

Appendix D. Summary of Citizenspace Consultation Part 2

Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy Consultation and Policy on Adaptations for Disabled Tenants in Council Housing 2023

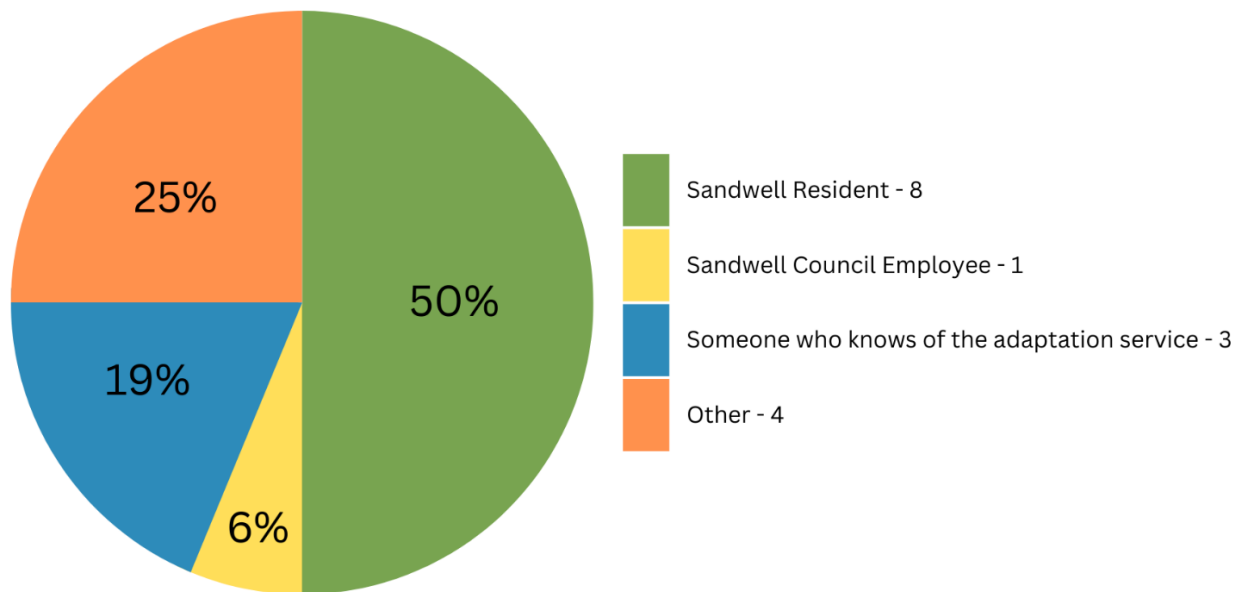
<https://consultationhub.sandwell.gov.uk/housing/disabled-facilities-grant-2023>

Report created on: **Friday 05 May 2023** at 13:11

The activity ran from: **20/04/2023** to **02/05/2023**

Responses to this survey: **16**

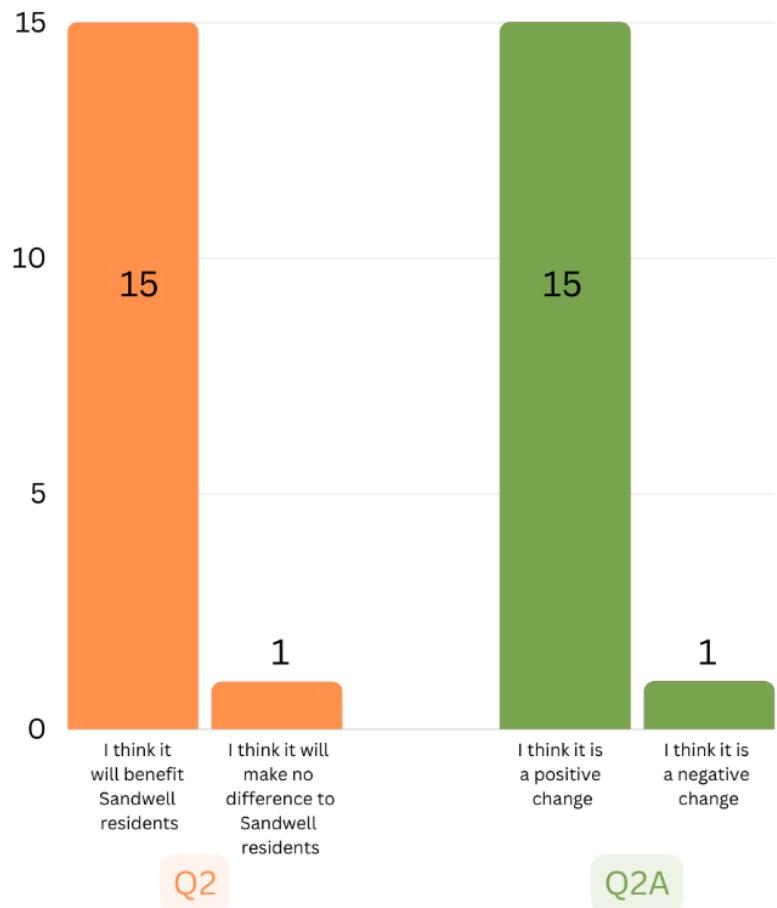
1: Who are you?



2: Proposed service change no.1

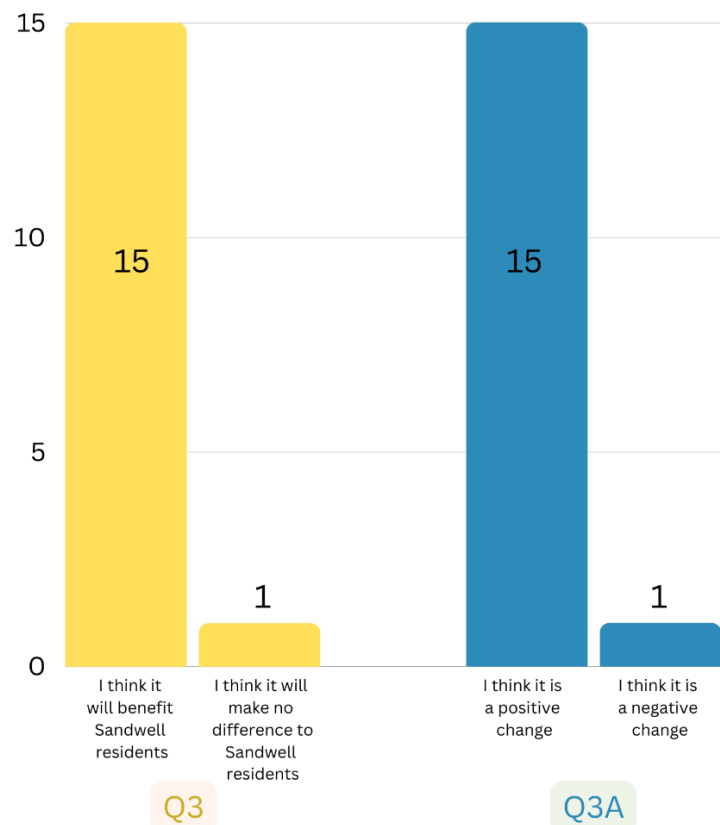
Some simple adaptations we could offer as a minor adaptation currently exceed the £1,000 limit. This means you may wait longer for something that could be installed quicker. We can overcome this by increasing the limit for minor adaptations that just exceed the current threshold, such as over bath showers.

To improve your customer experience and so we can install simple adaptations more quickly, we are proposing to increase the threshold for minor adaptation work to £1,500



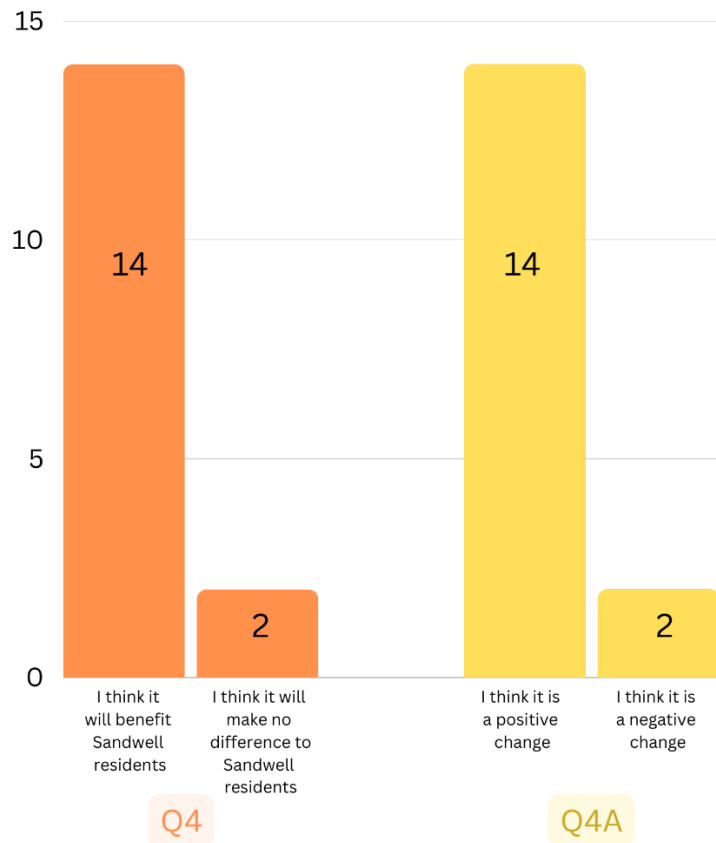
3: There are times when building works for adaptations cost more than the current grant limit of £30,000 and we need to request a “top up” so work can continue. As we must get approval first this can cause delays in completing your adaptation.

We are proposing that a ‘top up’ of up to £60,000 is made available without the need to go through another approval process so work can continue as quickly as possible.



4: All applications for Disabled Facilities Grants are currently means tested. This is where we assess your financial circumstances to see whether you need to contribute to your building work.

We are considering amending the means test so the first £15,000 of any application contribution is waived. However, we need to understand the impact this would have on Sandwell residents and our budgets. We would like to test this out and if the impact is positive, we may decide to make this change permanent.



Q4 OTHER RESPONSE

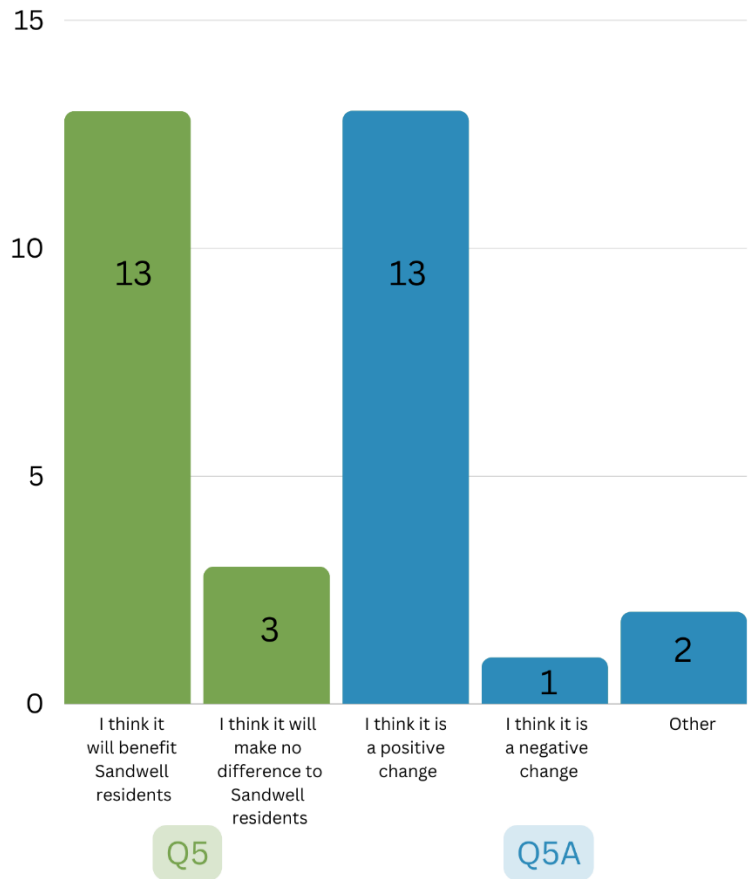
There was 1 response to this part of the question.

- The first question only gives two options, neither of which are that it might disbenefit Sandwell residents. It would be good to waive the first £15k, but might this mean that support is being given to more affluent households?

The proposal enables some services to be delivered much quicker. Sandwell is an area of deprivation and many residents accessing the service will be in a position of low income, however do acknowledge there may be some residents that have a higher income.

5: Not all properties are suitable for adaptations, or the cost of adapting them may be excessive. If this is the case, you may wish to move somewhere that better suits your needs. We previously offered New Homes Grants which helped with moving costs and any gap between the cost of your old and new home.

We recognise that moving house can be expensive so are proposing to offer a 'relocation grant' to help cover the cost of moving home. This would be up to £10,000 for owner occupiers and £2,000 for private tenants.



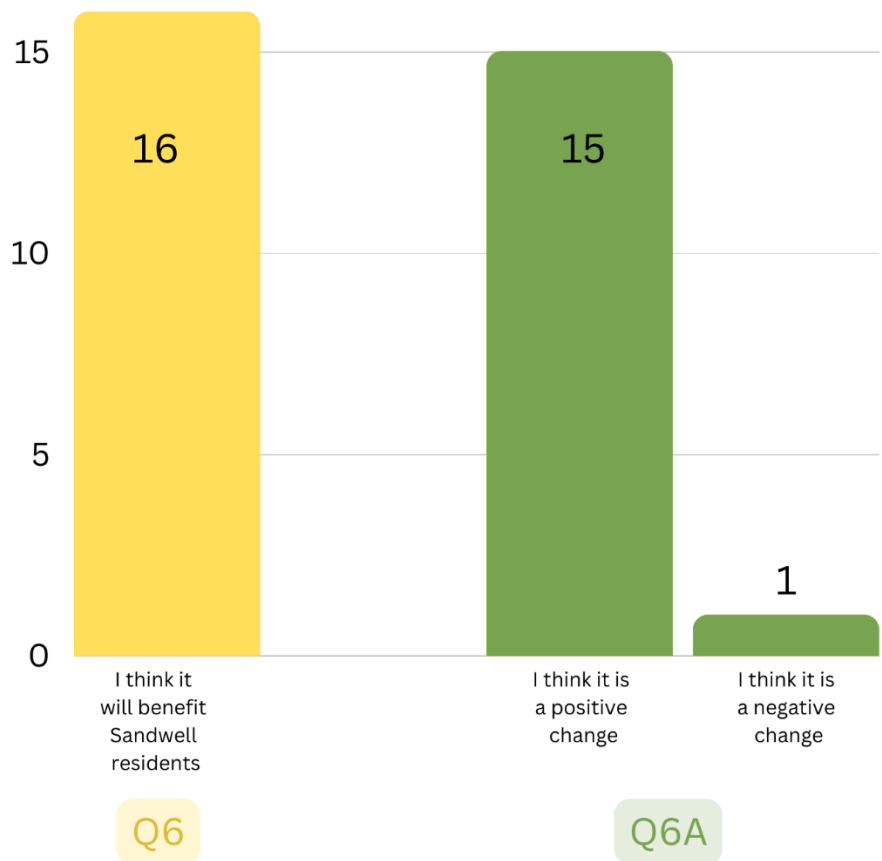
Q5 OTHER RESPONSE

There were 3 responses to this part of the question.

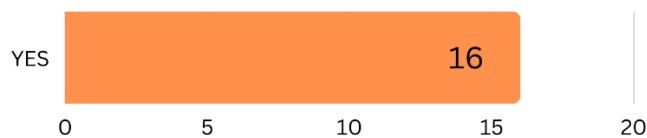
- There is potential risk of vulnerable people moving away from the community they know and their support networks. It's important to guard against this.
- It does not state the amount of the new homes grant compared with the relocation grant
- It's not clear if residents will be worse off as a result of this change. Leaving your local neighbourhood and community support networks can undermine well-being. How will the council ensure that this change doesn't result in unintended consequences such as social isolation?

Residents would be supported with this process through the identified caseworker/point of contact and will support the relocation in agreement with the resident and will consider wider necessary support in relation to community networks.

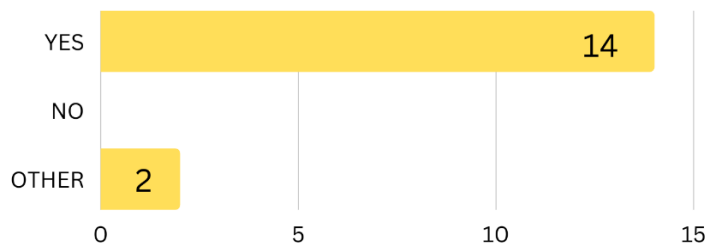
6: Most people who are in hospital want to get back home as quickly as possible. Sometimes discharge from hospital is delayed because homes are not safe to move back to, for example urgent home repairs might be needed to prevent trips/falls or a property may need to be cleared. We are proposing to offer a small grant (up to £6,000) to help residents get home from hospital sooner.



7: The Policy On Adaptations For Disabled Tenants In Council Housing policy states that a request for an adaptation will normally be classified as urgent if the person does not have access to a kitchen or toilet or they are terminally ill. Do you agree with this definition?



8: Under the terms of this Policy, a person is regarded as being disabled if they have a physical, sensory or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities within their home. A long-term effect refers to disabilities that have lasted for at least 12 months, the effects of which last for at least 12 months, or which are likely to last for the remainder of a person's life. Do you agree with this definition?



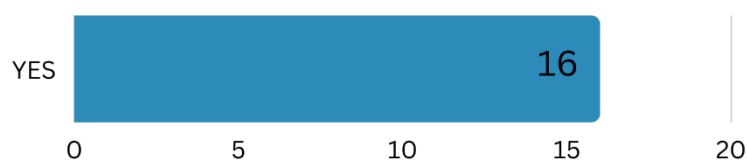
Q8 OTHER RESPONSE

There were 2 responses to this part of the question.

- Does this definition recognise people living with autism and other forms of Neuro diversity that and who may require long term support
- What about individuals with autism or other neurological conditions? Are they covered by this definition?

The definition does not just refer to a physical disability, but also considers aspects where a resident considers themselves to have a disability and we would work with them and provide support with relevant advocacy services throughout the process. In addition, the definition for disability is taken from legislation.

9: Section 9 of the policy sets out the support that the council will provide where a tenant needs to move in order to meet their needs. Do you think this support is sufficient?



10: Section 11 of the policy sets out some criteria that the council may use to refuse an adaptation. Do you agree with these criteria?

