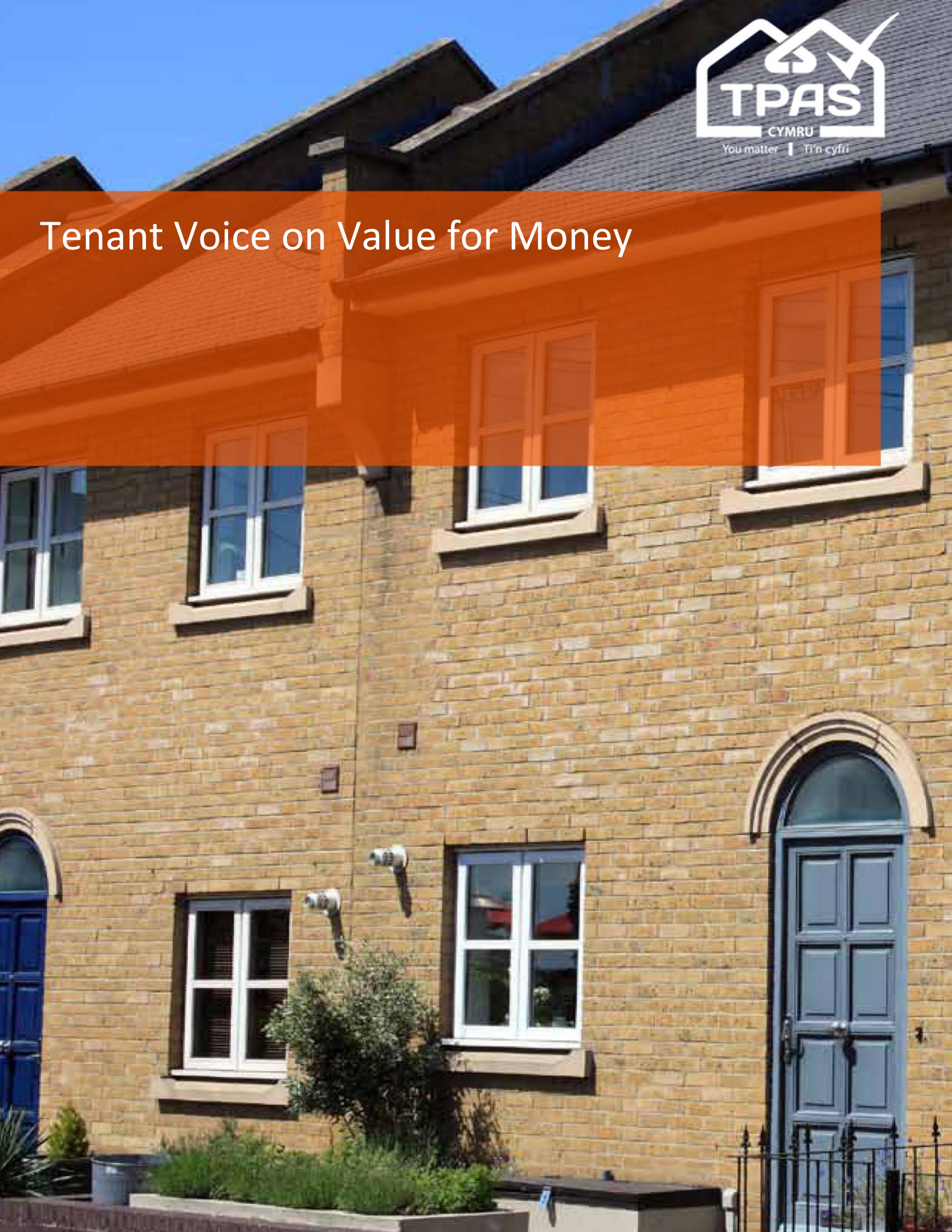


Tenant Voice on Value for Money



Introduction

In 2017 the Welsh Government's Value for Money Thematic Review Steering Group identified the need to develop an effective approach to gather tenant perspectives of value for money. TPAS Cymru agreed to assist the Steering Group in this work.

Having agreed to assist the Steering Group in its work, TPAS Cymru developed a survey to gather the views of social housing tenants from across Wales and a methodological approach was agreed.

Just over a year later in March 2019, we carried out a shorter, similar survey to see if perceptions of VfM have changed.

Methodology agreed:

1. Tenant Pulse – on-line and postal survey for Tenant Pulse members, issued January 2019.
2. Completion of agreed survey questionnaires at TPAS Cymru meetings: Linc Cymru Health and Safety Scrutiny Event and Cardiff Council Coffee Morning.
3. Social media consultation with both Private Rental Sector and Social Housing tenants.

The standard questions that were set out in the survey questionnaire were similar to those developed in conjunction with the Steering Group. The questions asked were as follows:

1. Do you think that your rent provides value for money?
2. Which aspects do you think about when considering if your rent provides value for money? (multiple choice question)
3. What should landlords focus on in the future to provide better value for money (multiple choice questions)
4. Will you use/ have you used the Welsh Government's Landlord Comparison tool to compare value for money between landlords?

Response rates:

In total 301 tenants completed the survey. At the time 693 tenants were signed up to Tenant Pulse meaning that the response rate was 43%.

The information gathered:

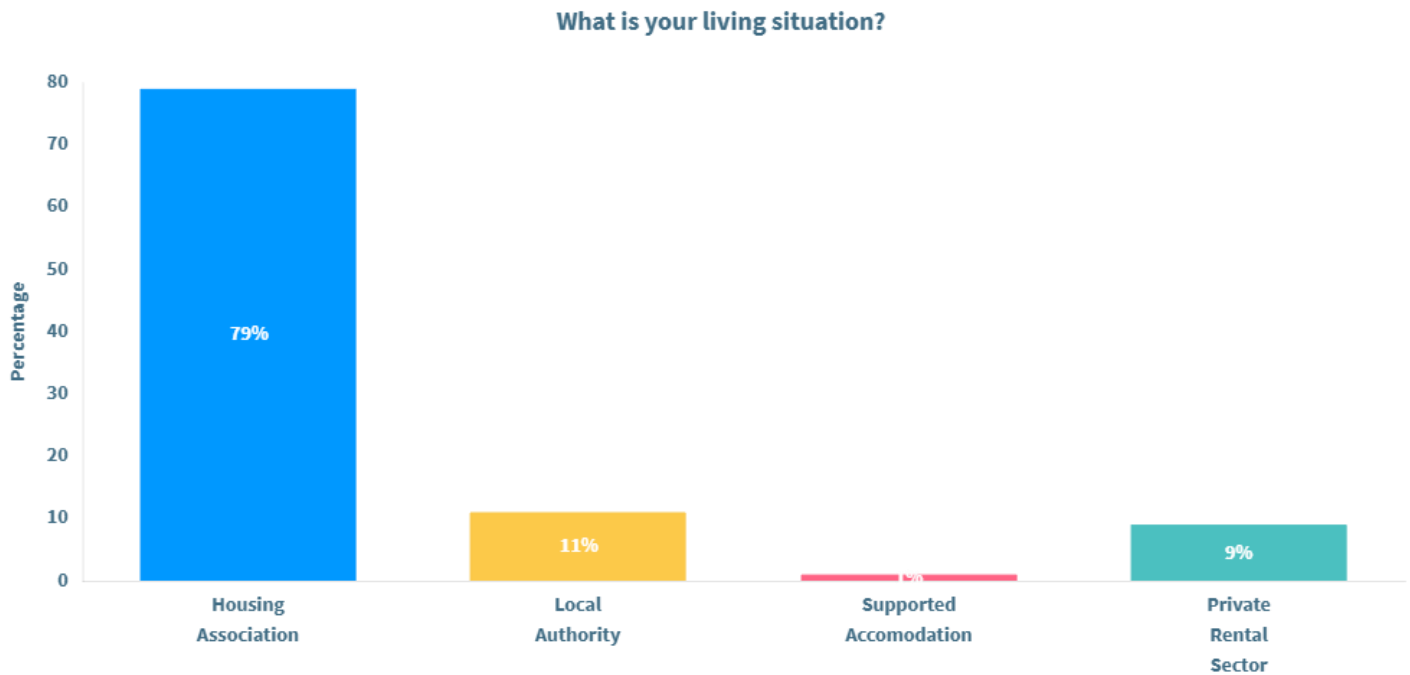
In March 2019 TPAS Cymru will present the results to the Regulatory Board for Wales (RBW) and the Welsh Government Regulation Team, setting out the findings from the survey. This

document summarises the responses TPAS Cymru received and the information that was presented to RBW.

Survey Result

1. What is your living situation?

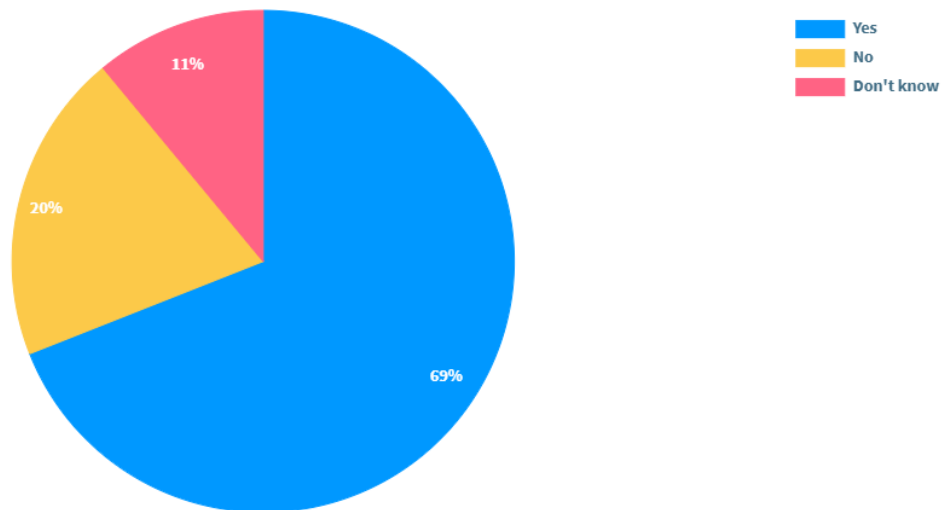
From the 301 tenants completing the survey, the majority (238) were living in Housing Associations.



2. Do you think that your rent provides value for money?

As can be seen in the chart, a considerable number of tenants felt that their rent was value for money which is consistent with the previous survey. However, there has been an increase in tenants feeling that they don't get value for

Do you think that your rent provides value for money?



money and those that don't know. This makes up almost 1/3rd of the data. TPAS Cymru feel that; whilst landlords are effective in monitoring VfM, these perceptions may be a direct result of the recent changes in rent policy, resulting in many increased rents.

3. Which aspects do you think about when considering if your rent provides value for money?

The survey asked respondents to list three issues or aspects of their landlord's service that they consider when asked to judge whether they received value for money.

In line with the previous survey, respondents felt that the most important factor of VfM was quality of service from landlords. The quality and standard of your home followed closely which was significantly different to the last survey where only 28 people felt that the quality and standard of your home was an important element of VfM compared with 169.

When looking at PRS tenant perception compared to social housing tenants, the quality and standard of their home was significantly more important than the service received from landlords. Interestingly, none of the PRS tenants chose 'your landlord building affordable new homes' as being the most important aspect to them when considering VfM.

This clearly emphasises the differences in perceptions between the two tenant groups. Following further analysis, the reason behind this difference is that social housing tenants felt they were likely to get access to those newly built properties whereas this was irrelevant to PRS tenants.

What does "Value for Money" mean to you?

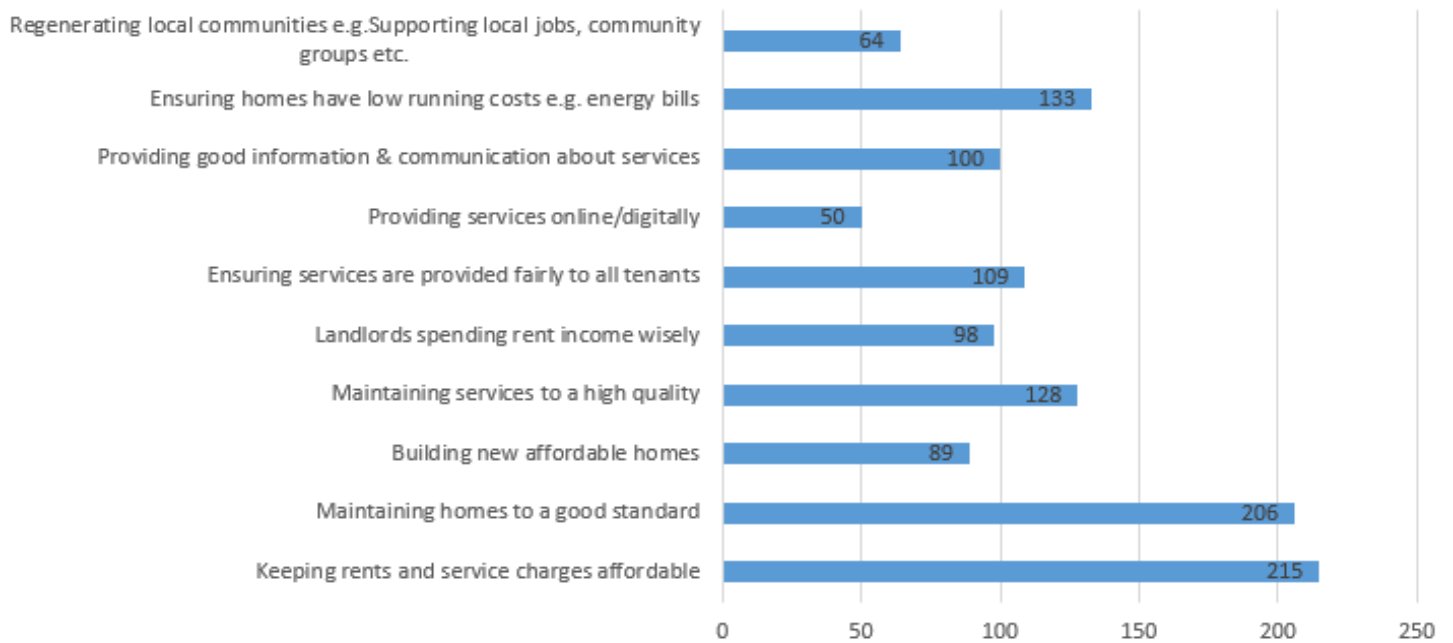


4. What should landlords focus on in the future to provide better value for money? *(multiple choice answers)*

The survey asked the respondents to list three issues or aspects of their landlord's service that they felt were important when considering value for money.

As can be seen from the chart, VfM is influenced by numerous factors. It seems that this year the most significant factors relating to VfM are keeping rents and service charges affordable and maintaining homes to a good standard. As well as being consistent with our previous survey, this was also consistent across both the PRS and Social Housing Sector. However, there was a change in perception in terms of building affordable housing in the future.

What should landlords focus on in the future?



In the last survey, only 2% of people felt that their landlords should focus on building new affordable housing, where as 9% (89 respondents) felt this was important in this survey. This may be related to the current media emphasis on homelessness in Wales, highlighting the need for more affordable homes.

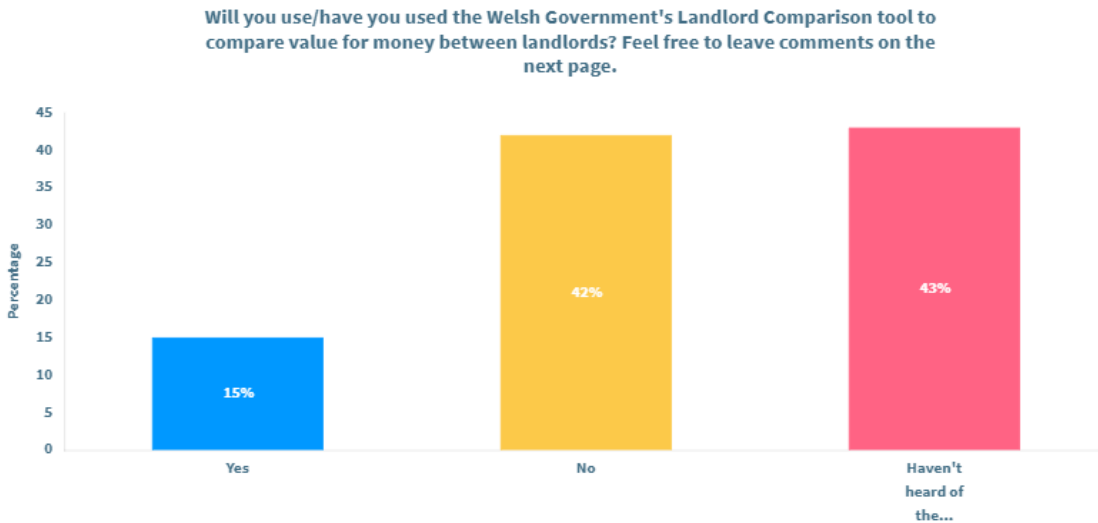
Another factor that may have influenced this perception is the survey we recently carried out on the affordable housing review which was sent out to Tenant Pulse Members and therefore makes them aware of the current challenges in Wales.

5. **Have you used the Welsh Government Landlord Comparison tool to compare value for money between landlords?**

In October 2018, Welsh Government launched a comparison tool which allows users to compare information from different housing associations in Wales. There is a specific section on tenant satisfaction which focuses on many of the questions asked in this

survey.

As can be seen in this chart, 15% of respondents have used this tool, whilst a huge 85% haven't heard of it or haven't used it. This could be as a result of the lack



of awareness due to the tool still being fairly new; suggesting a need for landlords to promote the tool to tenants.

Amongst the respondents using paper surveys (72) only 2 had heard of the tool; both commenting that this was due to their lack of digital accessibility. This emphasises; not only a need for promotion of the tool but for the tool to be accessible for those that don't have access or choose not to access digital technology.