

# Private Sector Housing: Home Improvement Finance

---

## Guidance Note 5: Local Authority Survey Results

June 2024





This report has been produced with funding from the Local Government Association's Housing Advisers Programme.

The Housing Advisers Programme is designed to support councils seeking to innovate in meeting the housing needs of their communities. It aims to be simple, flexible and locally-led. In 2022/23, 21 successful projects received money from the programme to promote, facilitate and enhance their role and capacity to meet their local housing need.

The report has been produced by the Financial Inclusion Centre, an independent research and policy innovation think-tank dedicated to reducing financial and social exclusion.

It is based on work undertaken with a number of councils through the Housing Advisers Programme, including Derby City Council, Nottingham City Council, Stoke-on-Trent City Council and the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, in relation to home improvement finance in the private housing sector.

It is one of four reports, as detailed below, designed to provide councils with a practical toolkit including relevant evidence, good practice and learning on the effective development and delivery of home improvement finance schemes targeted at non-decent homes, homes requiring adaptations and those with a low level of energy efficiency.

- Guidance Note 1: Research and Literature Review
- Guidance Note 2: Building the Business Case
- Guidance Note 3: Case Studies
- Guidance Note 4: Financing Options
- Guidance Note 5: Local Authority Survey Results

Written by: Matt Earnshaw, Gareth Evans and Mick McAteer.

Contact: Gareth Evans – [gareth.evans@inclusioncentre.org.uk](mailto:gareth.evans@inclusioncentre.org.uk)  
Website: [www.inclusioncentre.org.uk](http://www.inclusioncentre.org.uk)

# Contents

<b>Executive summary</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>2. Policy and operational context</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>2.1 The importance of improving private sector housing</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>2.2 Challenges and barriers</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>2.3 Plans and policies</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>2.4 Evidence and targeting</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>2.5 Promotion and communication</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<b>2.6 Monitoring and measuring</b> .....	<b>17</b>
<b>3. Financial assistance to improve non-decent homes</b> .....	<b>19</b>
<b>3.1 Grants</b> .....	<b>19</b>
3.1.1 Grant provision.....	19
3.1.2 Grant availability.....	19
3.1.3 Grant delivery model.....	20
3.1.4 Grant effectiveness.....	20
3.1.5 Scale of grant delivery.....	21
3.1.6 Introduction of loans.....	21
<b>3.2 Loans</b> .....	<b>22</b>
3.2.1 Loan provision.....	22
3.2.2 Loan availability.....	22
3.2.3 Loan delivery model.....	23
3.2.4 Loan effectiveness.....	23
3.2.5 Scale of loan delivery.....	24
<b>3.3 Comparison between grant and loan delivery</b> .....	<b>25</b>
3.3.1 Type of financial assistance.....	25
3.3.2 Availability.....	25
3.3.3 Delivery model.....	26
3.3.4 Effectiveness.....	26
3.3.5 Scale of delivery.....	27
<b>4. Financial assistance to bring empty properties back into use</b> .....	<b>28</b>
<b>4.1 Grants</b> .....	<b>28</b>
4.1.1 Grant provision.....	28

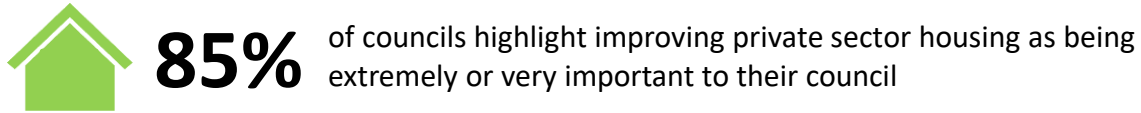
4.1.2	<u>Grant availability</u> .....	28
4.1.3	<u>Grant delivery model update</u> .....	29
4.1.4	<u>Grant effectiveness</u> .....	29
4.1.5	<u>Scale of grant delivery</u> .....	29
4.1.6	<u>Introduction of loans</u> .....	30
<b>4.2</b>	<b><u>Loans</u></b> .....	30
4.2.1	<u>Loan provision</u> .....	30
4.2.2	<u>Loan availability</u> .....	30
4.2.3	<u>Loan delivery model</u> .....	31
4.2.4	<u>Loan effectiveness</u> .....	31
4.2.5	<u>Scale of loan delivery</u> .....	32
<b>4.3</b>	<b><u>Comparison between grant and loan delivery</u></b> .....	32
4.3.1	<u>Type of financial assistance</u> .....	32
4.3.2	<u>Availability</u> .....	32
4.3.3	<u>Delivery model</u> .....	33
4.3.4	<u>Effectiveness</u> .....	33
4.3.5	<u>Scale of delivery</u> .....	34
<b>5.</b>	<b><u>Financial assistance to improve energy efficiency</u></b> .....	<b>35</b>
<b>5.1</b>	<b><u>Grants</u></b> .....	35
5.1.1	<u>Grant provision</u> .....	35
5.1.2	<u>Grant availability</u> .....	35
5.1.3	<u>Grant delivery model</u> .....	35
5.1.4	<u>Grant effectiveness</u> .....	36
5.1.5	<u>Scale of grant delivery</u> .....	36
5.1.6	<u>Introduction of loans</u> .....	37
<b>5.2</b>	<b><u>Loans</u></b> .....	38
5.2.1	<u>Loan provision</u> .....	38
5.2.2	<u>Loan availability</u> .....	38
5.2.3	<u>Loan delivery model</u> .....	38
5.2.4	<u>Loan effectiveness</u> .....	39
5.2.5	<u>Scale of loan delivery</u> .....	39
<b>5.3</b>	<b><u>Comparison between grant and loan delivery</u></b> .....	40
5.3.1	<u>Type of financial assistance</u> .....	40
5.3.2	<u>Availability</u> .....	40
5.3.3	<u>Delivery model</u> .....	41

5.3.4	<u>Effectiveness</u> .....	41
5.3.5	<u>Scale of delivery</u> .....	42
<b>6.</b>	<b><u>Financial assistance to make disability adaptations</u></b> .....	<b>43</b>
<b>6.1</b>	<b><u>Grants</u></b> .....	<b>43</b>
6.1.1	<u>Grant provision</u> .....	43
6.1.2	<u>Grant availability</u> .....	43
6.1.3	<u>Grant delivery model</u> .....	44
6.1.4	<u>Grant effectiveness</u> .....	44
6.1.5	<u>Scale of grant delivery</u> .....	45
6.1.6	<u>Introduction of loans</u> .....	45
<b>6.2</b>	<b><u>Loans</u></b> .....	<b>46</b>
6.2.1	<u>Loan provision</u> .....	46
6.2.2	<u>Loan availability</u> .....	46
6.2.3	<u>Loan delivery model</u> .....	47
6.2.4	<u>Loan effectiveness</u> .....	47
6.2.5	<u>Scale of loan delivery</u> .....	48
<b>6.3</b>	<b><u>Comparison between grant and loan delivery</u></b> .....	<b>48</b>
6.3.1	<u>Type of financial assistance</u> .....	48
6.3.2	<u>Availability</u> .....	49
6.3.3	<u>Delivery model</u> .....	49
6.3.4	<u>Effectiveness</u> .....	50
6.3.5	<u>Scale of delivery</u> .....	51

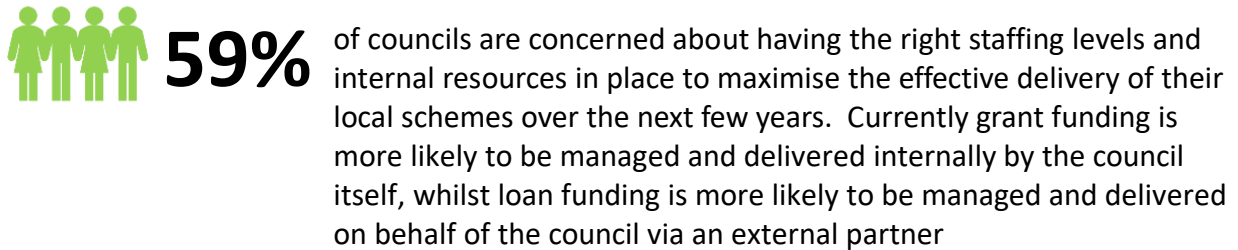
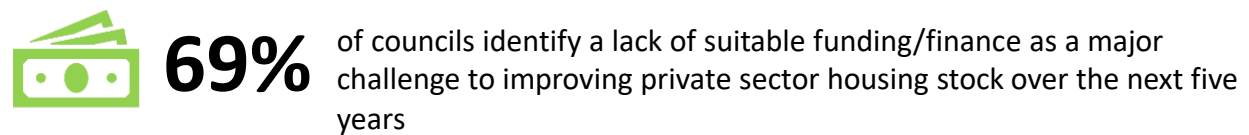
# Executive summary

## Policy and operational context

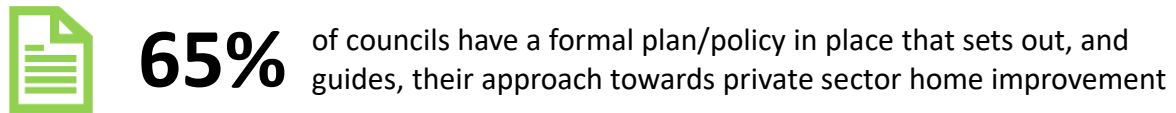
### The importance of improving private sector housing:



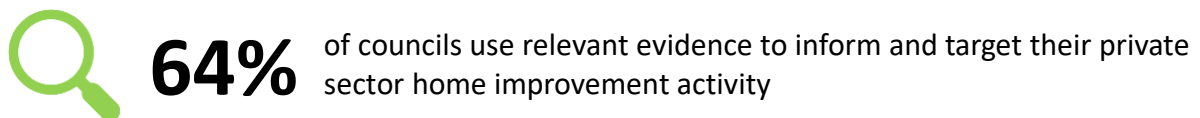
### Challenges and barriers:



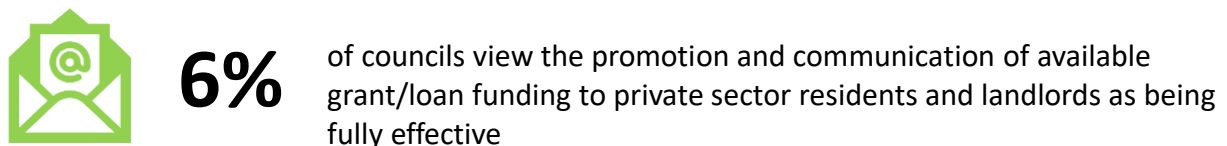
### Plans and policies:



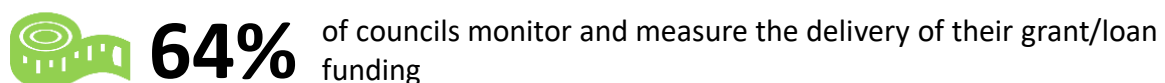
### Evidence and targeting:



### Promotion and communication:



### Monitoring and measuring:





**12%** of councils measure the wider social and economic impact that home improvements can have on individual residents and local communities



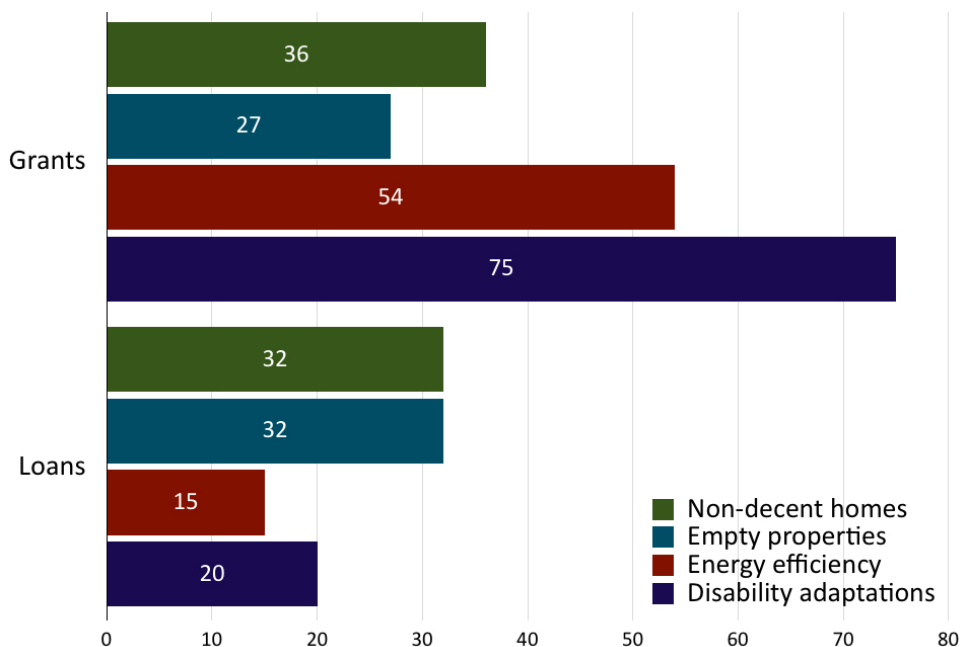
**21%** of councils measure the health and wellbeing impacts that home improvements can have on individual residents and local communities

## Financial assistance

### Grant and loan provision

In terms of the type of financial assistance provided across the four core housing themes, whilst the proportions of councils providing grants and loans in relation to non-decent homes and bringing empty properties back into use are broadly the same, there is a significant difference in relation to energy efficiency improvements and disability adaptations. In terms of energy efficiency, 3.6 times as many councils are currently providing grant funding to support improvements as there are providing loan funding (54% v 15%). Additionally, there is a similar ratio in relation to disability adaptations, with 3.75 times as many councils providing grant funding for these works as there are providing loans (75% v 20%).

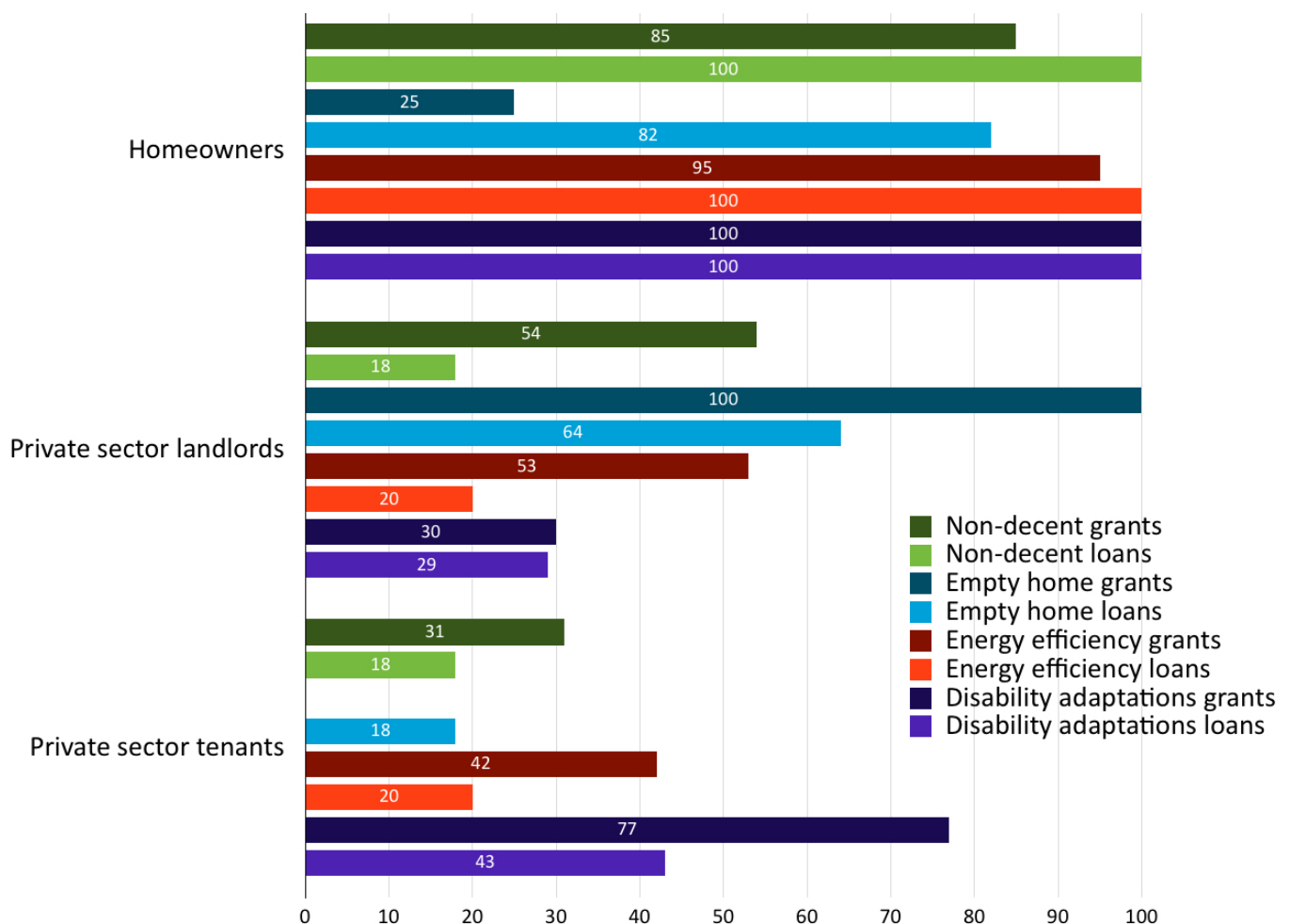
*Graph 1: Proportion (%) of councils providing grant and loan assistance across four core housing themes*



## Grant and loan availability by tenure

In terms of eligibility for financial assistance to support private sector home improvements, an average of 86% of councils across the eight funding options (eg grant and loan provision across the four core housing themes, as highlighted below) provide access to homeowners, compared to an average of 46% and 31% for private sector landlords and tenants respectively. Whilst homeowner access is broadly consistent and widespread across all of the funding options, there are much greater levels of differentiation between the figures for both landlords and tenants. For example, whilst 100% of councils who provide empty home grants target landlords, only 18% of councils who provide non-decent loans and 20% who provide energy efficiency grants target the same group. Likewise, whilst 77% of councils who provide access to disability adaptations grants target tenants, this same group is only targeted by 18% of councils who provide non-decent loans and 20% of councils who provide energy efficiency loans. Additionally, the biggest disparity between landlord and tenant access relates to disability adaptations grants, where the proportion of councils providing access to tenants is 157% greater than the proportion providing access to landlords, and non-decent grants, where the proportion of councils providing access to landlords is 74% greater than the proportion providing access to tenants.

*Graph 2: Grant and loan availability by tenure (% of councils)*



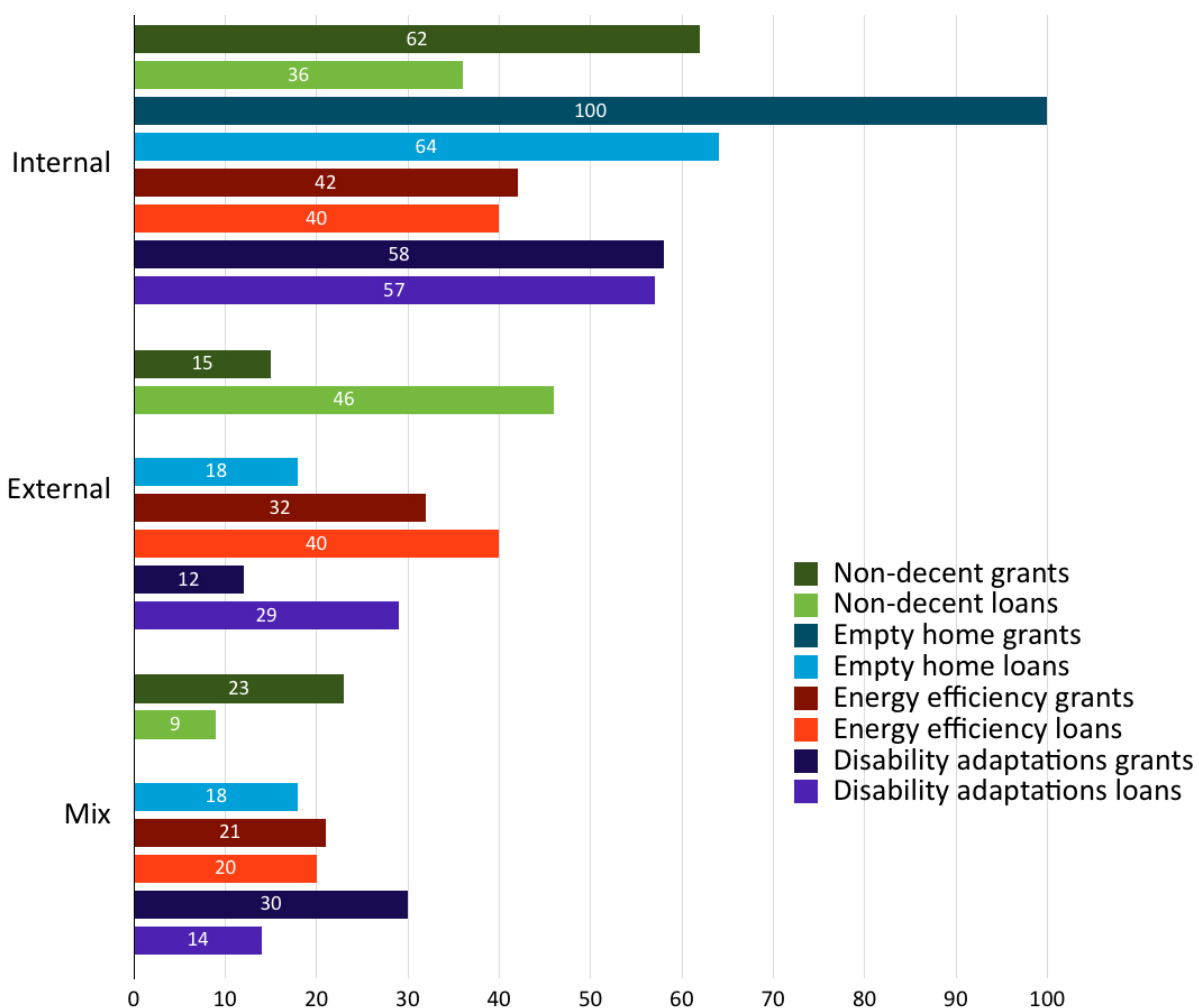


## Grant and loan delivery models

In terms of the delivery models used for the provision of home improvement finance, the most used option is the internal model, where the funding is managed and delivered internally via the council itself. An average of 57% of councils across the eight funding options use this model, compared to an average of 24% of councils who deliver their funding via an external partner and an average of 17% who use a mixed approach combining elements of both internal and external delivery.

Looking at both grant and loan funding options in isolation also highlights further differences in how the approaches are used. For example, an average of 66% of councils across the four grant funding options deliver their support internally, a proportion that is 35% greater than the proportion of loan-providing councils who also use an internal delivery model. In addition, the proportion of councils across the four loan funding options who deliver their support via an external partner is 120% greater than the proportion of grant-providing councils who also use an external delivery model. To put it simply, grant funding is more likely to be managed and delivered internally by the council itself, whilst loan funding is more likely to be managed and delivered on behalf of the council via an external partner.

*Graph 3: Grant and loan provision by delivery model (% of councils)*

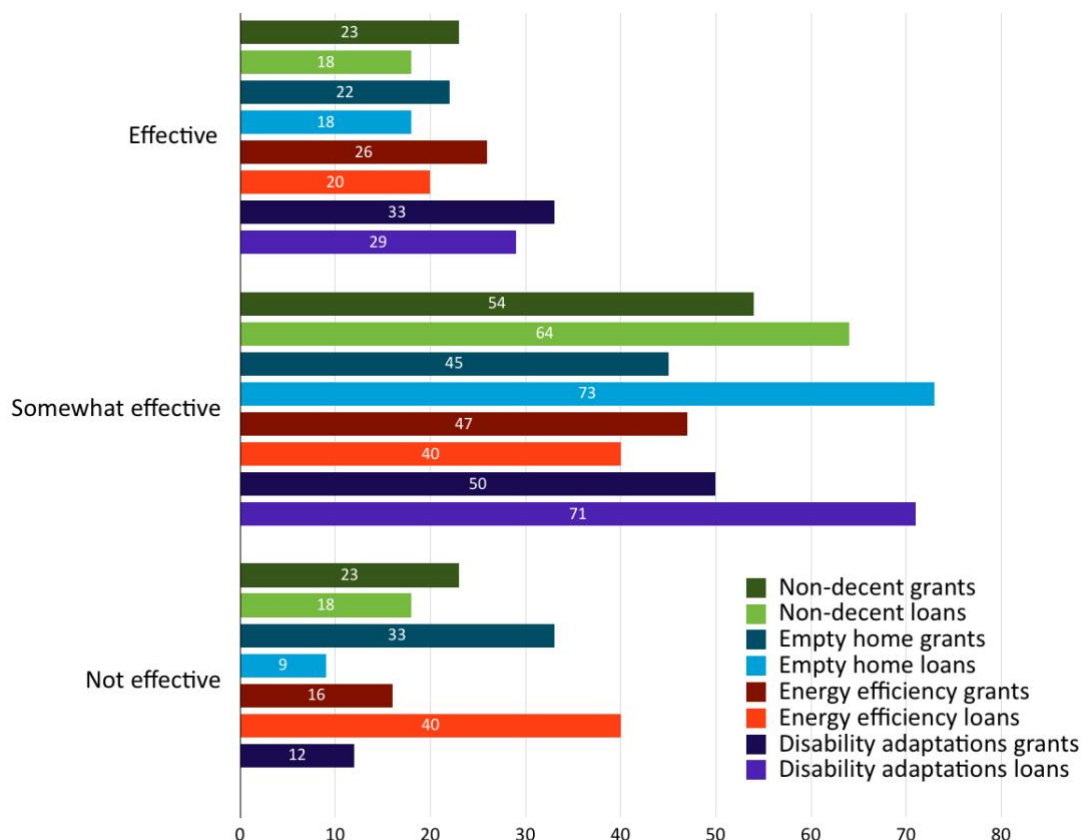


## Grant and loan effectiveness

The survey results present a mixed picture in relation to how councils view the effectiveness of their current funding provision to improve non-decent private sector homes. On average, across the eight funding options, 24% of councils view their approach as being effective, with peaks of 33% and 29% in relation to disability adaptations grants and loans respectively. In comparison, however, an average of 15% of councils view their approach as not being effective, with this rising to 33% of councils providing empty home grants and 40% of those providing energy efficiency loans. Additionally, on average 56% of councils across the eight funding options only rate their provision as ‘somewhat effective’ which suggests that there is scope for improvement to much of the financial assistance delivered across the sector.

Looking at both grant and loan funding options in isolation reinforces this mixed picture of effectiveness, but also illustrates that the perceptions of effectiveness are broadly consistent across the two types of financial assistance. For example, an average of 26% of councils across the four grant funding options view their provision as being effective, which is 24% higher than the proportion of councils across the loan funding options who rate their provision at the same level (21%). However, this is balanced out by the fact that the average proportion of those councils providing loans who rate their provision as not being effective is 24% lower than the proportion of grant-providing councils who also view their provision in this way (17% v 21%). Ultimately, therefore, it is considered that levels of effectiveness could be improved across the full spectrum of home improvement finance, and not just in relation to one particular funding type.

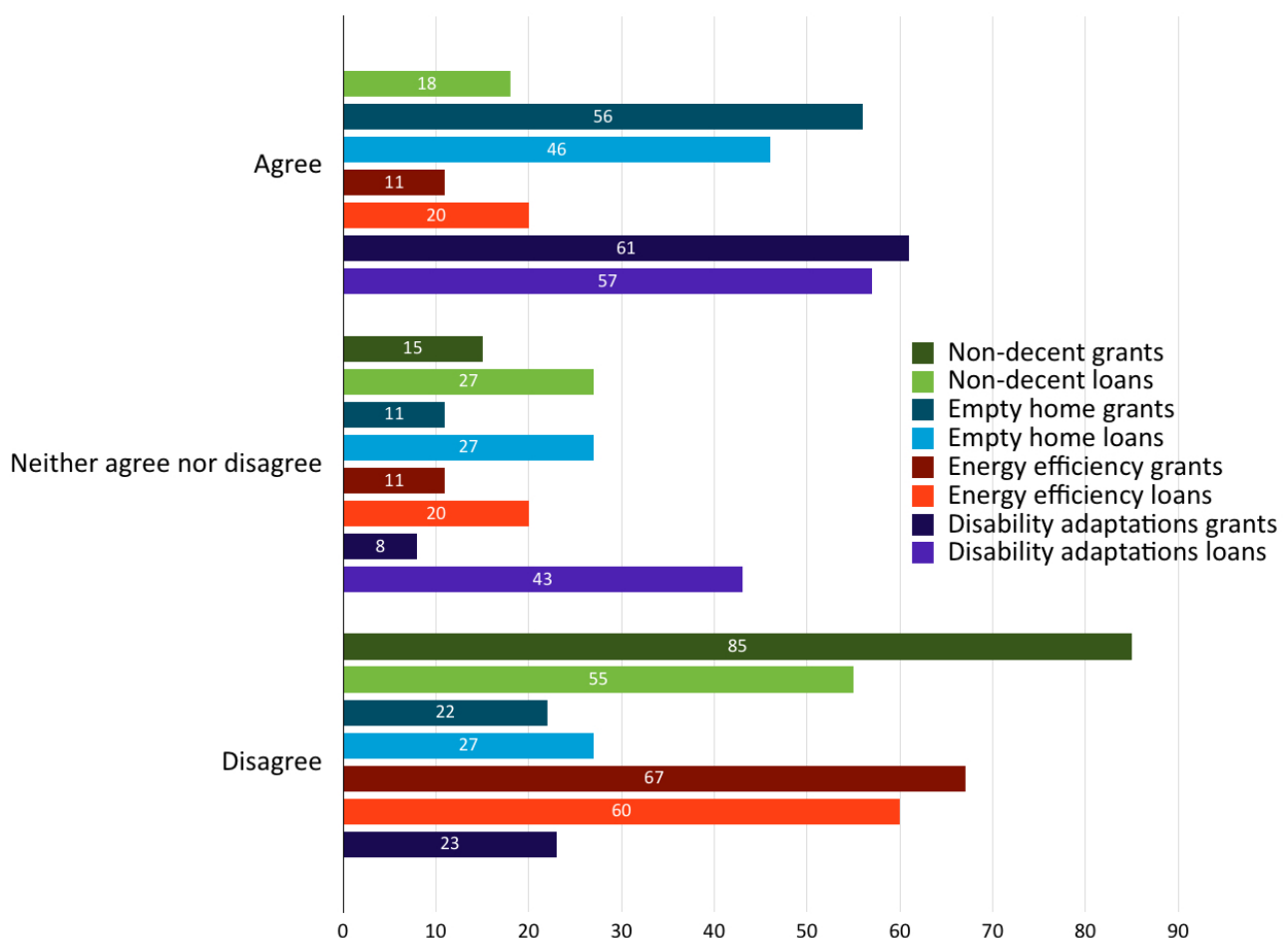
**Graph 4: Rating the effectiveness of grant and loan provision (% of councils)**



## Grant and loan scale of delivery

Across the eight funding options, the average proportion of councils that consider their current scale of funding provision to be insufficient to meet local need is 24% greater than the proportion who consider it to be sufficient (42% v 34%). Looking at both grant and loan funding options in isolation provides some further detail in terms of how the perceived scale of delivery differs across the different funding types. For example, on average, whilst the proportion of loan-providing councils who consider their provision to be sufficient is only slightly higher than grant-providing councils (35% v 32%), the proportion of loan-providing councils who consider their provision to be insufficient is 36% lower than grant providing councils (36% v 49%). Ultimately, therefore, whilst it is considered that there is room for improvement in terms of the scale of delivery across much of the home improvement finance spectrum, particular attention should be paid towards the scale of grant-funded delivery and whether this matches the level of local need.

*Graph 5: Does the scale of grant and loan provision meet local need (% of councils)*



# 1. Introduction

This report summarises the results of an online survey undertaken with local authorities across England, as part of a wider research project commissioned by Stoke-on-Trent City Council and funded by the Local Government Association's Housing Advisors' Programme, to help inform the council's future approach towards private sector home improvement finance and disseminate relevant learning on this agenda across the local government sector.

Specifically, the survey focused on identifying the different approaches taken by local authorities across the country for financing private sector home improvements across four core housing themes: non-decent homes; disability adaptations; energy efficiency improvements and bringing empty properties back into use. The survey questions were designed to allow self-reported responses on a range of issues covering both the policy and operational context for the councils' delivery of home improvement finance and the specific detail of existing funding schemes.

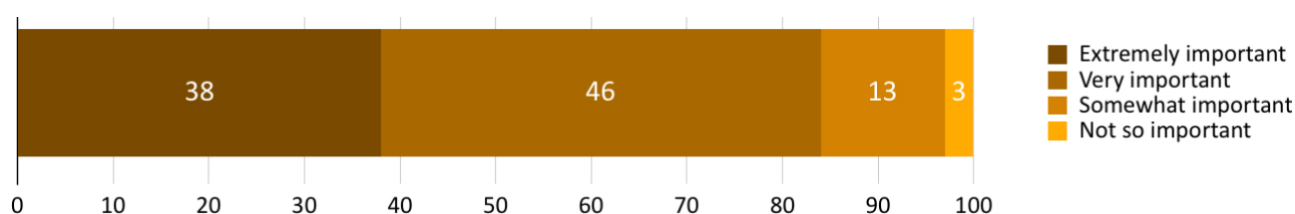
In total, 73 survey responses were received from 49 individual councils, 15% of the total number of 317 councils in England. To provide an accurate summary of council activity, and minimise any double-counting, the results highlighted in this report are based on the unique number of councils rather than the total number of individuals. In some instances, therefore, where multiple survey responses were received from different departments within the same council, these have been combined to produce one single response for that organisation. It should also be noted that the results in this report are only based on fully completed survey responses and therefore the baseline number of councils may differ slightly across the different survey questions due to gaps in some of the survey responses.

## 2. Policy and operational context

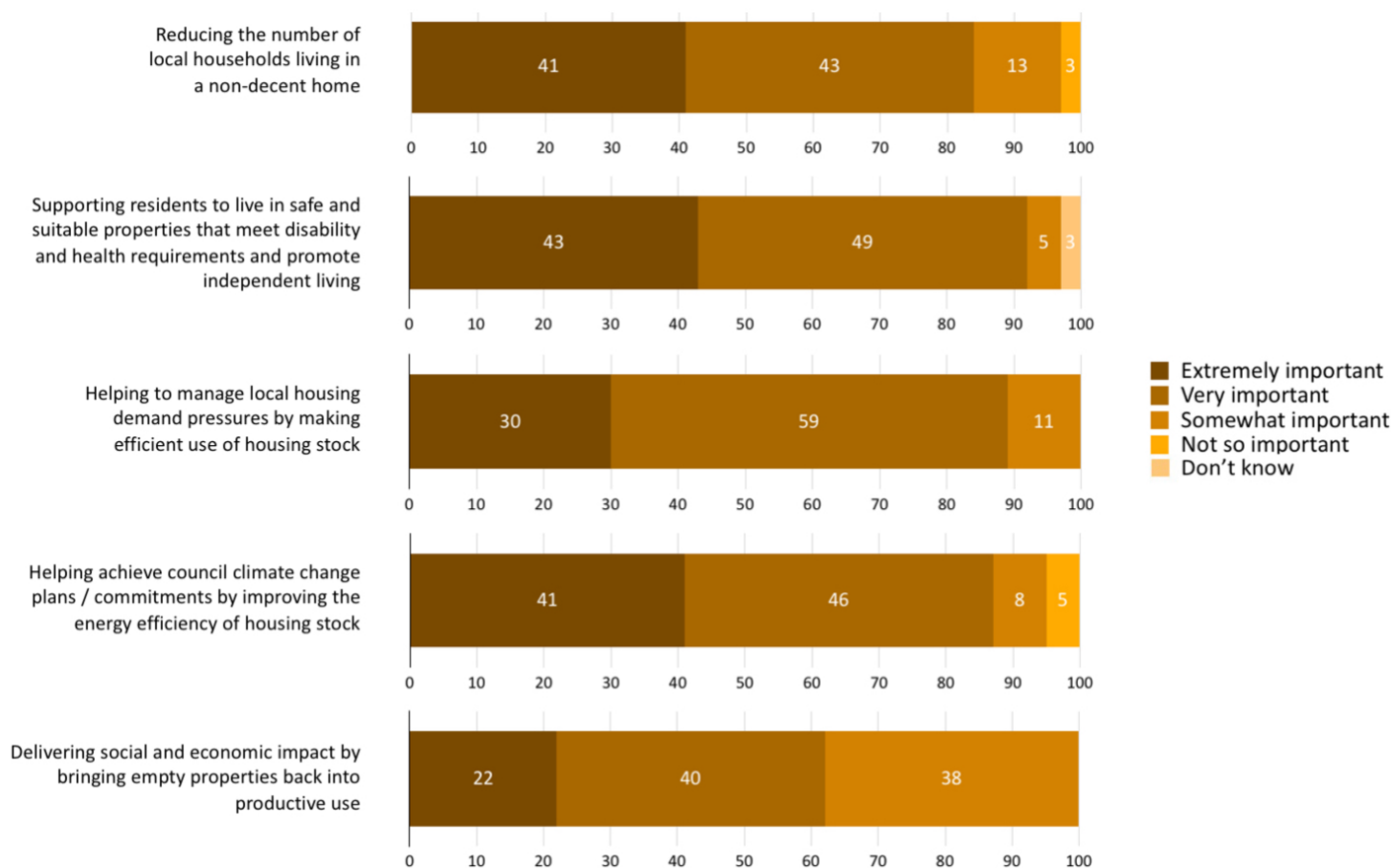
### 2.1 The importance of improving private sector housing

It is clear from the survey results that improving the quality and standard of private sector housing is an important agenda across local government, with 84% of those surveyed highlighting it as being extremely or very important to their council. Only 3% of councils rated it as 'not so important'.

*Graph 6: How important is improving the quality and standard of private sector housing to your council? (% of councils)*



*Graph 7: How would you rate the importance of each of the following outcomes / objectives to the council? (% of councils)*



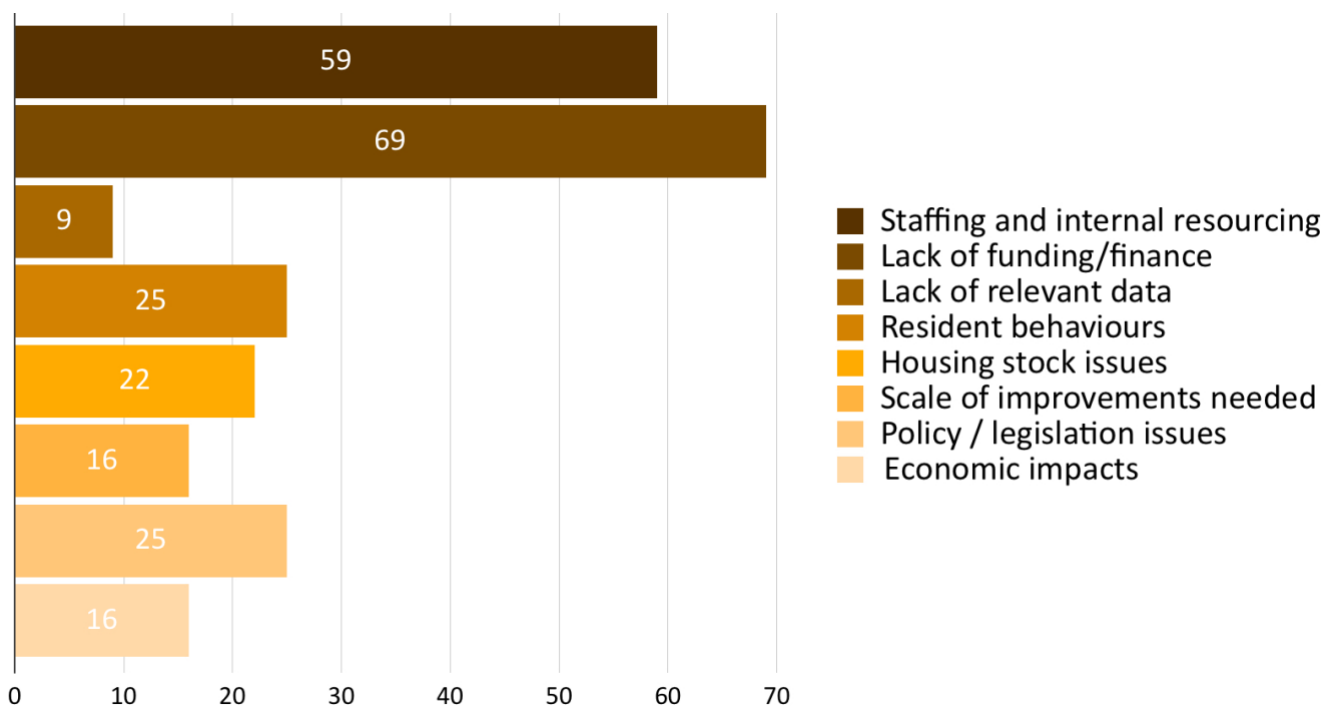
Graph 7 above also highlights how important individual housing-related objectives are to councils, with 92% viewing the adaptation of properties to meet disability and health

requirements and promote independent living as being extremely or very important to their council. This is closely followed by making efficient use of local housing stock, rated by 89% of councils as being extremely/very important, and improving the energy efficiency of housing stock and reducing the number of non-decent homes, rated by 87% and 84% respectively. Finally, the lowest priority was delivering social and economic impact by bringing empty properties back into use, although 62% of councils still rated this as an extremely/very important objective.

## 2.2 Challenges and barriers

A wide range of challenges and barriers to improving private sector housing stock over the next five years were identified by surveyed councils, which have been summarised into eight key themes as highlighted in graph 8. As the graph illustrates, the two most common challenges relate to resources, with 69% of councils identifying a lack of suitable funding/finance as a major challenge, particularly in terms of meeting an increasing scale of home improvement need in their local areas, whilst 59% are concerned about having the right staffing levels and internal resources in place to maximise the effective delivery of their local schemes over the next few years.

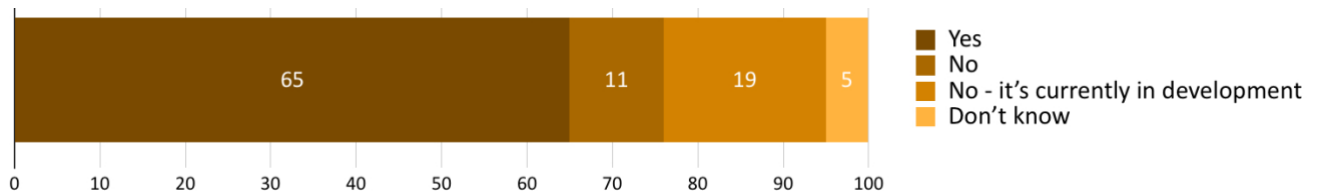
*Graph 8: What do you feel are the biggest challenges facing your council in terms of improving its local private sector housing stock over the next 5 years? (% of councils)*



## 2.3 Plans and policies

65% of councils have a formal plan or policy in place that sets out, and guides, their approach towards private sector home improvement. Whilst some councils have a specific named plan/policy in place, others highlighted that relevant detail is included within wider council strategies or documents. 30% of councils say that they do not have relevant plan/policy content in place, although 19% highlight that this is currently in development.

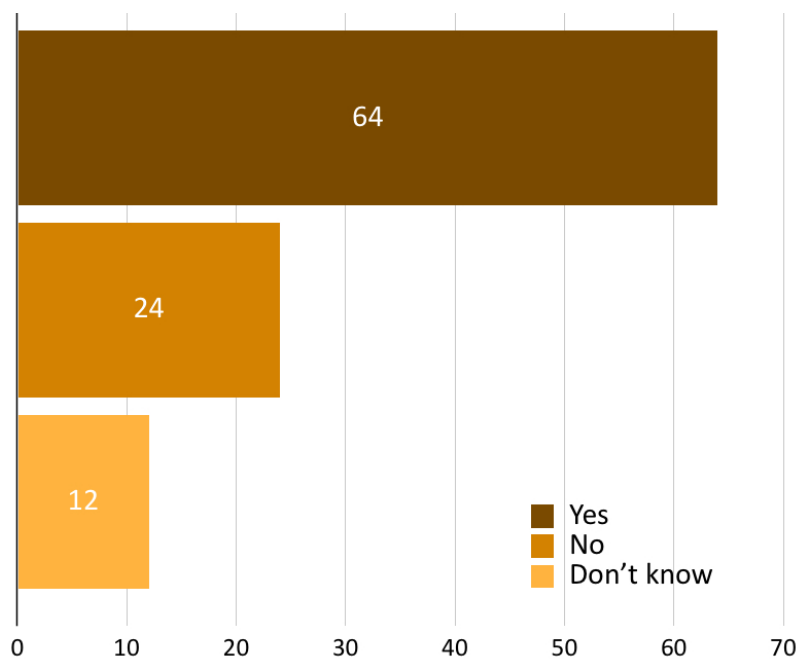
*Graph 9: Does your council have a formal plan/policy in place for private sector home improvement? (% of councils)*



## 2.4 Evidence and targeting

64% of councils report that they do use relevant evidence to inform and target their private sector home improvement activity, compared to 24% who don't. A variety of different data sources were identified, as summarised in the word cloud below, with the most common sources including the census, indices of multiple deprivation, EPC register, BRE and internal services, such as revenues and benefits.

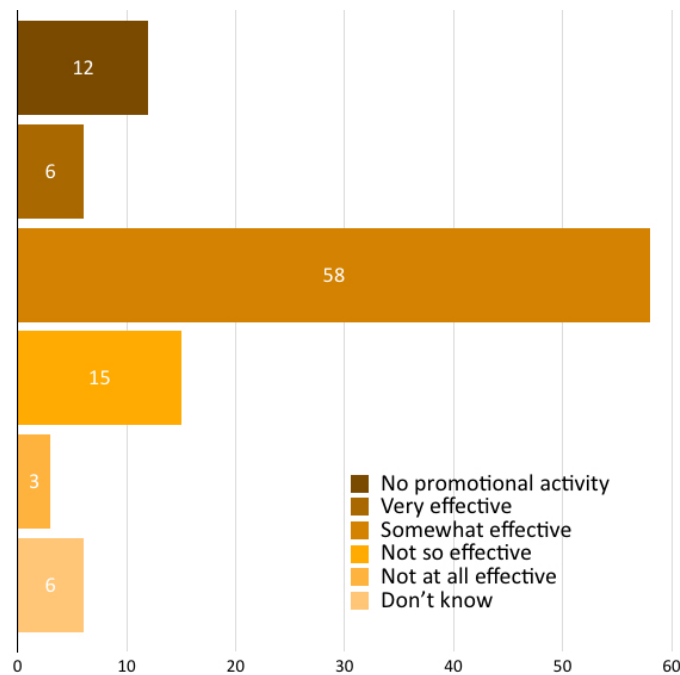
*Graph 10: Do you use relevant evidence to inform and target your private sector home improvement activity? (% of councils)*







**Graph 11: How effective would you say the promotion and communication of the available grant/loan funding currently is to private sector residents and landlords in your area? (% of councils)**

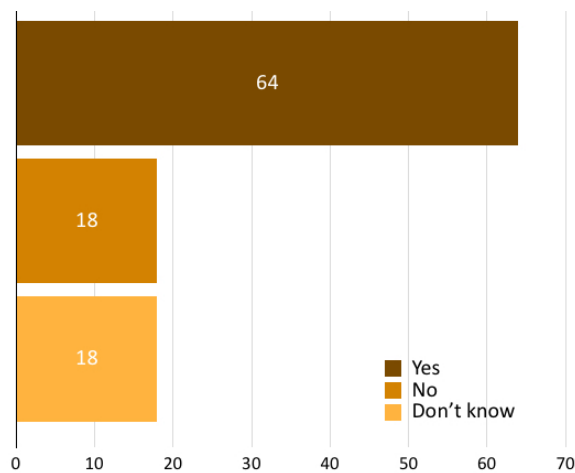


## 2.6 Monitoring and measuring

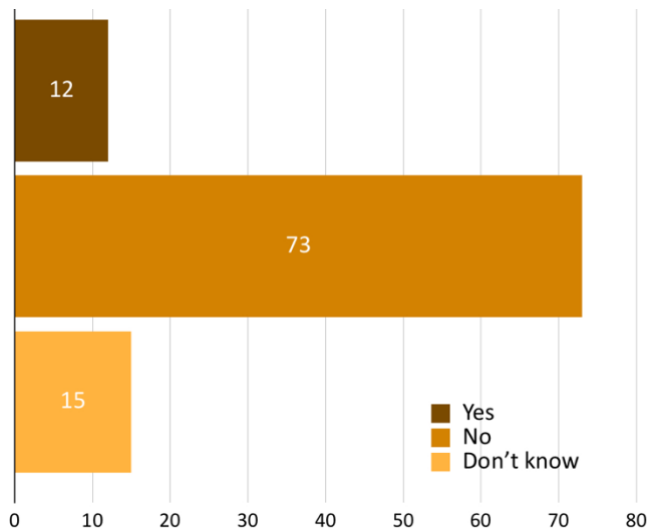
64% of councils highlight that they monitor and measure the provision of their home improvement finance scheme, compared to 18% who say they don't (graph 12). In terms of the data collected and measured, this predominantly relates to outputs and performance management data generated by the funding scheme, rather than outcomes or impacts, such as the number of applications received; number of awards made; value of awards made and number of properties improved etc...

Looking more specifically at outcomes and impacts, only 12 % of councils said that they currently measure the wider social and economic impact of the home improvements funded through their scheme/s on local residents and communities (graph 13). In addition, only a slightly higher proportion of councils (21%) said that they currently measure the health and wellbeing impacts of funded improvements (graph 14). It is therefore considered that there is significant scope to improve both the scale and quality of social impact analysis and evaluation in relation to the delivery of private sector home improvement finance across the sector.

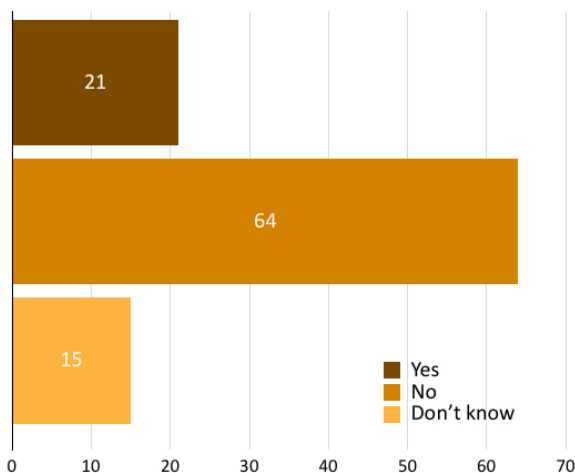
**Graph 12: Do you monitor and measure your financial assistance scheme / programme? (% of councils)**



**Graph 13: Do you measure the wider social and economic impact that home improvements funded by this financial assistance can have on individual residents and local communities? (% of councils)**



**Graph 14: Do you measure the health and wellbeing impacts that home improvements funded by this financial assistance can have on individual residents and local communities? (% of councils)**



# 3. Financial assistance to improve non-decent homes

## 3.1 Grants

### 3.1.1 Grant provision

In terms of financial assistance in the context of non-decent homes, 36% of surveyed councils currently make non-repayable grants available to help upgrade private sector homes to the decent homes standard in their local area. This is compared to 58% of councils who currently make no such provision.

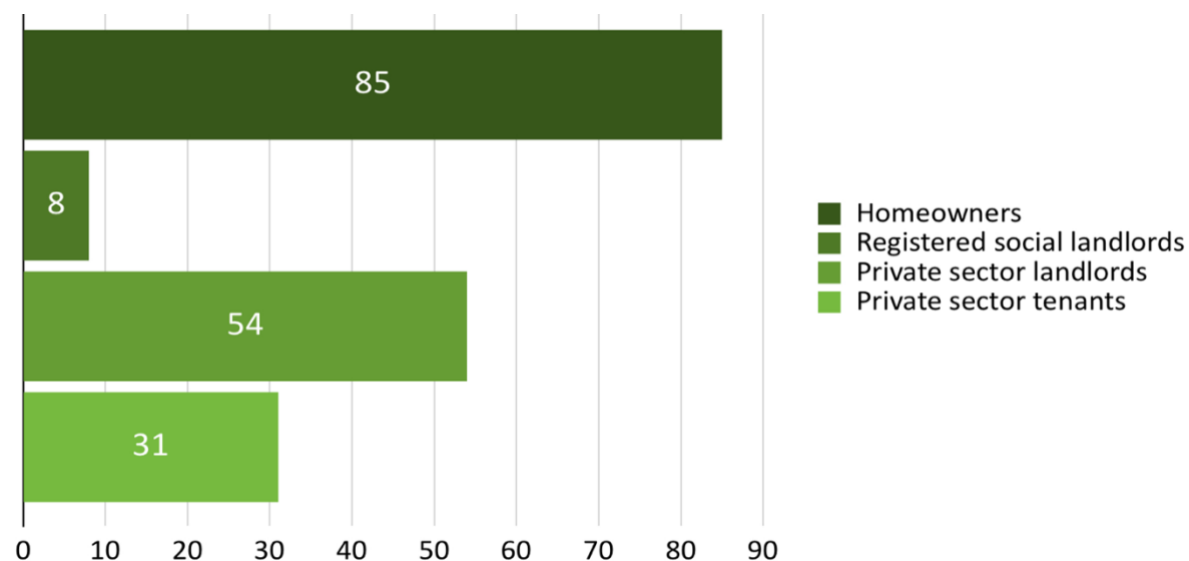
*Graph 15: Proportion (%) of councils currently making non-repayable grants available for the purpose of improving non-decent private sector homes*



### 3.1.2 Grant availability

Of those councils who provide this type of grant provision, 85% provide grants targeted at homeowners, whilst 54% and 31% provide grants targeted at private sector landlords and tenants respectively.

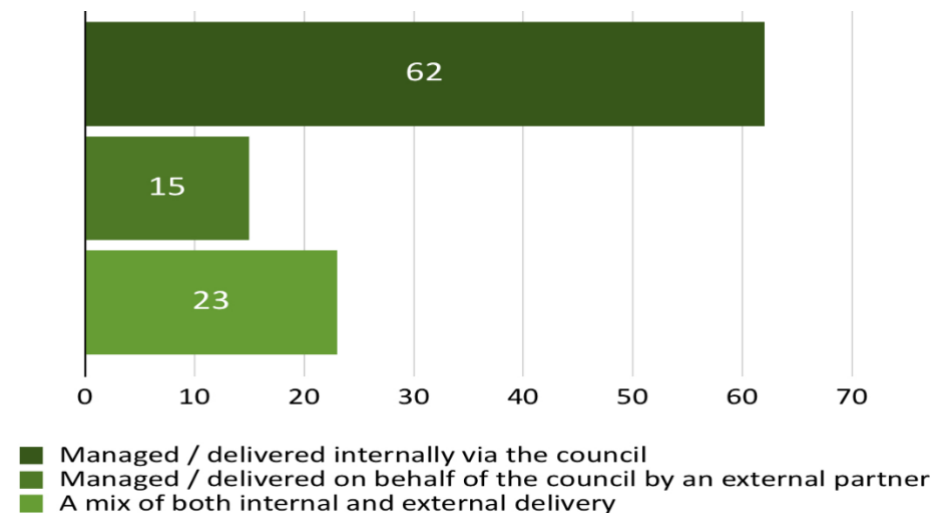
*Graph 16: Who are grants available to? (% of grant-providing councils)*



### 3.1.3 Grant delivery model

Four times as many councils (62%) are currently managing and delivering their existing grant scheme internally via the council, compared to those who use an external partner (15%). 23% highlight that they use a mixed delivery model, combining both internal and external delivery elements within their scheme.

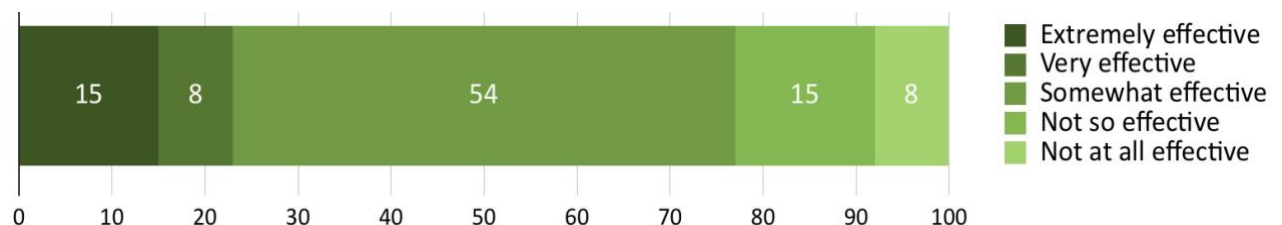
*Graph 17: How is your grant funding currently delivered? (% of grant-providing councils)*



### 3.1.4 Grant effectiveness

The survey results paint a mixed picture in terms of how councils view the effectiveness of their current grant provision to improve non-decent private sector homes. Whilst 23% view their approach as being effective with regards to achieving local goals, this is matched by 23% who say it is ineffective. Additionally, 54% of councils consider their approach to only be somewhat effective. Combined with those who said ineffective, this suggests that overall, 77% of councils see the need for improvement within their existing grant-led approach.

*Graph 18: How effective do you feel your current approach is towards improving non-decent private sector homes (% of grant-providing councils)*

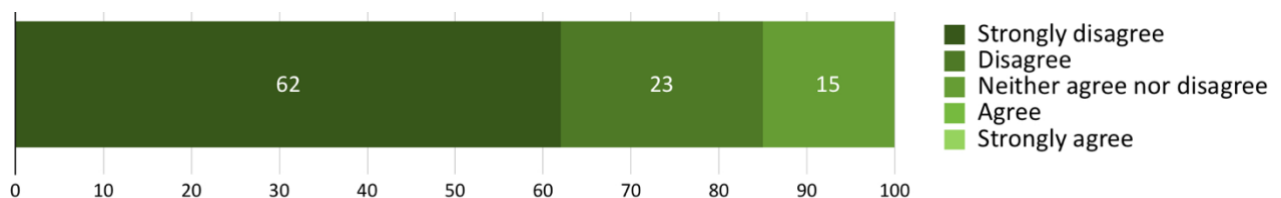


In a similar vein to concerns about the effectiveness of a grant-led approach, a significant majority of councils (85%) consider that the current level of their grant provision is insufficient to meet the scale of non-decent private sector homes that need improving in their local area. No councils felt that their current level of grant provision was sufficient to meet local need.

*“The amount of grant for the council is simply inadequate and too piecemeal to substantially impact on the retrofit needs of private sector housing in the city”*

### 3.1.5 Scale of grant delivery

**Graph 19: How much do you agree/disagree that the current level of grant funding provided by your council is sufficient to meet local need (% of grant-providing councils)**



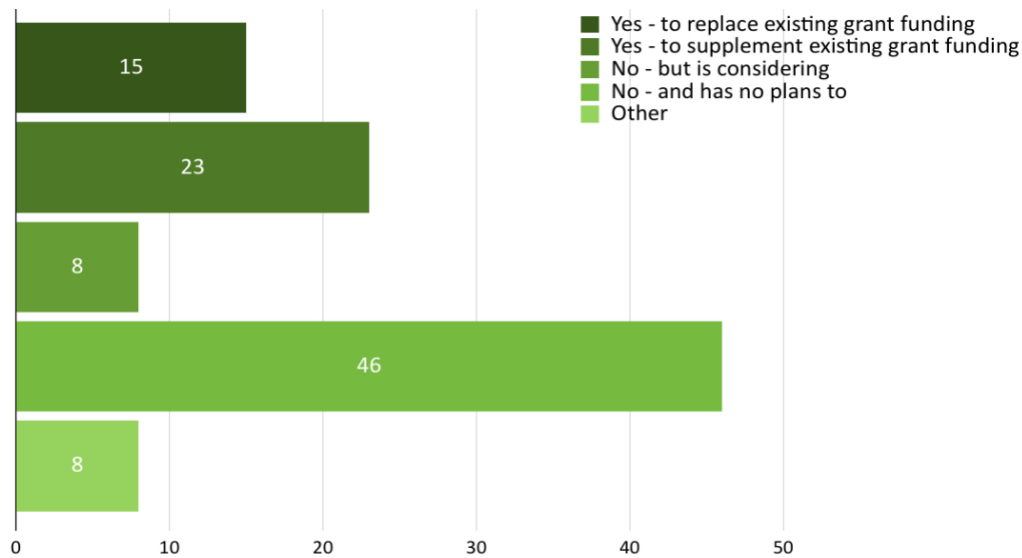
*“It is focused on those with low incomes only and therefore may not be reaching all those needing assistance”*

### 3.1.6 Introduction of loans

Interestingly, given the concerns around effectiveness and the ability to meet local need expressed by the majority of councils only 38% have sought to develop their approach towards improving non-decent private sector homes by introducing home improvement loans to supplement or replace their grant provision. Whilst 15% highlighted that they introduced loans to replace their existing grant funding, 23% used loans to supplement their grant funding and thus increase the scale of available financial support in their local area. However, 54% of councils highlighted that they have not yet introduced loans, with 46% noting that they have no plans to do so within the foreseeable future.

*“We have been using loans since 2006 and with very little grant funding this is now the main funding source for improving private homes in the city.”*

**Graph 20: Has your council introduced home improvement loans to replace or supplement your grant funding? (% of grant-providing councils)**

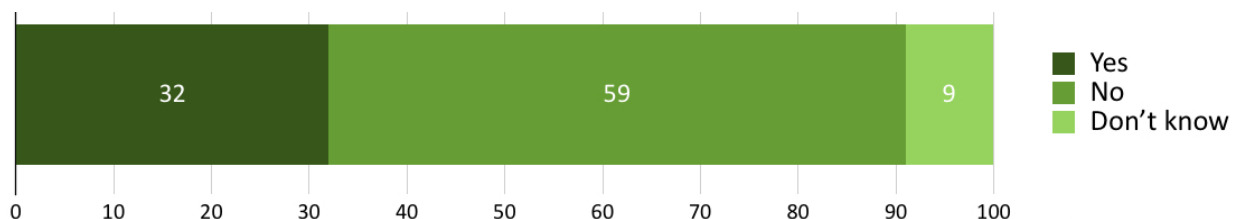


## 3.2 Loans

### 3.2.1 Loan provision

In terms of loan provision in the context of non-decent homes, 32% of surveyed councils currently provide repayable loans to help upgrade private sector homes to the decent homes standard in their local area. This is compared to 59% of councils who currently make no such provision.

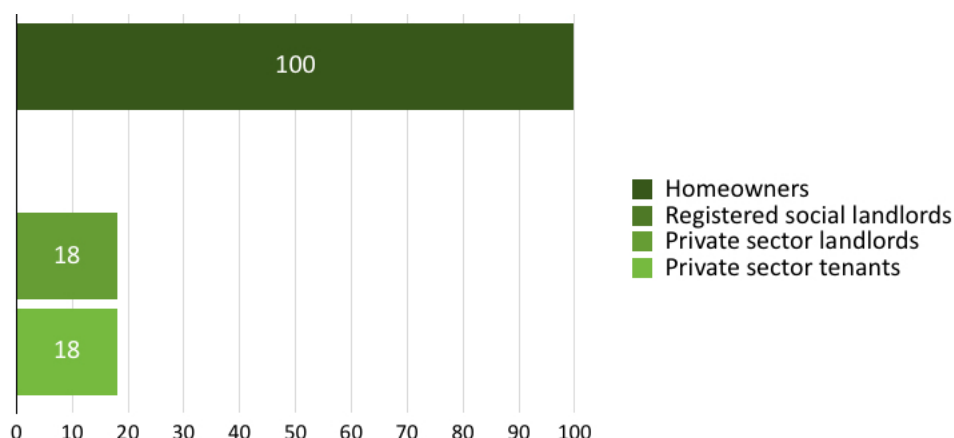
**Graph 21: Proportion (%) of councils currently making repayable loans available for the purpose of improving non-decent private sector homes**



### 3.2.2 Loan availability

Of those councils who provide access to loans, 100% provide loans targeted at homeowners, whilst 18% provide loans to private sector landlords and 18% to tenants.

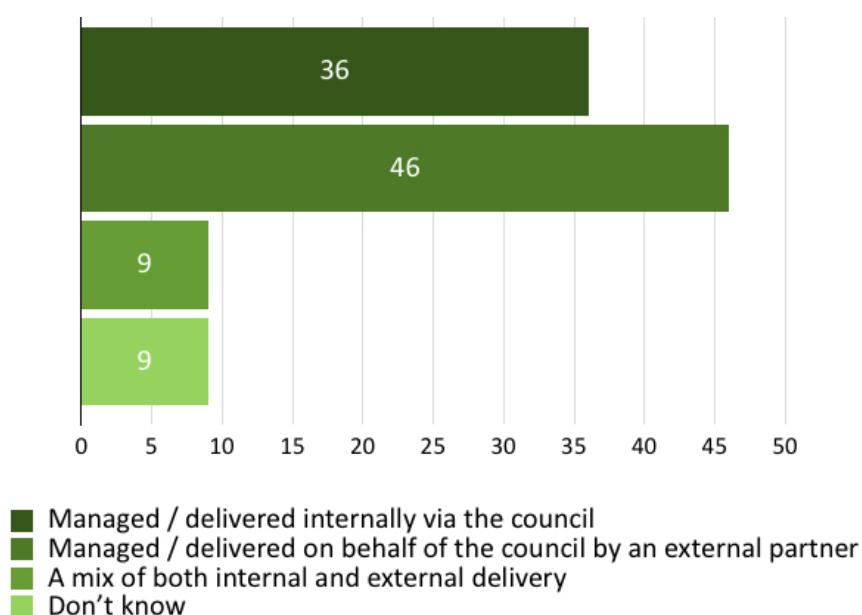
**Graph 22: Who are loans available to? (% of loan-providing councils)**



### 3.2.3 Loan delivery model

It is a mixed picture in relation to loan delivery models, with 46% of councils currently managing and delivering their existing loan scheme via an external partner, compared to 36% managing it internally via the council itself. 9% of councils highlight that they use a mixed delivery model, combining both internal and external delivery elements within their scheme.

**Graph 23: How is your lending currently delivered? (% of loan-providing councils)**



### 3.2.4 Loan effectiveness

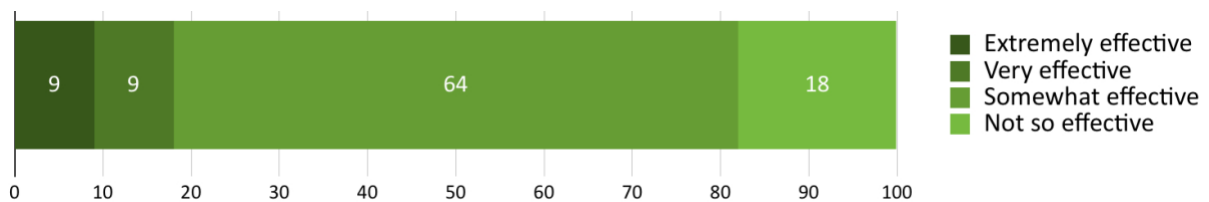
The survey results also paint a mixed picture in terms of how councils view the effectiveness of their current loan provision to help improve non-decent homes. Whilst 18% view their approach as being effective with regards to achieving local goals, this is matched by exactly the same proportion who say it is ineffective.

*“Lots of residents will not, for whatever reason, take a loan to make home improvements – they would prefer a grant.”*

Additionally, 64% of councils consider their approach to only be somewhat effective. Combined with those who said ineffective, this suggests that overall, 82% of councils see the need for some improvement within their existing loan-led approach.

*“We have found a no-interest approach of repaying the exact amount provided works best. We have also found we need to be flexible on the amount of money and the income status of the household.”*

**Graph 24: How effective do you feel your current approach is towards improving non-decent private sector homes (% of loan-providing councils)**

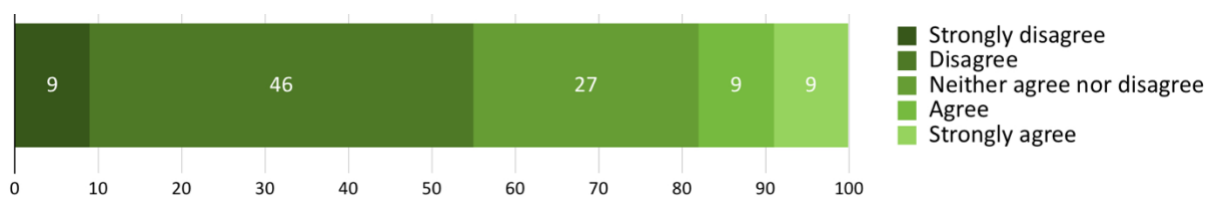


### 3.2.5 Scale of loan delivery

In a similar vein to concerns about the effectiveness of their loan-led approach, a majority of councils (55%) consider that the current level of their loan provision is insufficient to meet the scale of non-decent private sector homes that need improving in their local area, compared to only 18% who feel that it is sufficient.

*“We are finding more residents who have a high level of hazards in their home through sustained lack of maintenance and it is usually too much work for the loan limit to cover. We sadly have to turn some people away.”*

**Graph 25: How much do you agree/disagree that the current level of lending provided by your council is sufficient to meet local need (% of loan-providing councils)**



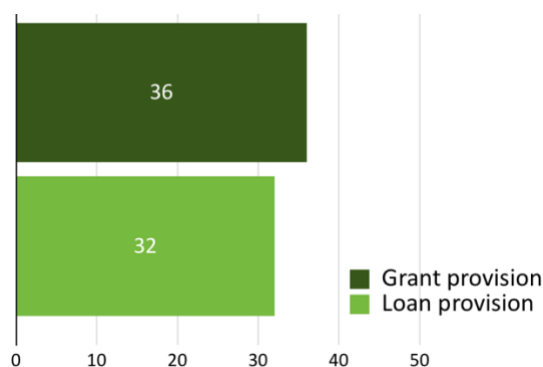


### 3.3 Comparison between grant and loan delivery

#### 3.3.1 Type of financial assistance

The split between grant and loan provision in relation to improving non-decent private sector homes is relatively similar, with 36% of councils providing access to grants and 32% loans.

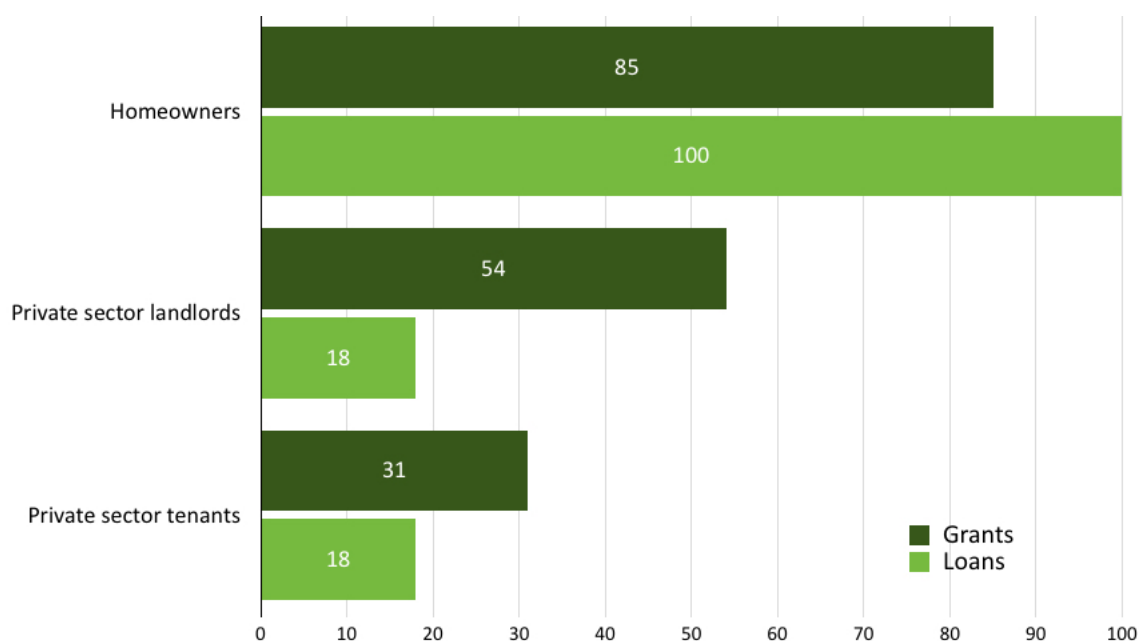
*Graph 26: Proportion of councils (%) providing grant/loan funding*



#### 3.3.2 Availability

In terms of the availability of financial assistance to support improvements to non-decent private sector homes, 85% of grant-providing councils target homeowners, compared to 100% of loan-providing councils. As regards other core groups, more than three times as many grant-providing councils target landlords as do those who provide loans (54% v 18%). The pattern for tenants is similar, albeit with a smaller gap between the proportion of councils providing grants to this group (31%) and those providing loans (18%).

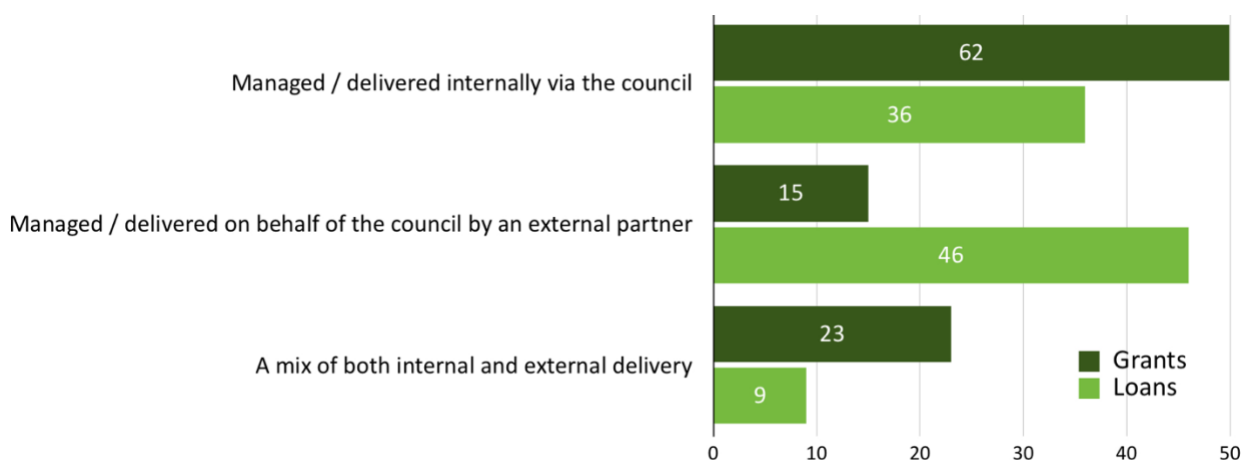
*Graph 27: Who are grants/loans available to? (% of grant/loan-providing councils)*



### 3.3.3 Delivery model

The survey results paint a mixed picture as regards the delivery models used in relation to grant and loan funding for non-decent homes. In terms of grant provision, four times as many councils are managing and delivering their scheme internally as those using an external partner (62% v 15%). In terms of loan provision, this pattern is reversed and there is less difference between the two, as 46% of councils use an external partner compared to 36% who manage delivery internally. In terms of a mix of both internal and external delivery, this approach is more likely to be used by grant-led councils (23%) compared to loan-led (9%).

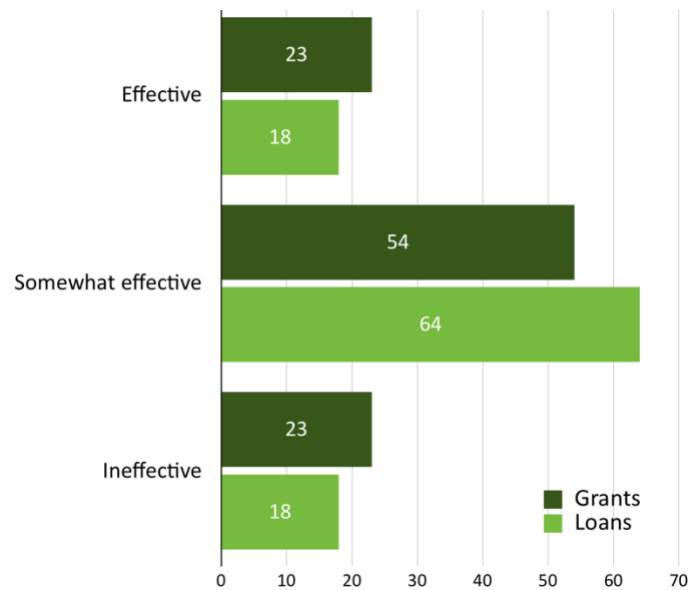
*Graph 28: How is your grant/loan funding currently delivered? (% of grant/loan-providing councils)*



### 3.3.4 Effectiveness

There isn't a significant amount of difference between the perceived effectiveness of grant and loan provision in relation to non-decent homes, with only 23% of grant-providing councils and 18% loan-providing viewing their approach as being effective with regards to achieving local goals, and the same proportions viewing their approach as being ineffective.

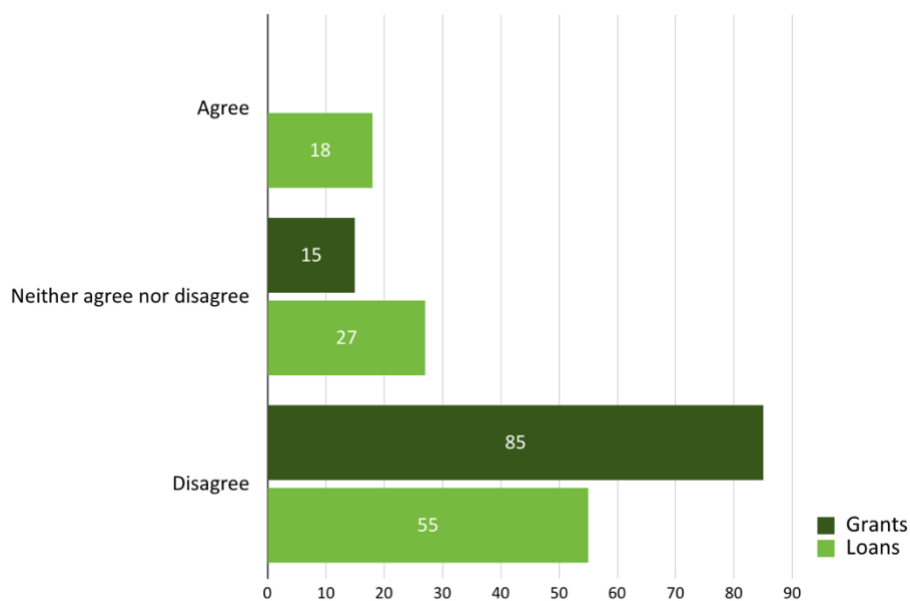
**Graph 29: How effective do you feel your current approach is towards improving non-decent private sector homes (% of grant/loan-providing councils)**



### 3.3.5 Scale of delivery

In terms of the scale of delivery, however, there are significant differences between grant-providing and loan-providing councils, with those providing loans more likely to agree that the current level of funding they provide through their scheme is sufficient to meet local need. 18% of loan-providing councils consider this to be the case, compared to none of those running grant schemes. In turn this is compounded by the fact that most grant providers (85%) disagree and view the scale of their delivery as being insufficient, compared to 55% of loan providers.

**Graph 30: Do you agree/disagree that the current level of grant/loan funding provided by your council is sufficient to meet local need (% of grant/loan-providing councils)**



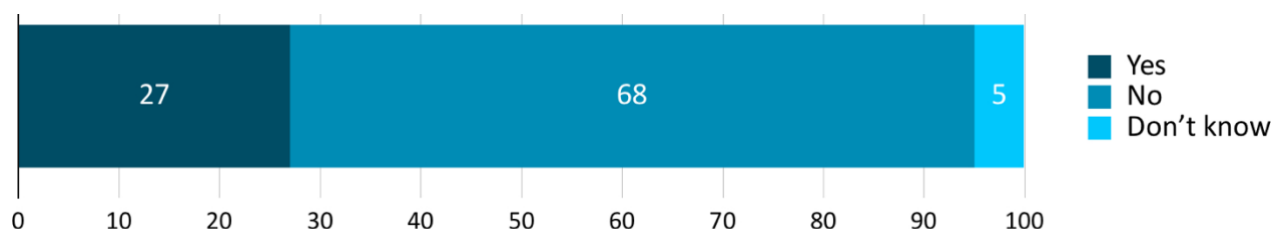
## 4. Financial assistance to bring empty properties back into use

### 4.1 Grants

#### 4.1.1 Grant provision

In terms of financial assistance in the context of bringing empty properties back into use, 27% of surveyed councils currently make non-repayable grants available to help bring empty properties back into productive use in their local area. This is compared to 68% of councils who currently make no such provision.

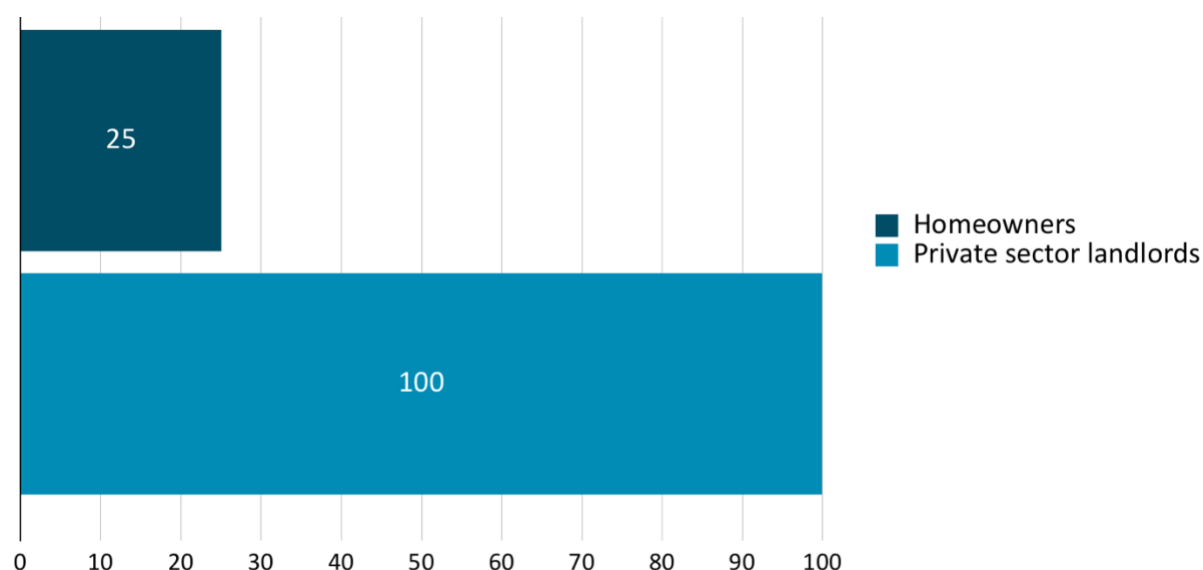
*Graph 31: Proportion (%) of councils currently making non-repayable grants available for the purpose of bringing properties back into use*



#### 4.1.2 Grant availability

Of those councils who provide this type of grant provision, 100% provide grants targeted at private sector landlords, whilst 25% provide grants targeted at homeowners.

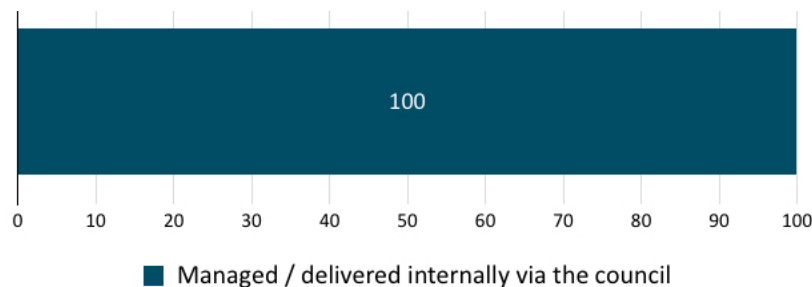
*Graph 32: Who are grants available to? (% of grant-providing councils)*



### 4.1.3 Grant delivery model update

All councils currently providing grant assistance to bring empty properties back into use are managing and delivering their grant scheme internally via the council, rather than using an external partner.

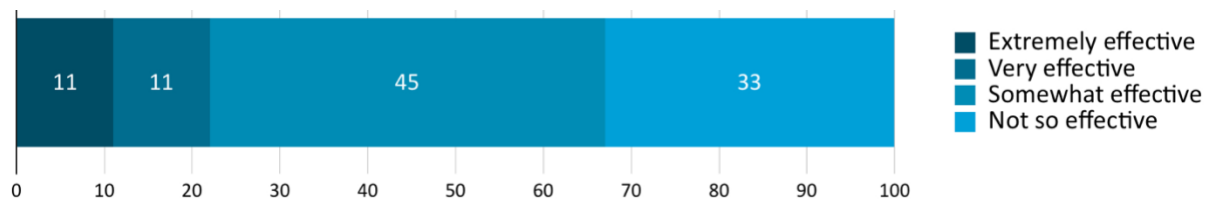
*Graph 33: How is your grant funding currently delivered? (% of grant-providing councils)*



### 4.1.4 Grant effectiveness

The survey results paint a mixed picture in terms of how councils view the effectiveness of their current grant provision to improve empty homes. Whilst 22% view their approach as being effective with regards to achieving local goals, the proportion who say it is ineffective is 1.5 times larger (33%). Additionally, 45% of councils consider their approach to only be somewhat effective and, when combined with those who said ineffective, this suggests that overall, 78% of councils see the need for improvement within their existing grant-led approach.

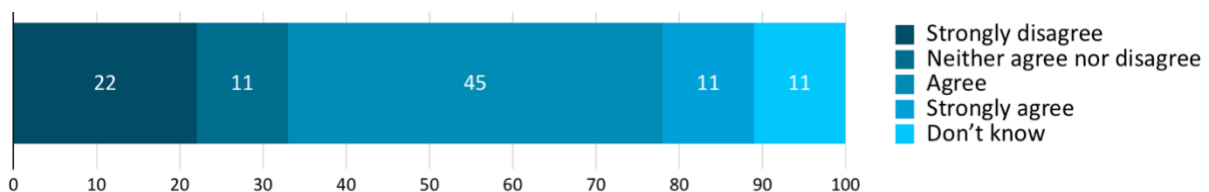
*Graph 34: How effective do you feel your current approach is towards bringing empty properties back into use (% of grant-providing councils)*



### 4.1.5 Scale of grant delivery

There is a similar mixed picture in relation to the scale of grant delivery. Whilst 56% of councils agree that the current level of their grant provision is sufficient to meet the scale of empty homes that need improving in their local area, 22% disagree.

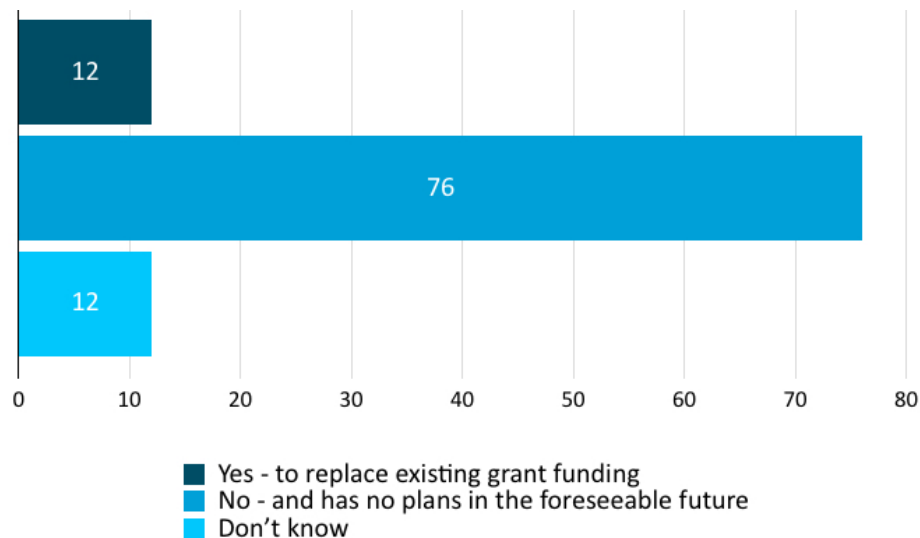
*Graph 35: How much do you agree/disagree that the current level of grant funding provided by your council is sufficient to meet local need (% of grant-providing councils)*



### 4.1.6 Introduction of loans

Despite the concerns around effectiveness and the ability to meet local need expressed by a decent proportion of councils, it appears that little has been done to look at how existing financial provision could be improved. Only 12% of councils have sought to develop their approach by introducing home improvement loans, all of which replaced existing grant funding, whilst 76% have no plans to consider introducing loans in the foreseeable future.

**Graph 36: Has your council introduced home improvement loans to replace or supplement your grant funding? (% of grant-providing councils)**

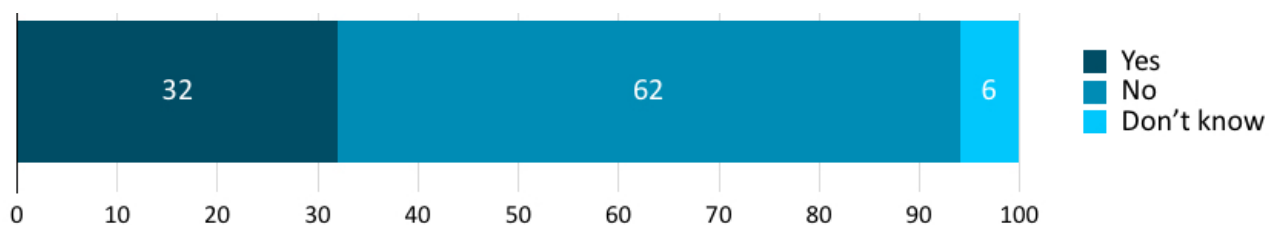


## 4.2 Loans

### 4.2.1 Loan provision

In terms of loan provision in the context of empty homes, 32% of surveyed councils currently provide repayable loans to help bring empty properties back into use in their local area. This is compared to 62% of councils who currently make no such provision.

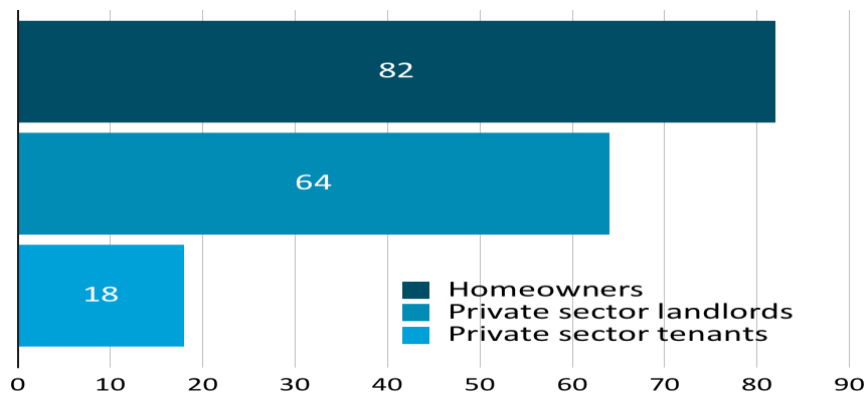
**Graph 37: Proportion (%) of councils currently making repayable loans available for the purpose of bringing empty homes back into use**



### 4.2.2 Loan availability

Of those councils who provide access to loans, 82% provide loans targeted at homeowners, whilst 64% provide loans to private sector landlords. 18% of councils also make loans available to prospective private sector tenants.

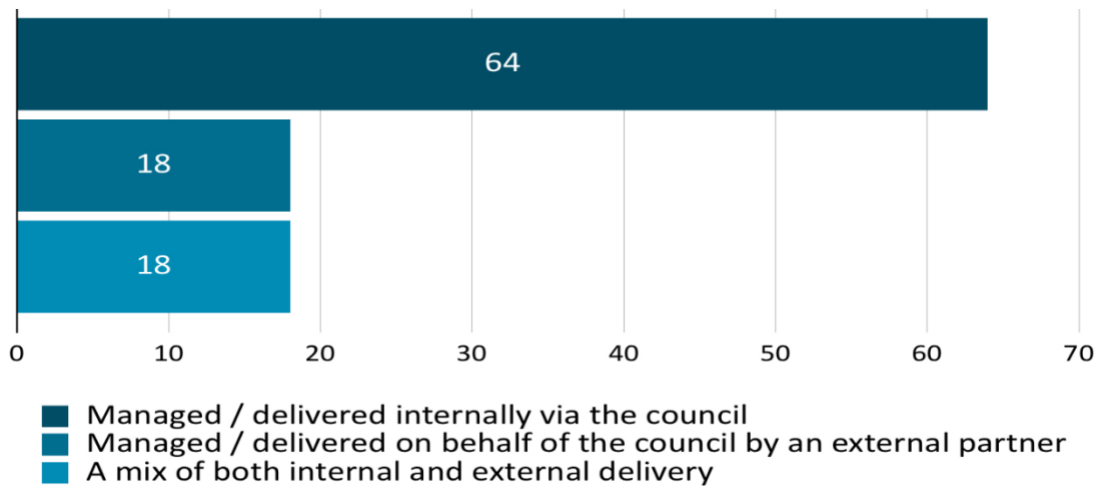
**Graph 38: Who are loans available to? (% of loan-providing councils)**



### 4.2.3 Loan delivery model

Four and a half times as many councils (64%) are currently managing and delivering their existing grant scheme internally via the council, compared to those who use an external partner (18%). 18% of councils highlight that they use a mixed delivery model, combining both internal and external delivery elements within their scheme.

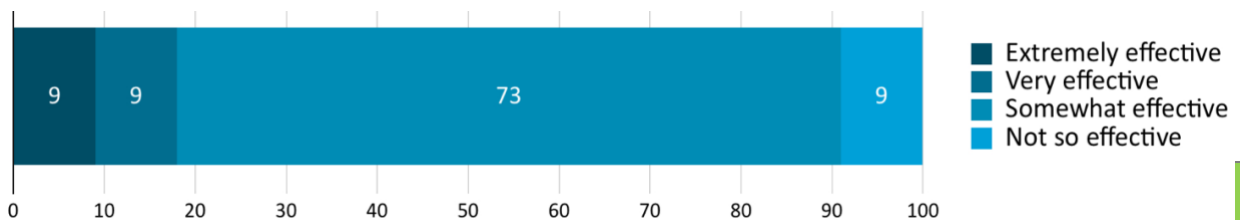
**Graph 39: How is your lending currently delivered? (% of loan-providing councils)**



### 4.2.4 Loan effectiveness

The survey results suggest that loan provision targeting empty properties is viewed as being relatively effective by councils, with 18% of councils rating it as extremely or very effective, compared to 9% who say it’s not so effective. However, 73% view their provision as only being somewhat effective, which suggests that there is significant scope for improvement within existing loan-led approaches.

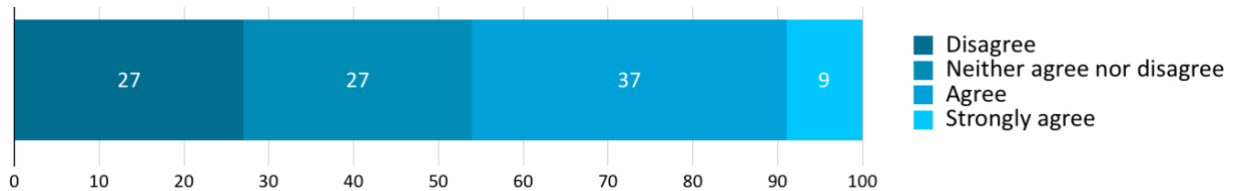
**Graph 40: How effective do you feel your current approach is towards bringing empty homes back into use (% of loan-providing councils)**



### 4.2.5 Scale of loan delivery

46% of councils consider that the current level of their loan provision is sufficient to meet the scale of empty homes that need improving in their local area, compared to 27% who feel it is insufficient.

*Graph 41: How much do you agree/disagree that the current level of lending provided by your council is sufficient to meet local need (% of loan-providing councils)*

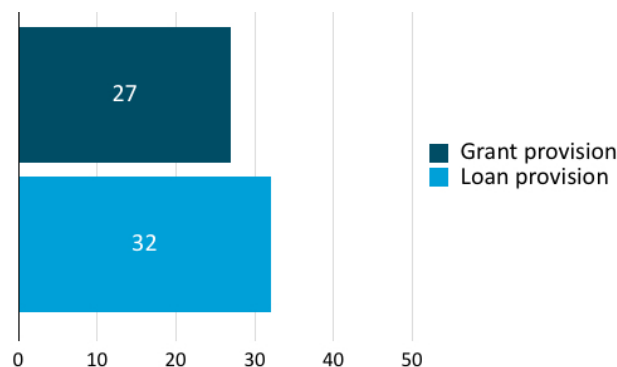


## 4.3 Comparison between grant and loan delivery

### 4.3.1 Type of financial assistance

The split between grant and loan provision in relation to bringing empty properties back into use is relatively similar, with 27% of councils providing access to grants and 32% loans.

*Graph 42: Proportion of councils (%) providing grants/loans to help bring empty properties back into use*

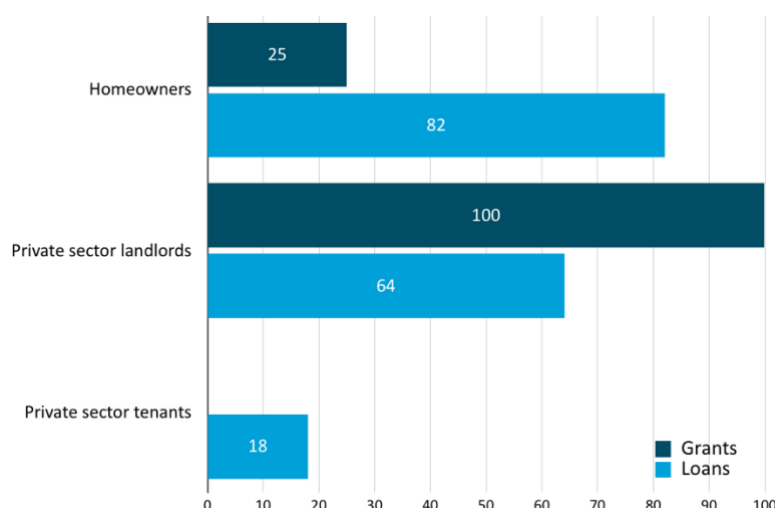


### 4.3.2 Availability

In terms of the availability of financial assistance to upgrade empty properties, there are significant differences between grant-providing and loan-providing councils as regards target groups. In terms of grant providers, availability is heavily skewed towards landlords, with 100% of councils offering grants to this group, compared to 25% who offer grants to homeowners. No councils offer grants direct to tenants. Meanwhile, the split of loan provision across these groups is more equal and skewed towards homeowners, with 82% of councils offering loans to this group, alongside 64% who target landlords and 18% who target tenants.



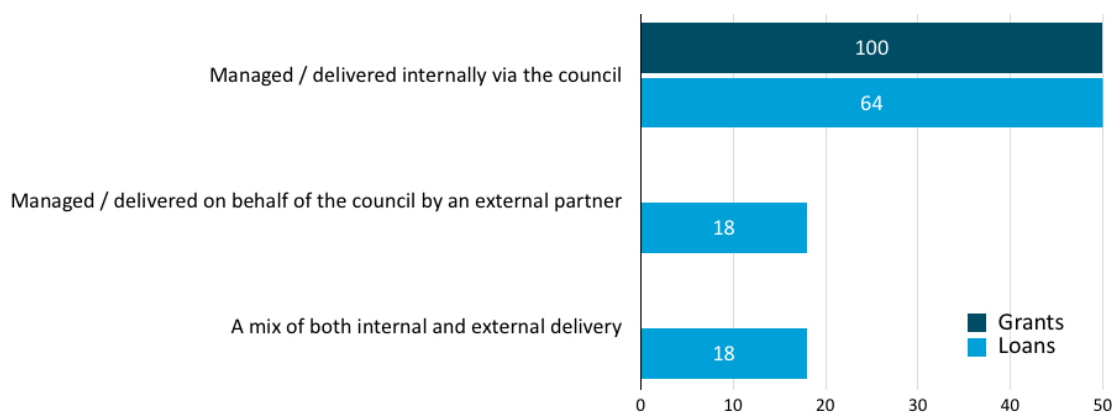
**Graph 43: Who are grants/loans available to? (% of grant/loan-providing councils)**



### 4.3.3 Delivery model

As per eligibility, there are also significant differences between grant-providing and loan-providing councils in terms of the delivery models that are used. All of the councils (100%) providing grants deliver their funding schemes solely via the council, whilst loan delivery is split across the different approaches, with 64% of councils managing their schemes internally, 18% via an external partner and a further 18% who using a mixed approach that combines both internal and external delivery elements.

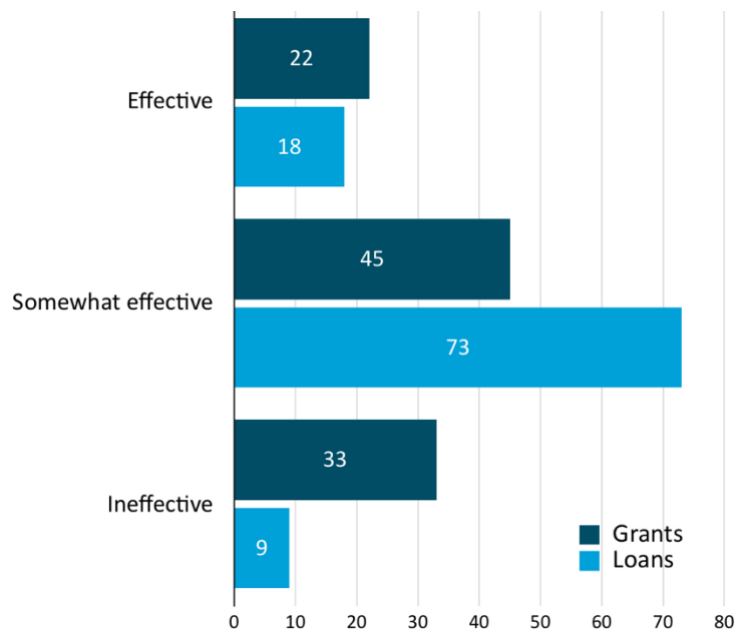
**Graph 44: How is your grant/loan funding delivered? (% of grant/loan-providing councils)**



### 4.3.4 Effectiveness

Whilst there isn't a significant amount of difference between the proportion of grant-providing and loan-providing councils who consider their current funding approach to be effective in terms of achieving local goals (22% v 18%), there is a more significant difference in relation to perceptions of ineffectiveness, with almost four times as many grant-providers viewing their approach as being ineffective as loan-providers (33% v 9%).

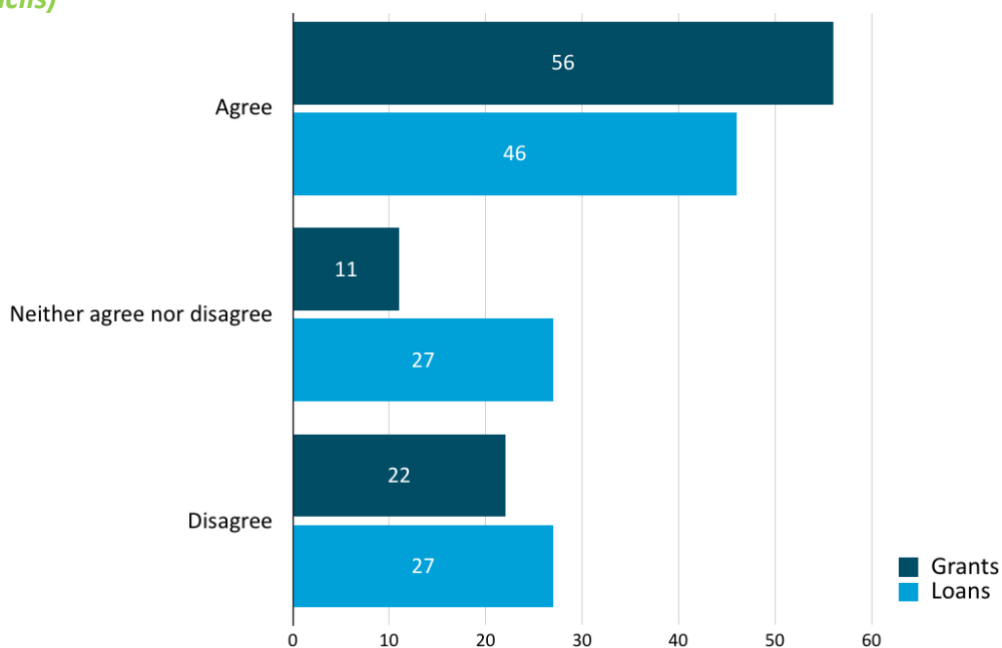
**Graph 45: How effective do you feel your current approach is towards improving non-decent private sector homes (% of grant/loan-providing councils)**



### 4.3.5 Scale of delivery

In terms of the scale of delivery, grant-providers are slightly more likely to view the current level of their provision as being sufficient to meet local need, with 56% of councils agreeing this to be the case, compared to 46% of loan-providing councils. Likewise, slightly fewer councils view their grant provision as being insufficient (22%) than councils who have a similar view about their loan provision (27%).

**Graph 46: How much do you agree/disagree that the current level of grant/loan funding provided by your council is sufficient to meet local need (% of grant/loan-providing councils)**



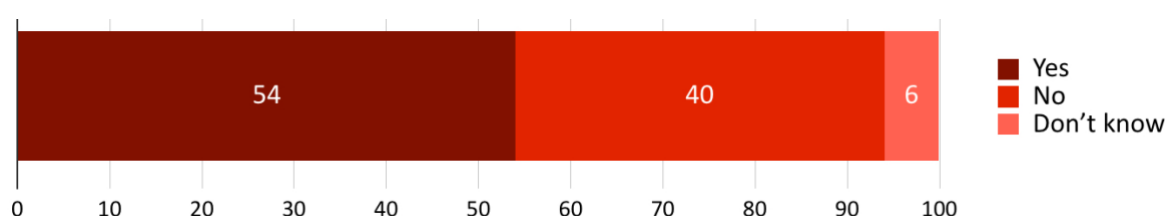
# 5. Financial assistance to improve energy efficiency

## 5.1 Grants

### 5.1.1 Grant provision

In terms of financial assistance in the context of energy efficiency or energy generation, 54% of surveyed councils currently make non-repayable grants available to help improve the energy efficiency of private sector homes in their local area. This is compared to four in ten 40% of councils who currently make no such provision.

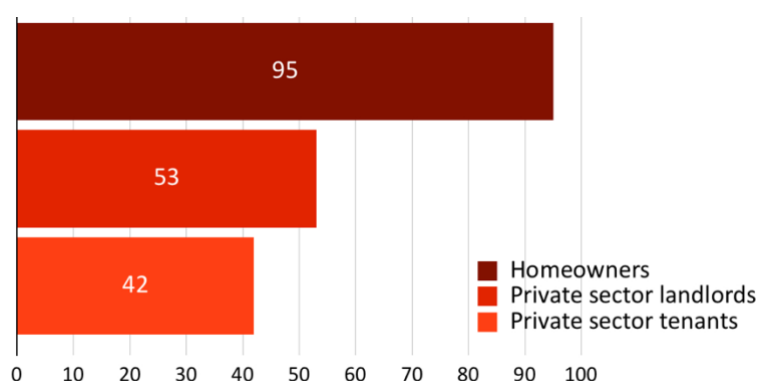
*Graph 47: Proportion (%) of councils currently making non-repayable grants available for the purpose of improving energy efficiency within private sector homes*



### 5.1.2 Grant availability

Of those councils who provide this type of grant provision, 95% provide grants targeted at homeowners, whilst 53% and 42% provide grants targeted at private sector landlords and tenants respectively.

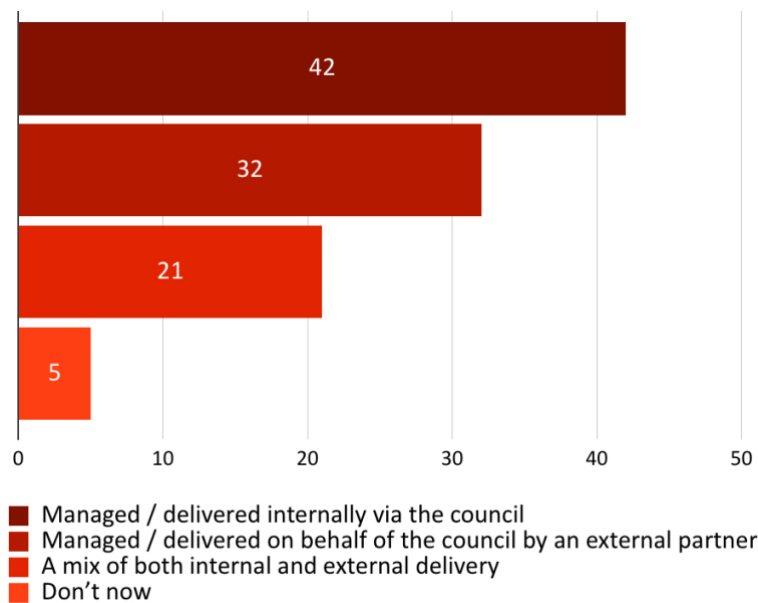
*Graph 48: Who are grants available to? (% of grant-providing councils)*



### 5.1.3 Grant delivery model

42% of councils are currently managing and delivering their existing grant scheme internally via the council, compared to 32% who use an external partner. 21% of councils highlight that they use a mixed delivery model, combining both internal and external delivery elements within their scheme.

**Graph 49: How is your grant funding currently delivered? (% of grant-providing councils)**



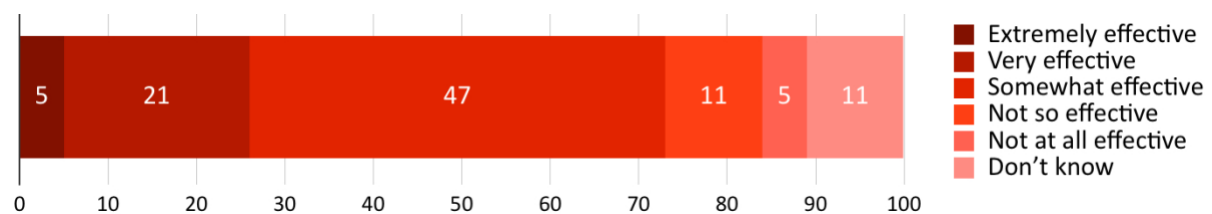
### 5.1.4 Grant effectiveness

26% of councils view their approach as being effective with regards to achieving local energy efficiency goals, whilst 16% consider it to be ineffective.

Additionally, 47% consider their approach to only be somewhat effective. Combined with those who said ineffective, this suggests that overall, 63% of councils see the need for improvement within their existing grant-led approach.

*“Grant schemes can be complex. They are often time limited, have arbitrary parameters and overlapping funding streams.”*

**Graph 50: How effective do you feel your current approach is towards improving the energy efficiency of private sector homes (% of grant-providing councils)**

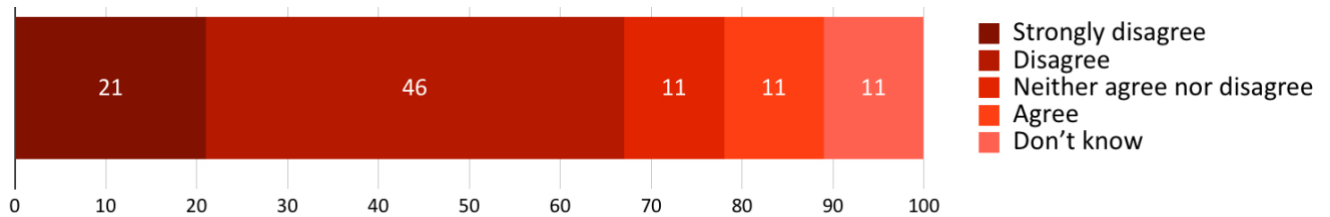


### 5.1.5 Scale of grant delivery

In a similar vein to concerns about the effectiveness of a grant-led approach, a majority of councils (67%) consider that the current level of their grant provision is insufficient to meet the scale of private sector homes that need energy efficiency improvements in their area. Only 11% of councils felt that their current level of grant provision was sufficient to meet local need.

*“We have a lack of clarity as to the scale of the issues in our area.”*

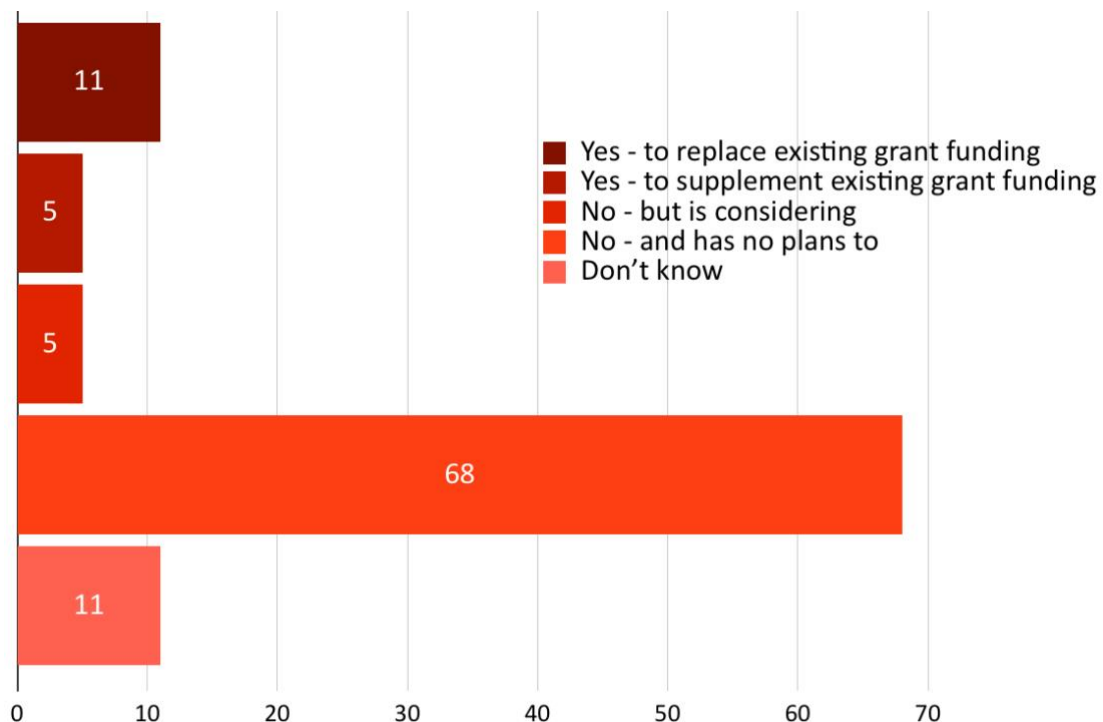
**Graph 51: How much do you agree/disagree that the current level of grant funding provided by your council is sufficient to meet local need (% of grant-providing councils)**



### 5.1.6 Introduction of loans

Interestingly, given the concerns around effectiveness and the ability to meet local need expressed by the majority of councils, 16% of councils have sought to develop their approach towards improving the energy efficiency of private sector homes by introducing home improvement loans to supplement or replace their grant provision. Whilst 11% highlighted that they introduced loans to replace their existing grant funding, only 5% used loans to supplement their grant funding and thus increase the scale of available financial support in their local area. However, 73% of councils highlighted that they have not yet introduced loans, with the majority (68%) noting that they have no plans to do so within the foreseeable future.

**Graph 52: Has your council introduced home improvement loans to replace or supplement your grant funding? (% of grant-providing councils)**

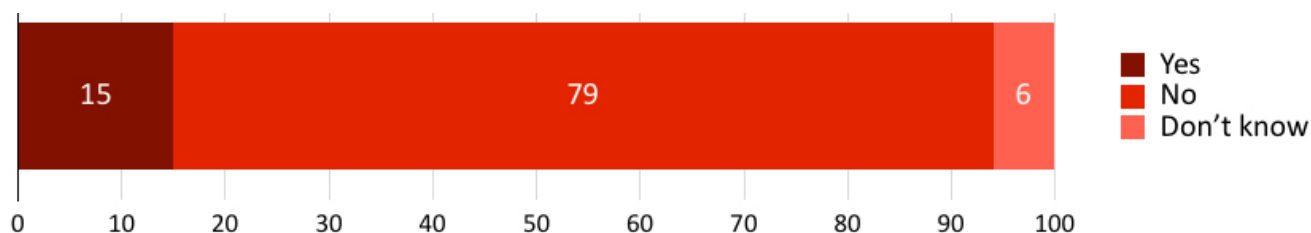


## 5.2 Loans

### 5.2.1 Loan provision

In terms of loan provision in the context of energy efficiency, 15% of surveyed councils currently provide repayable loans to help improve energy efficiency within private sector homes in their local area. This is compared to 79% of councils who currently make no such provision.

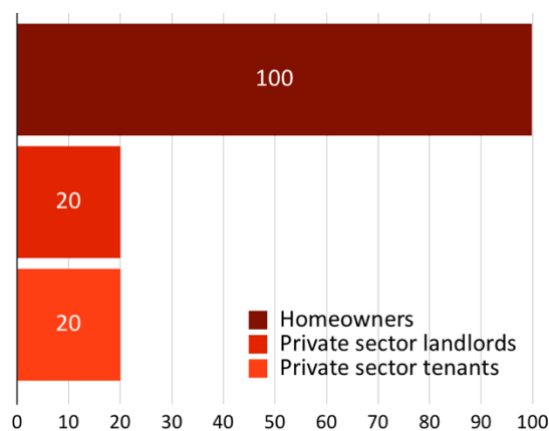
*Graph 53: Proportion (%) of councils currently making repayable loans available for the purpose of improving energy efficiency within private sector homes*



### 5.2.2 Loan availability

Of those councils who provide access to loans, 100% provide loans targeted at homeowners, whilst 20% provide loans to private sector landlords and 20% to tenants.

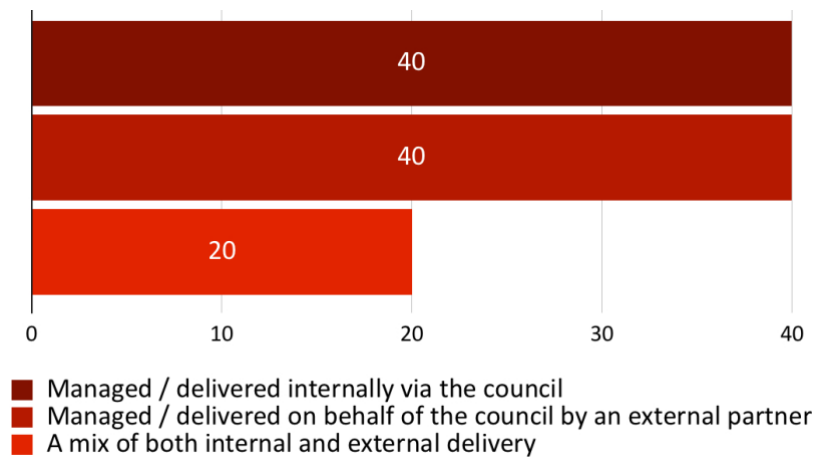
*Graph 54: Who are loans available to? (% of loan-providing councils)*



### 5.2.3 Loan delivery model

40% of councils are currently managing and delivering their loan scheme internally via the council, the same proportion as those who are using an external partner. One in five councils highlight that they use a mixed delivery model, combining both internal and external delivery elements within their scheme.

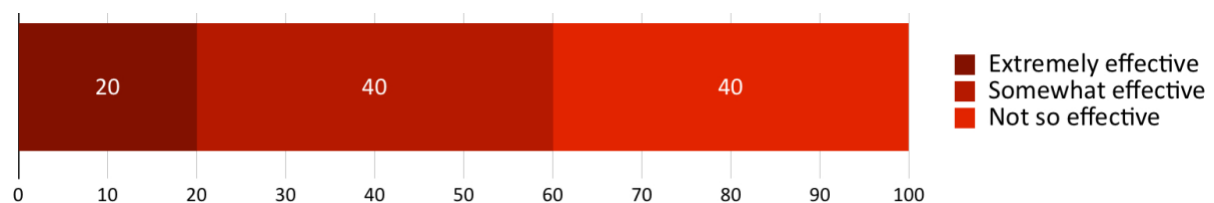
**Graph 55: How is your lending currently delivered? (% of loan-providing councils)**



### 5.2.4 Loan effectiveness

The survey results paint a mixed picture in terms of how councils view the effectiveness of their current loan provision to improve energy efficiency within private sector homes. Whilst 20% view their approach as being effective with regards to achieving local goals, double this proportion say it is ineffective. Additionally, a further 40% consider their approach to only be somewhat effective. Combined with those who said ineffective, this suggests that overall, 80% of councils see the need for improvement within their existing grant-led approach.

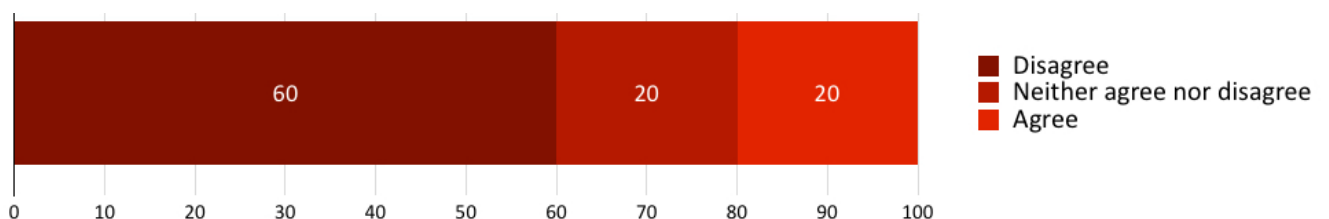
**Graph 56: How effective do you feel your current approach is towards improving the energy efficiency of private sector homes (% of loan-providing councils)**



### 5.2.5 Scale of loan delivery

In a similar vein to concerns about the effectiveness of a loan-led approach, a majority of councils (60%) consider that the current level of their loan provision is insufficient to meet the scale of private sector homes that require energy efficiency improvements in their local area. Only 20% of councils felt their current level of lending was sufficient to meet need.

**Graph 57: How much do you agree/disagree that the current level of lending provided by your council is sufficient to meet local need (% of loan-providing councils)**

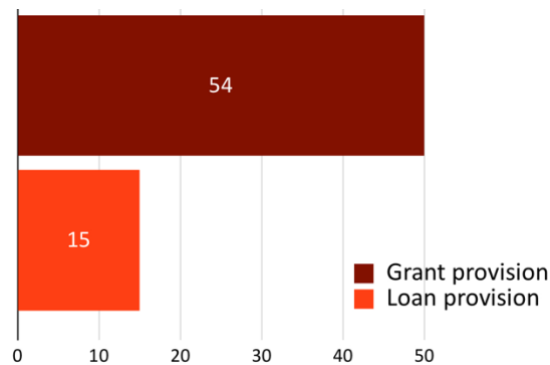


## 5.3 Comparison between grant and loan delivery

### 5.3.1 Type of financial assistance

The split between grant and loan provision in relation to supporting energy efficiency improvements is quite significant, with 54% of councils providing access to grants for this agenda, compared to 15% providing loans.

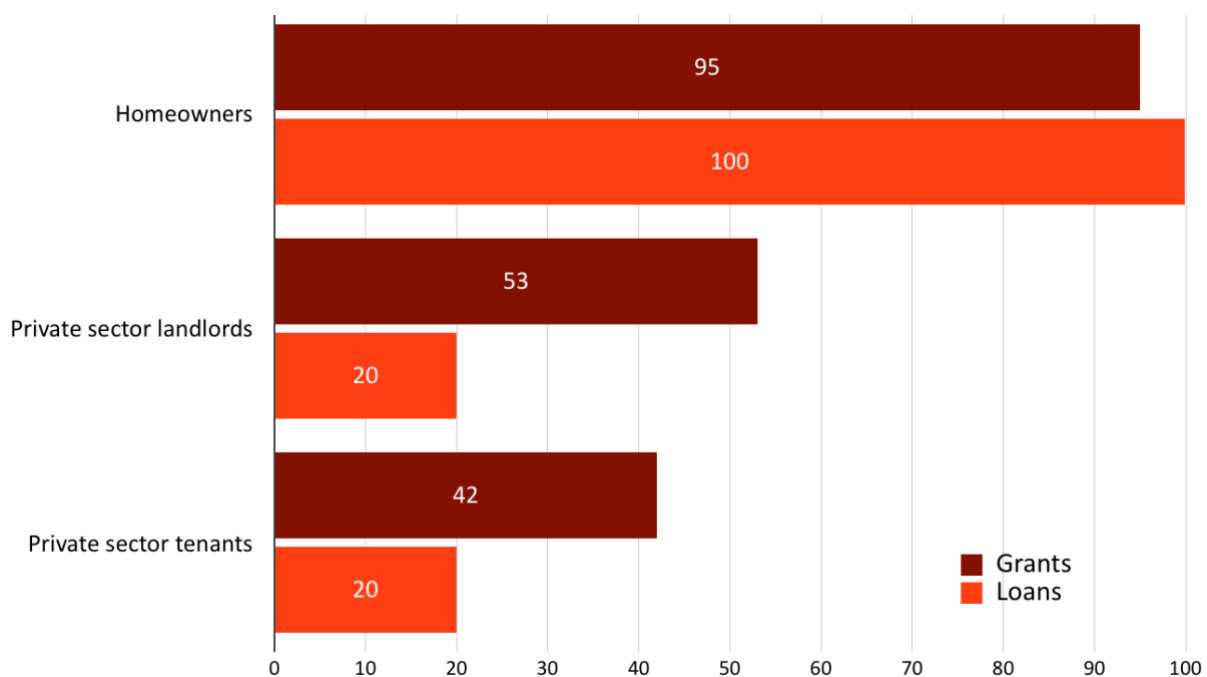
*Graph 58: Proportion of councils (%) providing grants/loans to help bring empty properties back into use*



### 5.3.2 Availability

In terms of the availability of financial assistance to make energy efficiency improvements, the proportions targeting homeowners are very similar, with 95% of grant providers and 100% of loan providers offering support to this group. It's a different picture regarding other groups however, with 53% of grant-providing councils targeting landlords, compared to 20% of those providing loans, and 42% of grant providers targeting tenants, compared to 20% of loan providers.

*Graph 59: Who are grants/loans available to? (% of grant/loan-providing councils)*

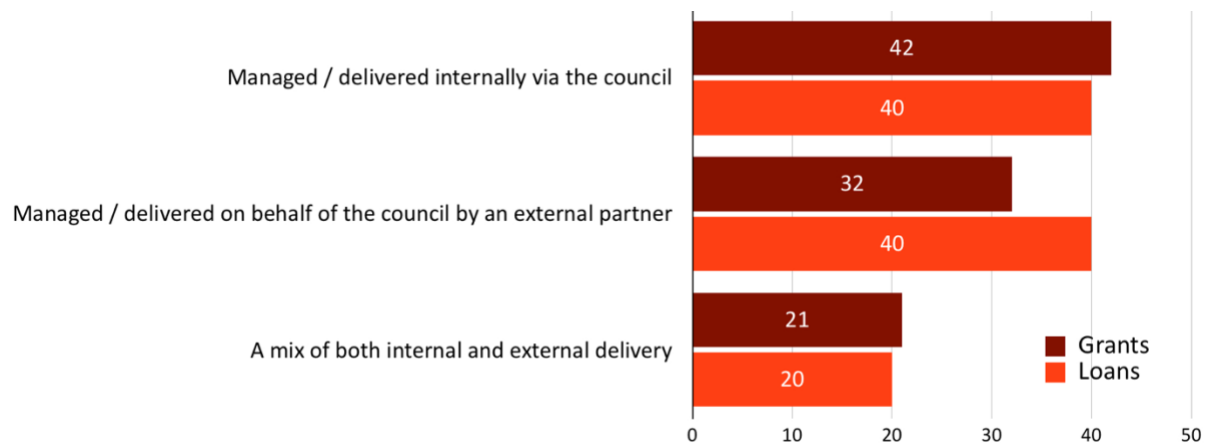




### 5.3.3 Delivery model

In terms of the delivery models used for energy efficiency funding, the results are broadly similar across both grant and loan provision. 42% of grant-providing councils and 40% of those providing loans use an internal approach, whilst slightly more loan providers (40%) deliver via an external partner compared to grant providers (32%). Similarly, the proportions using a mixed approach are almost the same at 21% and 20% for grant providers and loan providers respectively.

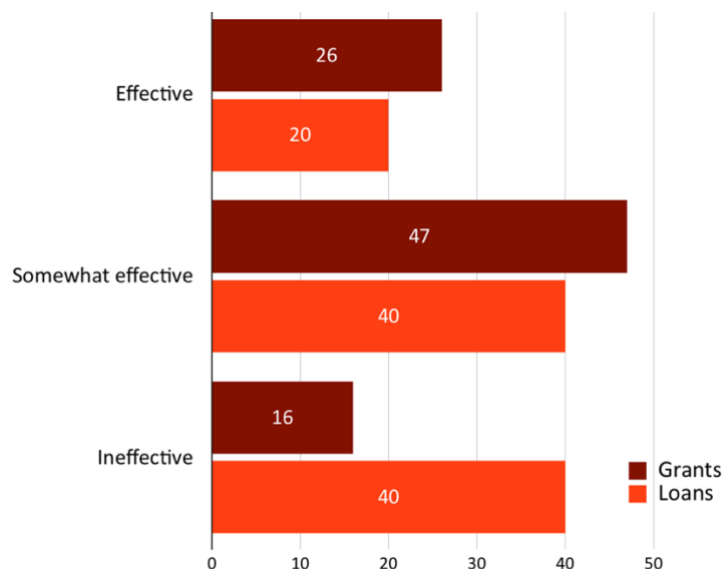
*Graph 60: How is your grant/loan funding delivered? (% of grant/loan-providing councils)*



### 5.3.4 Effectiveness

Whilst the proportions of grant-providing councils and loan-providing councils who view their current approach as being effective in terms of achieving local goals are broadly similar, at 26% and 20% respectively, 2.5 times more loan providers (40%) view their approach as being ineffective than grant providers (16%).

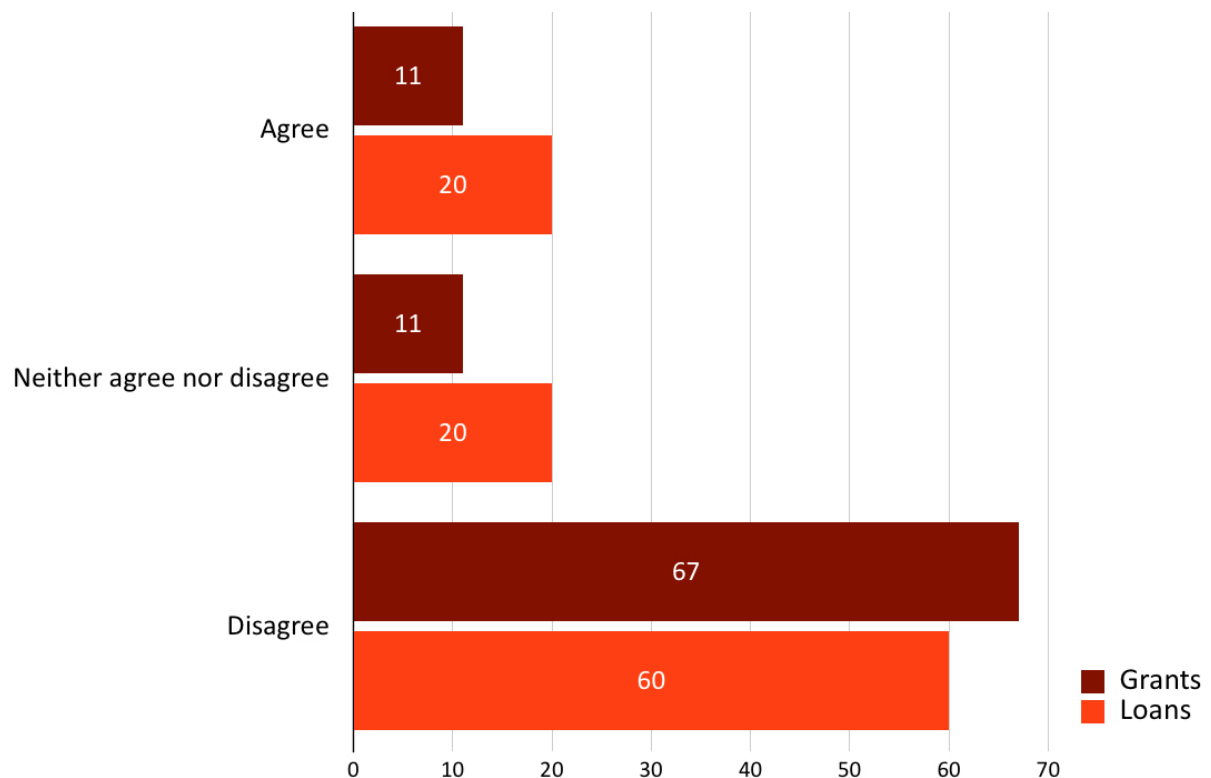
*Graph 61: How effective do you feel your current approach is towards improving the energy efficiency of private sector homes (% of grant/loan-providing councils)*



### 5.3.5 Scale of delivery

In terms of the scale of delivery, loan-providing councils are 82% more likely to consider that the level of their funding is sufficient to meet local needs than grant-providing councils (20% compared to 11%), whilst the gap in relation to those who believe their existing provision is insufficient is smaller at 12%, with slightly more grant providers (67%) considering this to be the case than loan providers (60%).

*Graph 62: How much do you agree/disagree that the current level of grant/loan funding provided by your council is sufficient to meet need (% of grant/loan-providing councils)*



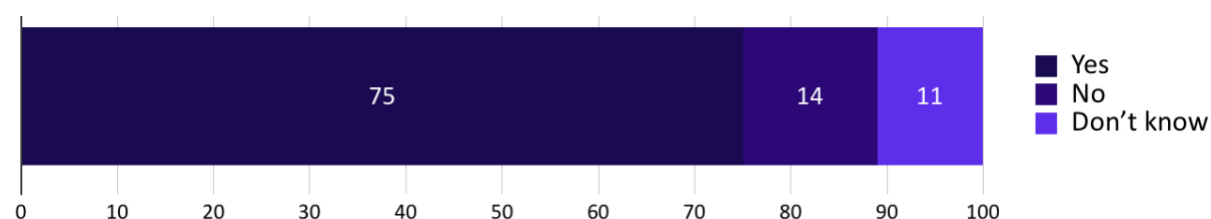
## 6. Financial assistance to make disability adaptations

### 6.1 Grants

#### 6.1.1 Grant provision

In terms of financial assistance in the context of disability adaptations, 75% of surveyed councils currently make additional/discretionary non-repayable grants available to support disability adaptations in private sector homes in their local area. This is compared to just 14% of councils who currently make no such provision and only have mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) available.

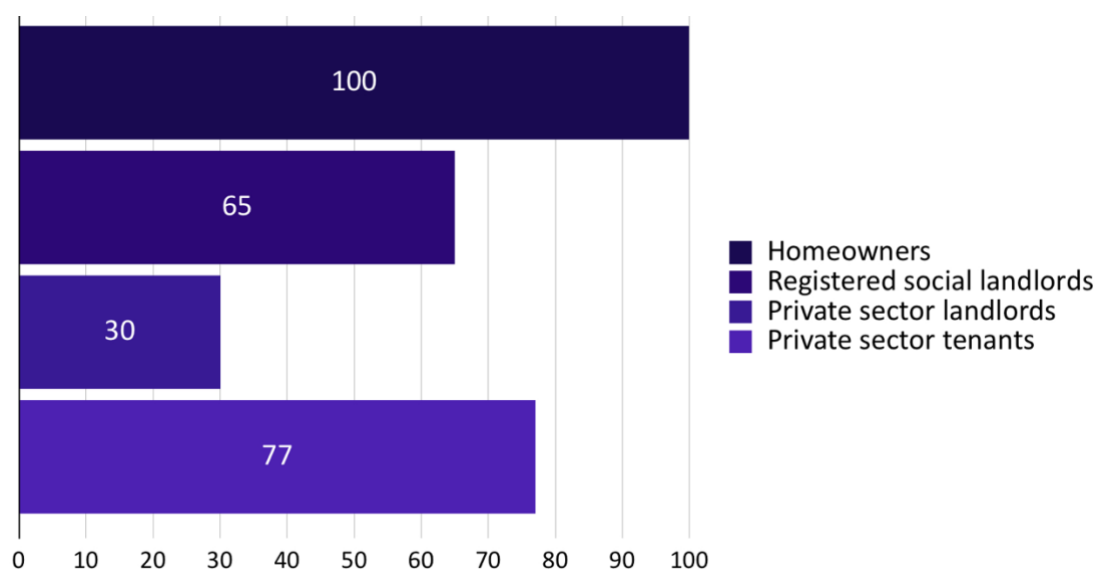
*Graph 63: Proportion (%) of councils currently making additional/discretionary non-repayable grants available to support disability adaptations within private sector homes*



#### 6.1.2 Grant availability

Of those councils who provide this type of grant provision, 100% provide grants targeted at homeowners, whilst 77% provide grants targeted at private tenants. In terms of landlords, the proportion of councils providing grants to registered social landlords (65%) is more than double that of councils providing grants to private sector landlords (30%).

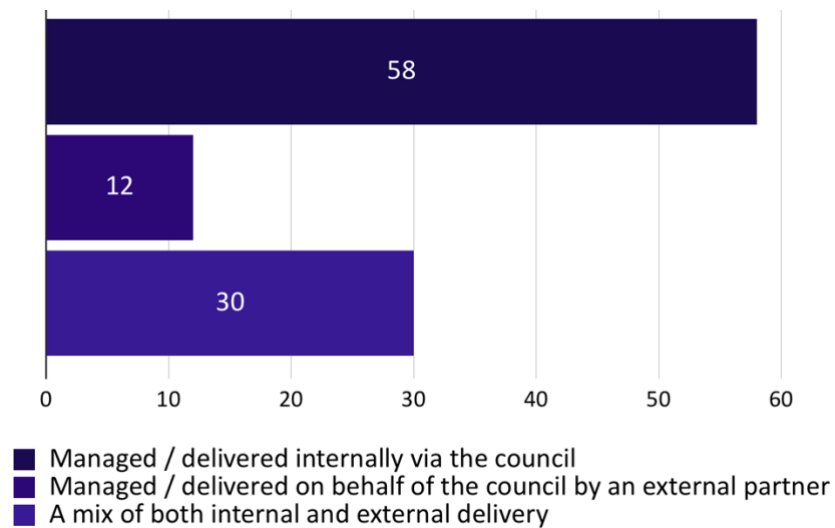
*Graph 64: Who are grants available to? (% of grant-providing councils)*



### 6.1.3 Grant delivery model

58% of councils are currently managing and delivering their existing grant scheme internally via the council, compared to only 12% who use an external partner. 30% of councils highlight that they use a mixed delivery model, combining both internal and external delivery elements within their scheme.

**Graph 65: How is your grant funding currently delivered? (% of grant-providing councils)**

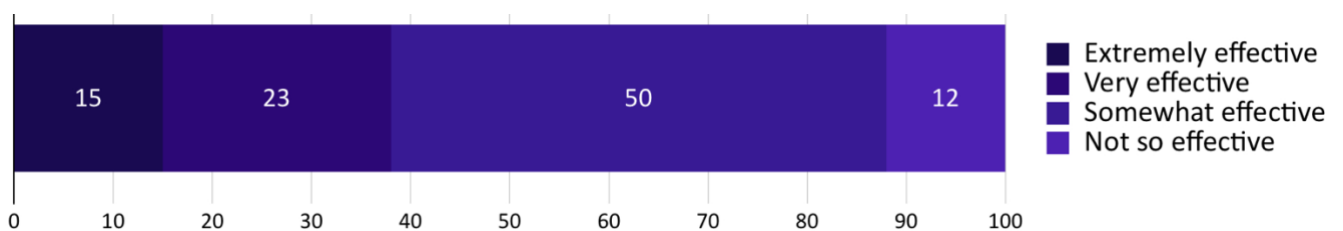


### 6.1.4 Grant effectiveness

The proportion of councils viewing their approach towards supporting disability adaptations as being effective (38%) is more than three times greater than the proportion who consider it to be ineffective (12%). However, 50% of councils only consider their approach to be somewhat effective, and when combined with those who said ineffective, this suggests that 62% of councils see the need for some improvement within their existing grant-led approach.

*“DFG funding can be used in a variety of ways to target support to those most in need. However, the funding allocated to adaptations through DFGs is insufficient to meet demand. The result is assistance being provided on a first come, first served basis.”*

**Graph 66: How effective do you feel your current approach is towards supporting disability adaptations within private sector homes (% of grant-providing councils)**

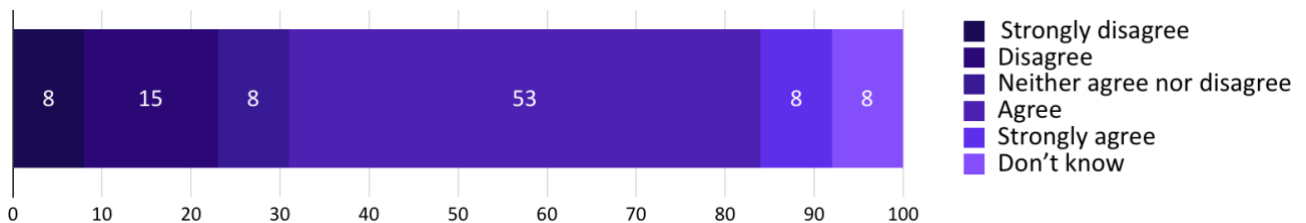


### 6.1.5 Scale of grant delivery

In terms of the scale of grant delivery, 61% of councils consider it to be sufficient to meet local need in terms of disability adaptations, compared to 23% of councils who feel that it is insufficient.

*“An ageing population will bring more challenges to the budget as time moves on.”*

**Graph 67: How much do you agree/disagree that the current level of grant funding provided by your council is sufficient to meet local need (% of grant-providing councils)**

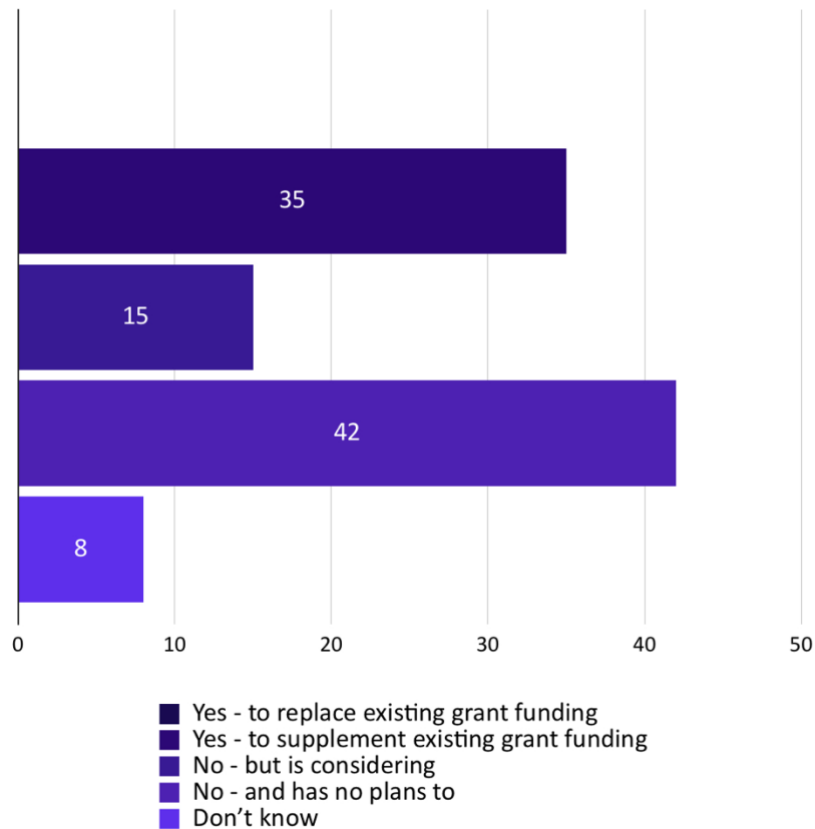


*“We’ve seen a huge increase in referrals this year, causing staffing capacity issues. High costs due to inflation has also meant budget consumption issues in the context of a static core grant. This leads to longer waiting times and more complaints.”*

### 6.1.6 Introduction of loans

35% of councils have increased the scale of their support towards disability adaptations, by supplementing their grant provision with additional loan funding. However, 57% of councils highlighted that they have not yet introduced loans, with the majority (42%) noting that they have no plans to do so within the foreseeable future.

**Graph 68: Has your council introduced home improvement loans to replace or supplement your grant funding? (% of grant-providing councils)**

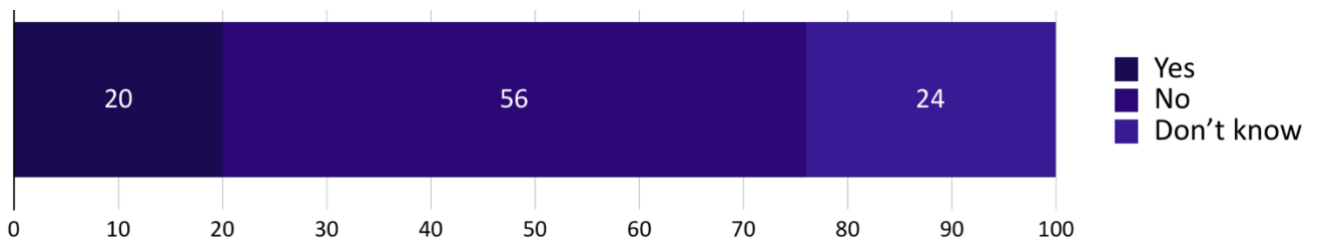


## 6.2 Loans

### 6.2.1 Loan provision

In terms of loan provision in the context of disability adaptation, 20% of surveyed councils currently provide additional/discretionary repayable loans to support disability adaptations within private sector homes in their local area. This is compared to 56% of councils who currently make no such provision.

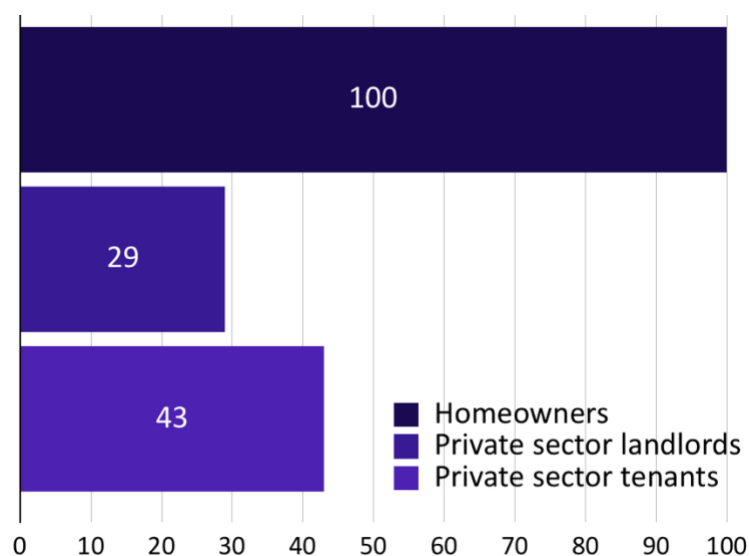
**Graph 69: Proportion (%) of councils currently making repayable loans available for the purpose of supporting disability adaptations in private sector homes**



### 6.2.2 Loan availability

Of those councils who provide access to loans, 100% provide loans targeted at homeowners, whilst 29% provide loans to private sector landlords and 43% to tenants.

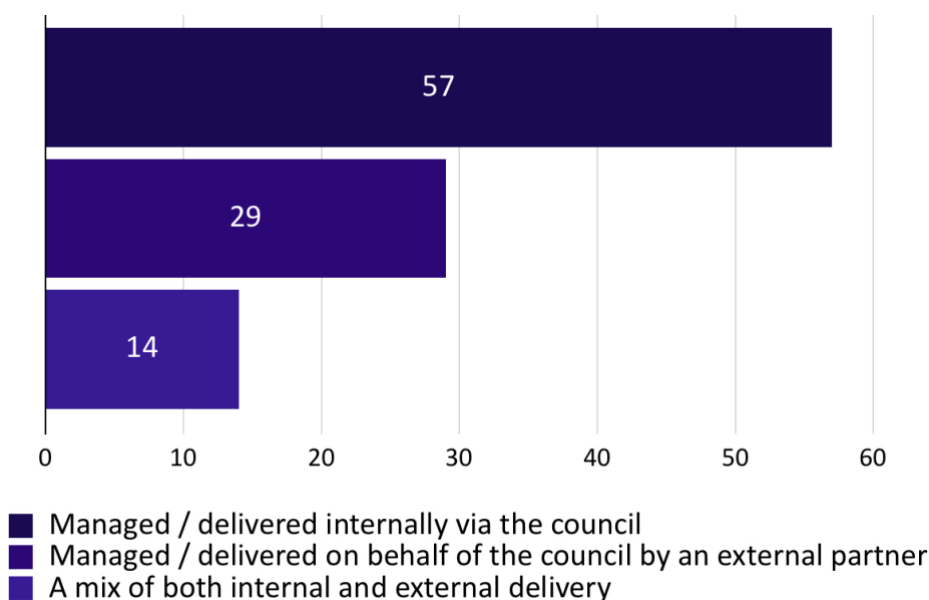
**Graph 70: Who are loans available to? (% of loan-providing councils)**



### 6.2.3 Loan delivery model

In relation to how loans are being delivered, the majority of councils (57%) currently managing and delivering their existing loan scheme internally via the council itself, whilst 29% use an external partner to manage it on their behalf. 14% of councils highlight that they use a mixed delivery model, combining both internal and external delivery elements within their scheme.

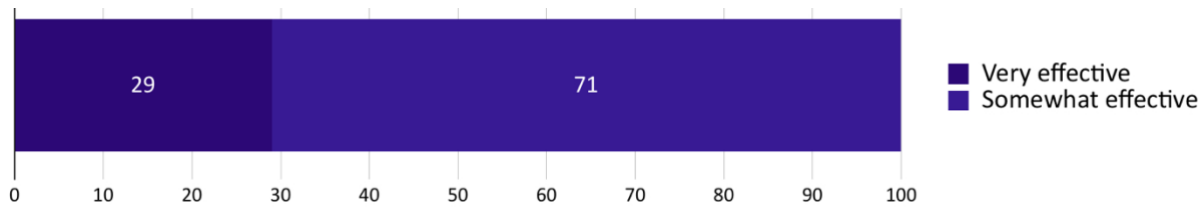
**Graph 71: How is your lending currently delivered? (% of loan-providing councils)**



### 6.2.4 Loan effectiveness

29% of councils view their current lending approach towards disability adaptations as being very effective, whilst no councils consider it to be ineffective. However, given that 71% said that they only considered their approach to be somewhat effective, this does suggest that most councils see the need for some improvement within their existing loan-led approach.

**Graph 72: How effective do you feel your current approach is towards supporting disability adaptations in private sector homes (% of loan-providing councils)**

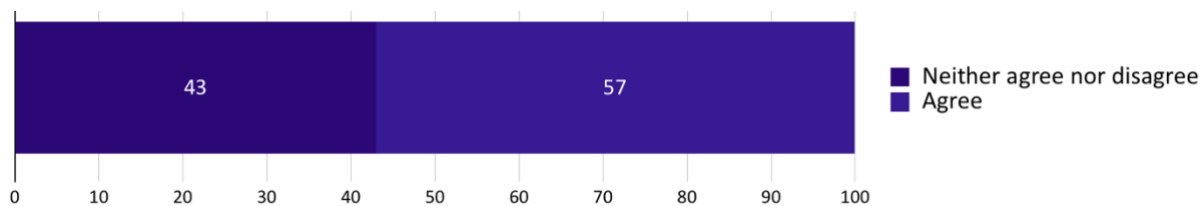


### 6.2.5 Scale of loan delivery

Most councils (55%) consider that the current level of their loan provision is sufficient to meet the scale of need with regards to disability adaptations in their local area. No councils highlighted that they consider the scale of their delivery to be insufficient, although the fact that 43% provided a neutral answer does suggest that there could be a need for increased delivery within some council areas.

*“Loans are means-tested and only available as a top-up to a DFG for homeowners who are willing to accept a legal charge on their property.”*

**Graph 73: How much do you agree/disagree that the current level of lending provided by your council is sufficient to meet local need (% of loan-providing councils)**

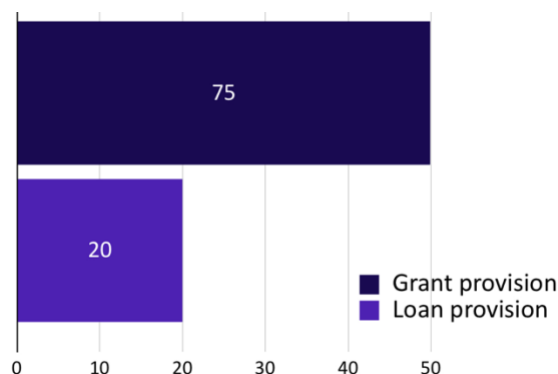


## 6.3 Comparison between grant and loan delivery

### 6.3.1 Type of financial assistance

The split between grant and loan provision in relation to the provision of additional/discretionary financial support for disability adaptations is markedly different, with almost four times as many councils providing additional/discretionary grants as those providing additional/discretionary loans (75% v 20%).

**Graph 74: Proportion of councils (%) providing grants/loans to help bring empty properties back into use**

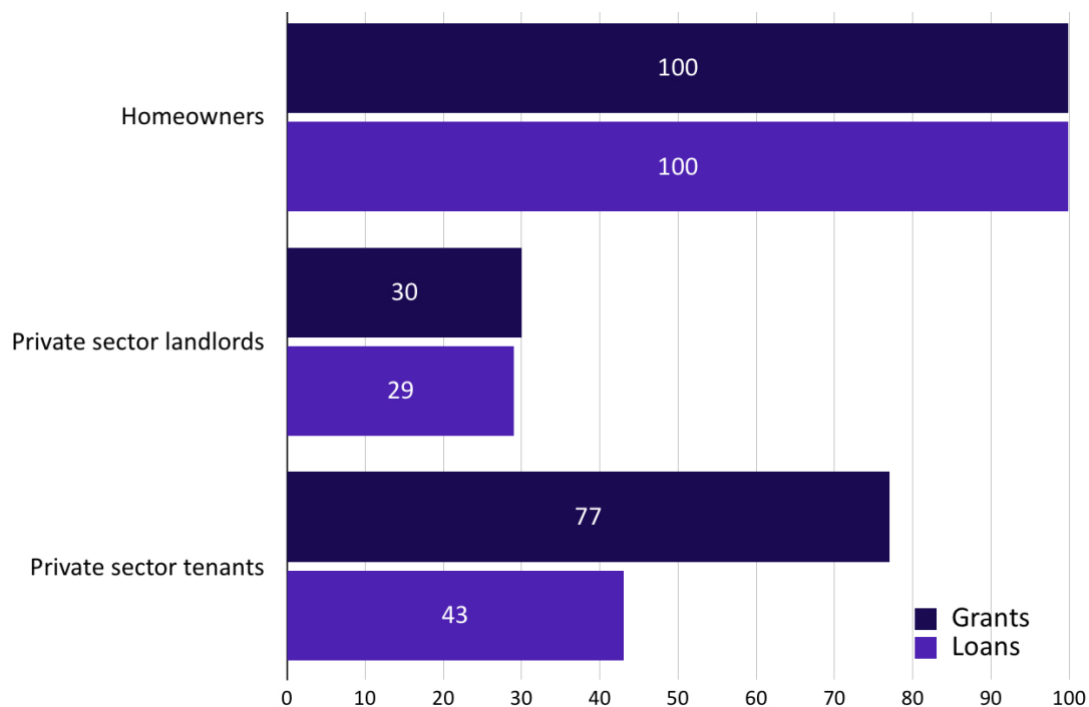




### 6.3.2 Availability

In terms of the availability of additional/discretionary assistance to support disability adaptations, 100% of both grant-providing and loan-providing councils target homeowners, whilst 30% and 29% respectively target landlords. There is a significant difference in relation to tenants however, where the proportion of grant providers targeting this group is 79% larger than the proportion of loan providers (77% v 43%).

*Graph 75: Who are grants/loans available to? (% of grant/loan-providing councils)*

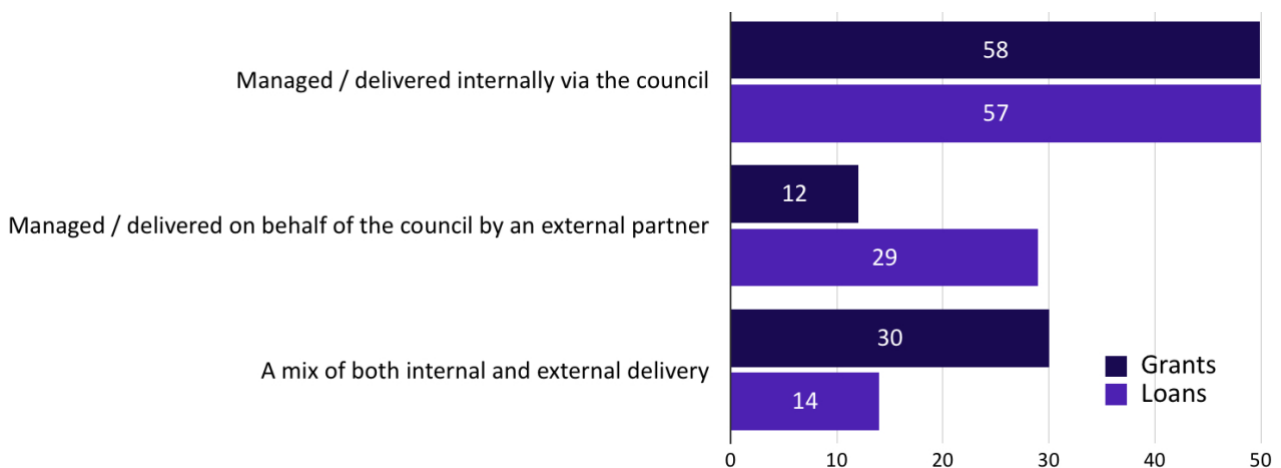


### 6.3.3 Delivery model

In terms of the delivery models used to provide additional/discretionary assistance for disability adaptations, whilst the same proportion of both grant-providing councils (58%) and loan-providing councils (57%) manage the delivery of their scheme internally, there is a significant difference between the proportion of loan providers and grant providers who use an external partner, 29% and 12% respectively.

Additionally, just over double the proportion of grant-providers used a mix of both internal and external delivery methods than loan providers (30% v 14%).

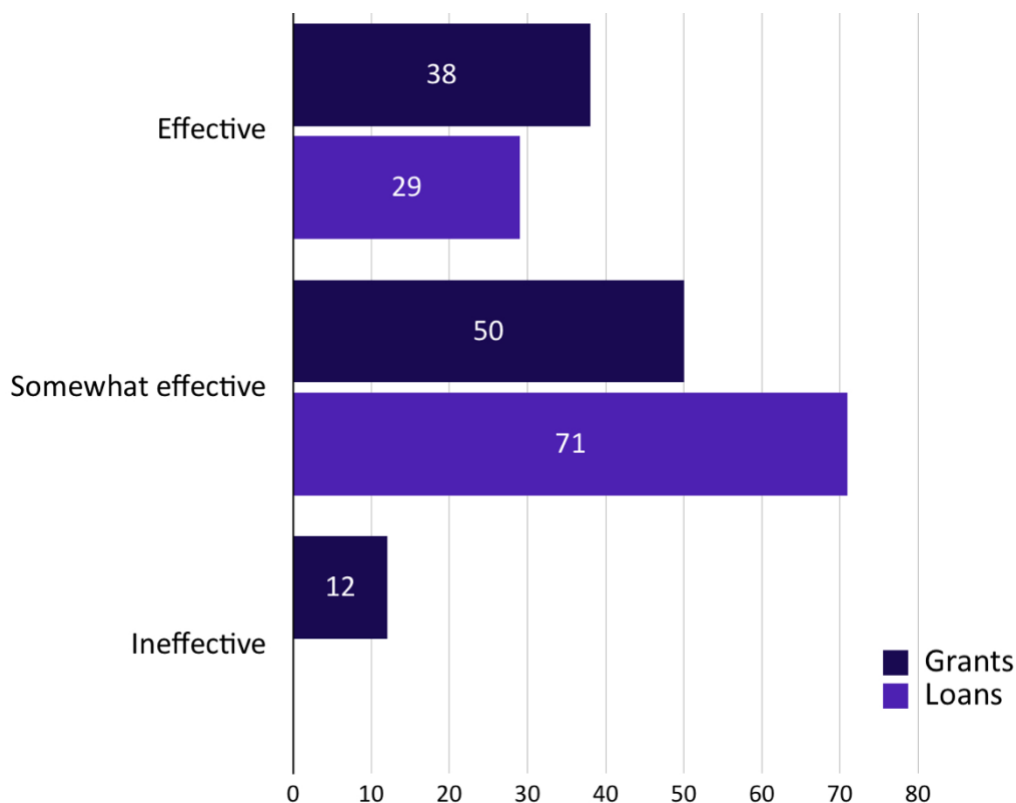
*Graph 76: How is your grant/loan funding delivered? (% of grant/loan-providing councils)*



### 6.3.4 Effectiveness

The results suggest that grant-providing councils are slightly more likely to perceive the provision of their additional/discretionary support for disability adaptations to be effective compared to loan-providing councils. Whilst 38% of grant providers consider their approach to be effective, compared to 29% of loan providers, this is mitigated to a degree by the fact that 12% of grant providers view their approach as being ineffective, whilst no loan providers consider this to be the case.

*Graph 77: How effective do you feel your current approach is towards improving non-decent private sector homes (% of grant/loan-providing councils)*



### 6.3.5 Scale of delivery

In terms of the scale of delivery, there are significant differences between grant-providing and loan-providing councils. Whilst slightly more grant providers than loan providers view the current level of their funding to be sufficient to meet local need (61% v 57%), 23% of grant providers view it to be insufficient, compared to none of the loan providers.

*Graph 78: How much do you agree/disagree that the current level of grant/loan funding provided by your council is sufficient to meet need (% of grant/loan-providing councils)*

