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

22 January 2018

Report of the Assistant Director – Housing and Community Safety

2017/18 Tenant Satisfaction Survey Results

Purpose of the report

1. This is the report on the outcomes of the 2017/18 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 note the results of the survey.

Reason: To ensure the service continues to take account of residents' views.

Background / Process

3. The Survey was conducted by the Strategic Business Intelligence Hub (independently of housing services) between September and November 2017.
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. A randomly selected representative sample of 2,800 tenants (from 7,583 total lead tenants) was contacted, producing a 23% response rate (647 respondents – 8.5% of total lead tenants). This was a cross-sectional study, which means that although the sampling method used reflected the demographics of the population, the response did not.
5. The 2017/18 results are statistically significant to within a +/- 3.68% confidence interval (CI).

6. This is the second time a 25 question survey has been used, having been reduced from 44 questions prior to that. Last year the question set for the 2016/17 Survey was reduced and amended from the 2015/16 Survey through discussions with officers from the housing service.
7. The Tenant Scrutiny Panel was given the opportunity to contribute to the 2017/18 Survey and a small number of questions have been added or changed to reflect their views.
8. All results are presented as percentage points (PP). For example a change from 10% to 20% would be a 10PP change, as opposed to the actual percentage change which would be 100%.

Summary

9. Email response grew by 26.2% compared to last year, from 12.1% to 38.3%.
10. 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.
11. Table 1 below shows how CYC performed on the Housemark core questions compared with its performance in 2016/17.

Table 1: Housemark core questions (marked with an * throughout the report)		
Tenant satisfaction with...	2017/18 figure	Change from 2016/17
Service provided by the landlord*	86.79%	↓ 2.08%
Overall quality of the home*	80.97%	↓ 3.57%
Rent providing value for money*	84.49%	↓ 2.01%
Repairs and maintenance (generally)*	78.72%	↓ 1.85%
Neighbourhood as a place to live*	81.89%	↓ 3.25%
Landlord listening to views and acting on them*	73.28%	↓ 0.28%

12. This year's results show that satisfaction has decreased across all six core measures.
13. The results from this year's survey would usually be compared against last year's Housemark results; however, we have not received last year's

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

results in time for this report. Therefore, as a benchmark for comparison, the core questions are compared against their own four year average from past survey results in this report.

14. The following tables show the most significant fluctuations in satisfaction from the 2017/18 Survey when compared with the 2016/17 results.

Table 2: Headline improvements in satisfaction since 2016/17		
Tenant satisfaction with...	2017/18 figure	Increase from 2016/17
The speed your complaint was dealt with	41.75%	↑ 8.09%
The support you received while your complaint was dealt with	37.08%	↑ 5.77%
Overall, the final outcome of the complaint	40.51%	↑ 4.42%
How easy it was to make your complaint	70.97%	↑ 3.98%
How well you were kept informed about the progress of your complaint	35.56%	↑ 2.88%

Table 3: Headline decreases in satisfaction since 2016/17		
Tenant satisfaction with...	2017/18 figure	Decrease from 2016/17
Rent arrears (how landlord deals with)	48.61%	↓ 3.66%
Overall quality of the home*	80.97%	↓ 3.57%
Ease of reporting a repair	86.61%	↓ 3.44%
Moving or swapping your home	41.15%	↓ 3.32%
Neighbourhood as a place to live*	81.89%	↓ 3.25%

15. The survey results are grouped according to housing's four themes, the broad content 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

16. There has been a decrease in satisfaction for 11 of the 13 questions related to property. The magnitude of change is moderate to small across all questions, with none exceeding the 3.68% confidence

intervals. Table 5 shows some notable results and their degree of change.

Table 5: Headline changes in satisfaction since 2016/17		
Tenant satisfaction with...	2017/18 figure	Change from 2016/17
Increases in satisfaction		
Overall service you received with this repair ^b	85.22%	↑ 1.19%
The overall quality of the repair ^b	85.64%	↑ 0.08%
Decreases in satisfaction		
Overall quality of the home*	80.97%	↓ 3.57%
Repairs and maintenance (generally)*	78.72%	↓ 1.85%
Ease of reporting a repair ^b	86.61%	↓ 3.44%
Did the contractor show proof of identity? ^a	56.57%	↓ 3.85%

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

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

17. There are two core questions for 'Your Property'. The first, 'Overall quality of the home' decreased by 3.57% to 80.97%. Data from the past four surveys provides an average (mean) score for this question of 84.19% (as a comparator in the absence of housemark data).
18. The second core question 'Repairs and maintenance (generally)' decreased by 1.85% to 78.72%. The average score from the past four surveys was 82.16%.
19. The lowest levels of satisfaction were seen in 'Time taken before the work started' at 77.89% (↓1.14%), 'The repair being done "right first time"' at 79.58% (↓2.65%) and 'Being able to make an appointment' at 81.38% (↓1.50%).
20. In the case of contractors showing proof of identity, the figure shown in table 5 reflects the number of respondents who answered 'yes' rather than 'no' or 'don't remember'. Where the decrease in this figure is shown as 3.85%, only 0.8% of this was respondents answering 'no' whereas 3.05% answered 'don't remember'. Therefore this decrease may not necessarily reflect a reduction in contractors showing ID, but rather shows fewer people being able to recollect that they did.
21. A total of 399 tenants declared that they had repairs carried out to their homes within the past 12 months, this accounts for 64.04% of those who responded to the question (some respondents skipped this question).

This group provide the insight into satisfaction of aspects of the repair service.

22. The greatest levels of satisfaction (for repairs) were seen in ‘The attitude of the workers’ at 92.86% (↓0.56% from last year), ‘Keeping dirt and mess to minimum’ at 87.34% (↓2.34%) and ‘Ease of reporting a repair’ at 86.61% (↓3.44%).

Theme 2: Your Place

23. Of the 17 questions related to ‘Your Place’ 13 saw a decrease in satisfaction. Of these 13 questions, five were greater than the 3.68% confidence interval which indicates that there may be a true decrease in satisfaction. These questions are shown below in table 6.

Table 6: Headline changes in <i>satisfaction</i> since 2016/17		
Tenant satisfaction with...	2017/18 figure	Change from 2016/17
Neighbourhood as a place to live*	81.89%	↓ 3.25%
Increase in tenants reporting the following are <i>not a problem</i> (i.e. satisfaction improved)		
Problems with pets & animals	79.73%	↑ 2.75%
Abandoned or burnt out vehicles	94.87%	↑ 0.58%
Conditions of Roads / Pavements	42.24%	↑ 0.38%
Decrease in tenants reporting the following are <i>not a problem</i> (i.e. satisfaction decreased)		
Availability of storage space	65.53%	↓ 5.29%
People damaging your property	80.73%	↓ 5.95%
Drug use or dealing	55.58%	↓ 4.73%
Noise from traffic	66.55%	↓ 4.64%
Car parking	37.19%	↓ 4.43%

24. This category’s core question, ‘Neighbourhood as a place to live’ is a satisfaction orientated question, where all others asked tenants to rate each issue as either ‘Not a problem’, ‘Minor problem’ or ‘Major problem’. For this core question satisfaction decreased by 3.25% compared to last year (now at 81.89%). The average result from the previous four years for this question is 82.67%.
25. Rather than being ‘Satisfied’ or ‘Dissatisfied’, the following questions refer to whether an issue was considered ‘a problem’ (‘Major problem’ and ‘Minor problem’ combined) or ‘not a problem’. Table 6 provides an overview of the most notable fluctuations.

26. When asked to rate estate-based questions, tenants rated 'Car parking' as the greatest problem (62.81% consider it to be a problem) followed by 'Dog fouling/dog mess' (58.86%) and 'Condition of Roads/Pavements' (58.86%).
27. 'Problems with pets and animals' has improved by 2.75% compared to last year (Now 79.73%). Some minor improvements are seen in 'Abandoned or burnt out vehicles' and 'Conditions of Roads / Pavements' with an improvement of 0.58% (to 94.87%) and 0.38% (to 42.24%) respectively.
28. Problems with car parking have increased with a change of 4.43% to 37.19% (i.e. it is statistically significant that more people report this as a problem). Feedback for 'Drug use or dealing' has increased as a problem by 4.73% to 55.58%, as has 'People damaging your property' which saw the greatest change in those reporting problems (by 5.95% to 80.73%).

Theme 3: Your Service

29. There were 18 questions designed to account for satisfaction of service provision. Of these questions six showed lower levels, 11 improvements and one remained the same when compared against last year's satisfaction. Of the six reduced satisfaction questions, none showed reductions greater than the 3.68% CI. This indicates that these results may fall within normal levels of variation and not necessarily indicate a true reduction of opinions. For the questions indicating improved satisfaction, four showed results above the CIs. This indicates that the improvements are likely to reflect a true improvement of satisfaction.

Table 7: Headline changes in satisfaction since 2016/17		
Tenant satisfaction with...	2017/18 figure	Change from 2016/17
The speed your complaint was dealt with?	41.76%	↑ 8.09%
The support you received while your complaint was dealt with?	37.08%	↑ 5.77%
Overall, the final outcome of the complaint?	40.51%	↑ 4.42%
How easy it was to make your complaint?	70.97%	↑ 3.98%
Decreases in satisfaction		
Service provided by the landlord*	86.79%	↓ 2.08%
Rent providing value for money*	84.49%	↓ 2.01%
Rent arrears (how landlord deals with)	48.51%	↓ 3.66%

30. In this years survey the greatest changes came from the 'Services' category and were increases in satisfaction.

31. The two core questions in this category saw a small decline in satisfaction. For 'Services provided by the landlord' satisfaction decreased by 2.08%, this year's result of 86.79% is 0.76% lower than the four year average of 87.55%. A decrease of 2.01% was seen for 'Rent providing value for money' now at 84.49%, which is 0.81% lower than the four year average of 83.68%.
32. Another noteworthy decrease was the non-core question, 'Rent arrears' (how landlord deals with) which saw a decrease of 3.66% (now 48.51%) which is close to the CI set at 3.68%.
33. Results from the following questions represent a sub-group of tenants who responded 'Yes' to the question 'Have you made a complaint within the last 12 months' (those responding 'No' skipped these questions). This was done in order to identify tenant satisfaction regarding the way landlords dealt with complaints.
34. An 8.09% increase was seen for 'Speed your complaint was dealt with' - now at 41.76%. The second greatest change was 'The support you received while your complaint was dealt with' which rose by 5.77% to 37.08%. Two other notable improvements were 'Overall, the final outcome of the complaint' and 'How easy it was to make your complaint' which increased by 4.42% (to 40.51%) and 3.98% (to 70.97%) respectively. All other results (increase or decrease) remained within the 3.68% CI.
35. Tenants were asked how they access the internet. The results showed that the percentage of people using a home computer/tablet has steadily decreased over the last four years – from 42.8% in 2014/15 to 30.44% in 2017/18. Conversely, the percentage of people accessing the internet using a Smartphone has steadily increased from 10.05% in 2014/15 to 31.07% in 2017/18. The amount of people selecting 'I don't use it at all' has also decreased from 42.26% in 2014/15 to 26.42% in 2017/18.
36. 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'*.
37. 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 55% of respondents thought that providing more services online is a good idea (↑13% from last year). Around 22% raised issues with access to the

internet/equipment (↓12%) and 7% stated that they did not have digital skills/had a physical barrier to accessing services online such as a disability (↓1%).

Theme 4: Your Say

38. There were three questions to gauge opinion regarding 'Your Say'. All three questions show a decrease in satisfaction.

Table 9: Headline changes in satisfaction since 2016/17		
Tenant satisfaction with...	2017/18 figure	Change from 2016/17
Landlord treating tenants fairly and with respect	84.93%	↓ 2.47%
Landlord keeping tenants informed	76.50%	↓ 0.66%
Landlord listening to views and acting on them*	73.28%	↓ 0.28%

39. The core question 'Landlord listening to views and acting on them' decreased by 0.28% to 73.28%. The four year average for this core question is 65.53% a difference of 7.75%.

40. The biggest change for this category was for 'Landlord treating tenants fairly and with respect' which decreased by 2.47% to 84.93%. The final question 'Landlord keeping tenants informed' saw a decrease of 0.66% to 76.50%.

Service Improvement / Recommendations

41. **Building Services:** The results that relate to Building Services are primarily those in 'Theme 1: Your Property'; both of the core questions show a decrease in satisfaction; although for tenants who declared they had had repairs done to their homes within the past 12 months there were some increases in satisfaction. This suggests that the trend of decreasing satisfaction with 'Repairs and maintenance (generally)' relates more to planned works or those who have not reported a repair in the last 12 months and are basing their answers on historical experience. Further analysis will be done by geographical area to understand if the lower levels of satisfaction are in areas where 'Tenants Choice' and 'Standing Water' schemes have been undertaken. Further analysis will also be undertaken to understand in which areas satisfaction with 'overall quality of the home' has decreased to identify if this can be linked to schemes of work that have been undertaken or areas where work is due to be undertaken in the near future.

42. One of the areas that saw the largest decrease in satisfaction was the 'ease of reporting a repair'; with a 3.44% decrease. The restructure of

Building Services has implemented measures to address this with dedicated Customer Support Officers, whose primary focus will be to answer telephone calls, and, as such, the average speed of answering phone calls and the abandoned call rate should significantly improve. In the longer term, Building Services will add self-service repair logging as a requirement for the new ICT system.

43. The restructuring process (the survey was undertaken during it) may have contributed to the reduced satisfaction levels highlighting low levels of morale amongst the team; however, the new structure will be fully implemented by 2018/19 and places greater emphasis on roles and responsibilities which will contribute to increased customer satisfaction.
44. **Housing:** Areas showing low satisfaction, or a trend toward, will be revisited. There will be a review of approaches and actions in these areas, for example the use of HEIP and ward funding to improve car parking and storage for tenants and leaseholders. These actions will be informed by detailed feedback from residents through the use of surveys, focus groups and target consultations.
45. Changes in Housing Services and Building Maintenance have been made based on customer satisfaction trends and consultations. We will ensure that customers are kept informed of the progress made due to these changes.
46. Customers will be encouraged to be part of the solution through initiatives such as resident associations or volunteering, rather than solely relying on individual services to respond.
47. Areas of low satisfaction such as traffic noise, damage to property, and drug dealing (and use), will be improved through collaboration with local partners. Other areas such as 'Rent providing value for money' or 'Quality of home' will be examined by comparing data against other Social Landlords.
48. The results of the digital questions will be used by the Housing ICT Board and the Corporate Digital Services Board to shape the future of all electronic/digital communications made by CYC. The Board will use the information gathered from this Survey to ensure that the future shape of this service is as inclusive as possible and that it meets tenants' needs.

Equalities Monitoring

49. A detailed profile of respondents can be found in Annex 2, compared to the profile of lead tenants.

50. There was a low response rate from those in the younger age categories. The response from tenants aged 16-24 was particularly low. This age group makes up 4% of all lead tenants, however just 2% (13 tenants) of survey respondents were 16-24. Similarly, 25-44 year olds make up 34% of the lead tenant population but constituted just 20% of the total respondents.
51. There were more female respondents (53%) than male (32%). The male response shared a similar proportion to the current lead tenant population but the female proportion was 9% lower. There was an increase of 12% in people not stating whether they were male or female.
52. Responses to the core questions were largely similar between the sexes. The only stand-out difference was for 'overall quality of your home' where female respondents were more likely to be 'fairly dissatisfied' and less likely to be 'very satisfied'.
53. The number of respondents with protected characteristics was too low to allow comparison of differences in satisfaction. The respondent profile, including detail on protected characteristics, can be found in Annex 2.

Council Plan

54. 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

55. The implications arising from this report are:
 - **Financial** – None. The survey is delivered within existing budgets.
 - **Human Resources** – None.
 - **Equalities** – See points 46-49 above. The respondent profile, including detail on protected characteristics, can be found in Annex 2.
 - **Legal** – None.
 - **Crime and Disorder** – None.
 - **Information Technology** – None.
 - **Property** – None.

Risk Management

56. 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 target resources at the services customers feel are most in need of attention.

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**Report
approved**



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Annexes

Annex 1 – Full Survey Results

Annex 2 – Profile of Respondents

Glossary of Abbreviations used in the report:

CI	confidence interval
CYC	City of York Council
HEIP	Housing Environment Improvement Programme
ICT	Information Communications Technology
PP	percentage points