

Attitudes to housing
**Findings from Ipsos MORI Public Affairs Monitor Omnibus
Survey (England)**



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This study was carried out by Stephen Finlay and Richard Davis at Ipsos MORI. The views in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of Communities and Local Government.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

This report presents the results of a programme of research Ipsos MORI conducted on behalf of Communities and Local Government exploring public attitudes towards housing issues. In particular the research focused on the views and experiences of those in the social and private rented sectors.

This quantitative study was commissioned alongside a qualitative programme of work which was divided into two phases; phase one of the qualitative project was designed to explore the housing experiences of people on low-to-middle incomes, and the implications of these experiences on their aspirations and life chances.

Phase two of the qualitative work was designed to build on the first phase and look specifically at the allocation and prioritisation of social housing. It sought to understand the trade-offs and choices that those on low-to-middle incomes, from a variety of tenure backgrounds, consider to be important. The results from the qualitative study are presented in a separate report¹.

1.1. Public Affairs Monitor: a face-to-face survey of the general public

The quantitative phase was conducted over two waves of the Ipsos MORI Public Affairs Monitor, a monthly face-to-face omnibus survey. A representative quota sample of 3,958 adults aged 16 and over was interviewed throughout Great Britain in 210 super output area-based sampling points. As a representative survey of the population, respondents could include heads of households, partners and other household members aged over 16 years.

Interviews were conducted face-to-face in respondents' homes, using CAPI (Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing) between 24 and 31 July and 14 and 21 August 2008. This report presents the results for England only, which are based on 3,344 interviews over the two waves.

The data were weighted by gender, age, region (government office region), and social class, to reflect the known population profile of England.

¹ Communities and Local Government (2009) *Attitudes to housing: Findings from focus groups*

Prior to inclusion of the question module on to the Public Affairs Monitor, the questions developed for this programme of research were extensively cognitively tested with members of the public across all tenure groups. Questions were tested and modified to ensure they were being correctly interpreted by respondents.

1.2. The analysis

In the report, some of the results have been analysed by income. This is based on the respondent's estimate of gross household income. Throughout the report the following income bands have been used. Where a chart includes analysis by income for all respondents it is based on the base sizes identified.

Label	Description	Base size
<£9.5k	Less than £9,500 pa	433
£9.5 – £17.4k	£9,500 to £17,499 pa	562
£17.5 – £29.9k	£17,500 to £29,999 pa	410
£30k+	£30,000 + pa	655

Where analysis specifically focuses on the rented tenures (either social or private) and presents results by income, the higher income bands have been merged to increase the base size.

Data have also been analysed by region and again have been grouped to ensure sufficiently robust sample sizes. Regional analysis is defined as follows and base sizes for each are included.

Label	Description	Base size
North	Yorkshire and the Humber, North West, North East	1,010
Midlands	East Midlands, West Midlands, East of England	910
South	South East, South West	936
London	London	488

Other key variables considered of most relevance to the research have also been presented throughout the report. A description and their base sizes are presented below.

Tenure	Base size
Owners	2,281
Social renters	680
Private renters	356

It is important to note that analysis by tenure is based on those currently living in each tenure group but that respondents may not necessarily be the head of the household or may be living in property that is rented or owned by someone else. Sixteen percent of survey respondents indicated the property they lived in was owned or rented in someone else's name and the table below shows how this breaks down by tenure group.

Proportion living in property owned or rented in someone else's name by tenure	%
Owners	14%
Social renters	16%
Private renters	27%

Other variables analysed include age and household type (life stage).

Age	Base size
16-24	401
25-44	1,073
45-64	1,044
65-74	490
75+	336

Household type (life stage)	Base size
<55 Single no children under 16 years	547
<55 Single with children under 16 years	288
<55 Couple with no children under 16 years	434
<55 Couple with children under 16 years	712
55+ With or without children under 16 years	1,341
Others	22

The household type categorisation is one used by the Ipsos MORI Public Affairs Monitor to distinguish households at various stages through the life cycle. It is derived from demographic data collected on household size, marital status and number of children (under the age of 16) in the household. For the purpose of this categorisation, children are defined as those under the age of 16 and as such will not include anyone over the age of 16 that still live with their parents. Here a threshold of 55 years of age is used principally to distinguish empty-nester households from the more conventional household types (such as single person households or couples with children).

The inclusion of an 'Other' category includes those where sufficient demographic information about the household is not supplied. Given the small base size, data for this 'Other' group are not shown in subsequent analysis presented throughout this report.

Where particularly relevant, the analysis also differentiates results by the following:

- experience of the social rented sector and
- knowledge of social housing allocations policies.

It should be remembered that a sample, and not the entire population, was interviewed. In consequence, all results are subject to sampling tolerances, which means that not all differences are statistically significant. Further details of sampling tolerances are provided in the appendices section of this report. In the main the commentary focuses on differences that are significant, although for reasons of completeness data is presented for key sub-groups even where base sizes are small.

Where percentages do not sum to 100, this is due to computer rounding, the exclusion of 'don't know' categories, or multiple answers. Throughout the report an asterisk (*) denotes any value less than half a per cent.

In this report, reference is made to 'net' figures. This represents the balance of opinion on attitudinal questions, and provides a particularly useful means of comparing the results for a number of variables. In the case of a 'net agree' figure, this represents the percentage that agree on a particular issue, less the percentage that disagree. For example, if a statement records 40 per cent agree and 25 per cent disagree, the 'net agree' figure is +15 points.

Chapter 2

Key findings

This report presents results from the July and August waves of the Ipsos MORI Public Affairs Monitor – a monthly face-to-face omnibus survey – to explore the public's attitudes towards housing issues. Results are based on 3,344 completed interviews from these two waves and covers respondents living in England only. Data have been weighted to reflect the known population profile of England.

2.1. Housing experiences

- owner-occupation was the predominant tenure type but just under half (44%) of the public had some experience of living in the social rented sector. Eighteen percent lived in the social rented sector at the time of the survey and 26 per cent had done so previously
- three per cent of the public not living in social housing were registered on a housing register or waiting list; private renters were most likely to be registered (13%). The main reasons for not registering with a social landlord included already owning their own home and happiness with their current housing situation.

Social renters

- the social rented sector was characterised by a higher than average proportion of those on low incomes, single parent families and the unemployed
- three in ten (29%) social renters moved to the sector because it was all they could afford at the time
- satisfaction with social housing was high among social renters; 82 per cent of social tenants were satisfied. Not having responsibility for repairs and low affordable rents were the most commonly cited advantages, although actually getting repairs done and anti-social behaviour were the most commonly identified problems with the sector
- satisfaction levels were lowest among tenants with higher incomes (£17,500 or more). Relative to other income groups, those with higher incomes were more likely to cite problem neighbours and the condition of properties as disadvantages of living in social rented housing

- forty-two percent of social tenants agreed that living in social housing had helped them become more financially independent. Fewer agreed that social housing had helped them take up work or training (27% agreed) and to help save for a deposit to buy a home in the future (20% agreed). Those on the lowest incomes (less than £9,500) were consistently more negative about the impact living in the social rented sector had had on their life opportunities
- more than three out of five (61%) social renters would find advice and support to find work or suitable training helpful, and it is those on higher incomes (£17,500 and above) who were most likely to say this would be helpful.

Private renters

- private renters were generally younger and had lower incomes than the population as a whole. The private rented sector contained a higher proportion of younger tenants than the social rented sector, but average income was higher and receipt of housing benefit lower for tenants in the private sector
- in the main, those that first become a private tenant with the assistance of benefit continued to receive benefit, although one in five (19%) who did previously receive benefit no longer did so at the time of the survey
- whilst three quarters (74%) of private renters were satisfied with renting from a private landlord, this was the lowest of the three tenure groups (owner occupiers, social renters and private renters). Choice of location was most commonly mentioned as the best thing about living in the sector. Higher rents were most commonly mentioned as the worst thing about the sector, especially for those with incomes between £9,500 and £17,499
- satisfaction levels were lowest for those with low incomes, single parent families and those living in London
- despite lower satisfaction levels for private renting, the support for social housing among private renters was low. Slightly more than a third (35%) said they would want to move to social housing at the present time if it was easy to get a property. Potential demand for social housing was greatest among private renters with incomes between £9,500 and £29,999.

Tenure perceptions of renters

- the social rented sector was perceived by private renters to offer low rents and security of tenure, but was also perceived to suffer from a lack of choice (both in terms of type and location) and problems with anti-social behaviour. Owning, in contrast, was perceived to offer control, freedom and financial prosperity in terms of being a good investment and something that can be passed on to future generations, although the biggest concern was the financial responsibility that comes with it

- for social renters, the private rented sector was perceived to offer greater choice but this comes at a price. Two out of five (41 %) social renters considered higher rents to be a disadvantage of renting privately.

2.2. Attitudes to rented housing

The general public were asked a series of attitudinal questions focusing on the rented housing sector:

- almost a third (32 %) disagreed that the way social housing is allocated is fair. Disagreement was higher among those with some knowledge of how social housing is allocated (37 %) and even higher for those who said they know a lot about how social housing is allocated (64 %). Reflecting the close relationship between knowledge and experience, it is no surprise that social renters were most likely, of all the tenure groups, to disagree that allocation of social housing is fair (42 %)
- almost half (48 %) believed that more low income working households should be allocated social housing rather than always allocating to the most vulnerable. The same proportion (48 %) also agreed that priority for social housing should be given to people who have lived in the local area for a long time. The majority (54 %) thought 18 months is too long to expect people to wait for social housing and exactly half agreed that priorities for social housing should be determined locally to reflect local circumstances
- when asked about aspects of allocation policies, nearly three quarters of the public (74 %) thought that people with dependent children need more housing stability and the majority (57 %) agreed that social housing tenancies should be passed on to adult children living with their parents
- there was strong public support in favour of creating better and more balanced communities. Almost half agreed (48 %) that more social housing should be allocated to low income households rather than always to the very vulnerable and 44 per cent agreed that having poorer and better off people living side by side helps to create balanced communities
- the public strongly favoured low rents in social housing for social tenants who are working, but on low incomes, to make working worthwhile – 69 per cent agreed. Opinion was, however, much more closely divided on offering financial support to social and private sector tenants to help them buy their own home and whether all social tenants should pay the same rent for the same property regardless of their income
- eighty-one percent of the public felt tenants who abuse the conditions of their tenancy should not be allowed to stay in their homes and three out of five supported under-occupying tenants being required to move to more

appropriately sized accommodation. Three out of five (59%) also favoured a requirement for out of work social tenants to take up help and advice on how to find work as a condition of their tenancy

- forty-one percent of the public supported placing limits on access to social housing by excluding people who have “significant savings”, but the same proportion supported tenants being able to remain in social housing as long as they want, even if they are able to afford to rent privately or buy their own home. Overall, two thirds of the public were in favour of regular reviews of a tenants’ need to carry on living in social housing.

The quantitative survey results suggested some support for change of the current social housing system, although a more detailed exploration of this issue in the qualitative research highlights stronger doubts about the ability and appropriateness of change. Further details can be found in the qualitative survey research report.²

2.3. Housing advice

The general public were also asked about sources of housing advice they used and would find useful:

- sources of housing advice most commonly used include friends and family, the internet and local councils. Usage did, however, vary: owners were more likely to approach friends and family for advice whereas social renters were more likely to use the local council. Private renters were more likely, relative to other tenure groups, to use a Citizens Advice Bureau and those on the highest incomes were most likely to use the internet
- just under half (49%) of the general public were certain or likely to use a new local service, if one existed, to get advice on future housing options. Renters were particularly keen to use such a service, as too were those on the lowest incomes (60%) and those living in London (69%)
- for social renters, advice on right to buy and eligibility for benefits would be most helpful, whereas private renters would find general tenancy advice and help dealing with the landlord over repairs most useful. For owners, advice on repairs and maintenance and eligibility for grants are considered most useful.

² Communities and Local Government (2009) *Attitudes to housing: Findings from focus groups*

Section A

Housing experiences and choices

In this section of the report we look in greater detail at the housing experiences of the general public before focusing more specifically on the views of social and private renters. We also consider the perceptions of tenure among these groups before considering, in greater detail, public attitudes to social housing.

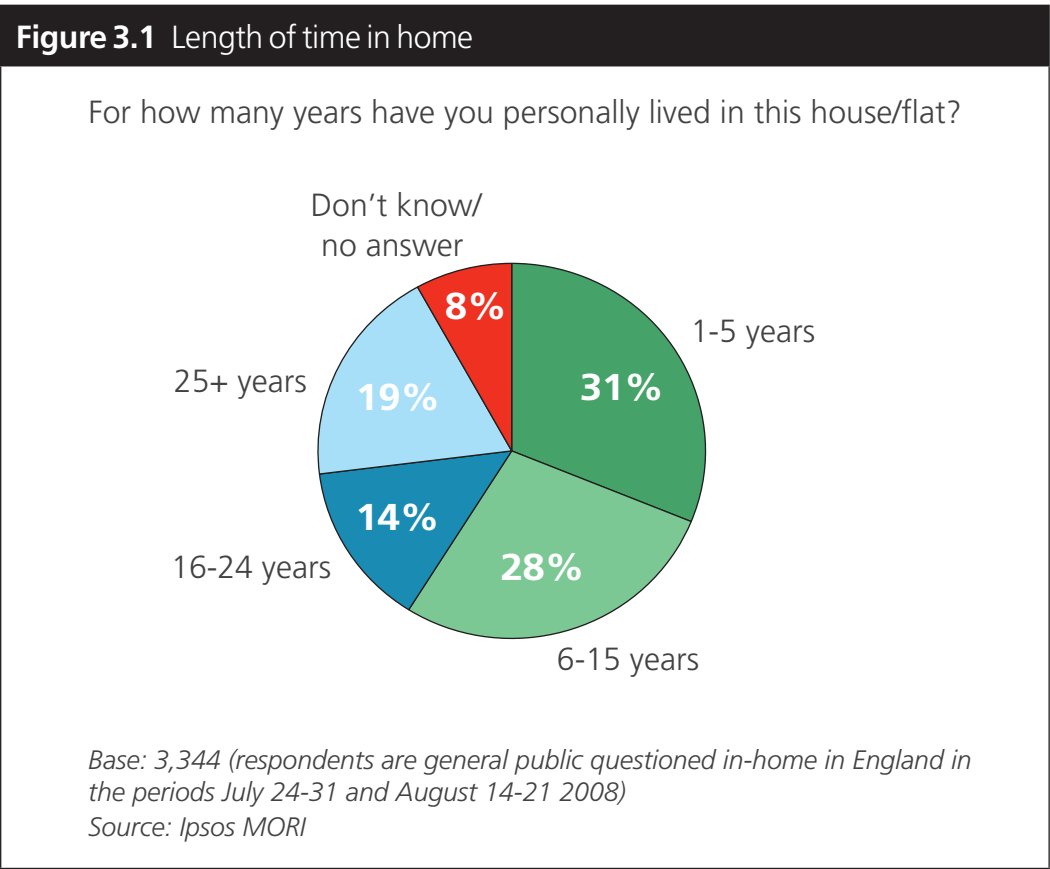
Chapter 3

Housing experiences

The housing experiences of the population have an important role to play in shaping aspirations and housing choices. Here we consider in further detail past and present (at the time of the survey) tenure experiences, together with information on the receipt of benefits and registration on a social housing register or waiting list.

3.1. Length of time in current home

Three in ten members of the public (31%) have lived in their home for five years or less whereas one in five (19%) have lived in their home for 25 years or more.

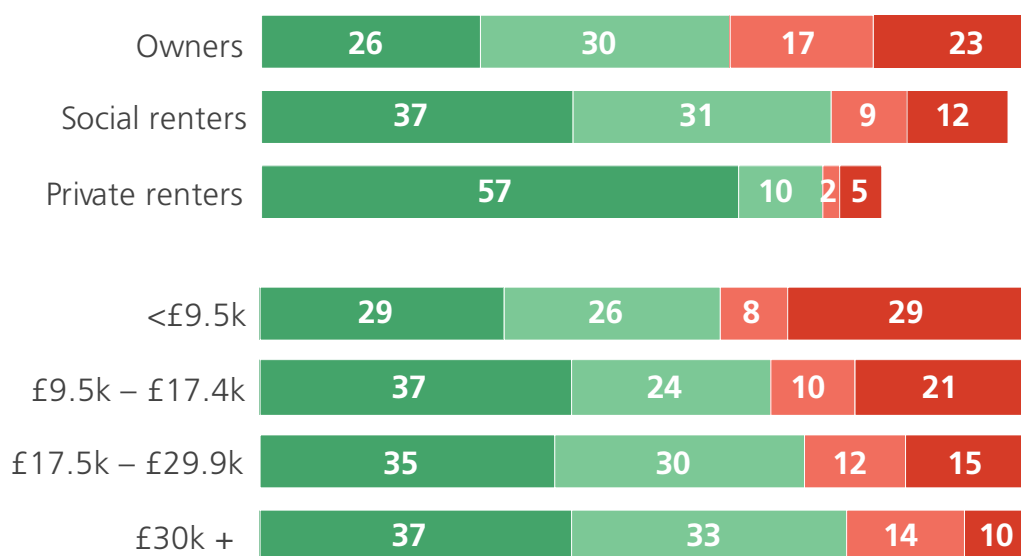


Owners and those with the lowest household income levels were most likely to have lived in their home for longest (25 years or more), whereas over half of all private renters have lived in their home for five years or less. Differences between the regions of England were less marked although mobility levels in London were higher than the rest of the country.

Figure 3.2 Length of time in home by tenure and income

For how many years have you personally lived in this house/flat?

■ % 1-5 years ■ % 6-15 years ■ % 16-24 years ■ % 25+ years



Base: 3,344 (respondents are general public questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24-31 and August 14-21 2008)

Source: Ipsos MORI

3.2. Housing history as a child

There is some evidence of a link between current housing tenure and tenure lived in as a child. Some two-thirds of current owners lived in owner-occupied housing as a child, and over half of existing social renting tenants lived in local authority housing as a child. The trend is weaker but still evident for existing private renting tenants with nearly a third living in the private rented sector as a child.

Table 3.1 Types of accommodation lived in as a child by current tenure

Thinking back to your childhood, which of these types of accommodation did you live in up to the age of 16?

	% All (3,344)	% Owners (2,281)	% Social tenants (680)	% Private tenants (356)
Accommodation lived in as child				
Owner occupied housing	57	66	27	54
Local Authority housing	29	25	55	17
Private rented housing	17	16	13	31
Housing Association housing	3	1	12	2
Other	3	2	3	2

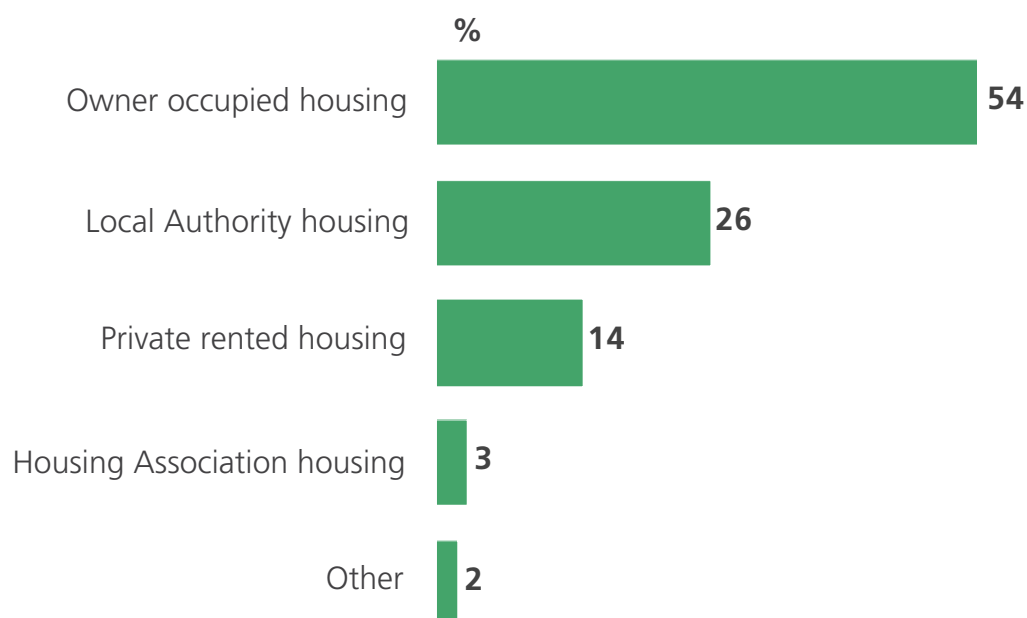
Source: Ipsos MORI

Notes: Base sizes in brackets. This question allowed respondents to identify as many relevant responses as applied 'Don't know' and 'Not stated' responses not presented

Overall, over half (54%) of the population lived in owner-occupied housing for the longest time during their childhood, compared to a quarter (26%) who lived in local authority housing and one in seven (14%) who rented in the private sector for the longest time. This is consistent with the growth in home ownership seen over the last fifty years, which by 1971 had become the predominant tenure in England.

Figure 3.3 Types of accommodation lived in for the longest time as a child

And which of these were you living in for the longest time up to the age of 16?



Base: 3,344 (respondents are general public questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24–31 and August 14–21 2008)

'Don't know and 'Not stated' responses not shown

Source: Ipsos MORI

3.3. Housing history as an adult

Experience of the private rented sector was high among those currently living in other tenures. Nearly two in five (38%) current owners have lived in private rented accommodation as an adult and a quarter (26%) of social tenants have had experience of the private rented sector. Experience of the other main tenures is also high among existing private renters – a half of existing private renters have lived in owner occupied housing since they reached the age of 16 and one in six (16%) have lived in local authority housing.

Among existing owners, around a fifth (21%) had also lived in local authority rented housing whereas around a quarter (26%) of existing social tenants had lived in owner-occupied housing.

Table 3.2 Types of accommodation lived in as an adult

Now thinking about the time since you were 16, which, if any, of these types of accommodation have you ever lived in, including your current home?

	% All (3,344)	% Owners (2,281)	% Social tenants (680)	% Private tenants (356)
Accommodation lived in as an adult				
Owner occupied housing	80	99	26	50
Local Authority housing	30	21	76	16
Private rented housing	43	38	26	99
Housing Association housing	9	3	34	7
Other	5	5	4	6

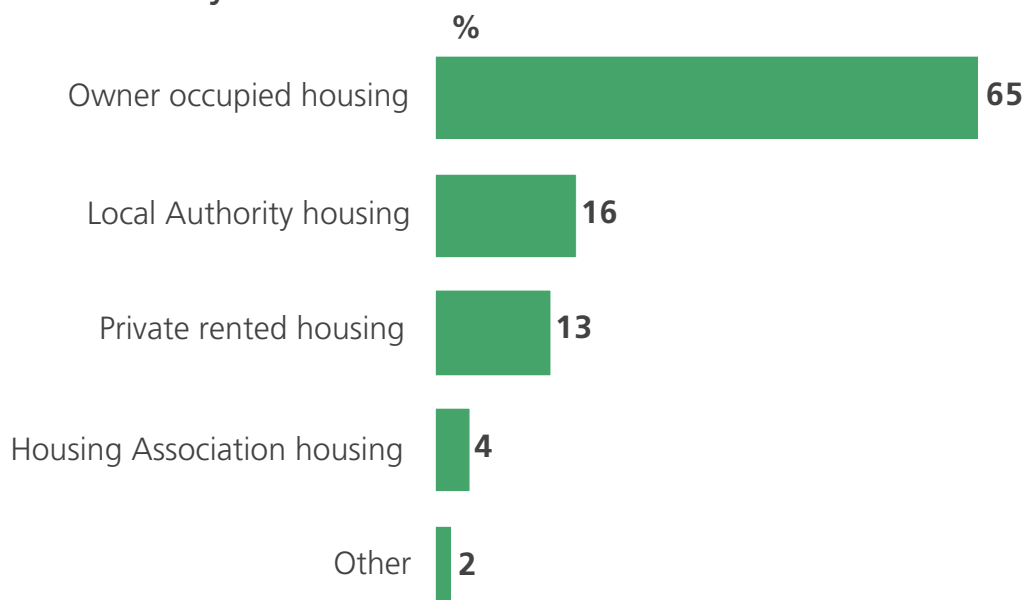
Source: Ipsos MORI

Notes: Base sizes in brackets. This question allowed respondents to identify as many relevant responses as applied 'Don't know' and 'Not stated' responses not presented

Again it is owner-occupation that is the predominant tenure type when respondents indicate the tenure they have spent most time in since the age of 16. Nearly two-thirds (65%) have spent most time in owner-occupation compared to 16 per cent in local authority rented accommodation and 13 per cent in the private rented sector.

Figure 3.4 Types of accommodation lived in as an adult

And which of these types of accommodation have you spent most time in since you were 16?



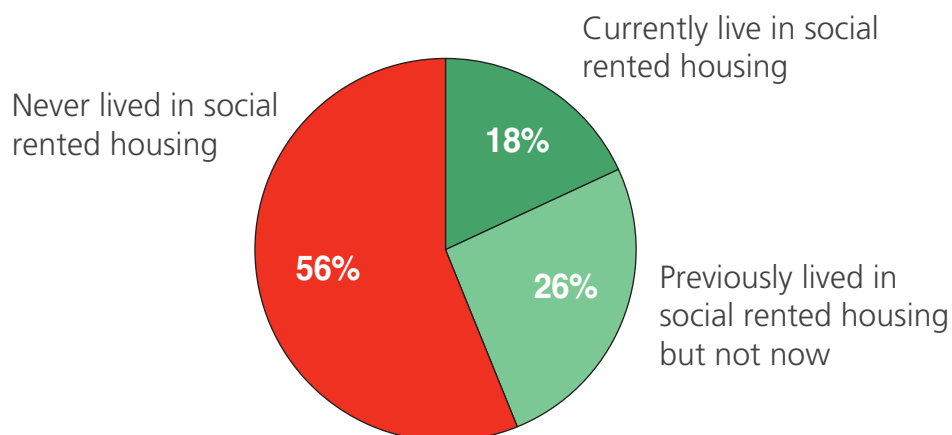
Base: 3,344 (respondents are general public questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24–31 and August 14–21 2008)

'Don't know and 'Not stated' responses not shown

Source: Ipsos MORI

3.4. Experience of the social rented sector

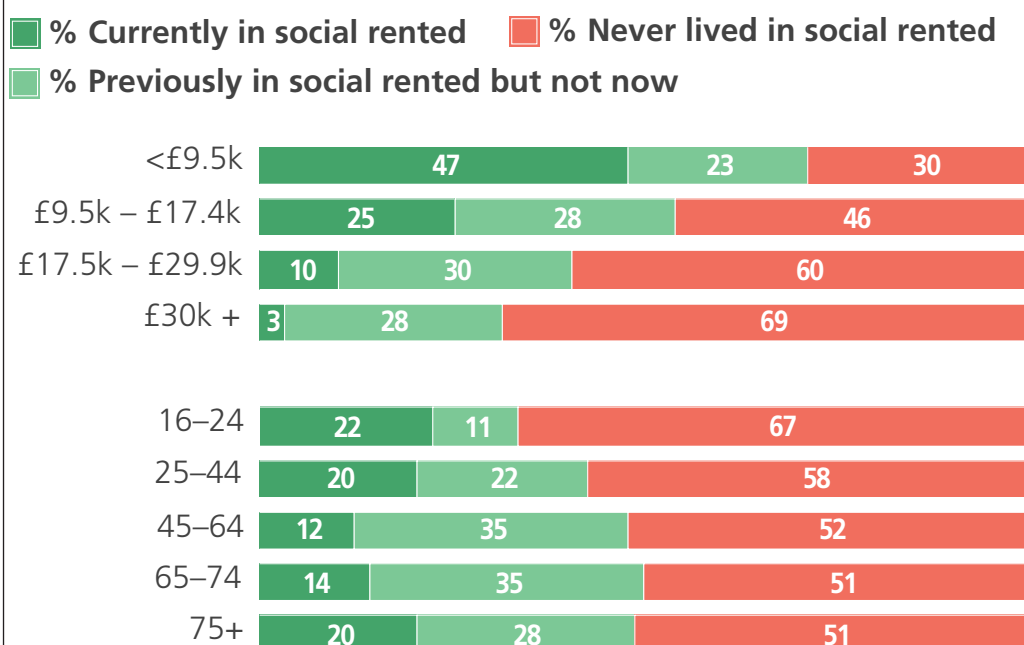
Combining responses to the tenure experience questions indicates that just under half (44%) of the population have had some experience of living in social rented housing. Slightly fewer than one in five (18%) were currently living in social rented housing at the time of the survey and around a quarter (26%) of the population have previously rented from a social landlord but were not at the time of the survey.

Figure 3.5 Experience of living in the social rented sector

Base: 3,344 (respondents are general public questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24-31 and August 14-21 2008)

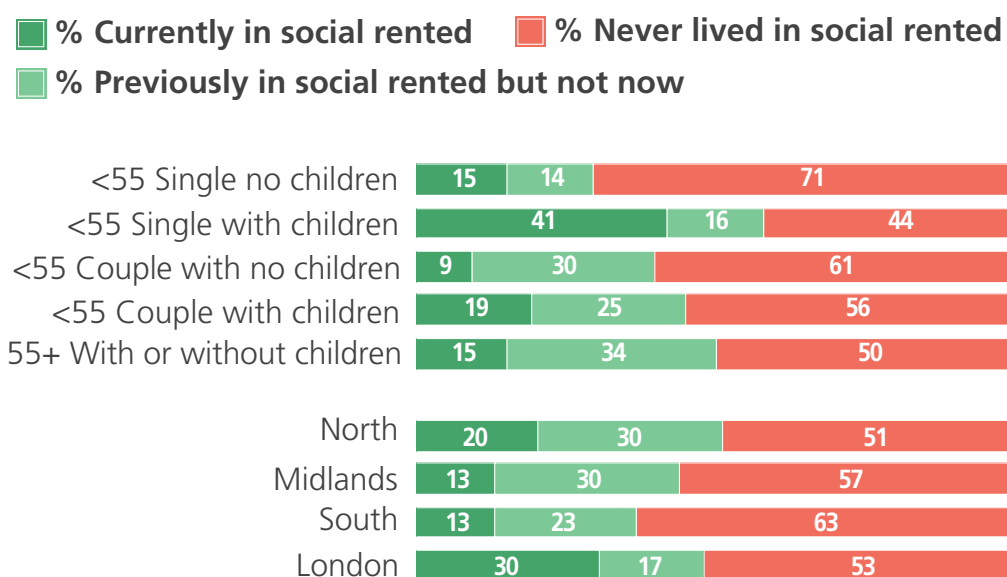
Source: Ipsos MORI

It was those on low incomes, the elderly and single parent families who were most likely to have had experience of living in social rented housing. Seventy per cent of those with income less than £9,500 were either currently or had previously lived in social housing, as had just under half (49%) of all those aged 65 and above. Differences by region were less stark, although it was evident that those living in the south were most likely never to have lived in the social rented sector.

Figure 3.6 Experience of the social rented sector by income and age

Base: 3,344 (respondents are general public questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24-31 and August 14-21 2008)

Source: Ipsos MORI

Figure 3.7 Experience of the social rented sector by life stage and region

Base: 3,344 (respondents are general public questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24-31 and August 14-21 2008)

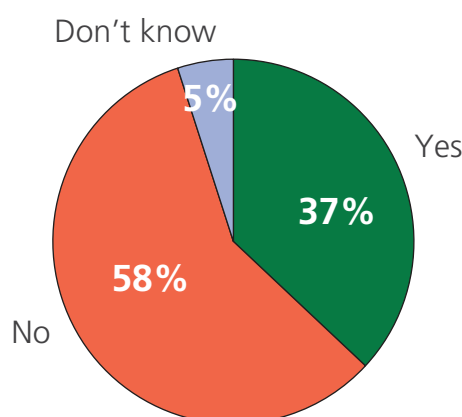
Source: Ipsos MORI

3.5. Receipt of housing benefit

One in eight (12%) of the population indicated they or members of their household were in receipt of housing benefit or local housing allowance. Among only those eligible for housing benefit or local housing allowance (those living in social or private rented accommodation), more than a third (37%) indicated they or someone in their household received housing benefit.

Figure 3.8 Receipt of housing benefit among renters

Some people qualify for “Housing Benefit” or “Local Housing Allowance”, either as a rent rebate or as an allowance.
Do you or other members of your current household receive any housing benefit or local housing allowance?



Base: 1,036 (respondents are general public living in rented accommodation questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24–31 and August 14–21 2008)

Source: Ipsos MORI

Nearly half (48%) of all adults living in social housing reported that someone in their household was in receipt of benefit to help with their housing³. Social renters were more than twice as likely to be in receipt of benefits as private renters. Other demographic groups that were significantly more likely to receive housing benefit or local housing allowance included those with low household income; the elderly (75+); single parent families and; those who lived in London.

³ The proportion of social renters receiving Housing Benefit is lower than Survey of English Housing (2006/07) estimates. This most likely reflects methodological differences between the two surveys – the Omnibus survey is a representative survey of the GB population and as such can include interviews with any member of the household aged 16 or over. The SEH is representative of households with interviews conducted with the head of household or their partner/spouse. A lack of knowledge by younger household members that the household receives housing benefit would account for the lower proportion observed from this Omnibus survey.

Table 3.3 Variations in the receipt of Housing Benefit

Some people qualify for “Housing Benefit” or “Local Housing Allowance”, either as a rent rebate or as an allowance. Do you or other members of your current household receive any housing benefit or local housing allowance?

	% Yes	% No
Tenure		
Social renters (680)	48	47
Private renters (356)	21	74
Household income		
<£9.5k (433)	48	49
£9.5k – £17.4k (562)	16	84
£17.5k – £29.9k (410)	5	94
£30k+ (655)	1	99
Age		
16-24 (401)	12	77
25-44 (1,073)	13	85
45-64 (1,044)	10	90
65-74 (490)	12	87
75+ (336)	21	77
Household type (life stage)*		
<55 Single no children (547)	10	84
<55 Single with children (288)	28	60
<55 Couple with no children (434)	4	95
<55 Couple with children (712)	11	87
55+ With or without children (1,341)	13	85
Region		
North (1,010)	15	82
Midlands (910)	10	87
South (936)	9	90
London (488)	17	76

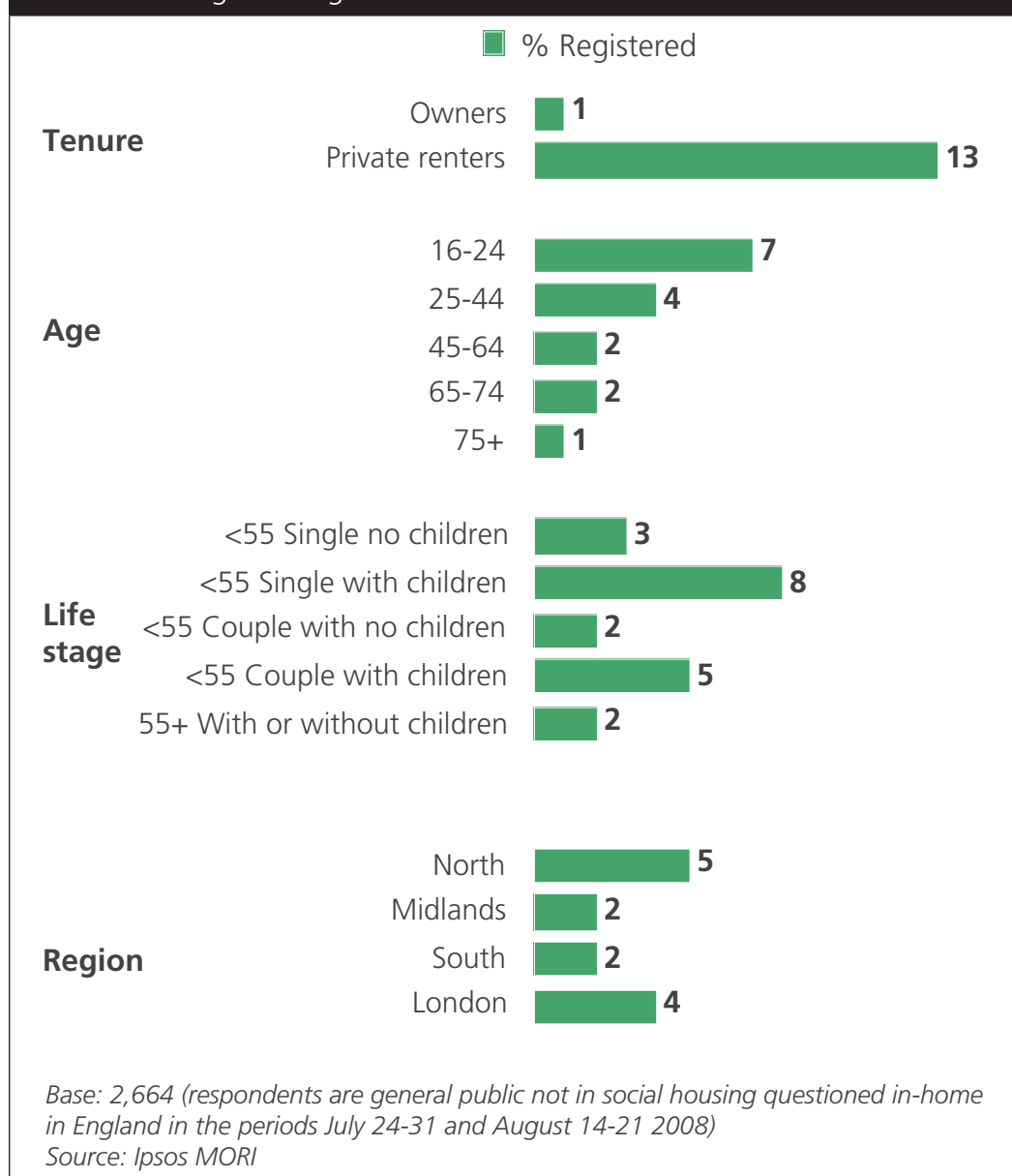
Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: Base sizes in brackets. ‘Don’t know’ and ‘Not stated’ responses not presented. * ‘Other’ life stage category not presented due to small base size

3.6. Registration on the waiting list

The survey asked all those not currently living in social rented housing whether they were on a social housing register or waiting list⁴. For those that were not currently living in social housing, fewer than one in twenty (3%) were currently registered on a social housing register or waiting list. Private renters were much more likely to be registered on a waiting list than owners as were the young when compared with those aged 65 and above.

Figure 3.9 Registration on housing register/waiting list and tenure, age, life stage and region



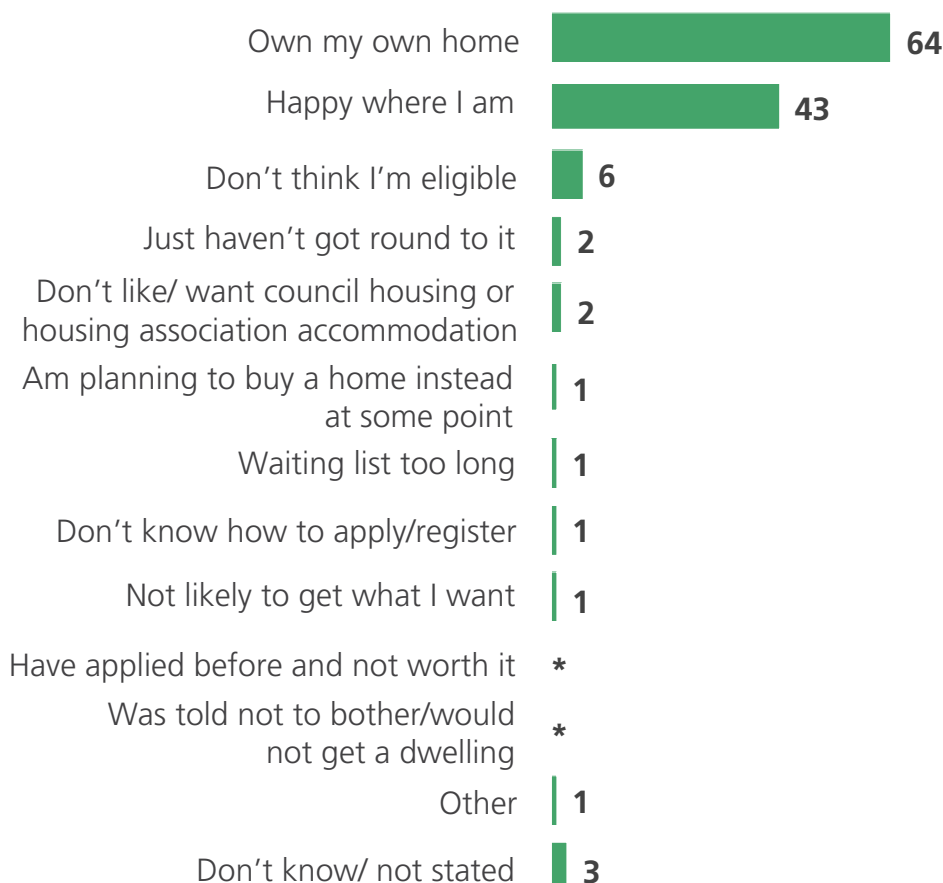
⁴ This will exclude children of social renters, who if over 16 and interviewed for the survey, will be identified as social renters and consequently not asked about registration on a housing register/waiting list.

3.7. Reasons for not registering on a social housing register or waiting list

The overwhelming majority of the population were not registered on a social housing register or waiting list because they either owned their own home or were happy in the home they currently occupied at the time of the survey. Eligibility for social housing, although the next most commonly stated reason, was mentioned by just six percent of the unregistered population. Concerns about the social rented sector as a tenure and accessibility to the right types of property within the sector were not major factors in the decision not to register.

Figure 3.10 Reasons for not registering on a social housing register/waiting list

What are your main reasons for not registering on a social housing register or waiting list?



Base: 2,584 (respondents are general public not in social housing and not registered on a waiting list questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24-31 and August 14-21 2008)

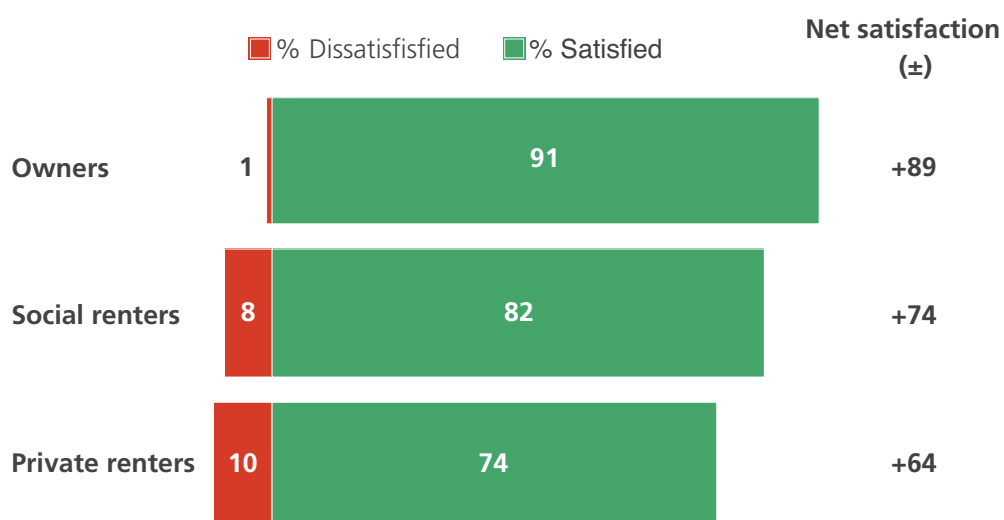
Source: Ipsos MORI

3.8. Overall satisfaction

The overwhelming majority of owner occupiers were satisfied with being an owner, with more than nine out of ten stating they were either very or fairly satisfied. More than four out of five social renters (82%) were satisfied with being a social tenant and just under three-quarters of private renters (74%) were satisfied.

Figure 3.11 Overall satisfaction

Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with being a council/housing association/ private tenant/ owner occupier



Base: 3,344 (respondents are general public questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24-31 and August 14-21 2008)

Source: Ipsos MORI

The survey explored in greater depth the views of those currently living in both social and private rented accommodation at the time of the survey which are considered further in the following chapters.

Chapter 4

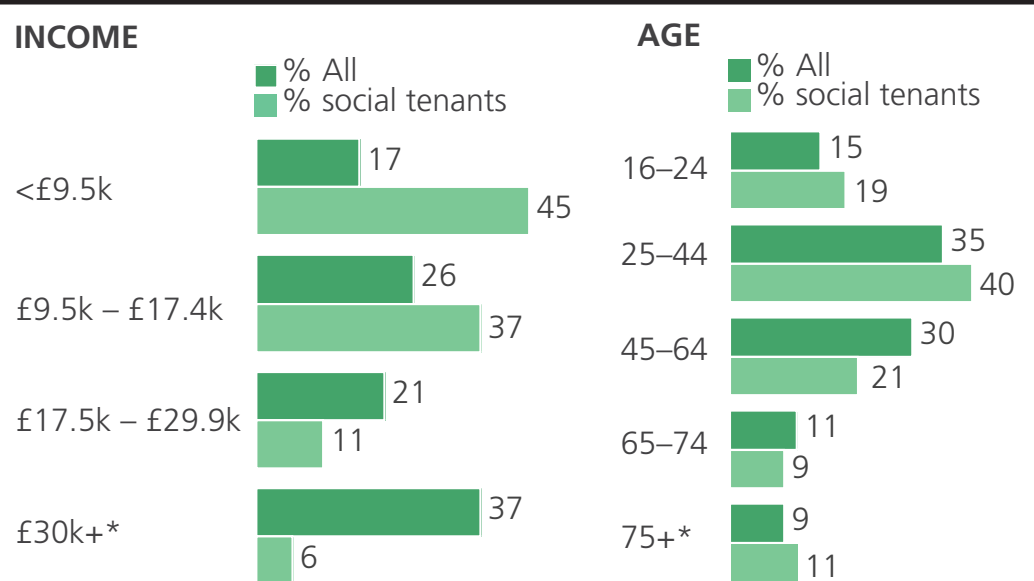
Social renters

In this chapter we look specifically at the characteristics of those living in the social rented sector and explore in more detail what they saw as the main advantages and disadvantages of the sector. We also examine social tenants' views on the impact living in the social rented sector has had on their life opportunities.

4.1. Who are social renters?

The profile of those in the social rented sector is a reflection of who applies, how the properties are allocated and how this changes over time. Looking at the national picture across England, the effect of these factors is to produce a social rented sector that has some distinctive characteristics.

Social renters at the time of the survey were noticeably more likely to be people on low incomes when compared with the profile of the population nationally (including all tenures). More than two in five social tenants (45%) had less than £9,500 in annual household income – more than two times the level seen nationally. The sector was also characterised by a greater proportion of people in the 16-24 and 25-44 age groups as well as older (75+) people, but fewer in the 45-74 age groups, when compared to the national profile.

Figure 4.1 Household income and age profile of social renters

Base: 3,344 (respondents are general public questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24-31 and August 14-21 2008)

* Figures included for completeness but are based on small base sizes

Source: Ipsos MORI

Related to the income profile observed above, it is not surprising to see that the incidence of unemployed people and single parent families was also higher in the social rented sector.

Table 4.1 Profile of social renters by life stage, region and work status**Profile of social renters by life stage, region and work status**

	% Social tenants (680)	% All (3,344)
Household type (life stage)*		
<55 Single no children	16	18
<55 Single with children	20	8
<55 Couple with no children	7	15
<55 Couple with children	26	24
55+ With or without children	30	34
Region		
North	32	29
Midlands	22	30
South	20	27
London	25	15
Work status		
Employed	40	56
Retired	22	23
Unemployed	7	3
Other not working	31	18

Source: Ipsos MORI

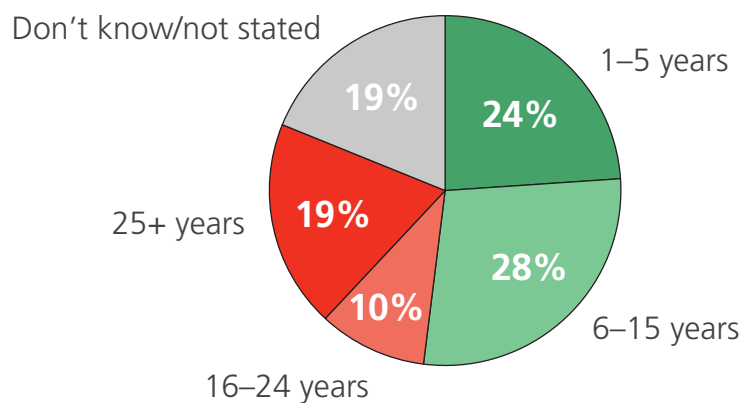
Note: Base sizes in brackets * 'Other' life stage category not presented due to small base size

4.2. Length of time as a social tenant

For those living in the social rented sector at the time of the survey, a quarter (24%) had been a tenant for five years or less and nearly one in five (19%) had been a tenant for 25 years or more.

Figure 4.2 Length of time as a social tenant

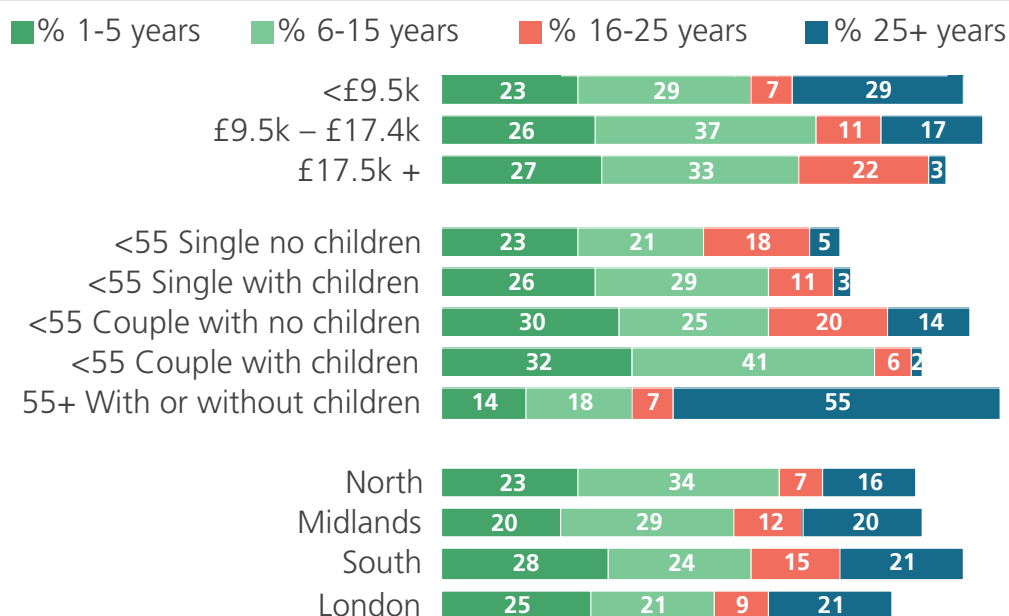
And how long is it since you first became a council/ housing association tenant, by which I mean having a tenancy in your own name or jointly?



Base: 680 (respondents are social renters questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24-31 and August 14-21 2008)

Source: Ipsos MORI

Those on the lowest household incomes were significantly more likely to be a longer term tenant (25 years or more).

Figure 4.3 Length of time as a social tenant and characteristics

Base: 680 (respondents are social renters questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24-31 and August 14-21 2008) 'Don't know' and 'Not stated' responses not included

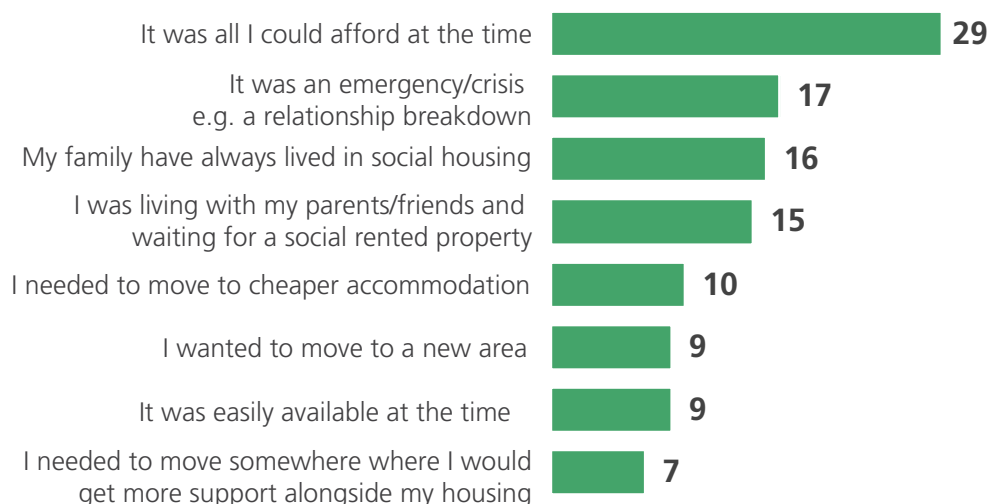
Source: Ipsos MORI

4.3. Reasons for moving into social housing

The most commonly cited reasons for moving into social rented housing related to housing costs or changes in personal circumstance. Three in ten (29%) social renters moved to the sector because it was all they could afford at the time of the move and slightly fewer than one in five (17%) moved to the sector as a result of an emergency or crisis. One in seven tenants (16%) had always lived in social housing, which includes young renters born into the sector, those establishing their own tenancy when they moved out of their family home and those with a direct succession tenancy. The proportion of existing social renters that have always lived in social housing is likely to be understated here as respondents were asked to identify the main reasons – a respondent may have already been living in social housing but consider affordability to be the main reason for remaining in social housing.

Figure 4.4 Main reasons for moving into social housing

Which if any of these were your main reasons for moving into social housing?



Base: 680 (respondents are social renters questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24–31 and August 14–21 2008)

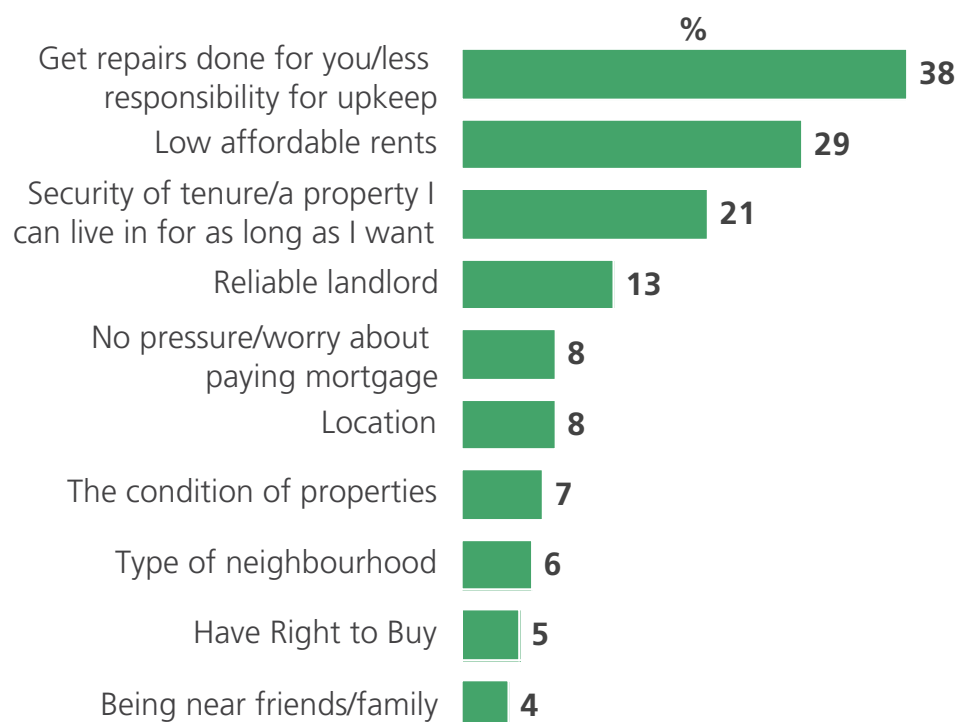
Source: Ipsos MORI

4.4. The benefits of living in social rented housing

For existing tenants, at the time of the survey the main benefits of living in social rented housing related to provision of repair services and having cheap rent. Security of tenure was another key benefit, as too was having a reliable landlord. Less commonly cited benefits related to the type and condition of property, the community and neighbourhood more generally.

Figure 4.5 The best things about living in social housing

What, if anything, do you consider to be the *best* things about living in council or housing association housing? – **TOP 10 responses**



Base: 680 (respondents are social renters questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24–31 and August 14–21 2008)

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: This question allowed respondents to identify as many relevant responses as applicable

The table below shows the five most commonly mentioned best things about social housing by key characteristics. Lower income social tenants were more likely to consider getting repairs done as one of the best things of the sector, but were less likely to consider low affordable rents to be an advantage. Social tenants with higher incomes did, however, consider this to be an advantage, perhaps reflecting a more sensitive view of housing costs without the assistance of housing benefit to help. More generally, younger tenants were less likely than older tenants to cite the benefits of living in the sector and couples, both with and without children, were more likely than other household types to recognise low rents as a major benefit.

Table 4.2 The best things about living in social housing and characteristics***What, if anything, do you consider to be the BEST things about living in council or housing association housing? (5 most common mentions)***

	%				
	Get repairs done for you/less responsibility for upkeep	Low affordable rents	Security of tenure/a property I can live in for as long as I want	Reliable landlord	No pressure/worry about paying mortgage
Household income					
<£9.5k (219)	41	22	25	16	11
£9.5k – £17.4k (152)	42	37	23	13	9
£17.5k + (60)	34	38	23	13	4
Age					
16-24 (109)	20	23	18	10	3
25-44 (254)	37	36	22	16	11
45-64 (172)	47	28	20	12	9
65-74 (74)	46	19	24	12	8
75+ (71)	52	22	26	12	9
Household type (life stage)*					
<55 Single no children (109)	33	28	19	12	9
<55 Single with children (135)	26	29	22	11	5
<55 Couple with no children (51)	45	36	20	27	18
<55 Couple with children (150)	40	37	20	12	10
55+ With or without children (224)	46	21	23	11	7
Region					
North (236)	44	32	22	9	5
Midlands (140)	46	31	24	17	10
South (145)	42	28	22	13	7
London (159)	21	25	18	15	12

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: base sizes in brackets * 'Other' life stage category not presented due to small base size

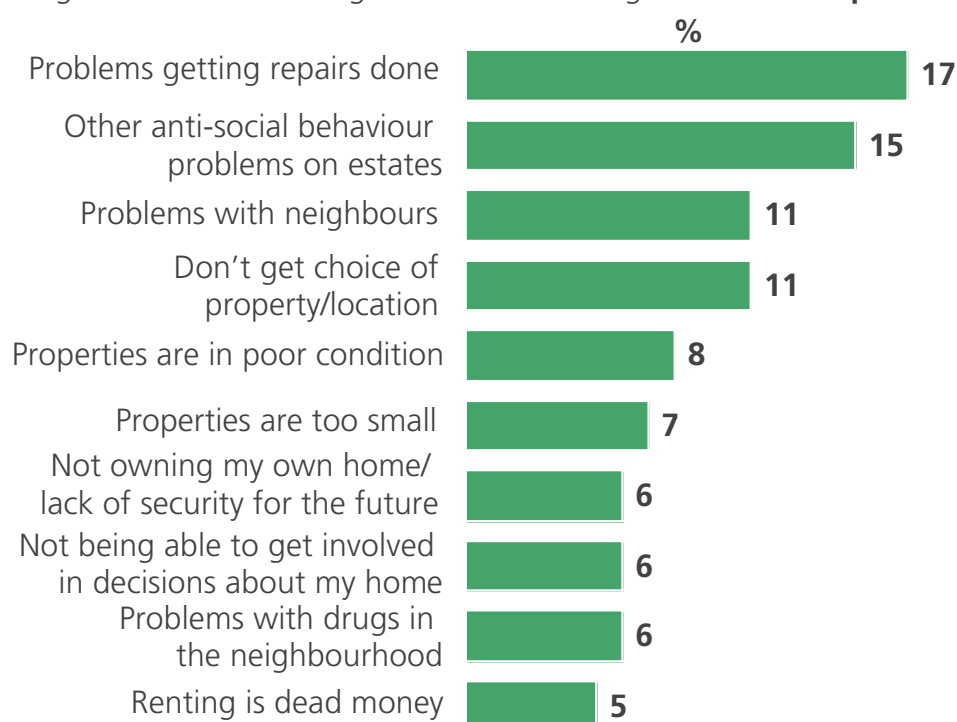
Note: This question allowed respondents to identify as many relevant responses as applicable

4.5. The disadvantages of living in social rented housing

Although one of the most commonly mentioned advantages of living in social housing was not having responsibility for repairs, the most commonly cited disadvantage was actually getting the repairs done. Nearly one in five (17%) social tenants cited this as one of the worst things about living in the sector. The surrounding living environment – including anti-social behaviour and problem neighbours – and the property available (in terms of condition, type and location) were also commonly mentioned problems associated with the sector.

Figure 4.6 The worst things about living in social housing

And what, if anything, do you consider to be the *worst* things about living in council or housing association housing? – **TOP 10 responses**



Base: 680 (respondents are social renters questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24–31 and August 14–21 2008)

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: This question allowed respondents to identify as many relevant responses as applicable

The table below shows the five most commonly mentioned worst things about social housing by key characteristics. Problems getting repairs done was an issue for those social tenants on the lowest and highest incomes. It was also more of an issue for single parent families and tenants living in London. Anti-social behaviour on estates was a particular issue for young tenants (16–24). Those on medium and higher incomes and those living in London were more likely than their sub-group counter-parts to consider choice and the condition of properties to be problematic.

Table 4.3 The worst things about living in social housing and characteristics

And what, if anything, do you consider to be the WORST things about living in council or housing association housing? (5 most common mentions)

	%				
	Problems getting repairs done	Other anti-social behaviour problems on estates	Problems with neighbours	Don't get choice of property/ location	Properties are in poor condition
Household income					
<£9.5k (219)	21	12	9	8	6
£9.5k – £17.4k (152)	14	19	17	14	11
£17.5k + (60)	15	12	13	18	11
Age					
16-24 (109)	19	22	10	17	9
25-44 (254)	17	12	11	14	8
45-64 (172)	19	17	12	8	10
65-74 (74)	12	15	13	2	6
75+ (71)	18	8	5	2	3
Household type (life stage)*					
<55 Single no children (109)	15	24	11	11	9
<55 Single with children (135)	20	14	13	14	9
<55 Couple with no children (51)	14	11	11	11	9
<55 Couple with children (150)	18	13	8	17	9
55+ With or without children (224)	17	11	11	3	6
Region					
North (236)	14	19	17	10	8
Midlands (140)	16	12	10	10	3
South (145)	15	8	7	13	7
London (159)	25	17	7	11	13

Source: Ipsos MORI

Notes: Base sizes in brackets. * 'Other' life stage category not presented due to small base size

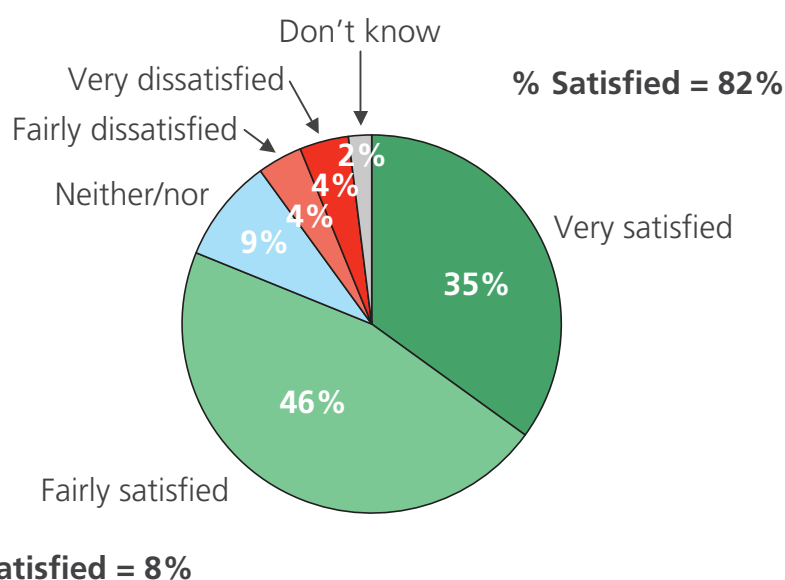
Note: This question allowed respondents to identify as many relevant responses as applicable

4.6. Overall satisfaction with social rented housing

It is clear from the responses of existing tenants at the time of the survey that the social rented sector has both advantages and disadvantages. To get a better understanding of the relative balance between the merits and weaknesses, tenants were asked to rate overall satisfaction with the sector. Results were strongly positive with more than eight out of ten social renting tenants satisfied with the sector. Fewer than one in ten were dissatisfied, resulting in a net satisfaction score of 74 per cent.

Figure 4.7 Overall satisfaction with social rented housing

And taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with being a council/housing association tenant?



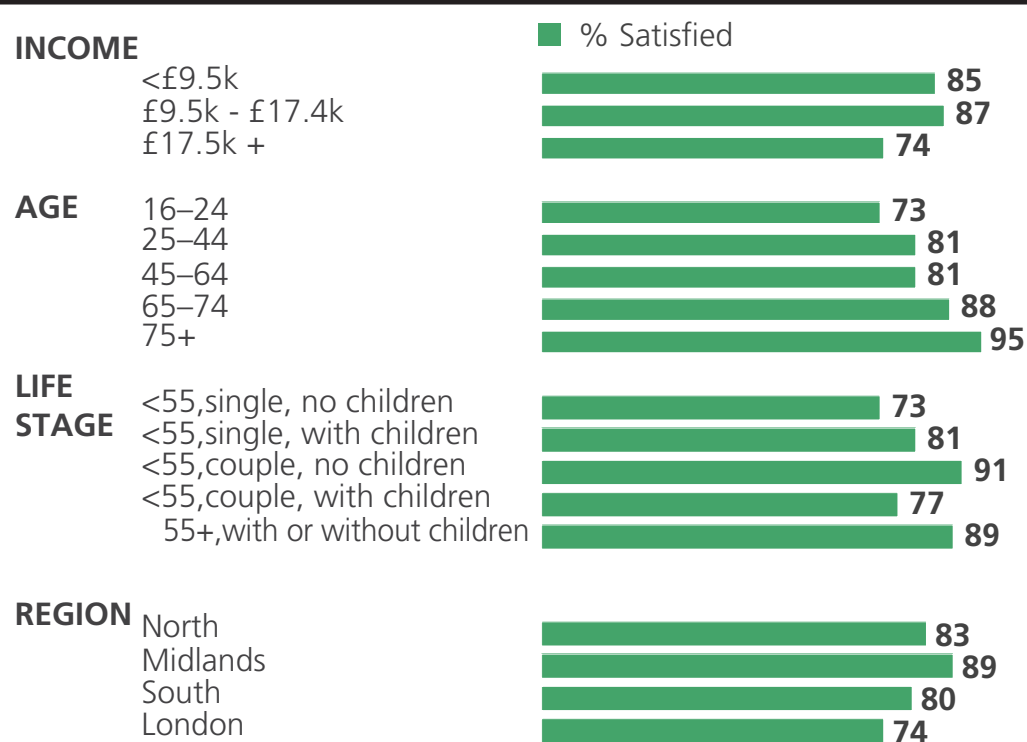
Base: 680 (respondents are social renters questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24–31 and August 14–21 2008)

Source: Ipsos MORI

The positive rating for the sector overall did, however, mask some differences. Those tenants with the highest income were least likely to be satisfied with this tenure and older tenants were significantly more satisfied than younger tenants (a pattern consistent with much of our other satisfaction survey work⁵). Single person households without children were least likely to be satisfied with the tenure whereas couples under 55 and without children were most likely to be satisfied. Differences also existed geographically, with tenants in the midlands most likely to be satisfied, whereas tenants living in London were least likely to be satisfied – again a pattern that is consistent with our other tenant satisfaction work⁶

⁵ Satisfaction and Age: Review of Recent Ipsos MORI Research Results – Report prepared for L&Q Group (November 2007)

⁶ Housing Frontiers 2008: An analysis of local authority tenant satisfaction data <http://www.ipsos-mori.com/researchspecialisms/publicaffairs/socialresearchinstitute/housing/tenantssatisfactionsurveysstatus.ashx>

Figure 4.8 Variation in satisfaction among social renting tenants

Base: 680 (respondents are social renters questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24–31 and August 14–21 2008)

Source: Ipsos MORI

4.7. The impact of the social rented sector on life opportunities

Overall, social tenants were positive about social housing, but what impact did they feel being a social housing tenant had had on their life opportunities? To explore this issue further, tenants were asked to assess the contribution social housing had made to their financial independence, their training and employment prospects and their ability to access market housing. In the following sections we look at the proportion of respondents who agreed and disagreed with each statement. The 'net agree' figures show the balance between those agreeing and disagreeing – a positive score indicates more agreed than disagreed and a negative score indicates more disagreed than agreed.

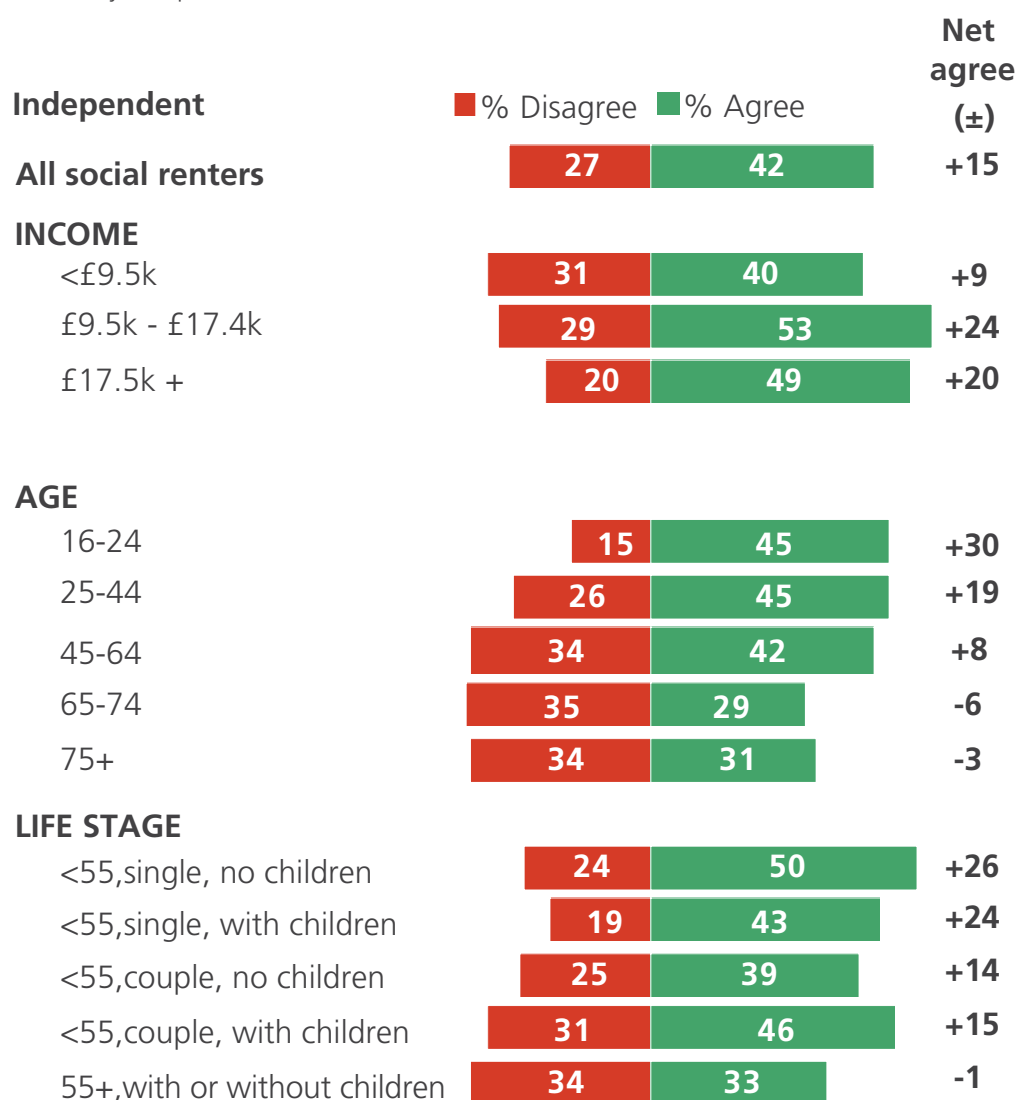
4.7.1. Financial independence

More than two in five (42%) tenants agreed, living in social housing has helped them to become more financially independent, compared to slightly more than a quarter who disagreed. On balance, social tenants agreed that living in social housing has assisted them in becoming more financially independent. It was

young tenants, those with medium incomes and single person households without children who were most likely to agree that they had become more financially independent as a result of renting social housing.

Figure 4.9 Help with financial independence and household characteristics

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements that having a lower rent by living in social housing has helped you... to become more financially independent



Base: 680 (respondents are social renters questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24–31 and August 14–21 2008).

'Don't know' and 'Not stated' responses not presented Source: Ipsos MORI

Tenants living in London were most likely to consider the lower rents in the social sector to have assisted with their financial independence. The net agree score for London tenants was +21 percentage points compared to just +9 percentage points for tenants in the north.

Table 4.4 Help with financial independence and regional variation

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements that having a lower rent by living in social housing has helped you...to become more financially independent?

	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
Region			
North (236)	33	42	+9
Midlands (140)	23	39	+16
South (145)	27	40	+13
London (159)	24	45	+21

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: Base sizes in brackets. 'Don't know' and 'Not stated' responses not presented

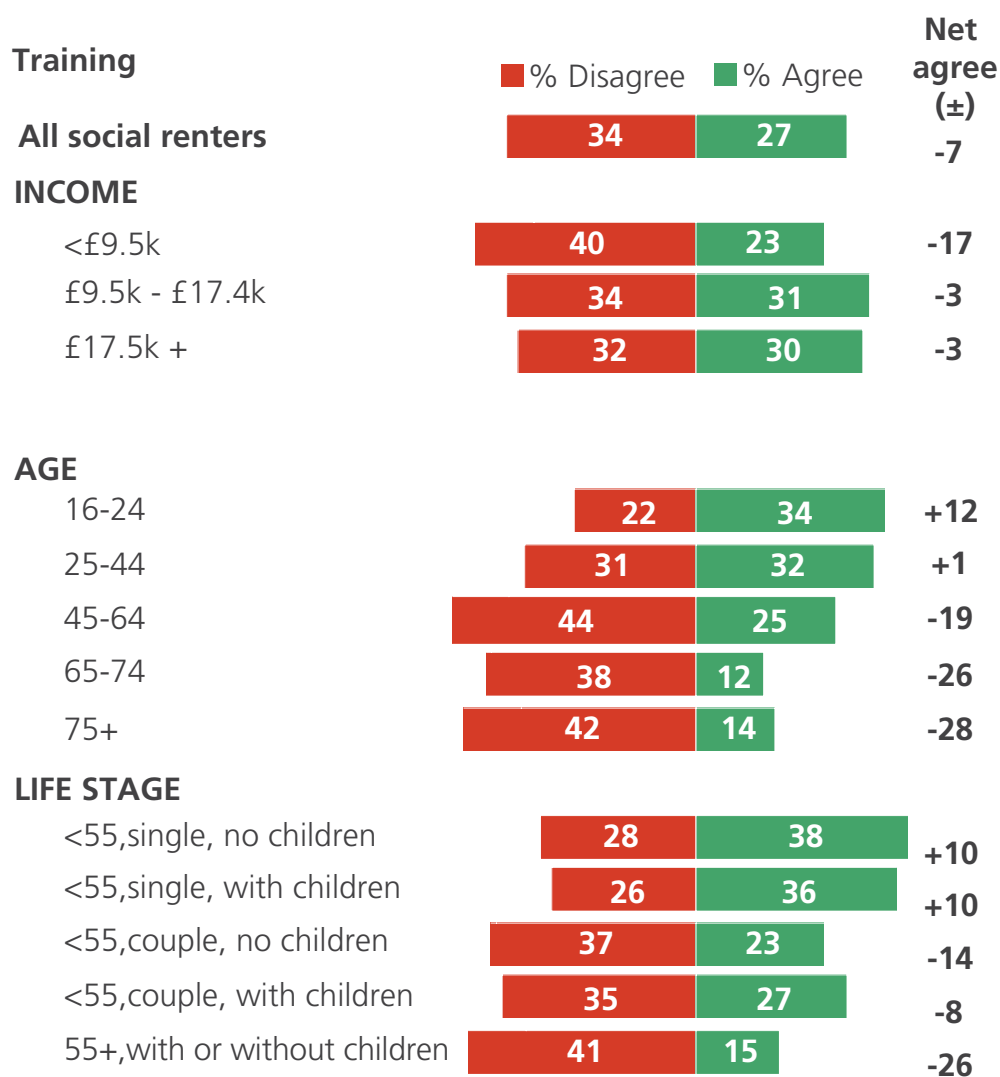
4.7.2. Work and training

Fewer social tenants agreed than disagreed that living in social housing has helped them to take up work or training. Just over a third disagreed, compared to slightly more than a quarter who agreed, producing a net agree score of -7.

Again young tenants (aged between 16 and 24), and those in single person households were most likely to agree that living in social housing has helped with work and training prospects. When looking at the income of tenants, agreement was lowest for those earning less than £9,500 p.a. – probably reflecting the higher proportion of unemployed tenants covered by this income category.

Figure 4.10 Help with take up of work or training and household characteristics

To what extent do you agree or disagree that having a lower rent by living in social housing has helped you ... to take up work or training



Base: 680 (respondents are social renters questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24–31 and August 14–21 2008).

'Don't know' and 'Not stated' responses not presented Source: Ipsos MORI

When looking at results by region, again the contrast was greatest between London and the north. Only for social tenants living in London did more tenants agree than disagree that living in social housing had helped with work and training opportunities.

Table 4.5 Help with take up of work or training and regional variation

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements that having a lower rent by living in social housing has helped you...to take up work or training?

	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
Region			
North (236)	42	24	-19
Midlands (140)	30	23	-7
South (145)	35	24	-11
London (159)	26	36	+10

Source: Ipsos MORI

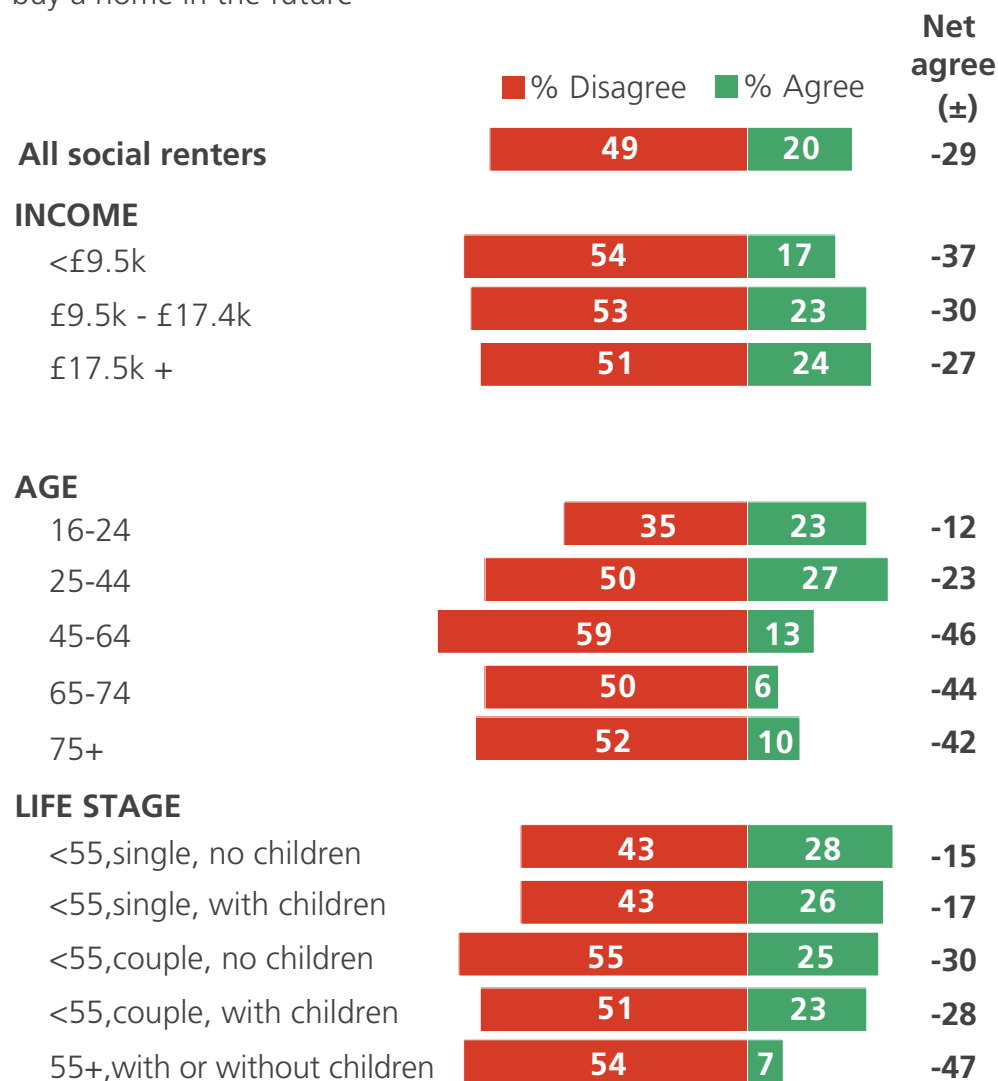
Note: Base sizes in brackets. 'Don't know' and 'Not stated' responses not presented

4.7.3. Saving for a deposit to help buy a house

Of the life opportunity aspects identified, fewest tenants agreed that living in social housing had helped with saving for a deposit to help buy a home. Just one in five tenants agreed that it had, compared to around a half (49%) who disagreed producing a net agree score of -29. Again tenants with higher incomes (above £9,500) were more likely to have agreed, although consistently across all income bands the majority disagreed.

Figure 4.11 Help saving for a deposit to help buy a home in the future and household characteristics

To what extent do you agree or disagree that having a lower rent by living in social housing has helped you ... to save up a deposit to help buy a home in the future



Base: 680 (respondents are social renters questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24–31 and August 14–21 2008).

'Don't know' and 'Not stated' responses not presented Source: Ipsos MORI

There was, however, the same geographical pattern to responses as seen for previous life opportunity aspects. The greatest differences were evident between the north and London. In the north, levels of disagreement were four times the levels of agreement, with net agreement at –45, whereas opinion was nearly equally split in London (–1).

Table 4.6 Help saving for a deposit to help buy a home in the future and regional variation

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements that having a lower rent by living in social housing has helped you...to save up a deposit to help buy a home in the future?

	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
Region			
North (236)	60	15	-45
Midlands (140)	48	11	-37
South (145)	55	22	-32
London (159)	32	31	-1

Source: Ipsos MORI

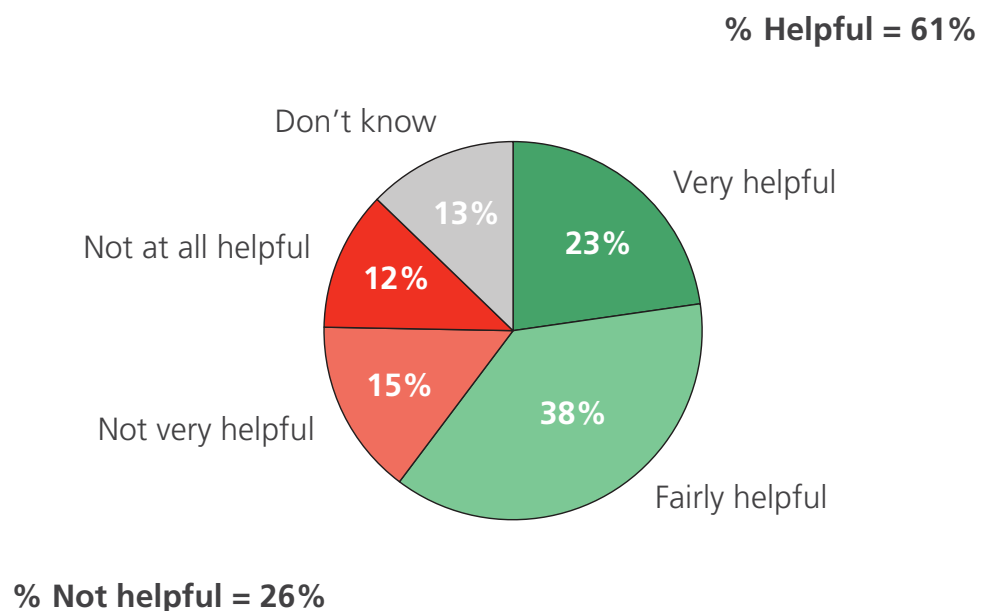
Note: Base sizes in brackets. 'Don't know' and 'Not stated' responses not presented

4.8. Provision of advice and support to find work or training

More than three out of five (61%) tenants for whom the question was applicable, indicated that provision of information to assist finding work or training would be helpful. A quarter (26%) indicated it would not be helpful.

Figure 4.12 Access to advice and support to find work or suitable training

How helpful, if at all, would you find it if your housing officer was able to provide information on where to go for advice or support to find work or suitable training for work?



Base: 680 (respondents are social renters questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24–31 and August 14–21 2008)

Source: Ipsos MORI

Those tenants finding this type of support most helpful included those with higher incomes (£17,500 and more), younger tenants and those living as single person households and those who are currently unemployed.

Table 4.7 Access to advice and support to find work or suitable training and household characteristics

How helpful, if at all, would you find it if your housing officer was able to provide information on where to go for advice or support to find work or suitable training for work?

	% helpful	% not helpful	Net helpful (±)
Household income			
<£9.5k (169)	62	28	+34
£9.5k – £17.4k (119)	62	30	+32
£17.5k + (48)	73	23	+50
Age			
16-24 (103)	65	20	+45
25-44 (220)	64	29	+35
45-64 (114)	56	32	+24
65-74 (32)	55	23	+32
75+ (36)	54	17	+37
Household type (life stage)*			
<55 Single no children (91)	70	23	+47
<55 Single with children (122)	63	22	+42
<55 Couple with no children (46)	69	21	+49
<55 Couple with children (128)	61	32	+28
55+ With or without children (109)	47	29	+17

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: Base sizes in brackets. 'Don't know' and 'Not stated' responses not presented Note: Base sizes in brackets. * 'Other' life stage category not presented due to small base size

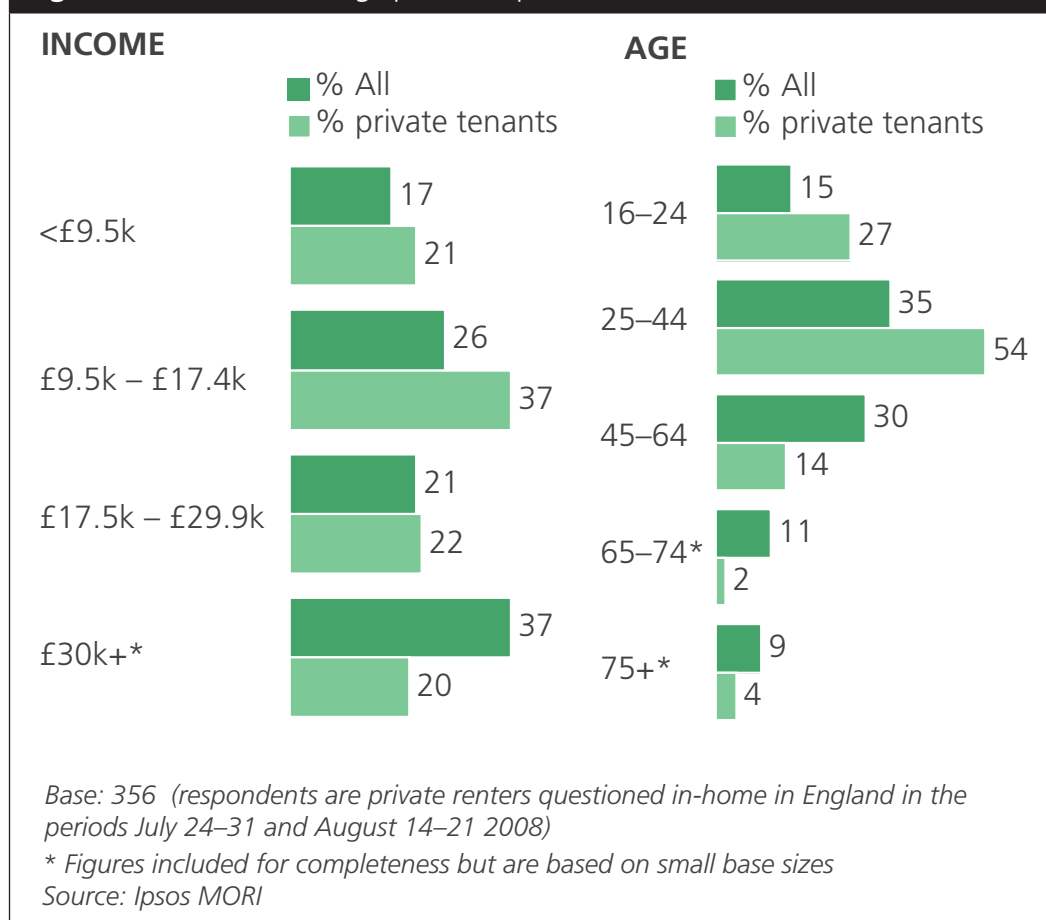
Chapter 5

Private renters

In this chapter we look at the characteristics of private renting tenants, together with what they saw as the main advantages and disadvantages of living in the sector. We also consider overall satisfaction levels across the sector before looking at the potential demand for social housing among this tenure group.

5.1. Who are private renters?

As has been commented on earlier in this report, the private rented sector is for many seen as a first step towards owner-occupation and as such we would expect the profile of private renters to be younger and have lower incomes. When compared with the national profile, it was indeed apparent that this profile characterised the sector. There were nearly two times the proportion of young people (between 16 and 24) in the private rented sector as seen nationally and a significantly higher proportion in the lowest income bands (less than £17,500). Just one in five (20%) private renters had annual income of £30,000 or more compared to 37 per cent across England as a whole.

Figure 5.1 Income and age profile of private renters

Consistent with age and income profiles, there was also a far higher incidence of single person households and those receiving housing benefit (or local housing allowance) in the private rented sector than was seen across England as a whole.

Table 5.1 Profile of private renters by life stage, region and work status		
Profile of social renters by life stage, region and work status		
	% Private tenants (356)	% All (3,344)
Household type (life stage)*		
<55 Single no children	39	18
<55 Single with children	9	8
<55 Couple with no children	16	15
<55 Couple with children	26	24
55+ With or without children	10	34
Region		
North	29	29
Midlands	21	30
South	26	27
London	25	15
Work status		
Employed	62	56
Retired	6	23
Unemployed	7	3
Other not working	26	18

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: Base sizes in brackets. * 'Other' life stage category not presented due to small base size

5.2. Receipt of housing benefit

The profile of the private rented sector lends support to the suggestion that this tenure increasingly serves to cater for specialised needs⁷. For the young and mobile it offers easy and flexible access to housing. For others it represents an alternative for those unable to gain access to owner-occupation or the social rented sector.

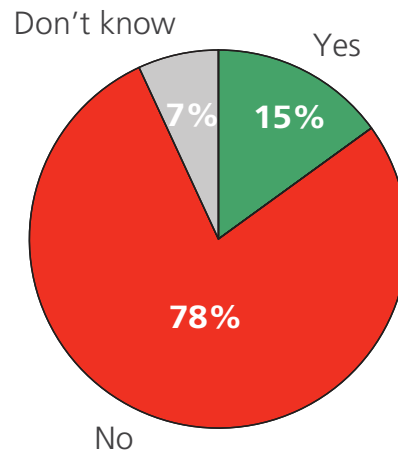
Those in the private sector were less likely than those in the social rented sector to be receiving some form of Housing Benefit (21 % compared to 48% of social renters). When asked if they received Housing Benefit when they first became a

⁷ Discussed in Rugg, J. and Rhodes, D. (2008) *The private rented sector: its contribution and potential*. Centre for Housing Policy, University of York.

private tenant fewer indicated they did so – around one in seven (15%) private renters received Housing Benefit when they first became a tenant.

Figure 5.2 Receipt of housing benefit when first became a tenant

And did you receive “Housing Benefit” or “Local Housing Allowance” when you first became a private tenant?

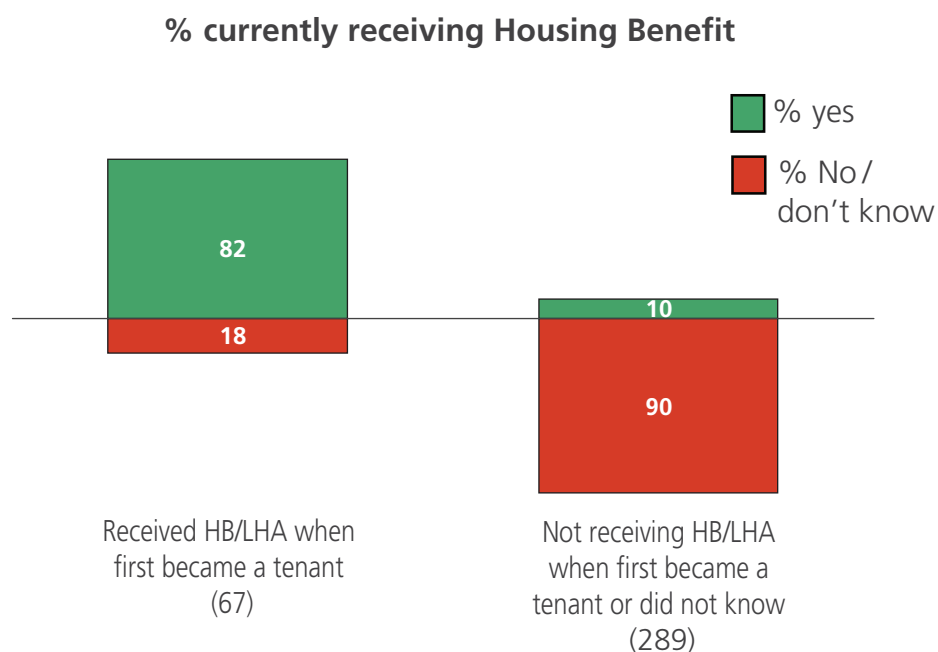


Base: 356 (respondents are private renters questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24–31 and August 14–21 2008)
Source: Ipsos MORI

Further analysis indicates that the majority of tenants who received Housing Benefit when they first became a tenant continued to receive Housing Benefit at the time of the survey (82%). Similarly, the majority (90%) of those not initially receiving Housing Benefit were not on Housing Benefit when they were surveyed. However one in ten private renters started to receive Housing Benefit after becoming a private tenant, a figure which, numerically, is larger than the proportion of tenants who started on Housing Benefit but who no longer received it when surveyed (18%). The net effect is a higher proportion of private renting tenants who have moved on to Housing Benefit since joining the sector than have moved off Housing Benefit.

Figure 5.3 Current receipt of housing benefit

Some people qualify for "Housing Benefit" or "Local Housing Allowance", either as a rent rebate or as an allowance. Do you or other members of your current household receive any housing benefit or local housing allowance?



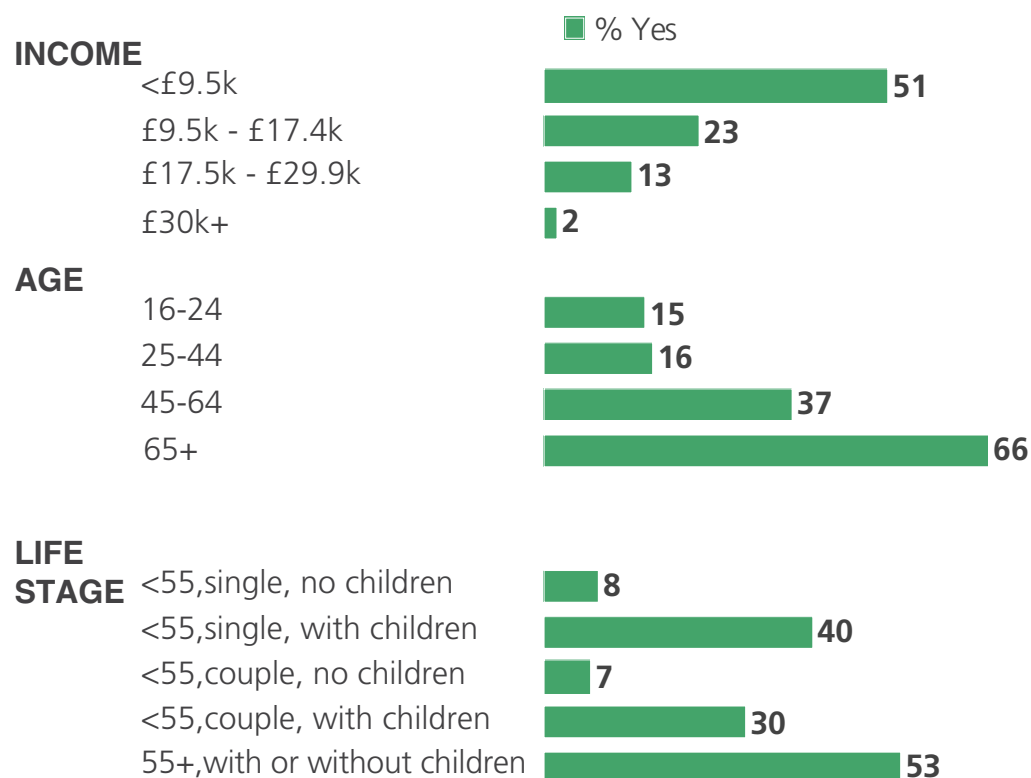
Base: 356 (respondents are private renters questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24–31 and August 14–21 2008).

Source: Ipsos MORI

Those receiving housing benefit at the time of the survey were most likely to be on the lowest incomes, elderly or single parent families. Over half (51%) of private renting tenants with less than £9,500 in household income received benefits – double the proportion of those with income between £9,500 to £17,499.

Figure 5.4 Receipt of housing benefit and household characteristics

Some people qualify for "Housing Benefit" or "Local Housing Allowance", either as a rent rebate or as an allowance. Do you or other members of your current household receive any housing benefit or local housing allowance?



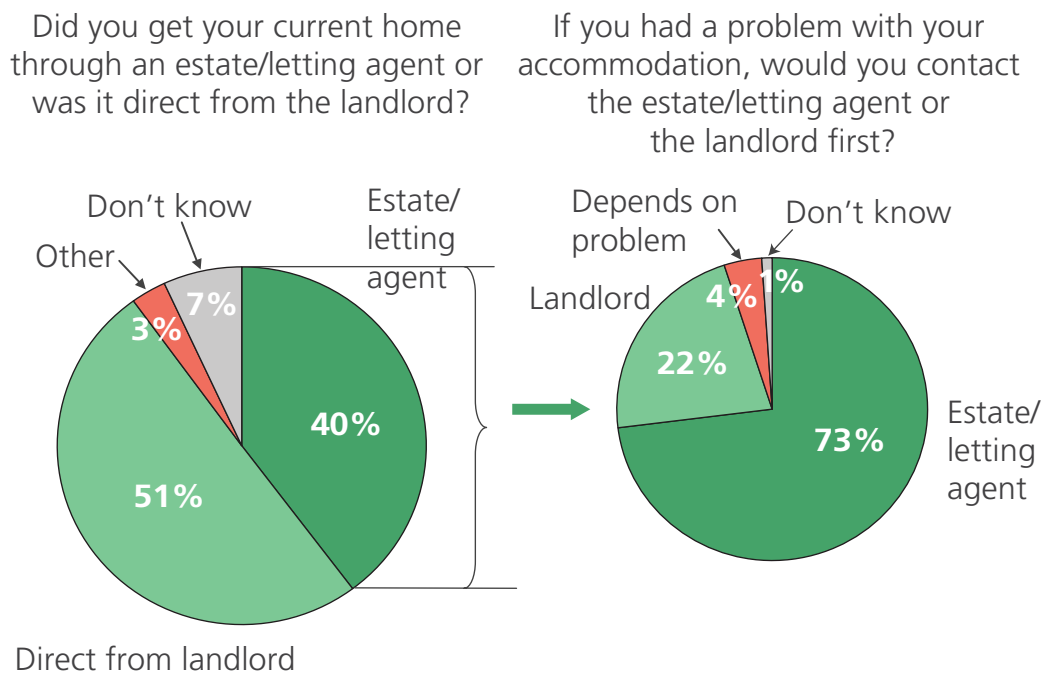
Base: 356 (respondents are private renters questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24–31 and August 14–21 2008).

Source: Ipsos MORI

5.3. Management arrangements

The majority of private renters at the time of the survey got their home direct from a landlord, whereas two out of five private renters used an estate or letting agent.

For those using an estate or letting agent, nearly three-quarters would contact the agent in the event of a problem with the accommodation, whereas just over a fifth would contact the landlord directly.

Figure 5.5 The management arrangements of private renters

Base: 356 (respondents are private renters questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24–31 and August 14–21 2008).

Source: Ipsos MORI

5.4. The benefits of living in private rented accommodation

The choice afforded by the private rented sector was one of the main benefits according to tenants. However it was choice of location rather than the types of properties available that was the most commonly recognised benefit. Over a third of tenants considered the choice of location to be one of the best things about private renting, nearly three times the proportion that considered choice of property to be a key advantage.

Responsibility for repairs resting with the landlord and flexible tenancy arrangements also feature strongly as key benefits of the sector. As we have already seen the higher incidence of younger people and those with lower household incomes within the sector help explain why these factors were seen as key benefits.

Figure 5.6 The best things about living in private rented accommodation

What, if anything, do you consider to be the *best* things about living in private rented accommodation?



Base: 356 (respondents are private renters questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24–31 and August 14–21 2008).

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: This question allowed respondents to identify as many relevant responses as necessary

The table below shows the five most commonly mentioned best things about living in the private rented sector. Low income private renters were more likely to consider choice of location as a benefit of the sector, but were much less likely to recognise flexible tenancy arrangements as a benefit. Older private renters were most likely to see a lack of responsibility for repairs as a benefit, but were less likely to see flexibility, availability and choice as benefits of the sector. Some of the biggest differences were seen by region with private renters in London more likely to recognise choice of location, flexible tenancy arrangements and easy availability as key benefits.

Table 5.2 The best things about living in private rented accommodation and characteristics*What, if anything, do you consider to be the BEST things about living in private rented accommodation? (5 most common mentions)*

	%				
	Choice of location	Get repairs done for you/less responsibility for upkeep	Flexible tenancy arrangements	Properties more easily available	Better choice of properties available (house/flat etc)
Household income					
<£9.5k (49)	43	24	6	10	10
£9.5k – £17.4k (86)	33	25	25	29	16
£17.5k – £29.9k (50)	32	35	34	5	11
£30k+ (43)	33	26	18	14	8
Age					
16-24 (88)	33	19	16	8	18
25-44 (191)	38	24	26	21	12
45-64 (57)	29	23	12	12	10
65+ (20)	55	48	-	-	9
Household type (life stage)*					
<55 Single no children (133)	41	20	25	15	13
<55 Single with children (38)	26	14	17	6	17
<55 Couple with no children (53)	39	23	21	18	11
<55 Couple with children (90)	30	27	19	22	15
55+ With or without children (42)	39	41	5	3	8

Table 5.2 The best things about living in private rented accommodation and characteristics (continued)*What, if anything, do you consider to be the BEST things about living in private rented accommodation? (5 most common mentions)*

	%				
	Choice of location	Get repairs done for you/less responsibility for upkeep	Flexible tenancy arrangements	Properties more easily available	Better choice of properties available (house/flat etc)
Work status					
Employed (full & part-time) (204)	39	21	23	17	17
Retired (28)	18	32	0	5	10
Unemployed (31)	44	4	8	20	4
Other not working (93)	31	35	19	13	8
Region					
North (101)	35	19	15	21	10
Midlands (68)	34	33	20	10	17
South (98)	31	29	19	7	9
London (89)	46	18	27	22	19

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: Base sizes in brackets. * 'Other' life stage category not presented due to small base size

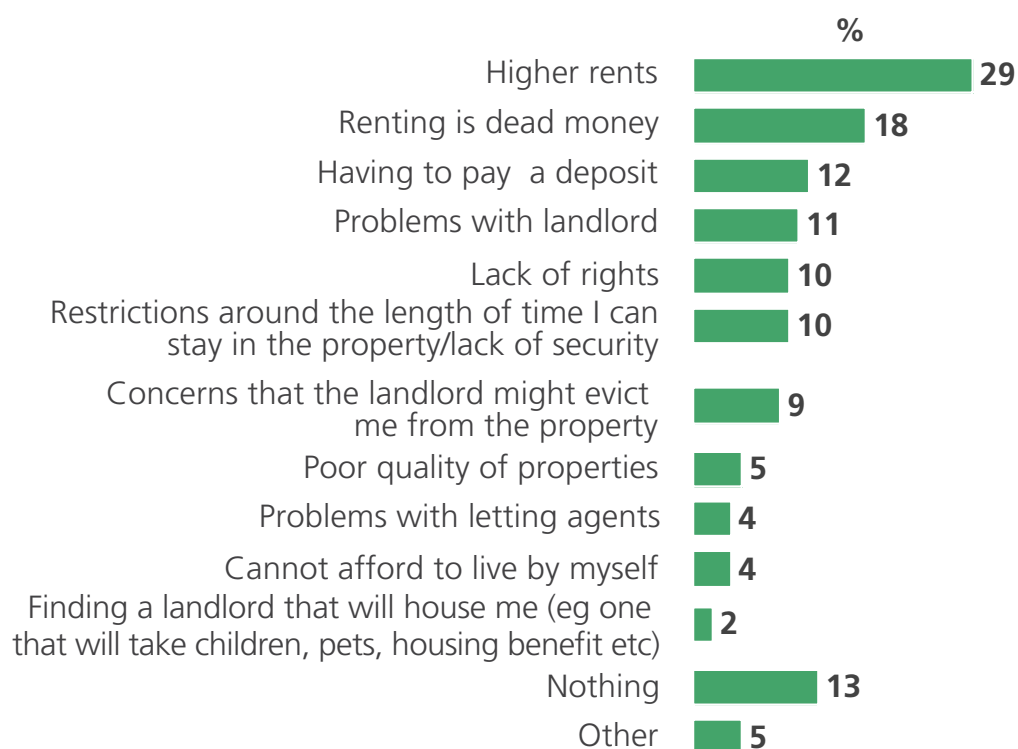
Note: This question allowed respondents to identify as many relevant responses as applicable

5.5. The disadvantages of living in private rented accommodation

The biggest concerns about the sector for private renters were financial. Nearly three out of ten (29%) considered higher rents to be the worst thing about the sector and one in eight (12%) identified having to pay a deposit as a disadvantage. Nearly one in five (18%) renters believed that renting is 'dead money' – a factor most likely driven by the perceptions of equity gain if you own your own home. Concerns around security of tenure afforded by the private rented sector were evident but were much less prevalent than financial concerns. Around one in ten renters identified a lack of rights, tenancy restrictions and the threat of eviction as problems with the sector. The quality of properties and accessibility were far less prominent concerns.

Figure 5.7 The worst things about living in private rented accommodation

And what, if anything, do you consider to be the *worst* things about living in private rented accommodation?



Base: 356 (respondents are private renters questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24–31 and August 14–21 2008).

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: This question allowed respondents to identify as many relevant responses as necessary

The table below shows the five most commonly mentioned worst things about living in the private rented sector. For private renters with the lowest incomes, problems with the landlord and a lack of rights were more of an issue than for higher income groups, whereas concerns over cost (higher rents or deposits) were more of an issue for those in the middle income bands. Higher rents were less of a concern for older private renters and of most concern for those aged between 25 and 44. High rents were also more of a concern for tenants living in the north and in London. Those renting in London were also more likely to have concerns about their landlord and a lack of rights.

Table 5.3 The worst things about living in private rented accommodation and characteristics*What, if anything, do you consider to be the WORST things about living in private rented accommodation? (5 most common mentions)*

	%				
	Higher rents	Renting is dead money	Having to pay a deposit	Problems with landlord	Lack of rights
Household income					
<£9.5k (49)	22	0	6	22	12
£9.5k – £17.4k (86)	42	20	21	9	12
£17.5k – £29.9k (50)	31	27	18	7	7
£30k+ (43)	24	24	6	8	10
Age					
16-24 (88)	22	19	9	14	9
25-44 (191)	35	19	17	10	13
45-64 (57)	27	17	0	13	2
65+ (20)	3	2	3	15	3
Household type (life stage)*					
<55 Single no children (133)	28	19	11	11	14
<55 Single with children (38)	14	6	9	29	3
<55 Couple with no children (53)	38	25	20	7	16
<55 Couple with children (90)	37	18	14	5	5
55+ With or without children (42)	8	8	3	18	3
Work status					
Employed (full & part-time) (204)	34	19	10	9	10
Retired (28)	14	5	5	18	5
Unemployed (31)	32	28	16	8	8
Other not working (93)	20	13	17	15	13
Region					
North (101)	39	8	11	10	5
Midlands (68)	20	20	11	6	9
South (98)	18	30	8	13	9
London (89)	36	15	17	15	18

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: Base sizes in brackets. * 'Other' life stage category not presented due to small base size

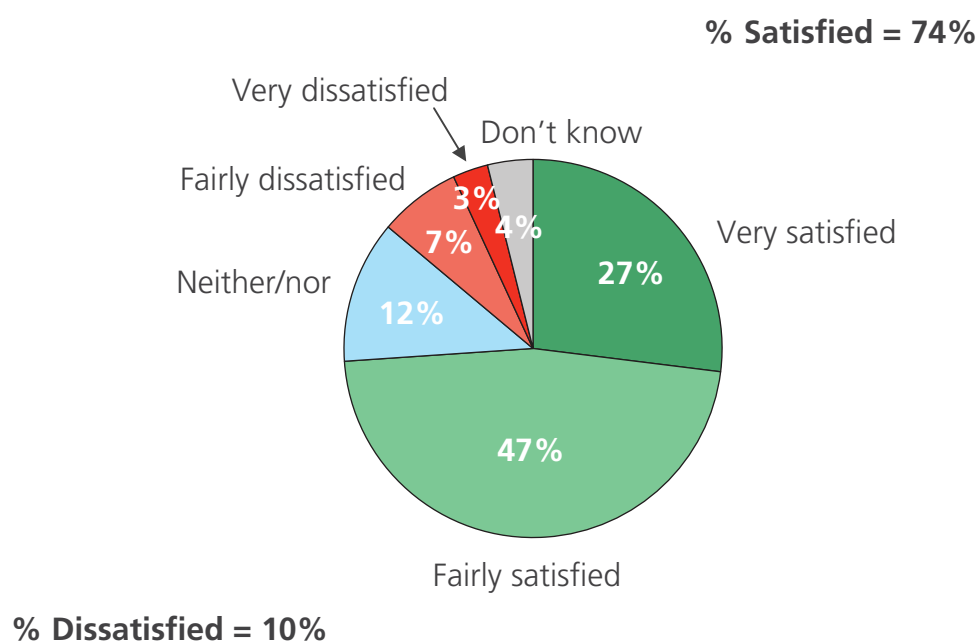
Note: This question allowed respondents to identify as many relevant responses as applicable

5.6. Overall satisfaction with private rented accommodation

Satisfaction with being a private tenant was high – nearly three-quarters (74%) of all private renters were satisfied compared to just one in ten who were dissatisfied. However, as detailed earlier in this report, with a net satisfaction score of +64 percentage points, the private rented sector achieves the lowest satisfaction rating of the three main tenure groups. Net satisfaction for owners was +89 and for tenants in social housing it was +74.

Figure 5.8 Overall satisfaction with private rented accommodation

And taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with being a private tenant?



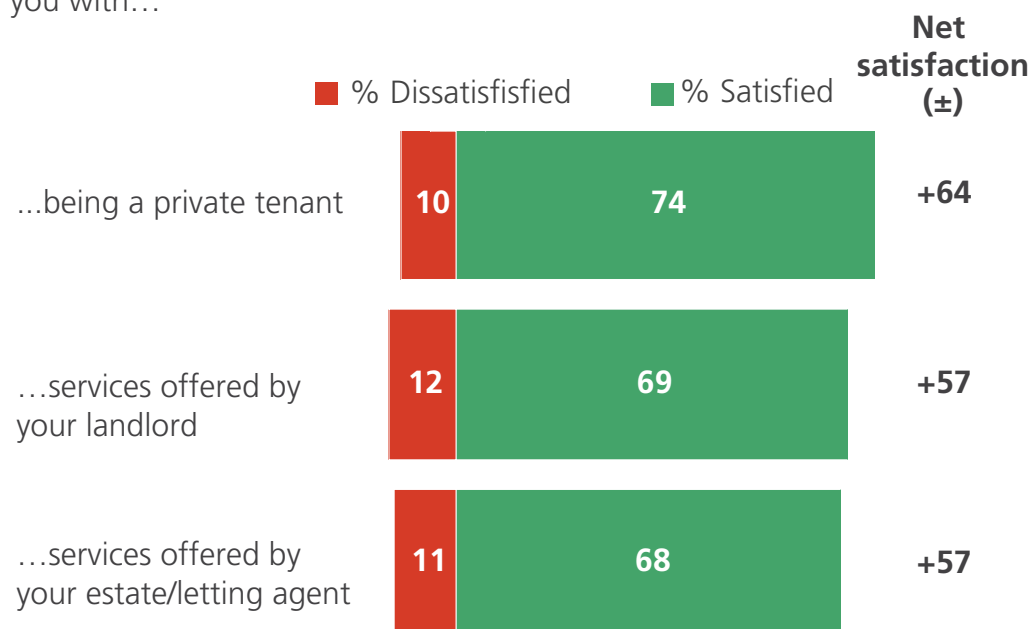
Base: 356 (respondents are private renters questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24–31 and August 14–21 2008).

Source: Ipsos MORI

When rating services offered by their landlord or the estate or letting agent (if applicable), satisfaction ratings were lower than for the tenure generally. For both, net satisfaction stood at +57 percentage points.

Figure 5.9 Satisfaction with other aspects of private rented accommodation

Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with...



Base: 356 (respondents are private renters questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24–31 and August 14–21 2008).

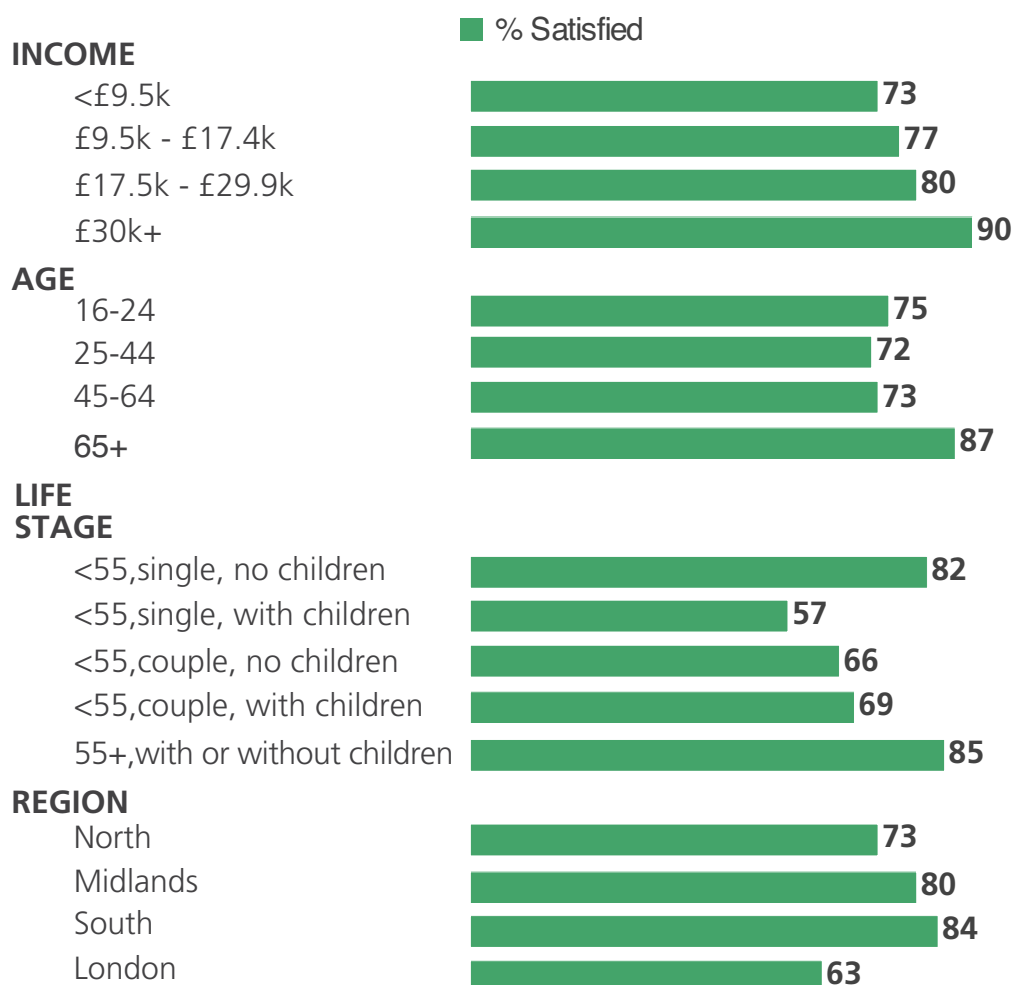
Source: Ipsos MORI

Those on the lowest incomes were least likely to be satisfied, whereas higher income tenants were most satisfied. This supports the notion that it is the most financially vulnerable tenants that are least satisfied with private renting as a tenure. Consistent with other tenures, older tenants were most likely to be satisfied as were single person households without children.

There were also some significant variations in satisfaction levels across England, with private renters in London least likely to be satisfied and those in the south most likely to be satisfied.

Figure 5.10 Variation in satisfaction among private renters

And taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with being a private tenant?



Base: 356 (respondents are private renters questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24–31 and August 14–21 2008).

Source: Ipsos MORI

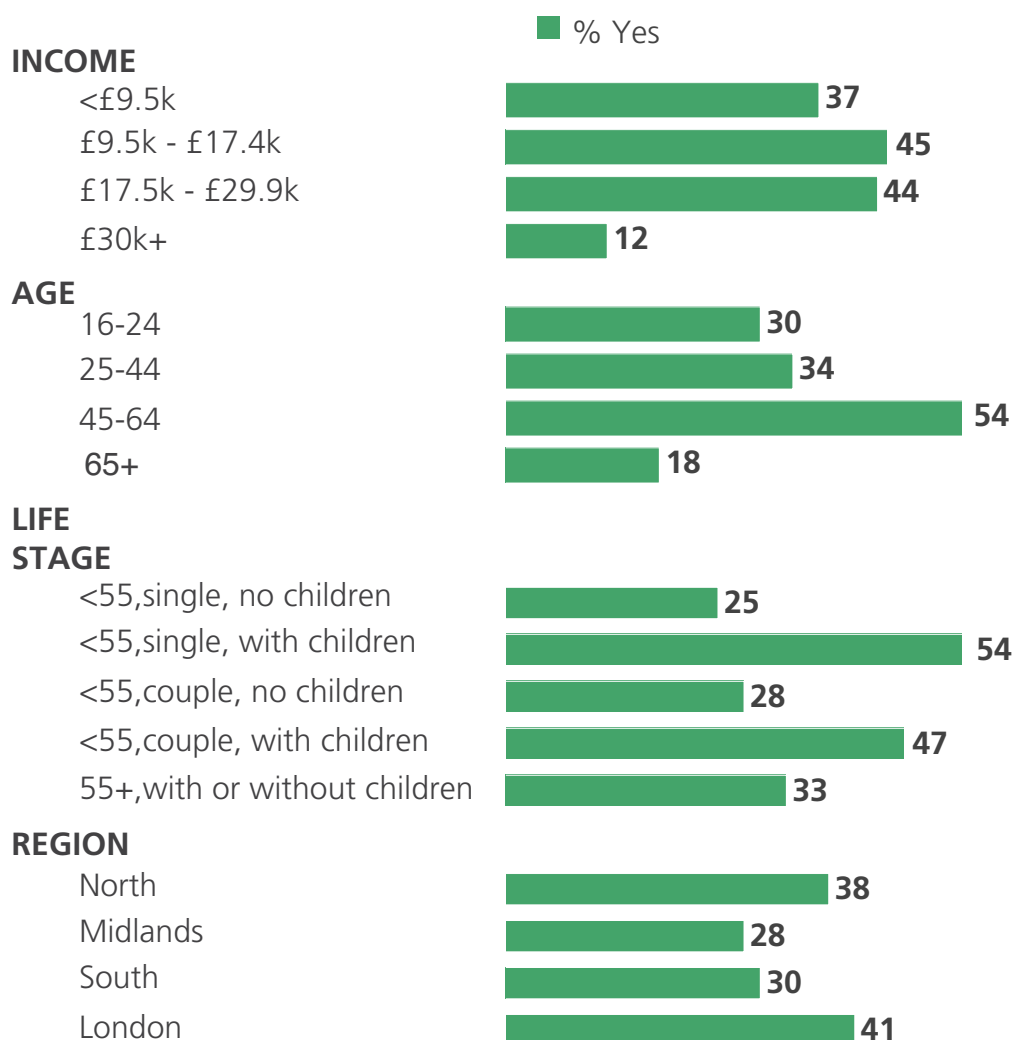
5.7. Potential demand for social housing

Tenants were asked to indicate whether they would like to move to social housing, if such housing was easily accessible. Slightly more than a third (35%) indicated they would want to move to social housing and it was middle income and middle aged tenants who were most likely to express this.

Over half of all private tenants aged between 45 and 64 would want to move to social housing, whereas potential demand was lowest among older tenants. It was also evident that potential demand was strongest among single parent families – with more than half (54%) stating they would want to move to social housing.

Figure 5.11 Variation in demand for social housing among private renters

If it was easy to get a property with the council or a housing association, would you want to at the present time?



Base: 356 (respondents are private renters questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24–31 and August 14–21 2008).

Source: Ipsos MORI

Low income tenants demonstrate the lowest levels of satisfaction with being a private tenant but were less likely than those on middle incomes to want to move to the social rented sector. Sample sizes are insufficient to draw firm conclusions on why this might be the case although we have already seen that choice of location is a key advantage of the sector for low income private renters and lack of choice (as we shall see in the perceptions analysis later), is a commonly perceived disadvantage of living in social rented housing.

Chapter 6

Perceptions of other tenures

The differences between levels of satisfaction and potential demand for social housing highlighted in the previous section, particularly for low income renters, suggest that perceptions of tenure are an important factor in shaping housing decisions. Why would some of the poorest and least satisfied private renters not want social housing if it was in plentiful supply and freely accessible? Is it that demand is constrained by perceptions that the social housing sector has strict selection criteria, or unsuitable property types for example? Is it that the perceived advantages of the owner-occupied or private rented sector outweigh the perceived benefits of the social sector? And further, are these tenure perceptions based on actual experience?

For those living in rented accommodation at the time of the survey, their views were collected on the main tenure groups. In this section we consider their responses in further detail to assess perceptions across tenure.

6.1. Tenure perceptions of social renters

According to social renters, the most commonly mentioned advantage of privately renting was choice. Around one in eight social renters perceived the private sector to offer choice both in terms of the types of property available (14%) but also in location (12%). This perception was consistent with the views of private renters themselves – over a third indicated choice of location was one of the best things about living in private rented accommodation. The flexibility of the private rented sector as well as the condition of property were other perceived advantages commonly mentioned by social renters, which again was consistent with the views of private renters.

The perceived advantages of owning by those living in social housing were very similar to those living in private rented accommodation with control over your own property and the opportunity for financial gain most commonly mentioned. Security and choice were also recognised but to a much lesser extent.

Figure 6.1 Advantages of private renting and owning according to social renters

What do you consider to be the advantages of renting from a private landlord/owning or part owning a home of your own rather than the council or a housing association?

PRIVATE RENTING

Better choice of properties available (house/flat etc)



Choice of location



Get repairs done/less responsibility for upkeep



Properties more easily available



Properties are in good condition



Flexible tenancy arrangements

**OWNING**

It's my own place



Good investment



Something to pass on to children/future generations



More freedom to do what I want with the property (eg decorations/alterations)



Security/no one can throw me out



More choices of property available



Base: 680 (respondents are social renters questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24–31 and August 14–21 2008).

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: This question allowed respondents to identify as many relevant responses as necessary

The tables below show the most commonly perceived advantages of private renting and owning. Those on middle incomes (£9,500 to £17,499) were most likely to recognise choice as an advantage of living in the private rented sector. Younger social tenants and those living in London were also more likely, than their sub-group counterparts, to recognise choice (of property and location) as an advantage of the private rented sector. Those social renters on higher incomes (£17,500 or more) were more likely to consider owning a home to represent a good investment and provide something to pass on to future generations, than those on lower incomes.

Table 6.1 Advantages of private renting according to social renters and their characteristics***What do you consider to be the ADVANTAGES of renting from a private landlord rather than the council or housing association?***

	%		
	Better choice of properties available	Choice of location	Get repairs done for you/less responsibility for upkeep
Household income			
<£9.5k (219)	5	7	8
£9.5k – £17.4k (152)	22	19	5
£17.5k + (60)	13	9	12
Age			
16-24 (109)	21	14	9
25-44 (254)	17	13	12
45-64 (172)	12	11	6
65-74 (74)	8	8	6
75+ (71)	3	9	6
Household type (life stage)*			
<55 Single no children (109)	11	20	12
<55 Single with children (135)	18	9	9
<55 Couple with no children (51)	9	16	7
<55 Couple with children (150)	24	12	13
55+ With or without children (224)	6	9	6
Work status			
Employed (full & part-time) (215)	15	12	11
Retired (165)	5	8	6
Unemployed (65)	14	12	11
Other not working (235)	20	14	9
Region			
North (236)	14	13	6
Midlands (140)	8	8	10
South (145)	13	7	9
London (159)	21	19	13

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: Base sizes in brackets. * 'Other' life stage category not presented due to small base size

Note: This question allowed respondents to identify as many relevant responses as applicable

Table 6.2 Advantages of owning according to social renters and their characteristics

What do you consider to be the ADVANTAGES of owning or part owning a home of your own rather than the council or housing association?

	%		
	It's my own place	Good investment	Something to pass on to children/future generations
Household income			
<£9.5k (219)	28	25	15
£9.5k – £17.4k (152)	36	32	24
£17.5k + (60)	43	40	26
Age			
16-24 (109)	44	27	10
25-44 (254)	36	34	17
45-64 (172)	37	24	21
65-74 (74)	23	29	16
75+ (71)	29	19	19
Household type (life stage)*			
<55 Single no children (109)	46	27	12
<55 Single with children (135)	41	26	15
<55 Couple with no children (51)	36	32	18
<55 Couple with children (150)	35	34	19
55+ With or without children (224)	27	25	20
Work status			
Employed (full & part-time) (215)	34	32	19
Retired (165)	26	22	17
Unemployed (65)	33	28	7
Other not working (235)	44	28	16
Region			
North (236)	40	27	16
Midlands (140)	37	32	16
South (145)	24	30	22
London (159)	38	26	16

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: Base sizes in brackets. * 'Other' life stage category not presented due to small base size

Note: This question allowed respondents to identify as many relevant responses as applicable

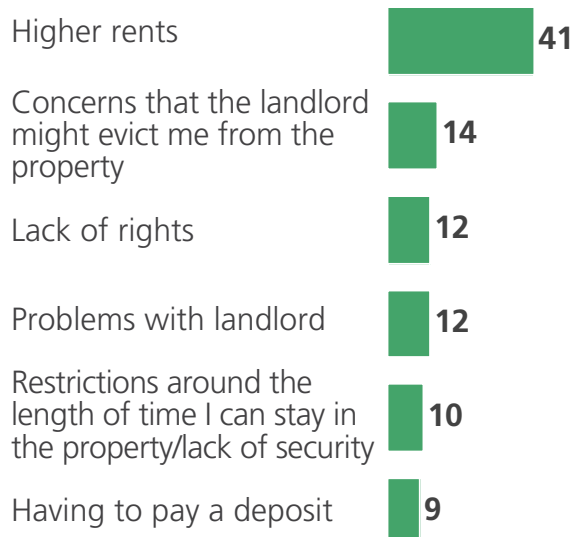
The biggest concerns for social renters with the private rented sector included the high cost of rents as well as tenancy rights and landlord behaviour. More than two in five (41%) social renters perceived high rents to be a disadvantage, compared to three in ten existing private renters at the time of the survey. The flexibility of private rented accommodation, a key advantage of the sector for social renters also, however, brings concerns over tenancy rights and landlord reliability. Around one in eight social renters mentioned eviction (14%) and a lack of rights (12%) as disadvantages of renting privately. Such issues were not major concerns with the social rented sector.

The biggest concerns of social renters with owning were financial. A third of social renters perceived owning to be too much financial responsibility and a quarter (24%) considered owning to be too expensive. The cost of maintenance and repairs is another important concern with owning, as it was among private tenants.

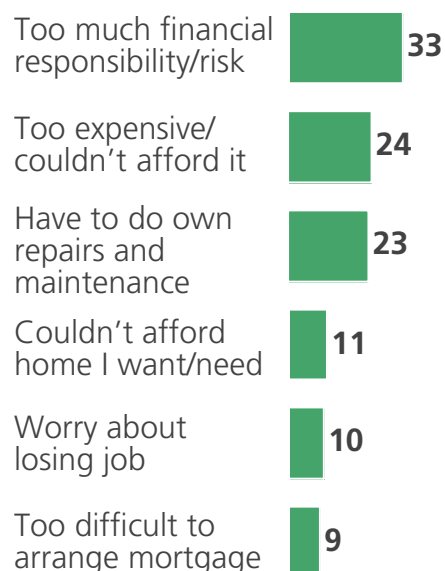
Figure 6.2 Disadvantages of private renting and owning according to social renters

What do you consider to be the disadvantages of renting from a private landlord/owning or part owning a home of your own rather than the council or a housing association?

PRIVATE RENTING



OWNING



Base: 680 (respondents are social renters questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24–31 and August 14–21 2008).

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: This question allowed respondents to identify as many relevant responses as necessary

The tables below show the most commonly perceived disadvantages of private renting and owning. Social tenants on higher incomes were most likely to consider cost to be a disadvantage of the private rented sector, as too were those aged between 25 and 44, couples under 55 with children and those living in London when compared with their sub-group counterparts. Those on higher incomes were more likely to be concerned about the cost of owner-occupation than those on lower incomes.

Table 6.3 Disadvantages of private renting according to social renters and their characteristics

What do you consider to be the DISADVANTAGES of renting from a private landlord rather than the council or housing association?

	%		
	Higher rents	Concerns that the landlord might evict me from the property	Lack of rights
Household income			
<£9.5k (219)	32	15	17
£9.5k – £17.4k (152)	52	12	9
£17.5k + (60)	57	15	16
Age			
16-24 (109)	36	12	10
25-44 (254)	51	13	14
45-64 (172)	36	19	15
65-74 (74)	44	15	12
75+ (71)	24	10	8
Household type (life stage)*			
<55 Single no children (109)	44	16	16
<55 Single with children (135)	36	14	8
<55 Couple with no children (51)	40	25	9
<55 Couple with children (150)	54	11	18
55+ With or without children (224)	33	14	9
Work status			
Employed (full & part-time) (215)	47	14	11
Retired (165)	32	13	8
Unemployed (65)	39	14	12
Other not working (235)	41	14	17

Table 6.3 Disadvantages of private renting according to social renters and their characteristics (continued)***What do you consider to be the DISADVANTAGES of renting from a private landlord rather than the council or housing association?***

	%		
	Higher rents	Concerns that the landlord might evict me from the property	Lack of rights
Region			
North (236)	38	12	12
Midlands (140)	44	20	13
South (145)	38	16	12
London (159)	47	11	13

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: Base sizes in brackets. * 'Other' life stage category not presented due to small base size

Note: This question allowed respondents to identify as many relevant responses as applicable

Table 6.4 Disadvantages of owning according to social renters and their characteristics***What do you consider to be the DISADVANTAGES of owning or part owning a home of your own rather than the council or housing association?***

	%		
	Too much financial responsibility/ risk	Too expensive/ couldn't afford it	Have to do own repairs and maintenance
Household income			
<£9.5k (219)	26	24	20
£9.5k – £17.4k (152)	34	26	24
£17.5k + (60)	48	30	27
Age			
16-24 (109)	35	27	20
25-44 (254)	31	22	27
45-64 (172)	39	27	25
65-74 (74)	35	19	14
75+ (71)	28	20	15

Table 6.4 Disadvantages of owning according to social renters and their characteristics (continued)

What do you consider to be the DISADVANTAGES of owning or part owning a home of your own rather than the council or housing association?

	%		
	Too much financial responsibility/risk	Too expensive/couldn't afford it	Have to do own repairs and maintenance
Household type (life stage)*			
<55 Single no children (109)	30	22	23
<55 Single with children (135)	31	30	25
<55 Couple with no children (51)	30	25	30
<55 Couple with children (150)	38	23	22
55+ With or without children (224)	33	21	19
Work status			
Employed (full & part-time) (215)	34	24	25
Retired (165)	30	19	15
Unemployed (65)	21	19	16
Other not working (235)	38	27	27
Region			
North (236)	40	28	25
Midlands (140)	34	26	34
South (145)	35	16	19
London (159)	23	22	13

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: Base sizes in brackets. * 'Other' life stage category not presented due to small base size

Note: This question allowed respondents to identify as many relevant responses as applicable

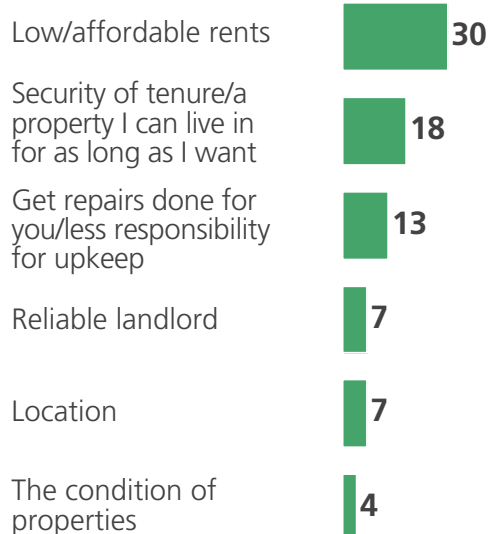
6.2. Tenure perceptions of private renters

The main advantages of social housing perceived by private tenants were cheap rents, security of tenure and not having responsibility for the upkeep of the property. These perceptions were strongly supported by social renters themselves, who, as we have seen earlier, identified these same three factors as the best things about living in social housing. Reliability of the landlord was also perceived to be a good thing about living in social housing. Again this was supported by the views of social renters themselves and contrasts with the landlord relationship in the private sector – one in ten private renters identified problems with landlord as one of the worst things about renting privately.

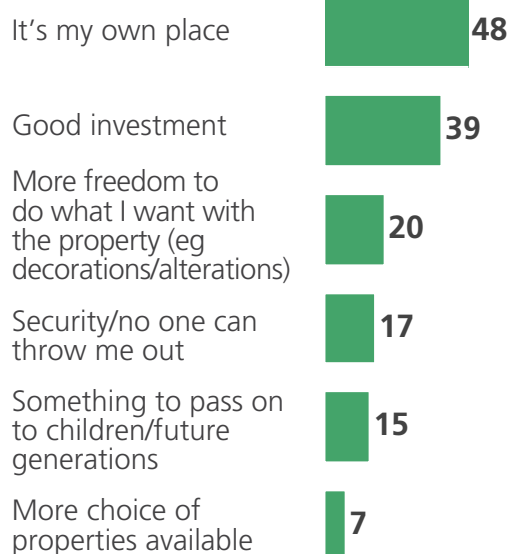
Figure 6.3 Advantages of social housing and owning according to private renters

What do you consider to be the advantages of renting from the Council or a housing association/owning or part owning a home of your own rather than a private landlord?

SOCIAL RENTING %



OWNING %



Base: 356 (respondents are private renters questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24–31 and August 14–21 2008).

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: This question allowed respondents to identify as many relevant responses as necessary

Control, freedom and financial prosperity were the most commonly cited advantages of owning a home according to private renters. Nearly half perceived ownership to offer a place of their own and a fifth saw the freedom to adapt and modify the home as an advantage of the sector. Almost two out of five private renters perceived the financial rewards of owning to be an advantage and the ability to pass these rewards to future generations was also seen as a key benefit for one in seven private renters⁸.

The table below shows the most commonly mentioned perceived advantages of social renting and owning. Those private renters in the middle income bands were most likely to consider low rents to be an advantage of the social rented sector. Younger tenants and single parent families were also more likely to consider low rents to be an advantage. Security of tenure was relatively more important for those on income levels between £17,500 and £29,999 as well as those aged between 45 and 64, and couples with children.

When looking at owning, it was private renters on the highest incomes that were most likely to consider owning to represent a good investment, as too were couples without children. The perceived freedom afforded by owning a place of your own was more likely to be recognised as an advantage by middle aged tenants (45-64), couples without children and those living in the south of England.

⁸ Note: Survey work for the research was conducted during July and August 2008 prior to the impact of the economic downturn taking full effect

Table 6.5 Advantages of social housing according to private renters and their characteristics

What do you consider to be the ADVANTAGES of renting from the Council or a housing association rather than a private landlord?

	%		
	Low/ affordable rents	Security of tenure/ a property I can live in for as long as I want	Get repairs done for you/less responsibility for upkeep
Household income			
<£9.5k (49)	24	18	18
£9.5k – £17.4k (86)	35	18	10
£17.5k – £29.9k (50)	30	25	9
£30k+ (43)	24	12	14
Age			
16-24 (88)	44	12	14
25-44 (191)	28	17	12
45-64 (57)	23	37	10
65+ (20)	0	12	24
Household type (life stage)*			
<55 Single no children (133)	28	17	6
<55 Single with children (38)	37	11	29
<55 Couple with no children (53)	33	16	15
<55 Couple with children (90)	36	22	12
55+ With or without children (42)	10	18	23
Work status			
Employed (full & part-time) (204)	30	20	10
Retired (28)	9	18	27
Unemployed (31)	38	19	0
Other not working (93)	32	13	19
Region			
North (101)	30	19	13
Midlands (68)	29	18	12
South (98)	28	20	12
London (89)	34	15	15

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: Base sizes in brackets. * 'Other' life stage category not presented due to small base size

Note: This question allowed respondents to identify as many relevant responses as applicable

Table 6.6 Advantages of owning according to private renters and their characteristics***What do you consider to be the ADVANTAGES of owning or part owning a home of your own rather than a private landlord?***

	%		
	It's my own place	Good investment	More freedom to do what I want with the property (eg dec'tions/alt'ions)
Household income			
<£9.5k (49)	37	39	20
£9.5k – £17.4k (86)	59	27	15
£17.5k – £29.9k (50)	58	42	25
£30k+ (43)	52	54	18
Age			
16-24 (88)	48	33	22
25-44 (191)	52	41	18
45-64 (57)	37	37	25
65+ (20)	50	43	13
Household type (life stage)*			
<55 Single no children (133)	47	37	19
<55 Single with children (38)	46	31	14
<55 Couple with no children (53)	46	46	30
<55 Couple with children (90)	57	37	19
55+ With or without children (42)	38	41	18
Work status			
Employed (full & part-time) (204)	50	42	19
Retired (28)	23	18	27
Unemployed (31)	38	36	15
Other not working (93)	53	35	22
Region			
North (101)	60	31	15
Midlands (68)	39	45	19
South (98)	46	41	30
London (89)	45	40	16

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: Base sizes in brackets. * 'Other' life stage category not presented due to small base size

Note: This question allowed respondents to identify as many relevant responses as applicable

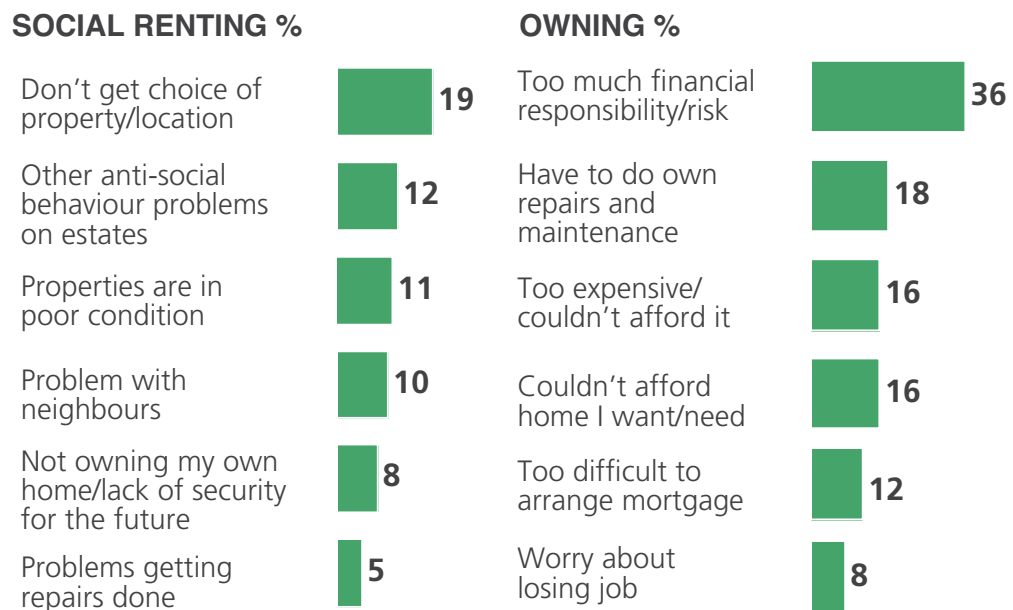
The most commonly perceived problems with the social rented sector according to private renters included the lack of choice of properties, anti-social behaviour and the poor condition of properties. Nearly one in five (19%) saw restricted choice (in terms of property type and location) as a disadvantage of the social sector, perhaps reflecting perceptions (rightly or wrongly) about the allocation process.

Perceptions of the social rented sector as housing some of the most disadvantaged in society may be driving private renter concerns around anti-social behaviour and problem neighbours. It is, however, interesting to note that these too were major concerns for social tenants themselves – around one in seven (15%) social renters identified anti-social behaviour problems on estates as one of the worst things about living in the sector.

The potential financial rewards of owning a home was one of the most commonly cited advantages for private renters, but the financial responsibilities that came with it were also recognised by many as a key disadvantage. Although two out of five saw owning as a good investment, a similar proportion recognised owning as a significant financial risk. Concerns over affordability, access to finance and job security reflected the overarching financial concerns that private renters have about the owner-occupied sector.

Figure 6.4 Disadvantages of social housing and owning according to private renters

What do you consider to be the disadvantages of renting from the Council or a housing association/owning or part owning a home of your own rather than a private landlord?



Base: 356 (respondents are private renters questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24–31 and August 14–21 2008).

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: This question allowed respondents to identify as many relevant responses as necessary

The tables below show the most commonly perceived disadvantages of social renting and owning. A lack of choice in the social rented sector was most commonly seen as a disadvantage by private renters aged between 45 and 64, those in full or part time work and those living in the Midlands.

Private renters with higher incomes (£17,500 and above) were more likely than those on lower incomes to consider the financial responsibility of owning to be a disadvantage. Other sub-groups that were more likely to see the financial responsibility of ownership as a disadvantage included: younger private tenants (under 25), single person households without children, those in full or part-time employment and those living in the South. In contrast it was private renters on lower incomes (less than £17,500), those aged 65 and over and those living in the North who were more likely to say they couldn't afford to own.

Table 6.7 Disadvantages of social housing according to private renters and their characteristics***What do you consider to be the DISADVANTAGES of renting from the Council or a housing association rather than a private landlord?***

	%		
	Don't get choice of property/ location	Other anti-social behaviour problems on estates	Properties are in poor condition
Household income			
<£9.5k (49)	18	4	6
£9.5k – £17.4k (86)	15	15	11
£17.5k – £29.9k (50)	18	5	11
£30k+ (43)	24	14	18
Age			
16-24 (88)	20	11	10
25-44 (191)	17	12	14
45-64 (57)	28	12	9
65+ (20)	15	13	0
Household type (life stage)*			
<55 Single no children (133)	21	9	16
<55 Single with children (38)	9	17	9
<55 Couple with no children (53)	20	10	7
<55 Couple with children (90)	16	15	12
55+ With or without children (42)	26	10	0
Work status			
Employed (full & part-time) (204)	22	12	13
Retired (28)	18	18	0
Unemployed (31)	20	4	12
Other not working (93)	13	12	11
Region			
North (101)	21	8	10
Midlands (68)	24	13	13
South (98)	20	12	7
London (89)	12	15	17

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: Base sizes in brackets. * 'Other' life stage category not presented due to small base size

Note: This question allowed respondents to identify as many relevant responses as applicable

Table 6.8 Disadvantages of owning according to private renters and their characteristics*What do you consider to be the DISADVANTAGES of owning or part owning a home of your own rather than a private landlord?*

	%		
	Too much financial responsibility/risk	Have to do own repairs and maintenance	Too expensive/couldn't afford it
Household income			
<£9.5k (49)	29	12	18
£9.5k – £17.4k (86)	28	14	20
£17.5k – £29.9k (50)	45	25	16
£30k+ (43)	42	27	6
Age			
16-24 (88)	43	20	12
25-44 (191)	33	18	15
45-64 (57)	42	11	21
65+ (20)	25	20	39
Household type (life stage)*			
<55 Single no children (133)	40	19	13
<55 Single with children (38)	39	14	6
<55 Couple with no children (53)	38	25	17
<55 Couple with children (90)	31	14	22
55+ With or without children (42)	28	13	23
Work status			
Employed (full & part-time) (204)	38	19	16
Retired (28)	36	23	10
Unemployed (31)	24	4	16
Other not working (93)	35	17	18
Region			
North (101)	29	22	21
Midlands (68)	43	14	11
South (98)	45	23	16
London (89)	29	11	16

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: Base sizes in brackets. * 'Other' life stage category not presented due to small base size

Note: This question allowed respondents to identify as many relevant responses as applicable

Section B

Attitudes to rented housing

In this section of the report we consider the general public's attitudes to housing, in particular their attitudes towards how social housing is allocated and what changes they would like to see to make it fairer. These and wider issues relating to the role of social housing in shaping aspirations and life chances are explored in further depth in the qualitative research undertaken at the same time and reported on separately⁹.

⁹ Communities and Local Government (2009) *Attitudes to housing: Findings from focus groups*

Chapter 7

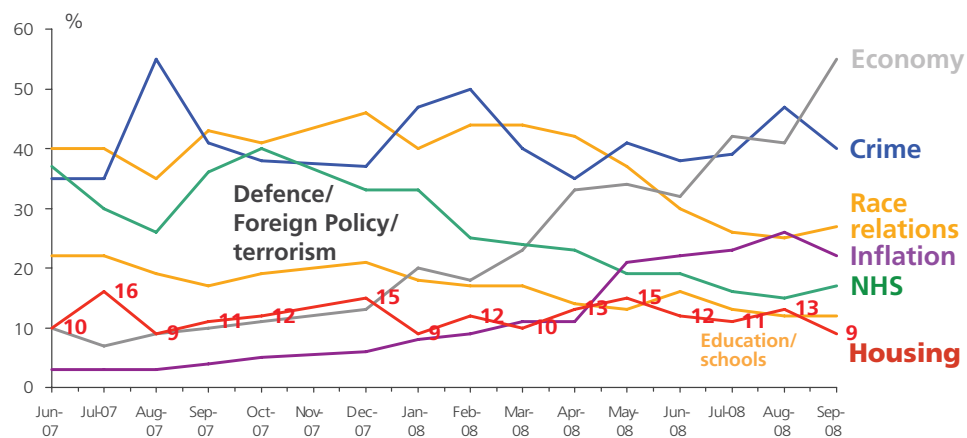
Public attitudes to rented housing

7.1. The importance of housing issues

The Ipsos MORI omnibus surveys offer an excellent opportunity to track the sensitivities of public opinion over time. We regularly track the importance of housing as an issue facing Britain in the Public Affairs Monitor, data for which are presented in the chart below. Of particular note is that although housing has constantly been rated in the top eight most important issues, it consistently appears at or near the bottom of the ranking.

Figure 7.1 The most important issues facing Britain

What would you say is the most important issue facing Britain today?
What do you see as other important issues facing Britain today?



Base: c. 1,000 adults 18+ each month

Source: Ipsos MORI Issues Index

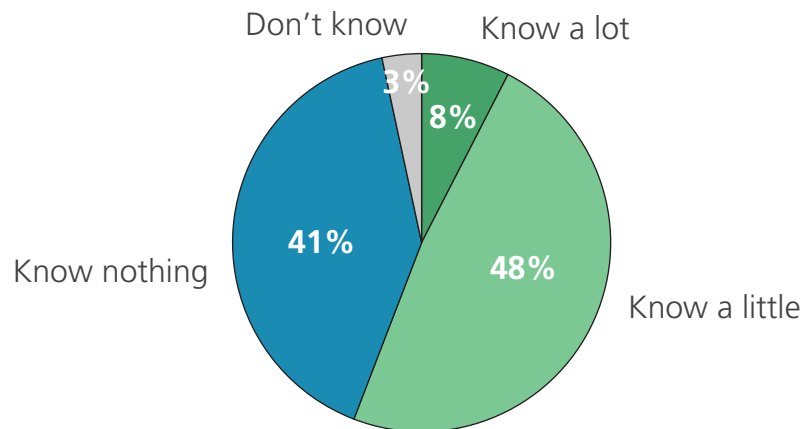
7.2. Assessing public attitudes

It is important to stress that the results reported in this paper were a representative reflection of the views of the English population which, by its very nature, means a whole range of viewpoints were covered. Some will be based on a sound knowledge of the social housing sector while others will not. Indeed when asked how much they felt they knew about the way social housing is allocated, around four in ten (41%) of the general public reported that they knew nothing about it,

whereas 8 per cent said they knew a lot. This lack of knowledge, however, in no way diminishes the value of responses; it accurately portrays public attitudes and opinions.

Figure 7.2 Knowledge of allocations policies

How much, if anything, do you feel you know about how council and housing association homes are allocated to people?



Base: 3,344 (respondents are general public questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24–31 and August 14–21 2008).

Source: Ipsos MORI

Regardless of the level of knowledge we still encourage and expect respondents to give their opinion¹⁰.

To overcome the potential fear of offering opinions that were uninformed, we emphasised to respondents that we were interested in their opinions, even if they felt they didn't know very much about the topic.

We also employed a series of measures to ensure information was collected in a rigorous and robust fashion. As a preliminary stage to the research, the questions developed were cognitively tested and modified to ensure they would be correctly interpreted by respondents. In order to reduce the effects of respondent fatigue, we split the battery of 18 attitudinal statements into two sections with some other less challenging factual and attitudinal questions in between.

¹⁰Krosnick, a leading expert in questionnaire design and attitude measurement, eloquently describes what may happen in a survey where there are considerable cognitive demands on a respondent: "Respondents are likely to satisfy whatever desires motivate them to participate just a short way into an interview, and they are likely to become increasingly fatigued, disinterested, impatient and distracted as the interview progresses. This situation presents respondents with a dilemma. Their motivation to work hard has evaporated and the cognitive costs of hard work have become increasingly burdensome. Nonetheless, the interviewer continues to ask a seemingly unending stream of questions and to record responses, which suggests that the interviewer expects the respondent to devote the effort necessary to generate high-quality responses." ['Response strategies for coping with the cognitive demands of attitude measures in surveys' Jon A. Krosnick, *Applied Cognitive Psychology*, Vol 5 213-236 (1991)].

In the remainder of this section we present key findings from each of the attitudinal statements.

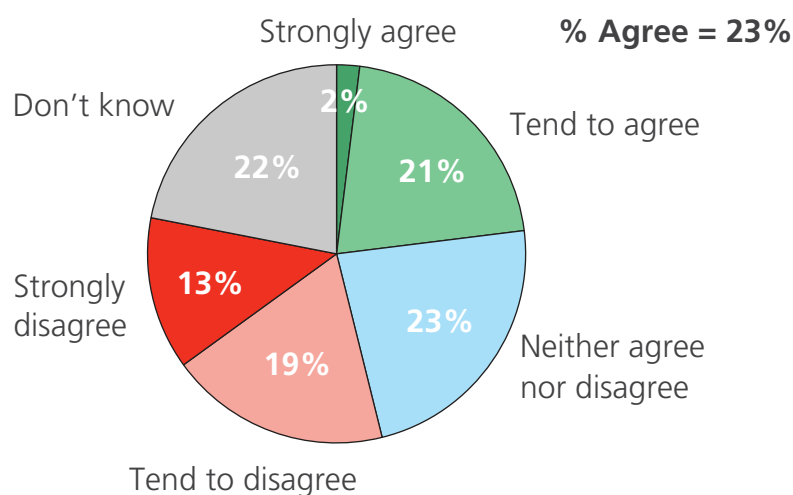
7.3. Fairness of allocation policies

Less than a quarter (23%) of the public agreed that the way social housing is allocated is fair, and only 2 per cent *strongly* endorsed the fairness of the system. One in three (32%) did not agree that it's fair. However, just under a half (45%) said they don't know if it's fair, or were unwilling to give an opinion and opted for 'neither agree nor disagree'.

Figure 7.3 Fairness of the way social housing is allocated

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

– The way social housing is allocated to people is generally fair?



% Disagree = 32%

Base: 3,344 (respondents are general public questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24–31 and August 14–21 2008).

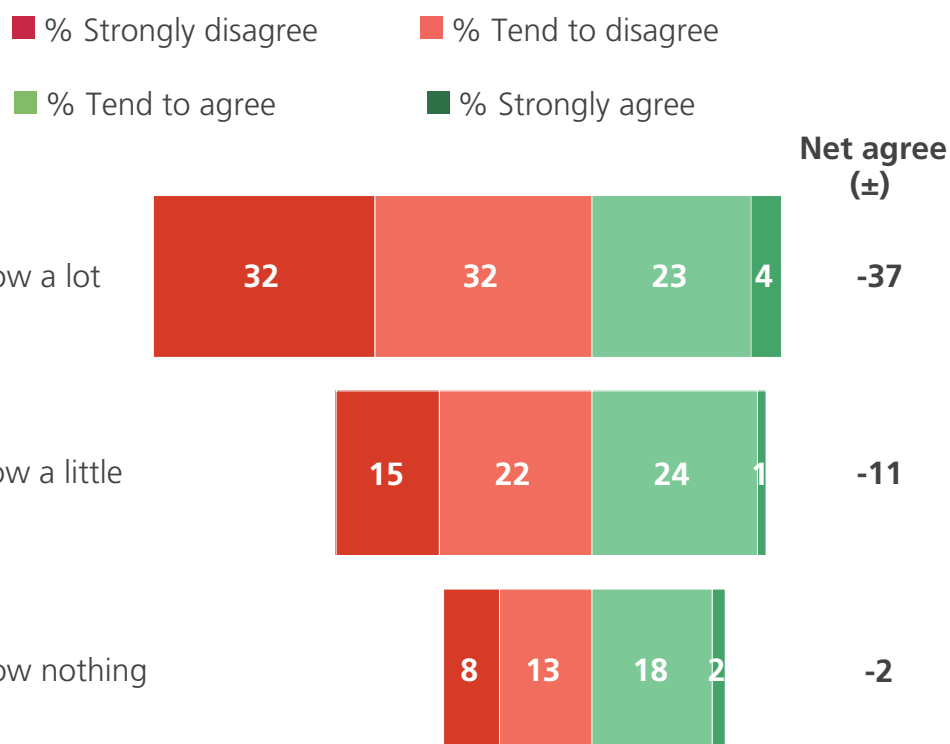
Source: Ipsos MORI

Those who thought they knew about how social housing is allocated expressed more negative views about the fairness of social housing allocation policies. Almost two-thirds (64%) of those who said they know a lot about it disagreed that it was fair, more than twice as likely as everybody else (30%).

Figure 7.4 Knowledge of the sector and views on fairness

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

– The way social housing is allocated to people is generally fair?



Base: 3,344 (respondents are general public questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24–31 and August 14–21 2008).

Source: Ipsos MORI

One in five (20%) owner-occupiers agreed that the way social housing is allocated is fair, compared with one in three (33%) social renters (who were the most positive tenure group). However, social renters were also the most likely to be negative, with 42 per cent disagreeing that it was fair. This was because more people in the social rented sector gave an opinion either way, rather than opting for the middle option ('neither agree nor disagree') or saying they don't know. Almost a half (49%) of owners did not give an opinion either way, compared with a quarter (25%) of social renters. Those who have had experience of living in the social rented sector but no longer do so were less likely to be positive than existing social renters at the time of the survey – only 21 per cent of this group agreed that the system is fair.

Those on lower incomes were also more likely to agree that the system is fair, but this is of course closely related to the tenure differences already described.

Regional variations were not especially marked, although people in the midlands were least likely to think the system is fair, while people in the north were most likely to think it is fair.

Table 7.1 Variations in the views on fairness

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements – the way social housing is allocated to people is generally fair

	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
Tenure			
Owners (2,281)	30	20	-10
Social renters (680)	42	33	-10
Private renters (356)	30	25	-5
Household income			
<£9.5k (433)	33	34	+1
£9.5k – £17.4k (562)	35	30	-5
£17.5k – £29.9k (410)	33	22	-11
£30k+ (655)	32	19	-13
Age			
16-24 (401)	28	26	-2
25-44 (1,073)	34	21	-13
45-64 (1,044)	35	21	-14
65-74 (490)	31	23	-8
75+ (336)	22	30	+8
Household type (life stage)*			
<55 Single no children (547)	25	26	+1
<55 Single with children (288)	37	27	-10
<55 Couple with no children (434)	31	20	-11
<55 Couple with children (712)	37	18	-19
55+ With or without children (1,341)	32	25	-7
Region			
North (1,010)	32	28	-3
Midlands (910)	37	18	-19
South (936)	29	21	-8
London (488)	29	25	-4

Table 7.1 Variations in the views on fairness (continued)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements – the way social housing is allocated to people is generally fair

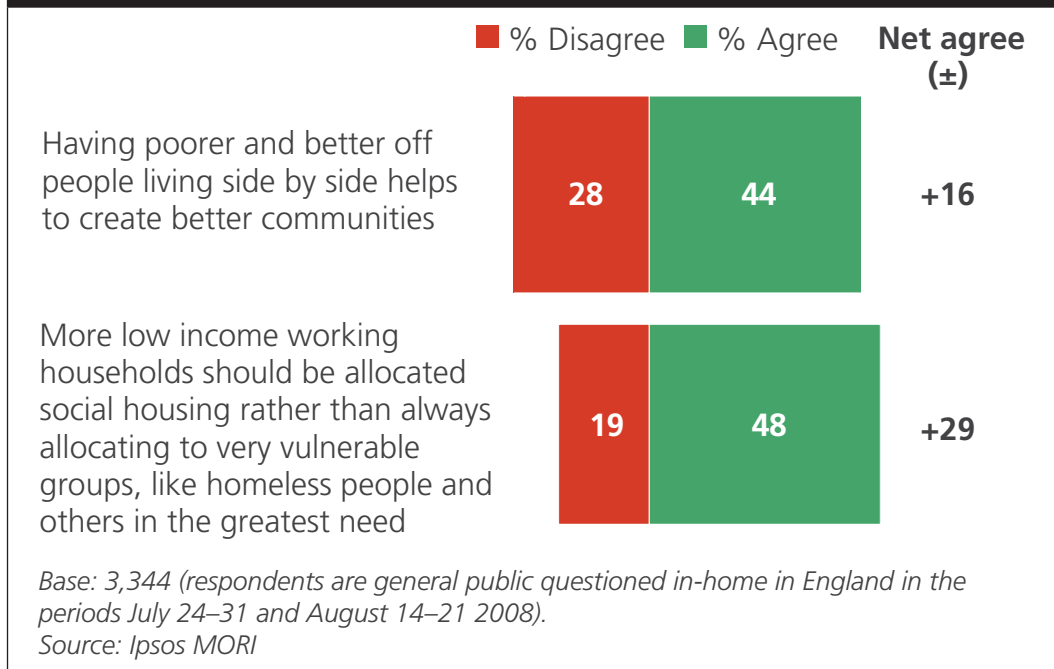
	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
Experience of the social rented (SR) sector			
Currently in SR (680)	42	33	-10
Previously in SR but not now (901)	41	21	-20
Never lived in SR (1,763)	25	21	-4
Knowledge of allocations policies			
A lot/a little (1,884)	41	26	-15
Nothing/don't know (1,460)	21	19	-2

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: Base sizes in brackets. * 'Other' life stage category not presented due to small base size

7.4. Better and more balanced communities

Forty-four percent of the public agreed that having poorer and better off people living side by side helps to create better communities and almost a half (48%) agreed that more social housing should be allocated to low income households rather than always to very vulnerable groups.

Figure 7.5 Better and more balanced communities

The distribution of opinions across tenures and income groups was very similar, although people on higher incomes (over £30,000) were less likely to agree with more prioritisation for low income working households.

Support for more prioritisation for low income working households increased with age (45 per cent of those under 44 supported this compared with 53 per cent of those aged 65 or more), but support for mixed income communities was reasonably constant across the age groups.

In terms of geography, Londoners were most likely to support mixed income communities (50% agreeing) while those in the midlands were most likely to disagree (33%). Support for greater priority being given to low income working households in the allocation of social housing was again highest in London (at 52%) and lowest in the north (47%).

People who said they know a lot or a little about the way social housing is allocated were also more positive about the idea of giving greater priority to low income working households. Fifty percent of those who said they know a lot or a little agreed with this idea compared with 45 per cent of those who know nothing at all about it or don't know.

Table 7.2 Variations in the views on creating better communities

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements – having poorer and better off people living side by side helps to create better communities

	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
Tenure			
Owners (2,281)	28	44	+15
Social renters (680)	28	44	+16
Private renters (356)	23	49	+26
Household income			
<£9.5k (433)	22	48	+26
£9.5k – £17.4k (562)	28	47	+19
£17.5k – £29.9k (410)	26	44	+18
£30k+ (655)	31	43	+12

Table 7.2 Variations in the views on creating better communities (continued)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements – having poorer and better off people living side by side helps to create better communities

	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
Age			
16-24 (401)	26	47	+21
25-44 (1,073)	25	45	+20
45-64 (1,044)	31	43	+12
65-74 (490)	31	43	+12
75+ (336)	26	43	+18
Household type (life stage)*			
<55 Single no children (547)	24	47	+23
<55 Single with children (288)	27	47	+19
<55 Couple with no children (434)	28	44	+16
<55 Couple with children (712)	27	45	+18
55+ With or without children (1,341)	30	43	+12
Region			
North (1,010)	26	47	+21
Midlands (910)	33	42	+8
South (936)	29	41	+12
London (488)	17	50	+32
Experience of the social rented (SR) sector			
Currently in SR (680)	28	44	+16
Previously in SR but not now (901)	31	45	+14
Never lived in SR (1,763)	26	44	+18
Knowledge of allocations policies			
A lot/a little (1,884)	29	45	+17
Nothing/don't know (1,460)	27	43	+16

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: Base sizes in brackets. * 'Other' life stage category not presented due to small base size

Table 7.3 Variations in the views on allocating social housing to more low income working households

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements – More low income working households should be allocated social housing rather than always allocating to very vulnerable groups, like homeless people and others in the greatest need

	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
Tenure			
Owners (2,281)	20	48	+28
Social renters (680)	17	51	+34
Private renters (356)	20	47	+27
Household income			
<£9.5k (433)	12	51	+39
£9.5k – £17.4k (562)	18	56	+38
£17.5k – £29.9k (410)	21	50	+29
£30k+ (655)	27	41	+15
Age			
16-24 (401)	19	45	+26
25-44 (1,073)	22	45	+23
45-64 (1,044)	20	49	+30
65-74 (490)	17	53	+36
75+ (336)	11	54	+43
Household type (life stage)*			
<55 Single no children (547)	20	46	+26
<55 Single with children (288)	20	46	+26
<55 Couple with no children (434)	24	44	+20
<55 Couple with children (712)	22	46	+25
55+ With or without children (1,341)	16	53	+37

Table 7.3 Variations in the views on allocating social housing to more low income working households (continued)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements – More low income working households should be allocated social housing rather than always allocating to very vulnerable groups, like homeless people and others in the greatest need

	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
Region			
North (1,010)	20	47	+26
Midlands (910)	22	48	+26
South (936)	19	47	+28
London (488)	12	52	+40
Experience of the social rented (SR) sector			
Currently in SR (680)	17	51	+34
Previously in SR but not now (901)	19	51	+31
Never lived in SR (1,763)	20	46	+26
Knowledge of allocations policies			
A lot/a little (1,884)	21	50	+29
Nothing/don't know (1,460)	17	45	+28

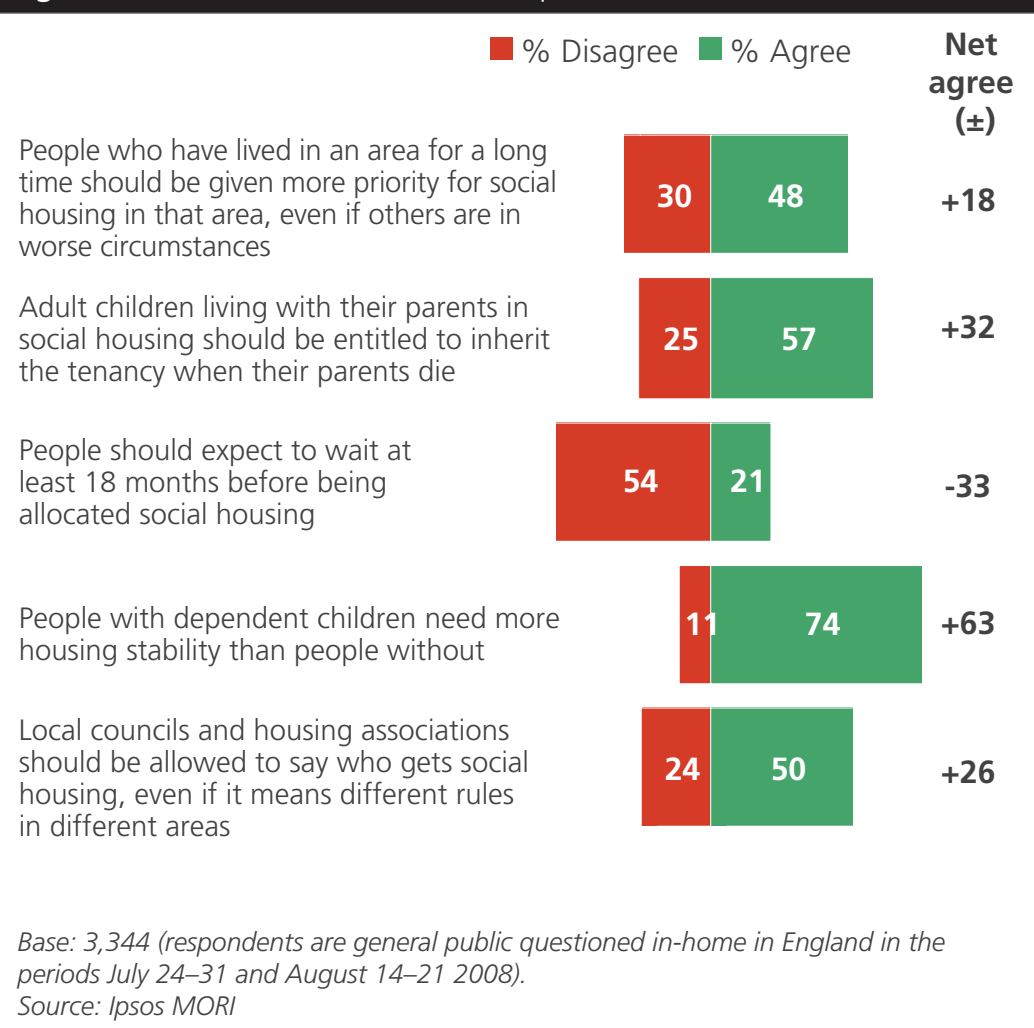
Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: Base sizes in brackets. * 'Other' life stage category not presented due to small base size

7.5. General views on allocation policies

When presented with various options for how allocations policies should prioritise between competing demands, there was a widespread view that housing stability for people with dependent children should be a top priority. Almost three quarters of the public (74%) believed that people with dependent children need more housing stability than those without children, and a majority (57%) also supported the passing on of social housing tenancies to adult children living with their parents.

There was also considerable support for local autonomy in determining allocations policies, with exactly half of the public believing that local councils and housing associations should be allowed to say who gets social housing even if it means different rules in different areas.

Figure 7.6 General views on allocations policies

7.5.1. Priority for longer term local residents in an area

Almost half of the public (48%) believed that priority for social housing should be given to people who have lived in an area for a long time, even if others are in worse circumstances.

Neither tenure nor knowledge about how social housing is allocated make much difference to people's views on this aspect, but income did. A higher proportion (56%) of those on very low incomes (under £9,500 a year) agreed that priority should be given to longer term residents in an area compared to those on incomes of £30,000 or more (42%), perhaps reflecting the greater ease with which higher income households can move between areas, should they need to.

Age was also a crucial factor: those aged 65 or more were almost twice as likely to support priority being given to longer term residents as those under 25 who were of course less likely to have experience of living in a well-established community. Single person households and single parent families were also less likely to support greater priority for longer term residents in an area. Less than two

in five (37%) single person and single parent households supported the view that priority should be given to long term residents. Also, not surprisingly, support for this was highest among those who have lived in an area for a long time.

Table 7.4 Variations in the views on prioritising social housing for long term residents

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements – People who have lived in an area for a long time should be given more priority for social housing in that area, even if others are in worse circumstances

	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
Tenure			
Owners (2,281)	30	48	+19
Social renters (680)	30	47	+17
Private renters (356)	31	43	+13
Household income			
<£9.5k (433)	21	56	+36
£9.5k – £17.4k (562)	29	52	+24
£17.5k – £29.9k (410)	32	47	+16
£30k+ (655)	38	42	+3
Age			
16-24 (401)	42	33	-9
25-44 (1,073)	35	41	+5
45-64 (1,044)	27	52	+25
65-74 (490)	17	66	+48
75+ (336)	15	63	+49
Household type (life stage)*			
<55 Single no children (547)	36	37	0
<55 Single with children (288)	40	37	-3
<55 Couple with no children (434)	35	44	+9
<55 Couple with children (712)	35	43	+8
55+ With or without children (1,341)	18	61	+43

Table 7.4 Variations in the views on prioritising social housing for long term residents (continued)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements – People who have lived in an area for a long time should be given more priority for social housing in that area, even if others are in worse circumstances

	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
Region			
North (1,010)	33	46	+13
Midlands (910)	29	51	+22
South (936)	32	47	+14
London (488)	21	47	+26
Experience of the social rented (SR) sector			
Currently in SR (680)	30	47	+17
Previously in SR but not now (901)	30	52	+22
Never lived in SR (1,763)	30	46	+16
Knowledge of allocations policies			
A lot/a little (1,884)	32	50	+18
Nothing/don't know (1,460)	27	45	+18

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: Base sizes in brackets. * 'Other' life stage category not presented due to small base size

7.5.2. Succession for adult children

Public support for adult children living with their parents in social housing being entitled to inherit the tenancy was high with 57 per cent agreeing with this (figure 7.6), but especially among social renters, of whom 81 per cent supported succession.¹¹ Support for succession declined among those who have previously lived in the social rented sector but no longer do so, but was still considerably higher than those who have *never* lived in the social rented sector.

Three-quarters of low income households (those on less than £9,500) were also more likely to support succession, compared with 45 per cent of those on incomes of £30,000 or more.

¹¹In certain circumstances family members can 'succeed' a social housing tenancy. This is dependent on the type of tenancy and is also limited to one succession per tenancy. The successor must also have been living in the property for 12 months prior to the tenant's death.

Younger and older members of the public were more likely to support succession as too were single parent families – more than three in five in each group supported this view.

There was also particularly strong support for succession in the north, where two-thirds of the public agreed with adult children in social housing being able to inherit their parents' tenancy. The lowest levels of support were in the south (48%).

Table 7.5 Variations in the views on succession for adult children

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements – Adult children living with their parents in social housing should be entitled to inherit their tenancy when their parents die

	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
Tenure			
Owners (2,281)	31	51	+20
Social renters (680)	7	81	+74
Private renters (356)	21	57	+36
Household income			
<£9.5k (433)	11	75	+63
£9.5k – £17.4k (562)	19	64	+45
£17.5k – £29.9k (410)	32	54	+23
£30k+ (655)	39	45	+6
Age			
16-24 (401)	17	64	+46
25-44 (1,073)	29	53	+25
45-64 (1,044)	28	55	+27
65-74 (490)	26	58	+32
75+ (336)	17	63	+46
Household type (life stage)*			
<55 Single no children (547)	21	60	+39
<55 Single with children (288)	18	65	+47
<55 Couple with no children (434)	29	52	+23
<55 Couple with children (712)	30	51	+21
55+ With or without children (1,341)	24	59	+34

Table 7.5 Variations in the views on succession for adult children (continued)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements – Adult children living with their parents in social housing should be entitled to inherit their tenancy when their parents die

	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
Region			
North (1,010)	18	66	+47
Midlands (910)	30	56	+27
South (936)	33	48	+14
London (488)	16	57	+42
Experience of the social rented (SR) sector			
Currently in SR (680)	7	81	+74
Previously in SR but not now (901)	23	62	+39
Never lived in SR (1,763)	32	47	+15
Knowledge of allocations policies			
A lot/a little (1,884)	26	59	+33
Nothing/don't know (1,460)	24	53	+29

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: Base sizes in brackets. * 'Other' life stage category not presented due to small base size

7.5.3. Waiting times for social housing

When asked about waiting times for social housing, over half (54%) disagreed that people should expect to wait 18 months, while only one in five (21%) agreed (figure 7.6).

Views on this are pretty consistent across tenures, but lower income households appeared to have lower expectations; only 46 per cent of those on incomes below £9,500 thought 18 months is too long, compared with 63 per cent of those on incomes of £30,000 or more. Older people also had much lower expectations, as the table below illustrates.

Single parent families are less likely to be tolerant of an 18 month wait (65 per cent disagreed that 18 months is a reasonable amount of time to wait compared with 54 per cent overall). Similarly those who said they know a lot or a little about the way social housing is allocated are more likely to think that 18 months is too long to wait (59 per cent of those who said they know a lot or a little compared with 48 per cent of those who know nothing or don't know).

It is no surprise that people currently registered on a waiting list or social housing register at the time of the survey were more likely, than those who are not, to disagree that an 18 month wait is reasonable (71 % disagree).

Table 7.6 Variations in the views on waiting times for social housing

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements – People should expect to wait at least 18 months before being allocated social housing

	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
Tenure			
Owners (2,281)	53	20	-33
Social renters (680)	57	22	-35
Private renters (356)	55	20	-35
Household income			
<£9.5k (433)	46	30	-16
£9.5k – £17.4k (562)	52	27	-26
£17.5k – £29.9k (410)	54	20	-34
£30k+ (655)	63	15	-48
Age			
16-24 (401)	63	14	-49
25-44 (1,073)	59	16	-44
45-64 (1,044)	55	22	-33
65-74 (490)	41	32	-9
75+ (336)	36	32	-4
Household type (life stage)*			
<55 Single no children (547)	55	18	-37
<55 Single with children (288)	65	14	-51
<55 Couple with no children (434)	59	17	-42
<55 Couple with children (712)	62	15	-46
55+ With or without children (1,341)	44	29	-15
Region			
North (1,010)	61	16	-45
Midlands (910)	55	22	-33
South (936)	52	22	-31
London (488)	45	25	-20

Table 7.6 Variations in the views on waiting times for social housing (cont.)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements – People should expect to wait at least 18 months before being allocated social housing

	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
Experience of the social rented (SR) sector			
Currently in SR (680)	57	22	-35
Previously in SR but not now (901)	57	21	-36
Never lived in SR (1,763)	52	20	-32
Knowledge of allocations policies			
A lot/a little (1,884)	59	21	-38
Nothing/don't know (1,460)	48	20	-28

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: Base sizes in brackets. * 'Other' life stage category not presented due to small base size

7.5.4. Stability for people with dependent children

Almost three-quarters of the general public (74%) agreed that people with dependent children need more housing stability than those without, while just 11 per cent disagreed (figure 7.6). Support for this was quite uniform across all sections of the population, although those in the lowest income band were less likely to agree (69%) and those with the highest incomes were most likely to agree (77%).

Table 7.7 Variations in the views on the need for stability for people with dependent children

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements – People with dependent children need more housing stability than people without

	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
Tenure			
Owners (2,281)	12	74	+62
Social renters (680)	13	71	+59
Private renters (356)	7	75	+68
Household income			
<£9.5k (433)	12	69	+57
£9.5k – £17.4k (562)	11	76	+65
£17.5k – £29.9k (410)	12	75	+63

Table 7.7 Variations in the views on the need for stability for people with dependent children (continued)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements – People with dependent children need more housing stability than people without

	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
£30k+ (655)	12	77	+65
Age			
16-24 (401)	6	78	+72
25-44 (1,073)	11	73	+62
45-64 (1,044)	15	72	+57
65-74 (490)	11	76	+65
75+ (336)	9	72	+62
Household type (life stage)*			
<55 Single no children (547)	10	74	+64
<55 Single with children (288)	10	74	+63
<55 Couple with no children (434)	13	72	+58
<55 Couple with children (712)	10	75	+65
55+ With or without children (1,341)	12	73	+61
Region			
North (1,010)	11	74	+63
Midlands (910)	16	74	+58
South (936)	11	74	+63
London (488)	4	72	+67
Experience of the social rented (SR) sector			
Currently in SR (680)	13	71	+59
Previously in SR but not now (901)	13	73	+60
Never lived in SR (1,763)	10	75	+65
Knowledge of allocations policies			
A lot/a little (1,884)	12	75	+63
Nothing/don't know (1,460)	10	71	+61

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: Base sizes in brackets. * 'Other' life stage category not presented due to small base size

7.5.5. Local priorities setting

Half of the public believed that local councils and housing associations should set priorities for who gets social housing in their area, even if it means there are different rules in different areas (figure 7.6).

Agreement for this was consistent across tenure groups but some of the biggest differences were seen by income and age. More than half (57%) of those on incomes below £9,500 believed housing priorities should be set locally, compared with 49 per cent of those on incomes of £30,000 or more. Fewer than half (46%) of those aged under 25 agreed priorities for social housing should be set locally, compared to 59 per cent of those aged between 65 and 74.

Although the number of respondents to the surveys who said they were registered on a waiting list or social housing register was small, it was clear that there was less support for local priority setting among those registered (39% agreeing) than those who were not (52%). This suggests that their views on the subject may be influenced by a negative perception of what local priorities have been set in reality.

Table 7.8 Variations in the views on local priorities setting

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements – Local councils and housing associations should be allowed to say who get social housing, even if it means different rules in different areas

	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
Tenure			
Owners (2,281)	24	51	+27
Social renters (680)	23	50	+27
Private renters (356)	21	48	+27
Household income			
<£9.5k (433)	18	57	+38
£9.5k – £17.4k (562)	22	53	+31
£17.5k – £29.9k (410)	24	52	+29
£30k+ (655)	30	49	+19
Age			
16-24 (401)	28	46	+18
25-44 (1,073)	27	46	+19
45-64 (1,044)	23	53	+31

Table 7.8 Variations in the views on local priorities setting (continued)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements – Local councils and housing associations should be allowed to say who get social housing, even if it means different rules in different areas

	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
65-74 (490)	19	59	+40
75+ (336)	15	56	+41
Household type (life stage)*			
<55 Single no children (547)	25	47	+21
<55 Single with children (288)	30	44	+14
<55 Couple with no children (434)	25	48	+23
<55 Couple with children (712)	28	48	+20
55+ With or without children (1,341)	18	57	+39
Region			
North (1,010)	23	51	+27
Midlands (910)	28	50	+22
South (936)	25	50	+25
London (488)	15	52	+38
Experience of the social rented (SR) sector			
Currently in SR (680)	23	50	+27
Previously in SR but not now (901)	27	49	+22
Never lived in SR (1,763)	22	51	+29
Knowledge of allocations policies			
A lot/a little (1,884)	27	52	+25
Nothing/don't know (1,460)	20	49	+29
Registered on a social housing register or waiting list			
Yes (80)	34	39	+5
No (2,513)	24	52	+28

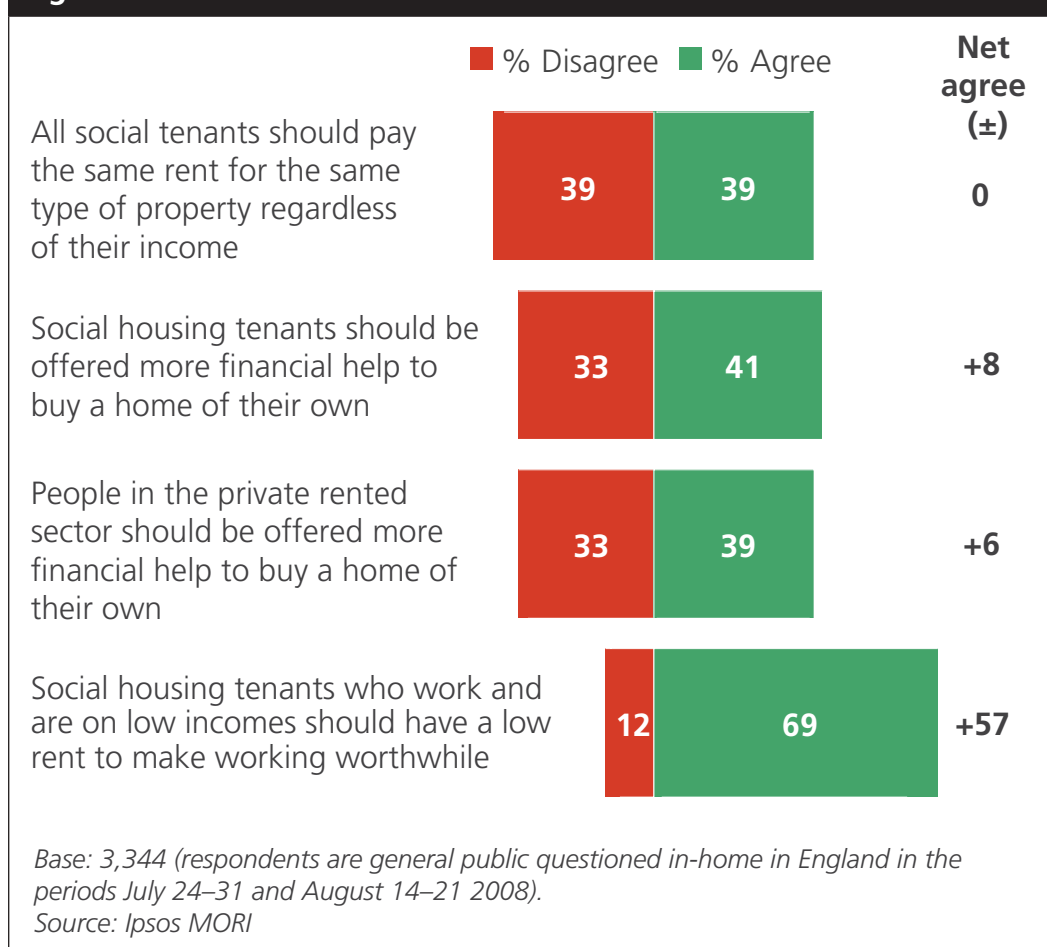
Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: Base sizes in brackets. * 'Other' life stage category not presented due to small base size

7.6. Financial issues

The survey included a number of statements addressing financial issues for social tenants. There was widespread support for low rents for low income working households to make working worthwhile, but there was a balance of negative and positive views about offering financial support to social and private rented sector tenants to buy a home of their own, and rents in the social rented sector being uniform regardless of the tenant's income.

Figure 7.7 Financial issues



7.6.1. Uniform rents regardless of income

An equal proportion of people (39%) agreed and disagreed that all social tenants should pay the same rent for the same type of property regardless of income.

People in the private rented sector were more likely to agree that all social tenants should pay the same, regardless of income: 46 per cent of private renters agreed compared with 43 per cent of social renters and 37 per cent of owner-occupiers. Those on higher incomes were most likely to disagree with standardised rents (48 per cent of people with incomes over £30,000). There was also a greater tendency for older people to support uniform rents, while those in the middle age

group (45-64) were least likely to support it. Opinion also varied by location with those in the north more likely to support standardised rents (43%) and those in the south least likely to (36%). However, on balance, net agreement was highest in London (+12) reflecting the lowest level of disagreement that social tenants should pay uniform rents.

Table 7.9 Variations in the views on uniform rents

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements – All social tenants should pay the same rent for the same type of property regardless of their income

	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
Tenure			
Owners (2,281)	41	37	-4
Social renters (680)	36	43	+7
Private renters (356)	30	46	+16
Household income			
<£9.5k (433)	31	43	+12
£9.5k – £17.4k (562)	32	49	+17
£17.5k – £29.9k (410)	43	34	-9
£30k+ (655)	48	34	-14
Age			
16-24 (401)	37	39	+2
25-44 (1,073)	38	39	+1
45-64 (1,044)	46	34	-12
65-74 (490)	32	46	+14
75+ (336)	28	44	+15
Household type (life stage)*			
<55 Single no children (547)	37	38	+1
<55 Single with children (288)	37	41	+4
<55 Couple with no children (434)	46	35	-10
<55 Couple with children (712)	39	39	0
55+ With or without children (1,341)	37	40	+3

Table 7.9 Variations in the views on uniform rents (continued)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements – All social tenants should pay the same rent for the same type of property regardless of their income

	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
Region			
North (1,010)	38	43	+4
Midlands (910)	42	38	-4
South (936)	42	36	-6
London (488)	28	39	+12
Experience of the social rented (SR) sector			
Currently in SR (680)	36	43	+7
Previously in SR but not now (901)	42	38	-4
Never lived in SR (1,763)	38	38	0
Knowledge of allocations policies			
A lot/a little (1,884)	44	38	-6
Nothing/don't know (1,460)	33	40	+8

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: Base sizes in brackets. * 'Other' life stage category not presented due to small base size

7.6.2. Support for social and private rented sector tenants to buy their own homes

More people were in favour of providing financial support to social and private rented sector tenants to buy a home of their own than were against, but not by a huge margin.

Not surprisingly, existing renters (in both the social and private rented sectors) were considerably more in favour of financial support to renters for home purchase than owners.

Income was also a factor in whether people agreed with the principle of offering financial support to renters to buy their own home. More of those on incomes below £30,000 were in favour of financial support for renters than were against, whereas for those on incomes above £30,000 the reverse was true.

There was considerably more support for providing help to renters among the younger population. A majority of 16-24 year olds agreed with providing help to both social and private renters for home purchase (58% and 52% respectively). Support declined among older age groups, with more opposing financial help

than supporting it among the 65+ age group (36 per cent supported help to social renters and 32 per cent supported help for private renters).

In London, where house prices are highest, the strength of support for helping social and private rented sector tenants on to the housing ladder was greater than elsewhere. Over half (52%) of Londoners supported providing help to social renters and a half (50%) supported helping private renters. There was also above average support in the north (46%).

Table 7.10 Variations in the views on support for social tenants to buy their own homes

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements – Social housing tenants should be offered more financial help to buy a home of their own

	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
Tenure			
Owners (2,281)	37	38	+1
Social renters (680)	21	51	+30
Private renters (356)	25	49	+24
Household income			
<£9.5k (433)	28	47	+19
£9.5k – £17.4k (562)	30	45	+15
£17.5k – £29.9k (410)	33	44	+12
£30k+ (655)	40	33	-8
Age			
16-24 (401)	17	58	+42
25-44 (1,073)	30	42	+12
45-64 (1,044)	40	36	-4
65-74 (490)	44	35	-9
75+ (336)	34	36	+2
Household type (life stage)*			
<55 Single no children (547)	25	47	+23
<55 Single with children (288)	21	55	+34
<55 Couple with no children (434)	35	38	+3
<55 Couple with children (712)	32	41	+9
55+ With or without children (1,341)	39	36	-4

Table 7.10 Variations in the views on support for social tenants to buy their own homes (continued)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements – Social housing tenants should be offered more financial help to buy a home of their own

	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
Region			
North (1,010)	30	46	+16
Midlands (910)	40	37	-4
South (936)	36	36	0
London (488)	16	52	+36
Experience of the social rented (SR) sector			
Currently in SR (680)	21	51	+30
Previously in SR but not now (901)	38	40	+2
Never lived in SR (1,763)	34	39	+5
Knowledge of allocations policies			
A lot/a little (1,884)	36	42	+7
Nothing/don't know (1,460)	29	40	+11

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: Base sizes in brackets. * 'Other' life stage category not presented due to small base size

Table 7.11 Variations in the views on support for private tenants to buy their own homes

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements – People in the private rented sector should be offered more financial help to buy a home of their own

	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
Tenure			
Owners (2,281)	37	36	-1
Social renters (680)	26	41	+15
Private renters (356)	21	50	+29
Household income			
<£9.5k (433)	31	41	+11
£9.5k – £17.4k (562)	30	43	+13

Table 7.11 Variations in the views on support for private tenants to buy their own homes (continued)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements – People in the private rented sector should be offered more financial help to buy a home of their own

	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
£17.5k – £29.9k (410)	33	42	+9
£30k+ (655)	42	32	-10
Age			
16-24 (401)	20	52	+33
25-44 (1,073)	30	41	+11
45-64 (1,044)	39	33	-6
65-74 (490)	44	30	-14
75+ (336)	35	33	-2
Household type (life stage)*			
<55 Single no children (547)	24	47	+24
<55 Single with children (288)	22	50	+28
<55 Couple with no children (434)	33	39	+6
<55 Couple with children (712)	35	36	+2
55+ With or without children (1,341)	40	32	-8
Region			
North (1,010)	32	41	+9
Midlands (910)	39	34	-5
South (936)	37	34	-3
London (488)	15	50	+35
Experience of the social rented (SR) sector			
Currently in SR (680)	26	41	+15
Previously in SR but not now (901)	40	36	-3
Never lived in SR (1,763)	32	39	+6
Knowledge of allocations policies			
A lot/a little (1,884)	36	39	+3
Nothing/don't know (1,460)	29	38	+8

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: Base sizes in brackets. * 'Other' life stage category not presented due to small base size

7.6.3. Rents for low income working households

More than two-thirds (69%) of the general public supported low rents for social tenants who work and are on low incomes to make working worthwhile (figure 7.7). Although there was slightly more support for this among social renters (74% agree), support was reasonably consistent across all tenures. Higher income respondents were slightly more supportive (72 per cent of those with incomes over £30,000 agreed), but, overall, support was consistent, regardless of income.

Support for low rents for low income working households was strongest in London (72% agree) and weakest in the north (67% agree).

Table 7.12 Variations in the views on having low rents for low income working households

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements – Social housing tenants who work and are on low incomes should have a low rent to make working worthwhile

	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
Tenure			
Owners (2,281)	12	68	+56
Social renters (680)	9	74	+64
Private renters (356)	11	67	+56
Household income			
<£9.5k (433)	9	69	+59
£9.5k – £17.4k (562)	13	70	+57
£17.5k – £29.9k (410)	11	69	+58
£30k+ (655)	13	72	+59
Age			
16-24 (401)	9	72	+62
25-44 (1,073)	11	70	+59
45-64 (1,044)	13	69	+56
65-74 (490)	14	66	+52
75+ (336)	12	63	+52
Household type (life stage)*			
<55 Single no children (547)	10	69	+59
<55 Single with children (288)	7	74	+67
<55 Couple with no children (434)	13	69	+56

Table 7.12 Variations in the views on having low rents for low income working households (continued)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements – Social housing tenants who work and are on low incomes should have a low rent to make working worthwhile

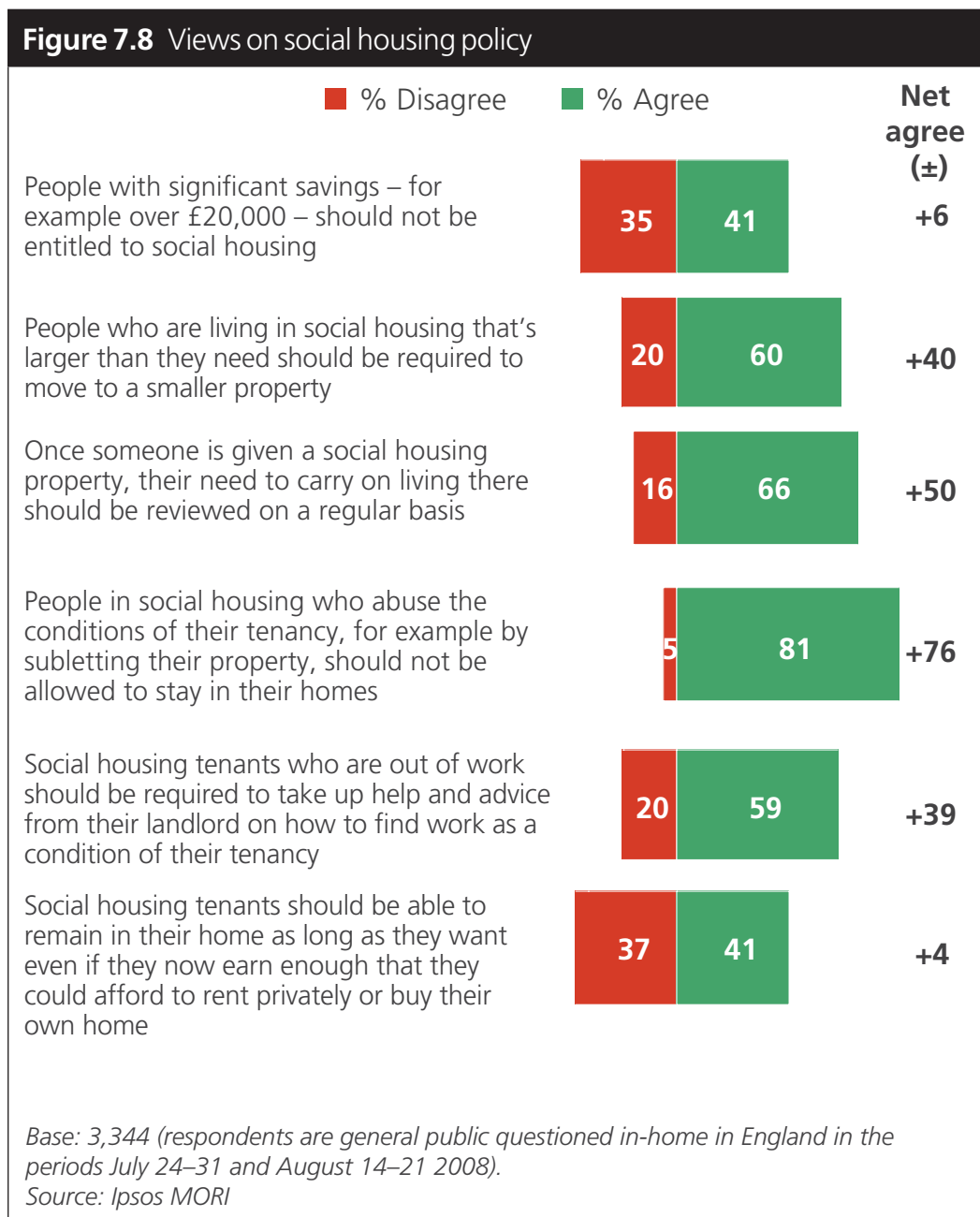
	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
<55 Couple with children (712)	13	70	+57
55+ With or without children (1,341)	12	66	+54
Region			
North (1,010)	13	67	+54
Midlands (910)	12	71	+59
South (936)	13	68	+54
London (488)	5	72	+67
Experience of the social rented (SR) sector			
Currently in SR (680)	9	74	+64
Previously in SR but not now (901)	14	69	+55
Never lived in SR (1,763)	11	67	+56
Knowledge of allocations policies			
A lot/a little (1,884)	12	72	+60
Nothing/don't know (1,460)	11	65	+54

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: Base sizes in brackets. * 'Other' life stage category not presented due to small base size

7.7. Views on social housing policy

In general, there was public support for targeting access to social housing (for example, by excluding people who have significant savings), and for extending the range of circumstances in which existing tenants in the sector may be required or encouraged to move home (for example, people who are under-occupying their property, or who abuse the terms of their tenancy).



7.7.1. Access for people with savings

Slightly more people supported removing access to social housing for people with savings over £20,000 than opposed it (figure 7.8). Private tenants were most likely to agree that people with significant savings should be excluded (47 per cent of private renters supported this, compared with 41 per cent of owners, and 35 per cent of social renters). Support was lower, both among those who were currently in the social rented sector at the time of the survey and those who have previously lived in the social rented sector but no longer did so (34%), than those who have never lived in the social rented sector (46%).

Those on the highest incomes were also more likely to support removing access to social housing for those with significant savings – 47 per cent of those on incomes above £30,000 agreed compared with 41 per cent of those with income of less than £9,500. Age was also a factor, with older people, who were of course more likely to have built up significant savings, generally less likely than young people to support the exclusion of people with savings.

Table 7.13 Variations in the views on access for people with savings

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements – People with significant savings – for example over £20,000 – should not be entitled to social housing

	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
Tenure			
Owners (2,281)	35	41	+6
Social renters (680)	38	35	-2
Private renters (356)	29	47	+19
Household income			
<£9.5k (433)	35	41	+6
£9.5k – £17.4k (562)	38	42	+4
£17.5k – £29.9k (410)	37	40	+3
£30k+ (655)	33	47	+13
Age			
16-24 (401)	26	43	+17
25-44 (1,073)	30	47	+17
45-64 (1,044)	40	38	-2
65-74 (490)	41	34	-7
75+ (336)	43	30	-13
Household type (life stage)*			
<55 Single no children (547)	28	46	+19
<55 Single with children (288)	34	39	+6
<55 Couple with no children (434)	29	47	+18
<55 Couple with children (712)	31	44	+13
55+ With or without children (1,341)	43	33	-11

Table 7.13 Variations in the views on access for people with savings (cont.)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements – People with significant savings – for example over £20,000 – should not be entitled to social housing

	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
Region			
North (1,010)	37	38	+1
Midlands (910)	37	43	+6
South (936)	33	43	+10
London (488)	29	39	+10
Experience of the social rented (SR) sector			
Currently in SR (680)	38	35	-2
Previously in SR but not now (901)	44	34	-10
Never lived in SR (1,763)	29	46	+17
Knowledge of allocations policies			
A lot/a little (1,884)	39	40	+1
Nothing/don't know (1,460)	29	41	+12

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: Base sizes in brackets. * 'Other' life stage category not presented due to small base size

7.7.2. Under-occupiers

A majority of people (60%) agreed that people who were living in social housing that is larger than they need should be required to move to a smaller property (figure 7.8). Only one in five people disagreed with requiring under-occupiers to move.

Across sub-groups of the population, the majority supported this, although some expected differences were evident. Social renters were least likely to support the movement of under-occupiers (52 per cent compared with 62 per cent of owners and private renters). Older people were also less likely to support this, but still over half (54%) of those aged 65 or more supported this.

We might also have expected regional variations according to where housing pressures are most acute and survey results suggest some evidence of this. People living in the south showed the highest level of support (at 64%) whereas those living in the north showed the lowest level of support (57%).

Table 7.14 Variations in the views on under-occupation

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements – People who are living in social housing that is larger than they need should be required to move to a smaller property

	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
Tenure			
Owners (2,281)	19	62	+43
Social renters (680)	28	52	+25
Private renters (356)	15	62	+47
Household income			
<£9.5k (433)	22	53	+31
£9.5k – £17.4k (562)	19	62	+43
£17.5k – £29.9k (410)	21	61	+40
£30k+ (655)	17	68	+51
Age			
16-24 (401)	16	63	+47
25-44 (1,073)	15	66	+51
45-64 (1,044)	24	57	+34
65-74 (490)	27	57	+30
75+ (336)	27	51	+24
Household type (life stage)*			
<55 Single no children (547)	17	61	+44
<55 Single with children (288)	18	60	+41
<55 Couple with no children (434)	16	62	+46
<55 Couple with children (712)	17	66	+49
55+ With or without children (1,341)	26	56	+30
Region			
North (1,010)	24	57	+33
Midlands (910)	21	61	+41
South (936)	18	64	+46
London (488)	14	59	+45

Table 7.14 Variations in the views on under-occupation (continued)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements – People who are living in social housing that is larger than they need should be required to move to a smaller property

	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
Experience of the social rented (SR) sector			
Currently in SR (680)	28	52	+25
Previously in SR but not now (901)	24	58	+34
Never lived in SR (1,763)	16	64	+48
Knowledge of allocations policies			
A lot/a little (1,884)	21	63	+42
Nothing/don't know (1,460)	19	57	+38

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: Base sizes in brackets. * 'Other' life stage category not presented due to small base size

7.7.3. Reviewing the needs of existing social tenants

The John Hills Review of social housing suggested a more varied 'offer' than a standard social housing tenancy.¹² This could involve a system of 'regular reviews' every few years to consider tenants' changing circumstances to allow them to take up a different part of the 'offer.'

There was a high level of support for regularly reviewing the needs of social tenants. Two-thirds (66%) of the public agreed that needs should be regularly reviewed, while only 16 per cent disagreed (figure 7.8). Fewer social renters (53%) supported this than either owners (69%) or private renters (67%). Income was also a factor here, with almost three-quarters (73%) of people on incomes of £30,000 or more agreeing with regular reviews.

¹²Hills, J (2007) *Ends and Means: The future of social housing in England*, ESRC

Table 7.15 Variations in the views on regularly reviewing the needs of social tenants

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements – Once someone is given a social housing property, their need to carry on living there should be reviewed on a regular basis

	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
Tenure			
Owners (2,281)	14	69	+55
Social renters (680)	26	53	+27
Private renters (356)	10	67	+57
Household income			
<£9.5k (433)	19	59	+40
£9.5k – £17.4k (562)	15	69	+54
£17.5k – £29.9k (410)	14	68	+53
£30k+ (655)	15	73	+58
Age			
16-24 (401)	12	66	+55
25-44 (1,073)	13	69	+56
45-64 (1,044)	21	64	+43
65-74 (490)	18	66	+48
75+ (336)	15	58	+43
Household type (life stage)*			
<55 Single no children (547)	13	67	+54
<55 Single with children (288)	17	61	+44
<55 Couple with no children (434)	18	66	+49
<55 Couple with children (712)	13	69	+56
55+ With or without children (1,341)	18	64	+45
Region			
North (1,010)	17	63	+46
Midlands (910)	18	69	+51
South (936)	15	68	+54
London (488)	12	61	+49

Table 7.15 Variations in the views on regularly reviewing the needs of social tenants (continued)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements – Once someone is given a social housing property, their need to carry on living there should be reviewed on a regular basis

	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
Experience of the social rented (SR) sector			
Currently in SR (680)	26	53	+27
Previously in SR but not now (901)	21	62	+41
Never lived in SR (1,763)	10	71	+61
Knowledge of allocations policies			
A lot/a little (1,884)	18	67	+49
Nothing/don't know (1,460)	13	64	+51

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: Base sizes in brackets. * 'Other' life stage category not presented due to small base size

7.7.4. Tenancy abuses

Of all the suggestions put to people in the survey, the highest level of support was shown for evicting people who abuse the conditions of their tenancy, for example by subletting their property. More than eight in ten (81%) supported this with only 5 per cent against (figure 7.8). It was owners, those on the highest incomes, and those who knew a lot or a little about how social housing is allocated, where support for this was strongest.

Table 7.16 Variations in the views on tenancy abuse

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements – People in social housing who abuse the conditions of their tenancy, for example by subletting their property, should not be allowed to stay in their homes

	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
Tenure			
Owners (2,281)	5	83	+78
Social renters (680)	5	80	+75
Private renters (356)	7	74	+67
Household income			
<£9.5k (433)	6	79	+73
£9.5k – £17.4k (562)	5	82	+77
£17.5k – £29.9k (410)	6	79	+73
£30k+ (655)	4	87	+83
Age			
16-24 (401)	7	75	+68
25-44 (1,073)	5	82	+77
45-64 (1,044)	4	84	+80
65-74 (490)	8	81	+73
75+ (336)	3	81	+78
Household type (life stage)*			
<55 Single no children (547)	8	75	+66
<55 Single with children (288)	5	78	+73
<55 Couple with no children (434)	6	82	+76
<55 Couple with children (712)	3	85	+82
55+ With or without children (1,341)	4	82	+78
Region			
North (1,010)	5	83	+78
Midlands (910)	6	84	+77
South (936)	5	81	+76
London (488)	3	74	+71

Table 7.16 Variations in the views on tenancy abuse (continued)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements – People in social housing who abuse the conditions of their tenancy, for example by subletting their property, should not be allowed to stay in their homes

	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
Experience of the social rented (SR) sector			
Currently in SR (680)	5	80	+75
Previously in SR but not now (901)	4	84	+80
Never lived in SR (1,763)	5	80	+75
Knowledge of allocations policies			
A lot/a little (1,884)	4	85	+81
Nothing/don't know (1,460)	6	76	+70

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: Base sizes in brackets. * 'Other' life stage category not presented due to small base size

7.7.5. Accepting advice on how to find work

While one in five (20%) of the general public disagreed with a requirement for out of work social tenants to take up help and advice from their landlord, almost six in ten (59%) agreed with it, and one in five (20%) strongly agreed.

There was less support among existing social renters, but still a majority (52%) supported a requirement to take up help and advice. Similarly, those on higher incomes (62 per cent of those on £30,000 or more), and younger people (67 per cent of under 25 year olds) were all more likely to support this tougher line for non-working social renters.

Table 7.17 Variations in the views on finding work as a condition of tenancy

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements – Social housing tenants who are out of work should be required to take up help and advice from their landlord on how to find work as a condition of their tenancy

	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
Tenure			
Owners (2,281)	20	60	+40
Social renters (680)	25	52	+27
Private renters (356)	15	60	+45
Household income			
<£9.5k (433)	22	56	+34
£9.5k – £17.4k (562)	21	58	+37
£17.5k – £29.9k (410)	18	60	+42
£30k+ (655)	22	62	+40
Age			
16-24 (401)	12	67	+55
25-44 (1,073)	19	58	+39
45-64 (1,044)	26	56	+30
65-74 (490)	23	55	+32
75+ (336)	16	58	+41
Household type (life stage)*			
<55 Single no children (547)	16	63	+46
<55 Single with children (288)	16	63	+47
<55 Couple with no children (434)	21	58	+37
<55 Couple with children (712)	21	58	+37
55+ With or without children (1,341)	23	56	+33
Region			
North (1,010)	22	58	+36
Midlands (910)	23	58	+36
South (936)	21	59	+38
London (488)	12	59	+47

Table 7.17 Variations in the views on finding work as a condition of tenancy (continued)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements – Social housing tenants who are out of work should be required to take up help and advice from their landlord on how to find work as a condition of their tenancy

	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
Experience of the social rented (SR) sector			
Currently in SR (680)	25	52	+27
Previously in SR but not now (901)	24	56	+32
Never lived in SR (1,763)	17	62	+45
Knowledge of allocations policies			
A lot/a little (1,884)	23	60	+36
Nothing/don't know (1,460)	17	57	+41

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: Base sizes in brackets. * 'Other' life stage category not presented due to small base size

7.7.6. Tenant security

Two out of five (41%) agreed that social tenants should be allowed to stay in their home as long as they want even if their circumstances change so that they can afford to rent privately or buy a home of their own (figure 7.8). Slightly fewer (37%) disagreed that social tenants should be allowed to stay in their homes as long as they want. Social renters, perhaps not surprisingly, were much keener on being able to remain regardless of circumstances than either owners or private renters. Those who have never lived in the social rented sector were least likely to be in favour, with more of this group disagreeing than agreeing that tenants should be allowed to remain in their homes as long as they want.

People's attitudes on this issue varied considerably according to their income. Households with income of £30,000 or more disagreed with the right of social tenants to remain in their homes as long as they want (55%) compared to all other income groups that agreed with the statement. There was also a tendency for older people to be more in favour: a little under a half (46%) of those aged 65 or more agreed that tenants should be allowed to remain in their homes as long as they want compared with 35 per cent of under 25 year olds.

Table 7.18 Variations in the views on tenancy security

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements – Social housing tenants should be able to remain in their home as long as they want even if they now earn enough that they could afford to rent privately or buy their own home

	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
Tenure			
Owners (2,281)	42	37	-5
Social renters (680)	20	62	+43
Private renters (356)	35	38	+4
Household income			
<£9.5k (433)	20	55	+35
£9.5k – £17.4k (562)	27	52	+25
£17.5k – £29.9k (410)	36	43	+7
£30k+ (655)	55	28	-27
Age			
16-24 (401)	39	35	-4
25-44 (1,073)	40	40	0
45-64 (1,044)	36	43	+7
65-74 (490)	33	46	+13
75+ (336)	28	46	+18
Household type (life stage)*			
<55 Single no children (547)	40	37	-3
<55 Single with children (288)	28	50	+22
<55 Couple with no children (434)	38	40	+2
<55 Couple with children (712)	43	37	-6
55+ With or without children (1,341)	33	45	+12
Region			
North (1,010)	27	51	+24
Midlands (910)	40	41	+1
South (936)	49	29	-20
London (488)	26	45	+19

Table 7.18 Variations in the views on tenancy security (continued)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements – Social housing tenants should be able to remain in their home as long as they want even if they now earn enough that they could afford to rent privately or buy their own home

	% Disagree	% Agree	Net agree (±)
Experience of the social rented (SR) sector			
Currently in SR (680)	20	62	+43
Previously in SR but not now (901)	32	48	+16
Never lived in SR (1,763)	45	32	-13
Knowledge of allocations policies			
A lot/a little (1,884)	39	43	+4
Nothing/don't know (1,460)	34	40	+5

Source: Ipsos MORI

Note: Base sizes in brackets. * 'Other' life stage category not presented due to small base size

Section C

Housing advice

In this final section, we examined the general public's views on sources of housing advice. Housing advice provided by local authority staff is increasingly being administered through a 'housing options approach'. Under a housing options approach, the feasibility of securing, improving or adapting a customer's existing accommodation is explored and appropriate measures are taken to do this. Failing that, the full range of possible routes to accessing alternative accommodation is explored.

The Hills review on the future role of social housing in England highlighted the success of this approach and suggested that it could form the basis for more holistic 'enhanced' housing options services.¹³ Communities and Local Government is currently taking this approach forward in a series of housing options trailblazers.

¹³Hills *op cit*

Chapter 8

Housing advice

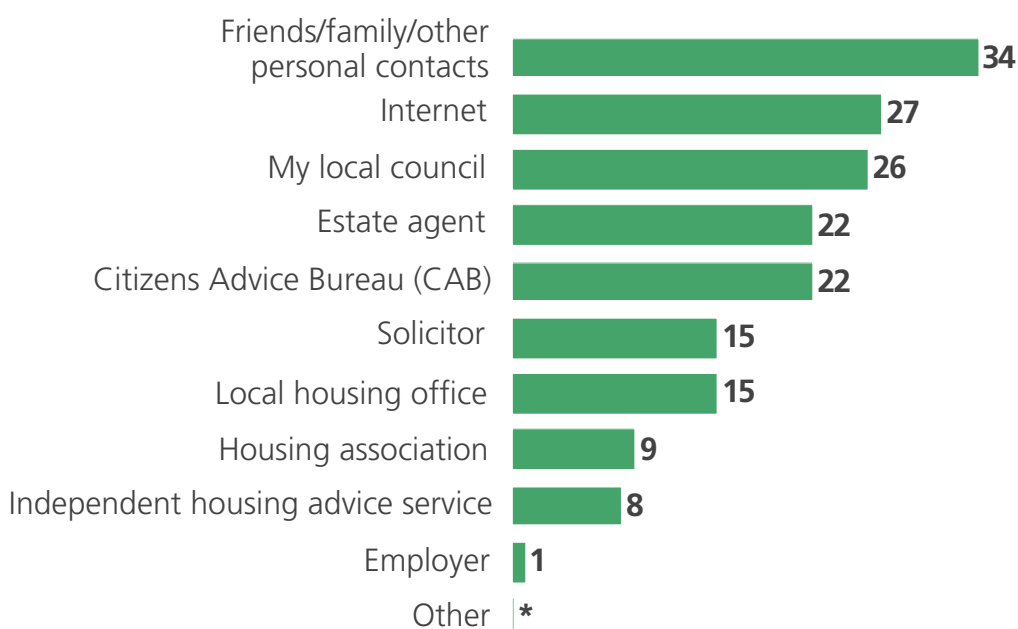
In this final section we consider some of the main sources of housing advice used by the population and look in a bit more detail about the specific types of advice that would be useful for those in each of the main tenure groups.

8.1. Sources of housing advice

Friends/family and other personal contacts were the most common source used for advice about housing. Other important sources included the internet, local councils, estate agents and the Citizens Advice Bureau. Less commonly used included solicitors and local housing offices and fewer than one in ten would use a housing association or independent housing advice service. Just one per cent of the population would approach their employer for housing advice.

Figure 8.1 Getting housing advice

If you needed advice about housing, which, if any, of these would you be most likely to use?



Base: 3,344 (respondents are general public questioned in-home in England in the periods July 24–31 and August 14–21 2008).

Source: Ipsos MORI

Some quite distinct patterns emerge, however, when we look in more detail at sources of housing advice used by tenure and income levels. For owners, friends and family and the internet were the main sources of housing advice used. Estate agents were also an important source of advice for this tenure group, whereas far fewer would use the council for housing advice. For private renters, friends and family and the internet were also the main sources of advice used, The Citizens Advice Bureau was also an important source for private renters.

In contrast, those in the social rented sector were more likely to use the council as a source of advice and were much less likely to rely on friends or family or the internet.

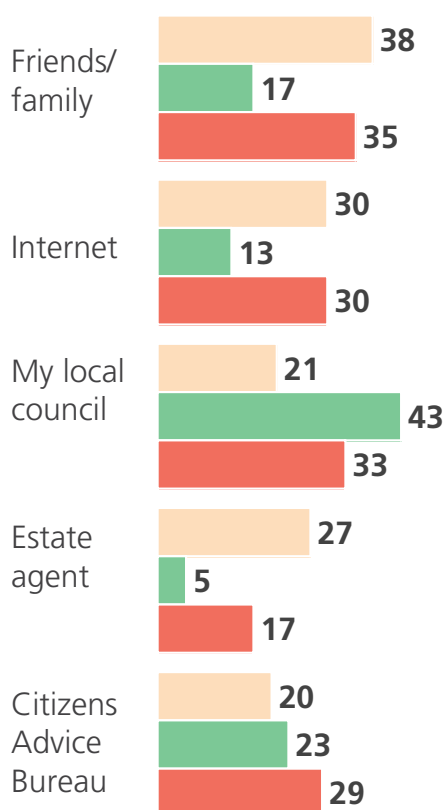
By income, it was clear that for those on the lowest incomes, the council was the most commonly used source of housing advice, whereas those on the highest incomes were most likely to use the internet and friends and family.

Figure 8.2 Getting housing advice: Variations by tenure and income

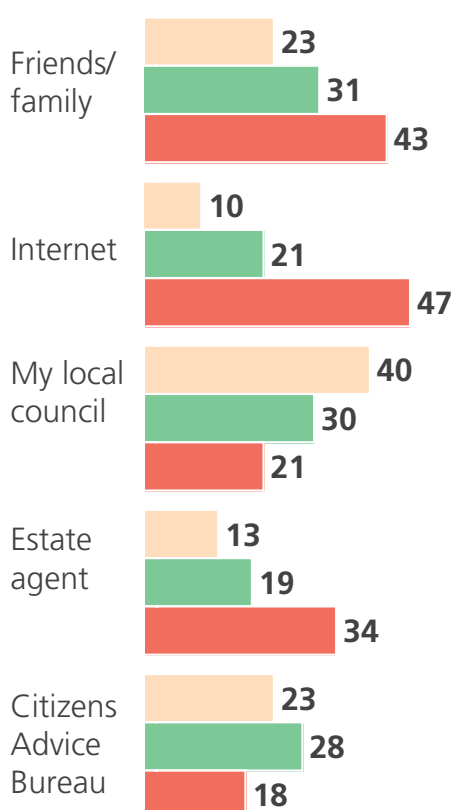
If you needed advice about housing, which, if any, of these would you be most likely to use? Top five mentions

TENURE

- % Owners
- % social tenants
- % private tenants

**INCOME**

- % <£9.5K
- % £9.5 – £29.9K
- % £30K+



Base: 3,344 (Respondents are general public questioned in-home in England between July 24 – July 31 2008 and August 14 – August 21 2008).

Source: Ipsos MORI

8.2. Demand for new housing advice services

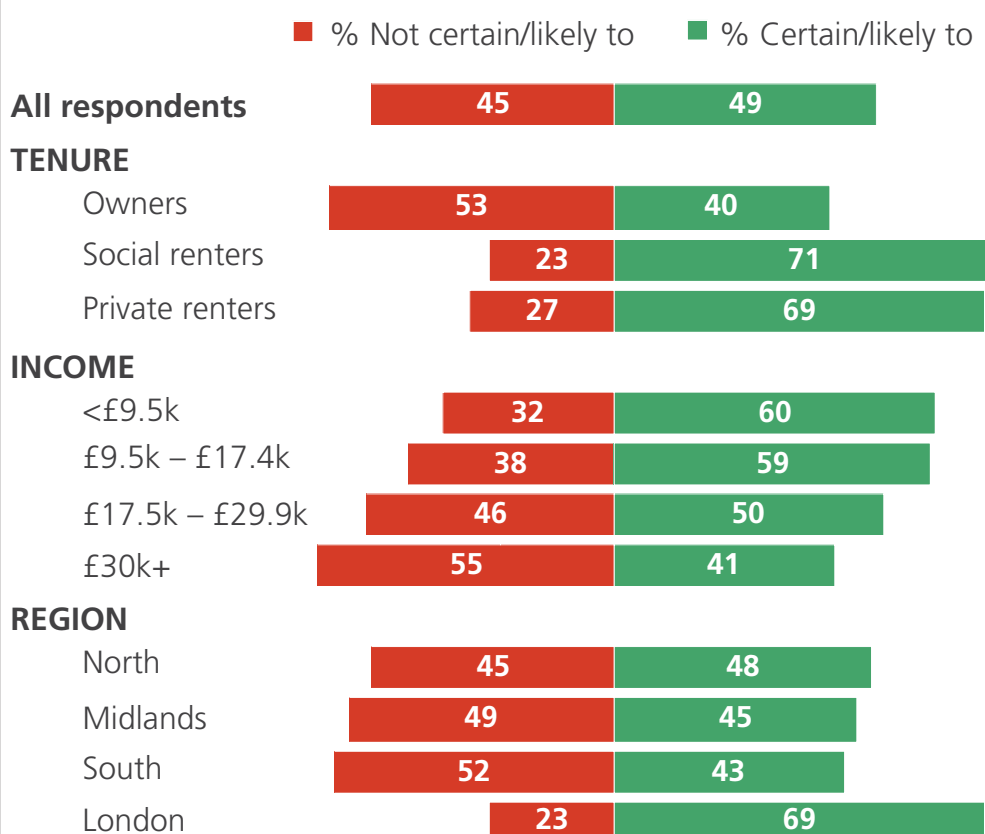
If a new service was available locally to provide advice about future housing options, just under half of the population would be likely to use the service compared to slightly more than two in five who would not. Again differences in potential demand for such a new service were evident by tenure, income and geographical region.

Renters were most likely to use a new service – around seven out of ten – whereas just two out of five owners indicated they would be likely to use such a service. Similarly it was those on the lowest incomes who would be most likely to use a new housing advice service. Three out of five with income of less than £9,500 indicated they would use the service, compared to two out of five with income of £30,000 and above.

There was also an interesting difference by region, with those in London most likely to use a new local service, and those in the south of England least likely to use it. The acute pressures on the London housing market in combination with the income and tenure profiles of these two regions are most likely to help explain these observed differences.

Figure 8.3 Profile of likely users of a new housing advice service

If there was a new service available locally providing you with advice about your future housing options, how likely or unlikely would you be to use the service?



Base: 3,344 (Respondents are general public questioned in-home in England between July 24 – July 31 2008 and August 14 – August 21 2008).

Source: Ipsos MORI

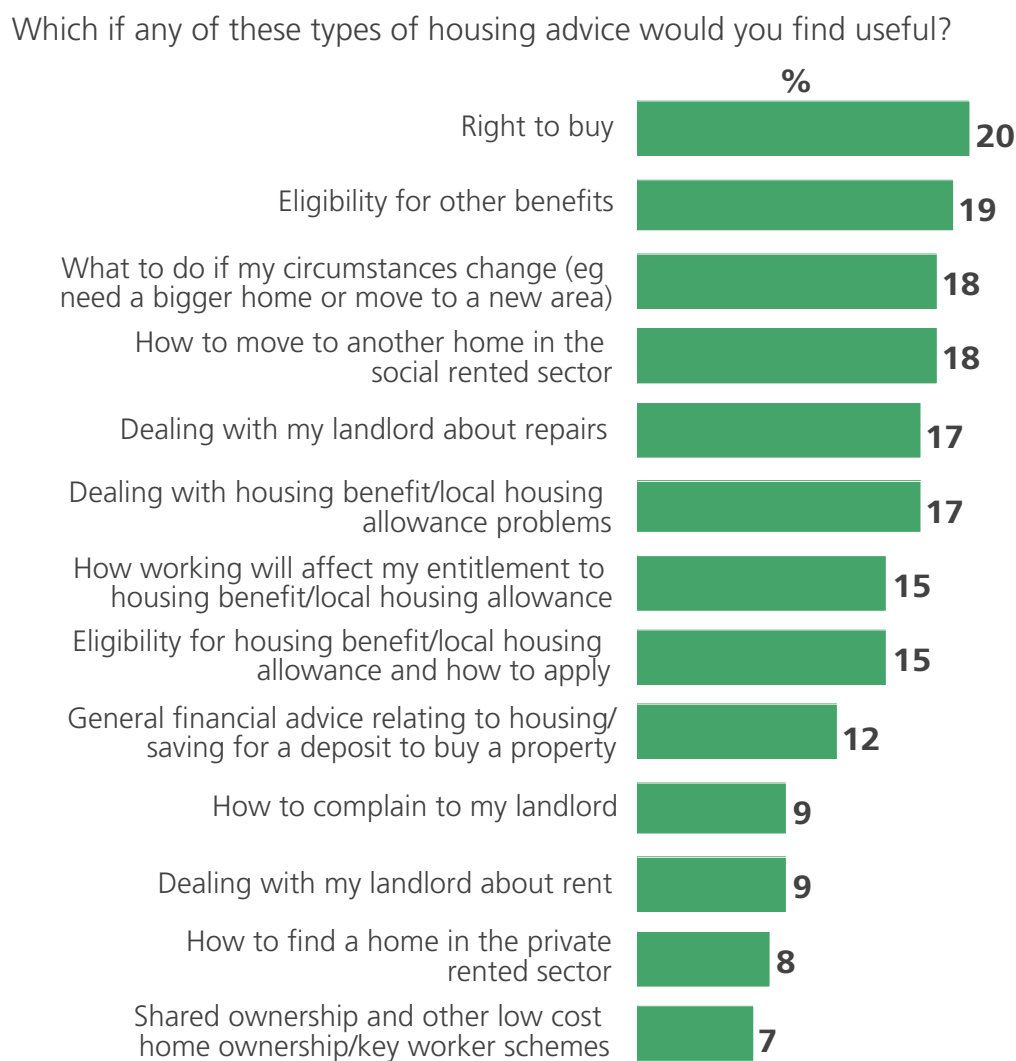
8.3. Types of housing advice

Each tenure group was asked what types of housing advice would be useful to them and we begin with the responses of those living in social rented housing.

8.3.1 Social renters

Around one in five social renters would find advice on right to buy and eligibility of benefits (other than housing benefit/ local housing allowance) to be useful. Advice on moving home within the social rented sector and dealing with the landlord over repairs would be useful for around one out of six of the social rented population.

Figure 8.4 Useful types of housing advice for social renters



Base: 680 (Respondents are general public in social rented housing questioned in-home in England between July 24 – July 31 2008 and August 14 – August 21 2008).

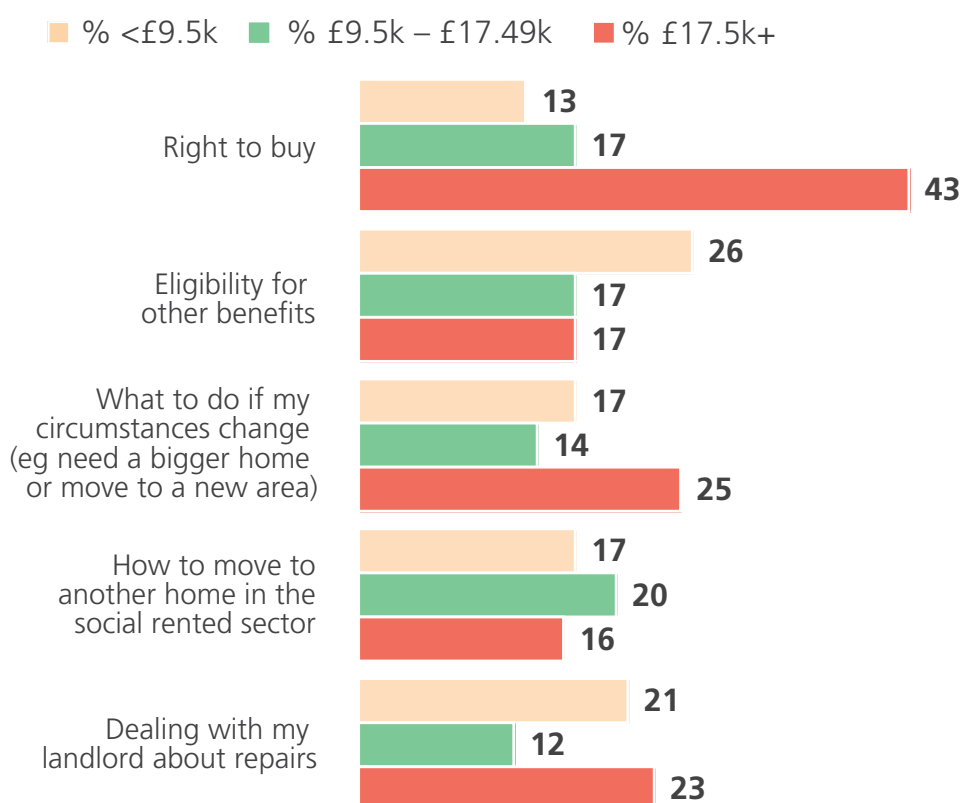
Source: Ipsos MORI

One out of eight social renters would find advice to help buy a property useful, although fewer than one in ten would find advice to help gain access to the private rented sector or advice on shared ownership and other low cost home ownership options to be useful.

When looking at responses by broad income band it was noticeable that for social renters on the lowest incomes, eligibility for benefits (other than housing benefit) and dealing with the landlord about repairs are the types of housing advice most would find useful. For those on higher incomes, most would find advice on right to buy useful. A quarter of social renters with income of £17,500 or more would also find advice on what to do when circumstances change useful. For those social renters with income levels in between, a fifth mentioned advice on how to find another home in the social rented sector would be useful.

Figure 8.5 Useful types of housing advice for social renters by income

Which if any of these types of housing advice would you find useful?
Top five mentions



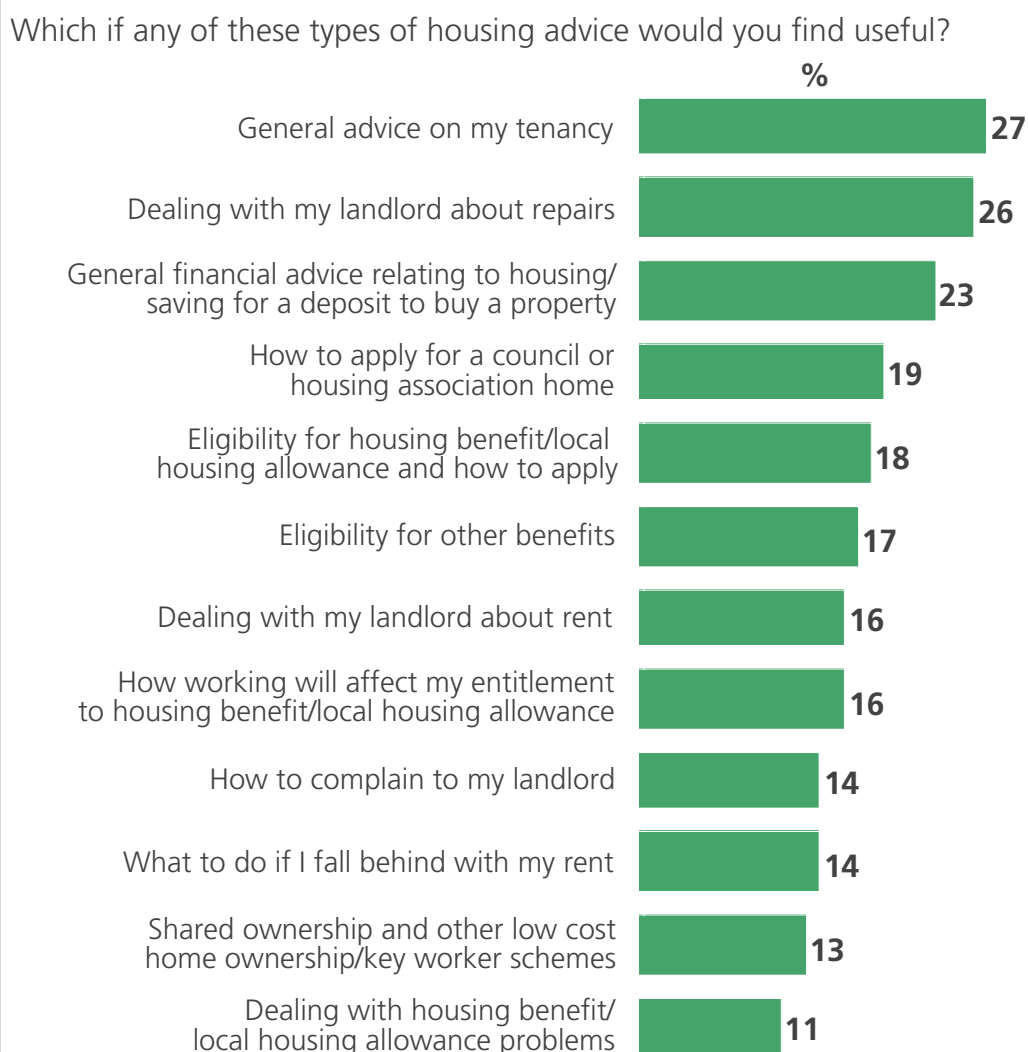
Base: 680 (Respondents are general public in social rented housing questioned in-home in England between July 24 – July 31 2008 and August 14 – August 21 2008).

Source: Ipsos MORI

8.3.2. Private renters

More than a quarter of all private renters indicated that general advice on the tenancy and dealing with the landlord over repairs were the types of advice most would find useful. Advice to assist with entry into the owner-occupied market was considered useful for slightly fewer than a quarter of private renters (compared to 12 per cent of social renters) and a fifth considered advice to help with access to the social rented sector would be useful.

As with social renters the usefulness of advice on shared ownership and other low cost home ownership options was a relatively low priority, although there appeared more support for this among private renters than among social renters – 13 per cent versus 7 per cent respectively. Similar proportions of private and social renters considered advice on eligibility for housing benefit (local housing allowance) and other benefits to be useful.

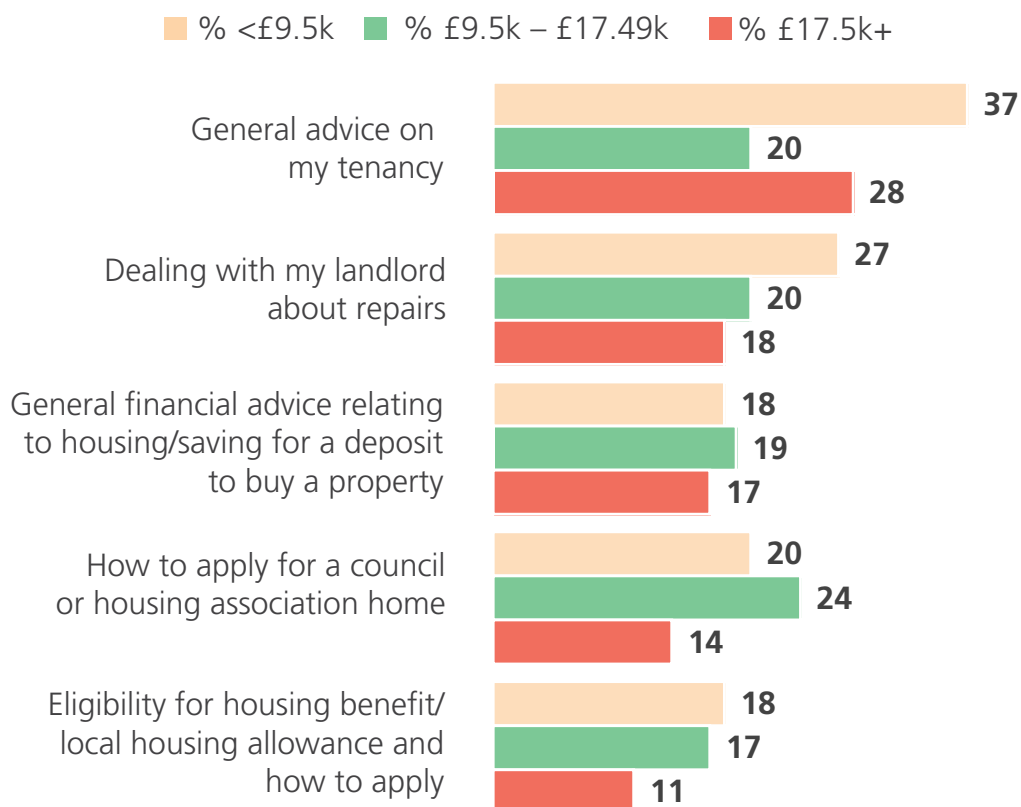
Figure 8.6 Useful types of housing advice for private renters

Base: 356 (Respondents are general public in private rented housing questioned in-home in England between July 24- July 31 2008 and August 14 – August 21 2008). Source: Ipsos MORI

For low income private renters, the priorities for housing advice included general advice on the tenancy, dealing with the landlord about repairs, applying for social rented accommodation and eligibility for housing benefit. Eligibility for benefits and applying for social rented housing were much lower priorities for high income private renters. Again it was advice on general tenancy issues and repairs that most considered useful in this group. For those private renters with income in between, the advice most would find useful was how to apply for social rented housing.

Figure 8.7 Useful types of housing advice for private renters by income

Which if any of these types of housing advice would you find useful?
Top five mentions



Base: 356 (Respondents are general public in private rented housing questioned in-home in England between July 24 – July 31 2008 and August 14 – August 21 2008).

Source: Ipsos MORI.

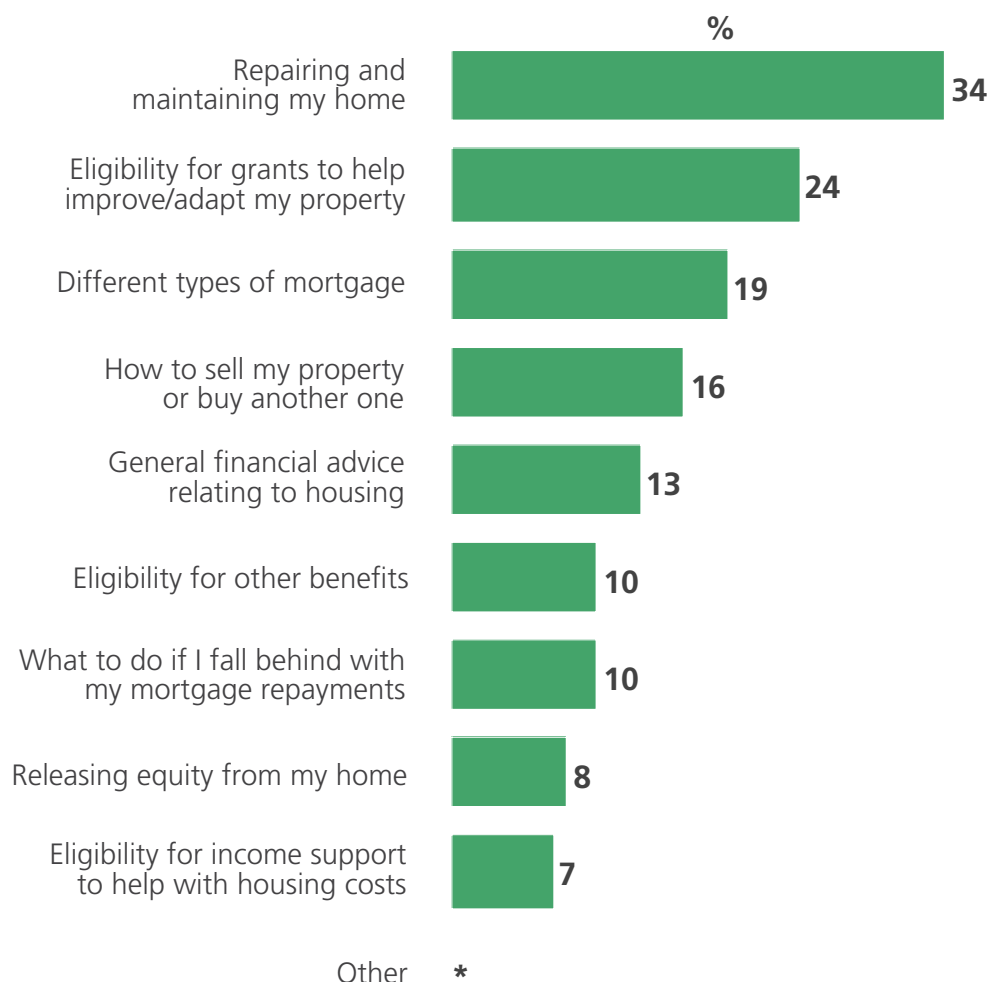
8.3.3. Owners

Over a third of all owners would find advice on maintaining and repairing their home to be useful and almost a quarter considered eligibility for grants to be a useful type of advice. General financial advice, particularly on the different types of mortgages were relatively lower priorities although a significant proportion of owners considered these to be useful types of advice.

The support for advice on benefits as well as equity release was much lower among owners, with one out of ten or less indicating they would find this type of advice useful.

Figure 8.8 Useful types of housing advice for owners

Which if any of these types of housing advice would you find useful?

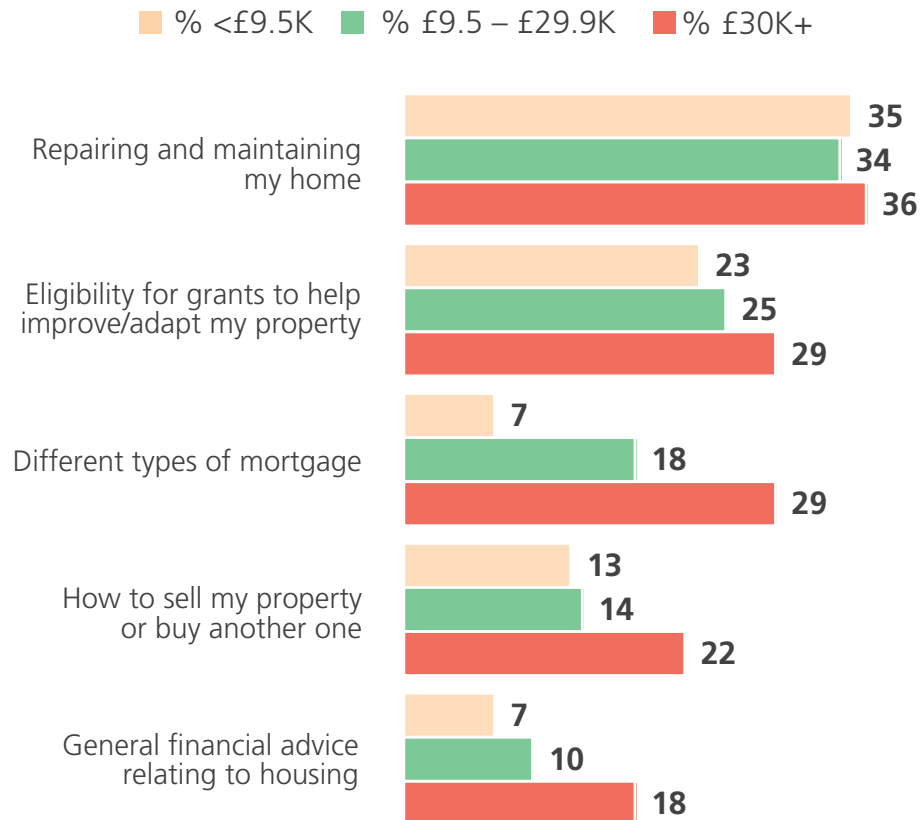


Base: 2,281 (Respondents are general public in owner-occupied housing questioned in-home in England between July 24 – July 31 2008 and August 14 – August 21 2008).
Source: Ipsos MORI

Advice on repairs and maintenance and eligibility for grants were consistently viewed as useful, regardless of the income levels of owners. The most noticeable difference in response was that owners with higher incomes were more likely than lower income owners to consider general financial advice, particularly on the different types of mortgage, together with advice on selling and buying a property to be useful. For those on the lowest incomes, advice on mortgages and financial advice in general were lower priorities.

Figure 8.9 Useful types of housing advice for owners by income

Which if any of these types of housing advice would you find useful?
Top five mentions



Base: 2,281 (Respondents are general public in owner-occupied housing questioned in-home in England between July 24- July 31 2008 and August 14 – August 21 2008).
Source: Ipsos MORI

Appendix 1

Statistical Reliability

The sample tolerances that apply to the percentage results in this report are given in the table below. This table shows the possible variation that might be anticipated because a sample, rather than the entire population, was interviewed. As indicated, sampling tolerances vary with the size of the sample and the size of the percentage results.

Approximate sampling tolerances applicable to percentages at or near these levels			
Size of sample on which survey result is based	10% or 90%	30% or 70%	50%
1,100	2	3	3
750	2	3	4
500	3	4	4
400	3	5	5
300	3	5	6
200	4	6	7
100	6	9	10
50	8	13	14

Source: Ipsos MORI

For example, on a question where 50 per cent of the people in a weighted sample of 1,100 respond with a particular answer, the chances are 95 in 100 that this result would not vary more than 3 percentage points, plus or minus, from a complete coverage of the entire population using the same procedures.

Tolerances are also involved in the **comparison of results** from different parts of the sample. A difference, in other words, must be of at least a certain size to be considered statistically significant. The following table is a guide to the sampling tolerances applicable to comparisons.

Differences required for significance at or near these percentages			
Size of sample on which survey result is based	10% or 90%	30% or 70%	50%
500 and 500	4	6	6
250 and 250	5	8	9
200 and 200	6	9	10
150 and 150	7	10	11
100 and 100	8	13	14
50 and 50	12	18	20

Source: Ipsos MORI

Caution should be exercised when comparing small sub-groups to ensure that the findings are statistically significant.

Appendix 2

Topline Results

HOUSEHOLD HISTORY

Q1.	For how many years have you personally lived in this house/flat?	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All valid responses</i>		(3,344)	(1,650)	(1,694)
Less than 1 year		–	–	–
1–5 years		31	29	33
6–15 years		28	28	27
16–24 years		14	14	14
25+ years		19	19	18
No answer		7	7	6
Don't know		1	1	2

Q2.	Is this property owned or rented in you or your partner's name, or is it in someone else's name?	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All valid responses</i>		(3,344)	(1,650)	(1,694)
Respondent		77	77	77
Partner		30	30	29
Someone else		17	16	18
Don't know		1	1	1

Q3. Thinking back to your childhood, which of these types of accommodation did you live in up to the age of 16? What other types?			
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All valid responses</i>	(3,344)	(1,650)	(1,694)
Local authority/council housing	29	30	28
Housing association housing	3	3	3
Private rented housing	17	18	16
Owner occupied housing	57	57	58
Shared ownership housing (part rent/ part buy)	*	*	—
Social care	1	*	1
Other	2	2	2
Don't know	1	1	1

Q4. And which of these were you living in for the longest time up to the age of 16?			
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All valid responses</i>	(3,344)	(1,650)	(1,694)
Local authority/council housing	26	26	26
Housing association housing	3	3	2
Private rented housing	14	12	16
Owner occupied housing	54	55	53
Shared ownership housing (part rent/ part buy)	*	*	*
Social care	1	1	*
Other	1	1	2
Don't know	1	2	1

Q5.	Now thinking about the time <i>since</i> you were 16, which, if any, of these types of accommodation have you ever lived in, including your current home? What other types?		
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All valid responses</i>	(3,344)	(1,650)	(1,694)
Local authority/council housing	30	28	29
Housing association housing	9	7	9
Private rented housing	43	43	39
Owner occupied housing	81	74	75
Shared ownership housing (part rent/ part buy)	2	2	2
Social care	1	*	1
Other	2	2	2
Don't know	1	1	1

Q6.	And which of these types of accommodation have you spent most time in since you were 16?		
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All valid responses</i>	(3,344)	(1,650)	(1,694)
Local authority/council housing	16	15	16
Housing association housing	4	4	3
Private rented housing	13	14	13
Owner occupied housing	65	65	65
Shared ownership housing (part rent/ part buy)	1	1	1
Social care	*	*	*
Other	1	1	1
Don't know	1	2	1

Q7.	Some people qualify for housing benefit or local housing allowance, either as a rent rebate or as an allowance. Do you or other members of your current household receive any housing benefit or local housing allowance?		
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All valid responses</i>	(3,344)	(1,650)	(1,694)
Yes	12	11	13
No	85	86	84
Don't know	3	3	3

Q8a.	Which, if any, of these types of housing advice would you find useful? Which others?		
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents who are owner occupier</i>	(2,281)	(1,148)	(1,133)
Repairing and maintaining my home	34	30	38
Different types of mortgage	19	19	20
What to do if I fall behind with my mortgage payments	10	7	12
Releasing equity from my home	8	7	9
General financial advice relating to housing	13	10	15
How to sell my property or buy another one	16	15	17
Eligibility for income support to help with housing costs	7	7	8
Eligibility for grants to help improve/ adapt my property	24	21	28
Eligibility for other benefits	10	8	12
Other	*	*	*
No answer	32	34	29
Don't know	6	7	6

Q8b.	Which, if any, of these types of housing advice would you find useful? Which others?		
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All valid responses</i>	(680)	(314)	(366)
How to move to another home in the social rented sector	18	14	21
How to find a home in the private rented sector	8	5	11
Shared ownership and other low cost home ownership/key worker schemes	7	4	10
Right to Buy	20	16	24
General financial advice relating to housing/saving for a deposit to buy a property	12	6	18
What to do if my circumstances change (e.g. need a bigger home or move to a new area)	18	16	20
Dealing with my landlord about rent	9	6	12
Dealing with my landlord about repairs	17	15	19
How to complain to my landlord	9	8	11
Eligibility for housing benefit/local housing allowance and how to apply	15	10	18
Eligibility for other benefits	19	16	22
Dealing with housing benefit/local housing allowance problems	17	15	18
How working will affect my entitlement to housing benefit/local housing allowance	15	14	16
Other	–	–	–
No answer	24	26	23
Don't know	9	11	7

Q8c.	Which, if any, of these types of housing advice would you find useful? Which others?	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All valid responses</i>		(356)	(177)	(179)
General advice on my tenancy		27	24	29
How to apply for a council or housing association home		19	16	22
Shared ownership and other low cost home ownership/key worker schemes		13	10	16
What to do if I fall behind with my rent		14	11	17
General financial advice relating to housing/saving for a deposit to buy a property		23	15	29
Dealing with my landlord about rent		16	10	23
Dealing with my landlord about repairs		26	25	26
How to complain to my landlord		14	10	18
Eligibility for housing benefit/local housing allowance and how to apply		18	14	21
Eligibility for other benefits		17	11	22
Dealing with housing benefit/local housing allowance problems		11	8	14
How working will affect my entitlement to housing benefit/local housing allowance		16	9	23
Other		–	–	–
No answer		23	28	18
Don't know		5	5	6

Q9.	If you needed advice about housing, which, if any, of these would you be most likely to use? Which others?		
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents</i>	(3,344)	(1,650)	(1,694)
My local council	26	25	28
Local housing office	15	12	18
Housing association	9	8	11
Independent housing advice service	8	7	8
Citizens' Advice Bureau (CAB)	22	21	23
Estate agent	22	21	24
Solicitor	15	17	14
Employer	1	1	2
Friends/family/other personal contacts	34	34	34
Internet	27	23	–
Other	*	*	*
No answer	5	6	4
Don't know	5	6	5

Q10. If there was a new service available locally providing you with advice about your future housing options, how likely or unlikely would you be to use the service?			
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents</i>	(3,344)	(1,650)	(1,694)
Certain to	7	6	7
Very likely	17	16	18
Fairly likely	25	24	25
Not very likely	21	23	20
Not at all likely	15	14	16
Certain not to	8	10	7
Don't know	7	7	6
Likely	49	46	51
Not likely	45	46	43

Q11. Are you or your partner currently on a social housing register or waiting list?			
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All valid responses</i>	(2,664)	(1,336)	(1,328)
Yes – on social housing register/ waiting list	3	3	3
No – not on social housing register/ waiting list	94	93	95
Don't know	3	3	2

Q12.	Approximately how long have you or your partner been on the housing register or waiting list?		
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents on housing register or waiting list</i>	(80)	(41)	(39)
Less than 3 months	12	15	9
3 months but less than 6 months	9	7	10
6 months but less than 1 year	14	3	26
1 year but less than 2 years	19	27	10
2 years but less than 3 years	8	8	8
3 years but less than 5 years	14	20	7
5 years but less than 10 years	17	16	18
More than 10 years	6	3	10
Don't know/can't remember	1	–	3
Less than 1 year	35	26	45
1–10 years	58	71	42

Q13.	How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the information provided about how long you have to wait to be housed?		
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents on housing register or waiting list</i>	(80)	(41)	(39)
Very satisfied	7	9	5
Fairly satisfied	20	17	23
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	8	10	7
Fairly dissatisfied	29	31	28
Very dissatisfied	36	34	38
Don't know	–	–	–
Satisfied	26	25	28
Dissatisfied	65	65	66
Net satisfaction	–39	–40	–38

Q14.	What are your main reasons for not registering on a social housing register or waiting list? What other reasons?		
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents in private rented or owner occupied accommodation who are not on a housing register or waiting list.</i>	(2,584)	(1,295)	(1,289)
Happy where I am	43	40	46
Own my own home	64	65	64
Am planning to buy a home instead at some point	1	1	2
Don't like/want council housing or housing association accommodation	2	2	1
Don't think I'm eligible	6	6	5
Was told not to bother/would not get a dwelling	*	*	*
Don't know how to apply/register	1	1	1
Waiting list too long	1	1	1
Not likely to get what I want	1	1	1
Have applied before and not worth it	*	1	*
Just haven't got round to it	2	2	2
Other	1	1	2
Don't know	1	1	1
No answer	2	2	1

I am now going to ask you about your views on social housing, by which I mean accommodation that is rented from either a council or a housing association. We are interested in your opinions even if you feel you don't know very much about it. Please answer these questions bearing in mind that in some parts of the country, there is not enough social housing for everybody who wants it.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

Q15a.	The way social housing is allocated to people is generally fair?		
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents</i>	<i>(3,344)</i>	<i>(1,650)</i>	<i>(1,694)</i>
Strongly agree	2	2	2
Tend to agree	21	20	22
Neither agree nor disagree	23	23	23
Tend to disagree	19	18	20
Strongly disagree	13	15	11
Don't know	22	22	21
Agree	23	22	24
Disagree	32	33	32
Net agree	–9	–10	–8

Q15b. More low income working households should be allocated social housing rather than always allocating to very vulnerable groups, like homeless people and others in the greatest need?			
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents</i>	(3,344)	(1,650)	(1,694)
Strongly agree	12	13	11
Tend to agree	36	36	37
Neither agree nor disagree	25	25	26
Tend to disagree	17	16	17
Strongly disagree	3	3	3
Don't know	7	7	7
Agree	48	49	47
Disagree	19	19	20
Net agree	+29	+30	+27

Q15c. People with significant savings – for example over £20,000 – should not be entitled to social housing?			
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents</i>	(3,344)	(1,650)	(1,694)
Strongly agree	11	12	11
Tend to agree	29	28	31
Neither agree nor disagree	19	20	19
Tend to disagree	25	24	26
Strongly disagree	9	12	7
Don't know	5	5	6
Agree	41	40	42
Disagree	35	36	34
Net agree	+6	+4	+8

Q15d.	People who have lived in an area for a long time should be given more priority for social housing in that area, even if others are living in worse circumstances?		
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents</i>	<i>(3,344)</i>	<i>(1,650)</i>	<i>(1,694)</i>
Strongly agree	14	14	13
Tend to agree	34	32	36
Neither agree nor disagree	18	18	17
Tend to disagree	24	24	24
Strongly disagree	6	7	5
Don't know	5	4	5
Agree	48	47	49
Disagree	30	31	29
Net agree	+18	+16	+20

Q15e.	Social housing tenants should be able to remain in their home as long as they want even if they now earn enough that they could afford to rent privately or buy their own home?		
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents</i>	<i>(3,344)</i>	<i>(1,650)</i>	<i>(1,694)</i>
Strongly agree	11	12	10
Tend to agree	30	29	32
Neither agree nor disagree	17	17	16
Tend to disagree	26	26	26
Strongly disagree	11	11	11
Don't know	5	5	6
Agree	41	41	42
Disagree	37	37	36
Net agree	+5	+4	+6

Q15f.	Adult children living with their parents in social housing should be entitled to inherit the tenancy when their parents die?		
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents</i>	(3,344)	(1,650)	(1,694)
Strongly agree	20	22	19
Tend to agree	36	35	38
Neither agree nor disagree	13	13	14
Tend to disagree	17	18	16
Strongly disagree	8	8	8
Don't know	4	4	5
Agree	57	56	57
Disagree	25	27	24
Net agree	+31	+30	+33

Q15g.	People who are living in social housing that's larger than they need should be required to move to a smaller property?		
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents</i>	(3,344)	(1,650)	(1,694)
Strongly agree	18	18	19
Tend to agree	42	42	43
Neither agree nor disagree	16	17	15
Tend to disagree	15	15	15
Strongly disagree	5	6	4
Don't know	4	3	4
Agree	60	60	61
Disagree	20	20	20
Net agree	+41	+40	+41

Q15h.	Once someone is given a social housing property, their need to carry on living there should be reviewed on a regular basis?		
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents</i>	<i>(3,344)</i>	<i>(1,650)</i>	<i>(1,694)</i>
Strongly agree	18	17	19
Tend to agree	48	49	47
Neither agree nor disagree	14	14	15
Tend to disagree	11	10	12
Strongly disagree	5	6	4
Don't know	4	4	4
Agree	66	66	66
Disagree	16	16	16
Net agree	+50	+50	+50

Q15i.	People should expect to wait at least 18 months before being allocated social housing?		
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents</i>	<i>(3,344)</i>	<i>(1,650)</i>	<i>(1,694)</i>
Strongly agree	4	5	4
Tend to agree	16	16	17
Neither agree nor disagree	19	19	19
Tend to disagree	35	35	35
Strongly disagree	20	20	19
Don't know	6	5	7
Agree	21	20	21
Disagree	54	55	54
Net agree	−34	−35	−33

Q16. How much, if anything, do you feel you know about how council and housing association homes are allocated to people? Do you...			
	Combined %	July %	August %
Base: All respondents	(3,344)	(1,650)	(1,694)
Know a lot	8	7	8
Know a little	48	49	48
Know nothing	41	41	41
Don't know	3	3	4

SOCIAL RENTERS

Q17.	Which, if any, of these were your main reasons for moving into social housing? Which others?	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents who social rent</i>		(680)	(314)	(366)
It was an emergency/crisis e.g. a relationship breakdown		17	16	17
I was in mortgage arrears/my property was repossessed		3	4	3
I was in rent arrears		2	2	1
I was living with my parents/friends and waiting for a social rented property		15	16	15
I needed to move somewhere where I would get more support alongside my housing		7	4	10
It was all I could afford at the time		29	31	27
I needed to move to cheaper accommodation		10	9	10
I wanted to move to a new area		9	10	9
It was easily available at the time		9	11	8
My family have always lived in social housing		16	15	–
Most of my friends are social rented tenants		2	1	–
Moved in with my partner who already had a social rented property		6	6	–
Other		4	3	5
No answer		6	6	7
Don't know		3	3	4

Q18. And how long is it since you first became a social rented tenant, by which I mean having a tenancy in your own name or jointly?			
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents who social rent</i>	(680)	(314)	(366)
Less than 1 year	–	–	–
1–5 years	24	22	25
6–15 years	28	27	28
16–24 years	10	11	10
25+ years	19	21	18
No answer	8	10	6
Don't know	11	10	13

Q19. And before you first moved into social rented housing, approximately how long were you on a housing register or waiting list yourself?			
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents who social rent</i>	(680)	(314)	(366)
Less than 3 months	14	15	13
3 months but less than 6 months	12	12	12
6 months but less than 1 year	13	13	12
1 year but less than 2 years	10	9	12
2 years but less than 3 years	7	7	8
3 years but less than 5 years	7	8	6
5 years but less than 10 years	4	5	4
More than 10 years	3	4	1
Was not on a waiting list	15	15	14
Don't know/can't remember	16	13	18

Q20.	What, if anything, do you consider to be the <i>best</i> things about living in council or housing association housing?	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents who social rent</i>		(680)	(314)	(366)
Security of tenure/a property that I can live in for as long as I want		21	22	20
Have right to buy		5	6	5
Reliable landlord		13	11	15
The type of properties available (flat/ house, etc.)		3	4	3
The condition of properties		7	6	8
Location		8	9	7
Type of neighbourhood		6	4	8
Being near friends/family		4	3	4
Sense of community		2	3	2
Community facilities		2	3	2
Low/affordable rents		29	27	31
No pressure/worry about paying mortgage		8	11	6
Get repairs done for you/less responsibility for upkeep		38	40	37
Provision of other services on estates		2	1	3
More freedom to do what I want with the property (e.g. decorations/ alterations)		2	1	2
Being able to get involved in decisions about my home		1	1	1
Other		2	3	1
No answer		10	11	8
Don't know		7	5	8

Q21. And what, if anything, do you consider to be the <i>worst</i> things about living in council or housing association housing? Anything else			
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents who social rent</i>	(680)	(314)	(366)
Don't get choice of property/location	11	7	14
Don't like the type of property – e.g. no garden, etc	4	4	5
Properties are in poor condition	8	10	6
Properties are too small	7	8	6
Problems with neighbours	11	12	10
Problems with drugs in the neighbourhood	6	6	5
Other anti-social behaviour problems on estates	15	11	18
Stigmatisation, e.g. difficult to get a job because of postcode	3	4	3
Problems getting repairs done	17	22	14
Not being able to get involved in decisions about my home	6	5	–
Difficult to move to other types of property when needs change	3	4	–
Not owning my own home/lack of security for the future	6	5	–
Renting is dead money	5	4	–
Other	2	2	1
No answer	26	26	25
Don't know	7	7	7

Q22.	What, if anything, do you consider to be the <i>advantages</i> of renting from a private landlord rather than the council or a housing association?	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents who social rent</i>		(680)	(314)	(366)
Better choice of properties available (house/flat, etc.)		14	12	17
Properties more easily available		6	5	7
Properties are in good condition		6	5	6
Flexible tenancy arrangements		4	2	6
Choice of location		12	13	11
Get repairs done/less responsibility for upkeep		9	9	9
No social stigma		3	4	2
Other (please specify)		1	1	2
Nothing		36	40	33
Don't know		24	24	25

Q23. And what, if anything, do you consider to be the <i>disadvantages</i> of renting from a private landlord rather than the council or a housing association? What else?			
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents who social rent</i>	(680)	(314)	(366)
Higher rents	41	40	42
Renting is dead money	7	6	8
Having to pay a deposit	9	10	8
Cannot afford to live by myself	4	3	4
Poor quality of properties	9	8	11
Restrictions around the length of time I can stay in the property/lack of security	10	10	10
Lack of rights	12	13	12
Concerns that the landlord might evict me from the property	14	15	14
Problems with landlord	12	15	10
Problems with letting agents	3	3	3
Finding a landlord that will house me (eg –one that will take children, pets, housing benefit, etc)	3	4	2
Other (please specify)	2	2	2
Nothing	10	12	8
Don't know	22	23	20

Q24.	What, if anything, do you consider to be the <i>advantages</i> of owning or part-owning a home of your own? What else?		
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents who social rent</i>	(680)	(314)	(366)
Good investment	28	27	31
Something to pass on to children/future generations	17	18	15
It's my own place	35	34	37
Security/no-one can throw me out	12	10	14
More choice of properties available	6	6	4
More freedom to do what I want with the property (e.g. decorations/alterations)	13	12	11
Other (please specify)	–	–	–

Q25.	What, if anything, do you consider to be the <i>disadvantages</i> of owning or part-owning a home of your own? What else?		
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents who social rent</i>	(680)	(314)	(366)
Too much financial responsibility/risk	33	31	36
Couldn't afford home I want/need	11	13	10
Worry about losing job	10	12	8
Too expensive/couldn't afford it	24	20	26
Lack of flexibility/difficult to move when I need to	3	1	4
Too difficult to arrange mortgage	9	10	8
Have to do own repairs and maintenance	23	24	22
Other (please specify)	1	1	1
Nothing	9	10	9
Don't know	18	19	17

Q26.	And taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with being a council/housing association tenant?		
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents who social rent</i>	(680)	(314)	(366)
Very satisfied	35	36	35
Fairly satisfied	46	44	48
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	9	10	8
Fairly dissatisfied	4	4	4
Very dissatisfied	4	3	4
Don't know	2	2	2
Satisfied	82	81	83
Dissatisfied	8	8	8
Net satisfaction	+74	+73	+75

Q27a.	To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements that having a lower rent by living in social housing has helped you... <i>to become more financially independent</i>		
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents who social rent</i>	(680)	(314)	(366)
Strongly agree	10	9	10
Tend to agree	32	32	32
Neither agree nor disagree	24	21	26
Tend to disagree	15	16	14
Strongly disagree	12	15	10
Don't know	7	7	8
Agree	42	41	42
Disagree	27	31	24
Net agree	+14	+10	+18

Q27b.	To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements that having a lower rent by living in social housing has helped you... <i>to take up work or training</i>		
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents who social rent</i>	(680)	(314)	(366)
Strongly agree	8	8	7
Tend to agree	19	18	20
Neither agree nor disagree	30	27	33
Tend to disagree	17	17	17
Strongly disagree	17	21	14
Don't know	9	9	9
Agree	27	26	27
Disagree	34	38	30
Net agree	-7	-11	-3

Q27c.	To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements that having a lower rent by living in social housing has helped you... <i>save up a deposit to help buy a home in the future</i>		
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents who social rent</i>	(680)	(314)	(366)
Strongly agree	3	2	4
Tend to agree	17	19	15
Neither agree nor disagree	21	18	24
Tend to disagree	23	20	26
Strongly disagree	26	32	21
Don't know	9	9	9
Agree	20	21	19
Disagree	49	52	47
Net agree	-29	-31	-28

Q28.	How helpful, if at all, would you find it if your housing officer was able to provide information on where to go for advice or support to find work or suitable training for work?		
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents who social rent</i>	(680)	(314)	(366)
Very helpful	18	16	20
Fairly helpful	29	26	31
Not very helpful	11	13	10
Not at all helpful	9	9	9
Not applicable	24	25	22
Don't know	10	11	8
Helpful	47	42	51
Not helpful	20	22	19

PRIVATE TENANTS

Q29.	How long is it since you first became a private tenant?		
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents who private rent</i>	(356)	(177)	(179)
Less than 1 year	–	–	–
1–5 years	47	43	51
6–15 years	24	27	22
16–24 years	4	5	4
25+ years	6	5	8
No answer	12	14	10
Don't know	6	7	6

Q30. And did you receive housing benefit or local housing allowance when you first became a private tenant?

	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents who private rent</i>	(356)	(177)	(179)
Yes – received housing benefit or local housing allowance	15	16	14
No – did <i>not</i> receive housing benefit or local housing allowance	78	80	76
Don't know/can't remember	7	5	10

Q31. Did you get your current home through an estate/letting agent or was it direct from the landlord?

	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents who private rent</i>	(356)	(177)	(179)
Estate/letting agent	40	43	37
Direct from landlord	51	50	51
Other	3	3	3
Don't know	7	4	9

Q32. If you had a problem with your accommodation, would you contact the estate/letting agent or the landlord first?

	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents who private rent, who let through an agent only</i>	(135)	(74)	(61)
Estate/letting agent	73	73	73
Landlord	22	22	22
Depends on the problem	4	5	3
Other	–	–	–
Don't know	1	–	1

Q33. What, if anything, do you consider to be the <i>best</i> things about living in private rented accommodation? What else?			
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents who private rent</i>	(356)	(177)	(179)
Choice of location	36	38	36
Better choice of properties available (house/flat, etc.)	13	12	14
Flexible tenancy arrangements	20	22	19
Properties more easily available	15	18	13
Properties are in good condition	12	11	13
Get repairs done/less responsibility for upkeep	24	27	21
No social stigma	1	1	1
Other (please specify)	4	4	4
No answer	9	11	8
Don't know	11	10	12

Q34.	And what, if anything, do you consider to be the <i>worst</i> things about living in private rented accommodation? What else?	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents who private rent</i>		(356)	(177)	(179)
Higher rents		29	31	27
Renting is dead money		18	18	17
Cannot afford to live by myself		4	6	2
Having to pay a deposit		12	14	10
Poor quality of properties		5	7	3
Restrictions around the length of time I can stay in the property/lack of security		10	11	9
Concerns that the landlord might evict me from the property		9	7	10
Problems with landlord		11	9	13
Problems with letting agents		4	4	4
Lack of rights		10	13	7
Finding a landlord that will house me (e.g. one that will take children, pets, housing benefit, etc)		2	2	2
Other		5	7	3
No answer		13	14	13
Don't know		13	11	15

Q35. What do you consider to be the <i>advantages</i> of renting from the council or a housing association rather than a private landlord? What else?			
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents who private rent</i>	(356)	(177)	(179)
Security of tenure/a property that I can live in for as long as I want	18	19	17
The type of properties available (flat/ house, etc.)	4	5	3
The condition of properties	4	5	4
Location	7	9	4
Being near friends/family	2	2	2
Type of neighbourhood	3	4	2
Sense of community	3	4	2
Provision of other services on estates	2	2	1
Community facilities	2	2	1
Low/affordable rents	30	30	30
Get repairs done for you/less responsibility for upkeep	13	14	11
More freedom to do what I want with the property (e.g. decorations/ alterations)	6	5	6
Being able to get involved in decisions about my home	1	–	3
Reliable landlord	7	9	6
Have right to buy	3	2	3
Other	1	1	2
No answer	14	11	16
Don't know	22	21	23

Q36.	And what are the <i>disadvantages</i> of renting from the council or a housing association rather than a private landlord? What else?		
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents who private rent</i>	(356)	(177)	(179)
Not owning my own home/lack of security for the future	8	6	11
Don't get choice of property/location	19	21	17
Don't like the type of property – e.g. no garden, etc	5	6	4
Properties are in poor condition	11	10	12
Properties are too small	3	5	2
Problems getting repairs done	5	6	4
Problems with neighbours	10	10	9
Problems with drugs in the neighbourhood	4	4	5
Other anti-social behaviour problems on estates	12	11	12
Stigmatisation, e.g. difficult to get a job because of postcode	3	2	3
Difficult to move to other types of property when needs change	4	4	4
Not being able to get involved in decisions about my home	4	7	1
Other	3	2	3
No answer	18	17	19
Don't know	29	29	29

Q37.	What, if anything, do you consider to be the <i>advantages</i> of owning or part-owning a home of your own? What else?		
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents who private rent</i>	(356)	(177)	(179)
Good investment	39	34	43
Something to pass on to children/future generations	15	12	18
It's my own place	48	45	52
Security/no-one can throw me out	17	18	16
More choice of properties available	7	7	7
More freedom to do what I want with the property (e.g. decorations/alterations)	20	23	18
Other	*	1	–
No answer	5	5	5
Don't know	16	18	15

Q38.	And what do you consider to be the <i>disadvantages</i> of owning or part-owning a home of your own? What else?		
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents who private rent</i>	(356)	(177)	(179)
Too much financial responsibility/risk	36	36	36
Couldn't afford home I want/need	16	19	12
Lack of flexibility/difficult to move when I need to	5	5	4
Worry about losing job	8	9	7
Too difficult to arrange mortgage	12	10	14
Have to do own repairs and maintenance	18	19	16
Too expensive/couldn't afford it	16	14	18
Other	1	–	2
No answer	9	8	10
Don't know	17	21	14

Q39. And taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with being a private tenant?			
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents who private rent</i>	(356)	(177)	(179)
Very satisfied	27	30	24
Fairly satisfied	47	46	49
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	12	12	12
Fairly dissatisfied	7	5	9
Very dissatisfied	3	5	2
Don't know	4	3	4
Satisfied	74	75	73
Dissatisfied	10	9	11
Net satisfaction	+64	+66	+61

Q40. And how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the services offered by your landlord?			
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents who private rent</i>	(356)	(177)	(179)
Very satisfied	26	24	28
Fairly satisfied	43	44	43
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	14	14	15
Fairly dissatisfied	7	8	7
Very dissatisfied	5	6	4
Don't know	4	5	4
Satisfied	69	68	71
Dissatisfied	12	13	11
Net satisfaction	+57	+54	+60

Q41. And how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the services offered by your estate/letting agent?			
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents who private rent, who let through an agent only</i>	(135)	(74)	(61)
Very satisfied	24	20	28
Fairly satisfied	44	50	38
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	17	17	18
Fairly dissatisfied	7	5	9
Very dissatisfied	5	5	4
Don't know	3	3	3
Satisfied	68	70	66
Dissatisfied	11	10	13
Net satisfaction	+57	+60	+53

Q42. If it was easy to get a property with the council or a housing association, would you want to at the present time?			
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents who private rent</i>	(356)	(177)	(179)
Yes	35	40	30
No	51	48	53
Don't know	14	12	17

OWNER OCCUPIERS

Q43. How long is it since you first became an owner occupier, that is in your own or your partner's name?

	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents who owner occupy</i>	(2,281)	(1,148)	(1,133)
Less than 1 year	–	–	–
1–5 years	10	10	11
6–15 years	18	17	19
16–24 years	19	19	18
25+ years	41	41	40
No answer	4	4	4
Don't know	9	9	9

Q44. And taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with being an owner occupier?

	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents who owner occupy</i>	(2,281)	(1,148)	(1,133)
Very satisfied	68	68	69
Fairly satisfied	22	23	22
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	4	3	4
Fairly dissatisfied	1	1	1
Very dissatisfied	–	–	–
Don't know	4	5	4
Satisfied	91	90	91
Dissatisfied	1	1	1
Net satisfaction	+89	+89	+90

ALL TENURES

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

Q45a. All social tenants should pay the same rent for the same type of property regardless of their income

	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents</i>	<i>(3,344)</i>	<i>(1,650)</i>	<i>(1,694)</i>
Strongly agree	10	10	9
Tend to agree	29	29	29
Neither agree nor disagree	17	17	17
Tend to disagree	32	31	34
Strongly disagree	7	8	5
Don't know	5	5	5
Agree	39	39	38
Disagree	39	39	39
Net agree	–	–	–1

Q45b. People in social housing who abuse the conditions of their tenancy, for example by subletting their property, should not be allowed to stay in their homes.

	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents</i>	<i>(3,344)</i>	<i>(1,650)</i>	<i>(1,694)</i>
Strongly agree	47	49	45
Tend to agree	34	32	36
Neither agree nor disagree	10	10	10
Tend to disagree	4	4	5
Strongly disagree	1	1	1
Don't know	4	4	4
Agree	81	81	81
Disagree	5	5	5
Net agree	+76	+77	+76

Q45c. Social housing tenants who are out of work should be required to take up help and advice from their landlord on how to find work as a condition of their tenancy			
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents</i>	<i>(3,344)</i>	<i>(1,650)</i>	<i>(1,694)</i>
Strongly agree	20	22	15
Tend to agree	38	35	41
Neither agree nor disagree	16	16	15
Tend to disagree	13	14	13
Strongly disagree	7	8	6
Don't know	6	6	5
Agree	59	57	60
Disagree	20	22	19
Net agree	+38	+35	+41

Q45d. Social housing tenants should be offered more financial help to buy a home of their own			
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents</i>	<i>(3,344)</i>	<i>(1,650)</i>	<i>(1,694)</i>
Strongly agree	8	8	7
Tend to agree	34	35	33
Neither agree nor disagree	20	20	21
Tend to disagree	23	22	24
Strongly disagree	10	10	9
Don't know	6	6	6
Agree	41	42	40
Disagree	33	32	33
Net agree	+9	+11	+7

Q45e. People in the private rented sector should be offered more financial help to buy a home of their own			
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents</i>	(3,344)	(1,650)	(1,694)
Strongly agree	7	8	6
Tend to agree	31	33	30
Neither agree nor disagree	22	20	23
Tend to disagree	24	22	26
Strongly disagree	9	10	8
Don't know	7	6	7
Agree	39	41	36
Disagree	33	32	34
Net agree	+5	+9	+2

Q45f. People with dependent children need more housing stability than people without			
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents</i>	(3,344)	(1,650)	(1,694)
Strongly agree	23	24	22
Tend to agree	50	50	51
Neither agree nor disagree	12	13	11
Tend to disagree	9	8	10
Strongly disagree	2	2	2
Don't know	3	3	3
Agree	74	74	73
Disagree	11	10	12
Net agree	+62	+64	+61

Q45g. Local councils and housing associations should be allowed to say who gets social housing in their area, even if it means different rules in different areas			
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents</i>	(3,344)	(1,650)	(1,694)
Strongly agree	10	9	10
Tend to agree	41	41	40
Neither agree nor disagree	19	19	19
Tend to disagree	17	16	18
Strongly disagree	7	7	6
Don't know	7	7	7
Agree	50	51	50
Disagree	24	24	24
Net agree	+27	+27	+26

Q45h. Having poorer and better off people living side by side helps to create better communities			
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents</i>	(3,344)	(1,650)	(1,694)
Strongly agree	9	9	9
Tend to agree	36	35	36
Neither agree nor disagree	22	23	21
Tend to disagree	19	17	21
Strongly disagree	8	9	8
Don't know	6	6	5
Agree	44	44	45
Disagree	28	27	29
Net agree	+17	+18	+16

Q45i. Social housing tenants who work and are on low incomes should have a low rent to make working worthwhile			
	Combined %	July %	August %
<i>Base: All respondents</i>	(3,344)	(1,650)	(1,694)
Strongly agree	17	19	16
Tend to agree	52	50	53
Neither agree nor disagree	14	15	13
Tend to disagree	10	9	10
Strongly disagree	2	2	2
Don't know	5	5	6
Agree	69	69	69
Disagree	12	11	12
Net agree	+57	+58	+56

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