



APARTMENT LIVING IN IRELAND 2019



Acknowledgements

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Contents

Foreword	/ 05
Executive Summary	/ 09
1 Introduction	/ 15
2 Research Methodology	/ 17
3 Context and Literature Review	/ 21
4 Nationally Representative Survey Results	/ 31
5 Focus Group Results	/ 71
6 Conclusion and Summary of Key Findings	/ 82
7 Appendices	/ 87
– Appendix I: Sampling procedure	/ 87
– Appendix II: Sample profile	/ 89
– Appendix III: Additional tables	/ 93
– Appendix IV: Relevant policy, legislation and guidelines	/ 102
– Appendix V: Bibliography	/ 110

Abbreviations and Glossary

AHB	Approved Housing Body (AHB)	Also called housing associations or voluntary housing associations, they are independent, not-for-profit organisations. They provide affordable rented housing for people who cannot afford to pay private sector rents or buy their own homes; or for particular groups, such as older people, or homeless people.
HAP	Housing Assistance Payment (HAP)	The Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) is a form of social housing support for people who have a long-term housing need. HAP will eventually replace long-term Rent Supplement. The scheme is administered by the local authorities, who pay landlords directly.
LA	Local Authority (LA)	Local authorities are responsible for public services and facilities in a particular area. They provide affordable rented housing for people who cannot afford to pay private sector rents or buy their own homes; or for particular groups, such as older people, or homeless people.
MUD	Multi-Unit Development (MUD)	A development of not less than five residential units, made up of homes where amenities, facilities and services are shared.
OMC	Owners' Management Company (OMC)	A not-for-profit company established for the management of a MUD. It owns the common areas of the estate. It is collectively owned and controlled by all the owners of the properties within the estate. The directors are elected by the OMC members, and are typically unpaid volunteers.
Owners		Owners include those with and without a mortgage. This study refers to Owners and these are Owner-Occupiers only and not landlord/owners.
Pobal HP Deprivation Index (SA) Trutz Haase		A measure of the affluence or deprivation of each small area on a single scale.
Property Management Agent		A person or company engaged by an OMC to provide services in respect of the management of a MUD.
Purpose-built Apartment		Following the Census definitions of apartments, this study is concerned with purpose-built apartments as opposed to an apartment in a converted house or a bedsit.
Private Renter		Private renter refers to those renting from a private landlord and not in receipt of RAS and/or HAP

RAS	Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS)	RAS is a social housing support introduced to cater for the accommodation needs of persons who are in receipt of long-term rent supplement. Under the RAS scheme, private rented properties provide an additional source of good quality rental accommodation for eligible persons.
RS	Residential Satisfaction	To determine overall residential satisfaction, the ratings given to overall apartment satisfaction and overall neighbourhood satisfaction were combined at an individual respondent level and the mean scores rounded to give one rating score
	Social Renter	Social renter refers to those living in LA/AHB apartments and also those renting from a private landlord and in receipt of HAP and/or RAS
	Social Class/Socio-economic Groupings	AB: Higher and intermediate managerial, administrative, professional occupations C1: Supervisory, clerical and junior managerial, administrative, professional occupations C2: Skilled manual occupations DE: Semi-skilled and unskilled manual occupations, unemployed and lowest grade occupations



Foreword

In 2019 The Housing Agency set out to understand how satisfied people living in apartments are with their homes, with their neighbours and with their neighbourhoods. We wanted to ask them about how affordable their homes were, why they chose to live in apartments and what their future housing expectations and aspirations are.

In order to gain this insight, we interviewed (face-to-face) more than 500 people living in apartments and we ran four focus groups to delve more deeply into the lived experiences and future aspirations of families with young children living in apartments, and older renters. We also carried out an extensive literature review and we provided a summary of recent policy changes, legislation and guidelines that impact on the development of apartment living at the end of this report.

Clearly, with an increased focus on sustainable densification and compact urban growth, apartment living is becoming one of the key methods of delivering more sustainable living. As of the 2016 Census, one in ten Irish households were living in purpose-built apartments. However, this proportion is set to increase. Planning permissions for 14,771 houses and 12,923 apartments were granted over the first three quarters of 2019, as reported by the Central Statistics Office, with the number of apartments granted permission exceeding the number granted for houses in the third quarter of 2019. That is why an understanding of people's experiences of, attitudes and aspirations to apartment living is important for the development of sensible, sustainable policies and planning in this area.

We hope this report will be of interest to policy makers, architects, planners, Owners' Management Companies and people living in, or anticipating living in apartments.

This report provides the main results from the survey and the focus groups. The full datasets for the 2018 and the 2019 National Study of Irish Housing Experiences, Attitudes and Aspirations will be available to academics and researchers for further research through the Irish Social Science Data Archive in University College Dublin in early 2020.

I would like to thank all the people living in apartments who participated in this survey, Amárach Research for its work on the project, all those who advised and helped with the development of the report, and colleagues in The Housing Agency who have supported the research.

David Silke
Housing Agency 2019

Apartment Living – Some Facts

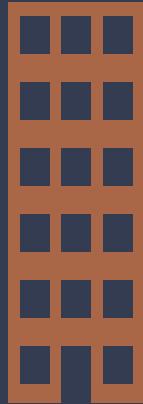
54% (92,356) of households in purpose-built apartments rent from a private landlord



17% (3,644) of all dwellings completed in 2019 were apartments

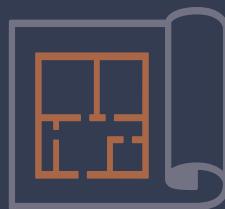


10% of all households in the State and 8% of all persons (364,243 persons) are living in purpose-built apartments.



18% of all 25 to 34-year olds live in purpose-built apartments

53% (5,656) of all planning permissions granted in Quarter 3 2019 were for apartments



35% of all the housing stock in Dublin City Council administrative area is made up of apartments

42% of persons living in EU-28 countries live in apartments



14% (24,190) of households in purpose-built apartments rent from a local authority





Executive Summary

Background

In the 2019 Housing Agency National Study of Irish Housing Experiences, Attitudes and Aspirations we have focused our attention on apartment living in Ireland. This year the research has set out to understand apartment dwellers' attitudes to, and experiences of, living in their apartments and in their neighbourhoods. The focus is on those living in purpose-built flats or apartments.¹ The research examines people's levels of satisfaction with their property and neighbourhood, affordability issues and explores housing aspirations for the future.

The 2019 Apartment Living study is part of the ongoing Housing Agency's National Study of Irish Housing Experiences, Attitudes and Aspirations. Other work carried out in this area is the **2019 report 'Owners' Management Companies, Sustainable Apartment Living for Ireland'**, commissioned by The Housing Agency and Clúid Housing, and the **2018 Design Guide 'Quality Apartments and Urban Housing'** compiled with the Urban Agency. All of these reports can be found on The Housing Agency website: www.housingagency.ie

Approach

The study includes a nationally representative survey of 511 people living in purpose-built apartments in Ireland and results from four focus groups with families living in apartments, and older renters. A literature review and

summary of main policy and legislative changes in Ireland are also included.

Key findings

Apartment dwellers satisfaction levels with their apartment were high at 81%.

Overall satisfaction levels with apartment living was high, at 81%, with 56% being 'satisfied' and 25% being 'very satisfied' with their apartment. These findings were supported by discussions with the focus group participants who, in general, appeared to be satisfied with their current apartments.

Comparing these results to The Housing Agency 2018 survey – which was a survey of 1,369 people living in all housing types (96% living in houses and 4% in apartments or flats) – the main difference was that in 2018 people were twice as likely to rate themselves as 'very satisfied' with their housing (49%) compared to the 2019 apartment dwellers (25%).²

Apartment owners were more likely to be satisfied with their apartments than those renting.

As was identified in The Housing Agency 2018 study, tenure was found

to be a significant predictor of satisfaction levels. In the 2019 Apartment Living Study 93% of apartment owners were either 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with their apartment, compared to 84% of private renters and 67% of social renters. This is important considering the nature of occupancy of apartments. In Census 2016 just 20% of households living in apartments were owner-occupied.

The two major issues for apartment dwellers were well-designed indoor space and useable outdoor space.

The two issues that caused the most dissatisfaction for apartment dwellers were having inadequate internal space/storage (32%) and the absence of useable, adequate outdoor space (31%). Focus group participants with young families, spoke of the need for adequate outdoor space to provide a place to sit, a meeting-space for neighbours and a well-designed, safe play area for children away from traffic. Focus group participants spoke of the need for well-designed internal storage spaces, and space more generally; including larger bedrooms, utility rooms, lock-up sheds or storage rooms. The impact of open-plan-living on family life and the lack of flexibility with the communal space for multiple activities were also found to be

In 2018 people were twice as likely to rate themselves as 'very satisfied' with their housing (49%) compared to the 2019 apartment dwellers (25%)

1 The report references those living in apartments throughout, this refers to those living in flats or apartments in purpose-built developments unless stated otherwise. No distinction is made between flat or apartment in the analysis.

2 Further research will be carried out in 2020 on this topic.

Despite living closer together in apartment schemes, people felt further apart than in the traditional housing most had grown up in. They felt living in an apartment made it more difficult to meet neighbours and forge friendships

problems with apartment living for families.

Apartment dwellers were satisfied with their neighbourhoods with 82% being either 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied'. Owners were more likely than renters to be satisfied.

Levels of neighbourhood satisfaction were similar to levels of satisfaction with the apartments. Apartment dwellers were happy with their neighbourhoods, with 82% being either 'satisfied' (57%) or 'very satisfied' (25%) with their neighbourhoods. They were especially positive about their neighbourhoods in terms of proximity to amenities and services – with over 40% of the surveyed apartment dwellers commuting to work or college by either walking, cycling or taking public transport (twice the national figure in Census 2016). Almost 40% think that their neighbourhood is 'changing for the better'.

Apartment owners (39%) were almost twice as likely as renters to be 'very satisfied' (21%) with their neighbourhood, and those living outside Dublin (34%) were much more likely to be 'very satisfied' with their neighbourhood compared to those living in Dublin (19%).

Substantial proportions in the survey agreed that they would like to stay where they live long-term (66%) and would recommend their neighbourhood to a friend (81%). In terms of neighbourhood attitudes, owners were most positive; 56% 'strongly agreeing' they would recommend their neighbourhood compared to 32% of renters.

Family living close by was important to apartment dwellers (76%). We found

that social renters were far more likely to be living close to where they grew up (42%) compared to owners (25%) and private renters (12%).

Apartment living can be a barrier to creating neighbourhoods and communities.

A theme that emerged in the focus groups was that apartment living can be a barrier to creating neighbourhoods. Paradoxically, despite living closer together in apartment schemes, people felt further apart than in the traditional housing most had grown up in. They felt living in an apartment made it more difficult to meet neighbours and forge friendships. The transient nature of many apartment dwellers was also a barrier to creating neighbourhoods. Short-term lettings and the increase of "corporate" landlords were seen as having a negative impact diminishing the sense of community.

Apartments were seen as a good place to raise children.

In the survey more than half of the participants would consider apartments to be suitable for raising a family. Renters in private developments were the most likely to 'agree' or 'strongly agree' (66%), while those renting from a local authority or approved housing body (48%) were the least likely to agree.

Most of the focus group participants had moved into their apartments with children. The reason for the choice of an apartment was varied, but preferences for location, affordability, access to schools and childcare, or to remain close to family were some of the reasons mentioned.

Most of the focus group participants with families were happy in their current situation and while many would ideally move in a 'few years' this was dependent on affordability and availability of properties within a desired area. For most an apartment would 'tick all the boxes' if it was big enough and had good outdoor communal areas.

Key factors that were considered important for families with children living in apartments were to have good outside space so that parents would be able to let their children 'out to play' without close supervision; provision of adequate storage space and well-designed internal layouts; including laundry facilities, in particular for drying clothes; and, better sound insulation so that noise between apartments is not a difficulty.

Affordability is an issue for those renting apartments.

What is clear from the survey, is that owners find it easier to meet their accommodation costs than renters. We found that 70% of renters said that they had 'some' (68%) or 'a lot' (2%) of difficulty paying their monthly rental accommodation costs. This compares with just 15% of apartment owners who said they experienced 'some' (13%) or 'a lot' (2%) of difficulty repaying their mortgage each month. Meanwhile, 75% of owners said they were living comfortably on their present income compared to 40% of those renting.

66% of renters rated their experience of renting as either 'good' or 'very good'.

Renters in the survey had lived an average five years in their current apartment, with this increasing to an average of eleven years for those renting apartments from a local authority or approved housing body.

Overall, the experience of those living in the rental sector was positive. While, only 14% of renters rated their experiences as 'very good', just over half (52%) had 'good' experiences

of renting. There were low levels of negative experiences of renting, despite the average length of time that those surveyed had been living in the rental sector. Only 5% of renters surveyed rated their experiences in the rental sector as 'poor' (4%) or 'very poor' (1%). Renters living outside Dublin were slightly more positive in general, with 19% having 'very good' experiences of living in the rental sector compared to 11% in Dublin.

In the survey, renters were asked about how secure they felt in their tenancy; over half (51%) rated their tenure as 'secure' and another 27% as 'very secure'.

In discussions with focus group participants, more nuanced views were expressed. Renters here were concerned about the security of their tenure, with many stating that they did not want to "rock the boat" with their landlord for fear of eviction or rent increases. This manifested itself with some of the renters undertaking minor repairs and maintenance themselves. The idea of a more 'European Model' of renting was highlighted; one with much greater security of tenure.

A further concern in the focus groups with renters was their ability to pay rent in the longer-term. Several focus group participants said they had

concerns about potentially becoming homeless as they were not sure how they will pay their rent in retirement. There was a sense amongst these renters, aged 40 years and older, that they are somewhat forgotten about in terms of their housing needs.

One fifth of apartment dwellers considering moving would prefer an apartment as their next home.

We asked apartment dwellers who were considering moving what their housing type preference would be. One fifth (21%) said they would prefer to move to another apartment, while 68% would prefer a house (two or more floors), 10% a bungalow and 1% a flat in a converted house.

The most important features people are looking for in their next home are garden space (34%), more bedrooms (21%) and a larger kitchen (11%). While a more peaceful area (22%), friendly neighbours (15%) and feeling safe (14%) were the most important neighbourhood attributes people would be looking for when moving.

35% of renters think they will always rent.

Looking forward to future tenure choices, over a third of renters in apartments think they will always rent, whilst almost half (48%) think they will eventually buy a property at some

point in the future. The expectation to buy a property decreased the older one gets. The renters aged 40 plus years, in the focus groups mostly aspired to homeownership. However, having highlighted difficulties in saving for a deposit given high rents and the challenge of getting a mortgage for people in their forties, most had concluded that their chances of becoming homeowners were rapidly diminishing and they would likely remain renting.

Three-quarters of apartment owners were happy with their Owners' Management Company (OMC).

The survey found that 73% of owners thought that their Owners' Management Company was well-run and 66% were happy with the work it does. Engagement with the OMC was lower, though still high with 43% saying they would consider acting as director of the OMC, and just over half saying they would normally attend the OMC annual general meeting.

82% of owners had a good understanding of what their annual service charge was being spent on, and 57% agreed that the fee represented good value for money. However, there were concerns about management fees in the future, with two-thirds worrying that the fees might increase significantly over the next couple of years.

There was discontent among some of the focus group participants about the OMC blocking parking access of residents who had not paid their management fees. However, 84% of participants in the survey agreed that paying management fees on time was important.

One fifth (21%) said they would prefer to move to another apartment, while 68% would prefer a house (two or more floors), 10% a bungalow and 1% a flat in a converted house

Key findings



Apartment satisfaction

81% of all apartment dwellers 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with their homes

31% lacked a place to sit outside

"It does feel like a house, even though it's an apartment."

43% owners very satisfied

32% said that shortage of space is a problem

21% renters very satisfied

21% said noise from neighbouring homes a problem



Neighbourhood satisfaction

82% of all apartment dwellers 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with their neighbourhoods

66% would like to stay long-term in their area

"So, it's just been great for the kids to walk to school and everything's on your doorstep."

39% owners 'very satisfied' with their neighbourhoods

52% commute daily by car, 21% walk or cycle and 21% take public transport

21% of renters 'very satisfied' with their neighbourhoods

22% live in an area they grew up in and 41% have family members living close by



Renters' experiences

66% of renters had 'good' or 'very good' experiences renting

35% renting because they don't know where they want to settle down

78% feel 'secure' or 'very secure' in their tenure

25% renting because they can't access a mortgage

13% saving for a deposit

"...the longer you rent, the less chance you have of buying."



Homeowners' experiences

88% of apartment owners have had a 'good' or 'very good' experience of homeownership

23% had experienced 'a lot' of financial difficulty to buy

"It's big, yeah, like for an apartment and I was shocked at what you could get for the money in an apartment rather than a house..."
Family with children



Affordability

85% apartment owners experience no difficulty paying their monthly mortgage repayments

30% of apartment renters experience no difficulty paying their monthly rental costs

"I have to save a thousand a month to prove to my bank I can pay a mortgage even though my rent is more than a mortgage would be."



Future expectations

35% of all renters expect always to rent

33% of those who expect to move expect to rent in the private sector

61% of private renters expect to buy

14% of those who expect to move expect to buy a new home and 32% expect to buy a second-hand home

37% of those who expect to move say it will be for employment reasons and 29% because of a growing family



Future aspirations

68% would like to move to a 'traditional' house

21% would prefer to move to another apartment

"An apartment could tick all the boxes; you know if you can't afford a house you can't afford it, you have to make do."



Families

66% of renters in private developments think apartments can be a good place to raise children

70% of all apartment dwellers think their neighbourhoods are a good place to raise children

"If it was big enough (a 3-bed apartment), with good quality outdoor communal area, let kids down to play and feel safe..."



1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The Apartment Living in Ireland 2019 research study is part of The Housing Agency's ongoing National Study of Irish Housing Experiences, Attitudes and Aspirations. The report is a continuation of the series of reports published by The Housing Agency, which can be found on The Housing Agency's website: www.housingagency.ie

This year, the research has set out better to understand apartment dwellers' attitudes to and experiences of living in their apartments. The focus is on those living in purpose-built flats or apartments³ and examines people's levels of satisfaction with their apartment and neighbourhood, affordability issues, and explores housing aspirations for the future.

The study includes a nationally representative survey of those living in flats or apartments in purpose-built blocks in Ireland containing at least five apartment units.⁴ The survey involved face-to-face interviews, and the sample reflects the distribution

of the population living in apartments in a purpose-built block.⁵ The study also includes the results of four focus groups held with people living in apartments.

1.2 Research objectives

The purpose of this research study is to provide information on the experiences, attitudes and aspirations of apartment dwellers in Ireland in 2019. The research objectives are to:

- Outline the key contextual issues influencing the apartment sector;
- Provide data on people's experiences living in apartments;
- Examine the different factors that impact on their experiences; and,
- Examine apartment dwellers' aspirations for their future housing needs.

1.3 Report structure

Section 1 of this report provides an overview of the study and outlines the research objectives. Section 2 details the methodologies used for the quantitative survey of apartment dwellers and the accompanying qualitative focus groups. Section 3 presents the results of an extensive review of the literature on apartments. Section 4 of the report outlines the results of the nationally representative face-to-face survey of 511 apartment dwellers carried out in 2019. Section 5 details the results from the four qualitative focus groups and Section 6 summarises the results from the survey and focus groups.

This year, the research has set out better to understand apartment dwellers' attitudes to and experiences of living in their apartments

³ The report references those living in apartments throughout; this refers to those living in flats or apartments in purpose-built developments, unless stated otherwise. No distinction is made between flat or apartment in the analysis.

⁴ Apartments in developments containing five or more residential units comprise a multi-unit development, as defined by the MUD Act 2011.

⁵ CSO definitions (Census 2016)



2 Research Methodology

2.1 Research methodology

This research project employed quantitative and qualitative research methods. The quantitative element was a nationally representative face-to-face survey of apartment dwellers in Ireland. The qualitative element of the project consisted of four thematic focus groups. These research elements were supplemented by an extensive review of existing literature on apartments.

the rest of Leinster, Munster, Connacht and Ulster. Furthermore, within Dublin sampling points were distributed across the four local authority areas proportionally to represent the number of persons living in purpose-built apartment blocks in each administrative area.

To reflect the diversity of Dublin and to take account of the large proportion of interviews to be conducted in the capital, the Pobal HP Deprivation Index,⁷ which shows the relative affluence or disadvantage of a particular geographical area, was used to profile each local authority area and determine the spread of sampling points within each local authority area. Using this method ensured the interviewing captured a representative socio-economic profile in each local authority area. See Appendix I for a more detailed description of the sampling procedure used.

point. The margin of error was 4.28% at a 95% confidence interval.

An overview of the full sample achieved is shown in Figure 2.1 and further details on the sample can be found in Appendix II.

2.2.2 Weighting

While all efforts were made to achieve a wholly representative survey sample, some variables are weighted to match that recorded by the CSO 2016 census of population broken down by age, sex, region and tenure type. Due to weighting of data to reflect CSO figures, some base sizes may vary by +/- 1. Weighting was applied on age, region and tenure type to ensure the results were comparable to the Census 2016 figures. Individual weights were applied to 'private renters' and LA/AHB renters within the 'social renter' classification.

2.2.3 Accessing apartments

Interviewers achieved access to gated apartment blocks by liaising with a resident and/or security personnel where possible. In cases where access was not possible or refused, interviewers sought access to another apartment development within the assigned electoral district where possible. If a different apartment development could not be accessed, an alternate electoral district and starting address was allocated. The alternative electoral district had the same deprivation score as the original electoral district.

2.2 Sampling approach

The sampling approach taken was non-probability quota based, similar to the 2018 study.⁶ The achieved sample was 511 completed survey questionnaires from a sample which was representative of the Irish population aged 19 years plus living in purpose-built apartment blocks. To achieve this, quotas were set on age, region and gender to align with the Central Statistic Office's Census 2016.

Sampling points were spread to represent the distribution of apartment dwellers nationally – across Dublin,

2.2.1 Sample achieved

The research achieved a sample of 511⁸ face-to-face interviews across 64 sampling points, consisting of eight complete interviews with appropriate participants achieved per sampling

Table 2.1: Overview of sample

Sample Size	Sampling Points	Completed Interviews Per Sampling Point	Error Rate
511	64	8	4.28%

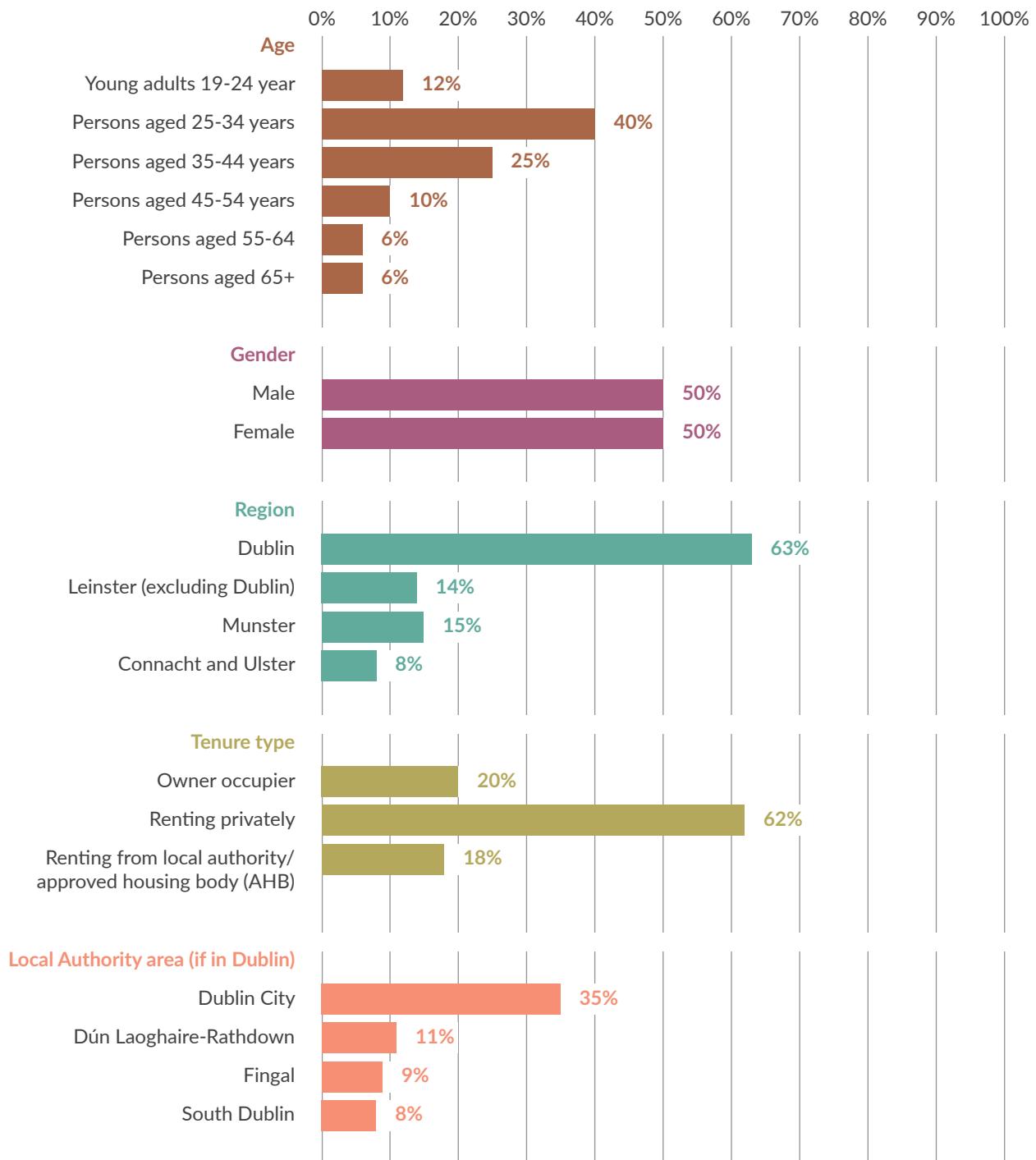
6 In the 2018 study AIMRO social class quotas were used to ensure the sample matched the Irish population. In the absence of this social class quotas for those living in purpose-built apartments; the HP Deprivation Index was used to ensure that a spread of socio-economic groups were interviewed.

7 See <https://www.pobal.ie/app/uploads/2018/06/The-2016-Pobal-HP-Deprivation-Index-Introduction-07.pdf>

8 One interview dataset was corrupted, and the data was not recorded. This case was excluded from the total sample.

Figure 2.1: Sample Profile

(N=511)⁹



⁹ Due to weighting of data to reflect CSO figures, some base sizes may vary by +/- 1.

2.3 Survey instrument

An additional module was added to the 2018 Survey Questionnaire Instrument to capture extra information of relevance to apartment living.

In this year's study overall residential satisfaction has been assessed by combining the responses from two questions which measured satisfaction with the current housing and satisfaction with the neighbourhood at an individual respondent level and the mean scores rounded to give one rating score.

2.4 Pilot study

A pilot study of 24 completed face-to-face interviews was undertaken across three sampling points in Dublin and carried out prior to main stage data collection. This approach highlighted any potential issues that could affect data quality and fieldwork efficiencies. Findings from the pilot study informed the main stage interviewer briefings. As changes were made to the questionnaire following the pilot study, the data collected from the 24 interviews was excluded.

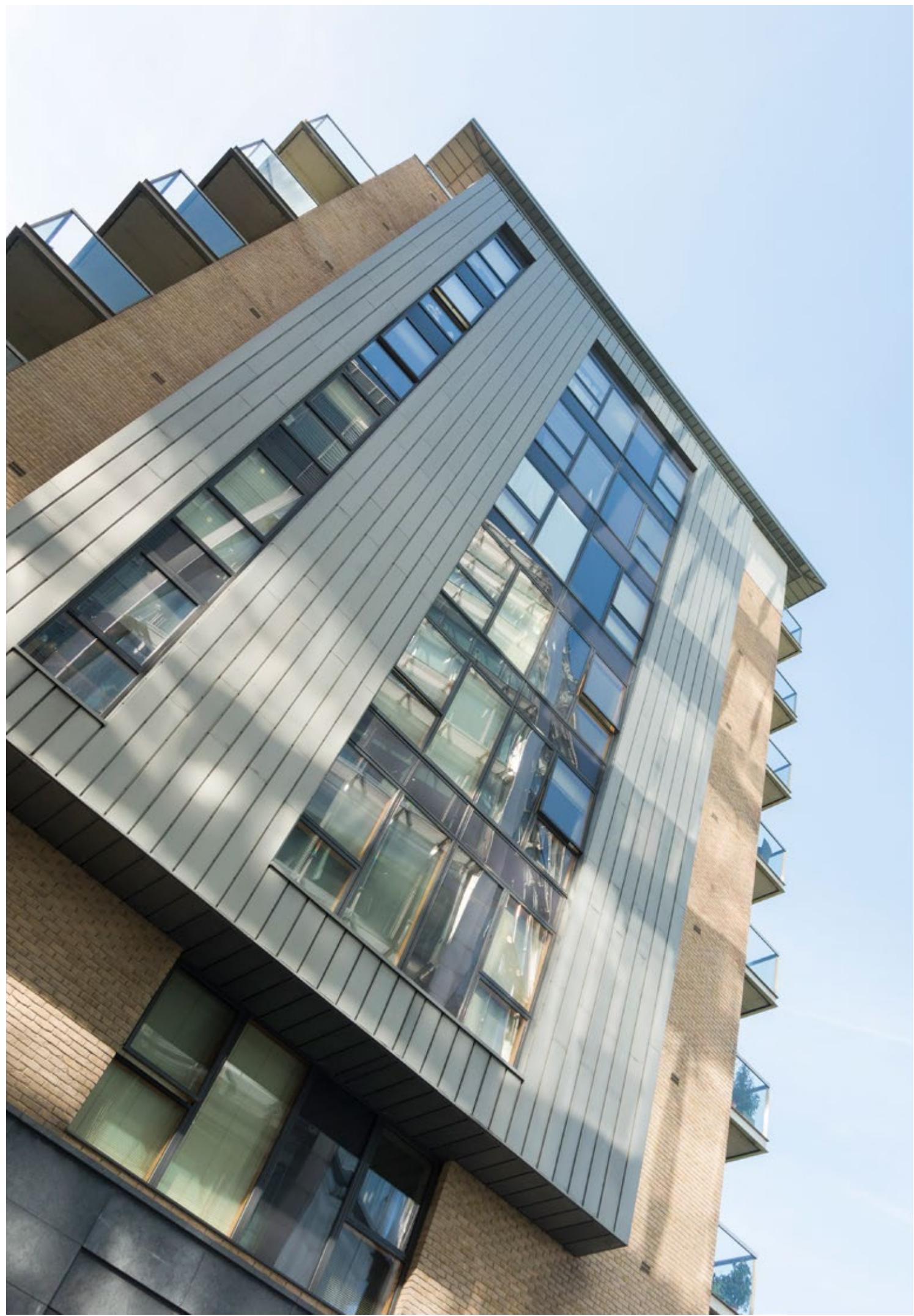
2.5 Qualitative focus groups

Four focus groups were conducted in Dublin in September 2019. The purpose of the four focus groups was to explore the experiences and attitudes of two groups of apartment dwellers:

- Families with children living in apartments; and
- Renters aged 40 years or older and with no children living with them, living in apartments.

In this year's study overall residential satisfaction has been assessed by combining the responses from two questions which measured satisfaction with the current housing and satisfaction with the neighbourhood





3 Context and Literature Review

3.1 Context

Ireland has the lowest level of apartment dwellers in Europe as a proportion of the population (Eurostat:ilc_lvho01). In 2016, according to the most recent Census figures, there were 172,096 private households and 364,243 persons living in purpose-built apartments or flats. This accounted for 10% of all private households in the State, and 8% of all persons. Huge growth was witnessed between the censal periods 2002 to 2016, with an 85% increase in the number of apartments. By 2016, 35% of households in the Dublin City Council Local Authority administrative area lived in apartments (CSO, Census 2016).

During the first six decades of the twentieth century in Ireland, most apartments/flats were mainly developed by local authorities as social housing (Biddlecombe, 2001) and so apartment living developed mainly within the social housing sector in Dublin during the earlier part of the twentieth century, and only later in the private sector. Mansion blocks for private owners or renters did not, by and large, develop as they did in London for example. The 1932 Housing Act led to 11,000 houses being condemned, and left the legacy of 17,000 city council flats and houses built in the era of city architect Herbert Simms. (Henry, 2019)

Net migration into Dublin in the 1980s and early 1990s increased demand for apartments (Biddlecombe, 2001). This continued as the 1990s progressed, with Dublin attracting large numbers of residents into the city centre (Howley, 2010, MacLaran and Murphy, 1997). The population of Dublin's city centre increased by nearly 28,000 people between 1991 and 2002, with apartments accounting for 80% of all residential developments built over the same period, which were mostly one-

and two-bedroom homes. Between 2010 and 2015, a further 50,000 new households were formed in Dublin (Lyons, 2015).

As well as net migration, another lever for the rapid expansion in apartment developments during the 1990s and up to the financial crisis in 2008 were the generous tax incentives available under the Urban Renewal Act 1986 and the Finance Act 1986. Tax reliefs for investor-landlords provided the main incentive for development. Between 1989 and 1996, 5,700 new dwellings were constructed in inner city Dublin, including large-scale apartment developments of 200 or more homes (MacLaran and Murphy, 1997). The focus was on constructing new buildings rather than refurbishment, and building homes for one and two professional persons. This led to a lack of variety in the type of apartments available, restricted to dwellings similar in size, design and price. There was a perception that successive Irish Governments had prioritised the needs of developers over future apartment residents (Howley, 2010).

Between 2011 and 2017, a total of 6,603 apartments were built out of the total housing production of 53,578; approximately 12% of new housing stock. By the time of the 2016 Census, apartments (74,537) overtook terraced houses (74,446) as the main housing type in the Dublin City local authority area.

It is only within the Dublin region that a sizeable proportion of households live in apartments. As already mentioned, 35% of all households in Dublin City, 9.6% in Fingal, 9.3% in Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown and 7.2% in South Dublin County Council were living in apartments. For the rest of the country, even including the regional cities, the proportion of households living in apartments is low; ranging from 0.2% of households in Leitrim to 4.3% of households in Cork City (CSO, 2016).

Typically, purpose-built apartment households are occupied by younger households; 54% of persons living in purpose-built apartments are aged under 35 years of age, while just 10% are aged 55 years and over. The average age of persons in purpose-built apartments is 32 years of age, compared to the national average of 37 years (Census 2016). Most apartments in Ireland are rented from a private landlord (54%), while 20% are owner occupied, 14% are rented from a local authority, 4% from an approved housing body and the rest are either occupied free of rent or the tenure type was not stated. (Census 2016, E1006).

Table 3.1 gives a profile, by age, of the occupancy of householders in purpose-built apartments from Census 2016. As can be seen, just under 8% of the total population live in purpose-built apartments. Of these, 18% of the population aged between 25 years and 34 years of age live in apartments,

Typically, purpose-built apartment households are occupied by younger households; 54% of persons living in purpose-built apartments are aged under 35 years of age, while just 10% are aged 55 years and over

Table 3.1: Age group of persons by all households and by purpose-built apartments

Age group of persons in private households	All households number of persons	All purpose-built apartments number of persons	% of persons by age in purpose-built apartments
Persons of all ages	4,676,648	364,243	7.8
Pre-school children (0-4 years)	329,854	29,355	8.9
Primary school children (5-12 years)	549,743	27,361	5.0
Teenagers (13-18 years)	372,116	13,015	3.5
Young adults (19-24 years)	342,750	35,093	10.2
Persons aged 25-34 years	650,072	118,230	18.2
Persons aged 35-44 years	734,374	74,875	10.2
Persons aged 45-54 years	614,928	30,032	4.9
Persons aged 55-64 years	495,527	18,452	3.7
Persons aged 65-74 years	355,980	10,630	3.0
Persons aged 75 years and over	231,304	7,200	3.1

Source: CSO Census 2016

while just 3% of those aged over 75 years of age live in purpose-built apartments. Interestingly, nearly one in ten children (8.9%) aged between 0 and 4 years of age live in purpose-built apartments today.

Corrigan *et al* (2019) note that 'rental tenure is a function of lifecycle'. Dublin city centre has also seen an increase in ethnically diverse apartment dwellers who may culturally be more used to apartment living (Howley, 2009; Sajan, 2015). Across Europe there is a higher proportion of separated, widowed or divorced people among apartment dwellers compared to the general population (Winston 2004).

3.1.1 Residential density

Apartment building is often seen as a key solution to achieving higher residential densities (Biddlecombe, 2001; Bounds, 2010; Sajan, 2015; Howley, 2009). Four main factors have been identified to explain the increasing popularity of apartment

living as part of public policy globally. Firstly, the need to increase densities through sustainable development; secondly, increasing demand for greater diversity in housing; thirdly, urban renewal and regeneration at a time of land scarcity; and lastly, lifestyle changes where apartment developments provide a range of facilities (Dredge and Coiacetto, 2011). Irish Government policy is to look to increase residential density to improve sustainability (DHPLG, 2018b). Apartment developments are considered a better use of land, are more sustainable and more suitable to Ireland's changing demographics (Lyons, 2015). Apartment living growth is seen as essential to ensure major

urban areas develop sustainably rather than continue in an ever-outward sprawl (DHPLG, 2018b)

However, increasing higher residential densities through apartment living faces a challenge because the consistent and long-term aim of most people in Ireland is for low-density housing and for homeownership (Corrigan *et al.*, 2019). Howley (2009) notes that increased density needs to occur in tandem with enhancing the liveability of inner-city neighbourhoods.

This preference for low-density living can change so that higher-density living can be seen as desirable as a long-term aim, as in Australia, where apartment

developments are the predominant residential unit for medium-to high-density urban living in cities such as Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane (Fisher and McPhail, 2014).

3.1.2 Apartment construction quality

Standards for apartment design and construction quality have evolved over the years. The most recent guidelines on apartment standards were published in March 2018, while in December 2018 the DHPLG published guidelines on urban development and building heights (DHPLG, 2018).

The introduction in 2014 of building standards for apartments has resulted

in improved quality of apartments; in particular: size; soundproofing, and energy efficiency (Mooney, 2019). Government guidelines issued in 1995 introduced minimum sizes, soundproofing and open space for apartments, which Howley (2010) notes were quickly adopted as guidelines for maximum standards rather than as minimum standards by developers. Much of the older stock of apartment buildings in Ireland does not comply with modern building regulation or best practice, and a great deal of the focus on building defects, particularly fire safety defects, has been on 'Celtic Tiger' properties completed at the peak of the property boom (Mooney, 2019).

3.1.3 Costs of building

Costs and regulatory conditions are determinants of housing supply (Lyons, 2015). Lyons identifies, on top of the change in costs themselves, three drivers for increased building costs between 2009 and 2014 at a time when incomes were static and house prices were falling. Firstly, larger minimum sizes accounted for 40% of the increase; secondly, the requirement for greater energy efficiency accounted for another 40%, and thirdly, a further 10% was due to costs relating to the 2014 Building Control (Amendment) Regulations. In 2015, the break-even cost of building a new two-bed apartment was €260,000 including VAT (Lyons, 2015).

Figure 3.1: Viability of Two-Bed Apartment



Source: The Real Costs of New Apartment Delivery, SCSI (2017)

In 2017 the Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland reported on the viability of constructing apartments. Looking at the costs of developing two-bedroom apartments, it reported that only suburban low rise (lower range) apartment blocks were assessed as being viable for developers to build. Costs ranged from €293,000 for a suburban low-rise (lower range) apartment to €578,000 for an urban medium-rise (higher range) apartment. Figure 3.1 breaks down the findings by apartment type into sales price and total cost and shows the viable/viability gap.

3.1.4 Apartment living

Apartment living is well established and viewed as an attractive alternative to house living in some countries such as Austria, Germany, Sweden and Korea (Pekkonen and Haverinen-Shaughnessy, 2015; Sung Heui *et al.*, 2010). Even in many English-speaking societies, such as Australia, where housing aspirations are perhaps more similar to Ireland, the demand for apartments is expected to increase by 44% by 2030, particularly in Sydney and other cities such as Brisbane and Melbourne (Sajan, 2015).

Bounds (2010) asserts that people will spend more of their lives in multi-owned apartment developments because of increased supply, and demand for their proximity to work, service and leisure. Life stage also has a fundamental impact on a household's decision to locate in a high-density centre, with relatively young, affluent, highly educated renters attracted to the lifestyle offered by living in or near the city centre and are more likely to live in an apartment to achieve that (Howley, 2010). Making apartment living attractive for a wide range of age groups and household types will be important to create sustainable and liveable neighbourhoods and achieve increased housing density in Ireland (Howley, 2009).

"The challenge remains to create inner city residential environments that are attractive to individuals throughout all stages of their life cycle" (Howley, 2010).

Making apartment living attractive for a wide range of age groups and household types will be important to create sustainable and liveable neighbourhoods and achieve increased housing density in Ireland

3.1.5 Management of purpose-built apartment developments

One key feature for apartment owners that differs from most house owners is that individual ownership of a unit is accompanied by shared responsibility with other owners for common areas and the overall building (Fisher and McPhail, 2014). In Ireland, the structure that has evolved is the use of a company to hold the reversionary and freehold of the land and building, with apartment unit owners becoming members and, collectively the owners of the company. Following the transfer of the freehold to an owners' management company (OMC) by the developer, the company becomes the lessor to each of the leases granted to the unit owners; typically 999-year leases.

The Multi-Developments Act, 2011 was intended to address issues that had arisen in the management of apartment developments. The Act established the rights of the collective ownership over individual property rights. The legal framework enabled a structure whereby owners are collectively empowered to operate the common parts of a purpose-built apartment block and to determine services concurrently with their individual interest in the unit (Mooney, 2019).

The OMC owns the freehold of apartments and the common parts of the estate, while each apartment is owned on a leasehold title by individual owners, who purchase a fixed-term lease, at the end of which title reverts to the freeholder (the OMC). In Ireland, the OMC structure has been in place since the early 1970s, when long leasehold apartments were first sold and operated. Each OMC is an

individual legal entity, which must manage its financial records and is typically established as a not-for-profit Company Limited by Guarantee. The apartment leaseholders comprise the members of the company who collectively own the multi-unit development. The membership mandates its elected directors to oversee and manage the company in the interests of all members. The directors often delegate tasks to property management agents, such as collection of charges, operational management of maintenance, and upkeep of the common areas. Property management agents are regulated by the Property Services (Regulation) Act 2011 and enforcement is undertaken by the Property Services Regulatory Authority.

Directors are volunteers and the role of an OMC director carries responsibility, as they are entrusted with the executive decision-making powers of the OMC. Many will delegate this to property management agents but, ultimately, the directors are responsible for the repair, maintenance and operation of the apartment complex and the operation of service charge and sinking fund schemes, and they are potentially personally financially liable. The directors decide service levels, appoint contractors and agents, and decide when to enforce lease covenants on their neighbours. The MUD Act requires OMCs to produce annual reports and present service charge budgets to their members for approval, and empowers OMC apartment owners, through their automatic membership of the OMC, to influence the service charge levels, the type of services provided and, importantly, to understand the relationship between the two.

Owners' management companies are funded exclusively by their members, from which the OMC funds its obligations. The OMC must raise charges in accordance with the MUD Act to fund the management and maintenance of the common parts. Members pay an annual service fee charge which incorporates two elements: a service charge for operations and a building investment fund (sinking fund) element for long-term maintenance.

An OMC is unlikely to be required if a corporate body owns an entire apartment complex, nor for apartment units in converted premises and that have fewer than five units. Corporate owners can be investment funds, publicly listed on the stock market, private equity companies or approved housing bodies as defined and regulated by The Housing Agency.

3.2 Review of the literature

3.2.1 Residential satisfaction

Residential satisfaction is 'a broad concept associated with multidimensional aspects including physical, social and neighbourhood factors, as well as psychological and socio-demographic characteristics of the residents' (Balestra and Sultan, 2013). It is often used as an umbrella term encompassing three aspects: satisfaction with the physical housing unit, satisfaction with the neighbourhood, and satisfaction with neighbours and the community (Adriaanse, 2007). Residential satisfaction can also be viewed as a way of predicting housing behaviour and changes in housing demand, which can be measured using subjective, objective and socio-demographic variables (Permentier *et al.*, 2011).

A preference for house owning in low density areas exists in many European

and English-speaking countries and is associated with high levels of residential satisfaction. A Finnish study found that residents of more sparsely populated areas had higher satisfaction levels than those residing in more densely populated areas (Pekkonen and Haverinen-Shaughnessy, 2015). However, in societies such as Austria, Germany and Korea where apartment living is culturally accepted, a majority of apartment residents have high residential satisfaction (Pekkonen and Haverinen-Shaughnessy, 2015; Cho and Lee, 2011).

Although Ireland has the lowest rate of apartment residency in Europe, those who live in apartments have reported high levels of residential satisfaction. In a study of inner-city Dublin apartment residents, 81% of respondents were either 'quite' or 'very satisfied' with their apartment unit (Howley, 2009). Ten years later, a Housing Agency study of households in Ireland, which



included apartment residents, found that 85% of apartment residents reported high levels of residential satisfaction, (The Housing Agency, 2018).

Bounds (2010) argues that residents in multi-owned apartment developments can display high levels of residential satisfaction. The literature on residential satisfaction with apartment living does not wholly support this view, however. A 2004 comparative European study found that those living in multi-unit housing were less likely to be very satisfied with life compared to those living in detached dwellings in a majority of countries (Winston, 2014). A Scottish study of more than 5,000 apartment tenants in public housing high-rise found that they had worse housing satisfaction outcomes than all other dwelling type residents, although, interestingly, family satisfaction levels were on a par with other household types. (Kearns *et al.*,

2012). Kearns *et al.* (2012) conclude that high-rise apartment living is more challenging than for residents of other housing types on residential, social and psychological outcomes linked to residential satisfaction. In a study of apartment dwellers in Brisbane, Australia, overall levels of residential satisfaction were predicted by dwelling design characteristics, noise levels, condition and safety of the local environment, and social interactions (Buys and Miller, 2012). Floor level can affect residential satisfaction; with those living on higher floors feeling less satisfied than those on lower floors, in part due to malfunctioning lifts (Sajan, 2015). However, a separate study in Scotland found that living on the sixth floor or above could have an insulating effect on residents' perception of their neighbourhood in deprived areas (Kearns *et al.*, 2012).

Life stage and age are also determinants of residential satisfaction

(Howley, 2009; James, 2008). Younger respondents are less satisfied with apartment living than those aged 35 years and over (Howley, 2010). Howley (2009) relates this to anticipation of child-rearing which will bring a change to housing needs to cater for an increased household size and, as noted by Oliveira and Elahi (2012), apartments are not as flexible in adapting to changing household demands over the life course, being less easy to adapt and redesign, and usually unable to be increased in size. An earlier study in 2004 found that Ireland had the lowest incidence in Europe of children living in multi-unit housing (Winston, 2014). Residential satisfaction of apartment tenants increases after middle age, increases rapidly for those aged sixty years and over, and, by the time people are in their early eighties it exceeds that of other tenure and household-type groups (James, 2008).



3.2.2 Housing satisfaction

Housing satisfaction is predicted by physical aspects of the dwelling; specifically, the kitchen, bathroom, heating, size, draughts and damp affected levels (Davis and Fine-Davis, 1981). In a Dublin study, respondents' satisfaction with kitchen size tallied closely with their overall satisfaction with their apartment (Howley, 2009). Storage space is a predictor of residential satisfaction, with more adequate storage associated with higher levels of housing satisfaction (Davis and Fine-Davis, 1981; Howley, 2009; Buys and Miller, 2012). Functional clarity, design, storage space, building quality, heating, kitchen, bathroom, lighting and daylight, windows, doors, bedroom sizes, water and sewage systems, cooking smells, internal building noises from plumbing and heating systems, air conditioning, lifts, and vandalism have all been found to relate to residential satisfaction (Davis and Fine-Davis, 1981; Cho and Lee., 2011; Mridha, 2015; Dinc *et al.* 2014; Pekkonen and Haverinen-Shaughnessy, 2015; Sajan, 2015).

Levels of sound insulation and the view from the apartment were also found to predict residents' levels of dwelling satisfaction in the 2009 Dublin study (Howley, 2010). An Australian study found that apartment residents desired larger and better-designed apartments, with more space, larger balconies, an additional room, more storage space and more car parking (Buys and Miller, 2012). Although the 1981 study of Irish householders did not look at dwelling type, it found that having a garden was highly predictive of housing satisfaction; an option not available to apartment dwellers (Davis and Fine-Davis, 1981). Exactly which factors matter most varies with culture and residency conditions (Dinc, 2014).

Healy (2002) noted that for the period 1994 to 1997, people in Ireland and the UK appeared to be relatively content with their housing – both houses and apartments – despite relatively inefficient physical housing conditions and high levels of overcrowding. A comparative European study in 2004,

Irish respondents differed in their neighbourhood satisfaction based on their age, with younger respondents less satisfied than older respondents. Younger people on lower incomes were the least satisfied with their neighbourhood

which examined the experiences of people living in multi-unit housing, found that the quality of multi-unit dwellings was rated lowest in Ireland, with only one per cent categorised as very good quality (Winston, 2014).

Rohe and Stegman (1994) concluded that build quality of the home is more important than tenure. In contrast, a study by Pekkonen and Haverinen-Shaughnessy (2015) found that tenure affects perceptions of build quality with owners reporting higher levels than apartment tenants. This study reported that quality of houses was perceived by residents to be higher than the quality of apartment blocks (Pekkonen and Haverinen-Shaughnessy, 2015). Poor internal quality of an apartment had a greater effect on pre-retirement childless households in public housing high-rise apartments than on families (Kearns *et al.*, 2012).

In 2009, Howley ascribed the greater housing satisfaction of Dublin city centre apartment dwellers who were living in new apartments compared to those living in second-hand apartments to the superior design of new apartments compared to older ones.

Sajan (2015) concluded that many issues in apartments that cause residential dissatisfaction are driven by poor design, possible inconsistencies in certification and inadequate building regulation, which are aggravated by certain management and governance practices and residents' actions.

3.2.3 Neighbourhood satisfaction

Although not studying apartment residents specifically, Davis and Fine-Davis (1981) found that

Irish respondents differed in their neighbourhood satisfaction based on their age, with younger respondents less satisfied than older respondents. Younger people on lower incomes were the least satisfied with their neighbourhood (Davis and Fine-Davis, 1981).

Employment opportunities, perceived safety, absence of litter and neighbours looking out for each other were all associated with neighbourhood satisfaction for inner city Dublin apartment residents (Howley, 2009). In high-rise apartment developments in Scotland, neighbourhood satisfaction did not differ between residents of houses and smaller apartment blocks (Kearns *et al.*, 2012). This was similar to a 1986 study in the United States which compared neighbourhood satisfaction amongst residents of three housing types and found that apartment dwellers' perceptions of the quality of their neighbourhood was most strongly linked to their levels of dwelling satisfaction (Gruber and Shelton, 1987). This appears to be a 'virtuous circle' as overall satisfaction with the neighbourhood for residents of all dwelling types was associated with higher levels of satisfaction with the dwelling unit. Paradoxically, the same study found that people living in houses and mobile homes rated their neighbourhood as more attractive than did residents of apartments. Apartment residents perceived there to be less open space compared to house residents, but those apartment dwellers who perceived the neighbourhood to be pleasant and friendly had higher housing satisfaction levels than residents of either houses or mobile homes (Gruber and Shelton, 1987).

In Ireland people have clear tenure and dwelling aspirations, preferring to own their homes in lower density suburbs rather than remain as renters in city centre apartments

Berkoz *et al* (2009) concluded in a study of apartment residents in a private development in Istanbul, that a preference for living in the centre instead of the periphery depended on access to open areas, health facilities, the maintenance of the development environment, recreational areas, social structure and some physical features of the environment. Location, safety and 'unique characteristics' were predictors of residential satisfaction identified in a study of gated apartment development residents in Brazil (Carvalho *et al*, 1997). Proximity of health facilities is associated with residential satisfaction (Berkoz *et al*, 2009; Dinc, 2015). Access to open spaces is an important predictor of neighbourhood satisfaction (Gruber and Shelton, 1987; Berkoz *et al*, 2009; Howley, 2009; Sajan, 2015).

3.2.4 Neighbours

Friendly and helpful neighbours influence residential satisfaction (Howley, 2009; Mridha, 2015). Kearns *et al* (2012) found that residents of apartments in high-rise public housing in Scotland who perceived a lack of community cohesion reported low levels of social contact with neighbours and were more likely to report having a complete lack of social support.

Noise was found to be an important factor in satisfaction levels, with noise mitigation strategies desired by apartment residents to decrease noise levels from both neighbouring apartments and from the external environment (Buys and Miller, 2012). Sajan (2015) found that trespassing was identified as a problem; leading to fears about safety, theft and vandalism for residents of apartment developments.

3.2.5 Apartments and housing aspiration

Housing aspirations are the gap between a person's current housing circumstances and their ideal circumstances, with both a tenure facet and a dwelling type-facet. Aspirations are a key factor in choosing a dwelling; whether to rent or buy. Housing is the most important consumption good in developed countries with two aspects; the first as a 'good' and the second as an 'asset' and this dual aspect means that most people aspire to own their housing unit (Howley, 2009).

3.2.6 Tenure

In Ireland homeownership is nearly completely aligned with housing type, with houses being the most frequently-owned type (Glaeser and Shapiro, 2003 in James *et al*, 2008; Elsinga and Hoekstra, 2005; CSO, 2016). Winston (2004) suggested that multi-unit residents in Ireland cannot afford other housing options rather than it being a preference for apartment living. However, Bounds (2010) notes that what differentiates owning from renting is the level of sovereignty the resident has over their domain, rather than any intrinsic satisfaction in detached dwelling over an apartment in a multi-owned development. Elsinga and Hoekstra (2005) assert that the low proportion of owner-occupied properties in Switzerland, Austria and Germany is a consequence of tenancy protection laws which enable tenants to experience a sense of tenure security on a par with homeowners. Buys and Miller (2012) found that the study population of young, childless, well-educated professional apartment residents expressed the intention to remain in their apartment in the short-to-middle-term, and over half would consider a move to another apartment.

In a European survey, Elsinga and Hoekstra (2005) found that in seven out of eight countries homeowners were more satisfied than tenants with their housing situation. However, they note that in countries where government policy supports a stable, affordable housing sector and there is a well-developed cost-rental sector with security of tenure for tenants, a rental dwelling is a satisfying alternative to homeownership, with Vienna as the most established and developed example (Elsinga and Hoekstra, 2005).

Elsinga and Hoekstra (2005) assert that homeownership ensures basic security, freedom, self-esteem and financial advantage, which, in turn, leads to higher overall residential satisfaction. As is the case in Ireland, houses in Finland are more likely to be owned than rented, and apartments more likely to be rented than owned. Tenure status in Finland is associated with income level, with owners having higher disposable income than tenants. Similarly, in Ireland people have clear tenure and dwelling aspirations, preferring to own their homes in lower density suburbs rather than remain as renters in city centre apartments (Howley, 2009; Winston 2004; Corrigan *et al*, 2019) and viewing homeownership as a lifetime purchase that provides social stability in which to raise a family (Biddlecombe, 2001, Corrigan *et al*. 2019). A study of the housing aspirations of tenants in Ireland, found that homeownership was the tenure goal for most respondents; the vast majority (84.5%) of respondents indicating that they intended to buy a house, with many willing to pay a premium over the cost of renting to achieve this goal and an even greater majority (92%) intending to fund the purchase with a mortgage (Corrigan *et al*, 2019). The same study found that even those who anticipated renting into the long term had a preference for ownership, even if they could not envisage that they would ever be able to afford it. This is a historically long-established attitude which holds true for westernised societies and is not unique to Ireland.

In Ireland, several studies have found that apartment residents, whether owners or renters, aspire to ownership of a house (MacLaran and Murphy, 1997; Howley, 2009; Corrigan *et al.*, 2019). In 1995, a survey of inner-city Dublin owner-occupiers found that 47% intended to move out within three years and 82% intended to move out within five years (MacLaran and Murphy, 1997). Howley (2009) found that over three-quarters of respondents in a survey of Dublin city centre apartment dwellers did not consider living in an apartment as their long-term choice of dwelling. Just under one-quarter felt they would be living in an apartment in five years, but it is unclear if this was the response of the social housing tenants who may not have the choices open to younger more affluent tenants in privately-rented apartments. In the 2019 study of housing aspirations in Ireland, only 6.4% of respondents intended to purchase an apartment, while a further 9.1% would consider purchasing either

a house or an apartment (Corrigan *et al.*, 2019). Planning for the life stages of child rearing and retirement seem to be part of people's decision to purchase a house (Corrigan *et al.*, 2019).

3.2.7 Shared ownership

One key feature for apartment owners that differs from house owners is that individual ownership of an apartment is accompanied by shared responsibility with other owners for common areas and the overall building (Fisher and McPhail, 2014). Residents' sense of control over the management of their apartments is linked to residential satisfaction and management factors play a key role in predicting residential satisfaction (Baldassare, 1981; Francescato, 1977; Weidemann and Anderson, 1982; Dinc, 2014). Problems of power and conflict are inherent in multi-owned developments – which legislation may address but may not be able to fully resolve (Bounds, 2010). Tensions can occur between residents and other stakeholders in relation to a

range of management and maintenance issues (Yip *et al.*, 2002).

In a study of tenants of privately-owned apartments in Bangladesh, Rahman *et al.* (2015) found a strong relationship between services provided by private companies and residents' satisfaction with their dwelling. A second study in Dhaka, Bangladesh, of apartment dwellers found that management and maintenance strongly predicted levels of residential satisfaction (Mridha *et al.*, 2015); with prompt reaction to maintenance requests, rules that are perceived to be fair and a perception that the management company is friendly and cooperative resulting in higher levels of residential satisfaction. Mridha *et al.* (2015) concluded that overall residential satisfaction is largely dependent on quality, performance and policy aspects of management and maintenance.

A study of apartment residents by James *et al.* (2009) in the United States found that largest driving force in tenants' residential satisfaction was found to be the relationship with the management company. Similarly, in Australia apartment residents' experience of frustrating relationships with management companies undermine their sense of security and lower their satisfaction with multi-owner developments (Bounds, 2010).

Residents' sense of control over the management of their apartments is linked to residential satisfaction and management factors play a key role in predicting residential satisfaction



4 Nationally Representative Survey Results

This section of the report presents the findings from the nationally representative face-to-face survey of apartment dwellers in Ireland.

The key themes covered in the analysis include overall residential satisfaction¹⁰, satisfaction with the apartment¹¹, neighbourhood satisfaction, tenure experiences, household income and affordability and housing aspirations. Throughout the report, comparisons are made with The Housing Agency 2018 study. While both studies are not directly comparable in terms of the profile of the sample, it does allow some

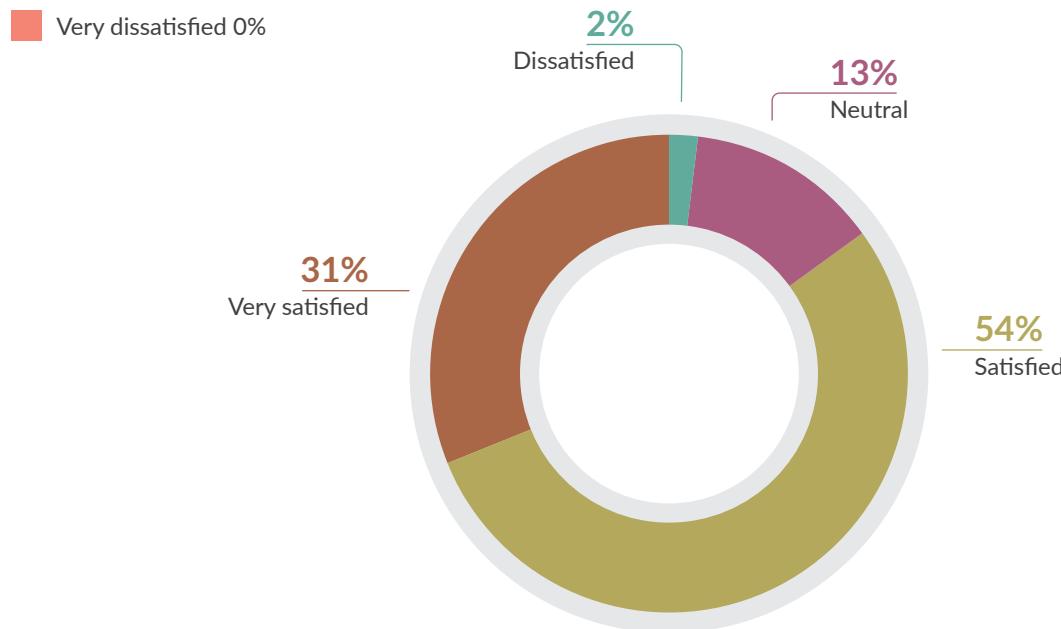
interesting differences between the two studies to be highlighted.¹²

4.1 Residential satisfaction

The study found that the overall residential satisfaction levels for apartment dwellers was positive; with 31% being 'very satisfied' and a further 54% 'satisfied'. Homeowners displayed

the highest satisfaction levels, with 50% of homeowners scoring 'very satisfied' for their residential satisfaction, which is almost double that of private and social renters – both at 27% 'very satisfied'. Similarly, there were differences in overall residential satisfaction across regions, with just 25% of Dublin residents being 'very satisfied', compared to 42% of those living outside the capital.

Figure 4.1: Residential satisfaction, all tenure (N=511)



¹⁰ To determine overall residential satisfaction, the ratings given to overall apartment satisfaction and overall neighbourhood satisfaction were combined at an individual respondent level and the mean scores rounded to give one rating score.

¹¹ 2018 Study referred to this as housing satisfaction – for this study it can be referred to as either housing or apartment satisfaction.

¹² Of the 1,200 sample reported in the 2018 study, 96% of those interviewed lived in either a house (two or more floors) or a bungalow.

Figure 4.2: Residential satisfaction (% very satisfied) by tenure and region (n=511)

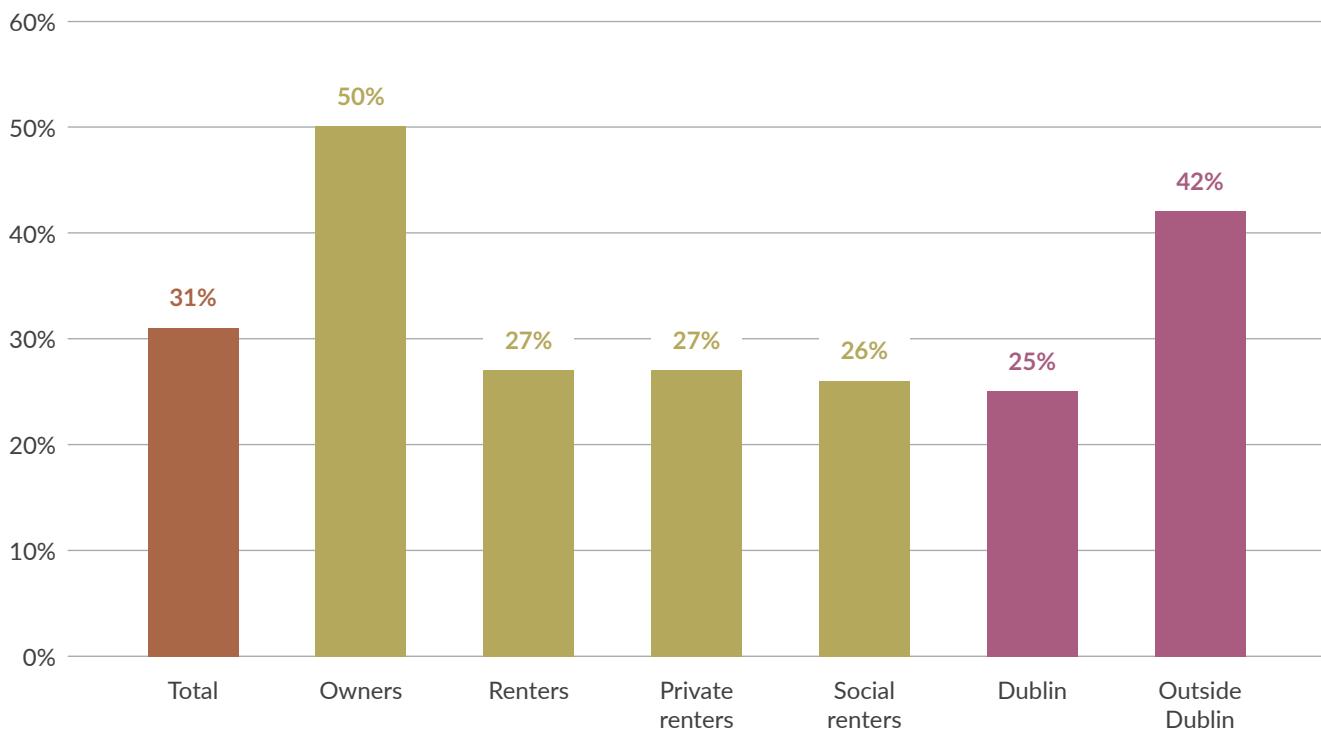


Table 4.1: Residential satisfaction by tenure and region (N=511)

	Total	Owners	Renters	Private renters	Social renters	Dublin	Outside Dublin
	511	102	409	279	130	322	189
Very satisfied	31%	50%	27%	27%	26%	25%	42%
Satisfied	54%	46%	56%	61%	44%	57%	48%
Neutral	13%	4%	15%	11%	26%	16%	8%
Dissatisfied	2%	0%	2%	1%	5%	2%	2%
Very dissatisfied	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%

4.2 Housing (apartment) satisfaction

Key insight

Apartment satisfaction levels in Ireland were high overall, at 81%. Apartment owner occupiers were the most likely to be 'very satisfied' (43%). External and internal space are seen as the biggest issues with apartment living.

The survey found that people living in apartments were, on the whole, satisfied. Overall, 81% were satisfied with their apartment, with 25% of them being 'very satisfied'. Some interesting differences in satisfaction levels emerge across tenure types. Owners

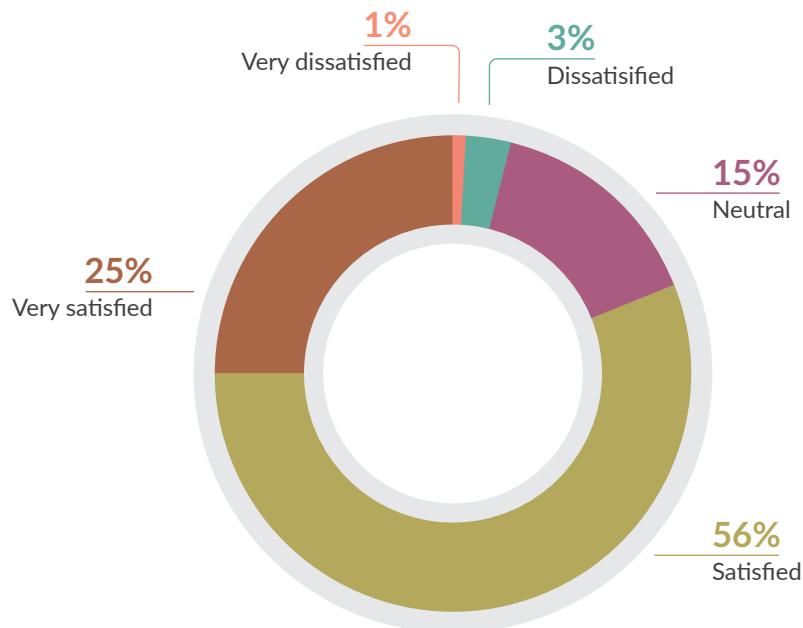
have the highest 'very satisfied' levels at 43%, which was higher than private renters¹³ (22%) and social renters (20%). Some differences were also evident between Dublin and outside Dublin, with a higher proportion of those living outside Dublin (34%) being 'very satisfied' compared to those living in Dublin (21%). Older apartment dwellers¹⁴ (aged 55+) had a higher level of 'very satisfied' compared to the youngest age group (19-34):

37% versus 20%. (See Table A3.1 in Appendix III).

While apartment satisfaction levels for apartment dwellers were high, they were somewhat lower than the 2018 Housing Agency study, which found that 92% were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' overall. The biggest difference seen was in terms of 'very satisfied' at 25%, compared to 49% for the previous study.

While apartment satisfaction levels for apartment dwellers were high, they were somewhat lower than the 2018 Housing Agency study, which found that 92% were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' overall

Figure 4.3: Overall apartment satisfaction (N=511)



13 Private renter refers to those renting from a private landlord and not in receipt of RAS and/or HAP. Social renter refers to those living in LA/AHB apartments and also those renting from a private landlord and in receipt of HAP and/or RAS.

14 It should be noted that there was a lower number of those aged 55+ years in the sample (n63), therefore, results should be viewed with caution.

Table 4.2: Apartment satisfaction by tenure and region (N=511)

	Total	Owners	Renters ¹⁵	Private renters	Social renters	Dublin	Outside Dublin
	511	102	409	279	130	322	189
Very satisfied	25%	43%	21%	22%	20%	21%	34%
Satisfied	56%	50%	57%	62%	47%	59%	51%
Neutral	15%	6%	17%	13%	25%	17%	10%
Dissatisfied	3%	0%	4%	3%	7%	3%	4%
Very dissatisfied	1%	0%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%

The high levels of apartment satisfaction were reflected in answers to statements in the questionnaire asked to capture people's attitudes to living in apartments. The survey found half of apartment dwellers 'strongly agreeing' that they enjoy living in their home (47%), that their apartment was suited to their needs (47%), that it is not difficult to live in (45%) and that they had chosen to live there (48%).

Owners were seen to be most positive about their apartments, with upwards of 60% 'strongly agreeing' with the statements. Meanwhile, social renters had the lowest levels of satisfaction with their apartment, with approximately 35% 'strongly agreeing' with the statements, as can be seen in Table 4.3.

Those in the lower socio-economic groups were the least positive about their apartments, with around one third 'strongly agreeing' with the statements. This compares to around 50% of the

higher socio-economic groups 'strongly agreeing' with the statements. See Table A3.2 in Appendix III.

A range of questions was asked to find out about the condition and quality of apartments that people were living in and what issues apartment dwellers had with them. Overall, a significant proportion of people said that they did not have any dwelling related issues or problems with their apartments.

The main problems that were mentioned by apartment dwellers were to do with space; both internal and external space. Nearly a third of apartment dwellers (31%) said

that a 'lack of space/or a place to sit outside' was a problem for them, and for 15% this was a 'big problem'. This is in contrast to the 2018 study, which found this to be a problem for only 5% of households. Internal space was also a problem, with a third of apartment dwellers (32%) saying that 'shortage of space' was a problem for them, of which 9% felt it was a 'big problem'.

Other issues that people had difficulties with were damp-with one in five reporting a problem with damp conditions (21%) and safety with 18% not feeling their home was safe.

Nearly a third of apartment dwellers (31%) said that a 'lack of space/or a place to sit outside' was a problem for them, and for 15% this was a 'big problem'

15 Owners refers to owners with and without a mortgage.

Figure 4.4: Apartment satisfaction statements (N=511)

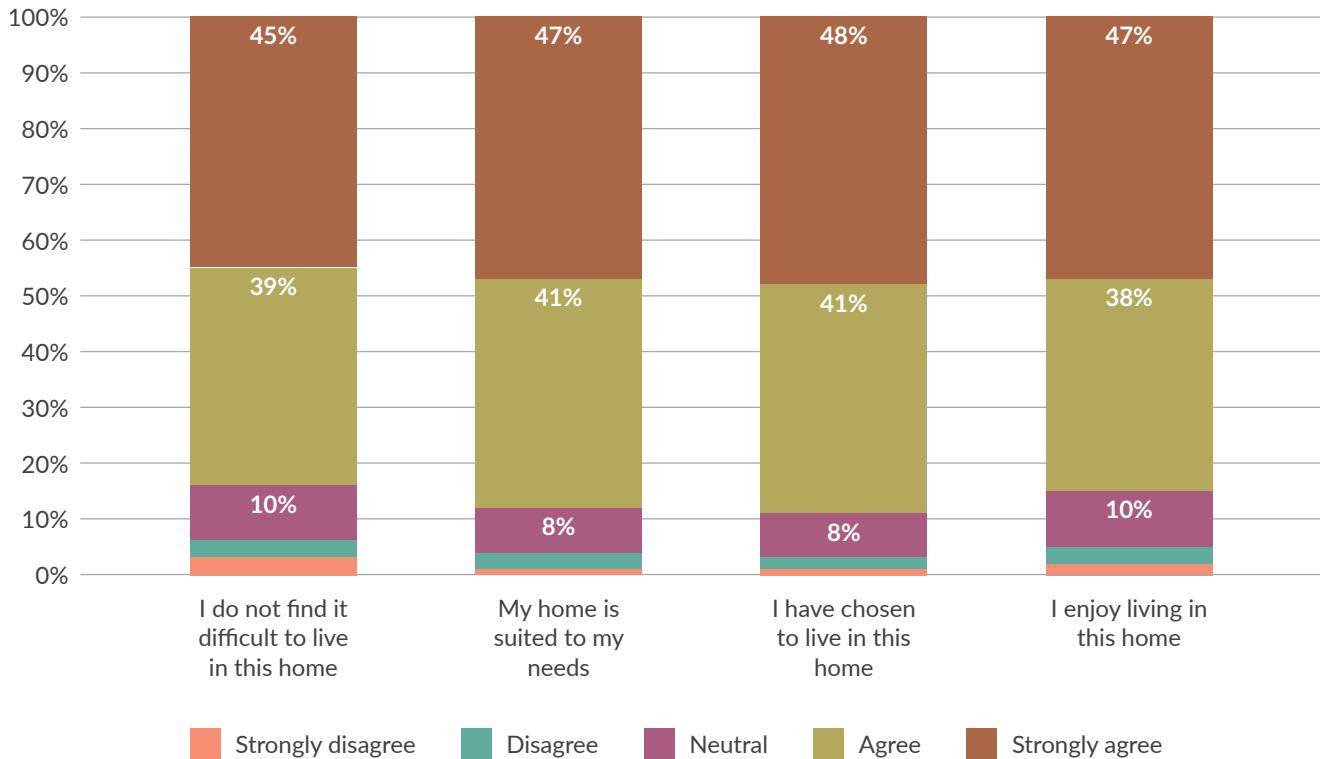


Table 4.3: Apartment satisfaction statements by tenure and region (% strongly agree) (N=511)

% Strongly agree	Total	Owners	All renters	Private renters	Social renters	Dublin	Outside Dublin
	511	102	409	279	130	322	189
I do not find it difficult to live in this home	45%	60%	41%	44%	35%	42%	50%
My home is suited to my needs	47%	62%	43%	46%	35%	44%	52%
I have chosen to live in this home	48%	64%	44%	49%	35%	43%	56%
I enjoy living in this home	47%	66%	43%	46%	36%	44%	53%

Figure 4.5: Incidence of apartment problems/issues (N=511)

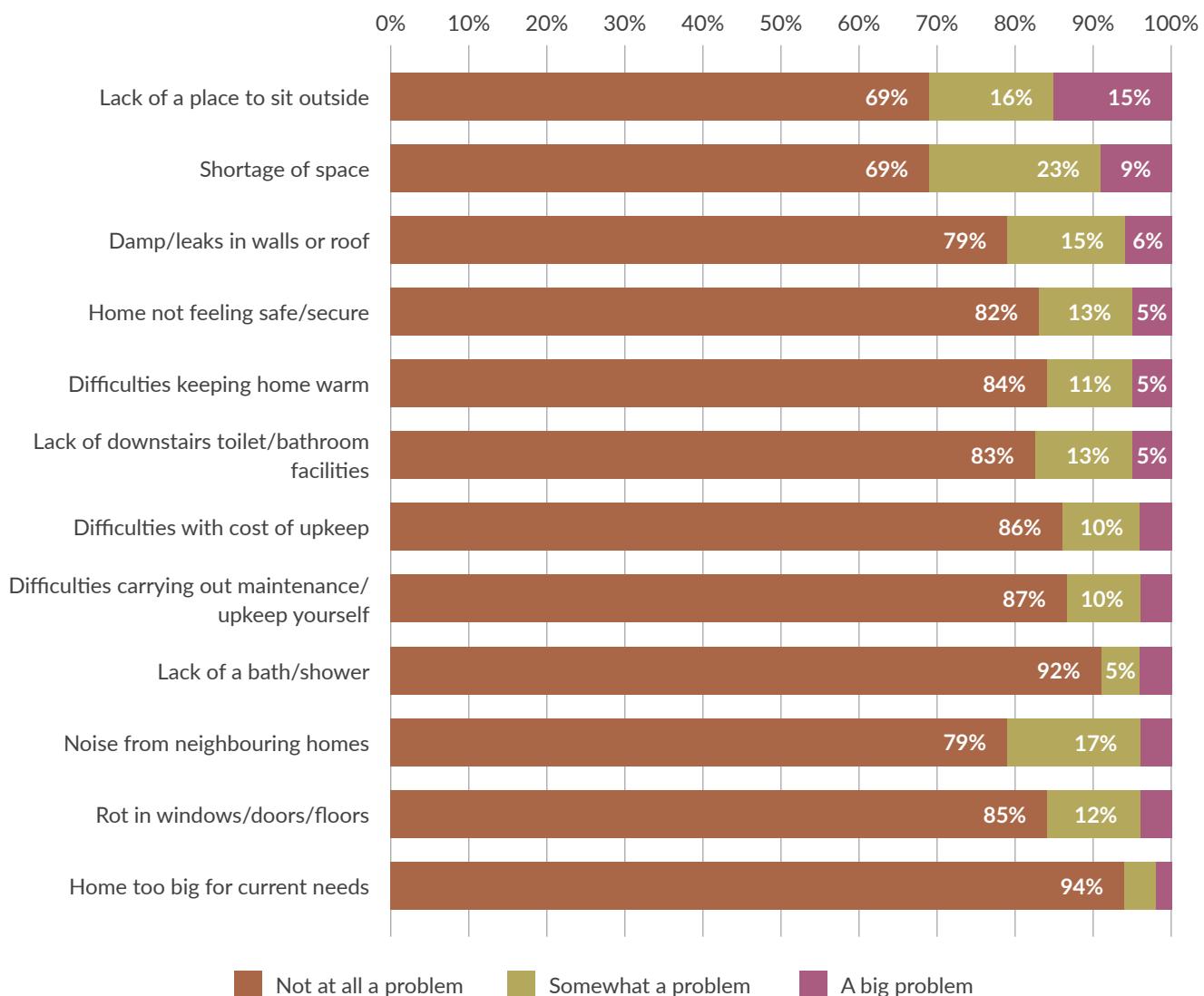
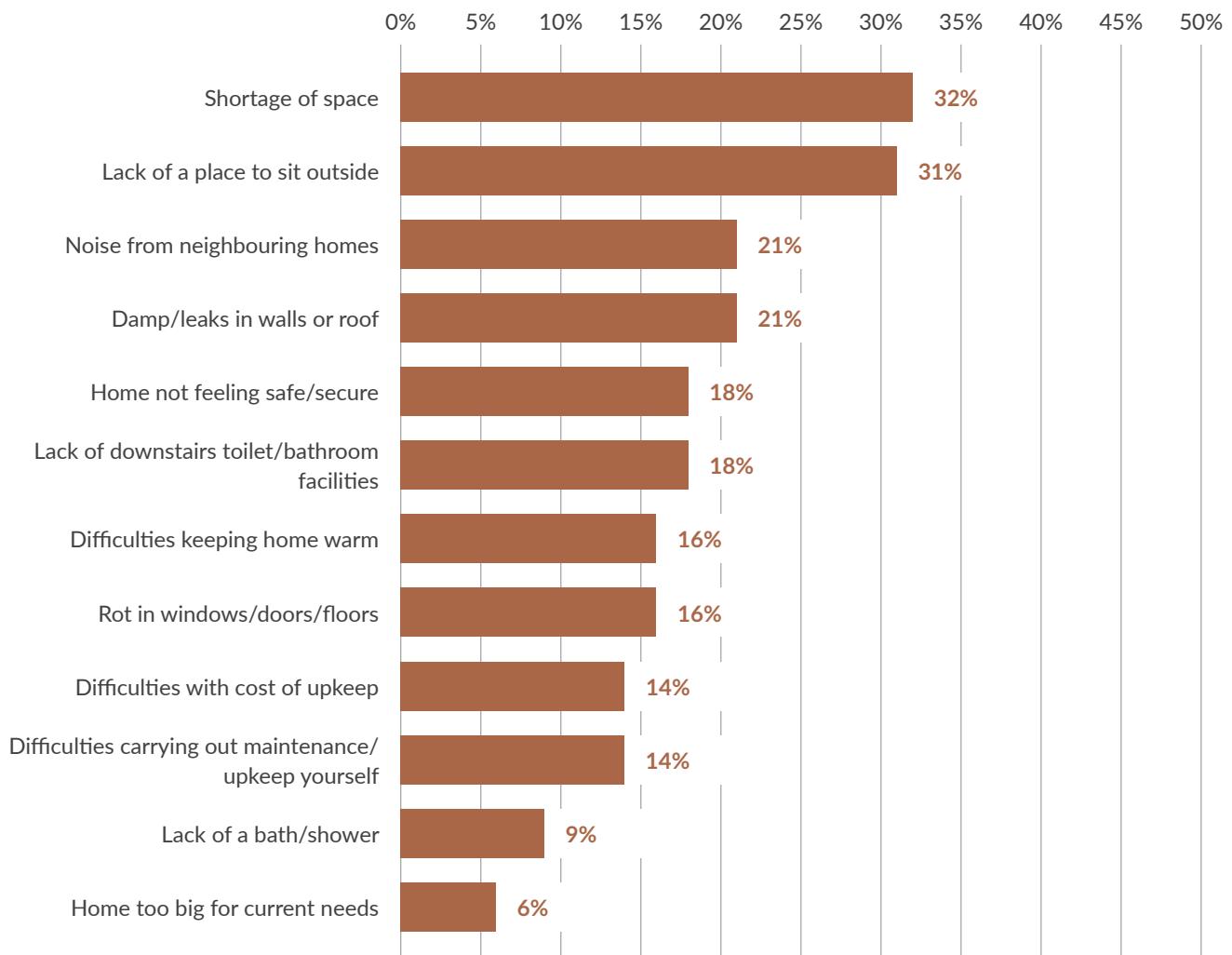


Figure 4.6: Incidence of apartment problems/issues (% somewhat a problem/a big problem) (N=511)



4.3 Neighbourhood satisfaction

Key insight

Neighbourhood satisfaction levels were high overall, at 82%, although higher proportions of owners and those living outside Dublin were 'very' satisfied with their neighbourhood. Apartment dwellers were especially positive about their neighbourhoods in terms of proximity to amenities and services.

As was the case with apartment satisfaction, neighbourhood satisfaction levels were high amongst apartment dwellers, with 82% being 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' in their neighbourhood. Overall, neighbourhood satisfaction levels were similar across tenure type; however, 39% of owners were 'very satisfied' which is considerably higher than the 21% of renters who were 'very satisfied' with their neighbourhoods. Those living outside Dublin were

more likely to be 'very satisfied' in their neighbourhoods, at 34%, compared to 19% of those living in the capital.

Neighbourhood satisfaction amongst apartment dwellers, whilst still high, was lower than The Housing Agency 2018 study, which found that 91% were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with their neighbourhood.

The survey found that apartment residents were generally positive about the characteristics of their neighbourhoods – especially in terms of tangible characteristics such as proximity to services and amenities. Proximity and ease of access to shops/supermarkets (42%), parks/green areas (42%), public amenities (38%) and public services had some of the highest levels of 'strongly agree' across those surveyed. Certain neighbourhood intangibles also scored highly, with 39% and 36% 'strongly agreeing' that their neighbourhood was 'safe' and a 'calm area to live' respectively.

Owners were the most positive about the characteristics of their neighbourhoods, with more owners

'strongly agreeing' across the range of neighbourhood characteristics than renters (either social renters or private renters). Generally, those in the lower socio-economic groups were least likely to be positive about the characteristics of their neighbourhood. See Table A3.4 – Appendix III.

The positive neighbourhood experiences were further evidenced by people's attitudes to the area in which they live. Substantial proportions agreed, overall, that they would like to stay where they live long-term (66%), would recommend their neighbourhood to a friend (81%) and considered it a good place to raise children (70%). In terms of neighbourhood attitudes, it was owners again who were most positive; with 56% 'strongly agreeing' that they would recommend their neighbourhood and 43% 'strongly agreeing' it was a good place to raise children. In comparison, just 23% and 22% of social renters 'strongly agree' with the same statements respectively.

Figure 4.7: Overall neighbourhood satisfaction (N=511)

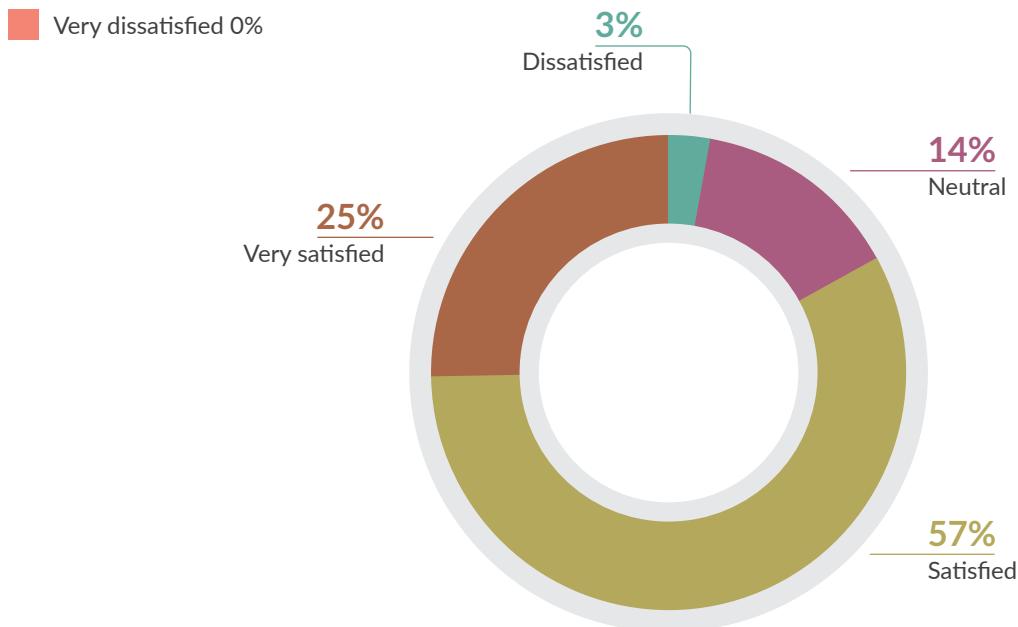


Table 4.4: Overall neighbourhood satisfaction by tenure and region (N=511)

	Total	Owners	Renters	Private renters	Social renters	Dublin	Outside Dublin
	511	102	409	279	130	322	189
Very satisfied	25%	39%	21%	21%	21%	19%	34%
Satisfied	57%	52%	58%	65%	44%	58%	55%
Neutral	14%	9%	16%	11%	25%	18%	9%
Dissatisfied	3%	0%	4%	3%	8%	5%	2%
Very dissatisfied	0%	0%	1%	0%	2%	1%	0%

Figure 4.8: Neighbourhood attitudes (N=511)

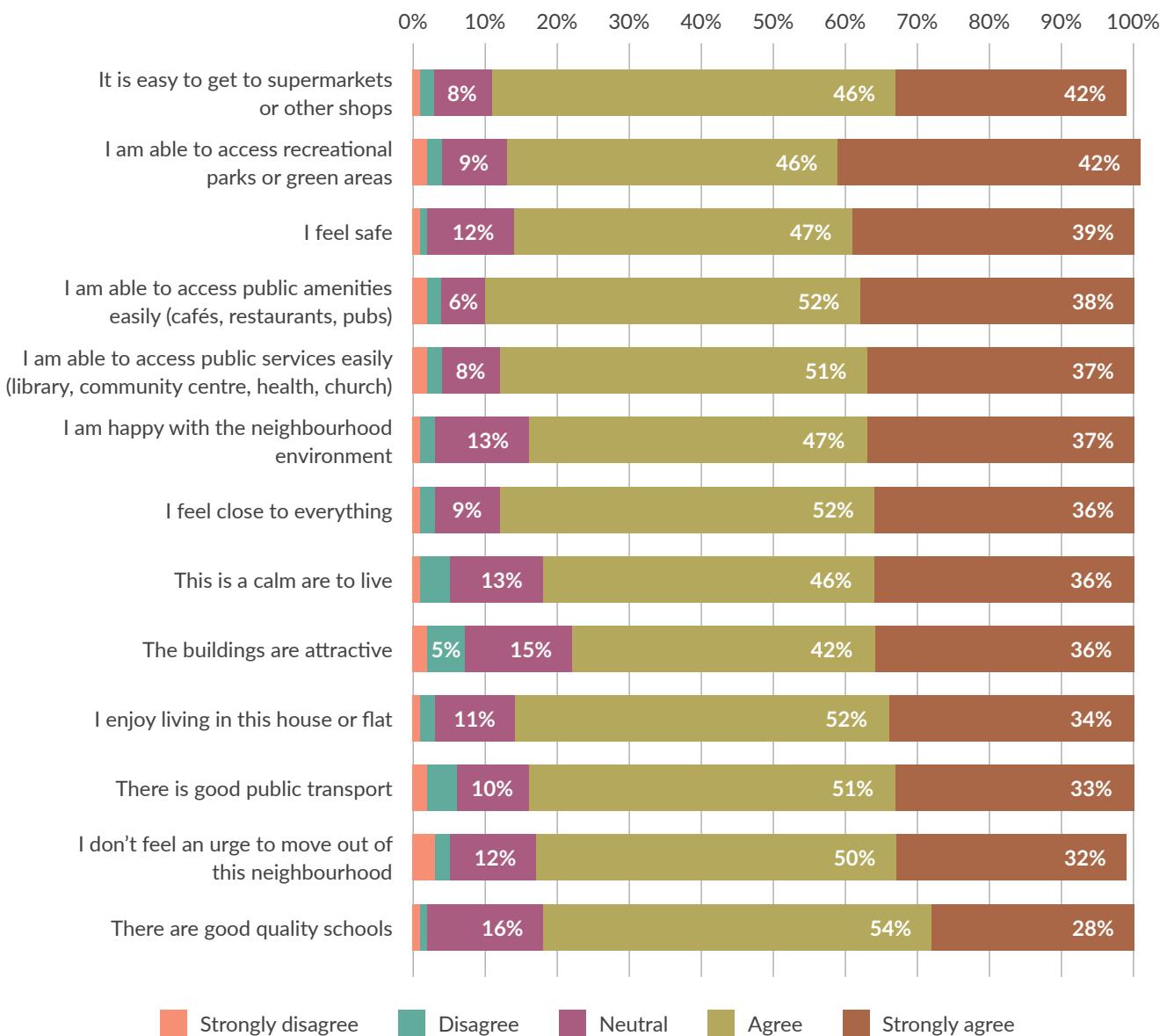


Table 4.5: Neighbourhood attitudes by tenure and region (% strongly agree) (N=511)

	Total	Owners	Renters	Private renters	Social renters	Dublin	Outside Dublin
	511	102	409	279	130	322	189
I am able to access recreational parks or green areas	42%	57%	38%	41%	31%	37%	50%
It is easy to get to supermarkets or other shops	42%	50%	40%	43%	33%	37%	50%
I feel safe	39%	50%	36%	41%	28%	33%	49%
I am able to access public amenities easily	38%	47%	36%	40%	26%	31%	49%
I am happy with the neighbourhood environment	37%	45%	35%	40%	23%	31%	47%
I am able to access public services easily	37%	44%	36%	38%	31%	33%	45%
The buildings are attractive	36%	44%	34%	40%	20%	34%	38%
This is a calm area to live	36%	42%	34%	39%	23%	30%	45%
I feel close to everything	36%	47%	34%	36%	28%	31%	46%
I enjoy living in this house or flat	34%	50%	31%	33%	25%	30%	41%
There is good public transport	33%	37%	32%	31%	33%	32%	35%
I don't feel an urge to move out of this neighbourhood	32%	45%	29%	31%	25%	27%	41%
There are good quality schools	28%	28%	28%	31%	21%	27%	30%

Figure 4.9: Neighbourhood satisfaction statements (N=511)

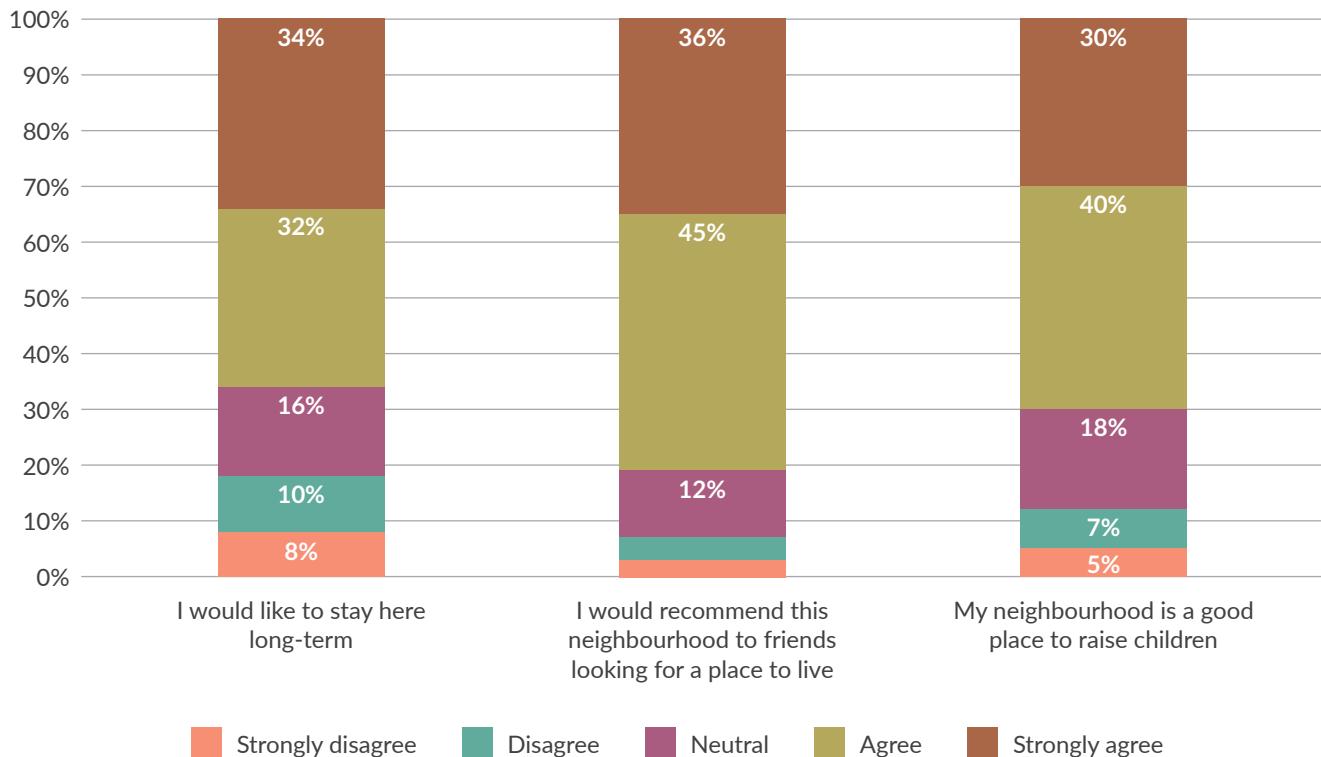


Table 4.6: Neighbourhood satisfaction statements by tenure and region (% strongly agree) (N=511)

% Strongly agree	Total	Owners	Renters	Private renters	Social renters	Dublin	Outside Dublin
	511	102	409	279	130	322	189
I would like to stay here long-term	34%	55%	29%	27%	35%	35%	34%
I would recommend this neighbourhood to friends looking for a place to live	36%	56%	32%	37%	23%	35%	39%
My neighbourhood is a good place to raise children	30%	43%	27%	29%	22%	31%	30%

The Housing Agency 2018 study found that living close to other family members is an important factor when choosing a neighbourhood, and 76% of apartments dwellers in this 2019 research agreed it was important to them. Overall, having family close by was important across tenure type; particularly for owners; with 50% of owners saying they 'strongly agree' that having family close by was important to them, followed by social renters at 41%.

In terms of family, social renters were seen to have the strongest connections to their neighbourhood. While 22% of all apartment dwellers lived in 'an area where they grew up', this rose to 42% of social renters. Conversely, private renters were least likely to be living where they spent their childhood,

at only 12%. A similar situation was evident regarding having family members living close by. While 41% of all apartment occupants said they had family members living close by, this increased to 51% for owners and to 67% for social renters. While, just 26% of private renters had family members living close by.

The survey found that a significant proportion of apartment dwellers were positive about the future prospects for the neighbourhood; with 39% perceiving their area to be 'changing for the better'. In contrast, only 13% saw their neighbourhood as 'changing for the worse'. However, there were noteworthy differences in attitudes across tenure type and region. Apartment owners were most positive about their neighbourhoods' future

prospects; with 60% seeing it 'changing for the better'. In comparison this fell to 39% for private renters and to 23% for social renters; the latter being most likely to consider their neighbourhood as 'changing for the worse' at 28%. Across location there were differences evident, with 45% of Dublin residents seeing their area 'changing for the better', falling to 30% for those living in apartments outside Dublin.

Those in the highest socio-economic group were considerably more positive about the future of their neighbourhoods; 61% of those in socio-economic group AB 'strongly agree' that their area was 'changing for the better', compared to 30% in the C2 socio-economic group and 26% in the DE socio-economic group. See Table A3.7 – Appendix III.

Figure 4.10: Importance of family living close (N=511)

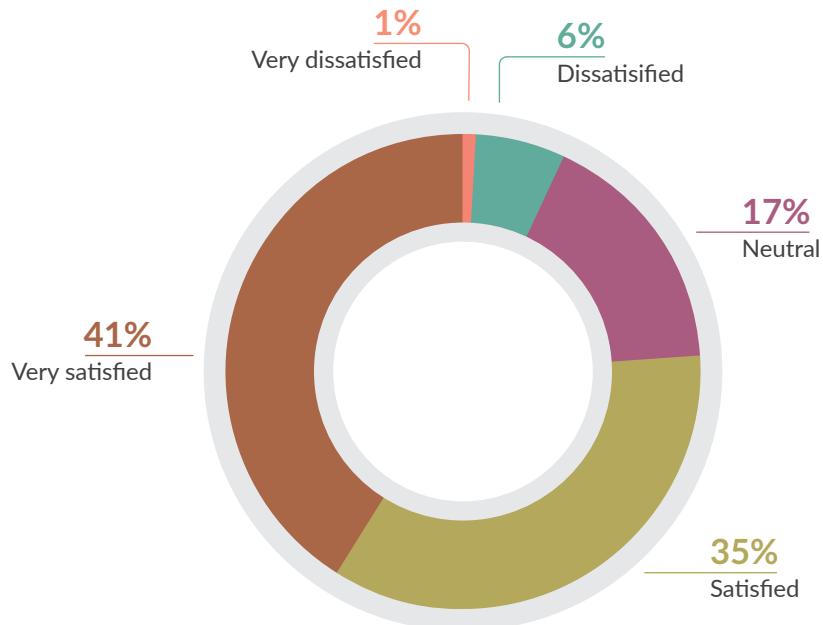


Table 4.7: Importance of family living close, by tenure and region (N=511)

% Strongly agree	Total	Owners	Renters	Private renters	Social renters	Dublin	Outside Dublin
	511	102	409	279	130	322	189
Strongly agree	41%	50%	39%	38%	41%	43%	38%
Agree	35%	28%	37%	38%	35%	35%	35%
Neutral	17%	18%	17%	17%	17%	16%	18%
Disagree	6%	4%	6%	7%	5%	6%	6%
Strongly disagree	1%	1%	1%	0%	3%	0%	3%

Figure 4.11: Incidence of those living where they grew up, by tenure and region (N=511)

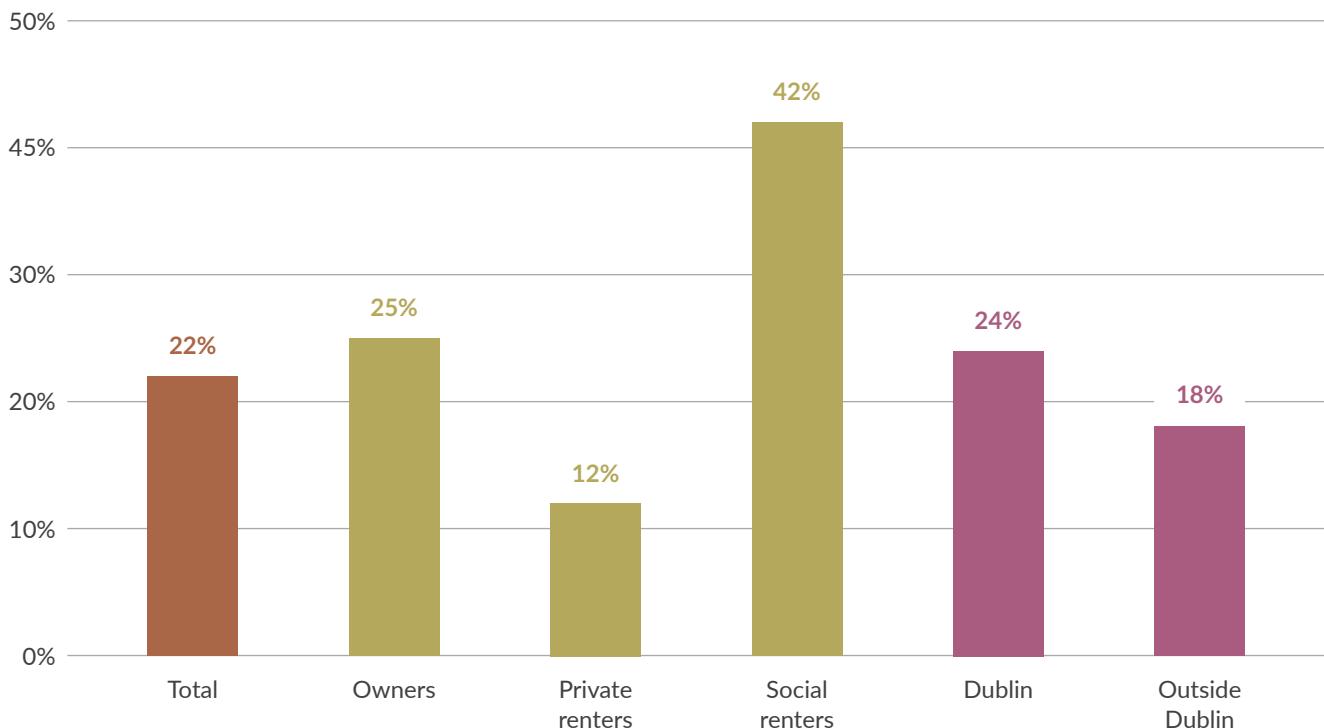


Figure 4.12: Perceptions of neighbourhoods changing (N=511)

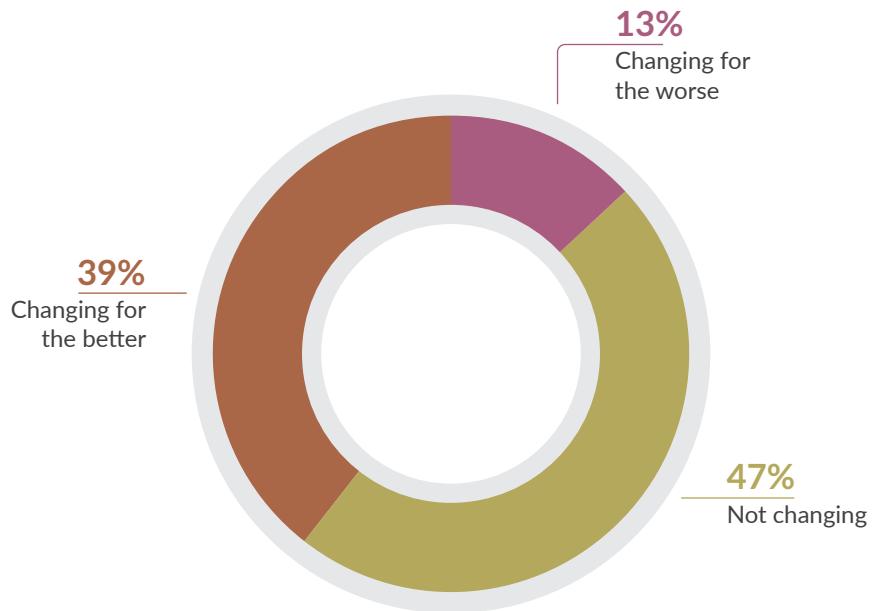


Table 4.8: Perceptions of neighbourhood changing, by tenure and region (N=511)

% Strongly agree	Total	Owners	Renters	Private renters	Social renters	Dublin	Outside Dublin
	511	102	409	279	130	322	189
Changing for the better	39%	60%	34%	39%	23%	45%	30%
Not changing	47%	31%	51%	53%	49%	40%	59%
Changing for the worse	13%	9%	15%	8%	28%	15%	11%

4.4 Commuting experiences

Over 40% of apartment dwellers made their way to work or education each day either by walking, cycling or public transport. Renters were more likely than owners to be less dependent on using the private car for making their daily commute. In fact, three quarters of apartment owners used the private car as their main mode of transport compared to less than half of all renters. Dublin apartment residents were more likely to use public transport each day, at 28%, compared to 9% for those living outside Dublin.

Commuting times were short. Just 9% of apartment dwellers had a commute that lasted one hour or more, while 32% had a commute lasting less than 20 minutes. The average commute time was

29 minutes for all apartment dwellers. The short commute times were reflected in the responses to a question asking how difficult their commute is; with 69% rating their commute as easy.

Just 9% of apartment dwellers had a commute that lasted one hour or more, while 32% had a commute lasting less than 20 minutes. The average commute time was 29 minutes for all apartment dwellers

Table 4.9: Mode of transport for daily commute (N=389)

% Strongly agree	Total	Owners	Renters	Private renters	Social renters	Dublin	Outside Dublin
	389	84	305	240	65	247	141
Private car – driver	52%	75%	46%	45%	46%	53%	50%
Walk or cycle	21%	12%	24%	23%	26%	16%	31%
Public transport (incl. bus, train, DART, Luas)	21%	10%	25%	26%	20%	28%	9%
Private car – passenger	3%	1%	3%	4%	1%	1%	6%
Lorry	1%	0%	1%	0%	5%	1%	0%
Motorcycle	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%
Work from home/ NA	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	2%

Figure 4.13: Duration of commute (N=353)

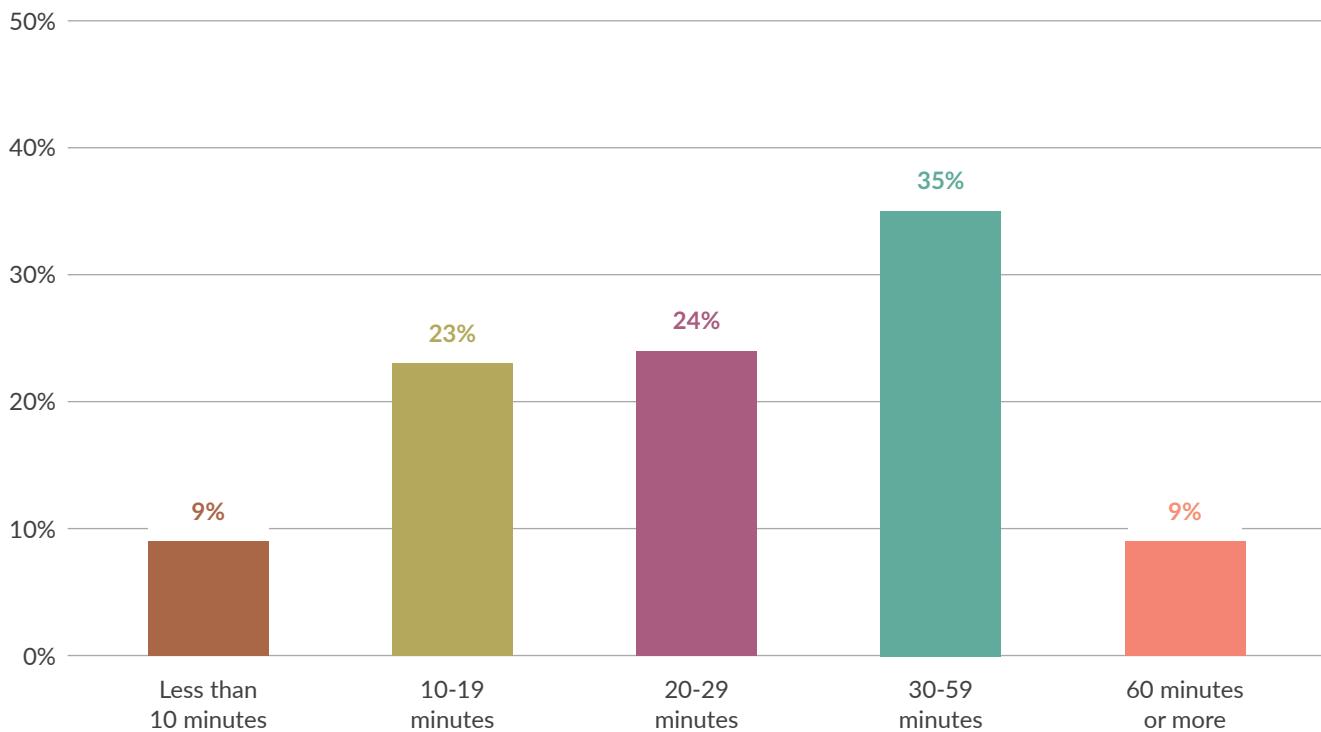
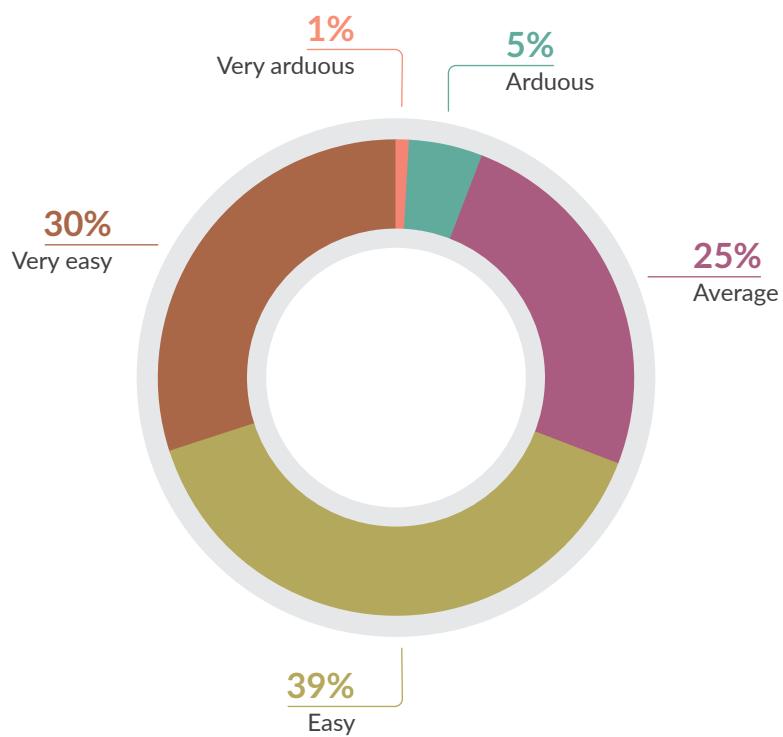


Figure 4.14: Ease of daily commute (N=389)



4.5 Renters' experiences in apartments

Key insight



Experiences of living in the rental sector were good overall, with 66% of those renting apartments rating their experience as either 'good' or 'very good', while only 1% of all those renting rated their overall experience of renting as 'very poor'. When asked why they were renting, uncertainty about where to live long-term (35%) and difficulty accessing a mortgage (25%) were the key drivers of rental choice. Renters felt secure in their tenancies; with 78% feeling 'secure' or 'very secure' in their current tenancy.

or approved housing body apartment schemes are separated in the following analysis. For all other analysis, they are included within social renters, which also includes HAP/RAS tenants living in the private rental sector.

Overall, the experience of those living in the rental sector was positive. While only 14% of renters rated their experiences as 'very good', just over half (52%) had 'good' experiences of renting. There were low levels of negative experiences of renting, despite the average length of time that those interviewed had been living in the rental sector. Only 5% of renters

surveyed rated their experiences in the rental sector as 'poor' (4%) or 'very poor' (1%). Renters living outside Dublin were slightly more positive in general, with 19% having 'very good' experiences of living in the rental sector compared to 11% in Dublin.

Those in the highest socio-economic group of AB were the most positive in relation to their experience of renting; with 24% having a very good experience. This compares to 13% for those in the C1 group, 10% in the C2 group and 13% in the DE socio-economic group. See Table A3.8, Appendix III.

Overall, the experience of those living in the rental sector was positive. While only 14% of renters rated their experiences as 'very good', just over half (52%) had 'good' experiences of renting

Table 4.10 provides a summary of the length of tenancy of those renting, both in their current home and in total. Those living in local authority

Table 4.10: Average length of time in current tenancy and length of time renting in total, by tenure and region (N=385)¹⁶

	Total	Private renters	Social renters	LA/AHB	Dublin	Outside Dublin
	385	279	107	68	231	154
Avg. no. years renting in current home	5.2	3.8	9.0	11.0	5.8	4.4
Avg. no. years renting in total	10.4	7.6	17.7	21.9	12.1	7.8

¹⁶ 24 cases of social renters who have lived in property all their lives were removed from mean score calculations.

Figure 4.15: Experiences of renting (N=409)

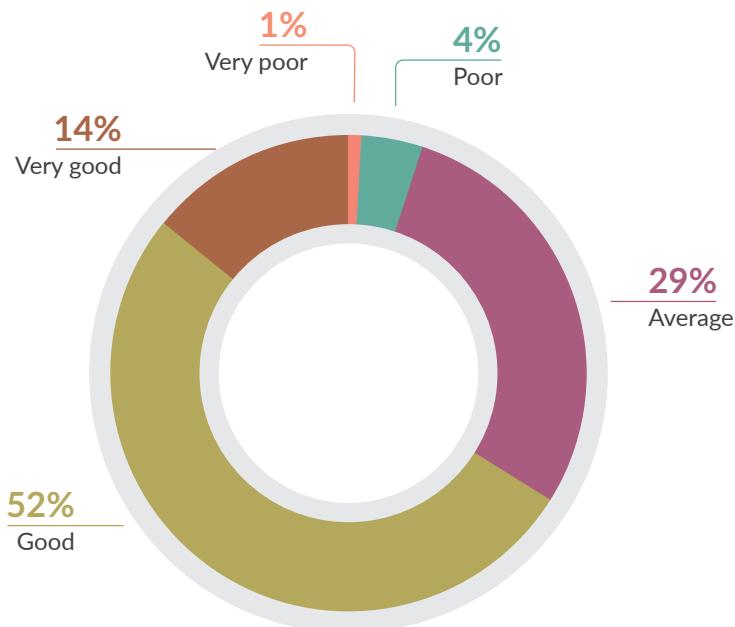


Table 4.11: Experiences of renting by tenure type and region (N=409)

	Total	Private renters	Social renters	Dublin	Outside Dublin
	409	279	130	255	154
Very good	14%	15%	12%	11%	19%
Good	52%	53%	49%	52%	52%
Average	29%	27%	34%	33%	24%
Poor	4%	4%	3%	4%	4%
Very poor	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%

The survey results suggest that uncertainty about where one wants to live long-term was the primary reason given for renting (35%). However, the survey also reported that a significant proportion of renters said they rented because they could not get a mortgage (25%).

Private renters (40%) and Dublin residents (41%) were most likely to

feel they were renting by choice and were not sure where they wanted to live long-term. It is the lower socio-economic groups of C2 and DE that were most likely renting because they were unable to access a mortgage, with the higher socio-economic grades AB and C1 more likely to give reasons for renting such as convenience and uncertainty over where they want to live long-term. See Table A3.9 – Appendix III.

Generally, renters had positive perceptions about the security of their tenure, with 78% feeling secure overall, of which 27% felt 'very secure'. Tenure security perceptions ('secure' and 'very secure') differed minimally across tenure type or region; however, social renters were most likely to feel 'very secure', at 40%, compared to 20% of private renters.

Figure 4.16: Reasons why currently renting (N=409)

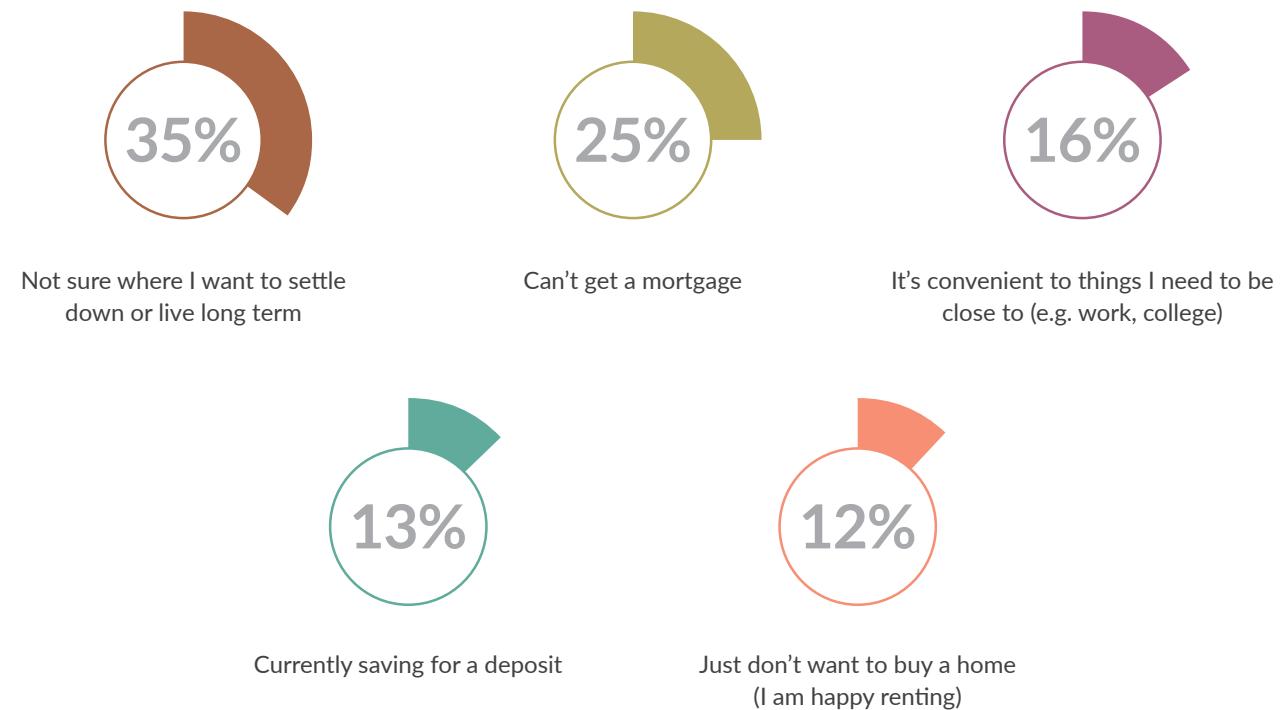


Table 4.12: Reasons why renting, by tenure and region (N=409)

	Total	Private renters	Social renters	Dublin	Outside Dublin
	409	279	130	255	154
Not sure where I want to settle down or live long term	35%	40%	22%	41%	25%
Can't get a mortgage	25%	24%	27%	20%	33%
It's convenient to things I need to be close to (e.g. work, college)	16%	18%	10%	8%	28%
Currently saving for a deposit	13%	18%	4%	13%	13%
Just don't want to buy a home (I am happy renting)	12%	12%	13%	7%	21%

Respondents could give more than one answer

Figure 4.17: Reason/s why cannot get a mortgage (N=103)

Respondents could give more than one answer

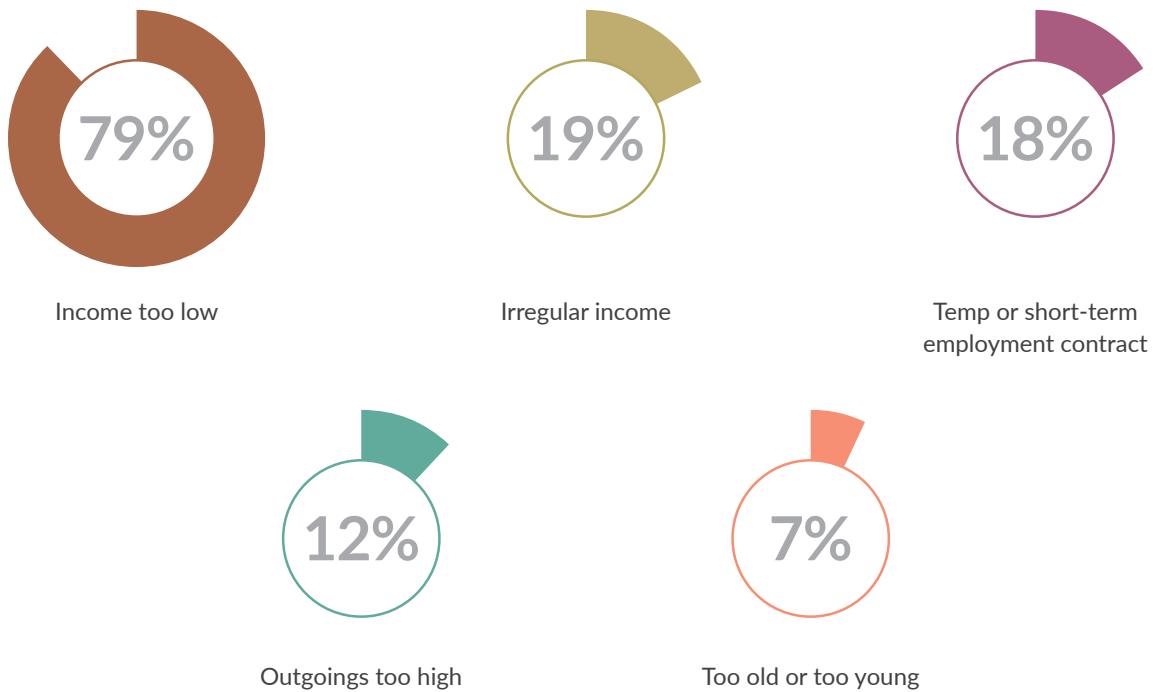


Figure 4.18: Tenure security (N=409)

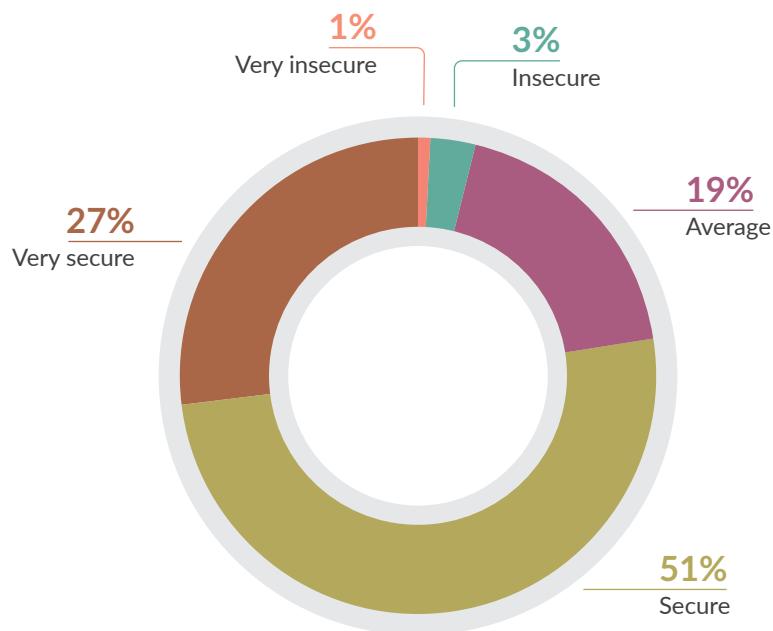


Table 4.13: Tenure security, by tenure and region (N=409)

	Total	Private renters	Social renters	Dublin	Outside Dublin
	409	279	130	255	154
Very secure	27%	20%	40%	25%	31%
Secure	51%	57%	36%	56%	42%
Average	19%	19%	19%	17%	22%
Insecure	3%	3%	3%	2%	4%
Very insecure	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%

4.6 Homeowners' experiences in apartments

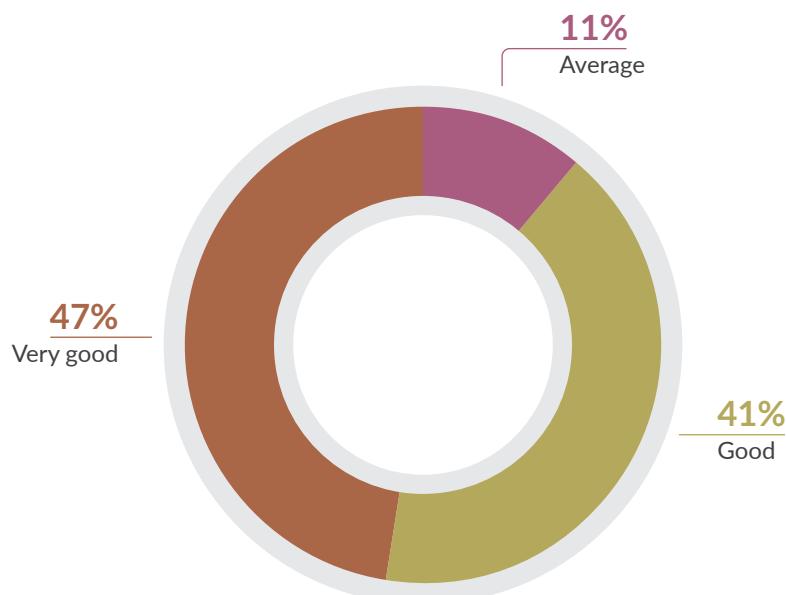
Key insight

47% of apartment owners had 'very good' experiences of homeownership.

Just over half (58%) of the 100 apartment owners surveyed were living in the first home they had owned, with most having bought it from a previous private owner (52%) or new from a builder/developer (43%). Overall, the experiences of homeownership were very positive, with almost half (47%) rating their experience as 'very good'. The high levels of positive homeownership experiences were also evident in the 2018 study, where 45% said their experiences of ownership were 'very good'.

A significant proportion of owners said they had experienced some degree of financial sacrifice when purchasing their apartment. Overall, just under a quarter (23%) believed they had faced 'a lot' of financial sacrifice when first buying, in line with the 2018 results, with slightly more (26%) feeling 'some' financial sacrifice. Conversely, 18% said they had experienced 'no financial sacrifice'.

Figure 4.19: Experiences of homeownership (N=102)



4.7 Apartment costs and bill affordability

Key insight

Of the sample of renters, 68% said that they had 'some difficulty' paying their rent each month, and a further 2% had 'a lot of difficulty'. For owners this was very different with just 13% having 'some difficulty' making monthly repayments and 2% 'a lot of difficulty'.

4.7.1 Renters' rental costs

A significant proportion of renters (68%) said that they had 'some difficulty' paying their rent each month. The lower socio-economic grade DE (78%) had the most difficulties paying their rent each month compared to others. See Table A3.11, Appendix III.

While the results show there was a substantial proportion of renters who found it difficult to pay the rent each month, the incidence of missing a rent payment within the last 12 months was low, at only 2%.

Excluding AHB or LA owned social housing tenants, three-quarters of renters surveyed received no State financial support with their housing costs, 11% were in receipt of Rent Supplement, 9% were in receipt of the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP), 2% were accommodated through the Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS), and 4% were not able to say if they were in receipt of any housing supports.

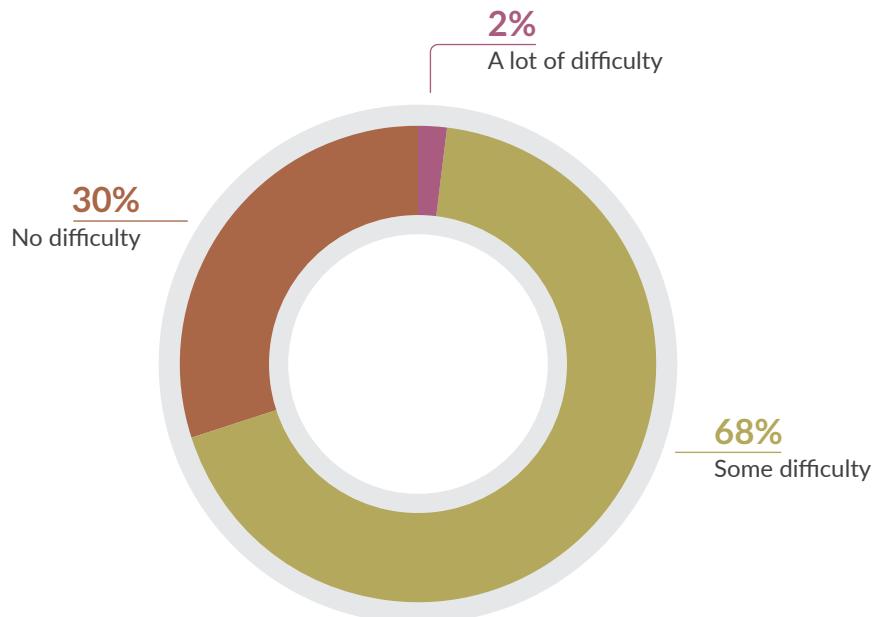
In this section the data by tenure has been further analysed to reflect differences in groups: private renters with no State supports and those living in private rental accommodation and in receipt of housing State support.

In terms of rent increases¹⁸, just under half (49%) of all renters living in private rental accommodation had experienced a rent increase in the previous twelve months¹⁹, of which 34% said their rent increase had been greater than 4%.

Those living in apartments reporting higher than 4% rent increases were most likely to be renting privately with no supports (35%) and living in Dublin (38%). Rent levels were most likely to have remained the same for those living outside Dublin (62%).

The majority (79%) of those who had experienced a rent increase were told by their landlord that it was a 'standard increase'. Regarding rental costs, 61% of those renting had some 'extras' included in their monthly payments – the most likely being communal heating/ electricity charges (31%) and cable TV/internet charges (31%).

Figure 4.20: Level of difficulty in meeting monthly rental costs (N=408)¹⁷



17 Refused responses excluded.

18 Please note, the comparative analysis of this question differs slightly to take account of the various supports some renters receive. The question was asked only of those living in their apartment for 12 months or more.

19 Interviewing took place between June and August 2019 and answer refers to the 12 month period prior to these dates and to those renting for 12 months or more.

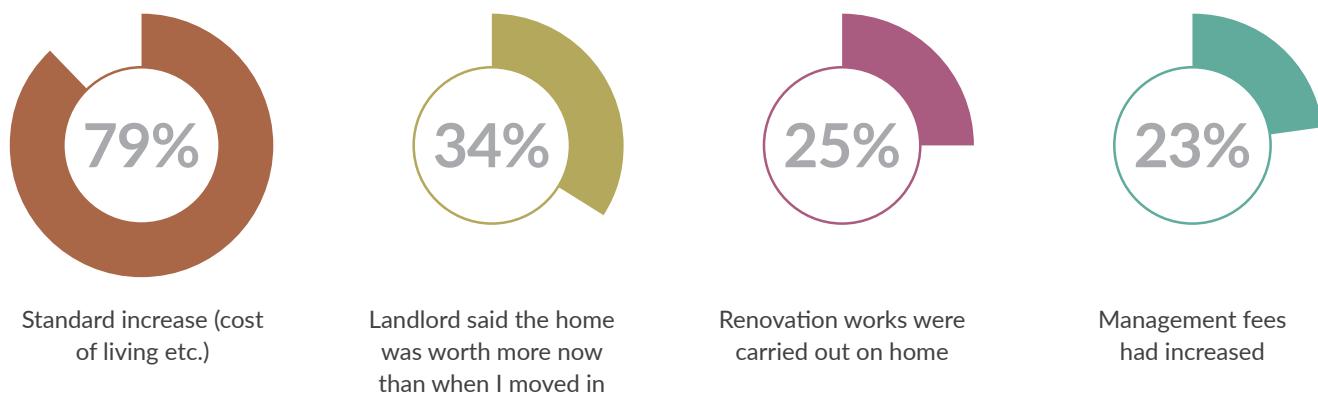
Table 4.14: Level of difficulty in meeting monthly rental costs by tenure and region (N=408)²⁰

	Total	Private renters	Social renters	Dublin	Outside Dublin
	408	279	129	254	154
A lot of difficulty	2%	2%	1%	1%	3%
Some difficulty	68%	69%	66%	68%	67%
No difficulty	30%	29%	32%	29%	30%

Table 4.15: Rent changes in last 12 months, by tenure and region (N=219)²¹

	Total	Private renters with no supports	Private renters with supports	All Dublin	Outside Dublin
	219	162	57	120	99
Increased by less than 4%	15%	15%	16%	20%	9%
Increased by more than 4%	34%	35%	30%	38%	29%
Remained the same	51%	49%	54%	41%	62%
Decreased	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

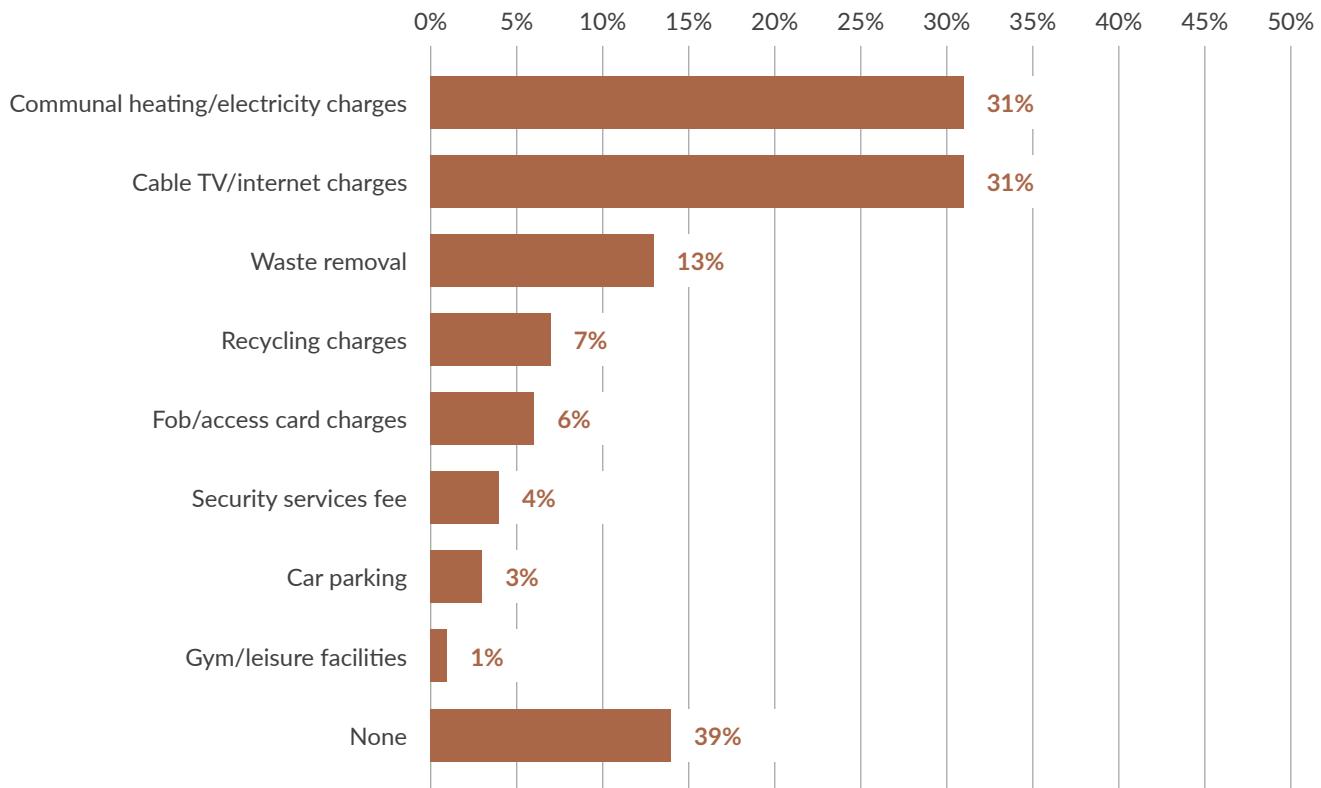
Figure 4.21: Reasons for rental increase (N=77)



20 Refused responses excluded.

21 Sample size is of those renting privately for 12 months or more only. Local authority/AHB renters are excluded from the sample due to the differences in rental costs and rent reviews compared to private renters. Don't know responses are also excluded from analysis.

Figure 4.22: Services included in rental costs (N=267)



4.7.2 Homeowners' mortgage costs

Most apartment homeowners with a mortgage (85%) reported 'no difficulty' meeting their monthly repayments, while just 13% reported 'some difficulty' and 2% 'lots of difficulty'. In The Housing Agency 2018 study 63% of all homeowners said they had 'no difficulty' repaying their mortgage, over 20% less than this study. Whilst similar to renters, incidences of missing mortgage repayments within the last 12 months are minimal at, only 2%.

4.7.3 Paying household bills and household income

Almost half of those surveyed felt they were 'living comfortably' on their present income, with only 12% reporting to be in any degree of difficulty. However, there was a large cohort of 41% in the middle who said they were only 'getting by' on their present incomes. These figures

are broadly in line with The Housing Agency 2018 study, where 50% were 'living comfortably' and 38% were 'getting by'. Homeowners were the most likely to be living comfortably on their present income (75%). Whilst comparably lower proportions of private renters felt they are 'living comfortably' (44%), this is still higher than social renters, of whom, 31% felt they were 'living comfortably' on their present income. Social

renters were most likely to be having difficulties on their present income at 20% overall. Whilst over half (52%) of Dublin residents felt they were 'living comfortably', this fell to 39% for apartment dwellers living outside the capital. A higher proportion (24%) of those in the lower socio-economic grades of DE had difficulties living on their present income. See Table A3.12, Appendix III.

Almost half of those surveyed felt they were 'living comfortably' on their present income, with only 12% reporting to be in any degree of difficulty. However, there was a large cohort of 41% in the middle who said they were only 'getting by' on their present incomes

Figure 4.23: Level of difficulty in meeting monthly mortgage costs (N=49)

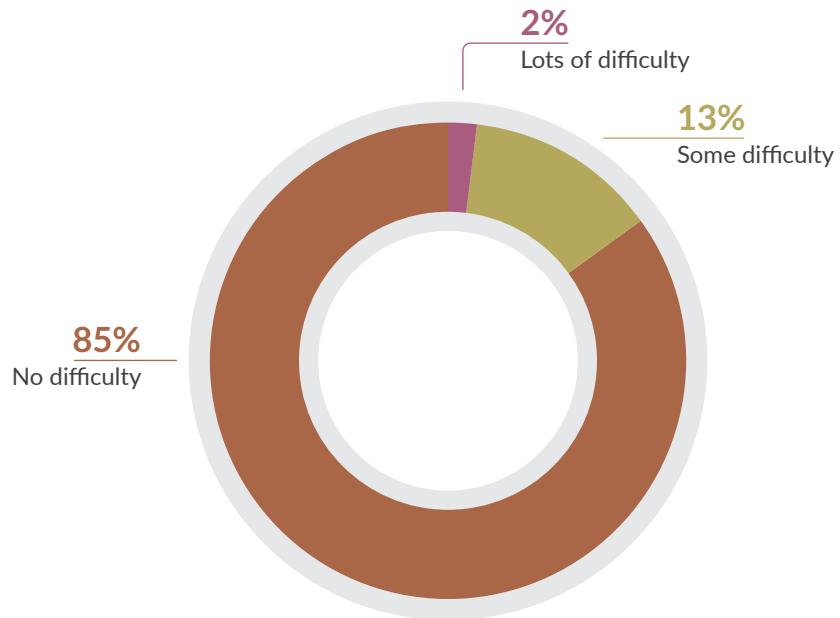
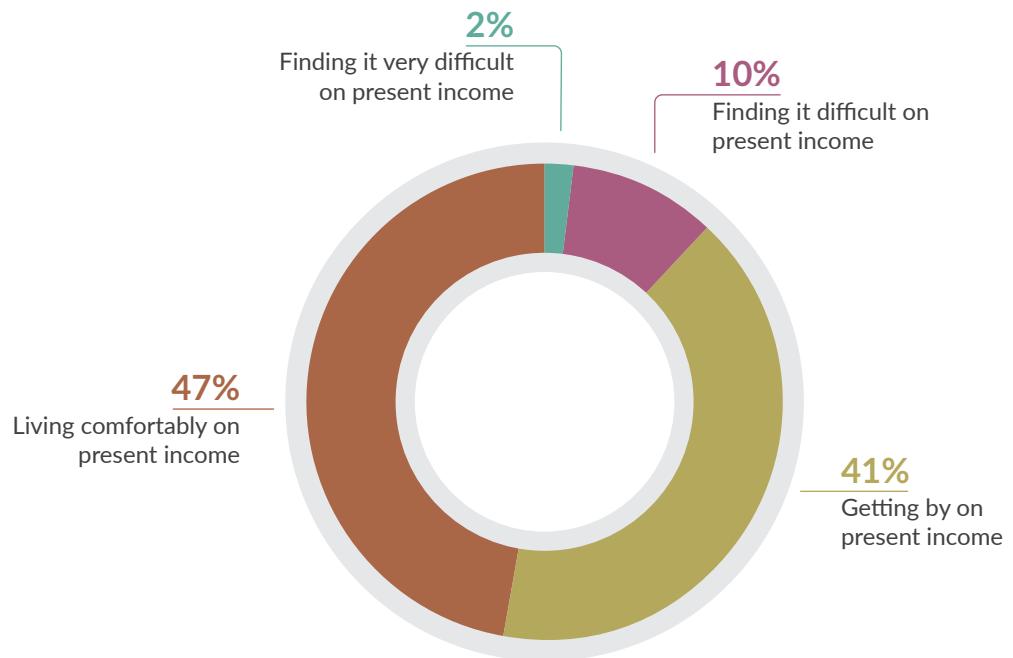
Figure 4.24: Household views on present income (N=506)²²²² Refused responses excluded.

Table 4.16: Household views on present income, by tenure and region (N=506)²³

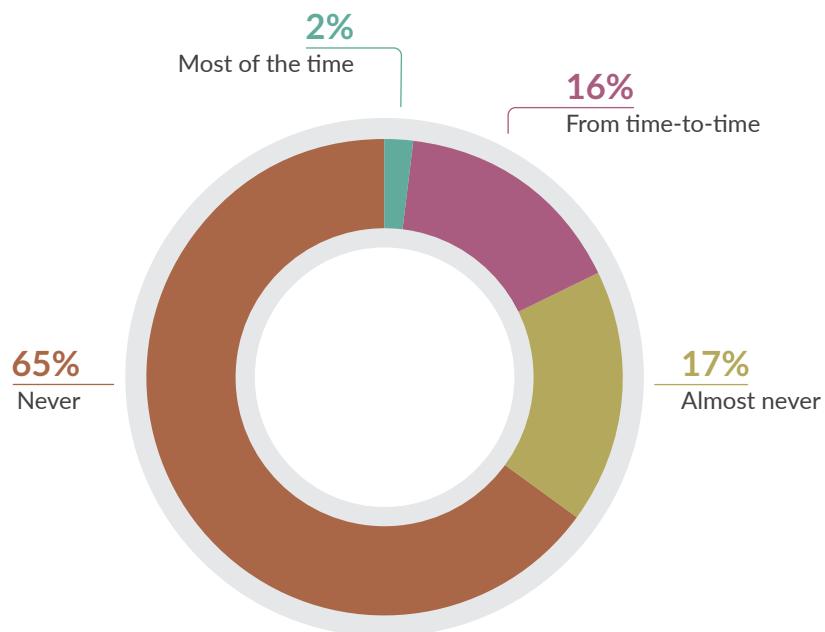
	Total	Owners	Renters	Private renters	Social renters	Dublin	Outside Dublin
	506	100	406	276	130	317	189
Living comfortably on present income	47%	75%	40%	44%	31%	52%	39%
Getting by on present income	41%	22%	45%	44%	49%	35%	50%
Finding it difficult on present income	10%	2%	12%	9%	18%	11%	8%
Finding it very difficult on present income	2%	1%	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%

When asked about difficulties paying household bills each month, two thirds reported experiencing no difficulties paying their household bills at the end of the month. Conversely, almost one-fifth (18%) had difficulties with household bills each month, although only 2% of these experienced

difficulties 'most of the time'. A similar narrative emerged with owners in the most secure financial position with 86% reporting never having difficulties meeting their household bills compared to 63% of private renters and 53% of social renters. Meeting household bills each month was found to be more

difficult for those living outside Dublin; with 24% having difficulties 'from time-to-time' compared to only 11% of Dublin residents. Those in the lower socio-economic grades (DE) were much more likely to have difficulties paying household bills each month (32%). See Table A3.13, Appendix III.

Figure 4.25: Household bill difficulties each month (N=500)²⁴



23 Refused responses excluded.

24 Refused responses excluded.

Table 4.17: Household bill difficulties each month, by tenure and region (N=500)²⁵

	Total	Owners	Renters	Private renters	Social renters	Dublin	Outside Dublin
	500	100	400	276	124	312	188
Most of the time	2%	2%	2%	3%	1%	2%	2%
From time to time	16%	4%	19%	14%	29%	11%	24%
Almost never	17%	8%	19%	20%	17%	14%	21%
Never	65%	86%	60%	63%	53%	72%	53%

4.8 Future housing expectations and aspirations

Key insight

Just over a third of apartment dwellers said they were likely to move in the future with key reasons for moving being employment (37%) and wanting more space for a growing family (29%), while housing costs being too expensive acted as a barrier to moving for 33%.

4.8.1 Future tenure and moving expectations

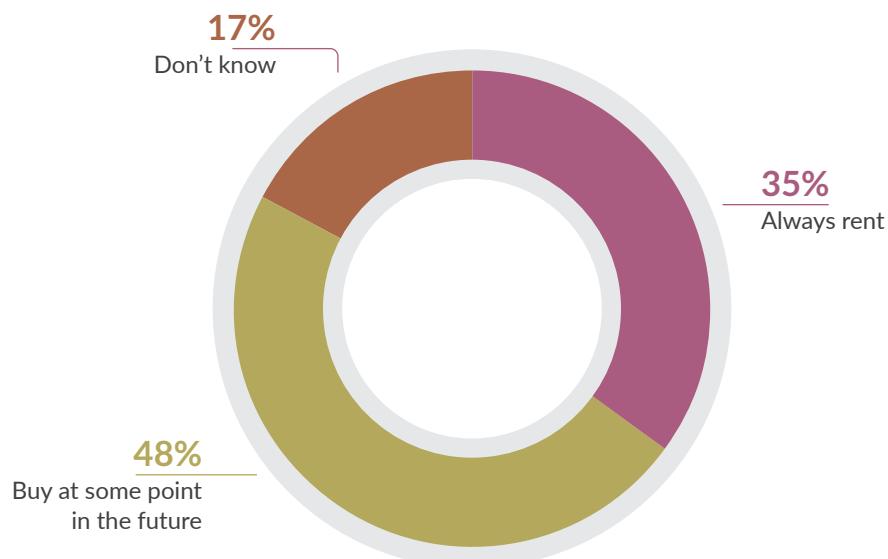
In terms of future tenure choices, 35% of renters in apartments thought they will always rent, whilst almost half (48%) though they will eventually buy a property at some point in the future. Social renters were less likely to have an expectation to buy in the future, at 21% compared to 61% of private renters.

Looking at future moving intentions, the survey found similar proportions of all apartment dwellers were both likely

(37%) and unlikely (37%) to move to a new home. A significant proportion of owners were seen to be happy in their apartment going forward, with 68% saying they were unlikely to move. Across renters, private renters were most likely to envisage a future move, with 46% believing they were likely to move compared to 27% of social renters.

Being happy in one's current home (57%) and a feeling that housing is too expensive (33%) were the main factors causing people to feel like they would be unlikely to move. On the

Figure 4.26: Renters' future tenure expectations (N=409)



²⁵ Refused responses excluded.

other hand, moving intentions were driven by employment reasons (37%) and wanting more space for a growing family (29%), whilst a desire to buy a home in general (18%) was also a factor.

Private renters (62%) were more likely than social renters (45%) to say that they were unlikely to move due to

being happy in their current home, whilst those living outside of Dublin were much more likely to say that they were unlikely to move due to being happy in their home than those living in Dublin (73% compared to 49%).

In terms of intentions to move, owners (54%) were more likely than renters (26%) to say that they were likely to

move due to wanting more space for a growing family. Although the number of renters (39%), and in particular private renters (46%), said they were likely to move due to employment reasons compared to owners (24%).

Table 4.18: Renters' future tenure expectations, by tenure and region (N=409)

	Total	Private renters	Social renters	Dublin	Outside Dublin
	409	279	130	255	154
Always rent	35%	22%	63%	37%	32%
Buy at some point in the future	48%	61%	21%	48%	48%
Don't know	17%	17%	17%	16%	20%
Finding it very difficult on present income	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%

Figure 4.27: All tenure likelihood of moving (N=511)

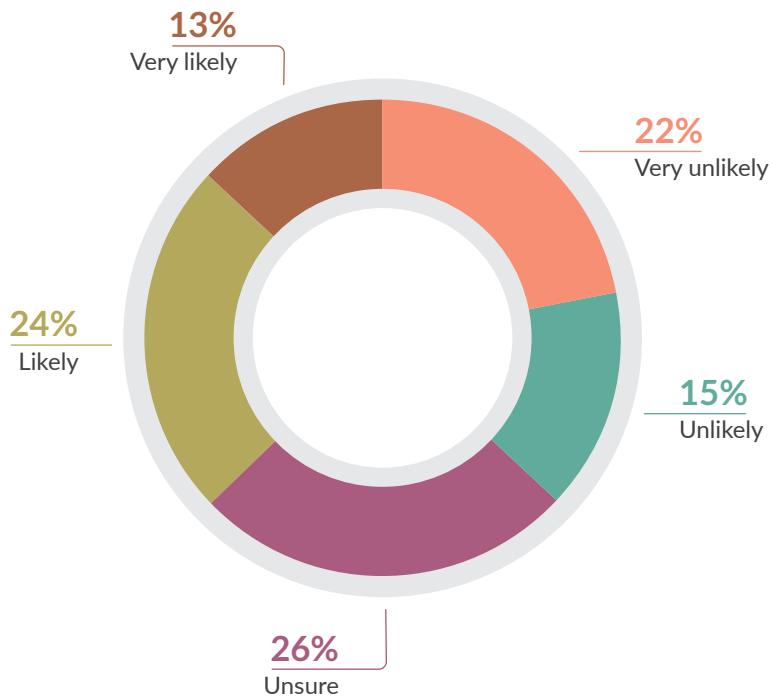


Table 4.19: Likelihood of moving, by tenure and region (N=511)

	Total	Owners	Renters	Private renters	Social renters	All Dublin	Outside Dublin
	511	102	409	279	130	322	189
Very likely	13%	10%	13%	14%	11%	10%	17%
Likely	24%	13%	27%	32%	16%	24%	25%
Unsure	26%	8%	31%	32%	29%	28%	23%
Unlikely	15%	25%	13%	11%	16%	15%	15%
Very unlikely	22%	43%	16%	10%	29%	23%	19%

Figure 4.28: Reasons for being unlikely to move (N=187)

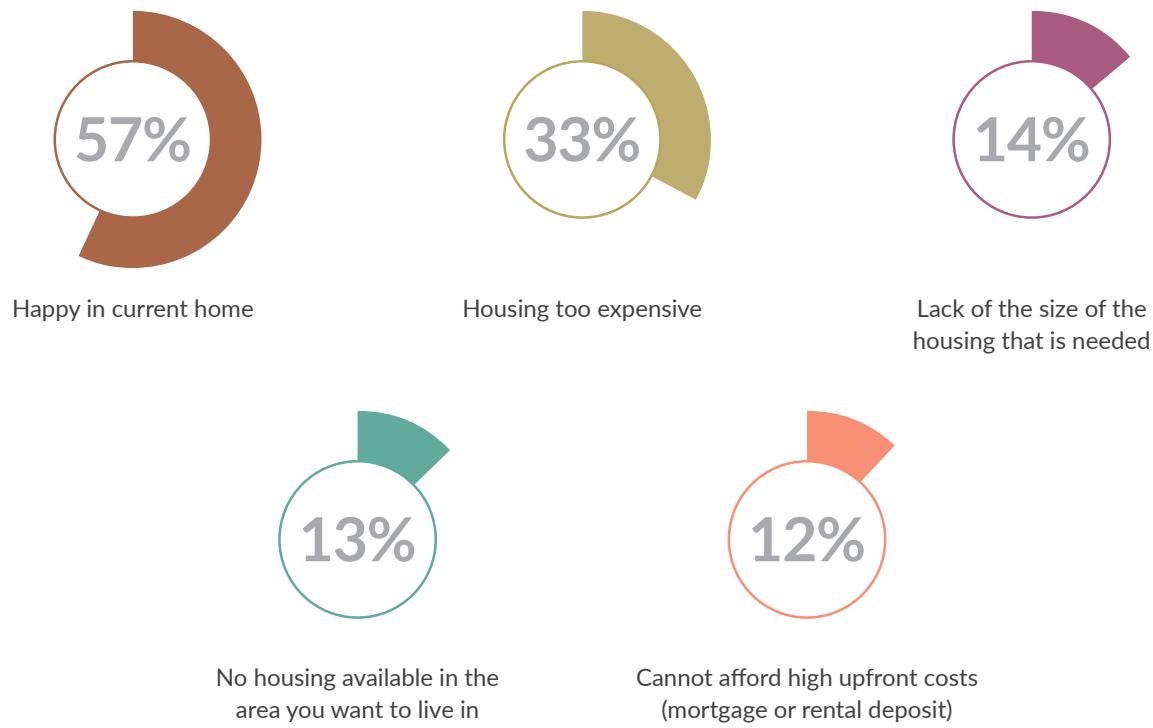
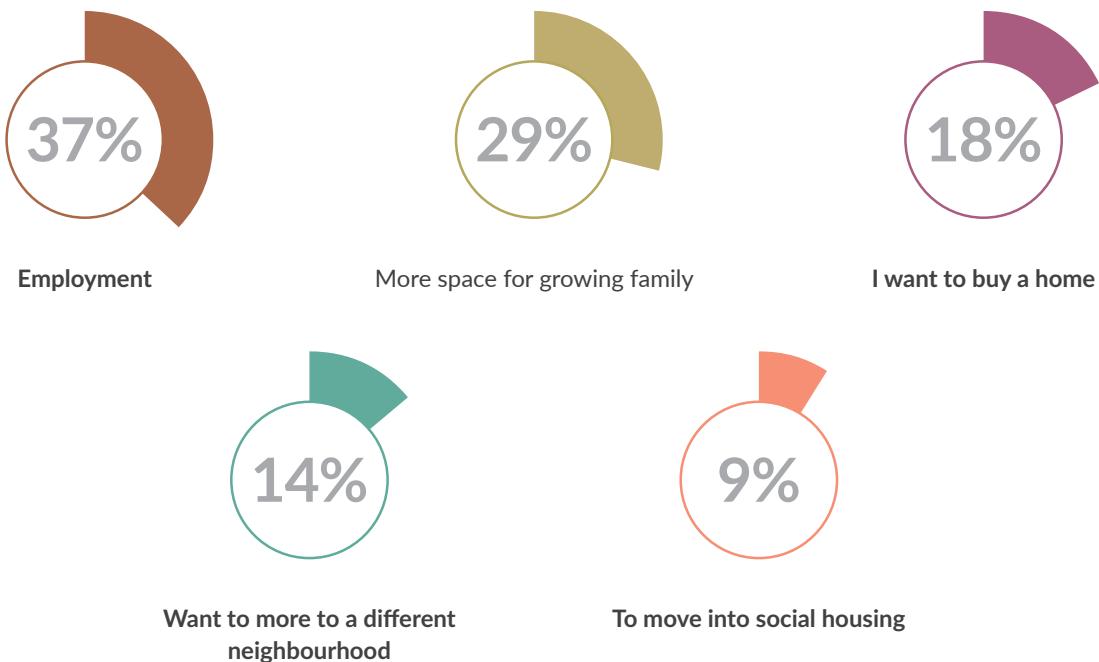


Table 4.20: Reasons for being unlikely to move by tenure and region (N=187)

	Total	Owners	Renters	Private renters	Social renters	All Dublin	Outside Dublin
	187	70	117	59	58	123	65
Happy in current home	57%	63%	54%	62%	45%	49%	73%
Housing too expensive	33%	32%	34%	44%	23%	36%	27%
Lack of the size of the housing that is needed	14%	19%	10%	8%	12%	19%	4%
No housing available in area want to live in	13%	12%	13%	13%	13%	12%	14%
Cannot afford high up-front costs (mortgage or rental deposit)	12%	4%	17%	13%	20%	10%	16%

Figure 4.29: Reasons for being likely to move (N=324)²⁶



²⁶ 324 bases included very likely, likely and also includes those who answered 'unsure' throughout.

Table 4.21: Reasons for moving by tenure and region (N=324)

	Total	Owners	Renters	Private renters	Social renters	All Dublin	Outside Dublin
	324	32	292	219	73	199	124
More space for growing family	29%	54%	26%	22%	39%	31%	27%
Employment	37%	24%	39%	46%	16%	42%	29%
I want to buy a home (house)	18%	16%	19%	20%	15%	13%	26%
Want to move to a different neighbourhood	14%	16%	14%	13%	17%	11%	18%
To move into social housing	9%	0%	11%	5%	29%	9%	10%

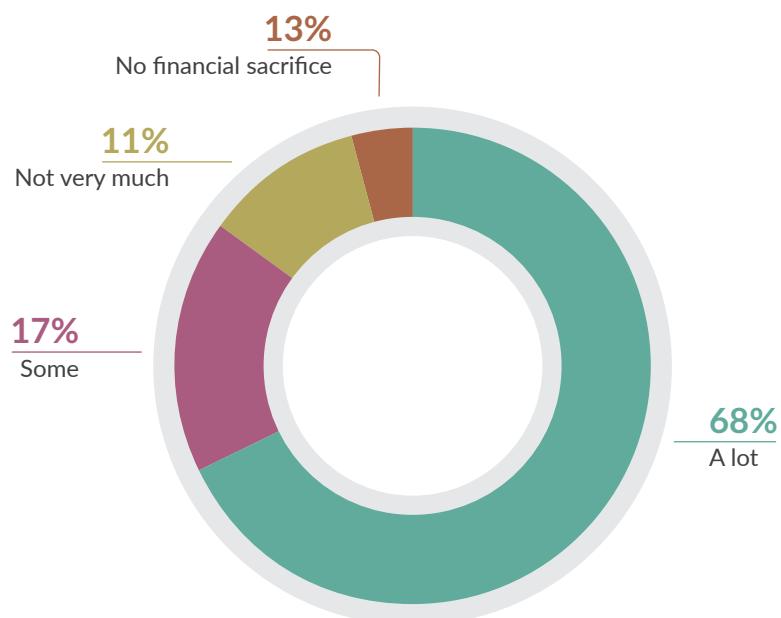
Respondents could give more than one answer

In terms of affordability when looking to move, 68% of those who had expectations to buy or build their own home felt they will experience 'a lot of financial sacrifice', with a

further 17% expecting at least 'some financial sacrifice'. The expectation for 79% was that they will fund their property purchase through a mortgage, with 72% of these people already

saving for a deposit with a view to securing a mortgage. 15% of those with expectations to buy did envisage receiving some financial help from their parents.

Figure 4.30: Expectation of financial sacrifice to buy next home (N=114)



4.8.2 Future housing type expectations and preference

Key insight

68% of apartment dwellers looking to move have a preference for a “traditional” house, with garden space and a more peaceful area being the most important property and neighbourhood features.

In Figure 4.31 future housing tenure expectations and preferences are reported on. It is clear that the expectation (33%) and also the preference (28%) of most people likely to move, was to continue to rent in the

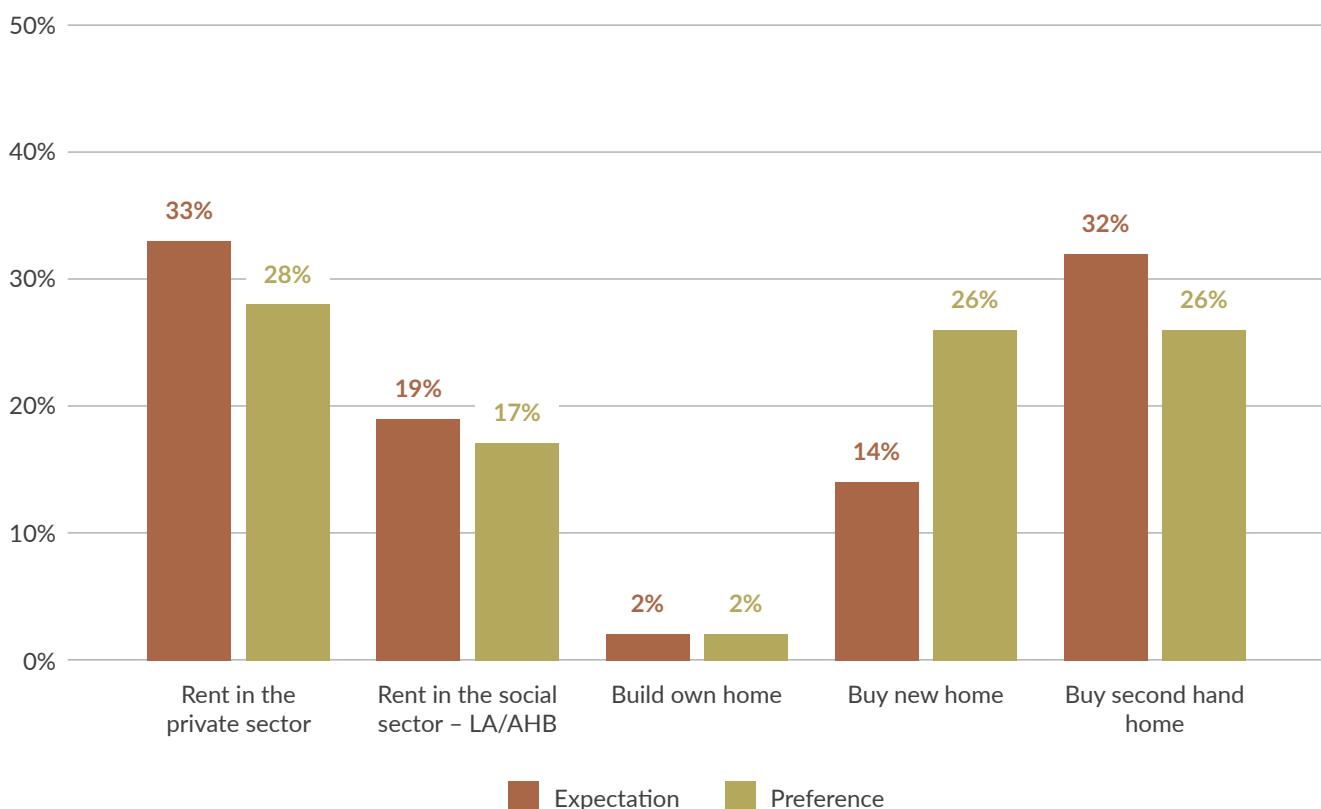
private sector. This was followed by the expectation of almost a third (32%) that they will buy a second-hand home, while a quarter (26%) stated they would prefer a second-hand home. When looking at preferences for second-hand over new-build, a quarter would prefer to buy a new-build, but only 14% expected that they will be able to do that.

Looking at housing type aspirations, there was a strong preference for

the ‘traditional’ house among those considering a move, with 68% saying it was their preferred option. However, while preference for a ‘traditional’ house was high, there were 21% who stated they would prefer an apartment as their next property. Further to this, many considered apartments a good place to raise a family, especially renters in private developments of which 29% ‘strongly agree’.

When looking at preferences for second-hand over new-build, a quarter would prefer to buy a new-build, but only 14% expected that they will be able to do that

Figure 4.31: Future housing tenure expectations and preferences (N=289)²⁷



²⁷ Don't know responses excluded.

Figure 4.32: Future housing expectations and preferences (N=324)

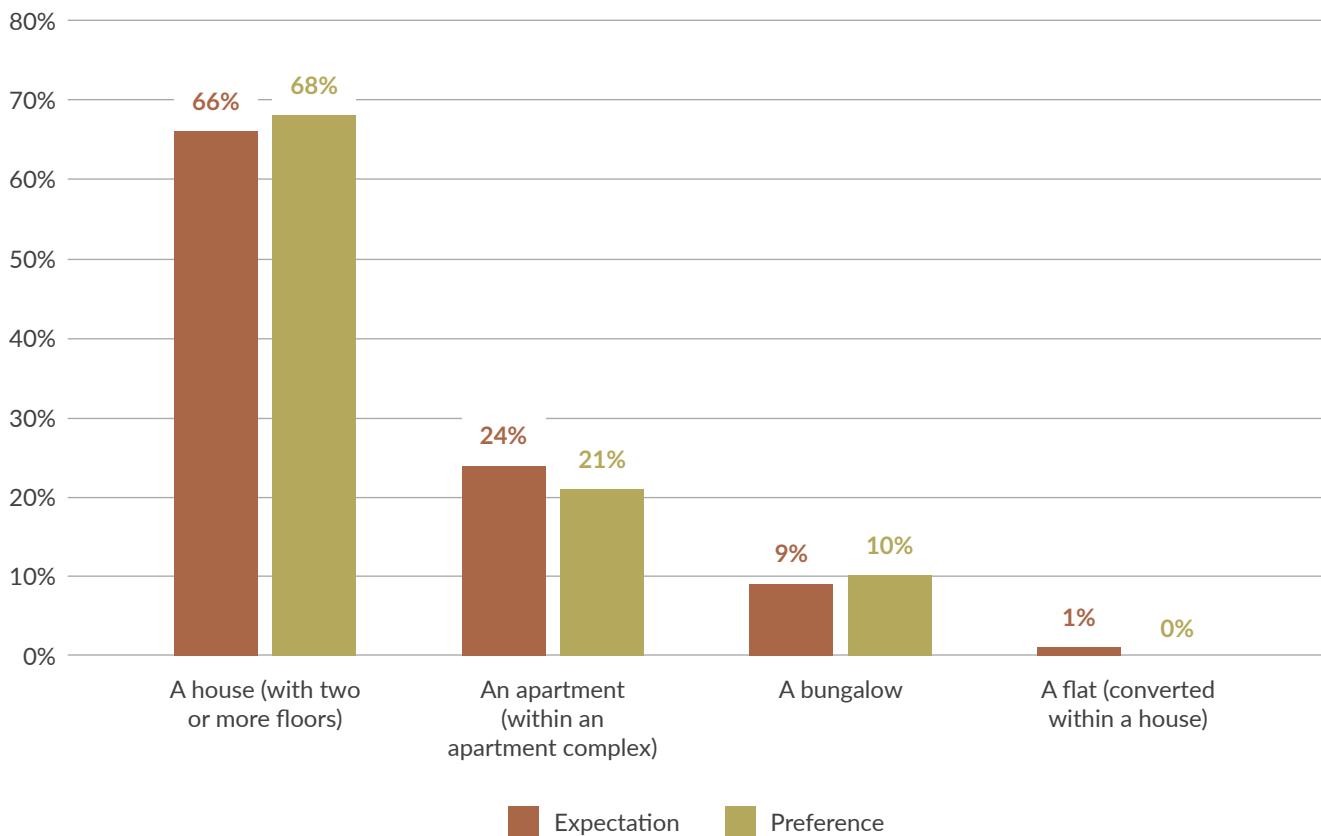
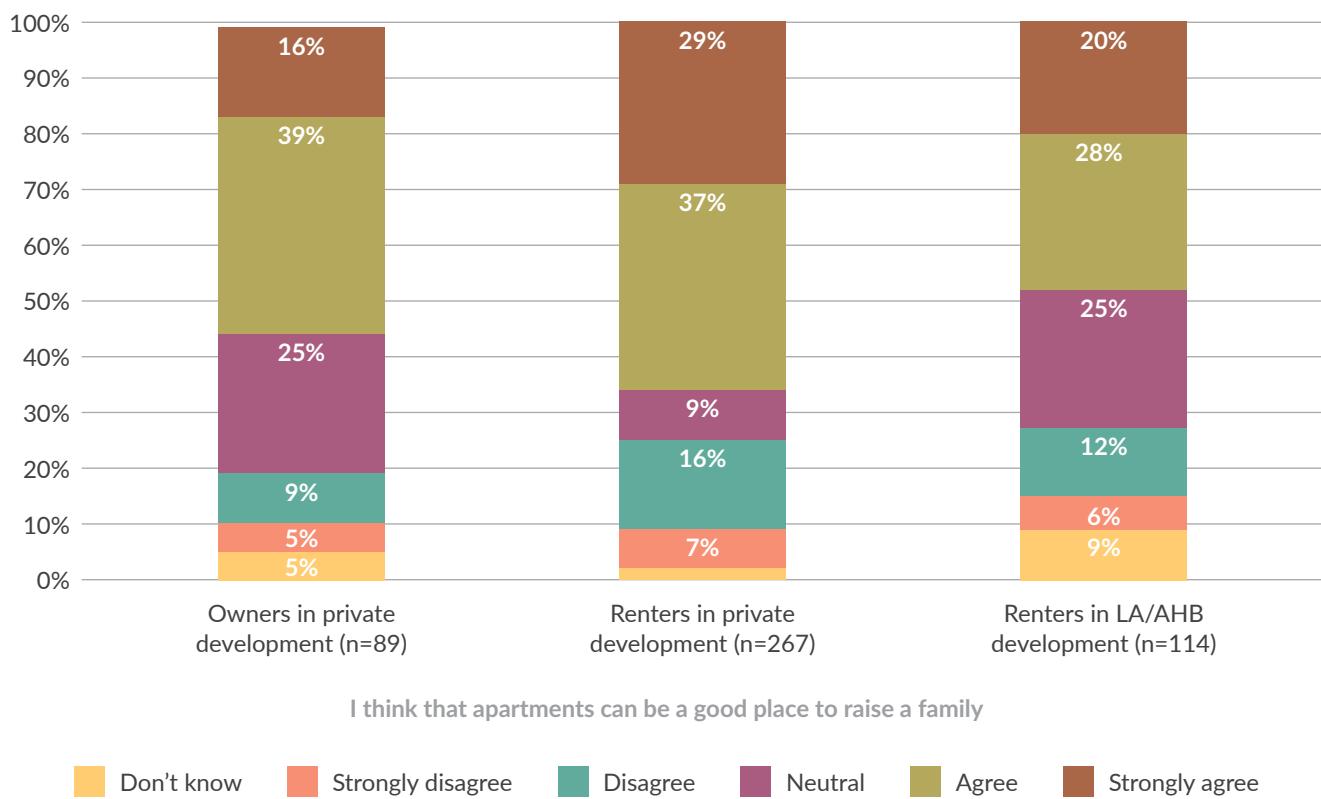


Figure 4.33: Attitudes to apartment suitability for families by tenure



When choosing where next to live, the most important features people were looking for in terms of the property itself were garden space (34%), number of bedrooms (21%) and a larger kitchen (11%). Surprisingly

perhaps, only 5% mentioned good storage space as the most important feature in their next home. Important neighbourhood features were more focused on intangible characteristics; with a more peaceful area (22%),

friendly neighbours (15%) and feeling safe (14%) rated as the most important features of a neighbourhood when choosing where to live.

Figure 4.34: Important property features for next home (N=511)

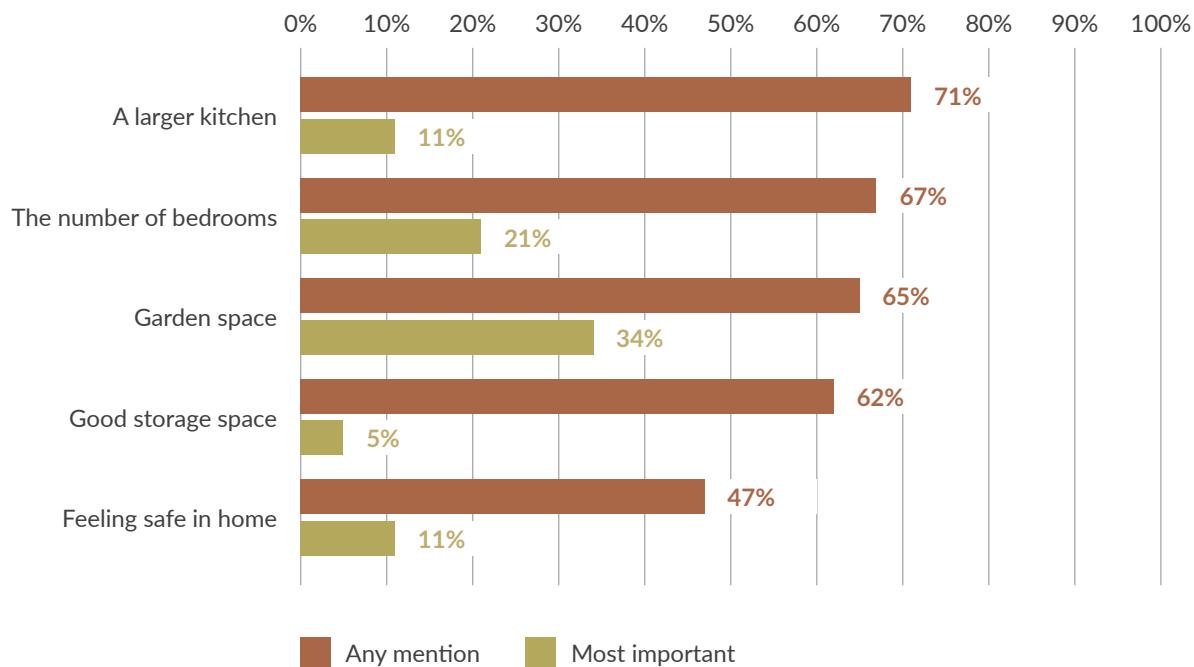
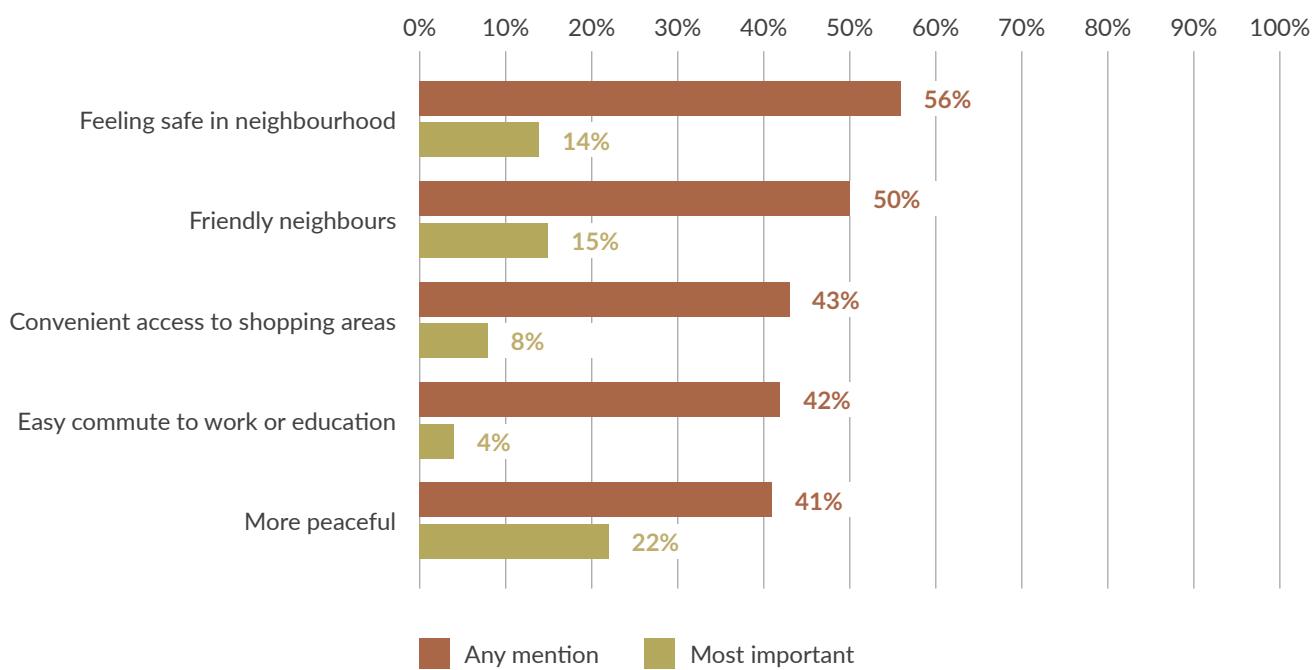


Figure 4.35: Important neighbourhood features for next home (N=511)



4.9 Apartment-specific experiences

Key insight

High satisfaction levels with the work of the OMCs overall were reported, but 66% had concerns about significant increases in management fees in the future.

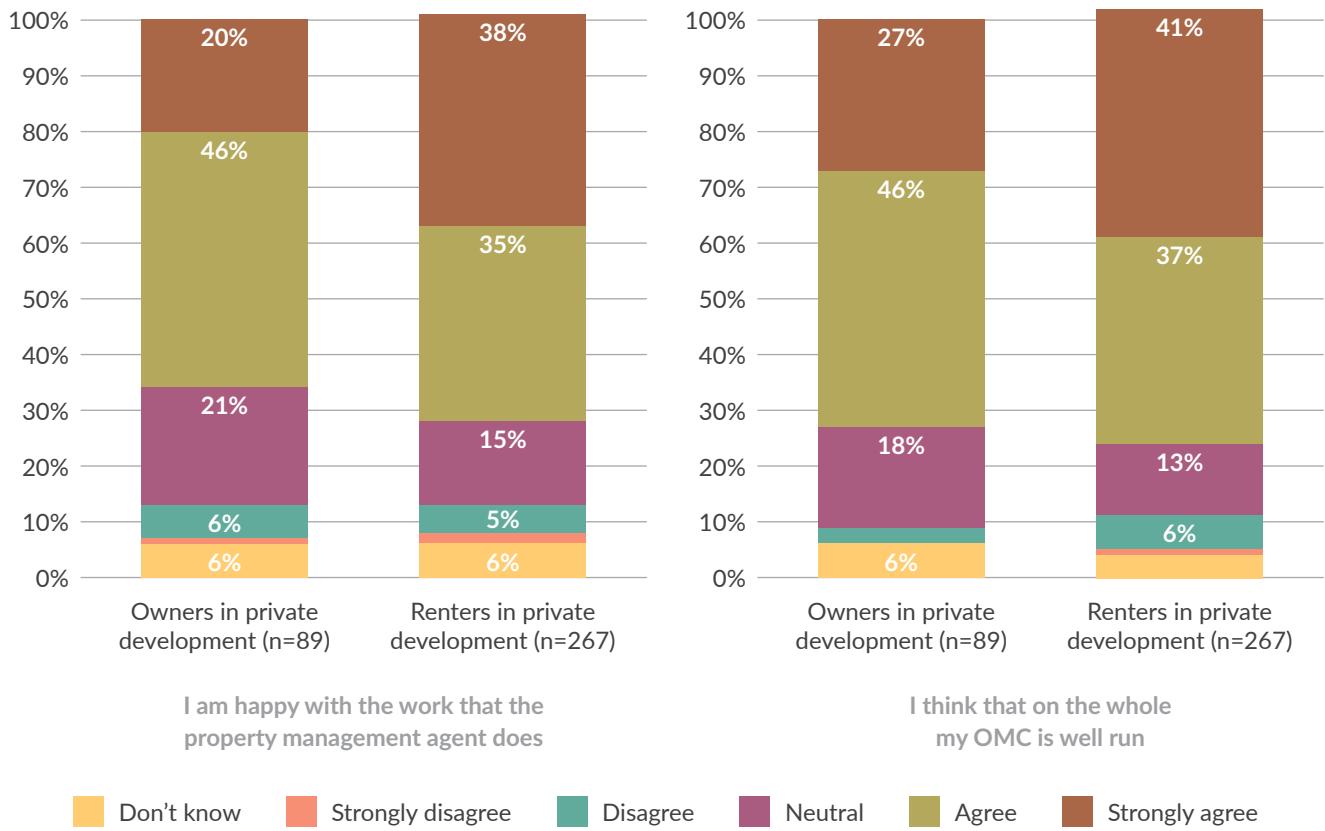
The 2019 iteration of this study included an extra module of questions

specific to apartment living. The analysis for the following section has divided apartment dwellers into three separate categories: owners living in a private development (owners), renters living in a private development (renters), and those renters living in local authority/approved housing body schemes or developments.

Overall, owners surveyed had positive opinions about their Owners' Management Companies (OMC)²⁸ and agreed that they were happy with the work the OMC does (66%) and

thought their OMC was well-run (73%). Renters in private developments were similarly positive about the work of the OMC in the development they were living in, with 73% agreeing they were happy with the work the OMC does, and 78% agreeing that the OMC was well-run. Understandably, renters were more likely to agree that they should be allowed to become involved in the running of the OMC, at 72% compared to 59% of owners.

Figure 4.36: Attitudes and perceptions towards property management



28 See section 3.1.5 for explanation of the role of an OMC.

Figure 4.36: Attitudes and perceptions towards property management

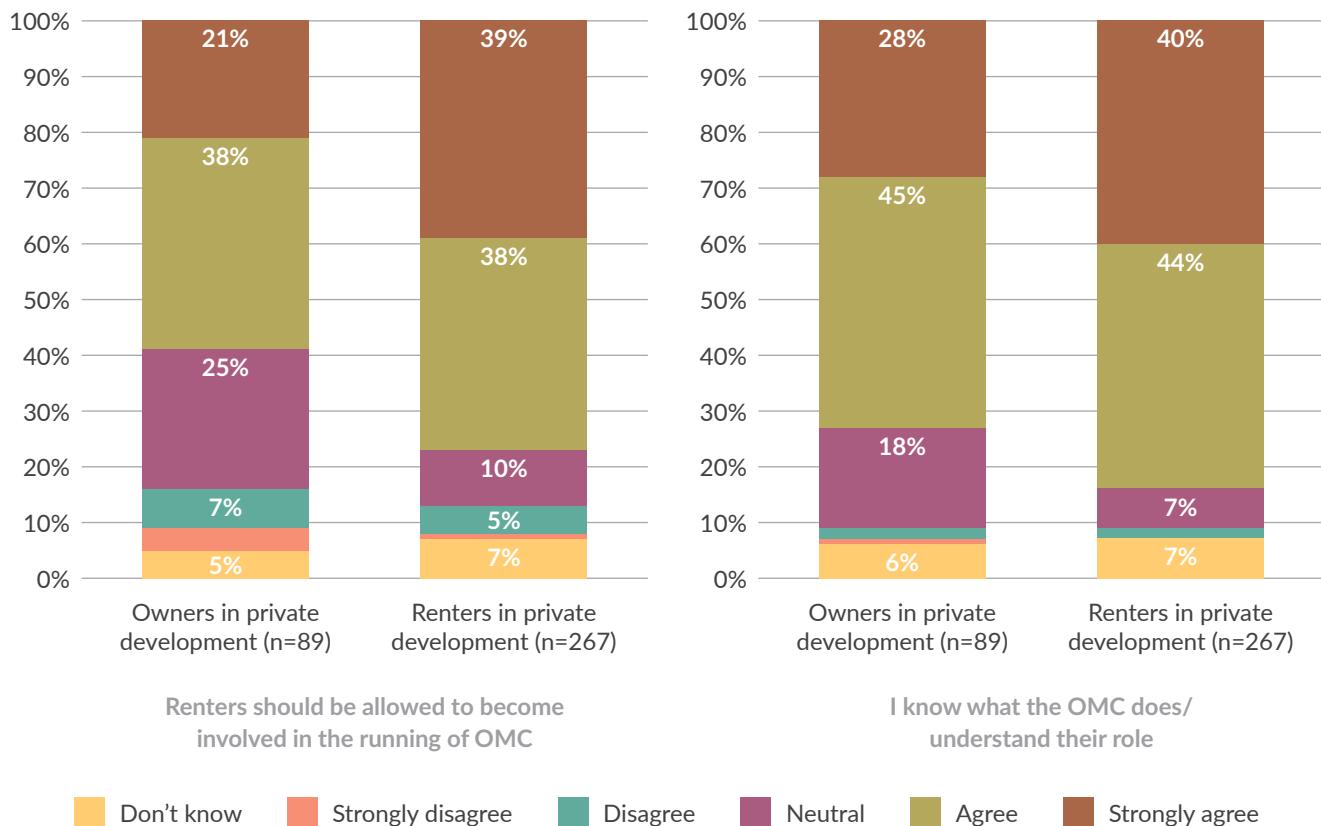
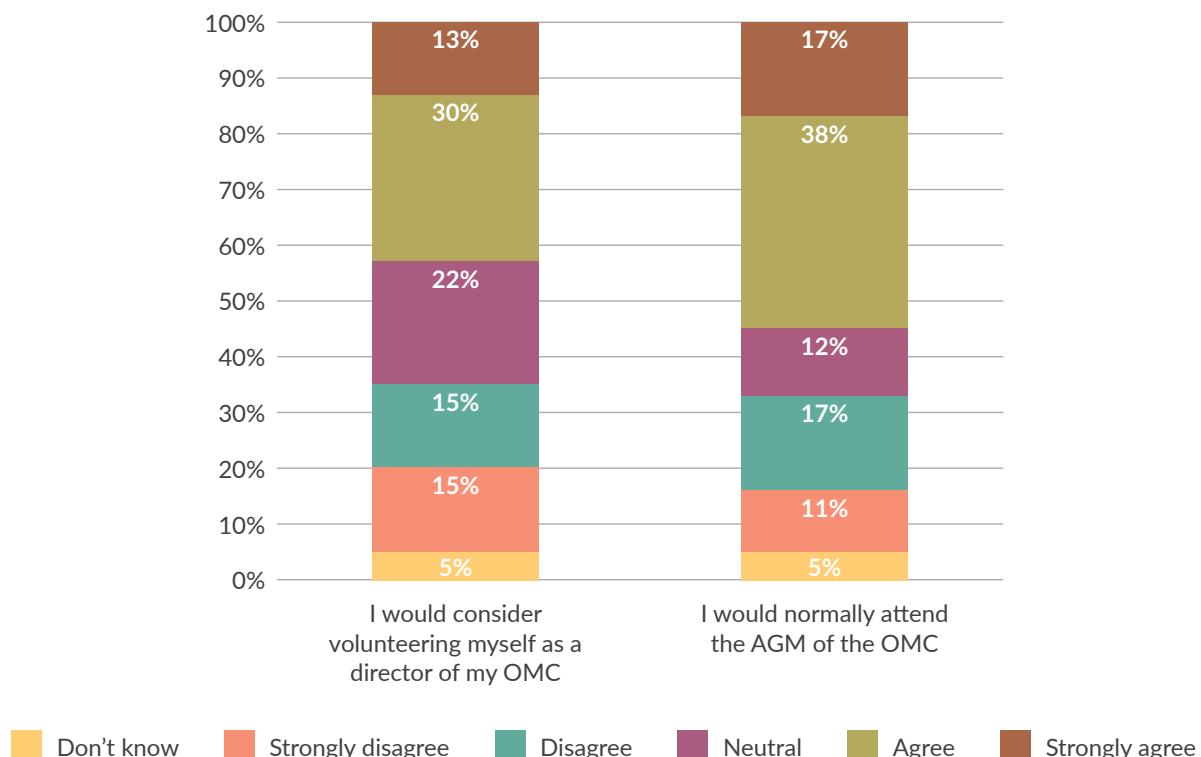


Figure 4.37: Owners' attitudes and perceptions towards the OMC (N=89)



However, engagement with the OMC was somewhat lower, with less than half (43%) saying that they would consider volunteering to act as a director, and just over half (55%) saying that they normally attend the OMC annual general meeting.

Owners were also seen to be broadly positive and knowledgeable regarding their management fees. Overall, 57% agreed their management fees represented 'good value for money',

84% felt it was important to pay the fees on time and 67% thought that service charge arrears were not an issue in their development. Furthermore, 82% agreed that they understood what their service charge fees were spent on. However, many had concerns that fees may increase into the future, with 66% agreeing they were worried that the fees may increase significantly over the next couple of years.

With regard to apartment facilities, renters in private developments were most positive about their development's communal areas being well maintained, with 41% 'strongly agreeing'. This fell to 28% for owners and to 21% for those living in LA/AHB developments.

Renters were similarly more positive about the structural condition of their home; 44% 'strongly agree' they were happy with the structural condition and 42% 'strongly agree' they were happy with the fire protection and safety measures in their apartment development. On the other hand, those living in LA/AHB developments had the lowest levels of satisfaction with the structural condition of their home and the fire protection and safety measures.

Many had concerns that fees may increase into the future, with 66% agreeing they were worried that the fees may increase significantly over the next couple of years

Figure 4.38: Owners' attitudes and perceptions of apartment fees and charges (N=89)

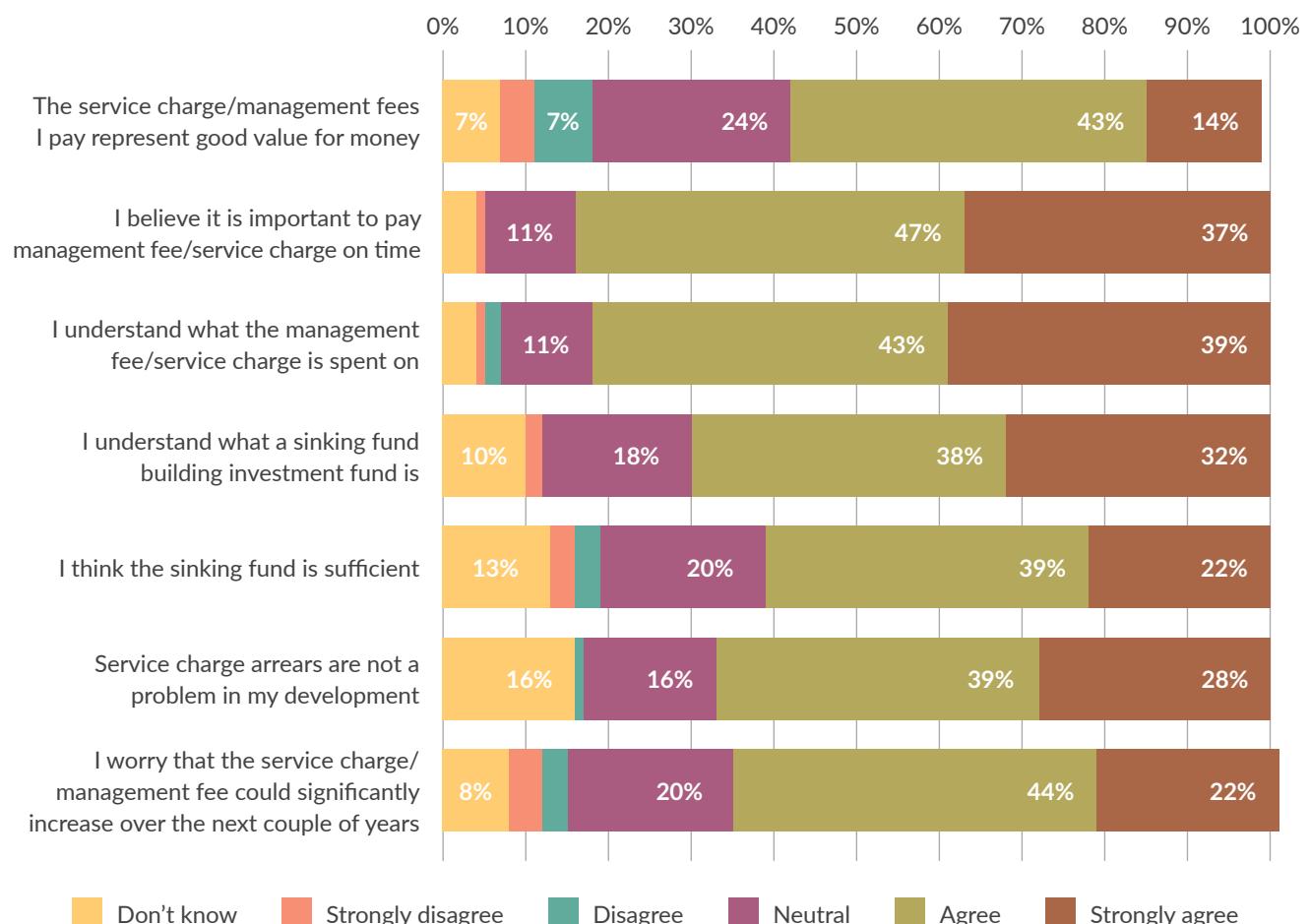
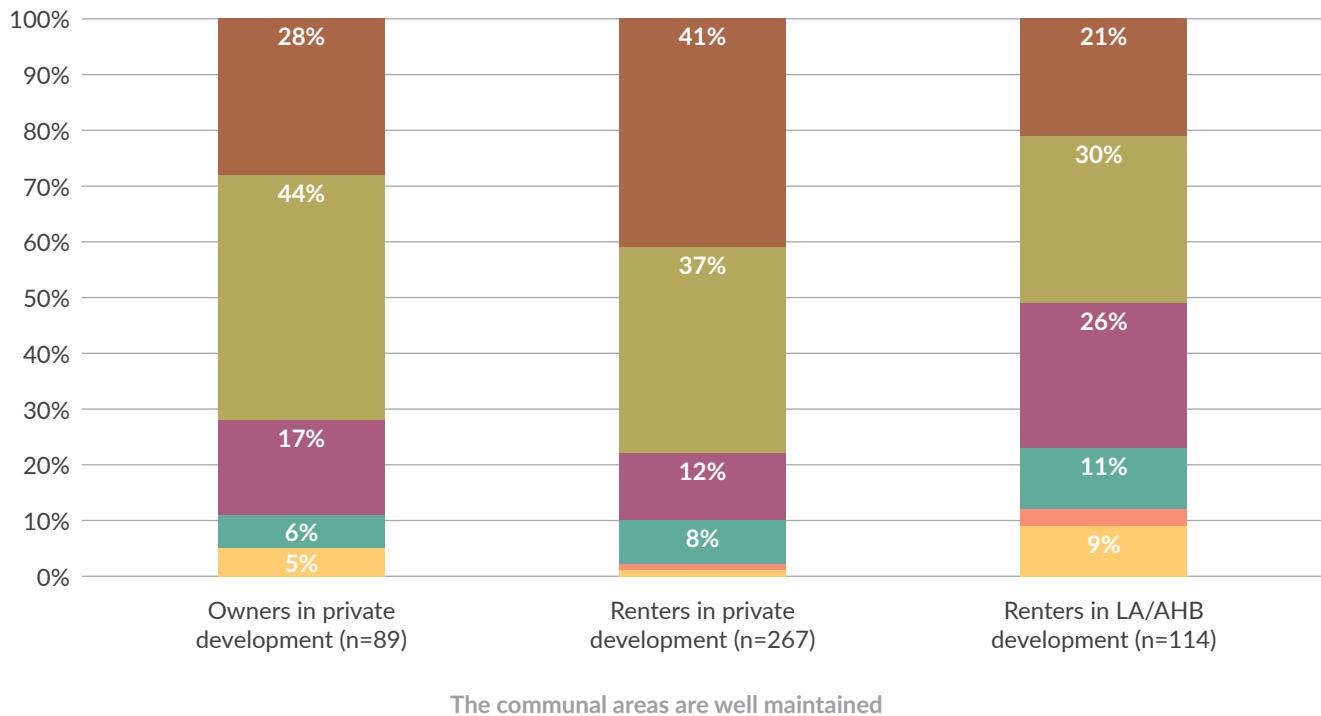
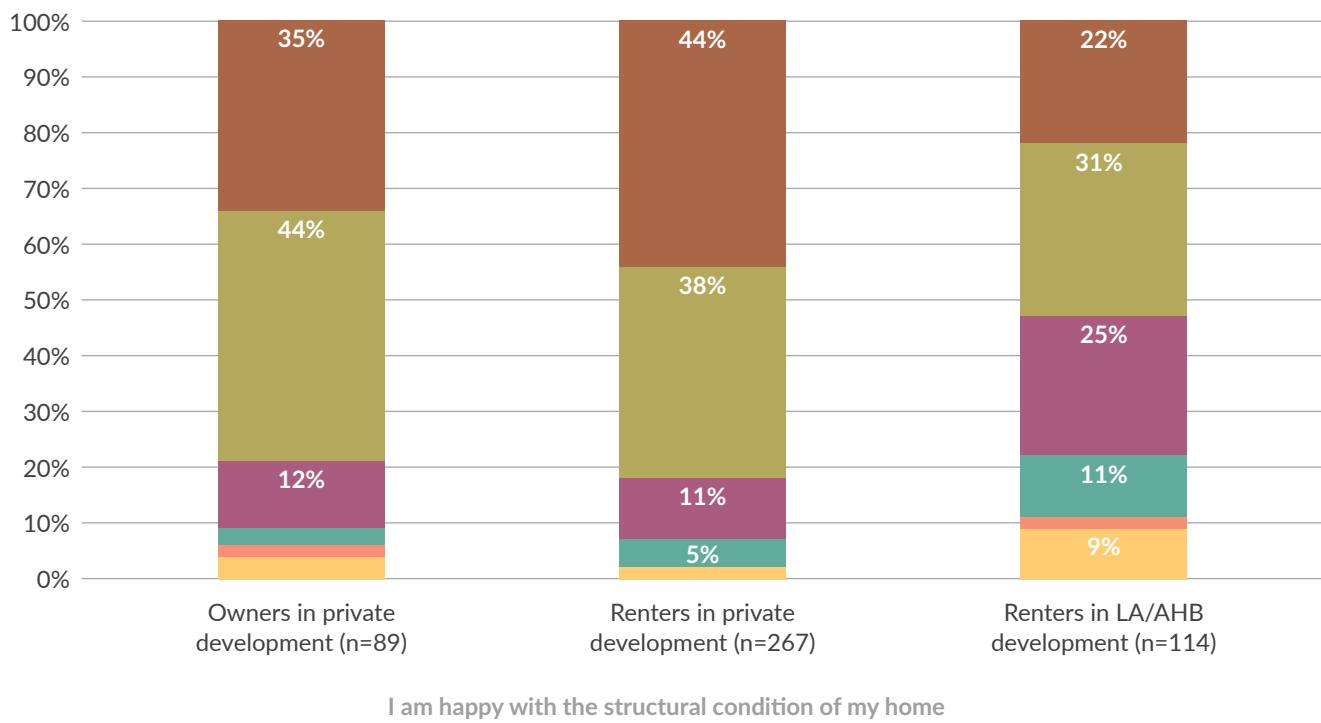


Figure 4.39: Attitudes and perceptions on apartment development facilities



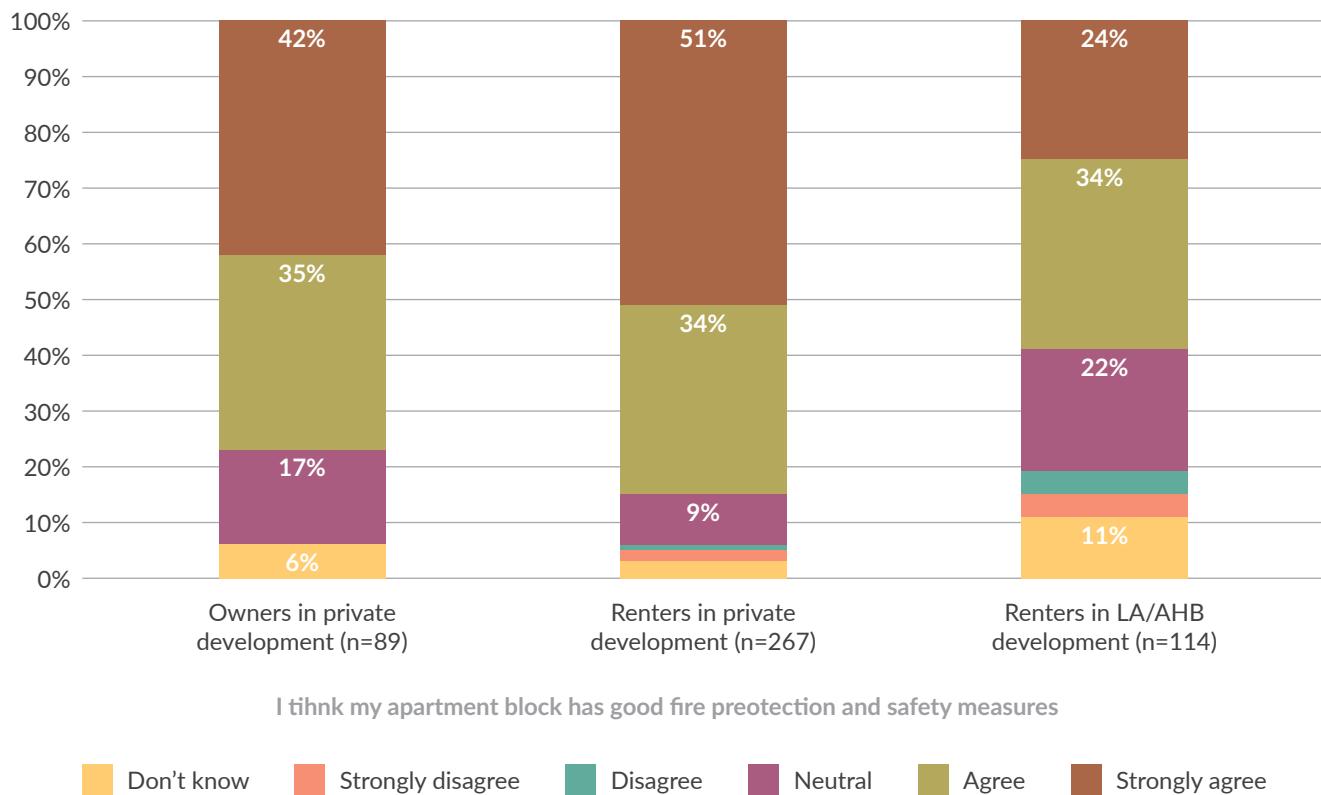
The communal areas are well maintained



I am happy with the structural condition of my home

█ Don't know █ Strongly disagree █ Disagree █ Neutral █ Agree █ Strongly agree

Figure 4.39: Attitudes and perceptions on apartment development facilities (continued)





5 Focus Group Results

For this phase of the research, four focus groups were undertaken in September 2019.

The purpose of the four focus groups was to explore the experiences and attitudes of two cohorts of apartment dwellers to gain more of an insight into what apartment living was like for them: families with children and renters aged 40 years or older with no children. Four themes were examined: housing and neighbourhood satisfaction, experiences of living in an apartment, how to improve suitability of apartment living and future housing aspirations. An overview of the group structure is detailed in Table 5.1 below.

While there was a preference to own a house, this did not diminish the sense of home at present and the majority are happy with their current housing situation

Focus groups with families

Two focus groups with families living in apartments were held, with a total of 16 participants. Both groups of families consisted of either one or two young children ranging in age from eight weeks old to teenagers, and both groups were made up of a mixture of renters and owners. Participants lived in Dublin city centre or suburbs and the length of time living in their current apartments ranged from two and a half years to 19 years. Most had children already when they moved into their current apartment.

House/home associations

Key point

A sense of permanency drives traditional 'home' associations. It is closely linked to aspirations and satisfaction in one's current property and living situation.

While there was a preference to own a house, this did not diminish the sense of home at present and the majority are happy with their current housing situation. Not having enough outside space for their children was a driver of dissatisfaction in apartment living for some families, meaning they did not consider it a 'home'. Weaker 'home' association with one's current housing situation meant a deeper 'home' connection to where they grew up. For many, 'home' means security and family.

"I consider where I grew up to be my

Table 5.1: Focus group profile

Location	Date	No. participants	Tenure type	Age	Life-stage
Dublin	18/9/2019	8	Mix of owners and renters	20-45	Families – mix of babies, toddlers and older children (5+years)
Dublin	19/9/2019	8	Mix of owners and renters	20-45	Families – mix of babies, toddlers and older children (5+years)
Dublin	18/9/2019	7	Renters only	40-50	No children
Dublin	19/9/2019	7	Renters only	40-50	No children

home. Hopefully where I move will be my daughter's home, but I don't think it'll ever be home to me."

Drivers of apartment choice

Key point

Accommodation choice is a balance of location, affordability and space. Proximity to services and amenities and Dublin City was the key driver for choosing an apartment offering a more affordable accommodation choice within a desired area.

Nearly all participants had moved into their current apartment after their children (or some of them) were born. Many chose to live in an apartment as it offered affordable accommodation compared to a house in a location that offered an abundance of services and amenities. For many, there is a balance to be achieved between location, affordability and space. More space is sacrificed to achieve affordability in a desired area. *"City living for me. That was the aim. Lived in cities in the States. Wanted to come back but didn't want to have a car, things to be accessible and I'm really pleased with how it worked out, I suppose because where I live, everything's grown up around that area now. So, it's just been great for the kids to walk to school and everything's on your doorstep."*

Good transport links and / or being able to walk to work or school were important. While all shared the view that long commutes to and from work and poor public transport were an influencing factor on choosing where to live.

For some the space available for the price, especially those living in three-bedroom apartments was a reason buy an apartment: *'It's big, yeah, like for an apartment and I was shocked at what you could get for the money in an apartment rather than a house...'* *"...it does feel like a house even though it's an apartment."*

The amenities and services that families looked for includes schools, community centres or sports facilities, playgrounds or green spaces and family close to their apartment. Interestingly, some families had a view that houses in Dublin were generally in older neighbourhoods with less children. For others, buying an apartment offered the opportunity to purchase a new property and that would not have been possible if purchasing a house. *"Young families live in apartments and I think houses are full of older people."*

Further benefits of living in an apartment were also referenced, such as low heating costs, higher security (although very dependent on the type of complex) and offering the option to live in a more modern property (as opposed to what would be available if looking for a house).

Creating neighbourhoods

Key point

Living in apartments can paradoxically bring about less contact with neighbours, despite closer proximity.

Participants spoke of the difficulty of meeting and getting to know neighbours. Living in apartments brought about fewer opportunities to casually meet than they would have if living in a house or in an old-fashioned social housing flat development. The reasons mentioned were that in apartments you are just 'passing by people' and that there 'is nowhere to sit'. Balconies are private spaces and are often too small to sit on. One person spoke of coming straight up from the underground carpark to her front door. Another spoke of how when she was renting, she didn't know many people but that since buying *"we've made more of an effort to say hello kind of thing. You feel a bit more involved because you actually bought a place".*

There was a discussion about how living in apartments can be more

isolating, partly because there is no 'nipping out' and that once one is home then there is no going out again. *"...but if I was in my mam's house and there is all the shops down the road, I'll just nip down, it's like lock the apartment, go down one set of stairs to get the lift and then down open that door, and down the steps..."*

But community was being developed in some apartment complexes. The outside amenities in some apartments are helping with this. One, an approved housing body resident, spoke of the playground built in the central courtyard of her apartment block helping her to get to know and speak to her neighbours.

Another spoke of the allotments that are part of the apartment complex that have helped create community, while another spoke of the work of a gardening committee. Building in other communal spaces, such as gyms was a suggestion as a way of encouraging community interaction.

Key point

Short-term lettings are seen to be a barrier to creating communities in the city centre with a focus on tourism impacting local businesses, creating "generic" areas with less local character.

Many thought online accommodation platforms were having a negative impact and were described as being 'a drag' and having 'a negative impact'. Firstly, short-term lettings meant creating relationships with neighbours was becoming less frequent and more difficult. Such short-term letting took away from the community feel of an area, meaning it felt more like a hotel for some. Secondly short-term lettings led to people feeling less safe where they lived, with strangers easily accessing their buildings.

Issues with apartment living

Key point

Internal and external space shortages and noise are the main issues of living in an apartment for families. A lack of sufficient outside space has the biggest impact on the day-to-day lives of families, meaning many have to adjust their routines and behaviours to ensure children can 'play' outside safely.

While apartment living offered many benefits, notably with a desired location and proximity to services and facilities, there were a number of key areas where apartment living was not ideal for family living, in particular:

- Outside space;
- Internal space;
- Drying clothes; and
- Noise pollution.

Outside space

What participants with children wanted (if they didn't already have it) was an outside space, which is well-designed, safely accessed, and easily monitored from the apartment for young children to play in. Communal space and activities for teenagers was also mentioned by some as being important.

The lack of sufficient outside space was one of the biggest drawbacks of apartment living, with a significant impact on the day to day lives of families, as safety concerns meant parents were not in a position to let their children 'out to play' without supervision.

Families made use of the available space around them, such as public parks and playgrounds, but within the city centre, especially, these required extra care and attention in terms of supervising children.

One participant spoke about how as a child she could go out in the garden but "*I have to bring my kid to the park, stay with them in the park. I can't just say get out to the garden. Five minutes of peace.*"

The lack of an outside space for some participants was why their apartment would never feel like home: "*But at the weekends, we want to go to our nanny's,*

The lack of sufficient outside space was one of the biggest drawbacks of apartment living, with a significant impact on the day to day lives of families



we want to get out of here and where the big garden is. And then we're gone the whole day, we have dinner in the in-law's house and back then just for baths and bed in the apartment. It just never feels like home ...we're always leaving the place for parks or in-laws."

As was echoed by another participant: *"I think when you have an apartment, I think it's hard on parents as well because you constantly have to go somewhere with the kids, do something, entertain..."*

Some had green spaces for children to play but getting to them was dangerous. Proximity to cars meant children were not able to play safely or access the spaces safely. *"In my complex there is a little bit of green space, but cars can drive in and out of it!"*

Whereas when the space was well designed and was overlooked from the balcony it made a vast difference: *"Where I am, I'm blessed with that little bit of green, and it has the playground and she can go round it on her bike."*

Internal space and layout

The internal space of apartments was another key point. While all are conscious that most apartments will be smaller than a house, the provision of storage space and poor internal layouts worsened the impact. Insufficient internal space impacted families significantly. *"When you do have a child, it makes your apartment half the size straight away."*

For some, the cluttered nature of living in apartments with children was just a 'part of life' and while they would prefer more space, they were used to it. Other families adapted their behaviours, focusing on regular clear outs of toys especially and learning not to buy too much. Where possible, many also used sheds and attics of parents or family members living close by, mainly for storing larger items like Christmas trees. *"I get rid of stuff as I am buying stuff."*

Having a boy and a girl created additional difficulties in two-bed apartments, especially as the children

got older. Parents were very aware that as their children became teenagers, sharing a bedroom with a sibling, especially one of the opposite sex would not be 'fair' on the children. Further, similar difficulties arose if the children were far apart in age as having a teenager and toddler sharing a bedroom, was again, not seen as 'fair'.

Drying clothes

Drying clothes was an issue, caused by insufficient internal (e.g utility room/hot press) and external space. Using a dryer was not an option for some due to cost concerns. Most were not allowed dry their clothes on the balcony by order of the complex management company – although, some said they did not adhere to this rule. Having a clotheshorse in the living area was standard practice for most, even though this creates a number of difficulties within an apartment.

The issues with having a clotheshorse include firstly, the space it takes up and adds 'clutter' to an already compact area. Secondly, open plan living areas



Damp and mould were a constant issue for most due to drying clothes and insufficient ventilation. Some had a seasonal 'scrubbing' of damp and mould from their walls and dehumidifiers and damp traps were commonplace

mean cooking odours on clothes were a common complaint – worsened by a lack of sufficient ventilation or windows in the kitchen area. Finally, damp and mould were a constant issue for most due to drying clothes and insufficient ventilation. Some had a seasonal 'scrubbing' of damp and mould from their walls and dehumidifiers and damp traps were commonplace.

There were references to poor ventilation contributing to the damp and mould issues. *"I have mould all over the apartment, all over my windows the walls everywhere."* *"In apartments they always put the bathroom in the middle with no window, no ventilation so you end up with mould I treat mould every single winter, it's a disaster."*

Drying clothes outside on a washing line was the preferred option, but a suitably sized and well ventilated drying cupboard would also go some way to addressing this problem. Further to the points above, the idea of a separate washing and drying area located outside the apartment (e.g. carpark or connected lockup/annex) received a mostly negative reaction. Some voiced safety concerns, while others said it required additional effort and would not be practical with young children.

Views on the open plan layout (combined kitchen and living space) were mixed. Some liked the added feeling of space it provided. Although, it did create a number of issues for families particularly a sense that 'we are all living in the one room'. Some spoke about having a separate kitchen and a utility room. The idea that it would be "nice to have the option to

close the door" and to have a big open plan space, with an option of dividing off space by closing doors.

The noise of washing machines was also an issue, as they can make it difficult to hear the television, while some people had been told by their management company not to put on their washing machines at night.

Many felt apartments were poorly designed and better use could be made of the space. 'Dead' spaces such as large hallways for example were seen to be an inefficient use of space. *"For some reason the apartment above me is laid out differently, so their kitchen is over my bedroom and one day there was a leak, that wouldn't happen in a house."*

Noise pollution

Most felt noise pollution was a big issue in apartments. Participants said that they needed to adapt their parenting because of living in apartments, for example one person said she "*wouldn't want to be having an argument, put it that way*". Or another said that people commented on the noise of her baby crying.

The layout was said to contribute to noise. Bedrooms were situated under kitchens and living areas, and this worsened noise issues. There were suggestions that apartments should be designed with a bedroom over a bedroom as this would go some way to reducing noise issues. *"The apartment above me, their living room is over my bedroom and they're three lads so when they stayed up for the McGregor match, they were enjoying it where you would in your living room, but it was over my bedroom so I could hear everything."*

Although, there was a sense that many had become accustomed to noises from upstairs or next door, most noise grievances were of taps, toilets, footsteps, doors opening, fans, electric pumps and music. The build quality of some apartment buildings amplified these routine noises with complaints of poorly sound insulated walls and floors.

Some were conscious of their own noise, but those with children felt there was very little they could do to reduce noise levels, especially with babies or toddlers. or another has a neighbour below her objecting to her three-year old walking on the floor: *"I feel like I can't move with a three year old who wants to run from here to the wall."*

Parking

Parking, or lack of availability of it, was an issue that could impact on living in apartments. Friends were less able to drop by, if there was a risk of their car being clamped in the car park. This was the case in some apartment complexes, but not all.

Owners' Management Companies (OMCs) and management fees

All participants had an awareness, especially the owners, of the work of their OMCs. They knew that they organised the maintenance, fixed lifts, lights, gates, and sorted the building's insurance. Few, however, were inclined to become more involved with their OMC. Most paid their management fees but objected to the levels, didn't understand the costs and wanted more communication from the OMC. One participant spoke of the practice in her apartment block of the OMC blocking access to underground parking to residents who had not paid their management fees. *"And if you don't pay your fees, they don't give you access to the car park and they have clampers will come out on a regular basis! You are given a disc to display in your window."*

There was little interaction, and perhaps confusion about the role of the OMC and the role of the property management agent, managing the apartment block on behalf of the OMC:



Suggestions on how to make apartments more suitable for family living

Communal green spaces



A personal, secure lock-up for bikes etc.



A utility room



Sufficient parking – own and visitor



Cars kept safely away from childrens' play areas



Provision for a washing line



Better noise insulation – in ceiling, floors and walls



More bedrooms



Better storage. Loft to store larger items like Christmas trees, etc.



Bigger balconies to overlook play areas



A separate kitchen



Better ventilation/ windows in bathroom



"But to be honest the only interaction I have with them is when they put leaflets through the letterbox to just keep you updated, when the windows (are going to be) cleaned or something like that."

One participant spoke of the positive experience of being on the OMC; it helped her to finally get to know her neighbours; helped her create a good relationship with people she would never have got to know, but it was a lot of work.

Aspirations for families

Key point

Aspirations are dependent on current situation but grounded in pragmatism. Renters aspire to homeownership for security, while some owners aspire to a house for additional space.

Most families are happy in their current situation and while many would ideally move in a 'few years', this is heavily dependent on affordability and the availability of properties within a desired area. Expectedly, most would prefer more space (internal and external), but this did not necessarily mean they aspired to a house – many would be happy with a 3-bed apartment. However; the apartment would also have to come with sufficient communal spaces for children to play outside safely, with a degree of supervision. *"An apartment could tick all the boxes; you know if you can't afford a house you can't afford it, you have to make do."* *"If it was big enough (a 3-bed apartment), with good outdoor communal area, let kids down to play and feel safe, 2 or 3 balconies."*

Some families who were renting saw the current rental market as a barrier to finding more suitable accommodation.

They are highly aware of how difficult finding suitable accommodation in the private rental sector is at present and feel fortunate to 'have a roof over my head'. There were frustrations too, as many thought their rental costs are higher than what a mortgage would be. Even though they believed this demonstrated 'ability to pay', the upfront cost/saving for a deposit and Central Bank mortgage rules meant homeownership was out of reach for many. This heightened the perception that rent was 'dead money' for a lot of people. *"It would have to be a good apartment to go through all that drama again with the queueing up and stuff."* *"I have to save a thousand a month to prove to my bank I can pay a mortgage, even though my rent is more than a mortgage would be."*



The convenience of the location of their apartment was a key driver for apartment choice. Proximity to shops, bars, restaurants, employment and social circles were of most importance for participants

Focus groups with renters 40+ with no children

Two focus groups were held with renters aged 40+ years with no children and living in an apartment, with a total of 14 participants. The majority of renters in both of these focus groups were long-term renters, with most having lived in their current apartment for several years. One person had lived in their current apartment for less than two years, but the remaining participants have lived there between three years and 16 years.

House/home associations

Key point

While some saw their apartment as "home", there was also a view that it was not their "forever home".

Some participants saw where they lived at present as their 'home', where their possessions are and where they go back to after a day's work. These renters feel a sense of permanency in their current apartment, even though there was an admittance that their situation was not strictly speaking, 'forever'. *"What makes it home is it is where I am now and even though I know it is not permanent I am still happy there".* They are happy in their current property as apartment living facilitates their lifestyle being close to the city centre, and they have not got strong aspirations to buy a property at the moment.

Some renters had more of a focus on the future with clearer aspirations to

eventually buy a property. They viewed renting as more temporary and had more of a connection to their parents' house as "home".

Drivers of apartment choice

Key point

Proximity to amenities was the key driver of apartment choice

The convenience of the location of their apartment was a key driver for apartment choice. Proximity to shops, bars, restaurants, employment and social circles were of most importance for participants, with apartment living facilitating a lifestyle of 'city living'. *"Some people just want to be in city centre close to everything and live in an apartment."*

The convenience of having easy access to these various amenities was the biggest pull to apartment living for participants, with many being able to walk to work. Not all participants lived in the city centre, however, they still felt that their apartments were in a good location, close to facilities and services.

Choice

There was a view amongst participants that renting gave them more "choices" in where to live, that they could not afford to live where they do now if they owned their own home. However, for new renters, or any renters looking to move, this choice was considered to have lessened with demand outstripping supply resulting in increasing rents and affordability issues.

Creating neighbourhoods

Key point

Less of a sense of a community with apartment living, and more difficult to build relationships for this group of 40+.

Participants felt that there was less of a sense of community when living in an apartment with less interaction with their neighbours than they would have if they lived in a house: *"people walk past you without knowing them, and mostly there's no acknowledgement – no hello or smile".* *"Like if I knew my neighbours that would be nice. But they are mostly people just living out going to work 9 to 5 professionals."*

The ability to develop friendships with neighbours was highlighted by some as a particular issue for this age group (i.e. those over 40), as it was viewed apartments generally house a younger cohort (in their 20's or 30's). They perceived that it was more difficult for them to develop friendships with these younger cohorts.

Key point

The transient nature of apartment dwellers makes creating communities difficult.

The fast turnover of people in apartments was viewed as feeding into the lack of a sense of community. The transitional nature of apartment living was felt by many *"I think because of the culture in Ireland, stuff like that, like unless you have a house that's yours, you know, apartment is kinda very transitional, you know? And a lot of people are moving, moving, moving, moving and then people like focus on getting a house. They wanna get a house to settle properly, you know".*

However, participants felt that the transient nature of apartment residents

is changing, with people “settling in apartments for long periods”, and generally becoming “less transient”. The fact that housing is “limited” was given to partially explain this – the lack of supply and resultant higher rents means that for many participants they felt that they were better off remaining in their current home, than face trying to find a new place, which, more than likely, would have a higher rent.

However, this perceived lack of supply in the general rental market has resulted in some participants accepting rental increases in the past in order to keep their accommodation and avoid the inconvenience of finding an apartment, moving, paying a deposit etc: *“One year I got hit with 15% and obviously its supply and demand. Massive demand little supply I've nothing to do but capitulate and say, ‘Okay, I'll take another 15%.’ ‘Cause I know... the inconvenience of leaving deposits, you know and then find somewhere and*

then the whole thing again is absolutely a nightmare so thank God for 4% cap, you know?”

There were also numerous references to large technology companies purchasing blocks of apartments and a recent proliferation of student accommodation being built. Both were seen to increase the transient profile of an area, diminishing the sense of community. Such developments were considered to not be intended for long-term residents as one respondent noted, some apartment blocks have become *“like a hotel kind of thing”*.

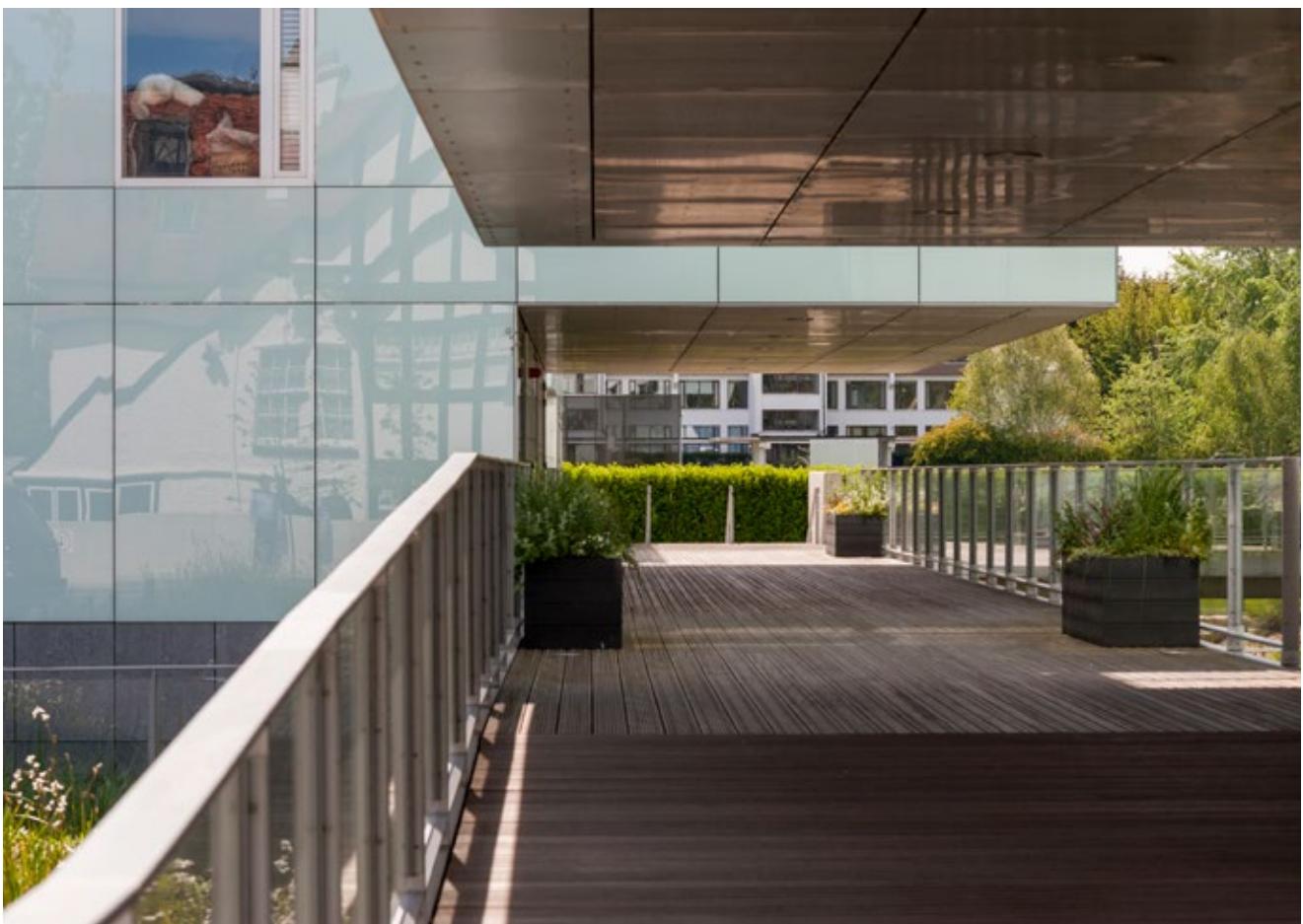
The notion of long-term renters was viewed to be crucial if a community, and a sustainable community, is to be developed. There could not be a sustainable community with short-term renters, it was felt.

Apartment versus house

Key point

Most spoke of a “trade-off” between choosing to live in their preferred location, in an apartment due to affordability, versus living in a house outside of the city centre, which would be more affordable.

Generally, participants were satisfied with living in their apartment, however, comments such as *“it's okay for now”* were used, indicating an element of having to “settle”, for the time being at least. Most participants aspired to move to a house in the future. However, the idea of a “trade-off” was discussed, that if they wanted to live in a house they would have to move out of Dublin/their central location to be able to afford it. The view was



compounded by the perceived lack of employment opportunities outside of Dublin, with some stating they would still have to travel into Dublin each day for work.

Key point

Insecurity – Most felt the need to “not rock the boat” with their landlord in order to maintain their tenancy.

Lack of security of tenure was of concern to participants: “...but it’s the insecurity it’s – it’s that not knowing – it’s the insecurity is the biggest scare”. This was discussed in the context of landlords undertaking “substantial refurbishment” of apartments, for example, putting in new windows, and the potential for being given a Notice of Termination or significantly increased rent. Throughout the discussion participants stated that they did not want to “rock the boat” with their landlord. “...Don’t want to disturb them too much. I kinda want to just exist there ‘cause they didn’t put up the rent for quite a while.”

It was felt amongst participants that most renters don’t want to contact their landlord for fear of a rent increase. For minor/cosmetic issues they will deal with them themselves.

Aspirations

Key point

Long-term aspiration to buy, but affordability and location preferences means this is deemed unattainable for many, with the trade-off between location and ownership the key issue. Long-term financial planning not apparent, although there are concerns about retirement and ability to pay rent.

The long-term aspiration for most participants in this group is to buy a property. This aspiration being largely

There was a cohort of renters in their 40s who felt their prospects of getting a mortgage, to buy something suited to their preferences was diminishing each year. Some feeling they may have “missed their chance” at homeownership altogether

driven by the security ownership offers. However; there is a realism of what they can afford and what it would mean for them in terms of location choice – they would almost certainly have to move outside the city. The location versus ownership trade-off is the central issue for this group. Because of this, some are happy in their current accommodation and have no immediate aspirations to move or to buy. Most had grown-up in the ‘traditional’ 3 bed family home in a suburb and their current aspirations were not seen to be anchored to this experience. Further, some felt there is an Irish culture of having to own a property and this was not, for a myriad of reasons, necessarily suited to everyone.

Culture of homeownership

Most participants agreed that homeownership was ultimately something that they would prefer, and at a more fundamental level the notion of a culture of homeownership was highlighted by many: “*it’s a real Irish thing. It’s culture, and everyone is looking at me like you should just own a place. I probably will but I’m happy enough (...) at the moment*”. “*Exactly, I think it is an Irish thing. Like we just have to own a place like*”. “*This push to follow the line, you know middle class Ireland, you go to school, you get your first job, you rent, you find a partner, you buy a house etc. I’d like to stay outside that*.”

Getting a mortgage

There was a cohort of renters in their 40s who felt their prospects of getting a mortgage, to buy something suited to their preferences was diminishing

each year. Some feeling they may have “missed their chance” at homeownership altogether and that getting a mortgage was unrealistic “...at this stage of life”.

“*the longer you rent, the less chance you have of buying*”. The increasing rents were felt to be hindering their chances of buying a home in the future. “*You just can’t afford it. And every year, what, the rent goes up 4%, so just when you kind of get used to the previous increase, you’re hit with it again, and the cost of living gone up as well so you’re like, “I’m never getting out of this.”* Being able to get a 20% deposit to buy was viewed as difficult for participants, with some saying that they would never be able to save enough for a deposit. “*of course they don’t have that savings because they are paying rent*”.

The difficulty in getting a mortgage was particularly problematic for these over 40s. It was discussed that it would have to be a 20-year mortgage, and in order to service the mortgage they would have to buy a small home – something similar to what they are living in now.

While age created a barrier to getting a mortgage, being single had a greater impact and meant mortgage affordability was effectively halved. This was possibly the biggest impediment to getting a mortgage of sufficient value for many.

Participants were asked where they saw themselves living in 20 years’ time. The majority expected that they would be living in rented accommodation. Several hoped that they would own their own home, using phases such as “*I’d like to think that*”, although

realistically the option of home buying was diminishing for some and for others, unless something radically altered in their financial circumstances, was not a viable option.

More stability in the rental sector

Many would be interested in a so called 'European model' of renting, with longer-term leases and increased tenure security, but felt Irish culture would first have to change to make this a viable long-term option. *"Europe has renting culture – yes, but they have different standards, regulations, lease length."*

The availability of longer-term leases may impact on renters' desire to own their own home. A lot of emphasis was put on security. The term "stability" was given by many tenants....and a longer-term lease, such as a 20 or 30 year lease would give that. *"...if I could stay in that place for the rest of my life, I'd be extremely happy. You know what I mean, if I had the security, if my landlord was to say to me tomorrow, listen you are there for the next ten years. First thing I would*

do would be invest in doing that place up and making it you know the way I like it. Because it's just, for my needs it's perfect but I guess I have just been really lucky in that regard".

One participant stated that they did not have a desire to buy a home but – *"I feel like in Ireland you have to because we don't have...a long-term security or a long-term lease".*

How to pay rent long-term / retirement

Overall, while cognisant of the fact that renting for another 20 to 30 years would create difficulties with some having asked themselves the question "How do you pay rent when you retire?", many did not have definitive long-term plans for accommodation. There were some worries about how they would afford accommodation if they lost their job for example, or how the State pension could cover the cost of living if renting. However, generally it was apparent that longer-term planning for their future was not high on their agenda at the minute. For

example, when asked about what their thoughts on retirement are, as one participant stated: *"I don't know, I don't really think of the future too much. Like I kind of hope for the best.... Of all the things I'm going to save for I'm not saving for a pension. I don't know why it's just too far ahead of me."*

There was a sense amongst this group that they are somewhat forgotten about in terms of housing needs and if the medium-term trend of increasing numbers of households/ people in the private sector is to continue, this could have a negative societal and economic impact in the future. *"Ireland needs to catch up – a lot has happened very quickly – there needs to be a solution for people in their 40s who can't afford to buy."*

There was discussion amongst participants that other countries must have dealt with this issue of older renters, and there was a suggestion that the Government needs to examine how other countries deal with older renters.



6 Conclusion and Summary of Key Findings

Although Ireland has the lowest level of apartment dwellers in Europe, Ireland has witnessed a significant increase in the number of apartment dwellers. Between 2002 and 2016 the number of apartments increased by 85%, and by 2016 35% of households in Dublin city lived in apartments. This study aimed to provide information on the experiences, attitudes and aspirations of apartment dwellers in Ireland.

Previous studies of apartment residential satisfaction in other countries indicated there is a significant degree of agreement with these findings of this research, which is important in itself.

In relation to overall residential satisfaction with apartment living, whilst the international literature showed mixed reports on whether those living in apartments were more satisfied than those who did not, several still reported high levels of residential satisfaction amongst apartment dwellers (Bounds, 2010). The international literature found that that overall residential satisfaction was often linked to other factors, such as design characteristics, noise levels, neighbourhood safety, social interactions, (Buys and Miller, 2012) the age of apartment dwellers (James 2008, Howley, 2010) and the inflexibility of apartments to adapt to the changing housing demands over the life course (Oliveira and Elahi, 2012).

There are many similarities between this study and previous studies on the physical aspects of apartments which impact on housing satisfaction of apartments. In particular, storage space, the design of apartments, cooking smells and noise were prevalent problems. The issue of a lack of clothes drying space was a concern within this Irish study but was not an apparent issue within the international literature. This may be linked

to the provision of dedicated laundry facilities which is commonly found in many European apartment complexes.

Access to open space was important for apartment dwellers both for those in this study and within the international literature (Gruber and Shelton, 1987; Berkooz et al, 2009; Howley 2009; Sajan, 2015). Similarly, relationships with neighbours is important, with apartment dwellers in this study reporting some issues with social contact and community cohesion. This phenomenon was also reported in a study of Scottish apartment dwellers (Kearns et al, 2012).

In Ireland, homeownership is aligned with house type, with houses being the most frequently owned type. Previous studies in Ireland found that people have clear tenure and dwelling aspirations, preferring to own their own homes in lower density suburbs rather than remain as renters in in city centre apartments (Howley, 2009; Winston 2004; Corrigan et al 2019). This study also found a desire for homeownership

amongst the apartment dwellers that rent, although there is a significant proportion of renters that expect to continue to rent in the future. Results from the focus groups provided some further insights into this, with renters signalling a pragmatic approach to their future housing aspirations, highlighting that whilst they might like to become a homeowner, affordability concerns mean that this is unlikely to happen.

Several previous studies in Ireland have found that apartment residents, whether owners or renters, aspire to ownership of a house (Maclaran and Murphy, 1997, Howley, 2009; Corrigan et al 2019). Whilst the majority of apartment dwellers in this study would prefer to move to a house, one fifth would prefer to move to an apartment.

Overall, whilst Ireland has the lowest proportion of apartment dwellers in Europe (for the moment at least), there are many similarities found in the experiences of those living in apartments to those in the rest of Europe.

Strong connections for social renters with their neighbourhood were found with 42% of social renters living in areas they had grown up in, compared to just 12% of private renters

Survey results

Apartment satisfaction

Apartment dwellers levels of satisfaction were high at 81% either 'satisfied' (56%) or 'very satisfied' (25%) with their accommodation. Apartment owners (43%) were much more likely to rate themselves as 'very satisfied' with their apartment than renters (21%), and while there was little difference seen between social and private renters in the 'very satisfied' ratings when 'satisfied' and 'very satisfied' were added together those renting privately (84%) were more likely than social renters (67%) to be 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with their apartment. People living in apartments outside Dublin (34%) were more likely to rate their experience as 'very satisfied' compared to people living in apartments in Dublin (21%). People in socio-economic group AB were more likely to be 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' (85%) compared to those falling into socio-economic group DE (71%).

The main issues raised by respondents about apartment living were; a shortage of space (32%); lack of a place to sit outside (31%); noise from neighbours (21%); and, damp or leaks in walls or roof (21%).

Neighbourhood satisfaction

Levels of neighbourhood satisfaction were similar to housing satisfaction. Apartment dwellers were happy with their neighbourhoods, with 82% being either 'satisfied' (57%) or 'very satisfied' (25%) with their neighbourhoods.

Again, it was found that apartment owners (39%) were almost twice as likely as renters to be 'very satisfied' (21%) with their neighbourhood, and those living outside Dublin (34%) were much more likely to be 'very satisfied' with their neighbourhood than those living in Dublin (19%). People in socio-economic group AB were more likely to be 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' (86%) compared to those

falling into socio-economic group DE (77%).

People living in apartments on the whole wanted to stay living in their neighbourhoods long-term and thought it would be a good place to raise their children. However, comparing the 2019 and 2018 responses to these statements, marked differences were found. In 2018 87% agreed that they would like to remain living in their neighbourhoods long-term, this dropped to 66% in the 2019 study. With regards to the neighbourhood being a good place to raise children 70% of those living in apartments in 2019 agreed with this statement compared to 91% in the 2018 survey.

Strong connections for social renters with their neighbourhood were found with 42% of social renters living in areas they had grown up in, compared to just 12% of private renters.



Families noted that apartments bring fewer opportunities to meet people, and the renters (40+) highlighted their different age profile to others in the building as a barrier

Commuting

21% of people living in apartments made their way to work or education each day by public transport. More than half (56%) of all apartment dwellers spent less than half an hour commuting to work or education each day, while just 9% spent longer than an hour.

Renters' experiences

There were very low level ratings of 'poor' (4%) or 'very poor' (1%) experiences of living in the rental sector, and little difference in overall experiences between private and social renters. People living in apartments outside Dublin were slightly more likely to have had a 'very good' (19%) experience compared to those living in Dublin (11%). Social renters were found to have been renting their current home for three times longer than someone in the private rental sector. 77% of private renters and 76% of social renters felt either 'secure' or 'very secure' in their tenure.

The main reason people gave for renting (35%) was that they don't know where they want to settle down or live-long term. This is followed by a quarter of renters (25%) saying they are renting because they are unable to access a mortgage.

Homeowners' experiences

Experiences of homeownership were good with 47% saying they had a 'very good' experience and 41% rating as 'good' their experience of being a homeowner. Of the sample 58% were living in the first home they had bought. Buying an apartment had required 'a lot' of financial sacrifice by almost a quarter (23%) while almost a fifth (18%) said they experienced 'no financial sacrifice' buying their apartment.

Affordability

While 2% of renters experienced 'a lot' of difficulty, a further 68% experienced 'some' difficulty paying their rent each month. Just under a third of all renters experienced no difficulty meeting their monthly rental costs, with little difference between social and private renters. Of those in socio-economic group AB just under half experienced no difficulty paying their rent, this compared to the other end of the scale with just 21% in socio-economic group DE experiencing no difficulty paying their rent, with the rest experiencing 'some' or 'a lot' of difficulty.

Just 15% of mortgage holders experienced 'some' (13%) or 'a lot' (2%) of difficulty meeting their monthly mortgage repayments. In fact, 85% of those living in apartments with a mortgage experienced 'no difficulty' making their mortgage repayments. This contrasts with the 63% of all homeowners in 2018 who experienced 'no difficulty meeting their monthly repayments.

Geographically those living in Dublin (52%) were more likely than those living outside Dublin (39%) to be living comfortably on their present income.

Future expectations and aspirations

Just over a third of apartment renters (35%) thought they would always rent, while 48% thought they would buy, and the rest didn't know. Private renters were more likely to have an expectation to buy in the future, at 61% compared to 21% of social renters.

Owners were more likely to expect to stay where they were and never

move (68%), while private renters were the most likely (46%) to think they were likely to move. Employment opportunities (37%) and providing space for a growing family (29%) were the two key reasons that people thought it would be likely they would move in the future.

Of those who were likely to move 68% would prefer to move to a house, while a fifth (21%) said their preference would be to move to another apartment.

Focus group results

House/home association

For both families (with young children) and renters (40+ years and no children) there was a sense of their apartment being their "home", and the majority of both groups, in the main, were happy with their current housing situation. For renters (40+ years) there was a sense of permanency in their current accommodation. However, there was a desire to purchase a house at some stage in their future for both groups.

Drivers of apartment choice

Proximity to services and amenities was the key driver to choosing to live in an apartment offering a more affordable accommodation choice within a desired location. City living and the lifestyle it facilitated was important for all participants. Importantly, nearly all of the families had children prior to moving into their current apartment.

The importance of different amenities to the two different groups differed. Whilst shops, employment and good transport links were important for both groups, families stressed the importance of being close to schools, sporting facilities, playgrounds and green spaces, whilst renters (40+ years) highlighted the proximity of bars and restaurants.

Creating neighbourhoods and barriers to creating neighbourhoods and communities

Both groups felt that living in an apartment made it more difficult to meet neighbours and forge friendships. Families noted that apartments bring fewer opportunities to meet people, and the renters (40+) highlighted their different age profile to others in the building as a barrier. However, for both groups the transient nature of apartment dwellers was a barrier to creating neighbourhoods. Short-term lettings and the rise of "corporate" landlords (usually large technology companies or student accommodation landlords) were thought to be having a negative impact, which diminished the sense of community.

Issues with apartment living

Outside space

Outside space was a concern for both groups, although this manifested itself in different ways. For families, outside space which was well-designed, safely accessed and easily monitored from the apartment was important. Lack of sufficient outside space was one of the biggest drawbacks for families living in apartments, as safety concerns meant that families were not able to let their children play outside without supervision. For renters (40+ years), lack of outside space was not a major concern, indeed, many did not make use of the communal outside space. The key concern for renters (40+ years) was the lack of their "own" garden space.

Internal space and layout

Lack of storage space was particularly problematic for families, some of which have adapted their behaviours by focusing on regular clear outs and generally buying less. Living in a two-bedroom apartment and having a boy and a girl was an added difficulty for

families. For both families and renters (40+) the open plan nature of apartments was an issue for them, with some mentioning a separate kitchen as preferable. For renters (40+) it would mean the containment of cooking smells, for families it would allow for more "space" for the people living there.

Drying clothes was a problem for both groups. A dryer was not possible space wise for some, and cost wise for others, so most used a clotheshorse. This takes up more space in an already small area and, as many had a combined kitchen living room this means that cooking smells on clothes was an occurring problem.

Noise

Noise was a concern for all participants, although this was reflected in different ways across the two groups. For renters (40+), it was the day to day noises from other apartment dwellers that was impacting on them most. For families, whilst this also impacted on them, there was a greater awareness of the noise that they made, and at times these families adapted their way of living to try and minimise this. However, the layout of apartment buildings was criticised as contributing to poor noise levels, for example, with bedrooms being situated under kitchens.

Renting

Renters were concerned with insecurity of tenure, with many stating that they did not want to "rock the boat" with their landlord for fear of eviction or rent increases. This manifested itself with many of the renters undertaking minor repairs and maintenance themselves. The idea of a more "European Model" of renting was highlighted, one with much greater security of tenure. If this

stability were to be introduced into the Irish rental market, many would happily stay in the rented sector.

How to pay rent in the longer-term was a concern. During the discussions renters (40+) admitted that they had not given much thought to their long-term plan for accommodation and how to pay their rent once they retired. This resulted in several stating their concerns about potentially becoming homeless as they were not sure how they could pay their rent in retirement. There was a sense amongst these renters (40+) that they were somewhat forgotten about in terms of housing needs, and the potential impact on society of increasing numbers of tenants in the private rented sector heading towards retirement age.

Aspirations

For families, aspirations were somewhat dependent on their current situation. Those renting aspired to homeownership, whilst owners aspire to move to a house for more space. Nevertheless, generally families were happy in their current accommodation, and were pragmatic with regards to affordability concerns for moving.

Similarly, for renters (40+), most aspired to homeownership. However, the same pragmatism was apparent. Many highlighted firstly, the difficulties in saving for a deposit given their high rents, and secondly, the issue of getting a mortgage in their 40s. This led to most coming to the conclusion that their chances of becoming homeowners were rapidly diminishing and they would likely remain renting. Given the instability in the rental market, affordability concerns in general, and ability to pay the rent in retirement meant that homeownership for them was preferable.



7 Appendices

Appendix I Sampling procedure

The sampling point selection process used the Pobal HP Deprivation Index.²⁹

The following table details the stages taken in the selection of sampling points and starting addresses:

Table A1.1: Sampling point selection process

Stage	Details
1	Calculate number of sampling points in each region based on the proportion of persons living in a flat or apartment in a purpose-built block as per CSO Census 2016.
2	Calculate number of sampling points in each Dublin local authority based on the proportion of persons living in a flat or apartment in a purpose-built block.
3	Download CSO database of number of persons accommodated in apartments.
4	Download the Deprivation Index data for Dublin region. https://maps.pobal.ie/WebApps/GeoprofilingReports/index.html
5	Determine deprivation profile of each local authority area and distribute sampling points proportionally to deprivation scores and classify each 'Electoral Division' within Dublin with a Deprivation Index Score Class ranging from -4 to 4.
6	Select sampling points with the highest number of persons accommodated in apartments that meet the criteria of Deprivation Index score class by local authority
7	Identify 'Electoral Districts' within the points above with the highest number of persons accommodated in apartments to target the population more easily.
8	Select starting address using CSO SapMap by displaying each 'Small Area' and using Eircode finder website to target the apartments.

²⁹ See <https://www.pobal.ie/app/uploads/2018/06/The-2016-Pobal-HP-Deprivation-Index-Introduction-07.pdf>

The following table outlines the proportional distribution of population of apartment dwellers and sampling points in the four Dublin local authorities by Deprivation Index score:

Table A1.2: Number of sampling points and deprivation score

Deprivation score		No. sampling points per local authority			
Class	Area classification	Dublin City	Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown	Fingal	South Dublin
-4	Extremely disadvantaged	0	0	0	0
-3.0	Very disadvantaged	0	0	0	0
-2.0	Disadvantaged	3	0	0	2
-1.0	Marginally below average	6	1	1	1
1.0	Marginally above average	8	2	5	1
2.0	Affluent	5	3	1	1
3.0	Very affluent	0	0	0	0
4	Extremely affluent	0	0	0	0

Selecting sampling points

A three-stage sample selection procedure was used. The stages in the sample selection were:

- Stage 1: Selection of a fixed number of sampling points
- Stage 2: Selection of starting addresses within sampling points
- Stage 3: Selection of the individual for interview

Stage 1: Selection of sampling points

The regional spread of sampling points was proportionate to the number of those living in a flat or apartment in a purpose-built block. The sampling points were stratified using two indicators of socio-demographic and socio-economic composition: the Pobal HP Deprivation Index and the CSO's area typology for the four Dublin local authorities.

Stage 2: Selection of starting addresses within sampling points

Apartment developments were identified beforehand using the Eircode finder. A single point address with multiple Eircodes was used to identify purpose-built apartment blocks. Interviewers were given a starting address within the purpose-built apartment development, the Eircode and the Electoral District name. Maps were provided to ensure interviews were conducted within Electoral District boundaries only.

To ensure sample representation of local authority (LA) owned and approved housing body (AHB) apartments, twelve sampling points were given a LA or AHB starting address.³⁰ All other sampling points were given private apartment addresses.

Stage 3: Selection of the individual for interview

When contacting the household, the interviewer sought an adult resident aged 19 years or older with whom to complete the screening question. Prior to the interview taking place, informed consent was sought from the person taking the interview. Once this individual was identified and had provided consent, the interviewer conducted the interview.

29 See <https://www.pobal.ie/app/uploads/2018/06/The-2016-Pobal-HP-Deprivation-Index-Introduction-07.pdf>

Appendix II

Sample profile

Demographics		Total
Age	19-24 25-34 35-44 45-54 55-64 65+	12% 40% 25% 10% 6% 6%
Gender	Male Female	50% 50%
Region	Leinster (excluding Dublin) Munster Connaught or Ulster Dublin City Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown Fingal South Dublin	14% 15% 8% 35% 11% 9% 8%
Employment status	Full-time employed Part-time employed Self-employed or working family business Unemployed in receipt of social or community welfare benefit Third level education (incl. vocational training or retraining) Unable to work – sickness or disability Retired Looking after family home	56% 11% 3% 9% 6% 5% 4% 6%
Socio-economic group	AB C1 C2 DE	23% 22% 22% 34%
Place of birth	Ireland (including Northern Ireland) Outside Ireland	56% 44%
Ethnicity	White Irish Irish Traveller Any other white background Black or Black Irish or African Any other Black background Asian or Asian Irish or Chinese Any other Asian Background Other, including mixed background Refusal	55% 0% 26% 2% 1% 6% 7% 1% 1%

Demographics		Total
Household composition	One person	22%
	Couple without children	17%
	Couple with children	28%
	Couple without children but with other persons	2%
	Couple with children and other persons	1%
	One parent with children	10%
	One parent with children and other persons	1%
	Two or more family units	3%
	Non-family household	14%
Marital status	Married or civil partnership	32%
	Cohabiting	18%
	Single – never married	33%
	Divorced	4%
	Widowed	3%
	Separated	5%
	Refused	4%
Educational attainment	Some primary (not complete)	0%
	Primary or equivalent	6%
	Inter or junior or group certificate or equivalent	15%
	Leaving certificate or equivalent	20%
	Diploma or certificate	17%
	Primary degree	24%
	Postgraduate or higher degree	16%
	Doctorate	1%
Living situation	Living with my family (spouse or partner with or without children)	57%
	Living alone	22%
	Living with others (sharing)	16%
	Living in the family home (with parents)	4%
	Refused	1%
No. people in household	1	23%
	2	27%
	3	27%
	4	18%
	5	4%
	6	1%

Housing demographics		Total
Tenure	Owner occupier	20%
	Renting privately	62%
	Renting from local authority or approved housing body	18%
Landlord type (n=264)	A small private/individual landlord	74%
	A professional landlord	16%
	An institutional landlord/investment fund landlord or REIT	3%
	Don't know	6%
Property type	Your main residence	98%
	A holiday home owned by yourself or family	0%
	A residence used in connection with work but not main residence	2%
Apartment development type	Part of a private multi-unit development	70%
	Located within a local authority development	20%
	Located within an approved housing body complex	4%
	Don't know	6%
No. bedrooms	1	14%
	2	67%
	3	18%
No. living rooms	0	2%
	1	81%
	2	9%
	3	7%
	4	1%
Property features	Private garden (including patio/yard/courtyard)	11%
	My own front garden	5%
	Own parking space	59%
	Garage (private or communal)	16%
	Own balcony/roof terrace	46%
	Communal gardens or other space	29%
	Lift	43%
	Secure place to park bike	28%
	Separate secure storage space on site	15%
	Electric vehicle charging point	9%
	Shared TV/satellite dish	23%
	On-site security/concierge presence	21%
	Post parcel holding facility	31%
	None	13%

Housing demographics		Total
Property suitability for injury, old age or disability	Yes	44%
	No	43%
	Could easily be adapted to suit	6%
	Has already been adapted	2%
	Don't know	5%
Floor of development	Basement/semi basement	0%
	Ground floor/street level	28%
	1st floor (floor above street level)	19%
	2nd floor	29%
	3rd floor	15%
	4th floor	5%
	5th-9th floor	3%
Year moved into apartment	1971-1980	1%
	1981-1990	1%
	1991-2000	2%
	2001-2005	4%
	2006-2011	13%
	2012 or later	74%
Last time moved	Within the last 12 months	13%
	Within the last 1-2 years	19%
	Within the last 3-5 years	33%
	Within the last 6-10 years	17%
	Within the last 11-15 years	9%
	Within the last 16-20 years	1%
	Within the last 21-25 years	1%
	More than 25 years ago	2%
	Lived here all my life	5%
No. years in neighbourhood	Less than 1 year	7%
	1-10 years	69%
	10-20 years	12%
	20-30 years	4%
	30-40 years	4%
	40-50 years	2%
	50 years or more	2%

Appendix III

Additional tables

Please note that some sample sizes are small so please use with caution.

Table A3.1: Apartment satisfaction by age, social class and place of birth (N=511)

	Total	19-34	35-54	55+	AB	C1	C2	DE	Ireland (incl. NI)	Outside Ireland
	511	269	179	63	117	112	110	171	287	225
Very satisfied	25%	20%	29%	37%	29%	26%	27%	21%	31%	18%
Satisfied	56%	60%	53%	43%	60%	59%	56%	50%	45%	69%
Neutral	15%	16%	13%	16%	8%	13%	15%	20%	19%	9%
Dissatisfied	3%	2%	5%	3%	1%	1%	2%	7%	4%	3%
Very dissatisfied	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	2%	1%	1%

Table A3.2: Apartment satisfaction statements by age, social class and place of birth (% strongly agree) (N=511)

% Strongly agree	Total	19-34	35-54	55+	AB	C1	C2	DE	Ireland (incl. NI)	Outside Ireland
	511	269	179	63	117	112	110	171	287	225
I do not find it difficult to live in this home	45%	45%	44%	46%	49%	47%	59%	32%	46%	43%
My home is suited to my needs	47%	46%	47%	48%	48%	51%	62%	34%	48%	44%
I have chosen to live in this home	48%	46%	51%	48%	54%	50%	61%	35%	49%	48%
I enjoy living in this home	48%	44%	50%	54%	54%	47%	56%	37%	50%	44%

Table A3.3: Overall neighbourhood satisfaction by age, social class and place of birth (N=511)

	Total	19-34	35-54	55+	AB	C1	C2	DE	Ireland (incl. NI)	Outside Ireland
	511	269	179	63	117	112	110	171	287	225
Very satisfied	25%	18%	30%	38%	31%	21%	24%	23%	30%	18%
Satisfied	57%	64%	52%	42%	57%	65%	57%	52%	47%	69%
Neutral	14%	15%	11%	19%	10%	14%	13%	18%	19%	9%
Dissatisfied	3%	2%	7%	0	2%	0	6%	5%	3%	4%
Very dissatisfied	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%



Table A3.4: Neighbourhood attitudes by age, social class and place of birth (% strongly agree) (N=511)

% Strongly agree	Total	19-34	35-54	55+	AB	C1	C2	DE	Ireland (incl. NI)	Outside Ireland
	511	269	179	63	117	112	110	171	287	225
I am able to access recreational parks or green areas	42%	43%	39%	41%	47%	41%	50%	33%	45%	37%
It is easy to get to supermarkets or other shops	42%	41%	42%	43%	50%	39%	50%	33%	44%	40%
I feel safe	39%	38%	41%	38%	53%	34%	44%	30%	39%	40%
I am able to access public amenities easily	38%	38%	38%	34%	44%	39%	47%	27%	41%	34%
I am happy with the neighbourhood environment	37%	37%	37%	34%	47%	34%	42%	28%	38%	36%
I am able to access public services easily	37%	38%	37%	32%	39%	38%	47%	29%	39%	35%
The buildings are attractive	36%	37%	35%	35%	42%	34%	44%	28%	36%	36%
This is a calm area to live	36%	34%	40%	30%	46%	33%	39%	27%	35%	36%
I feel close to everything	36%	35%	37%	39%	45%	32%	43%	28%	38%	34%
I enjoy living in this house or flat	34%	34%	34%	38%	43%	30%	42%	26%	38%	30%
There is good public transport	33%	34%	34%	25%	33%	30%	44%	27%	37%	27%
I don't feel an urge to move out of this neighbourhood	32%	31%	33%	37%	43%	26%	36%	25%	36%	27%
There are good quality schools	28%	27%	31%	24%	32%	24%	38%	21%	30%	25%

Table A3.5: Neighbourhood satisfaction statements by age, social class and place of birth (% strongly agree) (N=511)

% Strongly agree	Total	19-34	35-54	55+	AB	C1	C2	DE	Ireland (incl. NI)	Outside Ireland
	511	269	179	63	117	112	110	171	287	225
I would like to stay here long-term	34%	29%	37%	53%	34%	28%	41%	35%	39%	29%
I would recommend this neighbourhood to friends looking for a place to live	36%	32%	40%	47%	46%	31%	46%	27%	38%	35%
My neighbourhood is a good place to raise children	30%	27%	35%	32%	35%	23%	39%	26%	30%	30%

Table A3.6: Importance of family living close by, by age, social class and place of birth (N=511)

	Total	19-34	35-54	55+	AB	C1	C2	DE	Ireland (incl. NI)	Outside Ireland
	511	269	179	63	117	112	110	171	287	225
Strongly agree	41%	38%	42%	49%	47%	34%	48%	37%	43%	39%
Agree	35%	39%	33%	24%	29%	39%	31%	39%	35%	35%
Neutral	17%	16%	16%	22%	18%	20%	17%	15%	18%	16%
Disagree	6%	6%	7%	3%	6%	7%	4%	6%	4%	9%
Strongly disagree	1%	*	2%	1%	0	1%	0	3%	1%	1%

Table A3.7: Neighbourhood change perceptions by age, social class and place of birth (N=511)

	Total	19-34	35-54	55+	AB	C1	C2	DE	Ireland (incl. NI)	Outside Ireland
	511	269	179	63	117	112	110	171	287	225
Changing for the better	39%	39%	37%	49%	61%	45%	30%	26%	40%	38%
Not changing	47%	50%	46%	40%	30%	45%	58%	53%	42%	54%
Changing for the worse	13%	12%	17%	10%	9%	10%	11%	21%	18%	8%

Table A3.8: Experiences of renting by age, social class and place of birth (N=409)

	Total	19-34	35-54	55+	AB	C1	C2	DE	Ireland (incl. NI)	Outside Ireland
	409	242	132	35	66	91	97	155	208	201
Very good	14%	9%	21%	19%	24%	13%	10%	13%	17%	11%
Good	52%	57%	46%	42%	46%	57%	61%	46%	46%	58%
Average	29%	29%	29%	32%	22%	29%	23%	37%	32%	27%
Poor	4%	3%	4%	7%	4%	1%	5%	4%	4%	3%
Very poor	1%	1%	1%	0	4%	0	1%	1%	1%	1%

Table A3.9: Reasons why renting, by age and social class (N=409)

	Total	19-34	35-54	55+	AB	C1	C2	DE
	409	242	132	35	66	91	97	155
Not sure where I want to settle down or live long-term	35%	36%	32%	34%	56%	47%	19%	28%
Can't get a mortgage	25%	27%	23%	16%	5%	12%	36%	33%
It's convenient to things I need to be close to (e.g. work, college)	16%	16%	16%	6%	25%	20%	13%	10%
Currently saving for a deposit	13%	18%	9%	0%	8%	13%	28%	6%
Just don't want to buy a home (I am happy renting)	12%	9%	15%	20%	12%	12%	11%	13%

Table A3.10: Tenure security by age, social class and area

	Total	19-34	35-54	55+	AB	C1	C2	DE	Ireland (incl. NI)	Outside Ireland
	511	242	132	35	66	91	97	155	208	201
Very secure	27%	23%	27%	52%	33%	21%	16%	34%	34%	19%
Secure	51%	52%	57%	19%	49%	56%	64%	40%	43%	58%
Average	19%	21%	14%	24%	10%	22%	18%	21%	21%	17%
Insecure	3%	3%	3%	0%	8%	1%	1%	3%	1%	4%
Very insecure	1%	1%	0%	5%	0%	0%	1%	2%	1%	1%

Table A3.11: Level of difficulty in meeting monthly rental costs by age, social class and place of birth (N=408)

	Total	19-34	35-54	55+	AB	C1	C2	DE	Ireland (incl. NI)	Outside Ireland
	408	242	131	35	66	91	97	154	208	200
A lot of difficulty	2%	1%	3%	3%	0%	3%	0%	3%	0%	3%
Some difficulty	68%	71%	68%	47%	52%	72%	65%	75%	62%	74%
No difficulty	30%	28%	28%	50%	48%	25%	35%	21%	36%	23%

Table A3.12: Living on present income, by age, social class and place of birth (N=506)

	Total	19-34	35-54	55+	AB	C1	C2	DE	Ireland (incl. NI)	Outside Ireland
	506	266	179	61	116	110	110	170	283	223
Living comfortably on present income	47%	48%	45%	50%	83%	42%	53%	22%	49%	44%
Getting by on present income	41%	41%	40%	42%	14%	46%	42%	55%	37%	46%
Finding it difficult on present income	10%	10%	12%	6%	2%	10%	4%	20%	11%	8%
Finding it very difficult on present income	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%	4%	2%	2%

Table A3.13: Household bill difficulties each month by age, social class and place of birth (N=500)

	Total	19-34	35-54	55+	AB	C1	C2	DE	Ireland (incl. NI)	Outside Ireland
	500	262	177	62	116	108	110	166	278	222
Most of the time	2%	2%	3%	2%	3%	2%	2%	3%	3%	1%
From time to time	16%	18%	15%	14%	2%	15%	12%	29%	18%	14%
Almost never	17%	15%	19%	15%	12%	15%	18%	20%	15%	19%
Never	65%	65%	64%	69%	83%	68%	68%	48%	64%	67%

Table A3.14: Renters future tenure expectations, by, age, social class and place of birth (N=409)

	Total	19-34	35-54	55+	AB	C1	C2	DE	Ireland (incl. NI)	Outside Ireland
	409	242	132	35	66	91	97	155	208	201
Always rent	35%	25%	42%	75%	10%	27%	23%	58%	44%	25%
Buy at some point in the future	48%	60%	37%	7%	74%	51%	64%	25%	39%	57%
Don't know	17%	15%	21%	17%	15%	22%	13%	17%	17%	17%

Table A3.15: Private renters future tenure expectations, by, age, social class and place of birth (N=278)

	Total	19-34	35-54	55+	AB	C1	C2	DE
	279	180	81	18	61	75	66	76
Always rent	22%	15%	25%	74%	10%	25%	16%	34%
Buy at some point in the future	61%	70%	51%	7%	75%	56%	72%	44%
Don't know	17%	14%	24%	19%	15%	19%	12%	22%

Table A3.16: Likelihood of moving by, age, social class and place of birth (N=511)

	Total	19-34	35-54	55+	AB	C1	C2	DE	Ireland (incl. NI)	Outside Ireland
	511	269	179	63	117	112	110	170	287	225
Very likely	13%	13%	15%	4%	17%	12%	12%	10%	11%	14%
Likely	24%	30%	22%	7%	20%	29%	30%	21%	21%	29%
Unsure	26%	30%	22%	22%	17%	34%	29%	26%	23%	30%
Unlikely	15%	13%	16%	20%	23%	10%	14%	14%	18%	12%
Very unlikely	22%	14%	25%	47%	23%	14%	15%	30%	27%	15%

Table A3.17: Reasons for being unlikely to move by age, social class and place of birth (N=187)

	Total	19-34	35-54	55+	AB	C1	C2	DE	Ireland (incl. NI)	Outside Ireland
	187	172	72	43	54	28	31	75	128	59
Happy in current home	57%	51%	60%	62%	62%	57%	68%	49%	54%	64%
Housing too expensive	33%	49%	27%	15%	38%	45%	30%	26%	29%	42%
Lack of the size of the housing that is needed	14%	9%	16%	18%	13%	7%	25%	12%	16%	8%
No housing available in area want to live in	13%	9%	17%	12%	11%	10%	16%	13%	12%	14%
Could not afford high up-front costs (mortgage or rental deposit)	12%	13%	13%	8%	4%	21%	20%	11%	12%	11%

Table A3.18: Reasons for being likely to move by age, social class and place of birth (N=324)

	Total	19-34	35-54	55+	AB	C1	C2	DE	Ireland (incl. NI)	Outside Ireland
	324	196	106	21	64	84	79	96	159	165
More space for growing family	29%	26%	38%	20%	36%	14%	33%	35%	29%	30%
Employment	37%	42%	30%	33%	54%	41%	36%	24%	31%	44%
I want to buy a home	18%	23%	14%	4%	29%	16%	20%	12%	24%	13%
Want to move to a different neighbourhood	14%	11%	17%	21%	14%	8%	17%	16%	19%	9%
Was given social housing	9%	8%	9%	23%	4%	2%	10%	19%	13%	7%



Appendix IV

Relevant policy, legislation and guidelines

Policy	
<p>Climate Action Plan</p> <p>June 2019</p> <p>www.gov.ie/en/publication/5350ae-climate-action-plan/</p>	<p>Chapter 6 “Carbon Pricing and Cross-cutting Policies”</p> <p>Chapter 6.3.3 “Spatial and Planning Policy” considers the policies and objectives of Project Ireland 2040 the NPF. Sustainable, compact urban growth, densification, and de-carbonisation are considered in spatial and planning context.</p> <p>Changing the pattern of development will need to be buttressed by new policy tools in the planning system. It will ensure that more people will be living within the existing built-up footprint of cities and towns and will support achieving the objectives of this Plan through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced travel distances and greater proximity to employment and services, which will enable a greater proportion of journeys by bike or on foot (zero emissions) • Greater urban density, which when combined with the point above, will ensure more viable public transport (less emissions per person than by individual vehicle) • Greater sustainable mode share, which will enable cities and towns to densify, as development will not be dependent on road capacity nor car parking requirements, and less land will be required for the latter • Higher density residential development, which tends to comprise smaller units and therefore require less energy to heat. NPF targets require the proportion of apartments to treble, from 13% in 2019, to 39% by 2030 • Closer proximity of multi-storey and terraced buildings, which will require less energy and make renewables-based systems of energy distribution such as district heating, or area-wide technology upgrades, more feasible. <p>Chapter 9 “Built Environment”, esp. Ch. 9.3.4 “Regulation of New Buildings and Renovations” notes that at least 40% of all new homes nationally will be delivered within the built-up footprint of existing settlements under our commitment to promote compact and sustainable growth of our cities, towns, and villages.</p>
<p>Review of delivery costs and viability for affordable residential developments</p> <p>April 2018</p> <p>www.housing.gov.ie/sites/default/files/publications/files/review_of_delivery_costs_and_viability_for_affordable_residential_developments.pdf</p>	<p>Provides an overview and analysis of the cost and viability of building affordable homes. The second part of the report is based on analysis from viability modelling undertaken on the delivery of sample residential projects; the first example is an apartment building in an urban location.</p>
<p>Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework</p> <p>February 2018</p> <p>www.npf.ie/wp-content/uploads/Project-Ireland-2040-NPF.pdf</p>	<p>The NPF identifies the need for apartment building as key to the delivery of housing strategy. Specifically, National Policy Objectives 34 and 35 reference the need for more apartment housing to increase residential density to reach environmental and infrastructural demands. NPOs 3a, 3b and 3c translate to the proportion of apartments in Ireland trebling, from 13% in 2019, to 39% by 2030.</p>

Policy	
<p>Safe as Houses? A report of building standards, building controls and consumer protection</p> <p>December 2017</p> <p>data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/32/joint_committee_on_housing_planning_and_local_government/reports/2018/2018-01-24_report-safe-as-houses-a-report-on-building-standards-building-controls-consumer-protection_en.pdf</p>	<p>Makes recommendations to develop a more assured and robust environment for apartment development for consumers.</p> <p>Makes recommendation for a redress system for owners of homes with latent defects stating 'ordinary owners who purchased in good faith should not be liable for the costs of remediation caused by the incompetence, neglect or deliberate non-compliance of others'.</p> <p>Details a number of committee recommendations that were made to make the environment around apartment development more assured and robust for consumers.</p> <p>Recommended a redress system for owners with homes that have latent defects, with a mission statement of "Ordinary owners who purchased in good faith should not be liable for the costs of remediation caused by the incompetence, neglect or deliberate non-compliance of others".</p>
<p>Rebuilding Ireland 2016</p> <p>July 2016</p> <p>www.rebuildingireland.ie/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Rebuilding-Ireland_Action-Plan.pdf</p>	<p>Rebuilding Ireland outlines the plan to sustainably increase housing supply in the immediate, medium and longer term. The plan aims to double the growth of the annual level of residential construction to 25,000 homes and deliver 47,000 units of social housing in the period to 2021. Increasing the supply of apartments is highlighted as key to developing the build-to-rent sector and increasing sustainable housing density in urban area where there is a shortage of apartments.</p>
<p>Stabilising Rents, boosting supply' 2015</p> <p>November 2015</p> <p>www.housing.gov.ie/sites/default/files/migrated-files/en/Publications/DevelopmentandHousing/Housing/FileDownLoad%2C43556%2Cen.pdf</p>	<p>Amends the Residential Tenancies Act so that rent reviews for all tenancies will take place every 24 months rather than every 12 months.</p> <p>Introduces a minimum notice period of 90 days to tenants by a landlord and provide the tenant with information on dispute resolution through the PRTB where necessary, and specifying supporting information that needs to accompany the notice, including the rents of three other similar dwellings in the area.</p> <p>Requires landlords to notify the PRTB about an increase in rent accompanied by a signed statement by the tenant that they have been made aware of their rights and supporting documentation in relation to market rent for three similar dwellings in the area.</p>

Legislation	
S.I. No. 235/2019 – Planning and Development Act 2000 (Exempted Development) (No. 2) Regulations 2019 July 2019 www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2019/si/235/made/en/print	The statutory Instrument is primarily aimed at addressing the impact on the private rental market using residential homes for short-term tourism type letting in areas of high housing demand. The provisions apply to areas designated as "rent pressure zones" under the Residential Tenancies Act 2004, as amended.
Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016 December 2016 data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/act/2016/17/eng/enacted/a1716.pdf	Bill entitled an Act to facilitate the implementation of the document entitled "Rebuilding Ireland – Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness" that was published by the Government on 19 July 2016. The following provisions influenced the construction of multi-unit developments and provided new regulations for tenancy agreements. The key provisions of the Act include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The introduction of a fast-track planning process for developments consisting of 100 or more houses and for student accommodation of 200 or more bed spaces;• The potential for a second extension of already extended planning permissions for developments comprising 20 or more houses;• The introduction of Rent Pressure Zones ("RPZs") and rent caps;• The extension of Part 4 tenancies from four years to six years;• The restriction on landlords terminating tenancies of 10 or more units within the same development within a specified six-month period where they intend to sell the properties; and• The repeal of the right of landlords to terminate a 'further' Part 4 tenancy within the first six months on no stated grounds.
Residential Tenancies (Amendment) Act, 2015 December 2015 www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2015/act/42/enacted/en/html?q=Residential+Tenancies+Amendment++Act%2C+2015&search_type=all	Applies to tenants of apartments. The Residential Tenancies (Amendment) Act 2015 provides for several changes to the rules governing residential tenancies. It aimed at providing rent certainty by changing the rules on rent reviews. It also amends the notice periods for the termination of a Part 4 tenancy and requires the landlord to provide additional proof in certain circumstances when terminating a Part 4 tenancy.
Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2015 December 2015 www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2015/act/63/enacted/en/html	Streamlines the assessment of applications seeking modifications to existing planning permissions in respect of multi-unit housing developments (primarily apartment block and duplex type developments) on foot of the issuing of new or revised apartment standard guidelines by the Minister. Revised apartment guidelines entitled 'Sustainable urban housing: Design Standards for New apartments, Guideline for Planning authorities' were issued by in December 2015. These guidelines update the 'Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments' published in 2007.

Legislation

<p>Urban Regeneration and Housing Act, 2015 July 2015 www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2015/act/33/enacted/en/html</p>	<p>Introduces a vacant land levy whereby local authorities will have the power to apply levies to property owners who leave their sites vacant and underutilised. The levy will work by applying an annual levy at a rate of 3% of the market value to the site if the owner does not take steps to develop the site. This is intended to expedite the development of lands identified as being important in delivering on the objectives of the relevant development plan, including housing delivery and regeneration of land.</p> <p>Amends Part V, Planning and Development Act 2000 and refocuses the measure on the delivery of completed housing units. The maximum requirement under Part V has been amended to 10% from 20%. The option of providing cash in lieu of land or completed housing units is removed and provision is made to allow an agreement to determine that units on an alternative site can be acquired by local authorities where the developer that is subject to the planning application does not meet the local social housing need.</p> <p>A number of changes also see a greater role for Approved Housing Bodies in delivery of Part V social housing.</p>
<p>Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2014 December 2014 www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2014/act/21/section/4/enacted/en/html?q=apartment&search_type=all</p>	<p>Applies to apartment complexes (as defined in section 50 of the Act of 2009).</p> <p>Applies to purchase of apartments by tenants of a local authority, as defined under the Housing Acts 1966 to 2014 or Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000.</p> <p>Amends 64(9) of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009, changing the criteria for rejecting an application by tenants with rent arrears during the 3 years immediately before applying to purchase an apartment, or other moneys owing for 12 weeks to a housing authority for a dwelling or site to which Chapter 3 of Part 2 of the Act of 2009 relates, and has not entered into rescheduling arrangements with the housing authority for the payment of arrears.</p>
<p>Companies Act 2014 Commenced 1 June 2015 www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2014/act/38/enacted/en/html</p>	<p>Applies to the corporate compliance of companies in the State, including owners' management companies, the vast majority of which are bodies corporate.</p>

Legislation	
Building Control (Amendment) Regulations 2014 March 2014 www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2014/si/9/made/en/print	<p>These regulations prohibit the opening, occupation or use of a building until a Certificate of Compliance on Completion has been provided to ensure that the structure and works align with regulatory building standards.</p> <p>Commencement Notice submissions transfer to a Building Control Management System requiring specific supporting documentation and Certificate of Compliance (Design) also requires confirmation that the documentation was included in the schedule of the Commencement Notice.</p> <p>Inspections to Certify Works required to be completed by an Assigned Certifier, having regard to the Code of Practice for Inspecting and Certifying Buildings and Works. The person assigned is competent to inspect the building or works and to coordinate the inspection work undertaken by others and to certify the works for compliance with the requirements of the second schedule of the Building Regulations.</p> <p>When a building is complete, a two-part Certificate of Compliance on Completion must be completed – Part A by the builder and Part B by the assigned certifier. These certificates must be submitted to the building control authority, which is obliged to keep a register of such certificates. The Certificate of Compliance on Completion must be accompanied by the inspection plan as implemented by the assigned certifier in accordance with the code of practice and any documentation necessary arising out of changes in the building. The building control authority will record the date of receipt of the certificate and has 21 days to query it, failing which it must register it.</p>
Local Government Reform Act 2014 January 2014 www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2014/act/1/schedule/3/enacted/en/html?q=apartment&search_type=all	<p>Section 53 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009: Adopts a proposal to designate an apartment complex for the purpose of making the apartments available for sale to the tenants.</p> <p>Section 55 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009 Designates of an apartment complex in accordance with a section 53 proposal.</p> <p>Section 56 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009. Extends the initial selling period for apartments in a designated apartment complex.</p>
Multi-Unit Developments Act 2011 January and April 2011 www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2011/act/2/enacted/en/html	<p>Amends the law relating to the ownership and management of the common areas of multi-unit developments and to facilitate the fair, efficient and effective management of bodies responsible for the management of such common areas, and to provide for related matters.</p> <p>Provides a statutory framework for multi-unit developments (be they mixed use or residential only) containing at least 5 residential units with shared amenities, facilities and services.</p> <p>Certain provisions of the Act are applicable to smaller developments containing two or more residential units but less than 5 and to developments consisting solely of houses with an owners' management company structure.</p> <p>The Act puts structured processes in place for matters such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Defining 'multi-unit developments' ● Conditions and obligations relating to the compulsory transfer of the common areas from the developer to the Owners' Management Company (OMC) ● Management and operation of an OMC ● Obligations of the developer upon completion of the development stage ● New remedial mechanisms for dealing with disputes

Legislation

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● New regulations, rights and obligations of the OMC in relation to directorships and voting rights, reporting and information, the calculation, apportionment and recovery of service charges, the provision of a sinking fund and other related matters ● Provision of documentation to an OMC ● Setting down new arrangements for the future, whilst providing remedial measures to address existing developments which have problems ● Facilitating fair and effective management for the long term. ● Details the capture of the Act to include Mixed-Use developments and the relevant sections for them ● Requires developers to convey reversionary interest on all developments completed or in construction and future developments ● Obliges the OMC to join in additional purchases and the developer to complete the development and other issues around the phased completion of a development ● Confirms the connection between membership/shareholding of OMC and unit ownership ● Confirms voting rights at 1 per unit and the inclusion of words "Owners' Management Company" in the names of all new OMCs ● Confirms requirement for retirement and re-election of directors every three years ● Details requirements for AGM's and the production of an Annual Report in addition to Financial Statements ● Requires the OMC to approve service charge budgets prior to issuing any demands at a general meeting ● Obliges the OMC to create a sinking fund and detail how it should be agreed at a general meeting each year ● Empowers the OMC to create legally binding House Rules at a general meeting of owners ● Encourages disputes in OMCs to be referred to mediation, and empowers the courts to alter OMCs for specific purposes ● Enables an OMC to be restored to the company register on certain conditions ● Obligation on developer to transfer guarantees and warranties, together with all relevant building and management company documentation ● Restricts the OMC from entering into prohibitive contracts.
Property Services (Regulation) Act 2011 December 2011 www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2011/act/40/enacted/en/print	Introduces regulation of property service providers, including the Property Management Agents that OMCs contract for day-to-day/operational maintenance of apartment blocks.
Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009, Part 4 July 2009 www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2009/act/22/enacted/en/html	<p>Expands opportunities for home ownership by lower-income households through an incremental purchase scheme and a tenant purchase scheme for apartments.</p> <p>Provides for a purchase scheme for apartment tenants in complexes wholly owned by housing authorities.</p>

Legislation	
Planning and Development Act, 2000. Section 28 August 2000 www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2000/act/30/section/28/enacted/en/html	Legislative basis for the issuing of guidelines to planning authorities regarding any of their functions under this Act.
Urban Renewal Act, 1998. Section 23 July 1998 www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1998/act/27/enacted/en/html	Covers the building of apartment blocks during the period the Act was in force, 1998-2011.
Building Control Act 1990 March 1990 www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1990/act/3/enacted/en/html	<p>Introduces 'Opinions on Compliance', which are a mechanism developed by the banking sector to enable the banks to satisfy themselves that buildings being sold provided good security. OCs enable banks to assure that the property title is good and loan security is good.</p> <p>'Opinions on Compliance' are often assumed to be 'Certificates of Compliance', but they are not regulated by government or local authorities.</p> <p>'Opinions on Compliance' for apartments were issued in respect of each individual apartment, rather than the apartment building.</p> <p>Introduced requirement for fire certificates to be applied for prior to construction, approved by the local authority without inspection of the building and without any need for certification at the end of construction.</p>
Urban Renewal Act 1986 June 1986 www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1986/act/19/enacted/en/html	Make new provision for the renewal of certain urban areas.

Building standards and guidelines

<p>Urban Development and Building Heights Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2018.</p> <p>December 2018</p> <p>www.housing.gov.ie/planning/guidelines/urban-development-and-building-height/urban-development-and-building-height-3</p>	<p>These guidelines set out new and updated national planning policy on building heights in relation to urban areas, elaborating on the strategic policy framework set out in Project Ireland 2040 and the National Planning Framework.</p> <p>These guidelines set out national planning policy that expand on the requirements of the National Planning Framework and applies those requirements in setting out relevant planning criteria for considering increased building height in various locations, but principally (a) urban and city-centre locations and (b) suburban and wider town locations.</p>
<p>Cost Analysis of the Updated Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments/ Guidelines for Planning Authorities.</p> <p>March 2018</p> <p>www.housing.gov.ie/housing/building-standards/building-regulations/cost-analysis-updated-sustainable-urban-housing</p>	<p>Is a detailed "like for like" cost analysis outlining the difference in the Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2018) with the guidelines published in 2015. The findings of the cost exercise show that the new 2018 apartment planning guidelines will reduce construction costs on a "like for like" basis when compared against the 2015 apartment planning guidelines by a range of 3% to 15% depending on the nature of the apartment development itself.</p>
<p>Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities</p> <p>March 2018</p> <p>www.housing.gov.ie/planning/guidelines/apartments/design-standards-new-apartments-guidelines-planning-authorities-march</p>	<p>These new guidelines build on the content of the 2015 apartment guidance particularly with regard to design quality safeguards such as internal space standards for 1, 2 and 3-bedroom apartments, internal storage and amenity space. The guidelines are divided by the following categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Apartments and Statutory Development Plans ● Apartment Design Standards ● Communal Facilities in Apartments ● Build-to-Rent and Shared Accommodation Sectors ● Apartments and the Development Management Process.
<p>Planning Guidelines on Design Standards for New Apartments</p> <p>December 2015</p> <p>www.housing.gov.ie/sites/default/files/publications/files/apartment_guidelines_21122015.pdf</p>	<p>These guidelines update the "Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments" guidelines, published by the Department in 2007.</p> <p>The focus of this guidance is on the apartment building itself and on the individual units within it. This includes standards on apartment design, communal facilities in apartments and apartment management processes.</p>
<p>Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments" guidelines, published by the Department in 2007.</p> <p>September 2007</p> <p>www.housing.gov.ie/sites/default/files/migrated-files/en/Publications/DevelopmentandHousing/Housing/FileDownLoad%2C1979%2Cen.pdf</p>	<p>The aim of these guidelines is to promote sustainable urban housing, ensuring that the design and layout of new apartments will provide satisfactory accommodation for a variety of household types and sizes – including families with children - over the medium to long term. These guidelines provide recommended minimum standards for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Floor areas for different types of apartments ● Storage areas and communal facilities ● Sizes for apartment balconies / patios ● Room dimensions for certain rooms ● Environmental and accessibility

Appendix V

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