

Allocation Policy Consultation Report

By Mary Hargreaves, Customer Information Officer

1.0 Introduction

A review of the Allocations Policy is being carried out, including the development of a new digital lettings service, These Homes. As a result, two consultation exercises took place during November 2019 and September 2020.

The 2019 consultation was sent to all tenants, and all Homehunt applicants who had bid on a property in the last 5 years. 53 stakeholders which consisted of local councillors, support and advice agencies, East Lothian Council (ELC) departments local Tenants and Residents Associations and ELHA's Tenant Involvement Group were also invited to take part. This came to 3,135 recipients

The 2020 consultation was undertaken as new opportunities came to light during the development of These Homes. All tenants and all Homehunt applicants were invited to take part, and anyone who had not been able to take part in the previous consultation, either because they had not been a tenant or applicant in 2019, or because they were an inactive Homehunt applicant in 2019, were given the opportunity to also comment on the 2019 consultation. The 2020 consultation was sent to 5,546 recipients.

The consultation documents can be found at **Appendix 1a & 1b**.

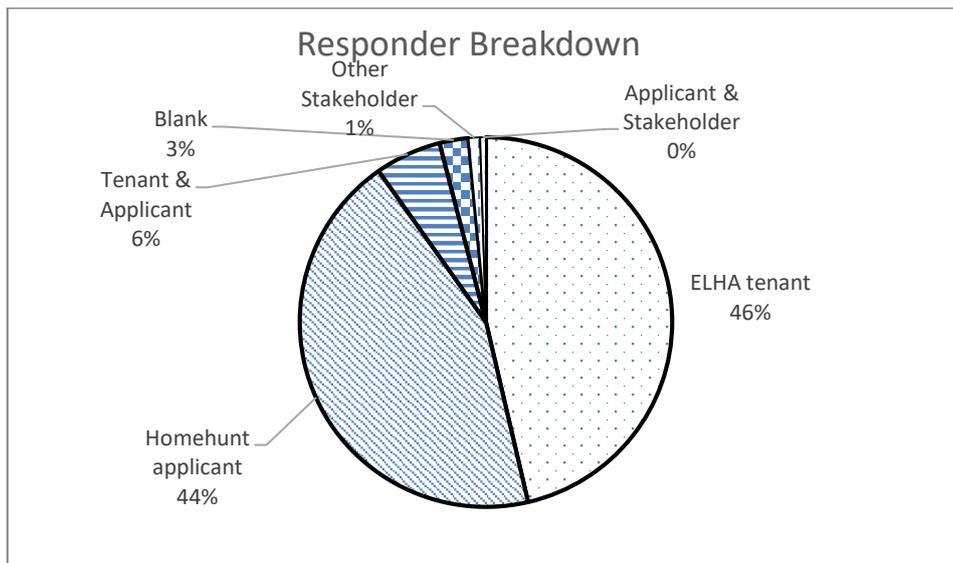
399 responses were received for the 2019 consultation, and 600 for the 2020 consultation a response rate of 11.5% and 10.8% respectively. Of the 399 responses in 2019, 77 (19%) were from completed paper forms, with the remaining 322 responses being made online. Of the 600 responses in 2020, 170 (28%) were from completed paper forms, with the remaining 430 responses being made online.

2.0 Results

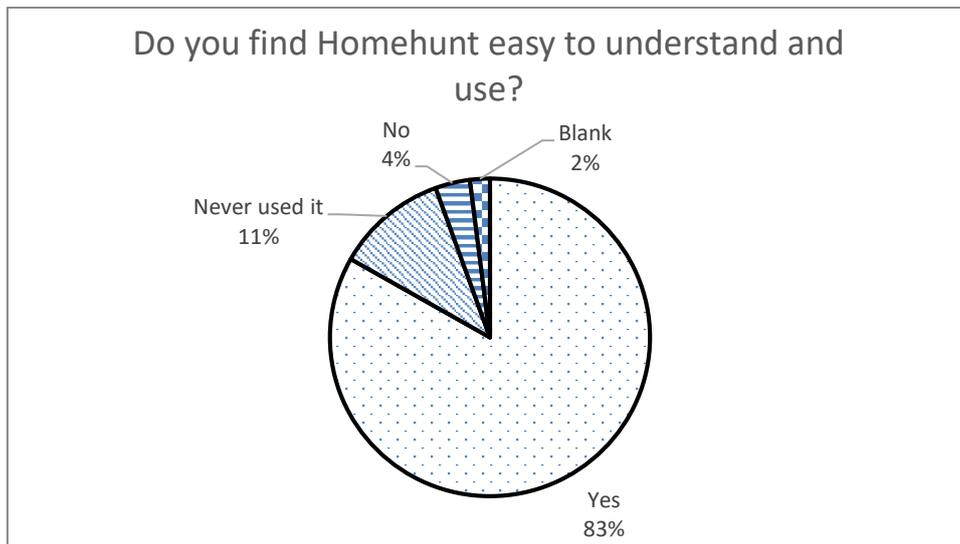
As these consultations generated a lot of comments, these have been moved to **Appendix 1c** to make this report easier to read.

2019 – please refer to **Appendix 1a** for the full questions.

Demographics:

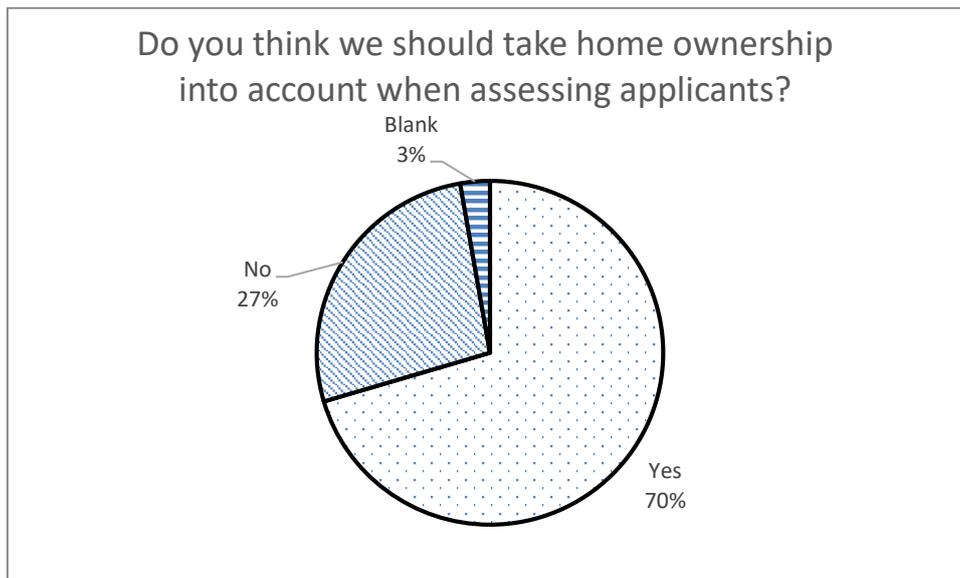


Where there was a significant variation between the responses given by tenants and Homehunt applicants, an additional note has been made below the chart.



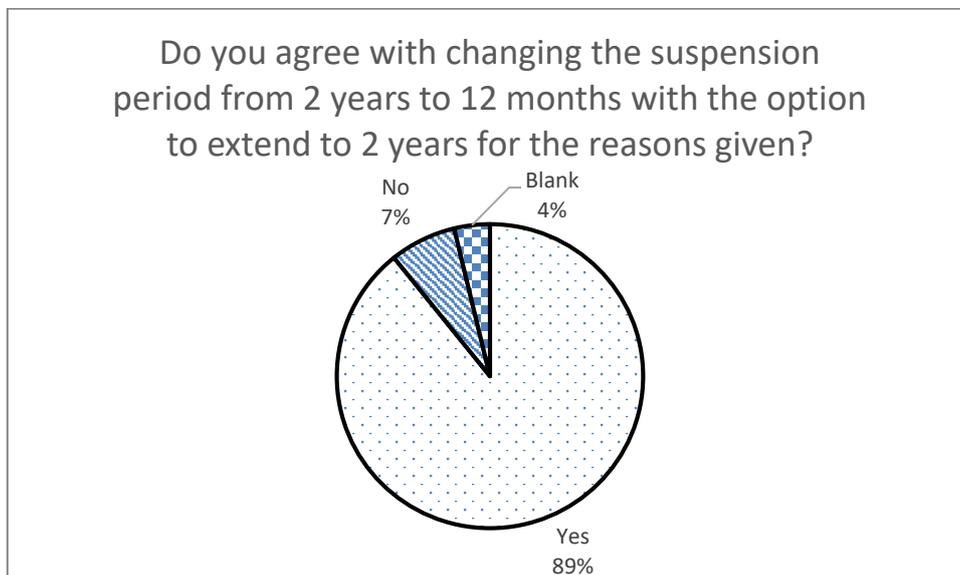
Responders who had never used Homehunt were tenants who had either become tenants before the introduction of Homehunt, had exchanged into their current home, or had been nomination allocations from East Lothian Council.

Question 1.

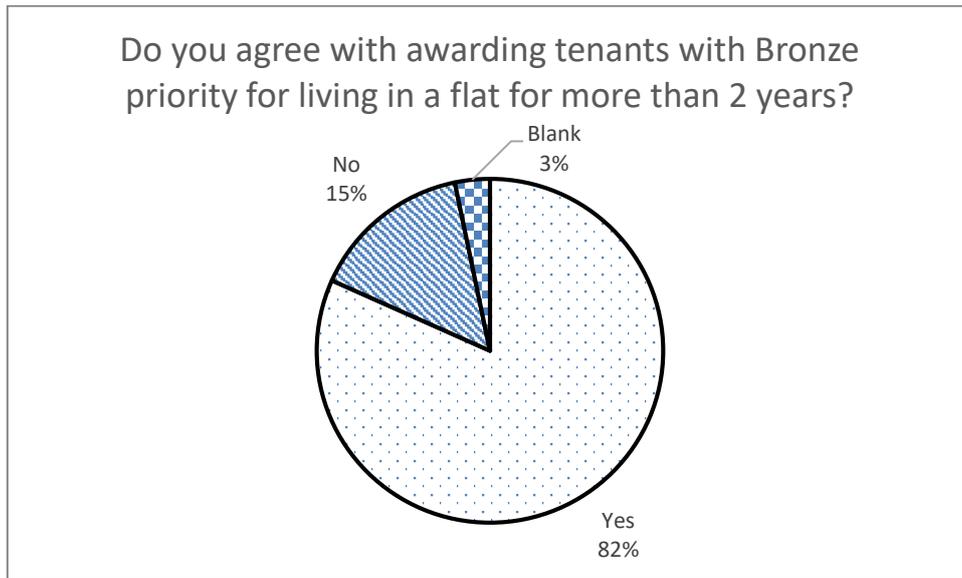


This question had a very large variation between tenants and Homehunt applicants. 81% of Homehunt applicants thought we should take home ownership into account, while only 64% of tenants agreed.

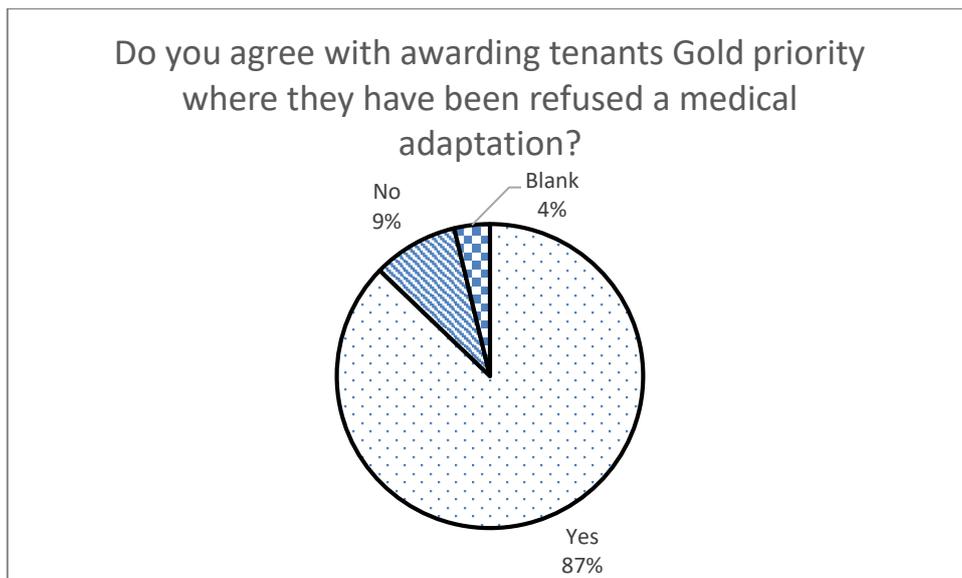
Question 2.



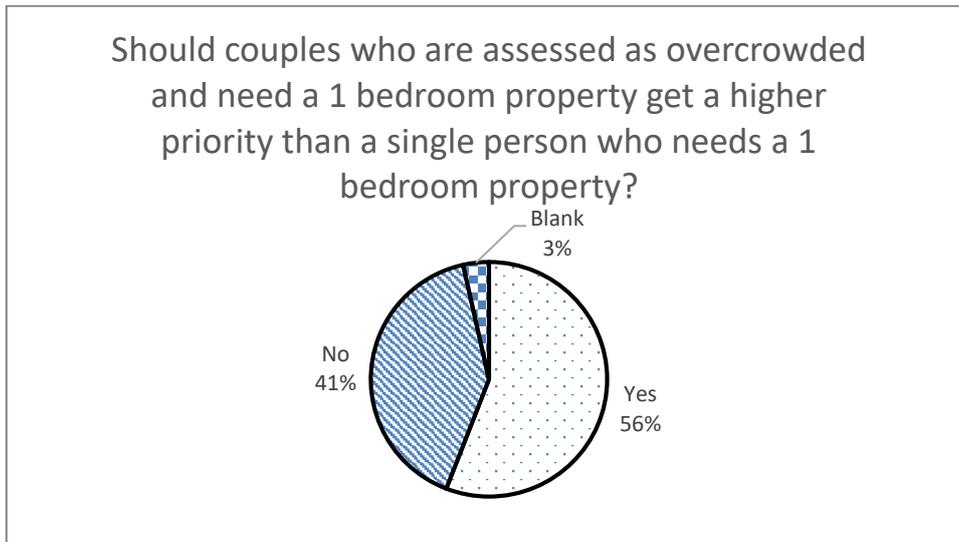
Question 3a.



Question 3b.

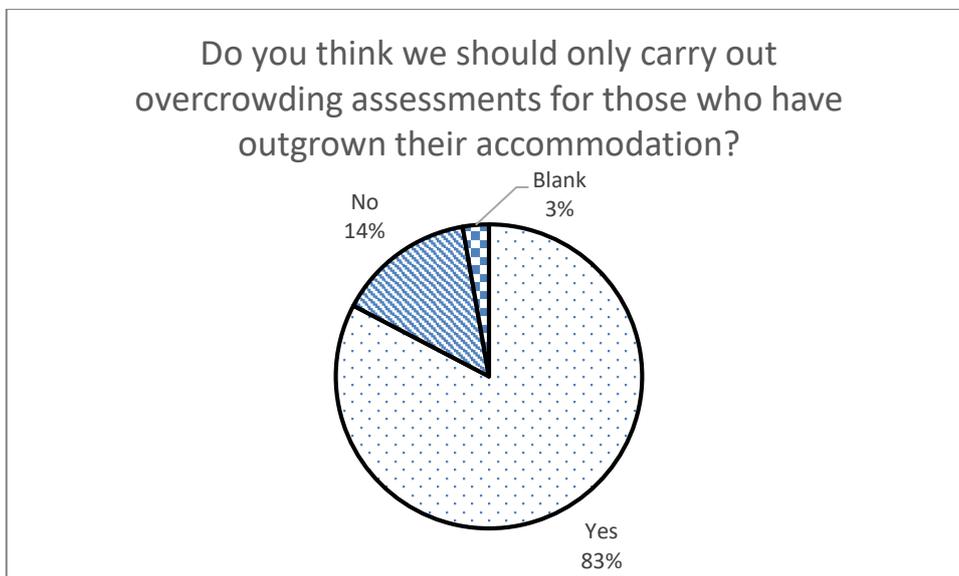


Question 4a.

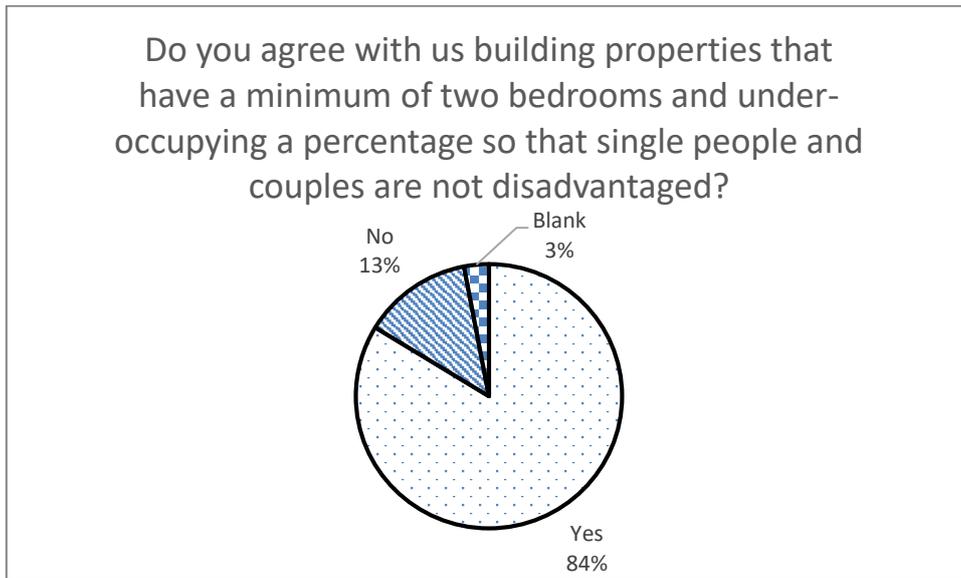


52% of Homehunt applicants thought couples should receive overcrowding priority over single applicants in the same situation. Tenants scored much higher with 59%. Some notice should be taken for the format of the question, which may have caused some confusion over the proposed change. In the other questions, we asked if the responder agreed with the proposed change, while in this question we asked if the responder would like the currently situation to continue.

Question 4b.

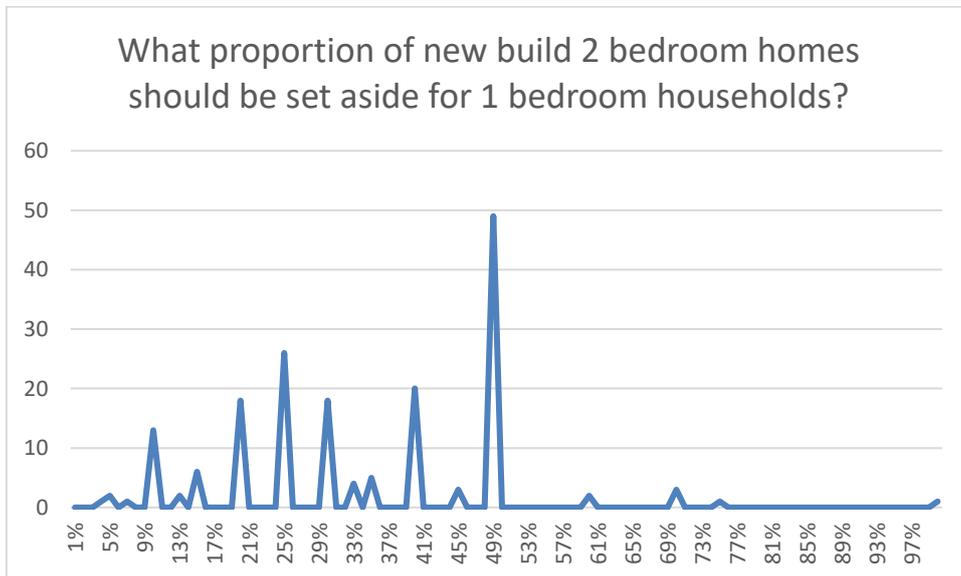


Question 5.

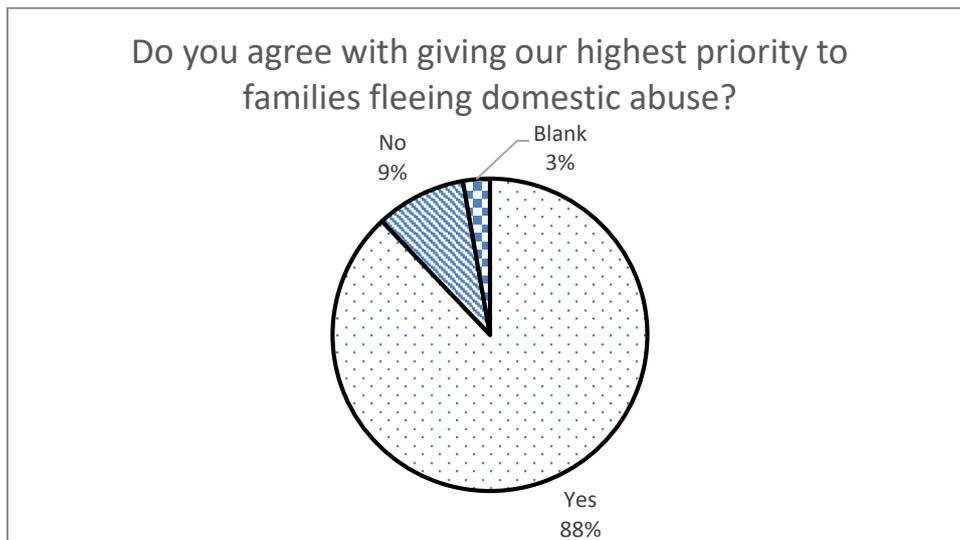


If yes, what proportion should be set aside?

In the consultation document, a breakdown of the demand for 1 bedroom properties had been provided. Some responders left percentages, and some left comments – percentages have been shown as a graph, with comments noted in Appendix 3:

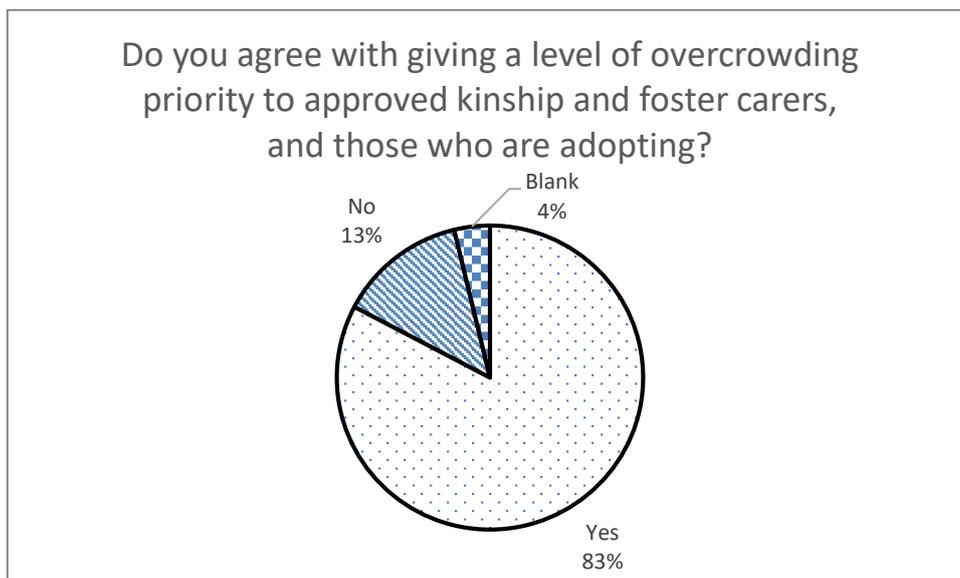


Question 6.



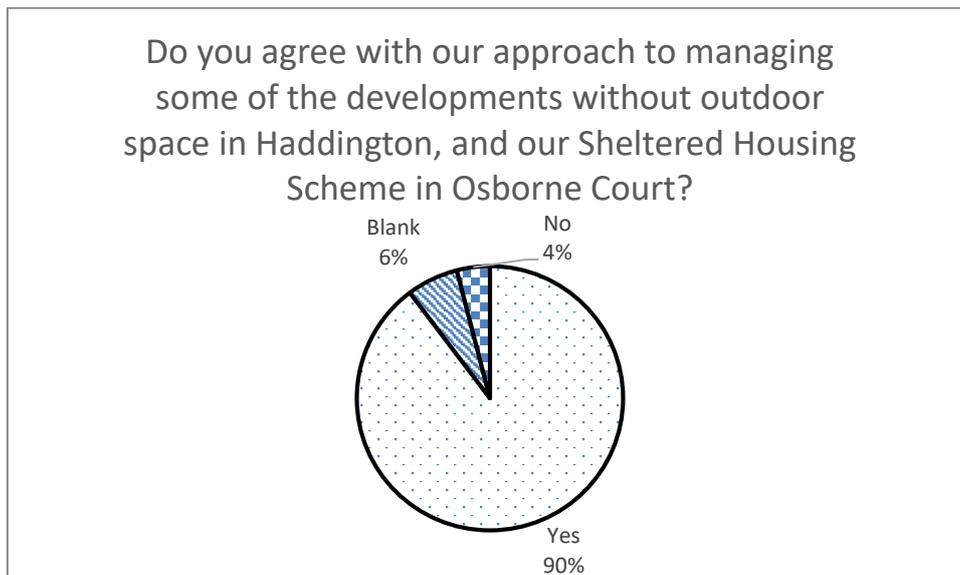
92% of ELHA tenants supported this proposal, whilst only 86% of applicants supported it.

Question 7.

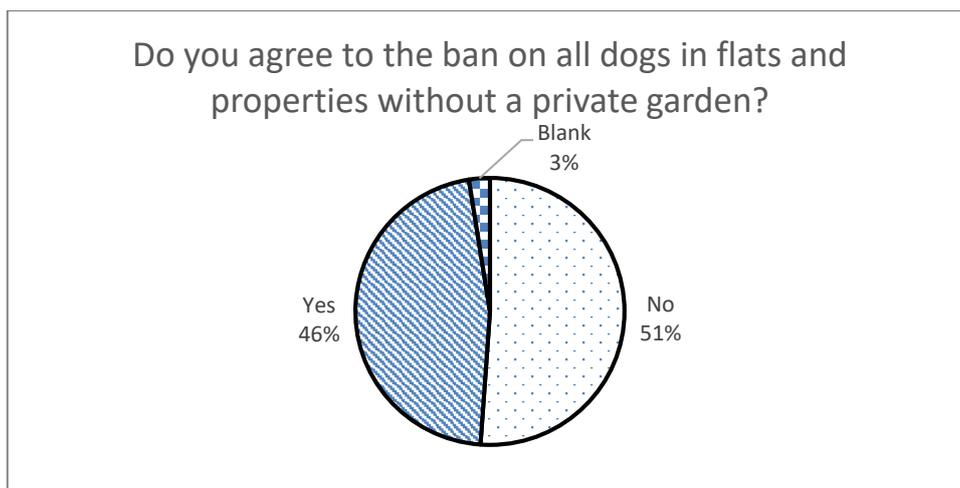


Again, there is a large difference between tenants and Homehunt applicants. 89% of tenants agree that kinship and foster carers should receive overcrowding priority, while only 79% of Homehunt applicants agreed.

Question 8.

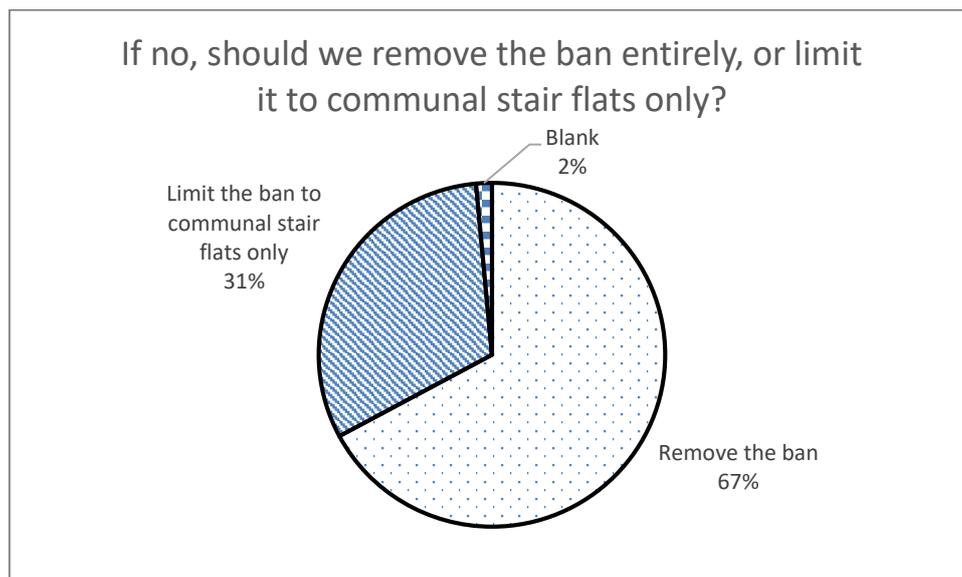


Question 9a.



This question was one where tenants and Homehunt applicants disagreed; the majority of tenants (51%) support the dog ban, while the majority of Homehunt applicants don't (56%). While the overall vote is very close, particular note should be given to the fact that tenants have experienced the difference that the dog ban has made (the number of pet nuisance complaints more than halved after the ban was introduced).

Question 9b:



Tenants and applicants who disagreed with the ban were far more likely to prefer a complete removal of the ban, however, when we take into consideration the total number of responders to the survey, only 40% of applicants and 34% of tenants (37% of total responders) support the complete removal of the ban.

Feedback from the TIG-Panel

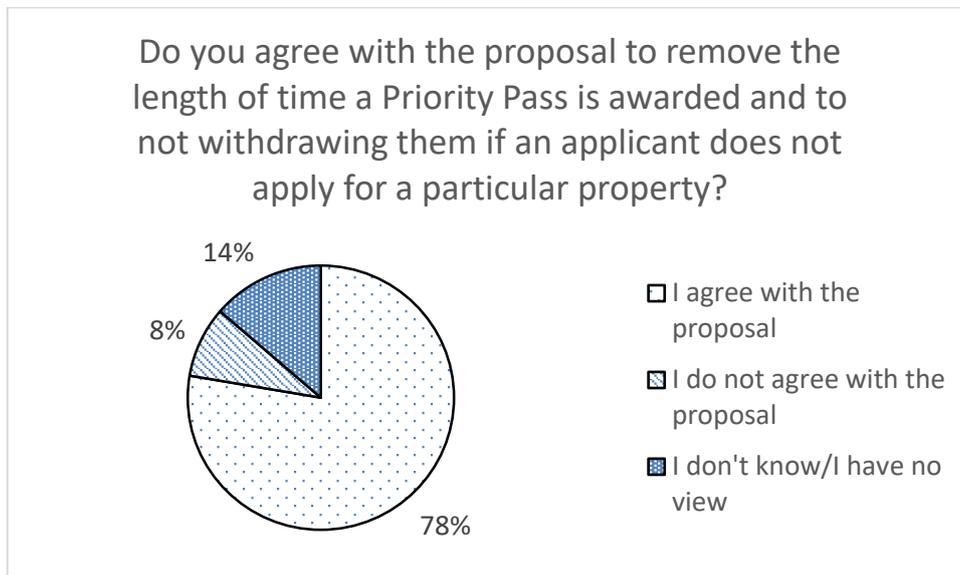
The 2019 consultation report was circulated to the TIG-Panel at their February 2019 meeting. Due to the length of the report, Panel members were invited to send in additional comments.

One TIG member who had been unable to attend the meeting had commented by e-mail that some of the responses appeared to be ‘spiteful’ answers to the questions. She also pointed out that she felt that many people had mistaken assumptions regarding the requirements for older tenants.

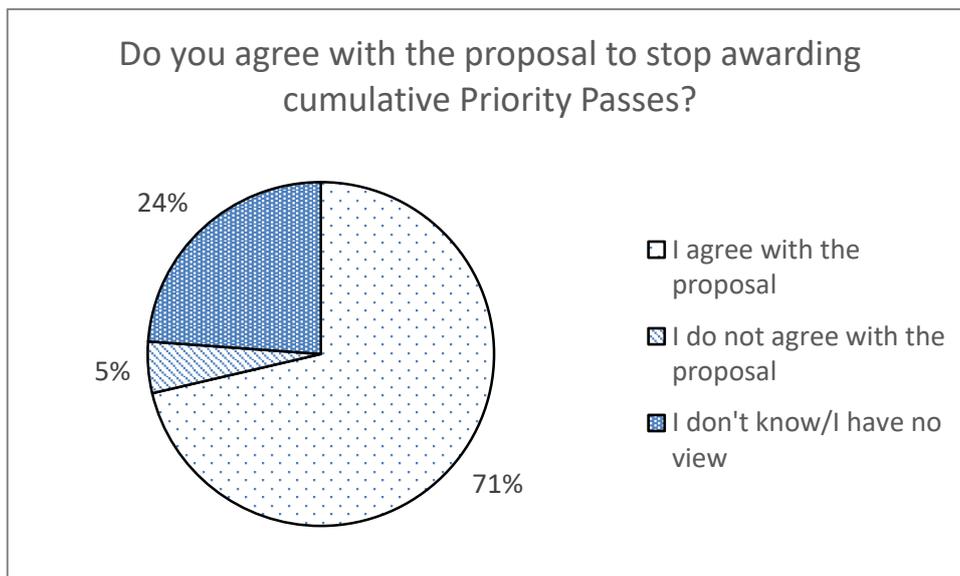
Another member of the Panel expressed concern that the comments on the report made it clear that many people had stopped reading the consultation document before the end and had completed the form without context.

2020 - see Appendix 1b for the full questions

Question 1.



Question 2.



Question 3:

