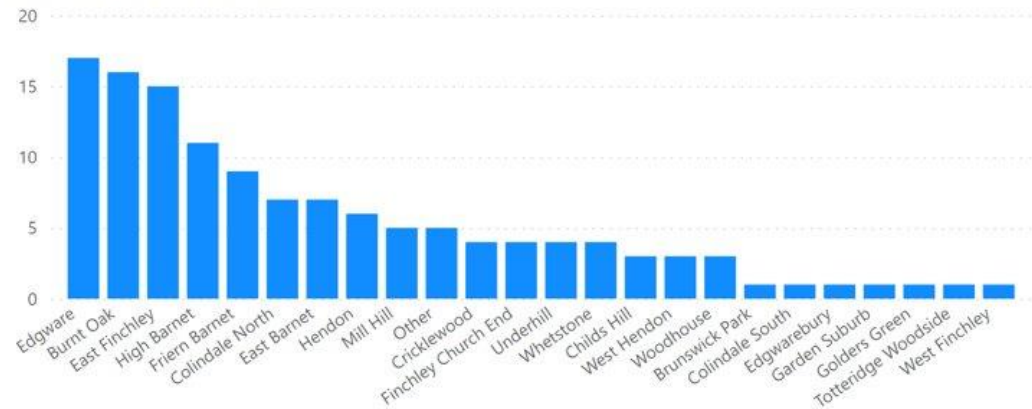
If you rent from the council, what type of tenancy do you currently hold?



Does your household own or rent your accommodation?

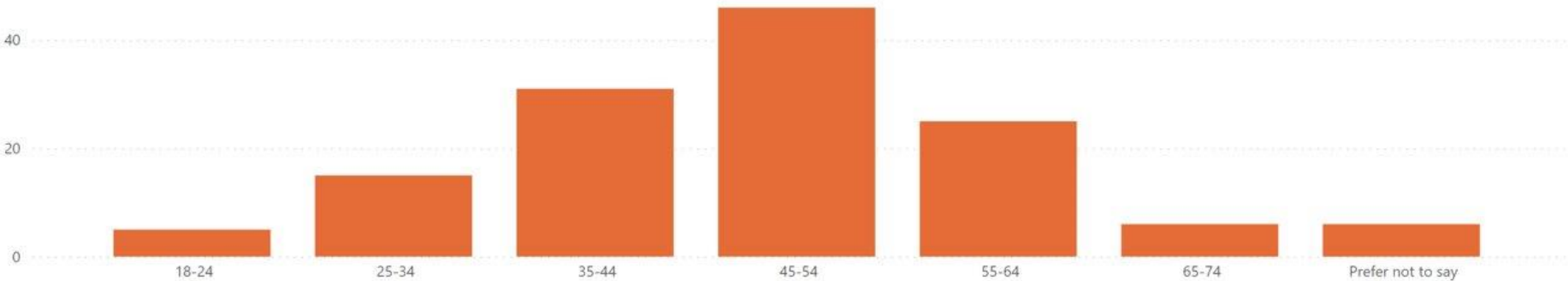


Which ward do you live in?

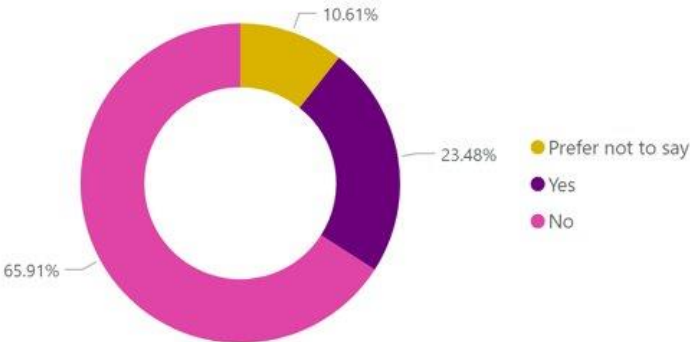


Respondents' profile (2) - Age and Disability

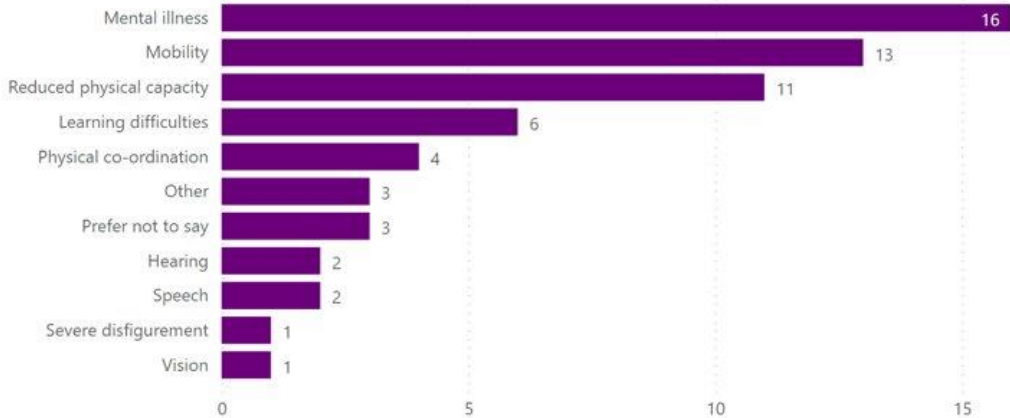
In which age group do you fall?



Do you consider that you have a disability as described above?

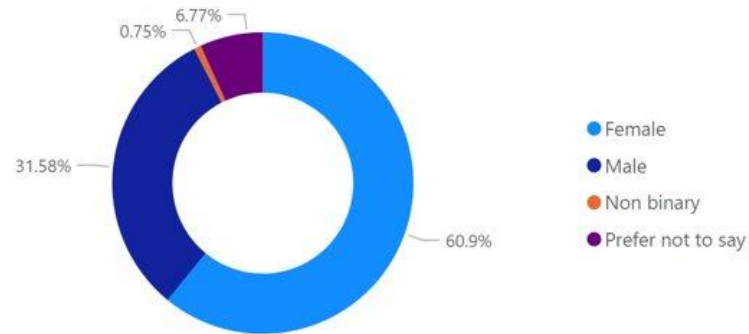


Type of disabilities:

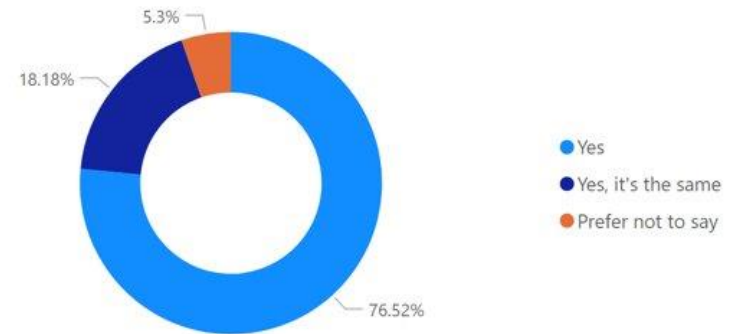


Respondents' profile (3) - Gender, Sex and Sexuality

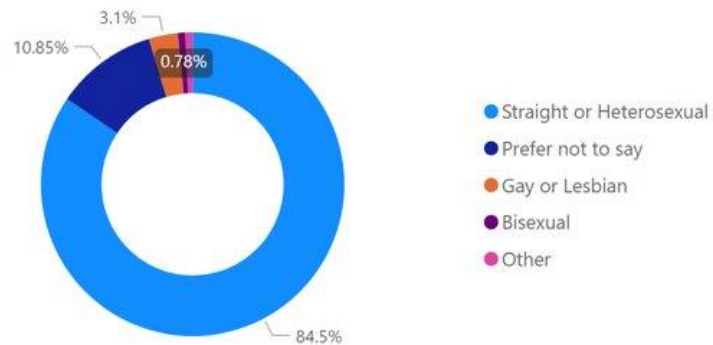
What is your gender?



Is your sex the same as the sex you were assigned at birth?

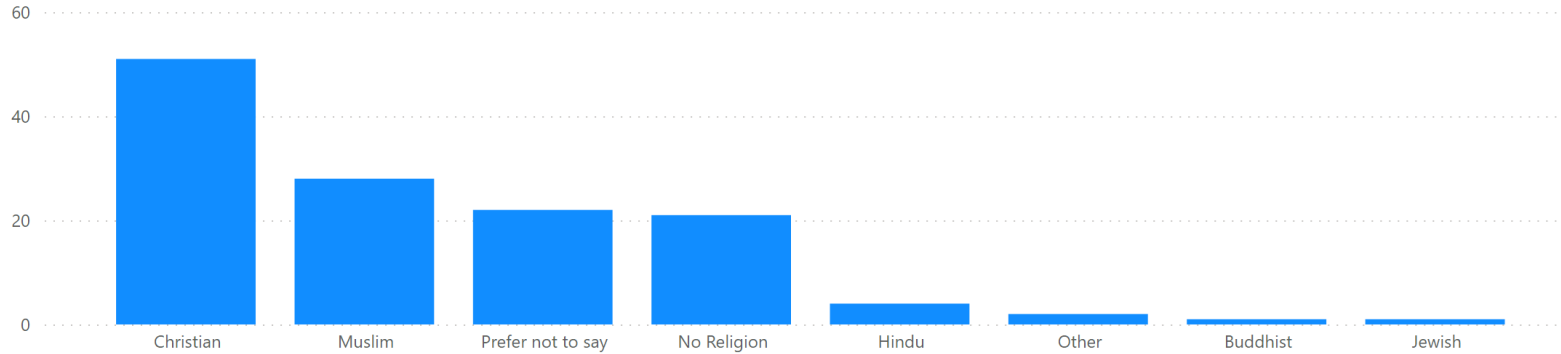


What is your sexual orientation?



Respondents' profile (4) - Ethnicity and Religion

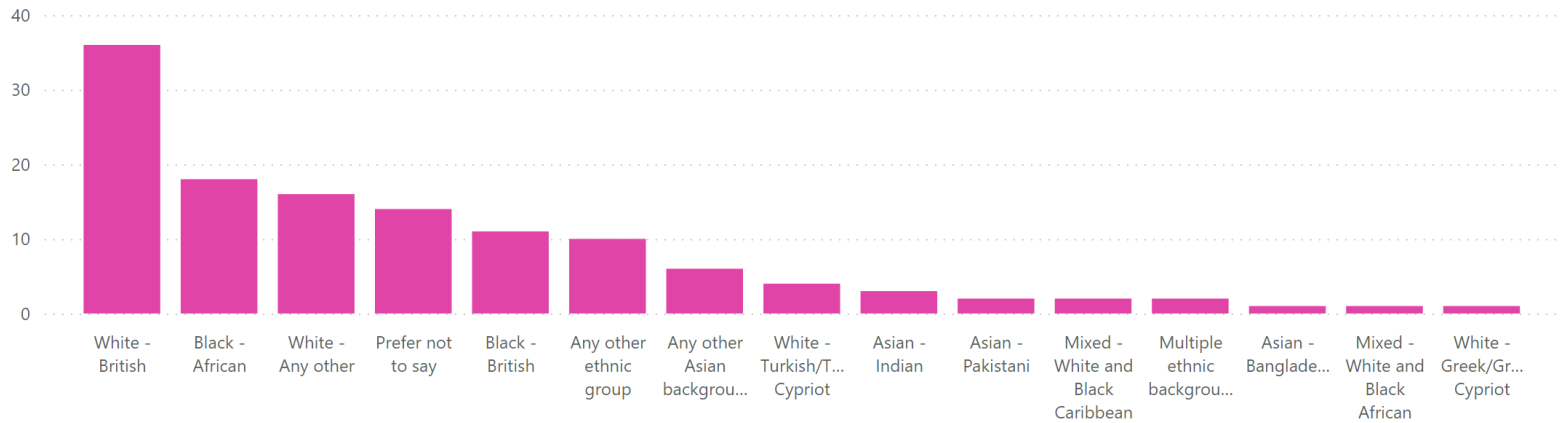
What is your religion or belief?



Other religions/beliefs:

- Bahai 1
- Jehovah's Witnesses 1

What is your ethnic group?



Other ethnic groups:

- Arabic 1
- British East Indian 1
- Iranian 1
- North African 1
- South American 1
- Thai 1
- Asian British (Hong Kong) 1
- Afghan 1

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The findings from the consultation show a strong support for the proposed new Tenancy Strategy.
- 6.2 Of those who responded, over 85% agreed to the ten questions outlining the key components of the new strategy especially the council's intention to cease to grant flexible tenancies and converting those already on flexible tenancies to secure tenancies.
- 6.3 The main areas where slightly less agreement was received were for:
- Registered providers who did not agree with the continued granting of introductory tenancies (25%) of 5 responses.
 - Secure tenants who did not agree with granting lifetime tenancies to transferring tenants already on lifetime tenancies (less than 5%) of 13 responses.
- 6.4 We thank all those who took the time to respond to the Tenancy Strategy consultation.