

Decision Session - Executive Member for Housing and Safer Neighbourhoods 21 March 2016

Report of the Assistant Director – Housing and Community Safety

2015/16 Tenant Satisfaction Survey Results

Summary

1. This is the report on the outcomes of the annual 2015/16 Tenant Satisfaction Survey, (hereafter referred to as the Survey) which is the biggest single gauge of satisfaction across landlord services by leaseholders and tenants of council owned housing stock.
2. The Survey feeds into benchmarking the service against national comparators, using Housemark.¹
3. The following tables show the headline results of the 2015/16 Survey.

Headline increases in satisfaction since 2014/15		
Tenant satisfaction with...	2015/16 figure	Increase from 2014/15
Repairs and maintenance	84.56%	↑ 3.29%
Overall quality of the home	87.19%	↑ 4.81%
Overall service provided by landlord	88.67%	↑ 2.92%
Opportunity to make views known	73.76%	↑ 4.96%

Headline decreases in satisfaction since 2014/15		
Tenant satisfaction with...	2015/16 figure	Decrease from 2014/15
Neighbourhood as a place to live	81.27%	↓ 1.1%
Generally, the way enquiries are dealt with	78.93%	↓ 1.96%
Ease of making a complaint	72.73%	↓ 5.77%
Information and advice provided when making complaint	57.62%	↓ 6.74%

¹ Housemark is the independent core benchmarking service that CYC uses. Details at <https://www.housemarkbusinessintelligence.co.uk/>

Ability of staff to deal with queries at first point of contact	78.78%	↓8.69%
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4. A breakdown of all of the questions is shown in Annex 1.

Recommendations

5. The Executive Member is asked to:

- consider the results of the 2015/16 Tenant Satisfaction Survey and note the officer comments regarding future actions
- agree to run a Tenant Satisfaction Survey for 2016/17

Reason: To ensure that the Council has up to date information regarding customer satisfaction, enabling landlord and building services to target resources and improvements to those services prioritised by customers.

Background

6. The Survey was conducted by the Strategic Business Intelligence Hub (independently of Housing Services) between October and December 2015. It was primarily carried out by post but contact by email and text was also used to encourage tenants to complete the survey online. A randomly selected representative sample of 3,500 tenants was contacted, producing a 25% response rate (878 respondents). This was a cross sectional study, which means the sampling method used reflected the demographics of the population, although the response did not.
7. The 2015/16 results are statistically significant to within a +/- 2.48% confidence interval.
8. Several new questions were introduced into the 2015/16 survey to ensure the results were compatible to feed in to Housemark benchmarking. Extra questions around internet usage were also added to obtain data to feed into the Council's wider Digital Inclusion work.
9. Survey questions and results are grouped according to housing's four themes, the broad content of which are shown in the table below.

Housing theme	Tenant Satisfaction with...
Your Property	<i>Repairs, gas servicing and overall property condition</i>
Your Place	<i>Place to live, neighbourhood and estate services</i>
Your Service	<i>Customer service, complaints, rent and overall service</i>
Your Say	<i>Resident involvement and tenant influence</i>

Consultation

10. Core questions from Housemark's 'STAR'² survey are asked each year to enable satisfaction to be benchmarked against other housing providers. Some new questions were added in accordance with this. Other questions were amended through discussions with members of the housing service to ensure results could feed meaningfully into service improvement.

Analysis

Theme 1: Your Property

11. Tenant satisfaction with repairs, gas servicing and overall property condition has mainly increased, as shown in the table below.

Tenant satisfaction with...	2015/16 figure	Variance from 2014/15
Increases in satisfaction since 2014/15		
Repairs and maintenance	84.56%	↑ 3.29%
Overall quality of the home	87.19%	↑ 4.81%
Gas servicing arrangements	91.45%	↑ 3.30%
Being able to make an appointment for a repair	83.24%	↑ 2.09%
Overall quality of the repair	87.66%	↑ 1.92%
Repair done 'right first time'	81.52%	↑ 2.56%
Repair operatives doing 'the job you expected'	87.23%	↑ 2.27%
Overall service received with repair	85.07%	↑ 1.84%
Decreases in satisfaction since 2014/15		
Speed repair was completed	85.05%	↓ 0.57%
Attitude of repair workers	91.62%	↓ 1.24%

12. The above results show that satisfaction has increased with the vast majority of areas within the 'Your Property' theme. Satisfaction notably increased with the overall quality of the home, overall repairs and maintenance service and with gas servicing arrangements.

² Housemark's Survey of Tenants and Residents replaced the statutory STATUS survey.

13. With repairs, the highest levels of satisfaction were with the attitude of repair staff (satisfaction at 91.62% - a decrease of 1.24% from 2014/15), keeping dirt and mess to a minimum (satisfaction at 90.35% - consistent with last year's result) and with the overall quality of the repair (satisfaction at 87.66% - a 1.92% increase from 2014/15).
14. The lowest levels of satisfaction with repairs were with the amount of time before the work started (satisfaction at 77.76% - consistent with 2014/15), the repair being done 'right first time' (satisfaction was 81.52% - 2.56% increase on 2014/15) and with being able to make an appointment (satisfaction at 83.24% - a 2.09% increase from 2014/15).
15. Building Services are improving the service in a number of key ways. These include developing individual quality targets for tradespersons, revamping the tradespersons code of conduct, implementing a sub-contractor contract and expanding mobile working. Furthermore, the service is implementing a text messaging notification service for residents and a new Tenants' Choice contract.

Theme 2: Your Place

16. Tenant satisfaction with neighbourhood and estate services has mainly increased, as shown in the table below. However, satisfaction with the neighbourhood as a place to live has decreased – the only core question to have done so. Several of the key satisfaction measures have changed by less than 1% compared to 2014/15.

Tenant satisfaction with...	2015/16 figure	Variance from 2014/15
Increases in satisfaction since 2014/15		
Internal cleaning service	77.56%	↑ 3.47%
Decreases in satisfaction since 2014/15		
Neighbourhood as a place to live	81.27%	↓1.1%
Overall appearance of neighbourhood	82.76%	↓1%
No material change in satisfaction since 2014/15 (<1% variance)		
Grounds maintenance service	74.34%	↑ 0.33%
Satisfaction with estate service provided	74.24%	↑ 0.66%
Estate worker	73%	↓0.83%

17. Estate services such as grounds maintenance, litter picking and internal cleaning are delivered by council's Public Realm team who also manage

the estate workers. Communal repairs are delivered by Building Services.

18. When asked to rank estate based problems, tenants cited dog fouling the highest (58.66% – down 8.47% from last year), followed by car parking (56.02% - down 11.09% from last year), condition of roads and pavements (54.37%) and rubbish or litter (49.36% - down 8.47% from last year). Interestingly, car parking, dog fouling and rubbish and litter are all areas which have seen a significant improvement from 2014/15.
19. Amendments to the tenancy agreement will make it a requirement that tenants request permission to keep a pet. There will also be best practice guidance on keeping a pet.
20. During next year there will be an overall review of the Estate Improvement Grant. The intention is to link any future programme to key issues that tenants are raising such as parking and storage. Potentially any programme will be capitalised to ensure there is a coordinated programme across the city.
21. As part of a review of the landlord service team any revision of the structure will look at how the service can improve on the cleaning of communal areas.

Theme 3: Your Service

22. Satisfaction with service delivery was mixed, as shown in the table below.

Tenant satisfaction with...	2015/16 figure	Variance from 2014/15
Increases in satisfaction since 2014/15		
Overall service provided by landlord	88.67%	↑ 2.92%
Helpfulness of staff	81.00%	↑ 2.00%
Way complaints dealt with	61.44%	↑ 4.99%
Moving/swapping home	43.66%	↑ 8.11%
Speed complaint dealt with	39.22%	↑ 2.77%
Rent providing value for money	84.44%	↑ 2.19%
Decreases in satisfaction since 2014/15		
Ability of staff to deal with query at first point of contact	78.78%	↓ 8.69%
Ability of staff to deal with query efficiently and effectively	74.79%	↓ 1.89%
Ease of making complaint	72.73%	↓ 5.77%

Information and advice provided	57.62%	↓ 6.74%
No material change in satisfaction since 2014/15 (<1% variance)		
Final outcome of query	75.95%	↓0.73%
Final outcome of complaint	40.4%	↑ 0.03%

23. Satisfaction with the way the landlord responds to certain issues was highest with reporting repairs (86.06% generally satisfied), and dissatisfaction was highest with the way anti-social behaviour is dealt with (49.02% generally dissatisfied).
24. With different aspects of complaints, satisfaction was highest with the ease of making a complaint – significantly higher than any other aspect at 72.73%. Dissatisfaction was highest with the speed of dealing with complaints, at 49.02%.
25. It is important to note that the detailed responses about complaints are drawn from a small sample – 175 tenants – who answered ‘yes’ to whether they had made a complaint to their landlord in the last 12 months. Although not statistically significant, this number of responses provides a good indicator of satisfaction with complaints. Some 22% of respondents had made a complaint to the landlord in the last 12 months, a 7% increase from 2014/15, and a 16% increase from 2011/12. This appears to show a trend of the number of tenants making a complaint to the landlord increasing year on year.
26. This year, several new questions about internet usage were introduced into the ‘Your Service’ section of the survey. The results of this showed a 10% decrease of those reporting to not use the internet at all, and a 10% increase in those using a smart phone to access the internet.
27. Online shopping, social media/email and online banking were cited as the most popular activities that tenants use the internet for. Further, only 13% of tenants said ‘yes’ when asked whether they would be interested in participating in internet skills sessions – analysis shows that the vast majority (77%) of those that answered yes to this question were aged over 45. The data gathered from the internet questions has been shared with the Council’s Digital City Manager, and will feed into shaping the Council’s wider Digital Inclusion work.
28. The review of landlord services will look at creating a tailored, proactive, holistic management of tenancies, dovetailing with and complementing council and other services for the benefit of tenants. Linking in to the ward teams to highlight and promote the wellbeing of residents and their environs in managed areas. Efficient, customer focused services that are top performing whilst meeting the complex needs of customers.

29. The 'Frontline' Project is the development of a new model of council housing management. Frontline is a patch-based model involving named officers working with all households in their patch. There will be an emphasis on more contact with customers in their own homes and all households will receive a periodic visit, based on their profile, to discuss their tenancy and a wide range of support or advice will be drawn-in from the relevant specialists for those households who need it.
30. Clearly these changes will be a radical change from the current way services are delivered and they will take time to fully realise the benefits. It is hoped that they will tackle some of the issues such as the ability to deal with query at first point of contact, staff will be able to deliver more effective and efficient service and staff will be empowered to deliver services without referral to managers.

Theme 4: Your Say

31. Satisfaction with tenant involvement has mainly increased, as shown in the table below.

Tenant satisfaction with...	2015/16 figure	Variance from 2014/15
Increases in satisfaction since 2014/15		
Opportunity to make views known	73.76%	↑ 4.94%
Landlord listens to views and acts on them	65.72%	↑ 4.46%
Landlord informing residents about things that affect them	77.18%	↑ 2.08%
No material change in satisfaction since 2014/15 (<1% variance)		
Landlord giving tenants chance to have a say in how their area is maintained/looked after	65.44%	↑ 0.53%

32. The results show that satisfaction has increased with most areas of tenants giving their views to the landlord, most notably with tenants' opportunity to make their views known and with the landlord listening to views and acting on them.
33. Staff are currently reviewing the way forward on tenant engagement. It is recognised that whilst the traditional methods of consultation have a place they clearly don't reach the views of a wider range of tenants. Any revisions will involve engagement with a wider demographic making use of social media and improved profiling information on households.

Service Improvement

34. The results from the survey have been broken down by tenancy patch which allows the data to be used to target issues in particular areas.
35. The results will inform landlord services' area based local action plans, using detailed patch based data to tailor plans and address local concerns and priorities.
36. Results will inform operational team plans, incorporating specific improvement actions for those areas where low customer satisfaction is a concern.

Equalities Monitoring

37. The age and gender profile of respondents is shown in Annex 2 compared to the profile of the overall tenant population.
38. The age group category was not representative of the current tenant age profile. The over 65 category was over represented by 16%, while all of the other age groups were under represented. The 16-24 category was under represented by 4%, the 25-44 category by 15% and the 16-24 category by 6%.
39. The gender split of respondents was generally more representative than the age split, with a 6% over representation of females. The full break down can be seen in Annex 2.
40. There are no significant variations in satisfaction when analysed by equalities strands.

Council Plan

41. This survey supports the Council Plan priority 'a Council that listens to residents', which commits the council to working with communities to deliver the services they want.

Implications

42. The implications arising from this report are:
 - **Financial** – None. The survey is delivered within existing budgets.
 - **Human Resources** – None.

- **Equalities** – Responses have been analysed by equalities strands to check for variances in satisfaction. The respondent profile is detailed in Annex 2.
- **Legal** – None.
- **Crime and Disorder** – None.
- **Information Technology** – None.
- **Property** – None.

Risk Management

43. This survey provides the key measure of tenant satisfaction with housing services. Its results also feed into benchmarking work through Housemark, which enables us to measure how the service is performing compared to national peers. Without the information gained through the survey there is a risk of the Council being unable to target resources at the services customers feel are most in need of attention.

Contact Details

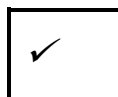
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**Report
approved**



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Annexes

- Annex 1 Tenant Satisfaction Survey Results
- Annex 2 Table showing age and gender profile of respondents