

Consultation Report

Mobile Homes Act 1983

Consultation on proposal to change the basis of pitch fee uprating in Scotland: Analysis of Responses to the Consultation

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Summary of Findings

There were 171 responses to the consultation. By far the largest number of responses (159) came from self-identified individuals, almost all of which were residents of mobile home sites. There were 12 respondents that self-identified as organisations. Of these, four responses were from residents' associations or organisations representing the interests of residents' associations, six responses were from mobile home site operators or organisations representing their interests, and two from local authorities or organisations representing the interests of local authorities.

Findings from the consultation responses:

- The majority of respondents (92%) agreed with the proposal that the Consumer Price Index (CPI) is the most appropriate inflationary index for pitch fee uprating for Scottish contracts under the Mobile Homes Act 1983. The majority of respondents who identified as residents or residents' associations agreed with the proposal, as did respondents from local authorities. Site operators were more divided with some agreeing with the proposal and some disagreeing. The reasons respondents gave for agreeing with the proposal were that they believe the CPI is a more accurate statistical measure, that it is used for uprating pensions and benefits so that increases would be aligned, that it will make increases more affordable, and that it would provide consistency with the rest of the UK. A few respondents disagreed with the proposal because of a preference for another measure or no measure. There was no consensus on an alternative measure with suggestions including the RPI, the Consumer Price Index including owner occupiers' housing (CPIH), alignment with Council Tax increases or a bespoke system.
- The majority of respondents (96%) thought that the proposed change in uprating from the Retail Price Index (RPI) to the CPI should take effect for both existing and future contracts. The majority of respondents who identified as residents or residents' associations, as well as those representing local authorities, agreed that changes should take effect for existing contracts. Some of the small number of respondents who identified as site operators agreed and some disagreed. The main reasons given for agreeing were to promote fairness and reduce potential for confusion that might arise if two different measures were in use. A few respondents who identified as site operators disagreed with the proposal because of the potential impact on site income, in particular in light of increases in operational costs.
- The majority of respondents (86%) thought that a further change should be made to the Mobile Homes Act 1983 so that the statistical basis for uprating pitch fees can be amended by secondary legislation in the future, to keep pace with developments in statistics. The majority of respondents who identified as residents and residents' associations agreed, as did representatives of local authorities. Those respondents who identified as site operators were split in their views on whether secondary legislation should be

used in the future, with some agreeing and some disagreeing. Many gave the reason that secondary legislation is a quicker, simpler and more flexible approach to legislation. The reasons given for disagreeing were that there should be no further change to the index in future, concerns expressed about complexity and that secondary legislation would result in a reduced level of scrutiny on a future change.

- No additional considerations were identified by respondents for Gypsy/Traveller sites in relation to the Mobile Homes Act. One organisation representing local authorities highlighted the importance of rents being set by the Council based on the need to balance income with expenditure.
- Of those respondents who identified as residents or residents' associations, a minority said that they thought that the changes proposed in the consultation would result in little or no impact on mobile home parks. This was for a number of reasons, for example the relatively small difference between the RPI and the CPI, potential alternative income sources for site operators or a view that expenditure on maintenance is limited so a reduction in income would not impact on it. Some respondents who identified as residents and some site operators said that they thought the change would result in a loss of income for site operators and therefore reduce future maintenance, or create a threat to site viability.
- The most common impact on individuals mentioned in responses was reduced cost for residents and therefore a potential financial benefit. Particular groups identified as benefiting were older people and people with health conditions or disabilities, who are more likely to have a fixed income linked to pension or benefits. Some responses highlighted the concentration of these groups on licenced sites.

1) Introduction

The Scottish Government wants to make sure that the protections relating to pitch fee uprating for residents of residential mobile homes remain fair, appropriate and in line with development of statistical measures of inflation. This is of particular importance in light of recent increases in the cost of living. This consultation gathered views about changing the measure of inflation that is used in annual pitch fee increases under the Mobile Homes Act 1983 and options for implementing the change.

2) Background

Scottish Confederation of Park Home Residents Associations have estimated that there are around 100 mobile home parks with around 7,000 residents in Scotland, and report that many of them older people¹. Homes on licensed sites have pitch agreements under the Mobile Homes Act 1983 (the 1983 Act). Agreements include statutory implied terms to protect residents, including the basis of pitch fee uprating, currently the Retail Prices Index (RPI).

The RPI is a longstanding measure of inflation in the UK but is no longer classified as a national statistic. Information on the RPI and other common inflation measures like the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) and the Consumer Prices Index including owner occupiers' housing costs (CPIH) is available on the [Office for National Statistics website](#).

The cost of living crisis and a campaign by residents has highlighted the impact of the gap between different inflation measures on pitch fee inflation² and that the RPI is no longer judged to be a reliable measure of inflation. As a result, a commitment was made during the passage of the Cost of Living (Tenant Protection) Scotland Act 2022 to consult on changing the basis of pitch fee uprating from the RPI to the CPI and to consider making the change via forthcoming housing legislation.

This consultation was technical, focused on the most appropriate index to apply to pitch fee uprating and the impacts of moving away from the current index. [The consultation paper](#) gave background on the indices and explained that the RPI is no longer considered a reliable measure of inflation which has led to its designation as a national statistic being removed. The CPI, which is designated as a national statistic, is calculated in a different way to the RPI and is regarded as better measure of

¹ Research by the University of York in 2007 identified 92 residential mobile home parks in Scotland and more than 4000 mobile homes. Sites were concentrated in six local authority areas: Perth and Kinross, Dumfries and Galloway, Fife, Angus, Argyll and Bute, and Aberdeen. Mobile homes can be a popular option for those downsizing in retirement. Some sites are actively marketed as retirement communities, including a minimum age limit for residents

² Over the period from January 1989 to April 2023, the RPI has been just under 1 percentage point higher on average than the CPI. Over the past two years, as inflation has accelerated, this gap has been higher at around two to three percentage points.

inflation. The Scottish Government proposed the CPI as a robust alternative that is widely forecast and used for uprating, including of pensions and benefits.

The consultation sought views to inform decisions on whether:

- it would be more appropriate for the presumption for annual increases in pitch fees to be set in line with the CPI rather than the RPI or the CPIH;
- the change should apply to agreements that are made in the future only or to both existing and future agreements; and
- it would be appropriate for ministers to be able to update the index in future via secondary rather than primary legislation, to keep pace with developments in statistics.

3) Consultation Process

The consultation ran from 19 January 2023 to 7 April 2023. Respondents were invited to respond online on Citizen Space and were also given the option to respond by email or post. The consultation was distributed widely to stakeholders who represent residents of mobile homes, mobile home site operators, Gypsy/Travellers, third sector organisations and local authorities. The consultation was drawn to the attention of MPs and MSPs in a letter from the Minister as they may have received constituent enquiries. Stakeholders were offered meetings to explain the background to the consultation and encourage responses. One organisation, which represents mobile home park residents' associations, took up this offer, after this meeting there was a short-term increase in the rate of responses to the consultation. Organisations which represent site operators and local authorities did not take up the option of a meeting.

A shortened consultation was sent to a third sector organisation which supports Gypsy/Travellers, aiming to make it more relevant to their situation and easier to understand. However, the topic is inherently complex and advice from this third sector organisation was that it would be unlikely to generate responses. The policy team therefore followed up to seek views of Gypsy/Travellers outside the written consultation process instead, via a meeting with this third sector organisation as well as a small online meeting with some of the residents on a Local Authority Gypsy/Traveller site.

4) Consultation Responses

The consultation received 171 valid responses. 13 of these were paper responses that were scanned and uploaded to Citizen Space to allow them to be analysed alongside online responses. Not all of the paper responses included a respondent information form. In such cases, responses were included but not published. Where the information in the response allowed them to be identified as individual residents they were coded as such. A breakdown between organisational and individual responses is given in Table 1 below:

Table 1 – Responses by respondent type

Option	Number of Respondents	Percentage who answered this question
Individual	159	93%
Organisation	12	7%

The largest number of responses came from self-identified individuals. Almost all individuals who responded were residents of a mobile home site. There were 12 responses declared to be on behalf of organisations, most of which did not want their names to be published. Among the organisations that responded which were willing to be identified were the British Holiday and Home Parks Association and the Association of Local Authority Chief Housing Officers.

A breakdown of responses by respondent type is given below:

- 159 self-identified individuals. 147 of these answered yes to being a resident of a mobile home site. A further 8 individuals didn't respond to the question about whether or not they were a resident but their responses to other questions indicate that they are residents or prospective residents. Four individuals didn't respond to the question and there was nothing in their response to indicate whether they were residents;
- four individual residents associations or an organisation representing the interests of residents associations;
- six residential mobile home site operators or an organisation representing the interests of mobile home site operators. One respondent listed themselves as an individual but identified themselves as a site operator in their response text. In this case, we categorised them as a site operator during data cleaning; and
- two of which were from a local authority or an organisation representing the interests of local authorities.

There was substantial consensus between the responses from self-identified individuals (who were almost all residents), organisations who represent the interests of residents and local authorities. The views of the small number of site operators and organisations which represent site operators were divided.

5) Approach to Analysis

The consultation involved a questionnaire with six questions, of which three had free-text components as well as a closed component, and three were free-text questions. The consultation responses were analysed by the Scottish Government. The

majority of the analysis was undertaken using the summary report and analysis tools provided in Citizen Space. Citizen Space provided an overview of information on respondents and a numerical breakdown of the answers to questions with a closed component.

Responses were moderated to remove language that was inappropriate prior to publication. Any personal information that might identify the respondent or that was not material to their response was redacted. This included, for example, information about which site they live on or details of medical conditions.

Responses were sorted by respondent and email address and the content reviewed. This identified that there were 8 duplicate responses which were deleted from Citizen Space and a record kept of the reasons why each was removed. This review process also identified that some respondents who were residents had not responded to the question to indicate that they were. Since their responses made it clear that they were residents, they were classified as residents for the purposes of the analysis.

Qualitative responses were reviewed by the policy team and for each question common themes were identified. The responses were then tagged in Citizen Space with the relevant theme or themes to determine the proportion of respondents who gave that view. Where a detailed breakdown was not available directly on Citizen Space, responses were downloaded and analysed using Microsoft Excel. Cross-tabulations were produced to break down responses by respondent category (e.g. by individuals, organisations and by organisation sector). These tables were used to identify any differences or patterns in opinion between different groups.

Patterns were identified in responses to some questions from individuals. A degree of consistency was identified among a small number of responses and it is possible that they were informed by a small scale campaign. Although such consistency may also arise from similar views and discussions between residents, potentially those living on the same site or linked by a residents' association. These responses have therefore been treated as separate individual responses.

Throughout the analysis, terms have been used to indicate the prevalence of certain viewpoints or suggestions. The following provides definitions of the approximate proportions referred to when these terms are used:

- all – 100%
- many – More than half
- the majority – over four-fifths
- a minority – less than one fifth
- some – one fifth to a half
- a few – up to 5

Figures in response tables have been rounded to the nearest 1% and may not sum to 100% as a result. As with any public consultation exercise, it should be noted that respondents usually have a particular interest in the subject area. The self-selecting

nature of the respondents therefore means that the views expressed in the following summary cannot necessarily be seen as representative of wider public opinion.

6) Summary of Consultation Responses by Question

Question 1: Do you agree with the proposal that Consumer Price Index (CPI) is the most appropriate inflationary index for pitch fee uprating for Scottish contracts under the Mobile Homes Act 1983?

169 respondents provided an answer to this question. The majority of respondents (92%) agreed with the proposal that the CPI is the most appropriate inflationary index for pitch fee uprating for Scottish contracts under the Mobile Homes Act 1983, as shown in Table 2:

Table 2 - Do you agree with the proposal that Consumer Price Index (CPI) is the most appropriate inflationary index for pitch fee uprating for Scottish contracts under the Mobile Homes Act 1983?

Option	Number of Respondents	Percentage who answered this question
Agree	158	92%
Disagree	11	7%
Not Answered	2	1%

The majority of respondents who identified as residents or residents' associations agreed with the proposal, as did respondents from local authorities. Site operators were more divided with some agreeing with the proposal and some disagreeing.

Reasons Given

There were 144 responses to this part of the question. The reasons respondents gave for agreeing with the proposal were that the CPI is a more accurate statistical measure, that it is used for uprating pensions and benefits so that increases would be aligned, that it will improve affordability, and that it would provide consistency with the rest of the UK.

Some respondents to the question felt that the CPI is the best suited statistical measure of inflation for pitch fee uprating. For example a mobile home resident highlighted accuracy and a Local Authority Representative organisation explained that it is already used by local authorities as a standard index:

“CPI provides the most accurate reflection of current inflationary pressures and the state of the economy as a whole.” Mobile Home Resident

“[...]the argument to move from RPI to CPI is clear, it’s a set standard used across the whole UK, and would ensure one standard index was being used. CPI is used by local authorities, therefore a legislative change from RPI to CPI would not pose a risk to LA’s.” Local Authority Representative Organisation

Some said that use of the CPI would bring the uprating of pitch fees for residential mobile homes in line with uprating of state pensions and therefore make them more affordable for older residents. This comment from a resident highlights alignment with pension reviews:

“As most park home occupiers are of pension age, the change to CPI will bring pitch fees into line with pension reviews and current statistical measures of inflation.”
Mobile Home Resident

A minority said that the CPI is lower than the RPI, meaning that pitch fees would therefore be more affordable. As one respondent stated, the use of a lower inflation measure would be particularly welcome in the context of the current cost of living crisis:

“CPI is usually less than RPI and due to the cost of living crisis, everything helps.”
Mobile Home Resident

A few respondents pointed out that the change to the CPI has been or is being made in the rest of the UK and that Scotland should follow suit. As one respondent noted, this would bring inflation measures into alignment with those used in England and Wales:

“RPI isn’t a good measure of general inflation. A change to CPI would align Scotland with Wales and England.” Organisation representing the interests of Mobile Home Site Operators

A few respondents disagreed with the proposal because of a preference for another measure or no measure. No two suggestions for an alternative measure were the same. For example, the following comments from respondents suggest the CPIH, a bespoke option such as alignment with Council Tax increases or an option without an index could be appropriate alternative measures:

“I believe that CPIH is more suited. It does then apply to housing.” Mobile Home Resident

“The only true comparison would be the Council tax. We are now paying more than we do in council tax for our site fees and the two things are very similar as they are for services provided. I therefore think the site fee should be raised by the same amount as the Council tax and if there is a water and sewage charge that this too should rise by the same as it does on the council tax.” Mobile Home Resident

“Pitch fees should not be linked to any index but rather be a set figure with the option to increase annually provided the land owner maintains that land in a fit state and there is value to residents also from any increase.” Mobile Home Resident

Some respondents who identified as site operators disagreed with the proposal because of the potential impact on income, particularly in light of increases in operational costs. In the comments below, one site operator states a preference for remaining with the RPI and another highlights that costs are not limited by the CPI so a change would make it more difficult to afford increasing running costs:

‘To give you an indication why I prefer RPI is because for instance running costs, take £6,400 for pot holes in one go, insurance rose by 350% in one year.’ Mobile Home Site Operator

“The costs of operating the park are not restricted to CPI. E.g. electricity for street lighting, security systems, gates, sewage pumps. Collection of trade waste, general park rates covering office and ancillary required to operate a park also not restricted by CPI.” Mobile Home Site Operator

Question 2: Do you agree that the proposed change in uprating from Retail Prices Index (RPI) to Consumer Prices Index (CPI) should take effect for both existing and future contracts?

170 respondents provided an answer to this question. The majority of respondents (96%) thought that the proposed change in uprating from the RPI to the CPI should take effect for both existing and future contracts. A breakdown is given in Table 3:

Table 3 - Do you agree that the proposed change in uprating from Retail Prices Index (RPI) to Consumer Prices Index (CPI) should take effect for both existing and future contracts?

Option	Number of Respondents	Percentage who answered this question
Agree	165	96%
Disagree	5	2%
Not Answered	1	1%

The majority of respondents who identified as residents or residents' associations as well as those representing local authorities agreed that changes should take effect for existing as well as new contracts. Some of the small number of respondents who identified as site operators agreed and some disagreed.

Reasons Given

There were 116 responses to this part of the question. The main reasons given for agreeing with the change were to promote fairness and reduce the potential for confusion that might arise if two different measures were in use.

Some respondents who agreed said that it was important to avoid unfairness between residents on the same site with existing and new contracts. For example two residents highlighted that it would be unfair if only new residents benefitted from a change to uprating as it could compound existing inequalities:

“To expect existing home owners to pay a higher increase year on year as opposed to new owners paying lower increases will result in the gap between payments growing wider and wider, this is unfair. There are already different rates payable on the same sites by older and newer contract holders.” Mobile Home Resident

“It would be grossly unfair to leave existing residents on the RPI index as the majority are over pension age and their homes are generally older so less valuable.” Mobile Home Resident

Some highlighted the need to avoid confusion about which uprating measure applies to a resident's contract. This was noted by a resident but also by organisations who highlighted the potential benefits of consistency for administration:

“It will end up in total confusion to have some people on one system and others on another system.” Mobile Home Resident

“To avoid customer confusion and complicating administration.” Organisation representing the interests of Mobile Home Site Operators

“From an accounting perspective having 1 agreed index standard is better, which would cover all future agreements and bring existing agreements inline as they renew.” Organisation representing the views of Local Government

A few site operators who disagreed gave the negative impact on income as a reason. One site operator indicated that a change to existing contracts should not be made because residents agreed to them in advance:

“Everyone has a mobile home agreement, they bought and live there understanding what is what. That's why it should not change.” Mobile Home Site Operator

QUESTION 3: Do you think a further change should be made to the Mobile Homes Act 1983 so that the statistical basis for uprating pitch fees can be amended by secondary legislation in the future, to keep pace with developments in statistics?

166 respondents provided an answer to this question. The majority of respondents (86%) thought that a further change should be made to the Mobile Homes Act 1983 so that the statistical basis for uprating pitch fees can be amended by secondary legislation in the future, to keep pace with developments in statistics. Table 4 gives a breakdown of responses:

Table 4 - Do you think a further change should be made to the Mobile Homes Act 1983 so that the statistical basis for uprating pitch fees can be amended by secondary legislation in the future, to keep pace with developments in statistics?

Option	Number of Respondents	Percentage who answered this question
Yes	147	86%
No	19	11%
Not Answered	5	3%

The majority of respondents who identified as residents or residents' associations agreed, as did local authorities. Those respondents who identified as site operators were split in their views on whether secondary legislation should be used in the future, with some agreeing and some disagreeing.

Reasons Given

There were 103 responses to this part of the question. Many respondents stated that secondary legislation would be a quicker, simpler or more flexible mechanism.

For example, two site residents pointed to the relative speed and simplicity of secondary legislation:

“Secondary legislation is a simpler, more efficient way of implementing change. It is therefore a quicker way of responding to a demonstrated need, should one arise.”
Mobile Home Resident

“It removes the need for protracted primary legislation.” Mobile Home Resident

The reasons given for disagreeing were that there should be no further change to the index in future, concern about complexity and that secondary legislation would reduce the level of scrutiny of a future change. For example, one resident indicated that they thought it would be less democratic, potentially because the opportunity for scrutiny of secondary legislation is less intense than for primary legislation.

“Secondary legislation may be quicker and cheaper but it is less democratic.” Mobile Home Resident

Question 4: Are there any additional considerations in relation to this proposal as it affects public sector Gypsy/Traveller sites or any other types or site or contract covered by the implied terms under the Mobile Homes Act 1983?

93 respondents answered this question. More than half of respondents to this question explicitly stated they had nothing further to add. Some respondents thought that Gypsy/Traveller sites should have the same treatment as any other site. For example one site resident expressed the opinion that the law should apply across all mobile home sites:

“It makes sense for this change to apply across all mobile home sites whether operated by local authorities or as in a lot of cases multi millionaires who operate numerous sites. The same law should apply to all.” Mobile Home Resident

One organisation representing local authorities highlighted current exceptional circumstances for public sector rent setting.

“It should be noted that due to the emergency legislation that is the Cost of Living (Scotland) Act 2022, ALACHO and COSLA, have a statement of intent in place that means social rents will not rise above £5 per week, annually. Most LA’s with pitches are choosing to extend this same agreement to pitch fee increases. The statement of intent is only to remain in place as long as the Cost of Living (Scotland) Act 2022. A caveat to the above is that rent increases for HRA services should not be constrained by the application of a CPI index. Rents should be set by the Council based on the need to balance income with expenditure.” Organisation representing the interests of local government

Respondents did not identify any additional requirements or issues in relation to Gypsy/Traveller sites.

Question 5: In your opinion, what is the likely impact of the proposed change in pitch fee uprating from Retail Prices Index (RPI) to Consumer Prices Index (CPI) on businesses or other organisations?

126 respondents provided an answer to this question. Of those respondents who identified as residents, a minority said that they thought there would be little or no impact on mobile home parks because of the relatively small difference between the RPI and the CPI, potential alternative income sources for site operators or a view that expenditure on site maintenance is already limited, so a reduction in income would not impact.

An organisation representing residents associations highlighted that the difference between the RPI and the CPI is typically 2-3% resulting in a relatively small impact.³ This was also the view taken by a respondent identifying as a site operator:

“... believe that there will be minimal impact on businesses particularly site owners, since the difference in percentage between RPI and CPI is likely to be no more than 2% to 3%.” Organisation representing the interests of Residents Associations

“I do not think there would be much of an impact on businesses as they will still get an increase.” Mobile Home Site Operator

Some residents gave the view that they don’t see evidence of the pitch fees being used to maintain sites and that pitch fee income is often retained by the operator. Some highlighted other income sources for site operators, such as the 10% commission payable on the sale of a mobile home, as in these comments:

³ As set out in footnote 2, while the gap has been around 2-3 percentage points over the last two years, the long-run difference is a little under one percentage point.

“There would be very little impact on businesses as they already make a great deal of money from the park homes often for little or no maintenance.” Mobile Home Resident

“Many Park Owners are already making money from selling units, the 10% sales commission...” Mobile Home Resident

A few commented that more disposable income for residents would benefit local businesses, as in this response from a mobile home park resident:

“The park site owner would still receive his yearly increase from all park home owners but still freeing up a bit more money in the pocket of the individual park home owner to spend locally or nationally on businesses or just to allow them to keep their heating on that bit longer.” Mobile Home Resident

A few residents and site operators said that they thought the change would result in a loss of income for site operators and therefore reduced future maintenance or a threat to site viability, as in these responses from site operators:

“Loss of income and reduced maintenance” Mobile Home Site Operator

“Any legislation restricting the profitability of business will only see closures or loss of availability of such homes at a time when the government can ill afford to lose more housing.” Mobile Home Site Operator

One respondent requested stability if the change is made, so that businesses can plan ahead:

“Any sound business copes with changes in income and overheads. What all businesses need however is stability. Once a rate is set, businesses have some idea of how to plan for their future.” Mobile Home Site Operator

Question 6: In your opinion, what is the likely impact of the proposed change on residents and other individuals?

123 respondents provided an answer to this question. Some respondents did not think that there would be much or any impact on individuals from the proposed change. Some repeated points from previous questions on the importance of fairness or the detrimental impact of high pitch fee rises. The most common impact mentioned in responses was reduced cost for residents and therefore a potential financial benefit. Particular groups identified as benefiting were older people and people with health conditions or disabilities. Respondents indicated that these groups make up a large proportion of mobile home residents as this type of accommodation is popular with people downsizing⁴.

⁴ Research by the University of York in 2007 found that residents of caravans and mobile homes in Scotland were more likely to be older than the general population.

A minority of responses specifically mentioned older people as benefitting because many site residents are older and living on pension incomes, as outlined in these comments from mobile home residents:

“The impact will bring a very small measure of relief to a group which are generally of pension age and often in receipt of benefits. It will equally bring the same advantage to disadvantaged groups.” Mobile Home Resident

“It should ease the financial burden on people who are on a fixed income. which is most people staying on a residential park.” Mobile Home Resident

A few responses also pointed to benefits for disabled people or people living with long term health conditions as in these comments from site residents:

“I am disabled and don’t have an increase in benefits to cover the increase. My elderly neighbours have a pension which has not increased by the amount of rental increase so any reduction to these prices will help improve their quality of life. For me with the massive hike in cost of living plus a rent increase this has meant accruing debt in order to stay warm and eat, a stressful situation that is not helpful.” Mobile Home Resident

“As a disabled person I would hope it would mean that my site fees don’t exponentially outstrip my benefits/pension income. I would hope the same for other pension recipients struggling now & in the future.” Mobile Home Resident

These examples also highlighted the benefit of reduced stress or financial worry which was repeated in comments from respondents who did not mention a disability:

“As these increases are a constant worry to older residents who are on a limited budget this will be of great relief to both their budget worries and Mental Health.” Mobile Home Resident

In addition, a few responses highlighted an impact on the morale of residents because they feel that their voices have been heard or the balance of rights with site operators has been shifted, as in these comments from site residents:

“Slightly beneficial, but a big jump in morale as it is a shift towards residents rights rather than site owners’ rights.” Mobile Home Resident

“Fewer suicides, less depression, affordable housing, an air of happiness amongst residents, less violence, less feeling of being hard done to. More chance of low income families/people being able to afford mobile homes which are in essence great places to live.” Mobile Home Resident

Other Issues Raised

Among the responses to all of the questions, there were some comments about different aspects of policy and practice on mobile homes that did not relate directly to the questions asked. Themes emerging in these comments included:

- dissatisfaction with the level of maintenance or other operation of sites e.g. the way that fee reviews are carried out;
- concerns about other parts of the Mobile Homes Act 1983 e.g. the 10% commission payable on the sale of a mobile home;
- concerns about standards on sites or tighter enforcement on site licensing conditions by Local Authorities;
- concerns about resolving disagreements under the Mobile Homes Act, a request that these should be heard by a Tribunal rather than a Court or for a new oversight body to be established; and
- emphasising that mobile homes are very different to caravans and some suggestions that mobile homes to be re-classified.

7) Feedback on the Consultation Process

158 respondents gave feedback about their views of the consultation process which is summarised in Table 5.

Table 5 - How satisfied were you with this consultation?

Option	Number of Respondents	Percentage who answered this question
Very dissatisfied	11	6%
Slightly dissatisfied	7	4%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	36	21%
Slightly satisfied	31	18%
Very satisfied	73	42%
Not Answered	14	8%

The majority of respondents were satisfied with the consultation. Some were slightly or very dissatisfied. Site operators were more likely to be dissatisfied than residents.

Residents who gave a positive response said that they had found the consultation relatively simple. For example, these residents commented on the clarity and usability of the questionnaire:

“As official forms and questionnaires go this one is clear and comparatively simple.”
Mobile Home Resident

“I felt the questions were broad but specific enough to get my point of view across.”
Mobile Home Resident

On the other hand, some respondents thought the consultation was complicated or confusing, for example these two residents noted:

“Questions are far too similar and are certainly not plain English in terms of peoples experience in these matters.” Mobile Home Resident

“Didn’t understand some of the questions so left them blank.” Mobile Home Resident

When reading the analysis, it is important to bear in mind that some potential respondents might have been deterred from responding because of the technical nature of the consultation. In addition, a few residents commented that there may not be a wide awareness of the consultation preventing people from replying.

Paper surveys and response by post was available but some comments suggested that people may not be able to access online surveys and that paper surveys should be available. This may indicate that there was not a wide awareness of the alternative option for responding.

Some residents welcomed the opportunity to express their views as a sign of progress in an area where they want to see action. These comments from residents show that a consultation on this topic is welcomed:

“It is heartening to have the opportunity to comment and give my opinion on a matter which affects me directly and which has an impact on my quality of living.” Mobile Home Resident

“Very happy that at long last something is being done to help us out.” Mobile Home Resident

“This issue has been overdue for consultation and will give some considerable comfort to residents.” Mobile Home Resident

A few responses would have preferred the consultation to cover more policy issues, including other aspects of the Mobile Homes Act 1983 or Site Licencing.

As noted in the response analysis, Question 4 on Gypsy/Traveller sites did not generate many responses that were directly relevant to the question. This may be in part because very few Local Authorities responded. Although respondents were not asked to declare their ethnicity, we did not identify any response that commented from the perspective of a Gypsy/Traveller resident. As set out in Section 3, views of Gypsy/Travellers were sought outside the written consultation process.

Respondents were also asked to provide feedback about their views of using the Citizen Space platform to respond to this consultation. Table 6 gives a breakdown of responses.

Table 6 - How would you rate your satisfaction with using this platform (Citizen Space) to respond to this consultation?

Option	Number of Respondents	Percentage who answered this question
Very dissatisfied	8	5%
Slightly dissatisfied	2	1%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	35	20%
Slightly satisfied	27	16%
Very satisfied	86	50%
Not Answered	14	8%

In many cases, comments did not distinguish between the survey and the platform and were therefore similar to those in the question above. Where comments related directly to the experience of Citizen Space, they were positive, for example this respondent commented that it was user friendly:

“This is an important matter and the online questionnaire was user friendly and ease to use and record our views.” Residents’ Association

8) Conclusion

The majority of respondents agreed that the CPI is the most appropriate inflationary index for pitch fee uprating for Scottish contracts under the Mobile Homes Act 1983 and thought that this should apply to both existing and new contracts. Positive financial impacts were identified for residents and some corresponding negative impacts for site operators. Many respondents think a further change should be made to the Mobile Homes Act 1983 so that the statistical basis for uprating pitch fees can be amended by secondary legislation in the future.

9) Next Steps

Ministers will use the findings from the consultation to inform their final decision on whether to bring forward legislation to change the measure of inflation that is used to increase mobile home pitch fees under the Mobile Homes Act 1983.



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St Andrew's House
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ISBN: 978-1-83521-020-8 (web only)

Published by The Scottish Government, June 2023

Produced for The Scottish Government by APS Group Scotland, 21 Tennant Street, Edinburgh EH6 5NA
PPDAS1314782 (06/23)

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