



Housing Strategy 2026-31

consultation report

southampton
dataobservatory 

Data, Intelligence & Insight Team | *October 2025*

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INTRODUCTION





Southampton City Council undertook a public consultation on a proposed new Housing Strategy for the period 2026 to 2031.

This consultation took place between **28/07/2025 – 21/09/2025** and received **220** responses.

The aim of this consultation was to:

- Clearly communicate the proposed plans to residents and stakeholders;
- Ensure any resident, business or stakeholder in Southampton that wished to comment on the proposals had the opportunity to do so, enabling them to raise any impacts the proposals may have, and;
- Allow participants to propose alternative suggestions for consideration which they feel could achieve the objectives of the plans in a different way.

This report summarises the aims, principles, methodology and results of the public consultation. It provides a summary of the consultation responses both for the consideration of decision makers and any interested individuals and stakeholders.

It is important to be mindful that a consultation is not a vote, it is an opportunity for stakeholders to express their views, concerns and alternatives to a proposal. This report outlines in detail the representations made during the consultation period so that decision makers can consider what has been said alongside other information.



Southampton City Council is committed to consultations of the highest standard and which are meaningful and comply with the *Gunning Principles*, considered to be the legal standard for consultations:

1. Proposals are still at a formative stage (a final decision has not yet been made);
2. There is sufficient information put forward in the proposals to allow 'intelligent consideration';
3. There is adequate time for consideration and response, and;
4. Conscientious consideration must be given to the consultation responses before a decision is made.



New Conversations 2.0
LGA guide to engagement



Rules: The Gunning Principles

They were coined by Stephen Sedley QC in a court case in 1985 relating to a school closure consultation (R v London Borough of Brent ex parte Gunning). Prior to this, very little consideration had been given to the laws of consultation. Sedley defined that a consultation is only legitimate when these four principles are met:

- 1. proposals are still at a formative stage**
A final decision has not yet been made, or predetermined, by the decision makers
- 2. there is sufficient information to give 'intelligent consideration'**
The information provided must relate to the consultation and must be available, accessible, and easily interpretable for consultees to provide an informed response
- 3. there is adequate time for consideration and response**
There must be sufficient opportunity for consultees to participate in the consultation. There is no set timeframe for consultation,¹ despite the widely accepted twelve-week consultation period, as the length of time given for consultee to respond can vary depending on the subject and extent of impact of the consultation
- 4. 'conscientious consideration' must be given to the consultation responses before a decision is made**
Decision-makers should be able to provide evidence that they took consultation responses into account

These principles were reinforced in 2001 in the 'Coughlan Case (R v North and East Devon Health Authority ex parte Coughlan²), which involved a health authority closure and confirmed that they applied to all consultations, and then in a Supreme Court case in 2014 (R ex parte Moseley v LB Haringey³), which endorsed the legal standing of the four principles. Since then, the Gunning Principles have formed a strong legal foundation from which the legitimacy of public consultations is assessed, and are frequently referred to as a legal basis for judicial review decisions.⁴

¹ In some local authorities, their local voluntary Compact agreement with the third sector may specify the length of time they are required to consult for. However, in many cases, the Compact is either inactive or has been cancelled so the consultation timeframe is open to debate

² BAILII, England and Wales Court of Appeal (Civil Division) Decisions, Accessed: 13 December 2016.

³ BAILII, United Kingdom Supreme Court, Accessed: 13 December 2016

⁴ The information used to produce this document has been taken from the Law of Consultation training course provided by The Consultation Institute



The agreed approach for this consultation was to use an online questionnaire as the main route for feedback. Questionnaires enable an appropriate amount of explanatory and supporting information to be included in a structured way, helping to ensure respondents are aware of the background and detail of the proposals.

Respondents could also write letters or emails to provide feedback on the proposals. Emails or letters from stakeholders that contained consultation feedback were collated and analysed as a part of the overall consultation.

Promotion, engagement and other comms activity included SCC corporate communications, including social media, newsletters and e-bulletins, as well as comms via relevant businesses and organisations.

All quantitative survey results have been analysed and presented in graphs within this report. Respondents were also given opportunities throughout the questionnaire to provide written feedback on the proposals.

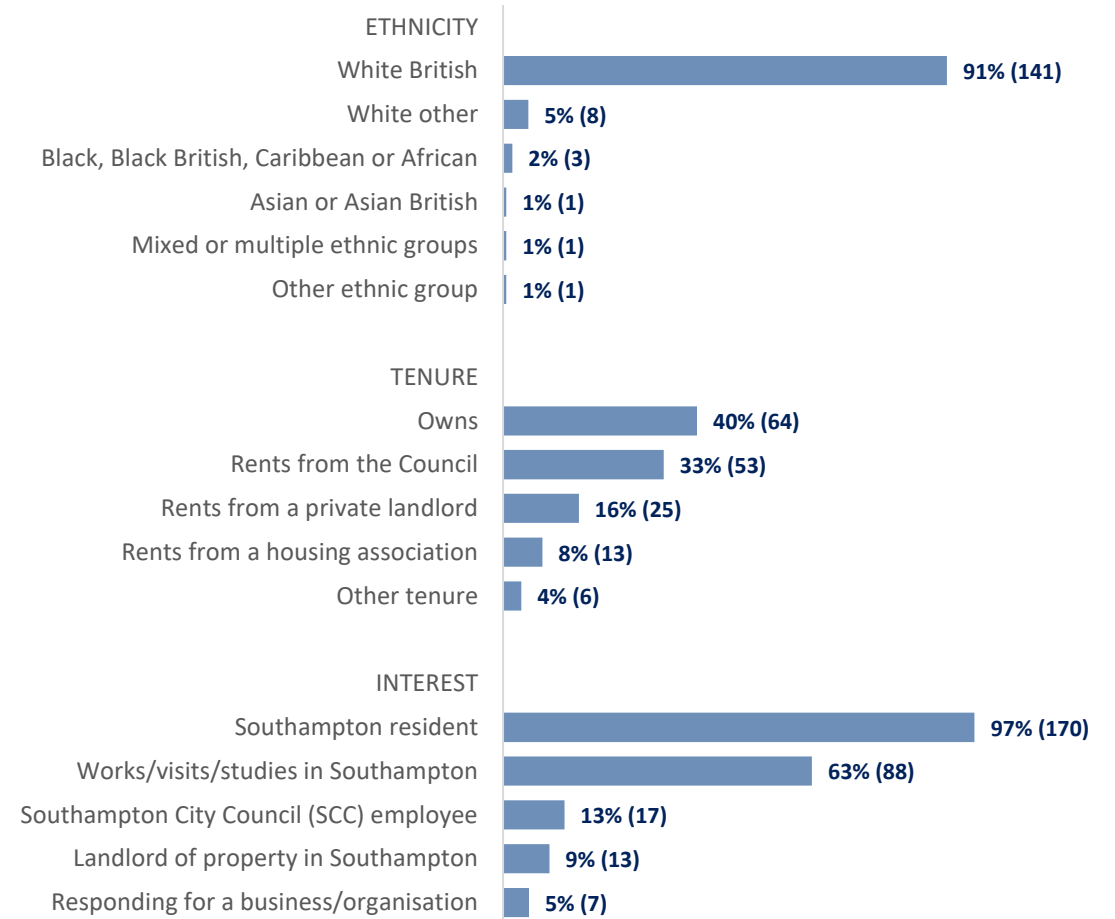
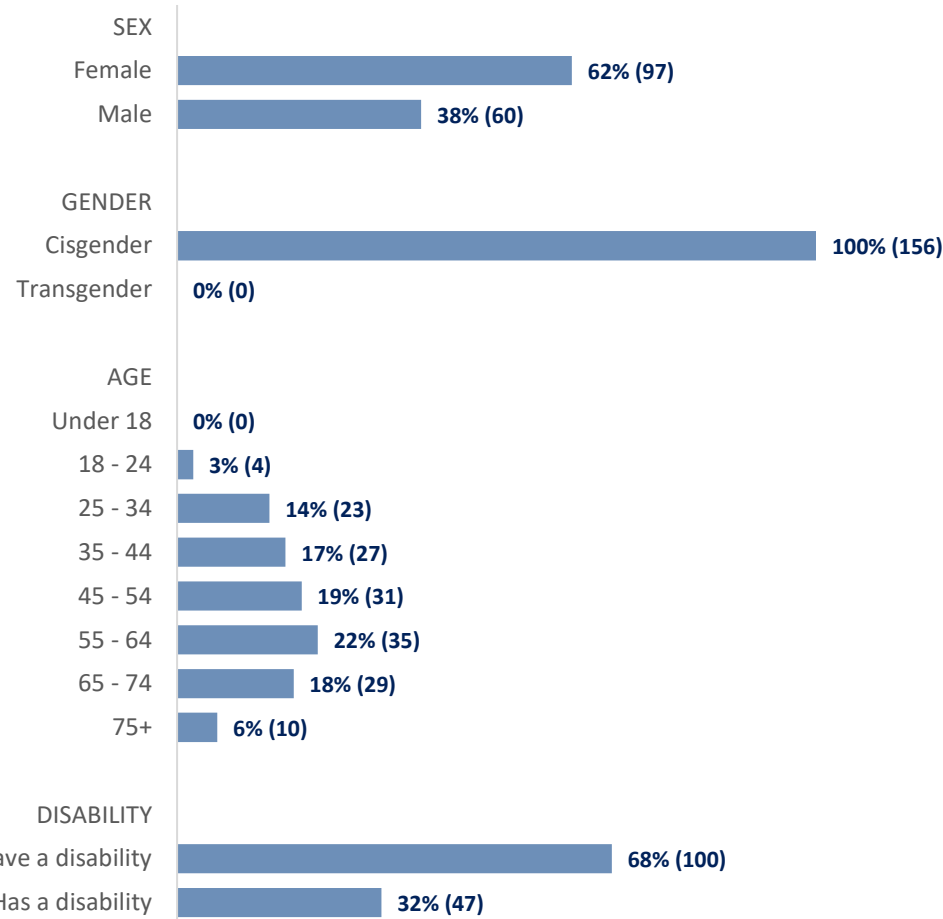




Who are the respondents?

Total responses

212 survey responses
8 email/letter responses
220 total





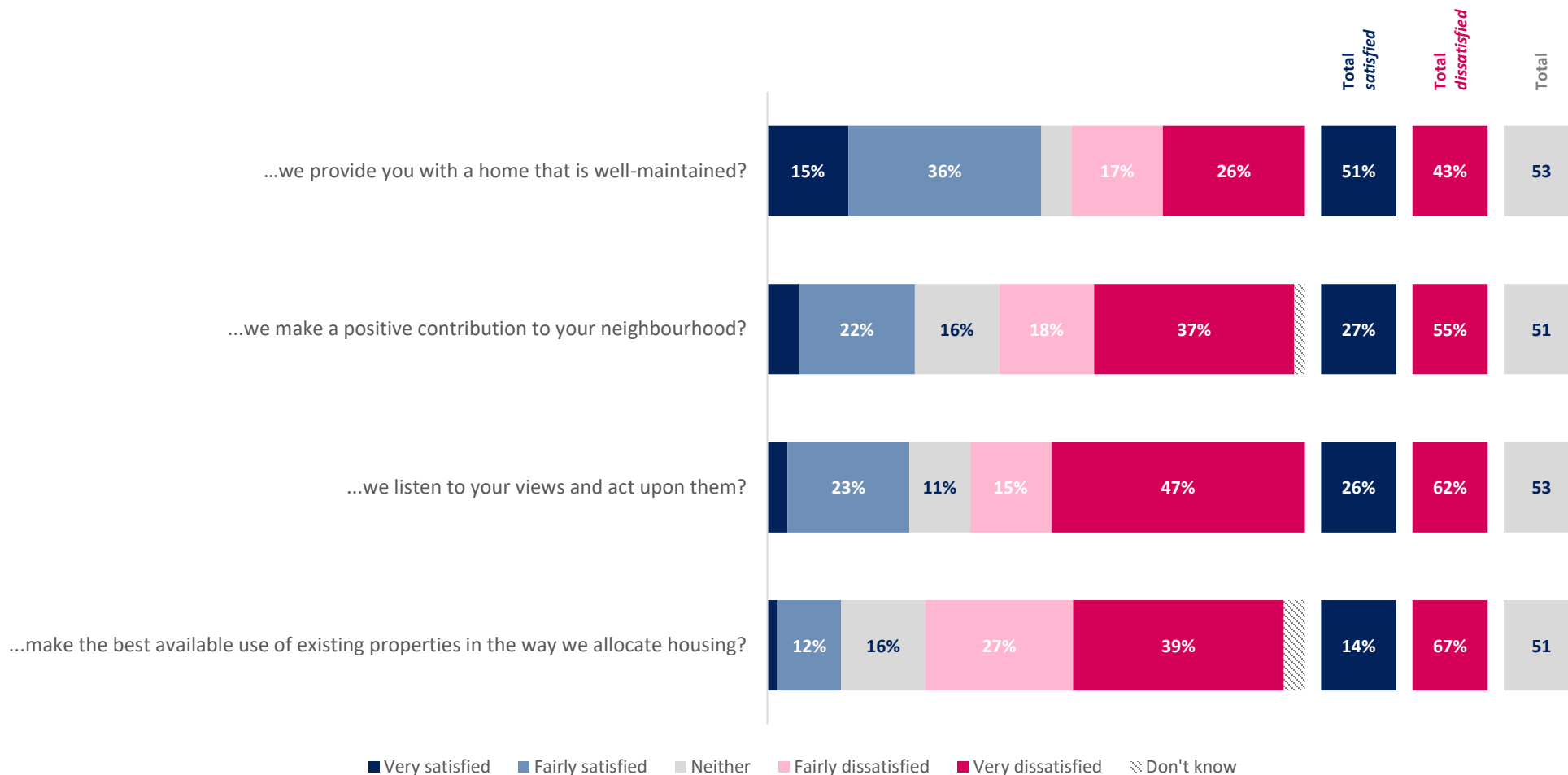
PRIORITY ONE

Improving our landlord services





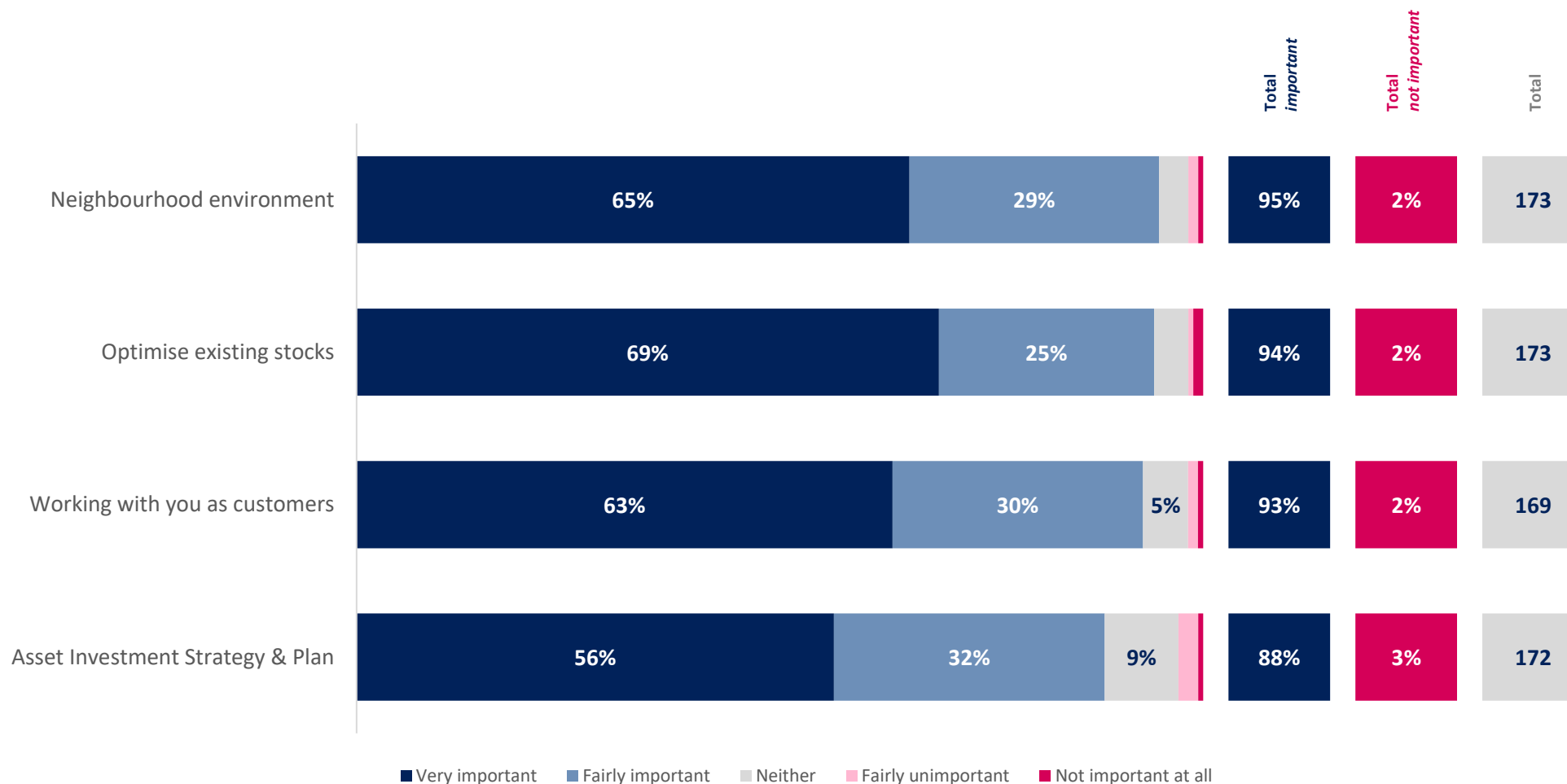
Question 1* | Currently, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you...





Question 2 |

How important do you feel the following suggested priorities are as part of improving our landlord services?

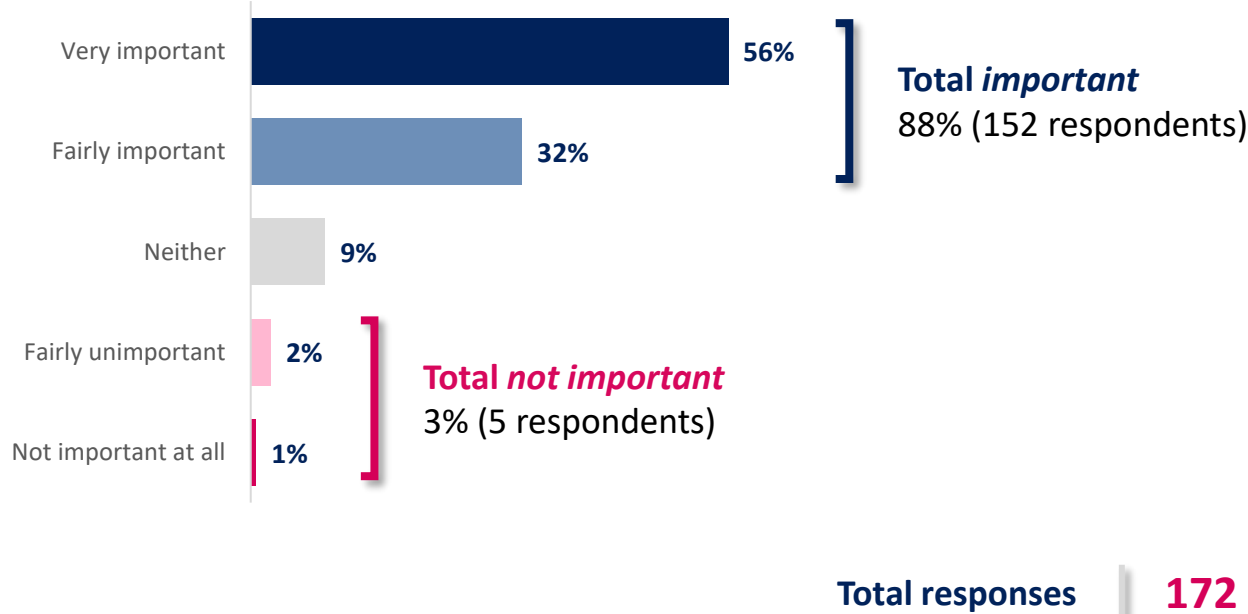


*Question asked only of those that confirmed they were Council tenants in response to the initial demographic question.



Question 2a

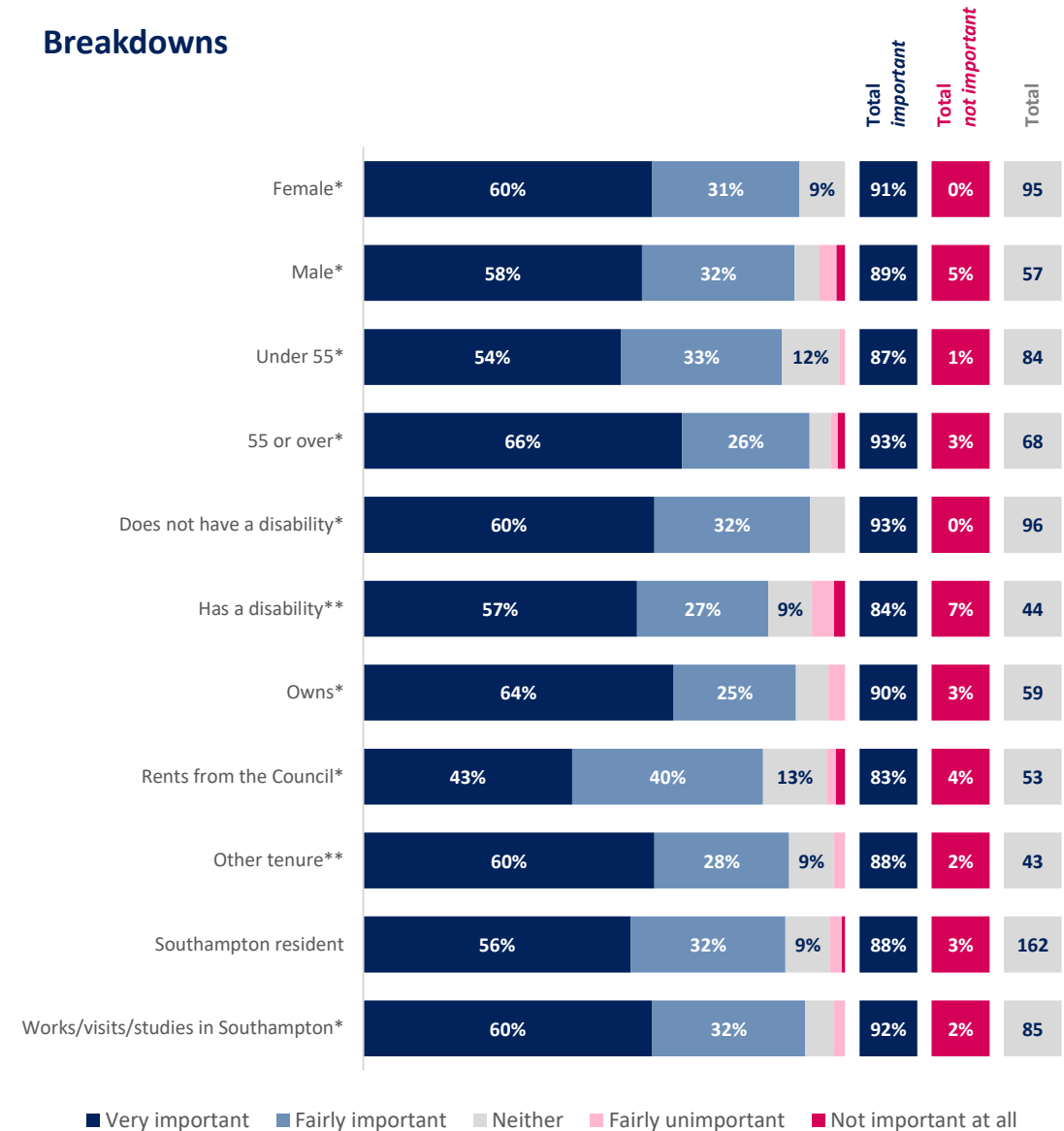
How important do you feel the following suggested priorities are as part of improving our landlord services? *Asset Investment Strategy & Plan*



Key findings

- 88% of respondents said that the Asset Investment Strategy & Plan was *important*, including over half (56%) that said it was *very important*
- Older respondents aged 55 or over and respondents that own their own home both said that this priority was *very important* between 64% and 66%
- The over-55s demographic responded *very important* 12% points more than the under-55s, and homeowners responded likewise 21% points more than respondents that rent from the Council
- Council renters also responded *very important* to the least extent at 43%, 13% points less than respondents overall, although still 83% *agree* total

Breakdowns

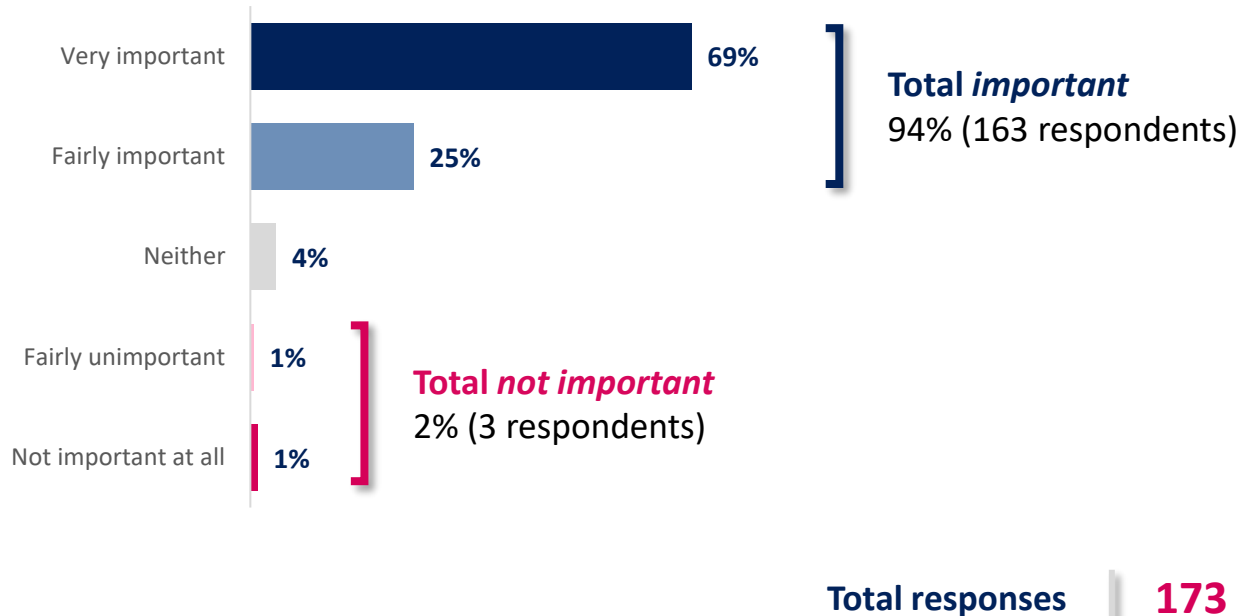


*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents.



Question 2b

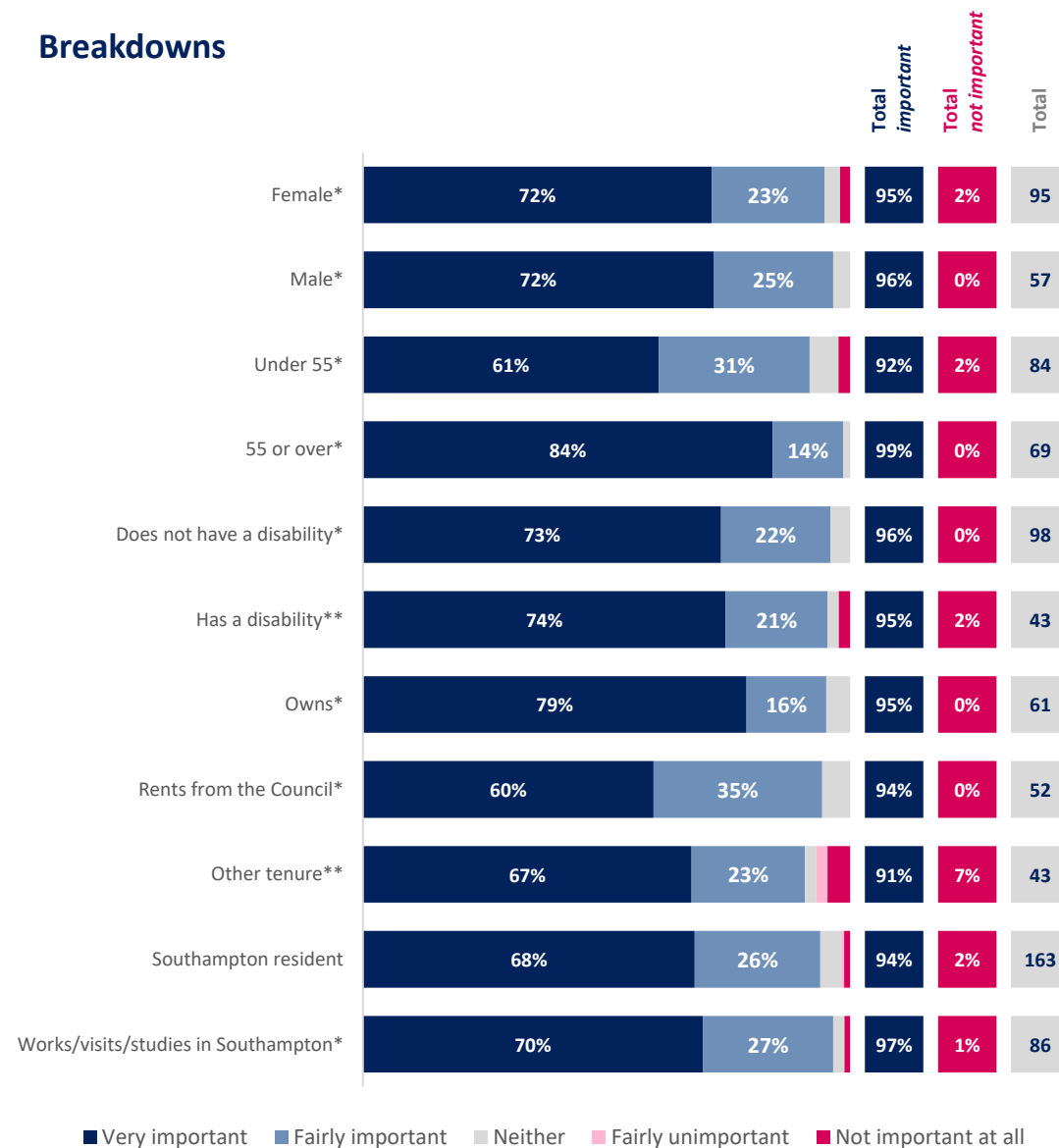
How important do you feel the following suggested priorities are as part of improving our landlord services? *Optimise existing stocks*



Key findings

- 94% said this priority was *important*, including 69% that said it was *very important*
- All demographic breakdowns also said *very important* by 60% or more

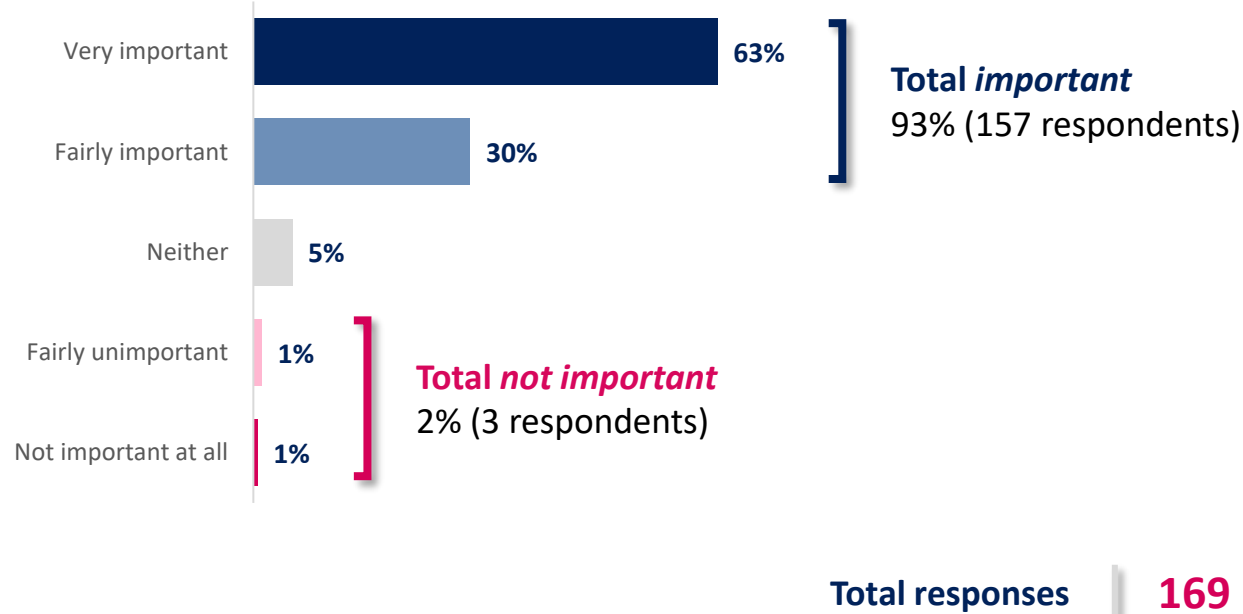
Breakdowns





Question 2c |

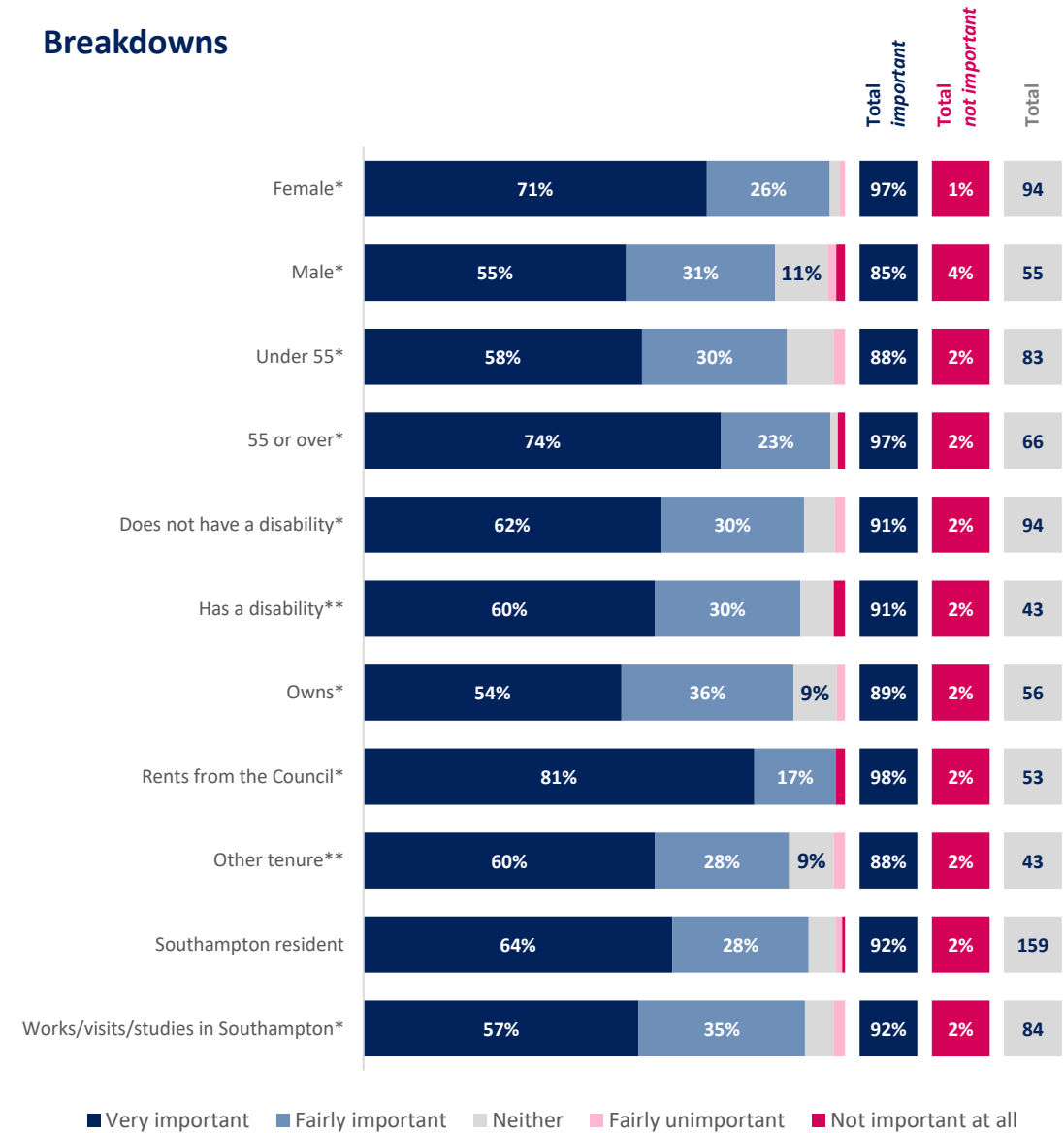
How important do you feel the following suggested priorities are as part of improving our landlord services? *Working with you as customers*



Key findings

- 93% of respondents said that this priority was *important*, including 63% that said it was *very important*
- This includes both 81% of respondents that rent from the Council and 54% of those that own their own home (% *very important*)

Breakdowns

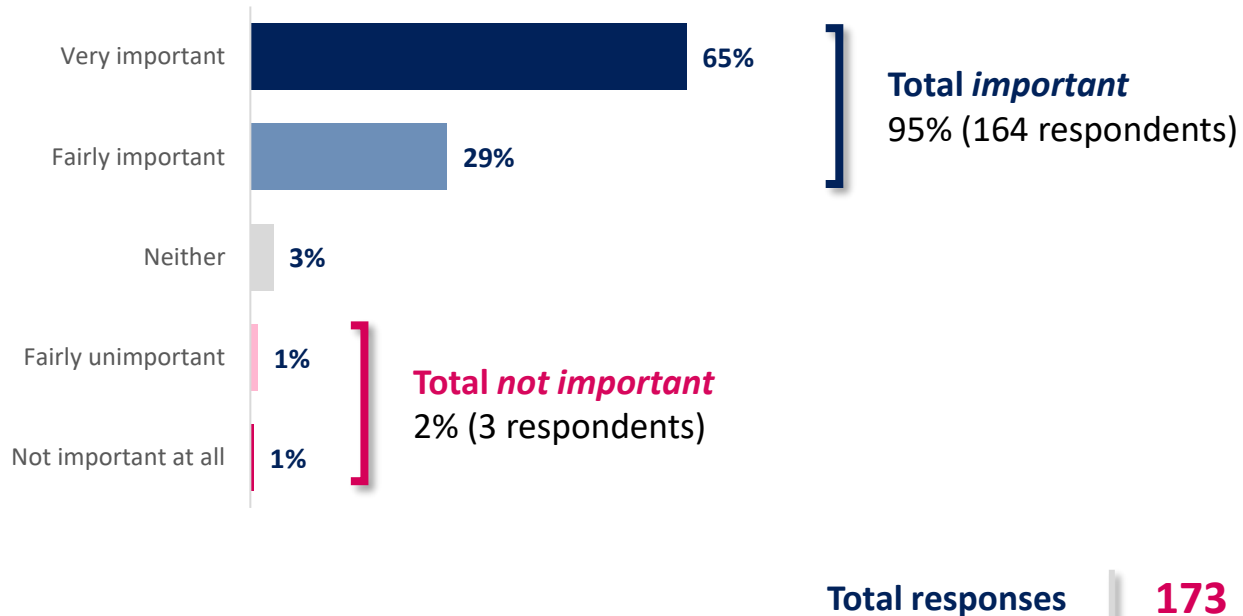


*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents.



Question 2d

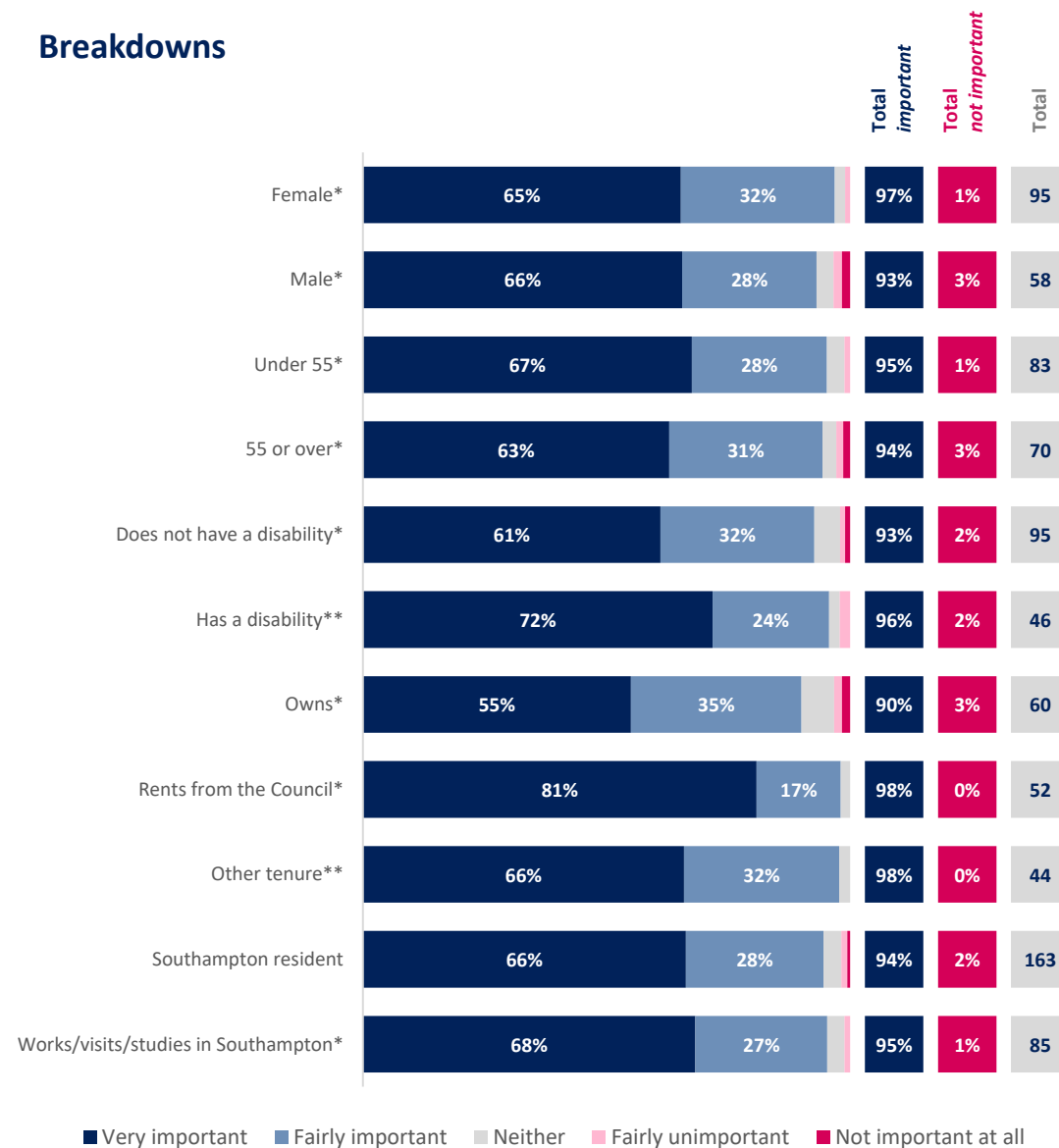
How important do you feel the following suggested priorities are as part of improving our landlord services? *Neighbourhood environment*

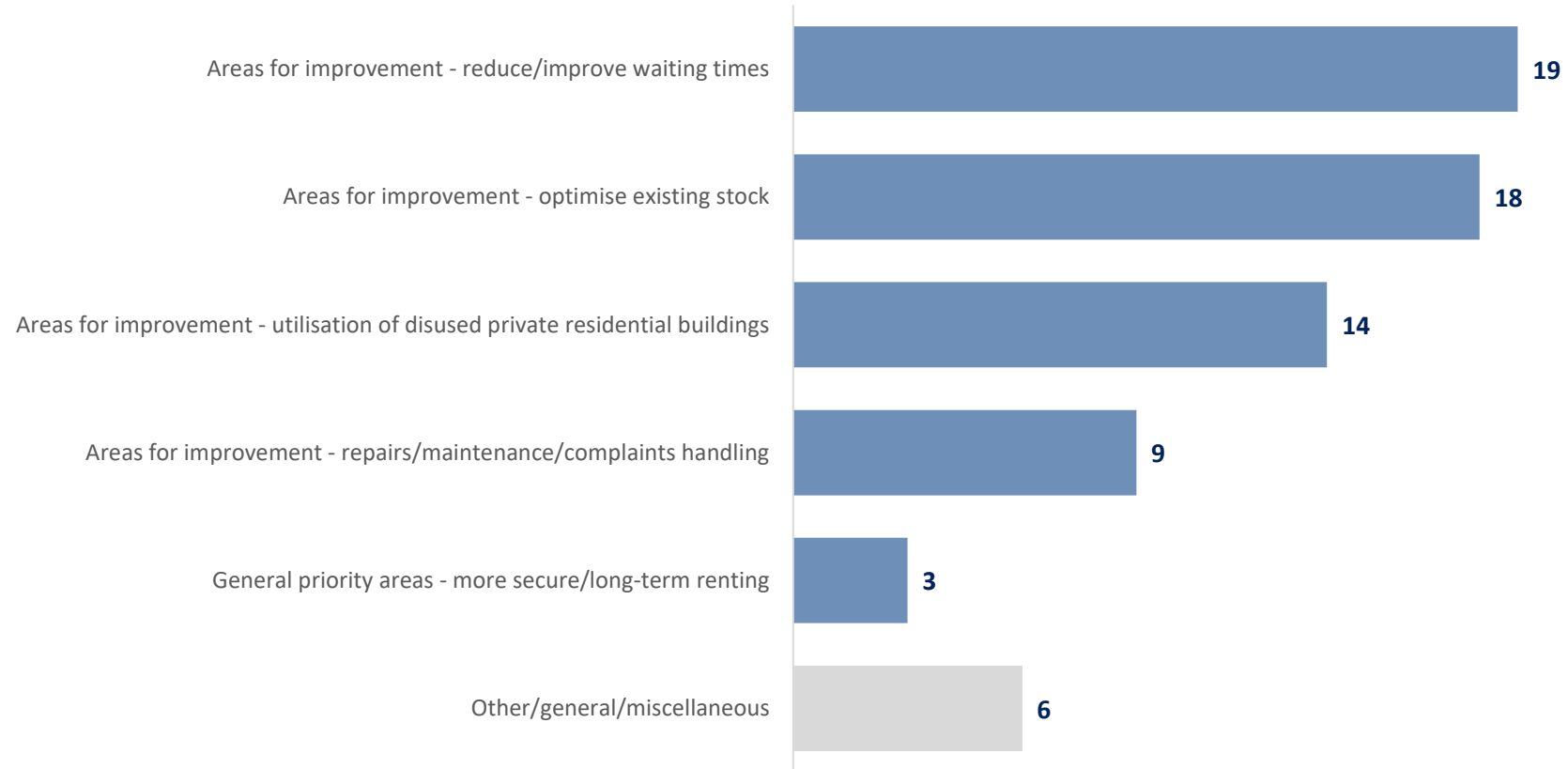


Key findings

- Again, 95% of respondents said that this priority was *important*, including 65% that said it was *very important*
- This includes both 81% of respondents that rent from the Council and 55% of those that own their own home (% *very important*)

Breakdowns







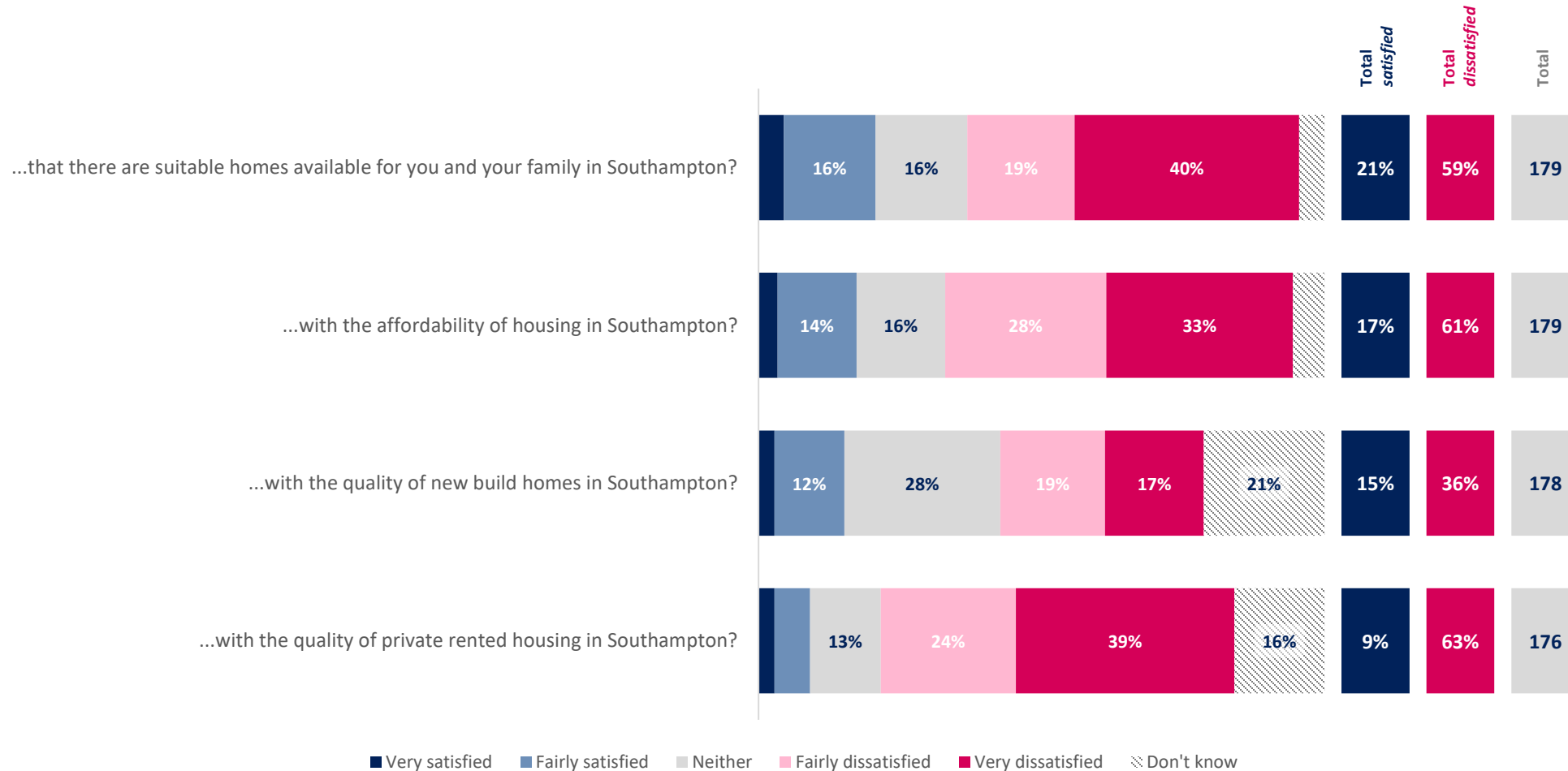
PRIORITY TWO

Increasing quality homes in the city





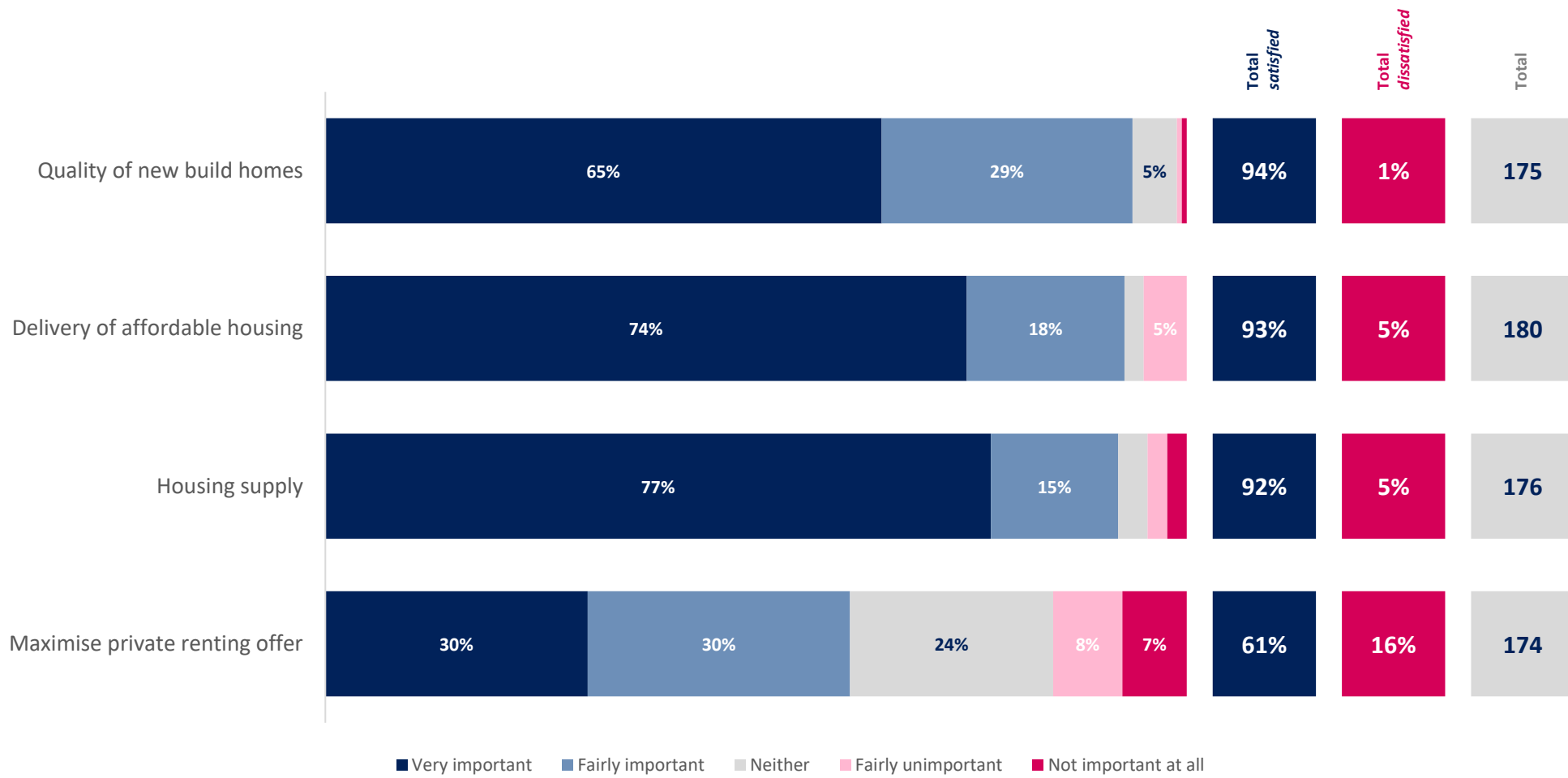
Question 4 | Currently, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you...





Question 5 |

How important do you feel the following suggested priorities are as part of increasing quality homes in the city?

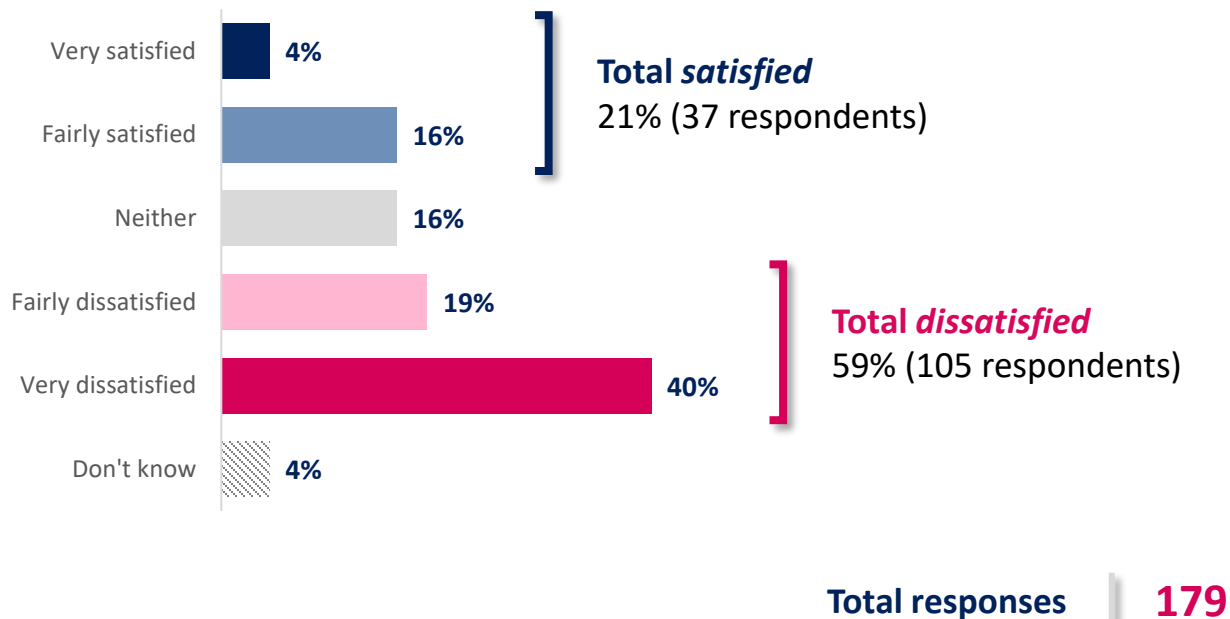


*Question asked only of those that confirmed they were Council tenants in response to the initial demographic question.



Question 4a

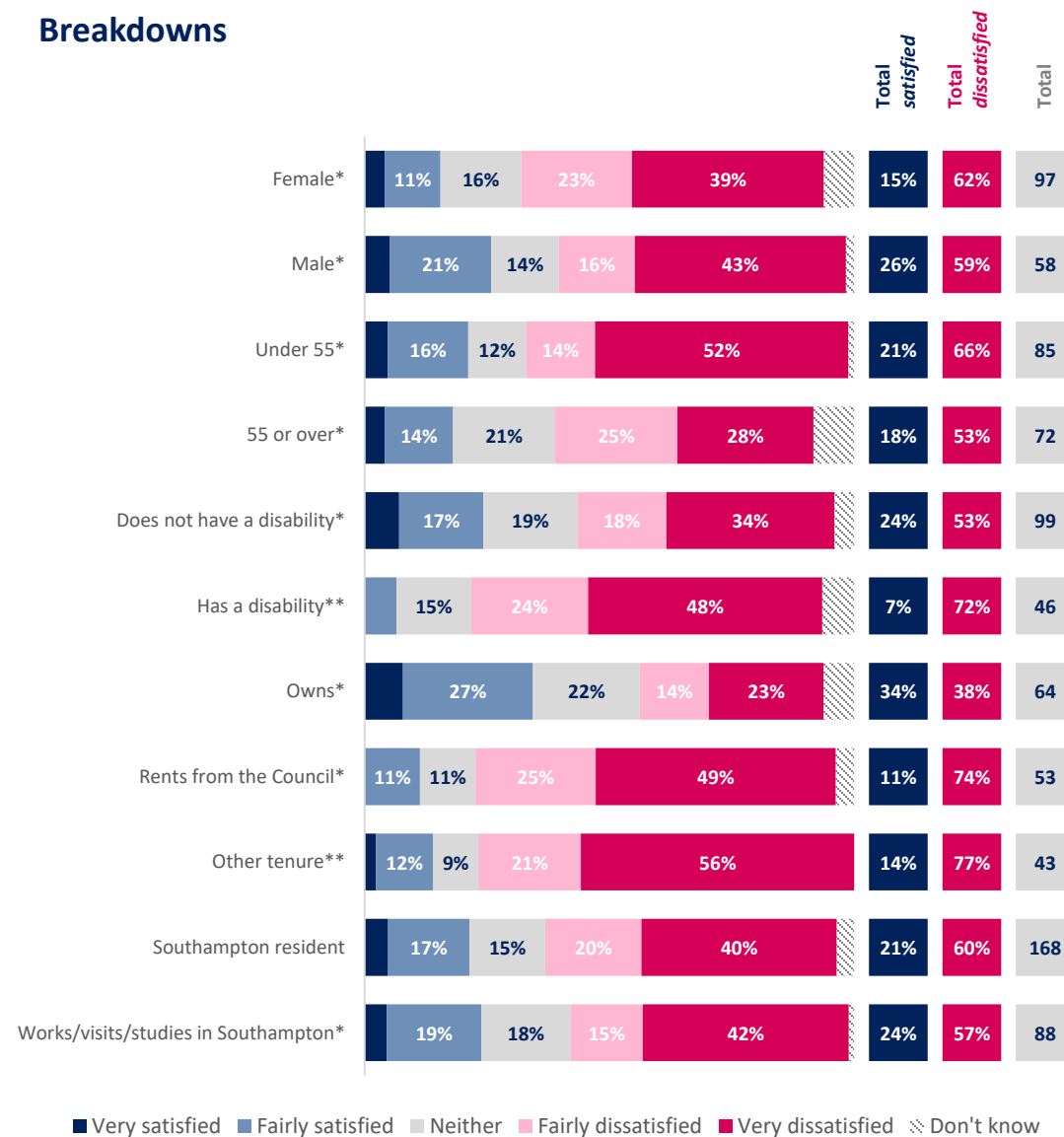
Currently, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you... that there are suitable homes available for you and your family in Southampton?



Key findings

- Over half (59%) of respondents said they were *dissatisfied* with the availability of 'suitable' homes in Southampton
- This includes 72% of respondents with a disability, 74% of Council tenants, and 77% of respondents that neither own their home nor rent from the Council (i.e. 'Other tenure')
- Additionally, over half of 'Other tenure' respondents and respondents aged under 55 responded *very dissatisfied* (56% and 52% respectively)

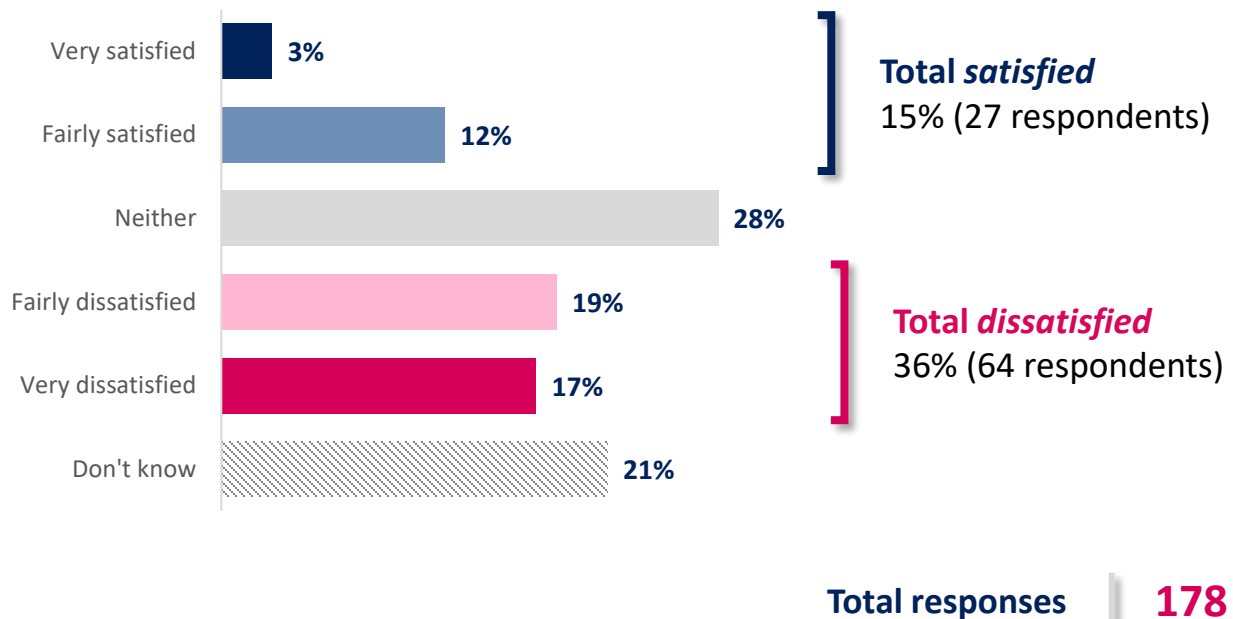
Breakdowns





Question 4b

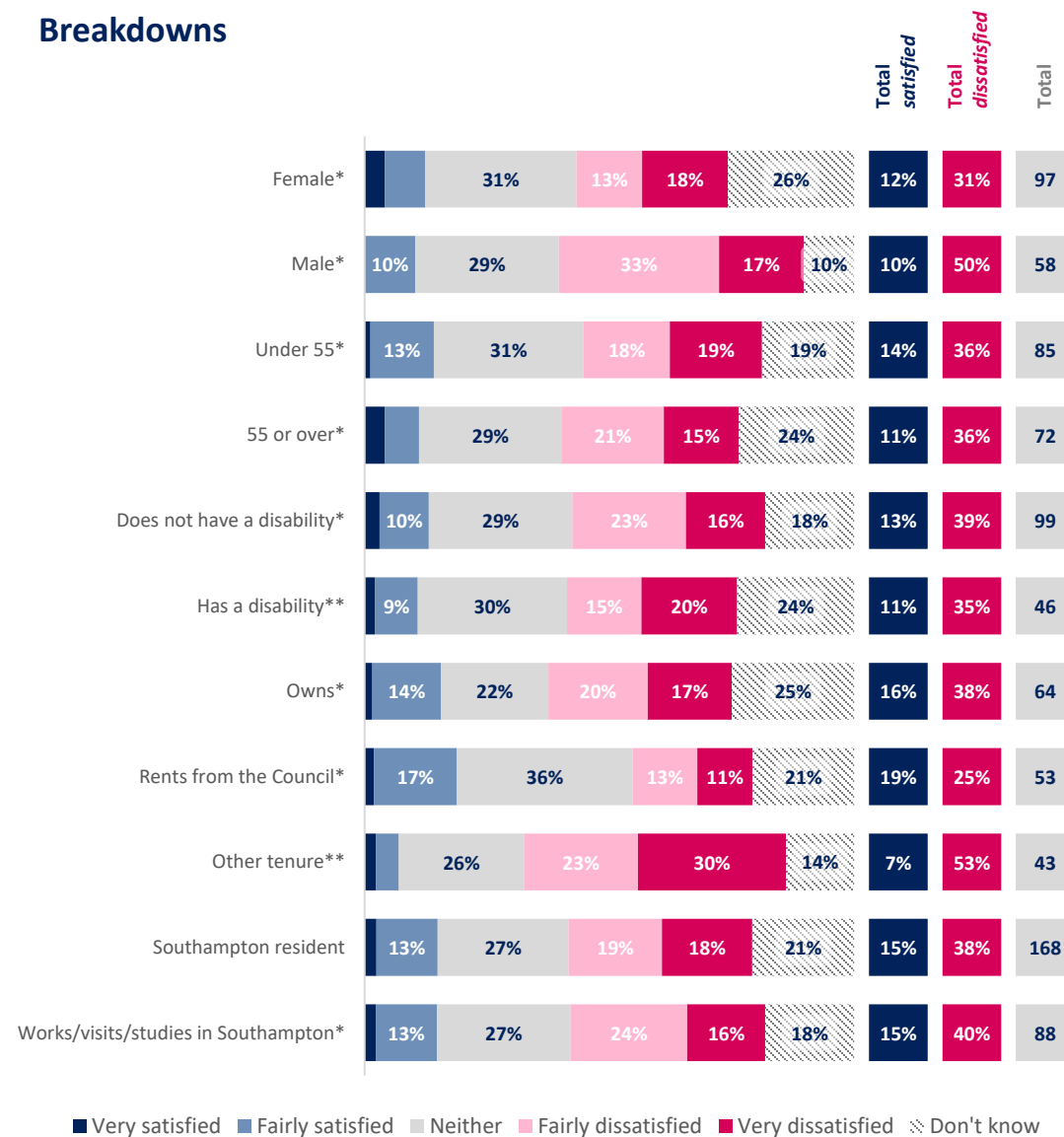
Currently, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you... with the quality of new build homes in Southampton?



Key findings

- While *dissatisfied* was the most common sentiment response with 36% of the total, 49% responded either *neither* (28%) or *don't know* (21%)
- In terms of breakdowns, over half of male and 'Other tenure' respondents responded *dissatisfied* (50% and 53% respectively)

Breakdowns

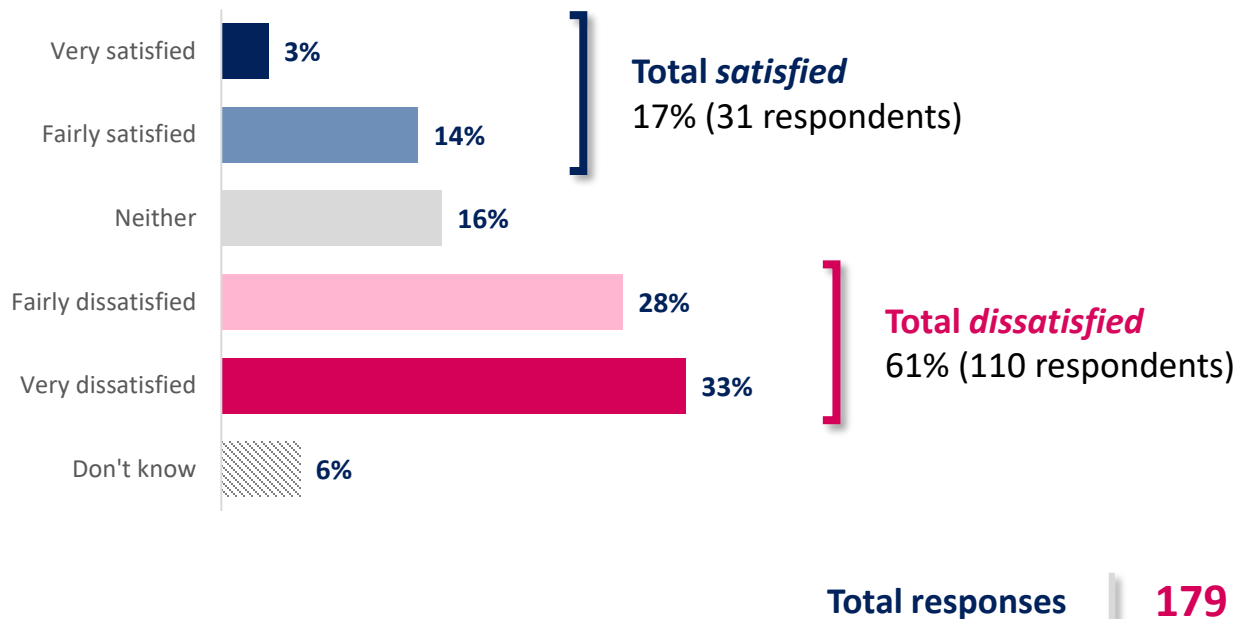


*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents.



Question 4c |

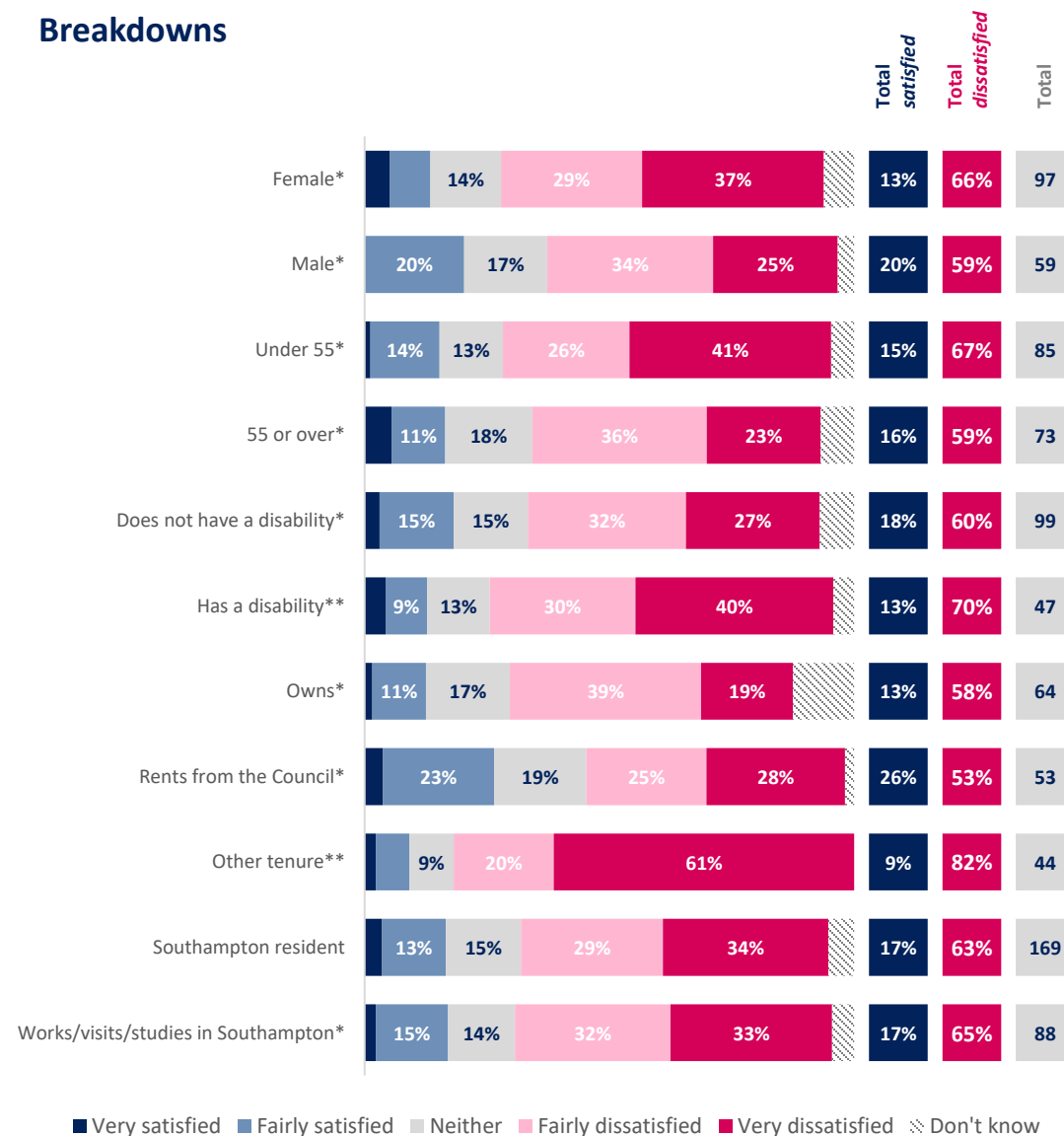
Currently, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you... with the affordability of housing in Southampton?



Key findings

- 61% of respondents said that they were *dissatisfied* with the affordability of housing in Southampton, with 'Other tenure' and respondents with a disability responding *dissatisfied* to the greatest extent at 82% and 70% respectively, with 61% of the former also responding *very dissatisfied*

Breakdowns

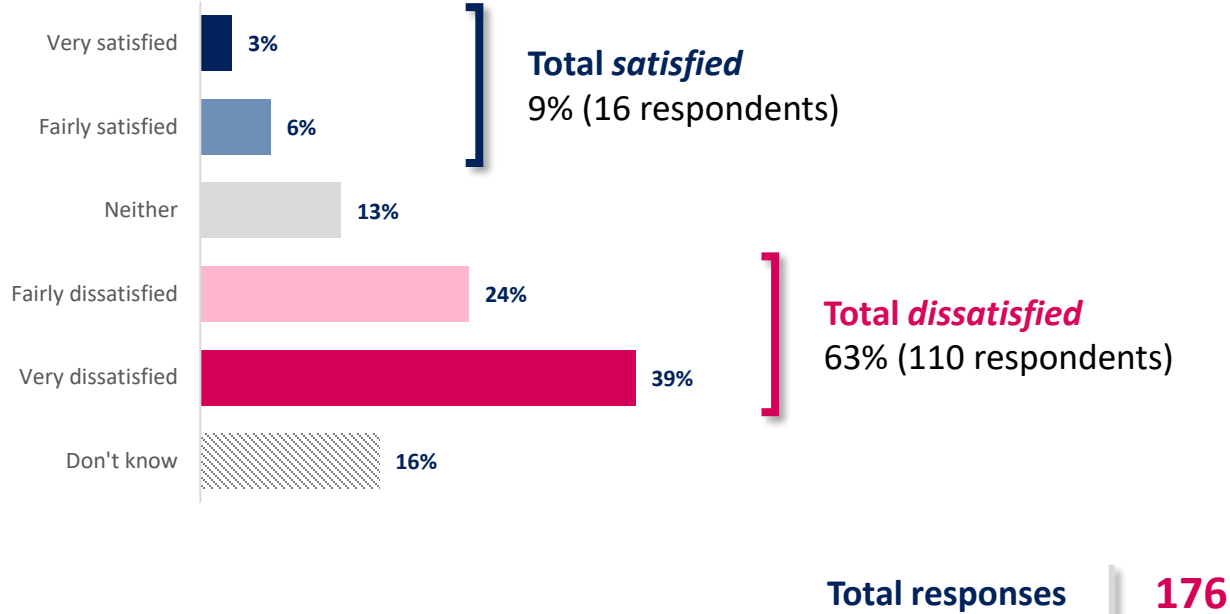


*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents.



Question 4d

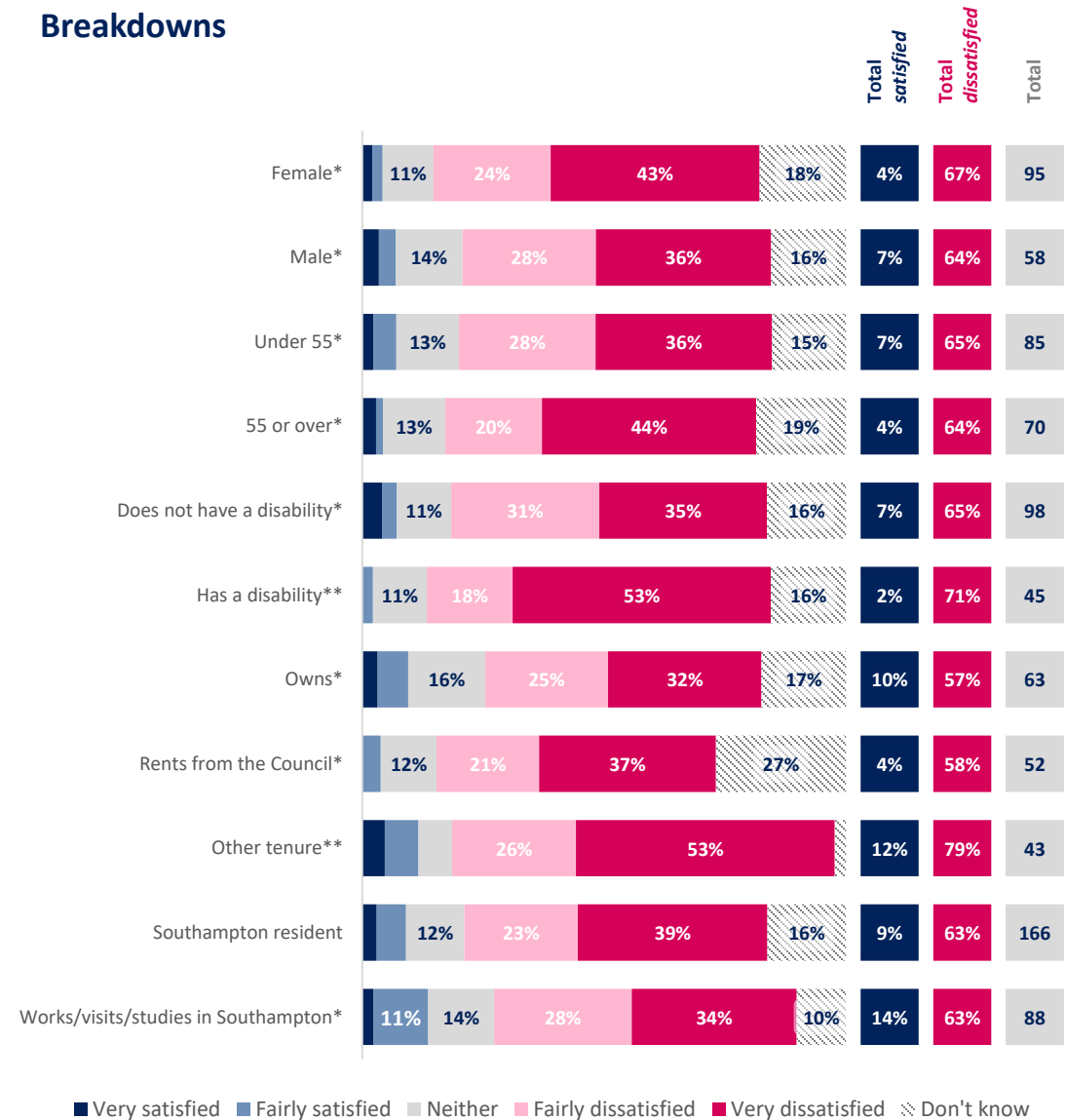
Currently, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you... with the quality of private rented housing in Southampton?



Key findings

- 63% of respondents said that they were *dissatisfied* with the quality of private rented housing in Southampton, the greatest % of *dissatisfied* responses for this question
- 'Other tenure' respondents responded *dissatisfied* to the greatest extent at 79%, including 53% that said *very dissatisfied*
- This is similar to respondents with a disability, who responded 71% *dissatisfied*, including 53% *very dissatisfied*

Breakdowns

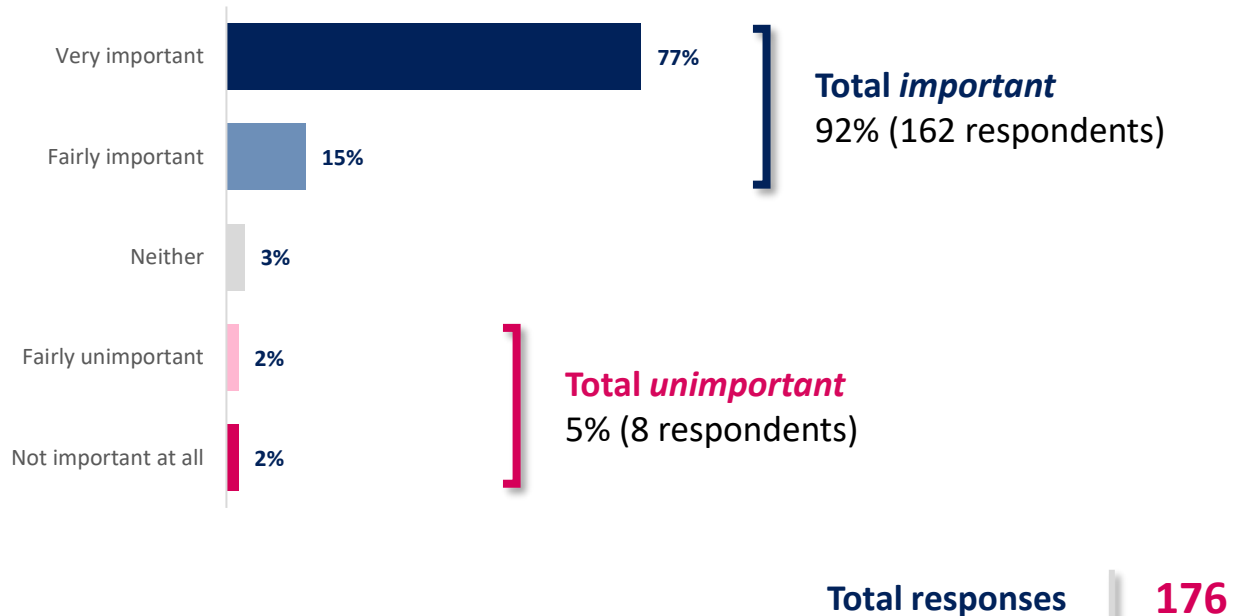


*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents.



Question 5a

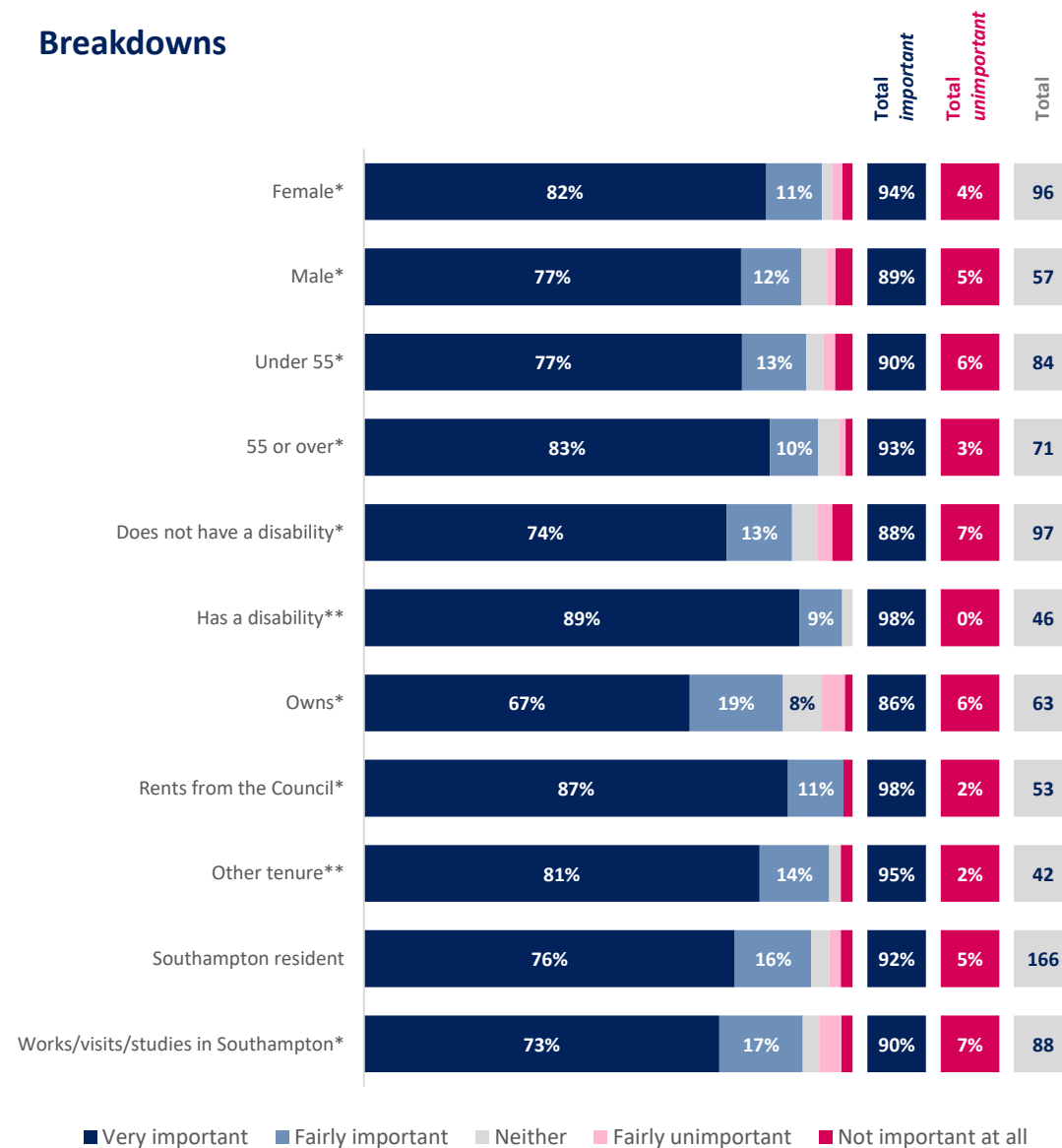
How important do you feel the following suggested priorities are as part of increasing quality homes in the city? *Housing supply*



Key findings

- 92% of respondents said the supply of housing is *important*, with 77% saying it is *very important*
- All demographic breakdowns similarly responded *very important* by 67% or more

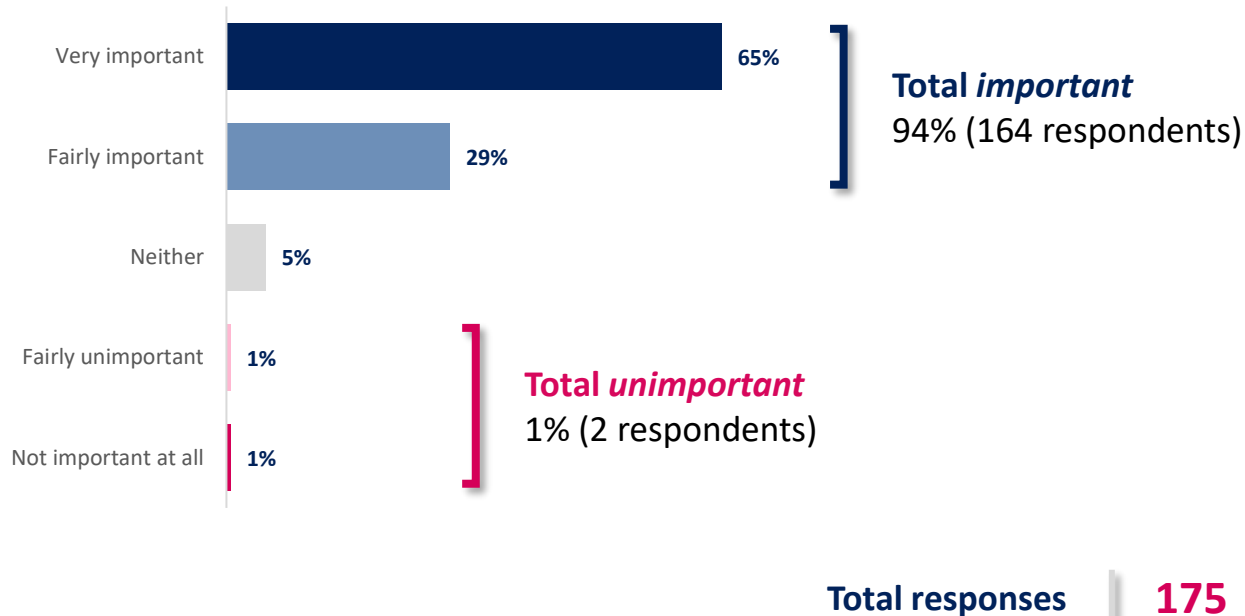
Breakdowns





Question 5b

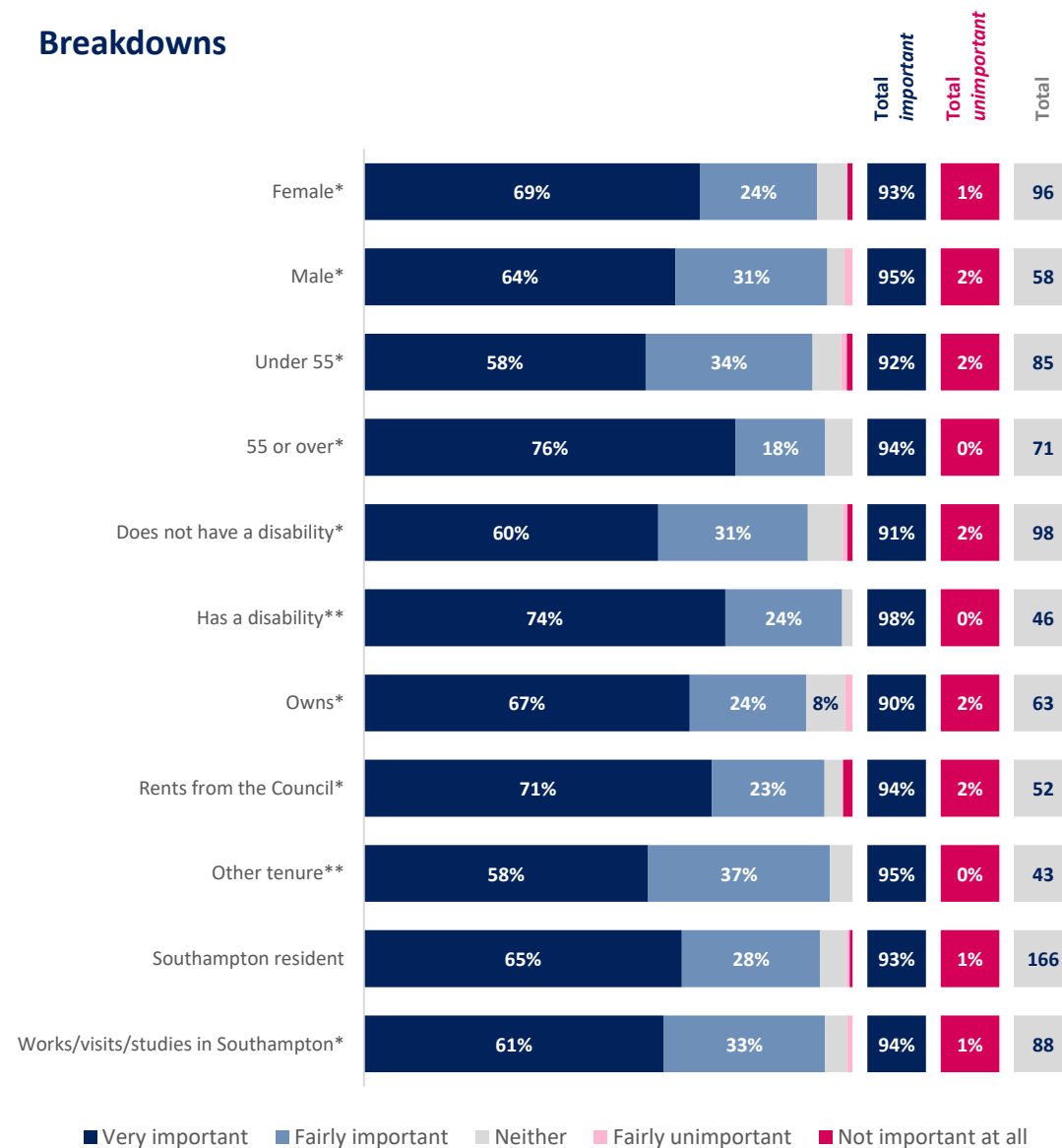
How important do you feel the following suggested priorities are as part of increasing quality homes in the city? *Quality of new build homes*



Key findings

- Again, the quality of new build homes was rated as *important* by 94% of respondents, including 65% that said it is *very important*
- All demographic breakdowns likewise responded *very important* by 58% or more

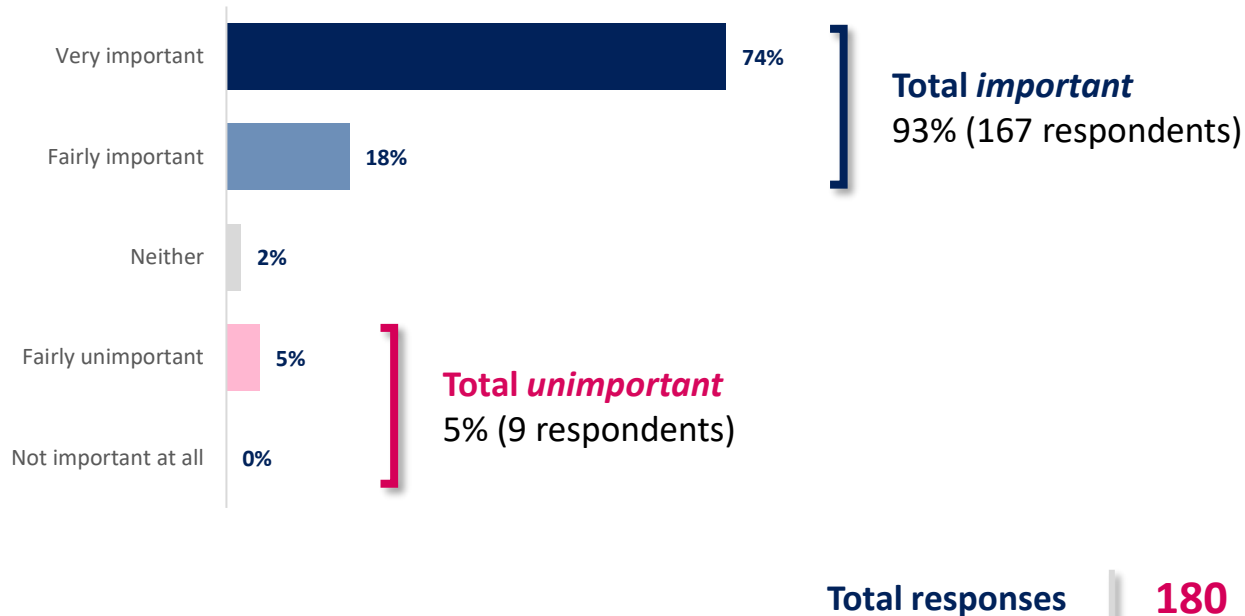
Breakdowns





Question 5c |

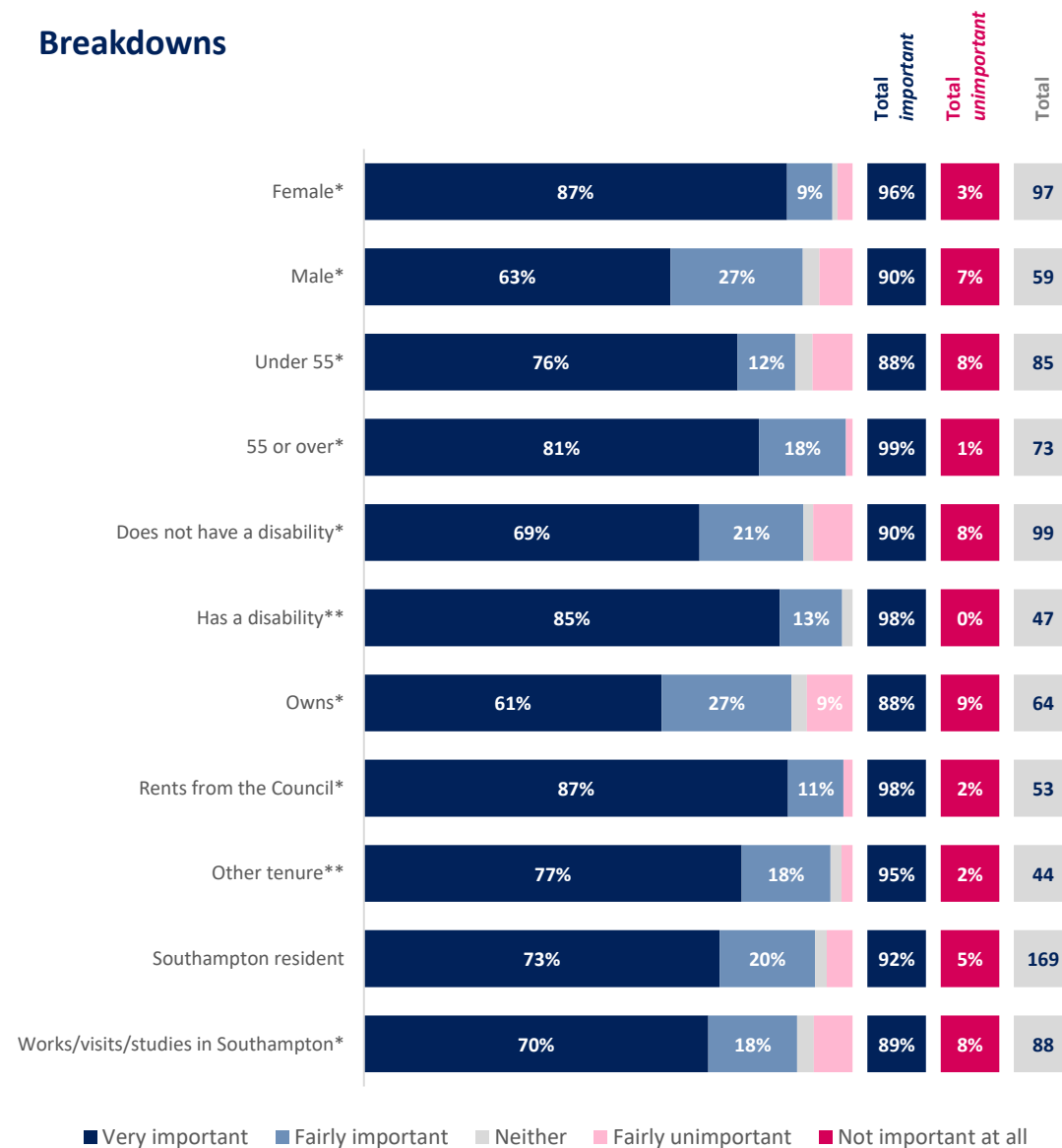
How important do you feel the following suggested priorities are as part of increasing quality homes in the city? *Delivery of affordable housing*



Key findings

- As with the housing supply priority, the delivery of affordable housing was rated as *very important* by 74% or more
- Again, this includes all demographic breakdowns responding *very important* by at least 61%

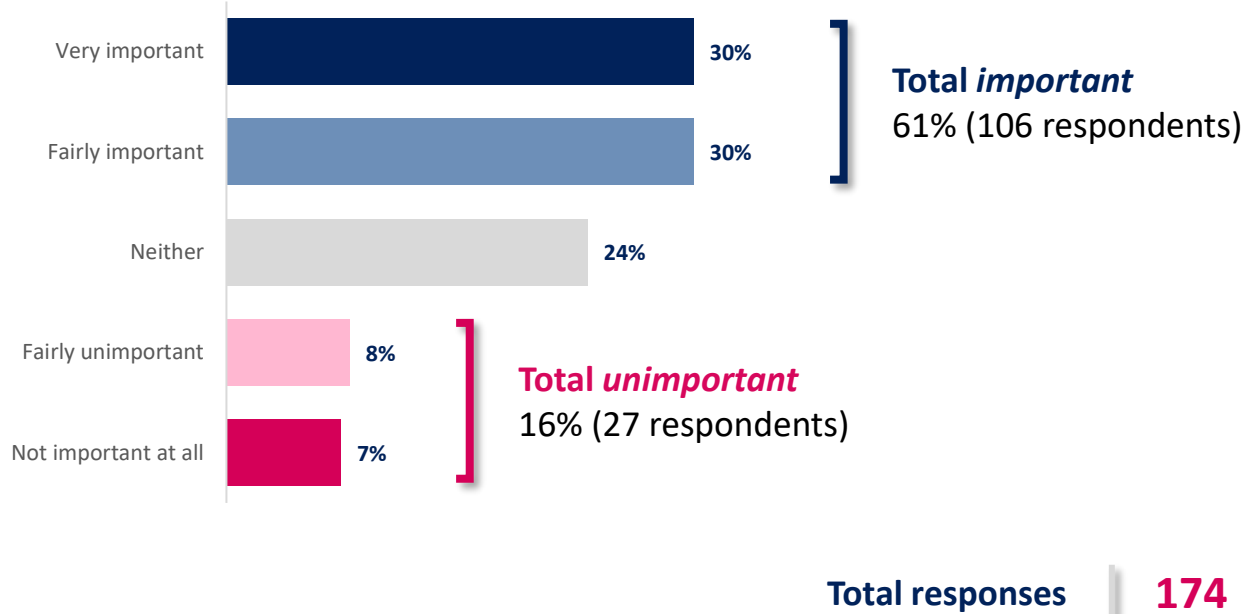
Breakdowns





Question 5d

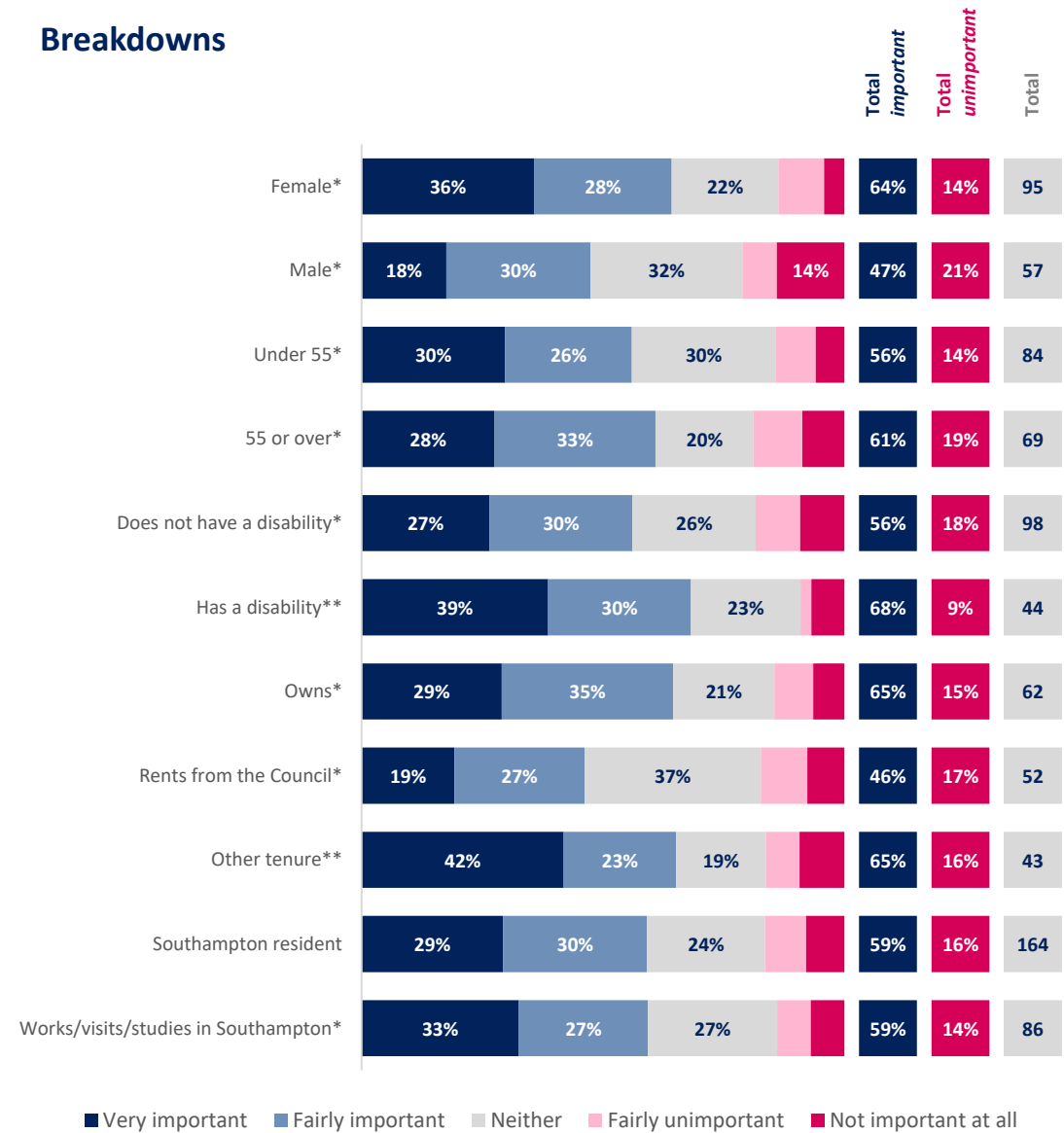
How important do you feel the following suggested priorities are as part of increasing quality homes in the city? *Maximise private renting offer*



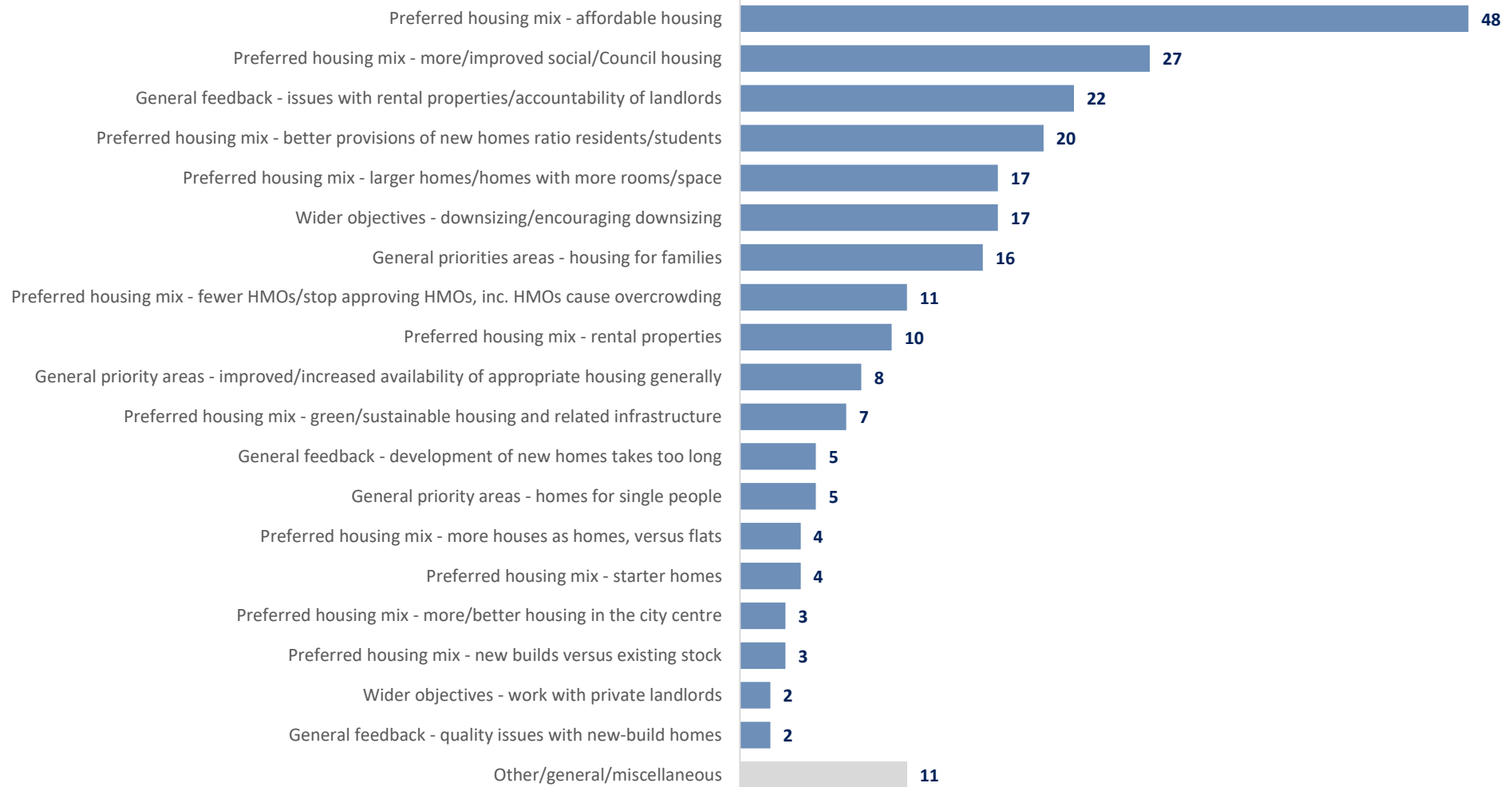
Key findings

- 61% of respondents said that maximising Southampton’s private renting offer was an *important* priority, evenly split between *very* and *fairly* important (30% each)
- Most demographic breakdowns responded *important* by 50% or more, apart from men and Council tenants who responded at 47% and 46% respectively

Breakdowns



*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents.





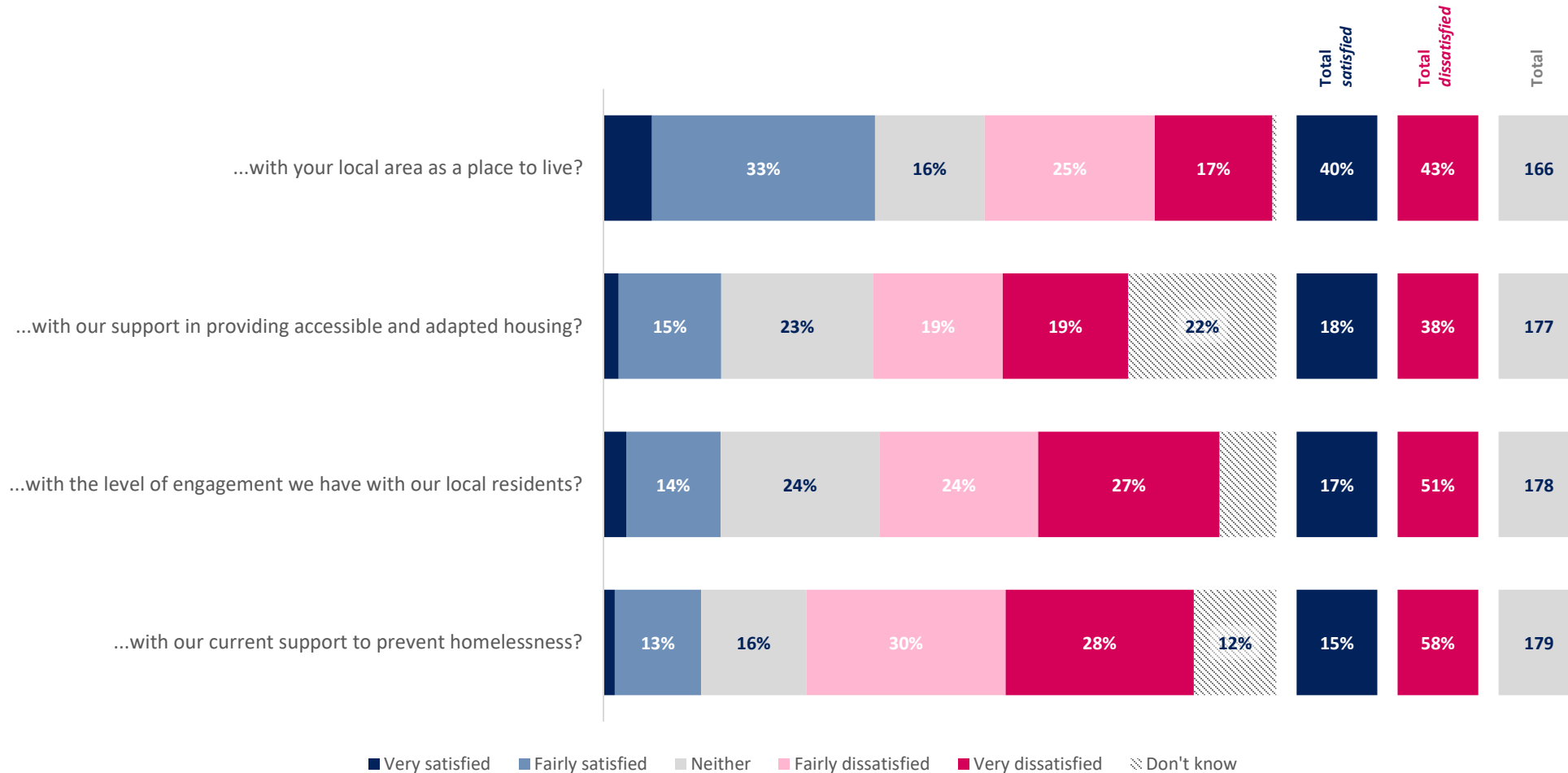
PRIORITY THREE

Supporting strong & resilient communities





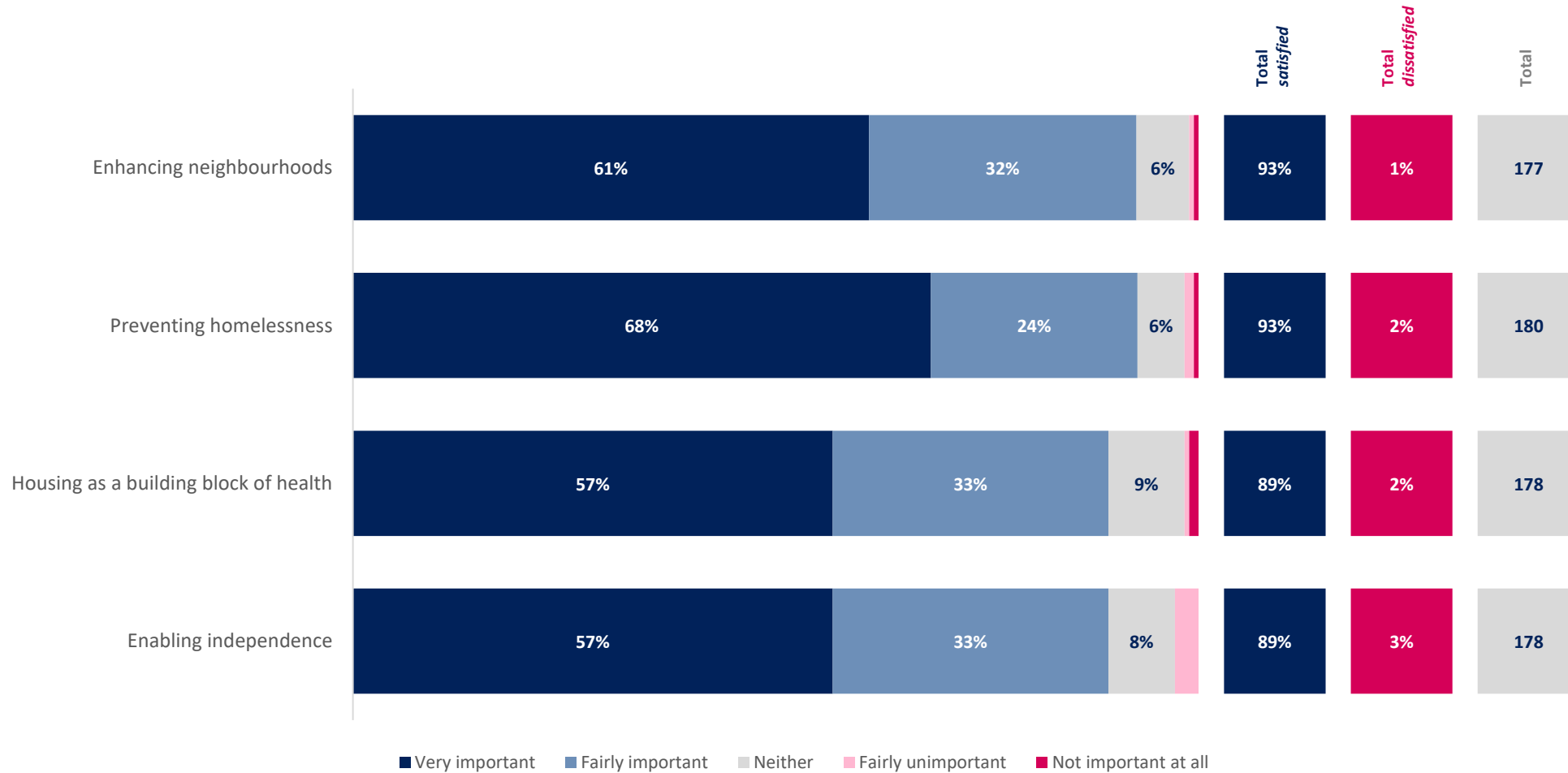
Question 7 | Currently, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you...





Question 8 |

How important do you feel the following suggested priorities are as part of supporting strong and resilient communities?

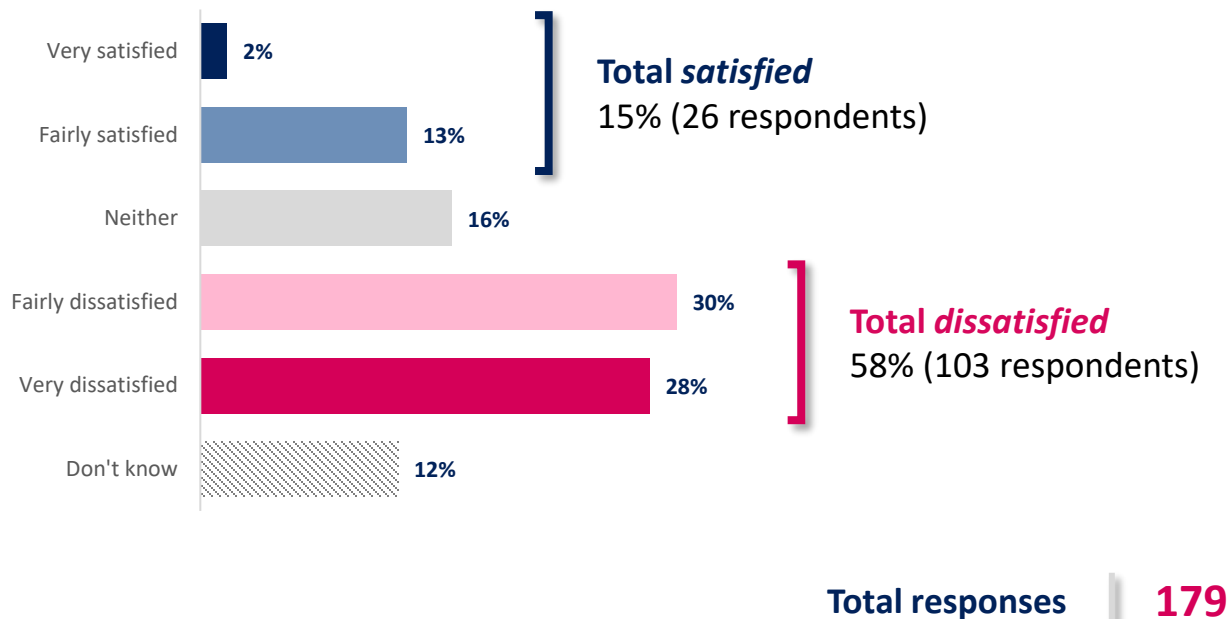


*Question asked only of those that confirmed they were Council tenants in response to the initial demographic question.



Question 7a |

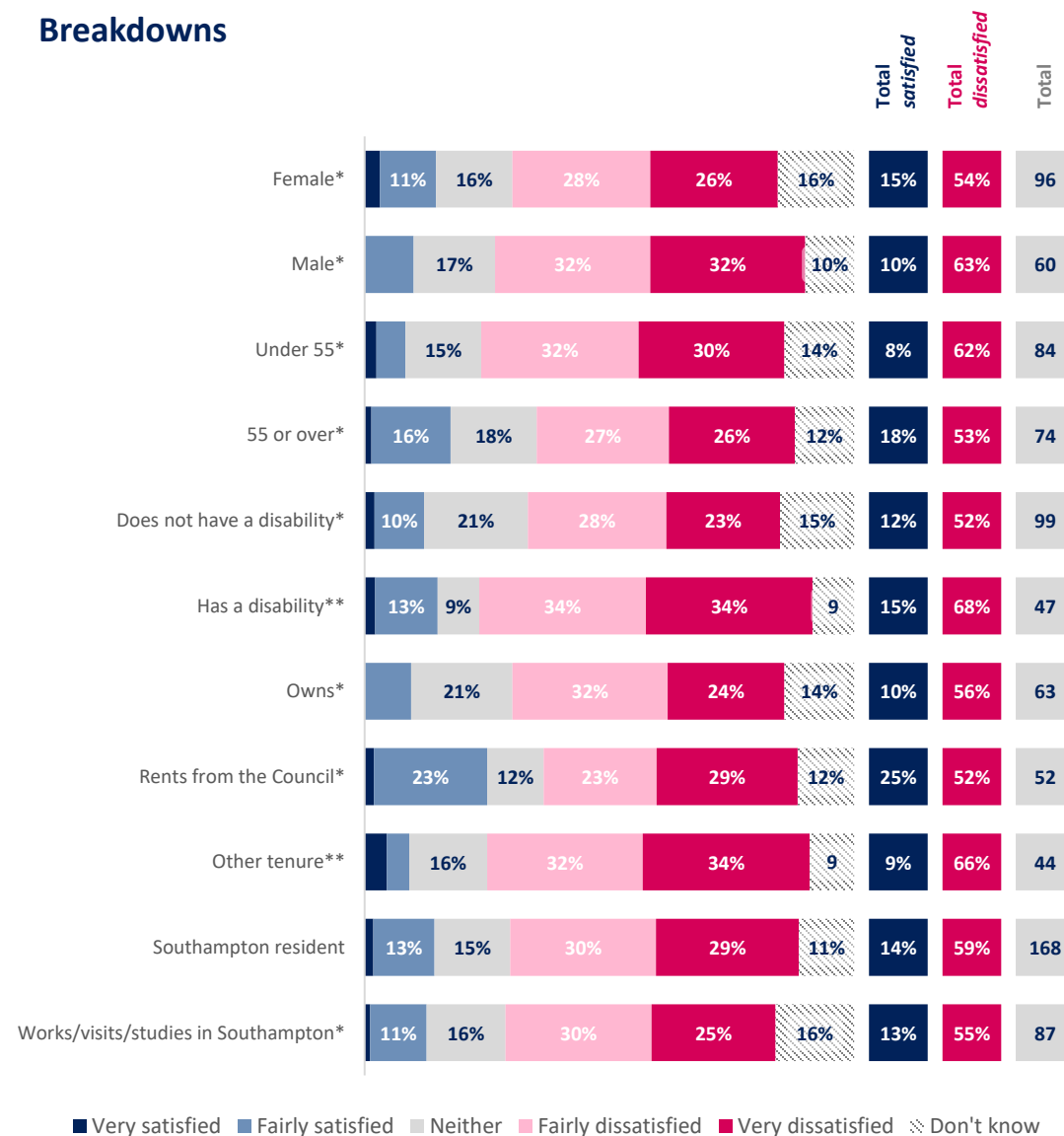
Currently, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you... with our current support to prevent homelessness?



Key findings

- 58% said that they were *dissatisfied* with current homelessness prevention measures
- 'Other tenure' and respondents with a disability responded *dissatisfied* to the greatest extent at 66% and 68% respectively

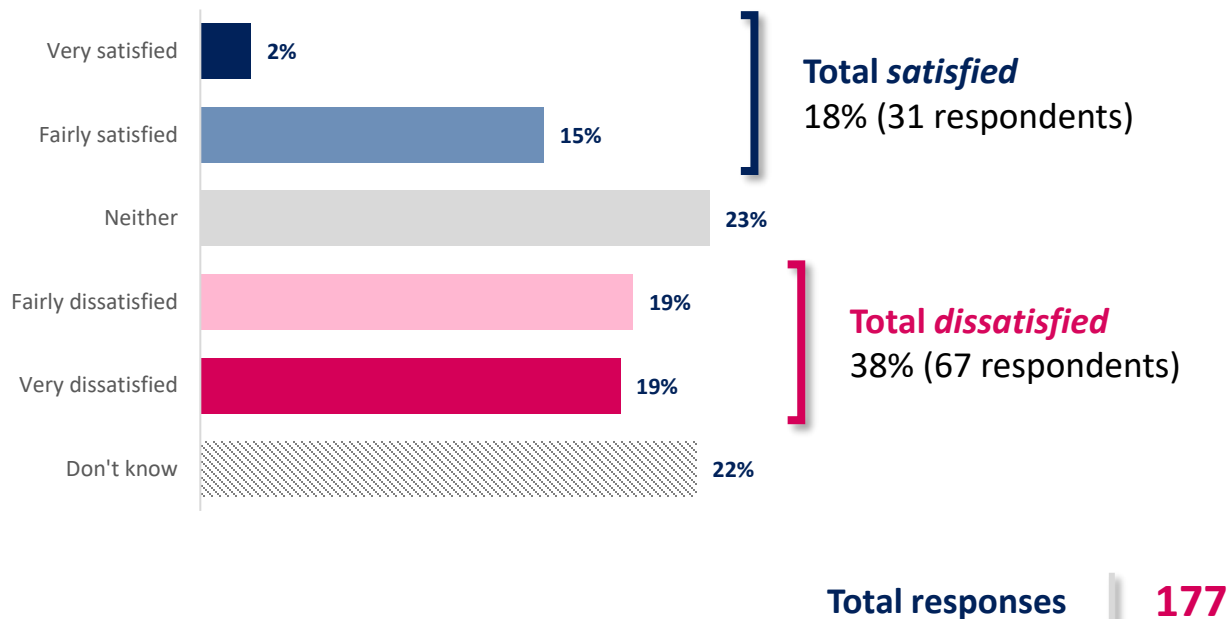
Breakdowns





Question 7b

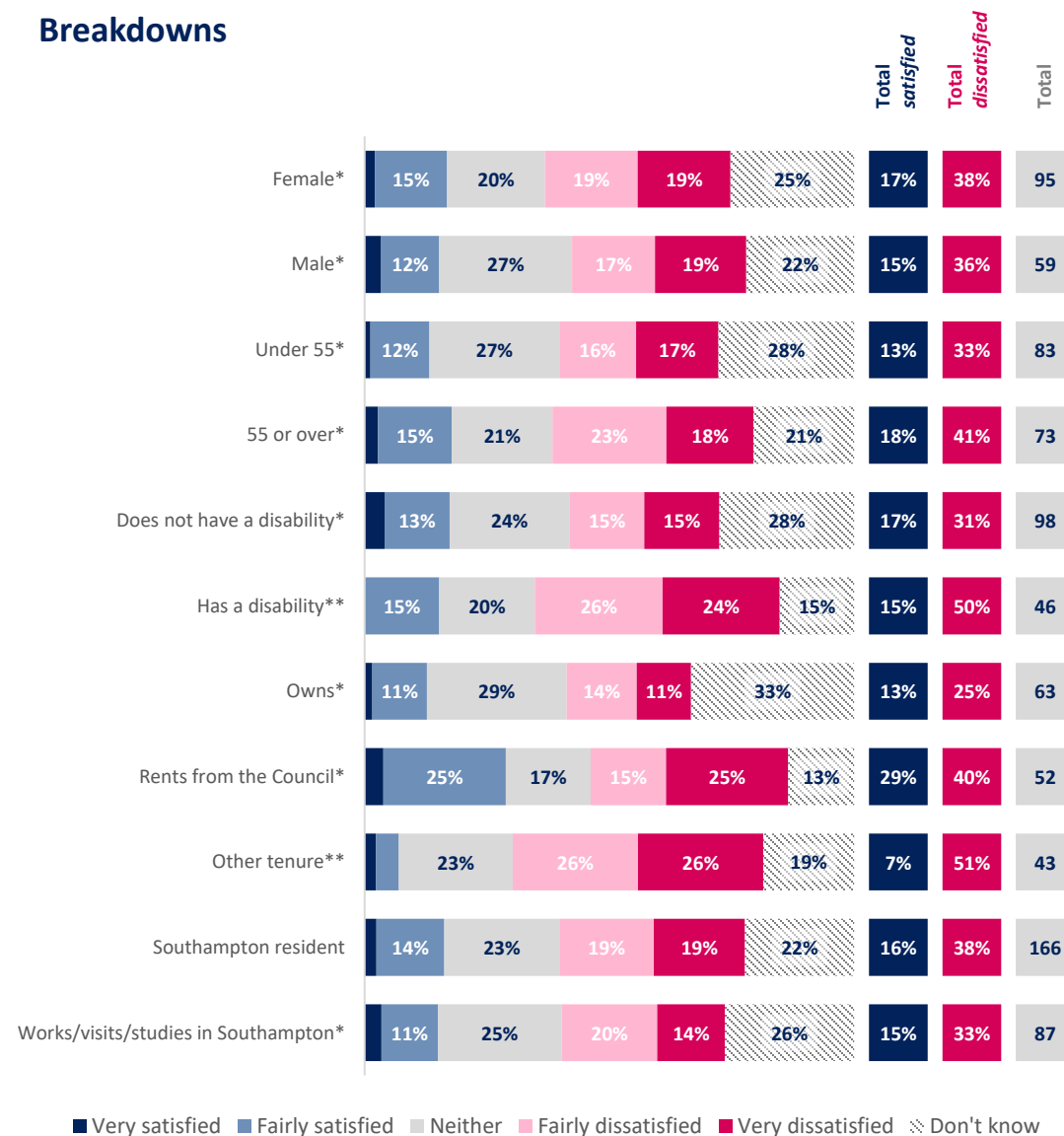
Currently, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you... with our support in providing accessible and adapted housing?



Key findings

- 45% of respondents overall responded either *neither* (23%) or *don't know* (22%), with 38% responding that they are *dissatisfied* with the provision of accessible and adapted housing
- Numbers responding *dissatisfied* increases to 50% among respondents with a disability and 51% of 'Other tenure' respondents

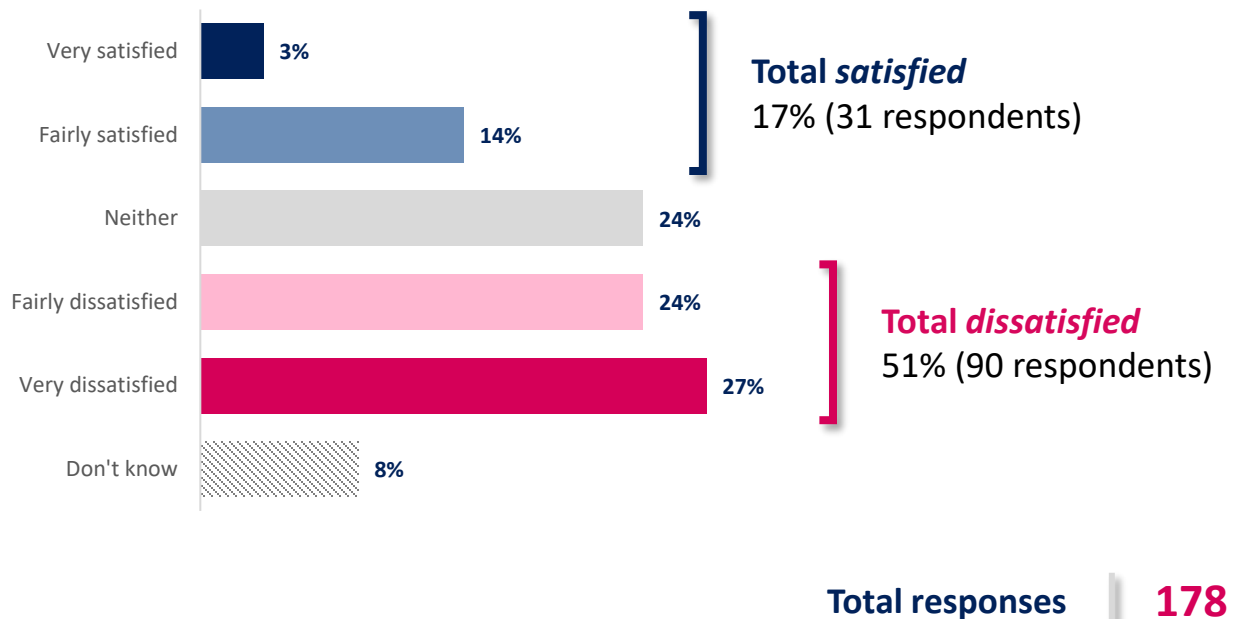
Breakdowns





Question 7c |

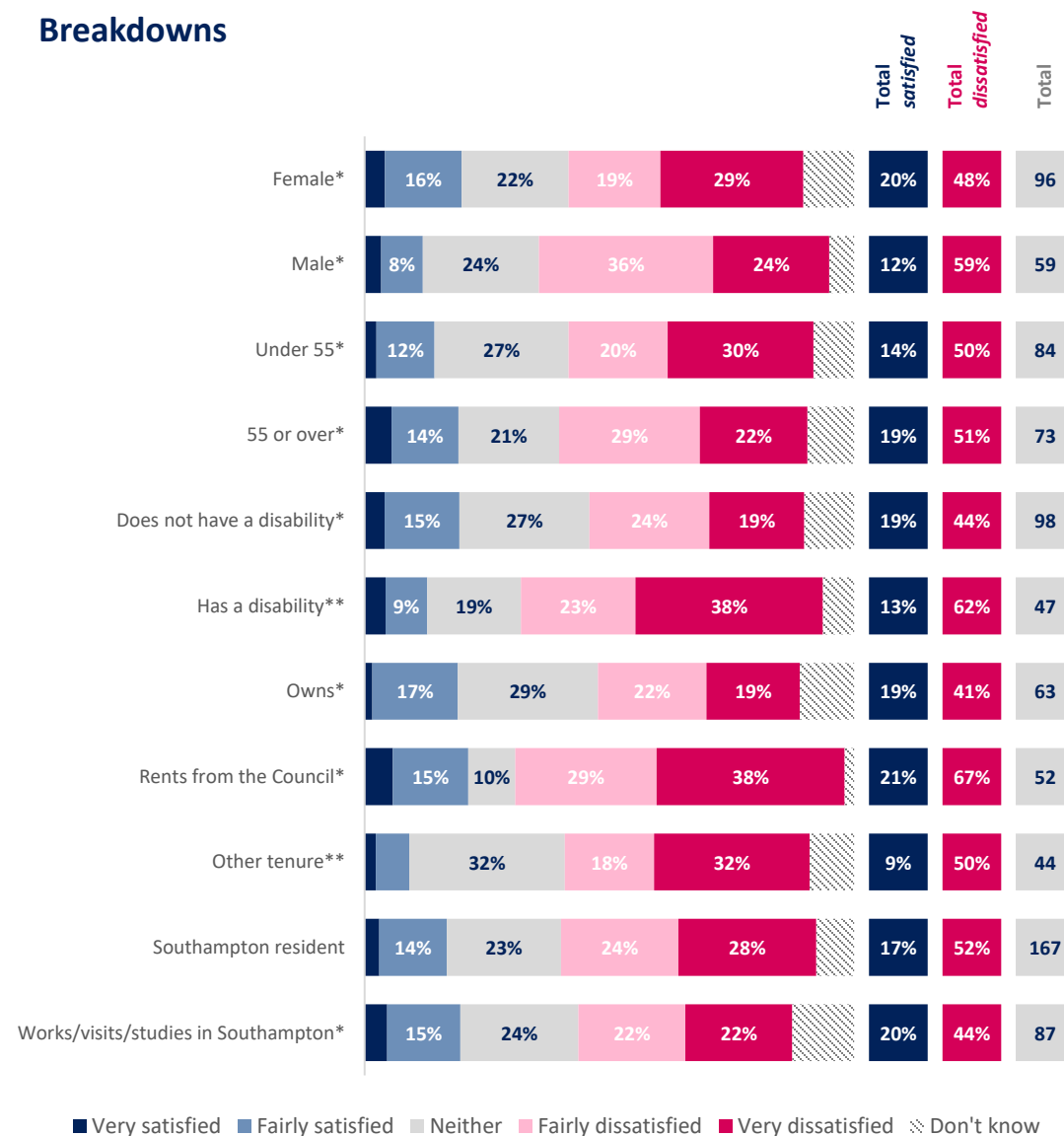
Currently, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you... with the level of engagement we have with our local residents?



Key findings

- Over half (51%) of respondents said they were *dissatisfied* with the level of engagement with local residents
- Again, this number climbs to 59% of male respondents, 62% of respondents with a disability, and 67% of those that rent from the Council

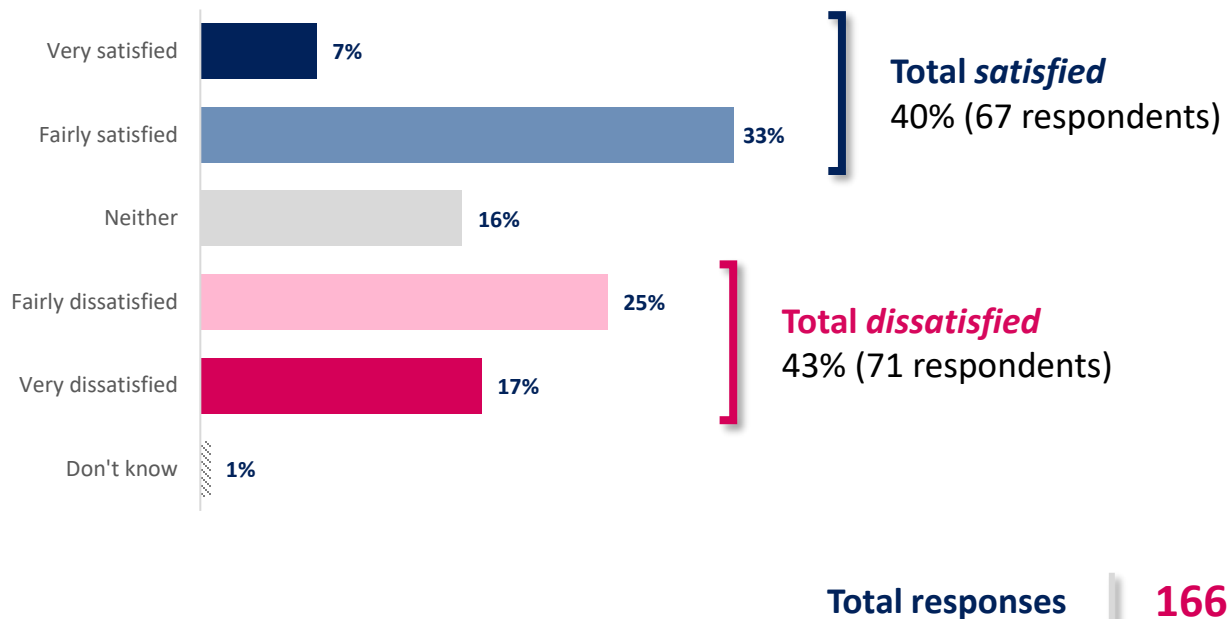
Breakdowns





Question 7d

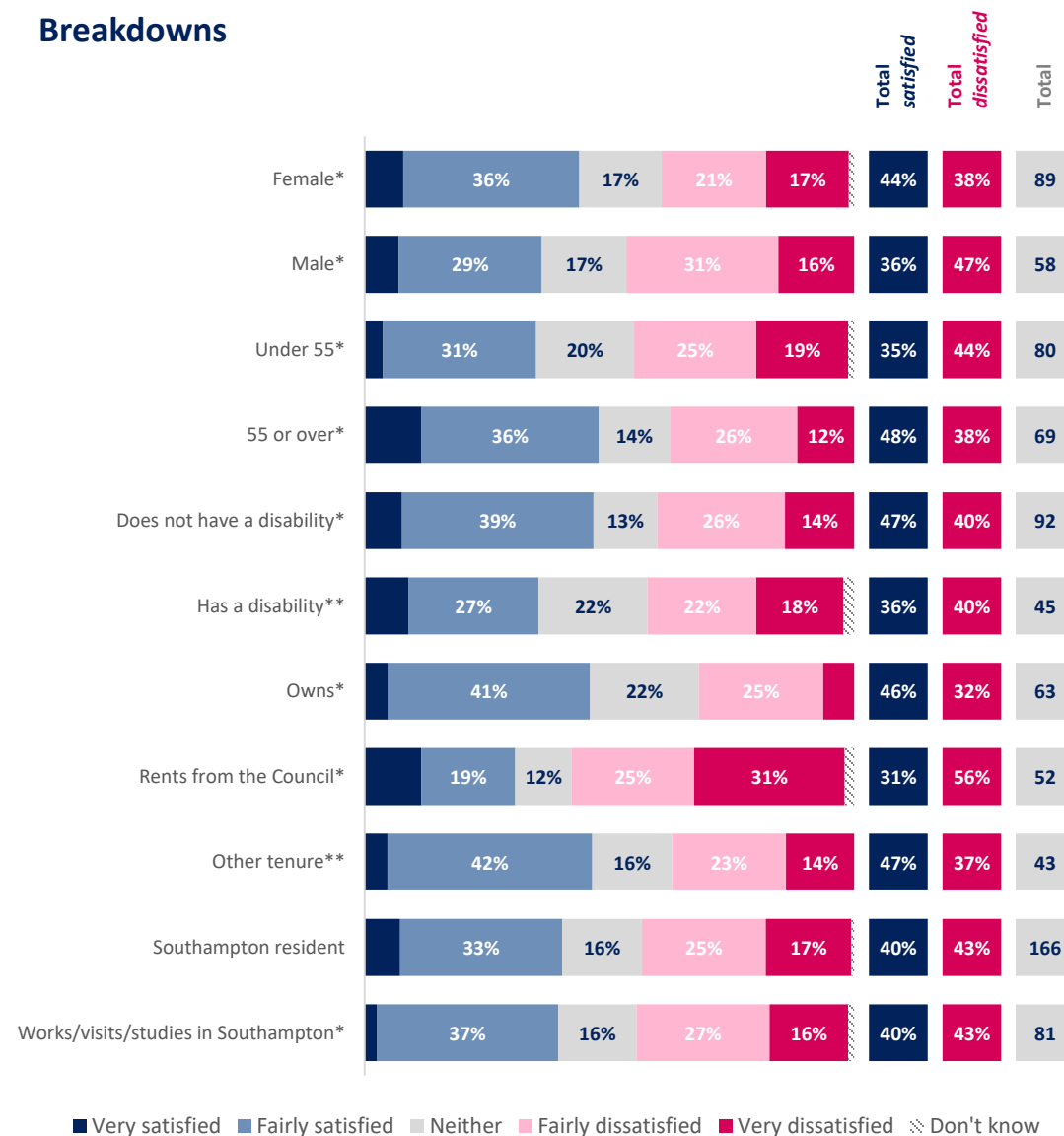
Currently, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you... with your local area as a place to live?



Key findings

- Broadly, responses were evenly split between *satisfied* and *dissatisfied* for this question, at 40% and 43% respectively – the most common response was *fairly satisfied* at 33%, while more responded *very dissatisfied* than *very satisfied* by 10% points (17% to 7% respectively)
- The over 55s, homeowners, respondents without a disability and 'Other tenure' respondents all responded *satisfied* to the greatest extent between 46% and 48% each
- By contrast, men, the under-55s, and Council tenants responded *dissatisfied* between 44% and 56%

Breakdowns

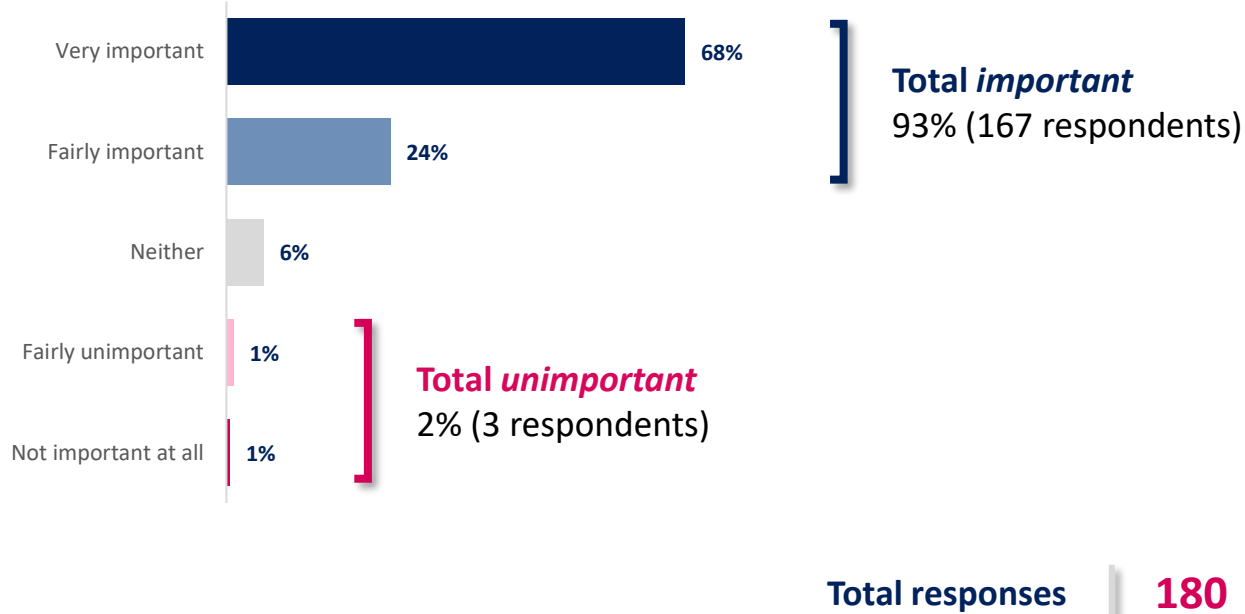


*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents.



Question 8a

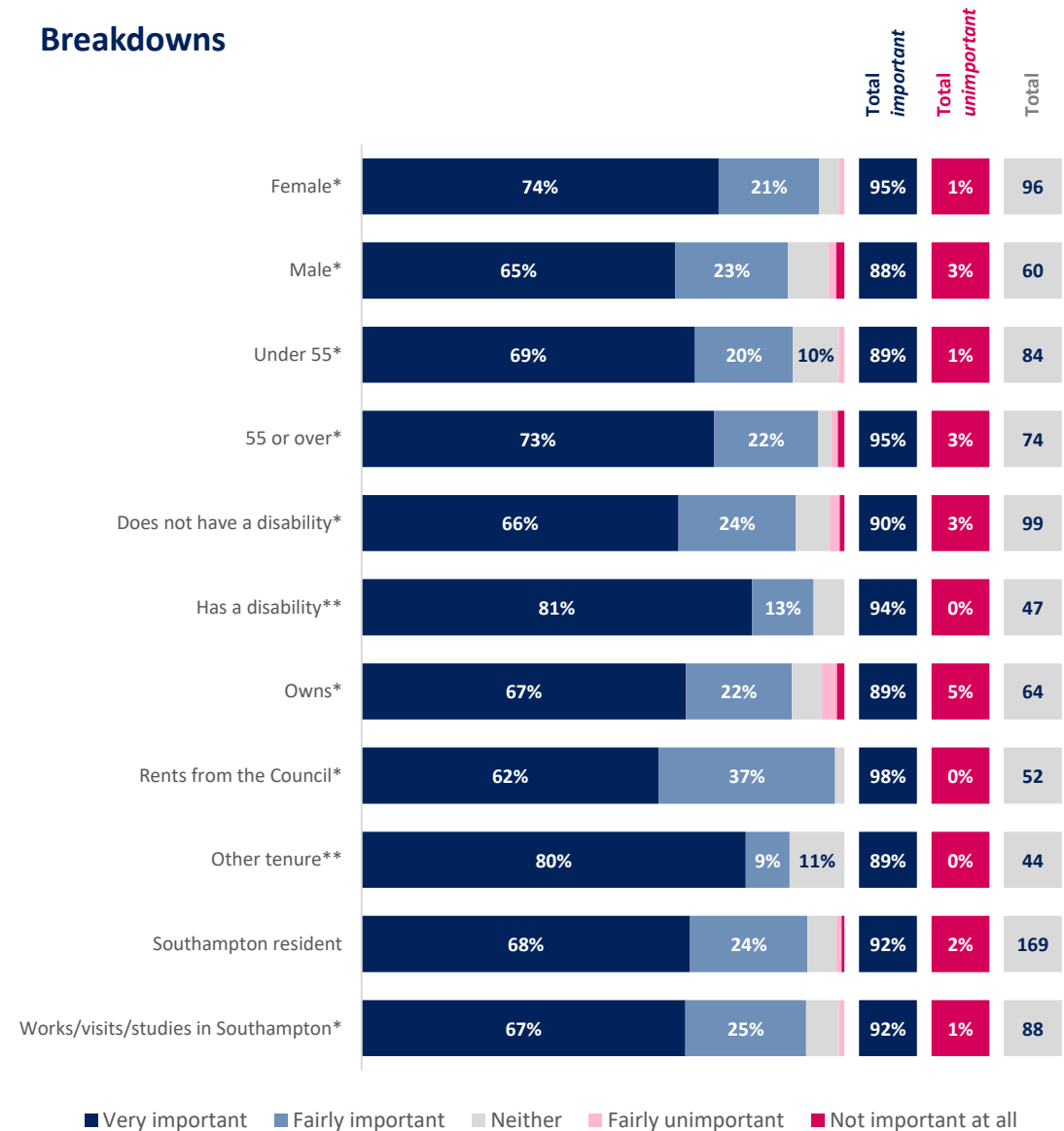
How important do you feel the following suggested priorities are as part of supporting strong and resilient communities? *Preventing homelessness*



Key findings

- Preventing homelessness as a priority had the highest number of *very important* responses to this question at 68%
- 81% of respondents with a disability and 80% of 'Other tenure' respondents said preventing homelessness was *very important*

Breakdowns

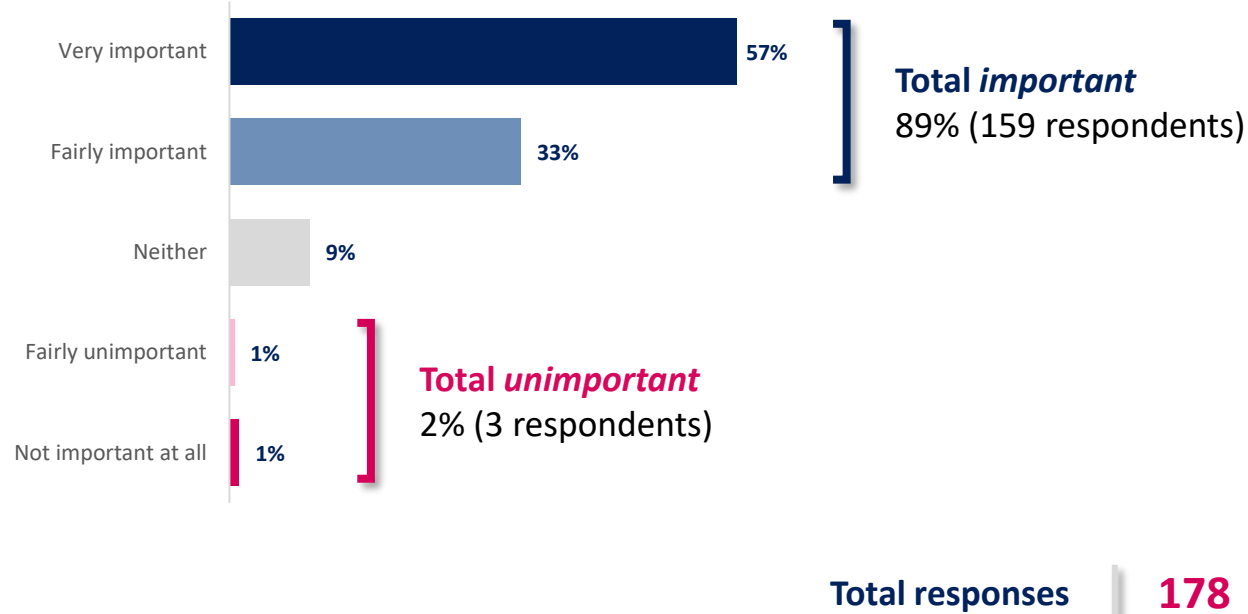


*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents.



Question 8b

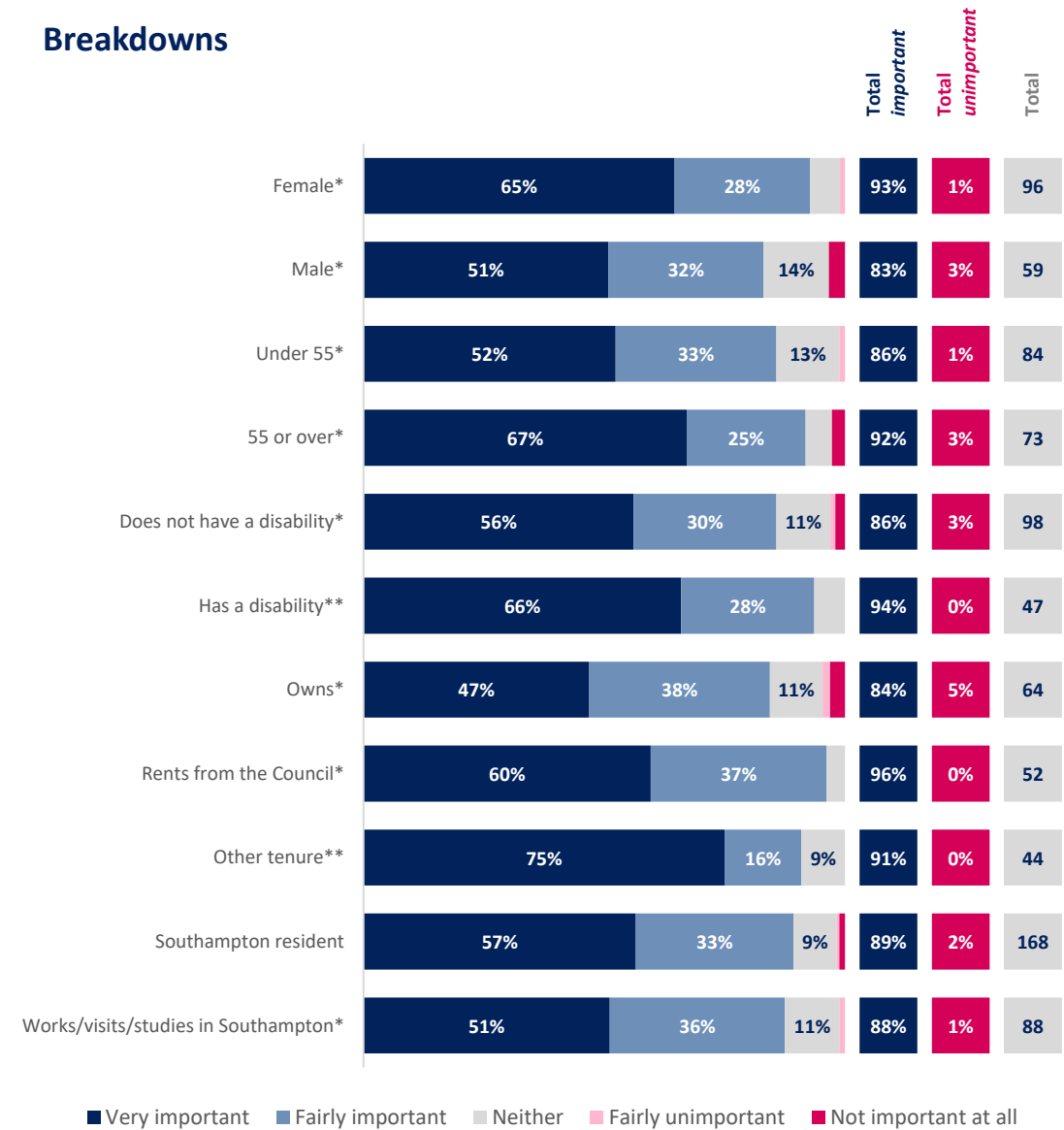
How important do you feel the following suggested priorities are as part of supporting strong and resilient communities? *Housing as a building block of health*



Key findings

- 89% of respondents said this priority was *important*, with 57% saying it was *very important*
- 'Other tenure' respondents said *very important* to the greatest extent at 75%

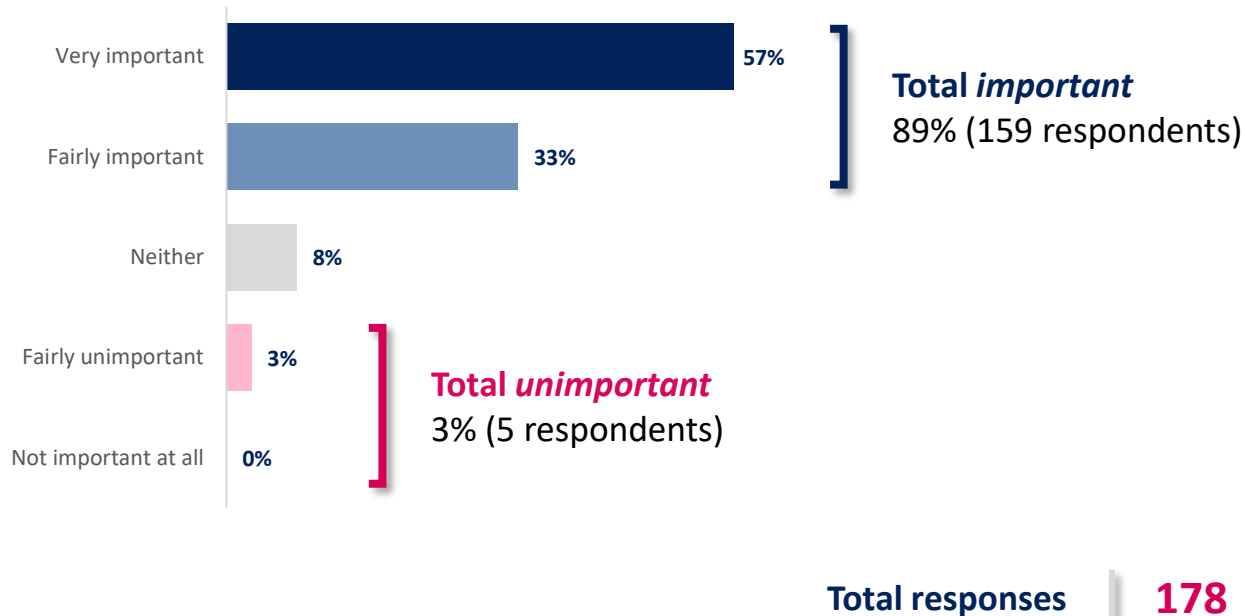
Breakdowns





Question 8c |

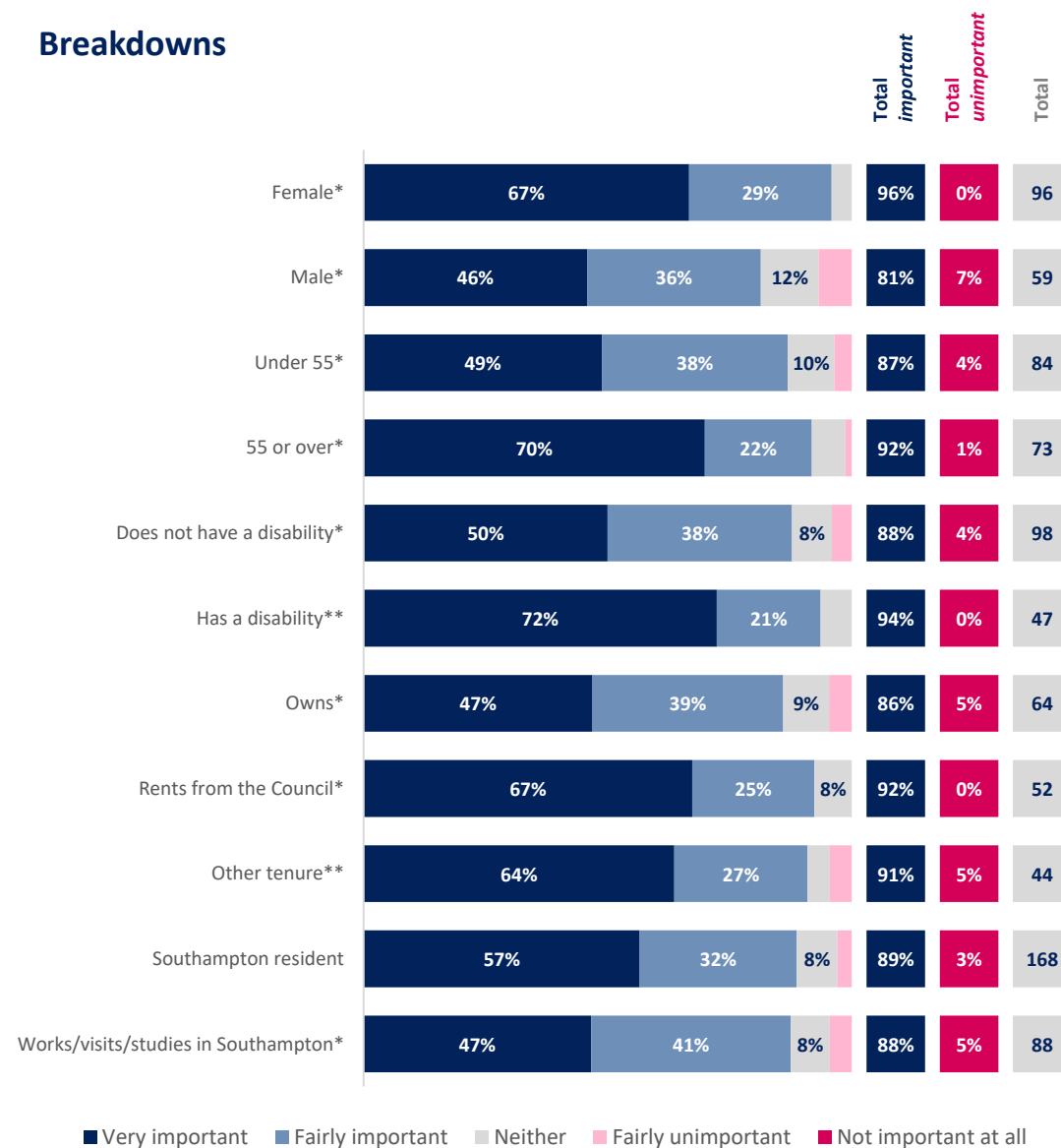
How important do you feel the following suggested priorities are as part of supporting strong and resilient communities? *Enabling independence*



Key findings

- 89% of respondents said enabling independence was an *important* priority, with 57% saying it was *very important*
- Enabling independence had the most support among the over-55s and respondents with a disability, with both these groups responding 70% and 72% *very important* respectively

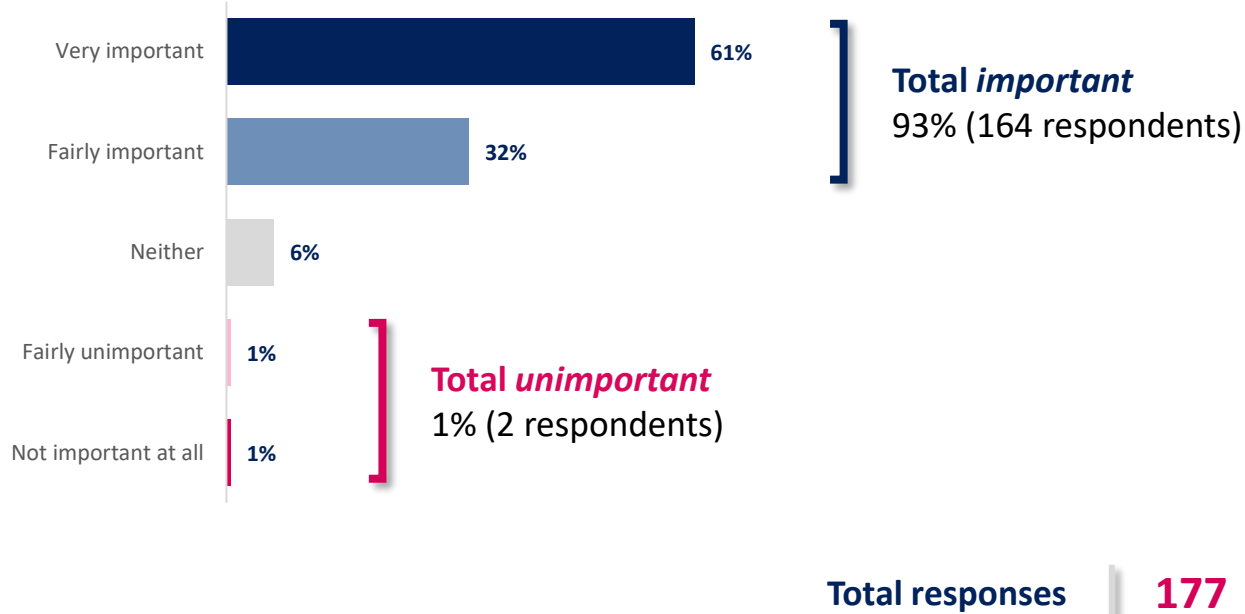
Breakdowns





Question 8d

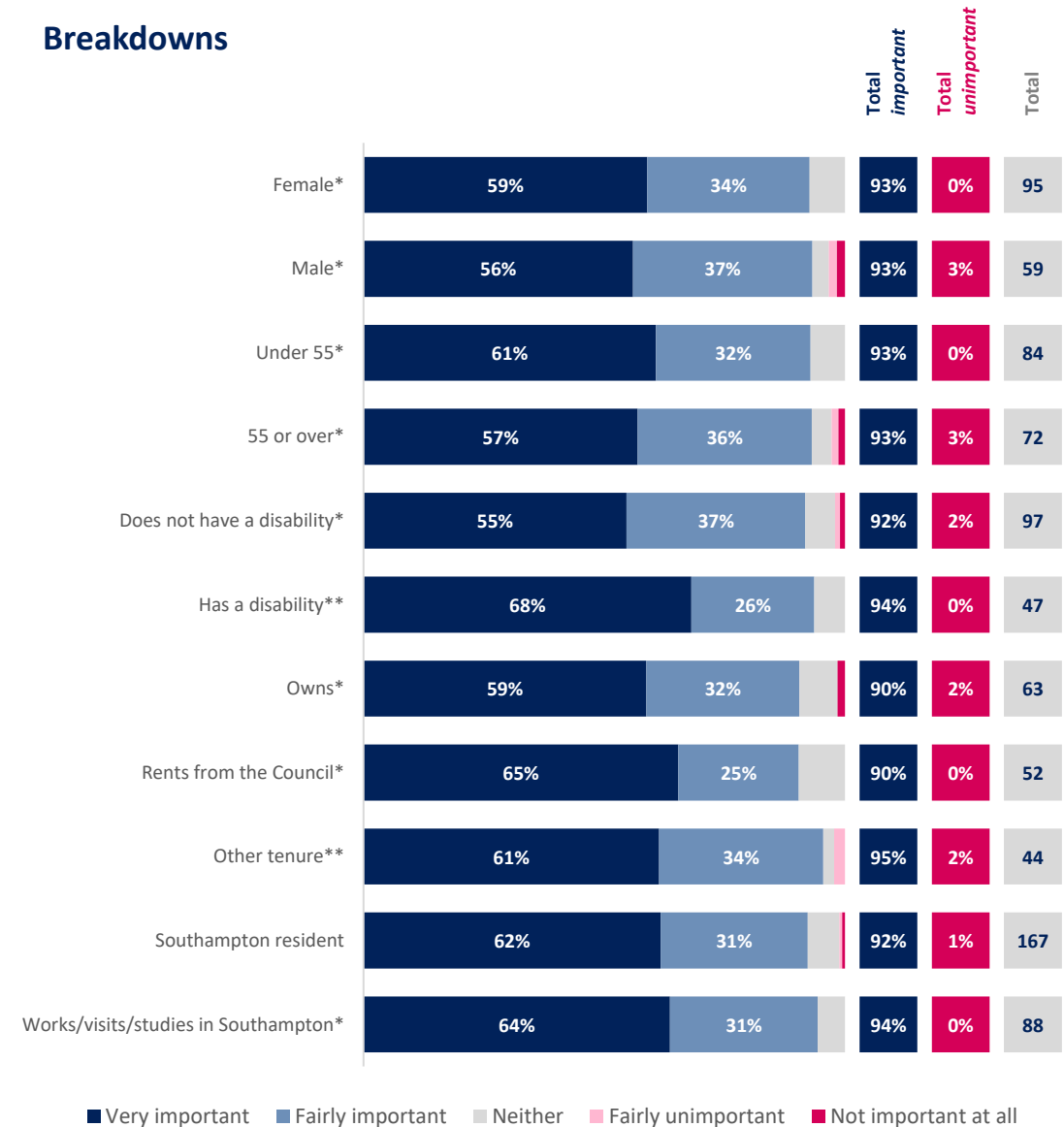
How important do you feel the following suggested priorities are as part of supporting strong and resilient communities? *Enhancing neighbourhoods*

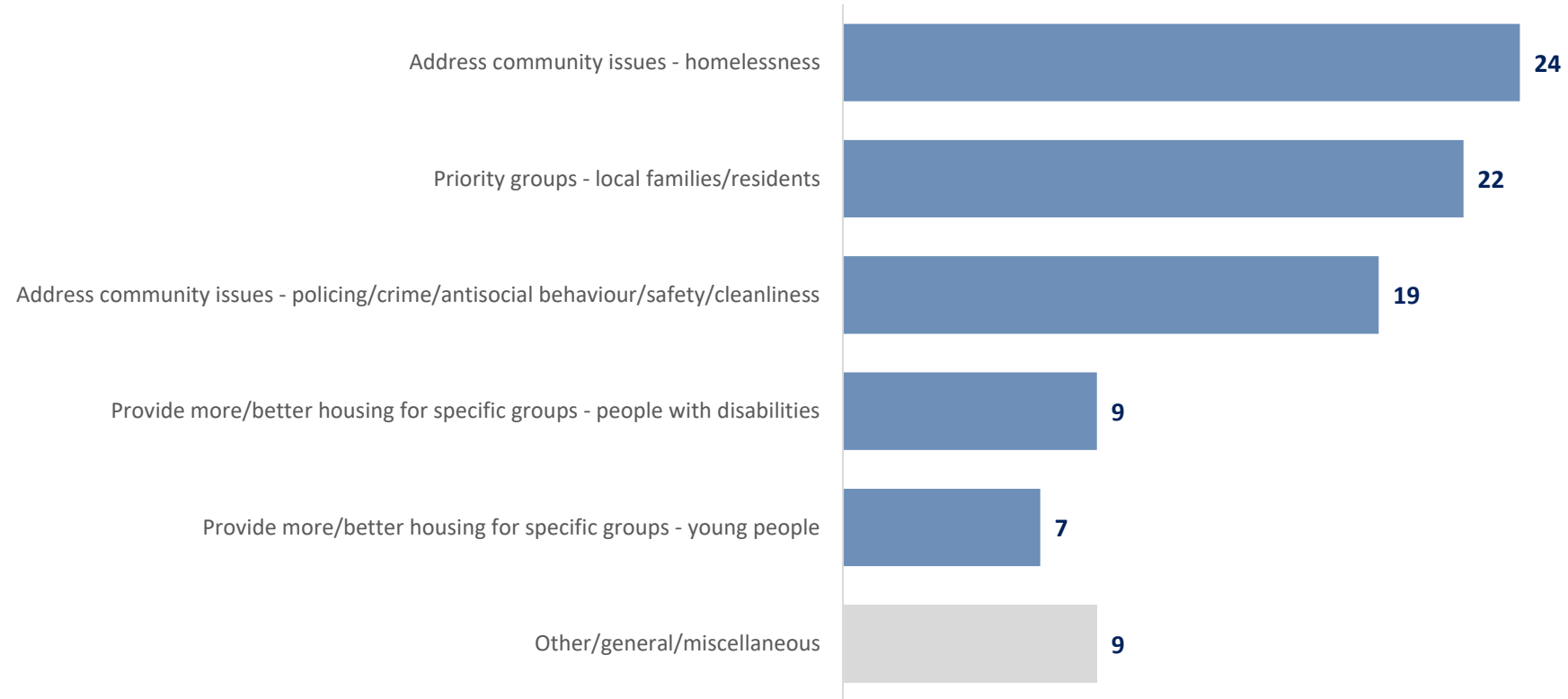


Key findings

- 93% said that this priority was *important*, including 61% that said it was *very important*
- All breakdowns likewise responded *important* by 90% or more, with respondents with a disability responding *very important* to the greatest extent at 68%

Breakdowns

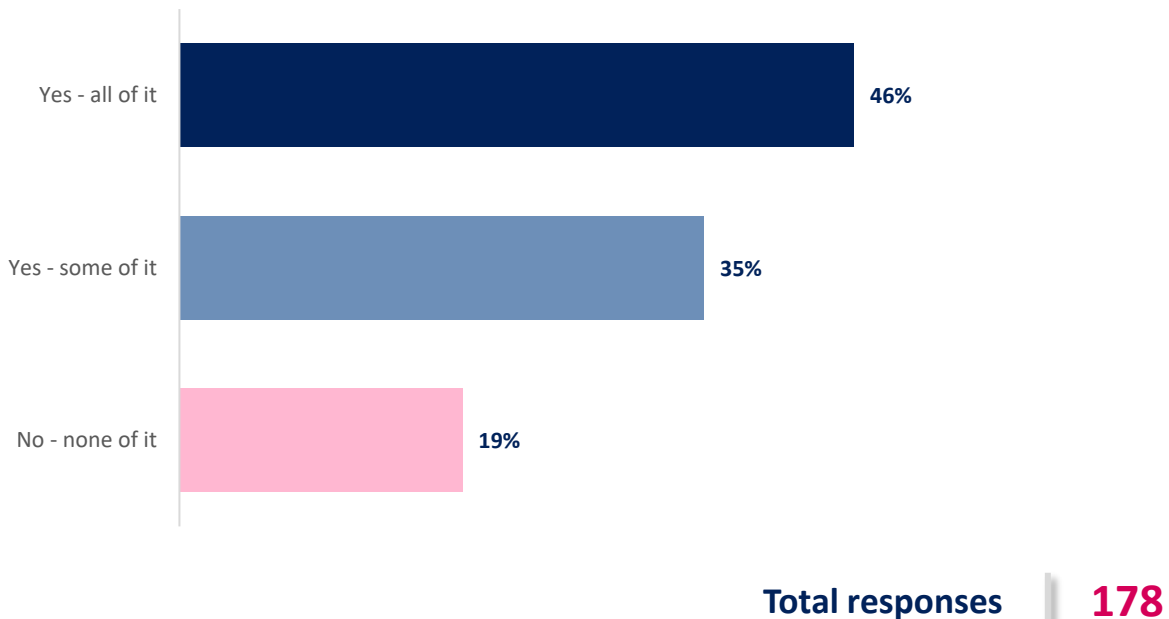






GENERAL FEEDBACK

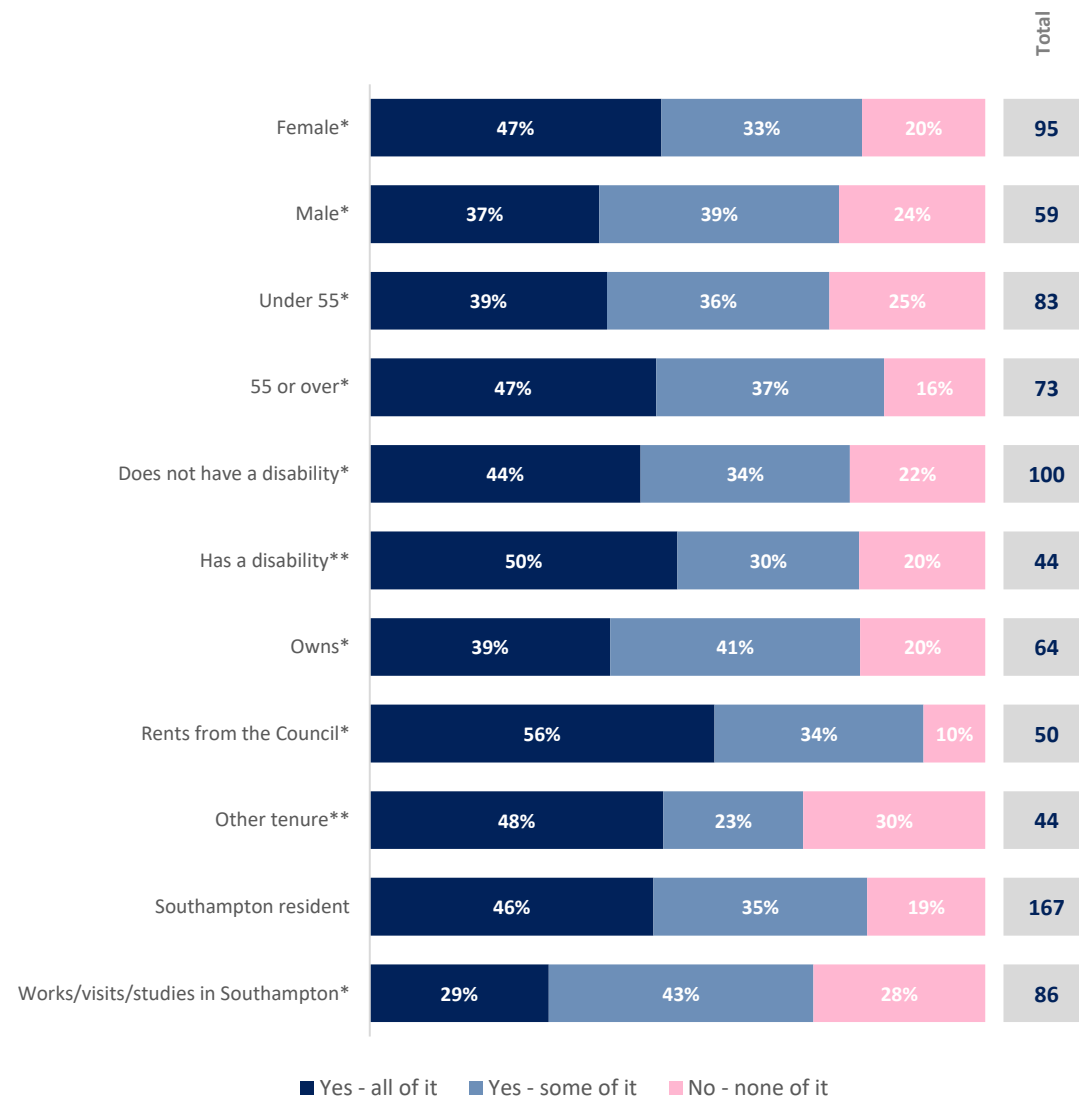




Key findings

- 81% of respondents confirmed they had read at least *some* of the proposed strategy
- Almost half (46%) said they had read *all* of the draft strategy, with just 19% said they had not read any of it at all

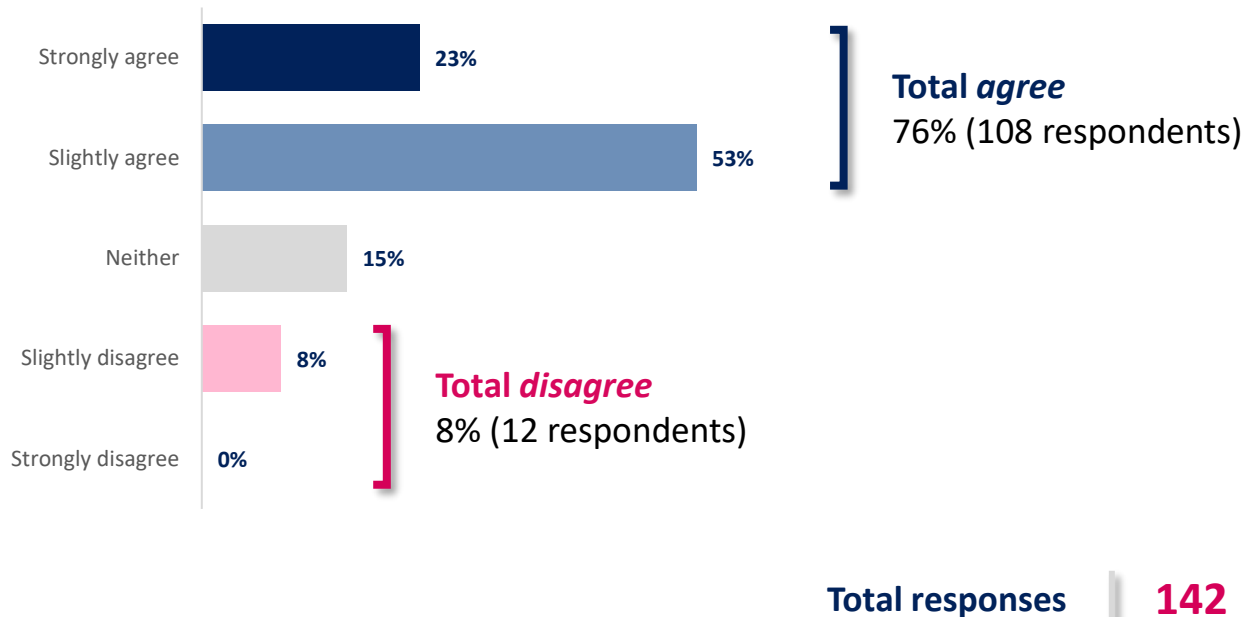
Breakdowns





Question 11a

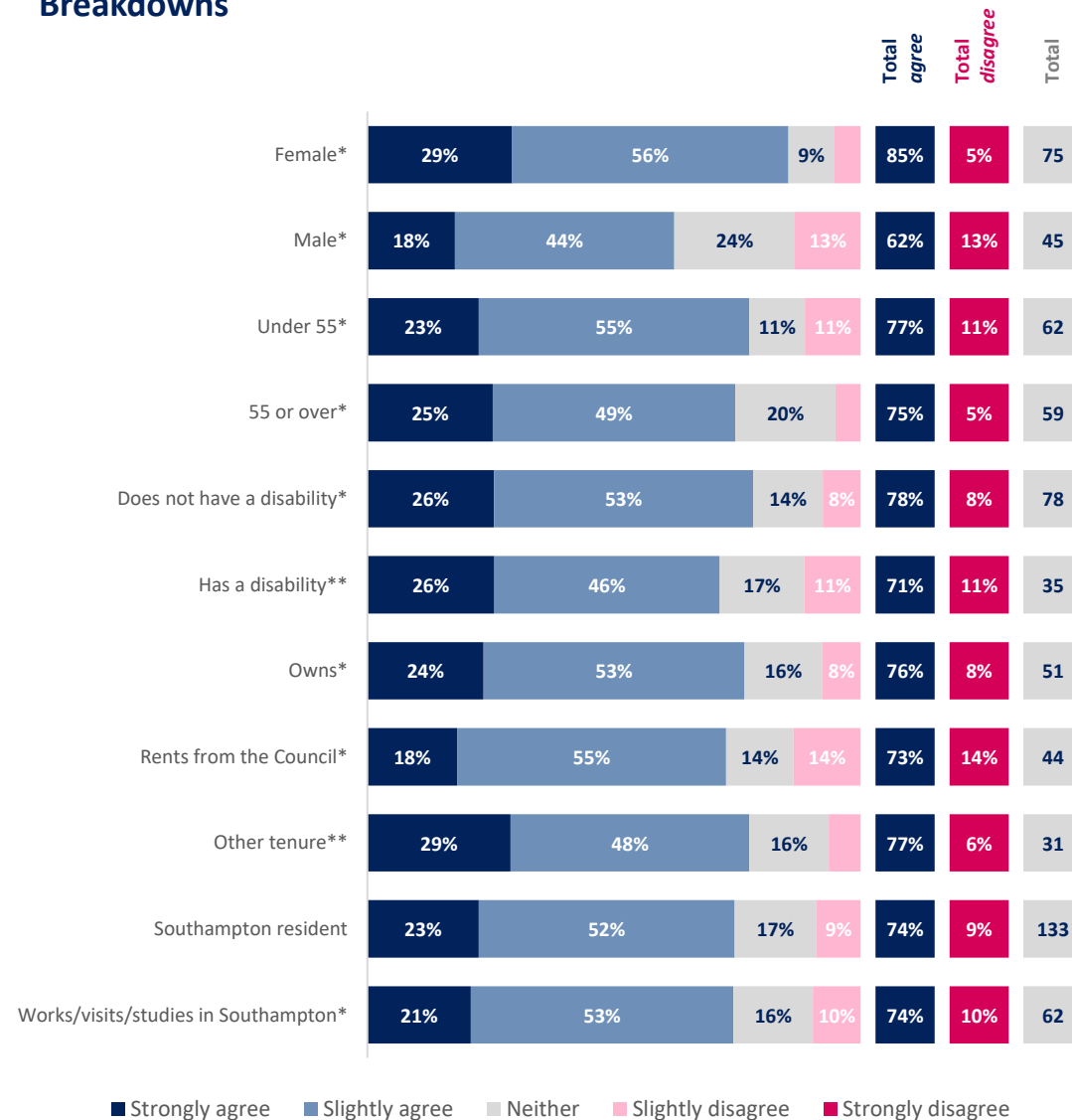
If you have read the proposed draft policy, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? "The draft strategy is easy to understand"



Key findings

- Over three-quarters (76%) of respondents said *agreed* that the draft strategy was easy to understand
- This includes 85% of female respondents

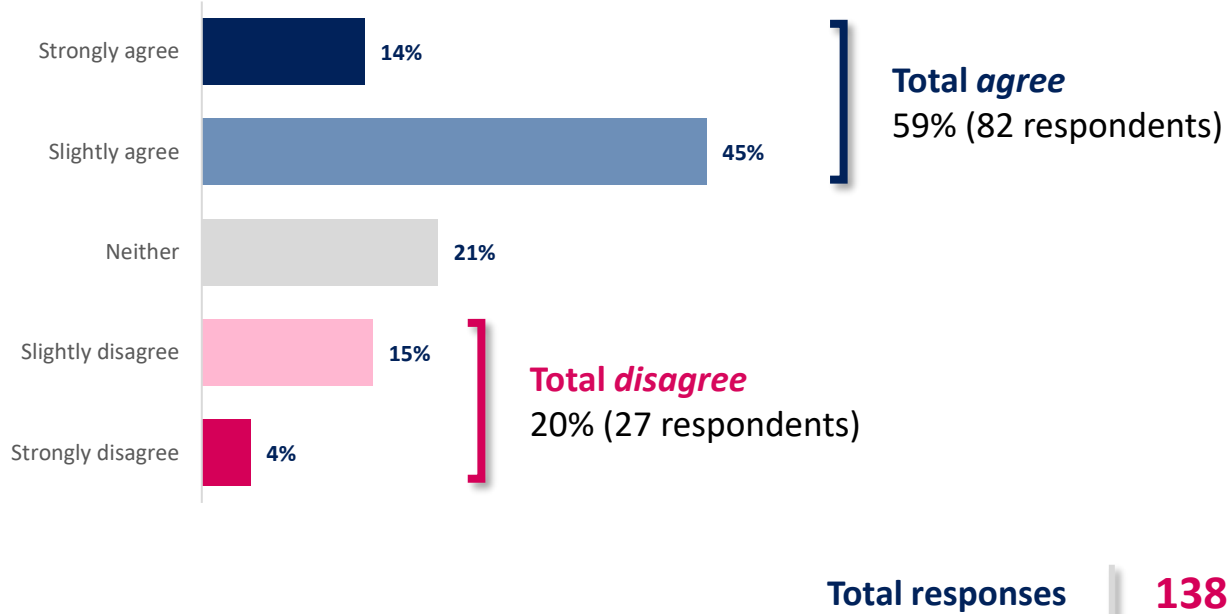
Breakdowns





Question 11b

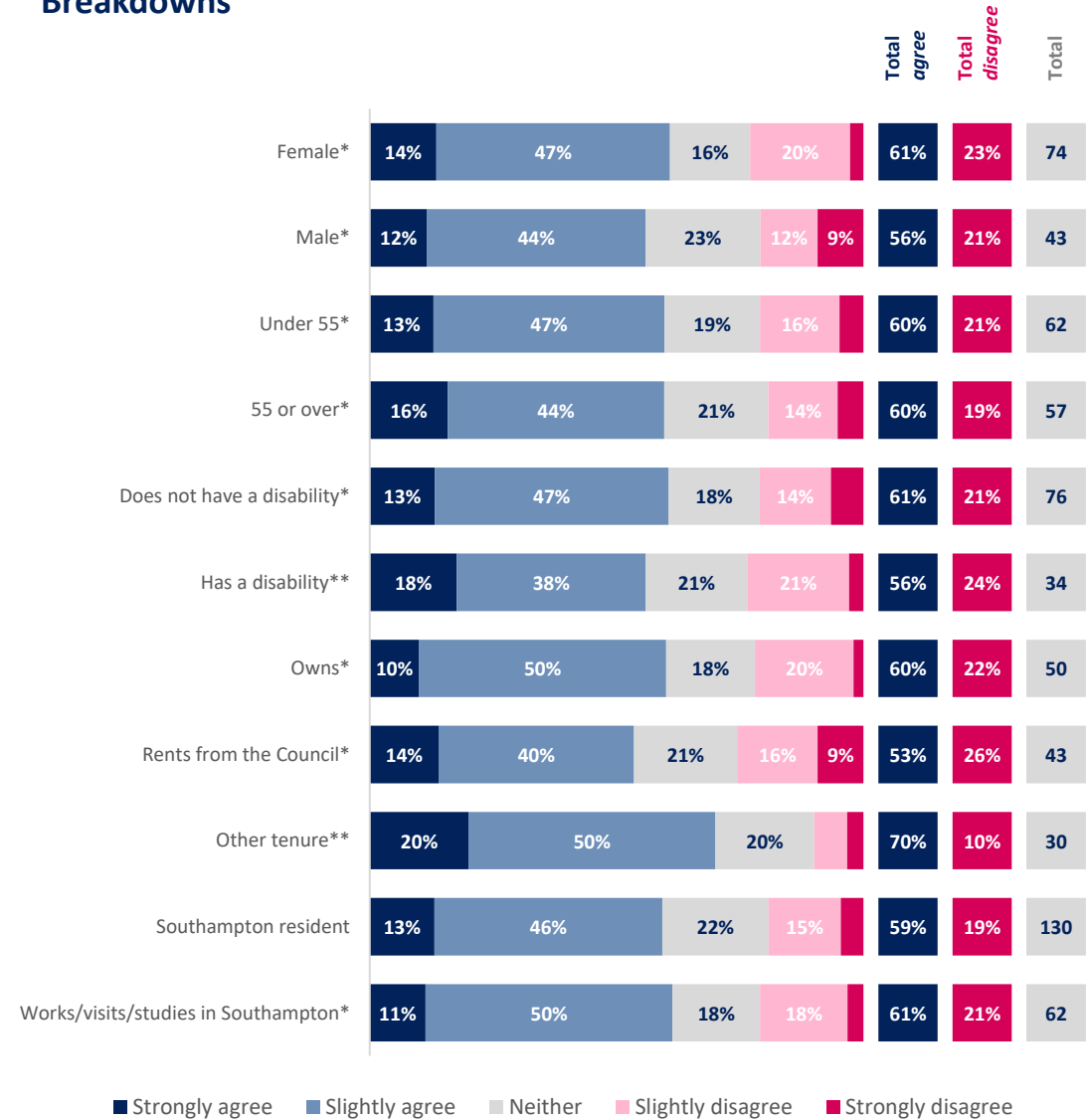
If you have read the proposed draft policy, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? "The draft strategy provides sufficient information"



Key findings

- 59% of respondents agreed that the proposed strategy provides sufficient information
- This number climbs to 70% of 'Other tenure' respondents, with 50% of this group also responding *strongly agree*

Breakdowns

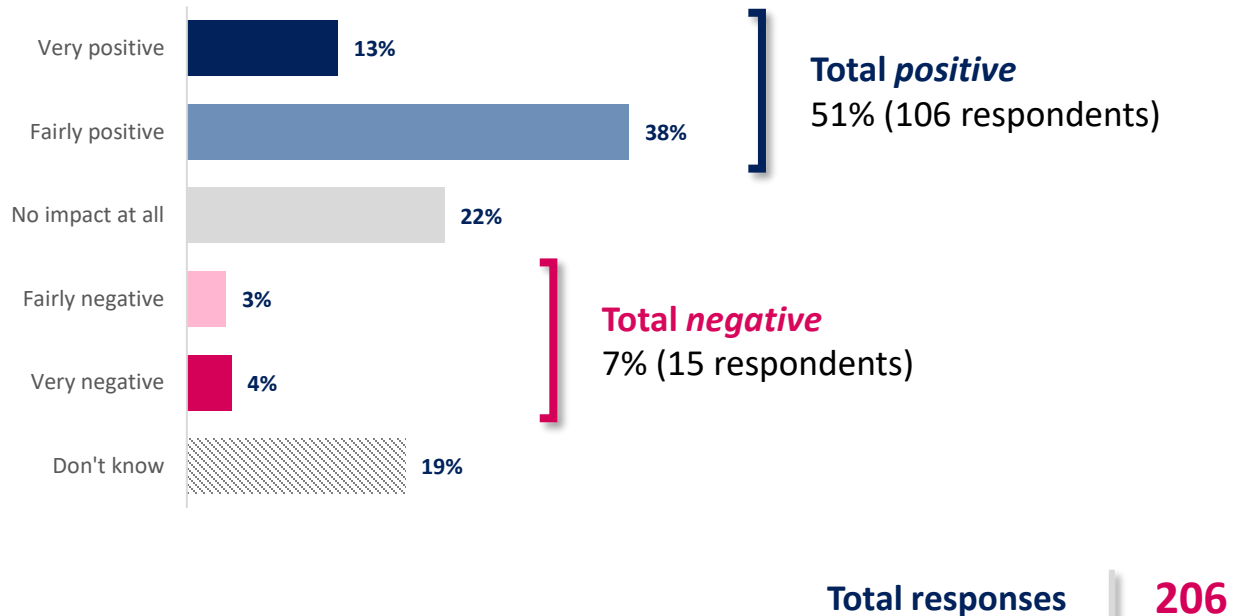


*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents.



Question 13

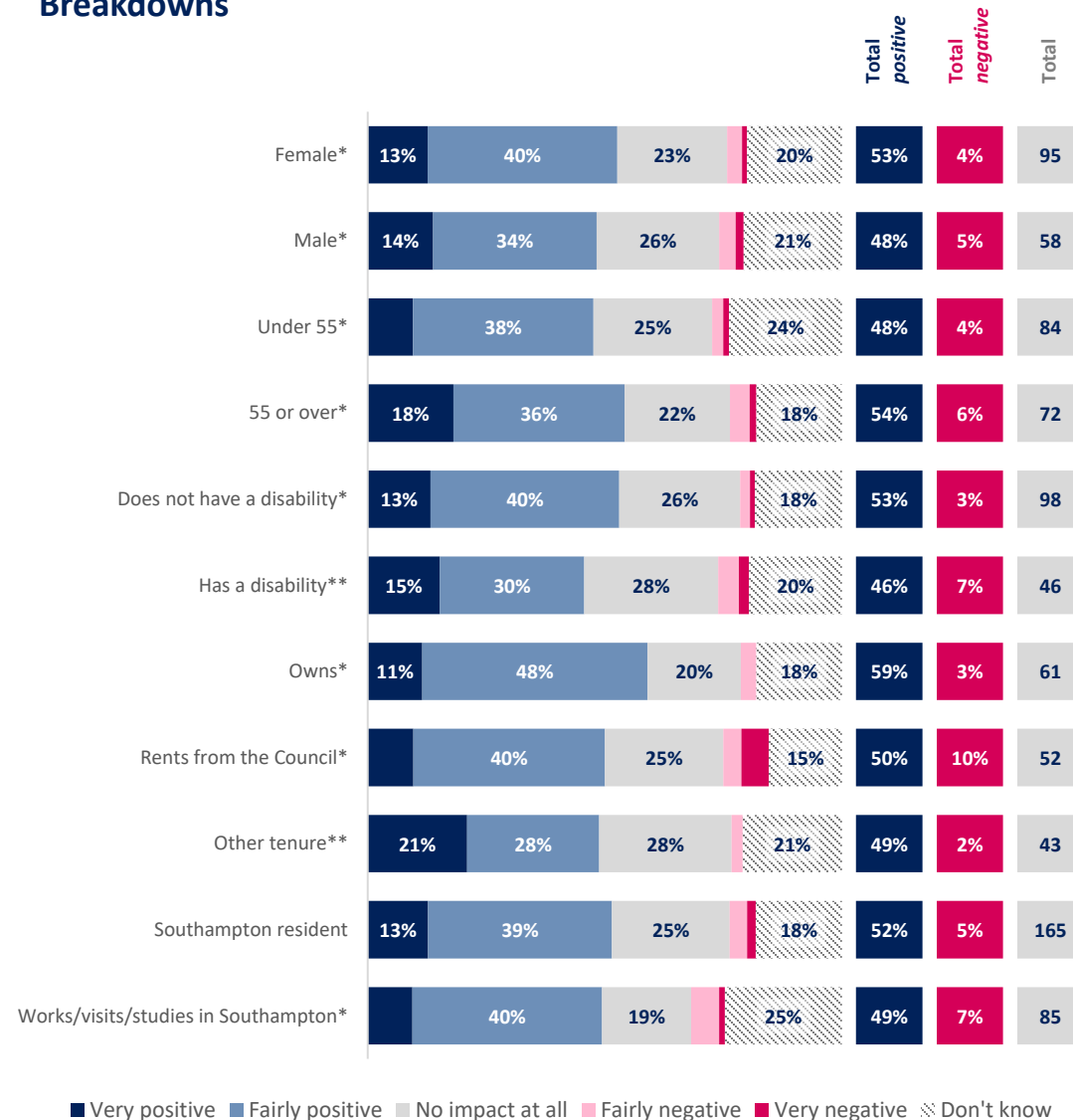
If the draft strategy were to be implemented, what impact do you feel this would have on you, your family, your business or the wider community?



Key findings

- 51% said the draft strategy would have a *positive* impact if implemented: this compares to 41% that said either *no impact* or *don't know*, and 7% that said it would have a *negative* impact
- Homeowners said the draft strategy would have a *positive* impact to the greatest extent at 59%, with respondents with a disability responding likewise to the least extent at 46%

Breakdowns



*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents.

