



## Consultation Report

### 2022/23 Rent and Service Charge Consultation – Summary of Responses

#### **Introduction**

This year we followed a similar approach to our consultation on setting rent and service charges as we did over the last two years. This year we were able to form a working group to agree on the design and the information in the leaflet.

- Information leaflet and questionnaire sent to all tenants in November 2021. On the questionnaire, there was a link to submit responses online, via Survey Monkey.
- Information was put on Viewpoint website with a link to the questionnaire in Survey Monkey.
- All tenants received a reply paid envelope to return the questionnaire.
- The Fife Viewpoint Tenants Group and Tenants Action group were unable to discuss this due to various circumstances within the groups.

#### **Rent and Service Charge Proposal**

The proposal put to tenants was

##### **Rents Proposal:**

- To increase rents by 2.9%

##### **Service Charges Proposal:**

- Service charges would increase by 2%

#### **Responses**

We received **238 responses**, a response rate of 19.8% of our tenants.

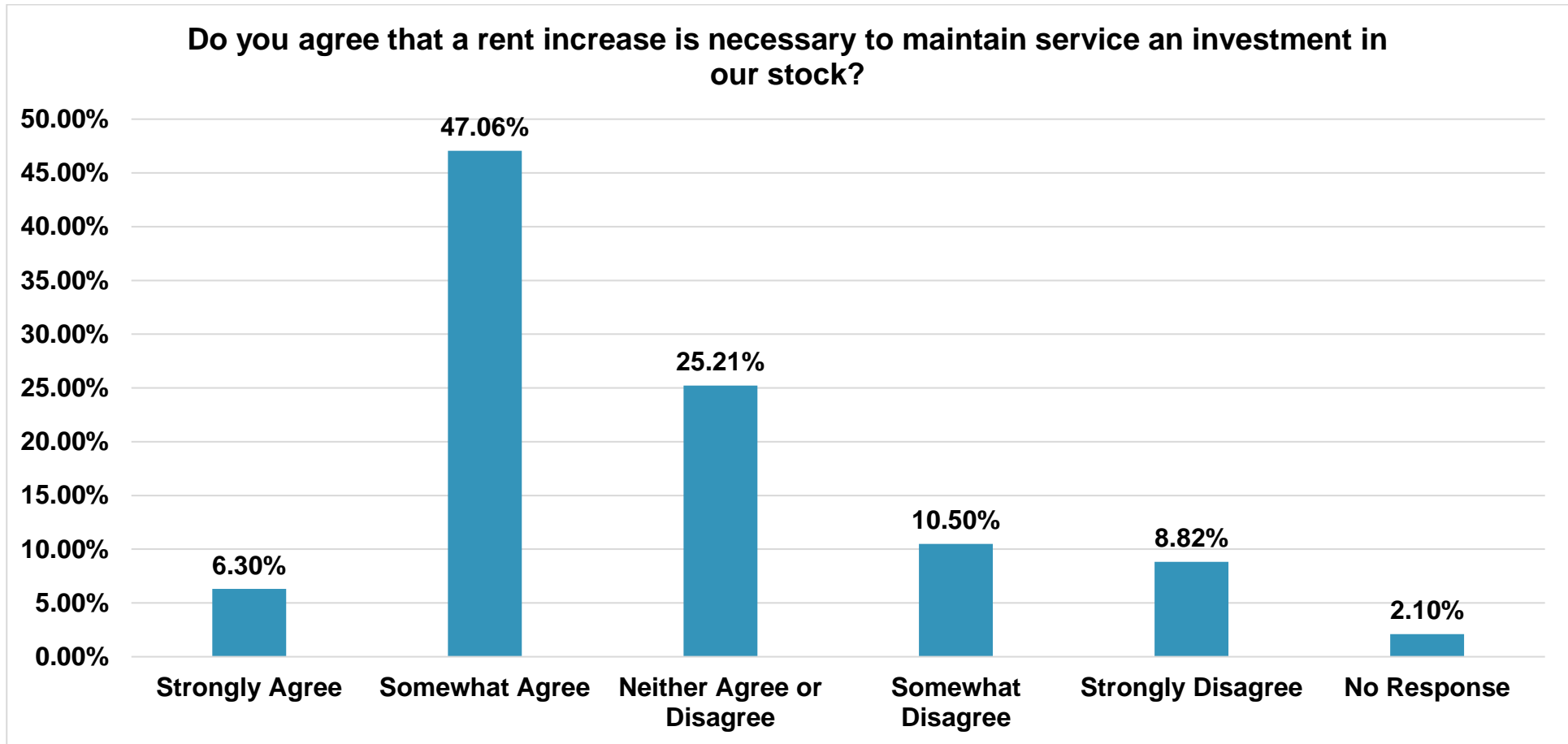
- **233** responses were received on the paper questionnaire
- **5** responses were completed online

This is an increase on last year's response rate, which was 17%.

The responses are broken down by type of housing in the table below.

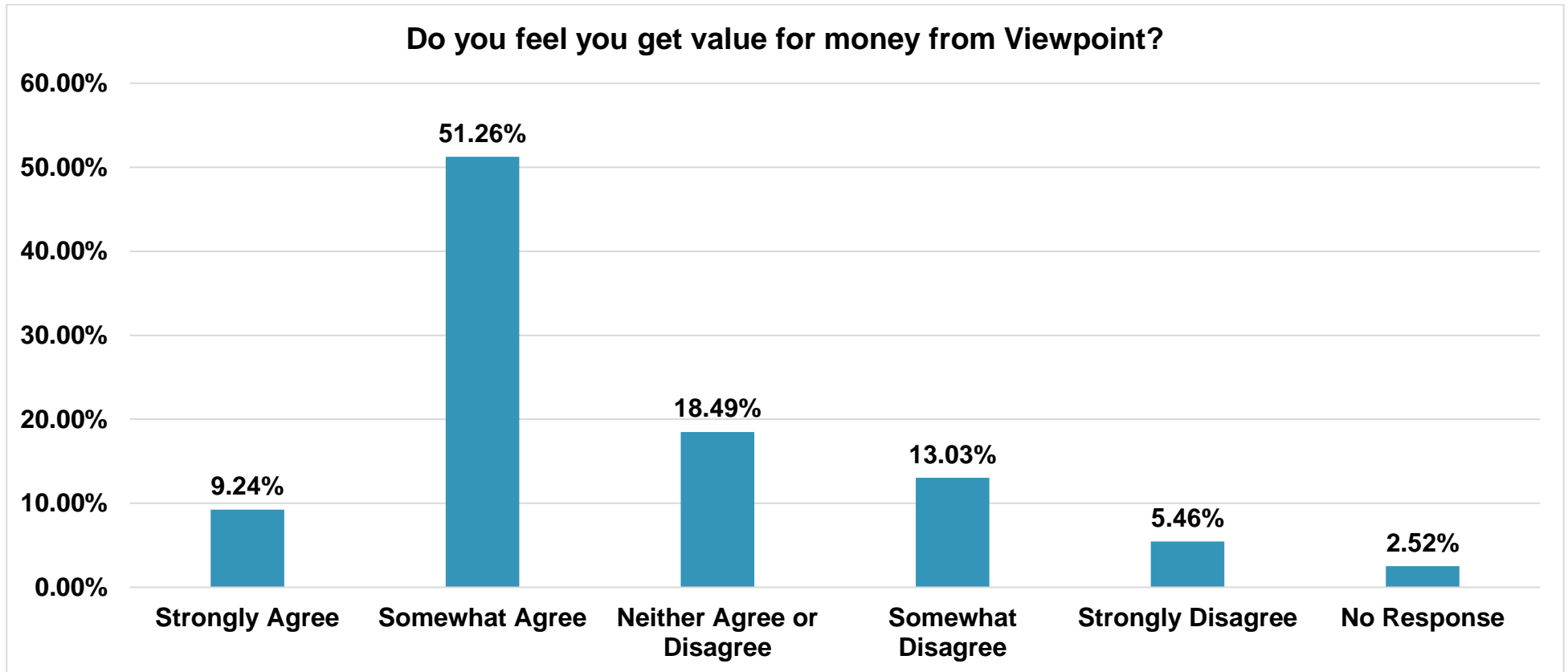
<b>Type of Housing</b>	<b>Total Number of Responses</b>	<b>% of Total Responses i.e. 238</b>
Enhanced Sheltered	35	14.71%
Sheltered	112	47.06%
Alarmed	45	18.91%
Retirement	16	6.72%
General Needs	18	7.56%
No response	12	5.04%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>100%</b>

Question 1:



	Number	%
Strongly Agree	15	6.30%
Somewhat Agree	112	47.06%
Neither Agree or Disagree	60	25.21%
Somewhat Disagree	25	10.50%
Strongly Disagree	21	8.82%
No Response	5	2.10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>100%</b>

Question 2:

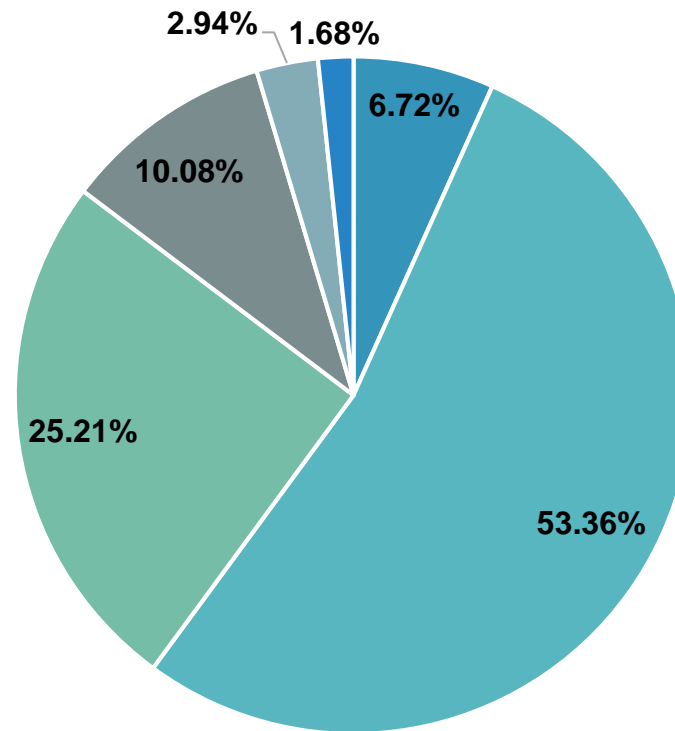


	Number	%
Strongly Agree	22	9.01%
Somewhat Agree	122	49.10%
Neither Agree or Disagree	44	19.37%
Somewhat Disagree	31	13.96%
Strongly Disagree	13	5.86%
No Response	6	2.70%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>100%</b>

Question 3:

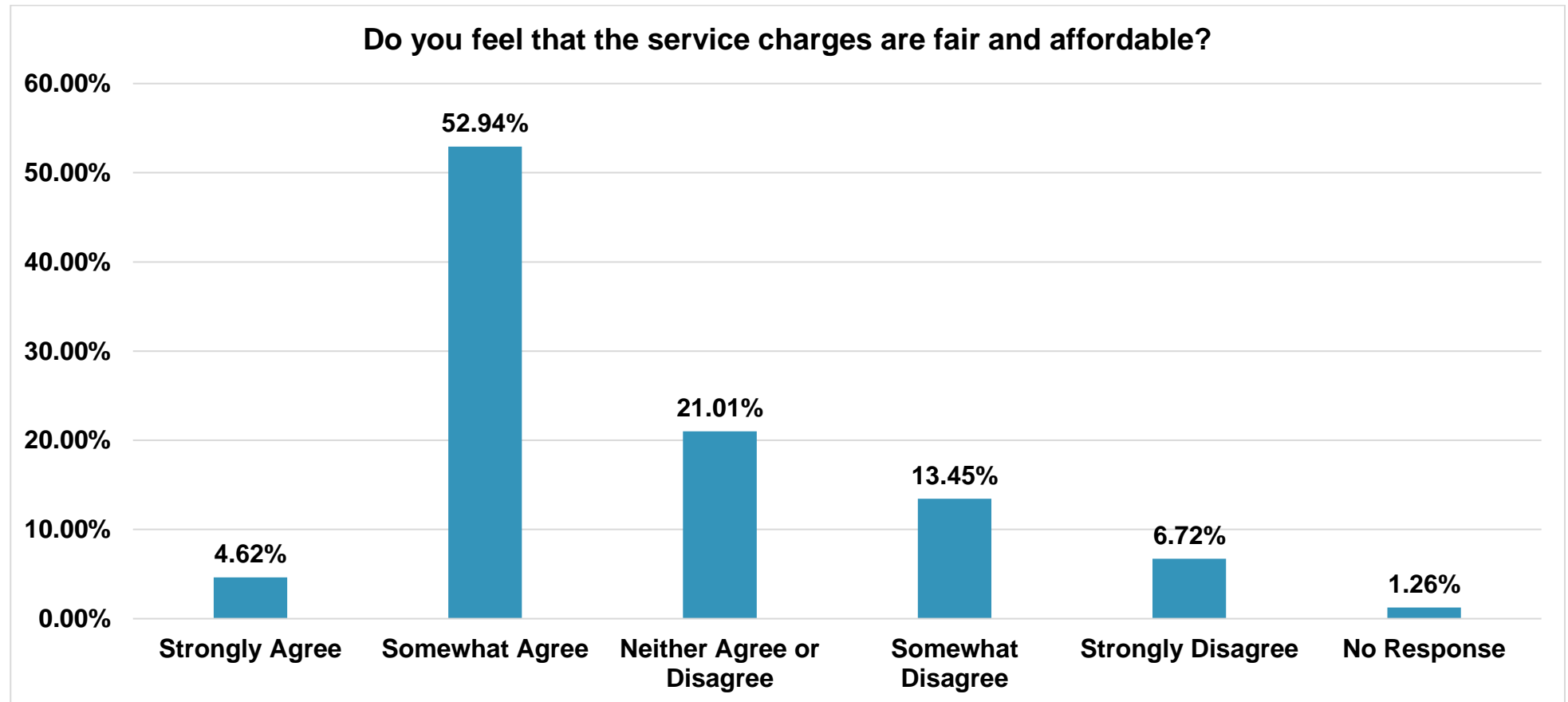
Do you feel your rent is affordable?

- Very Affordable
- Affordable
- Neither affordable or unaffordable
- Unaffordable
- Very unaffordable
- No response



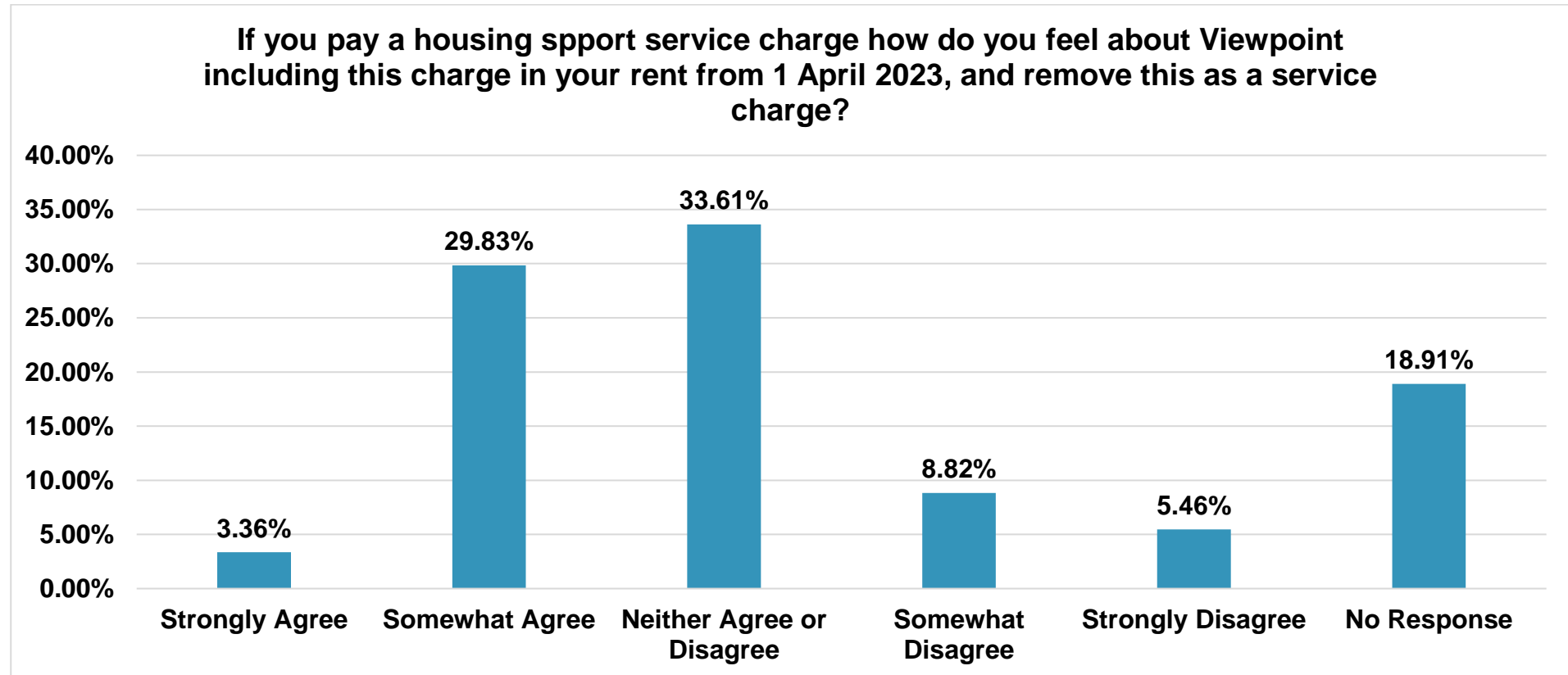
	Number	%
Very Affordable	16	6.72%
Affordable	127	53.36%
Neutral	60	25.21%
Unaffordable	24	10.08%
Very Unaffordable	7	2.94%
No Response	4	1.68%
<b>Total</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>100%</b>

Question 4:



	Number	%
Strongly Agree	11	4.62%
Somewhat Agree	126	52.94%
Neither Agree or Disagree	50	21.01%
Somewhat Disagree	32	13.45%
Strongly Disagree	16	6.72%
No Response	3	1.26%
<b>Total</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>100%</b>

Question 5:



	Number	%
Strongly Agree	8	3.36%
Somewhat Agree	71	29.83%
Neither Agree or Disagree	80	33.61%
Somewhat Disagree	21	8.82%
Strongly Disagree	13	5.46%
No Response	45	18.91%
<b>Total</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Question 6:

Summary of comments on the proposal - A summary of the comments is below, negative and positive comments and some comments that do not directly relate to the proposal but are indirectly related to the services we provide

### Positive

- Very fair rent and service charge for Edinburgh
- Service charges need to increase every year as everything getting expensive
- The increased charges are necessary to keep the building in good condition
- Increase is reasonable and please that increase has been limited to the rates proposed, especially in light of other living costs rising significantly.
- I receive Housing benefit. Very well maintained, clean and tidy. Repairs dealt with very quickly.
- Rent and service charges remain affordable at present
- The proposed changes/increase seem entirely fair. I am hugely grateful for the openness of this dialogue with tenants. I have also long considered that Viewpoint Housing give is a very good/fair deal

### Negative

- Since COVID is still affecting our income, I do not think this is the time for a rent and service charge increase
- Concern about the planning of repairs and sometimes the workmanship including the gardeners
- Concerns about rents being increased when common areas have been unavailable or restricted in use
- Concern about rents being increased when economic climate is uncertain.
- Do not feel a rent increase can be justified after 2 years of a pandemic and where housing support and services are reduced
- Increases should be limited to 1% every year
- Review based on a flawed housing support review



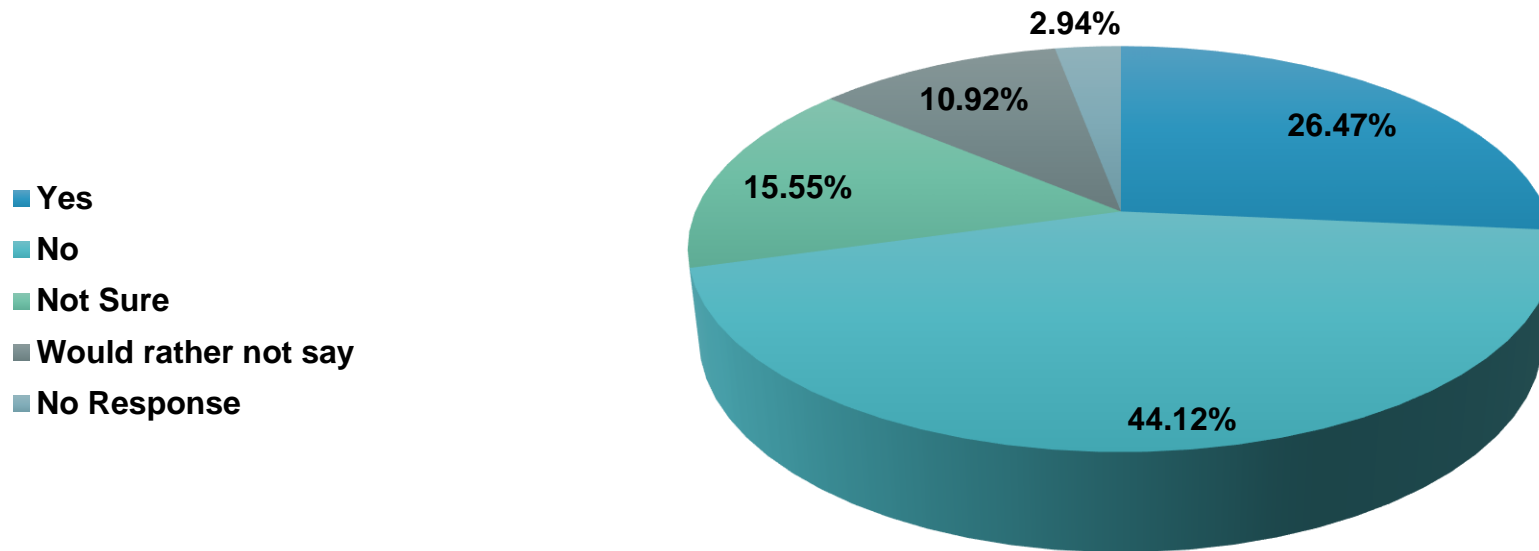
## Other

- During lockdown, it was a difficult time for all and obviously, the maintenance of the building had to be put on hold. Now more needed reported repairs and maintenance could be carried out as restrictions are lifted.
- I have lived here for 5 years now. The only thing I miss is my own garden
- Can you please explain what benefits it would bring to residents to combine rent and service charges?
- Feel secure and safe in my home since I came to live here when they were built. Thank you for your kind attention during the COVID.
- Some concerns about services
- Unfair to for laundry charges that they don't use – has own machine

### Question 7 :

Given the current ongoing situation with the pandemic, we felt it was prudent to find out how many of our tenants felt they had been financially impacted by the pandemic, and take the opportunity to make the tenants who were affected aware of the Welfare Rights service that we have.

### Has the Coronavirus pandemic had a negative impact on you financially?



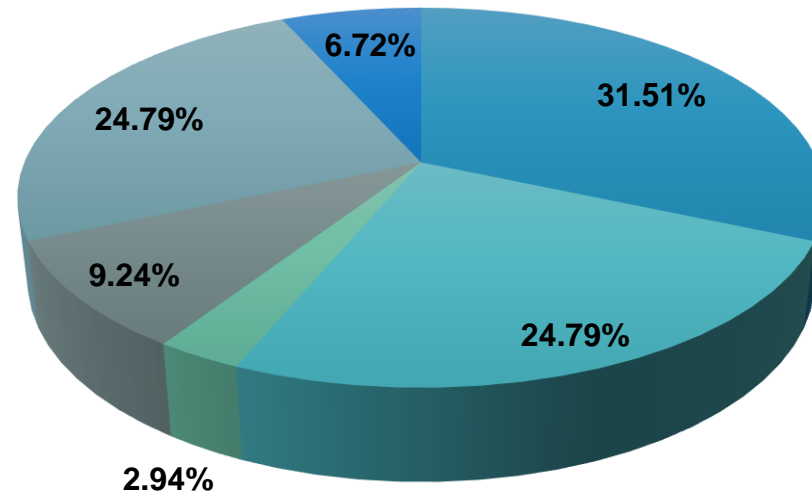
	Number	%
Yes	63	26.47%
No	105	44.12%
Not Sure	37	15.55%
Would rather not say	26	10.92%
No response	7	2.94%
<b>Total</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Question 8:

Tenants were asked if they were in receipt of full, partial or no housing benefit/housing support. This question was to assist in putting the question of affordability into context. Those not in receipt of any housing benefit or housing support are most likely to be affected by the rent proposal.

### Are you in receipt of housing benefit (or housing support) or do not pay rent?

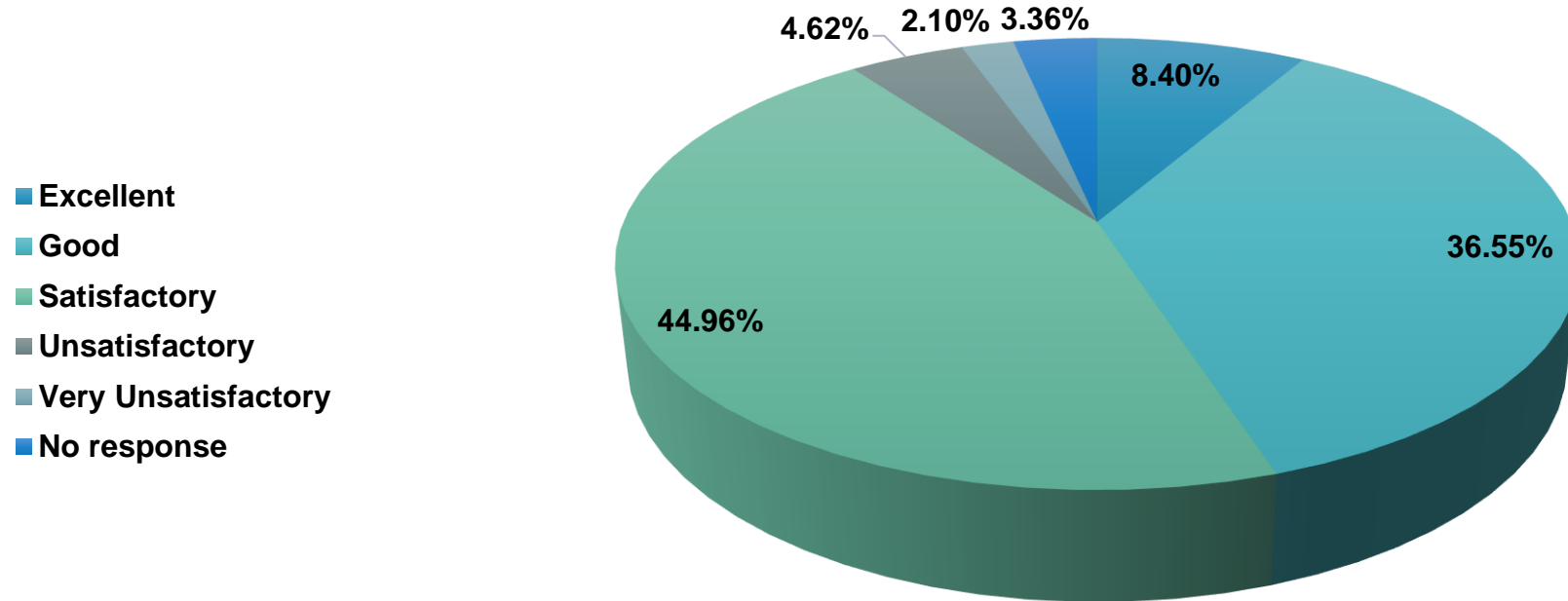
- No Housing Benefit or Housing Support
- Partial Housing Benefit or Housing Support
- Full Housing Benefit or Housing Support
- I do not pay rent
- Would rather not say
- No response



	Number	%
No Housing Benefit or Housing Support	75	31.51%
Partial Housing Benefit or Housing Support	59	24.79%
Full Housing Benefit or Housing Support	7	2.94%
I do not pay rent	22	9.24%
Would rather not say	59	24.79%
No Response	16	6.72%
<b>Total</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>100%</b>

Question 9:

### How would you rate the information in the rent and service charge proposal leaflet?



	Number	%
Excellent	20	8.40%
Good	87	36.55%
Satisfactory	107	44.96%
Unsatisfactory	11	4.62%
Very Unsatisfactory	5	2.10%
No Response	8	3.36%
<b>Total</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>100%</b>

At the end of the survey tenants were asked to add their name and telephone number if they wished a call from a member of staff to discuss their feedback.

10 of the 238 responses requested a call back.

- 5 of these were passed to Assets to contact
- 1 was a tenancy issue and passed to Housing Services
- 2 were a queries regarding Housing Support charges
- 1 unknown as not yet been able to contact
- 1 was additional comments on the review and these comments have been added in at question 6.

**Finally, in the tables below you will see the responses to the 6 main questions broken down into property type.**

	<b>Q1 Do you agree that a rent increase is necessary to maintain service and investment in our stock?</b>					
	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither Agree or Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>No Response</b>
<b>Alarmed</b>	2	22	13	5	2	1
<b>Enhanced Sheltered</b>	4	19	7	2	3	0
<b>General Needs</b>	1	4	5	2	6	0
<b>Sheltered</b>	5	61	27	11	8	0
<b>Retirement</b>	1	4	6	3	2	0
<b>Not Known</b>	2	2	2	2	0	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>5</b>

	<b>Q2 Do you feel you get value for money from Viewpoint?</b>					
	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither Agree or Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>No Response</b>
<b>Alarmed</b>	5	21	8	7	3	1
<b>Enhanced Sheltered</b>	2	17	8	6	2	0
<b>General Needs</b>	0	9	4	1	4	0
<b>Sheltered</b>	12	68	15	13	3	1
<b>Retirement</b>	1	4	7	3	1	0
<b>Not Known</b>	2	3	2	1	0	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>6</b>

	<b>Q3 Do you feel your rent is affordable?</b>					
	<b>Very Affordable</b>	<b>Affordable</b>	<b>Neither Affordable or Unaffordable</b>	<b>Unaffordable</b>	<b>Very Unaffordable</b>	<b>No Response</b>
<b>Alarmed</b>	4	25	12	2	1	1
<b>Enhanced Sheltered</b>	3	18	10	3	1	0
<b>General Needs</b>	1	6	8	2	1	0
<b>Sheltered</b>	6	68	20	14	3	1
<b>Retirement</b>	0	4	8	2	1	1
<b>Not Known</b>	2	6	2	1	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>

	<b>Q4 Do you think the service charges are fair and affordable?</b>					
	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither Agree or Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>No Response</b>
<b>Alarmed</b>	2	26	11	4	2	0
<b>Enhanced Sheltered</b>	2	23	3	4	3	0
<b>General Needs</b>	1	6	3	4	3	1
<b>Sheltered</b>	4	63	22	17	6	0
<b>Retirement</b>	0	5	7	2	1	1
<b>Not Known</b>	2	3	4	1	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>3</b>

	<b>Q5 If you pay a housing support service charge, how do you feel about Viewpoint including this charge in your rent from 1 April 2023, and remove this as a service charge?</b>					
	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither Agree or Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>No Response</b>
<b>Alarmed</b>	2	15	17	1	2	8
<b>Enhanced Sheltered</b>	2	13	7	2	5	6
<b>General Needs</b>	0	2	7	0	2	7
<b>Sheltered</b>	3	37	42	14	3	13
<b>Retirement</b>	0	3	4	3	1	5
<b>Not Known</b>	1	1	3	1	0	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>45</b>

	<b>Q7 Has the coronavirus pandemic had a negative impact on you financially?</b>				
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Unsure</b>	<b>Would rather not say</b>	<b>No Response</b>
<b>Alarmed</b>	14	18	7	6	0
<b>Enhanced Sheltered</b>	10	16	5	3	1
<b>General</b>	6	4	2	4	2
<b>Sheltered</b>	25	55	19	11	2
<b>Retirement</b>	5	7	2	2	0
<b>Blanks</b>	3	5	2	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>7</b>