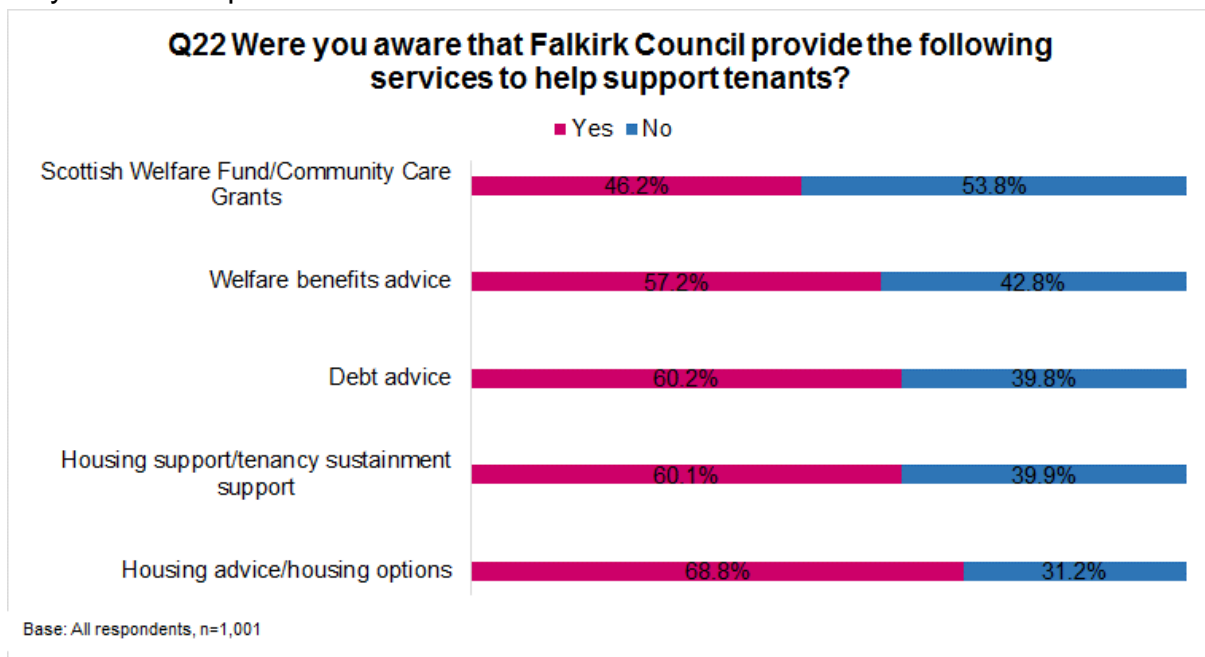


9. RENT AND VALUE FOR MONEY

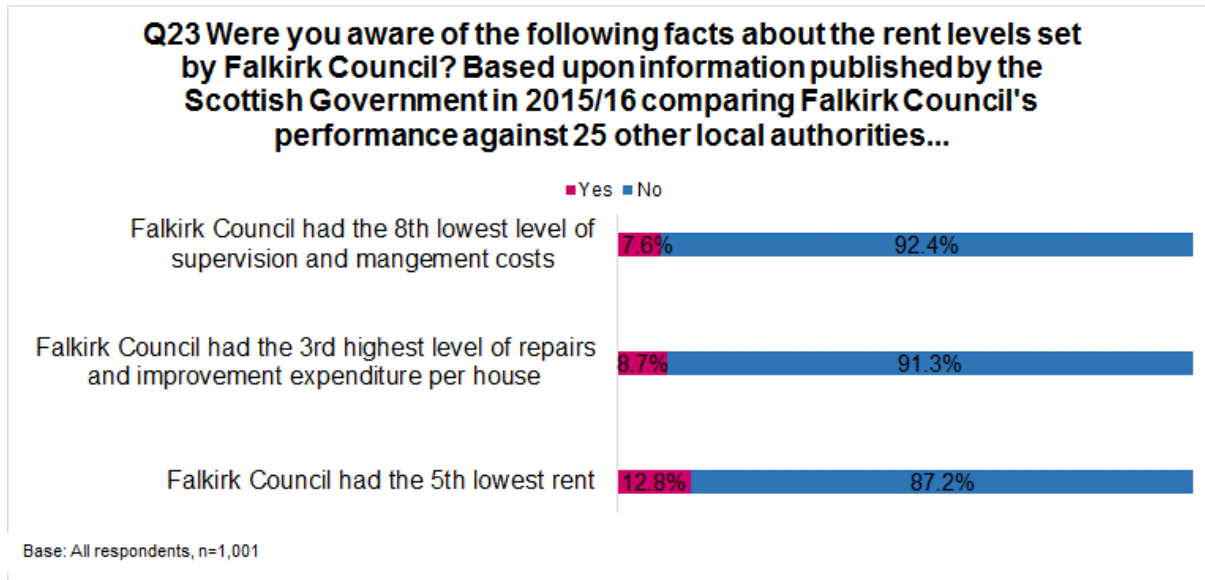
9.1 Support services (Q22)

Tenants were then asked if they were aware of various services provided by the Council to help support tenants. Just under 7 in 10 respondents (69%) said they were aware of housing advice, 60% said they were aware of housing and tenancy sustainment support and debt advice and 57% said they were aware of welfare benefits advice. Awareness was lowest in terms of the Scottish Welfare Fund where only 46% of respondents were aware of this service.



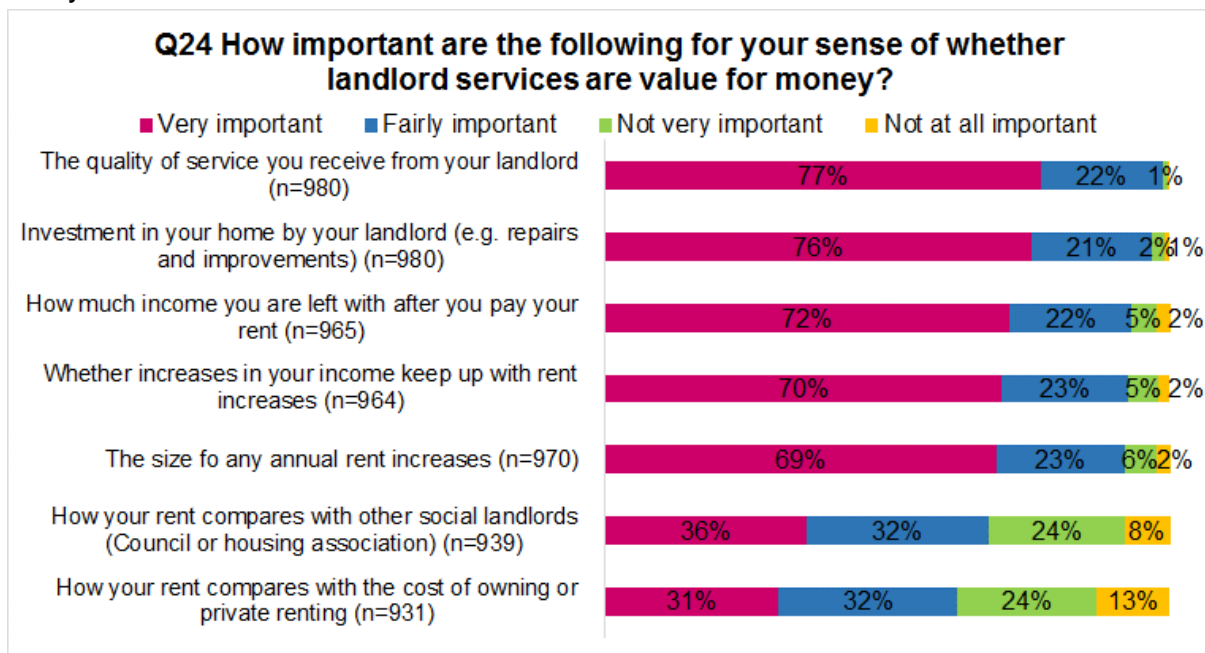
9.2 Rent levels (Q23)

In terms of rent levels awareness was low, with only 13% of respondents aware that Falkirk Council had the 5th lowest rent, 9% were aware that Falkirk Council had the 3rd highest level of repairs and improvement expenditure per house and 8% of respondents were aware that Falkirk Council had the 8th lowest level of supervision and management costs.



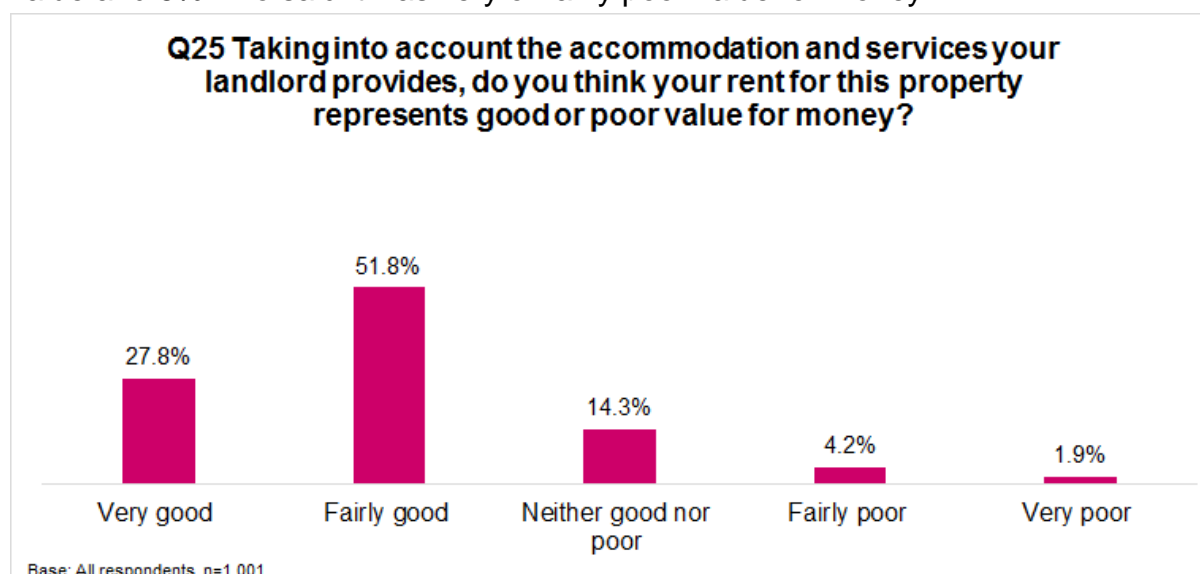
9.3 Considering value for money (Q24)

Respondents were then asked how important various statements were to their sense of whether the services the Council provide are value for money. Almost all respondents who gave an opinion considered the quality of service they receive from their landlord as very or fairly important when considering if a service is value for money (99%). 97% said they considered investment in their home by their landlord very or fairly important and 94% of respondents said they felt how much money they had left once they paid the rent was very or fairly important when considering value for money. Please note those who stated don't know have been excluded from analysis.



9.4 Value for money (Q25/26)

8 in 10 respondents (80%) were of the opinion that their rent represented very or fairly good value for money, compared to 14% who said it was neither good nor poor value and 6% who said it was very or fairly poor value for money.

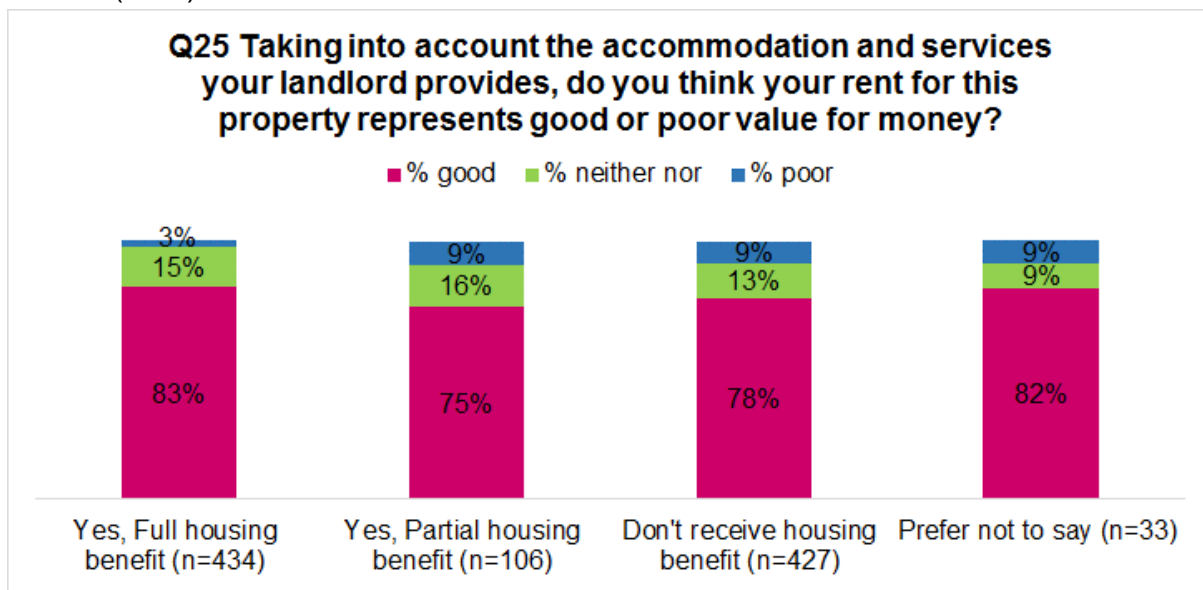


Following on from this respondents were then asked to explain why they said their rent represented good or poor value for money. As shown in the table below, just over 1 in 4 respondents (26%) said their rent represented good value or was affordable, 17% said they were in receipt of housing benefit and 16% said their rent was low or cheaper than others or private rent.

Q26 Can you explain why you say that?		
Base: All respondents, n=1001	No.	%
It is ok/ fair/ good value/ affordable/ good	255	25.5%
I receive housing benefit/ don't pay rent	167	16.7%
Rent I pay is low/ less than others/ private rent	161	16.1%
It is ok for what I have got/ I have a nice house/ good sized home	156	15.6%
It is expensive/ could be cheaper	57	5.7%
Because of repairs/ upgrades needing done	47	4.7%
Don't know/ Don't know how much it is	46	4.6%
It is a nice area/ convenient location/ good neighbours	38	3.8%
Happy/ no issues	23	2.3%
We need to pay it/ don't get a say/ no choice	20	2.0%
Rents are always increasing	20	2.0%
Good services	8	0.8%
Lived here a long time	5	0.5%
Other	40	4.0%

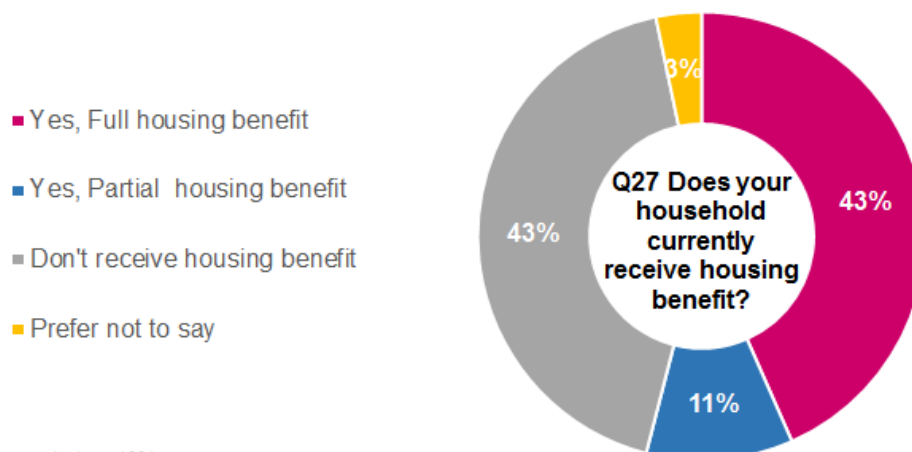
Analysis by housing benefit revealed that respondents in receipt of full housing benefit were more likely to be of the opinion that their rent represents very or fairly

good value for money than respondents who received partial (75%) or no housing benefit (78%).



9.5 Housing benefit (Q27)

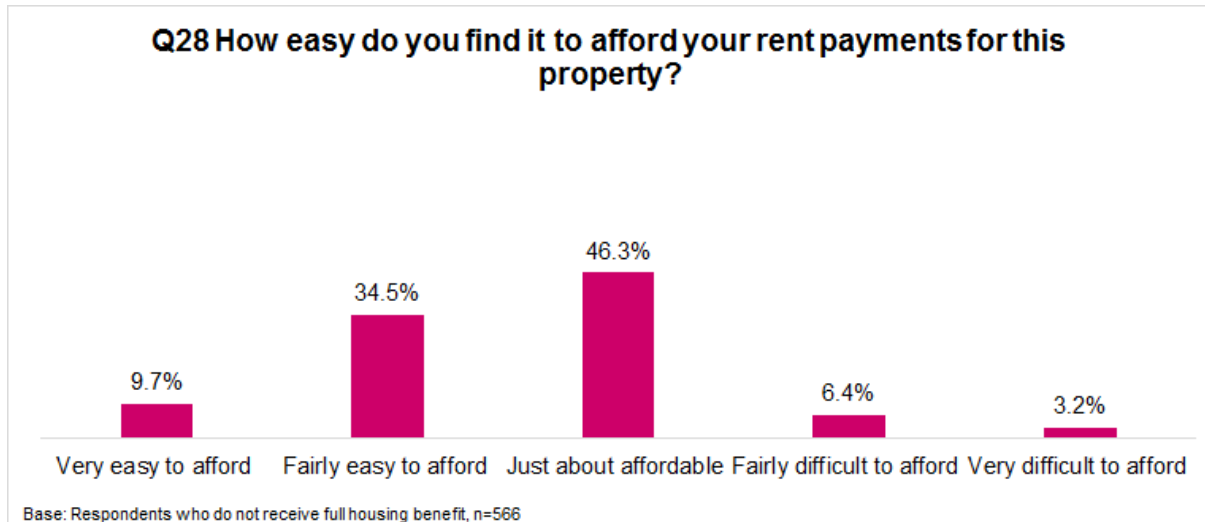
Over half of respondents (54%) said they were in receipt of full or partial housing benefit, compared to 43% who said they did not receive any housing benefit. 3% of respondents (amounting to 33 individuals) preferred not to give this information.



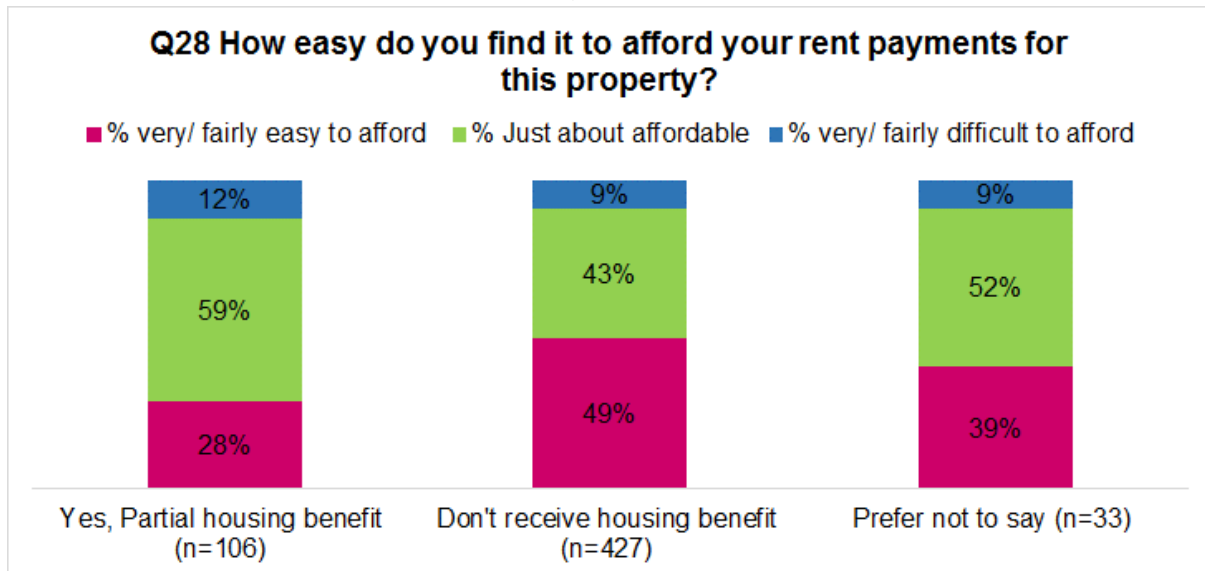
Base: All respondents, n=1001

9.6 Affordability of rent payments (Q28)

Respondents who did not receive full housing benefit were then asked how easy they find it to afford their rent payments. As shown in the chart below, 44% of respondents said they found their rent payments very or fairly easy to afford, compared to 46% who said they found their rent payments just about affordable and 10% of respondents who said their payments were fairly or very difficult to afford.



Further analysis revealed that respondents in receipt of partial housing benefit were less likely to state their rent payments were very or fairly easy to afford (28%) than respondents who do not receive housing benefit (49%).



Analysis by age revealed that older respondents, those aged 55-64 (14%) and those aged 65 and over (13%) were more likely to state they find their rent payments very or fairly difficult to afford than respondents aged 16-34 and 35-54 (both 8%).

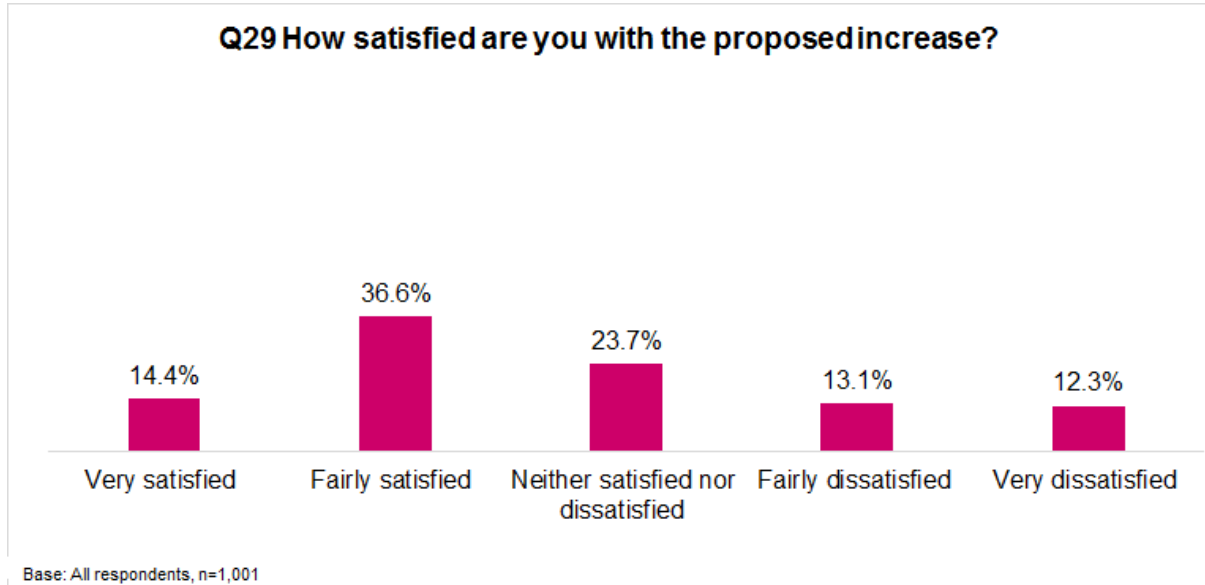
Q28 How easy do you find it to afford your rent payments for this property?					
	16-34	35-54	55-64	65+	Unknown
Base	130	220	73	133	9
Very easy to afford	10.8%	10.0%	13.7%	5.3%	22.2%
Fairly easy to afford	39.2%	33.2%	42.5%	24.8%	66.7%
Just about affordable	42.3%	49.1%	30.1%	57.1%	11.1%
Fairly difficult to afford	3.1%	5.5%	11.0%	9.0%	-
Very difficult to afford	4.6%	2.3%	2.7%	3.8%	-

Analysis by area revealed that respondents from Camelon (22%) and Stenhousemuir (18%) were the most likely to find their rent payments very or fairly difficult to afford. On the other hand respondents from Bo'ness (2%) and Falkirk (4%) were least likely. Please note the small base numbers.

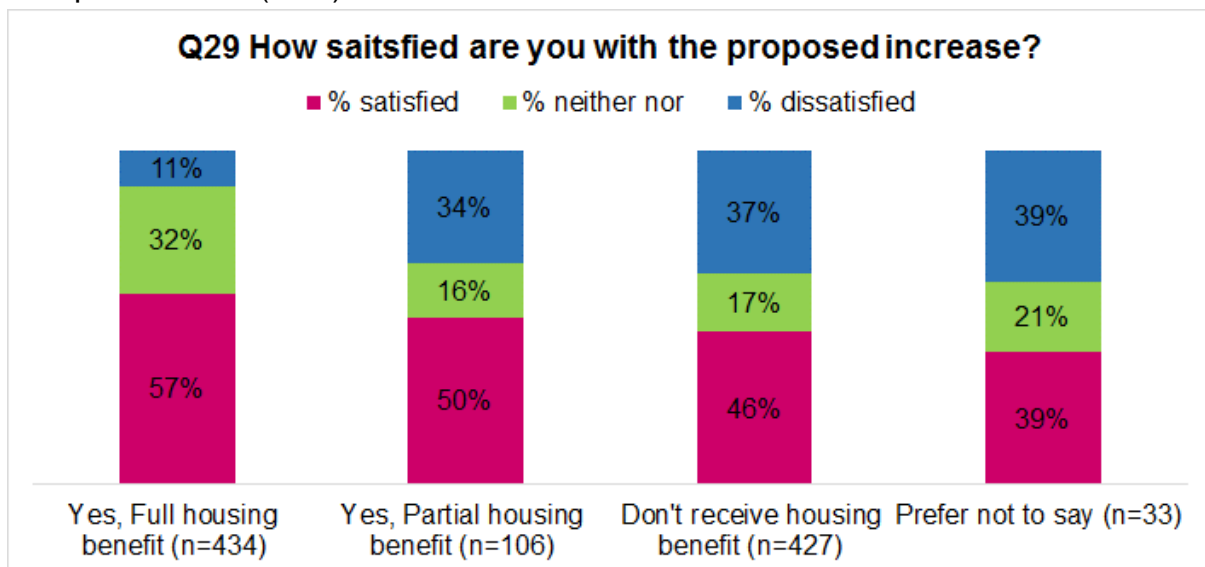
Q28 How easy do you find it to afford your rent payments for this property?				
	Base	% very/ easy to afford	% just about affordable	% fairly/ very difficult to afford
DAWSON	27	70%	19%	11%
BO'NESS	66	24%	74%	2%
DENNY	99	45%	46%	9%
CAMELON	54	13%	65%	22%
GRANGEMOUTH	100	59%	33%	8%
FALKIRK	130	52%	45%	4%
STENHOUSEMUIR	89	40%	42%	18%

9.7 Proposed rent increase (Q29)

All respondents were then asked how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with the proposed rent increase of 3.6%. Just over half of respondents (51%) said they were very or fairly satisfied with the proposed increase, compared to 24% who were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and 25% who were very or fairly dissatisfied.



Tenants who were in receipt of full housing benefit were more likely to state they were very or fairly satisfied with the proposed rent increase (57%) than respondents who paid full rent (46%).



Analysis by age revealed that respondents aged 16-34 were the most likely to be very or fairly satisfied with the proposed rent increase. Respondents aged 35-54 on the other hand were the most likely to state they were very or fairly dissatisfied (29%).

Q29 How satisfied are you with the proposed increase?					
	16-34	35-54	55-64	65+	Unknown
Base	216	333	144	297	10
Very satisfied	15.7%	15.6%	14.6%	12.5%	-
Fairly satisfied	42.1%	34.2%	37.5%	34.7%	30.0%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	19.4%	21.0%	20.8%	30.0%	60.0%
Fairly dissatisfied	8.3%	15.9%	17.4%	11.4%	10.0%
Very dissatisfied	14.4%	13.2%	9.7%	11.4%	-

In terms of area, respondents from Stenhousemuir were more likely to be very or fairly dissatisfied with the proposed rent increase (49%) than respondents from Denny (14%). Respondents from Grangemouth were the most likely to be very or fairly satisfied (76%).

Q29 How satisfied are you with the proposed increase?				
	Base	% satisfied	% neither nor	% dissatisfied
DAWSON	79	41%	27%	33%
BO'NESS	102	51%	28%	21%
DENNY	176	69%	17%	14%
CAMELON	98	16%	40%	44%
GRANGEMOUTH	196	76%	15%	10%
FALKIRK	229	44%	29%	27%
STENHOUSEMUIR	120	33%	18%	49%

Three adult households were the most likely to state they were very or fairly dissatisfied with the proposed rent increase (48%). 1 parent families were the most likely to be very or fairly satisfied (61%).

Q29 How satisfied are you with the proposed increase?				
	Base	% satisfied	% neither nor	% dissatisfied
One adult	417	51%	28%	21%
Two adults	215	49%	23%	28%
Three or more adults, 16 or over	79	43%	9%	48%
1 parent family	126	61%	21%	18%
2 parent family	121	52%	22%	27%
Other	40	35%	30%	35%
Prefer not to say	3	100%	-	-

Following on from this respondents who were not satisfied with the proposed rent increase were then asked to explain why. The main reason given by tenants as to why they were not satisfied was in regards to not being sure why rents were increasing again or not being able to afford the proposed increase (48%). 10% of respondents mentioned that their wages or income was not increasing and 7% of respondents said they would just have to pay it. 20% of respondents said they did not pay rent as they were in receipt of housing benefit.

Can you explain why you are not satisfied with the proposed increase?		
Base: Respondents who were not satisfied, n=491	No.	%
Not sure why rents are increasing/ too expensive	235	47.9%
I don't pay rent/ receive benefits	97	19.8%
Wages/ pensions are not increasing	49	10.0%
I will just have to pay	36	7.3%
Repairs/ upgrades to properties are not being carried out	24	4.9%
Services are poor	14	2.9%
Don't know/ not sure	12	2.4%
Increasing more than the rate of inflation	3	0.6%
Other	31	6.3%