



Epping Forest District Council 2012 Customer Satisfaction Survey Report

July 2012

Survey report written by Feedback Services –
satisfaction survey service for social landlords

Customer Survey 2012

Prepared for: Epping Forest District Council

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Summary

Epping Forest District Council commissioned Feedback Services to carry out a STAR tenant satisfaction survey. General needs and sheltered housing tenants were included in the postal survey, which took place between March and April 2012.

The results from the 2012 STAR survey demonstrate that the majority of tenants believe that Epping Forest District Council is providing a good, and on occasions excellent, housing service. The headline rating of 88% overall satisfaction from tenants with landlord services closely matched that awarded for the quality of the home (89%) and the neighbourhood as a place to live (88%). High ratings were also recorded for satisfaction with the condition of the home (85%), value for money of the Housing service for the level of rent charged (84%), ability of staff to deal with queries (83%) and enquiries generally (85%) and being kept informed of things that might affect them (83%). The individual aspects of the repairs service were very highly rated (88% - 93%).

The overall rating for the services provided by Epping Forest District Council (88%) is 3% higher than the level of satisfaction found in the previous full survey of all tenants undertaken in 2006 (85%). The overall rating is also higher than many individual ratings for specific aspects found in the survey, suggesting that Epping Forest District Council tenants hold the Council in good favour.

The survey also found increased satisfaction since the 2006 survey with the condition of the home (4% higher). The neighbourhood is a good place to live according to seven out of eight of Epping Forest District Council's tenants (88%) – an 8% increase in satisfaction since 2006.

Satisfaction with the overall repairs service has fallen slightly since 2006 (3% lower) and the decline can be seen in both general needs and sheltered tenants ratings. However, it should be noted that the 2006 results were exceptionally high, compared to other landlords. Individual ratings are still high and the survey found higher

levels of satisfaction with the time taken before the work started and the quality of the work.

Marginally fewer tenants in 2012 felt that Epping Forest District Council kept them informed about things that might affect them as tenants.

Key drivers

Key driver analysis reveals the importance to tenants of the repairs and maintenance service, followed by value for money. The condition and quality of the home, neighbourhood and listening to tenants views are also influential on overall satisfaction; as is being kept informed.

Key driver analysis also revealed that overall satisfaction with the repairs service is linked to the quality of the work, the speed of the workers and being able to make an appointment. It should be noted that the survey was undertaken **before** the Council introduced appointments for all repairs.

Areas of dissatisfaction

The survey found a small number of areas where approximately one in eight or more tenants are dissatisfied and these perhaps suggest the issues that the Council should focus upon.

Table 1. Services with the higher percentage of dissatisfied tenants	Dissatisfied (%)
Final outcome of enquiry	20%
Cleaning of internal communal areas	17%
Cleaning of external communal areas	17%
Anti-social behaviour	17%
Complaints	14%
Ability of staff to deal with queries quickly and efficiently	13%
Listens to views and acts on them	13%

Comparison with other Landlords

As Epping Forest District Council has been one of the first landlords to have taken the initiative

of carrying out a survey using the newly designed STAR question sets, it has not been possible to benchmark using 2012 data. However, over the last ten years Feedback Services has carried out over 800 STATUS surveys (the predecessor to the STAR survey) and although the last one was carried out in June 2011, the results from recent years provide some comparative analysis for Epping Forest District Council.

The comparison reveals that generally, Epping Forest District Council tenants are more satisfied (1% lower to 5% higher) than tenants of other social landlords. When the results are compared with the new HouseMark STAR averages (3% lower to 3% higher) the Council's ratings were close to the average ratings. The comparison revealed only exception, satisfaction with listening to tenants' views and acting upon them was rated considerably below the HouseMark average.

Table 2. Satisfaction of general needs and sheltered tenants (% satisfied or good)	2012 Epping Forest District Council STAR survey	House-Mark STAR surveys June 2012	2010/2011 STATUS survey (Ave of 41,000 tenants)
Services provided by landlord	88%	88%	85%
Quality of home	89%	87%	86%
Condition of property/home	85%		83%
Neighbourhood as a place to live	88%	85%	84%
Value for money of rent	84%	86%	83%
How enquiries are dealt with generally	85%		81%
Ability of staff to deal with query	83%		80%
Satisfaction with outcome	72%		72%
Repairs and maintenance service	82%	86%	82%
Being told when workers would call	90%		87%
Time taken before work started	88%		83%
Speed of completion of the work	91%		89%
Attitude of workers	93%		94%
Quality of repair work	90%		88%
Keeping tenants informed	83%		83%
Listen to views and act upon them	61%	74%	83%

Satisfaction at area level

The results from tenants were analysed at area level and the survey found considerable differences in some areas, some of which may require further investigation once tenant demographics, property type, stock condition and neighbourhood/environmental issues are taken into account. The survey found slightly lower levels of satisfaction amongst general needs tenants living in several areas:

- Buckhurst Hill - overall services (80%) and condition of the home (77%)
- Chigwell - overall services (82%), condition of the home (75%), value for money (73%), place to live (67%), appearance of neighbourhood (57%), ability to deal with query quickly and efficiently (70%), final outcome (57%), listens to views and acts on them (41%), kept informed (69%), repairs and maintenance service (76%), time taken before repair work was started (82%), speed work completed (87%)
- Waltham Abbey – listening to views (55%), overall repairs service (78%) and aspects of the repairs service (being told when workers would call (84%), being able to make an appointment (84%), time taken before the work was started (81%), speed work completed (86%), quality of repair work (88%))
- Loughton – satisfaction with final outcome of contact (65%)

General needs and sheltered housing residents

Sheltered residents generally are far more satisfied than general needs tenants, consistently awarding ratings higher than general needs tenants.

Sheltered residents awarded ratings in the high 80%s and 90%s and the survey found only a few instances where satisfaction was slightly lower than for all tenants – listening to views and acting upon them (68%), satisfaction with final outcome of contact (76%), dealing with anti-

social behaviour (77%), handling of complaints (81%) and the cleaning of internal communal areas (83%).

Overall, the ratings reflect a very high level of satisfaction amongst sheltered housing tenants. They awarded a higher rating for the overall services provided by the landlord (93%) compared to general needs tenants (86%) and key aspects of the services that affect them directly were also rated highly - including contact with the scheme manager (96%) and the Careline system (98%).

Analysis by key strands of diversity

Throughout the report, satisfaction with different services is analysed by the key strands of diversity. Younger residents almost consistently awarded lower ratings across all services measured in the survey compared with other residents, and the pattern is similar to that found by many social landlords.

In terms of household composition, family households and adult households (under 60) are often not as satisfied with services compared with older households. Female residents are less satisfied than male residents.

The considerable differences found in the subgroup analysis may require further investigation once resident demographics, property type, stock condition, neighbourhood and environmental issues are taken into account.

Service reviews

Epping Forest District Council should look to review service delivery in those areas, highlighted by the results in this survey, which indicate that service improvements may be needed. These should also provide further avenues that could usefully be explored with tenants. In particular:

Satisfaction with outcome of contact - One of the highest levels of dissatisfaction in the survey was linked to satisfaction after contacting the Council, with one in five tenants left

dissatisfied. This was the one area where sheltered tenants were not considerably more satisfied than general needs tenants, and comparison with previous surveys reveals that satisfaction has fallen for both groups. Any further analysis or investigation needs to ensure that the rating reflects the Council's Housing Directorate and not the wider services provided by the Council generally to residents of the District. It also needs to identify how much satisfaction is outside the control of the Council (for example the ability to provide tenants with transfers to alternative accommodation).

Listening to views and acting upon them – Epping Forest District Council is not alone in recording a much lower level of satisfaction with tenant communication and involvement than previous surveys. Although it is likely that the Council has recruited more residents to get involved in advising on improvements to housing services, residents still do not seem to feel that the Council listens to their views and acts upon them. Residents certainly consider that they are kept well informed, however perhaps not enough information is fed back on what action has been taken as a result of residents' views and suggestions.

Repairs and maintenance service – Unlike other services measured in the survey satisfaction with the overall repairs service has fallen slightly since the last survey (although satisfaction at the time of the last survey was exceptionally high). Key driver analysis reveals that satisfaction with the repairs service is the biggest driver of overall satisfaction with landlord services. However, the change in the headline result does not reflect the very high ratings for the different elements of the service, nor the fact that satisfaction in some areas have increased since the last survey. The finding suggests that the general perception amongst tenants is slightly adrift from reality and the results from the survey should be used to promote the service to tenants.

Overall Epping Forest District Council are to be congratulated on continuing to carry out

satisfaction surveys with tenants and working with them to measure trends and improve services with the aim of fulfilling their aims of providing and maintaining safe and attractive neighbourhoods that meets the needs and aspirations of the community.

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1. Introduction

Feedback Services (a research agency supported by the National Housing Federation) was commissioned to undertake an independent survey of Epping Forest District Council's tenants to collect data on their opinions of and attitudes towards their landlord and the services provided. The survey was designed using HouseMark's STAR questions for tenant satisfaction surveys.

1.1 About STAR

In July 2011 HouseMark launched STAR - a set of questions designed to measure tenant satisfaction in the housing sector.

Following the demise of STATUS (the standardised tenant satisfaction survey developed by the National Housing Federation and adopted by the government as a regulatory requirement), HouseMark was approached by members to devise an approach for carrying out tenant satisfaction surveys on a voluntary, self-regulatory basis.

The new approach ensures social housing providers remain equipped with the means of comparing key satisfaction results with other landlords and also provides a framework for trend analysis.

HouseMark worked with a number of organisations including the National Housing Federation, Chartered Institute of Housing, Tenant Participation Advisory Service and Tenants and Tenants Organisations of England to develop STAR. Over 260 responses were received during the consultation period from social landlords, tenants and market research companies.

In England, guidance from Communities and Local Government (CLG) and the regulatory framework for social housing sets out the standards by which landlord performance will be judged. Current legislation, guidance and regulation places greater emphasis on the relationship between landlords and their tenants at the local level. Tenants are at the heart of shaping, influencing and monitoring the services

they receive. The regulatory standards focus on seven key areas, split into economic standards and consumer standards. The economic standards cover: governance and financial viability, value for money and rent, whilst consumer standards cover tenant involvement and empowerment, the home (including repairs and maintenance), the tenancy (including allocations and tenure) and neighbourhood and community (including anti-social behaviour)..

The consumer standards have been set to provide tenants, landlords and stakeholders to know what performance outcomes are expected, which is crucial for tenants to effectively hold their landlords to account. For tenants this means a greater focus on issues that matter the most to them (such as repairs and tackling anti-social behaviour), more opportunities to have their say, get involved and hold their landlord to account. Tenants are also entitled to more feedback from the landlord, including an annual report setting out just how well the landlord is doing against any local standards that have been set to complement the national standards.

Seeking to embed a customer focus in the way social landlords prioritise investment, shape services and make decisions is not a new concept. Increasingly, many landlords are seeing this kind of approach as good business sense – a way to differentiate their services from those of other providers by ensuring resources are focused on the right things and that the services they provide are what tenants want.

Meaningful involvement places a focus on the tenant as an empowered consumer and delivers better services by ensuring that tenants are able

to influence service design and hold their landlord to account for performance. Undertaking STAR surveys is just one of many different methods of involvement which landlords are able to use to engage with their tenants as part of a wider and coordinated customer engagement strategy.

1.2 Aims of the surveys

The aim of these surveys is to provide data on tenant satisfaction, which will allow the Council to:

- Provide an up to date picture of tenants' satisfaction with their homes and with the Housing services the Council provides
- Compare the current performance against previous surveys where possible
- Compare the performance of the Council as a landlord with that of other social landlords who have undertaken STAR surveys
- Inform decisions regarding service reviews.

1.3 Sampling frame and fieldwork

Sampling

The sampling frame was designed to achieve a sampling error of $\pm 3.0\%$ at the 95% confidence interval, this would produce very reliable survey results well and within the recommended sampling error of $\pm 4.0\%$. A sample of general needs and sheltered tenants were randomly selected by Feedback based on estimated response rates of around 40% for general needs tenants and 50% for sheltered tenants. Feedback randomly selected the sample using quotas for general needs and sheltered tenants.

Fieldwork

The survey was planned to take place during a four-week period. Two individual mailings took place. Feedback carried out the administration of the first mailing, which was sent out on 12 March 2012. This consisted of a copy of the questionnaire, a covering letter written by the Council and a reply-paid envelope. All

questionnaires were returned to Feedback. After two weeks, Feedback sent any tenant who had not responded a second, full survey pack. The survey was held open an extra week as completed questionnaires were still being returned and finally closed on 20 April when the final questionnaires were then sent for data entry.

Incentives

Incentives were used to boost the response rate. Three questionnaires were drawn at random from those returned and lucky winners won high street shopping vouchers of £100, £50 and £20.

1.4 Questionnaire design

One STAR questionnaire was designed for the survey for both general needs and sheltered tenants. The questionnaire comprised 24 questions on four pages. A copy of the general needs questionnaire can be found in Appendix 3.

1.5 Response rates

The overall response from all tenants combined was very good at 49%, returning 1,093 of the 2,215 questionnaires sent out. The response rates from general needs tenants (47%) and sheltered tenants (64%) was similar to the response rates found at other landlords who have undertaken STAR surveys in the last year. See Figure 1.1 for the full figures and response rates.

1.6 Accuracy

For the overall results, Feedback and HouseMark recommend that surveys of under 10,000 population achieve a sampling error of at least $\pm 4\%$ at the 95% confidence level. This means that, for example, if 35% of tenants answered "Yes" to a particular question, there are 95 chances out of 100 that the correct figure for all tenants – including those who did not respond - would be between 31% and 39%.

For the Council, when the data is analysed for all tenants, 1,093 responses were achieved. This response was high enough to conclude that any figures quoted at this level are accurate to within +/-2.7% at the 95% confidence interval. The raw data has been checked to take into account any differences between the responding tenants and the total tenant population, based on the ward populations. As the response was not representative, weightings were applied at area level.

1.7 Presenting the findings

This report presents the findings of the survey for general needs and sheltered housing tenants. The report focuses on the key findings of the survey and the results are analysed by:

- Tenure
- Age of tenant
- Gender of tenant
- Area
- Property type
- Number of bedrooms
- Comparison with previous surveys, and
- Comparison with the results from other landlords.

Note: A comparison using combined figures for general needs and sheltered tenants has not been possible with the previous survey carried out in 2008 as only general needs tenants were surveyed at that time, in accordance with the Government's guidance. Satisfaction amongst general needs tenants has been compared against the 2008, 2006 and 2003 surveys. For sheltered tenants and a combined rating for all tenants the 2006 and 2003 survey data has been used for comparative purposes.

Analysis by some key diversity demographics has also not been possible due to the small numbers of tenants falling outside the main groups (ethnic origin, religion and sexual

orientation).

The report includes topline findings for quick reference in the appendices (Appendix I) and accompanying this report is a full set of data tables.

1.8 Notes to figures

Throughout this report, the figures show the results as percentages and base numbers are also shown where appropriate.

Rounding

Throughout this report, the vast majority of figures show the results as percentages. The percentages are rounded up or down from one decimal place to the nearest whole number, and for this reason may not in all cases add up to 100%. Rounding can also cause percentages described in the supporting text to differ from the percentages in the charts by 1% when two percentages are added together. In some parts of the report percentages may be expressed to one decimal place.

Excluding 'don't know' and 'no opinion'

In general, in line with the convention for satisfaction surveys, only valid responses to questions have been included and all non-valid responses (for example, where a response to a question has not been stated) have been excluded. Responses such as 'no opinion', 'can't remember' or 'don't know' (where these were possible responses to questions) are also excluded from the base in this report. Where these results are excluded this is noted in the written comments and charts.

1.9 Acknowledgements

Our thanks go firstly to the tenants of the Council who took part in the survey. We would also like to thank the staff of the Council for their assistance with the project, and our particular thanks go to Chris Sobey for her help throughout the project.

Figure 1.1 Survey sampling, response and reliability

Client group	Number of tenants	Sample size	Completed interviews	Response rate	Sampling error (%)
General needs tenants	5,114	1,905	895	47%	±3.0%
Sheltered tenants	1,299	310	198	64%	±6.5%
All tenants	6,413	2,215	1,093	49%	±2.7%

2. Overall satisfaction with services

The following chapters look at the results from the survey based on the views of all Epping Forest District Council’s tenants (general tenants and sheltered tenants) surveyed. Commentary is also given in this chapter where there is a noticeable difference in satisfaction between the different property types and neighbourhoods identified as subgroups in the survey and by the diversity of tenants. The ratings for general needs tenants have also been compared with the previous STATUS surveys undertaken in 2003, 2006 and 2008. This chapter examines the overall rating for Epping Forest District Council’s services and is often seen as the headline figure in the survey. Later on in the report a chapter explores the differences in the relationship between the overall rating and individual ratings in an attempt to understand what is driving overall satisfaction at Epping Forest District Council.

2.1 Landlord services



The vast majority of Epping Forest District Council’s tenants are satisfied with the services provided by the Council, and encouragingly the overall rating is amongst the highest in the survey (88%) – suggesting a high degree of customer loyalty towards the Council.

Tenants were asked, “Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the services provided by Epping Forest District Council?”

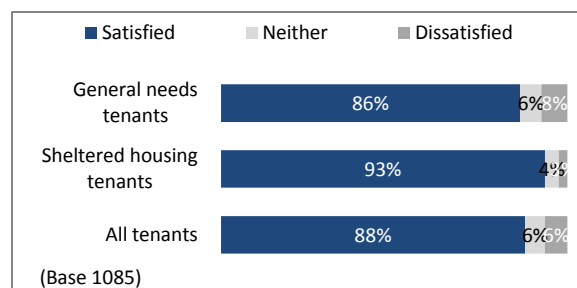
Around two fifths of the tenants said they are “very satisfied” with the services provided (44%), and a similar percentage are “fairly satisfied” (43%). Few tenants are dissatisfied with the services provided (6%), while a further 6% are undecided (neither satisfied nor dissatisfied).

The overall rating for landlord services is 3% higher than the average found in Feedback’s database (85% based on landlords who asked a similar question as part of a STATUS survey in the last two years) and matches the rating found in HouseMark’s benchmarking service (based on approximately 80 landlords who have submitted the results from STAR surveys in June 2012).

Note: It is important to note that neither of the two comparative datasets are representative of the housing sector and should not be taken as an indication of any national average.

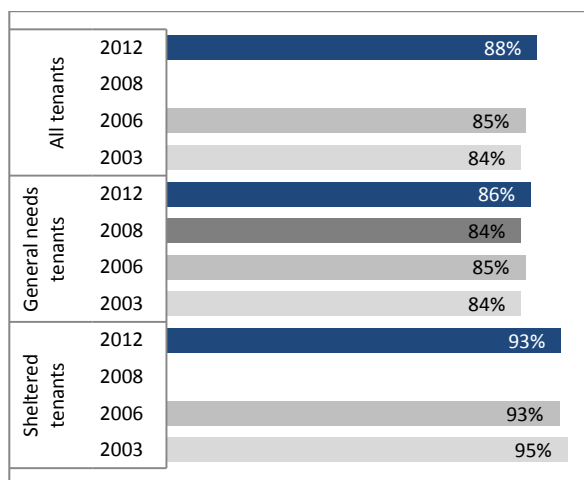
A higher percentage of sheltered tenants are highly satisfied with the Council’s services (93%) compared with general needs tenants (86%).

Figure 2.1 : Satisfaction with services provided by Epping Forest District Council



Encouragingly the overall rating for services (88%) from all tenants is 3% higher than the rating awarded in 2006 (85%). The increase is a result of the higher rating from general needs tenants (up 2% since 2008) – while the rating for sheltered tenants remains identical to the one recorded in 2006 (93%) – when sheltered tenants were last surveyed.

Figure 2.2 : Change in satisfaction with services provided by Epping Forest District Council



Note: Sheltered housing tenants were excluded from the 2008 STATUS survey, as required by Government guidelines for that year's surveys.

Demographic and property analysis (general needs tenants)

The results for general needs tenants have been examined in more detail and any comment is made where there are differences in satisfaction compared to the overall results in terms of tenant demographics and other factors. It is important to note however that the differences do not necessarily mean that there is a causal link. For example, surveys often find that tenants with disabilities are frequently more satisfied than those that are not, however it is invariably the case that tenants with disabilities have an older age profile than those without and further analysis also reveals that it is the age of the tenant that is the reason for the higher satisfaction ratings rather than any disability.

For the results from the survey at the Council it has not been possible to examine the results by ethnicity, religion or sexual orientation due to the low numbers of tenants in some of these groups.

Number of bedrooms – Satisfaction with overall services was at its highest for the small

number of general needs tenants who had 4 bedrooms (100%), with little to separate those with smaller properties (84% - 87%).

Property type – General needs tenants living in flats (86%) are just as satisfied with overall services compared with tenants living in houses (87%).

Household composition – Older households are highly satisfied with the Council, awarding a very high rating for the overall service (95% single older residents and 97% older couples). Families (78% - one parent and 75% two parents) awarded the lowest ratings, with single adult households (80%) less satisfied than two adult households (87%).

Age - Analysis by age found that younger tenants (under 35 years old) are far less satisfied (75%) than middle aged tenants (82% - 35 to 59 years old) and especially older tenants (95% - 60 years old or over).

Gender - The survey found that male tenants are slightly more satisfied with overall services (90%) compared with female tenants (84%).

Health problems - Tenants who had a health problem which limits their day to day activities either a lot (84%) or a little (86%) were marginally less satisfied with the quality of their home compared with tenants with no health issues (87%).

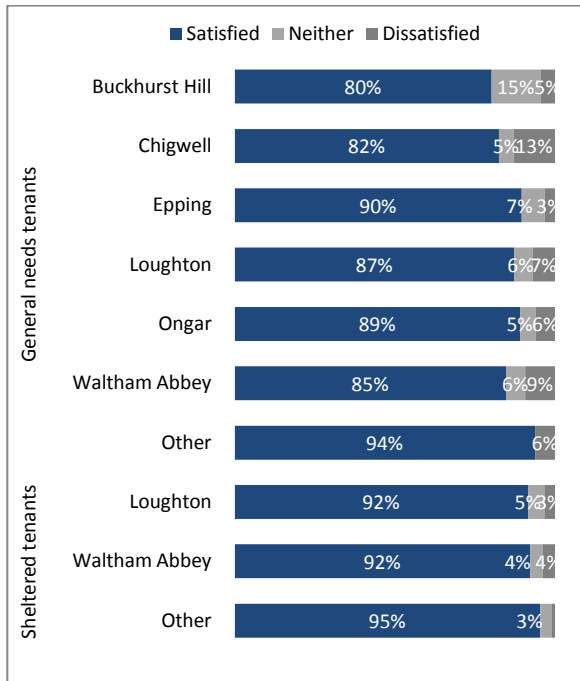
Housing benefit - The survey found no difference in satisfaction in terms of whether tenants receive housing benefit or not (both 86%).

Satisfaction by area - Satisfaction with overall services is very highly regarded by all sheltered tenants (92% - 95%) and general needs tenants living in "Other" areas (94%).

Overall satisfaction is noticeably lower amongst general needs tenants living in Buckhurst Hill (80%), Chigwell (82%) and to a certain extent Waltham Abbey (85%) compared with other

general needs tenants.

Figure 2.3 : Satisfaction with overall services provided by area



Note: it has not been possible to display ratings below 3% in figure 2.3.

3. The home

The following chapter looks at the results from the survey based on the views of all Epping Forest District Council’s tenants in relation to their homes (general needs tenants and sheltered tenants). Landlords are required to ensure that tenants’ homes meet the standard set out in the Government’s Decent Homes Guidance and continue to maintain their homes to at least this standard as well as meeting the standards of design and quality that applied when the home was built, if these standards are higher than the Decent Homes Standard.

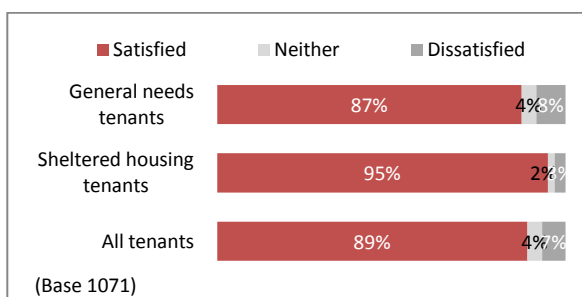
3.1 Overall quality of the home

89% The vast majority of the Council’s tenants are satisfied with the overall quality of the home (89%). Over half of tenants are “very” satisfied (57%), while a third of tenants are “fairly” satisfied (32%). Few tenants are dissatisfied (7%). Most tenants gave either a positive or negative rating, with few falling into the middle ground of being neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the quality of their home (4%).

Encouragingly the rating for the quality of the home at the Council is higher than both Feedback’s STATUS average (86%) and HouseMark’s STAR average (88%).

As the chart below demonstrates sheltered housing tenants rated their home very highly indeed (95%), with 8% more satisfied compared with the Council’s general needs tenants (87%).

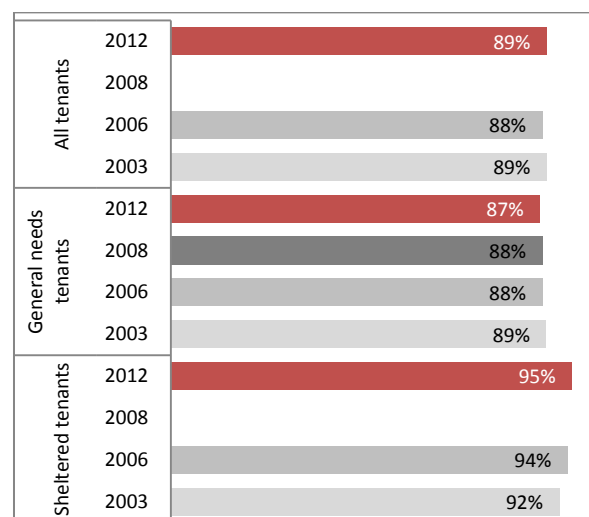
Figure 3.1 : Satisfaction with the home



The latest survey found that tenants rated the quality of the home (89%) at a similar level to the one found in two earlier surveys (88% - 89%).

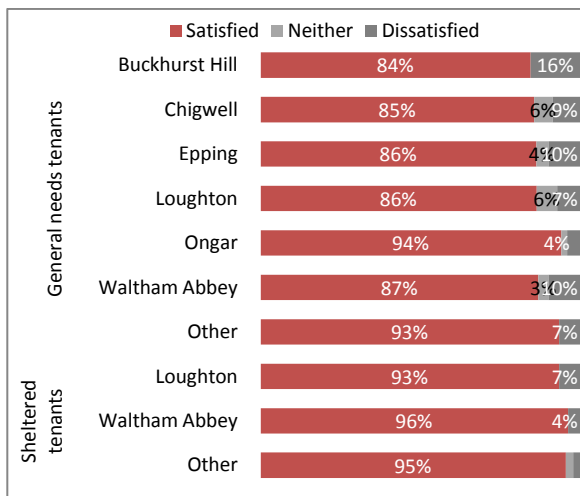
However as the Figure 3.2 shows, satisfaction amongst general needs tenants appears to have fallen slightly over the last nine years – albeit marginally, while sheltered tenant satisfaction with their home is increasing and is now at its highest level (95% in 2012).

Figure 3.2 : Change in satisfaction with the home over the last nine years



Area - Satisfaction with the quality of the home is highly regarded by all sheltered tenants (93% - 96%). General needs tenants in Other (mostly rural) areas (93%) and Ongar (94%) rated the quality of their homes higher than other general needs tenants (84% - 87%).

Figure 3.3 : Satisfaction with the home



Note: it has not been possible to display ratings below 3% in Figure 3.3.

Demographic and property analysis (general needs tenants)

Number of bedrooms – Satisfaction with the home was slightly higher for general needs tenants with either one, two or three bedrooms (87% - 89%), with a slightly lower rating from the few tenants with four bedrooms (85%).

Property type – General needs tenants living in flats, bedsits and houses or bungalows are all equally satisfied with the quality of their home (87% - 89%).

Household composition – Older households are highly satisfied with the quality of the home (95% single older residents and 96% older couples), far more so than families (78%) and adult households (81% one adult and 80% two adults).

Age - Analysis by age found that younger tenants (under 35 years old) are far less satisfied (75%) than middle aged tenants (83% - 35 to 59 years old) and especially older tenants (95% - 60 years old or over).

Gender - The survey found that male tenants are slightly more satisfied with the quality of their home (89%) compared with female tenants

(86%).

Health problems - Tenants who had a health problem which limits their day to day activities either a lot (84%) or a little (86%) are marginally less satisfied with the quality of their home compared with tenants with no health issues (89%).

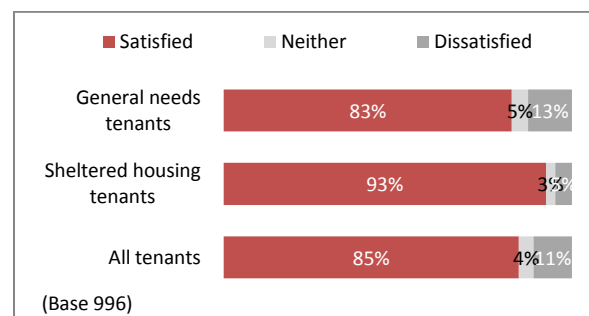
Housing benefit - The survey found little difference in satisfaction in terms of whether tenants receive housing benefit or not (87% - 88%).

3.2 Condition of the home

85% A significant majority of the Council’s tenants are satisfied with the overall condition of the home (85%). More tenants are “fairly” satisfied (48%) with the condition rather than “very” satisfied (37%). Around one in ten tenants are dissatisfied (11%). Tenants tended to award either a positive or negative rating, with few falling into the middle ground of being neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the condition of their home (4%). Satisfaction with the condition of the home is 2% higher than Feedback’s STATUS average for satisfaction with the condition of the property (83%).

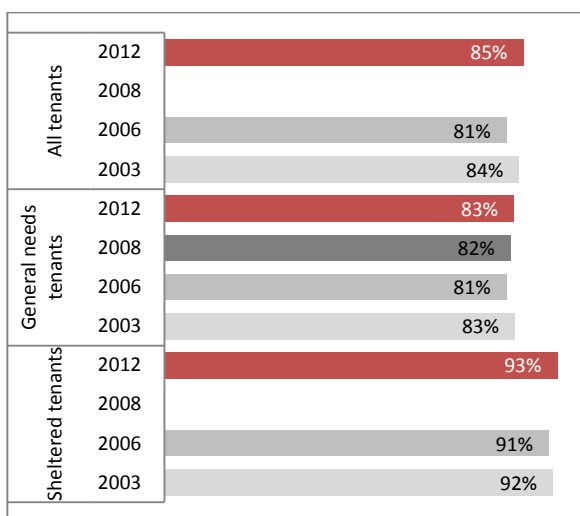
As the chart below demonstrates, sheltered housing tenants (93%) rated the condition of their home higher than general needs tenants (83%).

Figure 3.4 : Satisfaction with the condition of the home



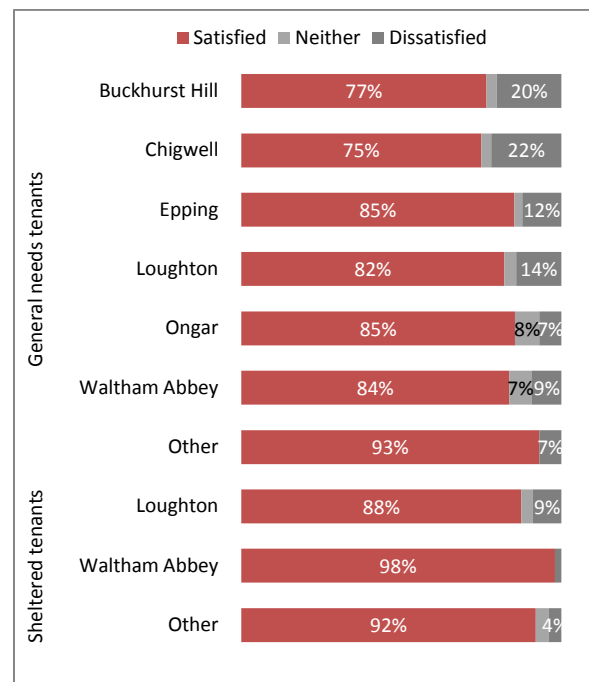
The 2012 survey found that the level of satisfaction with the condition of the home amongst tenants has increased considerably since all tenants were last surveyed in 2006 (4% higher). The overall increase reflects the small increases recorded amongst general needs and sheltered tenants since the previous surveys in 2008 and 2006.

Figure 3.5 : Change in satisfaction with the condition of the home over the last nine years



Area - Satisfaction with the condition of the home is highly rated by sheltered tenants in Waltham Abbey (98%), followed by tenants living in “Other” areas (92% sheltered tenants and 93% general needs tenants). General needs tenants living in Chigwell (75%) and Buckhurst Hill (77%) are less satisfied than other tenants.

Figure 3.6 : Satisfaction with the condition of the home by area



Note: it has not been possible to display ratings below 4% in Figure 3.6.

Demographic and property analysis (general needs tenants)

Number of bedrooms – Satisfaction with the condition of the home was at its lowest for general needs tenants with either none or two bedrooms (79% - 80%), compared with other bedroom sizes (84% - 85%).

Property type – General needs tenants living in flats and houses are just as satisfied with the condition of them (both 83%).

Household composition – Virtually all older households are highly satisfied with the condition of their home (92% - 96%) – with families (67% single parent and 72% two parent families) and to some extent single adult households (75%) less satisfied.

Age - Analysis by age found that younger tenants (under 60 years old) are far less satisfied (74% - 76%) than older tenants (93% - 60 years old or over).

Gender - The survey found that male tenants are slightly more satisfied with the condition of their home (86%) compared with female tenants (81%).

Health problems - Tenants who had a health problem which limits their day to day activities either a lot (83%) or a little (84%) are just as satisfied with the property condition compared with tenants with no health issues (82%).

Housing benefit - The survey found identical levels of satisfaction in terms of whether tenants receive housing benefit or not (83%).

4. Value for money

More than ever before, landlords are required to deliver a comprehensive approach to achieving value for money in meeting their objectives, taking into account the interests of and commitments to stakeholders. This means managing their resources economically, efficiently and effectively to provide quality services and homes, and planning for and delivering year on year improvements in value for money.

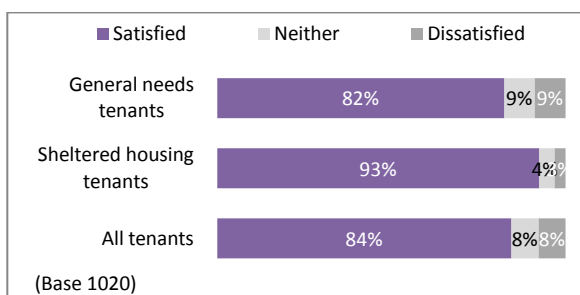
4.1 Value for money

84% Five out of six tenants are satisfied with the value for money of the Council's Housing service for the level of rent charged (84%). Less than one in ten tenants are dissatisfied (8%), with an identical percentage neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (8%).

Satisfaction with value for money at the Council is close to the average ratings for Feedback STATUS surveys (83%) and only slightly lower than that reported by HouseMark's for STAR surveys (86%).

The majority of sheltered tenants are satisfied with the value for money provided (93%), with just 3% dissatisfied compared with 9% of general needs tenants expressing dissatisfaction.

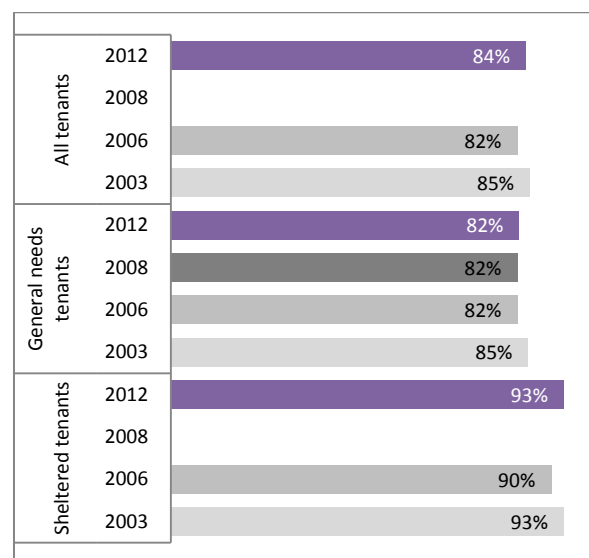
Figure 4.1 : Satisfaction with value for money



Satisfaction with the value for money for all tenants has increased by 2% since the 2006 survey. While satisfaction with the value for money for general need tenants has remained at the same level found in 2006 and 2008, sheltered tenants are more satisfied than the level recorded in 2006 (3% higher) – with the

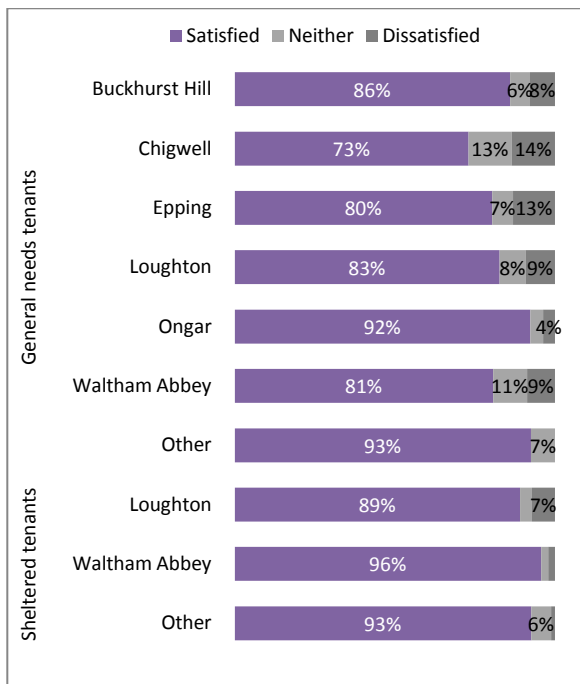
rating matching the higher level found in 2003.

Figure 4.2 : Change in satisfaction with the value for money of the rent



Area - Satisfaction with the value for money was at its highest amongst sheltered tenants living in Waltham Abbey (96%) and "Other" Areas (93%), and general needs tenants living in Ongar (92%) and "Other" Areas (93%). Far fewer tenants are satisfied in Chigwell (73%), while the highest percentages of dissatisfied tenants are found in Epping and Chigwell (13% - 14%).

Figure 4.3 : Satisfaction with value for money by area



Note: it has not been possible to display ratings below 4% in the above chart.

Demographic and property analysis (general needs tenants)

Number of bedrooms – The general pattern revealed that satisfaction with the value for money increased with the number of bedrooms. Tenants with four bedrooms are highly satisfied with the value for money, while those living in bedsits are the least satisfied (73%). General needs tenants with either one, two or three bedrooms awarded a similar rating for the value for money from the rent (81% - 84%).

Property type - Tenants living in flats (80%) are slightly less satisfied with the value for money compared with those living in houses or bungalows (84%).

Household composition – Value for money was rated higher by older households (88% - 90%) and multi-adult households (86%) compared with couples of working age (73% under 60 years old) and one parent families

(75%).

Age - Analysis by age found that younger tenants (under 35 years old) are far less satisfied (72%) than middle aged tenants (80% - 35 to 59 years old) and especially older tenants (89% - 60 years old or over) in terms of value for money.

Gender - The survey found that male tenants are slightly more satisfied with the value for money achieved for the rent charged (86%) compared with female tenants (80%).

Health problems - Tenants who had a health problem which limits their day to day activities either a lot (85%) are more satisfied with the value for money compared with tenants with either minor health issues (80%) or no health issues (82%).

Housing benefit – Tenants on housing benefit are more satisfied with the value for money (86%) compared to tenants who did not receive housing benefit (80%).

5. Neighbourhood

The District is a popular place to live, and with its proximity to London the local population is likely to continue to grow over the coming years. The pressure for development and the demand for homes, jobs and leisure facilities has never been greater. The Council is committed to providing a safe and attractive environment by building and strengthening communities and supporting individual tenants.

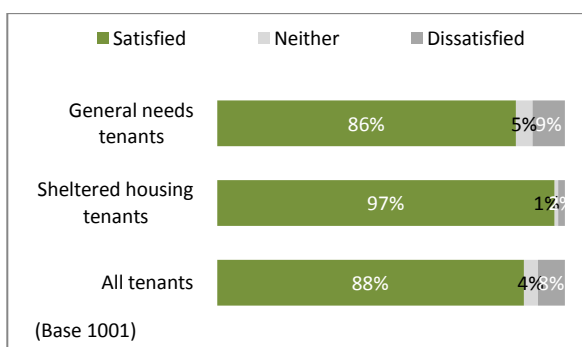
5.1 A place to live

88% The vast majority (nine out of ten tenants) are satisfied with the neighbourhood as a place to live (88%), with half of all tenants “very” satisfied (48%). Less than one in ten tenants are dissatisfied with their neighbourhood (8%), while 4% are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

The neighbourhood is very popular at the Council and the rating is higher than both Feedback’s STATUS average (84%) and HouseMark’s STAR average (85%).

Far more sheltered tenants are satisfied with the neighbourhood (97%) compared with general needs tenants (86%) – with 62% of sheltered tenants “very” satisfied with their neighbourhood compared with 44% of general needs tenants.

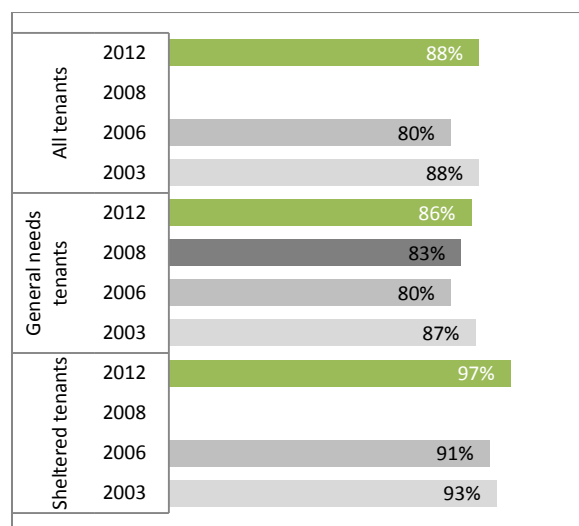
Figure 5.1 : Satisfaction with the neighbourhood as a place to live



Encouragingly, satisfaction with the neighbourhood as a place to live (88%) has increased by 8% since 2006 for all tenants, with rises in satisfaction recorded from both general

needs tenants (3% above the level found in 2008) and sheltered tenants (6% higher than the rating in 2006).

Figure 5.2 : Change in satisfaction with the neighbourhood over the last nine years



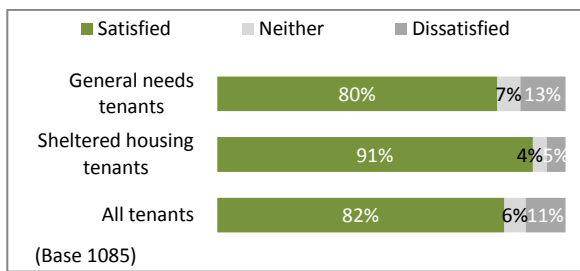
5.2 Appearance of the neighbourhood

82% The survey found that slightly fewer tenants are satisfied with the appearance of the neighbourhood (82%) compared with it as a place to live (88%).

Only a third of all tenants are “very” satisfied with the appearance of the neighbourhood (33%). One in ten tenants are dissatisfied with the appearance of their neighbourhood (11%), while 6% are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

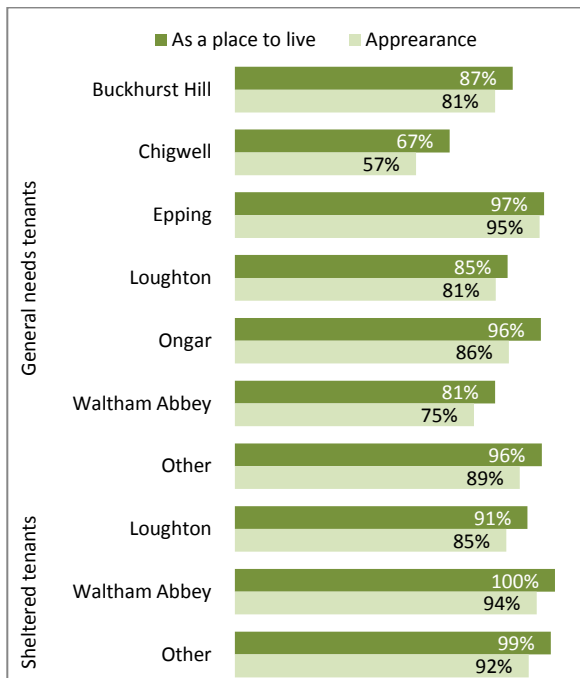
More sheltered tenants are satisfied with the appearance (91%) compared with general needs tenants (80%).

Figure 5.3 : Satisfaction with the appearance of the neighbourhood



Area – Across almost every area tenants consistently rated the neighbourhood slightly higher as a place to live than its appearance. The only exceptions being Epping – where there was little difference between the two neighbourhood measures. In Chigwell and Ongar the difference was more considerable than other areas.

Figure 5.4 : Satisfaction with the appearance of the neighbourhood by area



The chart above reveals that not all areas are rated the same, with much lower ratings found in Chigwell for the neighbourhood – both as a place to live (67%) and its appearance (57%). Lower ratings are also recorded in Waltham

Abbey (81%) with the neighbourhood as a place to live and in Buckhurst Hill (81%) and Loughton (81%) for its appearance.

Demographic and property analysis (general needs tenants)

Number of bedrooms – The survey found that satisfaction with the neighbourhood appears to increase with the number of bedrooms. Satisfaction with the neighbourhood as a place to live was at its highest for general needs tenants with either three or four bedrooms (90% - 92%), with the lowest rating from the few tenants in bedsits or with one bedroom (81% - 79%). Tenants in one or two bedroom properties rated the appearance of the neighbourhood lower (74% - 76%) than other tenants (86% - 94%).

Property type – General needs tenants living in houses or bungalows are slightly more satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live (87%) and its appearance (82%) compared with tenants living in flats (84% and 78% respectively).

Household composition – Virtually all older households are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live (94%) and are satisfied with its appearance (87% - 90%), while families (77% - 81%), single adults (79%) and especially adult couples (70%) are less impressed with their neighbourhood as a place to live. Family householders also awarded a lower rating for the appearance of the neighbourhood (71% - 74%).

Age - Younger tenants (under 35 years old) are far less satisfied with the neighbourhood as a place to live (72%) and its appearance (64%) than middle aged tenants (80% place to live and 79% appearance - 35 to 59 years old), who in turn are not as satisfied as older tenants (89% place to live and 88% appearance - 60 years old or over).

Gender - The survey found that male tenants are slightly more satisfied with the

neighbourhood as a place to live (86%) and its appearance (84%) compared with female tenants (80% and 79% respectively).

Health problems - Tenants who had a health problem which limits their day to day activities either a lot (85%) are more satisfied with the neighbourhood compared with other tenants (76% - 80%), however the appearance was rated slightly lower (79%) compared to other tenants (82%).

Housing benefit - The survey found that tenants who receive housing benefit (86%) liked their neighbourhood as a place to live more than those who did not receive benefits (80%), with little difference between the two groups in terms of the appearance of the neighbourhood.

6. Contact with Epping Forest District Council

Providing excellent customer service is a fundamental part of landlord services to ensure a positive relationship with its tenants. How staff dealt with the various queries and enquiries raised by tenants is examined in this chapter. The views of tenants who had not been in contact with Epping Forest District in the last 12 months, or who had no opinion, have been excluded from this analysis.

6.1 Level of contact

Less than two thirds of tenants had contacted the Council in the last 12 months with a query other than to pay their rent or service charge (61%), with more contact from general needs tenants (65%) compared with sheltered housing tenants (46%).

The overall percentage of tenants contacting the Council is slightly higher than that found in 2006 (66%). A lower percentage of general needs tenants made contact in the last 12 months compared to the level found in the 2008 survey (78%), while more sheltered tenants are also contacting the Council each year compared to the level found in 2006 (40%).

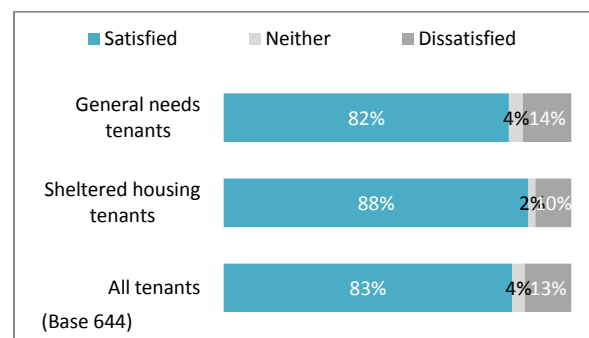
6.2 Ability of staff to deal with enquiry quickly and efficiently

83% A significant majority of tenants are satisfied that the Council staff deal with queries quickly and efficiently (83%), with over half of tenants “very” satisfied (54%).

Around one in eight tenants are dissatisfied with the way in which staff dealt with the query (13%), and few are neutral (4% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied). Sheltered tenants (88%) are more satisfied than general needs tenants (82%).

Encouragingly the rating is 3% higher than the average found in Feedback’s database of landlords who have carried out STATUS surveys in the last two years (80%).

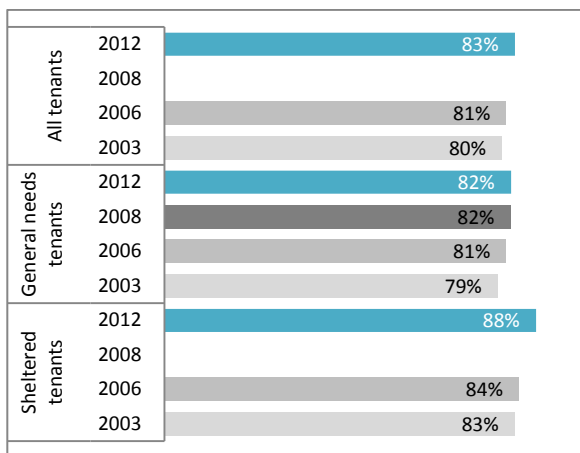
Figure 6.1 : Satisfaction with the ability of staff to deal with queries quickly and efficiently



As the chart below shows, there has been a slight increase in the percentage of tenants who are satisfied with the ability of staff to deal with enquiries quickly and efficiently over the last few years.

The overall rating is now 2% higher than six years ago and reflects the higher ratings in the latest survey from sheltered tenants (4% higher), while the rating for general needs tenants remains at the same level recorded four years ago.

Figure 6.2 : Change in satisfaction with the ability of staff to deal with enquiries



Note to figure 6.2, a slightly different question was asked in the 2003, 2006 and 2008 surveys.

6.3 Satisfaction with final outcome of query



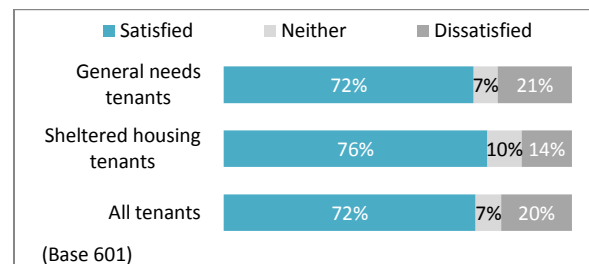
A lower percentage of tenants are also satisfied with the final outcome of the enquiry (72%), however more are “very” satisfied (45%) rather than “fairly” satisfied (27%). A fifth of tenants are however dissatisfied (20%), with 7% remaining neutral.

Sheltered tenants (76%) are once again far more satisfied than general needs tenants (72%) – however the difference is less noticeable than that recorded for other services and performance measures.

The rating matches the average level of satisfaction found in Feedback’s database of STATUS surveys (72%).

It was not possible to differentiate between the level of satisfaction with the final outcome of enquiries for those matters within the control of the Council, and those outside the Council’s control (such as availability of alternative accommodation for transfer). Furthermore, tenants may have responded in relation to contact with other Council services (not Housing).

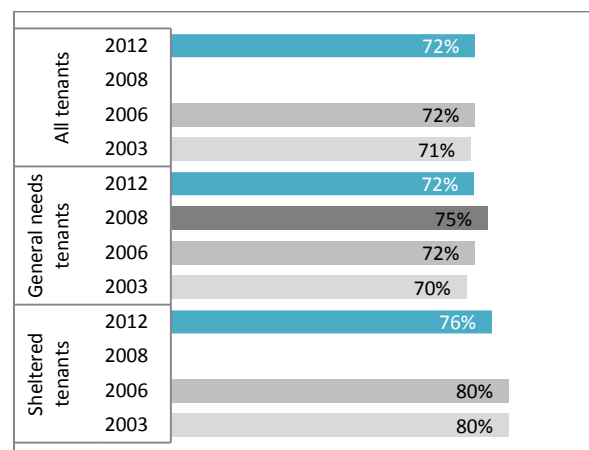
Figure 6.3 : Satisfaction with the outcome of the enquiry



The chart below compared the ratings from the 2012 survey with a similar but not identical question asked in previous surveys.

The findings from the recent survey suggests that tenant satisfaction in this area is at the same level as six years ago for all tenants (2006), however satisfaction has fallen slightly amongst general needs tenants - 3% lower than the level recorded in 2008 and sheltered tenants have also been more satisfied in the past.

Figure 6.4 : Change in satisfaction with the outcome of the enquiry



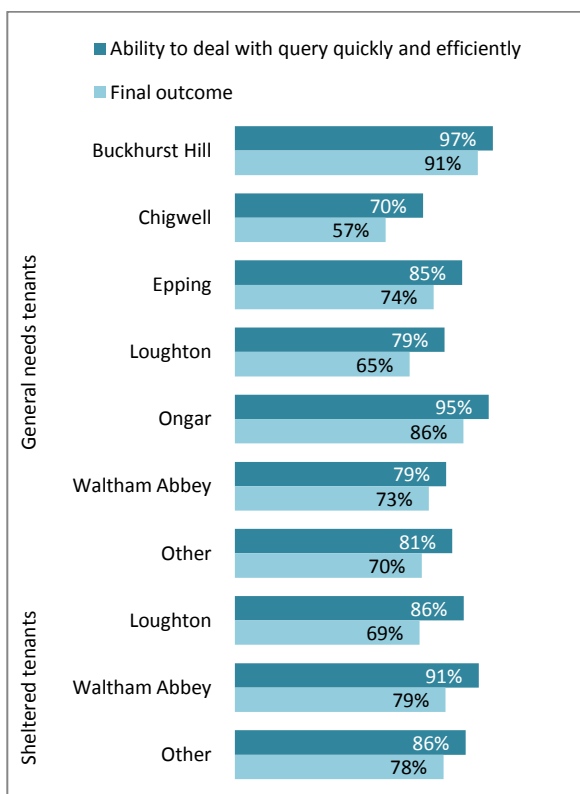
Area – General needs tenants in Buckhurst Hill and Ongar awarded some of the highest ratings for satisfaction with customer services – with ratings higher than those awarded by sheltered tenants.

Satisfaction with the ability of staff to deal with queries quickly and efficiently was at its lowest

in Chigwell (70%), while fewer general needs tenants are satisfied with the final outcome in Chigwell (57%), Loughton (65%) and “Other” areas (70%).

Sheltered tenants in Loughton also awarded a lower rating for the final outcome (69%) compared with other areas.

Figure 6.5 : Satisfaction with customer contact by area



Demographic and property analysis (general needs tenants)

Number of bedrooms – Tenants living in 4 bedroom houses (59%) and bedsits (54%) are less likely to contact the Council compared to other tenants (63% - 67%). General needs tenants living in four bedroom houses found more staff able to deal with their query quickly (100%) and are more satisfied with the final outcome (93%) than other tenants groups.

Property type – Tenants living in bedsits are far more likely to contact the Council (79%)

than other general needs tenants (62% houses and 69% flats), with little difference in satisfaction with contact between tenants living in flats or houses.

Household composition – A higher percentage of two parent families (84%), followed by one parent families (77%) contacted the Council each year compared with other tenants. The survey found that older households rated the contact much higher in terms of dealing with the query quickly and efficiently (90% and 91%) and the final outcome of the query (83% - 84%). Far fewer adult couples (73%) and two parent families (74%) are satisfied with the way in which their query was dealt with, and together with single parents awarded a much lower rating for the outcome of contact (65% - 69%).

Age - Younger tenants (under 35 years old) are far more likely to contact the Council each year (76%) compared with middle aged tenants (69% - 35 to 59 years old) and especially older tenants (58% - 60 years old or over). Younger tenants are far less satisfied with the ability of staff to deal with their enquiry quickly (70% under 35 years old) and fewer are satisfied with the final outcome (57%), compared with older tenants (90% and 82% respectively – tenants over 60 years old).

Gender - The survey found that slightly more female tenants had contact the Council in the last 12 months (67%) compared with male tenants (63%) and that male tenants are marginally more satisfied with customer contact.

Health problems - Tenants who had a health problem which limits their day to day activities are marginally less likely to make contact (61% - 63%) than tenants with no health issues (66%). Tenants whose lives are affected on a daily basis tended to be slightly more satisfied with customer contact than other tenants.

Housing benefit - The survey found little difference in satisfaction with customer contact in terms of whether tenants receive housing

benefit or not.

6.4 Internet access

Just under half of the Council’s tenants has access to the internet (46%), with almost twice as many general needs tenants having internet access (51%) than sheltered tenants (28%). The percentage of tenants with access has been steadily climbing over the last few years, up from 35% in 2008 and 26% in 2006.

The percentage is still very given the national average of 77% households having internet access (Office for National Statistics – August 2011).

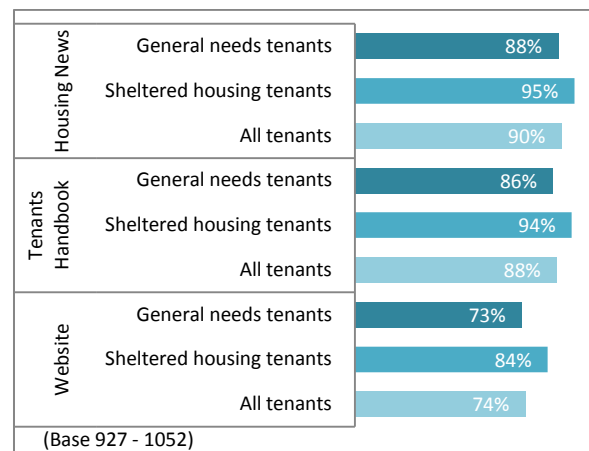
6.5 Information and advice

Housing News – the Council’s tenants newsletter is generally very well received by tenants (90% satisfied), with its popularity slightly higher amongst sheltered tenants (95%) compared with general needs tenants (88%). Very few tenants are dissatisfied with Housing News (2% overall). Only 3% of all tenants said that they had not seen or read the newsletter.

Around nine out of ten tenants are satisfied with the Tenants Handbook, with which they were provided when they moved into their home (88%). Very few tenants are dissatisfied (2%). More sheltered tenants are satisfied with the handbook (94%) than general needs tenants (86%). A number of tenants said that they had not seen or used the handbook (7% of all tenants).

Just under half of all tenants (45%) said that they had not seen the Council’s website, with a much higher percentage of sheltered tenants (59%) not having visited the site compared with general needs tenants (41%). More sheltered tenants who had visited the website, are satisfied with the website (84%) compared with general needs tenants (73%).

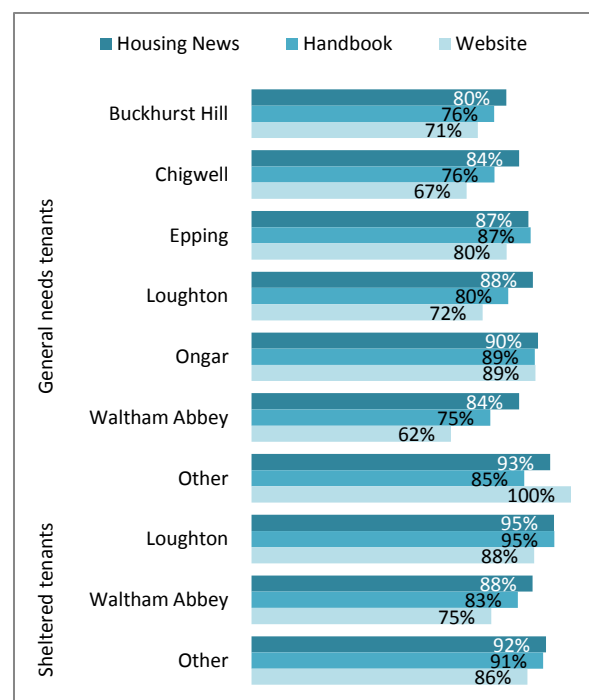
Figure 6.6 : Satisfaction with information and advice from the Council



Area – As the chart below shows general needs tenants living in Chigwell and Waltham Abbey are less impressed with Housing News (both 84%) compared with all other tenants, while tenants in Buckhurst Hill, Chigwell and Waltham Abbey awarded the lowest ratings for satisfaction with the handbook (75% - 76%).

Of those tenants who had visited the website, general needs tenants in Waltham Abbey (62%) are the least satisfied.

Figure 6.7 : Satisfaction with information provided by area



The survey found that amongst general needs tenants, older tenants and male tenants rated Housing News higher than other tenants, while male tenants are also more satisfied with the Handbook. Tenants without health issues and not in receipt of housing benefit tended to rate the website higher than other tenants.

6.6 Dealing with enquiries

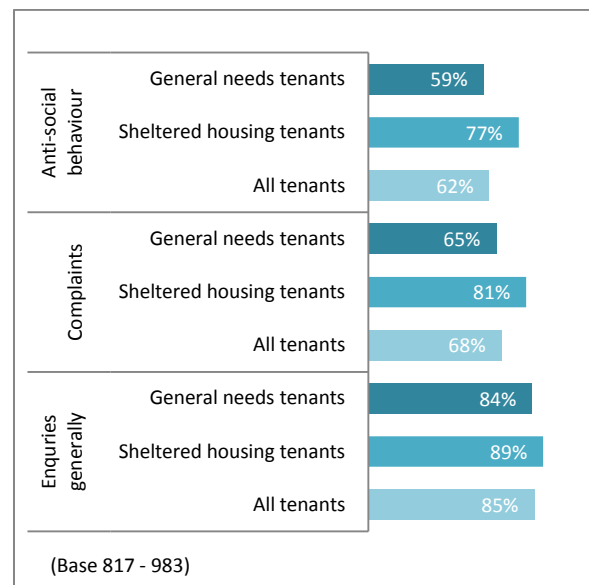
Just under two thirds of tenants are satisfied with the way in which the Council deals with anti-social behaviour (62%). Almost a fifth of tenants are dissatisfied (18%) with the handling of anti-social behaviour. Far fewer general needs tenants are satisfied (59%) compared with sheltered tenants (77%), and twice as many are dissatisfied (19% general needs and 10% sheltered tenants).

More tenants are satisfied with the way in which the Council handles complaints (68%) than anti-social behaviour; with more sheltered housing tenants impressed (81%) than with general needs tenants (65%).

A relatively low number of tenants are dissatisfied - around one in seven tenants (14%), with a fifth being neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (18%). More general needs tenants are dissatisfied (15%) compared with sheltered tenants (8%).

The majority of tenants are satisfied with how enquiries are generally dealt with (85%) - with high ratings from general needs (84%) and sheltered (89%) tenants.

Figure 6.8 : Satisfaction levels when dealing with enquiries

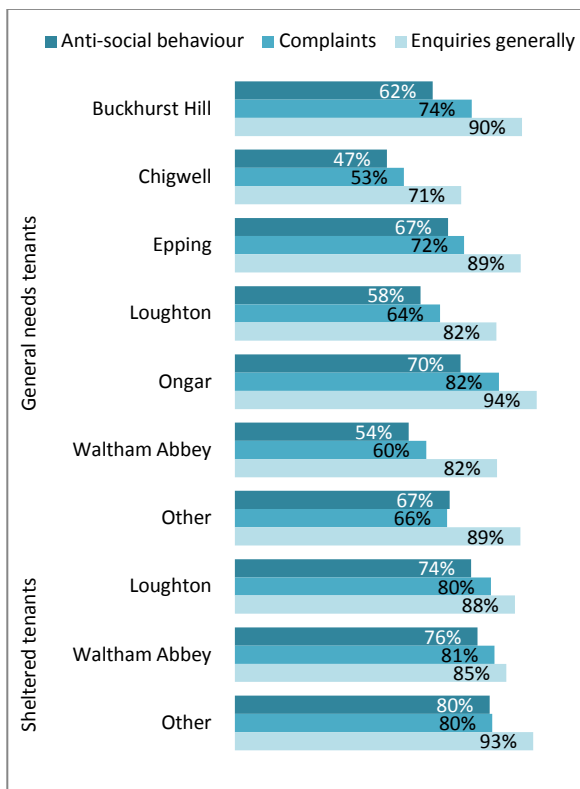


Area – Less than half of general needs tenants in Chigwell (47%) are satisfied with how the Council dealt with anti-social behaviour, with low levels of satisfaction also found in Waltham Abbey (54%) and Loughton (58%). General needs tenants in Ongar (70%) are the most impressed, but not as satisfied as sheltered tenants (74% - 80%).

General needs tenants in Ongar (82%) awarded a high rating for the way in which the Council deals with complaints – matching those awarded by sheltered tenants (80% - 81%).

The majority of tenants in all areas awarded high ratings for how the Council dealt with enquiries generally (85% - 94%), with a noticeably lower rating from tenants in Chigwell (71%).

Figure 6.9 : Satisfaction with dealing with different issues by area



Satisfaction was generally higher in all three areas for older general needs tenants (aged 60 or over) and male tenants compared with other tenants.

6.7 Service standards

Just two in five tenants said that they are aware of Epping Forest District Council’s published housing service standards (39%). The survey found that awareness was much higher amongst sheltered tenants (47%), compared with general needs tenants (37%). And, for tenants in general needs accommodation awareness was higher amongst older tenants (44%), male tenants (45%) and those on housing benefits (40%).

7. Communication and involvement

Over recent years social landlords have put a lot of time and resources into ensuring that they have effective and clear communication channels in place with their tenants, and that information given out to tenants is clear and easy to understand. Epping Forest District Council offers a wide range of information leaflets and channels of communication, using a variety of traditional methods and newer digital technology options. The Council has a strong commitment to be recognised as an innovative and transparent council involving its tenants in decisions to ensure that services are shaped around their needs. This chapter examines the views of the Council’s tenants in these two key areas and notes any differences amongst tenants.

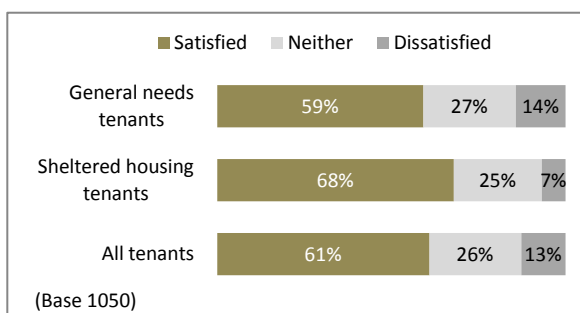
7.1 Listens to views and acts on them

61% Less than two thirds of tenants felt that their landlord listens to their views and acts upon them (61%), and few of those are “very” satisfied (20%). While many tenants are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (26%), only one in eight are actually dissatisfied (11%) and did not feel that the Council listens to their views and acts upon them.

Fewer general needs tenants felt less listened to (59%) compared with those in sheltered housing (68%).

The rating is considerably lower than the average found in HouseMark’s benchmarking database of STAR surveys (74%).

Figure 7.1 : Listen to views and acting upon them



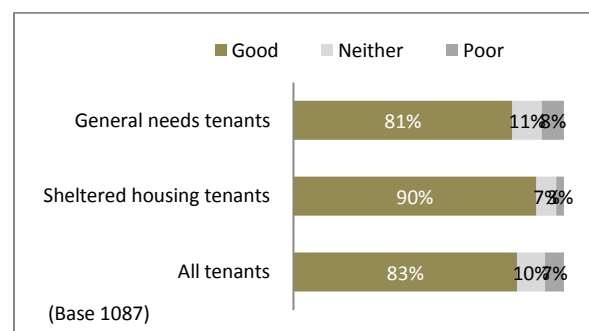
7.2 Keeping tenants informed

83% Encouragingly, a significant majority of tenants felt that the Council is good at keeping them informed about things that might affect them as a tenant (83%), although only 34% of these tenants said the Council was “very good” at this. Few tenants said that the Council was poor in this area (7%), while 10% are neutral (neither good nor poor).

The rating matched that found in Feedback’s STATUS database (83%) revealing that just as many tenants felt as informed at the Council as at other social landlords.

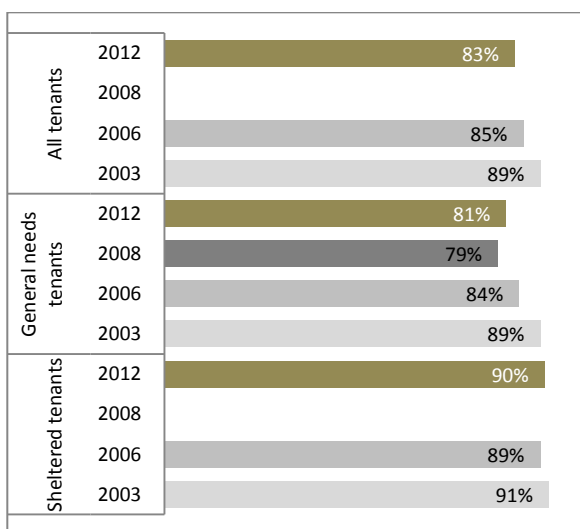
As the chart below shows, not as many general needs tenants (81%) felt that the Council are good at keeping them informed as sheltered tenants (91%).

Figure 7.2 : Listening to tenants and keeping them informed about things that might affect them



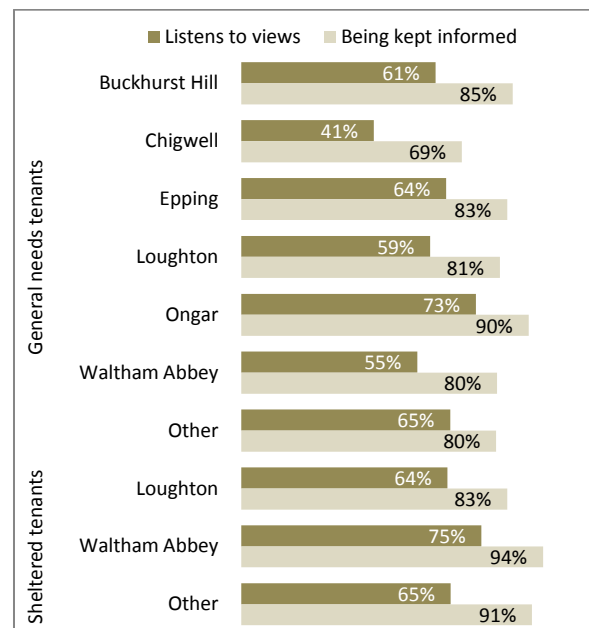
In 2012, slightly fewer tenants felt that the Council keeps them informed compared to the level recorded in 2006 (2% lower) and the rating is now some 6% lower than in 2003. However, the percentage of general needs tenants who are satisfied with being kept informed has increased slightly over the last four years (2% higher) and suggests that this rating is now no longer falling over time. Just as many sheltered tenants felt as informed in 2012 (90%) compared with previously (89% - 91%).

Figure 7.3 : Change in satisfaction with being kept informed over time



Area – In many areas around two thirds of tenants or slightly fewer felt that the Council listens to their views and acts on them (59% - 65%). However, far fewer general needs tenants in Chigwell (41%) and Waltham Abbey (55%) felt that the Council listened to their views, and noticeably fewer tenants in Chigwell felt informed (69%) compared with other areas.

Figure 7.4 : Tenants' satisfaction with information and involvement by area



Demographic and property analysis (general needs tenants)

Number of bedrooms – A higher percentage of tenants living in three or four bedroom properties felt that the Council listens to their views and acts on them (65% and 81% respectively) and felt more informed (86% and 91% respectively) compared with tenants living in smaller properties.

Property type – There was little difference between general needs tenants living in flats or houses in terms of having views listened to or being kept informed.

Household composition – Around half of adult households (45% single and 49% couples) and families (55% one parent and 46% two parent) felt that the Council listened to their views and acted on them – much lower than other tenants while around three quarters of adult households and family households felt informed (68% - 76%), lower than other groups.

Age – Fewer younger tenants felt that they are listened to (45% under 35 years old) and not as many felt informed (66% under 35 years old)

compared with older tenants (71% and 91% respectively).

Gender - The survey found that more male tenants felt informed (86%) than female tenants (79%).

Health problems – Slightly more tenants who had a health problem which limits their day to day activities a lot felt informed (86%) compared with other tenants (80%).

Housing benefit - The survey found that more tenants on housing benefit felt the Council listened to them and acted on their views (64%) compared to tenants who do not receive housing benefit (54%).

8. Repairs and maintenance service

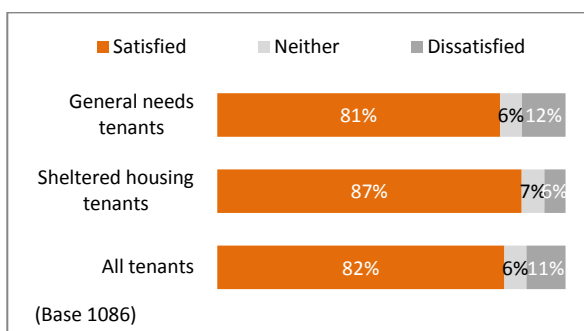
Tenant surveys almost universally find that satisfaction with the repairs and maintenance service is the most important factor in determining overall satisfaction with the landlord. The Council has recently appointed a private repairs management contractor to manage the Repairs Service, which has led to many key repair targets being achieved and exceeded. However, many of the contractor's recent initiatives will not have impacted on the survey's results because they were introduced after the survey was carried out. The following chapter looks at satisfaction with this key service at the Council and reports any differences in satisfaction between the subgroups in the survey.

8.1 Overall satisfaction

82% The 2012 survey found that the significant majority (four out of five) tenants are satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service (82%). The survey revealed that almost half of tenants are “very” satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service (46%), while over a third of tenants are “fairly” satisfied (36%). Around one in ten tenants are dissatisfied with the repairs and maintenance service (11%), with half of those “very dissatisfied” with the service (5%). A small number of tenants are neutral when it comes to rating the repairs service (6%).

As the chart below shows, the Council’s repairs service is highly rated by sheltered tenants (87%), higher than general needs tenants (81%).

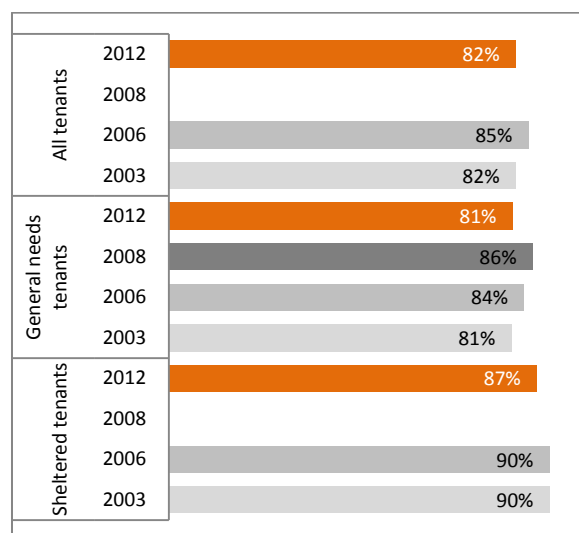
Figure 8.1 : Satisfaction with repairs and maintenance service



The overall rating for the repairs and maintenance service (82%) is slightly lower than the level recorded in 2006 (85%) and reflects the fall amongst both general needs and

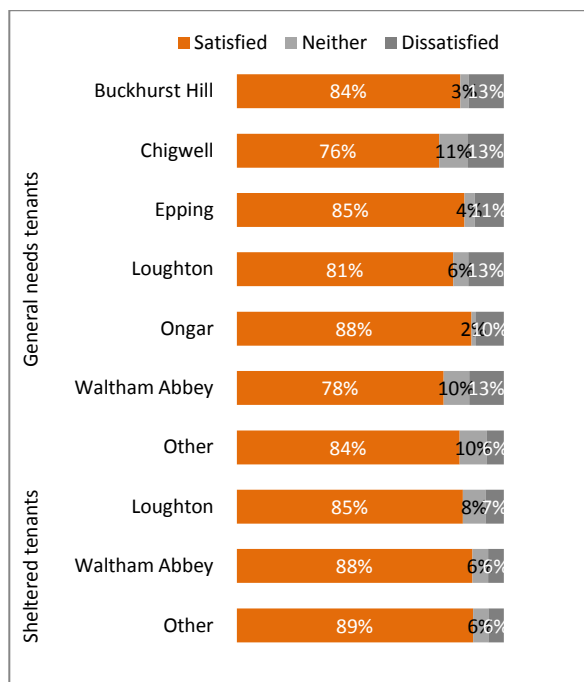
sheltered tenants. The rating awarded by general needs tenants has fallen considerably since 2008 (5% lower) and is at its lowest rating for over 6 years.

Figure 8.2 : Change in satisfaction with the repairs and maintenance service



Area - Satisfaction with the repairs and maintenance is rated the highest amongst sheltered tenants in Waltham Abbey and Other areas (88% - 89%) and by general needs tenants in Ongar (88%). Satisfaction is also high in other areas, with general needs tenants in Chigwell (76%) and Waltham Abbey (78%) the least satisfied with the repairs service.

Figure 8.3 : Satisfaction with the repairs service by area



Demographic and property analysis (general needs tenants)

Number of bedrooms – Satisfaction with the repairs service was at its highest for general needs tenants with four bedrooms (85%) – marginally higher than tenants with either one, two or three bedrooms (80% - 82%), with a lower rating from the few tenants living in bedsits (75%).

Property type – General needs tenants living in flats are just as satisfied with the repairs service compared with tenants with houses or bungalows (81% - 82%).

Household composition – The service was rated higher by older households (90% - 91%) than other tenants, with adult households (73% - 74%) and two parent families (71%) the least satisfied.

Age - Analysis by age found that younger tenants (under 35 years old) are far less satisfied with the repairs service (72%) than middle aged tenants (77% - 35 to 59 years old) and especially

older tenants (90% - 60 years old or over).

Gender - The survey found that male and female tenants are equally satisfied with the repairs service (82% - 83%).

Health problems - Tenants health had little bearing on satisfaction with the repairs service at the Council.

Housing benefit - The survey found that tenants who receive housing benefit (83%) are slightly more satisfied with the repairs service than those who did not (79%).

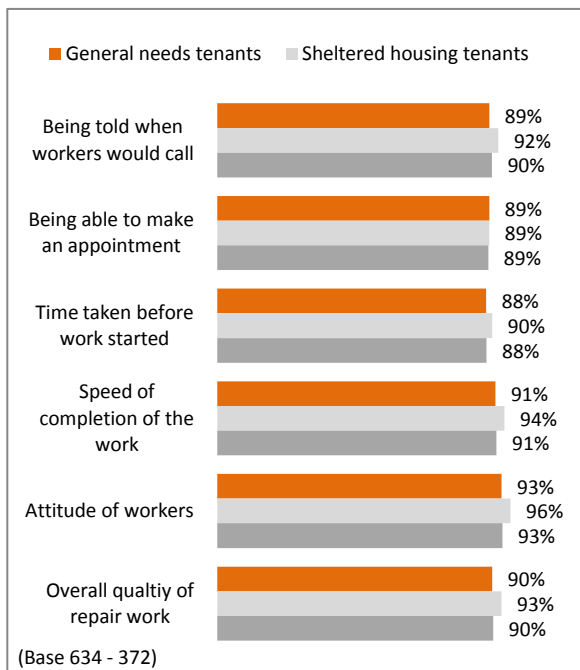
8.2 Satisfaction with the last repair

Just under two thirds of tenants (63%) said that they had a repair to their home completed in the last 12 months.

Epping Forest District Council tenants are highly satisfied with all aspects of the repairs service – with consistently high ratings for all aspects of the service (88% - 93%). Very few tenants are dissatisfied with any aspect of the service (3% to 8% for all tenants), as shown in figure 8.4.

Encouragingly the survey found that general needs tenants (88% - 93%) are almost as satisfied as sheltered tenants (89% - 96%).

Figure 8.4 : Satisfaction with the last repair by tenure

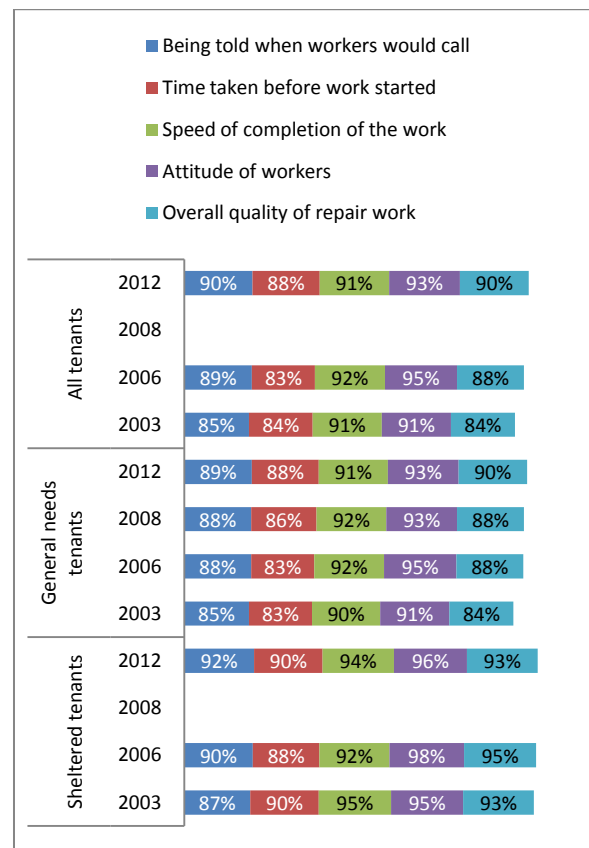


The 3% decrease in overall satisfaction with the repairs service does not appear to correspond with the ratings for the various aspects of the repair work, which are very high. Satisfaction with the time taken before the work started is 5% higher than in 2006, while a small fall is recorded in satisfaction with the attitude of the repair workers (2% lower) and other ratings remaining at similar high levels to those recorded in 2006.

The 5% decrease in overall satisfaction for general needs tenants also does not appear to be linked to changes in the actual aspects of the work which remain at similar levels to those found in 2008 (1% lower to 2% higher).

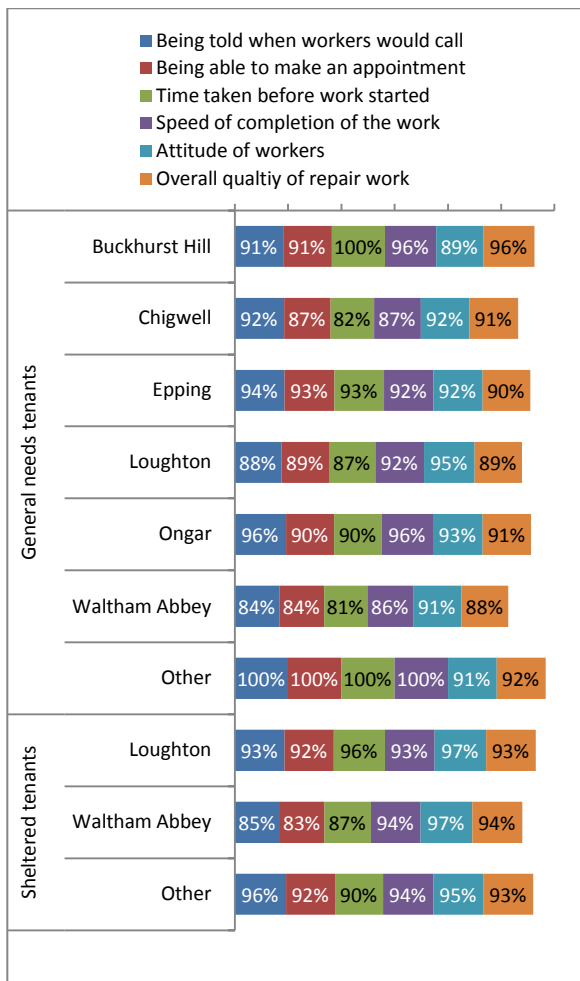
Satisfaction amongst sheltered tenants has not changed dramatically with small changes recorded. The latest survey found a rise in satisfaction in several areas (information given, time taken before repair started, and speed of completion – all 2% higher), while recording a fall in others (attitude of workers and quality of work - both 2% lower than in 2006).

Figure 8.5 : Change in satisfaction with different aspects of the repairs and maintenance service over time



Area - Satisfaction with the individual aspects of the repairs service is very highly rated across all areas with perhaps the exception of general needs tenants in Waltham Abbey who are not as satisfied with the different measures of the service. General needs tenants in Chigwell reported a lower level of satisfaction with the time taken before the work was started (82%).

Figure 8.6 : Satisfaction with aspects of the repairs service by area



8.4 Keeping repair appointment

94%

The vast majority of tenants (94%) said that the repairs appointment was kept, while 6% said it was not (93% general needs and 95% sheltered housing tenants).

9. Sheltered accommodation

Sheltered tenants were asked to answer a question about the key services that affect them directly. This chapter examines the views of the Council’s sheltered housing tenants in these key areas.

9.1 Support plan

90%

Nine out of ten sheltered housing tenants are satisfied with their support plan (90%), with two thirds “very” satisfied (69%). Very few tenants are dissatisfied with their plan (2%), while 8% are neutral (neither satisfied nor dissatisfied).

9.2 Contact with scheme manager

96%

Virtually all of the Council’s tenants are satisfied with the frequency of contact with their scheme manager (96%) and three quarters are “very” satisfied (75%).

9.3 Overall service provided by scheme manager

95%

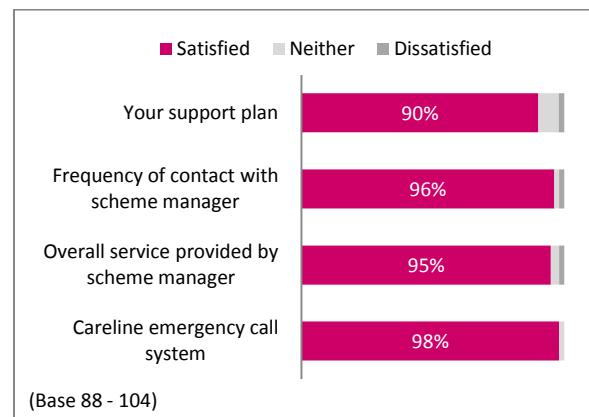
The overall service provided by the scheme manager is very highly rated (95%), with only 2% of tenants dissatisfied.

9.4 Careline – the emergency call system

98%

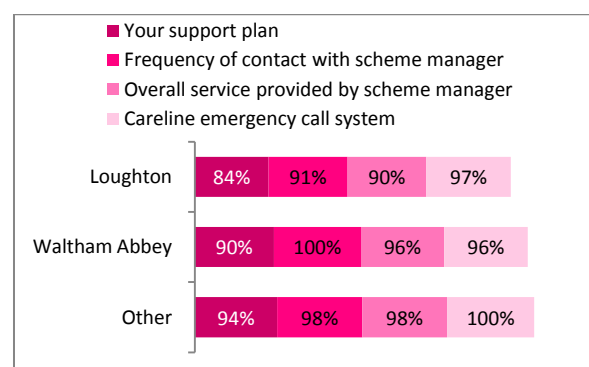
Encouragingly, virtually all sheltered tenants are satisfied with the emergency call system and the majority are “very” satisfied (88%).

Figure 9.1 : Sheltered tenants’ satisfaction with support services



Area – Sheltered tenants in Loughton are noticeably less satisfied with their support plan (84%), the frequency of contact with the scheme manager (91%) and awarded a lower rating for the scheme manager (90%) compared with tenants living in the other two areas.

Figure 9.2 : Satisfaction with sheltered services by area



10. Demographics

The following analysis looks at the demographics of Epping Forest District Council tenants. Whilst the results can be used to give a general indication of the Council’s tenant population, they are likely to vary slightly from that collected in a profiling surveys or the Council’s own housing management system. It is important to note that the demographic composition of tenants will greatly influence the satisfaction ratings, and that older tenants have a higher tenancy to respond to this kind of survey. It is widely accepted that older tenants are far more satisfied than younger households, families and often working households. Generally speaking the highest levels of satisfaction are found at landlords with a high percentage of older tenants. Knowing who your customers are plays a vital role in ensuring the landlord offers the right mix of services, and customer insight tools which examine the makeup of tenants, the use of services and satisfaction levels, are widely used in the social housing sector.

10.1 Household composition

For tenants living in general needs properties, adult households (couples or single tenants aged under 60 and living in a household without children) represent just under a quarter of the households (23%) – with twice as many single adults (16%) than couples (7%). A quarter of households are family households (25%), with slightly more two-parent families (14%) than one-parent families (11%). Older tenants are found in two fifths of the properties (39%), including 23% single older households. A significant number of general needs households contain three or more adults (13%), while 1% have other household compositions.

Figure 10.1 : Household composition

	General needs tenants
One adult under 60	16%
Two adults both under 60	7%
One adult aged 60 or over	23%
Two adults, at least one over 60	16%
Three or more adults, 16 or over	13%
1 parent family with child/ren at least one under 16	11%
2 parent family with child/ren at least one under 16	14%
Other	1%

(Base 876 households)

10.2 Age (principal tenant)

Respondents were asked to give details of the main (principal) tenant. Just over half of all principal tenants (52%) are aged 60 or over, with two fifths of all tenants aged between 35 and 59 years old (38%). The survey found that only 10% of all tenants are aged under 35 years old.

The age of general needs tenants is split equally between those who are aged between 35 and 59 years old (44%) and those who are older (43%), with just 13% under 35 years old.

Compared with the 2008 survey of general needs tenants, the latest survey found a lower percentage of older tenants (43% compared with 49% in 2008) and an increase in the percentage of tenants aged between 34 and 59 years old (44% compared with 37% in 2008).

Figure 10.2 : Age of tenants

	All tenants	General needs tenants	Sheltered housing tenants
34yrs and under	10%	13%	0%
35-59 yrs	38%	44%	11%
60+ yrs	52%	43%	89%

(Base 986 tenants)

10.3 Gender (principal tenant)

Two fifths of all tenants (57%) are female, with a higher percentage of female tenants found in sheltered housing (62%) compared with general needs housing (56%). The current ratio of general needs female and male tenants, was exactly the same as that found in the 2008 survey.

Figure 10.3 : Gender of principal tenant

	All tenants	General needs tenants	Sheltered housing tenants
Male	43%	44%	38%
Female	57%	56%	62%

(Base 1009 tenants)

10.4 Health problems

Just over half of tenants (54%) have a member of the household whose day to day activities are limited due to a health problem which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months. 23% of tenants said that the day to day activities are limited a lot and 23% said they are limited a little. As expected the percentage increases amongst sheltered tenants (65%) compared with general needs tenants (42%).

The latest survey reported a lower percentage of general needs tenants with health problems (42%) compared with the 2008 survey (52%) – however it is important to note that the wording of the question has changed.

Figure 10.4 : Amount health problems have an impact on daily life

	All tenants	General needs tenants	Sheltered housing tenants
Yes, a lot	23%	20%	36%
Yes, a little	23%	22%	29%
No	54%	59%	35%

(Base 984 tenants)

10.5 Ethnic origin

The majority of Epping Forest District Council's tenants are White British households (94% general needs and 98% sheltered tenants). According to the housing regulator's definition, which includes White Irish and White Other tenants, just 6% of tenants are Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) households.

Figure 10.5 : Ethnic origin of tenant

	All tenants	General needs tenants	Sheltered housing tenants
British	94%	94%	98%
Irish	1%	1%	0%
Gypsy/Irish Traveller	0%	0%	0%
Other white	1%	1%	0%
White and Black Caribbean	1%	1%	0%
African	1%	1%	0%
Other	3%	3%	1%

(Base 1054 tenants)

10.6 Housing benefit

Over half of all households are in receipt of housing benefit (56%), with a higher percentage of sheltered households in receipt (66%) compared with general needs households (54%). The percentage of general needs tenants on housing benefit is similar to the level found four years ago (53%).

Figure 10.6 : Housing benefit levels

	All tenants	General needs tenants	Sheltered housing tenants
Yes	56%	54%	66%
No	42%	45%	31%
Don't know	1%	1%	3%

(Base 1060 tenants)

10.7 Sexual orientation

The majority of tenants classed their sexual orientation as heterosexual (89%), although some preferred not to say (9%).

A higher percentage of general needs tenants classed their sexual orientation as heterosexual compared with four years ago (83%), with the percentage of tenants preferring not to say and having “other” sexual orientations falling from the 2008 levels (12% and 4% respectively).

Figure 10.7 : Sexual orientation of principal tenant

	All tenants	General needs tenants	Sheltered housing tenants
Heterosexual	89%	89%	90%
Gay woman/ Lesbian	0%	1%	0%
Gay man	0%	0%	0%
Bisexual	0%	0%	0%
Other	1%	1%	1%
Prefer not to say	9%	9%	9%

(Base 982 tenants)

10.8 Religion

Two thirds of general needs tenants are Christian (65%), much lower when compared with sheltered housing tenants (82%). Many general needs tenants are not religious (25% none) compared with 12% in sheltered housing.

A small percentage of households are either Muslim (1%), Jewish (1%) or had another religion (2%). Some 6% of all householders preferred not to say.

The percentage of general needs tenants who are Christians has fallen since 2008 (71%), with more tenants now having no religion (25%) compared with four years ago (21%).

Figure 10.8 : Principal tenant’s religion

	All tenants	General needs tenants	Sheltered housing tenants
None	22%	25%	12%
Christian	68%	65%	82%
Buddhist	0%	0%	0%
Jewish	1%	1%	0%
Muslim	1%	1%	0%
Any other religion	2%	2%	1%
Prefer not to say	6%	7%	4%

(Base 1032 tenants)

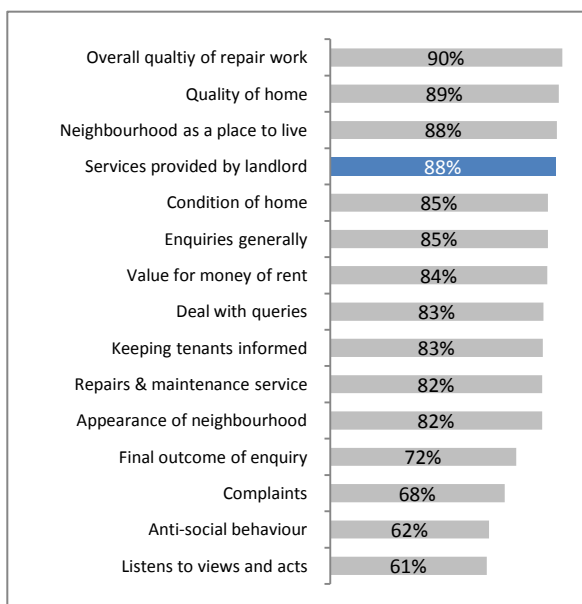
11. Understanding overall satisfaction

The following analysis of results is based on the overall rating for Epping Forest District Council’s services and is often seen as the headline figure in the survey. This chapter explores the differences in the relationship between the overall rating and individual ratings in an attempt to understand what is driving overall satisfaction at the.

11.1 Key services

The vast majority of Epping Forest District Council’s tenants are satisfied with the overall services (88%) and the rating is perhaps marginally higher than expected given the individual ratings for different aspects of the service – suggesting a high degree of support for the Council. The overall rating for landlord services is closer to the rating of the quality of the home, the quality of the repairs service, property condition and the neighbourhood, rather than value for money and overall repairs service.

Figure 11.1 : Satisfaction with key services for all tenants



11.2 Lower levels of satisfaction

As demonstrated above, throughout the survey high levels of satisfaction were found and the findings are an endorsement of the commitment

of the Council’s and its staff.

The survey found that satisfaction fell below 80% in a few areas as shown in the table below.

Figure 11.2 : Services with lower levels of satisfaction

All tenants	Satisfied (%)	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (%)	Dissatisfied (%)
Website	75%	24%	1%
Cleaning of external communal areas	73%	10%	17%
Final outcome of enquiry	72%	7%	20%
Cleaning of internal communal areas	70%	13%	17%
Complaints	68%	18%	14%
Anti-social behaviour	62%	21%	17%
Listens to views and acts on them	61%	26%	13%

11.3 Dissatisfaction levels

Sometimes where satisfaction is lower than in other areas, the remaining tenants can be split between those who fall into the neither satisfied nor dissatisfied middle ground and those who are actually dissatisfied. Also, some tenants will express dissatisfaction about issues outside of the Council’s control (such as its ability to re-house them).

The survey found the following areas with higher levels of dissatisfaction at the Council and these should not be overlooked:

- Outcome of enquiry (20% dissatisfied)
- Cleaning of internal and external communal

- areas (17% dissatisfied)
- Dealing with anti-social behaviour (17% dissatisfied)
- Complaints (14% dissatisfied)
- Value for money (14% dissatisfied)
- Ability of staff to deal with enquiry quickly and efficiently (13% dissatisfied)
- Condition of home (11% dissatisfied)
- Repairs and maintenance service (11% dissatisfied)

These may be areas where Epping Forest District Council wishes to investigate further.

However, the Council will need to take into account areas where high levels of satisfaction have also been stated (for example, 84% are satisfied that their rent provides value for money).

Figure 11.3 : Dissatisfaction with service

All tenants	Dissatisfied (%)	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (%)	Satisfied (%)
Final outcome of enquiry	20%	7%	72%
Cleaning of internal communal areas	17%	13%	70%
Cleaning of external communal areas	17%	10%	73%
Anti-social behaviour	17%	21%	62%
Complaints	14%	18%	68%
Ability of staff to deal with query quickly and efficiently	13%	4%	83%
Listens to views and acts on them	13%	26%	61%
Condition of home	11%	4%	85%
Appearance of neighbourhood	11%	6%	82%
Repairs & maintenance service	11%	6%	82%

11.4 General needs and sheltered tenants

Generally the results from customer satisfaction surveys reveal that sheltered tenants are more satisfied than general needs tenants. This was found to be the case at Epping Forest District Council for the majority of services measured in the survey. When ratings are very high the

ratings from the two groups of tenants can be closer aligned and this is the case with some measures of satisfaction for the repair work. There was however one service area where satisfaction was at a similar level for both groups – satisfaction with the final outcome of the enquiry, which suggests that sheltered tenants are not as satisfied with the outcome of contact as perhaps they should be.

11.4 Key Driver Analysis

Key Driver Analysis is used to examine the relationship between the different variables (the questions asked in the survey) and to determine which elements of the service are the key drivers for customers’ overall satisfaction. Multiple regression is used to analyse the relationship between several key satisfaction questions and determine which ones have the most influence.

Key Driver Analysis is useful to identify service areas in which increases in satisfaction potentially could lead to an increase in the overall satisfaction rating. Tenants who did not have an opinion are excluded from this analysis.

As would be expected, figure 11.4 shows the most important driver for tenants is by far the repairs and maintenance service. Value for money is also far more influential than satisfaction with the condition and quality of home and the neighbourhood. Tenant involvement in terms of keeping tenants informed, listening to their views and acting on them are also drivers of overall satisfaction.

The second chart (figure 11.5) shows that the quality of the repair work, followed by the speed of the workers and being able to make an appointment play a role in driving overall satisfaction with the repairs and maintenance. The survey found only a weak relationship – which could be due to chance, with satisfaction with being told when the workers would call, the time taken before the work started and the attitude of the workers and the overall rating.

Figure 11.4 : Key driver analysis – overall satisfaction

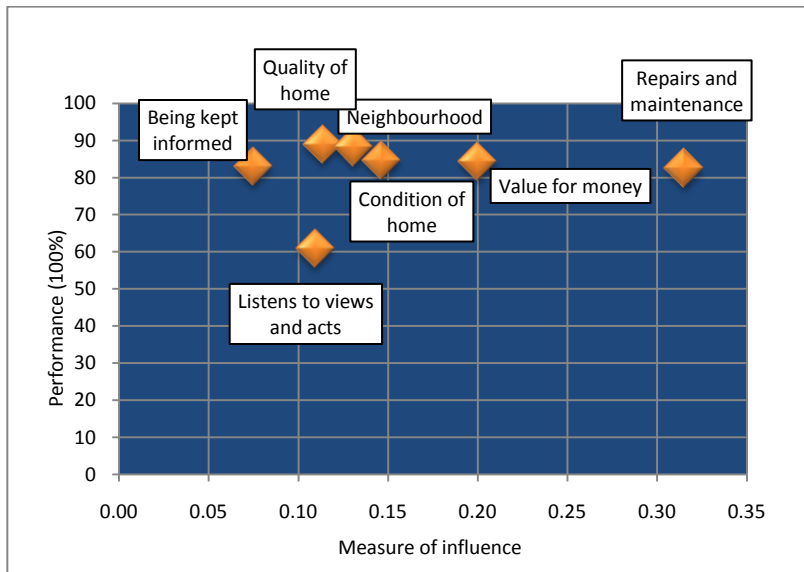
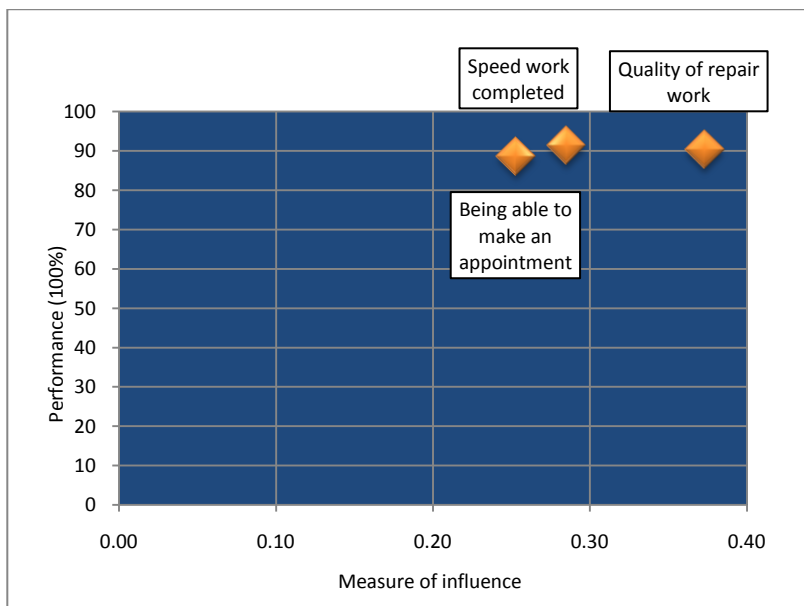


Figure 11.5 : Key driver analysis – repairs and maintenance service



12. Comparison with other landlords

Undertaking a STAR survey using a survey based on a widely used standard question set allows landlords to benchmark the satisfaction of their tenants against other landlords. Benchmarking externally, ideally with landlords who have similar characteristics (such as size, type and location), provides a broader dimension than internal targets may offer, assisting both the landlord and their tenant scrutiny panel (if one exists) in assessing performance levels and areas of improvement.

12.1 Available comparative data

The Council was one of the first social landlords (housing association or local authority) to survey its tenants' satisfaction using HouseMark's new STAR questions (launched in July 2011). One of the consequences of the changes to regulatory requirements and the demise of the Tenant Service Authority is that fewer landlords carried out satisfaction surveys in 2010/2011 and in 2011/12. In addition to this, the change from STATUS to STAR in 2011 also led to fewer surveys being undertaken in 2011/12 as landlords waited for the new framework to be released. At present there is currently a lack of available data from landlords who surveyed in 2011/12, however more results are becoming available for early 2012/13.

12.2 HouseMark benchmarking

Landlords who subscribe to HouseMark are able to upload and benchmark their STAR results as they did for STATUS surveys. The results from the Council survey have been compared against HouseMark's data tables (as at 29 June 2012). Currently the comparison is only available for the 7 core questions and one other question which the Council did not include.

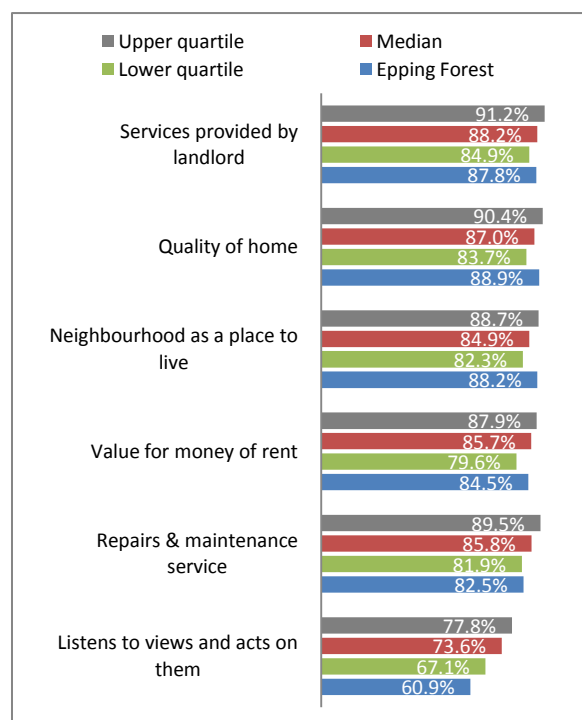
The comparison reveals that the overall level of satisfaction at the Council (87.8%) is just 0.4% below the HouseMark average (88.2%) for general needs and sheltered tenants and the rating places the association considerably higher than the cut off point for quartile one (84.9%).

The levels of satisfaction found at the Council are generally fairly close to the HouseMark

averages. Satisfaction with the neighbourhood was slightly above average (3.3% higher) and just 0.5% below the top quartile. The quality of the home was also rated slightly above average (1.9% higher). Compared to the HouseMark average marginally fewer tenants at the Council were satisfied with value for money (1.2% lower).

The survey found one rating considerably below the HouseMark average (listening to views and acting upon them – 12.7% lower) and in the bottom quartile.

Figure 12.1 : HouseMark key STAR comparison (June 2012)



Note: the current figures from HouseMark reflect those landlords who have posted their results and should not be taken to be representative of any

national averages.

12.3 Comparison with STATUS data

Over the last ten years Feedback Services has carried out over 800 STATUS surveys and although the last one was carried out in June 2011 the results from recent years give some comparison for the Council.

The comparison reveals that on every occasion the Council tenants are just as satisfied or slightly more satisfied than tenants at other landlords for compatible questions (1% lower to 5% higher).

*Note: Not all questions are directly comparable as some of the key questions were re-worded or re-grouped and in some instances the options available as answers have changed, therefore some caution needs to be exercised.

12.4 Comparison with other STAR surveys

At present the number of landlords who commissioned Feedback Services to undertake their STAR survey remains at a relatively low number compared to commissions for STATUS surveys. The current data base which contains the full bank of questions used by all our clients is not statistically robust enough to give any representative comparative analysis. Feedback Services fully anticipates being able to remedy this within 2012/13 and would be happy to provide a comparative analysis for the Council at a later date.

Figure 12.2 : STAR and STATUS comparison

Satisfaction of general needs and sheltered tenants (% satisfied or good)	2012 Epping Forest District Council STAR survey	2010/2011 STATUS survey (41,000 tenants)
Services provided by landlord	88%	85%
Quality of home	89%	86%
Condition of property/home*	85%	83%
Neighbourhood as a place to live	88%	84%
Value for money of rent	84%	83%
How enquiries are dealt with generally*	85%	81%
Ability of staff to deal with query*	83%	80%
Satisfaction with outcome	72%	72%
Repairs and maintenance service	82%	82%
Being told when workers would call	90%	87%
Time taken before work started	88%	83%
Speed of completion of the work	91%	89%
Attitude of workers	93%	94%
Quality of repair work	90%	88%
Keeping tenants informed	83%	83%

13. Conclusion

The results from the 2012 STAR survey are encouraging and demonstrate that Epping Forest District Council has increased overall satisfaction (88%) by 3% from the last recorded for all tenants in 2006 (85%). The survey also recorded high ratings for the quality of the home (89%) and the neighbourhood (88%). Satisfaction with value for money (84%), the condition of the home (85%), the ability of staff to deal with queries (83%), keeping tenants informed (83%) and the repairs service (82%) are also high. Only satisfaction with the overall repairs and maintenance service has fallen slightly since the last full survey, although satisfaction was already very high compared to other landlords.

There are some positive and encouraging headline results from the Council's 2012 survey.

The increase in overall satisfaction with landlord services since the last full survey in 2006 (3% higher) can be linked to higher ratings for the home (4% higher), the neighbourhood as place to live (8% higher) and the time taken before the repair work started (5% higher), with smaller rises also recorded with the value for money and the ability of staff to deal with queries (both 2% higher). Whilst most of increases are not large enough to be statistically significant they are encouraging.

The latest survey found that satisfaction with the repairs and maintenance service was lower than in 2006 (3% lower for all tenants) and had fallen 5% for general needs tenants since the last survey in 2008. It should be noted that most tenants' responses were based on their experience of the Repairs Service before the Council's new private repairs management contractor had introduced changes to the service.

Comparison with other landlords reveals that generally the Council tenants are either just as satisfied, as or slightly more satisfied than tenants at other social landlords.

Key driver analysis reveals the importance of the repairs and maintenance service and value for money on overall satisfaction with the Council. The condition and quality of the home, neighbourhood and listening to tenants views are also influential. Further analysis revealed that tenants that overall satisfaction with the

repairs service is linked to the quality of the work, the speed of the workers and being able to make an appointment.

Key strands of diversity

Throughout the report, satisfaction with different services is analysed by the key strands of diversity. Younger tenants (those under 35) consistently awarded lower ratings across all services measured in the survey compared with other tenants. In terms of household composition, family households and adult households (under 60) are often not as satisfied with services compared with older households.

Satisfaction at area level

The results from general needs tenants were analysed at ward level and the survey found considerable differences in some areas, some of which may require further investigation once tenant demographics, property type, stock condition and neighbourhood/environmental issues are taken into account.

Recommendations

The survey found a small number of areas which the Council may wish to investigate further.

Satisfaction with outcome of contact – With the highest levels of dissatisfaction, a similar rating from general needs and sheltered tenants, and a fall in satisfaction from the previous surveys, the Council may wish to carry out further analysis or investigation into why some tenants are left dissatisfied after having contact the Council.

Listening to views and acting upon them –

Not all tenants felt that the Council listens to their views and acts upon them, more information needs to be fed back on what action has been taken as a result of residents' views and suggestions.

Repairs and maintenance service –

With the overall rating significantly lower than the individual elements of the service for this key driver of overall satisfaction the Council needs to promote the high ratings awarded in the survey to change overall tenant perception of the repairs service.

Different tenant groups -

It is recommended that the Council also work with tenants (particularly younger tenants and families) on other areas highlighted in this report.

Appendix 1 – Data tables

Table 1. Satisfaction by tenure	General needs tenants	Sheltered housing tenants	All tenants
Services provided by landlord	86%	93%	88%
Quality of home	87%	95%	89%
Condition of home	83%	93%	85%
Neighbourhood as a place to live	86%	97%	88%
Appearance of neighbourhood	80%	91%	82%
Value for money of rent	82%	93%	84%
Cleaning of internal communal areas	66%	83%	70%
Cleaning of external communal areas	69%	85%	73%
Ability of staff to deal with query quickly and efficiently	82%	88%	83%
Final outcome of enquiry	72%	76%	72%
Anti-social behaviour	59%	77%	62%
Complaints	65%	81%	68%
Enquiries generally	84%	89%	85%
Listens to views and acts on them	59%	68%	61%
Keeping tenants informed	81%	90%	83%
Repairs & maintenance service	81%	87%	82%
Being told when workers would call	89%	92%	90%
Being able to make an appointment	89%	89%	89%
Time taken before work started	88%	90%	88%
Speed of completion of the work	91%	94%	91%
Attitude of workers	93%	96%	93%
Overall quality of repair work	90%	93%	90%

Table 2. General needs tenants satisfaction over time	2012	2008	2006	2003
Services provided by landlord	86%	84%	85%	84%
Quality of home/accommodation	87%	88%	88%	89%
Condition of home	83%	82%	81%	83%
Neighbourhood as a place to live/area	86%	83%	80%	87%
Value for money of rent	82%	82%	82%	85%
Ability of staff to deal with query quickly and efficiently	82%	82%	81%	79%
Final outcome of enquiry	72%	75%	72%	70%
Listens to views and acts on them	59%	62%		
Keeping tenants informed	81%	79%	84%	89%
Repairs & maintenance service	81%	86%	84%	81%
Being told when workers would call	89%	88%	88%	85%
Time taken before work started	88%	86%	83%	83%
Speed of completion of the work	91%	92%	92%	90%
Attitude of workers	93%	93%	95%	91%
Overall quality of repair work	90%	88%	88%	84%

Table 3. Sheltered housing tenants satisfaction over time	2012	2006	2003
Services provided by landlord	93%	93%	95%
Quality of home/accommodation	95%	94%	92%
Condition of home	93%	91%	92%
Neighbourhood as a place to live/area	97%	91%	93%
Value for money of rent	93%	90%	93%
Ability of staff to deal with query quickly and efficiently	88%	84%	83%
Final outcome of enquiry	76%	80%	80%
Keeping tenants informed	90%	89%	91%
Repairs & maintenance service	87%	90%	90%
Being told when workers would call	92%	90%	87%
Time taken before work started	90%	88%	90%
Speed of completion of the work	94%	92%	95%
Attitude of workers	96%	98%	95%
Overall quality of repair work	93%	95%	93%

Table 4. Satisfaction over time for all tenants	2012	2006	2003
Services provided by landlord	88%	85%	84%
Quality of home/accommodation	89%	88%	89%
Condition of home	85%	81%	84%
Neighbourhood as a place to live/area	88%	80%	88%
Value for money of rent	84%	82%	85%
Ability of staff to deal with query quickly and efficiently	83%	81%	80%
Final outcome of enquiry	72%	72%	71%
Keeping tenants informed	83%	85%	89%
Repairs & maintenance service	82%	85%	82%
Being told when workers would call	90%	89%	85%
Time taken before work started	88%	83%	84%
Speed of completion of the work	91%	92%	91%
Attitude of workers	93%	95%	91%
Overall quality of repair work	90%	88%	84%

Appendix 2 – Covering Letter

Dear NAME

As part of our commitment to listening to the views of our tenants, Epping Forest District Council has asked the National Housing Federation's Feedback Service to carry out a postal survey to find out how satisfied you are with your home and the services you receive from us. This important information will be used to help improve our services in future.

We would very much appreciate your help. You can do this by completing the enclosed questionnaire and returning it to Feedback Services, in the pre-paid envelope supplied, by **13th April 2012**.

I would like to assure you that all your answers will be treated in the strictest confidence, and used for research purposes only. This means that it will not be possible for any person or address to be identified from the survey findings.

If you have any questions or concerns about this survey, please contact Chris Sobey, Principal Housing Officer, on 01992 564292 who will be happy to help you.

I very much hope that you will take part and would like to thank you for your help in advance. Three questionnaires will be drawn at random from those returned, and the lucky winners will receive shopping vouchers to the value of £100, £50 or £20.

The results of the survey will be published. However, no information will be released in a way that allows it to be traced to an individual.



Alan Hall
Director of Housing

*** should you be randomly selected as a prize draw winner by Feedback Services, then Feedback Services will release your name and address details ONLY to Epping Forest District Council so that they may contact you about your winnings. All other information provided by you in the questionnaire will remain confidential.**

Appendix 3 – Questionnaire



Help for completing the STAR Tenant Satisfaction Survey Your reference number: 1997/

- Thank you for taking the time to complete the STAR Tenant Satisfaction Survey. You have been selected at random to take part in this survey, which should take no more than 10 minutes to complete. Your views are important to Epping Forest District Council.
- All of the information that you give will be kept completely confidential. It will only be used by Epping Forest District Council to assess its performance and compare it with that of other social housing providers
- The questionnaire should be completed by a tenant at this address, or by their carer if necessary.
- Please return the completed questionnaire in the envelope provided by **13th April 2012**.
- If you would like the STAR Tenant Satisfaction Survey in a different language or in large print please call the **Freephone helpline: 0800 849 4019**. For all other enquiries please call **01992 564292**.

Housing and services

1. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following? ⚠ Please tick one box only for each

	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
The overall quality of your home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The overall condition of your home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your neighbourhood as a place to live	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided by Epping Forest District Council? ⚠ Please tick one box only

Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that your rent provides value for money?

⚠ Please tick one box only

Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Not applicable
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Your Neighbourhood

4. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall appearance of your neighbourhood?

⚠ Please tick one box only

Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the cleaning of the following?

⚠ Please tick one box only for each

	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Not applicable
Internal communal areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
External communal areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Contact with Epping Forest District Council

6. **Have you contacted Epping Forest District Council in the last 12 months with a query other than to pay your rent?** ! Please tick one box only

Yes **Go to Q7** No **Go to Q8** Can't remember **Go to Q8**

7. **How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the following?** ! Please tick one box only for each

	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
The ability of staff to deal with your query quickly and efficiently	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The final outcome of your query	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. **Do you have access to the internet at home?** ! Please tick one box only

Yes No

9. **Thinking about the information and advice you receive from Epping Forest District Council, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following?** ! Please tick one box only for each

	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Not used or seen
Housing News	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tenants Handbook (provided when you moved in)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Epping Forest District Council's Website	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. **How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way Epping Forest District Council deals with the following?** ! Please tick one box only for each

	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Not applicable
Anti-social behaviour	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Complaints	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your enquiries generally	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11. **Are you aware of Epping Forest District Council's published housing service standards?**

! Please tick one box only

Yes No

Communication and information

12. **How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Epping Forest District Council listens to your views and acts upon them?** ! Please tick one box only

Very satisfied Fairly satisfied Neither Fairly dissatisfied Very dissatisfied

13. **How good or poor do you feel Epping Forest District Council is at keeping you informed about the things that might affect you as a tenant?** ! Please tick one box only

Very good Fairly good Neither Fairly poor Very poor

Repairs and maintenance

14. **Generally, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way Epping Forest District Council deals with repairs and maintenance?** ! Please tick one box only

Very satisfied Fairly satisfied Neither Fairly dissatisfied Very dissatisfied

15. Have you had any repairs to your home within the last 12 months? ⚠ Please tick one box only

Yes **Go to Q16** No **Go to Q18** Can't remember **Go to Q18**

16. Thinking about your last completed repair, how would you rate it in terms of...?

⚠ Please tick one box only for each

	Very good	Fairly good	Neither	Fairly poor	Very poor	No opinion
Being told when workers would call	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Being able to make an appointment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Time taken before work started	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The speed of completion of the work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attitude of workers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overall quality of repair work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

17. Was the repair appointment kept? ⚠ Please tick one box only

Yes No

Sheltered Accommodation Tenants Only

i Please go to the next section if you are not in sheltered accommodation.

18. Thinking about where you live, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following:

⚠ Please tick one box only for each

	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Not applicable
Your support plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Frequency of contact with your scheme manager	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The overall service provided by your scheme manager	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Careline emergency call system	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

You and your household

i Providing the following information is optional, but by answering these questions you will help the Council make sure that they are not discriminating against you or anyone else.

19. Please tell us the age and gender of everyone who lives with you in your household?

	Age Please enter one number per box	Gender Please tick one box only for each
Main tenant	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
Partner	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
Person 3	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
Person 4	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
Person 5	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
Person 6	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female

20. Are you or any household member's day to day activities limited because of a health problem which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months? † Please tick one box only

Yes, limited a lot Yes, limited a little No

21. What is your (and your partner's) ethnic group?

† Please tick one box only for each

		MAIN TENANT	PARTNER
White	English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish/ British	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Irish	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gypsy or Irish Traveller	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Any other White background	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mixed / multiple ethnic groups	White & Black Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	White & Black African	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	White & Asian	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Any other Mixed background	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asian / Asian British	Indian	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Pakistani	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Bangladeshi	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Any other Asian background	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	African	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Any other Black/ African/ Caribbean background	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other ethnic group	Arab	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Any other ethnic group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

22. Does your household currently receive housing benefit (either paid directly to you or to your landlord)? † Please tick one box only

Yes No Don't know

23. How would you describe your sexual orientation? † Please tick one box only

Heterosexual/straight Gay woman/Lesbian Gay man Bisexual Other Prefer not to say

24. What is your religion? † Please tick one box only

None Christian (all denominations) Buddhist Hindu Jewish Muslim Sikh Any other religion Prefer not to say

Thank you for completing the STAR Tenant Satisfaction Survey.

Please return your STAR Tenant Satisfaction Survey by 13th April 2012 in the Freepost envelope provided.

Appendix 4 – Recommendation for further research

Using your data to provide effective, value for money, services

Feedback Services recommends landlords to make strategic use of the results to inform and drive service improvements. We would advise carrying out (if not already doing so) :

- A customer insight exercise – which would follow on from a profiling exercise, using data about tenants to better understand their needs and expectations and the application of this understanding in the design and delivery of services
- The development of a consultation and research strategy that co-ordinates all customer feedback activity across the housing service
- A Bi-annual STAR survey – a more regular testing of customer views allows landlords more flexibility when assessing services and improvements, the 2 yearly STATUS survey was not precise enough to test customer views accurately
- Performance tracking - carrying out at least an annual mini-survey to track key performance or undertaking continuous / regular monitoring of key services – repairs, customer contact, estate management, ASB etc. This might involve surveys of random samples of recent customers in each key service, using telephone and / or postal surveys
- Regular focus groups - can be effective in identifying key issues and improvements.

Much of the survey work can be carried out in-house, but it may be more cost-effective to use external market research agencies which would also ensure external validation of results. Feedback can implement a continuous monitoring service for social landlords and we would be happy to help develop a co-ordinated strategy for customer consultation.

Using the results from your 2012 STAR survey

The 2012 surveys of general needs and sheltered tenants have provided valuable information for the Council.

We would recommend that Epping Forest District Council in particular:

- Look to engage with dissatisfied groups of tenants – young tenants, families
- Review area data and seek to explain differences between the geographical areas
- Tackle areas of highest dissatisfaction and those which have the most influence on overall satisfaction/tenant priorities
- Involve tenants/scrutiny panels in reviewing the survey findings.