

Draft Housing Enforcement Policy 2026: Tenancy Reforms under the Renters' Right Act

Analysis of stakeholder consultation

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Background

The Renters' Rights Act comes into force on 1 May 2026 and introduces changes to private rented sector tenancies.

This includes:

- **End of section 21 “no fault” evictions:** Landlords will no longer be able to use a section 21 notice to end a tenancy.
- **Introduction of assured periodic tenancies:** Replacing assured shorthold tenancies and roll on a monthly basis with no fixed end date – renters will be able to end the tenancy at any point by giving two months' notice.
- **Reform of possession grounds so they are fair for both parties:** Landlords will only be able to evict tenants when they have a valid reason.
- **Limit rent increases to once a year in line with the market rate:** Landlords must give tenants at least two months' notice of a rent increase.
- **Ban rental bidding and asking for more than one month's rent in advance:** It will be illegal to invite or accept bids above the advertised rent.
- **End to discrimination:** It will be illegal to discriminate against renters who have children or receive benefits.
- **Right to request a pet:** Landlords cannot unreasonably refuse a tenant's request to have a pet.

The Council will have a new responsibility to enforce these rules where landlords do not comply with them. We want to support the majority of good landlords operating in our borough to comply with the new rules, while holding to account the minority of those who do not.

The new enforcement policy explains how we will enforce these new rules. This includes imposing a civil penalty (fine) or pursuing a criminal prosecution where a landlord commits a breach or offence. The starting points for the level of civil penalties are stated in the government's statutory guidance. The policy outlines the steps we will take, and factors we will consider, when deciding on the final level of a civil penalty.

The new policy will complement the existing Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy, which explains how we use enforcement powers for non-compliance with current rules relating to housing conditions and property management.

The draft policy is based on a model civil penalty policy endorsed by the Association of Chief Environmental Health Officers (ACEHO) and used by other councils. The current Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy is also based on this model policy.

Introduction

Consultation methodology

The exercise was completed via an online survey, alongside a copy of the draft policy. The survey opened on 16 February 2026 and closed on 30 March 2026.

The survey was promoted widely to residents and landlords.

Report

A total of 20 surveys were returned by the deadline. This report contains an analysis of the responses.

Due to the number of responses, actual numbers of responses have been used in graphs as percentages can be misleading with a small number of responses. Examples of comments made have been included in this report, but in many cases it has not been possible to theme the comments due to the limited number.

A separate appendix report is available on request which details all comments made by respondents to the open questions within the survey.

Acknowledgements

The Council would like to thank all residents and stakeholders that took the time to feedback their views.

Analysis of survey responses

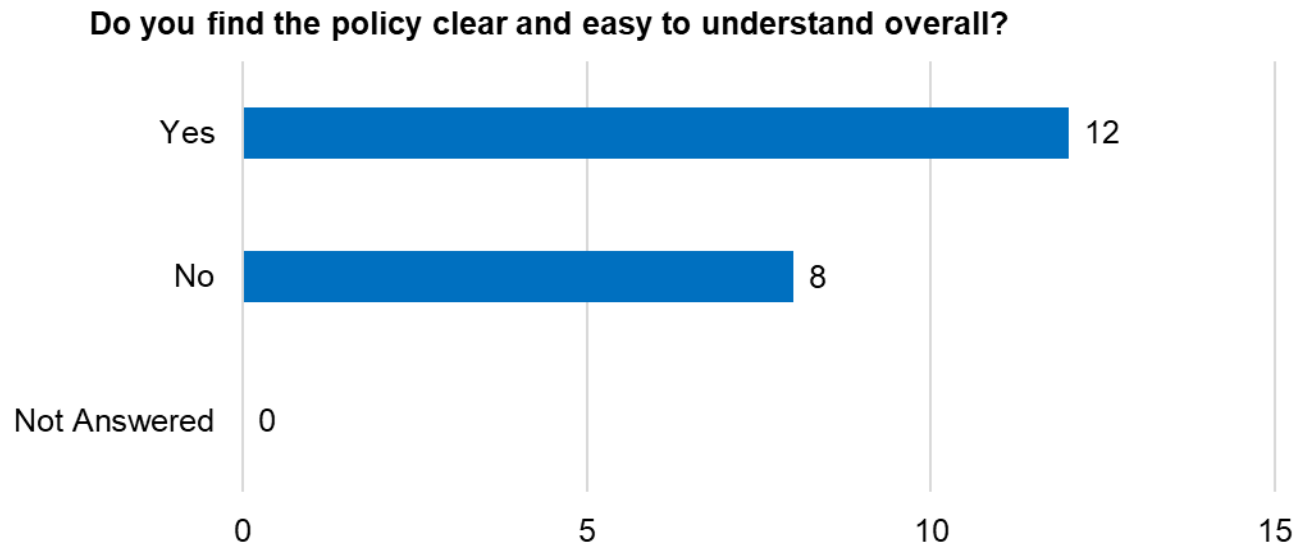


Ease of understanding the policy

Respondents were asked if they found the policy clear and easy to understand.

- Just over half (12) found the policy clear and easy to understand
- However, eight respondents did not.

Those that did not find the policy clear and easy to understand were asked to explain why. Ten respondents commented, seven comments, mainly from landlords, related to the complexity of the policy or information or that they needed more information to aid understanding. Three comments related to fines/penalties or the need for a period of grace whilst landlords got used to requirements. Examples of these comments can be seen overleaf, with all comments in the appendices.



Base: All respondents (20)

Ease of understanding the policy - comments

Complexity of policy, more information needed:

“This policy raises numerous unanswered questions and creates significant uncertainty.”

“Too many changes all at once. Too much to remember as this is not the only thing we as landlords have to remember.”

“Very legalistic and repetitive and also refers to documents that the government have still not published - (tenants 'information sheet' etc.)”

“While the policy sets out its intentions, several sections lack the clarity, structure, and procedural detail required for residents to fully understand how enforcement will operate under the Renters' Rights Act 2025. Key terms are undefined, statutory duties are not explicitly referenced, and the processes for investigation, decision-making, proportionality, and appeals are not described in sufficient detail. As a result, the policy is not consistently easy to understand, particularly for vulnerable tenants, carers, or residents who need predictable, transparent procedures to feel safe and supported.”

Fines/penalties and period of grace:

“I have attended a number of landlord's events in an effort to understand how the new rules will affect landlords. The changes are complex. I think it unfair that whilst landlords are adjusting to the many new restrictions, including those relating to agreement, pre-tenancy information, deposits and grounds for repossession, they should be fined for any mistakes or misunderstandings.”

“The policy is complex and it would be helpful if landlords could be given a period of grace from fines from any mistakes while they get to grips with the new rules especially for notice periods, accurate paperwork and information shared with tenants.”

“Penalty after penalty after penalty after penalty.”



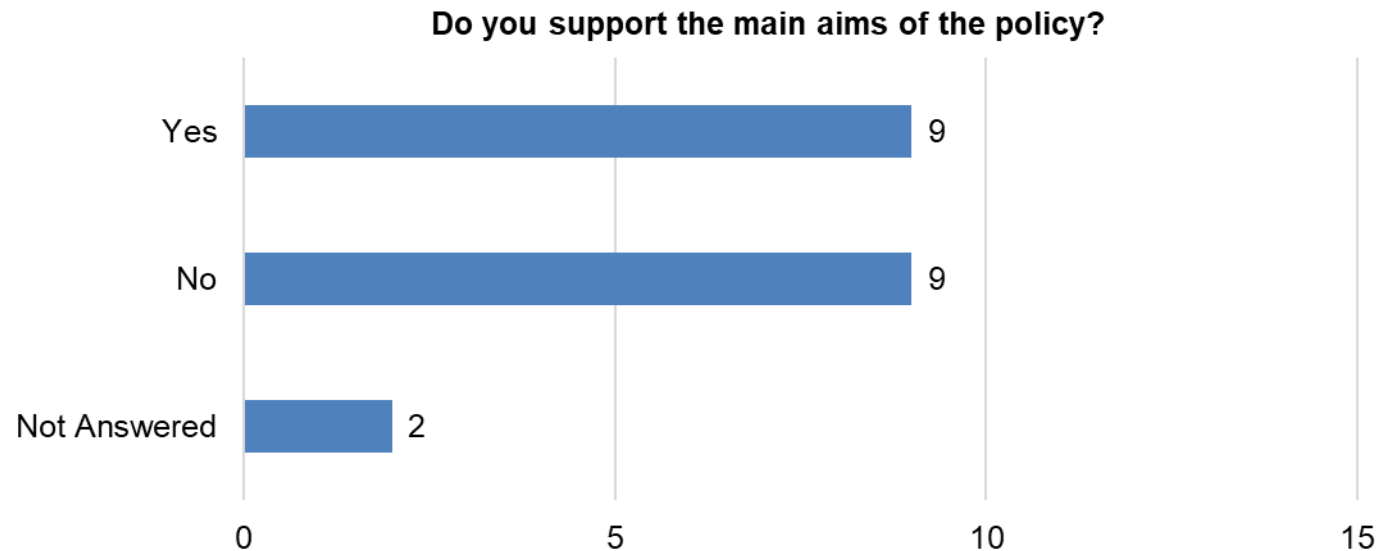
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Aims of the policy

Respondents were asked if they supported the main aims of the policy.

- There were mixed views from respondents with nine supporting the main aims and nine not supporting them.

Those that did not support the main aims were asked to explain why. Thirteen respondents commented. A number of the comments related to concerns about the impact on landlords, examples of these comments can be seen overleaf, with all comments in the appendices.

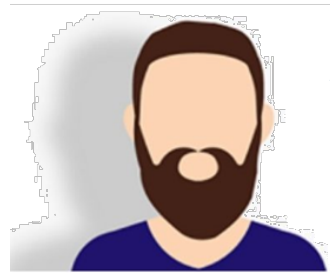


Base: All respondents (20)

Aims of the policy - comments

“Absolutely not. Your policies continue to undermine landlords in every respect. Being a landlord is no longer financially viable, and we are already witnessing an exodus from the sector. This will only further exacerbate the shortage of rental accommodation and drive rents even higher for tenants.”

“Because instead of being able to use a section 21 to ask an unpleasant tenant who does not pay their rent or keeps the place in a mess damaging the building means that the landlord has no way of placing nice tenants into the property because the unpleasant tenant who causes problems for the neighbours won't leave. We have no security or control to keep the property kept up nicely. If they ruin the property I cannot see that they will pay to put it right and if they just continue to pay their rent and continue to abuse the property, the property will decline and decline. At least before an antisocial tenant could be asked to leave and the property made decent for a well kept tenant.”



“I see the need to protect tenants from bad landlords, but this legislation will reduce the availability of rented accommodation and ultimately drive up the cost of renting. My family has owned and run 2 HMO properties for more than 60 years. We now have one HMO. My wife and I are well into our seventies. Our tenants, some of whom have been with us for twenty/thirty years, will not thank you if the legislation makes it too onerous for us to continue.

I suspect that rogue landlords will continue to be rogue landlords while the rest of us struggle to jump through all the hoops.”

“I support anything that improves the conditions for tenants and landlords. However the policy introduces onerous restrictions on landlords and affects their ability to re-let accommodation at certain times of year. It leaves landlords more financially vulnerable and restricts their ability to take possession of their property.”



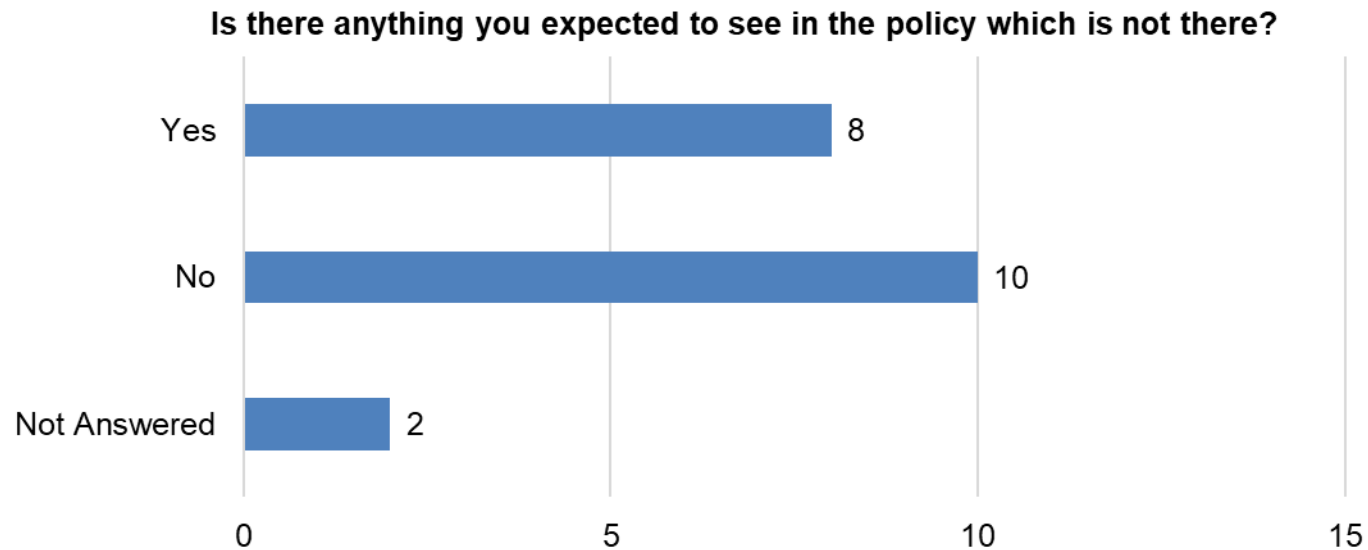
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Content of the policy

Respondents were asked if there was anything they expected to see in the policy which was not there.

- Eight respondents did feel there was something they expected to see in the policy that was not there.
- Ten did not expect to see anything additional in the policy.

Those that did expect to see something additional in the policy were asked to elaborate. Nine respondents commented, examples of these comments can be seen overleaf, with all comments in the appendices.



Base: All respondents (20)

Content of the policy - comments

“An explanation of how the rent tribunal will work and how RBKC will help enforce evictions and if there is extra resource being brought in to help with the rent reform act.”

“Animals which are a nuisance should not be allowed to stay in a premises. I.E. in a flat where a dog is left alone all day and barks all the time until the owner returns is unsatisfactory for all in the building. Damage caused by Tenants animals including making carpets and the property smell , must be paid for by the Tenant.”

“It could be written in English instead of in legal terms. We are landlords without law degrees. Only humans providing homes for people from all different backgrounds.

Many tenants are from different countries where their rental process is different.”



“Landlords’ rights are being completely disregarded. Their circumstances including high interest rates, rising service charges, and increasing compliance costs are overlooked.

This policy is likely to result in longer void periods, which landlords must cover from their own funds in the absence of rental income. Consequently, many will have little choice but to sell in order to limit their losses.”

“Would like to see the council provide landlords with a 'Rogue Tenants' website where landlord can share details of terrible tenants. This would even up the legislation, since landlords are being expected to rent 'indefinitely' it would be helpful if we know which tenants to avoid.”



Any other comments

Respondents were given the opportunity to add any further comments.

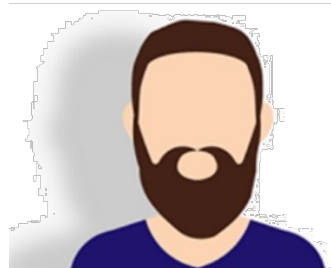
Ten respondents commented, a number of comments related to concerns from landlords about fines or the impact on landlords letting properties. Examples of these comments can be seen below, with all comments in the appendices.

“Absolutely ridiculous threatening landlords with fines.”

“It gives no provision for how landlords and agents can handle incoming (new) people to the UK without being able to accept rent in advance.”

“It is very difficult to make any sort of return as a landlord given this framework and the tax treatment.”

“So many huge fines for essentially administrative errors will inevitably provide a reason for landlords NOT to let their properties - to avoid the risks of inadvertent infringement - thereby reducing number of available rentals.”



“The new rules are likely to cause the loss of already scarce private housing stock as landlords stand to lose security over length of tenancy and regaining possession of their properties.”

“What happens if it is an HMO if one of the tenants displays antisocial behaviour that makes the other rooms unlettable does the whole place become unlettable because of the one person who cannot be removed? Do you consider a tenant who is drunk or leaves rubbish everywhere a problem? How do you show that the tenant is showing antisocial behaviour, what proof will the Landlord have to have and how long will it take to remove a badly behaved tenant from a property?”



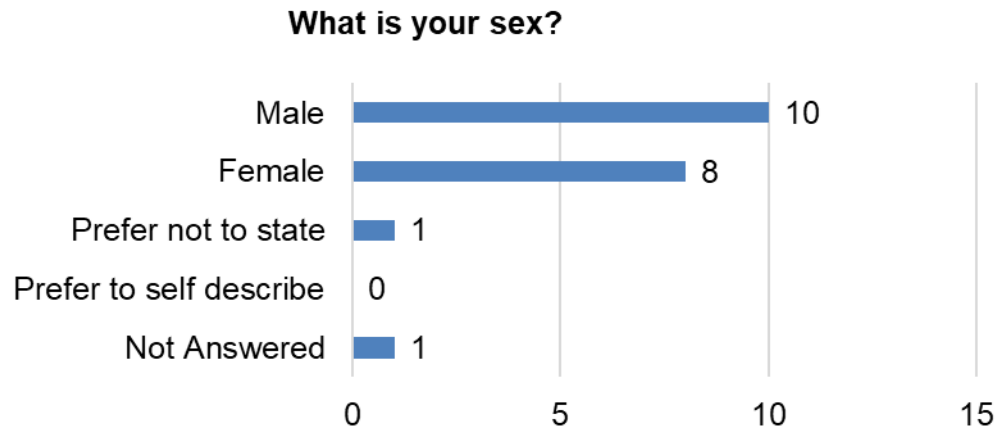
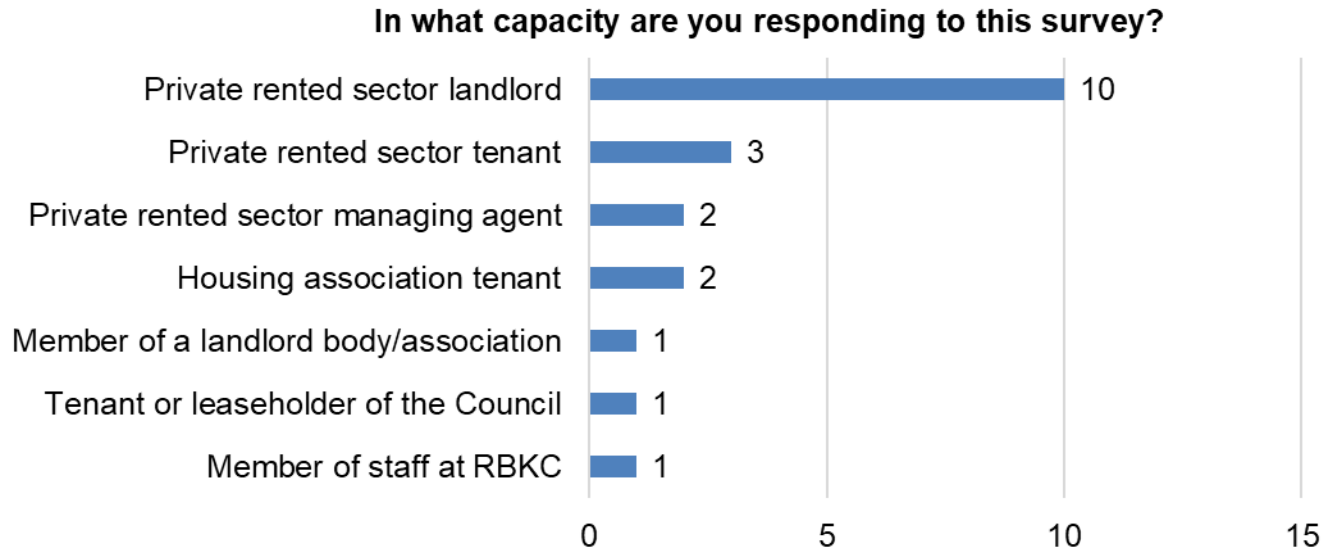
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Demographics



Profile of respondents

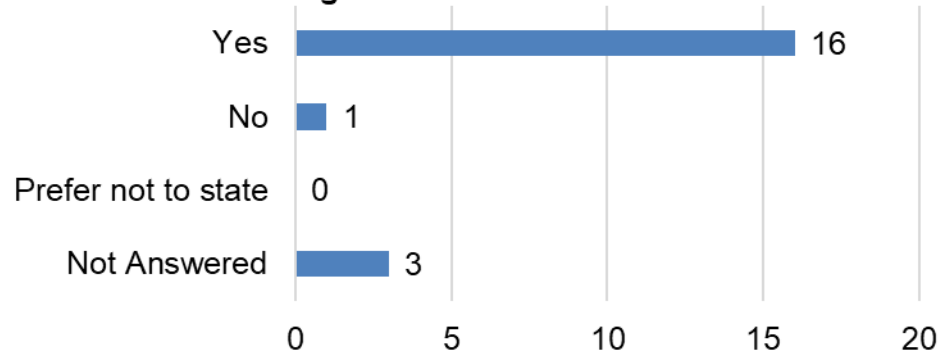
Respondents were asked a series of questions about themselves, to understand who had responded to the consultation.



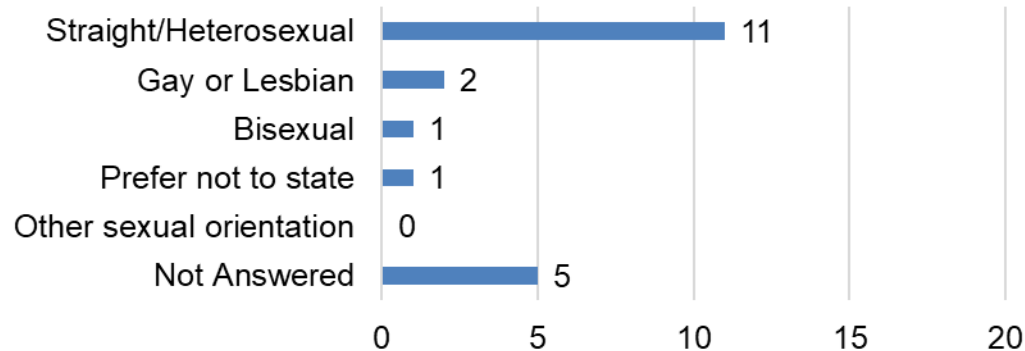
Base: All respondents (20)

Profile of respondents

Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?



Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?

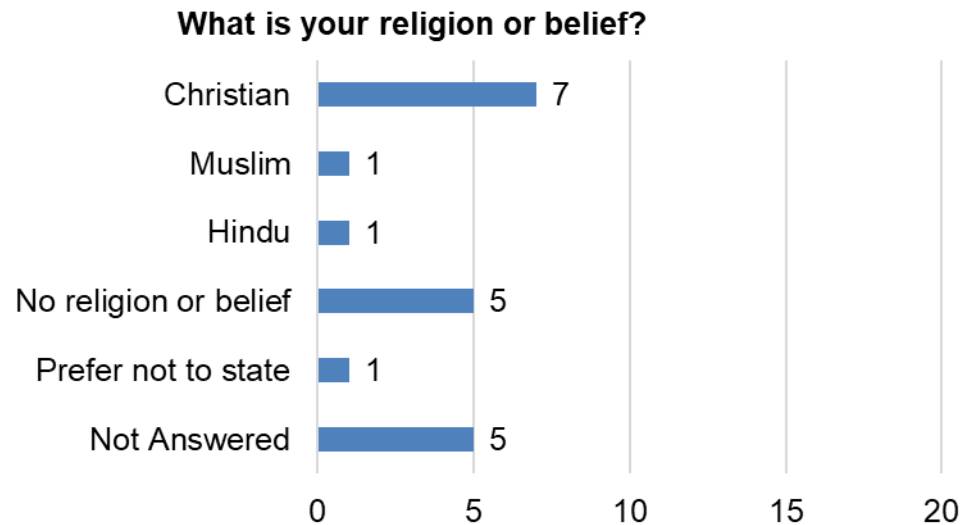
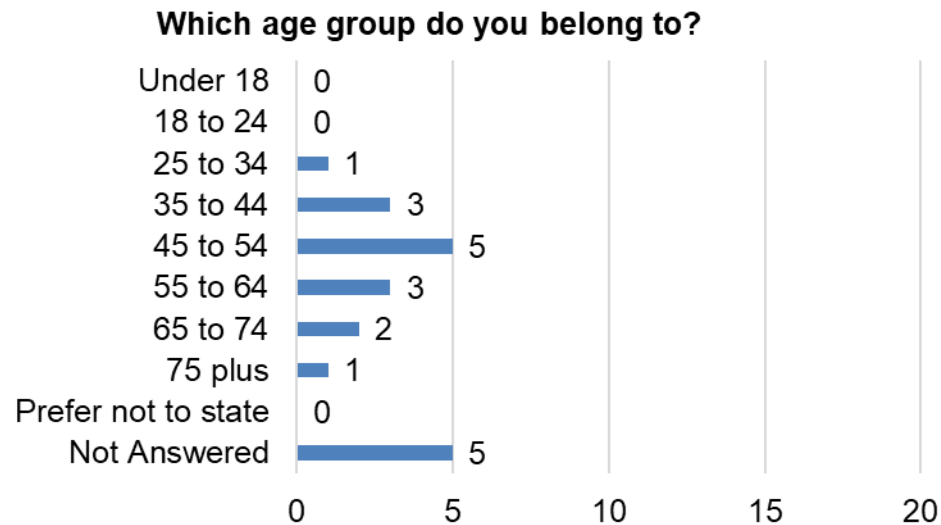


Base: All respondents (20)



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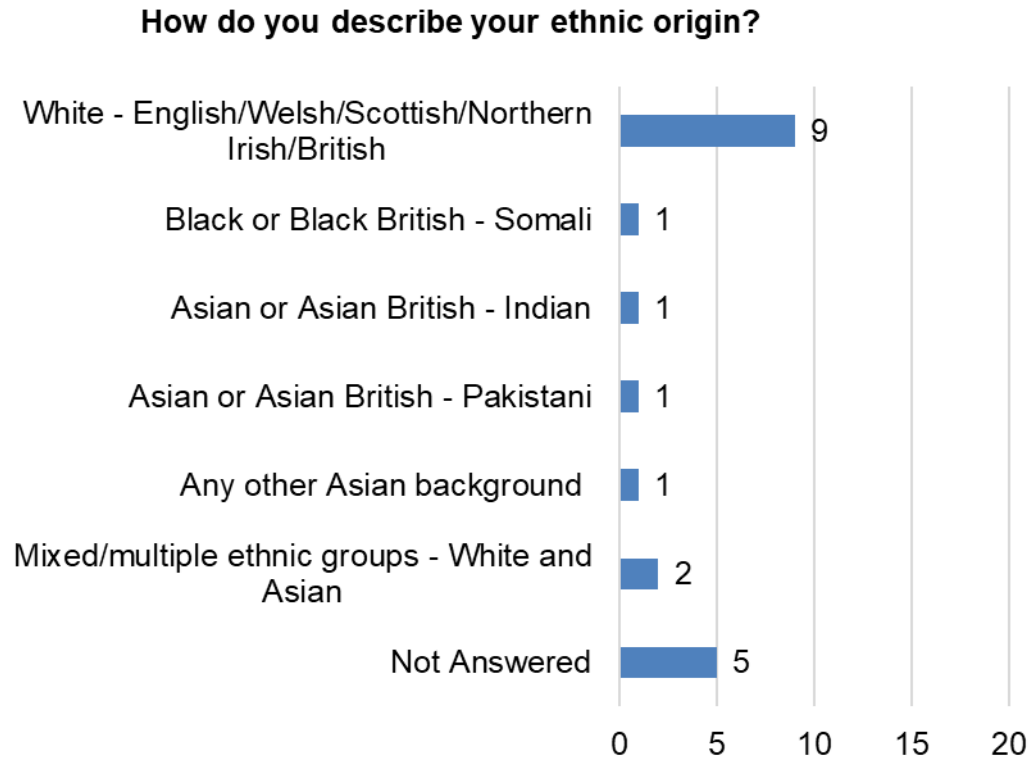
Profile of respondents



Only religion or belief selected by respondents are shown in the graph

Base: All respondents (20)

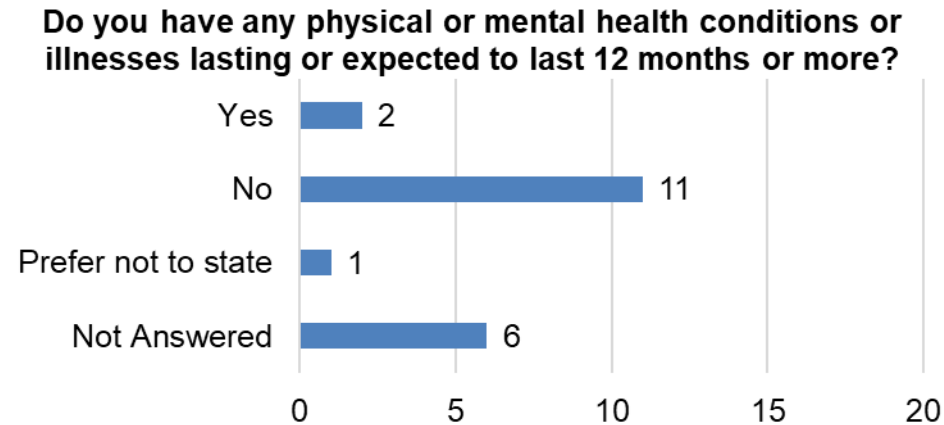
Profile of respondents



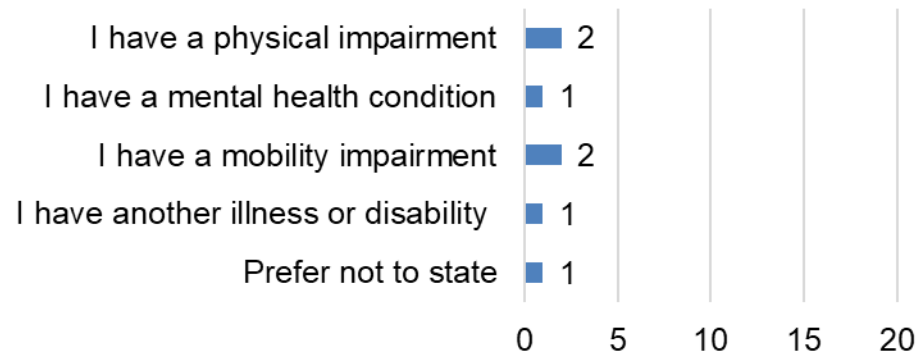
Only ethnicities selected by respondents are shown in the graph

Base: All respondents (20)

Profile of respondents



If yes, what is the nature of your physical or mental health condition or illness?



Base: All respondents (20)



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