

# **English Rural Housing Association**



## ***Resident Satisfaction Survey Report***

***March 2014***

## Summary

### Context

In 2014, English Rural Housing Association undertook a satisfaction survey across all 1088 of its residents. Postal surveys were sent to residents in October 2014, with the aim of determining a snapshot of resident views and satisfaction levels with service delivery.

The survey was broadly based around questions development under Housemark's STAR (Survey of Tenants and Residents) system. By using this common approach to resident satisfaction measurement, English Rural has been able to benchmark its performance against other Associations within the South West Benchmarking group who also use the same core questions.

### Key Findings

The results of the survey indicate that the majority of English Rural Housing Association residents are satisfied with the overall service delivery to residents, with 87% indicating they are either very satisfied or fairly satisfied with the services provided by English Rural.

Satisfaction levels remain high across other core services:

- 83% are satisfied with the overall quality of their home
- 91% are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live
- 84% are satisfied with the way in which enquiries are dealt with
- 78% are satisfied with the way repairs are dealt with
- 80% feel that English Rural keeps them informed of things that affect them
- 83% feel that overall services provided offer good value for money

### Comparisons

Where possible, throughout the report comparisons have been made with satisfaction levels recorded in the last English Rural resident survey undertaken in 2011. Key comparisons from the last survey are shown below.

Key Service Area	% of residents who are either very satisfied or fairly satisfied	
	2014	2011
Overall service provided	87%	89%
Dealing with enquiries	84%	81%
Dealing with repairs and maintenance	73%	63%
Rent offers value for money	84%	85%
Advice on rents and service charges	73%	53%

English Rural's results have also been compared to those of other housing associations through a benchmarking group. The group comprises of 13 other small housing associations based in the South West of England, all of which offer comparable services to English Rural.

## **English Rural Housing Association**

English Rural Housing Association has 1080 homes across 38 local authority areas. The homes are a mix of shared ownership and social and affordable rent.

### **Aims of the Survey**

English Rural aims to offer a flexible and cost-effective approach to services through a balance between quality and costs, ensuring residents receive good value for the rent they pay.

By undertaking a satisfaction survey across all of its 1080 residents, allows English Rural to:

- Have an indication of satisfaction levels which can be benchmarked against others and measure future improvements
- Compare satisfaction levels from previous years
- Ascertain resident's perceptions of the strengths and weaknesses of different service areas and help deliver continuous improvement.

### **Methodology**

The survey was undertaken using a questionnaire format designed around Housemark's STAR survey. It included the core STAR questions which cover the key measures of satisfaction and are the basis for comparisons. Additional questions were also included in the questionnaire to gain a better understanding of issues that specifically affect English Rural residents. The questionnaire comprised of 45 questions in the following categories:

Section 1	The Big Picture
Section 2	Your Home and Neighbourhood
Section 3	Services in General
Section 4	Customer Services
Section 5	Repairs and Maintenance
Section 6	Communications
Section 7	Information about You and Your Household

### **The Survey Process**

The questionnaire was sent out by post to both shared owners and tenants with an attached cover letter explaining the survey process and how the results would be used. Each resident was provided with a pre-paid envelope to return their completed form. Residents were given four weeks to submit their completed survey. An abbreviated version of the survey was also available on English Rural's website and those unable to complete the full survey were encouraged to fill in the online version.

Of the 1088 questionnaires sent, 226 were returned, a return rate of around 21%.

### **Results**

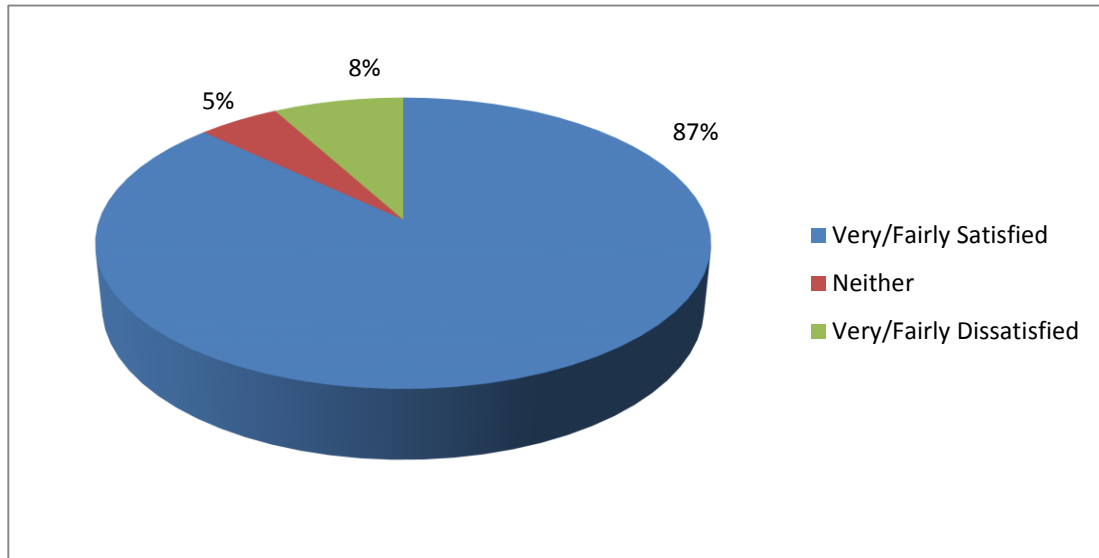
The following includes detailed analysis of the survey results. Although not all 45 questions are included in the findings, the key service areas and performance results are shown.

Throughout the findings, comparisons have also been made with other housing associations within the South West Benchmarking group.

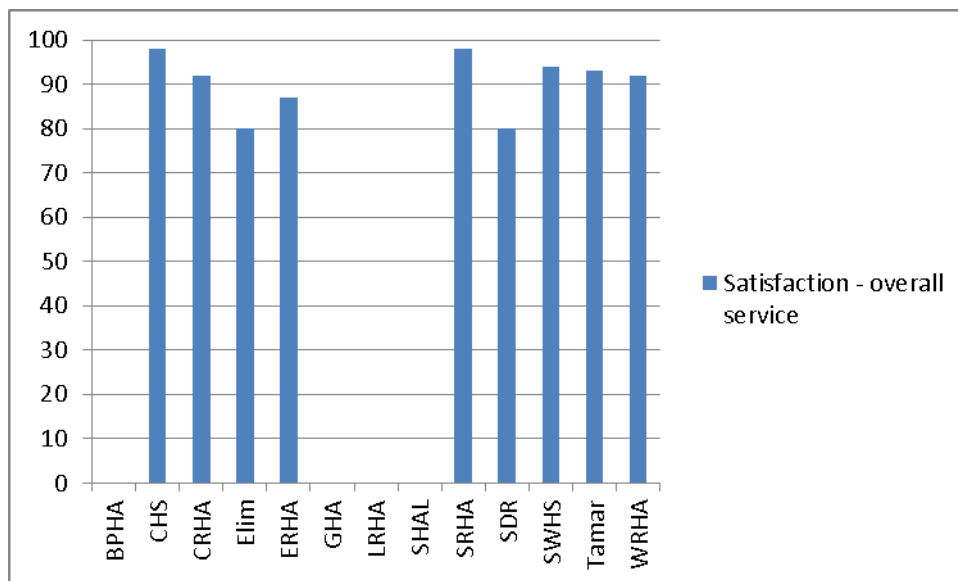
### Section 1 – The Big Picture

Satisfaction with the services provided by English Rural is high. 87% of residents said they were very or fairly satisfied and only 8% were dissatisfied. The charts below show English Rural's overall satisfaction level and also comparisons with other housing associations in the South West Benchmarking Group.

**Figure 1.1 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided by English Rural?**



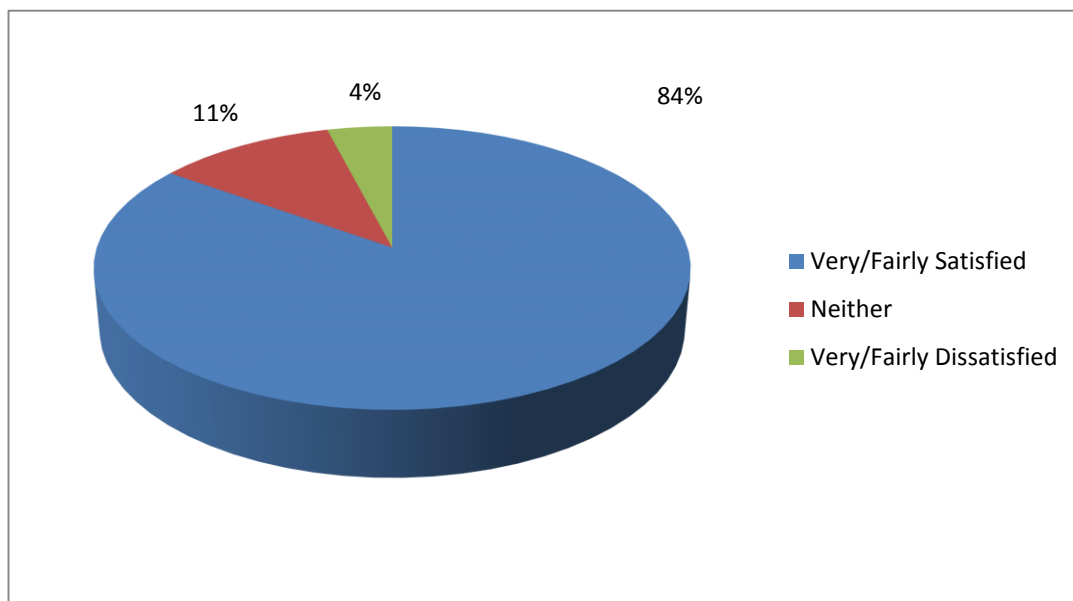
**Figure 1.2 South West Benchmarking Group Results – Overall service provided**



**Value for money**

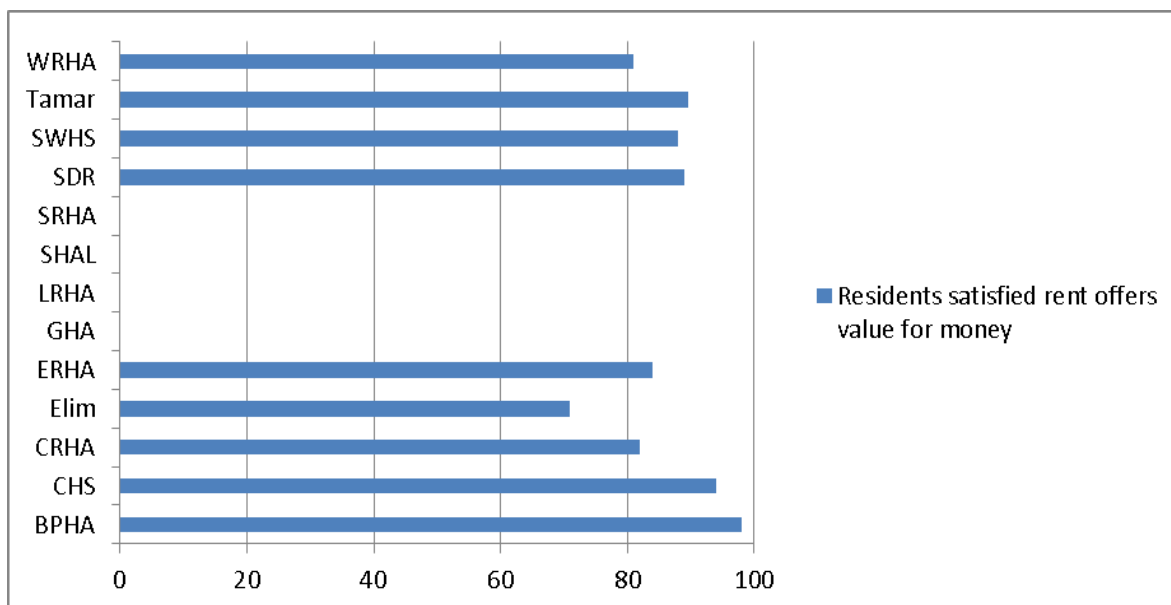
84% of residents are satisfied with value for money for the rent with only 4% dissatisfied.

**Figure 1.2 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that your rent offers value for money?**



English Rural performed fairly consistently with other comparable Housing Associations in satisfaction with value for money. Results from others in the South West Benchmarking group are shown below.

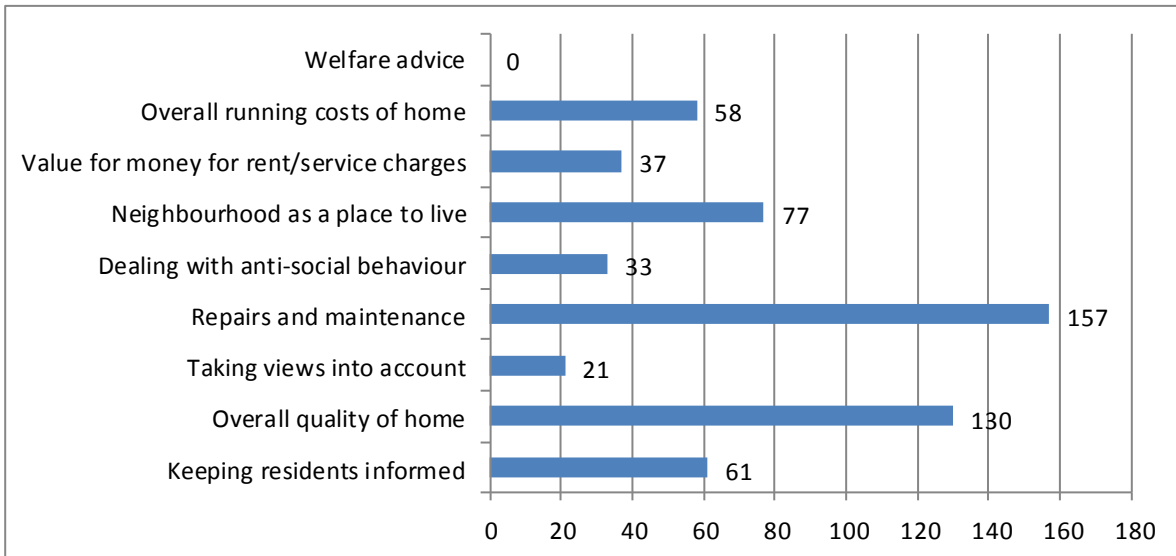
**Figure 1.3 South West Benchmarking Group results – Rent offers value for money**



### Importance of Services

Residents were asked to choose three services from a list of nine which they felt were most important to them. It is important that English Rural can understand and gauge the priority of services offered to residents and develop these further where necessary.

**Figure 1.4 Service which residents consider to be the three most important**

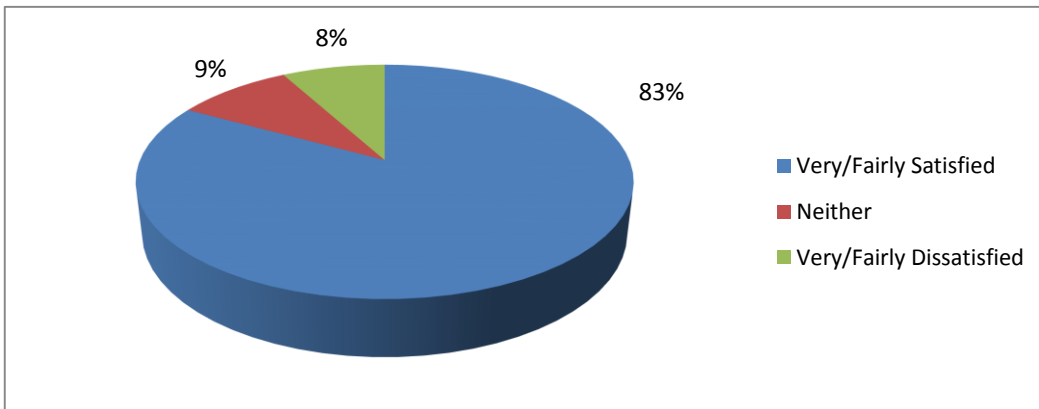


Repairs and maintenance services ranked as the highest priority to 157 of all respondents, closely followed by overall quality of home (130 respondents). No residents indicated that welfare advice was one of the three most important services to them and only 21 residents felt taking their views into account was a high priority.

## Section 2 - You and Your Neighbourhood

Residents satisfied with the overall quality of their home is high, with 83% of all residents being either very or fairly satisfied and only 8% dissatisfied.

**Figure 2.1 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall quality of your home?**



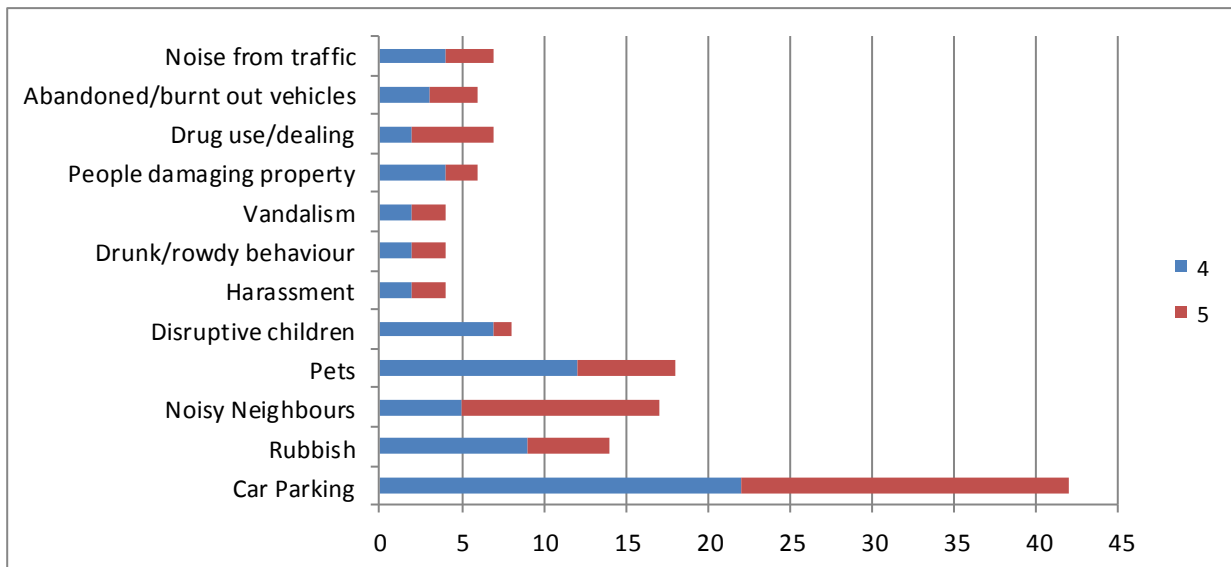
The majority of residents are also very or fairly satisfied with their development as a place to live with 93% of respondents falling into this category and only 3% indicating they are dissatisfied.

## Anti-Social Behaviour

Residents were asked to what extent anti-social behaviour is a problem on their development and were given a list of twelve issues to rank against a score of 1 to 5, 1 being no problem and 5 being a serious problem. Car parking was highlighted as the biggest issue by residents with 44 residents ranking this as either a 4 or 5 on a scale of seriousness. Pets and noisy neighbours also ranked highly among anti-social neighbour problems. The chart

below shows all residents that indicated either a seriousness level 4 or 5 in their responses for each category.

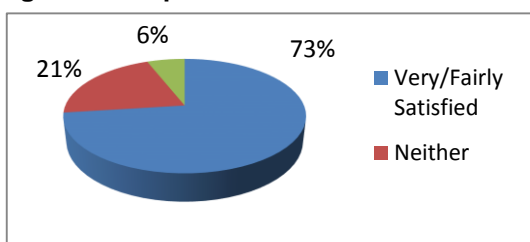
**Figure 2.2 How tenants rank anti-social behaviour on their development**



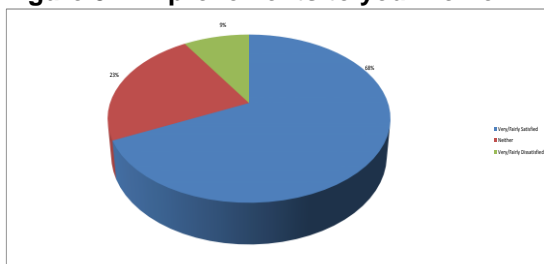
### Section 3 – Services

Residents were asked in general how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with the way English Rural deals with a range of eight services. The pie charts below show that tenants are generally satisfied across most service areas. The highest level of dissatisfaction amongst respondents was in relation to open spaces around homes. 28 residents in total indicated they were either fairly or very dissatisfied with this service, which equates to 15% of respondents. This also compares to the results of the question which asked how satisfied residents were with the way English Rural deals with looking after communal and shared areas. 57% of residents were either very or fairly satisfied with how English Rural look after communal areas and 18% were dissatisfied.

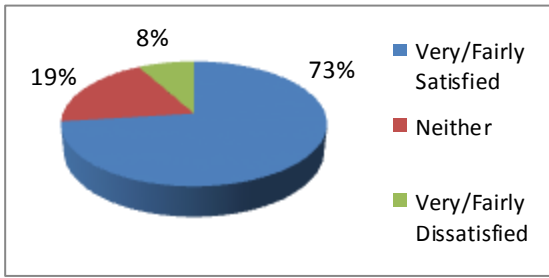
**Figure 3.1 Repairs and Maintenance**



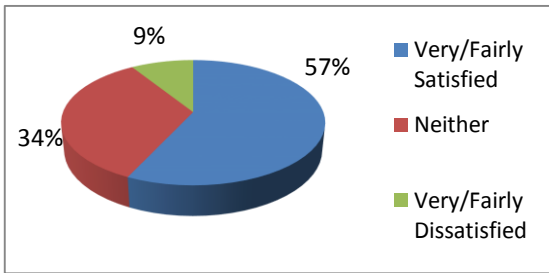
**Figure 3.2 Improvements to your home**



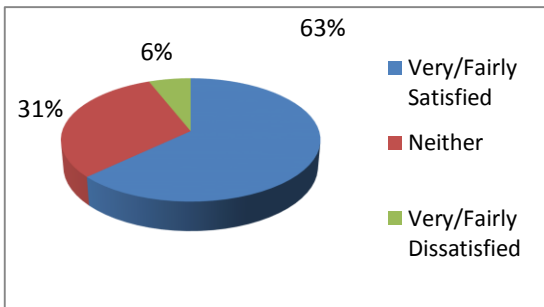
**Figure 3.3 – Advice on rents and service charges**



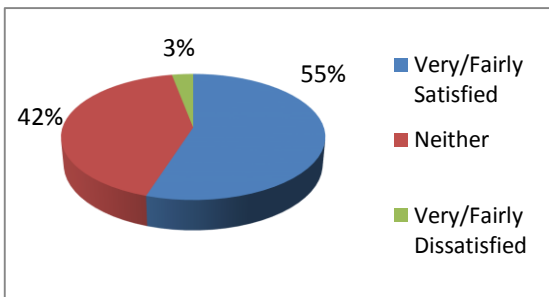
**Figure 3.4 – Anti-social behaviour**



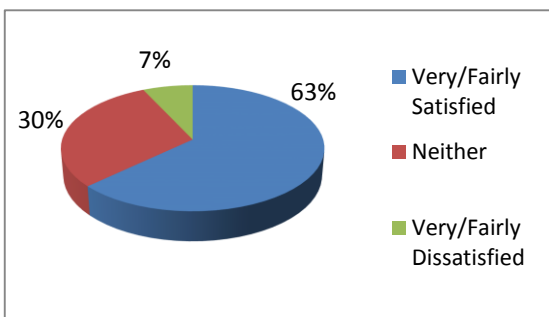
**Figure 3.5 – Neighbour Disputes**



**Figure 3.6 – Transfers and Exchanges**

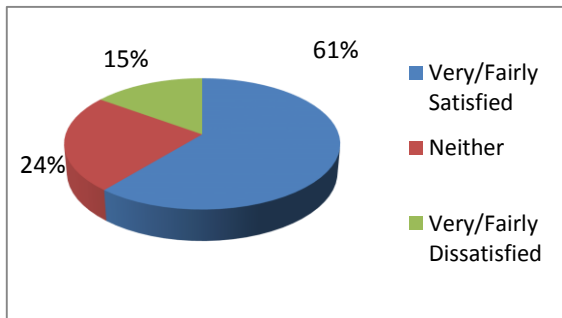


**Figures 3.7 – Allocations and Lettings**





**Figure 3.8 – Open spaces around your home**



80% of residents stated that they feel English Rural is more able to provide services tailored towards their specific needs because it is a smaller housing association.

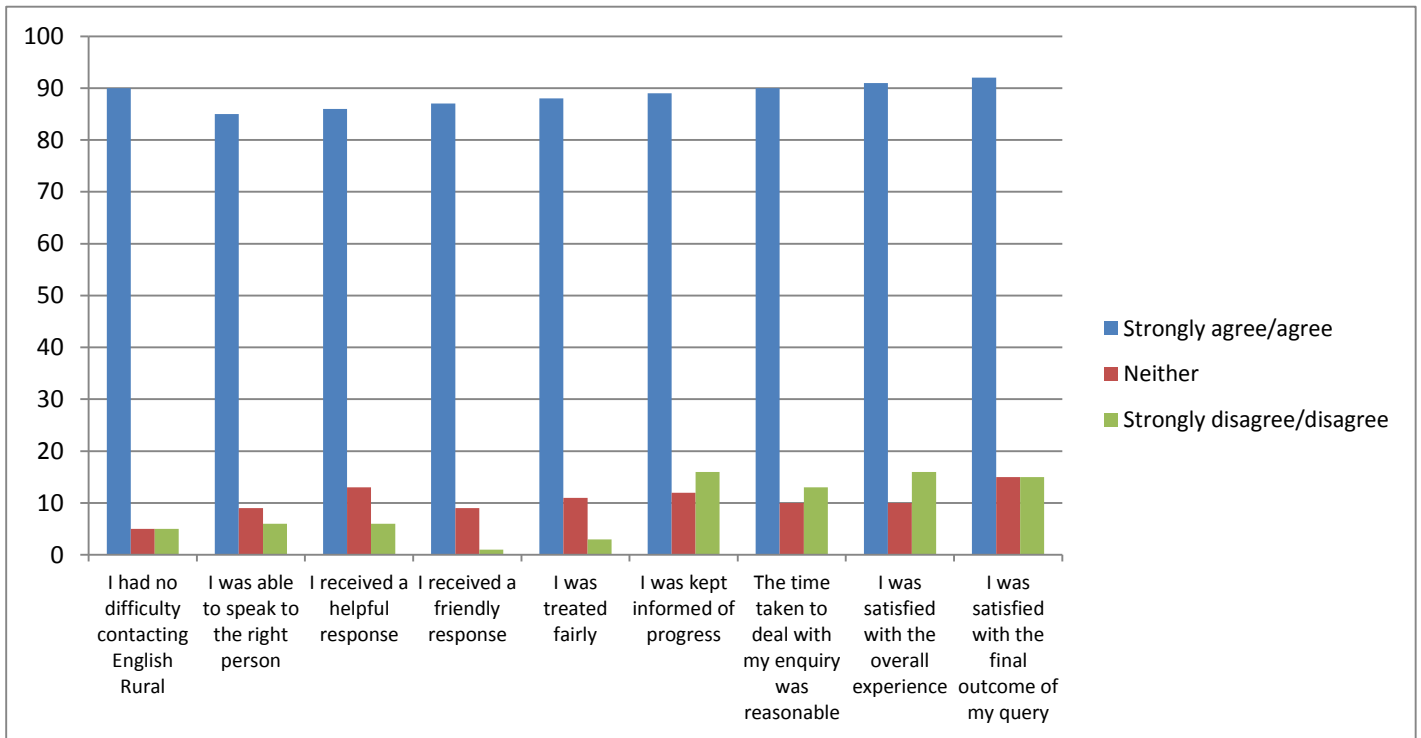
#### **Section 4 – Customer Services**

Residents were asked about the last time they contacted English Rural and how strongly they agreed or disagreed with the following nine statements:

- I had no difficulty contacting English Rural
- I was able to speak to the right person
- I received a helpful response
- I received a friendly response
- I was treated fairly
- I was kept informed of progress
- The time taken to deal with my enquiry was reasonable
- I was satisfied with the overall experience
- I was satisfied with the final outcome of my query

70% or more residents either strongly agreed or agreed with each of the nine statements. A breakdown is shown below.

**Figure 4.1 How strongly tenants agreed with the following statements regarding contact with English Rural**

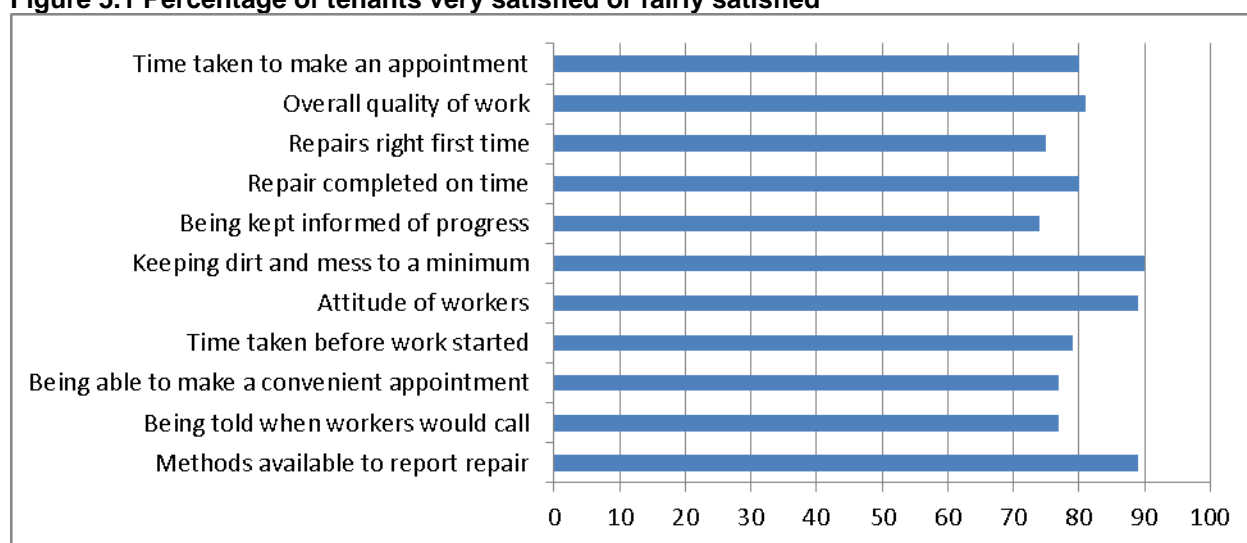


In a further question residents were asked how satisfied they were with the way English Rural deals with their enquiries generally. 84% of residents said they were very or fairly satisfied, 11% said they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and 5% said they were dissatisfied. In relation to satisfaction when making a complaint, 60% of residents were very or fairly satisfied with the service received, 31% were neither and 9% were dissatisfied.

## Section 5 – Repairs and Maintenance

Residents were asked to indicate how satisfied they were with process of their last repairs. The following chart shows the percentage of residents who were satisfied or very satisfied with each aspect.

**Figure 5.1 Percentage of tenants very satisfied or fairly satisfied**



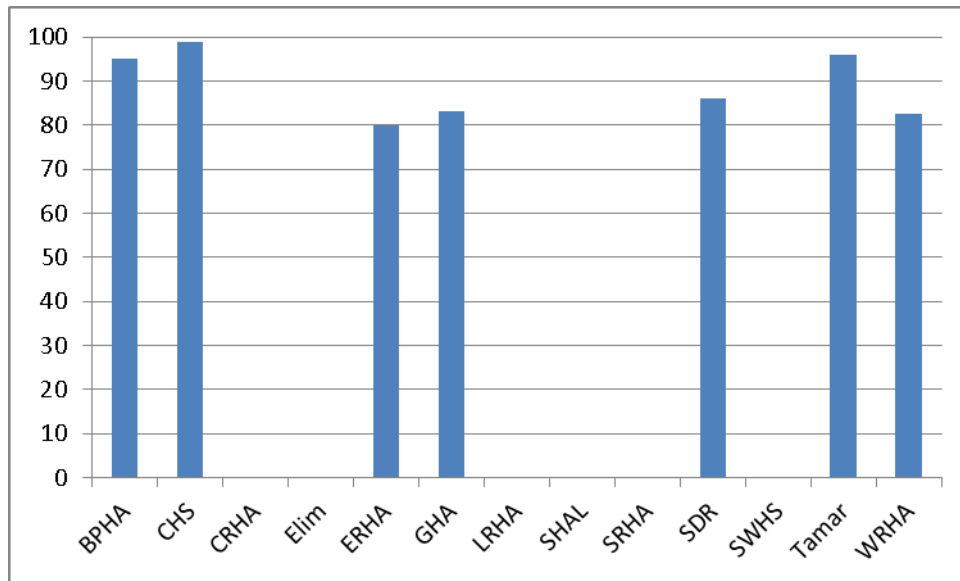
Satisfaction was high across all aspects of the repairs process with a very low percentage of residents being dissatisfied with methods available to report repairs (1%), attitude of workers (2%), keeping mess and dirt to a minimum (2%) and overall quality of work (3%). The remaining categories all had dissatisfaction levels under 5% except for repairs right first time which showed 9% of residents being dissatisfied.

Following the introduction of new repair target completion times in 2014, residents were asked if they would be happy for all non-emergency repairs to be completed at their convenience within 28 days of reporting. 77% of residents said yes they would be happy for this new target time and 23% said no.

Residents were also asked generally how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with the way English Rural dealt with their last completed repairs. 80% of tenants were either very or fairly satisfied, 10% were neither satisfied or dissatisfied and 10% were very or fairly dissatisfied. One point to note about this section is that the survey does not distinguish between a defect reported on new homes which are the responsibility of the builder and on existing homes which are carried out by our preferred contractors.

The following table shows English Rural's repairs satisfaction levels in comparison to some of the other housing associations in the South West Benchmarking Group.

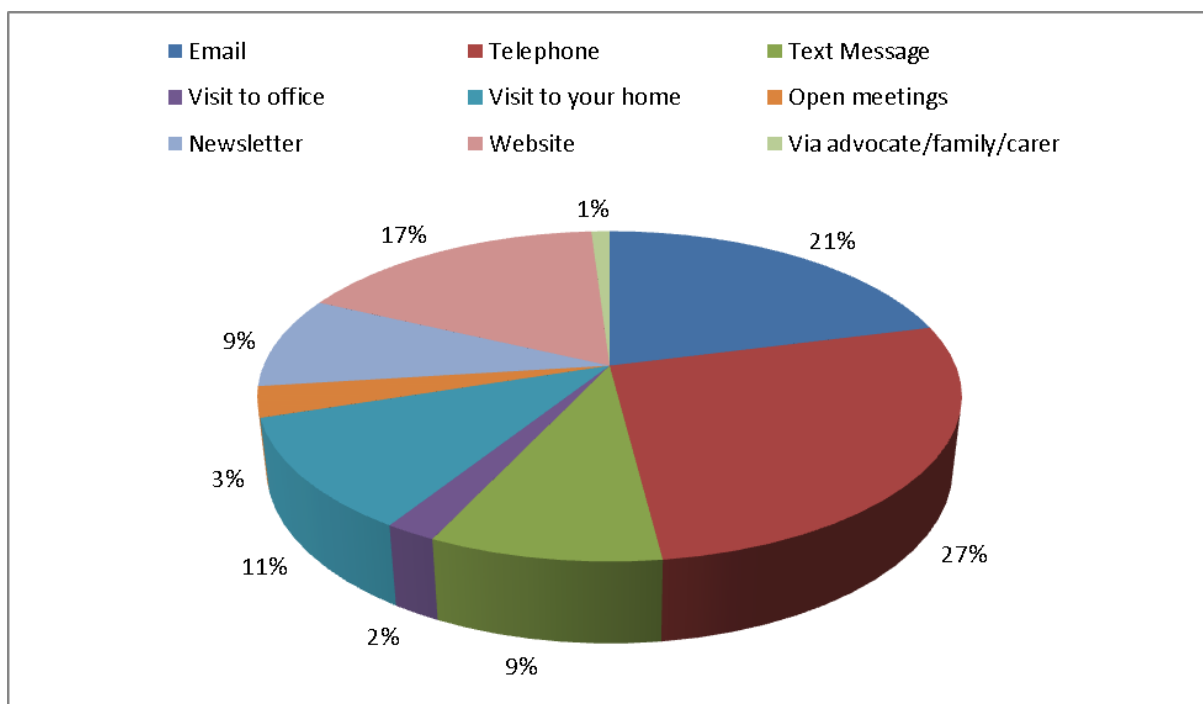
**Figure 5.2 Resident satisfaction with last completed repair across South West Benchmarking Group**



## Section 6 – Communications

Residents were asked which methods of communication they preferred when making contact with English Rural and being kept informed. The chart below shows that most residents prefer to use the telephone with email and the newsletter also scoring highly. Few people prefer text and open meetings to communicate and be informed.

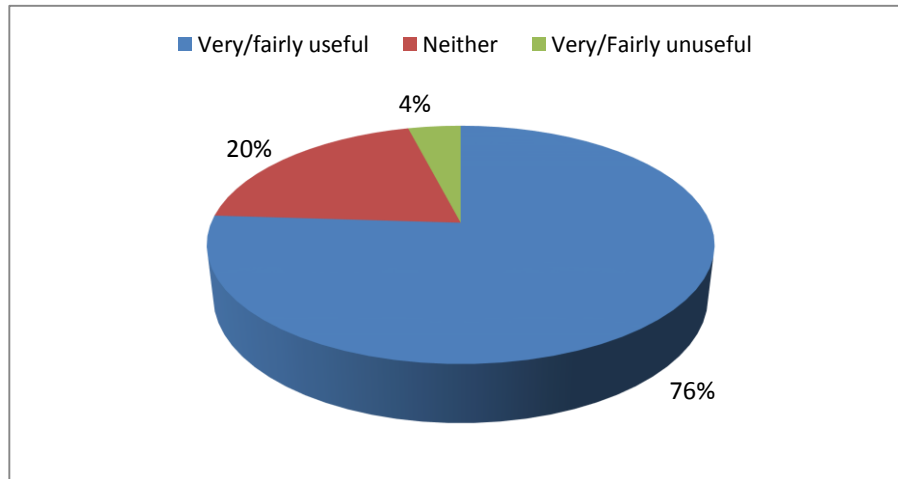
**Figure 6.1 Preferred methods of contact with English Rural**



Three residents stated they would like large print and one resident sign language to be used when communicating.

82% of residents who responded to the survey have regular access to the internet. Over the past year 32% of these residents had used English Rural’s website. The chart below shows how useful these residents found the website.

**Figure 6.2 Usefulness of the website**



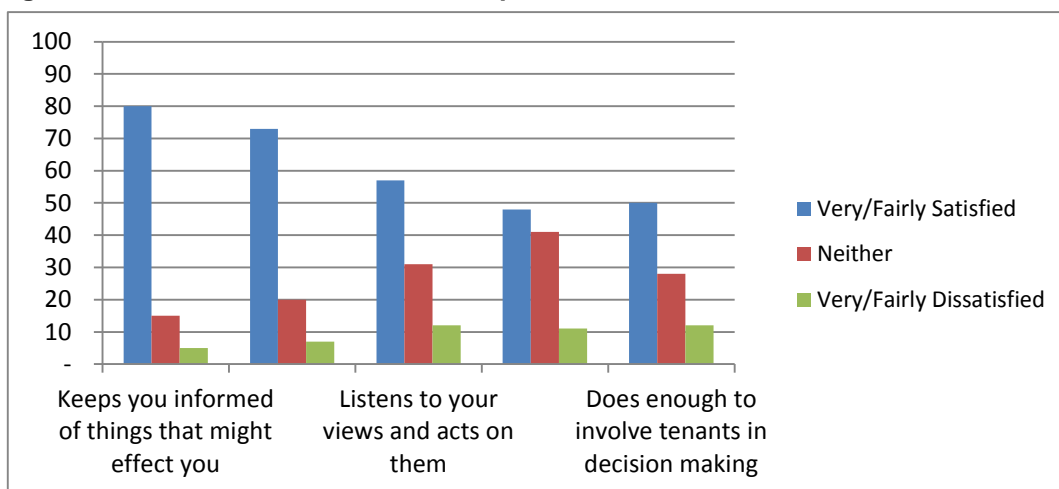
As one of the preferred methods of being kept informed, residents were asked how useful they had found their most recent English Rural newsletter. 64% of residents felt the newsletter was useful, 30% thought it was neither and 6% felt it wasn’t useful.

In addition to methods of communicating with residents, they were also asked to rate how satisfied they were with five aspects of communication which were that English Rural:

- Keeps you informed about things that might effect
- Gives you opportunities to make your views known
- Listen to your views and acts on them
- Does enough to support local tenants groups
- Does enough to involve residents in making decisions.

Satisfaction levels for each of the five aspects of communication are as follows

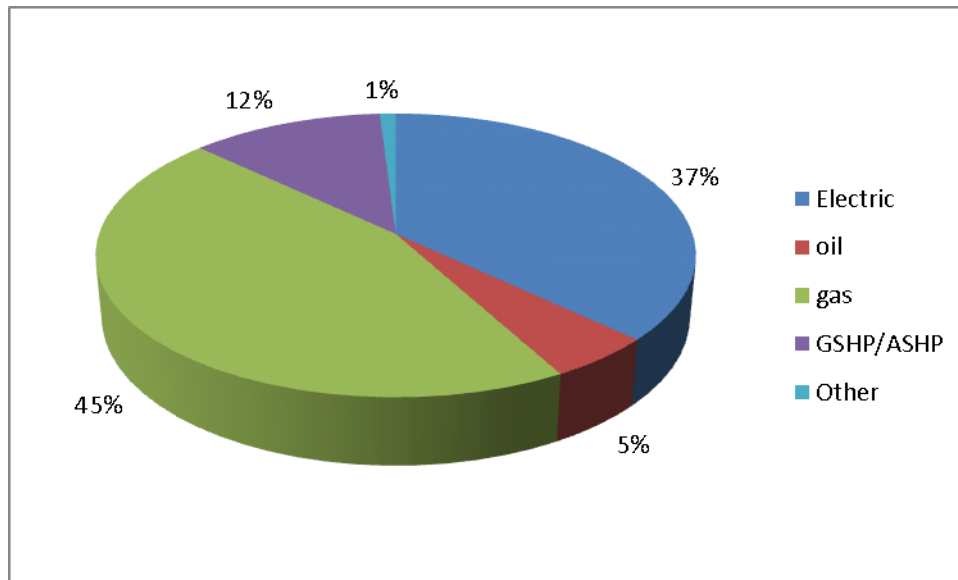
**Figure 6.3 Levels of satisfaction with aspects of communication**



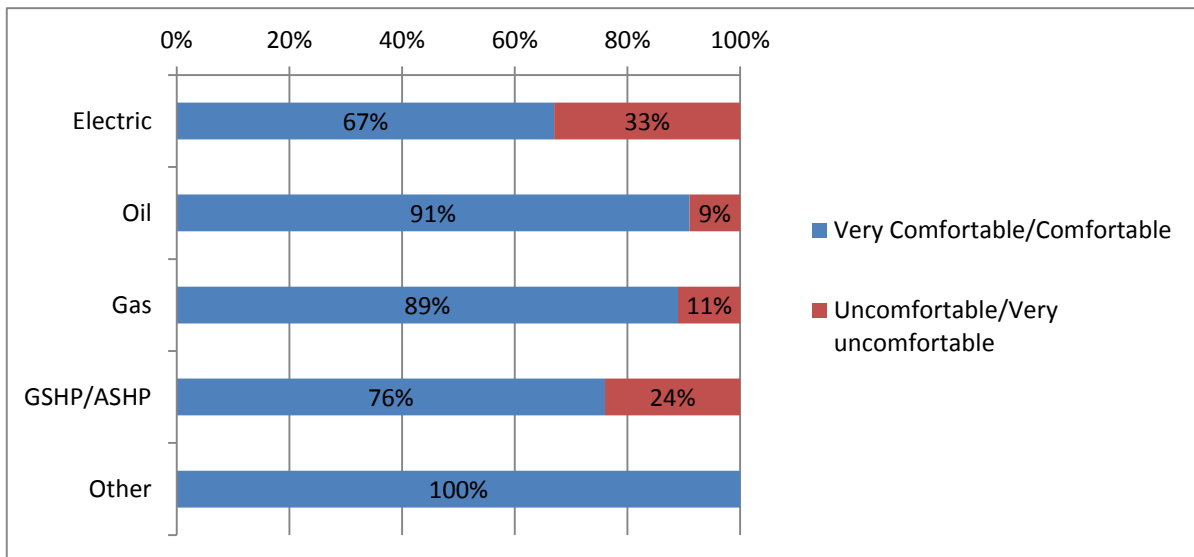
**Section 7 – Information about You and Your Household**

Residents were asked what type of heating was installed in their home and whether they were comfortable for the level of warmth against their annual expenditure on heating their home. For all heating types the majority of residents were very comfortable or comfortable with the level of warmth in their home.

**Figure 7.1 Heating Type**

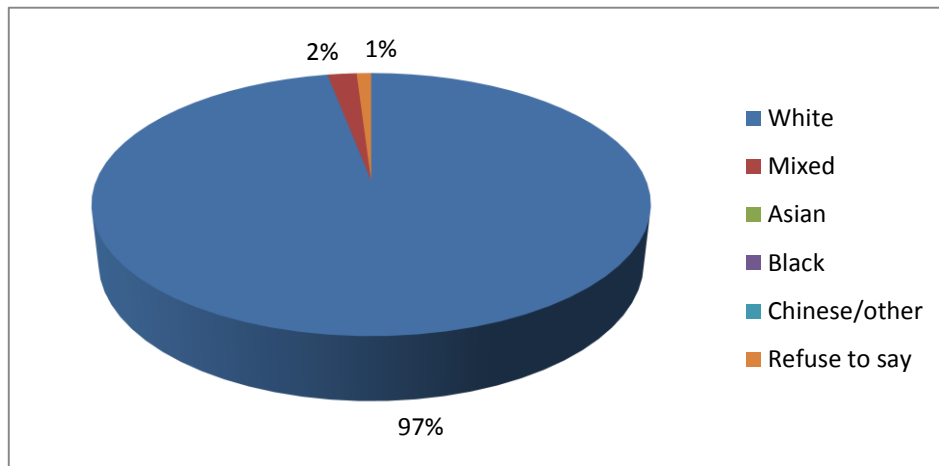


**Figure 7.2 Level of comfort with warmth of home**

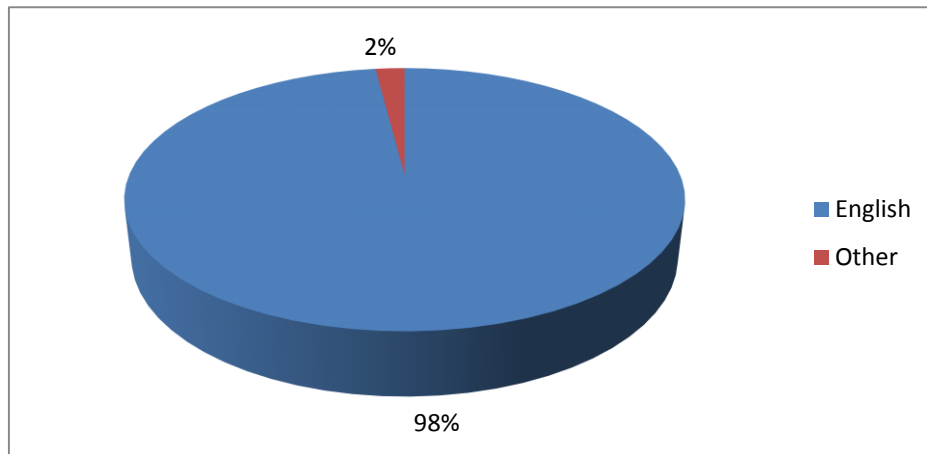


Questions were asked relating to ethnicity and language. The figures below illustrate the response from tenants.

**Figure 7.3 Ethnicity**

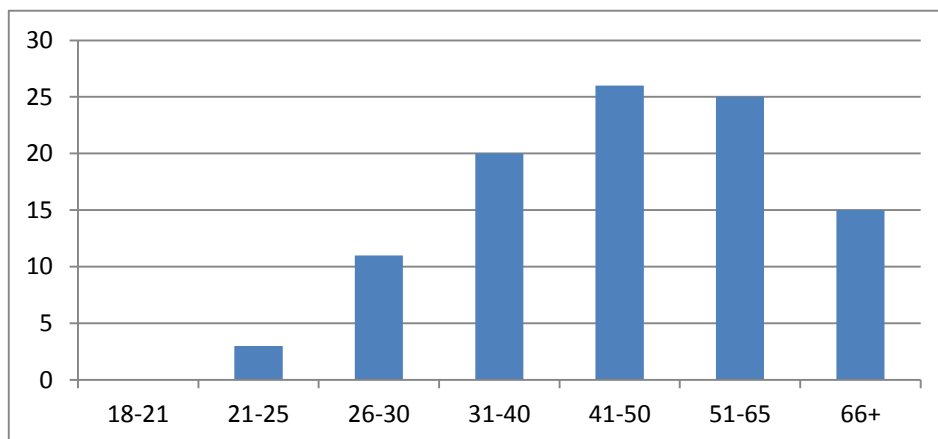


**Figure 7.4 First Language**



Questions relating to the age of residents were asked and the results show that most adults living in English Rural homes are between the ages of 41-50 (26%). No residents fall within the age bracket of 18-21 years old and only 3% of residents are aged between 21-25.

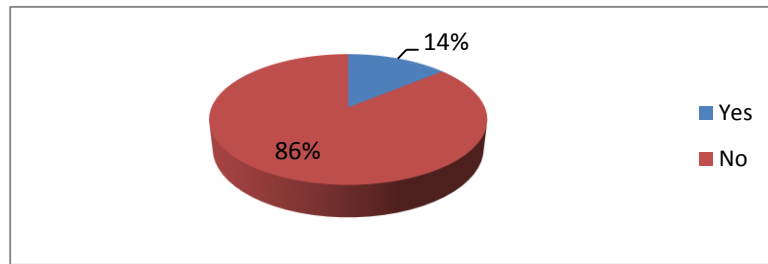
**Figure 7.5 Age ranges of residents**



Residents were also asked in a separate question how many people living in the home were over the age of 60. 37 households had one resident over the age of 60, 21 households had two residents over 60 and one household had three residents over 60. Not sure this makes sense?

Residents were asked how likely they were to move anytime in the next 5 years. 14% of residents said that they would likely move within 5 years.

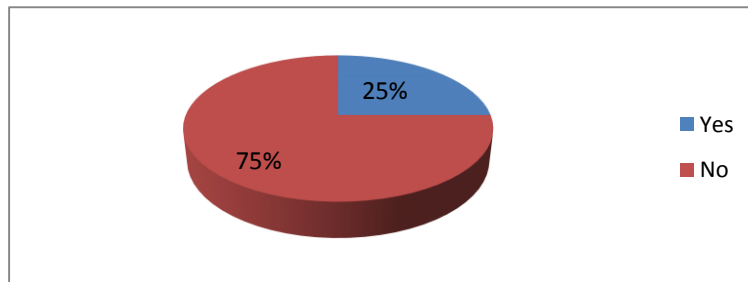
**Figure 7.6 Residents likely to move in next 5 years**



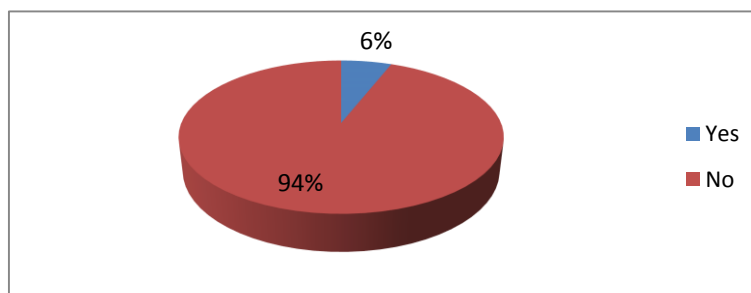
### Health and Disability

The set of questions asked residents about long term illness and disability. Results are shown in the figures below.

**Figure 7.7 Households containing a member with any long-term illness**



**Figure 7.8 Households containing a wheelchair user**

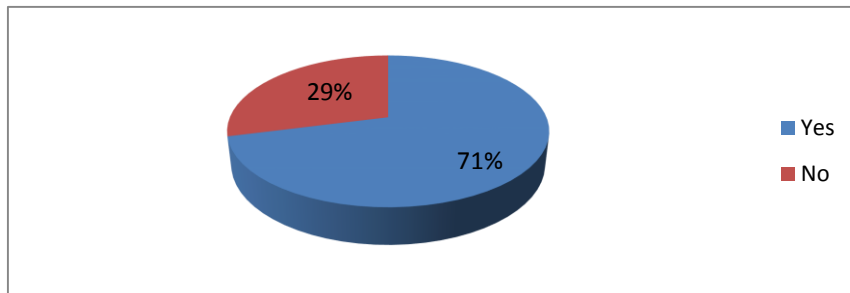


### Income and Employment

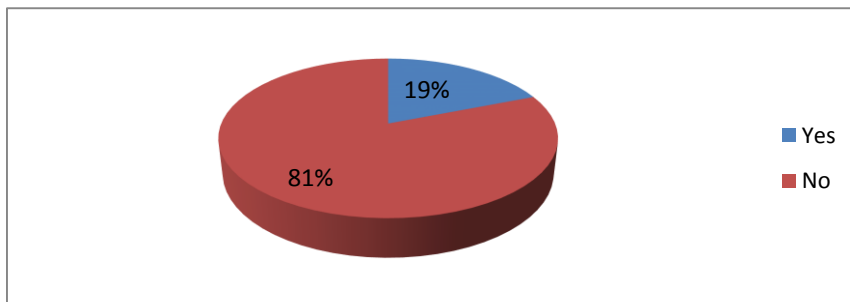
Residents were asked questions relating to their income, employment and benefits. 71% of residents were either in full or part time employment, with 19% considering themselves as unemployed. 28% of residents were also in receipt of housing benefit. The full detailed results are shown in the figures below.



**Figure 7.9 Residents in full or part time employment**

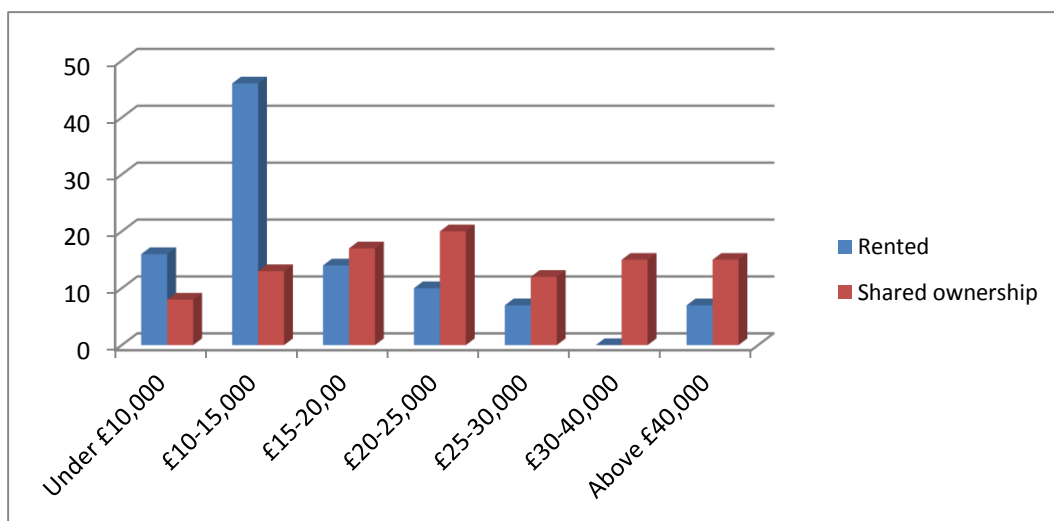


**Figure 7.10 Residents considering themselves to be unemployed**



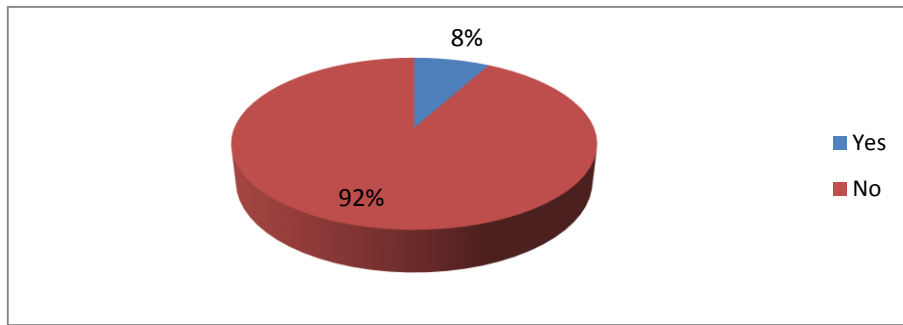
Relating to household income, residents were asked to select a household income bracket which included all income from employment, benefit and other sources. The majority of residents in rented homes had an annual income of between £10,000 and £15,000 (46%) and in shared ownership households, the majority of annual incomes fell between £20,000 and £25,000 per annum (20%). The full breakdown of income levels for each category as a percentage is shown below.

**Figure 7.11 Household incomes**



English Rural wanted to determine any impact recent benefit changes had had on residents. The chart below shows the percentage of residents who have seen an effect on their income.

**Figure 7.12 Impact of benefit changes on income**



### Comparisons – Changes over time

English Rural Housing Association monitors resident satisfaction over time to ensure rates remain high and any reduction in satisfaction can be addressed. The table below shows satisfaction levels across the core questions and changes from the last survey in 2011.

**Figure 8.1 Changes over time for core satisfaction questions - % of residents either very or fairly satisfied**

