

Birmingham City Council Housing Allocations Scheme

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Overview

This report was created on Monday 21 February 2022 at 10:08 am.

From **29th November 2021** to **20th February 2022** Birmingham City Council ran a consultation entitled '*Birmingham City Council Housing Allocations Scheme*'. This report covers the online element of the consultation process, which was run from <https://www.birminghambeheard.org.uk/place/birmingham-city-council-housing-allocations-scheme>

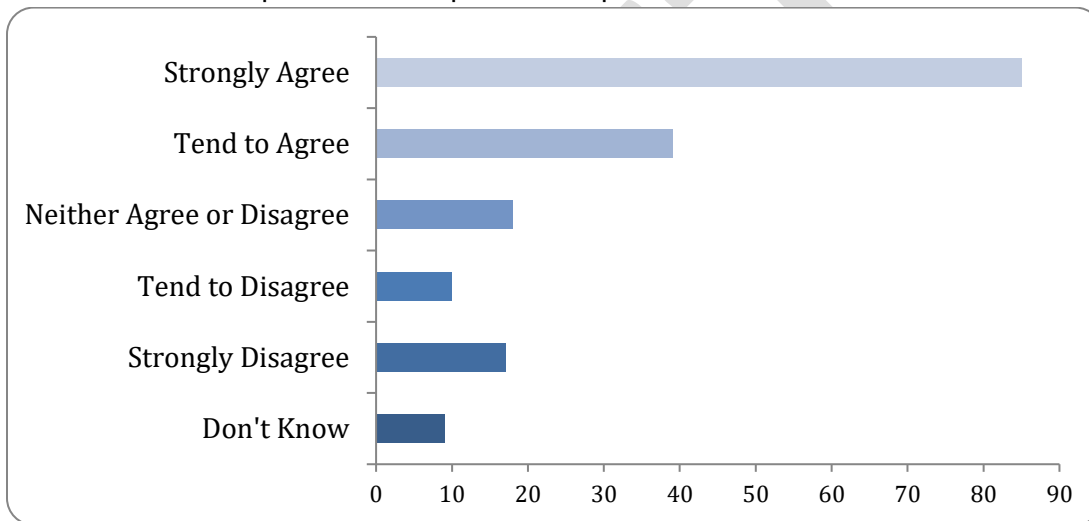
Total Responses to the survey: 178

Consultation Report

1: The criteria in the current scheme requires applicants to have lived through their own choice in the Local Authority's area for the last 12 months. For the purpose of this scheme we are proposing to increase the criteria by being normally resident within the Local Authority area, by their own choice for a minimum period of two years. To what extent do you agree with this proposal?

Local Connection

There were 178 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly Agree	85	47.75%
Tend to Agree	39	21.91%
Neither Agree or Disagree	18	10.11%
Tend to Disagree	10	5.62%
Strongly Disagree	17	9.55%
Don't Know	9	5.06%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

Comments

There were 48 responses to this part of the question which were mainly in agreement with some suggesting the criteria should be longer.

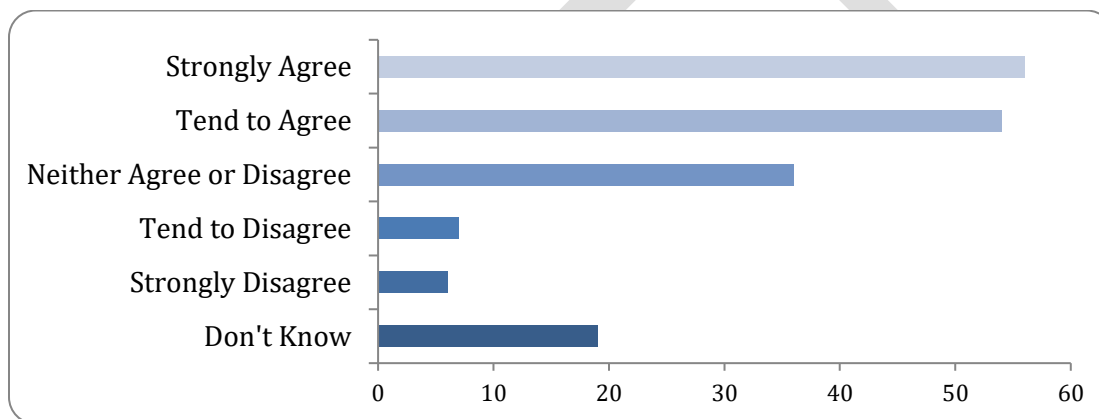
2: It is proposed to apply local residence exemptions to the qualifying criteria for local connection to the following:

- 1. Homeless households, as defined by the Housing Act 1996, Part 7 and care leavers owed a duty by the Local Authority placed outside the local authority area.**
- 2. Transfer applicants who have not been resident in the Local Authority area for a minimum of 2 years who are under-occupying and wish to downsize to a smaller home.**

To what extent do you agree with this proposal?

Residence Exemptions

There were 178 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly Agree	56	31.46%
Tend to Agree	54	30.34%
Neither Agree or Disagree	36	20.22%
Tend to Disagree	7	3.93%
Strongly Disagree	6	3.37%
Don't Know	19	10.67%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

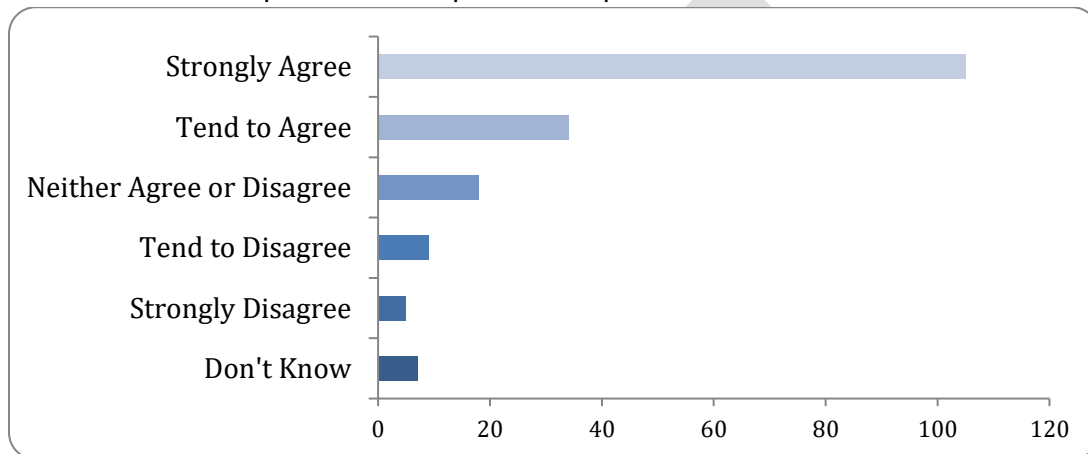
Comments

There were 30 responses to this part of the question which were mainly in agreement especially around current tenants who are under occupying.

3: The current scheme does not disqualify persons with a property in the UK or abroad that is suitable for their occupation from joining the register. It is being proposed to disqualify persons who are homeowners from being allocated social rented housing with some minor exemptions, for example, applicants who have survived domestic abuse. To what extent do you agree with this proposal?

Homeowners

There were 178 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly Agree	105	58.99%
Tend to Agree	34	19.10%
Neither Agree or Disagree	18	10.11%
Tend to Disagree	9	5.06%
Strongly Disagree	5	2.81%
Don't Know	7	3.93%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

Comments

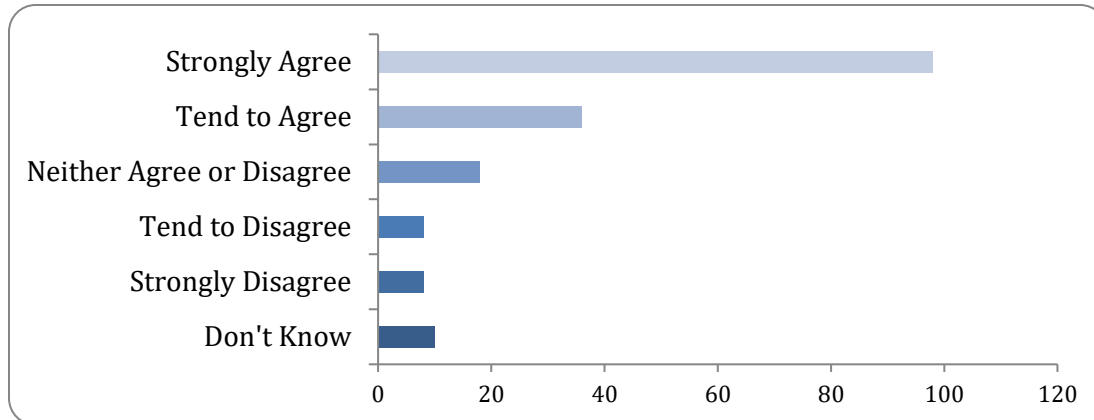
There were 38 responses to this part of the question which were all in agreement especially for the exemption for victims of domestic abuse.

4: We are proposing to disqualify applicants where there is clear evidence and a conclusion can be properly drawn that applicants or a member of their household have contrived an overcrowding or under-occupation situation or worsened their housing conditions in order to obtain an offer of social housing.

To what extent do you agree with this proposal?

Worsening Housing Conditions

There were 178 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly Agree	98	55.06%
Tend to Agree	36	20.22%
Neither Agree or Disagree	18	10.11%
Tend to Disagree	8	4.49%
Strongly Disagree	8	4.49%
Don't Know	10	5.62%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

Comments

There were 40 responses to this part of the question which were mainly in agreement so long as robust procedures to determine this were put in place.

5: The governments Code of Guidance on the allocation of social housing states that the bedroom standard is an appropriate measure of overcrowding for allocation purposes and recommends that all housing authorities should adopt this as a minimum. The bedroom standard allocates a separate bedroom to each:

- **married or cohabiting couple,**
- **adult aged 21 years or more,**
- **pair of adolescents aged 10-20 years of the same sex,**
- **pair of children aged under 10 years regardless of sex**

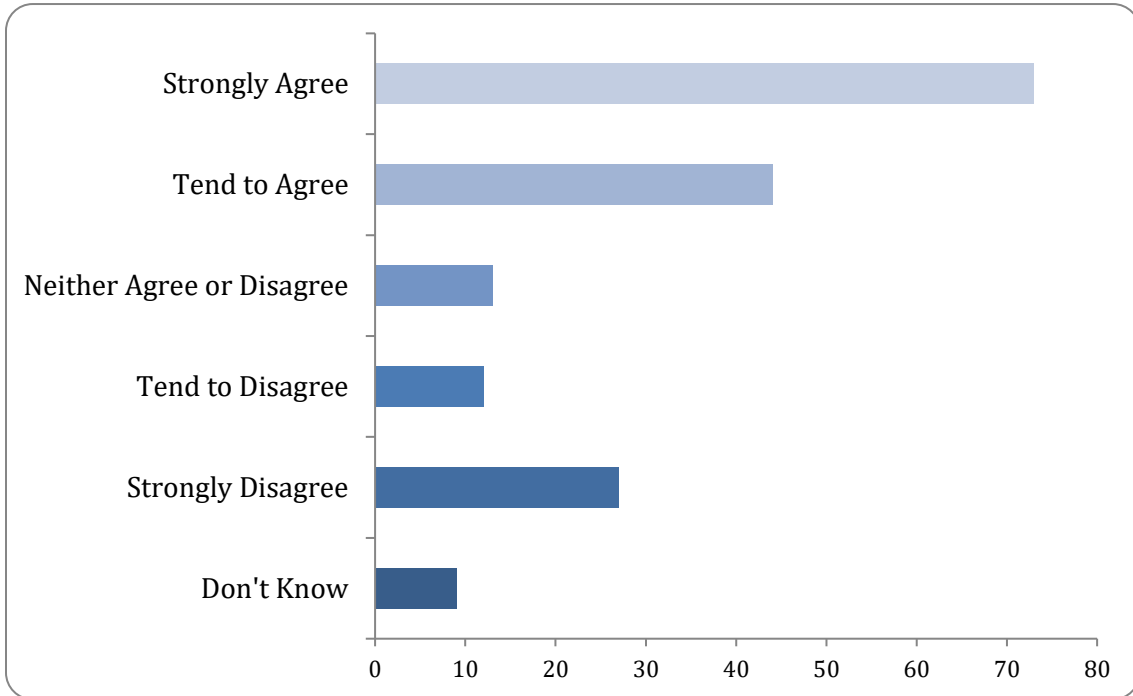
For the purpose of the current and new scheme we propose to adopt the following bedroom standard which allows a bedroom for:

- i. A married or cohabiting couple,**
- ii. Main applicant aged 16 or more,**
- iii. Adult aged 21 years or more,**
- iv. Pair of adolescents aged 10-20 years of the same gender,**
- v. Pair of children aged under 10 years regardless of gender,**
- vi. An adolescent aged 10-20 years paired with a child aged under 10 years of the same gender,**
- vii. An unpaired adolescent aged 10-20 years,**
- viii. An unpaired child aged under 10 years,**
- ix. An adult or child who cannot share due to a disability or medical condition, or due to fostering arrangements being facilitated by the Local Authority,**
- x. An overnight carer for any usual household member, if the carer isn't a usual household member,**
- xii. An adult or child where it would be detrimental to their mental health if they should share a room**

To what extent do you agree with this proposal?

Bedroom Standard

There were 178 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly Agree	73	41.01%
Tend to Agree	44	24.72%
Neither Agree or Disagree	13	7.30%
Tend to Disagree	12	6.74%
Strongly Disagree	27	15.17%
Don't Know	9	5.06%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

Comments

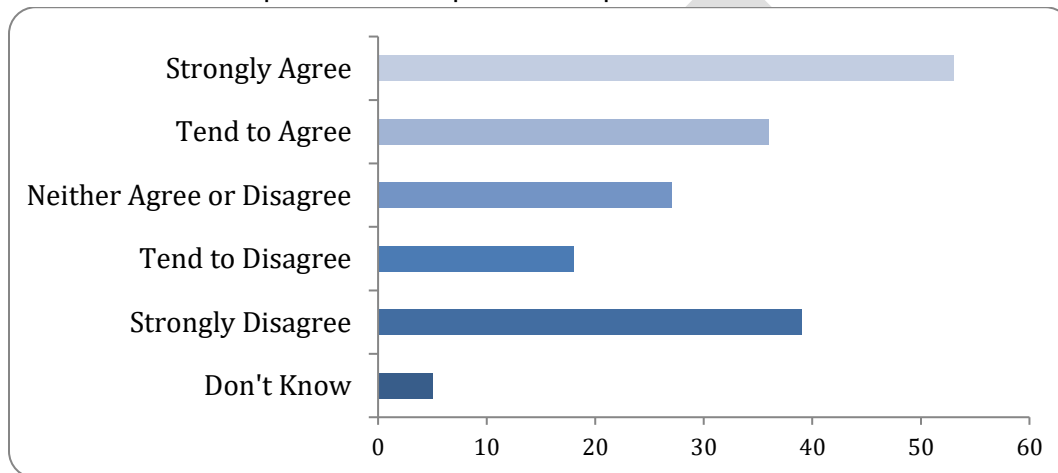
There were 37 responses to this part of the question with differing views such as a child reaching puberty not having to share, a person aged 10-20 not having to share with the same gender and children of different gender having their own room regardless of age.

6: The Council is proposing to continue to award those who are overcrowded due to lacking three or more bedrooms the highest banding, Band A.

The Council is proposing to award those overcrowded due to lacking two bedrooms the second highest banding, Band B and The Council is proposing to award those overcrowded due to lacking one bedroom the third highest banding, Band C. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Overcrowding

There were 178 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly Agree	53	29.78%
Tend to Agree	36	20.22%
Neither Agree or Disagree	27	15.17%
Tend to Disagree	18	10.11%
Strongly Disagree	39	21.91%
Don't Know	5	2.81%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

Comments

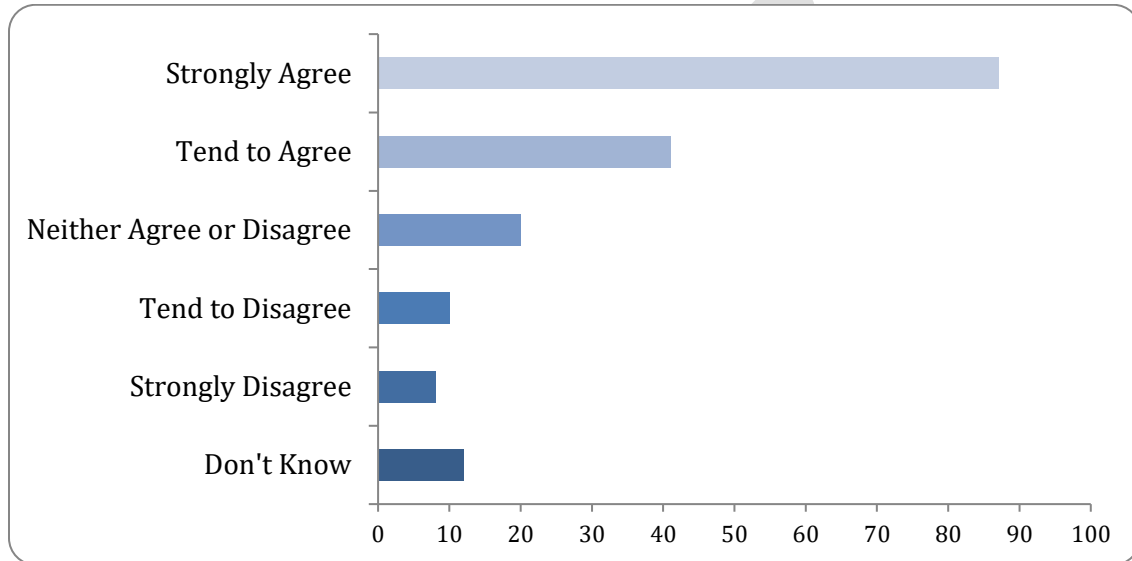
There were 55 responses to this part of the question which mainly disagreed with this proposal. Comments suggested all overcrowding should be awarded high priority and the impact on mental health should be considered. One comment suggested the property type needed should be taken into consideration rather than bedroom need.

7: In the current scheme the award for a Child in Need is Band 2, the second highest band award. It is proposed to increase the award for a Child in Need to the highest priority, Band A. The criteria for this would be for a child who is subject to a Child Arrangement Order in respect to a looked after child or for a child that is deemed at high risk of becoming looked after otherwise.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Child In Need

There were 178 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly Agree	87	48.88%
Tend to Agree	41	23.03%
Neither Agree or Disagree	20	11.24%
Tend to Disagree	10	5.62%
Strongly Disagree	8	4.49%
Don't Know	12	6.74%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

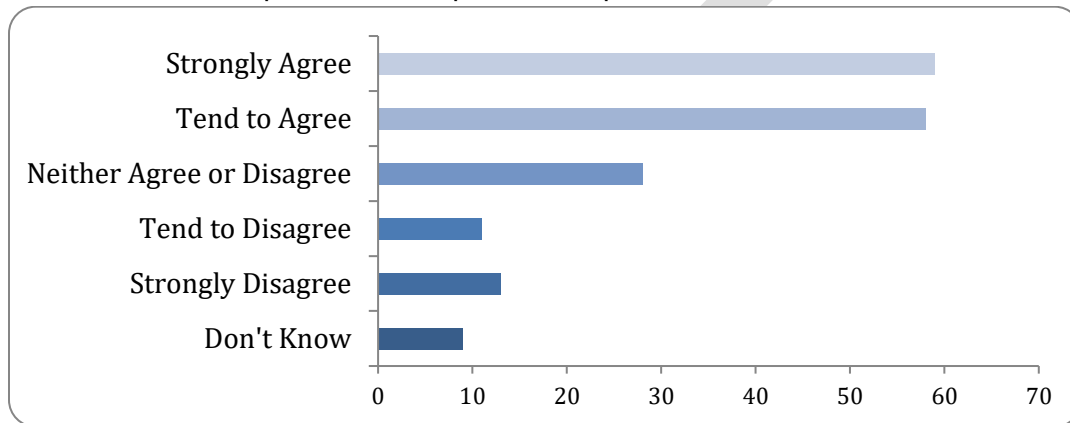
Comments

There were 27 responses to this part of the question which were mainly in agreement with the proposal.

8: In the current scheme there are 2 levels of award, Band 1 and Band 2, dependent upon the timeframe in which the property is required to be vacated. It is proposed to award the highest priority, Band 1, to those who require rehousing due to a clearance, demolition, compulsory purchase order and/or subject to a local authority approved regeneration scheme regardless of when the property is required to be vacated. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Compulsory Purchase

There were 178 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly Agree	59	33.15%
Tend to Agree	58	32.58%
Neither Agree or Disagree	28	15.73%
Tend to Disagree	11	6.18%
Strongly Disagree	13	7.30%
Don't Know	9	5.06%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

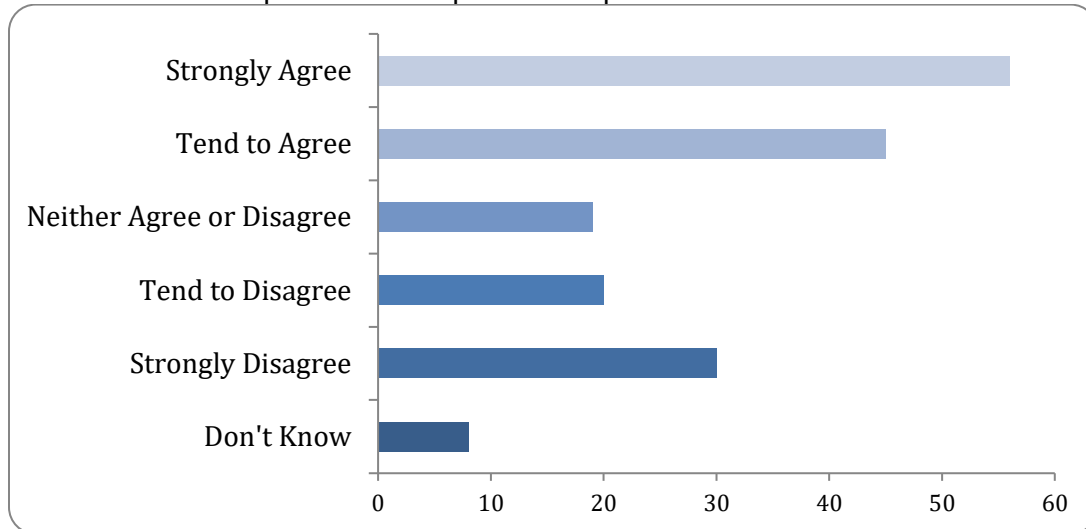
Comments

There were 22 responses to this part of the question with the majority agreeing with this proposal.

9: Applicants living in private rented sector properties and who are occupying insanitary, overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions are awarded the highest band in the current scheme, Band 1. We are proposing to decrease this priority and award the second highest award of Band B. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Private Rented Sector

There were 178 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly Agree	56	31.46%
Tend to Agree	45	25.28%
Neither Agree or Disagree	19	10.67%
Tend to Disagree	20	11.24%
Strongly Disagree	30	16.85%
Don't Know	8	4.49%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

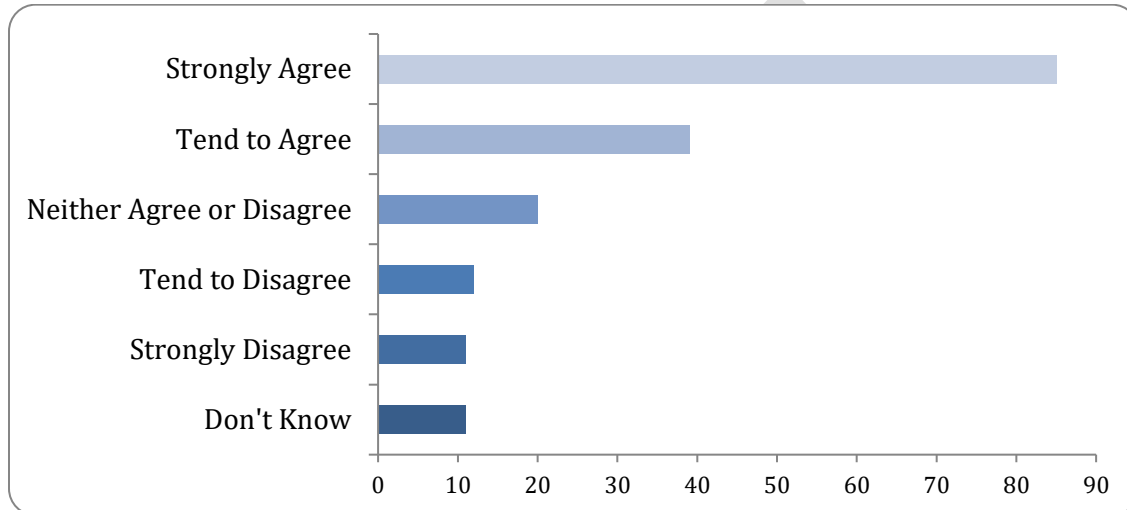
Comments

There were 40 responses to this part of the question with a mixed response from those who agreed and disagreed with this proposal. Comments suggested Private Landlords should be held responsible for maintaining their properties to an acceptable standard.

10: In the current scheme applicants who have been accepted as priority homeless and who are owed the main homeless duty are given the second highest award, Band 2. We are proposing that this be increased to Band A in the new scheme. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Homeless Main Duty

There were 178 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly Agree	85	47.75%
Tend to Agree	39	21.91%
Neither Agree or Disagree	20	11.24%
Tend to Disagree	12	6.74%
Strongly Disagree	11	6.18%
Don't Know	11	6.18%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

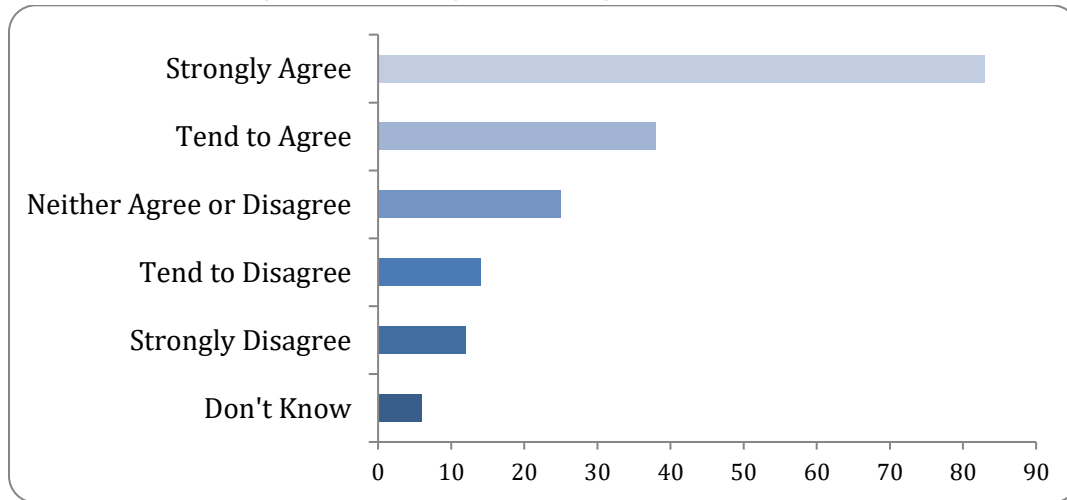
Comments

There were 33 responses to this part of the question which were mainly in agreement with this proposal. Comments from those who disagreed included concerns with the potential increase of people presenting as homeless to gain a higher priority.

11: In the current scheme most eligible homeless applicants who are accommodated in emergency and temporary accommodation, including Bed and Breakfast, are awarded Band 2. The Council is proposing to increase this award to the highest award, Band A. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Homeless - Temporary Accommodation

There were 178 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly Agree	83	46.63%
Tend to Agree	38	21.35%
Neither Agree or Disagree	25	14.04%
Tend to Disagree	14	7.87%
Strongly Disagree	12	6.74%
Don't Know	6	3.37%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

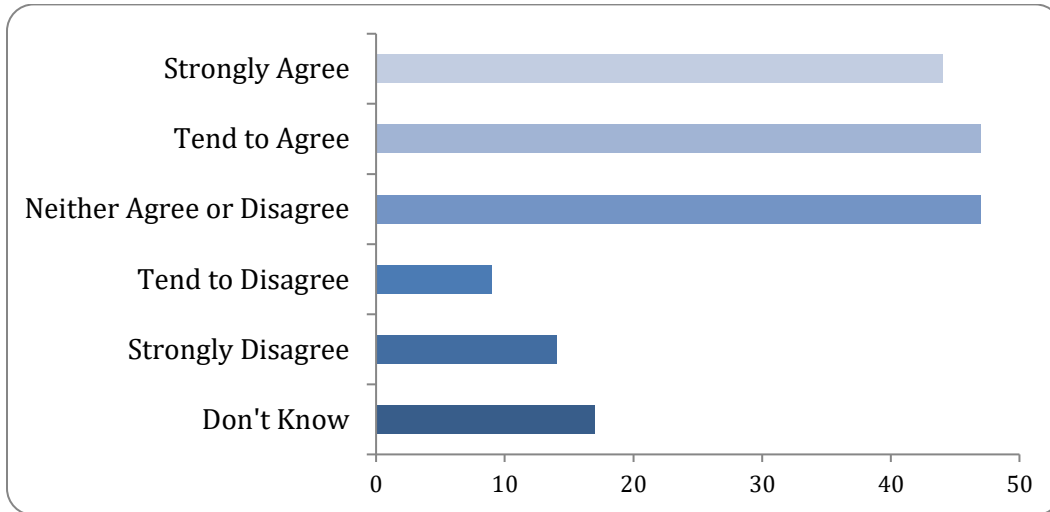
Comments

There were 33 responses to this part of the question of which an equal number of respondents agreed and disagreed. Those in agreement commented that this would help reduce the need for Temporary Accommodation. Those who disagreed commented that this could result in an increase in homeless presentations

12: The Council is proposing to award Band C to all other eligible homeless applicants who do not meet the criteria for Bands A or B. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Homeless - Relief Duty

There were 178 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly Agree	44	24.72%
Tend to Agree	47	26.40%
Neither Agree or Disagree	47	26.40%
Tend to Disagree	9	5.06%
Strongly Disagree	14	7.87%
Don't Know	17	9.55%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

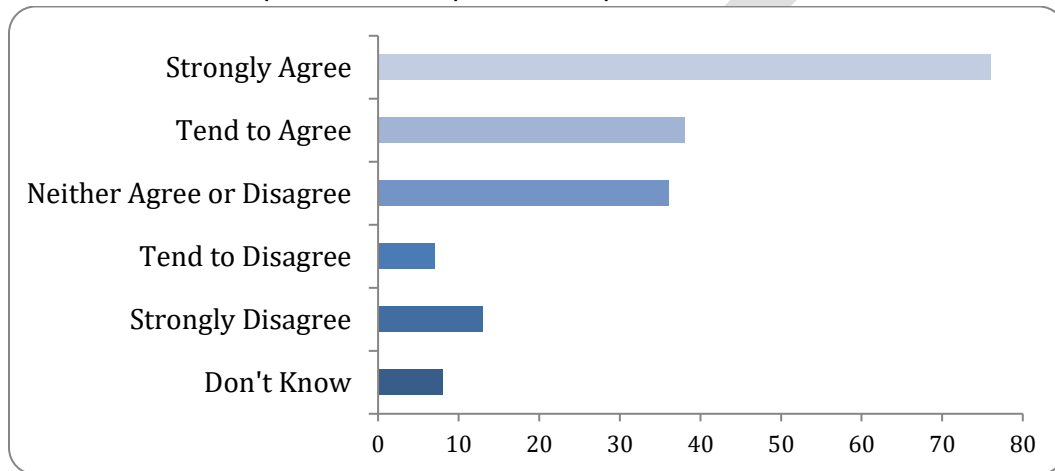
Comments

There were 18 responses to this part of the question of which there was a mix of those who agreed and disagreed. Those who disagreed commented that all homeless applicants should be awarded high priority.

13: As in the current policy we are proposing to retain choice based lettings and the ability to place bids on behalf of applicants (assisted bidding). This will only affect certain applicants such as those with a high priority need who are not placing bids themselves or for applicants who need assistance with the bidding process. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Assisted Bidding

There were 178 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly Agree	76	42.70%
Tend to Agree	38	21.35%
Neither Agree or Disagree	36	20.22%
Tend to Disagree	7	3.93%
Strongly Disagree	13	7.30%
Don't Know	8	4.49%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

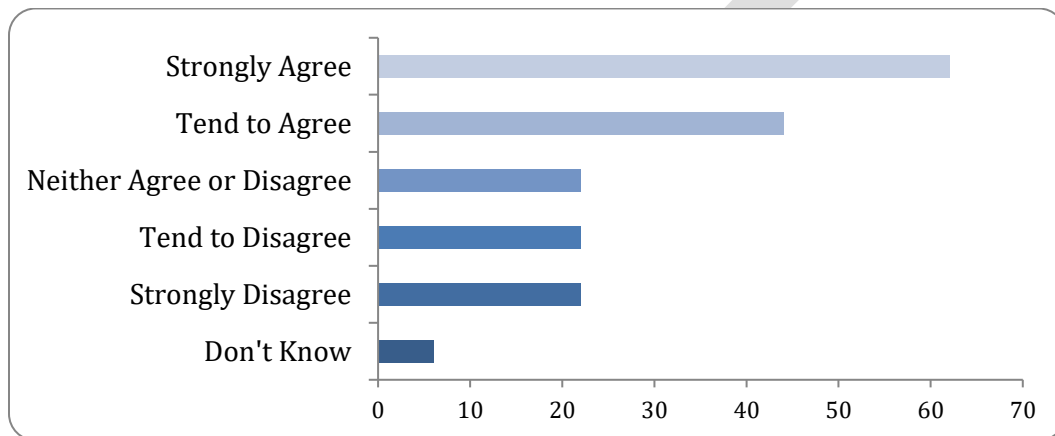
Comments

There were 34 responses to this part of the question. An equal number of respondents agreed and disagreed with the proposal. Those who agreed commented that this was beneficial to vulnerable applicants who had difficulty placing bids themselves. Those who disagreed commented that it was the applicant's responsibility to place bids and could be open to abuse.

14: It is proposed to introduce a process where we will place bids on the behalf of applicants who are homeless, have a priority need and who are not homeless intentionally. This will be completed so that we can find a suitable offer of accommodation for them as soon as possible. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Auto Bidding

There were 178 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly Agree	62	34.83%
Tend to Agree	44	24.72%
Neither Agree or Disagree	22	12.36%
Tend to Disagree	22	12.36%
Strongly Disagree	22	12.36%
Don't Know	6	3.37%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

Comments

There were 48 responses to this part of the question of which mainly disagreed with this proposal. Comments made stated that choice would be removed from this group of applicants.

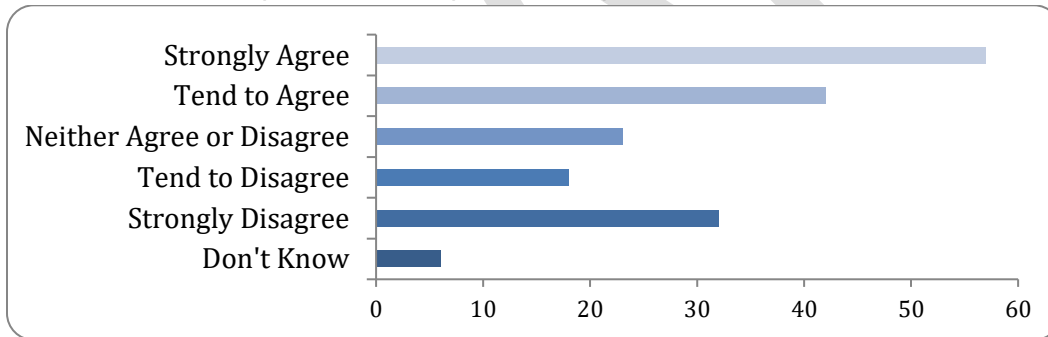
15: In the current scheme applicants receive up to 2 suitable offers of accommodation made either through Choice Based Lettings or as a direct offer. If refused the applicant will be notified that they no longer qualify for an allocation for 12 months and will be removed. It is proposed to limit the number of reasonable offers that an applicant can refuse. The number of refusals allowed will be dependent upon banding as follows:

- Band A applicants are entitled to one refusal of a reasonable offer of accommodation, except those who are homeless or owed a homelessness duty who will have no entitlement to a refusal of a reasonable offer of accommodation.
- Band B applicants are entitled to two reasonable refusals
- Band C applicants are entitled to two refusals of a reasonable offer of accommodation.
- Band D applicants have no cap on the number of refusals of a reasonable offer of accommodation.

Upon refusal of a final offer or nomination, applicants will be reduced in preference for a period of 12 months, resulting in a demotion from either Band A, B or C down to Band D. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Refusals

There were 178 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly Agree	57	32.02%
Tend to Agree	42	23.60%
Neither Agree or Disagree	23	12.92%
Tend to Disagree	18	10.11%
Strongly Disagree	32	17.98%
Don't Know	6	3.37%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

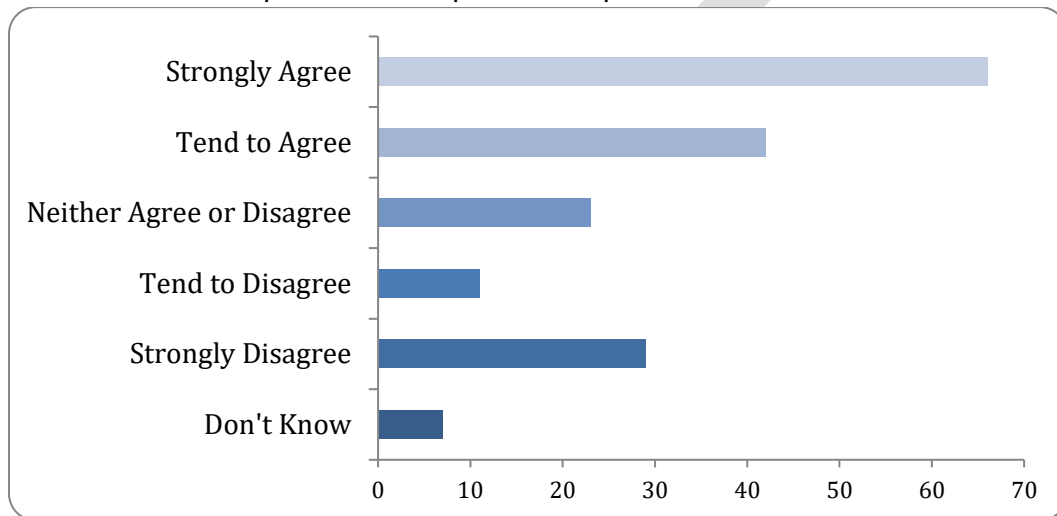
Comments

There were 47 responses to this part of the question which had an equal number of those who agreed and disagreed with the proposal. Those who disagreed mainly thought that all bands should have a limit of 2 refusals.

16: The Council is proposing to allow for an extra bedroom where sharing a bedroom would be detrimental to a person’s mental health. As an example, this may include where a household member is undertaking gender re-assignment. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Bedroom Need

There were 178 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly Agree	66	37.08%
Tend to Agree	42	23.60%
Neither Agree or Disagree	23	12.92%
Tend to Disagree	11	6.18%
Strongly Disagree	29	16.29%
Don't Know	7	3.93%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

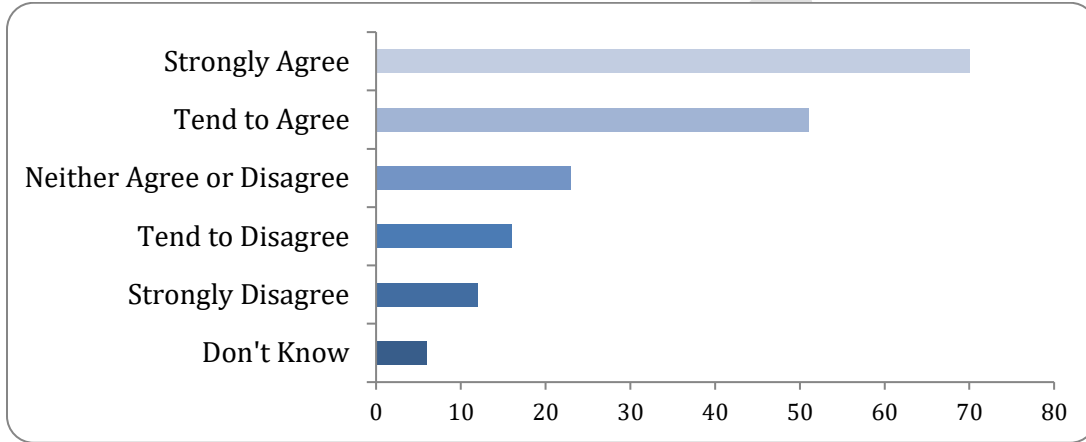
Comments

There were 31 responses to this part of the question which had an equal number of those who disagreed and agreed with this proposal.

17: It is proposed that an affordability assessment will be completed to ensure an applicant can afford to pay the rent on a property which they may be offered. This will be determined by considering the applicants total income minus housing costs and other reasonable living expenses equal to welfare benefit standard allowances, relevant child costs and any outstanding priority debts. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Affordability

There were 178 responses to this part of the question.



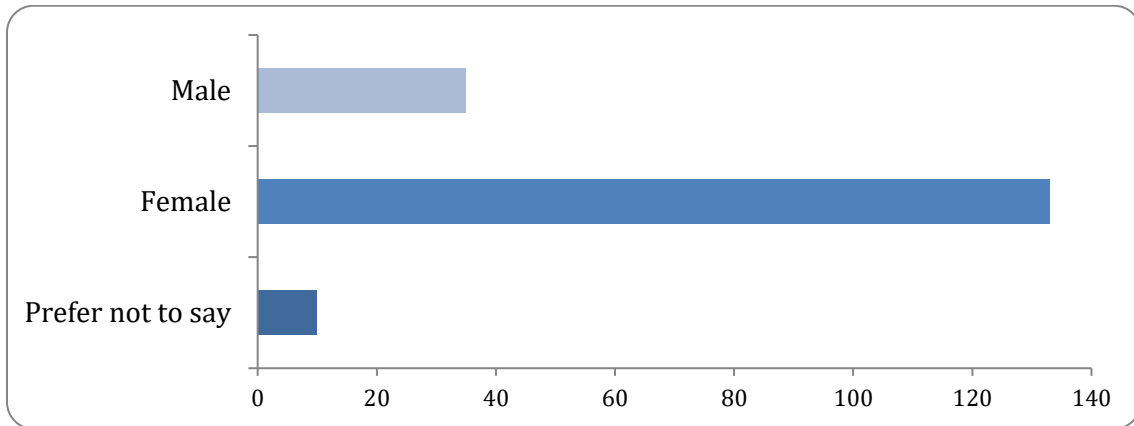
Option	Total	Percent
Strongly Agree	70	39.33%
Tend to Agree	51	28.65%
Neither Agree or Disagree	23	12.92%
Tend to Disagree	16	8.99%
Strongly Disagree	12	6.74%
Don't Know	6	3.37%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

Comments

There were 30 responses to this part of the question of which mainly agreed with the proposal. Comments made by those in agreement suggested budgeting advice should also be offered. Those who disagreed commented that Social Housing rents are the lowest and should be affordable to everyone.

18: What is your Gender?

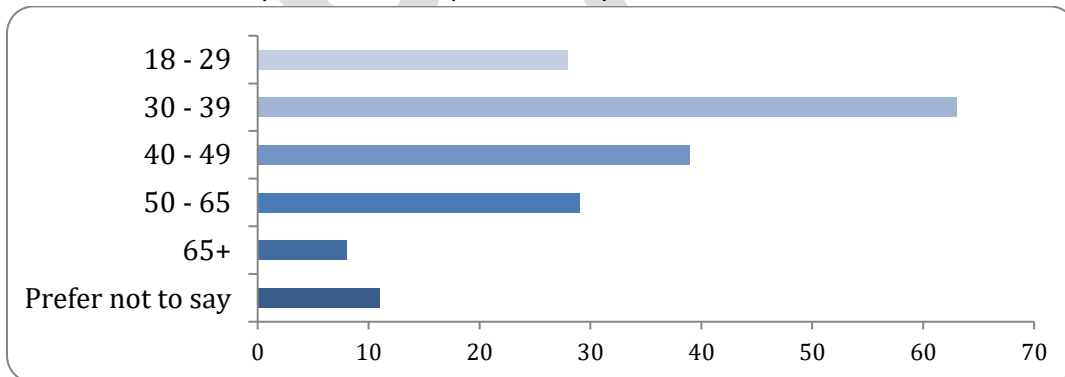
There were 178 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Male	35	19.66%
Female	133	74.72%
Transgender	0	0.00%
Prefer not to say	10	5.62%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

19: How old are you?

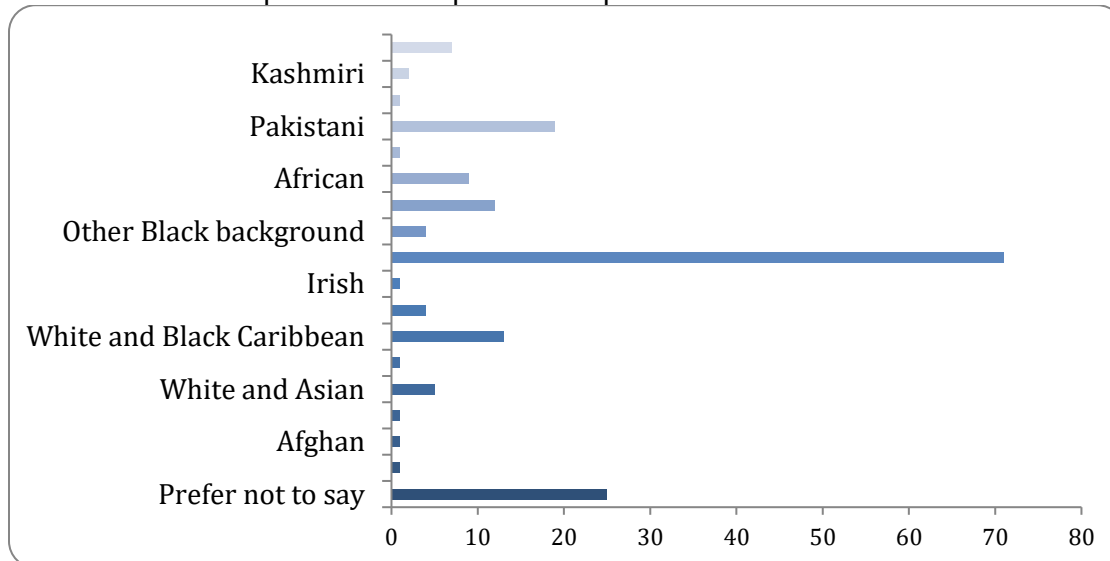
There were 178 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
18 - 29	28	15.73%
30 - 39	63	35.39%
40 - 49	39	21.91%
50 - 65	29	16.29%
65+	8	4.49%
Prefer not to say	11	6.18%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

20: What is your Ethnic Origin?

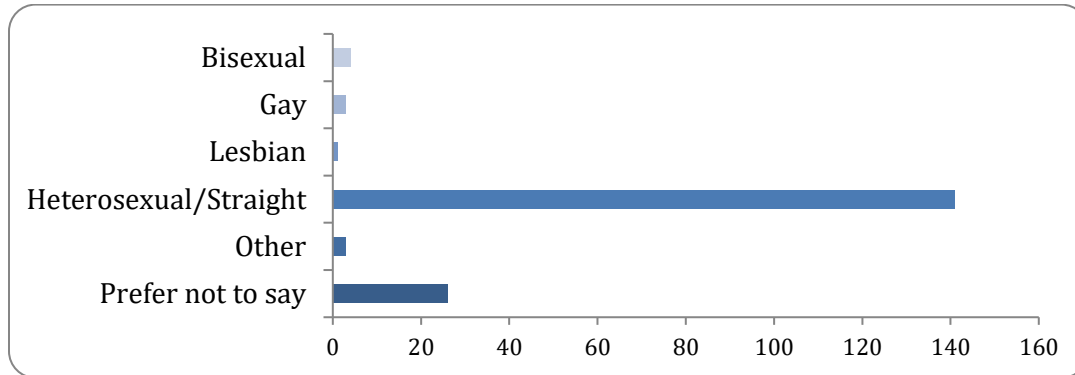
There were 178 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Bangladeshi	7	3.93%
Kashmiri	2	1.12%
Indian	1	0.56%
Pakistani	19	10.67%
Sikh	0	0.00%
Other Asian background	1	0.56%
African	9	5.06%
Caribbean	12	6.74%
Other Black background	4	2.25%
White British	71	39.89%
Albanian/Kosovan	0	0.00%
Bosnian	0	0.00%
Irish	1	0.56%
Roma	0	0.00%
Other White background	4	2.25%
White and Black Caribbean	13	7.30%
White and Black African	1	0.56%
White and Asian	5	2.81%
Asian and Black	0	0.00%
Other mixed background	0	0.00%
Chinese	0	0.00%
Arab	1	0.56%
Kurdish	1	0.56%
Vietnamese	0	0.00%
Any other background	1	0.56%
Prefer not to say	25	14.04%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

21: What is your Sexual Orientation?

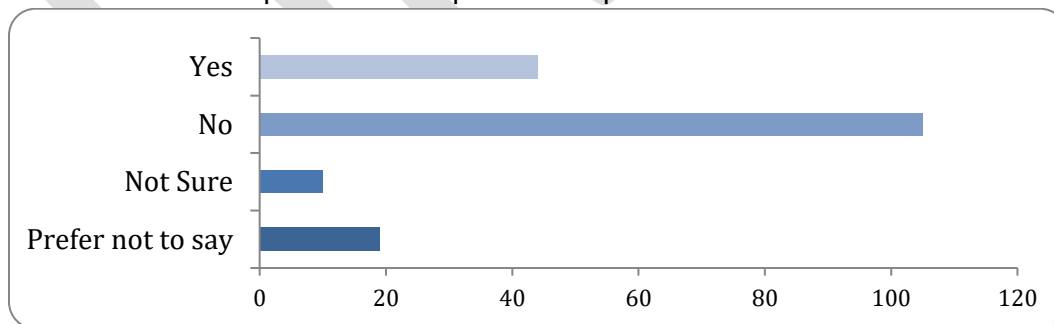
There were 178 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Bisexual	4	2.25%
Gay	3	1.69%
Lesbian	1	0.56%
Heterosexual/Straight	141	79.21%
Other	3	1.69%
Prefer not to say	26	14.61%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

22: Disability – The Equality Act 2010 defines a person as a person as having a disability if he/she has a physical or mental impairment that has a ‘substantial’ and ‘long-term’ negative effect on his/her ability to do normal daily activities. Do you have a disability as defined above?

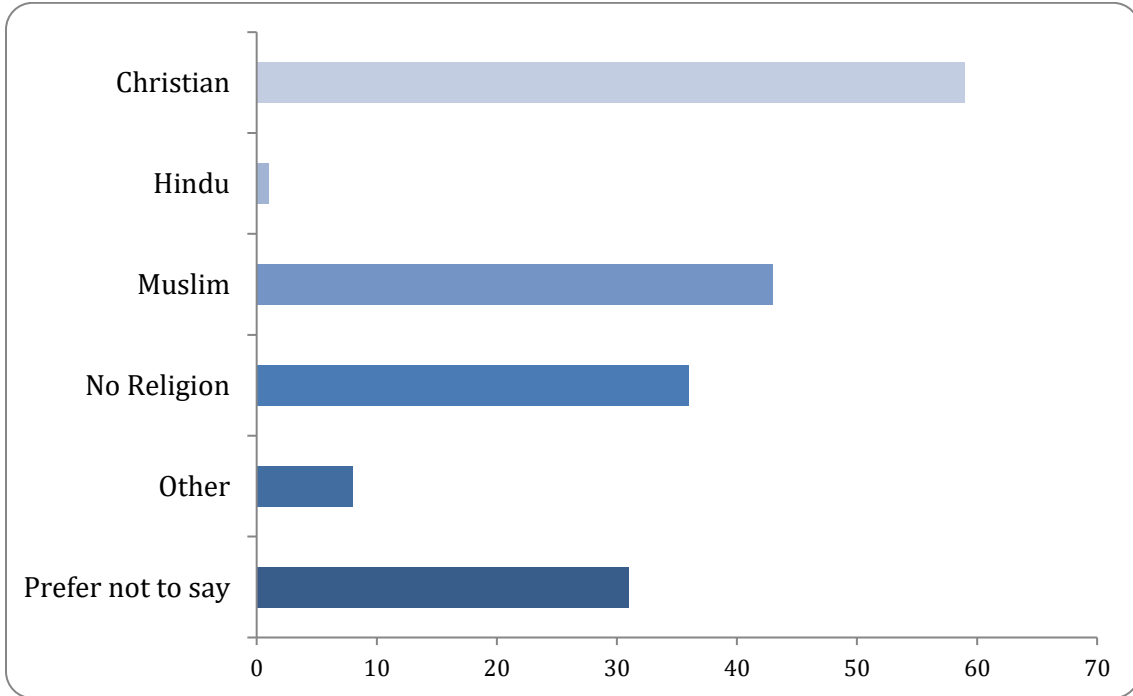
There were 178 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Yes	44	24.72%
No	105	58.99%
Not Sure	10	5.62%
Prefer not to say	19	10.67%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

23: What is your Religion?

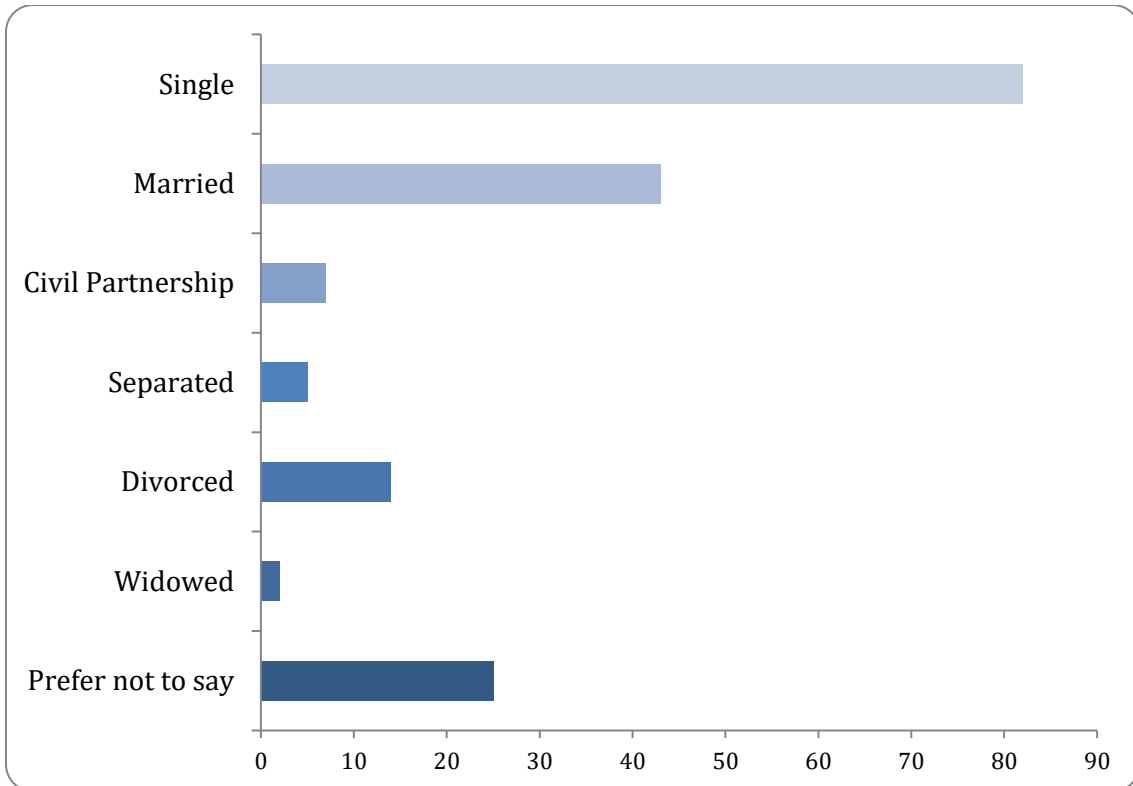
There were 178 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Buddhist	0	0.00%
Christian	59	33.15%
Hindu	1	0.56%
Jewish	0	0.00%
Muslim	43	24.16%
Sikh	0	0.00%
No Religion	36	20.22%
Other	8	4.49%
Prefer not to say	31	17.42%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

24: What is your Marital Status?

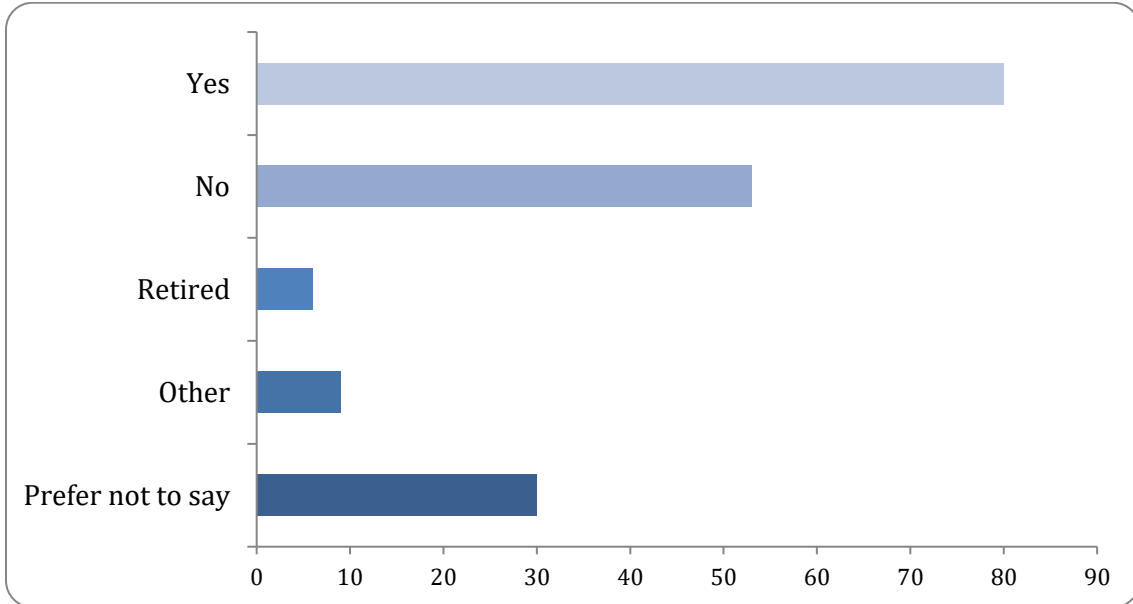
There were 178 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Single	82	46.07%
Married	43	24.16%
Civil Partnership	7	3.93%
Separated	5	2.81%
Divorced	14	7.87%
Widowed	2	1.12%
Prefer not to say	25	14.04%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

25: Are you Employed?

There were 178 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Yes	80	44.94%
No	53	29.78%
Retired	6	3.37%
Other	9	5.06%
Prefer not to say	30	16.85%
Not Answered	0	0.00%