

Appendix 2 – Outputs of Resident Consultation Activities

Part 1 – Summary of resident consultation activities

Heat Networks Residents Working Group

The group met three times between October 2019 and February 2020 and discussed a range of topics and experiences. As a vision for the Council's future heat networks residents suggested:

- A service no worse and no more expensive than a gas boiler
- Protecting vulnerable residents through careful planning and communication.
- Freedom of choice - leaseholders should have choice in relation to capital investment options
- Heat metered to reduce wastage
- Performance guarantees
- Low carbon

At the end of the third meeting, the group attempted to boil discussions down to a set of aims and proposals which is summarised in the table below.

Aim / vision	Means
To make reporting and tracking outages easier for residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review & promote text message service • Make sure all priority estates can access the call centre hotline • Enable online outage reporting and tracking
To ensure both tenants and leaseholders voices are heard on investment decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early stage consultation with all residents during investment plan development
To ensure value for money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure site specific options are considered rather than a one-size-fits-all • To undertake an options appraisal process when major investment is required and share the results with residents • Log and monitor warranties and guarantees thoroughly to ensure these are exercised whenever applicable • To benchmark district heating charges with individual gas boiler equivalents
To ensure the roll-out of heat meters protects vulnerable residents as well as promotes energy efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and consult on heating tariffs before implementation • Consideration of bespoke tariff service • Caution raised over pre-payment solutions that could cut people off automatically
Transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can estate-specific KPIs be shared on a semi-regular basis? • Can residents access site specific BMS data? • Can leaseholders receive a breakdown of how charges are calculated?

Compensation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplifying the means of compensating residents for increased electricity costs when there are outages • Avoiding the development of a “compensation culture”
--------------	--

Borough-wide heat networks consultation

After the third meeting with the Residents Working Group, it was felt that the Council should consult with a wider audience so a borough wide consultation exercise was carried out, inviting views from all residents connected to a Southwark heat network. An 8 week long consultation ran from the 10th of June to the 9th of August 2020. This was designed to capture resident feedback on issues experienced and how the networks could be improved. The consultation was also used to spread awareness of the new heat metering and billing regulations.

There are around 17,000 individual properties connected to district heating systems across the borough. To advertise the consultation letters were sent out to all residents and text messages were sent to all registered phone numbers. Posters and social media were also used. Just over 800 responses were received. This is a response rate of almost 5% which is considered typical.

Many points were addressed in the questionnaire such as; what types of problems do residents face most frequently? Which estate are the most problematic? What do tenants/leaseholders think of heat meters? And what improvements would they like to see?

After analysis some useful results were reached such as heating satisfaction and outage rates experienced by residents at different for estates. Estates with specific issues such as hot water shortages, over heating or under heating were also pinpointed.

Most residents welcomed the idea of having greater control over their heating and bills through heat metering and additional controls and only paying for what they used. Some residents expressed concern over the possibility of increased costs if they were higher than average heat users.

A great deal was learnt during the exercise about the issues faced by residents and the data collected is being used to guide future investment priorities.

A summary of the responses received is included below and is on the [Council's website](#).

Repeating the consultation exercise on an annual / bi-annual basis may be a good way to gauge changes in satisfaction levels and keep track of residents' views and experiences. If repeated, a higher response rate would be targeted through longer consultation period and a wider range of communication channels.

Tenant and homeowner forums

A summary of the Heat Networks Strategy were presented at the Central East Housing Forum (9th March 2021), Central West Housing Forum (10th June 2021) Tenants Forum (23rd June 2021) and Homeowners Forum (7th July 2021).

Part 2 – Outputs from the Heat Networks Residents Working Group meetings

KEY DISCUSSIONS ON CURRENT OPERATIONS

	Communications	Service levels and outages	Other
Discussion	<p>Residents reporting outages to Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text messages and website are key to letting residents know if there is a problem with their heating. Understanding how many residents are signed up to receive the texts would be helpful. • Call centre hotline – how does this work and can all estates utilise it for outage reporting? <p>Council notifying residents of outages or other issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council officers reported that the first communication was via text messages and website updates • Letters are sent as well when outages go over 24 hours. These are often delivered by housing officers and vulnerable residents are prioritised for delivery. • Electric heaters are provided free of charge and left with residents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water can come out too hot – scalding risk? • How to improve the response to outages compared to last year. • Understanding of the welfare impacts of district heating failure. • Underground pipework is hardest to guarantee against failure (due to limited ability to inspect condition) and also the hardest to repair quickly if there is a problem. • The group commented that the current compensation approach was too ad hoc. A case by case process of needing to “prove your extra electricity cost” doesn’t protect the most vulnerable residents. However, the group also wanted to avoid a “compensation culture” because it costs the Council money which could be better used improving problematic heating systems. <p>Regarding vulnerable residents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was questioned whether vulnerable residents actually use the electric heaters provided or are they fearful of the costs? • Does the council have good enough data on who is really vulnerable? Is this data available to the Housing Officers at the right time? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considering how to make the best use of waste heat. • Ability to take tough decisions based on robust information and informed decision-making. • Considering the impact of a zero-carbon objective on resident finances. • Buy-in from LBS re engaging with TMOs in a strategic way. • Mutual understanding – shared stakeholder knowledge. •

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How are vulnerable residents looked after in the event of a heating outage? How are they communicated with? 	
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review call centre “hotline” operation Review reach of text message service – what percentage of residents receive texts and can this be increased? Investigate the potential to use the web service more effectively e.g. for outage reporting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review legislation and current practice on domestic hot water supply temperatures 	

KEY DISCUSSIONS ON MAJOR WORKS / FUTURE INVESTMENT STRATEGY

It had previously been discussed that high capital charges relating to heating major works were a significant issue for Leaseholders. LHs felt that the Council didn’t listen to them on this issue and that they didn’t always get value for money. The point was made that both tenants (through the HRA) and leaseholders (capital works charges) pay for heating works and it was agreed that VFM is really important. The discussions then centred around three topics as follows.

	What would be your vision of Southwark’s heat networks in 2030, 2040, 2050...?	What are the pros and cons of heat meters to you and your neighbours?	What are the pros and cons of creating private sector partnerships to fund and manage some or all of the Council’s heat networks in the long term (ESCO model)?
Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A service no worse and no more expensive than a gas boiler Freedom of choice - leaseholders should have choice in relation to capital investment options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pro – lower carbon and more efficient. Pro – far too many people leave their windows open – meters would be a good incentive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This sounds a bit like a PFI deal – there can be eye-watering legal and financial set-up costs to these deals. Myatts Fields North in Lewisham is an ESCO and that has been disastrous

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can the council provide a guarantee about on performance? • In five years, you won't be allowed to install gas boilers in new builds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Con – vulnerable residents may turn off their heating due to worry about bills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'm open to this kind of arrangement as long as there is a good service. It might be necessary to make the level of investment that is required. What's the alternative? One con though is that the service provider is an extra level removed from the residents.
Actions		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop heat metering tariff structures that could be used to balance efficiency with protecting vulnerable residents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present case studies of ESCOs at the next Residents Working Group

KEY DISCUSSIONS ON HEAT METERING STRATEGIES

	Tariff structures	Communications	Other
Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussed the pros and cons of different heat meter tariff structures – from 100% fixed rate as at present, to 100% variable charges. Refer to “Heat tariff structures” for background. • Whatever tariff is applied should not be overly complicated – need to protect vulnerable residents. • Regarding the spectrum between 100% fixed and 100% variable, the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If heat meters were rolled out across existing properties, it would need a massive programme of education to help people understand how they work and how any associated charging system would affect them. • Could YouTube videos be used – modern methods of communication... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New-build homes are already required to have heat meters by law and LBS could be forced to retrofit heat meters into existing council properties. This is subject to how the current Heat Metering and Billing Regulations are amended (currently being updated by central government) • It was noted that LBS have to arrange forced entry into about 40 properties per week as a last resort to carry out gas safety checks.

	<p>question was raised “How do you get people concerned about heat consumption without being worried about heat consumption?”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maybe there is a tenure dimension to the question, as homeowners often want a breakdown of actual consumption costs. • Pre-payment arrangements for heat meters with auto cut-off are not uncommon in the housing association sector (probably the standard approach). Some members of the group thought an auto cut-off approach would be very negative for some residents. • LBS does not have discretionary aid programme for people who have medical conditions that require high level of washing and bathing. Difficult to do this with communal heating systems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What about a Handbook • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inter-related issues - heat retention (closed windows), mould, low air quality. The Council is aware of the complications involved and that sometimes certain objectives (e.g. tackling fuel poverty and maintaining good indoor air quality) can be in tension with other objectives (e.g. energy efficiency). • Some members of the group expressed that freedom of choice ought to be a clear principle in deciding on heating systems. • Some discussion that there is a public health dimension to issue of heating.
--	---	--	---

Part 3 – Outputs from the Borough-wide Heat Networks Consultation

Heat Networks Consultation

10th June – 09th August 2020

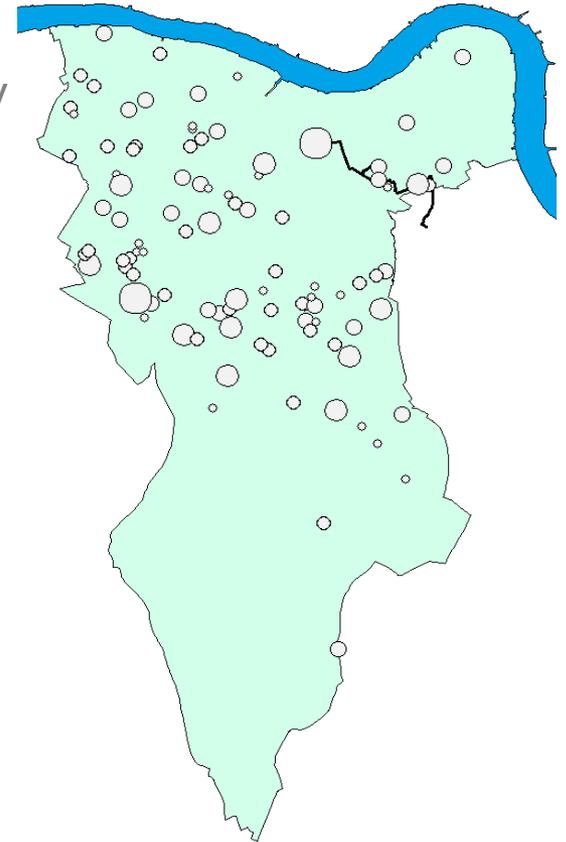
 @lb_southwark  facebook.com/southwarkcouncil

Overview

- We currently have over 16,000 individual properties connected to district heating systems across the borough.
- To advertise the online consultation letters and text messages were sent out to residents and we also aimed to use posters and social media.
- We were told to expect a response rate of around 5% and that's exactly what we got with over 800 people responding.

Objectives

- Which estates are the most problematic
- What kind of problems are experienced most frequently
- How satisfied are our heat network residents
- What types of improvements do residents suggest
- Spreading awareness of Heat Metering & Billing regs
- Introducing residents to heat meters
- Introducing systems for paying for the heat they use
- Resident opinions on reducing carbon emissions



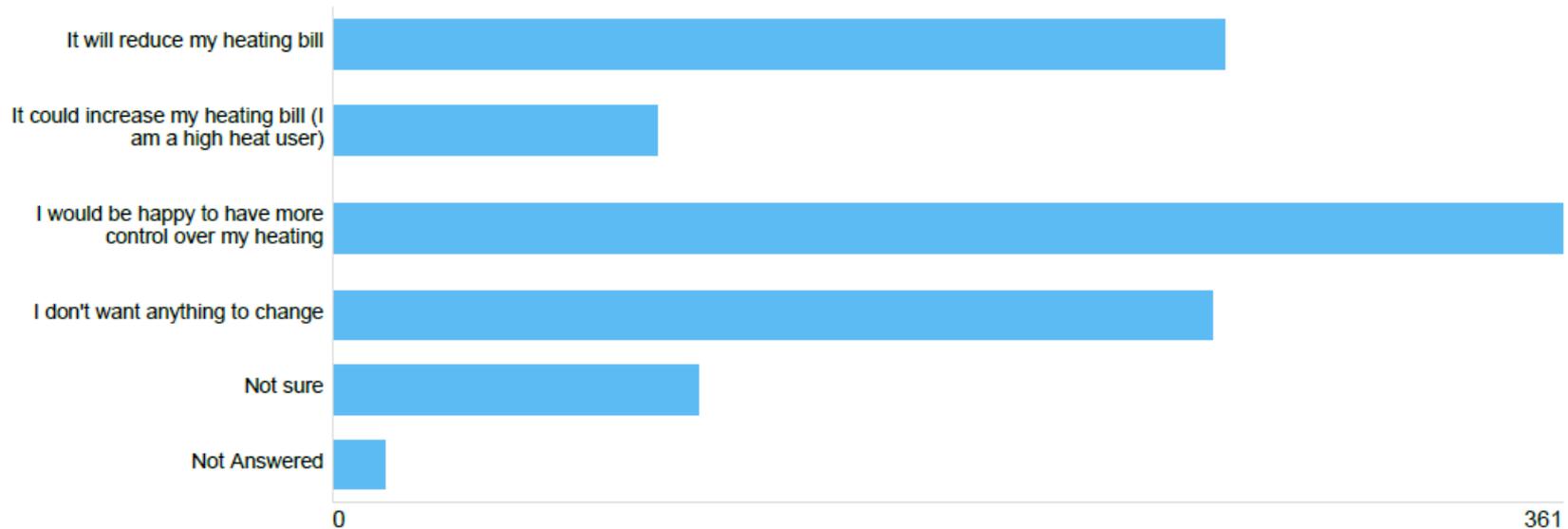
Summary of results

- Top 5 estates with residents reporting the least number of outages:
Keetons (5%), Portland (6%), Downtown North (9%), Scovell (10%), Elmington (11%)
- Bottom 5 estates with residents reporting the most number of outages:
Aylesbury (88%), Brimington (68%), Cossall (63%), Newington (60%), North Peckham (59%)
- Estates where residents reported the most over heating issues:
Cossall (84%), Havil (70%), Lettsom (65%)
- Estates where residents reported the most under heating issues:
Slippers Place (67%), Alberta (50%), Aylesbury (50%)
- Estates where residents reported the greatest shortage or hot water:
Abbeyfield (60%), Carlton Grove (50%), Lindley (50%)

Summary of results

Question 13: In what ways do you think having control over your heat and being billed for only what you use will affect you? (tick apply that apply)

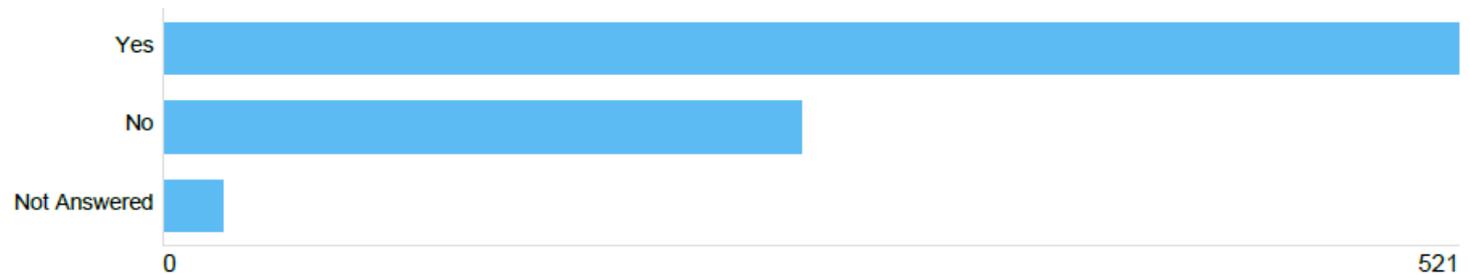
How would this affect you



Option	Total	Percent
It will reduce my heating bill	261	32.58%
It could increase my heating bill (I am a high heat user)	95	11.86%
I would be happy to have more control over my heating	361	45.07%
I don't want anything to change	258	32.21%
Not sure	107	13.36%
Not Answered	15	1.87%

Summary of results

Question 15: Do you think your current heating charges are affordable?

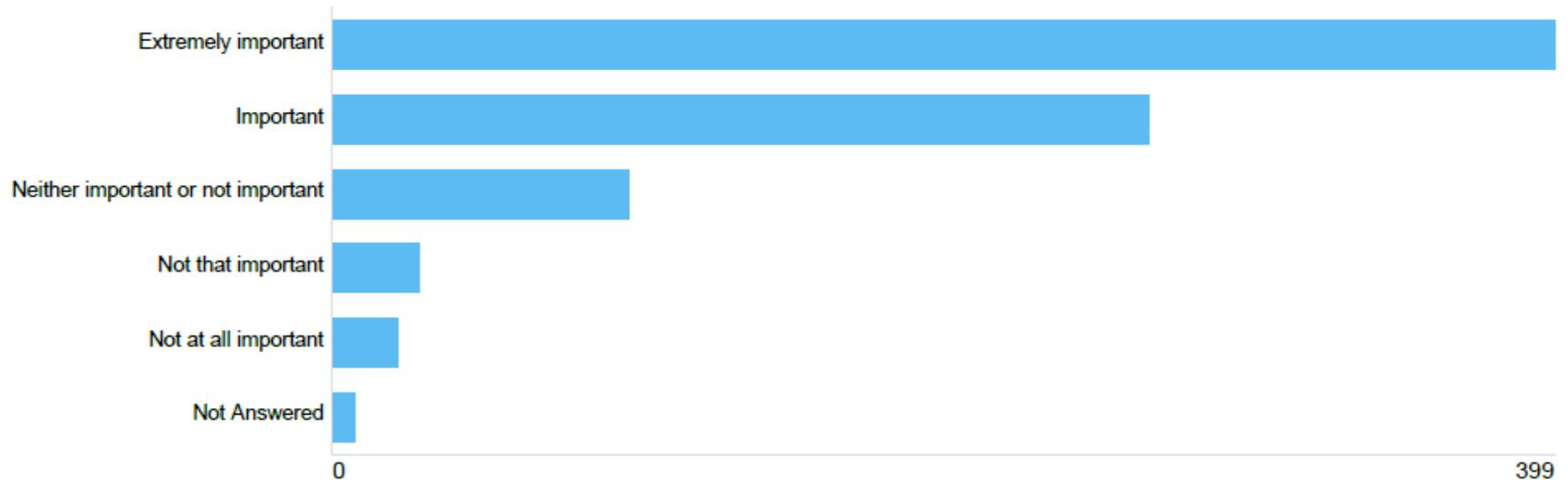


Option	Total	Percent
Yes	521	65.04%
No	256	31.96%
Not Answered	24	3.00%

Summary of results

Question 20: How important do you think it is to lower emissions from heating ?

how important



Option	Total	Percent
Extremely important	399	49.81%
Important	266	33.21%
Neither important or not important	96	11.99%
Not that important	28	3.50%
Not at all important	21	2.62%
Not Answered	7	0.87%

Comments from residents

- Q12 - How can you heating service be improved?

“Install new boilers in the boiler room and new radiators in the properties and engage in proactive maintenance instead of waiting until something breaks before it gets fixed. Install double glazing in the properties.” – Aylesbury Estate

“Stop fixing the system with untreated water - that's one of the reasons it is constantly going wrong and costing me as a leaseholder an obscene amount of money!” – Brimmington Estate

- Q16 - What can the council could do to help ensure affordability?

“I think that people should be charged according depending on the number of people who live in the flat and the number of rooms in a property” – Aylesbury Estate

“If meters were installed and we are still charged within the rent that would be a good thing” – Barsest Estate

Comments from residents

- Q18 - How can the council improve communication?

“Emails would be a extra help, however heating outage communication seems to be carried out with success. I'm always made aware of planned works by post.” –

Lettsom Estate

- Q22 - Any other heating related information?

“No need to change anything. Southwark council has a very excellent heating system for our estate.” – Styles House

“Thanks for asking for our views and making this upgrade a priority. In case it helps to highlight why this is overdue to colleagues: when a plumber was helping us fix a problem in our flat's bathroom he looked at the water tank and said 'Wow! Reminds me of the old soviet boilers we had back home'.” – D'Eynsford Estate

Heat Networks Consultation: Summary report

The consultation ran from 10/06/2020 to 09/08/2020.

Contents

Question 1: What Estate do you live on ?	2
Estate name	2
Question 2: Is your property connected to one of the Council's heat networks?	2
connected to heat network	2
Question 3: Are you a tenant or leaseholder?	3
tenant or leaseholder	3
Question 4: What is your name?	3
Name	3
Question 5: What is your address ?	3
Address and postcode	3
Question 6: How many people are there in your household ?	3
number in household	3
Question 7: Do you think your current heating system is reliable?	4
Yes or No	4
Question 8: Do you ever experience outages with your heating or hot water supply?	4
Yes or No	4
Question 9: If yes, how frequently do these outages occur?	4
Frequency of Outages	4
Question 10: When the heating is working as normal, do you regularly suffer from any of the following heating problems?	5
Effectiveness - regular problems	5
Other regular heating problems	5
Question 11: What measures do you take (if any) to deal with these problems?	5
personal measures taken from regular problems	5
Other measures	6
Question 12: Do you think your heating service could be improved?	6
Could your heating service be improved	6
other issues and how to improve	6
Question 13: In what ways do you think having control over your heat and being billed for only what you use will affect you? (tick apply that apply)	6
How would this affect you	6
Please specify any other ways you think these changes might affect you	7
Question 14: Which payment methods would be convenient for you? (tick all that apply)	7
which method	7
If other use this space to tell us more	7
Question 15: Do you think your current heating charges are affordable?	7
Struggle paying utility bills	7
Question 16: Please tell us what more the Council could do to help ensure our heating is fairly priced and affordable?	8
Affordability - What can the council do?	8
Question 17: What methods of communication work best for you?	8
methods of communication	8
Other methods of communication	8
Question 18: How could the council improve their communication regarding heating outages?	8
Outages	8
Question 19: In what ways do you think we could help protect our vulnerable residents? E.g. When there is a heating outage	8
Ways to help vulnerable residents	8
Question 20: How important do you think it is to lower emissions from heating ?	9
how important	9
Question 21: Relating to heat supply, what else could the council do to become more environmentally friendly?	9
Ways to be more environmentally friendly	9
Question 22: If there is any other information related to your heating that you think would be useful, please let us know	9
Additional information	9

Question 1: What Estate do you live on ?

Estate name

There were **788** responses to this part of the question.

Question 2: Is your property connected to one of the Council's heat networks?

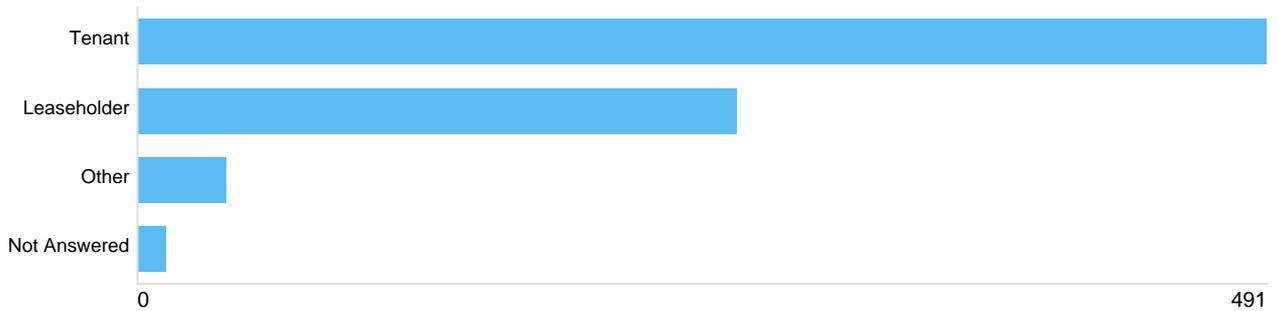
connected to heat network



Option	Total	Percent
Yes	724	90.39%
No	9	1.12%
Don't know	59	7.37%
Not Answered	9	1.12%

Question 3: Are you a tenant or leaseholder?

tenant or leaseholder



Option	Total	Percent
Tenant	491	61.30%
Leaseholder	260	32.46%
Other	38	4.74%
Not Answered	12	1.50%

Question 4: What is your name?

Name

There were **779** responses to this part of the question.

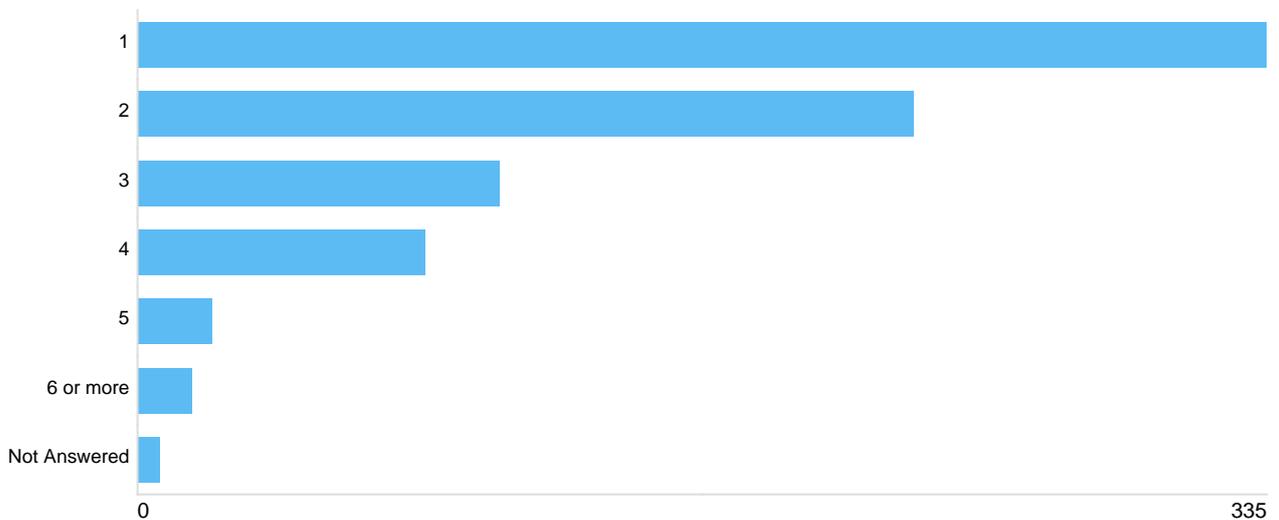
Question 5: What is your address ?

Address and postcode

There were **782** responses to this part of the question.

Question 6: How many people are there in your household ?

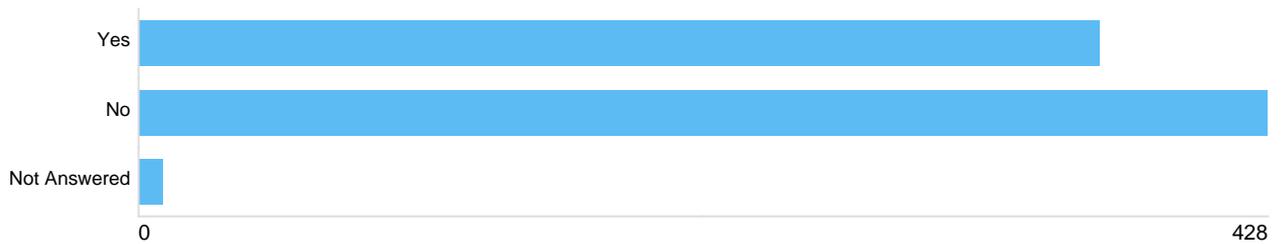
number in household



Option	Total	Percent
1	335	41.82%
2	230	28.71%
3	107	13.36%
4	85	10.61%
5	22	2.75%
6 or more	16	2.00%
Not Answered	6	0.75%

Question 7: Do you think your current heating system is reliable?

Yes or No



Option	Total	Percent
Yes	364	45.44%
No	428	53.43%
Not Answered	9	1.12%

Question 8: Do you ever experience outages with your heating or hot water supply?

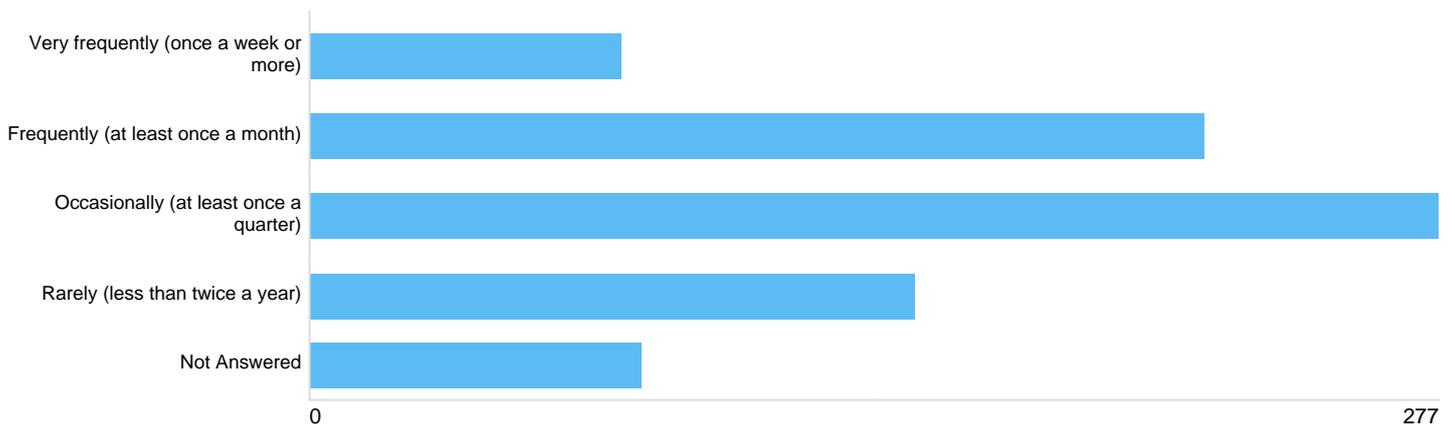
Yes or No



Option	Total	Percent
Yes	677	84.52%
No	119	14.86%
Not Answered	5	0.62%

Question 9: If yes, how frequently do these outages occur?

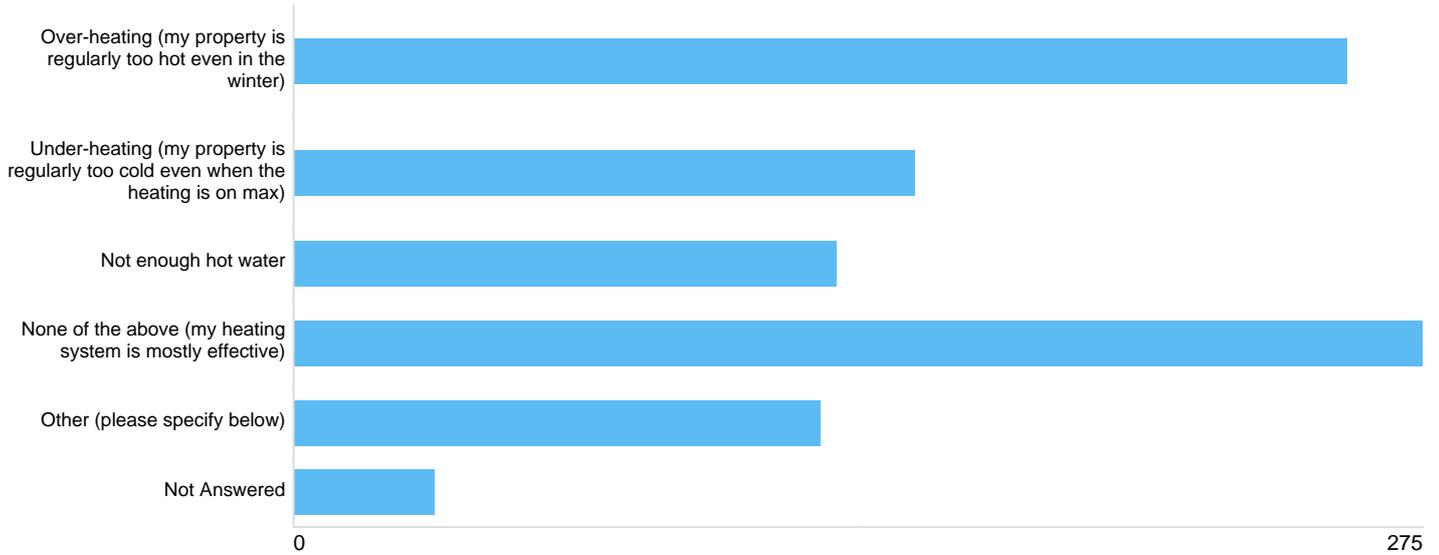
Frequency of Outages



Option	Total	Percent
Very frequently (once a week or more)	76	9.49%
Frequently (at least once a month)	219	27.34%
Occasionally (at least once a quarter)	277	34.58%
Rarely (less than twice a year)	148	18.48%
Not Answered	81	10.11%

Question 10: When the heating is working as normal, do you regularly suffer from any of the following heating problems?

Effectiveness - regular problems



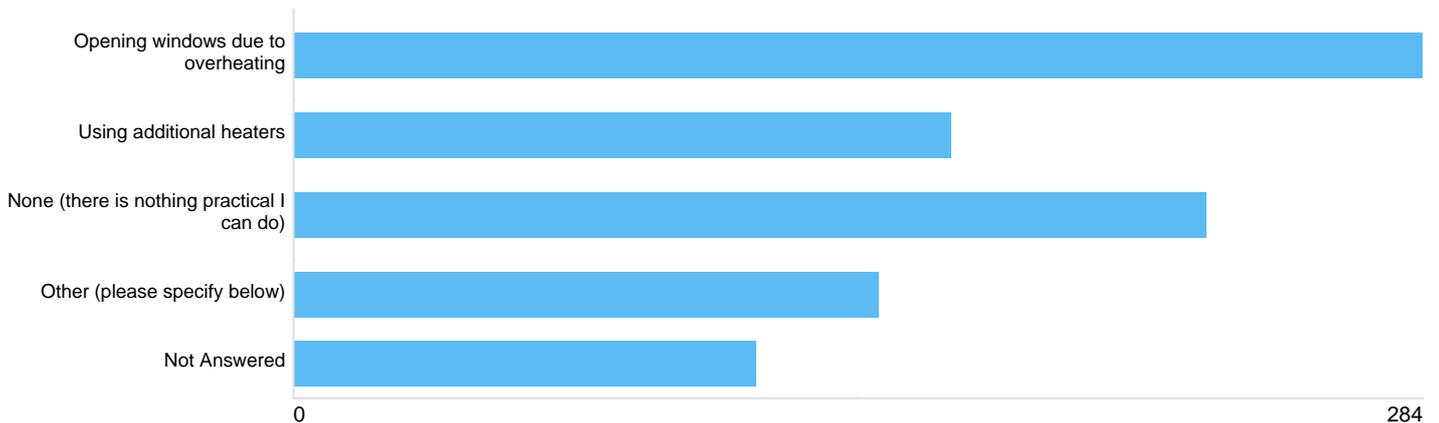
Option	Total	Percent
Over-heating (my property is regularly too hot even in the winter)	256	31.96%
Under-heating (my property is regularly too cold even when the heating is on max)	151	18.85%
Not enough hot water	132	16.48%
None of the above (my heating system is mostly effective)	275	34.33%
Other (please specify below)	128	15.98%
Not Answered	34	4.24%

Other regular heating problems

There were 334 responses to this part of the question.

Question 11: What measures do you take (if any) to deal with these problems?

personal measures taken from regular problems



Option	Total	Percent
Opening windows due to overheating	284	35.46%
Using additional heaters	165	20.60%
None (there is nothing practical I can do)	229	28.59%
Other (please specify below)	147	18.35%
Not Answered	116	14.48%

Other measures

There were **296** responses to this part of the question.

Question 12: Do you think your heating service could be improved?

Could your heating service be improved



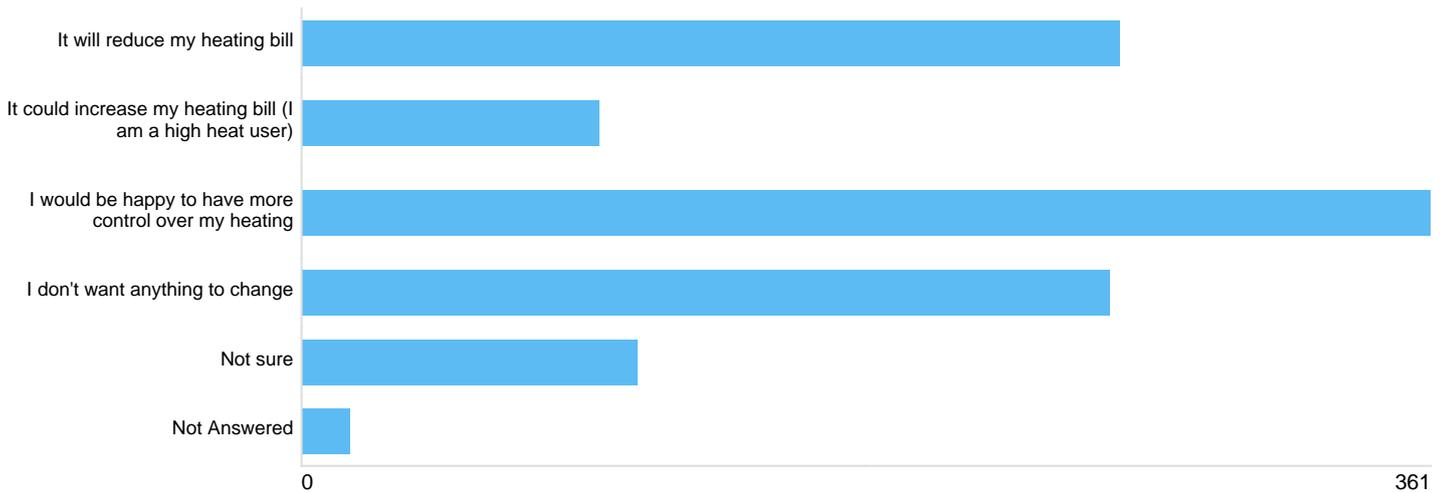
Option	Total	Percent
Yes	590	73.66%
No	192	23.97%
Not Answered	19	2.37%

other issues and how to improve

There were **544** responses to this part of the question.

Question 13: In what ways do you think having control over your heat and being billed for only what you use will affect you? (tick apply that apply)

How would this affect you



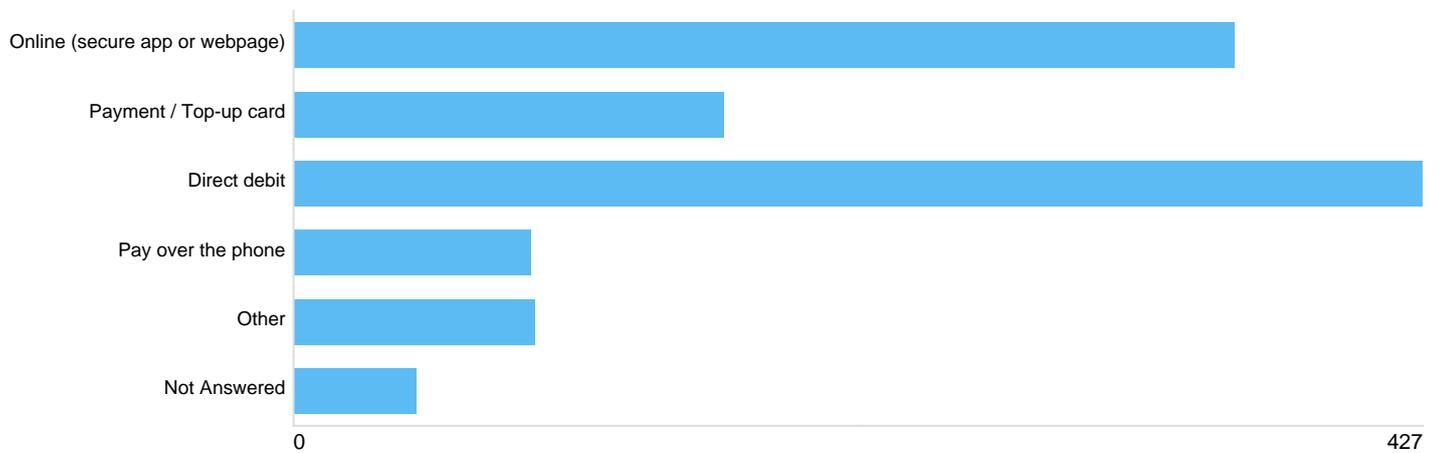
Option	Total	Percent
It will reduce my heating bill	261	32.58%
It could increase my heating bill (I am a high heat user)	95	11.86%
I would be happy to have more control over my heating	361	45.07%
I don't want anything to change	258	32.21%
Not sure	107	13.36%
Not Answered	15	1.87%

Please specify any other ways you think these changes might affect you

There were **308** responses to this part of the question.

Question 14: Which payment methods would be convenient for you? (tick all that apply)

which method



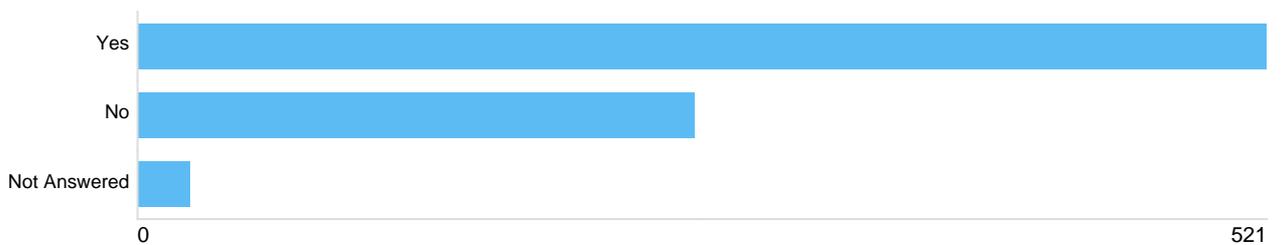
Option	Total	Percent
Online (secure app or webpage)	355	44.32%
Payment / Top-up card	162	20.22%
Direct debit	427	53.31%
Pay over the phone	89	11.11%
Other	91	11.36%
Not Answered	46	5.74%

If other use this space to tell us more

There were **147** responses to this part of the question.

Question 15: Do you think your current heating charges are affordable?

Struggle paying utility bills



Option	Total	Percent
Yes	521	65.04%
No	256	31.96%
Not Answered	24	3.00%

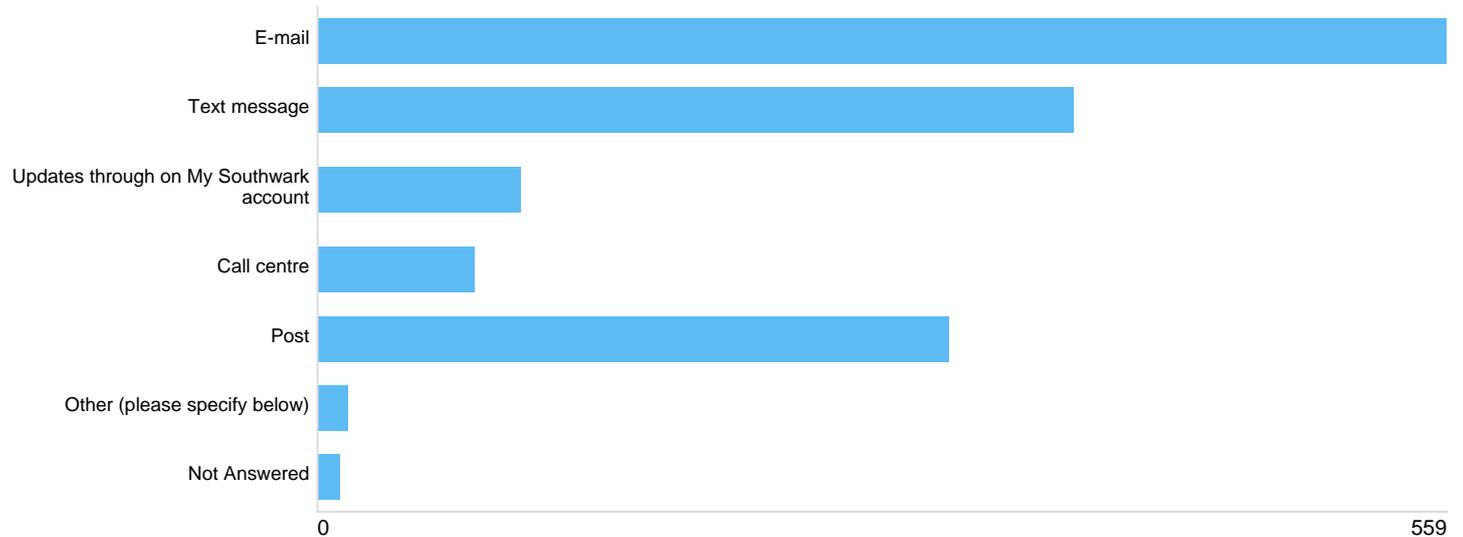
Question 16: Please tell us what more the Council could do to help ensure our heating is fairly priced and affordable?

Affordability - What can the council do?

There were **561** responses to this part of the question.

Question 17: What methods of communication work best for you?

methods of communication



Option	Total	Percent
E-mail	559	69.79%
Text message	373	46.57%
Updates through on My Southwark account	100	12.48%
Call centre	77	9.61%
Post	312	38.95%
Other (please specify below)	14	1.75%
Not Answered	10	1.25%

Other methods of communication

There were **42** responses to this part of the question.

Question 18: How could the council improve their communication regarding heating outages?

Outages

There were **567** responses to this part of the question.

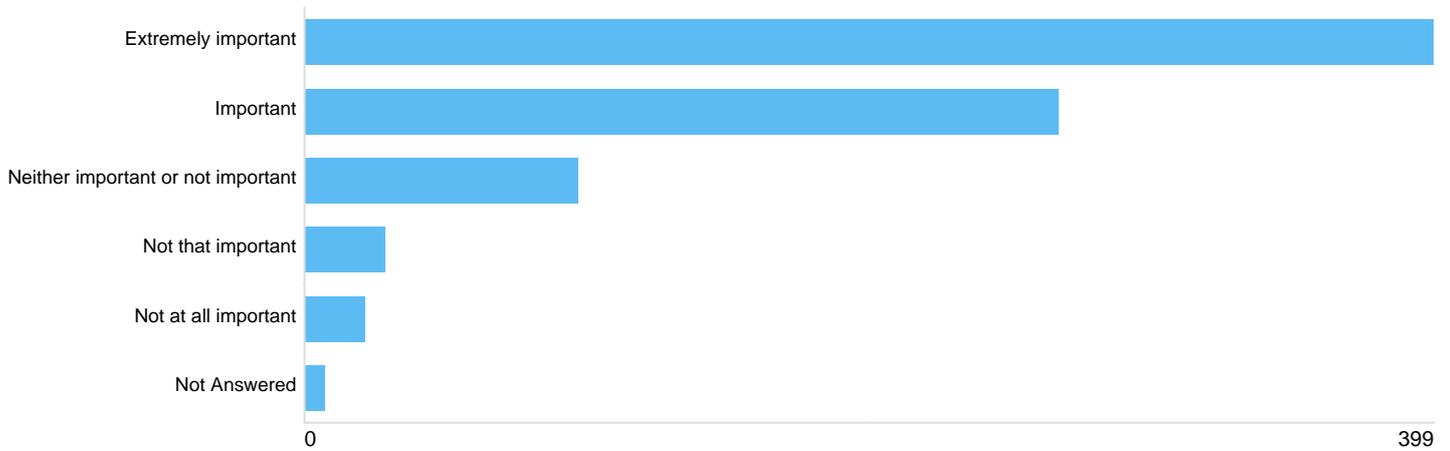
Question 19: In what ways do you think we could help protect our vulnerable residents? E.g. When there is a heating outage

Ways to help vulnerable residents

There were **576** responses to this part of the question.

Question 20: How important do you think it is to lower emissions from heating ?

how important



Option	Total	Percent
Extremely important	399	49.81%
Important	266	33.21%
Neither important or not important	96	11.99%
Not that important	28	3.50%
Not at all important	21	2.62%
Not Answered	7	0.87%

Question 21: Relating to heat supply, what else could the council do to become more environmentally friendly?

Ways to be more environmentally friendly

There were **506** responses to this part of the question.

Question 22: If there is any other information related to your heating that you think would be useful, please let us know

Additional information

There were **353** responses to this part of the question.