

The background of the slide is a photograph of a fountain at night. The fountain is illuminated, with water spraying upwards and outwards in various directions. The water droplets are captured in motion, creating a sense of dynamic energy. The fountain is set against a dark, textured wall, possibly made of stone or brick. The overall scene is dramatic and visually appealing.

Draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Consultation

Full results summary

Data, Intelligence & Insight Team – October 2023



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Introduction and Methodology



Southampton City Council undertook public consultation on the Draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.

- The consultation took place between **10/07/2023 – 01/10/2023**.
- The aim of this consultation was to:
 - Communicate clearly to residents and stakeholders the proposals for Draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.
 - Ensure any resident, business or stakeholder who wished to comment on the proposals had the opportunity to do so, enabling them to raise any impacts the proposals may have.
 - Allow participants to propose alternative suggestions for consideration which they feel could achieve the objective in a different way.
- This report summarises the aims, principles, methodology and results of the public consultation. It provides a summary of the consultation responses both for the consideration of decision makers and any interested individuals and stakeholders.
- It is important to be mindful that a consultation is not a vote, it is an opportunity for stakeholders to express their views, concerns and alternatives to a proposal. This report outlines in detail the representations made during the consultation period so that decision makers can consider what has been said alongside other information.



Southampton City Council is committed to consultations of the highest standard, which are meaningful and comply with *The Gunning Principles (considered to be the legal standard for consultations)*:

1. Proposals are still at a formative stage (a final decision has not yet been made)
2. There is sufficient information put forward in the proposals to allow 'intelligent consideration'
3. There is adequate time for consideration and response
4. Conscientious consideration must be given to the consultation responses before a decision is made



Rules: The Gunning Principles

They were coined by Stephen Sedley QC in a court case in 1985 relating to a school closure consultation (R v London Borough of Brent ex parte Gunning). Prior to this, very little consideration had been given to the laws of consultation. Sedley defined that a consultation is only legitimate when these four principles are met:

- 1. proposals are still at a formative stage**
A final decision has not yet been made, or predetermined, by the decision makers
- 2. there is sufficient information to give 'intelligent consideration'**
The information provided must relate to the consultation and must be available, accessible, and easily interpretable for consultees to provide an informed response
- 3. there is adequate time for consideration and response**
There must be sufficient opportunity for consultees to participate in the consultation. There is no set timeframe for consultation,¹ despite the widely accepted twelve-week consultation period, as the length of time given for consultee to respond can vary depending on the subject and extent of impact of the consultation
- 4. 'conscientious consideration' must be given to the consultation responses before a decision is made**
Decision-makers should be able to provide evidence that they took consultation responses into account

These principles were reinforced in 2001 in the 'Coughlan Case (R v North and East Devon Health Authority ex parte Coughlan²), which involved a health authority closure and confirmed that they applied to all consultations, and then in a Supreme Court case in 2014 (R ex parte Moseley v LB Haringey³), which endorsed the legal standing of the four principles. Since then, the Gunning Principles have formed a strong legal foundation from which the legitimacy of public consultations is assessed, and are frequently referred to as a legal basis for judicial review decisions.⁴

¹ In some local authorities, their local voluntary Compact agreement with the third sector may specify the length of time they are required to consult for. However, in many cases, the Compact is either inactive or has been cancelled so the consultation timeframe is open to debate

² BAILII, [England and Wales Court of Appeal \(Civil Decision\) Decisions](#), Accessed: 13 December 2016.

³ BAILII, [United Kingdom Supreme Court](#), Accessed: 13 December 2016

⁴ The information used to produce this document has been taken from the Law of Consultation training course provided by The Consultation Institute



- The agreed approach for this consultation was to use an online questionnaire as the main route for feedback. Questionnaires enable an appropriate amount of explanatory and supporting information to be included in a structured questionnaire, helping to ensure respondents are aware of the background and detail of the proposals.
- Respondents could also write letters or emails to provide feedback on the proposals. Emails or letters from stakeholders that contained consultation feedback were collated and analysed as a part of the overall consultation.
- The consultation was promoted in the following ways by:
 - Engaged with various stakeholders and service groups (including the Domestic Abuse and Violence against Women and Girls Partnership Board, the Domestic and Sexual Abuse Operational Group, providers of Social Housing, commissions services, frontline staff, Housing Officers and the Welfare Rights Team)
 - Social media posts
 - Southampton City Council e-bulletins (including City News, Your City Your Say, Staff Bulletin, Communities Bulletin, Business Bulletin)
 - Tenants' Link
 - Southampton City Council website
 - Press release
- All questionnaire results have been analysed and presented in graphs within this report. Respondents were given opportunities throughout the questionnaire to provide written feedback on the proposals. In addition anyone could provide feedback in letters and emails. All written responses and questionnaire comments have been read and then assigned to categories based upon similar sentiment or theme.

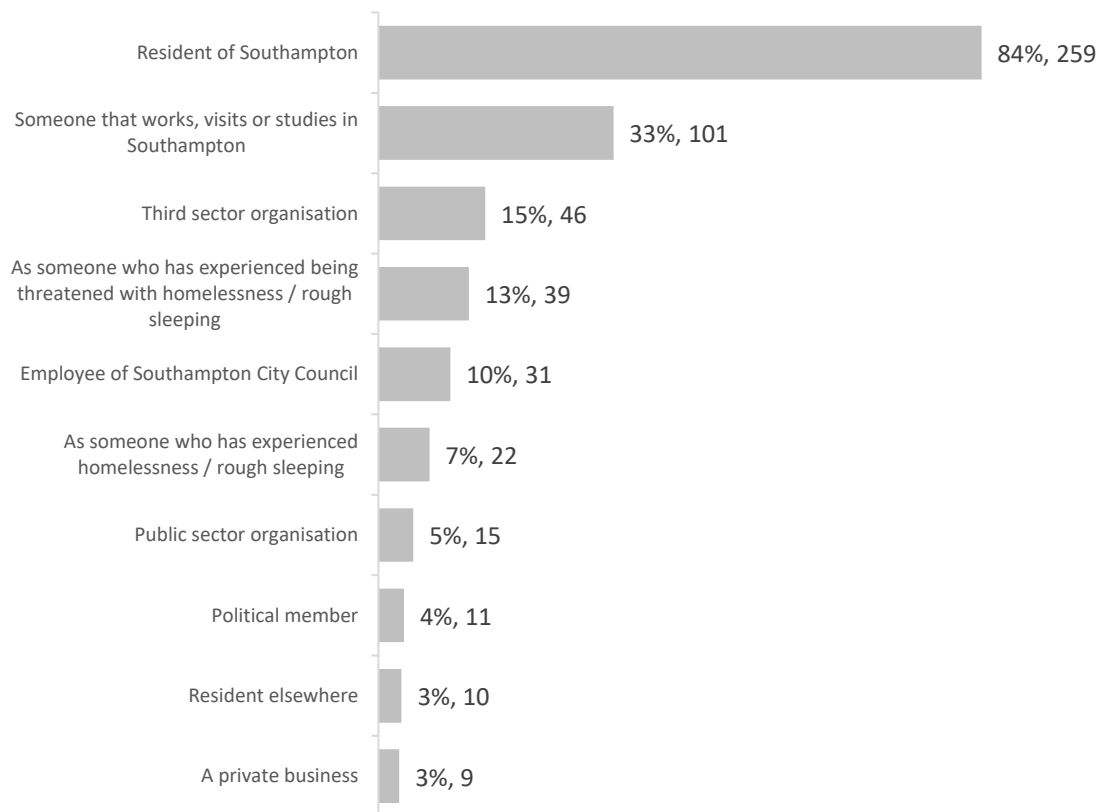


Who were the respondents?

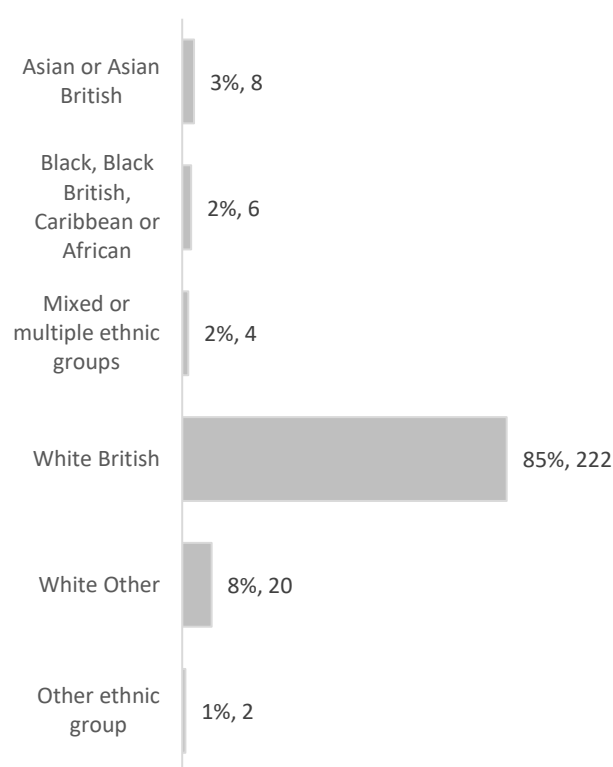
Total respondents:

	Total number of responses
Questionnaire	311
Emails / letters	4
Total	315

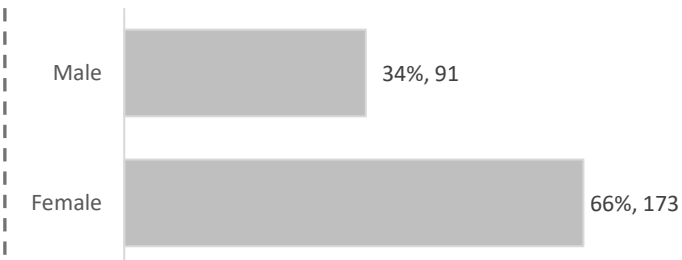
Interest in the consultation:



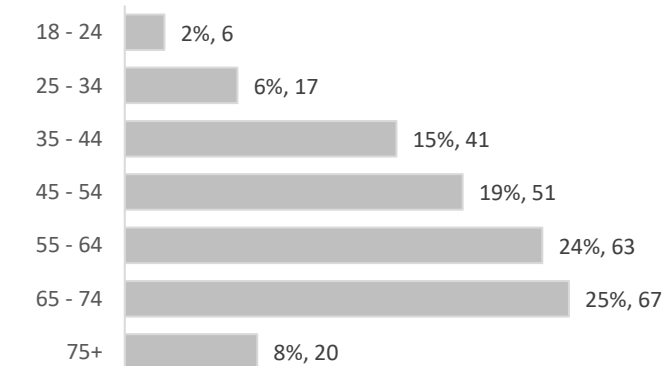
Ethnicity:



Sex:



Age:





Proposed changes



The questionnaire outlined the following background information:

Background:

“Not having a home as a stable and secure base can make it harder for people to find a job, stay healthy and maintain relationships. People often experience feelings of isolation, increasing their chances of taking drugs or experiencing mental health problems...” (Homeless Link, 2022)

We believe that everybody has the right to a safe, suitable, and stable home. Home gives stability, a sense of belonging, and keeps people safe, together, and protected from the outside elements. It is where we make memories with friends and families, and it helps us to build a strong foundation for our lives.

Yet sadly, figures from Shelter indicate that at least 271,000 people were recorded as homeless in England in January 2023 (123,000 being children). In Southampton, the rate of homelessness is significantly higher than the national average.

We have analysed key information and data to understand the current needs in Southampton around homelessness. This strategy is our plan to address these needs and tackle homelessness and rough sleeping in Southampton over the next 5 years. The strategy will be accompanied by an action plan explaining in detail how we will achieve our aims.



The questionnaire outlined the following proposals:

Priorities:

Priority 1 - Prevention: Move beyond a reactive response and focus on reducing individual and population-wide risks of homelessness across the city.

Priority 2 - Intervention: Providing timely, appropriate and effective interventions to alleviate homelessness and help those sleeping rough.

Priority 3 - Working Together: Combining skills, resources, and experience to improve homelessness solutions and outcomes.

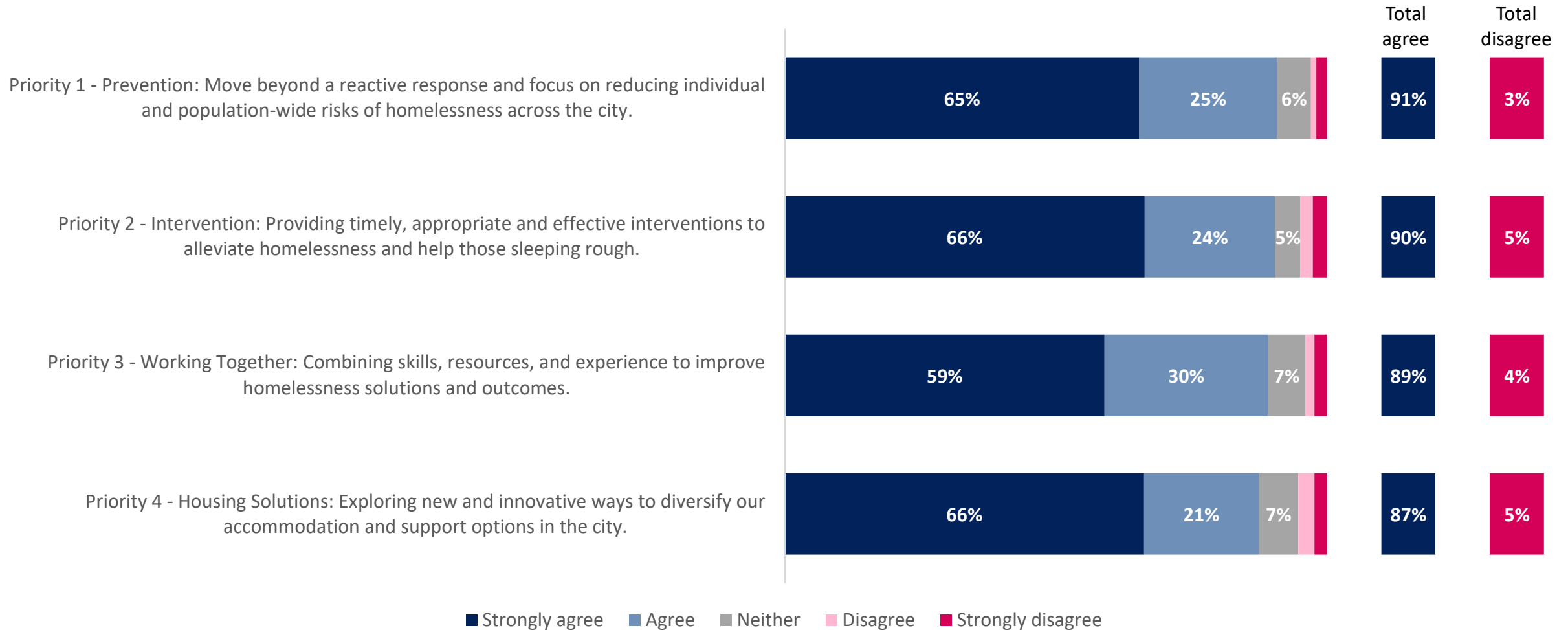
Priority 4 - Housing Solutions: Exploring new and innovative ways to diversify our accommodation and support options in the city.



Focus on four suggested priorities

Question: What extent do you agree or disagree with our focus on the four suggested priorities?

Overall:





The questionnaire outlined the following proposals:

Priority 1:

We want to move beyond a reactive response and focus on reducing individual and population-wide risks of homelessness across the city.

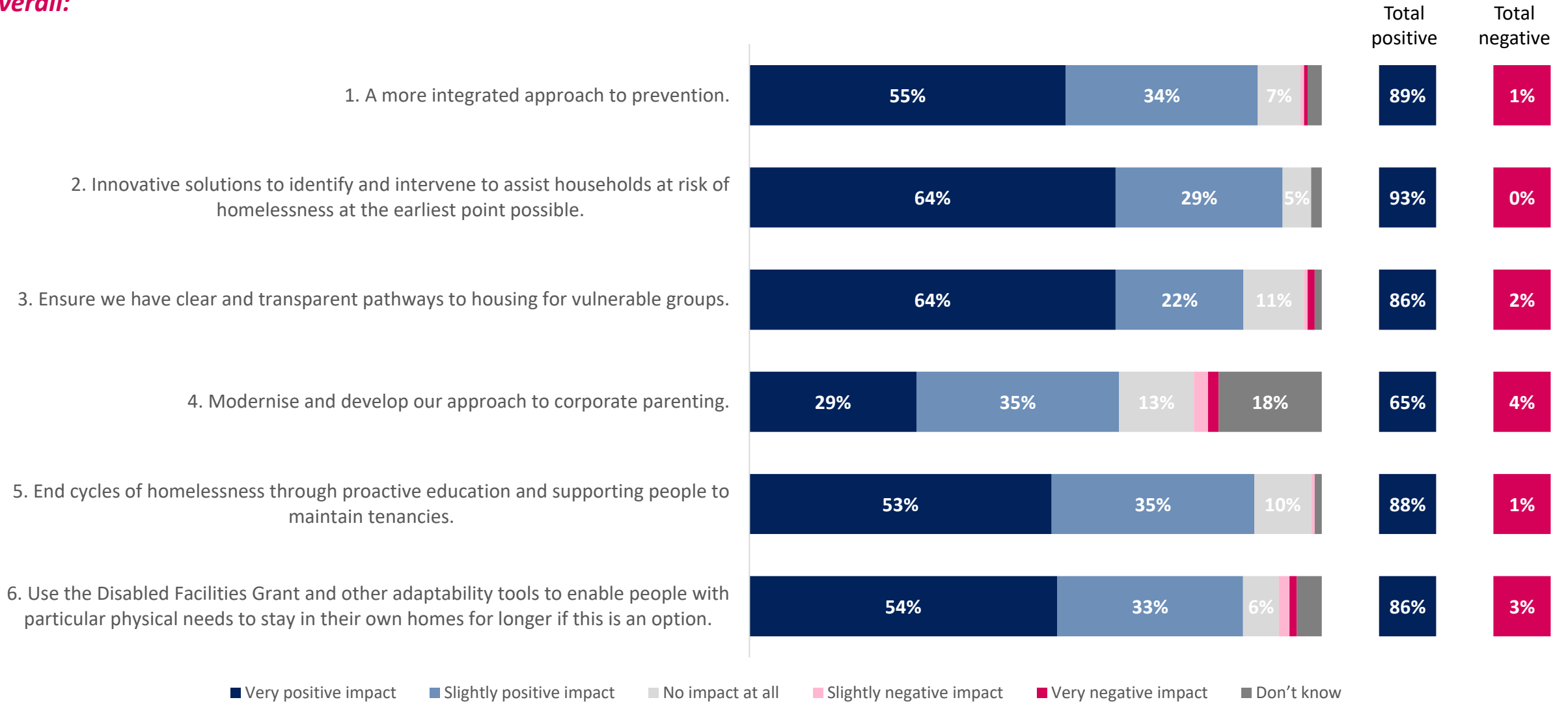
Losing a tenancy and or being unable to find suitable and safe accommodation can be a very frustrating and traumatic experience. So, it is important that we focus on preventing people who are at risk of homelessness from losing their homes. We also want to move beyond a reactive response. We will focus on reducing population-wide risks of homelessness by developing stable, supportive and inclusive environments. This includes ensuring people have access to education about finding and remaining in affordable housing.



Priority 1 impacts

Question: What impact do you think each of the following proposals will have on preventing homelessness and rough sleeping?

Overall:





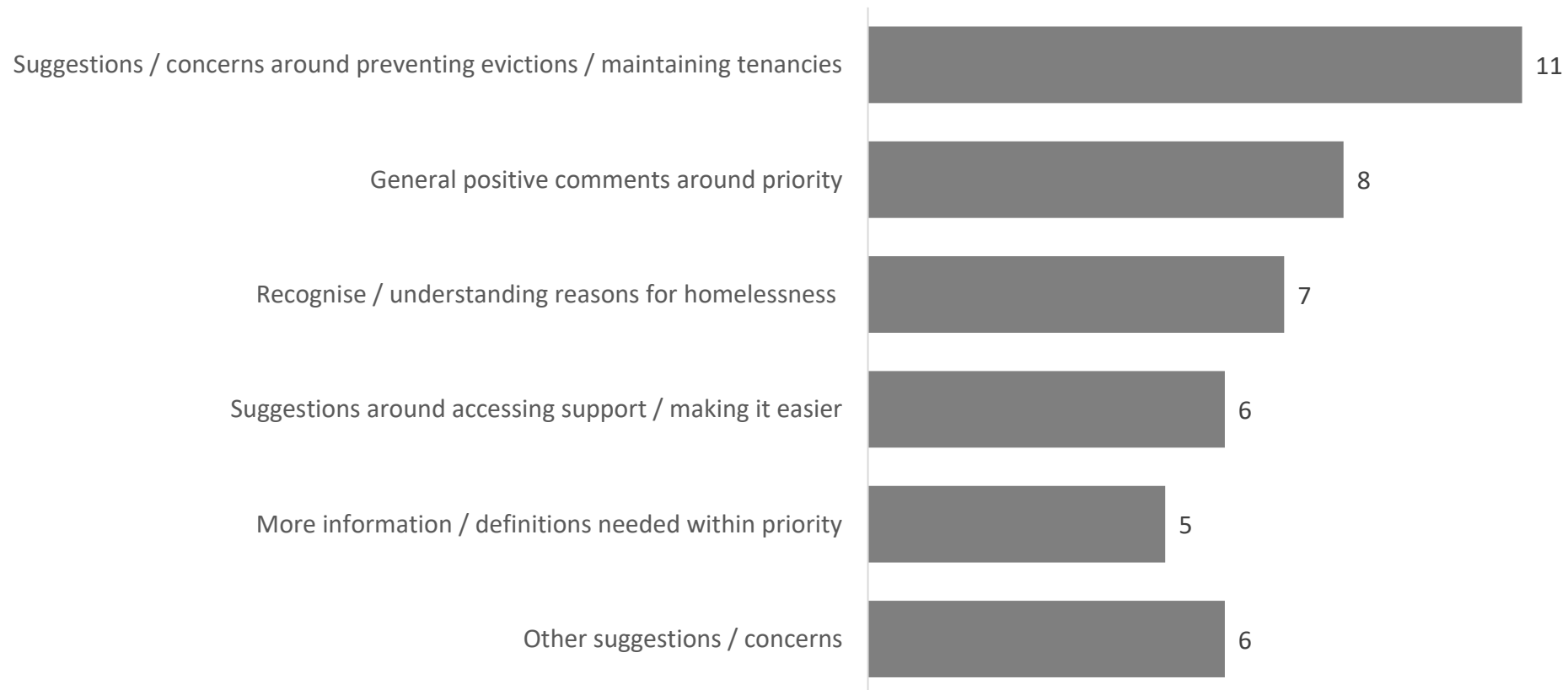
Priority 1 – Free text responses.

Within the questionnaire, respondents were given the opportunity to provide their own free text comments. Any email or letter responses were also analysed alongside free-text responses in the questionnaire.

The following graph shows the total number of respondents by each theme of comment.

These graphs are in respondent count, rather than percentage.

Please use the following space to tell us your comments, concerns, suggestions or alternatives you feel we should consider:





The questionnaire outlined the following proposals:

Priority 2:

Providing timely, appropriate, and effective interventions to alleviate homelessness and help those sleeping rough.

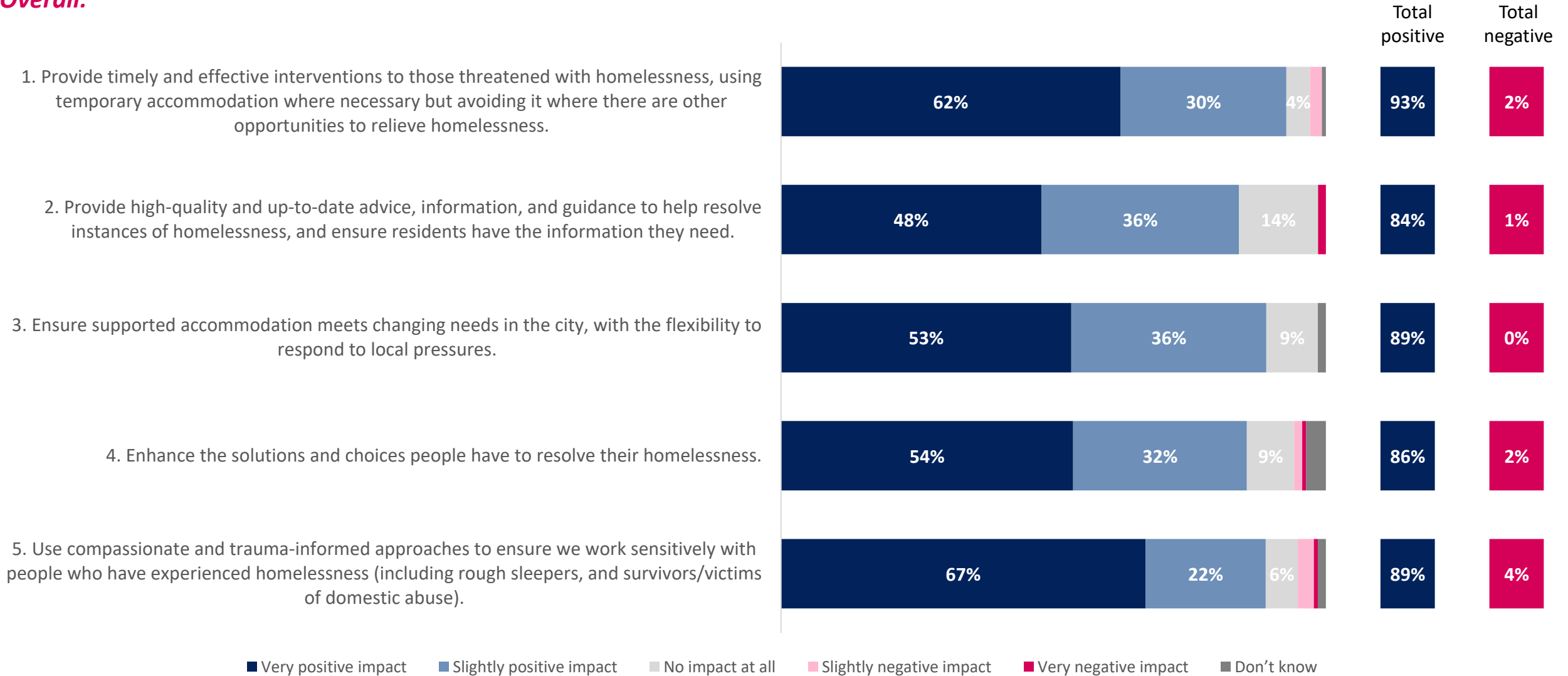
The longer someone is homeless, the greater the risk of worsening physical and mental health problems. It is crucial that we intervene as early as possible to provide support and work quickly to help people find a suitable home. It is also important that when we intervene, the support we provide ensures long-term solutions and reduces the risk of repeat homelessness.



Priority 2 impacts

Question: What impact do you think each of the following proposals will have on providing timely, appropriate and effective interventions to alleviate homelessness and help those sleeping rough?

Overall:





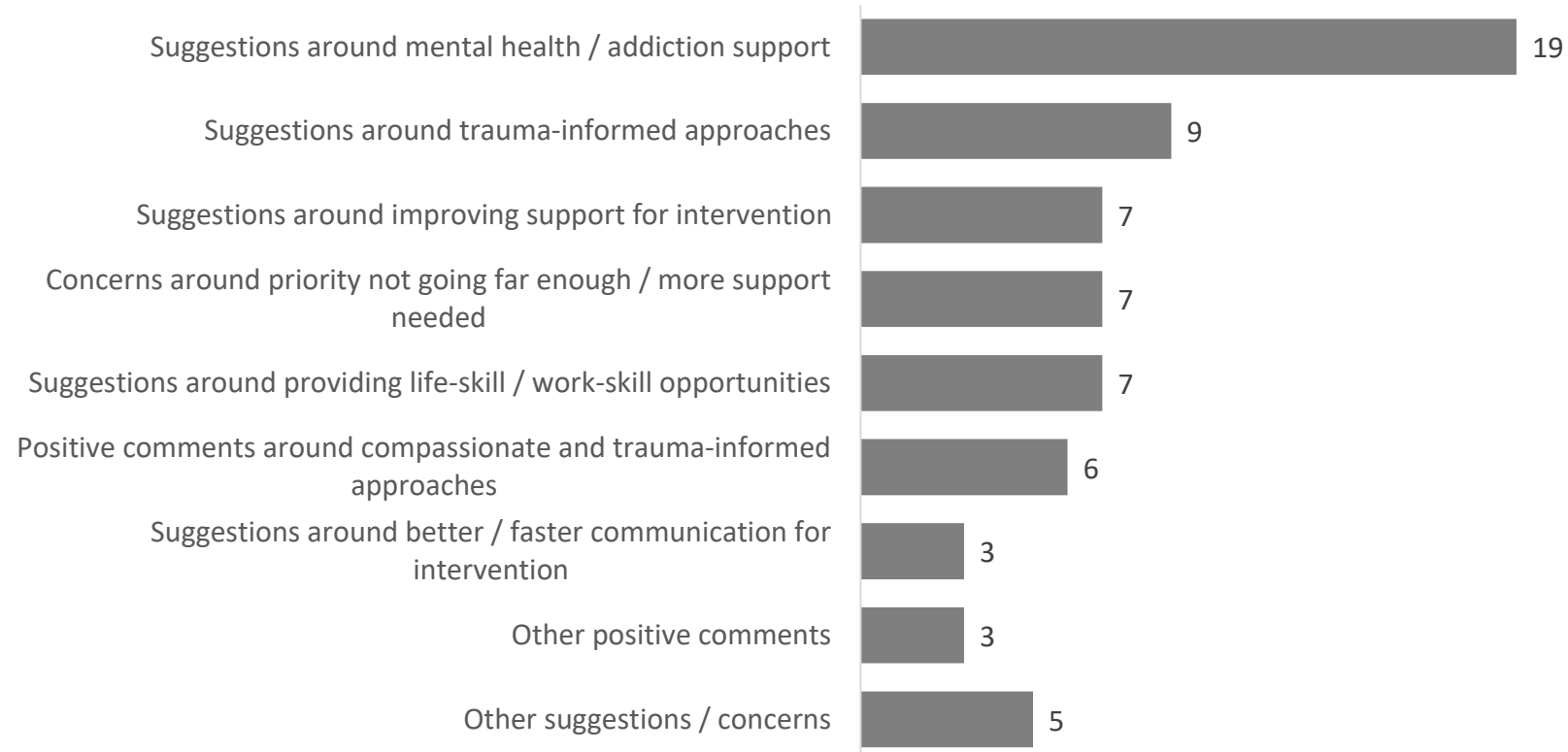
Priority 2 – Free text responses.

Within the questionnaire, respondents were given the opportunity to provide their own free text comments. Any email or letter responses were also analysed alongside free-text responses in the questionnaire.

The following graphs show the total number of respondents by each theme of comment.

These graphs are in respondent count, rather than percentage.

Please use the following space to tell us your comments, concerns, suggestions or alternatives you feel we should consider:





The questionnaire outlined the following proposals:

Priority 3:

Combining skills, resources, and experience to improve homelessness solutions and outcomes.

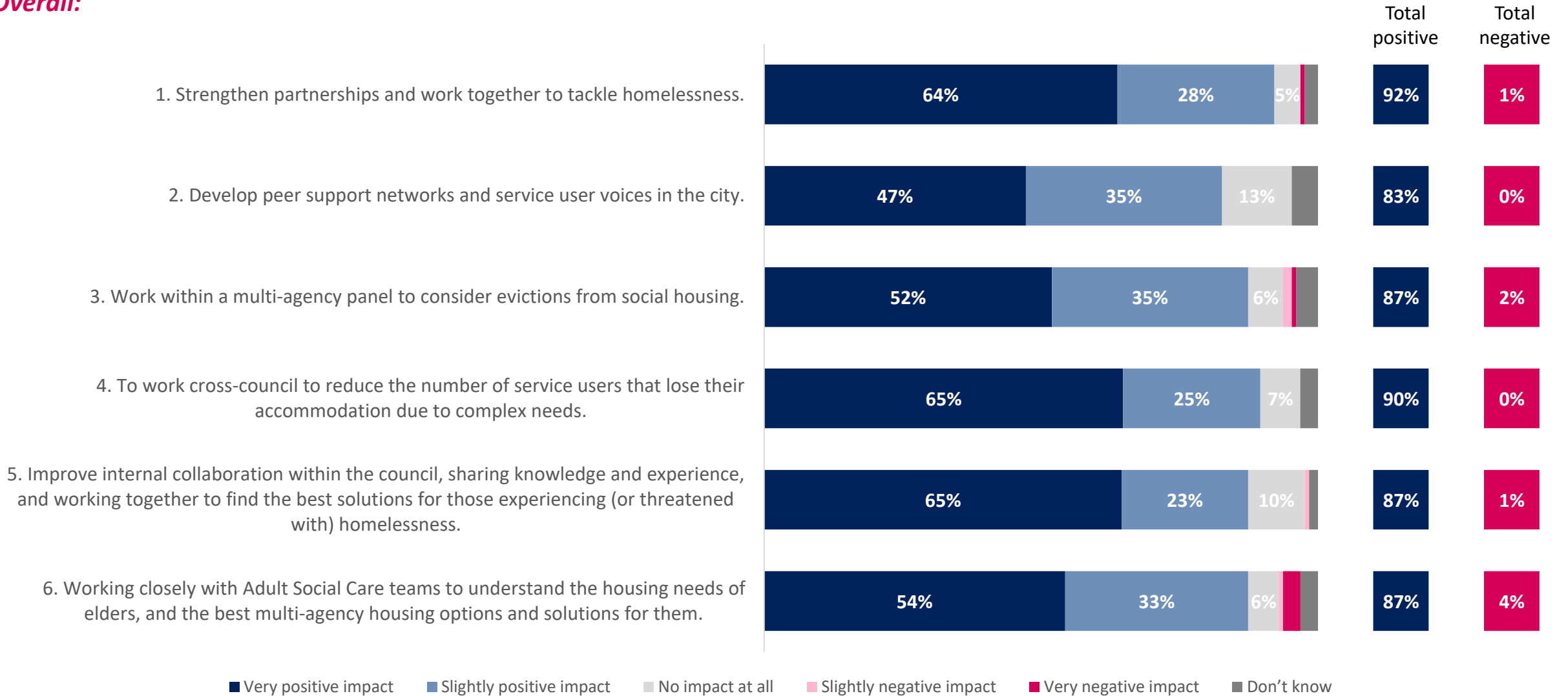
The needs of people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness, often stretch across different services, including the housing services, mental health services and children's services. We want to work with our partners to pull together our knowledge, skills, and resources, to improve prevention methods and provide effective support. Our partners include public health, NHS trusts, police, and charities such as, the Society of St James and Two Saints.



Priority 3 impacts

Question: What impact do you think each of the following proposals will have on combining skills, resources and experience to improve homelessness solutions and outcomes?

Overall:





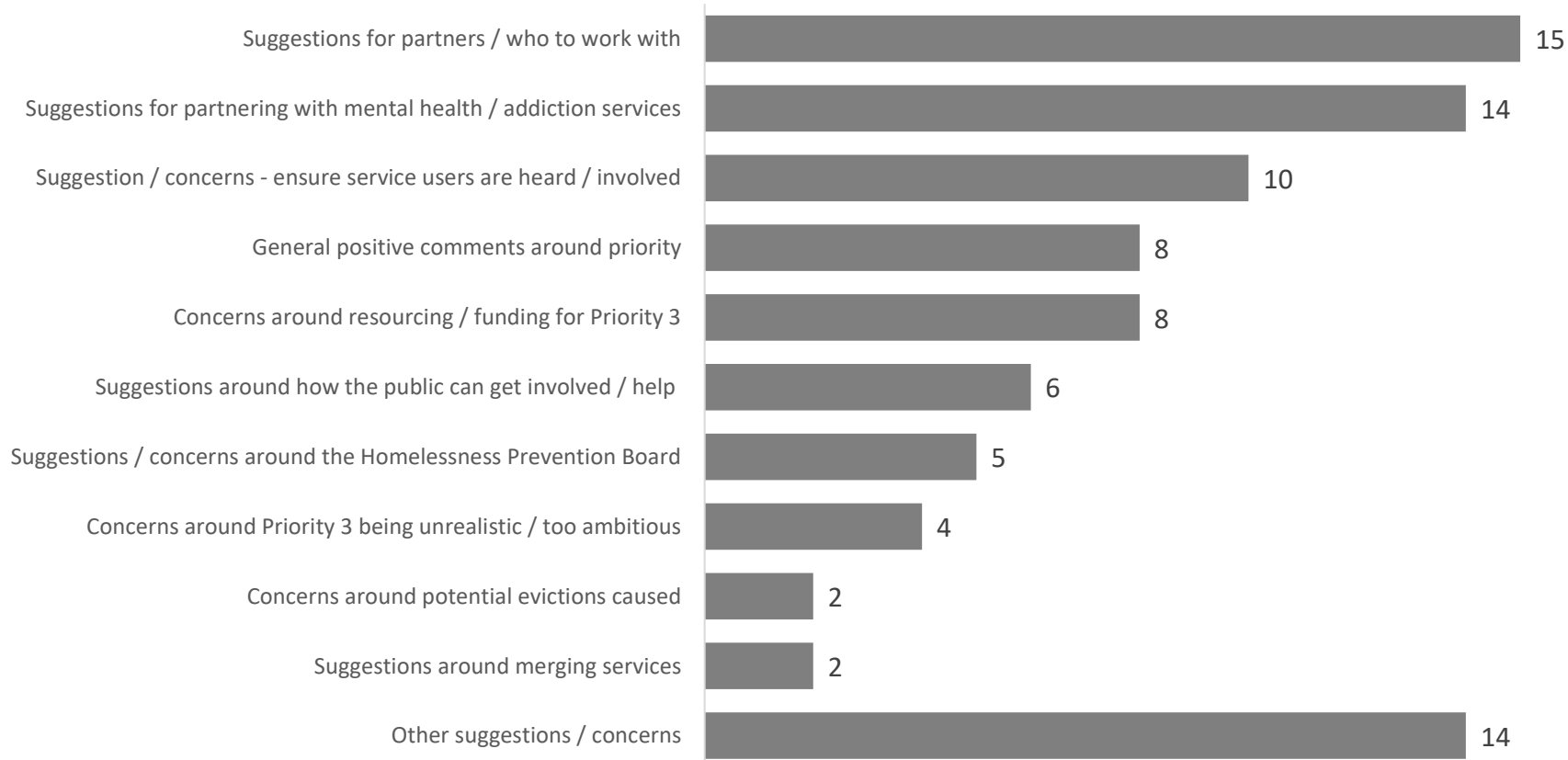
Priority 3 – Free text responses.

Within the questionnaire, respondents were given the opportunity to provide their own free text comments. Any email or letter responses were also analysed alongside free-text responses in the questionnaire.

The following graph shows the total number of respondents by each theme of comment.

These graphs are in respondent count, rather than percentage.

Please use the following space to tell us your comments, concerns, suggestions or alternatives you feel we should consider:





The questionnaire outlined the following proposals:

Priority 4:

Exploring new and innovative ways to diversify our accommodation and support options in the city.

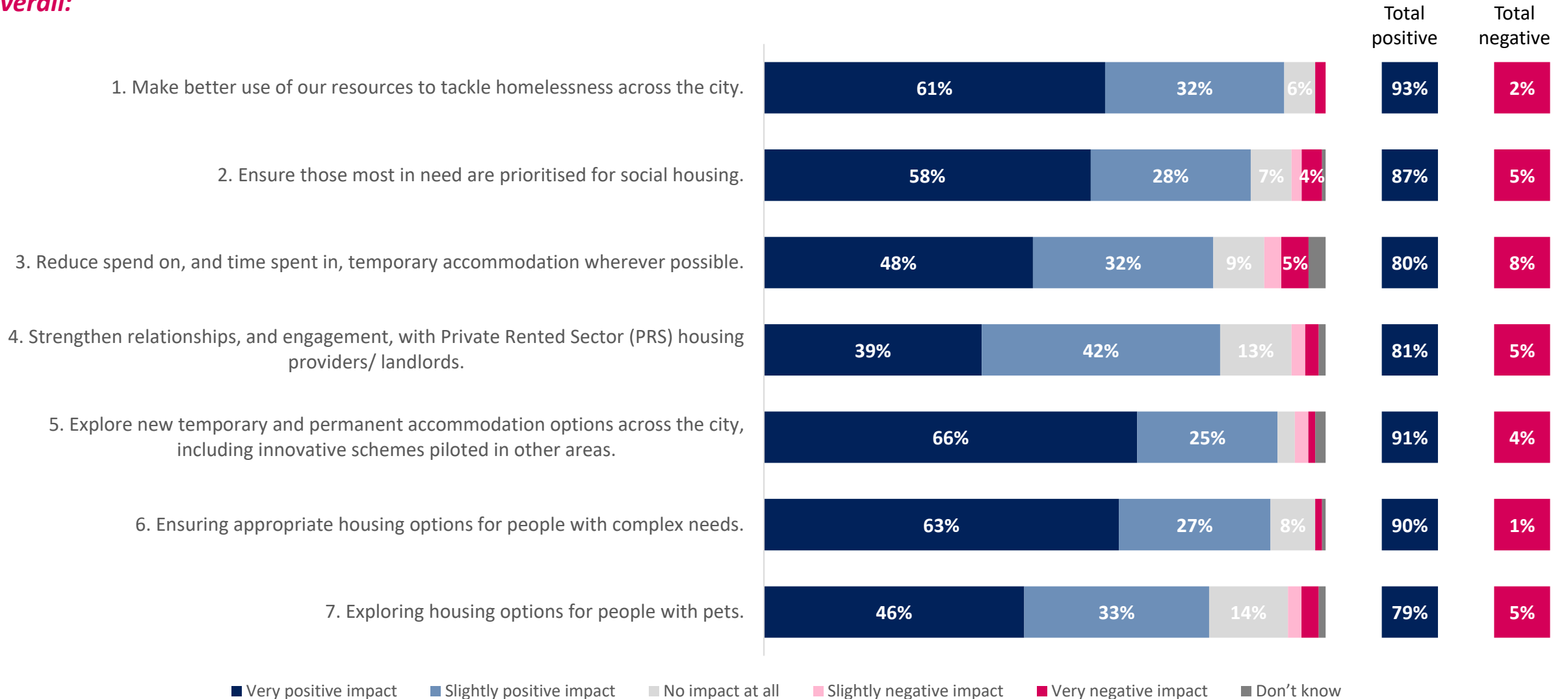
The reasons why people become homeless or are threatened by homelessness, vary and can be complex. By diversifying and enhancing the current housing options, we can provide better, tailored, and long-term solutions for individuals.



Priority 4 impacts

Question: What impact do you think each of the following proposals will have on providing timely, appropriate and effective interventions to alleviate homelessness and help those sleeping rough?

Overall:





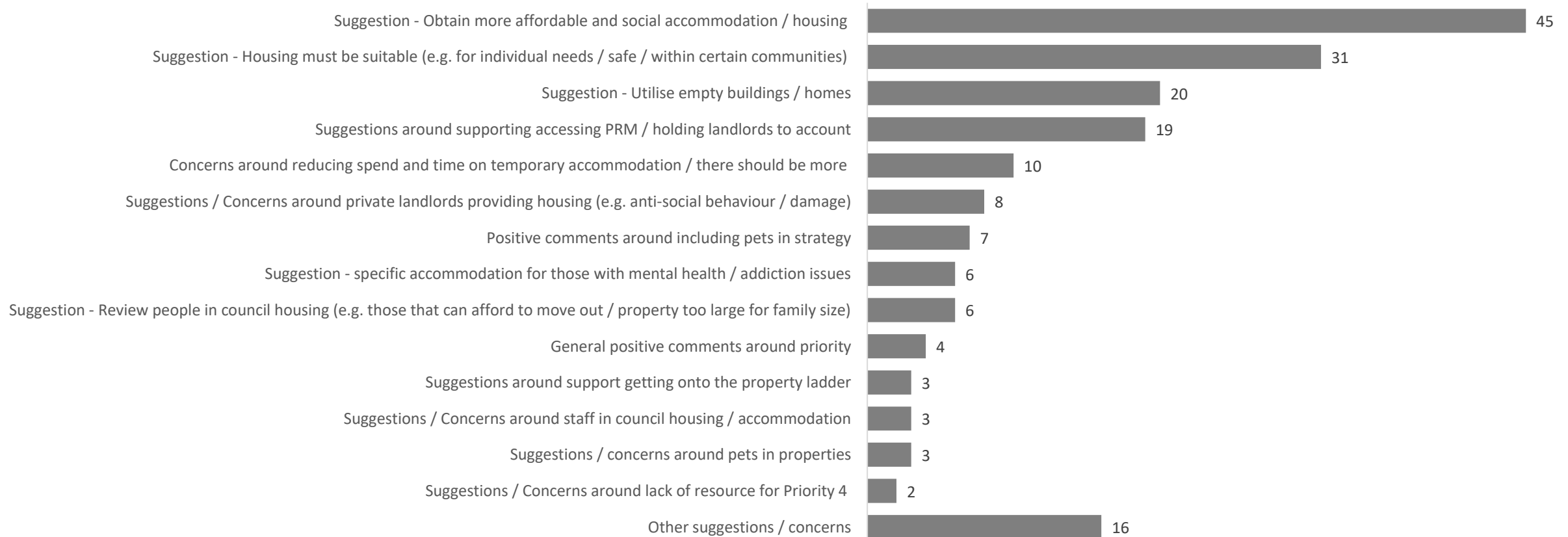
Priority 4 – Free text responses.

Within the questionnaire, respondents were given the opportunity to provide their own free text comments. Any email or letter responses were also analysed alongside free-text responses in the questionnaire.

The following graph shows the total number of respondents by each theme of comment.

These graphs are in respondent count, rather than percentage.

Please use the following space to tell us your comments, concerns, suggestions or alternatives you feel we should consider:





Overall Draft Strategy

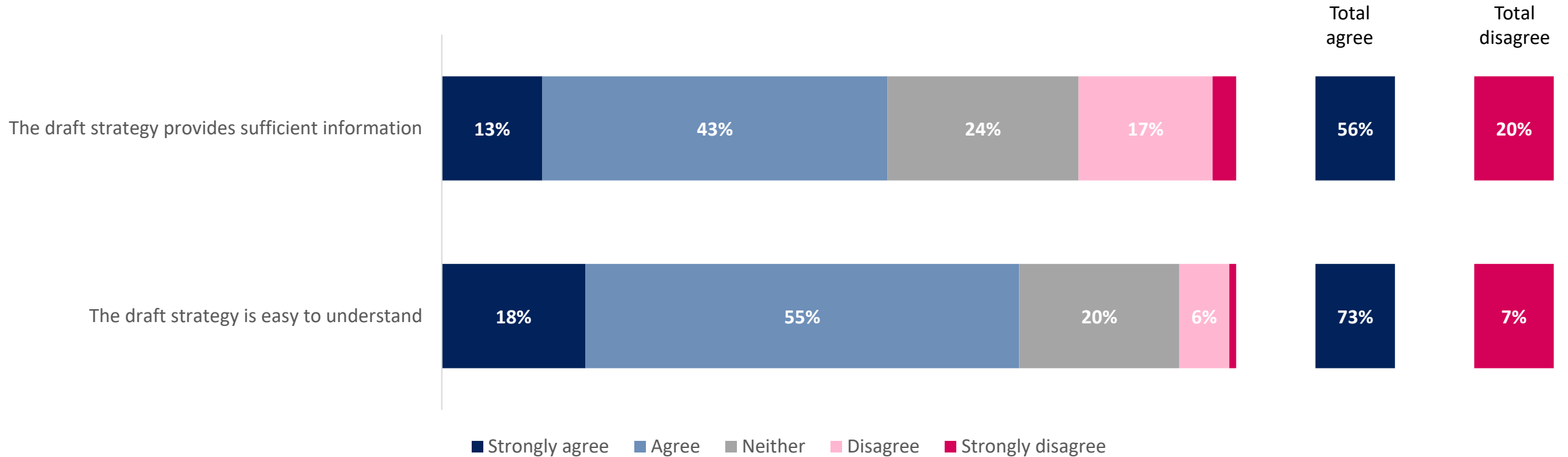
Have you read the proposed draft strategy?

35% Yes, all of it

41% Yes, some of it

24% No

If you have read the proposed strategy, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?





Overall comments about the strategy / priorities – Free text responses.

Within the questionnaire, respondents were given the opportunity to provide their own free text comments around anything else we should consider, any other comments or suggestions, and if there was anything that needed more information. Any email or letter responses were also analysed alongside free-text responses in the questionnaire.

The following graph shows the total number of respondents by each theme of comment.

These graphs are in respondent count, rather than percentage.

