

 **August**

Landlord Report

August Landlord
Survey 2026

Findings on the Renters' Rights Act, Making
Tax Digital, letting agents and landlords'
plans for the next two years

Fieldwork
4–25 September 2026

2026

Contents

00	Key findings	03
	The report's headline findings	
01	Who took part	05
	Portfolio size, experience, regions and how they hold their properties	
02	Renters' Rights Act	14
	Understanding, awareness of the measures, and what landlords and tenants have done	
03	Making Tax Digital	21
	Start dates, first quarterly updates, digital records and the time cost	
04	Letting agents	27
	Two years of churn, why landlords changed, fees and the direction of travel	
05	Plans, worries and confidence	33
	Growing or selling, reletting, what drives plans, the biggest worry and confidence	
06	In their own words	44
	Comments from the landlords who took part	
07	Methodology	49
	How the survey was run and how to read the figures	

Key findings

The headline numbers from the August Landlord Report 2026.

81%

say they understand the Renters' Rights Act, at least in its main points, but only 46% have changed how they operate.

23%

are aware that a landlord database and ombudsman are being introduced, the least-known measure in the Act.

39%

have tightened referencing or affordability checks since the Act came into force. 32% now ask for a guarantor where they didn't before.

35%

of landlords could name the correct Making Tax Digital start date for their own income level.

75%

of landlords already in MTD expect it to add at least four hours of work every quarter. A third expect more than a day.

27%

left a letting agent in the last two years and now self-manage. 69% say they are likely to be self-managing all their properties in two years' time.

34%

intend to increase the number of properties they own over the next two years, against 7% in the government's 2024 survey.

29%

plan to shrink or sell up, almost identical to the 31% the government found.

7.1

out of 10: average confidence in being a UK landlord over the next five years. Among the over-65s it falls to 4.7.

How to read the numbers. Percentages are based on everyone who answered each question, so bases vary slightly from question to question and are shown on every chart. Where we compare with the English Private Landlord Survey (EPLS), we are comparing a UK-wide, self-selected sample of landlords who were sent this survey with a large, weighted, England-only survey of landlords registered with a deposit scheme. The comparisons are indicative, not like-for-like. Full details are in the methodology at the end.

Partner view

EMPO

A not-for-profit landlords' association for the East Midlands, established in 1942.

“

“These findings match what we hear from our members every week. Most landlords have made a real effort to understand the Renters' Rights Act, and the fact that so many have tightened their referencing shows they are trying to reduce risk rather than walk away. But the low awareness of the landlord database and ombudsman is a warning. Every landlord in England will have to register, and the sector has a lot of work to do to get that message out before the deadline.”

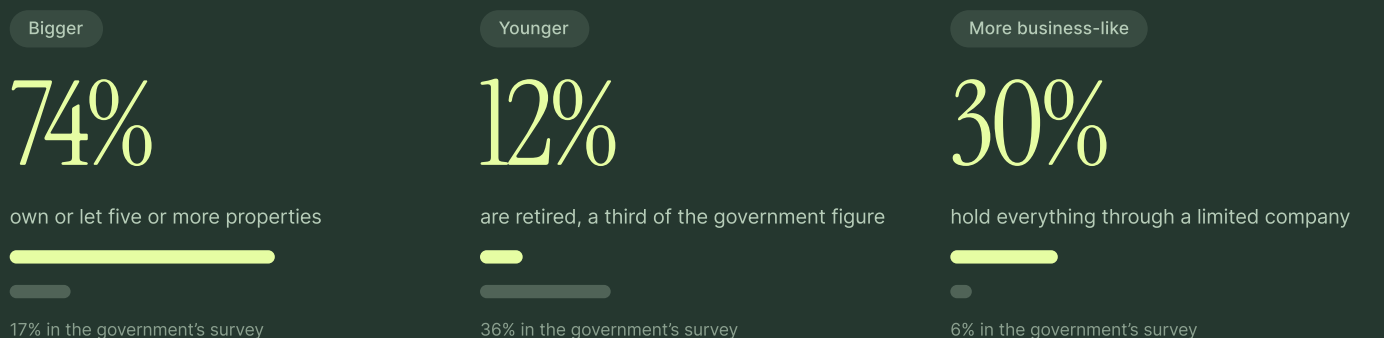
Vicki Hextall

Area Manager, EMPO

01

Who took part

These landlords are bigger, younger and more business-like than the picture painted by government data. That matters for how the rest of the findings should be read. This is a survey of active, engaged landlords, many of them running property as a serious part of their income.

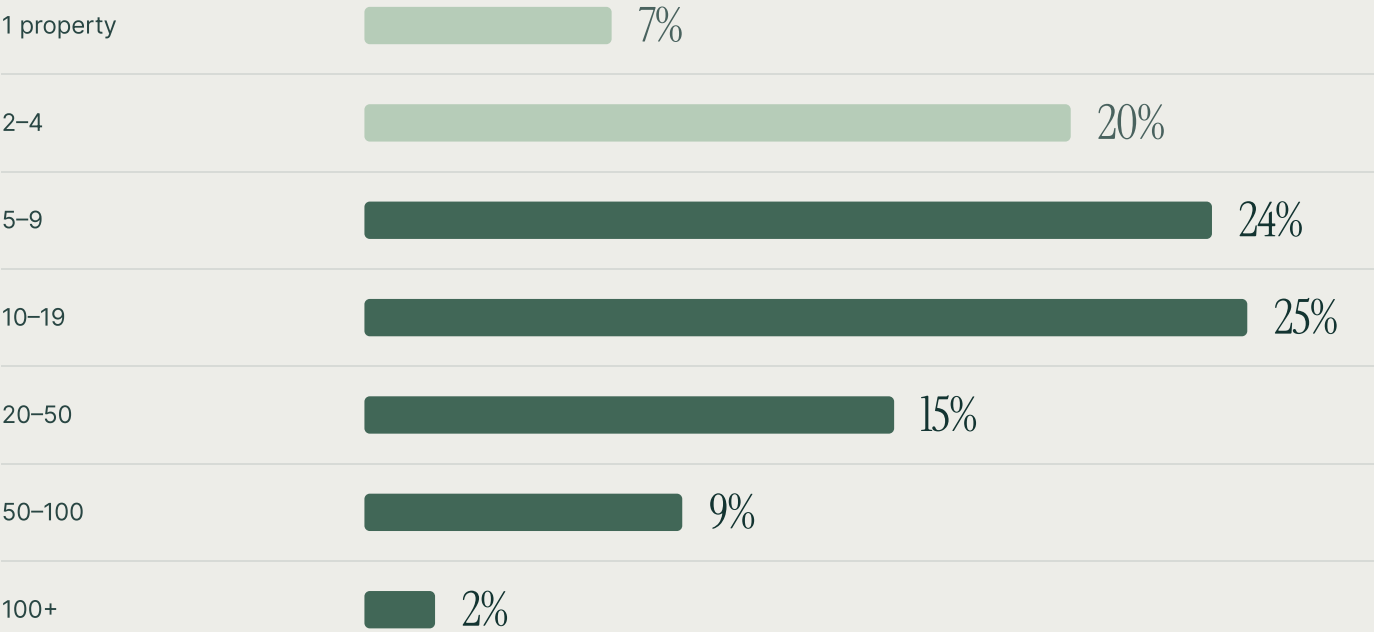


How this sample compares with the sector

■ August Landlord Survey 2026 (UK) ■ English Private Landlord Survey 2024 (England)

1.1 Portfolio size

Three-quarters own or let five or more properties



Three-quarters of respondents (74%) own or let five or more properties. A quarter (25%) have between ten and nineteen, and a further quarter (26%) have twenty or more. Only 7% are single-property landlords.

The government's English Private Landlord Survey 2024 found the reverse. 45% of landlords in England own one property, 38% own two to four and just 17% own five or more.

1.2

Experience

These are experienced landlords

These are experienced landlords. A third (33%) have been letting for more than twenty years and 59% for more than a decade, close to the 58% with eleven or more years' experience in the government survey. Only 7% have been a landlord for less than three years.

59%

have been letting for more than a decade, close to the 58% with eleven or more years' experience in the government survey

33%

have been letting for more than twenty years

7%

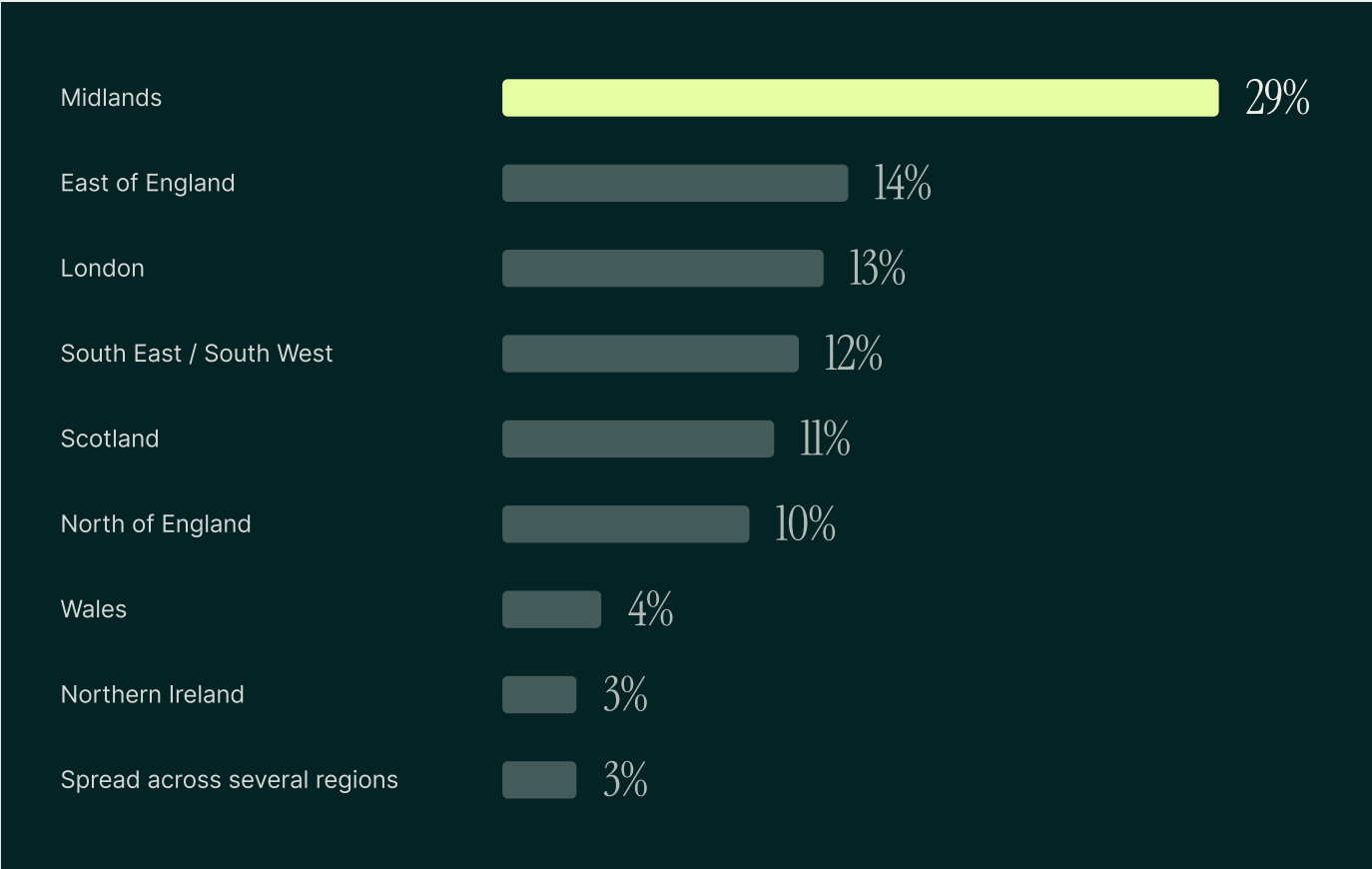
have been a landlord for less than three years

1.3 Where their properties are

Every UK nation is represented, led by the Midlands

Every nation of the UK is represented. The Midlands is the largest single region (29%), followed by the East of England (14%), London (13%), the South East and South West (12%), Scotland (11%) and the North of England (10%). Wales and Northern Ireland together account for 6%, and 3% have portfolios spread across several regions.

Because the Renters’ Rights Act applies to England, we show England-only figures alongside the UK totals in section 2 where the difference matters.



1.4 How they hold their properties

Three in ten hold everything through a limited company



Just under half (45%) hold their properties as an individual or jointly with a partner or family member. Three in ten (30%) hold everything through a limited company, and a quarter (25%) use a mix of both.

Incorporation is far more common in this sample than in the sector at large. The government survey found 93% of landlords in England let as individuals and 6% through a company. Limited-company structures are concentrated among mid-sized portfolios here, with 36% of landlords with two to four properties and 34% of those with five to nine using an SPV for everything.

52%

have a buy-to-let mortgage on at least one property

33%

own all their rental properties outright

26%

let at least one HMO or house share

19%

let a furnished holiday let or short let

1.5

How they became landlords

Just under half bought their first rental property to let it out



46%

Bought it to let it out

37%

Bought it to live in, then let it out

14%

Inherited

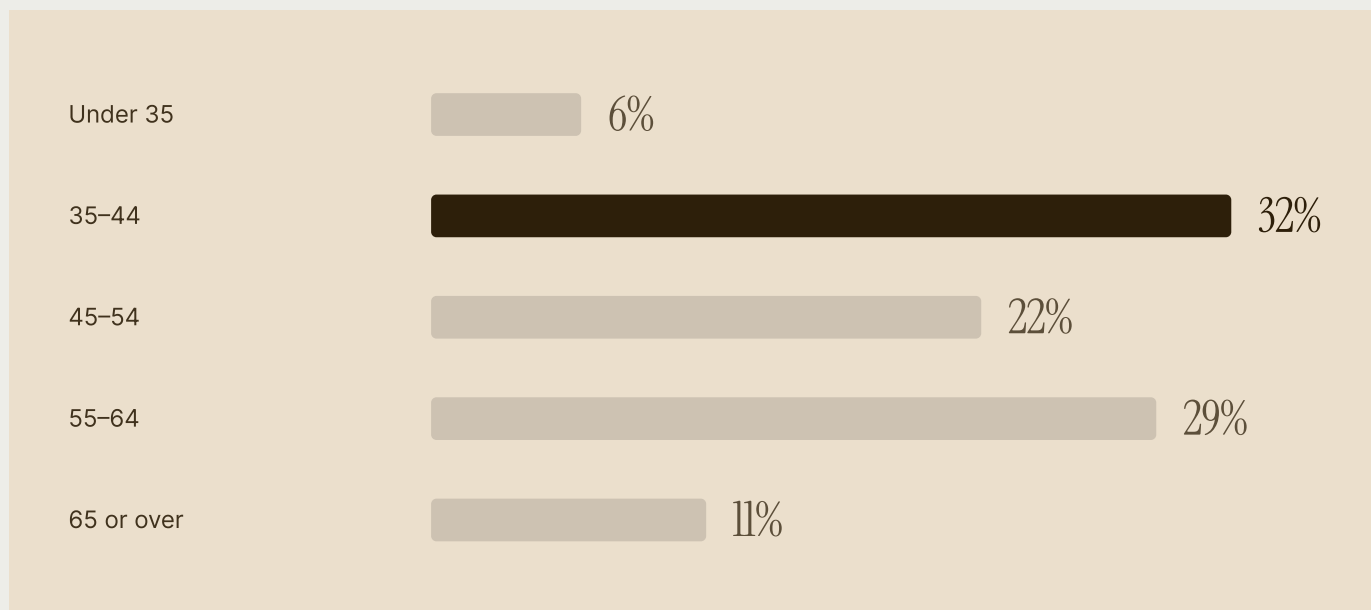
Just under half (46%) bought their first rental property specifically to let it out. More than a third (37%) bought it to live in and let it out later, and 14% inherited or were given it.

The first two figures are close to the government survey (52% and 37%). Inheritance is more common here than the 6% the government found.

1.6

Age, gender and occupation

Respondents are noticeably younger than the sector average



40%

are aged 55 or over, compared with 64% in the government survey

55%

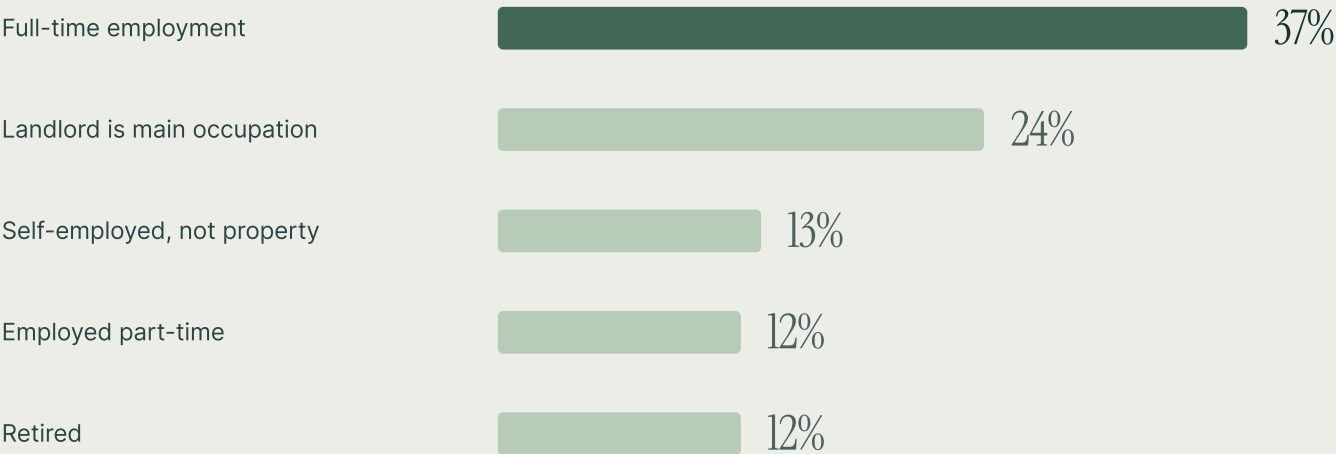
of respondents are men and 44% women, with 1% preferring not to say. The EPLS found an even split.

Respondents are noticeably younger than the sector average. Two in five (40%) are aged 55 or over, compared with 64% in the EPLS 2024, and the largest single group is aged 35 to 44 (32%).

Men make up 55% of respondents and women 44%, with 1% preferring not to say. The EPLS found an even split.

1.6 Age, gender and occupation

The largest group work full-time alongside their portfolio



For a quarter of respondents (24%), being a landlord is their main occupation. The largest group (37%) are in full-time employment alongside their portfolio, 13% are self-employed in something other than property, 12% work part-time and 12% are retired.

That last figure is a third of the 36% of retired landlords in the government survey, and it is the clearest sign that this survey reached working-age, actively managing landlords rather than the sector's older, more passive tail.

66%

report a gross annual income from property and any self-employment of £30,000 or more

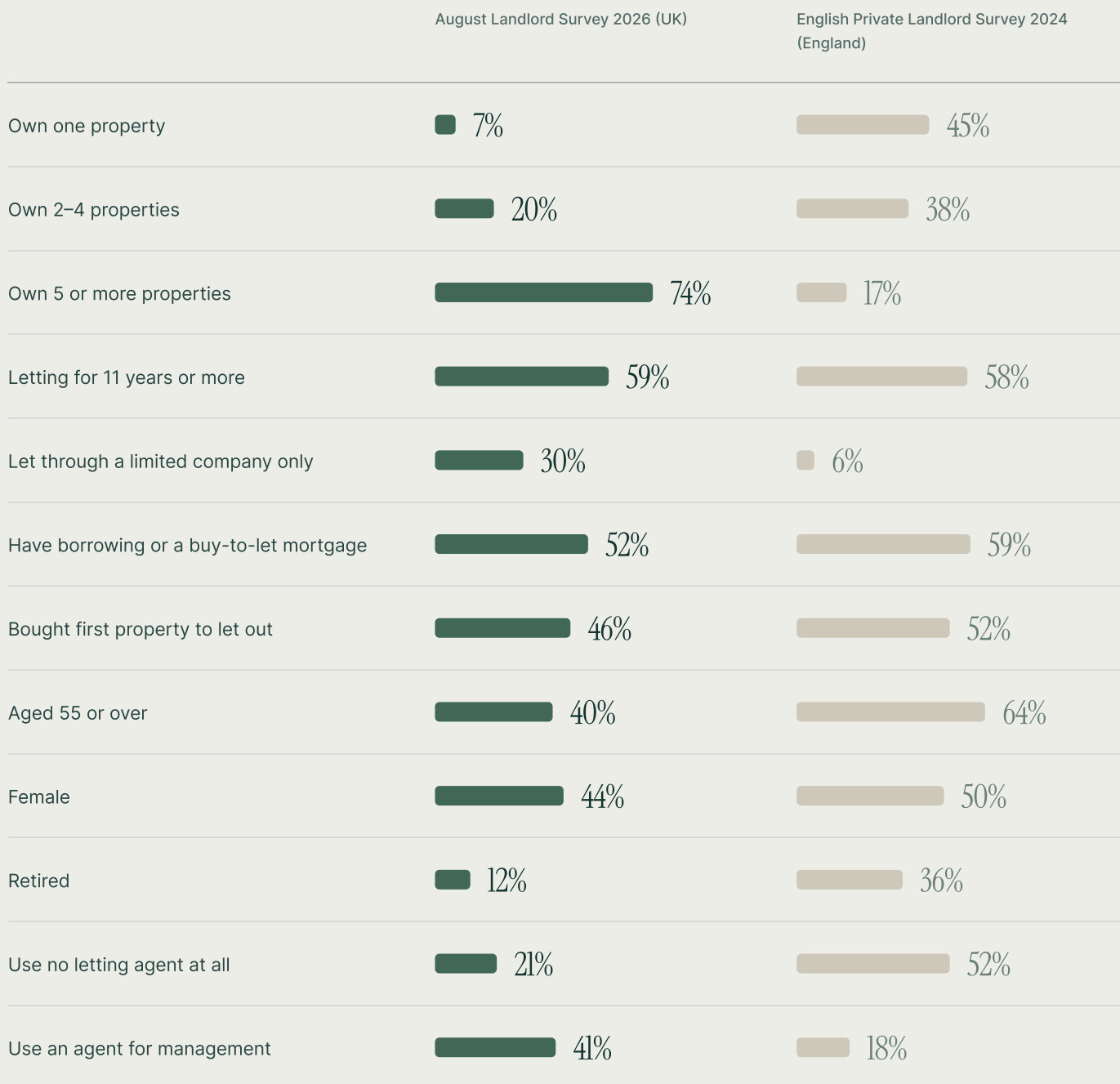
34%

report £50,000 or more. Those are the bands that decide when a landlord is drawn into Making Tax Digital.

1.7

Profile at a glance

How this sample compares with the sector



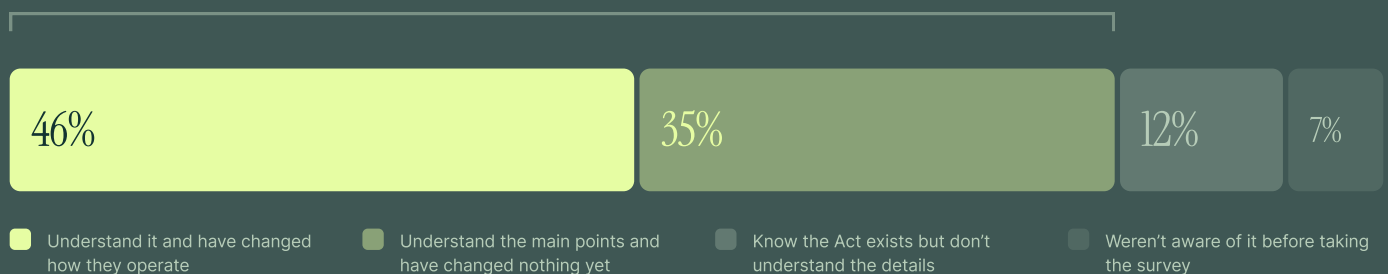
Government figures are for direct landlords in England in 2024, weighted by landlord. "Use an agent for management" in this survey combines "fully managed" and "a mix across properties". The government borrowing figure is landlords with borrowing on at least one property. The comparison is indicative, not like for like.

02

Renters' Rights Act

The Renters' Rights Act is the biggest change to private renting in England for a generation, and the survey went into the field a few months after its main provisions took effect. We asked landlords how well they understand it, which of its measures they are aware of, what they have done differently, and what their tenants have done differently.

81% understand it, at least in its main points

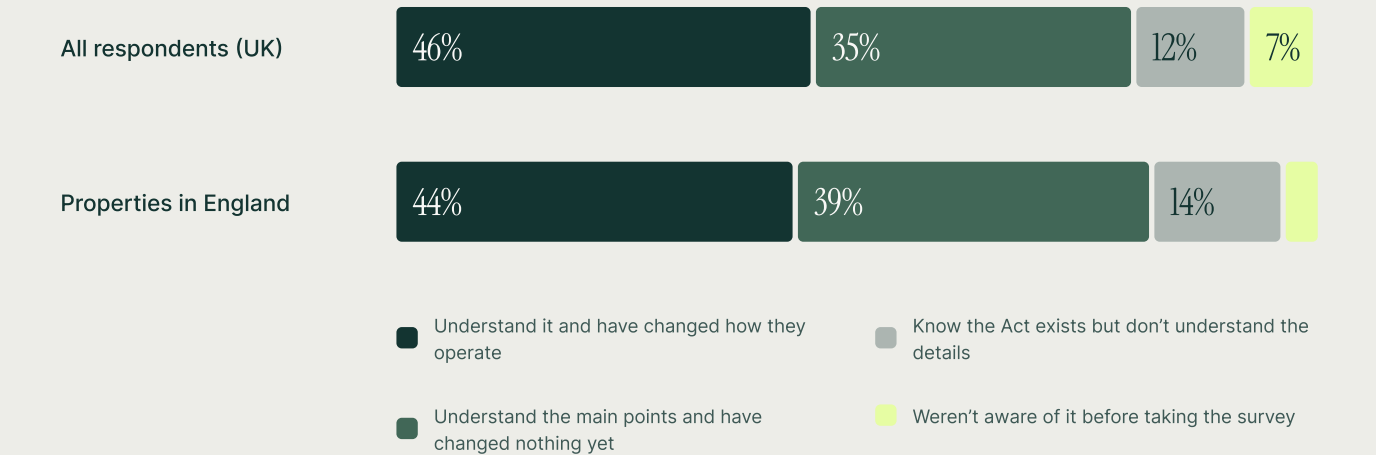


2.1 How well landlords understand the Act

Understanding of the Renters' Rights Act

Four in five landlords (81%) say they understand the Act, at least in its main points. But understanding and action are different things. 46% say they understand it and have changed how they operate, while 35% understand the main points and have changed nothing yet. One in eight (12%) know the Act exists but don't understand the details, and 7% weren't aware of it before taking the survey.

Restricting the analysis to landlords whose properties are in England, the picture is similar. 44% have changed how they operate, 39% understand it but have not acted, 14% don't understand the details and 3% weren't aware of it. Most of the "wasn't aware" answers come from Scotland (25%) and Wales and Northern Ireland (18%), where the Act does not apply and different regimes are in force.

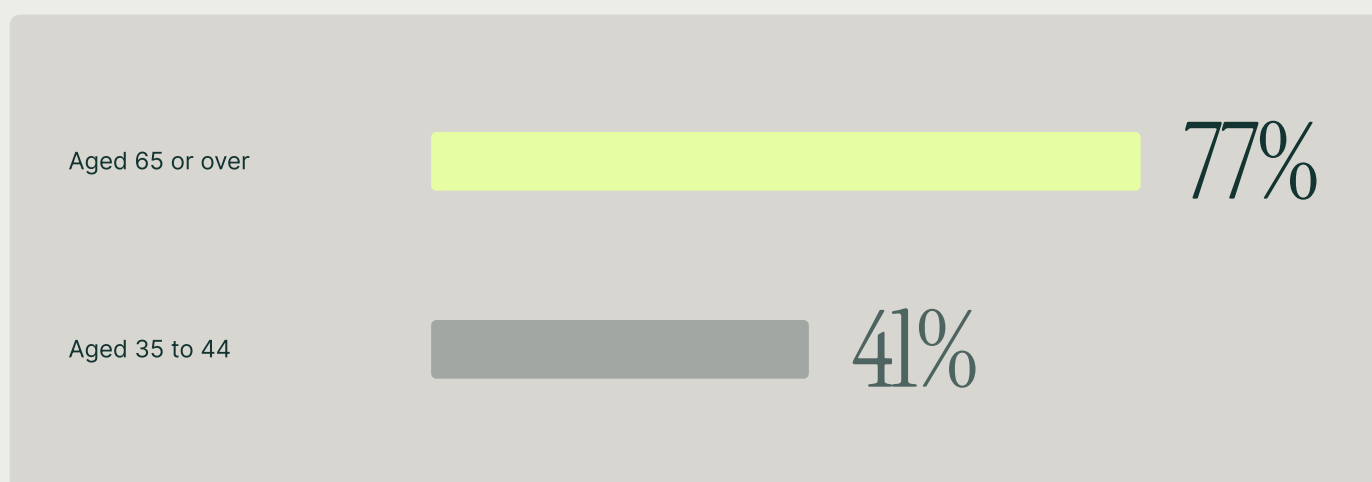


2.1 How well landlords understand the Act

Understanding rises sharply with age

More than three-quarters (77%) of landlords aged 65 or over say they have already changed how they operate, against 41% of those aged 35 to 44. Landlords in their thirties and forties are the most likely to say they understand the main points, but have not yet acted (50% of 35 to 44 year olds).

Newer landlords are least sure of their ground. A third (33%) of those letting for under three years know the Act exists, but don't understand the details.



50%

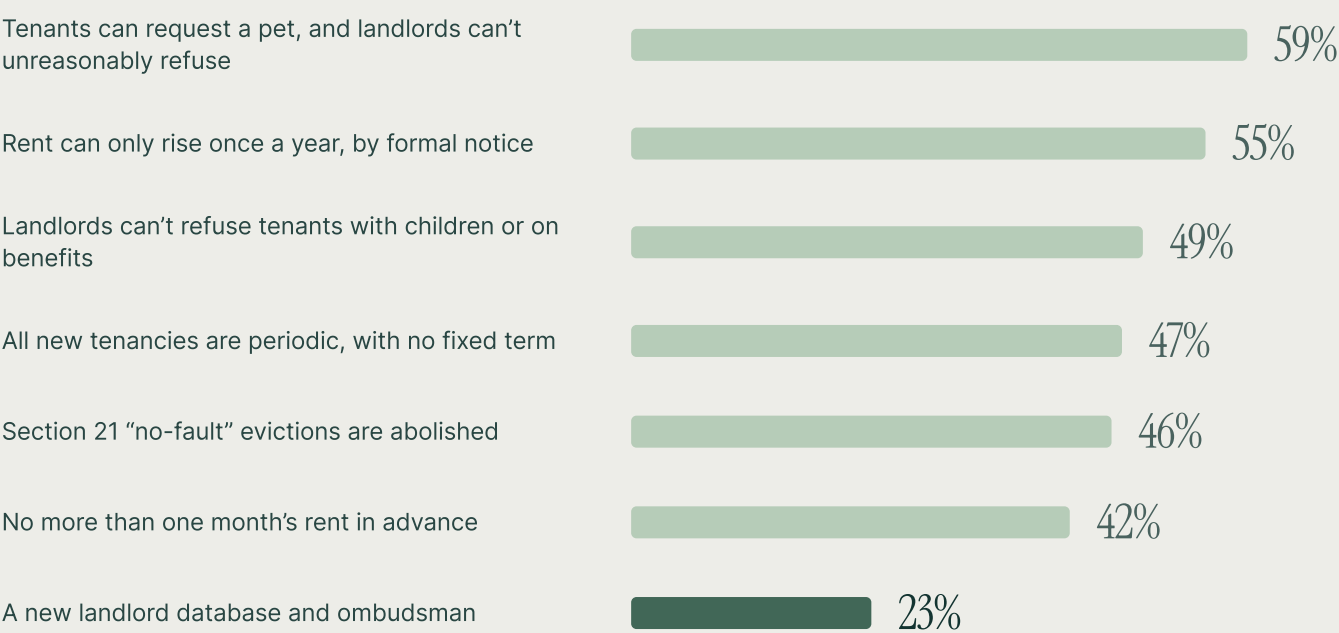
of 35 to 44 year olds understand the main points but have not yet acted

33%

of those letting for under three years know the Act exists but don't understand the details

2.2 Which measures landlords know about

Only 23% know about the landlord database and ombudsman



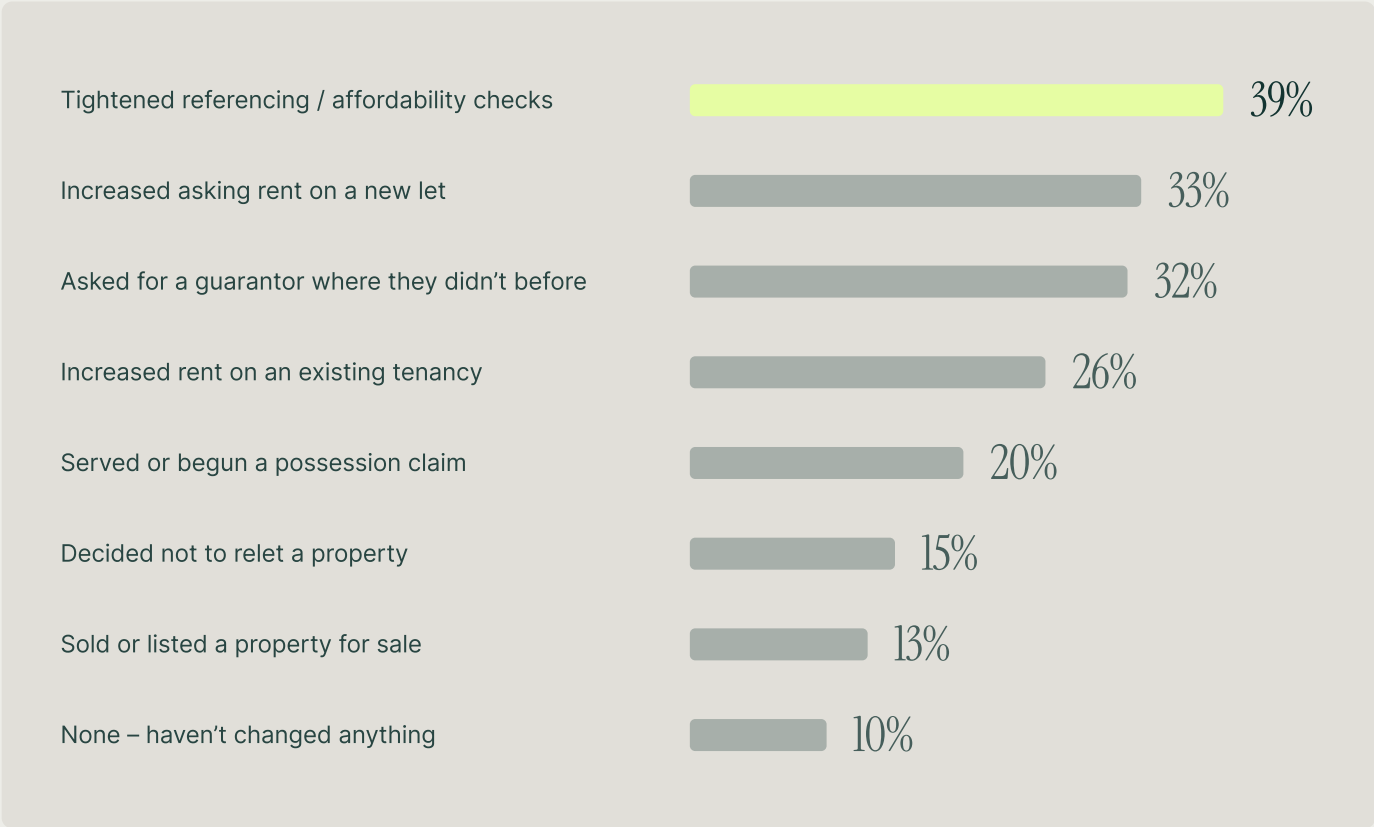
We listed seven of the Act's headline measures and asked landlords to tick the ones they were aware of. No single measure was recognised by more than six in ten landlords, and none by fewer than one in five. The best-known change is the new rule that rent can only be increased once a year through a formal notice (58%), narrowly ahead of the abolition of Section 21 "no-fault" evictions (55%).

Around half know that tenants can request a pet and cannot be unreasonably refused (49%), that landlords cannot refuse tenants because they have children or receive benefits (47%), and that all new tenancies are now periodic (46%). Fewer (42%) know that landlords cannot take more than one month's rent in advance.

The measure landlords know least about is the one that will touch every one of them. Only 23% know that a new landlord database and ombudsman are being introduced. Every landlord in England will need to register on the database and join the ombudsman scheme, and the low awareness suggests a large communication gap before those requirements bite.

2.3 What landlords have done since the Act came into force

The most common response has been to become more selective



Two in five landlords (39%) have tightened referencing or affordability checks, and a third (32%) now ask for a guarantor where they didn't before. A third (33%) have increased the asking rent on a new let and a quarter (26%) have increased rent on an existing tenancy.

One in five (20%) have served or begun a possession claim since the Act came into force. Fifteen per cent have decided not to re-let a property and 13% have sold or listed one for sale. Only one in ten (10%) say they have changed nothing. Among landlords in England the pattern is the same. 41% tightened referencing, 36% raised asking rents, 32% asked for a guarantor and 12% changed nothing.

2.3 What landlords have done since the Act came into force

Responses differ markedly by portfolio size

Portfolio size	1 property	2-4	5-9	10-19	20+
Tightened referencing / affordability checks	22%	38%	46%	40%	34%
Increased the asking rent on a new let	17%	38%	46%	27%	22%
Asked for a guarantor where you didn't before	17%	12%	54%	35%	30%
Increased rent on an existing tenancy	28%	30%	36%	22%	21%
Served or begun a possession claim	0%	10%	12%	22%	37%
Decided not to relet a property	11%	18%	7%	13%	22%
Sold or listed a property for sale	11%	16%	2%	21%	16%
None of these	56%	22%	3%	2%	3%
Base	18	50	59	63	67

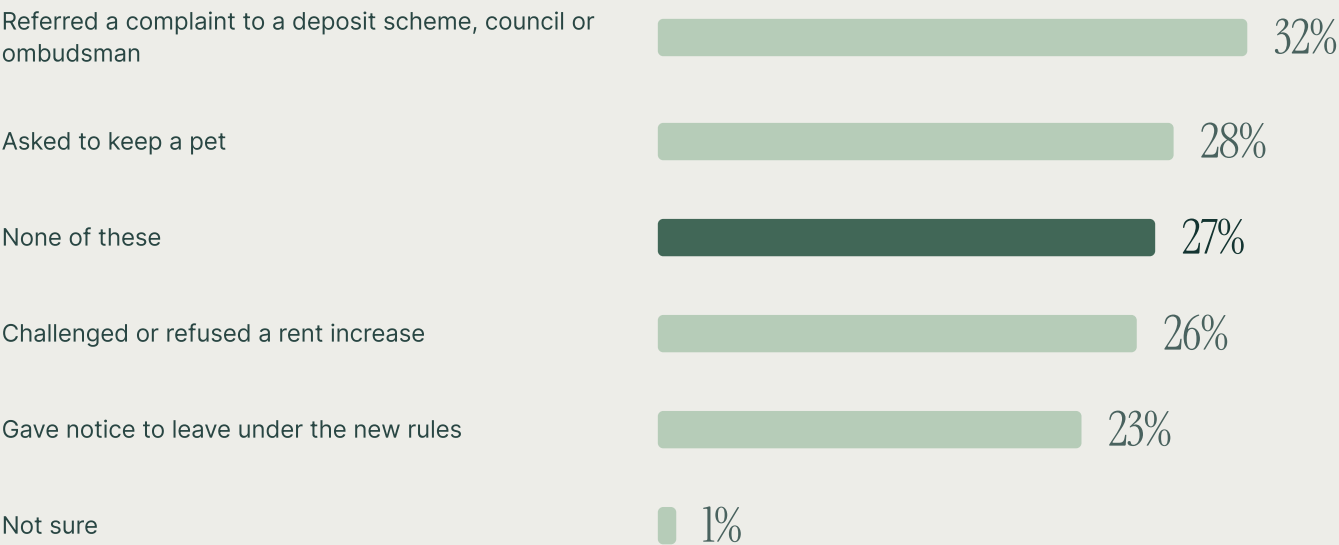
Multiple answers allowed

Single-property landlords are the least affected. 56% of them have changed nothing, but they are also the most likely to have decided not to re-let a property (22%). Landlords with five to nine properties have been most active on the letting side, with 54% asking for guarantors and 46% raising asking rents. The largest landlords, with twenty or more properties, are the most likely to have used the courts. 37% have served or begun a possession claim, compared with 10% of those with two to four properties and none of the single-property landlords.

Age matters too. Landlords aged 55 to 64 are the most likely to have withdrawn stock. A quarter (25%) have decided not to relet a property and 22% have sold or listed one, roughly double the rate among landlords under 45.

2.4 What tenants have done

Landlords are already seeing tenants use their new rights



A third (32%) have had a tenant request to keep a pet, 28% have had a tenant give notice to leave under the new rules, 26% have had a complaint referred to a deposit scheme, council or ombudsman, and 23% have had a tenant challenge or refuse a rent increase. Just over a quarter (27%) have experienced none of these, and 1% aren't sure.

Larger landlords, with more tenancies, naturally see more of everything. Among those with twenty or more properties, 42% have received notice under the new rules and 42% have had a complaint referred on. Landlords with ten to nineteen properties report the highest rate of rent-increase challenges (44%). Half of landlords with one to four properties have experienced none of these changes yet.

03

Making Tax Digital

Making Tax Digital for Income Tax began in April 2026 for landlords and sole traders with gross income of £50,000 or more. Those with income of £30,000 or more follow in April 2027 and those over £20,000 in April 2028. We asked landlords when they think they need to start, and those already in scope how it is going.

When Making Tax Digital for Income Tax applies



April 2026

Gross income of £50,000 or more

Already in effect



April 2027

Gross income of £30,000 or more



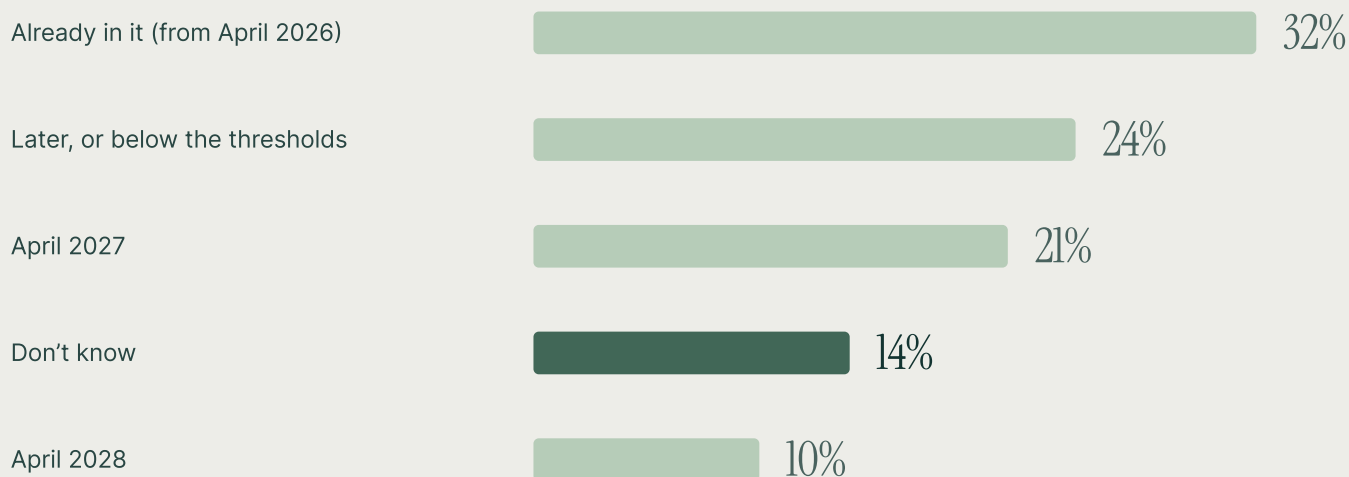
April 2028

Gross income over £20,000

3.1

Do landlords know when they start?

A third say they are already in Making Tax Digital



A third of landlords (32%) say they are already in Making Tax Digital. A fifth (21%) expect to start in April 2027 and 10% in April 2028. A quarter (24%) believe they start later or fall below the thresholds, and 14% simply don't know.

We also asked landlords their gross income from property and self-employment combined, which is what HMRC uses, so we can check their answers against the rules. Most don't match. Only 35% of landlords named the start date that applies to their own income.

3.1

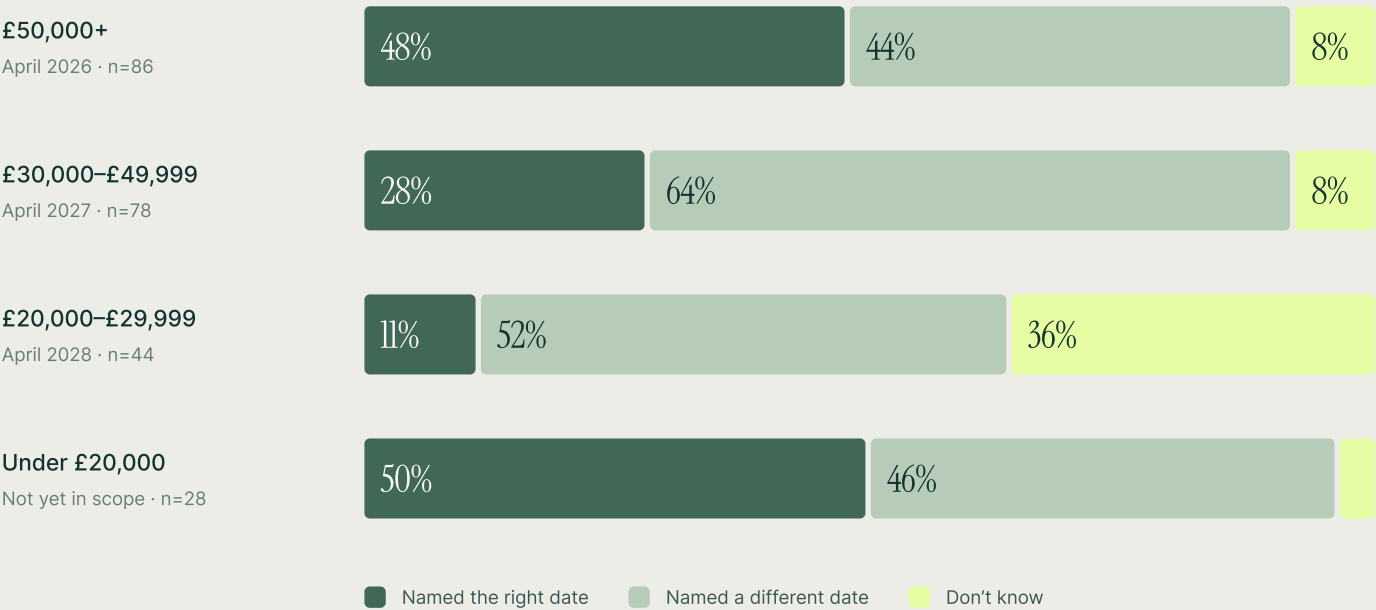
Do landlords know when they start?

Only 35% named the start date for their own income band

Among landlords reporting £50,000 or more, who should already be filing quarterly updates, fewer than half (48%) say they are in MTD, and almost as many (44%) named a later date or believe they are below the thresholds.

In the £30,000 to £49,999 band, due to join in April 2027, only 28% named the right year. Most (64%) named a different date, many of them believing they are already in. In the £20,000 to £29,999 band, due in April 2028, only 11% got it right and 36% don't know.

Roughly half of the landlords who should already be in Making Tax Digital don't think they are, and only a quarter of those due to join next April know it. Software providers, accountants and HMRC have a job to do before the 2027 wave.



Income is gross property and self-employment income combined, as reported, and the right date is based on HMRC thresholds.

3.2

How it's going for landlords already in MTD

Most of those already in filed their first update on time

Of landlords who say they are already in MTD, 83% report submitting their first quarterly update on time and 12% submitted late. A further 5% don't know whether it has been done, because their accountant handles it.

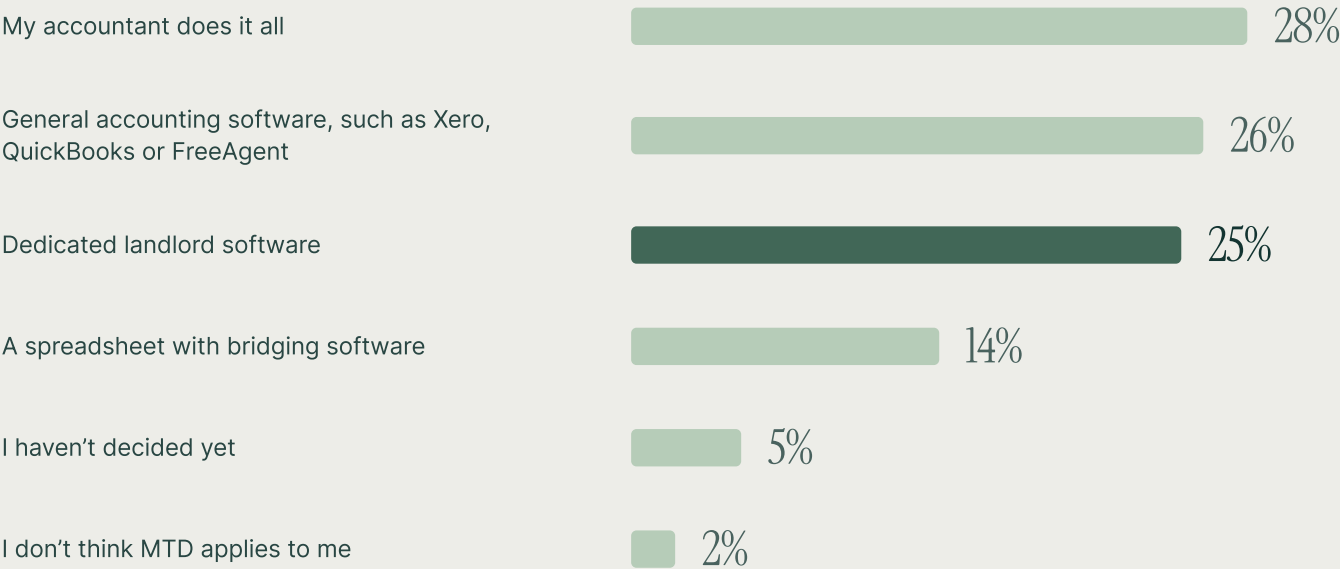


3.3 How landlords keep their digital records

Accountants lead, with software close behind

The accountant is the single most common answer. 28% say their accountant does it all. A similar number use general accounting software such as Xero, QuickBooks or FreeAgent (26%) or dedicated landlord software (25%). One in seven (14%) run a spreadsheet with bridging software, and 5% haven't decided yet.

There is a clear split by management style. Landlords who use an agent for management lean heavily on their accountant (42%), while self-managing landlords are far more likely to handle it themselves, with 21% using a spreadsheet and bridging software and 15% relying on an accountant.

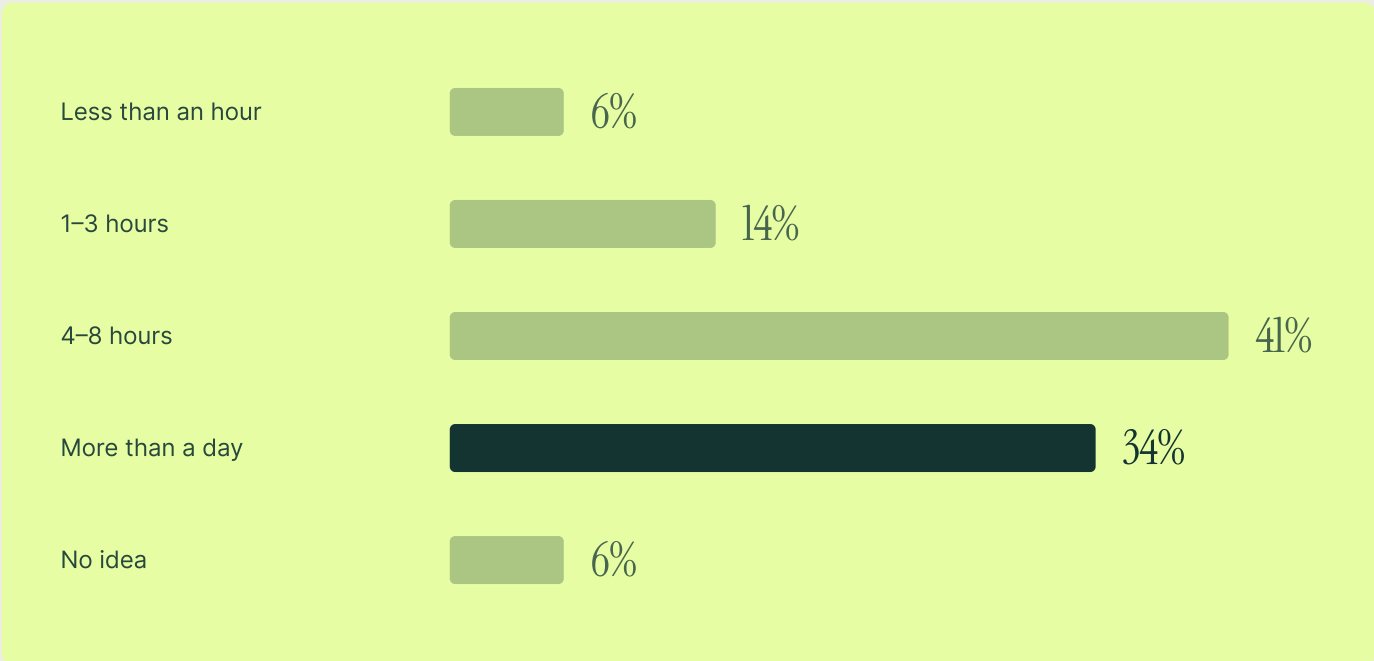


3.4

How long MTD takes each quarter

Three in four expect MTD to add at least four hours a quarter

Landlords expect Making Tax Digital to be a real burden. Three-quarters (75%) of those in scope expect it to add at least four hours of work every quarter, and a third (34%) expect it to take more than a day. Only 6% expect it to take less than an hour.



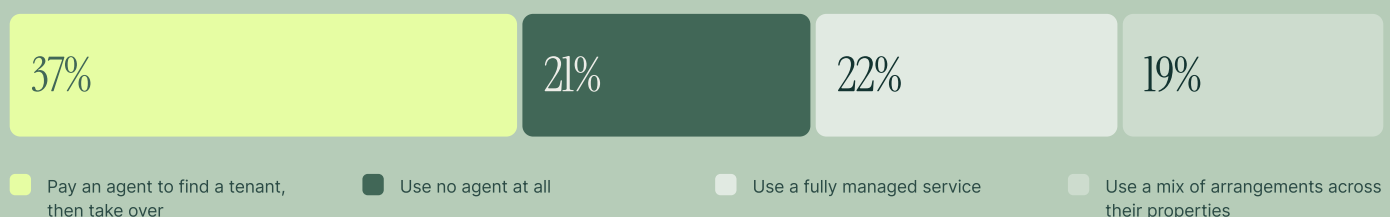
04

Letting agents

Only 21% of landlords in the survey use no agent at all, but most of the day-to-day management is done by landlords themselves. The largest group (37%) pay an agent to find a tenant and then take over, so 58% of respondents manage their tenancies personally once they are let. A fifth (22%) use a fully managed service and 19% use a mix of arrangements across their properties.

Use of letting agents

58% manage their tenancies personally once they are let



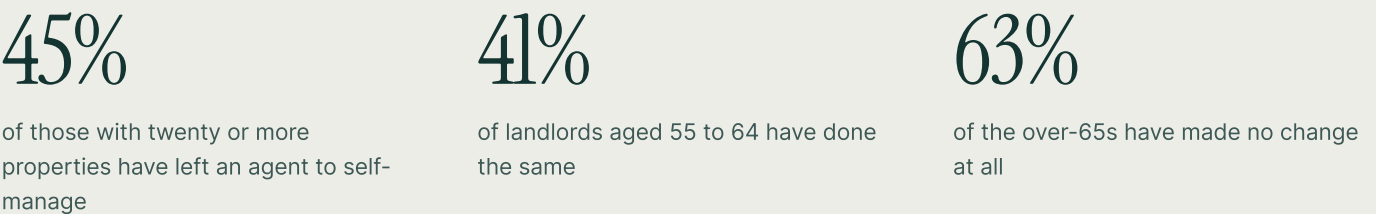
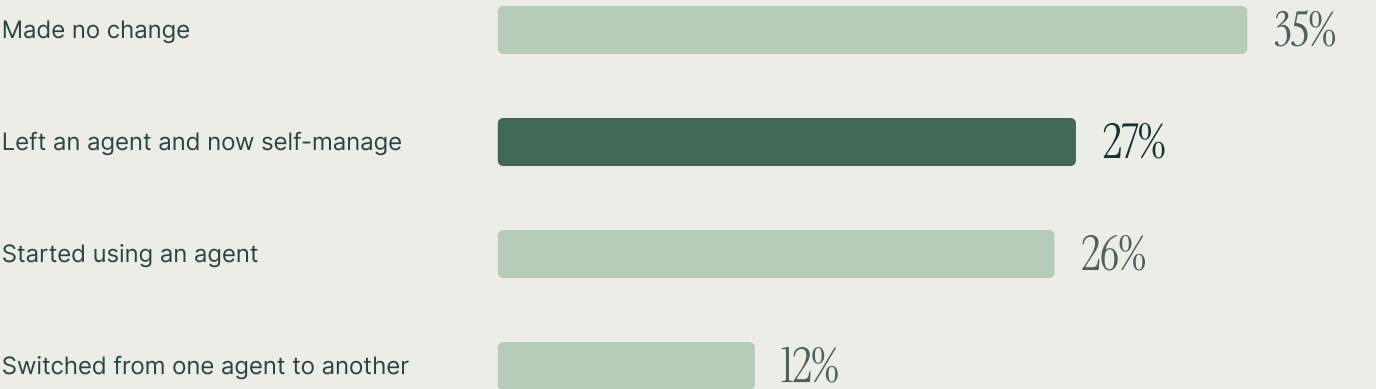
Base: 275 respondents. Source: August Landlord Survey 2026.

4.1 Two years of change

Landlords are changing how they manage

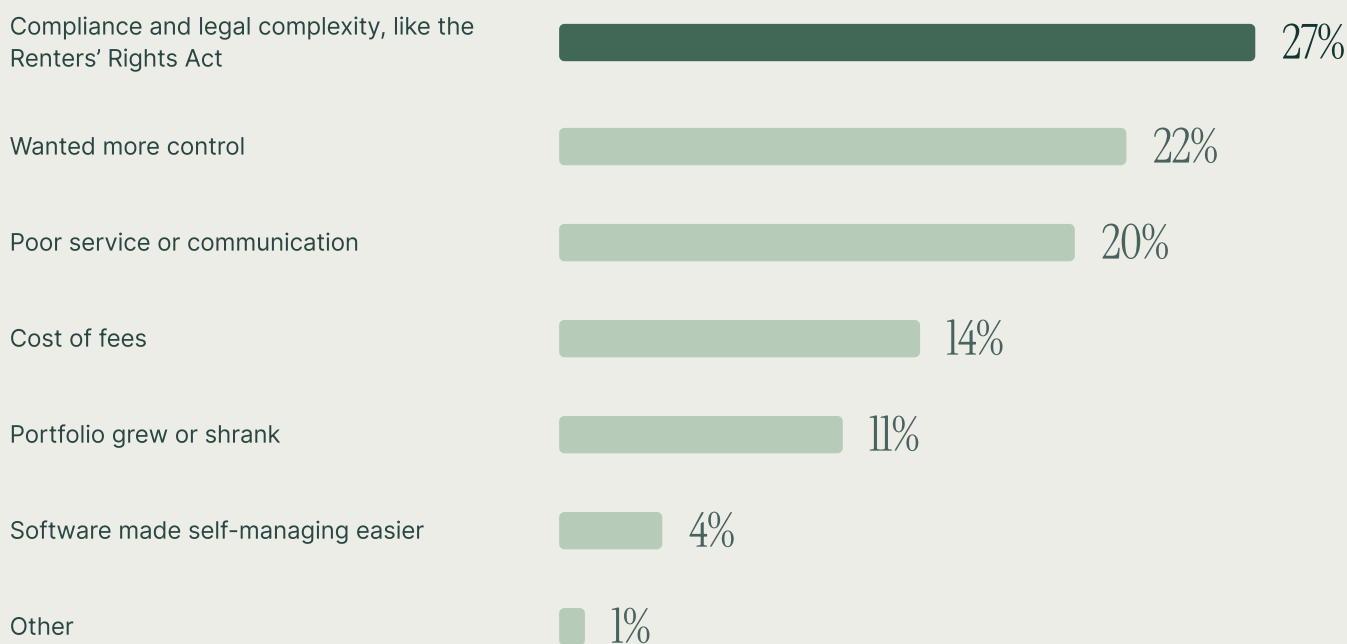
Only 35% say they have made no change in the last two years. Just over a quarter (27%) have left an agent and now self-manage, a similar number (26%) have started using an agent, and 12% have switched from one agent to another.

Movement is in both directions, and it is concentrated among larger and more experienced landlords. 45% of those with twenty or more properties have left an agent to self-manage, as have 41% of landlords aged 55 to 64, while 63% of the over-65s have made no change at all.



4.2 Why landlords changed how they manage

Compliance is the main reason landlords change how they manage



Of the 172 landlords who made a change, 169 gave a main reason. The single most common was compliance and legal complexity, including the Renters' Rights Act (27%). Wanting more control came second (22%), followed by poor service or communication (20%), the cost of fees (14%) and a change in portfolio size (11%).

Only 4% said software made self-managing easier. That is a sign of the order in which decisions are made. Compliance and control push landlords into self-managing first, and the search for the best property management software follows. With a quarter of landlords in scope for MTD already using dedicated landlord software (section 3).

4.2 Why landlords changed how they manage

The reasons differ by the direction of change

Direction of change	Main reason	Share
Started using an agent	Compliance and legal complexity	37%
Left an agent to self-manage	Compliance and legal complexity	24%
	Wanting more control	23%
	Cost of fees	18%
Switched to another agent	Poor service or communication	39%

Compliance is the main driver for landlords who started using an agent (37%), suggesting the Act is pushing some landlords towards professional help. But it is also the top reason for landlords who left an agent (24%), alongside wanting more control (23%) and the cost of fees (18%).

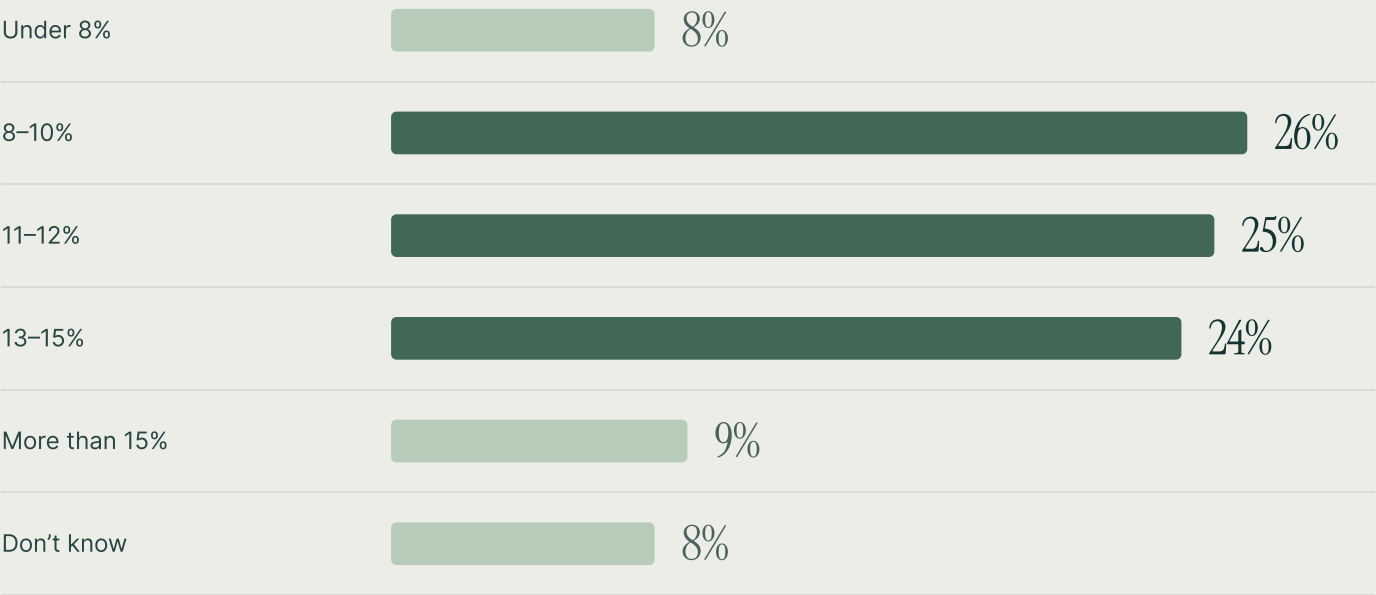
This suggests others have concluded that if they are carrying the legal responsibility anyway, they may as well do the work. Landlords who switched agent overwhelmingly did so because of poor service or communication (39%).

4.3

What letting agents charge landlords

Fees cluster between 8% and 15% of the rent

Among landlords who pay or have paid for management, fees cluster between 8% and 15% of the rent. 26% paid 8 to 10%, 25% paid 11 to 12% and 24% paid 13 to 15%. Nearly one in ten (9%) paid more than 15%, and 8% didn't know what they paid. On a modest portfolio of five properties let at £1,000 a month, a 12% fee comes to £7,200 a year.



Management fee paid (or previously paid) to an agent, as % of rent

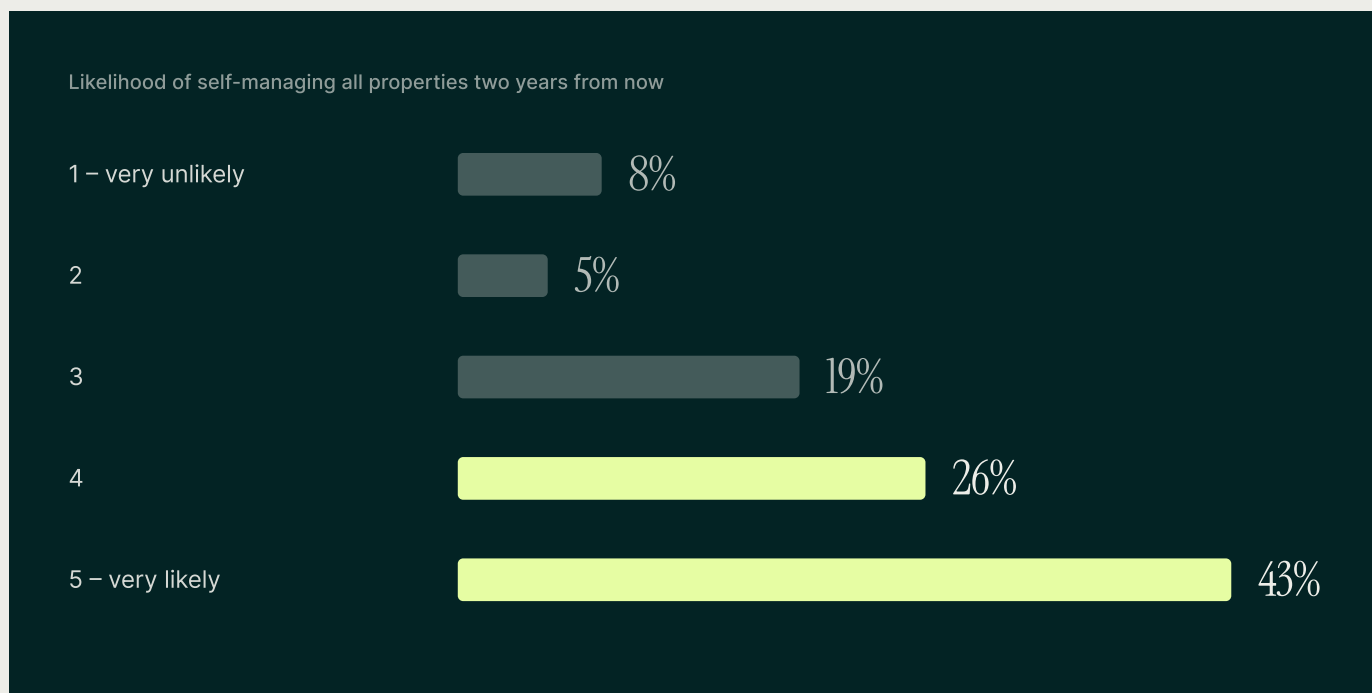
4.4

Will more landlords self-manage?

69% are likely to be self-managing everything in two years

Asked how likely they are to be self-managing all their properties two years from now, 69% of landlords placed themselves at 4 or 5 on a five-point scale, including 43% at “very likely”. Only 13% said it was unlikely.

The over-65s are the exception. A third (34%) say self-managing everything is very unlikely, the highest of any group. Landlords with two to four properties are also more hesitant (27% unlikely), possibly because they are the group most likely to be juggling property with full-time work.



58%

of landlords who use an agent for management say they are likely to be self-managing everything; 46% very likely

34%

of the over-65s say self-managing everything is very unlikely, the highest of any group

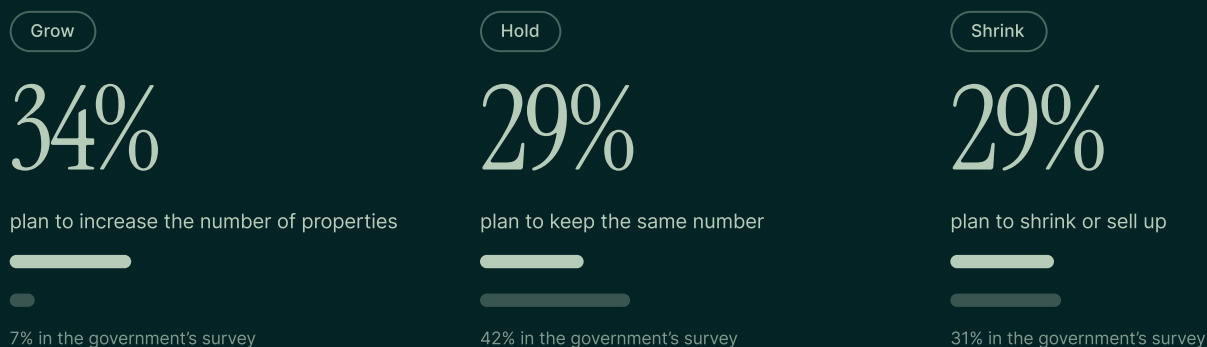
27%

of landlords with two to four properties say it is unlikely

05

Plans, worries and confidence

Contrary to much of the commentary about a landlord exodus, more landlords in this survey plan to grow than shrink.



Plans for the portfolio over the next two years

August Landlord Survey 2026 (UK)

English Private Landlord Survey 2024 (England)

5.1

Growing, holding or selling

More landlords plan to grow than to shrink

August Landlord Survey 2026 (UK)

English Private Landlord Survey 2024 (England)

Plan to grow

34%

7%

Plan to shrink or sell up

29%

31%

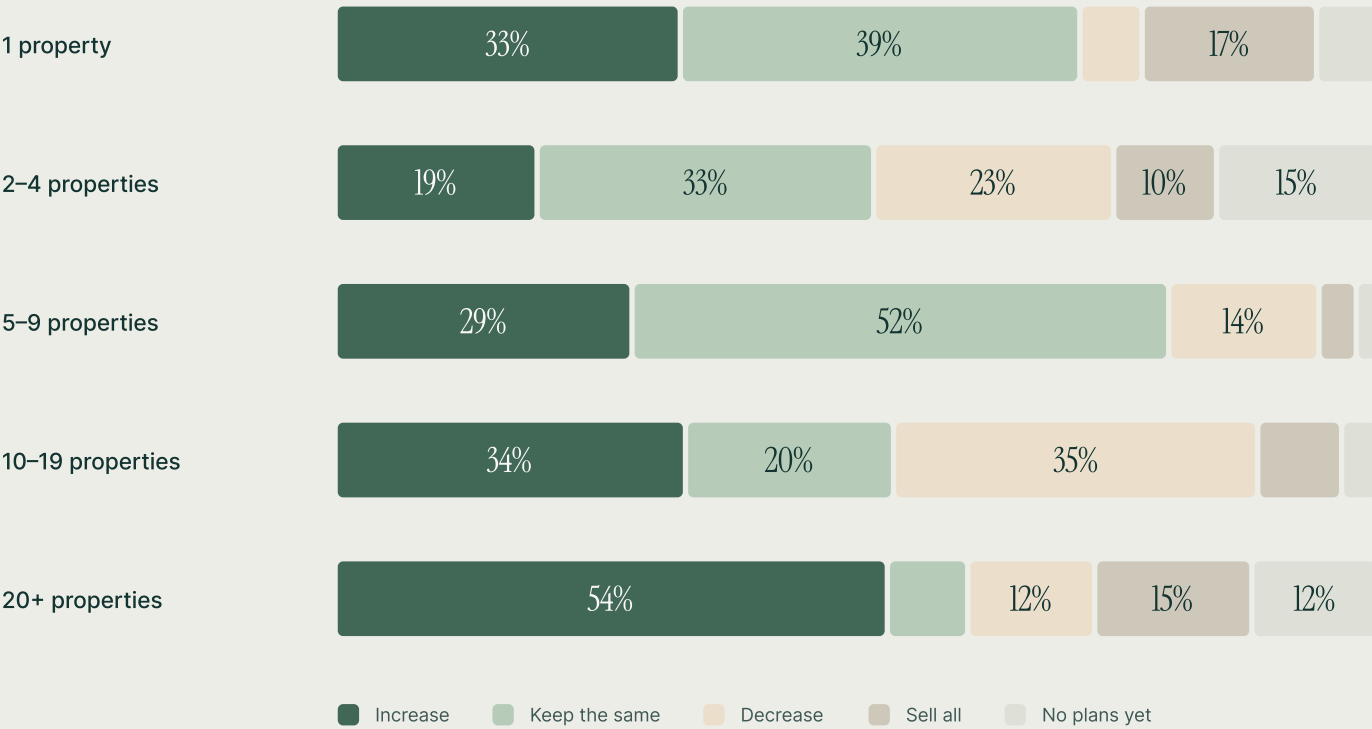
Contrary to much of the commentary about a landlord exodus, more landlords in this survey plan to grow than shrink. A third (34%) intend to increase the number of properties they own over the next two years, 29% plan to keep the same number, 20% plan to decrease and 9% plan to sell all their rental properties. Seven per cent haven't made plans.

The share planning to shrink or sell up, 29%, is almost identical to the 31% the government found among landlords in England in 2024. The difference is at the other end. 34% plan to grow, against 7% in the government survey. That fits the profile of this sample, which leans towards larger, incorporated and younger landlords, and the government's own finding that company landlords were far more likely to plan an increase (27%) than individuals (5%).

5.1 Growing, holding or selling

The split is starkest by portfolio size

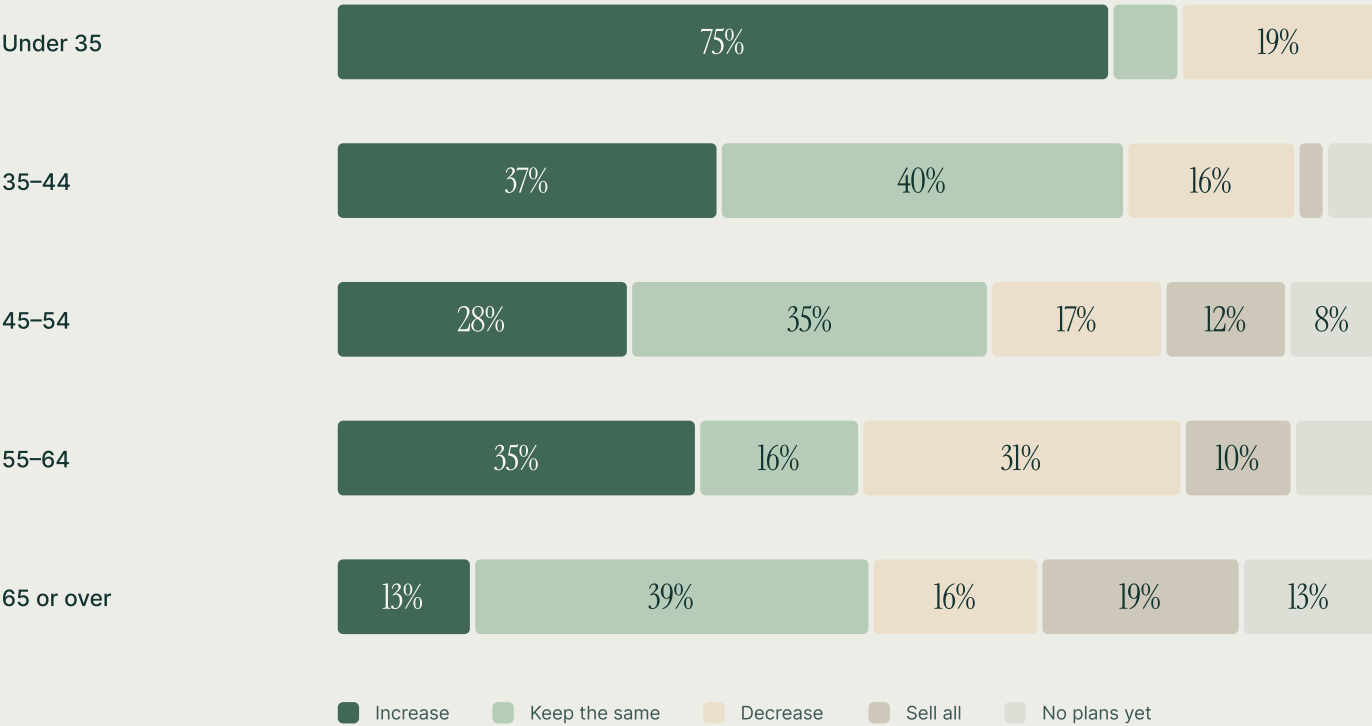
More than half (54%) of landlords with twenty or more properties plan to grow. Landlords with ten to nineteen properties are the most likely to be shrinking, with 43% planning to decrease or sell all, and a third (33%) of those with two to four properties plan to reduce or exit.



5.1 Growing, holding or selling

Age tells the same story

Three-quarters of landlords under 35 plan to grow. Among the 55 to 64s, 41% plan to decrease or sell all, and among the over-65s 35% do, including 19% who intend to sell everything. Landlords holding properties in their own name are the most likely to be selling up entirely (14%), against 2% of those using a limited company.

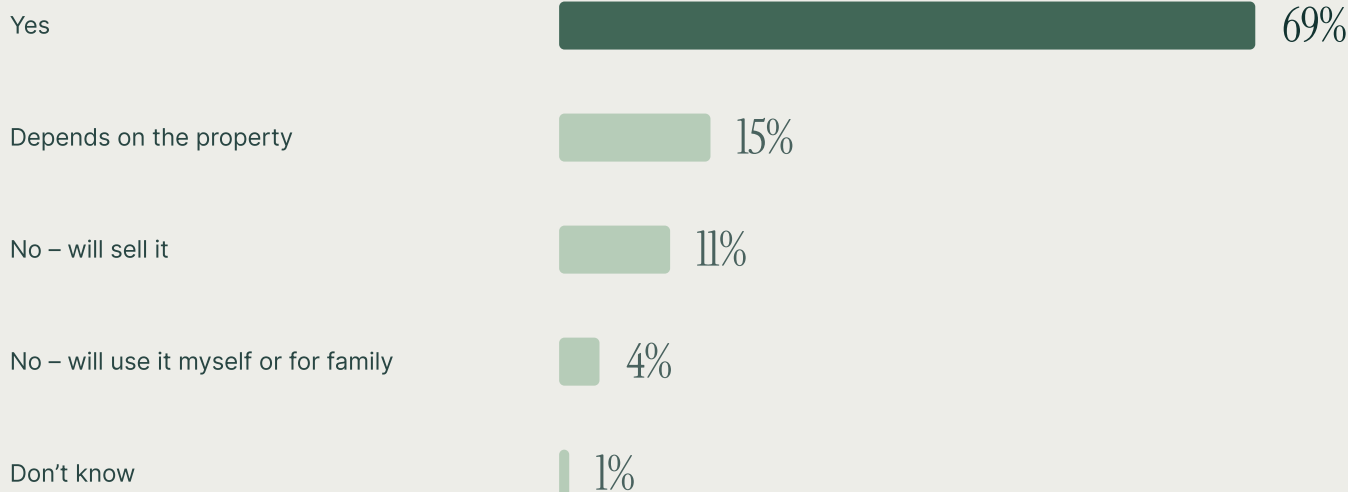


5.2

Will the next vacancy be re-let?

Seven in ten will re-let the next property that falls vacant

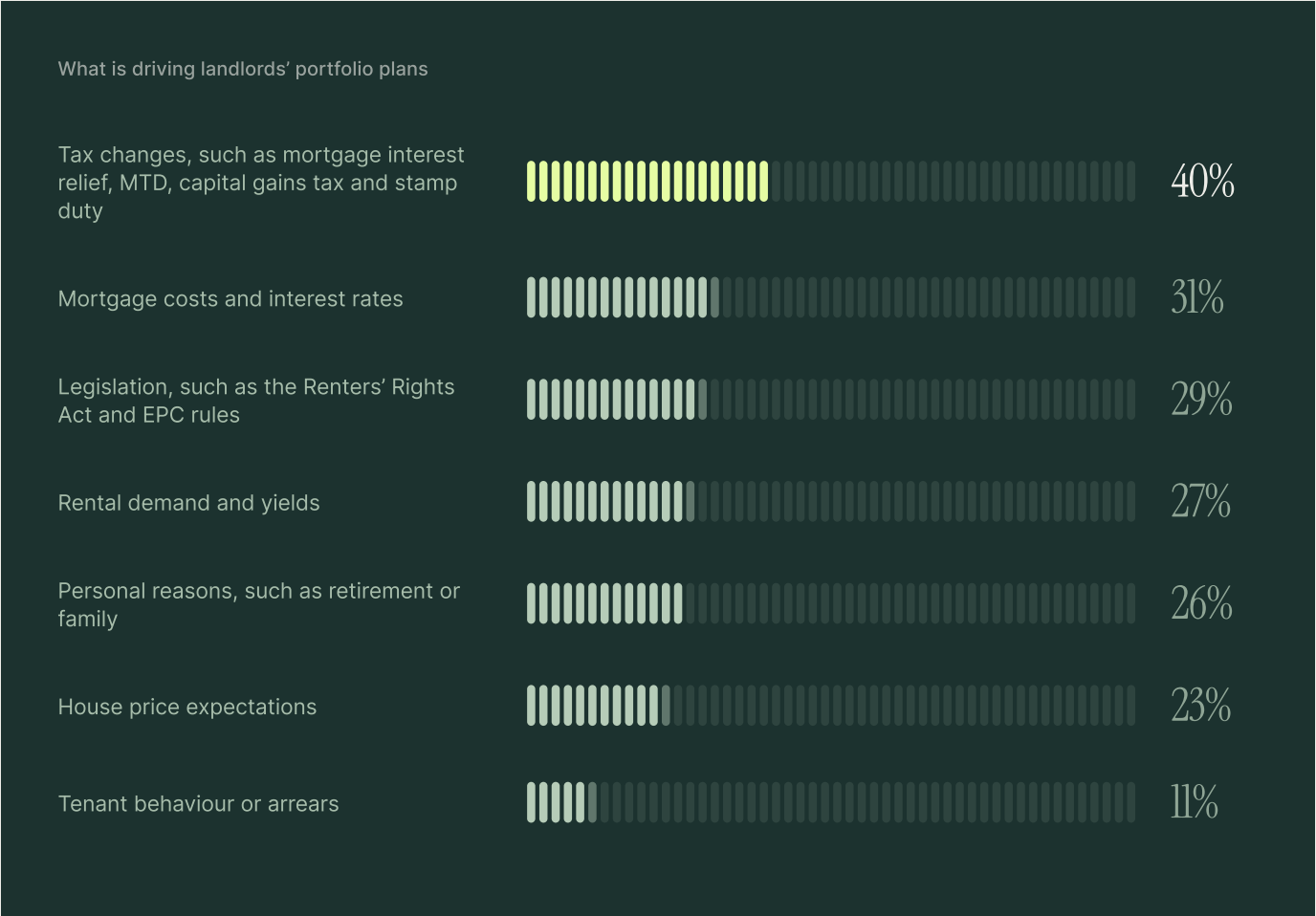
The next time one of your properties becomes vacant, will you re-let it?



Seven in ten landlords (69%) say they will re-let the next property that falls vacant, higher than the 59% in the government's 2024 survey. Fifteen per cent say it depends on the property, 11% will sell it and 4% will use it themselves or for family. Among the over-65s, only 48% will re-let and 29% will sell.

5.3 What is driving those plans

Tax, mortgage costs and legislation shape landlords' plans



Tax is the factor landlords mention most when they explain their plans for the next two years. Two in five (40%) name tax changes, including mortgage interest relief, Making Tax Digital, capital gains tax and stamp duty. Next come mortgage costs and interest rates (31%), then recent or forthcoming legislation such as the Renters' Rights Act and EPC rules (29%).

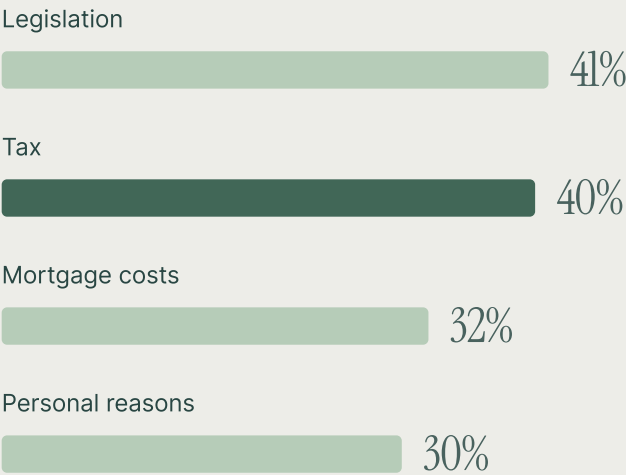
Market factors are further down the list: rental demand and yields (27%) and house price expectations (23%). Personal reasons such as retirement or family were cited by 26%, and tenant behaviour or arrears by just 11%. Taken together, tax, borrowing costs and legislation account for most of what is shaping plans: 65% of landlords cite at least one of the three.

5.3 What is driving those plans

For some landlords tax is a reason to expand rather than retreat

The drivers differ by direction. Among the landlords planning to decrease or sell up, legislation (41%) and tax (40%) lead, followed by mortgage costs (32%) and personal reasons (30%).

Planning to decrease or sell up



Among the planning to grow, the drivers are rental demand and yields (32%), house price expectations (32%) and, interestingly, tax (30%). For some landlords tax is a reason to restructure and expand rather than retreat.

Planning to grow



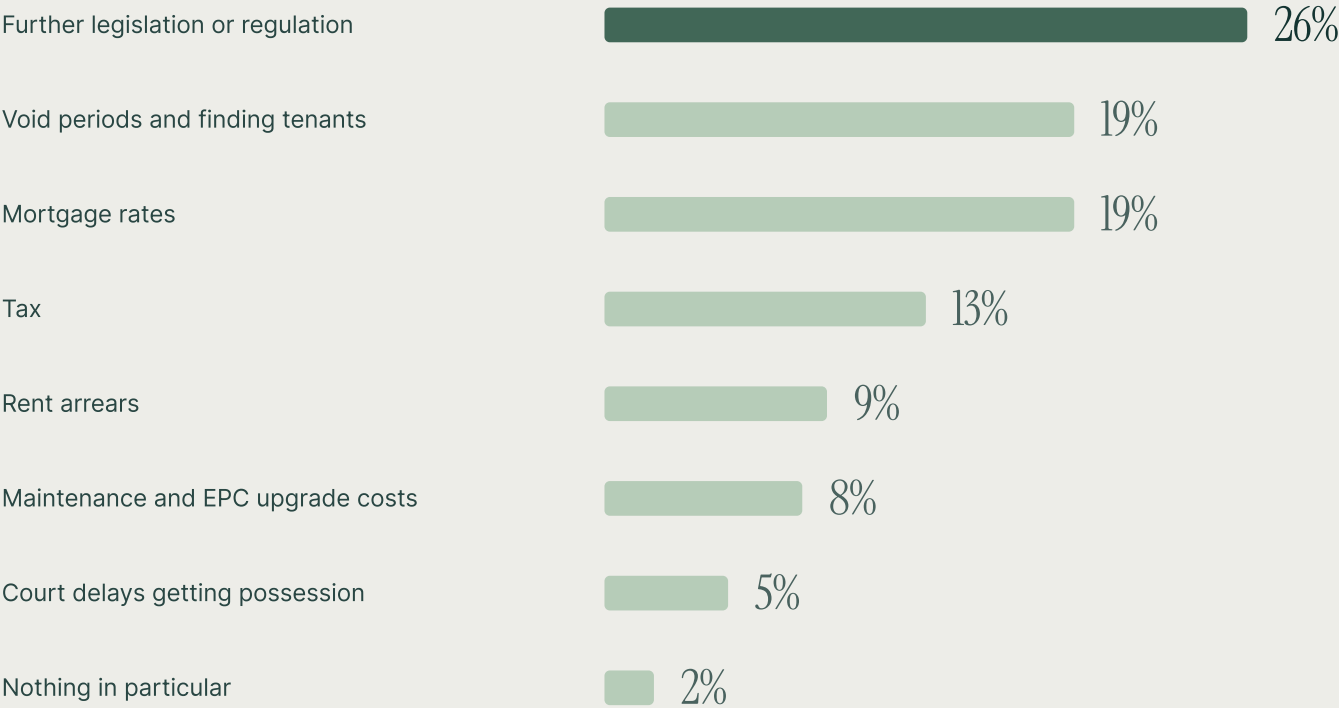
5.4

The biggest worry

Further legislation is landlords' biggest worry for the year ahead

Asked to pick the single thing that worries them most over the next twelve months, a quarter of landlords (26%) chose further legislation or regulation. Void periods and finding tenants (19%) and mortgage rates (19%) tie for second, followed by tax (13%), rent arrears (9%) and maintenance and EPC upgrade costs (8%). Court delays getting possession worry 5% most, and only 2% say nothing in particular. The worry shifts with age and with who does the managing.

Biggest single worry over the next 12 months



55%

of the over-65s name legislation as their biggest worry

44%

of the 55 to 64s do the same

35%

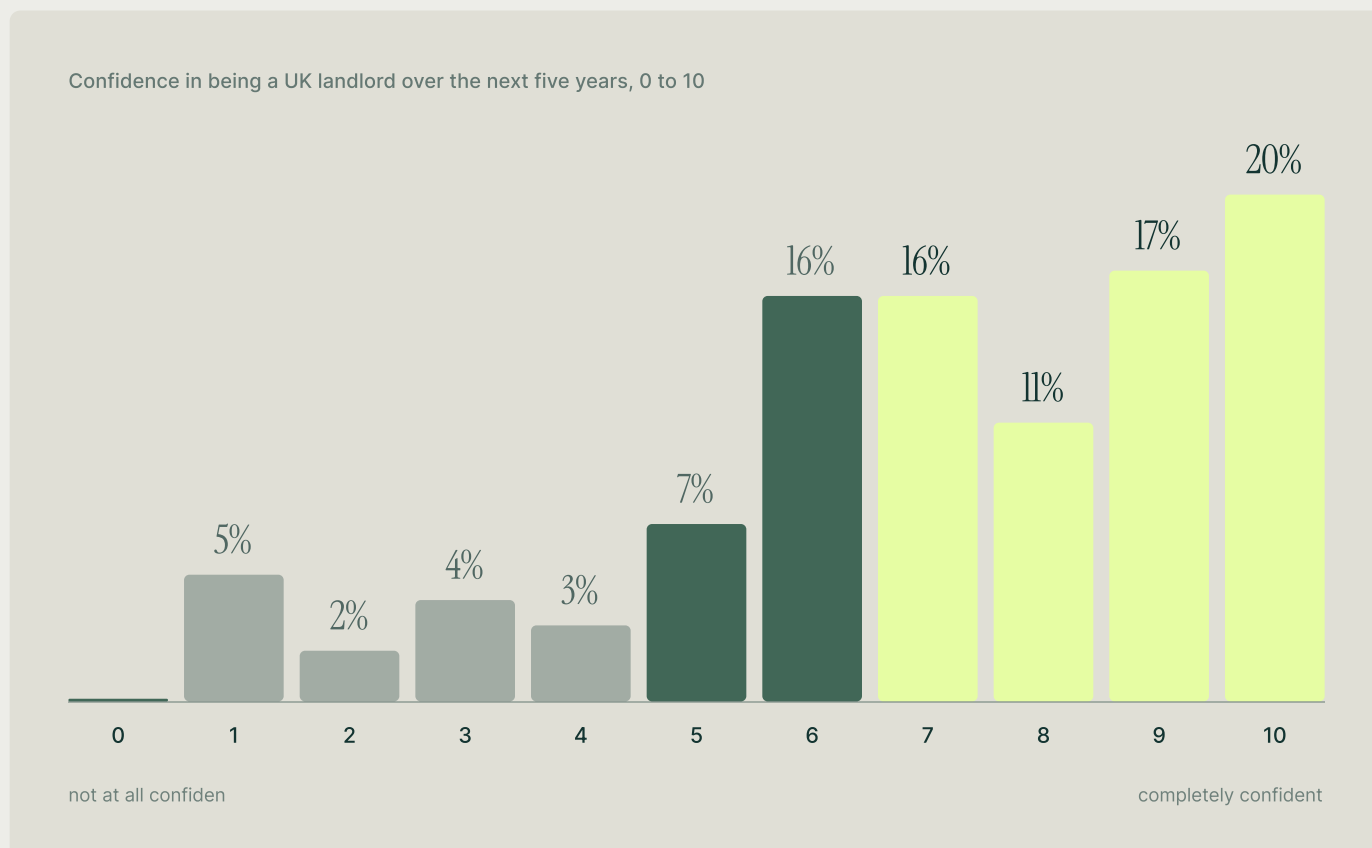
of the 35 to 44s are most worried about mortgage rates

5.5

Confidence in the future

Average confidence is 7.1 out of 10

Landlords were asked to rate their confidence in being a landlord in the UK over the next five years, on a scale of 0 to 10. The average score was 7.1 and the median 7. Nearly two-thirds (63%) scored 7 or above, including 20% who gave the maximum 10. One in seven (14%) scored 4 or below.



63%

scored 7 or above, including 20% who gave the maximum 10

14%

scored 4 or below

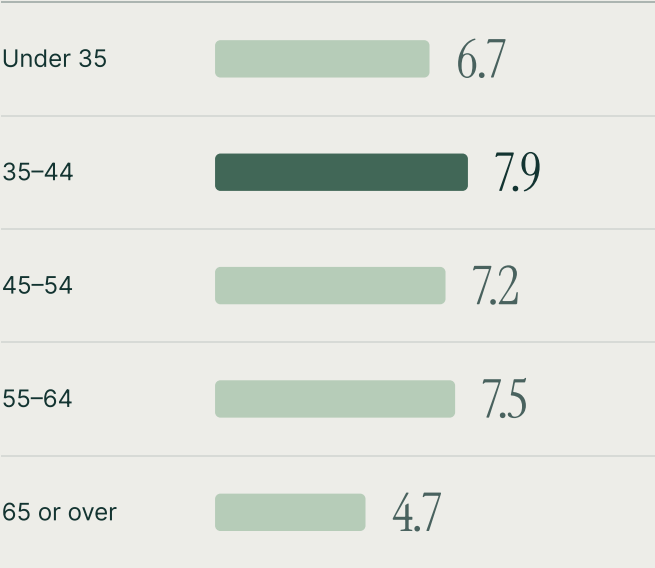
7

was the median score

5.5 Confidence in the future

Confidence is not evenly spread

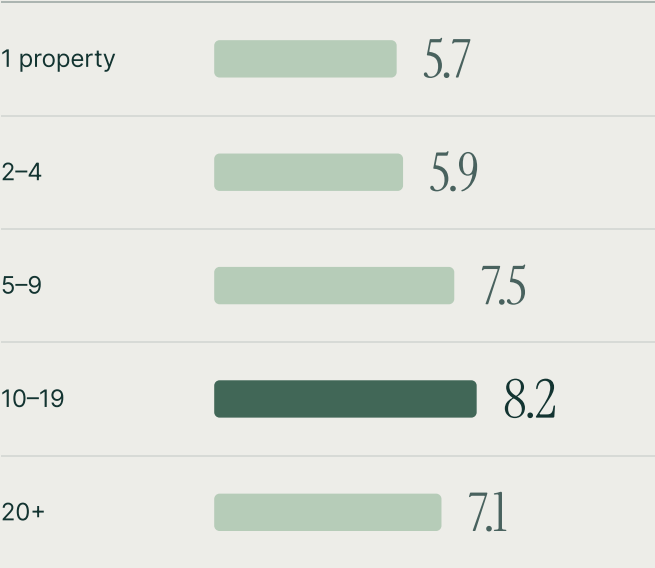
Average score by age, out of 10



Bases: age groups 13-83.

Landlords aged 35 to 44 are the most confident (7.9 on average) and the over-65s by some distance the least (4.7). By portfolio size, single-property landlords (5.7) and those with two to four properties (5.9) are least confident, while those with ten to nineteen properties (8.2) are most.

Average confidence out of 10, by portfolio size



Groups of 15 to 65 landlords. The single-property group is small, so treat it as indicative.

Length of time as a landlord makes little difference. Landlords in Scotland (7.9) are marginally more confident than those in England (7.1). Unsurprisingly, those planning to sell everything are the least confident of all (5.4), and those planning to grow the most (7.7).

5.5 By age at a glance

Plans, confidence and the biggest worry by age



06

In their own words

The survey ended with an open question. Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about being a landlord right now? More than a hundred landlords added a comment, and most agreed to be quoted anonymously. A selection follows, lightly trimmed for length, but otherwise as written.

“

“Self-managing my properties is a full-time job in itself. I have also been managing clients' properties and was keen to grow that side of my business. However, MTD now creates so much additional administration, I now do not have time to grow my business, or keep on top of maintenance and repairs.”

A landlord with 20+ properties in the South

“The whole idea of investing in properties was to supplement my state pension. I am very concerned about continuing to be a landlord. I am closely monitoring the new regulations and laws that are enforced on me, and if the situation gets to a point where it becomes non-viable, I would be looking to sell all the properties and reinvest in bonds and gilts.”

A landlord with 10–19 properties in the Midlands

“I reduced my portfolio in the last two years, selling two successful HMOs, both sold to private investors within five days, as a direct consequence of ongoing council-led legislation without any support from the council. The introduction of digital tax and the Renters’ Rights Act were the last straws.”

A landlord with 2–4 properties in the East of England

“We have done our absolute best to be compliant, but are very worried about any small item we may have inadvertently missed which might land us with a large fine. With that and the threat of even more fees and legislation it feels like the sword of Damocles is hanging above us 24/7.”

A landlord with 5–9 properties in the Midlands, letting for more than 20 years

“The private rented sector is still a profitable occupation, as demand far outstrips supply. National and local government intervention is increasing costs for tenants whilst doing nothing to increase tenant security.”

A landlord with 10–19 properties in the North of England

“Despite all of the changes I still feel quite positive about being a landlord. However, all of the changes over the last decade or so have made it more difficult, and it will only get worse. I think the real game changer will be the change of EPC regulations, and quite frankly it is the main reason I will slowly sell my properties over the next ten years.”

A landlord with 5–9 properties in the Midlands, letting for more than 20 years

“Rules keep changing all the time. It’s hard to plan ahead, even when you own more properties. You can’t easily work out what you will earn in the future.”

A landlord with 5–9 properties spread across several regions

“Get decent people as tenants, respond quickly to any issues and keep rents on the low side. Three of my tenants have been with me for over 10 years and are happy to stay.”

A landlord with 2–4 properties in the Midlands

“Being a landlord means you have to identify the needs of your consumer, manage at a professional level and provide a service above and beyond to capture quality tenants. It’s not as simple as previously; it’s now finding your niche and providing an exceptional service for your customers, who are renters and need homes to live in.”

A landlord with 5–9 properties in London

“Not as enjoyable as it was. I have long-term tenants (10 years plus) in each property and we didn’t need any of this legislation, but I understand there are rogue landlords around. The costs keep increasing and don’t benefit my tenants.”

A landlord with 2–4 properties in the Midlands, letting for more than 20 years

“Market changes have a direct impact on rentals. When a house is vacant, fixed costs such as the mortgage still need to be paid.”

A landlord with 10–19 properties in Scotland

“There is much more admin work from new rules. It’s stressful for small landlords. Clear simple advice would help a lot.”

A single-property landlord in the Midlands

“Costs keep going up. More tenants ask for pets and push back on rent rises. Picking good tenants is getting harder.”

A landlord with 5–9 properties in the South

“The government should see private landlords as an ally to provide good quality accommodation in a housing crisis. Instead they are pushing landlords out, which will reduce tenant choice and drive up rents.”

A landlord with 20+ properties in the Midlands

“If one has a busy job, being a landlord can be a heavy burden. Authorising a formal agency to manage the property is a feasible option.”

A landlord with 10–19 properties in Northern Ireland

“Not financially viable when owned in a personal name. May as well sell up after 20 years of housing people professionally. Government policy to force private landlords to leave by becoming financially unviable has worked. But rents will go up, and choice will go down for tenants.”

A landlord with 5–9 properties in the Midlands

“I am a student landlord of 30 years. I sold two-thirds of my portfolio last year. Property values have slumped, I have no security of income with student lettings, and regulation is getting more and more ridiculous.”

A landlord with 2–4 properties in the North of England, letting for more than 20 years

“More red tape increases admin work. Uncertain regulations make investment decisions slower.”

A landlord with 5–9 properties in the North of England

“As a landlord, I have found the service charge is getting higher and higher, the letting agent service is getting worse and house prices are going down. It has all led to a decline in the property market.”

A landlord with 2–4 properties in London

“There are certain risks in being a landlord. One may face tough situations such as rent arrears, damaged furniture and appliances, and neighbour complaints.”

A landlord with 10–19 properties in Scotland

“Being a landlord requires a lot of support and collaboration with various stakeholders.”

A landlord with 10–19 properties in Wales

“It requires a good understanding with your tenants.”

A landlord with 2–4 properties in Wales

Methodology

M.1

About the survey

The August Landlord Survey 2026 was designed and run by August (August Technologies Limited), the property management platform for UK landlords. It was hosted on Typeform and open from 4 September 2026 to 25 September 2026.

The questionnaire took around eight minutes to complete and covered six areas, including landlord profile, the Renters' Rights Act, Making Tax Digital, use of letting agents, portfolio intentions and demographics. The design took its cue from the government's English Private Landlord Survey so that several questions could be compared.

M.2

Who was invited

The survey was open to UK residents aged 18 or over who own or let at least one residential rental property in the UK, with one entry per landlord. Invitations were emailed directly to a distribution list of more than 5,000 landlords across the UK, assembled by August from its customer base, newsletter subscribers and landlord contacts.

The survey was also promoted through August's LinkedIn and X accounts, and the East Midlands Property Owners (EMPO) emailed it to their members. Respondents could enter an optional prize draw for one of three £100 Amazon.co.uk gift cards. Email addresses were collected only for the draw and for sending the results, and are not used in this analysis. As the survey was also open via social media and partner channels, a response rate cannot be calculated.

With thanks to EMPO, which also helped distribute the survey to its members.

M.3

Sample

276

276 landlords completed the survey. All 276 completed responses are included in the analysis. No responses were excluded or weighted. The survey included a hidden question designed to catch automated submissions.

Respondents self-selected, so the sample is not a random or representative cross-section of UK landlords. In particular, it over-represents landlords with larger portfolios, limited-company structures and working-age landlords relative to the government's English Private Landlord Survey (see section 1). Results should be read as the views of an engaged group of active UK landlords, rather than as estimates for the sector as a whole.

M.4

Reporting conventions

- 01

Percentages are calculated on the number of respondents who answered each question, excluding those who skipped it. Bases are shown on every chart and table and range from 250 to 276 for single-answer questions asked of everyone.
- 02

Several questions allowed more than one answer. These are marked “multiple answers allowed” and percentages add to more than 100.
- 03

Questions on quarterly submissions, digital records and time cost (C3 to C5) were asked of landlords in scope for MTD, giving bases of 125 to 127.
- 04

The question on reasons for changing management arrangements was asked of all respondents. We report it for the 172 landlords who said they had made a change, 169 of whom gave a main reason.
- 05

Percentages are rounded to whole numbers and may not sum to exactly 100.
- 06

Sub-group results with bases below 20 (single-property landlords, under-35s, landlords with properties spread across several regions) are indicative only and are flagged where shown.
- 07

The five-year confidence question was asked on a 0 to 10 scale. Six responses recorded a value of 11 and are excluded from the confidence figures. The self-management likelihood question was answered on a five-point scale.
- 08

Regional analysis groups Wales and Northern Ireland together because of small bases. Because the Renters’ Rights Act applies to England, England-only figures are given alongside UK figures in chapter 02.

M.5

Comparisons with the English Private Landlord Survey

Where a question corresponds, results are compared with the English Private Landlord Survey 2024 (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, published 5 December 2024). The EPLS is a weighted survey of over 9,000 landlords in England who registered a tenancy deposit directly with a government-backed scheme, with fieldwork in April and May 2024. It is England-only, excludes landlords whose agent registered the deposit, and used different question wording in places. Comparisons are therefore indicative of how this sample differs from the wider sector, not measures of change over time.

M.6

Statistical note

A percentage of 50% has a margin of error of roughly plus or minus 6 percentage points at the 95% confidence level if the sample were random; for sub-groups the margin is wider. Because the sample is self-selected, these figures are a guide to precision rather than a formal claim.

M.7

About EMPO



Established in 1942, EMPO is a not-for-profit landlords' association supporting and representing private landlords and property professionals across the East Midlands.

Based in Lenton, Nottingham, EMPO works with local authorities and industry experts to represent the interests of landlords and help members keep up with the changing requirements of the private rented sector through practical training, guidance, workshops, resources and local support.

www.empo.co.uk

M.8

Contact

For the full data tables, questionnaire or to discuss the findings, contact the August team at augustapp.com. August is the trading name of Augur Technologies Limited, 1 Mark Square, London EC2A 4EG.

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