



**Proposed changes to Bristol Allotment Rent and Tenancy
Consultation Report v0.1**

26 February 2024

Contents

1	Introduction.....	4
1.1	The current situation	4
1.2	Proposed changes to Bristol Allotment Rent and Tenancy Agreement.....	4
1.3	Scope of this report.....	5
2	Methodology.....	6
2.1	Survey.....	6
2.1.1	Online survey.....	6
2.1.2	Alternative formats.....	7
2.1.3	Other correspondence	7
2.2	Publicity and briefings	7
2.2.1	Objective.....	7
2.2.2	Bristol City Council channels.....	7
2.2.3	Media engagement	7
3	Survey response rate and respondent characteristics	8
3.1	Response rate to the survey	8
3.2	Geographic distribution of survey responses	8
3.3	Response rate from areas of high and low deprivation	10
3.4	Characteristics of survey respondents	12
3.4.1	Overview.....	12
3.4.2	Age	13
3.4.3	Disability	14
3.4.4	Ethnicity	14
3.4.5	Religion/Faith.....	15
3.4.6	Sex	17
3.4.7	Gender reassignment	18
3.4.8	Sexual orientation	19
3.4.9	Pregnancy and maternity, carer status and and refugee/asylum status.....	20
3.4.10	Other respondent characteristics	22
3.5	Respondents who responded to the consultation by email	25
4	Survey results.....	26
4.1	Views on the proposed rent increase	26
4.1.1	Views on proposed rent increase in areas with different levels of deprivation	26
4.1.2	Views on proposed rent increase by respondent protected characteristics	27
4.2	Views on the level of rent increase.....	34
4.2.1	Views on the level of rent increase in areas with different levels of deprivation ...	35
4.2.2	Views on the level of rent increase by respondent protected characteristics	36
4.3	Views on expanding the low income rent discount.....	42
4.3.1	Views on expanding the low income rent discount by levels of deprivation	43

4.4	Free text comments on the proposed allotment rent fee increase, low-income discount and water charge	50
5	Impact of the proposals because of protected characteristics	53
5.1	Scale of effects.....	53
5.2	Reasons why proposals would affect people because of protected characteristics	54
6	How will this report be used?	57

1 Introduction

1.1 The current situation

Bristol City Council's Parks Service manages 227 hectares of food growing land (much of which is protected under the Allotments Act). Within this land, the council manages over 4,000 allotment plots, with an additional 1,500 plots managed by five Allotment Associations on behalf of the council. The significant potential for growing healthy and sustainable food makes allotments an important priority for Bristol.

Allotment rents in Bristol have not been reviewed since 2018. Due to rising costs and demand for allotments, we need to increase income just to maintain the allotment services at existing levels.

We aspire to go further than just maintaining the current service; we want to improve the offer to our tenants and work towards increasing the number of plots available to people on the waiting list.

1.2 Proposed changes to Bristol Allotment Rent and Tenancy Agreement

Between 11 December 2023 and 31 January 2024, Bristol City Council consulted on proposed changes to allotment rents and other fees and charges, and some changes to activities permitted on allotments under the allotment tenancy agreement. These proposals were intended to address the funding challenge and enhance the allotments offer. The allotment rent, fees and charges proposed in the consultation were outlined in [Schedule A – Allotment Rent, Fees, and Charges](#).

On 5 March 2024, Cabinet will consider and decide on the following proposals:

- Increased allotment rent
- A separate charge for the supply of water
- Ensuring more people on low income can benefit from a discount.

Following the consultation, Councillor Ellie King, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Public Health and Communities, has agreed with the Mayor that the other proposed changes to tenancy rules, fees and charges described in the consultation would not be taken forward at this stage. Instead, revised proposals would be developed through a collaborative process with representative stakeholders. This will allow the necessary time to make the engagement meaningful and help to build a trusting and constructive working relationship with those who would be affected by any future proposals. There is no planned date for a future decision on revised proposals for the other tenancy rules, fees and charges.

1.3 Scope of this report

This consultation report describes the consultation methodology, response rates and respondent characteristics for the consultation on proposed changes to Bristol allotment rent and tenancy agreement. It presents the feedback received on those proposals for allotments that will be considered by Cabinet on 5 March 2024.

Feedback on the other consultation proposals that are not being taken forward at this stage are not included in this report. That feedback will be used to help develop revised proposals as part of the collaborative process described above.

This report includes quantitative data for all 3,016 survey responses and analysis of the 2,332 survey free text responses (survey question 7) and 112 email responses.

This consultation report does not contain the council's recommendations, nor an assessment of the feasibility of any of the suggestions received. The consultation feedback that is summarised in this report has been taken into consideration by officers when developing final proposals for allotment rent, water charges and help for people on low income that will be considered by Cabinet on 5 March 2024.

The final proposals are included in a separate report which, together with this consultation report and responses, will be considered by Cabinet when making its decisions on 5 March 2024.

- **Chapter 2** of this report describes the consultation methodology. The consultation information and questions are summarised in section 2.1.
- **Chapter 3** presents the consultation survey response rate and respondent characteristics.
- **Chapter 4** describes feedback on the proposed rent increase, expansion of the rent discount for people on low income, and proposals for a separate charge for the supply of water.
- **Chapter 5** sets out the effects that respondents said the proposals would have on them because of their protected characteristics.
- **Chapter 6** describes how this report will be used and how to keep updated on the decision-making process.

2 Methodology

2.1 Survey

2.1.1 Online survey

The [Proposed changes to Bristol Allotment Rent and Tenancy consultation survey](#) ('the allotments consultation') was available on the council's Consultation and Engagement Hub (www.ask.bristol.gov.uk) between 11 December 2023 and 31 January 2024.

Survey information

The survey contained the following information as context for the survey questions.

- Details of the [proposed allotment rent fees and charges](#)
- Details of the revised [allotment tenancy agreement](#) and [allotment rules](#)¹
- [The schedule for the transitional arrangements for bringing the new tenancy agreement and rules into force](#)

Survey questions

The survey questions sought respondents' views on the following:

- Whether respondents agreed or disagreed with the proposed rent increase
- If respondents disagreed with the rent increase, whether they thought it should be higher, lower, or not increased at all
- Whether respondents agreed or disagreed with expanding the current low income rent discount
- Respondents' reasons for why they agreed or disagreed with the rent increase proposal and expanding the current rent discount.

The 'About you' section requested information which helps the council to check if the responses are representative of people across the city who may have different needs.

- Respondents' postcode – this identifies if any parts of the city are under-represented in responding to the consultation and it can show if people from more deprived areas of Bristol have different views compared to people in less deprived areas
- Equalities monitoring information – this enables the council to check if people with specific protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are under-represented in the responses, and it can show if different groups have different views
- Other information about respondents; for example, whether they are a current allotment tenant, on a waiting list for an allotment, an allotment association tenant, a collective or community growing group member, a resident of Bristol interested in food growing, a councillor, or a large-scale food producer.

Respondents could choose to answer some or all questions in any order and save and return to the survey later.

¹ The allotment tenancy agreement, allotment rules, and schedule for the transitional arrangements are not part of the 5 March 2024 Cabinet decision.

2.1.2 Alternative formats

Alternative formats (easy read, braille, large print, other alternative formats, and translation to other languages) were available on request.

2.1.3 Other correspondence

112 emails were received in response to the consultation.

The email text has been analysed with the free text responses to question 7 of the survey and is reported with the survey free text feedback in chapter 4.

2.2 Publicity and briefings

2.2.1 Objective

The following programme of activity was carried out to publicise and explain the Proposed changes to Bristol Allotment Rent and Tenancy consultation. The primary objective was to engage residents, communities, and stakeholders across the city, with a focus on people who may be affected most by the proposals, and to encourage them to give their views through the consultation.

To achieve this, information was shared across a wide range of channels, reaching as broad a range of audiences as possible, to maximise response rates.

2.2.2 Bristol City Council channels

Online and paper versions of the consultation document were shared via the following council and partner channels and networks:

- 3,500 allotment tenants via email
- 450 letters sent to allotment tenants without emails
- 8,000 prospective allotment tenants on the waiting list via email
- 5 allotment associations provided with information to share with their tenants.
- Other stakeholders e.g. Bristol food producers, Feeding Bristol, Bristol Food Network.
- Ward councillors
- Subscribers to Ask Bristol e-bulletin – delivered to 7,800 recipients on 30 January 2024

2.2.3 Media engagement

Councillor Ellie King was interviewed on BBC Radio Bristol on 14 December 2023.

3 Survey response rate and respondent characteristics

3.1 Response rate to the survey

The allotments consultation survey received 3,016 responses, of which 3,002 were responses to the online survey, and 14 were paper surveys. In addition, 112 email responses were received.

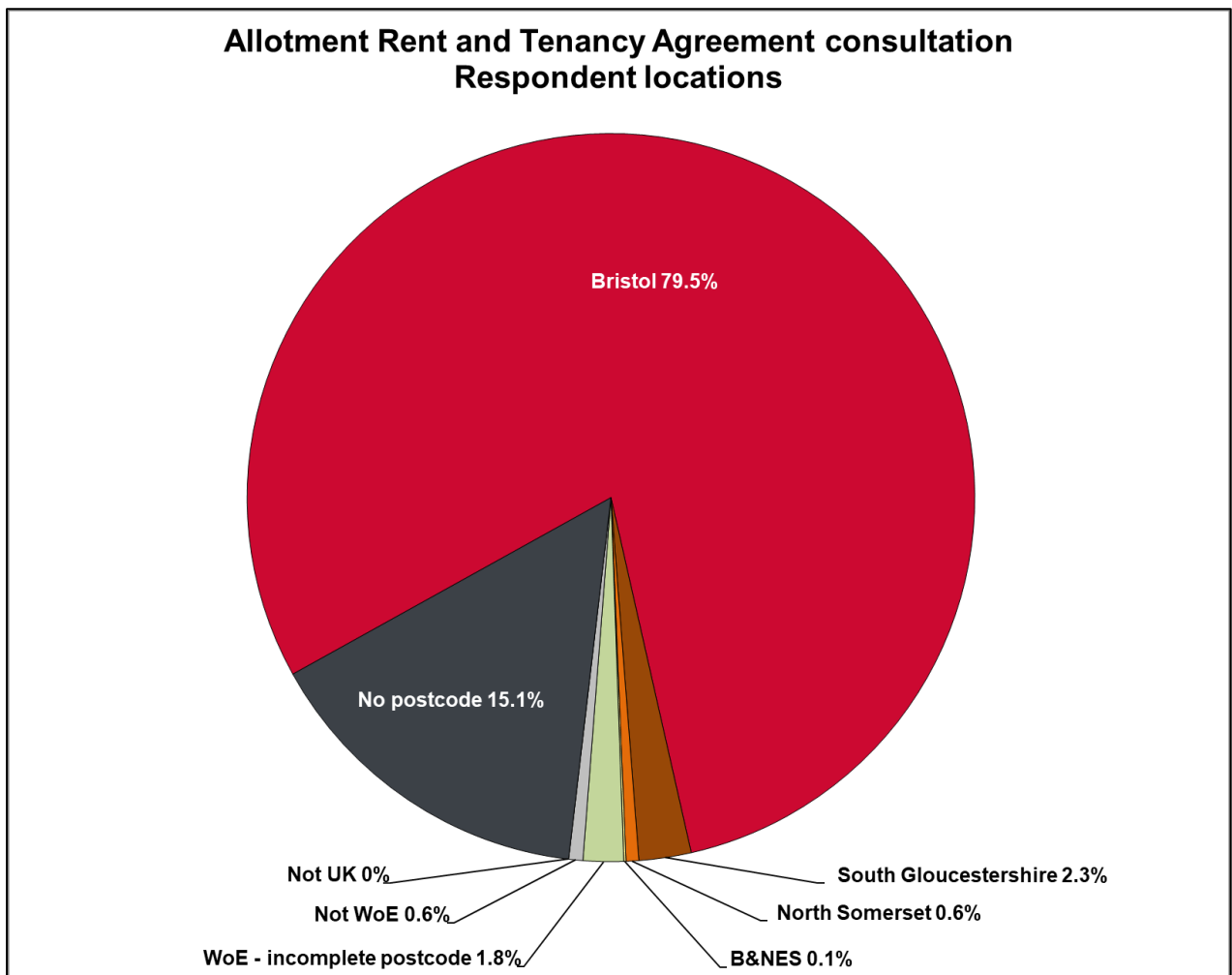
The response rate and respondent details in sections 3.2 to 3.4 are for respondents to the survey. Details of the email respondents are summarised in section 3.5.

3.2 Geographic distribution of survey responses

2,398 responses (80%) were received from postcodes within the Bristol City Council area, 70 (2%) responses were from South Gloucestershire, 17 (0.6%) were from North Somerset, and three (0.1%) were from Bath & North East Somerset (B&NES). A further 54 (2%) were from unspecified locations within the four West of England authorities² (Figure 1).

446 (15%) did not provide a postcode.

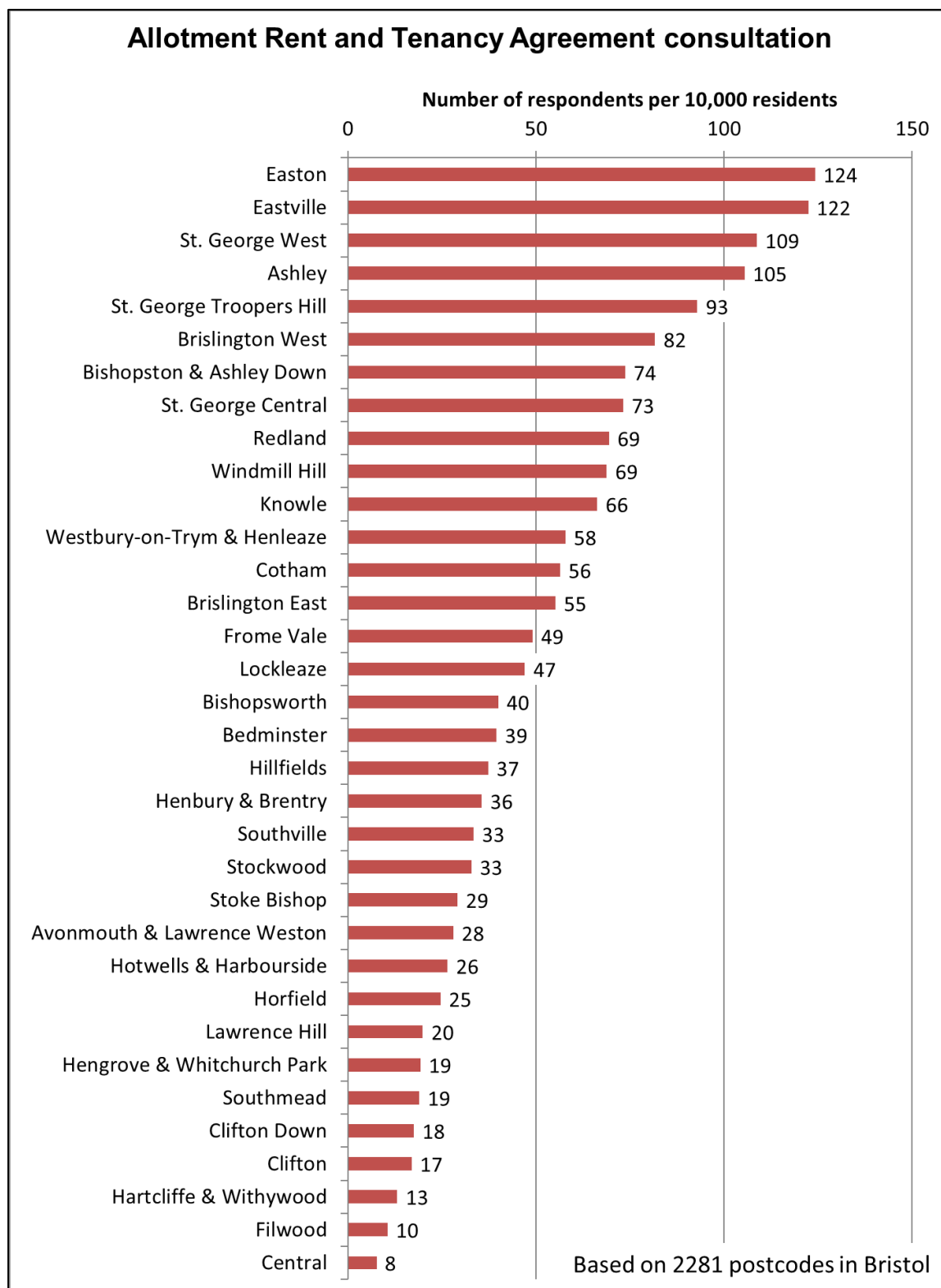
Figure 1: Geographic distribution of responses



² Incomplete postcodes identified the home location as within the WOE authorities area (Bristol, B&NES, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire), but not which authority.

Of the 2,398 responses from within the Bristol City Council area, 2,281 provided full or partial postcodes from which the ward of origin could be identified³ (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Geographic distribution of responses in Bristol



³ The other 117 responses included incomplete postcodes which are within Bristol but do not include enough information to identify a specific ward.

3.3 Response rate from areas of high and low deprivation

The home location of respondents in Bristol was compared with nationally published information on levels of deprivation across the city⁴ to review if the responses received include a cross-section of people living in more deprived and less deprived areas. This helps the council to know if the views of citizens in more deprived areas differ from people living in less deprived areas.

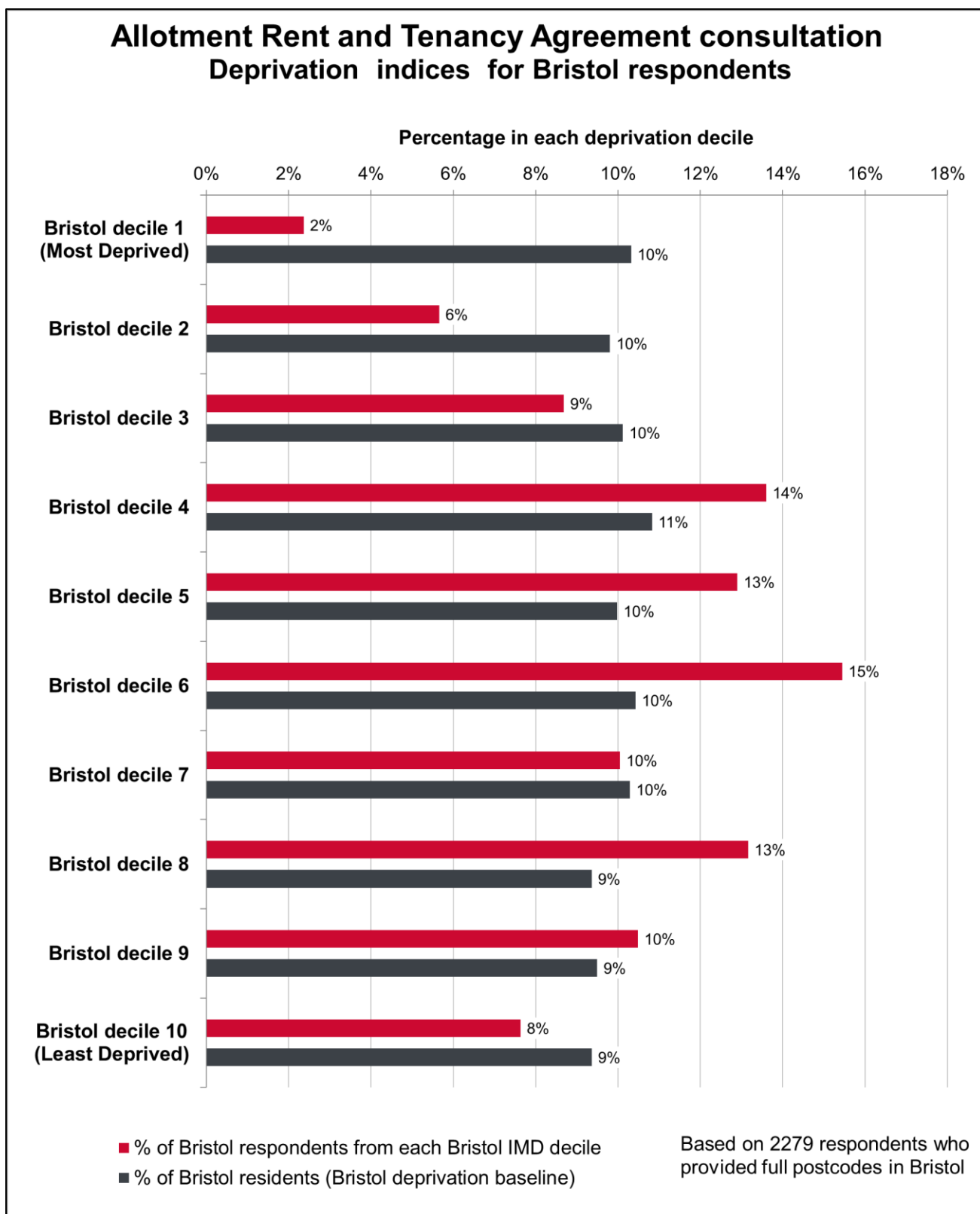
The comparison looked at levels of deprivation in 10 bands (known as 'deciles') from decile 1 (most deprived) to decile 10 (least deprived). Figure 3 compares the percentage of Bristol respondents⁵ living in each of the deprivation deciles (red bars) to the percentage of all Bristol citizens who live in each decile.

Figure 3 shows that there was an under-representation of responses from the most deprived 30% of the city (deciles 1, 2 and 3), as well as the least deprived 10% (decile 10). Responses from deciles 4, 5, 6, 8 and 9 were over-represented, while decile 7 was representative.

⁴ The Office for National Statistics (ONS) publishes information about deprivation for small areas throughout England - known as 'Lower Super Output Areas' (LSOAs). For each LSOA, a measure of deprivation is published called 'Indices of Multiple Deprivation' (IMD), which takes account of 37 indicators that cover income, employment, education, health, crime, barriers to housing and services, and living environment. The latest IMD data are from 2019 and define IMD for each of the 32,844 LSOAs in England used in the 2011 Census, of which 263 LSOAs are in the Bristol City Council area. Postcodes provided by respondents can each be matched to one of the 263 LSOAs in Bristol and thus to one of the deprivation deciles. Note: postcodes provide approximate locations; they are not used to identify individuals or specific addresses.

⁵ Based on 2,279 respondents who provided full postcodes in the Bristol administrative area from which deprivation decile can be identified.

Figure 3: Comparison of response rate from areas of high and low deprivation



Percentages in Figure 3 are shown to the nearest whole number. The length of each bar reflects unrounded percentages; hence bars shown with the same percentage (e.g. decile 7) may be slightly different in length.

3.4 Characteristics of survey respondents

3.4.1 Overview

Respondent characteristics are summarised below. The charts compare:

- characteristics for all respondents who answered the equalities questions (shown by bars with a red outline)
- characteristics of 'Bristol respondents' who answered equalities questions and provided a Bristol postcode (shown by solid red bars)
- characteristics of all Bristol's citizens based on the 2021 Census (shown by solid grey bars). Census 2021 data are available for seven protected characteristics (age, disability, ethnicity, religion/faith, sex, gender identity, and sexual orientation).

Note that many of the respondents who did not provide postcodes may also live in the Bristol City Council administrative area but are not included in figures for 'Bristol respondents'.

In summary, groups that were under-represented in the responses were:

- Children and young people aged 24 years and younger, people aged 25-34, and 85 and older
- People of Asian or Asian British backgrounds; Black, Black British, Caribbean or African backgrounds; Mixed or multiple ethnic groups; and people of other ethnic background
- Christians, Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs
- Males
- Heterosexual citizens.

The following groups responded in higher numbers than their proportion in the population:

- People aged 35 to 84 years
- Disabled people
- People of White British and Other White Background
- People with no religion, Buddhists, Jews, and people with 'Other religion'
- Females
- Bi, gay/lesbian, and people who use another term to describe their sexual orientation.

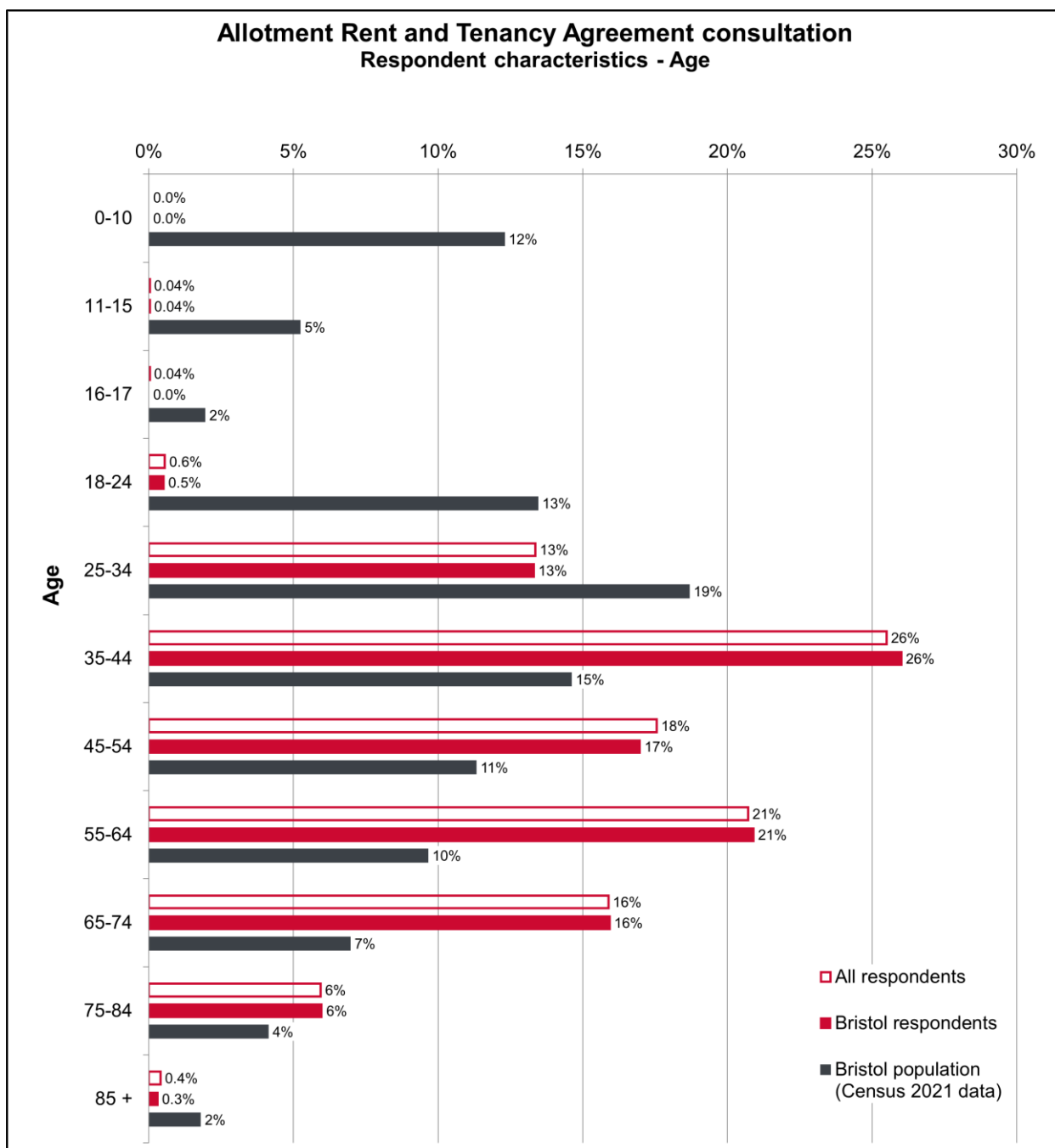
3.4.2 Age

The highest number of responses were from respondents aged 35-44 years (26%), followed by 55-64 (21%). See Figure 4.

All age groups between 25 and 84 responded in higher proportions than these ages in the population. Response rates from children (under 18), young people aged 18-24, people ages 25-34 and those aged 85 and over were under-represented. These percentages exclude the 4% of respondents (3% of Bristol respondents) who answered 'prefer not to say'.

In each age category, the proportions of 'all respondents' and 'Bristol respondents' were very similar.

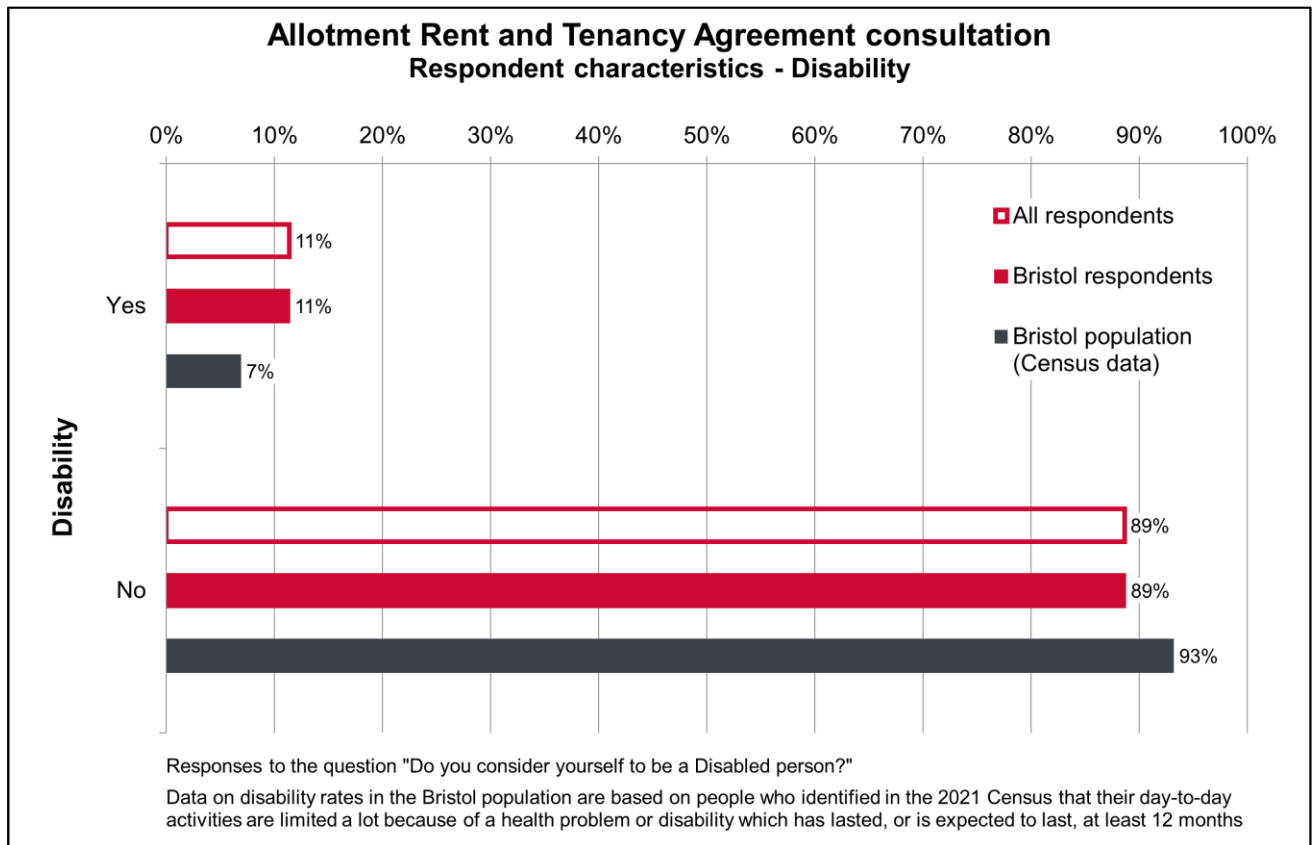
Figure 4: Age of respondents



3.4.3 Disability

The proportion of disabled respondents (11% of respondents) is greater than the proportion of disabled people living in Bristol (7% of the population). See Figure 5. These percentages exclude the 8% of respondents who answered 'prefer not to say'.

Figure 5: Disability



3.4.4 Ethnicity

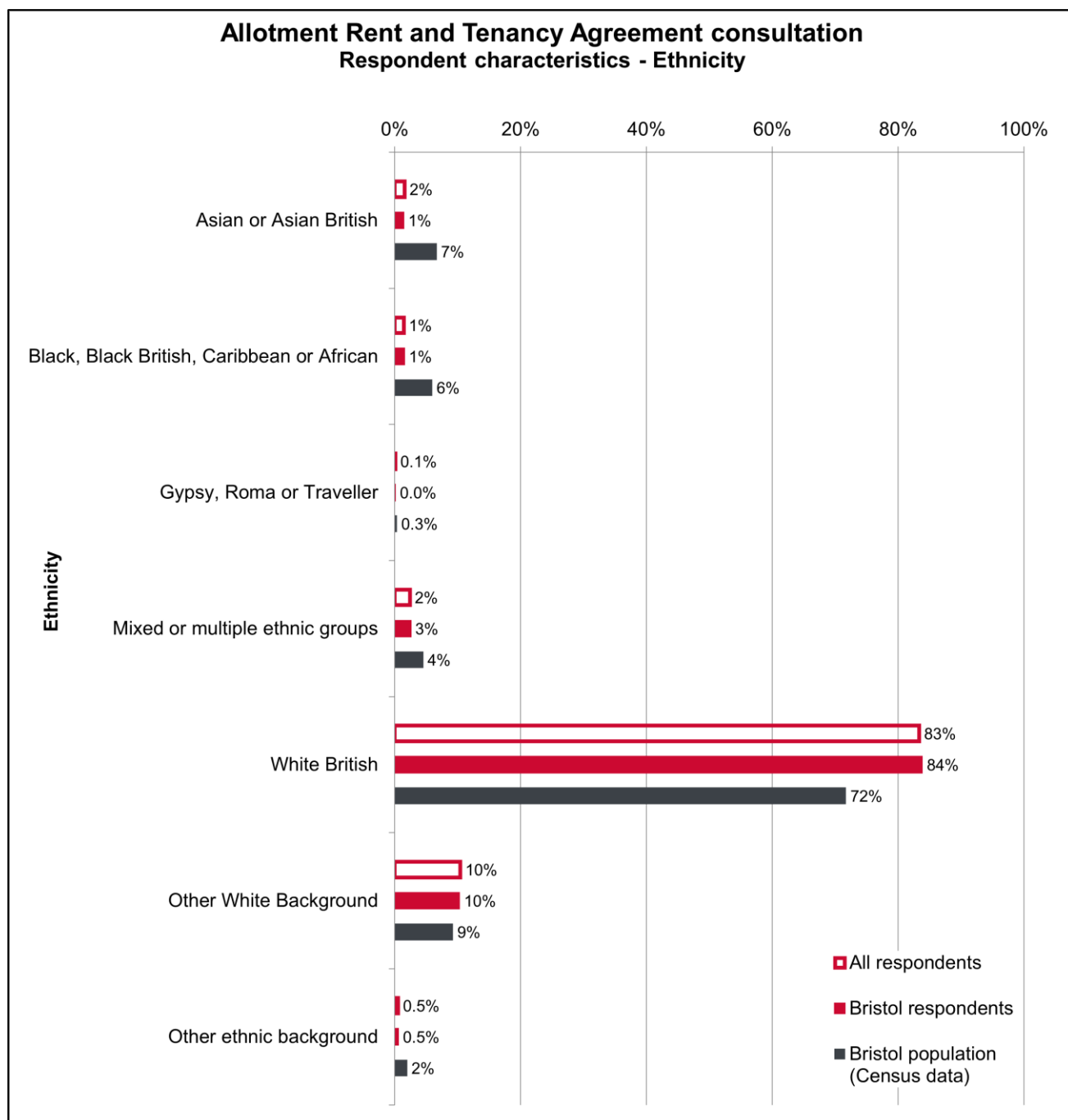
The response rate from White British (83%) and Other White Background respondents (10%) is higher than the proportion of these citizens in the Bristol population (72% White British and 9% other white background). See Figure 6.

The following ethnic groups were under-represented in the response rates compared to the proportion of people in each of these ethnic groups living in Bristol:

- Asian or Asian British (2% of all respondents; 1% of Bristol respondents compared with 7% of the Bristol population)
- Black, Black British, Caribbean or African (1% of respondents compared with 6% of the Bristol population)
- Mixed or multiple ethnic groups (2% of all respondents; 3% of Bristol respondents compared with 4% of the Bristol population)
- Other ethnic background (0.5% of respondents compared with 2% of the Bristol population).

These percentages exclude the 14% of respondents (13% of Bristol respondents) who answered 'prefer not to say'.

Figure 6: Ethnicity



3.4.5 Religion/Faith

People with no religion (72% of all respondents; 73% of Bristol respondents) responded in higher proportion than people of no religion in Bristol’s population (55%). See Figure 7.

Buddhists (2% of respondents), Jews (0.5%) and people with ‘Other religion’ (2%) also responded in slightly greater numbers than the proportions of these faiths in Bristol.

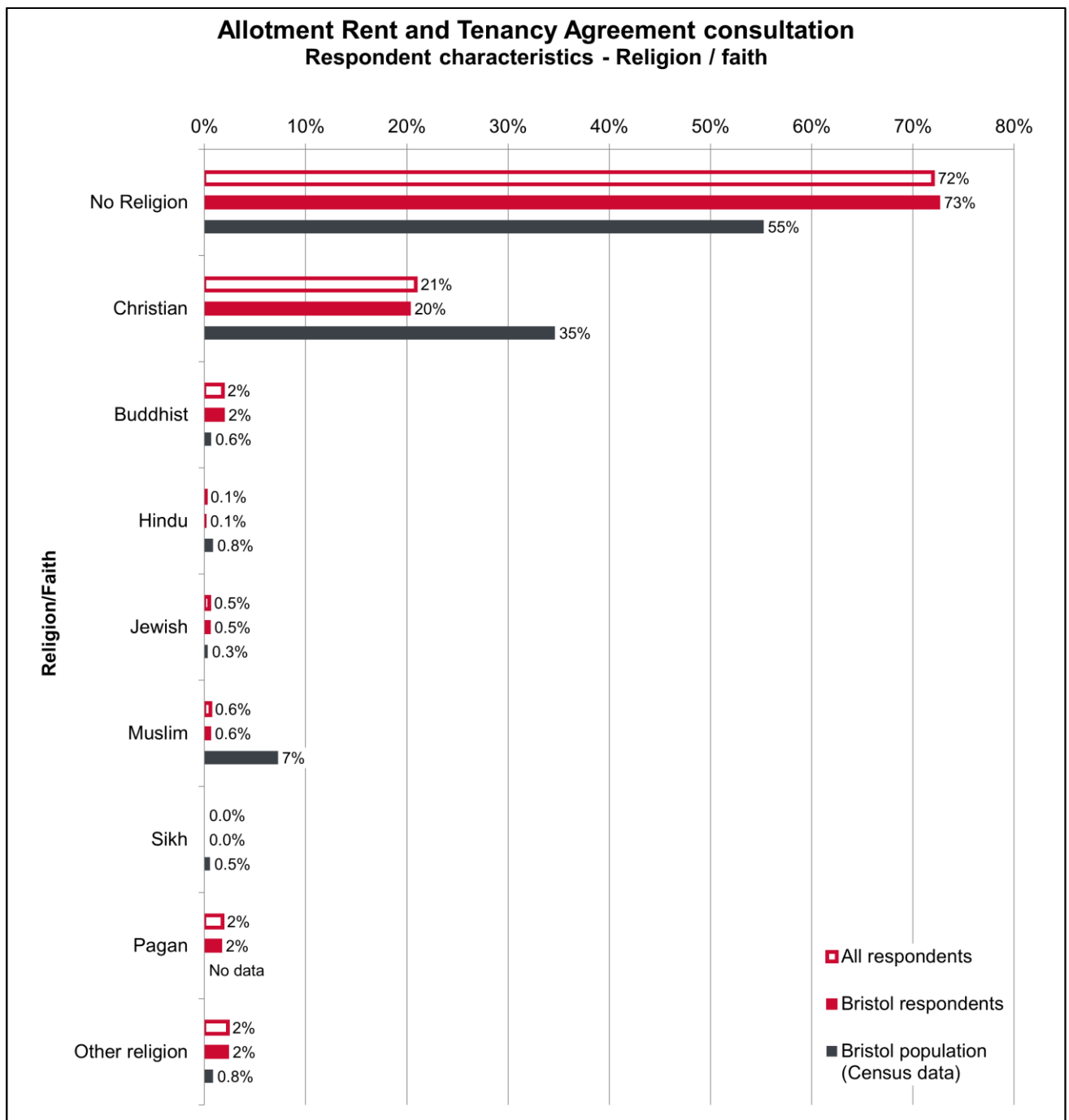
Christians (21% of all respondents; 20% of Bristol respondents), Muslims (0.6%), Hindus (0.1%) and Sikhs (0%) were under-represented compared to the proportions of these faiths living in Bristol.

2% of respondents are Pagan. There are no data from the Census 2021 for the proportion of Pagans living in Bristol.

These percentages exclude the 20% of respondents (18% of Bristol respondents) who answered 'prefer not to say'.

The proportion of each religion/faith for all respondents closely matches Bristol respondents.

Figure 7: Religion/faith of respondents



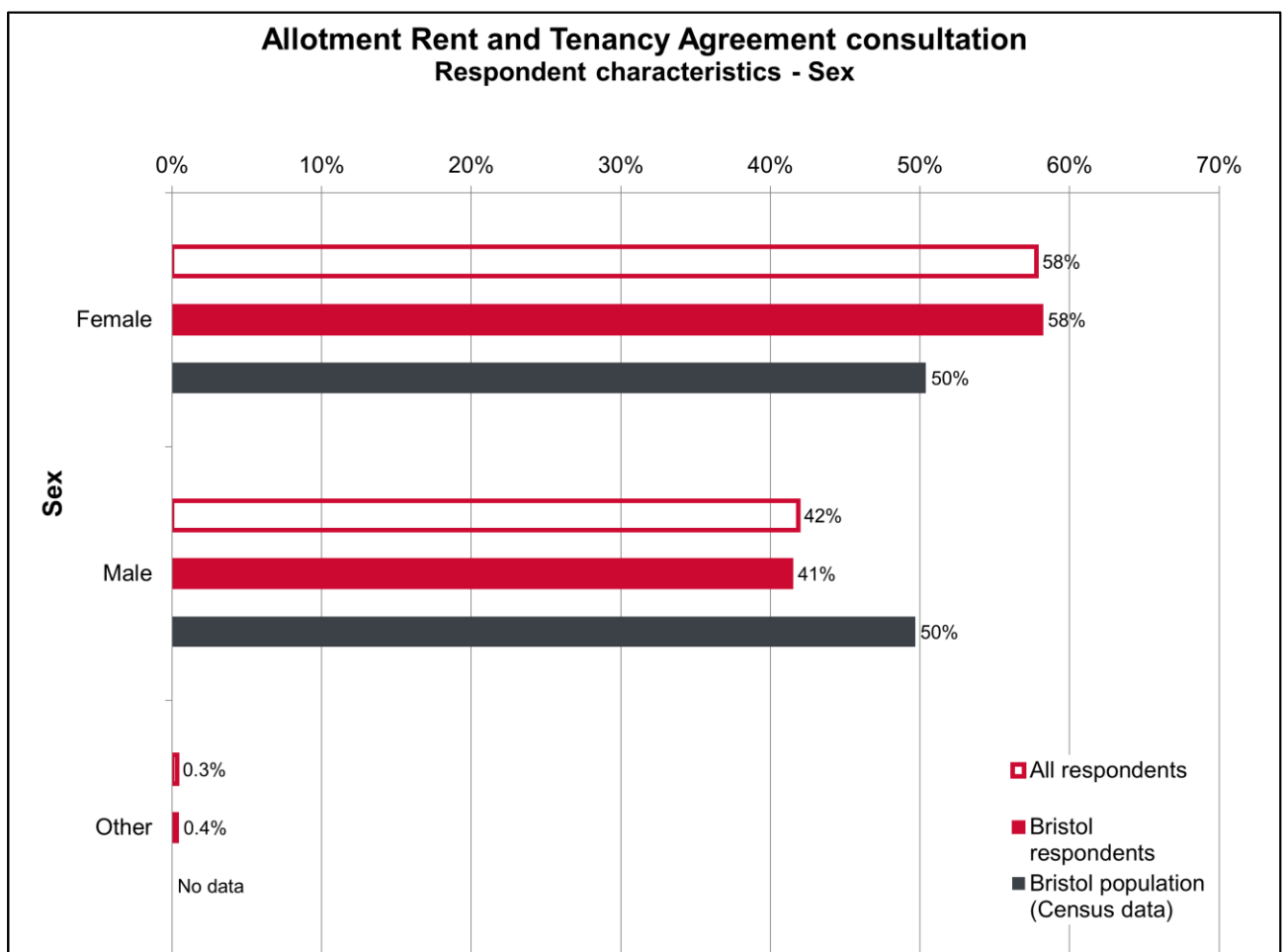
3.4.6 Sex

58% of all survey responses were from women and 42% were from men (Figure 8). This compares to 50% of each sex in the Bristol population. 0.3% of all responses and 0.4% of Bristol responses were from people who identified as 'other sex'.

The proportion of female for all respondents closely matches Bristol respondents, with male having a slight difference (42% of all respondents compared to 41% of Bristol respondents).

These percentages exclude the 14% of respondents (12% of Bristol respondents) who answered 'prefer not to say'.

Figure 8: Sex of respondents

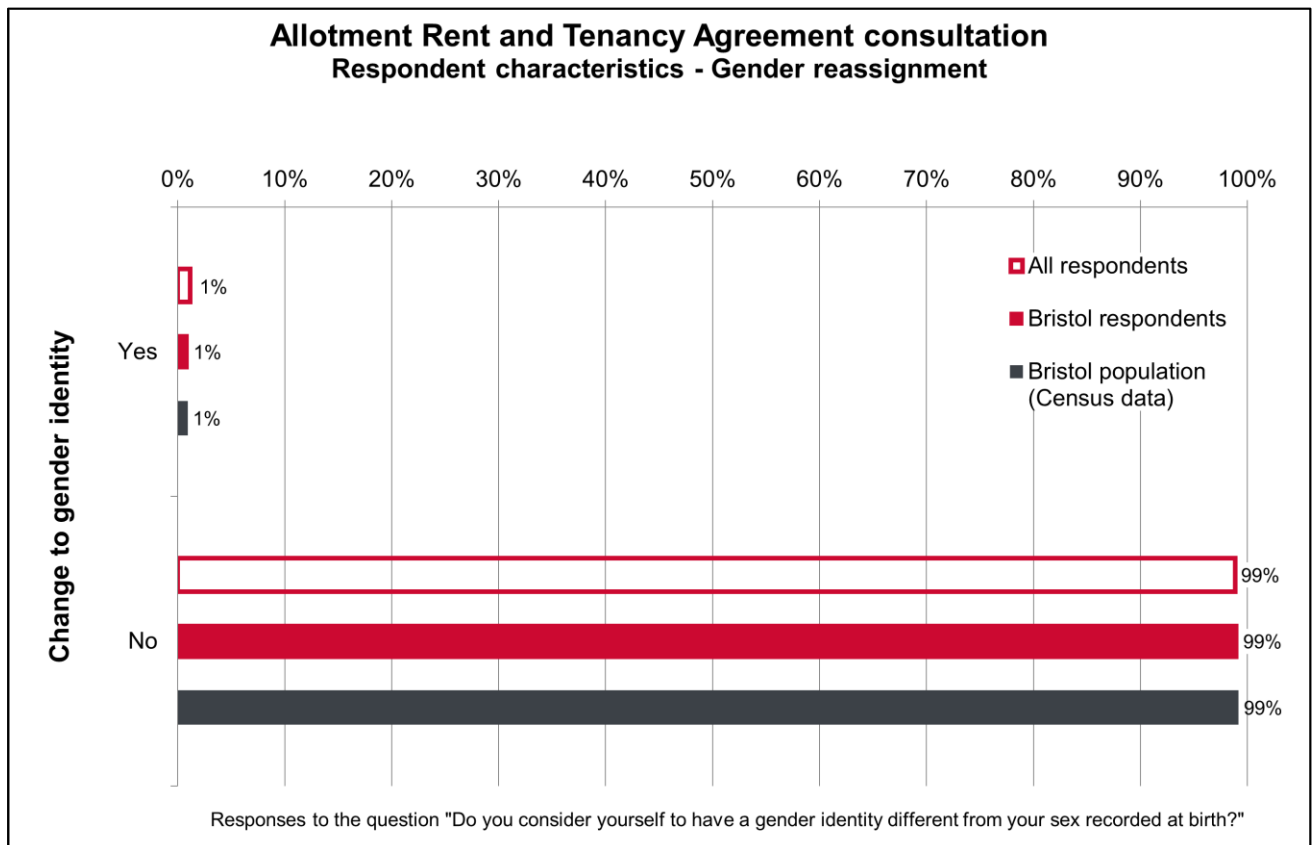


3.4.7 Gender reassignment

1% of respondents stated they have a gender identity different to their sex recorded at birth (Figure 9). This is the same as the 1% of the Bristol population who stated in the 2021 Census that their gender identity is different to their sex recorded at birth.

These percentages exclude the 15% of respondents (14% of Bristol respondents) who answered 'prefer not to say'.

Figure 9: Gender reassignment



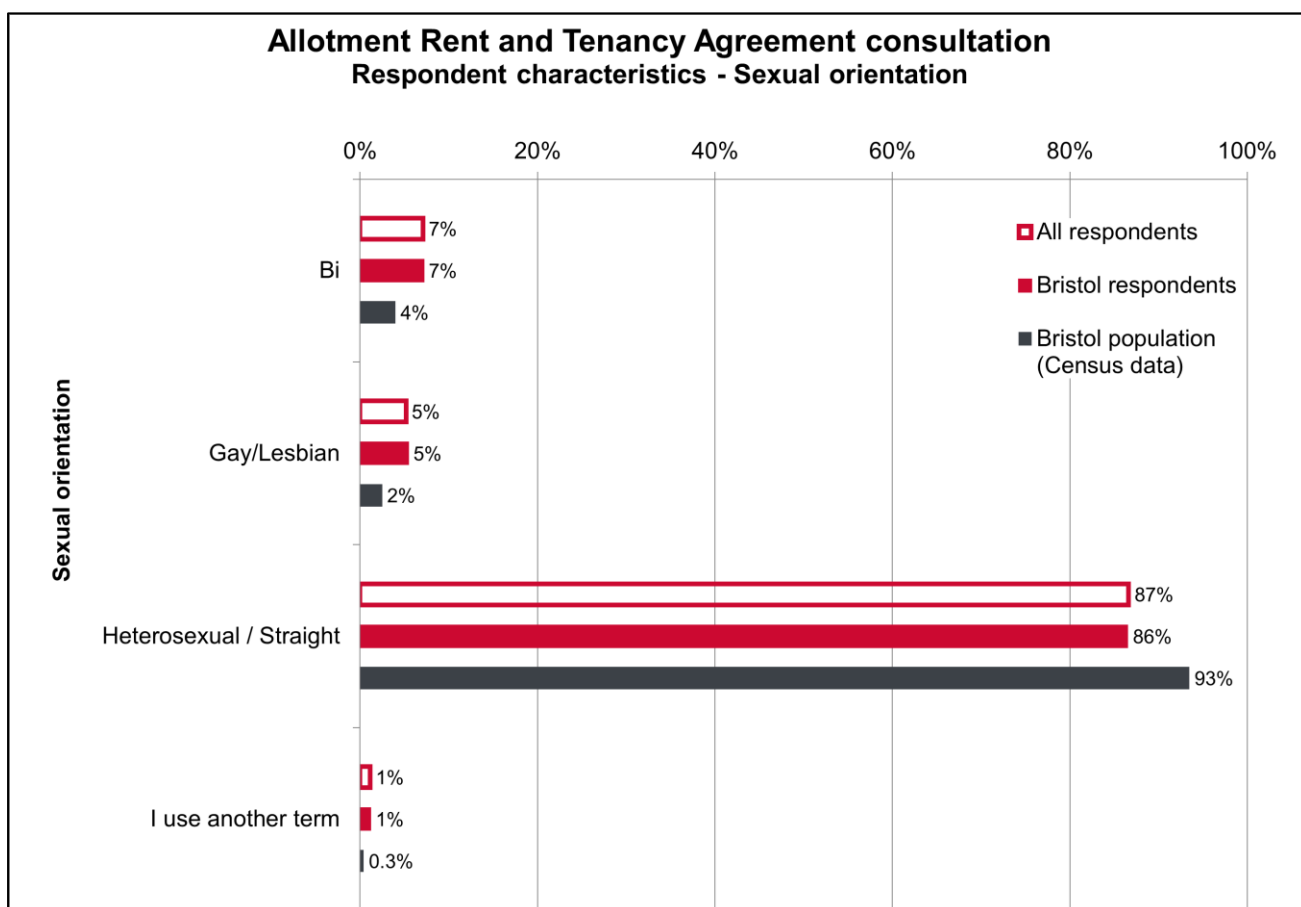
3.4.8 Sexual orientation

People who are bi (7%), gay/lesbian (5%), or who use another term for their sexual orientation (1%) responded in higher numbers than the proportions of these groups in Bristol's population (Figure 10). In the 2021 Census, the proportions of each group in Bristol was 4% bi, 2% gay/lesbian, and 0.3% use another term.

Heterosexual respondents (87% of all respondents, 86% of Bristol respondents), were under-represented compared to the proportions of heterosexual people living in Bristol (93%).

These percentages exclude the 32% of respondents (31% of Bristol respondents) who answered 'prefer not to say'.

Figure 10: Sexual orientation



3.4.9 Pregnancy and maternity, carer status and and refugee/asylum status

The survey also asked respondents about their pregnancy and recent maternity status, if they are a carer, and if they are a refugee or asylum seeker.

Census data are not available for the proportion of people with these characteristics living in Bristol. Figures 11, 12, and 13 show the proportions of all respondents and Bristol respondents for each of these characteristics. The proportion of each characteristic for all respondents closely matches the proportion for Bristol respondents.

Figure 11: Pregnancy and recent maternity

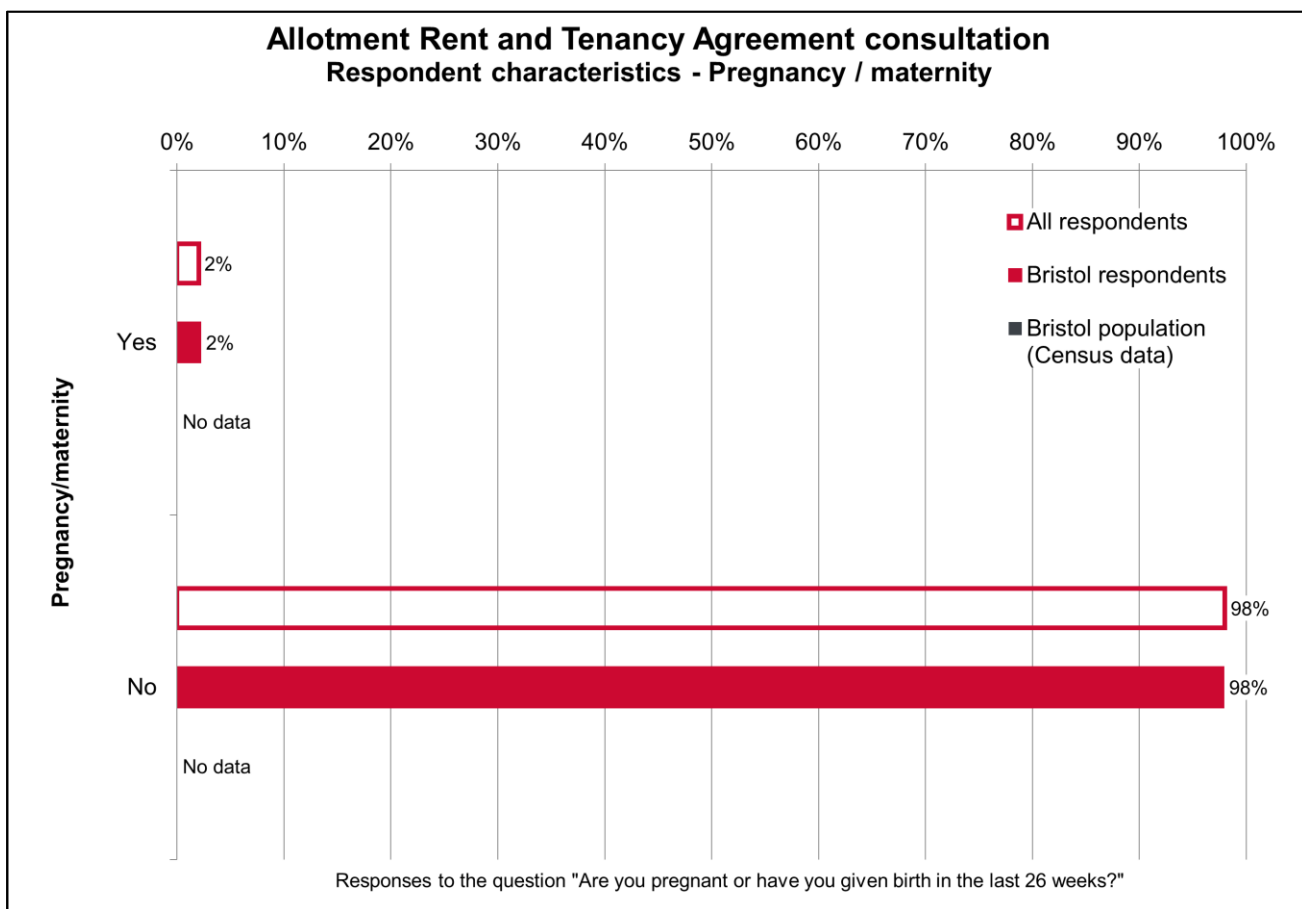


Figure 12: Carer status

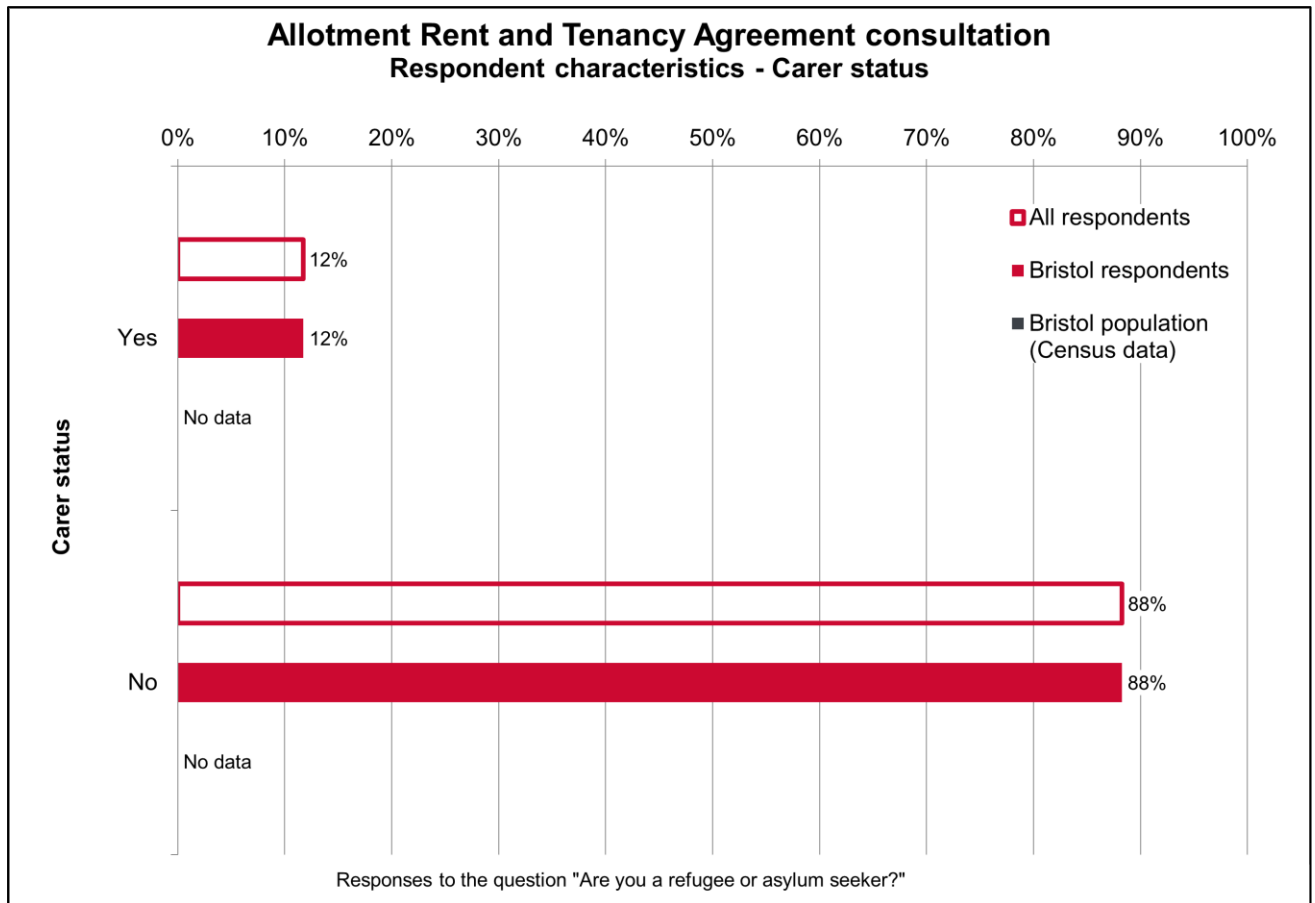
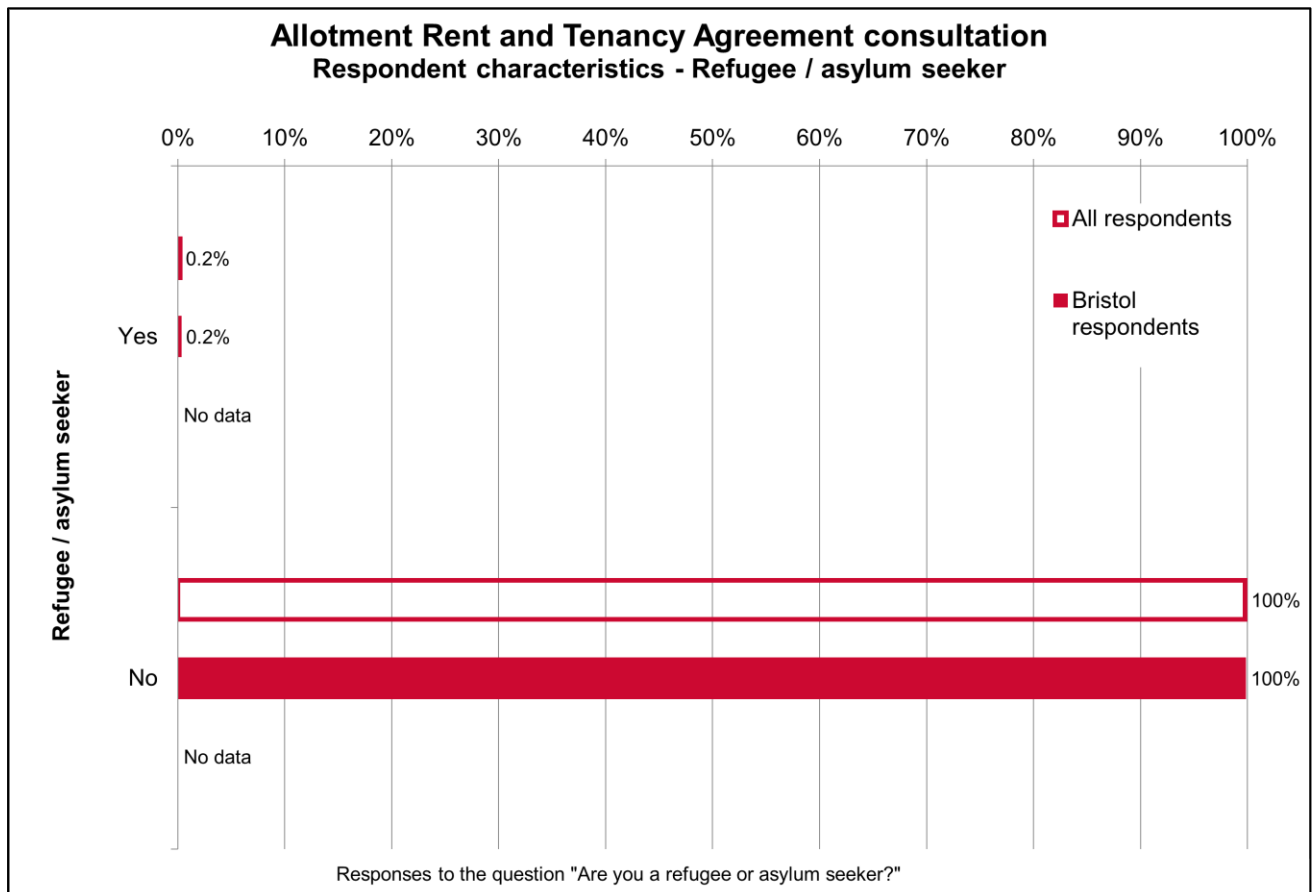


Figure 13: Refugee or asylum seeker status



3.4.10 Other respondent characteristics

3,004 (99.6%) respondents provided details of their personal situation, selecting from a list of eight options.

- 2,124 (71% of the 3,004 respondents who provided details) are current allotment tenants
- 231 (8%) are on the waiting list for an allotment
- 226 (8%) are Bristol residents who are interested in food growing
- 143 (5%) are allotment association tenants
- 88 (3%) are members of a collective or community growing group
- 7 (0.2%) are ward councillors
- 2 (0.1%) are large scale food producers
- 183 (6%) selected 'other'.

Of the 183 respondents who selected 'other', 179 described their role or interests in their own words. Because some of these respondents listed more than one role (for example 'on the waiting list for an allotment' and 'helping out on someone else's allotment'), the total numbers below exceed 179. Several of the roles described by respondents as 'other' match those in the seven categories listed above and are additional to the numbers for the seven categories above.

- 11 are allotment site representatives
- 3 are former allotment site representatives
- 14 are current allotment tenants, of whom one is a tenant of the educational plots
- 3 are current allotment association tenants
- 19 describe themselves as former allotment holders
- 12 are allotment tenants elsewhere (not in Bristol)
- 2 are former allotment tenants elsewhere (not in Bristol)
- 12 are on the waiting list for a council allotment
- 1 is on a waiting list to be added as a co worker
- 18 are co-workers on someone else's allotment
- 1 said they share an allotment with three other families
- 19 have family members or partners who are allotment tenants. Seven of the 19 also work on the allotment.
- 11 are friends / neighbours of allotment tenant(s), of whom 4 also help work on the plot
- 5 other respondents said they help out on someone else's allotment, without specifying a connection

- 6 are members of community orchards, of whom one is a member of the management committee
- 11 are members of other community growing / food groups
- 1 is a member of an unspecified community group
- 8 stated they are interested in allotments and food growing, of whom six said they live in Bristol and one is a former Bristol resident
- 4 are interested in or concerned about biodiversity and the environment
- 1 stated their interest in the use of public spaces
- 1 is a ward councillor in another city and one is a former Bristol ward councillor
- 3 live next to an allotment
- 11 described themselves as Bristol residents
- 1 is a North Somerset resident
- 2 described themselves as members of the local community
- 1 stated they have family who live in Bristol
- 9 were responses on behalf of organisations. These included:
 - St Werburghs City Farm, which manages the Ashley Vale Allotment Association site on behalf of Bristol City Council
 - The Forest of Avon community forest
 - The charity PROPS which runs horticultural sessions at Thingwall Park allotments for people with learning disabilities and autism
 - The Bristol Rainforest, a constituted community association working to create a new model of allotmenting to enable communities to be food independent
 - An un-named charity with allotment space for working with young people
 - An un-named local VCSE organisation
 - An un-named organisation which has a contract with an allotment site running a small scale local composting business
 - An un-named large market garden plot
 - An un-named food producer
- 7 were employees of organisations. These were:
 - A Local Avon Wildlife Trust Environmental officer
 - An employee of Quartet Community Foundation which funds local community gardens and growing projects
 - An employee of Bountiful Bristol, a community food donation project which re-distributes surplus from allotments to community food projects.
 - A Water Reduction Officer for the RHS, currently volunteering with Edible Bristol

- The Local Authorities Coordinator for the Carbon Literacy Trust
- A Member of Southwick Parish Council that provides parish allotments outside of Bristol
- A Roots employee
- 16 described other roles or interests. These were:
 - A gardening and food educator working with primary schools
 - A respondent who teaches gardening to children
 - A garden writer about growing vegetables, who promotes growing food and no dig horticulture.
 - A named tenant for a communal Operation Courage allotment for veterans with mental health problems who use it as part of their recovery
 - A respondent for a shared site used to grow willow for basketry and sculpture
 - An academic researcher carrying out research in food growing
 - An Ecology Msc student at UWE and former core team volunteer at Edible Bristol (community growing initiative)
 - Founder of St George's in Bloom
 - Two responses from gardeners with an interest in allotments / access to food growing
 - A member of a wildlife trust
 - An advocate/consultant for resilient, localised, equitable, healthy, agroecological food economies
 - A respondent who uses food banks and benefits from donated food grown on allotments
 - A Beavers young leader who runs outdoors activities on their leaders allotment to introduce the children to growing their own food and other outdoor activities
 - A parent of child who attends Beavers on the Combe Grove allotments
 - A parent of a forest school child
- 2 selected 'other' but gave no details
- 2 made comments about the proposals but did not describe their role.

3.5 Respondents who responded to the consultation by email

112 responses to the consultation were received via email. These are in addition to the 3,016 survey responses.

100 of the email responses were from members of the public.

12 responses were from organisations. These were:

- Avon Organic Group
- Bristol Allotmenters Resist
- Bristol Food Producers
- Bristol Tree Forum
- Coombe Brook Valley (including Royate Hill, Clay Bottom and Dubbers Lane allotments site)
- Easton Community Garden
- Edible Bristol
- Feeding Bristol
- Street Goats
- Thingwall Park
- West Bristol Climate Action
- Woodcroft Community Orchard

The email text has been analysed with the free text responses to question 7 of the survey and is reported with the survey free text feedback in chapter 4.

4 Survey results

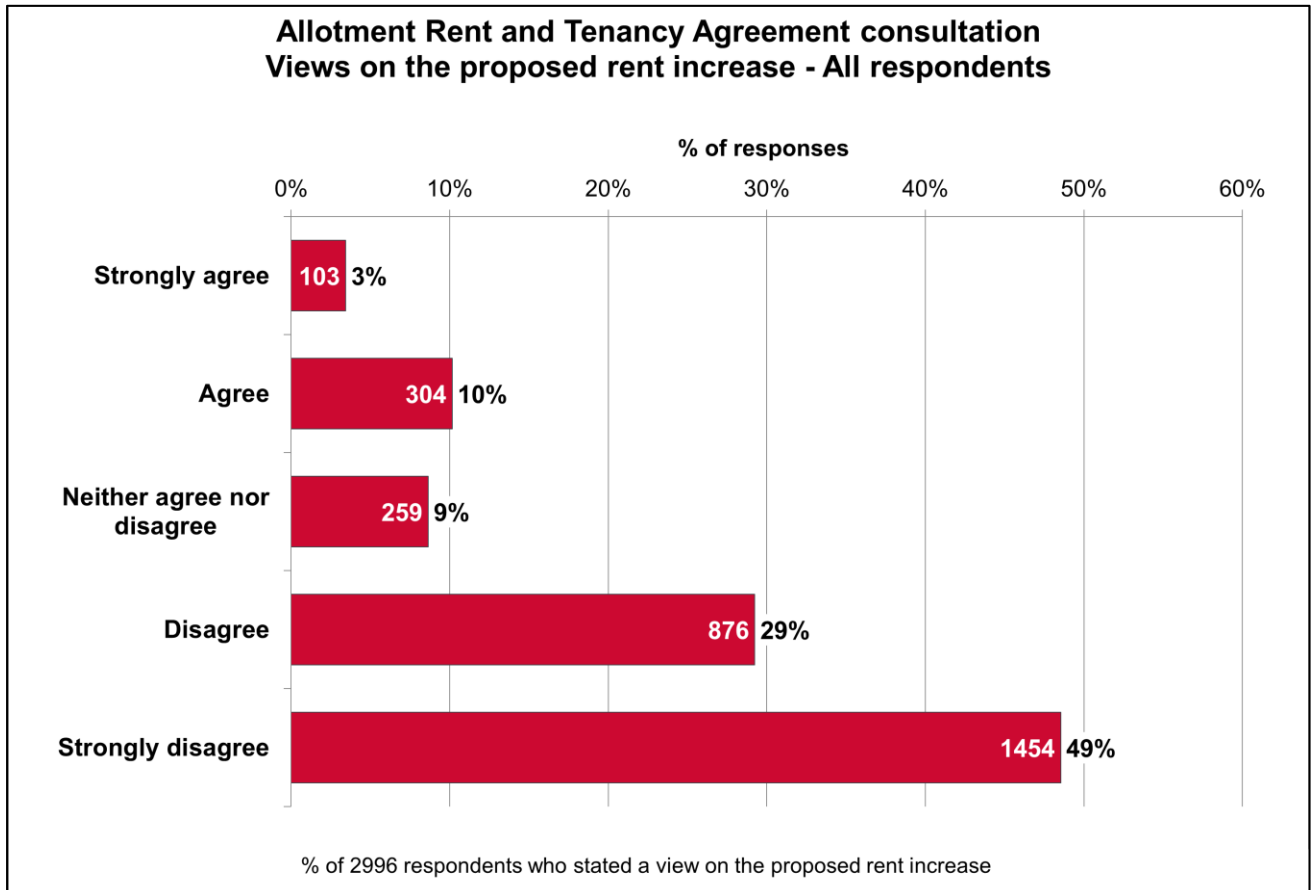
4.1 Views on the proposed rent increase

Respondents were asked if they agree or disagree with the proposed rent increase.

78% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the proposed rent increase.

Figure 14 shows the percentage of respondents who strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, and strongly disagree.

Figure 14: Views on the proposed rent increase from all respondents



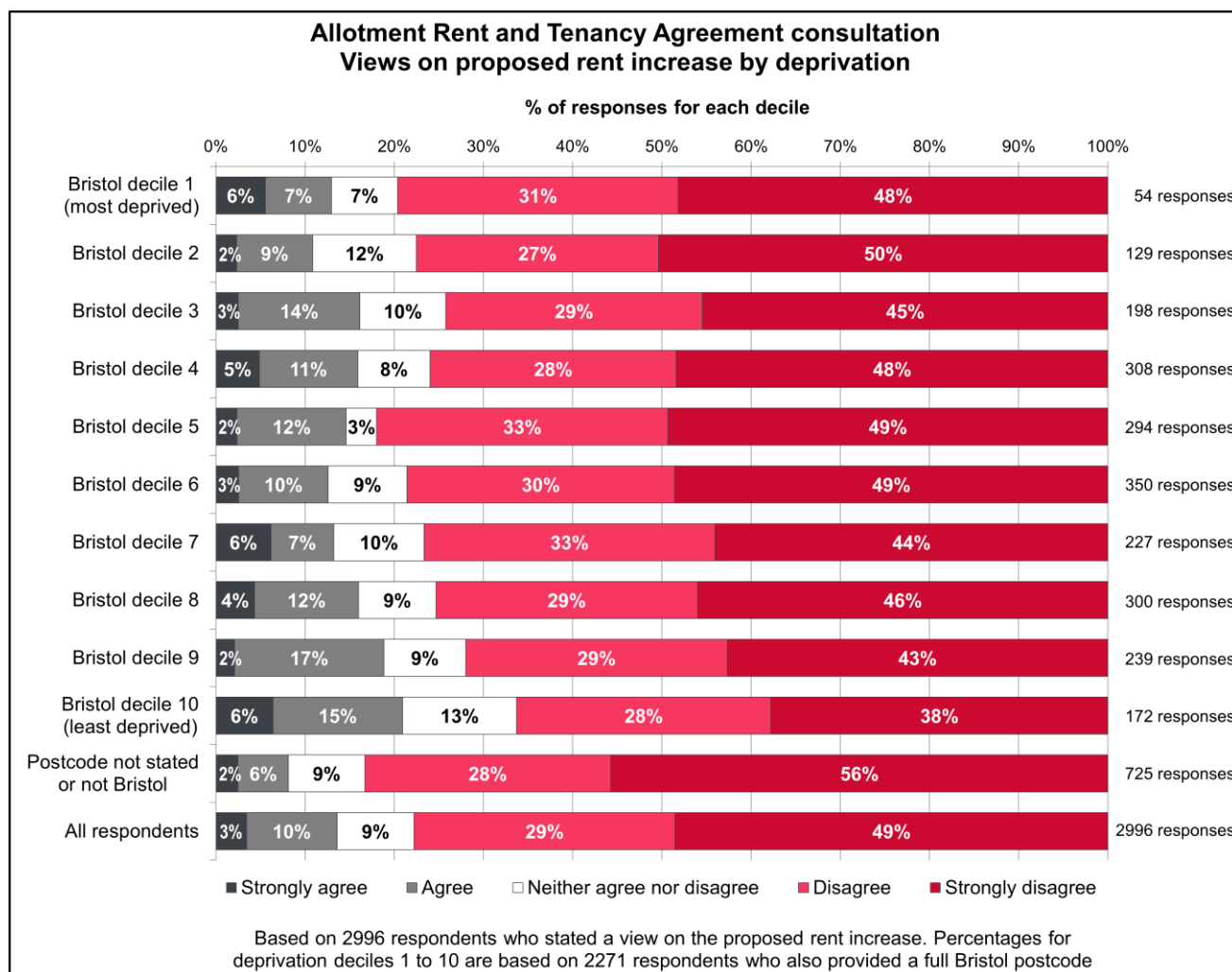
4.1.1 Views on proposed rent increase in areas with different levels of deprivation

Views on the proposed rent increase were compared for respondents in areas with different levels of deprivation, to check for any significant differences (Figure 15).

Figure 15 shows that agreement with the proposed rent tends to increase as levels of deprivation decrease. However, some deciles do not fit this trend; for example, deciles 3 and 4 show higher levels of agreement than deciles 5, 6, and 7.

The majority of respondents in each decile disagreed with the proposed rent increase.

Figure 15: Views on the proposed rent increase by deprivation



4.1.2 Views on proposed rent increase by respondent protected characteristics

Views on the proposed rent increase were compared for respondents by the following protected characteristics to check for any significant differences:

- Age
- Disability
- Ethnicity
- Sex
- Pregnancy/maternity

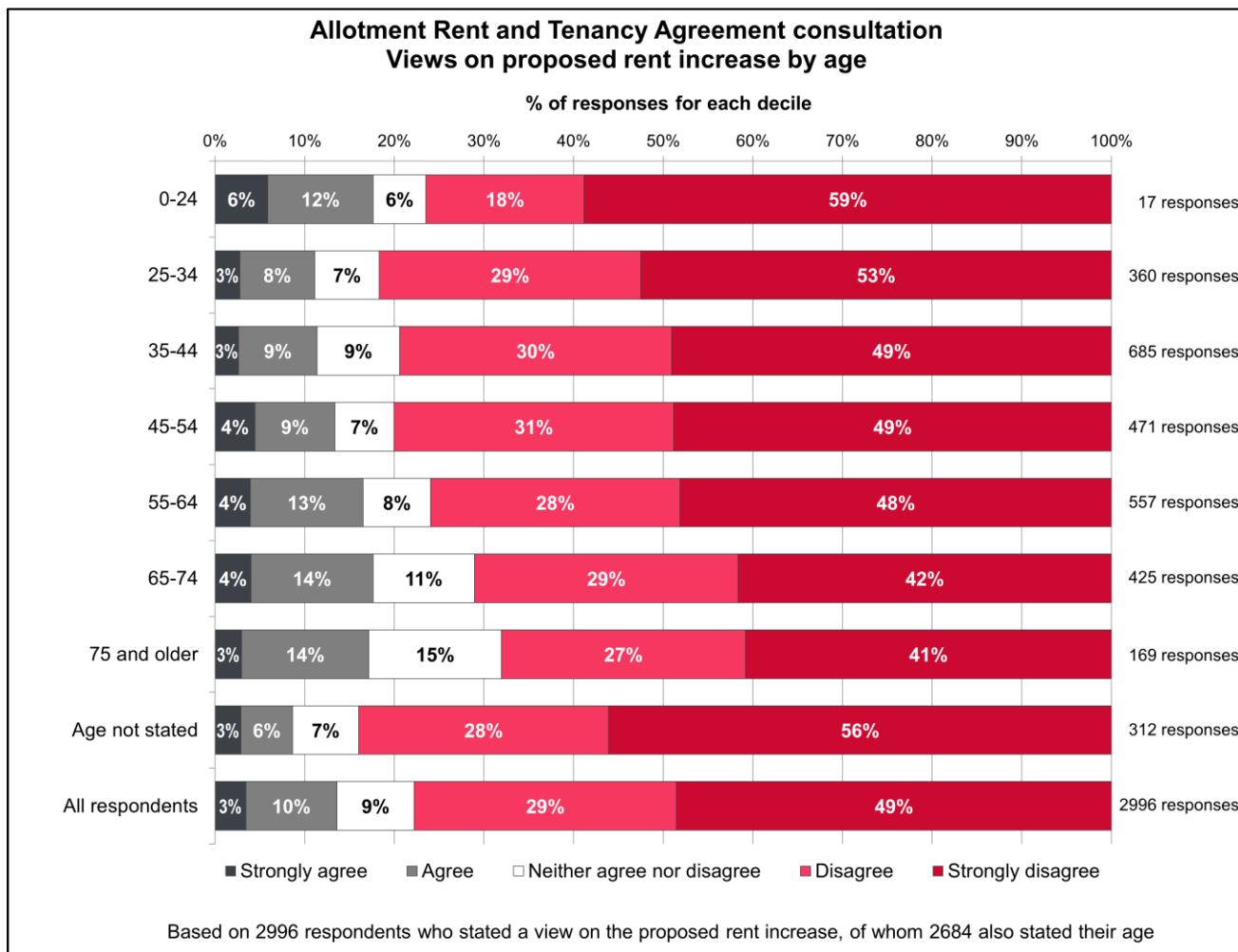
Views were also compared for carers and non-carers.

4.1.2.1 Age

Views on the proposed rent increase showed a slight trend towards rates of agreement increasing with age (Figure 16). Age group 0-24 does not follow this trend, although the number of respondents in this age group is small.

The majority of respondents in all age groups disagreed with the proposed rent increase.

Figure 16: Views on the proposed rent increase by age

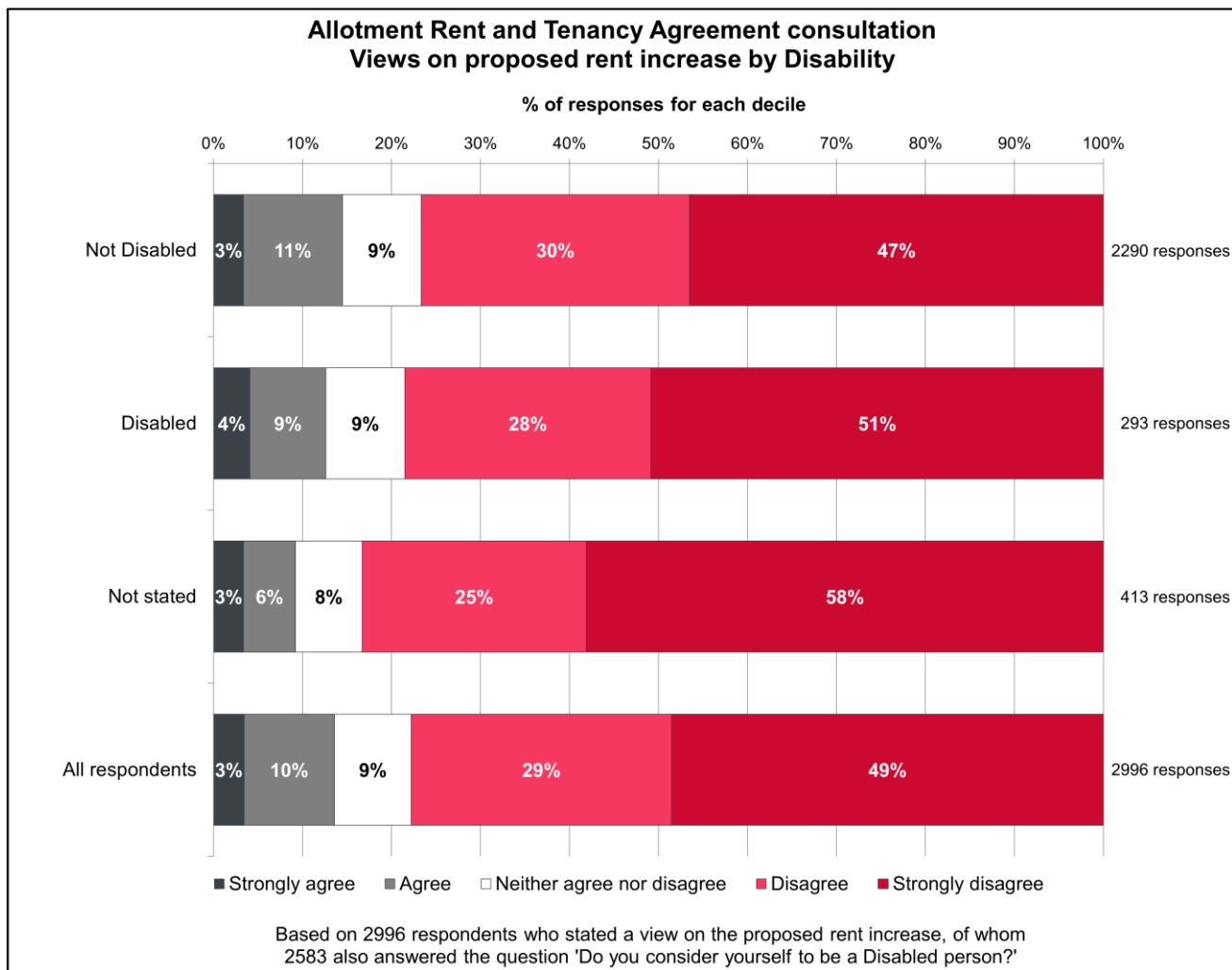


4.1.2.2 Disability

Views on proposed rent increase were similar between those with disabilities and those without (Figure 17).

The percentage of Disabled people who disagree or strongly disagree is slightly higher (by 2%) than for people who are not Disabled. For both groups, the majority disagreed with the proposed rent increase.

Figure 17: Views on the proposed rent increase by disability

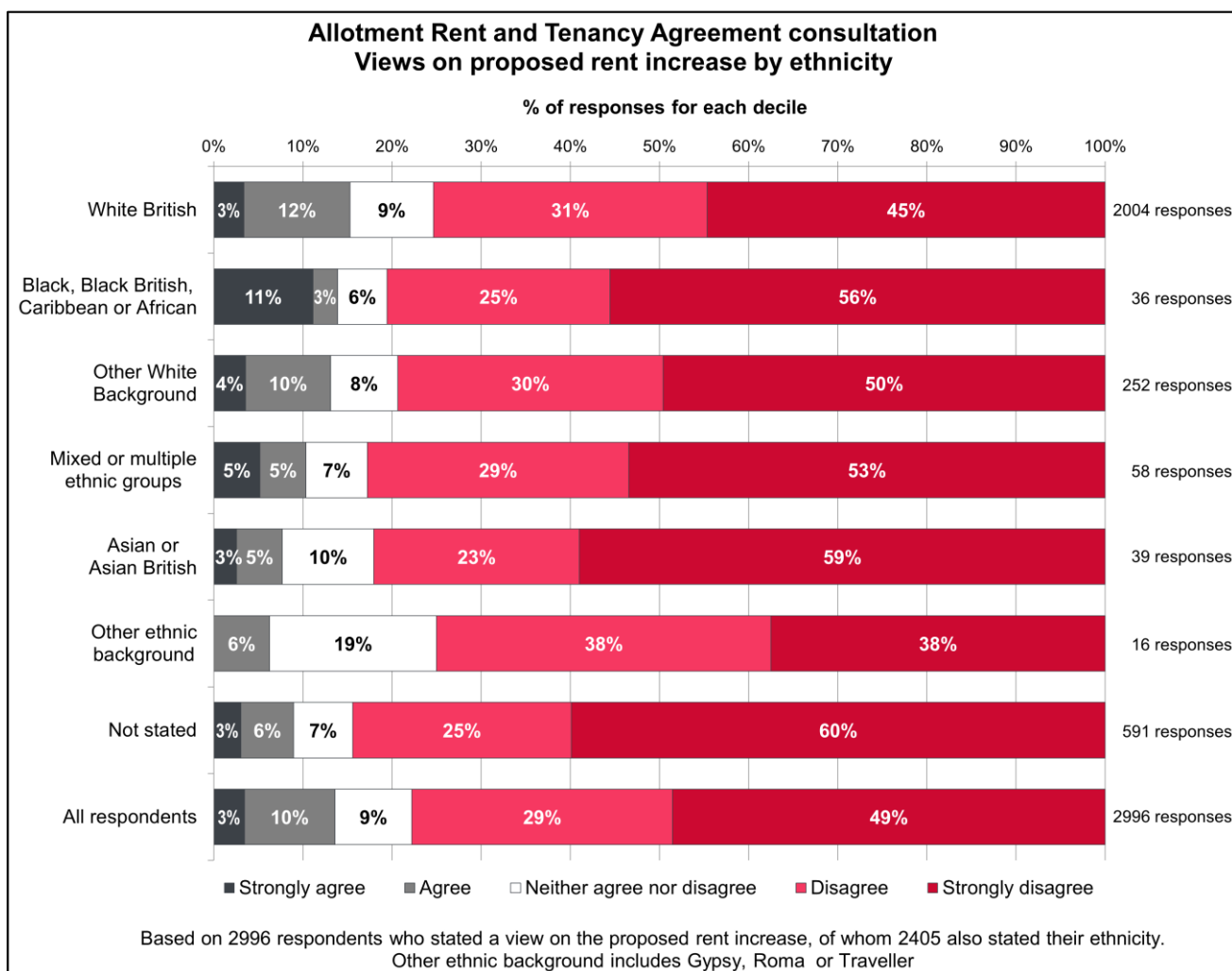


4.1.2.3 Ethnicity

There were slight differences between the views on the proposed rent increase between ethnicities (Figure 18). Black, Black British, Caribbean or African; Other White background; Asian or Asian British; and mixed or multiple ethnic groups had slightly higher levels of disagreement with the proposed rent increase than the view of all respondents. White British and other ethnic backgrounds had slightly lower levels of disagreement.

However, all ethnic groups had over 75% disagreement with the proposed rent increase.

Figure 18: Views on the proposed rent increase by ethnicity

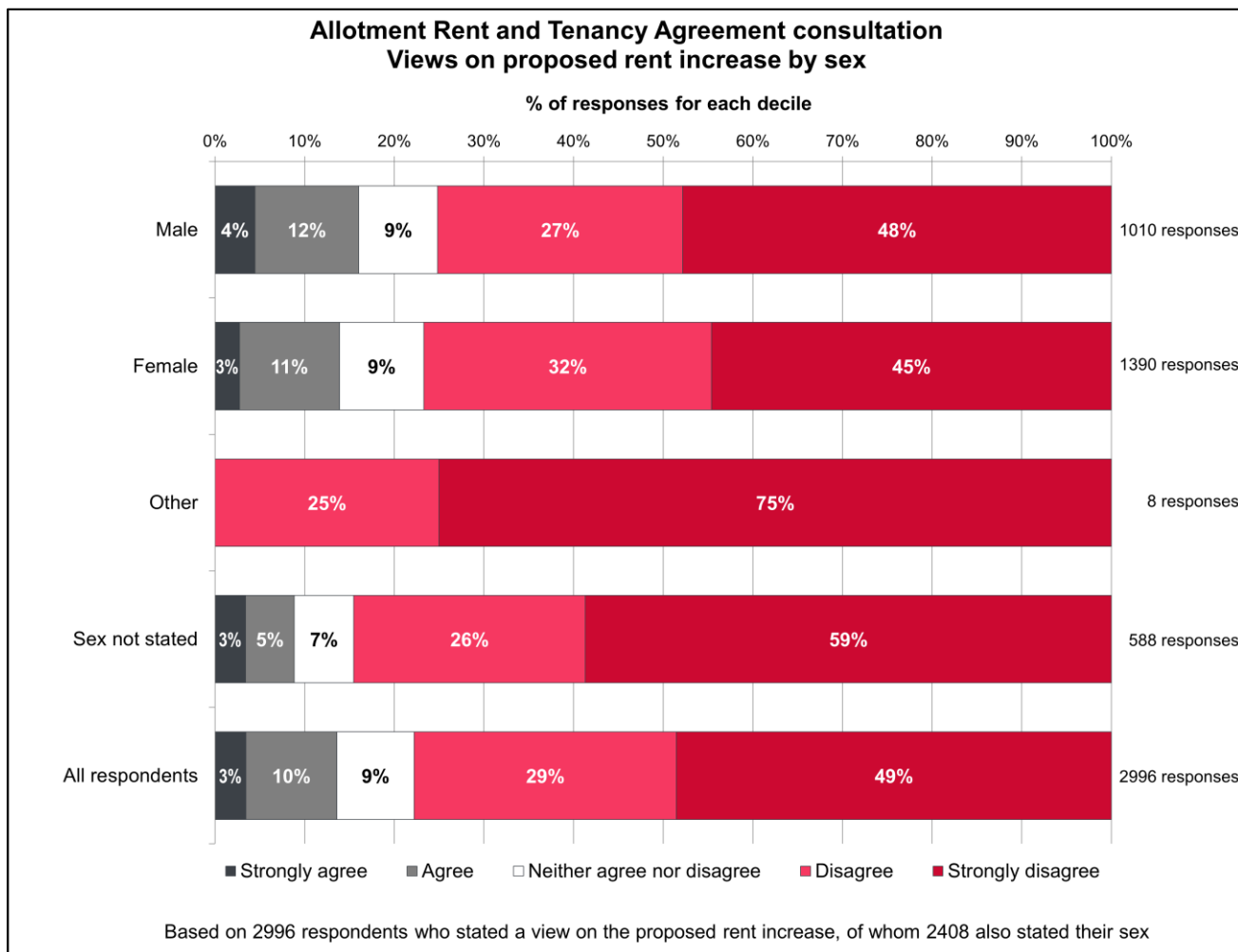


4.1.2.4 Sex

There was a slightly higher percentage of agreement with the proposed rent increase for male respondents (16%) compared to females (14%). (See Figure 19.)

All respondents who selected 'Other' for their sex disagreed with the rent increase. However the sample size of this group was small (8 respondents).

Figure 19: Views on the proposed rent increase by sex



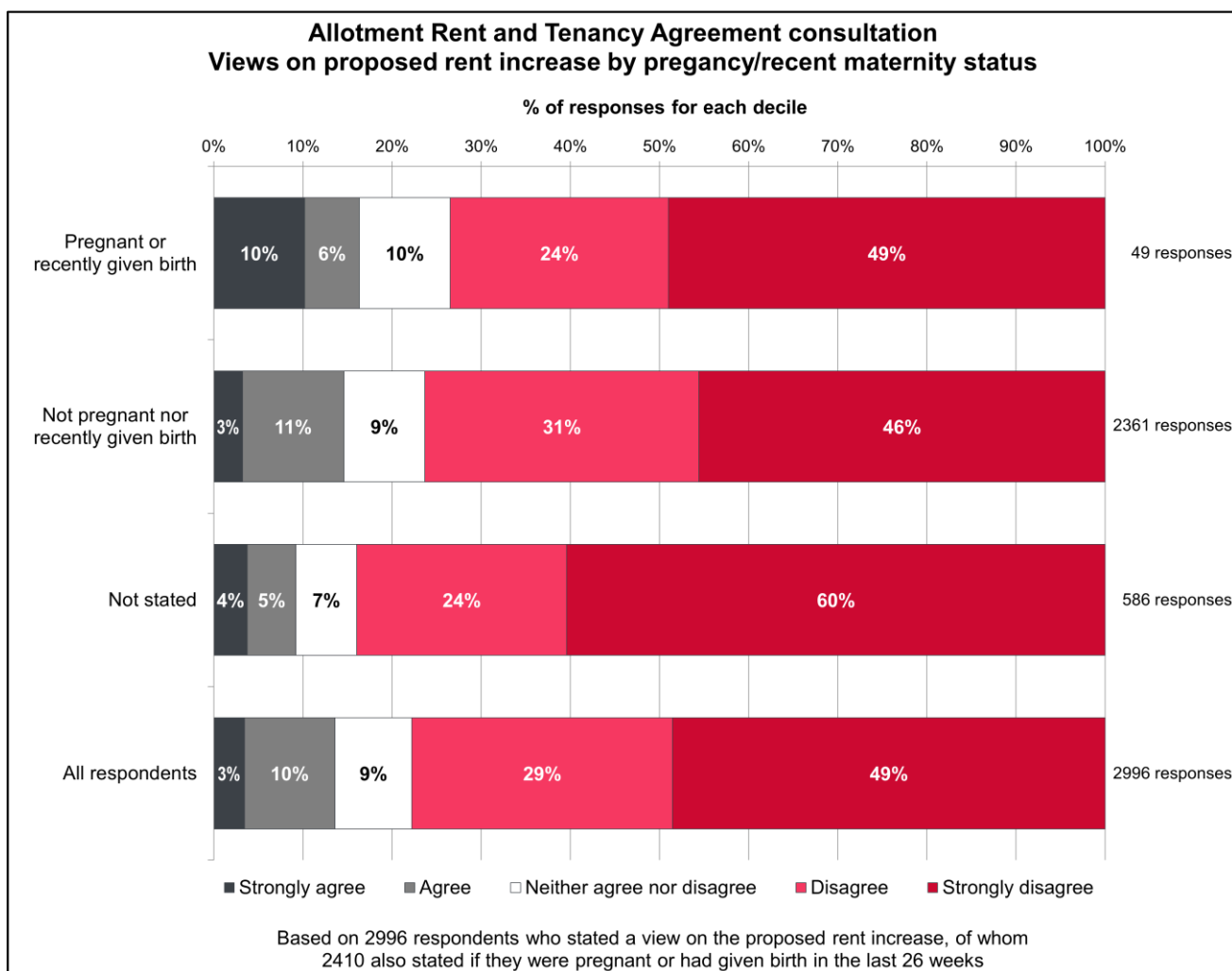
4.1.2.5 Pregnancy/maternity

There were slightly lower levels of disagreement with the proposed rent increase amongst people who were pregnant or had recently given birth than those who had not (73% pregnant/recently given birth and 77% not pregnant nor recently given birth).

Respondents who are pregnant or have recently given birth also showed higher levels of agreement with the proposed rent increase.

Over 70% of all groups disagreed with the proposal (Figure 20).

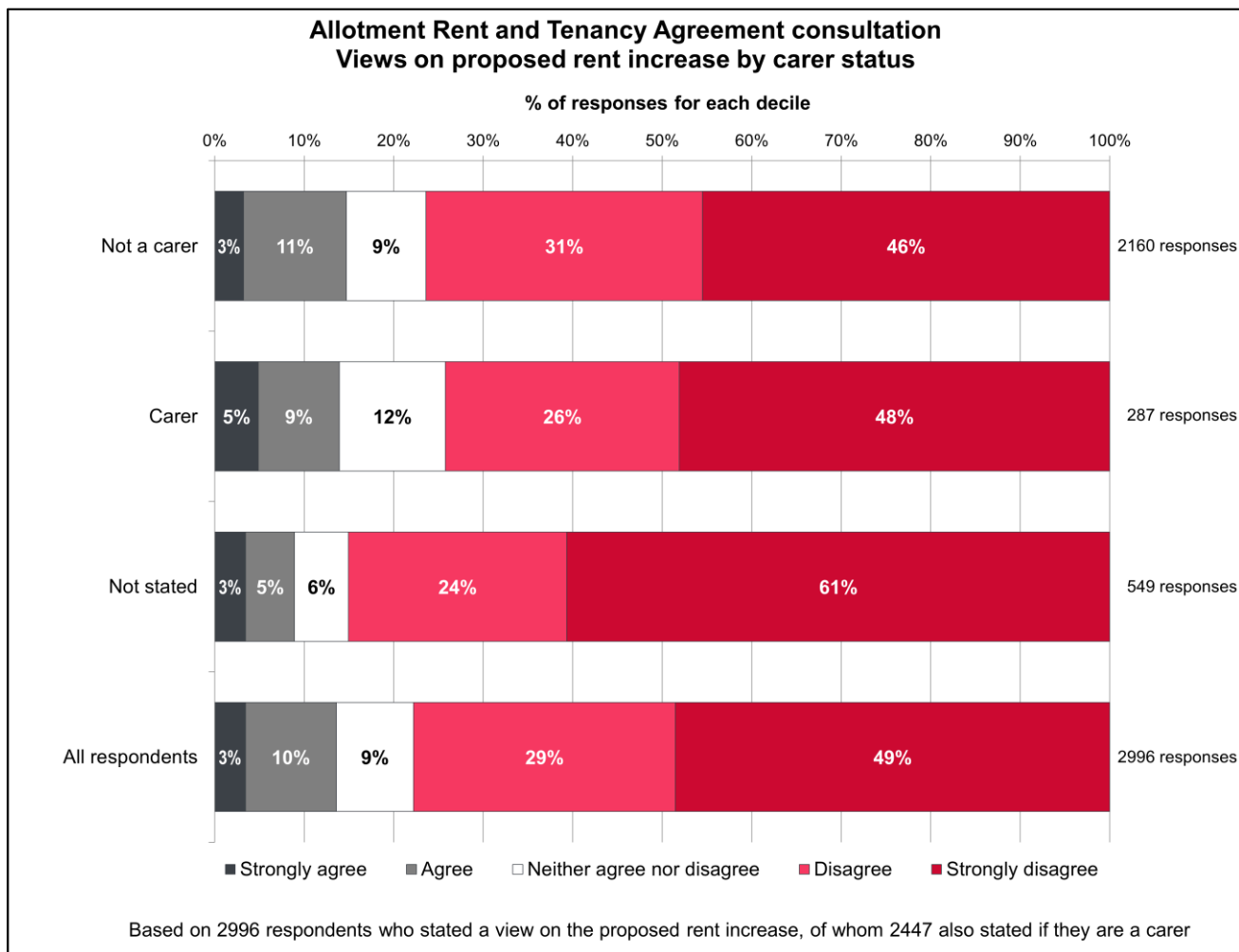
Figure 20: Views on proposed rent increase by pregnancy/recent maternity status



4.1.2.6 Carers

There were slightly lower levels of disagreement with the proposed rent increase amongst people who were carers than those who were not (Figure 21). However, more than 70% of all groups disagreed with the proposal.

Figure 21: Views on the proposed rent increase by carer status

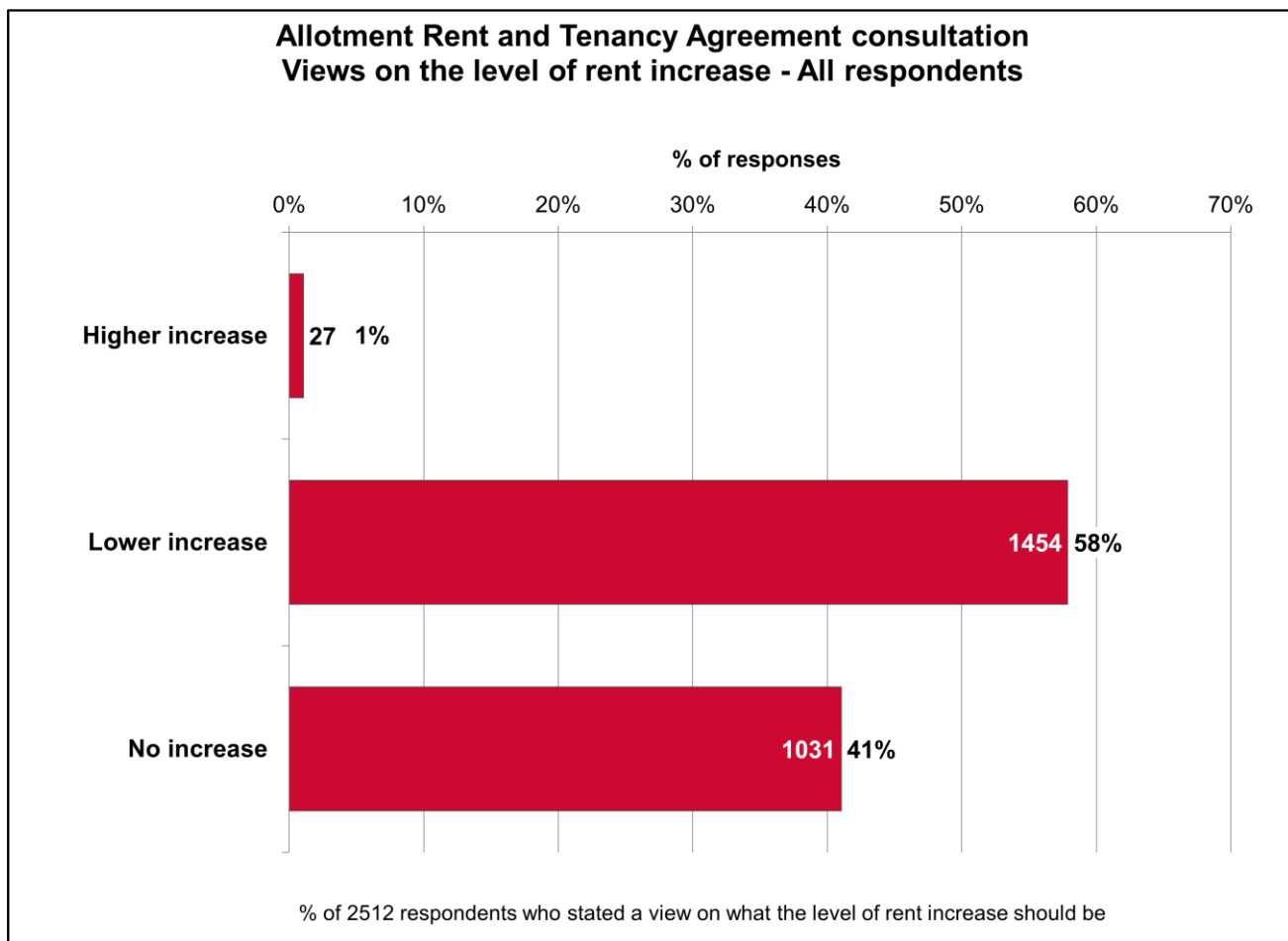


4.2 Views on the level of rent increase

Respondents who disagreed with the proposed rent increase were asked if they think it should be higher, lower, or no increase (Figure 22).

- 58% said the increase should be lower
- 41% said there should be no increase
- 1% said the increase should be higher.

Figure 22: Views on the level of rent increase by all respondents



4.2.1 Views on the level of rent increase in areas with different levels of deprivation

Views on the level of rent increase were compared for respondents in areas with different levels of deprivation, to check for any significant differences (Figure 23).

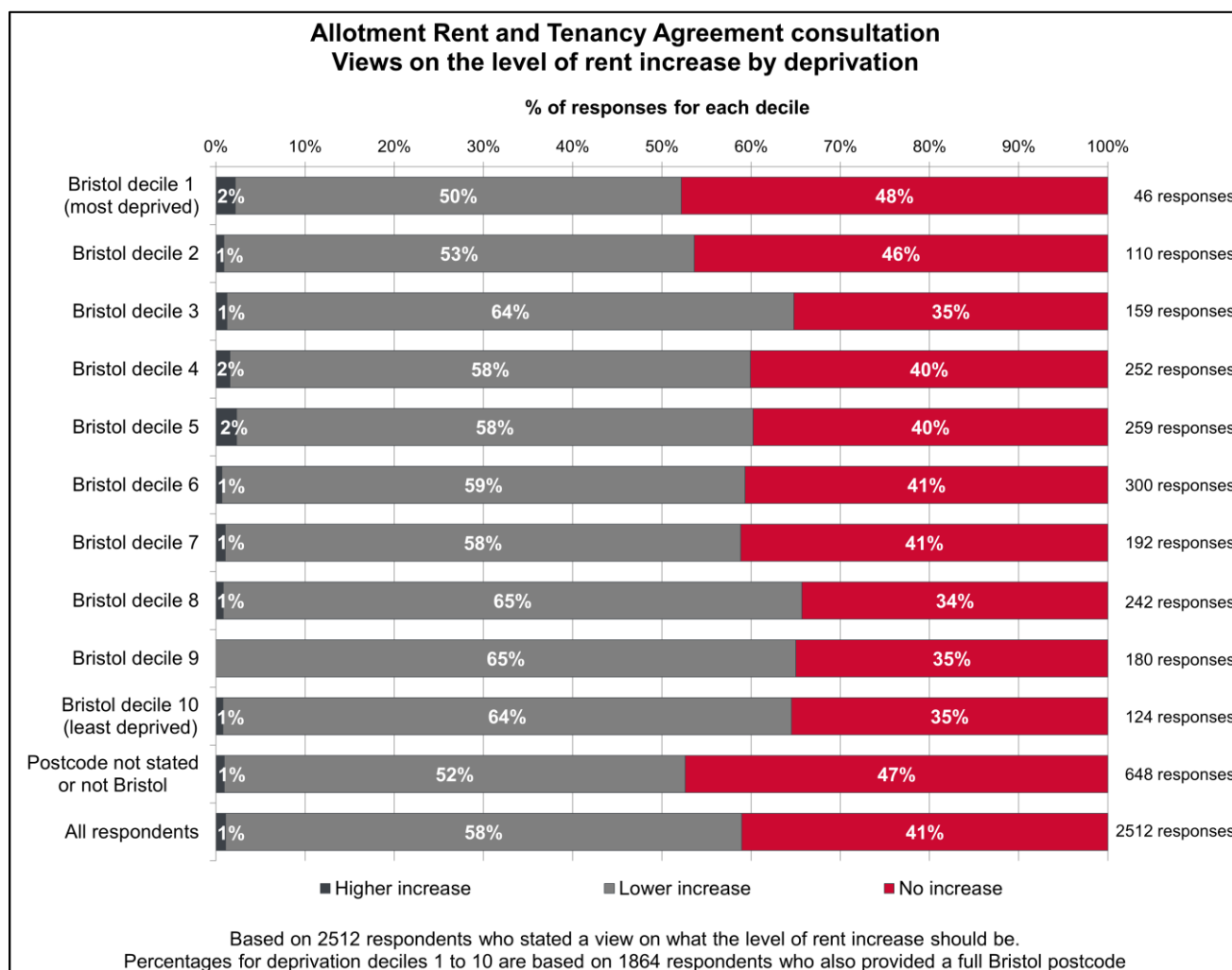
Respondents in the most deprived 20% of the city showed the highest support for 'no increase' (48% in decile 1 and 46% in decile 2). Support for 'no increase' was lowest in the least deprived 30% of the city (34% in decile 8 and 35% in deciles 9 and 10).

Support for a 'lower increase' was correspondingly higher in deciles 8, 9 and 10 and lowest in deciles 1 and 2.

Support for a 'higher increase' was less than 2% in all deciles.

Decile 3 deviates from this trend and more closely matches the profile of support for deciles 8, 9 and 10.

Figure 23: Views on the level of rent increase by deprivation



4.2.2 Views on the level of rent increase by respondent protected characteristics

Views on the level of rent increase were compared for respondents by the following protected characteristics to check for any significant differences:

- Age
- Disability
- Ethnicity
- Sex
- Pregnancy/maternity

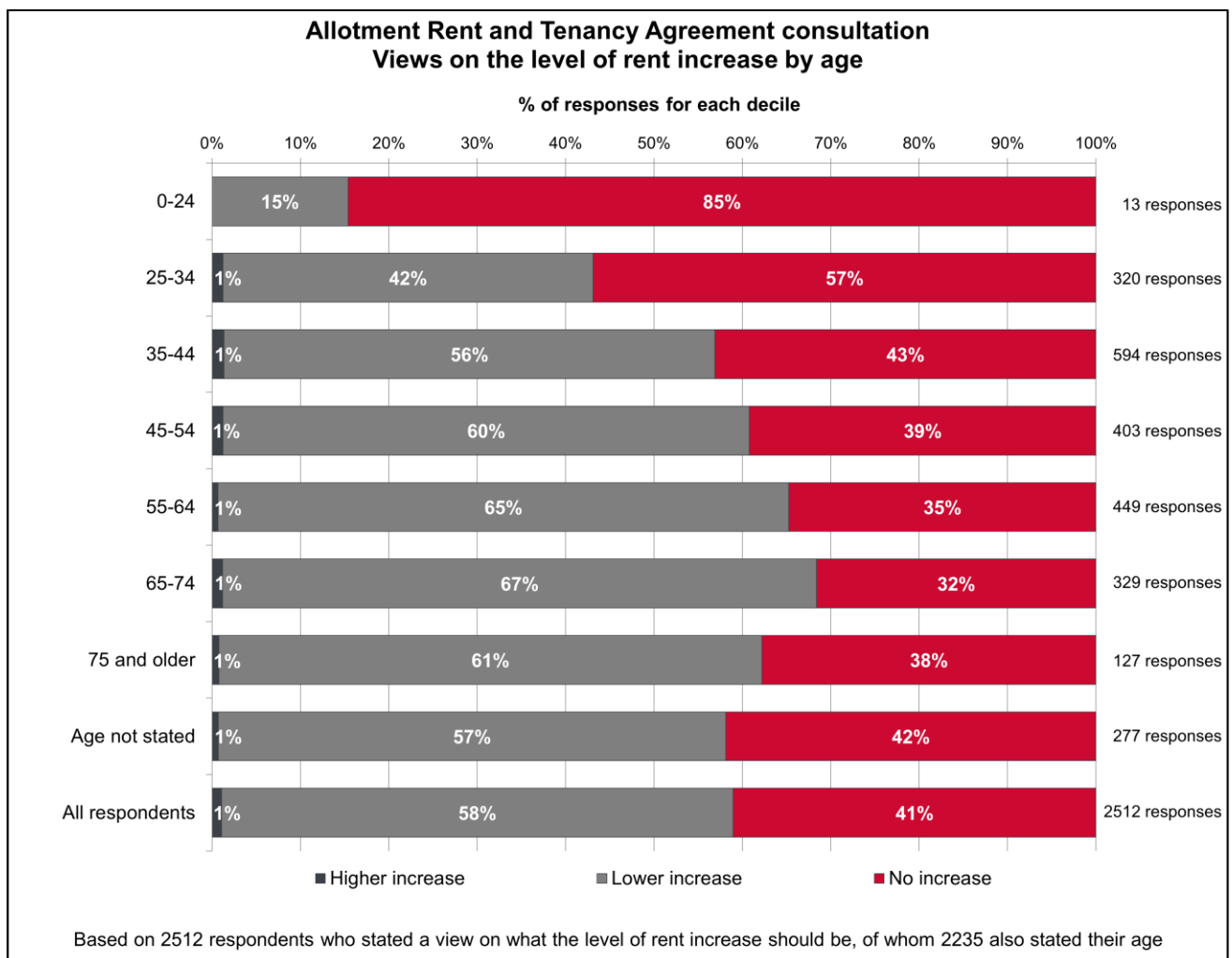
Views were also compared for carers and non-carers.

4.2.2.1 Age

There is a clear trend of younger respondents preferring 'no increase' and older respondents preferring a 'lower increase' (Figure 24). The oldest age category (75 and older) deviates from this trend.

Support for a 'higher increase' was less than 1% in all age groups.

Figure 24: Views on the level of rent increase by age

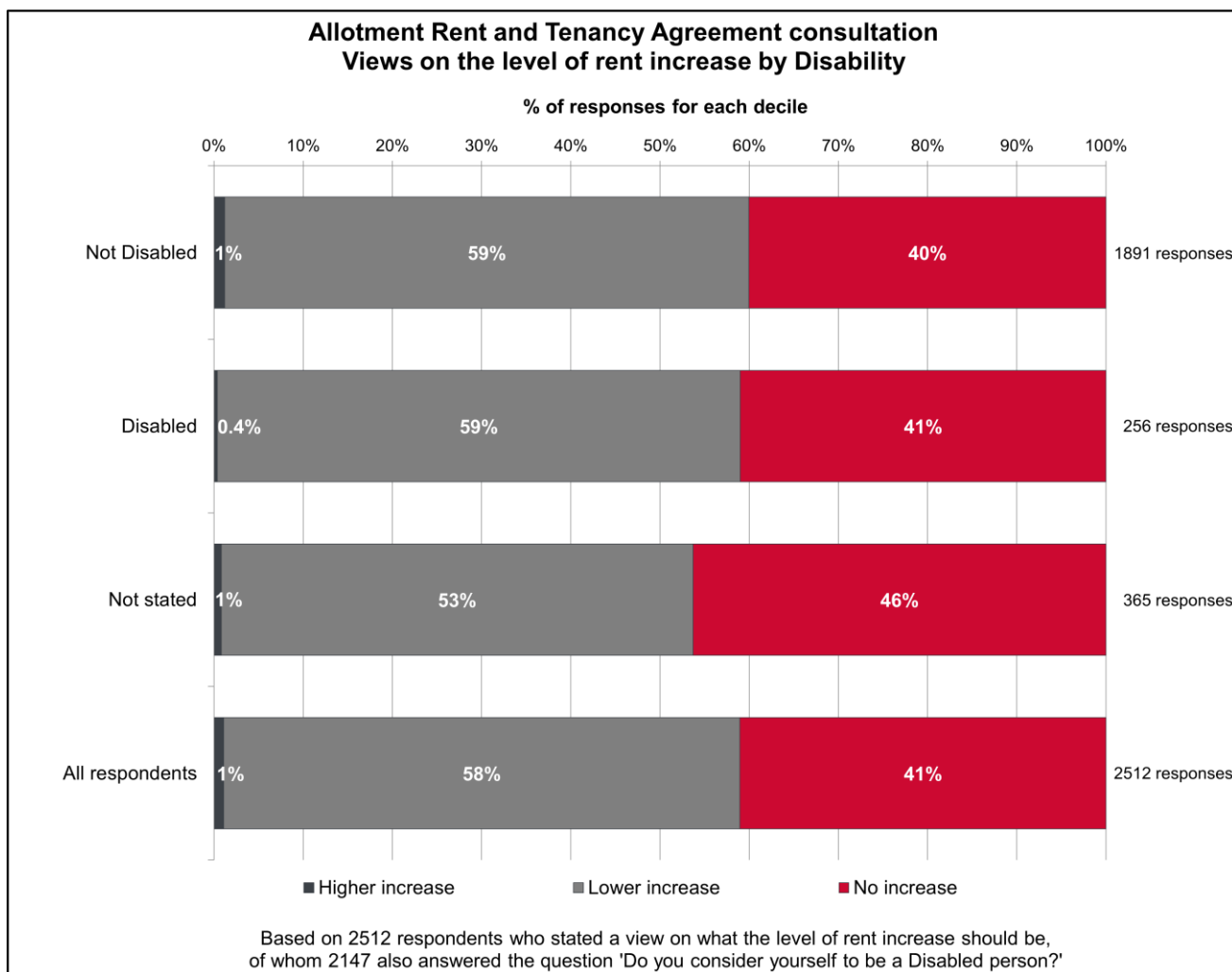


4.2.2.2 Disability

There are minimal differences between the responses to this question from Disabled and not Disabled people (Figure 25):

- 41% of Disabled people said 'no increase' while 40% of non-Disabled people said 'no increase'
- 0.4% of Disabled people said 'higher increase', while 1% of non-Disabled people opted for a 'higher increase'.

Figure 25: Views on the level of rent increase by disability



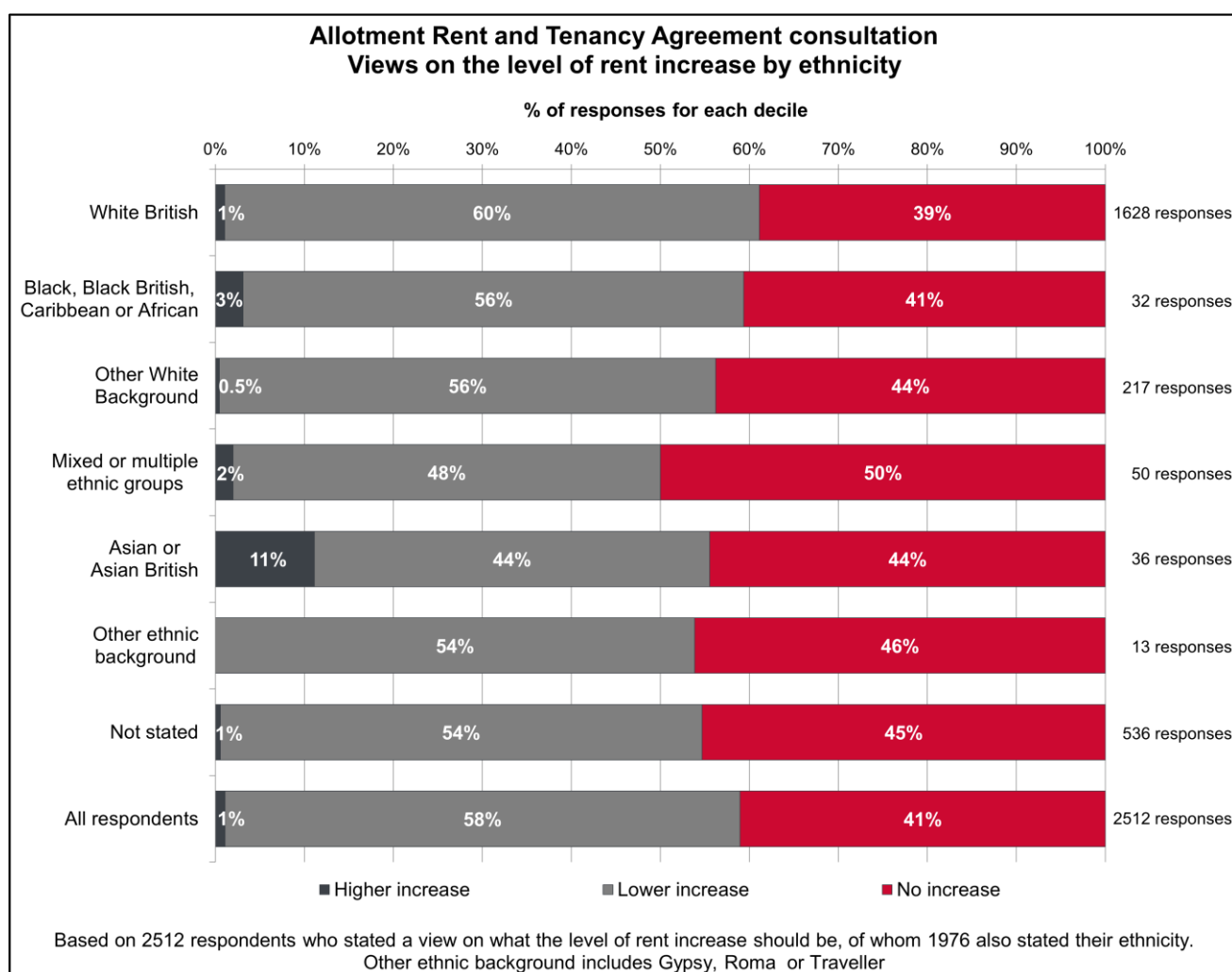
4.2.2.3 Ethnicity

A 'higher increase' in the level of rent was least unpopular among the respondents the following ethnic groups (Figure 26):

- Asian or Asian British - 11% support a higher increase
- Black, Black British, Caribbean or African - 3% support a higher increase
- Mixed or multiple ethnic groups - 2% support a higher increase

Respondents from mixed or multiple ethnic groups were most likely to select 'no increase' (50%). White British respondents expressed lowest support for 'no increase' (39%)

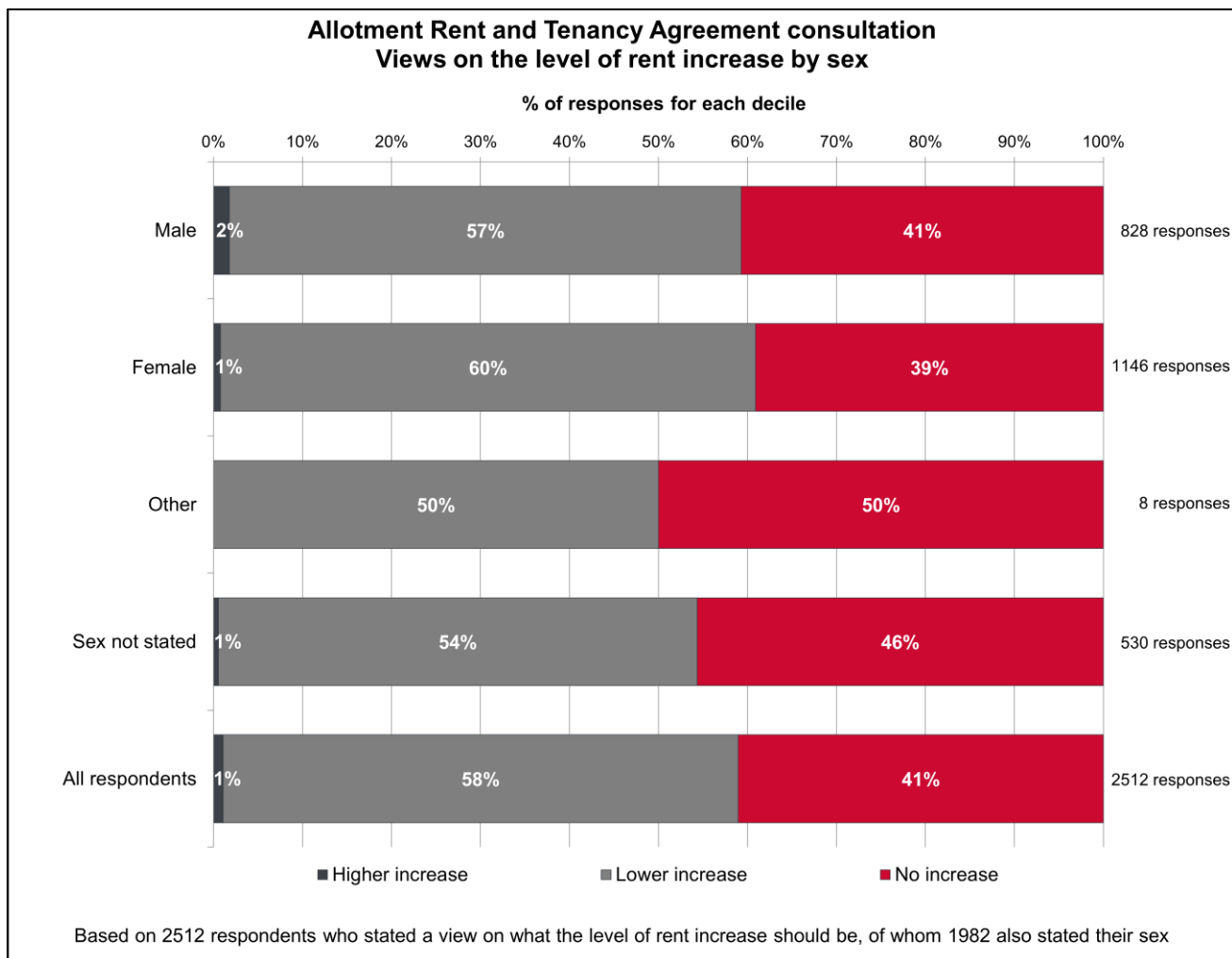
Figure 26: Views on the level of rent increase by ethnicity



4.2.2.4 Sex

Views on the levels of a rent increase are similar for male and female respondents. A slightly higher percentage of male respondents (2%) said there should be a higher increase in the level of rent than female respondents (1%). See Figure 27.

Figure 27: Views on the level of rent increase by sex

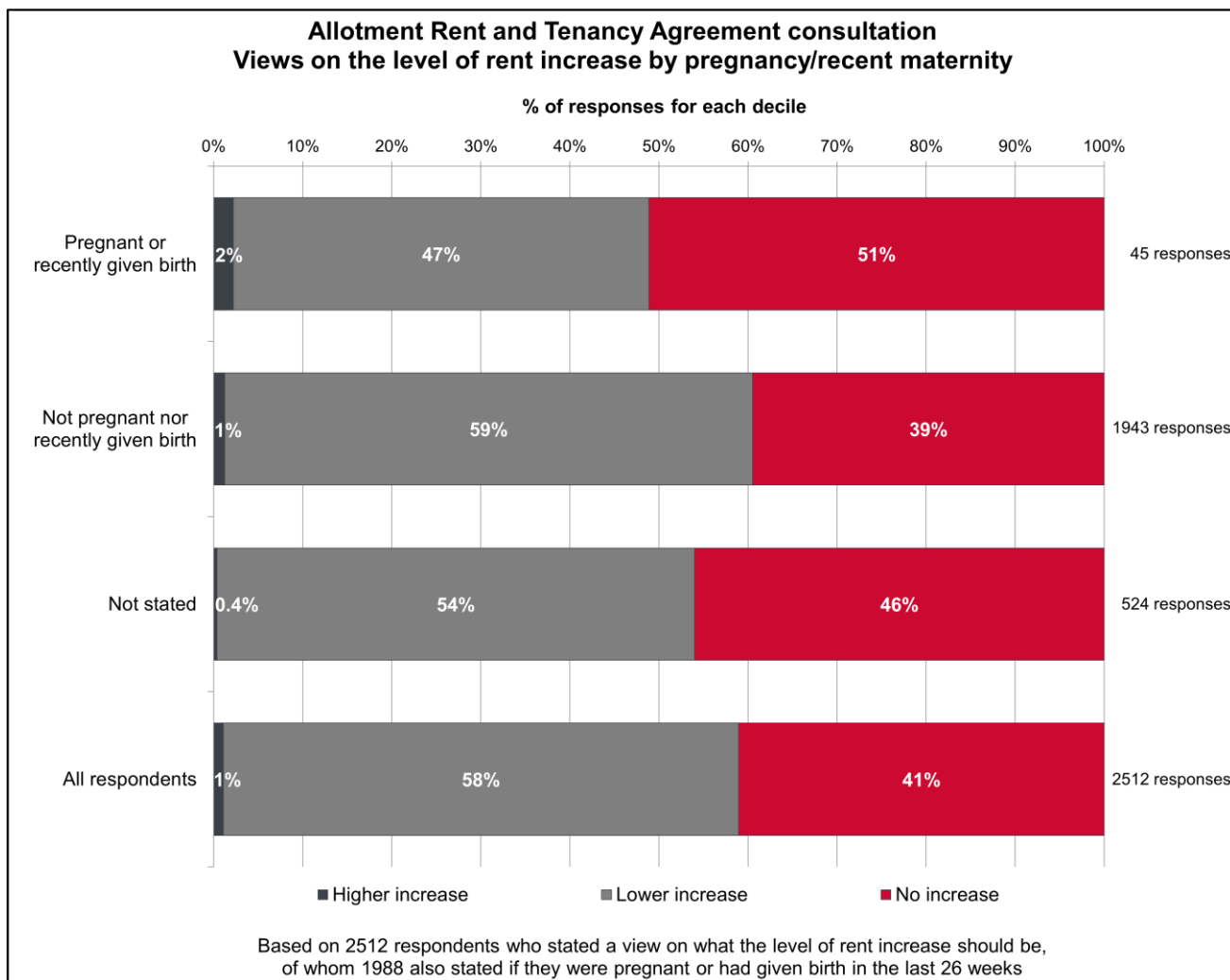


4.2.2.5 Pregnancy/maternity

Respondents who are pregnant or have recently given birth express higher support for 'no increase' (51%) than respondents who are not pregnant/recently given birth (39%).

A slightly higher percentage of respondents who are pregnant or have recently given birth said there should be a 'higher increase' in the level of rent, than other respondents (Figure 28).

Figure 28: Views on the level of rent increase by pregnancy/recent maternity

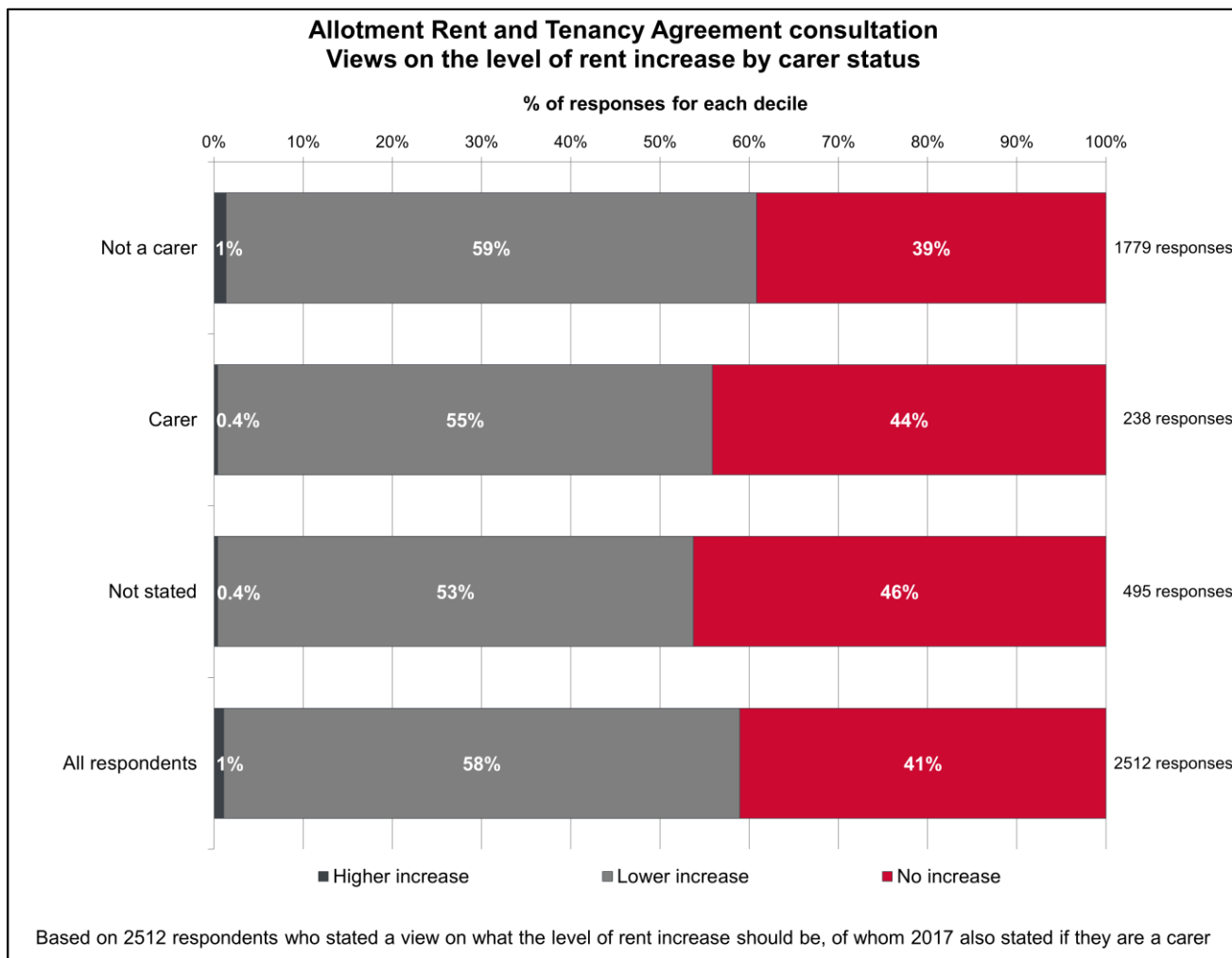


4.2.2.6 Carers

A larger percentage of carers (44%) thought there should be 'no increase', than for those who are not carers (39%). See Figure 29.

A slightly higher percentage of non-carers (1%) support a 'higher increase', compared to carers (0.4%).

Figure 29: Views on the level of rent increase by carer status



4.3 Views on expanding the low income rent discount

Bristol City Council currently offers a 50% rent discount to tenants on a low income who are in receipt of Council Tax reduction or Universal Credit Housing Benefit.

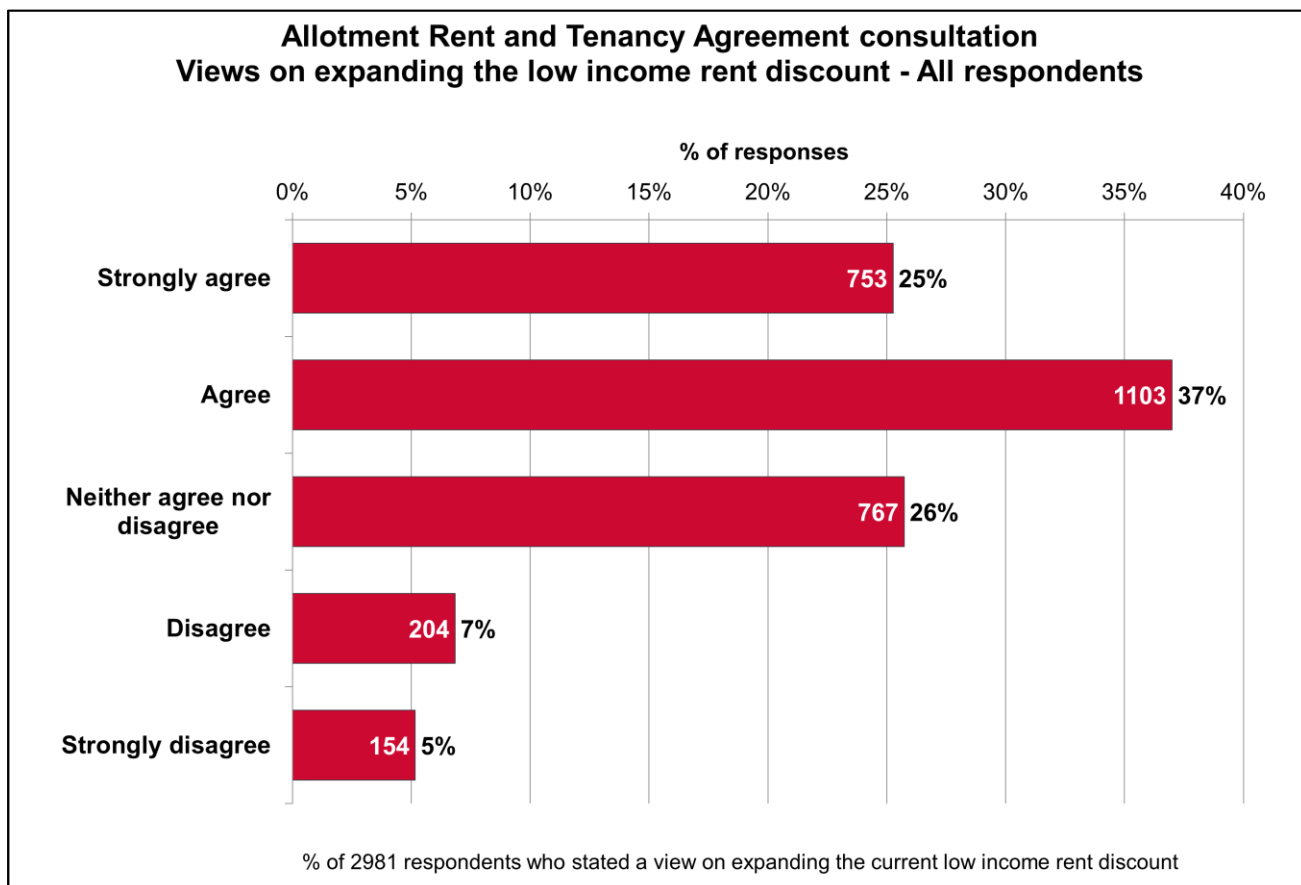
The proposal in the consultation was to expand the 50% rent discount to include people in receipt of all Universal Credit or Pensions Credit benefits.

Respondents were asked if they agreed or disagreed with expanding the current low income discount offered.

- 62% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with expanding the discount
- 26% neither agreed nor disagreed
- 12% disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Figure 30 shows the percentage of respondents who strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree with each action, and the number of people who gave views on each.

Figure 30: Views on expanding the low income rent discount from all respondents



4.3.1 Views on expanding the low income rent discount by levels of deprivation

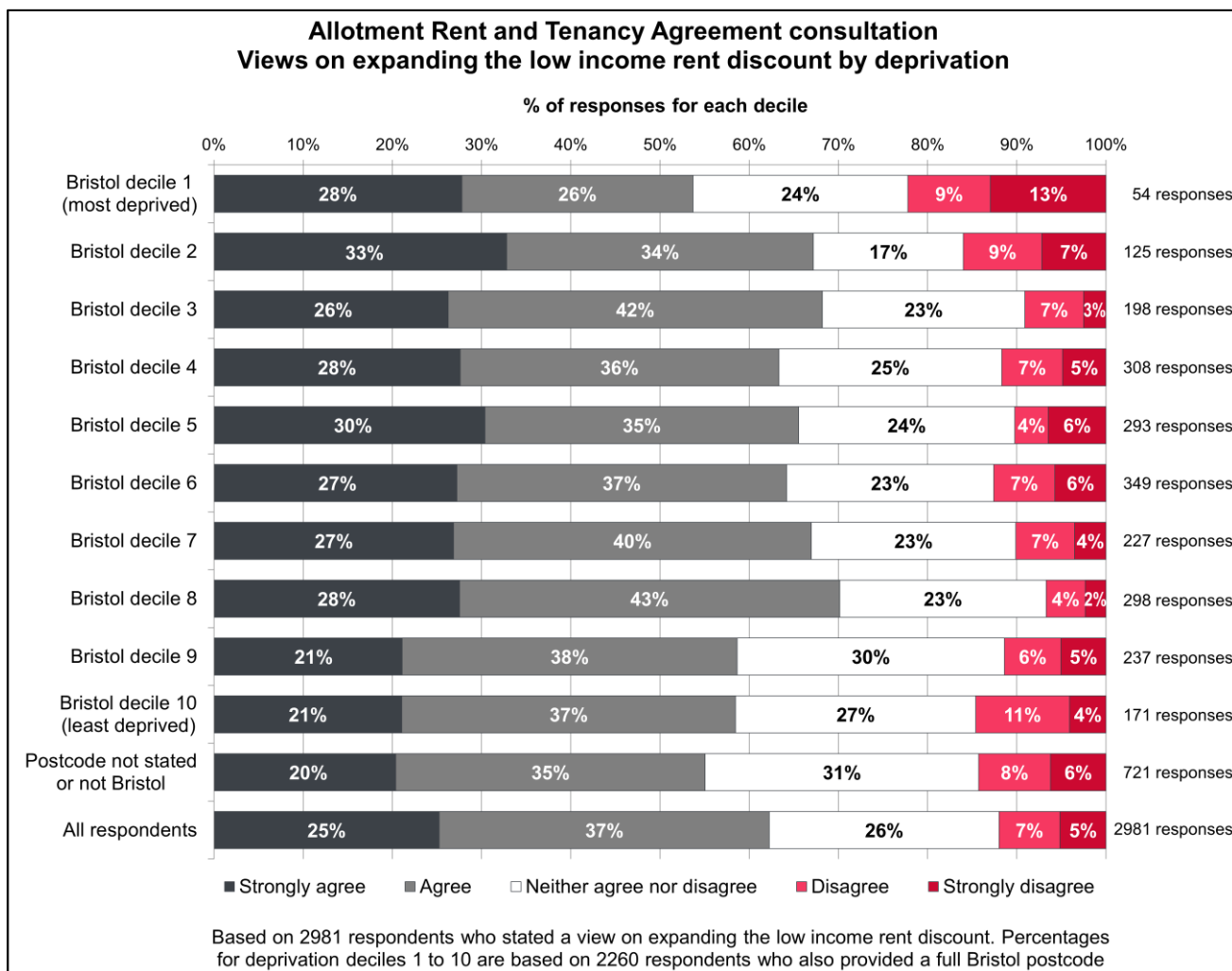
There is no clear trend in the views on expanding the low rent discount between areas with different levels of deprivation (Figure 31).

Decile 1 (the most deprived) and decile 10 (the least deprived) have the highest percentages of respondents who disagree or strongly disagree with expanding the low rent discount

Decile 1 and deciles 9 and 10 also have lower percentages who agree/strongly agree than the rest of the deciles.

In all deciles, a majority (least 54%) agree or strongly agree with the proposal.

Figure 31: Views on expanding the low income rent discount by deprivation

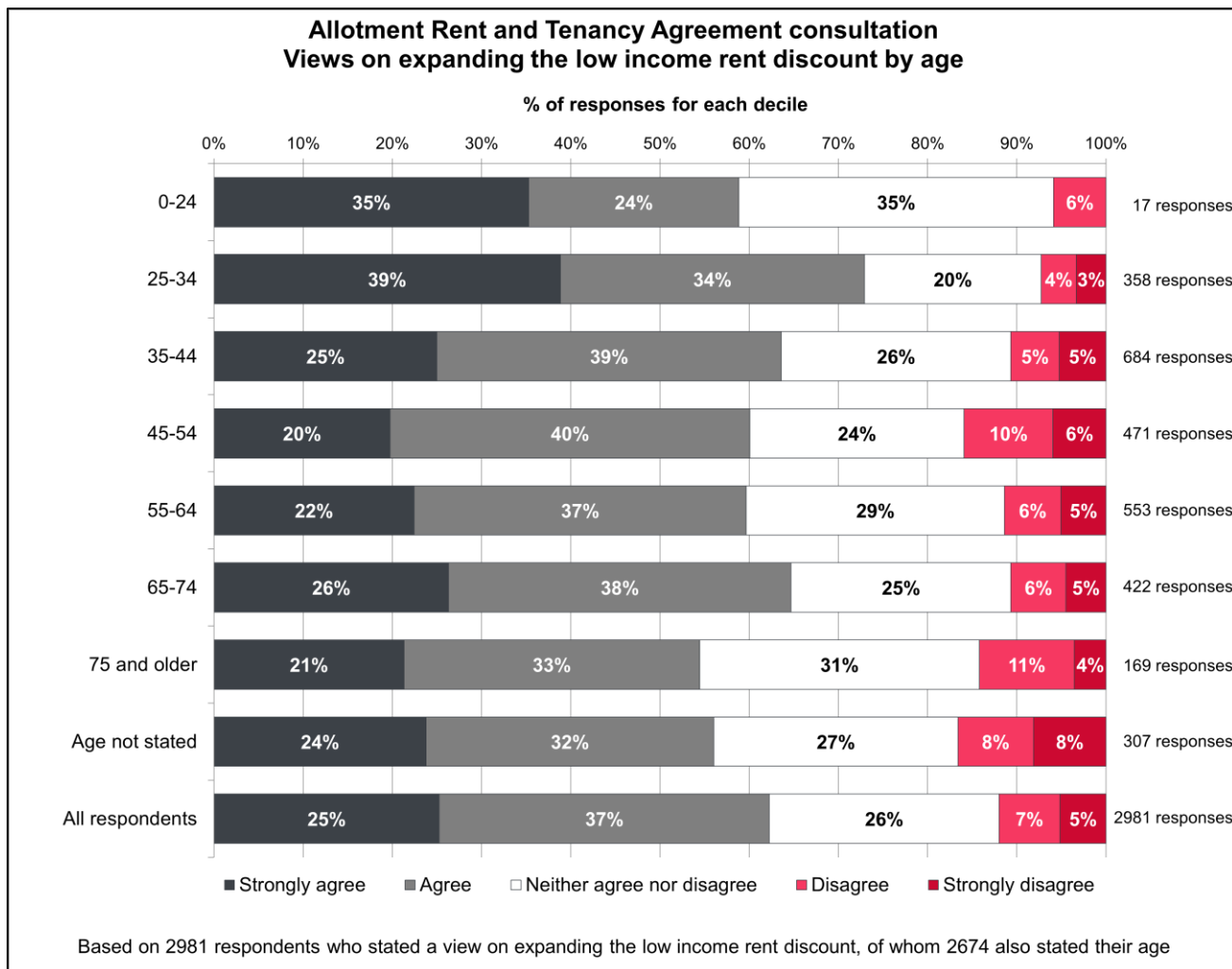


4.3.1.1 Age

There is a weak trend of decreasing support with increasing age for expanding the low income rent discount. (Figure 32).

A majority of respondents in all age groups support the proposal.

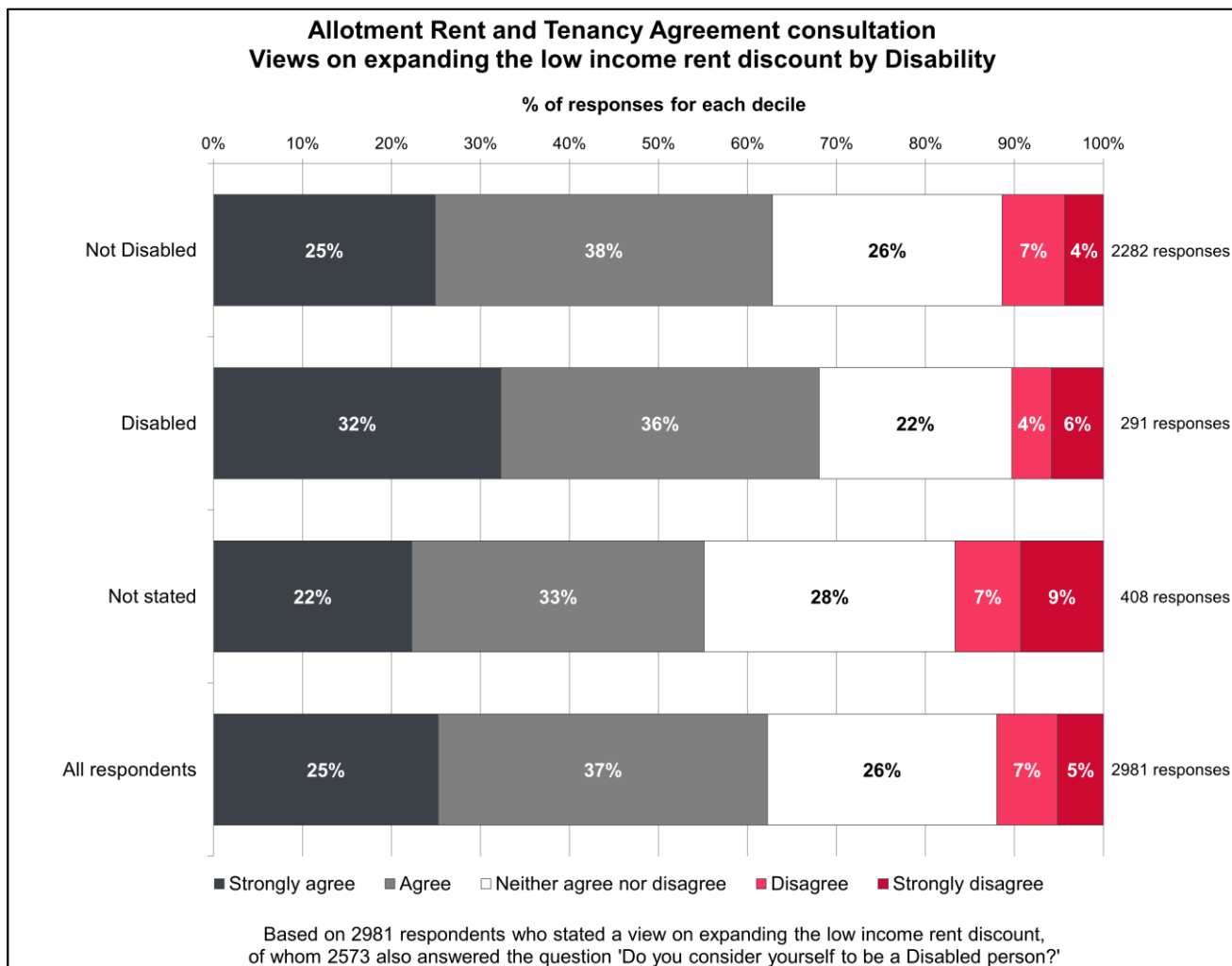
Figure 32: Views on expanding the low income rent discount by age



4.3.1.2 Disability

A higher percentage of Disabled respondents (68%) agree or strongly agree with expanding the low income rent discount, compared to 63% of non-Disabled respondents (Figure 33).

Figure 33: Views on expanding the low income rent discount by disability



4.3.1.3 Ethnicity

There were several differences between ethnic groups in levels of agreement and disagreement with expanding the low income rent discount (Figure 34).

Groups with a higher percentage of agreement than all respondents were:

- White British
- Black, Black British, Caribbean or African
- Other white background

Groups with a lower percentage of agreement than all respondents were:

- Asian or Asian British
- Mixed or multiple ethnic groups
- Other ethnic background

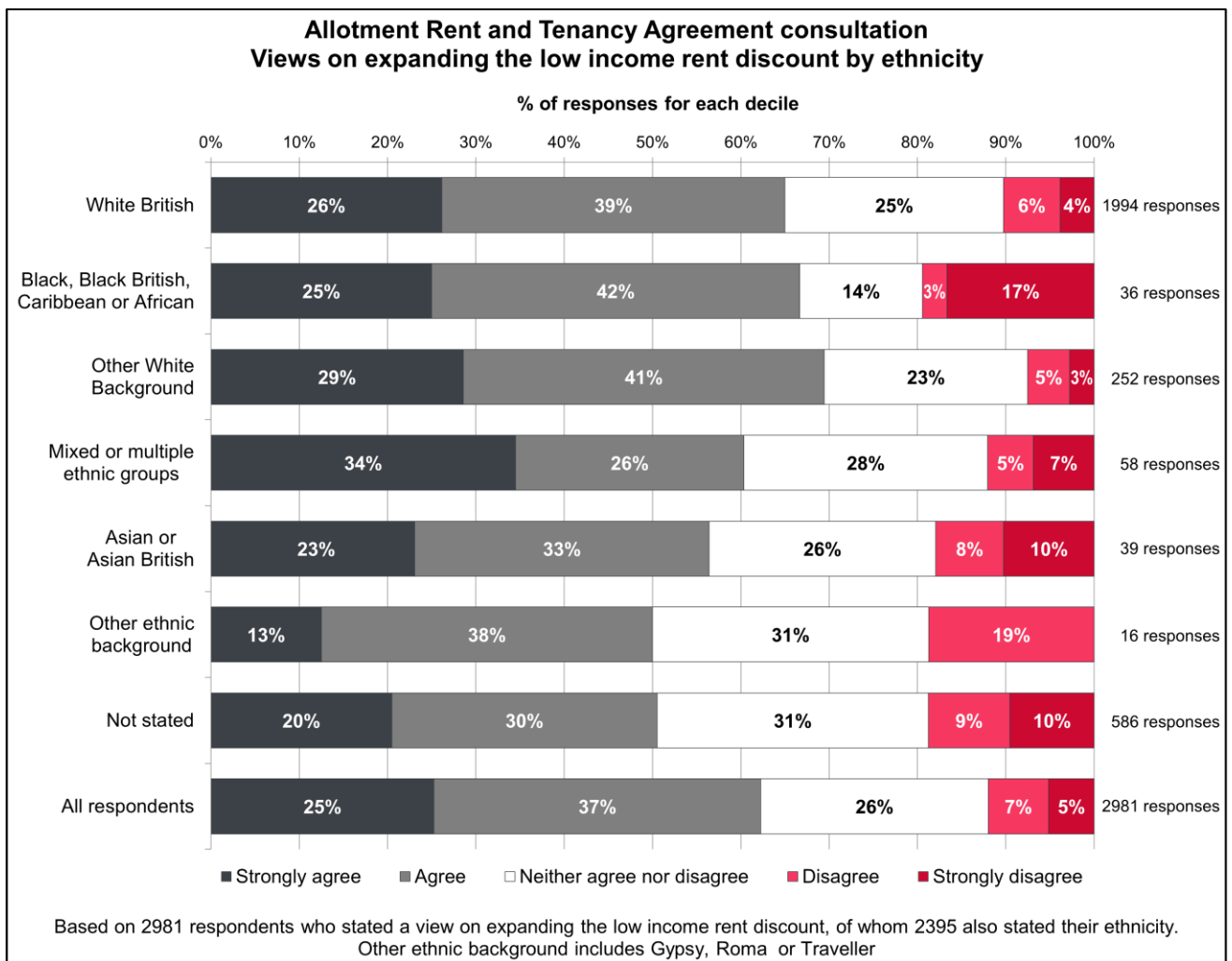
Groups with a higher percentage of disagreement than all respondents were:

- Black, Black British, Caribbean or African
- Asian or Asian British
- Other ethnic background

Groups with a lower percentage of disagreement than all respondents were:

- White British
- Other white background

Figure 34: Views on expanding the low income rent discount by ethnicity

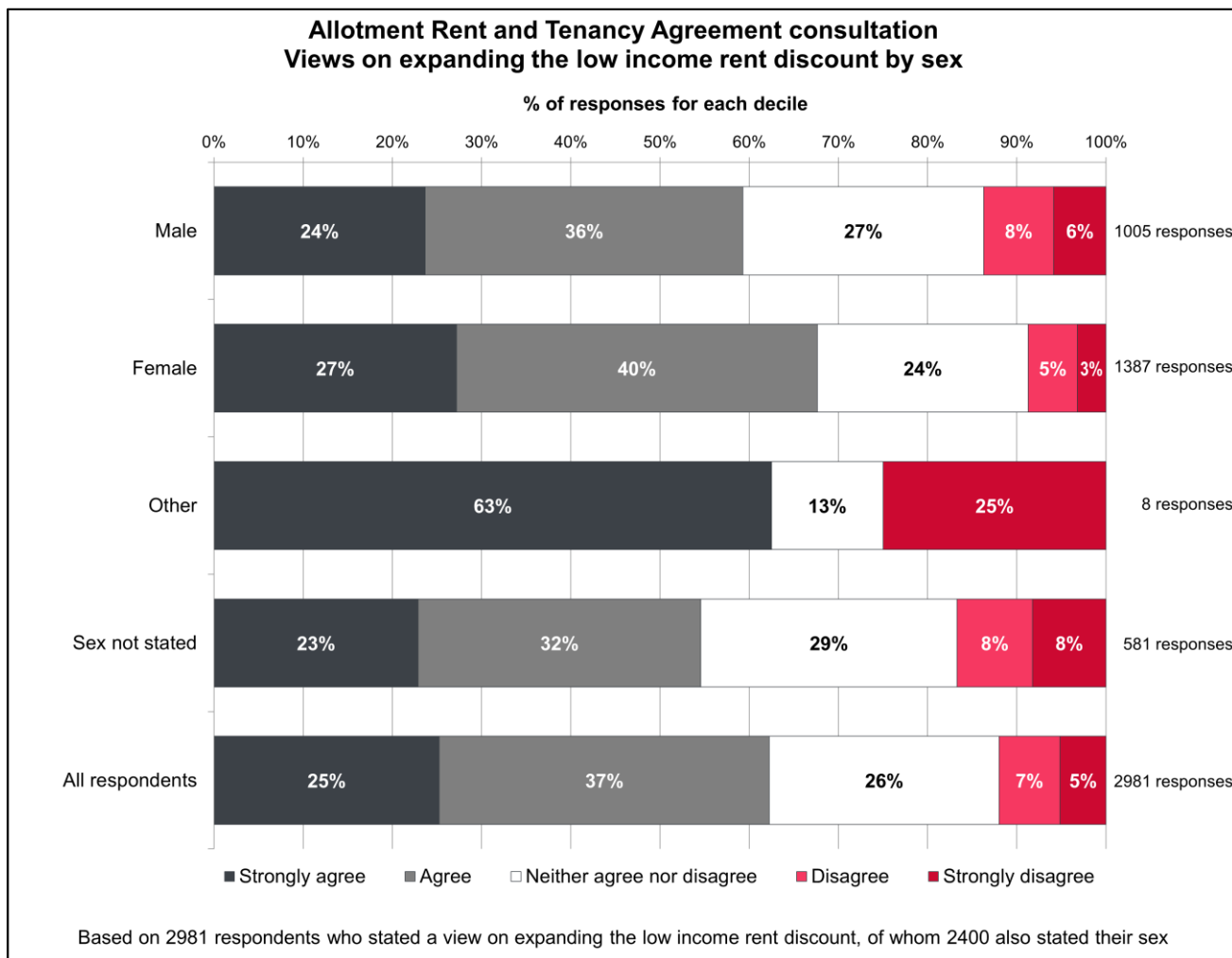


4.3.1.4 Sex

A higher percentage of female respondents (67%) agreed or strongly agreed with the expansion of the low income discount than male respondents (60%). See Figure 35.

The percentage of females who disagreed or strongly disagreed (8%) was correspondingly lower than for males (14%).

Figure 35: Views on expanding the low income rent discount by sex

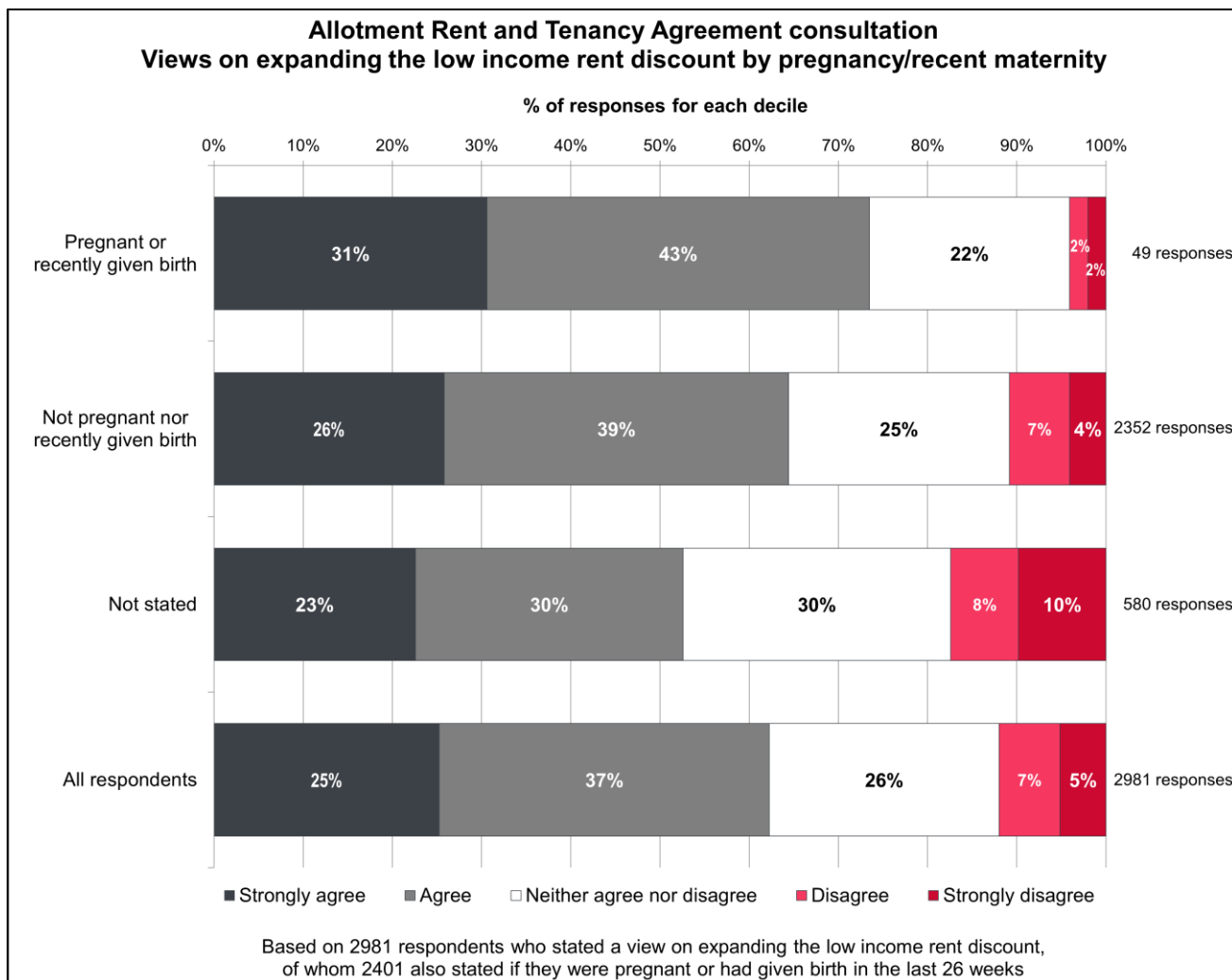


4.3.1.5 Pregnancy/maternity

A higher percentage of respondents who were pregnant or had recently given birth (74%) agreed or strongly agreed with the expansion of the low income discount than those who had not (65%). See Figure 36.

The percentage of respondents who were pregnant or had recently given birth who disagreed or strongly disagreed (4%) was correspondingly lower than for respondents who had not (11%).

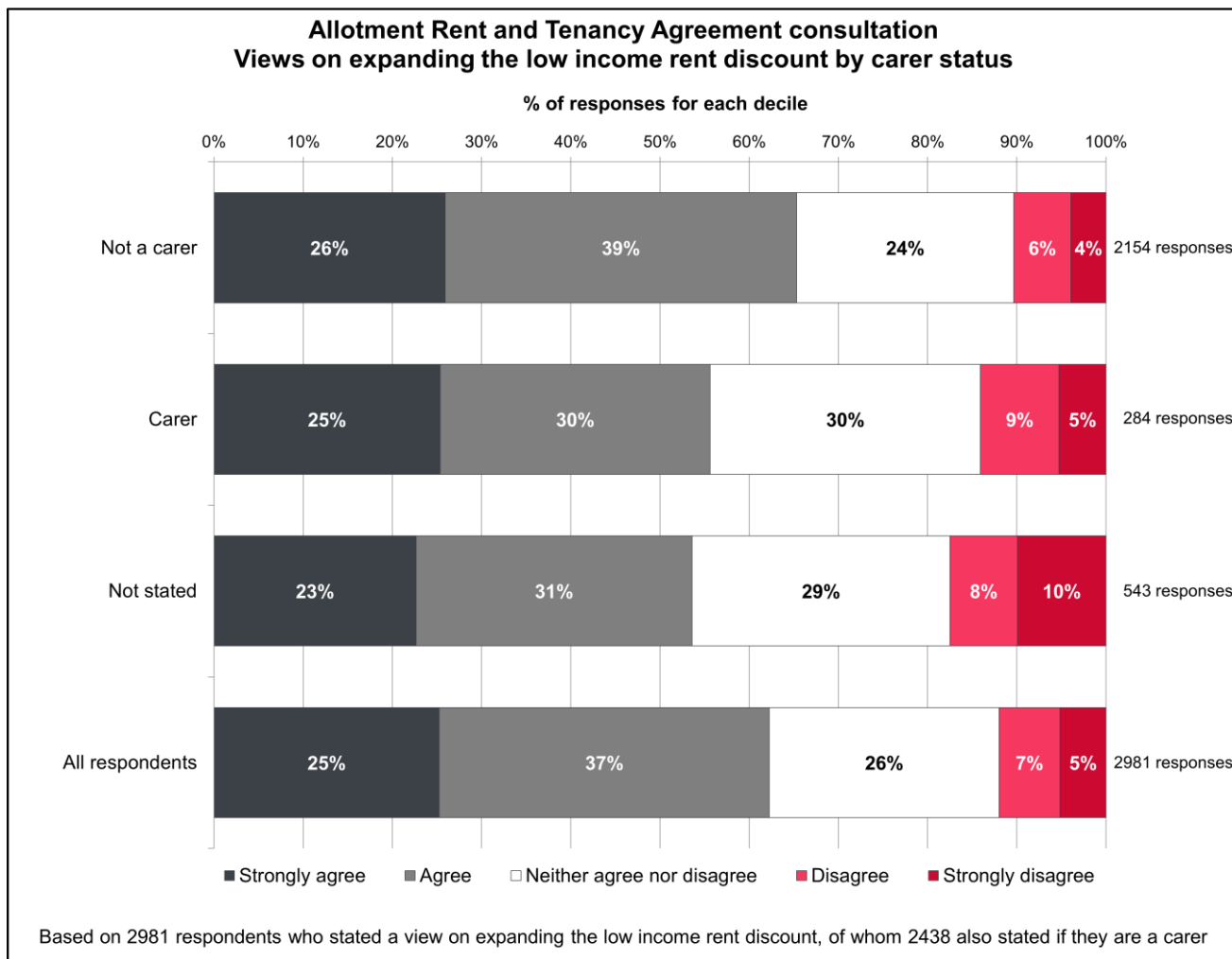
Figure 36: Views on expanding the low income rent discount by pregnancy/recent maternity



4.3.1.6 Carers

A lower percentage of carers agreed or strongly agreed with the expansion of the low income rent discount than non-carers (55% of carers and 65% of non-carers). Carers had a higher percentage of both neither agree nor disagree and disagree/strongly disagree than non-carers (Figure 37).

Figure 37: Views on expanding the low income rent discount by carer status



4.4 Free text comments on the proposed allotment rent fee increase, low-income discount and water charge

Respondents were invited to say why they agreed or disagreed with the rent increase proposal, expanding the current low income rent discount, the revised tenancy agreement and rules, or to provide comments and suggestions about the proposals. 2,336 respondents provided free text responses, and 112 respondents provided email and letter responses.

This feedback has been categorised into the following themes (Figure 38).

Rent increase and low-income discount

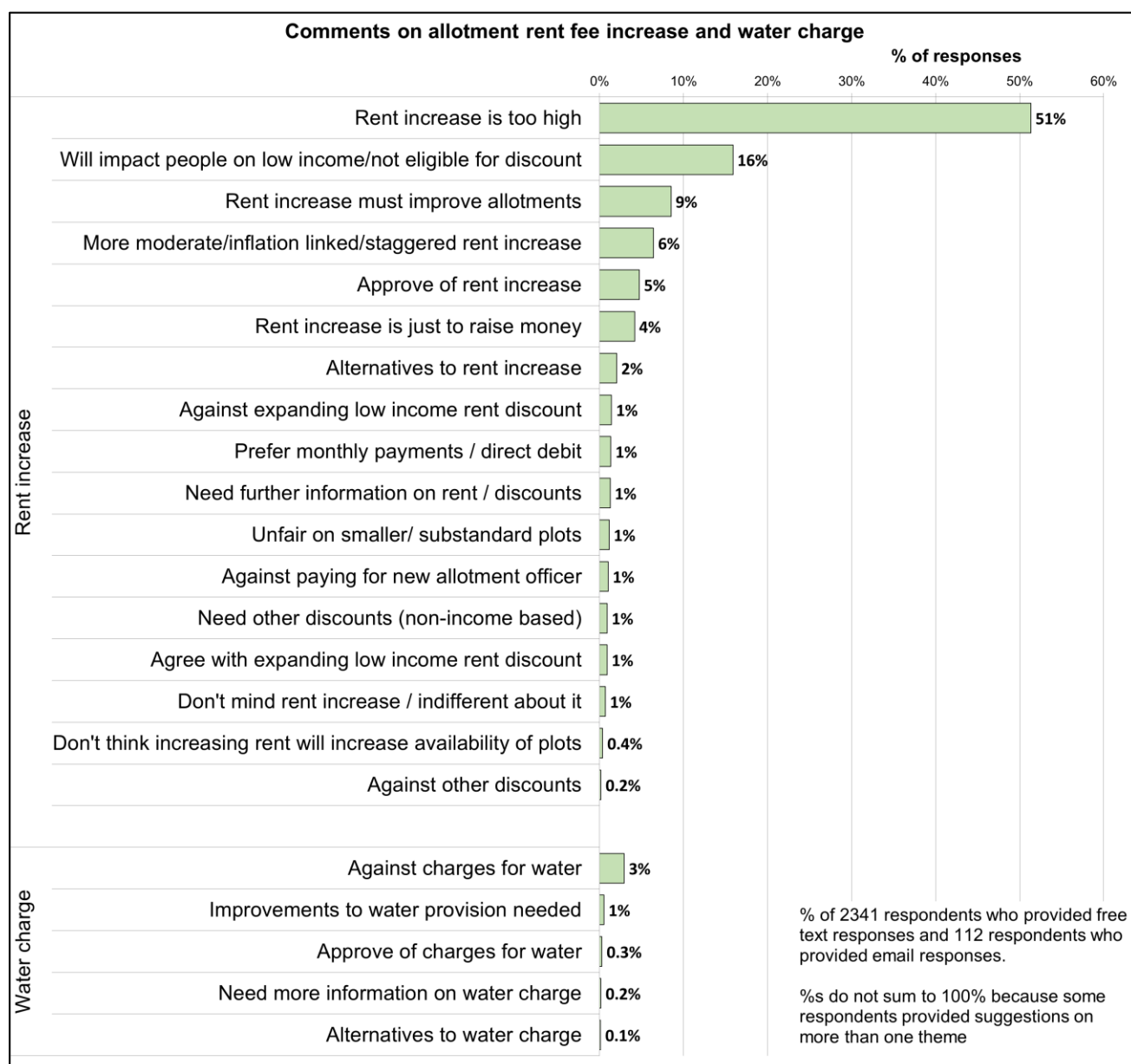
- 51% of respondents said the rent increase was too high.
- 16% said the rent increase would negatively impact people on low incomes, and particularly those who are on relatively low incomes, but are not eligible for the low-income discount. There were suggestions for ways to expand the low-income discount to help these people.
- 9% said that if the rent increased, there should be improvements to the allotments and the allotment service, and that they feel they do not currently receive a sufficient service from the council.
- 6% said the increase should be more moderate, in line with inflation, and/or staggered incrementally over a number of years.
- 5% approved of the rent increase.
- 4% believed that the proposed rent increase was being used by the council to raise money rather than improve the allotments.
- 2% provided alternative to increasing the rent, such as:
 - Reducing council overheads
 - Better management of waiting lists and turnover of empty plots to increase the number of plots being used and rented
 - Petition the government to increase funding
 - Charge for other things, e.g. polluting vehicles.
- 1% agreed with expanding the low income rent discount.
- 1% were against expanding the low income discount.
- 1% said they would prefer paying the rent fee monthly, and/or on a direct debit.
- 1% said they needed further information on the rent increase, e.g. what it would be spent on.
- 1% said the rent increase would be unfair on smaller and substandard plots, as they pay relatively more for less benefit.
- 1% were against paying for a new allotment officer.

- 1% said there needed to be additional, non-income-related discounts, e.g. for long-term tenants.
- 1% said they either didn't mind or were indifferent about the rent increase.
- 0.4% said they didn't think that increasing the rent would result in an increase in the availability of plots.
- 0.2% were against other discounts.

Water charges

- 3% of respondents were against charges for water.
- 1% said that improvements to water provision on allotment sites were required.
- 0.3% of respondents approved of the charges for water.
- 0.2% said they needed more information on the water charges.
- 0.1% provided alternative suggestions for charging for water.

Figure 38: Comments on the allotment rent fee increase and water charge



As described in section 1.2, the categories presented in this report are limited to the rent increase, the low income rent discount, and the water charge. Feedback on the other consultation proposals are not included in this report, but will be used to help develop revised proposals as part of the collaborative process.

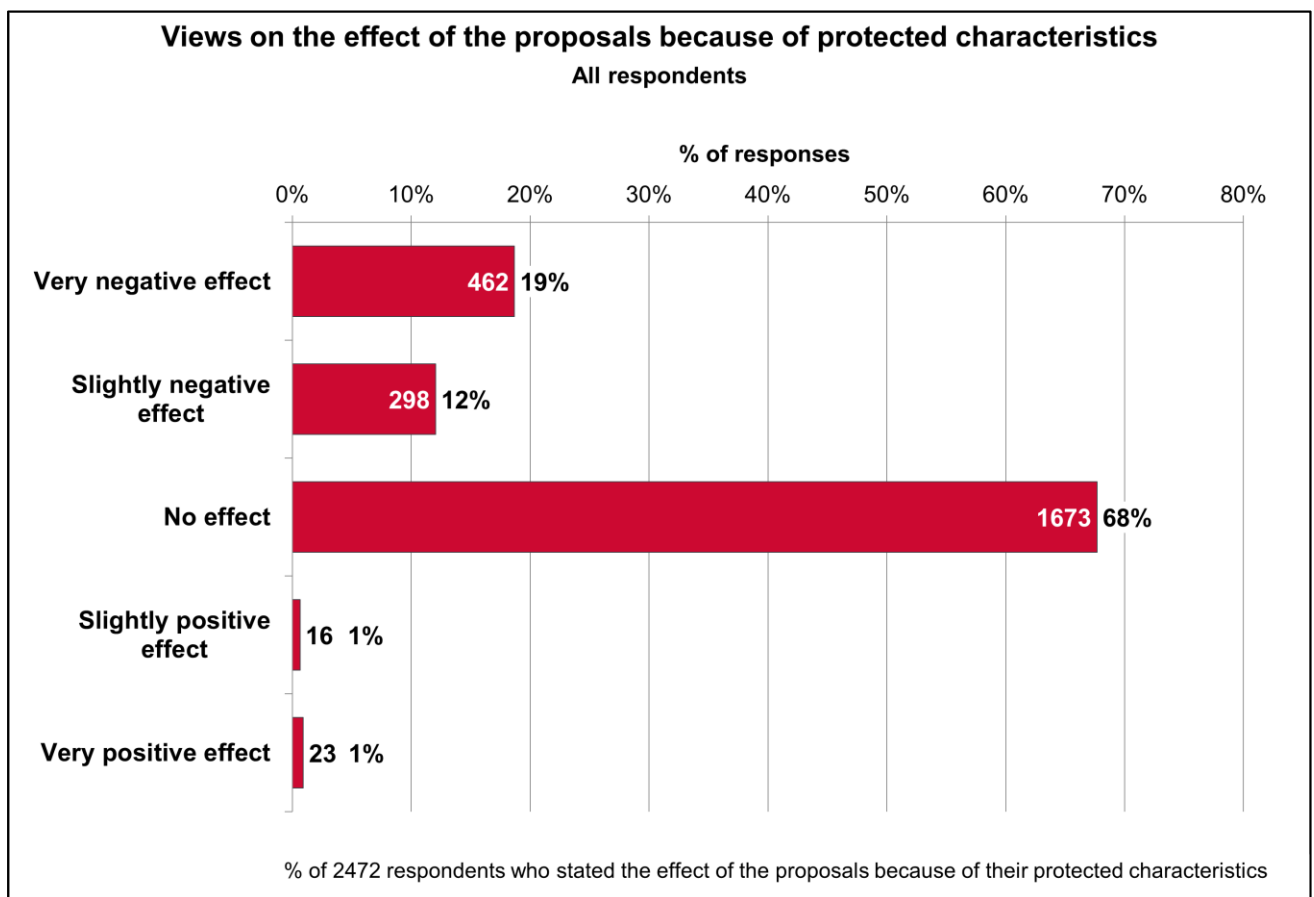
5 Impact of the proposals because of protected characteristics

5.1 Scale of effects

Respondents were asked what effect, if any, the proposals would have on them because of their protected characteristics⁶. Of the 3,016 respondents to the survey, 2,472 (82%) answered the question. Of these (Figure 39):

- 68% of respondents said there would be no effect of the proposals on them because of their protected characteristics
- 19% said there would be a very negative effect and 12% said there would be a slightly negative effect
- 1% said there would be a slightly positive effect and 1% said there would be a very positive effect.

Figure 39: Views on effects of the proposals because of protected characteristics



⁶ The protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010 are age; disability; race including colour; nationality, ethnic or national origin; religion or belief; sex; gender reassignment; sexual orientation; being married or in a civil partnership; being pregnant or on maternity leave.

5.2 Reasons why proposals would affect people because of protected characteristics

Respondents were also asked to explain how they believe the proposals would have an impact on themselves or others. The 580 respondents who provided a free text response highlighted the following impacts.

Disability

148 (26%) respondents said that the proposals would have a negative impact on Disabled people.

The reasons given are summarised below:

- Lower income due to disability means the rent increase has more of a negative effect
- Required standards will be harder to meet due to disability
- A ban on temporary helpers/co-workers will make it difficult for Disabled people to maintain their allotments to the required standard
- A negative effect of the amount of changes in rules, restrictions, and financial burden on people with mental health disabilities – increase in anxiety, worsening conditions etc.
- Removing waste from an allotment plot requires using your own vehicle, which some disabilities prevent
- Disabled people may need sheds/shelters to rest whilst working on their allotments.

5 (1%) respondents said that the proposals would have a positive impact on people with disabilities. Reasons given included the rent discount being beneficial to them, and the ban on bonfires helping with respiratory disabilities.

Older people

147 (26%) respondents said that the proposals would have a negative impact on older people. The reasons given included:

- Reduced income due to no longer working and being on a pension means the rent increase has more of a negative effect on older people
- Negative effect on mental and physical health of no longer being able to work on their allotment due to the increased rent.

Younger people

4 (1%) respondents said that the proposals would have a negative impact on younger people, due to younger people having a lower income than older age groups, making the rent increase have more of a negative effect.

Women

34 (6%) respondents said that the proposals would have a negative impact on women. The reasons given included:

- The gender pay gap means the increase in fees will have more of a negative effect on women.

Pregnancy/maternity

31 (5%) respondents said that the proposals would have a negative impact due to pregnancy and maternity. The reasons given included:

- Reduced income due to maternity leave means the increase in fees will have more of a negative effect.

Ethnicity

16 (3%) respondents said that the proposals would have a negative impact due to ethnicity. The reasons given included:

- Ethnic minorities may have lower incomes, and so be more negatively impacted by the proposed rent increase
- The current lower numbers of ethnic minorities in gardening/allotments will be made worse by the proposed changes.

Carers

13 (2%) respondents said that the proposals would have a negative impact on carers. The reasons given included:

- Reduced income due to being a carer means the increase in fees will have more of a negative effect
- Allotments can be essential for a carer's mental health, due to the pressures of the caring responsibilities.

LGBT+

11 (2%) respondents said that the proposals would have a negative impact on people in the LGBT+ community. The reasons given included:

- The allotment communities the respondents belong to are welcoming to LGBT+ people and are seen as a safe space, and the proposed fee increase may result in them no longer being able to take part in them.

Religion/Faith

5 (1%) respondents said that the proposals would have a negative impact on people due to their religion/faith. The reasons given included:

- Nature worship and sharing activities such as growing and harvesting amongst family and friends being part of their religion/faith, which would be impacted by the proposed fee increase.

Refugees

2 (0.3%) respondents said that the proposals would have a negative impact on refugees. The reasons given included:

- There may be negative sentiment due to the expansion of the low-income discount, which could impact refugees
- Refugees may not be able to access the benefits required to be eligible for the low-income discount.

Other non-protected characteristics mentioned

Lower income

166 (29%) responses said that the proposals would have a negative impact on people with lower incomes, and/or that they would cause a financial burden to people.

The lower incomes were often linked to protected characteristics, as mentioned above, however it was also raised as being a significantly impacted group, regardless of protected characteristics.

Parents/children

The reasons given included:

- Single parents may find it harder to pay the increased fee for allotments.
- Allotments can be essential for a parent's mental health, due to the pressures of parenting responsibilities.
- Allotments provide activities to do with the children.

6 How will this report be used?

The consultation feedback summarised in this report has been taken into consideration by officers when developing the proposed changes to allotment rent fees, low-income discount, and water charges.

The final proposals are included in a separate report which, together with this consultation report, will be considered by Cabinet on 5 March 2024.

How can I keep track?

You can find the latest consultation and engagement surveys online on the council's Consultation and Engagement Hub (www.ask.bristol.gov.uk). You can also sign up to receive automated email notifications about consultations and engagement at www.bristol.gov.uk/askbristolnewsletter

Decisions related to the proposals in this consultation will be made publicly at the Cabinet meeting on 5 March 2024.

You can find forthcoming meetings and their agendas at democracy.bristol.gov.uk.

Any decisions made by Full Council and Cabinet will also be shared at democracy.bristol.gov.uk