

The Provision of Floor Coverings in Social Housing



A grant-making partner for the social housing sector

Longleigh – An Introduction

- Our formation in 2015 - a result of the grip of austerity
- £1.5m in grants to individuals, £.3m to research and projects
- £37,000 in flooring in 2022/23, with an ave. of £2000 spent on a three-bedroom property
- Flooring research background – building on what has come before
- An ultimate aim of floors in social housing so we may use funds for other essentials.

Research Overview

Longleigh, a grant making partner in the social housing sector has commissioned Altair Advisory and Consultancy (Altair) to deliver a three-year research project which investigates the impact of and opportunities for UK (Wales, Scotland and England) social housing provider's flooring standards. This research aims to keep tenant voice at its heart.

As a grant-making foundation, Longleigh spend a lot of time and money providing much needed funding to families who have just moved into social housing and need support flooring their homes. Through their conversations with others in the Grant Makers Alliance, they know that you are not alone and there is a widespread need for flooring by social housing tenants across the UK.

The key requirements of this research project are:



1. Build off the work of TPAS Cymru and TaiPawb's "Flooded" research undertaken in Wales which makes recommendations to social housing providers and to Welsh government to take action to ensure tenants have access to flooring or funding, especially more vulnerable tenants.



2. Link with **Longleigh's network** of housing providers, tenant representative bodies and grant-making foundations and **Altair's network** of private and public social housing providers and regulatory bodies to understand the current state of flooring in social housing and opportunities to improve tenants' experiences. From the network a steering group should be identified and engaged throughout



3. The production of interim learning reports that highlight key insights of the topic and best practice, keeping the momentum of the project high throughout the programme. These learning reports should be used to drive forward a communications campaign to get **#flooring** as an issue on the agenda of providers, government and regulators.



4. Make **practical recommendations** to the sector in a final report that have the greatest meaningful impact on provision of flooring to tenants, **articulating a business case** which considers the financial, economic, environmental and social benefits and costs of the proposals versus maintaining the status quo. The report should result in an output that the sector can get behind and actively campaign to move forward.

Key findings – floor coverings

760,000
people
Living in
Social
housing
without
flooring

80%
Of social
homes let
without
floor
coverings

61%
Of landlords
don't have
specific
processes in
place to
reuse floor
coverings

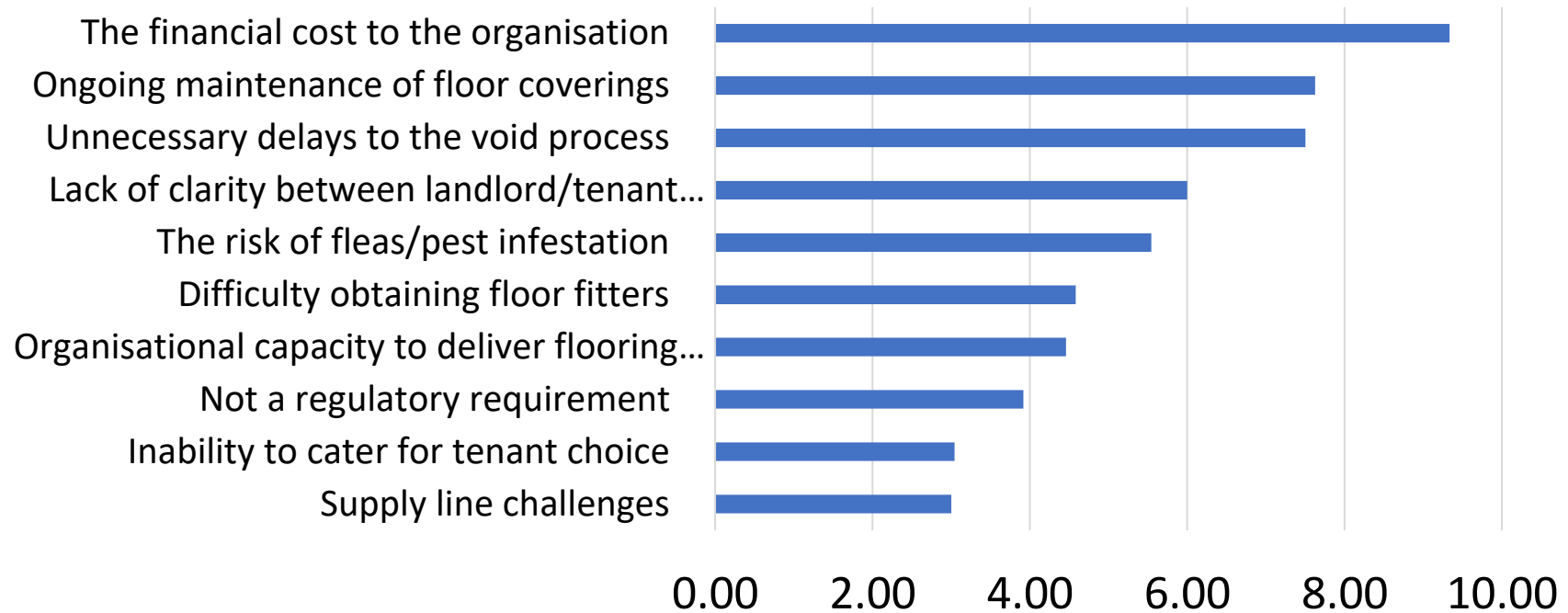
17%
Of landlords
always
remove
floor
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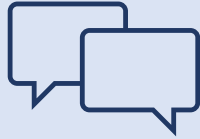


Findings from the landlord survey - barriers ranked



Our learning so far – Tenants Experience

Our Methods



Interviews

6 interviews have been held with those with and without floor coverings, to develop case studies



Focus Groups

6 focus groups (one face to face) been held with those with and without floor coverings to better understand experience



MRI Software Survey

8,000 tenants have responded to a survey hosted by MRI Software about their experiences

Our early findings

Community Integration

57% of those surveyed without flooring found that they struggled to integrate into the community



Heating

Tenants reported that they felt that their homes are much colder without floor coverings

Debt

It takes over 50% of people more than 2 years to pay off the cost of flooring when they move in



Children

Tenants reported that they worry a lot about their children living in homes without floorcoverings.

Tenants Experience – Moving in without flooring



Costs of flooring



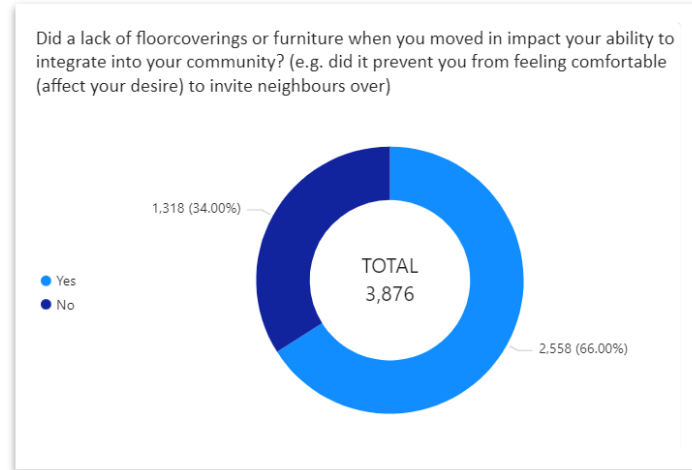
Community Integration



Noise



Feeling of Home



'My partner and I could not afford carpet and she did not want to have visitors over because she thought it made her look poor.' (Tenant Focus Group attendee)

Tenants Experience – Moving in without flooring



Heat

“Flooring should be standard when people move in, it’s a necessity. My house has original floorboards but concrete flooring can get really cold in the winter months” (Tenant Focus Group attendee)



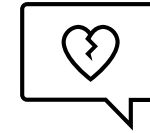
Environment

“It annoys me is you spend loads of money on flooring and when you move you have to rip it up, I don't understand that. What if the next family can't afford flooring?” (Tenant Focus Group attendee)



Impracticalities

“You can make do with some makeshift bits, like sheets for blinds but you cannot do that for flooring. You put a rug or two down to soften, but the upheaval for moving furniture and fitters charge more for that service once you have already moved in and it is not easy to do” (Tenant Focus Group attendee)



Stigma

“Horrid. Poor. Unworthy. Even though I work full time and earn a good wage, I felt stigmatised.” Resident Voice Index respondent

Tenants Experience – Moving in with flooring



Costs of floor coverings

'I wouldn't have had the finances to be able to afford it (floor coverings) otherwise' (Tenant Focus Group Attendee)

This was a huge burden taken off of me when moving with small children it was easier to just get furniture in and get settled. Having to get flooring sorted always delays a move in and would have been harder especially for us with children' (Resident Voice Index response)

Ease of moving in



Quality

'Whilst some of the carpet was ok the rest had to be taken out and replaced- so might have been easier for it not to be left in' (Resident Voice Index response)

Tenants Experience – Cost Impact

20 months
to pay for
flooring –
those on
Universal
Credit

8 months
to pay for
flooring –
those on
low
incomes

83%
Self fund
floor
coverings

59%
Of
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3%
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£920
The
average
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Next Steps

Learning
Report 1:
Scene
Setting



Learning
Report 2:
Tenants
Experience



Learning
Report 3:
Landlord
Experience



Learning
Report 4:
Regulator
and
Government



Our Final
Report



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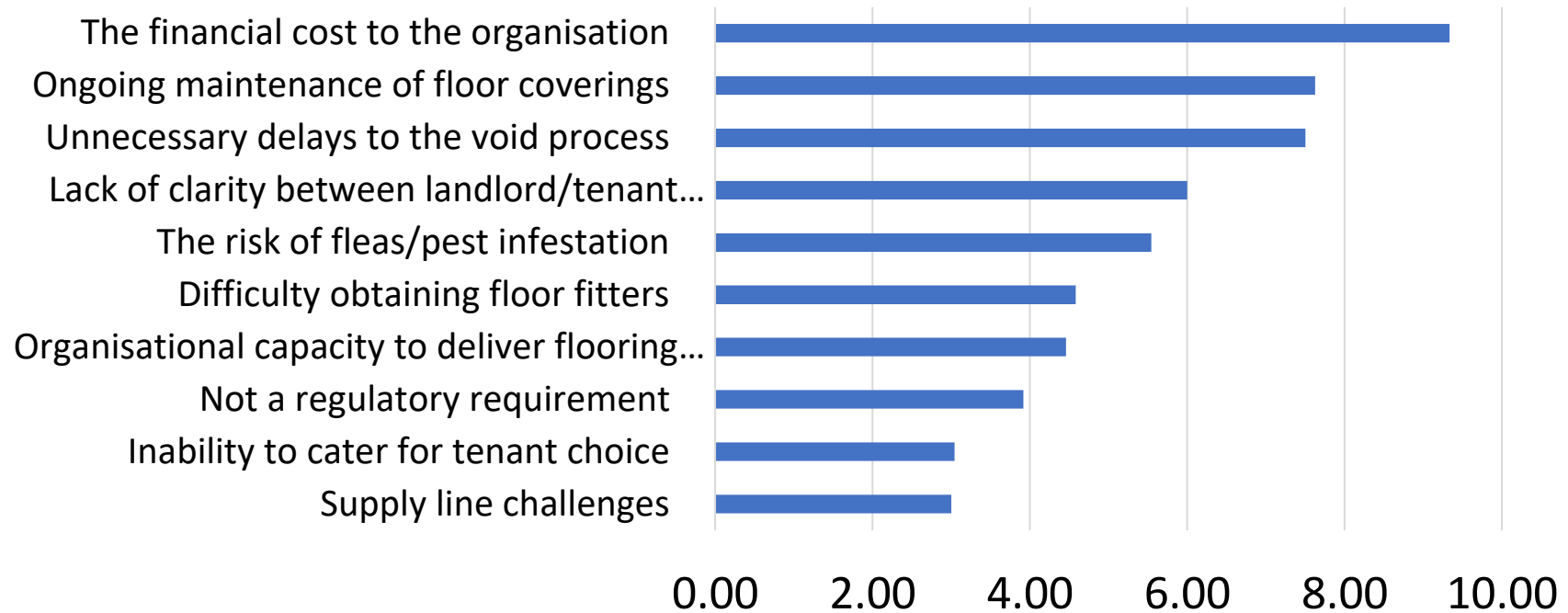
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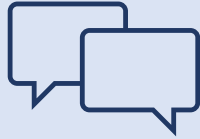


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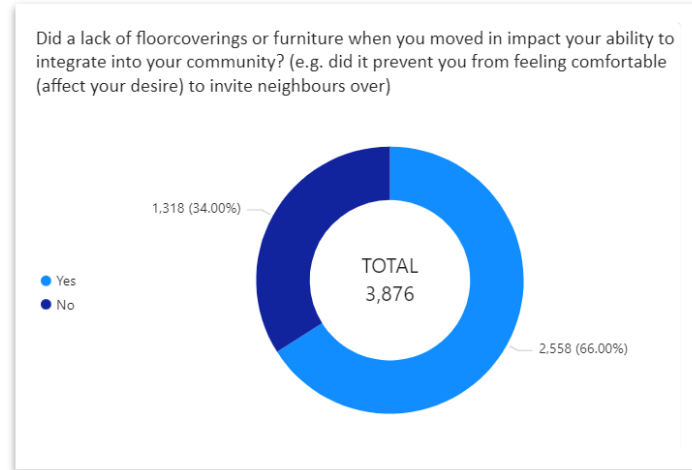
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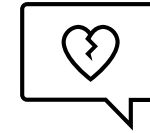
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