

# Landlords Pulse Survey Topline report

May 2023



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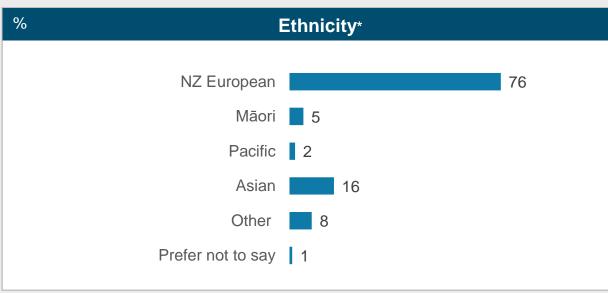
# Research objectives and method

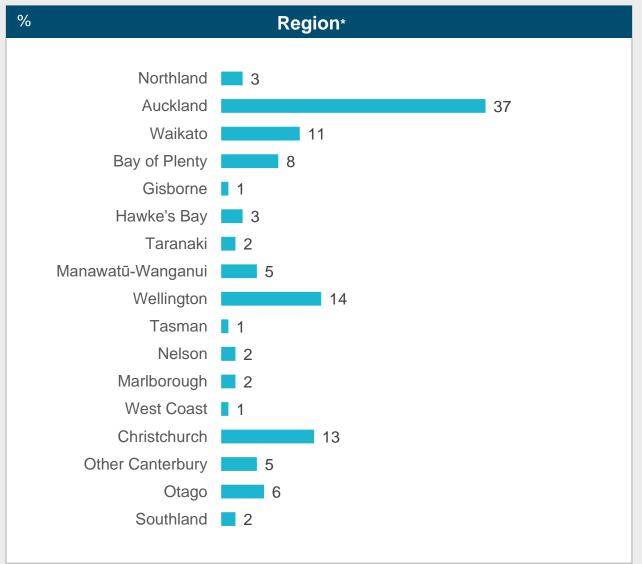
The Ministry of Housing and Urban Development has commissioned Kantar Public to undertake 'pulse' surveys of renters and landlords to help inform its understanding of the impacts of legislative changes on the residential rental market. This report provides the results for the fifth wave (conducted in May 2023), with comparisons made with the previous four waves where appropriate (April 2021, October 2021, May 2022 and November 2022).

- A nationwide online survey of **701 landlords**, defined as landlords who currently receive rental payments for residential property or properties they own.
- Maximum margin of error on the total sample (at the 95% confidence level) is +/-3.7%.
- Fieldwork for the fifth wave was conducted from 28<sup>th</sup> April to 12<sup>th</sup> May 2023.
- Statistically significant changes over time are denoted on the charts by triangles.
   Statistical significance has been calculated (at the 95% confidence level, unless otherwise stated) using a two column independent proportional t-test.
- Percentages in a graph or table may not add to 100% because the respondent could choose more than one answer or due to rounding. Percentages below 0.5% are shown to one decimal point. All others have been rounded to the nearest number.

# Sample profile of landlords (May 2023 only)







Base: All landlords. Showing results for May 2023 only (n=701).

Source: S2, Q1, Q34.

Note: Some totals do not add to 100% due to rounding. \*Multiple responses allowed so totals do not add to 100%



# **Landlord** motivations



### Reasons for buying a rental property

Landlords most often invest in property as a source of income, whether as an investment for their future (72%), to supplement their other income (35%) or as their primary source of income (10%). Others have become landlords more incidentally, having previously lived in the property themselves (19%) or inheriting it (4%). Landlords' motivations have remained consistent over time.

#### **Motivations for investment**

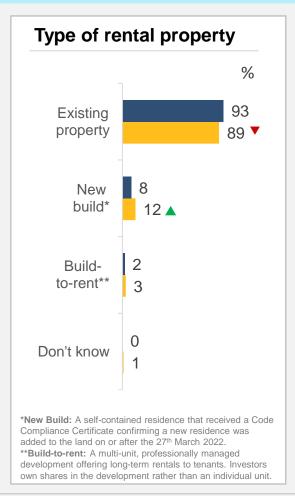
April 2021 October 2021 May 2022 November 2022 May 2023 14151415 1 1 1 1 1 As an investment As an additional I or my partner To provide Income from rental The current property I inherited I plan to To have a home Some other source of current for the future or used to live in accommodation properties is my main market makes it the house live in it and income reason\*\* retirement income the house for family, friends source of income a good investment\*

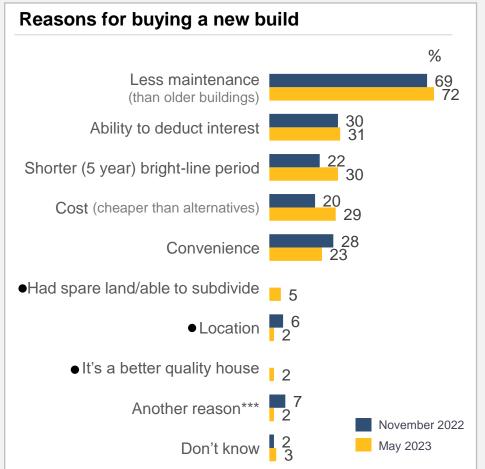
or employees

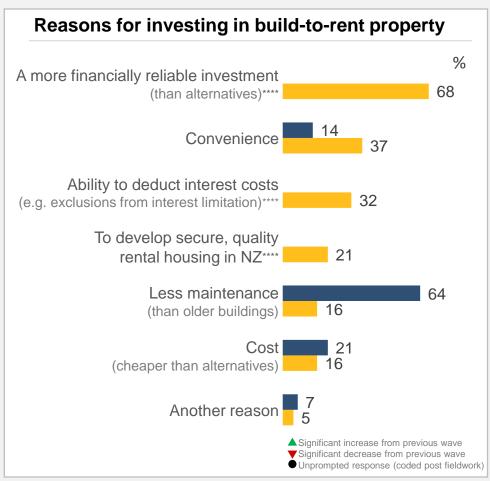
Source: Q2. "Landlords invest in rental properties for a range of reasons. Why did you choose to do this?"

#### Motivation for investment in new builds or build-to-rent

Landlords mostly invest in existing property (89%). However, new build investment has increased by four points in the last six months (up to 12%). New builds appeal most because they are low maintenance (72%), or due to cost-related factors stemming from regulation e.g. interest deductibility (31%) or a shorter bright-line period (30%), or lower costs generally (29%). Build-to-rent investors see this as more reliable (68%) and convenient (37%).









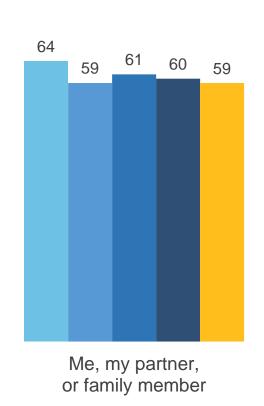
Landlord property management

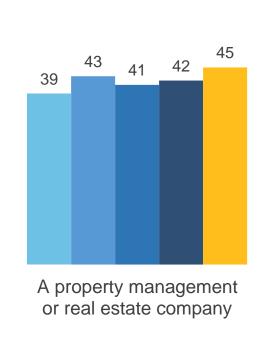


# **Management of rental properties**

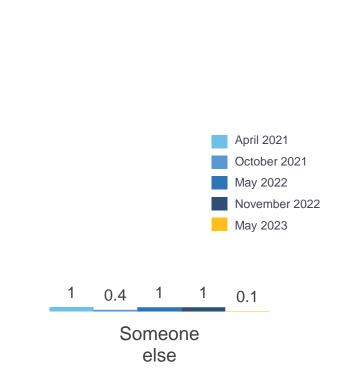
Three in five (59%) landlords manage their property/properties personally and about half use a property manager, either through a company (45%) or an individual property manager (6%). Overall, these results have remained fairly consistent over time.

#### Management of rental property









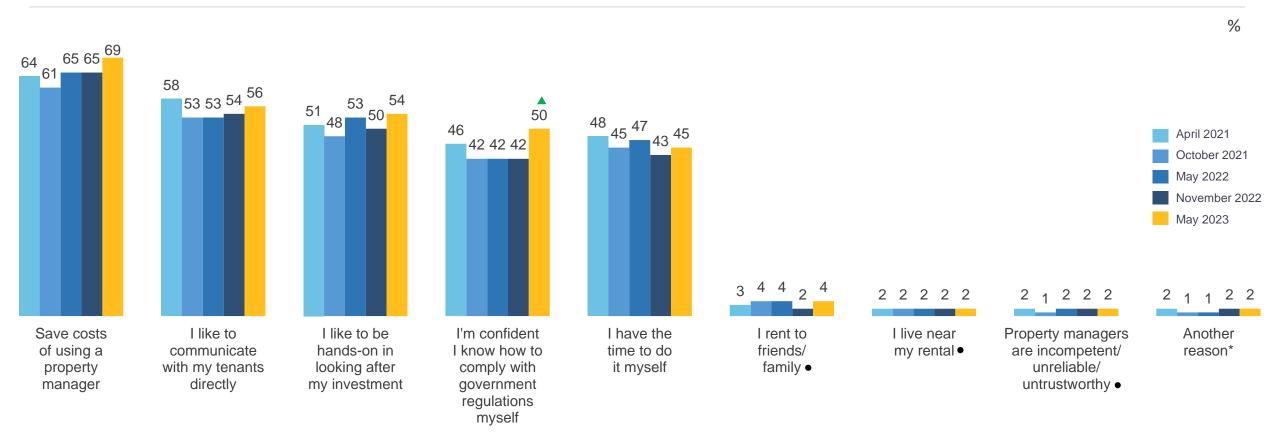
Base: All landlords (Apr '21 n=701, Oct '21 n=700, May '22 n=700, Nov '22 n=700, May '23 n=701).

**Source:** Q3. "Who manages your rental property/properties?" **Note:** Multiple responses allowed so totals do not add to 100%

# Reasons for self-managing property

Landlords who self-manage their properties do so due to cost (69%), or a desire to be hands-on (56% like communicating with their tenants and 54% like being hands-on with their investment). Landlords' confidence in their ability to comply with regulations without help from a property manager has improved in the last 6 months (up eight points to 50%).

#### Reasons landlords manage their property or properties themselves



Landlords who manage their property or properties themselves (Apr '21 n=448, Oct '21 n=414, May '22 n=428, Nov '22 n=417, May '23 n=411).

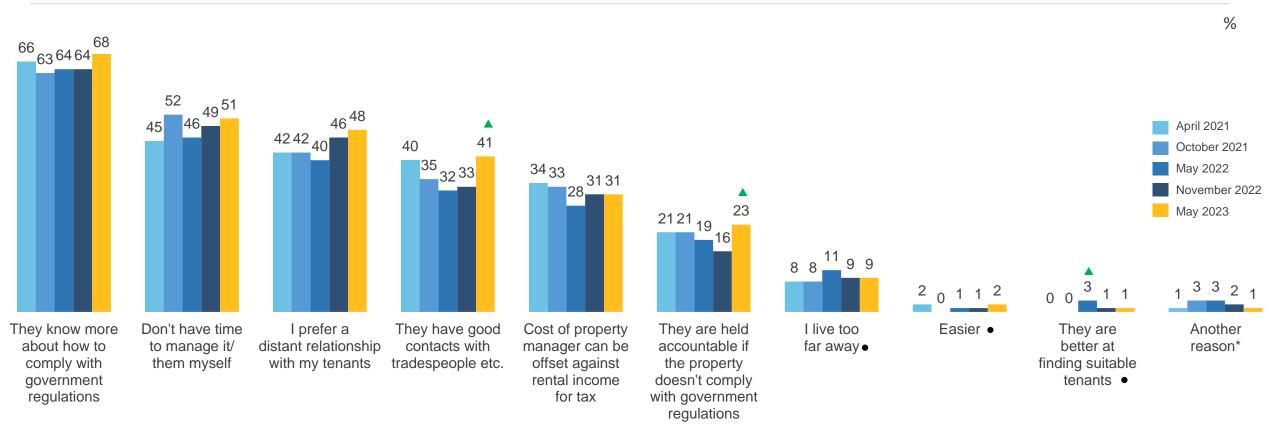
Source: Q5. "Why do you manage the property yourself, rather than using a property manager?"

Multiple responses allowed so totals do not add to 100%. \*Other reasons include being unaware of the option to use property managers, being interested in learning about property management, or having an uninsured property that property managers will not manage

# Reasons for using property manager

Landlords choose to use property managers for their regulatory know-how (68%), to save time (51%) or to maintain distance between themselves and their tenants (48%). Compared with last year, landlords are now more driven to use a property manager because of their contacts (up eight points to 41%), as well as removing accountability from themselves (up seven points to 23%).

#### Reasons landlords use property managers





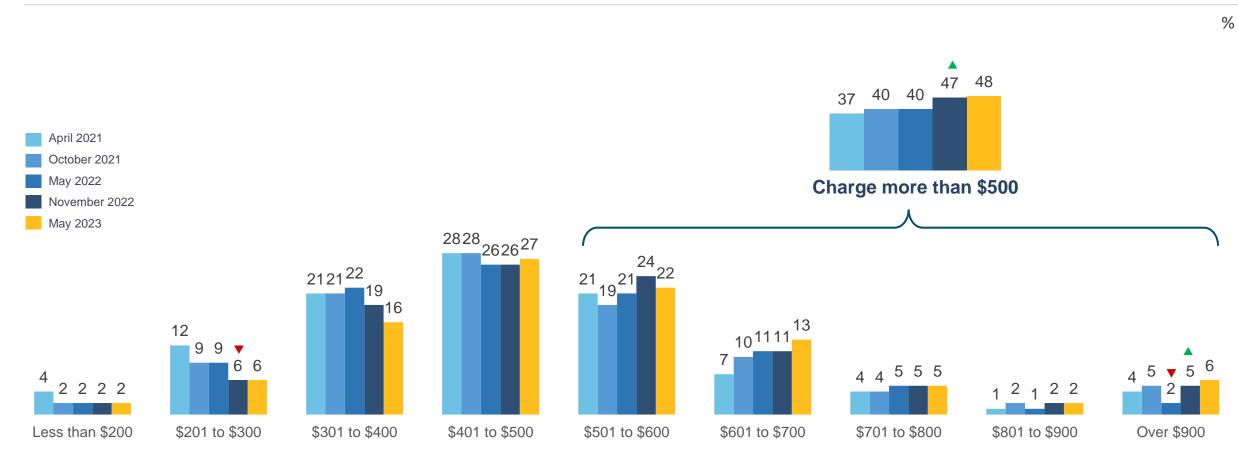




# Average rent

Almost half of landlords charge over \$500 a week in rent (48%) which has stabilised following an increase in late 2022.

#### Average weekly rent charged

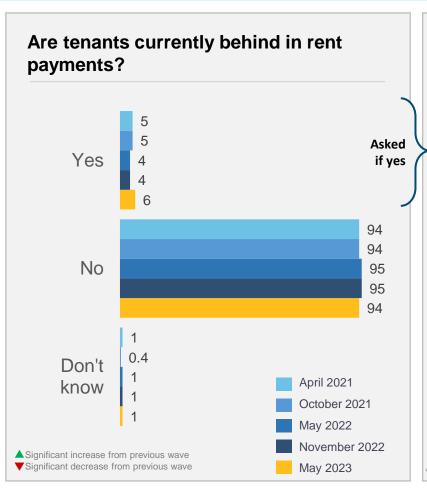


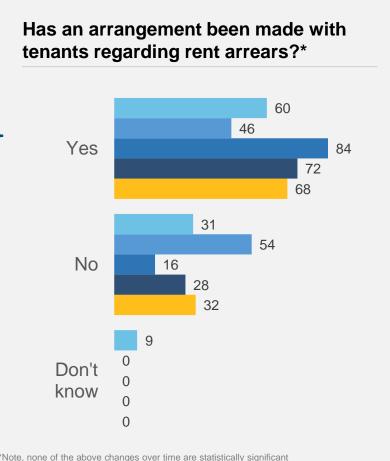
All landlords (Apr '21 n=701, Oct '21 n=700, May '22 n=700, Nov '22 n=700, May '23 n=701). Source: Q12. Landlords with one property: "What is the weekly rent you charge for your current rental property/properties?" Landlords with multiple properties: "What is the average weekly rent for your rental properties?". Note: Some totals do not add to 100% due to rounding.

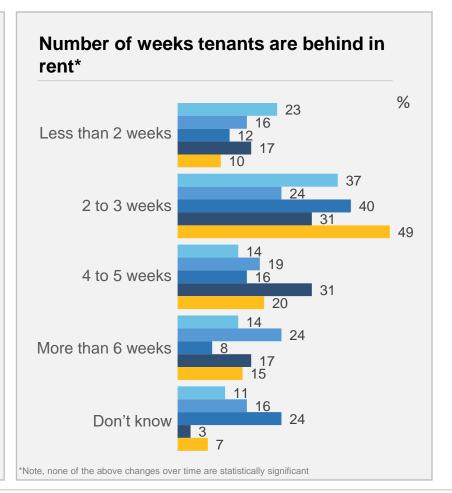
▲ Significant increase from previous wave ▼Significant decrease from previous wave

### **Tenants' payments in arrears**

Few landlords (6%) have tenants who are currently behind on their rent. Of these landlords, seven in ten (68%) have made arrangements with their tenants to address this. Around a third (34%) of tenants with rent arrears are behind by four weeks or more.







All landlords (Apr '21 n=701, Oct '21 n=700, May '22 n=700, Nov '22 n=700, May '23 n=701)

Source: Q9. "Are any of your tenants currently behind in their rent payments?" Some totals do not add to 100% due to rounding

Landlords with tenants with rent in arrears (Apr '21 n=35, Oct '21 n=37. May '22 n=25. Nov '22 n=29. May '23 n=41).

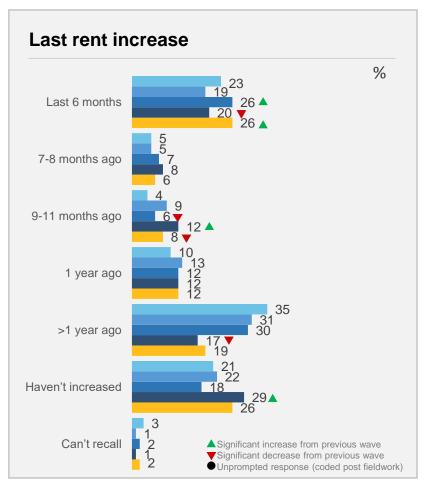
Source: Q10. "Have you made an arrangement with your tenants that means you agree to them being behind in their rent payments?" Landlords with tenants with rent in arrears (Apr '21 n=35, Oct '21 n=37, May '22 n=25, Nov '22 n=29, May '23 n=41).

Source: Q11. "Around how many weeks are your tenants behind in rent?"

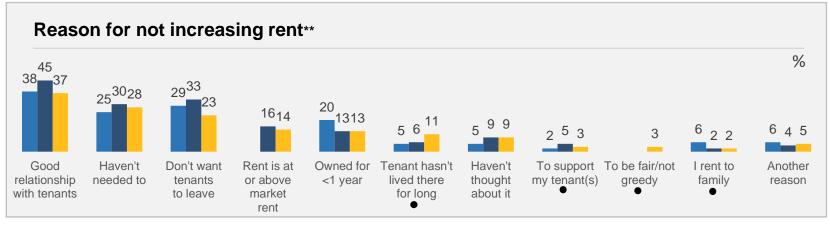
**Note:** Some totals do not add to 100% due to rounding.

# Timing and size of rent increases

There has been an increase in landlords raising rent in the last six months (up six points to 26%), following a dip in November 2022. Half of all landlords who increased rent did so by less than \$20 a week (50%). Landlords who have not increased rent say this is because of a desire to maintain a good relationship with their tenants (37%), to encourage tenants to stay (23%), or because they acknowledge they did not need to increase rent (28%).







Base: All landlords (Apr '21 n=701, Oct '21 n=700, May '22 n=700, Nov '22 n=700, May '23 n=701).

Source: Q13. "When did you last increase the rent for the current tenants for any of your rental properties?"

Note: Some totals do not add to 100% due to rounding.

Base\*: Apr '21: Landlords who increased rent in the last six months (n=159), from Oct '21: Landlords who increased rent (any time period) (n=540)\*, May '22 n=565, Nov '22 n=486, May '23 n=508.

Source: Q14. "Still thinking about the last increase, how many dollars did you increase the weekly rent by?"

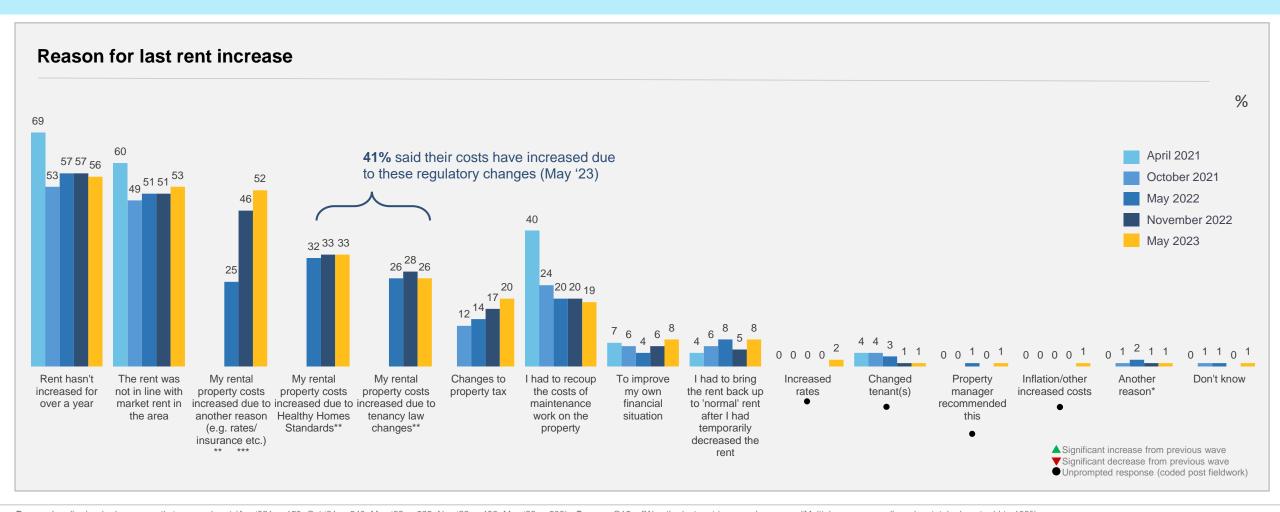
Some totals do not add to 100% due to rounding.

Base\*\*: Landlords who haven't increased rent for the current tenants in the last 6 months (May '22: n=124, Nov '22 n=205, May '23 n=181).

**Source:** Q13a "Why have you not increased the rent for the current tenants for any of your rental properties?" **Note:** Multiple responses allowed so totals do not add to 100%

#### Reasons for rent increases

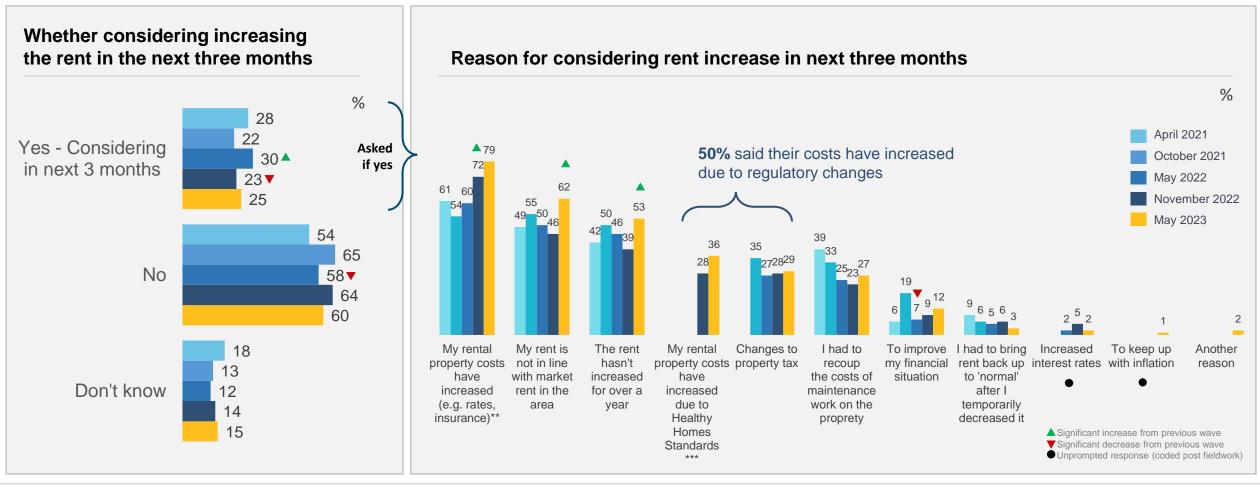
Landlords who have increased rent recently mostly attribute this to more than a year lapsing since their last increase (56%), wanting to keep their rent in line with the market (53%), to cover increased costs to them generally (52%), or regulatory changes (41%).



Landlords who have recently increased rent (Apr '021 n=159, Oct '21 n=540, May '22 n=565, Nov '22 n=486, May '23 n=508). Source: Q15a. "Was the last rent increase because...."Multiple responses allowed so totals do not add to 100% \*Other reasons include: increasing rent as instructed by a bank, offsetting other costs like gas or electricity, or a change to tenant circumstances e.g. getting a dog. \*\*Prior to 2022, only the response category 'increased costs' was provided and starting in May 2022, increased costs were split out into costs relating to Healthy Homes, Tenancy Law Changes and other increased costs. \*\*\*Note this wording changed in November 2022 to remove "maintenance" and include "rates/insurance" in the example. This wording change may be partly responsible for the increase in November 2022 which has not been noted as significant due to the wording change.

#### Landlord intentions for future rent increases

A quarter (25%) of landlords who have not recently raised rent are considering increasing it in the next three months. The most common reason for this is keeping up with increased costs such as rates or insurance (79%). Compared with six months ago, landlords are much more driven to increase rent to keep it in line with the market (up 16 points to 62%) or because they haven't increased rent for over a year (up 14 points to 53%).

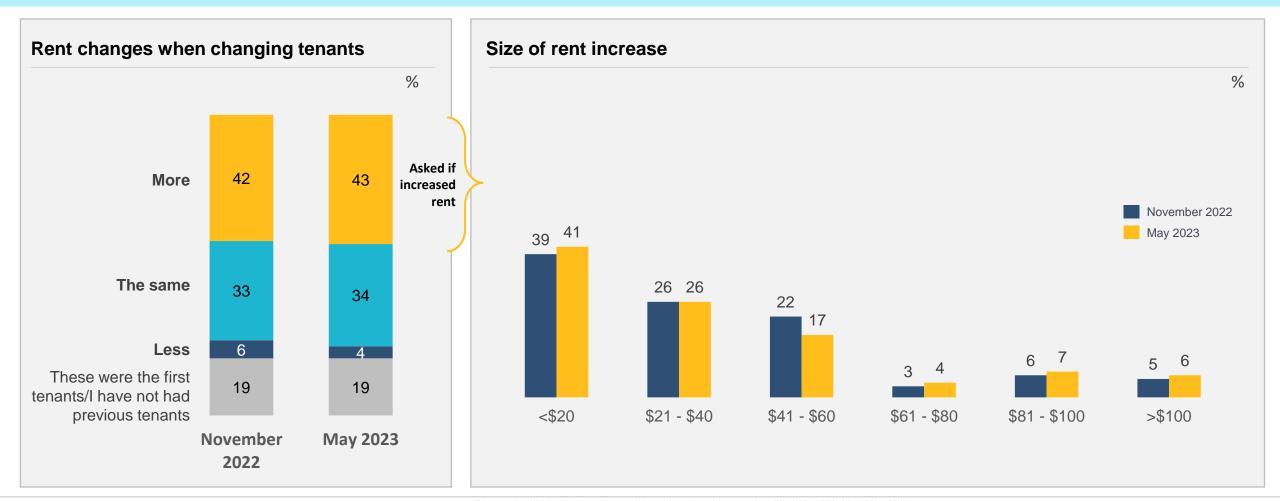


Base: Landlords who have not increased rent within the last six months (Apr '21 n=542, Oct '21 n=568, May '22 n=517, Nov '22 n=562, May '23 n=517). Source: Q16. "Are you considering increasing the rent in the next three months?"

Landlords who are considering increasing the rent in the next three months (Apr '21 n=150, Oct '21 n=125, May '22 n=154, Nov '22 n=127, May '23 n=128). **Source:** Q17. "Why are you considering increasing the rent?"

# Rent increases when changing tenancies

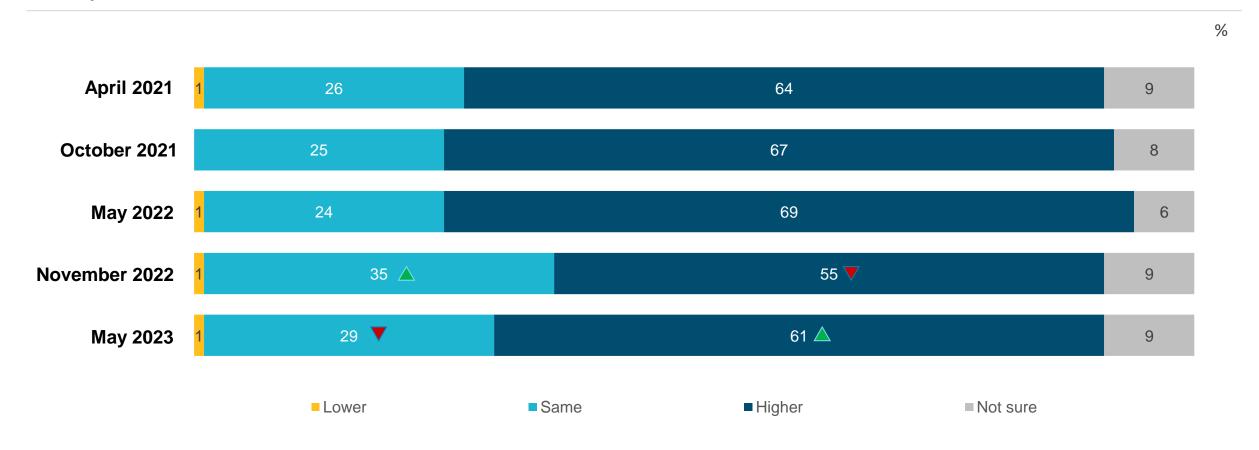
Just over four in ten landlords (43%) took the opportunity to increase rent when their tenants changed. Around six in ten (59%) of these landlords increased the rent by more than \$20 per week.



#### Landlords' rent intentions for new tenants

Three in five (61%) landlords say they would increase rent if they had to find new tenants, which is up six points following a dip in November 2022.

#### Rental price for new tenants



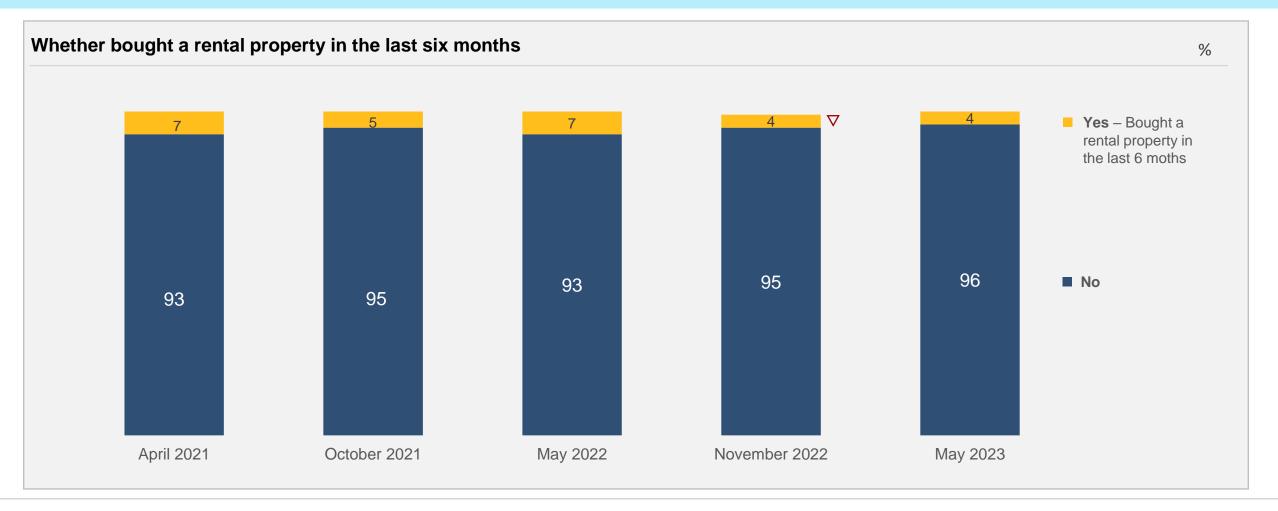


Recent market movements – buying, selling, and ending a tenancy



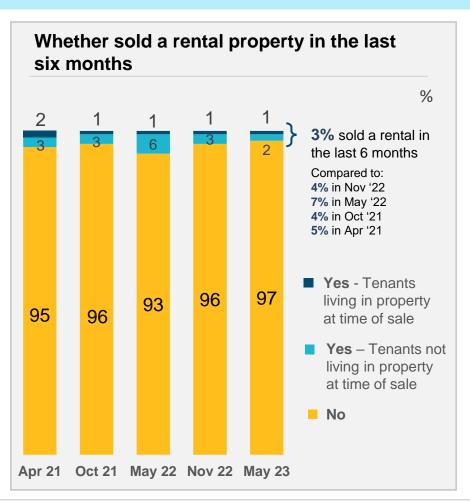
# **Buying rental property**

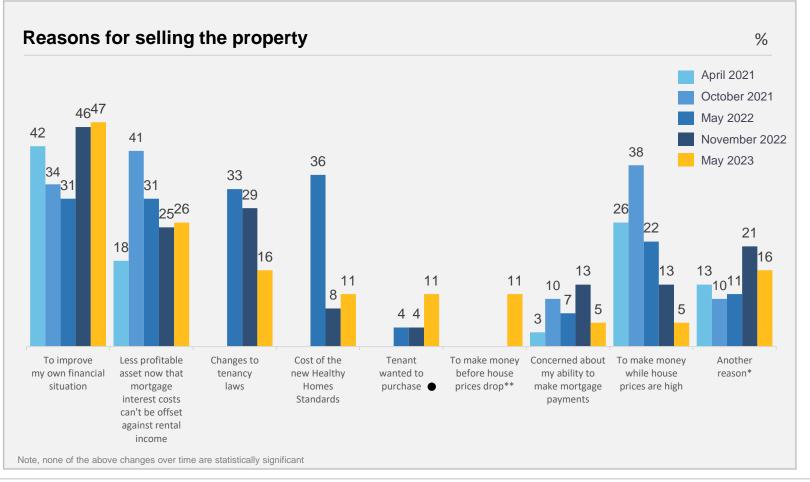
Just 4% of landlords have bought a rental property in the last six months, which is consistent with November 2022.



# **Selling rental property**

A small proportion of landlords (3%) have sold a rental property in the last six months, which has remained fairly consistent over time. Reasons for selling most commonly relate to the need to improve their own financial situation (47% of those who have sold), the gap between mortgage costs and rent (26%) and changes to tenancy laws (16%).





**Base:** All landlords (Apr '21 n=701, Oct '21 n=700, May '22 n=700, Nov '22 n=700, May '23 n=701). **Source:** Q22 "have you sold a rental property in the last six months" &

Base: Landlords who have sold a property in the last six months (Apr '21 n=38, Oct '21 n=29\*, May '22 n=45, Nov '22 n=24, May '23 n=19). Source: Q23 "Why did you sell your property?"

\*\*Other reasons include: landlords moving out of area, difficulty finding tenants etc.. \*\*Added in May '23.

Multiple responses allowed so totals do not add to 100%

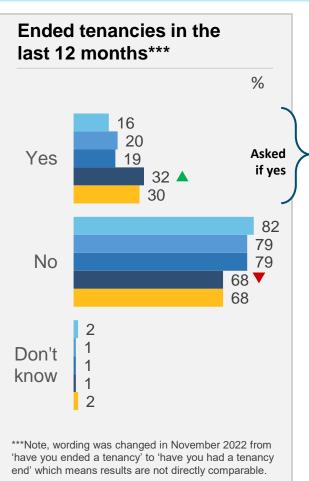
▲ Significant increase from previous wave ▼ Significant decrease from previous wave

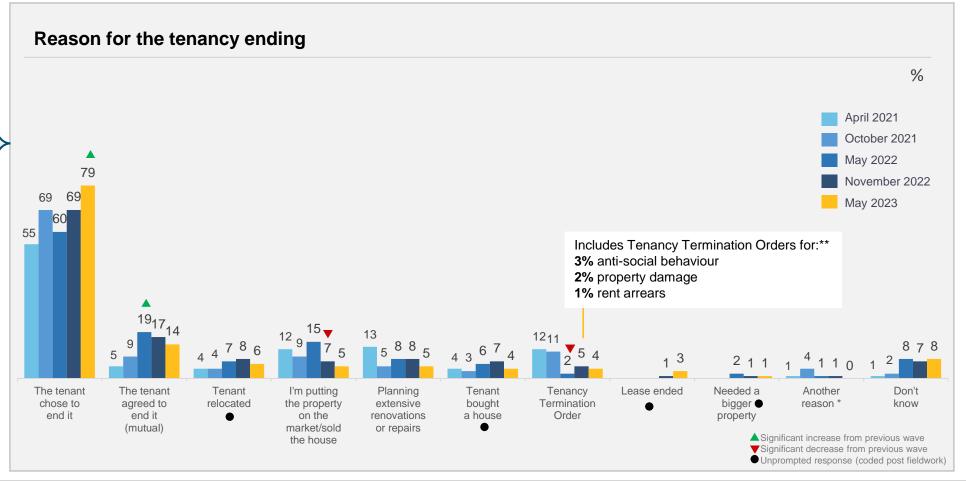
Unprompted response (coded post fieldwork)

Q24 "Did you sell your rental property with existing tenants living in the property at the time of sale, or was the property sold with vacant possession?"

# **End of tenancy**

Three in ten (30%) landlords have had a tenancy end in the last 12 months. These landlords mostly say their tenancies have ended because the tenant initiated it (up ten points to 79%) or mutually agreed to end it (14%).





Base: All landlords (Apr '21 n=701, Oct '21 n=700, May '22 n=700, Nov '22 n=700, May '23 n=701).

Source: Q19. "Has one of your tenancies ended in the last 12 months?"

Note: Multiple responses allowed so totals do not add to 100%

Base: Landlords who have ended a tenancy since 26 June, 2020 (Apr '21 n=112, Oct '21 n=137, May '22 n=135, Nov '22 n=221, May '23 n=210). Source: Q20. "Why did the tenancy end?"

\*\*Starting in Nov '22, 'tenancy termination order' was separated out into reasons for obtaining this. \*Other reasons include tenants not looking after the property. Multiple responses allowed so totals do not add to 100%.



Landlords' plans for selling rental properties



# Landlord intentions for rental property

Less than one in five (17%) landlords were considering selling their rental property/properties 12 months ago and almost a quarter are considering selling in the next six months (23%). These results are broadly consistent with the previous wave.

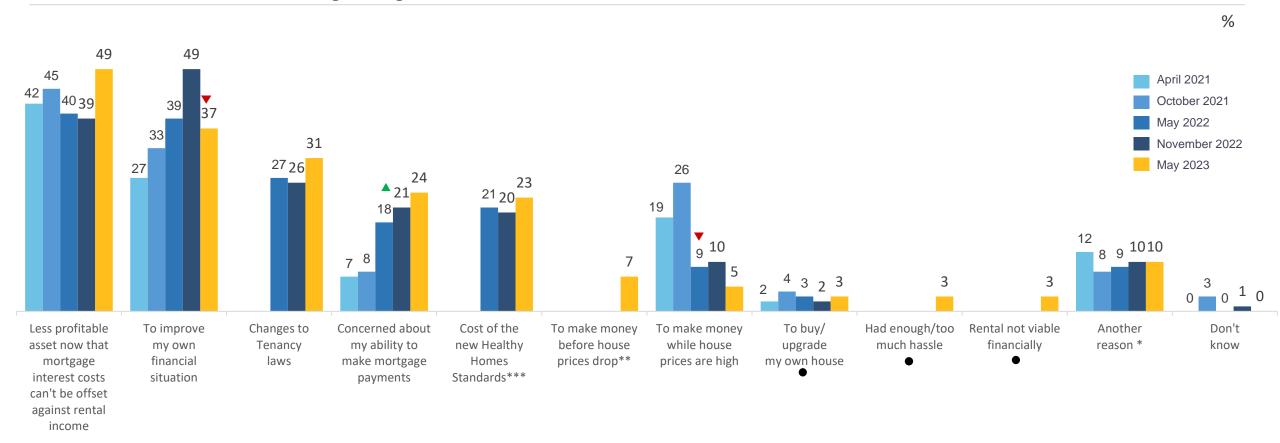




#### **Enhanced motivations to sell**

Landlords considering selling property are mostly motivated by a reduction in profitability due to mortgage costs compared with rental income (49%). With dropping house prices, fewer landlords are motivated to sell as a way to improve their financial situation (down 12 points to 37%).

#### Reasons landlords are considering selling in the next six months



Base: Landlords who are considering selling property in the next six months (Apr '21 n=177, Oct '21 n=168, May '22 n=147, Nov '22 n=153, May '23 n=160).

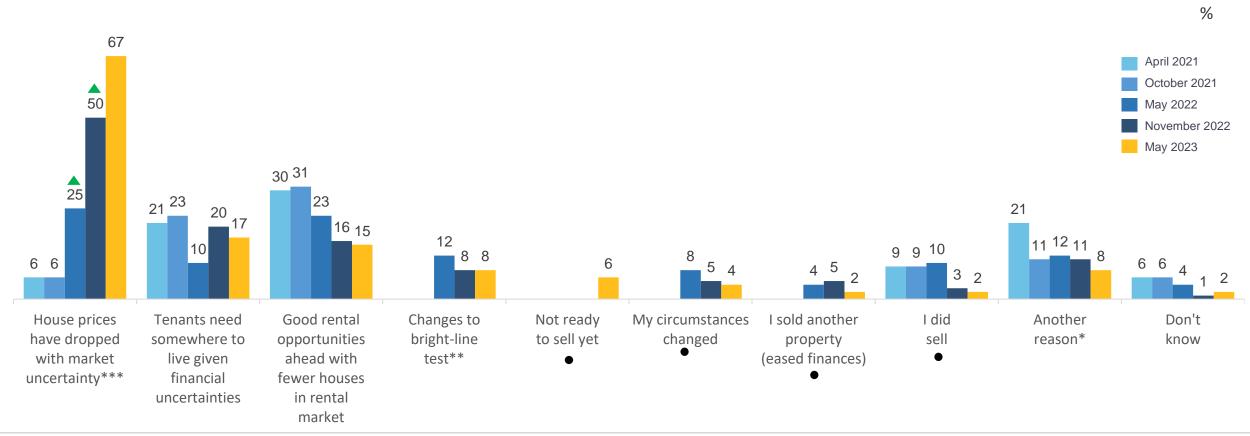
Source: Q27. "Why are you now considering selling your rental property?"

Only showing responses with more than 2%. \*Other reasons include: For health reasons, tenancy issues/hard to find good tenants, current tenants want to buy the property and relocating. \*\*Response category added in May 2023. \*\*\*Changed from 'changes to standards' (pre Nov '22) to 'cost of standards' (starting in Nov '22). Multiple responses allowed so totals do not add to 100%.

#### Weakened motivations to sell

Market uncertainty created by falling house prices is the main reason why landlords are no longer considering selling their properties (67%). This has increasingly become a motivation to hold on to their rental property since mid 2022.

#### Reasons why landlords are no longer considering selling



Base: Landlords who were considering selling property 12 months ago, but now are not considering selling in the next six months (Apr '21 n=33, Oct '21 n=35, May '22 n=52, Nov '22 n=80, May '23 n=48). Source: Q28. "Why are you no longer intending to sell (or are unsure)?"

▼ Significant decrease from previous wave
 ● Unprompted response (coded post fieldwork)

▲ Significant increase from previous wave



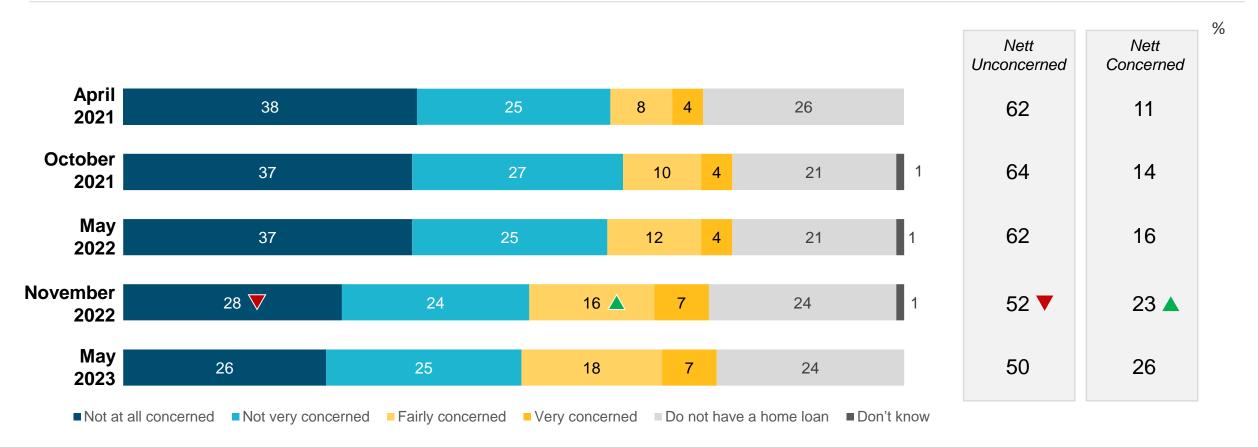
# Landlords' financial situation



# **Concern about mortgage payments**

A quarter of landlords are concerned about their ability to pay their mortgage (26%). Concern has plateaued after increasing concerns in November 2022.

#### Concern about ability to pay mortgage payments over the next few months





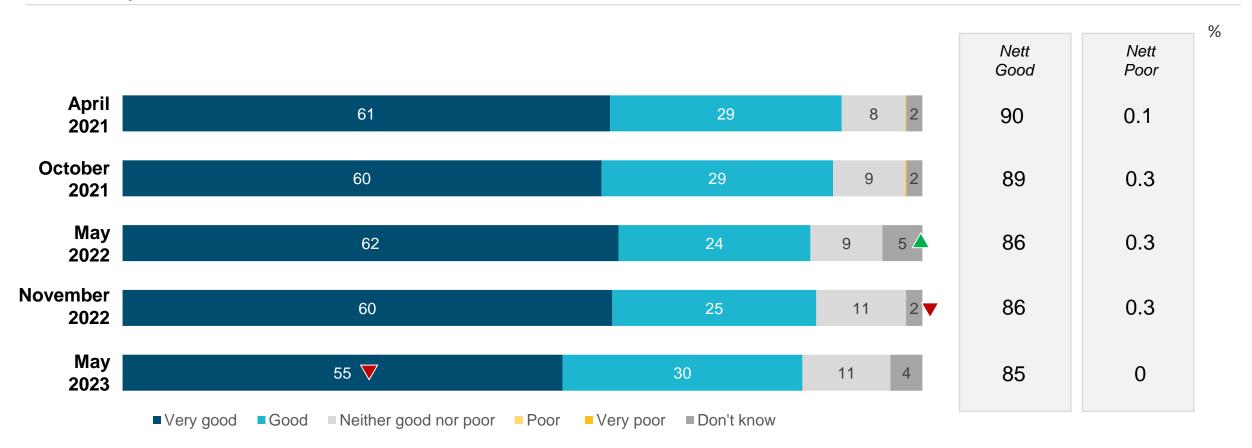
Landlords' relationships with tenants



# **Relationship with tenants**

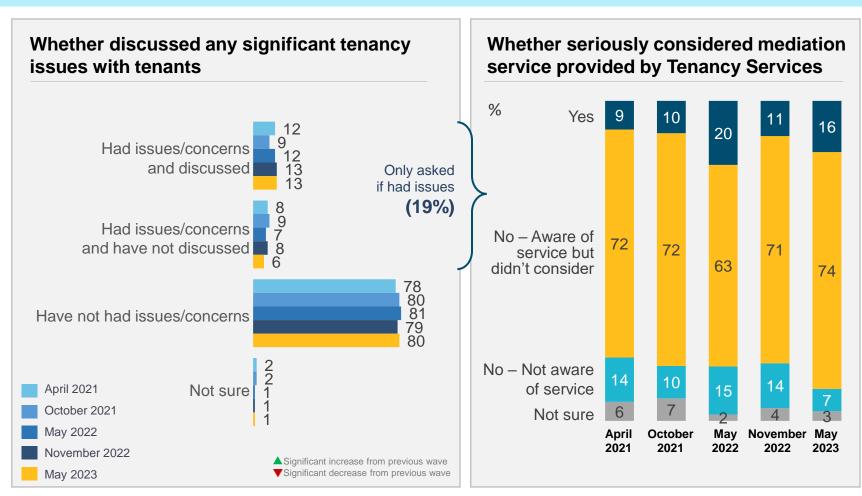
Most landlords (85%) feel they have a positive relationship with their tenants. However, the strength of this relationship has declined over the last six months, with fewer landlords feeling their relationship is very good (down five points to 55%).

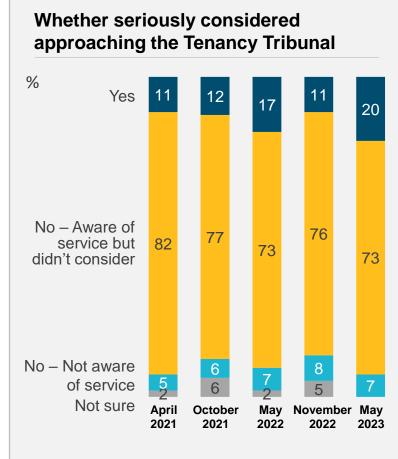
#### **Relationship with tenants**



# **Tenancy issues**

One in five landlords (19%) have had issues or concerns with their tenants and 13% of all landlords have discussed an issue with their tenants. Of those who have had problems or concerns, 20% have considered approaching the Tenancy Tribunal and 16% have considered using mediation services.





Base: All landlords (Apr '21 n=701, Oct '21 n=700, May '22 n=700, Nov '22 n=700, May '23 n=701). Source: Q29. In the last three months have you discussed any significant tenancy related concerns or increase with your tenants?"

or issues with your tenants?"

Some totals do not add to 100% due to rounding.

Base: Landlords with concerns or issues with tenants (Apr '21 n=140, Oct '21 n=126. May '22 n=127. Nov '22 n=144. May '23 n=135).

**Source:** Q30. "Had you seriously considered the mediation service that Tenancy Services provides, to assist with resolving the issues with your tenants?".

Base: Apr '21 n=140, Oct '21 n=126, May '22 n= 127, Nov '22 n=144, May '23 n=135 Source: Q31. "Had you set in the Journal to help make the day of the Journal to help make the day of the Journal to help make the Journal to help make the Journal to the Journal to

Note: Multiple responses allowed so totals do not add to 100%



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT

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