



# Public Document Pack

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Committee Manager - Katherine Davis (01903 737984)

17 January 2024

## HOUSING AND WELLBEING COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Housing and Wellbeing Committee will be held in **The Council Chamber at The Arun Civic Centre, Maltravers Road, Littlehampton, BN17 5LF on Thursday 25 January 2024 at 6.00 pm** and you are requested to attend.

Members: Councillors Birch (Chair), Haywood (Vice-Chair), Bence, Bicknell, Butcher, English, Long, Pendleton, Wiltshire, Walsh and Yeates.

### ***PLEASE NOTE:***

A live webcast of the meeting will be available via the Council's [Committee webpages](#).

Any members of the public wishing to address the Committee meeting during Public Question Time, will need to email [Committees@arun.gov.uk](mailto:Committees@arun.gov.uk) by 5.15 pm on **Friday, 19 January 2024** in line with current Committee Meeting Procedure Rules.

For further information on the items to be discussed, please contact [Committees@arun.gov.uk](mailto:Committees@arun.gov.uk)

## **AGENDA**

### 1. APOLOGIES

### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members and Officers are invited to make any declaration of pecuniary, personal and/or prejudicial interests that they may have in relation to items on this agenda, and are reminded that they should re-declare their interest before consideration of the items or as soon as the interest becomes apparent.

Members and Officers should make their declaration by stating:

- a) the item they have the interest in
- b) whether it is a pecuniary/personal interest and/or prejudicial interest
- c) the nature of the interest

3. MINUTES

(Pages 1 - 10)

The Committee will be asked to approve as a correct record the minutes of the Housing and Wellbeing Committee held on 23 November 2023.

4. ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA THAT THE CHAIR OF THE MEETING IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

To receive questions from the public (for a period of up to 15 minutes).

6. LEISURE OPERATING CONTRACT ANNUAL REPORT

(Pages 11 - 48)

This report will provide members of the Housing and Wellbeing Committee with an update in respect of the Council's Leisure Operating Contract over the past 18-months and will include a presentation from the Council's Leisure Operator Freedom Leisure.

7. CONSULTATION ON SUSSEX POLICE PRECEPT 2024 - 25

(Pages 49 - 52)

The Sussex Police and Crime Panel will meet on 26 January 2024 to discuss the proposed precept for policing in Sussex for 2024-25. In taking the opportunity to discuss through this committee, Councillor Walsh will be afforded information with which to represent the Council during the panel's discussion.

8. COMMITTEE GENERAL FUND REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS AND HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGETS 2024/25

(Pages 53 - 62)

The purpose of the report is for this Committee to consider and recommend its revenue budget for inclusion in the Council's overall 2024/25 revenue budget. The report also considers the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget for 2024/25. These recommendations will be submitted to the Policy and Finance Committee on 8 February 2024 when it considers the overall revenue and capital budgets for 2024/25 so recommendations can be made to a Special Meeting of the Council on 21 February 2024 regarding the budgets to be set and level of Council Tax for the District for 2024/25.

9. BUDGET MONITORING REPORT TO 31 DECEMBER 2023 (Pages 63 - 72)  
 The purpose of this report is to appraise the Housing & Wellbeing Committee of its forecast outturn against the 2023/24 budgets, which were approved by Full Council at its meeting of 9 March 2023.
10. LOCAL COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2024/2025 (Pages 73 - 84)  
 The purpose of this report is to present options to amend the current Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2024/2025.
11. SINGLE HOMELESSNESS ACCOMMODATION PROGRAMME (SHAP) UPDATE (Pages 85 - 92)  
 The Purpose of this report is for information only. We were unable to proceed with the SHAP bid because the financial modelling for the scheme identified made it financially unviable.
12. HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY UPDATE - HOUSING & WELLBEING (Pages 93 - 106)  
 Demand for properties in rural communities outstrips supply. To protect communities in the rural villages and parishes within Arun, a Rural Lettings Policy is required to ensure that the correct households are prioritised for housing via Arun's Choice Based Lettings Scheme.
13. HOUSING OMBUDSMAN COMPLAINT HANDLING CODE SELF-ASSESSMENT (Pages 107 - 142)  
 This report shares with members the outcome of our self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.
14. TENANT SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS (Pages 143 - 202)  
 This report sets out the results of the Tenant Satisfaction Measures survey which ran during June and July of 2023.
15. Q3 PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPI'S) WHICH FORM PART OF THE COUNCIL'S VISION 2022-2026. (Pages 203 - 208)  
 This report will set out the performance of the Key Performance indicators at Quarter 3 for the period 1 April to 31 December 2023.

## OUTSIDE BODIES - FEEDBACK FROM MEETINGS

### 16. WORK PROGRAMME

(Pages 209 -  
216)

The Committee is required to note the Work Programme for 2023/24.

**Note: If Members have any detailed questions, they are reminded that they need to inform the Chair and relevant Director in advance of the meeting.**

Note: Filming, Photography and Recording at Council Meetings – The District Council supports the principles of openness and transparency in its decision making and permits filming, recording and the taking of photographs at its meetings that are open to the public. This meeting may therefore be recorded, filmed or broadcast by video or audio, by third parties. Arrangements for these activities should operate in accordance with guidelines agreed by the Council and as available via the following link - [PART 8 - CP - Section 5 Filming Photographic Protocol](#)



# Agenda Item 3

Subject to approval at the next Housing and Wellbeing Committee meeting

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## HOUSING AND WELLBEING COMMITTEE

23 November 2023 at 6.00 pm

Present: Councillors Birch (Chair), Haywood (Vice-Chair), Bicknell, J English, Long, Pendleton, Wiltshire, Dr Walsh, Yeates, Madeley (substitute for Bence) and McDougall (substitute for Butcher)

[Councillor Walsh was absent for discussion of the matters referred to in the following minutes - Minute 412 to Minute 416 (Part)]

Apologies: Councillors Bence and Butcher

### 405. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Bence and Butcher.

### 406. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Bicknell declared a Personal Interest in Agenda Item 7 as a Member of Angmering Parish Council.

### 407. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Housing and Wellbeing Committee held on 12 September 2023 were approved and signed by the Chair.

### 408. ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA THAT THE CHAIRMAN OF THE MEETING IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

The Chair confirmed that there were no urgent matters for this meeting.

### 409. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chair confirmed that no public questions had been submitted for this meeting.

### 410. BUDGET MONITORING REPORT TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2023

The Group Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer was invited by the Chair to present the report. He referred to Table 1 that set out the 2023/24 revenue out turn forecast for Quarter 2 against the budget, highlighting an anticipated underspend of £240,000, which was an adverse change since Quarter 1 of £160,000. He drew attention to the major changes to the Revenue Budget at paragraphs 4.2 to 4.4. in particular referring to the homeless estimate which had increased by £300,000 since Quarter 1. It was anticipated that the Council's recently approved capital investments for projects would reduce the financial impact. However, it should be noted that homelessness expenditure is driven by price and volumes, and whilst the Council could

exert some influence over the former, it could not control the volume of homeless clients, which was the issue that adversely affected the budget.

He reported that the Chancellor had released his Autumn Budget Statement the previous day. Of particular interest for Housing was the increase in the Local Housing allowances. Once officers had considered the impacts, the outcome would be reported to this committee via the budget monitoring report. It had also been announced that there would be additional Local Authority Housing Fund money available, but at this stage it was not known if the council would benefit from this fund. It was noted that the Council had previously successfully applied for a grant to purchase seven properties to accommodate homeless clients, which was hoped would have a positive effect on the budget.

Turning to the Capital Programme this showed an under spend of £6.4 million due to slippage. The Group Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer said he would speak further on this at item 12. Whilst there were no immediate signs of financial distress, members should bear in mind that homelessness presented a real risk in cost terms for the council, as was the same for other councils across the Country.

The Chair then invited questions and comments from members. It was asked why, at table 1, the Fred Lyons Pool, Wave Leisure Centre, Windmill Theatre and Leisure were shown as four separate headings, as these services were run by Freedom Leisure, which made comparisons difficult. The Group Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer undertook to provide a written answer explaining why these budget cost codes were separated and whether it was possible to merge them in future reports. Responding to a question of the timescale of when the report on Sheltered Accommodation would be considered by this Committee, the Interim Group Head of Housing advised that work on this matter was progressing. A meeting to discuss feasibility had taken place earlier in the day to discuss the next steps and a briefing would be arranged for councillors in the new year. The Group Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer undertook to provide a breakdown of the costings for each of the services provided by the Wave Leisure Centre.

During the discussion views were expressed that it was hoped that there would be progress on more social housing and council houses being built and the Decarbonisation Scheme slippage was of concern if the money was used for match funding other grant pots.

The Committee noted the report.

#### 411. SAFER ARUN PARTNERSHIP SCRUTINY REPORT

The Community Safety Officer was invited to present his report. The report provided details of the previous two Safer Arun Partnership meetings and the decisions on Grant funding made, set out at paragraphs 4.4, 4.5 and 4.13 of the report.

The Chair then invited members to make comments or ask any questions. Details of the concerns of shoppers, including the elderly, of incidents of youths gathering in Littlehampton town centre at the end of the day, which had made it a no-go

area. Details of the same issues happening in Bognor Regis Town centre were also reported. It was felt that Community Wardens and Police Community Support Officers were not challenging the youths who caused problems. The Community Safety Officer advised that the Local Action Team (LAT) were the 'boots on the ground' officers. The LAT was aware of the issues, which also included incidences of youths riding e-scooters and were discussing how to best address these issues, having requested support from Sussex Police and the Community Safety Team on these issues. The Community Safety Officer provided details of the provision for volunteers to borrow equipment to undertake road speed watches in areas where there were issues. Sussex Police can issue warning letters to drivers caught speeding. The re-introduction of Youth Outreach sessions was welcomed by members. The Community Safety Officer confirmed that the sessions had started, with Arun Youth Project providing three evening engagement sessions a week in Littlehampton town centre. It should be noted that recognising the need for youth provision, although a partnership, was ultimately the responsibility of WSCC who should be left to lead on this provision.

The Community Safety Officer undertook to include less acronyms in future reports.

The Committee noted the report.

412. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2022-2026 - QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 1 APRIL 2023 TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2023.

*(Councillor Walsh left the meeting at the start of this item)*

The Interim Group Head of Housing was invited to introduce the report.

The Chair invited questions and comments from members. During the discussion members raised concern as to CP16 (average days to average days to re-let all properties key to key excluding major voids), although some improvements had been made since Quarter 1, it was considered that the out turn was still not acceptable. The Interim Group Head of Housing provided details of the tender process carried out during Quarter 1 to appoint a second contractor who was now working though the majority of the voids to improve turnaround times. With regards to the estimated timeline of when the voids target would be met, it was expected that the trajectory set out in Appendix for both Quarters 3 and 4, which showed an improving target, would be met. It was requested that the Committee should receive a report providing details of the number of all voids, with explanations for the reasons for the longer-term voids (more than 60 days), so that the Committee to understand the progress being made.

The Interim Group Head of Housing was pleased to the recruitment of a Technical Services Manager and three Technical Officer posts, filling posts previously occupied partially by interims and its as hoped they would form a long-standing relationship with Arun DC. As well as improving the Voids situation, these posts would be involved in responding to and resolving any issues that arose from work undertaken, which in turn would reduce the number of complaints received. It was commented that

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these posts would only help to improve the situation and thanks were expressed to the Interim Group Head of Housing.

Councillor Bicknell referred to the number of issues in his Ward asked if he could attend a site visit with one of the Technical Officers, which he agreed he would take up with the new Interim Head of Housing.

The Interim Group Head of Housing undertook to provide members with a copy of the previous Voids Policy 2020-2023 and the current Voids policy, as well as details of the process.

Members thanked the officers for arranging the Housing Tour held on 20 October 2023, which had been very informative. The Interim Group Head of Housing said he would pass on the members thanks to the officers involved.

The Committee noted the contents of the report and provided questions and comments on the indicators relevant to this Committee to the Policy and Finance Committee on 8 February 2024.

413. PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR HOUSING SERVICES - QUARTER 2  
PERFORMANCE FOR THE PERIOD 1 JULY 2023 TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2023

The Interim Business Improvement Manager was invited to present the report to members. Compared to Quarter 1, improvements in performance had been achieved for seven targets during Quarter 2. Referring to Appendix 1, it was expected that this trend would continue at a higher rate, particularly in relation to Voids. Compliance performance had also improved across Gas Safety and Electrical Checks. Despite unprecedented demand, the time households were spending in temporary and emergency accommodation fell slightly. With regards to repair response times, the contractor was still not meeting the targets set and was not providing the service that residents expect. The continuing work to improve the response times and the processes expected to achieve improvements. Appendix 2 set out the work undertaken by the Council's Fraud Investigation Enforcement Officer who had recovered six properties this financial year.

The Chair invited members to make comment or ask any questions. The re-introduction of a Fraud Investigation Enforcement Officer role was welcomed, as it would ensure properties were provided to those who needed them and stop abuse of the system. Reports of fraud were increasing, specifically for subletting and non-occupation. The Interim Business Improvement Manager undertook to include a comparison in the Quarter 3 report, in terms of fraud with a breakdown of the different types. A member requested a copy of the terms of reference for sub-letting for Council houses, as he felt there was confusion as to what was allowed. The Interim Business Improvement Manager advised that Sub-letting, was a term set out within the tenancy agreements. She undertook to check the tenancy agreement document was correct and to forward a copy of the tenancy agreement to members.

The Interim Business Improvement Manager agreed to provide the actual numbers in addition to the percentages for each target in future reports.

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

414. HOUSING SERVICES COMPLAINTS PERFORMANCE AND DETERMINATIONS Q2

The Chair invited the Interim Business Improvement Manager to present the report to members. There has been a slight increase in the volume of complaints during Quarter 2 with high volumes of complaints impacting workloads, which was in line with increases other councils were experiencing, particularly concerning the repairs service. It was expected that the situation would improve during Quarter 3 and at this point benchmarking would be available against other councils.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor McDougall and seconded by Councillor Yeates.

The Interim Group Head of Housing explained that He advised a member who had concerns about the number of long-term complaints concerning outstanding repairs and other actions still outstanding within his Ward that the member could contact him outside of the meeting to discuss his concerns further.

A typographical error was identified in the chart showing the root causes of complaints at page 61, 'Homeless Compliant' should read 'Homeless Complaint'.

It was explained that the types of complaints received under 'Compliance' related to health and safety compliance. Generally a range of complaints were received concerning Homelessness, which could include a complaint about a decision where there was no statutory right of appeal or about the service provision itself. The Interim Business Improvement Manager undertook to confirm details of each of the complaints received in respect of 'Compliance' and 'Homeless Complaint' received during Quarter 2.

The Interim Business Improvement Manager agreed to provide the actual numbers in addition to the percentages for each target in future reports.

The Committee:

RESOLVED

1. To note the contents of the report.
2. To note the improve performance in complaint response times for quarter 2.

415. RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY 2022-2026 ANNUAL UPDATE

The Chair invited the Interim Resident Engagement Officer to present the report to members, which provided an update to the Resident Engagement Strategy approved

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during 2022. It was reported that all the Year 1 priorities and achievements were on target for completion in the first year. Work had also commenced on the Year 2 priorities. Since the publication of this report, the first community grants application had been assessed and the Christmas tree decorating competition was about to launch.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Yeates and seconded by Councillor McDougall.

The Chair invited questions and comments from members. Referring to paragraph 4.12 of the report, Aim 3 – Engage digitally, assurance was sought that all groups of people were being reached, such as those who may not have the necessary IT skills or be fluent in English. The Interim Resident Engagement Officer responded that some digital skills classes had taken place for those who wanted to improve their technical skills. The Getting Involved survey had asked residents what their preferred method of communication was, and it was confirmed that the paper method would still be used for those who had expressed that as their preference. With regards to community clean-ups, she confirmed that a date for a clean-up in the Hastings Close area of the Pevensey Ward was planned to take place during the second week of December 2023 subject to confirmation of the availability of all parties due to take part.

A suggestion was made that at Page 98, Changes within the Neighbourhood Housing Team, the colour yellow indicating the location of one of the Neighbourhood Officer's on the map should be replaced with a colour more visible to see.

The Committee:

RESOLVED

1. To note the contents of the report note; and
2. To note the progress against the aims of the strategy.

416. HRA FORECAST UPDATE

*(Councillor Walsh returned to the meeting during the discussion of this item)*

The Chair reminded the Committee that Appendix 1 of the report was a restricted document. If the Committee wished to discuss the appendix members will need to pass a resolution for the press and the public to be excluded to this item. Following a question from a member concerning the order of items on the Agenda pertaining to exempt matters, the Committee Manager explained that once the Committee had considered the appendix they would need to make a resolution to return into open session to enable them to vote on the recommendation.

The Chair invited the Group Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer to present the report to members.

He explained that this was a forecast report, produced by Finance and Housing, providing a detailed review of the Housing Revenue Account's financial position as at Quarter 2. All major cost elements in this account had been reviewed and revised. He drew attention to the Table 1 at paragraph 4.1 that summarised the forecast for 2023-24 for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) reserve. The HRA was expected to reduce to £902,000 by the end of March 2024, which was a reduction of approximately £281,000 below the budget forecast originally predicted for 2023-24. He referred to the minimum balance set by the Council for the HRA of £2million. He stressed that this target was a Council set target, not a statutory target, and referred to the Committee to paragraph 4.2 that explained the Council's position. Therefore, it could be necessary for officers to revise the target at a future date to ensure it was realistic. It should also be noted that the reserve level set by this Council was high for the size of its housing stock. It was crucial that the HRA budget avoided a deficit, as this would result in an intervention from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities with the Council possibly losing control of its housing stock.

Details of mitigating actions being taken to improve the forecast were set out at paragraphs 4.12 to 4.14. Details of the main variations in the report were provided: The situation concerning Supervision and Management overspend of £386,000 due to the use of agency staff was improving but still had some distance to go; Loan Charges was £111,000 overspent, as an interest rate of 3.2% was used to set the budget but the actual rate is currently 4.81%, but this had been partially offset due to no borrowing on the De-Carbonisation and the Sheltered Accommodation schemes; Whilst Repairs and Maintenance had a small underspend of £48,000 it was important to note that there was a large overspend of £304,000 for Responsive Repairs within this budget. Details of the steps being taken to improve this budget, at Paragraph 4.7, were outlined.

The recommendation was proposed by Councillor Wiltshire and seconded by Councillor Bicknell.

The Chair invited questions and comments from members.

During the discussion concerns were raised about the balances in the HRA and whilst it was understood that setting a minimum balance was not mandatory, the Council was in a situation that should be taken seriously. As regards to the actions set out to improve the HRA forecast, clarification was requested on the amounts set out in Paragraphs 4.12-4.14. A question was asked that if there was a reduction in spending what the implications of that on the Housing Service's ability were to carry out its service. The Interim Group Head of Housing advised that the forecast had been positively adjusted to that of the current profile of spending assuming there would not be an increase in the current spend during the remainder of the financial year. Savings had been made due to fewer voids than originally predicted. The Cyclical Redecorations and Maintenance budget was currently unspent with funds set aside for repairs on a property expected to commence during Quarter 4. He advised that there would not be an underspend during 2024-25 as the remainder of the planned works would be carried out during Quarters 1 and 2. The completion of the backlog of Fire Compliance work had reduced the financial impact on the budget. Details were provided of the Retrofit Inspections due to be carried out that involved inspections to

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assess the general standards of housing stock, ensuring the Council's de-carbonisation obligations were met. These inspections would also assess the quality of the Council's housing stock for reporting to the Council's Regulator, which he confirmed could be done within the budget. He confirmed that inspections would also be carried out by the Technical Service Team of the retro fit work undertaken to ensure it had been carried out satisfactorily. He confirmed that the savings made would not result in a reduction of services.

Responding to further questions, the Group Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer advised that the outstanding HRA debt in respect of the Housing Revenue Account Reform buyout that had taken place in 2012 was approximately £35million. He referred members to the Audit and Governance agenda papers of the meeting held on 30 November 2023, which provided further details. Whilst he understood the Committee's concerns that the HRA account was in a serious situation, which officers were taking very seriously it should be stressed that it was not a situation that would lead the Council to enter into bankruptcy. With regard to housing rent increases the Interim Group Head of Housing explained that the Council's 7% Council housing rent increase for 2023-24 was the rate agreed by the Government. The increase going forward year on year was expected to be the conventional rate of CPI plus 1%.

The Group Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer explained that both the Housing and the Finance services had reviewed the HRA's depreciation charges and they were confident that the figures arrived at were correct but they also stated that they would be kept under review. The Interim Group Head of Housing added that a reduction of 1.2 million in depreciation had already been achieved already and had been included in the updated forecast.

Responding to a question on the Government's position as regards to relacing gas boilers with air source heat pumps and whether the replacement of these boilers was factored into voids, the Interim Group Head of Housing explained that the current boiler replacement programme replaced the boilers on a 'like for like' basis. The trajectory for the Council's de-carbonisation programme included electric sources of heat. However, one of the challenges of air source heat pumps was they were only suitable for houses with a C EPC rating or above. If homes were not properly sealed it would allow air to escape, creating fuel poverty whilst meeting the Government's carbon neutral targets. A member commented that he hoped the Council was looking into installing efficient electric sources of heat for its new builds, as they should be properly insulated.

The Committee:

RESOLVED

That the Committee has made observations on and noted this report.

417. ARMED FORCES COVENANT IN THE COMMUNITY CONFERENCE IN NEWCASTLE



Councillor Turner provided an update on the Armed Forces Covenant and related matters arising from the Community Conference held on 15 September 2023. There were now additional pathways to help veterans in the community, but the issue was how to identify veterans in the first place.

Discussion took place on how veterans could best access services. It was suggested that organisations could be provided with the details of those leaving the armed forces. However, this would be subject to GDPR compliance and the Armed Forces agreeing to provide details of these veteran. It was for the veteran to decide if they wanted to provide their details. Comments were made of the importance of veterans, who were well cared for whilst in the services, being able to access services, whilst giving them the opportunity for equality and not advantage. It was considered that the Council responded well to the housing and wellbeing needs of veterans in the District. It was commented that veterans affected by trauma may find it difficult to seek help. Mention was made of the support provided by Crimsham Farm, a breakfast club at the Waverley Pub and lunch club at the Laburnham Centre Bognor Regis for veterans. Thanks were given to the staff responsible for the support they provided to veterans. Councillor Turner advised that identifying veterans was difficult but would become easier once Veteran ID cards were introduced.

The Committee thanked councillor Turner for his report .

The Committee

RESOLVED to

- a) Note the contents of the report particularly the “legal obligation” now on specified public bodies shown at Paragraph 10 of the report.
- b) Agree to the publication of the report on the Council’s website member area.
- c) Agree to continue to receive reports and updates on the Armed Forces Covenant.

#### 418. WORK PROGRAMME

The Chair advised members that the work programme for 2023/24 was for information and asked members if they had any questions or comments.

The following items were agreed to be added to the work programme:

- Voids Process: A progress report was requested on void reductions. A report would be considered by the Committee during Quarter 1 2024-2025, which will have given the new Technical Services Team time to make improvements.

Subject to approval at the next Housing and Wellbeing Committee meeting

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- Sheltered Housing: A member briefing on the feasibility of Sheltered Housing would be arranged for members before a report was considered by the Committee. The timing of these was to be determined being dependent on the process for the resident consultation and the outcome.

(The meeting concluded at 7.59 pm)

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>Housing and Wellbeing Committee</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Leisure Operating Contract 18-Month Report</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Fraser Kidd, Wellbeing Business Manager</b>
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	<i>Councillor Carol Birch – Chair of Housing Committee</i>
<b>WARDS:</b>	<b>ALL</b>
<b>CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION:</b>	
<p>IMPROVING THE WELLBEING OF ARUN: To plan services, resources, amenities, activities, and places to help our community thrive.</p>	
<b>DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT:</b>	
<p>To regularly monitor and review the performance of contracts.</p>	
<b>FINANCIAL SUMMARY:</b>	
<p>The sum tendered for the contract was £503,192 per annum payable to the council (averaged over ten years). The tendered sum was adjusted to reflect capital improvement work funded by the council and a reassessment of the financial position on the transfer of the business. This resulted in an average improvement to the tendered sum from £503,192 to £680,683 per annum (averaged over 10 years) with consumer price index linked inflation increases built into the contract.</p> <p>In June 2023 the Housing &amp; Wellbeing Committee approved to a one-off financial support (due in the main to increased energy costs) of £205,255 to Freedom Leisure to assist with the cost pressure of operating Arun’s facilities.</p>	

**1.        PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1        To inform members of the Housing and Wellbeing committee of 18 months of Freedom Leisure’s trading & performance (April 2022-September 2023). This covers a period of rising energy costs, high inflation, and overall pressure on the leisure industry.
- 1.2        Freedom Leisure will present two items:
  - The Arun District Council Leisure Operating Contract 18-month report from April 2022-September 2023
  - An update on the ‘Healthy Communities in Arun’

- 1.3 This is an opportunity for members to review the past 18-months trading and performance.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **That the Housing and Wellbeing Committee:**

- 2.1 Note the contents of the report and presentations provided by Arun District Councils Leisure Contractor Freedom Leisure.
- 2.2 Note the pressures and work undertaken by Freedom Leisure to continue to mitigate against the rising energy costs.

## **3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 3.1 This report will provide members of the Housing and Wellbeing Committee with an update in respect of the Council's Leisure Operating Contract over the past 18-months and will include a presentation from the Council's Leisure Operator Freedom Leisure.

## **4. DETAIL**

- 4.1 In September 2015 the Council's Leisure Operating Contract was awarded to Wealden Leisure Ltd, trading as Freedom Leisure. The contract is for a period of 10 years from 2016 with an extension of one year due to ceasing of trading due to Covid. There is an optional extension of 5 years, from 1 April 2027 to 31 March 2032. Under the terms of the contract Freedom Leisure is responsible for the operational costs and expenditure associated with the delivery of the service. They retain any income generated but pay an agreed annual management fee to the council (as detailed in the financial summary).
- 4.2 Freedom Leisure operate four facilities on behalf of the Council, which include Littlehampton Wave, Arun Leisure Centre, Windmill Entertainment Centre, and Bersted Park Community Centre:
- Littlehampton Wave opened in 2019 and hosts an eight-lane swimming pool with a separate multi use pool with variable depths. It also has a large gym, a four-court sports hall, three studios with one being dedicated to indoor cycling and a meeting room space.
  - Arun Leisure Centre, in Felpham is a dual use site with an eight-lane swimming pool, learner pool and flume. Wet change facilities were updated in 2023, opening in August. The centre also hosts two studios with one being dedicated to indoor cycling, a gym space on each floor, two squash courts and an eight-court sports hall.
  - Windmill Entertainment Centre, which is currently closed since the Harvester Fire on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> August 2023, has an auditorium with one hundred and ninety-two seats and four additional spaces for wheelchairs. The Windmill Cinema are a hirer of the facility and have a minimum of two hundred and forty-five days per year to show films. On other days there are several theatre and entertainment

productions throughout the year. This facility also has a studio and hosts the annual Arun Sports Awards.

- Bersted Park Community Centre has a pre-school nursery hirer, a multi-use hall which hosts variable activities including children's activities, badminton, table tennis, blood donors and cardiac rehab classes to name a few.

4.3 The contract specification is outcome based which requires Freedom Leisure to formulate the most effective and efficient way to manage the Council's leisure facilities and deliver the Council's vision whilst achieving the management fee payable to the Council. These outcomes include evidencing service contributions to the Leisure & Cultural Strategy 2013-2028, Health and Wellbeing Programmes and Arun's Local Plan.

4.4 Contract reporting is managed through an online contract performance framework portal specifically created for this purpose by industry experts, The Sports Consultancy. The portal is a shared resource which Freedom Leisure and Arun District Council Officers use to populate data and documents. The portal is also a tool for Freedom Leisure and the Council to review both financial and operational performance.

4.5 The contract is managed by monthly planned monitoring visits, regular unannounced visits, and monthly contract meetings. Over the past 6 months additional strategic meetings have been held with Freedom Leisure to discuss the Dual Use Agreement (DUA) 5-year maintenance (2022-2027) plan for the Arun Leisure Centre. The Arun Leisure Centre is subject to a DUA to facilitate shared and cooperative use of the building with Felpham Community College. Meetings between all parties are held each school term.

4.6 A primary indicator of contract performance is the number of people attending the leisure facilities. Attendance over this 18-month review period hasn't been impacted by rising costs and inflation as shown in the below table. An increase in attendance can be seen over a 3-year period from reopening of the facilities after the final lockdown in April 2021 to March 2024 (last 6 months predicted). There is also a positive increase of 13.5% in participation from pre-covid levels (2019/20) vs 2022/23.

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24***
<b>Arun Leisure Centre</b>	418,992	49,054	453,608	511,560	497,138
<b>Littlehampton Wave</b>	562,102	76,385	552,312	770,206	927,070
<b>Windmill Entertainment Centre</b>	77,029	2,843	25,988	13,183*	4,051**
<b>Bersted Park Community Centre</b>	31,557	1,263	14,422	12,318	15,430
<b>Active Communities</b>	74,700	20,810	38,923	37,635	48,848
<b>Total</b>	1,164,380	150,355	1,085,253	1,344,902	1,492,537

\*Does not include Windmill Cinema figures, as per contract these are not provided.

\*\* Closed from 8 August 2023 due to Harvester Fire.

\*\*\* Estimation based on first 6 months figures extrapolated over 12 months.

- 4.7 Other contractual key performance indicators include providing financial information, sufficient compliance audits, a marketing and events plan and a schedule of programmed maintenance. Financial information and participation numbers are provided via an online portal which both the Council and Freedom Leisure can access. Furthermore, Hampshire County Council's Audit team are currently in the process of auditing the Council's governance and contractual management of the Leisure Operating Contract
- 4.8 Freedom Leisure is continuing to develop and extend its programme of activities and classes. Notable successes include little leapfrogs, junior activities programme, healthy walks which are led by volunteers, and their exercise referral classes. Further detail will be provided by Freedom Leisure as part of their report/presentation. A success of the programme has been the Littlehampton Wave Friday Night Project which has attracted sixty young people 11-16 years of age on term time Friday evenings since 2019. In recent months this session has attracted incidents of anti-social behaviour, with multi- agencies involved to try and resolve. As of January 2024, it was jointly agreed to suspend this session temporarily in the interest of staff and customer welfare pending further review.
- 4.9 In addition to the above, the Council and Freedom Leisure have worked together in applying to Sport England for Phase 2 of the Swimming Pool Support Grant Fund. If successful both Arun Leisure Centre and Littlehampton Wave will have destratification fans installed into the swimming pool halls. Littlehampton Wave will also see one hundred photovoltaic (PVs) installed onto the swimming pool roof and Arun Leisure Centre triple glazed windows in the pool hall.
- 4.10 Arun Leisure Centre received significant investment from the Council and Freedom Leisure to upgrade the wet change facilities which were completed in August 2023. The centre now has changing facilities that it can be proud of with the addition of a fully compliant 'Changing Places' toilet facility thanks to funding attained from the Governments Changing Places Toilet Fund and the insight and guidance provided by Muscular Dystrophy UK. Photovoltaic (PV) panels will also be added to the south elevation of the swimming pool roof as part of this project, with a completion date of January 2024.

- 4.11 Within the 18-month period there has been additional challenges (other than energy price increases, and for which the previous committee report on this is provided in the background papers section of this report) These have required strong partnership work from the Council and Freedom Leisure to resolve and included a fifteen-day closure of the main pool at Littlehampton Wave due a pool channel failure in October 2022 and a six-day full closure due to an electrical station fault in February 2023. There have been two well publicised fires over the summer months, the first on 3 July 2023 at Arun Leisure Centre which was discovered on the south elevation of the swimming pool roof during the early stages of the PV works. Due to the swift response from Freedom Leisure staff, contractors and the fire service, the centre reopened the next day. On 8 August 2023 the Harvester in Littlehampton had a major fire which has affected the Windmill Entertainment Centre building. Demolition of the Harvester building was completed in November 2023 and works are ongoing to repair the Entertainment Centre, with a reopening date expected of March 2024.
- 4.12 The Leisure Operating Contract contains a clause which allows for a contract extension of up to 5 years from the current end date of 31 March 2027. Arun District Council Officers are in early discussions with Freedom Leisure and are utilising the services of the Sports Consultancy concerning potential extension to the contract. A further report is likely to be tabled to members of the Housing and Wellbeing Committee later in 2024/25 concerning the terms of any extension proposal.

## **5. CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 The Council have and will continue to consult on achieving best value for its leisure operations and any extension with industry experts The Sports Consultancy.
- 5.2 In September 2023 members of the Housing and Wellbeing Committee were given the opportunity to tour the Wave Leisure Centre. Freedom Leisure provided a brief overview of their business both nationally and locally and members asked several questions concerning the operation of the facility.

## **6. OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

- 6.1 None

## **7. COMMENTS BY THE GROUP HEAD OF FINANCE AND SECTION 151 OFFICER**

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications relating to this report.

## **8. RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

- 8.1 Without continued monitoring of the contract by the Council and continued good relations with Freedom Leisure, there would be a higher risk of a contract failure. To mitigate these risks there is regular monitoring of all facilities, documented with imagery and monthly contract meetings. All health and safety legislation requirements are also checked on monitoring visits. Freedom Leisure also complete internal audits on a quarterly basis of each of their facilities and Littlehampton Wave is due an external Quest audit which is scheduled for the end of January 2024. Business continuity plans and operational risks for the contract/service are reviewed regularly through the Council's corporate processes and good governance.

## **9. COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE & MONITORING OFFICER**

- 9.1 There are no direct legal implications associated with this report. Any future contract extension would be undertaken in accordance with contractual terms and the Council's Contract Standing Orders

## **10. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT**

- 10.1 None

## **11. HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT**

- 11.1 The management of Health Safety is in accordance with the contract specification. Where an accident or incident requires emergency services present, Freedom Leisure report this to the Council. Freedom Leisure also report monthly on the number of accidents and incidents as part of their monthly partnership report.
- 11.2 In each case of accidents and incidents Freedom Leisure investigate and inform of the outcome. During the past 18 months April 2022 – September 2023 no incidents were RIDDOR (Reporting of injuries, diseases, and dangerous occurrences regulations, 2013) reportable.

## **12. PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT**

- 12.1 None

## **13. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE**

- 13.1 The Council seeks to provide a range of opportunities for residents to participate in sport and community activities across the district. Sports facilities are fundamental to that provision. Freedom Leisure and its Active Communities are inclusive to all residents with a focus on sport, women & girls, low socio economic, older adults, special educational needs and disability, young people and ethnically diverse.



13.2 This report and its recommendations does not impact on those with identified protected characteristics under the Equalities Act

#### **14. CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE**

14.1 This report will not directly impact emissions within the Council. However, Freedom Leisure have been very invested in reducing their impact on the environment, and in turn helping Arun reduce its emissions. Currently Freedom Leisure is the second largest emitter sitting at 3.66% of total emissions, with procurement being the largest at 91.20%. Freedom Leisure has undertaken numerous works to reduce energy usage, including a joint application to Sports England funding (as per paragraph 4.9). They have also supported the Council in applying for the Low Carbon Skills Fund that took place in 2023. This allowed for a heat decarbonisation plan to be produced for Arun Leisure Centre, with an aim to provide a route to fully decarbonise this facility. It is hoped that the positive partnership between the Council and Freedom Leisure in reducing emissions associated with their activities will continue.

#### **15. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT**

15.1 None

#### **16. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT**

16.1 None

#### **17. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS**

17.1 None

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#### **CONTACT OFFICER:**

**Name:** Fraser Kidd

**Job Title:** Wellbeing Business Manager

**Contact Number:** 01903 737927

#### **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:**

[\(Public Pack\)Agenda Document for Housing and Wellbeing Committee, 20/06/2023 18:00 \(arun.gov.uk\)](#)

#### [Appendices](#)

- [1. Freedom Leisure 18-month operating report](#)
- [2. Healthy Communities in Arun update](#)
- [3. Exercise referral pathway case study](#)
- [4. Healthy walks in Arun case study](#)

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# Arun District Council

leisure operating contract annual report  
April 2022 - September 2023

Page 19

“ improving lives  
through leisure ”



[www.freedom-leisure.co.uk](http://www.freedom-leisure.co.uk)



# introduction

**freedomleisure** commenced a 10 year contract to manage Arun District Council's leisure facilities on 1 April 2016, these facilities include:

Arun Leisure Centre

Littlehampton Wave Leisure Centre

The Windmill Entertainment Centre

Bersted Park Community Centre

*The winter on 22/23 was particularly difficult for the leisure sector as energy prices trebled principally in response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Freedom Leisure and Arun District Council worked closely together on measures to mitigate the impact of this on the service and indeed the Council provided financial support in both 2022 and 2023. The significant changes put through the business during 22/23 as well as a softening of energy prices in 23/24 has resulted in a much more positive picture in the current year. We continue to work very closely with Arun District Council on our agenda of improving lives through leisure and indeed are keen to explore opportunities for extending our partnership.*

**Ivan Horsfall-Turner | Managing Director - Freedom Leisure**

**The council's strategic priorities for the community are as follows:**

- Supporting older, more vulnerable and less advantaged people in our community
- Protecting our environment
- Enhancing sporting, cultural, community and recreational facilities

**the health and wellbeing strategy identifies the following priorities for the local area:**

- Encourage residents to take part in regular physical activity to benefit their health and wellbeing and for enjoyment
- Encourage young adults to take up sport to lead to life long habits
- Improve quality and accessibility of leisure activities
- Enable lower income residents to access high quality leisure

This report provides a summary of the new initiatives that have made a real difference to the Arun community.





# An introduction to the UK's second largest genuine charitable leisure trust:

2022-2023 has been a challenging 18 month period for the sport and leisure sector as a whole, coming out of the back of Covid we were all affected by the utilities crisis, cost of living crisis as well as supply lines being interrupted; but Freedom Leisure has worked closely with their local authority partners to provide the best service possible during this time. Nationally, Freedom Leisure were selected as the preferred operator for 2 new leisure contracts in the last 6 months alone, increasing their portfolio to 115 Leisure Centres with 24 individual partners and now has over 4000 colleagues employed.



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## 115

**Leisure Centres, including 2 theatres, on behalf of 24 individual clients across England and Wales.**



## not for profit

**Freedom Leisure is a not-for-profit leisure trust which manages leisure and cultural facilities on behalf of partners across the UK to realise our vision of “improving lives through leisure”**



## focus

**Committed to providing and developing inclusive leisure facilities for everyone. Delivering a service to exceed our customers' expectations**

## freedomleisure ethos

- Provide affordable and accessible health, leisure and sport facilities for everyone, therefore having a positive impact on the local communities in which we operate and serve – we aim to inspire people to be more active more often
- Reinvest surplus into quality services
- Exceed our partners' desired outcomes for local communities
- Enhance our reputation and status
- Grow and develop as a company in a sustainable way
- Develop our people
- Renew existing contracts and win new ones

## freedomleisure corporate vision



# Area Insight

Our approach is to provide partners and customers with a bespoke service that will inspire and excite communities to increase participation in activities. Understanding local communities is at the heart of what we do, and we have worked closely with Arun District Council to ensure the community is fully supported and engaged in our local services. We have been able to gather a proven record of success in the Arun area through our commitment to understand the specific needs of Arun residents.

**36.9%**

of adults not reaching recommended levels of activity



**27.8%**

people have a long-term life limiting illness or disability



**164,889**

residents live in Arun (52% female, 485 male)



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**63.8%**

of adults are overweight or obese



**11 years**

difference in male life expectancy at birth between the most and least deprived areas



**2.7%**

Fewer active young People ( 16-34) than 6 years ago (Nov 15-16)



**7**

wards within 20% most deprived within the country (IMD2019)



## Throughput summary:



	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	April 23- Sept 23
<b>Arun Leisure Centre</b>	49,054	453,608	511,560	248,569
<b>Littlehampton Wave</b>	76,385	552,312	770,206	463,535
<b>Windmill Entertainment Centre</b>	2,843	25,988	13,183	4,051 Closed
<b>Bersted Park Community Centre</b>	1,263	14,422	12,318	7,715
<b>Active Communities</b>	20,810	38,923	37,635	24,424
<b>Total</b>	150,355	1,085,253	1,344,902	748,294

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Learn to Swim Members	April 2020	March 2022	Oct 2023
<b>Arun Leisure Centre</b>	1683	1826	1832
<b>Littlehampton Wave</b>	2365	2457	2040

Memberships	April 2020	March 2022	Oct 2023
<b>Arun Leisure Centre</b>	1642	1356	1369
<b>Littlehampton Wave</b>	3952	3206	3110





## Throughput summary:



April 2022 – March 2023  
Program numbers:

31,535

Contract group exercise visits  
(75,035 – 2021/22)



9,096

Contract badminton games played  
(7,835 – 2021/22)



4,154

Children attended holiday camps



There has been a steady increase in our overall user numbers at both Arun Leisure Centre and Littlehampton Wave year on year. The standout achievements include an increase in gym usage at Arun Leisure Centre as well as similar in public swimming at Littlehampton Wave. These successes underscore our commitment to promoting a healthy and active lifestyle within our community.

While we have encountered a decline in gym membership at Littlehampton Wave, this is a common occurrence for new facilities, and we anticipate a natural stabilization over time. The impact of Covid has undoubtedly affected our growth, but we remain optimistic about the future, with plans to foster steady gym membership growth through ongoing support, personalized inductions, and consistent engagement. We aim to work with those who would not usually feel comfortable in a gym environment so that we can increase our impact on those in our community who may not have access previously. We are currently talking with the Wellbeing team in Arun District Council to explore using the Community Transport Service to reach deeper into our local areas and explore removing as many hurdles as possible for others to lead a healthy lifestyle.

Despite a decrease in swimming lessons at Littlehampton Wave and slowed growth at Arun Leisure Centre, we recognize the challenges faced by parents in our area. The tough economic climate has prompted some to withdraw their children from lessons earlier, citing both sufficient progress and the need to manage expenses. We have also seen a significant drop in schools booking lessons in term times with the cost of transport being their main decision maker. We also recognise that The Windmill Cinema did not provide user figures for 2022 onwards which lowers the average slightly.

As we navigate the challenges, that our communities face, our unwavering commitment to their health and well-being remains steadfast, and we look forward to overcoming obstacles and continuing our positive trajectory in the years to come.

2868

Soft play visits  
(1711 – 2021/22)





## Energy Saving Measures



One of our largest focuses for this last 18 months was what we could action to mitigate any further pressures following the energy crisis. We made immediate decisions such as turning shower cycles from 1 minute to 30 seconds and turning off the air conditioning in our gyms during quieter periods and in the cooler months. On a larger scale, we reduced all flow rates on centrifugal pumps to all of our pools, We have changed the timeclocks in our public spaces to become more energy efficient, isolated our heating and reduced the radiator circuit to just 4 hours a day. We will continue to implement the Freedom Leisure Energy Saving Non-Negotiables and improving on our already reduced impact on the environment.



## Investments

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This year we have invested in our facilities and been fortunate enough to collaborate closely with our partners. Some of the investment packages have been those that our customers may not see but make a huge impact to the quality of service we provide.



- Investment in replacement of the Swimming Village at Arun Leisure Centre in conjunction with ADC
- Replacement Plate Heat exchangers at Arun LC from Old Calorifiers
- New Windows Dryside at ALC in conjunction with WSCC
- £11.3k on New Pool Grates
- £12k investment by both Freedom and ADC for new Inflatable for Both Sites.
- £4k on new cleaning machines for Arun Leisure Centre.
- £5k for brand new Little Leapfrogs and child activities equipment.
- Replacement Poolside Lighting on over 40% of LED's
- Replacement flooring in Bramber and room upgrade in conjunction with WSCC
- £1.8K on New Tables and Chairs for Parties

## Feedback

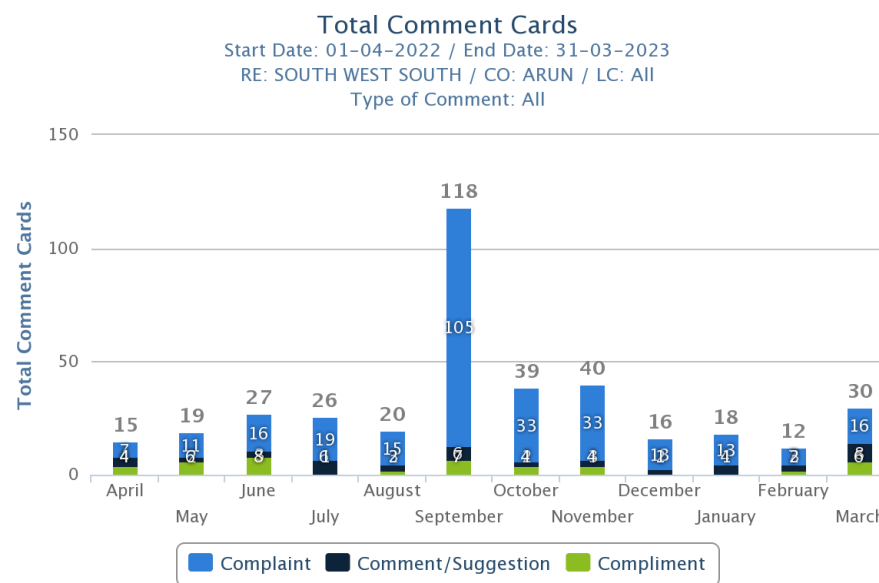
Our leisure centres continually gather valuable feedback from our patrons. We value the feedback received and are committed to continually enhancing our services to meet the expectations of our community.

One notable concern was related to the functionality of our app, the Freedom leisure app was causing issues for users which took some time for us to resolve as we had to work with our LMS provider but this is now resolved. Additionally, we acknowledge a spike in complaints in 2022 when pool temperatures were adjusted as a mitigating action amid the energy crisis in which the pool received 45.1% of complaints through October and November.

A significant improvement that has shown a significant swing in feedback involves the complete transformation of the aging changing facilities at Arun Leisure Centre. Thanks to a substantial investment from both the Arun District Council and Freedom Leisure, we have revamped the changing village to provide a modern and more comfortable environment for our visitors.

In 2022/23 Arun received a total of 377 comments via feedback focus.

46 compliments  
46 comments/suggestion  
285 complaints – 0.02 of total visits



We are always thrilled to share the positive feedback we have received for our performance in various areas. Specifically, our swift reaction times and exemplary care levels in handling first aid situations have garnered praise from individuals who have experienced such incidents. The recent decision to bring our Day Camps in-house has proven to be a resounding success, as both parents and children eagerly anticipate the upcoming half-term holidays. Furthermore, our receptionist team consistently receive commendations for their friendly, positive, and caring demeanour. Recognising that their primary role is to enhance our customers' days, they consistently contribute to creating a welcoming and positive environment for all.



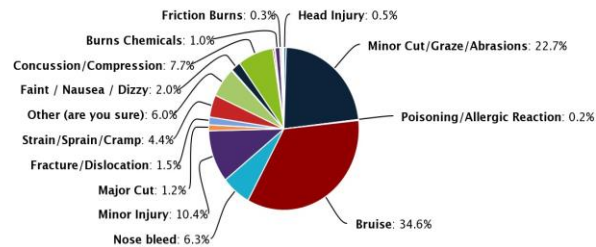




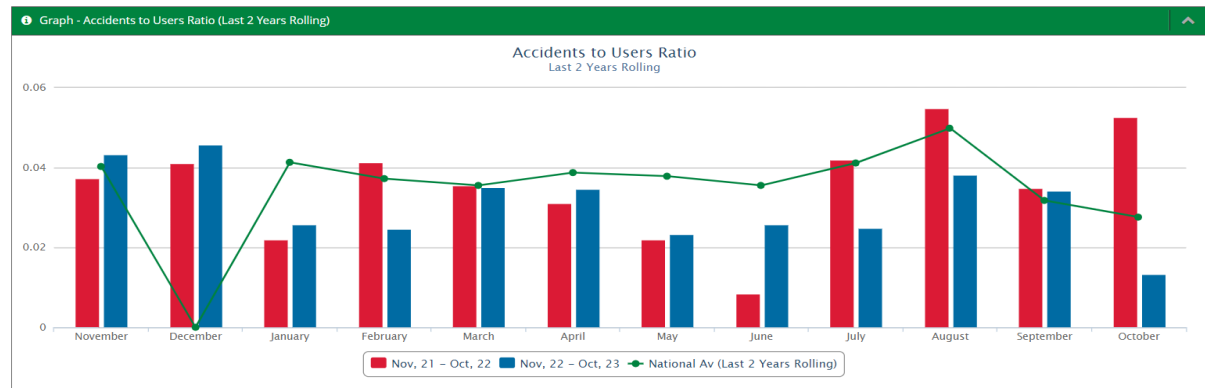
Freedom Leisure are committed to reducing accidents in our facilities and preventing them is at the pinnacle of all health and safety decisions. Across the contract between April 22 and September 23 we had just 612 recorded accidents in 1.3m visits. This equates to just 0.04% of all visits. When looking into it further, 74% of those accidents recorded on site resulting in injury have been bruises, nose bleeds or other minor injuries. The teams have a robust plan for all types of first aid incident and participate in regular monthly training.

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Accident Report – Injury



- Head Injury
- Minor Cut/Graze/Abrasions
- Poisoning/Allergic Reaction
- Bruise
- Nose bleed
- Minor Injury
- Major Cut
- Fracture/Dislocation
- Strain/Sprain/Cramp
- Other (are you sure)
- Epileptic Fit/Convulsion
- Faint / Nausea / Dizzy
- Concussion/Compression
- Dental Injury
- Eye Injury
- Burns Chemicals
- Friction Burns
- Heart Condition
- Heat/Fire Burns
- Vomit



## Accidents to Users Ratio

CON AV: 0.03%

NAT AV: 0.74%





April 2022 – March 2023	Littlehampton Wave	Arun Leisure Centre	Bersted Centre	The Windmill Entertainment Centre	SAPD	Total
Income	£2,641,650	£1,326,415	£42,674	£127,487	£125,192	£4,263,418
Expenditure	£2,207,424	£1,992,812	£98,860	£110,688	£41,870	£4,451,655
Arun Council Support	£265,001					£265,001
Net surplus / (deficit)	£434,226	-£666,397	-£56,186	£16,799	£83,322	-£188,236

At the conclusion of the 2022/2023 financial year, the Arun Area faced a deficit primarily attributable to the global utility crisis. As we continued to grow following the recovery of the Covid pandemic this was an unforeseen challenge. Despite efforts to manage other budgetary aspects effectively, the utility crisis proved to be a significant burden on the financial health of the Arun Area, contributing substantially to the year-end deficit. Arun District Council offered £265k support in 2022 for that financial year which helped greatly reduce the deficit.



April 2023 – September 2023	Littlehampton Wave	Arun Leisure Centre	Bersted Centre	The Windmill Entertainment Centre	SAPD	Total
<b>Income</b>	<b>£1,806,124</b>	<b>£1,086,685</b>	<b>£33,953</b>	<b>£46,656</b>	<b>£67,210</b>	<b>£3,040,628</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>£1,365,067</b>	<b>£1,353,933</b>	<b>£57,163</b>	<b>£42,020</b>	<b>£14,887</b>	<b>£2,833,071</b>
<b>Arun Council Support</b>	<b>£205,255</b>					<b>£205,255</b>
<b>Net surplus / (deficit)</b>	<b>£402,972</b>	<b>-£267,248</b>	<b>-£23,210</b>	<b>£3,635</b>	<b>£52,323</b>	<b>£168,472</b>

Looking ahead to the 2023/2024 financial year, the Arun Area has strategically positioned itself for a much stronger financial standing. Along with £205k support for utility costs from Arun District Council; several key initiatives have been implemented to mitigate the impact of utility expenses, including securing preferential utility rates. Additionally, spend line controls have been established to enhance financial discipline and ensure that resources are allocated judiciously. The focus for the upcoming year also includes a commercial drive to maximise revenue, coupled with an unwavering commitment to enhancing the overall quality of service provided. These measures collectively aim to not only rectify the previous year's deficit but also to position the Arun Area for sustained financial stability and growth. Financial stability allows us to invest more into the services that we offer the wider community.



## Team in Arun

Over the course of the year we have seen a turnover in various roles along with the employment market tightening and becoming more competitive. Freedom Leisure have added new roles into the business recognising the growth it has undertaken and the support sites require to perform to the best they can. In October 2023 Freedom Leisure gave all job roles a 5% pay award increase as another factor in the journey to become an employer of choice in our industry.

**Matt Eden** – Area Manager of Arun – Matt has worked in the Health and Fitness Industry for over a decade and has worked with providers such as Nuffield Health and The Village. He joined us in July 2023 after running the flagship Fitness First in Baker Street.



**Ben Lucas** – GM of Arun Leisure Centre – Ben has a background in Leisure having worked at The Arena in Bognor Regis amongst many other projects; Ben joined us in August 2023.

**Matt Williams** – GM of Littlehampton Wave – Matt was the General Manager of Arun Leisure Centre before taking the helm down the road. He has been in the industry since being a Lifeguard at just 17 years old.



**Internal Progression: Trish Causabon-Vincent** – Multifunctional Duty Manager – Trish has a wealth of experience and is an expert with Day Camps, Reception, Friday Night Project and many other depts, she has now started to train as a Duty Manager

**Kaylee Raynsford:** Multifunctional Duty Manager – Kaylee has been with Freedom for roughly 18 months and along with stepping up to be a Duty Manager is also part of the team that liaises between Management and the Lifeguards to increase communication.

**Apprenticeships:** We are proud to currently be investing in 5 people on different apprenticeships. From Lifeguards and Membership Advisors working towards becoming PT's, to Duty Managers gaining qualifications in their roles. We hope to grow this number of participants in the coming months.





# Marketing

Freedom Leisure actively promotes healthy lifestyles across the communities . Ensuring that everyone feels welcome within our centres.

In the recent few years, we have focused more on digital marketing as this leads to more interaction this is supported by traditional methods to ensure we are able to reach our demographic.

Our marketing displays a wide range of activities to ensure that there really is something for everyone and that we offer an all-inclusive service. To match our bespoke offering, we try to personalise our content along with our National campaigns. Our content will always be informative, fun and localised.



**NEW**  
**Exercise Referral class**

Come and join us for our new exercise referral class, suitable for those with a diagnosed health condition, including diabetes, obesity and hypertension. Our experienced and specifically trained instructors are here to help you improve your fitness to help you to manage your condition.



**I'm learning to swim with freedomleisure**

Alpha Step

www.freedom-leisure.co.uk

Swim England freedomleisure



**Christmas Holiday Day Camps now available to book.**

Call 01243 826 612

freedom kids freedomleisure where you matter!



**Artisan Christmas gift & food fair**

Sunday 10 December, 10am - 3pm

freedomleisure where you matter!

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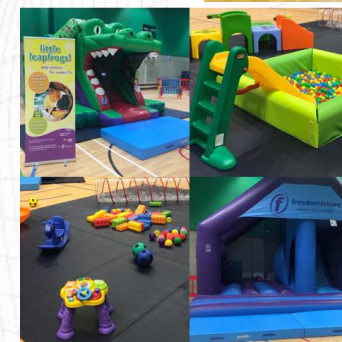



**FITNESS CHALLENGE**  
OF THE MONTH...

THIS MONTH'S CHALLENGE IS...

Register today! SPEAK TO A MEMBER OF THE TEAM FOR MORE DETAILS

freedomleisure where you matter!





# Social Media Coverage



Centre	Social media followers as of Nov 23
Arun Leisure Centre	4,504
Littlehampton Wave	9,440
Windmill Entertainment Centre	550
Bersted Park Community Centre	821
Active Communities Arun	376
Six Villages Sports Centre	667



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Photo 1- Santas Elves- day camps/ Photo2- walk leaders AGM/ Photo 3- Christmas Zumba. Photo 4- Cardiac



# Testimonials



## Cardiac Rehab Classes

"Since attending the cardiac rehab sessions I can now do everything that I used to be able to do before my heart attack. I feel more positive and I am happy with the progress that I've made. I enjoy coming to the class because it provides me with extra support and company" - Sue

Testimonial



## Swimming Lesson TESTIMONIAL

"Dannii has helped my child so much with her swimming, she is improving so much since having Dannii.

I spoke to Mum and she said that this is the third swimming school she has used and her child has progressed the best with us.



## Cardiac Rehab Testimonial

“ I feel so much better in myself and have seen a significant improvement in my strength and coordination. I can also see the progress being made by the others in the class” ”

COLIN



## Day Camps Testimonial

My daughter attended the children's day camp for the very first time. I never would normally email, but I just wanted to let you now she had an amazing time! From the moment we arrived the staff were brilliant and in particular Gemma, was great with my daughter, very friendly and couldn't do enough. I will definitely be recommending and sending my daughter again!"



# TESTIMONIALS

" I have the ability to work harder now without the feeling of being breathless and over tired.

I feel more able to do things with confidence now knowing I can work hard without any problems.

I can now push myself harder without the worry"

Elaine



## our year in numbers:

The last 18 months have been record breaking for the Arun Contract in many different areas. We have been able to support the community more than we ever have before. The numbers below reflect just January until September 2023.

# 126,000+

Learn to swim attendances in 2023



# 1,309,064

Centre visits



# 37

Children on Talented Athletic Programme



# 6,781

Over 75 year old swims in 2023



# 12

New volunteers walkers trained up in 2023



# 700

On average per week on Healthy Walk Sessions in 2023



# 8,986

Attendees to Little Leapfrogs sessions since April 2022



# 291,327

Nearly 300,000 visits In 2023





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# Healthy Communities Arun

“ improving lives  
through leisure ”

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# What is Healthy Communities and what do we do?

We work with a large majority of people of all ages and from all walks of life, to engage them with our leisure service. This is both within our centres but also out in the Arun community.



A majority of the people we work with won't be your average gym and swim users, many of these people have barriers in the way to participating in leisure activities. Barriers include, low income, social isolation, lack of confidence, health conditions ... the list goes on.



The job of the Healthy Communities team is to break down these barriers for people to make activities **ACCESSIBLE, FUN** and **WELCOMING** to help empower people to live healthier lives. This is done through sourcing funding, working with a variety of partners, regularly adapting programmes to meet peoples needs and above all, building an **AMAZING** team of staff, all of whom are passionate about making a positive difference and can deliver on our objectives!



In addition to our Healthy Communities targeted work, we also work on developing and building the Junior Activities provision at both leisure centres. We recognise that a healthy lifestyle needs to start early for everybody and we want to help young children and families create healthy habits that become a lifestyle choice.





## For Families and Young People

**Active Play 'Out & About' sessions** - A record **2,198** attendances this year on our community Active Play 'Out & About' sessions. The team delivered free play provision across 8 green spaces in Arun, all supported by parish and town councils.

**Little Leapfrogs** – Due to demand, 4 sessions are now running per week. Leapfrogs aims to support parents and families of young children with an affordable play session. **7,640** child attendances during 2023. Leapfrogs sessions will be launched at Arun Leisure Centre in 2024.

**Gymnastics & Trampolining**- We now have over 160 gymnasts coming through our programme here at Wave each week and 32 at Arun Leisure Centre. As well as our courses, we also offer drop in Gym Tots sessions for under 5's. Supported by an exceptionally dedicated and supportive team of coaches.

### Day Camps

Our holiday club runs at both Arun Leisure Centre & Littlehampton Wave. This provides working parents with affordable, wrap around child care Mon-Fri.

**Friday Night Project** – Up to **90** young people aged 11-16 years were engaging each week with our Friday Night projects at Wave and ALC. Due to reasons out of our control, both projects are currently on hold but we hope to relaunch shortly.



## Ageing Well

### Forever Active

Forever Active sessions each week at Wave geared towards older adults. These sessions aim to tackle social isolation and bridge the gap between health referral and centre exercise classes. Incredible testimonials coming from these classes of how they are helping customers. 8 customers have already joined our phase 4 cardiac rehab classes as a result of coming to Forever Active. This is exactly what we set out to achieve.

### Walking for Health in Arun

36 dedicated volunteer walk leaders leading 7 weekly and 3 monthly walks. Average attendance of **700** walkers per month.

### Adult Multi Sports

Now available at Wave for adults with learning disabilities. Sessions funded by Grace Eyre foundation & the Together Fund from Active Sussex.

### Exercise Referral Programme

Running in partnership with Active Sussex through the NHS Sussex Personalised Care and Prevention funding. These sessions are to target adults on low incomes and/or with a health condition through physical activity sessions. 26 weeks of funded activity available.

### Dementia Friendly Swimming

A dedicated, quiet pool space just for individuals living with age related memory loss.

## Affordability & Accessibility

### HAF

1,105 attendances at our Day Camps through the WSCC HAF scheme during 2023.

### Ukrainian Refugees LTS

In partnership with ADC, we are now offering 12 months worth of swimming lessons to Ukrainian refugees at Arun Leisure Centre and Wave. We currently have 14 children enrolled. In addition, ADC are also supporting supplying each child with swimwear, goggles, a bag and a towel.

### Community Memberships

Free yearly community memberships for community groups and service users to access our facilities. 70 live memberships at the end of September 2023. Groups include Mind, Social Prescribers and Carers Support.

### Free swimming to over 75's

Over 21,000 swims have been swam over the last 18 months.

### Free Swimming for Under 4's and to all those enrolled on our LTS programme



# Investment

## Equipment

### Littlehampton Wave

- 7.5k new roll out Gymnastics matting
- 8.5k replacement Little Leapfrogs/multi purpose matting
- New two modular Inflatazone castle purchased by Arun District Council. This has had an **incredible** impact on the centre and has been extremely well received by our customers of all ages!

### Arun Leisure Centre

- 15k junior equipment investment, including a large 10k two modular castle and 5k's worth of pre-school equipment. This will enable us to launch the following:
  - A re-vitalised and fresh party programme, including a brand new sports hall party offering with parties available for those 0-16 years on both Saturday and Sunday.
  - A new weekend junior activity programme, including Little Leapfrogs and Junior Sports Club.
  - Grow and raise the profile of our Day Camp provision.

## Staff

### Funded by Freedom Leisure, we have upskilled staff in the following areas:

- Provided Dementia Friends Training for staff teams in partnership with Zachary Merton.
- 2 x staff trained and passed their a Level 1 Boccia Course
- 2x staff trained and passed their Level 2 Gymnastics Coaching





# Healthy Communities in pictures!





# Healthy Communities Team



Together  
Everyone  
Achieves  
More!





# Testimonials & Engagement



“My Grandad was very anxious but the staff made him feel so comfortable! He did some exercise and played board games, it was lovely to see him laughing, smiling and telling jokes like the good old times – thank you Littlehampton Wave!” – **Forever Active Customer**

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I attend Leapfrogs every week with my toddler and baby. Every week Abi gives 100%, playing with them both, being aware of their needs and reacting when I have to help one of them independently. She is a lifesaver and has made our lives easier, happier and more wonderful whenever we attend leapfrogs” – **Leapfrogs Customer**

My daughter was very nervous attending Day Camp for the first time but the staff made her feel at ease immediately. She absolutely loved the range of activities and especially the themed days. You can see the staff work so hard to engage the children and I am very grateful for this provision so I can go to work in the knowledge she is happy. Thank you Littlehampton Wave team! – **Day Camp Customer**

“The team are so friendly and attentive. I hope this will continue for as long as possible as it makes the children & adults very happy!” - **Ferring parent**

“The best activity team ever! They are very friendly and super kind with all the kids. A HUGE thank you to all” – **Wick parent**

“My boys have had an amazing summer holiday thanks to the activity team, well done all” – **Wick parent**

“Great to have these free sessions on our doorstep, loved having more sessions at different locations too, please do them again next year!” – **Angmering parent**

“We love these sessions as they are great fun and also help with health and confidence in my child due to the friendly staff” – **Rustington parent**

“My children have really enjoyed this, the team get so involved with the kids and make it such a fun experience!” **Yapton parent**

“Staff really lovely, it’s been great to be able to go somewhere this summer that doesn’t cost the earth” – **Bersted parent**

## Positive Engagement





## active communities

Date Completed: December 23

### Case Study: Exercise Referral Classes

Programme Code: ARUN/ER

#### Overview:

In August 2023 we were awarded 26 weeks' worth of funding through Active Sussex from the NHS Sussex Personalised Care and Prevention, to target adults with a diagnosed health condition through physical activity sessions. The funding is also linked to the current NHS agenda around increasing referrals to their Digital Weight Management Programme.

We launched our Exercise Referral classes in September 23. Our classes are delivered by our Level 3 Instructors, one of whom has extensive knowledge and training in a range of exercise specialties, including Cardiac and Pulmonary Rehab, Long Term Neurological Conditions, Obesity, Diabetes, and Chronic Lower Back Pain and can provide individuals with an incredibly high level of support. Individuals can be referred to classes by an exercise professional or can self-refer. Initially, our instructors did a fantastic job of getting an understanding of a new group of people and the multiple and complex health conditions that they have. Understandably, this took up a lot of extra time and effort outside of the sessions. Indeed, it is not easy to recruit and sustain activity with people living with a range of conditions who were not previously active. All participants (12 in total to this date) self-referred themselves into the activity sessions which was fantastic, however, this brought significant challenges. After conducting a detailed PARQ, there were a number of participants who were more at risk than others due to their complex health conditions. For our instructors to be able to continue delivering the sessions safely and appropriately to all participants then Freedom required some of these patients to be signed off by a GP that they could exercise.

This then immediately put a barrier in the way for these self-referring individuals, as it is not easy to see a GP quickly for something that might not be considered a priority. The team at Freedom are passionate about not turning service users away and leaving them without support. Particularly as many of these individuals have made the first step back to addressing their health and wellbeing. One participant in particular struggled a lot with their anxiety and the instructor was concerned about asking them not to attend until a GP can sign them off as there was a high chance the individual would lose their confidence.

We raised this issue promptly with Active Sussex and with their support, we took our concerns to the ARUN PCN and local GP/Clinical Director. After discussions over the matter at PCN meetings the following plan has now been put in place by the Clinical Director moving forwards:

Member of public 'self refers' to our exercise referral classes

They fill in a PARQ submitted by Freedom Leisure.

Freedom Leisure send PARQ over to the PCN email address

PARQ is reviewed and individual is approved to attend our classes or referred for further review from Clinical staff rather than Freedom staff.

Member of public has not had to book an appointment with a GP, potentially experience a long wait for this appointment and then potentially lost interest/confidence in their cause, to then be back to square one.

This is partnership working at its best and is a HUGE step forward for Arun and Freedom Leisure. This breakthrough will make such a huge difference not only to our service users accessing services quickly but it will allow us to move closer into the community of more vulnerable adults in a safe way.

#### Feedback:

"The class has made such a difference to my life in just a few months. Having suffered with ongoing age-related conditions over the last 10 years I was extremely apprehensive about attending this class but knew I needed to take the step for my health and wellbeing. My balance in particular has improved incredibly. I have managed to stop myself falling recently which I would never have been able to do before" Class Attendee

#### Outcomes:

- New partnership with the Arun PCN agreed.
- Individuals PARQ will now be reviewed by a medical professional on receipt from Freedom Leisure, as opposed to the individual having to book an appointment (and in some cases pay) for a GP sign off to exercise.
- Extremely positive joined up approach with Freedom & the PCN to make the individual feel supported on their journey to improve their health and wellbeing.
- Class attendance can take place much sooner for these individuals and instruction given will help contribute to the prevention of further medical issues.
- Retention of participants.



#### Themes of activity completed (tick appropriate box):

## active communities

Date Completed: December 23

### Case Study: Healthy Walks in Arun

Programme Code: ARUN/WFH

#### Overview:

Healthy Walks in Arun is a Freedom Leisure scheme. The programme consists of 8 different walks, led by 36 volunteer walk leaders across the district, with some months seeing over 700 attendances. The walks are designed to combat social isolation, encourage sedentary people to move more, build confidence, make friends and improve an individual's health and wellbeing. All walks are free of charge and do not need to be pre-booked.

Our walking scheme strives to be inclusive. We have shorter and longer routes to help participants progress. Within the Littlehampton Walk, a wheelchair friendly route is incorporated.

Although a great way to improve physical and mental health, many people also come along for the social aspect. Many additional events have been organised by the leaders off the back of the walks, including meals out, quiz nights to raise money for charity and regular trips to the theatre. The walks offer people so much and play a vital part in their livelihood.

Pre-Covid, our walking programme was recognised on a county level. We are incredibly proud of our Healthy Walks in Arun volunteer walk leader Sian Fletcher, who won the Active Champion award at the Active Sussex Sports Awards. Sian has been volunteering with us for 10 years and has made a phenomenal impact on the community, not only running the Ferring walk each week with attendances that reach over 60 people but constantly going above and beyond, organising new walks for her groups, arranging walking holidays and raising copious amounts of money for charity. Sian is a true pillar of the Arun Community!

Although we are lucky enough in Arun to have a Walk Coordinator to manage the programme itself, the delivery is carried out solely by volunteers. They do the most incredible job. An example of their dedication is as follows. We started one of our walks in Rustington 7 years ago, at the beginning we had between 10-15 walkers each week. This has now grown to 40-50 with a record number of 56 participants attending in July. Much of this is down to the six leader's hard work of building up a fantastic rapport and maintaining relationships with current walkers, keeping them coming back week after week but also being a huge driving force behind continuously promoting the walk and welcoming new participants.

#### Feedback:

"I joined the walking programme when my husband passed away. I had become very lonely and needed something to help me find my confidence again." Current Walker

"The walks have given me a new lease of life. I love the walking, the fantastic friends I have made and the extra social events. I don't know where I would be without my walks. The leaders are absolutely fantastic and a credit to Freedom Leisure and Healthy Walks in Arun" - Current Walker

#### Outcomes:

- 7 weekly walks
- 3 monthly walks
- 2 inclusive walks (wheelchair and buggy friendly)
- Specially organised walks with the South Downs Rangers
- 36 volunteer walk leaders
- 700+ attendances per month



#### Themes of activity completed (tick appropriate box):



## Case Study: Exercise Referral Classes

Programme Code: ARUN/ER

### Overview:

In August 2023 we were awarded 26 weeks' worth of funding through Active Sussex from the NHS Sussex Personalised Care and Prevention, to target adults with a diagnosed health condition through physical activity sessions. The funding is also linked to the current NHS agenda around increasing referrals to their Digital Weight Management Programme.

We launched our Exercise Referral classes in September 23. Our classes are delivered by our Level 3 instructors, one of whom has extensive knowledge and training in a range of exercise specialties, including Cardiac and Pulmonary Rehab, Long Term Neurological Conditions, Obesity, Diabetes, and Chronic Lower Back Pain and can provide individuals with an incredibly high level of support. Individuals can be referred to classes by an exercise professional or can self-refer. Initially, our instructors did a fantastic job of getting an understanding of a new group of people as well as the multiple and complex health conditions that they have. Understandably, this took up lot of extra time and effort outside of the sessions. Indeed, it is not easy to recruit and sustain activity with people living with a range of conditions who were not previously active. All participants (12 in total to this date) self-referred themselves into the activity sessions which was fantastic, however, this brought significant challenges. After conducting a detailed pre-exercise questionnaire called a PARQ, there were a number of participants who were more at risk than others due to their complex health conditions. For our instructors to be able to continue delivering the sessions safely and appropriately to all participants then Freedom required some of these patients to be signed off by a GP that they could exercise.

This then immediately put a barrier in the way for these self-referring individuals, as it is not easy to see a GP quickly for something that might not be considered a priority. The team at Freedom are passionate about not turning service users away and leaving them without support. Particularly as many of these individuals have made the **incredibly important** first step back to addressing their health and wellbeing. One participant in particular struggled a lot with their anxiety and the instructor was concerned about asking them not to attend until a GP can sign them off as there was a high chance the individual would lose their confidence.

We raised this issue promptly with Active Sussex and with their support, we took our concerns to the ARUN PCN and local GP/Clinical Director. After discussions over the matter at PCN meetings, the following plan has now been put in place by the Clinical Director moving forwards:

- Member of public 'self refers' to our exercise referral classes
- They fill in a ParQ supplied by Freedom Leisure.
- Freedom Leisure send ParQ over to the PCN email address
- ParQ is reviewed and individual is approved to attend our classes or referred for further review from Clinical staff rather than Freedom staff.
- Member of public has not had to book an appointment with a GP, potentially experience a long wait for this appointment and then potentially lose interest/confidence in their cause, to then be back to square one.

This is partnership working at its best and is a HUGE step forward for Arun and Freedom Leisure. This breakthrough will make such a **huge** difference not only to our service users accessing services quickly but it will allow us to move closer into the community of more vulnerable adults in a safe way,

### Feedback:

*"The class has made such a difference to my life in just a few months. Having suffered with ongoing age-related conditions over the last 10 years I was extremely apprehensive about attending this class but knew I needed to take the step for my health and wellbeing. My balance in particular has improved incredibly. I have managed to stop myself falling recently which I would never have been able to do before" Class Attendee*

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- Retention of participants.



### Themes of activity completed (tick appropriate box):

Active Sport

Active Young People

Active Ageing

Active Communities

Active Health

Active Workforce

Email:

[Charlotte.simpson@freedom-leisure.co.uk](mailto:Charlotte.simpson@freedom-leisure.co.uk)

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## Case Study: Healthy Walks in Arun

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### Overview:

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### Feedback:

*"I joined the walking programme when my husband passed away. I had become very lonely and needed something to help me find my confidence again." Current Walker*

*"The walks have given me a new lease of life, I love the walking, the fantastic friends I have made and the extra social events. I don't know where I would be without my walks. The leaders are absolutely fantastic and a credit to Freedom Leisure and Healthy Walks in Arun" - Current Walker*

### Outcomes:

- 7 weekly walks
- 3 monthly walks
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### Themes of activity completed (tick appropriate box):

Active Sport

Active Young People

Active Ageing

Active Communities

Active Health

Active Workforce

Email:

Charlotte.simpson@freedom-leisure.co.uk

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## Arun District Council

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>Housing and Wellbeing Committee on 25 January 2024</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Consultation on Sussex Police Precept 2024 - 25</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Carrie Reynolds, Wellbeing &amp; Communities Manager</b>
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	Councillor Carol Birch – Chair of Housing and Wellbeing Committee
<b>WARDS:</b>	<b>All</b>
<b>CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION:</b>	
IMPROVING THE WELLBEING OF ARUN: Develop and implement a Wellbeing Strategy to plan services, resources, amenities, activities, and places to help our community thrive	
<b>DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT:</b>	
Arun District Council has appointed an elected member to represent the Council on the Sussex Police and Crime Panel.	
<b>FINANCIAL SUMMARY:</b>	
It should be noted that this report is an information item. The precept to be collected by Arun in its role as the billing authority will be included with the proposed 2024-25 Budget to be discussed at Full Council.	

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1. The Sussex Police and Crime Panel are meeting on 26 January 2024 to consider the Sussex Police Precept for 2024-25. This report provides the opportunity for committee members to express their views on the proposed precept.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. Members are asked to consider the content of the Sussex Police and Crime Panel precept report for 2024-25, when published, and to give their views.

### 3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 3.1. The Sussex Police and Crime Panel will meet on 26 January 2024 to discuss the proposed precept for policing in Sussex for 2024-25. In taking the opportunity to discuss through this committee, Councillor Walsh will be afforded information with which to represent the Council during the panel's discussion.

#### **4. DETAIL**

- 4.1. Councillor Walsh is the appointed representative on the Sussex Police and Crime Panel. As such, he will be in a position to attend the panel meeting on 26 January 2024 and represent the views of the Council.
- 4.2. The Sussex Police and Crime Panel's precept report is due to be published on 18 January 2024, and will set out the findings from public consultation, relevant financial information, and outline the recommendations for the Sussex Police precept 2024-25.
- 4.3. This covering report has been produced prior to publication of the precept recommendation and associated papers. These will be circulated under separate cover when published and will provide the opportunity for the Committee to feedback to Councillor Walsh prior to the Police and Crime Panel meeting.

#### **5. CONSULTATION**

- 5.1. Consultation has not been undertaken in relation to this information report.

#### **6. OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

- 6.1. Consideration of options / alternatives is not required as this is an information report relating to an outside body.

#### **7. COMMENTS BY THE INTERIM GROUP HEAD OF FINANCE AND SECTION 151 OFFICER**

- 7.1. There are no direct impacts on the above areas arising from this report.

#### **8. RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

- 8.1. There are no direct impacts on the above areas arising from this report.

#### **9. COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE & MONITORING OFFICER**

- 9.1. This report is an "information only" paper which provides detail from which the committee can discuss the proposed Sussex Police precept 2024-25. It should be noted that the Sussex Police and Crime Panel is an outside body.

#### **10. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT**

- 10.1. There are no direct impacts on the above areas arising from this report.

**11. HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT**

11.1. There are no direct impacts on the above areas arising from this report.

**12. PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT**

12.1. There are no direct impacts on the above areas arising from this report.

**13. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE**

13.1. There are no direct impacts on the above areas arising from this report.

**14. CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE**

14.1. There are no direct impacts on the above areas arising from this report.

**15. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT**

15.1. There are no direct impacts on the above areas arising from this report.

**16. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT**

16.1. There are no direct impacts on the above areas arising from this report.

**17. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS**

17.1. There are no direct impacts on the above areas arising from this report.

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**CONTACT OFFICER:**

**Name:** Carrie Reynolds  
**Job Title:** Wellbeing and Communities Manager  
**Contact Number:** x37605

**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:**

The Sussex Police and Crime Panel precept report for 2024-25 will be circulated once available; it is scheduled for publication on 18 January 2024.

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## Arun District Council

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>Housing &amp; Wellbeing Committee – 25 January 2024</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Committee General Fund Revenue and Capital Budgets and Housing Revenue Account Budgets 2024/25</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Antony Baden, Group Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer</b>
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	<b>Councillor Birch</b>
<b>WARDS:</b>	<b>All</b>
<b>CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION:</b>	
The Council’s financial planning and budget promotes all the Council’s Corporate Priorities.	
<b>DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT:</b>	
The Council’s financial planning and budget influences all Directorates of the Council.	
<b>FINANCIAL SUMMARY:</b>	
The draft budgets for this Committee are shown in the appendices. The Committee is responsible for General Fund services and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The detailed effects are contained in the body of the report. The HRA is under significant financial pressure. Members have received reports outlining the financial position of the Housing Revenue Account at previous meetings. The recommendations from these reports have been taken into account when setting the budgets.	

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1. The purpose of the report is for this Committee to consider and recommend its revenue budget for inclusion in the Council’s overall 2024/25 revenue budget. The report also considers the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget for 2024/25. These recommendations will be submitted to the Policy and Finance Committee on 8 February 2024 when it considers the overall revenue and capital budgets for 2024/25 so recommendations can be made to a Special Meeting of the Council on 21 February 2024 regarding the budgets to be set and level of Council Tax for the District for 2024/25.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that this Committee:

- (a) Agrees the 2024/25 Revenue Budget as set out in Appendix A of this report;
- (b) Agrees the 2024/25 HRA Revenue Budget set out in Appendix B of this report;

- (c) Agrees to allow the HRA Balance to remain below the minimum level of £2.0m for the period 2024/25 to 2027/28 to enable the realisation of savings in Repairs and Supervision & Management expenditure to deliver a sustainable HRA;
- (d) Recommends HRA rents for 2024/25 are increased by 7.7% in accordance with the provisions of the rent standard;
- (e) Recommends that HRA garage rents are increased by 7.7% to give an average rent of £15.60 per week (excluding VAT) and heating and water/sewerage charges be increased on a scheme by scheme basis, with the aim of balancing costs with income;
- (f) Agree on the 2024/25 Capital Programme as illustrated in Appendix C of this report;
- (g) Recommends to Policy and Finance Committee that the General Fund Revenue Budget, HRA Revenue Budget and Committee Capital Programme be included in the overall General Fund Budget when considering the overall budgets on 8 February 2024.

### **3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 3.1. The purpose of the report is for this Committee to consider and recommend its 2024/25 revenue budgets (General Fund & HRA), which will be submitted to the Policy and Finance Committee on 8 February 2024. The Policy and Finance Committee will consider the overall budgets for 2024/25 so that it can make recommendations to a Special Meeting of the Council on 21 February 2024.
- 3.2. In addition, this Committee must consider and recommend its draft capital budget for inclusion in the overall capital programme, which will be submitted to the Policy and Finance Committee on 8 February 2024. The Policy and Finance Committee will consider the overall programme to make a recommendation to the Special Meeting of the Council on 21 February 2024 regarding the overall capital programme to be set for 2024/25.

### **4. DETAIL**

#### **General Fund Budget 2023/24**

- 4.1. The general background to the budget was included in the Financial Prospects 2024/25 to 2028/29 report to Policy & Finance Committee on 26 October 2023. An updated report was also presented to Policy & Finance Committee on the 8 January 2024.
- 4.2. Financial forecasting continues to be extremely difficult due to high inflation rates and various other external factors affecting the economy therefore budgets have been compiled on the best information available.
- 4.3. The basis of revenue budgeting for 2024/25 broadly assumes that current levels of service provision will remain unchanged. This means that whilst cost increases have been included, there is no growth within the budget proposals.
- 4.4. The net change in the revenue budget between 2023/24 and 2024/25 is a reduction of £151k and the key changes are summarized in the table below:

<b>Change</b>	<b>Amount £'000</b>
Salary inflation	281
Homelessness / temporary accommodation	510
Supported accommodation	505
Utilities support Freedom Leisure contracts	(590)
Rent rebates	(130)
Community development grants	(37)
Savings identified by the Financial Strategy paper	(579)
Salary inflation adjustment	(72)
Other minor changes	(39)
<b>Total</b>	<b>(151)</b>

4.5. The savings of £580,000 identified in the Financial Strategy paper referred to in paragraph 4.4 are as follows:

<b>Change</b>	<b>Amount £'000</b>
Vacant Community Warden (0.5 FTE) post	23
Delete vacant Business & Contracts Engagement Officer	41
Community Safety - Reduce seminar budget	2
Community Safety - Reduce miscellaneous costs	6
Community Safety - Reduce protective clothing for Town Wardens	2
Upgrade to CCTV transmission	10
Cease Mobyssoft subscription due to implementation from Civica	49
Cease Aereon annual subscriptions	25
Reduce Emergency and Temporary Accommodation costs by using Council and Registered Social Landlord partners social housing stock	150
Avoid Emergency and Temporary Accommodation costs by using the 7 properties purchased through the LAHF Scheme	202
Recover a proportion of the Energy Efficiency Officer's costs from the Better Care Fund	4
Delete vacant posts of Visiting Officer and Deputy Clerical Team Leader	54
Cease use of Ascendant software used to deliver grants	12
<b>Total Savings</b>	<b>580</b>

## Housing Revenue Account Budget 2024/25

4.6. The net change in the revenue budget between 2023/24 and 2024/25 is £872k and the key changes are summarised in the table below:

<b>Change</b>	<b>Amount £'000</b>
Dwelling Rents	(1,926)
Other Income	(80)
Interest on Balance	(77)
Repairs & Maintenance	657
Depreciation	161
Loan Charges	153
Supervision & Management	144
Voids	133
Other minor changes	(37)
<b>Total</b>	<b>(872)</b>

4.7. Savings of £807k have been identified in the HRA Business Plan and also budgeted salary inflation realignment, as follows:

<b>Change</b>	<b>Amount £'000</b>
Responsive Repairs	390
Supervision & Management	376
Salaries Inflation Realignment	41
<b>Total Savings</b>	<b>807</b>

4.8. A housing rent increase of 7.7% has been assumed for 2024/25 giving an average rent of £110.70 per week (excluding VAT). In addition, a garage rent increase of 7.7% for 2024/25 has been assumed giving an average rent £15.60 per week (excluding VAT). The HRA budget for 2024/25 shows an expected surplus of £532k, leaving a balance carried forward as at 31 March 2025 of £3.988m (HRA Reserve £1.083m and Major Repairs Reserve £2.905m).

4.9. The minimum level HRA Balance is set at £2.0m. It is expected that by the end of 2023/24 the balance will remain well below this figure, and it is not expected to return to this level until 2027/28. The delivery of savings will be critical to this aim.

### Capital Programme 2024/25

4.10 The capital programme will be determined at the Policy and Finance Committee on 8 February 2024. Existing schemes and new schemes will continue to be reviewed during 2024/25 for affordability and deliverability. The impact of any new borrowing will also be kept under review and reported to Members during the financial year.

4.11 The planned capital programme for this committee totals £15.15 million for 2024/25.



## **5. CONSULTATION**

- 5.1. No consultation has taken place with external organisations regarding this committee's budget, but a wider budget consultation process is taking place in respect of the Council's overall budget.

## **6. OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

- 6.1. Not applicable.

## **7. COMMENTS BY THE GROUP HEAD OF FINANCE/SECTION 151 OFFICER**

- 7.1. The financial implications are shown throughout the report. It is important that close monitoring of both revenue budgets, and the capital programme is in place.

## **8. RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

- 8.1. The risks outlined in the Financial Prospects Report 2024/25 to 2028/29 to Policy & Finance Committee on the 26 October 2023 remain relevant. Members may wish to review these alongside this report.
- 8.2. Members will note that there is a risk to the delivery of some savings detailed in paragraph 4.5. If any savings are not realised this will increase the size of the budget shortfall.

## **9. COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE & MONITORING OFFICER**

- 9.1. The Council has a legal duty to ensure its revenue and capital expenditure can be met by its income, inclusive of reserves.

## **10. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT**

- 10.1. There are no direct implications. Any subsequent Human Resources impact arising from the savings programme will be managed in accordance with Council policies and procedures.

## **11. HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT**

- 11.1. There are no direct implications.

## **12. PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT**

- 12.1. There are no direct implications.

**13. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE**

13.1. There are no direct implications from this report, arising from this report, impacts arising from subsequent actions will be identified in future reports.

**14. CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE**

14.1. There are no direct implications.

**15. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT**

15.1. There are no direct implications.

**16. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT**

16.1. None.

**17. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS**

17.1. There are no direct implications.

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**CONTACT OFFICER:**

Name: Antony Baden

Job Title: Group Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer

Contact Number: 01903 737558

**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:**

2023/24 Budget Report to Full Council 01 March 2023

[Report](#)

Financial Prospects 2024/25 to 2028/29 –Policy & Finance Committee 26 October 2023

[Report](#)

Financial Prospects 2024/25 to 2028/29 update – Policy & Finance Committee 8 January 2024

[Report](#)

**Housing & Wellbeing Committee  
General Fund Revenue Budget 2024/25**

Actual 2022-23 £'000	Description	Budget 2023-24 £'000	Budget 2024-25 £'000
<b>Housing &amp; Wellbeing Committee</b>			
<b>Direct Services</b>			
(78)	Arun Lifeline	(7)	22
438	Community Safety/Development	772	781
88	Activities for the Elderly	79	84
2,452	Homelessness & Housing Advice	2,427	2,933
39	Housing Strategy & RSLs	39	42
(584)	Leisure & Culture	(445)	(1,023)
2,559	Revenues & Benefits	2,781	3,311
228	Voluntary Sector	291	287
<b>5,142</b>	<b>Housing &amp; Wellbeing Committee Sub Total:</b>	<b>5,937</b>	<b>6,437</b>
	Salary Inflation adjustment		(72)
	<b>Housing &amp; Wellbeing Committee Sub Total:</b>		<b>6,365</b>
	Savings identified by Financial strategy		(580)
	<b>Committee Total:</b>		<b>5,785</b>

## Housing Revenue Account Budget Summary

	Budget	Budget	Movement
	2023-24	2024-25	2024-25
Description	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b><u>Income</u></b>			
Dwelling Rents	18,345	20,271	(1,926)
Non-Dwellings Rents	479	5250	(46)
Voids	(272)	(405)	133
Write-Offs	(96)	(105)	9
Other Income	764	844	(80)
Interest on Balance	207	284	(77)
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>19,427</b>	<b>21,414</b>	<b>(1,987)</b>
<b><u>Expenditure</u></b>			
Supervision & Management	5,865	6,009	144
Repairs & Maintenance	5,956	6,613	657
Rent, rates, taxes & other charges	186	186	0
Depreciation	5,808	5,969	161
Loan Charges	1,952	2,105	153
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>19,767</b>	<b>20,882</b>	<b>1,115</b>
Asset sale Gain/Loss	0	0	0
<b>(Surplus)/Deficit</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>(532)</b>	<b>(872)</b>
<b><u>Major Repairs Reserve</u></b>			
Balance Brought Forward	(3,884)	(4,386)	
(Surplus)/Deficit	(1,334)	1,481	
<b>Balance Carried Forward</b>	<b>(5,218)</b>	<b>(2,905)</b>	
<b><u>HRA Reserve</u></b>			
Balance Brought Forward		(551)	
(Surplus)/Deficit	340	(532)	
<b>Balance Carried Forward</b>	<b>(1,183)</b>	<b>(1,083)</b>	

**Housing & Wellbeing Committee  
Capital Programme 2024/25**

<b>Actual 2022/23 £'000</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Original Budget 2023/24 £'000</b>	<b>Updated Budget 2023/24 £'000</b>	<b>Budget 2024/25 £'000</b>	<b>Budget 2025/26 £'000</b>	<b>Budget 2026/27 £'000</b>	<b>Budget 2027/28 £'000</b>	<b>Note</b>
409	Sports Centres	0	578	0	0	0	0	1
332	Housing IT	467	420	579	24	0	0	2
2924	Housing Stock Development	0	7,056	6,671	0	0	0	3
3,186	Housing Improvements	2,931	2,931	5,901	5,683	5,516	5,356	4
0	Decarbonisation	3,000	3,000	0	0	0	0	5
0	Sheltered Accommodation	2,600	2,600	2,000	1,400	0	0	6
<b>6,851</b>	<b>Committee Total</b>	<b>8,998</b>	<b>16,585</b>	<b>15,151</b>	<b>7,107</b>	<b>5,516</b>	<b>5,356</b>	

## Notes

1. Scheme complete.
2. Delivery of a new housing management system CX, phase 1 is expected to go live May 2024 with phase 2 expected to be delivered over the following 12 months. The budget takes into consideration the required resources for delivery of phase 2 and includes the reprofiling of £107k of 2023/24 budget.
3. Reprofiling of £6,671m of 2023/24 budget relates to development of garage sites.
4. Programme of improvements to housing stock, consisting of works such as boiler, kitchen, bathroom, and roof replacements. The increase in budget primarily relates to an enhanced roofing programme and an introduction of cavity/loft insulation and air source heat pump programmes.
5. Match funding to support a bid to the Social Housing Decarbonisation fund, which was unsuccessful. Decarbonisation will feature at some point in the future within the improvement programme.
6. £6m overall budget subject to full options appraisal and sound business case on the upgrading/redevelopment of sheltered housing stock.



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<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>Housing &amp; Wellbeing Committee - 25 January 2024</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Budget Monitoring Report to 31 December 2023</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Antony Baden – Group Head of Finance &amp; Section 151 Officer</b>
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	<b>Councillor Carol Birch, Chair of Housing &amp; Wellbeing Committee</b>
<b>WARDS:</b>	<b>All</b>
<b>CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION:</b>	
The Council’s budget supports all the Council’s Objectives.	
<b>DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT:</b>	
Budget monitoring and forecasting are key in ensuring sound financial control and control of spending is in place. It is also a major part in ensuring sound governance arrangements.	
<b>FINANCIAL SUMMARY:</b>	
The report shows the Committee’s Revenue budget, Housing Revenue Account and Capital programme forecast out turn position for 2023/24 as at the end of Quarter 3.	

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1. The purpose of this report is to appraise the Housing & Wellbeing Committee of its forecast outturn against the 2023/24 budgets, which were approved by Full Council at its meeting of 9 March 2023.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1. It is recommended that the Committee notes the content of this report.

**3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

3.1. The report sets out in further detail the Committee’s Revenue, Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Capital programme budget performance projections to the 31 March 2024.

**4. DETAIL**

**Revenue Budget**

4.1. Table 1 below details the 2023/24 forecast revenue budget out turn to the end of Quarter 3 and anticipates an overspend of £158k, which is an adverse movement of £398k against the £240k underspend reported in Quarter 2. The significant change in the forecast is explained in paragraph 4.2 below.

**Table 1**

<b>Housing &amp; Wellbeing Committee</b>					
	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Forecast</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>Movement</b>
	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q2</b>	
<b>Description</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Arun Lifeline	(7)	12	19	19	0
Community Safety / Development	772	638	(135)	(116)	(19)
Activities for the Elderly	79	79	0	0	0
Homelessness & Housing Advice	2,427	2,763	336	336	0
Housing Strategy & RSLs	39	21	(18)	(18)	0
Leisure & Culture	(445)	(820)	(375)	(375)	0
Revenues & Benefits	2,781	3,111	330	(86)	416
Voluntary Sector	291	291	0	0	0
<b>Total Housing &amp; Wellbeing Committee:</b>	<b>5,937</b>	<b>6,095</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>(240)</b>	<b>398</b>

4.2. **Revenue and Benefits** – The Quarter 3 forecast indicates an overspend of £330k, which is an adverse change of £416k from the Quarter 2 forecast. This is due to a net increase in supported accommodation costs.

4.3. Supported housing is the provision of accommodation by an external provider for people who require support, supervision, or care to live as independently as possible in the community. The Council pays the client's rent to the external provider and receives housing benefit subsidy from the Department of Work & Pensions. The amount of subsidy is set by legislation and dependent on various factors, including location and property type. It often does not cover the rent payable, which leads to a funding gap. The gap is referred to as 'subsidy loss' and is not unique to Arun District Council.

## Capital Programme

- 4.4. Table 2 below, details the Committee's 2023/24 forecast capital programme out turn as at Quarter 3. The total capital budget for 2023/24 is £16.585m which includes slippage from the previous year of £8.459m. There have been changes within year of an additional £5.907m attributed to Stock Development resulting in a £13.7m capital programme for this area, though £6.7m has since been reprofiled to future years along with £107k relating to the Civica implementation.

**Table 2**

	Original 2023/24 Budget	Slippage from 2022/23	In Year additions	Other Changes	Revised 2023/24 Budget	Forecast Out Turn 2023/24	Variance	2024/25 Budget	2025/26 Budget	2026/27 Budget
Project	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
ALC Wet Change	0	578	0	0	578	578	0	0	0	0
Housing Improvements	2,931	0	0	0	2,931	2,931	0	5,901	5,683	5,516
Decarbonisation (match funding)	3,000	0	0	0	3,000	0	-3,000	0	0	0
Civica Implementation	467	60	0	-107	420	419	0	579	24	0
Stock Development	0	7,821	5,907	-6,671	7,057	6,288	-769	6,671	0	0
Sheltered Accommodation	2,600	0	0	0	2,600	0	-2,600	2,000	1,400	0
<b>Total Housing &amp; Wellbeing Committee Capital</b>	<b>8,998</b>	<b>8,459</b>	<b>5,907</b>	<b>-6,778</b>	<b>16,585</b>	<b>10,216</b>	<b>-6,369</b>	<b>15,151</b>	<b>7,107</b>	<b>5,516</b>

- 4.5. The ALC Wet Change scheme is now complete.
- 4.6. The programme of housing improvements consists of boiler, kitchen, bathroom and roof replacements, along with cavity/loft insulation and air source heat pumps.
- 4.7. Match funding to support Social Housing Decarbonisation fund (SHDF) funding bid was unsuccessful. Officers are reviewing previous submissions to consider how and whether the information collated might be used for further bids as part of SHDF Wave 3 and the Local Authority Retrofit Fund (2025-2028). The £3m budget will therefore be carried over to 2024/25.
- 4.8. Phase 1 delivery of a new Civica housing management system is expected to go live May 2024 with phase 2 expected to be delivered over the following 12 months. A reprofiling of £107k of 2023/24 budget has been made into future years. A report will be brought before members outlining the detail for phase 2.
- 4.9. The reprofiling of £6.671m of the 2023/24 budget for the Stock Development programme relates to development of garage sites. Additions in year relate to property purchases at the Warwick Nurseries & Boweries (£3.8m) and The Mews, Yapton (£2.1m). Exchange & completion of the former is expected in February 2024 with handover expected May/June 2024.

4.10. Sheltered Accommodation has an overall budget provision of £6 million, which is subject to a full options appraisal and business case on the upgrading and redevelopment of sheltered housing stock. Once undertaken officers will have a clearer understanding of the budget requirement. The 2023/24 budget will likely be carried forward into 2024/25.

4.11. The Capital programme is being reviewed as part of the budget setting process and will take account of progress against the 2023/24 budget. Any changes will be reported to this Committee for approval by Policy & Finance Committee.

### Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

4.12. The Council has an established minimum threshold for the Housing Revenue Account reserve of at least £2 million. There is a statutory requirement for the Housing Revenue Account balance to maintain a positive balance. The balance on the Housing Revenue Account reserve is forecast to fall to £551k by the end of March 2024, which is £632k lower than the original budget target. The forecast outturn position for the HRA is summarized in Table 3 below.

**Table 3**

<b>Housing Revenue Account Q3 Forecast</b>					
	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Forecast</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>Movement</b>
	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q2 to Q3</b>
<b>Description</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
<b><u>Income</u></b>					
Dwelling Rents	18,345	18,452	(107)	(107)	0
Non-Dwellings Rents	479	442	37	17	(20)
Voids	(272)	(384)	112	70	(42)
Write-Offs	(96)	(96)	0	(35)	(35)
Other Income	764	820	(56)	0	56
Interest on Balance	207	330	(123)	(123)	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>19,427</b>	<b>19,564</b>	<b>(137)</b>	<b>(178)</b>	<b>41</b>
<b><u>Expenditure</u></b>					
Supervision & Mgt	5,865	6,310	(445)	(396)	49
Repairs & Maintenance	5,956	6,141	(185)	48	233
Rent, rates, taxes	186	273	(87)	0	87
Depreciation	5,808	5,808	0	0	0
Loan Charges	1,952	2,005	(53)	(111)	(58)
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>19,767</b>	<b>20,536</b>	<b>(769)</b>	<b>(459)</b>	<b>310</b>

Asset sale Gain/Loss	0	0	0	0	0
<b>(Surplus)/Deficit</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>972</b>	<b>632</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>(351)</b>
<b><u>Major Repairs Reserve</u></b>					
Balance B/Fwd	(3,884)	(3,884)			
(Surplus)/Deficit	(1,334)	(502)	832	832	0
<b>Balance C/Fwd</b>	<b>(5,218)</b>	<b>(4,386)</b>	<b>832</b>	<b>832</b>	<b>0</b>
<b><u>HRA Reserve</u></b>					
Balance B/Fwd	(1,523)	(1,523)			
(Surplus)/Deficit	340	972	632	281	(351)
<b>Balance C/Fwd</b>	<b>(1,183)</b>	<b>(551)</b>	<b>632</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>(351)</b>

### Explanation of main variances

- 4.13. Gross dwelling rents are forecast to be £107k favourable. When a property becomes vacant, the rent charged to a new tenant is increased to the formula rent which generates a favourable forecast. This is offset however, by the in-year increase in void properties. Whilst improvements have been made in void turnaround times, these improvements are impacted by a significant number of long-term void properties which require broader considerations for disposal and/or regeneration/development. Several new build properties have also become available at Water Meadows Way and have contributed to a more favourable position.
- 4.14. There has also been an increased focus on income recovery, and this is expected to see an improvement of up to 1% in rental income by April 2024.
- 4.15. Supervision and Management are forecast to be £445k overspent. The majority of this is the extra cost of engaging agency staff although this number has been progressively reducing. There are now six agency staff remaining and steps are being taken to reduce this figure further in 2024-25.
- 4.16. Repairs and Maintenance shows an adverse forecast of £185K, representing a worsening position of £233K compared to the Quarter 2 forecast. This is due to increased demand on the service and inflationary increases in contractor prices. Where investment is undertaken on increased capital spending for planned maintenance this will see reduced responsive repair costs going forwards.



- 4.17. Whilst the establishment of a Dynamic Purchasing System 'DPS Framework' will impact positively on the cost of certain types of repairs and maintenance work, the number of contractors signed up to each category is still building, which has led to delays in utilisation and impact. Officers will continue to exercise close cost control and monitoring to year-end with the intention of improving the year end position.
- 4.18. The Repairs and Maintenance budget also includes compliance costs. Increased investment (roof's £935K, windows and doors £230K and rewiring and installations £173K) and compliance expenditure is broadly offset by reduced expenditure in respect of cyclical (external) decorations, provision for decarbonisation surveys and minor works (due in part to delays resulting from a lack of tenders through DPS).
- 4.19. Rent, rates, taxes & other charges are forecast to overspend by £87k, mainly due to council tax payments on void properties. Whilst improvements have been made in void turnaround times, these improvements are impacted by a significant number of long-term void properties, which require broader considerations for disposal and/or regeneration/development.
- 4.20. Loan Charges are forecast to underspend by £58k as less borrowing is required in 2023/24, (see paragraphs 4.7 and 4.10).

#### **Actions to Improve Forecast**

- 4.21. Increased capital spending will reduce responsive repair costs going forward. Additionally, officers are implementing and maintaining close cost control and monitoring, with the escalation of decision-making in respect of expenditure in all but contracted works and health & safety repairs. Post works inspections have now commenced as a result of having a full complement of Technical Officers. Whilst this will not necessarily reduce costs, it will ensure effective practice and value for money.
- 4.22. Action has been taken to improve void turnaround times and we continue to see a reduction in the number of voids which can be made available to re-let. This should result in improved income and reduced void expenditure for year-end outturn.
- 4.23. Managers have undertaken an initial exercise in workstream realignment which will deliver efficiencies by ensuring that the staffing establishment within Housing Services is able to meet current strategic and operational challenges and is future-proofed to address increased external challenges through the changing legislative (building safety) and regulatory landscape. This work will ultimately help the service to move away from its previous reliance on agency staff for specialist expertise and skills gaps.
- 4.24. A rent arrears workshop has been arranged for 1 February 2024 to review working practices and to implement improved processes.

## 5. CONSULTATION

5.1. Consultation with other stakeholders is not required for this report.

## 6. OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

6.1. There are no alternative options to this report.

## 7. COMMENTS BY THE INTERIM GROUP HEAD OF FINANCE/SECTION 151 OFFICER

7.1. It is sound governance to monitor spending against budget during the financial year. Such control allows the Council to take prompt corrective action if spending or income significantly varies from the approved budgets.

7.2. The Housing Revenue Account balance projection remains a significant concern and is forecast to fall to £551k by the end of 2023/24. Further reports will continue to be presented to future Housing & Wellbeing Committees.

## 8. RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS - HRA

8.1.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
Agency costs are not minimised	3	4	CMT to review remaining agency contracts monthly
Severe weather increases responsive repair costs	4	4	Continue planned programme of roof replacements and triage roof repair work
Damp and mould costs increase	4	3	Undertake inspections and pro-active repairs
DPS may not deliver any in year savings	4	2	The forecast does not include savings from the DPS except for voids, where the contract has already been awarded
The savings identified are not delivered	3	4	CMT to review savings and income projections monthly

## **9. COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE & MONITORING OFFICER**

9.1. The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 requires the Council to maintain a Housing Revenue Account that is separate from its General Fund account. The amounts to be credited or debited to the Housing Revenue Account can only be in respect of items detailed in the Act or covered by regulations issued by the Secretary of State. Budgets must be prepared each year for the Housing Revenue Account which will avoid a debit balance on the account, and action must be taken if in any year it appears a debit balance may arise.

## **10. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT**

10.1. None.

## **11. HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT**

11.1. None.

## **12. PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT**

12.1. None.

## **13. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE**

13.1. None.

## **14. CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE**

14.1. None.

## **15. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT**

15.1. None.

## **16. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT**

16.1. None.

## **17. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS**

17.1. None.

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### **CONTACT OFFICER:**

Name: Antony Baden

Job Title: Group Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer

Contact Number: 01903 737558

**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:**

Budget Book 2023/24

Minute 779, Full Council 9 March 2023 – Arun District Council budget 2023/24

[Minutes of Full Council – 9 March 2023](#)

Quarter 2 Budget Monitoring Report, Environment Committee, 21 November 2023,  
Minute 380.

[Quarter 2 Budget Monitoring Report – Environment Committee – 21 November 2023](#)

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## Arun District Council

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>Housing &amp; Wellbeing Committee - 25 January 2024</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2024/2025 (Working Age)</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Antony Baden, Group Head of Finance &amp; Section 151 Officer</b>
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	<b>Cllr Birch</b>
<b>WARDS:</b>	<b>All</b>
<p>This report provides members with an update on the Working Age Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS) for April 2023– March 2024 (Year 11) and the options for consideration for the 2024/25 LCTRS. (Year 12).</p>	
<p><b>DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT:</b> Improving the wellbeing of Arun residents.</p>	

### **FINANCIAL SUMMARY:**

The proposal for 2024/25 is to retain the existing scheme for working age customers, which is an income banded scheme. The scheme allows that the income banding widths can be increased by the annual rate of CPI in September. Therefore, it is proposed that the bandings are increased by the rate of September 2023 CPI (6.7%). This will ensure that the most vulnerable people are not disadvantaged by the impact of inflation.

The proposed changes will benefit those Arun households who are most vulnerable to financial hardship thus helping to alleviate poverty.

In respect of the 2024/25 scheme the Council will maintain the Hardship Fund at £100,000 for qualifying households.

### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1. To present the options to amend the current Local Council Reduction Scheme for 2024/25.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1. The Housing and Wellbeing Committee is asked to approve:

- The increase in the income banding widths of the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme in line with the Consumer Prices Index (Year 12). Members are asked to approve from 1 April 2024.

## **3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

3.1 Each year the Council is required to review its Council Tax Reduction Scheme in accordance with the requirements of the schedule 1A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and to either maintain the scheme or replace it. This report outlines the proposed changes to the scheme and potential impact.

## **4. DETAIL**

4.1 The Council Tax Reduction (CTR) is a system for low-income households that helps to pay Council Tax. A resident may get Council Tax Reduction if they pay Council Tax, and their income and capital (savings and investments) are below a certain level.

4.2 People of pensionable age are assessed under national rules which the council cannot change. They continue to have their Council Tax Reduction worked out using the prescribed scheme. The council decides on the rules for working aged people. There are currently around 4,600 working age households in the district who claim CTR.

4.3 In 2019 the Council introduced a new type of CTR scheme based on income brackets for our working age customers.

4.4 Some of the reasons for doing this were:

- To make the scheme clearer, and easier to understand.
- To work better alongside Universal Credit (UC), because the previous CTR scheme did not align well with UC.
- To make it clearer how much Council Tax a resident still needs to pay if they are claiming CTR.
- To reduce the number of changes to a resident's Council Tax bill because of their UC amount changing each month.

4.5 It is estimated that in the current 2023-24 year, the working age part of the CTR scheme will cost approximately £4.8m based on current numbers of claims.

4.6 The proposed bandings for 2024/25 are set out in the table below and have been increased by 6.7% in line with the September 2023 Consumer Price Inflation rate. Bandings have been rounded to nearest £5.

Weekly income	Income band	% Council Tax Reduction
£0 to £215.99	A	90%
£216 to £274.99	B	70%
£275 to £339.99	C	50%
£340 to £398.99	D	30%
£399 to £462.99	E	10%

## 5. CONSULTATION

5.1. The document has been discussed with the Vice-Chair of Policy & Finance Committee.

## 6. OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

6.1. There are two options to be considered for 2024/25 (Year 12).

- a) Option 1. Retain the current income banded scheme but not increase for inflation. This has the disadvantage that the most vulnerable residents in our district would be adversely affected, (income increasing, Council Tax Reduction decreasing).

- b) Option 2. Retain the current scheme but allow for an increase in the Income banding widths in line with September 2023 CPI.

Option 2 is the preferred option as it would align the Council with the Chancellor's autumn statement when he announced that state working age benefits such as Universal Credit would increase by 6.7% along with an increase in the minimum wage from April 2024

## **7. COMMENTS BY THE GROUP HEAD OF FINANCE AND SECTION 151 OFFICER**

- 7.1. The Financial impact of changing the bands is predicted to be a cost of up to £130k a year awarded in additional council tax reductions based on the current take up of 4,600 households. This has been built in to the 2024/25 budget setting assumptions.

## **8. RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

- 8.1. There is a risk that the new scheme will increase costs to the Council. Work is currently being undertaken to assess the potential impact of this.

## **9. COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE & MONITORING OFFICER**

- 9.1. Under the Local Government Finance Act 1992, every billing authority in England is required to make a Council Tax Reduction Scheme.
- 9.2. Each financial year every billing authority in England is required to consider whether to revise or replace its Scheme.

## **10. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT**

- 10.1. There are no impacts.

## **11. HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT**

- 11.1. There are no impacts.

## **12. PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT**

- 12.1. There are no impacts.

## **13. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE**

- 13.1. See appendix A.

## **14. CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE**

- 14.1. There are no impacts.

## **15. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT**

- 15.1. There are no impacts.

**16. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT**

16.1. There are no impacts.

**17. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS**

17.1. There are no specific FOI or Data Protection implications.

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**CONTACT OFFICER:**

Name: Andrew Dale  
Job Title: Revenues & Benefits Manager  
Contact Number: 01903 737630

**BACKGROUND:**

Local Government Finance Act 1992.

[Local Government Finance Act 1992 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](http://legislation.gov.uk)



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## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

<b>Name of activity:</b>	Council Tax Reduction Scheme	<b>Date Completed:</b>	January 2024
<b>Directorate / Division responsible for activity:</b>	<b>Finance/Revenues &amp; Benefits</b>	<b>Lead Officer:</b>	Andrew Dale
<b>Existing Activity</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>New / Proposed Activity</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<b>Changing / Updated Activity</b>	<b>X</b>

### What are the aims / main purposes of the activity?

The Council proposes to amend the Council Tax Reduction (CTRS) scheme from April 2023.

The scheme continues to provide financial assistance to council taxpayers who have low incomes.

The scheme allows for the bandings within the scheme to be increased year by year by the rate of CPI in the prior September. Changes to the CTRS scheme form part of the Council's overall strategy in balancing the budget.

Persons who are of state pension age (currently a minimum 65 years or greater) are protected under the scheme in that the calculation of the support they are to receive has been set by Central Government.

For working age applicants however, the support they receive is to be determined by the local authority.

This equality impact assessment looks at the option being considered by the Council.

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The proposals for 2024/25 are:

- Increase the bandings within the existing scheme:

Income (net)	LCTRS Banding	% award of net liability
£0-£215.99	A	90%
£216.00-£274.99	B	70%
£275.00-£339.99	C	50%
£340.00-£398.99	D	30%
£399.00-£462.99	E	10%

These changes will apply from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024

Central Government has not been prescriptive in how an authority should protect vulnerable groups, but points to the Council's existing responsibilities including the Child Poverty Act 2010, the Disabled Person Act 1986 and the Housing Act 1996 as well as the public sector equality duty in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

**The Council will continue to protect the support received by all persons in receipt of war pensions and war disablement pensions.**

**What are the main actions and processes involved?**

The operation of the scheme, notwithstanding the changes outlined above, will involve identical processes and procedures as currently in place. All persons within the Council's area who have a low income may apply for support and assistance with their Council Tax.

The proposed changes to the existing CTRS scheme lines with the corporate objectives in that it meets, as far as possible, equality and sustainability.

The reduction scheme will still assist the local economy and also ensure, as far as possible within the constraints on a reduced budget, that persons on a low income will be able to meet their Council Tax liability.

#### **Who is intended to benefit & who are the main stakeholders?**

The main beneficiaries of the scheme are both pension age and working age applicants who have a low income and who are liable to pay Council Tax to the District Council.

The main outcomes for each stakeholder group are as follows.

##### **Pension Age Applicants**

- That all pensioners receive the level of support required by regulations set by Central Government (Council Tax Reduction Scheme (Prescribed Requirements) Regulations 2012);
- That all pensioner applicants or existing working age applicants who rise to pension age are able to receive CTRS in line with the regulations; and
- That all pensioner applicants continue to receive the correct level of support at all times.

##### **Working Age Applicants**

- That all working age applicants are still able to receive CTRS but they would be assessed under the new rules; and
- That all working age applicants continue to receive the correct level of reduction at all times.

#### **Have you already consulted on / researched the activity?**

**Impact on people with a protected characteristic** (What is the potential impact of the activity? Are the impacts high, medium or low?)

Protected characteristics / groups	Is there an impact (Yes / No)	If Yes, what is it and identify whether it is positive or negative
<b>Age</b> (older / younger people, children)	Yes	<p><u>Negative</u></p> <p>The proposed changes may impact negatively on some working age CTRS claimants. Within the scope of the scheme there is a Discretionary Council Tax Reduction Hardship policy to enable us to consider cases of hardship which will help mitigate negative impacts.</p> <p>Pensioners will <b>not</b> see any reduction in the support paid</p>
<b>Disability</b> (people with physical / sensory impairment or mental disability)	Yes	<p><u>Negative</u></p> <p>The proposed changes may impact negatively on some disabled working age CTRS claimants. The proposed scheme will still disregard payments of Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Allowance and Mobility Allowance. Within the scope of the scheme there is a Discretionary Council Tax Reduction Hardship policy to enable us to consider cases of hardship which will help mitigate negative impacts.</p> <p>However some disabled working age claimants may see an increase in support based on their income.</p>
<b>Gender reassignment</b> (the process of transitioning from one gender to another.)	No	The reduction scheme changes have no affect on the support received by persons who have undergone gender reassignment
<b>Marriage &amp; civil partnership</b> (Marriage is defined as a 'union between a man and a woman'. Civil partnerships are legally recognized for same-sex couples)	No	The reduction scheme changes have no affect on the support received by persons who are married or in a civil partnership.
<b>Pregnancy &amp; maternity</b> (Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant & maternity refers to the period after the birth)	No	The reduction scheme changes have no affect on the support received by persons who are pregnant or on maternity
<b>Race</b> (ethnicity, colour, nationality or	No	The reduction scheme changes have no affect on the support received by persons due to their

national origins & including gypsies, travellers, refugees & asylum seekers)		race or ethnicity
<b>Religion &amp; belief</b> (religious faith or other group with a recognised belief system)	No	The reduction scheme changes have no affect on the support received by persons due to their religion or belief system
<b>Sex</b> (male / female)	No	The reduction scheme changes have no affect on the support received by persons due to their gender.
<b>Sexual orientation</b> (lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual)	No	The reduction scheme changes have no affect on the support received by persons, irrespective of their sexual orientation.
Whilst <b>Socio economic</b> disadvantage that people may face is not a protected characteristic; the potential impact on this group should be also considered	Yes	Council Tax Reduction is an income banded scheme available to households on low incomes. Therefore all recipients would be considered to be at a socio-economic disadvantage, however within the scope of the scheme there is a Discretionary Council Tax Reduction policy to enable us to consider cases of hardship which will help mitigate negative impacts.

What evidence has been used to assess the likely impacts?
<p>Evidence has been gathered from the following sources;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extensive computer modelling.</li> </ul>

Decision following initial assessment			
<b>Continue with existing or introduce new / planned activity</b>		<b>Amend activity based on identified actions</b>	



Impact identified	Action required	Lead Officer	Deadline
UC claimants who fail to inform the DWP that they also wish to claim CTRS may well slip through the net as we will not be aware unless we receive notification from the DWP. Cases of this nature won't normally be backdated and so the applicant may seek help for the arrears from Citizens Advice.	Comprehensive communications and FAQs to ensure that customers have the right information before claiming UC such as the need for them to tell DWP that they want to claim CTRS as well.  DWP staff to ask customers the right questions at DWP interviews.	AD/KS	31.03.24

Monitoring & Review	
<b>Date of last review or Impact Assessment:</b>	
<b>Date of next 12 month review:</b>	15.01.25
<b>Date of next 3 year Impact Assessment (from the date of this EIA):</b>	15.01.27

<b>Date EIA completed:15.01.24</b>	Andrew Dale
<b>Signed by Person Completing:</b>	A Dale

## Arun District Council

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>Housing &amp; Wellbeing Committee</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Single Homeless Accommodation Programme update</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Jayne Knight, Housing Options Manager</b>
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	<i>Councillor Carol Birch – Chair of Housing and Wellbeing Committee</i>
<b>WARDS:</b>	<b>All</b>
<b>CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION:</b>	
<p>Provide a mixed housing economy within the district for all, regardless of age or circumstances, where different types of homes are available, and people can choose to rent or buy.</p> <p>Support those in our community that most need help, providing a safety net where necessary and working with people and organisations to meet different needs.</p> <p>Support households with complex needs to secure suitable accommodation.</p>	
<b>DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT:</b>	
<p>The objective of SHAP is to increase the supply of high-quality, longer-term accommodation with accompanying support to address gaps in homelessness pathway provision.</p> <p>The current homelessness strategy identifies the need to increase housing supply across all tenures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To supply the housing that Arun residents need</li> <li>• To maximise Homes England grant funding to ADC</li> <li>• To make housing affordable and sustainable</li> <li>• To work in partnership with Housing Associations to maximise delivery of affordable housing.</li> </ul> <p>One of the main objectives of this Housing &amp; Homelessness strategy is to create sustainable communities to meet the needs of all residents. We are keen to support vulnerable people to live a full and independent life with the same choices, opportunities, and responsibilities as the rest of the community.</p>	
<b>FINANCIAL SUMMARY:</b>	
<p>Schemes had to be ready to occupy by March 2025, which was a short timescale, especially for building new properties.</p>	

We had identified potential schemes for submission within existing stock that could be converted for this project, but the financial appraisals for these potential bids were carried out and found to result in a negative cash flow for every year and this would have resulted in the council receiving no income or being unable to recover its initial investment.

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The Purpose of this report is for information only. We were unable to proceed with the SHAP bid because the financial modelling for the scheme identified made it financially unviable.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 This report is only for the purpose of updating the committee.

## **3.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 3.1 Several options were explored, when looking at a Bid for SHAP.
- 3.2 Several properties were considered for purchase but had to be discounted, due to valuations not meeting the vendors desired market price.
- 3.3 Redevelopment of existing stock was appraised and discounted due to issues with financial modelling.

## **4.0 DETAIL**

- 4.1 Several models of accommodation were considered for SHAP. The purchase of several different properties was considered and then discarded as the financial modelling didn't work for those identified.
- 4.2 Two areas of land owned by ADC, were considered to place modular housing on, but DLUHC were not happy to support these plans, due to the length of time involved in the planning process.
- 4.3 The final potential project identified was the conversion or remodelling of 29 New Road. 29 New Road is HRA owned temporary accommodation currently used as 7 rooms with shared bathrooms and kitchens.
- 4.4 Planning was submitted to remodel the accommodation with an extension to the rear, to produce 5 self-contained units of SHAP accommodation.

- 4.5 The finance team appraised the financial models suggested for this scheme, but unfortunately with the loss of rents going from 7 to 5 units and the cost of borrowing being high, this resulted in negative cashflow every year and therefore the council would not have received any return on or recover its initial investment.
- 4.6 The planning application also received objections from Environmental Health, The Environment Agency, Private sector housing and Town Council/Planning.
- 4.7 On the basis of the above we were unable to proceed with a SHAP bid.

## **5.0 CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 N/A report for noting only.

## **6.0 OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

- 6.1 The timing of the financial decision, coupled with the tight timescales of the bidding process impacted our ability to source alternative options within the bid window which closed Mid- November.
- 6.2 Housing Options are reviewing alternative options to procure supported accommodation for single homeless going forwards.

## **7.0 COMMENTS BY THE GROUP HEAD OF FINANCE AND SECTION 151 OFFICER**

- 7.1 A surplus isn't generated until after year 40, which would be after the loan is fully repaid. The net present value is negative (-£157k) over the 40-year period. The net present value takes into account the time value of money.

## **8.0 RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

- 8.1 N/A for information, report for noting only.

## **9.0 COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE & MONITORING OFFICER**

- 9.1 This report is for information only and there are no legal or governance implications

## **10.0 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT**

- 10.1 N/A for information, report for noting only.

## **11.0 HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT**

11.1 N/A for information, report for noting only.

## **12.0 PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT**

12.1 N/A for information, report for noting only.

## **13.0 EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE**

13.1 As the bid did not progress, no persons have been discriminated against under the Equality Act. An EIA is not required.

13.2 The scheme may have brought social value by providing a supported accommodation pathway for applicants who are homeless, but not owed a statutory duty.

13.3 There are existing alternative pathways available, which rough sleepers can be referred to, within the Arun District.

13.4 Arun District Council will continue to explore alternative options to increase supported pathways, by working with our partners within the sector.

## **14.0 CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE**

14.1 N/A for information, report for noting only.

## **15.0 CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT**

15.1 N/A for information, report for noting only.

## **16.0 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT**

16.1 N/A for information, report for noting only.

## **17.0 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS**

17.1 N/A for information, report for noting only.

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### **CONTACT OFFICER:**

**Name:** Jayne Knight  
**Job Title:** Housing Options Manager  
**Contact Number:** 01903 737708

**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:**

Appendix 1 – Financial Feasibility Assessment



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# Arun District Council

## Board Approval Report

<b>Scheme name</b>	New Roadv3 Existing rents incl-SR- 5x1b-Feasibility	<b>Date</b>	2023/10/24
<b>Address</b>	29 New Road - Littlehampton - WEST SUSSEX - BN17 5AX	<b>Appraisal by</b>	Gillian Taylor
<b>Funding year</b>	2024/25	<b>Site area</b>	◆
<b>Administrative Area</b>	Arun	<b>Version</b>	1
<b>Project/File ref</b>		<b>Date last saved</b>	2023/10/24 by Gillian Taylor
<b>Units</b>	5	<b>Saved file name</b>	_1 Feasibility_SHAP Feasibilities\New Rdv3 Existing-SR-5x1b-Feasibility

## Financial Summary

Costs	Scheme	Cost per Unit	Per M <sup>2</sup>	Per ft <sup>2</sup> *
<b>Acquisition</b>				
<b>Works</b>	478,000	95,600	2,584	240
<b>Fees</b>	100,000	20,000	541	50
<b>Other costs</b>				
<b>Interest</b>	916	183	5	0
<b>Total scheme costs</b>	<b>578,916</b>	<b>115,783</b>	<b>3,129</b>	<b>291</b>
<b>Long term receipts</b>				
<b>Shared ownership sales</b>				
<b>Subsidy</b>	320,000	64,000	1,730	161
<b>Capital contribution</b>	0			
<b>Net rent in first year</b>	7,104	1,421	38	4
<b>Loan adjustment</b>				
<b>Long term loan</b>	258,916	51,783	1,400	130
<b>Repaid in year</b>	40			
<b>Gross rent yield (over TSC)</b>	4.40%			
<b>Sales receipts</b>				
<b>Net present value</b>	-157,461			
<b>Internal rate of return</b>	0.20%			

\*Conversion rate of 10.7639 ft<sup>2</sup> per M<sup>2</sup>

## Financial performance

	Social Rent
<b>Peak loan</b>	258,916
<b>Year of peak loan</b>	1
<b>Repayment year</b>	40
<b>Net present value</b>	-157,461
<b>Internal rate of return</b>	0.20%
<b>Acquisition</b>	0
<b>Works</b>	478,000
<b>Fees</b>	100,000
<b>Other costs</b>	
<b>Interest</b>	916
<b>Total costs</b>	<b>578,916</b>
<b>Subsidy</b>	320,000
<b>Sales</b>	
<b>Net cost</b>	258,916
<b>Shared ownership receipts</b>	
<b>Number units</b>	5
<b>Property value</b>	615,000
<b>Year surplus generated</b>	40
<b>Asset cover when scheme comes into management</b>	237.53%
<b>Year interest cover achieved</b>	

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## Arun District Council

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>Housing &amp; Well Being Committee</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Update on Allocations policy and addendum with rural lettings policy</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Jayne Knight, Housing Options Manager</b>
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	<i>Councillor Carol Birch – Chair of Housing and Wellbeing Committee</i>
<b>WARDS:</b>	<b>All</b>
<b>CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION:</b>	
<p>The Allocations Policy supports the Council’s objective of delivering the right homes in the right places by supporting those in our community that most need help, providing a safety net where necessary and working with people and organizations to meet different needs.</p> <p>The addendum, Rural Lettings Policy also meets this criterion.</p>	
<b>DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT:</b>	
<p>All Local Authorities are required by law to have an up-to-date Allocation Policy which sets out how housing applications are assessed, and how social housing vacancies are allocated. The Rural Lettings Policy clarifies out how additional priority is applied to rural communities.</p>	
<b>FINANCIAL SUMMARY:</b>	
None	

### 1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To agree an addendum to the Allocations policy adopted at Housing & Wellbeing Committee June 2023, to incorporate the Rural Lettings Policy.
- 1.2 To update members on the delay to implement the Allocations policy adopted at Housing and Wellbeing Committee in June 2023

### 2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To adopt the Rural Lettings Policy which sets out the procedure for letting properties advertised on our Choice Based Lettings scheme, which are located in the villages and parishes of the district where additional local connection

criteria are applied, giving priority to current residents or members of their families.

2.2 (a) To note that the implementation of the Allocations policy adopted at the Housing and Wellbeing Committee in June 2023 has been delayed alongside the implementation of the Abrisas software (part of the CIVICA project and

(b) To agree that the new Allocations Policy takes effect on the implementation of the Arbitras Software.

### **3.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

3.1 Demand for properties in rural communities outstrips supply. To protect communities in the rural villages and parishes within Arun, a Rural Lettings Policy is required to ensure that the correct households are prioritised for housing via Arun's Choice Based Lettings Scheme.

3.2 The implementation of the new Allocations policy is delayed due to delays with the Abrisas project. The implementation of Abrisas will require re-registration of all the applicants on the housing register on the QL system under the new policy. Once the Abrisas system is operational the re-registration process will commence under the new Allocations policy. The new software is expected to be operational by June 2024.

### **4.0 DETAIL**

4.1 Within the Arun District the areas defined as rural parishes are defined in appendix 1.

4.2 The parish local connection criteria are one of the following.

- Applicants who have lived in the parish for at least 2 years.
- Applicants who have previously lived in the parish for 3 years out of the last 5.
- Applicants with close relatives, generally defined as parents, adult children, and siblings who have lived continuously in the parish for 5 years.
- Persons who have permanent full-time employment or an offer of permanent employment which provided an important service to the local community and who need to live locally to carry out their duties.
- Where there are no bids from applicants who meet the above criteria, other applicants may be considered for the property.

4.3 This policy ensures that 100% of all vacancies (including First time lettings of new build homes will be allocated to applicants who have a connection to a rural parish, as outlined above.

- 4.4 The above included within the Allocations Policy but was left out of the revised policy by mistake. therefore, an addendum had been created to cover the Rural lettings criteria.
- 4.5 The Allocations policy adopted at Housing and Wellbeing committee in June 2023, will be implemented with the new Abritas software. The implementation of Abritas has been delayed due to issues identified during the testing process which required changes to be made, for the system to be satisfactory for our needs.
- 4.6 The new policy requires changes that can only be implemented in Civica. Each applicant on the current housing register will be invited to re-apply to the new system and their application will be assessed under the new Allocations policy. This is going to be a time-consuming process, with over 2100 applicants on the housing register, therefore we have not implemented the new policy on the old system. In the meantime, all applications are still being processed under the old Allocation Policy.
- 4.7 The re-registration process may see a potential reduction in the number of applications to the new system. There may be current applications who do not wish to re-apply under the new system and policy. The re-registration process may require additional short term temporary resource to ensure the work is completed within the required timeframe.
- 4.8 We will also need to consider that not all applicants will have the ability to apply online or carry out the re-registration process themselves.
- 4.9 We intend to run drop- in sessions at the offices where officers will be available to assist applicants.

## **5.0 CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 None required.

## **6.0 OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

- 6.1 To approve the Rural Lettings Policy, protecting current residents and family members of rural parishes, giving them preferential allocation of available housing stock within the rural community.
- 6.2 To not adopt the Rural Lettings Policy therefore not applying additional preference to households or their families within rural communities.



## **7.0 COMMENTS BY THE GROUP HEAD OF FINANCE AND SECTION 151 OFFICER**

7.1 This is an update report with one addendum but there are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

## **8.0 RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

8.1 None

## **9.0 COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE & MONITORING OFFICER**

9.1 Committee is asked to agree an addendum to the Allocations policy adopted at Housing and Wellbeing Committee June 2023, to incorporate the Rural Lettings Policy which was left out by mistake. There are no legal or governance implications.

9.2 Committee is also asked to note the reasons for the delay to implement the Allocations policy adopted at Housing and Wellbeing Committee in June 2023 and to agree that the implementation of the policy be delayed until the new software is in place. This decision is important in clarifying that though there is a new policy the start date of the policy is to be coterminous with the implementation of the Arbitras Software.

## **10.0 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT**

10.1 None identified.

## **11.0 HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT**

11.1 None identified.

## **12.0 PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT**

12.1 The Rural lettings Policy maintains local communities, giving preference to households already resident or their families. The preference gives the opportunity to keep properties within the existing community, or the extended community.

## **13.0 EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE**

13.1 This policy will give wider benefit and added social value to the local communities identified by the Rural Gazetteer in the Rural Lettings policy.

#### **14.0 CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE**

14.1 None identified.

#### **15.0 CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT**

15.1 None identified.

#### **16.0 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT**

16.1 None identified.

#### **17.0 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS**

17.1 None identified.

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#### **CONTACT OFFICER:**

**Name:** Jayne Knight  
**Job Title:** Housing Options Manager  
**Contact Number:** 01903 737708

#### **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:**

Appendix 1 – Rural Lettings Policy

Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment

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## **Arun District Council Policy for Lettings in Rural Parishes (as defined by the Rural Gazetteer 2002)**

To sustain and support rural communities, 100% of all vacancies (including first time lettings of new build homes) in the following rural parishes (as defined by the Rural Gazetteer 2002) will be allocated to applicants who have a substantial local connection with the parish:

Arundel, Findon, Clapham, Houghton, Patching, Slindon, Madehurst, Walberton, Fontwell, Burpham, Wepham, Warningcamp, Lyminster and Crossbush, South Stoke, Climping and Ford.

This will include households from the gypsy and traveller community who have established a connection with the Parish by virtue of resorting to the Parish in accordance with the Parish local connection criteria.

The Parish local connection criteria are one of the following:

- Applicants who have lived in the parish for at least 2 years.
- Applicants who have previously lived in the parish for 3 years out of the last 5.
- Applicants with close relatives generally defined as parents, adult children and siblings who have lived continuously in the parish for 5 years.
- People who have permanent full-time employment or an offer of permanent employment which provides an important service to the local community and who need to live locally to carry out their duties.

Where there are no bids from applicants with a local connection to the rural parish, other applicants may be considered for the property.

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## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

<b>Name of activity:</b>	Allocations Policy 2024	<b>Date Completed:</b>	2 January 2024		
<b>Directorate / Division responsible for activity:</b>	<b>Environment and Communities</b>	<b>Lead Officer:</b>	Jayne Knight		
<b>Existing Activity</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>New / Proposed Activity</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Changing / Updated Activity</b>	<b>N</b>

### What are the aims / main purposes of the activity?

The Allocations Policy sets out the priorities and procedures for the allocation of social housing in the Arun District. It applies to applicants joining the housing register for the first time and current Arun District Council (ADC) or Registered Provider tenants wanting to transfer.

ADC is committed to the principles of Choice Based Lettings, enabling people to make well-informed decisions about their housing options. Registered applicants can bid for properties suitable for their housing needs and in their chosen location. Choice helps to improve tenancy and community sustainment and encourage residents to have a stake in their community.

### What are the main actions and processes involved?

- Fulfil our obligations in S167 of the Housing Act 1996 to allocate in accordance with an Allocations Policy
- Use the additional qualifying criteria discretion provided by the Localism Act 2011 in deciding who will allowed to register for social housing.
- Meet the requirements of Part VI Housing Act 1996 (as amended); the Localism Act 2011; and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 by giving reasonable, but not always overriding, preference to applicants in greatest need.
- Achieve the requirements of the Regulator of Social Housing's Tenancy Standard.
- Deliver the ADC Tenancy Strategy, Housing Strategy and Homelessness Strategy



- Deliver our Domestic Abuse Policy and those of our Registered Provider partners.
- Meet the requirements of the Government's Statutory Guidance for allocations, homelessness, and improving access for members of the Armed Forces

### Who is intended to benefit & who are the main stakeholders?

To meet our Corporate Plan objectives and to create sustainable communities having regard for local circumstance.

Allocate housing fairly and consistently, and carefully and to ensure that our decisions are transparent.

Removing barriers to accessing social housing for homeless households.

Meeting the emergency and long-term housing needs of people fleeing domestic abuse and violence.

Meeting the housing needs of people leaving care.

Improving access to suitable homes for people with disabilities

Allocating housing in a way which complements the ADC Tenancy and Lettings Policy and the tenancy policies of our Registered Provider partners.

Ensuring vulnerable households can navigate the allocations process by providing clear and easy to understand information.

Enabling applicants to express choice in selecting their accommodation wherever possible.

Ensuring the Housing Register better reflects housing need than housing demand through effective management of the register.

Improving the way, the Council and our Registered Provider partners work together to ensure the effective allocation of social housing.

Providing appropriate advice to applicants ADC is unable to house, including accurate and timely referrals to other agencies.

### Key stakeholders

**Internal:** Arun Housing Services, Community Safety and Wellbeing, Revenue and Benefits, Planning, Building Control, Legal

**External:** Registered Social landlords, Worthing Homes, Vivid, Sage, Sanctuary Housing, Southern Housing, Hyde, Places for People, Clarion, Hastoe, Stonewater, Saxon Weald Guinness Homes. Turning Tides, Stonepillow, West Sussex County Council, Community Land Trusts, Worth Services, Safe in Sussex, My Sisters House, Bognor Housing Trust.

**Have you already consulted on / researched the activity?**

The Allocations Policy 2024 was originally brought to the Housing and Wellbeing Committee in December 2021 where it was agreed.

Amendments were subsequently agreed in June 2023 and the Rural Lettings Policy is being submitted as an appendix for approval at Housing and Wellbeing committee January 2024

**Impact on people with a protected characteristic (What is the potential impact of the activity? Are the impacts high, medium or low?)**

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Protected characteristics / groups	Is there an impact (Yes / No)	If Yes, what is it and identify whether it is positive or negative
<b>Age</b> (older / younger people, children)	Yes positive	<p>The Allocations Policy gives additional preference to young people leaving care.</p> <p>The Allocations Policy give additional banding to households wishing to foster or adopt.</p> <p>The Allocations Policy gives preference to older people over 60 where they have no other identified, alternative housing need.</p> <p>The Allocations Policy gives preference to older persons without requiring the Local Connection criteria or housing need, to join the housing register for sheltered accommodation.</p>

<p><b>Disability</b> (people with physical / sensory impairment or mental disability)</p>	<p>Yes positive</p>	<p>There are three bands of differing priority given to people who require different accommodation due the impact their current accommodation has on their condition.</p> <p>We also give the highest priority to applicants in severe housing need for exceptional circumstances, such as disabilities or medical needs.</p>
<p><b>Gender reassignment</b> (the process of transitioning from one gender to another.)</p>	<p>Yes positive</p>	<p>There are medical bands of differing priority which reflect the impact a person's housing can have on their wellbeing.</p> <p>We also have an additional highest priority banding which can be awarded if gender reassignment were to be affecting an applicant's housing situation.</p>
<p><b>Marriage &amp; civil partnership)</b></p>	<p>Yes Positive</p>	<p>Applications are taken from Single, Married or partners in Civil partnership, regardless of gender, when applying at the same time for housing. This will be subject to one household member or members meeting the other criteria to join the Housing register.</p>
<p><b>Pregnancy &amp; maternity</b> (Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant &amp; maternity refers to the period after the birth)</p>	<p>Yes Positive</p>	<p>There is no known impact on landlords or tenants due to pregnancy or maternity.</p> <p>The process of requiring a licence will mean that action will be taken to raise the quality of private rented accommodation, resolve hazards and ensure higher standards. The improved standards will be particularly beneficial for the most vulnerable tenants, who perhaps currently live in sub-standard accommodation. These more vulnerable residents often fall into one or more equality groups.</p>
<p><b>Race</b> (ethnicity, colour, nationality or national origins &amp; including gypsies, travellers, refugees &amp; asylum seekers)</p>	<p>Yes, within the legislation that covers the allocation of social</p>	<p>People from abroad cannot be allocated accommodation if they are ineligible under Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996.</p> <p>There are two categories in S160ZA: a person under immigration control and a person other than a person under immigration control.</p> <p>The regulations are subject to change and are all explained in detail in the Allocation of</p>

	housing	Accommodation statutory guidance. Council staff can advise people from abroad on the regulations and how they affect their application.
<b>Religion &amp; belief</b> (religious faith or other group with a recognised belief system)	No	There are no known implications for application to the Housing register based on religion or belief. Applicants are assessed on housing need and local connection.
<b>Sex</b> (male / female)	No	There is no known impact on applicants based on gender.  Applications are assessed on Housing Need and Local Connection
<b>Sexual orientation</b> (lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual)	No	There is no known impact on applicants due to sexual orientation.  Applicants are assessed on Housing need and Local Connection
Whilst <b>Socio economic</b> disadvantage that people may face is not a protected characteristic; the potential impact on this group should be also considered	Yes	The ability to join the housing register is first assessed on housing need and local connection, however Arun District Council will not except applications from households with a joint income (including partners of the main and joint applicants) with a combined gross annual income more than £50,000 per year (not including means tested benefits) Main and joint applicants (including partners of the main and joint applicants) with combined savings more than £16,000, or £50,000 for applicants eligible for sheltered housing will not qualify to be included on the Housing Register. Savings are also taken to mean accessible equity within a property.  The income and savings criteria do not apply to current tenants of the Council wanting to downsize.  Armed Forces compensation payments will not be considered in calculations of financial resources.

**What evidence has been used to assess the likely impacts?**

The Allocations Policy lays out the detail and framework of the likely impacts. It outlines the potential remedial options.

**Decision following initial assessment**

<b>Continue with existing or introduce new / planned activity</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Amend activity based on identified actions</b>	<b>N</b>
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**Action Plan**

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Impact identified	Action required	Lead Officer	Deadline

**Monitoring & Review**

<b>Date of last review or Impact Assessment:</b>	
<b>Date of next 12-month review:</b>	
<b>Date of next 3-year Impact Assessment (from the date of this EIA):</b>	

<b>Date EIA completed:</b>	02 January 2024
<b>Signed by Person Completing:</b>	Jayne Knight

## Arun District Council

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>Housing and Wellbeing Committee – 25 January 2024</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code annual self-assessment</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Sasha Hawkins – Interim Business Improvement Manager</b>
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	<i>Councillor Carol Birch – Chair of Housing and Wellbeing Committee</i>
<b>WARDS:</b>	<b>All</b>

**CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION:**

The report supports the following areas in the corporate vision:

- Delivering the right homes in the right places
- Support those in our community that need help, providing a safety net where necessary and working with people and organisations to meet different needs.
- Ensure the existing housing stock in the district (private sector and council owned) is maintained to a high standard.

The report will share with members the outcome of our self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman complaint handling code, this will ensure that the council is being transparent with the decisions made and that it is compliant against the requirements of the code, ensuring we are delivering an effective and fair complaint process.

**DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT:**

It is a requirement of the Housing Ombudsman complaint handling code that we present an annual self-assessment to members to evidence our performance against the code and publish the results on our website.

As a member of the Housing Ombudsman scheme, we must:

- agree to be bound by the terms of the scheme.
- establish and maintain a complaints procedure in accordance with any good practice recommended by the Ombudsman.
- as part of that procedure, inform residents of their right to bring complaints to the Ombudsman under the Scheme.
- publish our complaints procedure and where applicable, our membership of the Scheme. Make information about both, easily accessible to those entitled to make complaints, via our website and in correspondence with residents.
- manage complaints from residents in accordance with our published procedure or, where this is not possible, within a reasonable timescale.

Failure to comply with the conditions of membership may result in a Complaint Handling Failure Order and a requirement to rectify within a given timescale.



**FINANCIAL SUMMARY:**

There are no financial implications regarding this report.

**1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To present to committee Housing Services self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's complaint handling code.

**2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Housing and Wellbeing Committee:
- 2.2 Note Housing Services compliance with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.
- 2.3 Note that the self-assessment will be published on our website in accordance with the requirements of the Complaint Handling Code

**3 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 3.1 This report shares with members the outcome of our self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.
- 3.2 The code sets out that landlords must carry out an annual self-assessment against the Code to ensure their complaint handling remains in line with its requirements.
- 3.3 The outcome of our self-assessment must then be reported to elected members and published on our website, so it is accessible to residents.
- 3.4 Compliance with the code forms part of our membership obligations set out in the Housing Ombudsman Scheme. Non-compliance with the Code could result in the Housing Ombudsman issuing a complaint handling failure order.
- 3.5 The self-assessment set out at Appendix 1 shows that our complaint handling remains in line with the requirements of the Code.

## 4 **DETAIL**

### 4.1 **Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code**

4.1.1 The complaint handling code was introduced in July 2020 and reviewed a year later with changes taking effect from 1 April 2022. The code sets out good practice for landlords to ensure complaints are dealt with effectively and fairly.

### 4.2 **Key areas of the code**

- Universal definition of a complaint.
- Providing easy access to the complaints procedure and ensuring residents are aware of it, including their right to access the Housing Ombudsman Service.
- The structure of the complaint's procedure - only two stages necessary and clear timeframes set out for responses.
- Ensuring fairness in complaint handling with a resident-focused process
- Taking action to put things right and appropriate remedies.
- Creating a positive complaint handling culture through continuous learning and improvement.
- Demonstrating learning in annual reports.
- Annual self-assessment against the Code.

### 4.3 **Self-assessment**

4.3.1 The Housing Ombudsman expects landlords to carry out an annual self-assessment against the Code and take appropriate action to ensure landlord and tenant complaint handling processes are in line with the Code.

4.3.2 Our self-assessment does not have to be submitted to the Ombudsman but may be required to be provided on request.

4.3.3 At present, where the self-assessment refers to something landlords 'must' do this is a mandatory requirement. Where the self-assessment refers to something landlords 'should' do this regarded as best practice and landlords are able to use their discretion in how they achieve this.

4.3.4 The latest annual self-assessment concludes that the council remains compliant with the Code:

- Initial logging of a complaint within Housing has been updated to improve recording and monitoring. This includes the creation of a dedicated housing complaints mailbox, overseen by the Housing Project Officer
- This is also helping us to better understand complaint trends and root

causes. We can then take action to prevent other customers experiencing the same issue. For example, after seeing problems arising with some types of repair work we have engaged alternative contractors.

- Complaint performance is now reported at various levels within the organisation, including a quarterly report to Members to enable scrutiny of our complaint handling performance.
- Complaint information is published on our website in a new section called 'Our Performance'. This provides transparency to our customers on a range of performance information including complaint data.
- Training on complaints and awareness of the Code has been added to the induction process for all new housing staff members.

#### **4.4 Future changes**

4.4.1 The Social Housing Regulation Act 2023 places the Complaint Handling Code onto a statutory footing, meaning the requirements are now mandatory. The Ombudsman is now under a duty to monitor compliance with the Code.

4.4.2 Under the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023 the Housing Ombudsman has gained new powers that means it is now able to order landlords to evaluate policy or practice to prevent service failures being repeated. The Ombudsman will be able to be more prescriptive in what it wants to see in policy reviews.

4.4.3 Between September and November 2023, the Housing Ombudsman conducted a consultation on a new Complaint Handling Code which set out:

- further improvements to the code
- proposals for monitoring complaints
- what else might be needed to fulfil their new duties

4.4.4 The Housing Ombudsman and the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman have decided to jointly adopt the code with the aim of having a more consistent experience of complaint handling across housing and key local services.

4.4.5 The joint code will see a raft of changes for the wider council's approach to complaint handling, as they will be under the same obligations as Housing have been since the introduction of the Complaint Handling Code in 2020.

4.4.6 This will mean that the council will need to adapt their processes for complaint handling, and the reporting of complaints to the Ombudsman.

4.4.7 A report will be presented to Members once the new code is published that will set out any changes that are required.

## **5 CONSULTATION**

5.1 None required.

## **6 OPTIONS/ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERS**

6.1 This report is for noting only.

## **7 COMMENTS BY THE GROUP HEAD OF FINANCE AND SECTION 151 OFFICER**

7.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

## **8 RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

8.1 Not applicable.

## **9 COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE & MONITORING OFFICER**

9.1 Compliance with the Complaint Handling Code is a requirement of the membership of the Housing Ombudsman Scheme and failure to comply with the Code entitles the Ombudsman to take action through its determinations and other avenues. There are no direct legal implications associated with this report, but the report forms part of the Council's ongoing work to adhere to the Code and to improve its complaints performance.

## **10 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT**

10.1 No impact identified.

## **11 HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT**

11.1 There are no implications associated with this report

## **12 PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT**

12.1 The recommendations of this report have no impact on the Councils General Fund Portfolio or the delivery of Property, Estates, and Facilities functions.

## **13 EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE**

13.1 Please see attached at Appendix 2

**14 CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE**

14.1 No impact identified.

**15 CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT**

15.1 No impact identified.

**16 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT**

16.1 There are no implications identified.

**17 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS**

17.1 There are no implications identified.

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**CONTACT OFFICER:**

**Name:** Sasha Hawkins

**Job Title:** Interim Business Improvement Manager

**Contact Number:** 01903 737656

**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:**

Appendix 1 – Self-assessment against the Complaint Handling Code

Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment

<b>Section 1 - Definition of a complaint</b>			
<b>Mandatory 'must' requirements</b>			
<b>Code section</b>	<b>Code requirement</b>	<b>Do we comply</b>	<b>Evidence, commentary, and explanations</b>
1.2	A complaint must be defined as: 'an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions, or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents	<b>Yes</b>	Our complaints policy was updated in September 2022. The definition is as follows: A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions, or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual or group.
1.3	The resident does not have to use the word 'complaint' for it to be treated as such. A complaint that is submitted via a third party or representative must still be handled in line with the landlord's complaints policy.	<b>Yes</b>	<p>We do not insist on residents using the word complaint for a matter to be handled as a complaint and this is covered within our policy.</p> <p>"All customer complaints and compliments will be treated equally regardless of the method they are submitted, and customers do not have to use the word complaint for it to be treated as such." Any complaint submitted via a third party will be handled in line with our complaints policy and is stated within the policy.</p> <p>If a level of dissatisfaction is stated in any communication, it is logged as a complaint to ensure that the dissatisfaction is resolved, and the complainant receives a formal response to ensure closure to the situation reported.</p>
1.6	... if further enquiries are needed to resolve the matter, or if the	<b>Yes</b>	Our complaints policy defines a service request. Where there is then a repeated request for a service or where a resident raises

	resident requests it, the issue must be logged as a complaint.		<p>dissatisfaction with the response to their service request then this would be raised as a complaint.</p> <p>If no dissatisfaction is stated, then we will keep the enquiry at a service request stage. These are still tracked within the complaints &amp; enquiries process. If at any stage during the service request process, a level of dissatisfaction is noted, we will escalate the enquiry into the complaints process.</p>
1.7	A landlord must accept a complaint unless there is a valid reason not to do so.	<b>Yes</b>	The council will accept all complaints unless the complaint falls within matters that cannot be dealt with under our complaints policy. Included at Appendix 1 in our policy.
1.8	A complaints policy must clearly set out the circumstances in which a matter will not be considered, and these circumstances should be fair and reasonable to residents.	<b>Yes</b>	<p>The complaints policy at Appendix 1 details circumstances where a matter will not be considered under the policy.</p> <p>Anything that has an appeal process: issuing of parking tickets, a decision on a planning application, housing application scheme, an eviction decision, review of homelessness application, entitlement to housing benefit.</p>
1.9	If a landlord decides not to accept a complaint, a detailed explanation must be provided to the resident setting out the reasons why the matter is not suitable for the complaints process and the right to take that decision to the Ombudsman	<b>Yes</b>	Where the council does not accept a complaint, the customer will be provided with an explanation and of their right to take the decision to the Ombudsman. This is detailed within our complaints policy.



			In addition to this being stated within our policy, we also advise throughout the complaint process that a complainant can contact the Housing Ombudsman at any time within the complaints process to ensure full transparency and compliance with our own Complaints Policy and the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code.
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<b>Best practice 'should' requirements</b>			
<b>Code section</b>	<b>Code requirement</b>	<b>Do we comply</b>	<b>Evidence, commentary, and explanations</b>
1.4	Landlords should recognise the difference between a service request, where a resident may be unhappy with a situation that they wish to have rectified, and a complaint about the service they have/have not received.	Yes	Our complaints policy sets out the difference between a request for service and a complaint.  To support the policy and code requirements, the Housing Project Officer and our Infomanagement team monitor all complaints and enquires and ensure that there is an objective review of each submission into the complaint and enquiry process.
1.5	Survey feedback may not necessarily need to be treated as a complaint, though, where possible, the person completing the survey should be made aware of how they can pursue their dissatisfaction as a complaint if they wish to.	Yes	Wording has been added to our surveys to highlight how customers can make a complaint if they are dissatisfied with the service received.  When we receive survey feedback, and the officer analysing responses, deem a comment should be treated as a complaint, the survey response is sent to our housing complaints inbox for review and the concern will be progressed the same as any other communication channel.

<b>Section 2 - Accessibility and awareness</b>			
<b>Mandatory 'must' requirements</b>			
<b>Code section</b>	<b>Code requirement</b>	<b>Do we comply</b>	<b>Evidence, commentary, and explanations</b>
2.1	<p>Landlords must make it easy for residents to complain by providing different channels through which residents can make a complaint such as in person, over the telephone, in writing, by email and digitally.</p> <p>While the Ombudsman recognises that it may not be feasible for a landlord to use all the potential channels, there must be more than one route of access into the complaints system.</p>	Yes	<p>Our complaints policy makes clear the different channels residents can complain by. Either by phone, e-mail, online form, in person or in writing.</p> <p>In addition to the policy stating the channels of communication, the housing complaints inbox has now been set-up and all staff are aware of its existence, a number of our complaint communications are sent from that inbox too, allowing external knowledge of its existence.</p> <p>Therefore, if any staff or representatives of the council come across any enquiry or complaint, they can be sent into that inbox for progression. The idea of setting up a separate inbox ensures that it can always be managed even if the Housing Project Officer is unavailable, it will be monitored.</p>
2.3	<p>Landlords must make their complaint policy available in a clear and accessible format for all residents. This will detail the number of stages involved, what will happen at each stage and the timeframes for responding.</p>	Yes	<p>Our complaints policy is available on our website in an accessible format detailing how a complaint can be made, the number of stages involved and what will happen at each stage.</p> <p>All housing staff have had training in complaint management which will be repeated on a regular basis as new staff join; therefore, staff recognise the definition of a complaint and can submit complaints on a residents or service users' behalf.</p>

2.4	Landlord websites, if they exist, must include information on how to raise a complaint. The complaints policy and process must be easy to find on the website	Yes	<p>Our complaints policy is available on our website and is available in a clear and accessible.</p> <p>If a complainant enters the word make a complaint in the Arun District Council website search engine, they will be taken to the complaints policy which allows complaint submissions.</p>
2.5	Landlords must comply with the Equality Act 2010 and may need to adapt normal policies, procedures, or processes to accommodate an individual's needs. Landlords must satisfy themselves that their policy sets out how they will respond to reasonable adjustments requests in line with the Equality Act and that complaints handlers have had appropriate training to deal with such requests	Yes	<p>The council has a corporate equality and diversity policy.</p> <p>Equality and Diversity is important to us, and we are committed to making sure that people are treated fairly and with dignity. Our aim is to remove unnecessary barriers for everyone who works for us or uses our services. All staff receive training on equality and diversity and will respond to any requests for reasonable adjustments in line with the Equality Act.</p> <p>All staff have attended mandatory Equality &amp; Diversity Training to further expand EDI knowledge throughout the council, and all new recruits are put through the training as a mandatory requirement.</p> <p>Refresher training will be provided in due course.</p>
2.6	Landlords must publicise the complaints policy and process, the Complaint Handling Code and the Housing Ombudsman Scheme in leaflets, posters, newsletters, online and as part of regular correspondence with residents.	Yes	<p>Residents are advised about the complaints process, Housing Ombudsman scheme and complaint handling code through various channels, including the website, in correspondence and in our newsletter.</p> <p>In addition, as we work through the complaints process with any</p>

			complainant, they are advised that they can approach the Housing Ombudsman at any time throughout the complaints process.
2.7	Landlords must provide residents with contact information for the Ombudsman as part of its regular correspondence with residents.	Yes	Residents are provided with contact information for the Ombudsman within our newsletter, on our website and in correspondence with them about complaints.
2.8	Landlords must provide early advice to residents regarding their right to access the Housing Ombudsman Service throughout their complaint, not only when the landlord's complaints process is exhausted.	Yes	<p>The council's website includes information on complaints and the right to access the Housing Ombudsman Service, not only when the council's complaints process has been exhausted. Residents are informed within the complaint acknowledgement that they have the right to access the Housing Ombudsman service.</p> <p>Letter templates have been set-up, and all staff are encouraged to use them throughout the complaints process.</p>

<b>Best practice 'should' requirements</b>			
<b>Code section</b>	<b>Code requirement</b>	<b>Do we comply</b>	<b>Evidence, commentary, and explanations</b>
2.2	Where a landlord has set up channels to communicate with its residents via social media, then it should expect to receive complaints via those channels. Policies should contain details of the steps that will be taken when a complaint is received via social media and how confidentiality and privacy will be maintained.	Yes	Any complaint received via social media will be dealt with in line with our complaints policy. "Any complaints made via our social media sites will be dealt with in line with this complaint policy, to protect confidentiality and privacy we will reply and ask you to message us directly with further details so that we can log your complaint. "

<b>Section 3 - Complaint handling personnel</b>			
<b>Mandatory 'must' requirements</b>			
<b>Code section</b>	<b>Code requirement</b>	<b>Do we comply</b>	<b>Evidence, commentary, and explanations</b>
3.1	Landlords must have a person or team assigned to take responsibility for complaint handling to ensure complaints receive the necessary attention, and that these are reported to the governing body. This Code will refer to that person or team as the “complaints officer.”	<b>Yes</b>	<p>Our Infomanagement team receive formal complaints and will then pass these over to the relevant service areas. Within each service area there are officers who will respond to complaints. The Housing Project officer tracks complaints to ensure they are given the necessary attention and responded to in the timescales prescribed.</p> <p>To ensure ongoing compliance with the complaint handling code requirements and adherence to our policy, we have added complaint coordination to the Housing Project Officer’s Job Description, to ensure that there is a single point of responsibility wherever possible. This ensures a consistency of complaint coordination and decision making, and each complaint is followed through to resolution.</p>
3.2	...the complaint handler appointed must have appropriate complaint handling skills and no conflicts of interest.	<b>Yes</b>	<p>Complaint handlers are trained in complaint handling and the 2-stage process is in place to ensure that there is no conflict of interest.</p> <p>To ensure continued compliance with the complaint handling code training has been provided to staff on the complaints policy and a process implemented in housing to ensure it is consistently applied.</p> <p>The addition of the housing complaints inbox has further ensured</p>

			<p>that no complaints are missed or lost within the housing service. It also ensures transparency, further supporting the need of no conflicts of interest, as several staff have access to the inbox to ensure that it is monitored during every working day.</p> <p>Complaints training and awareness of the code has also been included within the induction process for new Staff.</p>
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<b>Best practice 'should' requirements</b>			
<b>Code section</b>	<b>Code requirement</b>	<b>Do we comply</b>	<b>Evidence, commentary, and explanations</b>
3.3	<p>Complaint handlers should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be able to act sensitively and fairly.</li> <li>• be trained to handle complaints and deal with distressed and upset residents.</li> <li>• have access to staff at all levels to facilitate quick resolution of complaints.</li> <li>• have the authority and autonomy to act to resolve disputes quickly and fairly.</li> </ul>	Yes	<p>The council's complaints policy makes clear what a complainant can expect from the nominated person dealing with the complaint.</p> <p>Act independently and have an open mind.</p> <p>Take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest Consider all relevant information and evidence carefully.</p> <p>Keep the complaint confidential as far as possible with information only disclosed if necessary to properly investigate the matter. All housing staff have recently undertaken the free Housing Ombudsman training.</p> <p>To ensure continued compliance with the complaint handling code we will establish an ongoing training programme for complaint handlers.</p>

			To further enhance our compliance, the Housing Project Officer ensures the officer responsible for the complaint continues to monitor any actions set out within the complaint response.
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<b>Section 4 - Complaint handling principles</b>			
<b>Mandatory 'must' requirements</b>			
<b>Code section</b>	<b>Code requirement</b>	<b>Do we comply</b>	<b>Evidence, commentary, and explanations</b>
4.1	Any decision to try and resolve a concern must be taken in agreement with the resident and a landlord's audit trail/records should be able to demonstrate this. Landlords must ensure that efforts to resolve a resident's concerns do not obstruct access to the complaints procedure or result in any unreasonable delay. It is not appropriate to have extra named stages (such as 'stage 0' or 'pre-complaint stage') as this causes unnecessary confusion for residents. When a complaint is made, it must be acknowledged and logged at stage one of the complaints procedure within five days of receipt.	<b>Yes</b>	The council does not have any extra/pre named stages such as stage '0'. All complaints are handled in line with our 2-stage process and are acknowledged within five days of receipt.
4.2	Within the complaint acknowledgement, landlords must set out their understanding of the complaint and the outcomes the resident is seeking. If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, the resident must be asked for clarification and the full definition agreed between both parties.	<b>Yes</b>	All acknowledgements include the name and contact details of the complaint handler, our understanding of the complaint and the outcomes the customer is seeking and a date or timeframe by which they can expect to receive a response. If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, we will ask the resident for clarification. This is contained within our complaints policy
4.6	A complaint investigation must be conducted in an impartial	<b>Yes</b>	Staff who are the subject of the complaint will not be involved in the complaint investigation.



	manner.		In addition to this, if an officer has undertaken a complaint investigation at an earlier stage, or is mentioned within a complaint, an alternative investigating officer is assigned to complaint investigation.
4.7	<p>The complaint handler must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• deal with complaints on their merits</li> <li>• act independently and have an open mind.</li> <li>• take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest.</li> <li>• consider all information and evidence carefully.</li> <li>• keep the complaint confidential as far as possible, with information only disclosed if necessary to properly investigate the matter.</li> </ul>	<b>Yes</b>	<p>The complaint policy sets out how the complaint handler will deal with the complaint, and includes all areas referred to in 4.7.</p> <p>Ongoing training for complaint handlers has been established to ensure adherence to the complaint handling code.</p> <p>In addition, the Housing Project Officer reviews all complaints and ensures adherence to the complaint handling code.</p>
4.11	Landlords must adhere to any reasonable arrangements agreed with residents in terms of frequency and method of communication	<b>Yes</b>	Where arrangements have been agreed with residents these will be adhered to and communicated to any staff who will be dealing with the complaint.
4.12	<p>The resident, and if applicable any staff member who is the subject of the complaint, must also be given a fair chance to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• set out their position.</li> <li>• comment on any adverse findings before a final decision is made.</li> </ul>	<b>Yes</b>	Staff members who are the subject of the complaint, will be interviewed as part of the complaint investigation. This allows them to confirm their thinking and decision making. The residents' position is confirmed at acknowledgement stage.
4.13	A landlord must include in its complaints policy its timescales for a resident to request escalation of a complaint	<b>Yes</b>	Timescales are confirmed within our complaints policy. This includes the timescales for escalating to stage 2.

			If complaints response times are extended, a clear reason is provided.
4.14	A landlord must not unreasonably refuse to escalate a complaint through all stages of the complaints procedure and must have clear and valid reasons for taking that course of action. Reasons for declining to escalate a complaint must be clearly set out in a landlord's complaints policy and must be the same as the reasons for not accepting a complaint.	<b>Yes</b>	In appendix 1 of the complaints policy, we set out the circumstances in which a matter will not be considered under the complaints policy. The council does not unreasonably refuse to escalate complaints.
4.15	A full record must be kept of the complaint, any review, and the outcomes at each stage. This must include the original complaint and the date received, all correspondence with the resident, correspondence with other parties and any reports or surveys prepared.	<b>Yes</b>	<p>We record our complaints via spreadsheets and record contacts on our housing management system. We are developing a new housing system with the aim of providing improved functionality and efficiency.</p> <p>All emails relating to the complaint are stored within the housing complaints inbox, and when the complaint is completed, all emails relating to the complaint and the investigation process is uploaded to our document management system, this ensures a full audit trail should the complaint escalate further.</p>
4.18	Landlords must have policies and procedures in place for managing unacceptable behaviour from residents and/or their representatives when pursuing a complaint.	<b>Yes</b>	The council has an unreasonable behaviour policy.

<b>Best practice 'should' requirements</b>
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Code section	Code requirement	Do we comply	Evidence, commentary, and explanations
4.3	Landlords should manage residents' expectations from the outset, being clear where a desired outcome is unreasonable or unrealistic	Yes	<p>Unrealistic outcomes are managed as and when received and are managed as part of the complaint acknowledgement and investigation.</p> <p>As part of our complaint response template, we have a section of outstanding actions, for example if a repair has not been completed within the complaint response time, we confirm what we still need to do to bring the complaint to a satisfactory conclusion.</p> <p>Complaints are set to monitoring if there are outstanding actions to complete, this ensures that we manage expectations and do what we said we would do.</p>
4.4	A complaint should be resolved at the earliest possible opportunity, having assessed what evidence is needed to fully consider the issues, what outcome would resolve the matter for the resident and whether there are any urgent actions required.	Yes	<p>Our complaint policy makes clear we will take action to put things right as quickly as possible. We aim to resolve all complaints at Stage 1.</p> <p>If we have not completed all items stated within the complaint, within the complaint response time, we will confirm next steps within our complaint response and the Housing Project Officer will monitor the complaint through to a conclusion.</p>
4.5	Landlords should give residents the opportunity to have a representative deal with their complaint on their behalf, and to be represented or accompanied at any meeting with the landlord where this is reasonable.	Yes	<p>Our complaints policy states how we will deal with complaints via a third party.</p> <p>We do require our complainants to provide us with a consent to share, this ensures compliance with GDPR.</p>

4.8	Where a key issue of a complaint relates to the parties' legal obligations landlords should clearly set out their understanding of the obligations of both parties.	Yes	The complaint handler will clarify any legal obligations at acknowledgement stage and the complaint response will detail the council's obligations and the obligations of the resident.
4.9	Communication with the resident should not generally identify individual members of staff or contractors.	Yes	Individuals will not be identified or named as part of the complaint process.  Our template letters confirm that only job titles are referenced within complaint responses.
4.10	Landlords should keep residents regularly updated about the progress of the investigation.	Yes	We aim to keep responses to all complaints within the timeframes set out within our policy. If it is known that timeframes cannot be met, the complaint handler will inform the complainant of this and confirm a clear reason for any delays encountered.
4.16	Landlords should seek feedback from residents in relation to the landlord's complaint handling as part of the drive to encourage a positive complaint and learning culture.	Yes	In April 2022 we set up a process for measuring satisfaction with complaint handling via transactional surveys that are sent out upon closure of a Complaint, which include a QR code to make this as accessible as possible.
4.17	Landlords should recognise the impact that being complained about can have on future service delivery. Landlords should ensure that staff are supported and engaged in the complaints process, including the learning that can be gained	Yes	We view complaints as a way to help us improve our standards and the quality of service provided. Staff are supported within the council and understand the value of learning from complaints.  We also monitor complaint trends, for example we review root causes for complaints and look deeper into the service to understand if there are complaints caused by an organisational

			issue that can be resolved to try and prevent other residents encountering the same issues.
4.19	Any restrictions placed on a resident's contact due to unacceptable behaviour should be appropriate to their needs and should demonstrate regard for the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.	Yes	<p>Our unreasonable behaviour policy sets out the type of restrictions that could be put in place. Prior to any restrictions being put in place the residents will be given notice of their possible implementation and given the opportunity to amend their behaviour.</p> <p>Any decisions made around unreasonable behaviour are made with consultation of senior managers within the Housing Service and our Law and Governance team to ensure that we do not breach the Equality Act 2010.</p>

<b>Section 5 - Complaint stages</b>			
<b>Mandatory 'must' requirements</b>			
<b>Code section</b>	<b>Code requirement</b>	<b>Do we comply</b>	<b>Evidence, commentary, and explanations</b>
5.1	Landlords must respond to the complaint within 10 working days of the complaint being logged. Exceptionally, landlords may provide an explanation to the resident containing a clear timeframe for when the response will be received. This should not exceed a further 10 days without good reason	Yes	We aim to respond to complaints within 10 working days. If we need to extend the timescale this will be explained to the resident and a new timeframe given, this will not exceed a further 10 days without a very good reason.
5.5	A complaint response must be sent to the resident when the answer to the complaint is known, not when the outstanding actions required to address the issue, are completed. Outstanding actions must still be tracked and actioned expeditiously with regular updates provided to the resident.	Yes	This is stated within our complaint policy, outstanding actions will then be tracked, and updates provided to residents.

			A complaint is set to monitoring once a response is sent. The case will not be closed until all actions are completed.
5.6	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law, and good practice where appropriate.	Yes	This is standard practice. A standard letter template is in place to assist staff and ensure consistency in responses.
5.8	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage one in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the complaint stages.</li> <li>• the decision on the complaint</li> <li>• the reasons for any decisions made.</li> <li>• the details of any remedy offered to put things right.</li> <li>• details of any outstanding actions.</li> <li>• details of how to escalate the matter to stage two if the resident is not satisfied with the answer.</li> </ul>	Yes	This is standard practice. A standard letter template is in place to assist staff and ensure consistency in responses.

<b>Stage 2</b>			
<b>Code section</b>	<b>Code requirement</b>	<b>Do we comply</b>	<b>Evidence, commentary, and explanations</b>
5.9	If all or part of the complaint is not resolved to the resident's satisfaction at stage one it must be progressed to stage two of the landlord's procedure unless an exclusion ground now applies. In instances where a landlord declines to escalate a complaint it must clearly communicate in writing its reasons for not escalating as well as the resident's right to approach the Ombudsman about its decision.	Yes	This is standard practice and complaints will be progressed to stage 2 of our complaints policy. Appendix 1 sets out the circumstances where a complaint would not be considered under the complaints policy.

5.10	On receipt of the escalation request, landlords must set out their understanding of issues outstanding and the outcomes the resident is seeking. If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, the resident must be asked for clarification and the full definition agreed between both parties	Yes	When acknowledging the stage 2 complaint we will set out our understanding of the complaint and the outcomes the resident is seeking, if any aspect of the complaint is unclear we will ask for clarification.  For objectivity and transparency, we ask our Infomanagement team to make decisions as to whether a Stage 2 process should be undertaken.
5.11	Landlords must only escalate a complaint to stage two once it has completed stage one and at the request of the resident.	Yes	Complaints are only escalated to stage 2 once a stage 1 has been completed and at the request of the resident.
5.12	The person considering the complaint at stage two, must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage one.	Yes	Stage 2 complaints are dealt with by a senior officer independent of the original complaint.
5.13	Landlords must respond to the stage two complaint within 20 working days of the complaint being escalated. Exceptionally, landlords may provide an explanation to the resident containing a clear timeframe for when the response will be received. This should not exceed a further 10 days without good reason.	Yes	We always aim to respond within 20 working days. If we need to extend the timescale this will be explained to the resident and a new timeframe given, this will not exceed a further 10 days without good reason.
5.16	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage two in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the complaint stage.</li> <li>• the complaint definition</li> <li>• the decision on the complaint</li> <li>• the reasons for any decisions made.</li> <li>• the details of any remedy offered to put things right.</li> <li>• details of any outstanding actions and</li> </ul>	Yes	This is standard practice. A standard letter template is in place to assist staff and ensure consistency.  Arun District Council does not have a stage 3 within its complaints policy.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• if the landlord has a third stage, details of how to escalate the matter to stage three.</li> <li>• if this was the final stage, details of how to escalate the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service if the resident remains dissatisfied.</li> </ul>		
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<b>Stage 3</b>			
<b>Code section</b>	<b>Code requirement</b>	<b>Do we comply</b>	<b>Evidence, commentary, and explanations</b>
5.17	Two stage landlord complaint procedures are ideal. This ensures that the complaint process is not unduly long. If landlords strongly believe a third stage is necessary, they must set out their reasons for this as part of their self-assessment.	Yes	The council operates a two-stage complaint process
5.2	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage three in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the complaint stage</li> <li>• the complaint definition</li> <li>• the decision on the complaint</li> <li>• the reasons for any decisions made</li> <li>• the details of any remedy offered to put things right</li> <li>• details of any outstanding actions</li> <li>• details of how to escalate the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service if the resident remains dissatisfied</li> </ul>	Yes	Not applicable as the council operates a two-stage complaint process

<b>Best practice 'should' requirements</b>			
<b>Stage 1</b>			
<b>Code section</b>	<b>Code requirement</b>	<b>Do we comply</b>	<b>Evidence, commentary, and explanations</b>
5.2	If an extension beyond 10 working days is required to enable the landlord to respond to the complaint fully, this should be agreed by both parties.	<b>Yes</b>	We aim to respond to complaints within the target timescales, if an extension is required this is confirmed to the resident and they are provided with an opportunity to consult should they disagree with the complaint extension request.
5.3	Where agreement over an extension period cannot be reached, landlords should provide the Housing Ombudsman's contact details so the resident can challenge the landlord's plan for responding and/or the proposed timeliness of a landlord's response.	<b>Yes</b>	The details of the ombudsman would be provided in cases where we cannot reach an agreement.  It is standard practice for complaints to be informed that they can contact the Housing Ombudsman at any point within the complaint process.
5.4	Where the problem is a recurring issue, the landlord should consider any older reports as part of the background to the complaint if this will help to resolve the issue for the resident.	<b>Yes</b>	Background information is considered as part of the complaint investigation.
5.7	Where residents raise additional complaints during the investigation, these should be incorporated into the stage one response if they are relevant, and the stage one response has not been issued. Where the stage one response has been issued, or it would unreasonably delay the response, the complaint should be logged as a new complaint.	<b>Yes</b>	This is stated within our complaint policy "Where you raise additional complaints during the investigation, these will be incorporated into Stage 1 response if they are relevant, and the stage 1 response has not been issued".

<b>Stage 2</b>			
<b>Code section</b>	<b>Code requirement</b>	<b>Do we comply</b>	<b>Evidence, commentary, and explanations</b>

5.14	If an extension beyond 20 working days is required to enable the landlord to respond to the complaint fully, this should be agreed by both parties.	Yes	We aim to respond to complaints within the target timescales, if an extension is required this is discussed with the resident and they are kept informed of the timeframe
5.15	Where agreement over an extension period cannot be reached, landlords should provide the Housing Ombudsman's contact details so the resident can challenge the landlord's plan for responding and/or the proposed timeliness of a landlord's response.	Yes	The details of the ombudsman are on our website and also would be provided in cases where we cannot reach an agreement

<b>Stage 3</b>			
<b>Code section</b>	<b>Code requirement</b>	<b>Do we comply</b>	<b>Evidence, commentary, and explanations</b>
5.18	Complaints should only go to a third stage if the resident has actively requested a third stage review of their complaint. Where a third stage is in place and has been requested, landlords must respond to the stage three complaint within 20 working days of the complaint being escalated. Additional time will only be justified if related to convening a panel. An explanation and a date for when the stage three response will be received should be provided to the resident.	Yes	This council operates a two stage complaints process
5.19	Where agreement over an extension period cannot be reached, landlords should provide the Housing Ombudsman's contact details so the resident can challenge the landlord's plan for responding and/or the proposed timeliness of a landlord's response.	Yes	Not applicable the council operates a two stage complaints process

<b>Section 6 - Putting Things Right</b>			
<b>Mandatory 'must' requirements</b>			
<b>Code section</b>	<b>Code requirement</b>	<b>Do we comply</b>	<b>Evidence, commentary, and explanations</b>

6.1	Effective dispute resolution requires a process designed to resolve complaints. Where something has gone wrong a landlord must acknowledge this and set out the actions it has already taken, or intends to take, to put things right.	Yes	Our complaints policy sets out that when things go wrong, we will apologise and take actions to put things right as quickly as possible and use the feedback to change and improve the way we deliver our services.
6.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the extent of any service failures and the level of detriment caused to the resident as a result. A landlord must carefully manage the expectations of residents and not promise anything that cannot be delivered or would cause unfairness to other residents.	Yes	<p>When applying remedies staff consider the Ombudsman's guidance on remedies, and also refer to our compensation policy concerning redress to be made.</p> <p>To ensure ongoing compliance with the complaint handling code we provide regular training to staff on applying remedies.</p> <p>If a complaint requires more than what our compensation policy allows, this will either be done in conjunction with senior managers to approve a large compensation policy payment</p>
6.5	The remedy offer must clearly set out what will happen and by when, in agreement with the resident where appropriate. Any remedy proposed must be followed through to completion.	Yes	<p>Our complaint response letters are written clearly and considerately, setting out the remedies offered and will be followed through to conclusion.</p> <p>The Housing Project Officer will set any complaint to monitoring once the complaint response has been sent, to ensure that any actions that are outstanding are completed by action owners.</p>
6.6	In awarding compensation, a landlord must consider whether any statutory payments are due, if any quantifiable losses have been	Yes	In awarding compensation these points are considered, the council also has a compensation

	incurred, the time and trouble a resident has been put to as well as any distress and inconvenience caused.		policy in place to refer to on these matters.  If a complaint is deemed to fall outside what the compensation policy supports, these decisions will be done in conjunction with senior managers,
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<b>Best practice 'should' requirements</b>			
<b>Code section</b>	<b>Code requirement</b>	<b>Do we comply</b>	<b>Evidence, commentary, and explanations</b>
6.3	Landlords should look beyond the circumstances of the individual complaint and consider whether anything needs to be 'put right' in terms of process or systems to the benefit of all residents.	Yes	Service managers review the learnings from complaints, identifying trends, seeking to drive forward improvements and identify if anything needs to be changed in terms of policy, process, procedure, or systems.
6.7	In some cases, a resident may have a legal entitlement to redress. The landlord should still offer a resolution where possible, obtaining legal advice as to how any offer of resolution should be worded.	Yes	Where a resident may have a legal entitlement to redress we will offer a resolution where possible, and will obtain legal advice as required.

<b>Section 7 - Continuous learning and improvement</b>			
<b>Mandatory 'must' requirements</b>			
<b>Code section</b>	<b>Code requirement</b>	<b>Do we comply</b>	<b>Evidence, commentary, and explanations</b>
7.2	Accountability and transparency are integral to a positive complaint handling culture. Landlords must report back on wider learning and improvements from complaints in their annual report and more frequently to their residents, staff, and scrutiny panels.	Yes	A consistent process for tracking and collating data from complaints is consistently improving. Wider learning and improvement from complaints is reported via the annual report and in our resident's magazine.

			Learning from complaints is also shared with our residents' group.
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<b>Best practice 'should' requirements</b>			
<b>Code section</b>	<b>Code requirement</b>	<b>Do we comply</b>	<b>Evidence, commentary, and explanations</b>
7.3	A member of the governing body should be appointed to have lead responsibility for complaints to support a positive complaint handling culture. This role will be responsible for ensuring the governing body receives regular information on complaints that provides insight to the governing body on the landlord's complaint handling performance.	Yes	The Group Head of Law and Governance has lead responsibility for complaints. With the support of the Group Head of Housing regular performance reports are provided to members which provides scrutiny of our complaint handling performance.
7.4	<p>As a minimum, governing bodies should receive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular updates on the volume, categories and outcome of complaints, alongside complaint handling performance including compliance with the Ombudsman's orders.</li> <li>• Regular reviews of issues and trends arising from complaint handling.</li> <li>• The annual performance report produced by the Ombudsman, where applicable.</li> <li>• Individual complaint outcomes where necessary, including where the Ombudsman made findings of severe maladministration or referrals to regulatory bodies.</li> <li>• The implementation of management responses should be tracked to ensure they are delivered to agreed timescales.</li> <li>• The annual self- assessment against the Complaint Handling</li> </ul>	Yes	<p>The provision of regular performance information to the committee is provided to our Housing &amp; Wellbeing committee on a quarterly basis.</p> <p>At every committee meeting a KPI update is provided on our complaints position, and information on root causes and lessons learnt.</p>

Code for scrutiny and challenge.			
7.5	Any themes or trends should be assessed by senior management to identify potential systemic issues, serious risks or policies and procedures that require revision. They should also be used to inform staff and contractor training.	Yes	A quarterly report on themes and trends is presented to the corporate management team, and a monthly report is presented to the housing management team to discuss potential systemic issues, serious risks, or policies and procedures that require revision.
7.6	Landlords should have a standard objective in relation to complaint handling for all employees that reflects the need to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments.</li> <li>• take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints rather than blaming others.</li> <li>• act within the Professional Standards for engaging with complaints as set by the Chartered Institute of Housing.</li> </ul>	Yes	We are undertaking a service transformation as part of our implementation of a new housing management system, that will include review of objectives for employees, which will include best practice around complaint handling.

Section 8 - Self-assessment and compliance			
Mandatory 'must' requirements			
Code section	Code requirement	Do we comply	Evidence, commentary, and explanations
8.1	Landlords must carry out an annual self-assessment against the Code to ensure their complaint handling remains in line with its requirements.	Yes	This is undertaken annually in December
8.2	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure and/or change in procedures.	Yes	This will be undertaken in the event of a significant restructure and/or change in procedures



8.3	<p>Following each self-assessment, a landlord must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• report the outcome of their self-assessment to their governing body. In the case of local authorities, self-assessment outcomes should be reported to elected members.</li> <li>• publish the outcome of their assessment on their website if they have one, or otherwise make accessible to residents.</li> <li>• include the self-assessment in their annual report section on complaints handling performance.</li> </ul>	Yes	<p>This self-assessment is reported to committee in January 2024. The self-assessment will be published on our complaints page on our website and will be included within our annual report.</p>
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## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

<b>Name of activity:</b>	Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code Self-Assessment	<b>Date Completed:</b>	02/01/2024		
<b>Directorate / Division responsible for activity:</b>	<b>Environment and Communities - Housing</b>	<b>Lead Officer:</b>	Sasha Hawkins		
<b>Existing Activity</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>New / Proposed Activity</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Changing / Updated Activity</b>	<b>N</b>

### What are the aims / main purposes of the activity?

To carry out the self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. This is a mandatory annual requirement set by the Housing Ombudsman Service to ensure our complaint handling remains in line with the Code.

### What are the main actions and processes involved?

Completing the self-assessment in the template provided by the Housing Ombudsman, this involves reviewing our processes and policies to ensure they remain compliant.

### Who is intended to benefit & who are the main stakeholders?

Our tenants and leaseholders will benefit as by carrying out the self-assessment we ensure that our complaint handling remains consistent and compliant with the Code, and any gaps are highlighted allowing us to take action.

The main stakeholders are –  
Internal  
Infomanagement team

External  
Tenants  
Leaseholders  
Housing Ombudsman

**Have you already consulted on / researched the activity?**

No as this is an annual activity we must carry out, and the self-assessment is set out in a prescribed format by the Housing Ombudsman. We use satisfaction data from complaint handling surveys to provide insights on how satisfied residents are with our complaint handling. This is collected at the end of every complaint with residents having the opportunity to provide feedback, this helps inform our self-assessment each year and highlight areas where we may need to improve further as it asks questions relevant to our policy and the Complaint Handling Code.

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**Impact on people with a protected characteristic** (What is the potential impact of the activity? Are the impacts high, medium or low?)

Protected characteristics / groups	Is there an impact (Yes / No)	If Yes, what is it and identify whether it is positive or negative
<b>Age</b> (older / younger people, children)	Yes	Positive – by carrying out the self-assessment it ensures are complaint handling is in line with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code, this ensures consistency in our approach and that all tenants and leaseholders going through our complaint procedure are treated in a fair and transparent way in line with the code. Reasonable adjustments are made when required, and these are agreed with complainants throughout the process, our policy also allows third parties to represent complainants on their behalf.
<b>Disability</b> (people with physical / sensory impairment or mental)	Yes	As above

disability)		
<b>Gender reassignment</b> (the process of transitioning from one gender to another.)	Yes	As above
<b>Marriage &amp; Civil Partnership</b> (Marriage and registered civil partnerships)	Yes	As above
<b>Pregnancy &amp; maternity</b> (Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant & maternity refers to the period after the birth)	Yes	As above
<b>Race</b> (ethnicity, colour, nationality or national origins & including gypsies, travellers, refugees & asylum seekers)	Yes	As above
<b>Religion &amp; belief</b> (religious faith or other group with a recognised belief system)	Yes	As above
<b>Sex</b> (male / female)	Yes	As above
<b>Sexual orientation</b> (lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual)	Yes	As above
Whilst <b>Socio economic</b> disadvantage that people may face is not a protected characteristic; the potential	Yes	As above

impact on this group should be also considered		
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<b>What evidence has been used to assess the likely impacts?</b>
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This is a mandatory activity that we must complete each year, the self-assessment is set out in a prescribed format. The Code itself ensure good practise and that complaints are dealt with effectively and fairly. By complying with the code, we ensure that those with protected characteristics are positively impacted as the process is resident focused, specific elements of the code ensure fairness and accessibility to the complaint process.

Landlords must make their complaint policy available in a clear and accessible format for all residents. This

Landlords must make it easy for residents to complain by providing different channels through which residents can make a complaint such as in person, over the telephone, in writing, by email and digitally.

Landlords must comply with the Equality Act 2010 and may need to adapt normal policies, procedures, or processes to accommodate an individual's needs. Landlords must satisfy themselves that their policy sets out how they will respond to reasonable adjustments requests in line with the Equality Act and that complaints handlers have had appropriate training to deal with such requests.

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<b>Decision following initial assessment</b>			
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<b>Continue with existing or introduce new / planned activity</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Amend activity based on identified actions</b>	<b>N</b>
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<b>Action Plan</b>			
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Impact identified	Action required	Lead Officer	Deadline
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None	None		

<b>Monitoring &amp; Review</b>	
<b>Date of last review or Impact Assessment:</b>	02/01/24
<b>Date of next 12-month review:</b>	02/01/25
<b>Date of next 3-year Impact Assessment (from the date of this EIA):</b>	

<b>Date EIA completed:</b>	02/01/24
<b>Signed by Person Completing:</b>	S Hawkins

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## Arun District Council

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>Housing &amp; Wellbeing Committee</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Tenant satisfaction measures survey results</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Richard Tomkinson – Group Head of Housing</b>
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	<i>Councillor Carol Birch – Chair of Housing and Wellbeing Committee</i>
<b>WARDS:</b>	<b>All</b>
<b>CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION:</b>	
<p>This report supports the following areas in the corporate vision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivering the right homes in the right places</li> <li>• Support those in our community that need help, providing a safety net where necessary and working with people and organisations to meet different needs.</li> <li>• Ensure the existing housing stock in the district (private sector and council owned) is maintained to a high standard.</li> </ul> <p>This report will share with members the results of the tenant satisfaction survey carried out in July 2023.</p>	
<b>DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT:</b>	
<p>As a housing provider we must comply with the Standards set out by the Regulator of Social Housing, this includes the Tenant Satisfaction Measures Standard which came into effect on 1 April 2023.</p> <p>This standard introduced a requirement for landlords to carry out an annual tenant perception survey asking a set of prescribed perception questions ‘The Tenant Satisfaction Measures’ these results must be reported to members and tenants and then submitted to the Regulator each year.</p> <p>Non-compliance with the Standard could result in the Regulator taking enforcement action against us as a landlord.</p>	
<b>FINANCIAL SUMMARY:</b>	
There are no financial implications associated with this report	



## **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 To present to members the results of the Tenant Satisfaction Measures survey carried out during June and July 2023.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

2.1.1 Discuss the survey results and offer comment on the actions being taken to improve tenant satisfaction.

2.1.2 Note that the results will be submitted to The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) in the Summer of 2024 and presented to tenants through Arun at Home.

## **3.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

3.1 This report sets out the results of the Tenant Satisfaction Measures survey which ran during June and July of 2023.

3.2 The survey collected data on tenants and leaseholders' perception in respect of landlord services, using the RSH's Tenant Satisfaction Measures which came into effect in April 2023.

3.3 The aim of the survey is to provide data which allows us to:

- Understand tenant sentiment in relation to our service performance,
- Compare results with other social landlords,
- Provide findings that allow us to take action to address dissatisfaction,
- Report to the RSH from Summer 2024 onwards.

3.4 The survey was issued on a census basis and 1,189 responses were received from tenants and 145 responses from leaseholders.

3.5 The satisfaction with the overall service provided by Arun District Council Housing Services is 58% for tenants, which represents a 20% reduction when compared with the previous survey undertaken in 2021.

3.6 Leaseholders were less satisfied with only 27% overall satisfaction.

3.7 No measure received a satisfaction rating above 60% and satisfaction has decreased for all but one of the measures (satisfaction with how Anti-Social Behaviour is handled doubled from 21% to 43%).

- 3.8 Tenant and leaseholder satisfaction is far below expected standards and sends a clear message of dissatisfaction with the quality of services being provided.
- 3.9 We recognise that our service must improve and have begun taking action to ensure that we deliver the level of services tenants expect and deserve.
- 3.10 The main body of the report sets out the steps we are taking to improve service and levels of satisfaction.

## **4.0 DETAIL**

### **4.1 Tenant Satisfaction Measures Standard**

- 4.1.1 The Standard was created by the RSH to assess the quality and effectiveness of social housing landlords in England, as measured by tenant satisfaction and to form part of their decision-making in establishing a programme of pro-active regulation and inspections.
- 4.1.2 The Standard came into effect on 1 April 2023, requiring landlords to collect and report on 22 measures across 5 themes. 10 measures are collated using management information from business systems and the remaining 12 are measured through a perception survey. The Standard establishes specific technical requirements along with mandatory questions and methodologies for data collection and reporting.
- 4.1.3 Whilst the measures do not apply to leaseholders, the service decided to include them to better understand their satisfaction and concerns and to use the insight gathered for service improvement activities.
- 4.1.4 Landlords were required to start data collection during the 2023/24 financial year, and landlords with over 1,000 homes will be required to submit our results annually to the RSH from the Summer 2024.

### **4.2 Our Survey Results**

- 4.2.1 We carried out a census survey of all tenants using a postal questionnaire, tenants were also given the opportunity to complete the survey online.
- 4.2.2 The survey and analysis was outsourced to Acuity Research and Practice and ran throughout June and July 2023. At its close a total of 1,189 responses had been received. 441 were completed online and 747 by post. A further 145 responses were received from leaseholders.

- 4.2.3 The methodology chosen for carrying out surveys does have an impact on the satisfaction level. The service chose to carry out a postal and online survey as this was the preferred method of our residents at the time. However recent data by Housemark has shown that online surveys do elicit a negative bias which can account for around 15 percentage points. Telephone or postal surveys are less likely to elicit a negative bias.
- 4.2.4 A significant majority of social landlords (78%) have undertaken telephone surveys during 2023.
- 4.2.5 Each method has pros and cons, and we have already taken steps to explore other options ahead of the survey next year.
- 4.2.6 Appendix 1 shows that only 58% of tenants and 28% of leaseholders are satisfied with the overall service provided. This a key metric in any tenant perception survey and satisfaction has dropped considerably since 2021 (from 78%).
- 4.2.7 Whilst the national context shows a decline in tenant satisfaction, these results still place us in the bottom quartile and below the national trend across all measures and no rating above 60% has achieved against any measure (the highest level of satisfaction being that tenants feel their home is safe (59%), and that we treat tenants fairly and with respect (57%))
- 4.2.8 The two lowest areas of satisfaction are in respect to listening to tenants' views and acting upon them (38%) and complaint handling (23%)
- 4.2.9 The remaining measures fall into the 40%-50% range.
- 4.2.10 Analysis of the results show that tenants in sheltered housing are more satisfied than those in general needs accommodation, though these results also fall short of expected standards. The 25-34 age group are the least satisfied overall.
- 4.2.11 Key driver analysis has also been utilised to examine the relationship between the different questions asked in the survey and determine which elements of the service are the key drivers for tenants' overall satisfaction.
- 4.2.12 In common with many other social landlords, the most key driver for tenant satisfaction with the overall service provided is that they have a well-maintained home.
- 4.2.13 Tenants were also provided with the opportunity to identify one thing we could do to improve services, 680 tenants provided comments, resulting in four key themes, accounting for 74% of comments:

- Customer services and contact
- Day to day repairs
- Communication and information
- Property condition

### **4.3 Next Steps**

4.3.1 We fully recognise that these results fall well below expected standards and actions have already been taken to improve the service provided.

4.3.2 A full day workshop session was held with managers and team leaders to discuss the results and develop an improvement plan. High priority actions are set out below:

- Introduce communal cleaning across our blocks.
- Improve call handling for repairs, reducing call wait times.
- Reduce repair completion times.
- Increase planned maintenance and cyclical decorations.
- Carry out stock condition surveys and developed a planned programme of works.
- Publicise performance information.
- Improve communication and accessibility to our services.
- Introduction of regular transactional surveys for anti-social behaviour, complaints, repairs, and new lettings to afford earlier intervention and service response when tenants express dissatisfaction.
- Arranging tenant focus groups to delve deeper into the perception and dissatisfaction in key areas such as repairs, communication, and that we listen to tenants' views and act upon them.

4.3.3 Actions will be continually monitored across the Housing Management Team to ensure we are making progress, and an update of key actions will be provided to Housing & Wellbeing Committee prior to undertaking the satisfaction survey for 2024-25.

4.3.4 Residents will be involved in helping us to improve services and focus groups will be held in the new year on key areas our residents told us we could improve.

## **5.0 CONSULTATION**

5.1 The contents of this report are informed through extensive consultation which includes the expressed views of over 1300 residents. Further engagement will be undertaken with residents to collect qualitative data in respect of expressed dissatisfaction.

5.2 The results of this survey and the feedback we derive from onward engagement (focus groups) will inform service improvement activities and decision-making.

## **6.0 OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

6.1 To review the report and survey results at Appendix 1

6.2 To request further information and/or remedial actions to be undertaken.

## **7.0 COMMENTS BY THE GROUP HEAD OF FINANCE AND SECTION 151 OFFICER**

7.1 Financial implications arising from this report are contained within ongoing revenue and capital budgets.

## **8.0 RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

8.1 The tenant satisfaction results present a reputational risk which we aim to mitigate through the actions detailed throughout the contents of this report.

## **9.0 COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE & MONITORING OFFICER**

9.1 This report is for noting and discussion. The Housing Service must comply with the Tenant Satisfaction Measures Standard. Non-compliance could result in a range of enforcement measures by the RSH.

## **10.0 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT**

10.1 No impact identified.

## **11.0 HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT**

11.1 59% of tenants and 34% of leaseholders feel their home is safe and well maintained. Actions detailed within this report will seek to improve this position over the coming 12 months.

## **12.0 PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT**

12.1 The recommendations of this report have no impact on the Councils General Fund Portfolio or the delivery of Property, Estates, and Facilities functions.

## **13.0 EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE**

13.1 The RSH has set out specific requirements to ensure that results from the Tenant Satisfaction Measures surveys are representative. Our survey provider Acuity checked our data to ensure it is representative of the tenant population and it was discovered that fewer younger tenants than expected had responded. Our results are therefore weighted to reflect these responses.

13.2 We also broke down the results of the survey into sub-groups to better understand trends. We used tenure, area, age group, gender, length of tenancy and number of bedrooms. This provides greater insight that can be used to help shape and improve our services.

## **14.0 CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE**

14.1 No impact identified.

## **15.0 CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT**

15.1 No impact identified.

## **16.0 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT**

16.1 No impact identified.

## **17.0 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS**

17.1 No impact identified.

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### **CONTACT OFFICER:**

**Name:** Richard Tomkinson

**Job Title:** Group Head of Housing

**Contact Number:** 01903 737719

### **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:**

Appendix 1 – Survey results

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# Arun District Council TSM Survey

2023 Report  
August 2023  
Prepared by: Acuity Research & Practice





# Contents

- Introduction
- Key Metrics Summary
- Overall Satisfaction
- Keeping Properties in Good Repair
- Responsible Neighbourhood Management
- Respectful & Helpful Engagement
- Recommending Arun DC & Improvement Suggestions
- Wellbeing
- Trends
- Understanding Satisfaction
- Conclusion
- Recommendations

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# Introduction

Acuity has been commissioned to undertake independent satisfaction surveys of the tenants and leaseholders of Arun District Council (Arun DC) to collect data on their opinions of, and attitudes towards, their landlord and the services provided. The contract is for three years, and this is the first report of this kind. This report focuses on the results for the tenants, with a separate report covering the results from the Council's leaseholders.

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 for the first time in 2024.

Over the next three years, the tenants of Arun District Council (Arun DC) will be contacted and asked to take part in a satisfaction survey to comment upon their levels of satisfaction with the services they receive and suggest ways things can improve, where necessary.

The survey has been carried out using a postal questionnaire and tenants were also given the opportunity to complete the survey online. The aim was to receive a minimum of 508 responses to achieve the required margin of error but at the close of the survey on the 31<sup>st</sup> of July a total of 1,189 responses had been received; 441 online and 747 by post, with one incomplete survey.

The data has been checked to ensure it is representative of the tenant population and it was discovered that fewer younger tenants than expected had responded. The results in the report are, therefore, weighted to reflect these responses.

The survey is confidential, and the results are sent back to Arun DC anonymised unless tenants give their permission to be identified – 88% of tenants did give permission to share their responses with their details attached and 91% of these tenants are happy for Arun DC to contact them to discuss any issues they raised.

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

- Provide information on tenants' perceptions of current services
- Compare the results with a similar survey undertaken in 2021
- 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 under 10,000 properties achieve a sampling error of at least  $\pm 4\%$  at the 95% confidence level. For Arun DC, 1,189 responses were received in 2023, and this response is high enough to conclude that the findings are accurate to within  $\pm 2.3\%$ , well within the required margin of error and providing a very good level of accuracy.



# Overall Satisfaction





# 58%

## Overall Satisfaction

The tenant survey in 2023 has produced moderate ratings, with satisfaction with the overall service provided by Arun DC at 58%. As will be shown later in the report, this is a significant fall compared with the previous survey in 2021.

No measure received a rating above 60%, with the highest levels of satisfaction being for the provision of a safe home (59%), the repairs service in the last 12 months (58%) and how tenants are treated fairly and with respect (57%).

The remaining measures fall into the 40% – 50% range apart from the way the Council listens to tenants' views and acts upon them (38%) and the handling of complaints (23%). There are 29% of tenants who would recommend Arun DC to other people, but 48% would not, making the Net Promoter Score -18.

# Key Metrics Summary 2023



**55%** Well maintained home



**59%** Safe home



**58%** Repairs - Last 12 months



**53%** Time taken - Last repair



**48%** Repairs - Overall satisfaction



**49%** Communal areas clean & well maintained



**46%** Positive contribution to neighbourhood



**43%** Anti-social behaviour



**52%** Easy to deal with



**38%** Listens & Acts



**47%** Keeps you informed



**57%** Treats fairly & with respect



**23%** Complaints handling



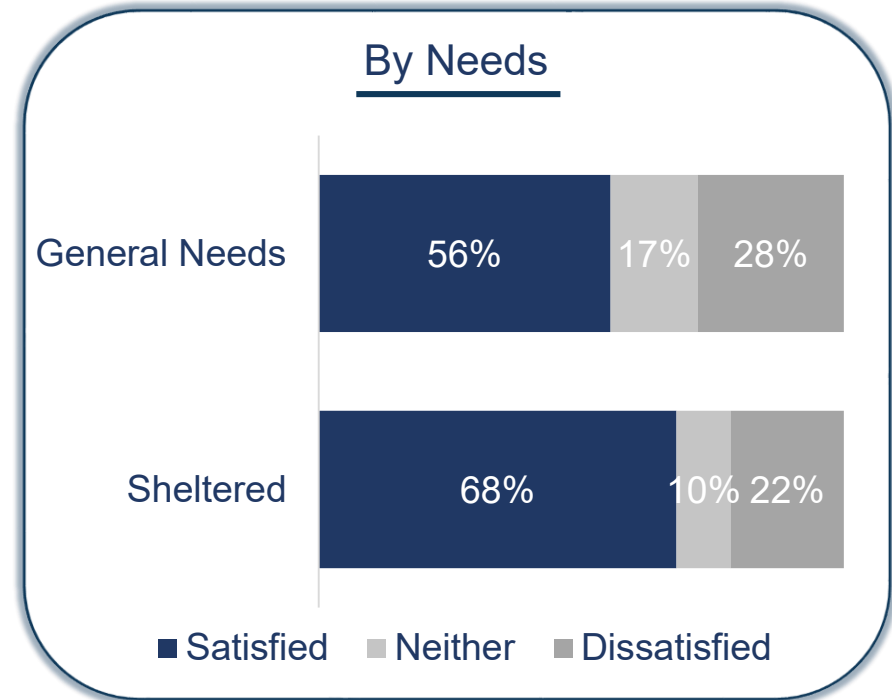
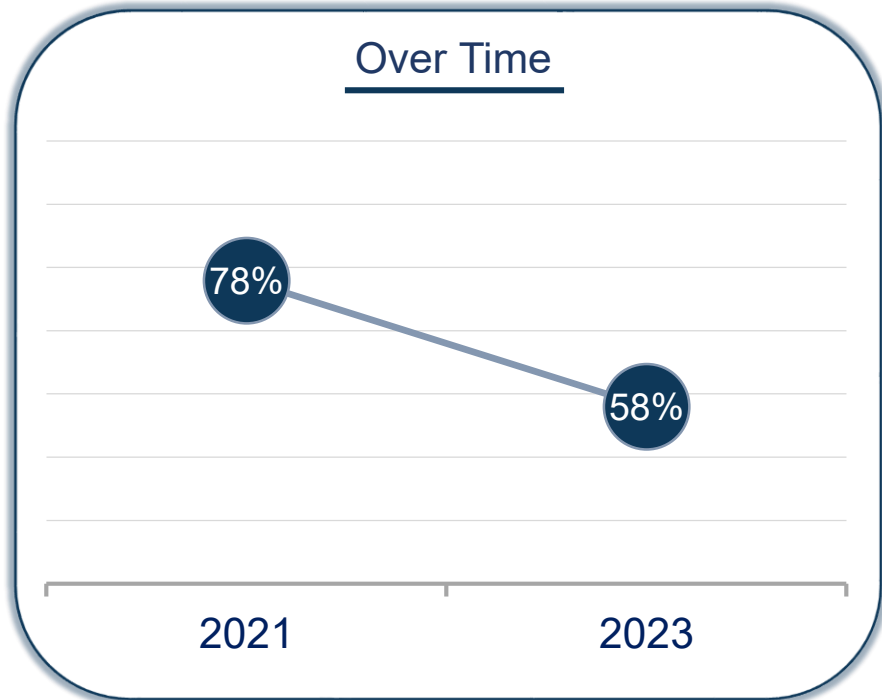
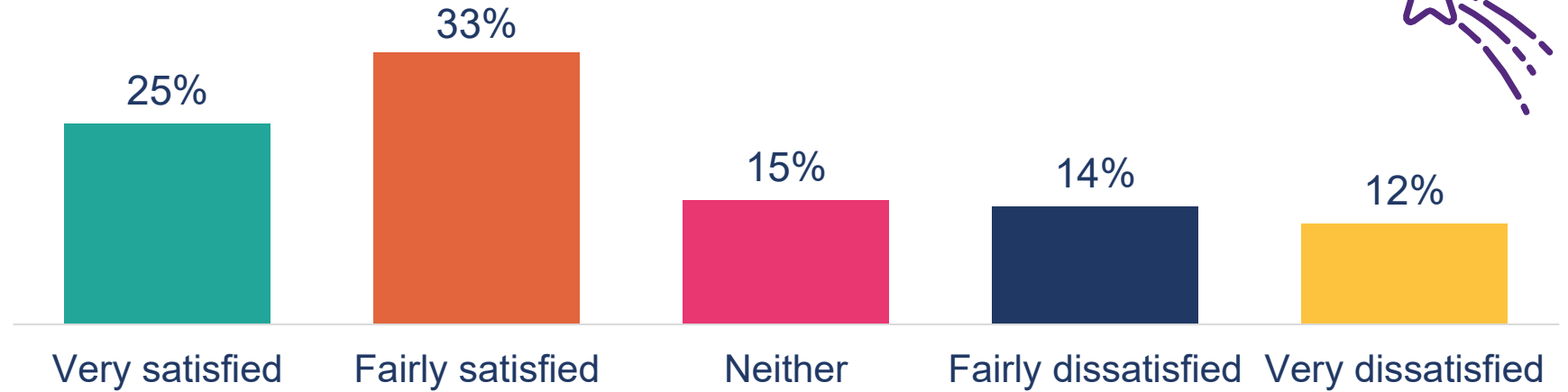
**29%** Promoters



**56%** Energy efficiency



# Overall Satisfaction



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

There are 58% of tenants satisfied with the overall services they receive, with fewer very satisfied (25%) than fairly satisfied (33%). Just over a quarter of tenants (27%) are dissatisfied with the overall service provided and a further 15% are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

Acruy undertook a satisfaction survey for Arun DC in 2021 and whilst many of the questions have changed in line with the new TSMs, there are some where a direct comparison is possible, including the overall satisfaction question. This shows a significant fall in satisfaction from 78% in 2021 to 58% in 2023. This report will later examine some of the reasons behind this change.

As expected, sheltered tenants are more satisfied than their general needs counterparts; 68% and 56% respectively.



The results from these surveys have fallen since 2021, but is this to do with Arun DC's performance or other factors?

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

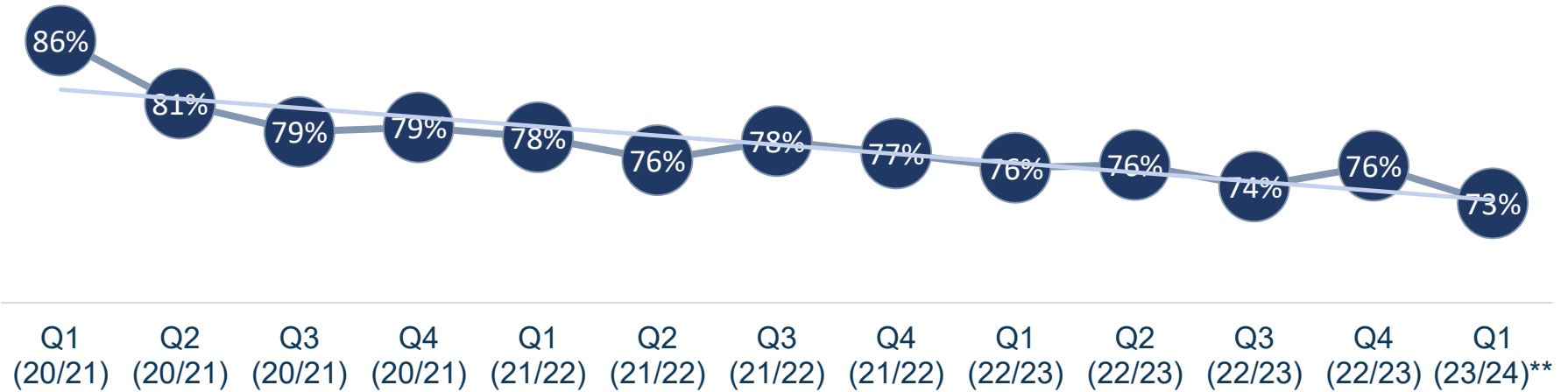
- Cost of Living Crisis
- Government & Political Changes
- Uncertainty about the Future
- Brexit and the economy

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.

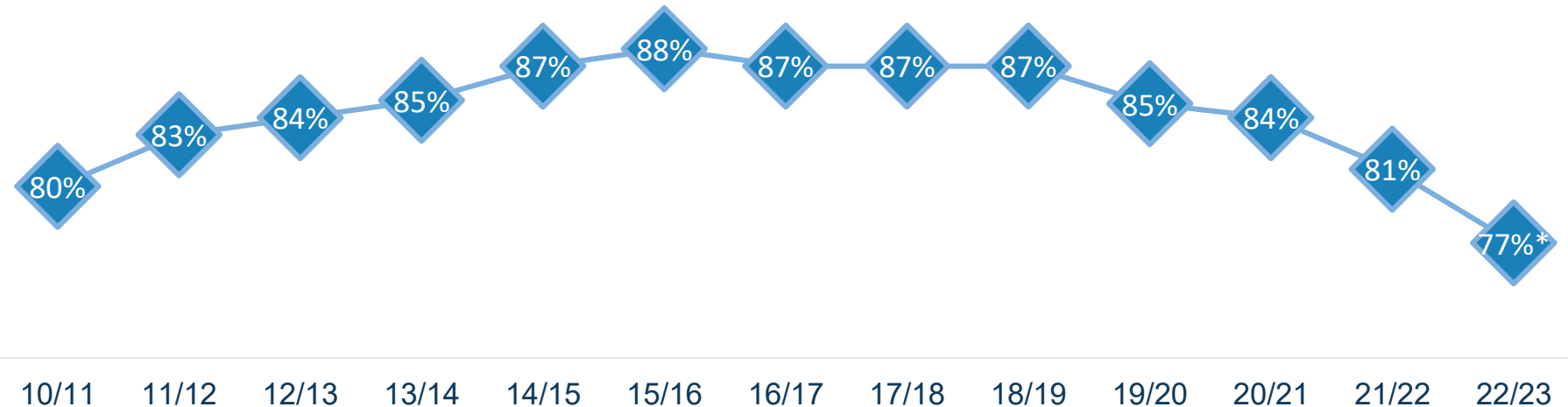
The top graph demonstrates how overall satisfaction has changed over time for Acuity's clients (tracker only). The trendline is downward over the last few years. The lower chart shows the results from Housemark members which peaked in 2015/16 but has been falling slowly since, even before the effects of the pandemic.

# National Context

Overall Services (Acuity Clients)



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



\*As reported by Housemark in January 2023. \*\*LCRA only from Q1 23/24 onwards



# Keeping Properties in Good Repair



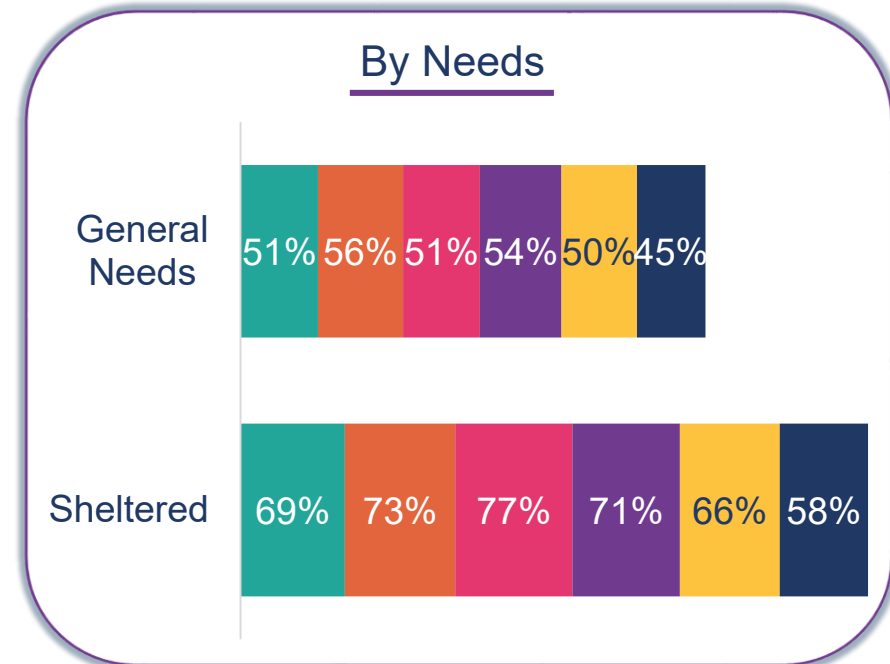
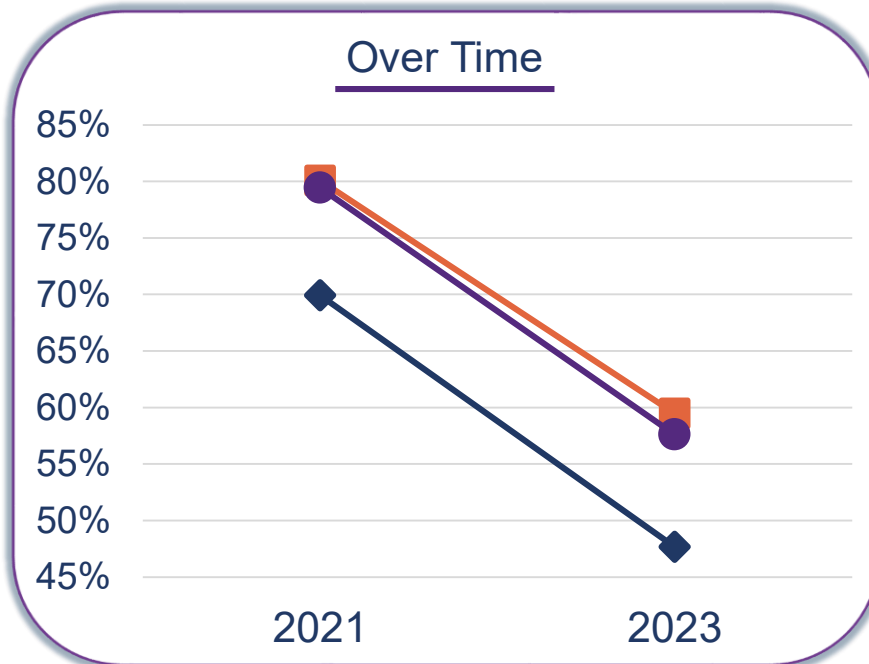
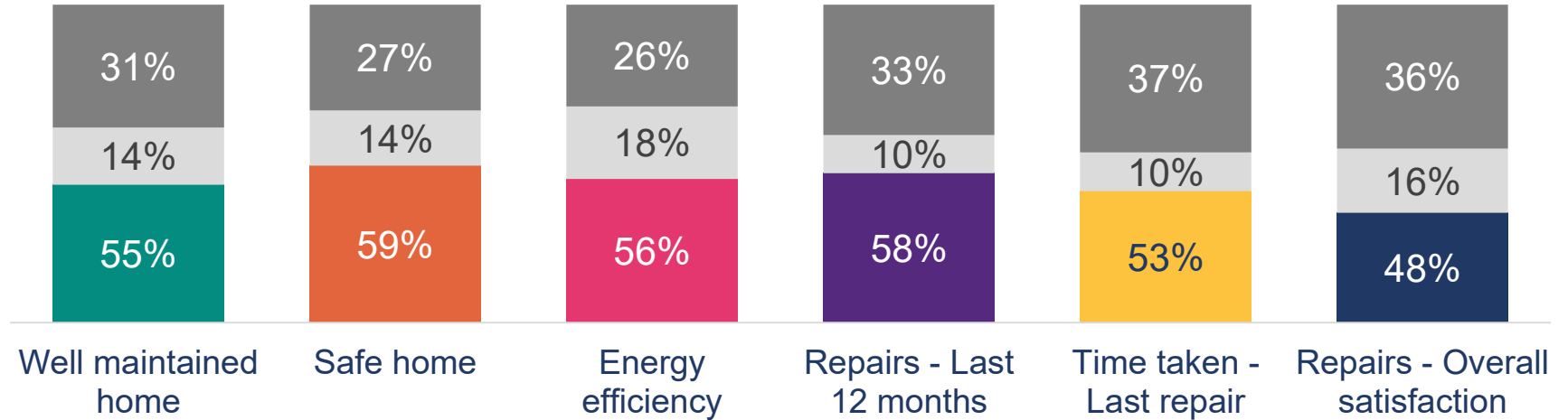
# Keeping Properties in Good Repair

Over half the tenants (55%) are satisfied that Arun DC provides them with a home that is well maintained, although nearly a third are dissatisfied (31%).

Slightly more tenants (59%) agree that their homes are safe. However, satisfaction has fallen from 80% in 2021 and a quarter of tenants are dissatisfied (27%). In terms of the energy efficiency of their homes, a similar number of tenants are satisfied (56%) but again, a quarter are dissatisfied (26%).

Less than half the tenants (48%) are satisfied with the overall repairs and maintenance service delivered by Arun DC, down from 70% in 2021. Although more (58%) are satisfied with the repairs service in the last 12 months and 53% are satisfied with the time taken to complete their most recent repair. At least a third of tenants are dissatisfied with each of these measures around the repairs service (between 33% and 36%).

Again, sheltered tenants are more satisfied than those in the general needs properties.



\*Safe home changed from "safe and secure" to just "safe" in 2023.



# Comments – Home or Communal Areas not Well Maintained or Safe

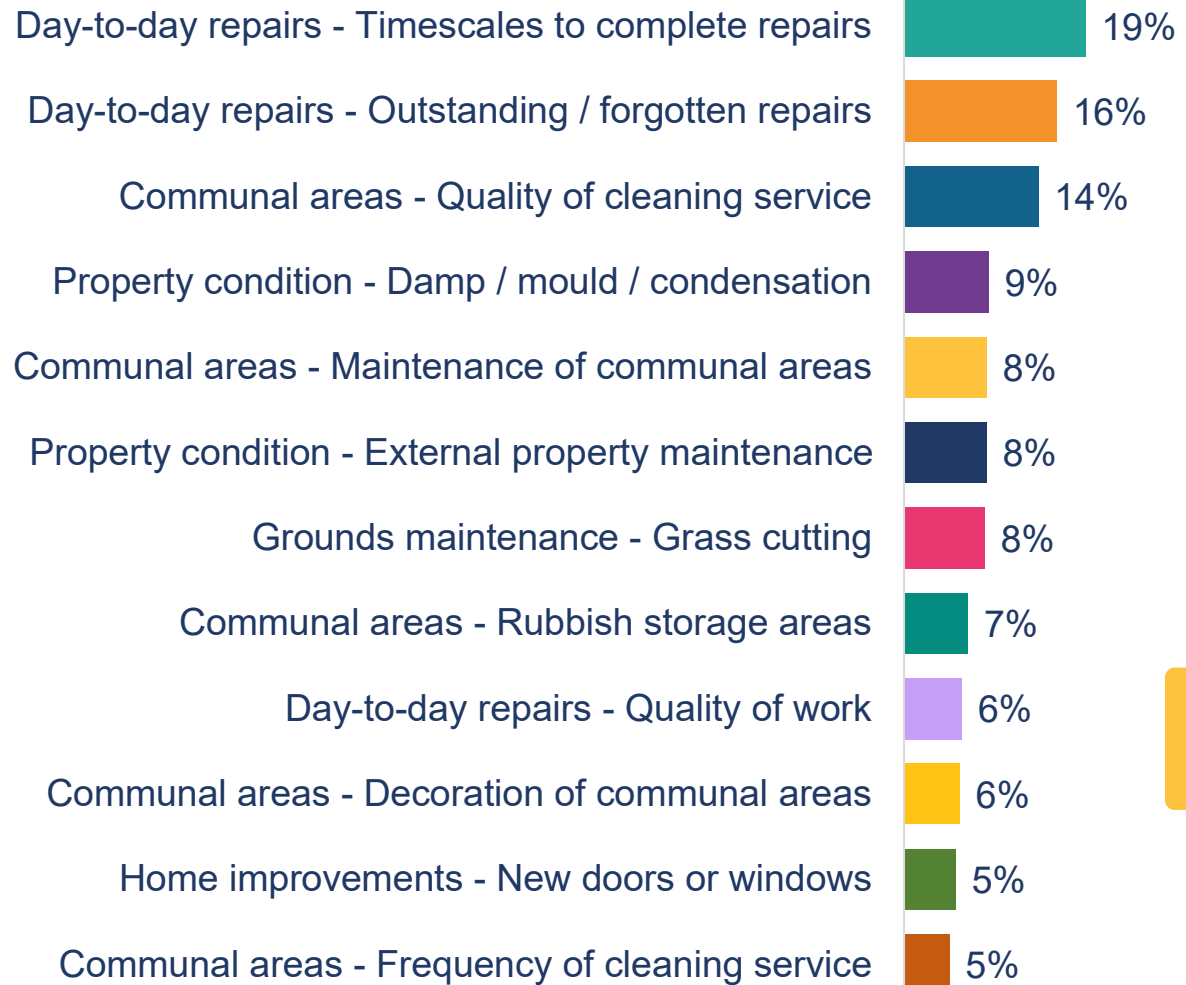
Tenants not satisfied with the maintenance, safety and cleanliness of their homes and/or communal areas, were asked to explain why and what could be done to improve this, and 472 tenants made comments.

Whilst there is a range of opinions expressed about the upkeep of tenants' homes and communal areas, the main reasons given for dissatisfaction are the timescales to complete repairs and dealing with repairs which are outstanding or appear to be forgotten.

In terms of the communal areas, their general maintenance, decoration, the cleaning service and dealing with rubbish are all commented upon by tenants, whilst the grass cutting is mentioned by some.

Also of concern is the condition of tenants' properties, in particular damp and mould problems and the external maintenance of the properties.

The following page shows some of the comments received in full, which will help Arun DC to better understand the issues raised and target those areas in need of improvement.



Number of respondents: 472

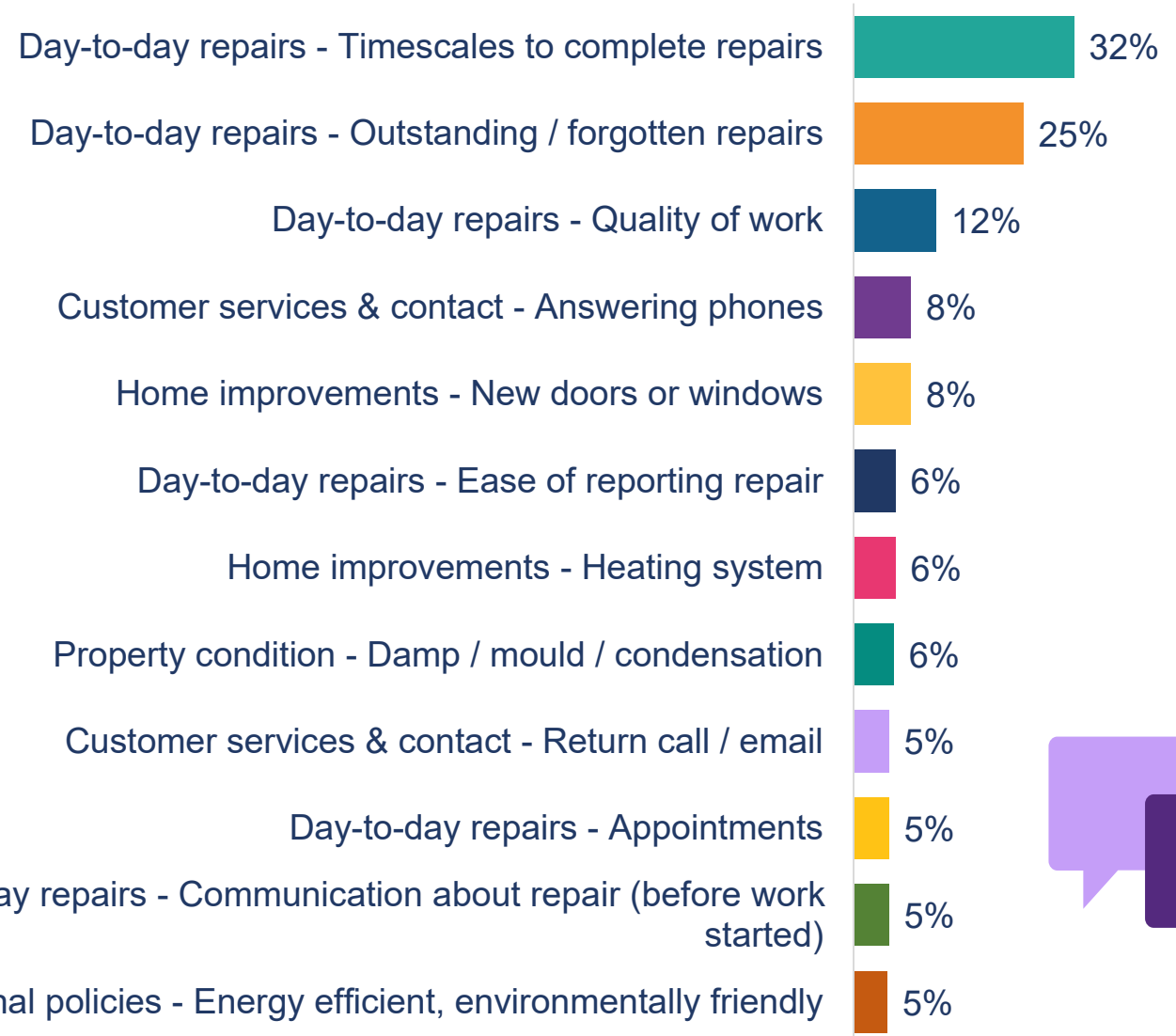
Tenants not satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service were asked to explain why and 411 tenants made comments.

The most frequent comment is once again the timescales for work to be completed, followed by dealing with outstanding repairs and the quality of the repair work but then getting through on the phone.

These first two issues are in common with a lot of other social landlords, many of whom are still trying to return to normal after the pandemic and are now hit with rising costs and a lack of suitable labour and contractors. There also appears to be a mismatch between expectation and performance. We now live in a society where you can order something and have it the next day, but it is impossible to operate a repairs service in this way so one of the challenges facing social landlords is to manage tenants' expectations.

However, these comments give insight into what tenants are most concerned about regarding the repairs service and will help Arun DC target areas for improvement.

# Comments – Dissatisfaction with Repairs



Number of respondents: 411

# Home or Communal Areas not Well Maintained or Safe – Comments

## Day-to-day repairs – Timescales to complete repairs

“Planned maintenance promised 5 years ago is still not carried out. Repairs that are done are poor quality. My house needs a new roof and windows to help fix damp issues.”

“I have countless times asked the council to fix my sink which is still leaking It also took the council 6 weeks to fix the shower it’s disgusting.”

“Do work quicker.”

“Have waited several months for URGENT building - work repairs.”

“Not take so long before they come and do the job they have been asked to do.”

“Do repairs quicker. I had to wait 6 months for mould and collapsed ceiling to be done. Plus, over 12 months for a new roof. Paint on the outside of bungalow is disgusting, hasn’t been done for over 4 years.”

“I have yellow tape over old electric metal for over 3 years waiting for it to be moved. Follow-up calls re anything.”

## Day-to-day repairs – Outstanding/forgotten repairs

“I have had my windows half fixed there are still faults with black beading, one window unsafe in my son’s room, hinges rusty and mouldy.”

“Communal gardens. Exterior lighting not working for 3 years, have reported nothing done.”

“I have still got things in my house that need doing, they haven’t come back to finish it.”

“Still waiting on repairs.”

“Have asked for a ramp to be put in for my disabled mother but have had no reply. They were also told by Southern Water that my sewer drain surround was dangerous, yet they have still not repaired it 4 months later.”

“They could actually carry out work as they are aware of things that need attention i.e., windows unsafe plus no smoke alarm.”

“Broken toilet, asking help to fix it and way promise us some. One comes check it, but never turn in.”

## Communal areas – Quality of cleaning service

“Communal areas are disgusting. Someone used to maintain them 2 years ago. Now they’re filthy.”

“They should cut down the weeds by the sheds and clean the communal halls and stairs inside.”

“Needs decorating and new carpet and a new cleaner.”

“The communal areas are never cleaned; can’t remember the last time we had a cleaner. My property hasn’t been painted for years.”

“Still waiting for communal areas to be deep cleaned after many, many months.”

“I don’t know who cleans the stairs and corridors. They are dirty.”

“Holes in communal ceilings still not repainted. Could do with 1 extra washing machine. Carpets need cleaning more regularly.”

“Get cleaner who hoovers and wipes all surfaces, weeds are not dealt with.”

## Property condition – Damp/mould

“Wish they sort the mould out in my bedroom, I have COPD.”

“Sort damp and mildew in bedroom.”

“Have mould around all windows and doors and in the bathroom.”

“I have damp and every time I try calling repairs to my bath too, I now have a leak I can’t get through if someone could get hold of me...”

“My walls are damp and falling apart in my lounge.”

“Communication is very poor. Been living with BLACK MOULD for years VERY LITTLE done about it.”

“Sort the mould out that’s been ongoing for 6 years.”

“Still waiting for the surveyor to look at rising damp. Waiting for property to be repaired.”

“I have black mould and the guy said he would send someone to fix my air vent, and nobody has been in touch, it’s been months.”





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# Responsible Neighbourhood Management





# Dissatisfaction with Repairs – Comments

## Day-to-day repairs – Timescales to complete repairs

“Have damp in the living room, it took two years for someone to come out and now still waiting again a month later.”

“Repairs need to be dealt with a lot quicker.”

“Repairs to the bathroom, over a year later and I am still waiting for some repairs to be done. Not having to wait so long for work to be done.”

“Took a formal complaint to get work done. Still ongoing as so much needs doing. Communication is dire from contractors.”

“We have waited 6 months for someone to change one broken door. It is a very long time.”

“Constantly put through to out of hours, who do nothing. Took 3 months to get gutter repaired even though it was reported as dangerous.”

“There is a total lack of communication. I’ve been waiting 3-4 months for latest repair. Still waiting....”

## Day-to-day repairs – Outstanding/forgotten repairs

“Have reported, several times since 2020 air vent coming away from lounge wall. This has caught my leg twice and is no longer needed, as was the old airing cupboard vent - 2 boilers ago.”

“Maintenance jobs left unfinished for months/years on end with no communication. I have a leak in one of my bedrooms which has caused black mould to grow. People have inspected it, but nothing has been done. My bathroom was stripped due to green electric fluid seeping in, but again, nothing done since.”

“My house needs so many repairs it’s unreal. We have had a man from council around before saying that repairs were going to be done to the outside, but nothing.”

“Could finish work they started.”

“No maintenance has been done. Most of the windows either won’t open, have gaps and don’t shut properly - makes it very hard to keep warm in winter.”

## Day-to-day repairs – Quality of work

“They take the cheap option, so its false economy do it right the first time.”

“Arun Council are not the problem, it’s the repair and maintenance companies they use I mostly have had very poor treatment so I will not tolerate idiots who claim to know what they’re doing when the opposite is true.”

“It’s all a shambles!! Can not get new anything even when it’s needed!! Repairs are just temp and not actual repairs.. just a waste of time to actually listen to tenants when they look after their homes and repair or replace things when it’s needed.”

“Company Hexagon really poor quality of work. Still waiting for it to be resolved.”

“Could have more robust bathroom fixtures and instructions on using appliances supplied.”

“Poor repair, lack of workmanship and knowledge.”

## Customer service – Answering phones

“Have to wait a long time on the phone which increases my phone bill.”

“One can be on the phone waiting for an agent for ages. The worst thing the council did was to remove managers. When we had a problem, the manager would sort it. Now we have to use the phone for everything.”

“Well, you can’t get through to Osbournes, they never answer the phone. Not everyone has a computer or mobile. Service appalling.”

“Could actually answer the phone more often, not everyone is internet savvy.”

“The phone lines are always busy - Told call is held in queue.”

“Far too long a wait on the phone when trying to report a problem. Lack of immediate phone contact especially at weekends.”

“Not reliable to answer, phone or call back. Give up!”

“By phoning no reply for more than an hour.”

Nearly half the tenants (47%) stated they live in a building with communal areas that Arun DC is responsible for maintaining. Of these tenants, 49% of are satisfied that Arun DC keeps their communal areas clean and well maintained.

Perhaps because of some of the comments made about the communal maintenance services, satisfaction is down by 6% since 2021, whilst two-fifths of tenants are dissatisfied (39%).

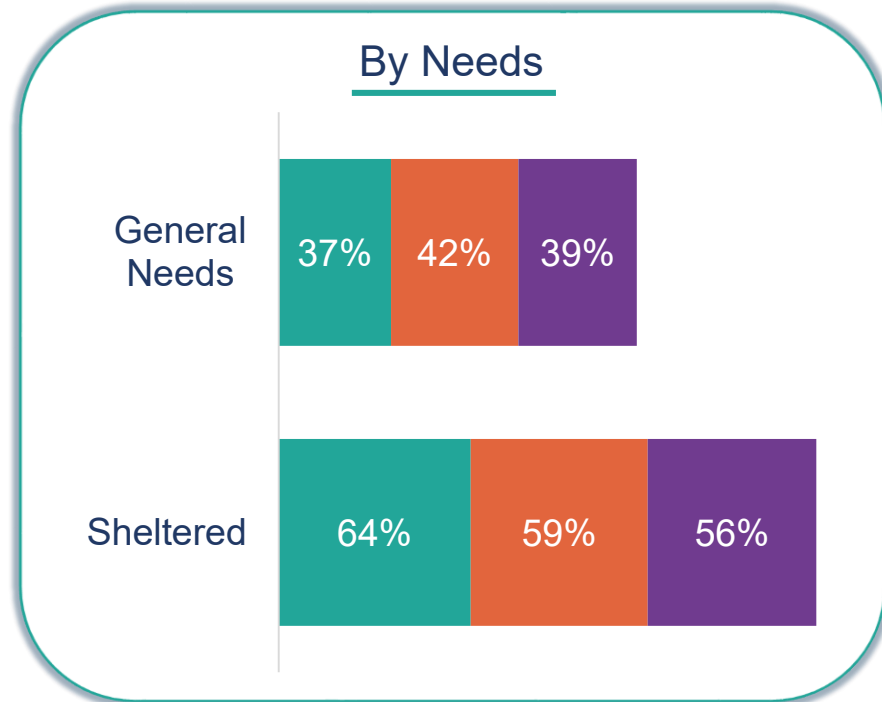
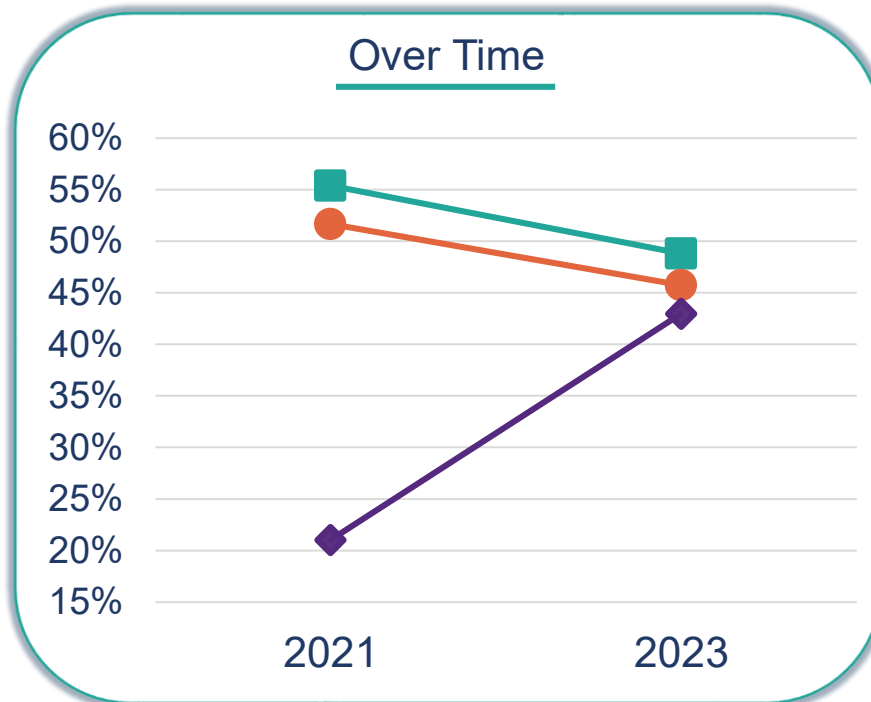
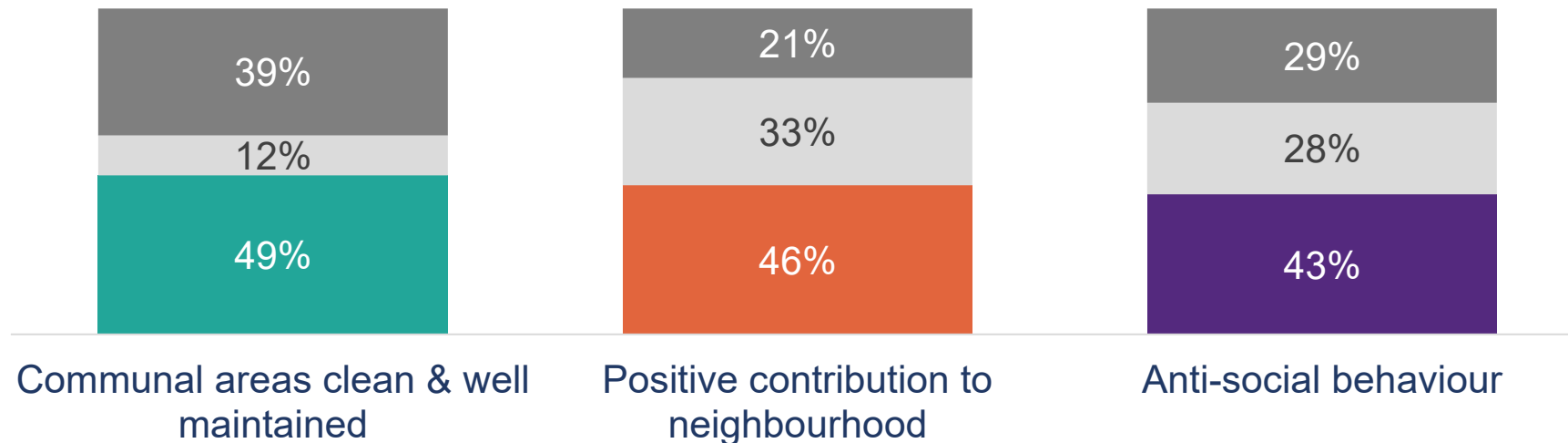
A similar number of tenants (46%) are satisfied that Arun DC makes a positive contribution to their neighbourhood (down 6%). Although 21% of tenants are dissatisfied a third gave a neither satisfied nor dissatisfied answer, possibly because they have no opinion on what contribution is being made.

Satisfaction with how anti-social behaviour is handled has doubled since 2021, up from just 21% to 43%. However, 29% of tenants remain dissatisfied with this measure.

Sheltered tenants are once again significantly more satisfied than general needs tenants.



# Responsible Neighbourhood Management





Respectful & Helpful Engagement





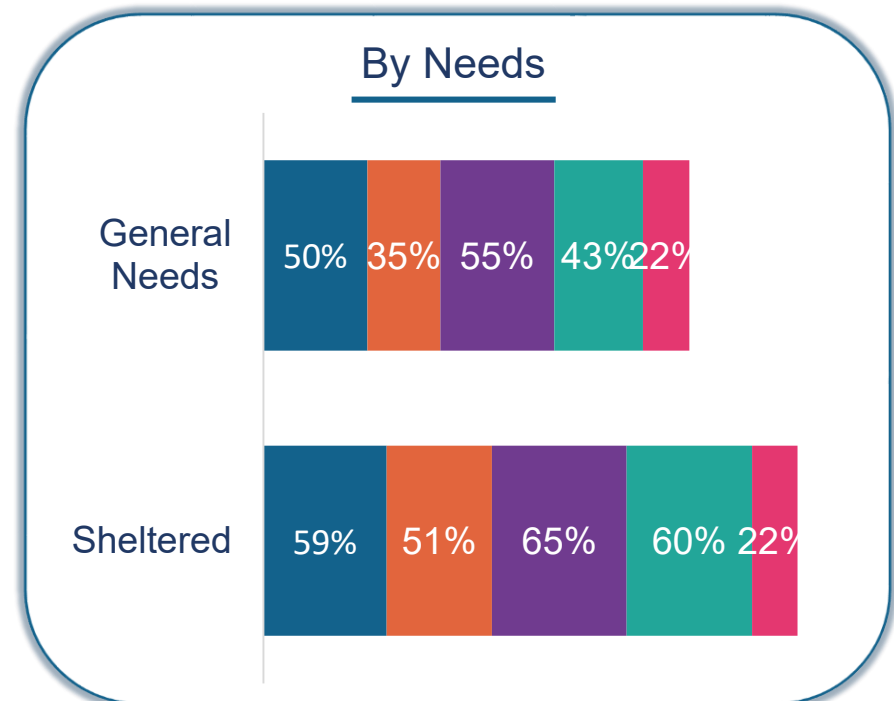
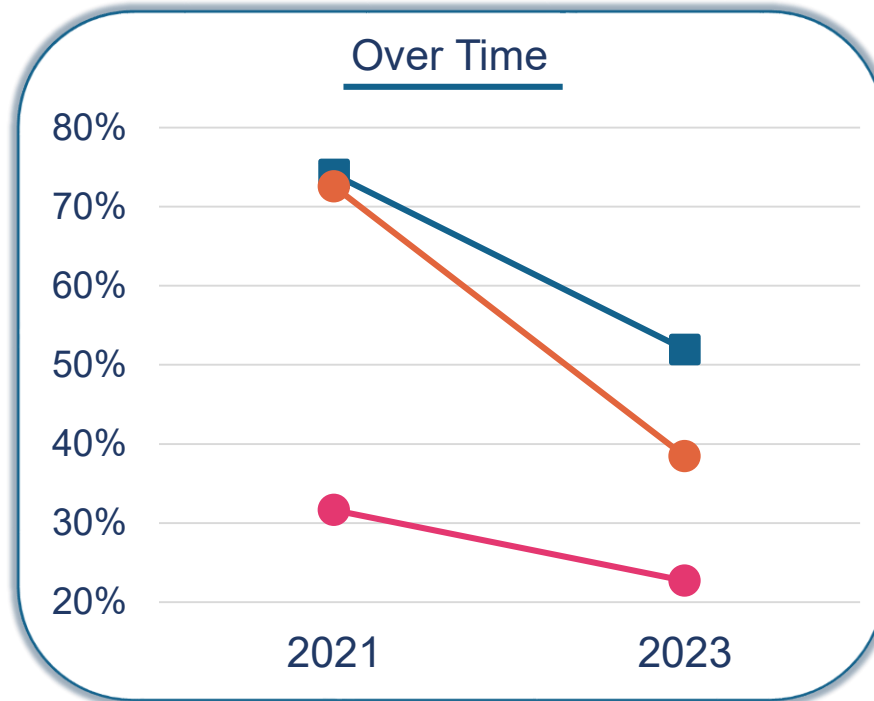
# Respectful & Helpful Engagement

Around half the tenants (52%) find Arun DC easy to deal with, although this has fallen from 74% in 2021, and a quarter are dissatisfied (27%). While slightly more tenants (57%) agree that they are treated fairly and with respect.

In terms of the communication with the Council, 47% are satisfied that they are kept informed about things that matter to them. However, fewer (38%) feel the Council listens to their views and acts upon them; almost as many tenants are dissatisfied with this (34%) and satisfaction has fallen by 35%.

A quarter of tenants (27%) stated they made a complaint to the Council's Housing Service in the last 12 months (300 tenants), although it is not clear how many of these are genuine complaints following a failure of service or service requests yet to be fully addressed. Nonetheless, of these tenants, just 23% are satisfied with the way their complaint was handled, down from 32% in 2021, and nearly three times as many are dissatisfied (61%).

Sheltered tenants are again more satisfied with these aspects of engagement, although the same number are satisfied with complaints handling.





# Comments – Customer Service

Tenants not satisfied with customer service and communications were asked why, and 362 tenants gave comments.

Answering the phones and returning calls and emails are the biggest issues for tenants, accounting for around two-fifths of the comments made. It does appear that many tenants have real difficulty getting in touch with the Council to report problems, particularly repairs, and this is affecting their levels of satisfaction with the service.

Linked to this is the way calls are handled, with some tenants complaining they are passed around to different people/departments, whilst others want the staff to show them a little more care, empathy and support when they do get through.

The remaining comments cover a range of issues, but a general feeling is that communication could be better.

Examples of the comments received from tenants are shown on the following page.



Number of respondents: 362

# Customer Service – Comments

## Customer service & contact – Answering phones

“Telephone conversations/trying to get through can take up to 30 minutes for an answer. No time limit given as to when repairs may take place Not taking into consideration my working hours.”

“Never can get through on phone sort repairs dept out. Get rid of town force put the men on the council team save money relook at housing issues for long-term tenants when elderly and disabilities.”

“Have to wait so long to get through on the phone, to then be told it will be done in so many weeks.”

“Telephone line is difficult to get through.”

“Out-of-hours (weekend) services don’t answer calls. Repairs get reported and months on repairs still waiting to be done, doesn’t seem to be any follow up to check repairs have been.”

“Phone line cuts out a lot and no call back so long waits on calls.”

## Customer service & contact – Return calls/emails

“They never return calls It is very hard to get hold of an individual to talk to They never let the tenants know ahead of work being carried out They don’t LISTEN!”

“Having to repeat issues as no one updates the system. Promises of emails sent and someone will call back - did not happen! Don’t keep updated as to what is happening re. repairs.”

“Return emails and phone calls more promptly.”

“Please answer and respond to messages.”

“1. Leaving messages on the answer phone is a waste of time. 2. Message saying they aim to respond within 10 working days! Is ridiculous.”

“Never answer the phone and when do take my name promise phone call back which never happens and when I phone again no one has any idea of what is going on.”

“A reply to phone calls would be polite.”

## Customer service & contact – Care, empathy and support

“I asked if my sink could get fixed as it leaks, and I was told to grow up!!!”

“I’ve had to raise a complaint against the repairs department level 1 and level 2 complaints that weren’t dealt with. I was just ignored. I’m disabled too and have a lot of health problems too I’m just fed up speaking to people who just don’t care!”

“Sometimes I feel people on the phone do not listen, and you’re made to feel stupid!”

“Some staff are very rude, could take notice of what is said and acted on.”

“Be more empathetic. You need people who actually care on the phones.”

“The council has a discriminatory attitude to the elderly! I am 73 and not listened to and treated like I am a nuisance - I don’t complain about anything.”

“Listen on the telephone. Not answering, not ringing back (repeatedly) to treat them the way they would like to be treated.”

## Customer service & contact – Contact handling – passed around

“Keep getting passed off to different people.”

“Takes a long time to get through to anyone or the right department.”

“Ring and get passed all around the houses and still don’t always get one you want.”

“Could the many departments please COMMUNICATE with each other & share relevant information? You tell something to A Dept then have to tell B C & D Depts when they ask why you didn’t inform them! At best it is just irritating, but swiftly becomes annoying, frustrating and negatively impacts the mental health of the tenant.”

“Can never get through when we do either wrong department or get cut off.”

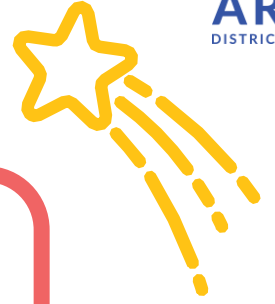
“No communication often passed around in circles between different phone agents.”

“Too much to say. Just get passed onto other departments when ringing them.”



# Recommending Arun & Improvements





# Recommending Arun DC

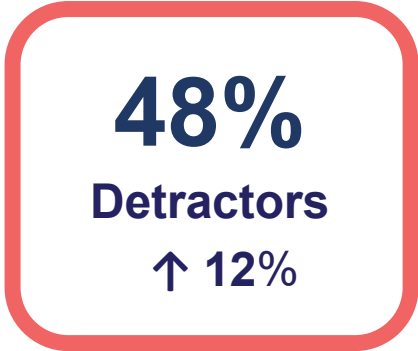
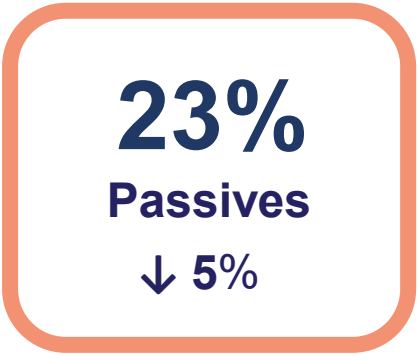
Tenants were also asked, "How likely would you be to recommend Arun DC to other people on a scale of 10 to 0, where 10 is extremely likely and 0 is not at all likely?"

Just 29% of tenants are promoters, very loyal and happy to promote Arun DC to other people, although 21% did give a score of 10 out of 10. Around a quarter of tenants are currently passive and could be persuaded either way (23%). However, 48% are detractors (with 13% scoring a 0), and likely to have negative views about Arun DC.

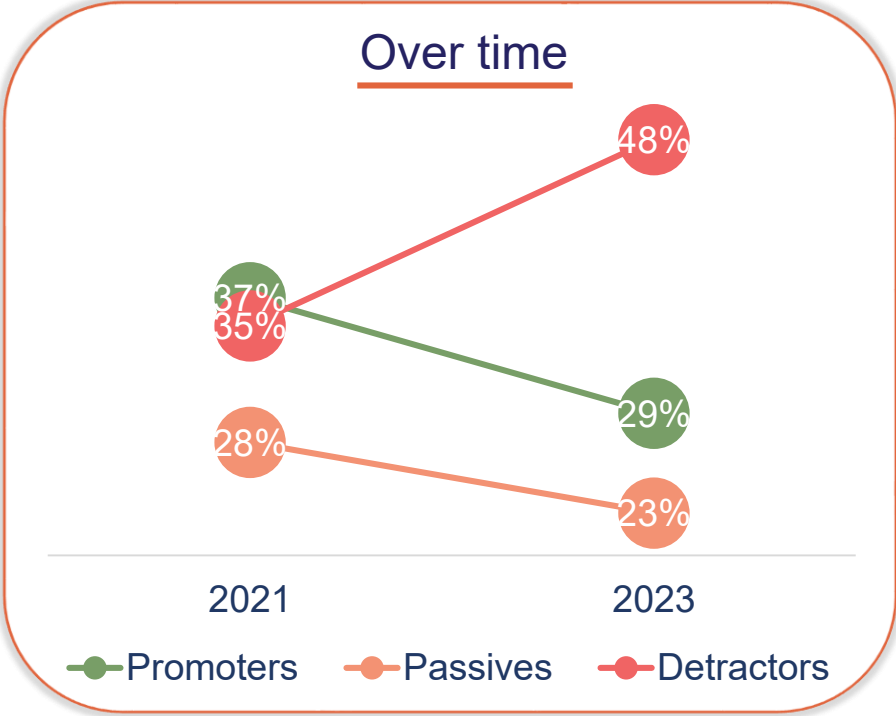
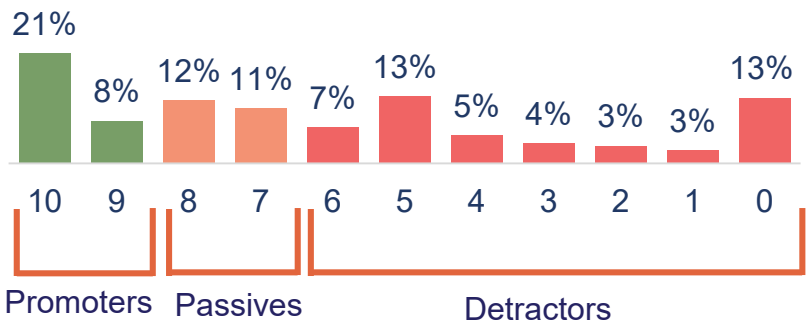
The Net Promoter Score (promoters minus detractors) is -18, which is a decrease of 20 points since the previous survey. This is driven by 8% fewer promoters, but 12% more detractors.

More sheltered tenants are promoters; 36% compared with 28% of general needs tenants. Correspondingly, the NPS is -6 for sheltered tenants and -22 for general needs tenants.

**-18**  
NPS ↓ 20

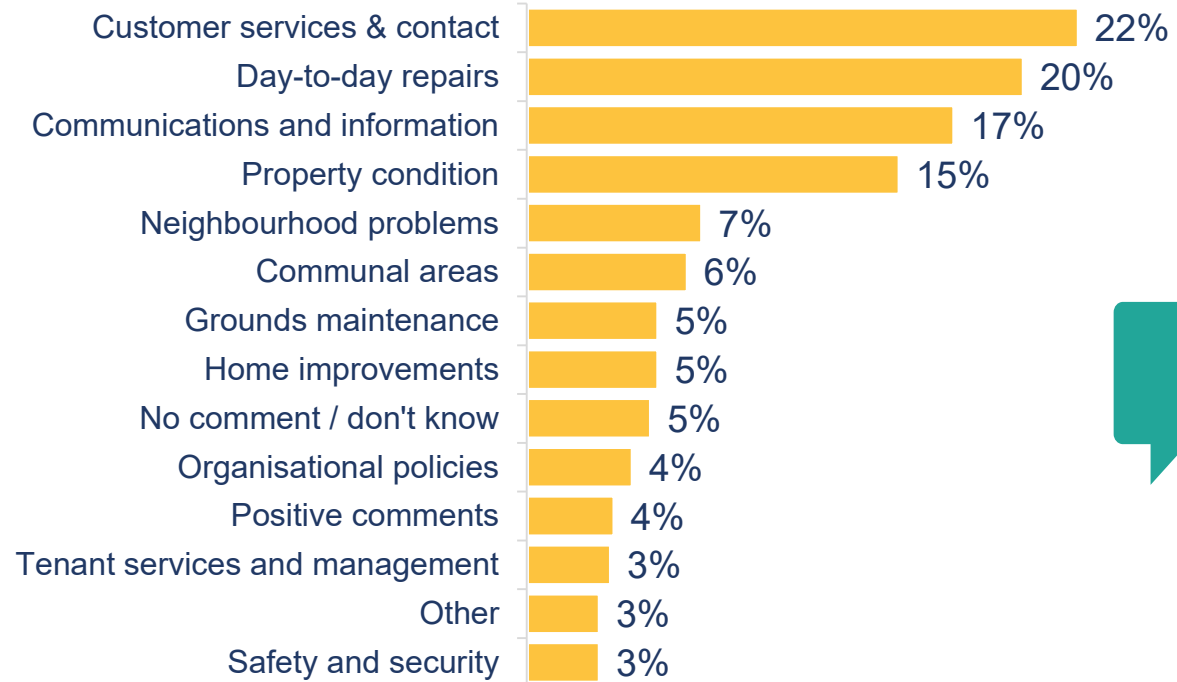


How likely would you be to recommend Arun DC to other people?



# Improvement Suggestions

## Categories



## Hot Topics



Tenants were asked if there was one thing Arun DC could do to improve its services, and what would they like it to be, and 680 tenants gave comments.

A fifth of the comments focus on customer service issues, including call handling, keeping promises, staff showing more care and support and the time taken to resolve problems. Almost as many comments refer to the repairs service, with the timescales to complete work and dealing with outstanding repairs again mentioned.

Communication issues and property condition make up the remaining top four places and some of the comments relating to these four categories are shown in full on the following page to give a feel of what the main concerns are for the tenants.

Just 4% of the comments are positive about the current service and 5% of tenants had no suggestions, perhaps also feeling no improvements are necessary.

Whilst many of these comments are negative about the current service, they will help the Council target areas for improvement.



# Improvements to Service – comments

## Customer service & contact

“Better reception in the reception area.”

“They need to be kind to tenants and listen.”

“Communication with its tenants, a straight answer. For two years we have been asking about flats here and all we get is a don't know. Not good enough.”

“Used to be a 9 for above but not seeing to tenants as good as once did. Lack of funding maybe?”

“The telephone service far too long a wait to get through to department.”

“Better staff understanding of people with additional needs.”

“To return calls and keep tenants informed as to how their complaints are processing time before completion etc.”

“People skills, treat people as people & help when they are in difficulties, especially with money problems.”

“More understanding.”

## Day-to-day repairs

“When you need something mended you have to do times around them. So, most people lose money from work. Should be when we can do in our times.”

“Communicate! Keep tenants informed of works that are to be carried out.”

“Actually, complete the repairs and turn up on appointment days.”

“Respond to repair requests and update residents with ongoing repairs. Rude uncaring staff, respond to requests for complaints. Timely repairs and communication needs rebuilding, Do something before someone is seriously hurt or killed.”

“Communicate with each other. Surely it should not be this stressful to get a repair. Communicate and just get a job done without coming back. Be efficient and employ contractors who can actually do their job and not have all these callbacks.”

## Communication & information

“Keep in touch more and listen to what people have to say.”

“Listen to tenants and perhaps have the mindset of would I want to live there?”

“More communication of who does what in the council - we used to get a printed list. Bring back the wardens that's when it all started to go downhill when we lost those. But it all comes down to the same thing in the end-money!”

“Better communication.”

“Being able to report issues online made easier. On the website it's confusing.”

“Face-to-face or person-to-person phone, less automated responses.”

“Act on complains and get told this time and time again.”

“Personal services, sort out online system and follow up on IT complaints iHousing is rubbish to use.”

## Property condition

“It would be so much easier to speak with the person responsible for dealing with any issues. To maintain their properties rather than let them go. i.e., mould, crumbling walls and cracks.”

“Maintain the exterior of properties better. e.g., Paint the buildings, hasn't been done for years!”

“More frequent outdoor communal decorating.”

“Update and modernise ageing buildings, particularly where vulnerable tenants live.”

“ADC have a policy called Raise the Roof. They made a commitment to the government that all of their housing stock would be of decent home standard by the end of 2010 (C grade). Instead of your councillors' excuses that the government gave them unrealistic targets maybe they should honour their agreements.”

“Gutters and paint work more often.”



# Wellbeing





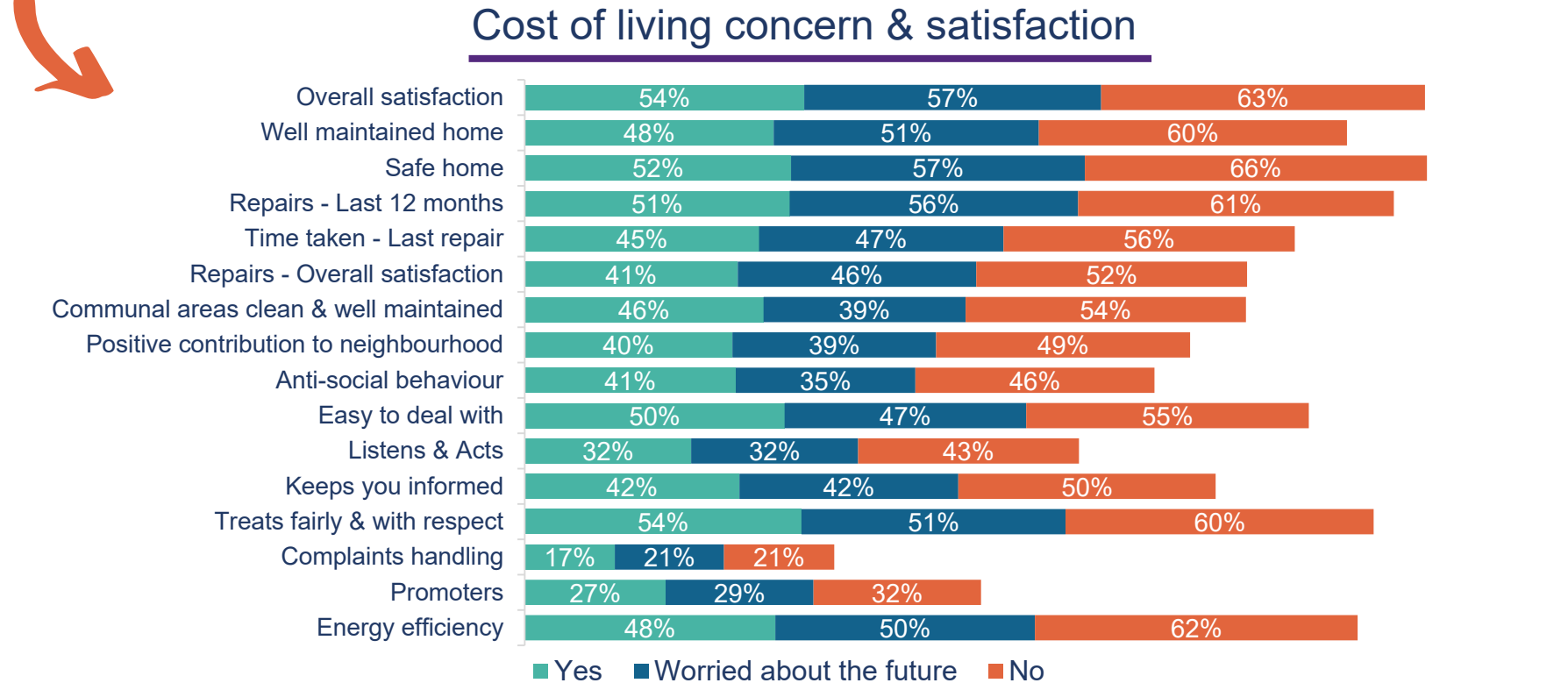
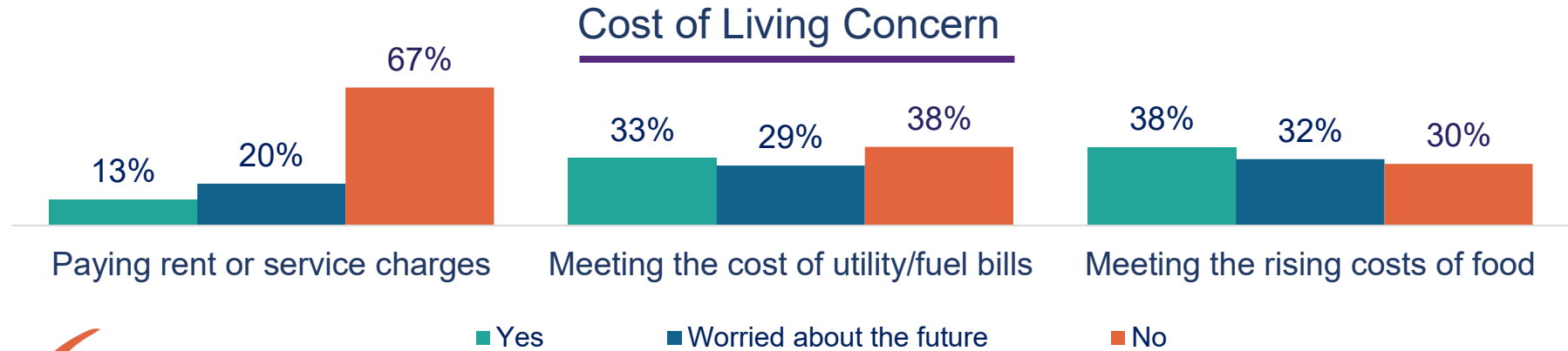
# Cost of Living Concern

Arun DC also took this opportunity to ask tenants some questions about their wellbeing, including how they feel about the cost of living crisis and whether they suffer from damp and mould in their homes.

The survey shows that some tenants are concerned about their bills; 13% stated that they are currently struggling with their rent payments, 33% with their utility bills and 38% with the rising cost of food. While 15% of tenants said they have used food banks in the last 12 months.

Despite the news that inflation is dropping, and fuel bills will fall, similar numbers of tenants are worried about the future, for instance, 29% worry about future fuel bills and 32% about food costs.

Evidence from similar surveys shows that those struggling financially are often less satisfied with their homes and the services provide by their landlord, and this largely looks to be the case with Arun DC. With the overall service, 54% of those struggling are satisfied compared with 63% of those not struggling. This also appears to be true for the other services, as shown in the chart opposite.



# Damp & Mould

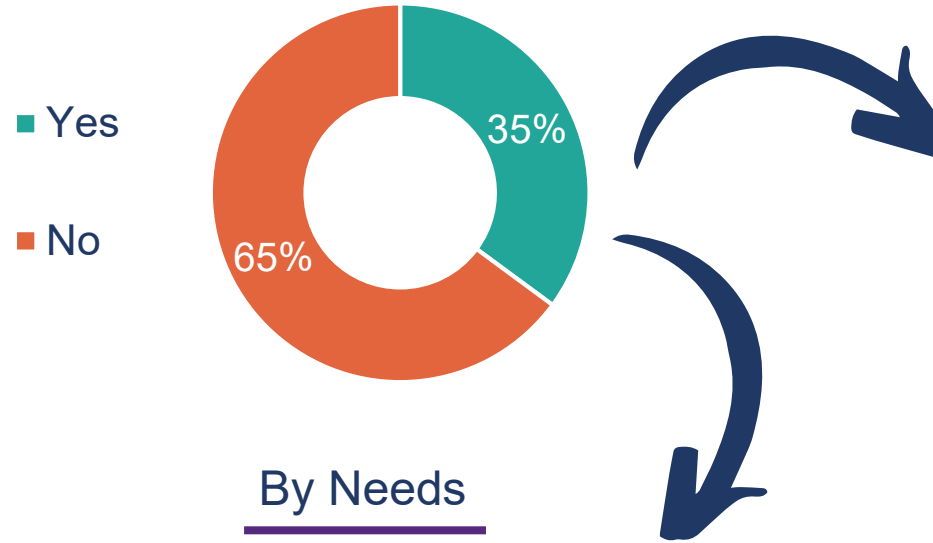
Arun DC also asked tenants if their home currently suffers from any damp or mould issues.

Just over a third of tenants (35%) stated they do have damp or mould in their homes, this equating to around 380 of the tenants that responded to the survey. Most tenants (71%) say that they have reported this to the Council's housing service to look into.

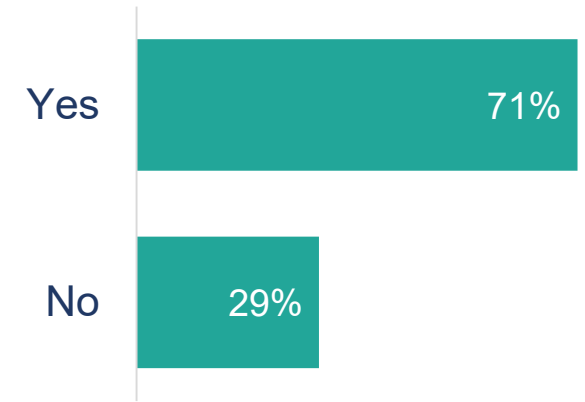
Tenants in Housing Area NO09 appear to have more issues with damp and mould than those in the other areas. While general needs tenants report more far problems than sheltered housing tenants.

The details of the tenants with damp or mould problems have been passed back to the Council. These need to be addressed as a matter of urgency to ensure tenants are kept safe and the condition of their properties does not deteriorate any further.

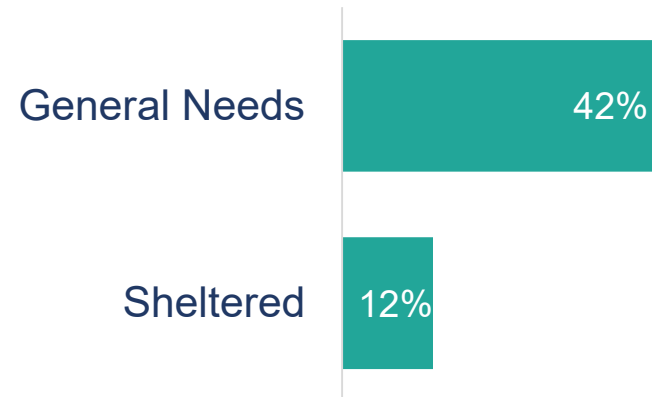
## Damp/Mould in Home



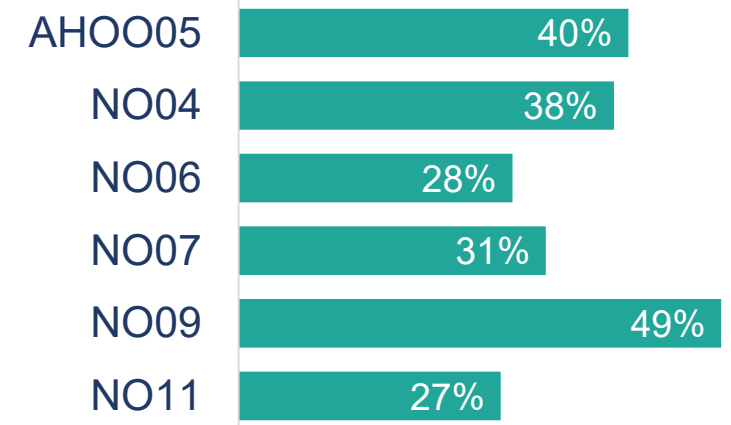
## Reported it?



## By Needs



## By Housing Area





# Trends



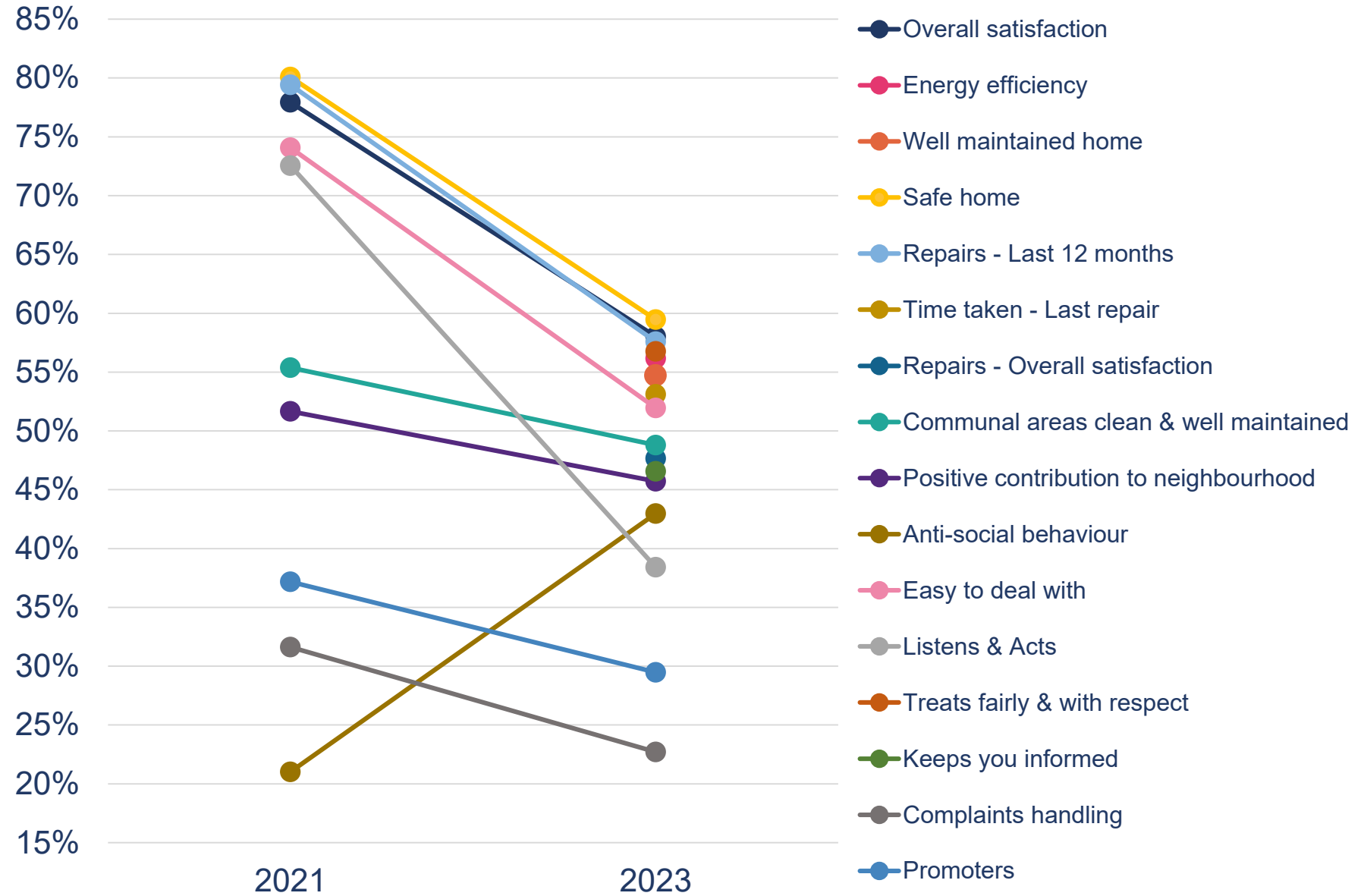
Since the survey in 2021 satisfaction has generally fallen. In fact, on all of the consistent measures between the two surveys satisfaction is down apart from the handling of anti-social behaviour, which is up from just 22% to 43%.

Satisfaction with the overall service provided is down 20% since 2021, with similar falls for the home being safe, the Council being easy to deal with and the repairs service in the last 12 months.

Page 178  
 How the Council listens to tenants' views and acts upon them has seen an even bigger fall, from 73% down to 38%, whilst the other measures are still down but by less.

This period was affected by the pandemic and now the cost of living crisis so tenants have faced many challenges and it is possible this has affected the results (see also general trends on page 7). However, it is worrying that things seem to be moving in the wrong direction, which the Council will need to address as a matter of urgency.

# Trend Over Time



\*Safe home changed from "safe and secure" to just "safe" in 2023



# Year on Year Change

The table opposite is a further way to present the changes between the current survey and that conducted in 2021.

It emphasises the level of change, with satisfaction decreasing for all but one measure.

The biggest change is for listening to tenants' views and acting upon them (down 35%) and the overall repairs and maintenance service (down 22%). While 20% fewer tenants are satisfied with the overall service from the council.

There have been smaller decreases for the upkeep of the communal areas and the positive contribution to the neighbourhood (both down 6%).

Some of the remaining measures are the new TSM questions and new to the survey so a trend will start to develop as these questions are used again in the future.

	2021	2023	Change
Overall satisfaction	78%	58%	-20%
Energy efficiency	--	56%	
Well maintained home	--	55%	
Safe home	80%	59%	-21%
Repairs - Last 12 months	79%	58%	-21%
Time taken - Last repair	--	53%	
Repairs - Overall satisfaction	70%	48%	-22%
Communal areas clean & well maintained	55%	49%	-6%
Positive contribution to neighbourhood	52%	46%	-6%
Anti-social behaviour	21%	43%	22%
Easy to deal with	74%	52%	-22%
Listens & Acts	73%	38%	-35%
Keeps you informed	--	47%	
Treats fairly & with respect	--	57%	
Complaints handling	32%	23%	-9%
Promoters	37%	29%	-8%

Base: 2022 = 1,473, 2023 = 1,189





# Understanding Satisfaction



# Satisfaction & Dissatisfaction

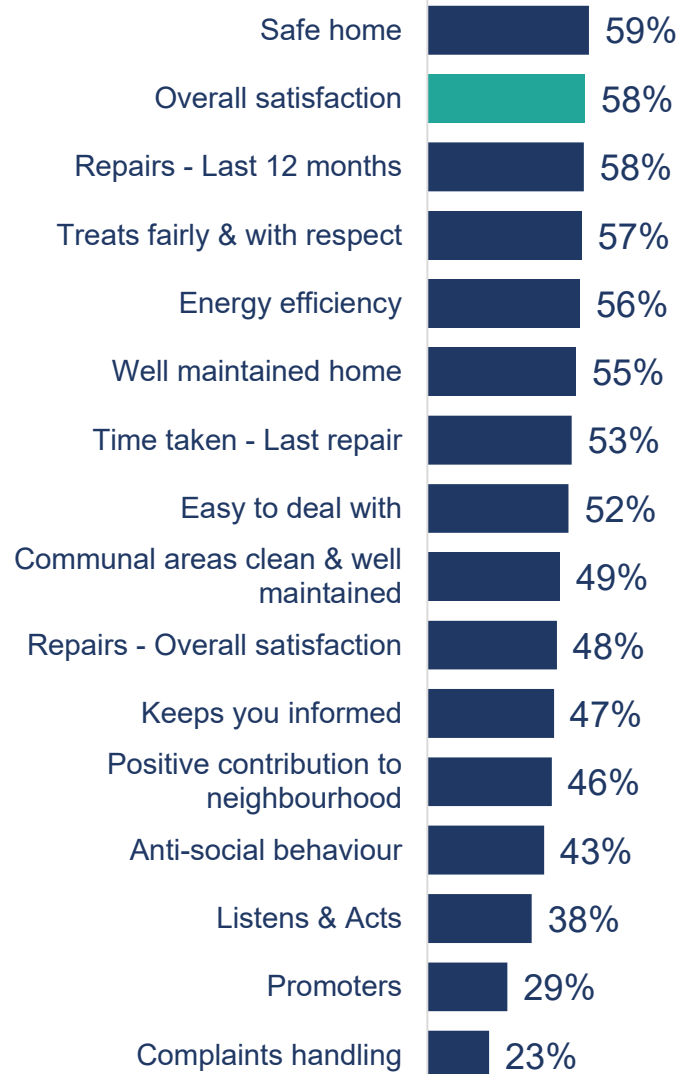
The charts opposite show the level of both satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the services provided by Arun DC in 2023. However, there will also be some giving a neither answer and these are also important to understand as, with work, they could be pursued to move into the satisfied bracket.

The overall satisfaction of 58% sits towards the top of the list of measures with only the provision of a safe home above (59%). While dissatisfaction is lowest for tenants being treated fairly and with respect and with respect and the contribution made to the neighbourhood – as more tenants gave a neutral response to these questions.

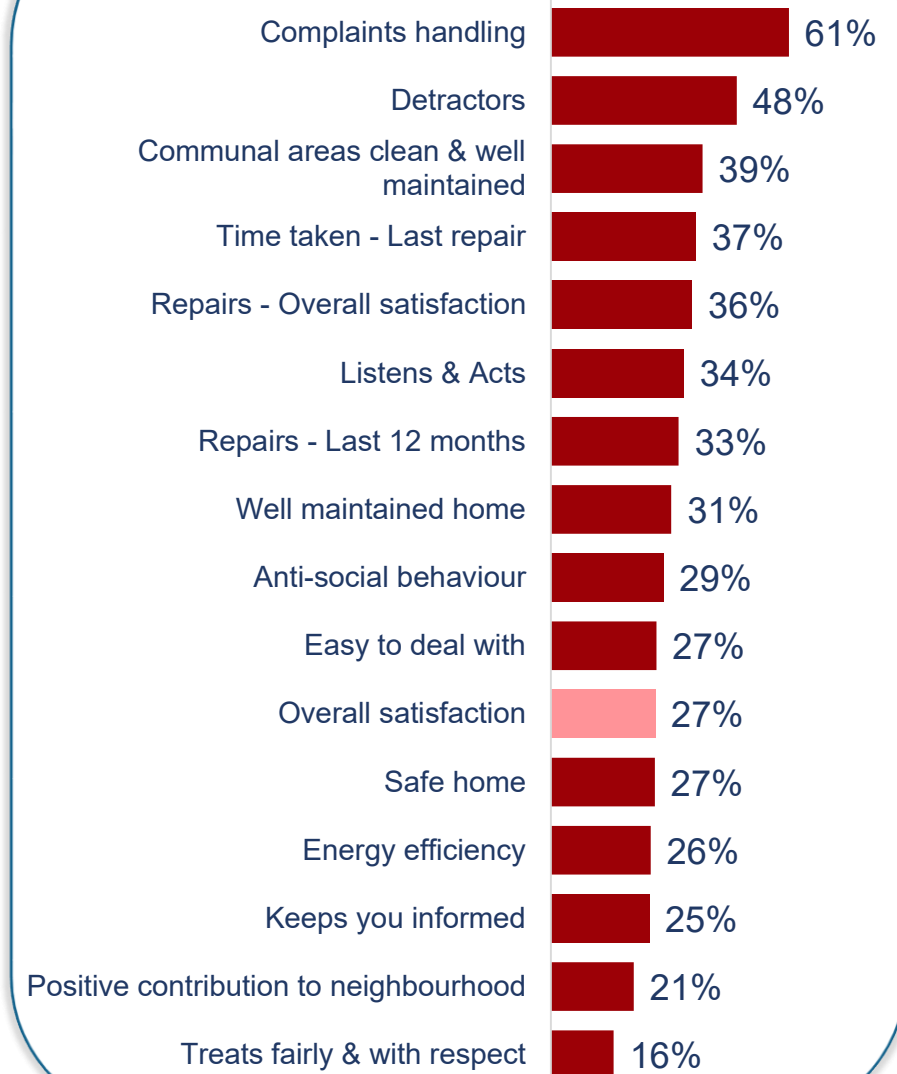
In many of the metrics, less than half of the tenants are satisfied and consequently, dissatisfaction is relatively high. Although only for one, complaints handling, are there more tenants dissatisfied than satisfied; 61% compared with just 23%.

However, there are also more tenants who would not recommend Arun DC to other people than who would, generating a negative Net promoter Score of -18.

## Satisfaction with measures



## Dissatisfaction with measures







# All Comments

The tables to the right include an analysis of all comments received in 2023 across all open-ended questions.

Perhaps not surprisingly, this shows the most frequent negative comment area is the repairs service. This is followed by customer contact issues and property condition concerns.

As shown in the comments included within the report, on the repairs service it is principally the time taken to complete work that tenants are most concerned about.

While making contact by phone and the returning of contact are the biggest issues with the customer service provided by the Council.

Some tenants have problems with damp and mould in their properties which is reflected in the comments and clearly causing some distress and worry.

Top Comment Areas	
Day-to-day repairs	36%
Customer services & contact	25%
Property condition	16%
Communications and information	11%
Communal areas	10%
Grounds maintenance	9%
Home improvements	7%
Safety and security	6%
Neighbourhood problems	5%
No comment / don't know	4%
Organisational policies	4%

Hot Topics	
Day-to-day repairs - Timescales to complete repairs	14%
Day-to-day repairs - Outstanding / forgotten repairs	12%
Customer services & contact - Answering phones	8%
Customer services & contact - Return call / email	6%
Day-to-day repairs - Quality of work	5%
Customer services & contact - Care, empathy, support etc	5%
Property condition - External property maintenance	5%
Communications and information - Communications (in general)	4%
Communal areas - Quality of cleaning service	4%
Property condition - Condition of the property	4%
Property condition - Damp / mould / condensation	4%
Home improvements - New doors or windows	4%
Communications and information - Listen carefully, take interest	3%

# Key Driver Analysis

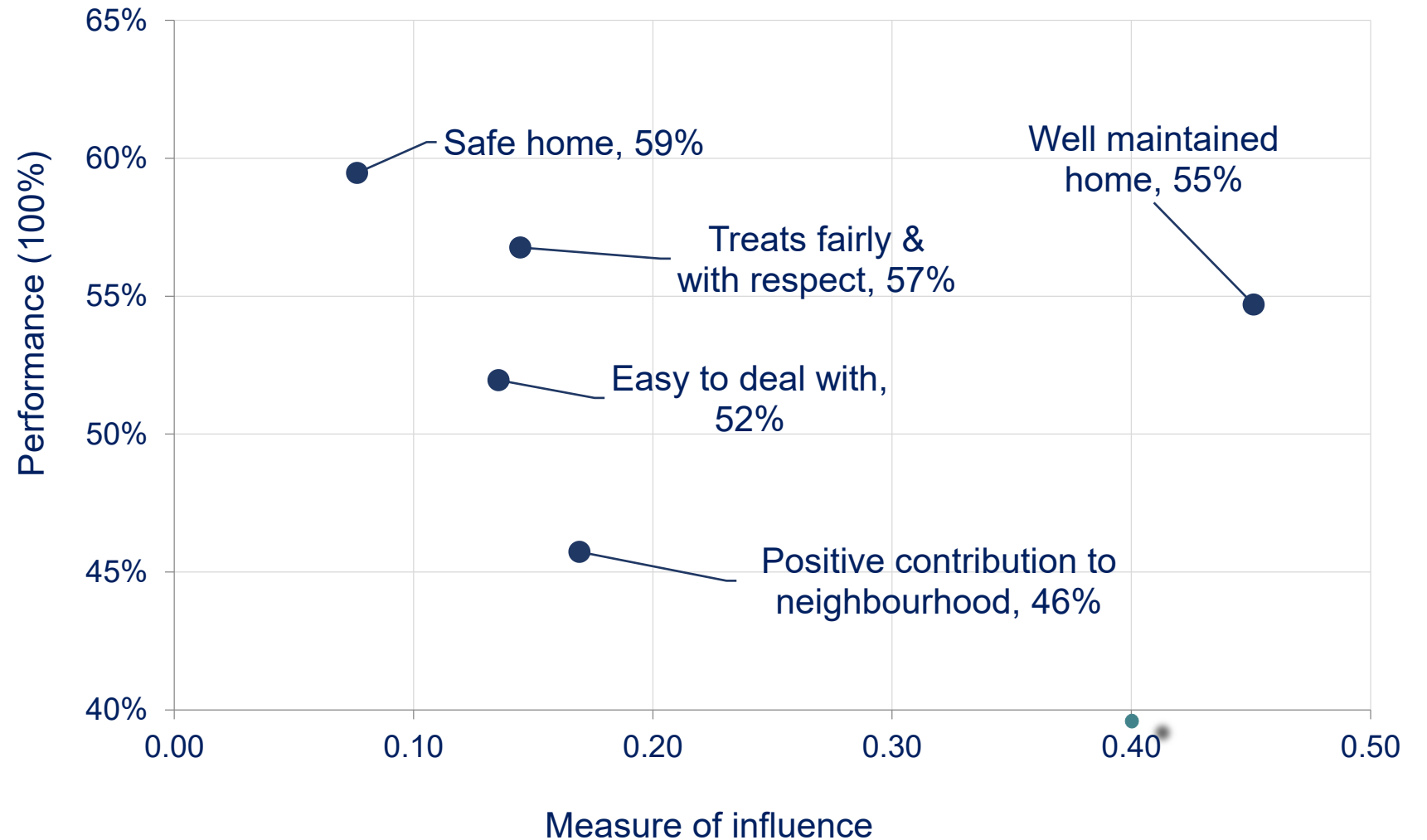
Key driver analysis is used to examine the relationship between the different variables (the questions asked in the survey) and determine which elements of the service are the key drivers for tenants' overall satisfaction.

The most important driver for tenants' satisfaction with the overall service provided by Arun DC is that they have a well maintained home; this is consistent with the themes of the comments reporting some issues with property condition and the repairs service.

The positive contribution made to the neighbourhood, treating tenants fairly and with respect, Arun DC being easy to deal with and the provision of a safe home are all important but less influential. Whereas the other measures in the survey are not significantly influential on overall satisfaction.

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

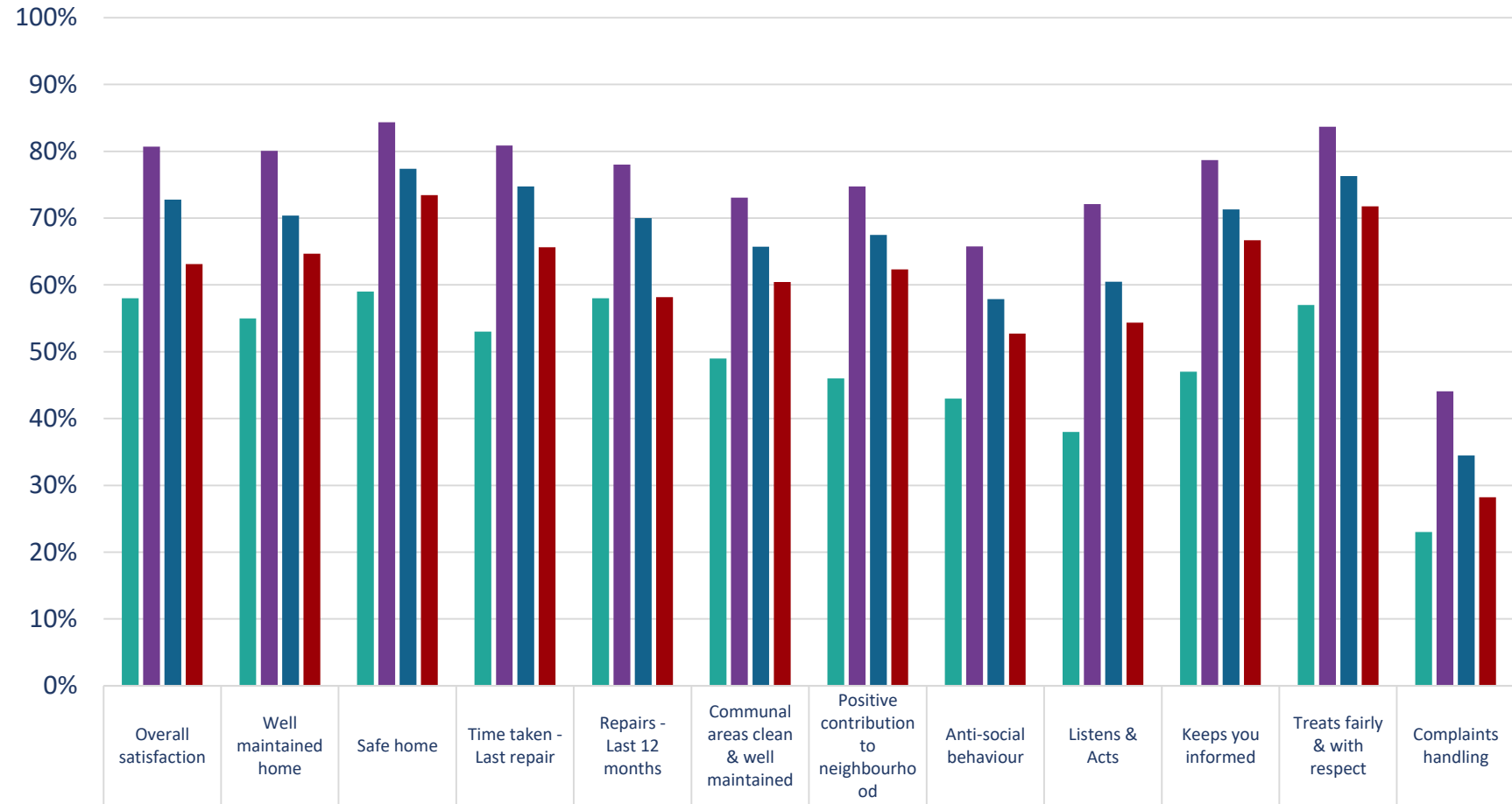
## Satisfaction Levels Acuity - Q1 23/24

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

This demonstrates that all measures fall into the lower quartile. On the overall services, Arun’s rating of 58% is 15% below the median for the group, while it is 24% below the median for the way tenants are kept informed and 22% below for listening to tenants’ views.

However, it should be remembered that the cohort of around 50 landlords varies in terms of their type, size and location. When the TSMs are reported for the first time to the Regulator next year, there will be a more comprehensive range of benchmarks and Arun will be able to choose a peer group more in line with their own characteristics.

Having said that, the comparisons are still disappointing and show that there is much to be improved.



■ Arun DC	58%	55%	59%	53%	58%	49%	46%	43%	38%	47%	57%	23%
■ 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	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Number of Landlords	55	49	49	49	49	49	49	53	55	49	49	50

# Subgroup Breakdown

As shown on the following pages, the results have been split down into various subgroups based on property and service characteristics, including the age and gender of tenants.

This section rounds up these different responses and attempts to find some conclusions from them.

- **Tenure** – In similar surveys, it is common that sheltered tenants are more satisfied than their general needs counterparts and this is the case for Arun DC. It is likely that the main issue is linked to the age of the tenants rather than the nature of the accommodation, although they will receive a higher level of service in the sheltered schemes.
- **Housing Area** – Arun operates over six areas each managed by a Housing Officer. There is no particular pattern to satisfaction except those in NO09 appear to be less satisfied than those in the other areas. It is not clear why this is the case, although this area reports more issues with damp and mould. The Council will clearly have more detailed knowledge of the area, property types and tenant characteristics but it is important to understand this to see whether the differences are linked to service delivery, in which case improvements could be targeted for this area.
- **Age Group** – It is commonly held that satisfaction increases with age, and this does seem to ring true with Arun DC, the oldest age group tends to be the most satisfied and those aged 25 to 34 the least. However, there is an anomaly in that the under-25 group are the most satisfied with some aspects of service and are the most likely to recommend the Council to other people.
- **Gender** – Whilst there are considerably more female tenants than male, they tend to be less satisfied. Although this is often seen at other landlords, it is far from universal, so it is not entirely clear why the differences occur. It is suggested that Arun DC works with a range of tenants to find out more about them to help understand what drives the differences of opinion.
- **Length of tenancy** – The results are split by length of occupation, and this shows that new tenants appear to be very satisfied, satisfaction then drops as time progresses. Perhaps this is because tenants are pleased to first receive an offer of their property, but satisfaction decreases as they start to experience more issues in their homes after a couple of years. Those of longer occupation will tend to be older and generally more settled and satisfied with the services.
- **Property type** – Perhaps unusually, it is tenants in the bedsits who are generally the most satisfied. It may be that these are more likely to be occupied by older tenants and be within sheltered schemes. Maisonette dwellers, many of whom will be young families, are the least satisfied, possibly because these are less suitable for families, and this affects satisfaction levels.
- **Number of bedrooms** – Similar to the property type, satisfaction is highest in the smallest properties, probably as these will, most likely be occupied by older tenants. However, perhaps surprisingly, those in four-bedroomed homes are the least satisfied. Whilst these will be occupied by families, they will also have the highest rents and be more difficult to heat.
- **Response method** – Whilst around half of those that responded to the survey did so online, compared with by post, they are consistently less satisfied. This is a pattern seen with other landlords and it appears that generally older (more satisfied) tenants prefer to use the postal method and younger (less satisfied) tenants prefer to complete online. For Arun DC, 74% of tenants that responded by post are aged 60 or over, compared with just 33% of those online, suggesting this pattern is true.

# Tenure

It is common in surveys of this type that older people, and those in sheltered accommodation, are more satisfied than their general needs counterparts and this is the case with Arun DC.

In fact, sheltered tenants are more satisfied with all the measures in the survey, apart from the handling of complaints which is the same as the general needs tenants.

Sheltered tenants are also more likely to recommend Arun DC to other people.

There are 12% more sheltered tenants satisfied with the overall service provided, 26% more with the energy efficiency of their homes, and 27% more with the upkeep of the communal areas.

Whilst the NPS is still negative for the sheltered tenants (-6) this is better than the general needs score by 16 points.



	General Needs	Sheltered
Overall satisfaction	56%	68%
Energy efficiency	51%	77%
Well maintained home	51%	69%
Safe home	56%	73%
Repairs - Last 12 months	54%	71%
Time taken - Last repair	50%	66%
Repairs - Overall satisfaction	45%	58%
Communal areas clean & well maintained	37%	64%
Positive contribution to neighbourhood	42%	59%
Anti-social behaviour	39%	56%
Easy to deal with	50%	59%
Listens & Acts	35%	51%
Keeps you informed	43%	60%
Treats fairly & with respect	55%	65%
Complaints handling	22%	22%
Promoters	28%	36%

Base: General Needs = 927, Sheltered = 249

# Housing Officer Area

Arun DC operates over six areas, each managed by a different Housing Officer. These vary in size with the most responses received from the NO06 area (220) and the least from NO09, although still 181. The results from each area are shown opposite.

The table shows that satisfaction is quite mixed across the different areas, although tenants in NO09 appear to be less satisfied than in the other areas.

On the overall service provided by Arun DC, 62% in NO06 are satisfied, compared with 53% in NO09. Whilst it is tenants in NO11 that are the most likely to recommend the Council to other people (35%), compared with 21% in NO09.

It is not clear why these differences occur, but further research may help to uncover this so improvements, particularly in NO09, could be made.



	AH0005	NO04	NO06	NO07	NO09	NO11
Overall satisfaction	56%	60%	62%	59%	53%	58%
Energy efficiency	47%	61%	62%	54%	50%	62%
Well maintained home	49%	60%	58%	55%	47%	60%
Safe home	54%	68%	64%	60%	49%	61%
Repairs - Last 12 months	56%	63%	58%	53%	51%	64%
Time taken - Last repair	46%	58%	55%	55%	44%	60%
Repairs - Overall satisfaction	42%	55%	47%	48%	41%	52%
Communal areas clean & well maintained	47%	49%	58%	48%	40%	50%
Positive contribution to neighbourhood	46%	48%	51%	40%	41%	48%
Anti-social behaviour	39%	49%	47%	35%	41%	45%
Easy to deal with	47%	56%	51%	57%	46%	53%
Listens & Acts	33%	41%	36%	41%	39%	42%
Keeps you informed	41%	48%	46%	51%	43%	51%
Treats fairly & with respect	49%	58%	60%	59%	57%	58%
Complaints handling	18%	23%	23%	35%	16%	20%
Promoters	27%	31%	30%	30%	21%	35%

Base: AH0005 = 199, NO04 = 206, NO06 = 220, NO07 = 186, NO09 = 181, NO11 = 195



# Age Group

It is often found in surveys of this kind that satisfaction generally increases with age and this largely appears to be the case with Arun DC although the youngest group are highly satisfied with some aspects of service and are the most likely to recommend the Council to other people.

Tenants aged 85 and over are the most satisfied overall, with their homes, the repairs service, how they are kept informed, complaints and they find the Council the easiest to deal with. They are also the most satisfied with the way complaints are handled, although only at 38%.

In contrast, tenants in the 25 to 34 age group are the least satisfied overall, as well as with ten other measures within the survey.

One theory is that older people are, perhaps, more tolerant and more likely to put up with dips in service whereas younger people have higher expectations and want things done much quicker.



	0 - 24	25 - 34	35 - 44	45 - 54	55 - 59	60 - 64	65 - 74	75 - 84	85+
Overall satisfaction	65%	42%	52%	53%	49%	58%	67%	69%	78%
Energy efficiency	35%	34%	47%	50%	45%	57%	69%	75%	79%
Well maintained home	65%	35%	43%	48%	46%	55%	67%	71%	73%
Safe home	53%	37%	49%	51%	56%	60%	73%	75%	83%
Repairs - Last 12 months	50%	28%	58%	52%	56%	57%	65%	74%	79%
Time taken - Last repair	50%	30%	55%	50%	44%	51%	57%	68%	79%
Repairs - Overall satisfaction	47%	34%	41%	42%	41%	45%	58%	61%	63%
Communal areas clean & well maintained	75%	38%	33%	36%	34%	55%	58%	57%	60%
Positive contribution to neighbourhood	47%	35%	40%	38%	29%	52%	57%	61%	55%
Anti-social behaviour	71%	31%	38%	31%	35%	40%	52%	58%	55%
Easy to deal with	59%	41%	47%	47%	45%	48%	61%	62%	63%
Listens & Acts	54%	32%	28%	30%	27%	38%	50%	52%	51%
Keeps you informed	63%	26%	44%	37%	37%	44%	55%	64%	64%
Treats fairly & with respect	71%	42%	51%	46%	58%	56%	64%	70%	69%
Complaints handling	0%	17%	19%	29%	22%	19%	25%	26%	38%
Promoters	41%	16%	25%	30%	25%	26%	38%	35%	33%

Base: 0-24 = 17, 25-34 = 69, 35-44 = 104, 45-54 = 163, 55-59 = 125, 60-64 = 135, 65-74 = 282, 75-84 = 194, 85+ = 90



# Gender

Female tenants outnumber male tenants by almost two to one but are consistently less satisfied.

Whilst the difference in satisfaction is generally not great, female tenants are less satisfied on all the measures in the survey, including on the overall service provided. Additionally, fewer would recommend the Council to other people.

It is not entirely clear why this may be the case, for example, whether female tenants do not feel that the services they receive are so sympathetic to their needs. It would be useful to carry out some further research with female tenants that gave permission to be contacted to find out if there is a common reason for the difference and whether service delivery should change as a result.



	Female	Male
Overall satisfaction	56%	62%
Energy efficiency	54%	61%
Well maintained home	53%	58%
Safe home	58%	62%
Repairs - Last 12 months	56%	60%
Time taken - Last repair	53%	53%
Repairs - Overall satisfaction	47%	49%
Communal areas clean & well maintained	46%	53%
Positive contribution to neighbourhood	44%	50%
Anti-social behaviour	41%	48%
Easy to deal with	50%	56%
Listens & Acts	37%	41%
Keeps you informed	44%	51%
Treats fairly & with respect	54%	63%
Complaints handling	22%	25%
Promoters	27%	34%

Base: Female = 774, Male = 405

# Length of Tenancy

	A. < 1 year	B. 1 - 3 years	C. 4 - 5 years	D. 6 - 10 years	E. 11 - 20 years	F. Over 20 years
Overall satisfaction	72%	58%	62%	46%	55%	64%
Energy efficiency	65%	56%	57%	51%	54%	59%
Well maintained home	66%	60%	51%	47%	51%	59%
Safe home	64%	58%	59%	51%	58%	69%
Repairs - Last 12 months	61%	57%	56%	56%	56%	63%
Time taken - Last repair	54%	52%	57%	52%	52%	55%
Repairs - Overall satisfaction	52%	48%	45%	46%	47%	49%
Communal areas clean & well maintained	68%	56%	48%	43%	43%	39%
Positive contribution to neighbourhood	63%	51%	47%	39%	37%	48%
Anti-social behaviour	61%	47%	38%	36%	36%	49%
Easy to deal with	64%	45%	59%	47%	48%	59%
Listens & Acts	55%	42%	37%	29%	35%	41%
Keeps you informed	54%	53%	45%	38%	41%	54%
Treats fairly & with respect	67%	58%	63%	47%	54%	60%
Complaints handling	41%	25%	20%	15%	25%	21%
Promoters	43%	30%	31%	24%	27%	29%

Base: <1 year = 94, 1 – 3 years = 194, 4 – 5 years = 135, 6 = 10 years = 211, 11 – 20 years = 290, Over 20 years = 263

It may be concluded that tenants who have the longest tenancies and who will, more likely be older, are more satisfied. However, whilst this is true to a point it is the tenants new to the Council who display the highest levels of satisfaction.

On the overall services, 72% of tenants who have been with the Council for less than a year are satisfied compared with just 46% of those of 6 to 10 years. This group are also the most satisfied with most aspects of communicating with the Council and are the most likely to recommend their landlord to other people.

It is possible that new tenants are initially very pleased to have received an offer of a new home, many having been waiting for some time and often leaving poor housing circumstances, however, as time progresses and they experience a range of issues in their home, satisfaction tends to drop off.

The challenge for the Council is to maintain this level of satisfaction beyond the first year.



# Property Type

The table opposite shows the results of the survey split by property type, the principal types being flats, houses, bedsits, maisonettes and bungalows.

Despite being, arguably, the less desirable type of property, tenants in the bedsits are the most satisfied. Possibly this is because these are more likely to be occupied by older people, many in the sheltered schemes, and as shown these tenants tend to be more satisfied.

The least satisfied are tenants in maisonettes. Often these properties will be occupied by families with young children and will lack the outside space needed for families and, as a result, satisfaction levels are affected.



	FLAT	HOUSE	BEDSIT	MAISON	BUNG
Overall satisfaction	57%	58%	77%	40%	60%
Energy efficiency	63%	48%	81%	48%	49%
Well maintained home	57%	50%	70%	33%	60%
Safe home	60%	59%	72%	26%	64%
Repairs - Last 12 months	60%	53%	80%	51%	59%
Time taken - Last repair	59%	46%	68%	54%	50%
Repairs - Overall satisfaction	50%	43%	70%	50%	48%
Communal areas clean & well maintained	45%	67%	72%	19%	64%
Positive contribution to neighbourhood	47%	43%	77%	5%	47%
Anti-social behaviour	45%	39%	70%	16%	45%
Easy to deal with	51%	52%	72%	45%	49%
Listens & Acts	41%	35%	64%	26%	35%
Keeps you informed	49%	46%	72%	22%	38%
Treats fairly & with respect	59%	54%	71%	47%	54%
Complaints handling	23%	19%	31%	12%	27%
Promoters	29%	30%	43%	23%	28%

Base: FLAT = 555, HOUSE = 392, BEDSIT = 63, MAISON = 24, BUNG = 146

# Number of Bedrooms

Most properties owned by Arun DC have one bedroom and occupiers of these tend to be the most satisfied.

Again, it may not be the number of bedrooms that is the influencing factor, but these smaller properties are more likely to be occupied by older people, who as shown, are more satisfied than their younger counterparts.

Perhaps strangely, tenants in the largest properties (4 bedrooms) tend to be the least satisfied, possibly because these will have the highest rents, take more to heat and maintain and will be occupied by families, who are generally less satisfied.

	1	2	3	4
Overall satisfaction	63%	52%	59%	35%
Energy efficiency	67%	51%	47%	40%
Well maintained home	62%	50%	50%	40%
Safe home	65%	55%	57%	47%
Repairs - Last 12 months	66%	49%	56%	33%
Time taken - Last repair	63%	47%	47%	23%
Repairs - Overall satisfaction	54%	44%	43%	38%
Communal areas clean & well maintained	53%	36%	57%	--
Positive contribution to neighbourhood	51%	43%	42%	34%
Anti-social behaviour	50%	37%	40%	21%
Easy to deal with	54%	49%	52%	56%
Listens & Acts	43%	36%	35%	20%
Keeps you informed	51%	41%	47%	21%
Treats fairly & with respect	61%	52%	56%	43%
Complaints handling	23%	26%	19%	0%
Promoters	32%	26%	30%	34%

Base: 1 = 554, 2 = 335, 3 = 285, 4 = 13



# Response Method

Just over half the responses to the survey were made online rather than by postal questionnaire; 442 compared with 747, but tenants that responded this way are consistently less satisfied.

The difference is 13% for the overall service provided, 14% for the maintenance of the home and 13% for the way the Council listens to tenants' views.

These sorts of differences have been seen in other surveys of this type and one theory is that older people are more likely to complete the survey by post and younger tenants online and as we have seen the older tenants tend to be more satisfied.

To test this theory, the age profile of these two groups has been analysed. This shows that whilst 33% of those that completed the survey online are aged 60 or over, this rises to 74% for those using the postal method.

This does need to be considered when conducting a survey of this type but using a variety of methods does, perhaps, open up the range of likely responses.



	Postal	Online
Overall satisfaction	61%	54%
Energy efficiency	60%	51%
Well maintained home	61%	47%
Safe home	66%	52%
Repairs - Last 12 months	62%	51%
Time taken - Last repair	56%	49%
Repairs - Overall satisfaction	51%	43%
Communal areas clean & well maintained	52%	44%
Positive contribution to neighbourhood	51%	38%
Anti-social behaviour	49%	36%
Easy to deal with	54%	48%
Listens & Acts	44%	31%
Keeps you informed	53%	38%
Treats fairly & with respect	62%	49%
Complaints handling	25%	19%
Promoters	31%	28%

Base: Postal = 747, Online = 442

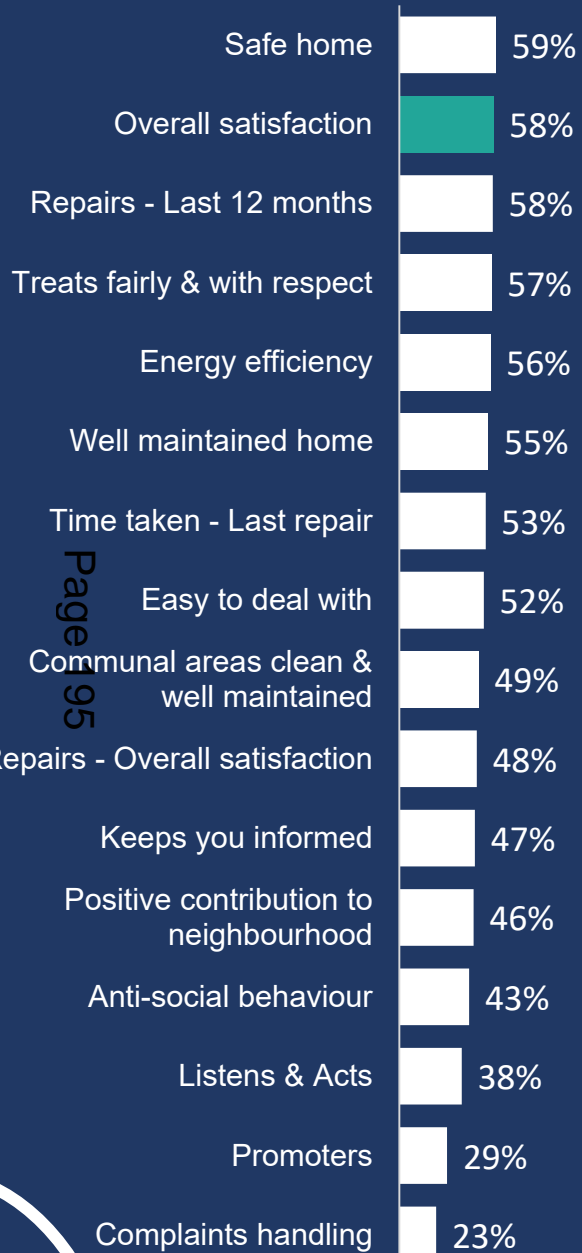


# Conclusion





## Satisfaction 2023



# Conclusion

Acuity has been commissioned by Arun District Council to undertake satisfaction surveys over the next three years. This is the first of such surveys and focuses on the findings from the tenant survey with a separate report for the leaseholder responses. The survey was undertaken by post, with tenants also given the opportunity to complete the survey online. At the close of the survey, an excellent 1,189 tenants had responded (441 online and 747 by post, with one incomplete). This gives a margin of error for the results of  $\pm 2.3\%$ , which is well within the guideline figure of  $\pm 4\%$  and gives a good level of accuracy of results.

As shown in the chart on the left, there are 58% of tenants satisfied with the overall service provided by Arun DC. This sits very close to the top of the range of measures, with just the provision of a safe home above (59%).

Whilst some further measures are in the high 50%, many fall below half of tenants being satisfied and two fall below 40%, these being the way the Council listens to tenants' views and acts upon them (38%) and the handling of complaints (23%). There are 29% of tenants that would recommend Arun DC to other people, although more would not (48%), making the Net Promoter Score is -18.

Acuity carried out a survey for Arun DC in 2021, so it has been possible to compare the results across these two surveys. Whilst not all questions match, as the current set includes the new TSM questions, where they do, satisfaction has generally decreased, often quite significantly. There are 20% fewer tenants satisfied with the overall services from the Council, 35% fewer feel their views are listened to and acted upon, and 22% fewer are satisfied with the overall repairs and maintenance service. The only exception to this general trend is for the way anti-social behaviour is dealt with, which is up 22%.

The survey included a series of open questions to seek the views of tenants about the services provided and allow them to make suggestions for improvement. Some examples of these comments are included in the report and give insight into what tenants are most concerned about and what is driving dissatisfaction. These comments most frequently relate to the repairs service, particularly the time it takes to get repairs completed and dealing with outstanding repairs. Whilst many also have problems contacting the Council, stating phones are not answered and calls are not returned when promised. The condition of tenants' properties is also a reason for dissatisfaction, with around a third reporting problems with damp and mould, and others would like to see better communications with the Council.



# Recommendations

This survey is the first of a series over the next three years and includes the full suite of TSM questions for the first time, as well as other questions specific to Arun DC.

The survey reveals many areas of relatively moderate performance, and these do not compare well with other social landlords who have used these questions during this year. It has also highlighted a number of areas where improvements could be made.

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

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



## Customer service and communication

When asked about possible improvements to service, customer service and contact tops the list. Many tenants complain it is very difficult to get hold of people, particularly on the phone, that they are then often passed around and then calls are not returned when promised. This seems to be a problem when reporting repairs but also other services. In addition, some say that when they do get in touch staff do not show them the care, empathy and support they expect and just 38% feel the Council listens to their views and acts upon them, with many also referring to a need to improve communications generally. Trying to improve service with high call volumes can be difficult but the Council should review how calls are received and dealt with, the working of the automated phone system and how they engage with tenants to establish their views. In this way, improvements may be identified to make the customer experience easier and more effective.



## Repairs and maintenance

Having a well maintained home is the key driver for overall satisfaction and when asked about their homes and how they are maintained, the repairs service receives a reasonable level of criticism. In particular, tenants want work done more quickly, better and more consistently. Many comments refer to extensive delays, works that have been seemingly forgotten about and poor-quality repairs. On top of this, following from the comments above, many tenants have difficulty making initial contact, having to chase up repairs and are often left with little knowledge about progress. Also, around a third of tenants have problems with damp and mould which clearly affect their enjoyment of their homes. Satisfaction levels do not compare well with other landlords so clearly, more could be done to improve the standard of service. Whether this is linked to the Council, their contractors or a mixture of both needs to be determined and it is also suggested that the Council works with tenants to improve the repairs service and set standards.



## Change in satisfaction

Satisfaction has fallen, almost across the board, since the previous survey in 2021, in some cases quite significantly, and this will be a worry to the Council. The last couple of years have been particularly difficult for social landlords, having to deal with the effects of the pandemic, rising costs and, in some cases, problems obtaining suitable labour and contractors. This is reflected in a general reduction in satisfaction throughout the sector, which may explain some of this change, but there are likely to be other reasons specific to Arun DC for the reduced levels of satisfaction. For example, around a third of tenants report issues with damp and mould, which are in need of investigation and action. Addressing the issues raised above should help improve the level of customer service provided and as having a well maintained home is a key driver, it should help restore some of the overall satisfaction with the Council's Housing Services.



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

For further information on this report please contact:

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## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

<b>Name of activity:</b>	Tenant Satisfaction Survey	<b>Date Completed:</b>	02/01/2024		
<b>Directorate / Division responsible for activity:</b>	<b>Environment and Communities - Housing</b>	<b>Lead Officer:</b>	Richard Tomkinson		
<b>Existing Activity</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>New / Proposed Activity</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Changing / Updated Activity</b>	<b>N</b>

### What are the aims / main purposes of the activity?

- Understand tenant sentiment in relation to our service performance,
- Compare results with other social landlords,
- Provide findings that allow us to take action to address dissatisfaction,
- Report to the RSH from Summer 2024 onwards.

### What are the main actions and processes involved?

- Agreeing methodology
- Commissioning external provider
- Analysis of results
- Developing and delivering improvement actions

### Who is intended to benefit & who are the main stakeholders?

Tenants and leaseholders are the main beneficiaries and stakeholders.

The Regulator of Social Housing is the key external stakeholder.

**Have you already consulted on / researched the activity?**

Yes. Consultation and engagement was undertaken to establish the preferred methodology for the satisfaction survey and the survey itself was undertaken on a census basis and resulted in over 1300 responses.

**Impact on people with a protected characteristic** (What is the potential impact of the activity? Are the impacts high, medium or low?)

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Protected characteristics / groups	Is there an impact (Yes / No)	If Yes, what is it and identify whether it is positive or negative
<b>Age</b> (older / younger people, children)	Yes	Positive – by undertaking the survey on a census basis, all tenants and leaseholders across all characteristics were able to participate and results were weighted to ensure representativeness. We also broke down the results of the survey into sub-groups to better understand the views of different groups by tenure, area, age group, gender, length of tenancy and number of bedrooms. Reasonable adjustments were made to support participation where required.
<b>Disability</b> (people with physical / sensory impairment or mental disability)	Yes	As above
<b>Gender reassignment</b> (the process of transitioning from one gender to another.)	Yes	As above
<b>Marriage &amp; Civil Partnership</b> (Marriage and registered civil partnerships)	Yes	As above
<b>Pregnancy &amp; maternity</b>	Yes	As above

(Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant & maternity refers to the period after the birth)		
<b>Race</b> (ethnicity, colour, nationality or national origins & including gypsies, travellers, refugees & asylum seekers)	Yes	As above
<b>Religion &amp; belief</b> (religious faith or other group with a recognised belief system)	Yes	As above
<b>Sex</b> (male / female)	Yes	As above
<b>Sexual orientation</b> (lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual)	Yes	As above
Whilst <b>Socio economic</b> disadvantage that people may face is not a protected characteristic; the potential impact on this group should be also considered	Yes	As above

**What evidence has been used to assess the likely impacts?**

External validation of results and weighting applied by external provider.

Decision following initial assessment			
Continue with existing or introduce new / planned activity	Y	Amend activity based on identified actions	N

Action Plan			
Impact identified	Action required	Lead Officer	Deadline
None	None		

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Monitoring & Review	
Date of last review or Impact Assessment:	02/01/24
Date of next 12 month review:	On commission of 2025 survey.
Date of next 3 year Impact Assessment (from the date of this EIA):	

Date EIA completed:	02/01/24
Signed by Person Completing:	R Tomkinson



## Arun District Council

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>Housing and Wellbeing Committee – 25 January 2024</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Key Performance Indicators 2022-2026 – Quarter 3 performance report for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 December 2023.</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Jackie Follis</b>
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	Councillor Carol Birch – Chair of Housing and Wellbeing Committee
<b>WARDS:</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION:</b>	
The Key Performance Indictors support the Council's Vision and allows the Council to identify how well we are delivering across a full range of services.	
<b>DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT:</b>	
This report is produced by the Group Head of Organisational Excellence to give an update on the Q3 Performance outturn of the Key Performance Indicators.	
<b>FINANCIAL SUMMARY:</b>	
Not required.	

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1. In order for the Committees to be updated with the Q3 Performance Outturn for the Key Performance indicators for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 December 2023.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.2. It is recommended that the Committee notes the contents of this report and provides any questions or comments on the indicators relevant to this Committee to the Policy and Finance Committee on 7 March 2024.

### 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1. This report sets out the performance of the Key Performance indicators at Quarter 3 for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 December 2023.

### 3. DETAIL

- 3.1. The Council Vision 2022-2026 was approved at Full Council in March 2022. To support the Vision we need a comprehensive and meaningful set of performance measures which allow us to identify how well we are delivering across a full range of services. Two kinds of indicators were agreed at the Policy and Finance Committee on 17 March 2022. The first of these are annual indicators and will primarily update the progress against strategic milestones. In addition to this 'key performance indicators' (KPIs) will be reported to committees every quarter. These KPIs are known as our Corporate Plan.
- 3.2. A short report and appendix will go to each of the other Committees in the cycle of meetings after each quarter has ended. This appendix will only contain the indicators which are relevant to each Committee.
- 3.3. A full report showing quarterly performance against all indicators (which are measured at that quarter) will go to the relevant Policy and Finance Committee meeting at the end of the cycle of the other Committee meetings. Members of the other Committees will be able to give comments or ask questions about the KPI indicators that are relevant to their Committee and these will be submitted to the Policy and Finance Committee for consideration.
- 3.4. This is the quarterly report covering performance from 1 April 2023 to 31 December 2023 and will cover only those indicators that are due to be measured at this point.
- 3.5. Thresholds are used to establish which category of performance each indicator is within.

Achieved target	100% or above target figure
Didn't achieve target but within 15% range	85%-99.9% below target figure
Didn't achieve target by more than 15%	85% or less target figure

- 3.6. There are 42 Key Performance indicators. 8 of these indicators relate to this Committee and all 8 are measured at Q3.
- 3.7. This report gives the status of the indicators at Q3. Appendix A gives full commentary for each indicator.

Status	Number of KPI's in this category at Q3
Achieved target	3
Didn't achieve but within 15% range	1
Didn't achieve target by more than 15%	1
Status not known until Q4	1
No data available	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8</b>

### 3.8. Actions to be taken

The Interim Chief Executive and Director of Environment and Communities and Group Head of Housing will continue to monitor CP16 to ensure that the highlighted matters are resolved to encourage improved performance during the remainder of 2023/24.

Data is not available for CP19, Number of Housing Register applications activated 'live' within 15 working days upon receipt of all verification documents. We are unable to provide this information as the PI was a new one based on the ability to extract data from Abritas, however, with the delayed implementation, this data is not available. Our current system, QL does not record this information.

## **4. CONSULTATION**

4.1. No consultation has taken place.

## **5. OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

5.1. To review the report

5.2. To request further information and/or remedial actions be undertaken.

## **6. COMMENTS BY THE GROUP HEAD OF FINANCE AND SECTION 151 OFFICER**

6.1. None required.

## **7. RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

7.1. None required

## **8. COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE & MONITORING OFFICER**

8.1. As this report is an information paper, there are no recommendations for the Committee to consider. This report is to be taken as read only with Members having the opportunity to ask questions at the meeting on service performance. Members can also submit questions or comments on the indicators relevant to their Committee and these will be considered by the Policy and Finance Committee on 7 March 2024.

## **9. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT**

9.1. Not applicable.

## **10. HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT**

10.1. Not applicable.

## **11.PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT**

11.1. Not applicable.

## **12.EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE**

12.1. Not applicable.

## **13.CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE**

13.1. Not applicable.

## **14.CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT**

14.1. Not applicable.

## **15.HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT**

15.1. Not applicable.

## **16.FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS**

16.1. Not applicable.

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### **CONTACT OFFICER:**

**Name:** Jackie Follis

**Job Title:** Group Head of Organisational Excellence

**Contact Number:** 01903 737580

**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:** *None*

No.	Indicator	Council Vision Theme	Service Committee to consider this	CMT Member	Assess by	Target 2023	Q1 Status	Q2 status	Q3 status	Better or worse since Q2 figure (Q3 compared to Q2)	Q3 Commentary
CP11	Number of Visits to Council Leisure Centres	Improving wellbeing of Arun	Housing & Wellbeing	Philippa Dart	Higher is better	956, 650	No status known until Q4 <b>Outturn for Q1 314,601</b>	No status known until Q4 <b>Outturn for Q3 329,117</b>	No status known until Q4 <b>Outturn for Q3 312,061</b>	Down by 17,056 visits (worse) 	Year to date figure is 955,779 against a target of 956,650. The increase in the participation numbers at Arun Leisure Centre is on almost every line that we monitor, from spectators through to Group exercise. The main increase is in Active participation of 3756. Most of this is from 1479 on top of last year's Gym usage, 1377 on top of last year's outdoor (3G) usage. Drop in figures for Wave year on year is spread across 2 main departments. A drop of 1032 in gym usage and 1306 in swimming lessons. The decrease in Wave is interesting as we have actually grown in participation across Active participation by 1397 but we have been working on cleaning up the administrative back office of the swim school and have reduced our occupants who may have old DD's or left us and had not been tidied up, so the number has reduced and affected our numbers.
CP15	Time taken to process Housing/Council Tax Benefit new claims and changes in circumstances	Improving wellbeing of Arun	Housing & Wellbeing	Philippa Dart	Lower is better	8 days	Achieving <b>Outturn for Q1 3.6 days</b>	Achieving <b>Outturn for Q3 3.6 days</b>	Achieving <b>Outturn for Q3 3.5 days</b>	Down by 0.5 days (better) 	A slight deterioration in performance during December due to closure and IT downtime.
CP16	Average days to re-let all properties (key to key) excluding major voids	Delivering right homes in right places	Housing & Wellbeing	Philippa Dart	Lower is better	Q1 70 Q2 60 Q3 50 Q4 40	Not achieving <b>Outturn for Q1 80 days</b>	Not achieving <b>Outturn for Q2 73 days</b>	Not achieving <b>Outturn for Q3 71 days</b>	Down by 2 days (better) 	Target for Q3 is 50 days. Performance has been affected by staff shortages which has led to delays in completing the initial void inspection. Poor contractor performance was also an issue at the start of the quarter. All voids are now being passed to a new contractor and we are starting to see an improvement in both the length of time the void is with the contractor and the quality of the work undertaken.
CP17	Of homeless cases owed a prevention duty, % successfully resolved	Delivering right homes in right places	Housing & Wellbeing	Philippa Dart	Higher is better	55%	Not achieving but within 15% range <b>Outturn for Q1 52%</b>	Not achieving <b>Outturn for Q2 46%</b>	Achieving <b>Outturn for Q3 59%</b>	Up by 13% (better) 	Preventing homeless has remained challenging but we have achieved some positive outcomes this quarter. We are hopeful that an increase in LHA rates in April will lead to further positive outcomes
CP18	Of homeless cases owed a relief duty, % positively relieved	Delivering right homes in right places	Housing & Wellbeing	Philippa Dart	Higher is better	35%	Not achieving but within 15% range <b>Outturn for Q1 34%</b>	Not achieving but within 15% range <b>Outturn for Q2 30%</b>	Achieving <b>Outturn for Q3 40%</b>	Up by 10% (better) 	Relieving homelessness has remained challenging there is less private rented properties available due to landlords sleing and the frozen LHS rates. We are optimistic that the increase in rates in April will lead to further positive outcomes
CP19	Number of Housing Register applications activated 'live' within 15 working days upon receipt of all verification documents	Delivering right homes in right places	Housing & Wellbeing	Philippa Dart	Higher is better	75%	No data available	No data available	No data available	No data available	We are unable to provide this information as the PI was a new one based on the ability to extract data from Abrisas, however, with the delayed implementation, this data is not available. Our current system, QL does not record this information
CP20	Rent collected as a proportion of rent owed (dwellings)	Delivering right homes in right places	Housing & Wellbeing	Philippa Dart	Higher is better	97%	Not achieving but within 15% range <b>Outturn for Q1 95.11%</b>	Not achieving but within 15% range <b>Outturn for Q2 95.06%</b>	Not achieving but within 15% range <b>Outturn for Q3 94.18%</b>	Down by 0.88% (worse) 	Income collection was impacted by an increase in cancellation of direct debits and standing orders during December. Daily processing of payments over this period was also affected as the end of month fell on the Sunday. Income recovery work was also affected by low staffing levels with 4.5 officers off at the end of the month either because of sickness or vacant positions.
CP21	Percentage of non-emergency repairs completed within 20 working days	Delivering right homes in right places	Housing & Wellbeing	Philippa Dart	Higher is better	90%	Achieving <b>Outturn for Q1 90.70%</b>	Achieving <b>Outturn for Q1 96.48%</b>	No data available	No data available	This measure is calculated using OPSL's data (the contractor Osborne Property Services Limited). The figures provided for Q3 has been queried by the Group Head of Housing. A satisfactory response has not been provided at the time of writing the Q3 report. Data and commentary for this KPI will be provided in the Q4 KPI report.

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## Housing and Wellbeing Committee Draft Work Programme 2023-2024

HOUSING & WELLBEING SERVICES COMMITTEE	<u>Report Author</u>	<u>Send to Gemma for CMT by 2pm Thurs</u>	<u>CMT Tues</u>	<u>Draft Reports to Committees</u>	<u>Agenda Prep Meeting</u>	<u>Room</u>	<u>Final Reports to Committees</u>	<u>Agenda Publish Date</u>	<u>Date of Meeting</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Full Council Meeting Date</u>
Meeting 1		18 May 23	23 May – changed to 15 May	29 May	01 Jun	Teams 15:00	<b>6 Jun</b>	8 Jun	<b>20 June 2023</b>		19 July 2023
Leisure Operating Contract	OH										
Housing Management System Programme Update	MH										
Amendments to new Allocations Policy	JK										
Safer Arun Partnership (scrutiny)	D o'C										
Performance Measures	SH										
<b>Exempt Items</b>											





## Housing and Wellbeing Committee Draft Work Programme 2023-2024

Housing Compliance Strategy	IH										
Public Facing CCTV upgrade	Carrie Reynolds										
LAHF – Local Accommodation Housing Fund	JK										
SHAP – Single Homeless Accommodation Programme	JK										
Budget 2024/25 Process	Karl Smith										
<b>Exempt Items</b>											
<b>Council Tax Insolvency</b>											
<b>Council Tax Business Rates</b>											
<b>Housing Benefit Overpayments</b>											
<b>HOUSING &amp; WELLBEING</b>	<b><u>Report Author</u></b>	<b><u>Send to Gemma for CMT</u></b>	<b><u>CMT Tues</u></b>	<b><u>Draft Reports to Committees</u></b>	<b><u>Agenda Prep Meeting</u></b>	<b><u>Room</u></b>	<b><u>Final Reports to Committees</u></b>	<b><u>Agenda Publish Date</u></b>	<b><u>Date of Meeting</u></b>	<b><u>Time</u></b>	<b><u>Full Council</u></b>





## Housing and Wellbeing Committee Draft Work Programme 2023-2024

Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code	SH									
Tenant Satisfaction Survey	SH									
Housing Allocations Policy Update	JK/RT									
Committee Revenue and Capital Budgets 2024/25 - Housing & Wellbeing	TB									
Q3 Performance Report for the Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) which form part of the Council's Vision 2022-2026	JF									
Q3 Budget Monitoring Report	TB/RT									



## Housing and Wellbeing Committee Draft Work Programme 2023-2024

period 1 October to 31 December 2023											
<b>Exempt Items</b>											
<b>Council Tax Insolvency</b>											
<b>Council Tax Business Rates</b>											
<b>Housing Benefit Overpayments</b>											