

# Tenant Satisfaction Measures

## Housing Committee Tuesday, 19 March 2024

Report of: Head of Housing

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Purpose: For decision

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Publication status: Open

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Wards affected: All

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### Executive summary:

The Regulator of Social Housing has introduced a requirement to collect Tenant Satisfaction Measures. These measures must be collected as part of a survey which is compliant with the prescribed methodology and the results must be submitted to the Regulator from April 2024.

The survey was undertaken by Acuity Research using a mixture of postal, online and telephone surveys. All Council tenants were invited to take part. The questions and methodology were pre-defined by the Regulator who also prescribed a minimum of 488 responses were required.

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**This report supports the Council's priority of:** Building a better Council  
Creating the homes, infrastructure and environment we need.

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### Recommendation to Committee:

- A) note the responses provided by tenants in relation to the statutory Tenant Satisfaction Measures in Appendix 'A'
- B) approve the Tenant Satisfaction Action Plan as attached in Appendix 'B'

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## **Reason for recommendation:**

Members are being asked to note the outcomes of the Tenant Satisfaction Measure survey as a national league table will be published by the Regulator of Social Housing later in the year.

Members are being asked to approve the action plan in Appendix 'B' which sets out how the Council proposes to address the concerns raised by tenants.

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## **Introduction and background**

- 1 This survey was jointly procured with Runnymede Borough Council and Worthing and Adur Councils. All Tandridge District Council tenants were written to asking them to take part in completing the survey.
  - 1.1 At the close of the survey, 721 responses were received, which equates to a response rate of 28%. This included 274 online responses, 331 responses by post and 116 telephone interviews. Following the surveys, Acuity undertook a representativeness check, where it was found that sheltered tenants were slightly over-represented in the sample. As such, weighting was applied to reflect this.
  - 1.2 A total of 97 respondents gave permission for the Council to contact them to discuss any issues raised which was duly done. Residents could choose which questions to answer and both the verbal and written feedback has been used as a baseline to develop an action plan which will aid service improvement and future planning within housing service.
  - 1.3 Overall, the survey shows good levels of satisfaction with the services provided by the Council's housing service. A 72% overall satisfaction rate was returned by tenants. In addition to this, tenants returned high satisfaction rates for the repairs service in the last 12 months, the time taken to complete repairs and the provision of a safe home.
  - 1.4 The key drivers for overall satisfaction are the provision of a well-maintained home, how the Council treats its tenants fairly and with respect, listening to their views and acting upon them is also important.
  - 1.5 The results for the Council compare positively against other Local Authority Landlords whose tenants had undertaken surveys with Acuity in Q1/Q2 2023/24, with three satisfaction measures being in the top quartile of performers, including overall satisfaction.
  - 1.6 Fewer tenants were satisfied with the contribution the Council makes to the neighbourhood, how it deals with Anti-Social Behaviour and the way it handles complaints.
  - 1.7 The survey included three probing questions, giving tenants the opportunity to expand on their answers and reasons for dissatisfaction. Tenants most frequently would like improvements to the repairs service,

including outstanding repairs that have not been dealt with, the timescales to complete repairs and the quality of repair work. In addition, tenants commented upon concerns around customer services and contact, as well as the maintenance of the communal areas including cleaning and grounds maintenance.

1.8 There are currently no previous results to compare this satisfaction data against so this survey will act as a baseline to compare future results. When considering the results, it is important that the national context and external factors should also be taken into account. For example:

- Cost of Living Crisis
- Government & Political Changes
- Uncertainty about the Future
- Brexit and the economy

1.9 Satisfaction is based on perception rather than specific values so can be affected by these factors and impact how positive people feel about their lives. Factors such as the pandemic have also altered the way social landlords operate, perhaps making them less accessible and responsive.

## **2 Areas identified as room for improvement**

### **2.1 Keeping properties in good repair**

2.1.1 While satisfaction with the repairs service was reasonably high, there were some areas for improvement identified. Tenants not satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service were asked to provide more information and to explain what could be improved, 89 comments were received.

2.1.2 Tenants most frequently referred to outstanding or forgotten repairs and the timescales to complete repairs. These are also common areas of concern for other social landlords, and for The Council it is partially due to shortages of labour and materials. Tenants expectations to complete work in a short period of time are high and can be difficult to manage. Plans are currently being made to move to a mobile stores solution where operatives vans will be fully stocked for the repairs booked in that week.

### **2.2 Responsible Neighbourhood Management**

2.2.1 Just over half of those who returned a survey stated that they live in a building with communal areas that the Council is responsible for maintaining (53%). Of these tenants, just 58% are satisfied with the cleaning and maintenance of their communal areas, whilst 31% remain dissatisfied. Table one below provides information on how many responses were received against each satisfaction level from residents residing in either general needs accommodation, housing for older people and sheltered accommodation:

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Tandridge District Council Housing Services keeps these communal areas clean and well maintained?

	Grand Total	General Needs	HfOP	Sheltered
<b>Base</b>	376	255	32	88
Very satisfied	26%	23%	16%	42%
Fairly satisfied	32%	30%	44%	39%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	11%	12%	13%	7%
Fairly dissatisfied	17%	19%	19%	7%
Very dissatisfied	14%	16%	9%	6%
<b>Satisfied (NET)</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>81%</b>
<b>Dissatisfied (NET)</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>13%</b>

Table one

2.2.2 Slightly fewer tenants are satisfied with the positive contribution the Council makes to their neighbourhood (54%). However, dissatisfaction is relatively low (17%), with 29% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. This may partly be due to a lack of visibility and awareness, therefore more needs to be done to communicate and promote the impact we have in the area.

2.2.3 Fewer are satisfied with the handling of anti-social behaviour (47%). Although, again, a significant number of tenants gave a neutral response (28%). Tenants residing in sheltered accommodation are, again, the most satisfied. Table two below provides information on how many responses were received against each satisfaction level from residents residing in either general needs accommodation, housing for older people and sheltered accommodation:

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with Tandridge District Council Housing Service's approach to handling anti-social behaviour?

	Grand Total	General Needs	HfOP	Sheltered
<b>Base</b>	544	436	29	78
Very satisfied	18%	16%	28%	35%
Fairly satisfied	28%	28%	21%	32%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	28%	29%	24%	22%
Fairly dissatisfied	10%	11%	17%	4%
Very dissatisfied	15%	17%	10%	8%
<b>Satisfied (NET)</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>67%</b>
<b>Dissatisfied (NET)</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>12%</b>

Table two

## 2.3 Respectful and helpful engagement

2.3.1 Six out of ten tenants are satisfied that they are kept informed about things that matter to them (62%) and 70% agree that they are treated fairly and with respect.

2.3.2 Slightly fewer tenants are satisfied that the Council listens to their views and acts upon them (58%), but a fifth are dissatisfied. Satisfaction with this metric can be influenced by a range of interactions tenants have with their landlords, including the handling of repairs, anti-social behaviour and complaints.

2.3.3 A quarter of tenants (26%) said they had made a complaint to the Council within the last 12 months, although it is not clear how many are genuine complaints following a failure of service or service requests yet to be fully actioned. Nevertheless, just 27% of tenants are satisfied with the way their complaint was handled and twice as many are dissatisfied (55%). Of the 721 responses, only 171 answered this question. Table three below provides information on how many responses were received against each satisfaction level from residents residing in either general needs accommodation, housing for older people and sheltered accommodation:

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with Tandridge District Council Housing Service's approach to complaints handling?

	Grand Total	General Needs	HfOP	Sheltered
Base	171	142	12	17
Very satisfied	9%	11%		
Fairly satisfied	17%	18%	25%	6%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	19%	17%	25%	35%
Fairly dissatisfied	22%	22%	25%	18%
Very dissatisfied	33%	33%	25%	41%
<b>Satisfied (NET)</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>6%</b>
<b>Dissatisfied (NET)</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>59%</b>

Table three

2.4 Appendix 'B' sets out an action plan which identifies areas for improvement and outlines how these improvements will be made.

## **Other options considered**

3 Members should be aware that the questions asked in this survey were questions provided by the Regulator of Social Housing and could not be amended prior to publication of the survey.

- 3.1 All registered providers with a stock holding of more than 1000 properties are required to publish this survey for completion by their tenants. Data is to be reported to the Regulator of Social Housing from April 2024 with a national league table to be produced by the Regulator later in the year. In addition to this, all registered providers are required to publish this data and other performance data in an annual report for tenants. The Council is expected to publish its annual report during the Summer.

## **Consultation**

- 4 The presentation as set out in Appendix 'A' has been shared with the Leader of the Council, Chairman of the Housing Committee and Member representatives from each group at the Housing Committee mid-cycle meetings.

## **Key implications**

### **Comments of the Chief Finance Officer**

The Council received a Government grant to help with the additional costs of the Tenants Satisfaction Measure survey. The survey is likely to lead to the Housing team making improvements and changes which may creep outside the set HRA Budget.

### **Comments of the Head of Legal Services**

As a Registered Provider, the Council will be subject to inspection by the Regulator of Social Housing at least once during 2024-2028 as per the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023. The Council will be rated as a landlord and the outcomes of the inspection will be published. The Regulator will ask for a copy of all strategies and policies as part of their inspection. The completion of the Tenant Satisfaction Measure survey will enable Officers to satisfy statutory requirements. The data collected through the survey will be used to inform service improvements as part of the ongoing review of strategic aims for the Housing Services team.

## **Equality**

This survey was sent to all tenants residing in Council homes with the option to return their survey by post or via on-line completion. A sample of those who had not returned their survey by a specified date were contacted by phone over a two-week period to capture the opinions of as many tenants as possible.

## **Climate change**

There are no significant environmental / sustainability implications associated with this report.

## **Appendices**

Appendix 'A' - Tenant Satisfaction Survey Results

Appendix 'B' - Tenant Satisfaction Action Plan

**Background papers**

None

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