

EMERGING EQUITY

25th March 2024

Environmental Change Institute



**OXFORD
COMMUNITY
ACTION**

Where Communities Thrive



**FUEL POVERTY
RESEARCH NETWORK**



ACCESS

Advancing Capacity for Climate
and Environment Social Science

The racial justice continuum for energy research

Racial

Creates or perpetuates assumptions that discriminate, invisibilise or exclude perspectives on racialised disadvantages

Example: An assumption that people from ethnic minority backgrounds are disengaged from the decarbonisation agenda

Neutral

Ignores or downplays unequal power dynamics, and racialised differences and needs.

Example: An assumption that racialisation is not a relevant dimension to explore in a socio-technical research enquiry

Sensitive

Considers racialisation as one among many other factors and uses categories such as race or ethnicity as proxies. Example, adding an indicator on race/ethnicity, or beginning to collect disaggregated data on them

Example: adding an indicator on ethnicity, or collecting disaggregated data on ethnicity

Responsive

Specific action or research that attempts to explain the reasons for racialised disadvantages as they manifest in a specific context. The research is politically-aware, responsive to the grassroots histories and demands of racially disadvantaged communities

Example: research that explores how the energy system is racialised and how that impacts energy use outcomes, thereby furthering an understanding beyond static characteristics

Racially just

Address racial injustice and its root causes at a structural level, across all scales of society, institutions and governance, that not only ensures equal opportunities, but also just outcomes



Intro to our community partners:



**OXFORD
COMMUNITY
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Where Communities Thrive



A warm space is a welcoming space



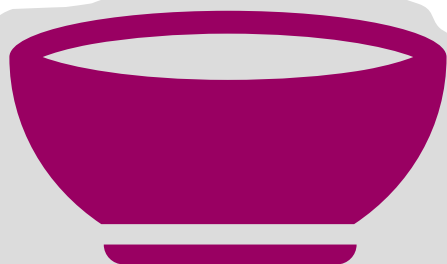
I cannot even visit a friend. He told me yesterday, “if you are coming to my house, you have to call me as I don’t have heating. I don’t have money to pay for my energy.”

“I used to love hosting people, cooking for people, having a barbecue, and things like that. But now, I feel ashamed inviting people over because we have a huge problem with the mould. My ten year old has a cough that takes longer to recover because of it.”

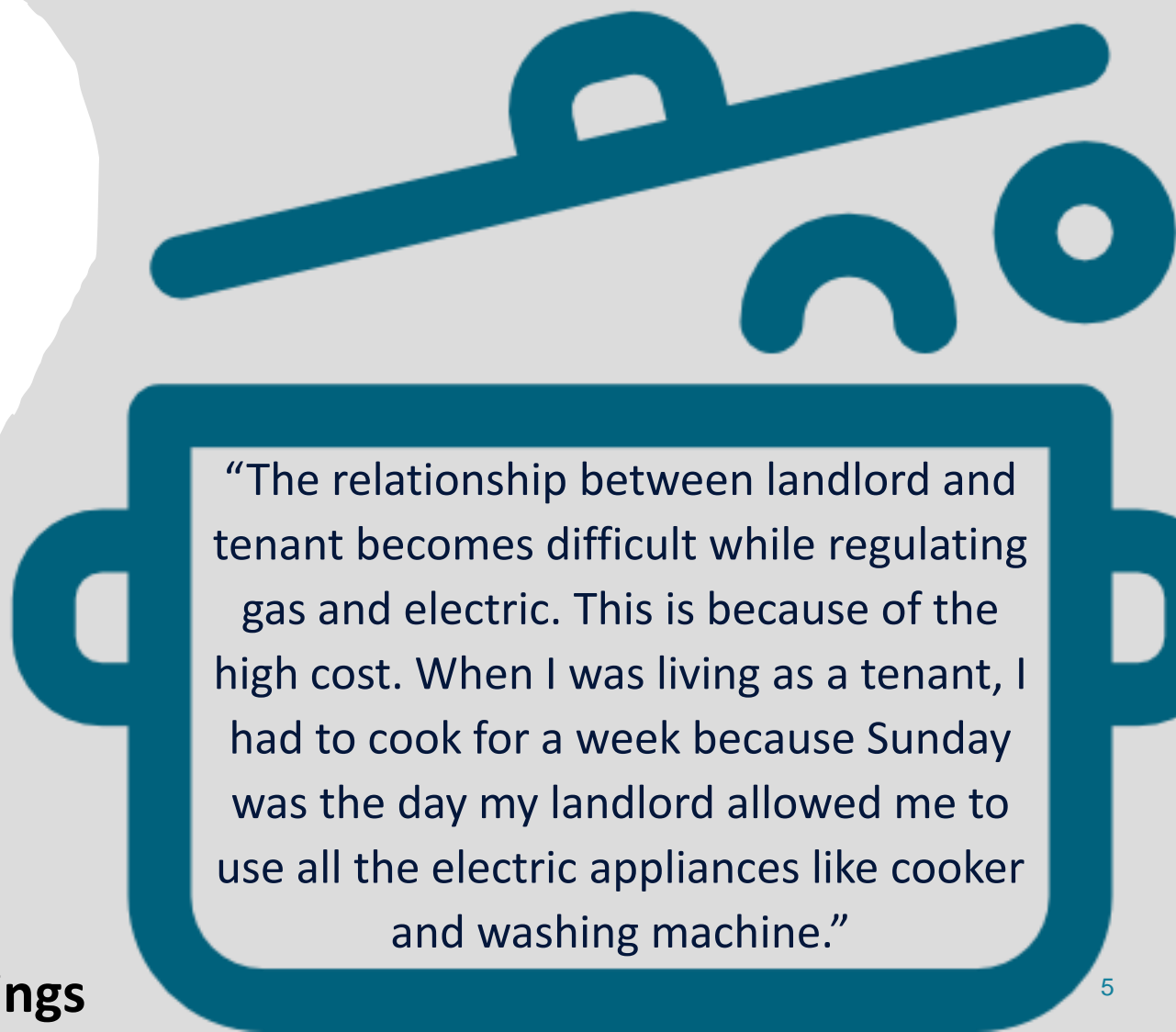
“If you grow up in a climate like Nigeria, you spend more to keep your house warm in England, because you are very cold very easily.”

Cooking is a significant way in which people attempt to manage their energy use

“I cook my food, I love to do that. Anyone who knows me, knows that about me. I am on pay-as-you-go. I want to eat good food, but when I think of cooking, I think of the price. I like to eat my ethnic food, so I have to cook it. I feel restricted by how I can cook. What I have to do now is that I have to cook everything at once—cook the beans, cook the soup, cook everything. And then I have to stock them in the freezer. But, after three days, I don’t enjoy the food anymore, because it is not fresh.
But what can I do?”



REPAIR Findings

A large, stylized teal illustration of a cooking pot with a lid. The lid is tilted, and steam is rising from the pot, represented by several curved lines. The pot has two handles on opposite sides. A white rectangular box is superimposed on the front of the pot, containing text.

“The relationship between landlord and tenant becomes difficult while regulating gas and electric. This is because of the high cost. When I was living as a tenant, I had to cook for a week because Sunday was the day my landlord allowed me to use all the electric appliances like cooker and washing machine.”

International students & recent immigrants in shared accommodation are very vulnerable to housing and energy hardships

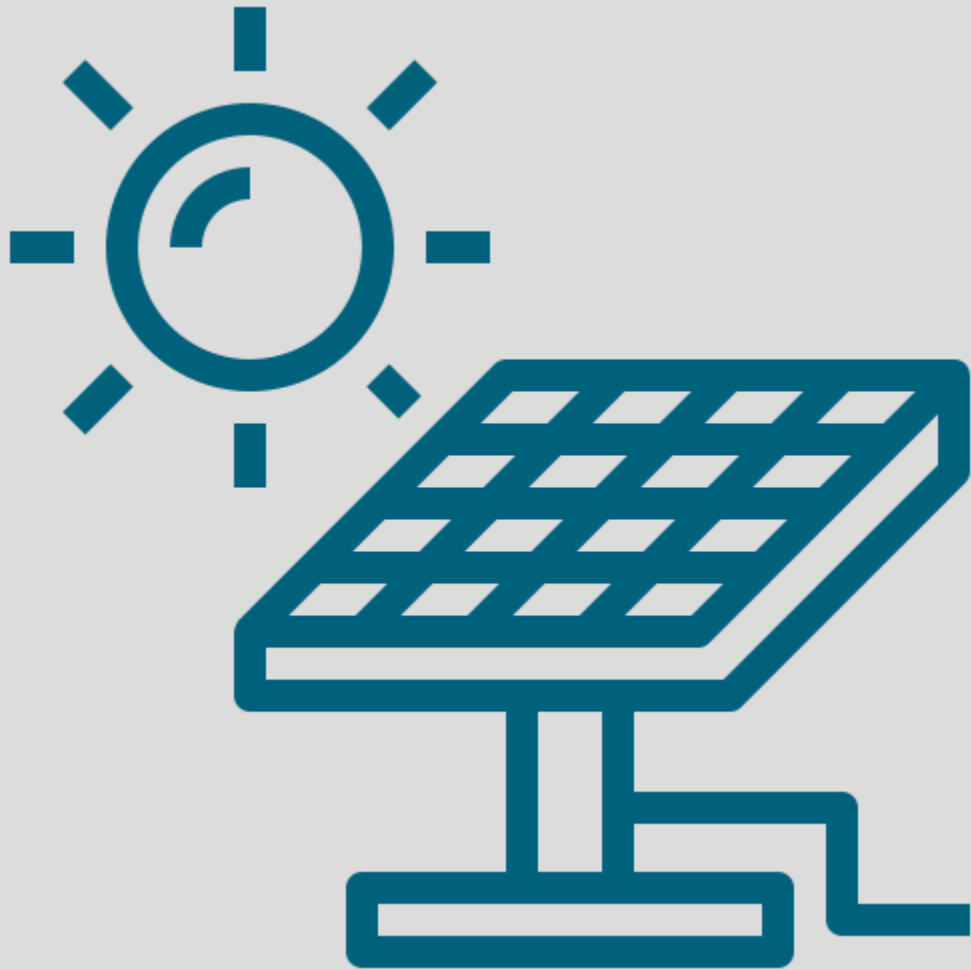
“You cannot challenge the landlord. They will tell you to leave the house. It is because I am Black, especially Black African, that I am treated this way. They don’t mess with people from here, because they know the laws. I am on a student visa, so don’t want to complain too much.”



“Back home, I am the owner of my apartment. So, I can control everything the way I want to. But here, in shared accommodation, you feel fear. You are always told not to use the microwave, or can only use the kitchen sometimes. It restricts you.”



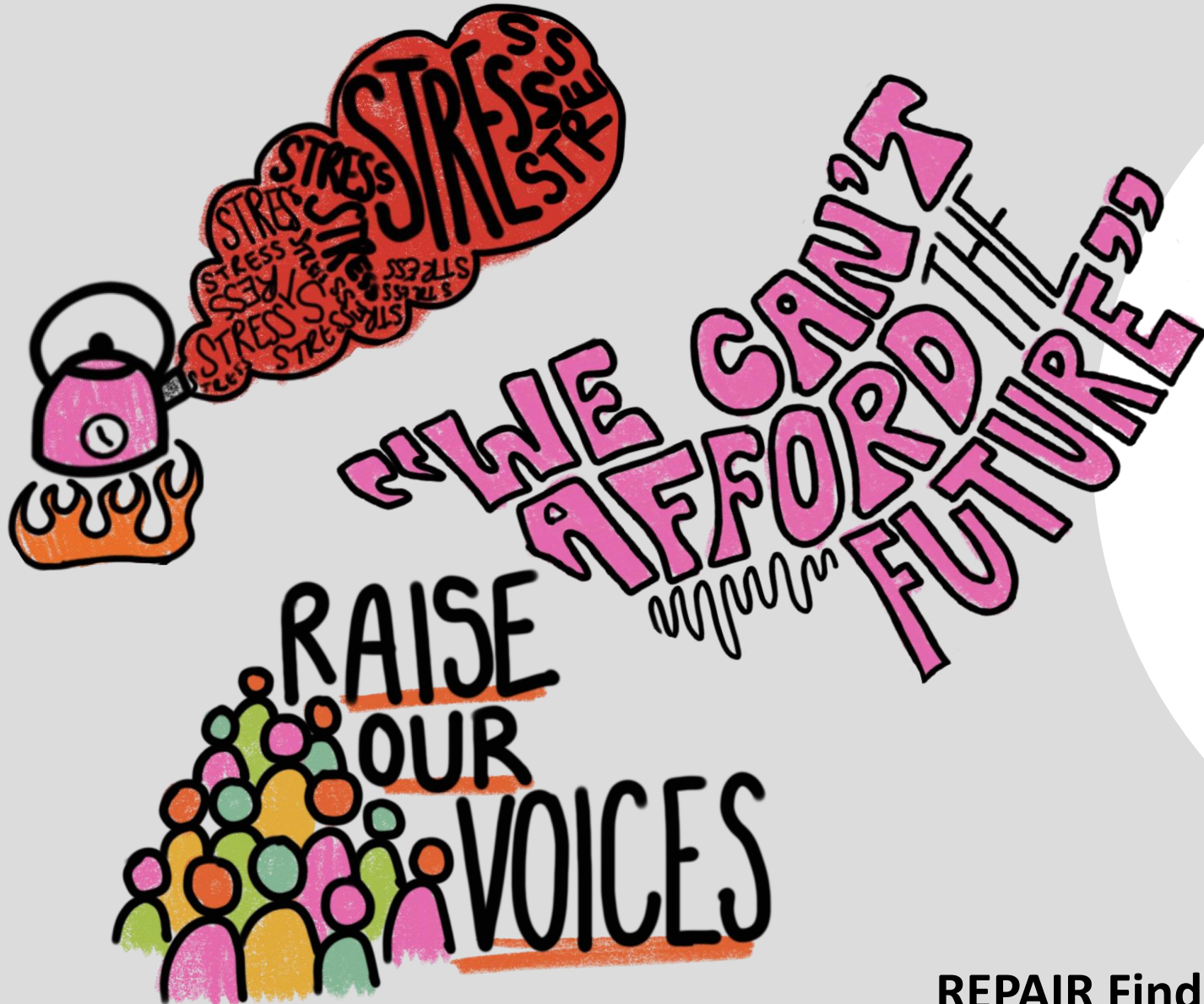
Democratising solutions to tackle the crises



“We need to talk about how we can get our own energy, produce the electricity by ourselves. Implementation of solar energy is one option, but it is expensive. It is not accessible to an average person. Definitely not for the people who need it.”

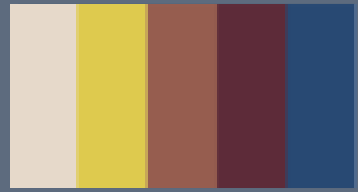


Belonging is a feeling of 'comfort'



“When you feel at home, you feel accepted. You are free to do many things--going somewhere, doing what other people do. This is not our mother’s land but we are equal with the people here, so we *feel at home*.

But when you are not feeling at home, or when you are not free, you see yourself drawing back. When you are welcomed, you feel free and have equal rights. That is what I call *belonging.*”



PRIME

Protecting Minority Ethnic Communities Online



**Energising Equity
webinar
25th March 2024**



Engineering and
Physical Sciences
Research Council



University
of Glasgow



From racialised inequalities towards more equitable digitalised energy services

Gina Netto, Mennan Guder,
Sacha Hasan and Nazmiye
Ozkan



From racialised inequalities towards co-design and co-production of more equitable services

- Protecting Minoritised Ethnic Communities Online (PRIME) is a multi-disciplinary UKRI-funded project.
- Motivated by concern that racialised inequalities in housing and health services could be worsened by digitalisation.
- Energy consumption and use of services of minoritised ethnic communities (MEC) is an under-researched area
- Higher rate of fuel poverty in MECs (19.1%) than ethnic majorities (13.2%) is well-established. (BEIS, 2022)
- Concerned that digitalization could replicate or worsen existing inequalities and give rise to new ones.
- Key aim: to identify the impacts of processes of digitalization on energy, housing and health services, and to co-design and co-produce more equitable digital services.
- We will highlight some emerging findings through:
 - Qualitative analysis of interviews conducted among 100 individuals from seven ethnic groups (African, Bangladeshi, Caribbeans, Chinese, Pakistani, Indians and people of dual heritage) in England and Scotland
 - Agent-based modelling based on data from an online survey of 878 respondents from the same ethnic groups in both countries exploring the relationship between types of use of service services, levels of concern and satisfaction about such services and residence in different types of accommodation.

User experiences: clustering of interacting and specific constraints



Fuel poverty



Digital poverty



Varying levels of digital literacy



Varying levels of proficiency in English



Housing insecurity

Policy and practice implications

Need for effective community engagement

More equal distribution of digital devices

Access to community hubs

Access to linguistically sensitive advice – in person and online

Access to housing advice

Fear and experiences of **fraud and scam**.

“I think a lot of people are trying to defraud people, to scam people, so you just need to be careful when using the internet.” (Black African male, 24).

Lack of familiarity with terminology or pricing of tariffs.

“How would you understand the calculation? Do you see? ...I don't know how to explain that.” (Bangladeshi female, 50).

Fear of incurring **hidden charges** through online changes and lack of ability to ask questions.

Inability to change provider (high proportion of ME communities live in private rented housing).

Location of residence: reports of being denied cheaper tariffs due to living in certain areas of deprivation, where ME communities are highly represented).

Regulation/Policy:

- Regularly monitor websites to ensure adequate measures are taken to ensure safety against fraud
- Insist that suppliers detail cost, including possible built in/hidden costs to build trust.

AND

- Design targeted interventions for low-income households to install alternative sources of renewable energy

PRIME Survey Results

From Accommodation Type Perspective

- **Energy Service Usage**

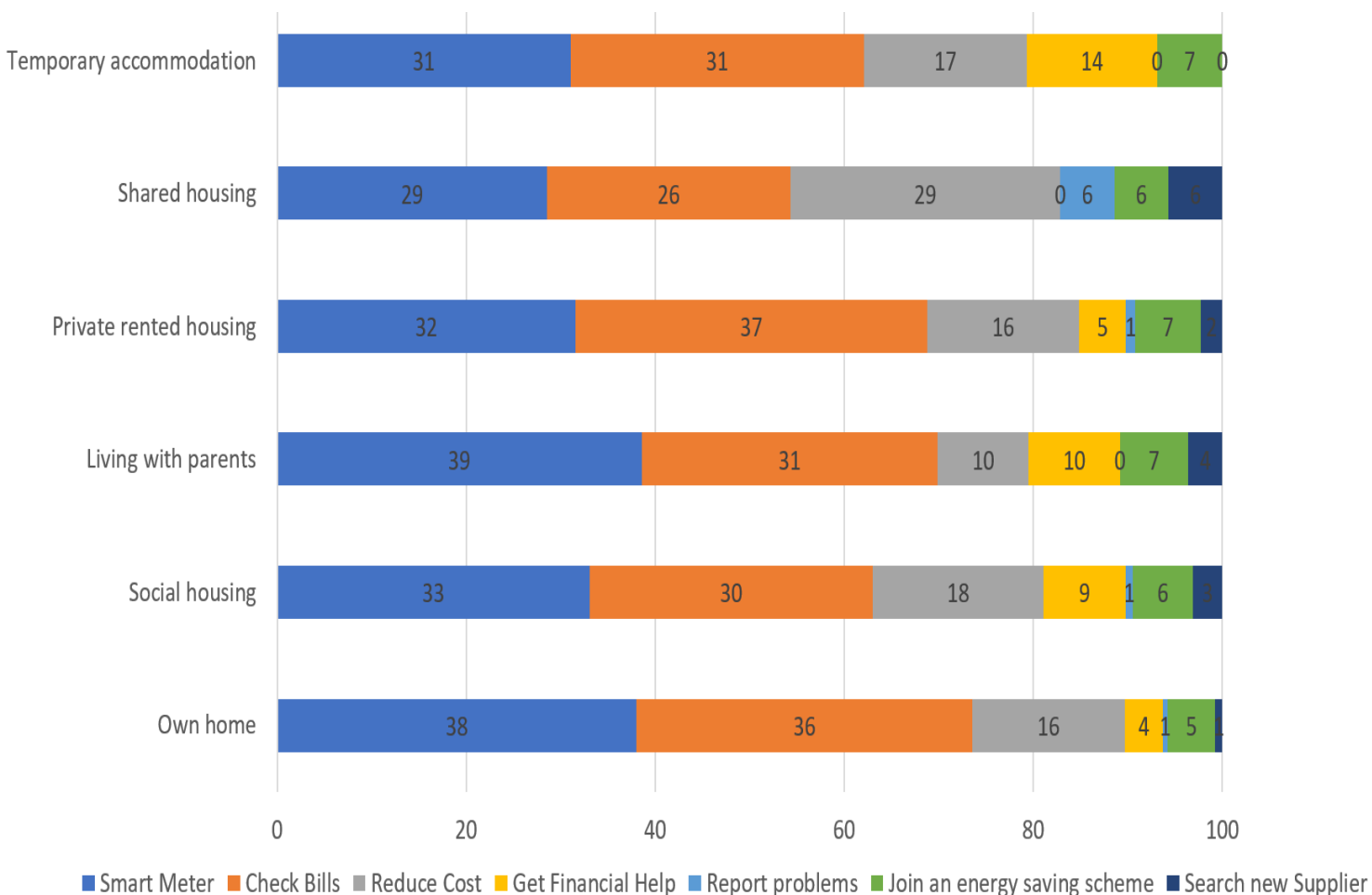
- Smart Meter
- Check Bills
- Reduce Cost
- Financial Help
- Report problems
- Join an energy saving scheme
- Search new Supplier

- **Energy Service Concerns**

- No concern
- Tariff
- Credit Score
- English
- Not Understanding the System
- Getting Help

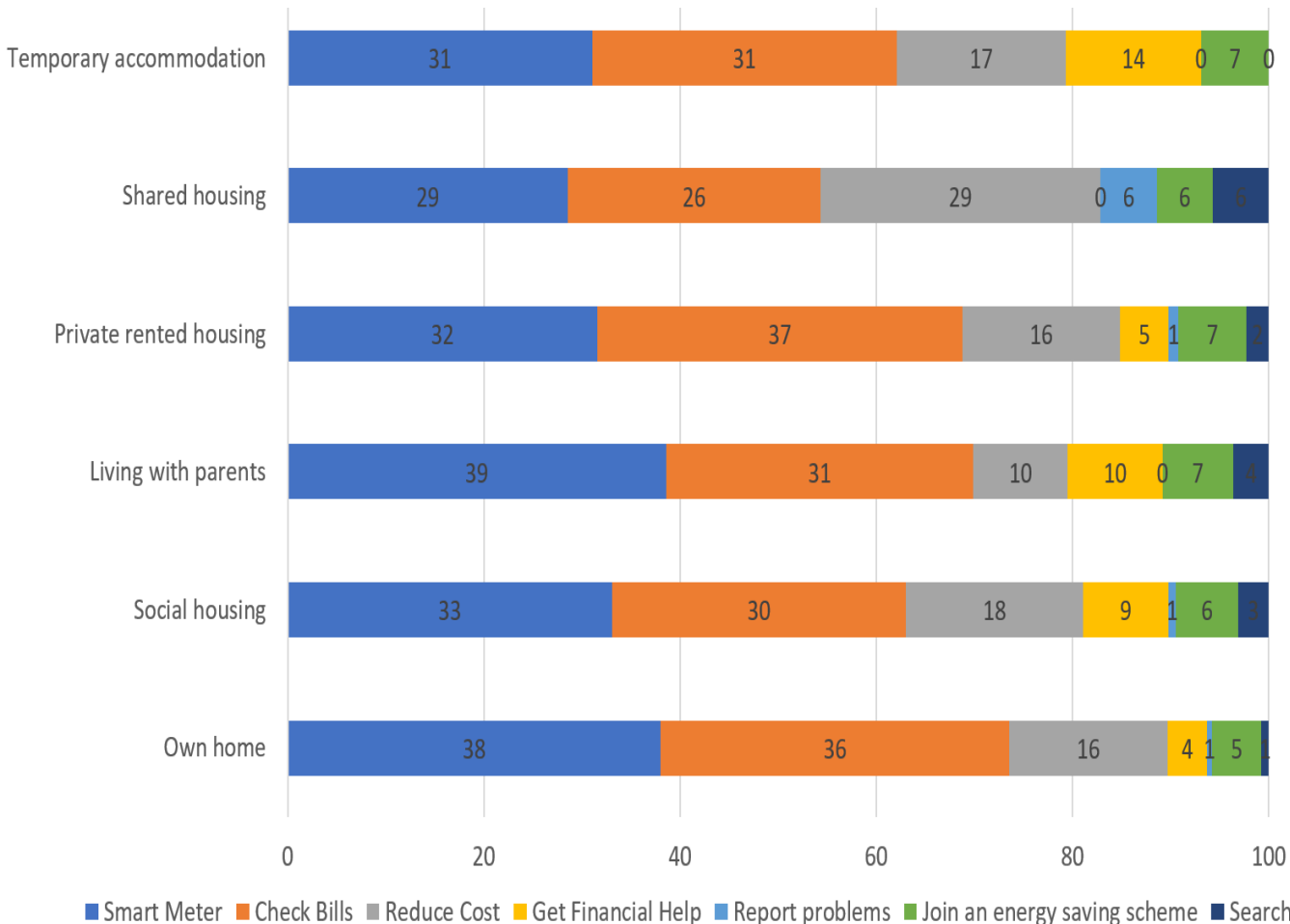
- **Levels of Satisfaction of Energy Services**

Energy Service Usage - Accommodation Type



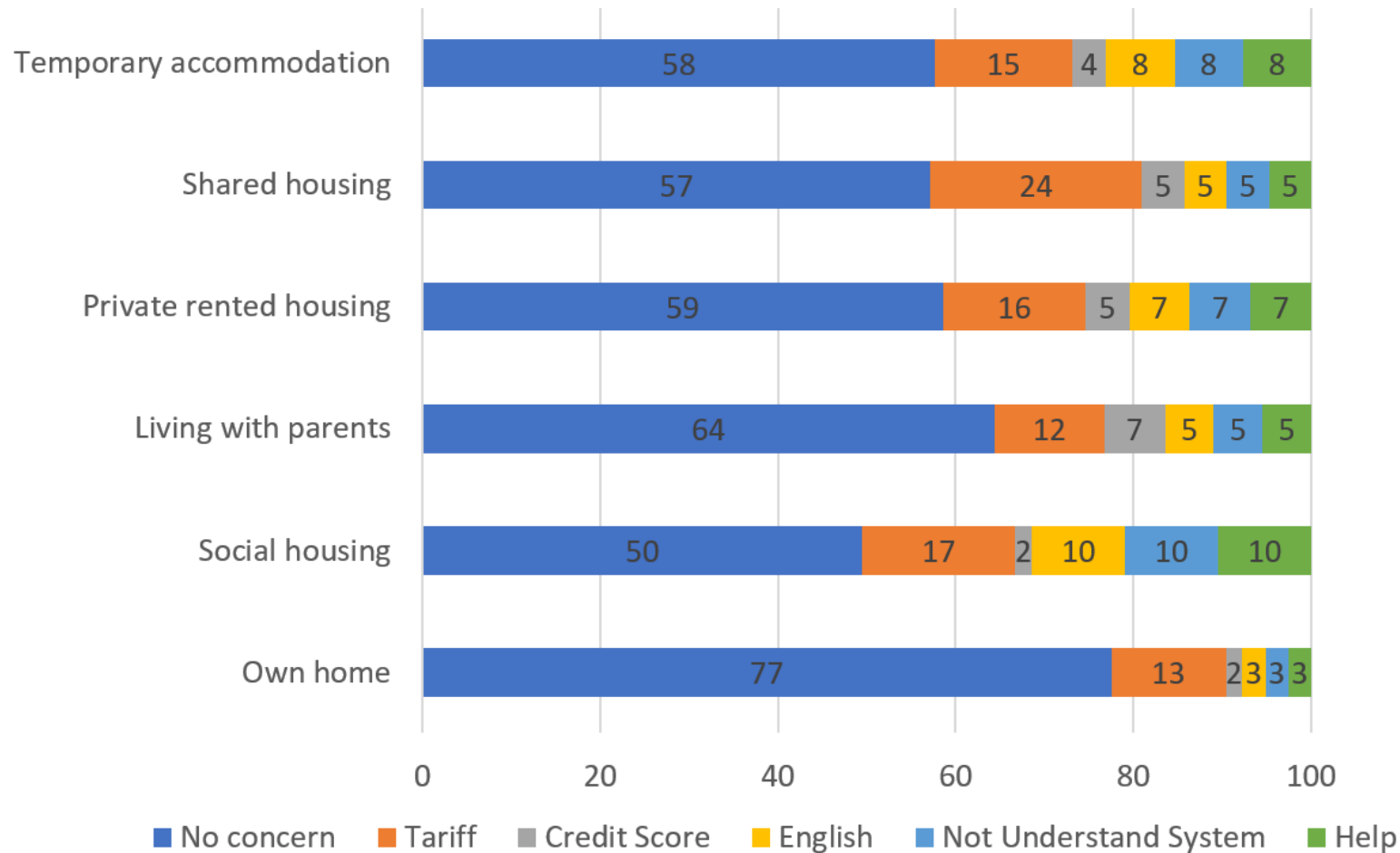
1. Smart Meter Usage: Highest among those who live with their parents.
2. Bills: Own homes and private rented housing show more concern about bills.
3. Reduce Cost: Shared housing residents express the most interest in cost reduction.
4. Financial Help: Temporary accommodation and undisclosed status residents seek more financial help.

Energy Service Usage - Accommodation Type



5. Report Problems: Shared housing residents report problems the most.
6. Search for New Supplier: Shared housing residents search for new suppliers the most.

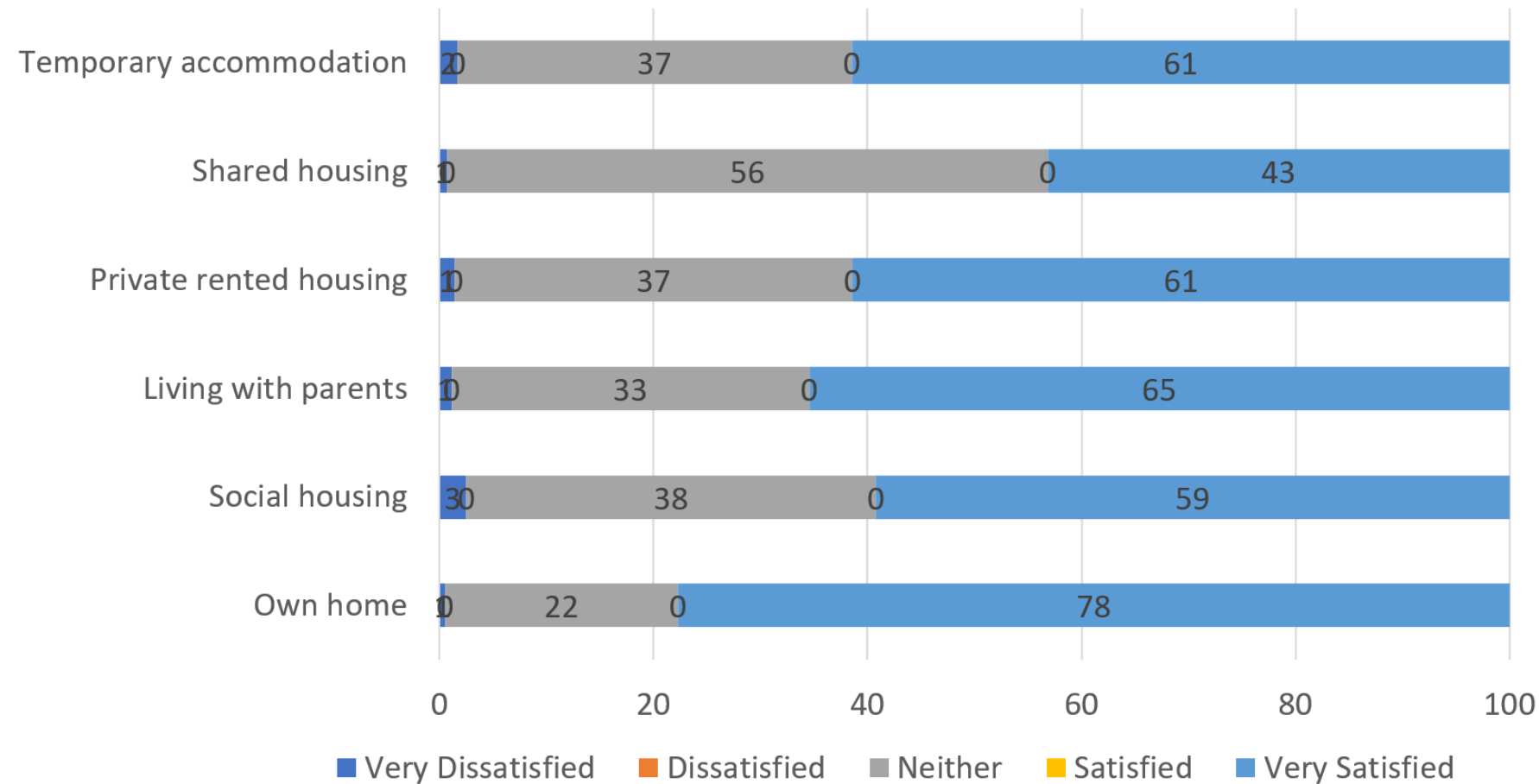
Energy Service Concerns - Accommodation Type



Social housing occupants tend to express more concerns regarding various factors related to energy service compared to other accommodation types.

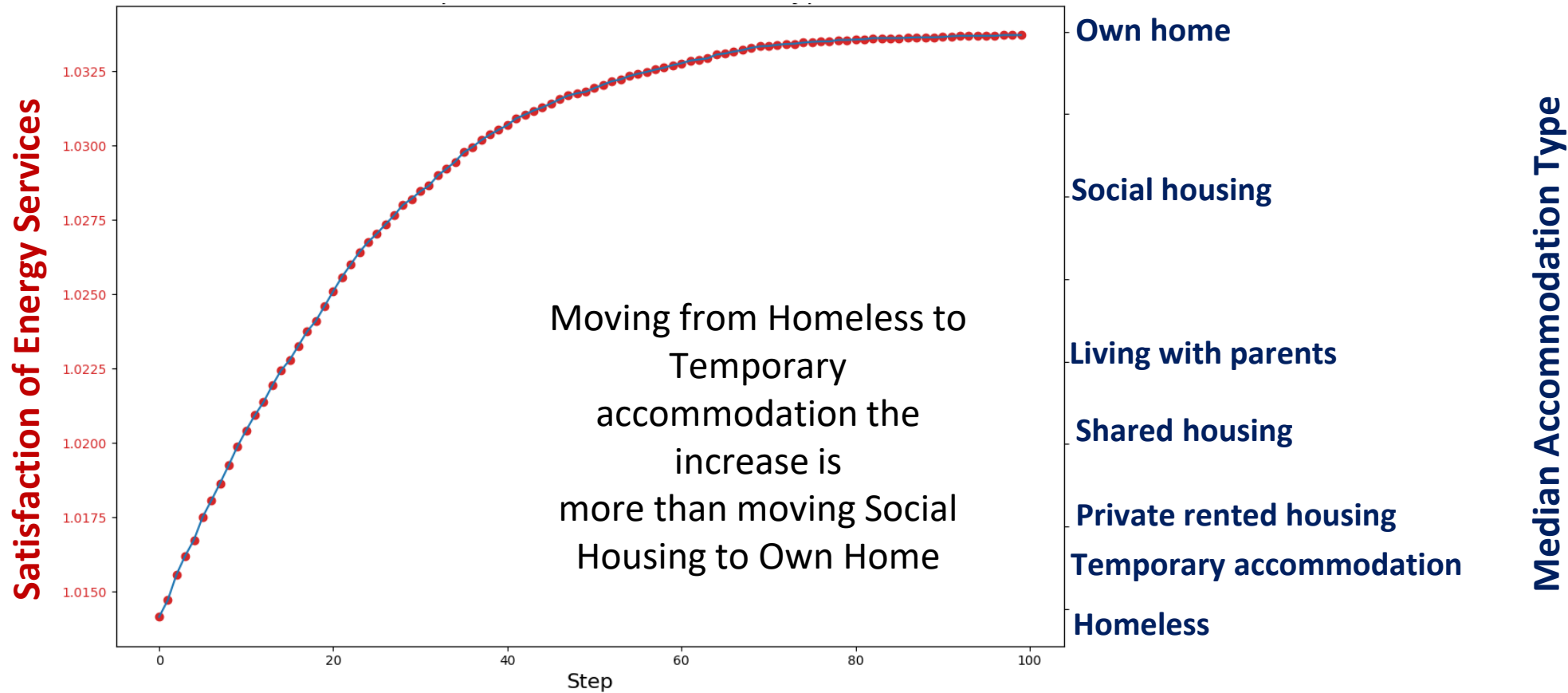
Conversely, those in own homes exhibit lower levels of concern across these factors.

Levels of Satisfaction of Energy Services by Accommodation Type



Residents in own homes consistently demonstrate higher levels of satisfaction with their energy service compared to individuals in other accommodation types.

Levels of Satisfaction of Energy Services by Accommodation Type Simulation



Moving from Homeless to Temporary accommodation the increase is more than moving Social Housing to Own Home

It starts from the population who are homeless and increases in home ownership to see the effect on online service satisfaction in 100 steps.

If home ownership increases the satisfaction with online services increases accordingly.

JUSTICE **ENERGISING** **EQUITY** **CHANGE** **BELONGING**

WITHOUT COMPLAINT, NOTHING WILL BE DONE.
 RATIONALISING 'WE CAN'T AFFORD THE FUTURE'
 MARGINALISED COMMUNITIES
 RACIAL INEQUALITY
 LACK OF RECOGNISING EXPERIENCES
 ANTI-RACIST FEMINIST LEADERSHIP
 THE RESEARCH CONNECTED TO ETHNICITY? ASK QUESTIONS
 SUSTAINABLE ACCESS TO
 BUT LOVE TO COOK WITH ME? STRESS
 TO MY MIND IS COST
 LANDLORDS JUST DIDN'T TELL ME THERE WAS
 LANDLORDS RAISE OUR GOVERNMENT TO SEE WHAT THE PRIVATE COMPANIES ARE DOING TO US.
 BUT WHAT NOW? REPRESENTATION
 BUT WHAT NOW? REPRESENTATION
 BUT WHAT NOW? REPRESENTATION
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 BUT WHAT NOW? REPRESENTATION

ALL BUT THAT ARE STILL people AND SUFFERING knowledge
DRAS... CRYING... DRA... NO WAY OUT... YOU'VE SIGNED... LANDLORDS... NO HEATING... LISTENING... LANDLORDS... VOICES... BUT WHAT NOW?

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Thank you!

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