Appendix 1

2. Executive summary

bench mark	2012 result	change over time *	proportion of tenants	
87%	88%	↓	87%	satisfaction overall
85%	89%	see section 4	85%	quality of home
82%	84%	↓	82%	value for money of rent
73%	N.A.	N.A.	73%	value for money of service charge
71%	61%	↑	62%	listens & acts on views
79%	83%	↓	82%	kept informed
70%	72%	↑	77%	final outcome of enquiry
82%	82%	↑	84%	repairs & maintenance overall
82%	N.A.	N.A.	87%	last completed repair
85%	88%	↓	87%	neighbourhood as a place to live

* colour if statistically significant

Overall satisfaction

1. The 2015 survey results for EFDC's tenants were in most cases similar to those achieved in the previous survey carried out in 2012. In addition, where benchmark data is available in the majority of cases EFDC appears in the top two quartiles of results when compared to the HouseMark benchmark database of similar landlords.

2. Overall satisfaction with the services that the Council's tenants receive from EFDC remained essentially the same as in 2012, with 87% of tenants now claiming to be satisfied, including 46% who were 'very satisfied'. This score was slightly above the median for other landlords within the HouseMark benchmark database (85%, section 3).

3. Areas where the scores seemed particularly positive included the repairs and maintenance service, including very good scores for the last completed repair (section 5), a significant increase in ratings for how the Council deals with anti-social behaviour (ASB) (section 9), and customer services which had seen a significant increase in satisfaction with the outcome of enquires (section 6). Conversely, satisfaction with the quality of the home was lower than in 2012, although there might have been methodological reasons for this (see below), satisfaction that the Housing Service listened to tenants' views was lower than average (section 8), and there was dissatisfaction amongst some tenants with communal cleaning (section 9).

4. A 'key driver' analysis is a statistical test to check which other results in the survey are best at predicting overall satisfaction. In descending order of strength, the top four key drivers for tenants are listed below.

    - Quality of the home (85% satisfied, section 4)
    - Ability of staff to deal with queries (83%, section 6)
    - Repairs and maintenance overall (84%, section 5)
    - Service charge value for money (73%, section 4)

The home

5. Satisfaction with the quality of the home was the primary key driver of overall satisfaction (section 3), and was rated significantly lower than it had been in 2012 (85% v 89%), but around the level expected of other similar landlords (84% benchmark, section 4). However, this result is somewhat misleading as the 2012 survey was less representative of the overall tenant population than the current survey. Indeed, when a like for like comparison is done using unweighted data, satisfaction had barely changed (88%, was 89%).

6. Significantly lower than average levels were reported with the quality and condition of the home by those living in in properties built between 1965 and 1974, whereas those in older properties built between 1945 and 1964 were significantly more satisfied. By patch, respondents in Epping & North Weald were significantly more satisfied, whereas those in Oakwood Hill & Loughton South, Waltham Abbey Estates South and Limes Farm & Chigwell were significantly less satisfied than average.

Customer services

7. The overall perception for the manner in which the Housing Service deals with enquiries had not changed since 2012, remaining at 85% satisfaction. However, this was a little higher than the expected median score of 82% amongst other landlords (section 6).

8. As in 2012, four out of five respondents (83%) were satisfied with the ability of staff to deal with queries. However, there had been a significant improvement in satisfaction with the final outcome (77%, up from 72%). In both cases, satisfaction was well above the benchmark median putting the Council's customer service scores in the top quartile of providers. Furthermore, there had also been a similar significant increase in satisfaction with how complaints were dealt with (71%, up from 68%).

Repairs and maintenance

9. Overall satisfaction with the repairs and maintenance service was rated slightly above the level one would expect based upon other landlords, with 84% of the sample being satisfied compared to a median benchmark target score of 82%. This score was also slightly higher than that reported in 2012 (was 82%, section 5).

10. This is particularly important as repairs and maintenance was the second key driver of overall satisfaction behind the quality of the home. These results are encouraging, as they will have had an impact on satisfaction with the Housing Service overall, and may well have been a factor in a number of the other questions where satisfaction had also improved.

11. When tenants were asked about their most recent repair, it was positive to find levels of satisfaction had barely changed with all but one aspect of the service rated high enough to appear in the top quartile of providers. The best predictor of satisfaction with the repairs service were the quality of the work (88% satisfied), speed of completion (89% satisfied) and the repair being done 'right first time' (80% satisfied). There was also a very strong relationship between whether workers showed proof of identity (89% satisfied) or not shown (74%) and overall satisfaction with the service.

Value for money

12. It would seem that value for money is an issue for the Council's tenants in 2015, in particular the value for money provided by the service charge which was a key driver of satisfaction overall. Three quarters of tenants were satisfied in this regard (73%), which is broadly in line with other providers where the median score is 74% (section 4). Communal cleaning services may be a factor in this appearing as a key driver, as almost a quarter of those who rated such services said that they were dissatisfied (see section 9).

13. A somewhat larger proportion of tenants were also satisfied that their rent provides value for money (82%), which equalled the benchmark median putting the organisation in the second quartile of providers.

Information and resident involvement

14. The extent to which respondents felt that EFDC's Housing Service listens to their views and acts upon them remains broadly unchanged since 2012 (62%, up from 61%). However, in contrast with the customer service questions, this result is well below the benchmark average (71%), putting the Council in the bottom quartile of providers (section 8).

15. In terms of what this result means, it is quite likely that it is more closely related to day to day customer transactions than it is to wider tenant involvement, indeed satisfaction was significantly lower for those who had made contact in the last year (58%) than those who had not (64%).

16. Nevertheless, only 17% were aware of the Tenant Participation Officer, a similar proportion said they would consider getting involved in a tenants' group (14%). Whilst awareness of the TPO increased with age, it was tenants aged 35 – 49 who were more likely to consider getting involved in one of the tenants' groups (24%).

17. Moving on to consider what tenants thought of the level of information provided by the Housing Service, it was again the case that the results were similar to those achieved in 2012 (82%, was 83%) and as a consequence remained well above the benchmark target of 79%, placing EFDC in the top quartile of providers.

Online access

18. When asked, two out of three respondents said they have access to the internet (63%). The majority had access at home (43%, 68% of users), but it is notable that around three quarters of those who used the internet did so via smartphone, which encompassed around a half of all respondents (49%). Tablets were also popular, being used by 41% of all those with internet (section 7).

19. Other than simple lack of interest, the cost of equipment was the biggest barrier to getting online (32% of non-users), with around a quarter also mentioning a connection costs, a lack of confidence and lack of knowledge.

Neighbourhood services

20. The majority of respondents were satisfied with their neighbourhood as a safe place to live (87%), including more than half who were 'very satisfied' (54%). On the opposite end of the scale only 9% expressed any dissatisfaction. This result obviously varied by patch with those living in the following significantly more satisfied than average:

- Epping & North Weald
- Abridge, Nazeing, Theydon & Rural
- Ongar & Epping Rural
- Buckhurst Hill & Loughton South

In contrast, respondents in the following areas were significantly less so (see section 9):

- Limes Farm & Chigwell
- Oakwood Hill & Loughton South
- Waltham Abbey Estates South

21. The experience of anti-social behaviour (ASB) is something that has an obvious impact on how people perceive their neighbourhood, so the results will have been helped by the fact that a significantly greater proportion of tenants were now satisfied with the way in which EFDC deals with ASB (67% v 62% in 2012), whilst one in five (19%) were ambivalent, and 15% were dissatisfied. This meant that the Council matched the score one would normally expect, whereas before it was below average.

22. Respondents were slightly more satisfied with the cleaning of external communal areas than internal (65% and 63% respectively) which is the opposite of what is typically the case. The two areas of communal cleaning also differed when compared to the respective benchmark medians with external cleaning comparing favourably (65% v 63% average), but tenants rated the cleaning of internal communal areas somewhat below average (63% v 68% average).

Sheltered housing

23. As previously noted, respondents living in sheltered accommodation were usually the most satisfied group. It was therefore unsurprising that when asked to rate the services specific to them, in each case the majority of respondents claimed to be satisfied. When compared to the benchmark average the majority of results were generally very close to the median. Indeed, to emphasise exactly how satisfied this group of customers were, for each aspect of the care and support service rated, the proportion who were 'very satisfied' did not fall below 55% and went as high as 78% (section 10).