

Dudley MBC TSM Survey

2023 Report

September 2023

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acuity
making sense of housing



Dudley
Metropolitan Borough Council

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Introduction

Acuity has been commissioned to undertake annual, independent satisfaction surveys of the tenants of Dudley MBC over the next two years, to collect data on their opinions of, and attitudes towards, their landlord and the services provided. The survey only focuses on the tenants of Dudley as the Council does not have any LCHO properties.

The survey was designed using the new Tenant Satisfaction Measures from the Regulator of Social Housing, which became mandatory in April 2023 and will be reported to the Regulator for the first time in 2024.

Each year for the next two years, tenants are telephoned and invited to take part in a telephone interview. The survey is designed to collect the views of approximately 1,014 tenants per year, proportionately sampled by tenure, area and age.

A report is produced for each year and this report presents an analysis of the results based on the 1,016 completed interviews. As this is a one-off survey for 2023/24, additional analysis is included on the results and what is driving satisfaction at Dudley MBC.

The telephone survey is confidential, and the results are sent back to Dudley MBC anonymised unless residents give their permission to be identified – 83% of tenants did give permission to share their name and 97% of these tenants are happy for Dudley MBC to contact them to discuss any issues they raised.

The aim of this survey is to provide data on tenants' satisfaction, which will allow Dudley MBC to:

- Provide information on tenants' perceptions of current services
- Compare the results with previous surveys, where possible
- Compare the results with other landlords (where appropriate)
- Report to the regulator from April 2024 onwards.

For the overall results, Acuity, Housemark and the Regulator of Social Housing recommend that landlords with between 10,000 and 25,000 properties achieve a sampling error of at least $\pm 3\%$ at the 95% confidence level. For Dudley MBC, 1,016 responses were received, and this response is high enough to conclude that the findings are accurate to within $\pm 3.0\%$ so meeting the requirement from the Regulator and giving good accuracy of the results.



65%

Overall Satisfaction

The survey has revealed that around two-thirds of tenants are satisfied with the overall services provided by Dudley MBC.

However, higher satisfaction is received for a number of measures including the repairs service in the last 12 months (76%), the Council providing a safe home (74%) and the neighbourhood as a place to live (73%).

The lowest ratings are for the upkeep of the communal areas (53%) and the way the Council deals with anti-social behaviour (46%), whilst just 25% are satisfied with the way complaints are handled.

Key Metrics Summary 2023



66% Well maintained home



46% Anti-social behaviour



74% Safe home



71% Easy to deal with



76% Repairs - Last 12 months



55% Listens & Acts



72% Time taken - Last repair



62% Keeps you informed



53% Communal areas clean & well maintained



67% Treats fairly & with respect



59% Positive contribution to neighbourhood



25% Complaints handling



73% Neighbourhood as a place to live

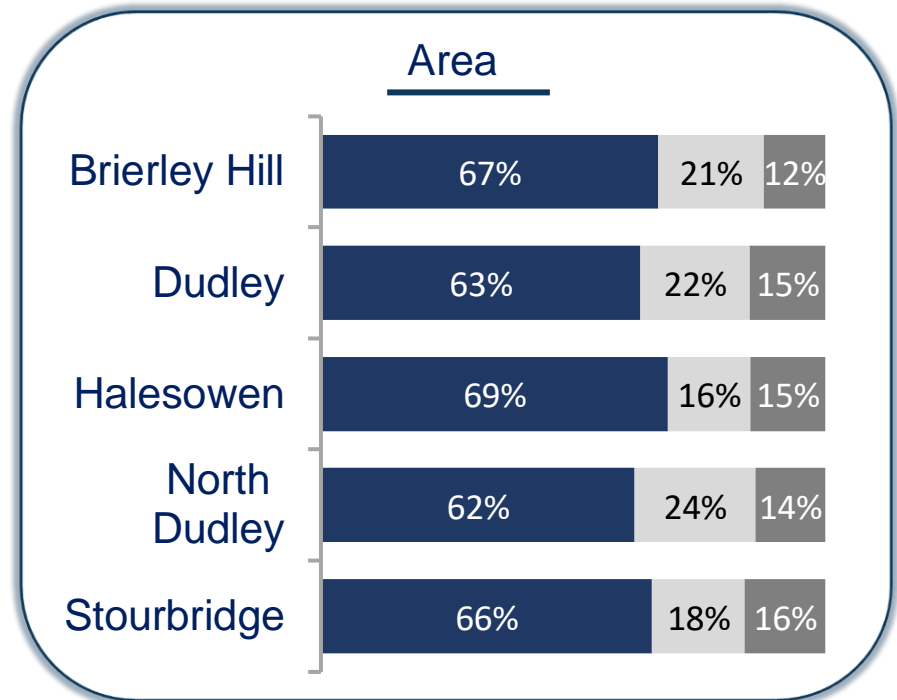
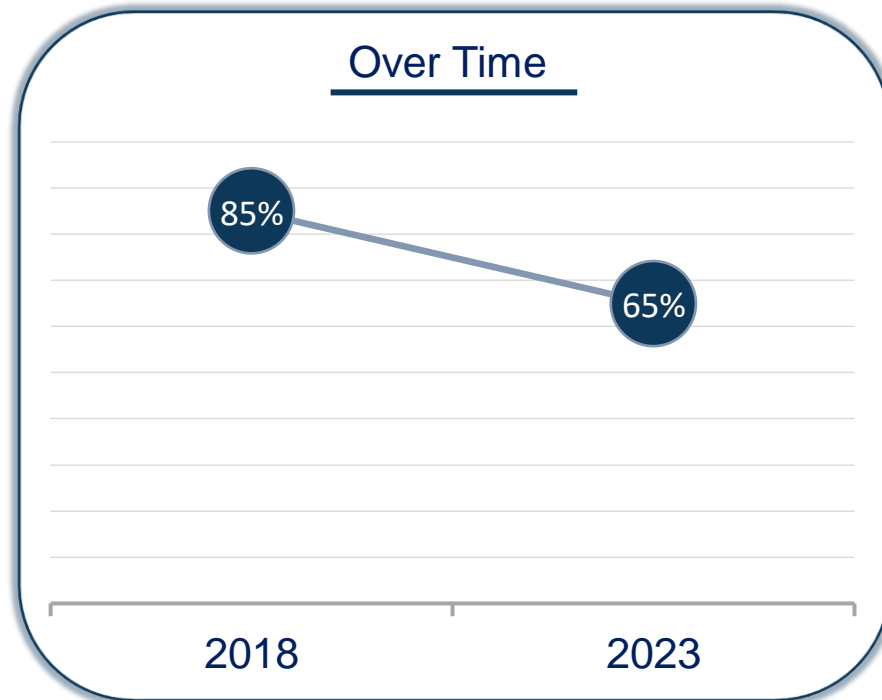
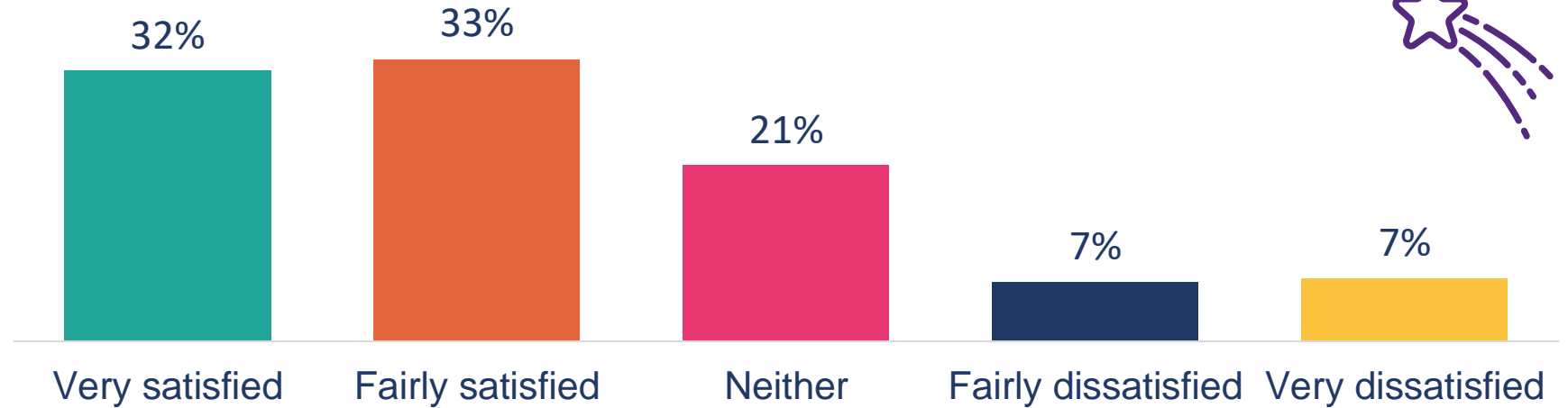


Overall Satisfaction





Overall Satisfaction



Tenants were asked, "Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided by Dudley MBC?" This is the key metric in any tenant perception survey.

Two-thirds of tenants (65%) are satisfied, with slightly fewer very satisfied (32%) as fairly satisfied (33%). Just 14% of tenants are dissatisfied with the overall services provided and a further 21% are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. This is a high number who are sitting on the fence and if the Council were to target this group to find out more about them, it may be possible to move some in the satisfied category.

The last survey of this type that the Council carried out was in 2018. Many of the questions will be different but where they match it will be possible to plot the changes between this two surveys.

What this shows is that satisfaction was 85% in 2018 but is now 65%. There is evidence that satisfaction is falling generally across the sector, but this does mark quite a difference and will be a source of concern.

There is little between the areas but those in Halesowen are the most satisfied and North Dudley the least.

National Context

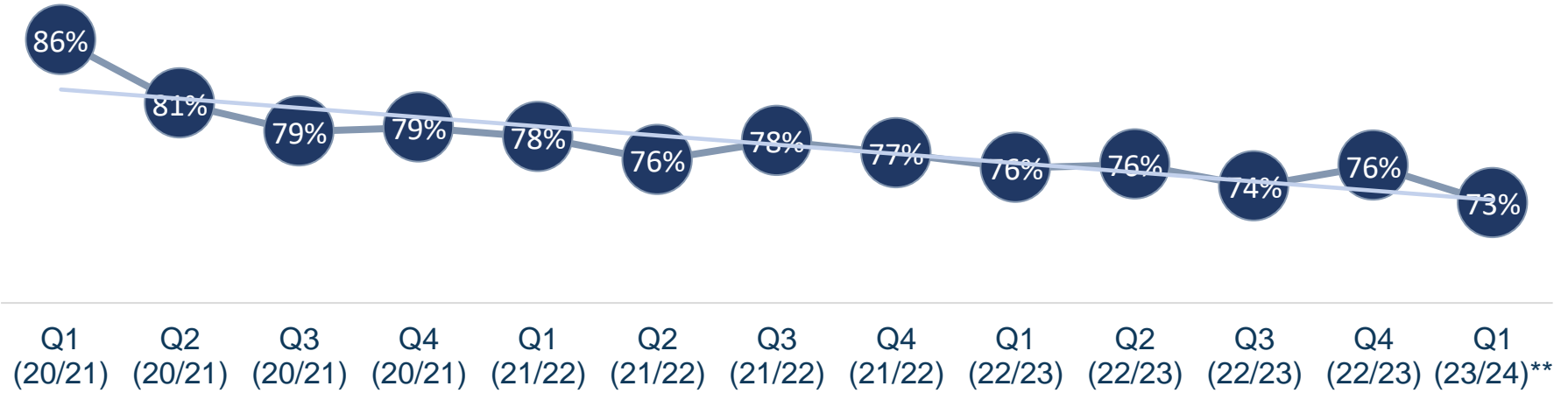
When considering the results, it is important that the national context and external factors should also be taken into account. For example:

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

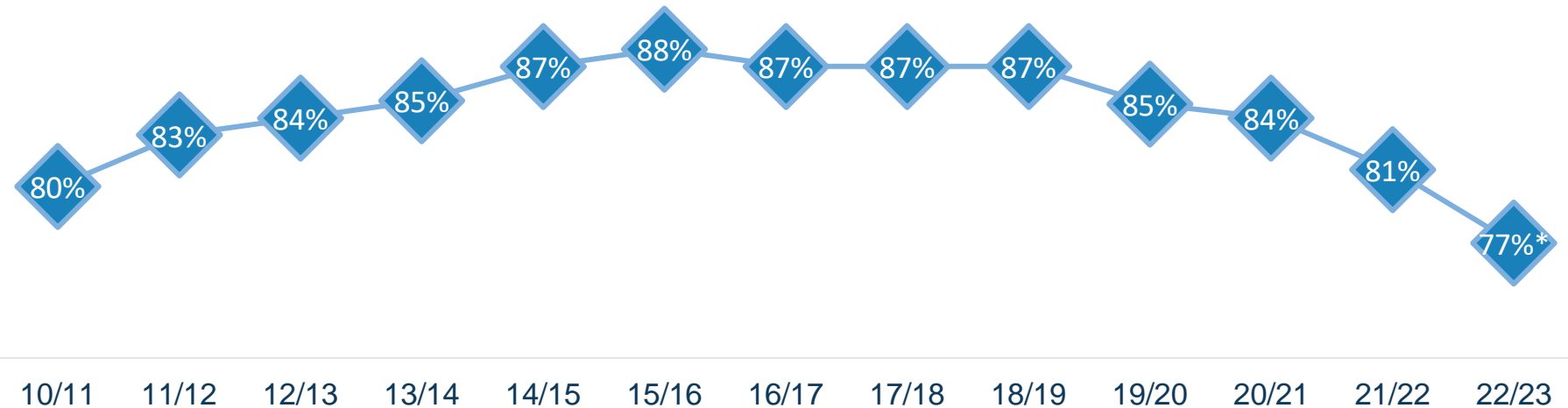
Satisfaction is based on perception rather than specific values so can be affected by these factors and how positive people feel about their lives. Factors such as the pandemic also altered the way social landlords operate, perhaps making them less accessible and responsive.

The top graph demonstrates how overall satisfaction has changed over time for Acuity's clients (tracker only). The trendline is downward over the last few years. The lower chart shows the results from Housemark members with a peak in 2015/16 but a steady fall ever since, even before the effects of the pandemic started to influence service.

Overall Services (Acuity Clients)



Satisfaction with services provided (NHF/Housemark median - general needs)



*As reported by Housemark in January 2023. **LCRA only onwards



Keeping Properties in Good Repair



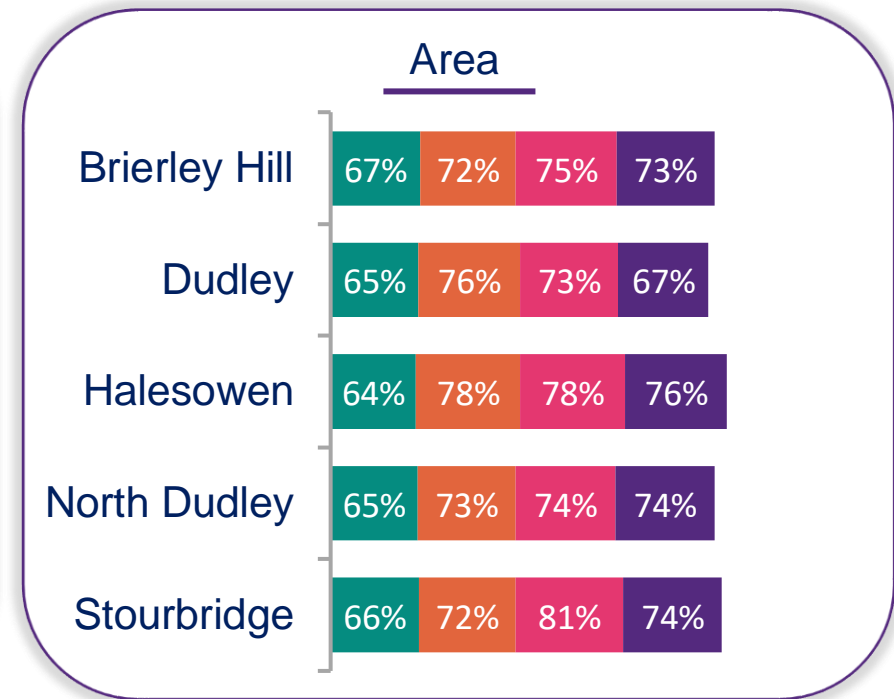
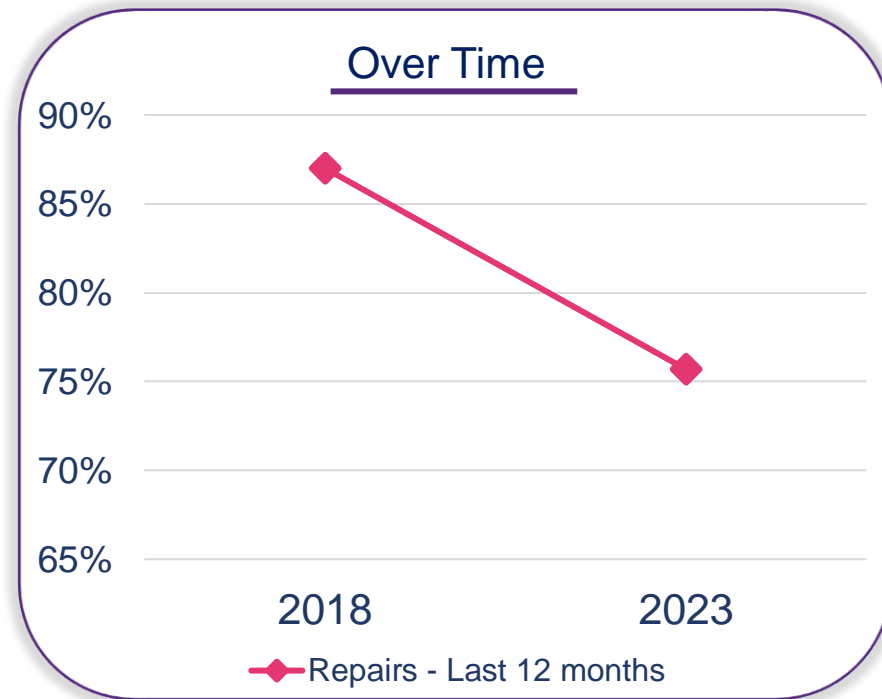
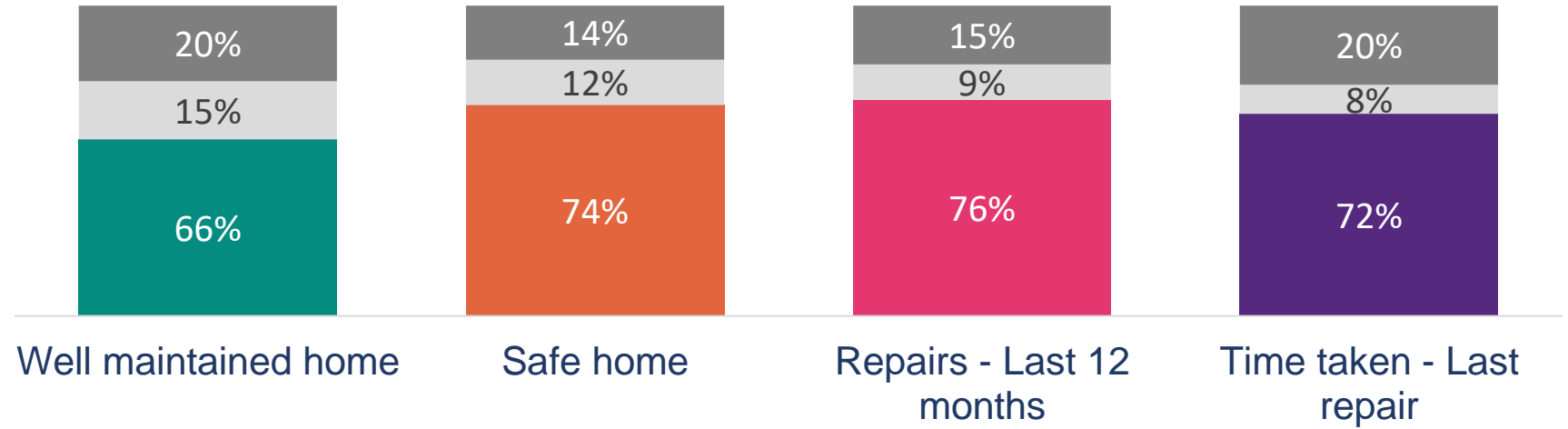
Keeping Properties in Good Repair

Two-thirds of tenants feel their homes are well maintained, although 20% are dissatisfied, whilst more feel they are safe (74%). This is a common finding with the safety of the home often rated higher than its maintenance.

Three-quarters of tenants (76%) are satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service in the last 12 months, whilst fewer (72%) are satisfied with the time taken to complete their last repair, a fifth being dissatisfied.

The only consistent question between the two surveys is about the recent repairs service and this has changed from 87% satisfied in 2018 to 76% currently.

Again, there is little between the areas suggesting service delivery is quite consistent. Halesowen tenants are marginally the most satisfied and Dudley the least.





Responsible Neighbourhood Management



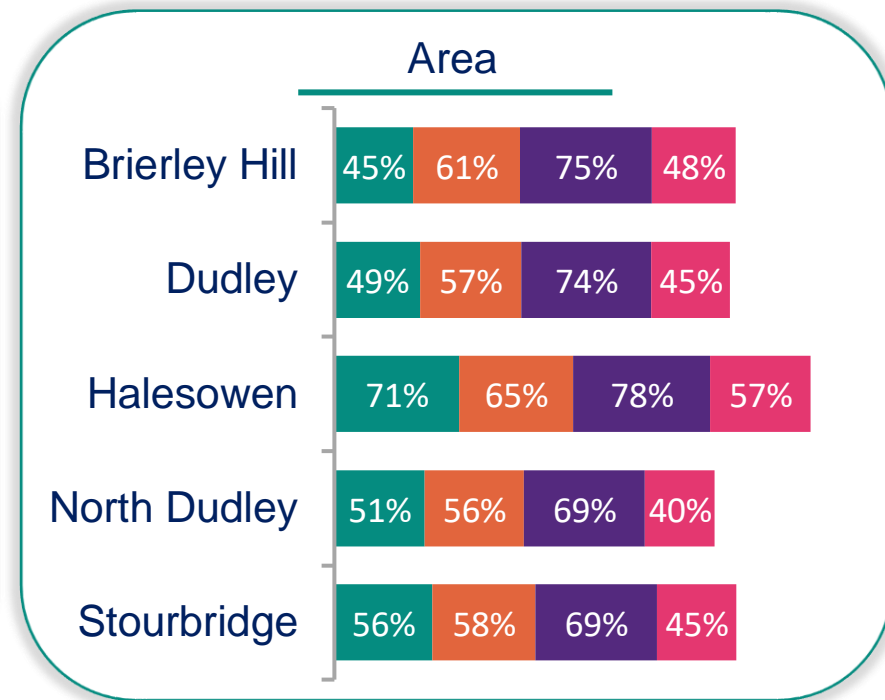
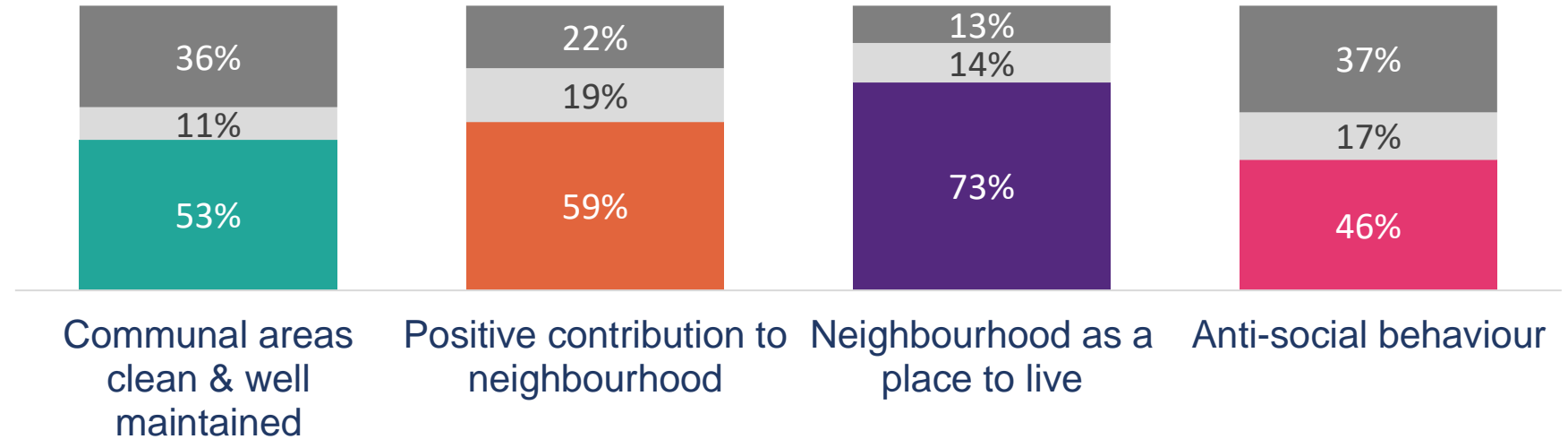
Responsible Neighbourhood Management

Over a third of tenants (36%) say they live in a building with communal areas that Dudley MBC is responsible for maintaining. Of these tenants, 53% are satisfied that Dudley MBC keeps their communal areas clean and well maintained, although 36% are dissatisfied.

The neighbourhood as a place to live is popular with 73% of tenants being satisfied, just 13% being dissatisfied, although satisfaction is down from 81% in 2018. Fewer tenants (59%) are satisfied that Dudley MBC makes a positive contribution to their neighbourhood. Around a fifth of tenants are dissatisfied with the contribution made (22%).

Additionally, in 2023, satisfaction with how anti-social behaviour is handled is 46% with 37% dissatisfied.

Once again, Halesowen tenants are the most satisfied with little between the other areas.





Respectful & Helpful Engagement



Respectful & Helpful Engagement

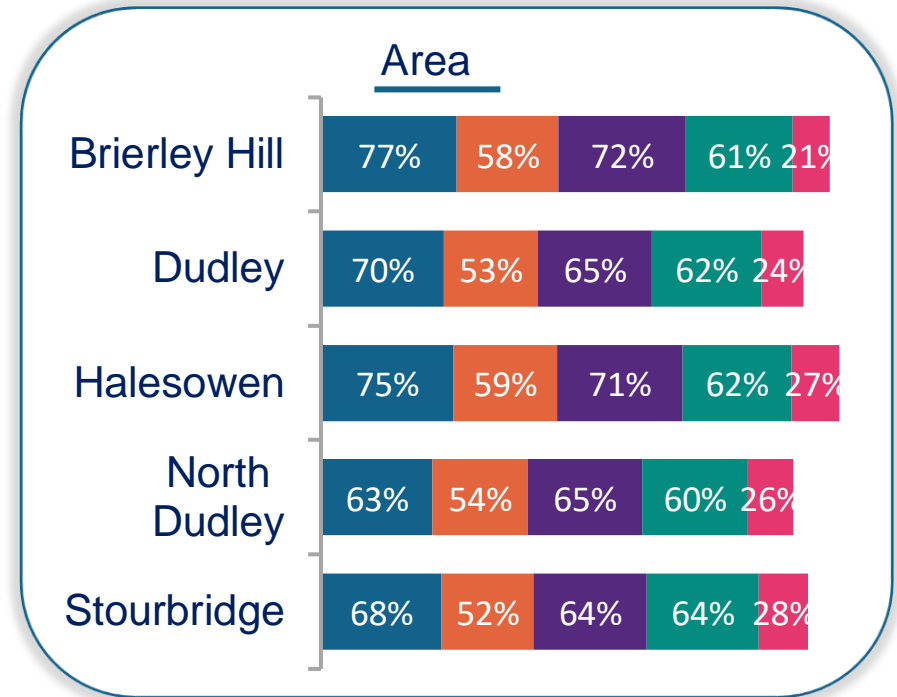
Seven out of ten tenants find dealing with the Council easy, just 15% finding it difficult.

However, just 62% of tenants are satisfied with how they are kept informed about things that matter to them, this having fallen from 68% in 2018. Fewer tenants (55%) are satisfied that Dudley MBC listens to their views and acts upon them, down from 60%, and 30% are dissatisfied with this aspect of service.

Two-thirds of tenants (67%) agree that they are treated fairly and with respect, just 11% are dissatisfied.

There are 29% of tenants who said they had made a complaint to Dudley MBC in the last 12 months, although it is not clear how many are genuine complaints following a failure of service or service requests yet to the fully actioned. Despite this caveat just 25% are satisfied with the way complaints are handled, with more than twice as many dissatisfied (60%).

Brierley Hill tenants find the Council the easiest to deal with but are the least satisfied with the handling of complaints.





Further Comments



Tenants were asked if there was anything else they would like to say about their home, or the services provided by Dudley MBC and 1,001 tenants gave comments.

By far the biggest area for comments is the repairs service, attracting 29% of the comments made. In particular, the timescales for completing repairs and dealing with outstanding works.

However, some have issues with the condition of their property, including damp and mould, whilst others would like some improvements to their homes, like updated kitchens and bathrooms.

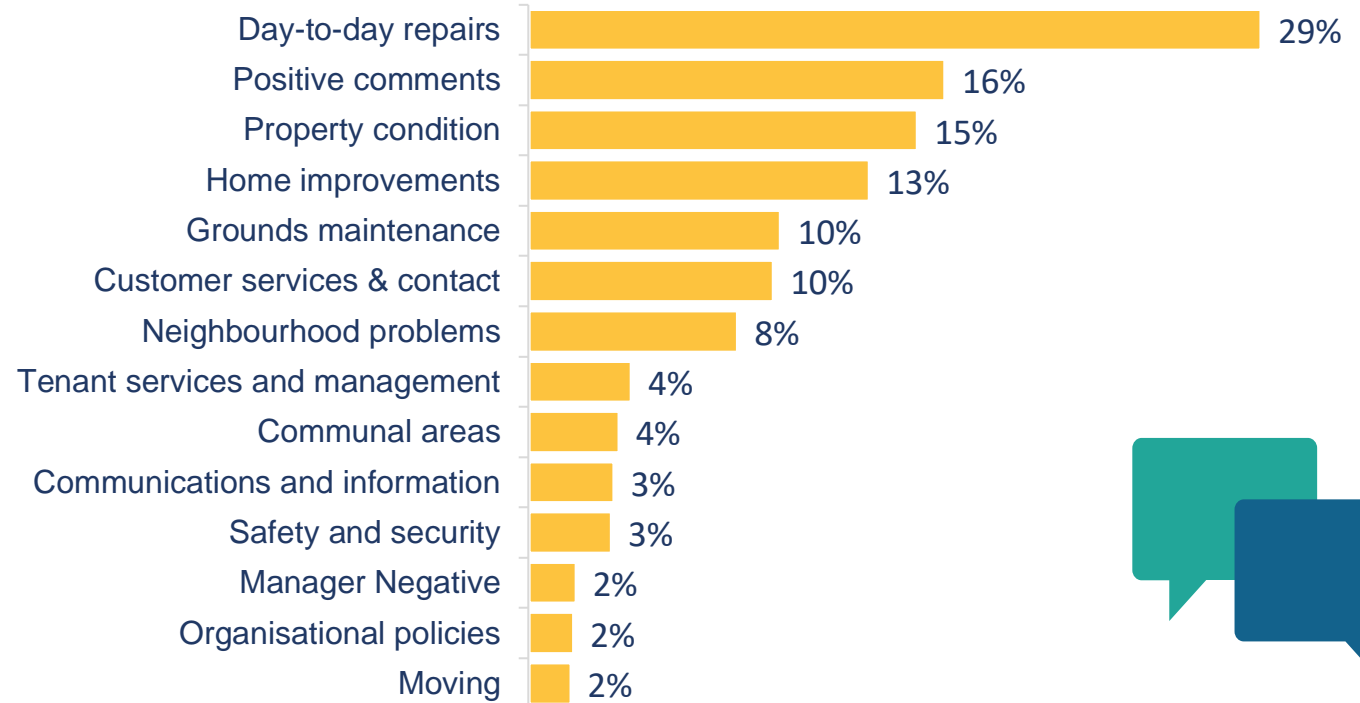
The remaining comments cover a range of issues including grounds maintenance, customers service and neighbourhood problems.

Encouragingly, 16% of the comments are positive about the current service, suggesting nothing needs to be improved.

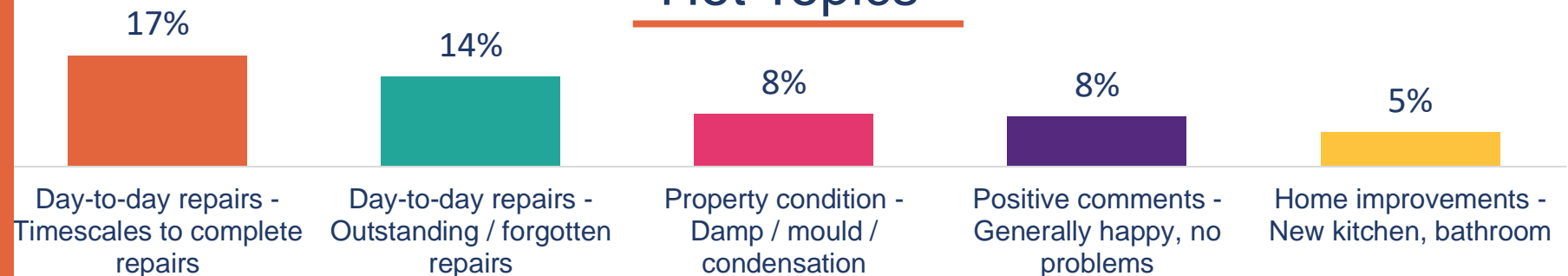
Some examples of the comments are shown on the following page and the full text of the comments is included in the accompanying data file and on the dashboard and these provide real insight into what tenants are most concerned about and should help Dudley target areas for improvement.

Further Comments – General Needs

Top Comment Areas



Hot Topics



Further Comments

Day-to-day repairs

“My gas fire was condemned 12th June; they have promised me an electric fire, but I am still waiting to hear.”

“The rent increases but when you report a repair you are on a waiting list for ages, and whilst you are waiting things are damaged (for example the floor). I had to wait 3 years for a new front door.”

“I have damp on the one wall (living room) which was reported December 21. An engineer came Jan 22, and I am still waiting for the damp to be treated.”

“Somebody came to check the electrics, he said he would be back to change a switch but never returned.”

“Maybe recruit more staff because I am having to wait until the end of the month for repair work to be carried out.”

“Repairs are done to a basic standard.”

“I am still waiting for my toilet to be fixed, it has been a couple of weeks.”

Property condition

“I have mould in my bathroom, in the kitchen near the pipes and also the corner of my bedroom, my carpets are wet in the winter.”

“We have damp in the kitchen, somebody came to treat it, but they have made it worse, the damp seems to be spreading.”

“Where we live, we are in a tiny cul-de-sac (4 houses). The ground is sinking outside my gate which has been inspected quite a few times. Me and next door have complained about the same old thing. We have had to put our own pebbles down to stop it from being dangerous.”

“I have mould in the kitchen and bathroom and can't decorate as it keeps coming back.”

“They are bit slow on keeping the guttering, fascias and external brickwork up to date.”

“I do think they are very good if you have a leak for example (the little jobs). Recently I have had issues with asbestos and mould, but they do not want to come, and they do not keep me informed.”

Home improvements

“I would like a new kitchen.”

“When the wind picks up the house whistles through the windows, it sounds like an organ playing.”

“Our boiler was replaced by E-Plan. The laminate flooring was removed but we weren't told that we could not put the flooring back, the next day they came to fit a thermostat which they were unable to fit because the flooring had been refitted. We asked for a wi-fi controlled thermostat which was not possible.”

“What I can do I maintain myself in my property. I was promised a new kitchen in 2013 which never happened. The doors keep falling off, I am sick of repairing them.”

“The kitchen needs replacing (cupboards and worktops).”

“I would like a new bathroom. Sometimes it can take 40-50 minutes to get through to somebody on the telephone, but then other times you can get through straight way.”

Grounds maintenance

“They do not maintain the communal grass properly, when they mow it, they do not clean the grass cuttings up. The children's play area is outdated and has not been maintained properly for 20 years.”

“It could do with an estate manager walking around. I am doing the garden now and the grass is waist high in the neighbours. The tenancy agreement used to say you have to look after your property inside and out, but it looks like a bomb site. We have problems.”

“It has only been this year that we have had a problem with the grass cutting for the communal garden. The quality has slipped, and they don't do it so regularly. Its just the garden area, the rest is fine.”

“They could do more with sprucing the blocks up and the gardens outside. Visit the tenants and ask them what they want.”

Further Comments – HfOP

Top Comment Areas



“I am just very happy and feel very safe because of everything I have there and if I need help it is all there, so I am very satisfied.”

“I am 82 and it is the best place that I have ever lived.”

“I have no problems here. Good neighbours.”

“The communal garden is a right mess; all the weeds are overgrown. The gardeners come but they do not cut the weeds.”

“Every year we are surrounded by trees, it is dark all year old. You can not see the sun when it is out, it keeps it cold all of time. There is draught coming in everywhere and dust from the trees and dirt. You can not keep up with the dust. I sent an e-mail 4 months ago and I am still waiting to hear. They come and cut the grass but leave all of the mess, we have to clear it up.”

“Prior to a tenant moving into the property I think the property should be painted and deep cleaned.”

“The property needs new carpets.”

Very few HfOP tenants responded to the survey and just 12 gave comments about their home and the services from Dudley MBC. Of these three gave a ‘not applicable’ answer.

Most of these comments are positive, with some of these shown opposite.

However, two comments are about the grounds maintenance, and two reflect on the condition of their property.

Whilst few in number, these comments help to sum up the feeling of those in HfOP accommodation and the specific service they get. They will also help the Council improve service to this group of tenants.



Understanding Satisfaction



Satisfaction & Dissatisfaction

The charts opposite show the satisfaction and dissatisfaction over the range of service areas included in the survey.

This shows that whilst 65% are satisfied overall, satisfaction is highest for the recent repairs service (76%) and the provision of a safe home (74%).

At the other end of the scale are the upkeep of the communal areas (53%) and how ASB (46%) and complaints are handled (25%).

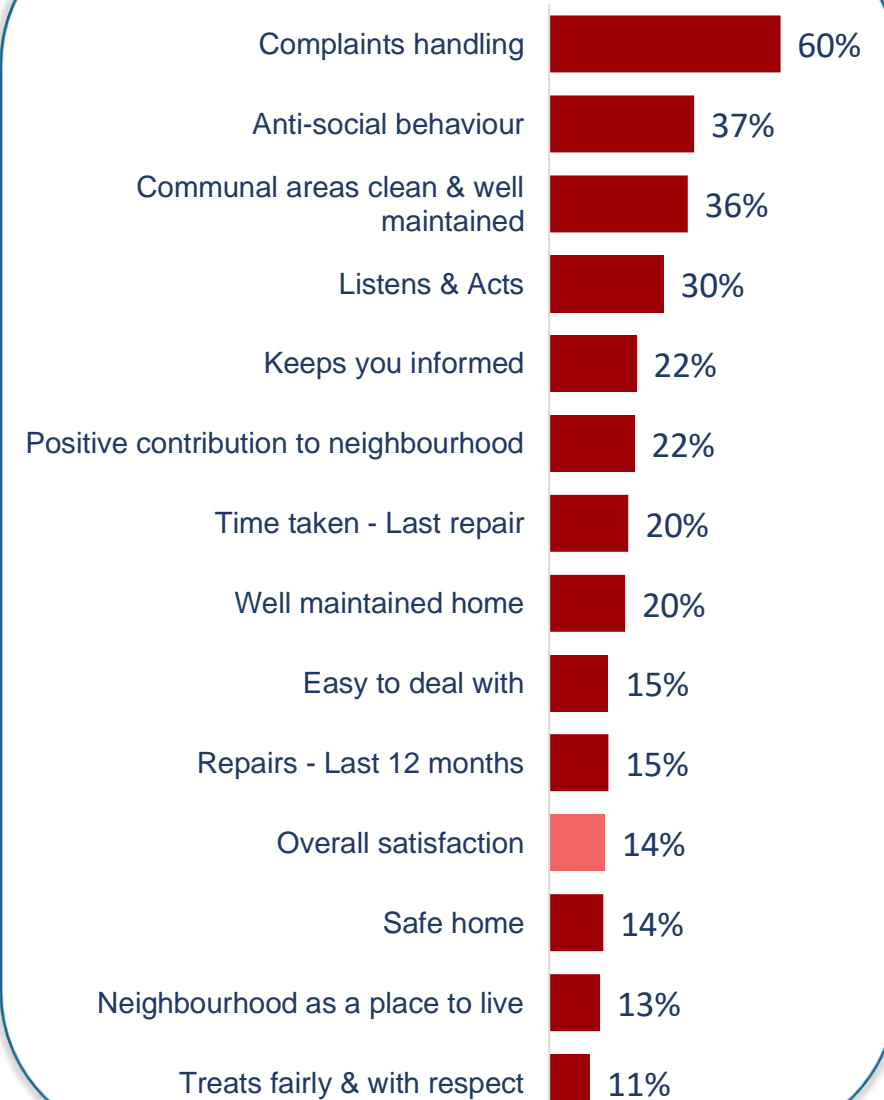
These areas correspondingly have the highest dissatisfaction, the most for the way complaints are dealt with (60%).

However, just 14% are dissatisfied with the overall services which suggests that the Council are doing a good job, although some areas are still in need of improvement.

Satisfaction with measures



Dissatisfaction with measures



Year on Year Change

The last survey of this type carried out by Dudley MBC was in 2018 and only five measures match the current set of questions.

Of these, all show lower levels of satisfaction than previously, with overall satisfaction moving from 85% in 2018 to 65% currently, but smaller falls for the other measures.

Satisfaction with the recent repairs service is down 11%, the neighbourhood as a place to live is down 8%, listening to views is down 5% and 6% fewer are satisfied with how they are kept informed about things that matter to them.

As shown earlier, satisfaction has been falling across the sector and a lot has happened to both landlords and tenants since 2018 so the Council shouldn't be unduly worried, although there are clearly some areas which could be improved as the service starts to return to some sort of normality after the disruption caused by the pandemic and the ongoing cost of living crisis.

	2018	2023	Change
Overall satisfaction	85%	65%	-20%
Well maintained home	--	66%	
Safe home	--	74%	
Repairs - Last 12 months	87%	76%	-11%
Time taken - Last repair	--	72%	
Communal areas clean & well maintained	--	53%	
Positive contribution to neighbourhood	--	59%	
Neighbourhood as a place to live	81%	73%	-8%
Anti-social behaviour	--	46%	
Easy to deal with	--	71%	
Listens & Acts	60%	55%	-5%
Keeps you informed	68%	62%	-6%
Treats fairly & with respect	--	67%	
Complaints handling	--	25%	

Base: 2018 = 1,051, 2023 = 1,016

Key Driver Analysis

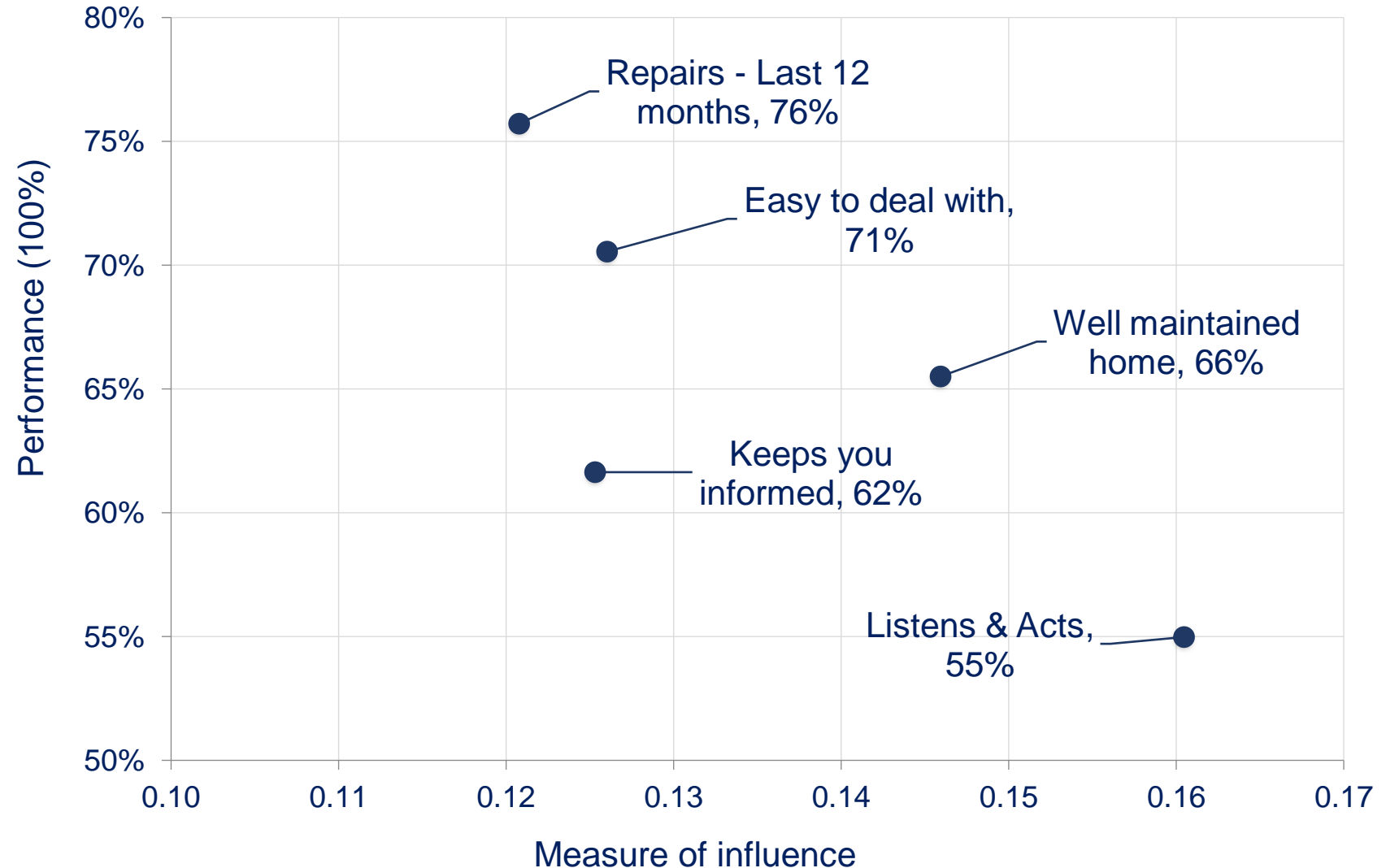
Key driver analysis is used to examine the relationship between the different variables (the questions asked in the survey) and determine which elements of the service are the key drivers for tenants' overall satisfaction.

All landlords will have a unique pattern of drivers and for Dudley MBC, the most important driver for tenants' satisfaction with the overall services is that Dudley MBC listens to their tenants' views and acts upon them, followed closely by providing a well-maintained home. Being easy to deal with, keeping tenants informed and the repairs service are also important but not as influential.

This pattern is a little unusual as often it is the well-maintained home and being easy to deal with that are the most influential.

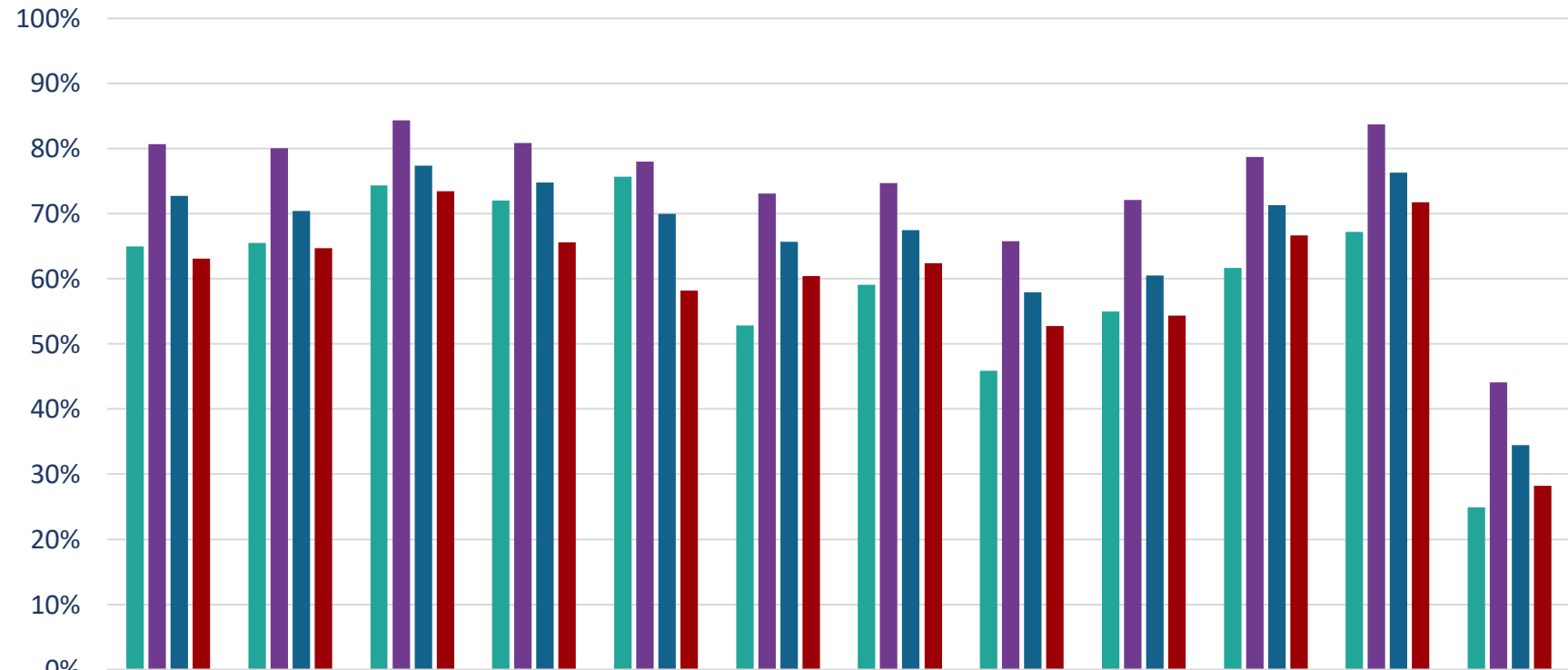
The implication of this analysis is that if improvements around the most influential measures can be achieved, it is more likely to lead to increased satisfaction with the overall services provided.

Key Driver Analysis – Overall Satisfaction



Benchmarking – Acuity

Satisfaction Levels Acuity Clients Q1 23/24



	Overall satisfaction	Well maintained home	Safe home	Time taken - Last repair	Repairs - Last 12 months	Communal areas clean & well maintained	Positive contribution to neighbourhood	Anti-social behaviour	Listens & Acts	Keeps you informed	Treats fairly & with respect	Complaints handling
Dudley MBC	65%	66%	74%	72%	76%	53%	59%	46%	55%	62%	67%	25%
Upper Quartile	81%	80%	84%	81%	78%	73%	75%	66%	72%	79%	84%	44%
Acuity Median	73%	70%	77%	75%	70%	66%	67%	58%	60%	71%	76%	34%
Lower Quartile	63%	65%	73%	66%	58%	60%	62%	53%	54%	67%	72%	28%
Quartile Position	3	3	3	3	2	4	4	4	3	4	4	4
Number of Landlords	55	49	49	49	49	49	49	53	55	49	49	50

It is also possible to compare performance on the core questions against Acuity clients that have been using the new TSM questions during the year. The chart shows the quartile positions based on the results collected from Q1 2023/24.

All but one of the ratings fall below the group medians with five in the third quartile, including the overall satisfaction, and six in the lower quartile.

The exception is for the recent repairs service which is 6% above the group median and in the second quartile.

This cohort of around 50 landlords varies in type, size and location and won't match the characteristics of Dudley MBC, however, given the current lack of available benchmarking information against the TSM questions, this does help to provide some context.

After landlords have submitted their TSM results to the Regulator next year, more benchmarking data will become available, and the Council will be able to choose a more relevant peer group to compare results against.

Tenure

	General Needs	Housing for Older People
Overall satisfaction	65%	83%
Well maintained home	65%	92%
Safe home	74%	83%
Repairs - Last 12 months	76%	67%
Time taken - Last repair	72%	67%
Communal areas clean & well maintained	52%	83%
Positive contribution to neighbourhood	59%	56%
Neighbourhood as a place to live	73%	67%
Anti-social behaviour	46%	33%
Easy to deal with	70%	91%
Listens & Acts	55%	80%
Keeps you informed	61%	75%
Treats fairly & with respect	67%	75%
Complaints handling	25%	33%

Base: General Needs = 1,004, Housing for Older People = 12

Just 12 HfOP tenants responded to the survey against 1,004 general needs tenants. That makes direct comparisons almost meaningless but does still confirm that the general view is that HfOP tenants are more satisfied.

However, it is suggested that little should be concluded about this, and the other breakdowns of the results are of more importance.



Area

Dudley MBC operates its housing service over five main areas with the most responses coming from Dudley (327) and the least from Halesowen (141).

The table opposite shows that the tenants of Halesowen are the most satisfied with the overall service provided by the Council (69%), and they are also the most satisfied on seven of the other measures in the survey.

Least satisfied overall are those in North Dudley (62%) and tenants here are the least satisfied across five of the other measures.

However, the differences between the areas is quite small suggesting that there is some consistency of service across the operating area. It may also be the case that these differences are driven by other factors such as tenant age, so perhaps more work could be done to see if this is the case.



	Brierley Hill	Dudley	Halesowen	North Dudley	Stourbridge
Overall satisfaction	67%	63%	69%	62%	66%
Well maintained home	67%	65%	64%	65%	66%
Safe home	72%	76%	78%	73%	72%
Repairs - Last 12 months	75%	73%	78%	74%	81%
Time taken - Last repair	73%	67%	76%	74%	74%
Communal areas clean & well maintained	45%	49%	71%	51%	56%
Positive contribution to neighbourhood	61%	57%	65%	56%	58%
Neighbourhood as a place to live	75%	74%	78%	69%	69%
Anti-social behaviour	48%	45%	57%	40%	45%
Easy to deal with	77%	70%	75%	63%	68%
Listens & Acts	58%	53%	59%	54%	52%
Keeps you informed	61%	62%	62%	60%	64%
Treats fairly & with respect	72%	65%	71%	65%	64%
Complaints handling	21%	24%	27%	26%	28%

Base: Brierley Hill = 205, Dudley = 327, Halesowen = 141, North Dudley = 180, Stourbridge = 163

Age Group

It is common in surveys of this type that satisfaction tends to increase with age, and this does largely appear to be the case here.

One theory for this is that older tenants have lower expectations and have learned to live with problems and just get on with it, whereas younger tenants are more likely to expect more and show their disapproval if standards drop.

Whatever the reason is, the table does show that those in the 75 to 84 age group are consistently more satisfied than the other groups. There are 86% satisfied with the overall service compared with just 54% of those aged 45 to 55.

The 'age effect' is well known across the sector and will also influence other results breakdowns so having a knowledge of the age profile will help better understand the differences in satisfaction that may occur.



	0 - 24	25 - 34	35 - 44	45 - 54	55 - 59	60 - 64	65 - 74	75 - 84	85+
Overall satisfaction	60%	62%	62%	54%	64%	62%	76%	86%	69%
Well maintained home	57%	54%	56%	59%	66%	73%	78%	85%	85%
Safe home	53%	61%	66%	72%	85%	79%	85%	88%	90%
Repairs - Last 12 months	68%	68%	69%	70%	82%	80%	87%	94%	80%
Time taken - Last repair	79%	71%	66%	65%	73%	68%	84%	87%	80%
Communal areas clean & well maintained	43%	44%	54%	49%	47%	45%	60%	83%	44%
Positive contribution to neighbourhood	57%	58%	52%	51%	64%	58%	67%	71%	69%
Neighbourhood as a place to live	70%	68%	71%	66%	78%	74%	78%	83%	79%
Anti-social behaviour	40%	42%	48%	44%	42%	43%	51%	57%	50%
Easy to deal with	77%	68%	68%	60%	67%	73%	78%	85%	82%
Listens & Acts	52%	55%	46%	45%	51%	53%	64%	81%	67%
Keeps you informed	48%	57%	53%	56%	63%	61%	69%	82%	84%
Treats fairly & with respect	67%	66%	65%	63%	71%	61%	68%	81%	74%
Complaints handling	22%	20%	24%	28%	14%	29%	28%	33%	25%

Base: 0-24 = 30, 25-34 = 151, 35-44 = 195, 45-54 = 184, 55-59 = 94, 60-64 = 85, 65-74 = 143, 75-84 = 94, 85+ = 39

Length of Tenancy

Whilst it is true that older people are more likely to hold the longest tenancies and that factor influences satisfaction, surveys of this type also tend to show that new tenants are also highly satisfied, and that is the case with Dudley MBC.

It is possible that new tenants will be highly delighted to get an offer of a property, perhaps having waited for some time or coming from poor accommodation. However, as the realities of life start to take affect and they experience some issues with their home and their environment, satisfaction may start to fall a little.

The results show here that 85% of those tenants of less than a year are satisfied with the overall services they get from the Council, compared with just 59% of those with Dudley for 6 to 10 years. In fact, this group tends to be the least satisfied across the range of services.



	< 1 year	1 - 3 years	4 - 5 years	6 - 10 years	11 - 20 years	Over 20 years
Overall satisfaction	85%	65%	60%	59%	67%	69%
Well maintained home	74%	63%	60%	59%	66%	76%
Safe home	74%	67%	66%	71%	77%	86%
Repairs - Last 12 months	76%	71%	71%	76%	76%	82%
Time taken - Last repair	88%	73%	70%	66%	73%	75%
Communal areas clean & well maintained	73%	56%	48%	48%	50%	57%
Positive contribution to neighbourhood	68%	67%	59%	53%	56%	62%
Neighbourhood as a place to live	79%	74%	72%	66%	74%	78%
Anti-social behaviour	36%	47%	46%	39%	53%	46%
Easy to deal with	85%	69%	73%	68%	69%	73%
Listens & Acts	66%	57%	53%	47%	55%	62%
Keeps you informed	67%	61%	53%	57%	63%	71%
Treats fairly & with respect	79%	67%	69%	63%	68%	68%
Complaints handling	20%	24%	26%	16%	30%	31%

Base: <1 year = 39, 1-3 years = 161, 4-5 years = 135, 6-10 years = 234, 11-20 years = 227, Over 20 years = 220

Property Type

	Bungalow	Flat	House	Maisonette
Overall satisfaction	69%	66%	64%	55%
Well maintained home	72%	71%	62%	50%
Safe home	85%	70%	75%	60%
Repairs - Last 12 months	85%	76%	74%	58%
Time taken - Last repair	83%	75%	69%	63%
Communal areas clean & well maintained	60%	52%	65%	29%
Positive contribution to neighbourhood	65%	61%	57%	44%
Neighbourhood as a place to live	79%	68%	75%	60%
Anti-social behaviour	44%	44%	49%	28%
Easy to deal with	75%	69%	71%	60%
Listens & Acts	59%	53%	55%	41%
Keeps you informed	66%	63%	61%	47%
Treats fairly & with respect	69%	65%	68%	67%
Complaints handling	29%	29%	21%	27%

Base: Bungalow = 127, Flat = 297, House = 552, Maisonette = 31

There appears to be a clear split of satisfaction based on the type of property occupier with those in the bungalows the most satisfied and those in maisonettes the least.

Whilst bungalows are seen as a desirable type of property, they are also most likely to be occupied by older tenants, and as shown, these tend to be more satisfied. Whereas the maisonettes are likely to be occupied by younger families and are less desirable because of the lack of outside space, which can be a big issue particularly for young children.

The differences are quite large with 69% of those in bungalows satisfied compared with 55% in the maisonettes.

Satisfaction of those from the flats and houses tend to sit in the middle.



Property Size

Splitting the results down by property size, perhaps, empathises the same issues as with the property type.

Older people are more likely to be in the smaller properties and it is this factor which is the most likely to be affecting the differences in results. Younger tenants and those with children are more likely to be in the larger properties.

On the overall services, 69% of those in the one-bedroomed homes are satisfied compared with 61% with three.

However, the difference on some of most of the measures is small, for example, just a range of 1% on the way ASB is dealt with, although on the neighbourhood as a place to live, there are 78% of those in the two-bedroomed homes satisfied compared with just 57% of those with four bedrooms.



	1 Bedroom	2 Bedrooms	3 Bedrooms	4 Bedrooms
Overall satisfaction	69%	65%	61%	66%
Well maintained home	72%	65%	60%	63%
Safe home	78%	73%	72%	74%
Repairs - Last 12 months	82%	70%	75%	73%
Time taken - Last repair	80%	71%	68%	65%
Communal areas clean & well maintained	54%	51%	50%	75%
Positive contribution to neighbourhood	65%	57%	55%	61%
Neighbourhood as a place to live	70%	78%	74%	57%
Anti-social behaviour	46%	46%	45%	45%
Easy to deal with	74%	69%	69%	69%
Listens & Acts	59%	52%	53%	61%
Keeps you informed	66%	64%	56%	71%
Treats fairly & with respect	69%	67%	66%	63%
Complaints handling	31%	26%	20%	25%

Base: 1 Bedroom = 318, 2 Bedrooms = 243, 3 Bedrooms = 411, 4 Bedrooms = 35

Gender

Female tenants outnumber male tenants by almost two to one, but they are consistently less satisfied with their homes and the services they get from Dudley MBC.

Again, the differences are small, just 3% between the groups on the overall service and just 1% more male tenants find the Council easy to deal with.

However, 8% more male tenants are satisfied with the maintenance of their home and 7% more feel they are kept informed about things that matter to them.

This is a pattern seen at other landlords, perhaps female tenants are a little more critical of the level of service and have higher expectations.



	Female	Male
Overall satisfaction	64%	67%
Well maintained home	63%	71%
Safe home	74%	76%
Repairs - Last 12 months	75%	77%
Time taken - Last repair	70%	76%
Communal areas clean & well maintained	50%	55%
Positive contribution to neighbourhood	57%	63%
Neighbourhood as a place to live	72%	75%
Anti-social behaviour	45%	47%
Easy to deal with	70%	71%
Listens & Acts	54%	57%
Keeps you informed	59%	66%
Treats fairly & with respect	66%	69%
Complaints handling	24%	26%

Base: Female = 664, Male = 352

BME/Non BME

Finally, the results are split by ethnicity, this page showing the clear split between BME and non BME tenants and the following page focusing on the main ethnic groups.

The table opposite shows a mixed picture with the non BME tenants the more satisfied overall, with their homes and the repairs service and feel a little more satisfied with ease to deal with and being kept informed.

However, the BME tenants are the most satisfied with their communal areas, the contribution to the neighbourhood made by the Council and are more satisfied with the handling of complaints.

Overall, 58% of BME and 66% of non BME tenants are satisfied but the difference between most measures is small, perhaps suggesting this is not a major factor in determining satisfaction.



	BME	Non BME
Overall satisfaction	58%	66%
Well maintained home	58%	67%
Safe home	69%	75%
Repairs - Last 12 months	69%	77%
Time taken - Last repair	70%	72%
Communal areas clean & well maintained	57%	52%
Positive contribution to neighbourhood	64%	59%
Neighbourhood as a place to live	72%	73%
Anti-social behaviour	51%	45%
Easy to deal with	70%	71%
Listens & Acts	56%	55%
Keeps you informed	59%	62%
Treats fairly & with respect	70%	67%
Complaints handling	40%	22%

Base: BME = 126, Non BME = 887

Ethnicity

The results are shown here split by the main ethnic groups with Dudley. The vast majority class themselves as White British with similar numbers on the other classifications. However, the small numbers of these groups makes drawing firm conclusions difficult.

Despite this caveat, those in the Other groups tend to be the most satisfied and the White & Black Caribbean group are the least satisfied, although it is the Black Caribbean group who are just the least satisfied with the overall services.



	Black African	Black Caribbean	Pakistani	White and Black Caribbean	White British	Other White Background	Other Ethnic Group
Overall satisfaction	50%	42%	63%	43%	66%	73%	87%
Well maintained home	56%	50%	63%	43%	67%	60%	80%
Safe home	72%	65%	74%	57%	75%	80%	87%
Repairs - Last 12 months	75%	61%	75%	45%	77%	58%	77%
Time taken - Last repair	88%	56%	56%	55%	73%	58%	86%
Communal areas clean & well maintained	67%	42%	50%	33%	52%	44%	100%
Positive contribution to neighbourhood	87%	40%	69%	42%	58%	73%	93%
Neighbourhood as a place to live	78%	62%	79%	64%	74%	67%	100%
Anti-social behaviour	60%	35%	14%	40%	45%	86%	100%
Easy to deal with	78%	65%	58%	43%	71%	47%	93%
Listens & Acts	67%	46%	53%	36%	55%	80%	80%
Keeps you informed	72%	58%	53%	31%	62%	73%	87%
Treats fairly & with respect	78%	56%	84%	36%	66%	87%	93%
Complaints handling	44%	20%	25%	0%	22%	50%	50%

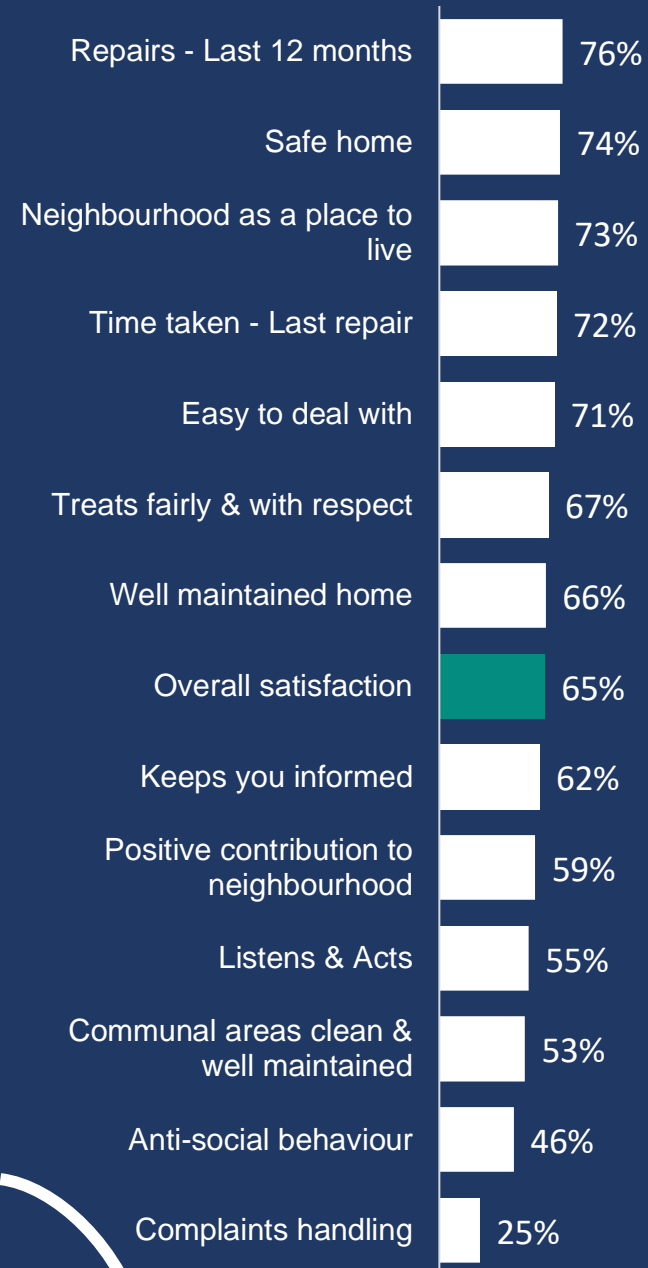
Base: Black African = 18, Black Caribbean = 26, Pakistani = 19, White and Black Caribbean = 14, White British = 866, Other White Background = 15, Other Ethnic Group = 15



Conclusion



Satisfaction 2023



Conclusion

- Acuity has a two-year commission to undertake annual tracker surveys of the tenants of Dudley MBC using the new Tenant Satisfaction Measures from the Regulator of Social Housing.
- The survey was conducted by telephone interview and 1,016 tenants responded giving a margin of error of $\pm 3.0\%$, as required by the Regulator and giving good accuracy of results.
- Two-thirds of tenants are satisfied with the overall services provided by the Council with the highest ratings for the repairs service in the last 12 months and the provision of a safe home, whilst just 53% are satisfied with the upkeep of the communal areas, 46% with the handling of ASB and just 25% with complaints; 60% being dissatisfied.
- The Council carried out a similar survey in 2018 and satisfaction is down since then. Overall satisfaction was 85% in 2018 but is now 65%, satisfaction with the recent repairs service is down 11%, the neighbourhood is down 8%, 5% fewer are satisfied that the Council listen to their views and act upon them and 6% fewer feel informed.
- The results generally fall below those of other landlords with most measures falling into the third or lower quartiles. However, the range of suitable benchmarks is currently limited but will become much wider when landlords report their results to the Regulator next year.
- When looking at the results from the five main areas within Dudley, those in Halesowen tend to be the most satisfied and those in North Dudley the least. However, the differences are small suggesting service delivery is fairly consistent across the areas.
- When asked about the service, the comments are dominated by repair issues. The repairs service itself attracted 29% of the comments, but this is followed by comments about the condition of the properties and the need for some home improvements such as kitchens and bathrooms. The upkeep of the communal areas is also important to tenants with the ground maintenance in particular attracting a number of comments.
- Overall, this has been a successful exercise allowing the Council to report results to the Regulator from next year. It will also act a baseline for the TSM questions to compare future surveys against.

Recommendations

The survey reveals many areas of very good performance, but it has also highlighted some areas where improvements could be made.

The comments made by tenants give insight into what they are most concerned about and will help Dudley MBC target services that may need some improvement.

Shown opposite are some recommendations that Dudley MBC may wish to follow up on to help improve satisfaction in the future.



Communications & complaints

The key driver for overall satisfaction is for the Council to listen to tenants' views and act upon them, and this is one of the lowest ratings in the survey with just 55% satisfied and 30% dissatisfied. In addition, just 62% feel the Council keeps them informed about things that matter to them. Tenants want to feel involved and heard so, perhaps, more could be done to improve communications. It is also suggested that in the next survey a probing question is added to find out more about what the main issues are. Over a quarter of tenants said they had made a complaint to the Council in the last 12 months, although it is not clear how many are genuine following a failure of service. However, just 25% are satisfied with their handling, 60% being dissatisfied. Whilst this is an issue across the sector, the Council should make sure its processes are clear and effective.



Repairs & maintenance

The way repairs and maintenance is delivered is key for any tenant and generally satisfaction with Dudley MBC's repairs service is good. However, the repairs service dominates the comments made by tenants about the service, together with related issues such as property condition and the need for home improvements. In particular, tenants want outstanding repairs completed and work to be done quicker. Whilst this is an issue across the sector with many landlords still catching up after the pandemic and having to focus on instances of damp and mould, the Council may be able to gain some quick wins but catching up on outstanding work and being clear to tenants about the expectations of service.



Communal areas

The maintenance of the communal areas is only seen as satisfactory by 53% with 36% dissatisfied. The comments suggest a lot of this is to do with the ground maintenance service, some complaining that grass cutting, and general maintenance is not up to standard and has declined in the last year or so. A review of this service would be useful to identify areas which are currently not up to standard. This could be done by contacting tenants affected and ask about their experiences as they are the eyes on the ground.

This research project was carried out to conform with ISO20252:2019 and the MRS Code of Conduct.

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