
**Decision Session - Executive Member for
Housing and Safer Neighbourhoods**

28 February 2019

Report of the Assistant Director – Housing and Community Safety

2018/19 Tenant Satisfaction Survey Results

Summary

1. This is the report on the outcomes of the 2018/19 Annual Tenant Satisfaction Survey, (hereafter referred to as the Survey) which is the biggest single gauge of satisfaction across Landlord Services by tenants of City of York Council (CYC) owned housing stock.

Recommendations

2. The Executive Member is asked to:
 - Consider the results of the 2018/19 Tenant Satisfaction Survey and note the officer comments regarding future action
 - Agree to run a Tenant Satisfaction Survey for 2019/20.

Reason: to ensure that CYC has up to date information regarding customer satisfaction, enabling landlord and building services to target resources and improvements to those services prioritised by customers, and to feed into the annual Housemark benchmarking return.

Background / Process

3. The Survey was conducted by the Business Intelligence Hub (independently of housing services) between September and November 2018.
4. While the Survey was primarily carried out by post, contact by email was also used to encourage tenants to complete the survey online, and all participants had the option to complete the survey online rather than filling in a paper form.

5. A randomly selected representative sample of 2,800 tenants (from 7,479 total lead tenants) was contacted. We received 595 responses representing 21% of the sample population, which is 8% of the total lead tenant population. This was a cross-sectional study, which means that although the sampling method used reflected the demographics of the population, the response did not.
6. The 2018/19 results are statistically significant to within a +/- 3.6% confidence interval (CI), so the “true” answer, if all tenants had responded, is within +/- 3.6% of the percentages quoted in this report..
7. This is the third running of the 25 question survey, having been reduced from 44 questions in 2015/16.
8. The Tenant Scrutiny Panel was given the opportunity to contribute to the 2018/19 Survey and a small number of questions have been added or changed to reflect their views.
9. Any reported change is done so in percentage points (PP) unless otherwise stated. For example if an indicator with a value of 10% increased by 5%, the product would be 15% (10%+5%PP), rather than 10.5% (10%+[5/100]%).
10. Throughout this report results and commentary are provided in relation to levels of ‘satisfaction’. This variable is the sum of those who responded to a question as either ‘very satisfied’ or ‘fairly satisfied’. Therefore all comparisons made to ‘satisfaction’ relate to the change in positive satisfaction.

Summary

11. The Survey feeds into benchmarking the housing service against national comparators, using Housemark.¹ Housemark prescribes a set of core questions which are detailed in table 1; asking these core questions every year allows CYC to measure its performance on tenant satisfaction against other social housing providers.
12. It is not possible to compare our 2018/19 performance with other providers’ (such as Housing Associations or Local Authorities) 2018/19 performance, as their data is not released until later in 2019. For this reason the 2017/18 Housemark national benchmark is used as a general gauge of where CYC sits with national comparators. A caveat of this data is that it is provided to the nearest whole number. The Housemark

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

national average tends not to alter much over time, so it is reasonable to assume that the 2018/19 figures, when published, will not differ all that much from the 2017/18 figures quoted here.

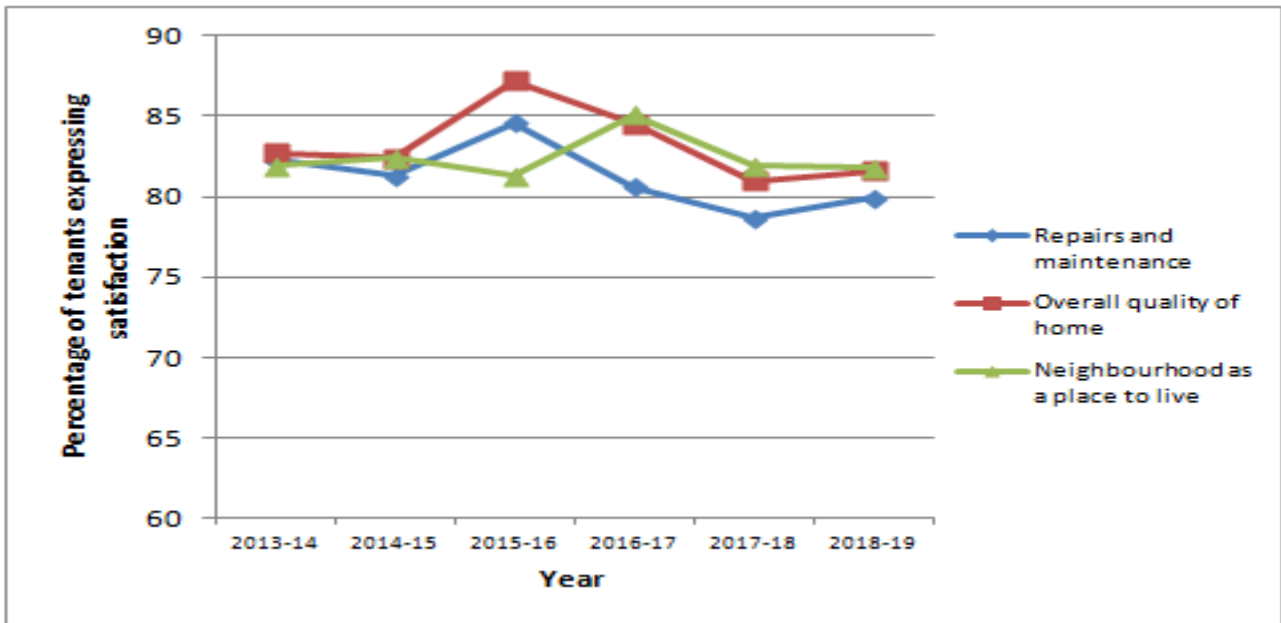
13. Only table 1 provides information in relation to the national benchmark. Throughout this report any comparison made to the national benchmark is done so in the commentary. All information in tables refers to the current year's results (2018/19) compared to last year's results (2017/18).

Table 1 shows how CYC performed on the Housemark core questions compared with its performance in 2017/18. Please note that core questions are denoted by an asterisk (*) throughout this report.

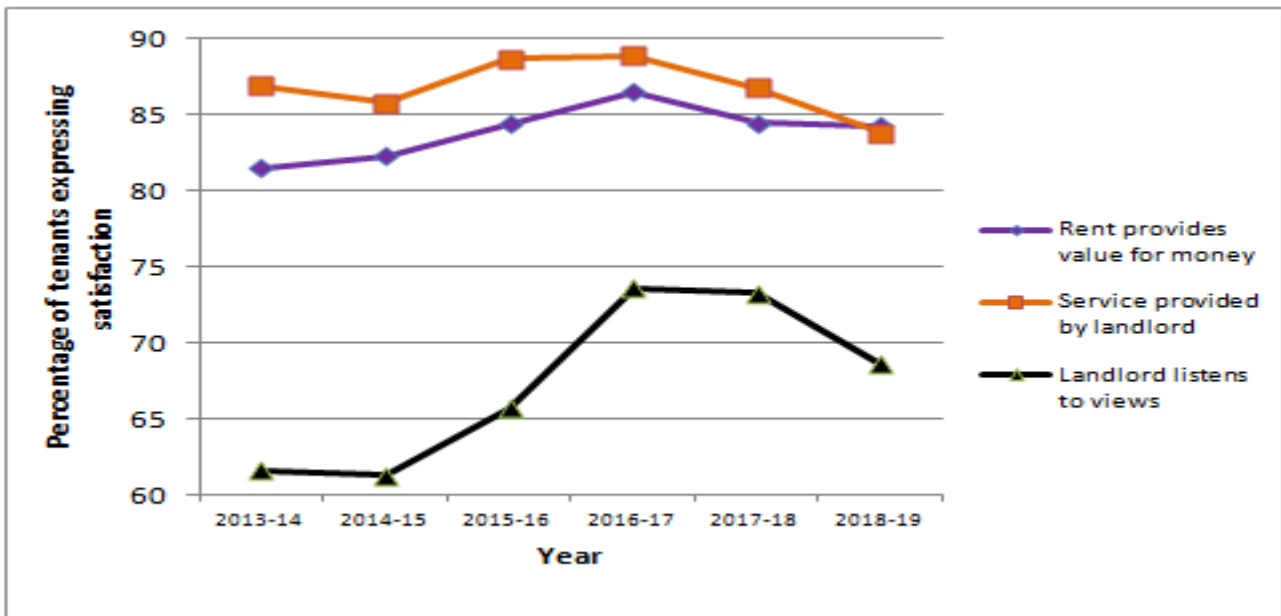
Table 1: Housemark core questions	2018/19	Difference
Repairs and maintenance*	79.9%	+1.1%
Overall quality of their home*	81.6%	+0.7%
Neighbourhood as a place to live*	81.8%	-0.1%
Rent provides value for money*	84.3%	-0.2%
Service provided by the landlord*	83.8%	-3.0%
Landlord listens to their views and acts on them*	68.6%	-4.7%

14. Of the six core questions, there were two notable decreases in satisfaction, one improvement and the rest changed by less than one percent.
15. Graphs 1 and 2 on the following page show how performance on the Housemark core questions has changed over the last five years.

Graph 1: Percentage of tenants expressing satisfaction with: Repairs and maintenance; Overall quality of home; and Neighbourhood as a place to live, 2013-14 to 2018-19



Graph 2: Percentage of tenants expressing satisfaction with: Rent providing value for money; and maintenance; Service provided by landlord; and Landlord listens to views, 2013-14 to 2018-19



16. The following tables show the most significant fluctuations in satisfaction compared to last year.

Table 2: Headline improvements in satisfaction since 2017/18		
Tenant satisfaction with...	2018/19	Change from 2017/18
Being told when workers would call	86.4%	+3.1%
Repairs and maintenance*	79.9%	+1.1%
Overall quality of your home*	81.6%	+0.7%
Ease of reporting a repair	87.3%	+0.7%
The way complaint about housing services was handled	44.2%	+0.5%

Table 3: Headline decreases in satisfaction since 2017/18		
Tenant satisfaction with...	2018/19 figure	Change from 2017/18
How easy it was to make your complaint	56.3%	-14.6%
How landlord deals with complaints	54.3%	-6.0%
Landlord listens to your views and acts upon them*	68.6%	-4.7%
Overall, the final outcome of a complaint	35.9%	-4.6%
Service provided by landlord*	83.8%	-3.0%

17. The survey results are grouped according to housing's four themes, the broad contents of which are shown in table 4 below. The full survey results are shown in Annex 1 with the highlights from each theme contained in this report.

Table 4: Housing Themes		
Theme	Tenant Satisfaction with...	
1	Your Property	Repairs, gas servicing and overall property condition
2	Your Place	Place to live, neighbourhood and estate services
3	Your Service	Customer service, complaints, rent and overall service
4	Your Say	Resident involvement and tenant influence

Theme 1: Your Property

18. Of the 13 property questions related to satisfaction, one saw a decrease above 1%, and four saw an improvement of above 1%. All other questions saw a non-significant change (above or below 1%). Table 5 shows the results for core questions and headline changes.

Table 5: Headline changes in satisfaction since 2017/18		
Tenant satisfaction with...	2018/19 figure	Change from 2017/18
Increases in satisfaction		
Contractor showed proof of identity ^α	61.4%	+4.8%
Being told when workers would call ^β	86.4%	+3.1%
Keeping dirt and mess to a minimum ^β	89.6%	+2.3%
Repairs and maintenance*	79.9%	+1.1%
Overall quality of the home*	81.6%	+0.7%
Decreases in satisfaction		
The attitude of the workers ^β	91.5%	-1.4%
The repair being done 'right first time' ^β	78.8%	-0.8%

^α'Contractor proof of identity' was not a satisfaction oriented question

^β"Thinking about your last completed repair how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with each of the following"

19. The core question relating to 'repairs and maintenance' improved by 1.1% compared to last year's survey (79.9% of respondents said they were satisfied). The Housemark national benchmark for this indicator in 2017/18 was 79%.
20. The second core question in this theme, regarding 'overall quality of the home', saw a small improvement compared to last year (81.6% said they were satisfied, an increase of 0.7%). The Housemark national benchmark for this indicator in 2017/18 was 85%.
21. The questions which received the greatest change in this theme relate to specific aspects of the repairs service. Responses for these questions came from a subset of respondents who answered 'Yes' when asked whether they have had a repair in the last 12 months.

22. For the repairs service, the highest levels of satisfaction were with: the attitude of the workers (91.5% expressed satisfaction, a decrease of 1.4% from 2017/18); keeping dirt and mess to a minimum (89.6% said they were satisfied, an increase of 2.3% from 2017/18); and ease of reporting a repair (87.3% were satisfied, an increase of 0.7% from 2017/18).
23. The lowest levels of satisfaction with the repairs service were in these areas: time taken before work started (78.3% said they were satisfied, an increase of 0.4% from 2017/18); the repairs being done 'right first time' (78.8% expressed satisfaction, a decrease of 0.8% from 2017/18); and being able to make an appointment (83.1% were satisfied, an increase of 1.7% from 2017/18).
24. Overall, this theme has seen an improvement in satisfaction compared to last year's survey. Furthermore, although not analysed in this report, levels of dissatisfaction fell on 12 of the 13 satisfaction-based questions (see annex 1).
25. Where satisfaction levels have decreased, building services are examining patch level data and undertaking further analysis with operational managers and supervisors to understand this inconsistency.

Theme 2: Your Place

26. Headline changes under the 'Your Place' theme are listed in table 6.
27. The core question is the only satisfaction based measure for this theme. All other questions rank a particular issue as being either a 'major problem', 'minor problem' or 'not a problem'. Table 6 shows the percentage of people who reported the issue as *not being a problem*.

Table 6: Headline changes since 2017/18		
Tenant satisfaction with...	2018/19 figure	Change from 2017/18
Neighbourhood as a place to live*	81.8%	-0.1%
Increase in tenants reporting the following are <i>not a problem</i> (i.e. satisfaction improved)		
People damaging your property	84.1%	+3.4%
Noise from traffic	67.5%	+1.0%
Dog fouling/dog mess	41.3%	+0.2%
Decrease in tenants reporting the following are <i>not a problem</i> (i.e. satisfaction decreased)		
Drug use or dealing	52.5%	-3.1%
Drunk or rowdy behaviour	53.5%	-3.0%
Problems with pets and animals	76.8%	-3.0%
Rubbish or litter	45.4%	-2.5%
Disruptive children/teenagers	55.6%	-2.4%

28. The core question expressing satisfaction in their 'neighbourhood as a place to live' remains virtually the same as last year. The Housemark national benchmark for this indicator was 85% in 2017/18.

29. The issues highlighted as least problematic were:

- Abandoned or burn-out vehicles (93.9% said this was “not a problem”, a decrease of 1% from 2017/18);
- Racial or other harassment (91.0% ticked the “not a problem” box, a fall of 0.3% from 2017/18);
- People damaging your property (84.1% mentioned this was “not a problem”, an increase of 3.4% from 2017/18).

30. The issues highlighted as most problematic were:

- Car parking (only 37.0% said this was “not a problem”);
- Dog fouling/dog mess (41.3% mentioned this was “not a problem”);
- Condition of roads/pavements (41.6% ticked the “not a problem” box).

31. When examining the degree of change from last year’s survey results, seven of the 16 problem-based questions saw an increase in being reported as a problem. The greatest changes were seen for::

- Drug use or dealing (47.5% said this was “a problem”, a 3.1% increase from the 2017/18 figure);
- Drunk and rowdy behaviour (46.5% said “ a problem”, 3% more than in 2017/18);
- Problems with pets and animals (23.2% said this was “a problem”, a 3% increase compared with 2017/18).

Theme 3: Your Service

32. The 'Your Service' theme contains 18 questions examining service provision. Of the 15 questions measuring satisfaction, two are core questions and seven are specifically related to the complaints process. Results are presented in separate tables, with table 8 showing questions concerning the complaints process and table 7 showing core questions and other headline results.

Table 7: Headline changes in satisfaction since 2017/18		
Tenant satisfaction with...	2018/19 figure	Change from 2017/18
Increase in satisfaction		
Rent arrears	50.4%	+1.9%
Decreases in satisfaction		
The way the landlord deals with complaints	54.3%	-6.0%
The way the landlord deals with anti-social behaviour	54.9%	-5.3%
Cleaning services provided	57.7%	-3.6%
Service provided by the Landlord*	83.8%	-3.0%
Rent providing value for money*	84.3%	-0.2%

33. The first core question, relating to whether 'rent provided value for money' saw little change from last year (84.3% said they were satisfied). However the second, which asks about the 'service provided by the landlord', saw a notable decrease in satisfaction compared to last year (83.8% said they were satisfied, a decrease of 3.0% from 2017/18).
34. The Housemark national average for 'rent providing value for money' was 84% in 2017/18. The Housemark national average for 'service provided by the landlord' was 86% in 2017/18
35. An increase in satisfaction was seen in dealing with 'rent arrears' (the 2018/19 figure was 50.4%, a 1.9% increase from the previous year). However there were five decreases in satisfaction. The largest decreases in satisfaction were for 'the way your landlord deals with complaints' (a decrease of 6.0% to 54.3%), anti-social behaviour (a 5.3% decrease to 54.9%), and cleaning services provided (a fall of 3.6% to 57.7%).

36. The survey also included a question asking how satisfied tenants were with the process of making a complaint to the landlord. Responses to this question indicate that satisfaction decreased, as shown in the table below.

Table 8: Satisfaction with complaints		
How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with each of the following aspects of how your complaint was dealt with?		
Tenant satisfaction with	2018/19 figure	Change from 2017/18
How easy it was to make your complaint	56.3%	-14.6%
The final outcome of the complaint	35.9%	-4.6%
The information and advice housing staff provided	50.8%	-2.5%
Being kept informed about the progress	33.1%	-2.5%
The speed your complaint was dealt with	40.0%	-1.8%
The support you received	35.3%	-1.7%
The way your complaint was handled	42.2%	0.5%

37. It is important to note that the detailed responses about complaints listed above are drawn from a sample of 92 tenants (those who answered 'Yes' when asked if they had made a complaint to their landlord in the last 12 months). Although this sample is not large, this number of responses provides a good indication of satisfaction with complaints.

38. There has been a decrease in satisfaction in six of the seven complaints indicators. The greatest change comes from 'how easy it was to make your complaint' (56.3%) which saw a decrease in satisfaction of 14.6% compared with 2017/18. The second greatest change was seen in 'the final outcome of the complaint' (35.9% said they were satisfied, a reduction of 4.6%).

39. Satisfaction with complaints is generally low when compared to other areas of the survey. The areas where the least satisfaction was given by respondents were in 'being kept informed about the progress' (33.1% said they were satisfied, a decrease of 2.5% compared with 2017/18) and 'the support you received' (35.3% expressed satisfaction, a decline of 1.7% compared to 2017/18).

40. Another function of the survey is to collect data on how our tenants access the internet. The results of this question will be used by the Digital Services Board which is working towards mapping the future of all electronic/digital communications made by CYC. The board will use the information gathered by this survey to ensure that the future shape of this service is as inclusive as possible and that it meets tenants' needs.
41. The results show that the percentage of people using a smartphone has increased year-on-year and is at its highest level (43.0% said they used one, an increase of 11.9% on 2017/18). Those using a home computer or tablet have increased over the past three years (39.5% did, 9.1% higher than in 2017/18). There has also, counter-intuitively, also been an increase in those not accessing the internet at all (37.2% said they did not use the internet, an increase of 10.3% compared with 2017/18).
42. Taking into account wider changes taking place across the council, the survey asked a more general question about CYC moving to provide more services online in the long term. The question asked was: *'We are looking at providing more of our services online through the council website. These changes could enable you to report issues and/or access your records online. We'd like to know what you think about this – please use the space below to make any comments or suggestions you have'*.
43. The response to this question was in free text form and so there is no quantitative data from it. The qualitative data shows that around 42% of respondents thought that providing more services online is a good idea. Around 28% raised issues with access to the internet/equipment and 3% stated that they did not have digital skills, or had a physical barrier to accessing services online such as a disability. Fewer than 10% of those that responded provided generally negative views.

Theme 4: Your Say

44. Satisfaction in the 'Your Say' theme has decreased as shown in the table below.

Table 9: Headline changes in satisfaction since 2017/18		
Tenant satisfaction with...	2018/19 figure	Change from 2017/18
Landlord listens to your views and acts upon them*	68.6%	-4.7%
Landlord keeping tenants informed	72.2%	-4.3%
Landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect	83.2%	-1.8%

45. The core question about whether the council 'listens to views and acts upon them' saw a decrease of 4.7% compared with 2017/18, with 68.6% expressing satisfaction. The Housemark national benchmark for this indicator was 69% in 2017/18.

46. For the other indicators, the percentage satisfied by their 'landlord keeping tenants informed' decreased to 72.2% from 76.5% in 2017/18, while the percentage of those who thought their landlord 'treats tenants fairly and with respect' remains high (83.2% in 2018/19), even though this is a decrease of 1.8% from the 2017/18 figure.

Ongoing and future actions

47. We have recently reviewed our Tenancy Engagement Strategy with the Tenant Scrutiny Panel to ensure it remains appropriate and intend to relaunch this strategy to increase tenant awareness.

48. We will highlight more examples of "You Said, We Did" in Streets Ahead and look at more positive housing-related articles, with the intention of using the CYC website and social media to do so online.

49. We need to monitor the impact the new Housing Facebook page is having on keeping our tenants informed. We need to ensure that it is being used as much as possible to promote new initiatives, any incentive schemes, changes to procedures and events. We will continue to promote it through Housing Panels, Residents Associations, website and Streets Ahead so as many tenants as possible have the opportunity to access current information.

50. The restructure in Housing has meant that there are staff who have not had previously encountered anti-social behaviour before and this may have impacted on satisfaction rates. More generally, the Housing restructure has led to a change in the staff mix, with many members of staff (including new staff) having duties unfamiliar to them. A large amount of training has taken place and skills audits are about to commence. It is anticipated that all staff will be fully trained and confident in their roles during the course of 2019.
51. Following the success of the Chapelfields Hot Spot meetings, a hot spot identification process was introduced in December 2017, with the first meeting in January 2018. This is to identify areas of concern from North Yorkshire Police, Community Safety and Housing. Issues that have been highlighted include drug-taking, and drunk and rowdy behaviour. This has led to Hot Spot meetings being organised and action plans developed. During the last year, five areas have been identified; in three of them, visits were undertaken to the estates most affected, with customers advised how to report incidents and they were asked if and how they had been affected. This process will be monitored throughout the year and it is anticipated that this should increase satisfaction next year. This process will also be better publicised, enabling Tenants to report issues quicker.
52. Collection of customer satisfaction data on the way anti-social behaviour issues have been handled has proved troublesome when we have asked people about them once the issue has been resolved (outside of this Survey); methods to collect it have included postal, online and telephone surveys. We will look again at the way in which this information is collected so we can analyse where customer dissatisfaction is most likely to occur and amend our procedures accordingly.
53. There will be a review of the Pets Policy in 2019. This will enable us to collect information on specific problems with pets and other animals. A comparison will be made with the Community Safety Unit to examine the number of complaints they have received about dog fouling to ensure that residents know how to report issues, and to who they should make them.
54. The Housing Environment Improvement Programme (HEIP) will deliver approximately 80 car parking spaces across the City by March 2019. As the TSS is one of the mechanisms taken into account when schemes are put forward by Ward Councillors for HEIP funding, we would expect that car parking solutions will be submitted to the next programme of HEIP, running from 2019-2023.

55. Parking enforcement is currently provided by Minster Baywatch. Whilst there is little performance information available, feedback suggests that patrolling and enforcement are not at levels required. Housing are currently looking to transfer the function of enforcement to CYC's Parking Services. This would assist with any parking issues on Housing land, including garage sites.
56. A review of the estate worker service has just been completed and a new structure put into place. This will be monitored over the next year to ensure satisfaction improves. The review took longer than anticipated, but the structure has now been implemented. New ways of working being embedded may have impacted on performance which is now across all of the areas where the council has housing.
57. Officers will be working with the Customer Complaints and Feedback team to understand more fully why satisfaction with complaints handling has declined. This will include looking at data from formal complaints and comparing it with the data on complaints gathered through the survey to see if there are any notable patterns. Initial research has shown that there is a difference in what customers perceive as a complaint and what is classed as a formal complaint and therefore logged through the complaints process.

Equalities Monitoring

58. A detailed profile of respondents can be found in Annex 2 (compared to the profile of lead tenants).
59. There was a low response rate from those in the younger age categories. The response from tenants aged 25-44 was particularly low. The 16-24 age group makes up 4% of all lead tenants, however in our sample, only 2.4% of responses were from lead tenants aged 16-24. The 25-44 age group make up 34% of the lead tenants, but only 19.7% of the sample were from respondents aged 25-44. The 45-64 accurately reflected the lead tenant population (there was a difference of 0.6% between the percentage of those who are lead tenants and people in this group who responded), but the over-65 age group was over represented (24.9% of lead tenants were in this age group, but 41.3% of survey responses were from it).
60. There were more female respondents (59.5%) than male (39.6%); 0.9% declined to give their sex. Both sexes responded in similar proportions to the current lead tenant population.
61. There were some significant differences between male and female core questions responses. The level of satisfaction was notably lower for females across the following core questions: overall quality of your home (they were 7.3% less likely to be satisfied); repairs and maintenance (9.1% less likely to be satisfied); neighbourhood as a place to live (8% less likely to be satisfied); listens to your views and acts upon them (9.6% less likely to be satisfied).
62. The number of respondents with protected characteristics was too low to allow for a comparison of differences in satisfaction. The respondent profile, including detail on protected characteristics, can be found in Annex 2.

Corporate Priorities

63. 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.

Risk Management

64. This survey provides the key measure of tenant satisfaction with Housing Services. Its results also feed into benchmarking work through Housemark, which enables CYC 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 allocate resources to the services customers feel would benefit them most.

Contact Details

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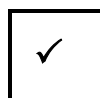
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**Report
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Date 24/01/2019

Annexes

Annex 1 – Full Survey Results

Annex 2 – Profile of Respondents