



Consultation Report

2019/20 Rent and Service Charge Consultation - Summary of Responses

Background

The approach to undertaking our consultation on setting rent and service charges for 2019/20 was informed by recommendations from a working group which TPAS facilitated with tenants in 2018 about how Viewpoint consults its tenants on setting its rents and service charges. We tried to implement as many of the recommendations made by the group as possible which included consulting earlier than usual.

We discussed the proposed rent and service charge with the VTRG committee at a meeting in October, outlining the proposal and the background to this and the way in which we were going to carry out the consultation. They were supportive of the proposal and the approach.

A small group of tenants worked with Viewpoint staff to design an information leaflet and questionnaire which was sent to all tenants in November. Ballot boxes were made available in complexes to make it easier for tenants to post their questionnaire back and the questionnaire was available to complete online via survey monkey. This consultation concluded on the 24 December.

As agreed with the rent and service charge consultation group, the group met again following the conclusion of the consultation to discuss the output. 4 Board members also attended this meeting. We also took the opportunity to

seek feedback to the draft letter which is sent to tenants following the annual decision on rent and service charges for the following year. Our draft letter will be amended as a result.

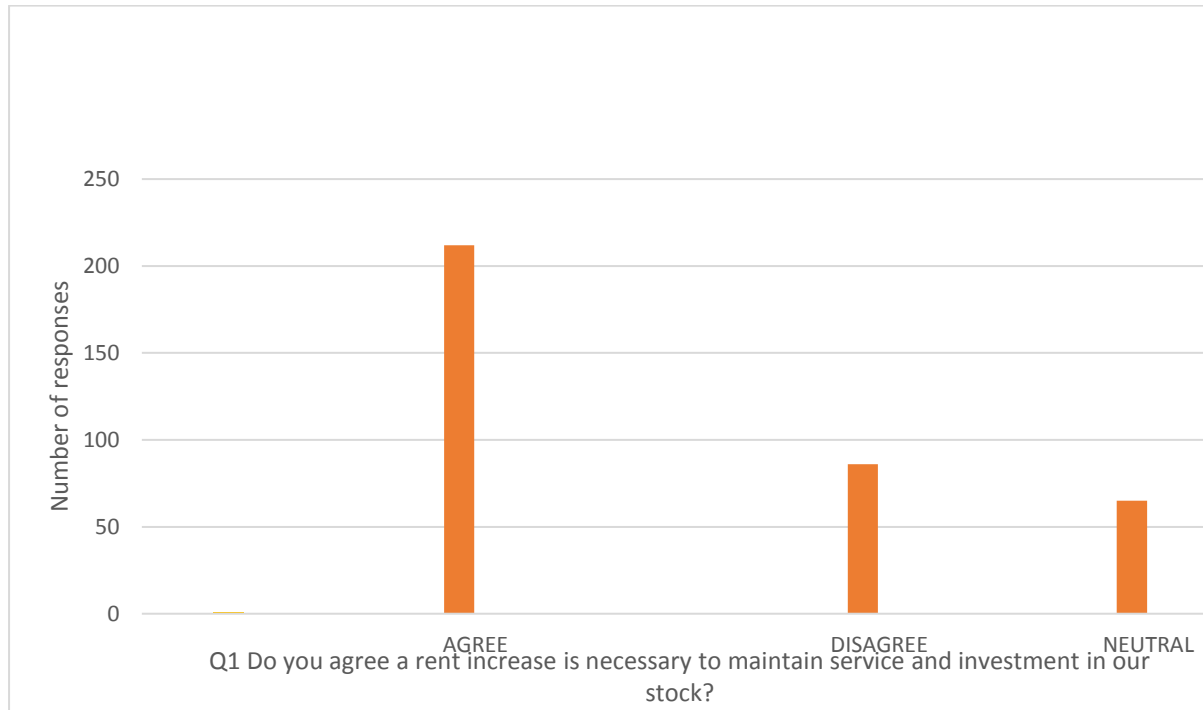
Rent and Service Charge Proposal

The proposal which was put to tenants was that rents would increase by 2.3% and there would be no increase in service charges from 1 April 2019.

Responses

We received **364 responses**, a response rate of **27%**. 35 responses (10%) were completed online. Over the past 5 years, the highest response rate has been 14% and the lowest 8%, with an average over the 5 years of just under 10%.

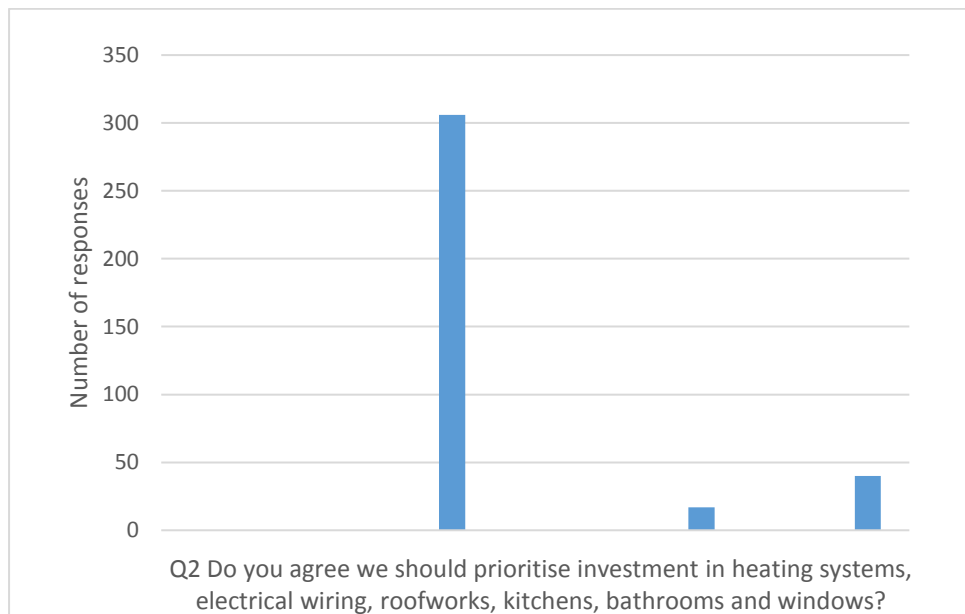
Q1: Do you agree that a rent increase is necessary to maintain service and investment in our stock?



	no	%
Strongly Agree	78	21%
Somewhat Agree	135	37%
Neutral/No comment	65	18%
Somewhat Disagree	35	10%
Strongly Disagree	51	14%

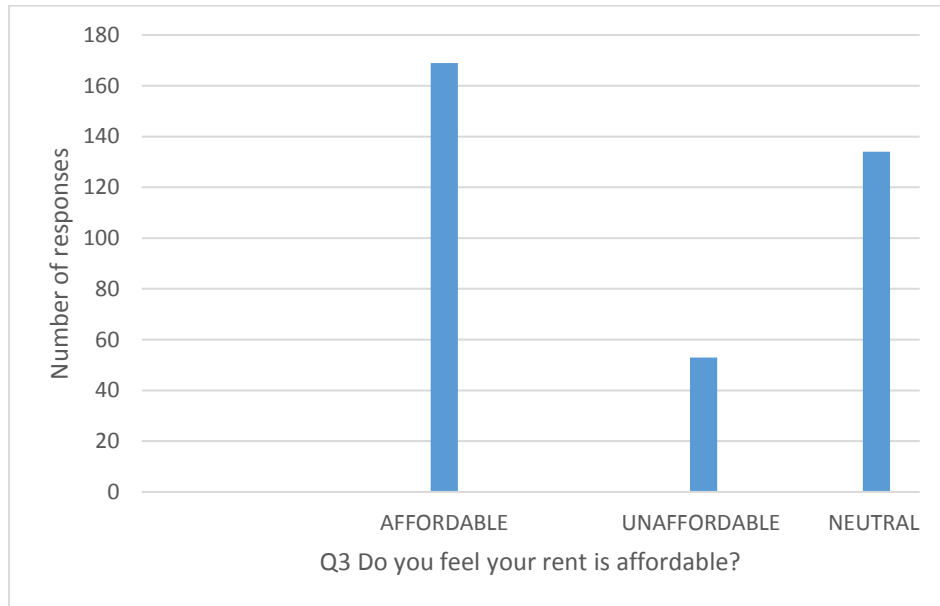
Total	364	100%
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Q2: Do you agree we should prioritise investment in heating systems, electrical wiring, roofworks, kitchens, bathrooms and windows?



	no	%
Strongly Agree	202	55%
Somewhat Agree	105	29%
Neutral/no comment	40	11%
Somewhat Disagree	35	10%
Strongly Disagree	51	14%
Total	364	100%

Q3: Do you feel your rent is affordable?



	no	%
Very Affordable	22	6%
Somewhat Affordable	148	41%
Neutral/no comment	134	38%
Unaffordable	40	11%
Very unaffordable	13	4%
Total	357	100%

Q4: Opportunity to provide comments – comments received are set out below:

Positive

" like everything else costs go up in all areas and I do see the need for increase".

" as long as increase gives my complex a better standard off facilities".

" I agree that rents need to be increased to keep up with rising costs".

" understand rents may have to increase due to rising costs from contractors etc..."

" necessary I think".

" the increase is inevitable".

Negative

" increase again too high 1% to 1.75% at the most acceptable".

" being on a fixed income it is very difficult to agree to a rent increase".

"affordable ? " that would depend entirely on people's circumstances, and I think it is wrong of you to put people in the position of feeling embarassed into voting in a positive manner."

I myself am happy with the rent and if they increased in line with inflation would not object, however, other than this I would feel grieved".

" You already receive grants for stock improvement and the construction of new property. I do expect rents to go up in line with inflation but tenants should not be subsidising improvements to your business model".

" We also feel the surpluses generates in the past years, have been excessive and feel that tenants should be rewarded with a negative increase."

"unable to make comments on rent increase due to not knowing VP expenditures. Tenants satisfaction survey - waste in admin and it is bribe the prize draw. "

Q5: How would you rate the information in the rent increase leaflet?

	no	%
Very Satisfied	104	30%
Somewhat satisfied	110	31%
Neutral/no comment	35	10%
Somewhat dissatisfied	21	6%
Very dissatisfied	14	4%
Total	349	100%

Q6: How would you like to receive feedback on the consultation? (Select as many as you wish)

	no
Individual letter or e mail	223
Through complex meeting	52
Via complex noticeboard	69
Newspoint	78
Viewpoint website	22

