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Welsh Housing Quality Standard: Tenants' Survey Report

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Welsh Housing Quality Standard – Tenants’ Survey

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Glossary

Acronym/Key word	Definition
EPC	Energy Performance Certificate
MaxQDA	Software package for qualitative and mixed-method analysis
RSL	Registered Social Landlord
SAP	Government mandated Standard Assessment Procedure – assesses the energy performance of dwellings.
SAP90	SAP rating is used to assess the energy efficiency of a property. The SAP rating is expressed on a scale of 1 to 100. The higher the score, the more energy efficient the dwelling. SAP92 (EPC A) is the target for all housing in Wales by 2050.
TPAS Cymru	Tenant Participation Advisory Service of Wales
WHQS	Welsh Housing Quality Standard

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) was introduced in 2002 to raise the physical standard and condition of social housing in Wales. With significant investment from social landlords supported by Welsh Government, substantial programmes of work have been delivered. Statistical reporting showed that 93% of social homes were compliant (including compliance subject to acceptable fails) at 31st March 2019¹.
- 1.2. The WHQS applies to Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and Local Authorities with council houses. In order for social housing to meet the WHQS, houses must be:
 - In a good state of repair;
 - Safe and secure;
 - Adequately heated, fuel efficient and well insulated;
 - Contain up-to-date kitchens and bathrooms;
 - Well managed (for rented housing);
 - Located in attractive and safe environments; and
 - Where possible, suitable for the specific needs of those living there, such as those with disabilities.
- 1.3. Important lessons can be learned from the existing WHQS, and these lessons can help inform a future Standard. Whilst monitoring and Official Statistics produced to support the WHQS provide information about achievement of the WHQS by social landlords, tenants' views provide an important additional perspective. The Tenants' survey was therefore conducted to collect the perspectives of social rental tenants across Wales on the WHQS.
- 1.4. The survey was carried out in the autumn of 2020, at a time when, although local restrictions applied in certain areas of Wales, the national restrictions of the first Coronavirus lockdown were being eased. Questions around how the expectations and uses of domestic spaces changed during this period were also asked, with the aim of gaining understanding about if and how social housing met the changing demands of the lockdown.

¹ [Welsh Government Statistics: Welsh Housing Quality Standard \(WHQS\), as at 31 March 2019.](#)

- 1.5. A key element of the next iteration of the WHQS will be ensuring support for Welsh Government's objectives for decarbonisation. The Welsh Government has committed to all housing, excluding those with constraints around retrofit, being retrofitted beyond SAP90², which equates to current Building Regulations performance standards, by 2050. The Better Homes, Better Wales, Better World report recommended that SAP92, equivalent to an EPC A (very efficient) rating, should be achieved by 2030 for social housing³. The survey therefore included a short section around decarbonisation with the aim of gaining understanding about the acceptability of the kind of work needed to meet decarbonisation goals.

² [Statement from the Minister for Housing and Local Government in Plenary, 24/09/2019](#)

³ [Better Homes, Better Wales, Better World: Decarbonising existing homes in Wales. Decarbonisation of Homes in Wales Advisory Group, 18/07/2019](#)

2. Aims and Objectives

- 2.1 The aims of the Tenants' Survey were to:
- contribute to the ongoing evaluation of the current WHQS. The assessment includes multiple strands of work, and is scheduled to be reported on in Spring next year; and
 - to help inform the next iteration of the WHQS; and
 - to capture changes to the ways in which tenants interacted with their homes and local environments in the context of the Coronavirus pandemic.
- 2.2 To meet these aims, the following objectives were identified:
- assess awareness and knowledge of the WHQS amongst respondents;
 - measure how important the WHQS criteria (listed in paragraph 1.2 above) are to respondents, and assess to what extent respondents viewed their own dwellings as meeting these criteria;
 - gain understanding about the acceptability of work to decarbonise tenants' homes; and
 - explore concerns of tenants, and changes to the ways tenants interact with and experience their homes and surrounding environments, in the context of the Coronavirus pandemic and first lockdown.

3. Methodology

- 3.1 The survey was developed during August of 2020 by Welsh Government, with input from social landlords around Wales and the housing non-profit organisation, TPAS Cymru.
- 3.2 The survey was developed and disseminated using the online survey software SmartSurvey. The survey was offered online only due to the implications of disseminating the survey via post or in person during the Coronavirus pandemic. The survey was opened to responses on 16th September 2020 and closed four weeks later on 14th October.
- 3.3 The survey was circulated via email to TPAS Cymru's Tenants Pulse, a panel of social tenants across Wales, and to social tenants by landlords. Links to the survey were also shared via social media by TPAS Cymru and by social landlords. Due to this convenience sampling approach, results cannot be presented at a local authority level. The survey script can be viewed in Annex A, and the accompanying Privacy Notice in Annex B. Full tables of results for all quantitative questions can be viewed in Annex C.
- 3.4 Analysis of quantitative questions was carried out using SmartSurvey.
- 3.5 Responses to open questions were analysed and coded using MaxQDA, a digital software package used to code and analyse qualitative data. The data was first blind-coded in order to identify notable topics. This was later refined and placed into parent and child codes (a process of identifying an overarching code and then any sub-codes that fall within that category). Undertaking this process allowed responses to be grouped into key thematic areas for this report.
- 3.6 The survey included a small number of skip conditions: respondents who indicated in Question 1 that they were not social tenants were routed past the main survey to a single question asking for their views on the WHQS; respondents who indicated in Question 4 that they were on the waiting list only answered attitudinal questions 5 – 13 and then skipped to the final question, and respondents who had been in their homes under six months skipped the pre-lockdown recall questions 24-33.

The Sample

- 3.7 There were 1132 discrete responses to the survey. Of these, 116 were blank, with no questions answered. These were excluded. 1016 responses had at least one answered question and were included for analysis. 804 of these responses were complete, in that the respondent had answered all questions put to them and reached the closing screen of the survey, and 212 were partial responses, meaning that the respondent had left the survey before reaching the final screen. There was a wide variation in number of questions answered in these partial responses, from only the first screening question being answered, to all mandatory questions answered but the final screen not accessed.
- 3.8 Of the 1016 included responses, 71 respondents indicated they were not social tenants. These respondents were not the target population for this survey, and were routed past all mandatory questions to a single, open question allowing them to give their views on the WHQS if they wished. Their responses are discussed in paragraph 4.71 below.
- 3.9 The remainder of the sample (n=945) indicated that they were social tenants and were routed through the main survey.
- 3.10 Respondents were offered the choice of taking the survey via the medium of Welsh or via the medium of English. Ten of the sample selected to complete the survey via the medium of Welsh.

4. Findings

- 4.1 There was a relatively even split between age ranges amongst responses, apart from 18-24 year olds who were the most under-represented age group with 2.7% of the sample (n=25). 45-54 was the most common age range in the sample with 22.9% (n=213).

Question: How old are you?			
Answer options		Response Percent	Response Total
1	18 - 24	2.7%	25
2	25 - 34	13.8%	129
3	35 - 44	17.6%	164
4	45 - 54	22.9%	213
5	55 - 64	19.6%	183
6	65 and over	22.3%	208
7	Prefer not to say	1.1%	10
answered			932
skipped			13

Table 1: Age ranges of respondents

- 4.2 Responses were received from all local authority areas in Wales. However, there was a wide variation in numbers of responses between the local authorities, with Cardiff, Powys and Conwy being the three best represented and Bridgend and Blaenau Gwent the least represented. Because of the wide variation in the number of responses from the 22 local authorities, it is not possible to extrapolate findings with confidence from the survey sample to social tenants in Wales as a whole.

Question: Please select your Local Authority:			
Answer options		Percent of Response	Response Total
1	Blaenau Gwent	0.9%	8
2	Bridgend	0.5%	5
3	Caerphilly	2.8%	26
4	Cardiff	18.5%	172
5	Carmarthenshire	1.4%	13
6	Ceredigion	2.6%	24
7	Conwy	12.4%	116
8	Denbighshire	1.7%	16
9	Flintshire	1.0%	9
10	Gwynedd	2.9%	27
11	Isle of Anglesey	2.3%	21
12	Merthyr Tydfil	1.3%	12
13	Monmouthshire	1.6%	15
14	Neath Port Talbot	1.2%	11
15	Newport	2.9%	27
16	Pembrokeshire	1.9%	18
17	Powys	16.6%	155
18	Rhondda Cynon Taf	4.0%	37
19	Swansea	3.8%	35
20	Torfaen	4.9%	46
21	Vale of Glamorgan	8.0%	75
22	Wrexham	6.9%	64
answered			932
skipped			13

Table 2: Local authority of respondents

- 4.3 Respondents were asked how long they had been a tenant in their current home. The majority of the sample had been a tenant for over a year, with 0.5% (n=5) on the waiting list for a property, and 10.3% (n=96) in their home for less than a year. Responses to this question had routing implications through the survey, with respondents who were on the waiting list only answering attitudinal questions 5 – 13 and then skipping to the final question, and respondents who had been in their homes under six months skipping the pre-lockdown recall questions 24-33.

Question: How long have you been a tenant in your current home?			
Answer options		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Not currently a tenant but on the waiting list for a property	0.5%	5
2	Less than 6 months	4.9%	46
3	Over 6 months up to 1 year	5.4%	50
4	Over 1 year up to 5 years	28.6%	267
5	Over 5 years up to 10 years	21.5%	200
6	Over 10 years up to 20 years	21.9%	204
7	Over 20 years	17.2%	160
		Total	932

Table 3: Length of tenancy

Awareness of the WHQS

4.4 An objective of the survey was to assess awareness and knowledge of the WHQS amongst social tenants. The question used to assess this was *“How would you describe your awareness and understanding of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard?”* with respondents given five options:

1. I had not heard of the WHQS before taking this survey
2. I've heard of the WHQS but don't know much about it
3. I have some understanding of the WHQS
4. I have quite a good understanding of the WHQS
5. I have a very good understanding of the WHQS

4.5 44% of respondents had never heard of the WHQS (n=404). 38.3% had heard of it or had some understanding (n=350), and 17.5% of respondents (n=160) reported having a quite good or very good understanding of the Standard.

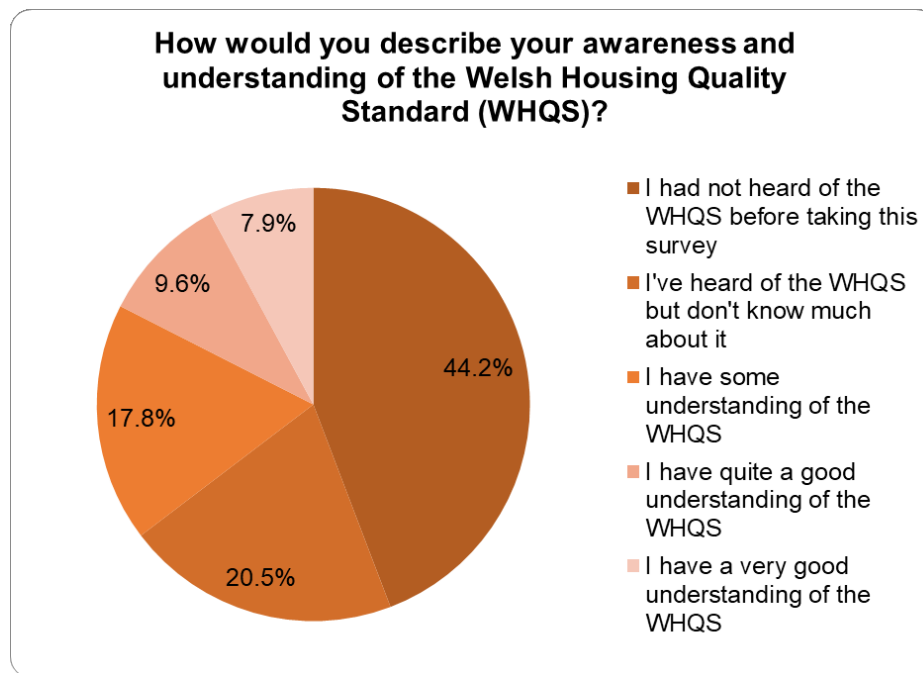


Figure 1: Awareness of the WHQS (n=914)

- 4.6 In response to open questions, several respondents stated that they were not aware of the WHQS prior to completing the survey and some intended to research it further, suggesting that low levels of awareness about the WHQS may be down to lack of information rather than lack of engagement on the part of tenants.

"I'll go and have a look at the Welsh Housing Quality Standard, now that I know it exists."

Tenants' perceptions of the WHQS Criteria

- 4.7 The questions addressing the WHQS criteria were split into two sections. The first section aimed to collect tenants' attitudes to the criteria, by asking respondents to quantify the importance of each, and the second asking how well tenants thought their homes met the criteria.
- 4.8 891 respondents answered the section exploring attitudes to the WHQS criteria. All the WHQS criteria (as listed in paragraph 1.2) were rated by a large majority of respondents as being very important, suggesting that the current iteration of the WHQS is successful in addressing issues which are priorities for social tenants.

- 4.9 There were small variations in the criteria rated very important, with home being in a good condition (95%, n=843), safe and secure (96%, n=858), adequately heated (95%, n=843) and well managed (92%, n=821) being seen by the largest majorities as being very important. The home having up-to-date kitchens and bathrooms was rated as very important by a smaller but still large majority, with up-to-date bathrooms being rated as very important by slightly more respondents (76%, n=684) than up-to-date kitchens (71%, n=631).

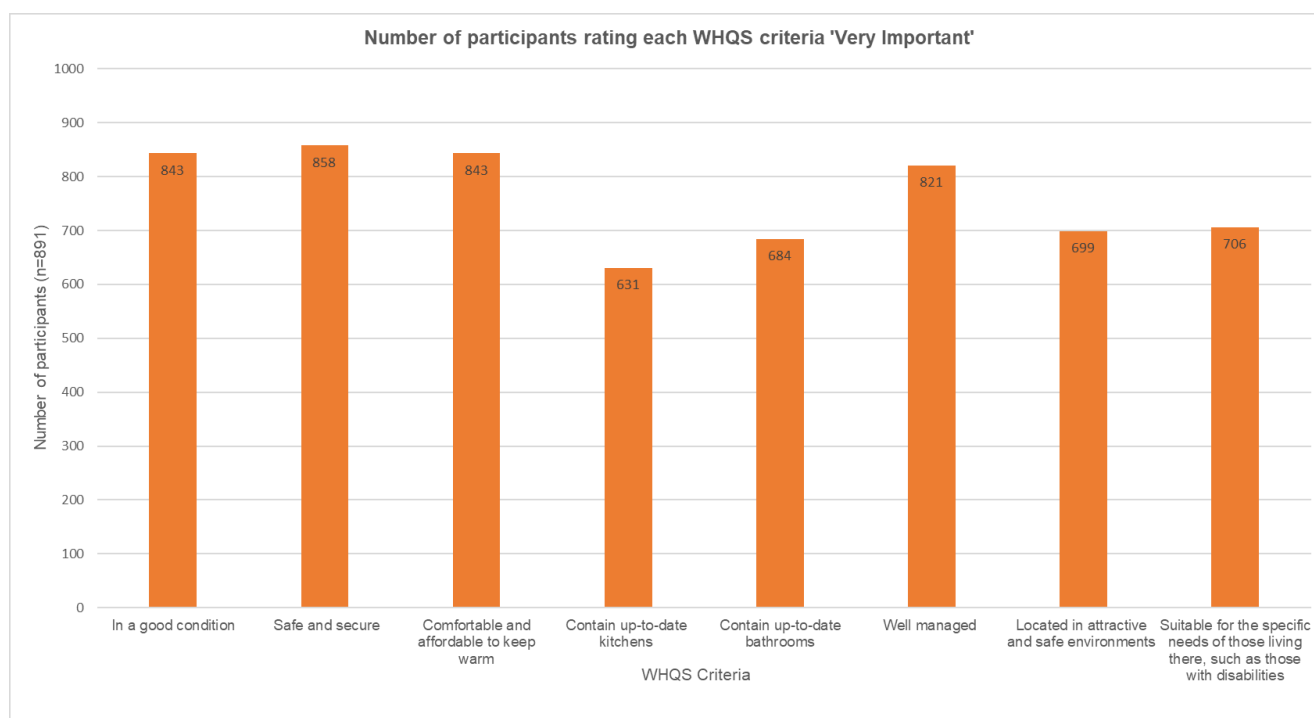


Figure 2: Number of respondents rating each WHQS criteria 'Very important' (n=891)

- 4.10 857 respondents answered the section addressing to what extent their homes met the WHQS criteria. For most criteria, a majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the criterion was being met. The exception to this was the criterion addressing management, with just under half of respondents (48.4%, n=415) agreeing or strongly agreeing that their home is well managed by their landlord.

Statement	Strongly agree / agree total	Strongly agree / agree percent
My home is in a good condition	459	53.6%
My home is safe and secure	577	67.3%
My home is comfortable and affordable to keep warm.	491	57.3%
My home contains an up-to-date kitchen (<i>updated within the last 15 years</i>)	610	71.2%
My home contains an up-to-date bathroom (<i>updated within the last 15 years</i>)	568	66.3%
My home is well managed by my landlord (for instance, repairs and replacements are carried out in good time)	415	48.4%
My home is located in an attractive and safe environment	500	58.3%
My home suits the specific requirements of my household (<i>e.g. specific disabilities</i>)	517	60.3%

Table 4: Number of respondents agreeing that their homes met WHQS criteria

- 4.11 A smaller, but still substantial, percentage of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed that their homes were meeting the WHQS criteria:

Statement	Disagree / Strongly disagree total	Disagree / Strongly disagree percent
My home is in a good condition	240	28.0%
My home is safe and secure	157	18.3%
My home is comfortable and affordable to keep warm.	214	25.0%
My home contains an up-to-date kitchen (<i>updated within the last 15 years</i>)	129	15.1%
My home contains an up-to-date bathroom (<i>updated within the last 15 years</i>)	167	19.5%
My home is well managed by my landlord (for instance, repairs and replacements are carried out in good time)	273	31.9%
My home is located in an attractive and safe environment	168	19.6%
My home suits the specific requirements of my household (<i>e.g. specific disabilities</i>)	153	17.9%

Table 5: Number of respondents disagreeing that their homes met WHQS criteria

4.12 The criteria rated most important in the attitudinal section of the survey (good condition, safe and secure, comfortable and affordable to keep warm, and well managed by landlord) tended to also be the criteria which tenants most felt were not being met in their homes. In other words, the more important respondents rated the criterion, the less likely they were to perceive their home as meeting that criterion.

4.13 Figure 3 below shows how participants responded to each question in the section. It should be noted that for each of the statements, a sizeable proportion neither agreed nor disagreed that the criterion was being met, potentially indicating some ambivalence or uncertainty amongst the respondents about how well their homes are meeting the criteria.

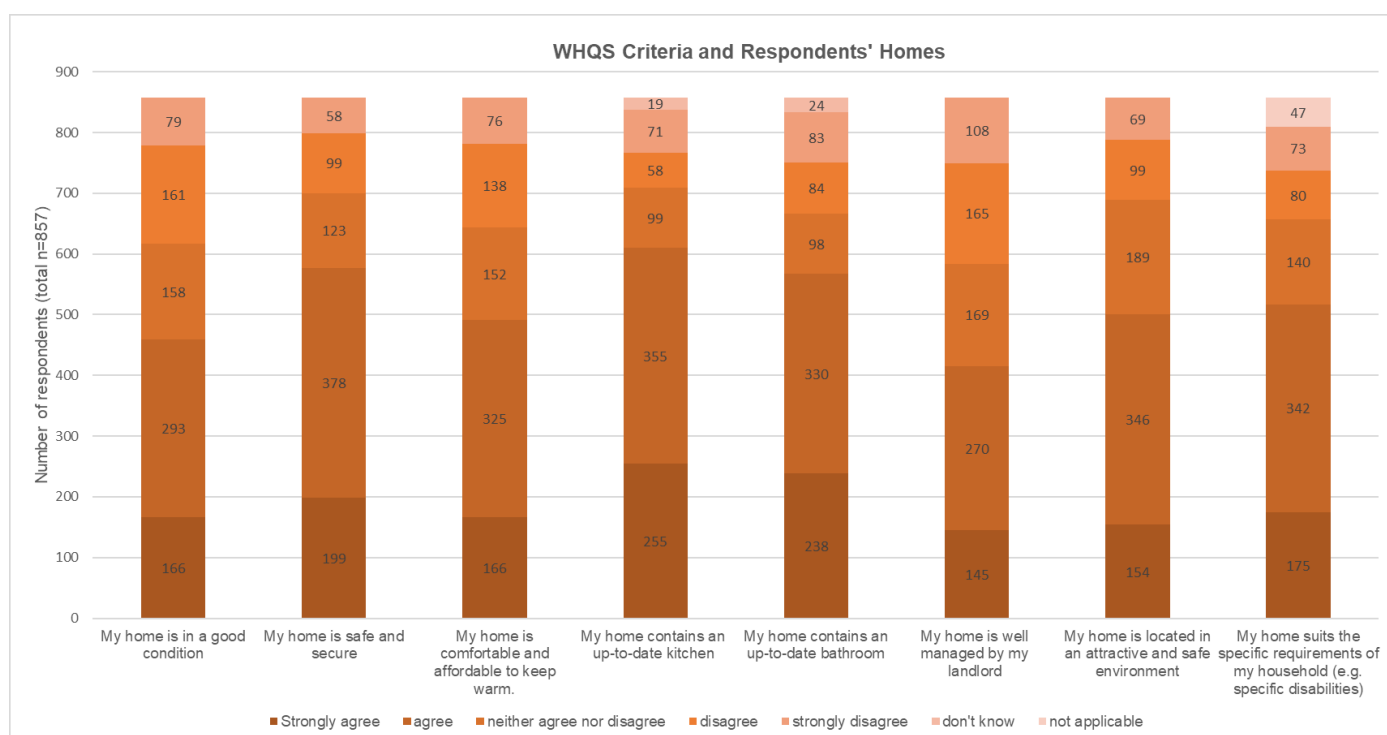


Figure 3: Breakdown of responses to the WHQS criteria and respondents' homes questions (n=857)

Thematic analysis of open responses (WHQS Criteria)

4.14 This section had two open questions for respondents to provide more detail on their views and experiences. Firstly, "If there is anything you'd like to add about your home and the WHQS, please tell us in the box below". 379 out of 945 responded to this. Secondly, those who disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement given in Q14 "My home is in a good condition"(n = 240) were asked to elaborate on their concerns. 195 responses were given. Since this was only asked of

tenants who did not agree their home was in a good condition, the responses tended to highlight negative, rather than positive, experiences.

- 4.15 These two open questions were coded collectively and the following themes were identified:-
- Maintenance and Management
Communication and Engagement; Updating and Repairs
 - Meeting Tenant's needs
Meeting disability needs; Mental health/wellbeing needs;
 - Safety and Security;
 - Location;
 - Costs and Affordability;
 - Fuel Efficiency, Heating and Insulation; and
 - General Positive Views and Experiences.

Maintenance and Management
Communication and Engagement

- 4.16 Many respondents cited feeling frustrated with their landlords for not acting on requests for maintenance or for failing to communicate effectively. Respondents frequently commented that repeated complaints and requests are needed for landlords to take action on repairs or updates. As a result, a small number of respondents reported that they have made to feel like their excuse is invalid or that they are being a nuisance.
- 4.17 Some respondents reported having the sense that their landlords are dismissive of their needs, and are unwilling to work with their tenants to resolve problems. Moreover, a few respondents mentioned feeling like they are not included in discussion processes about their homes and that decisions are out of their control.

"I find my landlord does not listen, take my views into account or indeed work with me to improve the quality/standard of my home without having to jump through major hoops... My effort trying to improve the standard of my kitchen which was to a high standard of my choosing was not matched by the landlords willingness to readily work with me."

Updating and Repairs

- 4.18 A recurring theme was that respondents felt their homes were in need of repairs, and that the processes for arranging for these to take place tended to be slow and inconsistent. This was an area of concern repeatedly cited by respondents, with some tenants reporting waiting up to 10 years for repairs to be completed and feeling like their request had been lost in the system.
- 4.19 The range of required updates and repairs included; damaged roofs, leaks, draughty windows, unsecure doors, plastering, poor insulation and heating to name a few. Several tenants cited needing a new kitchen and bathroom as they had not been updated for a decade or more.
- 4.20 One of the most common problems identified in the responses was damp and mould. Some respondents reported that this has affected their health. A few attributed the mould problem to leaks and poor ventilation not being attended to, and again, lack of communication was seen as exacerbating these issues.

"We have been waiting for a complete new roof for 11 months as it is leaking through to a bedroom. We need a new back door as it is leaking and not secure, again about 8 years! Been waiting for a new lintel above back door for 11 months as old 1 has rusted through and causing water to leak through. Waiting for cavity wall insulation to be taken out as it has caused damp and water penetration through walls. Today we was supposed to have scaffolding put up to start the work but they have not arrived and no one knows what is going on."

- 4.21 Where repairs or updates had been completed, a commonly expressed view was that the work was done to an unsatisfactory level. Some respondents commented that this then resulted in further repairs being needed in the future, resulting in further delays.

"Repairs are carried out after a lot of fuss and repeat phone calls, however these repairs are not of a good standard and often fail to fix the problem or cause further problems. Seems as if the housing association

staff don't talk to each other and blame others for their mistakes."

Meeting Tenant's Needs

- 4.22 Some respondents commented on houses being unsuitable to meet a variety of their individual needs. A problem that many respondents cited was property size. A number of respondents reported that their property was too small for the size of their household. The small size of the home was perceived as causing stress and anxiety to households who reported having family members with medical conditions such as asthma, autism and heart problems.

"I have been on the waiting list for more than 9 years and I have two girls and I have a lot of health problems and this apartment is limited to one bedroom and we are all in a state of anxiety and upset about this situation."

Disability Needs

- 4.23 Several respondents commented that their property failed to meet their disability needs. They reported similar problems to those illustrated in paragraphs 4.19-4.22 in requesting and waiting for their necessary requirements and adaptations to be met, as the following quotes illustrate:

"I am registered disabled it's taken me five years of hard work of constantly phoning to get disability adaptations five years on i've [I've] still not got a disabled kitchen the kitchen does not suit my needs at all."

"I have serious mobility problems, loads of external steps to access the property, loads of internal steps, can't even get to my kitchen and bathroom without risking personal safety due to stairs."

Mental Health and Wellbeing Needs

- 4.24 A number of respondents commented that their mental health had been affected by their living conditions. In particular, this was attributed to incomplete repairs and poor communication from landlords which

caused some tenants to feel depressed and/or anxious. As previously mentioned, small property size and unmet disability needs were also seen as having affected the mental health of some respondents. A small number of respondents also highlighted that having a poorly maintained garden had a negative impact on their well-being.

"I suffer with social anxiety depression and complex grief/PTSD, the garden has been my only outdoor pleasure, this has now been taken away from me as I don't have the heart to really do anything as it is such poor condition. This won't go away as it sinks further down every year and I believe I should be able to enjoy my garden."

Safety and Security

- 4.25 Many respondents referred to feeling unsafe in their home due to broken locks or damaged fences (or lack thereof). Moreover, some respondents referred to fire risks, tripping over uneven paths, out-of-reach kitchen appliances, for example, due to certain repairs not being carried out.

"25 year old kitchen which is also falling apart. No carbon monoxide detector. Out of date fire blanket. Electrics have been checked once in 25 years."

Location

- 4.26 Location was a more common theme in the open ended questions asked in the lockdown sections of the survey, which are discussed from paragraph 4.56 below. However, there were several responses to this section which referred to location in different ways. These responses either spoke about the immediate location of their property or the location more widely.
- 4.27 Immediate location concerns included issues with having shared entrances (like teenagers gathering, or cigarette smells circulating) and accessibility issues such as steps up to the property, or the property being on a busy main road. Wider location concerns included feeling unsafe in their local area, problems with anti-social behaviour, issues with littering and fly tipping and for some, poor access to conveniences like shops and public transport, and excess environmental noise.

“There is a lot of fly tipping in the area, noisy street, neighbour causing distress and nuisance, lots of homeless people around, back garden not secure enough.”

- 4.28 Additionally, a small number of tenants noted that they have requested to move properties due to being isolated from family or friends or due to the housing not meeting disability requirements.

“I’ve been trying to move to be closer to family. At 54 I just want to be near them and have a little garden space.”

Costs and Affordability

- 4.29 Many respondents reported arranging and paying for repairs themselves because of long waits, in spite of it being their landlord’s responsibility.

“I would say that 60% of the repairs in my house i would do myself or pay someone to come and do it as my landlord never seems to come out and get it sorted so I have give up asking them and sort it out myself.”

- 4.30 A small number of respondents reported that they struggled with the costs of heating their home, exacerbated by draughty windows or inefficient/dated heating systems.

- 4.31 Some responses commented on the rent becoming more expensive.

“The cost of rent has increased incredibly and is more in line with private properties than social.”

Fuel Efficiency, Heating and Insulation

- 4.32 Many respondents reported that it is difficult to heat their homes because of old and inefficient storage heaters. Others commented on using more heating than necessary as a result of draughty windows and/or poor insulation. As mentioned in paragraph 4.35 above, this was reported as being very costly for some tenants.

“We have storage heaters and it costs me a fortune in electric to heat the home to even a basic standard. I think social housing landlords should put solar panels and air source heating in every home, for the environment and to help those like myself living in fuel poverty.”

- 4.33 One respondent highlighted the urgency of improving fuel efficiency in light of the climate emergency.

“The imperative must be energy-saving due to the climate emergency while using sustainable and safe, non-polluting materials.”

General Positive Views and Experiences

- 4.34 While the responses to the open-ended questions within this section tended to highlight negative experiences of respondents, it should be noted that a subset of respondents reported positive housing experiences. Comments in this category ranged from respondents feeling safe and comfortable in their neighbourhood, appreciating their responsive and friendly landlords, and generally feeling fortunate.

“My partner and I are extremely grateful for our current home, friendly neighbours, the lovely green and quiet neighbourhood, and its convenient access to shopping and public transport. I want so much to say thanks to whoever and however this resource was created.”

Final comments

- 4.35 The final question of the Survey asked if participants had anything to add. 177 respondents chose to leave an additional comment. These responses mostly reflected themes previously identified from the free-text responses discussed in this section.
- 4.36 A small number of respondents commented on the WHQS criteria more broadly. These respondents thought the WHQS was a good idea but criticised its implementation, and felt that future additional requirements, particularly around decarbonisation, were unfeasible where original targets had not been met, as illustrated by the following quote:

“Whilst I appreciate WHQS being enforced, it’s pointless adding more requirements (fuel efficiency, etc) when some social landlords haven’t completed the 2012 ones.”

Decarbonisation

- 4.37 An objective of the survey was to gain understanding about the acceptability of work to decarbonise tenants’ homes. To this end, tenants were asked the following two questions:
- Homes which are energy efficient have lower fuel bills, and are also more environmentally friendly. How happy would you be for your landlord to undertake minor work in your home to make it more fuel efficient? *Very happy/Happy/Neither happy nor unhappy /Unhappy/Very unhappy*. This question was answered by 817 respondents.
 - Sometimes, making existing homes more fuel efficient may require substantial work. How happy would you be for your landlord to undertake work in your home to make it more fuel efficient, if it required *substantial* work? *Very happy/Happy/Neither happy nor unhappy/Unhappy/Very unhappy*. This question was answered by 821 respondents.
- 4.38 A large majority of respondents answered that they would be happy or very happy for both minor (71%, n=588) and substantial works (78%, n=641) to be carried out in their home for the purpose of improving fuel efficiency. Interestingly, a higher percentage of respondents were happy or very happy for substantial works to be done, than were happy or very happy for minor works to be done.

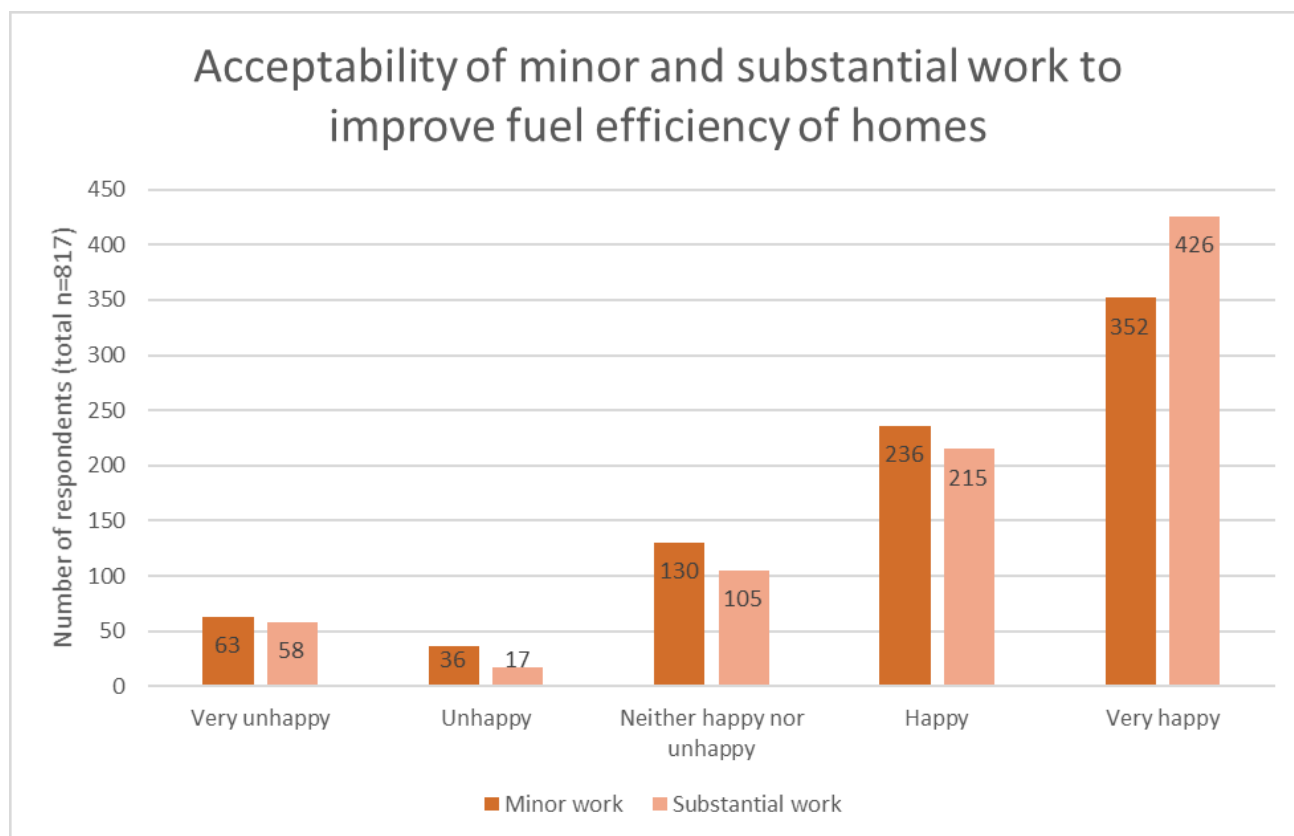


Figure 4: Acceptability of minor and substantial work to improve fuel efficiency of homes (n=817)

- 4.39 A minority of respondents reported that they would be very unhappy or unhappy for minor work (12%, n=99) or substantial work (9%, n=75) work to be done in their homes.
- 4.40 The responses to the two questions in this section suggest that decarbonisation and the environment are important issues to respondents. It may also reflect that some respondents are living in homes they find difficult to heat and are hoping for improvements from such work. This is supported in the thematic analysis of the open-ended responses which identified fuel efficiency as an emerging theme, as illustrated in the following quote:

“Please can landlords consider informing tenants of regeneration works/plans that may occur in the future so tenants know how long they have to endure the use of amenities such as the storage heaters or give tenants the options.”

Concerns about the home environment prior to and during the first Coronavirus lockdown of 2020

- 4.41 These questions explored experiences of the first Coronavirus lockdown, which began in March 2020, and by the time the survey was live in September/October 2020 was considerably eased, although some restrictions remained in place. The questions do not address the Welsh 'Firebreak' lockdown, which took place in late October / early November 2020, after the dissemination of the survey.
- 4.42 In order to characterise how and if there were changes to the ways homes were used because of the lockdown, respondents were asked to select from a list of statements whichever best described their situation during this period.
- 4.43 795 respondents answered this question. Respondents who selected 'Other' (n=136) were asked to specify their situation during lockdown. The responses were coded into three codes, 'more time spent in the home' (n=46), 'time spent in the home unchanged' (n=17), and 'not classifiable' (n=73), which was used for responses where it was not clear how or if the amount of time the respondent spent in their home had changed during lockdown.
- 4.44 Because respondents were able to select multiple options for this question, it is not possible to give strict percentages, as the total categories selected necessarily sum to more than the number of respondents. However, there were more selected responses (n=506) indicating that respondents spent more time in their homes due to changes to working patterns, increased childcare requirements, being furloughed, losing their job, shielding or specified other, than selected responses indicating that respondents' time spent at home remained the same (n=328).

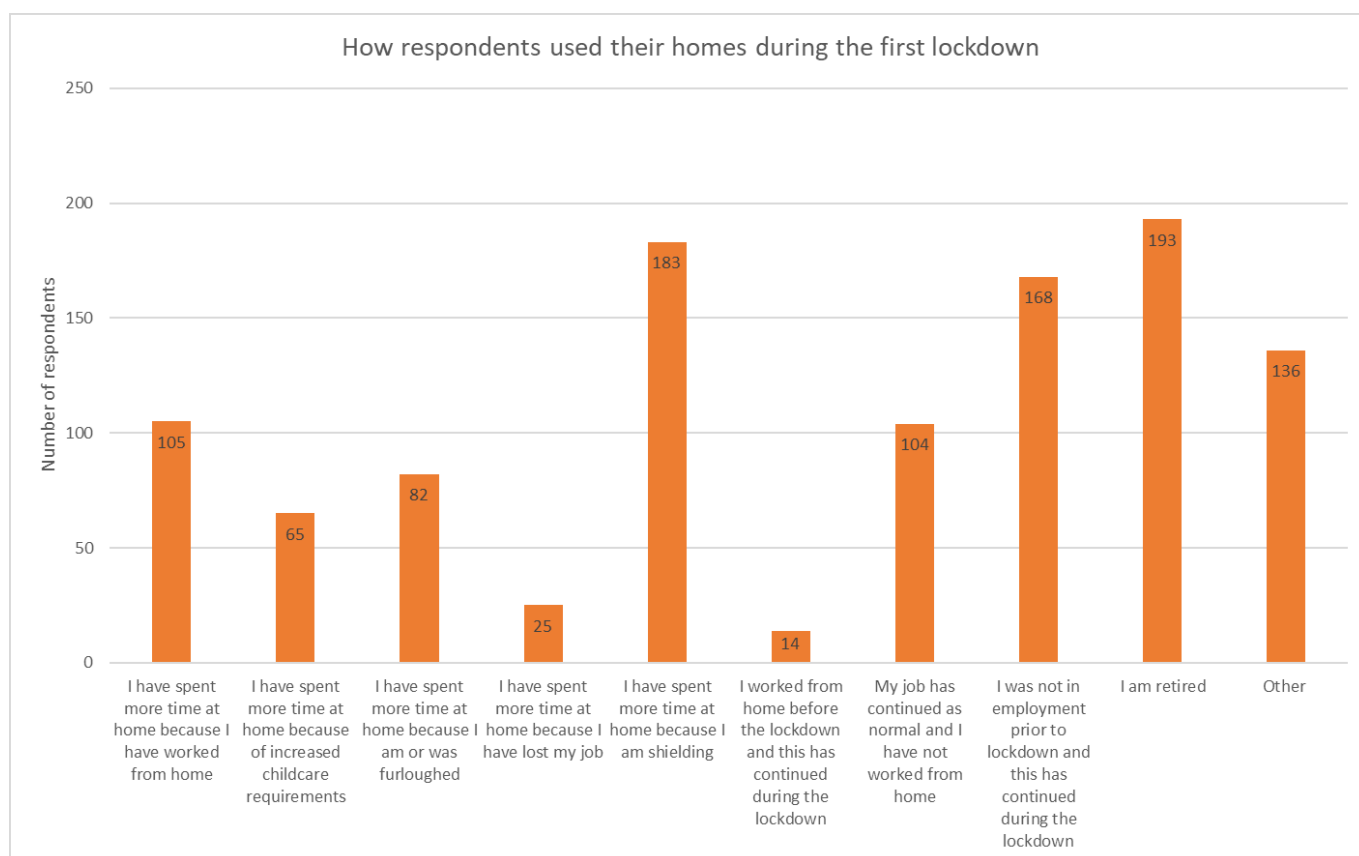


Figure 5: How respondents used their homes during the lockdown (n=795)

- 4.45 To explore whether respondents' concerns had changed as a result of lockdown, the survey asked participants to rate levels of concern about aspects of their home and local area prior to, and during, the first Coronavirus lockdown.
- 4.46 The aspects that respondents were asked to rate their concern level for were: accessing local amenities, using local communal spaces, broadband/accessing the internet, household bills, safety and security in their neighbourhood and safety and security in their homes, on a scale of 1 (not at all concerned) to 5 (very concerned).
- 4.47 Due to the survey design, participants reporting a tenancy length of less than six months skipped the questions addressing the time before the lockdown began in March. As a result of this, 18 more respondents answered the set of questions exploring concerns during the lockdown (n=781) than the set of questions exploring concerns prior to the lockdown (n=763).
- 4.48 As Table 6 below shows, a higher percentage of respondents reported high levels of concern (rating 5 or 4) across all aspects during

lockdown compared to prior to lockdown, and fewer respondents reported low levels of concern (rating 1 or 2) during lockdown compared to prior to lockdown.

	Percentage of respondents rating concern levels at 4 or 5 (the highest ratings)	Percentage of respondents rating concern levels at 1 or 2 (the lowest ratings)
Safety and Security in the local neighbourhood prior to lockdown	33.0	44.2
Safety and Security in the local neighbourhood since lockdown began	34.9	43.3
Safety and Security in the home prior to lockdown	27.4	50.4
Safety and Security in the home since lockdown began	31.1	48.0
Broadband / accessing the internet prior to lockdown	21.3	63.7
Broadband / accessing the internet since lockdown began	23.7	57.1
Accessing local amenities prior to lockdown	16.7	63.2
Accessing local amenities since lockdown began	27.8	49.1
Using communal spaces in your neighbourhood prior to lockdown	21.3	60.3
Using communal spaces in your neighbourhood since lockdown began	31.1	47.3
Household bills prior to lockdown	32.7	42.8
Household bills since lockdown began	40.3	38.6

Table 6: Percentages of the highest and lowest ratings of concerns about aspects of the home prior to and during the first lockdown.

- 4.49 The changes in levels of concern were smallest for safety and security in the neighbourhood; safety and security in the home; and access to the internet. As Table 6 above shows, safety and security in the neighbourhood had the highest number of respondents reporting levels of concern at a 5 or a 4 (the highest levels) prior to lockdown (33%, n=252) for any of the aspects being compared here, and was also one of the least likely to be rated at the lowest levels of 1 or 2 (44.2%, n=337). While increased concerns around safety and security in the neighbourhood during lockdown emerged as a theme during analysis of

the open-ended responses in this section (see paragraph 4.56 below), the findings around safety and security in the neighbourhood suggest that this is a serious source of concern for respondents regardless of lockdown conditions.

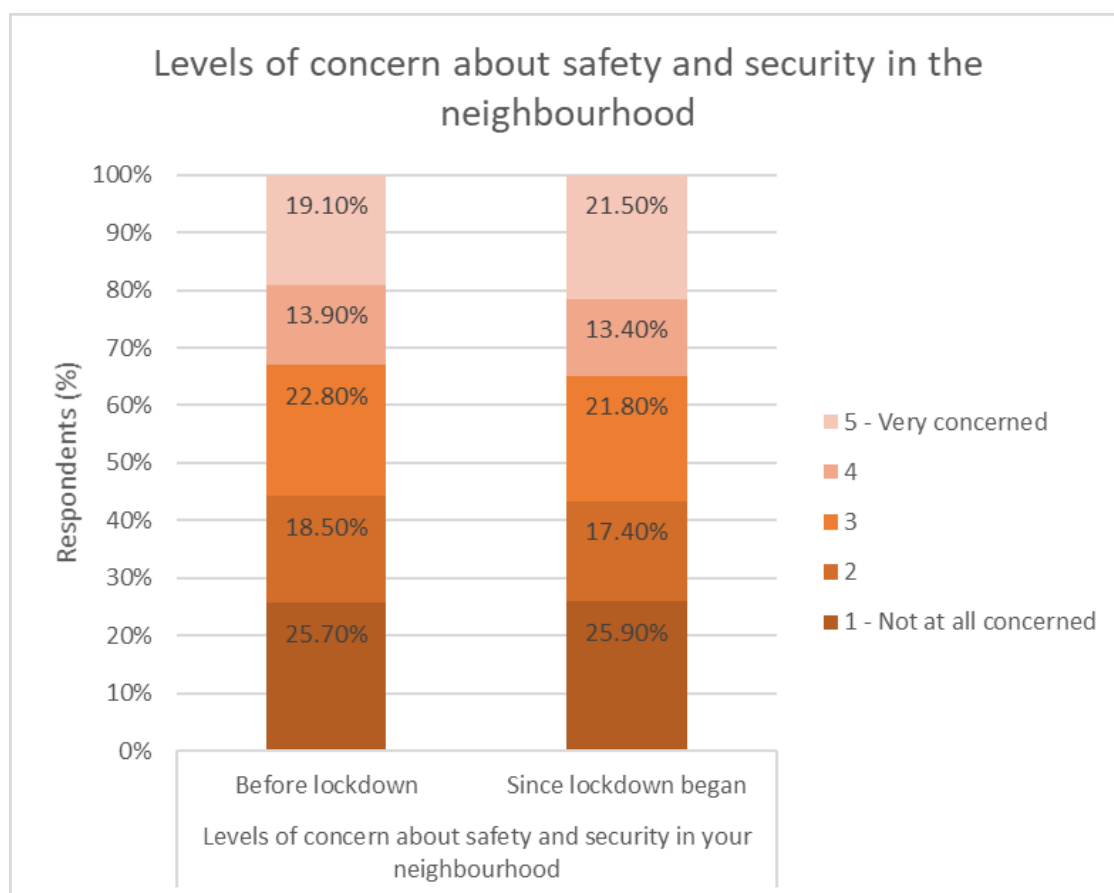


Figure 6: Levels of concern about safety and security in the neighbourhood

- 4.50 Larger changes are seen in percentage numbers of respondents reporting high levels of concern around accessing local amenities, where 16.7% of respondents (n=128) rated their concerns prior to lockdown at a 4 or a 5 compared to 27.8% during lockdown (n=217). For those rating their concerns prior to lockdown at a 1 or a 2, the lowest ratings on the scale, the percentage dropped from 63.2% (n=482) to 49.0% (n=383). Similar percentages are apparent for levels of concern about accessing local communal spaces (21.3% (n=163) rated concern level at 4 or 5 prior to lockdown compared to 31.1% (n=243) during lockdown; 60.3% (n=460) rated concern level at 1 or two prior to lockdown compared to 47.3% (n=470) during lockdown).
- 4.51 As illustrated in Figure 7 below, almost a third of respondents rated their level of concern around household bills at 4 or 5 on the scale prior to lockdown (32.7%, n=250), and this rose to 40.3% (n=315) during the

lockdown. While it appears clear that household bills were already a serious source of concern for respondents, the lockdown appears to be correlated with a large increase in levels of concern of respondents around this aspect.

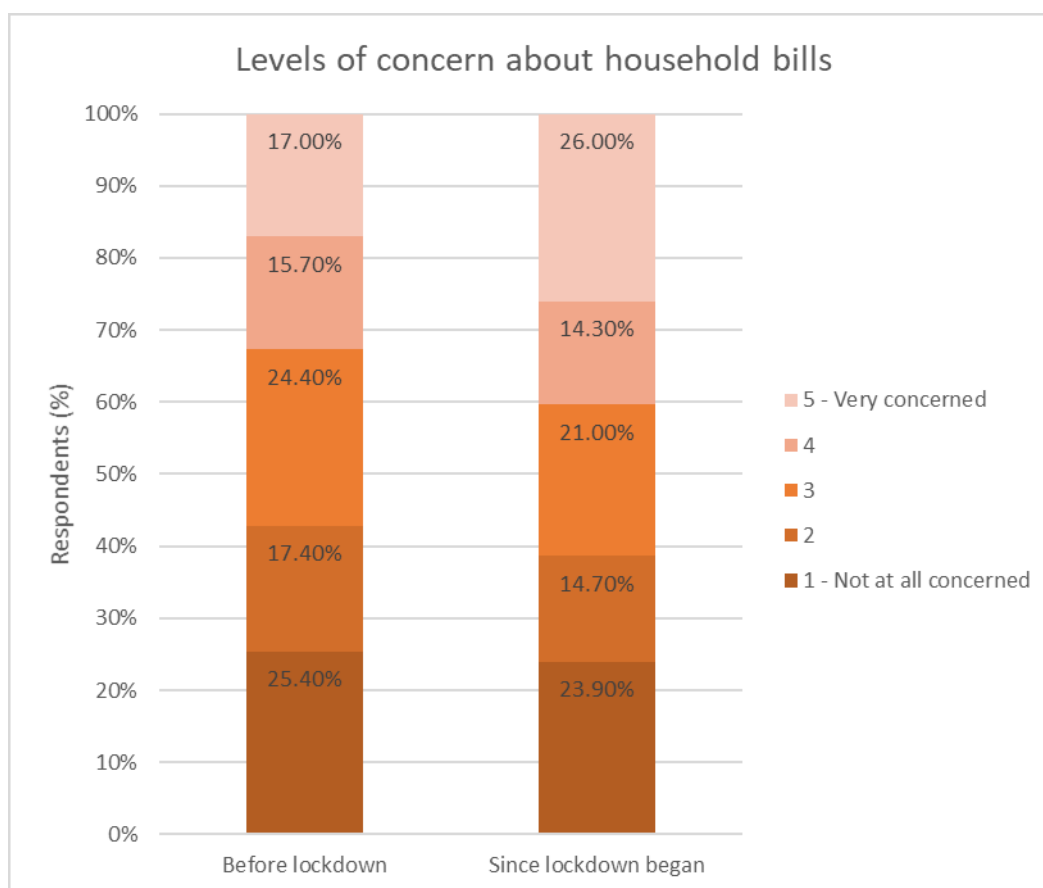


Figure 7: Levels of concern about household bills before and during lockdown

Thematic analysis of freetext responses (lockdown)

- 4.52 This section had two open questions for respondents. The first related to concerns which caused tenants stress in their home or surrounding environment in the six months prior to the Coronavirus lockdown. 251 out of 945 responded to this. The second question related to similar concerns during the lockdown. 171 out of 945 responded to this.
- 4.53 Most themes echoed those that were identified from the first two open questions and a very similar coding framework was used. However, some themes were identified as being exclusive to the experiences during the pandemic and lockdown.

- 4.54 In comparison to the open responses explored in Paragraphs 4.18 to 4.41, there was more of a focus on the surrounding environment and neighbourhood in the questions relating to lockdown. Some of the most commonly referenced concerns were the prevalence of substance misuse and the flouting of lockdown restrictions in the community.

Changes in antisocial behaviour

- 4.55 Many respondents reported feeling less safe in their home during the lockdown due to a perceived increase in substance misuse, antisocial behaviour and crime in their area.

“The neighbours underneath are causing me constant distress and due to lockdown I feel unable to escape it as much. I’ve experienced attempted brake ins into my property, theft of items, I no longer feel safe here I want as leave as soon as possible.”

- 4.56 Additionally, some respondents commented that they felt the monitoring and surveillance of anti-social behaviour had worsened.

“Since the start of lockdown, the usual services which would have been deployed to deal with anti-social behaviour in our neighbourhoods weren’t so active, so people who are so inclined to behave in an anti-social manner knew they would be less likely to be subject to police involvement, have court appearances, or have be subject to eviction. I didn’t feel especially safe at the start of lockdown and for months afterwards as there is a person(s) who have threatened physical assault in my neighbourhood.”

- 4.57 Nonetheless, two respondents did note that whilst there was a perceived increase in anti-social behaviour towards the beginning of lockdown, this has since improved.

“The level of crime did spike during lockdown and a friend commented that it was the most despondent she had heard me about the area. I made numerous calls to 101 and was in close contact with the local PCSO and PC. Thankfully things are better currently.”

- 4.58 Another recurring theme among responses was the flouting of lockdown restrictions by members of the community. Some respondents mentioned that members of their community seemed dismissive of the seriousness of the virus.

“I am very concerned about neighbours living in close proximity to me in my complex who have been consistently flouting all the rules and advice given during and after lockdown. They do not seem to understand social distancing.”

Changes to Local Environment in the first Lockdown

Accessing Local Amenities

- 4.59 A small number of respondents reported finding it difficult to access local amenities due to a reduction in public transport services during the lockdown period.

“My biggest concern is the bus [number] has ceased so I have to buy all groceries from the local Spar shop, this is proving costly; and because I no longer can visit [the local town] my son and I cannot collect meds, see a GP or visit family there.”

- 4.60 Several respondents mentioned the impact of not having access to local parks or green spaces during the lockdown.

“There is no parks and NO places to go locally. I had to learn to drive and have the cost of a car to get anywhere. One bus every 2 hours and then it doesn't turn up.”

Landlord Engagement and Communication in Lockdown

- 4.61 Some respondents reported that they had not seen or heard from their landlord during the lockdown and contact services were less responsive, suggesting that for some respondents, lockdown exacerbated communication issues that were already present.

“...[local] HA [Housing Association] ‘working’ from home yet do nothing including never answering the phone when requiring help [...] now the service is worse than ever from this HA.”

Positive experiences of lockdown

- 4.62 A sub-set of responses were positive about their experiences during the lockdown. The comments included feeling supported by neighbours and enjoying countryside walks.

“I do feel safe because we as a neighbourhood contact each other and support each other.”

Additional Coronavirus Questions

- 4.63 The survey also included an additional section about the impact of the first Coronavirus lockdown. The questions in this section were developed with input from Public Health Wales.
- 4.64 The first two questions in this section are summarised in Figure 7 below. They explored the impact of changing space requirements as a result of lockdown, for instance due to working from home, or increased childcare requirements. The first question asked if respondents felt they would need to move in future because of changing space requirements. Most respondents to this question either did not think this was applicable to them (62%, n=480), or responded ‘no’ (17%, n=132). 159 respondents (20.6%) did think it was a possibility. This suggests that the majority of the sample (79%) either did not experience changes in space requirement during the lockdown, or were able to accommodate such changes without needing to consider relocating. However, a sizeable minority do feel that changes to space requirements has rendered their current home potentially unsuitable.
- 4.65 The second question in this section explored whether working from home / home-schooling during lockdown was found to be stressful because of lack of space. 279 respondents (36.2%) answered ‘yes’ to this, and 491 (63.8%) answered no. ‘Not applicable’ was not an available answer option for this question, suggesting that the majority of those who answered ‘not applicable’ to the first question answered ‘no’

to this one. The respondents who answered 'yes' to this question are likely to include both respondents who answered 'yes' and who answered 'no' to the first question. This suggests that there may be respondents who did not feel they would need to move as a result of changing space requirements, but still found lack of space stressful when working from home or home-schooling.

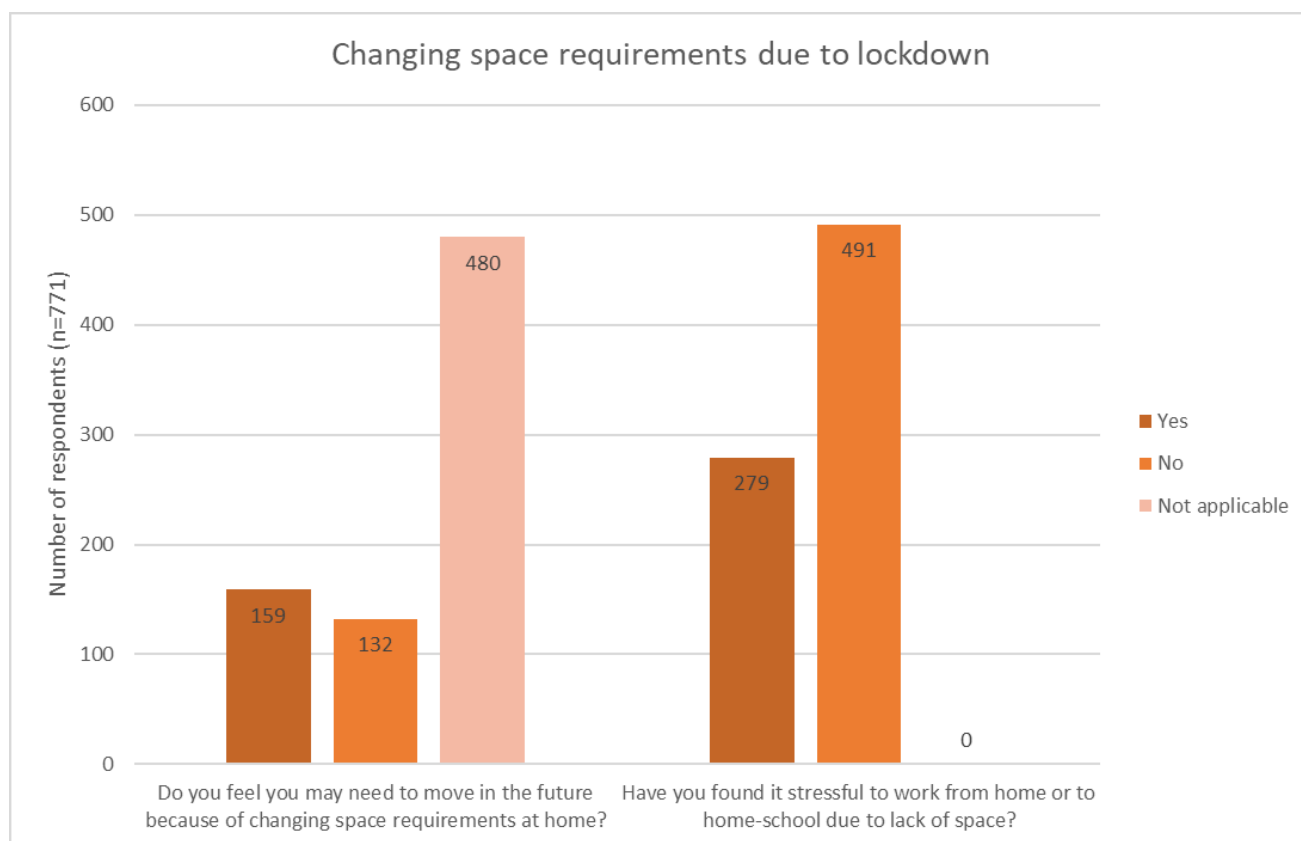


Figure 8: Changing space requirements due to lockdown (n=771)

4.66 The final question in this section asked respondents if they had regular access to various amenities, including parks, gardens, other green space, necessary technology and necessary shopping. Results show that while a majority of respondents had access to a garden (74%, n=599), a smaller number had regular access to parks (41%, n=309) or other recreational space (53%, n=391) during the lockdown. Although large majorities reported regular access to necessary technology (71%, n=512) and necessary shopping (85%, n=657), almost a third, 28.5% (n=205), did not have regular access to necessary technology and 14.6% (n=113) did not have regular access to necessary shopping.

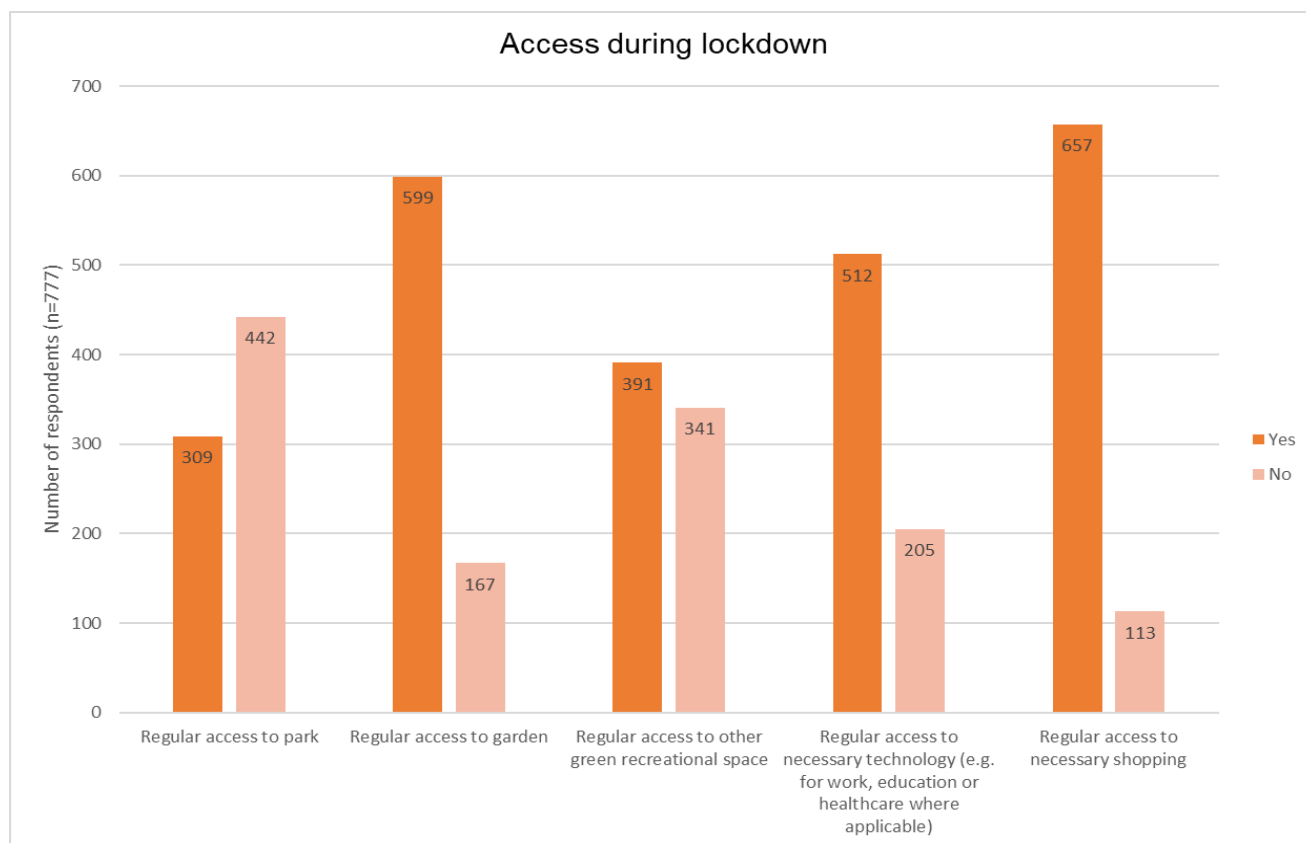


Figure 9: Access to amenities during lockdown (n=777)

Comments from non-social tenants

4.67 71 respondents reported that they were not social tenants, and were therefore routed past the main survey to a question which asked if they had any comment to make on the Welsh Housing Quality Standard. Seventeen chose to leave a comment. Of these, it was clear from nine of the responses that although they had not selected the 'Social tenant' option for Question 1, they were in fact either social tenants or on the waiting list for social housing, meaning that eight open responses were received from non-social tenants. Although written from different perspectives from the responses of the social tenants, the emergent themes from these responses echoed those identified in the main sample.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 This survey explored the views of social tenants, resident across Wales, regarding the WHQS and their experiences in their homes during the first Coronavirus lockdown of 2020.
- 5.2 While 56% of respondents (n=510) reported at least having heard of the WHQS, the results showed that 44% of respondents had not heard of the Standard (n=404). It might therefore be of benefit for social landlords and the Welsh Government to consider ways to increase awareness of the WHQS so that social tenants can have a greater knowledge of what they can expect from their accommodation.
- 5.3 The survey measured how important respondents considered each of the criteria in the current WHQS, and found that a large majority rated all criteria as 'very important'. This suggests that the current WHQS is correctly focused on criteria that are valued by tenants and the next iteration of the WHQS would benefit from retaining the current criteria.
- 5.4 Most respondents agreed that their homes are meeting WHQS criteria, but a sizeable minority did not. The only criterion which less than half of respondents agreed was met in their home was 'management'. This also emerged as a theme in the open question responses, particularly with regards to poor landlord engagement and communication. This finding suggests that improving systems to communicate effectively and in good time may go some way towards addressing the perception that homes are poorly managed.
- 5.5 A majority of respondents reported that they would be happy for both minor and substantial work to be done in their homes to increase fuel efficiency. This may be influenced by environmental concerns amongst respondents and may also be influenced by issues respondents have in their homes with heating and insulation. Given that the next iteration of the WHQS is committed to a greater focus on decarbonisation this is a positive finding, suggesting that retrofit programmes and other domestic decarbonisation work may be acceptable to some social tenants.
- 5.6 The results of this survey suggest that a majority of respondents spent more time in their homes as a result of the first Coronavirus lockdown, and that concerns around aspects of the home increased during the lockdown. This effect was very apparent for household bills, suggesting

respondents, a high level of whom also reported having concerns about bills prior to lockdown, have been particularly hard-hit financially as a result of the lockdown.

- 5.7 High levels of concern about safety and security in the neighbourhood and in the home were also revealed, and these levels remained relatively stable prior to and during lockdown. A substantial number of respondents also reported increased levels of stress as a result of changes to space requirements during the lockdown. Some respondents thought that they would need to move in future as a result of changing space requirements in lockdown.
- 5.8 Although the response rate for the survey was reasonably high, the method of recruitment, which used a convenience-based approach, and the variation in response rate between different local authorities, means that the findings of this survey cannot necessarily be extrapolated to all social tenants in Wales, and should be treated as indicative only.

6. Annex A: Survey Script

Questions in bold. Explanatory text in italics.

	Tenants' Views on the Welsh Housing Quality Standard
	Introduction
	<p>The Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) is an all-Wales standard set by Welsh Government for all homes that are let to tenants in social housing. It started in 2002 and sets out the quality that we expect social housing landlords (such as Councils and Housing Associations) to achieve in their housing.</p> <p>To help us evaluate the scheme, Welsh Government are very interested to hear your views and experiences of the WHQS while renting in the Social Housing sector in Wales. Your participation is completely voluntary and will help inform what the future WHQS might look like. Thank you in advance for your help and support with this.</p> <p>Your responses are anonymous, and information you provide as part of this survey will be recorded and stored in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). For more information please see the privacy notice provided with this survey.</p> <p>If you have any questions about the survey, please contact Katy Addison (katy.addison@gov.wales).</p>
	You and your tenancy
	First, we would like to ask a little about you and your specific circumstances.
	Questions marked with a red asterisk are mandatory. Please select the most applicable answer for these questions.
1	Please select the statement that best describes your household:
	I am a social housing tenant (landlord is a housing association or a local authority/council)
Route to 44a	I am a private rented tenant
Route to 44a	I am an owner occupier (either outright or with a mortgage)
Route to 44a	Other - please specify:
2	How old are you?
	18 - 24
	25 - 34

	35 - 44
	45 - 54
	55 - 64
	65 and over
	Prefer not to say
3	Please select your Local Authority:
	Blaenau Gwent
	Bridgend
	Caerphilly
	Cardiff
	Carmarthenshire
	Ceredigion
	Conwy
	Denbighshire
	Flintshire
	Gwynedd
	Isle of Anglesey
	Merthyr Tydfil
	Monmouthshire
	Neath Port Talbot
	Newport
	Pembrokeshire
	Powys
	Rhondda Cynon Taf
	Swansea
	Torfaen
	Vale of Glamorgan
	Wrexham
4	How long have you been a tenant in your current home?
Skip qs 14 - 43	Not currently a tenant but on the waiting list for a property
Skip qs 24 - 33	Less than 6 months
	Over 6 months up to 1 year
	Over 1 year up to 5 years
	Over 5 years up to 10 years
	Over 10 years up to 20 years
	Over 20 years
	The Welsh Housing Quality Standard

5	How would you describe your awareness and understanding of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS)?
	I had not heard of WHQS before taking this survey
	I've heard of the WHQS but don't know much about it
	I have some understanding of the WHQS
	I have quite a good understanding of the WHQS
	I have a very good understanding of the WHQS
	The Welsh Housing Quality Standard states that all households should have the opportunity to live in good quality homes, and lists a number of criteria that should be met in social housing. We would like you to tell us how important each of these criteria are to you on a scale of 1 to 5.
6	How important is it to you that your home is in a good condition?
	1 - not important at all
	2
	3
	4
	5 - very important
7	How important is it to you that your home is safe and secure?
	1 - not important at all
	2
	3
	4
	5 - very important
8	How important is it to you that your home is comfortable and affordable to keep warm?
	1 - not important at all
	2
	3
	4
	5 - very important
9	How important is it to you that your home contains an up-to-date kitchen?
	1 - not important at all
	2
	3
	4
	5 - very important
10	How important is it to you that your home contains an up-to-date bathroom?

	1 - not important at all
	2
	3
	4
	5 - very important
11	How important is it to you that your home is well managed by your landlord? (<i>for instance, repairs and replacements are carried out in good time</i>)
	1 - not important at all
	2
	3
	4
	5 - very important
12	How important is it to you that your home is located in an attractive and safe environment?
	1 - not important at all
	2
	3
	4
	5 - very important
13	13. How important is it to you that your home, as far as possible, suits the specific requirements of the household (<i>e.g. specific disabilities</i>)?
	1 - not important at all
	2
	3
	4
	5 - very important
	The WHQS criteria and your home
	Thinking about your home, to what extent do you agree with each of the following statements?
14	My home is in a good condition
	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neither agree nor disagree
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
15	My home is safe and secure
	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neither agree nor disagree

	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
16	My home is comfortable and affordable to keep warm.
	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neither agree nor disagree
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
17	My home contains an up-to-date kitchen (<i>updated within the last 15 years</i>)
	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neither agree nor disagree
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
	Don't know
18	My home contains an up-to-date bathroom (<i>updated within the last 15 years</i>)
	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neither agree nor disagree
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
	Don't know
19	My home is well managed by my landlord (for instance, repairs and replacements are carried out in good time)
	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neither agree nor disagree
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
20	My home is located in an attractive and safe environment
	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neither agree nor disagree
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
21	My home suits the specific requirements of my household (<i>e.g. specific disabilities</i>)
	Strongly agree
	Agree

	Neither agree nor disagree
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
	Not applicable
xx	If there is anything you would like to add about your home and the WHQS criteria, please tell us in the box below:
	Condition of your home
xx	If you did not agree that your home is in good condition and would like to tell us what your concern is, please use the box below:
	Environmental sustainability in your home
	Decarbonisation and energy efficiency are an important part of the future of housing in Wales, and environmental goals will be included in the next iteration of the WHQS.
22	Homes which are energy efficient have lower fuel bills, and are also more environmentally friendly. How happy would you be for your landlord to undertake <i>minor</i> work in your home to make it more fuel efficient?
	Very happy
	Happy
	Neither happy nor unhappy
	Unhappy
	Very unhappy
23	Sometimes, making existing homes more fuel efficient may require substantial work. How happy would you be for your landlord to undertake work in your home to make it more fuel efficient, if it required <i>substantial</i> work?
	Very happy
	Happy
	Neither happy nor unhappy
	Unhappy
	Very unhappy
	Concerns about your home prior to the lockdown
	Thinking about your home and the surrounding area before the Coronavirus lockdown period began in March 2020, we would like you to tell us if any aspects caused you any level of concern or stress, on a scale of 1 to 5.
24	How concerned were you about the condition of your kitchen in the six months prior to the lockdown?
	1 - not at all concerned
	2

	3
	4
	5 - very concerned
25	How concerned were you about the condition of your bathroom in the six months prior to the lockdown?
	1 - not at all concerned
	2
	3
	4
	5 - very concerned
26	How concerned were you about keeping your home warm in the six months prior to the lockdown?
	1 - not at all concerned
	2
	3
	4
	5 - very concerned
27	How concerned were you about accessing amenities, such as parks and libraries in your local area, in the six months prior to the lockdown?
	1 - not at all concerned
	2
	3
	4
	5 - very concerned
28	How concerned were you about broadband / access to the internet in the six months prior to the lockdown?
	1 - not at all concerned
	2
	3
	4
	5 - very concerned
29	How concerned were you about using communal spaces in your neighbourhood in the six months prior to the lockdown?
	1 - not at all concerned
	2
	3
	4
	5 - very concerned
30	How concerned were you about your household bills in the six months prior to the lockdown?

	1 - not at all concerned
	2
	3
	4
	5 - very concerned
31	How concerned were you about having enough storage in your home in the six months prior to the lockdown?
	1 - not at all concerned
	2
	3
	4
	5 - very concerned
32	How concerned were you about safety and security in your neighbourhood in the six months prior to the lockdown?
	1 - not at all concerned
	2
	3
	4
	5 - very concerned
33	How concerned were you about safety and security in your home in the six months prior to the lockdown?
	1 - not at all concerned
	2
	3
	4
	5 - very concerned
xx	If there was anything else in your home or the surrounding environment which caused you concern or stress in the six months prior to lockdown, please tell us about it in the box below:
	Your home environment and the coronavirus lockdown
	We would now like you to think specifically about the recent and current Coronavirus lockdown.
34	Please select which of these statements best describe your circumstances during the Coronavirus lockdown. Tick all that apply.
	I have spent more time at home because I have worked from home
	I have spent more time at home because of increased childcare requirements
	I have spent more time at home because I am or was furloughed
	I have spent more time at home because I have lost my job

	I have spent more time at home because I am or have been shielding
	I worked from home before the lockdown and this has continued during the lockdown
	My job has continued as normal and I have not worked from home
	I was not in employment prior to lockdown and this has continued during the lockdown
	I am retired
	Other - please specify:
	Concerns about your home during the lockdown
	Thinking about your home and the surrounding area since the Coronavirus lockdown period began in March 2020, we would like you to tell us if any aspects have been causing you any level of concern or stress, on a scale of 1 to 5.
35	How concerned have you been about being able to access amenities, such as parks and libraries in your local area, since the lockdown began?
	1 - not at all concerned
	2
	3
	4
	5 - very concerned
36	How concerned have you been about broadband / access to the internet since the lockdown began?
	1 - not at all concerned
	2
	3
	4
	5 - very concerned
37	How concerned have you been about using communal spaces in your neighbourhood since the lockdown began?
	1 - not at all concerned
	2
	3
	4
	5 - very concerned
38	How concerned have you been about household bills since the lockdown began?
	1 - not at all concerned
	2
	3

	4
	5 - very concerned
39	How concerned have you been about safety and security in your neighbourhood since the lockdown began?
	1 - not at all concerned
	2
	3
	4
	5 - very concerned
40	How concerned have you been about safety and security in your home since the lockdown began?
	1 - not at all concerned
	2
	3
	4
	5 - very concerned
xx	If there is anything else in your home or the surrounding environment which has caused you concern or stress during the lockdown, please tell us about it in the box below:
	Additional questions about your home and the impact of Coronavirus
	Please think about the time since the Coronavirus lockdown was announced while answering the questions on this page.
41	Have you found it stressful to work from home or to home-school due to lack of space?
	Yes
	No
	Not applicable
42	Do you feel you may need to move in the future because of changing space requirements at home?
	Yes
	No
43	Have you had regular access to the following during lockdown?
	Park Yes / No
	Garden Yes / No
	Other green recreational space Yes / No
	Food Yes / No
	Necessary technology (e.g. for work, education or healthcare where applicable) Yes / No
	Thank you for your interest

44a routing for non- social tenants	Thank you for your participation in this survey. The survey is specifically for social tenants. However, if you do have any comments you would like to share with us about the Welsh Housing Quality Standard, please let us know in the box below:
44b last q for social tenants	Thank you for your participation in this survey. If you have anything further to add about the Welsh Housing Quality Standard, please tell us about it in the box below:
	<p>You have reached the end of the survey. Thank you very much for taking part.</p> <p>Your answers will help inform the evaluation of the WHQS. A report on the findings of this survey will be published on the Welsh Government website in Winter 2020.</p> <p>If you have any questions about the survey, please contact Katy Addison (katy.addison@gov.wales).</p>

7. Annex B: Privacy Notice accompanying the Survey



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Evaluation OF Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS): Tenant Survey

The Welsh Housing Quality Standard Policy Team in Welsh Government has commissioned the Sustainable Futures Research Team in Knowledge and Analytical Services, Welsh Government to undertake a tenant survey into the existing Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS). This aim of this survey is to explore how tenants view and perceive the current WHQS, in order to inform the development of a new Standard. As part of this research, the Sustainable Futures Research Team will be gathering information from tenants through a survey disseminated by TPAS Cymru and by social landlords.

The Welsh Government is the data controller for the research. The Sustainable Futures Research Team will remove personal data before writing up the report and will not provide personally identifiable data to others in Welsh Government unless you ask us to.

The information collected during the project will be included in a report which may be published on the Welsh Government website.

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. However your views and experiences are important in order to help inform Welsh Government policies.



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

PRIVACY NOTICE

What personal data do we hold and where do we get this information?

Personal data is defined under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) as 'any information relating to an identifiable person who can be directly or indirectly identified by reference to an identifier'.

The Welsh Government does not hold relevant contact details for you. You have either been contacted because:

- your landlord (with whom you already engage) has been asked to contact you to inform you of this survey and provide you with a link to participate; or
- you have been invited to take part through TPAS Cymru as a member of their Tenant Pulse; or
- you have accessed the research via an invitation from either your landlord or TPAS Cymru's social media account.

Neither your landlord nor TPAS Cymru will have access to any of your responses. If you agree to participate your contact details will not be provided to Welsh Government and any identifying details you may choose to provide within the survey will be removed prior to analysis of the data.

This research does not require the collection of any personal data from you. Your IP address and email will not be collected by completing the survey.

Your participation is voluntary.

If you choose to provide additional personal data in any responses to the survey questions, we will not identify you from, or link your identity to, the responses you provide. If you raise a query or complaint and provide personal data requesting a response, the researcher will forward the request only to the relevant official and subsequently delete it from the research data.

What is the lawful basis for using your data?

The lawful basis for processing information in this data collection exercise is our public task; that is, exercising our official authority to undertake the core role and functions of the Welsh Government.



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Participation is completely voluntary. Research studies such as this are important for the Welsh Government to collect information and actionable evidence about its ability to deliver government priorities.

How secure is your personal data?

Personal data provided to Welsh Government is held on secure servers, and for this project a folder has been created that has access restricted only to the immediate research team. Any personal data you choose to provide in your responses will be stored in this restricted folder. The researchers will not provide any personal information when reporting findings to the policy team.

When conducting surveys, the Welsh Government use a survey software programme called Smart Survey. We have ensured that Smart Survey is GDPR compliant and meets our expectations in terms of the security of any data collected via the software (e.g. all data is processed within the EEA).

All data gathered through this research will be reported in an anonymised format. It will not contain your contact details and any identifiable information in open-ended answers will be removed. The Sustainable Futures Research Team will use the information gathered to produce a report, and this may be published on the Welsh Government website. This report will not include any information that could be used to identify individual participants.

How long do we keep your personal data?

Any personal data not already removed during analysis will be deleted by the Sustainable Futures research team three months after the publication of the final report.

Individual rights

Under GDPR, you have the following rights in relation to the personal information you provide as part of this research, specifically you have the right:

- To access a copy of your own data;
- For us to rectify inaccuracies in that data;
- To object to or restrict processing (in certain circumstances);
- For your data to be 'erased' (in certain circumstances); and
- To lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) who is our independent regulator for data protection.



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The contact details for the Information Commissioner's Office are: Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Phone: 01625 545 745 or 0303 123 1113. Website: www.ico.gov.uk

Further Information

If you have any further questions about how the data provided as part of this study will be used by the Welsh Government or wish to exercise your rights using the General Data Protection Regulation, please contact:

Name: Katy Addison

E-mail address: katy.addison@gov.wales

Telephone number: 03000 256292

The Welsh Government's Data Protection Officer can be contacted at:

Welsh Government, Cathays Park, Cardiff, CF10 3NQ, Email:

DataProtectionOfficer@gov.wales.

8. Annex C: Tables of Results for Quantitative Questions

Question 1: Please select the statement that best describes your household:

		Response Percent	Response Total
1	I am a social housing tenant (landlord is a housing association or a local authority/council)	93.0%	945
2	I am a private rented tenant	3.2%	33
3	I am an owner occupier (either outright or with a mortgage)	2.2%	22
4	Other (please specify):	1.6%	16
answered			1016

Question 2: How old are you?

		Response Percent	Response Total
1	18 - 24	2.7%	25
2	25 - 34	13.8%	129
3	35 - 44	17.6%	164
4	45 - 54	22.9%	213
5	55 - 64	19.6%	183
6	65 and over	22.3%	208
7	Prefer not to say	1.1%	10
answered			932

Question 3: Please select your Local Authority:

		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Blaenau Gwent	0.9%	8
2	Bridgend	0.5%	5
3	Caerphilly	2.8%	26
4	Cardiff	18.5%	172
5	Carmarthenshire	1.4%	13
6	Ceredigion	2.6%	24
7	Conwy	12.4%	116
8	Denbighshire	1.7%	16
9	Flintshire	1.0%	9
10	Gwynedd	2.9%	27

11	Isle of Anglesey	2.3%	21
12	Merthyr Tydfil	1.3%	12
13	Monmouthshire	1.6%	15
14	Neath Port Talbot	1.2%	11
15	Newport	2.9%	27
16	Pembrokeshire	1.9%	18
17	Powys	16.6%	155
18	Rhondda Cynon Taf	4.0%	37
19	Swansea	3.8%	35
20	Torfaen	4.9%	46
21	Vale of Glamorgan	8.0%	75
22	Wrexham	6.9%	64
answered			932

Question 4: How long have you been a tenant in your current home?

Answer Choice		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Not currently a tenant but on the waiting list for a property	0.5%	5
2	Less than 6 months	4.9%	46
3	Over 6 months up to 1 year	5.4%	50
4	Over 1 year up to 5 years	28.6%	267
5	Over 5 years up to 10 years	21.5%	200
6	Over 10 years up to 20 years	21.9%	204
7	Over 20 years	17.2%	160
answered			932

Question 5: How would you describe your awareness and understanding of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS)?

Answer Choice		Response Percent	Response Total
1	I had not heard of the WHQS before taking this survey	44.2%	404
2	I've heard of the WHQS but don't know much about it	20.5%	187
3	I have some understanding of the WHQS	17.8%	163
4	I have quite a good understanding of the WHQS	9.6%	88
5	I have a very good understanding of the WHQS	7.9%	72
answered			914

Questions 6-13: Attitudes to WHQS Criteria

	1 - not important at all	2	3	4	5 - very important	Response Total
How important is it to you that your home is in a good condition?	2	1	10	35	843	891
How important is it to you that your home is safe and secure?	2	0	6	24	858	890
How important is it to you that your home is comfortable and affordable to keep warm?	2	2	6	38	843	891
How important is it to you that your home contains an up-to-date kitchen?	9	4	64	183	631	891
How important is it to you that your home contains an up-to-date bathroom?	8	2	53	144	684	891
How important is it to you that your home is well managed by your landlord? (for instance, repairs and replacements are carried out in good time)	3	3	10	54	821	891
How important is it to you that your home is located in an attractive and safe environment?	5	2	41	143	699	890
How important is it to you that your home, as far as possible, suits the specific requirements of the household (e.g. specific disabilities)?	11	7	59	107	706	890

Questions 14-21: WHQS Criteria and Your Home

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree		Total answered
My home is in a good condition	166	293	158	161	79		857
My home is safe and secure	199	378	123	99	58		857
My home is comfortable and affordable to keep warm.	166	325	152	138	76		857
My home contains an up-to-date kitchen (updated within the last 15 years)	255	355	99	58	71	Don't know = 19	857
My home contains an up-to-date bathroom (updated within the last 15 years)	238	330	98	84	83	Don't know = 24	857
My home is well managed by my landlord (for instance, repairs and replacements are carried out in good time)	145	270	169	165	108		857
My home is located in an attractive and safe environment	154	346	189	99	69		857
My home suits the specific requirements of my household (e.g. specific disabilities)	175	342	140	80	73	Not applicable = 47	857

Question 22: Homes which are energy efficient have lower fuel bills, and are also more environmentally friendly. How happy would you be for your landlord to undertake minor work in your home to make it more fuel efficient?

Very unhappy	Unhappy	Neither happy nor unhappy	Happy	Very happy	Response Total
58	17	105	215	426	821

Question 23: Sometimes, making existing homes more fuel efficient may require substantial work. How happy would you be for your landlord to make your home more fuel efficient, if it required substantial work?

Very unhappy	Unhappy	Neither happy nor unhappy	Happy	Very happy	Response Total
63	36	130	236	352	817

Questions 24-33: Concerns prior to lockdown

	1 - not at all concerned	2	3	4	5 - very concerned	Response Total
How concerned were you about the condition of your kitchen in the six months prior to the lockdown?	423	84	110	81	65	763
How concerned were you about the condition of your bathroom in the six months prior to the lockdown?	376	94	107	77	109	763
How concerned were you about keeping your home warm in the six months prior to the lockdown?	259	103	143	99	159	763
How concerned were you about accessing amenities, such as parks and libraries in your local area, in the six months prior to the lockdown?	393	89	153	53	75	763
How concerned were you about broadband / access to the internet in the six months prior to the lockdown?	388	98	115	67	95	763

How concerned were you about using communal spaces in your neighbourhood in the six months prior to the lockdown?	361	99	140	52	111	763
How concerned were you about your household bills in the six months prior to the lockdown?	194	133	186	120	130	763
How concerned were you about having enough storage in your home in the six months prior to the lockdown?	245	98	153	120	147	763
How concerned were you about safety and security in your neighbourhood in the six months prior to the lockdown?	196	141	174	106	146	763
How concerned were you about safety and security in your home in the six months prior to the lockdown?	234	150	170	91	118	763

Question 34: Please select which of these statements best describe your circumstances during the Coronavirus lockdown. Tick all that apply.

	Response Percent	Response Total
I have spent more time at home because I have worked from home	13.2%	105
I have spent more time at home because of increased childcare requirements	8.2%	65
I have spent more time at home because I am or was furloughed	10.3%	82
I have spent more time at home because I have lost my job	3.1%	25
I have spent more time at home because I am shielding	23.0%	183
I worked from home before the lockdown and this has continued during the lockdown	1.8%	14
My job has continued as normal and I have not worked from home	13.1%	104
I was not in employment prior to lockdown and this has continued during the lockdown	21.1%	168
I am retired	24.3%	193
Other (please specify):	17.1%	136
	answered	795

Questions 35-40: Concerns since Lockdown Began

	1 - not at all concerned	2	3	4	5 - very concerned	Response Total
How concerned have you been about being able to access amenities, such as parks and libraries in your local area, since the lockdown began?	273	110	181	84	133	781
How concerned have you been about broadband / access to the internet since the lockdown began?	350	96	150	79	106	781
How concerned have you been about using communal spaces in your neighbourhood since the lockdown began?	269	101	168	81	162	781
How concerned have you been about household bills since the lockdown began?	187	115	164	112	203	781
How concerned have you been about safety and security in your neighbourhood since the lockdown began?	202	136	170	105	168	781
How concerned have you been about safety and security in your home since the lockdown began?	243	132	163	101	142	781

Question 41: Have you found it stressful to work from home or to home-school due to lack of space?

	Response Percent	Response Total
Yes	20.6%	159
No	17.1%	132
Not applicable	62.3%	480
answered		771

Question 42: Do you feel you may need to move in the future because of changing space requirements at home?

	Response Percent	Response Total
Yes	36.2%	279
No	63.8%	491
answered		770

Question 43: Have you had regular access to the following during lockdown?

		Yes	No	Response Total
1	Regular access to park	309	442	751
2	Regular access to garden	599	167	766
3	Regular access to other green recreational space	391	341	732
4	Regular access to necessary technology (e.g. for work, education or healthcare where applicable)	512	205	717
5	Regular access to necessary shopping	657	113	770