

Arun District Council

REPORT TO:	Housing & Wellbeing Committee
SUBJECT:	Tenant satisfaction measures survey results
LEAD OFFICER:	Richard Tomkinson – Group Head of Housing
LEAD MEMBER:	<i>Councillor Carol Birch – Chair of Housing and Wellbeing Committee</i>
WARDS:	All

CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION:

This 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.

This report will share with members the results of the tenant satisfaction survey carried out in July 2023.

DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT:

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.

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.

Non-compliance with the Standard could result in the Regulator taking enforcement action against us as a landlord.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY:

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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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Appendix 1 – Survey results