

Scottish Housing Regulator

National Panel of Tenants and Service Users

2025/26 Report

Lead author: Chris Thornton

engage
scotland

March 2026

Contents

INTRODUCTION	1
REPORTING REPAIRS AND CONCERNS	3
Reporting damp or mould	4
HEATING YOUR HOME.....	8
Zero emission heating	10
RENTS AND VALUE	11
Value for money	11
Rent affordability	13
Rent consultation	16
MONEY AND FINANCES	18
Current financial circumstances	18
Views on future financial circumstances	21
INFORMATION ON LANDLORD PERFORMANCE.....	23
Annual Assurance Statements	23
Performance information topics	24
SCOTTISH HOUSING REGULATOR.....	29
Getting information about SHR	29
Use of SHR website	31
USERS OF HOMELESSNESS SERVICES	33
Accessing services	33
Temporary accommodation	34
Accessing permanent accommodation	39
Particular needs and support	40
GYPSY/TRAVELLER SITE RESIDENTS.....	41
The importance of effective engagement	41
Experience of landlord engagement	42
Interest in engagement	43
SHR and Serious Concerns	44
ANNEX: PANEL MEMBERSHIP	45

Tables and figures

Figure 1: Whether received information from landlord about reporting repairs or safety concerns.....	3
Figure 2: Whether know how to report repairs or safety concerns.....	4
Figure 3: Whether received information from landlord about reporting damp or mould	4
Figure 4: Whether reported damp or mould to landlord.....	5
Figure 5: Confidence in having to report damp or mould.....	5
Figure 6: Potential barriers to reporting damp or mould.....	6
Figure 7: Whether had difficulty heating home.....	8
Figure 8: Factors contributing to difficulty heating the home	9
Figure 9: Whether heard of zero emission heating.....	10
Figure 10: Whether rent is value for money	11
Figure 11: Whether experienced difficulty affording rent.....	14
Figure 12: Factors contributing to difficulty affording rent	14
Figure 13: Whether concerned about affording rent over next few years	15
Figure 14: When last received information from landlord on rent increases	16
Figure 15: Information provided by landlords on rent increases	16
Figure 16: How managing financially at the moment.....	18
Figure 17: Views on current financial circumstances	19
Figure 18: How current financial circumstances compare with 6, 12 and 24 months ago.....	20
Figure 19: Factors affecting financial circumstances in the last 12 months	21
Figure 20: Expectations for finances over next few years.....	22
Figure 21: Views on Annual Assurance Statements.....	23
Figure 22: Importance of landlord performance information topics (scored out of 7)	24
Figure 23: How prefer to receive information about the SHR	29
Figure 24: Interest in using SHR website in the future	32
Table 1: Profile of current National Panel membership	46

INTRODUCTION

This report sets out findings from the 2025/26 programme of engagement with the National Panel of Tenants and Service Users, commissioned by the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR).

The Panel was established in 2013 as a way for the Scottish Housing Regulator to engage with tenants and other users of social landlord services. The Panel is used to gauge service user priorities and experiences, and findings help to shape SHR's focus as regulator of social landlords. Members include social tenants, people who have used homelessness services, residents of Gypsy/Traveller sites provided by social landlords and owners using social landlord factoring services.

Regular refreshment exercises and ongoing promotion seek to maximise the level of engagement with Panel members, and improve representation of specific groups. Panel membership stood at 404 individuals in March 2026. A profile of the current Panel membership is provided as an [Annex to this report](#).

The 2025/26 programme

The 2025/26 Panel programme sought to support current SHR priorities and track views over time on key issues such as rents and finances. Across the programme we asked Panel members about:

- Reporting repairs and concerns
- Heating your home
- Rents and value
- Money and finances
- Information on landlord performance
- Getting information on SHR and use of the SHR website
- Experience of homelessness services
- Landlord engagement on Gypsy/Traveller sites

A combined quantitative and qualitative research approach comprised a survey issued to all Panel members in December 2025 followed by more targeted qualitative engagement during February and March 2026. This report combines quantitative survey results with qualitative findings, based on responses to the full Panel survey (47% response, 188 respondents) and qualitative feedback. The qualitative engagement strand involved 23 Panel members, 36 users of homelessness services and 17 residents of Gypsy/Traveller sites.

The survey included questions across the first six themes listed above. Qualitative engagement focused on:

- (i) Gathering more detailed feedback from Panel members on how they prefer to access SHR information, and priorities for landlord performance information – feedback is included at [Performance information topics](#) and [Getting information about SHR](#).
- (ii) Qualitative interviews with users of homelessness services – findings are reported at [USERS OF HOMELESSNESS SERVICES](#).
- (iii) Survey interviews with residents of Gypsy/Traveller sites to explore experience of landlord engagement processes – findings are reported at [GYPSY/TRAVELLER SITE RESIDENTS](#).

The 2025/26 programme has further developed the growing National Panel evidence base, and gathered rich feedback from a range of tenants and other service users across the themes noted above. However, findings should not be seen as necessarily representative of the service user population more widely.

The remainder of this report sets out quantitative and qualitative findings. Data visualisations present overall survey results, and any variation across key respondent groups is highlighted in the body of the report. We refer to those taking part as 'respondents' where this was via the survey, and 'participants' where this was via qualitative methods. Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number; for some questions this means that percentages may not sum to 100%. Similarly, aggregate figures cited in the text (e.g. the percentage of respondents answering 'strongly agree' or 'agree') may not sum to results presented in figures and tables. Illustrative quotes from qualitative participants may have been lightly edited for brevity.

REPORTING REPAIRS AND CONCERNS

A large majority of respondents had received information from their landlord about reporting repairs or safety concerns (89%) and would know how to report repairs (94%) and safety concerns (87%).

More than half of respondents (56%) had received information about reporting damp or mould, and 29% had previously reported damp or mould to their landlord.

The majority (79%) felt that they know how to report damp or mould concerns, but views were more mixed on how their landlord would deal with concerns. Around half were confident that their landlord would deal with concerns quickly and effectively, but up to a third were not confident about this.

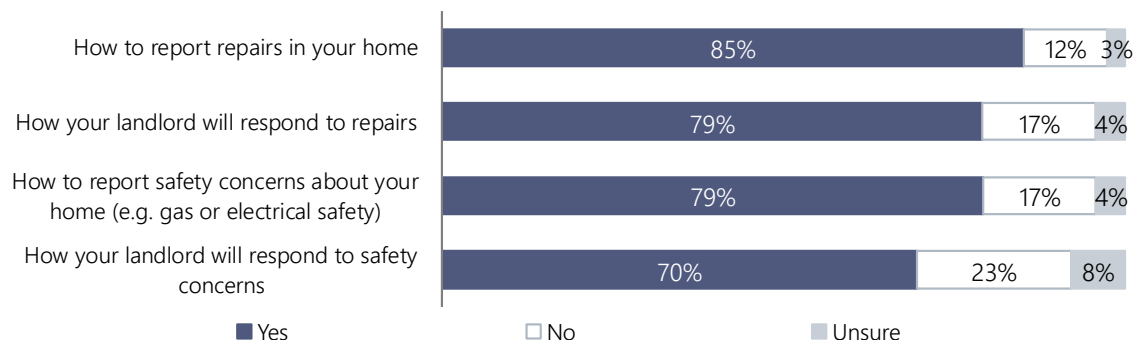
Most respondents (63%) mentioned factors that might prevent them reporting damp or mould concerns, primarily related to whether the landlord would be able to resolve the issue and knowing who to speak to.

This section summarises views and experiences in relation to reporting repairs and other concerns including damp or mould in their home.

A large majority of respondents had received information from their landlord about reporting repairs or safety concerns; 89% had received one or more of the types of information listed at Figure 1. Respondents were more likely to have received information on how to report repairs in their home (85%) and least likely to have received information on how their landlord will respond to safety concerns (70%).

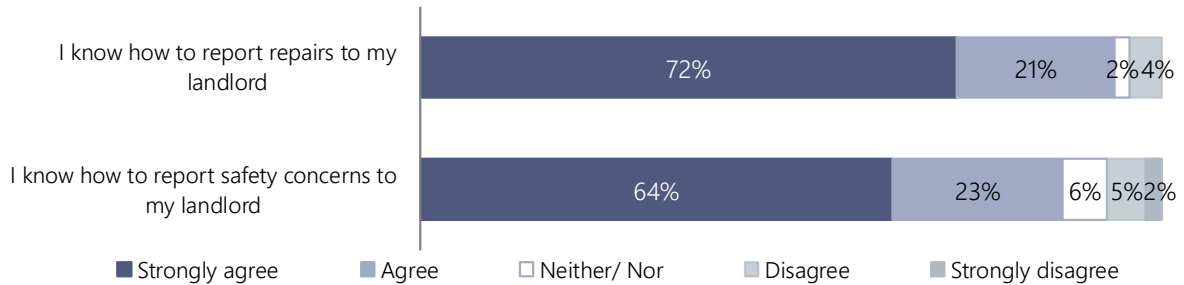
These findings were broadly consistent across key respondent groups. The only notable variation was Council tenants being less likely to indicate that they have received information on how the landlord will respond to repairs and safety concerns.

Figure 1: Whether received information from landlord about reporting repairs or safety concerns



As Figure 2 shows, a large majority of respondents felt that they know how to report repairs and safety concerns to their landlord; 94% know how to report repairs and 87% know how to report safety concerns. These findings were consistent across key respondent groups.

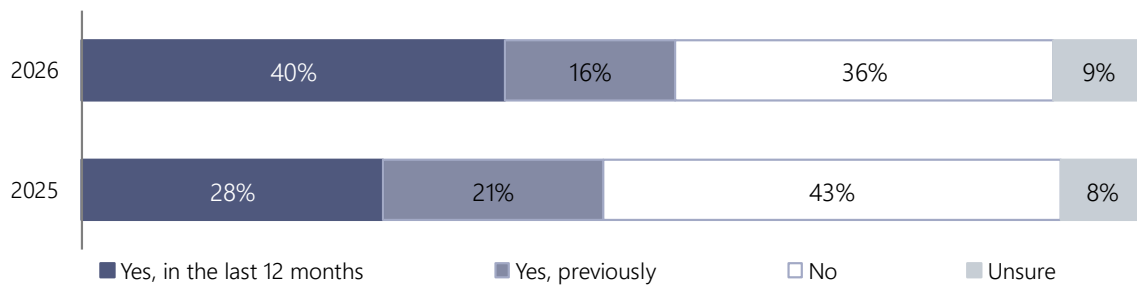
Figure 2: Whether know how to report repairs or safety concerns



Reporting damp or mould

More than half of respondents (56%) indicated that they had received information about reporting damp or mould (Figure 3). This shows a 7-point increase from the 2025 survey. This finding was broadly consistent across most respondent groups, although Registered Social Landlord (RSL) tenants and Regional Tenant Organisation (RTO¹) members were somewhat more likely than others to have received information on damp or mould.

Figure 3: Whether received information from landlord about reporting damp or mould



As Figure 4 shows, 29% of respondents had reported damp or mould to their landlord, including 13% who had done so in the last year. This finding is very similar to the 2025 finding and was consistent across most respondent groups, although those aged under 60 were more likely to have reported damp or mould.

¹ Registered Tenant Organisations (RTOs) are local groups set up under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 who represent social tenants.

Figure 4: Whether reported damp or mould to landlord

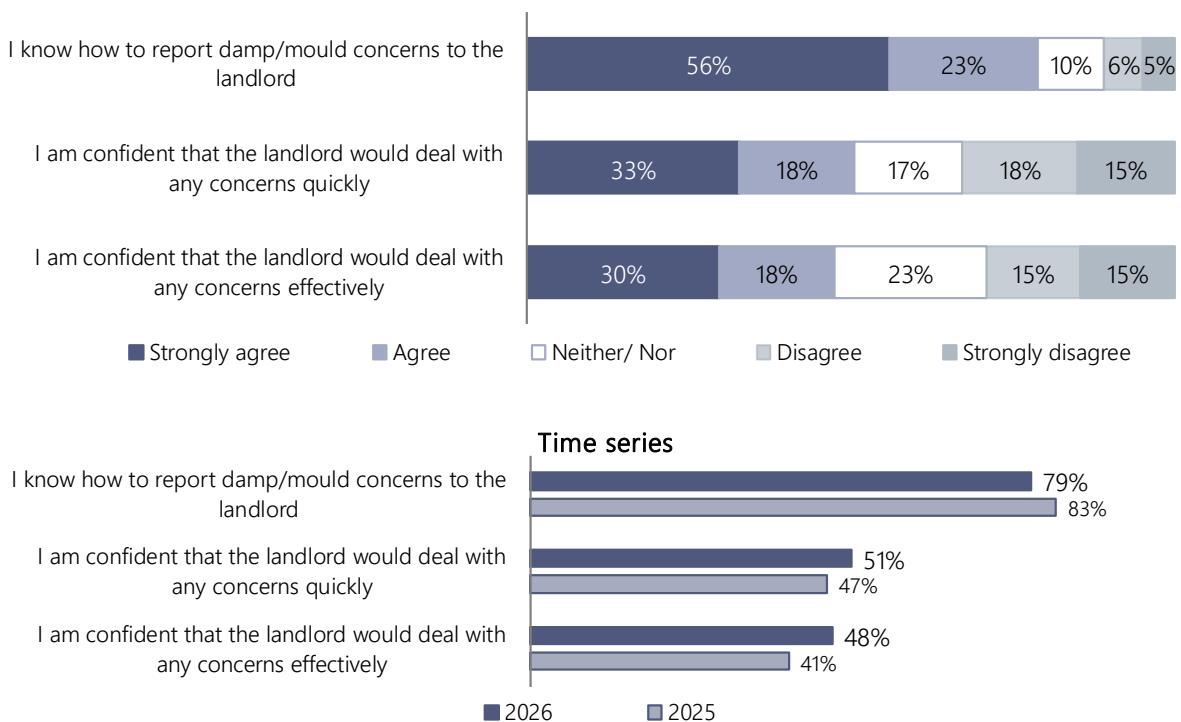


The majority of respondents (79%) felt that they know how to report damp or mould concerns, similar to the 2025 finding (83%). This finding was consistent across respondent groups.

Respondents were more mixed in terms of being confident that their landlord would deal with damp and mould concerns. Around half (51%) were confident that their landlord would deal with concerns quickly, but around a third were not confident about this (33%). Similarly, 48% were confident that their landlord would deal with concerns effectively but 29% were not confident about this.

These findings are similar to the 2025 survey and were broadly consistent across key respondent groups, although younger respondents were less confident in how their landlord would respond to damp or mould concerns.

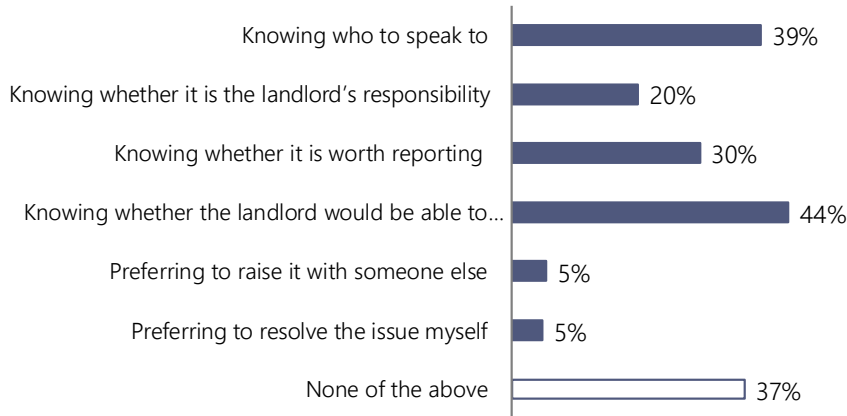
Figure 5: Confidence in having to report damp or mould



The survey also asked Panel members about anything that might prevent them from reporting damp or mould to their landlord (Figure 6).

Most respondents (63%) mentioned potential barriers to reporting damp or mould. These were primarily related to knowing whether the landlord would be able to resolve the issue (mentioned by 44%) and knowing who to speak to about any concerns (39%).

Figure 6: Potential barriers to reporting damp or mould



Respondents were able to select multiple options.

The survey asked Panel members about anything that their landlord could do differently on damp and mould. Respondents were invited to answer in their own words.

Around 50 respondents provided written comment. Most of these referred to experience of damp or mould issues and expressed frustration about their landlord's response to these - although some reported positive experience of their landlord's response. Several respondents indicated that reported damp or mould issues remain unresolved.

Written comments highlighted the importance of resolving damp and mould issues first time. There were calls for landlords to respond more quickly and effectively to concerns. It was also suggested that landlords should include follow-up checks after allowing sufficient time to ensure that the cause of damp or mould has been resolved.

Around a quarter of those providing written comment felt that their landlord did not appear to take reports of damp or mould seriously enough. This included reference to the time that landlords had taken to respond to reports, and a perception that their response had not resolved the underlying cause of damp or mould. Several of those providing written comment suggested that their landlord had "blamed" tenants' behaviour rather than dealing with the underlying cause.

Respondents referred to having had been affected by a range of factors that can contribute to damp or mould. These included poor ventilation, inadequate insulation and difficulty keeping their home warm, and water ingress. A small number reported having felt required to pay for dehumidifiers and other remedies at their own expense, due to what was described as an inadequate response from their landlord. It was suggested that further investment is required from landlords to improve properties affected by poor ventilation and heating/insulation.

Finally in relation to damp and mould, some wished to see landlord provide clearer information for tenants. This included on how to report concerns, what landlords will do in response, and what tenants can do to minimise the risk of damp and mould.

HEATING YOUR HOME

More than half of respondents (54%) had experienced difficulty heating their home, a 17-point reduction from the 2024 survey and in line with 2022 and 2021 results.

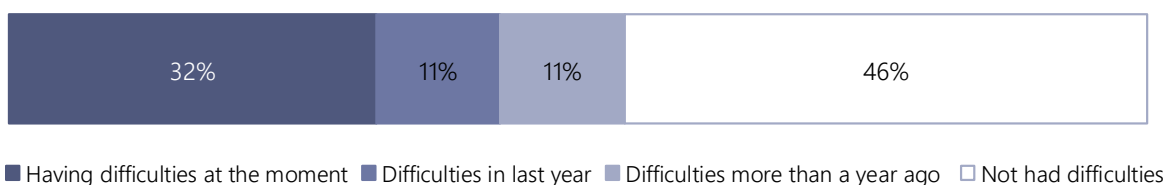
Energy costs were the main factor contributing to respondents' difficulties heating their home – 80% mentioned this. Around half of respondents reported that poor heating (51%) or poor windows (51%) had contributed to heating difficulties.

In relation to heating, Panel members were asked whether they have had any difficulties heating their home (Figure 7), and about the factors that had contributed to any difficulties (Figure 8).

More than half of respondents (54%) had experienced difficulty heating their home. This included around a third of respondents (32%) who were experiencing difficulties at the time of the survey. The proportion of respondents who have experienced difficulties heating their home has reduced by 17-points from the 2024 survey (the last time a comparable question was asked), having fallen broadly in line with the 2022 and 2021 surveys.

The proportion of respondents who have experienced difficulties heating their home was broadly consistent across key respondent groups. Perhaps unsurprisingly, those who had experienced difficulty affording their rent were also more likely to have difficulty heating their home. More than 7 in 10 of those who had difficulty affording their rent had also struggled to heat their home.

Figure 7: Whether had difficulty heating home



Time series- whether experienced difficulties



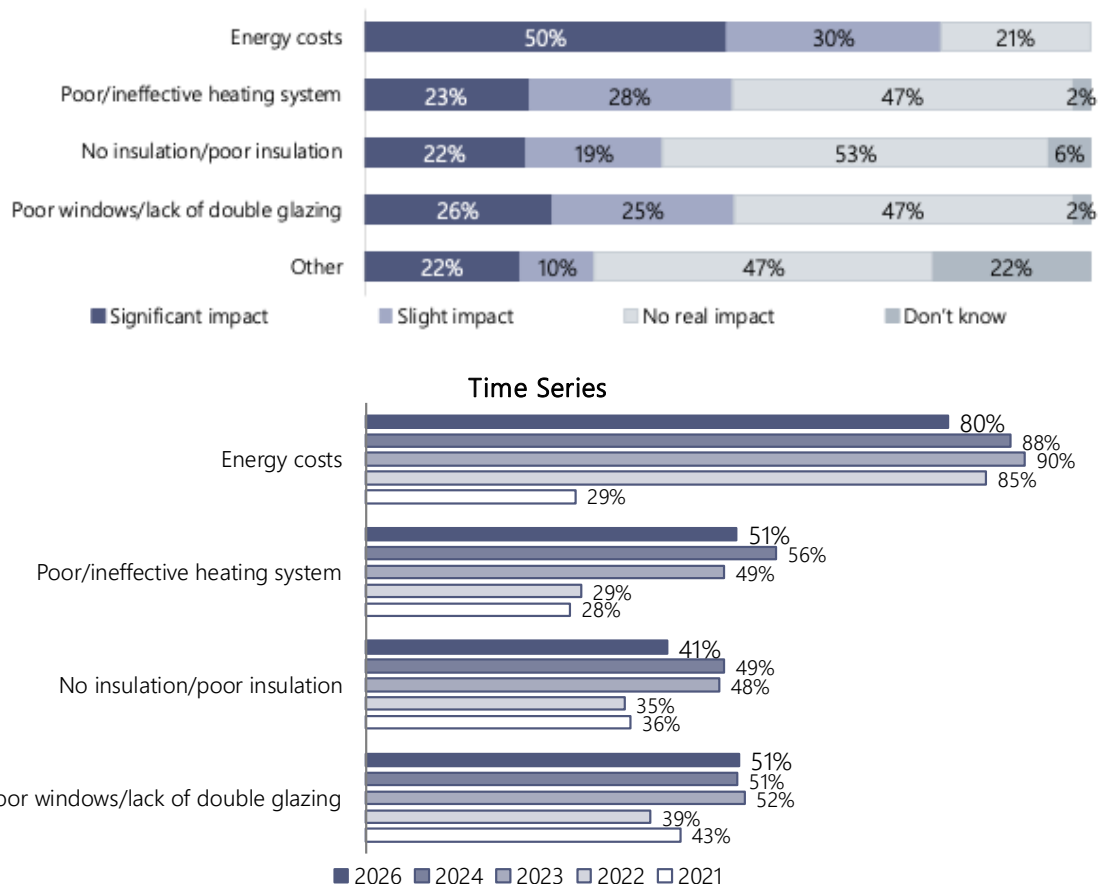
Note: Respondents were able to select multiple options.

As Figure 8 shows, energy costs were the main issue contributing to difficulties heating the home. A large majority of respondents (80%) felt that energy costs had made it difficult for them to heat their home, including half of all respondents (50%) who felt energy costs have had a 'significant impact'.

Other factors were less commonly mentioned, although around half of respondents indicated that a poor or inefficient heating system (51%) or poor windows (51%) had contributed to difficulty heating their home. Around 2 in 5 respondents (41%) indicated that poor insulation had contributed to difficulty heating their home.

These findings are broadly similar to previous surveys, with energy costs remaining the most commonly mentioned factor contributing to respondents' difficulty heating their home.

Figure 8: Factors contributing to difficulty heating the home

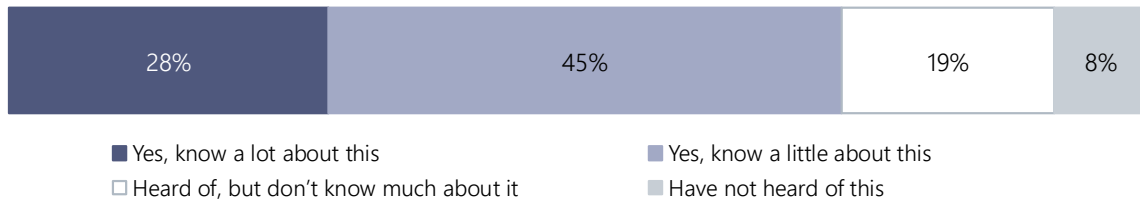


Figures may not sum to 100% due to rounding

Zero emission heating

As Figure 9 shows, a large majority of respondents (92%) had heard of zero emission heating, including 73% who felt that they knew at least a little about this. Awareness levels were similar across key respondent groups.

Figure 9: Whether heard of zero emission heating



Panel members were also asked whether their home has a zero-emission heating system; 1 in 10 respondents (10%) reported that this was the case. In terms of the types of zero emission heating installed, these respondents referred to heat pumps – both air source and ground source – and solar panel heating.

RENTS AND VALUE

Around half of respondents (49%) felt that their rent is good value for money, and more than a quarter (24%) felt their rent is poor value.

Nearly half of respondents (48%) have experienced difficulties affording their rent, nearly a third (31%) in the last year. Rent levels, heating and other living costs were seen as the main causes of rent difficulties.

The majority of respondents (72%) were concerned about the future affordability of their rent, most commonly linked to the potential impact of future rent increases.

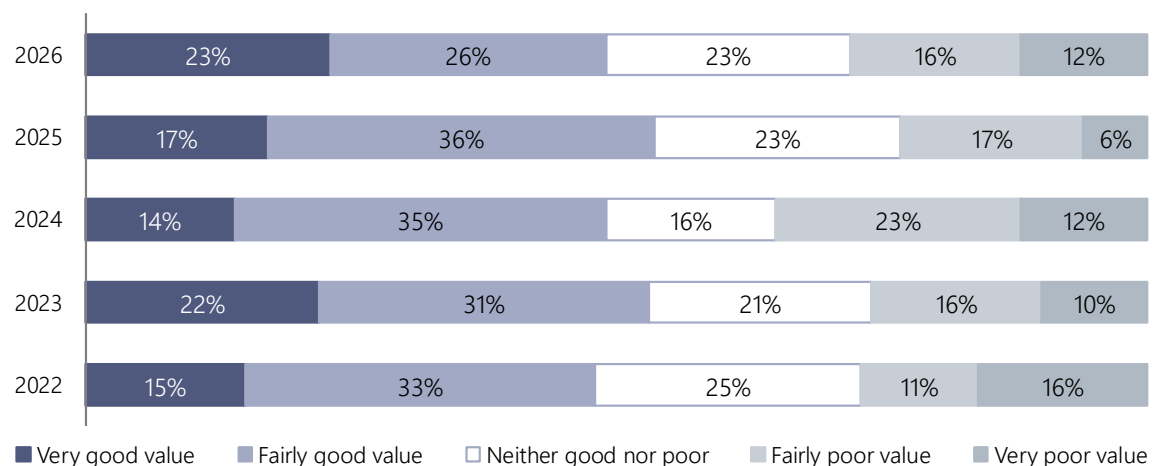
A large majority (81%) had recently received information about rent increases from their landlord. Most of these respondents indicated that the information was clear on the proposed increase and asked for their views.

This section considers Panel member views and experiences around rents, including whether respondents feel their rent is value for money, rent affordability, and rent consultations.

Value for money

As Figure 10 shows, around half of respondents (49%) felt that their rent is good value for money, while more than a quarter (28%) felt their rent is poor value. The survey has shown some year-to-year variation in views on value for money, but this balance of views is broadly in line with findings across previous surveys. Views were broadly consistent across key respondent groups although older respondents and RTO members were more positive than others on value for money.

Figure 10: Whether rent is value for money



The survey asked Panel members to expand on what they think about when judging whether rents are value for money. Written feedback members identified a range of considerations, most commonly relating to (i) the quality and responsiveness of their landlord services, (ii) the level and affordability of their rent, and (iii) the quality of their home including ease of keeping the home warm. Below we summarise the main points raised.

Service quality. The most commonly mentioned considerations related to the quality of service received from the landlord. Several respondents noted that the balance between their rent and service quality is fundamental to how they assess value for money. Repairs was the most commonly mentioned specific service area, including examples of emergency repairs requiring a rapid response, and to the importance of landlords getting repairs right first time. A number of respondents expressed frustration that they had to complain about repairs works where their landlord had not properly addressed the problem, and there was also a view that landlords making 'patch' repairs (e.g. rather than replacing a worn item) can gradually degrade the quality of their home.

The potential for service quality to impact (positively or negatively) on the quality and condition of their home was a key focus for some of those providing written comment. Other aspects of service quality referenced by respondents included:

- Accessibility of services in terms of being able to contact their landlord in a way that suits them, and how quickly landlords respond to service users.
- The manner of service staff including how effectively they are able to deal with service requests and queries, and more generally whether they demonstrate understanding and respect for tenants.

Rent levels and affordability were also commonly referenced in terms of how respondents judge value for money. This included comment on the extent to which respondents are able to afford their own rent, and wider considerations such as how their landlord's rent levels compare with other options (social rented and private rented).

The size of rent increases was also a key focus for those providing written comment. Some cited specific percentage increases to their rent in recent years and compared with these with other landlords. There was also concern about the cumulative impact of annual increases, including comment from longer-standing tenants that their rent has increased substantially during their tenancy.

Home and heating. The quality of home was identified as a key concern for many of those providing comment, including in relation to the responsiveness of repairs services (as noted above). Other factors relating to quality of home that affect how respondents judge value for money included planned improvement works and capital investment (e.g. upgrading kitchens, bathrooms and heating systems), the effectiveness of other ongoing maintenance work, and suitability for particular needs such as wheelchair users or other disabilities.

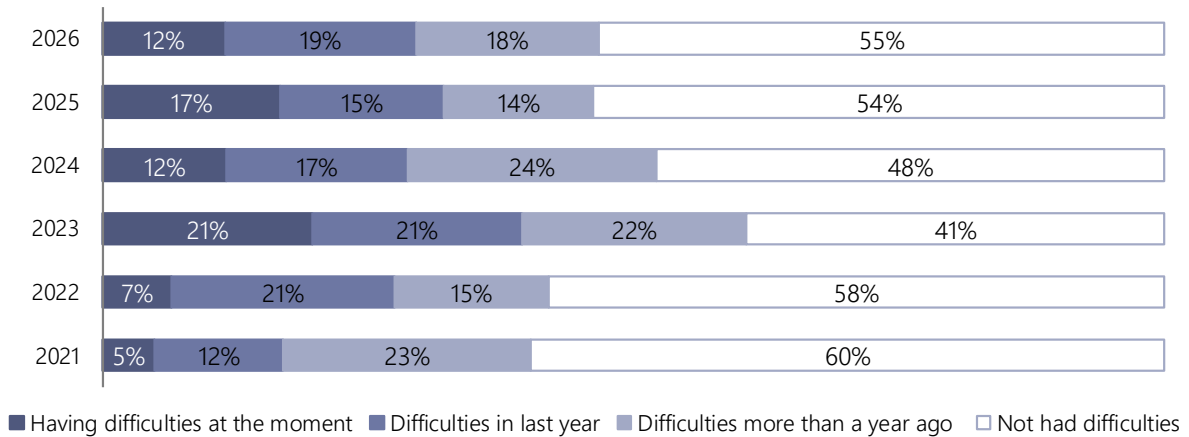
Heating was also commonly referenced by respondents in relation to the quality of their home. A number of those providing comment indicated that energy efficiency and how easy their home is to keep warm contribute to whether they feel their rent is value for money. Respondents also highlighted the impact of energy efficiency and insulation in reducing their heating costs, and ultimately easing wider affordability pressures.

Other considerations that can affect value for money judgements included:

- Quality of local neighbourhood and how this is managed - including upkeep of common areas, dealing with neighbour problems or antisocial behaviour.
- Opportunities for tenants to engage in their landlord's decision making, and whether tenants feel listened to by the landlord. This included specific reference to rent consultations, and also to landlord's wider approach to participation and communication. This was seen as an important way that landlords can demonstrate respect for tenants.
- How landlords respond to issues and complaints.
- How efficiently the landlord operates as an organisation.

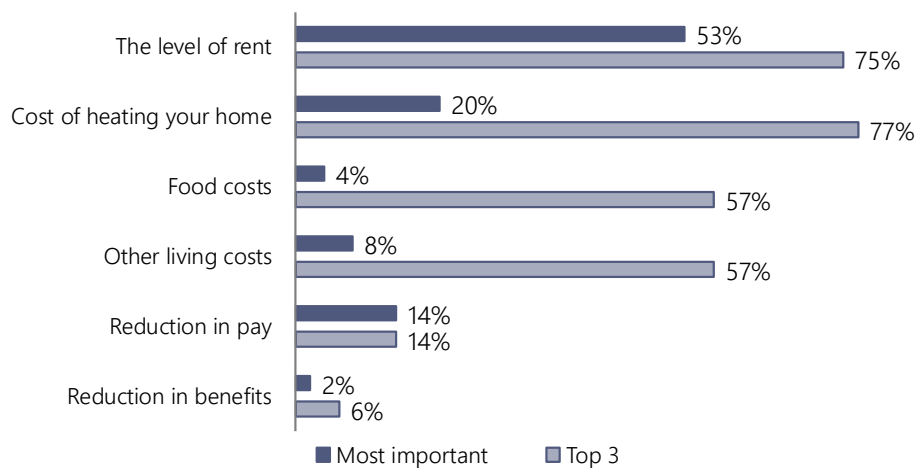
Rent affordability

Figure 11 summarises feedback on respondents' experience of difficulties affording their rent. As this shows nearly half (48%) had experienced difficulties affording their rent, including nearly a third (31%) who had experienced difficulties in the last year and 11% who were experiencing difficulties at the time of the survey. Results are in line with those from the 2025 survey. Survey responses indicate that those aged under 60 were more likely to have experienced difficulty affording their rent.

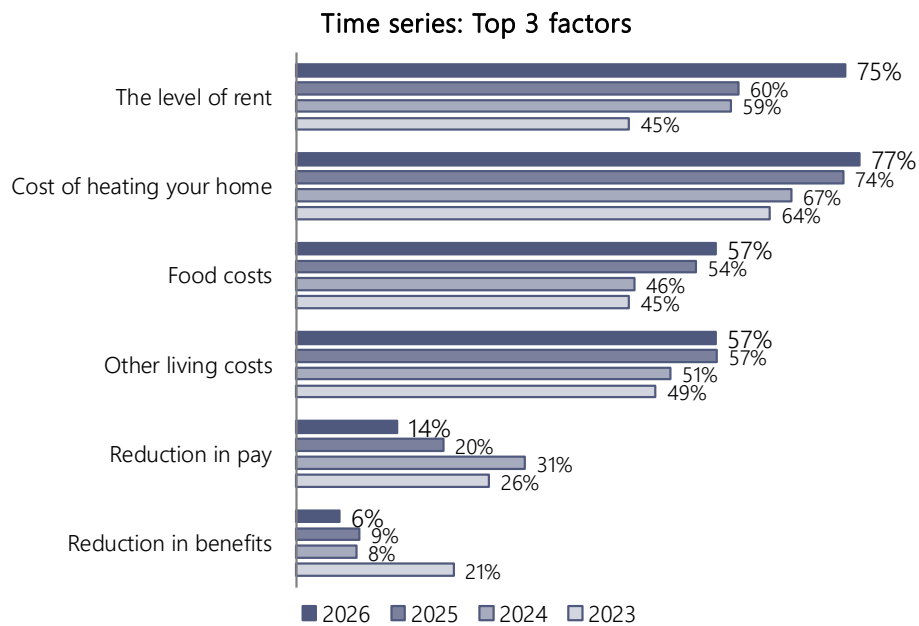
Figure 11: Whether experienced difficulty affording rent

As Figure 12 shows, the level of rent was seen as the most significant factor contributing to rent affordability difficulties; 75% of those who had experienced difficulties mentioned this, and 53% felt this was the most important factor. Heating costs were also commonly mentioned (by 77%) but were less likely to be ranked as the most important factor (20%).

The overall mix of factors contributing to respondents' rent difficulties was broadly similar to that reported in previous surveys, with rent levels and heating the home consistently identified as the main factors contributing to rent difficulties. However, there has been some year-to-year variation in the proportion of respondents mentioning specific factors, for example the proportion of respondents citing rent levels has increased since 2025.

Figure 12: Factors contributing to difficulty affording rent

Respondents were able to select multiple options.



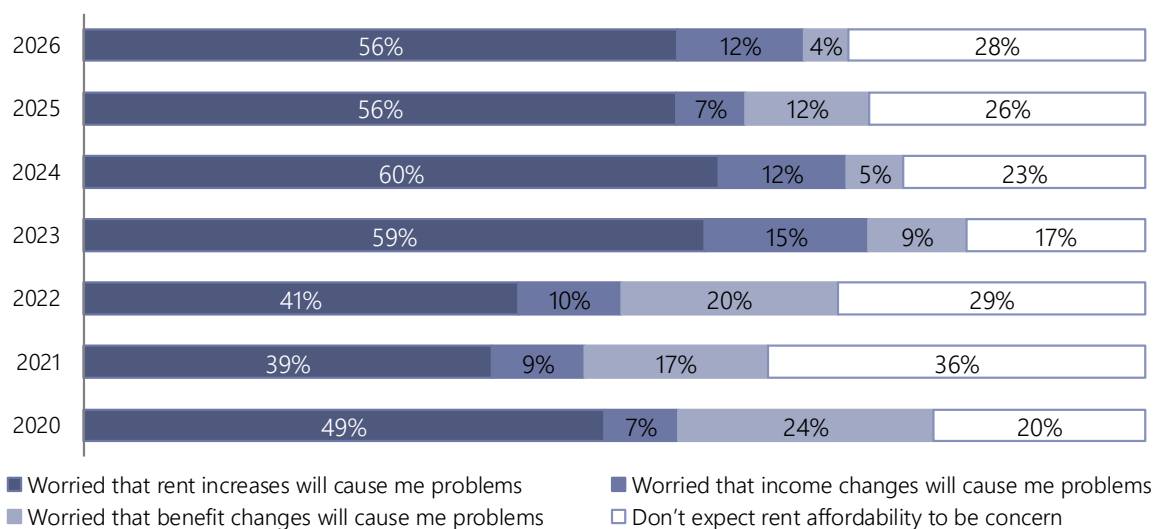
Respondents were able to select multiple options.

Future affordability

As Figure 13 shows, the majority of respondents (72%) expressed concerns about affording their rent over the next few years, similar to the 2025 survey. Perhaps unsurprisingly, those who had experienced difficulty affording their rent were significantly more likely to express concerns; more than 9 in 10 of those who had experienced difficulties also expressed concerns about the future.

In terms of the nature of these concerns, these were most commonly related to rent increases. More than half of respondents (56%) were concerned about the impact of future rent increases on rent affordability. This compares with 12% who were concerned about future changes to their income, and 4% about future benefit changes.

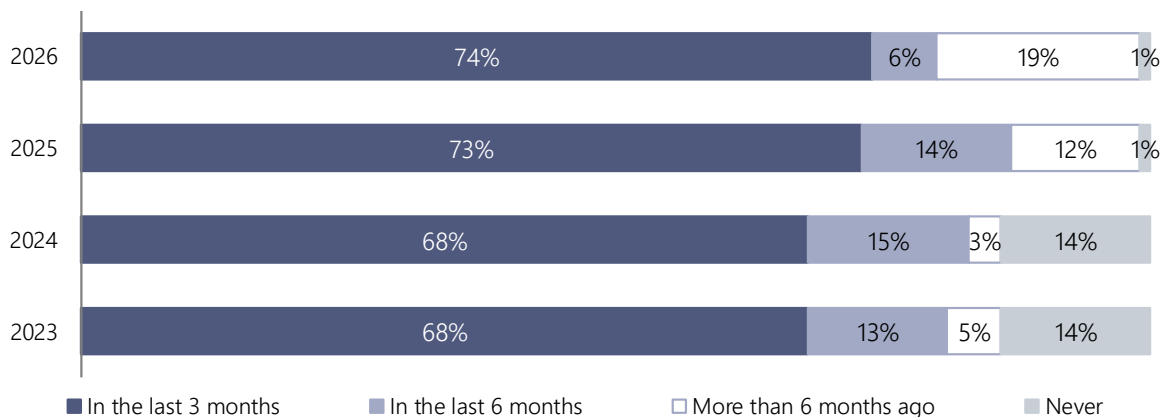
Figure 13: Whether concerned about affording rent over next few years



Rent consultation

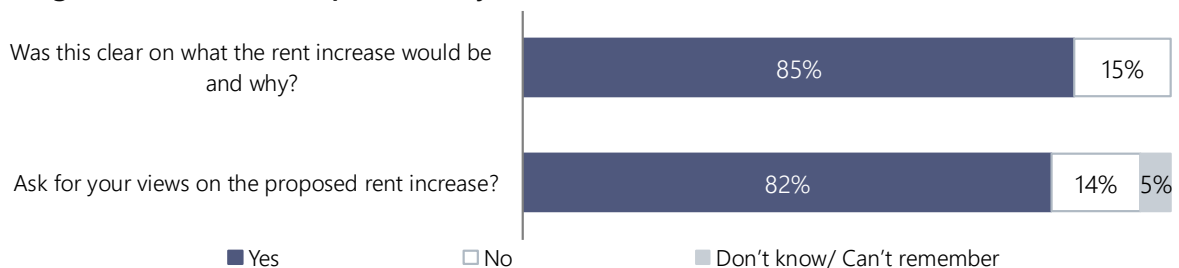
A large majority of respondents (81%) indicated that they had received information about rent increases from their landlord in the last six months, with most of these (74%) having received information in the last three months. This is similar to results across previous surveys.

Figure 14: When last received information from landlord on rent increases



As Figure 15 shows, a large majority of those who had received information on rent increases felt that this was clear on what the rent increase would be and why (85%). A large majority (82%) also indicated that they were asked for their view on the proposed rent increase. RSL tenants were somewhat more likely than local authority tenants to report that they had been asked for their views.

Figure 15: Information provided by landlords on rent increases



The survey asked Panel members to expand on their most recent experience of receiving information from their landlord on rent increases. Key points are summarised below.

- What information was provided on rent increases? Most of those providing comment indicated that information from their landlord had stated the proposed level of rent increase, with some noting that this had included multiple increase options. Respondents also generally indicated that their landlord had provided a rationale for the proposed rent increase, although some specifically noted that this was not included. This contextual

information had included references to inflation and increasing costs affecting services, comparison with other social landlords, and a breakdown of how rental income is used by the landlord. Some had also received information on the implications of different rent increase options for ongoing service standards.

- Were you satisfied with the information? Those providing comment were mixed in terms of their satisfaction with the information provided. Relatively few included a specific rationale for their satisfaction, but it is notable that most of those who were satisfied had been provided with multiple rent increase options, information on the rationale for proposed increases and/or options for tenants to provide their views. Dissatisfied respondents included several who felt that the information provided was limited, and for example did not include a proper rationale for the proposed rent increase. Some also noted that they had wished to see a 0% increase option.
- What options did you have to give your views? Respondents were divided on whether their landlord provided options to give their views on proposed rent increases, with some indicating that this had not been provided. Where tenants had been given options to share their views, this was most commonly via a survey or similar mechanism (including web-based, postal and telephone examples). Others indicated that email or telephone contact details had been provided, and several noted that they had opportunities to comment on proposed rent increases through RTOs or scrutiny activity.
- Were you satisfied with the options to give your views? Respondents were divided in terms of the options to give their views. Relatively few included detail on the basis for any satisfaction or dissatisfaction, but several respondents expressed a view that tenant input has little or no impact on landlord rent increase decisions. This included comment that very few tenants take part rent consultations.

MONEY AND FINANCES

Around a fifth (19%) of respondents were not managing well financially at the time of the survey, with 10% in financial difficulty.

Financial worries have affected a substantial proportion – 80% struggle with unexpected expenses and 35% often have to delay or miss paying a bill.

Most felt their financial circumstances were worse than 12 months ago (56%, a 14-point fall since 2025), with food and energy costs seen as the biggest contributors.

Around three quarters (76%) were concerned about their finances over the next few years.

This section considers Panel member views and experiences about their financial circumstances, how these have changed in the last 12 months, and how respondents feel about their future finances.

Current financial circumstances

As Figure 16 shows, around a fifth (19%) of respondents indicated that they are not managing well with their finances as a whole, including 10% who are in financial difficulties. These findings are similar to the 2025 survey, and were broadly consistent across most respondent groups - although younger respondents were more likely to be struggling financially.

Figure 16: How managing financially at the moment

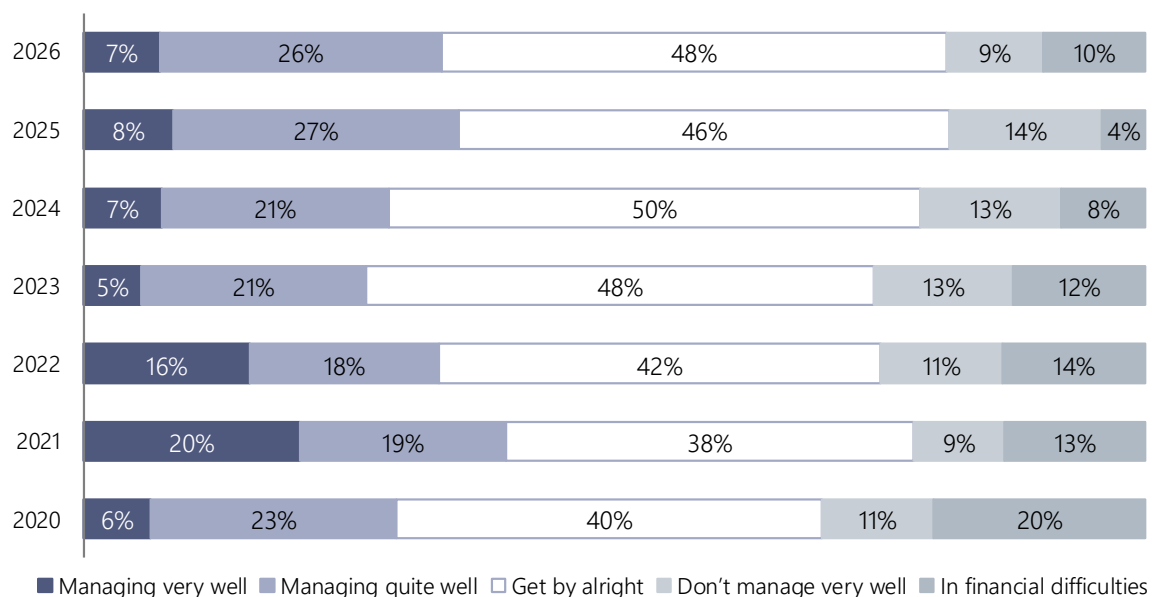
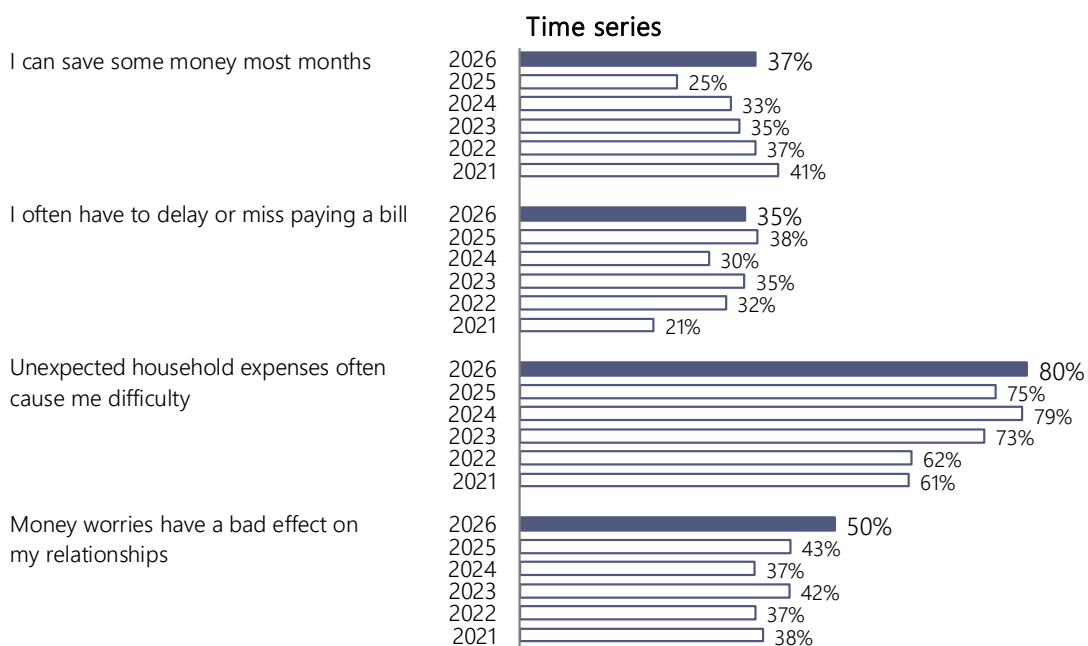
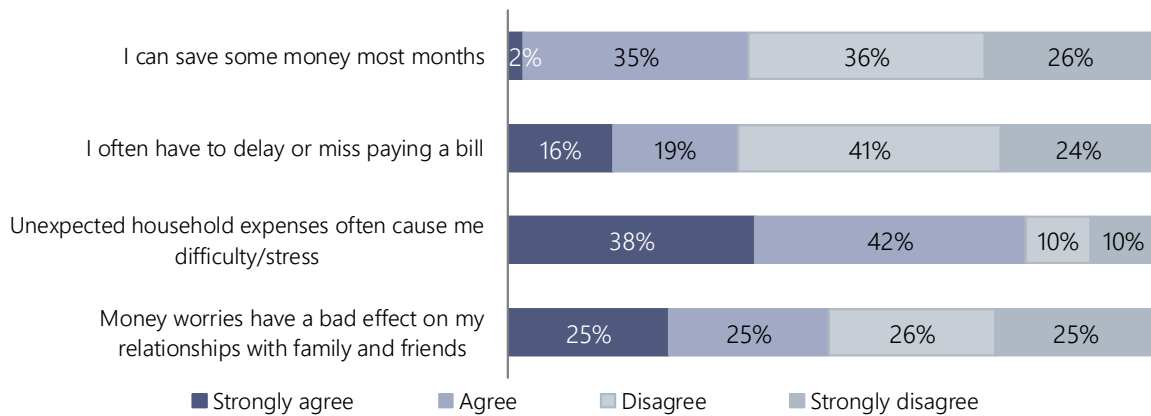


Figure 17 summarises views on specific aspects of respondents’ current financial circumstances. Consistent with findings noted above, results show that financial worries have affected a relatively substantial proportion of respondents:

- More than a third (35%) often have to delay or miss paying a bill.
- Nearly two thirds (63%) are not able to save money most months.
- Unexpected household expenses often cause difficulty or stress for a large majority of respondents (80%).
- Money worries have a bad effect on relationships for half of respondents (50%).

Also consistent with findings noted earlier, those aged under 60 were most likely to have experienced financial worries. This was particularly so in relation to often having to delay or miss bills, and being unable to save money.

Figure 17: Views on current financial circumstances



Financial circumstances over the last 12 months

As Figure 18 shows, more than half of respondents felt that their financial circumstances are worse now than 6-12 months ago (51% felt they are worse than 6 months ago and 56% worse than 12 months ago).

This represents a 14-point reduction since 2025 in the proportion of respondents who felt worse off than a year ago. Findings were broadly consistent across key respondent groups, although RSL tenants and under 60s were more likely than others to feel worse off than a year ago.

Figure 18: How current financial circumstances compare with 6, 12 and 24 months ago

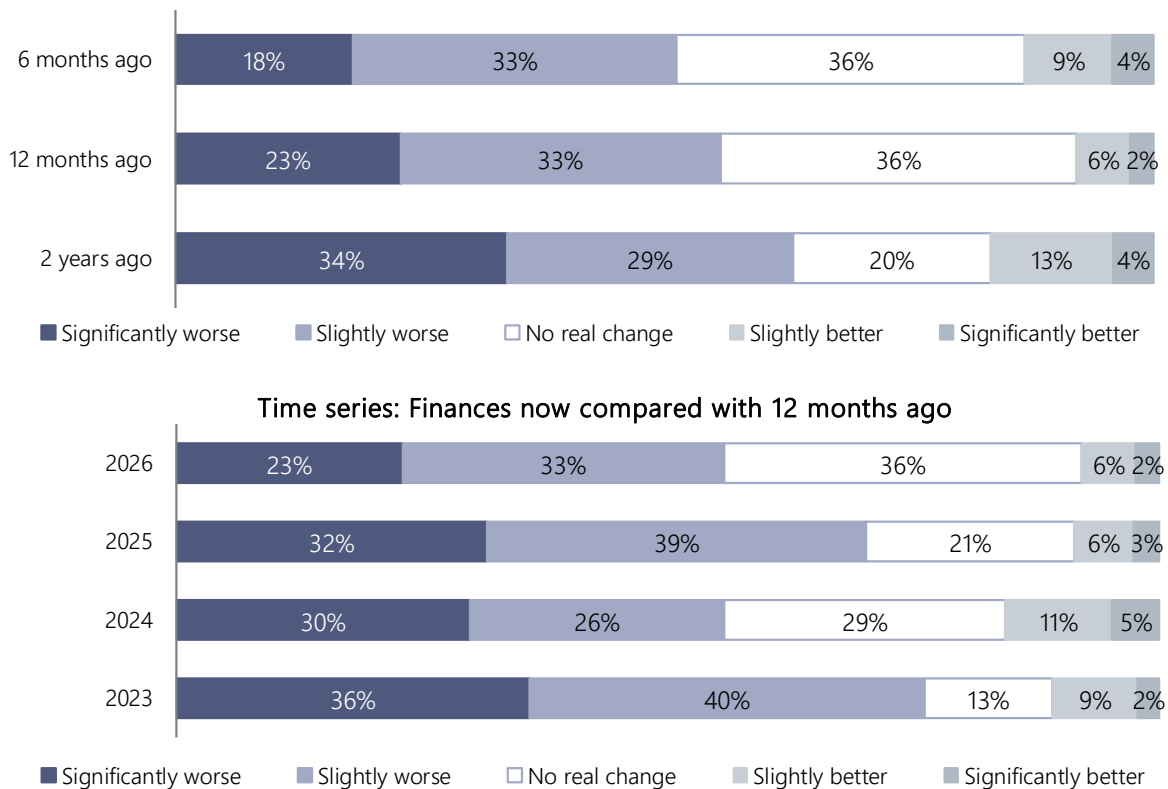
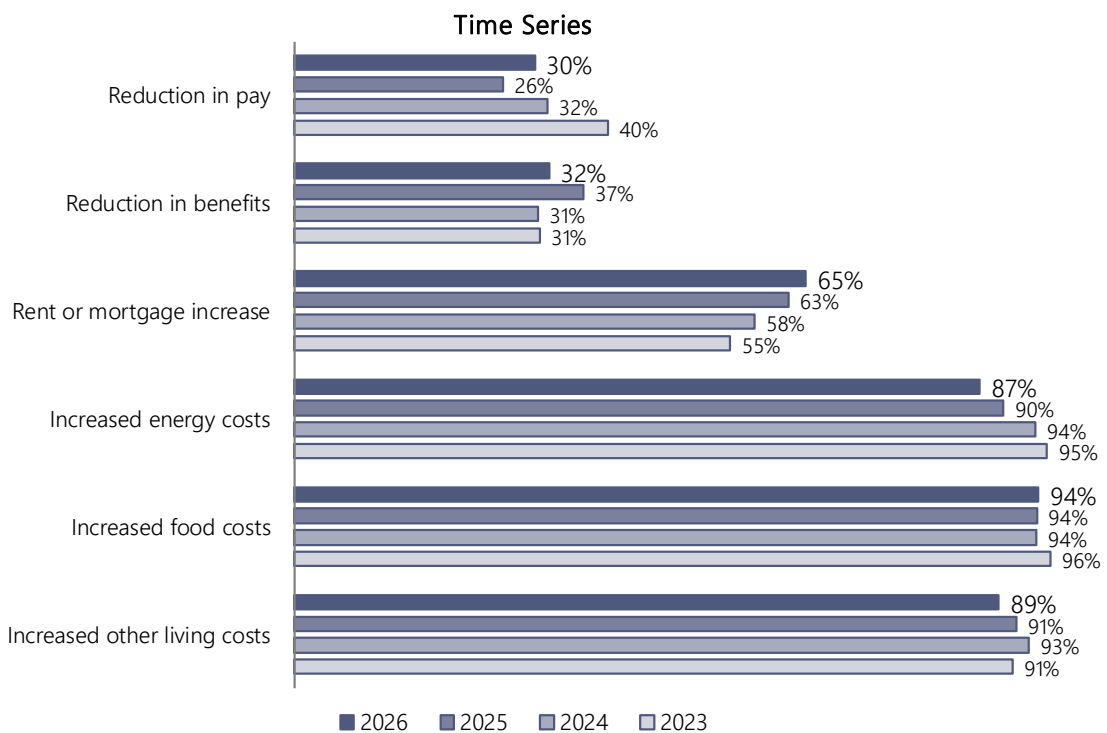
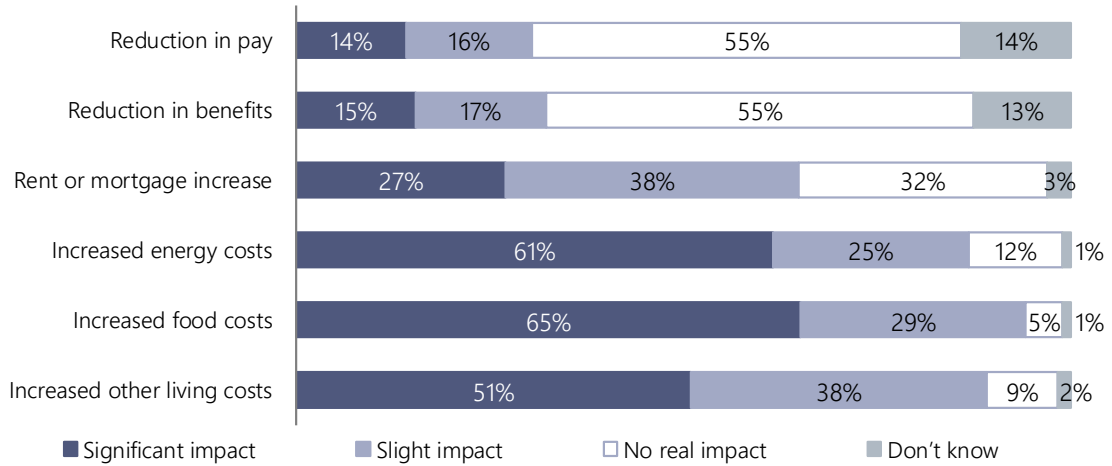


Figure 19 highlights the factors that have affected respondents’ finances over the last 12 months.

This shows that food, energy and other living costs were the most commonly mentioned factors affecting respondents’ financial circumstances. The great majority of respondents mentioned at least one of these issues, including more than half who felt that these have had a “significant impact” on their finances (65% for food costs and 61% for energy costs). Results were broadly similar to previous surveys, with food and energy costs consistently the most commonly mentioned factors affecting finances.

Figure 19: Factors affecting financial circumstances in the last 12 months

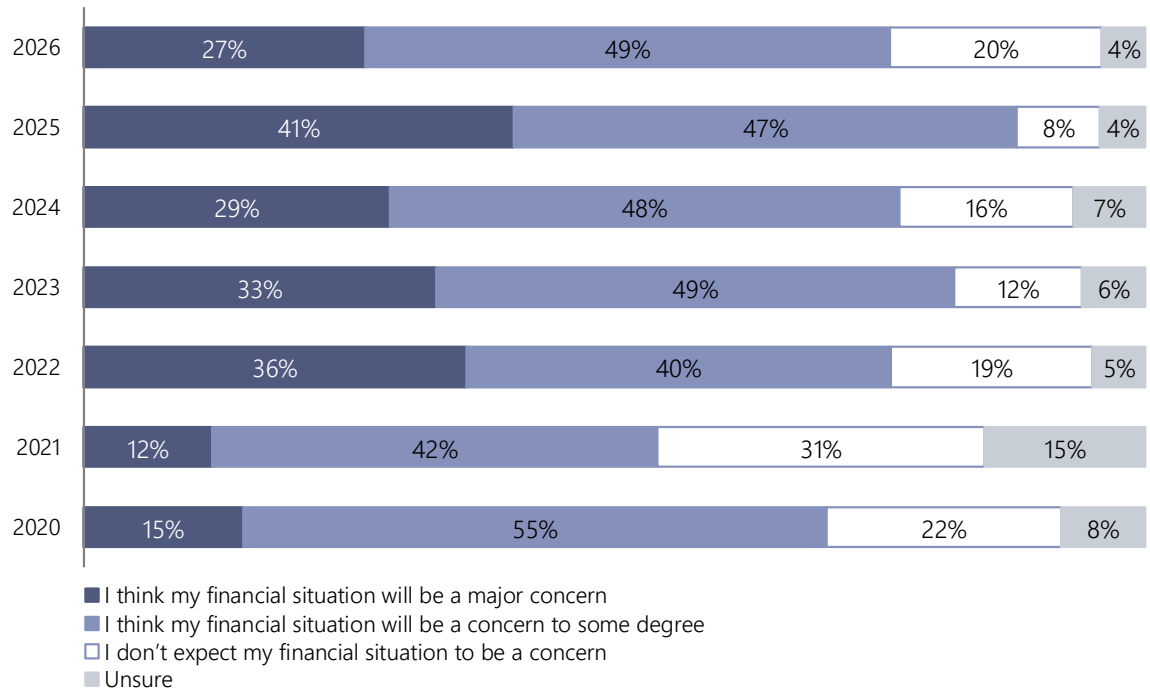


Views on future financial circumstances

As Figure 20 shows, around three quarters of respondents (76%) expressed concern about their financial circumstances over the next few years. This included 27% for whom their future financial situation was a “major concern”.

This represents a 12-point decrease since 2025 in the proportion of respondents who are concerned about their future financial circumstances, although findings are broadly in line with 2022-2024 survey results.

Figure 20: Expectations for finances over next few years



INFORMATION ON LANDLORD PERFORMANCE

More than 2 in 5 respondents had seen information from their landlord about Annual Assurance Statements (45%).

A large majority (85%) felt that Annual Assurance Statements provide information that is relevant to them, and 64% felt that they provide accurate information.

All types of performance information were seen as important, with indicators relating to repairs services generally rated as most important.

This section considers Panel members’ views and experiences on landlord performance information.

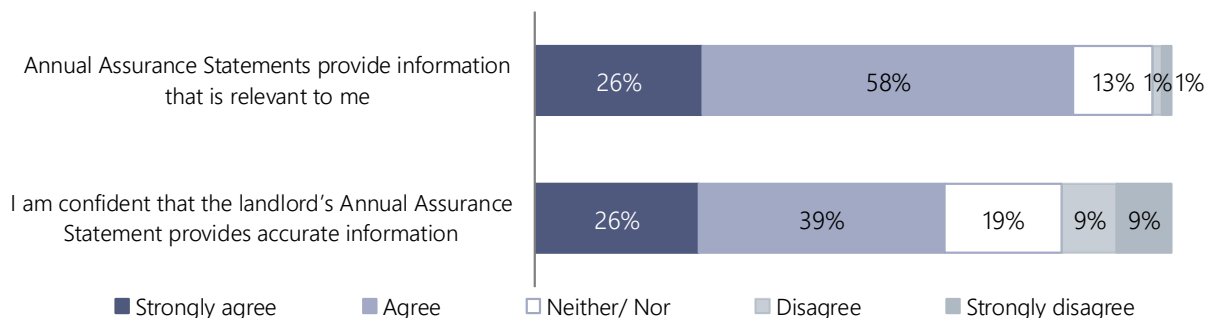
Annual Assurance Statements

Annual Assurance Statements are a requirement on social landlords to provide assurance that the landlord is meeting the standards and requirements set out by the Scottish Housing Regulator.

More than 2 in 5 respondents (45%) indicated that they had seen information from their landlord about Annual Assurance Statements, similar to the 2023 survey (the last survey for which comparable data is available). Survey responses indicate that RTO members were more likely than others to have seen such information.

As Figure 21 shows, a large majority of respondents (85%) felt that Annual Assurance Statements provide information that is relevant to them. The majority (64%) also felt that Statements provide accurate information, although 17% of respondents disagreed with this. Younger respondents were most likely to be sceptical about the accuracy of Annual Assurance Statements.

Figure 21: Views on Annual Assurance Statements



Panel members were invited to provide further written comment in support of their responses to the above questions. A minority of respondents provided

written comment here. This included some expressing a positive view on the importance of landlords providing tenants with clear information about standards being met. Several respondents also praised the quality of Annual Assurance Statements in relation to the relevance of content, and accessibility in terms of layout/design and clear use of language.

Others were less positive about Annual Assurance Statements. This was most commonly related to distrust of the information provided, and the data collection and verification processes used - "the statistics have to be taken on trust". There were also calls for Statements to include information on how landlords take account of tenant input in their service delivery and decision making.

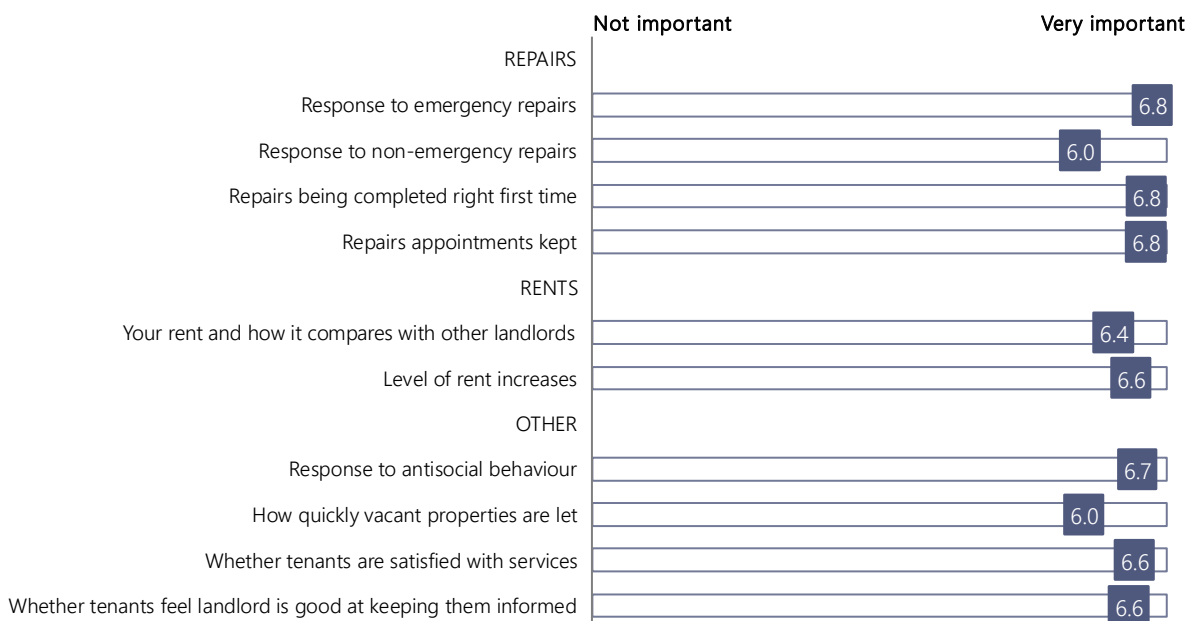
Performance information topics

The survey and qualitative engagement also sought views on landlord performance information, with Panel members first asked to rate the importance of different types of performance information.

As Figure 22 shows, respondents rated all of the listed types of performance information as important. Indicators relating to repairs services were generally rated as most important; response to emergency repairs, repairs being completed right first time and repairs appointments being kept each averaged 6.8 out of 7.

Other indicators rated as particularly important were response to antisocial behaviour (6.7), level of rent increases (6.6), tenant satisfaction with services (6.6) and whether tenants feel their landlord is good at keeping them informed (6.6).

Figure 22: Importance of landlord performance information topics (scored out of 7)



The qualitative engagement strand with Panel members (see [The 2025/26 programme](#)) further explored views on the landlord performance information that matters most to tenants and service users.

Performance information and SHR landlord reports

Feedback from qualitative participants expanded on the relative importance of specific types of performance information listed at Figure 22. This is summarised below.

Quality of home, maintenance and repairs. The responsiveness of repairs services was a priority for all participants, and was highlighted as essential in ensuring the quality of tenants' homes. This included performance information related to emergency repairs and structural or safety issues, and also more minor repairs that might be termed 'cosmetic' but which can have a significant impact for tenants.

Some noted that measures of repair response times alone are not enough, and wished to see information on the quality of repair works and ensuring that repairs provide a permanent fix for tenants. The number of complaints raised about repair works was suggested as a potential indicator here. In addition to repairs services, some wished to see performance information on heating costs and energy efficiency of homes – this was identified as a key concern for some.

"The quality of repairs being completed - and tenant satisfaction on the quality of work. The time taken to complete is only part of the picture, I wouldn't mind them taking longer if it meant the work was better."

Rents and value. Rent increases were a key focus for participants. This was primarily related to the size of rent increases, including comment on the potential cumulative impact of annual increases. For example, several participants who had been in their home for 10 or more years noted that their rent had increased substantially over this period. Participants also highlighted the importance of communication around rent increases, and for example ensuring that landlords provide a proper rationale for proposed rent increases. How rents compare with other social landlords was a vital performance indicator for some participants, although it was also noted that comparison of rents may not be meaningful if there is a difference in the quality of services.

Tenant satisfaction. Satisfaction with homes and landlord services was highlighted as a key area for landlord performance. This was linked to a view that 'administrative' measures such as repair response times do not give a full account of performance, and that satisfaction-based measures are more meaningful in terms of whether homes and services meet tenants' needs. However, others

expressed concern that tenant satisfaction evidence can be less robust than other measures, for example dependent on how evidence is gathered.

Satisfaction measures were also suggested for measuring landlords' approaches to communication and participation. Effective sharing of relevant information, ensuring communications are accessible to all, and enabling tenants and service users to have a voice were seen as an important aspect of landlord services. It was suggested that tenant satisfaction is the best way to measure performance here.

Quality of local area and neighbourhood was also referenced by some participants as having potential to significantly impact daily lives. It was suggested that the effectiveness of landlords in dealing with antisocial behaviour, managing neighbour problems and the upkeep of local neighbourhoods are important performance indicators.

Most qualitative participants felt that the indicators included in SHR landlord reports fit well with their priorities for landlord performance information (as outline above). This included comments that SHR landlord reports cover the points that make the biggest difference to tenants, and are easy to understand and relevant to tenants' experience.

"The landlord reports are really clear and comprehensive. They cover the key points for tenants - repairs, rents, those are what make a difference to tenants."

A minority of participants suggested other performance information that they would like to see included in SHR landlord reports and their own landlord's reporting. These included:

- Complaints data as an indicator of potential gaps or shortcomings in service delivery. This included the numbers of complaints received, how landlords respond and service user satisfaction with complaint handling. It was also suggested that landlord reports could highlight where issues or concerns have been raised and/or are being investigated by the Regulator.
- Whether tenants and service users feel valued and respected.
- How landlord income is spent.
- Planned improvement works and capital investment.
- Ensuring homes can meet tenants' disability and health needs, including adaptation services and how many homes meet recognised accessibility standards and are "genuinely suitable for disabled people".
- How landlords are addressing any shortfall in supply of affordable housing.

- Progress in reducing carbon emissions associated with housing.

Key themes and principles for performance reporting

Qualitative feedback identified several over-arching themes that appear to influence priorities for performance information.

Most commonly, interest in specific information was linked to how landlord performance can impact individuals' quality of life. This was highlighted in the context of repairs services having potential to reduce the negative impact of disrepair and poor housing quality on tenants' day-to-day lives. Interest in performance information was also linked to comments that performance reporting should be relevant to tenants' daily experience. This was highlighted in terms of the performance indicators used, and whether information is meaningful for tenants - "some of it is just full of statistics that feel quite remote from my experience – like how budgets are being spent".

Qualitative discussions also identified the following common themes or principles relating to landlord performance reporting. These are summarised below.

- It was noted that differences in service users' personal experience can affect priorities for performance reporting. This included examples of personal experience directly affecting views on landlord performance reporting, for example where interest in how well landlords deal with antisocial behaviour reflected personal experience. Participants acknowledged that meeting this diversity in service user priorities can be a challenge for landlord performance reporting.
- There were calls for greater transparency in landlord performance information. It was noted that SHR landlord reports draw together information from a range of sources, and that additional detail or contextual information could be useful for readers (e.g. the size of survey samples and an account of the robustness of performance data).
- An interest in transparency appeared to be linked to concern about whether performance reporting provides an accurate, balanced account of service performance. Some felt that their landlord's performance reporting can feel too focused on positives, and less willing to highlight areas of poor performance. Feedback suggests that this scepticism may reflect a view that positive performance information does not reflect individuals' personal experience. It was suggested that service users can disengage from landlord performance reporting if they feel it paints an overly positive picture, if it does not feel relevant to their own experience, or if there is no accountability for poor performance.

“Information on performance and how well the landlord is doing can feel like a disconnect when I’ve been getting a poor service. People disengage if they feel it just paints an overly positive picture, if it doesn’t seem to relate to my experience.”

- Some referred to the value of SHR’s reporting specifically. This was in terms of providing standardised reports that allow comparison of landlords, and as a trustworthy source of performance information.

SCOTTISH HOUSING REGULATOR

Respondents generally prefer to receive information about the SHR via email newsletters from SHR (64%), the SHR website (50%), or coverage in their own landlord's newsletters or website (47%).

Nearly all respondents would be interested in using the SHR website, most commonly to get information on their landlord's performance (97%), to learn more about SHR (97%), or to report an issue or concern (92%).

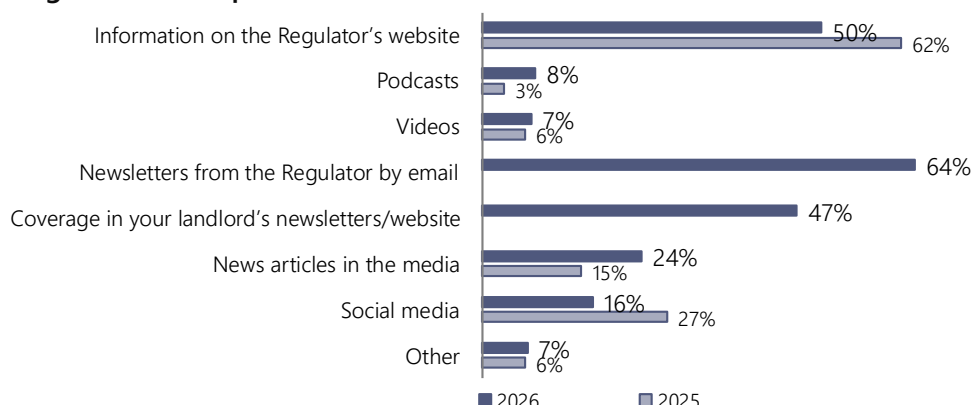
The final part of the survey asked Panel members preferences for getting information about SHR, and use of the SHR website. Qualitative engagement was also used to explore how Panel members may prefer to receive SHR information.

Getting information about SHR

As Figure 23 shows, respondents generally prefer to receive information about SHR via email newsletters from SHR (64% mentioned this), information on the SHR website (50%), and/or coverage in their own landlord's newsletters/website (47%).

Survey responses show some variation in preferences across respondent groups; for example RSL tenants were more likely to prefer the Regulator's website and female respondents were more likely to prefer news articles in the media. Variation was also evident across age groups, with younger respondents generally more likely than others to prefer social media, videos and podcasts.

Figure 23: How prefer to receive information about the SHR



Respondents were able to select multiple options. Additional answer options were added for the 2026 survey – 2025 comparator results are not available for these.

Qualitative engagement was used to gather further detail on preferences for accessing information about SHR. As noted earlier (see [The 2025/26 programme](#)), this involved engagement with 23 Panel members to explore views on different means of accessing information, and why participants prefer particular options. Key points are summarised below.

- Email and website. As Figure 23 shows, these were the most commonly preferred means of accessing information for qualitative participants. Qualitative participants noted that they typically use these options every day for personal and work purposes, and as such they are a 'natural' choice for accessing information on SHR. There was specific support for email as a means of enabling interested individuals to sign-up for information, such that they do not have to pro-actively check websites for updates. There was also reference to email newsletters and/or service user 'portals' as enabling individuals to receive alerts for the news or information that interests them. It was also noted that email newsletters can be easily saved to read later.

"I use email for things like news, upcoming events. I prefer that – it gets your attention, if it's there I won't miss it."

- Social media. Participants expressing a preference for social media indicated that this fits with their existing use of social media, and noted that this already includes using social media to access news on public agencies and other services. This was described as a useful way for individuals to "come across things" of potential interest, and as an effective means for SHR to reach out to potentially interested people. The ease of accessing social media information by smartphone was also noted – some appeared to find this less easy for other web-based information.
- Podcasts and other audio or video. As noted above in relation to Figure 23, survey results indicate that younger respondents were more likely than others to prefer audio/visual options. A small number of qualitative participants also suggested that people aged under 40 typically prefer to access information digitally. These participants indicated that they find podcasts and other audio/visual formats more engaging, and also suggested that they can be particularly useful for those who may have difficulty with written information. However, a small number of participants noted that they do not use podcasts or similar media and would be unlikely to change this to access SHR information.
- Coverage of SHR activity in landlord's own newsletters or websites. While email or website was preferred by most qualitative participants, relatively few indicated a preference for their own landlord's email or website specifically.

Those who did prefer this option noted that landlord newsletters and websites are particularly convenient where service users are already familiar with accessing information or contacting their landlord in this way.

- Non-digital options. A small number of primarily older participants referred to letters and printed newsletters as their preferred options. It was also suggested that this option may be especially useful for service users who do not typically use digital media as a way of accessing information.
- Other options were suggested by several qualitative participants. These included information via third sector agencies and others who may be engaging with users of social landlord services, information via Snapchat, SMS or WhatsApp messages with links to web-based information, a dedicated SHR app and use of AI to support engagement with SHR information.

As noted earlier (see Figure 23), survey results indicate that there may be differences across age groups in how individuals prefer to access SHR information. Qualitative discussions supported this with further examples of variation in preferences by age. Feedback linked to specific age groups included:

- Those aged under 40 wanted to be able to access information through the channels or methods they already use, and noted that this is typically via digital means such as email, social media and websites. Being able to access or save information for a time that suits them was also important. For example, there was some preference for options that do not require individuals to seek out news or information – “you can ignore them if you’re not interested or until you have time”.
- Older respondents (aged 60+) also referred to accessing information through the options that they already use. This included a preference for information being available through landlord websites and emails that individuals are familiar with. Feedback was more mixed on audio/visual options – several older participants were regular podcast listeners, but others indicated that this was of no interest to them.

Use of SHR website

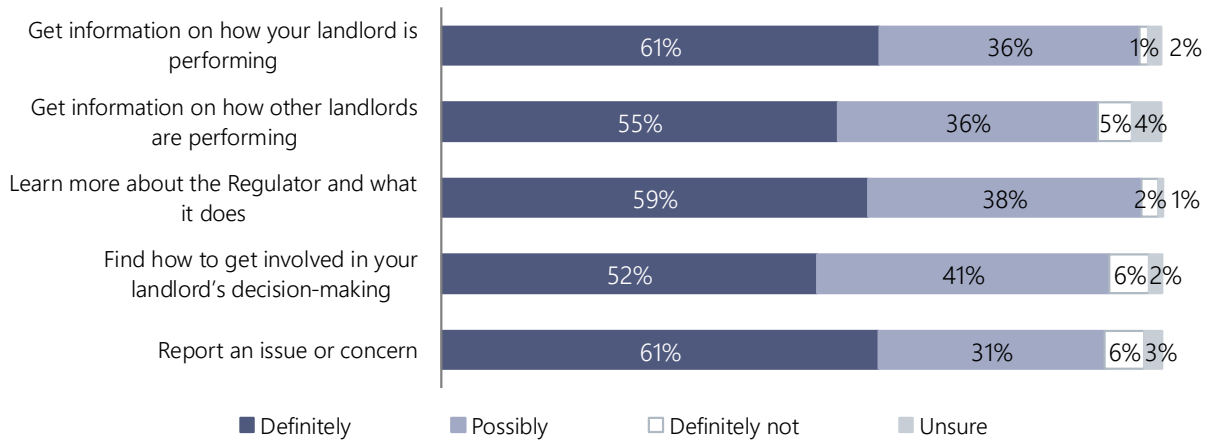
Nearly all respondents indicated that they would be interested in using the Regulator’s website for one or more of the reasons listed at Figure 24. Interest was most widespread in relation to:

- Getting information on how their landlord is performing (97% would be interested, including 61% ‘definitely’ interested).
- Learning more about the Regulator and what it does (97%, 59% ‘definitely’).

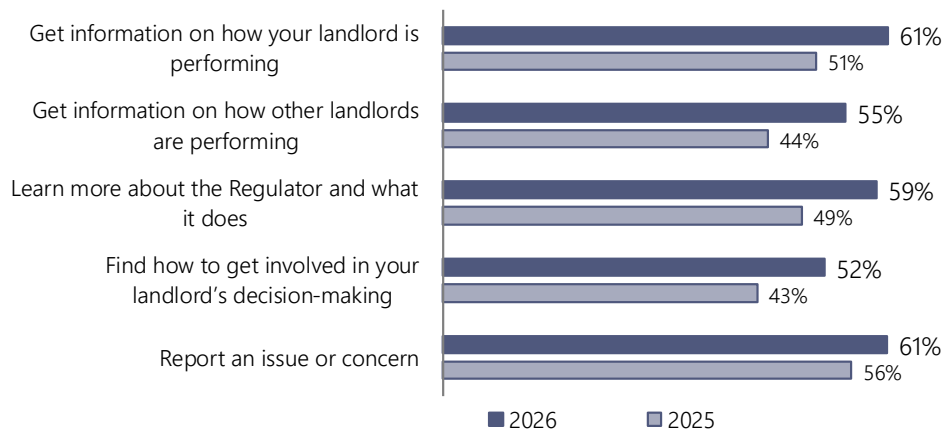
- To report an issue or concern (92%, 61% 'definitely').

These results show some increase since 2025 in the proportion of respondents who would 'definitely' be interested in using the SHR website to access the listed information. This was most notable in relation to getting information on landlord performance and learning about the Regulator's work.

Figure 24: Interest in using SHR website in the future



Time Series- would definitely consider using



The small number of respondents who indicated that they would not use the SHR website included those who are not interested in regulatory activity or comparison of landlord performance, those who questioned the value of SHR's work, and those who do not like to use the internet.

USERS OF HOMELESSNESS SERVICES

The second qualitative engagement strand involved people with experience of homelessness services. Discussions considered experiences around accessing services, temporary accommodation, and (for those at this stage) of accessing a permanent home of their own.

Findings are based on qualitative interviews with 36 households. Interviews have provided valuable feedback on the experience and views of service users, but findings should be treated as illustrative rather than representative of the wider population.

Accessing services

Engagement first looked at individuals' experience of accessing services.

A substantial number of participants indicated that this had been their first experience of homelessness services. These participants had very little awareness or understanding of services prior to presenting as homeless, and it was clear that this had a significant impact on experience of accessing services.

In terms of practical impact, several participants had been helped to access services by family or friends or existing support services. For some, this support had been vital in enabling them to navigate services. However, those without access to (formal or informal) support could find the process of accessing services lonely and isolating. Several reported having felt extremely vulnerable at this time. For example, there were instances of individuals making an initial approach to services and being asked to return at the end of the day, leaving them to wait a whole day without any funds or access to indoor space.

Anxiety and uncertainty around accessing services were also commonly referenced by participants, especially those with no prior experience of services. Uncertainty was typically focused on whether and how services would be able to help, and the type of accommodation that might be available. This had been a major contributor to anxiety at the time of presenting for many participants, especially for households with children, those with health or disability-related needs, and those leaving care (for whom this could feel like a "backwards" step to less secure circumstances).

"It was really stressful and I struggle with anxiety...There was a lot of uncertainty around where I might end up."

Feedback also indicated that experience of accessing homelessness services could be affected by individual circumstances and needs. Most obviously, if households required immediate accommodation this was their foremost concern when presenting as homeless. This included examples of participants fleeing violence or otherwise unsafe circumstances, for whom the key priority was to ensure the safety of accommodation for example in terms of location and security provisions. These participants also noted that their circumstances impacted how they first engaged with services, including their ability to take in the information provided. Service staff had a particularly important role for these participants, for example in terms of understanding their specific requirements, and providing reassurance.

Initial engagement with service staff was also highlighted more widely as a key positive for participants. Comment focused here on staff taking the time to understand individuals' circumstances and specific needs, demonstrating care and empathy, and providing clear information – including on the accommodation and support available to them.

“That first contact was really good...[the staff] reassured me and helped with anxiety. My mental health was really bad at the time, they took that into account and took the time to help.”

While there were a range of experiences in relation to accessing services, it was clear that quick access to suitable accommodation was the over-riding concern for many participants. This was clear from positive comments where participants had been provided with quick access to accommodation. The importance of speed of access to accommodation was also evident in feedback where it had taken time for participants to access accommodation. This highlighted that even a relatively short stay in unsuitable B&B or hotel accommodation could be a challenging experience for participants.

Temporary accommodation

The transition to temporary accommodation was an especially challenging aspect of the experience for many homelessness service users. As was evident for initial access to services, prior experience of temporary accommodation appears to have a significant impact on how participants managed this transition. This was particularly the case for those moving to hostel accommodation. Those with prior experience of hostels indicated that they had a clearer idea of what to expect, and were able to adapt more quickly for example to living alongside a diverse mix of other residents, and different hostel schedules and rules.

Those who had not previously stayed in temporary accommodation could experience significant anxiety about potential temporary accommodation options. There was particular concern around the potential location of temporary accommodation and the ability of participants to maintain access to family and support networks. Safety concerns were also highlighted, especially for those without access to support networks – *“it’s unknown territory, you feel really vulnerable as homeless”*. Some had refused offers of temporary hostel accommodation due to safety concerns linked to previous stays and/or experiences with people currently staying in the hostel.

Feedback on participants’ experience of adjusting to temporary accommodation made clear that the challenges experienced can vary dependent on the type of accommodation:

- For example, for those moving to hostel accommodation the experience of living in close proximity with others could be overwhelming. Some of those with care experience felt that hostel accommodation had been a familiar environment and found the transition relatively easy. However, those with neuro-divergent or mental health conditions could find the accommodation particularly challenging, indicating that they struggled with the noise and social contact involved. Several participants had also found this an isolating experience, for example where they felt there was little common ground to build relationships with other residents – *“this really isn’t an environment for me, I’m out of my depth”*.
- In relation to longer-term accommodation, participants were more likely to feel isolated or lonely. This appeared to be a particular challenge where the move followed a stay in hostel or other shared accommodation, or if individuals do not have nearby family or friends. Some participants also noted that this had been the first time managing their own home for a prolonged period. Other challenges specifically associated with longer-term temporary accommodation included condition issues or disrepair, and missing appliances or amenities.

Participants also highlighted the following aspects of temporary accommodation as important to their experience.

- Location was a key consideration for many, especially in terms of maintaining contact with family and friends, and accessing local services. Many participants noted that they were reliant on public transport which added to the importance of location. It was noted that it can take time to adjust to a new location, for example negotiating public transport links. While some had seen such a move as *“a fresh start”*, others had felt isolated and had seen a deterioration in their mental health.

- The potential cost of temporary accommodation was an issue for several participants who were seeking employment. These participants were unclear about rent and service charges, or how employment might impact their access to other support.

The experience of households with children highlighted some specific issues and challenges associated with a stay in temporary accommodation. For example, location had been especially important for many of those with children living with them and/or with shared custody arrangements. This was referenced in terms of whether accommodation was in a safe neighbourhood, and in maintaining access with schools and other services. There were examples of homeless households being required to travel a substantial distance to their child's school – this had practical and cost implications, and could also add to children feeling unsettled.

Feedback from those with custody arrangements in place included examples of individuals being unable to maintain arrangements while in hostel accommodation, and financial difficulties limiting participants' capacity to visit their children. Several reported that a lack of time with their children was the most difficult aspect of their stay in temporary accommodation. In this context, several of those who had accessed longer-term temporary accommodation reported that this had significantly improved access to their children.

Specifically for individuals with custody arrangements, there was a lack of clarity about how this might impact their access to permanent housing. For example, there was concern that being unable to maintain custody during a stay in temporary accommodation could affect their assessed bedroom requirements.

In terms of other challenges associated with temporary accommodation, uncertainty around the length of stay was referenced by many participants. This had been the most difficult aspect of their time in temporary accommodation for some participants. It was acknowledged that services are often unable to give a clear indication of timescales for accessing a permanent home, but some felt that there could be more focus on keeping service users up to date and providing reassurance that progress is being made.

A small number of participants referred to having moved between temporary accommodation, for example where their length of stay had been limited to a specific period. These participants noted the importance of support from staff in identifying the best option to meet individual needs, including health needs and learning disabilities.

Emotional impact had been the most difficult aspect of their time in temporary accommodation for some. This was linked to uncertainty around their potential length of stay, and difficulty where participants felt their progress was too slow; for example if they were looking for employment and/or had no positive responses to bids for properties.

However, it should be noted that several participants had been able to use a stay in temporary accommodation to “stabilise” their circumstances. These participants noted the positive impact of structure and routine for their mental health and wellbeing, especially where previous living circumstances had been chaotic. Access to support services while in temporary accommodation was also an important element, and there were examples of individuals remaining in temporary accommodation for longer where it was felt this was necessary to continue to improve their mental health.

“If you asked me 6 months ago I probably would feel I wasn’t ready for my own place. Over the last few months the support worker has helped to get me more active and social...built my confidence.”

Staff and support whilst in temporary accommodation

Engagement with service staff and support workers was important for many participants’ experience of temporary accommodation. Indeed, this was identified by a number of participants as the most positive aspect of their overall experience of homelessness services.

These participants were clear that staff contact and support had a significant positive impact on their experience of temporary accommodation. The key worker role was especially important. Participants referred to the value of having the time to develop a trusting relationship with a specific individual, in terms of participants feeling able to share information or ask for help, and for staff having a better understanding of individuals’ needs.

“I see my key worker a lot, it feels like I’ve built a relationship with them. I’m much better when it’s 1-1 like that, I feel able to say if I’m struggling.”

Engagement with on-site staff in hostel accommodation was also highlighted as having helped participants to adjust to new circumstances, for example addressing initial concerns, understanding 'house rules', and adapting to shared kitchen and public spaces. Several participants had also been able to develop good relationships with on-site staff. They felt this had enabled staff to look out for participants, for example identifying when individuals are struggling emotionally. This was especially important for those who may find it difficult to ask for help.

Staff had provided a range of practical help to participants. This included submitting and managing housing applications, and accessing other support services such as financial/income maximisation, including speaking on behalf of participants. For those with health needs, disability and/or limited mobility, assistance from staff included taking the time to make sure that accommodation is suitable to their individual needs, and identifying additional aids or supports that may help. Access to food was especially important for some, both in terms of staff providing referral to food banks and provision of catering in some hostels.

As noted earlier, the emotional impact of their circumstances was a real challenge for some participants. Staff had an important role to play in providing support and reassurance, particularly for those without access to informal support networks. Participants with nearby family and friends described this as having been a vital source of support during their time in temporary accommodation. There was reference to the positive impact of contact with family and friends such as in maintaining a sense of "normality", and encouraging participants to "get out and see people".

"I'd fallen out with family and so was really on my own. It's been a really difficult journey to be ready for my own place."

Several participants had less positive experiences of staff and support in temporary accommodation. This included a perceived lack of empathy from staff, and suggestions that staff could have done more to comfort or reassure homeless households. Some participants with care experience also felt that homelessness service staff and other support staff did not necessarily understand how this experience can affect their needs - for example in terms of adapting to different settings or difficulties managing living in close proximity with others.

"I get they have a lot of people coming through all with different needs....it felt like staff were just going through the motions. Just being offered a cup of tea would have been enough".

Accessing permanent accommodation

Most participants were in temporary accommodation at the time of their engagement with the Panel programme. For these individuals, the prospect of managing their own home could be a source of some anxiety and uncertainty. This included practical considerations such as access to furniture, white goods etc, but also wider concerns around adjusting to independent living.

“I want a fresh start...but it'll take some getting used to [my own place] after all this time, especially with the hostel being really regimented.”

Anxieties were also linked to individuals' accommodation requirements, and whether these are likely to be met. Consistent with experience of temporary accommodation, location has been the biggest concern for some, in terms of proximity to family/friends and other support networks, safety of the local area, and transport connections.

Other specific accommodation needs included ensuring an adequately sized property to accommodate children, including for those with shared custody. Those with disabilities, health needs and/or limited mobility expressed particular concern around being able to access suitable accommodation, and their likely length of stay in temporary accommodation.

In terms of preparing for a move to permanent housing, some participants felt that their stay in temporary accommodation had been an opportunity to develop essential skills and resilience. This included the role of support staff in improving mental health, building confidence and social skills, and developing the practical skills required to maintain a home. This was especially important for those who had been in hostel accommodation for a prolonged period.

Those who had accessed permanent accommodation at the time of the research reflected on their experience. Several participants noted the extent to which their mental health had improved significantly prior to accessing permanent accommodation, and reported that the move had helped to further support their mental health and wellbeing. Access to support workers around the move had been vital for these participants.

However, feedback also identified a number of challenges around the transition to permanent accommodation. This included difficulty securing necessary furniture and appliances, financial challenges and practical considerations around managing a tenancy. Again, these appeared to be particular challenges for those who had not lived independently for some time.

Particular needs and support

As has been noted above, feedback from participants identified a diverse range of specific needs and circumstances that can have a significant impact on experience of services.

This included disabilities and health-related needs with a direct impact on experience of homelessness services, such as wheelchair users and those with limited mobility. These participants noted that their particular needs could cause additional challenges while in temporary accommodation, and when seeking permanent accommodation. For example, specific health conditions had caused significant difficulties for individuals required to share bathroom and kitchen facilities in temporary accommodation. Some participants also felt that a need for ground floor accessible accommodation had limited temporary accommodation options, and were concerned that this could impact their access to suitable permanent housing.

Particular needs related to mental health conditions, trauma and addiction also affected a number of participants. Feedback consistently highlighted the anxiety, distress and shame experienced by many participants. This could add to challenges during stays in temporary accommodation and moves to permanent accommodation. For example, some participants had found it particularly difficult to build relationships with support staff. Mental health conditions and distress could affect the ability of participants to take in the information provided by staff, and to feel able to ask for help or support when needed.

Several participants also referred to 'external' difficulties such as relationships with family members during their time using homelessness services. It was noted that these experiences can add to the challenges experienced by participants, especially those with mental health needs.

Access to effective support was vital for these participants. There was reference to the time required to overcome "barriers" to engagement with available support services, especially for those with prior trauma or care experience. Consistent engagement with a specific support worker had also been an important factor for some. While some had more engagement with accommodation-based staff (in part due to the convenience of staff being available on-site), others felt that having a named key worker had been a key element in their experience of services, and in achieving a positive outcome.

GYPSY/TRAVELLER SITE RESIDENTS

The third qualitative engagement strand involved residents of Gypsy/Traveller sites provided by social landlords. This strand was focused on experience of landlord engagement and views on landlords' approach to communication and participation with residents.

Findings are based on survey interviews with 17 residents with experience of social rented sites. This strand of work has provided valuable feedback on the experience and views of site residents, but findings should be treated as illustrative rather than representative of the wider population.

The importance of effective engagement

As noted over the page, participants were varied in the extent of any experience of landlord engagement exercises. However, a clear view emerged through resident feedback that it is important for site residents to be able to influence their landlord's decisions.

Most participants wished to see opportunities for residents to share meaningful feedback, and to ensure that landlords take genuine account of resident input in their decision-making processes. This included reference to residents feeling "listened to". Landlords making the effort to engage with residents was also seen as demonstrating respect for Gypsy/Travellers' wellbeing, and recognising the value of their input.

This was also linked to views about whether landlords understand residents' culture and needs. Some suggested that their landlord does not appear to appreciate the distinctiveness of Gypsy/Traveller priorities or concerns, or the specific experience of living on a traveller site. This included comments highlighting the extent to which this differs from the experience of social tenants in bricks and mortar housing.

Several participants cited specific examples where they felt their landlord had demonstrated a lack of understanding of their culture and experiences. This included site design and pitch layout as part of improvement works leading to problems with drainage and keeping homes warm

"They seem to come to us with a set of ideas that suit mainstream houses, but they just don't apply to living on a site."

Participants also highlighted the extent to which landlord decisions on site management and capital investment can have a direct bearing on residents' quality of life. This included examples of landlords having a positive impact on residents' daily lives and wellbeing, but also cases where participants felt that a lack of input from residents had negative consequences (for example where this had resulted in inappropriate design choices). These examples were provided as demonstrating the importance of effective engagement with site residents.

Experience of landlord engagement

Participants were mixed in their experience of landlord engagement, with some indicating that they had not taken part in any defined engagement exercises since they have been on the site. This included some who had been on their site for a relatively limited time (e.g. less than 2 years), and it should be noted that most referred to more informal engagement with site managers or liaison officers.

Specific experiences described by participants most commonly involved site meetings, primarily related to planned or ongoing site improvement works. There was reference to opportunities for residents to help identify site improvement priorities, to have input to design choices, and identifying need for decant accommodation for major works such as installation of chalet accommodation. Others indicated that meetings had primarily been focused on providing information and progress updates, with more limited opportunity for residents to provide feedback or have input to decisions.

Participants were generally positive on their experience of meetings. This included the timing and accessibility of meetings, the manner of those running engagement exercises, and information provided to residents. There were also examples of specific exercises enabling residents to consider specific design options, for example selecting preferred chalet designs. These were cited as positive examples of landlords engaging with residents and enabling their input to decision making.

While these participants praised the approach to initial engagement with residents, a common frustration was that promised works did not go ahead, or were not as expected. Some questioned whether their landlord's input to engagement exercises was genuine – "they just say 'yes, yes, yes' during the meetings, but then after it changes".

Also reflecting this experience of landlord engagement, several participants suggested that their landlord does enough to reach out to site residents, but does not appear to take proper account of resident input.

“It feels like they don’t listen to what residents say, or aren’t flexible to allow room to take on board our experiences and preferences.”

The importance of site wardens or caretakers was highlighted specifically in relation to ensuring an understanding of the needs and culture of Gypsy/Traveller. Several participants referred to the role as providing a link to their landlord, and considered feedback to the warden as a form of landlord engagement.

There was also reference to residents developing trust with wardens, aided by the consistency of a dedicated staff contact. It was suggested that this enabled development of a genuine understanding of resident priorities, such that wardens are able to advocate for residents.

Interest in engagement

Several participants wished to see more engagement opportunities for residents, and greater input to landlord decisions that affect the site. As noted above, this reflected a view that residents can add significant value to decision making.

In terms of approach, in-person engagement was generally preferred. A number of participants expressed interest in site meetings, although others preferred 1-1 or smaller group engagement. This included some affected by anxiety who would struggle to engage in larger meetings.

Discussion of potential approaches also linked to the focus or purpose of engagement. The most common preference appeared to be for engagement exercises focused on specific identified issues or proposed improvement works, and this was consistent with some participants’ prior experience of landlord engagement. This also appeared to reflect a view that residents are most likely to participate in engagement opportunities where these have a direct link to potential improvements to their site or pitch.

However others expressed an interest in more regular, ongoing engagement with their landlord. This included residents who had previously participated in ‘standing’ site meetings. It was also notable that some of those interested in ongoing engagement with their landlord had been on the site for many years and/or expected to remain on the site for the long-term.

SHR and Serious Concerns

The final element of engagement with site residents focused on the SHR's role investigating 'Serious Concerns' raised by residents of Gypsy/Traveller sites. Participants were provided with a summary of this function, noting that the SHR can look into concerns that can affect multiple residents for example where a landlord repeatedly fails to meet the Scottish Government minimum site standards or its Scottish Social Housing Charter.

Some participants had heard of other aspects of SHR's regulatory work, including through use of the SHR website and seeing news and SHR publications. However, none of the participants were aware that they could report Serious Concerns to SHR, or were familiar with the term 'Serious Concern' in this context.

When asked for their views on this function, some participants indicated that they would not know where to turn if their landlord was not meeting standards. There was support for the option to ask SHR to investigate persistent concerns, if residents felt that these were not being addressed by their landlord.

In terms of whether and how residents would like to approach SHR, participants primarily related this to their experience of reporting concerns to their landlord. In this context, some noted that they have extensive experience with their landlord, and would feel confident in reporting concerns to SHR. However, others appeared more ambivalent and were unsure of whether they would be prepared to report such concerns.

In terms of how they would prefer to engage, again there was a preference for speaking directly to SHR staff, whether in-person or by phone. Some participants noted that they typically report repairs or other concerns via their site wardens. It was suggested that wardens could also have a role in supporting residents to raise a Serious Concern with SHR where the criteria for doing so might apply.

ANNEX: PANEL MEMBERSHIP

The Panel seeks to engage with a good cross-section of tenants and service users. Current members include social tenants, people who have used homelessness services, residents of social rented Gypsy/Traveller sites and owners using social landlord factoring services. In terms of the wider Panel profile, the focus is on ensuring membership includes representation across all socio-demographic groups, rather than achieving an exact match to the wider service user population. In this context, some groups such as those in rural areas have been over-sampled to ensure sufficient volume for more focused engagement within these groups.

Ensuring a balanced Panel membership is also a key element of ongoing promotion and recruitment work. This seeks to expand the reach of the Panel in terms of the size of the membership and representation of specific population subgroups. Total Panel membership was 404 at March 2026.

A profile of the current Panel membership is provided over the page.

Table 1: Profile of current National Panel membership

Current membership	404
Age	
Under 35	12%
35-44	15%
45-59	28%
60-74	27%
75+	15%
Unknown	4%
Gender	
Woman	57%
Man	41%
In another way	1%
Unknown	1%
Housing tenure	
Council tenant	37%
RSL tenant	48%
Owner	7%
Gypsy/ Traveller site resident	8%
Unknown	<0.5%
Ethnicity	
White Scottish, British or Irish	81%
White other (inc Scottish Traveller, Gypsy/ Traveller)	11%
Black Minority Ethnic	4%
Unknown	4%
Disability	
1 or more disabilities	41%
No disability	45%
Unknown	14%
RTO membership	
Member of RTO	23%
Not a member of RTO	74%
Unknown	4%

Figures may not sum to 100% due to rounding.