



RentBetter

Wave 1 tenants survey analysis report

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1. Introduction and study methods

Research aims and design

1.1 Introduction

Rent Better is a three year research programme funded by the Nationwide Foundation on private renting in Scotland. The Foundation commissioned Indigo House to undertake this work between August 2019 and August 2022.

The purpose of the research is to understand the impacts of changes that have been made in the private rented sector in Scotland and to share lessons learned for the benefit of private tenants and landlords across the UK.

The focus of the research is around the changes to rights and responsibilities between tenants and landlords brought about through the Private Residential Tenancy introduced in Scotland in 2017.

1.2 Research design

The work involves three years of research, including large scale surveys of private tenants, landlords and letting agents, followed up by qualitative interviews. Wider stakeholders in the private, public and third sectors will also be interviewed.

It is expected that lessons learned on what is, and what is not working in the new tenancy regime will be of interest to Scottish stakeholders, but also to others across the UK.

The research design includes:

- 2019-2020 – Wave 1: quantitative and qualitative research with PRS tenants, landlords/agents and wider stakeholders plus secondary data analysis.
- 2020-2021 – Wave 2: qualitative research with tenants and landlords/agents plus secondary data analysis.
- 2021-2022 – Wave 3: quantitative and qualitative research with PRS tenants, landlords/agents, and wider stakeholders plus secondary data analysis.

The research involves two surveys of private rented tenants with tenants approached in Year 1 and Year 3 of the research. This is to allow a comparison of the experiences of private tenants in the early years following the introduction of the Private Renting Tenancy (PRT), which was introduced on 31st December 2017, and at a later stage once the policy and other relevant legislation have been in place for longer.

1.3 Main research questions

The tenants survey collected information from tenants about their experiences of living in private rented accommodation at present and in the recent past. This information collected from tenants informs the following key research questions:

- How has the experience of private renting in Scotland changed over time?
- What evidence is there that policy changes in private renting have had an impact?
- What use is being made of the new policy/legislation and with what outcomes?

The survey of private renting tenants was intended to provide insights into the breadth of tenant experiences in the PRS. Tenants' experiences and perceptions are also being examined in more depth in qualitative research, which will be reported separately in June 2020.

Survey method

1.4 Survey design

The survey was designed in consultation with the Advisory Group. A copy of the final tenant survey questionnaire is included in Annex 1, with details of the sample characteristics set out in Annex 2.

The survey was designed to explore a wide range of tenant experiences and perceptions, including awareness of current tenancy status, the new regulations and their experiences of different types of tenancy. The survey examined perceptions of security of tenure, experiences of landlord/letting agent conduct and the experience of rent increases, deposits and repairs. The survey also asked whether tenants had any cause for dispute and how they had dealt with that, or how confident they would be in dealing with a dispute, as well as awareness of the powers of the First Tier Tribunal (FTT). A key focus of the Nationwide Foundation's brief was also to explore the impact that the change in legislation has had on tenants on lower incomes and those in housing need.

1.5 Sampling approach

The survey data was collected using primarily a face-to-face survey method, with interviewers from IBP Strategy and Research achieving 980 interviews against a target of 1,000 surveys. Face-to-face surveys were supplemented with telephone surveys in rural and remote communities to allow the research to reach tenants in such areas where there was a lower density of private rented properties.

The starting point for the sample was a database of private rented tenants, which was intended to limit the amount of screening required to secure respondents who were in scope. This approach allowed the study team to access private tenants across a wide geographical area across Scotland more effectively and to identify areas that had a higher incidence of

private renting, where it was necessary to conduct interviews with households not on the database.

There were some considerable challenges with sample quality, which meant that a significant number of addresses on the database were not actually private rented properties. Where this was the case, interviewers were instructed to use a 'focused enumeration' approach, seeking interviews in areas adjacent to those addresses identified on the databases, with these being screened to ensure that the respondent was a private renter. Whilst students were "in scope" for the purposes of the survey, interviewers were instructed not to conduct interviews within purpose-built student accommodation, where the landlord would be either an educational institution or a commercial provider of such accommodation.

The achieved sample of 980 PRS tenants provides a sufficiently large sample to give confidence intervals of $\pm 3\%$, and allows disaggregated analysis, enabling a comparison between newer and longer-standing tenants, more and less deprived tenants and tenants in different types of location.

The survey was intended to provide two 'snap-shots' to look at a sample of tenants that represented the tenant body overall, rather than longitudinal surveys that followed the same tenants over time. This approach provided a representative sample of the tenant body as a whole at Wave 1 and Wave 3, rather than following a more limited cohort, to ensure that each sample consisted of private rented tenants. Tracking the same respondents over time would mean that some could have left the tenure by Wave 3. As the primary focus of the research was to look at the impact of the policy on private renters, it was decided that providing data on the whole tenant body is more useful.

The research was not intended to provide a strict 'pre- and post-' intervention design as it was commissioned after the policy interventions were already in place. However, the survey asks questions about past and current experiences to capture retrospective accounts.

A face-to-face survey method was adopted to limit bias as far as possible, since online and postal surveys, though potentially cheaper depending on response rate, suffer from considerable self-selection bias. Although the sampling frame of PRS tenants did not cover all possible addresses, analysis of the geography of the sample frame against the Scottish Household Survey (SHS) data suggested that the sample is broadly representative in terms of location and rurality, however households in more deprived locations were somewhat over-represented when compared to the SHS profile (see discussion below on differences).

A stratified sample was selected by location and gender, with sample clusters selected with probability proportionate to population to ensure that the resulting sample is representative of the range of household types resident within private renting. The sample was issued to interviewers to undertake the tenant survey interviews - visiting households within each sample cluster to achieve the target number of interviews within each geography. At each address, the survey respondent was the highest income householder or their spouse/partner, or any householder in the case of 'flat-shares'.

Annex 2 includes an analysis of the sample outcomes. Annex 3 includes a comparison of the PRS tenant profile from the SHS, comparing this to the Rent Better survey tenant profile. This shows that there are a number of areas where the characteristics of the Rent Better respondent sample differ from the SHS results – tending to poorer locations and couples and families more than single adult households. The profile of private tenants in the SHS has changed over recent years towards smaller households, with considerably fewer reporting being on Housing Benefit.

At this stage in the Census cycle reflecting on the SHS and DWP Housing Benefit data is the best comparison we have to the Rent Better survey. This suggests that, overall, the Rent Better survey has achieved a good mix of household types but fewer smaller households compared with the SHS sample and the sample has proportionately more poorer households in poorer areas. Given that looking at the experiences of poorer households in housing need was a key focus for the work, this is not a disadvantage, but the findings need to be interpreted in that context.

Limitations of the survey

1.6 The timing of the survey

The timing of the study, with surveys undertaken between December 2019 and mid-March 2020, meant that we were asking tenants about their experiences just over two years after the tenancy regime change (in December 2017). Inevitably, only those tenants moving within the last two years would be expected to have a new Private Rented Tenancy (PRT). Many continuing tenants ‘roll over’ their existing leases (whether Assured or Short Assured tenancies), so it may be a number of years before the majority of tenants lease their property through a PRT.

1.7 The context of the survey

The survey fieldwork ended shortly before the UK lock-down in response to the Covid-19 pandemic in late March 2020. The timing of the completion of the Wave 1 tenant survey fieldwork meant that none of the quantitative survey findings were impacted by the pandemic.

Tenants interviewed were broadly representative of private renters in early 2020, but some tenants interviewed may have subsequently experienced considerable economic hardship and loss due to the pandemic. The disruption due to the pandemic will inevitably impact on the private rented sector over the short and medium term. Thus, the design and analysis of Wave 3 quantitative survey needs to take account of how the tenant body in Wave 3 compares with that in Wave 1 (pre-pandemic) sample. For example, the tenant body in Wave 3 may still be recovering from the impact of social distancing on individual workplaces and the wider labour market, and some may still be repaying debts built up during the Covid-19 pandemic. The supply of private renting may also change as landlords and institutional investors make decisions about their portfolio of rented property, short-term and holiday lets

in a post-Covid-19 travel and tourism market. This will all require careful consideration as the research moves to Wave 2 and later Wave 3 over the next couple of years.

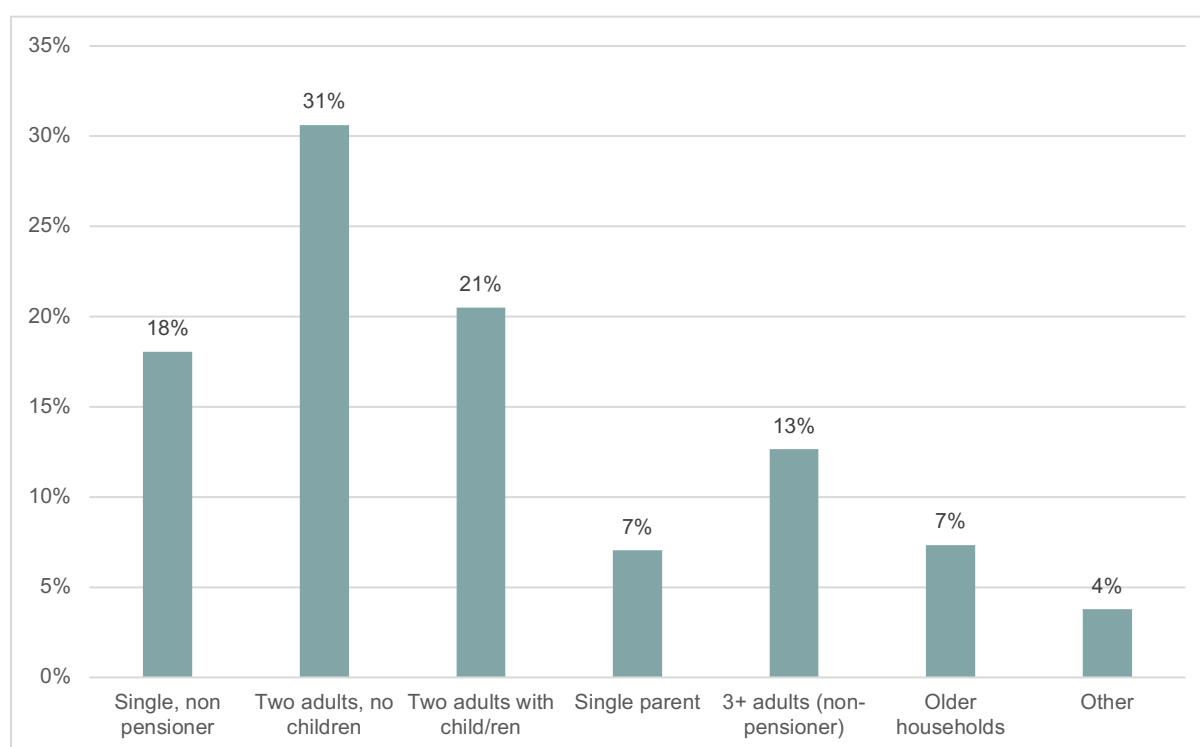
2. Who are private renters?

Household characteristics

2.1 Household type

Figure 1 shows the profile of the private renter households in the tenants survey, with the largest group (31%) being two adults with no children, followed by households containing two adults and at least one child aged under 16 years (21%). Around one in five households (18%) were single non-pensioners¹ while 13% were larger adult households of three or more people. Less than one in ten households (7%) were single parents (an adult and at least one child aged under 16 years) and the same proportion were older households, while 4% were other types of household.

Figure 1: Household type

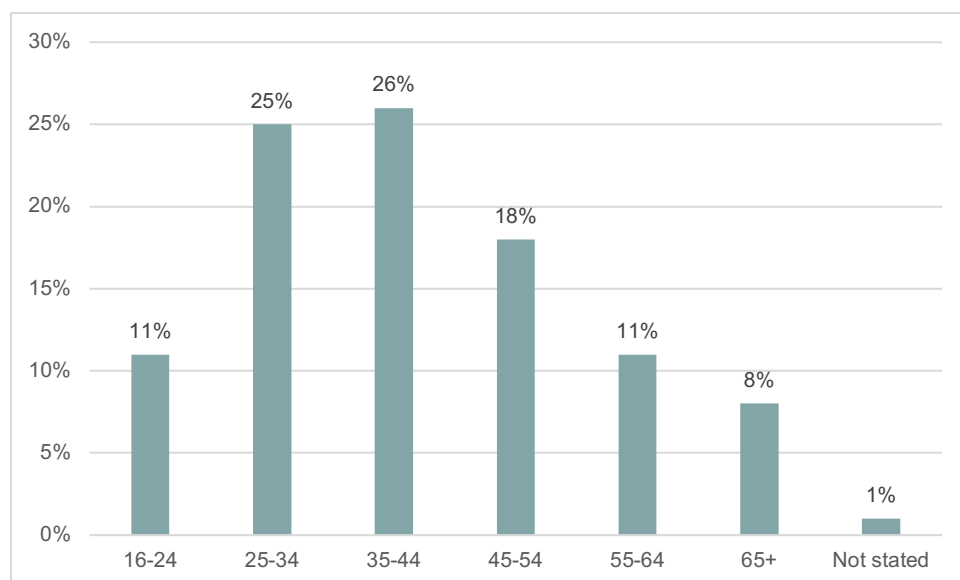


The majority of respondents – 70% – were adult-only households while 16% contained one child aged under 16 years, 11% contained two children and 3% contained three or more children. Three per cent of those interviewed lived in a household with a baby aged less than 12 months old.

¹ 'Pensioner' households were those households where the highest income householder economic activity was specified as 'retired'

Just over half of respondents were female - 53% and just under half were male (47%). The age profile of respondents, shown in Figure 2, was weighted towards the younger to middle-aged groups. Over 60% of households had a highest income householder (HIH) who was less than 45 years old, though just 11% were aged under 25 years old.

Figure 2: Banded age of Highest Income Householder



2.2 Working status

The majority of the respondents participating in the survey had a HIH that was working – 63% worked full time (30 hours or more per week) while 7% worked part-time. The largest group not in work were unemployed (9%) and retired (8%) followed by those in full time education (6%). Smaller proportions were looking after the home or family or something else (3% each).

Working status was very different among single parent households, with 29% of single parents working full time and 29% part-time, compared with 81% of HIHs in households with two adults and children working full-time and 8% part time.

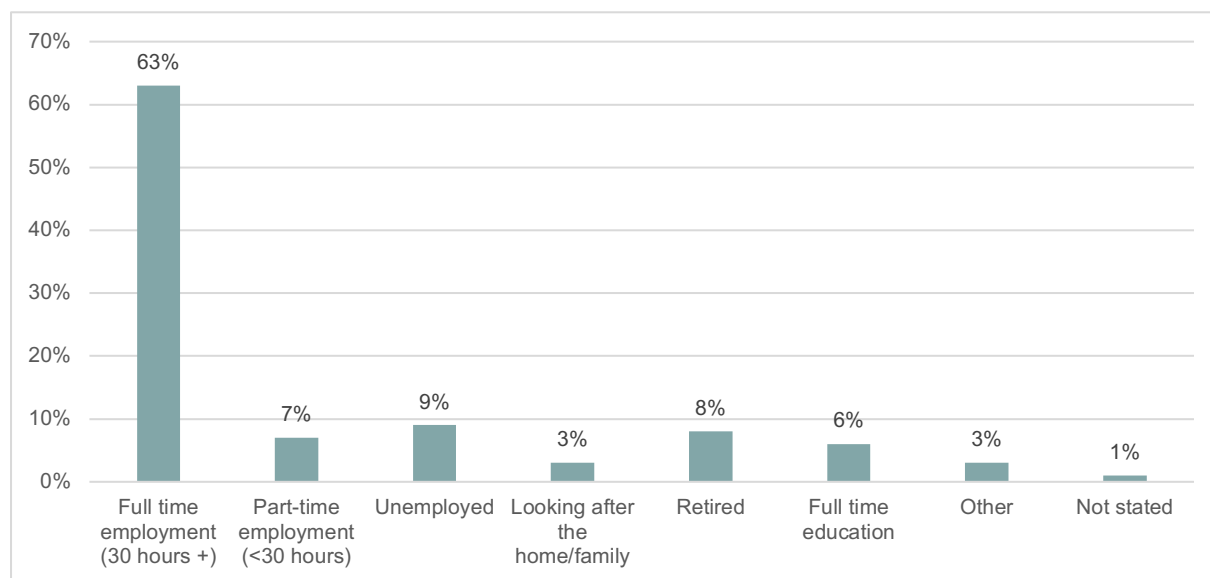
2.3 Ethnicity

Overall, 79% of respondents described themselves as 'White Scottish' with a further 8% 'Other White British' and 3% were 'White Polish' with 3% being 'Other White'. The respondents describing themselves as from a minority ethnic group were as follows:

- 1% from a mixed or multiple ethnic group
- 1% Pakistani, Pakistani Scottish or Pakistani British
- 1% Indian, Indian Scottish or Indian British
- 1% other Asian

- 1% African, African Scottish or African British
- The remaining 2% of respondents described themselves as Chinese, Chinese Scottish or Chinese British, Other African, Black, Black Scottish or Black British or from another ethnic group (each fewer than 1%).

Figure 3: Working Status of Highest Income Householder



2.4 Income level and deprivation

The median monthly income of households (who provided income data) was £1,800 overall, with a mean of £1,834.55. The mean income being higher than the median (the point at which 50% of incomers are above and 50% below) indicates that the average income is skewed by some high individual household incomes.

Incomes ranged from £200 a month to £4,500 a month (after tax). The cut-off point for the highest quartile of incomes was £2,500 after tax, for the second highest quartile of incomes (the median) it was £1,800 after tax and for the third highest quartile it was £1,000 after tax.

Table 1: Household income distribution (monthly, after tax)

		Monthly household income (after tax)
Mean		£1,834.55
Median		£1,800.00
Minimum		£200.00
Maximum		£4,500.00
Percentiles	25	£1,000.00
	50	£1,800.00
	75	£2,500.00
N	Valid	403
	Missing	577

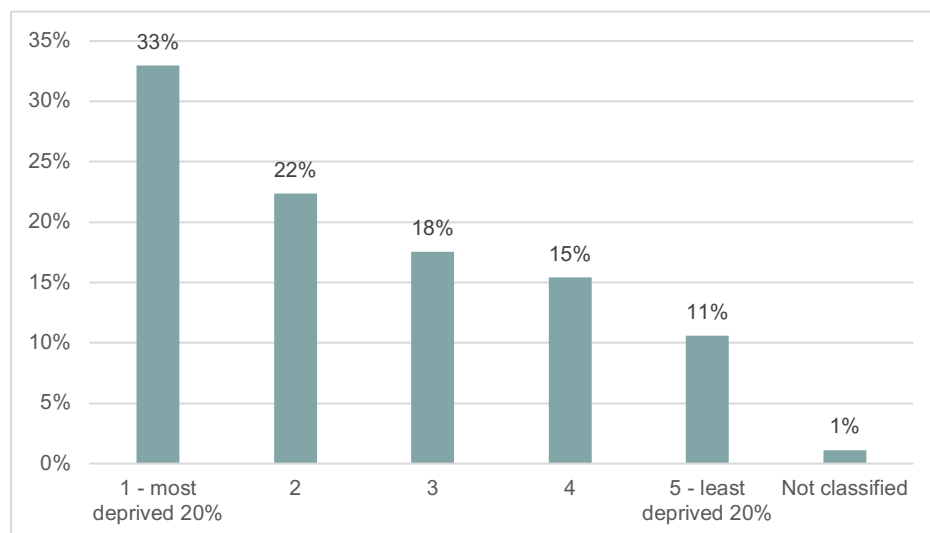
Median household incomes ranged from a low of £875 a month in Ayrshire, £1,400 in North Lanarkshire and £1,500 in South Lanarkshire to £2,000 a month in Glasgow, Lothians and Edinburgh, £2,100 in Dunbartonshire and £2,200 in Southern Scotland.

Figure 4: Median income by LA grouping



The private renters interviewed lived in relatively deprived neighbourhoods, with a third of households in the 20% most deprived data zones according to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) and just 11% in the least deprived 20% of data zones.

Figure 5: SIMD quintile



The lowest median incomes were found in households where the HH was unemployed (£490 per month) while the highest median incomes were households with an HH in full time employment (£2,100 per month). Incomes among households with the HH in full-time education and looking after the home or family were also lower – both median incomes of £800 per month. Retired households had a slightly higher median income of £1,000 a month.

Table 2: Household income (monthly, after tax) of different types of households

Household composition	Median Income
Larger adult household (3+ adults, with children)	£2,500
Two adults, with children	£2,400
Two adults, no children	£2,050
Larger adult household (3+ adults, no children)	£1,900
Single Parent	£1,230
Older Couple	£1,100
Single Older Person	£1,100
Single Person	£1,100
All households	£1,800

Ranking monthly median net household income by household type, higher household incomes were more common (on average) among families with two or more adults, with household incomes of £2,400-£2,500.

Households with two or more adults and no children had the next highest incomes (£1,900-£2,050), with single parents and other smaller adult households having lower incomes (£1,100-£1,230).

The income data above is not equivalised to take account of household size (since we do not have the ages of all the children to allow this procedure).²

The household incomes of the oldest and youngest respondents were lower, with a median net monthly household income of £1,300 among those aged 16-24 and £1,600 at age 25-34 compared with £2,000 for those aged 35-44 and 45-54 years. Incomes were lower for older households, down to £1,700 for those aged 55-64 years and £1,100 for those aged 65+.

2.5 Housing allowances

The rent payment profile closely matched the working status profile, with 64% of households paying the full rent on their property. Those in receipt of financial assistance to pay for rent through Universal Credit or Local Housing Allowance were split fairly evenly between the 13% of households whose rent was fully met by housing allowances and 14% who paid some rent but received partial financial assistance. A small proportion of households had other arrangements, with 3% paying a part share of rent through a flat-share, 2% living rent free in tied accommodation or some other rent free housing and 3% not saying whether they paid rent or not.

There was variation by household type, with 37% of single parents saying housing allowances paid all, and 44% saying this paid part, of the rent. Single adults who were not retired were also more likely to receive full housing allowance with 25% having rent fully paid (compared with 13% of all households).

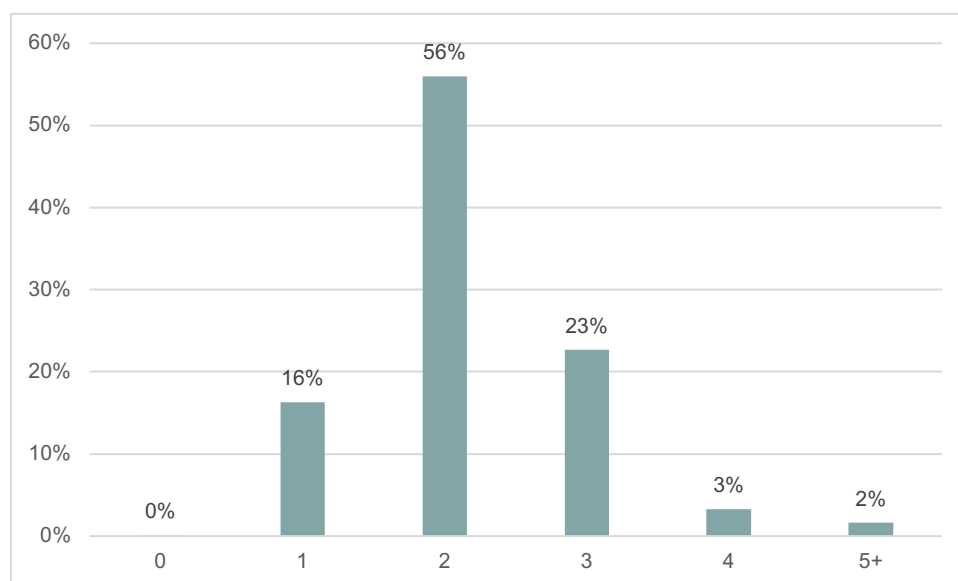
Property characteristics

2.6 Property size

Over half the respondents in the survey (56%) occupied properties with two bedrooms, with just under one in four (23%) with three bedrooms. One-bedroom properties were occupied by 16% of respondents. Very large and very small properties were less common, with less than 1% of respondents saying they had no bedrooms, 3% having four bedrooms and 2% with five or more bedrooms.

² Equivalising the income data would have the effect of reducing the income of families and increasing the income of single people because it recognises that the incomes of larger households need to cover more costs. It would recognise that single parents are effectively poorer than older couples or single adults because their household income needs to spread further.

Figure 6: Property size -number of bedrooms



Although we might have expected that larger households would tend to have more bedrooms than smaller households, this was not always necessarily the case in the sample. Most notably, single older households and older couples tended to have more bedrooms than needed, perhaps indicating that these households have rented their properties for longer periods when children may have also been present. Older couples had a median of three bedrooms while single people had a median of two bedrooms. This proportional split between size of property also reflects the supply more generally, with 56% of households renting two-bedroom and 23% renting three-bedroom properties.

Table 3: Household income (monthly, after tax) of different types of households

Household Composition	Mean number of bedrooms	Median number of bedrooms
Larger adult household (3+ adults, no children)	2.68	2
Larger adult household (3+ adults, with children)	3	3
Older Couple	2.57	3
Single Older Person	1.78	2
Single Parent	2.25	2
Single Person	1.74	2
Two adults, no children	2.03	2
Two adults, with children	2.46	2
Total	2.2	2

The tendency for smaller households to occupy two or three bedroomed properties may reflect the nature of supply, and the need for extra space for the shared care of children, visitors etc. and the preference for more space generally.

2.7 Property type

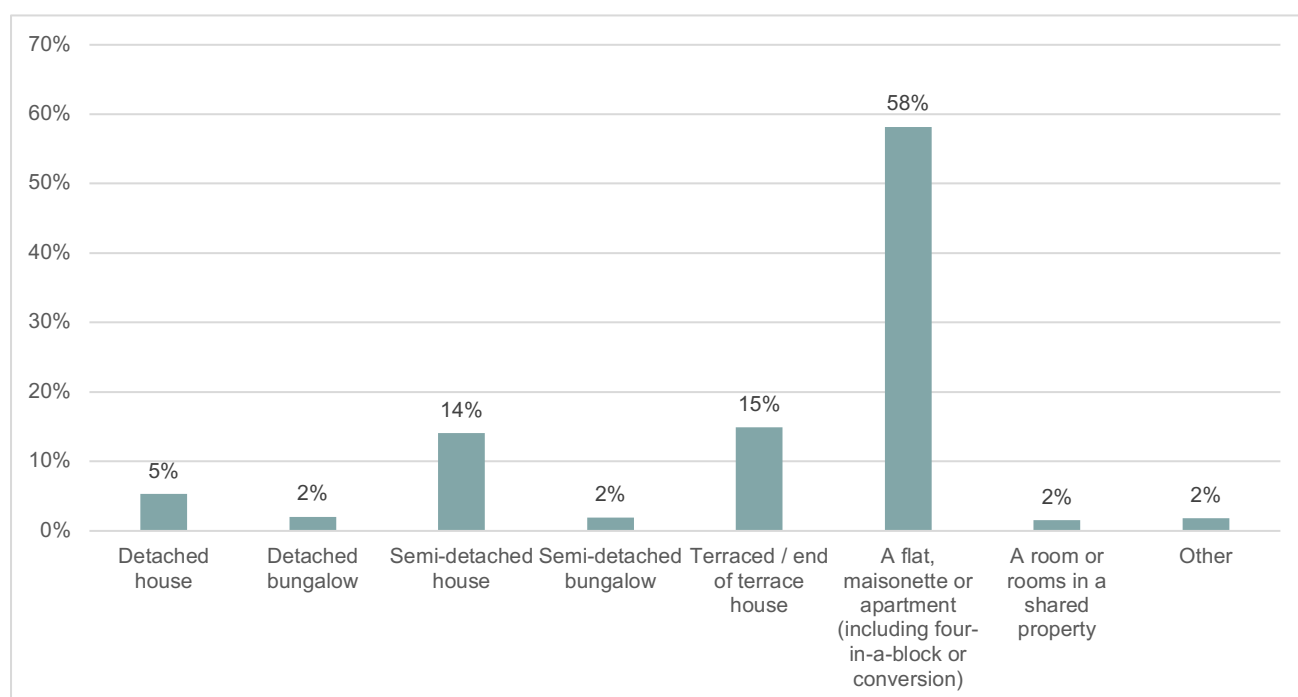
Almost 60% of the private tenants surveyed lived in flats, with those living in houses more commonly renting in terraced (15%) or semi-detached (16%) properties. Fewer than 10% lived in detached properties – 5% in detached houses and 2% in detached bungalows while 2% rented a room within a shared property and 2% lived in another type of property.

Property type varied considerably by location and household composition. Almost three-quarters (74%) of rural dwellers lived in houses, compared with a third (33%) of those in urban areas.

Over half of retired households (56%) and two-adult households with children (54%) lived in houses, compared with 38% of households generally, while 80% of single (non-pensioner) adults lived in flats.

It is notable that 61% of single parent PRS respondents are living in flats, compared with 46% of other households with children.

Figure 7: Property type



6% of respondents said that their day-to-day activities (or those of someone else within the household) were limited a lot by a health issue or disability, while a further 17% said that day-to-day activities were limited a little. This was far higher among retired households, with 24% of respondents saying someone's day-to-day activities were limited a lot by a health issue or disability, and a further 25% saying activities were limited a little.

Location

2.8 Rurality and Local Authority grouping

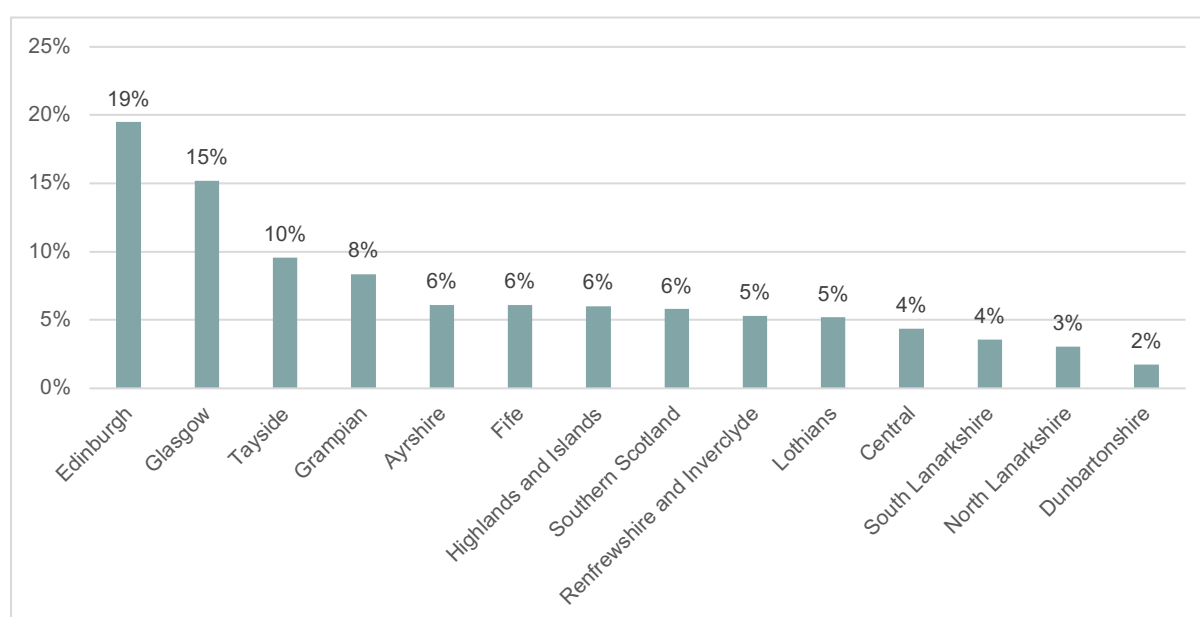
The sample was designed to be broadly in proportion to the population of private renters as per the SHS (see Annex 2) with 14% of respondents in rural areas and 86% in urban areas.

The spread of respondents by local authority was designed to reflect the profile from the SHS as follows:

- 19% of the private renters interviewed living in Edinburgh
- 15% in Glasgow
- 10% in Tayside
- 8% in Grampian
- Between 4%-6% in most other local authority groupings, and 3% in North Lanarkshire and 2% in Dunbartonshire.

This profile reflects the greater number of private renters in the four largest cities, with Edinburgh having a higher level of private renting than Glasgow, despite Glasgow having the largest population.

Figure 8: Local authority grouping of respondents



Summary

The private tenant sample reflects the overall profile of private rented tenants in Scotland, being more concentrated in the four largest cities and Edinburgh even more so.

The private tenants interviewed are mainly in the younger to middle aged groups with most working. However, a third of those interviewed lived in the most deprived areas in Scotland – the lowest SIMD quintile. There is considerable variation in income by geography, with lower incomes on average in Ayrshire and North and South Lanarkshire and higher incomes on average in Glasgow, the Lothians, Edinburgh, Dunbartonshire and Southern Scotland.

Most of those interviewed had a working HH, but single parents were less likely to work and more likely to have lower incomes. The oldest and youngest tenants had the lowest incomes with incomes of those aged 35-54 somewhat higher.

Almost a quarter of tenants interviewed reported a health problem or disability that impacts on the daily life of someone in the household, with 6% affected a lot by this. Retired tenants far more commonly had issues, with 24% of households having someone's daily activities limited a lot by a health issue or disability.

Private tenants interviewed were predominantly flat dwellers and most commonly two-person households in two-bedroom properties. Families and those in rural areas more commonly occupied houses but single parents far more commonly occupied flats than other families did.

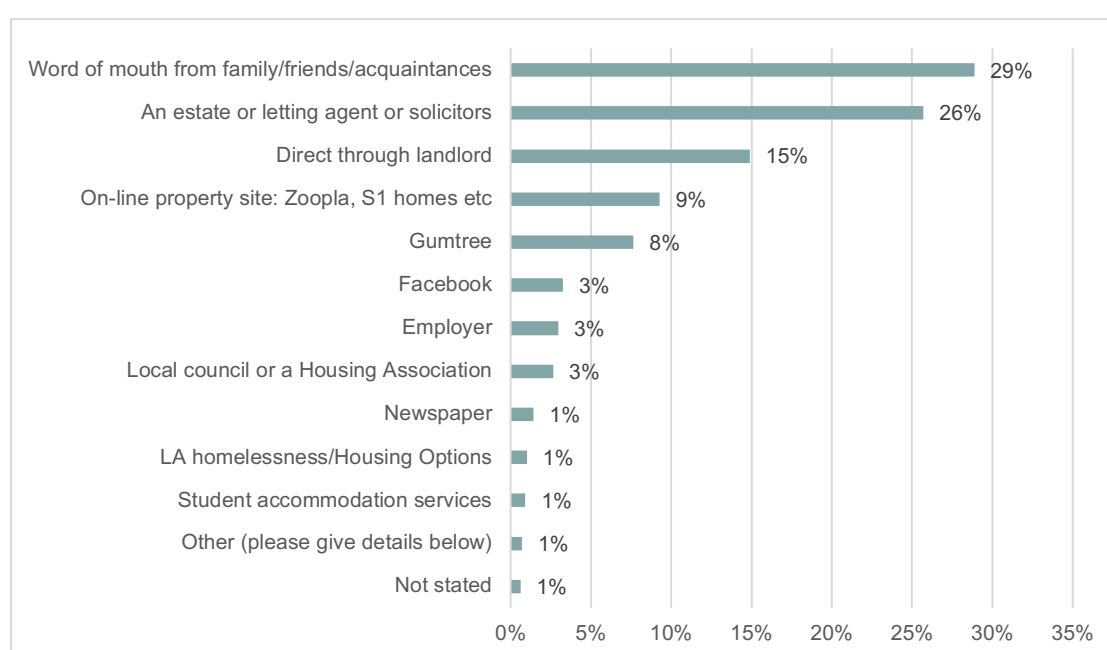
3. Accessing private renting

Finding a property to rent

3.1 How private renters find properties

It is striking that in almost a third of cases (29%) respondents said that they heard about their current property by word of mouth from family, friends or acquaintances. Just over a quarter (26%) found their property through an estate agent or solicitors and 20% found the property from an online property website, such as Gumtree or Facebook, while 15% found the property directly from the landlord.

Figure 9: How found property to rent



3.2 Difficulties finding somewhere to live

Around two-thirds of respondents said that it was easy to find somewhere to stay – 46% said it was quite easy and 20% said very easy. One in five respondents (21%) said they found it difficult, though, with 15% saying it was quite difficult and 6% saying it was very difficult.

Families found it more difficult to find a place to rent, with 35% of single parents and 25% of other families finding it difficult, compared with 18% of two-adult households. It followed that respondents aged between 25 and 34 years were more likely to say they found it hard to find a property (32% said this). People living in rural areas were much less likely to find it difficult to find somewhere to rent than in urban areas - 9% in rural areas compared with 23% of tenants in urban areas. 35% of tenants from a minority ethnic group and 27% of tenants with a disability found it difficult to find somewhere to live compared with 21% of tenants generally.

There was also variation depending on length of residence, with more recently moving tenants reporting more difficulty – 28% of those resident for fewer than two years said that it was difficult to find a place to rent, compared with 17% resident for between two and five years and 9% resident for longer than this. However, it is important to note that this will be impacted by recency and recall effects, with longer-term residents possibly less likely to remember whether they had difficulties or not.

The locations where difficulty finding a property to rent was most frequently reported include:

- Tayside (where 37% of respondents said it was difficult to find a place to rent)
- Renfrewshire and Inverclyde (32%)
- Edinburgh (26%)
- North Lanarkshire (26%).

Those who said that they had found it difficult to find a property were asked why that was, with the most common reasons being rents being too high/the lack of affordable properties (54% - 11% of all those interviewed) followed by there not being enough properties available (46% or 9%) and lots of people competing for properties to rent (37% of those who had difficulties, 8% overall). Affordability issues were strongly correlated with supply and demand tensions (as was expected).

Figure 10: How easy or difficult to find a property to rent

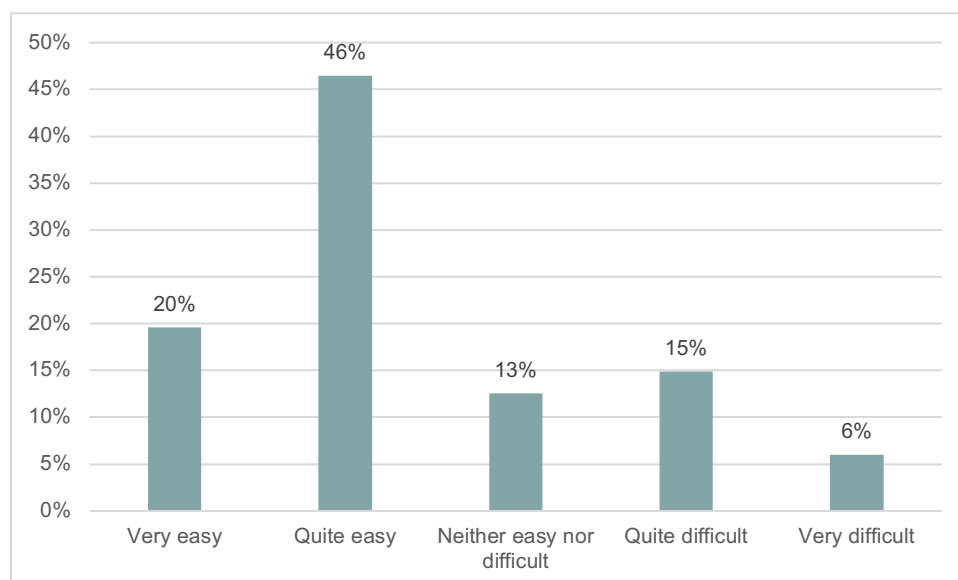
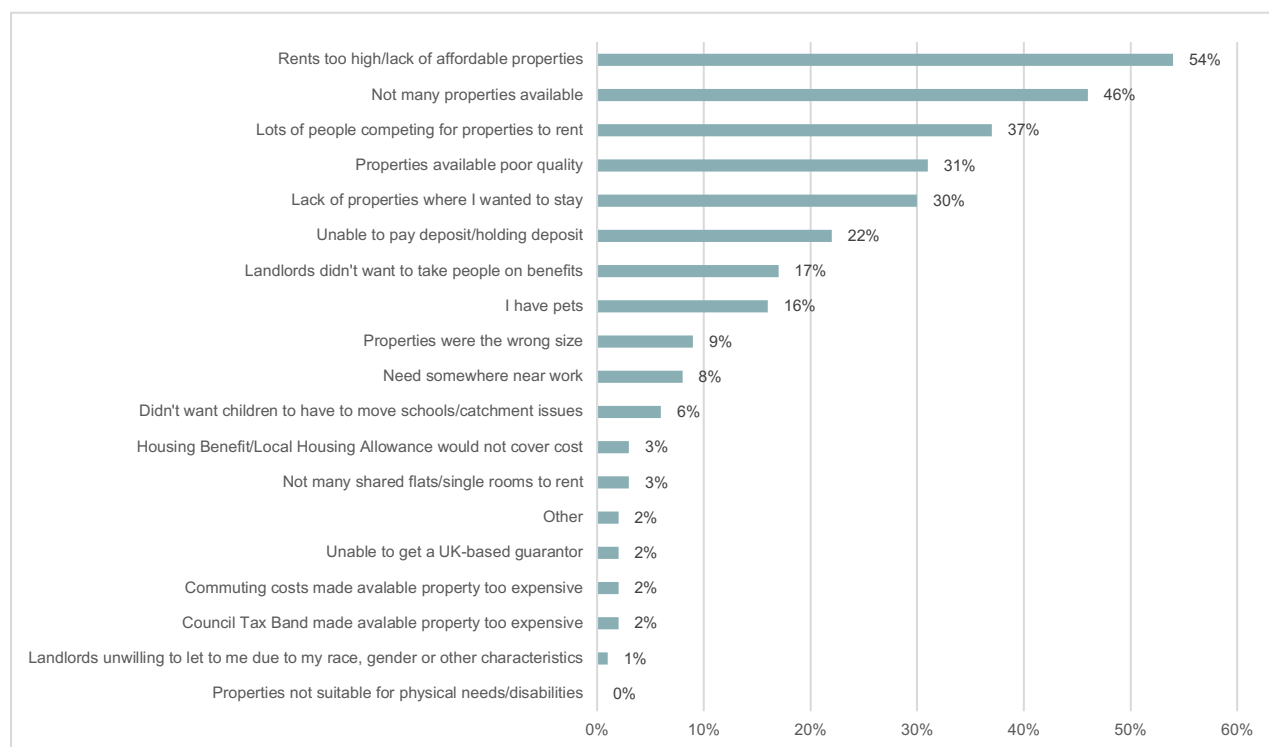


Figure 11: Difficulties finding a property to rent (among those who said they had difficulties n=205)



Almost a third of those who had difficulties finding a property to rent (31%) said that the properties available were of a poor quality, and a similar proportion (30%) said there was a lack of properties where they had wanted to stay. This was 6% of all the tenants interviewed.

More than one in five (22%) of those who had difficulties finding a property said this was because they had been unable to pay a deposit, while one in six (17% or 4% of all those interviewed) said that they had difficulties finding a property to rent as landlords did not want to take tenants on benefits. A similar proportion (16%) had difficulties because they had pets, which were often not allowed. That was 3% of all tenants interviewed.

Less commonly mentioned issues that still affected around 1 in 10 of those with difficulties finding a property were finding the right size of property, or somewhere near work. Six per cent of those with difficulties (one per cent of all tenants) mentioned schooling and as would be expected this was a higher proportion of families (22% of single parents and 13% of other families).

Although tenants with disabilities and tenants from minority ethnic groups more commonly had difficulties finding a property than tenants generally, this was more commonly attributed to affordability, or being on benefits (in the case of tenants with disabilities in particular). Just four tenants identified specific equalities issues. Discrimination may need to be considered alongside affordability and benefit receipt to be fully understood.

Summary

The majority (80%) of respondents reported not having any difficulty finding a home to rent. A significant minority (one in five) of tenants did experience difficulty accessing the rental market, particularly families with children, and single parents, as well as tenants with disabilities and tenants from minority ethnic groups. Equalities issues and discrimination seem to be related to affordability and benefit receipt and this could be explored further in future waves.

Tenants in urban areas were far more likely to report difficulties finding somewhere to stay, compared with those in rural areas and those moving more recently within the last two years – these tenants were more likely to report difficulties than those resident for longer. Tenants living in Tayside and those in Renfrewshire and Inverclyde were most likely to report difficulties finding a property, followed by tenants in Edinburgh and North Lanarkshire.

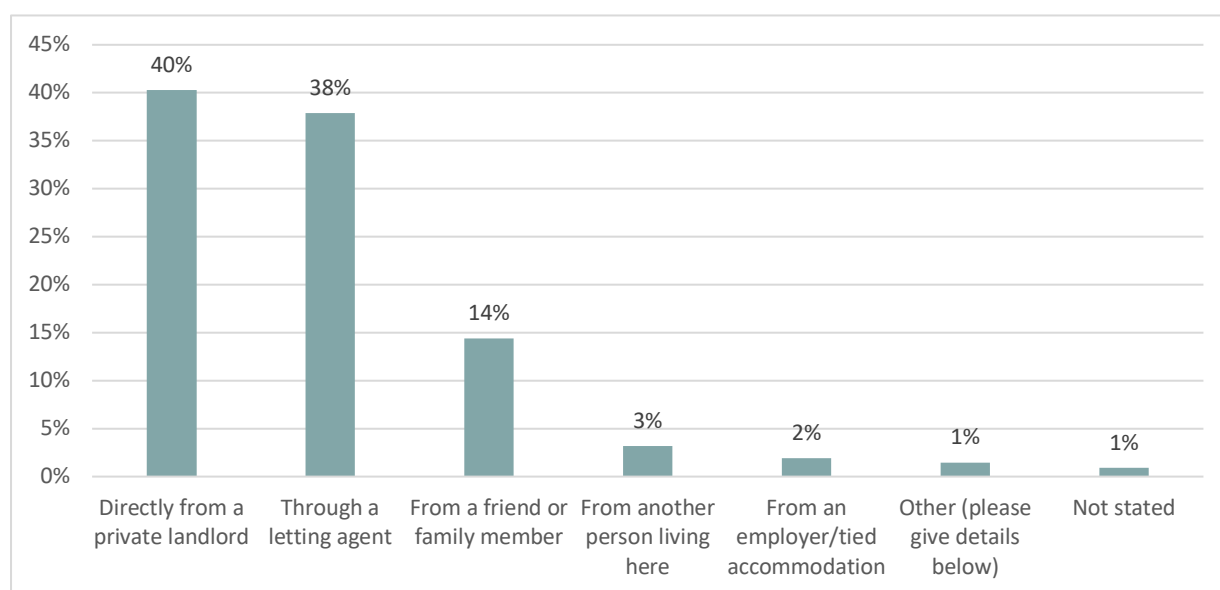
4. What experience do people have of renting privately?

Why and how are people privately renting?

4.1 Landlords

Most tenants (78%) rented their property from a landlord or a letting agent, with tenants broadly evenly split between these two categories (40% from a landlord, 38% through a letting agent). Of the one in five tenants who had another arrangement, the largest group were renting from family or friends – 14% of all tenants – while smaller numbers rented from the person they shared with (3%) had tied accommodation (2%) or some other arrangement.

Figure 12: How tenants rent their property



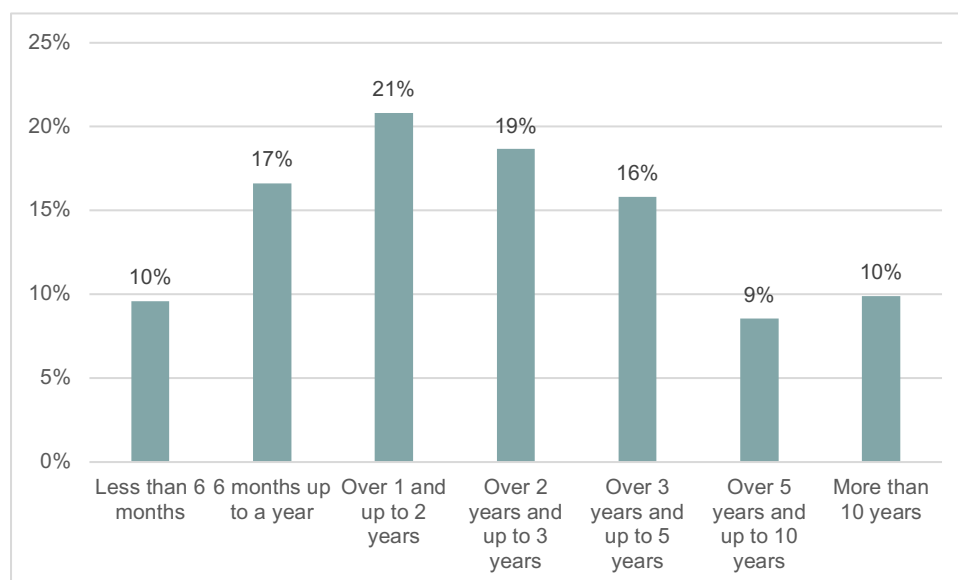
Renting from a friend or family member was more common among older tenants, with 28% of those renting who were aged 65+ saying they rented this way. This type of tenancy arrangement was more common among longer tenancies – 29% of those tenancies of more than five years in length – and in rural areas (20% of tenancies, compared with 14% in urban areas).

4.2 Security of tenure

Almost half of those interviewed had been resident in their current property for two years or less. Just over a third had been living there between two and five years and one in every five tenants (19%) had been resident for more than five years, with one in ten residents for more than 10 years. There are significant differences for rural/urban tenants - nearly half (46%) of tenants in rural areas have been residents for more than 10 years, compared with 4% of those in urban areas.

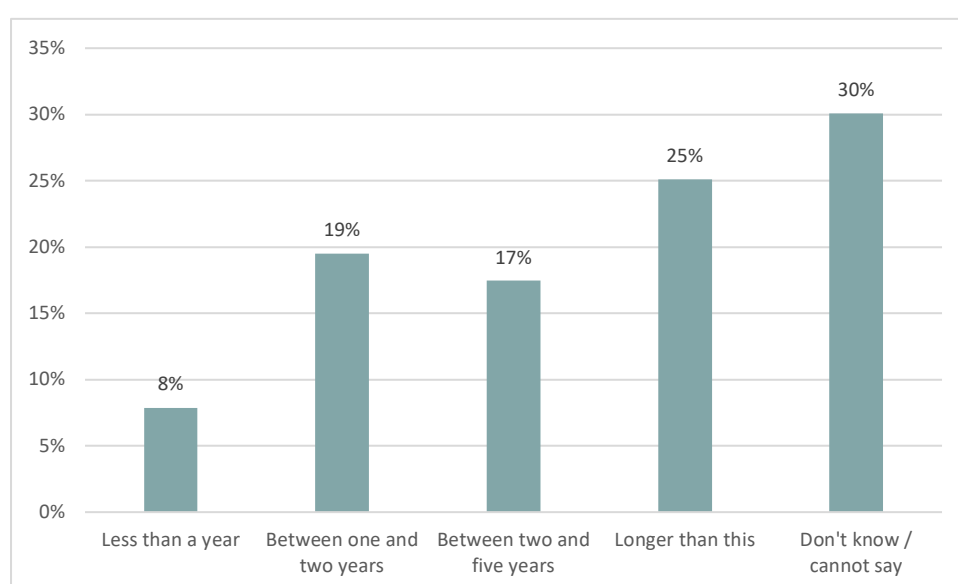
Length of residence is an important indicator of security of tenure but needs to be interpreted in relation to tenants' needs and aspirations. Are tenants able to stay in private rented tenancies as long as they want to, using them for transitional periods as flexible accommodation, for example? This is explored in more depth in the qualitative research, but the survey also asked how confident tenants felt in their ability to stay in their tenancy for as long as they wanted.

Figure 13: Length of residence



When asked how much longer they see themselves renting their property, almost a third of respondents were not able to say. Over a quarter saw themselves moving within the next two years while a similar proportion saw themselves renting for a further five years or more.

Figure 14: How much longer see themselves renting the property

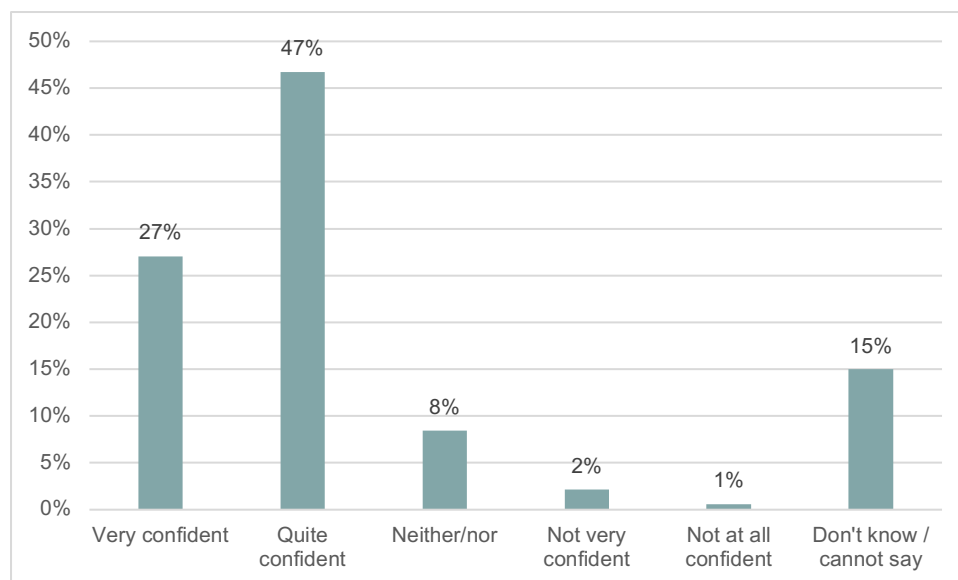


The survey examined security of tenure further by asking respondents how confident or not they were that they would be able to rent their property for as long as they would like to. Overall, three quarters of tenants were confident that they would be able to stay in the current property for as long as they would like, with 27% very confident and 47% quite confident. So, one in four tenants were not confident in how long they might be able to stay, with most expressing uncertainty rather than an explicit lack of confidence. Only three per cent of respondents said they were not confident that they would be able to stay in the current property for as long as they would like, while 8% pitched themselves as 'neither confident nor not confident' while 15% said they did not know.

Of the 27 who were not confident in being able to stay in their property:

- 23 lived in urban areas
- 11 were in a neighbourhood in the most deprived SIMD quintile and 9 in the second most deprived SIMD quintile
- 14 were on Housing Benefit while 13 paid more than 40% of their income on rent
- 9 were single, 8 were couples without children while 8 were families
- 9 people (1 in 3) had a long-term health issue or disability.

Figure 15: How confident or not will be able to rent the property for as long as they'd like to



For those who felt confident in being able to stay in their current property for as long as they would like to, the reasons for this were:

- Rent affordable at the moment (35%)
- Landlord unlikely to sell the property (22%)

- Know the landlord well (21%)
- Secure employment (20%)
- Have lived here a long time (14%)
- Financially stable (14%)
- I know I have a legal right to stay here (13%)
- Other reasons (3%).

Confidence in staying in the tenancy is driven by a combination of affordability and stability and trust in the landlord. On balance, affordability is the most commonly mentioned factor. Having legal rights was less often mentioned as a source of confidence, after affordability, trust in the landlord and secure employment.

For those **not** confident in being able to stay in the property as long as they would like (n=27), the reasons given were:

- Landlord likely to sell the property (10)
- Rent might increase and become difficult to afford (9)
- Problems with neighbours (3)
- Landlord likely to end the tenancy for another reason (3)
- Other reasons (7).

So, just as being confident about being able to stay in the property related to both trust in the landlord and affordability, lack of confidence relates to the absence of these.

4.3 Why are tenants in the private rented sector?

Tenants' views of private renting are likely to be affected by how they have come to be renting in the PRS and whether they would prefer to be living somewhere else.

Tenants were asked to indicate from a list of statements which best described them, where the statements indicated possible motivations and reasons for private renting. Respondents were asked to select as many statements as they wanted, so the percentages in Figure 16 add up to more than 100%.

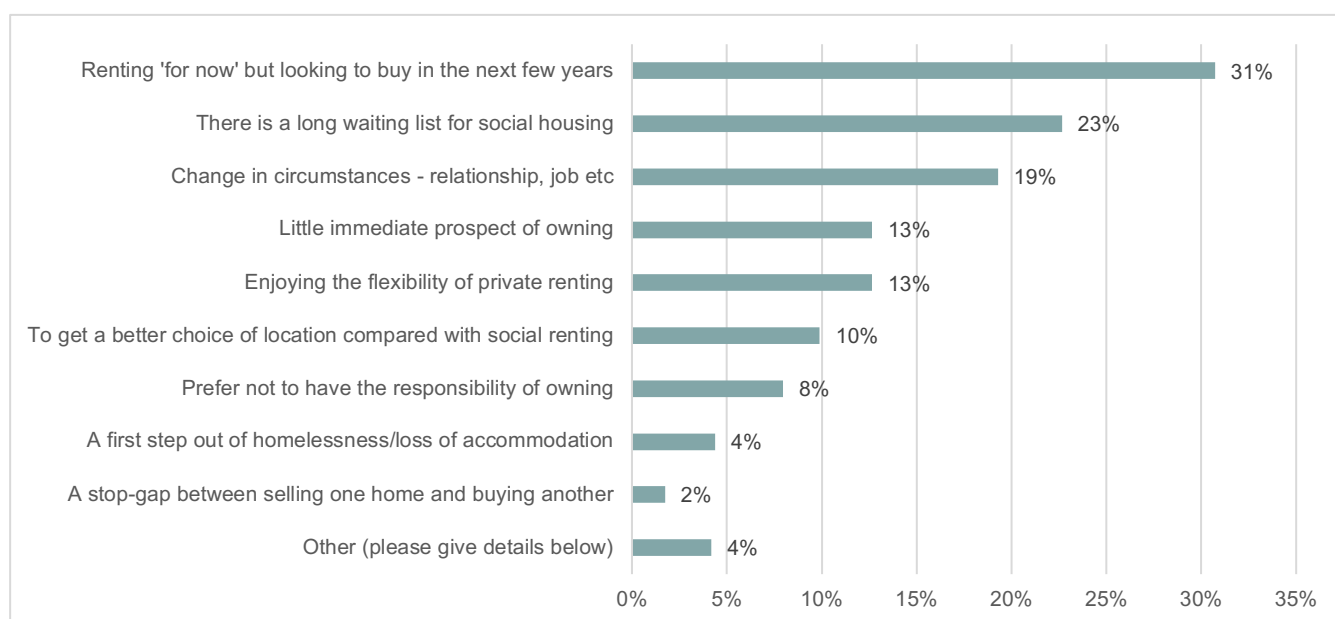
The most commonly agreed with descriptions were:

- 'renting for now but looking to buy in the next few years' -31% of respondents
- 'private renting because there is a long waiting list for social housing' - 23%

- ‘renting due to a change in circumstances – relationship, job etc.’ – 19%

The relative negativity of the 13% of respondents selecting ‘private renting with little prospect of owning’ is balanced against 13% selecting ‘prefer not to have the responsibility of owning’. The extra choice that private renting offers is also apparent in 10% selecting ‘private renting to get a better choice of location compared with social renting’.

Figure 16: Best description of current status/reasons for private renting



So, private renting provides flexibility and choice for some while others rent due to the lack of other options available to them.

One of the more ‘negative’ factors indicating a lack of choice – the ‘long list for social housing’ was more commonly chosen in urban areas – 25% of urban tenants agreed with this statement, compared with 9% of tenants in rural areas. This was very commonly selected by single parents (38% selected this) and selected far more commonly in some locations – South Lanarkshire (63%) Tayside (48%) Dunbartonshire (41%) Lothian (39%) and Glasgow (29%).

Tenants from minority ethnic groups more commonly said they were renting for now but looking to buy in the next few years (49%) while tenants with a disability more commonly said they were renting due to the long wait for social housing (36%).

How well do properties meet people’s needs?

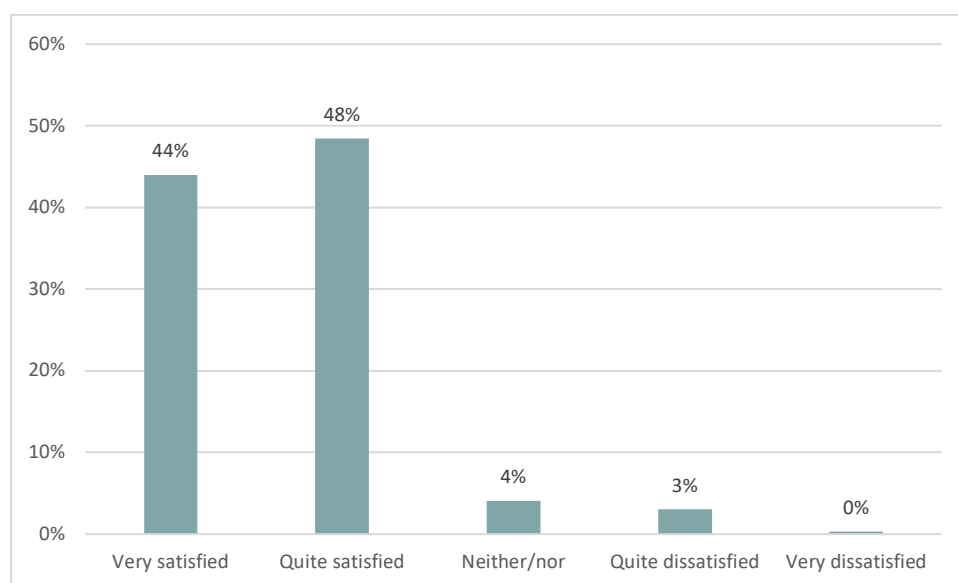
4.4 Overall satisfaction with the property

Tenants reported a high level of overall satisfaction with their property, with 48% ‘quite’ and 44% ‘very’ satisfied. The remaining 8% of tenants tended towards being neither satisfied nor not satisfied and being ‘quite’ dissatisfied.

This meant that just 33 out of 980 respondents said they were not satisfied with their property. These respondents were spread across different types of household and location, but had the following characteristics:

- 26 had moved into their property within the last two years
- 31 lived in urban areas
- 19 were aged between 25-44 years, proportionately more than the household in this group.

Figure 17: Overall satisfaction with the property

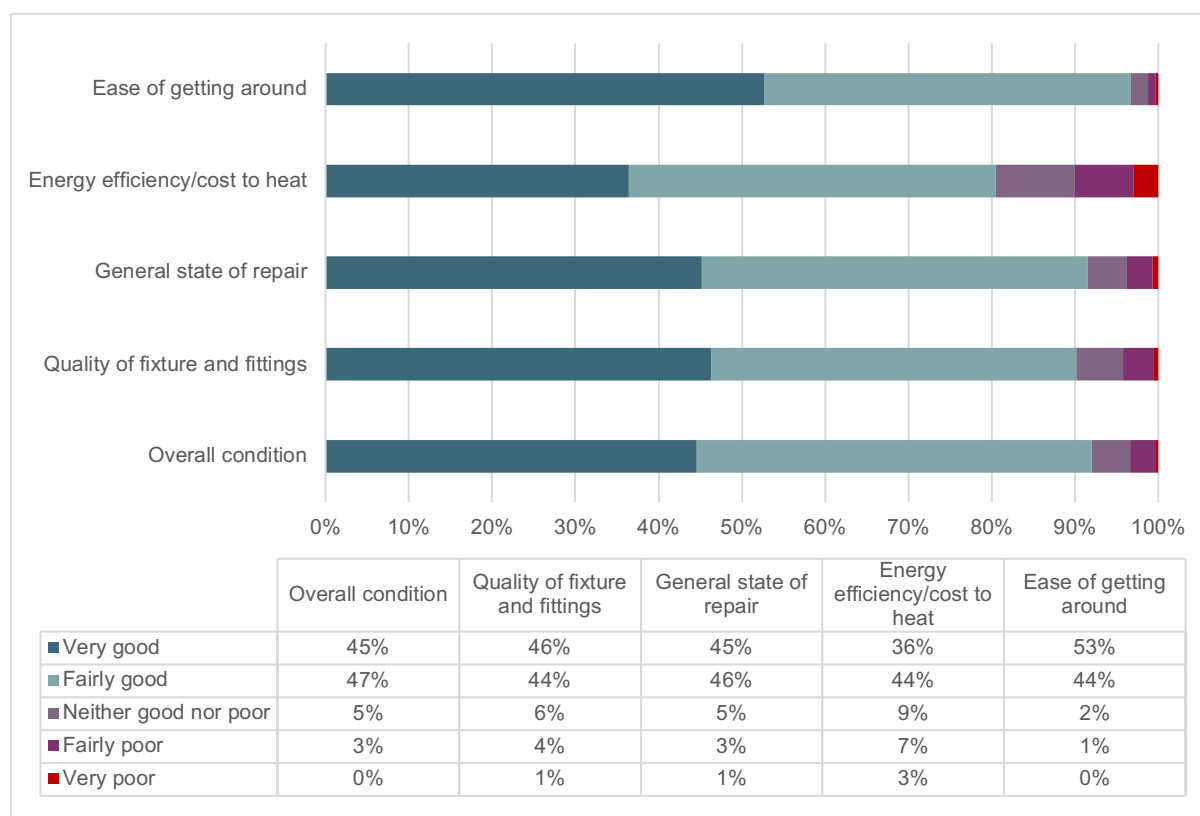


4.5 Property condition

Although there was a high level of overall satisfaction with the property, respondents were able to identify some aspects of the property that were less satisfactory. Energy efficiency was viewed less positively overall, with almost one in five tenants (19%) opting for a response other than 'good' in rating this. The quality of the fixture and fittings did not achieve a 'good' rating from around one in ten respondents (11%).

Overall condition was viewed more favourably, with just 8% indicating that the property was something else other than fairly or very good. Only 3% of private renters did not indicate that their property was good or fairly good in terms of the ease with which they could move around.

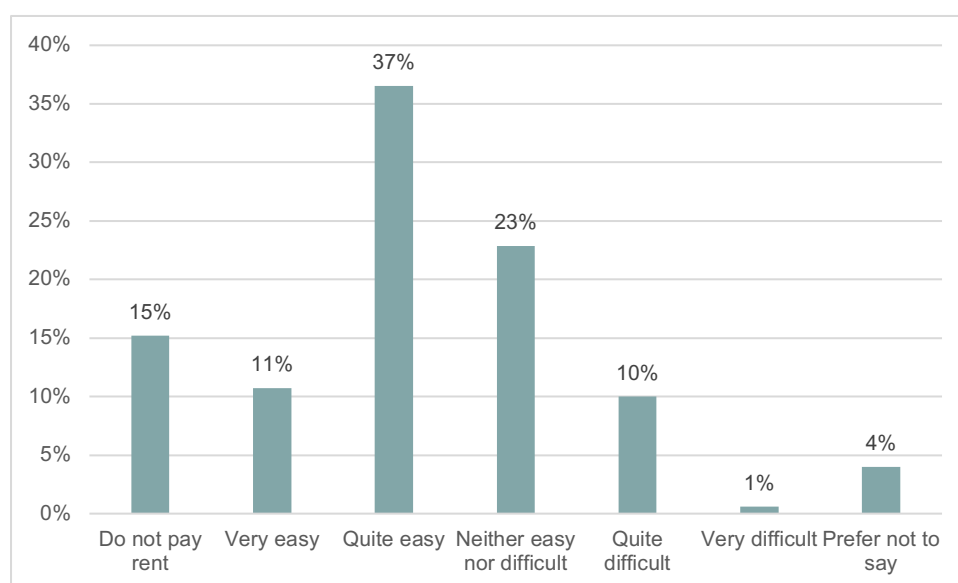
Figure 18: Rating of different aspects of the property



4.6 Rent setting and being able to afford the rent

Almost half of tenants interviewed said that it was easy to be able to afford their rent (37% said quite easy and 11% very easy) while 15% paid no rent as this was fully covered by housing allowances or they lived in tied accommodation or some other rent-free housing.

Figure 19: Views on how easy or difficult it is to afford the rent



Almost a quarter of respondents (23%) said that it was neither easy nor difficult to afford their rent while 11% said it was difficult (10% said quite difficult and 1% very difficult). A further 4% of respondents did not want to answer the question on rent affordability. Eight per cent of tenants said that they had difficulties paying their rent in the past year.

Excluding those who do not pay rent, 13% of rent payers said that found rent difficult to afford. Those more likely to struggle included:

- Households where the HH was working part-time, of whom 25% said rent was difficult to afford
- Renters in the more deprived areas – 17% found it difficult, compared with 5% of those in the least deprived areas
- People living in Tayside (39%) Renfrewshire and Inverclyde (17%) and Edinburgh (16%)
- A quarter of single parents (24%) had difficulties affording the rent while 18% of couples with children did, compared with 8% of couples without children and 7% of retired people
- Respondents aged 25-35 years were more likely to say they had difficulty affording rent (18% did) while people aged 65 or older were less likely to (8% did).

Some tenants (7% of all tenants) gave responses about seeking help about difficulties they had paying rent, these responses were:

- Getting a loan from family/friends (2% - 19 respondents)
- Agreeing payment terms or negotiating a delayed rent increase with landlord/letting agency (1% -8 respondents)
- Speaking to their employer/working extra hours to cover the rent (1% - 7 respondents)
- Getting advice from the Housing Benefit department (0.5% - 5 respondents)
- Getting advice from an advice agency of some sort (0.4%) – 4 respondents
- Some said they just paid the rent late or had cut back on other things. A few individual responses included asking an ex-partner for help, attending a food bank and leaving a previous property.

4.7 Rents levels and rent increases

Respondents were asked about the rent when they started renting and whether they paid a deposit. They were also asked what their current rent was (the rent charged and what they paid) as well as how often their rent increased.

Almost four out of five tenants (79%) said that they paid the rent that was advertised for their property while 8% said that they had agreed a lower rent. The remaining 13% either could not remember or did not want to answer. Negotiating a lower rent was more common in some rental markets – the areas with higher than average proportions of tenants saying they agreed a rent below the one advertised were:

- 22% of tenants in the Lothians
- 17% in Edinburgh
- 12% in Southern Scotland
- 11% in Renfrewshire and Inverclyde
- 9% in Glasgow

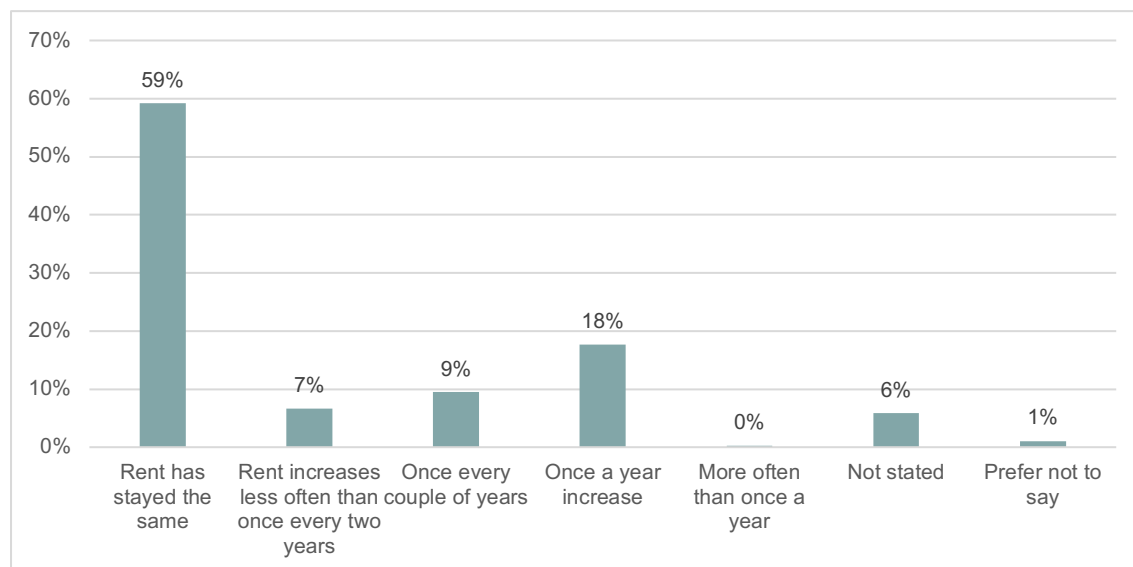
Table 4: Median monthly rent – total rent charged and rent paid by LA grouping

Location	Total rent (median)	Rent paid (median)
Edinburgh	£690	£650
Lothians	£640	£545
Fife	£595	£575
Highlands and Islands	£570	£535
Glasgow	£550	£480
Central	£518	£505
Grampian	£500	£400
Dunbartonshire	£495	£495
North Lanarkshire	£480	£450
Tayside	£480	£450
South Lanarkshire	£450	£395
Renfrewshire and Inverclyde	£425	£360
Southern Scotland	£380	£355
Ayrshire	£350	£230
Total	£525	£475

As shown above, although Edinburgh and the Lothians had the highest median rents, at £690 a month and £640 a month respectively, some of the other areas where tenants more commonly agreed a lower rent were not higher rent areas – e.g. Renfrewshire and Inverclyde with a median rent of £425 a month and Southern Scotland with a median rent of £380 a month.

Almost 60% of tenants said that their rent had not increased since they moved in while 18% said the rent increased annually. Just under one in ten (9%) said rent went up once every couple of years and 7% said it was less frequently than this. A very small proportion (less than one per cent or two respondents) said the rent had been increased more often than once a year.

Figure 20: How often the rent has increased since the tenant moved in



Of the 59% of all tenants who had not ever had their rent increased –

- The majority were more recent tenants - 39% had been resident for less than a year and 21% had been resident between 1-2 years.
- 19% of those who had not had a rent increase had lived in their property between 2-3 years, 13% between 3-5 years and 8% for over 5 years.

Clearly, a significant proportion of tenants benefit from renting properties where the landlord does not seem inclined to increase the rent. However, most of those whose rents had not increased (79%) had a signed lease that they had a copy of, so it was not just more informal arrangements where rents were not increased. 75% of single parents said their rent had stayed the same, as did 85% of those aged 18-25 years. This appears correlated to shorter periods of residence rather than occupant characteristics, with average incomes similar among those not having a rent increase and those whose rent increases once a year.

Of the 18% who reported an annual rent increase, 33% had been resident for between 1-2 years, 27% between 2-3 years and 21% between 3-5 years. In this respect, annual rent increases are more typical among tenancies that are more established (which we would expect). The oldest and youngest tenants less commonly reported annual increases. For those aged 18-24 they tended not to have had a rent increase, while older tenants aged

tended to have less frequent rent increases. Again, this appears related to length of residence.

The tenants who had seen their rent increase once a year were more concentrated geographically (compared with 18% of tenants overall):

- 45% of tenants in Grampian
- 37% in the Highlands and Islands
- 32% in the Lothians
- 30% in Renfrewshire and Inverclyde
- 29% in Glasgow

Just 9% of tenants in Edinburgh said their rent was increased annually, with 81% saying their rent had stayed the same. However, tenants in Edinburgh had been resident for shorter periods, with 62% resident for less than two years, compared with 48% of tenants generally and 45% of tenants in Glasgow. This may mean that in Edinburgh, rents were less commonly reported to have changed due to the relatively short tenancies involved.

The analysis of how rents have increased in the last two years is difficult to interpret at present. Comparing the proportion saying that rent changes once a year between tenants with longer and shorter tenancies, we see that:

- For those tenants that have been resident between 1-2 years, 28% said the rent had gone up once a year. Only 4% said that rents increased once every couple of years (possibly a very small proportion since most of this group will not have been resident to experience an increase at two years).
- For those tenants that have been resident between 2-3 years, 25% said the rent had gone up once a year, and 14% said that rents increased once every couple of years.
- 59% of both of these groups said rents had not increased.

Considering responses overall we see:

- Tenants in longer tenancies less often reported having an annual rent increase. Only 12% of tenants renting for five years or more reported an annual rent increase. These were often tenants in rural areas, with 23% of tenants in rural areas saying that rents increased less frequently than once every two years. A third of tenants who had been resident for more than five years (34%) had not had a rent increase since moving in, 23% had a rent increase every couple of years and 28% had rent increases less frequently.

- Comparing the experiences of those on a PRT compared with an SAT, 70% of those on a PRT said their rent was the same as when they moved in, compared with 58% of those on an SAT. 18% of those on a PRT and 17% on a SAT had an annual rent increase. Again, though, this is likely to be driven by the shorter tenancies of those on a PRT so we need to compare these results over time to understand whether the PRT has a beneficial impact on rent increases.

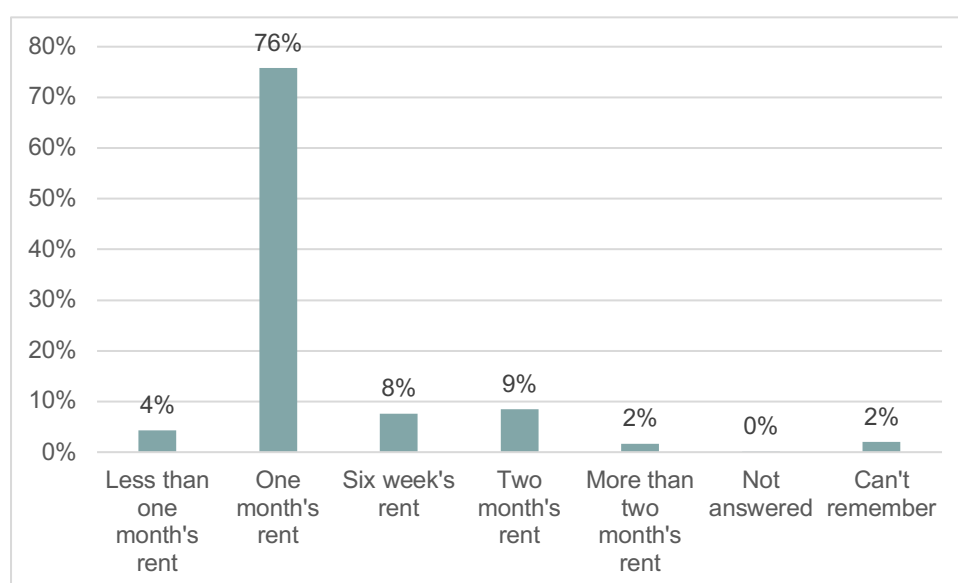
We will need to examine how this changes over time as those currently resident for between one and two years may not yet know that the rent increases every couple of years. The wave 3 survey will allow us to compare the pattern of rent increases over time.

4.8 Deposits

The majority of tenants (71%) said that they had paid a deposit when they first moved into the property. One in five (20%) said that they had not paid a deposit, while 5% had their deposit organised by a rent deposit scheme, funded by the local authority and the remaining 3% could not remember.

Tenants in rural areas were less likely to pay deposits – only 56% said they had, compared with 74% of tenants in urban areas. Longstanding tenants (often those in rural areas) were less likely to have paid a deposit, with just 48% of tenants resident for more than five years having paid a deposit, compared with 79% of tenants resident between two and five years and 73% of more recent tenants. The use of rent deposit schemes has increased more recently, with 3% of those resident between two to five years using a rent deposit scheme, and 8% resident for fewer than two years doing so. These schemes, funded by local authorities, enable low-income tenants to access private renting with the local authority guaranteeing the deposit.

Figure 21: Amount of deposits (among those paying a deposit)



Those paying deposits most commonly paid a month's rent in advance, with over three-quarters (76%) of those paying deposits saying this amount. One in five tenants paid more than a month's rent – 8% paid six week's rent, 9% paid two month's rent and 2% even more than this.

The payment of larger deposits was more common in a number of locations, with the following proportion of tenants reporting paying more than month's rent –

- 39% in South Lanarkshire
- 32% in Dunbartonshire
- 30% in Central
- 30% in Tayside
- 22% in North Lanarkshire

These are not high rent areas. Just 10% of tenants in Edinburgh, 12% of those in Highland and Islands and 15% in Lothians paying a deposit said this was more than a month's rent. It is more of an urban phenomenon, though, with 19% of tenants in urban areas paying more than a month's rent compared with 10% in rural areas.

Higher deposits were more frequently reported by respondents where the HHH worked full-time or were in full-time education. One in five (20%) working full-time and 17% of those in full-time education paid more than a month's deposit compared with 12% where the HHH is working part-time, 11% where the HHH is not working and 12% of others.

This variation suggests there is market segmentation such that higher rent properties with higher deposits are demanded in urban areas more than rural areas, and from those households working full time, or when in higher education.

Deposits should be lodged in a tenancy deposit scheme – through Letting Protection Service Scotland, Safe Deposits Scotland and my deposits Scotland. Almost half (45%) of those who had paid a deposit said their deposit had been lodged in this way, 39% were not sure whether it had been or not and 16% said it had not. Among tenants renting for fewer than two years, 51% said the deposit was lodged with a tenancy deposit scheme, 38% were not sure and 11% said it was not.

4.9 Proportion of income spent on housing costs

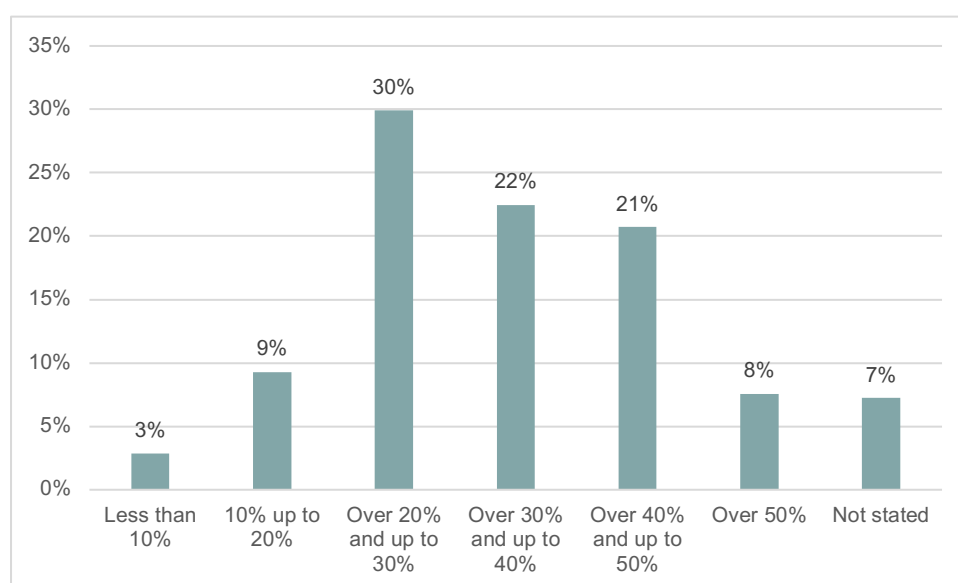
When asked what proportion of their income they spent on their housing costs³, 12% said rent was less than 20% of their income and 30% said they paid between 20%-30%.

This means that just over half of tenants reported paying housing costs that were over 30% of their net income:

- 22% of tenants said between 30%-40% of their net income goes on housing costs
- 21% said it is between 40-50%
- 8% said it is over 50%.

Eurostat uses 40% of disposable income as a measure of housing cost overburden (which includes rent and other housing costs), with the UK overall having 15% of households paying over 40% of income on housing costs in 2018.⁴ So 29% saying they spend 40% of income on housing costs is significant.

Figure 22: Proportion of net household income spent on housing costs



³ Q: Approximately how much of your income (that is, the income you get from benefits or work after tax and other deductions) goes on housing costs (including rent, utilities, council tax and other regular household bills)

⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Housing_statistics

However, earlier, we saw that just 11% of tenants said that their rent was difficult to afford to pay, while 23% said that it was neither easy nor difficult to pay.

There may be some errors in people's responses about the proportion of their income spent on housing costs (for example they may have answered as one household member's income rather than the whole household income as interviewed). But even with an assumption for errors, these findings suggests a mismatch between perceptions of rent affordability and the proportion of income that some people spend on housing costs. There is a correlation between the proportion of income paid in housing costs and how easy people say it is to pay, but even so, only 28% of those paying more than half of their income on housing costs said their rent was difficult to afford.

Table 5: Ratio of rent to income with median rents charged, paid and median household income

Ratio of housing costs to net income	Total rent charged	How much pay each month	Monthly household income (after tax)
Less than 10%	£400	£ -	£625
10% up to 20%	£500	£450	£2,300
Over 20% and up to 30%	£520	£475	£2,000
Over 30% and up to 40%	£510	£500	£1,900
Over 40% and up to 50%	£575	£495	£1,500
Over 50%	£550	£400	£1,350
Total	£525	£475	£1,800

Higher housing cost to income ratios are associated with higher average rents and lower average incomes. Households paying more than 40% of their incomes on housing costs have a net monthly median income of £1,500, while those paying more than half have a median income of just £1,350 a month. Both groups have higher rents than the average.

Higher housing cost to income ratios (of over 40%) were more commonly reported by:

- Single parents (46%) and retired people (44%)
- Those living in rural areas (44%) more than urban dwellers (29%)
- Those not working (42%) and working part-time (36%)
- Residents in Central (68%) Ayrshire (64%) Lothians (60%) Highlands and Islands (42%) and Edinburgh (37%).

In Central and Ayrshire, this very high proportion paying more than 40% of their net income towards their housing costs would appear to be driven more by lower incomes while in the Lothians, Highlands and Islands and Edinburgh it is driven by higher rents.

Summary

Most private renters were positive about their experience of their property, in terms of its condition, ability to meet their needs and affordability, but there were a significant minority of households with negative experiences.

Single parents and other families were more likely to say they were struggling to be able to afford the rent. A quarter of single parents and almost one in five other families found it difficult to be able to afford the rent.

Renters in rural areas tend to have less formal arrangements than those in urban areas, with more renting from family and friends, renting for longer, with fewer paying (smaller) deposits and seeing fewer rent increases since moving in. However, more of those living in rural areas were paying more than 40% of their net income in housing costs.

The higher rent areas, as reported by tenants, were Edinburgh and Lothians, Fife, Highlands and Islands, and Glasgow. Tenants in the Lothians, Highlands and Islands and Glasgow were also more likely to see rents increase at least once a year, while in Edinburgh this was less evident, but tenants tended to be resident for shorter periods.

The locations where tenants were paying higher deposits did not nest into these higher rent areas, with higher deposits in urban areas compared with rural areas but more tenants reporting higher deposits in South Lanarkshire, Dunbartonshire, Tayside, Central and North Lanarkshire compared with the higher rent areas.

Higher deposits were more frequently reported by respondents where the HH worked full-time or were in full-time education. Although this reflects in part the access some households, retired people in particular have, to lower rent, lower deposit properties through family and friends. This still suggests segmentation in the market, with higher rent properties with higher deposits demanded by those with greater financial capacity (albeit shared financial capacity in the case of those in full-time education).

Just over half of tenants who had moved into their property since the legislation changed in 2017 said their deposit was lodged with a recognised tenancy deposit scheme, though awareness may be low, as two in five tenants who had paid a deposit were unsure whether this was lodged or not.

Despite only around one in ten tenants saying that they found their rent difficult to be able to afford, almost a third paid more than 40% of their income on housing costs. Single parents and retired households and tenants from minority ethnic groups often paid a higher proportion of income on housing costs, with working part-time and not working associated with higher housing cost to income ratios than working full-time or being in full-time education. Tenants in rural areas more commonly paid a higher portion of their income on housing costs, with the majority of tenants interviewed in Central, Ayrshire and the Lothians paying more than 40% of their income on housing costs.

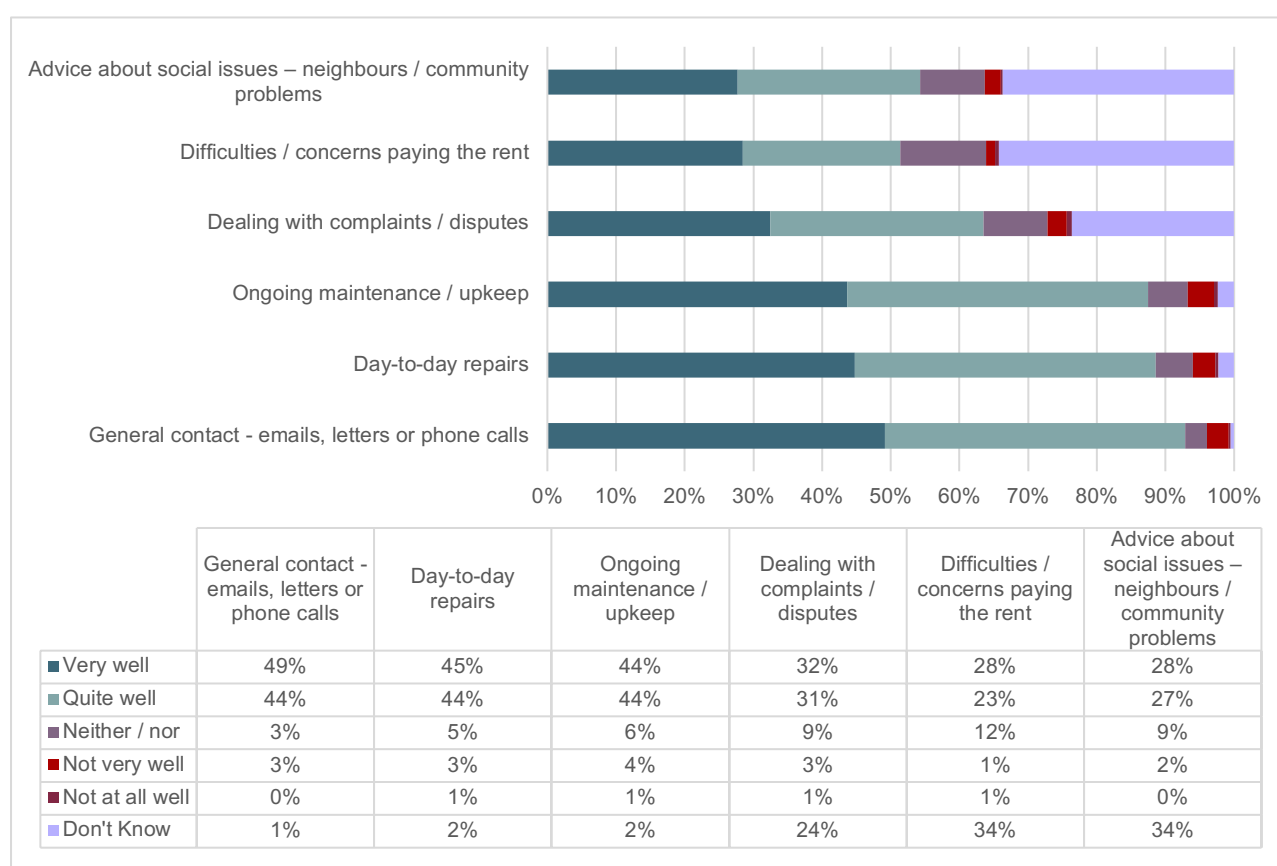
5. Access to Justice

Issues with landlords

5.1 Landlord services

Respondents were asked how well or not their landlord, letting agent or the property owner responded or helped in a number of different areas. Generally speaking, tenants said their landlord dealt with issues well, particularly in relation to general contact, day-to-day repairs and ongoing maintenance and upkeep, with between 88% and 93% saying these were well dealt with.

Figure 23: Views on landlord services (how well various issues dealt with)



The proportion of tenants that reported that issues arising were not dealt with well ranged from 2% to 5% of tenants.

There was also a middle group of renters that indicated that their landlord had not responded well, but neither had they responded badly. In the case of disputes and complaints, difficulties or concerns paying rent or social issues, between 9% and 12% of tenants were in this 'neither/nor' category.

The last three issues – complaints, rent difficulties and social issues – had a high number of ‘don’t know’ responses, indicating that 24% of tenants had no cause for complaint or dispute and 34% had no concerns or difficulties with rents or social issues.

A small number of tenants said their landlord had not dealt well with an issue (e.g. n=34 for general enquiries). Although small in number, there were some notable patterns:

- Almost half of the cases, where general enquiries and communication was felt to have been done not very well or not at all well, were in Glasgow.
- Almost all of those who were negative about different aspects had been resident for two years or fewer.
- Almost all of those who were negative (e.g. 33 of 34 in the case of general enquiries) lived in urban areas.
- Almost three-quarters of those who felt the landlord or letting agent had not dealt well with an issue lived in the two most deprived SIMD categories (the 40% most deprived data zones).
- One in three tenants who said landlords/letting agents had not dealt well with repairs, maintenance and complaints/disputes were in Tayside.

How disputes are resolved

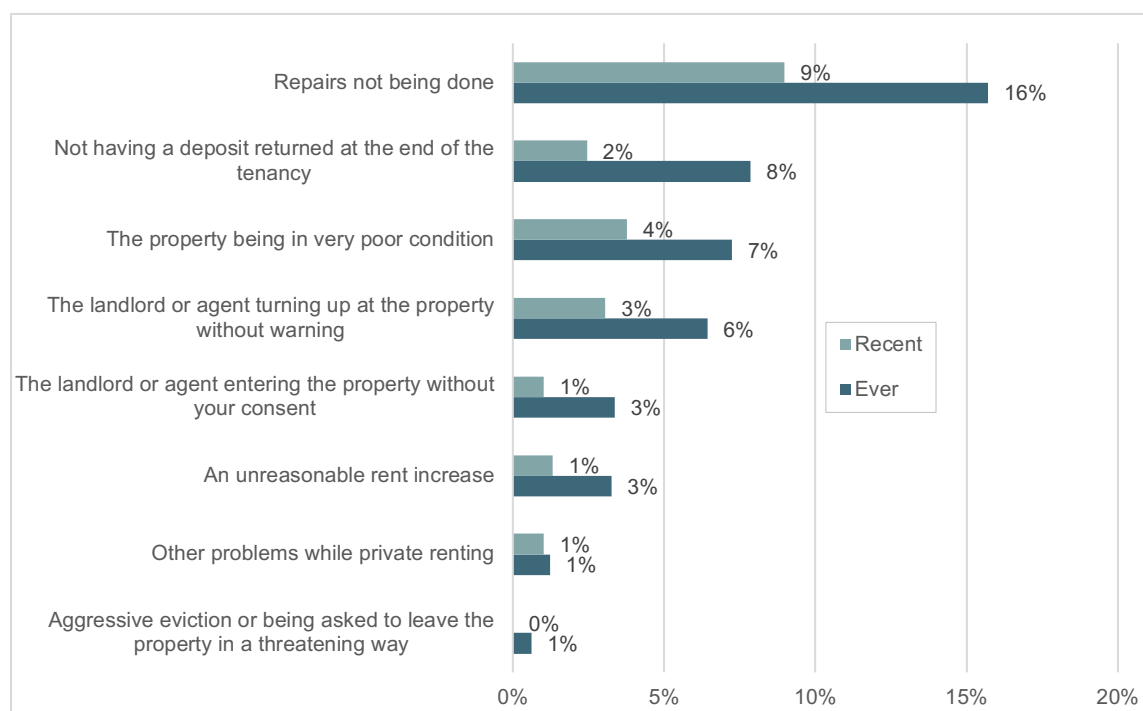
5.2 What are the most common issues for tenants?

The most common negative experience that private renters reported was repairs not being done, with 16% saying they had experienced this at some time while 9% had experienced this recently (within the last two years).

Other issues were far less likely to be reported, with only 8% ever having a deposit withheld (just two per cent within the last two years). Seven per cent had lived in a property in poor condition, with four per cent experiencing this within the last two years.

Six per cent of tenants had ever had experience of a landlord or agent turning up at the property without warning, with three per cent having this happen more recently. Three per cent of tenants said they had experience of a landlord or agent entering their property without consent, with one per cent having experienced this recently.

Figure 24: Issues tenants have ever experienced and experienced recently (in the last two years)



Unreasonable rent increases were reported by three per cent of tenants interviewed, with one per cent saying they had experience of unreasonable rent increases within the last two years. One per cent reported having been aggressively evicted or asked to leave the property in a threatening way at some point in the past, though no-one reported with having happened to them recently.

5.3 Who have experienced more recent disputes?

Although tenants were generally positive about their experience of renting, with fewer than one in six tenants (15%) reporting any recent cause for dispute, some tenants were more commonly affected:

- Families were more likely to have had issues with repairs needing done – making up 39% of those who have had recent problems getting repairs done while being just 27% of the tenant body.
- Single non-pensioners were a third of those who had recent problems with a landlord or letting agent turning up at the property without warning. Just 18% of all renters were single non-pensioners.
- Those moving into their property more recently were more likely to have had recent issues with property condition. Overall, 47% of tenants had been resident for fewer than two years but they made up 65% of those who had problems getting repairs done and 76% of those with recent experience of a property with very poor condition.

- More than 90% of those with problems or issues more recently were tenants living in urban areas.

5.4 How have disputes been dealt with?

Only around one in five tenants who had one of the disputes mentioned above had sought any help or advice about that, which is 6% of tenants overall. The 54 tenants who had sought help or advice had:

- Spoken to the landlord directly to try and resolve the issue (10)
- Spoken to the letting agent to try and resolve the issue (10)
- Sought help from a solicitor or other legal representative (10)
- Contacted the Citizen's Advice Bureau (9)
- Contacted the Local Council (5)
- Just decided to leave the property/put up with it (6)
- Contacted the Police (1) Social Work (1) or gave no answer (2)

Over a third of those who said they sought help had gone directly to their landlord or letting agent, while one in five sought legal advice and the same proportion sought advice from the CAB, while one in ten approached the Council.

In terms of the overall tenant body (980 respondents) just 26 respondents with a dispute had sought independent help or advice in order to have this resolved. That is just under three per cent of all tenants.

The proportion of tenants who had taken steps to seek independent help or advice about a dispute is low compared with the proportion experiencing disputes, which makes sense given that the most common issues relate to repairs, with most tenants dealing directly with landlords and letting agents to resolve these issues.

Confidence in disputes

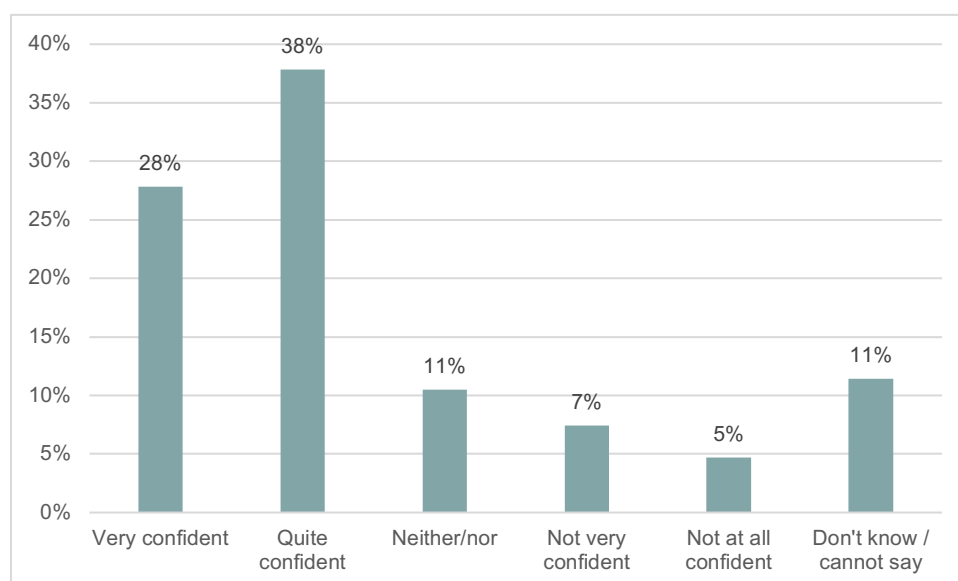
5.5 Awareness and use of the First Tier Tribunal

Just under a third of the tenants interviewed (32%) said that they were aware that private rented tenants could take their landlords to a First Tier Housing Tribunal. Fewer than one per cent of tenants, 7 of the 980 interviewed, had taken a landlord to the First Tier Housing Tribunal.

5.6 Confidence in challenging landlords, lettings agents and owners

Across the tenant body, around two-thirds of tenants said they would be confident (38% quite confident and 28% very confident) in challenging their landlord, letting agent or the owner of the property. Around one in ten private tenants (12%) said they would not feel confident challenging them. A significant proportion – 22% were neither confident nor not confident, or didn't know whether they would be confident to challenge their landlord, letting agent or the owner.

Figure 25: Confidence challenging the landlord/letting agent/owner



Those who were less confident in dealing with disputes were those who had been resident for fewer than two years, tenants in urban areas, younger people, those in full-time education or part-time work. Tenants with a disability and tenants from minority ethnic groups were also less confident than tenants generally. Older, longer-term residents, those in rural areas and those in full-time work were more confident in dealing with disputes.

5.7 Current leasing arrangements and awareness of the PRT

The vast majority of tenants said that they had a lease at present, with 79% saying they had a signed copy of their lease and 7% saying they signed a lease but did not have a copy of it. A further 12% said they had an informal arrangement with the landlord or owner of the property.

Not having a formal lease was more common in rural areas (16%) compared with urban areas (11%). Around one in five larger adult households (typically flat-shares) and one in five retired households had an informal lease arrangement.

Informal leases were also more common among longer standing tenancies – 20% of tenancies of over five years were informal. It is important to note that many of the tenants with an informal leasing arrangement had as good, if not better experiences, than others

despite their lack of a formal lease. Those who had signed a lease that they did not have a copy of fared less well.

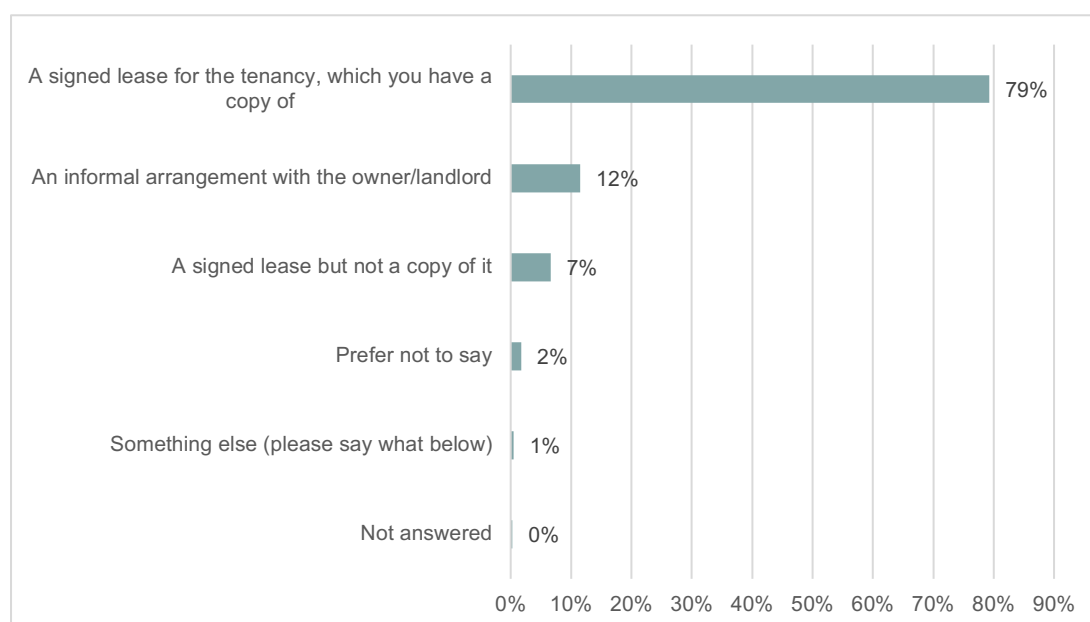
- 30% of informal leaseholders had been resident for more than 5 years compared with 8% with a signed lease that they had a copy of.
- Only 23% of those with an informal lease paid a deposit, compared with 75% of those with a signed lease that they had a copy of.
- The same proportion of tenants - 50% - with informal leases, and those with a signed lease that they had a copy of, found the rent easy to afford.
- 77% of those with an informal arrangement said they were confident that they would be able to stay in their property for as long as they wanted, as were 76% with a signed lease that they had a copy of, compared with just 51% of those with a signed lease which they did not have a copy.
- 73% of those with an informal lease had not had their rent increased, or had it increased less frequently than once every two years, compared with 66% with a signed lease they had a copy of and 58% of those with a signed lease that they did not have a copy of.
- The median rent for informal lets was £400 a month while the median rent for a property with a signed lease where they had a copy was £495.

Just one in three tenants were aware of the introduction of the new PRT, with one in three tenants saying they had moved onto a PRT from a Short Assured Tenancy (9%) and 23% saying they had started a new PRT.

Across all tenancies –

- 23% said they were on a Short Assured Tenancy
- 36% said they were on a Private Residential Tenancy
- 40% were not sure (including 12% who indicated an informal arrangement).

Figure 26: Lease arrangements



While SATs and Assured Tenancies can continue until the tenancy changes, at which point a new tenancy must be a PRT, it appears that awareness of the PRT is pretty low. Nearly half, or 47% of tenants said they had moved into their property within the last two years but only 36% said they were on a PRT.

Summary

Although tenants generally feel able to challenge landlords, there is little use of independent advice and very little use of the First Tier Tribunal. Awareness of the First Tier Housing Tribunal remains low after two years, with just a third of tenants saying they were aware of it. Awareness of the new PRT is also low, with 32% of tenants saying they were aware of the tenancy.

Private tenants reported more disputes about getting repairs done than about anything else and these were issues that tenants tended to resolve with the landlord or letting agent directly.

For more serious disputes, tenants were accessing legal advice and advice from the citizen's advice bureau more commonly than the local council.

The tenants that were less confident in challenging their landlord were more commonly younger tenants, tenants with a disability and tenants from minority ethnic groups, those residents for fewer than two years and those working part-time or in full-time education. So older, better-off tenants would be more confident with disputes.

Most tenants had a formal tenancy in place but there was evidence that having an informal tenancy could be beneficial in terms of affordability, not paying deposits, limited rent increases and feelings of security. Two in five respondents said they did not know what type

of tenancy they had, over a third said they were on a Private Residential Tenancy and, just under a quarter, a Short-Assured Tenancy.

6. Overall Summary

Who are private renters?

The private tenant respondents are mainly in the younger to middle aged groups with most working. However, a third of those interviewed lived in the most deprived areas in Scotland – the lowest SIMD quintile. There is considerable variation in income by geography, with lower incomes on average in Ayrshire and North and South Lanarkshire and higher incomes on average in Glasgow, the Lothians, Edinburgh, Dunbartonshire and Southern Scotland.

The median monthly income of respondents was £1,800, ranging from £875 a month to £2,200 in Southern Scotland. Most of those interviewed had a working HH, but single parents were less likely to work and more likely to have lower incomes. The oldest and youngest tenants had the lowest incomes with incomes of those aged 35-54 somewhat higher. Nearly two thirds of households paid full rent on their property, 13% of households' rent was fully met by housing allowances and 14% received partial financial assistance.

Almost a quarter of tenants interviewed reported a health problem or disability that impacts on the daily life of someone in the household, with 6% affected a lot by this. Retired tenants far more commonly had issues, with 24% of households having someone's daily activities limited a lot by a health issue or disability.

Private tenants interviewed were predominantly flat dwellers and most commonly two-person households in two-bedroom properties. Families and those in rural areas more commonly occupied houses but single parents far more commonly occupied flats than other families did.

Accessing private renting

The majority (80%) of respondents reported having no difficulty finding a home to rent. A significant minority (one in five) of tenants did experience difficulty, particularly families with children, single parents, tenants with disabilities and tenants from minority ethnic groups. Tenants in urban areas were far more likely to report difficulties finding somewhere to stay compared with those in rural areas. Those moving more recently within the last two years were more likely to report difficulties than those resident in the PRS for longer. Tenants living in Tayside and those in Renfrewshire and Inverclyde were most likely to report difficulties finding a property, followed by tenants in Edinburgh and North Lanarkshire. Difficulty accessing private renting was most commonly due to affordability and supply issues, as well as being on housing benefit. The most vulnerable people with the lowest incomes were particularly disadvantaged, although few tenants identified overt discrimination. This is an area for further exploration in future waves.

Experience of private renting, rents and affordability

Most tenant respondents rented their property from a landlord or a letting agent. A significant proportion also rented from a friend or family member, which was more common amongst older tenants, those living in rural areas and those with longer tenancies.

In general, PRS tenants had not lived in their home for long periods - nearly half in total had lived in their home for less than 2 years, and only 10% for more than 10 years. The highest proportion of tenants were not sure how long they would stay in the sector, although a quarter did suggest it may be over five years. However, over 75% of respondents were confident they would be able to stay in the current property for as long as they'd like with reasons for this confidence put down to affordability, stability and trust in the landlord.

The highest proportion of respondents were renting in transition before buying, while a significant proportion were waiting for social housing, or renting due to a change of circumstances.

Most private renters were positive about their experience of their property, in terms of its condition, ability to meet their needs and affordability, but there were a significant minority of households with negative experiences.

Just over half of tenants reported paying housing costs that were over 30% of their net income. While there is a correlation between the proportion of income paid on housing costs and how easy people say it is to pay rent, even so, only 28% of those paying more than half of their income on their housing costs said this was difficult to afford. These findings suggest a mismatch between perceptions of affordability and the proportion of income that some people are willing to spend on their housing costs.

Single parents and other families were more likely to say they were struggling to be able to afford the rent. A quarter of single parents and almost one in five other families found it difficult to be able to afford the rent. More of those living in rural areas were paying more than 40% of their net income in rent.

The higher rent areas, as reported by tenants, were Edinburgh and the Lothians, Fife, Highlands and Islands, and Glasgow. Tenants in the Lothians (excluding Edinburgh), Highlands and Islands and Glasgow were also more likely to see rents increase at least once a year, while in Edinburgh this was less evident, but tenants tended to be resident for shorter periods.

The locations where tenants were paying higher deposits did not nest into these higher rent areas, with higher deposits in urban areas compared with rural areas, but more tenants

reporting higher deposits in South Lanarkshire, Dunbartonshire, Tayside, Central and North Lanarkshire compared with the higher rent areas.

Higher deposits were more frequently reported by respondents where the highest income householder worked full-time or were in full-time education. This suggests segmentation in the market, with higher rent properties with higher deposits demanded by those with greater financial capacity (albeit shared financial capacity in the case of those in full-time education). The exception are those who access lower rent, lower deposit properties through family and friends - these are more often older renters.

Just over half of tenants who had moved into their property since the legislation changed in 2017 said their deposit was lodged with a recognised tenancy deposit scheme, though awareness may be low, as two in five tenants who had paid a deposit were unsure whether this was lodged or not.

Despite only around one in ten tenants saying that they found their rent difficult to be able to afford, almost a third paid more than 40% of their income on housing costs. Single parents, tenants from minority ethnic groups and retired households often paid a higher proportion of income in rent, with working part-time and not working associated with higher rent to income ratios than working full-time or being in full-time education. Tenants in rural areas more commonly paid a higher portion of their income in rent, with the majority of tenants interviewed in Central, Ayrshire and the Lothians paying more than 40% of their income on housing costs.

Access to justice

The vast majority of tenants responding to the survey felt their landlords dealt with issues well, particularly in relation to general contact, day-to-day repairs and ongoing maintenance and upkeep of the property. Areas where there was ambivalence about performance of landlords/letting agents were around dealing with complaints, difficulties or concerns paying rent or social issues.

If there have been disputes between tenants and landlords/agents the most common issue is around repairs not being completed (16% experienced at some point). Other types of disputes were much less common and included deposits not being returned, property being in poor condition, and the landlord/agent turning up, or entering the property without warning.

Tenants generally feel able to challenge landlords, and equal proportion of tenants had spoken to their landlord or sought help from a solicitor. For more serious disputes, tenants were accessing legal advice and advice from the citizen's advice bureau more commonly than the local council.

Awareness of the First Tier Housing Tribunal remains low after two years, with just a third of tenants saying they were aware of it. Awareness of the new PRT is also low, with 32% of tenants saying they were aware of the tenancy.

The tenants that were less confident in challenging their landlord were more commonly younger tenants, tenants with disabilities, tenants from minority ethnic groups, those resident for fewer than two years, those working part-time or in full-time education. So older, better-off tenants would be more confident with disputes.

Most tenants had a formal tenancy in place but there was evidence that having an informal tenancy could be beneficial in terms of affordability, not paying deposits, limited rent increases and feelings of security. Two in five respondents said they did not know what type of tenancy they had, over a third said they were on a Private Residential Tenancy and just under a quarter a Short-Assured Tenancy.

Annex 1 – PRS tenants survey

PRIVATE RENTING IN SCOTLAND

Tenant survey

Good morning / afternoon / evening. My name is _____ from a research company called IBP Strategy & Research. We are conducting research for Nationwide Foundation, which is charitable foundation. We are part of a team led by Indigo House Consultancy about the experience of tenants in private renting in Scotland.

The survey asks questions about what you think about the property that you're living in, including its condition and how affordable it is, as well as your experience of finding the property and dealing with the landlord, letting agent or owner. The survey takes about 20 minutes or so to complete and all your answers will be anonymous and confidential.

We'll use the survey responses to write a report, which will be published next year. The responses you provide will be used by Indigo House and IBP for the purposes of statistical research and will not be passed on to any other party. They will be stored securely and will be deleted/destroyed when no longer needed for the purposes of the survey.

1. Screening Questions

Q1.1 Can I just check, do you or anyone else in the household rent this property from a private landlord, letting agent or another person, whether paying rent or rent-free?

Yes ☐ Continue

No ☐ Thank and close. Note on address database

Q1.2. Would you be interested in taking part in this research? You will be able to opt out of the research at any time.

Yes ☐ Continue

No ☐ Thank and close. Note on address database

Q1.3. Finally, can I confirm that you are normally resident at this address? Note to interviewer; this is to confirm that this is not a temporary or holiday home.

Yes..... ☐ Continue

No ☐ Thank and close

2. Your property

I now have a couple of questions about your home.

Q2.1 Which of the following best describes this home? Interviewer to confirm with respondent.

Detached house ☐

Detached bungalow ☐

Semi-detached house ☐

Semi-detached bungalow ☐

Terraced / end of terrace house ☐

A flat, maisonette or apartment (including four-in-a-block or conversion) ☐

A room or rooms in a shared property ☐

A caravan, mobile home or a houseboat ☐

Some other kind of accommodation (please give details below) ☐

Q2.2 And how many bedrooms does the property have?

_____ bedrooms

Q2.3 Which of the following best describes how you rent this home?

- Through a letting agent ☐
- Directly from a private landlord ☐
- From a friend or family member ☐
- From an employer/tied accommodation ☐
- From another person living here ☐
- Other (please give details below) ☐

Q2.4 And roughly how long have you been living here for?

- Less than 6 months ☐
- 6 months up to a year ☐
- Over 1 and up to 2 years ☐
- Over 2 years and up to 3 years ☐
- Over 3 years and up to 5 years ☐
- Over 5 years and up to 10 years ☐
- More than 10 years ☐

3. Finding your property

Q3.1 How did you find out about this property being available to rent? Select one only.

- On-line through Zoopla, S1 homes or another property web-site ☐
- Gumtree..... ☐
- Facebook..... ☐
- An estate or letting agent or solicitors ☐
- Through the local council or a Housing Association ☐
- Through the local authority homelessness/Housing Options service ☐
- Word of mouth from family/friends/acquaintances ☐
- Newspaper ☐
- Employer ☐
- Student accommodation services ☐
- Direct through landlord..... ☐
- Other (please give details below)..... ☐
- _____
- _____
- _____

Q3.2 And how easy or difficult did you find it to get a place to rent?

- Very easy ☐
- Quite Easy..... ☐
- Neither easy nor difficult ☐
- Quite difficult ☐
- Very difficult ☐
- Don't Know/Can't remember ☐

ASK IF QUITE/VERY DIFFICULT AT Q3.2

Q3.3 Why was it difficult? (Interviewer, please describe response as fully as possible and then code to one or more options below)

- Not many properties available ☐
- Lots of people competing for properties to rent ☐
- Rents too high/lack of affordable properties ☐
- Properties available poor quality ☐
- Properties were the wrong size ☐
- Properties not suitable for my physical needs/disabilities ☐
- Lack of properties where I wanted to stay ☐
- Needed somewhere near work..... ☐
- Didn't want children to have to move schools/school catchment issues ☐
- Not many shared flats/single rooms to rent ☐
- Landlords didn't want to take tenants on benefits ☐
- I have pets..... ☐
- Landlord unwilling to let to me due to my race, gender or other characteristics ☐
- Housing Benefit/Local Housing Allowance would not cover the cost..... ☐
- Council tax band made available property too expensive..... ☐
- Commuting costs made available property too expensive..... ☐
- Unable to pay the deposit/holding deposit..... ☐
- Unable to get a UK-based guarantor..... ☐
- Other (please give details below)..... ☐

4. Views on renting

This section of questions is about how you see renting and what plans you have

Q4.1 Which of the following describes you? Select all that apply.

- Renting 'for now' but looking to buy in the next few years ☐
- Renting as a stop-gap between selling one home and buying another ☐
- Renting due to a change in circumstances – relationship, job etc..... ☐
- Renting as a first step out of homelessness/loss of accommodation..... ☐
- Enjoying the flexibility of private renting ☐
- Private renting to get a better choice of location compared with social renting..... ☐
- Private renting because there is a long waiting list for social housing ☐
- Private renting with little immediate prospect of owning..... ☐
- Prefer not to have the responsibility of owning ☐
- Other (please give details below)..... ☐

Q4.2 How much longer do you see yourself renting this property?

- Less than a year..... ☐
- Between one and two years..... ☐
- Between two and five years ☐
- Longer than this ☐
- Don't know / Cannot say..... ☐

Q4.3 How confident, or not, are you that you'll be able to rent this property for as long as you'd like to?

- Very confident..... ☐
- Quite confident ☐
- Neither/nor ☐
- Not very confident..... ☐
- Not at all confident..... ☐
- DK/cannot say ☐

ASK IF NOT VERY OR NOT AT ALL CONFIDENT AT Q4.3

Q4.4 Why do you not feel confident that you'll be able to stay here? Select all that apply.

- Rent difficult to afford at the moment..... ☐
- Rent might increase and become difficult to afford ☐
- Problems with neighbours ☐
- Issues with flat-mate/sharing ☐
- Insecure employment..... ☐
- Moving for work..... ☐
- Landlord likely to sell the property..... ☐
- Landlord likely to return to live in the property ☐
- Landlord likely to end the tenancy for another reason..... ☐
- Other (please give details below)..... ☐

ASK IF VERY OR QUITE CONFIDENT AT Q4.3

Q4.5 Why do you feel confident that you'll be able to stay here? Select all that apply.

- Rent is affordable at the moment ☐
- Financially stable ☐
- Secure employment..... ☐
- Have lived here a long time..... ☐
- Landlord unlikely to sell the property ☐
- Know the landlord well ☐
- I know I have a legal right to stay here ☐
- Other (please give details below)..... ☐

5. Property issues and disputes

This section of questions is about the current property and your dealings with the landlord/letting agent/owner

Q5.1 Thinking of the property overall, how satisfied or not are you with it?

- Very satisfied ☐
- Quite satisfied..... ☐
- Neither/nor ☐
- Quite dissatisfied..... ☐
- Very dissatisfied ☐
- DK/cannot say ☐

Q5.2 And how would you rate the following aspects of the property? Select one option in each row.

	Very good	Fairly good	Neither good nor poor	Fairly poor	Very poor	Don't Know	Not applicable
Q5.2a The overall condition of the property	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q5.2b The quality of fixtures and fittings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q5.2c The general state of repair	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q5.2d The energy efficiency / cost to heat the property	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q5.2e Ease of getting around inside the property	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q5.3 And how well, or not, does your landlord/letting agent/the owner respond or help with the following? Select one option in each row.

	Very well	Quite well	Neither/ nor	Not very well	Not at all well	Don't Know
Q5.3a General contact - emails, letters or phone calls	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q5.3b Day-to-day repairs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q5.3c On-going maintenance/upkeep	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q5.3d Dealing with complaints/ disputes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q5.3e Difficulties/ concerns paying the rent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q5.4f Advice about social issues – neighbours / community problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q5.4 Since renting privately, have you ever had experience any of the following, whether in this or another property? Select all that apply.

- Not having a deposit returned at the end of the tenancy ☐
- An unreasonable rent increase ☐
- Repairs not being done..... ☐
- The property being in very poor condition..... ☐
- The landlord or agent turning up at the property without warning..... ☐
- The landlord or agent entering the property without you consent..... ☐
- Aggressive eviction or being asked to leave the property in a threatening way ☐
- Other problems while private renting (please give details below)..... ☐

IF ANY CODED AT Q5.4

Q5.5 Can I just check, were any of those in the last two years? Select all that apply.

- Not having a deposit returned at the end of the tenancy ☐
- An unreasonable rent increase ☐
- Repairs not being done..... ☐
- The property being in very poor condition..... ☐
- The landlord or agent turning up at the property without warning..... ☐
- The landlord or agent entering the property without you consent..... ☐
- Aggressive eviction or being asked to leave the property in a threatening way ☐
- Other problems (please give details below)..... ☐

Q5.6 Did you seek any help or advice about this?

Yes..... ☐
No ☐
Can't remember ☐

IF CODED YES AT Q5.6

Q5.7 Who did you approach and what happened? Interviewer, please describe response as fully as possible.

ASK ALL

Q5.8 Private rented tenants that have disputes with landlords can take these to a First Tier Housing Tribunal, which deals with rent or repair issues in private sector housing as well as civil cases about deposits and landlord's right of entry and eviction/possession. Were you aware of that, before today?

Yes..... ☐
No ☐

Q5.9 How confident, or not, would you feel challenging your landlord/letting agent/the owner in this or another way?

- Very confident..... ☐
- Quite confident ☐
- Neither/nor ☐
- Not very confident..... ☐
- Not at all confident..... ☐
- DK / Cannot say ☐

Q5.10 Have you ever taken a landlord from whom you rent(ed) privately to either of the following?

- Yes, First Tier Housing Tribunal ☐
- Yes, the former Private Rented Housing Panel (PRHP) ☐
- Yes, but not sure if this was to the First Tier Housing Tribunal or the former Private Rented Housing Panel ☐
- No ☐

Go to Q5.11

Go to Q5.11

Go to Q5.11

Go to Section 6

Q5.11 What issues were raised at the Tribunal / Panel?

- Return of deposit..... ☐
- Rent increases ☐
- Repairs ☐
- Condition of property ☐
- Landlord access ☐
- Aggressive eviction or similar ☐
- Another issue (please say what below)..... ☐

Q5.12 How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with your overall experience of the Tribunal / Panel?

- Very Satisfied ☐
- Quite Satisfied ☐
- Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied ☐
- Quite Dissatisfied ☐
- Very Dissatisfied ☐

Q5.13 Could you give me brief reasons for your answer? Interviewer, include only substantive responses; exclude “no” and “don’t know” responses.

6. Rents and tenancy arrangements

I would now like to ask you some questions about rent affordability, which is important to our understanding of the experience of private renting. Should you not wish to provide this information please just tell me that you prefer not to say.

Q6.1 Which of the following applies to you?

- Housing Benefit/Universal Credit or Local Housing Allowance pays the whole rent ☐
- Some benefit received but you pay some rent..... ☐
- The property is rent free as it is tied accommodation ☐
- The property is rent free for some other reason (not paid by benefits)..... ☐
- You pay full rent ☐
- You pay a share of the rent through a flat-share ☐
- Prefer not to say..... ☐

IF ANY RENT PAID (OTHERS SKIP TO Q6.5)

Q6.2 How easy or difficult is it to be able to afford your rent?

- Very easy ☐
- Quite easy ☐
- Neither easy nor difficult ☐
- Quite difficult ☐
- Very difficult ☐
- Prefer not to say ☐

Q6.3 And, in the past year, have you had any difficulties paying the rent?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐
- Prefer not to say ☐

Q6.4 IF CODED YES AT Q6.3

Did you approach anyone for help and what happened? Interviewer, please describe response as fully as possible.

ASK ALL EXCEPT RENT FREE/TIED ACCOMMODATION (Coded 3 or 4 at Q6.1) – THOSE IN RENT FREE/TIED ACCOMMODATION SKIP TO Q6.13

Q6.5 How much is the **total rent** charged for the property? (i.e. before any Housing Benefit/Universal Credit) *If they share a flat, this would be their share of the rent.*

£ ____ per calendar month

Don't know

Refused

Q6.6 And how much **do you pay** each month after any Housing Benefit/Universal Credit? *If they share a flat, this would be their share of the rent.*

£ ____ per calendar month

Don't know

Refused

Q6.7 Approximately how much of your net income (that is, the income you get from benefits or work after tax and other deductions) goes on housing costs (including rent, utilities, council tax and other regular household bills)?

Less than 10% ☐

10% up to 20% ☐

Over 20% and up to 30% ☐

Over 30% and up to 40% ☐

Over 40% and up to 50% ☐

Over 50% (please estimate below) ☐

%

Q6.8 How often has your rent been increased, since you moved in?

Rent has stayed the same ☐

Once a year increase ☐

- More often than once a year ☐
- Once every couple of years ☐
- Rent increases less often than once every two years ☐
- Prefer not to say ☐

Q6.9 When you first started renting the property, did you agree to pay the rent advertised or a lower rent?

- Yes, paid advertised rent ☐
- No, agreed a lower rent ☐
- Can't remember ☐

Q6.10 And, when you first started renting the property, did you pay a deposit or have this organised through a Rent Deposit Scheme?

- Yes, deposit paid ☐
- Deposit organised through a Rent Deposit Scheme ☐
- No ☐
- Can't remember ☐

Q6.11 IF DEPOSIT PAID (code 1 at Q6.10)...Was that...

- Less than one month's rent..... ☐
- One month's rent ☐
- Six week's rent..... ☐
- Two month's rent ☐
- More than two month's rent ☐
- Can't remember..... ☐

IF DEPOSIT PAID

Q6.12 And, do you know whether your deposit is lodged in a tenancy deposit scheme? (these are called Letting Protection Service Scotland, Safe Deposits Scotland and my deposits Scotland).

Yes - deposit lodged with a tenancy deposit scheme ☐

Not sure ☐

No – deposit not lodged with a tenancy deposit scheme..... ☐

ASK ALL

Q6.13 Do you have ...

A signed lease for the tenancy, which you have a copy of ☐

A signed lease but not a copy of it ☐

An informal arrangement with the owner/landlord ☐

Something else (write in) ☐

Prefer not to say ☐

Q6.14 ‘Private Residential Tenancies’ were introduced on 1st December 2017. Were you aware of this change?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Q6.15 And, since December 2017, have you... (READ OUT)

Moved onto this type of tenancy from a Short Assured Tenancy ☐

Started a new tenancy on this type..... ☐

Not sure ☐

Q6.16 To the best of your knowledge, which if any of the following types of lease do you have for your tenancy of this property?

Short-Assured Tenancy (would have been signed before December 2017) ☐

- Private Residential Tenancy (would have been signed since December 2017) ☐
- None of these ☐
- Not sure ☐
- Prefer not to say ☐

7. Household profile information

Finally, I would now like to ask you some short background questions about yourself. This will allow us to compare the experiences of different types of household. Should you not wish to provide this information please just tell me that you prefer not to say.

Q7.1 Which of the following age bands do you fall into?

- 16 to 24 ☐
- 25 to 34 ☐
- 35 to 44 ☐
- 45 to 54 ☐
- 55 to 64 ☐
- 65+ ☐
- Prefer not to say ☐

Q7.2 What best describes your gender?

- Female..... ☐
- Male ☐
- Prefer not to say..... ☐
- Prefer to self-describe ☐

Q7.3 And how many of the following people live here (including you)

- Children under 1 year old _____
- Children aged 1 to 15 _____
- Adults aged 16 to 64 _____
- Adults aged 65+ _____
- Total (should add to sum of above)** _____

Q7.4 Do you, or anyone in your household, find your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability, which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?

- Yes, limited a lot..... ☐
- Yes, limited a little..... ☐
- No ☐

Q7.5 What is the working status of the householder with the highest income?

- Full-time employment (30+ hours per week)..... ☐
- Part-time employment (less than 30 hours)..... ☐
- Unemployed..... ☐
- Looking after family/the home full-time..... ☐
- Retired ☐
- Full time education..... ☐
- Other (please give details below)..... ☐
- Prefer not to say ☐

Q7.6 And thinking about your total monthly household income from earnings, benefits, tax credits and any other income together, roughly how much would your typical household income be **AFTER TAX?** (INT: If they flat-share, ensure their income only)

£ ____ per calendar month

Don't know

Refused

Q7.7 What is your ethnic group?

- White Scottish..... ☐
- Other White British..... ☐
- White Irish..... ☐
- Gypsy / Traveller..... ☐
- White Polish..... ☐
- Other White..... ☐
- Mixed or multiple ethnic group..... ☐
- Pakistani, Pakistani Scottish or Pakistani British..... ☐
- Indian, Indian Scottish or Indian British..... ☐
- Bangladeshi, Bangladeshi Scottish or Bangladeshi British..... ☐
- Chinese, Chinese Scottish or Chinese British..... ☐
- Other Asian..... ☐
- African, African Scottish or African British..... ☐
- Other African..... ☐
- Caribbean, Caribbean Scottish or Caribbean British..... ☐
- Black, Black Scottish or Black British..... ☐
- Other Caribbean or Black..... ☐
- Arab, Arab Scottish or Arab British..... ☐
- Other Ethnic Group..... ☐

8. Consent to re-contact

Q8.1 Finally, there will be some follow-up interviews with interested tenants, to discuss your experience in more detail. Those interviews will take place face to face or by telephone at a time that is convenient to you. Would you be interested in taking part in the follow-up research?

Yes (fill in contact details below) ☐

No (thanks and close) ☐

Name

Contact telephone

Contact email

Closing Statement

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this research and for answering our questions.

Interviewer: Issue Thank You card, thank and close

Annex 2 – Tenant survey fieldwork report

Sampling Approach

The primary approach to the survey involved a household survey designed to be reflective, as far as practical of the spread of private rented sector tenants by Local Authority area, urban-rural split and SIMD decile as per the Scottish Household Survey profile. It was envisaged that some element of interviewing would be conducted by telephone, primarily in rural areas where face-to-face interviewing would be impractical. For practical reasons (in order that visits could be appropriately targeted) it was necessary to source a database of contact details of people thought to be privately renting.

Various data providers were approached to provide this information although it should be noted that many indicated that they were not able to provide such data for a household survey due to the basis on which individuals on their lists had consented to be contacted. Following this process, Prospect360 were identified as the data provider (<https://www.prospect360.co.uk/>). They undertook appropriate checks on IBP's registration status with the Information Commissioner's Office and undertook the necessary weighting analysis under GDPR prior to releasing this data to IBP. A total of 8,008 records were sourced, which formed the primary sampling source for the survey.

The information provided to IBP contained contact names, addresses and telephone numbers broken down by Local Authority area. This was augmented as follows:

- By allocating all cases to the Local Authority Groupings from the Scottish Household Survey.
- By allocating all cases according to the Scottish Government's two-fold urban-rural classification.
- By allocating all cases to the five quintiles of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD).

A target sample was set in relation to Local Authority Groupings derived from the breakdown of private renters as per the Scottish Household Survey 2017. The target profile of interviews was as tabulated below:

Local Authority Grouping	Proportion of Private Rented Population	Target Number of Interviews
Ayrshire	5.3%	53
Central	4.3%	43
Dunbartonshire	2.0%	20
Edinburgh	18.8%	188
Fife	6%	60
Glasgow	15%	150
Grampian	9%	90
Highlands and Islands	8%	80
Lothian	5.1%	51
North Lanarkshire	3.3%	33
Renfrewshire and Inverclyde	5.1%	51
South Lanarkshire	3.4%	34
Southern Scotland	5.2%	52
Tayside	9.5%	95
Total	100%	1,000

The proportion of potential interviewees available on the database reflected this profile as this number of contacts was known in advance and was requested of the data provider.

The following target breakdown was derived in relation to the Scottish Government's twofold Urban-Rural Classification, again derived from the Scottish Household Survey 2017:

Urban-Rural Classification	Proportion of Private Rented Population	Target Number of Interviews
Urban	86.5%	865
Rural	13.5%	135
Total	100%	1,000

The profile of the sample database was broadly reflective of this breakdown (87.5% urban, 12.5% rural).

The target breakdown according to Scottish index of Multiple Deprivation Quintiles again using the Scottish Household Survey 2017 (and based on SIMD 2016) was as shown below:

SIMD Quintile (most deprived = 1)	Proportion of Private Rented Population	Target Number of Interviews
1	16.4%	164
2	21.9%	219
3	23.3%	233
4	20.1%	201
5	18.3%	183
Total	100%	1,000

The sample database that was sourced had a significantly different profile from this (SIMD1 33.0%, SIMD2 25.5%, SIMD3 18.2%, SIMD4 13.1%, SIMD5 10.1%). As one of the main purposes of the survey was to examine the experiences of lower income private renters, it was judged appropriate to allow the sample to be weighted towards more deprived areas, compared with the SHS profile.

The target breakdown by gender, again derived from the Scottish Household Survey 2018 was as follows:

Gender	Proportion of Private Rented Population	Target Number of Interviews
Female	49%	490
Male	51%	510
Total	100%	1,000

Interviewing Approach

IBP undertook an analysis by area of the numbers of interviews required in each category in order to ensure that the achieved sample would, as far as profile, reflect the profile of the Scottish Household Survey with respect to the factors described above. This data was used to prepare interviewer allocations, which broke down interviews required by Local Authority grouping, urban-rural classification and SIMD quintile.

Mainland interviews in predominantly urban areas were conducted on a house-to-house basis with the sourced database of contacts providing the starting point for this. Initially, interviewers were advised that they could also interview in homes that were 5 doors to either side of contacts on the sourced database. However, following commencement of fieldwork, it became apparent that, other than in some specific parts of Edinburgh and Glasgow, the sourced database contained within it very many non-eligible interviewees, who were either in the social rented or privately owned sectors. It was therefore necessary to relax this stipulation, with interviewers being informed that they could interview in areas adjacent from the named contacts, but still within the settlements identified.

Interviewers were also instructed that interviewing should not be conducted within purpose-built student accommodation, where the landlord would be either an educational institution or a commercial provider of such accommodation.

Overall, a total of 850 interviews were conducted on a face-to-face basis. Of these, 107 were from the sourced database (of which 46 were in Edinburgh and 35 in Glasgow). In all cases, whether the interview was drawn from the sourced database or from interviews conducted in adjacent areas within these settlements, respondent name, address and postcode was taken, so that this could be compared to target interview numbers in relation to urban-rural classification and SIMD.

Additional interviews in rural areas and remote island locations were conducted by telephone, with target quotas also being set for these. Similar issues were identified in relation to there being large numbers of non-eligible contacts on the sourced database and these contacts were exhausted in advance of the target interviewing numbers being met, with 64 interviews being achieved from a total of 1,003 contacts.

An additional database of contacts for telephone interview only was then sourced from an alternative data supplier (<https://ukdatahouse.com/>). This consisted of a further 1,500 contacts, primarily in rural areas but also including some urban contacts where these were required to top-up the existing sample.

A total of 130 telephone interviews were conducted overall.

The overall achieved sample was 980 interviews.

Achieved Sample Profile

The achieved sample as compared to target in relation to local Authority grouping is set out below:⁵

Local Authority Grouping	Proportion of Private Rented Population	Percentage of Survey Responses (base: 980)
Ayrshire	5%	6%
Central	4%	4%
Dunbartonshire	2%	2%
Edinburgh	19%	19%
Fife	6%	6%
Glasgow	15%	15%
Grampian	9%	8%
Highlands and Islands	8%	6%
Lothian	5%	5%
North Lanarkshire	3%	3%
Renfrewshire and Inverclyde	5%	5%
South Lanarkshire	3%	4%
Southern Scotland	5%	6%
Tayside	9%	10%

⁵ Figures in this section are expressed to the nearest percentage point

Total	100%	100%
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The profile of responses closely matches the profile of the private rented sector as per the Scottish Household Survey 2018. The Highlands & Islands is slightly under-represented, this reflected the challenges of sourcing sufficient interviews in rural areas as described above.

The achieved sample against target in relation to urban-rural classification is shown below:

Urban-Rural Classification	Proportion of Private Rented Population	Percentage of Survey Responses (base: 980)
Urban	87%	86%
Rural	13%	14%
Total	100%	1,000

The achieved sample in relation to this twofold urban-rural classification corresponds closely to the profile of the private rented sector in the Scottish Household Survey 2018.

The achieved sample in relation to SIMD quintiles is shown below:

SIMD Quintile (most deprived = 1)	Proportion of Private Rented Population	Percentage of Survey Responses (base: 969) ⁶
1	16%	33%
2	22%	23%
3	23%	18%
4	20%	16%
5	18%	11%
Total	100%	100%

The achieved sample varies quite significantly from that shown in the Scottish Household Survey 2017 and is, in reality, much more in line with that of the sourced database used as the starting point for interviewing. The study's aims were to consider the experiences of lower income private renters, so weighting the sample towards more deprived areas fitted these aims.

The achieved sample compared to target in relation to gender was as follows:

Gender	Proportion of Private Rented Population	Percentage of Survey Responses (base: 980)
Female	49%	53%
Male	51%	47%
Total	100%	1,000

⁶ The lower base number of responses here takes account of a small number of cases where the postcode could not be classified based on the published SIMD information.

Females were slightly over-represented in terms of the proportion of survey responses compared to that in the Scottish Household Survey 2018. This reflects females being more willing to engage with interviewers and, where more than one adult is present in the home, there being a common tendency for the female in the household to undertake the interview. Annex 3 – Comparison of Scottish Household Survey and Rent Better Tenants Survey household profile

Comparing the overall results for Scotland with the Scottish Household Survey and the Rent Better survey of private renters, just 13% of private renters in the SHS in 2018 and 27% of those in the Rent Better Survey received housing benefit. In this respect, lower income tenants are more prevalent in the Rent Better sample. However, 27% on Housing Benefit is close to the estimates for 2018 based on DWP data, with 25% of PRS households estimated to be on housing benefit or Universal Credit housing element⁷.

Table A1 below shows that while 37% of the SHS sample in 2018 were single adults, 18% of the Rent Better sample were. The Rent Better sample has proportionately more families, small adult and larger adult households.

As Table A1 shows, the SHS profile is younger, with 18% between aged 16 to 24 years compared with 11% of the Rent Better sample.

Table A1: Household characteristics by tenure (2018)

	Private Rent (SHS 2018)	Rent Better PRS tenants
Household composition		
Large adult	7%	13%
Small/Large family	15%	21%
Older smaller/ single older	8%	7%
Single adult	37%	18%
Single parent	5%	7%
Small adult	27%	31%
Age of highest income householder		
16 to 24	18%	11%
25 to 34	34%	25%
35 to 44	18%	26%
45 to 59	19%	18%
60 to 74	8%	11%
75 plus	3%	8%

⁷ Single Housing Benefit Extract (SHBE) May 2018 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/housing-benefit-caseload-statistics>); StatExplore - "Households on Universal Credit, Regional - LA - OAs by Month and Housing Entitlement – Tenure Counting: Households on Universal Credit

Table A6: SHS private renting household characteristics 2012-2018 compared with Better Rent

	SHS							Rent Better
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2020
Receives Housing Benefit	22%	19%	18%	16%	18%	16%	13%	27%
SIMD 1	17%	16%	16%	17%	20%	20%	16%	33%
SIMD 2	24%	21%	22%	21%	22%	21%	20%	22%
SIMD 3	21%	24%	21%	27%	22%	22%	22%	18%
SIMD 4	19%	21%	21%	20%	19%	19%	23%	15%
SIMD 5	19%	18%	20%	16%	17%	18%	19%	11%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	99%
Self employed	8%	7%	7%	8%	9%	9%	9%	-
Employed full time	46%	53%	54%	53%	50%	49%	49%	63%
Employed part time	7%	8%	6%	8%	8%	9%	7%	7%
Looking after the home or family	5%	4%	3%	3%	4%	3%	3%	3%
Permanently retired from work	7%	6%	6%	7%	8%	7%	8%	8%
Unemployed and seeking work	8%	6%	5%	5%	4%	4%	4%	9%
In further/higher education	13%	12%	14%	12%	13%	15%	15%	6%
Permanently sick or disabled	4%	4%	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%	
Short-term illness or injury	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	5%
Other, please say what (specify)	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Single adult	33%	32%	32%	20%	35%	35%	36%	18%
Small adult	27%	29%	29%	20%	26%	26%	27%	31%
Single parent	10%	9%	9%	5%	9%	8%	6%	7%
Small family	13%	12%	13%	12%	11%	12%	12%	
Large family	4%	3%	4%	5%	4%	4%	3%	21%
Large adult	6%	7%	6%	9%	7%	7%	7%	13%
Older smaller	3%	3%	2%	13%	3%	3%	4%	7%
Single pensioner	5%	4%	5%	15%	6%	5%	6%	
Other households	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Under £6000	6%	5%	6%	5%	4%	5%	5%	7%
£6001-10000	12%	12%	10%	9%	7%	8%	8%	8%
£10001-15000	19%	17%	18%	17%	19%	15%	15%	18%
£15001-20000	17%	19%	19%	21%	18%	18%	16%	13%
£20001+	46%	48%	47%	48%	52%	54%	55%	54%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table A2 shows some variability across time within the SHS sample and between the SHS sample and the Rent Better sample. 22% of SHS respondents reported receiving Housing Benefit in 2012 but this had reduced to 13% by 2018 while 27% received Housing Benefit in the Rent Better study. Data from the DWP suggests the rate of Housing Benefit receipt in

May 2018 was around 21% of all tenants (subject to considerable regional variation) increasing to 25% once Universal Credit is also included⁸.

	Private Rented Sector (HB - SHBE)	PRS UC housing entitlement	Estimated hhlds in PRS	% on HB or UC
SCOTLAND	72,750	13,790	352,322	25%
Aberdeen City	1,783	211	19,660	10%
Aberdeenshire	2,161	148	11,301	20%
Angus	1,534	478	9,838	20%
Argyll and Bute	1,337	80	4,638	31%
Clackmannanshire	515	238	3,390	22%
Dumfries and Galloway	2,840	125	10,329	29%
Dundee City	3,127	999	15,967	26%
East Ayrshire	1,869	640	4,467	56%
East Dunbartonshire	847	286	3,580	32%
East Lothian	726	654	4,552	30%
East Renfrewshire	779	31	1,355	60%
Edinburgh, City of	7,554	493	58,979	14%
Eilean Siar	149	13	1,015	16%
Falkirk	1,428	258	6,458	26%
Fife	4,918	1,428	22,871	28%
Glasgow City	11,696	958	54,340	23%
Highland	1,619	1,150	15,897	17%
Inverclyde	1,333	926	4,866	46%
Midlothian	833	457	4,305	30%
Moray	1,050	71	7,888	14%
North Ayrshire	3,004	869	4,533	85%
North Lanarkshire	4,748	546	14,269	37%
Orkney Islands	173	17	589	32%
Perth and Kinross	1,854	93	11,065	18%
Renfrewshire	2,853	270	8,643	36%
Scottish Borders	1,669	103	7,847	23%
Shetland Islands	50	14	593	11%
South Ayrshire	2,107	383	5,710	44%
South Lanarkshire	3,915	1,352	13,818	38%
Stirling	558	285	5,274	16%
West Dunbartonshire	1,255	91	3,266	41%
West Lothian	2,472	108	8,333	31%

⁸ Single Housing Benefit Extract (SHBE) May 2018 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/housing-benefit-caseload-statistics>); StatExplore - "Households on Universal Credit, Regional - LA - OAs by Month and Housing Entitlement – Tenure Counting: Households on Universal Credit, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/housing-statistics-scotland-2019-key-trends-summary/> (PRS estimates)

This suggests that the 2018 SHS respondents under-reported Housing Benefit receipt or included more non-recipients while the Rent Better sample – with 13% on full Housing Benefit and 14% on partial Housing Benefit – included more Housing Benefit recipients.

The Rent Better sample is weighted towards more deprived locations, with 33% of respondents in the lowest SIMD quintile (the poorest 20% of geographical locations, according to ONS area classification data). The SHS sample of PRS tenants has tended towards less deprived areas, with typically 16%-17% of households interviewed in the lowest SIMD areas.

The Rent Better sample includes proportionately slightly more working households and considerably fewer in full-time education, compared with the SHS. The SHS private renting sector respondent sample has seen a slight reduction in working respondent households in recent years, from 68% in 2013 to 65% in 2018 compared with 70% of the Rent Better sample. The proportion of private renter households in full time education in the SHS private renting respondent sample has increased slightly in recent years.

The Rent Better respondent sample is more weighted towards families than the SHS estimates suggest. Over a third of private renters (36%) were estimated to be single (non-pensioner) adults in the SHS in 2018 were while just 18% of the Rent Better sample were.

The proportion of the SHS PRS households estimated to be families has reduced over time, with 27% being families (single parents, small or large families) in 2012 reducing to 21% by 2018. The 2020 Rent Better sample included 28% families – 7% single parents and 21% two adults plus children.

Despite the difference in household profile, the income profile of the 2018 SHS PRS respondent sample and the 2020 Rent Better sample is similar. This means that the SHS respondent sample will tend to be better off, though, as households are larger.

On balance, there are a number of areas where the characteristics of the Rent Better respondent sample differ from the SHS sample – tending to poorer locations and couples and families more than single adult households. However, the income profile is similar and the proportion of households on Housing Benefit in the Rent Better sample is similar to estimates based on DWP claimant information for 2018.

At this stage in the Census cycle, reflecting on the SHS and DWP Housing Benefit data is the best comparison we have to the Rent Better survey. This suggests that, overall, the Rent Better survey has achieved a good mix of household types but has proportionately more poorer households in poorer areas and more families than the SHS. Given that looking at the experiences of poorer households in housing need was a key focus for the work, this is not a disadvantage but the findings need to be interpreted in that context.