

Residents Survey Feedback Report

Winchester City Council

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Table of Contents

1.	Introduction	3
	What should housing offer local residents and communities in Winchester district? .	4
	Housing Challenges	6
	More homes v' quality of homes	9
	Additional challenges.....	10
	My One priority.....	12

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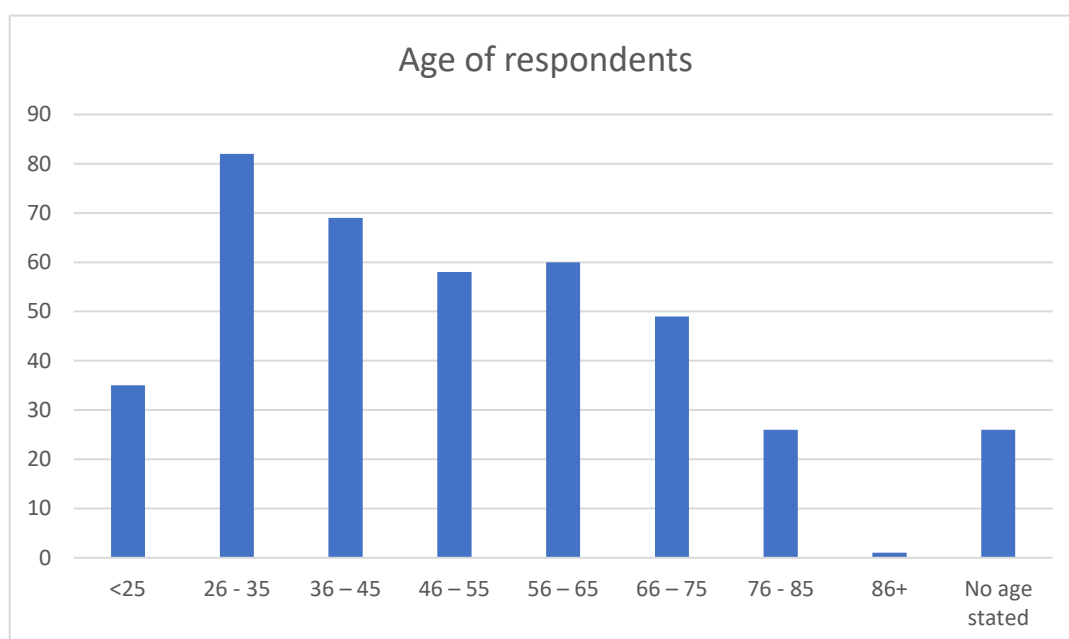
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1. Introduction

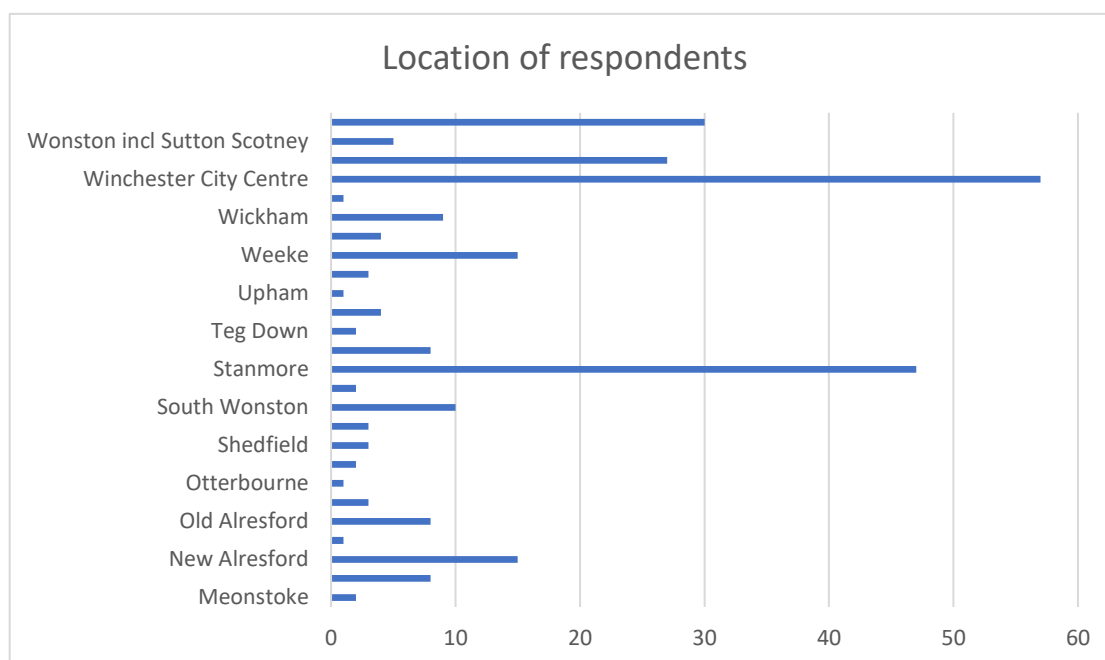
- 1.1 An online survey was developed to better understand priorities of residents for the Winchester City Council Housing Strategy. Residents were asked a series of multiple choice questions that enabled them to suggest their priority concerns.
- 1.2 This report sets out the findings,
- 1.3 There were 406 respondents to the Winchester City Council Residents Survey. 73% (297) respondents were aged under 65 years of age and 20.9% (84 respondents) were over 65 years of age with 6.2% (25 people) not stating their age on the survey. The ages are set out in Chart 1.1.

Chart 1.1 the Age of respondents



Source Winchester district resident survey

- 1.4 In terms of the ethnic origin of respondents the three largest groups were, 82.3% white – English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British, 5.9% stated any other white background, 12.8% responded across a variety of ethnic groups and backgrounds and 2.7% of respondents did not to state their ethnic origin.
- 1.5 Residents living in Winchester City Centre, Stanmore, Bishops Waltham and Winnell were the highest responding areas across all age groups. This is set out in Chart 1.2.

Chart 1.2 Location of respondents

What should housing offer local residents and communities in Winchester district?

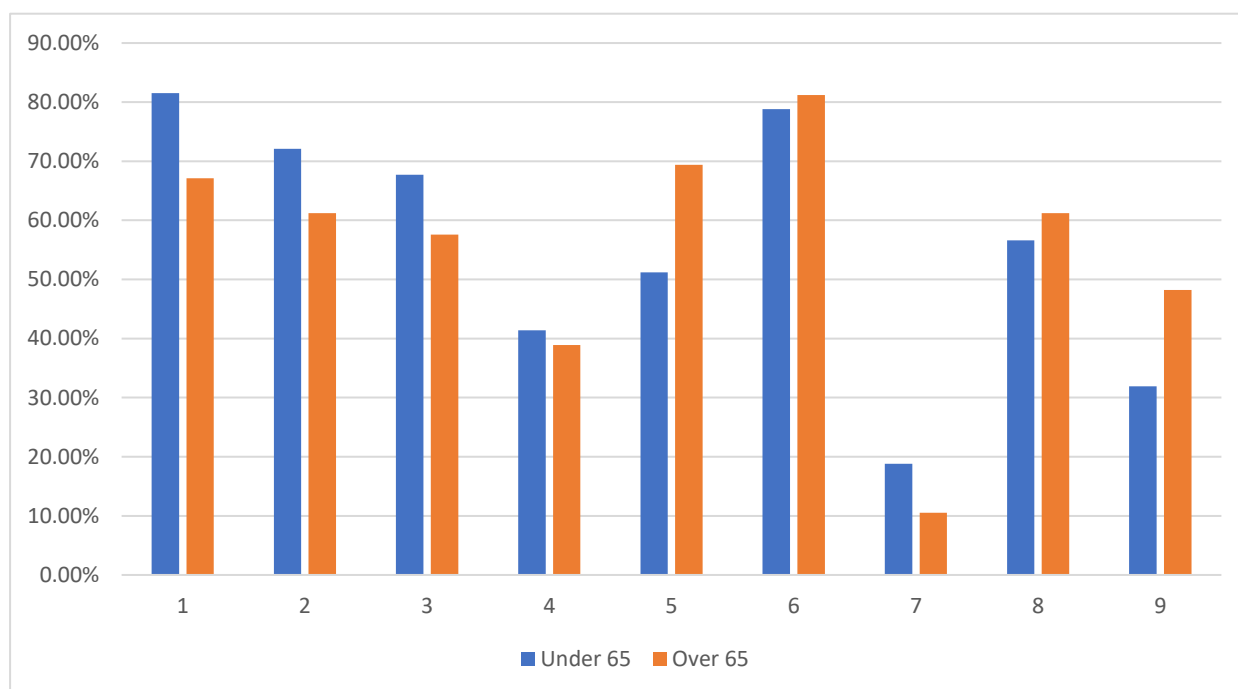
1.6 The survey encouraged respondents to consider the most important things housing should offer local residents and communities in Winchester. Residents had to select 5 options from the following.

1. Local people are able to afford either to buy or rent the type of housing that meets their need.
2. There is a good supply of housing available to meet the needs of local people.
3. Housing of the right size and type to meet the needs of people - in a safe environment and respected area to take pride in.
4. A range of different housing options and choices are available for people looking for accommodation in the area.
5. Local housing stock is in good repair (all tenures).
6. Homes are warm, energy-efficient and affordable to heat.
7. Housing makes a positive contribution to the life and growth of communities, and to the local economy.
8. Housing is available to support people living with health conditions and disabilities, so they can live independently in their homes.
9. Homes are located in places which have good digital and transport connections.

1.7 The results are set out in Table 1.1 and illustrated in Chart 1.3.

Table 1.1 Preferred options for housing and communities

Option	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Responses	320	280	266	165	225	320	74	236	144
Under 65	242	214	201	123	152	234	56	168	95
Percentage	81.5%	72.1%	67.7%	41.4%	51.2%	78.8%	18.8%	56.6%	31.9%
Over 65	57	52	49	33	59	69	9	52	41
Percentage	67.1%	61.2%	57.6%	38.9%	69.4%	81.2%	10.5%	61.2%	48.2%
Did not state age	21	14	16	9	14	17	9	16	8
	84%	56%	64%	36%	56%	68%	36%	64%	32%

Chart 1.3 Preferred options for housing and communities

Source Residents survey 2023

- 1.8 The survey indicated high levels of importance for local people to be **able to afford to buy or rent the type of housing that meets their needs**. This option was of the highest importance to the under 65 age group. The survey results suggest that a good supply of housing should be available to meet the needs of local people as a strong priority.
- 1.9 All age groups prioritised for their homes to be **warm, energy efficient and affordable to heat**. This option was of the highest importance to the over 65 age group. Housing of the **right size and type** to meet the needs of people - **in a safe environment and respected area** to take pride in and housing is available to **support people living with health conditions and disabilities**, so they can live independently in their homes complete the top five options from this question.
- 1.10 There was a general consensus 'that housing makes a positive contribution to the life and growth of communities and to the local economy', was of lower importance to residents and communities.

Housing Challenges

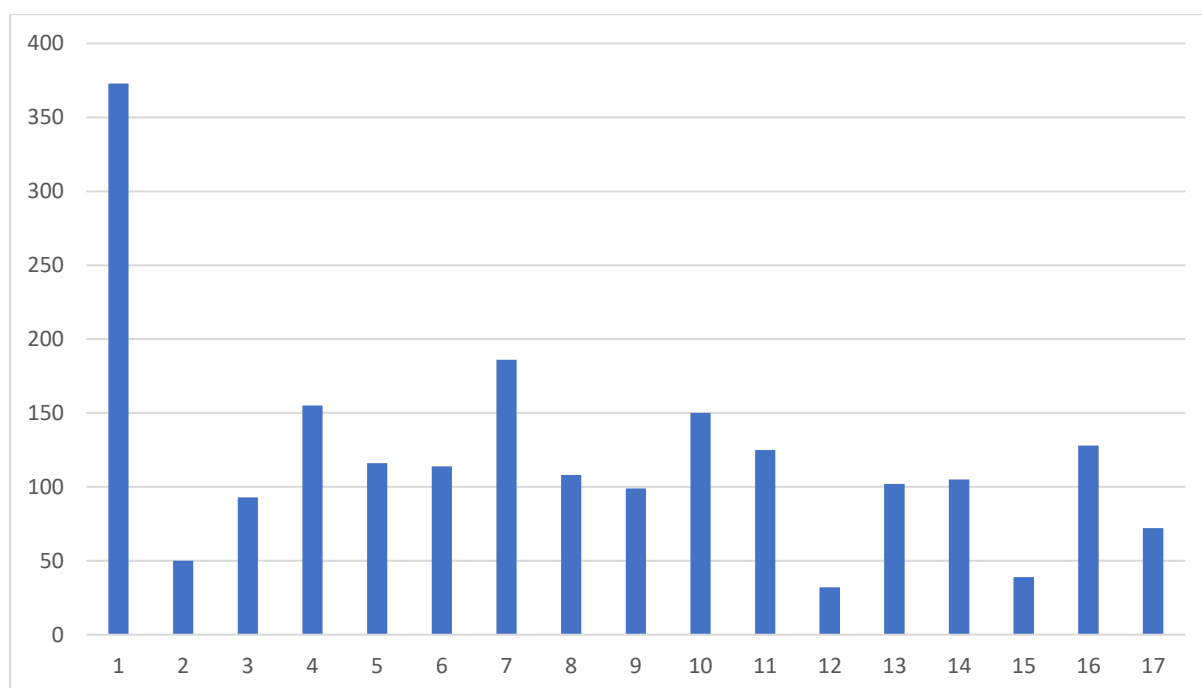
- 1.11 The survey encouraged residents to select their top five housing challenges facing people who live in Winchester. There were 17 options altogether and residents had to choose 5 options.

1. A shortage of housing that people can afford

2. A shortage of properties for people to buy
3. A shortage of private rented housing
4. Limited alternative housing options - for example, low cost home ownership; shared ownership or homes for mid-market rent
5. A lack of accessible housing for people living with health problems or disabilities including wheelchair, sheltered or adapted housing
6. Limited housing options for older people
7. Limited housing options for young people and families
8. Tackling homelessness
9. The poor condition or quality of existing homes in Winchester
10. Fuel poverty - people not being able to afford to pay their heating bills
11. Poor energy efficiency of existing homes and reducing carbon emissions
12. Finding skilled tradespeople locally for building, maintenance or repair work
13. Anti-social behaviour or community safety problems
14. Homes located in areas with poor transport connections or local amenities
15. Poor broadband connection or limited space to allow home working
16. Lack of options to downsize or find a larger family home (all tenures)
17. Lack of information on housing options such as low cost home ownership

1.12 The results are set out in Table 1.2 and illustrated in Chart 1.4.

Chart 1.4 Housing challenges



Source Residents survey 2023

Table 1.2 Housing Challenges

Option	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Responses	373	50	93	155	116	114	186	108	99	150	125	32	102	105	39	128	72
Under 65 297 people	262	44	66	120	80	60	149	73	84	105	88	19	79	69	33	102	54
	88.2%	14.8%	22.2%	40.4%	26.9%	20.2%	50.1%	24.5%	28.3%	35.4%	29.6%	6.4%	26.6%	23.2%	11.1%	34.3%	18.2%
Over 65 85 people	68	4	23	27	33	48	21	26	10	35	31	11	17	29	3	19	10
	80%	4.7%	27%	31.8%	38.8%	56.5%	24.7%	30.6%	11.7%	41.2%	36.5%	12.9%	20%	34.1%	3.5%	22.4%	11.7%
Did not specify age: 25 people	23	2	4	8	3	6	16	9	5	10	6	2	6	7	3	7	8
	93%	2.4%	16%	32%	12%	24%	64%	36%	20%	40%	24%	8%	24%	28%	12%	28%	32%

Source Residents survey 2023

- 1.13 The biggest challenge faced by people in Winchester is a **shortage of housing that people can afford**. This is a concern for all age groups with 88.2% of under 65s and 80% of over 65s highlighting this option.
- 1.14 All residents highlighted **limited alternative housing options** as a challenge; 40.4% of under 65s and 31.8% of over 65s. This includes low cost home ownership; shared ownership or homes for mid-market rent.
- 1.15 **Fuel poverty** - people not being able to afford to pay their heating bills and **poor energy efficiency of existing homes** and **reducing carbon emissions** were emphasised as challenges with 35.4% selecting this option in the under 65 age group and 41.2% in the over 65 age bracket.
- 1.16 Over 65s identified limited housing options for older people and under 65s identified limited housing option for younger people. Although there was recognition from both age groups for limited options across the board. The over 65 age group prioritised homes located in areas with **poor transport connections or local amenities**.
- 1.17 Both age groups recognised the **lack of accessible housing** for people living with health problems or disabilities including wheelchair, sheltered or adapted housing as a challenge.
- 1.18 Poor broadband connection or limited space to allow home working was at the bottom of the list of challenges.

More homes v' quality of homes

- 1.19 Residents were asked to rank the two statements from most to least important:
- I would rather more homes were built on Winchester or
 - I would rather potentially fewer homes were built in Winchester but they are better quality, energy efficient and zero carbon.

	I would rather more homes were built in Winchester		I would rather potentially fewer homes were built in Winchester but they are better quality, energy efficient and zero carbon	
	Most important	Least important	Most important	Least important
Under 65	162	131	158	136
Total under 65: 297 people	54.5%	44.1%	53.2%	45.8%
Over 65	42	36	46	34
Total over 65: 85 people	49.5%	42.4%	54.1%	40%
Did not specify age: 25 people	13	11	14	12
	52%	44%	56%	48%

- 1.20 There was a fairly even split between the two statements and which is considered to be the most important for the city.
- 1.21 54.5% of residents under the age of 65 and 49.5% of over 65s prioritised more homes to be built in Winchester.
- 1.22 In terms of potentially fewer homes but better quality, energy efficient and zero carbon, 53.2% of under 65s and 54.1% of over 65 respondents highlighted this as a priority option.

Additional challenges

- 1.23 Residents were asked to report additional challenges they are facing
- 1.24 Numerous residents used the survey to share personal stories about their current housing situation. For example, a professional working family who have not been able to afford to buy a house and are now in their 50s, a family who have been waiting 10 years for a home, a full time working mum who has been renting privately for 18 years and may now have to move away from the area when her landlord sells as she cannot afford to rent or buy another property and someone who has been on the local housing register for 16 years and still has no home to call their own with private renting offering no stability.
- 1.25 Affordability is the main issue in the city. "Winchester is incredibly expensive and limiting housing wise for both first time buyers and normal average salary working people." The constant increases in prices of single occupancy housing is reaching breaking point with the monthly rental cost of a one bed flat or studio apartment being more than half of a monthly salary, before bills and transport costs. Residents

- report new estates and developments being unaffordable for local people with a lack of affordable houses.
- 1.26 Further specific and frequent themes throughout the survey include, greater diversity of housing needed to meet the general lack of accommodation across the board, not enough housing for single people that do not have children and couples who are only eligible for one bedroom properties, more housing for young people who cannot get a mortgage or rent privately and want their independence and own space, more social housing to rent for low income families, more homes that allow pets, more housing is needed for larger families, limited rental properties for over 65s and not enough bungalows and low rise properties in any sector for disabled or older residents. In terms of location, more homes are needed in local villages so families can live in the area they are from.
- 1.27 Respondents identified some of the main issues where there are additional pressures on the market and some potential solutions to increase the capacity in the city. Firstly, there are too many rented houses for students. Student accommodation needs to be clustered and supported, rather than fragmented across the city in areas that are marginal such as the industrial parks and railway lines. There are too many tenants living in homes that are too big for them plus lack of quality homes for older people to downsize – there needs to be better incentives to downsize properties. Finally, there are too many houses for ‘outsiders’.
- 1.28 Residents report a “massive shortage of truly affordable, socially rented houses.” There is much confusion and frustration with ‘unfair’ waiting list criteria. Priority criteria such as ‘having family here’ is challenging for many people to meet despite living in the area for many years. Priority for couples with children does not necessarily reflect the need of the wider population in the city. Local connections are only required in certain places, resulting in people from outside of the area getting priority to housing over those with a strong local connection.
- 1.29 Furthermore, the removal of right to buy and lack of council homes combined with the increase in “extortionate rent” for housing association homes is an issue.
- 1.30 Quality and management of homes was highlighted as a concern by many tenants. Numerous residents reported damp and mould in their homes. One resident reported poor quality private renting with damp, mould and lack of insulation in an ageing council blocks. Another was worried about the lack of central heating and effective double glazing, insulation and ventilation which led to living in a cold and damp (and sometimes hot) environment. Housing stock needs to be ungraded with improved insulation - landlords have no incentive to change this. There are also general concern with the quality of repairs to many properties.
- 1.31 Space was highlighted as a challenge on numerous levels. Firstly a lack of outside space in small flats and homes is a big concern. Council houses and private rented properties are small with no storage which is particularly difficult for disabled people who need more space for mobility aids. Residents highlighted that there are properties that are suitable younger for disabled younger people which are locked behind high age requirement (65 years). Parking capacity (particularly with new developments) and residents not being able to park near to their home with permit parking limitations were also cause for concern.

- 1.32 Potentially more housing generates traffic and infrastructure concerns, “Winchester roads cannot cope with any more cars.” This is a further challenge when public transport is limited in some areas. Decisions around future housing must ensure investment into transport and associated services to ensure they have the capacity to cope.
- 1.33 Lack of information and direction to buying and renting schemes was a final concern.

My One priority

- 1.34 Residents were asked *‘if the new strategy could deliver one single thing that would have a major and positive impact on meeting household need in Winchester, what would it be?’*
- 1.35 68.2% of respondents shared ideas on what would have a major and positive impact on meeting household need in Winchester.
- 1.36 The most commonly used word in this section was ‘affordable’. **Affordable homes to rent and buy for local people** was a reoccurring theme throughout the responses from single occupancy through to family homes and everything in between. Key workers are not able to afford to live within a city they serve. Housing should be “reflective and relative to local salary.” Residents are keen to see support services including transport included in future plans.
- 1.37 There was a general demand for “**better quality homes**” and a greater range of houses (not flats) for local people, particularly those who would like the opportunity to **upsize and downsize** to be able to stay in an area. Single person occupancy should be carefully considered beyond the option of a flat. **Options for young couples, growing families and over 60’s** were all identified as key target groups. **More accessible properties** are needed for families with disabled children and young adults and not just older residents.
- 1.38 Residents highlighted the need to **keep rural communities together** with affordable housing options and transport links.
- 1.39 **More council housing** was highly advocated. Respondents indicated a need for more to be built, be available and also to re-evaluate needs of current residents to see if the accommodation is meeting their requirements. Some suggested the option of a ‘right to buy’ having lived in the property for a certain length of time. The social housing offer also needs to be reviewed, particularly the percentage within new developments.
- 1.40 “Maximise brownfield sites” and **protecting the green belt space** was frequently mentioned. Linked to this is the review of empty properties in the city to maximise space within current stock. Updating, fixing and repairing older properties was highlighted as part of the solution to housing capacity without the additional development.
- 1.41 Residents highlighted the importance of **assessing needs based on immediate circumstances** and being able to prioritise these needs, for example, domestic abuse

or mental health needs with “homes available in a timely manner for people finding themselves in situations beyond their control.”

- 1.42 **Reducing fuel poverty** with solar power, carbon neutral, energy and fuel efficient homes were all highlighted as an increasingly important factor for homes across the city.