

**Cabinet Member: Homes and Safer
Communities**

July 2014

Report of the Assistant Director – Housing & Community Safety

2013 Tenant Satisfaction Survey Results

Summary

1. This report provides results of the 2013 Tenant Satisfaction Survey which is the biggest single gauge of tenant satisfaction across landlord services.
2. In terms of the overall picture, headline satisfaction has
 - increased in three indicators
 - remained stable in two indicators
 - decreased in two indicators

Theme	Tenant satisfaction with...	2013		Variance
Your Say	Opportunities to be involved in management & decision-making	63%	↑	+12%
	Treated fairly and with respect by landlord	83%	↑	+ 3%
Your Property	Quality of home	83%	↑	+ 1%
	Repairs & maintenance service	82%	=	
Your Service	Overall landlord service	87%	=	
	Rent giving value for money	82%	↓	- 1%
Your Place	Neighbourhood as a place to live	82%	↓	- 5%

3. A detailed breakdown of all results is shown in Annex 1 along with comparison data internal targets; trend and HouseMark¹ top quartile.

¹ For consistency with the Tenant & Leaseholder Annual Report local authority Housemark data has been used

Background

4. The postal survey was conducted independently by ADTS November /December 2013. The mailing to 2,000 randomly selected tenants produced a 40% response rate (791), down by 8% (175) from the 2012 response rate of 48% (966). There were no changes to timescale or methodology that would account for this.
5. Based on the number of responses each year, a calculation is made to determine how confident we can be that survey results reflect the satisfaction of the wider tenant group. 2012 results were statistically significant to within a +/- 2.9% confidence interval.
6. 2013 results are statistically significant to within a +/- 3.2% confidence interval and have been profiled against all equalities strands and all estate management patches.
7. Survey questions and results are grouped according to housing's four themes, the broad content of which is shown below:

Housing theme	Tenant satisfaction with
Your Place	Place to live, neighbourhood and estate services
Your Property	Repairs, gas servicing and overall property condition
Your Service	Customer service, complaints, rents and overall service
Your Say	Resident involvement and tenant influence

8. 2013 survey results show a fairly balanced picture with 14 indicators having improved² and 4 having declined³, as shown in the table below:

	↑	↓	=	New indicators	Non-significant change	Total indicators
Your Place	0	3	0	0	1	4
Your Property	1	0	3	1	9	14
Your Service	12	0	0	4	3	19
Your Say	1	1	1	0	3	6
All	14	4	4	5	16	43

9. Overall, customer satisfaction with the ability of staff to deal with their problems and issues has improved whilst satisfaction with council homes and the management of them is stable.
10. The 14 indicators showing increased satisfaction are shown in the table below:

² Improved at a statistically significant level i.e. the increase exceeds the 3.2% confidence level

³ Declined at a statistically significant level i.e. the decrease exceeds the 3.2% confidence level

(Headline indicators are highlighted in yellow; other colours show housing's themes.)

Tenant satisfaction with	2012	2013	↑
Opportunities to be involved in management and decision making	51%	63%	12%
Landlord treats them fairly	80%	83%	3%
Complaints - Being kept informed	34%	51%	17%
Complaints - Speed dealt with	33%	48%	15%
Complaints - Information/advice	53%	65%	12%
Complaints - Overall handling	37%	48%	11%
Complaints - Final outcome	34%	44%	10%
Final outcome of query (not complaint)	65%	72%	7%
Complaints - Ease of making	65%	71%	6%
Complaints - Aware of procedure	54%	59%	5%
Staff speed & efficiency	74%	79%	5%
Moving or swapping your home	38%	43%	5%
Reporting a repair	84%	88%	4%
Contractors doing the job expected	81%	85%	4%

11. *Satisfaction with opportunities to be involved in management and decision-making*, a headline *Your Say* indicator, has increased by an impressive 12%. All aspects of complaints handling show marked improvements.
12. The 4 indicators with declined satisfaction are shown in the table below:
(Headline indicators are highlighted yellow; other colours show housing's themes.)

Tenant satisfaction with	2012	2013	↓
Neighbourhood as a place to live	87%	82%	5%
Grounds maintenance	80%	72%	8%
Estate services (litter; communal repairs)	80%	75%	5%
Listening to tenants' views and acting on them	67%	62%	5%

13. Satisfaction with all *Your Place* indicators has decreased, highlighting this as an area customers feel requires attention.

14. The 4 indicators with stable satisfaction are shown in the table below: (Headline indicators are highlighted yellow; other colours show housing's themes.)

Tenant satisfaction with	2012	2013	
Repairs and maintenance service	82%	82%	=
Attitude of workers (repairs)	91%	91%	=
Keeping dirt & mess to minimum	88%	88%	=
Being kept informed about things that might affect them	73%	73%	=

15. The headline repair indicator shows a sustained level of customer satisfaction with the service.

Consultation

16. Core questions are defined within the STAR⁴ survey process and are included to enable satisfaction to be benchmarked. Other questions were amended by service managers to ensure results could feed meaningfully into service improvement.
17. The Tenant Scrutiny Panel requested the inclusion of one new question: 4a *Ease of reporting a repair by phone*.

Analysis

18. **Your Say – Satisfaction with tenant involvement has increased substantially** as shown in the table below: (headline indicators highlighted yellow)

Tenant satisfaction with	2012	2013		Top	Target
Opportunities to be involved in management and decision	51%	63%	↑	n/a	55%
Landlord treats them fairly	80%	83%	↑	n/a	n/a
Listening to tenants' views and acting on them	67%	62%	↓	68%	72%

19. Results show a step change for tenant involvement and engagement activities. **Satisfaction with opportunities to be involved in management and decision-making has exceeded target with a notable 12% increase.**

⁴ Housemark's **Survey of Tenants and Residents** replaced the statutory STATUS survey.

20. These improvements clearly illustrate the impact of housing's dedicated Tenant Equalities and Engagement Facilitator (TEEF). Appointed October 2012, Julie Hood has increased the range of involvement opportunities to include Tenant Scrutiny Panel, Complaints Panel, Housing Week community events and a monthly new tenant feedback session.
21. Landlord services' increased emphasis on local advice sessions and neighbourhood working along with the well-regarded *Streets Ahead* and *Tenant and Leaseholder Annual Report* will also have contributed to improving customer satisfaction with involvement activities.
22. As demonstrated at the highly successful regional Tenant Networking event held by CYC in February 14, engaging with younger people is a challenge facing all landlords.

The 2014/15 TEEF workplan includes actions to:

- Develop closer working links with estate managers to identify potentially interested younger customers
- Explore new engagement methods aimed at younger customers.
- Raise the profile of housing's service standards amongst tenants.

23. **Your Service – Satisfaction with service delivery remains high**, as shown in the table below: (headline indicators highlighted yellow)

Tenant satisfaction with	2012	2013		Top	Target
Overall landlord service	88%	87%	↓	87.4%	90%
Reporting a repair	84%	88%	↑	n/a	n/a
Enquiries generally	New	81%	N/a	n/a	80%
Complaints	New	60%	N/a	n/a	n/a
Anti-social behaviour	New	58%	N/a	n/a	n/a
Moving or swapping your home	38%	43%	↑	n/a	n/a

24. Whilst satisfaction with the overall landlord service at 87% shows a non-significant 1% reduction, it is just 0.45% below Housemark top quartile. Satisfaction with dealing with enquiries generally has, at 81%, exceeded target.

25. **Satisfaction with reporting repairs has shown a notable 6% increase to 88%.** Satisfaction with ease of reporting a repair by phone was 83%. Both results counter the perception of staff and customers that reporting a repair is problematic. The Service Inspectors' planned inspection of the repairs service may throw light on why individual experiences, broad perceptions and actual satisfaction levels are at odds.
26. **Satisfaction with all aspects of complaint handling has increased** as shown in the table below:

Tenant satisfaction with	2012	2013		Top	Target
Ease of making a complaint	65%	71%	↑	n/a	n/a
Information/advice from staff	53%	65%	↑	n/a	80%
Aware of complaints procedure	54%	59%	↑	n/a	n/a
Being kept informed	34%	51%	↑	n/a	n/a
Speed complaint was dealt	33%	48%	↑	n/a	n/a
Overall handling of complaint	37%	48%	↑	63%	50%
Final outcome of complaint	34%	44%	↑	56%	50%
Support from staff	38%	41%	↑	n/a	n/a

27. Whilst 6 out of 10 customers are aware of the complaints procedure, detailed satisfaction responses are drawn from a small sample (106 respondents). Improvements across the board, notably satisfaction with being kept informed (+17%), speed (+15%), information /advice from staff (+12%), overall handling (+11%) and final outcome (10%) are welcome improvements, albeit from a low starting point.
28. **Satisfaction with all aspects of staff has increased** as shown in the table below:

Tenant satisfaction with	2012	2013		Top	Target
First person spoken to being able to deal with query	New	81%	N/a	n/a	n/a
Staff speed & efficiency	74%	79%	↑	n/a	n/a
Final outcome of their query	65%	72%	↑	n/a	90%

29. 8 out of 10 customers found staff helpful, efficient and able to deal with their query on first contact coupled with a 7% increase in satisfaction with the final outcome of query. This is a positive and morale-boosting message for staff with results reflecting the benefits of the move to West Offices early 2013.

30. **Your Property - Satisfaction with the repairs service remains high** as shown in the table below: (headline indicators highlighted yellow)

Tenant satisfaction with	2012	2013		Top	Target
Overall quality of home	82%	83%	↑	85%	85%
Repairs & maintenance service	82%	82%	=	82.25%	85%

31. Satisfaction with the overall repairs service is just 0.25% below Housemark top quartile. Satisfaction with the overall quality of home shows a non-significant 1% improvement, reflecting the continued impact of the Tenant's Choice and capital programmes on the standard of council homes.
32. Statistically significant responses showing customers' satisfaction with elements of their most recent repair are shown in the table below:

Tenant satisfaction with	2012	2013		Top	Target
Contractors doing the job expected	81%	85%	↑	n/a	n/a
Ease of reporting a repair by phone	New	83%	n/a	n/a	n/a

33. **Your Place – All four satisfaction measures have declined**, as shown in the table below: (headline indicators highlighted yellow)

Tenant satisfaction with	2012	2013		Top	Target
Neighbourhood as a place to live	87%	82%	↓	87%	90%
Estate services (litter; communal repairs)	80%	75%	↓	n/a	n/a
Grounds maintenance service	80%	72%	↓	83%	83%
Estate workers' internal cleaning service	71%	70%	↓	n/a	75%

34. Customers have delivered a clear message that their estate services require attention. As well as a decrease in those *very satisfied* or *fairly satisfied*, there has a 5% increase in those *very dissatisfied* or *fairly dissatisfied* (10% 2012: 15% 2013).
35. Estate services including grounds maintenance, litter picking and internal cleaning are delivered by Neighbourhood Services who also manage the estate workers. Communal repairs are delivered by Building Services.

36. To address this decline in customer satisfaction, work is underway to restructure and refocus the estate worker service. In a pilot due to start June 14, posts will be designated to either internal cleaning or external work. Following consultation with staff and unions and subject to a successful result from the pilot, full roll out is planned for autumn 2014.
37. When asked to rank estate-based problems, tenants cited dog fouling (1); car parking (2); rubbish and litter (3) as their top three concerns, consistent with last year. Actions to address these concerns have been identified the Local Estate Action Plans being developed with residents' associations.

Service Improvement

38. Results will inform landlord services' area based local action plans, as above, using detailed patch-based responses to tailor plans and address local concerns and priorities.
39. Results will inform operational 2014 service and team plans, incorporating specific improvement actions for those areas where low customer satisfaction is a concern.

Equalities monitoring

40. The equalities profile of respondents to the survey is shown in Annex 2 compared to the profile of current tenants. Respondents broadly mirror the composition of the wider tenant population. There are no significant variations in satisfaction when analysed by equalities strands other than older customers reporting higher satisfaction than younger tenants.
41. Older tenants are over-represented in survey respondents. We will consider various options to increase responses from younger tenants next year including
 - Use of age-targeted reminder letters (e.g. *We are especially interested in hearing the views of people in your age group*) Cost neutral.
 - As above, with an additional incentive specific to the target age group.
The survey currently carries a £100 gift voucher prize draw incentive. Cost neutral if split into 2 x £50 prizes, otherwise a small increase for the additional prize.
 - Boosting the random sample with additional 100-200 tenants selected by age group. Small increase in costs for additional results collation.

42. For the first time this year an amended satisfaction survey was conducted with tenants on the three Gypsy and Traveller sites. 9 responses were received from the 55 surveys. At a 16% response rate, the results are not statistically valid but have been collated and reported to the operational service for information. Work will be undertaken prior to the 2014 survey to explore how responses from this customer group can be increased.

Corporate Priorities

43. This survey supports the Council Plan: *Our Core Capabilities – completely in touch with our communities by engaging customers in shaping and measuring their housing services.*

Implications

44. The implications arising from this report are:
- **Financial** – None. The survey is delivered within existing budgets which can also accommodate any small increases arising from para 41 above.
 - **Human Resources (HR)** – 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 (IT)** - None
 - **Property** – None.

Risk Management

45. This survey provides the key measure of tenants' satisfaction with housing services. Without this information there is a risk that we would be unable to target resources at the services customers feel are most in need of attention.

Recommendations

46. Cabinet Member is asked to:
- a. Consider and accept the results of the 2013 Tenant Satisfaction Survey.
 - b. Agree to run a Tenant Satisfaction Survey in 2014
 - c. Agree the options in para 41 above should be explored to increase the response rate from younger tenants.

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 customer satisfaction.

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Report

Approved



Date

1st July 2014

Annexes

Annex 1 – 2013 Tenant Satisfaction Survey - detailed results.

Annex 2 – 2013 Tenant Satisfaction Survey - equalities profile.

Annex 3 – 2013 Tenant Satisfaction Survey and Equalities Monitoring sheet