

REPORT OF CONSULTATION ON RENTS AND SERVICE CHARGES FOR 2021-2022

As part of Council's commitment to involving tenants and other service users in the management of housing services, Housing Strategy undertook consultation with tenants and leaseholders for 2021-2022.

In February 2019 the government confirmed that it will resume the policy to increase rents by consumer price index (CPI) plus 1% from 1 April 2020 for five years.

For the financial year 2020-2021 a 2.7% increase was approved, this increased allowed us to build more Council homes and make improvements to housing quality by helping to fund the projects set out below:

- A pitched re-roofing programme.
- A re-roofing programme converting flat roofs to pitch roofs.
- Year 2 of the Heath Town refurbishment project.
- Year 2 of the programme to improve high-rise flats including improving fire safety and renewing services in tower blocks (electric and water supplies). It also includes installing sprinkler systems.
- Infrastructure works.
- Improving the decency of homes as they become empty as well as homes used for temporary accommodation.
- Delivering 38 new build homes in addition to new build homes brought forward by the Council's housing company WV Living.

For the financial year 2021-2022 an increase of 1.5% will be proposed to Cabinet in January 2021.

The impact of the rent increase is detailed in the table below:

CWC Social Rent	Average Rent 2020-2021 (£)	1.5% (CPI plus 1%) (£)	Average weekly increase (£)
1 bedroom	68.54	69.57	1.03
2 bedrooms	76.62	77.77	1.15
3 bedrooms	87.18	88.49	1.31
All properties	79.08	80.27	1.19

This increase would allow the Council to maximise investment in new build Council housing and improve housing quality and the safety of homes.

For 2021-2022 our priorities will include:

- Repairs - continue to improve our repairs and maintenance service.
- Customer experience - enabling customers to deal with us easily and ensure that they are listened to through a variety of channels.

Appendix 4

- Community focused - being more visible out in the neighbourhoods. As we move towards more digital channels with more customers using services online, we want to ensure that that we're more visible in the community too. The Estate Custodian approach allows us to go to the customer rather than they having to come to us.
- Smart working - developing digital platforms and a new website that will provide ease of access and speed in responding to calls.
- Helping communities to stay safe and secure.
- Keep neighbourhoods clean and tidy.
- Planned maintenance, investment and improvements to homes - responsive repairs, planned repairs, improvements and adaptations; asbestos and fire reviews - materials used, and specifications.
- Supporting the City Housing Strategy to provide more homes.
- Wrap around services - supporting the challenges Universal Credit poses; welfare benefits and money advice.
- Making improvements to aids and adaptations - quicker and easier for people with a disability to have access to what is needed.
- Capital Programme.
- Working to make the city a more environmentally friendly city.

The Council launched an online consultation from 4 November – 3 December 2020. The consultation was published on all the Council's social media platforms and all tenants with a registered email address were contact directly.

A total of 358 responses to the consultation were received, a summary of responses is detailed below:

1: Do you agree with the Council's priorities for 2021-2022?

There were 358 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Yes	249	69.6%
No	109	30.4%
Not Answered	0	0%

2: Do you feel the amount of rent you pay offers value for money?

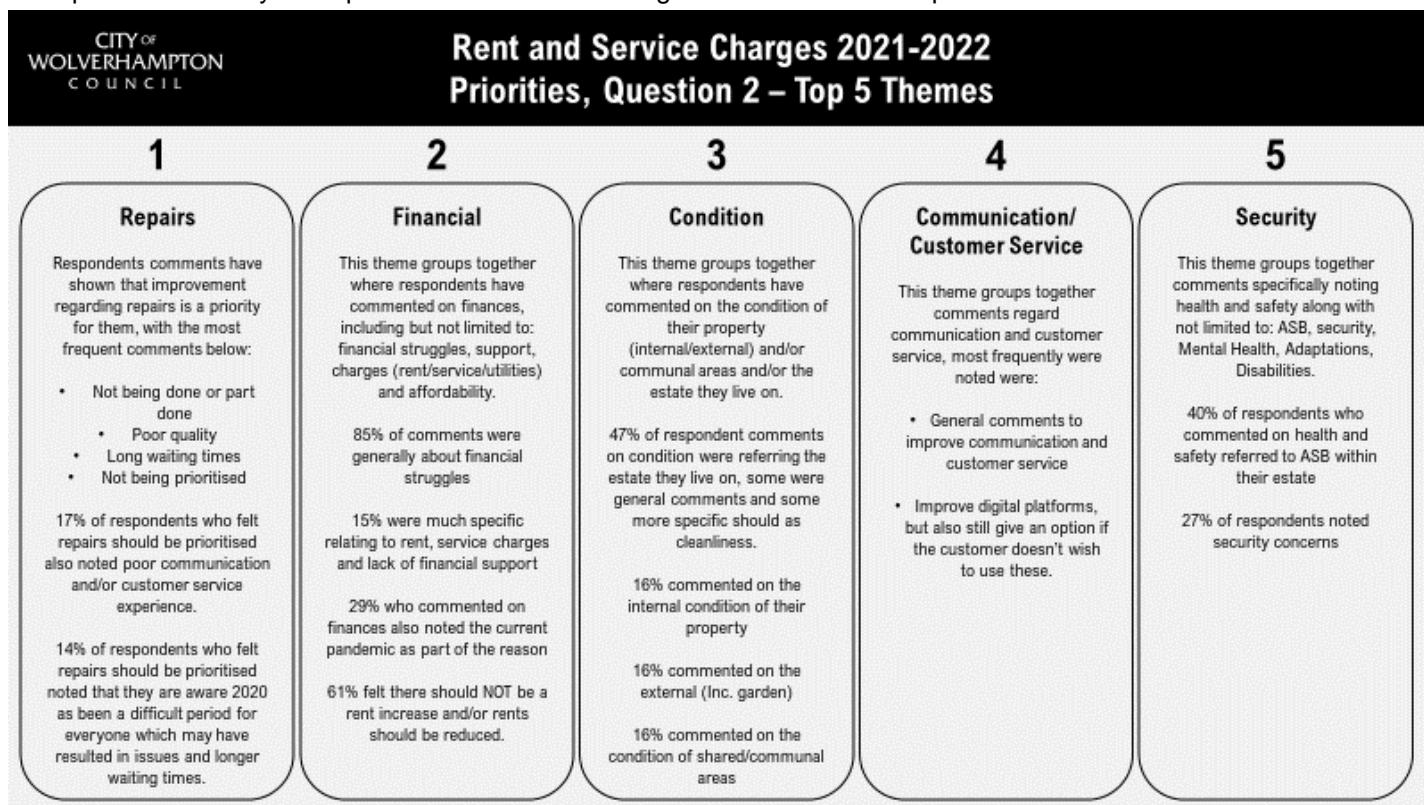
There were 358 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Yes	218	60.9%
No	140	39.1%
Not Answered	0	0%

Respondents who answered 'no' to either question were then given an opportunity to provide further comments for the Council to consider, the following provides a summary of the additional comments received:

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Graphic 1: Summary of responses for those who disagree with the Council's priorities.



Graphic 2: Summary of responses for those who do not feel their rent represents value for money.



Appendix 4

A breakdown of equalities data of those who have responded can be seen below:

Gender

Option	Total	Percent
Female	235	65.64%
Male	102	28.49%
Gender fluid / Gender neutral / None gender	2	0.56%
Other	1	0.28%
Prefer not to say	17	4.75%
Not Answered	1	0.28%

Gender identity

Option	Total	Percent
Yes	335	93.58%
No	4	1.12%
Prefer not to say	17	4.75%
Not Answered	2	0.56%

Ethnic origin

Option	Total	Percent
Asian or Asian British – Indian	5	1.40%
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	0	0.00%
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0.00%
Chinese	0	0.00%
Other Asian or Asian British	0	0.00%
White and Black African	1	0.28%
White and Black Caribbean	11	3.07%
White and Asian	3	0.84%
Other Mixed Background	4	1.12%
Black or Black British – African	12	3.35%
Black or Black British – Caribbean	9	2.51%
Other Black or Black British	3	0.84%
White - British	263	73.46%
White - Irish	1	0.28%
White Gypsy / Irish Traveller	0	0.00%
White - Other European	10	2.79%
Other White	4	1.12%
Arab	0	0.00%
Any Other	1	0.28%
Prefer not to say	29	8.10%
Not Answered	2	0.56%

Disability

Option	Total	Percent
Yes	106	29.61%
No	210	58.66%

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Not sure	14	3.91%
Prefer not to say	26	7.26%
Not Answered	2	0.56%

Religion

Option	Total	Percent
Buddhist	0	0.00%
Christian	159	44.41%
Hindu	1	0.28%
Jewish	0	0.00%
Muslim	13	3.63%
Sikh	2	0.56%
No Religion	120	33.52%
Any Other Religion	24	6.70%
Prefer not to say	36	10.06%
Not Answered	3	0.84%

Age

Option	Total	Percent
Under 16	0	0.00%
16 - 24	14	3.91%
25 - 34	69	19.27%
35 - 44	72	20.11%
45 - 54	83	23.18%
55 - 64	55	15.36%
65 or Over	48	13.41%
Prefer not to say	17	4.75%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

Sexual Orientation

Option	Total	Percent
Lesbian / Gay woman	6	1.68%
Bisexual	7	1.96%
Gay Man	2	0.56%
Heterosexual / Straight	286	79.89%
Unsure	1	0.28%
Other	6	1.68%
Prefer not to say	48	13.41%
Not Answered	2	0.56%