



Draft Building Safety Resident Engagement Strategy Consultation

Full results summary

southampton
dataobservatory 

Data, Intelligence & Insight Team | *April 2024*

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Southampton City Council undertook a public consultation on a Draft Building Safety Resident Engagement Strategy.

This consultation took place between **19/02/2024 – 17/03/2024** and received **43** responses.

The aim of this consultation was to:

- Communicate clearly to residents and stakeholders the proposals for the Draft Building Safety Resident Engagement Strategy Consultation;
- Ensure any resident, business or stakeholder in Southampton that wished to comment on the proposals had the opportunity to do so, enabling them to raise any impacts the proposals may have, and;
- Allow participants to propose alternative suggestions for consideration which they feel could achieve the objectives of the strategy in a different way.

The primary method of gathering feedback for this consultation was via online questionnaire. Physical paper versions of the questionnaire were also made available, and respondents could also email yourcity.yoursay@southampton.gov.uk with their feedback, as well as respond by post.



Southampton City Council is committed to consultations of the highest standard and 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, and;
4. Conscientious consideration must be given to the consultation responses before a decision is made.



New Conversations 2.0
LGA guide to engagement



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 & paper questionnaire as the main route for feedback; questionnaires enable an appropriate amount of explanatory and supporting information to be included in a structured way, 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 that contained consultation feedback were collated and analysed as a part of the overall consultation.

The consultation was promoted in the following ways:

- Housing social media
- Block reps and LHOs – block reps were informed
- Mailing list to tenant engagement team
- All tenants on Tenant Engagement Team's mailing list were invited to two focus groups and building safety group
- SCC website
- Leaflets

All questionnaire results have been analysed and presented in graphs within this report. Respondents were also given opportunities throughout the questionnaire to provide written feedback on the proposals. All written responses and questionnaire comments have been read and then assigned to categories based upon sentiment or theme.

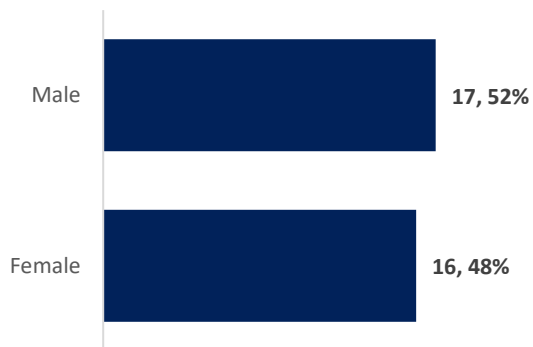


Total responses

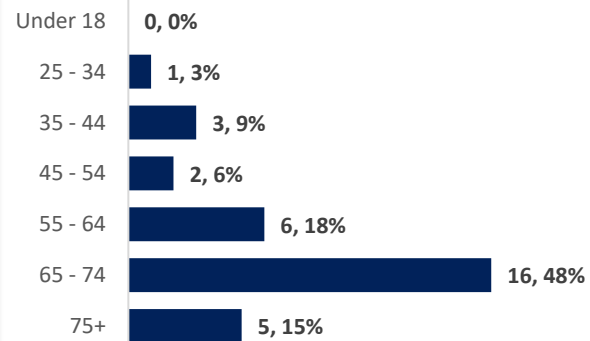
39 survey responses
4 email/letter/focus group responses
43 total

Graphs on this page are labelled as percentage (count).

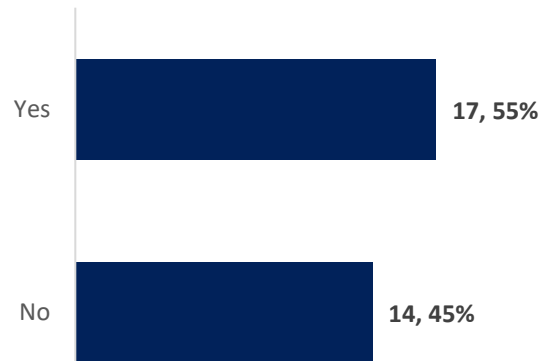
Sex



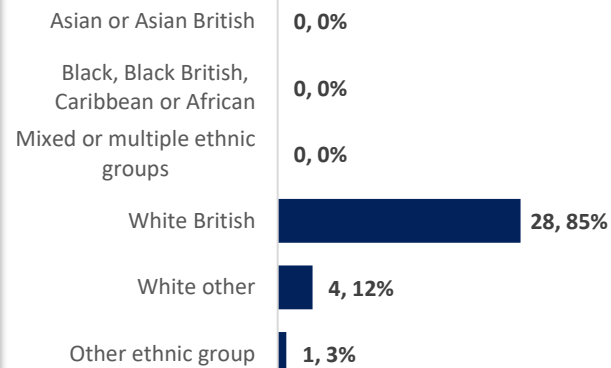
Age



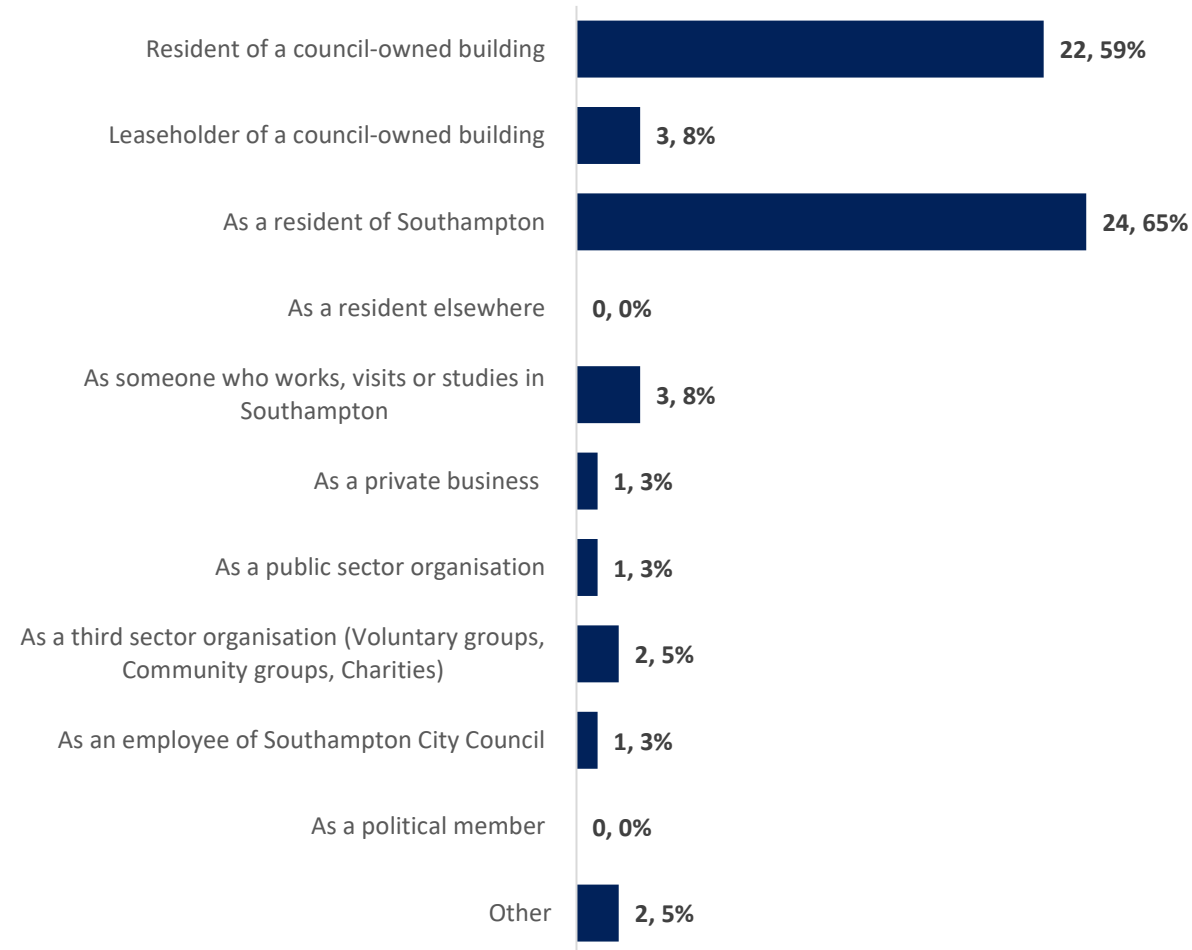
Disability



Ethnicity



Interest in the consultation





Consultation feedback

Proposed Commitments



Southampton City Council manages building safety in Council-owned residential buildings. Building safety refers to the measures that are in place to protect tenants in buildings. Building safety measures reduce and mitigate risks, such as the spreading of a fire, structural failures and gas and electric hazards. The building safety measures aim to reduce the seriousness of an incident if one occurs.

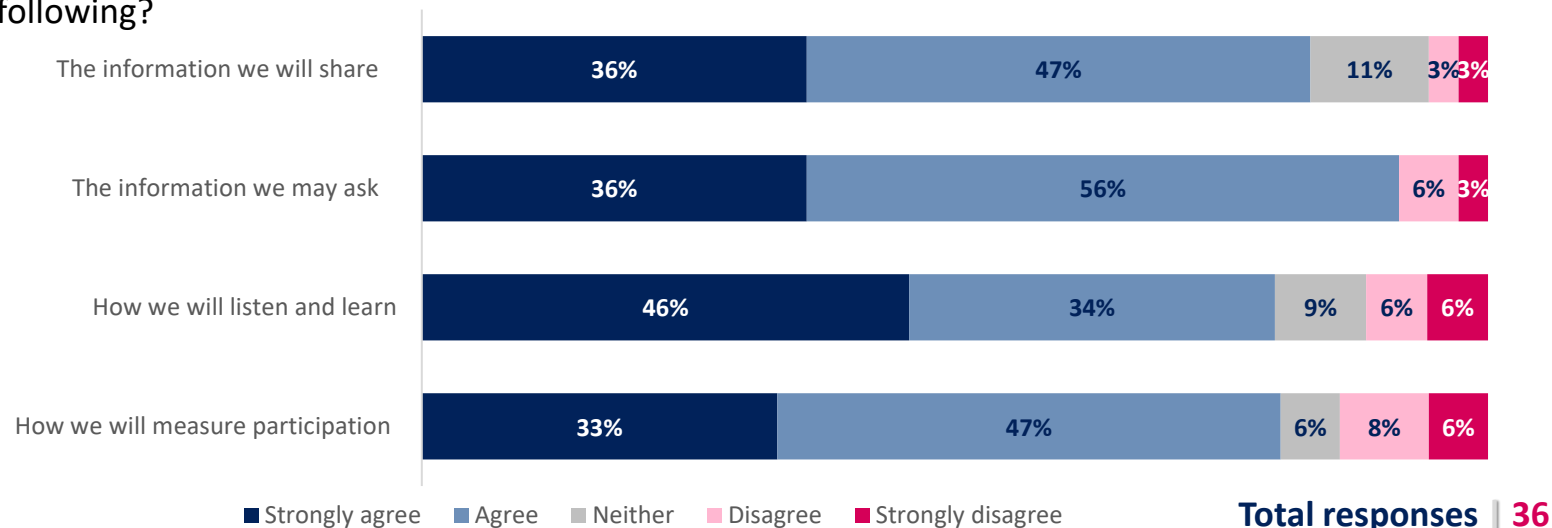
As residents, and leaseholders in Council-owned buildings, you have a say in building safety decisions. This draft strategy sets out how we will involve you in building safety decisions.

Our proposed commitments within the Resident Engagement Strategy include:

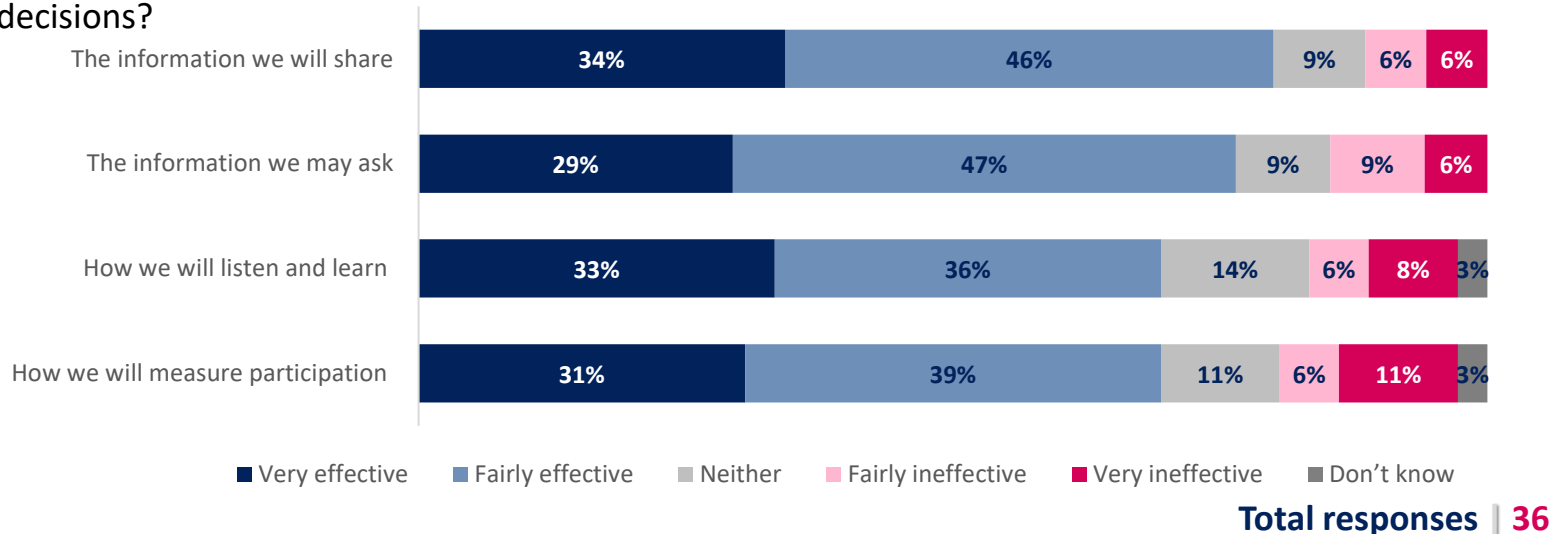
- **Information we will share:** We will make sure to provide key information that you need to know about building safety. This means we will continue to keep you informed through channels including, but not limited to, notice boards, tenant handbooks, letters and emails and publishing key information on our website, social media and Tenants Link.
- **Information we may ask:** We want to hear your views about how we can keep you safe in your building, and to help us make building safety decisions we may ask you questions, including but not limited to whether you feel safe, how easy you find it to report issues or raise safety concerns and what information would you like us to provide to help you feeling safe.
- **How we will listen and learn:** We want to make sure we engage with you about building safety decisions in a way that suits you best. This can include through letters, surveys, email, social media and meetings for examples.
- **How we will measure participation:** We will regularly monitor and review how we engage with you about building safety decisions. If there is a lack of satisfaction and participation, we will change our engagement methods.



Question 1 | To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposed commitments for the following?



Question 2 | How effective would these be in making sure you are involved in making building safety decisions?

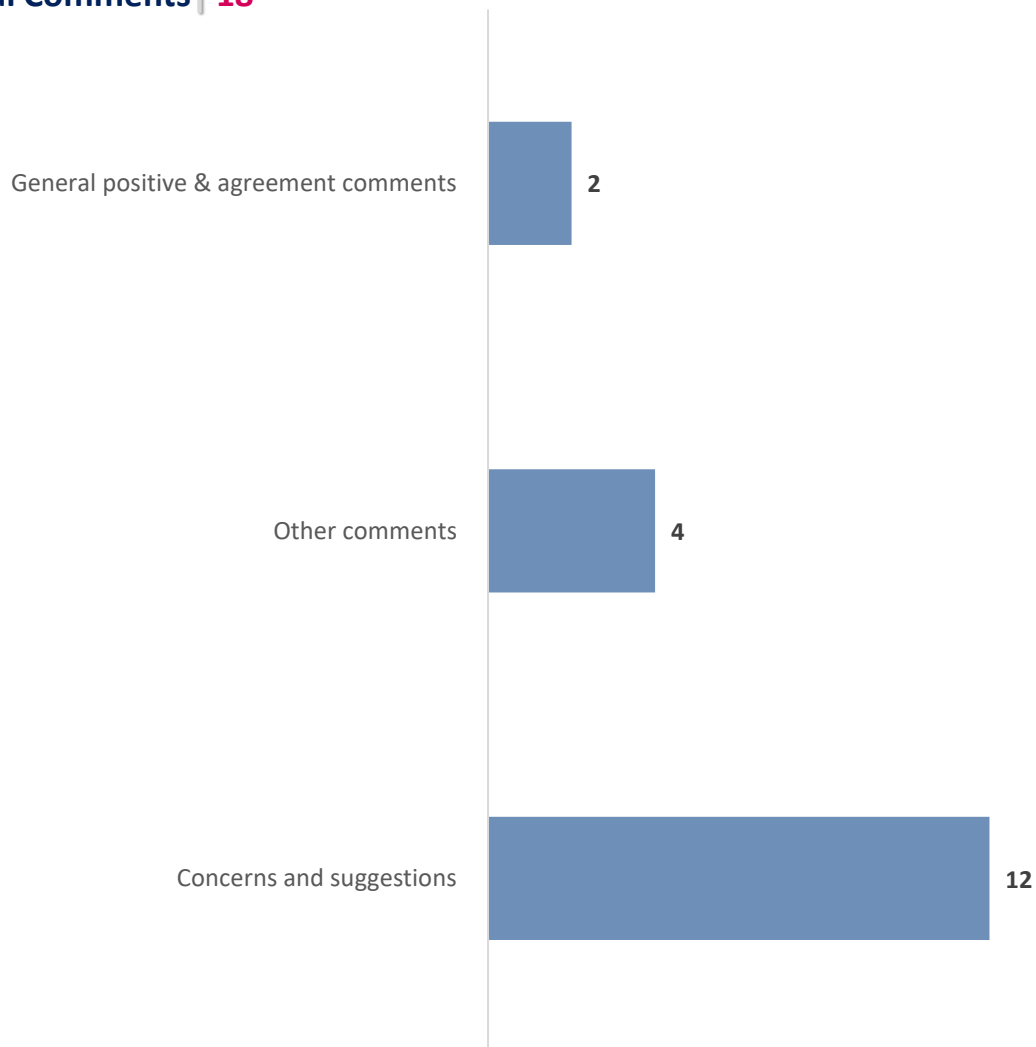


Key findings

- **'The information we may ask'** received the **highest level of agreement** with **92%**. While **'How we will measure participation'** got the highest level of **disagreement** from respondents (**14%**).
- **'The information we will share'** would be **most effective** in making sure there is involvement in the making of **building safety decisions (80%)**.



Total Comments | 18



General positive & agreement comments (2)

"I agree with what you say."

"This all sounds very good."

Other comments (4)

"The Council is regularly doing these consultations, but we have learned that often the Council has already made the decisions before doing the consultation but want to appear to be listening. As a result, little confidence in any commitments."

"Ps. When are my bins going to be emptied?."

"Still no resolution to Holyrood heating charges??Though not!"

I want to see Cxford Rd from Lordswood Rd down to Tremona Road be no Parking for Cars. Saturday is the worst. The Road is not Wide enough. Ive seen a 4x4 Truck car force a Ambulance on Blue Light over. If there was no Parking. Buses a Lorries have Difficulties I see Vehicles drive in the Bus Lane. Not wanting to Stop at the Lights The road seems a lot cleaner. I know there has been no Bin Collect Its a hard job Keeping Southampton Clean an Tidy. Wishing all the Staff a fine 2024. One point not happy with. Why Blue Star Buses took off the £15 wkly tick. I use the Bus because i have a Heart Condition. I believes Southampton is a Better City Shops Change over the years. I know one thing. Cars are parking on Double yellows. I even saw one on the Pavement. Lorries need to Deliver Along Cxford Rd there need to be more patrols. People are parking in the Zone are. Not wanting to pay parking Charges. Worst bit is the blind bend in the road before Arcadia Close. All in all Southampton is a Lovely City Its Changed since i moved here. I feel part of the City. Would love to help more. I spoken to Councillors from Conservatives an Labour. Thank you for making Southampton a City for all people.



Concerns and Suggestions (12)

"The stay in your flat should change."

"Too many variables. Stay put policy to change."

"With staffing cutbacks is this truly realistic."

"The Council never gives us a choice?"

"Will you really listen and then take action . Or carry on not really listening and doing what you want or doing nothing."

"I hope tenant's suggestions will be fully considered, but there will always be policy, budgetary and legislative constraints."

"Waste of money again."

"Suggestions and opinions don't seem to matter to housing as you will do what you want anyway. You can't even resolve complaints properly. "

"Some tenants will do the right thing, but many won't. One only has to look around and see the lack of residents abiding by tenancy rules etc .Nothing gets done owing to councils reply "oh it takes a long time ?? How long is a piece of string ? Forever .Does not inspire me at all."

"Honest upfront info and the disruption it will cause to us residents once again .It was dreadful and stressful first time around and to be honest no one wanted to know what our thoughts were !!!! It was only a few holding back that we were spoken to and properly engaged as to what was happening in our homes .As we all age, we don't need the stress .One comment was oh it's not that bad !!! (that was because she didn't live in a tower block) another was "well it's going to happen, so you have to put up with it !!" Not great, is it ?"

"I will wait and see. From.my point of view I prefer online contact. It saves on paper and post charges and I have been in the internet since 1997."

"What is said and what happens is two different things, my only issues are the selective safety conditions, if any safety issues out side those listed in the councils eyes won't matter. If I don't feel safe my feelings are validated and shouldn't be dismissed because it's not on your tick box, not everything is black and white."



Total Comments | 38

<i>"It mentioned that fire safety information is available at the back of the doors, but tenants are told that they are not allowed to keep anything on the for and all the notices have been taken down."</i>
<i>"Fire safety email – out of office message said that they would respond in 10 working days – this should be changed."</i>
<i>"Keep referring to "tower blocks" in the strategy – but council is committed to strategy for all the blocks – this should be changed."</i>
<i>"Need contact details for PAP and AP (and named person)."</i>
<i>"AP – not clear either."</i>
<i>"PAP: is there are name and contact for PAP. Not clear who is PAP and how to contact them."</i>
<i>"What is "commonhold"."</i>
<i>"Need to listen when people raise concerns."</i>
<i>"Explain what is "significant number of people" in the strategy."</i>
<i>"Can you clarify a bit better what "mandatory occurrence report" is. Mandatory occurrence should be changed."</i>
<i>"Would like strategy reviews 1x year."</i>
<i>"How will you know how many people reported building safety issues if tenants are reporting to different places – need central reporting ."</i>
<i>"Change wording on the Tenant participation: add coma on point 5."</i>
<i>"How can people request information in different formats if they are unable to read the information in the first place?"</i>
<i>"Could hold events 1x year in tower blocks." "Engage children and young people about building safety."</i>
<i>"Is there fire safety and building safety strategy? Both should be available online."</i>
<i>"Tenants want phone numbers."</i>
<i>"Need to get the emergency contact for out of hours building safety reporting."</i>
<i>"People do not know how to report Building safety issues at the moment."</i>



<p><i>"Get paper copies available for the vulnerable people."</i></p>
<p><i>"What about the leaseholders."</i></p>
<p><i>"Clarify what we deem to be "vulnerable" people."</i></p>
<p><i>"Would like to see the results of this consultation published in Tenants Link and send via Tenant Engagement email."</i></p>
<p><i>"Are consultation paper copies available in libraries?"</i></p>
<p><i>"The tenants wanted to know if there is a Building Safety Strategy? Fire Safety Strategy and if there is one – can they see it?"</i></p>
<p><i>"Need to change the "stay put" policy/advice – tenants are not convinced this is the best advice."</i></p>
<p><i>"Would like tenants' Building safety group to become a sounding board for the council – but would the council listen."</i></p>
<p><i>"The draft strategy unclear about who is the principal responsible person (name) and who is the responsible person for the individual blocks."</i></p>
<p><i>"Should have specific meetings for bigger blocks – when specific block issues come up. The meetings should be in the evening."</i></p>
<p><i>"It would be good that some competent SCC staff install electrical staff (like stoves) as tenants cannot afford one – maybe to have a pool of qualified staff that tenants can call upon for the "private" work – this would ensure the work is done to SCC standard."</i></p>
<p><i>"Would be good to produce a video of the strategy – with simplified information/summary of the strategy and to have an accessible version of the strategy. Develop a video portal to inform tenants of the consultation results (any consultations) – with bite sized information on issues."</i></p>
<p><i>"Should have a follow up meeting to update everyone who took part in focus groups on the results of the consultation: what has changed."</i></p>
<p><i>"Excessive questions in monitoring forms? Do you really need to know all that for the consultation on Building safety TE strategy?"</i></p>
<p><i>"Is there a separate Building safety Strategy and Fire safety strategy? Tenants would like to be able to see them both."</i></p>
<p><i>"How much is all this going to cost? Has someone calculated the costs?"</i></p>
<p><i>"Draft strategy: not clear how will the council "listen and learn"</i></p>
<p><i>"Doubtful. Council do not listen to the consultation recommendations. Do you really listen – or you just file it somewhere as a tick boxing exercise. If the suggestions not accepted, should tell us why. Need to be a two way process. Mass communication: consultation and then more heightened down – how is it going to be managed."</i></p>
<p><i>"Would like to receive the feedback in variety of ways – via emails definitely; would also like to get a feedback and the report of this consultation. Could use Notice boards with QR codes to report this back. And via email, and the meeting."</i></p>

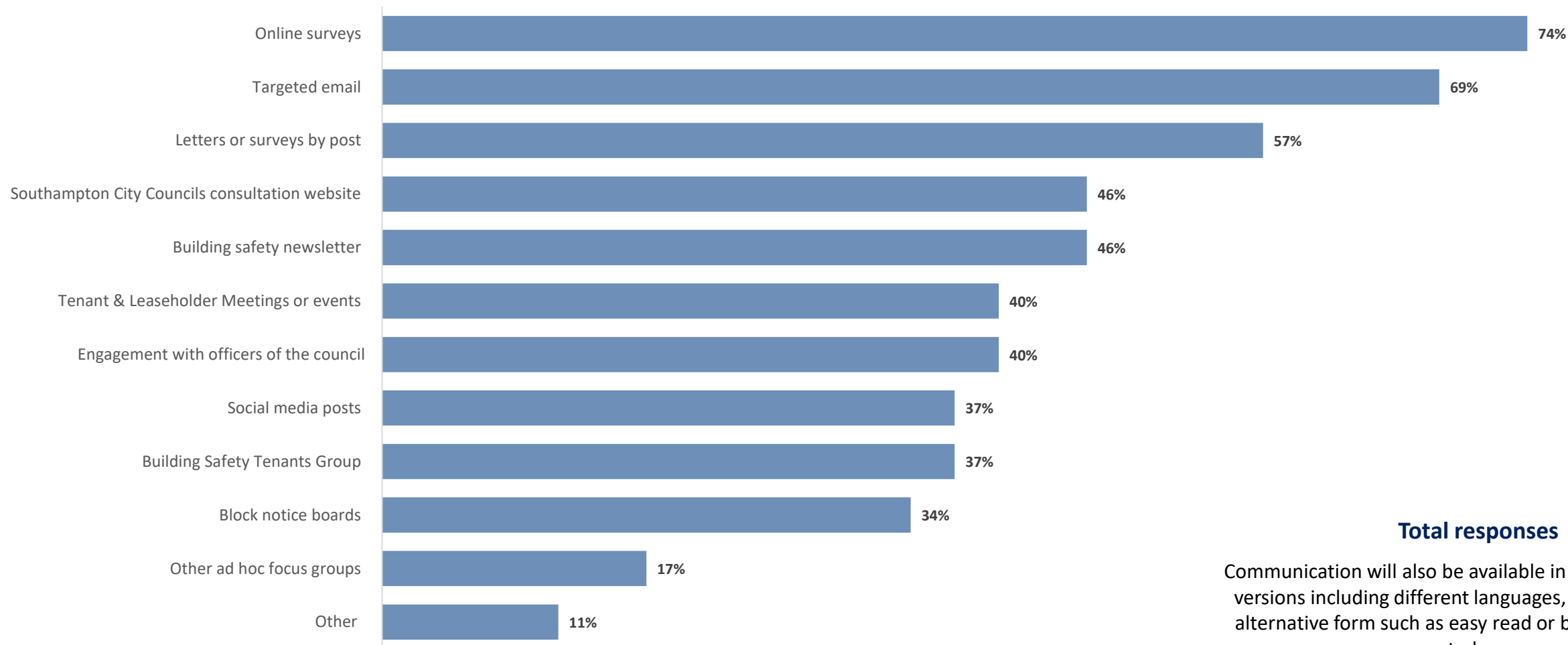


Consultation feedback

How we will listen and learn



Question 3 | Please let us know how best we can communicate with you about building safety decisions. (Please tick all that apply)



Total responses | 35

Communication will also be available in different versions including different languages, or in an alternative form such as easy read or braille, if requested.

Key findings

- 74% of respondents selected 'Online surveys' followed by 'Targeted email' with 69% and 'Letters or surveys by post' with 57% as the best communication methods regarding building safety decisions.



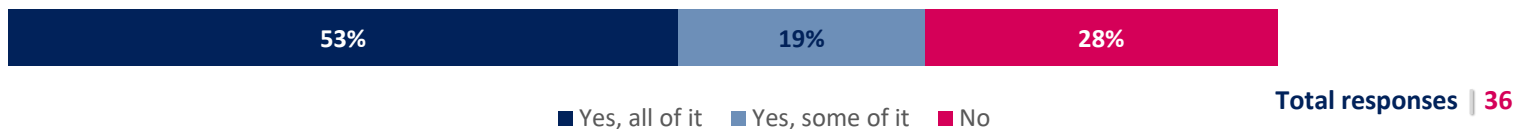
Consultation feedback

Reading the draft strategy





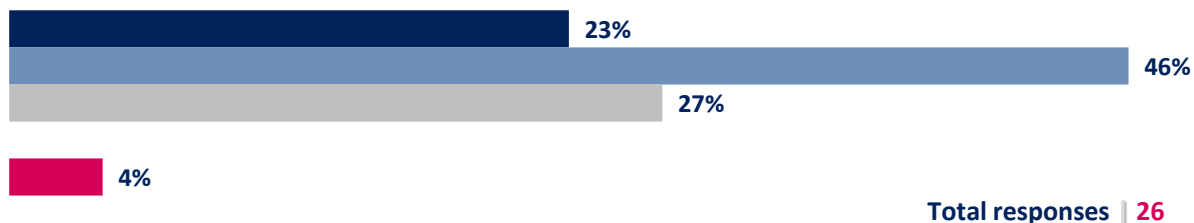
Question 4 | Have you read the proposed draft strategy?



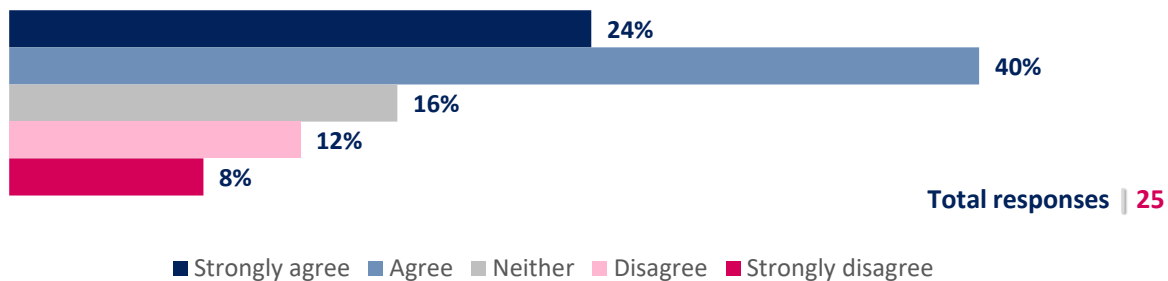
Question 5 | If you have read the proposed draft strategy, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Asked if "Yes, all of it" or "Yes, some of it" response to question 4.

"The draft strategy is easy to understand"



"The draft strategy provides sufficient information"



Key findings

- Of the **72%** of respondents who either read all the proposed draft strategy or some of it, **69% agreed** it was **easy to understand** with just **4% disagreeing**.
- **20%** of those who responded said they **disagree** that the **draft strategy provides sufficient information**, while **64%** said they agree.