

The Bristol Older People's Forum

Housing Survey Report

HOUSING AND OLDER PEOPLE: 'We are part of the solution not the problem.'



Housing and Older People: 'We are part of the solution not the problem'

May 2020

Lucy Rothwell, BOPF Researcher

Ian Quaife, BOPF Engagement & Development Manager

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We are grateful also for the support received from Bristol Ageing Better and the University of the West of England (UWE) Department of Health and Social Sciences in preparing and designing the questionnaire.

Bristol Older People's Forum

The Voice of Older People (55+) in the City of Bristol.

The Bristol Older People's Forum (BOPF) promotes the rights of older people in the city of Bristol by informing, raising issues and working with key local, regional and national partners. Our aim is:

'that every older person in the city is an equal, valued, participating member of the community who can influence the decisions which affect their lives.'

BOPF is a registered charity, first established in 1993, which now has nearly three thousand signed-up members (over the age of 55) across Bristol.

The Forum's work is focused on the issues identified by the membership. Activities currently include our bi-monthly Open Forum meetings for members, regular magazine, website and Facebook pages, development and research work on transport and housing, workshops on challenging ageism, research on loneliness and isolation and formal consultation with Bristol City Council, through our Voice & influence Partnership (VIP).

Bristol Ageing Better

Bristol Ageing Better (BAB) is a partnership of individuals and organisations working together to reduce isolation and loneliness among older people in Bristol. The BAB partnership is led by Age UK Bristol and funded by the National Lottery Community Fund as part of their Fulfilling Lives: Ageing Better £5.9 million programme, until 2021.

As part of the BAB legacy programme BOPF was commissioned to develop a new democratic structure and action group, enabling older people to be a core part of future decision-making around housing policy across the city. This BOPF research survey and report are key components of this work and form part of Bristol's status as an 'Age-Friendly City'.

Foreword

Everyone should have a decent and suitable place to live in their community as they grow older. This should be a fundamental right for all and not one that is dependent on a person's individual circumstances.

What is clear from the Housing Survey we have carried out is that older people not only want a home that meets their physical needs, but also one located within their community, where they have access to local amenities and feel safe. Older people wish to be at the heart of decision-making and feel empowered to influence future housing policy. In other words, they want to have a direct influence on the design, development, and delivery of housing in Bristol.

These were some of the key findings of the Survey. What is also clear is that the Covid-19 crisis has had a huge impact on some older people as they have generally been more at risk, and there will be significant future challenges around isolation and connection as the level of support reduces.

The Housing Survey Report is therefore a practical document that is designed to kick-start the process for older people to be at the centre of future decision-making on housing in our city.

Ian Bickerton

Chair

Bristol Older People's Forum

Contents

Foreword.....	3
1 Executive Summary	5
2 Introduction	7
3 Key Findings	8
4 The Housing Questionnaire.....	10
5 BOPF Housing Action Group.....	11
6 Meetings with Housing Professionals & Researchers	12
7 Questionnaire Data & Analysis	14
8 Developing the Research: The Interviews	24
9 Conclusion and Recommendations	29
10 Addendum: Impact of Coronavirus.....	31
Appendix 1: Housing Survey Questionnaire	32
Appendix 2: Housing Survey Questionnaire – Responses	38

1 Executive Summary

'Older people should be seen as part of the housing solution and not part of the housing problem.'

This report was commissioned by Bristol Ageing Better as part of the 'Age-Friendly City' initiative. The main purpose was to look at current housing for older people (over the age of 50) in Bristol and to identify their key challenges and future needs in relation to their homes.

Our aim was to focus on the ideas, concerns and views of older people across the city and to kick-start a process whereby older people could be at the heart of future decision-making on housing in Bristol.

The research was broken down into the following elements:

- Online and postal questionnaires - with 276 responses
- Semi-structured community group interviews
- Interviews/discussions with housing professionals including the political lead for housing in Bristol City Council (BCC), academics, voluntary sector professionals, residents and tenants
- Focussed group work and priority setting with the BOPF Housing Action Group (established as part of this project)
- Desk-top research on relevant housing policy

The interviews and discussions gave us the opportunity to dig deeper into the areas of importance and concern highlighted by the questionnaire and raised by the BOPF Housing Action Group.

The Housing Action Group

At the core of this project was the BOPF Housing Action Group, made up of around twenty regular attendees at face-to-face

monthly meetings plus another twenty older people participating in our Housing Information Hub - all with an interest, experience and/or expertise in housing, housing development and housing policy. Their input into this research was invaluable, from commenting in detail on the piloted questionnaire through to identifying and prioritising many of the key issues highlighted in this report.

Summary of Findings

A number of key themes have emerged from this survey and are set out in detail in the main body of the report.

In summary these included

- The importance of location and staying in the community
69% of older people said this in the survey
- The need for older people to be listened to and have the opportunity to influence decision-making
- The need for older and disabled people to be involved in the design of future housing schemes and the improvement of existing ones
- The effects of a reduction in housing support, particularly warden services in sheltered housing
- The need for adaptations and futureproofing, and associated independent advice, to enable older people to stay in their own homes
- The need for more creative housing options for older people in their own community - including challenging the often-perceived stigma of sheltered housing

- The need for trustworthy tradespeople and help with maintaining the home
36% of older people in the survey had difficulty with home maintenance
- Fear of crime and anti-social behaviour and fear of eviction -
In the survey 26% of those in the private rented sector mentioned fear of eviction
- The importance of promoting a positive image of older people and challenging ageism

The Way Forward

Beyond the initial funding of this project and research it was agreed that BOPF would continue with the Housing Action Group under its BCC funded Voice and Influence Partnership Framework. (This is our commissioned work around formal consultation with BCC and community development work with groups and organisations).

Our plan, once we move out of the current Covid-19 crisis, will be to present the findings of our research to BCC via the Homes and Communities Board of the One City Plan and to organisations that have a stake in housing provision for older people.

We want older people to have a direct influence in the design, development and delivery of housing and housing policy in the future - something that builds upon and improves the old-style tenants' structures (used by BCC). This is at the heart of what BOPF is trying to achieve as a membership organisation. It also forms a key element of the Age-Friendly City initiative and will help to challenge ageism and ageist stereotypes.

Recommendations

1. To formally recognise the BOPF Housing Action Group as an advisory sub-group of the Homes and Communities Board of the One City Plan (or similar future structures) with bi-monthly meetings with the political Chair and to include other key housing policy and decision makers.

2. Ensure that members of the BOPF Housing Action Group are used as advisors by housing developers, local politicians, planners, architects, academics and other professionals who are directly involved in future housing for older people in Bristol – including the development of mixed-age (inter-generational) neighbourhoods and schemes that promote innovation.

3. More generally we would like to see all organisations in the private and public sector, including BCC, review their own work practices and eliminate ageism and ageist stereotyping. We want to ensure that older people are seen as part of the solution and not part of the problem.

4. The BOPF Housing Action Group to further develop the key findings and themes of this report based around a clear and concise Action Plan of priorities.

2 Introduction

This survey is the product of six months' work from October 2019 to April 2020. The focus was to look at current housing for older people (over the age of 50) in Bristol, and to identify their key challenges and future requirements in relation to their homes.

There is a plethora of recent national and local academic and community research on homes and housing for older people and our aim was not to replicate issues already in the public realm (although some of that is inevitable and it is important to reassert key concerns) but to look at, and concentrate on, what a diverse cross-section of older people are saying at this present time across our city of Bristol.

Two important themes have emerged, which are highlighted throughout this report. Firstly, the **importance of location and people's need and right to feel part of their community** – being near to the shops, local transport routes, their GP surgery, leisure facilities and their friends and neighbours. Secondly, the **need for older people to be heard**, to be part of non-tokenistic decision-making around homes and housing options, as well as being involved in the design and development of future housing.

This is not a large-scale piece of research as our resources were limited. I, along with BOPF researcher Lucy Rothwell, feel however that we have managed to highlight the issues raised by a representative sample of older people. Using postal questionnaires, face-to-face semi-structured interviews with older people and housing professionals and focus group sessions, has enabled us to better understand the way things are being done at present and the way things could be changed in the future.

I write this on April 23rd 2020, in the midst of the current Coronavirus crisis. This has not affected the collection of the research data as it was completed by February 2020. It has, however, had a bearing on the timing of the report publication. As a result, we have also included a final section to reflect some of the housing and related challenges post Covid-19.

Ian Quaife

*BOPF Engagement and Development
Manager*

Bristol as An Age Friendly City

This housing survey forms part of the Bristol Ageing Better (BAB) commitment and membership of the Global Network of Age-Friendly Communities, first established in 2018 by the World Health Organisation (WHO).

It represents three years' work from Bristol City Council, Age UK Bristol and Bristol Ageing Better, which included a baseline assessment and a strategy considering the eight domains that make up an Age-friendly City. Housing is one of these key domains and this research and report will add further insight into housing policy as it affects the lives of older people.

3 Key Findings

These findings take into account all of our research including the housing questionnaire, interviews with selected individuals and groups, and discussions with the BOPF Housing Action Group.

3.1 Location within the community

The strongest theme which has emerged from the research is the importance for older people of location and feeling part of the community. There are many aspects to this which are discussed in more detail later in this report (section 7.2), however the research suggests a need for more suitable housing options for older people in their own communities. Our evidence suggests that some people are staying in unsuitable homes – homes which are difficult to maintain and may not be safe for people with reduced mobility or health issues. Older people also need the choice of staying in their own home where it can be adapted to suit changing needs, and more advice and information is needed about home adaptations and access to funding. Another strong theme was that many older people want to live in an environment with mixed ages and be able to share or play a part in intergenerational activities within the community. Above all older people need to be valued and respected within the community and have opportunities to contribute through their knowledge and experience.

3.2 Planning for the future

What came across very strongly in our interviews and discussions is that older people feel there is a lack of consultation with them about planning and design of housing (sections 5 & 8). They have concerns about the current building standards, and small size of new housing

units, and the need to build 'homes for life' which are designed to be easily adaptable to changing needs as people age. With the well-documented global trends of an ageing population and move towards urban living it is imperative that city planning incorporates the needs of older people. In a report published last year by ARUP on designing for ageing communities¹, one of the recommended actions is to

'Define roles for older people in planning the built environment'.

Planning for the future also needs to be done at an individual level and more needs to be done to encourage people to think about this at an early stage. This is not just about future-proofing your home but also about recognising when it is time to move for access and community. Better independent advice and information is needed to enable people to make long-term choices. (Section 5 & 7.5)

3.3 Warden support in sheltered housing

Our research findings from both the questionnaire and from discussions with older people (section 8) have highlighted that the reduction in warden support (no live-in or permanent warden) in recent years in sheltered housing is having a detrimental impact on some residents' lives. The sense of 'community' has been greatly diminished with little or no social activity amongst residents. The trend towards 'remote management' leaves some people feeling isolated and vulnerable. This has been exacerbated with the lowering of the 'qualifying criteria' for sheltered accommodation, which in some cases led to an increase in anti-social behaviour in these properties.

¹ ARUP (June 2019), Cities Alive – Designing for Ageing Communities,

3.4 Repairs and Maintenance

There has been much research into the state of Britain's housing stock and the number of 'non-decent'² homes, which do not meet modern standards of comfort and safety, is a national problem³. It is no surprise, therefore, that our research has highlighted that many older people find it a challenge to maintain their homes (section 7.4). Our survey found that this was a concern mostly amongst homeowners and those in private rented accommodation. Discussions with older people suggested the key factors are the affordability of repairs and renovation especially heating and insulation (including availability of affordable loans), ability to find trusted and reliable tradespeople, and capacity to organise and manage repair work.

With respect to those living in managed housing (Council, Housing Association or Charitable Housing), we also heard reports that people had been '**waiting years for repairs to be done**' and that with the introduction of remote management practices they found it more and more difficult to get their voices heard (section 8.2). The Housing Action Group also voiced concerns that communication between the renting body and the tenants has become more difficult for many older people with the increasing reliance of organisations on IT communications. Getting in touch can be really difficult for those older people who do not have IT ability.

² The Centre for Ageing Better defines a 'non-decent home' as a home that is not in a reasonable state of repair, does not have reasonably modern facilities and services, or has ineffective insulation or heating.

³ Centre for Ageing Better in partnership with Care & Repair England (March 2020), Home and Dry – The Need for Decent Homes in Later Life

4 The Housing Questionnaire

4.1 Who took part?

The questionnaire was aimed at older people aged 50+ living in the City of Bristol. Distribution was as follows:

Circulated via email to all BOPF members who are online (c. 500)

Completed at BOPF Open Forum Meeting 28 Nov 2019 (c. 50)

Distributed to different community groups across Bristol including:

- Bangladeshi Women Elders
- Somali Male Elders (Dalmar)
- East Park Estate Elders Group
- Golden Agers (Afrikan/Caribbean Elders)
- Walwyn Gardens Residents (BCC Housing Block, Hartcliffe)
- Bedminster Social Club
- Shirehampton Community Action Project
- North Bristol Community Development Team (LinkAge Network)
- Community Navigators⁴ – Bristol North & South Teams
- BAB LGBT+ Advisory Group
- Bristol Drugs Project Over 55 Group

⁴ Community Navigators is a one-to-one signposting and support service that helps isolated and lonely older people to access community activities and services.

4.2 Method

The questionnaire was completed anonymously either online (Google Forms) or paper copy and was open from 28 Nov 2019 to 31 January 2020. Results were combined into a single dataset (Excel). For the design of the questionnaire BOPF consulted with Bristol Ageing Better Community Research Team and researchers at the University of the West of England (UWE) Department of Health & Social Sciences. The questionnaire was piloted with the BOPF Housing Action Group (see below) prior to launch.

4.3 Interviews

In order to dig deeper into the areas of importance and/or concern highlighted by the questionnaire BOPF also carried out several semi-structured interviews with different underrepresented groups and individuals. These involved:

- Sheltered Housing⁵ Residents (BCC and Housing Associations)
- Bristol Drugs Project over 55 group
- Representative from the Bristol Disability Equality Forum (BDEF)
- BAB LGBT+ Advisory Group

⁵ Sheltered Housing is accommodation specifically designed for older (or younger disabled) people to allow them to live independently. Typically it consists of self-contained flats or bungalows offering a warden/manager and 24 hour emergency alarm system. This is different from Extra-Care Housing which is for people with greater need.

5 BOPF Housing Action Group

A core part of this project was the establishment of a 'Housing Action Group'. BOPF recruited more than forty older people with an interest and/or expertise in housing, housing development and housing policy. There is a wealth of expertise and knowledge amongst the group, which includes former and current housing professionals as well as older residents (55+) representing homeowners, tenants and other tenures in Bristol. Over the period of this research the core group has met monthly with the aim of exploring ways to tackle the many housing challenges, as well as identifying priorities based on group discussions and ultimately the key findings of this research.

The group initially identified 5 important themes:

- **Community** – feeling part of the community and staying in your own community
- **Choices** – need for housing choices in the community and more advice/information about choices
- **Planning Ahead** – needs to start at a younger age (before retirement)
- **Home Adaptations and Repairs** – poor design and shortage of advice & information; impact of Housing Associations moving to remote management (poor support & maintenance and reliance on online communication)
- **Influencing** – older people need to be involved in all stages of planning for housing services and housing developments

Findings from the BOPF Housing Survey were used to steer discussions and identify priorities. Output from these discussions has been included in the survey analysis in the following sections but it is also worth noting some of the strong sentiments which were expressed by the group:

- The importance of '***promoting a positive image of older people***' and providing opportunities for them to contribute to their community
- ***Beware of 'over-helping'*** – people need to retain independence and life skills as long as possible
- Important to '***differentiate between homeowners and people in other tenures***' as the needs are different
- Older people feel they are '***not being consulted about planning future housing***'. It is vital to seek their input now to ensure that future housing meets lifetime needs and that there will be sufficient attractive and affordable housing options available for our ageing community

Due to the Coronavirus crisis the Housing Action Group is not currently meeting in person. The commissioned work – funded through Bristol Ageing Better (BAB) came to an end in April 2020.

The core group are keen for the project to continue with an initial focus on the issues and recommendations of this report. It will therefore become part of our Voice and Influence Partnership (VIP - our formal consultation work with Bristol City Council) and focus on how older people can influence housing policy in Bristol.

6 Meetings with Housing Professionals & Researchers

To find out about current housing policies and housing research with respect to older people in Bristol, we met with or spoke to a number of housing professionals and academic researchers as follows:

Cllr. Paul Smith – Bristol City Council, Chair of Homes & Communities Board and Cabinet Lead for Housing

Paul Sylvester – Bristol City Council, HomeChoice Bristol⁶ Manager

Ian McIntyre – Bristol City Council, Housing Options Project Manager

Sarah Evens – Bristol City Council, Commissioning Manager, Adult Commissioning

Oona Goldsworthy – Brunelcare (Housing Association), CEO

Josh Williams - Homes England, Care & Support Specialised Housing

Sheila Mackintosh – University of the West of England (UWE), Research Fellow

Elly Hopkins - Care & Repair England, Head of Programmes

At the core of future policy in Bristol is the 'One City Plan' which sets out the city's vision for the next 30 years, embracing six themes: Connectivity, Economy, Environment, Health and Wellbeing, Homes and Communities, and Learning and Skills. Each theme has its own Board, including Councillors and representatives from other relevant organisations across the city, and reporting to the elected Mayor.

We learnt from our discussions with Councillor Paul Smith, who chairs the Homes & Communities Board, that current priorities include bringing all Council Housing up to a good standard – a programme which will require huge investment. With respect to sheltered housing this is likely to involve some scrapping and rebuilding, age and adaptations work and assistive technology. Housing Associations are facing similar challenges and Oona Goldsworthy, CEO of Brunelcare, spoke of a '**massive investment programme of refurbishment**' of current housing stock.

The Board is also focussed on tackling homelessness and the shortage of affordable homes and a number of new rapid build and modular schemes are being piloted in Bristol, with an emphasis on building '**mixed and balanced communities**' across the city.

Further housing development is being funded by Homes England, the Government's 'housing accelerator' who provide grants for the development of affordable housing. There is a separate funding programme for 'Care and Support Specialised Housing' (CASSH) for older or

⁶ HomeChoice Bristol is the Bristol City Council and partner Housing Associations allocation scheme. Properties are advertised on the housing register and people who qualify can express an interest in the properties they wish to be considered for

disabled people or adults with mental health problems, which is currently funded until 2021. Josh Williams, who manages this programme in the South-West, explained that all developments '**must have a community aspect**' and follow the guiding design principles known as **HAPPI** (Housing our Ageing Population Panel for Innovation) as well as criteria outlined in the CASSH Prospectus.

With regard to social housing we were informed by Paul Sylvester, Manager of BCC HomeChoice, that for older people, there was good availability of 50+ housing, if people were willing to consider other geographic areas in Bristol. However, due to current demand for social housing – a waiting list of around 13,000 households - it is not policy to allocate a 2-bedroom property to a single person. However, in our research survey older people expressed a desire for more 2-bedroom properties.

Housing management and housing support are handled by other BCC departments, but it was acknowledged that funding support for wardens has been reduced by BCC. The reduction in warden services in sheltered housing was raised as an issue in our survey and its impact is discussed in this report (section 8).

Difficulty maintaining the home and the need for home adaptations emerged as strong themes in our research. We spoke to Sheila Mackintosh (UWE), a research specialist in this area and have included some of her insights in this report (section 7.4).

7 Questionnaire Data & Analysis

A total of **276 questionnaire responses** were received. The survey centred on three main questions as follows.

- i. Which are the most important things for you (i.e. your ideal housing situation)?
- ii. What are your biggest challenges with respect to your current home circumstances?
- iii. What one thing might improve your housing situation?

The results for each question are discussed below. Full details of the responses can be found in *Appendix 2: Housing Survey Questionnaire – Responses*

7.1 Questionnaire Data: Which are the most important things for you (i.e. your ideal housing situation)?

Respondents were asked to choose a maximum of 5 from a list of 15 items. The items were NOT ranked in order of importance.

Top Selections - ticked by more than 50% of respondents:		
1	Location – centred within the community, with easy access to shops, library, place of worship etc.	69%
2	Feeling safe & secure in your home	66%
3	Adequate heating and insulation	55%
4	Having easy access to public or other transport	55%

Significantly only **4% of respondents** felt that '**living with other older people**' was important.

7.2 Analysis: Which are the most important things for you – Discussions with the BOPF Housing Action Group

From the above results it is clear that being '**located within the community**' is of major importance to older people. Further discussions were held with the BOPF Housing Action Group to explore the above four criteria in more detail and in particular to understand what is needed in a community to meet the needs of older people. Output from these discussions is summarised below.

1. Location within the Community

These discussions addressed what older people might need to live in the community, considering both their physical and emotional needs, and highlighted the need to treat older people as a '**valuable resource**' within the community rather than a '**shameful secret**' –

the trend in recent decades has been to segregate older people which has led to widespread isolation and loneliness⁷. The following needs were identified:

- **Better housing options** within the community – in particular more two-bedroom properties, accessible housing, and rental options - people have different needs
- **Independent advice** about housing options - it was suggested this should be tied to social care so that people can make long-term choices
- **Local shops** – in the survey several people highlighted the issue of high street shop closures in recent years
- **Good maintenance of the community environment** – fix broken pavements, stop cars parking on pavements, provide crossings and bus shelters and improve public awareness around older people (for example cyclists on pavements or in shared spaces) – all these can be barriers to older people getting out
- **Manage the number of buy to let / student let properties** within the community to maintain balance
- **Local activities and volunteering opportunities** for older people, including at weekends (many older people suffer '*weekend isolation*')
- **More intergenerational projects** and opportunities for shared experiences within the community
- **Positive publicity** about older people
- **Older people to have a voice** within the community and in **input to planning future housing**

2. Feeling Safe and Secure

For older people there are two main aspects to feeling safe and secure, one is personal safety within the home and the other is perception of and protection against crime. Key points which arose from the discussion:

- **Perception of crime** is very important; 'shock/horror stories' need to be offset
- **Beneficial to offer home security checks** from the police or other trusted sources
- **Advice is needed about affordable home security devices**
- **Need for a list of local trusted tradespeople** for small jobs as well as major work
- **Need for advice about home adaptations**
- **Important to have someone to call if you feel threatened** e.g. neighbourhood watch
- **Anti-social behaviour needs to be dealt with effectively;** victims need to be supported
- **Loss of wardens/introduction of remote management** is causing some older people to feel more vulnerable in Council/HA properties

⁷ A recent report by United for All Ages, (2020), identifies 'age apartheid' across the country, partly as a result of a housing market trends, with older generations tending to live in towns and rural areas while younger people gravitate towards cities.

3. Adequate Heating and Insulation

The above referenced report by the Centre for Ageing Better⁸ shows that more than 36% of homes for the over 55 age group which fail the Decent Homes Standard⁹ do not meet the standards for thermal comfort (a measure of the efficiency of heating and insulation systems). The Housing Action Group felt that funding was the major issue here and that there was a need for grants for energy and insulation and in particular green energy grants. Previous grants have all been withdrawn by the Government. There is also a need for independent advice; many older people do not know how to heat their homes efficiently without 'breaking the bank'.

4. Access to Public Transport

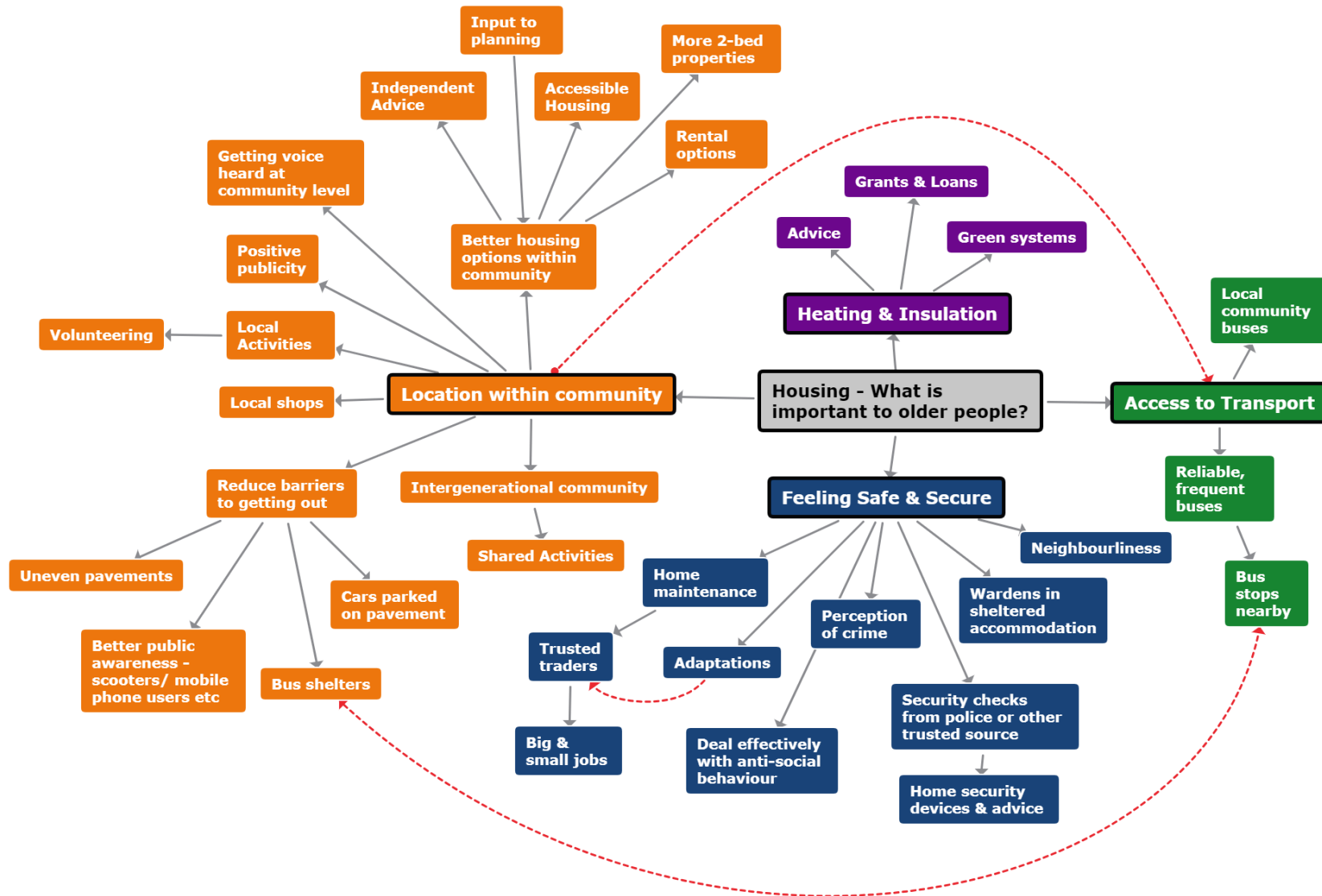
Transport is vital for older people to get to activities and access local facilities. A number of comments in the survey reflected the need for more frequent and reliable bus services in Bristol and also the need for local community buses. Discussions with the Housing Action Group highlighted the need for more routes around Bristol and not just in and out of the city centre. Another important aspect is the provision of necessary transport infrastructure such as bus shelters and accessible toilet facilities.

The following diagram summarises the key elements of these top 4 'most important' criteria, derived from discussions with the BOPF Housing Action Group.

⁸ Centre for Ageing Better (n 3)

⁹The Decent Homes Standard is a Government standard introduced in 2004 and last updated in 2006. It applies to all social housing except leasehold and shared ownership properties and sets the minimum criteria for a decent home.

Housing – What is important to older people? Analysis of survey findings by the BOPF Housing Action Group



7.3 Questionnaire Data: What are your biggest challenges with respect to your current home circumstances?

Respondents were asked to choose a maximum of 5 from a list of 20 items. The items were NOT ranked in order of importance. There was a much wider spread of answers to this question.

The most mentioned items were:

1	Difficulty maintaining home e.g. gardening, essential repairs	36%
2	Cost of living e.g. heating bills, rent, mortgage etc	33%
3	Fear of crime in your neighbourhood	20%

Other significant data:

4	16% ticked either ' feelings of loneliness ' or ' feelings of isolation '
5	26% of those in private rented housing ticked ' fear of eviction '

Other challenges which people mentioned (not included in the list of 20):

- Noisy neighbours
- Parking – lack of nearby parking and cars parked on the pavement causing a hazard
- Leasehold properties – value decreasing
- Lack of storage for mobility scooters
- Area/trees not maintained
- Too many students in the area
- Lack of a social meeting place / community centre
- Lack of options for people on housing benefit
- Traffic

7.4 Analysis: What are your biggest challenges?

Some further analysis of the data was carried out to establish whether these challenges applied to any particular groups, tenures or localities.

1. Difficulty Maintaining the home - This is a challenge for many people – 100 respondents mentioned this. The highest number were homeowners (71 which represents 39% of the sample), but the highest proportion were in private rented accommodation (16 which represents 52% of the sample).

Difficulties mentioned included:

- not being able to afford repairs
- finding reliable tradespeople for small jobs
- unable to manage repairs and maintenance
- homes difficult to heat
- waiting years for repairs to be done in Council properties

2. Cost of Living – Looking at the survey respondents who listed ‘cost of living’ as a challenge, this was mentioned by **63%** of **BAME** (Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic) respondents and by **26%** of **White** respondents. There was also a very noticeable trend across different tenures.

Survey Respondents who ticked ‘Cost of Living’			
Tenure	Number of Responses	Total survey responses per tenure	% of sample
Rented (Private)	26	31	84%
Rented (Housing Association/Charitable)	5	13	38%
Homeowner	52	183	28%
Rented (Council)	4	27	15%
Sheltered Housing	2	14	14%

The group which listed ‘cost of living’ as a challenge the most were those in **private rented housing** – 84% of the sample. From discussions with the BOPF Housing Action Group, there are several common scenarios which can make this a challenge for older people:

- High cost of private rented accommodation
- Money tied up in equity (homeowners) but low income i.e. ‘capital rich - pension poor’
- Leasehold properties with high ground rent
- High service charges in sheltered or extra care housing
- Older people living on very low income

3. Fear of Crime - The survey showed a general pattern of respondents who selected ‘fear of crime’, including people of all the age groups, many different locations across Bristol, and different ethnicities and gender. A higher proportion of those living alone (25%) ticked fear of crime, compared with those who did not live alone (16%).

4. Loneliness and Isolation - The survey data was further analysed to determine whether ‘loneliness and isolation’ was more prevalent in any particular group. There were no obvious patterns according to location, tenure or ethnicity but there were some variations across different age groups and sexuality groups.

Survey Respondents who ticked ‘Feelings of loneliness and/or isolation’			
Age Group	Number of Responses	Total survey responses per age group	% of sample
50-54	2	10	20%
55-64	11	59	19%
65-74	20	121	16%
75-84	10	70	14%
85+	0	8	0%
Sexuality	Number of Responses	Total responses per sexuality	% of sample
Heterosexual	13	210	6%
LGBTQ	9	19	47%

In this particular sample:

- feelings of loneliness and isolation were proportionately higher in the younger age groups;
- a relatively high proportion of the LGBTQ population surveyed experienced feelings of loneliness and isolation.

This would merit further research with a larger group to establish whether these are widespread issues and to investigate the reasons. This was beyond the scope of this study.

5. Fear of eviction – This problem for private renters has been highlighted before in a report by Age UK:

'The power-differential that exists between tenants and landlords as well as the potential threat of a 'Section 21'¹⁰ eviction means that any tenant living in this form of tenancy is potentially vulnerable.'¹¹

7.5 Questionnaire Data: What one thing might improve your housing situation?

There were a variety of answers to this question but many had common themes such as the need for home adaptations (downstairs toilet in particular), and difficulty affording and/or arranging home repairs and finding suitable trusted tradespeople. The answers have been grouped into categories as follows.

Categories

A graph showing the breakdown of responses by category is shown in *Appendix 2: Housing Survey Questionnaire – Responses*

Adaptations – homes needing modification to improve accessibility

Community – community resources, neighbourhood issues, local shops, social activity

Facilities/Space – not enough space or storage

Financial – low income/pension, lack of affordable housing, affordable rent

Heating & Insulation – need for double/triple glazing, wall and roof insulation, difficulty heating homes and need for more ecological solutions

Housing Options – people wanting to move to a smaller or more accessible property or for extra support

Maintenance – renovation, help with maintenance, gardening and small repairs, and getting repairs done in Council properties

Parking – on and off-street parking and issues with parking on the pavement

¹⁰ In England and Wales a section 21 notice, also known as a section 21 notice of possession or section 21 eviction, is the notice which a landlord must give to their tenant to begin the process to take possession of their property

¹¹ Age UK (2017), 'Living in fear' Experiences of Older Private-Renters in London

Security – home security devices and crime management/police presence

Support – relating to sheltered or managed housing – need for more warden support and better communication with management companies

Traffic – less traffic

Transport – more frequent and reliable bus services, better access to public transport

Other – individual concerns

The most mentioned categories were

- Community
- Maintenance
- Adaptations
- Heating & Insulation
- Financial

24% respondents answered 'nothing' or 'n/a'.

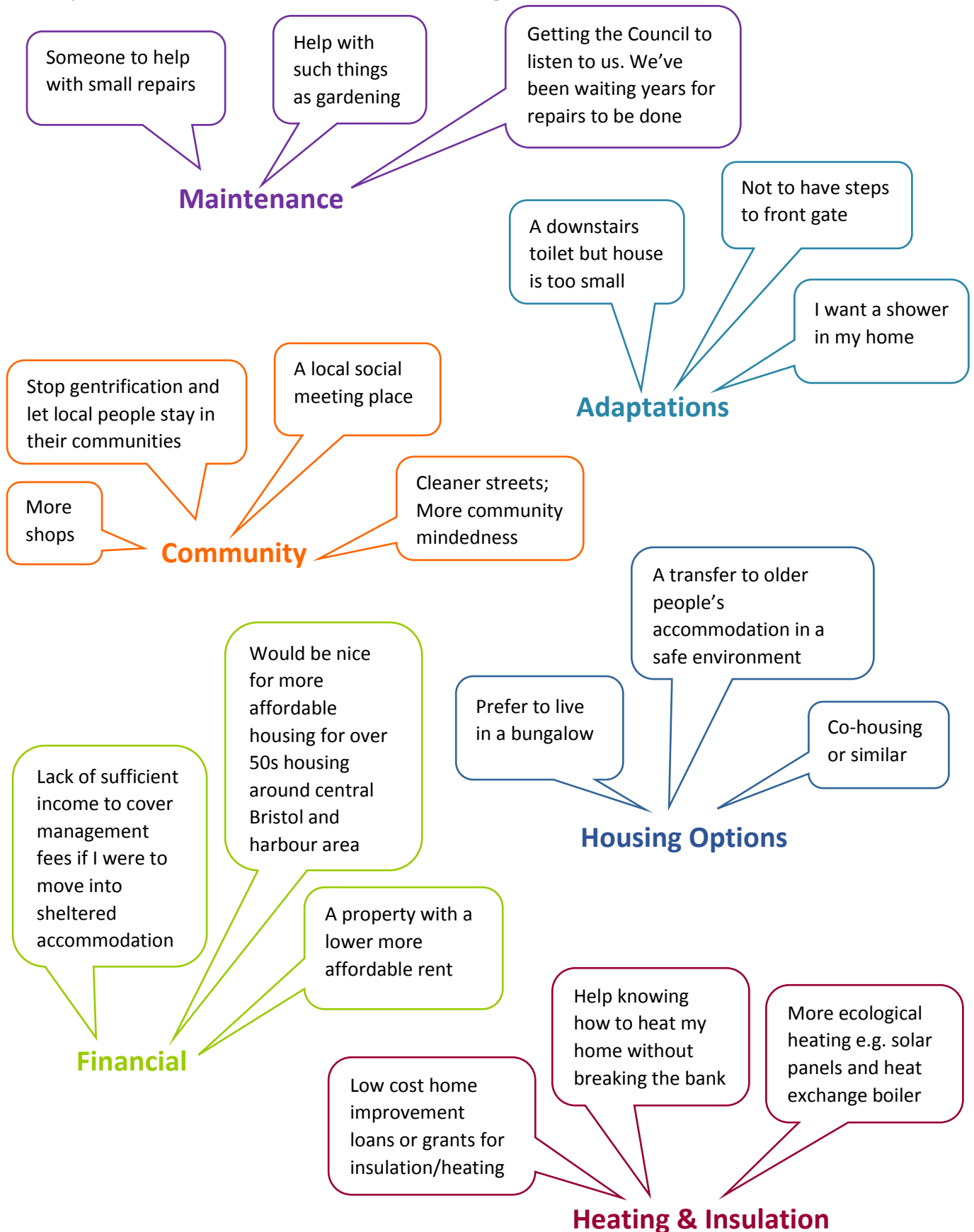
The diagram on the following page shows a sample of the responses to this question.

Further Context on Housing Challenges for Older People

The high number of comments about home maintenance and adaptations in the survey reflects findings from national research. During the course of our research we spoke to *Sheila Mackintosh, Research Fellow* in the Department of Health and Social Sciences at UWE, who specialises in issues to do with housing, later life, disability and how people can be helped to remain living independently in their own homes in the community. Sheila highlighted four particular problem areas, based on her research and experience:

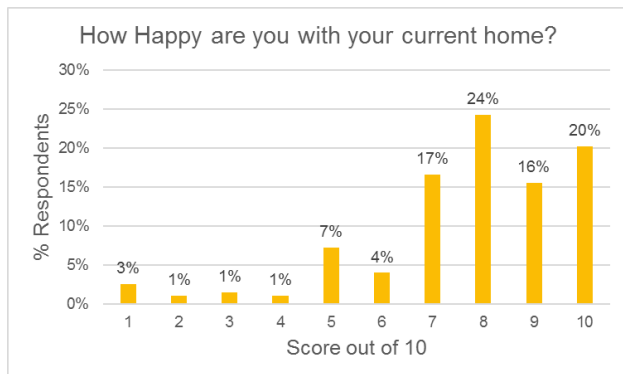
- Building standards over the last 15-20 years have been poor. There is a need for new homes to be designed to be adaptable in the future – this should apply to ALL new housing. This has been recognised by a government inquiry last year (All-party parliamentary group 'Ageing and Older People' Inquiry into Decent and Accessible Homes for Older people, Summer 2019) which recommended that **'Government must legislate to ensure that all new homes are built to the lifetime homes standard ... to make them flexible to the needs of older and disabled people and ensure we are building homes fit for the future population'**.
- Adaptations have traditionally been poorly designed, having a 'medicalised' appearance.
- There is a need for new finance products for older people to fund home improvements. Equity Release schemes have not been a good product.
- There is a lack of choice and fragmented sources of advice and information about housing options for older people.

‘What one thing might improve your housing situation’ – sample of questionnaire answers for different categories



7.6 How happy are you with your current home?

When asked to rate how happy they were with their current home, the majority (77%) scored 7/10 or above, where 10 is the happiest.



	Score: 1-5	8 -10
Homeowner	8%	72%
Private rented	32%	26%
Council rented	22%	37%
HA/Charitable Housing	23%	38%
Sheltered Housing	21%	57%

Breaking this down by type of home reveals that

- Those in the private rented sector were the least happy with their homes (low score 1-5)
- Homeowners were the happiest (high score 8-10)

8 Developing the Research: The Interviews

8.1 Interview with two residents (70+) from sheltered housing

'J' – resident of BCC owned property
(Southmead) and

'T' – resident of a national Housing
Association property (Fishponds).

Both interviewees were long term residents, twenty years and six years, and both were positive about their experience of living in sheltered housing and felt it was **'a good thing'**. In both cases they moved into sheltered housing because they could not afford private rented accommodation.

Both think there should be a lot more sheltered housing in all areas of the city and in the suburbs, but it must meet the required criteria and have proper governance. Older people need to be consulted about the criteria for sheltered housing and be able to make recommendations. 'J' felt that **'there are a lot more disabled people now'**, which needs to be taken into account. They were both of the opinion that more needs to be done to promote sheltered housing and to remove the stigma – 'J' commented that she **'felt like a second class citizen'** when she first moved in to sheltered housing, having been a homeowner.

Both were happy with the location of their sheltered housing, which was close enough to local shops and facilities, although 'J' did feel that things **'may not be so easy if she did not have a car'**.

Neither had any major issues with maintenance or tenants' participation groups. Grounds maintenance was very basic, just grass cutting, otherwise generally left to the residents or volunteers due to budget cuts. Also, maintenance problems had to be reported online. This

was not a problem for either of them, but some other residents would have to rely on family or friends to help with this.

Although the experience of both interviewees was generally positive, there have been several changes in recent years which are having a negative impact on their communities.

Reduction of warden support

When they first moved into the sheltered housing units both had a live-in warden providing daily on-site support. This has now been reduced to a rota of support personnel visiting for only a few hours per week. In the case of the Housing Association, there are many different people on the rota, whereas the Council wardens are allocated to a block, so it is the same personnel who visit. Their role is to test the fire alarms and to check on people who have paid for a specific level of support. There are also plans to install remote monitoring equipment in people's flats which would reduce contact even further.

Neither of the residents interviewed were keen on the idea of remote monitoring and felt strongly that personal contact was very important – the wardens need to **'get to know you'**.

The lack of on-site presence has also had a big impact on social activity. A lot more was done together as a community when the warden was there. The community rooms are now mostly unused and there is little social activity within the community, as there is no-one to organise it. There is a general **'lack of impetus'** and, as 'T' put it,

'small triggers can close people down very quickly'.

Reducing the age limit (eligibility criteria)

Due to a change in policy by BCC and Housing Associations, the minimum age to qualify for sheltered housing has been lowered to 50 and it is open to people who do not need any support as well as younger people who do need extra care. According to both 'J' and 'T' this is changing the community, particularly as in their experience younger people do not tend to mix with the rest of the community. 'T' commented:

'It is not a community like I would like it to be. I would like a bit more friendliness and openness.'

In their view, the age reduction has also introduced more anti-social behaviour into sheltered housing communities. Examples include alcoholics, hoarders and people who keep unusual pets such as snakes and tarantulas.

Both interviewees would prefer the age threshold to go back up and neither are keen on intergenerational living within the same block. They felt that the needs of the whole community should be considered when allocating properties to new tenants and that wardens who knew the residents should meet with potential new tenants before they are allocated a property.

8.2 Interview with a longstanding tenant of a Housing Association property

'D' lives in a cul-de-sac of 32 properties on the outskirts of Bristol, built in 1999. It was developed as a model of sustainable 'homes for life'. Tenants had a direct say in the design and development of the properties. At the heart of this was a belief that the needs of residents were central to the Trust's community-based principles.

'D' was a resident rep for nine years on the Local South-West Board and was also involved in the local resident panel. This included a scrutiny role, where any changes in the Trust's policies would be examined in detail by the tenants. This however has changed radically over the last four or five years.

'It now feels like a tick box exercise with a lack of community and a coldness from the landlords.'

'D' further explained how direct involvement with the Trust had been gradually reduced '***due to restructuring***' and '***cost cutting***' and '***because we had got too strong.***'

The systems for dealing with emergencies, repairs, anti-social behaviour and other issues had shifted from a local office with a regular and recognisable housing support officer to a distant national call-centre based in Bolton, Lancashire.

'It's now really remote and I've not seen a housing officer for two or three years. There is no personal contact.'

D's estate is not exclusively for older people and she likes the intergenerational aspect of the neighbourhood but did express some concerns at the lack of ethnic diversity.

'D' stressed that she still likes living on her estate, the rents are set at an affordable level and she would not want to move anywhere else. She remains concerned however at the loss of a local tenant voice.

8.3 Interview with Bristol Drugs Project Over 55 Group

These are summaries of separate unstructured discussions with two social housing residents from the group.

The key issues that emerged included the lack of action around serious anti-social behaviour and policy changes that have led to a reduction of support to older (and all) tenants.

'A' (aged mid 50s) is a recovering drug user who currently lives in a North Bristol-based Housing Association block of flats (sheltered), mainly for older people who are living independently but with some support needs. The main issue for 'A' has been the gradual reduction of warden-based support from a permanent on-site staff member to a more peripatetic model of support.

This has been concerning and 'A' has offered his own informal support to the more vulnerable neighbours to compensate for the reduction in Housing Association services. 'A' feels however, that residents could **'do more for themselves'**, by organising their own community 'get-togethers' in the communal space available.

'A' is happy with his accommodation but feels more could be done to support the residents and for them to have a voice.

'N' is also a recovering drug-user in his mid-50's, living in a BCC rented sheltered housing block in East Bristol, with an (unused) community room and communal garden. 'N' highlighted the problem of getting hold of a BCC housing officer to deal with day to day problems, ranging from anti-social behaviour (for example, a flat being used for 'cuckooing' - a form of crime in which drug dealers take over the home of a vulnerable person in order to use it as a base for drug trafficking) with non-residents hanging

about and a high level of noise during the evenings and nights.

For 'N' part of the problem has been the change from the block being exclusively for over 55 year olds to a more fluid age range – a Council policy decision based on the high demand for properties (see section 6).

'N' was now beginning to feel vulnerable, with his mental and physical health deteriorating. This has resulted in him becoming more isolated and feeling lonely, but he wanted to stress that the 'goings on in the block', were affecting more vulnerable residents than himself. Again, he has offered informal support to his neighbours but feels, even when reported, the Council could do more.

Finally, on a more positive note, 'N' said that there had been some improvements to the block, including refurbishment of rooms and new central heating.

8.4 Interview with representatives from BAB LGBT+ Advisory Group

An unstructured discussion with two male members of the group.

'P' is a BCC tenant living in central Bristol (55 years old) and 'D' is a 78-year-old homeowner, living on the outskirts of the city (in a semi-rural setting).

Homophobia, lack of housing support, not having a voice and ageist stereotyping were some of the issues raised during a two-hour interview session.

Both participants shared examples of recent incidents within their own homes, where they were made to feel uncomfortable by overly aggressive male tradespeople 'dog-whistling' their particular 'brand of homophobia.' This they stressed had not been the case with female traders.

There was a general feeling that minority groups, including older people are being '**actively overlooked**' in recent times. 'P' felt that this was linked to the rise in racism, homophobia and transphobia in the current political climate. Moreover, both felt that many older people of this generation were uncomfortable with homosexuality and discussing sex in old age.

'They clasp their pearls when we get on to sexuality'

'P' reflected on the lack of support for Gay men around their housing options. 'D' however felt that, compared with a generation ago, LGBT people can at least (if they could afford it) apply successfully for a mortgage as an individual or with a same-sex partner.

'P' was concerned that within his Council maisonette block there was little or no support for tenants who were victims of anti-social behaviour, including bullying. He outlined his own experience of harassment by a neighbour. He would personally like to move but would need support navigating around the Council housing scheme, HomeChoice Bristol.

The two interviewees reflected on the future, as they move into older age with both agreeing that they

'would never go into a care home.'
'There's a lack of control in a care home or a lack of power!'

Staying independent, living within the community (even in a semi-rural setting) were important to them although they were open to the idea of supported housing.

8.5 Interview with Walwyn Gardens Residents

A number of themes developed during a discussion with residents of Walwyn Gardens, a Local Authority block of 27 two-storey flats in Hartcliffe for older people, with a warden service, gardens and a community room.

The residents have become increasingly frustrated at what they see as a series of delays to a planned and essential full-scale refurbishment of their homes, built in the 1970's. Dampness, poor access to the block, a lack of security and inadequate heating were highlighted among the main concerns. Moreover, there was a feeling that some Council Officers had been patronising towards them.

'We have been treated like children.'

The general sense of not being listened to, exacerbated by the lack of communication from BCC, little resident input into the refurbishment design and an ongoing delay on the final plans, have further added to the inertia and resultant resident anger¹².

'This wouldn't happen in Henleaze!'

was a comment made by one resident, reflecting what they see as both a class and age divide.

¹² Since the completion of this report there has been some positive progress on this issue. BCC and the architects have met with residents to look at plans for the refurbishment.

8.6 Interview with a representative from the Bristol Disability Equality Forum (BDEF)

The BDEF Rep identified that the key housing concern for disabled people is accessibility. She has gained agreement (through the BCC Homes & Communities Board) that the Local Plan¹³ will include a figure of 10% of all new housing to be accessible. This is, however, still subject to ratification and is not yet enforceable.

As well as building fully accessible homes there is also a need to design 'future-proofed' homes i.e. including design features which will make retrofitting of accessibility adaptations cheaper and easier in the future when they are likely to be needed. BDEF is in discussion with the Council's housing team about this and feels that the importance of a reference group of disabled people from early to post design cannot be emphasised enough.

The BDEF Rep has given many presentations about these needs to Housing Associations in Bristol and the wider region (including West of England Combined Authority, WECA¹⁴). She is disappointed that to date no-one has followed up on the points raised.

Common problems which are reported to BDEF:

- Units too small for electric mobility vehicle
- No parking facility for scooters (which is close enough)

- People are moved into a property on the basis of a specific level of support, but the support does not materialise and/or is not what they were expecting
- Unit may be accessible but footpaths around may not accommodate scooters

BDEF has a general concern about the reduced footprint of new houses typically 3-storey townhouses where the ground floor may be used for parking. It is also concerned that the regulations are out of date for wheelchair accessible properties. They are based on an old wheelchair specification, but modern wheelchairs are now much bigger.

The Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) - a grant available for disabled people to make adaptations to their home for e.g. to widen doorways, install ramps etc - is available to individuals as well as Housing Associations, but the BDEF Rep believes most homeowners do not know about it and the extent to which you can claim it. For example, it will cover the installation of a lift or stairlift, although it is means tested.

Sheltered Housing

In her view there is not much in the way of supported housing available for the disabled. She also feels that there is a danger that moving people because of accessibility needs can take them away from all their support.

The BDEF Rep believes that the majority of disabled people are not in sheltered housing. Many get trapped into living at home as adults with their parents.

¹³ The Bristol Local Plan explores how Bristol will develop and is the framework for deciding planning applications in the city

¹⁴ WECA is made up of three of the Councils in the region – Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol and South Gloucestershire. Led by a separate elected Mayor, the combined authority has spending power over transport, housing and adult education and skills

Her view on sheltered housing currently:

- There is a lack of support for social interaction (probably no warden)
- A lot of people in sheltered housing are now of lower or no need
- Many have financial issues and are not claiming or getting all the right benefits

Community Health

BDEF is concerned about the re-organisation of Community Health within the region which comes into place in April 2020. Reducing the network to three main locality hubs is likely to present access problems and may be a challenge for disabled and older people.

9 Conclusion and Recommendations

This research survey and report has looked at what a sample of older people from disparate housing settings, diverse backgrounds and different communities in Bristol think about their housing and home situation. It offers a snapshot of current thoughts, opinions, issues and concerns and identifies a number of key priorities. In seeking out the views of residents, tenants, academics, local politicians and housing professionals it offers added value to the variety of recent research on housing policy and older people.

Several core themes have emerged, including the need for older people to be included in the development of future housing in Bristol. Older and disabled people working with planners, architects, developers, policy and decision-makers are best placed to advise on their particular needs. Decision and policymaking should be empowering, not top-down and patronising, based on a 'we know what's

best for you' philosophy, which often translates into poor practice. The Local Authority needs to think beyond the traditional model of tenant participation and the associated structures, which are not always representative or accessible to the majority of tenants. Those living in social housing want to have influence over Council and Housing Association policy changes that have a direct effect on their lives. We also found that older people want to challenge all forms of ageism and ageist stereotypes in the housing sector and the wider world.

A further significant finding of our research was that the majority of older people want to stay in their own communities, wherever possible, with access to shops, leisure activities, the local GP and public transport. They want to be near people of all ages with a connection to their neighbours, family and friends. To sustain this, modern and new technological adaptations will be important for future-proofing their homes as they grow older.

Older people want to feel safe and secure. They would like access to trusted traders so that they can maintain their homes. Those living in social housing, including sheltered and very sheltered housing, would like warden and housing worker support. Those in the rented sector want more security of tenure and decent homes to live in. For older people who would like to downsize they would like to see more innovation and creative housing choices with flexibility and support.

9.1 Recommendations

1. To formally recognise the BOPF Housing Action Group as an advisory sub-group of the Homes and Communities Board of the One City Plan (or similar future structures) with bi-monthly meetings with the political Chair and to include other key housing policy and decision-makers.

2. Ensure that members of the BOPF Housing Action Group are used as advisors by housing developers, local politicians, planners, architects, academics and other professionals who are directly involved in future housing for older people in Bristol – including the development of mixed-age (inter-generational) neighbourhoods and schemes that promote innovation.

3. More generally we would like to see all organisations in the private and public sector, including BCC, review their own work practices and eliminate ageism and ageist stereotyping. We want to ensure that older people are seen as part of the solution and not part of the problem.

4. The BOPF Housing Action Group to further develop the key findings and themes of this report based around a clear and concise Action Plan of priorities.

9.2 Getting Involved

If you would like to be kept informed about our work on housing or to get involved in the BOPF Housing Action Group, please contact:

Ian Quaife

BOPF Engagement & Development
Manager

Bristol Older People's Forum

Canningford House
38 Victoria Street
Bristol
BS1 6BY

Tel. 0117 927 9222

Email. bopf@ageukbristol.org.uk

10 Addendum: Impact of Coronavirus

This survey was conducted prior to the Coronavirus crisis. We feel, however, it is important to add in this brief summary to provide some context regarding how we take this work forward.

There is a growing consensus that life after the pandemic will be different for all of us. Management of the social and economic impact will be crucial as we move out of the current lock-down. With current levels of community/voluntary and governmental services for isolated older people likely to diminish over the coming months the need for long-term planning and support will be paramount. Moreover, with financial resilience under pressure, there are likely to be further reductions in warden services and resident support, identified as significant issues in this report. In addition, building age-friendly neighbourhoods, supporting older people in their homes, developing new innovative services and housing developments with input from older people as well as, tackling isolation, loneliness and physical and mental well-being will be even more demanding.

Although largely outside the scope of this research, it is important to highlight that Care Homes provide a housing option for many older people. The pandemic, however, has raised particular challenges in this largely privately run and fragmented sector. The cuts to social care budgets over recent years have exacerbated the financial fragility of the industry.

With these challenges ahead, BOPF will be looking to work with Age UK Bristol and other partners to explore new ways to find a voice for older, more vulnerable people in these settings.

Finally, taking our report forward over the coming months and developing the work of the BOPF Housing Action Group will also be challenging. As well as making the decision to hold back the publication until late Summer/early Autumn, the community development input needed to build new and empowering structures and relationships with BCC and other housing organisations will be a longer process. Nevertheless, this will remain a priority and a tangible outcome of this research survey.

Appendix 1: Housing Survey Questionnaire



Housing Survey 2019

Living Better in Later Life - your opportunity to influence housing policy in Bristol

Bristol Older People's Forum (BOPF), working with Bristol Ageing Better (BAB), is carrying out a housing survey with older people (50+). We would like to find out about your current housing – what are the challenges and what matters to you about your home.

This information will help us to build a picture of the housing and related well-being issues affecting older people in Bristol and will be used to influence future housing policy.

We will publish the results of the survey on our website, in our newsletter, and you will be invited to a survey presentation at our Open Forum meeting.

This questionnaire is anonymous - you don't have to enter any personal data - and comprises twelve easy to answer questions which should take no more than 15 minutes to complete.



Where You Live

1. Where do you live (Bristol ward)? *Tick the relevant ward*

Ashley		Hengrove & Whitchurch Park	
Avonmouth & Lawrence Weston		Hillfields	
Bedminster		Horfield	
Bishopston & Ashley Down		Hotwells & Harbourside	
Bishopsworth		Knowle	
Brislington East		Lawrence Hill	
Brislington West		Lockleaze	
Central		Redland	
Clifton		Southmead	
Clifton Down		Southville	
Cotham		St George Central	
Easton		St George Troopers Hill	
Eastville		St George West	
Filwood		Stockwood	
Frome Vale		Stoke Bishop	
Hartcliffe & Withywood		Westbury-on-Trym & Henleaze	
Henbury & Brentry		Windmill Hill	
		Other Location not listed above/ Not Sure	

2. Do you live alone?

Yes		No		Prefer not to say	
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3. What type of housing are you in currently? *Tick one of the following:*

Homeowner	
Rented (Council)	
Rented (Private Landlord)	
Rented (Housing Association/Charitable Housing)	
Shared Ownership (Part rent, part mortgage, including shared ownership with Housing Association)	
Sheltered Housing (independent but with occasional support e.g. warden)	
Extra Care Housing (Developments of self-contained flats with care and support services and communal facilities on site) - Rented/owned	
Retirement Village - Rented/owned	
Other (<i>please specify</i>):	

Your Housing Preferences

4. Which are the MOST IMPORTANT things for you (i.e. your ideal housing situation) from the list below?

Please tick a **maximum of 5** from the following list. If there is something else which is important to you, which is not on the list, please tick 'Other' and add a brief description in the space provided.

Location – centred within the community, with easy access to shops, library, place of worship etc.	
Living near other older people	
Living near people of all ages	
Living with or near your family	
Living near friends	
Feeling safe & secure in your home	
Comfort e.g. homeliness, good light, decoration, furnishings	
Adequate heating and insulation	
Home is suitable for pets e.g. with garden or other outdoor space	
Having easy access to healthcare services (e.g. on bus route, close to GP surgery)	
Having easy access to public or other transport	
Having easy access to local activities (e.g. social groups/exercise classes)	
Having access to reliable affordable home maintenance services (plumbing, gardening etc.)	
Affordable home adaptations e.g. accessible bathroom, handrails, stairlift	
Living independently in your home	
Other (<i>please specify</i>):	

Your Housing Challenges

5. What are your biggest challenges with respect to your current home circumstances?

Please tick a **maximum of 5** from the following list. If there is something else that is a challenge for you, which is not on the list, please select 'Other' and add a brief description in the space provided.

Lack of public or other transport	
Not convenient for shops	
Personal mobility	
Not living near family or friends	
Feelings of isolation (not enough contact with other people)	
Feelings of loneliness (lack of companionship/not feeling connected with other people)	
Lack of local activities (social groups/exercise classes)	
Property too small	
Property too large	
Difficulty maintaining home e.g. gardening, essential repairs	
Parts of the home that are difficult to use e.g. steps, stairs, bathroom, toilet (lack of or inadequate home adaptations)	
Cost of living e.g. heating bills, rent, mortgage etc	
Inadequate home security	
Fear of crime in your neighbourhood	
Fear of eviction	
Unfamiliar with or dislike the area	
Lack of information, advice & support about housing matters for your current home	
Lack of information about alternative housing options	
Language barriers e.g. English as your second language	
None	
Other (<i>please specify</i>):	

6. What one thing might improve your housing situation?

Please state in the box below.

--

7. How happy are you with your current home?

Please give a score from 1 to 10 where 1 is very unhappy and 10 is very happy.

Score (1-10)		Prefer not to say	
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Equality & Diversity Questions

We would be grateful if you could also answer the following equality and diversity questions. This will help us to gain a more accurate picture of survey respondents.

8. Age range (please circle one of the following options):

50-54 55-64 65-74 75-84 85+ Prefer not to say

9. What ethnic group do you belong to? *Tick one of the following*

White	
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	
Asian/Asian British	
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	
Other ethnic groups	
Prefer not to say	

10. Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?

Yes		No		Prefer not to say	
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11. In relation to your sexual orientation do you identify as:

Tick one of the following

Asexual	
Lesbian/Gay Woman	
Gay Man	
Bisexual	
Heterosexual (straight)	
Other	
Prefer not to say	

12. Which gender do you identify as?

Tick one of the following

Male	
Female	
Non-binary or Other	
Prefer not to say	

Thank you for your help with this survey.

If you would like to be kept informed about this project please email bopfprojects@ageukbristol.org.uk or

phone **0117 927 9222**

Please return completed survey forms free of charge to :

FREEPOST RLTY-EHKU-SYXB

Bristol Older People's Forum

c/o Age UK Bristol

Canningford House

38 Victoria Street

Bristol BS1 6BY

Please return survey forms by Friday 24 January 2020

Appendix 2: Housing Survey Questionnaire – Responses

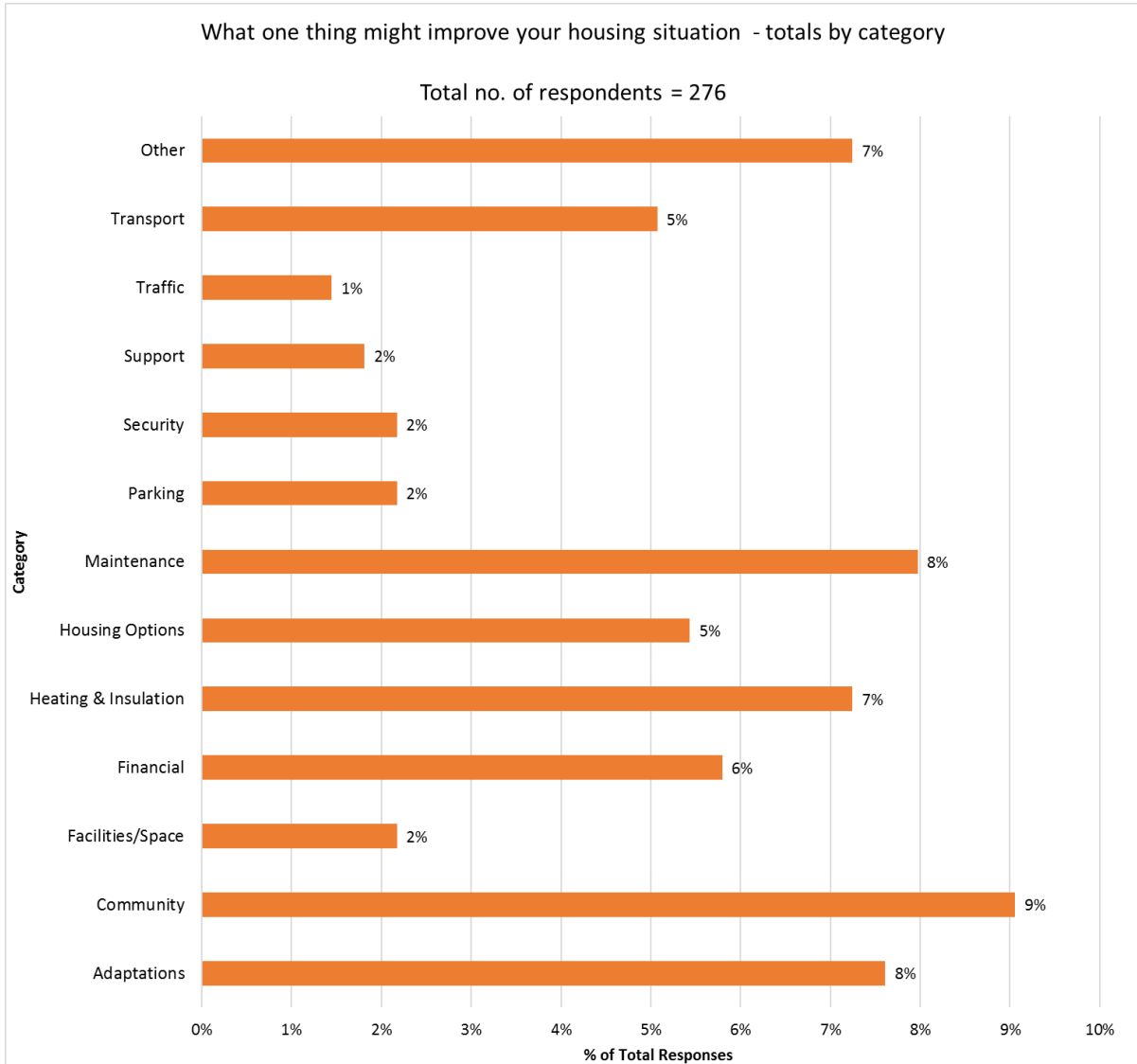
Housing Preferences

Q4. Which are the MOST IMPORTANT things for you (i.e. your ideal housing situation) from the list below?	No. of Responses	% of Total Responses
Location – centred within the community, with easy access to shops, library, place of worship etc.	191	69%
Feeling safe & secure in your home	182	66%
Adequate heating and insulation	152	55%
Having easy access to public or other transport	151	55%
Having easy access to healthcare services (e.g. on bus route, close to GP surgery)	116	42%
Living independently in your home	86	31%
Living near people of all ages	73	26%
Comfort e.g. homeliness, good light, decoration, furnishings	62	22%
Living with or near your family	61	22%
Having easy access to local activities (e.g. social groups/exercise classes)	55	20%
Living near friends	54	20%
Affordable home adaptations e.g. accessible bathroom, handrails, stairlift	33	12%
Home is suitable for pets e.g. with garden or other outdoor space	26	9%
Having access to reliable affordable home maintenance services (plumbing, gardening etc.)	23	8%
Living near other older people	12	4%

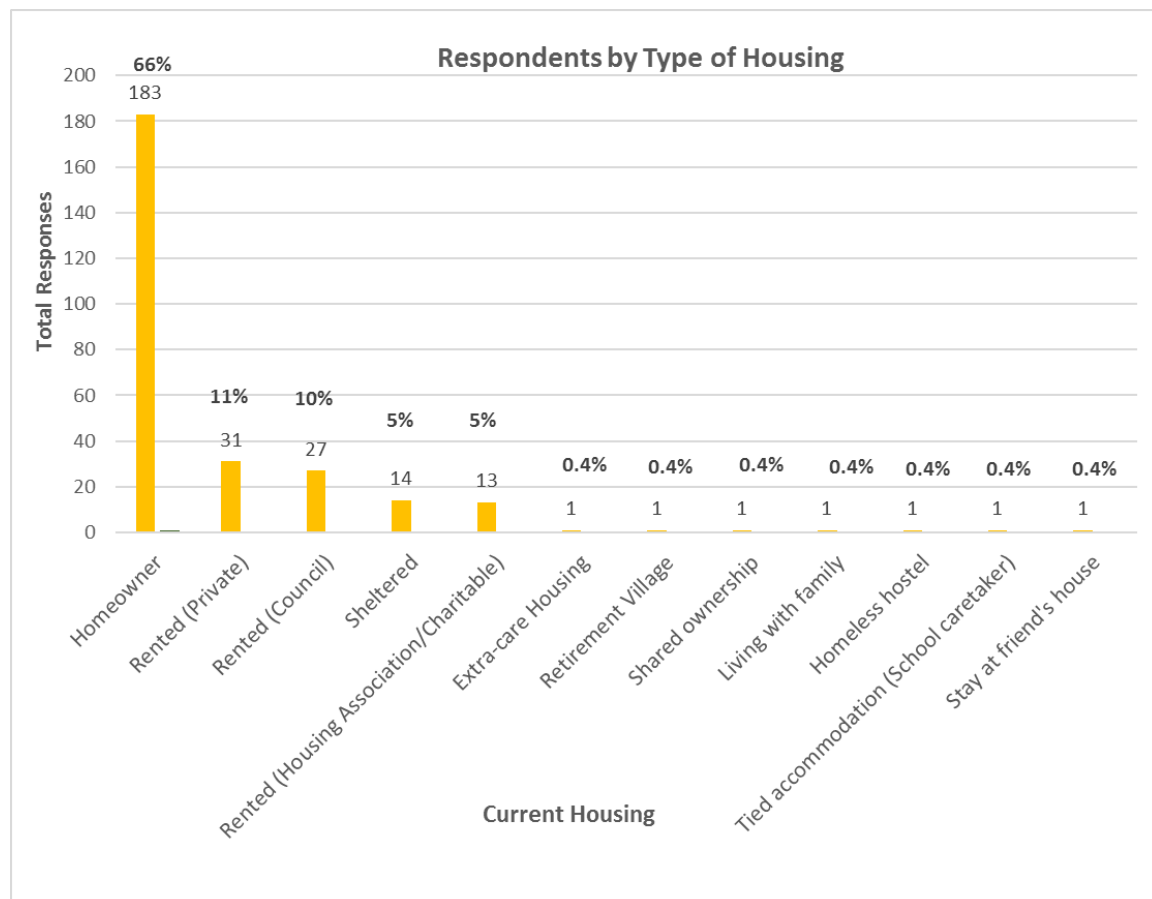
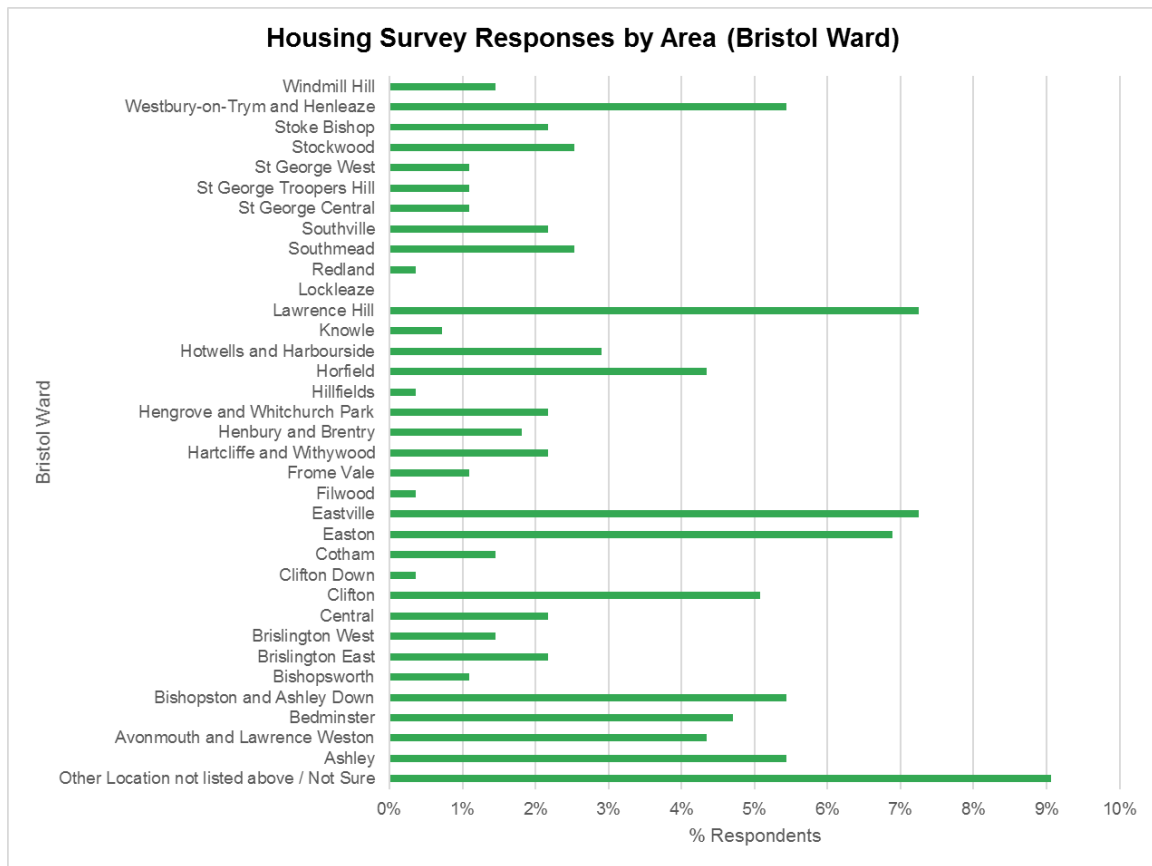
Housing Challenges

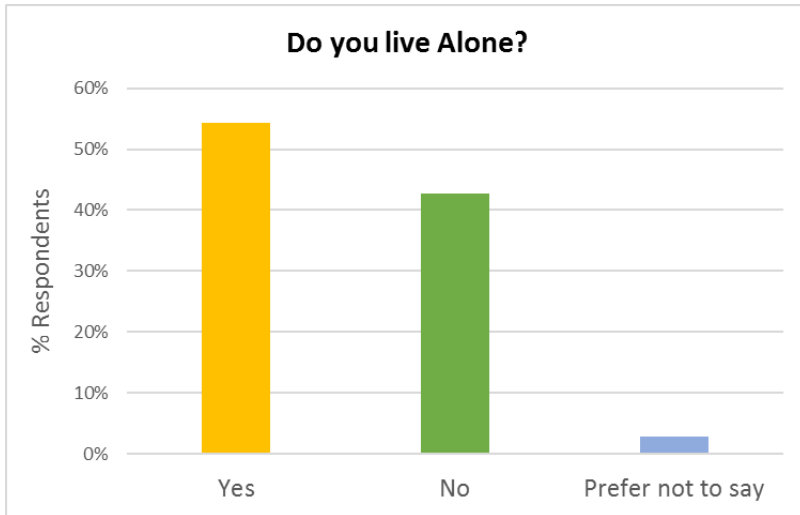
Q5. What are your biggest challenges with respect to your current home circumstances?	No. of Responses	% of Total Responses
Difficulty maintaining home e.g. gardening, essential repairs	100	36%
Cost of living e.g. heating bills, rent, mortgage etc	90	33%
Fear of crime in your neighbourhood	56	20%
None	44	16%
Personal mobility	41	15%
Lack of local activities (social groups/exercise classes)	38	14%
Lack of public or other transport	38	14%
Lack of information about alternative housing options	38	14%
Not living near family or friends	37	13%
Parts of the home that are difficult to use e.g. steps, stairs, bathroom, toilet (lack of or inadequate home adaptations)	33	12%
Not convenient for shops	32	12%
Lack of information, advice & support about housing matters for your current home	30	11%
Feelings of isolation (not enough contact with other people)	29	11%
Property too small	28	10%
Feelings of loneliness (lack of companionship/not feeling connected with other people)	27	10%
Property too large	23	8%
Inadequate home security	13	5%
Unfamiliar with or dislike the area	13	5%
Fear of eviction	11	4%
Language barriers e.g. English as your second language	4	1%

Q6 What one thing might improve your housing situation?



About the Respondents – Where you Live





About the Respondents – Equality & Diversity

