



Public Document Pack STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

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20 March 2023

HOUSING COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Housing Committee will be held on **TUESDAY, 28 MARCH 2023** in the Council Chamber, Ebley Mill, Ebley Wharf, Stroud at **7.00 pm**

Kathy O'Leary
Chief Executive

Please Note: The meeting is being held in the Council Chamber at Stroud District Council and will be streamed live on the Council's [YouTube Channel](#). A recording of the meeting will be published onto the [Council's website](#). The whole of the meeting will be recorded except where there are confidential or exempt items, which may need to be considered in the absence of press and public.

If you wish to attend this meeting, please contact democratic.services@stroud.gov.uk.
This is to ensure adequate seating is available in the Council Chamber.

AGENDA

1. **APOLOGIES**
To receive apologies of absence.
2. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**
To receive declarations of interest.
3. **MINUTES (Pages 5 - 14)**
To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 31 January 2023.
4. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**
The Chair of the Committee will answer questions from members of the public submitted in accordance with the Council's procedures.

DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF QUESTIONS
Noon on Wednesday, 22 March 2023

Questions must be submitted to the Chief Executive, Democratic Services,
Ebley Mill, Ebley Wharf, Stroud and can be sent by email to
democratic.services@stroud.gov.uk

5. **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**
See Agenda Item 4 for deadlines for submission.

6. **INDEPENDENT LIVING STRATEGY (UPDATE) (Pages 15 - 148)**
To present members with an update of Independent Living Strategy in relation to Independent Living for people 55+.
7. **BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2022/23 QUARTER 3 (Pages 149 - 158)**
To present the 2022/23 forecast outturn position against the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) revenue budgets and Capital Programme that the Committee is responsible for, in order to give an expectation of possible variances against budget.
8. **SOCIAL HOUSING DECARBONISATION FUND (Pages 159 - 164)**
To present members with an update on the Social Housing Decarbonisation fund available to the HRA.
9. **DE-POOLING OF RENTS AND SERVICE CHARGES (Pages 165 - 202)**
This report seeks approval from the Committee to implement depooling of rents and services charges with effect from 1 April 2024, thereby enabling the Council to recover fully where possible - in a fair and transparent manner, the costs we incur delivering services to our residents; some of which are currently subsidised by the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) or other residents.
- It also seeks approval of the new Rents and Service Charges Policy.
10. **TENANT ENGAGEMENT & SUPPORT (Pages 203 - 372)**
To present the results and provide an analysis of the tenant's satisfaction surveys for general needs tenants.
11. **EMPTY COUNCIL HOMES POLICY (Pages 373 - 390)**
Following a recommendation from Audit Risk Assurance this report presents an Empty Council Homes Policy for approval.
- The policy will provide the strategic framework for our operational void procedures.
12. **TENANT INFORMATION & PROPERTY UPDATE (Pages 391 - 398)**
To update members on what was formerly known as the Tenant Handbook and updates that are being considered.
13. **MEMBER / OFFICER REPORTS**
- (a) Canalside Site /A419 Stonehouse (Former Ship inn Site) (Pages 399 - 400)
 - (b) Damp and Mould Policy (Pages 401 - 404)
 - (c) Progress update on Key action plans (Cleaner Estates & Service Standards and tenant engagement) (Verbal Report)
 - (d) Performance Monitoring Q3 (Pages 405 - 414)
 - (e) Tenant Representatives (Verbal Report)
14. **WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 415 - 416)**
To consider the work programme.

Members of Housing Committee

Councillor Mattie Ross (Chair)

Councillor Paula Baker
Councillor Katrina Davis
Councillor Colin Fryer
Councillor Lindsey Green
Councillor Jessie Hoskin

Councillor Lucas Schoemaker (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Nicholas Housden
Councillor Steve Hynd
Councillor Christopher Jockel
Councillor Jenny Miles
Councillor Loraine Patrick



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HOUSING COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 31 January 2023

7.00 - 8.47 pm

Council Chamber

Minutes

Membership

Councillor Mattie Ross (Chair)

Councillor Paula Baker
 Councillor Katrina Davis
 Councillor Colin Fryer
 Councillor Lindsey Green
 * Councillor Jessie Hoskin
 * Absent

Councillor Lucas Schoemaker (Vice-Chair)

* Councillor Nicholas Housden
 * Councillor Steve Hynd
 Councillor Christopher Jockel
 Councillor Jenny Miles
 Councillor Loraine Patrick

Tenant Representatives

Becky Adams

Mike Richter

Officers in Attendance

Strategic Director of Communities
 Interim Head of Housing Services
 Head of Strategic Housing Services
 (Interim)
 Accountancy Manager

Housing Manager
 Senior Housing Advice Officer
 Senior Housing Strategy & Enabling Officer
 Democratic Services & Elections Officer

Others in Attendance

Andy Kefford

HC.037 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Hoskin, Housden and Hynd.

HC.038 Declaration of Interests

There were none.

HC.039 Minutes

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2022 were approved as a correct record

HC.040 **Public Question Time**

There were none.

HC.041 **Members' Questions**

There were none.

HC.042 **Local Authority Housing Fund bid**

The Head of Strategic Housing Services (Interim) introduced the report and explained that this was a new opportunity that had arisen just before the end of 2022. She further explained that Central Government had allocated Stroud District Council (SDC) £1.8m of funding to purchase 15 properties to use for people who were fleeing conflict in Afghanistan and Ukraine. SDC would be required to provide £2.2m in match funding for the project which could then be reclaimed through rental income.

The Head of Strategic Housing Services (Interim) gave the following answers in response to questions asked:

- The new properties would have affordable rents.
- The Property Services Team had begun to identify potential houses within the open Market and through the Buyback scheme but had not yet made any commitments.
- Ukrainian and Afghanistan refugees in temporary housing could be rehomed into these properties however there were currently none being temporarily housed by SDC.

Councillor Patrick proposed and Councillor Green seconded.

Councillors Green, Jockel, Baker, Miles and Patrick commended the report and expressed their support for the funding.

After being put to a vote, the Motion was carried unanimously.

RESOLVED To approve the submission of a capital bid to DLUHC for the purchase of accommodation to be held within the HRA.

HC.043 **Out of Hours Service Provision**

An information sheet was circulated prior to the committee and had been published online.

The Interim Head of Housing gave the following answers to Councillors and Tenant Representatives:

- They could look into options to bring the Out Of Hours (OOH) service in house however, the cost was expected to be much greater to provide the current level of service that the contractor currently provided.
- The incident on the 17 December was due to exceptional cold weather circumstances. OOH service providers all over the Country experienced the same drastic increase in demand and therefore did not have the capacity to manage all of the incoming calls.
- 10% of calls received on the 17 December were from the same number. Steps have been made for Orbis to put a message on the phonenumber when experiencing high levels of calls to provide email and text options to tenants who cannot stay on the line.
- Standby arrangements were put in place over the Christmas period where at least 4 Officers were on call should Orbis have met any of the thresholds. These arrangements could be used as a supplement in the future should the need arise.

2022/23

- They were looking to provide clarification, for tenants, as to what was classed as an emergency and who to contact in certain situations. This would be updated in the current Tenant Handbook and circulated via all communication channels with tenants.
- After the incident of the 17 December the OOH contractor had been asked to not only email SDC once a threshold had been met but to actively contact the SDC Officer on call to alert them.

In response to Councillor Shoemaker, the Interim Head of Housing agreed to look into proactive options such as identifying tenants with heat pumps and asking them not to turn off the equipment during periods of extreme cold weather.

HC.044 Tackling Damp and Mould

The Interim Head of Housing introduced the report and explained that it was a very topical subject due to recent news stories and there were a number of things to be addressed. She provided the following update:

- The cross over with the Cost of Living crisis meant that people were struggling to heat their homes and this contributed to damp and mould growth.
- They were looking to revise the Damp and Mould Policy
- They were investigating what proactive actions could be completed during the void process of a property.
- They had set up a Working Group with Officers, Members and Tenant Representative to address damp and mould issues.
- They were looking to categorise damp and mould issues by the level of the problem and the vulnerability of the household.
- They had invested in monitoring equipment which provided live information on temperature, humidity and ventilation to SDC and tenants. Once the equipment had been in place long enough it could provide guidance to prevent damp and mould in those areas.

Councillor Fryer raised concerns with pre-paid meters and affordability for the tenants and questioned whether SDC repair staff had the knowledge to signpost tenants who required extra support. The Interim Head of Housing confirmed that was the case and they were also trained to alert the Housing Team if there were concerns for tenant's welfare. The Housing Team could then signpost the tenant and provide support by way of food vouchers. In response to Councillor Fryer the Interim Head of Housing explained that they did not have a list of tenants on pre-paid meters. Before Christmas they had records of properties which had the gas capped, they visited each of those properties to complete a welfare check for the tenants.

In response to Councillor Baker, the Interim Head of Housing confirmed that health conditions such as asthma and age of tenants would come under household vulnerability and therefore would be prioritised as part of the categorisation process.

Councillor Patrick commended the effectiveness of Positive Input Ventilation (PIV) systems and questioned whether they could be used more widely. The Interim Head of Housing explained that in a lot of cases tenants either turned them off or blocked them up in an attempt to reduce costs.

The Interim Head of Housing gave the following answers in response to Councillor Green:

- The time taken to resolve or improve a damp and mould issue was dependant on many factors such as severity, lifestyle, vulnerability of the household etc. and was therefore difficult to predict.

- Where black mould spores were present and the tenant's health was at risk, the Council would move quickly to address the issue or identify whether a priority move would be necessary.
- Page 14 detailed the figures of complaints from 1 April 2022 – 19 January 2023. It was agreed to provide some comparable figures from earlier years outside of the meeting.
- The Council was not waiting for the results of the Decent Home Standards Review to respond to damp and mould cases, there was already ongoing work with tenants to address issues however it needed to be mindful that the review was underway and could lead to further changes in the future.
- The Council did not blame tenants for damp and mould issues however a large amount of the resolution was to work with tenants to change lifestyle choices such as drying washing on a radiator.

In response to Mr Ritcher, Tenant Representative, the Interim Head of Housing explained that many of the properties within the Housing stock were older and were built with little ventilation options. The Retrofit project would help to improve energy efficiency within the properties which would ultimately help with affordability of fuel bills.

Councillor Patrick questioned whether damp and mould issues could be identified earlier and therefore resolved quicker and at less expense to the Council. The Interim Head of Housing explained that was something the new Working Group would be looking into.

Ms Adams, Tenant Representative explained that it was difficult for tenants to keep on top of the maintenance of a property with high levels of condensation and shared her own experiences. The Interim Head of Housing agreed to take her comments back to the team to see what other proactive steps could be taken by the Council.

HC.045 **The Housing Enabling Process**

An information sheet was circulated prior to the committee as part of the reports pack.

The Head of Strategic Housing Services (Interim) gave the following answers in response to questions asked:

- There was an open book process for developers making viability cases which involved sending the figures across to the District Valuer at HMRC for scrutiny.
- Social Housing was included under the umbrella heading for Affordable Housing which also included shared ownership.
- The majority of new deliveries were affordable rents as opposed to social rents however these rents were capped at the Social Housing Allowance levels for new properties.

Councillor Schoemaker commended the number of affordable houses that were being built. 245 in 2021/22 and 219 in 2020/21 and hoped for it to continue. The Head of Strategic Housing Services (Interim) agreed and explained that Great Oldbury was responsible for a large amount of those figures due to the affordable homes being delivered in line with the market housing.

HC.046 **Member / Officer Reports**

- a) Progress Update on Key Action Plans (Cleaner Estates & Service Standards and Tenant Engagement)

2022/23

An update on Cleaner Estates & Service Standards was circulated prior to the committee and published online. The Housing Manager provided a verbal update on Tenant Engagement:

- Involved Tenants had held a scrutiny panel before Christmas, those that were part of an Independent Living Scheme had reported back about sharing the results of the scrutiny with other tenants in the communal areas as part of a coffee morning.
- A few Tenants had signed up to podcasts and conferences provided by the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS). They had already provided some positive feedback from engaging with other tenants from other Local Authorities.
- The satisfaction survey results for general needs tenants had been collated and they were just awaiting the results from the independent living tenants. These results would be reported at a future Committee. The Housing Manager gave a brief verbal update on the current results.

Councillor Jockel asked how the questions for the survey were created. The Housing Manager explained that the questions were based off the information requested by the Housing Regulator.

b) Tenant Representatives

Mr Ritcher, Tenant Representative raised an issue with the untidy work completed with the insulation upgrade in Dursley. The Interim Head of Housing explained that there was a large amount of turnover within the asset management team and part of the work was completed by temporary members of staff. She requested the details outside of the meeting in order to rectify any issues.

HC.047 **Work Programme**

It was agreed to get back to Mr Ritcher regarding the Ship Inn site in Stonehouse and when this could be expected to return to committee.

RESOLVED To note the above updates to the Work Programme

The meeting closed at 8.47 pm

Chair

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STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

HOUSING COMMITTEE

28 MARCH 2023

Report Title	INDEPENDENT LIVING STRATEGY 2023-2027 UPDATE			
Purpose of Report	To present members with an update of Independent Living Strategy in relation to Independent Living for people 55+.			
Decision(s)	The Housing Committee RESOLVES to approve the proposed amendments to the Strategy as documented ahead of the finalised version to be presented in June 2023			
Consultation and Feedback	Consultation involved Survey Monkey sent out June 2022 to all Stroud District tenants between the ages of 40-55 to ascertain potential future Independent Living tenants' aspirations and a Star Satisfaction Survey sent out October 2022 to all Independent Living tenants.			
Report Author	Lynne Mansell, Service Delivery Manager. Tel: 01453 754173 Email: lynne.mansell@stroud.gov.uk			
Options	The Council can choose to amend revised amendments. The Council can add to the amendments as appropriate.			
Background Papers	Older People's Housing Strategy 2019-2023			
Appendices	Appendix A -Older Peoples Housing Strategy Appendix B – Survey Monkey results and comments (To Follow) Appendix C – Star Satisfaction Survey results			
Implications (further details at the end of the report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	No	No	No	No

1. INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

- 1.1 SDC adopted the Older Peoples Housing Strategy (OPHS) in April 2019 which set out the approach to delivering the six 'UNIQUE' strategic objectives which can be found at Appendix A within the OPHS. This strategy was built on the works identified in the Sheltered Housing Modernisation Programme. The Strategy also allowed for the opportunity to convert some of the existing common areas into additional dwellings with a strong concentration on buildings, accommodation and financial implications/funding.
- 1.2 The OPHS has a robust action plan attached to it which set out timescales for delivery of the six strategic objectives. Most of the action plans have been undertaken, however, due to lockdown there are some that are ongoing and others will be reviewed with a potential of being removed in the revised Strategy.
- 1.3 The OPHS concentrated a great deal on the financial delivery in line with the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Sheltered Housing Modernisation Project which has since been renamed to Independent Living Modernisation Project. This is now in its final 2 years with the remainder of schemes being planned into a works programme allowing the

Independent Living Strategy to concentrate on the Strategy's vision "***To provide good quality older people's housing which meets a variety of current and future needs – where people want to live***".

2. MAIN POINTS

- 2.1 The Strategy has been renamed to Independent Living Strategy and will set out the vision for Independent Living sites for the next 5 years. It will link in with The Council Plan 2021-2026 which has been built on three tiers – Environmental and Climate Change, Community Resilience and Wellbeing, and Economy, Recovery and Regeneration. Although the Strategy will address housing need, it will also concentrate on independence, health and wellbeing, community and social inclusion now the existing strategy has met a significant number of targets regarding modernisation including accessibility.
- 2.2 The amendments to the existing Strategy are proposed as follows:
- Current climate and the challenges we are facing such as delivering more for less, homelessness, closure of care homes, low resource for mental health.
 - Building and sustaining resilience amongst residents i.e., providing allotments to address the cost of living; assisting people to improve ability to adapt positively when faced with adversity. Resilience/learning to cope has an important role in recovery from adversity which can also assist with better physical and mental health later in life.
 - Digitalisation research including digital equipment to assist independence, self-serve etc.,
 - Future Choice in living environment in collaboration with Modernisation Team.
 - Green Space versus Car Parks in the longer term including Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging infrastructure.
 - Downsizing from family homes to Independent Living accommodation – benefits/settlements available, in collaboration with Housing Officers
 - Independent Living HUBS: To continue building strong inclusive communities, access to training for residents and the wider communities, extended partnership working all with a person-centred approach.
 - Initiate and deliver a comprehensive Housing Information Network within the HUBS, feeding into the wider Independent Living sites and communities that support people to make the choices suitable for their situation. At present some information is available but held in different agencies and there is no 'one place' within Stroud District Council to turn to for information that is required regarding housing and care options in and for later life.
- 2.3 The delivery plan within the strategy to measure success will focus on quality of life. Evidence of retaining and sustaining independence will be used. Older people are more likely to be dependent on care and health services if interventions are not implemented. Partnership working with internal/external agencies and Adult Services will be strengthened to ensure preventative measures are put in place.
- 2.4 The action plan will be updated and further developed in accordance with the survey results ensuring it is person centred.

3. CONCLUSION

It is recommended that the Committee approve the proposed amendments in respect of the Independent Living Strategy. The completed document will be presented for adoption at Housing Committee in June 2023.

4. IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial Implications

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. Any expenditure arising will be met through established budgets.

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4.2 Legal Implications

There are no legal implications arising directly from the recommendations in the report. Officers will consult with One Legal where necessary during the implementation of the recommendations.

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4.3 Equality Implications

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 sets out the Public Sector Equality Duty ('PSED'). Consideration of equality matters is an integral part of a local authority's decision making. The PSED requires public authorities to have "due regard" to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations when carrying out activities.

There are not any specific changes to service delivery proposed within this decision.

4.4 Environmental Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

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Older People's Housing Strategy

(HRA)

2019 - 2023

Date Adopted: April 2019

Date for Review: April 2021

Foreword

In 2015, Stroud District Council (SDC) commissioned Ark Consultancy to undertake an in-depth review of its sheltered housing accommodation, to assess the viable options for achieving a sustainable sheltered housing service and to advise on a modernisation strategy. This work followed on from a review carried out by the Chartered Institute of Housing in 2014 which provided a detailed assessment of the sheltered housing support service.

The findings of the Ark Report 'Sheltered Housing - Getting Better, Getting Fit for the Future' (*Appendix A*) resulted in the Council committing to a 10 year modernisation programme which is now in its third year. Within the Ark Report, a number of schemes were categorised as 'red' and were considered unsuitable for older people's accommodation. The Council agreed to dispose of a number of these sites, in order to generate income which is required to reinvest in the redevelopment of some of the red sites to provide better quality, more energy efficient older people and general needs accommodation. The money is also being reinvested in the 'green' and 'amber' schemes to improve the quality of accommodation and to make it more attractive for current tenants and also future tenants who may wish to downsize. A number of the amber schemes were identified as 'consider for an alternative use' therefore in response to this, the Council set up a number of working groups to explore what these alternative uses might be.

This five year Strategy has been developed as a result of the Ark Report and subsequent working groups views to support the delivery of the modernisation programme and to deliver SDC's vision for its older people's accommodation in the district. Delivery of the Council's vision will make its older people's accommodation more attractive into the future and which will also provide a positive impact on the number of households who wish to downsize - in turn freeing up some of our much needed suitable family accommodation.

SDC knows that the increasing older population is also becoming more diverse, and more people are living into very old age which brings a number of challenges in terms of health and support. It also acknowledges that people's aspirations for their lives as they age, are changing too. The services SDC commissions and provides, and the way in which it does so, will have to evolve to meet these changing needs and aspirations.

SDC owns a portfolio of 5,071 affordable homes throughout the district. Within this stock, there are over 700 properties which form part of 26 sheltered housing schemes, and are currently let specifically for older people over the age of 60. There are also a number of bungalows and ground floor flats, which are let as general needs accommodation that are also suitable for older people or people with physical needs.

All of SDC's sheltered housing schemes have communal facilities, such as a communal lounge, kitchen and laundry, some of which are under utilised, and could create additional accommodation which would assist in meeting the increasing need for older people's housing.

The Council recognises the demographic shift highlighted in the Ark Report, which anticipates a significant increase in the ageing population over the next 20 years. The report confirmed that 41% of households in Stroud are made up of only older people (age 55 and over) and that

Stroud is likely to see an increase of approximately 78.5% of single people of pensionable age retiring in the district. Due to the popularity of the district to people of pensionable age, this increase is likely to impact Stroud more than any other district in Gloucestershire.

This Strategy is formed in a challenging financial climate; however SDC is committed to delivering its vision of “providing good quality older people’s housing which meets a variety of current and future needs – where people want to live.” SDC commits to delivering adapted housing and services which are good quality and provide value for money, with an emphasis on affordability to the tenant and the Council. SDC would like the homes it owns to ‘enable’ older tenants to live as independently as possible within the resources available.

In order to do this, the Council will need to think creatively about how this can be delivered in times of financial constraint, coupled with the current crisis in personal care services. This Strategy links strongly with Stroud’s Corporate Vision of “making Stroud a better place to live, work and visit for everyone” and the Corporate Delivery Plan 2018-2022 priorities, one of which is to implement the sheltered housing modernisation programme.

This Strategy sets further context about how it has been established and the strategic objectives which need to be achieved to deliver SDC’s vision for its older people’s housing. The action plan provides a list of robust actions to ensure delivery of this Strategy, in turn achieving SDC’s vision.

Councillor Chas Townley and Councillor Jenny Miles

Chair & Vice Chair of Housing Committee



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Appendices

Appendix A – Ark Report 2015 ‘Sheltered Housing - Getter Better, Getting Fit for the Future’

Appendix B – Vision & Strategy Group ‘Terms of Reference’

Appendix C – Task & Finish Group ‘Terms of Reference’

Appendix D – Future Focus Research ‘Older People’s Accommodation Research’

Appendix E – Older People’s Housing Strategy (HRA) - Action Plan

1. Our Local Landscape

The Stroud District is a largely rural area covering 175 square miles in the south of Gloucestershire. Much of the eastern half of the district falls into the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which covers just over 50% of the District's total land area. The district has a rich built heritage, including 42 conservation areas in a wide variety of towns and villages each of which are unique in character.

Stroud has a population of 118,130 (2017) and over 50,000 households. There are currently 47,640 private homes in the district with 5,071 properties in the ownership of the council and 1,640 housing association homes. The population is predicted to grow to 136,000 by 2041. There are currently over 600 people currently on the waiting list that would be eligible for older people's accommodation.

There are currently 21,114 young people (aged 0 – 15), 70,802 working age adults and 26,214 retirement age adults. The increase of people of pensionable age is anticipated to rise significantly in the future as a result of rising life expectancy and the demographic impacts of two generations of baby boomers.

The Stroud district benefits from a vibrant community spirit, offering a mix of culture and countryside. The towns benefit from a range of independent cafes and shops all set in a picturesque location, which is proving to be a popular choice to live and retire in, particularly with the larger towns of Cheltenham, Cirencester and Gloucester not far away.

2. The Corporate Context

The Council's Corporate Delivery Plan 2018-22 (CDP) was published in 2018 (<https://www.stroud.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/corporate-plans-and-policies/corporate-delivery-plan-cdp>). New challenges for our housing stock include; customer affordability issues arising from welfare reforms, increasing customer expectations, increasing demand and the need to provide more sustainable homes against the back drop of recent legislative reforms which have significantly affected income streams from 2016-2020. The Council's key priorities contained in the CDP are:

- **Economy** – help people and businesses grow the local economy and increase employment;
- **Affordable Housing** – provide affordable, decent and social housing;
- **Environment** – help the community minimise its carbon footprint, adapt to climate change and recycle more;
- **Resources** – provide value for money to our taxpayers and high quality services to our customers;
- **Health and Wellbeing** – promote the health and wellbeing of our communities and work with others to deliver the public health agenda.

The Older People's Housing Strategy supports the CDP and includes key strategic objectives and targets for our sheltered housing assets and appropriate general needs stock to ensure they provide good quality accommodation for older people. It also provides detail on our future

investment strategy through the sheltered modernisation programme and the effect this will have on our assets. The diagram below reflects how the Strategy fits within the wider corporate context.

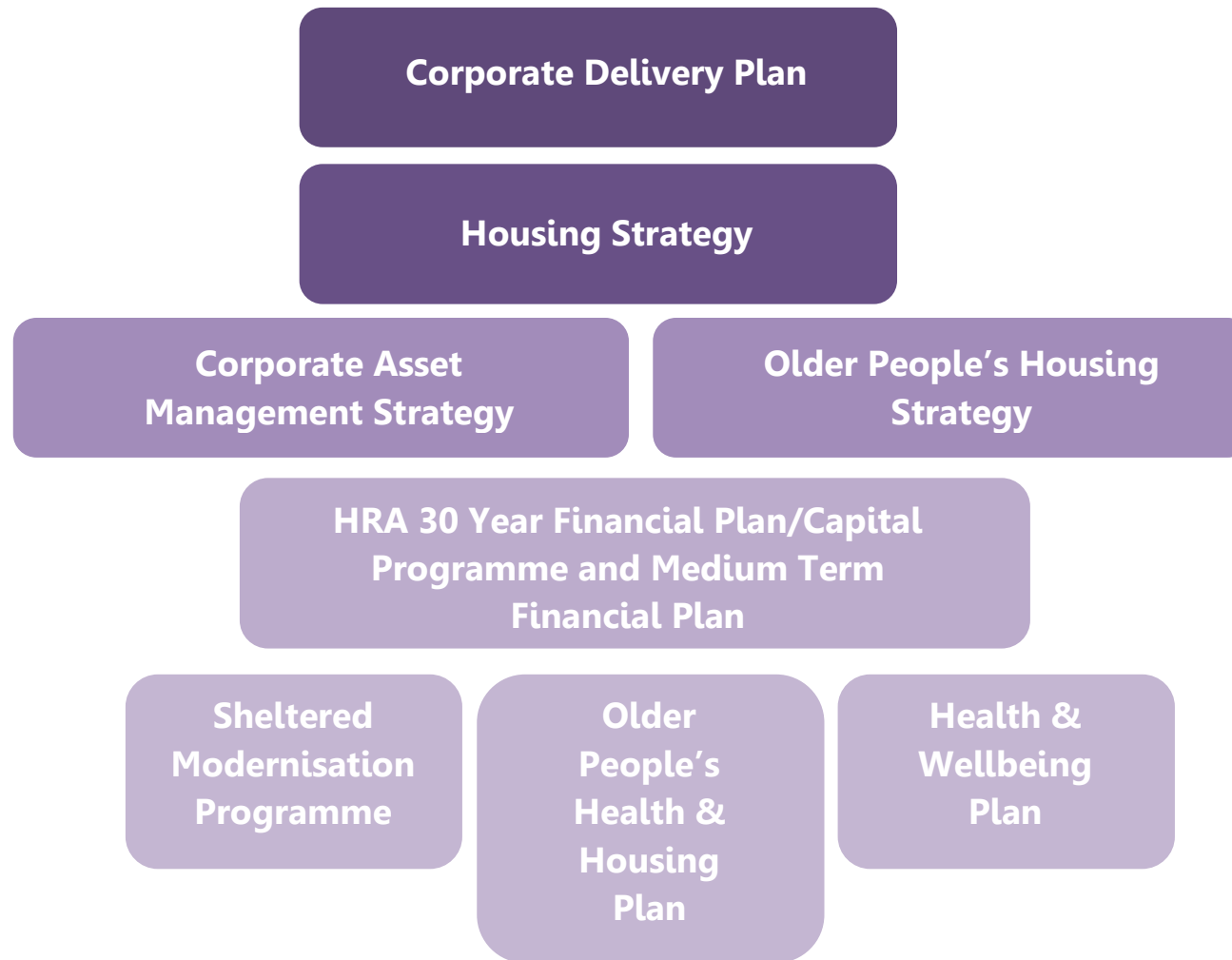


Diagram 2.1 Link to wider corporate context

3. Setting Our Vision

The subsequent need to set a vision and a strategy for our older people's accommodation for the next five years was founded on the Ark Report (2015) and the Council's commitment to deliver the sheltered modernisation programme. SDC completed the improvements to the first scheme in 2018 which opened further discussion about which improvements were priorities and what our older people's accommodation should be delivering for current and future tenants. The sheltered modernisation programme is fundamental to improving the health and wellbeing of our older tenants. The improvements to the internal and external environment of the first scheme completed (Sherborne House, Stonehouse) had a positive impact on the tenants living there (for example, the construction of external paths not only enabled tenants to access the back door of their property using a mobility scooter for those with mobility constraints; it also provided a space for tenants to walk around outside, so that they could enjoy the benefits of fresh air, sunshine and the opportunity to chat to neighbours, all of which have a profound effect on an individuals' sense of health and wellbeing.)

A Vision & Strategy group was formed (Terms of Reference *Appendix B*) with a variety of officers across the council to examine the challenges for older people in the future, particularly during a time of austerity and reduced spend on care and support; with a greater onus on enabling people to live independently in their homes for longer. The focus of this group was solely on current and future SDC tenants, and how some of the future challenges may be overcome. Together a vision was proposed with a number of areas identified which needed further examination and consideration.

One of the objectives was to form a Task & Finish Group (Terms of Reference *Appendix C*) comprised of elected councillors and officers. The purpose of the group was to explore the expectations of the 'next generation' in relation to the council's older people's accommodation, which was a recommendation within the Ark Report. In order to follow up on this recommendation, the group commissioned a telephone survey of 500 Stroud district residents which was undertaken by Future Focus Research. The questions in the survey were carefully considered to establish what people want from their accommodation as they age. The survey was open to anyone over the age of 18 and was structured so that all age groups were proportionally represented.

The results of the survey have been fed into this Strategy, so that the council is delivering older people's accommodation across its stock which is as closely aligned to the expectations of the next generation as resources will allow (summarised in *Appendix D*).

4. Our Vision

The vision proposed by the Vision & Strategy group is:

“To provide good quality older people’s housing which meets a variety of current and future needs – where people want to live.”

In order to achieve this vision, the Council must set strategic objectives, supported by a robust action plan which can be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.

5. Consultation - What Future Customers Want

The survey commissioned by the Task and Finish Group provided useful, tangible feedback for SDC. The detailed findings of the survey are contained within the ‘Older People’s Accommodation Research’ produced by Future Focus Research (*Appendix D*). A summary of some of the key findings are as follows:

- The survey found that two thirds of residents perceived the term ‘Sheltered Housing’ to be associated with older person’s accommodation where 24 hour care is provided. There have been a number of changes to the sheltered housing service over the past 5 years, and the results of the survey suggest that there is a need to re-brand sheltered housing with something which reflects the current service on offer.
- The survey confirmed that 61% of residents interviewed plan to retire in the Stroud district, with the majority having access to friends/family and/or social groups in the area.
- Accessibility and security in and around the home are important to most residents, with good access to healthcare and support services a high priority. When asked what else the communal lounge could be used for, health clinics were the most popular choice.
- The use of communal spaces by outside groups was not as popular, with only 37% of residents believing this would be a good idea – this could be partly due to the priority of living in a secure environment and uncertainty about who would be using the space.
- Access to Wi-Fi in communal areas was considered a priority by 77% of residents interviewed. SDC currently provides Wi-Fi access to tenants in all communal lounges and it is important that this is retained to ensure tenants are able to connect with friends and family.
- Parking and external communal space was important to most residents, which suggests that access to external green space is essential for health and wellbeing as people age as well as the independence which cars provide.

- When asked about various elements in the home which could be provided to enable individuals to live independently, the highest priority was a walk in shower/wet room, however all the elements identified in the question were considered either very important or fairly important to residents.
- The majority of those over the age of 55 had made plans for their accommodation needs for old age.

As a result of these findings, the Task and Finish Group made a number of recommendations to Housing Committee in February 2019 (<https://www.stroud.gov.uk/media/971200/item-6b-older-persons-strategy-task-and-finish-group-final-report.pdf>), which were approved for inclusion in this Strategy. A summary of the recommendations are detailed below:

- Work towards the development of a range of accommodation for older people, rather than ‘one size fits all’. This may involve the re-designation of some schemes which could potentially be linked to a hub scheme to ensure that access to services is not lost.
- Re-brand Sheltered Housing.
- Improve awareness of our Independent Living options to encourage households to downsize – schemes should become more desirable as a result of the sheltered modernisation programme which is improving communal areas and accessibility to these spaces.
- Consider conversion of communal areas, which are not utilised, to additional accommodation where those communal areas are not suitable to offer genuinely desired facilities for both residents and older people in the vicinity.
- Seek areas of improvement to the Council’s Corporate Asset Management Strategy to ensure that SDC’s older people’s schemes and general needs accommodation enables rather than disables – allowing tenants to live as independently as possible.
- The Older People’s Housing Strategy should seek to enhance partnership working with external agencies to improve support and care provision across the district.
- Undertake further visits to other affordable housing providers to examine the range of accommodation and best practice on offer.
- Carry out focus groups with existing tenants to further examine specific areas within the survey.

These recommendations have been developed into this Strategy, along with the Task and Finish Group’s input into the strategic objectives.

6. Strategic Objectives

Although the issues that face SDC are not uncommon to other local authorities the vibrancy and variety of the local landscape which includes a mix of rural and urban areas, alongside the demographic of our population, do present SDC with some unique challenges. A few of these challenges are, social isolation, access to health and support services, transport links, access to retail and leisure facilities and the lack of a range of good quality older people’s accommodation.

In response to these challenges, and to achieve the Council’s vision, this Strategy seeks to deliver six strategic objectives:



Diagram 6.1 Strategic Objectives

The Council recognises that a number of local authorities and housing associations have undertaken similar reviews in recent years. Whilst it is felt that there is good practice that can be replicated, SDC also understands that the district itself is unique and diverse, therefore it may require a different approach to other housing providers.

The six strategic objectives will provide the 'unique' approach that Stroud needs to future proof its older people’s accommodation, to meet the needs and aspirations of its current and future tenants.

These strategic objectives will shape Stroud’s housing stock to provide a range of accommodation which is suitable for a diverse group of older people, whilst remaining affordable in the longer term. The key objectives highlighted should also assist with the crisis in personal care, by enabling tenants to live independently in their homes for as long as possible.

7. Our Range of Accommodation

Currently SDC offers older people’s housing in the form of general needs or sheltered housing schemes with a mix of accommodation such as flats, bungalows and houses. Tenants in sheltered housing schemes pay a standard service charge across all schemes, which isn’t necessarily reflective of the service provided by the council and in some cases is heavily subsidised.

The new model proposed, as a result of the consultation undertaken with Stroud residents and the Task and Finish Group’s recommendations will create a range of accommodation options for tenants. This will provide choice for future customers who may not need all of the services provided at a hub scheme and may not wish to pay for services they do not use or need. The new model is set out below:

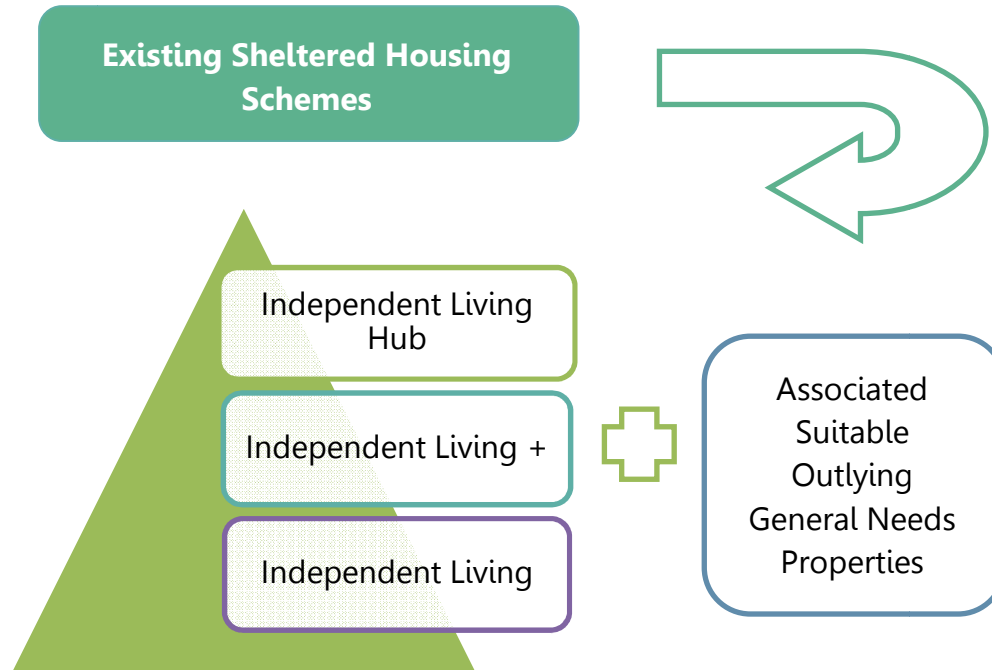


Diagram 7.1 Transitional Model - Reflects New Range of Accommodation

The Strategy recommends that to achieve this new model, each scheme is reviewed and categorised as one of the following; ‘Independent Living Hub’, ‘Independent Living +’ or ‘Independent Living’ with a new service charge which is reflective of the service provided in each of the schemes. The service charges will need to be made clear to current and future tenants so that there is complete transparency about the costs of the service. The delivery of this Strategy needs to be undertaken alongside the service charge project and could result in decreases or

increases in service charges. Where possible, the schemes also need to be spread geographically to ensure a range of options in as many areas as possible and to avoid a concentration of hubs in specific areas. The key criteria of the accommodation ranges are:

Independent Living Hub

- Communal lounge which can also be used for health clinics, police surgeries and activities for tenants of the scheme whilst also offering this service out to outlying properties which could be affiliated with the scheme
- 100% provision (or as close as possible) of mobility scooter storage and charging points
- Level access provided throughout the building and externally
- Visiting Site Officer
- Support Coordinator visiting as needed

Independent Living +

- Communal lounge where tenants can socialise to reduce social isolation
- Improved provision of scooter storage and charging
- These schemes may not benefit from level access
- Visiting Site Officer
- Support Coordinator visiting as needed

Independent Living

- No communal lounge - this will be used to create additional accommodation where possible
- Visiting Site Officer
- Support Coordinator can be contacted if needed

Associated Suitable Outlying General Needs Properties

- There is the potential to incorporate any general needs properties suitable for older people (e.g. bungalows) to any of the Independent Living schemes identified above. This would allow general needs residents access to the enhanced services provided at the Independent Living schemes. This would help to support the future viability of social activities provided at Independent Living schemes.

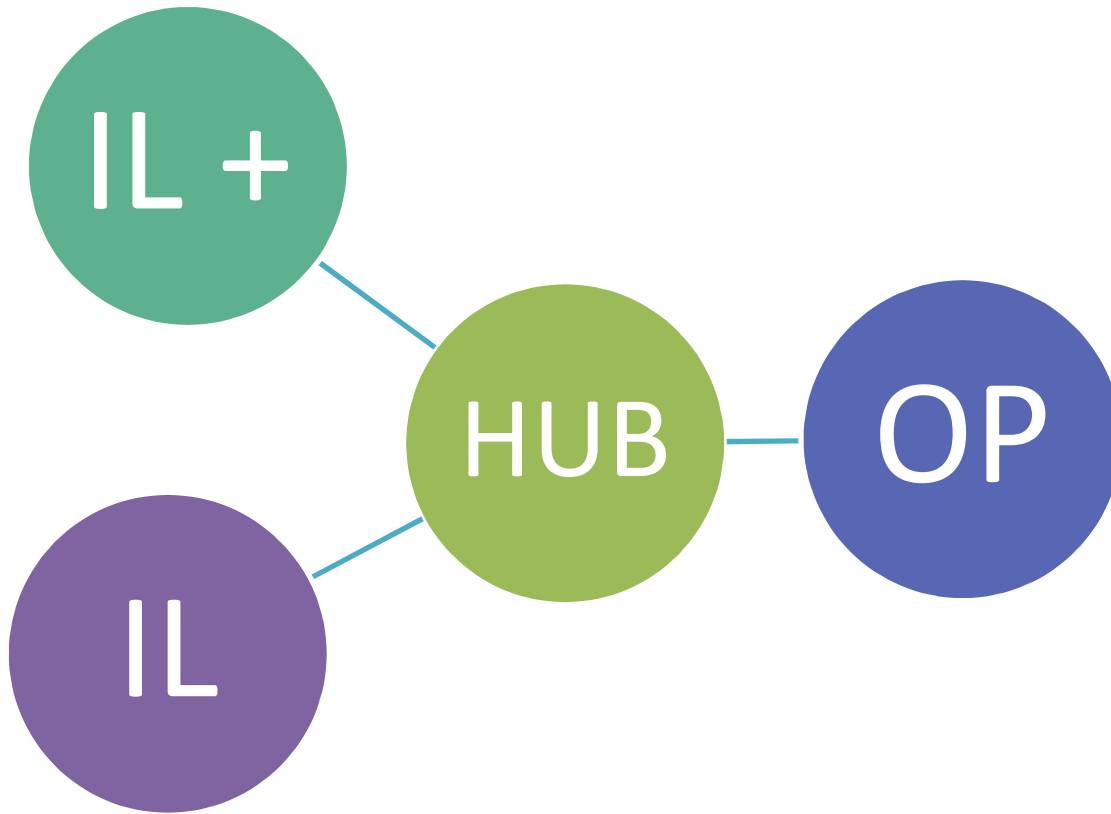


Diagram 7.2 Hub & Spoke Model

HUB = Independent Living Hub
IL + = Independent Living +
IL = Independent Living
OP = Outlying Properties (general needs bungalows)

Hub & Spoke Model:

This diagram shows how the range of accommodation could operate as a hub and spoke model.

- Independent Living Hub schemes will be located around the district with a range of Independent Living + and Independent Living schemes also provided in that locality where possible.
- Independent Living Hubs will be the centre of the Independent Living community for their area. Social activities such as health and wellbeing clinics and recreational events will be organised and held at these schemes and extended to wider residents.
- The residents at Independent Living + schemes would be invited to join in any group activities in the Hub schemes, however they would also benefit from a communal lounge at their own scheme allowing them the ability to socialise, building neighbourly relations and a support network.
- The Independent Living schemes would not have any communal lounge, however they would also be invited to use the Hub or IL + communal lounges and attend any social activities, this will ensure that residents living at these schemes have the opportunity to live independently but still have the ability to socialise when it suits them.
- Any suitable outlying properties, such as existing general needs bungalows which surround Independent Living schemes, could also be given the opportunity to attend activities at the Hub extending the community network.

8. Monitoring and Review

Monitoring of the Action Plan:

This action plan (*Appendix E*) will provide a robust method of monitoring delivery of the strategic objectives to achieve the Council's vision for its older people's accommodation.

The action plan will be monitored on a bi-monthly basis by the Head of Housing Services, with progress made being reported on an annual basis to Housing Committee.

Review of the Strategy & Action Plan:

The strategy and the action plan should be reviewed fully by the Head of Housing Services by April 2021, with any changes to the strategy reported to Housing Committee.

Document Owner: Kevin Topping, Head of Housing Services

Date for Review: April 2021

Appendix A

Ark Report 2015

'Sheltered Housing – Getting Better, Getting Fit for the
Future'

Sheltered Housing - Getting Better, Getting Fit for the Future



Executive Summary - July 2015

1. Introduction

1.1 Stroud District Council commissioned Ark to carry out an in-depth review of its sheltered housing portfolio to assess the viable options for achieving a sustainable sheltered housing service and to advise on a modernisation strategy. The review involved a number of carefully sequenced steps including:

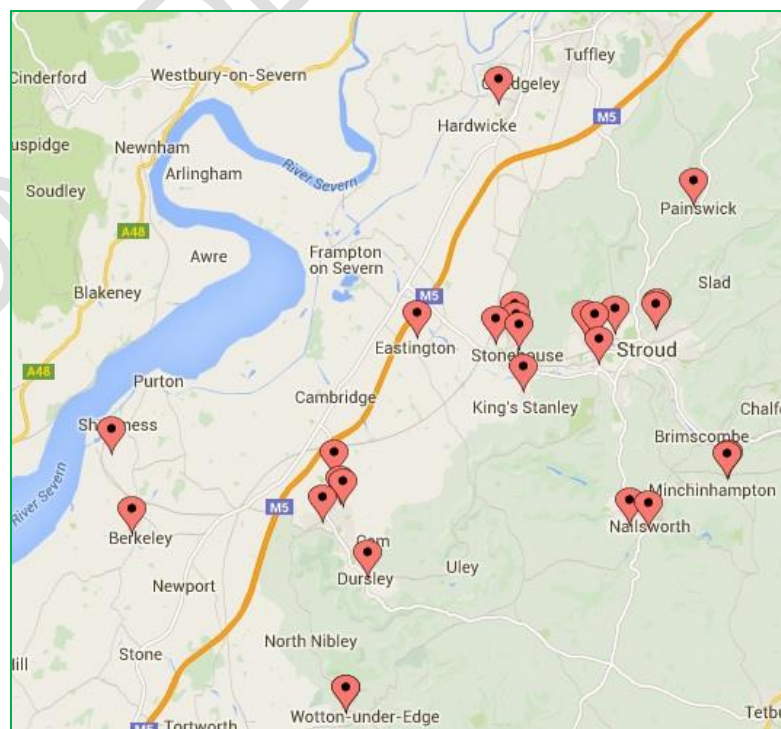
- A 'document review' of the Council's plans and those of key stakeholders, including Gloucestershire County Council, to understand strategic context;
- A review of stock information including investment plans and forecasts, repairs history and void times and costs;
- Undertaking on-site inspections of the schemes to assess its physical characteristics, the scheme's setting and neighbourhood surroundings;
- Reviewing the 'market' - the location of alternative 'competing' provision and likely demand for sheltered housing in the future; and
- Considering the available options and producing a preferred option for each scheme that forms part of an overarching strategy.

2. Scheme profile

2.1 The Council's sheltered housing stock consists of 788 homes in 28 schemes. Almost all the schemes are purpose built and all are at least 25 years old. Over 40 per cent was built over 45 years ago, in the 1960s.

2.2 The stock at an individual scheme level is diverse. Half the schemes comprise of purpose built blocks containing solely flats, while almost a third (32 per cent) comprises a combination of both flats and bungalows. Four schemes (14 per cent) contain just bungalows.

2.3 In terms of size, almost three quarters of the homes have one bedroom. Bedsits account for around 11 per cent and bungalows account for almost 40 per cent of the stock. Only 5 per cent of homes have more than one bedroom. The distribution of the schemes across the district is shown below:

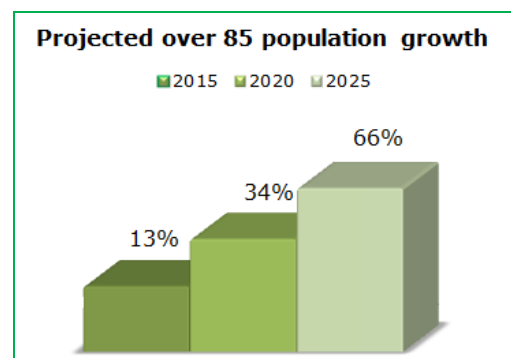
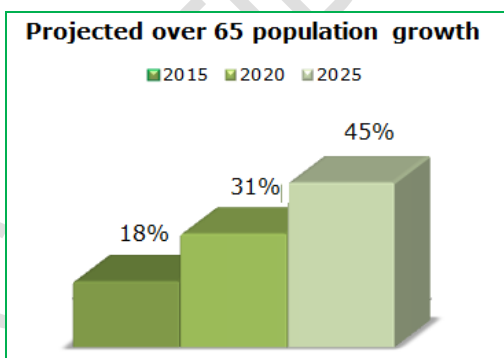


3. Resident profile

- 3.1 Demographic changes means that sheltered housing tenants are increasingly diverse with a much wider range of expectations, needs and ages. Sheltered housing tenants in 2015 are older and frailer than those who lived in the schemes when originally built – often living with dementia or chronic ill-health. For example, 11 schemes have more than 10 per cent of the residents aged over 90 while nine schemes have more than 40 per cent of residents aged over 80.
- 3.2 Alongside demographic changes, allocation policies mean that younger people are moving into sheltered housing, some having no care or support needs but others have complex needs, such as substance misuse or with a history of homelessness. Stroud has 3 schemes where more than 10 per cent of residents are aged under 60.
- 3.3 These ‘imbalances’ make it harder to provide a service that meets all tenants needs and aspirations. Willow Road - a scheme with 24 units serves as an example of this trend. This scheme has over a quarter of residents over 80 and a quarter under 60. Interestingly over 16 per cent of residents are currently working.

4. The local housing market

- 4.1 Stroud district has a population of 112,779 (2011 census) of which 21,977 (around 20 per cent) are aged 65 and over – higher than the Gloucestershire average. The population has increased by 5 per cent in the last decade with the number of over 65s expected to increase by over 60 per cent by 2031.
- 4.2 Most UK household growth is driven by older people. Overall, 41.0 per cent of households in Stroud are made up of only older people (aged 55 or over) and a further 11.7 per cent contain both older and non-older people. Older people in Stroud are slightly more likely than average to live in social rented housing.
- 4.3 Analysis carried out by GCC in 2012 on the need for older people’s services identified significant projected growth in the 65+ and 85+ populations over the next 10 years (shown below).



- 4.4 In Stroud a significant source of growth in household numbers is the projected increase in the number of single people of pensionable age by 78.5% and 2+ pensioner households by 52.9%. This in part reflects Stroud’s appeal to older people. For example, about a third (31 per cent) of market demand across the Stroud and Dursley area originates from retired households.
- 4.5 In total there are 844 households registered for accommodation suited to older households on the Gloucestershire Homeseeker database - 493 where the head of

household is aged over 65 and a further 351 in the 55-64 age bracket. Over half (58 per cent) of the 65+ group specifically require ground floor accommodation. This means that almost 6 out of every 10 'typical' applicants for sheltered housing (aged 65+) would not wish to be housed in first floor flats at a number of the Council's homes for example, at Glebelands, Ringfield Close and Jenner Court.

- 4.6 Overall, we believe that there are over 2000 sheltered homes serving Stroud. This figure includes other 'competing' schemes that fall within a natural catchment area that goes beyond the postcode and Stroud's geographical boundaries.
- 4.7 The level of competing provision is very high in some areas. For example, in the GL2 area in the north which includes parts of the Gloucester urban area including Hardwicke, the Council's stock consists of less than 10 per cent of the available provision for rent. Over 30 per cent of sheltered housing provision that may serve residents in the district is found in this postcode area. In addition, competing provision is high in the GL5 postcode area covering Stroud and GL6 which includes Nailsworth and Minchinhampton.

5. Communication and Consultation

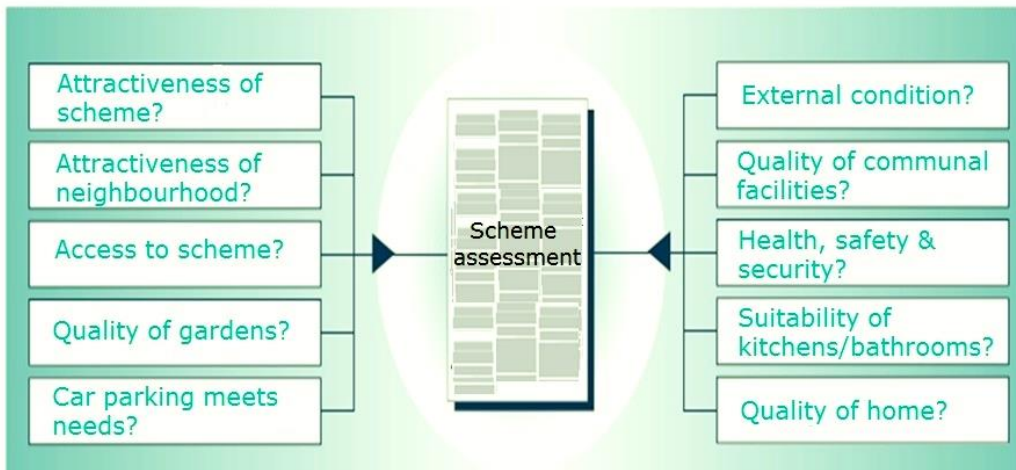
- 5.1 As part of any review of this nature one of the major challenges is to engage with all the stakeholders in an appropriate and timely way. The Council's 'Older Persons Housing Project Board' decided it was best to defer detailed consultation until the outcomes of the review were completed and 'at risk' schemes identified. In this way, we will be able to talk to residents, their families/advocates in a more informed and constructive way, encouraging greater ownership and empowerment of residents and in turn leading to increased satisfaction and individual well-being.
- 5.3 Ark also met with some key external and internal stakeholders over the course of our assignment. The key findings from the consultation are set out in the main report.

6. Asset performance

- 6.1 Stroud provided void data for the last three years for each of the schemes. This allowed us to review the performance of the schemes from a number of perspectives.
- 6.2 Our key findings are as follows:
- Repair numbers and costs too high in some schemes
 - Void costs in small number of schemes consistently high
 - Turnover in some schemes over 20 per cent
 - 'Demand' problems in some schemes (bedsit and unit size)
 - Void times can be too long and some schemes have long-term voids
 - The Council needs to ensure its plans are based on robust stock condition data

7. Scheme Assessments

- 7.1 The most significant stage of this review was the assessment of the schemes. This involved reviewing the asset performance data and local housing market information collected. Most importantly, this stage was informed by an on-site inspection and discussions with local staff.
- 7.2 Each scheme inspection involves an appraisal of the schemes from a number of perspectives illustrated in the figure below.



7.3 Schemes were categorised using a simple traffic light (Red/Amber/Green) system to reflect the degree of 'risk' they present to Stroud's ongoing business. The breakdown of results is shown below:

Category	Scheme	Number of Homes
RED	Cambridge House, Dryleaze Court, Glebelands, Ringfield Close, Willow Road (5 schemes)	173 homes – (57 of 86 bedsits) 22 per cent of homes
RED/AMBER	Burdett House (1 scheme)	25 homes (6 bedsits) 3 per cent of homes
AMBER	Archway Gardens, Ashcroft House, Chapel Lane, Concord, George Pearce House and Trinity Drive, Grange View, Grove Park Road, Jenner Court, Malvern Gardens, Sherborne House, Springfields Court, The Beeches, Vizard Close (13 schemes)	336 homes 43 per cent of homes
GREEN	Ashwell House, Broadfield Road, Draycott, Dryleaze House, Hamfallow Court, Hazelwood, The Corriett, St Nicholas Court, Walter Preston Court (9 schemes)	254 homes 32 per cent of homes

7.4 The recommendations based on the findings are that:

- 13 schemes including almost half of homes are retained in the longer term in their current form to continue providing older people's housing. These should benefit from improvements such as:
 - Improving communal entrance, lounge and garden;
 - creation of scooter stores and improving car parking; and
 - Lift installation where practicable
- 5 schemes are improved for an alternative use. These schemes are not suited to specialist older people's housing. However, they are probably sustainable as 'age-exclusive or 'age preferred' for people aged 50+.
- 3 schemes should be remodelled for continued older peoples use. To ensure these schemes are fit for the future the Council needs to invest in remodelling to

address problems around the quality of the 'offer'. In this way, the modernised schemes will better meet the needs of older people and ensure they are sustainable in the longer-term. Typical works proposed include:

- Remove bedsits and improve space standards;
 - Introduce some 2 bed accommodation; and
 - Maximising return by converting 'specialist' facilities or other assets
- One scheme should be remodelled for alternative use. In this case the scheme, Chapel Lane, is best suited to return to more general needs provision - probably 'age-exclusive' for people aged 50+. Opportunities for redevelopment to provide additional units and revenue returns should also be explored on this site.
 - 6 schemes should be decommissioned as older people's housing. The performance and quality of these schemes is poor and remodelling to meet modern and future needs is not an economic or practical solution. Our presumption is that most of these sites could form part of the Council's active development programme although a more detailed feasibility study is needed to make an informed decision on redevelopment or disposal.

7.5 Ark has completed a breakdown by scheme of the outline costs to deliver a programme flowing from the preferred option. The total cost is **£4,678,800** which captures the improvements or remodelling identified and associated fees. The Council should test the proposed capital costs, unit changes and revenue impacts of the programme with its HRA Business Plan in order better to gauge its capacity to support the proposed changes.

7.6 Below is a 'pen picture' review of the Council's highest risk schemes.

Burdett House, Stonehouse GL10 2LS

Burdett House was built in 1977 in a predominantly residential area approximately 1 mile away from Stonehouse. It consists of 25 homes – 6 small bedsits, 10 one person flats, (8 can accommodate two people) and 9 one bed bungalows of which 3 are big enough for two people. The flats and bungalows are in a linked block with 8 properties in a lower section away from the main scheme and communal areas.

Car parking is satisfactory but the scheme is not served by a local bus service. This means that some residents (over a quarter of whom are over 80) find it difficult to access local amenities (shops, GPs, PO etc.) and relevant activities.

Access around the scheme is difficult for some less mobile residents. There is no scooter store and the site is sloping. Access to communal facilities for lower section residents is via an external path or a stairlift in the main corridor.

The overall quality of accommodation at Burdett House is poor – although homes have benefitted from improvements the bedsits are small and relatively unpopular. Although there is little 'competing' provision the area is well-served by alternative Council accommodation. These factors contribute to very long void times and high level of refusals.

The number and cost of repairs raised each year appear satisfactory. The communal lounge, although well used has an unwelcoming 'institutional' feel.



Categorisation for Action: Red/Amber
Preferred Option: Redevelop/Dispose

Cambridge House, Dursley GL11 4AZ

Cambridge House is in Dursley in a residential area close to the town centre. It consists of 20 homes - 18 one-bed bungalows, 4 of which can accommodate two people and 2 bedsits. The former wardens' flat has been converted to create two first floor flats. It was built in 1962 with bungalows arranged as a long terrace accessed off a rear open walkway.

The scheme is not popular and 'lettability' is difficult despite being set in an attractive site that is well-maintained and well located for easy access to local amenities. The décor, fixtures and fittings in the communal lounge and kitchen are dated.

There is a high number of long-standing residents with a third over 80 and with 15 per cent over 90. Despite this, the turnover of tenancies and the number of refusals are high. The most common reasons given for refusals are that the property or area is unsuitable or the home is too small.

The overall design and construction falls well below modern standards. Homes are often small, badly arranged with poor natural lighting and insulation. The number of repairs appears satisfactory but repair costs are relatively high which may reflect the age and construction of the scheme.



Categorisation for Action: Red
Preferred Option: Redevelop/Dispose

Dryleaze Court, Wotton-under-Edge GL12 7BA

Dryleaze Court was built in 1969 in an attractive residential area close to the town centre and local amenities. There are 63 homes in total. 21 one-bed bungalows, (18 big enough for two people), 21 one-bed flats, 3 two-bed flats and 18 small bedsits.

Dryleaze Court benefits from close proximity to a range of local shops and other amenities. However, access to and from the town is difficult for some residents due to a very steep hill. Despite this, there is no scooter store and limited car parking. This is particularly important as over a third of existing residents are over 80.

Dryleaze Court's biggest weakness is the poor quality of accommodation. There is a high concentration of bedsits which are small and difficult to let. The scheme itself is relatively unattractive with some evidence of under investment in maintenance and decorative repair.

The number of repairs carried out and spend on repairs and voids are in line with the expected benchmark but arguably lower than the scheme needs. Some homes do not currently meet the Decent Homes Standard and some first floor flats are not served by a lift. Consequently, Dryleaze Court has 18 long-term voids with an average void time of over 850 days.



***Categorisation for Action: Red
Preferred Option: Redevelop/Dispose***

Glebelands, Cam, Dursley, Gloucestershire, GL11 5NE

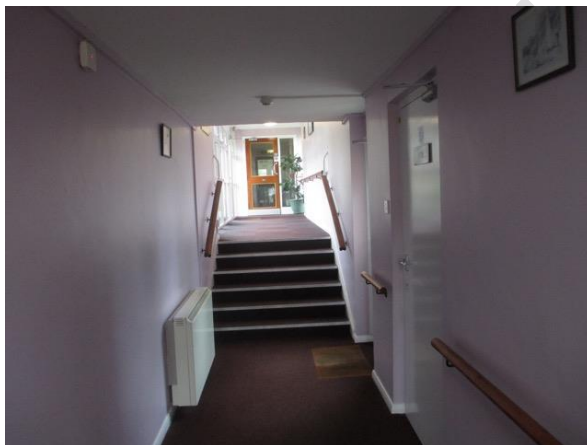
Glebelands was built in 1969 and comprises 40 homes of which 23 are bedsits. There are 12 one-bed flats mostly big enough for two people, four two-bedroom flats and 1 one-bed bungalow which can accommodate two people.

The scheme is in a good location, close to the town centre which has lots of amenities including a nearby medical centre. The location does mean that car parking at times can be difficult. A range of communal facilities are provided although they need updating to make them more appealing.

The scheme's sloping topography and layout with connecting corridors and steps can make access difficult for some residents (over a quarter are over 80). There is no lift access to the first floor or a suitably sited scooter store.

These issues contribute to a high number of refusals, long-term voids and some very long void times. Turnover in the scheme is also very high which is likely to be a reflection of the large number of small bedsits.

The number of repairs carried out is in line with the expected benchmark and the data suggests repairs spend is very low. The reliability of this data should be reviewed as we do not believe that all homes currently meet the minimum Decent Homes Standard.



***Categorisation for Action: Red
Preferred Option: Redevelop/Dispose***

Ringfield Close, Nailsworth GL6 0HY

Ringfield, Close (including Tanners Piece and Upper Park Road) was built in 1963 in a largely residential area. The split site comprises 26 homes made up of 16 flats, 4 of which have two bedrooms and 10 bungalows, 2 of which have two bedrooms.

All the homes are pebble-dashed Reema 'Hollow-land' – a "non-traditional" construction form built to address the acute housing shortage in the post-war era.

The properties are 'as built' with patch repairs and some remedial work carried out to sustain their ongoing use.

Inevitably, these homes experience a very high level of repairs and spend. This presents a number of risks to the Council and will continue to do so without significant investment to protect the structure and fabric of homes.

The properties are spacious and in a popular location. The large communal lounge is regularly used. However, turnover of tenancies is high. Car parking is insufficient for resident's needs, there is no lift access to first floor flats and the scooter store does not meet modern standards.



***Categorisation for Action: Red
Preferred Option: Redevelop/Dispose***

Willow Road, Stonehouse GL10 2DS

Willow Road comprises 1 one-bed (2-person) flat and 23 one bed bungalows, some small studio-style and 10 that can accommodate two people. It was built in 1965 and has a diverse resident population with over a quarter of residents over 80 and a quarter under 60.

The scheme has an unusual arrangement – sitting as an 'island' at the centre of a relatively unpopular housing estate surrounded by roads on all sides.

The location means that some residents may feel concerned about safety and security. In addition, access to local shops and amenities is difficult for some residents (about 10- 15 minutes' walk to nearest bus stop, GP and Post Office).

The bungalows themselves form a linked triangular shape with the communal facilities including a relatively small lounge easily accessed at the centre.

Homes often have narrow doorways with raised entrance thresholds. Some of the homes suffer from disrepair and need investment in external elements such as fascias, soffits and windows.

Tenancy turnover is high and the smaller bungalows can be hard to let.



***Categorisation for Action: Red
Preferred Option: Redevelop/Dispose***

8. Recommendations

8.1 To assist the Council we would make the following interim recommendations subject to further discussion and scoping with the Council.

- Consider the draft report and the findings
- Begin process to conduct the design feasibility work
- Work with residents to set the 'Stroud standard' for sheltered housing and improvement and remodelling plans
- Work with partners to improve local knowledge on 'demand'
- Improve financial performance and make best use of assets by:
 - understanding stock condition, unit costs and lifecycles
 - Address long-term voids and reduce 'avoidable' turnover
- Further improve service quality and efficiency by:
 - Fully understanding service charges
 - Explore opportunities around hub activities
- Develop a clear communication plan

Appendix B
Vision & Strategy Group
'Terms of Reference'

Older Person's Strategy – Vision & Strategy Group

Terms of Reference

1. Members:

Kimberley Read, Sheltered Housing Project Manager
Chris Horwood, Project Officer
Lynne Mansell, Principal Sheltered Housing Officer
Emma Keating-Clark, Health & Wellbeing Development Co-ordinator
Lucy Clothier, Principal Accountant
Tim Power, Head of Business Service Planning
Pippa Stroud, Policy Implementation Manager
Laura Stephen, Senior Housing Strategy Officer
Philip Bishop, Housing Advice Manager

2. Purpose of Group:

To collectively share and explore ideas and knowledge, leading to the development of a strategy to address the future increased demand in older person's housing. The strategy also needs to review existing service provision and consider how this might evolve to meet the changing expectations and needs of our ageing population.

3. Objectives of Group:

- To identify 'the problems' which SDC are likely to face over the next 10-20 years specifically in relation to the increasing demographic of an ageing population (this relates to the outcomes and findings of the Ark Report June 2015).
- To generate a healthy discussion to develop a draft vision, mission & objectives - suggesting creative solutions to 'the problems'. The key discussion points will then be developed into one overall draft for further review and debate at the Sheltered Modernisation Steering Group.
- Review and understand the programme for developing the strategy and the implementation phase.
- Start to develop a communication plan for the strategy.
- Agree some key action points between the group to move the draft strategy forward.

Appendix C

Task & Finish Group

'Terms of Reference'

Older Person's Strategy – Task & Finish Group

Terms of Reference

1. Members & Officers:

Cllr Jenny Miles, Labour Party (Chair)
Cllr Chas Townley, Labour Party
Cllr Norman Kay, Green Party
Cllr Julie Job, Conservative Party
Cllr Phil McAsey, Conservative Party
Ian Allan, Tenant Representative (optional)
Sadie Tazewell, Tenant Representative (optional)

Kimberley Read, Sheltered Housing Project Manager
Chris Horwood, Project Officer
Petula Davis, Principal Projects Officer
Lynne Mansell, Principal Sheltered Housing Officer
Lucy Clothier, Principal Accountant
Chris Eadie, Tenant Liaison Officer (additional resource if required)

2. Scope of Group:

“To explore the expectations of the ‘next generation’ in relation to SDC’s older people’s housing.”

The outcomes should enable SDC to develop an Older Person’s Housing offer for its’ current and future stock. The housing offer should be fit for purpose now and for future tenants and should enable flexibility within the stock to adapt to future demands.

The remit of the group does not extend to looking at new build sites, or sites for extra care. It is solely focussed on SDC’s housing stock and does not cover private sector housing.

3. Sources of Information:

There are a variety of methods of gathering information, for example:

- Telephone survey (500 respondents) company would be procured and demographics considered when selecting numbers (phone survey company would analyse the feedback).
- Online survey – based on our website and linked to Facebook and other social media outlets (SDC would need to analyse feedback).

Appendix A

- Refer to feedback and analysis from the Gloucestershire County Council survey undertaken this year around 'Housing with Care'.
- Arrange site visits around some of the Sheltered Housing schemes. Invite SDC staff from other service areas and possibly tenants for feedback.

4. Deadline:

The group should work towards the following deadlines:

- To provide a verbal update at December Housing Committee.
- Provide a written report at February Housing Committee - the report will need to be ready for legal & financial imps by 15th January 2019 with the final report sent to Democratic Services by 22nd January 2019.

5. Visits:

It is recommended that the Task & Finish Group consider visiting a number of SDC's Sheltered Housing schemes to understand what the current housing offer for older people looks like. It is also recommended that the group visit Sherborne House, Stonehouse which has been modernised recently as a pilot project. This will help the group to understand what can be achieved. Schemes to visit should be agreed at the first meeting.

Appendix D
Future Focus Research
'Older People's Accommodation Research'

Old People's Accommodation Research 2018

Report

January 2019

Prepared For: Stroud District Council

Prepared By: Future Focus Research
www.futurefocusresearch.co.uk

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1. Approach to research

1.1 Research objectives

Stroud District Council commissioned Future Focus Research to seek the views of residents and tenants in the Stroud district, to find out what they would like from their accommodation to ensure that it is fit for purpose now and for the future.

1.2 Methodology

The research consisted of 500 ten minute telephone interviews with local residents. All interviews were conducted with a representative sample of residents aged 18 and over who live in the Stroud District Council area. The sample was based on the quota controls below, which reflect the demographic makeup of the Stroud District Council area. In addition, to ensure the views were obtained from individuals from all areas of the district, we targeted a proportionate number of interviews in each of the local areas, as follows:

- Gloucester Border Areas
- Stroud Central
- Stroud Border Areas, including Nailsworth
- Stonehouse
- Dursley
- Wotton-Under-Edge
- Berkeley

These areas are grouped together based on the Royal Mail post towns – see [Appendix A](#) for details of the postcodes. In addition to area, quotas were also set on age and gender as shown in table 1.1 below.

Table 1.1: Age and Gender quotas

Gender	
Male	49%
Female	51%
Age	
18 - 34	21%
35 – 54	37%
55 – 74	31%
75+	11%
Total	100%

The questionnaire was designed in conjunction with the Council to ensure the research was able to deliver the intended objectives. Interviews were conducted by a team of trained interviewers.

A sample size of 500 gives a margin of error of +/-4.4% at the 95% confidence interval. Therefore, if 50% of respondents give an answer to a question, we can be sure that the true value lies somewhere between 45.6% and 54.4%.

Please note where charts do not add up to 100 this is due to one of two reasons:

- The question was a multiple choice and respondents may have been given more than one answer
- Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole percentage and therefore the total presented in the chart may sum to slightly more or less than 100%.

1.3 Who did we interview?

The profile of the 500 interviews is shown in table 1.2 below.

Table 1.2

Area	%	No. of respondents
Gloucester Border Areas	11%	54
Stroud Central	28%	139
Stroud Border Areas	22%	109
Stonehouse	12%	60
Dursley	16%	80
Wotton-under-Edge	7%	33
Berkeley	5%	25
Gender		
Male	49%	245
Female	51%	255
Age		
18 – 34	21%	105
35 – 54	37%	184
55 – 74	31%	153
75+	11%	55
Prefer not to say	1%	3
Disability		
Yes	16%	79
No	83%	416
Prefer not to say	1%	5
Working status		
Employed in Stroud district	45%	226
Employed outside Stroud district	12%	61
Unemployed and actively looking for paid employment	1%	3
Unemployed but not looking for paid employment	1%	4
Retired	28%	142
At school/college/university	11%	56
Other (e.g. house person, carer)	1%	4
Prefer not to say	1%	4
Ethnicity		
White or White British	90%	449
Other	9%	47
Prefer not to say	1%	4
Total	100	500

Where there are differences between any of the demographics, these have been highlighted in the report.

2. Summary

This section provides an overview of the findings of this survey:

Context

- 61% definitely plan to retire in the Stroud DC area. Although those who are uncertain about their plans, not surprisingly, increases as age decreases
- Encouragingly the vast majority of those over the age of 55 know what their accommodation plans are for when they retire.
- The majority of residents have access to friends/family and/or social groups in Stroud DC

Perception of the Term ‘Sheltered Housing’

- Two thirds associated the term sheltered housing with older person’s accommodation where 24 hour care is provided

Preference for Rural Town or Market Parish

- Over a half don’t currently have a preference for rural areas or a market town
- Of the remainder 30% preferred a market town and 12% preferred a rural parish

Accommodation Needs

- All elements within the home were considered to be important by at least three quarters of residents
- Most important was a walk-in shower room and an intelligent alarm system
- When asked about communal facilities, the most important was parking and communal gardens
- Most respondents were not willing to pay extra for any facilities

Access to Services

- Access to care and support services, shops, healthcare and transport were all considered to be important by the vast majority
- Access to leisure facilities was of lesser importance
- Opinion was divided on whether they would be prepared to travel to access facilities, but older residents were less likely

The Community

- Security (both within the building and the groups) was important to most as was living amongst people their own age
- *Mixed communities* were of much lower important

Communal Lounges

- Health clinics were the most popular choice for use of communal areas
- Just a third were in favour of letting communal areas to outside groups

3. Survey Findings

3.1 Context

The following questions regarding retirement plans were asked at the end of the survey to ensure that they did not influence the respondent’s decision to take part in the survey or their response to any subsequent questions. However, we feel the findings from these questions are best presented upfront, as they provide a context to the results.

Respondents were asked whether they plan to retire within the Stroud District Council area. Overall, 61% said that they were, 9% said that they weren’t, and 30% did not know. See figure 3.1.

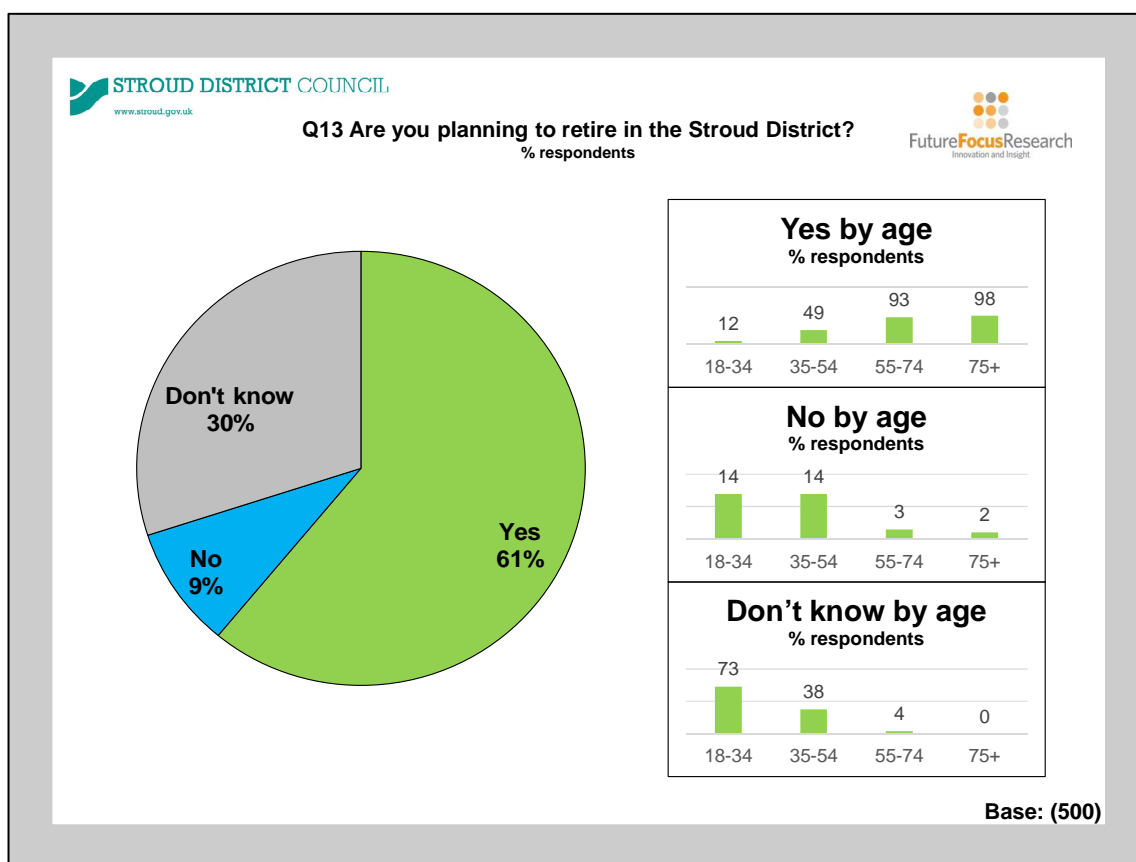


Figure 3.1

Perhaps not surprisingly, the percentage planning to retire within the Stroud area rises with age, from 12% of those aged 18-34, 49% of 35-54s, 93% of 55 – 74s and to 98% of those aged 75+. Almost three quarters of 18-34 year olds (73%) did not know what their plans for retirement are.

When asked about their housing plans for when they get older, 40% did not know what their plans were (rising to 50% of those aged 35 – 54 and to 93% of those aged 18-34).

One in 20 respondents (5%) currently live in specialist housing for older people, rising to 24% (1 in 4) of those aged 75+. The same percentage (5%) told us that they were planning to move to specialist housing, rising to 9% amongst those aged 55 -74. See figure 3.2.

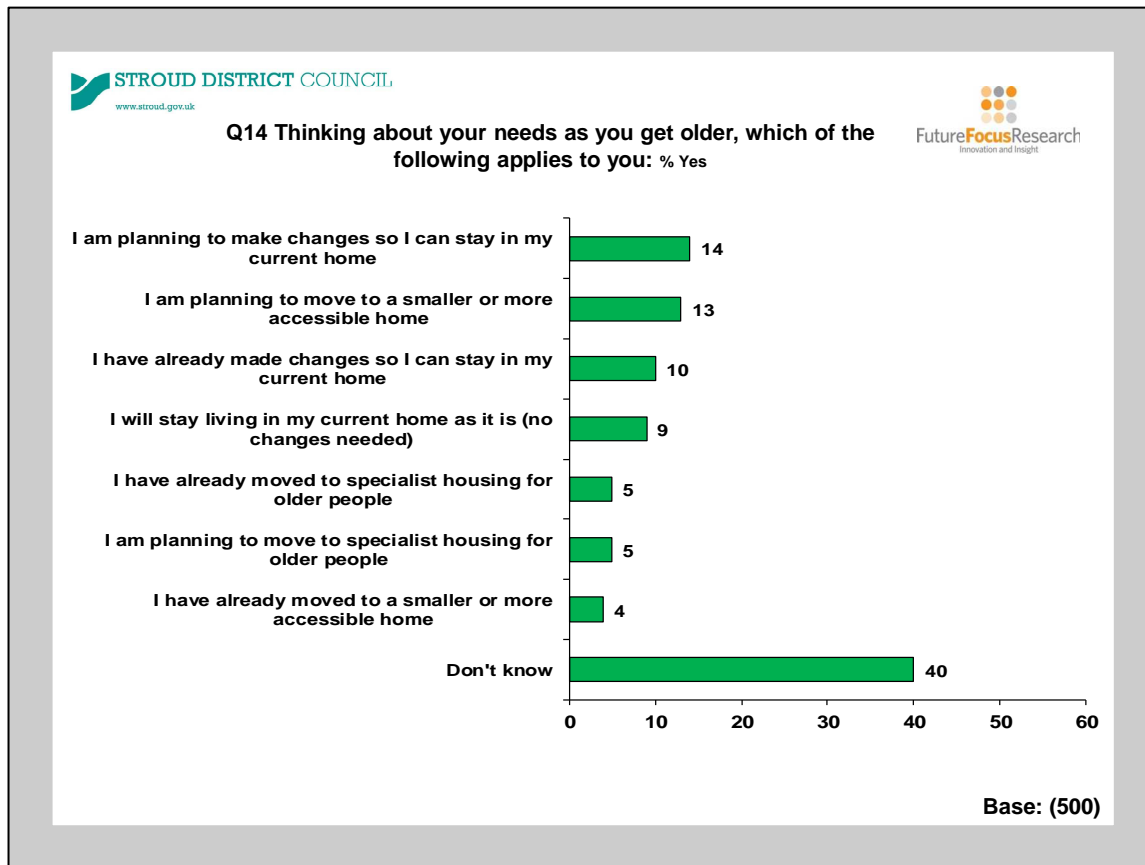
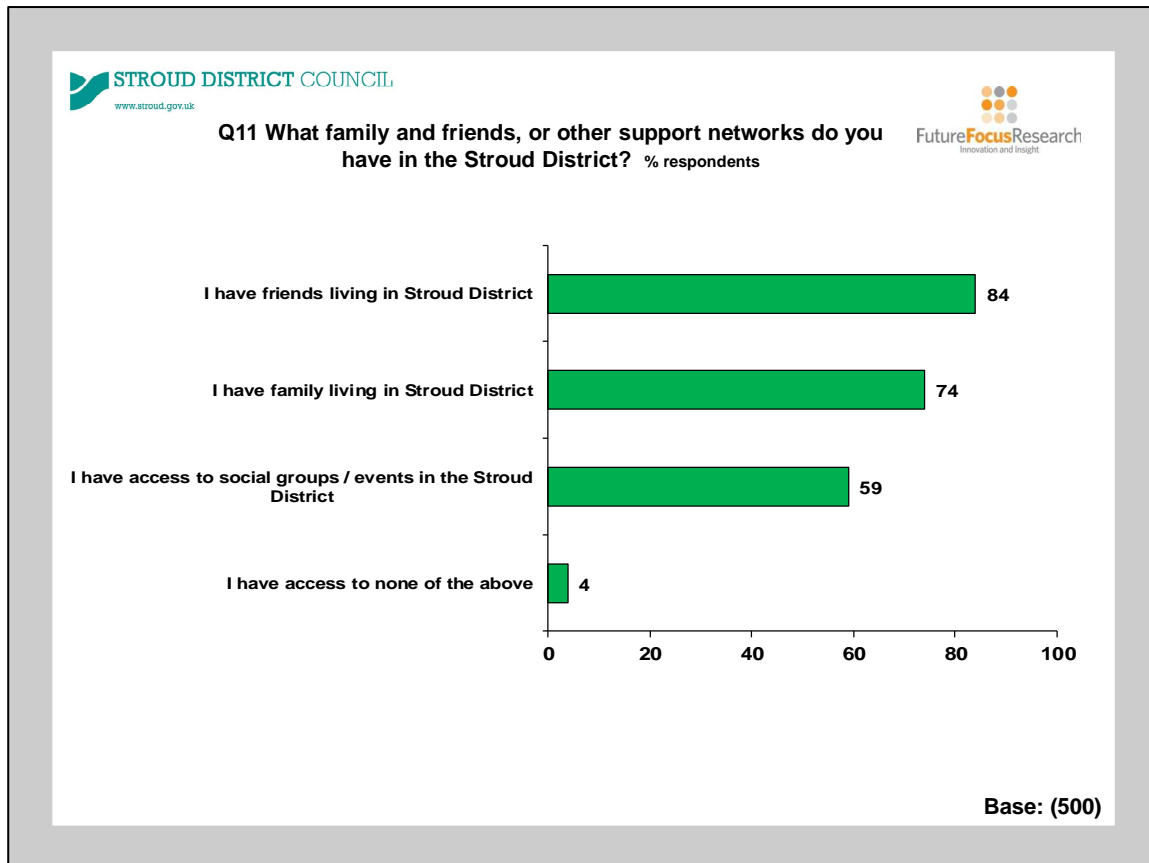


Figure 3.2

The vast majority of respondents (96%) said that they had either friends, family or access to social groups in the Stroud area, see figure 3.3.

Figure 3.3



3.2 Perceptions of the Term ‘Sheltered Housing’

Over two thirds of respondents (68%) agreed, either strongly or slightly, that the term ‘sheltered housing’ suggests older person’s accommodation where care and support are provided 24 hours a day. See figure 3.4.

Men were slightly more likely than women to agree (73% compared to 64%), as were those aged 35 – 54 (79%) and 18 – 34 (76%).

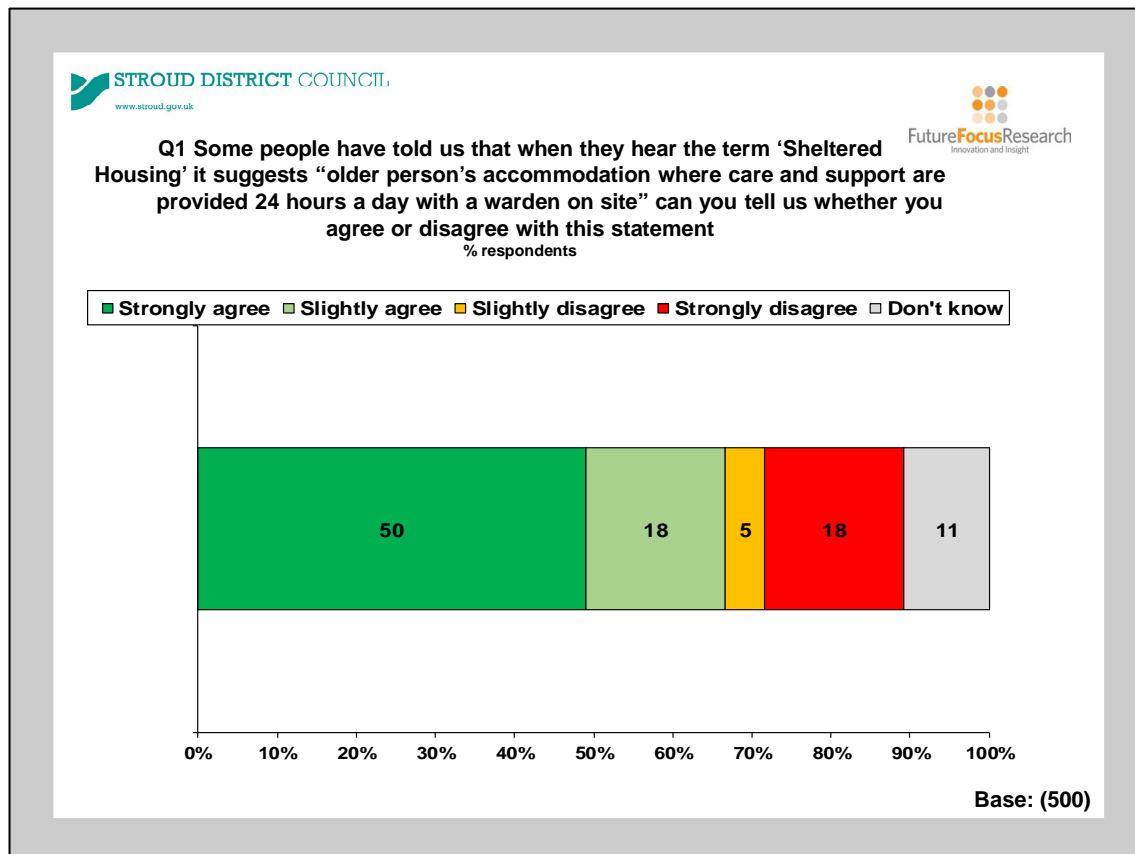
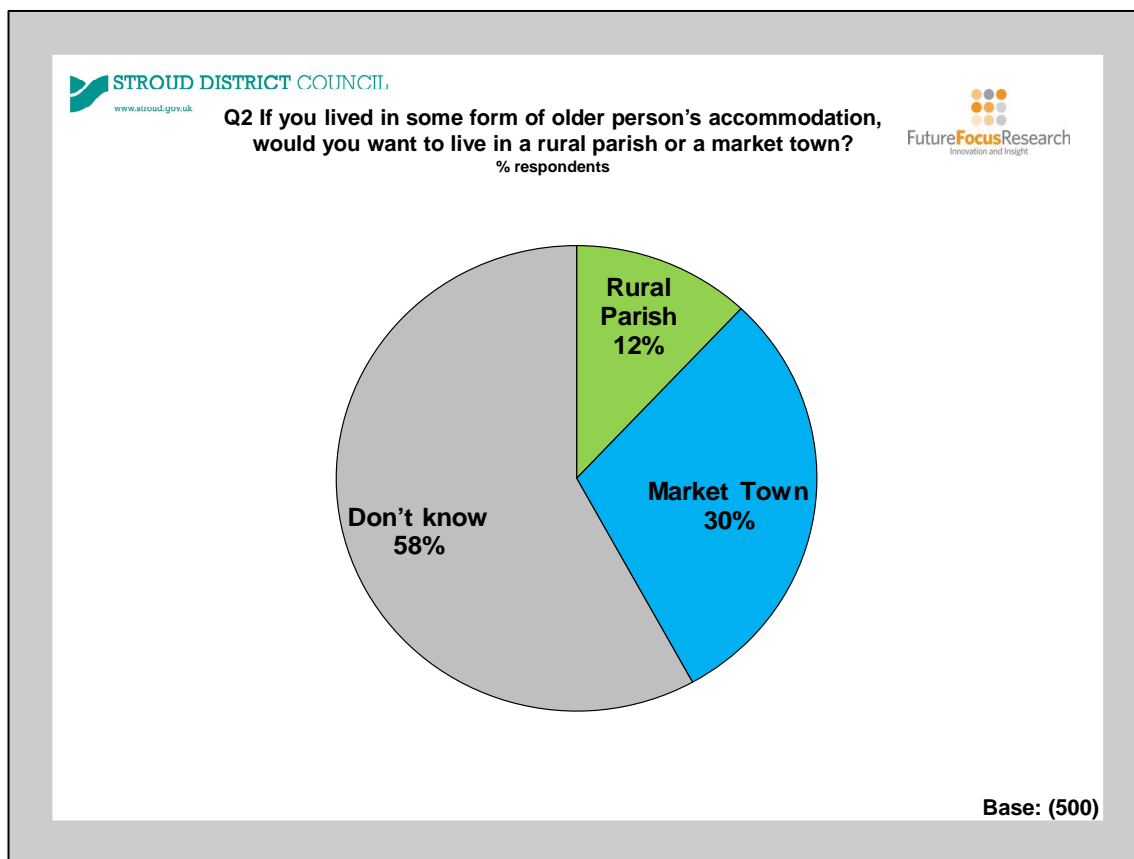


Figure 3.4

3.3 Preference for Market Town/Rural Location

Respondents were then asked whether they would choose a market town or a rural parish if they were to live in some form of older person’s accommodation in the future. Almost 6 in 10 (58%) did not know where they would choose, this rose to 81% amongst 18 – 34 year olds. Of the remainder, 30% would choose a market town and 12% would choose a rural parish. See figure 3.5.

Figure 3.5



When asked the reason for their preference, the main reason given for choosing a market town was that *it's close to shops/healthcare/amenities* (72%) and the main reason given for choosing a rural parish was that they had *always lived there* (34%), see table 3.1.

Table 3.1

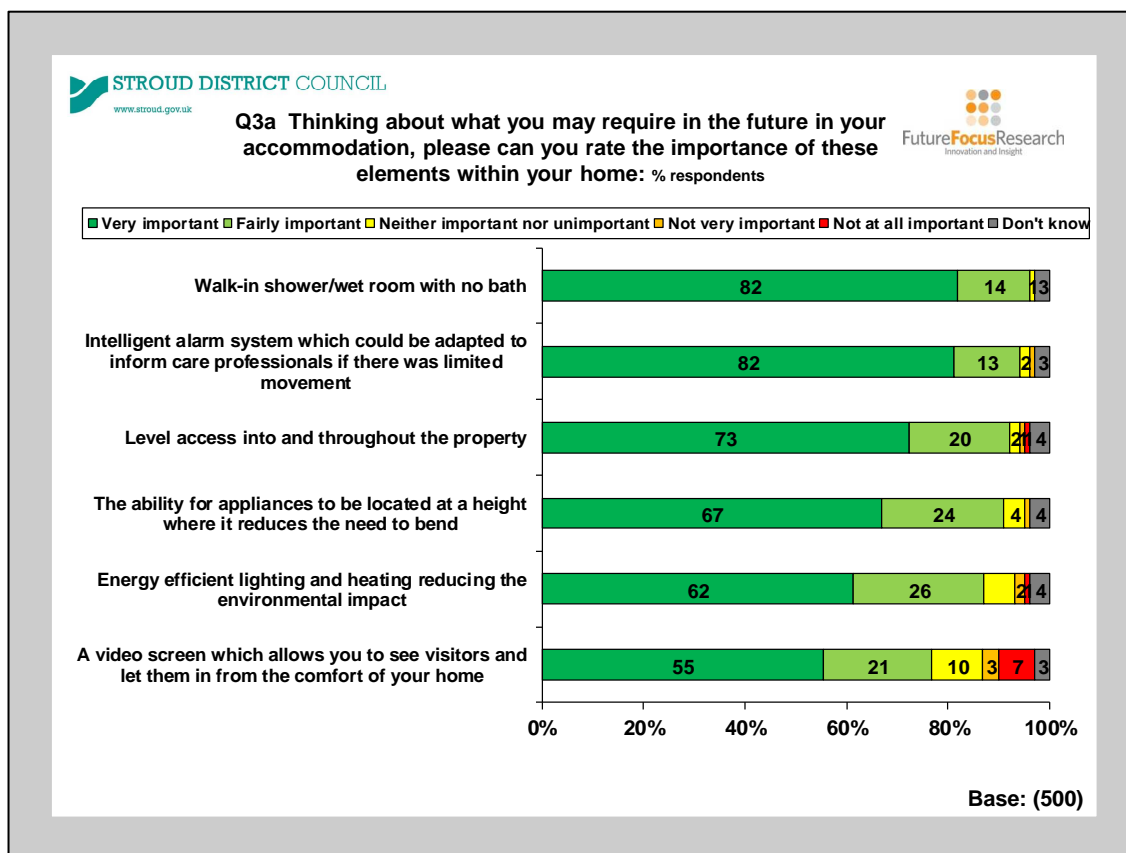
Reasons - Market Town (Base: 151)		
Close to shops/health/amenities	72%	109
Always lived there	10%	15
Busy/less isolated	7%	11
Safer	3%	4
Near/friends family	1%	2
Quieter	1%	2
Don't know	5%	8

Reasons - Rural (Base:61)		
Always lived there	34%	21
Safer	11%	7
Like the countryside	23%	14
Quieter/Relaxing	18%	11
Prefer way of life	8%	5
Near friends/family	3%	2
Don't know	2%	1

3.4 Accommodation Needs

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of a list of different elements within their home. Most important was a *walk-in shower room with no bath* (96% very or fairly important), see figure 3.6. This was followed by:

- *An intelligent alarm system* (95%)
- *Level access into and throughout the property* (93%)
- *The ability for appliances to be located at a height where it reduces the need to bend* (91%)
- *Energy efficient lighting and heating reducing the environmental impact* (88%)
- *A video screen which allows you to see visitors and let them in from the comfort of your home* (76%)



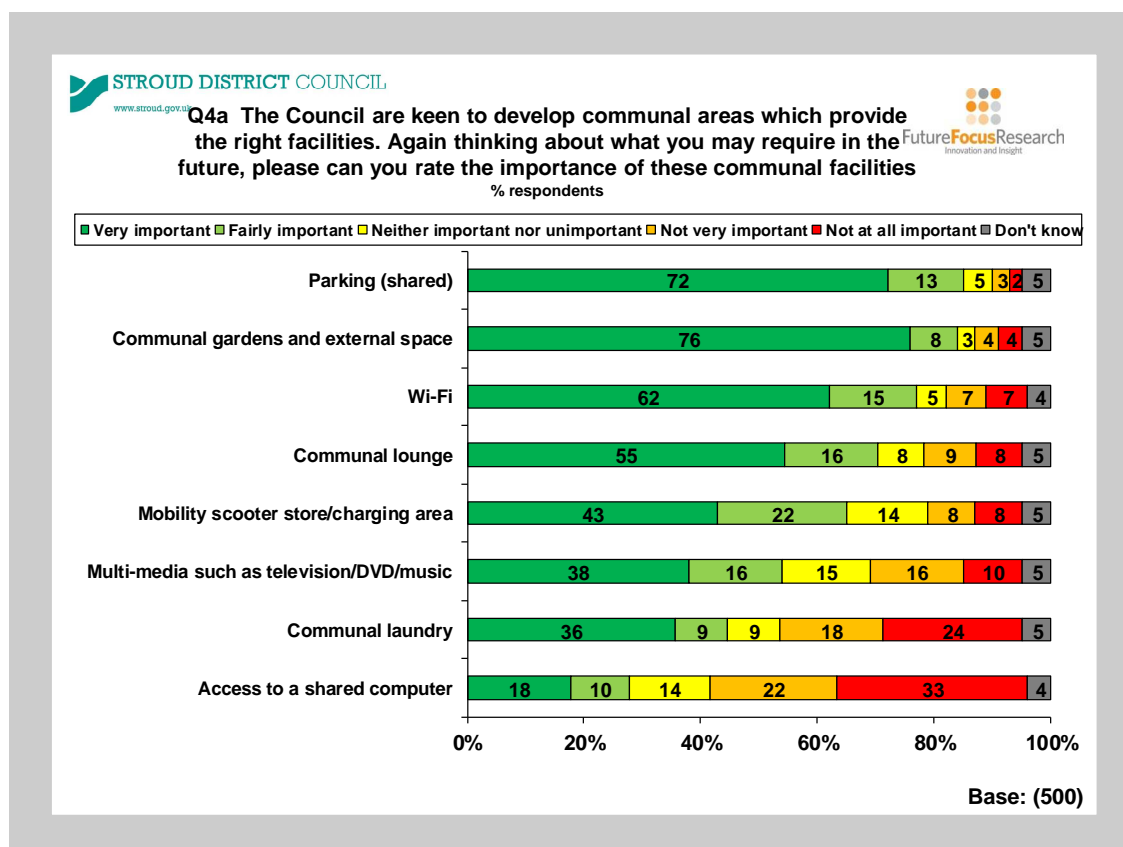
See Figure 3.6

Those aged 18-34 were more likely to not know how important each of these elements would be than the other age groups (at least 10%).

Whilst men and women rated most elements equally as important, a *video screen* was more important to women than men (81% compared to 72%).

Respondents were then asked to rate the importance of a list of communal facilities. Most important was *parking* (85% very or fairly important) and *communal gardens and external space* (84%), see figure 3.7. These were followed by:

- *Wi-Fi* (77%)
- *Communal Lounge* (71%)
- *Mobility scooter store/charging area* (65%)
- *Multi-media such as television/DVD/music* (54%)
- *Communal laundry* (45%)
- *Access to a shared computer* (28%)



See Figure 3.7

Those aged 18-34 were more likely to not know how important each of these elements would be than the other age groups (at least 15%). The only other notable age difference was that those over 75 were least likely to consider *Wi-Fi* as important (56%).

With the exception of *Wi-Fi* and *parking*, women were more likely to rate all other facilities as more important than men.

3.5 Paying for Additional Facilities

Respondents were then asked whether they would be willing to pay extra for any facilities. At least a half were not willing to pay extra for any of the facilities, see figure 3.8.

A half (50%) were willing to pay extra for *Wi-Fi* and 44% were willing to pay extra for *maintenance of communal gardens and external space* and a *mobility scooter store/charging area*.

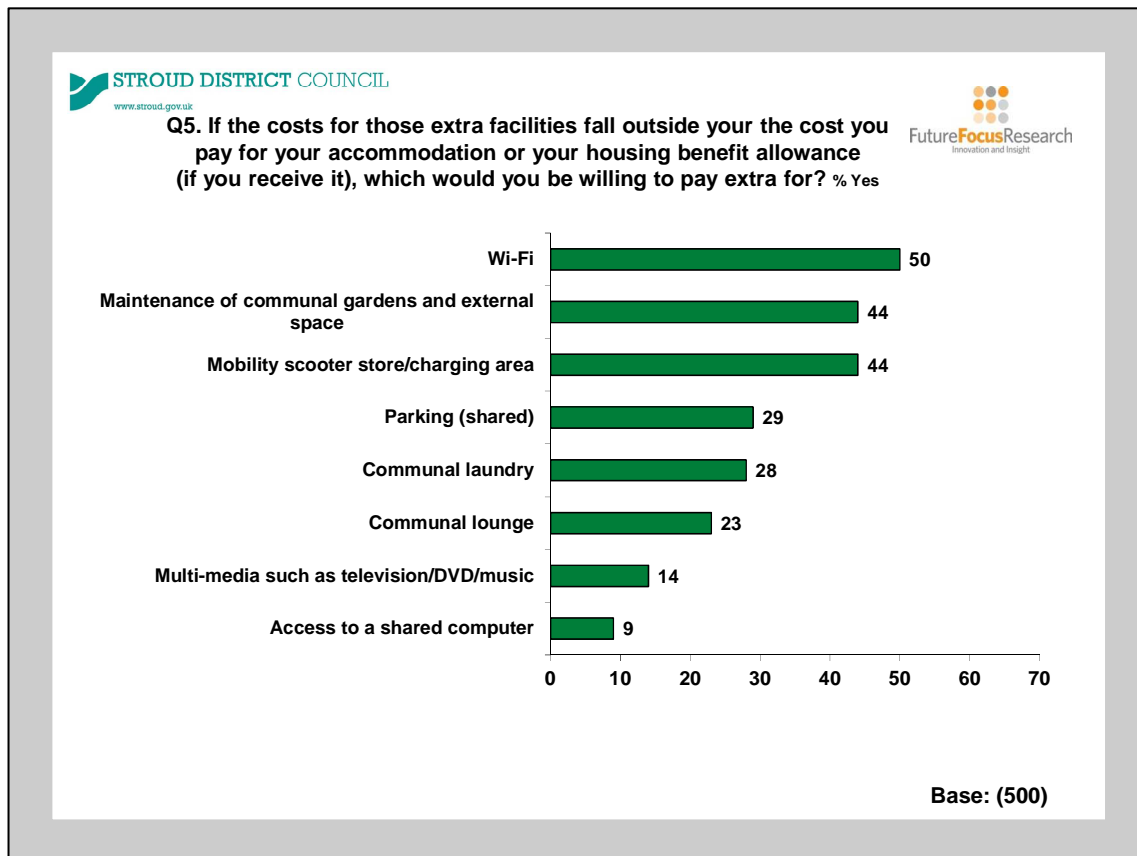


Figure 3.8

Those aged 18-34 were most likely to not know if they would be willing to pay extra for facilities (at least 10%).

In general, women were more likely than men to say that they would pay extra for things (with the exception of *Wi-Fi*).

3.6 Access to Services

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of access to different services in terms of the location of the accommodation. Most important was *access to care and support services* (98% very or fairly important), *shops* (97%) and *local healthcare facilities* (97%). Access to *public transport links* was important to 91% of respondents. Of least importance was access to *local leisure facilities* (56%), however, this was more important to those aged 18-34 (69%) and to women (64%).

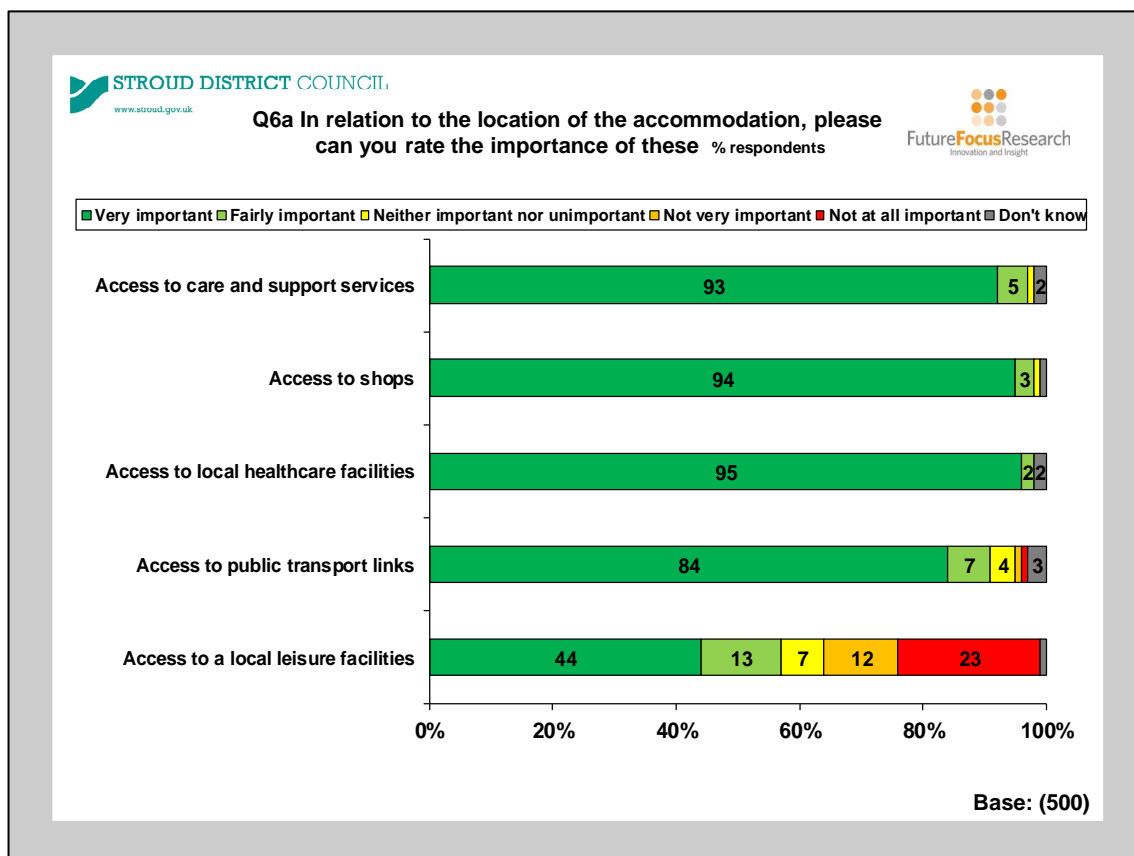


Figure 3.9

Just under a half (46%) said that they were prepared to travel to access these facilities, and a similar percentage (48%) said that they would not (6% did not know). Those over 75 were least likely to say they would travel to access facilities with 64% saying that they wouldn't.

3.7 The Community

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of different elements within the community that they may be living in. Most important was *security both within the building* (95% very or fairly important) and *around the grounds* (94%). *Living amongst people your own age* was important to 79% of respondents. *Mixed communities* were of much lower importance (31%).

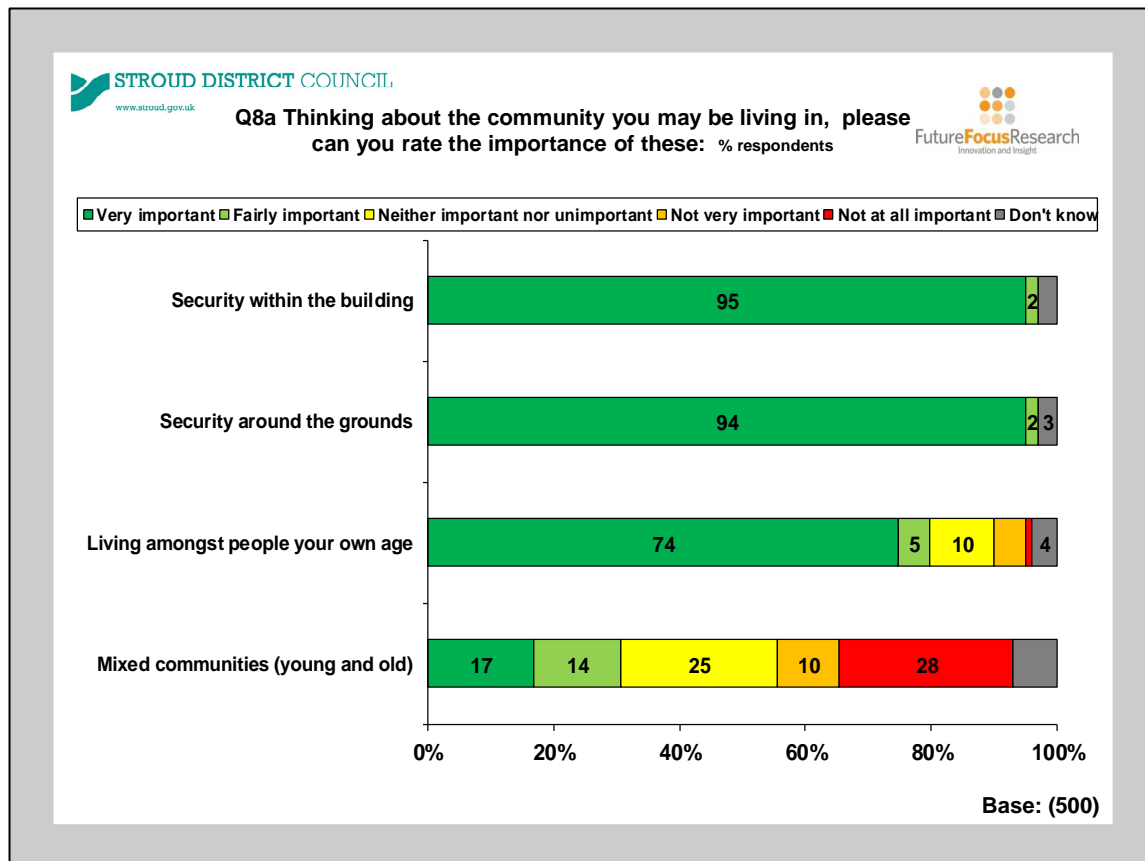


Figure 3.10

As previously, those aged 18-34 were most likely to not know how important each of these elements would be (at least 11%).

3.8 Communal Lounges

Respondents were asked what sort of activities would encourage them to use the communal lounges. *Health clinics* were the most popular option with 90% saying that they would use these. This was followed by *police surgery* (53%), *fitness group* (43%), *games afternoon* (40%), *films nights* (38%) and lastly *dance classes* (21%). See figure 3.11

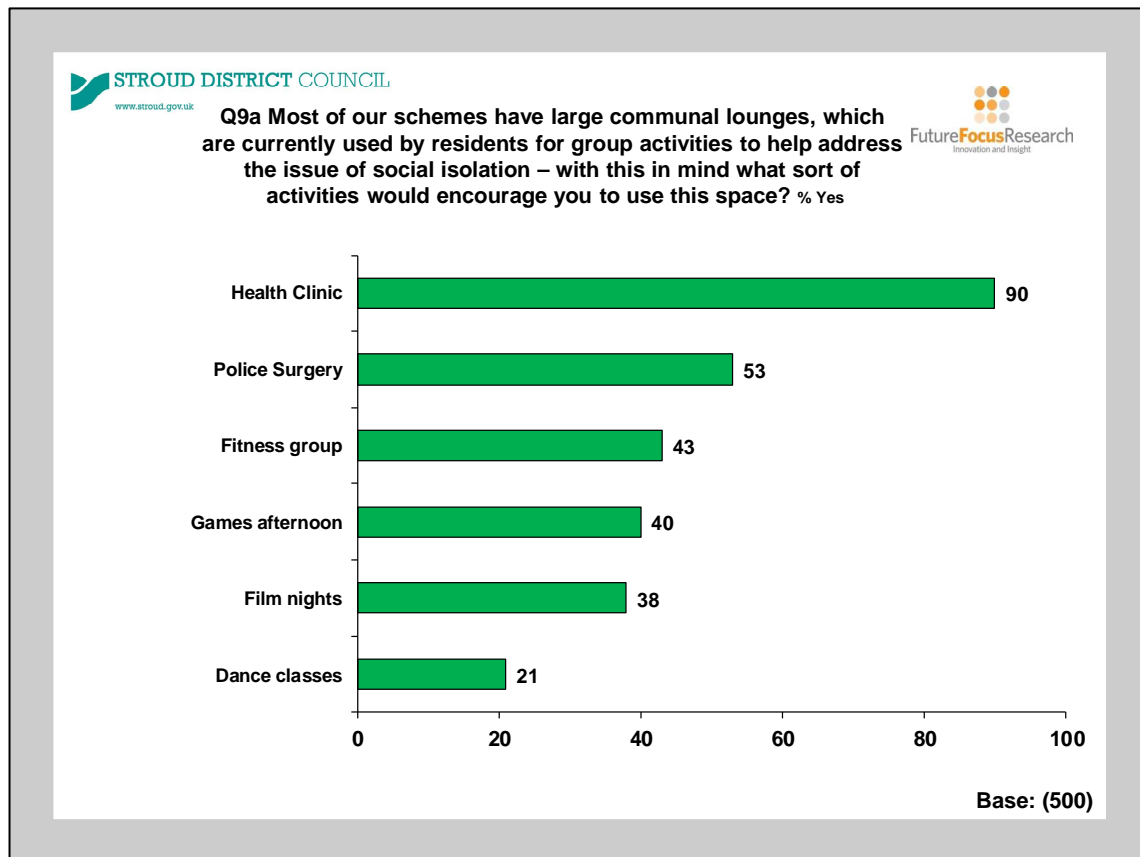


Figure 3.11

When asked, just 37% think it would be a good idea to let the communal space to outside groups, whilst 47% did not think it was a good idea and 16% did not know.

Appendix A Local area postcodes

Ref	Area Name	Postcodes
1.	Gloucester Border areas	GL2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.7, 3.4, 4.0, 4.8
2.	Stroud Central	GL5.1, to GL5.5
3.	Stroud Border Areas	GL6.0 to GL6.9
4.	Stonehouse	GL10.2, 10.3
5.	Dursley	GL11.4 to GL11.6
6.	Wotton-Under-Edge	GL12.7, 12.8
7.	Berkeley	GL13.9

Appendix E

Action Plan

'Older People's Housing Strategy (HRA)'

Action Plan – Older People’s Housing Strategy (HRA)

This action plan details how the Strategy will be delivered to achieve SDC’s six strategic objectives (UNIQUE) and in turn realise the Council’s vision.

1. Understand what current and future tenants want from their homes as they age and how this can be achieved.

Action	How will this be achieved?	Resource	Deadline	Progress	Outcome(s)	Review
<p>1.1 Undertake further analysis and exploration of the results from the Older People’s Accommodation Research to deepen SDC’s understanding of the outcomes. Some areas to explore could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why residents were not supportive of community groups using the communal lounges. • Why residents did not favour living in mixed communities. • Why residents were unwilling to pay for additional services. 	Undertake focussed user groups with existing or prospective future tenants to obtain information which can further shape the strategic objectives.	<p>Principal Sheltered Housing Officer (LM)</p> <p>Tenant Liaison Officer (CE)</p> <p>Business Support Officer (NP)</p>	September 2019		Clear understanding and consultative approach to gathering intelligence to shape the service we deliver.	
1.2 Commission the Older People’s Accommodation Research to be undertaken again within 5 years. This will ensure the Council are aware of any changing trends enabling future reviews of this Strategy to reflect current and future demand.	Procure a research company to undertake the same survey of a further 500 Stroud district residents within 5 years. This feedback can be used during the review of the Strategy.	Projects Officer (CW)	November 2022	First survey undertaken in November 2018.	Data analysis and identification of any trends.	
1.3 Undertake market research to identify any additional tenure options specifically for older people, which may address a future gap in the range on offer from SDC.	Approach other Local Authorities and RP’s to find out what other tenures they offer.	Projects Officer (CW)	October 2020		Data analysis and potential options for delivering the service in a more effective manner.	
1.4 Carry out a thorough analysis of costs prior to any changes to service provision, and establish the financial viability of these options to tenants and the Council.	The costs of the different ranges of accommodation need to be considered, with regards to affordability to the end user and also the Council. This needs to take place in conjunction with the service charge project, so that tenants are clear about any possible changes to service charges. Where there are any possible increases to service charges, the Council will need to consider whether it can afford to subsidise some of these services and think creatively about how these service charges could be reduced.	<p>Tenancy Operations Manager (PA)</p> <p>Principal Accountant (LC)</p>	April 2020	Undertake further investigations in relation to service charges.	Transparent approach to true rent and service chargeable items informing choice and cost.	
1.5 Explore all options for funding any additional services.	Consider partnership working with other providers who already operate hub and spoke models, grants from external agencies and funding from external users.	<p>Principal Sheltered Housing Officer (LM)</p> <p>Projects Officer (CW)</p>	September 2020		Data analysis and potential options for delivering the service in a more effective manner.	

2. New homes should be designed to be dynamic allowing flexibility and adaptability for the future.

Action	How will this be achieved?	Resource	Deadline	Progress	Outcome(s)	Review
2.1 New homes should be built to be accessible.	Where possible – new homes should be built to building regulations Part M4 (2), Part M4 (3) or Lifetime Homes Standard.	Project Manager (KR)	Ongoing		New homes should allow ease of access to tenants where possible to enable them to live independently.	
2.2 The Standard Employer's Requirements (SER's) should be reviewed to identify any areas where the specification for new homes can be improved to enable tenants to live independently for longer.	The review should consider what changes could be made such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptable kitchen space • Wet rooms • Easily accessible power points • Level access • Wider doors • Improved energy efficiency 	Project Manager (KR) Programme Delivery Manager (FG)	September 2019		Identify any changes which can be made to the specification for new homes which would allow tenants to live more independently as they age.	
2.3 Consider the mix and tenure of housing on sites which may suit older people's accommodation to continue increasing the amount of housing for this shifting demographic.	Consider sites which are close to health and support services, good transport links and local amenities. Review the 'older person's shared ownership' product and consider introducing this on any suitable sites.	New Homes and Regeneration Manager (LL) Policy Implementation Manager (PS) Head of Housing Services (KT) Principal Sheltered Housing Officer (LM)	December 2019		Ensure the delivery of housing is fit for purpose and meets the needs of future tenants. Introduce a competitive choice of housing options for older people.	
2.4 Review and assess the impact of any additional costs through changes to the SER's.	Consider whether these costs can be accommodated within the new build scheme costs and understand how this relates and impacts on future asset maintenance costs and affordability to the Council.	Project Manager (KR) Principal Accountant (LC)	December 2019		Ensure that any changes made to SER's can be accommodated within the HRA.	

3. Increase desirability of our older person's accommodation to encourage downsizing.

Action	How will this be achieved?	Resource	Deadline	Progress	Outcome(s)	Review
3.1 Continue to invest in the Sheltered Modernisation Programme – improving the quality and desirability of schemes.	Funding the remainder of the green and amber scheme improvements which do not currently fall within the medium term financial plan.	Senior Management Team Housing Committee Principal Accountant (LC)	Ongoing		Agree the priorities for the HRA Medium Term Financial Plan.	

<p>3.2 Re-brand and re-designate sheltered housing to 'Independent Living Hub', 'Independent Living +' and 'Independent Living'. Incorporating a robust communications plan of consultation in line with the service charge project.</p>	<p>Changes made to any references of Sheltered Housing – this should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaflets and information sheets • SDC website and any other websites where this may be referenced • Signage at schemes • Notice boards at schemes • Job titles which reference sheltered housing 	<p>Principal Sheltered Housing Officer (LM)</p> <p>Head of Housing Services (KT)</p> <p>Support Officer (TBC)</p> <p>Communications Officer (RL)</p>	<p>July 2020</p>		<p>Consultation with tenants to support changes as proposed to ensure there is a smooth transition with minimum disruption and anxiety to existing tenants.</p> <p>Review, designate and implement the new model of Independent Living.</p>	
<p>3.3 Undertake a review of the current marketing and advertising material of the Council's older people's accommodation to see how this could be improved to increase awareness of the range on offer.</p>	<p>Understand what current marketing is being used, consider forming a working group of officers to review and amend, also consider with item 3.2.</p>	<p>Projects Officer (CW)</p> <p>Communications Officer (RL)</p>			<p>Ensure the marketing promotes the accommodation and service on offer and make it more attractive to prospective tenants.</p>	
<p>3.4 Promote and expand the support available for tenants who opt to downsize into smaller accommodation.</p>	<p>Review current promotion methods and identify how to extend the message. Also see item 3.2 and consider linking together.</p>	<p>Principal Neighbourhood Management Officer (ME)</p> <p>Senior Income Management Officer (PH)</p> <p>Communications Officer (RL)</p>	<p>September 2019</p>		<p>Ensure best use of stock and support those in larger properties to move into smaller homes releasing larger homes for families.</p>	
<p>3.5 Consider how activities will be arranged and advertised within the Hubs to ensure tenants have access to a range of health clinics and other activities.</p>	<p>Examine best practice from other Local Authorities and RP's to find out what has worked well. Consider whether this will be tenant led, or whether this is something which could be accommodated within existing roles in the service team.</p>	<p>Support Officer (TBC)</p> <p>Principal Sheltered Housing Officer (LM)</p>	<p>December 2019</p>		<p>Links to health and wellbeing strategy, also prevention of slips, trips and falls – leading to reduced A&E admissions and other preventative measures to assist independent living, including the recognition of loneliness and other mental health conditions.</p>	
<p>3.6 Undertake a review of the allocations process and existing age criteria for our older people's accommodation to ensure it is fit for purpose, enabling future tenants to live in accommodation which meets their needs.</p>	<p>Review the existing allocations process, and consider the current age restriction of 60+. Give consideration to more suitable allocations processes which may involve an assessment of need instead of age. Alternatively, a range of different ages for each Independent Living model which would allow greater flexibility of our assets ensuring they are being used in the most effective way.</p>	<p>Tenancy Operations Manager (PA)</p> <p>Policy Implementation Manager (PS)</p> <p>Housing Advice Manager (PB)</p>	<p>July 2020</p>		<p>Ensure the properties we are offering meet the need of tenants both current and future and remove restrictions to entry to be as flexible as possible.</p>	

4. Quality homes which provide a range of options which 'enable' tenants to live independently for longer.

Action	How will this be achieved?	Resource	Deadline	Progress	Outcome(s)	Review
4.1 Undertake a review of general needs bungalows which are located in close proximity to any schemes identified as 'Hubs'.	Consider whether any tenants in existing general needs bungalow accommodation would like to pay to access the activities in the 'Hub' schemes. Also consider whether to convert any general needs bungalows to independent living accommodation when they become void and affiliate them to a 'Hub' scheme – this would assist by providing additional older person's accommodation and by potentially reducing service charges to those living in a 'Hub'.	Principal Sheltered Housing Officer (LM) Principal Neighbourhood Management Officer (ME) Support Officer (TBC)	December 2020		Co-ordination, use and access to Hubs from general needs tenants. Working towards a cohesive community – promoting a common vision and sense of belonging.	
4.2 Review the existing Asset Management Strategy to identify any areas which could be improved to 'enable' tenants to live independently in their property for longer.	This could include replacement of components to help prevent slips, trips and falls. It could also include any items which make appliances or power sockets more easily accessible.	Programme Delivery Manager (FG)			Identify any areas which could improve tenant's ability to live independently as they age.	
4.3 Review and assess the impact of any additional costs through changes to the Asset Management Strategy.	Consider whether these costs can be accommodated within the HRA 30 Year Business Plan and what other positive or negative cost impacts may be generated to other stakeholders by making these improvements.	Programme Delivery Manager (FG) Head of Contract Services (JG)			Ensure the costs are achievable within the existing HRA provision.	

5. Understand how affordable our homes and services are for our tenants and SDC.

Action	How will this be achieved?	Resource	Deadline	Progress	Outcome(s)	Review
5.1 Review existing rents and service charges as part of the service charge project, to understand the cost to tenants and how these may alter with the new model in place.	Service Charge Project.	Tenancy Operations Manager (PA) Business Support Officer (NP)	Subject to Housing Committee Approval		To provide transparency of costs and a review of affordability to tenants and the Council.	
5.2 Consider conversion of any communal areas which are not utilised or where those communal areas are not suitable for conversion, or to offer genuinely desired facilities for both residents and older people in the vicinity.	Procure and engage an architect to assess the possibility for conversion. The current and future use of these communal facilities will need to be considered against the provision of new accommodation.	Project Manager (CH) Principal Sheltered Housing Officer (LM)	September 2020		Provide additional homes for older people at affordable costs.	
5.3 Consider how activities will be funded within the Hubs to ensure tenants have access to a range of health clinics and other activities which can be rolled out to outlying properties.	Explore any possible funding options from external providers. Consider how these activities could provide the opportunity to generate income to help support the future viability of these social activities.	Principal Sheltered Housing Officer (LM) Projects Officer (CW)	December 2019		Support the delivery of activities and increase funding available for the provision of these within Hubs.	

6. Engage with other agencies and community groups to improve partnership working; reducing social isolation and improving health and wellbeing.

Action	How will this be achieved?	Resource	Deadline	Progress	Outcome(s)	Review
6.1 Work in partnership with Gloucestershire County Council to develop their Housing with Care Strategy.	Attend strategic meetings with GCC as necessary.	Senior Housing Strategy Officer (LS) Members	Ongoing		To share SDC's vision for housing for older people with Gloucestershire County Council.	
6.2 Explore other partnership working with organisations such as the NHS, or those suggested within the Ark Report to improve the housing options for our tenants.	Review the Ark Report and GCC Housing with Care Strategy and identify any possible partnership opportunities.	Head of Housing Services (KT) Principal Sheltered Housing Officer (LM)	December 2019		Cohesive communities enabling outreach surgeries in communal areas.	
6.3 Consider where practical applying dementia friendly improvements and practices across Independent Living schemes.	This will be achieved through the continuation of the sheltered modernisation programme improvements.	Project Manager (CH)	Ongoing		Improvements to the communal areas our Independent Living Schemes to assist the lives of tenants living with dementia.	

Action Plan Owner:	Kevin Topping, Head of Housing Services
Review:	Bi-Monthly with annual updates to Housing Committee



Independent Living

STAR Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2022



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1. Introduction

Background

This report details the results of Stroud District Council's 2022 STAR tenant satisfaction survey, delivered by ARP Research. This report covers the survey results for those in independent living. A second report is also available containing the survey results for general needs tenants. The aim of the survey is to allow tenants to have their say about their home, the services they receive, and how these could be improved in the future. This year's questionnaire also references The Regulator of Social Housing's tenant satisfaction measures (TSMs) that social landlords will be required to report on in future years (indicated throughout the report by the government coat of arms).

Where applicable the current survey results have also been compared against the 2019 STAR survey, including tests to check if any of the changes are *statistically significant*. Finally, the results have also been benchmarked against Housemark's STAR database of similar peer landlords, supplemented where necessary by ARP Research's own database.

About the survey

The survey was carried out between September and October 2022. Paper self completion questionnaires were distributed to all 718 Independent Living households, followed by a reminder approximately three weeks later for all those that had not yet replied. In addition, email invitations and reminders were sent to every valid email address in the sample, plus a text invitation and reminder to all mobiles in the sample. The survey was incentivised with a free prize draw.

In total there were 307 responses to the survey which represented a response rate of 43% (error margin +/- 4.2%). Online responses comprised 24% of the total (74), including 40 direct responses to email (11% response) and 18 to text message (4% response). The returns exceeded the stipulated STAR target error margin of +/- 5% with a 2% increase in response rate compared to 2019.

Understanding the results

The results were checked to ensure that they were representative of the tenant population on the main demographic and geographic characteristics. Most of the results are given as percentages, which may not always add up to 100% because of rounding and/or multiple responses. It is also important to take care when considering the results for groups where the sample size is small. Where there are differences in the results over time, or between groups, these are subjected to testing to discover if these differences are *statistically significant*. This tells us that we can be confident that the differences are real and not likely to be down to natural variation or chance. For further information on the methodology and statistics please see Appendix A.



2. Executive summary

Bench mark	2019 result	change over time	2022 result		Question source
85%	83%	↓	81%	satisfaction overall	HouseMark STAR
90%	90%	↓	86%	quality of home	HouseMark STAR
90%	N.A.		87%	safety and security of home	HouseMark STAR
79%	N.A.		77%	communal areas clean and maintained	
88%	N.A.		86%	rent value for money	HouseMark STAR
84%	83%	↓	68%	repairs and maintenance overall	HouseMark STAR
76%	88%	↓	76%	last completed repair	HouseMark STAR
79%	N.A.		79%	treated fairly and with respect	
83%	N.A.		70%	easy to deal with	HouseMark STAR
71%	57%	↑	64%	listens to views and acts on them	HouseMark STAR
74%	73%	↓	71%	keeps tenants informed	
68%	64%	↑	69%	opportunities to make views known	HouseMark STAR
57%	N.A.		61%	approach to handling complaints	
89%	N.A.		90%	neighbourhood as a place to live	HouseMark STAR
68%	N.A.		68%	makes a positive contribution to area	
60%	N.A.		59%	dealing with ASB	

statistically significant improvement
 no statistically significant change
 statistically significant decline

2. Executive summary

Overall satisfaction

1. Overall tenant satisfaction with the Independent Living service amongst tenants has fallen slightly from 83% in 2019 to 81% in 2022, but this change is small enough that it isn't considered to 'statistically significant'. This contrasts with the Housemark benchmark score amongst comparable landlords, which over the same time period had fallen by a greater margin (from 90% to 85%, section 3).
2. One factor that appears to have helped the overall satisfaction score will have been significant improvements in communication and consultation with Independent Living tenants, as evidenced by the fact that they are now more likely to feel listened to, and to have opportunities to make their views known (section 7). Satisfaction with the grounds maintenance service has also significantly improved (section 8).
3. Conversely, as was also the case for general needs tenants, the twin challenges of pandemic lockdowns happening at the same time as repairs functions were brought in-house, resulted in significantly poorer repairs satisfaction scores (section 5).
4. A 'key driver' analysis is a statistical test to check which other results in the survey are best at predicting overall satisfaction. In descending order of strength, the five strongest factors most closely associated with overall tenant satisfaction are:
 - Quality of the home (72% satisfied, section 4)
 - Being kept informed (56%, section 7)
 - Repairs and maintenance overall (55%, section 5)
 - Opportunities to make views known (56%, section 7)
 - Treated fairly and with respect (71%, section 6)

The home

5. The quality of the home has been the strongest key driver of satisfaction amongst Independent Living tenants for the last few surveys and this pattern continues in 2022. Indeed, it seems to be more influential than it has ever been (section 3).
6. Satisfaction with the quality of the home has fallen by 4% since 2019 to 86%, although this isn't quite enough to be considered a 'statistically significant' change. Indeed, the relevant Housemark benchmark has fallen by a comparable margin (section 4).
7. In the comments the single most common request for improvements were related to the property (24%), most frequently heating and energy efficiency (5%) and window replacements (section 11).
8. Far fewer tenants commented about other safety or security issues, which also supported the finding that most tenants are satisfied with the safety and security of their home (87%).
9. In addition, over three quarter of Independent Living tenants are satisfied that the communal areas in their scheme are kept clean and well maintained, which is consistent with similar landlords.

Repairs and maintenance

10. The overall perception of the way repairs and maintenance is dealt with has fallen since 2019 with only around two thirds of the sample now saying that they are satisfied (68%), compared to 83% in 2019 (section 5).
11. The score is now firmly in the benchmark fourth quartile compared to the sector average of 83%, whereas before it was exactly in line with the median.
12. This finding is consistent with the similar pattern observed in the general needs survey, although it seems to have had a more limited impact on other satisfaction scores in the survey.
13. Respondents have a higher opinion of their last completed repair (76%) than for the service as a whole. The last repair is much closer to the benchmark target of 79%. Only 66% are satisfied with the time taken to complete work after it is reported, however, doing the job right first time is actually the best predictor of satisfaction with the last completed repair.

Communication

14. Whether Independent Living tenants feel that they are kept well informed by their landlord is now the second strongest key driver of satisfaction overall, which undoubtedly linked to the issue of repairs.
15. Otherwise, performance in this regard appears to have been largely stable since 2019 (71%), which is close to the Housemark benchmark of 74% (section 7).
16. The opportunities that tenants have to make their views known is also now a key driver of satisfaction, which has significantly increased from 64% to 69%, and is now above the benchmark level.
17. This is coupled with an even bigger increase in the proportion that feel their views are being listened to and acted upon (64% v 57%), which provides further evidence that tenants are now feeling more engaged and involved than they were before.
18. Around a third of respondents are interested in having their say in the future, with in person discussion groups the most popular method.

Customer service

19. Being treated with fairness and respect is a key driver of overall satisfaction for both Independent Living tenants and those in general needs (see section 3).
20. Fortunately, almost four out of five tenants agree that they are treated this way (79%), compared to only 9% that disagree, which is in line with what other landlords (section 6).
21. Being easy to deal with, known as a customer effort score, is a recently added core STAR question. However, again following the same pattern as general needs, the 70% satisfaction score is well below the 83% Housemark benchmark target.

2. Executive summary

Value for money

22. Despite the cost of living crisis the majority of residents in Independent Living are satisfied that their rent represents good value for money (86%), compared to only 6% of the sample that are unhappy with it (section 4).
23. Indeed, most tenants also agree that their rent and service charges are affordable (75%), over a fifth say that they feel financially insecure (18%, section 10).

Complaints

24. Although the majority are satisfied with how the Council deals with complaints (61%), around a fifth are actively dissatisfied (19%). However, when placed in context with other similar landlords this score is actually quite good being slightly above the median score of 57% (section 9).
25. Note that it is important to remember that relatively few tenants will have direct experience of, or even be thinking about, the formal complaints process when answering this question.

Neighbourhoods

26. The vast majority of tenants are happy with their neighbourhood as a place to live (90%), and three quarter feel that their landlord makes a positive contribution to the where they live (76%). This is consistent with other landlords (section 8).
27. It is very pleasing to see that satisfaction with the grounds maintenance service has increased significantly from 69% to 76%, including a 15% increase in 'very' satisfied (now 40%).
28. As in 2019 the biggest neighbourhood problems are dog fouling/dog mess, rubbish or litter, and noisy neighbours. The only one of these to change since last time is dog mess, now considered a problem by 21% of respondents (was 12%).
29. The level of satisfaction appears relatively low when respondents are asked about the approach to handling anti-social behaviour (59%), but this is normally lower than many other scores and the benchmark average is virtually the same (60%).

Wellbeing

30. When asked about feelings of loneliness and isolation, 15% say they have felt this way to at least some extent, including 7% that explicitly feel this way (section 10).
31. Around two thirds of the sample say that they would consider going to the Council for help with wellbeing or money problems, although only one in ten respondents currently feel that they need such help, including a fifth of the under 65s.



3. Services overall

81%
satisfied
overall



top 'key drivers'

1. quality of home
2. being kept informed
3. repairs overall
4. making views known
5. treated fairly & with respect



Overall satisfaction has fallen slightly, but not by a statistically significant margin



The result is now closer to the Housemark benchmark than it was before, albeit still 4% below the norm



Bricks and mortar issues are stronger drivers of satisfaction than in 2019 due to falling repairs satisfaction



On the other hand, better communication and consultation scores seem to have positively influenced perceptions

3. Services overall

The last survey of Independent Living residents was conducted prior to the pandemic, during which time there was substantial disruption to services. It is therefore relatively positive to see that whilst overall satisfaction has **fallen slightly** from 83% to 81%, this change is small enough that it isn't considered to 'statistically significant'. What this means is the statistical test used to compare scores gave a result that was within the margin of error, showing we can't be confident enough that the difference was real rather than being merely down to chance.

Indeed, this contrasts with the Housemark benchmark score amongst comparable landlords, which over the same time period had fallen by a greater margin (from 90% to 85%). As a consequence, although the Council's score is still in the fourth quartile of peer landlords, the **gap has closed** since 2019 as it is now just 4% behind the norm, whereas the gap was 7% before. This is the opposite of the Council general needs tenants where this gap had extended (see separate report).

One factor that appears to have helped the overall satisfaction score will have been significant **improvements in communication and consultation** with Independent Living tenants as evidenced by the fact that they are now more likely to feel listened to, and to have opportunities to make their views known (section 7). Satisfaction with the grounds maintenance service has also significantly improved (section 8).

Conversely, as was also the case for general needs tenants, the twin challenges of pandemic lockdowns happening at the same time as repairs functions were brought in-house, resulted in significantly **poorer repairs satisfaction** scores (section 5). Indeed, overall satisfaction is lower for Independent Living tenants that received a repair in the last year (see below).

Key drivers

A 'key driver' analysis is a statistical test known as a 'regression' that identified those ratings throughout the survey that were most closely associated with overall satisfaction. This test does not mean that these factors directly caused the overall rating, but it does highlight the combination of factors that are the best predictors of overall satisfaction for tenants. This has the advantage of potentially identifying hidden links that respondents may not even be conscious of (see chart 3.2).

The first thing to note from these results is that the strongest key driver, the **quality of the home**, is the same as it was in 2019. This is a fairly common finding across the sector amongst this type of tenant. However, unlike in 2019 when it was broadly equal in strength to a few other issues it is now the dominant driver of Independent Living satisfaction.

This makes sense when considering that the pandemic will have disrupted maintenance and responsive repairs, which is probably why the quality of the home rating has fallen by 4% since 2019, albeit not quite enough to be a statistically significant change (section 4). Indeed, **repairs and maintenance** overall appeared in the key driver list itself for the first time in a Stroud Independent Living Survey.

Bricks and mortar issues are therefore the main theme of the 2022 results, but the key drivers suggest a secondary theme of **communication and resident involvement** as the remaining three items on the list could all be broadly encompassed with such a term. This too has echoes of 2019, with one of these items (being kept informed) appearing on the key driver list in both years. In addition, as mentioned above, the opportunities for tenants to make their views known seem to have improved significantly since the last survey (section 7), providing further evidence that this has had a positive effect on overall perceptions. The last of these linked drivers is the extent to which the Council is seen to treat tenants with fairness and respect, which whilst a new question seems to compare favourably with other landlords (section 6).

3.1 Overall satisfaction

% Base 302 | Excludes non respondents



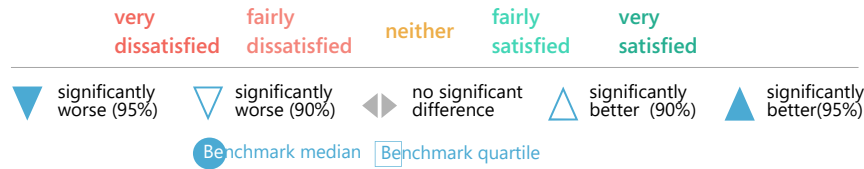
Overall service provided by housing services



satisfied 2022 satisfied 2019 error margin bench mark

81 ◀▶ 83

+/- 4.4 **85**
4th



Change over time

- Overall satisfaction has fallen by 2% but this is not a significant margin.
- The benchmark median is 5% lower than it was in 2019, so the Council's score is closer to it than it was previously.



By people

- Because the age profile of tenants in Independent Living is very similar, there was very little difference between this and other scores throughout the survey findings **by age**. That said, the youngest respondents (aged 55-64) were the least satisfied overall (78%). For full details see table 12.5.
- Overall satisfaction is also significantly lower for people that have felt lonely or isolated (63%), need help with **wellbeing or money** problems (71%), or had **made contact** with the Council in the last year (76%), however the latter were only significant at the 90% confidence level.
- Satisfaction is also notably lower amongst respondents who have **had a repair** in the previous year compared to those who have not (79% v 84%).



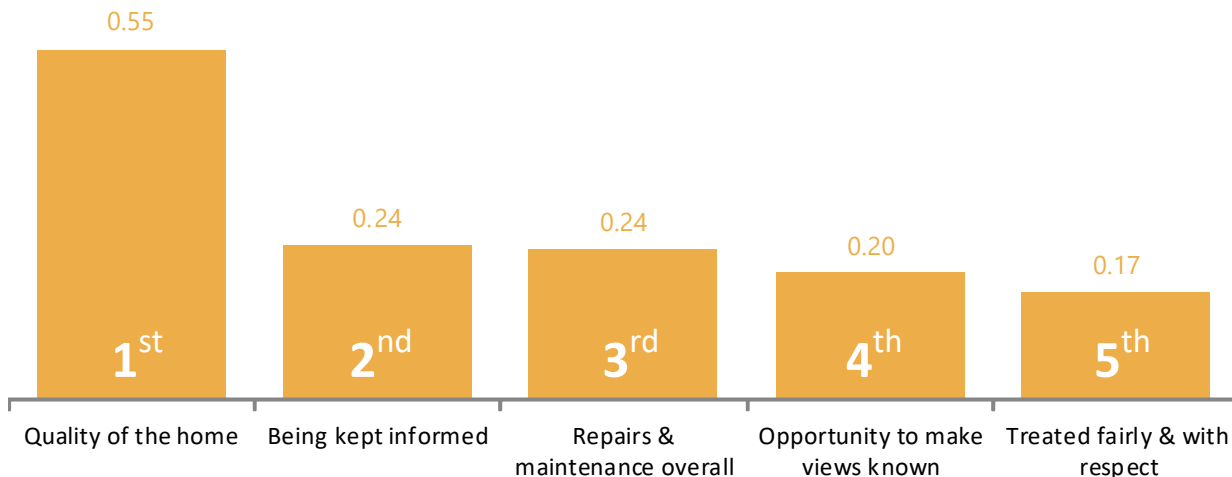
By place

- Please note that here, and throughout the report, the analyses by scheme have very small base sizes. Consequently, any variations, including those that are statistically significant, can show big swings due to the views of a small number of individuals.
- Nevertheless, it is still notable that respondents in **Dryleaze Court** are less satisfied than average overall (50%), which is the same pattern that also emerged in 2019. This pattern continues across many of the other survey results.
- Overall satisfaction is also lower in **Springfield's Court** (64%), including 3 of the 14 respondents that are actively dissatisfied.
- A number of schemes have an overall satisfaction score around 90%, but only Concord's score is statistically significant because this is the biggest sub-group in the survey.
- Overall satisfaction is identical for those living in flats and bungalows (both 81%).

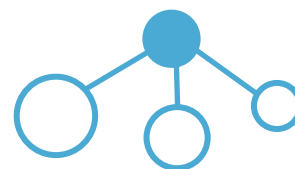
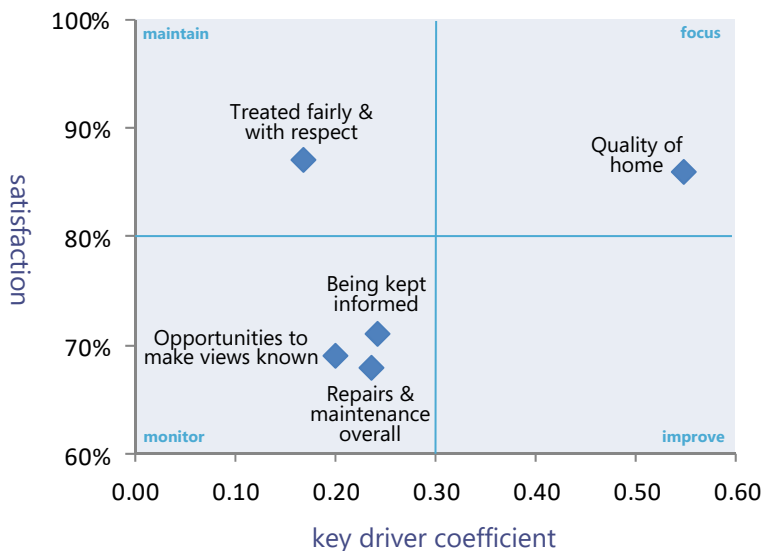
3. Services overall

3.2 Key drivers - overall satisfaction

R Square = 0.688 | Note that values are not percentages but are results of the statistics test. See Appendix A for more details.



3.3 Key drivers v satisfaction



A 'key driver' analysis uses a regression test to check which other results in the survey are best at predicting overall satisfaction. For a more detailed explanation of key drivers please see Appendix A.

3.4 Overall satisfaction by scheme

Excludes schemes with fewer than 7 respondents

	Sample size	% positive Overall satisfaction		Sample size	% positive Overall satisfaction
Overall	307	81	Overall	307	81
Archway Gardens	7	86	Hamfallow Court	12	83
Ashwell House	8	75	Hazelwood	17	88
Broadfield Road	14	79	Jenner Court	11	90
Burdett House	11	70	Malvern Gardens	7	86
Chapel Lane	8	63	Sherborne House	8	75
Concord	18	89	Springfields Court	14	64
Draycott	8	88	St Nicholas Court	18	83
Dryleaze Court	15	50	The Corriett	10	70
Dryleaze House	15	87	Trinity Drive	7	71
George Pearce House	13	85	Vizard Close	8	88
Grange View	12	100	Walter Preston Court	16	93
Grove Park Road	13	85	Willow Road	9	89

Significantly worse than average (95% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (95% confidence*)
Significantly worse than average (90% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (90% confidence*)

* See appendix A for further information on statistical tests and confidence levels



4. The home

87%



safe & secure

86%



quality



The quality of the home is the dominant key driver of overall satisfaction



Satisfaction with the quality of the home has fallen a little, but this isn't a statistically significant change



The most commonly mentioned requests for property improvements are heating, energy efficiency and windows



Satisfaction with the cleaning and maintenance of communal areas is broadly on par with other landlords

The quality of the home has been the **strongest key driver** of satisfaction amongst Independent Living tenants for the last few surveys and this pattern continues in 2022. Indeed, it seems to be more influential than it has ever been (chart 3.2).

The effects of the pandemic are still being felt across the sector, including perceptions of properties where maintenance had to be delayed due to lockdowns. This is also evident in this set of results as satisfaction with the quality of the home has **fallen by 4%** since 2019 to 86%, although it should be noted that this isn't quite enough to be considered a 'statistically significant' change. Indeed, the relevant Housemark **benchmark** has fallen by a comparable margin, meaning that the Council's score is still in the third quartile.

The centrality of this issue was also clear when tenants were asked at the end of the survey if there was anything else they would like to say, as the most common request for improvements were related to the property (24%), most frequently **heating and energy efficiency** (5%) and window replacements (2%, see section 11).

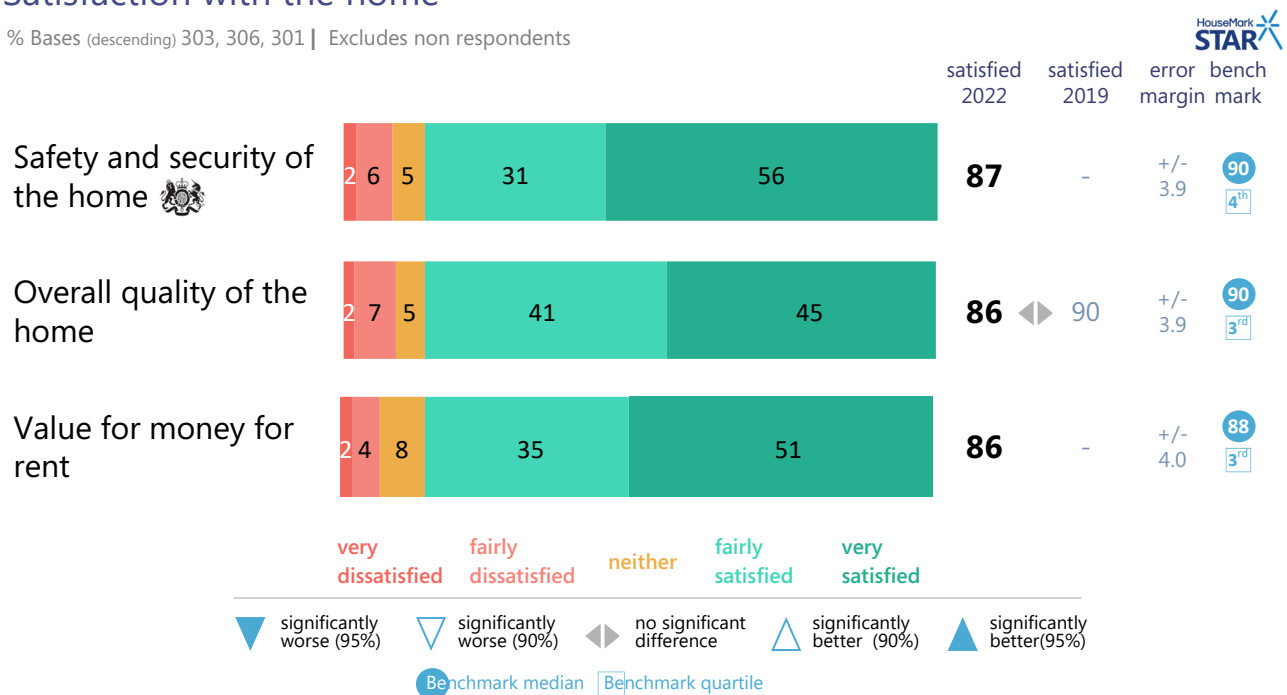
There were fewer comments about the **safety and security** of the home, which confirms the finding that the majority of tenants are satisfied in this regard (87%) and that this proportion is unchanged since 2019.

Similarly, perceptions of **rent value for money** are also sufficiently high that only 6% of the sample are unhappy with it. Indeed, only a handful of commenters really touched on value for money issues (chart 11.7). This question wasn't asked in 2019, but the result is broadly on par with similar landlords.

Another new question in this year's survey, due to its inclusion in the new regulatory suite of questions, asks about the cleanliness and maintenance of **communal areas**. Although there are currently only a few landlords in the Housemark database that have asked this new question, from the limited evidence available it would seem that the Council's score of 77% is also generally consistent with the **benchmark average**. Nevertheless, around one in six tenants are still dissatisfied (16%).

4.1 Satisfaction with the home

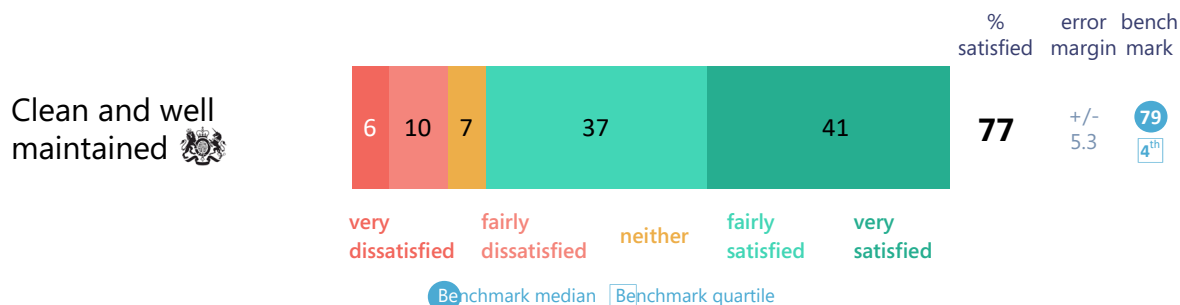
% Bases (descending) 303, 306, 301 | Excludes non respondents



4. The home

4.2 Communal areas

% Bases (descending) 242 | Living in a property with communal areas. Excludes non respondents .



Change over time

- Satisfaction with the quality of the home has fallen albeit not significantly since 2019 from 90% to 86%.
- However, perceptions of safety and security remain unchanged.



By people

- Both the quality of the home and its safety/ security are rated significantly lower than average by respondents who feel **lonely and isolated** (74% and 71% respectively).
- The quality of the home was also rated significantly lower than average by tenants who have **had a repair** in the previous year (82%).
- Similarly, tenants who have had a repair in the previous year are far less satisfied with the maintenance of communal areas than those who had not (71% v 83%).
- Unsurprisingly, value for money for rent is rated somewhat lower by tenants who **need help** with wellbeing or money problems (73%), compared to 88% who do not.

By place

- Respondents in **Dryleaze Court** are significantly less satisfied with their home, safety, and the rent that they pay (around two thirds satisfied for each).
- The **quality of the home** also seems to be a significantly worse issue in Burdett House, Chapel Lane, Sherbourne House and Springfields Court (chart 4.3).
- Respondents living in Concord and Grange View, Hamfallow Court and Willow Road seem to be the **most satisfied** with their homes.
- There are no significant differences in the scores in this section by property type, however the quality of the home was rated higher than average in **flats** compared to bungalows (88% and 84%). In contrast, respondents in bungalows were far more satisfied with the safety and quality of their home than those in flats (91% and 84%).
- Value for money for rent was identical for both property types (86%).



4.3 The home by scheme

Excludes schemes with fewer than 7 respondents

	Sample size	% positive			
		Quality of the home	Safety and security of home	Value for money for rent	Maintenance of communal areas
Overall	307	86	87	86	77
Archway Gardens	7	86	86	86	50
Ashwell House	8	63	88	100	100
Broadfield Road	14	86	86	79	20
Burdett House	11	36	64	73	60
Chapel Lane	8	75	75	100	67
Concord	18	94	94	94	93
Draycott	8	88	88	75	80
Dryleaze Court	15	67	60	67	40
Dryleaze House	15	100	73	79	71
George Pearce House	13	92	100	92	100
Grange View	12	100	92	100	100
Grove Park Road	13	92	92	92	90
Hamfallow Court	12	100	92	100	89
Hazelwood	17	94	88	88	53
Jenner Court	11	100	90	80	91
Malvern Gardens	7	100	100	71	71
Sherborne House	8	75	88	93	88
Springfields Court	14	57	86	79	80
St Nicholas Court	18	89	89	89	65
The Corriett	10	80	80	80	75
Trinity Drive	7	100	86	86	100
Vizard Close	8	100	75	88	100
Walter Preston Court	16	94	88	87	93
Willow Road	9	100	100	100	71

Significantly worse than average (95% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (95% confidence*)
Significantly worse than average (90% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (90% confidence*)

* See appendix A for further information on statistical tests and confidence levels



5. Repairs and maintenance

68%
▼



service overall

76%
▼



last repair 12 month period



Overall satisfaction has fallen by a significant 15% since 2019, mirroring the same pattern amongst general needs tenants



Repairs and maintenance is now a key driver of satisfaction for the first time amongst Independent Living tenants



Repairs satisfaction is now well below the Housemark benchmark average, even accounting for the pandemic



The best predictor of satisfaction with the last completed repair is whether the job was done 'right first time'

The overall perception of the way repairs and maintenance is dealt with has **fallen** dramatically since 2019 with only around two thirds of the sample now saying that they are satisfied (68%), compared to 83% in 2019. On the other end of the scale, one in five are now actively dissatisfied with the service (21%).

As a direct result of this the Council's score is now firmly in the **benchmark** fourth quartile compared to the sector average of 83%, whereas in 2019 this score was exactly in line with the median. It is therefore no surprise that the repairs score is a **key driver** for the first time, or that the quality of the home is now even important to Independent Living tenants (see section 3).

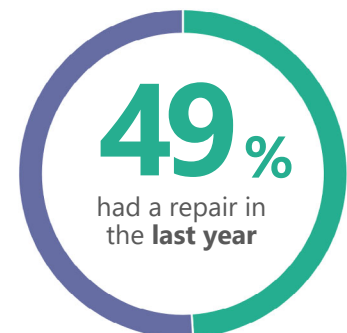
This finding is consistent with the similar pattern observed in the general needs survey (see separate report), although it seems to have had a more limited impact on other satisfaction scores in the survey. The reason is nevertheless certainly the same, namely that the Council experienced even more disruptions than most landlords during and after the **pandemic**, in part because it coincided exactly with a significant change to the repair service as it was brought in house in Spring 2020.

The overall STAR repairs and maintenance rating is an all-encompassing question that touches on both responsive repairs and cyclical maintenance, with a wider scope than just current performance on a day-to-day basis. When tenants were only asked about their experience on the **last completed repair** within the previous 12 months (76%, chart 5.3), it is reassuring that the score is considerably closer to the benchmark target of 79%, despite that fact that the year-on-year comparison is still disappointing (was 88%).

Here it is important to note that the primary measure of repairs satisfaction that the housing regulator will be using from 2023/24 is slightly different again, asking tenants to rate their overall experience of the repairs service received during the prior twelve months. This question was also asked in this year's survey to provide an initial baseline for it to become the headline question in future years, with the score of 79% being close to the aforementioned STAR question on last completed repair (chart 5.2).

Respondents that had received a repair in the last year were also asked a handful of additional questions on their last experience, as seen in chart 5.6. Of these, as was also true for general needs tenants, doing the job '**right first time**' is the strongest key driver of satisfaction with the last completed repair, but the current rating is unfortunately 9% below the ARP benchmark for this question. Similarly, a secondary key driver is the time taken to complete work after it was reported, with this too being below the benchmark, in this case 10% lower than the Housemark median. Note that this latter question is one of the new regulatory TSM measures.

Finally in this section of the survey, it should be noted that satisfaction with **gas servicing** arrangements has also fallen since 2019, albeit with the majority of tenants still remaining satisfied (89% v 93%). Indeed, very few tenants are actively dissatisfied (5%) and instead the main statistically significant shift is in the proportion of respondents that are 'very' satisfied with the arrangement, with this group shrinking from 73% in 2019 to 62% this year.



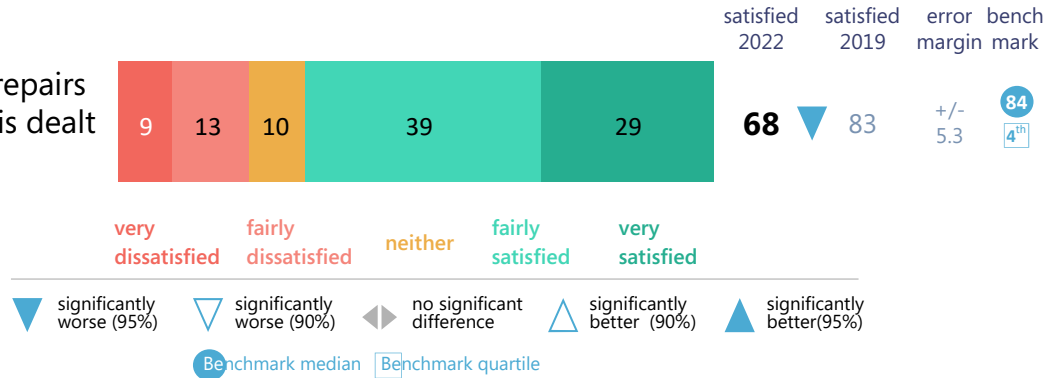
5. Repairs and maintenance

5.1 Overall repairs satisfaction

% Base 297 | Excludes non respondents



Generally, how repairs & maintenance is dealt with

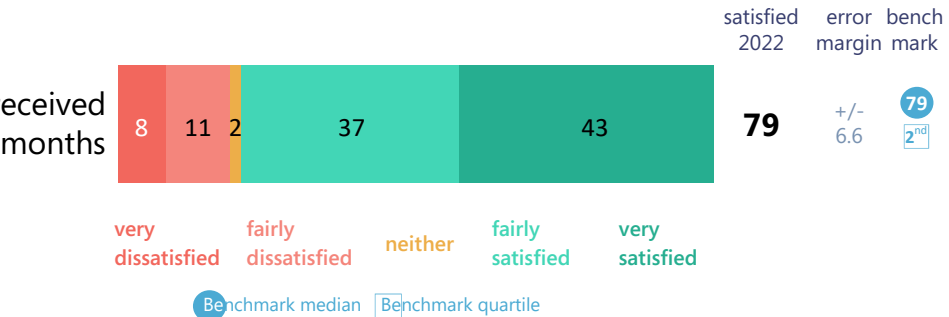


5.2 Repairs service in last 12 months

% Base 148 | Repair in last 12 months.. Excludes non respondents



Repairs service received over the last 12 months



Change over time

- Satisfaction with the repairs and maintenance service generally is down significantly from 83% to 68%.
- A fall in the proportion receiving a repair in the previous twelve-month period from 58% to 49%.
- Satisfaction with the last completed repair is also down significantly from 88% to 76%.
- A significant fall in satisfaction with the gas servicing arrangements from 93% to 89% (chart 5.7).

By place

- Being consistent with their scores elsewhere in the survey, **Dryleaze Court** residents are the least satisfied with the repairs service, in particular the quality of the work. The scores also seemed to lower than average in **Chapel Lane**.
- The repairs and maintenance service overall is rated significantly lower amongst respondents in **flats** (66%), but significantly above average for those in bungalows (72%).

By people

- Most aspects of the last completed repair are rated significantly higher than average by tenants **aged 55 – 64**, but only at the 90% confidence level.

5.3 Last repair

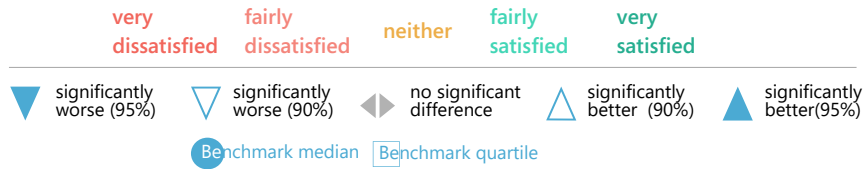
% Base 146 | Repair in last 12months. Excludes non respondents



Repairs service received on *this occasion*

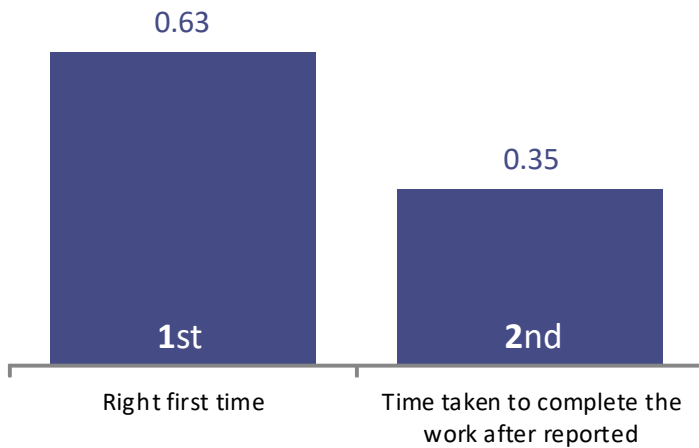


satisfied 2022: 76, satisfied 2019: 88, error margin: +/- 6.9, bench mark: 79

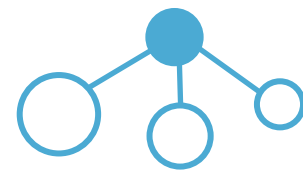
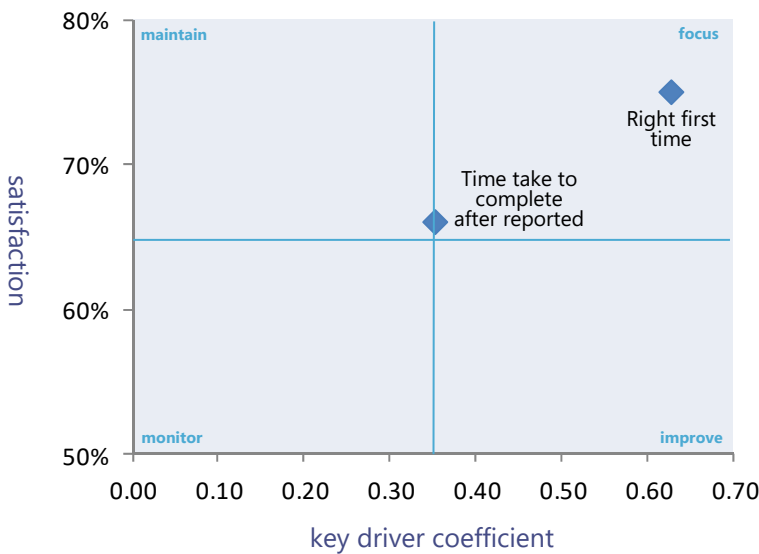


5.4 Key drivers - satisfaction with last repair

R Square = 0.793 | Note that values are not percentages but are results of the statistics test. See Appendix A for more details.



5.5 Key drivers v satisfaction

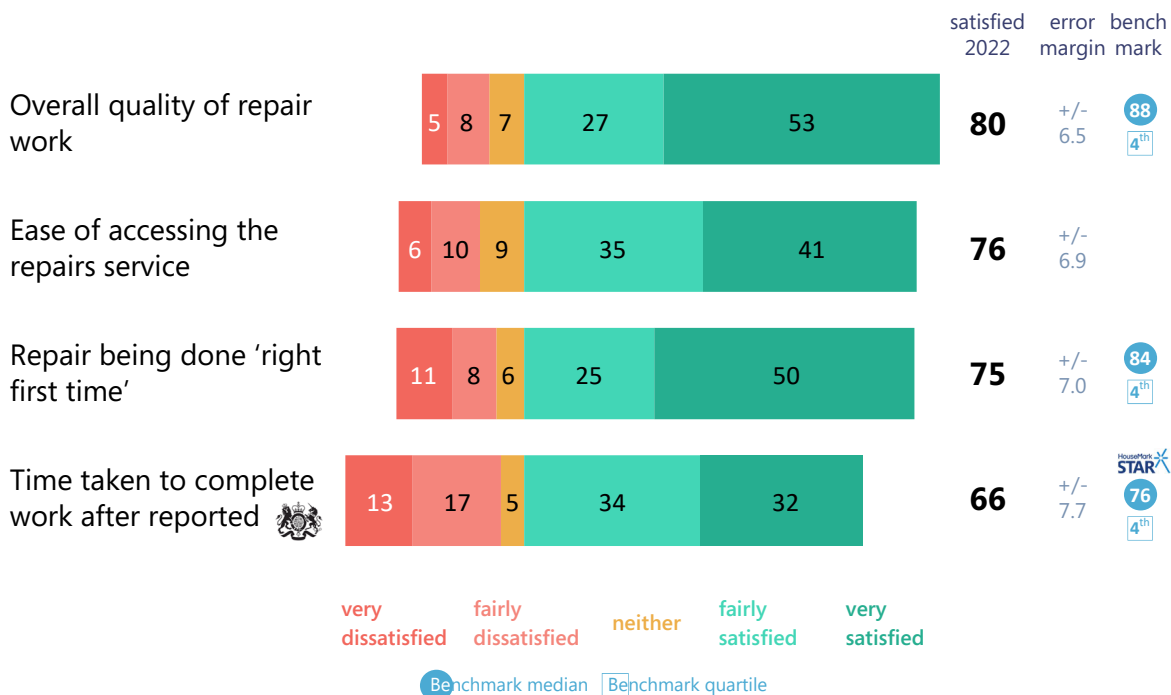


A 'key driver' analysis uses a regression test to check which other results in the survey are best at predicting overall satisfaction. For a more detailed explanation of key drivers please see Appendix A.

5. Repairs and maintenance

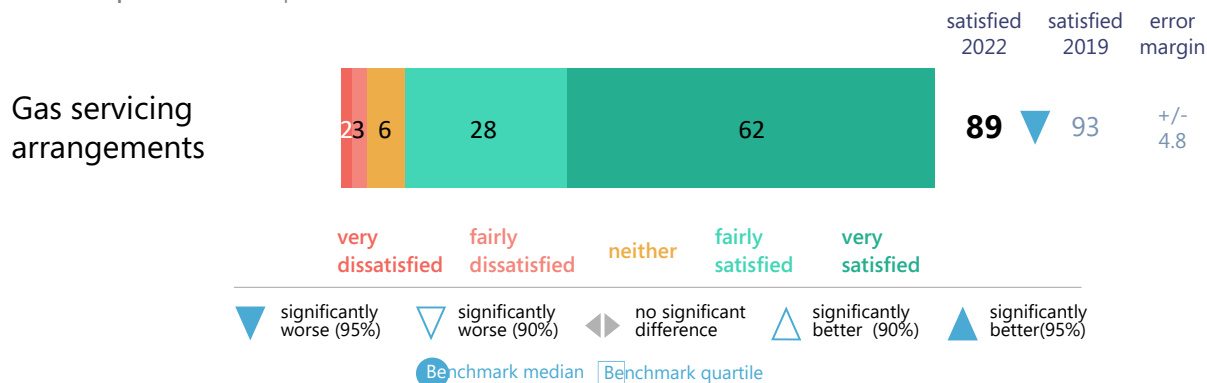
5.6 Last completed repair

% Bases (descending) 146, 148, 145, 148 | Repair in last 12 months. Excludes non respondents.



5.7 Gas servicing

% Base 160 | Excludes non respondents



5.8 Repairs by scheme

Excludes schemes with fewer than 7 respondents

		% positive							
	Base	Generally how repairs and maintenance is dealt with	Repairs service received over the last 12 months	Gas servicing arrangements	Ease of accessing the repairs service	Time taken to complete the repair after reported	The overall quality of the work	The repair being done 'right first time'	The repairs service received on this occasion
Overall	307	68	79	89	76	66	80	75	76
Archway Gardens	7	71	100	71	0	0	100	100	0
Ashwell House	8	71	100	0	100	100	67	67	67
Broadfield Road	14	79	71	100	71	57	50	67	67
Burdett House	11	46	83	50	83	67	67	67	67
Chapel Lane	8	57	50	88	50	33	60	40	40
Concord	18	88	80	100	90	60	80	67	80
Draycott	8	71	100	75	100	100	100	100	100
Dryleaze Court	15	50	80	93	70	50	50	70	60
Dryleaze House	15	73	86	67	57	71	86	86	86
George Pearce House	13	83	83	100	100	83	83	83	83
Grange View	12	83	86	100	71	71	86	86	86
Grove Park Road	13	62	75	85	50	50	75	75	75
Hamfallow Court	12	67	75	100	86	63	100	75	88
Hazelwood	17	53	67	67	78	78	100	78	78
Jenner Court	11	56	80	0	60	50	75	75	75
Malvern Gardens	7	57	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Sherborne House	8	63	75	80	75	75	75	50	100
Springfields Court	14	69	100	100	100	80	100	100	100
St Nicholas Court	18	56	67	80	67	44	67	44	56
The Corriett	10	70	71	100	71	86	100	86	71
Trinity Drive	7	83	75	100	75	75	100	100	100
Vizard Close	8	63	75	0	25	25	50	50	50
Walter Preston Court	16	69	100	100	88	63	100	100	88
Willow Road	9	78	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Significantly worse than average (95% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (95% confidence*)
Significantly worse than average (90% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (90% confidence*)

* See appendix A for further information on statistical tests and confidence levels



6. Customer service



79%



treated fairly &
with respect



Most tenants feel they are treated fairly and with respect, which is both a new regulatory question and a key driver



The 'customer effort' score for how easy housing services is well below the benchmark median at 70% v 83%



On both of these measures, respondents that have recently been in contact are less satisfied than those that have not

The standard of customer service that Independent Living tenants received was a strong key driver in the last survey conducted in 2019. This section of the question has changed considerably since then due to both the evolution of the STAR template and the new TSM regulatory framework, which means that none of the current questions can be tracked over time.

However, the customer experience is still clearly an important part of what tenants think about the service because the new TSM question on being treated with **fairness and respect** is a key driver of overall satisfaction (see section 3). Fortunately, almost four out of five tenants agree that they are treated this way, compared to only 9% that disagree, which is in line with what other landlords have found when asking this new question. However, it should be noted that this score does go down a little for residents that have recently made contact with the Council (see below).

Another new question, this time a core element of Housemark's STAR benchmarking, asked if tenants find Housing Services easy to deal with. This is also known as a '**customer effort**' score, as it considers the experience in a holistic way from the perspective of the customer, rather than internal business processes, and is used as a general summary of the customer service experience.

However, in this case the benchmark comparisons are considerably less positive as the 70% of Independent Living tenants that are satisfied is well below the 83% Housemark target. This is exactly the same pattern as also emerged amongst general needs tenants.

Two further detailed questions were also asked of all tenants that had made contact with Housing Services over the last twelve months, something which two thirds of respondents had done (63%, down from 77%). Whilst seven out of ten respondents are satisfied that **staff were helpful** (73%), slightly fewer were satisfied that they were able to **deal with their query** (66%).

By people

- Respondents who have **made contact** with housing services in the last year are significantly less satisfied than average that the Council is easy to deal with compared to those who have not been in touch (62% v 84%).
- Similarly, respondents who had been in contact in the previous year are less likely to agree that they are treated fairly and with respect (76%) compared to 85% amongst those who have not.
- Those feeling **lonely or isolated** are also significantly less likely to agree with this statement (63%).
- Respondents who have felt lonely or isolated were significantly less satisfied with their last contact in terms of helpfulness and ability of staff to deal with their query (69% and 55% respectively).

By place

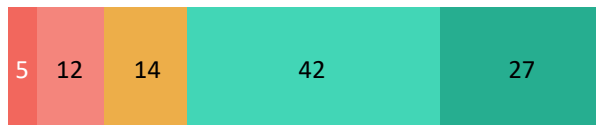
- Respondent in **Dryleaze Court** are less satisfied than average with most of the questions in this section of the survey.
- Tenants in flats were significantly less likely to agree that they were treated fairly and with respect (76%), whereas the opposite was true for those living in bungalows (84%).

6. Customer service

6.1 Customer effort

% Base 296 | Excludes non respondents

Housing Services are easy to deal with



very dissatisfied fairly dissatisfied neither fairly satisfied very satisfied

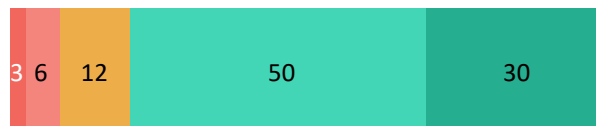
Benchmark median Benchmark quartile

satisfied 2022: **70**
 error margin: +/- 5.2
 HouseMark STAR bench mark: **83** (4th)

6.2 Treats residents fairly and with respect

% Base 296 | Excludes non respondents

Housing Services treats its residents fairly and with respect



strongly disagree tend to disagree neither tend to agree strongly agree

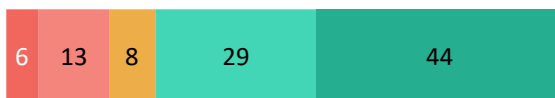
Benchmark median Benchmark quartile

agree 2022: **79**
 error margin: +/- 4.6
 HouseMark STAR bench mark: **79** (2nd)

6.3 Last contact

% Bases (descending) 190, 184 | Contact in last 12 months. Excludes non respondents.

Helpfulness of staff



Ability to deal with query



very dissatisfied fairly dissatisfied neither fairly satisfied very satisfied

Benchmark median Benchmark quartile

satisfied 2022: **73**
 error margin: +/- 6.3
 satisfied 2022: **66**
 error margin: +/- 6.8



6.4 Customer service by scheme

Excludes schemes with fewer than 7 respondents

	Sample size	% positive			
		Easy to deal with	Treated fairly and with respect	Helpfulness	Able to deal with query
Overall	307	70	79	73	66
Archway Gardens	7	71	86	33	33
Ashwell House	8	71	100	50	50
Broadfield Road	14	62	85	91	82
Burdett House	11	46	64	25	50
Chapel Lane	8	63	88	100	100
Concord	18	88	100	100	75
Draycott	8	75	75	75	50
Dryleaze Court	15	57	58	50	50
Dryleaze House	15	80	80	67	67
George Pearce House	13	92	92	86	71
Grange View	12	67	73	73	73
Grove Park Road	13	50	92	38	38
Hamfallow Court	12	75	82	70	60
Hazelwood	17	77	82	78	78
Jenner Court	11	67	78	80	75
Malvern Gardens	7	57	57	67	50
Sherborne House	8	63	88	67	67
Springfields Court	14	69	69	63	63
St Nicholas Court	18	83	61	83	64
The Corriett	10	60	70	63	63
Trinity Drive	7	86	100	80	80
Vizard Close	8	63	75	100	50
Walter Preston Court	16	71	75	89	86
Willow Road	9	78	78	63	71

Significantly **worse** than average
(95% confidence*)

Significantly **better** than average
(95% confidence*)

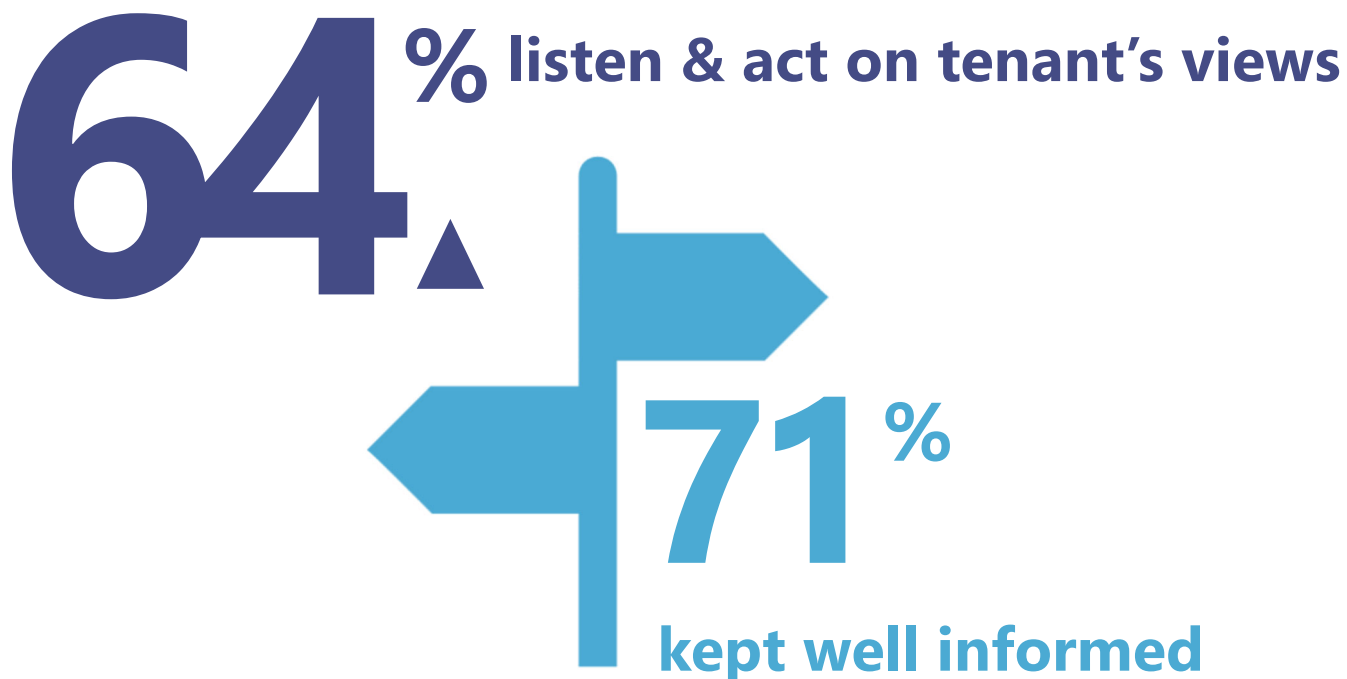
Significantly **worse** than average
(90% confidence*)

Significantly **better** than average
(90% confidence*)

* See appendix A for further information on statistical tests and confidence levels



7. Communication



Being kept informed, and the opportunities to make your views known, are both key drivers of satisfaction overall



The opportunities to make your views known, and feeling listened to, have both improved significantly



Around a third are interested in having their say, with in person discussion groups the most popular method



Just over half (59%) use the internet, including a third that use social media and 19% that use Council online services

Whether Independent Living tenants feel that they are **kept well informed** by their landlord is now the second strongest key driver of satisfaction overall, which undoubtedly linked to the issue of repairs because this issue also came up in that section of the research (see section 5).

More generally, however, performance in this regard appears to have been largely stable since 2019 (71%), which is close to the Housemark **benchmark** of 74%.

The opportunities that tenants have to **make their views known** is also now a key driver of satisfaction, which is especially notable because the Council has clearly improved the way it consults with Independent Living tenants since the last survey, to the extent that satisfaction has **significantly increased** from 64% to 69%, and is now above the benchmark level.

This is coupled with an even bigger **increase** in the proportion that feel their views are **being listened to** and acted upon (64% v 57%), which provides further evidence that tenants are now feeling more engaged and involved than they were before.



Change over time

- Significant **increase in satisfaction** with being listened to and having views acted upon (64%, was 57%). Same with the rating for opportunities to make views known (69%, was 64%).
- Increase in the proportion of respondents using the **internet** from 47% to 59%.
- Preference for an electronic **newsletter** has increased since 2019 from 17% to 24%.



By people

- Ratings for both listening to tenants and information are significantly lower if the tenant has felt **lonely or isolated** (47%/50%), the same is true for the opportunities to get involved (46%).
- Satisfaction with being kept informed is lower for those who have **made contact** in the previous year (65%).



By place


- There are no notable distinctions in these results by property.
- Satisfaction with information and communication is generally lower than average for tenants living at **Burdett House** and **Dryleaze Court** (chart 7.5).
- Residents at Grove Park Road are also significantly less likely to feel that they are kept well informed.

7. Communication

7.1 Involvement

% Bases (descending) 284, 279, 284 | Excludes non respondents



Keep tenants informed about things that matter to them 




satisfied 2022 71 | satisfied 2019 73 | error margin +/- 5.3 | bench mark 74 (3rd)

Opportunities to make views known



satisfied 2022 69 | satisfied 2019 64 | error margin +/- 5.4 | bench mark 68 (2nd)

We listen to your views and act upon them 



satisfied 2022 64 | satisfied 2019 57 | error margin +/- 5.6 | bench mark 71 (3rd)

▼ very dissatisfied
 ▼ fairly dissatisfied
 ◄ neither
 ▲ fairly satisfied
 ▲ very satisfied

▼ significantly worse (95%)
 ▼ significantly worse (90%)
 ◄ no significant difference
 ▲ significantly better (90%)
 ▲ significantly better (95%)

74 Benchmark median
 3rd Benchmark quartile

7.2 Preferred method of having a say

% Base 307 | More than one answer allowed

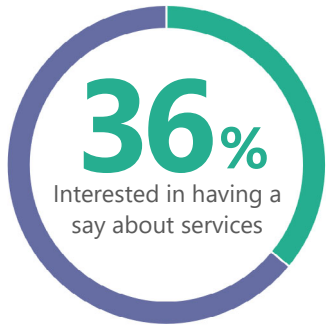
In person discussion group about the latest issues



Taking part in short online or social media polls

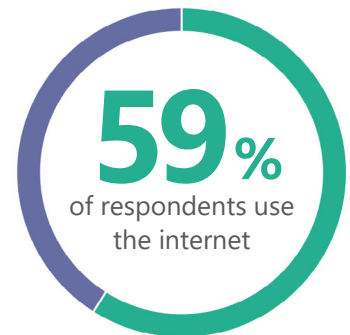
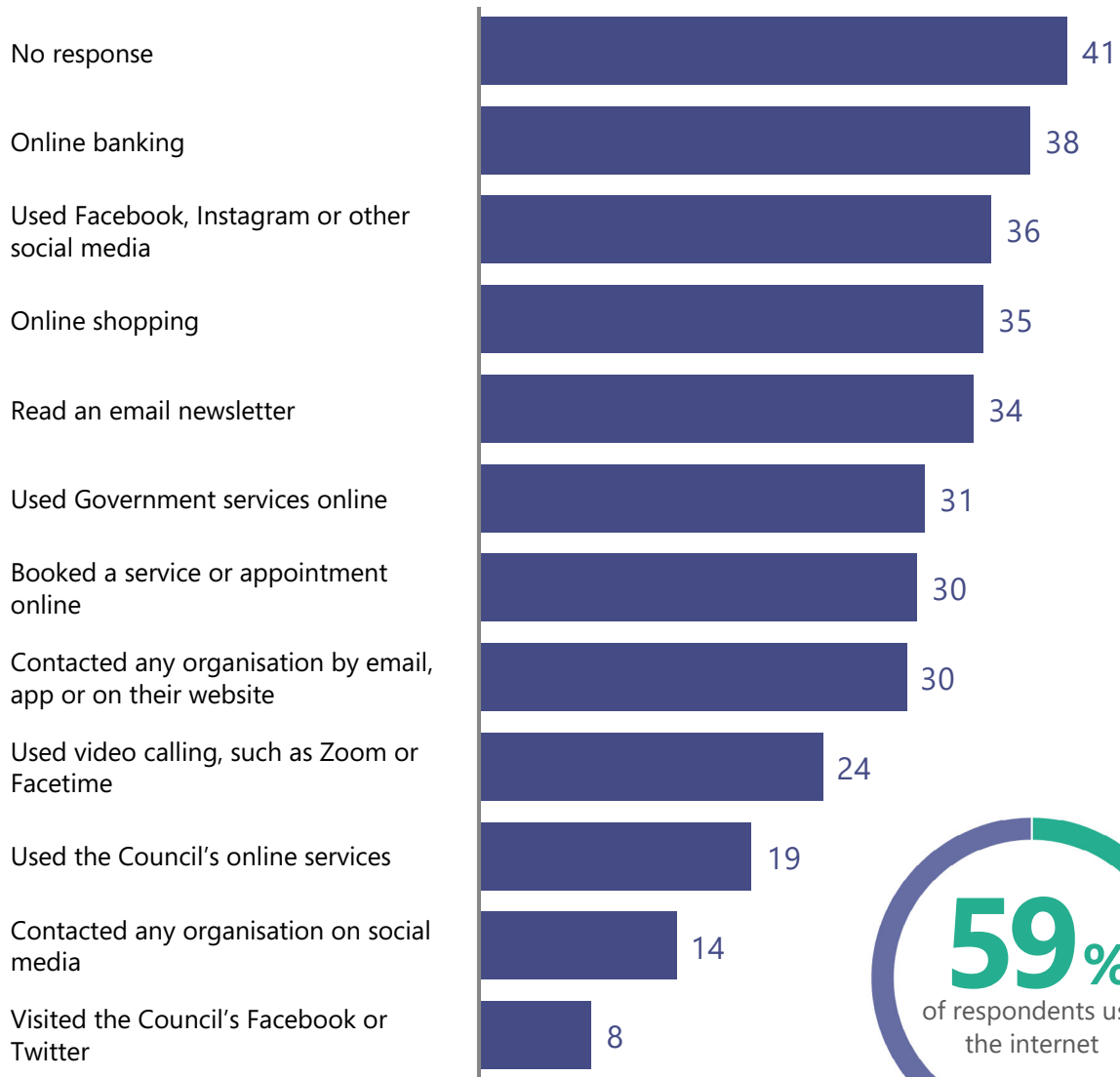


Online discussion groups about the latest issues



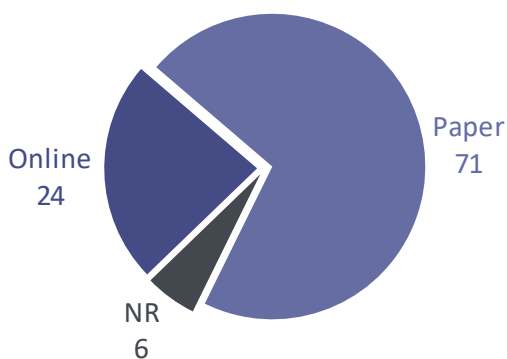
7.3 Used apps or websites to do any of the following

% Base 307 | More than one answer allowed



7.4 Preferred method of receiving a newsletter

% Base 307



7. Communication

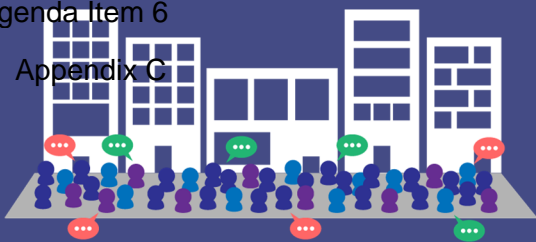
7.5 Communication by scheme

Excludes schemes with fewer than 7 respondents

	Sample size	% positive		
		Listens to views	Kept informed	Opportunities to have your say
Overall	307	64	61	79
Archway Gardens	7	71	71	57
Ashwell House	8	50	86	67
Broadfield Road	14	54	71	77
Burdett House	11	40	50	40
Chapel Lane	8	57	71	71
Concord	18	88	88	80
Draycott	8	75	100	71
Dryleaze Court	15	33	42	42
Dryleaze House	15	57	60	73
George Pearce House	13	69	77	69
Grange View	12	67	83	82
Grove Park Road	13	58	55	82
Hamfallow Court	12	75	73	91
Hazelwood	17	63	71	59
Jenner Court	11	63	75	67
Malvern Gardens	7	50	71	57
Sherborne House	8	88	75	63
Springfields Court	14	73	90	82
St Nicholas Court	18	61	67	61
The Corriett	10	50	60	50
Trinity Drive	7	86	83	83
Vizard Close	8	50	63	75
Walter Preston Court	16	57	73	73
Willow Road	9	67	78	67

Significantly worse than average (95% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (95% confidence*)
Significantly worse than average (90% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (90% confidence*)

* See appendix A for further information on statistical tests and confidence levels



8. Neighbourhood services

90%
good place
to live



**greatest
problems**

1. dog fouling/mess
2. rubbish or litter
3. Noisy neighbours



All questions in this section compare favourably to benchmarks



Satisfaction with the grounds maintenance service has increased significantly from 69% to 76%



Dog mess seems to have become an increasing problem, particularly around certain schemes

8. Neighbourhood

The portions of the survey that asked Independent Living tenants about their experiences of their local neighbourhood includes some of the most positive responses, with all four of the results displayed in chart 8.1 being in line with expectations. This means that the vast majority of tenants are happy with their neighbourhood as a **place to live** (90%), and three quarter feel that their landlord makes a positive contribution to the where they live (76%). Note that the latter is another question from the TSM regulatory framework.

The most pleasing result is, however, probably the statistically significant 7% **improvement** in the proportion of tenants that are satisfied with the **grounds maintenance** service (now 76%), which includes an even more impressive 14% increase in the proportion that are 'very' satisfied (now 40%). This almost entirely reverses the fall that was observed between the 2015 and 2019 surveys.

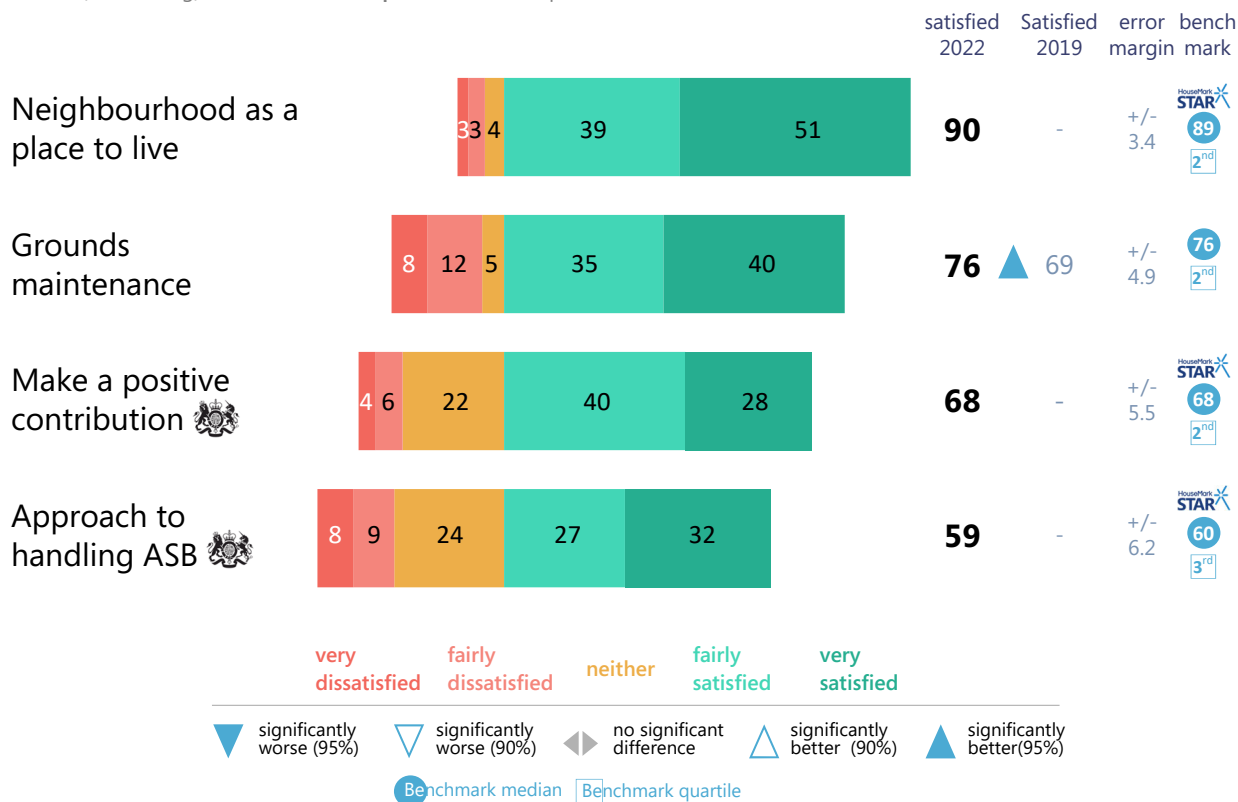
Even the lowest rated question on the chart opposite, the handling of **anti-social behaviour**, is still consistent with how similar tenants normally answer this question, including 59% that are satisfied compared to 17% that are dissatisfied.

When asked about specific problems that occur in the local neighbourhood, the pattern is fairly similar to that in 2019 with the most common issues being dog mess, rubbish and litter and noisy neighbours. Of these, however, the only one that has changed since the last survey is **dog mess**, which has jumped from 15% saying that it was a problem before to 21% this year. This appears to be driven by the experience of tenants handful of schemes (see table 8.5).

However, despite the higher frequency of issues with litter and dog mess, the strongest key driver of satisfaction with the neighbourhood is actually noisy neighbours (9% problem).

8.1 Neighbourhood services

% Bases (descending) 298, 295, 275, 241 | Excludes non respondents





Change over time

- Dog fouling is viewed to be significantly worse than it was three years ago (chart 8.4).



By people

- Significantly lower than average scores if reported **feel lonely or isolated**, for example only 56% of this group are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live.
- Respondents **aged 65 – 74** were significantly less satisfied than average with where they live (84%).
- **Noisy neighbours** is a significant concern for those living in a building with communal areas (10%).



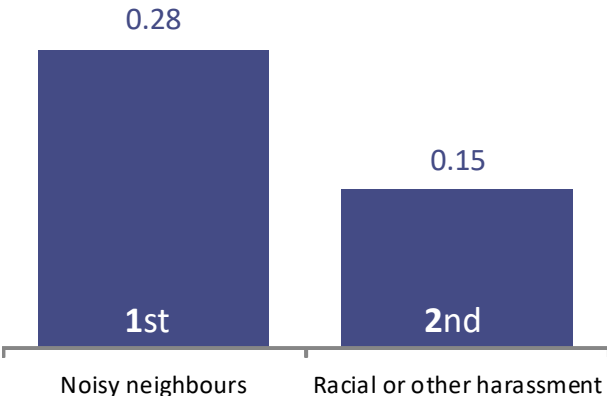
By place

- Detailed results by scheme can be found in tables 8.5 and 8.6.
- Dryleaze Court and Burdett House residents are considerably less satisfied than other tenants that housing services make a positive contribution to their **neighbourhood** (both under 40%). Conversely, this rating is higher than average in the Concord, George Pearce House and Hamfallow Court schemes.
- **Grounds maintenance** services are rated significantly poorer than average at Broadfield Road (57%) and Dryleaze Court (58%).
- The handling of **anti-social behaviour** seems to be a greater issue for tenants living at Ashwell House, Burdett House, Malvern Gardens and Walter Preston Court.
- **Rubbish, litter and drugs** appear to be more prevalent around St Nicholas Court.
- Respondents in bungalows are slightly more satisfied with their neighbourhood than those in flats (91% v 89%). The same is true for the positive contribution rating (69% 'bungalows', 68% 'flats').

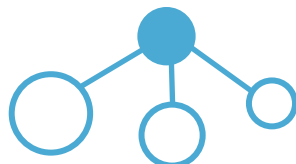
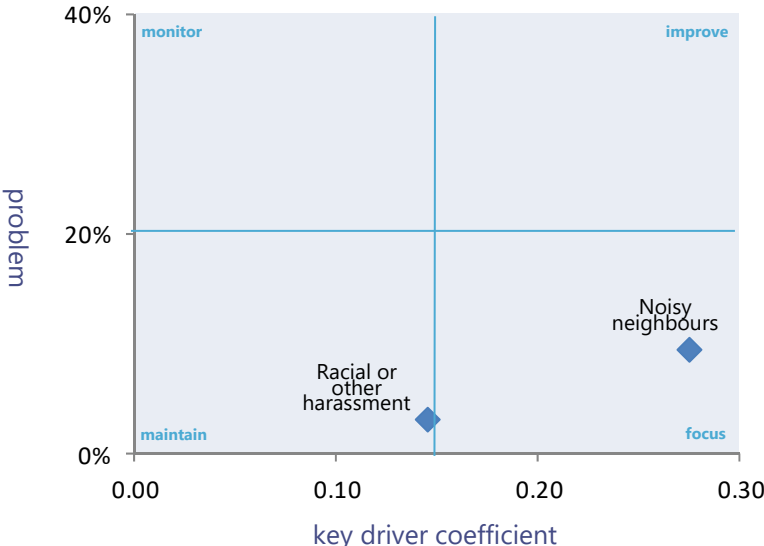
8. Neighbourhood

8.2 Key drivers - problems in the neighbourhood

R Square = 0.124 | Note that values are not percentages but are results of the statistics test. See Appendix A for more details.



8.3 Key drivers v problems



A 'key driver' analysis uses a regression test to check which other results in the survey are best at predicting overall satisfaction. For a more detailed explanation of key drivers please see Appendix A.

8.4 Neighbourhood problems

% Bases (descending) 279, 272, 266, 271, 264, 271, 267, 266, 266 | Excludes non respondents.



8. Neighbourhood

8.5 Neighbourhood problems by scheme

Excludes schemes with fewer than 7 respondents

	Base	% problem									
		Rubbish or litter	Noisy neighbours	Dog fouling/ dog mess	Other problems with pets and animals	Racial or other harassment	Drunk or rowdy behaviour	Vandalism and graffiti	People damaging your property	Drug use or dealing	Abandoned or burnt out vehicles
Overall	307	16	9	21	5	3	6	1	2	4	0.4
Archway Gardens	7	33	17	57	0	0	0	0	0	14	0
Ashwell House	8	0	57	0	0	0	57	0	0	0	0
Broadfield Road	14	7	8	8	7	0	0	0	0	7	0
Burdett House	11	11	11	11	11	11	0	0	11	0	0
Chapel Lane	8	0	17	17	20	17	17	0	0	0	0
Concord	18	0	0	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Draycott	8	13	13	13	13	13	0	0	0	0	0
Dryleaze Court	15	0	0	31	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dryleaze House	15	17	8	15	0	8	8	0	0	23	0
George Pearce House	13	0	8	54	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grange View	12	8	0	42	10	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grove Park Road	13	17	0	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hamfallow Court	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hazelwood	17	13	0	0	0	7	13	0	0	7	0
Jenner Court	11	18	0	36	10	0	10	0	0	0	0
Malvern Gardens	7	33	33	0	0	17	17	0	0	0	0
Sherborne House	8	29	13	29	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Springfields Court	14	46	11	42	20	0	9	9	9	0	0
St Nicholas Court	18	41	0	6	0	0	12	0	0	12	0
The Corriett	10	0	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Trinity Drive	7	17	29	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	17
Vizard Close	8	14	33	33	17	0	0	0	0	0	0
Walter Preston Court	16	31	0	13	8	8	0	0	0	0	0
Willow Road	9	50	0	33	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Significantly worse than average (95% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (95% confidence*)
Significantly worse than average (90% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (90% confidence*)

* See appendix A for further information on statistical tests and confidence levels

8.6 Neighbourhood ratings by scheme

Excludes schemes with fewer than 7 respondents

	Sample size	% positive			
		Neighbourhood as a place to live	Positive contribution to neighbourhood	Grounds maintenance service	Dealing with ASB
Overall	307	90	68	76	59
Archway Gardens	7	71	71	100	43
Ashwell House	8	75	57	100	29
Broadfield Road	14	93	54	57	56
Burdett House	11	70	38	60	13
Chapel Lane	8	86	50	57	60
Concord	18	100	93	75	78
Draycott	8	88	50	75	50
Dryleaze Court	15	77	31	58	22
Dryleaze House	15	87	46	73	57
George Pearce House	13	93	92	85	100
Grange View	12	100	83	100	44
Grove Park Road	13	92	83	69	55
Hamfallow Court	12	100	90	83	80
Hazelwood	17	88	81	88	75
Jenner Court	11	100	75	90	57
Malvern Gardens	7	100	60	43	40
Sherborne House	8	88	63	88	75
Springfields Court	14	86	69	77	55
St Nicholas Court	18	83	56	61	67
The Corriett	10	90	70	80	80
Trinity Drive	7	100	71	83	100
Vizard Close	8	75	50	88	50
Walter Preston Court	16	88	77	81	39
Willow Road	9	100	89	67	63

Significantly worse than average (95% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (95% confidence*)
Significantly worse than average (90% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (90% confidence*)

* See appendix A for further information on statistical tests and confidence levels



9. Complaints

61%



complaints handling

77%



know how to make a complaint



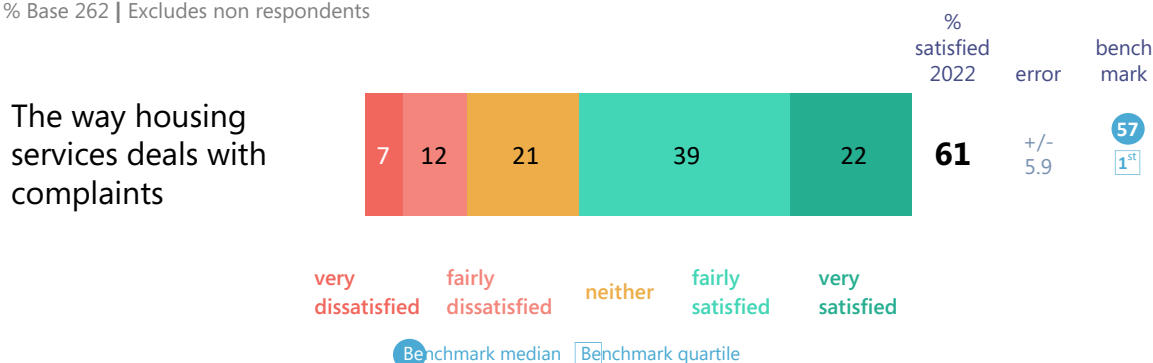
Satisfaction with complaints handling is a slightly above the benchmark average



Be aware that many respondents that claim to have made a complaint will not have used the formal complaints system

9.1 Overall the way housing management services deals with complaints

% Base 262 | Excludes non respondents



A new question was added to the 2022 survey asking tenants to rate how well housing services handle complaints. This is yet another result that the Council will have to report to the regulator in future years, but a very important point to consider that relatively few of those answering the question will be referring to the **formal complaints** process. Indeed, the experience with such questions with other landlords shows that that only a small minority of tenants that think they have made a complaint have ever used the formal process, and some even categorise standard repairs reports as complaints.

With that caveat, **awareness** of the complaints process seems high as over three quarters of the sample feel that they know how to make a complaint, compared to only 6% that actively disagree.

Although the majority are satisfied with how the Council deals with complaints (61%), around a fifth are actively dissatisfied (19%). However, when placed in context with other similar landlords this score is actually quite good being slightly **above the median** score of 57%.

By people

- Respondents who have **been in contact** are significantly less satisfied than average with complaint handling (55%), whereas those who have not been in contact are significantly more satisfied than average (71%).
- Interestingly, those who have been in contact in the previous year are also less likely to agree that they know how to make a complaint (76%).
- There are no significant variations by property type, with satisfaction similar amongst respondents in bungalows and flats (61% and 60% respectively).
- Awareness of how to make a complaint is lowest in bungalows, with only 76% of this group agreeing they know how to make a complaint, compared to 78% of those living in flats.

By place

- Only 2 out of the 11 respondents from **Dryleaze Court** that responded to this question are satisfied with how complaints are handled, compared to 5 that are dissatisfied. Similarly, only 2 **Malvern Court** resident are satisfied compared to 3 that are dissatisfied with complaints handling.



9. Complaints

9.2 Complaints by scheme

Excludes schemes with fewer than 7 respondents

	% positive			% positive	
	Sample size	Way complaints dealt with		Sample size	Way complaints dealt with
Overall	307	61	Overall	307	61
Archway Gardens	7	57	Hamfallow Court	12	67
Ashwell House	8	100	Hazelwood	17	59
Broadfield Road	14	42	Jenner Court	11	56
Burdett House	11	50	Malvern Gardens	7	33
Chapel Lane	8	71	Sherborne House	8	63
Concord	18	83	Springfields Court	14	58
Draycott	8	71	St Nicholas Court	18	59
Dryleaze Court	15	18	The Corriett	10	67
Dryleaze House	15	58	Trinity Drive	7	60
George Pearce House	13	67	Vizard Close	8	57
Grange View	12	64	Walter Preston Court	16	62
Grove Park Road	13	64	Willow Road	9	56

Significantly worse than average (95% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (95% confidence*)
Significantly worse than average (90% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (90% confidence*)

* See appendix A for further information on statistical tests and confidence levels



10. Well-being



Feelings of loneliness and isolation are lower for Independent Living tenants than those living in general needs housing



Around two thirds would consider wellbeing or financial help from their landlord, with 10% currently feeling in need of such support

Across the sector the experience of the pandemic has had an impact on the wellbeing of tenants living in housing schemes such as Independent Living, which has brought such issues to the fore.

When asked about feelings of **loneliness and isolation**, 15% say they have felt this way to at least some extent, including 7% that explicitly feel this way. This group were also significantly less satisfied with the majority of the opinion rating statements asked throughout the survey. It is notable that this figure is lower than the equivalent 21% amongst general needs tenants.

Another topical issue is financial wellbeing, with the survey fieldwork completed during the cost-of-living crisis. It was good to see that most residents felt that the rent and service charge that they pay is **affordable** (75%), although only one in ten did disagree. Indeed, around a fifth of Independent Living tenants say that they still feel **financially insecure** (19%).

It is also positive to note that around two thirds of the sample say that they would consider going to the **Council for help** with wellbeing or money problems, although only one in ten respondents currently feel that they need such help, including a fifth of the under 65s (see below).

By people

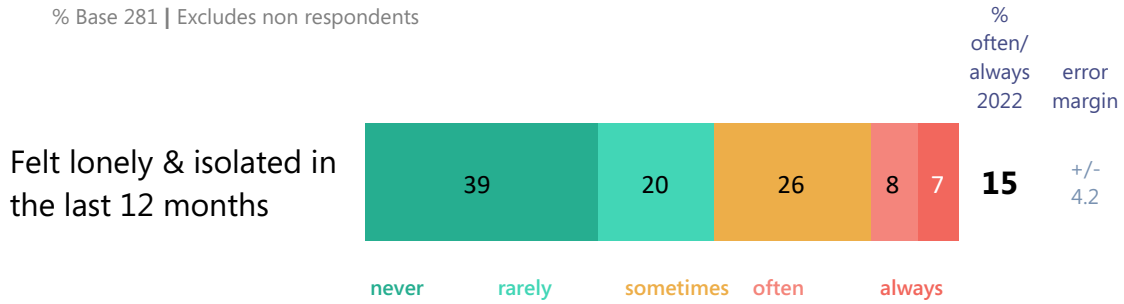
- All respondents that feel **lonely or isolated** were significantly less likely to agree with the well-being and support statements in chart 10.2.
- The same is true for those respondents who **need help** or support with well-being or money problems, although to a slightly lesser extent.
- Just over a fifth of respondents **aged 55 – 64** say they need help or support with well-being or money problems, this proportion falls to only 5% of those aged 75 - 84.

By place

- There are no significant variations by property type.
- Residents in **Dryleaze Court** are less positive than average on most of the wellbeing questions (chart 10.4).
- Out of the 8 respondents from **Draycott**, 3 say that they often experience loneliness or isolation and don't feel part of their local community.
- Conversely, the feeling of community is universal amongst **Grange View** respondents.

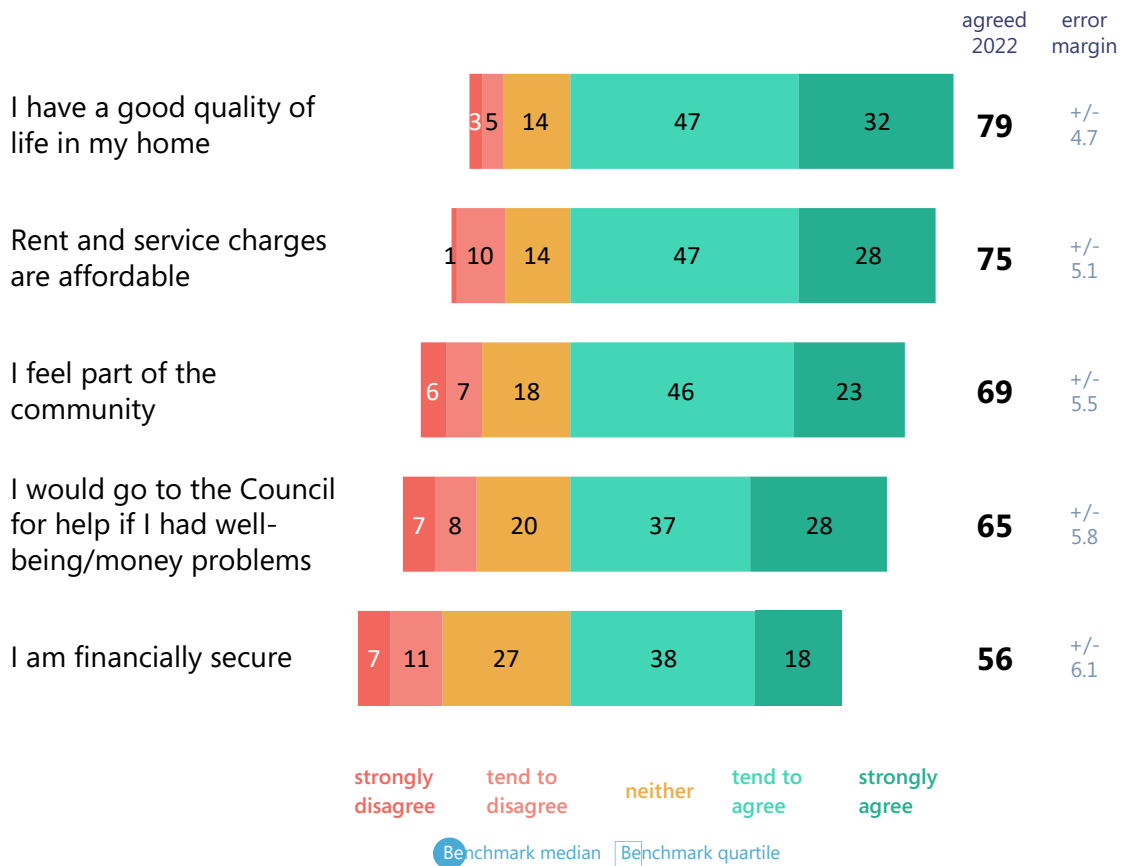
10.1 Felt lonely and isolated

% Base 281 | Excludes non respondents



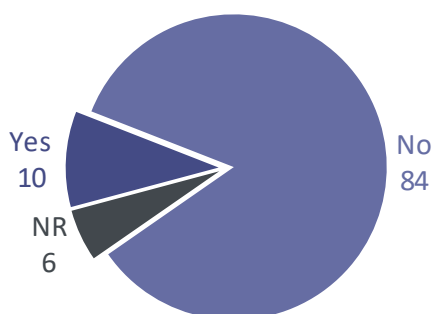
10.2 Well-being and support

% Bases (descending) 289, 278, 273, 261, 252 | Excludes non respondents.



10.3 Currently need help with well-being or money problems

% Base 307



10.4 Communication by scheme

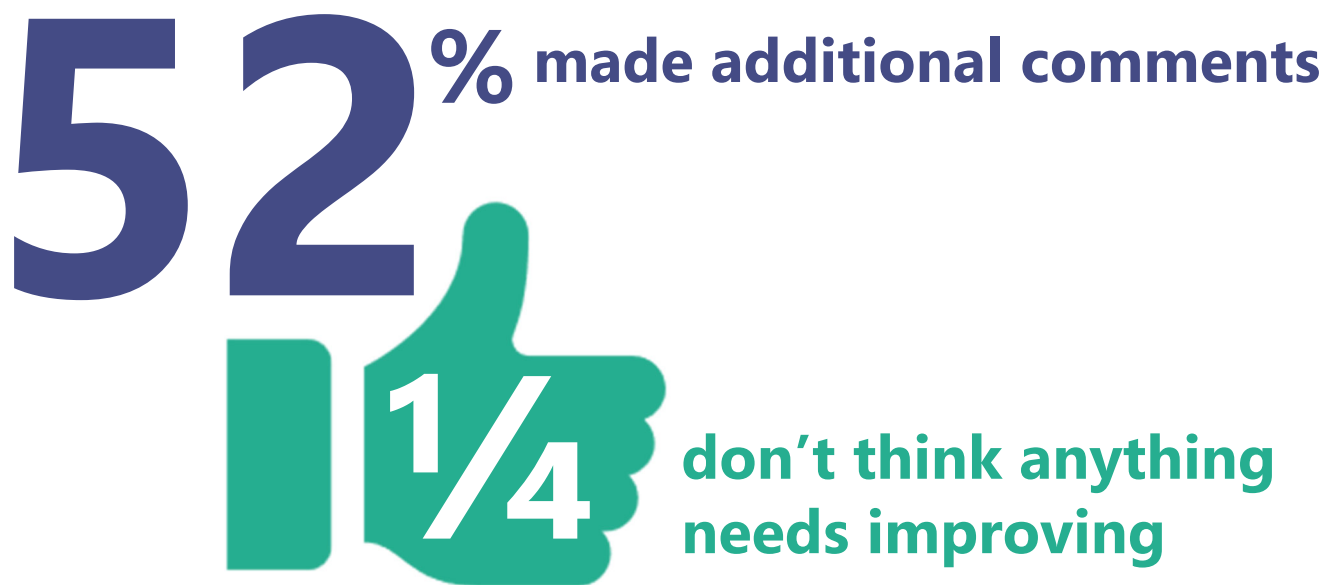
Excludes schemes with fewer than 7 respondents

	Sample size	% positive					
		Lonely & isolated	Affordable rent & charges	Financially secure	Quality of life in home	Part of community	Come to Council for help
Overall	307	15	75	56	79	69	65
Archway Gardens	7	29	71	71	57	43	57
Ashwell House	8	0	67	20	63	67	33
Broadfield Road	14	7	77	60	92	62	69
Burdett House	11	18	56	38	70	44	44
Chapel Lane	8	13	67	80	86	83	83
Concord	18	11	77	70	94	86	71
Draycott	8	38	63	43	63	38	75
Dryleaze Court	15	13	46	30	58	58	40
Dryleaze House	15	13	55	33	58	58	70
George Pearce House	13	15	92	55	77	67	75
Grange View	12	0	91	90	100	100	80
Grove Park Road	13	8	69	55	77	67	55
Hamfallow Court	12	17	92	46	82	60	80
Hazelwood	17	18	82	56	82	81	73
Jenner Court	11	9	78	71	89	73	38
Malvern Gardens	7	29	83	43	71	67	83
Sherborne House	8	13	63	43	63	63	71
Springfields Court	14	14	93	54	67	67	82
St Nicholas Court	18	17	65	59	78	50	47
The Corriett	10	10	63	25	70	70	67
Trinity Drive	7	0	57	43	100	83	67
Vizard Close	8	25	100	86	75	86	33
Walter Preston Court	16	13	93	69	94	64	67
Willow Road	9	11	78	67	100	88	89

Significantly worse than average (95% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (95% confidence*)
Significantly worse than average (90% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (90% confidence*)

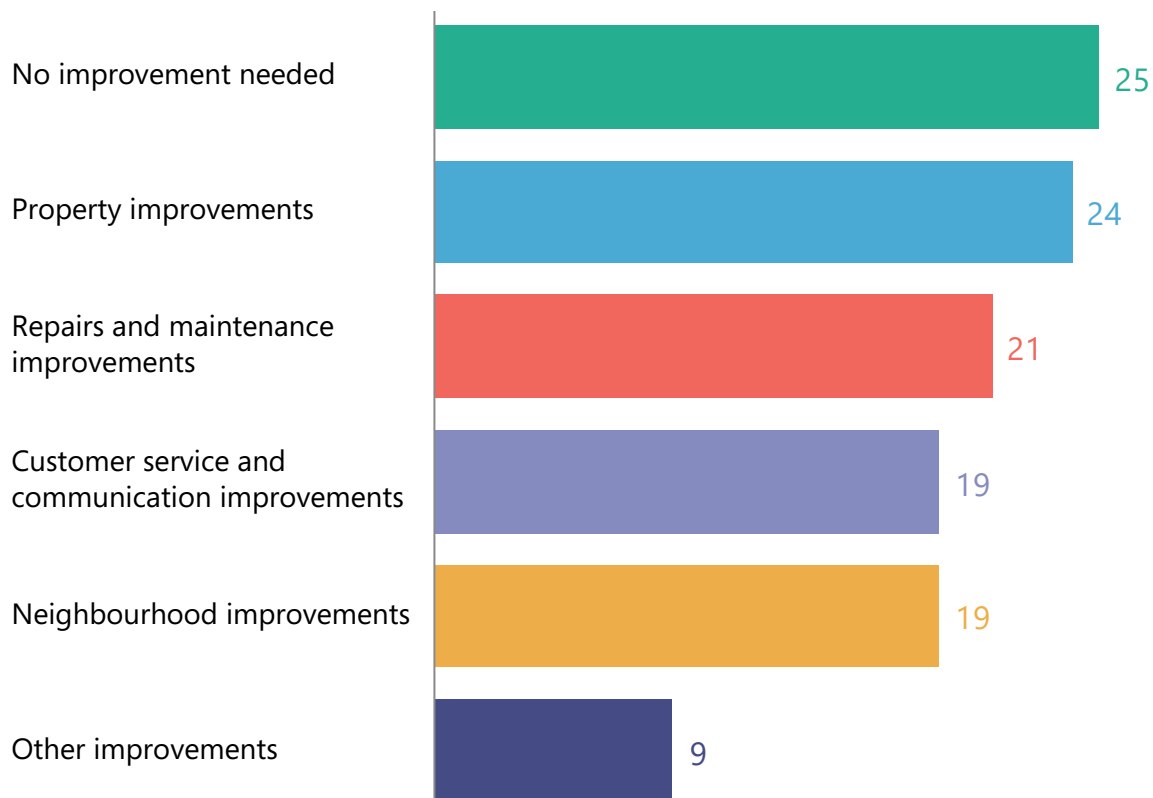
* See appendix A for further information on statistical tests and confidence levels

11. Further comments



11.1 Anything else you would like to say - summary

% Base 161 | Proportion of all tenants that commented. Includes multiple responses. Coded from verbatim comments.



11. Further comments

The final question that tenants were asked at the end of the survey was simply whether they had anything else that they would like to say about their home or the services they received, including any compliments or suggestions. Around half of the sample (52%) chose to do so, and all the percentage results presented in the following charts are calculated as a percentage of that group. These comments are coded and organised into different categories, both as broad headings, and in a further level of detail. Note that many respondents made comments that fall into multiple categories.

Chart 11.1 presents this analysis in terms of just a handful of broad categories, of which it is pleasing to see that a quarter of commenters simply wanted to **praise the service** that residents receive. This included 6% that praised **the home** that they lived in, which is to be expected when the quality of the home is the dominant driver of satisfaction (chart 11.2). However, plenty (4%) also wished to draw attention to the standard of **customer care** that they received:

“I am very satisfied and happy in my home and appreciate the help I have been given to settle in. Everyone I have dealt with has been very helpful and professional. Thank you.”

“I have lived here for almost two years and feel very privileged. Beautiful outside, natural grounds and friendship. Lovely little home which I can make my own. Lovely day room for our social life and groups which help our mental health, yoga, mindfulness, coffee mornings and crafts.”

“Stroud District Council have given me a home I love for last 10 years for which I am very grateful. I've lived in many other council properties over the years, but SDC is sincerely the best.”

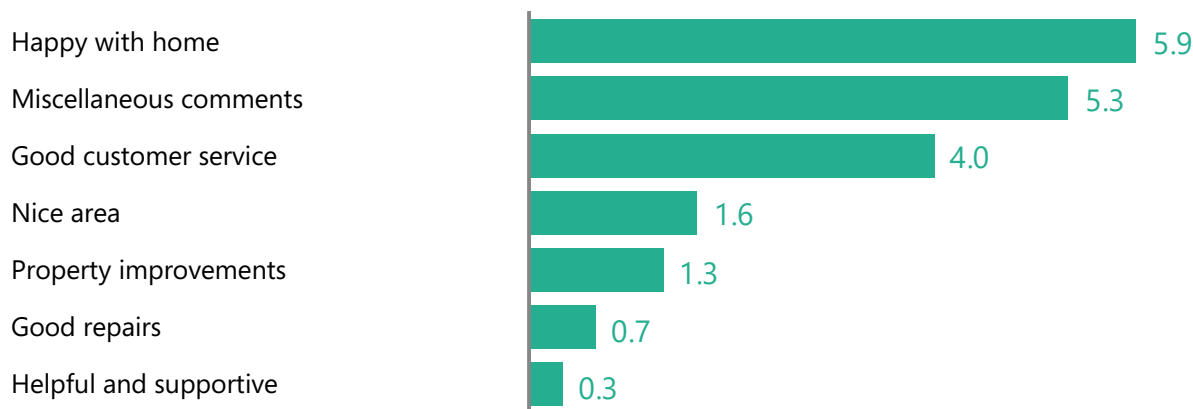
“My answers are based on the ten weeks I've been an applicant or tenant. So far you've been brilliant, every contact with staff has been fab.”

“With all my recent problems I feel really taken care of by the council they are so polite and friendly and helpful in getting me sorted and boy do I need sorting.”

“We are very fortunate to have a wonderful team at our disposal from our service delivery manager right to our coordinator and site officers and manager.”

11.2 Positive comments - detail

% Base 161 | Coded from verbatim responses. Excludes non respondents.



Aside from these compliments, however, the majority of comments still made suggestions for how the services could be improved in the future. The key driver theme continues here, with the most common suggested improvements are in the broad category of **property improvements** (24%), chief amongst these being upgrades to the **heating/energy efficiency** (5%) and **windows** (2%, chart 11.3).

“My flat is always cold, no insulation, draughts everywhere and ancient storage heater. Also lots of mould.”

“Money would be better spent on improving insulation and stopping drafts.”

“Cannot afford to put heating on as storage heater.”

“Overall I am very satisfied my only issue is the inadequate heating system, antiquated storage heaters.”

“As the council are aware a lot of the residents are unhappy with the heating in the bathrooms and the windows are very poor, if it's windy the blinds/curtains move constantly.”

“Draughts from poor windows and gaps, this has been reported more than once, has been seen by you and photos taken but no response.”

Moving on to specific comments about the **repairs and maintenance** service, the fact that outstanding jobs was the most common cause of complaint (4.9%) is entirely unsurprising in the context both of the poor repairs satisfaction scores in this survey, and the fact that it was also the dominant topic for general needs tenants in their own surveys. Some examples of such comments include:

“I have small jobs I need help with but no luck with any help yet.”

“We have walkabouts to point out jobs that need doing. Rarely are these walkabouts leading to the job being done”.

“We are not happy with the repairs just before covid I reported a problem ... That was 18 months ago.”

“I have been waiting several years for the wet room to have repairs.”

However, outstanding repairs wasn't quite the overwhelming issue it was for general needs survey respondents, with almost as many Independent Living residents focusing on a **lack of information** on when repairs would be completed (4.4% of comments).

“When it comes to building repairs /repairs the information is poor.”

“The repairs service needs to communicate better regarding appointments and would be a good idea to have a follow up call after the repair to ensure customer satisfaction.”

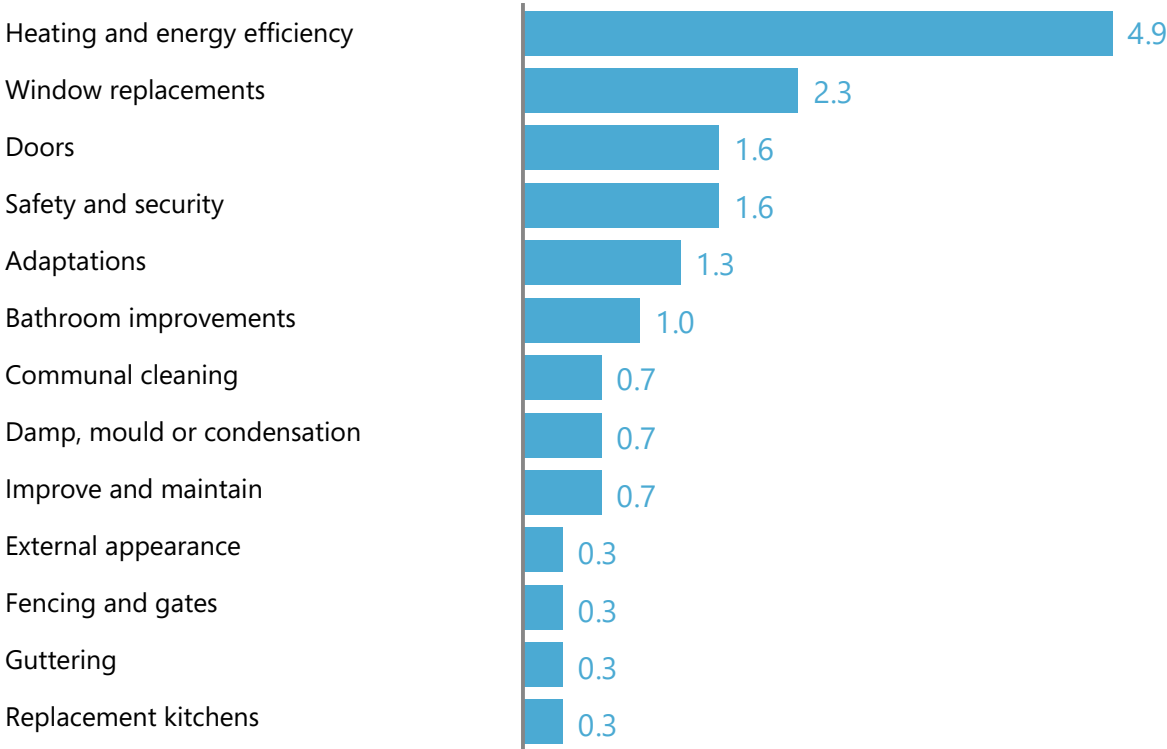
“If we ask for something or request a repair SDC should respond with yes or no and a timeframe.”

“Repairs. Have emailed repairs as suggested but ten days later no reply! I phoned to address my email with outstanding repair and explained that a simple reply from them saying my email was received would satisfy me and I would realise I had been heard. Customer response is vital.”

11. Further comments

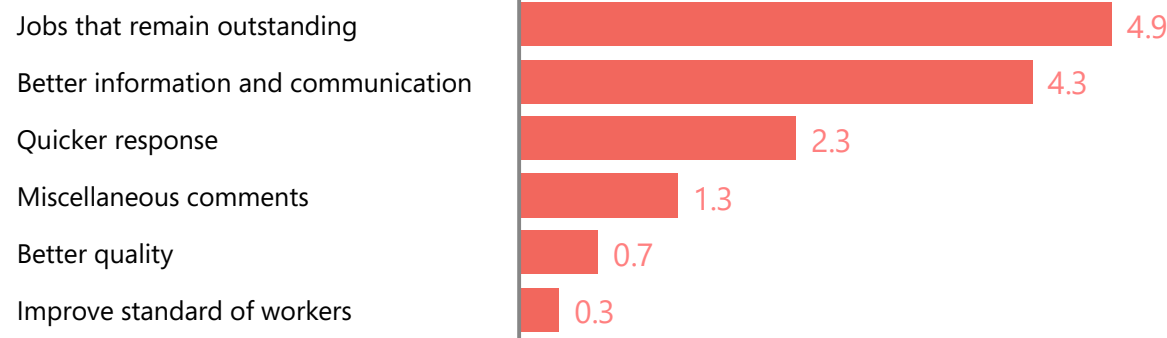
11.3 Property improvements - detail

% Base 161 | Coded from verbatim responses. Excludes non respondents.



11.4 Repair and maintenance improvements - detail

% Base 161 | Coded from verbatim responses. Excludes non respondents.



Around a fifth of the comments made were about **neighbourhood issues**, although they should be understood in the context of relatively high satisfaction with the tenant's local areas, including a substantial improvement in how the grounds maintenance service is perceived (section 8). Nevertheless, 3.6% of comments were complaints about untidy gardens and grounds maintenance, whilst a few tenants also noted issues that they had encountered with anti-social behaviour. For example:

"Our garden is an utter disgrace."

"Only that the upkeep of grounds is an absolute disgrace with overgrowing flower beds outside where, and beds that were "sorted" are now in need of remedial action."

"Not enough attention to the garden."

"The grass is not cut to a good standard and the rest of the gardens are not tended and are overgrown. The waste and recycling bins need cleaning more as there is a smell."

"Previous ASB completely ignored by Council - not at all satisfied. Two and a half years of neighbours breaking tenancy rules. Seriously, could do better."

"There is drug dealing going on at the moment which I'm not happy about."

One thing that makes Independent Living respondents different from those living in general needs is that problems with getting hold of the right person or returning calls seem to be relatively minor issues, even though they dominated the customer experience comments made by general needs respondent. Instead, the primary customer issue for this group is receiving the appropriate **wellbeing and disability support** that they think they need (4.9% of comments). Some examples of these type of comments include:

"I feel more isolated and lonely since Concord has become a hub."

"I do feel isolated at times being of a different culture."

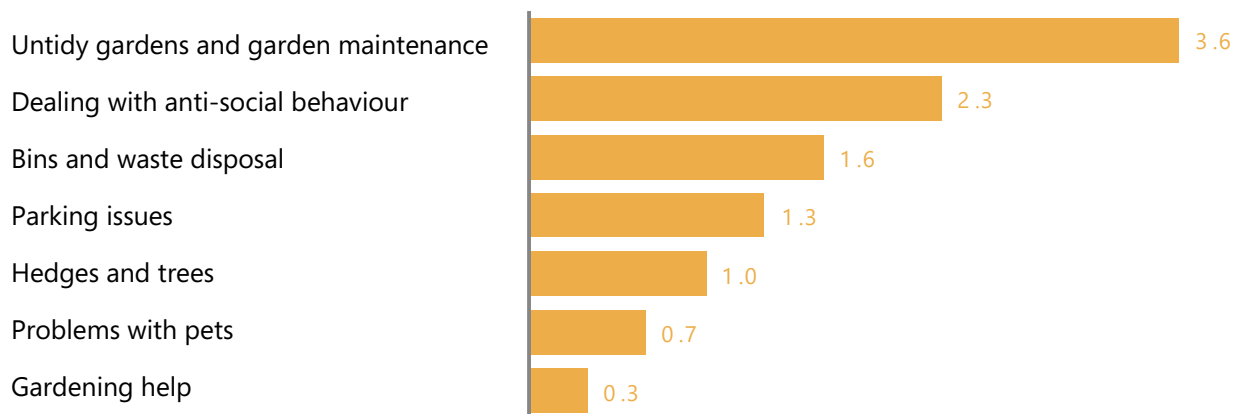
"Nan really misses having a warden, just the comfort, peace of mind of someone calling in/ringing to check everything is ok."

"I believe that some people in our building were left behind when we changed from sheltered accommodation to independent living."

11. Further comments

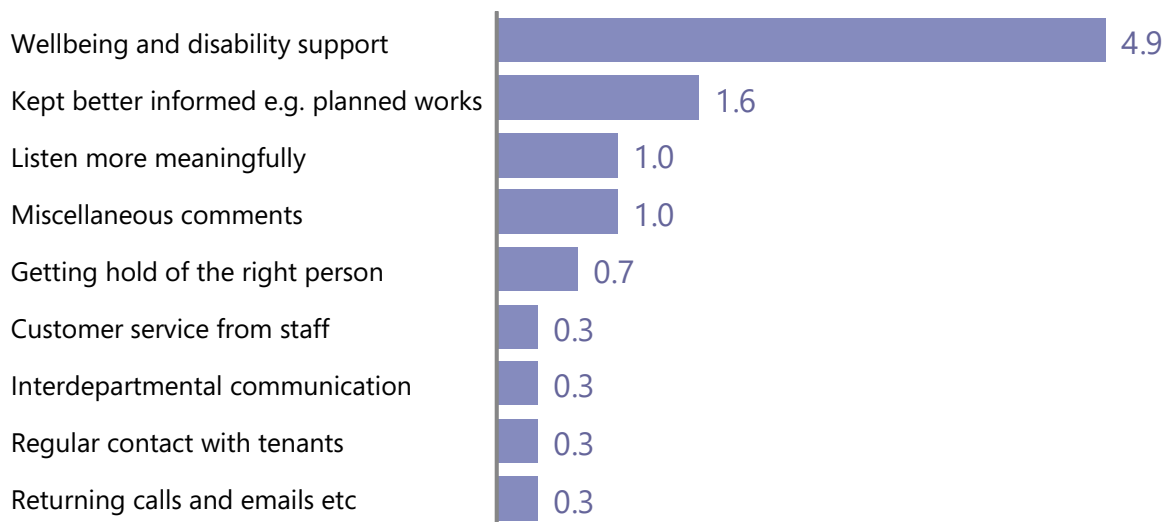
11.5 Neighbourhood improvements - detail

% Base 161 | Coded from verbatim responses. Excludes non respondents.



11.6 Customer service and communication improvements - detail

% Base 161 | Coded from verbatim responses. Excludes non respondents.



11.7 Other improvements - detail

% Base 161 | Coded from verbatim responses. Excludes non respondents.



12. Respondent profile

In addition to documenting the demographic profile of the sample, tables 12.5 and 12.7 in this section also display the core survey questions according to the main equality groups. When considering these tables it is important to bear in mind that some of the sub groups are small, so many observed differences may simply be down to chance. To help navigate these results they have been subjected to statistical tests, with those that can be confidently said to differ from the average score being highlighted in the tables.

12.1 Scheme

% Base 307

	Total	% 2022	% 2019		Total	% 2022	% 2019
Archway Gardens	7	2.3	4.1	Hamfallow Court	12	3.9	2.4
Ashcroft House	6	2.0	2.4	Hazelwood	17	5.5	5.1
Ashwell House	8	2.6	3.4	Jenner Court	11	3.6	4.1
Broadfield Road	14	4.6	2.7	Malvern Gardens	7	2.3	2.0
Burdett House	11	3.6	2.9	Sherborne House	8	2.6	3.1
Chapel Lane	8	2.6	2.7	Springfields Court	14	4.6	3.7
Concord	18	5.9	6.3	St Nicholas Court	18	5.9	4.1
Draycott	8	2.6	1.9	Tanners Piece	5	1.6	0.0
Dryleaze Court	15	4.9	6.5	The Beeches	6	2.0	2.7
Dryleaze House	15	4.9	5.8	The Corriett	10	3.3	2.7
George Pearce House	13	4.2	3.4	The Long Ground	2	0.7	1.4
Glebe Road	4	1.3	0.7	Trinity Drive	7	2.3	1.7
Glebelands	5	1.6	3.7	Vizard Close	8	2.6	2.7
Grange View	12	3.9	2.7	Walter Preston Court	16	5.2	6.1
Grove Park Road	13	4.2	5.1	Willow Road	9	2.9	2.0

12. Respondent profile

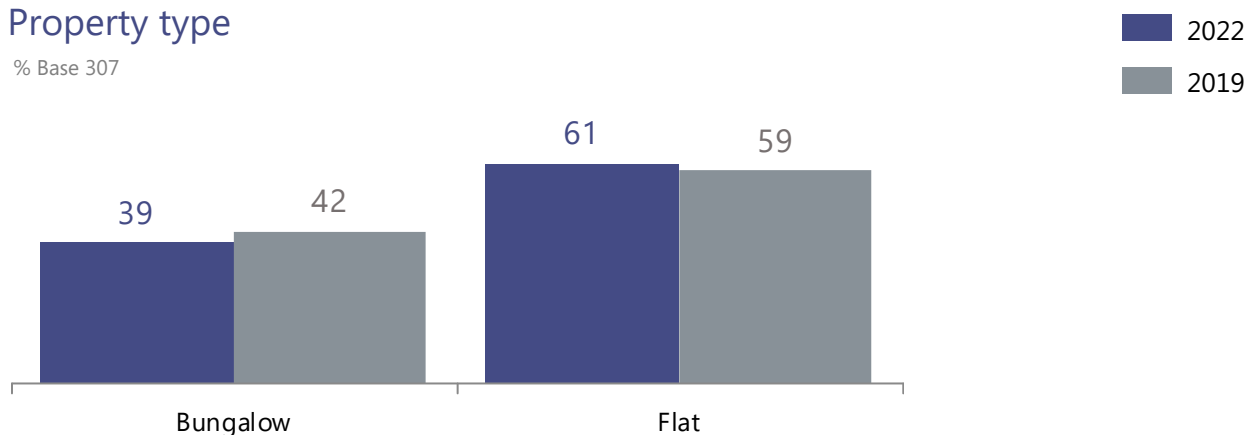
12.2 Area

% Base 307

	Total	%
Housing 1	74	24
Housing 2	8	3
Housing 3	63	21
Housing 4	52	17
Housing 5	42	14
Housing 6	39	13
Housing 7	29	9

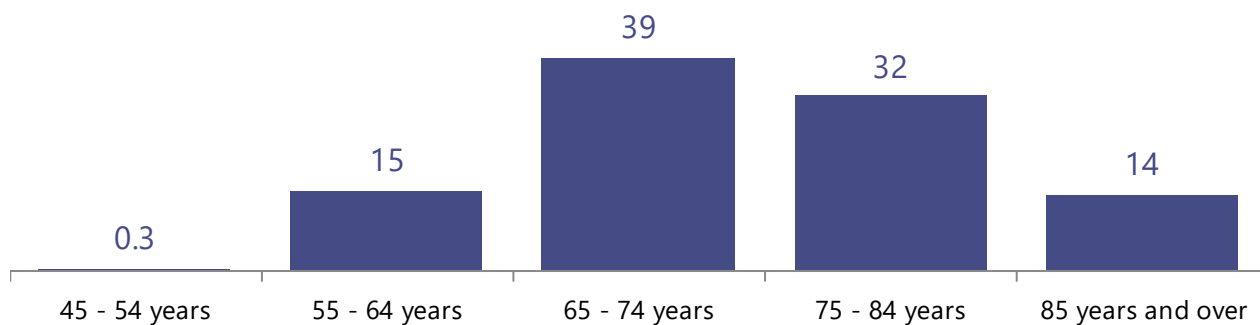
12.3 Property type

% Base 307



12.4 Age

% Base 307



12.5 Core questions by age

	Overall	% positive			
		55-64 years	65-74 years	75-84 years	85 years and over
Sample size	307	45	120	98	43
Service overall	81	78	81	81	81
Quality of home	86	84	84	90	86
Safety and security of home	87	80	83	93	88
Communal areas	77	70	76	83	75
Repairs & maintenance service	68	63	65	72	74
Last completed repair	76	55	78	81	79
Neighbourhood as a place to live	90	91	84	96	93
Positive contribution to communities	68	64	63	74	73
Dealing with anti-social behaviour	59	67	57	57	65
Rent value for money	86	81	84	90	86
Treated fairly and with respect	79	80	79	78	86
Is easy to deal with	70	68	71	67	74
Listen to views and act upon them	64	57	63	64	70
Keeps tenants informed	71	64	72	70	74
Opportunities to make views known	69	64	66	72	76
Approach to handling complaints	61	63	58	61	63

Significantly **worse** than average
(95% confidence*)

Significantly **better** than average
(95% confidence*)

Significantly **worse** than average
(90% confidence*)

Significantly **better** than average
(90% confidence*)

* See appendix A for further information on statistical tests and confidence levels

12. Respondent profile

12.6 Core questions by patch

		% positive						
	Overall	Housing 1	Housing 2	Housing 3	Housing 4	Housing 5	Housing 6	Housing 7
Sample size	307	74	8	63	52	42	39	29
Service overall	81	80	88	74	82	81	82	93
Quality of home	86	85	100	87	78	91	82	97
Safety and security of home	87	88	75	77	85	93	92	93
Communal areas	77	77	100	74	64	82	83	85
Repairs & maintenance service	68	70	63	72	60	70	71	69
Last completed repair	76	83	50	66	78	73	80	91
Neighbourhood as a place to live	90	93	75	90	84	91	92	93
Positive contribution to communities	68	65	50	62	71	73	73	74
Dealing with anti-social behaviour	59	66	50	57	57	81	42	50
Rent value for money	86	84	88	85	83	88	92	86
Treated fairly and with respect	79	78	75	81	79	81	81	76
Is easy to deal with	70	67	63	73	67	83	57	70
Listen to views and act upon them	64	65	50	63	64	69	61	62
Keeps tenants informed	71	75	63	66	69	71	69	79
Opportunities to make views known	69	74	75	67	57	68	74	75
Approach to handling complaints	61	60	57	58	57	63	71	57

Significantly worse than average (95% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (95% confidence*)
Significantly worse than average (90% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (90% confidence*)

* See appendix A for further information on statistical tests and confidence levels

12.7 Core questions by property type

	% positive		
	Overall	Bungalow	Flat
Sample size	307	120	187
Service overall	81	81	81
Quality of home	86	84	88
Safety and security of home	87	91	84
Communal areas	77	79	77
Repairs & maintenance service	68	72	66
Last completed repair	76	79	74
Neighbourhood as a place to live	90	91	89
Positive contribution to communities	68	69	68
Dealing with anti-social behaviour	59	64	57
Rent value for money	86	86	86
Treated fairly and with respect	79	84	77
Is easy to deal with	70	78	64
Listen to views and act upon them	64	69	60
Keeps tenants informed	71	76	67
Opportunities to make views known	69	69	69
Approach to handling complaints	61	61	60

Significantly worse than average (95% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (95% confidence*)
Significantly worse than average (90% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (90% confidence*)

* See appendix A for further information on statistical tests and confidence levels



Appendix A. Methodology & data analysis

Questionnaire

The questionnaire was based on the Housemark STAR survey methodology, with the most appropriate questions for Stroud DC being selected by them from the STAR questionnaire templates. This year’s questionnaire also referenced The Regulator of Social Housing’s proposed tenant satisfaction measures (TSMs) that social landlords will be required to report on in future years. The questionnaire was designed to be as clear and legible as possible to make it easy to complete, with options available for large print versions or completion in alternative languages. Postal versions of the questionnaires were printed as A4 booklets.

Fieldwork

The survey was carried out between September and October 2022. Paper self completion questionnaires were distributed all 718 independent living households, followed by a reminder approximately three weeks later for all those that had not yet replied. In addition, email invitations and reminders were sent to every valid email address in the sample, plus a text invitation and reminder to all mobiles in the sample. The survey was incentivised with a free prize draw.

Online survey example pages:

Response rate

In total there were 307 responses to the survey which represented a response rate of 43% (error margin +/- 4.2%). Online responses comprised 24% of the total (74), including 40 direct responses to email (11% response) and 18 to text message (4% response). The returns exceeded the stipulated STAR target error margin of +/- 5% with a 2% increase in response rate compared to 2019.

Weighting

The results were checked to ensure that they were representative of the tenant population on the main demographic and geographic characteristics, and it was determined that no further weighting was required.

Data presentation

Readers should take care when considering percentage results from some of the sub groups within the main sample, as the base figures may sometimes be small.

Many results are recalculated to remove 'no opinion' or 'can't remember' responses from the final figures, a technique known as 're-basing'.

Error Margins

Error margins for the sample overall, and for individual questions, are the amount by which a result might vary due to chance. The error margins in the results are quoted at the standard 95% level, and are determined by the sample size and the distribution of scores. For the sake of simplicity, error margins for historic data are not included, but can typically be assumed to be at least as big as those for the 2022 data. When comparing two sets of scores, it is important to remember that error margins will apply independently to each.

Tests of statistical significance

When two sets of survey data are compared to one another (e.g. between different years, or demographic sub groups), the observed differences are typically tested for statistical significance. Differences that are significant can be said, with a high degree of confidence, to be real variations that are unlikely to be due to chance. Any differences that are not significant *may* still be real, especially when a number of different questions all demonstrate the same pattern, but this cannot be stated with statistical confidence and may just be due to chance.

Unless otherwise stated, all statistically significant differences are reported at the 95% confidence level. Tests used were the Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney test (rating scales), Fischer Exact Probability test (small samples) and the Pearson Chi Square test (larger samples) as appropriate for the data being examined. These calculations rely on a number of factors such as the base figure and the level of variance, both within and between sample groups, thereby taking into account more than just the simple difference between the headline percentage scores. This means that some results are reported as significant despite being superficially similar to others that are not. Conversely, some seemingly notable differences in two sets of headline scores are not enough to signal a significant change in the underlying pattern across all points in the scale. For example:

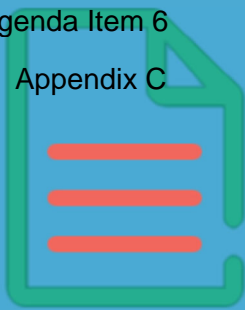
- Two satisfaction ratings might have the same or similar *total* satisfaction score, but be quite different when one considers the detailed results for the proportion *very satisfied* versus *fairly satisfied*.
- There may also be a change in the proportions who were *very* or *fairly* dissatisfied, or ticked the middle point in the scale, which is not apparent from the headline score.
- In rare cases there are complex changes across the scale that are difficult to categorise e.g. in a single question one might simultaneously observe a disappointing shift from *very* to *fairly* satisfied, at the same time as their being a welcome shift from *very dissatisfied* to *neither*.
- If the results included a relatively small number of people then the error margins are bigger. This means that the *combined* error margins for the two ratings being compared might be bigger than the observed difference between them.

Key driver analysis


“Key driver analyses” are based on a linear regression model. This is used to investigate the relationship between the overall scores and their various components. The charts illustrate the relative contribution of each item to the overall rating; items which do not reach statistical significance are omitted. The figures on the vertical axis show the standardised beta coefficients from the regression analysis, which vary in absolute size depending on the number of questionnaire items entered into the analysis. The quoted *R Square* value shows how much of the observed variance is explained by the key driver model e.g. a value of 0.5 shows that the model explains half of the total variation in the overall score.

Benchmarking

The questions are benchmarked against the Housemark STAR database of sheltered tenants, using Stroud DC’s normal peer group of English landlords with between 3,000 and 6,000 units. For the overall satisfaction score this includes 17 landlords. HouseMark benchmark scores are supplemented for the remaining questions with benchmark data from ARP Research clients who have carried out surveys in the last 2 years using the STAR questionnaires. The group selection has been verified against the core Housemark data to ensure that both benchmark groups are closely matched on their scores across those questions. This supplementary group included 15 landlords.




Appendix B. Example questionnaire



STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL
 Ebley Mill • Ebley Wharf • Stroud • Gloucestershire • GL5 4UB
 01453 766321
www.stroud.gov.uk

Mr A B Sample
 1 Sample Street
 Address line
 Address line
 Sample District
 Sample Town
 AB1 2CD

999999



scan me
 your code:
9999mnmw
www.arp-surveys.co.uk/stroud

Dear [Contact_Name]

Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2022

This is your chance to tell us what you think of your home and the services Stroud District Council currently provides as your landlord. If you choose not to participate in this survey this will not alter our services to you.

To help us understand your levels of satisfaction with the services we provide, ARP Research (an **independent** company) is carrying out this survey on our behalf. The survey is optional and confidential. Stroud District Council will **not** be able to link your answers to your name and address without your agreement.

Please either complete and return the survey in the enclosed freepost envelope, or complete the survey online using the link above. The closing date is **11 October 2022**. As a thank you for completing the survey, you can opt for entry into a **prize draw**, where one lucky person will win **£150** and two more will receive **£50** in shopping vouchers.

This information will be used to help us improve our services. We will publish the survey results on our website, SDC Housing Facebook page and Keynotes newsletter.

This survey is a regulatory duty as a social housing landlord. We take your privacy very seriously. For information about your rights and how we use your information please see Housing privacy notices at <https://rb.gy/6in4u3> which explains why we collect information, and how that information may be used, kept safe and confidential.

If you have any questions or concerns about this survey, please contact ARP Research on 0800 020 9564 or email support@arp-research.co.uk who will be happy to answer your queries. Alternatively, you can contact Christine Welsh on 07774453357 or email christine.welsh@stroud.gov.uk


Yours sincerely


Michelle Elliott
 Housing Manager

PRIZE DRAW! 1 x £150 2 x £50

Leading a community that is making Stroud district a better place to live, work and visit for everyone
 Chief Executive: Kathy O'Leary

Appendix B. Example questionnaire





STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2022

www.arpsurveys.co.uk/stroud your code: **999abcd**

About us

1 Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided by the council as your landlord?

Very satisfied Fairly satisfied Neither Fairly dissatisfied Very dissatisfied

Your home


2 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you:


	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
	😊	🙂	😐	☹️	😞

a. With the overall quality of your home?

b. That we provide a home that is safe and secure?

c. Your rent provides value for money?





Repairs & maintenance

3 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you:

	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	No opinion
	😊	🙂	😐	☹️	😞	🙄

a. That we provide a home that is well maintained and safe for you to live in?

b. With the way we generally deal with repairs and maintenance?

c. With your gas servicing arrangements (if applicable)?

4 Have you had any day to day repairs carried out in the last 12 months, e.g. a leaking tap?

Yes **go to Q5** ↓ No **go to Q7** →

5 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you repair service you have received to your home from the Council in the last 12 months?

	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
	😊	🙂	😐	☹️	😞

6 Thinking about you most recent repair, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you:

	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
	😊	🙂	😐	☹️	😞


a. That it was easy to access the repairs service?

b. With the time taken to complete the repair after you reported it?

c. With the overall quality of the work?

d. That the repair was done 'right first time'?

e. With the overall repairs service we provided on this repair?



STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL
www.stroud.gov.uk

Communication

7 How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement? "Housing Services treat tenants fairly and with respect."

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	No opinion
😊	🙂	😐	☹️	😞	🙄

8 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that housing services are easy to deal with?

Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	No opinion
😊	🙂	😐	☹️	😞	🙄

9 Have you contacted housing services in the last 12 months?

Yes **go to Q10** ↓ No **go to Q11** ↗

10 Thinking about the last time you contacted us, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you:

	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
	😊	🙂	😐	☹️	😞

a. With the helpfulness of the staff?

b. With their ability to deal with your query?

11 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that housing services:

	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	No opinion
	😊	🙂	😐	☹️	😞	🙄

a. Listen to your views and act upon them?

b. Give you the opportunity to make your views known?

c. Keep tenants informed about things that matter to them?

12 In your daily life, have you used any apps or websites to do any of the following in the last year?
tick all that apply

- Used Facebook, Instagram or other social media
- Used video calling, such as Zoom or Facetime
- Online shopping
- Online banking
- Booked a service or appointment online
- Read an email newsletter
- Contacted any organisation by email, app or on their website
- Contacted any organisation on social media, such as Facebook or Twitter
- Used Government services online
- Visited the Council's Facebook or Twitter
- Used the Council's online services

13 If we produce a newsletter, such as Keynotes, would you prefer to receive it online via email or on paper? (If you wish you can give us your email address below).

Online Paper

14 If you would like housing services to contact you either by email or mobile phone, please give us your below and tick the box to confirm :

Mobile:

E-mail:

I confirm that the Council can contact me via these methods

! By providing this information you consent for the Council to record this information on your customer record.

15 Would you be interested in having your say about our services in any of the following ways?

tick all that apply

- Taking part in short online or social media polls
- Online discussion groups about the latest issues
- In person discussion group about the latest issues
- None of these

! By expressing an interest in any of these you give your consent for the Council to contact you about it.

Estate and communal services

16 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with:

	Very satisfied 	Fairly satisfied 	Neither 	Fairly dissatisfied 	Very dissatisfied 	No opinion
a. Your neighbourhood as a place to live?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. How much we make a positive contribution to your neighbourhood?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. The grounds maintenance, such as grass cutting in your area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Our approach to handling of anti-social behaviour?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

17 Do you live in a building with communal areas, either inside or outside, that you share with other people who live in the building?

! This includes Independent Living Schemes

- Yes **go to Q18 ↓**
- No **go to Q19 →**

18 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that housing management services keeps these communal areas or scheme clean, safe and well maintained?

Very satisfied 	Fairly satisfied 	Neither 	Fairly dissatisfied 	Very dissatisfied 	No opinion
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5

19 To what extent are the following a problem in your neighbourhood?

	Very big problem 	Fairly big problem 	Not a very big problem 	Not a problem at all
a. Rubbish or litter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Noisy neighbours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Dog fouling/ dog mess	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Other problems with pets & animals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Racial or other harassment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Drunk or rowdy behaviour	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Vandalism and graffiti	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. People damaging your property	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Drug use or dealing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. Abandoned or burnt out vehicles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

! If you would like to tell the Council about any of these problems, please call us on 01453 766321.

Complaints

20 How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement? "I know how to make a complaint to housing services if I am not happy with the service I receive."

Strongly agree 	Tend to agree 	Neither 	Tend to disagree 	Strongly disagree 	No opinion
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

21 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with housing management services' approach to the handling of complaints?

Very satisfied 	Fairly satisfied 	Neither 	Fairly dissatisfied 	Very dissatisfied 	No opinion
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6

Well-being

These questions are optional, but they help us to understand what issues residents are facing and if there is any extra support we could offer.

22 Over the past 12 months, at times, have you felt lonely and isolated?

Always 	Often 	Sometimes 	Rarely 	Never 	Prefer not to say
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

23 How much do you agree or disagree that:

	Strongly agree 	Tend to agree 	Neither 	Tend to disagree 	Strongly disagree 	Prefer not to say
a. My rent and service charges are affordable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. I am financially secure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. I have a good quality of life in my home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. I feel part of the community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. I would come to the Council for help if I had wellbeing or money problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

24 Do you currently need help from the Council or another support agency with wellbeing or money problems?

- Yes
 - No
- !** If you answer yes, you give your consent for the Council to contact you about it.

7

And finally ...

25 Is there anything else you would like to say about your home and/or the services that we provide, including any compliments or suggestions you may have?

26 Do you want to enter the prize draw for a chance to win up to **£150** in vouchers?

- Yes
- No

! By answering this question you consent for the Council to contact you if you win.

Thank you!



Please now return in the enclosed freepost envelope for your chance to win up to £150 in shopping vouchers!

RETURN TO:
Freepost RTZK-RGZT-BSKU,
ARP Research,
PO Box 5928,
SHEFFIELD,
S35 5DN

5928vwv



Appendix C. Data summary

Please note that throughout the report the quoted results typically refer to the '*valid*' column of the data summary if it appears.

The '*valid*' column contains data that has been rebased, normally because non-respondents were excluded and/or question routing applied.

Representative. Unweighted			
Count	% raw	% valid	% +'ve

Q1 Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided by the council as your landlord?

Base: 307

1: Very satisfied	107	34.9	35.4	80.8
2: Fairly satisfied	137	44.6	45.4	
3: Neither	20	6.5	6.6	
4: Fairly dissatisfied	32	10.4	10.6	
5: Very dissatisfied	6	2.0	2.0	
N/R	5	1.6		

Q2a With the overall quality of your home

Base: 307

6: Very satisfied	139	45.3	45.4	86.2
7: Fairly satisfied	125	40.7	40.8	
8: Neither	15	4.9	4.9	
9: Fairly dissatisfied	21	6.8	6.9	
10: Very dissatisfied	6	2.0	2.0	
N/R	1	0.3		

Q2b That we provide a home that is safe and secure

Base: 307

11: Very satisfied	169	55.0	55.8	86.5
12: Fairly satisfied	93	30.3	30.7	
13: Neither	16	5.2	5.3	
14: Fairly dissatisfied	19	6.2	6.3	
15: Very dissatisfied	6	2.0	2.0	
N/R	4	1.3		

Q2c Your rent provides value for money

Base: 307

16: Very satisfied	154	50.2	51.2	85.8
17: Fairly satisfied	104	33.9	34.6	
18: Neither	23	7.5	7.6	
19: Fairly dissatisfied	13	4.2	4.3	
20: Very dissatisfied	7	2.3	2.3	
N/R	6	2.0		

Q3a That we provide a home that is well maintained and safe for you to live in

Base: 307

21: Very satisfied	121	39.4	40.1	81.2
22: Fairly satisfied	124	40.4	41.1	
23: Neither	10	3.3	3.3	
24: Fairly dissatisfied	31	10.1	10.3	
25: Very dissatisfied	16	5.2	5.3	
26: No opinion	1	0.3		
N/R	4	1.3		

Q3b With the way we generally deal with repairs and maintenance

Base: 307

27: Very satisfied	86	28.0	29.0	68.4
28: Fairly satisfied	117	38.1	39.4	
29: Neither	29	9.4	9.8	
30: Fairly dissatisfied	38	12.4	12.8	
31: Very dissatisfied	27	8.8	9.1	
32: No opinion	4	1.3		
N/R	6	2.0		

Representative. Unweighted			
Count	% raw	% valid	% +ve

Q3c With your gas servicing arrangements (if applicable)		Base: 307			
33:	Very satisfied	99	32.2	61.9	89.4
34:	Fairly satisfied	44	14.3	27.5	
35:	Neither	10	3.3	6.3	
36:	Fairly dissatisfied	4	1.3	2.5	
37:	Very dissatisfied	3	1.0	1.9	
38:	No opinion	51	16.6		
	N/R	96	31.3		
Q4 Have you had any day to day repairs carried out in the last 12 months?		Base: 307			
39:	Yes	149	48.5		
40:	No	144	46.9		
	N/R	14	4.6		
Q5 Satisfaction with the repairs service you have received to your home from the Council in the last 12 months		Base: 149			
41:	Very satisfied	63	20.5	42.6	79.1
42:	Fairly satisfied	54	17.6	36.5	
43:	Neither	3	1.0	2.0	
44:	Fairly dissatisfied	16	5.2	10.8	
45:	Very dissatisfied	12	3.9	8.1	
	N/R	159	51.8	0.7	
Q6a That it was easy to access the repairs service		Base: 149			
46:	Very satisfied	61	19.9	41.2	75.7
47:	Fairly satisfied	51	16.6	34.5	
48:	Neither	13	4.2	8.8	
49:	Fairly dissatisfied	14	4.6	9.5	
50:	Very dissatisfied	9	2.9	6.1	
	N/R	159	51.8	0.7	
Q6b With the time taken to complete the repair after you reported it		Base: 149			
51:	Very satisfied	47	15.3	31.8	65.6
52:	Fairly satisfied	50	16.3	33.8	
53:	Neither	7	2.3	4.7	
54:	Fairly dissatisfied	25	8.1	16.9	
55:	Very dissatisfied	19	6.2	12.8	
	N/R	159	51.8	0.7	
Q6c With the overall quality of the work		Base: 149			
56:	Very satisfied	78	25.4	53.4	80.1
57:	Fairly satisfied	39	12.7	26.7	
58:	Neither	10	3.3	6.8	
59:	Fairly dissatisfied	12	3.9	8.2	
60:	Very dissatisfied	7	2.3	4.8	
	N/R	161	52.4	2.0	
Q6d That the repair was done 'right first time'		Base: 149			
61:	Very satisfied	73	23.8	50.3	75.1

		Representative, Unweighted			
		Count	% raw	% valid	% +'ve
62:	Fairly satisfied	36	11.7	24.8	
63:	Neither	8	2.6	5.5	
64:	Fairly dissatisfied	12	3.9	8.3	
65:	Very dissatisfied	16	5.2	11.0	
	N/R	162	52.8	2.7	
Q6e With the overall repairs service we provided on this repair		Base: 149			
66:	Very satisfied	61	19.9	41.8	76.0
67:	Fairly satisfied	50	16.3	34.2	
68:	Neither	8	2.6	5.5	
69:	Fairly dissatisfied	16	5.2	11.0	
70:	Very dissatisfied	11	3.6	7.5	
	N/R	161	52.4	2.0	
Q7 Housing Services treat tenants fairly and with respect		Base: 307			
71:	Strongly agree	88	28.7	29.7	79.4
72:	Tend to agree	147	47.9	49.7	
73:	Neither	36	11.7	12.2	
74:	Tend to disagree	17	5.5	5.7	
75:	Strongly disagree	8	2.6	2.7	
76:	No opinion	6	2.0		
	N/R	5	1.6		
Q8 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that housing services are easy to deal with		Base: 307			
77:	Very satisfied	81	26.4	27.4	69.6
78:	Fairly satisfied	125	40.7	42.2	
79:	Neither	42	13.7	14.2	
80:	Fairly dissatisfied	34	11.1	11.5	
81:	Very dissatisfied	14	4.6	4.7	
82:	No opinion	5	1.6		
	N/R	6	2.0		
Q9 Have you contacted housing services in the last 12 months?		Base: 307			
83:	Yes	193	62.9		
84:	No	98	31.9		
	N/R	16	5.2		
Q10a With the helpfulness of the staff		Base: 193			
85:	Very satisfied	84	27.4	44.2	73.1
86:	Fairly satisfied	55	17.9	28.9	
87:	Neither	16	5.2	8.4	
88:	Fairly dissatisfied	24	7.8	12.6	
89:	Very dissatisfied	11	3.6	5.8	
	N/R	117	38.1	1.6	
Q10b With their ability to deal with your query		Base: 193			
90:	Very satisfied	70	22.8	38.0	66.3
91:	Fairly satisfied	52	16.9	28.3	
92:	Neither	25	8.1	13.6	
93:	Fairly dissatisfied	23	7.5	12.5	

	Representative. Unweighted			% +ve
	Count	% raw	% valid	
94: Very dissatisfied	14	4.6	7.6	
N/R	123	40.1	4.7	
Q11a Listen to your views and act upon them	Base: 307			
95: Very satisfied	75	24.4	26.4	63.7
96: Fairly satisfied	106	34.5	37.3	
97: Neither	46	15.0	16.2	
98: Fairly dissatisfied	39	12.7	13.7	
99: Very dissatisfied	18	5.9	6.3	
100: No opinion	13	4.2		
N/R	10	3.3		
Q11b Give you the opportunity to make your views known	Base: 307			
101: Very satisfied	88	28.7	31.5	68.8
102: Fairly satisfied	104	33.9	37.3	
103: Neither	52	16.9	18.6	
104: Fairly dissatisfied	24	7.8	8.6	
105: Very dissatisfied	11	3.6	3.9	
106: No opinion	15	4.9		
N/R	13	4.2		
Q11c Keep tenants informed about things that matter to them	Base: 307			
107: Very satisfied	93	30.3	32.7	70.7
108: Fairly satisfied	108	35.2	38.0	
109: Neither	38	12.4	13.4	
110: Fairly dissatisfied	29	9.4	10.2	
111: Very dissatisfied	16	5.2	5.6	
112: No opinion	10	3.3		
N/R	13	4.2		
Q12 In your daily life, have you used any apps or websites to do any of the following in the last year?	Base: 307			
113: Used Facebook, Instagram or other social media	109	35.5		
114: Used video calling, such as Zoom or Facetime	73	23.8		
115: Online shopping	107	34.9		
116: Online banking	117	38.1		
117: Booked a service or appointment online	93	30.3		
118: Read an email newsletter	105	34.2		
119: Contacted any organisation by email, app or on their website	91	29.6		
120: Contacted any organisation on social media	42	13.7		
121: Used Government services online	95	30.9		
122: Visited the Council's Facebook or Twitter	24	7.8		
123: Used the Council's online services	58	18.9		
N/R	125	40.7		
R12 Use the internet	Base: 307			
124: Yes	182	59.3		
125: No	125	40.7		
N/R	0	0.0		

Representative. Unweighted			
Count	% raw	% valid	% +'ve

Q13 If we produce a newsletter, such as Keynotes, would you prefer to receive it online via email or on paper?

Base: 307

126: Online	72	23.5		
127: Paper	218	71.0		
N/R	17	5.5		

Q15 Would you be interested in having your say about our services in any of the following ways?

Base: 307

128: Taking part in short online or social media polls	40	13.0		
129: Online discussion groups about the latest issues	13	4.2		
130: In person discussion group about the latest issues	74	24.1		
131: None of these	165	53.7		
N/R	33	10.7		

R15 Interested in having your say about our services

Base: 307

132: Yes	109	35.5		
133: No	165	53.7		
N/R	33	10.7		

Q16a Your neighbourhood as a place to live

Base: 307

134: Very satisfied	152	49.5	51.0	89.9
135: Fairly satisfied	116	37.8	38.9	
136: Neither	12	3.9	4.0	
137: Fairly dissatisfied	10	3.3	3.4	
138: Very dissatisfied	8	2.6	2.7	
139: No opinion	3	1.0		
N/R	6	2.0		

Q16b How much we make a positive contribution to your neighbourhood

Base: 307

140: Very satisfied	76	24.8	27.6	68.0
141: Fairly satisfied	111	36.2	40.4	
142: Neither	61	19.9	22.2	
143: Fairly dissatisfied	17	5.5	6.2	
144: Very dissatisfied	10	3.3	3.6	
145: No opinion	16	5.2		
N/R	16	5.2		

Q16c The grounds maintenance, such as grass cutting in your area

Base: 307

146: Very satisfied	119	38.8	40.3	75.6
147: Fairly satisfied	104	33.9	35.3	
148: Neither	14	4.6	4.7	
149: Fairly dissatisfied	35	11.4	11.9	
150: Very dissatisfied	23	7.5	7.8	
151: No opinion	4	1.3		
N/R	8	2.6		

Q16d Our approach to handling of anti-social behaviour

Base: 307

152: Very satisfied	78	25.4	32.4	59.4
153: Fairly satisfied	65	21.2	27.0	
154: Neither	57	18.6	23.7	

	Representative. Unweighted			
	Count	% raw	% valid	% +ve
155: Fairly dissatisfied	22	7.2	9.1	
156: Very dissatisfied	19	6.2	7.9	
157: No opinion	51	16.6		
N/R	15	4.9		
Q17 Do you live in a building with communal areas, either inside or outside, that you share with other people who live in the building?				
Base: 307				
158: Yes	251	81.8		
159: No	46	15.0		
N/R	10	3.3		
Q18 Satisfaction that housing management services keeps these communal areas or scheme clean, safe and well maintained				
Base: 251				
160: Very satisfied	98	31.9	40.5	77.3
161: Fairly satisfied	89	29.0	36.8	
162: Neither	16	5.2	6.6	
163: Fairly dissatisfied	24	7.8	9.9	
164: Very dissatisfied	15	4.9	6.2	
165: No opinion	7	2.3		
N/R	58	18.9	0.8	
Q19a Rubbish or litter				
Base: 307				
166: Very big problem	14	4.6	5.1	16.1
167: Fairly big problem	30	9.8	11.0	
168: Not a very big problem	105	34.2	38.6	
169: Not a problem at all	123	40.1	45.2	
N/R	35	11.4		
Q19b Noisy neighbours				
Base: 307				
170: Very big problem	5	1.6	1.9	9.4
171: Fairly big problem	20	6.5	7.5	
172: Not a very big problem	69	22.5	25.9	
173: Not a problem at all	172	56.0	64.7	
N/R	41	13.4		
Q19c Dog fouling/ dog mess				
Base: 307				
174: Very big problem	23	7.5	8.2	21.1
175: Fairly big problem	36	11.7	12.9	
176: Not a very big problem	78	25.4	28.0	
177: Not a problem at all	142	46.3	50.9	
N/R	28	9.1		
Q19d Other problems with pets & animals				
Base: 307				
178: Very big problem	5	1.6	1.9	4.6
179: Fairly big problem	7	2.3	2.7	
180: Not a very big problem	59	19.2	22.3	
181: Not a problem at all	193	62.9	73.1	
N/R	43	14.0		
Q19e Racial or other harassment				
Base: 307				

	Representative, Unweighted			
	Count	% raw	% valid	% +'ve
182: Very big problem	4	1.3	1.5	3.0
183: Fairly big problem	4	1.3	1.5	
184: Not a very big problem	36	11.7	13.5	
185: Not a problem at all	223	72.6	83.5	
N/R	40	13.0		
Q19f Drunk or rowdy behaviour Base: 307				
186: Very big problem	6	2.0	2.2	6.3
187: Fairly big problem	11	3.6	4.1	
188: Not a very big problem	41	13.4	15.1	
189: Not a problem at all	213	69.4	78.6	
N/R	36	11.7		
Q19g Vandalism and graffiti Base: 307				
190: Very big problem	2	0.7	0.8	1.2
191: Fairly big problem	1	0.3	0.4	
192: Not a very big problem	42	13.7	15.8	
193: Not a problem at all	221	72.0	83.1	
N/R	41	13.4		
Q19h People damaging your property Base: 307				
194: Very big problem	4	1.3	1.5	1.5
195: Fairly big problem	0	0.0	0.0	
196: Not a very big problem	32	10.4	12.0	
197: Not a problem at all	231	75.2	86.5	
N/R	40	13.0		
Q19i Drug use or dealing Base: 307				
198: Very big problem	6	2.0	2.2	4.0
199: Fairly big problem	5	1.6	1.8	
200: Not a very big problem	47	15.3	17.3	
201: Not a problem at all	213	69.4	78.6	
N/R	36	11.7		
Q19j Abandoned or burnt out vehicles Base: 307				
202: Very big problem	1	0.3	0.4	0.4
203: Fairly big problem	0	0.0	0.0	
204: Not a very big problem	27	8.8	10.2	
205: Not a problem at all	238	77.5	89.5	
N/R	41	13.4		
Q20 I know how to make a complaint to housing services if I am not happy with the service I receive Base: 307				
206: Strongly agree	88	28.7	31.5	77.0
207: Tend to agree	127	41.4	45.5	
208: Neither	46	15.0	16.5	
209: Tend to disagree	11	3.6	3.9	
210: Strongly disagree	7	2.3	2.5	
211: No opinion	18	5.9		
N/R	10	3.3		

	Representative, Unweighted			
	Count	% raw	% valid	% +ve
Q21 Satisfaction with housing management services' approach to the handling of complaints				
	Base: 307			
212: Very satisfied	58	18.9	22.1	60.6
213: Fairly satisfied	101	32.9	38.5	
214: Neither	54	17.6	20.6	
215: Fairly dissatisfied	31	10.1	11.8	
216: Very dissatisfied	18	5.9	6.9	
217: No opinion	35	11.4		
N/R	10	3.3		
Q22 Over the past 12 months, at times, have you felt lonely and isolated?				
	Base: 307			
218: Always	19	6.2	6.8	
219: Often	23	7.5	8.2	
220: Sometimes	74	24.1	26.3	
221: Rarely	55	17.9	19.6	
222: Never	110	35.8	39.1	
223: Prefer not to say	10	3.3		
N/R	16	5.2		
R22 Over the past 12 months have you always or often felt lonely and isolated?				
	Base: 307			
224: Yes	42	13.7	14.9	
225: No	239	77.9	85.1	
N/R	26	8.5		
Q23a My rent and service charges are affordable				
	Base: 307			
226: Strongly agree	78	25.4	28.1	75.2
227: Tend to agree	131	42.7	47.1	
228: Neither	38	12.4	13.7	
229: Tend to disagree	28	9.1	10.1	
230: Strongly disagree	3	1.0	1.1	
231: Prefer not to say	13	4.2		
N/R	16	5.2		
Q23b I am financially secure				
	Base: 307			
232: Strongly agree	45	14.7	17.9	56.0
233: Tend to agree	96	31.3	38.1	
234: Neither	67	21.8	26.6	
235: Tend to disagree	27	8.8	10.7	
236: Strongly disagree	17	5.5	6.7	
237: Prefer not to say	32	10.4		
N/R	23	7.5		
Q23c I have a good quality of life in my home				
	Base: 307			
238: Strongly agree	92	30.0	31.8	78.9
239: Tend to agree	136	44.3	47.1	
240: Neither	40	13.0	13.8	
241: Tend to disagree	13	4.2	4.5	
242: Strongly disagree	8	2.6	2.8	
243: Prefer not to say	8	2.6		

Representative. Unweighted
Count % raw % valid % +ve

N/R	10	3.3		
Q23d I feel part of the community		Base: 307		
244: Strongly agree	63	20.5	23.1	68.9
245: Tend to agree	125	40.7	45.8	
246: Neither	50	16.3	18.3	
247: Tend to disagree	20	6.5	7.3	
248: Strongly disagree	15	4.9	5.5	
249: Prefer not to say	18	5.9		
N/R	16	5.2		
Q23e I would come to the Council for help if I had wellbeing or money problems		Base: 307		
250: Strongly agree	73	23.8	28.0	65.2
251: Tend to agree	97	31.6	37.2	
252: Neither	51	16.6	19.5	
253: Tend to disagree	22	7.2	8.4	
254: Strongly disagree	18	5.9	6.9	
255: Prefer not to say	32	10.4		
N/R	14	4.6		
Q24 Do you currently need help from the Council or another support agency with wellbeing or money problems?		Base: 307		
256: Yes	31	10.1		
257: No	259	84.4		
N/R	17	5.5		
D101 Stock type		Base: 307		
258: General needs	0	0.0		
259: Independent Living	307	100.0		
N/R	0	0.0		
D102 Property type		Base: 307		
260: Bungalow	120	39.1		
261: Flat	187	60.9		
262: House	0	0.0		
263: Maisonette	0	0.0		
N/R	0	0.0		
D103 Patch		Base: 307		
264: Housing 1	74	24.1		
265: Housing 2	8	2.6		
266: Housing 3	63	20.5		
267: Housing 4	52	16.9		
268: Housing 5	42	13.7		
269: Housing 6	39	12.7		
270: Housing 7	29	9.4		
N/R	0	0.0		
D104 Main Tenant Age Group		Base: 307		

	Representative. Unweighted		
	Count	% raw	% valid % +ve
271: 16 - 24 years	0	0.0	
272: 25 - 34 years	0	0.0	
273: 35 - 44 years	0	0.0	
274: 45 - 54 years	1	0.3	
275: 55 - 64 years	45	14.7	
276: 65 - 74 years	120	39.1	
277: 75 - 84 years	98	31.9	
278: 85 years and over	43	14.0	
N/R	0	0.0	
D105 Main Tenant Age Group [simple]	Base: 307		
279: 16-34	0	0.0	
280: 35-49	0	0.0	
281: 50-64	46	15.0	
282: 65+	261	85.0	
N/R	0	0.0	
D108 Scheme	Base: 307		
289: Archway Gardens	7	2.3	
290: Ashcroft House	6	2	
291: Ashwell House	8	2.6	
292: Broadfield Road	14	4.6	
293: Burdett House	11	3.6	
294: Chapel Lane	8	2.6	
295: Concord	18	5.9	
296: Draycott	8	2.6	
297: Dryleaze Court	15	4.9	
298: Dryleaze House	15	4.9	
299: George Pearce House	13	4.2	
300: Glebe Road	4	1.3	
301: Glebelands	5	1.6	
302: Grange View	12	3.9	
303: Grove Park Road	13	4.2	
304: Hamfallow Court	12	3.9	
305: Hazelwood	17	5.5	
306: Jenner Court	11	3.6	
307: Malvern Gardens	7	2.3	
308: Sherborne House	8	2.6	
309: Springfields Court	14	4.6	
310: St Nicholas Court	18	5.9	
311: Tanners Piece	5	1.6	
312: The Beeches	6	2	
313: The Corriett	10	3.3	
314: The Long Ground	2	0.7	
315: Trinity Drive	7	2.3	
316: Vizard Close	8	2.6	
317: Walter Preston Court	16	5.2	
318: Willow Road	9	2.9	
N/R	0	0	



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STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

HOUSING COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, 28 MARCH 2023

Report Title	BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2022/23 QUARTER 3			
Purpose of Report	To present the 2022/23 forecast outturn position against the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) revenue budgets and Capital Programme that the Committee is responsible for, in order to give an expectation of possible variances against budget.			
Decision(s)	The Committee RESOLVES to note the outturn forecast for the General Fund and HRA revenue budgets and the Capital Programmes for this Committee.			
Consultation and Feedback	Budget holders have been consulted about the budget issues in their service areas. The feedback has been incorporated into the report to explain differences between budgets and actual income and expenditure.			
Report Author	Jon Coldridge, Principal Accountant Tel: 01453 754030 Email: jon.coldridge@stroud.gov.uk			
Options	None			
Background Papers	None			
Appendices	None			
Implications (further details at the end of the report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	Yes	No	No	No

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to notify members of any known significant variations to budgets for the current financial year, highlight any key issues, and to inform members of any action to be taken if required.

2. Summary

- 2.1 The General Fund revenue position shows an expected underspend of (£192k) below budget, as shown in Table 1. The General Fund capital forecast shows a net capital programme underspend of (£1,563k) as shown in Table 2.
- 2.2 The HRA is currently expected to have a revenue overspend of £46k and a net capital programme underspend of (£3,250k).

3. General Fund Revenue Budget Position

- 3.1 Council approved the original General Fund revenue budget for 2022/23 in February 2022. The latest budget for Housing Committee, following carry forwards from 2021/22, is £1,122k.
- 3.2 The budget monitoring position for the service at Quarter 3 shows an underspend of (£192k), as summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: General Fund Revenue Budgets

	Para Refs	2022/23 Original Budget (£'000)	2022/23 Revised Budget (£'000)	2022/23 Forecast Outturn (£'000)	2022/23 Reserve Transfers (£'000)	2022/23 Outturn Variance (£'000)
Housing Committee						
Housing Advice	3.3	562	569	438	0	(132)
Housing Strategy	3.4	166	336	234	43	(59)
Private Sector Housing		163	217	196	20	(1)
Housing General Fund Total		890	1,122	867	63	(192)

3.3 Housing Advice and Homelessness – (£132k) underspend

The cost of temporary accommodation is currently expected to be (£132k) lower than budget. (£70k) of this relates to reduced forecast Bed and Breakfast expenditure where it anticipated fewer referrals will be made within year and a forecast loss of income for reimbursement of housing benefit. The remaining (£62K) being additional grant funding received from the Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).

This cost could fluctuate up to the end of the year and will continue to be monitored closely.

3.4 Housing Strategy – (£59k) underspend

The (£59k) variance within Housing Strategy relates to work grant funded by the DLUHC including using previously received grants. Where DLUHC grants are awarded at short notice they are utilised in the first instance and the budgeted funds are used elsewhere. Any unspent grant funds will look to be carried forward in order to fund housing-related services in the next financial year. This is regarded as good practice in allowing flexibility in the face of unanticipated increases in demand for services, or improvement to commissioned services, such as rough sleeper outreach or target hardening works to properties for households experiencing domestic abuse.

4. General Fund Capital Programme

- 4.1 The Housing General Fund Capital Programme was approved by Council in February 2022. This has subsequently been revised to £6,963k after slippage from 2021/22. This includes revised capital budgets due to reprofiling of capital programmes over financial years as included in the Budget Setting report.
- 4.2 The Disabled Facilities Grant scheme (£100k) underspend is due to a backlog of referrals for occupational therapists from the County Council for adaptations.
- 4.3 Green Homes Local Authority Delivery Scheme (LADS) 3 energy efficiency and heating improvements to homes on the gas network is reporting an underspend of (£245k), with

the underspend carried forward to 23/24. Any subsequent unspent funding will be returned to BEIS, however with the project extension to June 2023 it is now estimated that the funding will be fully committed.

- 4.4 Home Upgrade Grant energy efficiency and heating improvements to homes not on the gas network is also showing an underspend of (£1,223k), with the underspend carried forward to 23/24. Any subsequent unspent funding will be returned to BEIS. The project has now been extended to June 2023 and It is estimated that the underspend will be in the region of 30%.
- 4.5 The following table gives a breakdown of the programme.
Table 2 – Housing Committee Capital Programme

	Para Refs	2022/23 Original Budget (£'000)	2022/23 Revised Budget (£'000)	2022/23 Forecast Outturn (£'000)	2022/23 Outturn Variance (£'000)
Housing Capital Schemes					
Better Care Fund Projects		0	0	15	15
Disabled Facilities Grant Scheme	4.2	350	350	250	(100)
Green Home LADS Park Homes		0	90	90	0
Green Homes LADS 3	4.3	1,030	945	700	(245)
Health through Warmth Grants		200	200	200	0
Home Upgrade Grant - Sustainable Warmth	4.4	4,218	4,133	2,900	(1,233)
Private Sector Housing Loans		15	15	15	0
Temporary Accommodation		0	190	190	0
Warm Homes		0	40	40	0
Warm Homes-Low Carbon Initiatives		0	1,000	1,000	0
Housing General Fund Capital Schemes TOTAL		5,813	6,963	5,400	(1,563)

5. Housing Revenue Account Budget Position

- 5.1 The original net Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget for 2022/23 is a transfer to reserves of £1,008k, as approved by Council in February 2022.
- 5.2 The monitoring position for the service at Quarter 3 shows a projected net overspend of £46k (0.0%) of gross spend against the current budget, following a proposed net transfer to earmarked reserves of (£90k), as shown in Table 3 (below).
- 5.3 The Forecast Outturn position includes estimates of the increased gas and electricity costs that have been calculated in response to the overall national utility price rises. These have been calculated based on a combination of actual usage rates / prices for the first 6 months of the year and historical usage rates at the new contract rate prices (capped for winter rates) for the second 6 months of the year, in line with the recent utility contract agreements. The actual impact of these rises within the HRA is an increase in Gas cost of £150k 530% and Electricity £195k 295%.
- 5.4 The Forecast Outturn position also includes an increase in respect of the pay award (which is determined nationally). This has been agreed with an additional £1,925 applied to all grades and backdated to 01 April 2022.

Table 3 – HRA Revenue Summary

Housing Committee	Para Refs	2022/23 Original Budget (£'000)	2022/23 Revised Budget (£'000)	2022/23 Forecast Outturn (£'000)	2022/23 Reserve Transfers (£'000)	2022/23 Outturn Variance (£'000)
Dwelling rents and service charges		(23,615)	(23,615)	(23,684)	0	(69)
Other charges and income		(644)	(644)	(666)	0	(22)
Provision for bad debt		200	200	100	0	(100)
Total Income	5.5	(24,058)	(24,058)	(24,250)	0	(192)
Supervision and management	5.6	4,538	4,642	4,088	0	(553)
Repairs and maintenance	5.7	5,294	5,362	5,894	60	592
Independent Living service	5.8	692	711	836	0	126
Other expenditure	5.9	575	575	648	0	73
Independent Living Modernisation	5.10	452	452	368	0	(84)
Total Expenditure		11,551	11,741	11,834	60	153
Support Service Charges from the GF		2,408	2,408	2,408	0	0
Interest payable/receivable		3,359	3,359	3,359	0	0
Provision for repaying debt		1,012	1,012	1,012	0	0
Revenue funding of capital programme (Depn & RCCO)		7,894	7,240	7,070	0	(170)
Total Other Costs and Income		14,673	14,019	13,849	0	(170)
Total Net Expenditure		2,166	1,702	1,433	60	(209)
Transfers to/(from) HRA earmarked reserves		(1,158)	(90)	164	0	254
Transfers to/(from) HRA general reserves		(1,008)	(1,612)	(1,612)	0	0
Total Housing Revenue Account		0	0	(15)	60	46

Note: table may contain rounding differences

5.5 Income – (£192k) additional income

During the course of the last financial year the number of empty council house properties undergoing works to make them ready to be let significantly reduced from 164 at the start of 2021/22 to 71 at the year end. The Property Care team have worked exceptionally hard over this period and during the three quarters of 2022/23, further reducing the figure to 35-40, which is now in line with pre pandemic levels.

The hard work of the Property Care team and its contractors assisted through additional targeted resources has meant we are continuing to reduce the recent historical backlog. Material and labour supply chains still remains uncertain, and we will continue monitor how this may impact on workstreams.

As a result of the reduction in the voids there has been an increase in let properties and therefore rental income.

Garage rents are expected to be higher than budgeted but will continue to reduce in line with the approval to review the use of all garage sites.

An allowance for non payment of rents is included in the Provision for Bad Debt line. The amount is not yet known, however through proactive support for tenants including sustainable payment arrangements to maintain tenancies the figure has decreased at Q3, reporting a (£100K) variance.

Income levels will continue to be monitored.

5.6 **Supervision and Management – (£553k) underspend**

During 2021/22 and early 2022/23 a number of posts became vacant and are actively being recruited for through the due process. The bulk of the variance relate to role changes and vacancies within the Tenant Management team (£130K), maternity adjustments and officer reduced working hours within the Housing Asset management team (£81K), secondment adjustments within the Systems team (£38K) and Senior housing management officers vacating within the year (£21K). There is also a (£120k) reduction in respect of IT software purchase and upgrades.

5.7 **Repairs and maintenance – £592k overspend**

There were also a number of posts that became vacant in 2021/22 within Property Care. These vacancies are currently actively being recruited for in order to maintain service delivery. Taking into account vacancy and recruitment across the quarter the underspend is estimated to be (£207k).

Where trade posts have remained vacant additional costs are being recorded for sub-contractors in order to maintain work patterns. Further work is being undertaken by the property care team to establish the impact of inflation as well as the costs of labour and materials in respect of the overall service position. The estimated variance of for sub-contractors is £374k which is a combination of current working sub-contractor requirements and also cover for vacant trade posts.

There is a (£36k) variance in respect of radon works as a result of delays in contractor procurement and a (£24k) variance relating to fire risk assessments fire doors & compartmentalisation works which were also delayed. It is unlikely these works will complete prior to year-end and therefore will be £60k slippage and carried forward into 2023/24.

Capacity for delivering voids remains high as a result of which the variance has increased by £162k. A further £75k variance relates to council tax on voids predominantly in the early part of the year and which will reduce as the number of voids decrease.

There is also additional slippage expenditure of £140k where costs exceeded the insured value are carried forward from 2021/22. Predominantly this relates to exceptional costs of making safe, rebuilding the property and reinstating surrounding properties following an incident in Newport.

5.8 **Independent Living Service - £126k overspend**

£192k of the overspend is due to the high increased costs of both Gas and electric supply within the independent living properties for which tenants have been protected against in 2022/23. There is a (£54k) vacancy saving in respect of site officers, for which the posts are currently being recruited.

5.9 Other Expenditure - £73K overspend

£46k of the overspend is due to the high increased costs of electric supply within the communal areas of flat blocks for which tenants have been protected against in 2022/23. There is also a forecast £27k overspend relating to grounds maintenance costs.

5.10 Independent Living Modernisation – (£84k) underspend

Council Tax charges in respect of buildings at Glebelands and Cambridge House, which are due to be demolished, report a £33k overspend. Phase 1 extension of time costs, increase in build costs, Covid and Brexit have all contributed to delays in the programme. Demolition at the sites started in January 2023. There is also an estimated slippage of (£120k) on the independent living modernisation project where the practical completion is expected to start 22/23 but complete 23/24.

5.11 Transfers to/from Earmarked reserves

The earmarked reserve transfers included in the budget are shown in the table below.

The transfer from the Independent Living Modernisation is in line with the approved budget.

Further changes to this position are likely, including for the Transformation and Retrofit reserves. This will be reported in later budget monitoring reports.

Table 4 – HRA Earmarked Reserves – budgeted transfers

Earmarked Reserves	Opening Balance (£'000)	Transfer in (£'000)	Transfers out (£'000)	Closing Balance (£'000)
Independent Living Modernisation	2,987	1,000	(846)	3,141
Estate Redevelopment	1,170	0	(1,170)	0
HRA General Contingency	100	0	0	100
HRA Carry Forwards	100	0	(100)	0
Provision for repayment of debt	1,885	1,012	0	2,897
Transformation	377	39	(39)	377
Retrofit	168	0	(168)	0
	6,787	2,051	(2,323)	6,515

6. HRA Capital Programme

6.1 The HRA capital programme has been revised to £16.389k for 2022/23. This includes revised capital budgets due to reprofiling of capital programmes over financial years as included in the Budget Setting report.

6.2 The following table gives a breakdown of the current capital programme.
Table 5 – HRA Capital

Capital Summary	Para Refs	2022/23 Original Budget (£'000)	2022/23 Revised Budget (£'000)	2022/23 Forecast Outturn (£'000)	2022/23 Outturn Variance (£'000)
Central Heating		1,181	648	648	(0)
Disabled Adaptations		155	155	155	0
Kitchens and Bathrooms	6.5	1,446	1,696	970	(726)
Major Works		464	515	515	0
Compliance		434	344	344	0
Doors and Windows		509	644	644	0
Electrical Works		499	471	471	(0)
Environmental Works		515	515	515	0
Door Entry	6.6	217	217	250	33
External Works	6.7	2,515	2,515	3,214	699
Fire Risk Works		490	490	490	0
Decarbonisation Projects		0	2,883	2,883	0
Total Major Works	6.3	8,425	11,093	11,098	5
Depot		0	0	0	0
IT Systems		0	435	162	(273)
Total Other Capital Works	6.8	0	435	162	(273)
Southbank, Woodchester		0	0	0	0
New Homes Contingency		50	50	50	0
Canal side: Corner of A419/Downton Rd (Former Ship Inn site)		284	0	0	0
Glebelands	6.10	4,508	358	193	(165)
Cambridge House	6.11	2,764	198	125	(74)
Broadfield Road, Eastington		0	95	89	(6)
Orchard Road, Ebley		762	0	6	6
Queens Drive, Cashes Green		488	26	27	1
Ringfield Close, Nailsworth	6.12	0	1,342	806	(536)
Summersfield Road, Minchinhampton		0	0	0	0
Gloucester St and Bradley St, WuE	6.13	1,665	94	55	(39)
Completed Schemes		50	50	50	0
Total New Build and Development	6.9	10,571	2,213	1,401	(812)
Independent Living Modernisation		648	648	478	(170)
Total Independent Living Modernisation	6.14	648	648	478	(170)
Acquisitions		2,000	2,000	0	(2,000)
Opportunity Land Acquisition Pot		0	0	0	0
Total Acquisitions	6.15	2,000	2,000	0	(2,000)
Total Capital Expenditure		21,644	16,389	13,139	(3,250)

6.3 Major Works – £5k Overspend

6.4 Most major works programmes are expected to deliver to budget with the exceptions below being affected by increased costs, slippage or delayed programmes.

6.5 Due to a late start in the Kitchens and Bathrooms programme there is a (£726k) underspend. As a result, the full programme of works for bathrooms will not be delivered in year and will look to be carried forward into next year whilst the smaller kitchens target will be met.

6.6 Door entry reports a £33k overspend which relates to the increase in costs to those that were originally quoted.

6.7 External works reports a £699k overspend which is due to a predicted 28% increase from original budget coupled with a 10-15% increase in the costs of materials. The overspend also includes additional work on properties that have slipped since last year as well as work brought in line to reduce future costs and property referrals from other areas of the business.

6.8 Other Capital Works – (£273K) Slippage

£435k has been allocated for the implementation of a new Housing IT system with a current forecast of (273K) slippage.

6.9 New Build and Regeneration – (£868k) Underspend

Construction is complete at Broadfield Road and Ringfield Close and an assessment of closure costs and the outturn position is underway. These sites have delivered a total of 29 affordable properties (24 affordable rent, 3 shared ownership and 2 Older person's shared ownership).

6.10 Glebelands reports a (£165k) underspend relating to enabling works costs and slippage. Spend has been delayed due to an additional procurement exercise which was required for market testing due to pricing volatility within the construction industry. Overall programme remains on target, with demolition due to complete in May 2023 and construction estimated to begin in Q2 2023.

6.11 Cambridge House reports a (£74k) underspend relating to slippage on construction payments for soft strip & enabling works. Spend has been delayed due to an additional procurement exercise which was required for market testing due to pricing volatility within the construction industry. Overall programme remains on target, with demolition due to complete in June 2023 and construction estimated to begin in Q2 2023.

6.12 Ringfield Close, Nailsworth reports a (£536k) underspend which predominantly relates to completion date slippage from 2021/22.

6.13 Gloucester and Bradley Street reports a (£39k) underspend relating to enabling works costs due to slippage. Start on site now estimated to begin in Q2 2023. Spend has been delayed due to an additional procurement exercise which was required for market testing due to pricing volatility within the construction industry. Overall programme remains on target, with demolition due to complete in July 2023 and construction estimated to begin in Q2 2023.

6.14 Independent Living Housing Modernisation – (£170k) Underspend

The (£170k) underspend is due to the forecast estimated slippage in the programme. The final scheme practical completion is expected to start in 2022/23 and complete in 2022/24.

6.15 **Acquisitions – (2,000) underspend**

No properties were purchased in quarter three however further properties have been identified to add to the general needs housing stock and work will continue to find properties and/or land to increase housing offered by the council.

The previously reported purchase of three properties build under section 106 obligations in Wotton-under-Edge is nearing completion. It is likely that this will be early in the next financial year and the relevant funding would be requested to be carried forward at year end in order to support this.

This budget is opportunity led, and may not be used in full in each financial year.

7. **IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 **Financial Implications**

This report is of a financial nature, reporting on previous financial activities and expected forecasts. Potential financial pressures are detailed in the report.

Lucy Clothier, Accountancy Manager

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7.2 **Legal Implications**

There are no specific legal implications arising from the recommendation of this report.

One Legal

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7.3 **Equality Implications**

There are not any specific changes to service delivery proposed within this decision.

7.4 **Environmental Implications**

There are no significant implications within this category.

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STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

HOUSING COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, 28 MARCH 2023

Report Title	Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund			
Purpose of Report	To present members with an update on the Social Housing Decarbonisation fund available to the HRA.			
Decision(s)	The Committee RESOLVES to note the contents of the paper.			
Consultation and Feedback	Consultation consisted of:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefings with the Chair and Vice-Chair of Housing Committee • Briefings with members of SLT • Briefing with Alliance Leadership Team • Discussion with the Retrofit T&F Group • Discussions with Finance • Discussions with the Strategic Head of Housing 			
Report Author	Tara Skidmore, Asset Operations Manager Tel: 01453 754536 Email: tara.skidmore@stroud.gov.uk			
Options	None			
Background Papers	None			
Appendices	None			
Implications (further details at the end of the report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	Yes	Yes	No	Yes

1. Introduction / Background

- 1.1 The Tenant Services Energy Strategy was adopted by Housing Committee in March 2017. The Strategy sets out its key aims, which are to:
- Relieve fuel poverty.
 - Maximise carbon reduction in line with the Council's existing and future agreed targets.
- 1.2 Housing Committee adopted option 2 of the Options Appraisal – Decarbonisation and energy efficiency of Council Housing on 14 September 2021. Option 2 was to invest an additional £18 million so that by 2030 the average energy efficiency rating across all Council housing stock will be SAP C
- 1.3 SDC is delivering a range of capital investment works into its properties and these programmes are in a strong position. Some deadlines have been reviewed in the context of wider market conditions, however Stroud's performance against its forward plan is comparable with, and in most cases, ahead of similar work being delivered by other providers in the region and across the rest of the country.
- 1.4 The council is carrying out planned capital investment in two main areas 1) BEIS grant funded work 2) HRA Investment programme work, both involve the retrofit of energy efficiency measures. Our progress on delivery of these works is outlined in this report.
- 1.5 Our performance has been recognised in the professional industry. Our programme and delivery has recently been highly commended by the Retrofit Academy Awards who recognise excellence in retrofitting across the market.

2. Main Points

- 2.1 SHDF – Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, where the Government has proposed a £3.8bn fund over a 10-year period, to improve the energy performance of social rented homes.
- 2.2 Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), who we work with in terms of grant funding for Retrofit Decarbonisation Works. We report to them monthly on our projects where we have received grant funding, in terms of progress towards the programme of works and money spent etc.
- 2.3 Severn Wye Energy Agency (SWEA) – These are our Retrofit Coordinators on our Retrofit Projects. A Retrofit Coordinator ensures that all elements of domestic retrofit are properly managed and coordinated, and that a cohesive retrofit plan is designed and implemented. SWEA have undertaken surveys on each of our properties on the Wave 1 project and have produced Measure Evaluation Reports, which outline different packages of measures and the projected output, in terms of carbon saved, reduction in energy use and fuel savings, once the works have been completed. They have a very active role in the whole project, from approving designs, attending works on site to ensure they are being installed correctly.
- 2.4 PAS 2035 – Is the retrofit process that we are required to follow for projects, which have been funded by the government (BEIS). It is a specification for “whole-house retrofit” and is an approach to the installation of energy efficiency measures which takes into account the requirement of the entire building, both from a technical standpoint and considering factors like occupancy comfort. It is used in conjunction with PAS 2030: 2019, which sets out the standards required for installing the energy efficient measures, and is what installers are required to follow.
- 2.5 Whole House Retrofit – This is an approach to retrofit where all appropriate works to a single property, are carried out in one programme. An example of this would be carrying out Cavity Wall Insulation (CWI), Loft Insulation, Window and Door replacements and upgrading the heating system. The idea of this is to allow all works to be completed in one hit and allows for the plans and designs of the retrofit works to consider how each measure interacts with each other. However, this approach to retrofit requires a large capital expenditure on each property, as all measures are installed in one time and if this approach is used, it could mean that less properties receive works each year, as opposed to if one measure, such as CWI, was selected to be installed on a greater number of properties.
- 2.6 The demonstrator Project: Hamfallow Court

In April 2022, we successfully completed our demonstrator project at Hamfallow Court, an independent living site which incorporates 28 flats, based in Berkeley. This site was chosen to utilise £425,834.60 of grant funding, which we were able to secure under the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Demonstrator project. Alongside the grant money, we provided £680,000 in matched funding, bringing the total project cost to just over £1,105,000.

The properties were originally heated by night storage heaters, and hot water was supplied via an electric cylinder. We have installed of Cavity Wall Insulation, Ground Source Heat Pumps (GSHP), PV Panels with Battery Storage and a top-up of existing loft insulation where required. New fire rated doors and double-glazed windows were also fitted throughout the scheme, which included individual properties and the communal areas.

We engaged with the tenants of Hamfallow Court regularly, ensuring that they were kept up to date with the project and our plans for the works. A wide range of communication methods were utilised in addition to regular letters to tenants.

As a result of these works there has been a huge improvement in the performance of the flats; in terms of reduced energy usage, reduced output of carbon and improved warmth and comfort in the homes. Following the works, we have received very positive feedback from the tenants of Hamfallow Court. Tenants are telling us that their homes are warmer than before the work was carried out and that minimal heating is now required to keep them warm in their homes. Prior to the works, some tenants didn't use their previous form of heating (night storage heaters) as they did not provide enough heat in relation to the cost outlay. Now tenants can use their heating and feel the impact of this straightaway, with the heat also being retained in the property for longer, due to the increased thermal efficiency of the flats.

In order to offset the increased use of electricity being used by the GSHP's, we installed PV Panels with battery storage, this results in the tenant's using less electricity from the grid and subsequently will see lower energy bills, than if battery storage had not been installed. Considering the current high energy costs the market is seeing at the moment, it has compounded the importance of the works we carried out.

Hamfallow Court Post Project Info:

Of the 28 flats, 4 have achieved a very high EPC SAP B score, with the remaining all achieving an EPC SAP A, with 9 achieving a SAP score of 100 or more. An average of 97 across the flats.

- 74 tonnes of CO₂ are saved across the site per year due to the works carried out.
- Following the works, it is expected to save the resident £730.43 per annum on their energy spend per year, even in the current energy market! (a mean average across the 28 flats)
- The average heat demand across the 28 flats is 27 kwh/m².a

2.7 SHDF Wave 1 – This is the second round of funding that has been made available by BEIS and is the project that is currently underway. We were again successful in gaining funding as part of a consortium, where Stroud District Council are the project lead along with other consortium members that include Cheltenham Borough Homes (CBH), Two Rivers Housing (2RH) and Gloucester City Homes (GCH).

We were awarded £1,828,116 of funding, along with our own match funding of £914,059. Funding was applied for works to be carried out to 187 properties. Work has started on the properties that require Cavity Wall Insulation work with 15 properties now completed.

We will be initiating the handover and lodgement phase with our Retrofit Coordinator imminently on these. We are currently finalising the Retrofit Design phase on the properties that require External Wall Insulation and have started work on our first archetype, as the designs are being completed on an archetype basis, and once a design is signed off by our Retrofit Coordinator, works can commence on the next archetype.

The consortium has applied and been granted by BEIS a project extension of six months, taking the project completion until 30 September 2023.

The expected improvements to our housing stock on wave 1 will:

- Increase of lowest Sap of 45 to a C
- Average Tonnes of CO₂ expected to be saved across the project – 1.1 tonnes per property, 204 tonnes in total
- Expected Energy Bill Savings - £203 per annum
- Heat Demand – 87.82

2.8 SHDF Wave 2 – On the 18 November 2022 we put in a bid for the third round of funding from BEIS. This is again a Consortium bid, made up of the same members from Wave 1 – CBH, 2RH and GCH. This application will focus on a ‘fabric first’ approach - similar to Wave 1, including energy efficiency improvement measures such as Cavity Wall Insulation, External Wall Insulation, Loft Insulation as well as window replacements.

We have requested funding for 250 properties, all with similar expected works as Wave 1, being CWI, EWI, Loft Insulation and ventilation. We have requested grant funding of £1,696,480.

The Wave 2 funding is spread across two financial years, and we expect to hear the outcome of the bid in March 2023 and if successful, the project will commence in May 2023. We are hopeful we will secure another successful bid, which will continue support towards retrofitting our housing stock and providing our tenants with warmer, more energy efficient homes.

The expected improvements to our housing stock on wave 2 will:

- Increase of lowest lowest SAP 43 to a C
- Average Tonnes of CO2 saved across the project – 0.74 tonnes per property, 184 tonnes in total
- Energy Bill Savings - £206.43 per annum
- Heat Demand – 91.12

3. Investment Programmes – External Works

3.1 Stroud District Council already has a strong council house investment plan in place to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon production. This includes an annual circa £3m multiple work stream programme delivering improvements to our homes. It includes:

- External wall insulation
- Loft and Cavity Wall Insulation
- New Roofs
- New Windows

The spend at quarter 2 on the 2022/23 Investment programmes on the above works are £3,742,657 and the breakdown is detailed below.

Workstream	cost	Qty
Insulation works – Cavity/loft	£448,362	107
Windows	£270,000	115
External works – Roofs/EWI/RWG	£3,024,295	171
Total	£3,742,657	393

The table above shows 393 planned works components completed, some properties required more than one component to be completed, for clarity 361 homes have had Retrofit work completed.

3.2 Part of the option approved at Housing Committee in September 2021 was to undertake the work above and target the off-gas properties. Although the work is being delivered, the decision around which heating method to be used going forward for these properties has not yet been finalised.

We have engaged with several leading manufacturers and are discussing with our current contractors to pilot additional new and innovative technologies. By doing this we hope to be able to demonstrate how we can work with partners to overcome the innovation barriers and target investment for those households in most need.

As discussed at Housing Committee, SDC does not want to be an early adopter of heating technology due to investing early, which previously resulted in the heating systems becoming replaced with newer technology in the market and SDC having issues maintaining the systems, as well as initial expected life cycle of the system not being met.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 Options to retrofit our housing stock hold both financial and resource limitations. Investment needs to be made on sound financial assessments and be sustainable over the longer term, however the programmes are being delivered at an appropriate pace.
- 4.2 The Regulator of Social Housing is currently revising regulatory standards, we need to respond to these changes and agree future investment priorities with our tenants to ensure that the HRA remains viable.
- 4.3 While pilots have and will take place on new innovative technology, feasibility studies need to continue before larger investment is made on heating technologies.
- 4.4 Officers will continue to take advantages of any new funding or grant incentives and continue to consider technological advancements in the renewable sector.

5. IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial Implications

Funding required to deliver the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund programme will be provided from the Department of Business, Environment, and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) grants.

The allocated budget for Wave 1 is £2,742,000. As detailed in paragraph 2.7 grant funding of £1,828,116 was awarded from BEIS with £914,059 match funded from Stroud District Council. The remaining Wave 1 budget will look to be carried forward in line with the 6-month extension of the project.

Jon Coldridge, Principal Accountant

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5.2 Legal Implications

Stroud District Council entered into a consortium agreement with Cheltenham Borough Council, Two Rivers Housing and Gloucester City Homes on the 23rd February 2023. The agreement details the arrangements around the process for payment and obligations of the Consortium Members in respect of the grant for the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Wave 1. The agreement is due to expire at the end of September 2023.

Stroud District Council have also entered into an agreement with Turner and Townsend as the Social Housing Retrofit Accelerator.

Officers will work with One Legal and the Corporate Governance Team to ensure that all contracts associated with the delivery of the programme comply with the terms of the BEIS Funding agreement, the Councils Contract and Procurement Procedure Rules and, where applicable, the Public Contract Regulations 2015.

Hayley Sims, Head of Law (Commercial and Property)

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5.3 **Equality Implications**

An EIA is not required because there are not any specific changes to service delivery proposed within this decision.

5.4 **Environmental Implications**

Key documents and policy which will influence our approach going forward include but not limited to:

- CN2030 Strategy
- Tenant Services Energy Strategy
- Housing Committee: Agenda Item 6 14 September 2021
- Non-Traditional Homes Strategy
- The Future Homes Standard
- The charter for social housing residents (Social Housing White Paper)
- The Housing and Regeneration Act 2008
- Clean Growth Strategy
- Committee on Climate Change (December 2020) The UK's Path to Net Zero

STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

HOUSING COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, 28 MARCH 2023

Report Title	DEPOOLING OF RENTS AND SERVICE CHARGES			
Purpose of Report	<p>This report seeks approval from the Committee to implement depooling of rents and services charges with effect from 1 April 2024, thereby enabling the Council to recover fully where possible - in a fair and transparent manner, the costs we incur delivering services to our residents; some of which are currently subsidised by the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) or other residents</p> <p>It also seeks approval of the new Rents and Service Charges Policy.</p>			
Decisions	<p>The Committee RESOLVES to approve:</p> <p>a) the depooling of rents with effect from 1 April 2024;</p> <p>b) new and re-let tenancies will be subject to the formula rent and service charges with effect from 1 April 2024; and</p> <p>c) the Rents and Service Charges Policy as at Appendix A.</p>			
Consultation and Feedback	Consultation with officers, Finance, Director of Communities, Interim Head of Housing.			
Report Author	Sara Weaver, Income & Systems Manager Tel: 01453 754183 Email: sara.weaver@stroud.gov.uk			
Options	<p>The Committee can consider that:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. depooling will be implemented with effect from April 2024 as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capped or, • Fully chargeable 2. no action is necessary if they feel the current charging structure is equitable and fair to all our residents, or 3. service charge costs will be clearly reported, including how they are funded, or subsidised, but no significant changes are made to the charging mechanism 			
Background Papers	Local Authority registered provider social housing in England – stock and rents 2020 - 2021			
Appendices	Appendix A – Rents and Service Charges Policy Appendix B – Equality Implications Assessment			
Implications (further details at end of the report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	Yes	Yes	No	No

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 On 9 April 2019¹, Housing Committee approved an investigation into the depooling of service charges from rents for all social housing residents.²

Whilst we currently levy service charges to tenants of flats, independent living, and leaseholders, there are a number of charges we incur in the delivery of our housing service which are funded not as a service charge but as part of our rental income, for example, grounds maintenance. This has been the case for many decades, being very much a legacy of a common standard of practice.

Rent is expected to cover a charge for the occupation of a home including its management and repairs, whilst charges for services, such as: communal facilities, car parking, grounds maintenance, communal area heating and cleaning are regarded as a service charges.

Whilst Section 24 of the Housing Act 1985 gives local authorities the power to make reasonable charges for the tenancy or occupation of dwellings, they retain discretion to decide what services to charge for separately and what services should be included in the rent, within a broad framework. Not all authorities have disaggregated charges for services from rent, nor depooled services, although they are encouraged to do so by the rent restructuring policy.

- 1.2 The Council currently operates two forms of rent calculations for social housing rents:-

- a) Social rent tenancies incur a weekly rental charge calculated using the Communities and Social Housing (CLG) guidance first issued in 2001. A formula is applied for each property using a combination of local capital values, local earnings, and bedroom size, compared to national capital and earnings averages, changes to the rent is subjected to an annual increase limit, which is a ceiling not a target. The rent calculation, which does not take account of any service charges, is:

70% of the national average rent, multiplied by relative county earnings and by a bedrooms' weighing PLUS

30% of the national average rent, multiplied by relative property value (as at 1 Jan 1999)

Under the Rent Standard 2020, social rents are defined as excluding any identified service element. This means that any service charge would have to be recovered separately or subsidised, either deliberately or by default, as the Council's social rented properties rents exclude service charges.

As at 31 March 2022, the total number of properties set at target/social rent was 4,822.

- b) Affordable rents are set at a level which is no more than 80% of the estimated market rent for the property (inclusive of service charges). The market rent is based on a valuation method recognised by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS). A market rent would not be expected to include personal charges such as heating inside the dwelling, these are in addition to the market rent and dealt with as a separate contract, or a clause within a tenancy agreement.

¹ [Depooling of Rents and Service Charges](#)

² Tenants, leaseholders, and shared owners in social housing

Currently, affordable rent is calculated for properties that are either new developments or leasehold properties which the Council has “bought back”.

As at 31 March 2022, the total number of properties set at affordable rent was 202.

- 1.3 From 1 April 2020, rents have been set in accordance with the Government’s Policy Statement on Rents for Social Housing (2019)³. This permits annual rent increases on both social rent and affordable rent properties of up to CPI+1% for 2020, for a period of at least 5 years. For 2023/24, the annual rent increase is limited to 7%.
- 1.4 Within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), the dwelling rental and service charges income has a combined 2023/24 budget of £25.8m. The amounts by which rents can be increased are, in effect, controlled by central Government.
- 1.5 The Council’s running costs, to provide the functions of the HRA including repairs and maintenance, are budgeted for at an overall service level, rather than at an individual property level.
- 1.6 The costs that could become service chargeable to individual residents are currently covered by the income going into the HRA, which is mainly from rent charged. As such, ALL residents are currently paying these costs, although they may not directly receive the service or benefit. One way to make this more equitable is by depooling service charges resulting in costs that are linked to a particular group of residents being only shared by them, rather than pooled into the HRA overall, bringing more fairness, openness, and transparency to our charging regimes.
- 1.7 Depooling will not bring a complete end to all residents covering some costs, as there will always be services incurred by the HRA that may not be linked to a particular tenancy, for example, the prevention of Anti-Social behaviour and the collection of rent arrears.
- 1.8 Residents living in independent living accommodation already pay some service charges separately to rent as shown at 2.3, alongside some tenants and leaseholders in flats.

2. CONTEXT

2.1 Rent and Service Charges Policy: (Appendix A):

This new policy is the framework to support how the Council meets all statutory, contractual, regulatory, legal requirements, and best practice, in relation to rent and service charges.

It supports the Council’s aim to ensure current and future rents are fair and affordable for residents and are set at levels which maintain the HRA’s financial stability and viability.

It sets out how the Council aims to deliver fair and transparent chargeable services, to high standards and good value for money. It also identifies that residents should pay for all the services they receive, whilst continuing to protect our assets and vulnerable customers by subsidising an element of service to them.

2.2 Examples of service charges which could be depooled:

- Caretaking services
- Communal area cleaning - contract and direct supervision costs
- Communal area electric / heating in blocks
- Communal window cleaning - internal and external

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rent-standard/rent-standard-april-2020>

- Grounds maintenance costs - contract and direct supervision cost and litter collection
- Cyclical pest control
- Communal and emergency lighting
- Communal area repairs and graffiti removal
- Additional refuse collections
- Door entry
- CCTV
- Street lighting
- Children's play areas

Whilst clarification would be required prior to setting service charges, the above charges would be eligible for housing benefit/universal credit housing costs, where residents are eligible to receive them.

- 2.3 Some service charges are already charged and itemised separately to the rent, including:
- Communal facilities in independent living schemes
 - Communal electric / heating / lighting in independent living schemes
 - Water supply in independent living communal areas (the charge is not eligible for housing benefit when the water supply is in the resident's own flat)
 - Heating in independent living schemes communal areas (the charge is not eligible for housing benefit when the heating supply is in the resident's own flat)
 - Communal cleaning in general needs blocks
 - Communal television aerials in general needs blocks/dwellings/independent living schemes
 - Scooter storage in independent living schemes

3. DEPOOLING METHODOLOGY

3.1 All properties:

Service charges will be identified and allocated in a fair and transparent manner, the charges depooled from the rent where appropriate. Where the rent is different from formula rent (often a legacy issue), the formula rent will also be shown to ascertain the full rent and service charge due. It is expected that an apportionment basis will be used.

For affordable rents, the service charges are deemed to be included unless they are a personal charge or the subject of a separate agreement. An assessment will be made of how much of the rent is available to fund "core services" once service charges are identified. If this residual rent is low because service charges are high, it means there are less funds available to maintain and manage the properties.

3.2 Existing Tenancies:

There may initially be a need for a hardship fund to reduce the impact on residents who might not have access to welfare benefits.

Initially, the majority of existing residents incurring the service charge could have their rents reduced by the same amount so it would only be new tenants who generated additional income. There may be a need to access the hardship fund to reduce the impact on residents who may not have access to welfare benefit.

In 2022/23 (YTD), there were 351 terminations of tenancies, around 7% of the Council's tenancies⁴. This means around 7% of the Council's housing stock⁵ would be eligible for increased service charges in a year. Over time that figure would fall as relets would include properties where the rent and service charges were already depooled and at their maximum.

3.3 New and Re-let Properties:

From 1 April 2024, when tenants start a new tenancy, the rent will be the formula rent plus any service charges. The tenants will be made aware of all service charges and rent due ahead of the tenancy, in a clear manner, explaining what charges might be eligible for welfare benefit.

Currently, 3,601 properties⁶ have not reached their rent target as calculated by the Government formula. As the target covers rent only, service charges would be additional to this. When properties are re-let, the incoming resident would pay the rent at the full formula rent plus any service charges.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 Advantages of depooling:

- Greater transparency and accountability: charging separately for services is viewed nationally as good practice because residents can see what they are paying for, will be better able to judge value for money and can be better involved in deciding what are the services they need.
- Fairness and removal of cross-subsidy: charging separately for services results in residents only paying for the services they receive; it encourages them to monitor services; this is a fairer charging basis as costs are not subsidised by the wider community. Any subsidy would need to be monitored and reported.

To test the assumption that creating service charges will detrimentally affect the demand for certain types of property, benchmarking has taken place with registered social property owners (RSLs) that have already carried out this procedure. Early indications from these RSLs highlight that there has been negligible impact on demand, and residents seem content with depooling charges, as it has increased local choice about what services are provided and they can have some influence over what is charged, and how it is charged. It increases engagement of residents in the cost of providing services, introducing an additional driver to obtain value for money. It can also help prioritise spending, as with leaseholders, tenants' priorities can change when a cost is attached to an option.

- Service charges to tenants would be more akin to how leaseholders are charged, as leaseholders get details of what they pay for. It promotes fairness and equity of charges between residents.
- The revised charging structure could increase the number of residents eligible for Housing Benefit. The revised rent would be set against the claimant's applicable amount, to assess if they are eligible for a rent rebate. Indeed, if a new claim were successful, it could passport the applicant to other forms of benefit. For example, non-housing related benefits such as free school meals.

⁴ 4,870 tenancies as at 6 March 2023

⁵ 5,029 properties as at 31 March 2022

⁶ As at 13 January 2023

- The combined impact of lower rent increases compared to increases in revenue and capital expenditure, and increasing financing costs, is already leading to significant challenges in restoring resilience and flexibility to the Council's business plan and service delivery.

Current choices are focused on expenditure reductions, leading to decreases in planned maintenance programmes and in turn a risk of deterioration of standards, increased repair costs and increased disrepair claims, which in turn could attract adverse publicity (around for example, damp, mould, and condensation). By depooling, income streams to the HRA would be protected and maximised, regardless of potential central government rent directives, as service charges can be recovered in full.

It will bring clarity to the impact of the current energy increases on other budgets: where service charges include energy costs, those can be recovered. When a charge is capped in one year, it has a compound impact on future years as the gap between that service charge and its costs widen, assuming the energy prices rise above inflation. This means that direct actions need to be taken to reduce costs such as retrofitting, smart meters, and reducing consumption through efficiency or residents' awareness.

4.2 Risks and uncertainties of depooling:

- Implementing additional charges during the current cost of living crisis could have an impact on affordability which could bring adverse publicity to the Council at a time when the economy is in recession. However, at the point of depooling, an assessment will be made to deal with any hardship; although there may be an increase over the coming years due to the way the rent increase formula is applied. For example, if the target rent for a property is £80 and the actual rent is £75, the rent only must increase by £5 over the following years to reach the target. However, if the rent is reduced to £70 because of depooling, it must increase by £10 to reach the target (these are illustrative figures only).
- All residents will need to be consulted as some service charges could cover houses and through the pooled HRA income/expenditure they are currently contributing to the costs which could be separated out.
- The residents who currently subsidise some services, but derive no benefit from them, may challenge the current charging structure as being unjust. This could be difficult to defend if the Local Government / Housing Ombudsman's were to become involved.
- For residents in receipt of Housing Benefit/Universal Credit, any increase would be met by a rent rebate. However, a small number of people could still be affected, where they are not in receipt of benefits or have their benefit capped which might place them on the margins of poverty, whilst those eligible for benefits remain trapped where it is not viable for them to get paid employment.
- Any alteration to the rent structure could impact negatively on the income collection rate. If bad debt provision is assessed at 0.5% then it not unreasonable to assume that amending the charges could add £1k to arrears. In context this would only be a 0.3% increase to an outstanding current debt of £324k.

4.3 Timescale for implementation

Pascale Mézac, trading as Plan2moro, was commissioned in January 2022 to assist with the project and was also tasked with writing the Rents and Service Charge Policy. Ms Mézac provides business planning services for social housing and charities and her expertise and knowledge around service charge and depooling charges from rents is vast.

A lot of tasks identified as part of the project plan have already been completed under Ms Mézac's guidance

However, given the requirement for consultation, and the significant systems work required, it is proposed that depooling is implemented with effect from Monday, 1 April 2024.

5. IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial Implications

This reports sets out a proposal to depool service charges from rents in line with best practise in social housing. It cannot yet set out what charges would be in place from April 2024, and these would need to be part of a separate decision from Housing Committee (expected to be a recommendation to Council as part of the budget setting and rent setting papers in December 2023). This would be following a period of consultation with tenants and members which would inform the desired level of service and so determine the cost of the service charges – as these must be based on the cost of delivering the service. It is currently expected that existing tenants could be protected through a gradual implementation of the full charges. Further details of this would accompany the proposed charges to Housing Committee.

If a full recovery of service chargeable items is achieved, it can be expected that this would improve the financial position of the HRA as some of these costs are currently subsidised within rents. The exact amount of this subsidy is not available with existing systems, but it can be estimated in the low hundreds of thousands of pounds. As existing tenants could be protected, it would not be expected that income would increase significantly in the short term, and additional cost may be incurred initially to support tenants through the changes. The primary driver and benefit of this change would be an increase in tenant involvement in service levels and the ability for tenants to hold the council, as a landlord, to account if these service levels are not delivered

Lucy Clothier, Accountancy Manager

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5.2 Legal Implications

The Council shall be required to undertake a consultation exercise with tenants of rented houses and flats to seek their views on the proposed changes and the likely impact on them. Consultation is not required in respect of leaseholders of sold right to buy flats as provision is already made for a service charge within those leases.

A review of the Council's Tenancy agreement is being undertaken to reflect any changes brought about by any decision to de-pool service charges.

Kaveena Dayalji, Property Team

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5.3 Equality Implications

An EIA has been carried out in relation to the decision made in this report and due regard will be given to any implications identified in it.

5.4 Environmental Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

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RENTS AND SERVICE CHARGES POLICY

MARCH 2023

TENANCY SERVICES

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Document Responsibility		
Name	Document title	Service
Strategic Head of Housing	Rents and Service Charges Policy	Tenant Services

Document Version Control			
Date	Version	Issued by	Summary of changes
19 October 2022	V 6.0	Pascale Mézac	Final draft - tracked changes from v5 removed
9 February 2023	V7.0	Sara Weaver	Final version following review by One Legal

Policy Review			
Updating frequency	Review date	Person responsible	Service
3 years	August 2026	Strategic Head of Housing	Tenant Services

Document Review and Approvals		
Name	Action	Date
Accountancy Manager	Consulted, reviewed, and approved	8 February 2023

RENT AND SERVICE CHARGES POLICY

1 POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 **Rent** – Stroud District Council aims to ensure current and future rents are fair and affordable for tenants and are set at levels which maintain our financial stability and viability. We seek to strike a balance between keeping rents affordable and having enough money to fund maintenance and improvement to our housing stock, for the long-term benefit of tenants.
- 1.2 **Service charges** - Stroud District Council aims to deliver fair and transparent chargeable services, to high standards and good value for money. Residents should pay for all the services they receive: we aim to recover no more than all relevant costs through the service charges, but we may subsidise an element of service to protect our assets and vulnerable customers.

This policy is the framework to support how we meet all statutory, contractual, regulatory, and legal requirements relating to rent and service charges and to apply best practice.

2 SCOPE

- 2.1 The policy applies to all residents of Stroud District Council, whether they rent a property or receive chargeable services from Stroud District Council. Residents can be tenants, licensees, leaseholders, shared owners, or freeholders. Properties include flats, houses, maisonettes, specialist accommodation, hostels, commercial properties, garages, garage sites and parking spaces. This policy does not apply to charges collected by landlords on behalf of other organisations, such as water rates.
- 2.2 If there is any difference between this policy and the terms of an occupancy agreement, any terms in the agreement takes priority over this policy.
- 2.3 This rent and service charges policy enables us to recover fully - where possible - the costs we incur delivering services to our residents.

3 WHAT ARE RENTS

Under the Rent Standard 2020 all registered providers (landlords registered with the Regulator of Social Housing) must charge rents in accordance with the government Rent Policy Statement 2020. Social rents (as opposed to affordable rents) are defined as excluding any identified service element (whether fixed or variable service charges).

- 3.1 **Social rents also called formula rents** are calculated using a national set formula that takes account of local earnings, property value and the number of bedrooms; they are limited by a rent cap. Landlords have the flexibility to set rents up to 5% above that formula for general needs properties (up to 10% above for supported housing properties). Formula rents are exclusive of any service charges.
- 3.2 **Affordable rents** are set at a level which is no more than 80% of the estimated market rent for the property (inclusive of service charges). The market rent is based on a valuation method recognised by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS). A market rent would not be expected to include personal charges such as heating inside the dwelling, those are in addition to the market rent and dealt with as a separate contract or a clause within a tenancy agreement.

- 3.3 **Fair rents** apply to secure tenancies, where the initial tenancy started before 15 January 1989; they are governed by the Rent Act 1977 and are set by rent officers from the Valuation Office Agency. Fair rents are reviewed every two years from the tenancy start date. A fair rent may include a fixed or a variable service charge. For tenancies under fair rent protection, the maximum weekly rent is the lower of the fair rent set by the Rent Officer, and formula rent.
- 3.4 Private rented sector: housing benefit is capped at Local Housing Allowance rates that were based on the lower 50th percentile of private market rents when first introduced. The rates have since been updated to the lower 30th percentile, on a mixture of inflation and actual market rents. Although it does not apply as a housing welfare cap to social rent tenants, it is often used as an affordability benchmark in the social housing sector, especially for rent setting in new developments, mixed tenure schemes, or to test the market where there are market rent units.
- 3.5 For Universal Credit purposes, shared ownership schemes are treated as social rented sector cases and housing costs are based on the rent and any Universal Credit eligible service charges. However, no size criterion is applied to shared ownership.
- 3.6 **Shared ownership rents** are calculated on the remaining percentage share of the property that is not owned by the resident, the rent is defined in the shared ownership agreement, usually a percentage is applied to the remaining share using the capital value of the property, an annual inflationary increase is set within the agreement as well as any changes should the resident decide to increase or decrease their share (also called “staircase” up or down).
- 3.7 A **licence** is personal permission for someone to occupy accommodation. It does not give the licensee a legal interest in (or control of) the land. Garages are often the subject of a licence.
- 3.8 **Temporary accommodation**: means short-term, temporary, or transient accommodation. At Stroud District Council, such accommodation is provided on a case-by-case basis, usually with private landlords under specific service level agreements that are outside of this policy. Stroud does not currently manage hostels or supported living accommodation. Where SDC manages such accommodation, rent and service charges would be in line with this policy.
- 3.9 **Commercial rents and shops**: any new lettings are agreed based on an open market rent. Rent reviews will be as per the rent review clause in the lease for that specific property.
- 3.10 **Ground rent** is payable under a long lease for the use of the ground on which the building stands and is charged annually by way of a demand using the form prescribed under Section 166 of the Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002. Since 30 June 2022 (April 2023 for retirement properties), ground rent in new leases cannot be more than a peppercorn rent (Leasehold Reform (Ground Rent) Act 2022).

4 WHAT ARE SERVICE CHARGES

- 4.1 A **service charge** is a payment made by residents for services received in connection with the occupation of their home and includes estate rent charges for freeholders. A “Rentcharge” is an annual sum paid by a freehold homeowner to a third party who normally has no other interest in the property.
- 4.2 For **tenants**, and usually **licensees**, their rent covers the costs of repairs, maintenance, and insurance of the properties, as well as housing management that includes the administration of tenancies from start to finish. Service charges are for

services provided in addition to the rent and usually reflect additional services that may not be provided to every tenant, or that may relate to communal facilities rather than being particular to the occupation of a dwelling.

- 4.3 **Leaseholders** receive and pay for the same services as tenants; they also pay towards the upkeep, repairs, improvements, and maintenance of buildings, including building insurance and a management fee; the payment is usually based on a proportion of their occupancy or other apportionment basis as defined in the lease. To spread the periodic costs, they may make an annual contribution to a **sinking fund** (also known as a reserve) for these services.
- 4.4 **Freeholders** may pay estate rent charges.
- 4.5 Some residents also benefit from **support services**, those are the delivery of person-centred services to support residents to occupy and sustain their homes. Those services are provided by the landlord under a separate agreement and need to be identified separately in any document. Additional personal charges which are not normally part of service charges can also be collected.
- 4.6 **A fixed service charge** is set according to best estimates and costs at budget time, it is a contribution towards the costs of the services provided. It reduces admin and suits predictable service charges spend, usually for tenants. This means that the landlords bear responsibility for:
- any shortfall between the cost of services and the amount of money collected in charges; or
 - any amount that accrues if collected charges are more than the cost of providing the services
- 4.7 **Variable service charge** – most of Stroud District Council’s agreements with leaseholders have a variable service charge as defined by Section 18 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 which states:
- “Service charge” means an amount payable by a tenant of a dwelling as part of or in addition to the rent –*
- (a) which is payable, directly, or indirectly, for services, repairs, maintenance improvements or insurance or the landlord’s costs of management, and*
- (b) the whole or part of which varies or may vary according to the relevant costs.”*
- Reference to ‘tenant’ in Section 18 means tenants or leaseholders but excludes freeholders and licensees.
- 4.8 **Sinking fund** – by adding an annual contribution to the service charge, a fund is built up to pay for the future replacement of equipment or for a large item of planned expenditure such as internal redecorations, windows, or a roof. Some leases refer to sinking funds as reserves.

5 RENT AND SERVICE CHARGES SETTING

For existing tenants, annual rent increases of social rents, fair rents, and affordable rents, are regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing. They are currently limited by the annual published guideline of CPI (consumer price index at previous September) + 1% and usually take place from 1 April.

For service charges, we endeavour to keep the increases within the same limit, with an average for the years where charges fluctuate up and down across several years. At the same time, we endeavour to demonstrate the service charge and the

administration fee levied and collected represent the costs to deliver chargeable services and no more.

5.1 RENT SETTING

5.1.1 Social rents are subject to a **rent cap** ([Gov limit on annual rent increases](#))

5.1.2 **Conversion** between different types of rent may occur when a property is “relet”, usually when there is a change of tenancy, within restrictions set out in the [Rent Policy Statement](#) 2020 (or as updated subsequently), including:

- an affordable rent can be converted to a social rent but not to a market rent
- a social rent cannot be converted to a market rent or an affordable rent
- a fair rent is usually converted to a social rent

5.1.3 **At relet**, an affordable rent is reviewed against the existing market rent and cannot exceed 80% of the market rent or formula rent if this is higher.

5.1.4 At relet, social, and fair rents are set at formula rent (adding up to 5% for general needs or up to 10% for supported housing if required by the scheme), plus service charges. A scheme requirement for a higher rent may be justified by additional works usually funded by rents such as to retrofit buildings, to make them more energy-efficient and reduce personal and shared area utilities bills.

5.1.5 To calculate a formula rent, a **1999 valuation** is used: the value of the property should be based on an existing use value, assuming vacant possession and continual residential use. A valuer may provide generic values based on types and sizes of properties in different locations, rather than value each property. A landlord may re-value a property where it has carried out major works that materially affect the value of the property, for example major structural alterations or significant improvements, such as adding an extra room or extension.

5.1.6 **Shared owners’** rent increases are as agreed in the lease agreement.

5.1.7 **Leaseholders’** ground rent is as determined in the lease agreement. Ground rent in new leases cannot be more than a peppercorn rent. (The Leasehold Reform (Ground Rent) Act 2022).

5.1.8 **New development** rents are often subject to conditions when in receipt of Homes England grants. Stroud District Council endeavours to maximise the number of affordable new homes for rent to meet the diverse needs of the local community. For new affordable rents, the rent cannot exceed 80% of the market rent or formula rent if this is higher; it is also compared to current local median rents *and, being mindful of affordability, it may be capped at that level or the Local Housing Allowance (e.g. using LA analysis* <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/bulletins/privaterentalmarketsummarystatisticsinengland/april2021tomarch2022>). The development appraisal identifies service charges costs now and, in the future, how those are met by the different tenures, what income remains after service charges spend to cover the expenditure the rent pays for.

5.2 SERVICE CHARGE SETTING

5.2.1 At least 4 weeks before payment is due, we provide annually to each existing resident a breakdown of their charges to show the rent (if any) they will pay for their home and a **schedule of their service charges** (if any) also to be paid, identifying any subsidy

by Stroud District Council. On the schedule, service charges are split between housing benefit eligible and non-eligible. An annual sinking fund statement is included where applicable. Where the rent includes some service charges, such as market rents, the breakdown shows what service charges costs are included in the rent. Payment due is clearly identified on the correspondence – either the rent letter or the invoice, including payment terms. Residents will be forewarned of any chargeable services due for contract renewal or review in the coming year, to encourage residents' involvement.

- 5.2.2 **New residents** will be informed of any service charge and rent before they sign a tenancy or leasehold agreement, using the same schedule/ rent format as above.
- 5.2.3 **Annual sinking fund** contributions are backed up by a sinking fund statement, showing items covered by the fund, their lifecycle and estimated renewal costs, receipts, payments, and interest for the year, estimated future cashflows and adequacy of the fund. It is expected that a fund will be supported by a five yearly stock condition survey, the contribution reviewed when a significant price change occurs or lifecycle is updated, the contribution is increased annually by major works' inflation.
- 5.2.4 **Payment** - service charges are usually chargeable in advance for the forthcoming 12 months. Tenants pay for the charges weekly with their rent; shared owners pay monthly with their rent; leaseholders' invoices are due on receipt; payments terms may be agreed.
- 5.2.5 **Annual service charges setting** is based on forecast expenditure as part of the budget cycle for the forthcoming financial year, it includes planned and cyclical maintenance programmes. It is usual to compare each service spend to the previous year and explain changes. To minimise over/ under recovery, service charges should be set once all relevant expenditure budgets are completed (see [Appendix A](#) timing). A charge or refund for variable service charges over/undercharge may be included in the annual schedule or recovered separately.
- 5.2.6 **Variable service charges** are reconciled to actual spend and demands for payment need to be issued within 18 months of the expenditure being incurred (section 20B of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985), this usually means that a statement is issued no less than 6 months after the year-end: for a 1 April to 31 March year (year X0), a statement is issued by 30 Sept (year X1), it may be accompanied by an invoice for a leaseholder or the notification that an adjustment will be made to the following year annual schedule.
- 5.2.7 **The apportionment basis** of chargeable services is how users share the costs of the services. First, the costs are usually allocated by scheme, using contract specifications or actual time spent per scheme, or meter readings at scheme level. Secondly, the scheme costs are shared equally across all units (a unit basis) or are shared on the proportion of the area occupied by each unit (a square meter basis). Adjustments may be made, however, to reflect specific development design and layout. To encourage residents to be more energy efficient, individual meters are fitted to individual homes whenever possible.
- 5.2.8 **New developments** are planned to minimise the creation of unnecessary shared areas for which service charges will require to be levied; although planning requirement may necessitate landscaping, planting, and parking, those are chargeable services that need to be affordable for all residents. Where shared external and internal communal areas are to be provided, we will aim to maintain such areas to

good environmental and amenity standards that are affordable to residents now and for the future.

6 HOW THE CHARGEABLE SERVICES ARE PAID FOR AND SUBSIDY

- 6.1 **Transparency and reporting** - at Stroud District Council, not all service charges are identified separately from the rents, either because they are part of a market rent or an affordable rent – rents that are inclusive of service charges - or because they have not yet been separated from the rents: this is called depooling of service charges from rents. To ensure the annual rent and service charges setting process is transparent, a comparison should be made between tenures, with a split between flats and houses, to identify any rent or service charges shortfall or subsidy, measuring annual progress for tenanted properties towards the full depooling of the service charges and the relet of all properties at formula rent plus service charges or affordable rent where applicable.
- 6.2 **Impact of service charges on rents and funding for non-chargeable services** Any service charge that is not recovered £ for £ reduces the availability of the rent for the costs of repairs, maintenance, and insurance of the properties, as well as housing management, including the administration of tenancies from start to finish. Therefore, where a rent is inclusive of service charges, it is important to identify all chargeable services costs and evaluate what remains for other expenditure requirements. The formula rent used for social housing is useful as a base to benchmark and identify any shortfall as the formula rent is deemed to exclude any service charges. The impact of service charges on rents is shown at [Appendix B](#).
- 6.3 **Subsidy** - if leaseholders' service charges are not fully recovered, this means that tenants' rents are subsidising the service charges. Any such subsidy should be identified and minimised as far as existing agreements allow.
- 6.4 **Hardship fund** – Instead of a blanket subsidy policy for specific service charges, a fund will be set up to aim for equal access to services based on needs, rather than ability to pay. A set of criteria is being developed for this. Currently, it is assumed that a physically vulnerable resident cannot afford some services that may help them stay at home longer or make their life more enjoyable whilst affordability is not always an issue. For example, individual gardening service are restricted to few residents when more could enjoy a service they can afford to pay for. Subsidy or rationing of services are applied when it may not be necessary.

7 RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT AND ENGAGEMENT

- 7.1 **Feedback and involvement** – Stroud District Council wants to promote transparency and openness and will take every opportunity to do this in its service charges communications with residents, seeking feedback and involving residents through questionnaires, surveys, focus groups and site meetings, as well as formal consultations.
- 7.2 **Continuous improvement framework** - Stroud District Council is committed to ensure residents' voice is heard and chargeable services are reviewed regularly in consultation with residents so that a balance is struck between the level of services provided, the cost of the services, and how far current and prospective residents can afford them.
- 7.3 **Changes in services** - to ensure greater transparency for residents, to support democracy and to help meet our legal and regulatory obligations, we will engage with residents when there is a planned change to a service, either to provide an additional

service, to reduce, discontinue or modify a service or to enter into a contract or agreement with an organisation to provide a service. Residents may request such a change. The consultation will clearly address any change in service provision, quality of service and frequency to the residents affected by the changes. To avoid misunderstanding, any consultation should be clear at the outset regarding what is for information or for decision by residents, how any decision will be made and by whom.

- 7.4 **Decision making, votes and consensus** – unless there is a 60% consensus, then on most occasions the change will not happen, because residents' views are particularly important in shaping the service they receive. Proxy votes will be given by default to the Stroud District Council representative unless a resident makes a specific nomination. One resident vote per unit/ household. Once a change is made by such a vote, it is expected to remain for a minimum set time (e.g., 5 years to tie in with any contract). See [Appendix C](#).

- 7.5 **Section 20 process** as it applies to variable service charges

We are legally obliged to enter into a formal consultation with our homeowners before carrying out any major works at their properties, or when entering into a long term agreement for the provision of services to residents, where the likely cost of any works/services per unit exceed £250 for major works and £100 for agreements that exceed one year. The process includes the serving of formal notices on each resident, known as Section 20 Notices. Failure to consult correctly may result in not being able to recover more than £250 per unit for major works or £100 per unit per annum, for services for the duration of the contract. S20 notices should be served to all leaseholders (including shared owners*), regardless of whether there is a sinking fund at their property. In exceptional circumstances such as emergency works, applications to dispense of the Section 20 Requirements (S20ZA) can be applied for. For charges below the £250 (works) or £100 (long term agreement) limits, it is good practice to at least inform residents of forthcoming changes and engage with them to ensure their voice is heard.

* Owners of shared ownership properties are responsible for all repairs and works to their property., Given the above, the section 20 process would usually only apply for communal services as the resident would manage their own building repairs and renewal.

8 MANAGING RENT AND SERVICE CHARGES

- 8.1 Stroud District Council will further develop **monitoring, reporting and assurance controls**:

- to ensure **health and safety** requirements are met and to ensure sites are safe for residents to use
- to encourage residents to understand and feedback on the **standards** of the services they receive
- aiming to demonstrate that all service charges represent **value for money** and are based on high standards and current good practice

- 8.2 **Debt management** - residents are required to pay rent and/or service charges as a condition of their tenancy and occupancy agreements. Non-payment will result in the relevant Income Management Policy being applied.

9 SPECIFIC SERVICES

9.1 **Major works** - sinking funds for future repairs work could be established for leaseholders where there is a requirement to undertake major works such as roof, doors, or windows. These funds will be identified and accounted for separately by block or estate, ring-fenced to specific items, and annual statements will be provided to those that contribute. Where there is insufficient fund in the sinking funds, billing for major works may be outside of the usual service charges cycle. Whether or not there is sufficient funds in the sinking fund, consultation needs to take place under section 20 if applicable (variable service charges and over £250 per unit limit). The 18-month rule to request payment under section 20B also applies, any retention money may be dealt with by giving notice to the resident.

Offer Notice Protection - New leases or resale of leases give an offer notice protection on the ability of the landlord to recover costs in full. At the time the offer is made, the offer notice includes a statement of costs and services identified, costs may be updated by inflation allowances (per an index), the period is five years minimum, but it may be longer due to financial years and expected commencement date. When the period has elapsed, the costs can be recovered in full.

9.2 **An annual usage charge** may be levied to spread and meet the cost of eventual replacement of a service chargeable item where its useful life exceeds 1 year and the replacement cost would distort the annual charge, usually for tenants' fixed service charges. The charge will be recovered on an annual basis, based on the costs, and expected life cycle of the item.

9.3 **Administrative and management fees** include the costs of running a service charges team, including the IT system, invoice / statement / correspondence production, communication, accounting, general overheads, debt recovery and consultation. For third party management fees, there will be additional costs to manage the third-party contract and manage the accounts. Such costs should reflect the costs of administering the service charges from start to finish and good practice suggest the costs would not exceed 15% of all chargeable service costs. There may be a separate management fee for leaseholders as set out in their lease agreement. The direct costs associated with the chargeable services such as procurement, contracting, service management or supervision would usually be included in the cost of the actual service, not the admin fee. Any digression from this should be clearly defined to ensure costs are not duplicated.

9.4 **A full list of existing chargeable services** and their definitions is shown at [Appendix D](#).

10 OTHER CHARGEABLE SERVICES

10.1 **Chargeable Repairs** – from time to time, Stroud District Council must carry out works that are the resident's responsibility, either

at the resident's request for example:

- to replace a lost key
- to repair a broken window or door

or when we think it is necessary, for example:

- when we must deliver repair work due to damage caused by neglect, misuse or failing to report repairs;
- force entry because of the resident's neglect or misuse of the unit, property, or failure to report repairs;

- carry out reinstatement work relating to a resident's DIY work;
- undertake repair work to bring the unit or property back up to a reasonable standard because the resident has not kept it clean or tidy;
- remove any of the resident's personal belongings or rubbish from communal areas;
- remove any of the resident's rubbish, furniture, or appliances from the garden.
- In exceptional circumstances, we will also offer chargeable repairs for minor repairs that are the resident's responsibility if the damage is causing a health and safety hazard that presents a serious risk of harm or non-repair would cause further damage.

The charge will include an element of admin charge to cover our costs in arranging and managing the works. Any works from our direct maintenance team will include all relevant costs such as materials, labour, and supervision. Whenever possible, chargeable repairs should be paid for in advance of the works being carried out, based on a schedule of rates or estimate, with a balancing figure due on completion of the works. The recovery of chargeable repairs is referred to in the Income collection and recovery policy.

- 10.2 **Support Services in Independent Living.** Support is available to enable older people to maintain their tenancies, sustain independence and lead a good quality of life. The Support team will sign post for housing related support, verify support needs and agree support plans where appropriate. Social inclusion and isolation will be explored as well as fund raising and income generation to support and sustain activities and events for inclusion of independent living tenants as well as the local community. Tenants self-refer to this service.

11 RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

Rent Standard :

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1014903/Rent_Standard_-_April_2020.pdf

Rent increase : <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rent-standard/limit-on-annual-rent-increases-2022-23-from-april-2022>

Policy Statement:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/781746/Policy_Statement.pdf

The Charter for Social Housing Residents (white paper)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-charter-for-social-housing-residents-social-housing-white-paper/the-charter-for-social-housing-residents-social-housing-white-paper>

Rent Act 1977: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1977/42/contents>

Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1985/70>

Valuation Office Agency: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/valuation-office-agency/about#voa-rent-officers>

Local Housing Allowance – how it is set:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/local-housing-allowance-lha-rates>

Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS): <https://www.rics.org/uk/>

12 CROSS REFERENCES TO OTHER POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

Income Collection and Recovery Policy

Corporate Strategy

Strategy for New Council Homes 2020-2024

Housing Strategy – 2019/24

Older People Strategy 2019/23 – the new model of independent living hub, independent living +, independent living and incorporating outlying general needs housing to access enhanced services will impact the services as changes are made. The likely impact is lower charges when services are shared by more users, or when shared accommodation is converted to dwellings. Any grant funding would reduce charges.

13 APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

RENT AND SERVICE CHARGES SETTING AND TIMING

	MONTH	Expenditure	Income	
			Rents	Service Charges
Financial Year	APRIL	Evaluate slippage and actions (capital/ revenue)	Rent increases start	Service charges increases start
	MAY	Year-end work. Review previous year's performance, benchmark, update policies and procedures		
	JUNE			
	JULY	Planned and cyclical programmes draft for service charges elements	Review budget to actuals, including increased income from relets	Review budget to actuals, including increased income from relets
	AUGUST			Agree assumptions and programmes. Review transfer to full charge ref depooling
	SEPTEMBER	Sinking funds requirements, major works programme and section 20 plan	September Inflation used for following year rent increase	Variable service charges - sent residents previous financial year's statement of actuals to budgets, balancing figure due/refund and sign off before auditors by 30 Sept (18 months rule)
	OCTOBER	Budget prep	Budget prep	Budget prep

	NOVEMBER	Budget review and board papers prep	Rent increases calculated	Service charges set to match costs in expenditure budgets. Test increases and outcomes
	DECEMBER	Expenditure budgets agreed	Rent increases agreed	Service charges adjusted to match costs in expenditure budgets
	JANUARY	Year-end forecasts and identify any service charges under-delivery or overspend	Rents set in system and prep records/ print run	Service Charges set in system and prep records/ print run
	FEBRUARY		Rent and Service charges letters to printers	
	MARCH		Rent and Service charges letters to tenants: >4 weeks before payment starts	

APPENDIX B

: Rent and Service Charges Setting and Timing

APPENDIX A Service Charges and Rents – Impact of Rent Inclusive Charges on Core Services

APPENDIX C

: Service Charges Consultation

APPENDIX D : List of Service Charges

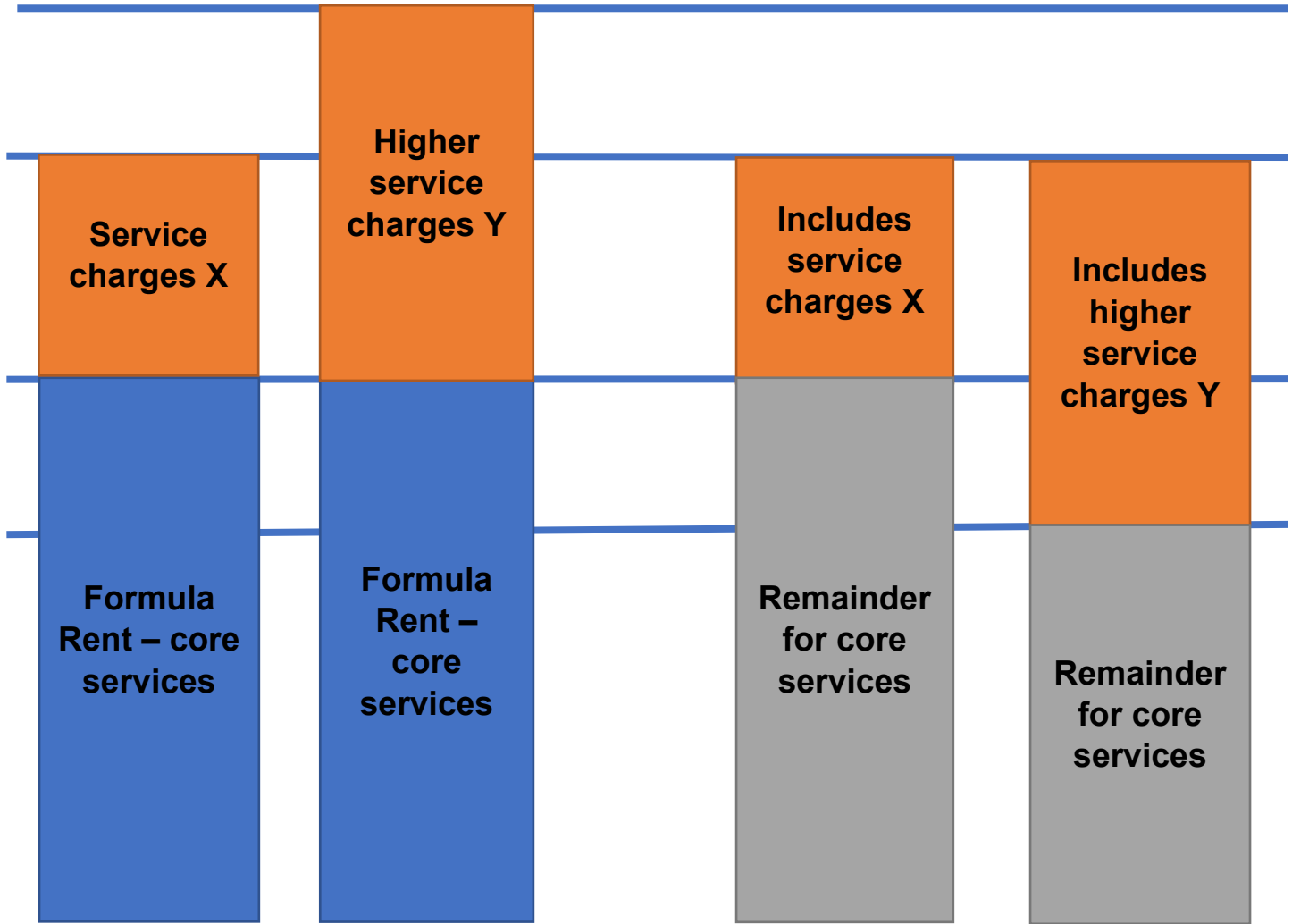
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APPENDIX B

SERVICE CHARGES AND RENTS – IMPACT OF RENT INCLUSIVE CHARGES ON CORE SERVICE



1 - Rent plus service charges

2 - Rent includes service charges

Formula rent (figure 1) does not include service charges, the rent goes up annually by CPI plus 1% or as per the guideline. The service charges reflect the costs they are based upon.

Rent inclusive of service charges (figure 2) goes up annually by CPI +1% (if affordable rent). If the service charge costs go up by more than that inflation figure, the remaining income available for core services reduces.

APPENDIX C

SERVICE CHARGES CONSULTATION

ARE YOU BEING SERVED? Getting your views and how to request new services or review existing services on which you pay a service charge

Stroud District Council aims to deliver fair and transparent chargeable services, to high standards and good value for money. Residents should pay for all the services they receive: we aim to recover no more than all relevant costs through the service charges, but we may subsidise an element of service to protect our assets and vulnerable customers.

We involve you in setting standards for the existing services you currently receive and you help us ensure these standards are met by telling us how we – and our contractors - perform.

WHAT IS CONSULTATION?

Listening to your views is an important part of service charges to ensure all residents have an opportunity to contribute, to be heard and to help shape the service delivery. Annual increases are not usually subject to consultation.

YOUR OPINION MATTERS

We will ask you what you think:

- Before introducing new or ending existing services
- When standards are set or changed

You can request a new service: if you want additional services, you can buy these either individually or as a group, depending on the service or where you live. The last page has a list of optional services from which you can choose. This list can be added to according to your needs.

- If the service is already listed and only involves you, please contact the individual named next to the service who will make arrangements with you and give you an estimate of costs before you commit yourself.
- If the service is already listed and involves other residents, please contact the individual named next to the service who will make arrangements to consult with your neighbours and give you an estimate of costs before you commit yourselves.
- If we do not currently provide the service, please contact XXXX to discuss how Stroud could best deliver this for you.

How to review or change existing services:

Needs are changing and we want to continuously improve the standards and range of services we deliver for you. New technology brings challenges and opportunities which we want to respond to. If you think a service you currently get has “passed its sell by date” in that it does not meet your current needs, you should not wait for the next review but tell us how you think we could improve. To do this, please contact the individual named next to the service.

- You can expect all services to be reviewed every [five years] and we would not expect to review services more than once in [three years].
- Standards of services are set in consultation with you. If you want to be actively involved, please contact XXXX.

HOW WILL WE DO THIS?

We like to speak to you personally to get your views and will do this by face to face door knocking, by telephone or via a meeting at a local venue. Where appropriate, a postal survey can be used for small changes and for leaseholders who do not live in the property. If we are unable to obtain

Appendix A

views from over 50% of affected householders, we will make a second and final attempt, again using the above methods.

WHO MAYBE AFFECTED?

Tenants, leaseholders, shared owners, and freeholders.

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?

When we consult with you it will be clearly communicated in writing and we will give you 30 days to consider your response.

VOTE AND MAKING DECISIONS

One vote per household: if there is no response from the household or no nomination of a proxy to represent that household (for example in a meeting), the default proxy will return to Stroud District Council.

Decision: changes will only be made if over 60% of householders wish it to be so. Sometimes we may choose to continue with the change for specific reasons, for example, on health and safety grounds. The decision will remain valid until the service is reviewed as applicable.

If there is not a 60% consensus, then on most occasions the change will not happen, so your views are important in shaping the service you receive.

FEEDBACK

Householders will be notified of the outcome within 30 days of the decision being made, together with a timetable as to when the changes will take place.

VARIABLE SERVICE CHARGES AND SECTION 20 LEGISLATION

Where a lease or tenancy agreement includes variable service charges, this means that consultation must be carried out under Section 20 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 when the service charge exceeds a specific amount for one of the dwellings: this is currently £250 for a one-off charge and £100 for an agreement exceeding one year. Stroud District Council will ensure consultation happens at the appropriate level, without the need to repeat all or part of the process for a section 20 requirement. We will consider individual and local needs and will undertake regular feedback and monitoring of work performed by contractors, thus building local partnerships.

MENU OF SERVICES DRAFT

OPTIONAL SERVICES	CONTACT	REVIEW DATE
Contents insurance		
Repair person/woman service and maintenance; van service		
Internal or external decorating service individual home		
Landscape services and individual home garden		
Window cleaning individual home		
Caretaker/cleaner individual home		
Electrical repairs or installation; improvements to individual properties or works such as installing showers		
Heating maintenance and repairs service (leaseholders)		

APPENDIX D – LIST OF SERVICE CHARGES (shorter version also available for residents)

Be mindful to split communal areas and individual homes (different eligibility to welfare benefit)

SERVICE	COSTS INCLUDED IN THE SERVICE ARE:
Admin and management fees	
Third party management costs, managing agents	Management and administration of the service charge; may include third party management costs, audit fee & housing management (leaseholders). Direct costs of procurement, supervision and management of a service are usually included at the service level unless decided otherwise; requirement of consistency of approach to avoid double counting.
Housing management and administration of the service charge - leaseholders	
Service charge audit fee - variable charges	
Management and administration of the service charge	
Staff providing some of the services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site officers • caretakers • support coordinators • Independent Living staff 	Define what services are delivered and include all relevant costs (including staff time, materials, equipment, storage, insurance and maintenance of equipment, vehicle hire, insurance and fuel). For comparison purposes, it may be useful to split the costs between cleaning/ grounds maintenance and other services that are provided elsewhere by a contractor. Intensive housing management to be identified separately as well as support costs.
Cleaning	
General cleaning - communal areas	All cleaning to include materials, equipment, staffing, contractors. Where services are provided in-house, personnel may deliver other services and should be apportioned consistently. Provision, maintenance, decontamination, and repair of refuse collection and refuse containers; cleaning bulk bins and refuse chutes, communal refuse collection and its disposal, and skip hire. Abandoned vehicle recovery. Pest control costs for communal areas unless provided separately (under health and safety). Litter picking is included in grounds maintenance.
External and internal window cleaning - communal areas	
Tenants' window cleaning (Universal Credit eligible 1st floor and above only)	
Refuse collection, bulk bins, and rubbish chutes	
Fly tipping on communal areas - collection and disposal	
Bulk collection ad hoc	
Abandoned vehicle	
Health and safety	
Pest control	May be included in cleaning charge; individual charges where appropriate.
Fire safety and prevention:	All fire safety requirements from assessment, inspection, testing to provision of equipment, servicing, and

Appendix A

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire risk assessments • Fire alarm, detection, and smoke dispersal systems • Fire panels • Fire-fighting equipment 	<p>maintenance, building works and equipment. Equipment may include buckets of sand and water, fire blankets, hose reels, fire extinguishers, sprinkler or fire dispersal systems and alarms. Periodic testing will be guided by assessment and advice, it is likely to differ between buildings and clientele, with increased frequency for the more vulnerable. The testing may be conducted in-house by caretakers/ housing officers or other personnel and recharged. May include building works as required by assessment</p>
<p>Electrical inspections - internal/ external communal parts and services</p>	<p>Electrical inspections – internal and external communal parts and services</p>
<p>Equipment PAT Testing</p>	<p>Electrical Portable Appliances Testing for items under 18kg</p>
<p>Air safety – ventilation systems</p>	<p>Maintenance, servicing, and replacement, including replacement of communal extractor fan systems for Radon</p>
<p>Security</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure building access door entry • Closed circuit television (CCTV) 	<p>Servicing, repairing and replacement of door entry system or appliances, including auto-door access, keys, key cards, keypad door locking mechanism and door entry phone; may include CCTV. Key/fob replacement are usually dealt with through rechargeable repairs. Security costs may include personnel.</p>
<p>Water safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legionella testing and water safety • Water tanks 	<p>Legionella testing, water softness. Cleaning, servicing, renewal, and de-chlorination of water tanks.</p>
<p>Heating, septic tanks and green agenda equipment</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communal heating, plant & equipment • Internal communal lighting and emergency lighting • Septic tanks • Green initiatives/ green agenda such as solar panels 	<p>As restricted by LTA sections 11 (1985) and 116 (1988) for tenants’ ref landlord statutory obligations with costs funded by the rent. Utilities provision separate. Providing heating to communal areas, as well as setting heating time clocks. Running, maintaining and insuring heating plant and equipment: includes the future cost of replacement or major repairs such as one-off costs. Costs restricted as shown for tenants. Includes all maintenance, servicing, testing, replacement and running costs of communal and emergency lighting Septic tanks and private sewerage systems: restricted for tenants but maintenance / servicing may be allowed depending on system design. Green agenda components are usually allocated to the relevant service they serve, costs restricted as shown for tenants.</p>
<p>Hospitality - Guest Rooms</p>	<p>Guest rooms costs including furnishings and replacement. Visitor room costs reduced by any income received</p>
<p>Equipment split within a dwelling and in communal areas</p>	

Aids and adaptations and specialist equipment	Maintenance, cleaning, repair, insurance and provision for major repairs or replacement of stairlifts and adaptations in communal areas, including electrical maintenance (only UC eligible if no grant funding available); some restrictions ref direct access only for stairlifts; within the dwelling is rechargeable but not UC eligible.
Carpets, flooring, and furnishing	Maintenance, repair and replacement of flooring and furnishings such as blinds
Furniture and white goods in communal areas or kitchen; other appliances and equipment (e.g., kettles)	Maintenance, servicing, repairs, and replacement of such equipment: such charges in individual homes may also be eligible for welfare benefit as long as the tenant does not become the owner of the goods.
Laundries	Maintenance, repair, running costs, replacement of laundry equipment in communal areas (washing machines, tumble dryers, spin dryers). If key fobs / pay as you go income, record this separately and deduct from charge. Utilities may be included here or separately
Lifts and stairlifts	Maintenance, servicing, cleaning, repair, insurance and provision for major repairs or replacement of lifts, including electrical maintenance and replacement, fire safety, emergency phone/ internet (line installation, rental, calls). 6-monthly inspections. Stairlifts may be shown in aids and adaptations.
Building management systems	Servicing, periodic testing, repairing, and replacing the IT system and equipment to operate the building, including phone lines, internet connections and Wi-Fi. The costs may be apportioned between communal areas and dwellings, depending on the application of the system and what it relates to.
Rotary dryers and external drying areas	Provision and maintenance of rotary dryers and external drying areas.
External safety equipment such as fall arrest systems for abseiling or lightning protector	External safety equipment which may include abseiling gear for external property maintenance or lightning protectors to protect property from storm damage.
TV and communications	
Broadband, satellite dishes and cable; TV and computer equipment	Communal internet consumption costs and broadband line charges are UC eligible, other charges including provision of equipment may be eligible for housing benefit depending on the installation, accessibility and agreements but are usually excluded from UC.
Television and radio (not satellite/ cable/ internet)	Provision, servicing, repairing and replacement of equipment (such as aerials, central amplifier, TV relay or masts) to enable access free-to-air television and radio, digital inclusion.
TV Licences	Providing concessionary license fees, such as disabled concession in sheltered schemes (not welfare eligible)

Outdoor services	
Car or bike parking	Maintenance, servicing and replacement of car and bike park provision, including access, gates, bike/ buggy/ scooter, and electric car facilities. If key fobs / pay as you go income is received, it is recorded separately and it reduces the service charge. Includes visitors' parking
Electric power points and scooter park plug-in	Electric power points, including communal charging points and vehicle charging
External access lighting and maintenance	Includes all maintenance, servicing, testing, replacement and running costs of external communal lighting.
Playground areas and equipment	Maintenance of the playground areas and equipment: it includes insurance, inspections and replacement of equipment and ground surface but excludes any grant received.
Unadopted roads	An "unadopted road" is simply a track or road which has not been adopted by a local authority or highways authority and so the said authority has no responsibility to maintain it, it may include car parking areas; the burden falls on the local residents; all costs for maintenance, repairs and renewals to be shared by the residents, regardless of tenure. Traffic calming costs may be included.
<p>Grounds maintenance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Footpaths • Woodlands • Trees • Shrubs 	<p>Grounds maintenance (including equipment renewal and maintenance as required), repair and renewal of the landscape and communal areas around blocks, areas of external access or communal gardens, to include grass and tree cutting, flower beds, hedges, and shrubs maintenance, including litter picking.</p> <p>Initial landscaping costs of a development are part of capital development costs, including tree and shrub planting. Tree, shrub and plant replacement and maintenance are in the service charge.</p> <p>Paths repairs, maintenance, and clearance.</p> <p>Maintenance of the woodlands, shrubs, and trees, including planting, tree cutting, fire prevention and maintenance of access to the woods.</p> <p>Footpaths, woodlands/ tree surgery may be included here or separate; tree programme may be charged annually to spread costs but be mindful of variable services 18 months rule.</p> <p>External signage included.</p>
Utilities	
Electricity – Communal or Personal	Electricity consumption; may include apportionment of energy efficiency consultants' fees.
Gas – Communal or Personal	Gas consumption; may include apportionment of energy efficiency consultants' fees.

Heating and hot water – Communal or Personal	Consumption; may include apportionment of energy efficiency consultants' fees.
Communal lighting and emergency lighting	Includes all maintenance, servicing, testing, replacement and running costs of communal and emergency lighting
Sewerage and drainage charges	Testing and treatment costs, including land drainage and culverts, private drainage. Leaseholders' liable for maintenance and replacement of external sewers/ external pipes if not water authority's; Tenants' rent covers this under landlord's obligation (section 11 LTA 1985). May want to split this service between internal/external if too complex.
Water – Communal or Personal	Consumption; communal taps repairs and maintenance
Business rates of some communal areas / offices	As appropriate
Decoration of communal areas	Communal cyclical decorations - internal and external; for tenants, exclude any elements deemed to be repairs to the fabric of the building that are covered by the rent (not cosmetic, small repairs are allowed)
Leaseholders Services	
Building insurance	Leaseholders only
Maintenance and repairs - reactive	Reactive repairs that are rechargeable services for leaseholders
Major Works and Component Replacements	All major works and renewals that are rechargeable to leaseholders such as roofs, doors, windows (may be subject to section 20 consultation or restricted in lease agreement)
Property maintenance	Maintenance and repairs
Sinking Fund Contribution	Annual contribution to major works, component replacements, redecorations, and other items as defined in a sinking fund policy (large items identified as cyclical or planned for leaseholders)
Ground Rent	Ground (peppercorn) rent to reflect the use of the land by a leasehold - this is not a service charge per se but is often included in the invoice/ statement and needs to be accompanied by a S166 notice

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Equality Analysis Form

By completing this form you will provide evidence of how your service is helping to meet Stroud District Council's General Equality duty:

The Equality Act 2010 states that:

*A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have **due regard** to the need to –*

(a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;

(b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

(c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The protected characteristics are listed in Question 9

Stroud District Equality data can be found at:

<https://inform.gloucestershire.gov.uk/equality-and-diversity/>

Please see Appendix 1 for a good example of a completed EIA.

[Guidance available on the HUB](#)

1. Persons responsible for this assessment:

Name(s): Sara J Weaver	Telephone: 01453 754183
	E-Mail: sara.weaver@stroud.gov.uk
Service: Tenant Services	Date of Assessment: 10 January 2023

2. Name of the policy, service, strategy, procedure or function:

Rents and Service Charges Policy (HRA)

Is this new or an existing one? **New**

3. Briefly describe its aims and objectives

This policy is the framework to support how the Council meets all statutory, contractual, regulatory, legal requirements, and best practice, in relation to rent and service charges.

It supports the Council's aim to ensure current and future rents are fair and affordable for residents and are set at levels which maintain the HRA's financial stability and viability.

It sets out how the Council aims to deliver fair and transparent chargeable services, to high standards and good value for money. It also identifies that residents should pay for all the services they receive, whilst continuing to protect our assets and vulnerable customers by subsidising an element of service to them.

4. Are there external considerations? (Legislation / government directive, etc)

- Rent Standard 2020 / Rent Policy Statement 2020
- The Charter for Social Housing Residents (white paper)
- Rent Act 1977
- Regulator of Social Housing
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- Valuation Office Agency
- Local Housing Allowance rates
- Section 20 process

5. Who is intended to benefit from it and in what way?

Rent: to ensure current and future rents are fair and affordable for tenants and are set at levels which maintain our financial stability and viability. We seek to strike a balance between keeping rents affordable and having enough money to fund maintenance and improvement to our housing stock, for the long-term benefit of tenants.

Service Charges: all residents will benefit from the delivery of fair and transparent chargeable services, to high standards and good value for money now and in the future.

6. What outcomes are expected?

The policy will enable the Council to recover fully, where possible, the costs we incur delivering services to our residents. The service charges will enable the Council to maintain shared areas to good environmental and amenity standards that are affordable to residents now and for the future.

7. What evidence has been used for this assessment?: (eg Research, previous consultations, Inform (MAIDEN); Google assessments carried out by other Authorities)

Inform (MAIDEN)
Office for National Statistics (ONS) data
Census 2021 data
Service Reports: Tenants identified as in receipt of Housing Benefits or Universal Credit
Service Report: Tenants in Arrears
Service Report: Current Tenants including age, sexuality, ethnic origin, sex, religion, and disability identifier

8. Has any consultation been carried out? See list of possible consultees

No

9. Could a particular group be affected differently in either a negative or positive way?
(Negative – it could disadvantage and therefore potentially not meet the General Equality duty;
Positive – it could benefit and help meet the General Equality duty;
Neutral – neither positive nor negative impact / Not sure)

Protected Group	Type of impact, reason, and any evidence (from Q7 & 8)
Age	<p>The youngest Council tenant is 18 years old and the oldest 101 years old. 1613 heads of household are 67+ years old. (out of 4844 households as at 10 January 2023).</p> <p>The policy is expected to have a neutral impact upon all ages as no direct, positive, or indirect discrimination has been identified.</p>
Disability	<p>The policy is expected to have a neutral impact upon disability groups as no identified direct, positive, or indirect discrimination has been identified.</p>
Gender Re-assignment	<p>The service does not record data in relation to gender re-assignment.</p> <p>The policy is expected to have a neutral impact upon residents who are seeking, undergoing, or have received gender re-assignment surgery, as no direct, positive, or indirect discrimination has been identified.</p>
Pregnancy & Maternity	<p>The service does not record data in relation to residents being pregnant or on maternity/paternity leave.</p> <p>The policy is expected to have a neutral impact upon pregnancy and maternity as no direct, positive, or indirect discrimination has been identified.</p>
Race	<p>Heads of household (out of 4844 households as at 10 January 2023) identified as the following race:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black African – 1 • Black Caribbean – 5 • Chinese – 4 • Indian – 1 • Other Asian – 6 • Other Black – 7 • Other Ethnic Group – 8 • Other Mixed – 6 • Other White – 62 • Traveller of Irish Descent – 2 • White – 44 • White & Asian – 4 • White & Black African – 4 • White & Black Caribbean – 9 • White British English – 3118 • White British Other – 25 • White British Scottish – 20 • White British Welsh – 25

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White Irish – 25 • Undisclosed - 1468 <p>The policy is expected to have a neutral impact on race as no direct, positive, or indirect discrimination has been identified.</p>
Religion – Belief	<p>Heads of household (out of 4844 households as at 10 January 2023) identified as the following:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buddhism – 9 • Christian – 1292 • Hinduism – 1 • Islam – 2 • Judaism – 2 • Sikhism - 7 • No religion – 1367 • Other - 72 • Undisclosed - 2092 <p>The policy is expected to have a neutral impact upon religion/belief as no direct, positive, or indirect discrimination has been identified.</p>
Sex	<p>2961 tenants are female and 1897 are male (out of 4844 households as at 10 January 2023).</p> <p>The policy is expected to have a neutral impact upon a person’s sex as no direct, positive, or indirect discrimination has been identified.</p>
Sexual Orientation	<p>Heads of household (out of 4844 households as at 10 January 2023) identified as the following:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bi-sexual – 6 • Heterosexual – 2121 • Homosexual – 4 • Lesbian/Gay – 5 • Other – 3 • Undisclosed - 2705 <p>The policy is expected to have a neutral impact upon sexual orientation as no direct, positive, or indirect discrimination has been identified.</p>
Marriage & Civil Partnerships (part (a) of duty only)	<p>The service does not record data in relation to marriage and civil partnerships.</p> <p>The service allows same sex couples to have tenancies and does not discriminate against marriage or civil partnerships. The Council encourages staff to undertake equality training during their induction and there is an e-learning portal available for refresher training at any point.</p>

	The policy is expected to have a neutral impact upon marriage and civil partnerships as no direct, positive, or indirect discrimination has been identified.
Rural considerations: i.e Access to services; transport; education; employment; broadband	The policy is expected to have a neutral impact upon rural considerations as no direct, positive, or indirect discrimination has been identified.

10. If you have identified a negative impact in question 9, what actions have you undertaken or do you plan to undertake to lessen or negate this impact?


Please transfer any actions to your Service Action plan on Excelsis.

Action(s):	Lead officer	Resource	Timescale

Declaration

We are satisfied that an Impact Assessment has been carried out on this policy and where a negative impact has been identified, actions have been developed to lessen or negate this impact.

We understand that the Equality Impact Assessment is required by the Council and that we take responsibility for the completion and quality of this assessment

Completed by: Sara J Weaver	Date: 11/01/2023
Role: Income & Systems Manager	
Countersigned by Director: 	Date: 28/02/2023

Date for Review: Please forward an electronic copy to eka.nowakowska@stroud.gov.uk

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STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

HOUSING COMMITTEE

28 MARCH 2023

Report Title	Tenant Support & Engagement			
Purpose of Report	To present the results and provide an analysis of the tenant's satisfaction surveys for general needs tenants.			
Decision(s)	The Committee RESOLVES to note the Tenant Satisfaction Survey results and actions moving forward.			
Consultation and Feedback	The 2022 survey results and action plan will be fed back to tenants through café conversations, social media and the SDC website			
Report Author	Michelle Elliott (Housing Manager) Tel: 01453 754131 Email: michelle.elliott@stroud.gov.uk			
Options	None			
Background Papers	None			
Appendices	Appendix A – STAR Survey General Needs Appendix B – STAR Survey Independent Living Appendix C – ASB Leaflet Appendix D – ASB Easy Read Appendix E – Action Plan			
Implications (further details at the end of the report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	No	Yes	No	No

1. INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Tenant Services undertake the STAR survey to understand tenants view of the service's we deliver. The analysis of the survey results assists us in understanding the services that are working well and those that we need to improve.
- 1.2 The survey was conducted by ARP Research, an independent company and took place during September /October 2022. Surveys were sent to all Independent Living tenants (totalling 718 households) and a randomly selected sample of 2000 general needs tenants.
- 1.3 In total there were 794 responses to the general needs survey which represented a response rate of 40% and 307 responses to the Independent Living survey which represented a response rate of 43%. The surveys saw an increased response rate compared to 2019.
- 1.4 Overall tenant satisfaction with the services provided by Stroud District Council has fallen to 70% compared to the 81% achieved in 2019, although it should be noted that the results for Independent Living have only fallen slightly since 2019 and these results will be used to form the action plan for the Independent Living Strategy 2023 – 2027.
- 1.5 The sector has seen suppressed results since the pandemic however the results have fallen below the Housemark benchmark average of other comparable landlords.

- 1.6 The dominant theme throughout the results is the repairs service and this has seen a 15% fall in satisfaction. Reasons for this score, cite outstanding jobs, delayed repairs and longstanding issues that have been repeatedly reported and incomplete work.

2. MAIN POINTS

- 2.1 The quality of the home is a key driver for satisfaction and results show repairs and maintenance as an overriding theme for the low results with over a third requesting home improvements, with the most notable comment mentioned being damp & mould or condensation.
- 2.2 Cleanliness and maintenance of communal areas was also deemed below average with a score of 41%. This area will be discussed in consultation with tenants as currently not all our communal areas are cleaned by a contractor.
- 2.3 Response to repairs & maintenance is the strongest driver for overall satisfaction and scored a disappointing result of 55% for service overall. This area will be a priority for improvement
- 2.4 Satisfaction with customer service scored 71% with most tenants feeling that they are treated fairly and with respect. However the commentary revealed dissatisfaction with the ability to speak with the right person and the return of messages.
- 2.5 Communication is the second strongest key driver of overall satisfaction and again we have seen a drop in satisfaction to 56%, tenants stating they are not kept informed, these comments are linked to repairs.
- 2.6 Just over three quarters of our respondents are happy with the neighbourhood as a place to live. The issues mentioned as concerns are dog fouling, refuse, drug use/dealing and noise although these are considered less of a problem than previously. These problems appear to be more prevalent in flats.
- 2.7 Satisfaction with complaint handling is just above the benchmark average and most respondents are aware of how to make a complaint.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The results clearly show that there are issues with the backlog of outstanding repairs, and this is an area that we need to communicate more with tenants and ensure they are updated with new appointments.
- 3.2 Anti-social behaviour remains a key area of concern and to address this we have updated the ASB app to advise this is evidence gathering tool and therefore tenants will not receive updates for every entry. Complainants will also receive a victim support leaflet when they sign into the ASB app.
- 3.3 In order to ensure tenants are able to understand the ASB process, a leaflet has been produced that is given to the complainant so that they understand the process that is followed when investigating anti-social behaviour
- 3.4 Telephone calls into the office appear to be an issue that we need to address. Again, these appear to be related to repairs and maintenance and will form part of the action plan to address issues.
- 3.5 In conclusion it is important to remember that one in ten commenters complimented the Council on the services they received, although we recognise that we need to improve this number.

4. IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial Implications

There are no financial implication arising directly from this report. Any expenditure arising will be met through established budgets.

Jon Coldridge, Principal Accountant

Tel: 01453 75030 Email: jon.coldridge@stroud.gov.uk

4.2 Legal Implications

The Tenant Support and Engagement sets out how the Council's housing meets the requirements of the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard.

Whilst there are no significant legal implications arising from this report, the advice of One Legal should be sought, when for example, there are issues arising from Anti-social behaviour.

One Legal

Email: legalservices@onelegal.org.uk

4.3 Equality Implications

There are not any specific changes to service delivery proposed within this decision.

4.4 Environmental Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

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General needs

STAR Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2022



Report by Scott Rumley & Adam Payne

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Appendix A
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1. Introduction

Background

This report details the results of Stroud District Council's 2022 STAR tenant satisfaction survey, delivered by ARP Research. This report covers the survey results for general needs tenants. A second report is also available containing the survey results for those in independent living. The aim of the survey is to allow tenants to have their say about their home, the services they receive, and how these could be improved in the future. This year's questionnaire also references The Regulator of Social Housing's tenant satisfaction measures (TSMs) that social landlords will be required to report on in future years (indicated throughout the report by the government coat of arms).

Where applicable the current survey results have also been compared against the 2019 STAR survey, including tests to check if any of the changes are *statistically significant*. Finally, the results have also been benchmarked against Housemark's STAR database of similar peer landlords, supplemented where necessary by ARP Research's own database.

About the survey

The survey was carried out between September and October 2022. Paper self completion questionnaires were distributed to a randomly selected sample of 2,000 general needs households, followed by a reminder approximately three weeks later for all those that had not yet replied. In addition, email invitations and reminders were sent to every valid email address in the sample, plus a text invitation and reminder to all mobiles in the sample. The survey was incentivised with a free prize draw.

In total there were 794 responses to the survey which represented a response rate of 40% (error margin +/- 2.6%). Online responses comprised 37% of the total (292), including 110 direct responses to email (11% response) and 74 to text message (6% response). The returns exceeded the stipulated STAR target error margin of +/- 4% with a 12% increase in response rate compared to 2019.

Understanding the results

The results were weighted by lead tenant age which ensured that they were also representative of the tenant population on the main demographic and geographic characteristics. Most of the results are given as percentages, which may not always add up to 100% because of rounding and/or multiple responses. It is also important to take care when considering the results for groups where the sample size is small. Where there are differences in the results over time, or between groups, these are subjected to testing to discover if these differences are *statistically significant*. This tells us that we can be confident that the differences are real and not likely to be down to natural variation or chance. For further information on the methodology and statistics please see Appendix A.



2. Executive summary

Bench mark	2019 result	change over time	2022 result	Question source
80%	81%	↓	70%	satisfaction overall HouseMark STAR
75%	81%	↓	72%	quality of home HouseMark STAR
80%	N.A.		78%	safety and security of home HouseMark STAR
64%	N.A.		41%	communal areas clean and maintained
84%	N.A.		79%	rent value for money HouseMark STAR
71%	70%	↓	55%	repairs and maintenance overall HouseMark STAR
75%	82%	↓	64%	last completed repair HouseMark STAR
75%	N.A.		71%	treated fairly and with respect
79%	N.A.		66%	easy to deal with HouseMark STAR
65%	58%	↔	56%	listens to views and acts on them HouseMark STAR
63%	72%	↓	57%	keeps tenants informed
63%	59%	↔	57%	opportunities to make views known HouseMark STAR
48%	N.A.		50%	approach to handling complaints
79%	83%	↔	77%	neighbourhood as a place to live HouseMark STAR
56%	N.A.		57%	makes a positive contribution to area
50%	N.A.		50%	dealing with ASB

statistically significant improvement
 no statistically significant change
 statistically significant decline

2. Executive summary

Overall satisfaction

1. Overall tenant satisfaction with the services provided by Stroud District Council has fallen to 70% compared to the 81% achieved in 2019 amongst general needs tenants. The pandemic significantly suppressed customer satisfaction scores across the sector, but this score is now below the Housemark benchmark average of 80% (section 3).
2. In addition, a number of other ratings have also fallen by a statistically significant margin since the last survey, most notably satisfaction with the quality of the home (section 4), repairs (section 5) and being kept informed (section 7). In particular, the substantial 15% fall in satisfaction with the repairs service is the obvious explanation for the disappointing overall satisfaction score.
3. The most influential demographic category in most tenant surveys is age group, with similar patterns across all of the results. Broadly speaking, overall satisfaction is much higher than average for retirement age tenants (83%).
4. A 'key driver' analysis is a statistical test to check which other results in the survey are best at predicting overall satisfaction. In descending order of strength, the five strongest factors most closely associated with overall tenant satisfaction are:
 - Repairs and maintenance overall (55% satisfied, section 5)
 - Listening and acting on tenant's views (56%, section 7)
 - Quality of the home (72%, section 4)
 - Treated fairly and with respect (71%, section 6)
 - Safety and security of the home (78%, section 4)

Repairs and maintenance

5. Satisfaction with the repairs and maintenance is the primary key driver of overall satisfaction for the current sample, which is common in the post pandemic era, during which time repairs satisfaction scores have generally fallen.
6. However, only a little more than half of general needs tenants are generally satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service (55%), compared to a third that are actively dissatisfied (33%). This rating is 16% lower than the Housemark benchmark average (section 5).
7. From the additional comments, issues with outstanding jobs seem to be the main cause, such as delayed repairs, longstanding issues that were repeatedly reported, and incomplete work (section 11).
8. Respondents have a higher opinion of their last completed repair (64%) than for the service as a whole, although this too is below the benchmark median of 75%. Only 56% are satisfied with the time taken to complete work after it is reported, however, doing the job right first time is actually the best predictor of satisfaction with the last completed repair.

The home

9. In common with most other landlords the satisfaction with the quality of the home has fallen, in this case from 81% to 72% amongst general needs tenants. This is, however, a greater fall in satisfaction than many others experienced (section 4).
10. In the comments the single most commonly mentioned property issue is damp, mould or condensation, which was mentioned by 4% of all tenants from all across the stock (section 11).
11. Far fewer tenants commented about other safety or security issues, which also supported the finding that most tenants are satisfied with the safety and security of their home (78%).
12. However, only 41% of those with shared communal areas are satisfied that they are kept clean, which is somewhat below the benchmark median for other landlords (64%).

Value for money

13. Satisfaction with rent value for money stands at 79%, which is below the benchmark median of 84%. However, the benchmark is a lagging measure that hasn't yet caught up with the cost-of-living crisis (section 4).
14. Whilst most tenants also agree that their rent and service charges are affordable (73%), over a third say that they feel financially insecure (36%, section 10).

Communication

15. Listening to tenant's views and acting upon them is now the second strongest key driver of overall satisfaction. This rating hasn't seen the same dramatic changes as some, but at 56% this score is still 9% below the benchmark, with almost a quarter of respondents being actively dissatisfied (23%, section 7).
16. This question's status as a key driver is probably linked to the wider issues with the repairs service. Many additional comments mentioned lack of information or updates on outstanding repairs, so it is also unsurprising that the proportion who feel that they are kept well informed has fallen from 72% to 57%.
17. Just over a quarter (28%) are interested in having their say, with online and social media polls the most popular method.

Customer service

18. Being easy to deal with, known as a customer effort score, is a recently added core STAR question. Two thirds of general needs tenants are satisfied in this regard, however a fifth find it hard. This score is also below the benchmark target of 78%, with additional comments identifying that not returning calls or messages, and problems getting hold of the right person, are the most common customer service issues (section 6).
19. Another related question asks tenants if they are treated fairly and with respect, a new regulatory question. Benchmark data suggests that the Council's score for this question is closer to the average for other landlords (71% agree, 75% benchmark). This is also a key driver of satisfaction.

2. Executive summary

Complaints

20. Only half of the survey sample are satisfied with how the Council as their landlord deals with complaints (50%). Many of the rest are merely ambivalent, whilst 24% are actively dissatisfied. Nevertheless, when compared to other tenant surveys, complaints satisfaction is two points higher than the benchmark median (section 9).
21. Note that it is important to remember that relatively few tenants will have direct experience of, or even be thinking about, the formal complaints process when answering this question.

Neighbourhoods

22. Three quarters of survey respondents are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live (77%). This figure has fallen, but not by a statistically significant margin, and is broadly on par with comparable landlords (section 8).
23. 57% of respondents are satisfied that their landlord makes a positive contribution to their neighbourhood, compared to 17% that are dissatisfied. This is a new regulatory question, but the limited available benchmarking places the Council's score broadly in line with other landlords.
24. One score that has not changed is the satisfied rating for the standard of grounds maintenance, which remains in the second quartile of ARP benchmarks being three points above the median of 65%.
25. As in 2019 the biggest neighbourhood problems are dog fouling/dog mess, rubbish or litter, drug use or dealing and noisy neighbours. Although most of these issues are rated broadly the same, the top three are considered by tenants to be significantly less of a problem than before.
26. The level of satisfaction appears relatively low when respondents are asked about the approach to handling anti-social behaviour (50%), but this is normal as it's such a contentious issue with the benchmark average also being 55%. Nevertheless, nearly a quarter of tenants are actively dissatisfied in this regard (22%).

Wellbeing

27. When asked about feelings of loneliness and isolation, around a fifth of those who answered (21%) say they have felt this way to at least some extent, including 5% that explicitly feel this way. It is interesting that despite what one might expect, younger tenants are the most likely to feel lonely or isolated (section 10).
28. Around half of the sample say that they would consider going to the Council for help with wellbeing or money problems, most commonly older tenants. This means that when asked if they currently need help with well-being or money problems only 15% say they do, although this includes 25% of under 35s.



3. Services overall

70%
satisfied
overall



top 'key drivers'

1. repairs overall
2. listen to views
3. quality of home
4. treated fairly & with respect
5. safe and secure home



Overall satisfaction has fallen, but COVID disruption has suppressed satisfaction scores across the sector



The scores are generally below comparable landlords in the Housemark benchmark database



Repairs and maintenance is the strongest theme of the 'key driver' list, which are the best predictors of overall satisfaction



Substantial differences by age group, being much higher than average for the over 65s, but having fallen substantially amongst 50-64 year olds

3. Services overall

Overall tenant satisfaction with the services provided by Stroud District Council has **fallen** to 70% compared to the 81% achieved in 2019 amongst general needs tenants. However, the **pandemic** significantly suppressed customer satisfaction scores across the sector to the extent that even in 2022 they have yet to recover, so the Council's score has to be viewed in that context.

That said, the overall satisfaction rating remains well below the Housemark **benchmark** average of other comparable landlords, whereas it was much closer in 2019. Furthermore, most of results across the survey are also generally below the average benchmark scores.

In addition, a number of other ratings have also fallen by a statistically significant margin since the last survey, most notably satisfaction with the quality of the home (section 4), repairs (section 5) and being kept informed (section 7).

Note that 'statistically significant' means that the statistical test used to compare scores gave a positive result, showing we can be confident that the differences are real rather than being merely down to chance. Changes that are not statistically significant may also be real, but we cannot say that with the same degree of confidence.

In particular, the substantial 15% fall in satisfaction with the **repairs service** is the obvious explanation for the disappointing overall satisfaction score and is the dominant theme throughout the rest of the survey results. From the additional comments, issues with outstanding jobs seemed to be the main cause, such as delayed repairs, longstanding issues that were repeatedly reported, and incomplete work.

Key drivers

A 'key driver' analysis is a statistical test known as a 'regression' that identified those ratings throughout the survey that were most closely associated with overall satisfaction. This test does not mean that these factors directly caused the overall rating, but it does highlight the combination of factors that are the best predictors of overall satisfaction for tenants. This has the advantage of potentially identifying hidden links that respondents may not even be conscious of (see chart 3.2).

The main theme of the 2019 results, including the key drivers, was how influential the **repairs and maintenance** service was on perceptions as a whole. This pattern continues in 2022, although it is also very common amongst other landlords in the post pandemic era. Although over this period the repairs satisfaction scores have dropped significantly for most landlords, the Council's ratings have fallen further than most. This will not have been helped by the unfortunate timing of the move to an in-house repairs team that coincided with the start of the pandemic.

Satisfaction with the quality of the home has also fallen significantly, which is again a common pattern, and explains why this too is a key driver, as is safety and security as a third aspect of repairs and maintenance on this list.

Even the extent to which the Council listens to its tenants and acts on their views, which is the second strongest of the key drivers, is also most likely affected by repairs issues. However, this score had changed little since 2019, albeit still below the benchmark for similar landlords.

The remaining key driver is a new question from the regulator's TSM question list on the topic of fairness and respect, which is likely to be an important measure going forward (also see section 6).

3. Services overall

Appendix A

3.1 Overall satisfaction

% Base 780 | Excludes non respondents



Overall service provided by housing services



satisfied 2022 satisfied 2019 error margin bench mark

70 ▼ 81 +/- 3.2 **80** 4th



Change over time

- Overall satisfaction has fallen by a statistically significant 11%.
- The repairs and maintenance service remains a dominant factor as it was in 2019, with significant falls in satisfaction with this aspect of the service clearly impacting perceptions overall.

By people

- The most influential demographic category in most tenant surveys is **age group**, with similar patterns across all of the results. Overall satisfaction is highest amongst the youngest (67%, under 35s) and retirement age tenants (83%, over 65s). However, those aged 35 – 49 are typically the least satisfied age group. For full details see table 12.4.
- Satisfaction is relatively stable amongst the under 35s when compared to the 2019 findings (67%, was 66%), however other age groups are far less satisfied than they were three years ago including those aged 35-49 (63%, was 75%). Even greater falls are seen amongst 50-64 year olds (64%, was 81%) and those aged 65 or over (83%, was 93%)
- Overall satisfaction is also significantly lower for people that have felt lonely or isolated (51%), need help with wellbeing or money problems (55%), or had made contact with the council in the last year (66%).

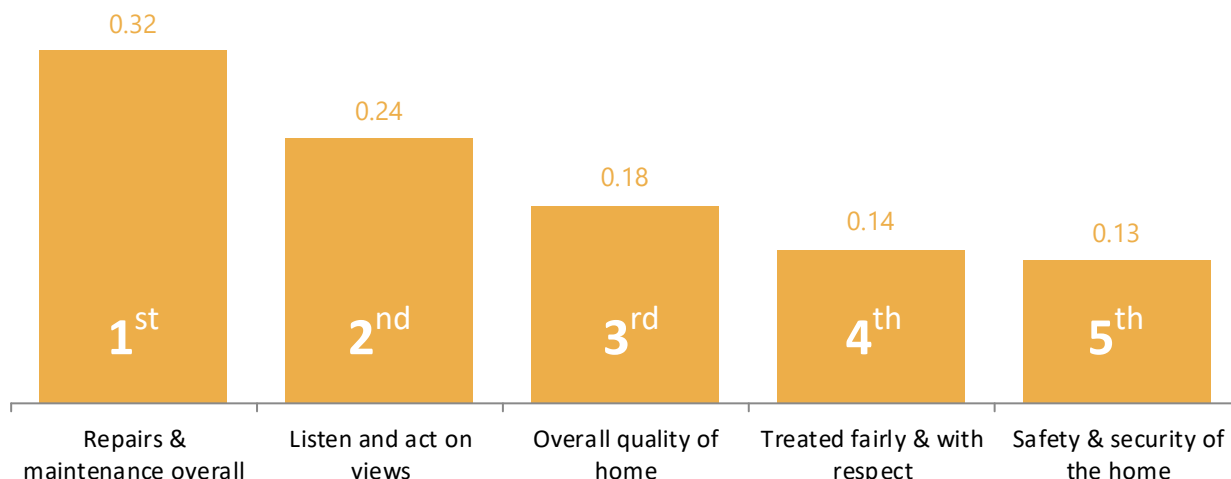
By place

- There are some significant differences by the seven main areas, with satisfaction significantly higher than average in **Housing 5** (79%), but significantly below average in Housing 2 (62%).
- Housing 2 residents were also typically less satisfied with other core ratings including the quality of the home, value for money and communal areas (section 4). Respondents in this patch were also significantly less satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service overall (section 5) and their neighbourhood as a place to live (section 8).
- Overall satisfaction is lower for tenants in **flats** (58%), compared to houses (72%) and bungalows (77%).

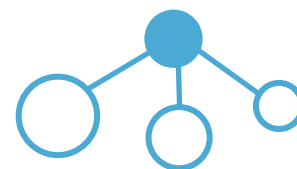
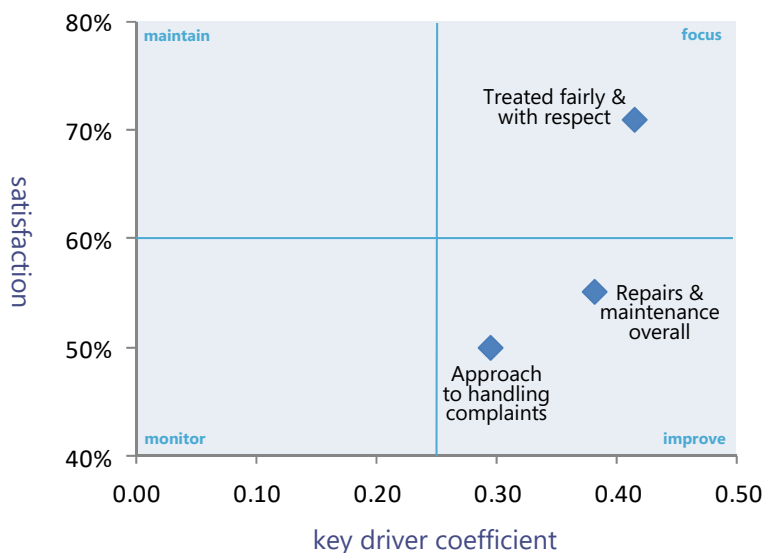
3. Services overall

3.2 Key drivers - overall satisfaction

R Square = 0.730 | Note that values are not percentages but are results of the statistics test. See Appendix A for more details.



3.3 Key drivers v satisfaction



A 'key driver' analysis uses a regression test to check which other results in the survey are best at predicting overall satisfaction. For a more detailed explanation of key drivers please see Appendix A.

3.4 Overall satisfaction by patch

	Sample size	% positive Overall satisfaction	
Overall	794	70	
Housing 1	172	68	
Housing 2	94	62	Significantly worse than average (95% confidence*)
Housing 3	121	68	Significantly worse than average (90% confidence*)
Housing 4	130	71	
Housing 5	57	79	Significantly better than average (95% confidence*)
Housing 6	140	72	Significantly better than average (90% confidence*)
Housing 7	81	72	

* See appendix A for further information on statistical tests and confidence levels

4. The home



Satisfaction with the quality of the home has significantly fallen



Both the quality and safety & security of the home are key drivers of overall satisfaction



The most commonly mentioned requests for property improvements related to damp, mould and condensation



Only 41% of those of communal areas are happy with how they are cleaned and maintained, which is well below average

4. The home

The last survey in 2019 was **before the pandemic**, so in common with most other landlords the satisfaction with the quality of the home has fallen, in this case from 81% to 72% amongst general needs tenants. This is, however, a greater **fall in satisfaction** than many others experienced, to the extent that the quality of the home is now rated in the third quartile compared to peer landlords (72% v 75%), whereas the Council was previously on par with the average.

Furthermore, the quality of the home is again a **key driver** of overall satisfaction (section 3), which provides further supporting evidence that repairs and maintenance issues are the overriding theme of this set of results, as the two questions are both inextricably linked and currently trending downwards.

Indeed, when tenants were asked at the end of the survey if there was anything else they would like to say, it is notable that over a third (37%) are **requests for property improvements**. Additional details on these comments can be found in section 11, but of particular note is that the single most commonly mentioned issue is **damp, mould or condensation**. This is obviously a high profile issue at a national level, and was also raised by 9% of the tenants who commented, which equates to 4% of all tenants. These comments show no strong pattern by age, area or property type, instead seeming to be distributed across the housing stock.

The next three most commonly requested property improvements are also in some way related, being windows replacements (8% of comments), doors (6%) and heating/energy efficiency (5%, chart 11.2).

Far fewer tenants commented about other **safety or security** issues, which also supported the finding that most tenants are satisfied with the safety and security of their home (78%), which is a new STAR/TSM question introduced since the last survey, including 44% that are 'very satisfied'. This result is also quite close to the benchmark median of 80% satisfied, and at the opposite end of the scale only 13% expressed any dissatisfaction. That isn't to say that this issue is unimportant, however, as safety and security is still the fifth strongest driver of overall satisfaction (section 3).

Another new question in this year's survey due to its inclusion in the new regulatory suite of questions asks about the cleanliness and maintenance of **communal areas**. Although there are currently only a few landlords in the Housemark database that have asked this new question, from the limited evidence available it would seem that the Council's score of 41% is unfortunately well **below average**. Indeed, an identical proportion are actively dissatisfied, including 26% that were 'very dissatisfied'. There is therefore scope to improve on this aspect of the service that is provided to around a fifth of tenant households, especially because of the renewed regulatory focus on communal areas.

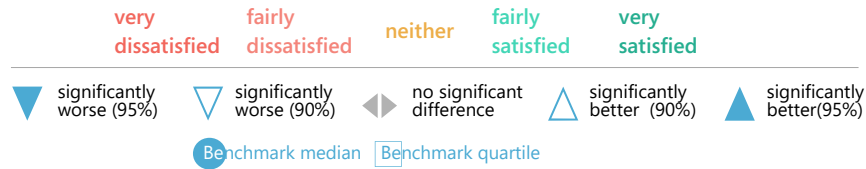
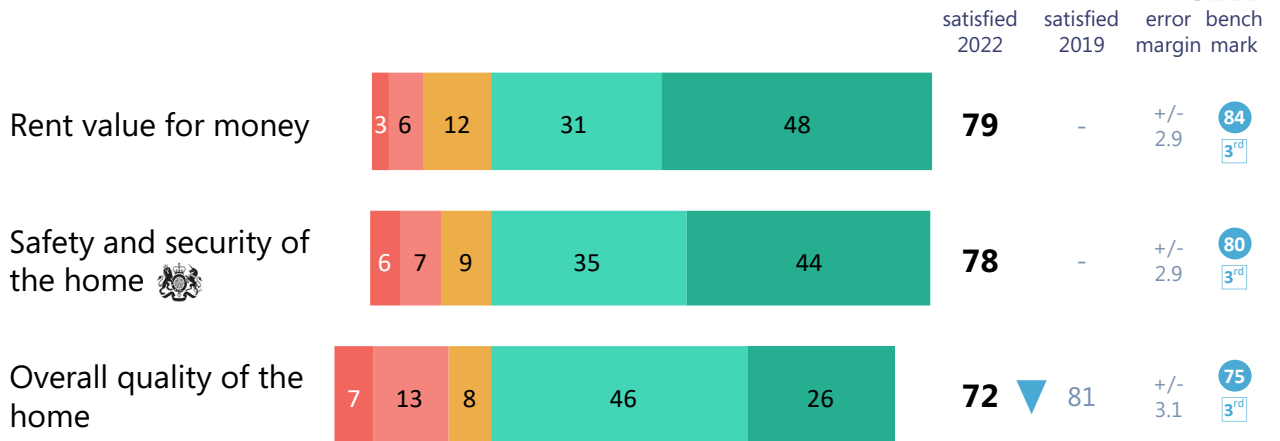
Finally, the last question in this section of the results concerns **rent value for money**, which is a STAR benchmarking question. Four out of five respondents are satisfied with their rent in terms of value for money, whilst one in ten are dissatisfied.

Although there is no historic data with which to compare, other surveys completed by ARP Research in the last few months have typically seen this figure fall during the current **cost of living crisis**. **This is important context when comparing the Council's satisfaction score of 79% to the benchmark** median of 84%, which is a lagging measure so won't yet reflect the real-world changes in the national economy, but the Council's score is nevertheless still 5% lower. In other surveys this score typically also moves in sympathy with the property maintenance and repair ratings, so the fact that all are below the benchmark level is unsurprising.

It should also be noted that whilst most tenants also agree that their rent and service charges are affordable (73%), over a third say that they feel financially insecure (36%, section 10).

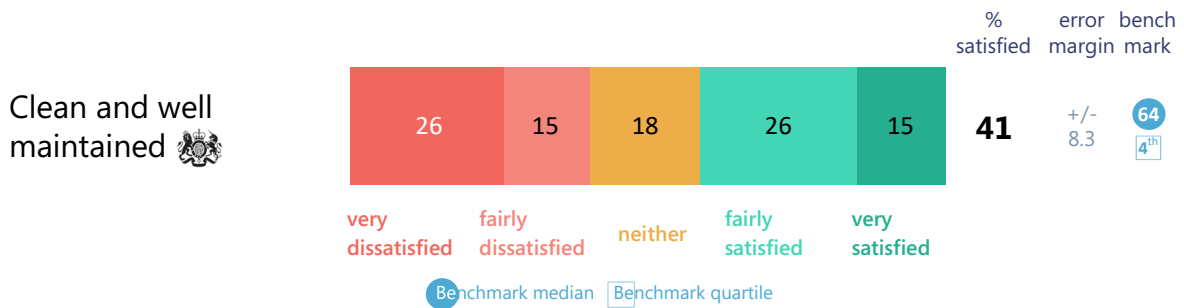
4.1 Satisfaction with the home

% Bases (descending) 781, 787, 791 | Excludes non respondents



4.2 Communal areas

% Bases (descending) 152 | Living in a property with communal areas. Excludes non respondents .



4. The home



Change over time

- Satisfaction with the quality of the home has fallen significantly since 2019 amongst general needs (72%, was 81%).



By people

- Slight fall in satisfaction amongst the under 35s with the quality of the home (64%, was 66%), but greater falls observed amongst the **35 – 49** year olds (65%, was 76%) and **50 – 64** year olds (68%, was 82%).
- Both the quality of the home and its safety/security is rated significantly lower than average by respondents who feel **lonely and isolated** (59% and 63% respectively).
- Respondents who live in a building with **communal areas** are significantly less satisfied with both the quality and safety/security of their homes (63% and 71%).
- Unsurprisingly, value for money for rent is rated significantly lower by tenants who need help with **wellbeing or money problems** (69%).



By place

- All property and value for money scores are lowest in the **Housing 2** area (see table 4.3 for scores by patch).
- Housing 2 respondents are significantly less satisfied than average with the quality of their home (68% inc. only 17% very satisfied), their rent in terms of value for money (71%) and the maintenance of communal areas (28%).
- In contrast, value for money is rated significantly higher than average in **Housing 5** (86%).
- Both the quality and safety/security are rated significantly higher than average in bungalows (81% and 85%), but significantly **lower in flats** (63% and 70%).
- Rent value for money for rent rated highest by tenants in bungalows (83%), then houses (78%), and the lowest score in flats (77%).

4.3 The home by patch

	Sample size	% positive			
		Quality of the home	Safety and security of home	Value for money for rent	Maintenance of communal areas
Overall	794	72	78	79	41
Housing 1	172	72	79	82	33
Housing 2	94	68 <small>* only 17% v. sat</small>	75	71	28
Housing 3	121	67	77	73	37
Housing 4	130	75	81	79	59
Housing 5	57	78	77	86	70
Housing 6	140	74	78	86	44
Housing 7	81	74	81	73	69

Significantly worse than average (95% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (95% confidence*)
Significantly worse than average (90% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (90% confidence*)

* See appendix A for further information on statistical tests and confidence levels



5. Repairs and maintenance

55%
▼



service overall

64%
▼



last repair 12 month period



Repairs and maintenance is the strongest key driver of overall satisfaction for the third survey in a row



Overall satisfaction has fallen by a significant 15% since 2019, with many tenants complaining about outstanding jobs



Repairs satisfaction is now well below the Housemark benchmark average, despite most landlord's scores also having suffered since the pandemic



The best predictor of satisfaction with the last completed repair is whether the job was done 'right first time'

5. Repairs and maintenance

Satisfaction with the repairs and maintenance service is the **strongest key driver** of overall satisfaction (section 3), continuing the pattern first observed in the 2015 STAR survey. This included a significant 9% fall in repairs satisfaction noted in 2019, and an even more dramatic **15% reduction** in the score this year. This means that only a little more than half of general needs tenants are generally satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service (55%), compared to a third that are actively dissatisfied (33%).

This is obviously a disappointing finding and will be a priority for the Council to improve, but it was at least partially expected when considering the significant disruption to repairs over the course of the **pandemic**, followed with the slow task of recovery. For context, other ARP Research clients experienced falls in repairs satisfaction of up to 10% immediately post-pandemic. Stroud DC also faced the added disruption of bringing repairs services in-house just as the pandemic started in Spring 2020.

Regardless of these factors, however, the current position in 2022 is that the Council’s overall rating is 16% lower than the Housemark **benchmark average**, whereas performance was still broadly on-par with its peers in 2019.

The primary reason for this disappointing result is apparent from the additional comments that respondents were able to make at the end of the survey, over half of which (58%) were about repairs and/or property improvements. Specifically, 18% of all comments, representing 9% of the entire sample, were about **outstanding repairs**. Additional details, including quotes, can be found in section 11, but this category covered comments on delayed repairs, longstanding issues that were repeatedly reported, and incomplete work.

The impact of these issues is stark when considering the satisfaction levels amongst these commenters, with only 13% of them still being positive about the repairs service, and just 39% having a positive perception of housing services overall. Looking at it from a different perspective, a quarter of tenants that claim to be dissatisfied with the overall housing service also mentioned problems with repairs work that remains outstanding.

Additionally, it is also important to note that the second most commonly mentioned repair issue was around being kept better **informed and updated** about repairs and maintenance work, including a number who complained that planned jobs were cancelled without their knowledge (chart 11.3).

The overall STAR repairs and maintenance rating is an all-encompassing question that touches on both responsive repairs and cyclical maintenance, with a wider scope than just current performance on a day-to-day basis. When tenants were only asked about their experience on the **last completed repair** within the previous 12 months, the figure of 64% (chart 5.3) is somewhat higher than the overall repairs score. However, it is also well below the Housemark benchmark median of 75% and followed a similar trajectory to the overall measure with a significant 18% decrease in the proportion of tenants that are satisfied.

Here it is important to note that the primary measure of repairs satisfaction that the housing regulator will be using from 2023/24 is slightly different again, asking tenants to rate their overall experience of the repairs service received during the prior twelve months. This question was also asked in this year’s survey to provide an initial baseline for it to become the headline question in future years, with the score of 65% being almost identical to the aforementioned STAR question on last completed repair (chart 5.2).

Respondents that had received a repair in the last year were also asked a handful of additional questions on their last experience, as seen in chart 5.6. The pattern of these answers is unsurprising in light of the extra comments made by tenants, with the overall quality of work being rated far higher than the timeliness (72% v 56%), with the rating for jobs being done ‘right first time’ appearing between the two (63% satisfied). Interestingly, when these questions are analysed to identify which was the strongest key driver of the last completed repair, doing the job **right first time** is the best predictor of satisfaction.

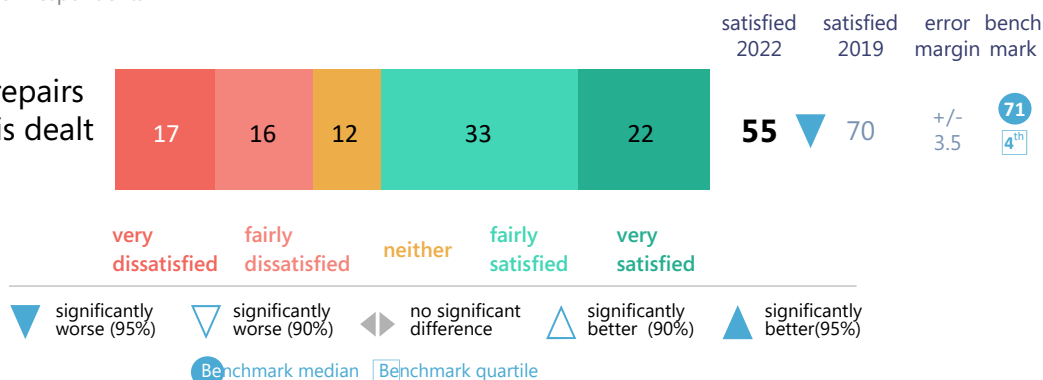


5.1 Overall repairs satisfaction

% Base 775 | Excludes non respondents



Generally, how repairs & maintenance is dealt with

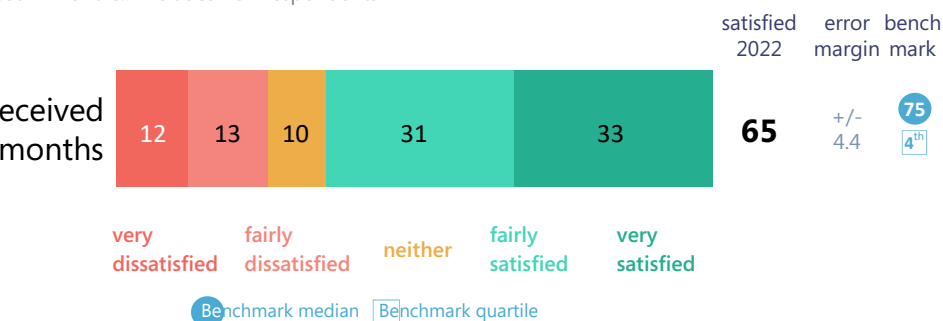


5.2 Repairs service in last 12 months

% Base 466 | Repair in last 12months.. Excludes non respondents



Repairs service received over the last 12 months



Change over time

- Satisfaction with the repairs and maintenance service remains the strongest key driver of overall satisfaction, as it was in both 2019 and 2015.
- Satisfaction with the repairs and maintenance service generally is down significantly from 70% to 55%.
- A smaller proportion of households received a repair this year compared to 2019 (60% v 68%).
- Satisfaction with the last completed repair is also down significantly from 82% to 64% and is now rated well below average.
- No change in perceptions of the **gas servicing** arrangements (chart 5.7).

By people

- **Older respondents** aged 65+ are significantly more satisfied than average with the repairs service overall (72%), compared to just 48% of working age tenants, including only 43% of the under 35s.
- Each aspect of the last completed repair is also rated significantly higher than average by tenants aged 65 or over.

By place

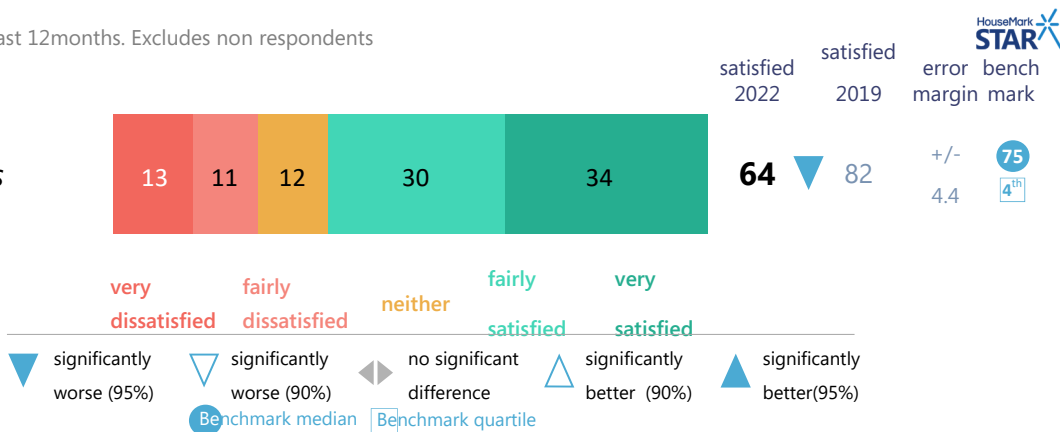
- Only one statistically significant difference by patch in terms of overall satisfaction, with respondents in **Housing 2** significantly less satisfied than average (46%, see table 5.8).
- The repairs and maintenance service overall is rated significantly lower amongst respondents in **flats** (47%), but significantly above average for those in bungalows (60%), with satisfaction somewhere in between for those in houses (57%).

5. Repairs and maintenance

5.3 Last repair

% Base 464 | Repair in last 12months. Excludes non respondents

Repairs service received on *this occasion*

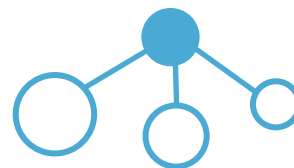
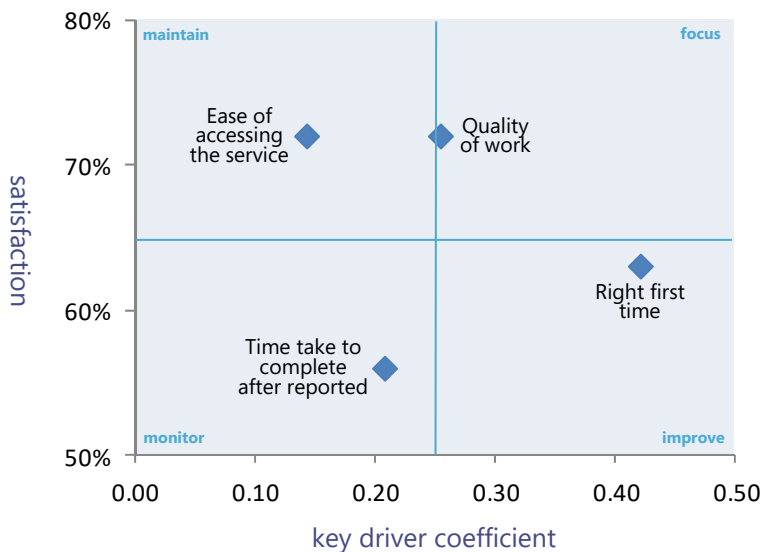


5.4 Key drivers - satisfaction with last repair

R Square = 0.851 | Note that values are not percentages but are results of the statistics test. See Appendix A for more details.



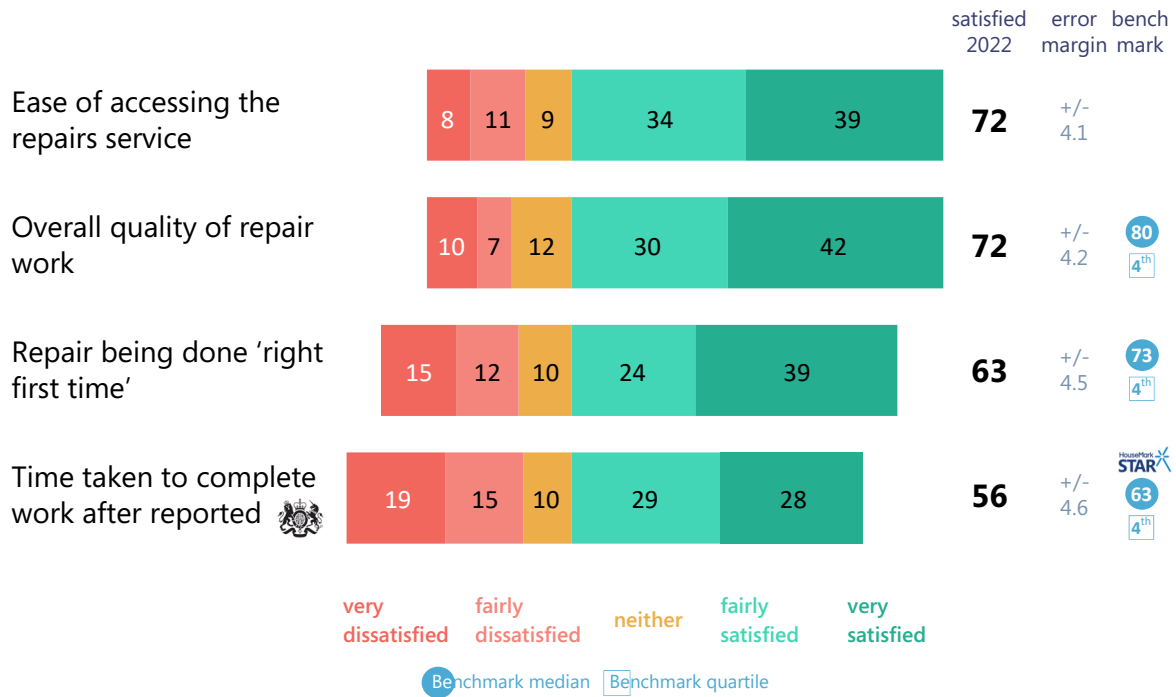
5.5 Key drivers v satisfaction



A 'key driver' analysis uses a regression test to check which other results in the survey are best at predicting overall satisfaction. For a more detailed explanation of key drivers please see Appendix A.

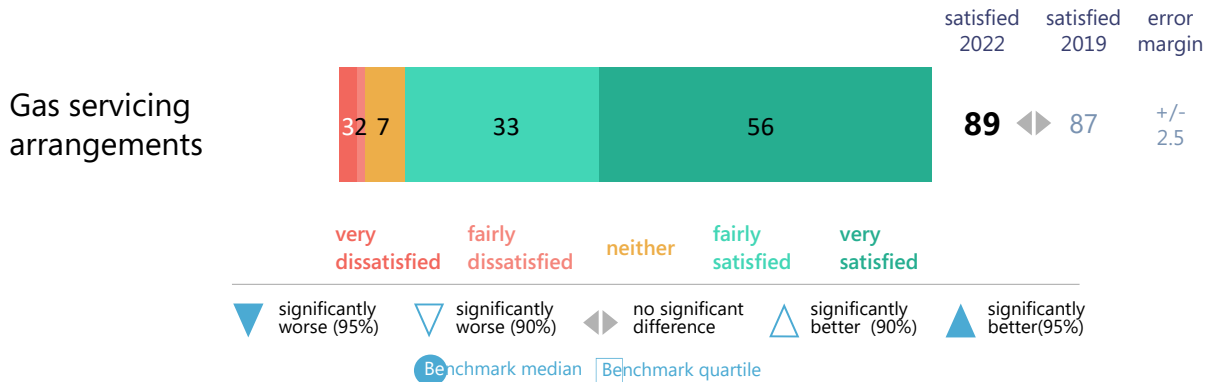
5.6 Last completed repair

% Bases (descending) 465, 462, 465, 465 | Repair in last 12 months. Excludes non respondents.



5.7 Gas servicing

% Base 631 | Excludes non respondents



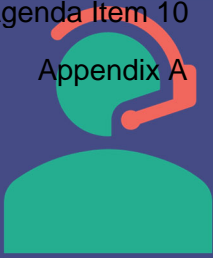
5. Repairs and maintenance

5.8 Last completed repair by contractor and area

	Base	Generally how repairs and maintenance is dealt with	Repairs service received over the last 12 months	Gas servicing arrangements	Ease of accessing the repairs service	Time taken to complete the repair after reported	The overall quality of the work	The repair being done 'right first time'	The repairs service received on this occasion
Overall	794	55	65	89	72	56	72	63	63
Housing 1	172	51	64	87	67	53	72	60	59
Housing 2	94	46	60	83	77	61	72	61	64
Housing 3	121	55	67	86	69	55	73	71	63
Housing 4	130	63	63	93	74	59	70	65	67
Housing 5	57	55	60	93	79	61	77	62	65
Housing 6	140	57	68	92	72	58	67	62	64
Housing 7	81	59	67	88	73	51	75	61	68

Significantly worse than average (95% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (95% confidence*)
Significantly worse than average (90% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (90% confidence*)

* See appendix A for further information on statistical tests and confidence levels



6. Customer service



Most tenants feel they are treated fairly and with respect, which is both a new regulatory question and a key driver



The 'customer effort' score for how easy housing services is well below the benchmark median at 66% v 79%



The most commonly mentioned customer service issues are not returning calls or messages, and problems getting hold of the right person

6. Contact and communication

The 2022 survey included the new STAR core question asking if tenants find Housing Services easy to deal with, which is also known as a '**customer effort**' score, as it considers the experience in a holistic way from the perspective of the customer, rather than internal business processes. Two thirds of general needs tenants are satisfied this was the case, however a fifth responded to the contrary.

Because there is no previous data for this question it isn't clear how the customer experience has changed since 2019, however, because repairs is the most common reason for tenants to contact their landlord, it is reasonable to assume that disappointing repairs results will have also suppressed this score. This theory is supported by the fact that the customer effort score is also considerably below the equivalent Housemark benchmark target of 79%, and by the finding that tenants who had recently made contact are less satisfied than those that have not (see below).

Analysis of the additional comments tenants made at the end of the survey revealed that the most frequent complaints about the customer service experience, both of which will make the Council harder to deal with, are **not returning calls** or messages, and problems **getting hold of the right person** (chart 11.5).

Another related question asks tenants if they are treated **fairly and with respect**. This is one of the new TSM regulatory measures that all landlords will have to report in future years. The initial limited benchmark data suggests that the Council's score for this question is closer to the average for other landlords (71% agree, 75% benchmark). This is also a key driver of satisfaction.

Two further detailed questions were also asked of all tenants that had made contact with Housing Services over the last twelve months, something which two thirds of respondents had done (68%, down from 77%). Whilst seven out of ten respondents are satisfied that **staff were helpful** (70%), slightly fewer were satisfied that they were able to **deal with their query** (63%). Ratings for both are again below average appearing the benchmark fourth quartile, with a fifth being dissatisfied that staff were helpful, whilst a quarter were dissatisfied with how they dealt with their query.



Change over time

- Around two thirds of respondents (68%) had been in contact in the previous year, far fewer than in 2019 (was 77%), with those making contact typically less satisfied than average with most core measures.



By people

- Customer effort score is lowest for the **under 35s** (58%), with those aged 35 – 49 being significantly less satisfied than average (61%).
- Respondents who have **made contact** in the last year are significantly less satisfied than average that they were easy to deal compared to those who had not (63% v 74%).
- Respondents **aged 35 – 49** are significantly less likely to agree that they are treated fairly and with respect than any other age group (64%), compared to 81% of those aged 65 or over.

- Again, this is rated significantly lower than average by respondents who had **been in contact** in the previous year (68%) compared to 80% amongst those who had not.
- Respondents who have **had a repair** in the previous year are significantly more satisfied with their last contact in terms of helpfulness and ability of staff to deal with their query (75% and 67% respectively).



By place

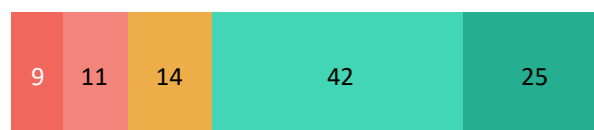
- Respondents in **Housing 5** are significantly more satisfied than average that housing services were easy to deal with.
- Tenants in **flats** are significantly less likely to agree that they were treated fairly and with respect (60%).

6.1 Customer effort

% Base 766 | Excludes non respondents



Housing Services is easy to deal with



satisfied 2022: **66**, error margin: +/- 3.3, bench mark: **79** (4th)

very dissatisfied, fairly dissatisfied, neither, fairly satisfied, very satisfied

Benchmark median, Benchmark quartile

6.2 Treats residents fairly and with respect

% Base 761 | Excludes non respondents

Housing Services treats its residents fairly and with respect



agree 2022: **71**, error margin: +/- 3.2, bench mark: **75** (3rd)

strongly disagree, tend to disagree, neither, tend to agree, strongly agree

Benchmark median, Benchmark quartile

6.3 Last contact

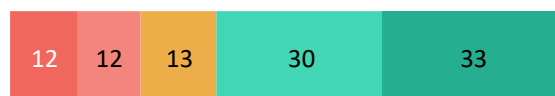
% Bases (descending) 535, 529 | Contact in last 12 months. Excludes non respondents.

Helpfulness of staff



satisfied 2022: **70**, error margin: +/- 3.9, bench mark: **84** (4th)

Ability to deal with query



satisfied 2022: **63**, error margin: +/- 4.1, bench mark: **73** (4th)

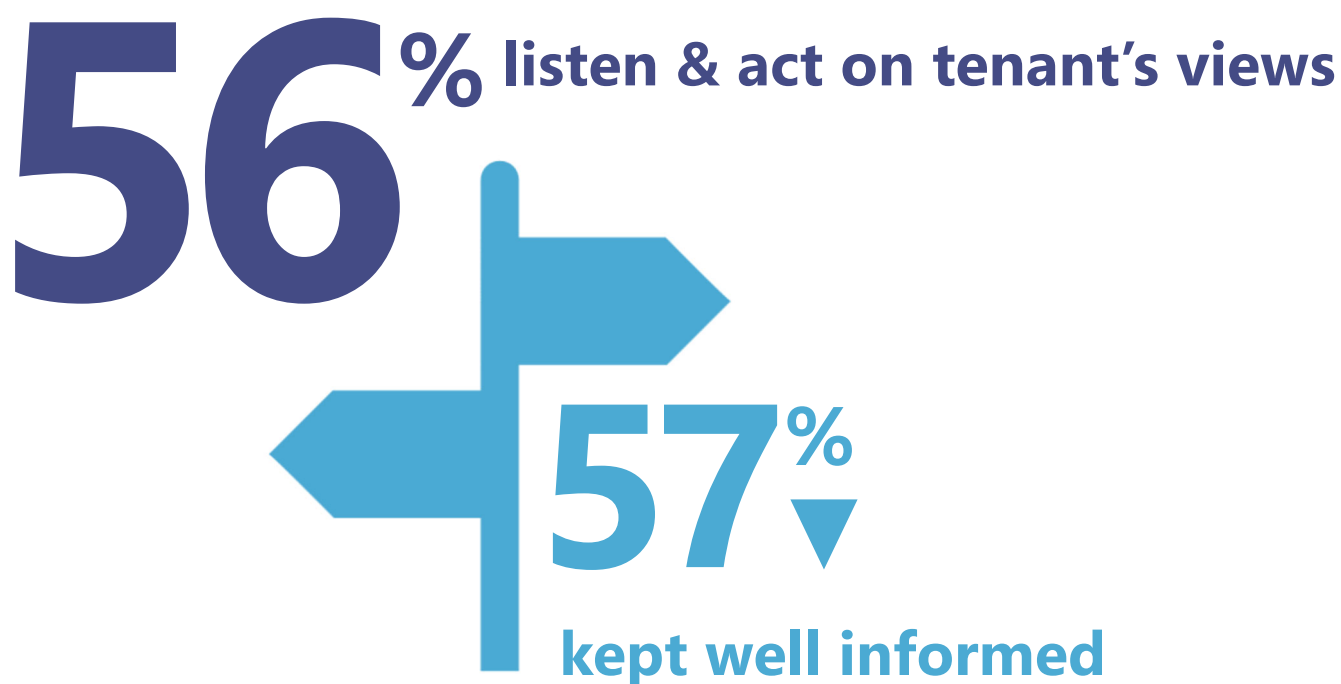
very dissatisfied, fairly dissatisfied, neither, fairly satisfied, very satisfied

Benchmark median, Benchmark quartile





7. Communication



Listening and taking account of tenants' views is the second strongest key driver of overall satisfaction



A statistically significant 15% fall in how satisfied tenants are that they are kept informed, most likely linked to repairs



Just over a quarter are interested in having their say, with online and social media polls the most popular method



Around three quarters of tenants (78%) use the internet, including a third that use the Council's online services

Listening to views and acting upon them is now the second strongest key driver of overall satisfaction, having previously not appeared on the list in 2019 (section 3). Experience of other similar surveys has shown that in answering this question, respondents are just as likely to consider day to day transactions such as telephone queries and the repairs process, as they are to think about wider resident involvement and consultation. Accordingly, it is likely that its status as a key driver is also linked to the wider issues with the repairs service.

This rating hasn't seen the same dramatic changes as others within the survey, as since 2019 it has fallen only slightly by a statistically insignificant 2%. However, this makes for a cumulative 8% drop since 2015, with this year's score of 56% being 9% below the Housemark benchmark. Indeed, at the opposite end of the scale almost a quarter of respondents are actively dissatisfied (23%).

Nevertheless, whether tenants feel that they are **kept informed** is the only aspect of communication in chart 7.1 where satisfaction has fallen significantly, from 72% to 57%, with 22% dissatisfied. This too is almost certainly as a consequence of repairs issues, as many additional comments mentioned lack of information or updates on outstanding repairs (chart 11.3). This question is one of those included in the new TSM housing regulator survey starting next year, and the score needs to recover by 6% to match the average amongst other landlords.

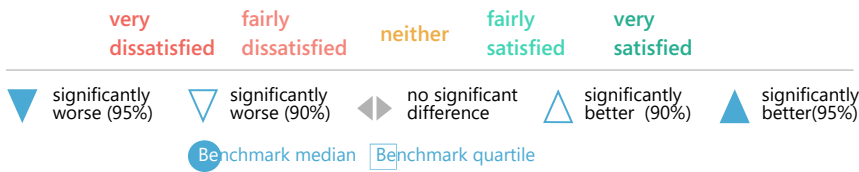
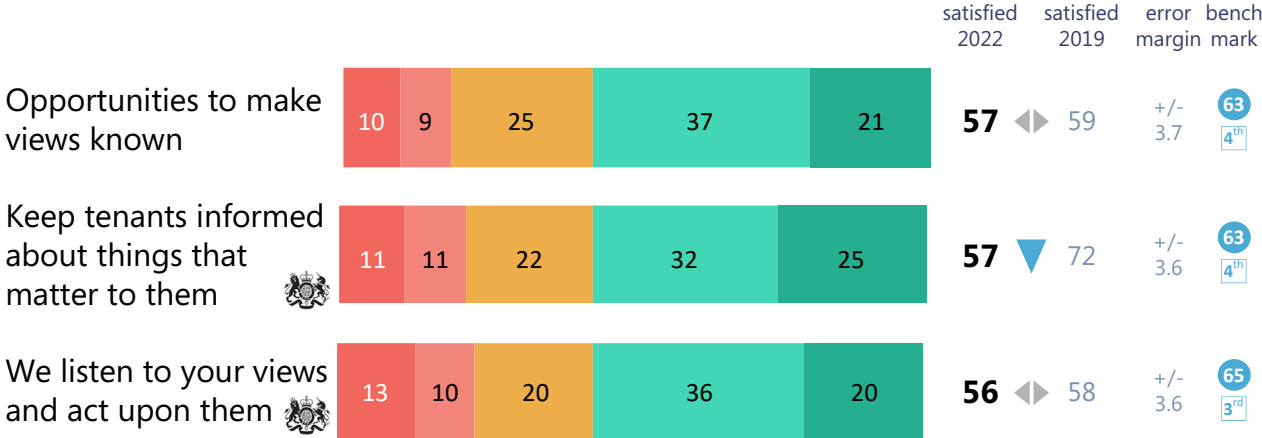
In reference to **wider resident** involvement activities, respondents were asked to rate their opportunities to get involved by making their views known, something which around three out of five tenants are satisfied with (58%, was 55%). Unfortunately, this is also six points lower than the benchmark level of 63%, however, a sizeable proportion chose the middle 'neither' option (25%) suggesting a lack of awareness or understanding of how to do this. Indeed only 19% are actively dissatisfied.

Similarly, only a little over a quarter of general needs tenants are interested in **having a say** about services, with the most popular method of doing so being through participation in short online/social media polls (22%). There is, however, a widespread deviation on this by age (see page 26).

7. Communication

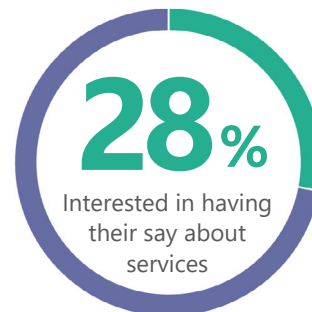
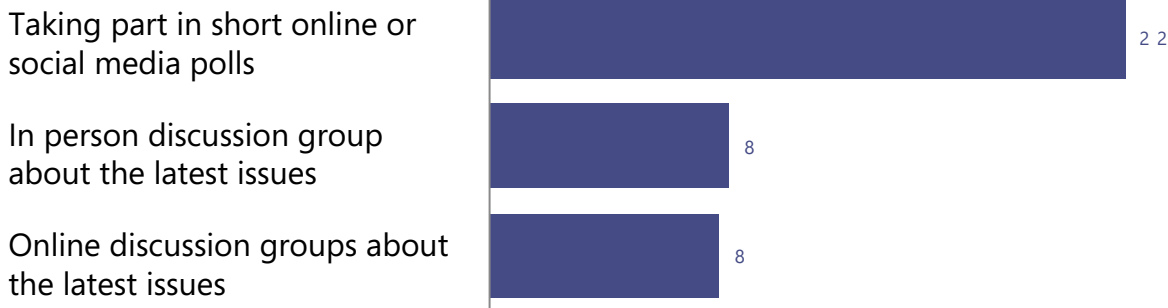
7.1 Communication

% Bases (descending) 707, 721, 735 | Excludes non respondents



7.3 Preferred method of having a say

% Base 794 | More than one answer allowed





Change over time

- No significant change in satisfaction with being listened to and having views acted upon (56%, was 58%). Same with the rating for opportunities to make views known (57%, was 59%).
- Significant fall in satisfaction with being kept informed from 72% to 57%.
- Slight increase in the proportion of respondents **using the internet** from 71% to 78%.
- More than double the proportion of respondents would like to receive an electronic version of the **newsletter** compared to 2019 (38%, was 17%). A paper version remains the preferred method for just over half of the sample (55%), but this is down 20% compared to three years ago (was 75%).
- Respondents aged 65 or over remain significantly more satisfied than average that they are listened to (66%), however satisfaction amongst this group is down compared to the previous findings (was 72%).
- Satisfaction with being **kept informed** is down across all age groups with the biggest fall amongst the under 35s (48%, was 71%).
- Ratings for both listening to tenants and information are significantly lower if the tenant has felt lonely or isolated (42%/43%) or made contact in the previous year (58%/55%).
- 95% of under 35s **use the internet** compared to 56% of those aged 65 or over.
- Similarly, an **online newsletter** is the preferred option amongst the majority of under 50s (61%), but paper is preferred by the majority of over 50s (72%).



By people

- Satisfaction with **being listened to** is up amongst the under 35s (56%, was 47%) and those aged 35 – 49 (51%, was 48%). Previously, both groups were significantly less satisfied than average, however this is no longer the case.
- Two fifths of tenants aged under 35 are interested in **having a say** about the services, only 14% of the over 65s said the same. Unsurprisingly, younger respondents favoured doing this online via poll (35%) or discussion groups (18%).



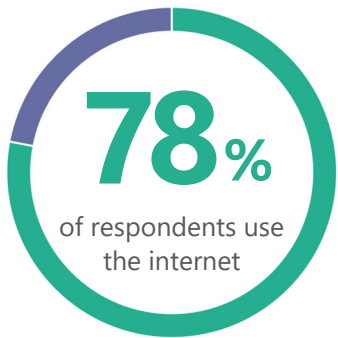
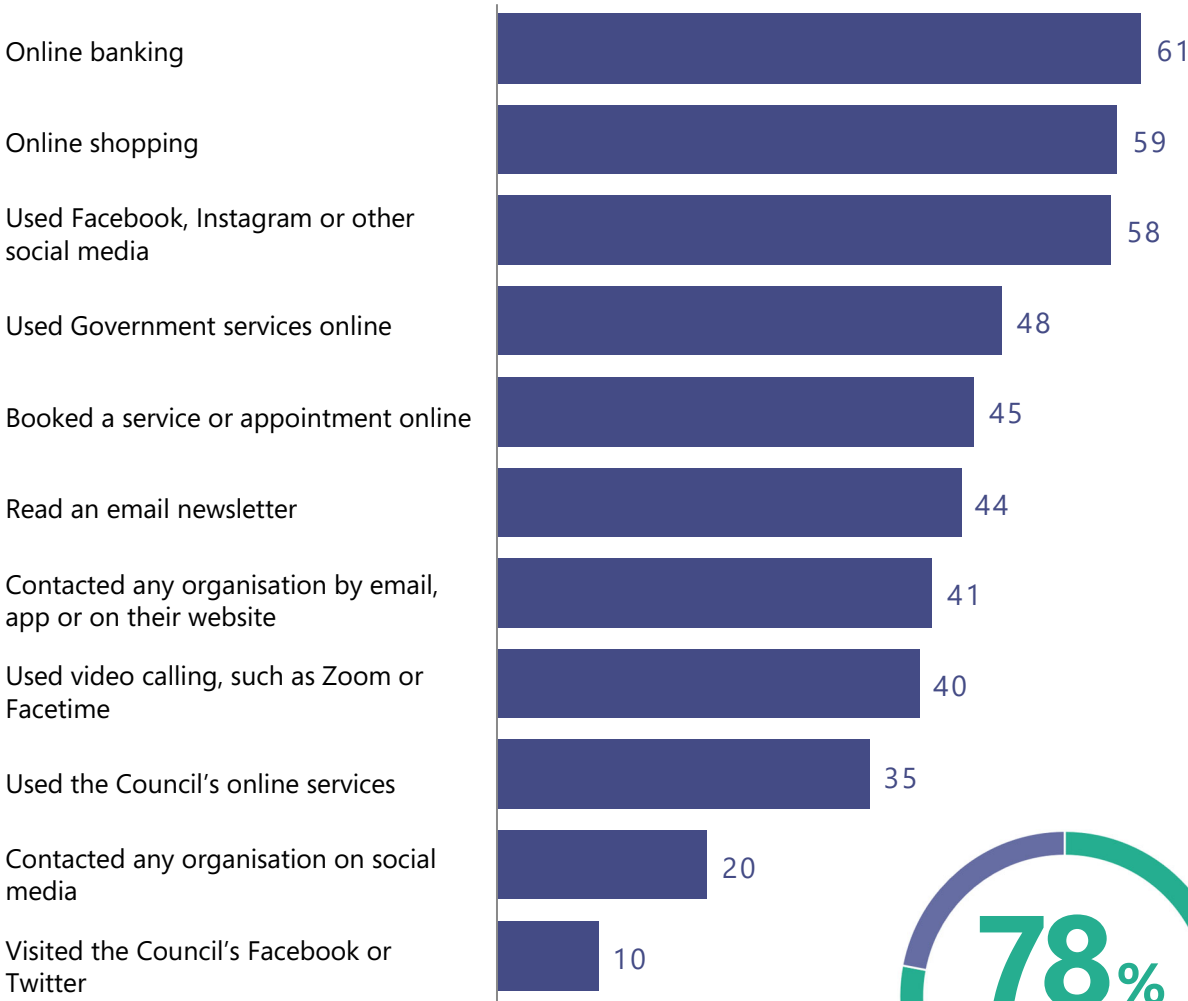
By place

- There are no notable distinctions in these results by property or geographical area that were not linked to age.

7. Communication

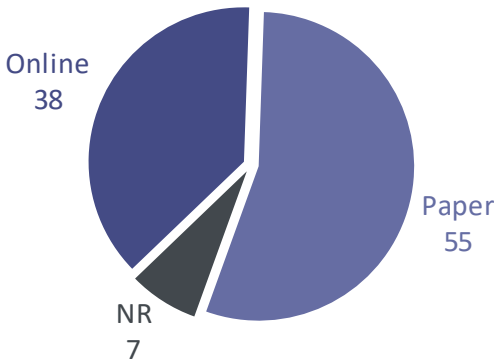
7.4 Used apps or websites to do any of the following

% Base 794 | More than one answer allowed



7.2 Preferred method of receiving a newsletter

% Base 794





8. Neighbourhood services

77%
good place
to live



**greatest
problems**

1. dog fouling/mess
2. rubbish or litter
3. drug use or dealing



All questions in this section are broadly on par with the benchmarks



Satisfaction with the grounds maintenance service is unchanged, remained slightly above the ARP benchmark



Dog mess, litter and drugs are all rated as significantly smaller problems compared to 2019.

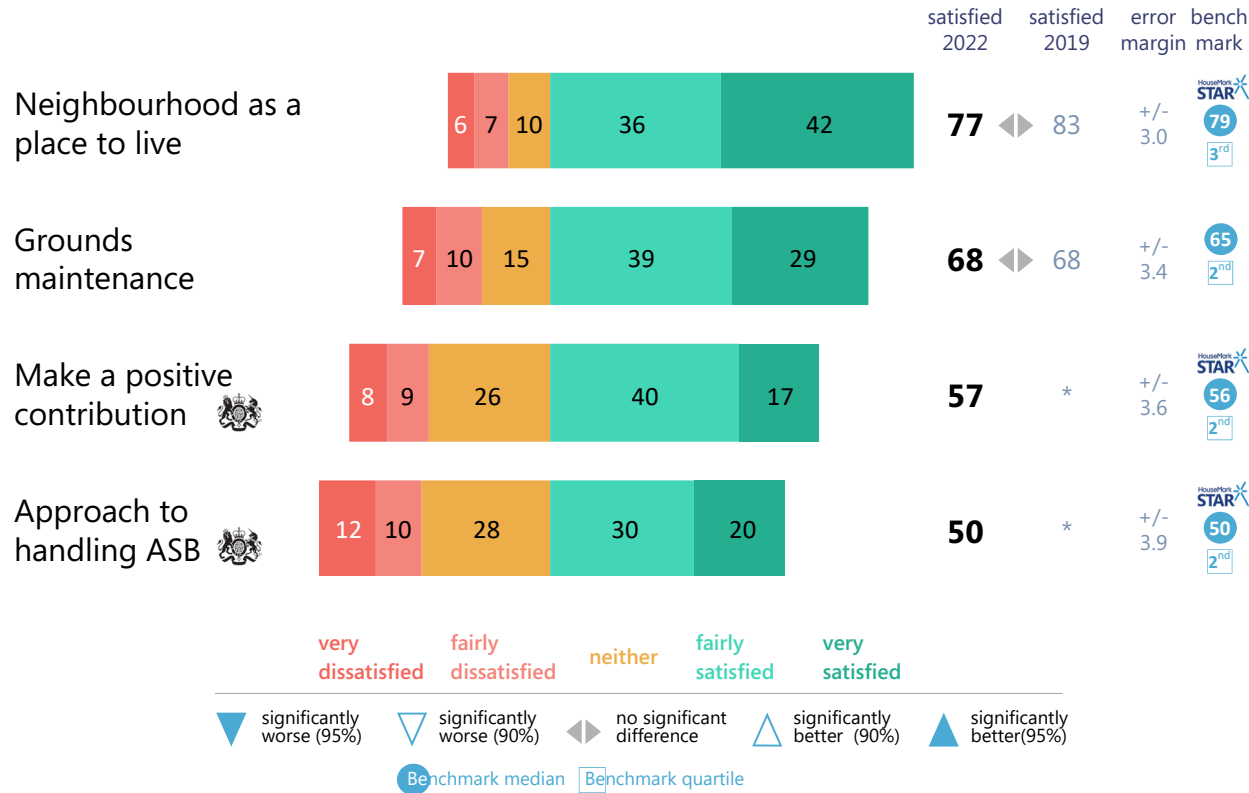


Residents of patches 4 and 7 report the greatest number of neighbourhood issues, whilst patches 1 and 5 report the least

8. Neighbourhood

8.1 Neighbourhood services

% Bases (descending) 765, 713, 712, 624 | Excludes non respondents



When asked to rate their local area, just over three quarters of respondents are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a **place to live** (77%), compared to only 13% that were dissatisfied. This figure has fallen, but not by a statistically significant margin, and is broadly on par with comparable landlords. Other landlords have seen this score fall since the pandemic, so the small drop is to be expected.

A new addition to the survey this year is another question from the TSM regulatory framework asks respondents to specifically rate whether they think their landlord makes a **positive contribution** to their neighbourhood, something 57% of respondents are satisfied with, compared to 17% that are dissatisfied. As this is a relatively new question, available benchmark data is based on only a limited number of other surveys, but the Council’s score appears to be broadly in line with what other landlords have achieved so far.

One score that has not changed is the satisfied rating for the standard of **grounds maintenance**, which remains in the second quartile of ARP benchmarks being three points above the median of 65%.

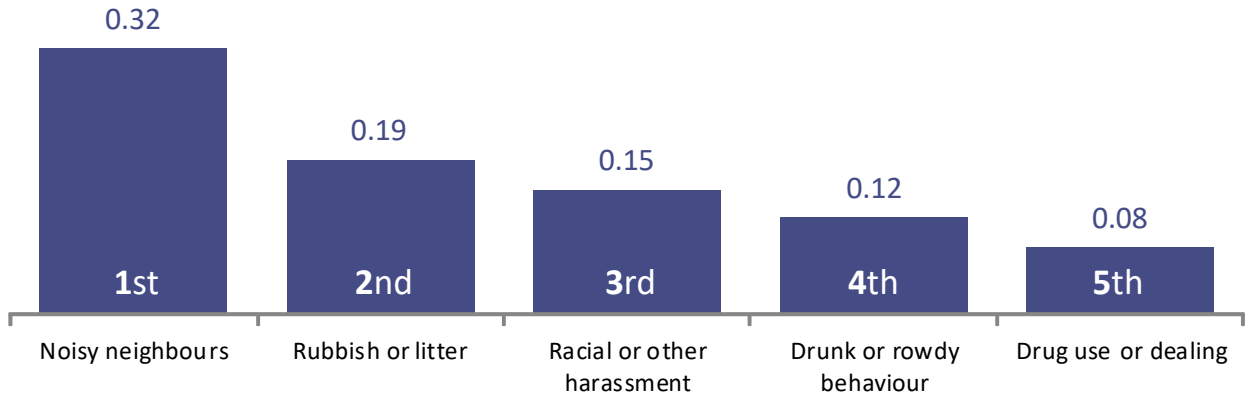
As in 2019 the biggest neighbourhood problems are dog fouling/dog mess, rubbish or litter, drug use or dealing and noisy neighbours, with most of these also being key drivers of satisfaction with the neighbourhood.

Although most of these issues are rated broadly the same as they were at the time of the last survey, it is notable that the **top three**, i.e. dog fouling/mess, rubbish or litter and drug use or dealing are considered significantly less of a problem than before.

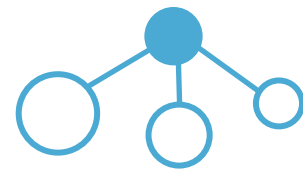
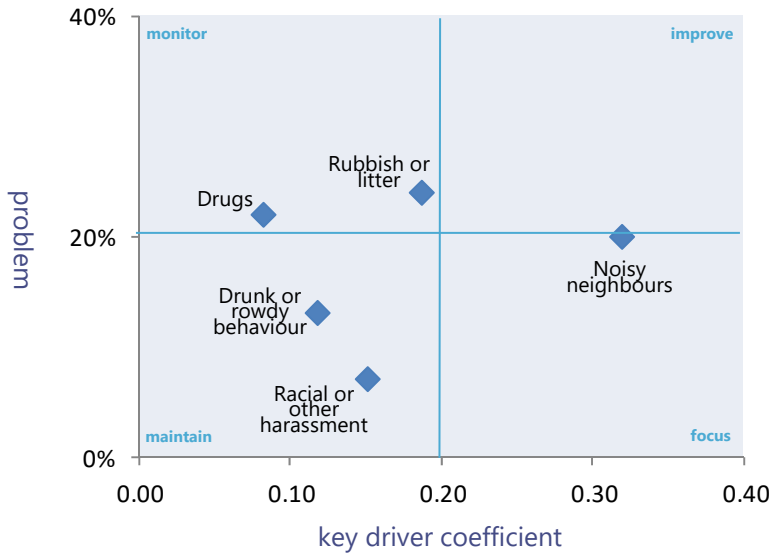
Specifically on the issue of **anti-social behaviour**, the perception of how this is handled by housing services is the lowest ranked aspect in chart 8.1 and although this means that just 50% of respondents are satisfied, this is exactly on par with the average in the benchmark database. In addition to being most commonly mentioned neighbourhood issue in the additional comments that tenants gave (see section 11), this will take on added importance as it is another TSM question that will be reported to the Regulator of Social Housing from the next financial year onwards.

8.2 Key drivers - problems in the neighbourhood

R Square = 0.452 | Note that values are not percentages but are results of the statistics test. See Appendix A for more details.



8.3 Key drivers v problems



A 'key driver' analysis uses a regression test to check which other results in the survey are best at predicting overall satisfaction. For a more detailed explanation of key drivers please see Appendix A.

8. Neighbourhood



Change over time

- No significant change in satisfaction with the neighbourhood as a place to live but it has fallen six points from 83% to 77%.
- No change at all in satisfaction with the grounds maintenance service with two thirds satisfied (68%).
- Dog fouling, rubbish or litter and drug use/ dealing remain the three most problematic neighbourhood issues, however they're significantly less of a problem than they were in 2019 (chart 8.4).



By people

- Significantly lower than average scores if reported feel **lonely or isolated**, for example only 63% of this group are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live.
- Pattern **by age** is similar to 2019, in that the under 35s are the least satisfied (67%, was 73%) with those aged 35 – 49 significantly less satisfied than average with their neighbourhood as a place to live (68%, was 77%). Tenants aged 65 or over remains significantly more satisfied than average, with only a slight drop in satisfaction amongst this group (88%, was 91%).

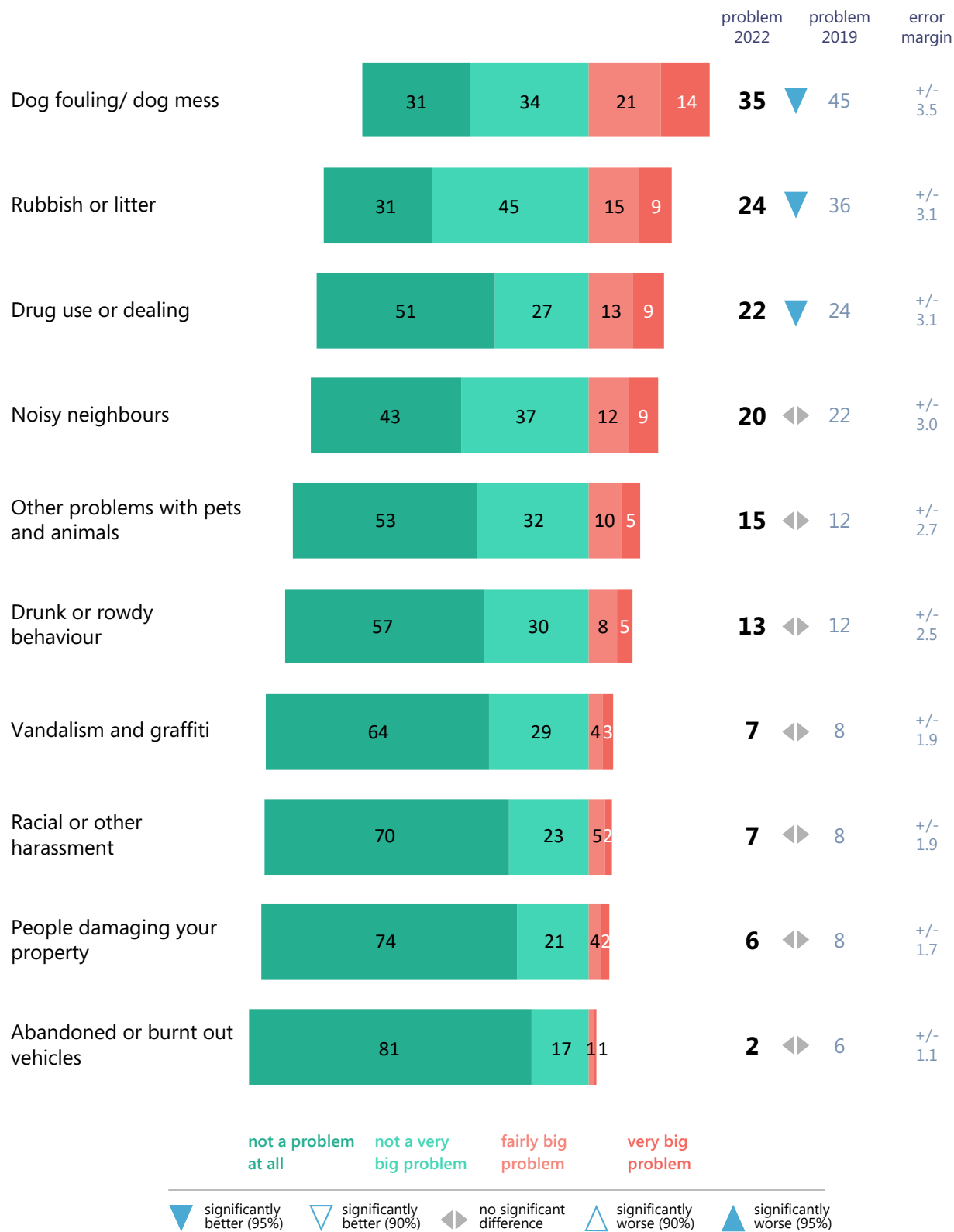


By place

- Some variations by patch in neighbourhood satisfaction as a place to live, with satisfaction in **Housing 2** significantly lower than average (68%), but significantly higher than average in **Housing 1** (83%).
- Tenants in **Housing 1** are also significantly more satisfied than average with the grounds maintenance service (77%).
- Detailed results by area can be found in tables 8.5 and 8.6. Some neighbourhood issues were significantly more of a problem in the **Housing 4 and 7**, but significantly less of a concern in **Housing patches 1 and 5**.
- Respondents in bungalows are significantly more satisfied with their neighbourhood (89%), whereas those in **flats** are significantly less so (65%). The same is true for the positive contribution rating (64% 'bungalows', 50% 'flats').
- Noisy neighbours and rubbish/litter is a significant concern for those living in flats (31% and 38%).

8.4 Neighbourhood problems

% Bases (descending) 729, 723, 708, 706, 698, 705, 697, 699, 703, 700 | Excludes non respondents.



8. Neighbourhood

8.5 Neighbourhood problems by patch

	Base	% problem									
		Rubbish or litter	Noisy neighbours	Dog fouling/dog mess	Other problems with pets and animals	Racial or other harassment	Drunk or rowdy behaviour	Vandalism and graffiti	People damaging your property	Drug use or dealing	Abandoned or burnt out vehicles
Overall	794	24	20	35	15	7	13	7	6	22	2
Housing 1	172	14	14	30	12	3	5	4	3	10	2
Housing 2	94	24	22	38	13	7	18	4	5	21	0
Housing 3	121	25	18	31	14	6	12	2	2	26	1
Housing 4	130	31	14	41	18	6	9	11	8	26	3
Housing 5	57	12	17	37	15	6	8	0	7	11	3
Housing 6	140	29	29	34	16	9	20	10	6	28	5
Housing 7	81	29	30	37	17	11	19	19	15	30	0

8.6 Neighbourhood ratings by patch

	Base	% positive			
		Neighbourhood as a place to live	Positive contribution to neighbourhood	Grounds maintenance service	Dealing with ASB
Overall	794	77	57	68	50
Housing 1	172	83	58	77	56
Housing 2	94	68	52	61	52
Housing 3	121	76	53	71	38
Housing 4	130	77	64	73	57
Housing 5	57	88	55	66	46
Housing 6	140	76	56	57	48
Housing 7	81	75	57	65	43

Significantly worse than average (95% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (95% confidence*)
Significantly worse than average (90% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (90% confidence*)

* See appendix A for further information on statistical tests and confidence levels

9. Complaints

50%



complaints handling

72%



know how to make a complaint



Satisfaction with complaints handling is a slightly above the benchmark average



Be aware that many respondents that claim to have made a complaint will not have used the formal complaints system

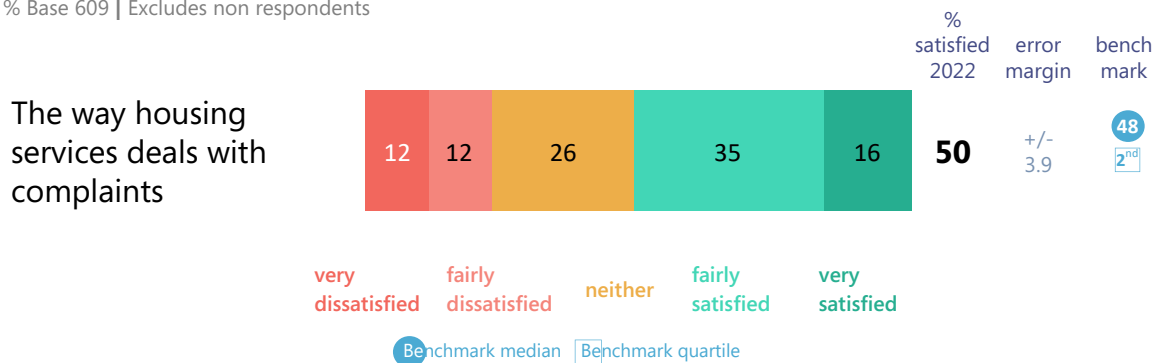


35-49 year olds are significantly less likely to either be aware of, or satisfied with, the process for complaints

9. Complaints

9.1 Overall the way housing management services deals with complaints

% Base 609 | Excludes non respondents



A new question was added to the 2022 survey asking tenants to rate how well housing services handle complaints. This is yet another result that the Council will have to report to the regulator in future years, but a very important point to consider that relatively few of those answering the question will be referring to the **formal complaints** process. Indeed, the experience with such questions with other landlords shows that that only a small minority of tenants that think they have made a complaint have ever used the formal process, and some even categorise standard repairs reports as complaints.

With that caveat, **awareness** of the complaints process seems high as almost three quarters of the sample feel that they know how to make a complaint, compared to only 14% that actively disagree.

Only half of the sample are satisfied with how the Council deals with complaints (50%), whilst a quarter are actively dissatisfied (24%). However, when placed in context with other similar landlords this score is actually quite good being slightly **above the median** score of 48%.

By people

- Respondents aged **35 – 49** are significantly less satisfied than average with complaint handling (41%).
- The same age group were also less likely to agree that they know how to make a complaint (64%).



By place

- There are no significant variations by patch but there was by property type, with satisfaction significantly higher amongst respondents in bungalows and significantly lower for those living in **flats** (58% and 44% respectively).
- Awareness of how to make a complaint is lowest in flats, with only 66% of this group agreeing they know how to make a complaint.



10. Well-being



Feelings of loneliness and isolation are more common amongst the under 35s than the over 64s



15% of respondents strongly disagreed that they were financially secure



Financial security is rated lowest in the 35-49 age group



Around half would consider wellbeing or financial help from their landlord, with 15% currently feeling in need of such support

10. Well-being

The past few years have been a challenging time for many households, including long periods of lockdown and reduced social contact, during which customer well-being has become a more important focus across the sector.

When asked about feelings of **loneliness and isolation**, around a fifth of those who answered (21%) say they have felt this way to at least some extent, including 5% that explicitly feel this way. This group were also significantly less satisfied with the majority of the opinion rating statements asked throughout the survey. It is interesting that despite what one might expect, younger tenants are the most likely to feel lonely or isolated (see below).

Another topical issue is financial wellbeing, with the survey fieldwork completed at a time when the cost-of-living crisis was a major part of the national conversation. Earlier in the survey results it was found that the Council's value for money score of 78% is somewhat below the benchmark median average (section 4), but it is interesting that this is still a slightly greater proportion than find their rent and service charges to be affordable (73%). Of greatest import, however, is the fact that only a third of tenants currently feel **financially secure** (34%), whilst a similar proportion actively disagree (36%).

However, only around half of the sample say that they would consider going to the **Council for help** with wellbeing or money problems, most commonly older tenants (see below), which means that when asked if they currently need help with well-being or money problems around one in seven say they do (15%). Indeed, only 29% of tenants that feel financially insecure think they need help from the Council, as do 38% of those that feel lonely or isolated.

By people

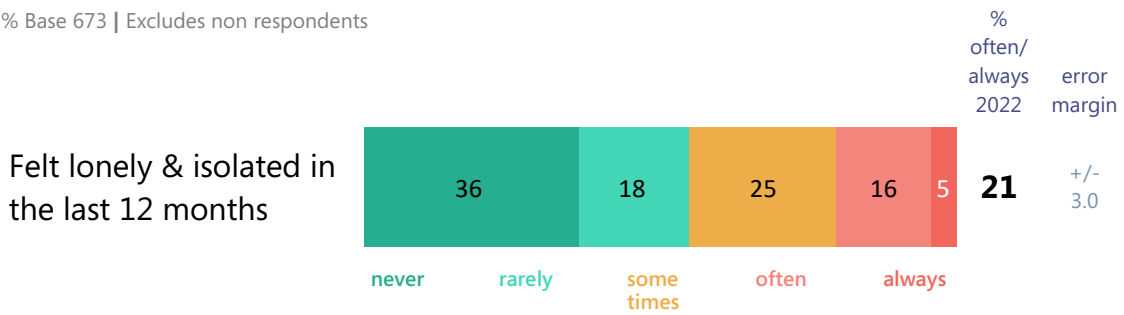
- Younger respondents are more likely than the oldest to say they always/often feel **lonely or isolated** (26% under 35s v 14% aged 65 or over).
- All respondents that feel lonely or isolated were significantly less likely to agree with the well-being and support statements in chart 10.2. The same is true for those respondents who need help or support with well-being or money problems.
- **Financial insecurity** is greatest in the 35-49 age group (44%), compared to 33% of under 35s and 24% of those aged 65+.
- Older people are significantly more likely to consider coming to the **Council for help** with wellbeing or money issues, which includes almost two thirds of retired age tenants yet only a third of those aged under 35.
- A quarter of respondents aged under 35 say they need help or support with well-being or money problems, this proportion fell for each age group to only 8% of those aged 65 or over.

By place

- There are no significant variations by patch or property type that are not linked to the age profile.
- Two thirds of respondents in **Housing 5** agree that they feel part of their community which is significantly higher than average.
- One in five respondents in **Housing 2** said they need help/support with well-being or money problems (19%).

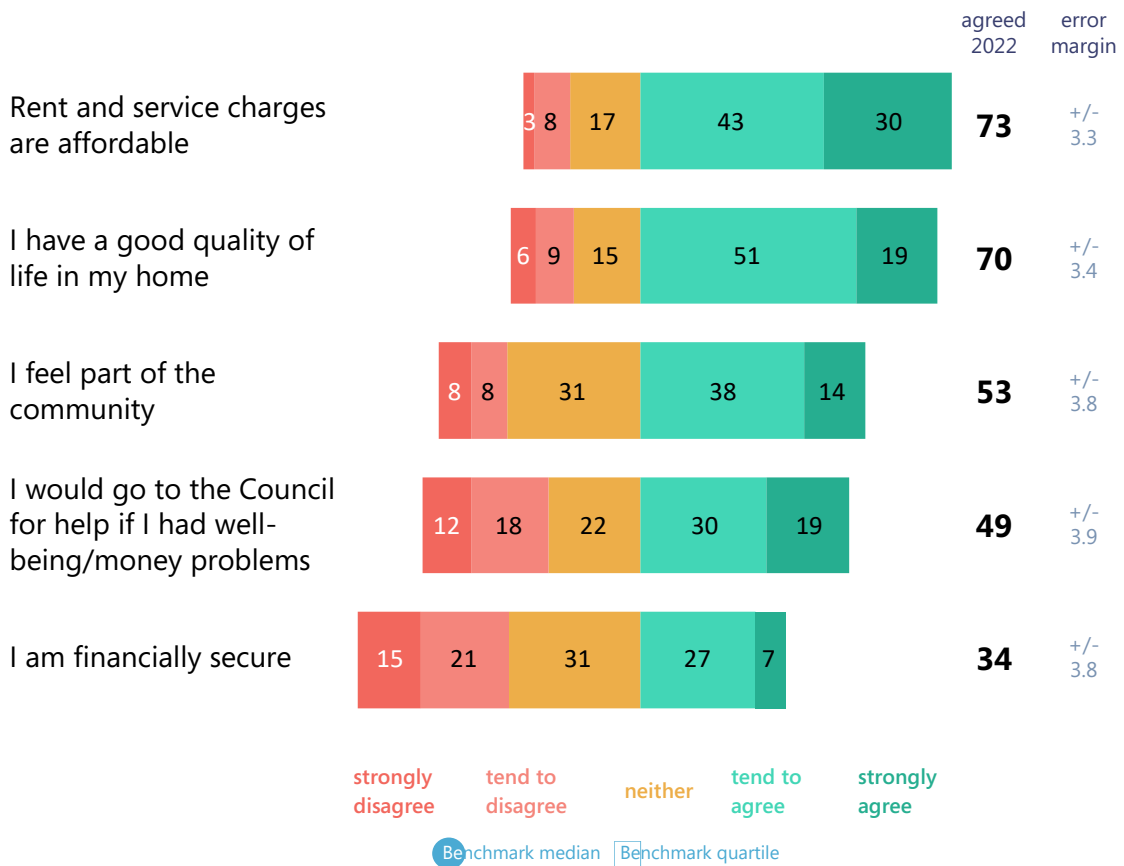
10.1 Felt lonely and isolated

% Base 673 | Excludes non respondents



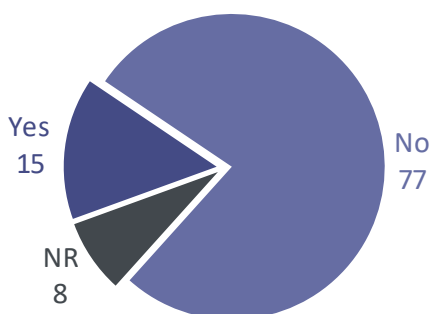
10.2 Well-being and support

% Bases (descending) 686, 700, 680, 657, 622 | Excludes non respondents.



10.3 Currently need help with well-being or money problems

% Base 794



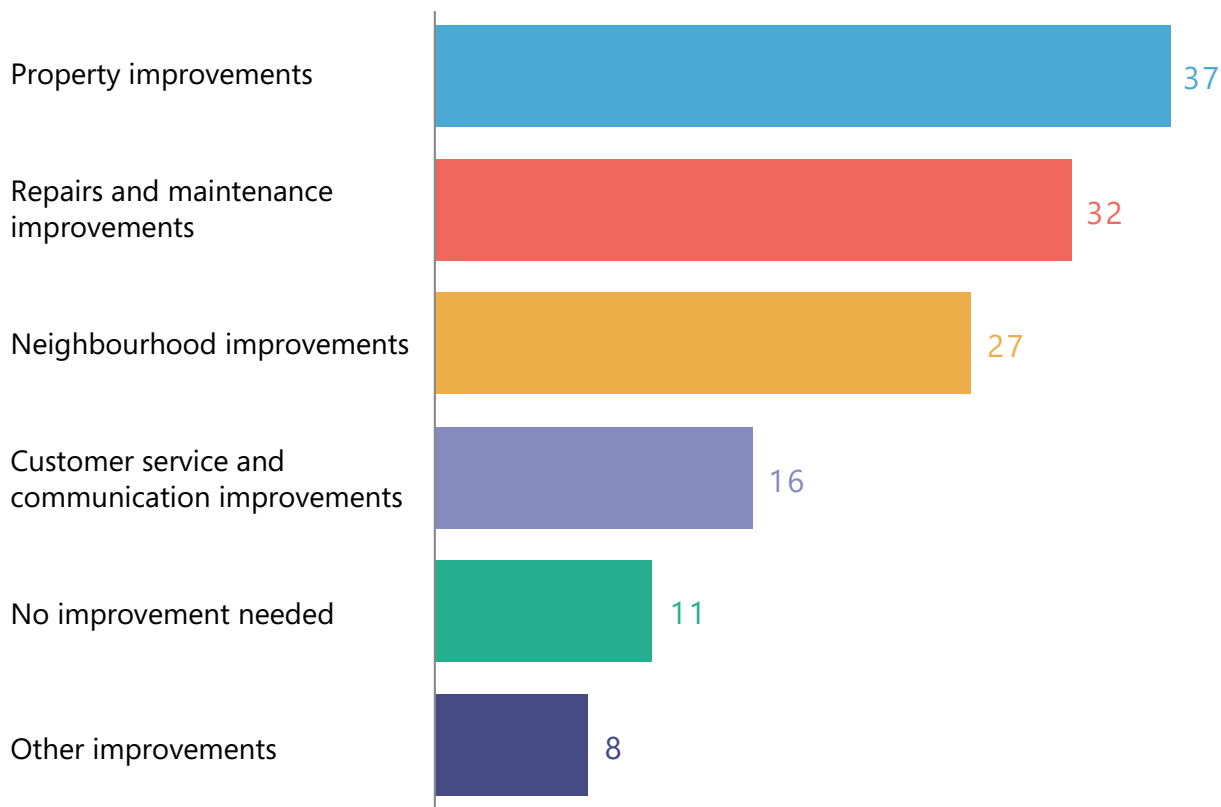


11. Further comments

49% made additional comments

11.1 Anything else you would like to say - summary

% Base 388 | Proportion of all tenants that commented. Includes multiple responses. Coded from verbatim comments.



The final question that tenants were asked at the end of the survey was simply whether they had anything else that they would like to say about their home or the services they received, including any compliments or suggestions. Around half of the sample (49%) chose to do so, and all of the percentage results presented in the following charts are calculated as a percentage of that group. These comments are coded and organised into different categories, both as broad headings, and in a further level of detail. Note that many respondents made comments that fall into multiple categories.

Chart 11.1 presents this analysis in terms of just a handful of broad categories, from which it is apparent that the theme of property maintenance, that runs throughout the survey, continues here. The two most common broad categories are requests for property improvements (37%), and comments on the repairs and maintenance service (32%). Indeed, over half of those comments (58%) touched on either one or both of these topics.

Dealing first with **property issues**, what is most obvious from chart 11.2 is that **damp, mould or condensation** was the most commonly mentioned single issue that tenants want to see addressed. This was raised by 9% of commenters, which equates to 4% of all tenants. The prominence of this issue may in part be influenced by its current prominence in national media and politics, but these commenters nevertheless gave concrete examples of their problems, a selection of which are included below. As mentioned earlier in the report, these comments are distributed across the stock rather than being limited to specific pockets.

“Not very happy with the response I had to reporting damp on the walls in the house, was told nothing they could do and to just keep wiping it off”

“I still have black mould in the bathroom they did not come when they were asked to, they said they were very busy”

“My house is damp and mouldy, people came out to look but nothing has been done. House smells really damp. Black mould in kitchen and bathroom which doesn't help my asthma. Got told house is damp and walls need stripping back to bricks but nothing has been done. Been like it since I lived here.”

“Our home is covered in mould and council never resolve the issue, just temporarily fix the problem. Extremely unhappy in our home and council have been made very aware but still don't resolve issues!!”

“Everything else is good could just be better at dealing with the mould”

Damp, mould and condensation are obviously all influenced by heating, ventilation and insulation, so it is unsurprising that **window replacements** are the next most commonly mentioned issue, followed by doors and heating/energy efficiency:

“My windows have all blown and measurements were taken years ago and still I have no decent windows”

“My windows have gaps around the edges that let in bonfires and the cold. They need replacing but have complained numerous times and still have them”

“Complaints have been made about ill-fitting and draughty windows, lack of insulation. This has been confirmed by a council representative, but no action has been taken to rectify these issues”

“My front door has a gap in and have been complaining about it for 7 years. With the energy crisis it needs sorting. I'm fed up of heating the street”

“My back door does not lock and does not work properly. I haven't reported it because there's no point”

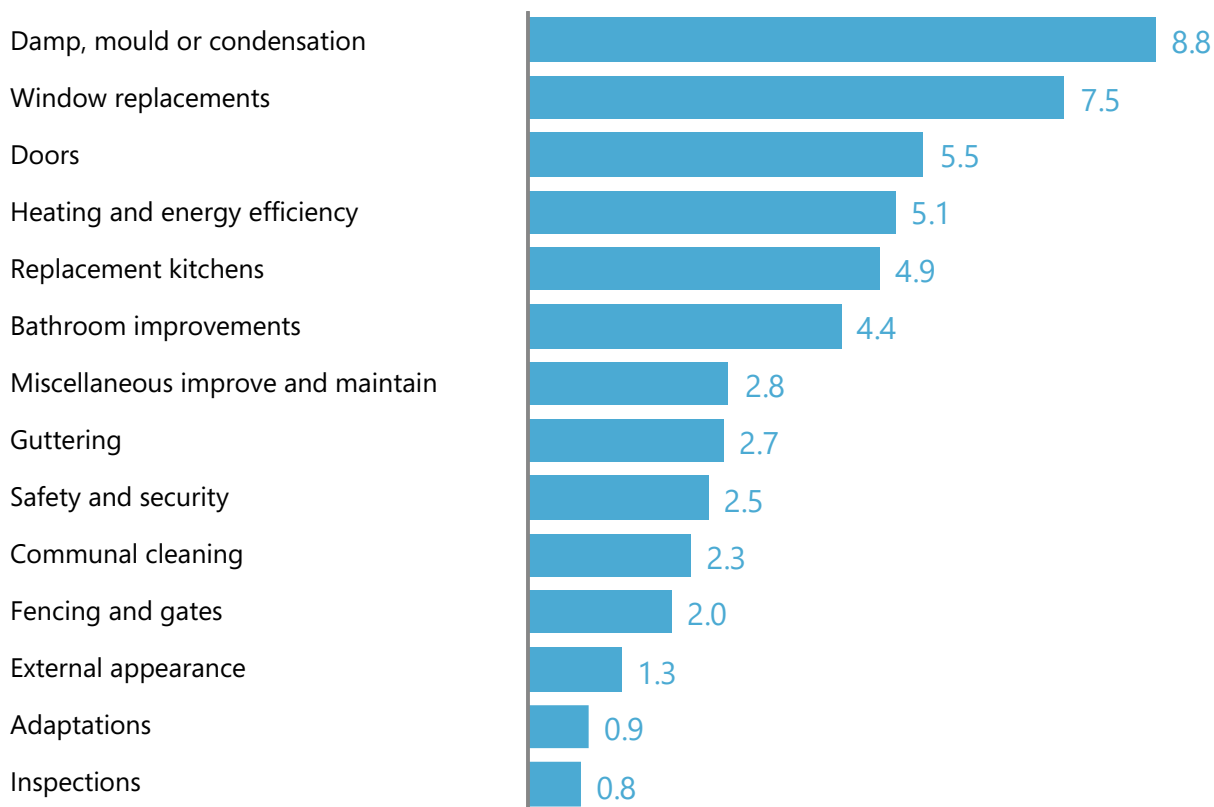
“There is no insulation, the houses are very cold and damp”

“My home is very cold at this time of year. Very draughty throughout as we are waiting for insulation to walls and loft area”

11. Further comments

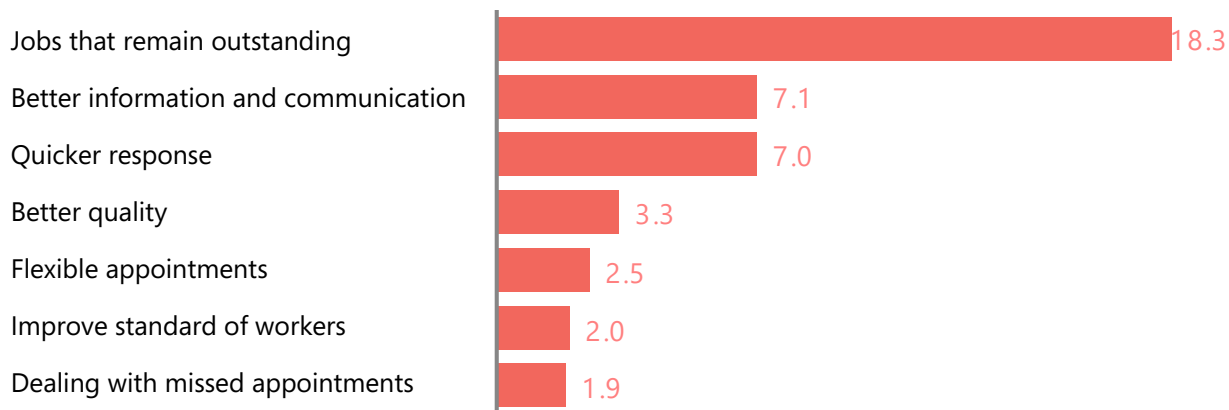
11.2 Property improvements - detail

% Base 388 | Coded from verbatim responses. Excludes non respondents.



11.3 Repair and maintenance improvements - detail

% Base 388 | Coded from verbatim responses. Excludes non respondents.



11. Further comments

Appendix A

Moving on to consider comments made about the **repairs service** itself, it is immediately apparent that **outstanding repairs** jobs dominate the list, with 18% of comments (9% of the total sample) mentioning repairs that they are still waiting to be completed. Some examples of these comments are provided below, which ranged between promised work that hadn't been started on time, incomplete repairs and longstanding issues that had never received a definitive response:

“Been waiting since before Covid for my home to be repaired. Also my back door and steps need replacing. Both jobs have been cancelled by them many times.”

“I've reported the need for repairs in February this year and only after 6 months of insisting I had half of the problems solved, others just dismissed.”

“Time and time again over 3 years have reported certain repairs and nothing has been done and each time I call they have no notification of my request for repairs. What do you have to do to get a repair done? “

“Jobs started but not finished, crack not followed up, damp not investigated”

“Planned Maintenance do not return phone calls ... We were told planned maintenance windows balconies last June. No update from them.”

“All is ok apart for the ridiculous delay in repairing the guttering/roof. this repair was reported continuously for over 5 years!!! And nothing has been done about it!”

“The repair to our property we have now been waiting 4 years. I have phoned numerous times, always the same reply even one of our local councillors contacted you and still got nowhere.”

There are clearly issues with backlog of work dating back to the pandemic, but one way in which this issue could be managed is with improvements in how tenants are informed about planned or upcoming work, and how **updates on work is communicated to tenants**. Indeed, this was the second most common category of repairs comments (7% of all comments), with a number complaining about work being cancelled without their knowledge, and others providing suggestions for how communications can be improved.

“Communications between tenants and service providers could be much better. There have been many instances where we have been promised that work would be done only for it to be forgotten or changed without notice.”

“We are told things are going to be done then nothing happens. The answer when we question this is staff shortages.”

“We've had problems with the repairs team well those who agree to jobs being done, spent 4 months being told something would be done to then being told no, also no one calls you when a job is cancelled.”

“It would be a great opportunity to get feedback from repairs or other issues by contacting the person making the complaint to inform them of the outcome and asking if they are satisfied with it.”

“I'd love to see an app that lets us handle council related tasks and allows us to report issues straight from it and include pictures. It would be a great way to get things reported efficiently ... This would also allow easy feedback on cases raised, the council could inform the person reporting the issue when it has been acknowledged, whether it is being actioned and inform the user when actioned and request feedback”

The third listed category in chart 11.3 is again a variant on the same theme, being mainly more general comments about the speed of repairs. Indeed, timeliness issues dominate over quality, with just a modest 3% of comments specifically highlighting repairs quality.

11. Further comments

More than a quarter of comments relate to **neighbourhood issues** (27%), and within this, as can be seen in chart 11.4, dealing with anti-social behaviour is the most commonly raised priority across the sample (10% of comments). How the Council deals with **anti-social behaviour** is also covered in section 8 but suffice to say that ASB remains a key topic for a considerable number of tenants. When looked at it more detail, the majority of comments are around respondent's experiences, such as drugs, harassment and noise nuisance.

"Drugs are a massive problem"

"I currently live in a block of flats, with 3 alcoholics and drug users and one who sells. I have a 8 month old baby. I have to keep taking her away from her home just so she can sleep un-interrupted and for her to be safe"

"I've had harassment from two lots of neighbours which is unfortunate"

"Feel very insecure in this area I'm living in, nothing but problems concerning my daughter not being able to go out on her own, due to threats she have received"

"My next door neighbour is my main problem day and night drumming"

"Noisy neighbours, dirty gardens, dogs barking"

However, a few did raise issues with the ASB **reporting process**, including:

"We have been using the ASB app but are getting no response and seemingly no action is taken with the issues we have"

"I am very unhappy with the way I was spoken to and treated regarding the anti-social behaviour we have had to endure"

Listening to tenants views is the second strongest key driver of satisfaction this year (section 3), but much of that seems to be linked specially to repairs issues, as the proportion of comments that refer to wider **customer service and communication** improvements was lower than for bricks and mortar topics, comprising 16% of comments.

The primary complaint on this general theme is around failures to return calls, or otherwise get back to tenants with a timely response (4% of comments), followed by the related problem that it is sometimes difficult to get hold of the right person;

"Planned Maintenance do not return phone calls. Several messages left for [name] who never calls me back"

"Overall, I'm dissatisfied with the quality of help and the length of time it takes to get things solved and especially only if I insist which is very time consuming and frustrating. Then I get a note to contact someone from council who missed me at home (came to visit without any notice or phone call) and when I tried to call back the line would not connect at all. Then I tried to email and got an automatic response that the person is on annual leave"

"Have rang council on numerous occasions to be told we can't do anything its with the planning team we will send another email. Sent 4 emails myself with no response"

"It is extremely difficult to contact the right person you need to speak to via telephone. Email contact is pointless as there is a long delay in reading the sent email"

"SDC are not always very cooperative and often it is very difficult to talk to anyone. Many employees seem to still work from home, messages don't get passed on"

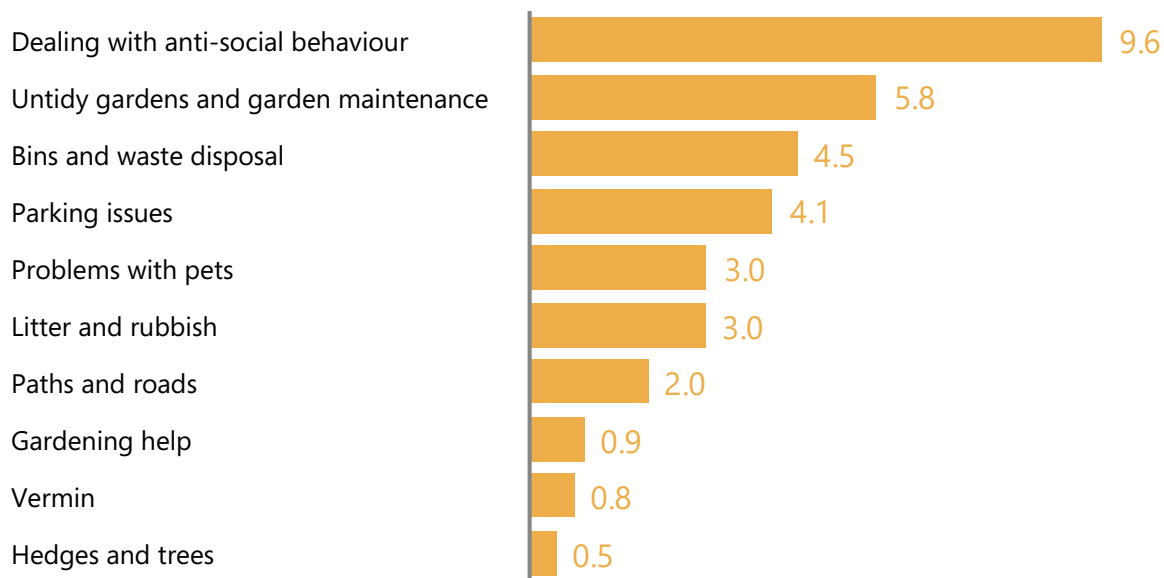
"Have staff on hand by phone that can answer it instead of the call being diverted to the switch board"

11. Further comments

Appendix A

11.4 Neighbourhood improvements - detail

% Base 388 | Coded from verbatim responses. Excludes non respondents.



11.5 Customer service and communication improvements - detail

% Base 388 | Coded from verbatim responses. Excludes non respondents.



11.6 Other improvements - detail

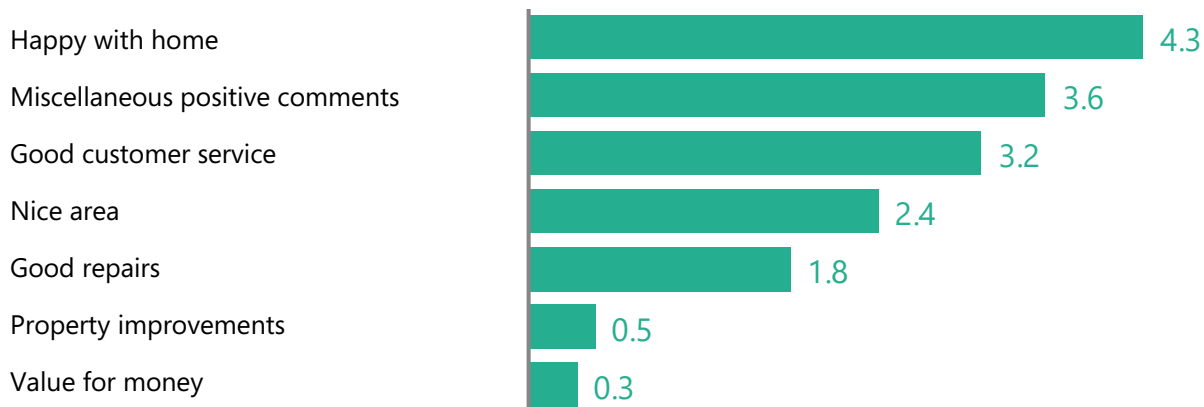
% Base 388 | Coded from verbatim responses. Excludes non respondents.



11. Further comments

11.7 Positive comments - detail

% Base 388 | Coded from verbatim responses. Excludes non respondents.



Finally, it is important to remember that around one in ten commenters simply wanted to **compliment** the Council on the services they received. This most commonly took the form of tenants that are happy with and grateful for their home (4% of comments), but many are also impressed with the standard of customer service they receive (3% of comments, chart 11.7).

“I am very grateful for my home, thank you very much”

“I love my home and garden, I have had no problems with the property recently. I have always received a prompt response if necessary. Many thanks”

“We love our home and the area we live in is absolutely beautiful. My husband and I are very grateful for all the help and support we've received from Stroud District Council over the past 10 years”

“There were renovations done to all the flats in the area including mine completed this year. I am very happy with the quality of the work”

“All the maintenance has been carried out well. I was very pleased and thank the council for their support”

“When I phone to speak to repairs they are very helpful and understanding, they will always do their utmost to sort things out. When workmen from response visit my home they are polite and repairs are done to a high standard”

“I feel more confident about repairs to my home since contractors no longer apply”

“Very happy living here, a very good council”

12. Respondent profile

In addition to documenting the demographic profile of the sample, tables 12.4 and 12.5 in this section also display the core survey questions according to the main equality groups. When considering these tables it is important to bear in mind that some of the sub groups are small, so many observed differences may simply be down to chance. To help navigate these results they have been subjected to statistical tests, with those that can be confidently said to differ from the average score being highlighted in the tables.

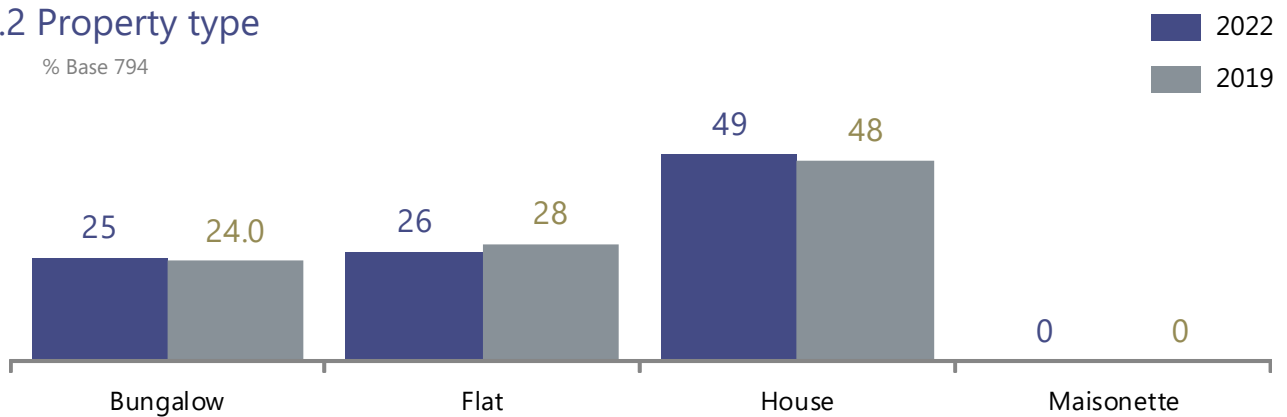
12.1 Area

% Base 794

	Total	%
Housing 1	172	21.7
Housing 2	94	11.8
Housing 3	121	15.2
Housing 4	130	16.4
Housing 5	57	7.2
Housing 6	140	17.6
Housing 7	81	10.2

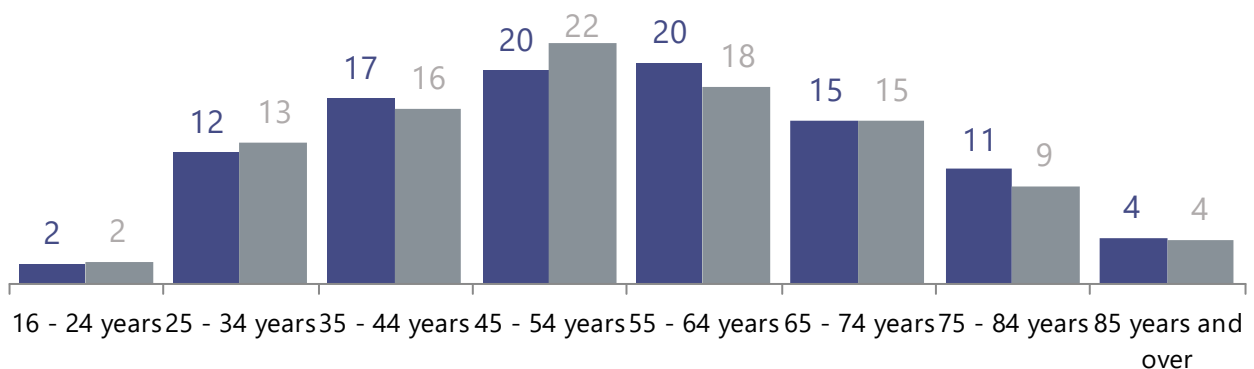
12.2 Property type

% Base 794



12.3 Age

% Base 794



12.4 Core questions by age group

	Overall	% positive			
		16 - 34	35 - 49	50 - 64	65+
Sample size	794	110	201	249	234
Service overall	70	67	63	64	83
Quality of home	72	64	65	68	86
Safety and security of home	78	76	71	76	89
Communal areas	41	31	34	48	73
Repairs & maintenance service	55	42	53	47	72
Last completed repair	64	60	58	59	78
Neighbourhood as a place to live	77	67	68	79	88
Positive contribution to communities	57	56	49	53	68
Dealing with anti-social behaviour	50	52	46	45	58
Rent value for money	79	78	75	73	89
Treated fairly and with respect	71	70	64	69	81
Is easy to deal with	66	58	61	65	77
Listen to views and act upon them	56	56	51	51	66
Keeps tenants informed	57	48	51	52	71
Opportunities to make views known	57	54	53	54	67
Approach to handling complaints	50	46	41	49	61

Significantly worse than average (95% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (95% confidence*)
Significantly worse than average (90% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (90% confidence*)

* See appendix A for further information on statistical tests and confidence levels

12. Respondent profile

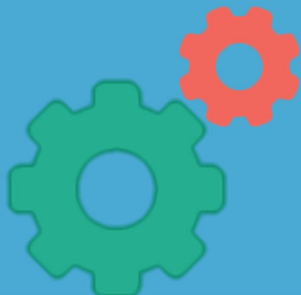
Appendix A

12.5 Core questions by patch

		% positive						
	Overall	Housing 1	Housing 2	Housing 3	Housing 4	Housing 5	Housing 6	Housing 7
Sample size	794	172	94	121	130	57	140	81
Service overall	70	68	62	68	71	79	72	72
Quality of home	72	72	68	67	75	78	74	74
Safety and security of home	78	79	75	77	81	77	78	81
Communal areas	41	33	28	37	59	70	44	69
Repairs & maintenance service	55	51	46	55	63	55	57	59
Last completed repair	64	59	64	63	67	65	64	68
Neighbourhood as a place to live	77	83	68	76	77	88	76	75
Positive contribution to communities	57	58	52	53	64	55	56	57
Dealing with anti-social behaviour	50	56	52	38	57	46	48	43
Rent value for money	79	82	71	73	79	86	86	73
Treated fairly and with respect	71	67	69	63	79	77	76	72
Is easy to deal with	66	62	61	62	74	77	67	69
Listen to views and act upon them	56	55	48	52	56	67	59	63
Keeps tenants informed	57	57	53	52	60	67	56	54
Opportunities to make views known	57	55	52	55	58	65	61	61
Approach to handling complaints	50	47	50	51	54	52	46	56

Significantly worse than average (95% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (95% confidence*)
Significantly worse than average (90% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (90% confidence*)

* See appendix A for further information on statistical tests and confidence levels



Appendix A. Methodology & data analysis

Questionnaire

The questionnaire was based on the Housemark STAR survey methodology, with the most appropriate questions for Stroud DC being selected by them from the STAR questionnaire templates. This year’s questionnaire also referenced The Regulator of Social Housing’s proposed tenant satisfaction measures (TSMs) that social landlords will be required to report on in future years. The questionnaire was designed to be as clear and legible as possible to make it easy to complete, with options available for large print versions or completion in alternative languages. Postal versions of the questionnaires were printed as A4 booklets.

Fieldwork

The survey was carried out between September and October 2022. Paper self completion questionnaires were distributed to a randomly selected sample of 2,000 general needs households, followed by a reminder approximately three weeks later for all those that had not yet replied. In addition, email invitations and reminders were sent to every valid email address in the sample, plus a text invitation and reminder to all mobiles in the sample. The survey was incentivised with a free prize draw.

Online survey example pages:

Response rate

In total there were 794 responses to the survey which represented a response rate of 40% (error margin +/- 2.6%). Online responses comprised 37% of the total (292), including 110 direct responses to email (11% response) and 74 to text message (6% response). The returns exceeded the stipulated STAR target error margin of +/- 4% with a 12% increase in response rate compared to 2019.

Weighting

The results were weighted by lead tenant age which ensured that they were also representative of the tenant population on the main demographic and geographic characteristics.

Data presentation

Readers should take care when considering percentage results from some of the sub groups within the main sample, as the base figures may sometimes be small.

Many results are recalculated to remove 'no opinion' or 'can't remember' responses from the final figures, a technique known as 're-basing'.

Error Margins

Error margins for the sample overall, and for individual questions, are the amount by which a result might vary due to chance. The error margins in the results are quoted at the standard 95% level, and are determined by the sample size and the distribution of scores. For the sake of simplicity, error margins for historic data are not included, but can typically be assumed to be at least as big as those for the 2022 data. When comparing two sets of scores, it is important to remember that error margins will apply independently to each.

Tests of statistical significance

When two sets of survey data are compared to one another (e.g. between different years, or demographic sub groups), the observed differences are typically tested for statistical significance. Differences that are significant can be said, with a high degree of confidence, to be real variations that are unlikely to be due to chance. Any differences that are not significant *may* still be real, especially when a number of different questions all demonstrate the same pattern, but this cannot be stated with statistical confidence and may just be due to chance.

Unless otherwise stated, all statistically significant differences are reported at the 95% confidence level. Tests used were the Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney test (rating scales), Fischer Exact Probability test (small samples) and the Pearson Chi Square test (larger samples) as appropriate for the data being examined. These calculations rely on a number of factors such as the base figure and the level of variance, both within and between sample groups, thereby taking into account more than just the simple difference between the headline percentage scores. This means that some results are reported as significant despite being superficially similar to others that are not. Conversely, some seemingly notable differences in two sets of headline scores are not enough to signal a significant change in the underlying pattern across all points in the scale. For example:

- Two satisfaction ratings might have the same or similar *total* satisfaction score, but be quite different when one considers the detailed results for the proportion *very satisfied* versus *fairly satisfied*.
- There may also be a change in the proportions who were *very* or *fairly* dissatisfied, or ticked the middle point in the scale, which is not apparent from the headline score.
- In rare cases there are complex changes across the scale that are difficult to categorise e.g. in a single question one might simultaneously observe a disappointing shift from *very* to *fairly* satisfied, at the same time as their being a welcome shift from *very dissatisfied* to *neither*.
- If the results included a relatively small number of people then the error margins are bigger. This means that the *combined* error margins for the two ratings being compared might be bigger than the observed difference between them.

Key driver analysis


“Key driver analyses” are based on a linear regression model. This is used to investigate the relationship between the overall scores and their various components. The charts illustrate the relative contribution of each item to the overall rating; items which do not reach statistical significance are omitted. The figures on the vertical axis show the standardised beta coefficients from the regression analysis, which vary in absolute size depending on the number of questionnaire items entered into the analysis. The quoted *R Square* value shows how much of the observed variance is explained by the key driver model e.g. a value of 0.5 shows that the model explains half of the total variation in the overall score.

Benchmarking

The questions are benchmarked against the Housemark STAR database of general needs tenants, using Stroud DC’s normal peer group of English landlords with between 3,000 and 6,000 units. For the overall satisfaction score this includes 24 landlords. Housemark benchmark scores are supplemented for the remaining questions with benchmark data from ARP Research clients who have carried out surveys in the last 2 years using the STAR questionnaires. The group selection has been verified against the core Housemark data to ensure that both benchmark groups are closely matched on their scores across those questions. This supplementary group included 17 landlords.




Appendix B. Example questionnaire



STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL
 Ebley Mill • Ebley Wharf • Stroud • Gloucestershire • GL5 4UB
 01453 766321
www.stroud.gov.uk

Mr A B Sample
 1 Sample Street
 Address line
 Address line
 Sample District
 Sample Town
 AB1 2CD

999999



scan me
 your code:
9999mnmw
www.arpsurveys.co.uk/stroud

Dear [Contact_Name]

Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2022

This is your chance to tell us what you think of your home and the services Stroud District Council currently provides as your landlord. If you choose not to participate in this survey this will not alter our services to you.

To help us understand your levels of satisfaction with the services we provide, ARP Research (an **independent** company) is carrying out this survey on our behalf. The survey is optional and confidential. Stroud District Council will **not** be able to link your answers to your name and address without your agreement.

Please either complete and return the survey in the enclosed freepost envelope, or complete the survey online using the link above. The closing date is **11 October 2022**. As a thank you for completing the survey, you can opt for entry into a **prize draw**, where one lucky person will win **£150** and two more will receive **£50** in shopping vouchers.

This information will be used to help us improve our services. We will publish the survey results on our website, SDC Housing Facebook page and Keynotes newsletter.

This survey is a regulatory duty as a social housing landlord. We take your privacy very seriously. For information about your rights and how we use your information please see Housing privacy notices at <https://rb.gy/6in4u3> which explains why we collect information, and how that information may be used, kept safe and confidential.

If you have any questions or concerns about this survey, please contact ARP Research on 0800 020 9564 or email support@arp-research.co.uk who will be happy to answer your queries. Alternatively, you can contact Christine Welsh on 07774453357 or email christine.welsh@stroud.gov.uk

Yours sincerely

Michelle Elliott
 Housing Manager

PRIZE DRAW! 1 x £150 2 x £50

Leading a community that is making Stroud district a better place to live, work and visit for everyone
 Chief Executive: Kathy O'Leary



Appendix C. Data summary

Please note that throughout the report the quoted results typically refer to the '*valid*' column of the data summary if it appears.

The '*valid*' column contains data that has been rebased, normally because non-respondents were excluded and/or question routing applied.

The results are weighted to be representative by age.

Representative. Weighted by age
Count % raw % valid % +ve

Q1 Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided by the council as your landlord?

Base: 794

	Count	% raw	% valid	% +ve
1: Very satisfied	219	27.6	28.1	69.5
2: Fairly satisfied	323	40.7	41.4	
3: Neither	80	10.1	10.3	
4: Fairly dissatisfied	85	10.7	10.9	
5: Very dissatisfied	73	9.2	9.4	
N/R	13	1.6		

Q2a With the overall quality of your home

Base: 794

	Count	% raw	% valid	% +ve
6: Very satisfied	207	26.1	26.2	72.1
7: Fairly satisfied	363	45.7	45.9	
8: Neither	60	7.6	7.6	
9: Fairly dissatisfied	105	13.2	13.3	
10: Very dissatisfied	56	7.1	7.1	
N/R	3	0.4		

Q2b That we provide a home that is safe and secure

Base: 794

	Count	% raw	% valid	% +ve
11: Very satisfied	342	43.1	43.5	78.4
12: Fairly satisfied	275	34.6	34.9	
13: Neither	69	8.7	8.8	
14: Fairly dissatisfied	58	7.3	7.4	
15: Very dissatisfied	43	5.4	5.5	
N/R	7	0.9		

Q2c Your rent provides value for money

Base: 794

	Count	% raw	% valid	% +ve
16: Very satisfied	377	47.5	48.3	78.9
17: Fairly satisfied	239	30.1	30.6	
18: Neither	93	11.7	11.9	
19: Fairly dissatisfied	48	6.0	6.1	
20: Very dissatisfied	24	3.0	3.1	
N/R	12	1.5		

Q3a That we provide a home that is well maintained and safe for you to live in

Base: 794

	Count	% raw	% valid	% +ve
21: Very satisfied	205	25.8	26.1	63.9
22: Fairly satisfied	297	37.4	37.8	
23: Neither	80	10.1	10.2	
24: Fairly dissatisfied	98	12.3	12.5	
25: Very dissatisfied	105	13.2	13.4	
26: No opinion	2	0.3		
N/R	8	1.0		

Q3b With the way we generally deal with repairs and maintenance

Base: 794

	Count	% raw	% valid	% +ve
27: Very satisfied	173	21.8	22.3	55.1
28: Fairly satisfied	254	32.0	32.8	
29: Neither	92	11.6	11.9	
30: Fairly dissatisfied	127	16.0	16.4	
31: Very dissatisfied	129	16.2	16.6	
32: No opinion	9	1.1		
N/R	11	1.4		

Representative. Weighted by age			
Count	% raw	% valid	% +ve

Q3c With your gas servicing arrangements (if applicable)		Base: 794			
33:	Very satisfied	354	44.6	56.1	88.7
34:	Fairly satisfied	206	25.9	32.6	
35:	Neither	44	5.5	7.0	
36:	Fairly dissatisfied	10	1.3	1.6	
37:	Very dissatisfied	17	2.1	2.7	
38:	No opinion	77	9.7		
	N/R	86	10.8		
Q4 Have you had any day to day repairs carried out in the last 12 months?		Base: 794			
39:	Yes	473	59.6		
40:	No	294	37.0		
	N/R	27	3.4		
Q5 Satisfaction with the repairs service you have received to your home from the Council in the last 12 months		Base: 473			
41:	Very satisfied	155	19.5	33.3	64.6
42:	Fairly satisfied	146	18.4	31.3	
43:	Neither	46	5.8	9.9	
44:	Fairly dissatisfied	62	7.8	13.3	
45:	Very dissatisfied	57	7.2	12.2	
	N/R	327	41.2	1.3	
Q6a That it was easy to access the repairs service		Base: 473			
46:	Very satisfied	179	22.5	38.5	72.0
47:	Fairly satisfied	156	19.6	33.5	
48:	Neither	42	5.3	9.0	
49:	Fairly dissatisfied	49	6.2	10.5	
50:	Very dissatisfied	39	4.9	8.4	
	N/R	328	41.3	1.5	
Q6b With the time taken to complete the repair after you reported it		Base: 473			
51:	Very satisfied	129	16.2	27.7	56.3
52:	Fairly satisfied	133	16.8	28.6	
53:	Neither	44	5.5	9.5	
54:	Fairly dissatisfied	69	8.7	14.8	
55:	Very dissatisfied	90	11.3	19.4	
	N/R	328	41.3	1.5	
Q6c With the overall quality of the work		Base: 473			
56:	Very satisfied	193	24.3	41.8	71.9
57:	Fairly satisfied	139	17.5	30.1	
58:	Neither	54	6.8	11.7	
59:	Fairly dissatisfied	31	3.9	6.7	
60:	Very dissatisfied	45	5.7	9.7	
	N/R	331	41.7	2.1	
Q6d That the repair was done 'right first time'		Base: 473			
61:	Very satisfied	181	22.8	38.9	63.0

		Representative. Weighted by age			
		Count	% raw	% valid	% +ve
62:	Fairly satisfied	112	14.1	24.1	
63:	Neither	48	6.0	10.3	
64:	Fairly dissatisfied	55	6.9	11.8	
65:	Very dissatisfied	69	8.7	14.8	
	N/R	330	41.6	1.9	
Q6e With the overall repairs service we provided on this repair		Base: 473			
66:	Very satisfied	159	20.0	34.3	63.8
67:	Fairly satisfied	137	17.3	29.5	
68:	Neither	56	7.1	12.1	
69:	Fairly dissatisfied	51	6.4	11.0	
70:	Very dissatisfied	61	7.7	13.1	
	N/R	329	41.4	1.7	
Q7 Housing Services treat tenants fairly and with respect		Base: 794			
71:	Strongly agree	206	25.9	27.1	71.3
72:	Tend to agree	336	42.3	44.2	
73:	Neither	112	14.1	14.7	
74:	Tend to disagree	64	8.1	8.4	
75:	Strongly disagree	43	5.4	5.7	
76:	No opinion	23	2.9		
	N/R	10	1.3		
Q8 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that housing services are easy to deal with		Base: 794			
77:	Very satisfied	188	23.7	24.5	66.3
78:	Fairly satisfied	320	40.3	41.8	
79:	Neither	110	13.9	14.4	
80:	Fairly dissatisfied	82	10.3	10.7	
81:	Very dissatisfied	66	8.3	8.6	
82:	No opinion	18	2.3		
	N/R	11	1.4		
Q9 Have you contacted housing services in the last 12 months?		Base: 794			
83:	Yes	539	67.9		
84:	No	215	27.1		
	N/R	39	4.9		
Q10a With the helpfulness of the staff		Base: 539			
85:	Very satisfied	195	24.6	36.4	70.2
86:	Fairly satisfied	181	22.8	33.8	
87:	Neither	44	5.5	8.2	
88:	Fairly dissatisfied	59	7.4	11.0	
89:	Very dissatisfied	56	7.1	10.5	
	N/R	258	32.5	0.6	
Q10b With their ability to deal with your query		Base: 539			
90:	Very satisfied	176	22.2	33.3	63.2
91:	Fairly satisfied	158	19.9	29.9	
92:	Neither	71	8.9	13.4	
93:	Fairly dissatisfied	61	7.7	11.5	

	Representative. Weighted by age			
	Count	% raw	% valid	% +ve
94: Very dissatisfied	63	7.9	11.9	
N/R	264	33.2	1.7	
Q11a Listen to your views and act upon them	Base: 794			
95: Very satisfied	148	18.6	20.1	56.2
96: Fairly satisfied	265	33.4	36.1	
97: Neither	149	18.8	20.3	
98: Fairly dissatisfied	76	9.6	10.3	
99: Very dissatisfied	97	12.2	13.2	
100: No opinion	43	5.4		
N/R	16	2.0		
Q11b Give you the opportunity to make your views known	Base: 794			
101: Very satisfied	145	18.3	20.5	57.4
102: Fairly satisfied	261	32.9	36.9	
103: Neither	173	21.8	24.5	
104: Fairly dissatisfied	61	7.7	8.6	
105: Very dissatisfied	67	8.4	9.5	
106: No opinion	60	7.6		
N/R	27	3.4		
Q11c Keep tenants informed about things that matter to them	Base: 794			
107: Very satisfied	180	22.7	25.0	56.8
108: Fairly satisfied	229	28.8	31.8	
109: Neither	156	19.6	21.6	
110: Fairly dissatisfied	77	9.7	10.7	
111: Very dissatisfied	79	9.9	11.0	
112: No opinion	45	5.7		
N/R	28	3.5		
Q12 In your daily life, have you used any apps or websites to do any of the following in the last year?	Base: 794			
113: Used Facebook, Instagram or other social media	463	58.3		
114: Used video calling, such as Zoom or Facetime	318	40.1		
115: Online shopping	468	58.9		
116: Online banking	485	61.1		
117: Booked a service or appointment online	360	45.3		
118: Read an email newsletter	350	44.1		
119: Contacted any organisation by email, app or on their website	328	41.3		
120: Contacted any organisation on social media	159	20.0		
121: Used Government services online	381	48.0		
122: Visited the Council's Facebook or Twitter	77	9.7		
123: Used the Council's online services	281	35.4		
N/R	172	21.7		
R12 Use the internet	Base: 794			
124: Yes	622	78.3		
125: No	172	21.7		
N/R	0	0.0		

Representative. Weighted by age
Count % raw % valid % +'ve

Q13 If we produce a newsletter, such as Keynotes, would you prefer to receive it online via email or on paper?

Base: 794

126: Online	300	37.8		
127: Paper	437	55.0		
N/R	58	7.3		

Q15 Would you be interested in having your say about our services in any of the following ways?

Base: 794

128: Taking part in short online or social media polls	171	21.5		
129: Online discussion groups about the latest issues	62	7.8		
130: In person discussion group about the latest issues	64	8.1		
131: None of these	490	61.7		
N/R	80	10.1		

R15 Interested in having your say about our services

Base: 794

132: Yes	223	28.1		
133: No	490	61.7		
N/R	80	10.1		

Q16a Your neighbourhood as a place to live

Base: 794

134: Very satisfied	319	40.2	41.7	77.4
135: Fairly satisfied	273	34.4	35.7	
136: Neither	73	9.2	9.5	
137: Fairly dissatisfied	52	6.5	6.8	
138: Very dissatisfied	48	6.0	6.3	
139: No opinion	7	0.9		
N/R	24	3.0		

Q16b How much we make a positive contribution to your neighbourhood

Base: 794

140: Very satisfied	119	15.0	16.7	57.0
141: Fairly satisfied	287	36.1	40.3	
142: Neither	187	23.6	26.3	
143: Fairly dissatisfied	65	8.2	9.1	
144: Very dissatisfied	54	6.8	7.6	
145: No opinion	45	5.7		
N/R	38	4.8		

Q16c The grounds maintenance, such as grass cutting in your area

Base: 794

146: Very satisfied	208	26.2	29.2	67.9
147: Fairly satisfied	276	34.8	38.7	
148: Neither	109	13.7	15.3	
149: Fairly dissatisfied	68	8.6	9.5	
150: Very dissatisfied	52	6.5	7.3	
151: No opinion	45	5.7		
N/R	35	4.4		

Q16d Our approach to handling of anti-social behaviour

Base: 794

152: Very satisfied	122	15.4	19.6	49.9
153: Fairly satisfied	189	23.8	30.3	
154: Neither	172	21.7	27.6	

	Representative. Weighted by age			
	Count	% raw	% valid	% +ve
155: Fairly dissatisfied	65	8.2	10.4	
156: Very dissatisfied	76	9.6	12.2	
157: No opinion	122	15.4		
N/R	48	6.0		
Q17 Do you live in a building with communal areas, either inside or outside, that you share with other people who live in the building?				
Base: 794				
158: Yes	155	19.5		
159: No	584	73.6		
N/R	55	6.9		
Q18 Satisfaction that housing management services keeps these communal areas or scheme clean, safe and well maintained				
Base: 155				
160: Very satisfied	23	2.9	15.1	41.4
161: Fairly satisfied	40	5.0	26.3	
162: Neither	28	3.5	18.4	
163: Fairly dissatisfied	22	2.8	14.5	
164: Very dissatisfied	39	4.9	25.7	
165: No opinion	3	0.4		
N/R	639	80.5	0.0	
Q19a Rubbish or litter				
Base: 794				
166: Very big problem	67	8.4	9.3	23.8
167: Fairly big problem	105	13.2	14.5	
168: Not a very big problem	325	40.9	45.0	
169: Not a problem at all	226	28.5	31.3	
N/R	71	8.9		
Q19b Noisy neighbours				
Base: 794				
170: Very big problem	60	7.6	8.5	20.0
171: Fairly big problem	81	10.2	11.5	
172: Not a very big problem	259	32.6	36.7	
173: Not a problem at all	306	38.5	43.3	
N/R	88	11.1		
Q19c Dog fouling/ dog mess				
Base: 794				
174: Very big problem	103	13.0	14.1	34.8
175: Fairly big problem	151	19.0	20.7	
176: Not a very big problem	250	31.5	34.3	
177: Not a problem at all	225	28.3	30.9	
N/R	65	8.2		
Q19d Other problems with pets & animals				
Base: 794				
178: Very big problem	37	4.7	5.3	14.8
179: Fairly big problem	66	8.3	9.5	
180: Not a very big problem	225	28.3	32.2	
181: Not a problem at all	370	46.6	53.0	
N/R	96	12.1		
Q19e Racial or other harassment				
Base: 794				

	Representative. Weighted by age			
	Count	% raw	% valid	% +'ve
182: Very big problem	14	1.8	2.0	6.6
183: Fairly big problem	32	4.0	4.6	
184: Not a very big problem	161	20.3	23.0	
185: Not a problem at all	492	62.0	70.4	
N/R	96	12.1		
Q19f Drunk or rowdy behaviour				
	Base: 794			
186: Very big problem	32	4.0	4.5	12.6
187: Fairly big problem	57	7.2	8.1	
188: Not a very big problem	213	26.8	30.2	
189: Not a problem at all	403	50.8	57.2	
N/R	89	11.2		
Q19g Vandalism and graffiti				
	Base: 794			
190: Very big problem	21	2.6	3.0	7.0
191: Fairly big problem	28	3.5	4.0	
192: Not a very big problem	200	25.2	28.7	
193: Not a problem at all	448	56.4	64.3	
N/R	96	12.1		
Q19h People damaging your property				
	Base: 794			
194: Very big problem	16	2.0	2.3	5.9
195: Fairly big problem	25	3.1	3.6	
196: Not a very big problem	145	18.3	20.6	
197: Not a problem at all	517	65.1	73.5	
N/R	91	11.5		
Q19i Drug use or dealing				
	Base: 794			
198: Very big problem	62	7.8	8.8	21.7
199: Fairly big problem	91	11.5	12.9	
200: Not a very big problem	192	24.2	27.1	
201: Not a problem at all	363	45.7	51.3	
N/R	86	10.8		
Q19j Abandoned or burnt out vehicles				
	Base: 794			
202: Very big problem	5	0.6	0.7	2.1
203: Fairly big problem	10	1.3	1.4	
204: Not a very big problem	116	14.6	16.6	
205: Not a problem at all	569	71.7	81.3	
N/R	95	12.0		
Q20 I know how to make a complaint to housing services if I am not happy with the service I receive				
	Base: 794			
206: Strongly agree	208	26.2	28.8	71.7
207: Tend to agree	310	39.0	42.9	
208: Neither	103	13.0	14.3	
209: Tend to disagree	61	7.7	8.4	
210: Strongly disagree	40	5.0	5.5	
211: No opinion	41	5.2		
N/R	31	3.9		

Representative. Weighted by age			
Count	% raw	% valid	% +ve

Q21 Satisfaction with housing management services' approach to the handling of complaints

Base: 794

212: Very satisfied	96	12.1	15.8	50.4
213: Fairly satisfied	211	26.6	34.6	
214: Neither	159	20.0	26.1	
215: Fairly dissatisfied	72	9.1	11.8	
216: Very dissatisfied	71	8.9	11.7	
217: No opinion	152	19.1		
N/R	32	4.0		

Q22 Over the past 12 months, at times, have you felt lonely and isolated?

Base: 794

218: Always	30	3.8	4.5	
219: Often	108	13.6	16.0	
220: Sometimes	168	21.2	25.0	
221: Rarely	124	15.6	18.4	
222: Never	243	30.6	36.1	
223: Prefer not to say	74	9.3		
N/R	47	5.9		

R22 Over the past 12 months have you always or often felt lonely and isolated?

Base: 794

224: Yes	138	17.4	20.5	
225: No	535	67.4	79.5	
N/R	121	15.2		

Q23a My rent and service charges are affordable

Base: 794

226: Strongly agree	205	25.8	29.9	72.8
227: Tend to agree	294	37.0	42.9	
228: Neither	113	14.2	16.5	
229: Tend to disagree	56	7.1	8.2	
230: Strongly disagree	18	2.3	2.6	
231: Prefer not to say	43	5.4		
N/R	64	8.1		

Q23b I am financially secure

Base: 794

232: Strongly agree	44	5.5	7.1	34.1
233: Tend to agree	168	21.2	27.0	
234: Neither	190	23.9	30.5	
235: Tend to disagree	129	16.2	20.7	
236: Strongly disagree	91	11.5	14.6	
237: Prefer not to say	96	12.1		
N/R	75	9.4		

Q23c I have a good quality of life in my home

Base: 794

238: Strongly agree	133	16.8	19.0	69.6
239: Tend to agree	354	44.6	50.6	
240: Neither	108	13.6	15.4	
241: Tend to disagree	64	8.1	9.1	
242: Strongly disagree	41	5.2	5.9	
243: Prefer not to say	36	4.5		

Representative. Weighted by age
Count % raw % valid % +ve

N/R	58	7.3		
Q23d I feel part of the community		Base: 794		
244: Strongly agree	98	12.3	14.4	52.6
245: Tend to agree	260	32.7	38.2	
246: Neither	213	26.8	31.3	
247: Tend to disagree	57	7.2	8.4	
248: Strongly disagree	52	6.5	7.6	
249: Prefer not to say	49	6.2		
N/R	66	8.3		
Q23e I would come to the Council for help if I had wellbeing or money problems		Base: 794		
250: Strongly agree	126	15.9	19.2	48.9
251: Tend to agree	195	24.6	29.7	
252: Neither	141	17.8	21.5	
253: Tend to disagree	119	15.0	18.1	
254: Strongly disagree	76	9.6	11.6	
255: Prefer not to say	73	9.2		
N/R	65	8.2		
Q24 Do you currently need help from the Council or another support agency with wellbeing or money problems?		Base: 794		
256: Yes	119	15.0		
257: No	613	77.2		
N/R	62	7.8		
D101 Stock type		Base: 794		
258: General needs	794	100.0		
259: Independent Living	0	0.0		
N/R	0	0.0		
D102 Property type		Base: 794		
260: Bungalow	195	24.6		
261: Flat	208	26.2		
262: House	391	49.2		
263: Maisonette	0	0.0		
N/R	0	0.0		
D103 Patch		Base: 794		
264: Housing 1	172	21.7		
265: Housing 2	94	11.8		
266: Housing 3	121	15.2		
267: Housing 4	130	16.4		
268: Housing 5	57	7.2		
269: Housing 6	140	17.6		
270: Housing 7	81	10.2		
N/R	0	0.0		
D104 Main Tenant Age Group		Base: 794		

	Representative. Weighted by age		
	Count	% raw	% valid
271: 16 - 24 years	14		1.8
272: 25 - 34 years	96		12.1
273: 35 - 44 years	134		16.9
274: 45 - 54 years	155		19.5
275: 55 - 64 years	161		20.3
276: 65 - 74 years	119		15.0
277: 75 - 84 years	83		10.5
278: 85 years and over	33		4.2
N/R	0		0.0
D105 Main Tenant Age Group [simple]		Base: 794	
279: 16-34	110		13.9
280: 35-49	201		25.3
281: 50-64	249		31.4
282: 65+	234		29.5
N/R	0		0.0



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Independent Living

STAR Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2022



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Appendix B
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1. Introduction

Background

This report details the results of Stroud District Council's 2022 STAR tenant satisfaction survey, delivered by ARP Research. This report covers the survey results for those in independent living. A second report is also available containing the survey results for general needs tenants. The aim of the survey is to allow tenants to have their say about their home, the services they receive, and how these could be improved in the future. This year's questionnaire also references The Regulator of Social Housing's tenant satisfaction measures (TSMs) that social landlords will be required to report on in future years (indicated throughout the report by the government coat of arms).

Where applicable the current survey results have also been compared against the 2019 STAR survey, including tests to check if any of the changes are *statistically significant*. Finally, the results have also been benchmarked against Housemark's STAR database of similar peer landlords, supplemented where necessary by ARP Research's own database.

About the survey

The survey was carried out between September and October 2022. Paper self completion questionnaires were distributed to all 718 Independent Living households, followed by a reminder approximately three weeks later for all those that had not yet replied. In addition, email invitations and reminders were sent to every valid email address in the sample, plus a text invitation and reminder to all mobiles in the sample. The survey was incentivised with a free prize draw.

In total there were 307 responses to the survey which represented a response rate of 43% (error margin +/- 4.2%). Online responses comprised 24% of the total (74), including 40 direct responses to email (11% response) and 18 to text message (4% response). The returns exceeded the stipulated STAR target error margin of +/- 5% with a 2% increase in response rate compared to 2019.

Understanding the results

The results were checked to ensure that they were representative of the tenant population on the main demographic and geographic characteristics. Most of the results are given as percentages, which may not always add up to 100% because of rounding and/or multiple responses. It is also important to take care when considering the results for groups where the sample size is small. Where there are differences in the results over time, or between groups, these are subjected to testing to discover if these differences are *statistically significant*. This tells us that we can be confident that the differences are real and not likely to be down to natural variation or chance. For further information on the methodology and statistics please see Appendix A.



2. Executive summary

Bench mark	2019 result	change over time	2022 result		Question source
85%	83%	↓	81%	satisfaction overall	HouseMark STAR
90%	90%	↓	86%	quality of home	HouseMark STAR
90%	N.A.		87%	safety and security of home	HouseMark STAR
79%	N.A.		77%	communal areas clean and maintained	
88%	N.A.		86%	rent value for money	HouseMark STAR
84%	83%	↓	68%	repairs and maintenance overall	HouseMark STAR
76%	88%	↓	76%	last completed repair	HouseMark STAR
79%	N.A.		79%	treated fairly and with respect	
83%	N.A.		70%	easy to deal with	HouseMark STAR
71%	57%	↑	64%	listens to views and acts on them	HouseMark STAR
74%	73%	↓	71%	keeps tenants informed	
68%	64%	↑	69%	opportunities to make views known	HouseMark STAR
57%	N.A.		61%	approach to handling complaints	
89%	N.A.		90%	neighbourhood as a place to live	HouseMark STAR
68%	N.A.		68%	makes a positive contribution to area	
60%	N.A.		59%	dealing with ASB	

statistically significant improvement
 no statistically significant change
 statistically significant decline

2. Executive summary

Overall satisfaction

1. Overall tenant satisfaction with the Independent Living service amongst tenants has fallen slightly from 83% in 2019 to 81% in 2022, but this change is small enough that it isn't considered to 'statistically significant'. This contrasts with the Housemark benchmark score amongst comparable landlords, which over the same time period had fallen by a greater margin (from 90% to 85%, section 3).
2. One factor that appears to have helped the overall satisfaction score will have been significant improvements in communication and consultation with Independent Living tenants, as evidenced by the fact that they are now more likely to feel listened to, and to have opportunities to make their views known (section 7). Satisfaction with the grounds maintenance service has also significantly improved (section 8).
3. Conversely, as was also the case for general needs tenants, the twin challenges of pandemic lockdowns happening at the same time as repairs functions were brought in-house, resulted in significantly poorer repairs satisfaction scores (section 5).
4. A 'key driver' analysis is a statistical test to check which other results in the survey are best at predicting overall satisfaction. In descending order of strength, the five strongest factors most closely associated with overall tenant satisfaction are:
 - Quality of the home (72% satisfied, section 4)
 - Being kept informed (56%, section 7)
 - Repairs and maintenance overall (55%, section 5)
 - Opportunities to make views known (56%, section 7)
 - Treated fairly and with respect (71%, section 6)

The home

5. The quality of the home has been the strongest key driver of satisfaction amongst Independent Living tenants for the last few surveys and this pattern continues in 2022. Indeed, it seems to be more influential than it has ever been (section 3).
6. Satisfaction with the quality of the home has fallen by 4% since 2019 to 86%, although this isn't quite enough to be considered a 'statistically significant' change. Indeed, the relevant Housemark benchmark has fallen by a comparable margin (section 4).
7. In the comments the single most common request for improvements were related to the property (24%), most frequently heating and energy efficiency (5%) and window replacements (section 11).
8. Far fewer tenants commented about other safety or security issues, which also supported the finding that most tenants are satisfied with the safety and security of their home (87%).
9. In addition, over three quarter of Independent Living tenants are satisfied that the communal areas in their scheme are kept clean and well maintained, which is consistent with similar landlords.

Repairs and maintenance

10. The overall perception of the way repairs and maintenance is dealt with has fallen since 2019 with only around two thirds of the sample now saying that they are satisfied (68%), compared to 83% in 2019 (section 5).
11. The score is now firmly in the benchmark fourth quartile compared to the sector average of 83%, whereas before it was exactly in line with the median.
12. This finding is consistent with the similar pattern observed in the general needs survey, although it seems to have had a more limited impact on other satisfaction scores in the survey.
13. Respondents have a higher opinion of their last completed repair (76%) than for the service as a whole. The last repair is much closer to the benchmark target of 79%. Only 66% are satisfied with the time taken to complete work after it is reported, however, doing the job right first time is actually the best predictor of satisfaction with the last completed repair.

Communication

14. Whether Independent Living tenants feel that they are kept well informed by their landlord is now the second strongest key driver of satisfaction overall, which undoubtedly linked to the issue of repairs.
15. Otherwise, performance in this regard appears to have been largely stable since 2019 (71%), which is close to the Housemark benchmark of 74% (section 7).
16. The opportunities that tenants have to make their views known is also now a key driver of satisfaction, which has significantly increased from 64% to 69%, and is now above the benchmark level.
17. This is coupled with an even bigger increase in the proportion that feel their views are being listened to and acted upon (64% v 57%), which provides further evidence that tenants are now feeling more engaged and involved than they were before.
18. Around a third of respondents are interested in having their say in the future, with in person discussion groups the most popular method.

Customer service

19. Being treated with fairness and respect is a key driver of overall satisfaction for both Independent Living tenants and those in general needs (see section 3).
20. Fortunately, almost four out of five tenants agree that they are treated this way (79%), compared to only 9% that disagree, which is in line with what other landlords (section 6).
21. Being easy to deal with, known as a customer effort score, is a recently added core STAR question. However, again following the same pattern as general needs, the 70% satisfaction score is well below the 83% Housemark benchmark target.

2. Executive summary

Value for money

22. Despite the cost of living crisis the majority of residents in Independent Living are satisfied that their rent represents good value for money (86%), compared to only 6% of the sample that are unhappy with it (section 4).
23. Indeed, most tenants also agree that their rent and service charges are affordable (75%), over a fifth say that they feel financially insecure (18%, section 10).

Complaints

24. Although the majority are satisfied with how the Council deals with complaints (61%), around a fifth are actively dissatisfied (19%). However, when placed in context with other similar landlords this score is actually quite good being slightly above the median score of 57% (section 9).
25. Note that it is important to remember that relatively few tenants will have direct experience of, or even be thinking about, the formal complaints process when answering this question.

Neighbourhoods

26. The vast majority of tenants are happy with their neighbourhood as a place to live (90%), and three quarter feel that their landlord makes a positive contribution to the where they live (76%). This is consistent with other landlords (section 8).
27. It is very pleasing to see that satisfaction with the grounds maintenance service has increased significantly from 69% to 76%, including a 15% increase in 'very' satisfied (now 40%).
28. As in 2019 the biggest neighbourhood problems are dog fouling/dog mess, rubbish or litter, and noisy neighbours. The only one of these to change since last time is dog mess, now considered a problem by 21% of respondents (was 12%).
29. The level of satisfaction appears relatively low when respondents are asked about the approach to handling anti-social behaviour (59%), but this is normally lower than many other scores and the benchmark average is virtually the same (60%).

Wellbeing

30. When asked about feelings of loneliness and isolation, 15% say they have felt this way to at least some extent, including 7% that explicitly feel this way (section 10).
31. Around two thirds of the sample say that they would consider going to the Council for help with wellbeing or money problems, although only one in ten respondents currently feel that they need such help, including a fifth of the under 65s.



3. Services overall

81%
satisfied
overall



top 'key drivers'

1. quality of home
2. being kept informed
3. repairs overall
4. making views known
5. treated fairly & with respect



Overall satisfaction has fallen slightly, but not by a statistically significant margin



The result is now closer to the Housemark benchmark than it was before, albeit still 4% below the norm



Bricks and mortar issues are stronger drivers of satisfaction than in 2019 due to falling repairs satisfaction



On the other hand, better communication and consultation scores seem to have positively influenced perceptions

3. Services overall

The last survey of Independent Living residents was conducted prior to the pandemic, during which time there was substantial disruption to services. It is therefore relatively positive to see that whilst overall satisfaction has **fallen slightly** from 83% to 81%, this change is small enough that it isn't considered to 'statistically significant'. What this means is the statistical test used to compare scores gave a result that was within the margin of error, showing we can't be confident enough that the difference was real rather than being merely down to chance.

Indeed, this contrasts with the Housemark benchmark score amongst comparable landlords, which over the same time period had fallen by a greater margin (from 90% to 85%). As a consequence, although the Council's score is still in the fourth quartile of peer landlords, the **gap has closed** since 2019 as it is now just 4% behind the norm, whereas the gap was 7% before. This is the opposite of the Council general needs tenants where this gap had extended (see separate report).

One factor that appears to have helped the overall satisfaction score will have been significant **improvements in communication and consultation** with Independent Living tenants as evidenced by the fact that they are now more likely to feel listened to, and to have opportunities to make their views known (section 7). Satisfaction with the grounds maintenance service has also significantly improved (section 8).

Conversely, as was also the case for general needs tenants, the twin challenges of pandemic lockdowns happening at the same time as repairs functions were brought in-house, resulted in significantly **poorer repairs satisfaction** scores (section 5). Indeed, overall satisfaction is lower for Independent Living tenants that received a repair in the last year (see below).

Key drivers

A 'key driver' analysis is a statistical test known as a 'regression' that identified those ratings throughout the survey that were most closely associated with overall satisfaction. This test does not mean that these factors directly caused the overall rating, but it does highlight the combination of factors that are the best predictors of overall satisfaction for tenants. This has the advantage of potentially identifying hidden links that respondents may not even be conscious of (see chart 3.2).

The first thing to note from these results is that the strongest key driver, the **quality of the home**, is the same as it was in 2019. This is a fairly common finding across the sector amongst this type of tenant. However, unlike in 2019 when it was broadly equal in strength to a few other issues it is now the dominant driver of Independent Living satisfaction.

This makes sense when considering that the pandemic will have disrupted maintenance and responsive repairs, which is probably why the quality of the home rating has fallen by 4% since 2019, albeit not quite enough to be a statistically significant change (section 4). Indeed, **repairs and maintenance** overall appeared in the key driver list itself for the first time in a Stroud Independent Living Survey.

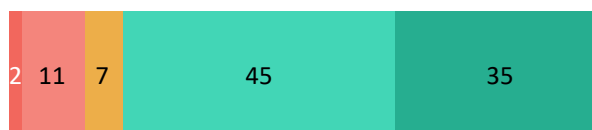
Bricks and mortar issues are therefore the main theme of the 2022 results, but the key drivers suggest a secondary theme of **communication and resident involvement** as the remaining three items on the list could all be broadly encompassed with such a term. This too has echoes of 2019, with one of these items (being kept informed) appearing on the key driver list in both years. In addition, as mentioned above, the opportunities for tenants to make their views known seem to have improved significantly since the last survey (section 7), providing further evidence that this has had a positive effective on overall perceptions. The last of these linked drivers is the extent to which the Council is seen to treat tenants with fairness and respect, which whilst a new question seems to compare favourably with other landlords (section 6).

3.1 Overall satisfaction

% Base 302 | Excludes non respondents



Overall service provided by housing services



satisfied 2022: **81** | satisfied 2019: 83 | error margin: +/- 4.4 | bench mark: **85** (4th)



Change over time

- Overall satisfaction has fallen by 2% but this is not a significant margin.
- The benchmark median is 5% lower than it was in 2019, so the Council’s score is closer to it than it was previously.

By people

- Because the age profile of tenants in Independent Living is very similar, there was very little difference between this and other scores throughout the survey findings **by age**. That said, the youngest respondents (aged 55-64) were the least satisfied overall (78%). For full details see table 12.5.
- Overall satisfaction is also significantly lower for people that have felt lonely or isolated (63%), need help with **wellbeing or money** problems (71%), or had **made contact** with the Council in the last year (76%), however the latter were only significant at the 90% confidence level.
- Satisfaction is also notably lower amongst respondents who have **had a repair** in the previous year compared to those who have not (79% v 84%).

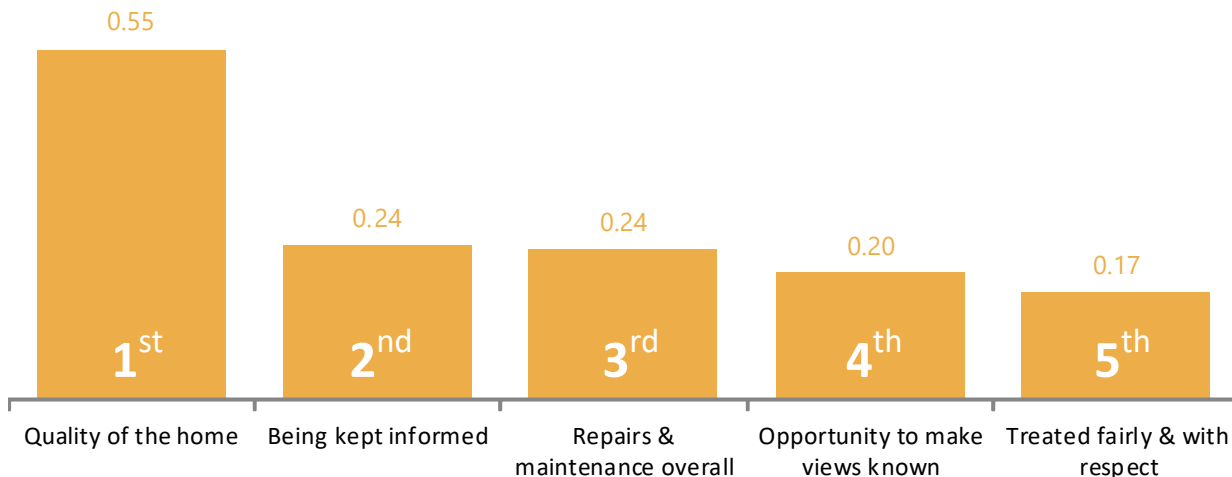
By place

- Please note that here, and throughout the report, the analyses by scheme have very small base sizes. Consequently, any variations, including those that are statistically significant, can show big swings due to the views of a small number of individuals.
- Nevertheless, it is still notable that respondents in **Dryleaze Court** are less satisfied than average overall (50%), which is the same pattern that also emerged in 2019. This pattern continues across many of the other survey results.
- Overall satisfaction is also lower in **Springfield’s Court** (64%), including 3 of the 14 respondents that are actively dissatisfied.
- A number of schemes have an overall satisfaction score around 90%, but only Concord’s score is statistically significant because this is the biggest sub-group in the survey.
- Overall satisfaction is identical for those living in flats and bungalows (both 81%).

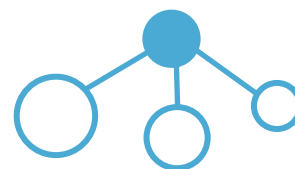
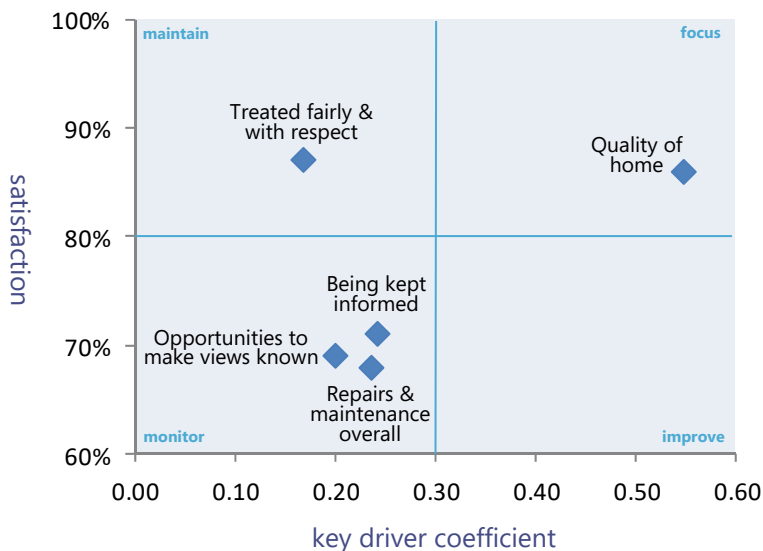
3. Services overall

3.2 Key drivers - overall satisfaction

R Square = 0.688 | Note that values are not percentages but are results of the statistics test. See Appendix A for more details.



3.3 Key drivers v satisfaction



A 'key driver' analysis uses a regression test to check which other results in the survey are best at predicting overall satisfaction. For a more detailed explanation of key drivers please see Appendix A.

3.4 Overall satisfaction by scheme

Excludes schemes with fewer than 7 respondents

	Sample size	% positive Overall satisfaction		Sample size	% positive Overall satisfaction
Overall	307	81	Overall	307	81
Archway Gardens	7	86	Hamfallow Court	12	83
Ashwell House	8	75	Hazelwood	17	88
Broadfield Road	14	79	Jenner Court	11	90
Burdett House	11	70	Malvern Gardens	7	86
Chapel Lane	8	63	Sherborne House	8	75
Concord	18	89	Springfields Court	14	64
Draycott	8	88	St Nicholas Court	18	83
Dryleaze Court	15	50	The Corriett	10	70
Dryleaze House	15	87	Trinity Drive	7	71
George Pearce House	13	85	Vizard Close	8	88
Grange View	12	100	Walter Preston Court	16	93
Grove Park Road	13	85	Willow Road	9	89

Significantly worse than average (95% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (95% confidence*)
Significantly worse than average (90% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (90% confidence*)

* See appendix A for further information on statistical tests and confidence levels



4. The home

87%



safe & secure

86%



quality



The quality of the home is the dominant key driver of overall satisfaction



Satisfaction with the quality of the home has fallen a little, but this isn't a statistically significant change



The most commonly mentioned requests for property improvements are heating, energy efficiency and windows



Satisfaction with the cleaning and maintenance of communal areas is broadly on par with other landlords

The quality of the home has been the **strongest key driver** of satisfaction amongst Independent Living tenants for the last few surveys and this pattern continues in 2022. Indeed, it seems to be more influential than it has ever been (chart 3.2).

The effects of the pandemic are still being felt across the sector, including perceptions of properties where maintenance had to be delayed due to lockdowns. This is also evident in this set of results as satisfaction with the quality of the home has **fallen by 4%** since 2019 to 86%, although it should be noted that this isn't quite enough to be considered a 'statistically significant' change. Indeed, the relevant Housemark **benchmark** has fallen by a comparable margin, meaning that the Council's score is still in the third quartile.

The centrality of this issue was also clear when tenants were asked at the end of the survey if there was anything else they would like to say, as the most common request for improvements were related to the property (24%), most frequently **heating and energy efficiency** (5%) and window replacements (2%, see section 11).

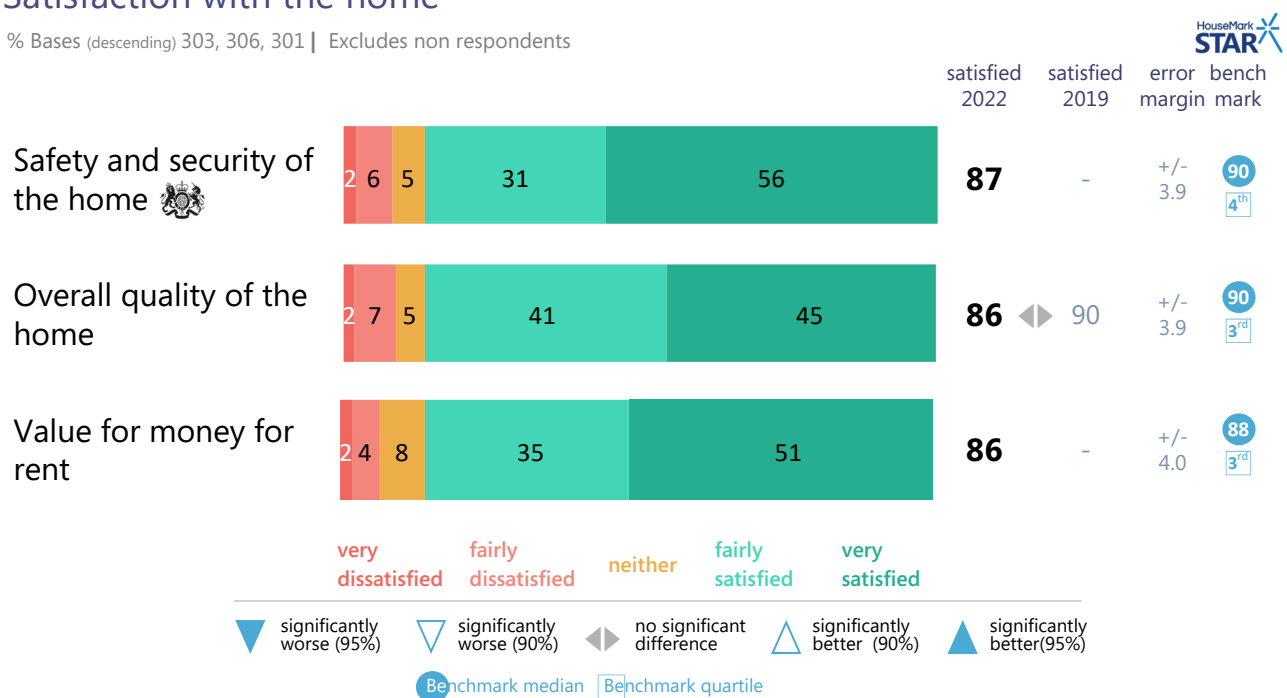
There were fewer comments about the **safety and security** of the home, which confirms the finding that the majority of tenants are satisfied in this regard (87%) and that this proportion is unchanged since 2019.

Similarly, perceptions of **rent value for money** are also sufficiently high that only 6% of the sample are unhappy with it. Indeed, only a handful of commenters really touched on value for money issues (chart 11.7). This question wasn't asked in 2019, but the result is broadly on par with similar landlords.

Another new question in this year's survey, due to its inclusion in the new regulatory suite of questions, asks about the cleanliness and maintenance of **communal areas**. Although there are currently only a few landlords in the Housemark database that have asked this new question, from the limited evidence available it would seem that the Council's score of 77% is also generally consistent with the **benchmark average**. Nevertheless, around one in six tenants are still dissatisfied (16%).

4.1 Satisfaction with the home

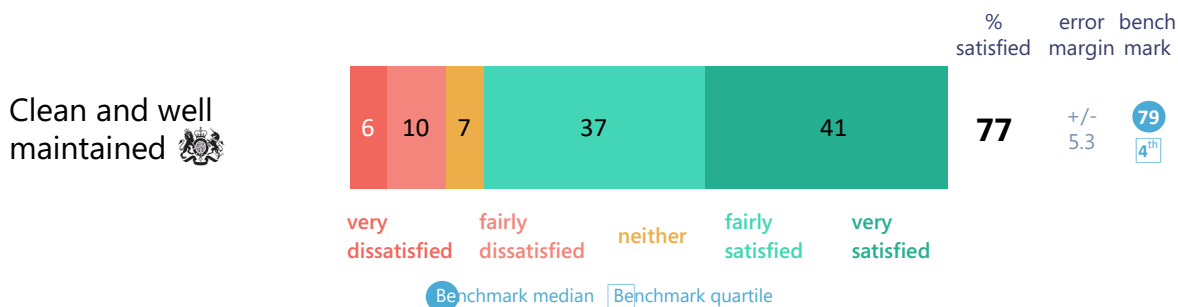
% Bases (descending) 303, 306, 301 | Excludes non respondents



4. The home

4.2 Communal areas

% Bases (descending) 242 | Living in a property with communal areas. Excludes non respondents .



Change over time

- Satisfaction with the quality of the home has fallen albeit not significantly since 2019 from 90% to 86%.
- However, perceptions of safety and security remain unchanged.



By people

- Both the quality of the home and its safety/ security are rated significantly lower than average by respondents who feel **lonely and isolated** (74% and 71% respectively).
- The quality of the home was also rated significantly lower than average by tenants who have **had a repair** in the previous year (82%).
- Similarly, tenants who have had a repair in the previous year are far less satisfied with the maintenance of communal areas than those who had not (71% v 83%).
- Unsurprisingly, value for money for rent is rated somewhat lower by tenants who **need help** with wellbeing or money problems (73%), compared to 88% who do not.

By place

- Respondents in **Dryleaze Court** are significantly less satisfied with their home, safety, and the rent that they pay (around two thirds satisfied for each).
- The **quality of the home** also seems to be a significantly worse issue in Burdett House, Chapel Lane, Sherbourne House and Springfields Court (chart 4.3).
- Respondents living in Concord and Grange View, Hamfallow Court and Willow Road seem to be the **most satisfied** with their homes.
- There are no significant differences in the scores in this section by property type, however the quality of the home was rated higher than average in **flats** compared to bungalows (88% and 84%). In contrast, respondents in bungalows were far more satisfied with the safety and quality of their home than those in flats (91% and 84%).
- Value for money for rent was identical for both property types (86%).



4.3 The home by scheme

Excludes schemes with fewer than 7 respondents

	Sample size	% positive			
		Quality of the home	Safety and security of home	Value for money for rent	Maintenance of communal areas
Overall	307	86	87	86	77
Archway Gardens	7	86	86	86	50
Ashwell House	8	63	88	100	100
Broadfield Road	14	86	86	79	20
Burdett House	11	36	64	73	60
Chapel Lane	8	75	75	100	67
Concord	18	94	94	94	93
Draycott	8	88	88	75	80
Dryleaze Court	15	67	60	67	40
Dryleaze House	15	100	73	79	71
George Pearce House	13	92	100	92	100
Grange View	12	100	92	100	100
Grove Park Road	13	92	92	92	90
Hamfallow Court	12	100	92	100	89
Hazelwood	17	94	88	88	53
Jenner Court	11	100	90	80	91
Malvern Gardens	7	100	100	71	71
Sherborne House	8	75	88	93	88
Springfields Court	14	57	86	79	80
St Nicholas Court	18	89	89	89	65
The Corriett	10	80	80	80	75
Trinity Drive	7	100	86	86	100
Vizard Close	8	100	75	88	100
Walter Preston Court	16	94	88	87	93
Willow Road	9	100	100	100	71

Significantly worse than average (95% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (95% confidence*)
Significantly worse than average (90% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (90% confidence*)

* See appendix A for further information on statistical tests and confidence levels



5. Repairs and maintenance

68%
▼



service overall

76%
▼



last repair 12 month period



Overall satisfaction has fallen by a significant 15% since 2019, mirroring the same pattern amongst general needs tenants



Repairs and maintenance is now a key driver of satisfaction for the first time amongst Independent Living tenants



Repairs satisfaction is now well below the Housemark benchmark average, even accounting for the pandemic



The best predictor of satisfaction with the last completed repair is whether the job was done 'right first time'

5. Repairs and maintenance

Appendix B

The overall perception of the way repairs and maintenance is dealt with has **fallen** dramatically since 2019 with only around two thirds of the sample now saying that they are satisfied (68%), compared to 83% in 2019. On the other end of the scale, one in five are now actively dissatisfied with the service (21%).

As a direct result of this the Council's score is now firmly in the **benchmark** fourth quartile compared to the sector average of 83%, whereas in 2019 this score was exactly in line with the median. It is therefore no surprise that the repairs score is a **key driver** for the first time, or that the quality of the home is now even important to Independent Living tenants (see section 3).

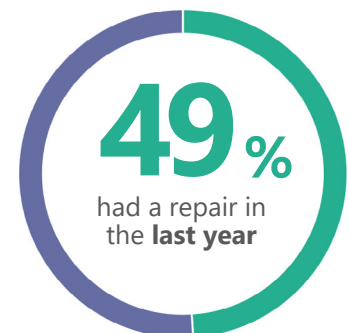
This finding is consistent with the similar pattern observed in the general needs survey (see separate report), although it seems to have had a more limited impact on other satisfaction scores in the survey. The reason is nevertheless certainly the same, namely that the Council experienced even more disruptions than most landlords during and after the **pandemic**, in part because it coincided exactly with a significant change to the repair service as it was brought in house in Spring 2020.

The overall STAR repairs and maintenance rating is an all-encompassing question that touches on both responsive repairs and cyclical maintenance, with a wider scope than just current performance on a day-to-day basis. When tenants were only asked about their experience on the **last completed repair** within the previous 12 months (76%, chart 5.3), it is reassuring that the score is considerably closer to the benchmark target of 79%, despite that fact that the year-on-year comparison is still disappointing (was 88%).

Here it is important to note that the primary measure of repairs satisfaction that the housing regulator will be using from 2023/24 is slightly different again, asking tenants to rate their overall experience of the repairs service received during the prior twelve months. This question was also asked in this year's survey to provide an initial baseline for it to become the headline question in future years, with the score of 79% being close to the aforementioned STAR question on last completed repair (chart 5.2).

Respondents that had received a repair in the last year were also asked a handful of additional questions on their last experience, as seen in chart 5.6. Of these, as was also true for general needs tenants, doing the job '**right first time**' is the strongest key driver of satisfaction with the last completed repair, but the current rating is unfortunately 9% below the ARP benchmark for this question. Similarly, a secondary key driver is the time taken to complete work after it was reported, with this too being below the benchmark, in this case 10% lower than the Housemark median. Note that this latter question is one of the new regulatory TSM measures.

Finally in this section of the survey, it should be noted that satisfaction with **gas servicing** arrangements has also fallen since 2019, albeit with the majority of tenants still remaining satisfied (89% v 93%). Indeed, very few tenants are actively dissatisfied (5%) and instead the main statistically significant shift is in the proportion of respondents that are 'very' satisfied with the arrangement, with this group shrinking from 73% in 2019 to 62% this year.



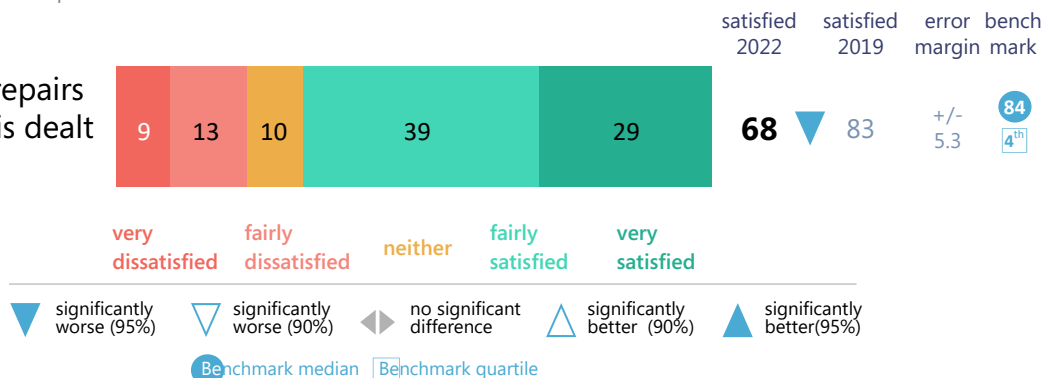
5. Repairs and maintenance

5.1 Overall repairs satisfaction

% Base 297 | Excludes non respondents



Generally, how repairs & maintenance is dealt with

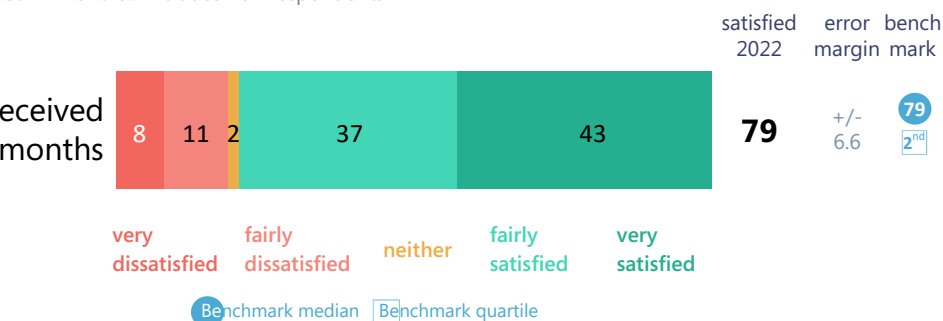


5.2 Repairs service in last 12 months

% Base 148 | Repair in last 12 months.. Excludes non respondents



Repairs service received over the last 12 months



Change over time

- Satisfaction with the repairs and maintenance service generally is down significantly from 83% to 68%.
- A fall in the proportion receiving a repair in the previous twelve-month period from 58% to 49%.
- Satisfaction with the last completed repair is also down significantly from 88% to 76%.
- A significant fall in satisfaction with the gas servicing arrangements from 93% to 89% (chart 5.7).

By place

- Being consistent with their scores elsewhere in the survey, **Dryleaze Court** residents are the least satisfied with the repairs service, in particular the quality of the work. The scores also seemed to lower than average in **Chapel Lane**.
- The repairs and maintenance service overall is rated significantly lower amongst respondents in **flats** (66%), but significantly above average for those in bungalows (72%).

By people

- Most aspects of the last completed repair are rated significantly higher than average by tenants **aged 55 – 64**, but only at the 90% confidence level.

5.3 Last repair

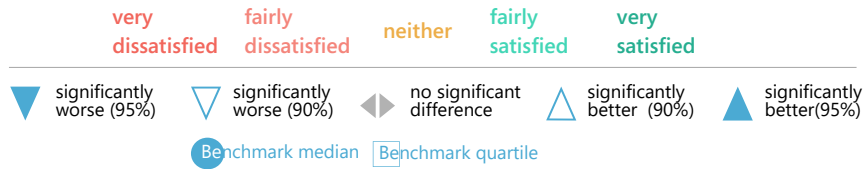
% Base 146 | Repair in last 12months. Excludes non respondents



Repairs service received on *this occasion*

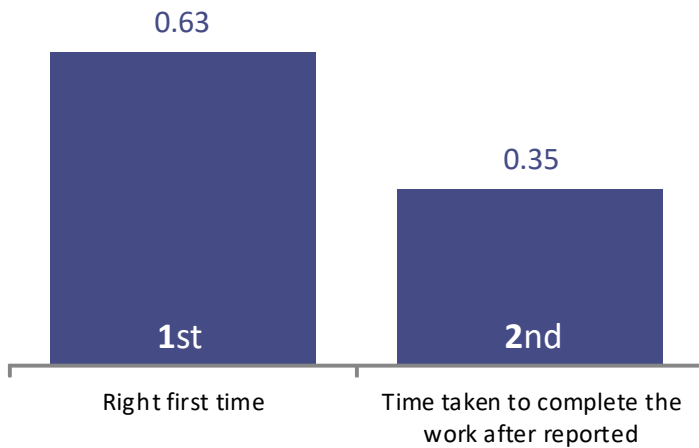


satisfied 2022: 76, satisfied 2019: 88, error margin: +/- 6.9, bench mark: 79

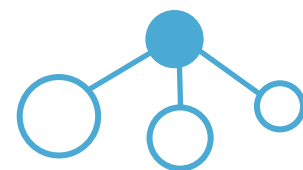
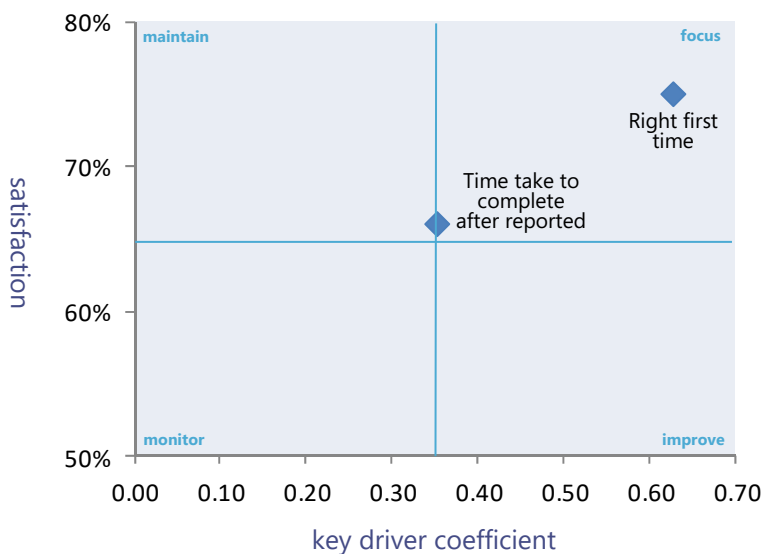


5.4 Key drivers - satisfaction with last repair

R Square = 0.793 | Note that values are not percentages but are results of the statistics test. See Appendix A for more details.



5.5 Key drivers v satisfaction

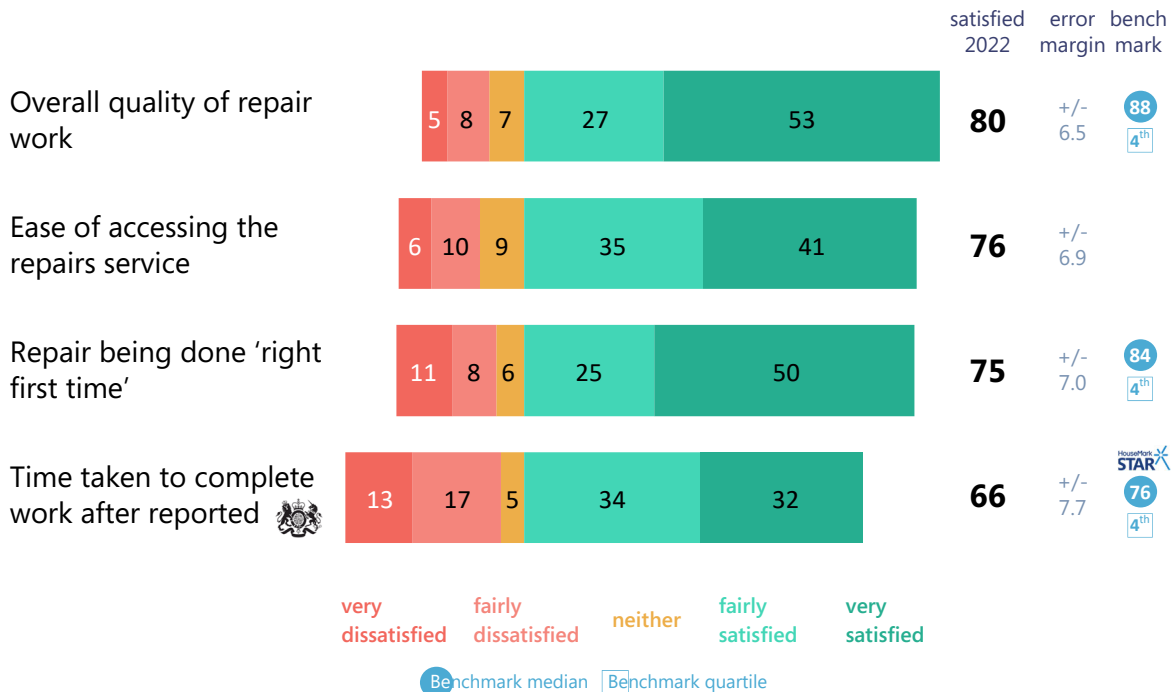


A 'key driver' analysis uses a regression test to check which other results in the survey are best at predicting overall satisfaction. For a more detailed explanation of key drivers please see Appendix A.

5. Repairs and maintenance

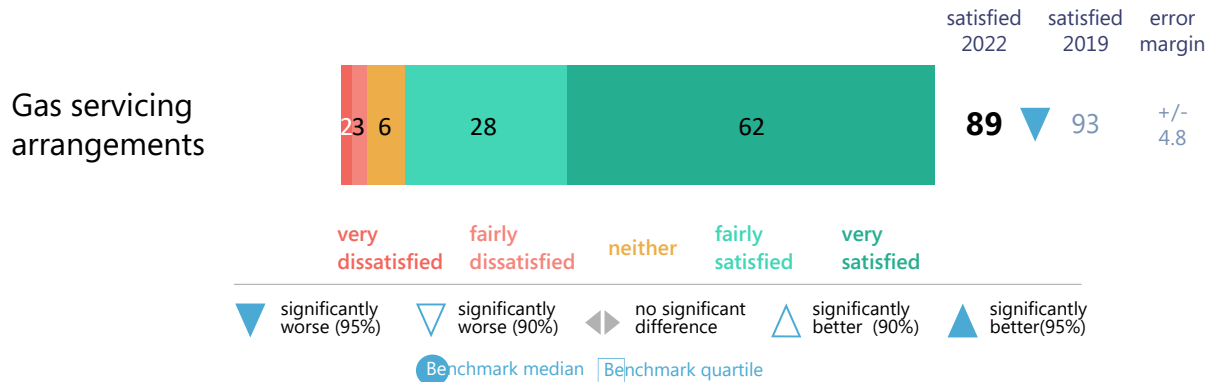
5.6 Last completed repair

% Bases (descending) 146, 148, 145, 148 | Repair in last 12 months. Excludes non respondents.



5.7 Gas servicing

% Base 160 | Excludes non respondents



5. Repairs and maintenance

Appendix B

5.8 Repairs by scheme

Excludes schemes with fewer than 7 respondents

		% positive							
	Base	Generally how repairs and maintenance is dealt with	Repairs service received over the last 12 months	Gas servicing arrangements	Ease of accessing the repairs service	Time taken to complete the repair after reported	The overall quality of the work	The repair being done 'right first time'	The repairs service received on this occasion
Overall	307	68	79	89	76	66	80	75	76
Archway Gardens	7	71	100	71	0	0	100	100	0
Ashwell House	8	71	100	0	100	100	67	67	67
Broadfield Road	14	79	71	100	71	57	50	67	67
Burdett House	11	46	83	50	83	67	67	67	67
Chapel Lane	8	57	50	88	50	33	60	40	40
Concord	18	88	80	100	90	60	80	67	80
Draycott	8	71	100	75	100	100	100	100	100
Dryleaze Court	15	50	80	93	70	50	50	70	60
Dryleaze House	15	73	86	67	57	71	86	86	86
George Pearce House	13	83	83	100	100	83	83	83	83
Grange View	12	83	86	100	71	71	86	86	86
Grove Park Road	13	62	75	85	50	50	75	75	75
Hamfallow Court	12	67	75	100	86	63	100	75	88
Hazelwood	17	53	67	67	78	78	100	78	78
Jenner Court	11	56	80	0	60	50	75	75	75
Malvern Gardens	7	57	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Sherborne House	8	63	75	80	75	75	75	50	100
Springfields Court	14	69	100	100	100	80	100	100	100
St Nicholas Court	18	56	67	80	67	44	67	44	56
The Corriett	10	70	71	100	71	86	100	86	71
Trinity Drive	7	83	75	100	75	75	100	100	100
Vizard Close	8	63	75	0	25	25	50	50	50
Walter Preston Court	16	69	100	100	88	63	100	100	88
Willow Road	9	78	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Significantly worse than average (95% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (95% confidence*)
Significantly worse than average (90% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (90% confidence*)

* See appendix A for further information on statistical tests and confidence levels



6. Customer service



79%



treated fairly &
with respect



Most tenants feel they are treated fairly and with respect, which is both a new regulatory question and a key driver



The 'customer effort' score for how easy housing services is well below the benchmark median at 70% v 83%



On both of these measures, respondents that have recently been in contact are less satisfied than those that have not

The standard of customer service that Independent Living tenants received was a strong key driver in the last survey conducted in 2019. This section of the question has changed considerably since then due to both the evolution of the STAR template and the new TSM regulatory framework, which means that none of the current questions can be tracked over time.

However, the customer experience is still clearly an important part of what tenants think about the service because the new TSM question on being treated with **fairness and respect** is a key driver of overall satisfaction (see section 3). Fortunately, almost four out of five tenants agree that they are treated this way, compared to only 9% that disagree, which is in line with what other landlords have found when asking this new question. However, it should be noted that this score does go down a little for residents that have recently made contact with the Council (see below).

Another new question, this time a core element of Housemark's STAR benchmarking, asked if tenants find Housing Services easy to deal with. This is also known as a '**customer effort**' score, as it considers the experience in a holistic way from the perspective of the customer, rather than internal business processes, and is used as a general summary of the customer service experience.

However, in this case the benchmark comparisons are considerably less positive as the 70% of Independent Living tenants that are satisfied is well below the 83% Housemark target. This is exactly the same pattern as also emerged amongst general needs tenants.

Two further detailed questions were also asked of all tenants that had made contact with Housing Services over the last twelve months, something which two thirds of respondents had done (63%, down from 77%). Whilst seven out of ten respondents are satisfied that **staff were helpful** (73%), slightly fewer were satisfied that they were able to **deal with their query** (66%).

By people

- Respondents who have **made contact** with housing services in the last year are significantly less satisfied than average that the Council is easy to deal with compared to those who have not been in touch (62% v 84%).
- Similarly, respondents who had been in contact in the previous year are less likely to agree that they are treated fairly and with respect (76%) compared to 85% amongst those who have not.
- Those feeling **lonely or isolated** are also significantly less likely to agree with this statement (63%).
- Respondents who have felt lonely or isolated were significantly less satisfied with their last contact in terms of helpfulness and ability of staff to deal with their query (69% and 55% respectively).

By place

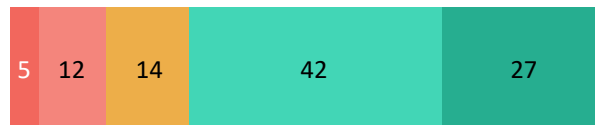
- Respondent in **Dryleaze Court** are less satisfied than average with most of the questions in this section of the survey.
- Tenants in flats were significantly less likely to agree that they were treated fairly and with respect (76%), whereas the opposite was true for those living in bungalows (84%).

6. Customer service

6.1 Customer effort

% Base 296 | Excludes non respondents

Housing Services are easy to deal with



very dissatisfied fairly dissatisfied neither fairly satisfied very satisfied

Benchmark median Benchmark quartile

satisfied 2022: **70**
 error margin: +/- 5.2
 HouseMark STAR bench mark: **83** (4th)

6.2 Treats residents fairly and with respect

% Base 296 | Excludes non respondents

Housing Services treats its residents fairly and with respect



strongly disagree tend to disagree neither tend to agree strongly agree

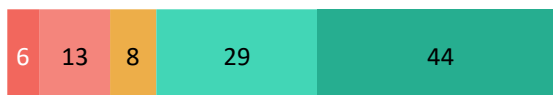
Benchmark median Benchmark quartile

agree 2022: **79**
 error margin: +/- 4.6
 HouseMark STAR bench mark: **79** (2nd)

6.3 Last contact

% Bases (descending) 190, 184 | Contact in last 12 months. Excludes non respondents.

Helpfulness of staff



Ability to deal with query



very dissatisfied fairly dissatisfied neither fairly satisfied very satisfied

Benchmark median Benchmark quartile

satisfied 2022: **73**
 error margin: +/- 6.3
 satisfied 2022: **66**
 error margin: +/- 6.8



6.4 Customer service by scheme

Excludes schemes with fewer than 7 respondents

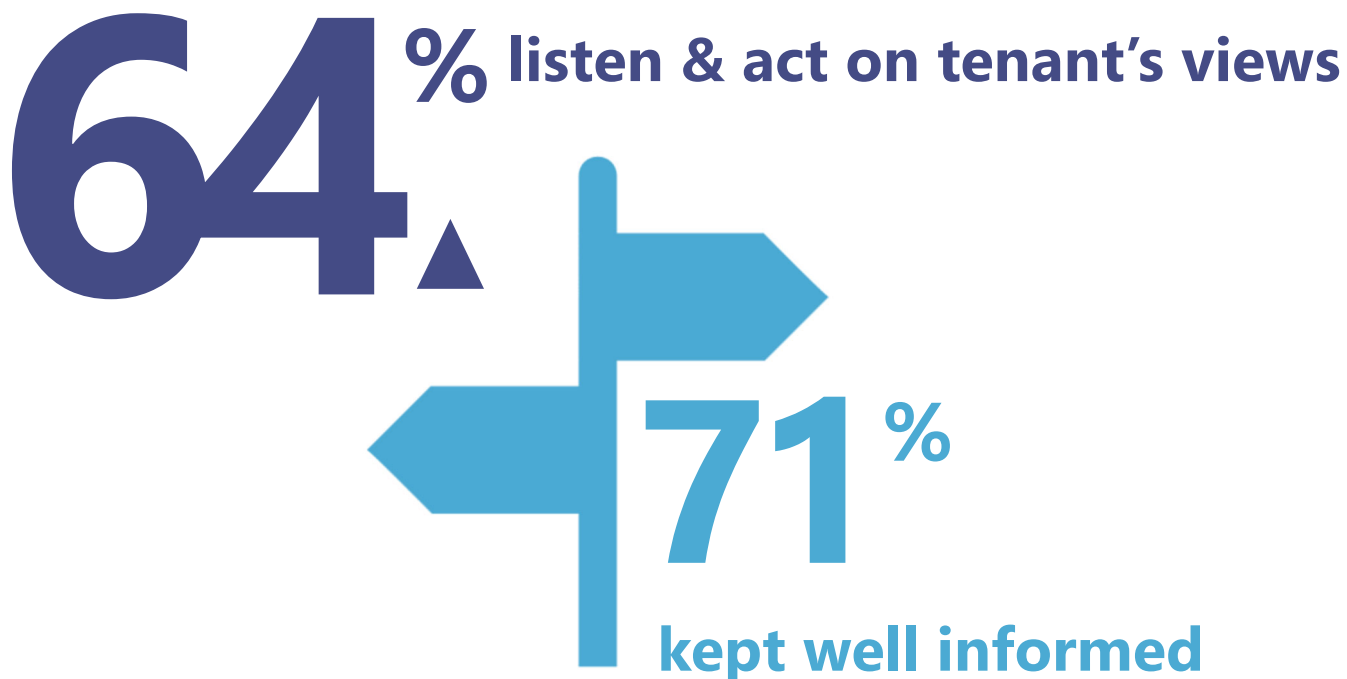
	Sample size	% positive			
		Easy to deal with	Treated fairly and with respect	Helpfulness	Able to deal with query
Overall	307	70	79	73	66
Archway Gardens	7	71	86	33	33
Ashwell House	8	71	100	50	50
Broadfield Road	14	62	85	91	82
Burdett House	11	46	64	25	50
Chapel Lane	8	63	88	100	100
Concord	18	88	100	100	75
Draycott	8	75	75	75	50
Dryleaze Court	15	57	58	50	50
Dryleaze House	15	80	80	67	67
George Pearce House	13	92	92	86	71
Grange View	12	67	73	73	73
Grove Park Road	13	50	92	38	38
Hamfallow Court	12	75	82	70	60
Hazelwood	17	77	82	78	78
Jenner Court	11	67	78	80	75
Malvern Gardens	7	57	57	67	50
Sherborne House	8	63	88	67	67
Springfields Court	14	69	69	63	63
St Nicholas Court	18	83	61	83	64
The Corriett	10	60	70	63	63
Trinity Drive	7	86	100	80	80
Vizard Close	8	63	75	100	50
Walter Preston Court	16	71	75	89	86
Willow Road	9	78	78	63	71

Significantly worse than average (95% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (95% confidence*)
Significantly worse than average (90% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (90% confidence*)

* See appendix A for further information on statistical tests and confidence levels



7. Communication



Being kept informed, and the opportunities to make your views known, are both key drivers of satisfaction overall



The opportunities to make your views known, and feeling listened to, have both improved significantly



Around a third are interested in having their say, with in person discussion groups the most popular method



Just over half (59%) use the internet, including a third that use social media and 19% that use Council online services

Whether Independent Living tenants feel that they are **kept well informed** by their landlord is now the second strongest key driver of satisfaction overall, which undoubtedly linked to the issue of repairs because this issue also came up in that section of the research (see section 5).

More generally, however, performance in this regard appears to have been largely stable since 2019 (71%), which is close to the Housemark **benchmark** of 74%.

The opportunities that tenants have to **make their views known** is also now a key driver of satisfaction, which is especially notable because the Council has clearly improved the way it consults with Independent Living tenants since the last survey, to the extent that satisfaction has **significantly increased** from 64% to 69%, and is now above the benchmark level.

This is coupled with an even bigger **increase** in the proportion that feel their views are **being listened to** and acted upon (64% v 57%), which provides further evidence that tenants are now feeling more engaged and involved than they were before.

Change over time

- Significant **increase in satisfaction** with being listened to and having views acted upon (64%, was 57%). Same with the rating for opportunities to make views known (69%, was 64%).
- Increase in the proportion of respondents using the **internet** from 47% to 59%.
- Preference for an electronic **newsletter** has increased since 2019 from 17% to 24%.

By people

- Ratings for both listening to tenants and information are significantly lower if the tenant has felt **lonely or isolated** (47%/50%), the same is true for the opportunities to get involved (46%).
- Satisfaction with being kept informed is lower for those who have **made contact** in the previous year (65%).

By place


- There are no notable distinctions in these results by property.
- Satisfaction with information and communication is generally lower than average for tenants living at **Burdett House** and **Dryleaze Court** (chart 7.5).
- Residents at Grove Park Road are also significantly less likely to feel that they are kept well informed.

7. Communication

7.1 Involvement

% Bases (descending) 284, 279, 284 | Excludes non respondents



Keep tenants informed about things that matter to them 




satisfied 2022 71  satisfied 2019 73 error margin +/- 5.3 bench mark  74 

Opportunities to make views known

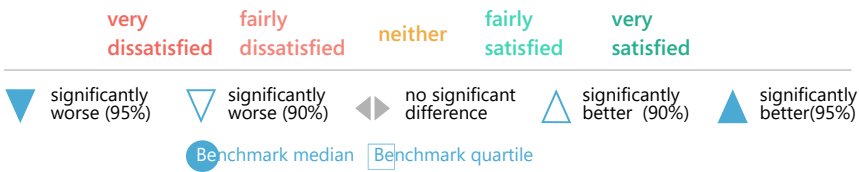


69  64 +/- 5.4  68 

We listen to your views and act upon them 



64  57 +/- 5.6  71 



7.2 Preferred method of having a say

% Base 307 | More than one answer allowed

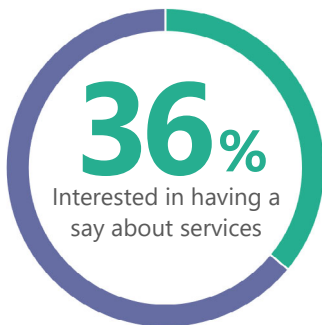
In person discussion group about the latest issues



Taking part in short online or social media polls

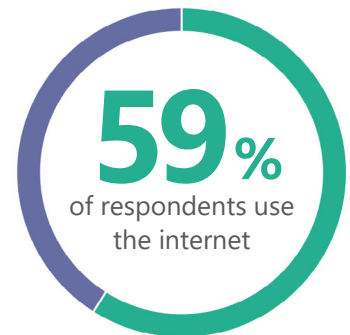
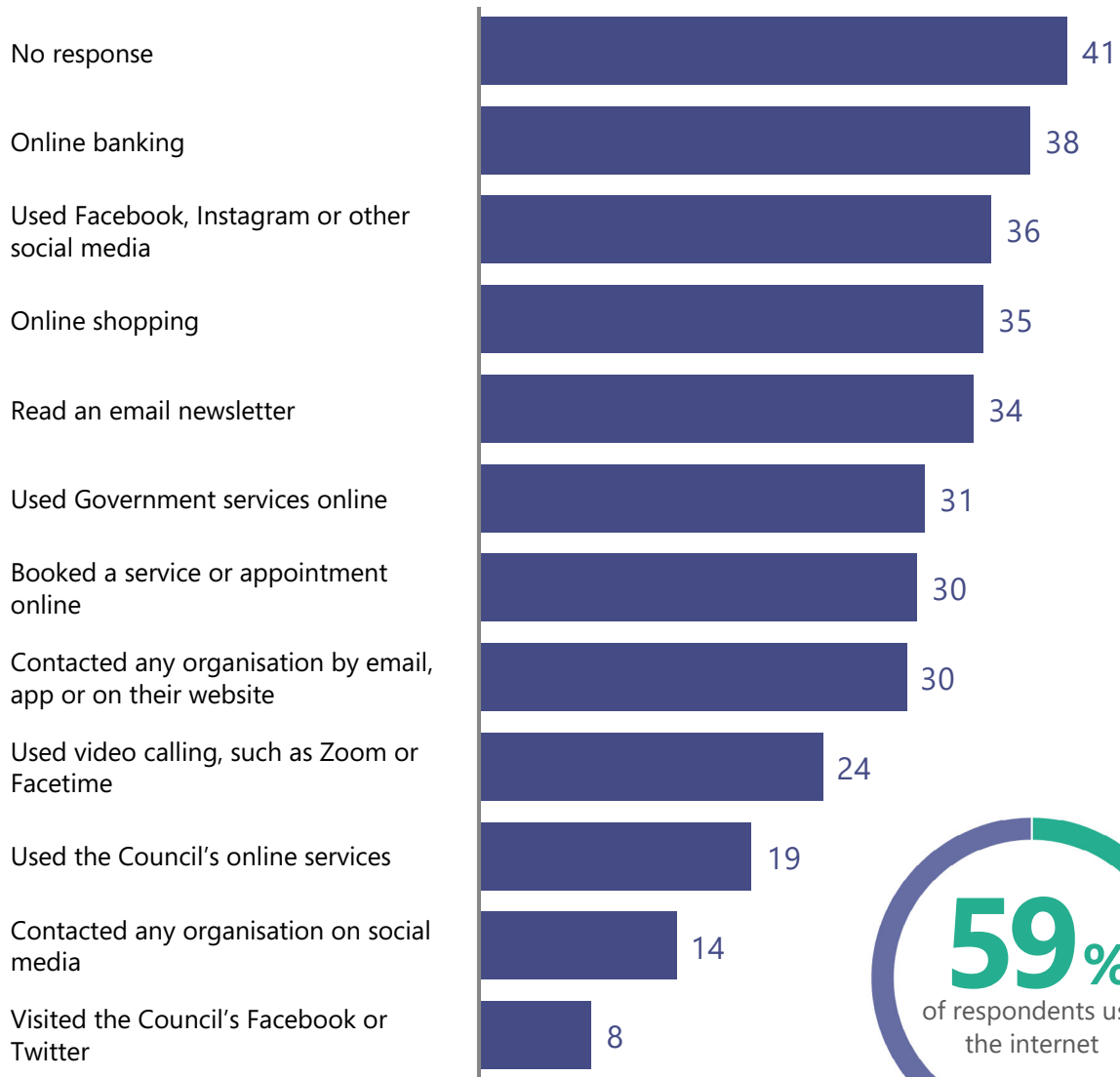


Online discussion groups about the latest issues



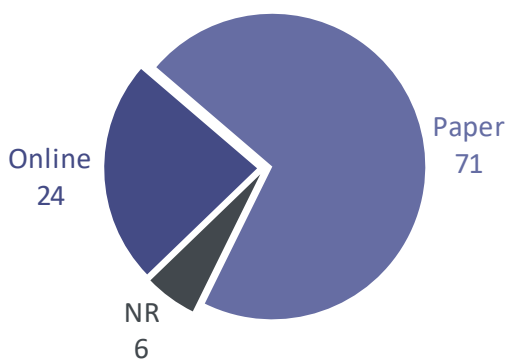
7.3 Used apps or websites to do any of the following

% Base 307 | More than one answer allowed



7.4 Preferred method of receiving a newsletter

% Base 307



7. Communication

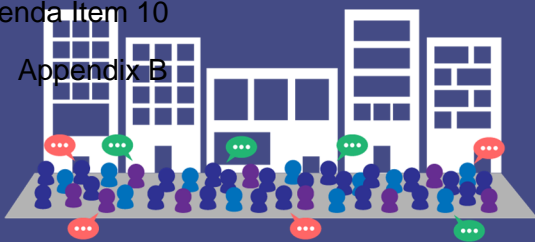
7.5 Communication by scheme

Excludes schemes with fewer than 7 respondents

	Sample size	% positive		
		Listens to views	Kept informed	Opportunities to have your say
Overall	307	64	61	79
Archway Gardens	7	71	71	57
Ashwell House	8	50	86	67
Broadfield Road	14	54	71	77
Burdett House	11	40	50	40
Chapel Lane	8	57	71	71
Concord	18	88	88	80
Draycott	8	75	100	71
Dryleaze Court	15	33	42	42
Dryleaze House	15	57	60	73
George Pearce House	13	69	77	69
Grange View	12	67	83	82
Grove Park Road	13	58	55	82
Hamfallow Court	12	75	73	91
Hazelwood	17	63	71	59
Jenner Court	11	63	75	67
Malvern Gardens	7	50	71	57
Sherborne House	8	88	75	63
Springfields Court	14	73	90	82
St Nicholas Court	18	61	67	61
The Corriett	10	50	60	50
Trinity Drive	7	86	83	83
Vizard Close	8	50	63	75
Walter Preston Court	16	57	73	73
Willow Road	9	67	78	67

Significantly worse than average (95% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (95% confidence*)
Significantly worse than average (90% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (90% confidence*)

* See appendix A for further information on statistical tests and confidence levels



8. Neighbourhood services

90%
good place
to live



**greatest
problems**

1. dog fouling/mess
2. rubbish or litter
3. Noisy neighbours



All questions in this section compare favourably to benchmarks



Satisfaction with the grounds maintenance service has increased significantly from 69% to 76%



Dog mess seems to have become an increasing problem, particularly around certain schemes

8. Neighbourhood

The portions of the survey that asked Independent Living tenants about their experiences of their local neighbourhood includes some of the most positive responses, with all four of the results displayed in chart 8.1 being in line with expectations. This means that the vast majority of tenants are happy with their neighbourhood as a **place to live** (90%), and three quarter feel that their landlord makes a positive contribution to the where they live (76%). Note that the latter is another question from the TSM regulatory framework.

The most pleasing result is, however, probably the statistically significant 7% **improvement** in the proportion of tenants that are satisfied with the **grounds maintenance** service (now 76%), which includes an even more impressive 14% increase in the proportion that are 'very' satisfied (now 40%). This almost entirely reverses the fall that was observed between the 2015 and 2019 surveys.

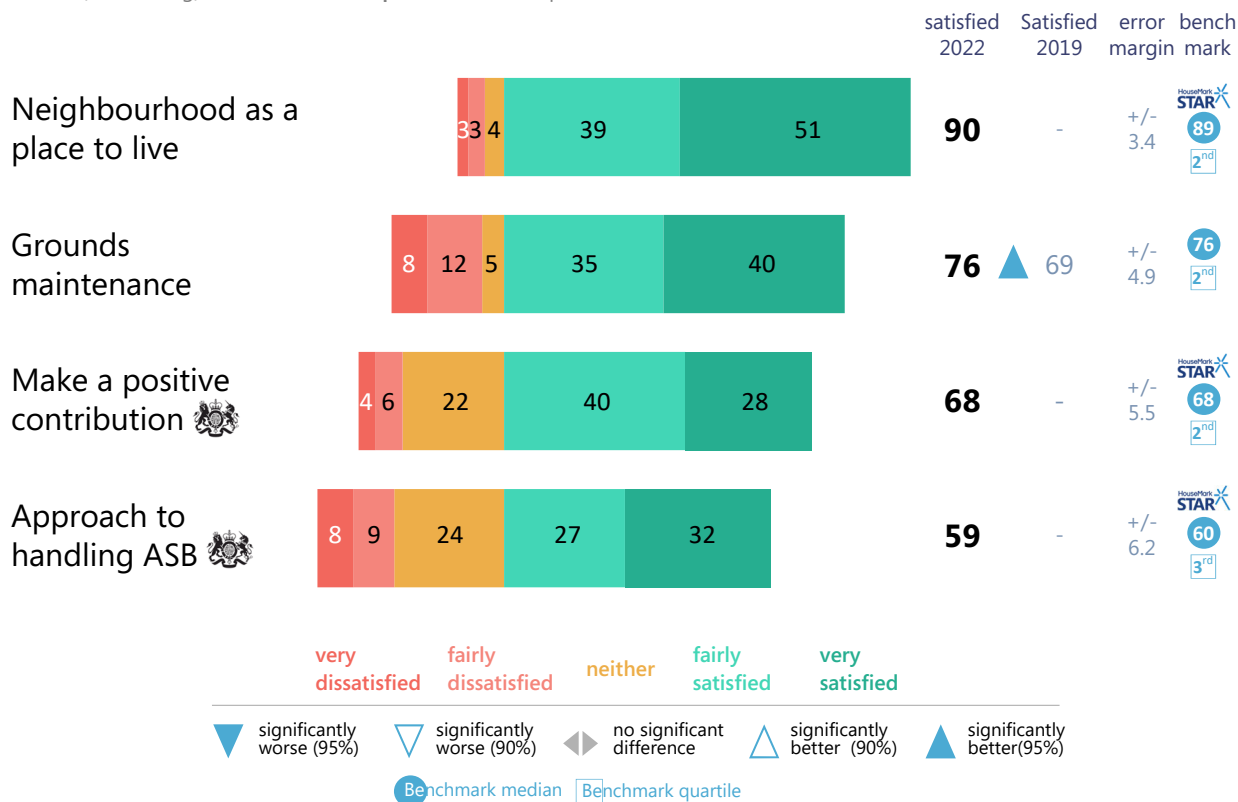
Even the lowest rated question on the chart opposite, the handling of **anti-social behaviour**, is still consistent with how similar tenants normally answer this question, including 59% that are satisfied compared to 17% that are dissatisfied.

When asked about specific problems that occur in the local neighbourhood, the pattern is fairly similar to that in 2019 with the most common issues being dog mess, rubbish and litter and noisy neighbours. Of these, however, the only one that has changed since the last survey is **dog mess**, which has jumped from 15% saying that it was a problem before to 21% this year. This appears to be driven by the experience of tenants handful of schemes (see table 8.5).

However, despite the higher frequency of issues with litter and dog mess, the strongest key driver of satisfaction with the neighbourhood is actually noisy neighbours (9% problem).

8.1 Neighbourhood services

% Bases (descending) 298, 295, 275, 241 | Excludes non respondents





Change over time

- Dog fouling is viewed to be significantly worse than it was three years ago (chart 8.4).



By people

- Significantly lower than average scores if reported **feel lonely or isolated**, for example only 56% of this group are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live.
- Respondents **aged 65 – 74** were significantly less satisfied than average with where they live (84%).
- **Noisy neighbours** is a significant concern for those living in a building with communal areas (10%).



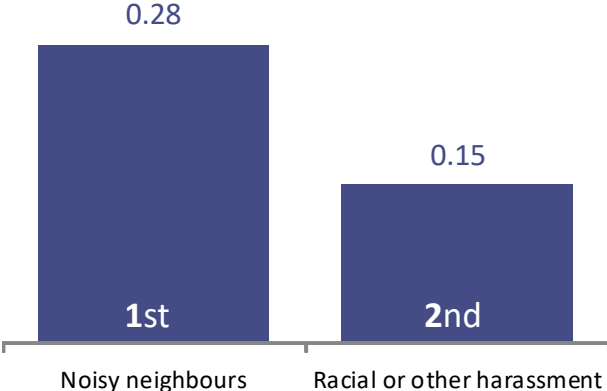
By place

- Detailed results by scheme can be found in tables 8.5 and 8.6.
- Dryleaze Court and Burdett House residents are considerably less satisfied than other tenants that housing services make a positive contribution to their **neighbourhood** (both under 40%). Conversely, this rating is higher than average in the Concord, George Pearce House and Hamfallow Court schemes.
- **Grounds maintenance** services are rated significantly poorer than average at Broadfield Road (57%) and Dryleaze Court (58%).
- The handling of **anti-social behaviour** seems to be a greater issue for tenants living at Ashwell House, Burdett House, Malvern Gardens and Walter Preston Court.
- **Rubbish, litter and drugs** appear to be more prevalent around St Nicholas Court.
- Respondents in bungalows are slightly more satisfied with their neighbourhood than those in flats (91% v 89%). The same is true for the positive contribution rating (69% 'bungalows', 68% 'flats').

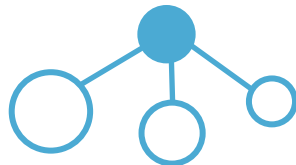
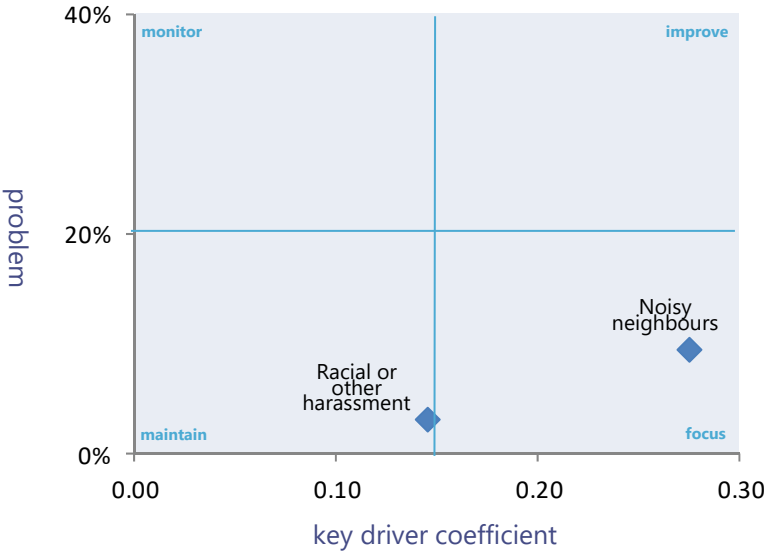
8. Neighbourhood

8.2 Key drivers - problems in the neighbourhood

R Square = 0.124 | Note that values are not percentages but are results of the statistics test. See Appendix A for more details.



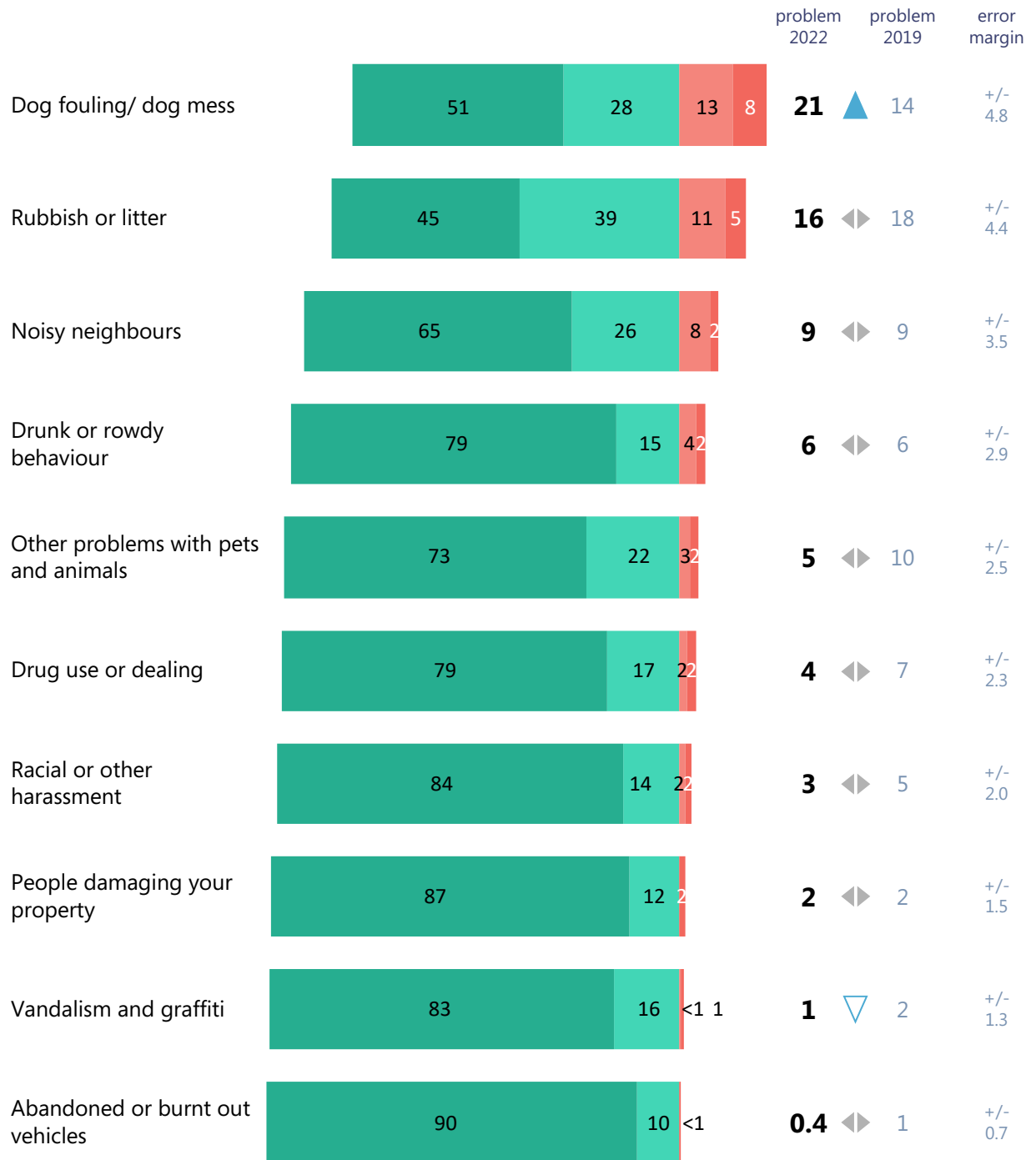
8.3 Key drivers v problems



A 'key driver' analysis uses a regression test to check which other results in the survey are best at predicting overall satisfaction. For a more detailed explanation of key drivers please see Appendix A.

8.4 Neighbourhood problems

% Bases (descending) 279, 272, 266, 271, 264, 271, 267, 267, 266, 266 | Excludes non respondents.



8. Neighbourhood

8.5 Neighbourhood problems by scheme

Excludes schemes with fewer than 7 respondents

	Base	% problem									
		Rubbish or litter	Noisy neighbours	Dog fouling/ dog mess	Other problems with pets and animals	Racial or other harassment	Drunk or rowdy behaviour	Vandalism and graffiti	People damaging your property	Drug use or dealing	Abandoned or burnt out vehicles
Overall	307	16	9	21	5	3	6	1	2	4	0.4
Archway Gardens	7	33	17	57	0	0	0	0	0	14	0
Ashwell House	8	0	57	0	0	0	57	0	0	0	0
Broadfield Road	14	7	8	8	7	0	0	0	0	7	0
Burdett House	11	11	11	11	11	11	0	0	11	0	0
Chapel Lane	8	0	17	17	20	17	17	0	0	0	0
Concord	18	0	0	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Draycott	8	13	13	13	13	13	0	0	0	0	0
Dryleaze Court	15	0	0	31	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dryleaze House	15	17	8	15	0	8	8	0	0	23	0
George Pearce House	13	0	8	54	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grange View	12	8	0	42	10	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grove Park Road	13	17	0	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hamfallow Court	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hazelwood	17	13	0	0	0	7	13	0	0	7	0
Jenner Court	11	18	0	36	10	0	10	0	0	0	0
Malvern Gardens	7	33	33	0	0	17	17	0	0	0	0
Sherborne House	8	29	13	29	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Springfields Court	14	46	11	42	20	0	9	9	9	0	0
St Nicholas Court	18	41	0	6	0	0	12	0	0	12	0
The Corriett	10	0	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Trinity Drive	7	17	29	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	17
Vizard Close	8	14	33	33	17	0	0	0	0	0	0
Walter Preston Court	16	31	0	13	8	8	0	0	0	0	0
Willow Road	9	50	0	33	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Significantly worse than average (95% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (95% confidence*)
Significantly worse than average (90% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (90% confidence*)

* See appendix A for further information on statistical tests and confidence levels

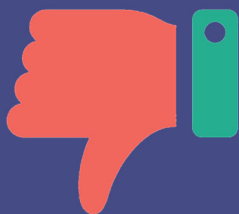
8.6 Neighbourhood ratings by scheme

Excludes schemes with fewer than 7 respondents

	Sample size	% positive			
		Neighbourhood as a place to live	Positive contribution to neighbourhood	Grounds maintenance service	Dealing with ASB
Overall	307	90	68	76	59
Archway Gardens	7	71	71	100	43
Ashwell House	8	75	57	100	29
Broadfield Road	14	93	54	57	56
Burdett House	11	70	38	60	13
Chapel Lane	8	86	50	57	60
Concord	18	100	93	75	78
Draycott	8	88	50	75	50
Dryleaze Court	15	77	31	58	22
Dryleaze House	15	87	46	73	57
George Pearce House	13	93	92	85	100
Grange View	12	100	83	100	44
Grove Park Road	13	92	83	69	55
Hamfallow Court	12	100	90	83	80
Hazelwood	17	88	81	88	75
Jenner Court	11	100	75	90	57
Malvern Gardens	7	100	60	43	40
Sherborne House	8	88	63	88	75
Springfields Court	14	86	69	77	55
St Nicholas Court	18	83	56	61	67
The Corriett	10	90	70	80	80
Trinity Drive	7	100	71	83	100
Vizard Close	8	75	50	88	50
Walter Preston Court	16	88	77	81	39
Willow Road	9	100	89	67	63

Significantly worse than average (95% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (95% confidence*)
Significantly worse than average (90% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (90% confidence*)

* See appendix A for further information on statistical tests and confidence levels



9. Complaints

61%



complaints handling

77%



know how to make a complaint



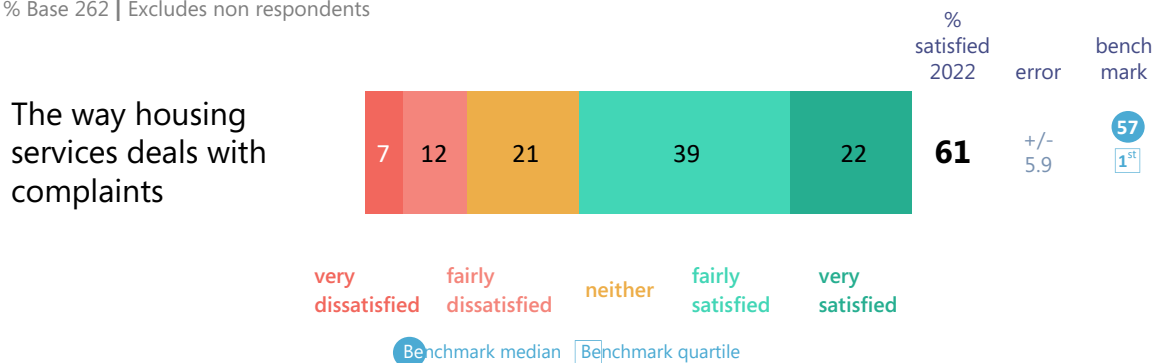
Satisfaction with complaints handling is a slightly above the benchmark average



Be aware that many respondents that claim to have made a complaint will not have used the formal complaints system

9.1 Overall the way housing management services deals with complaints

% Base 262 | Excludes non respondents



A new question was added to the 2022 survey asking tenants to rate how well housing services handle complaints. This is yet another result that the Council will have to report to the regulator in future years, but a very important point to consider that relatively few of those answering the question will be referring to the **formal complaints** process. Indeed, the experience with such questions with other landlords shows that that only a small minority of tenants that think they have made a complaint have ever used the formal process, and some even categorise standard repairs reports as complaints.

With that caveat, **awareness** of the complaints process seems high as over three quarters of the sample feel that they know how to make a complaint, compared to only 6% that actively disagree.

Although the majority are satisfied with how the Council deals with complaints (61%), around a fifth are actively dissatisfied (19%). However, when placed in context with other similar landlords this score is actually quite good being slightly **above the median** score of 57%.

By people

- Respondents who have **been in contact** are significantly less satisfied than average with complaint handling (55%), whereas those who have not been in contact are significantly more satisfied than average (71%).
- Interestingly, those who have been in contact in the previous year are also less likely to agree that they know how to make a complaint (76%).
- There are no significant variations by property type, with satisfaction similar amongst respondents in bungalows and flats (61% and 60% respectively).
- Awareness of how to make a complaint is lowest in bungalows, with only 76% of this group agreeing they know how to make a complaint, compared to 78% of those living in flats.

By place

- Only 2 out of the 11 respondents from **Dryleaze Court** that responded to this question are satisfied with how complaints are handled, compared to 5 that are dissatisfied. Similarly, only 2 **Malvern Court** resident are satisfied compared to 3 that are dissatisfied with complaints handling.



9. Complaints

9.2 Complaints by scheme

Excludes schemes with fewer than 7 respondents

	Sample size	% positive Way complaints dealt with		Sample size	% positive Way complaints dealt with
Overall	307	61	Overall	307	61
Archway Gardens	7	57	Hamfallow Court	12	67
Ashwell House	8	100	Hazelwood	17	59
Broadfield Road	14	42	Jenner Court	11	56
Burdett House	11	50	Malvern Gardens	7	33
Chapel Lane	8	71	Sherborne House	8	63
Concord	18	83	Springfields Court	14	58
Draycott	8	71	St Nicholas Court	18	59
Dryleaze Court	15	18	The Corriett	10	67
Dryleaze House	15	58	Trinity Drive	7	60
George Pearce House	13	67	Vizard Close	8	57
Grange View	12	64	Walter Preston Court	16	62
Grove Park Road	13	64	Willow Road	9	56

Significantly worse than average (95% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (95% confidence*)
Significantly worse than average (90% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (90% confidence*)

* See appendix A for further information on statistical tests and confidence levels



10. Well-being



Feelings of loneliness and isolation are lower for Independent Living tenants than those living in general needs housing



Around two thirds would consider wellbeing or financial help from their landlord, with 10% currently feeling in need of such support

Across the sector the experience of the pandemic has had an impact on the wellbeing of tenants living in housing schemes such as Independent Living, which has brought such issues to the fore.

When asked about feelings of **loneliness and isolation**, 15% say they have felt this way to at least some extent, including 7% that explicitly feel this way. This group were also significantly less satisfied with the majority of the opinion rating statements asked throughout the survey. It is notable that this figure is lower than the equivalent 21% amongst general needs tenants.

Another topical issue is financial wellbeing, with the survey fieldwork completed during the cost-of-living crisis. It was good to see that most residents felt that the rent and service charge that they pay is **affordable** (75%), although only one in ten did disagree. Indeed, around a fifth of Independent Living tenants say that they still feel **financially insecure** (19%).

It is also positive to note that around two thirds of the sample say that they would consider going to the **Council for help** with wellbeing or money problems, although only one in ten respondents currently feel that they need such help, including a fifth of the under 65s (see below).

By people

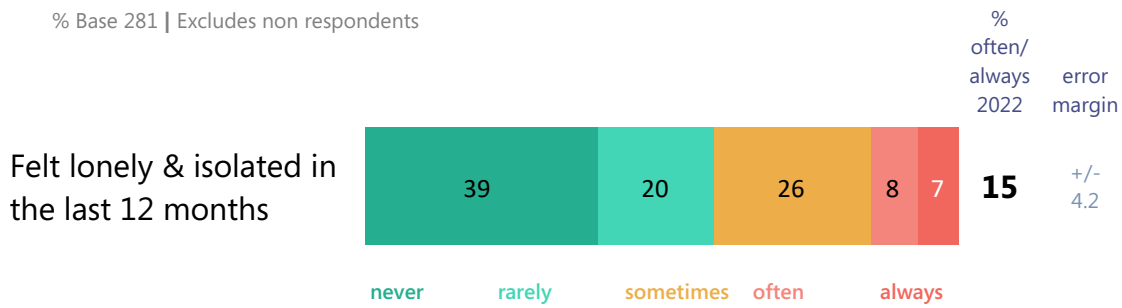
- All respondents that feel **lonely or isolated** were significantly less likely to agree with the well-being and support statements in chart 10.2.
- The same is true for those respondents who **need help** or support with well-being or money problems, although to a slightly lesser extent.
- Just over a fifth of respondents **aged 55 – 64** say they need help or support with well-being or money problems, this proportion falls to only 5% of those aged 75 - 84.

By place

- There are no significant variations by property type.
- Residents in **Dryleaze Court** are less positive than average on most of the wellbeing questions (chart 10.4).
- Out of the 8 respondents from **Draycott**, 3 say that they often experience loneliness or isolation and don't feel part of their local community.
- Conversely, the feeling of community is universal amongst **Grange View** respondents.

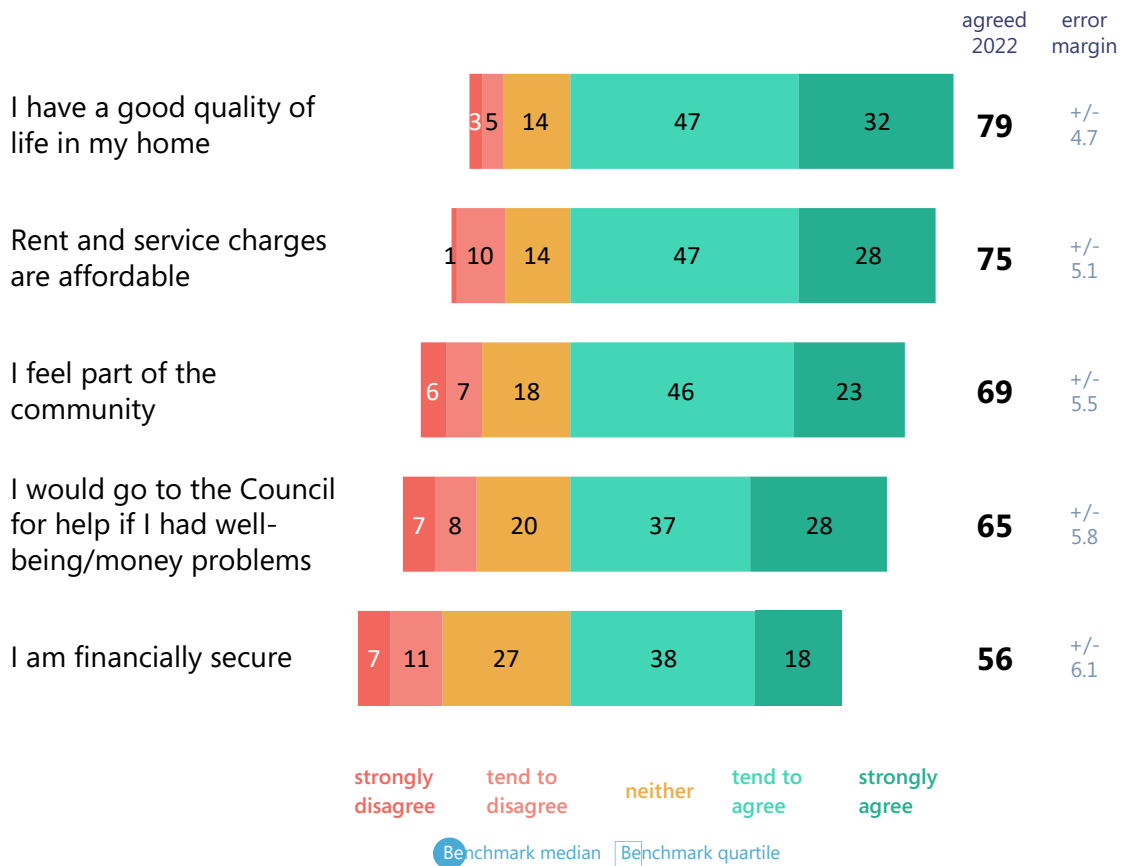
10.1 Felt lonely and isolated

% Base 281 | Excludes non respondents



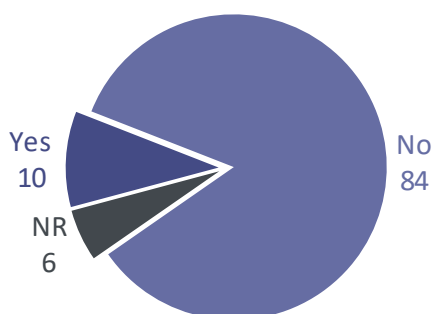
10.2 Well-being and support

% Bases (descending) 289, 278, 273, 261, 252 | Excludes non respondents.



10.3 Currently need help with well-being or money problems

% Base 307



10.4 Communication by scheme

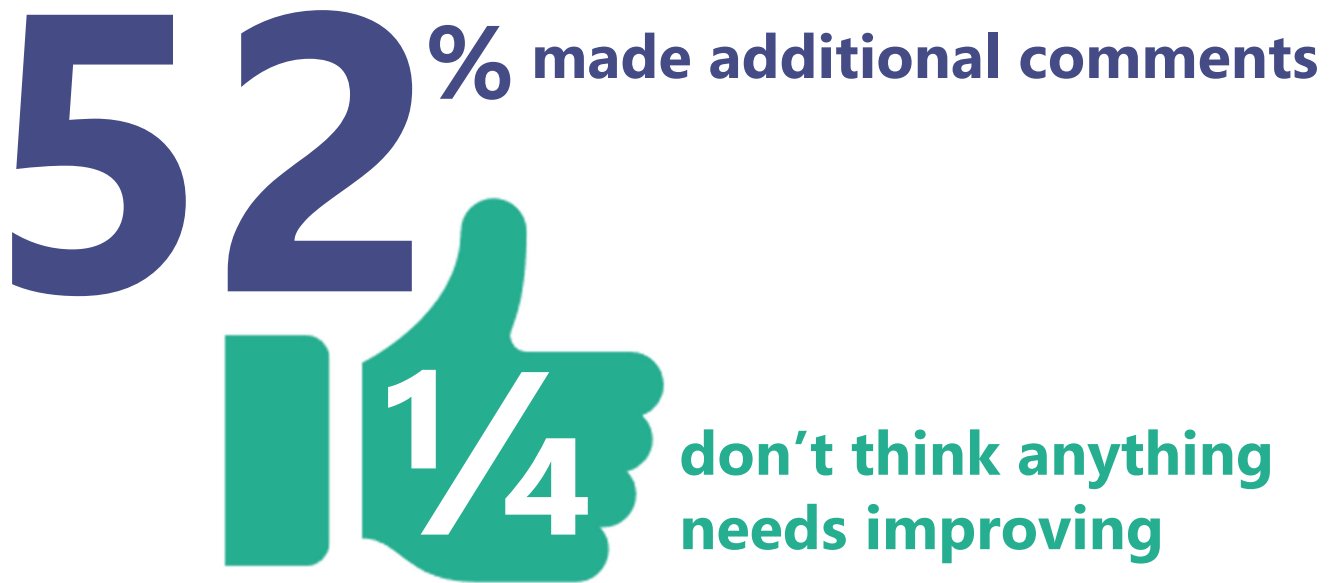
Excludes schemes with fewer than 7 respondents

	Sample size	% positive					
		Lonely & isolated	Affordable rent & charges	Financially secure	Quality of life in home	Part of community	Come to Council for help
Overall	307	15	75	56	79	69	65
Archway Gardens	7	29	71	71	57	43	57
Ashwell House	8	0	67	20	63	67	33
Broadfield Road	14	7	77	60	92	62	69
Burdett House	11	18	56	38	70	44	44
Chapel Lane	8	13	67	80	86	83	83
Concord	18	11	77	70	94	86	71
Draycott	8	38	63	43	63	38	75
Dryleaze Court	15	13	46	30	58	58	40
Dryleaze House	15	13	55	33	58	58	70
George Pearce House	13	15	92	55	77	67	75
Grange View	12	0	91	90	100	100	80
Grove Park Road	13	8	69	55	77	67	55
Hamfallow Court	12	17	92	46	82	60	80
Hazelwood	17	18	82	56	82	81	73
Jenner Court	11	9	78	71	89	73	38
Malvern Gardens	7	29	83	43	71	67	83
Sherborne House	8	13	63	43	63	63	71
Springfields Court	14	14	93	54	67	67	82
St Nicholas Court	18	17	65	59	78	50	47
The Corriett	10	10	63	25	70	70	67
Trinity Drive	7	0	57	43	100	83	67
Vizard Close	8	25	100	86	75	86	33
Walter Preston Court	16	13	93	69	94	64	67
Willow Road	9	11	78	67	100	88	89

Significantly worse than average (95% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (95% confidence*)
Significantly worse than average (90% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (90% confidence*)

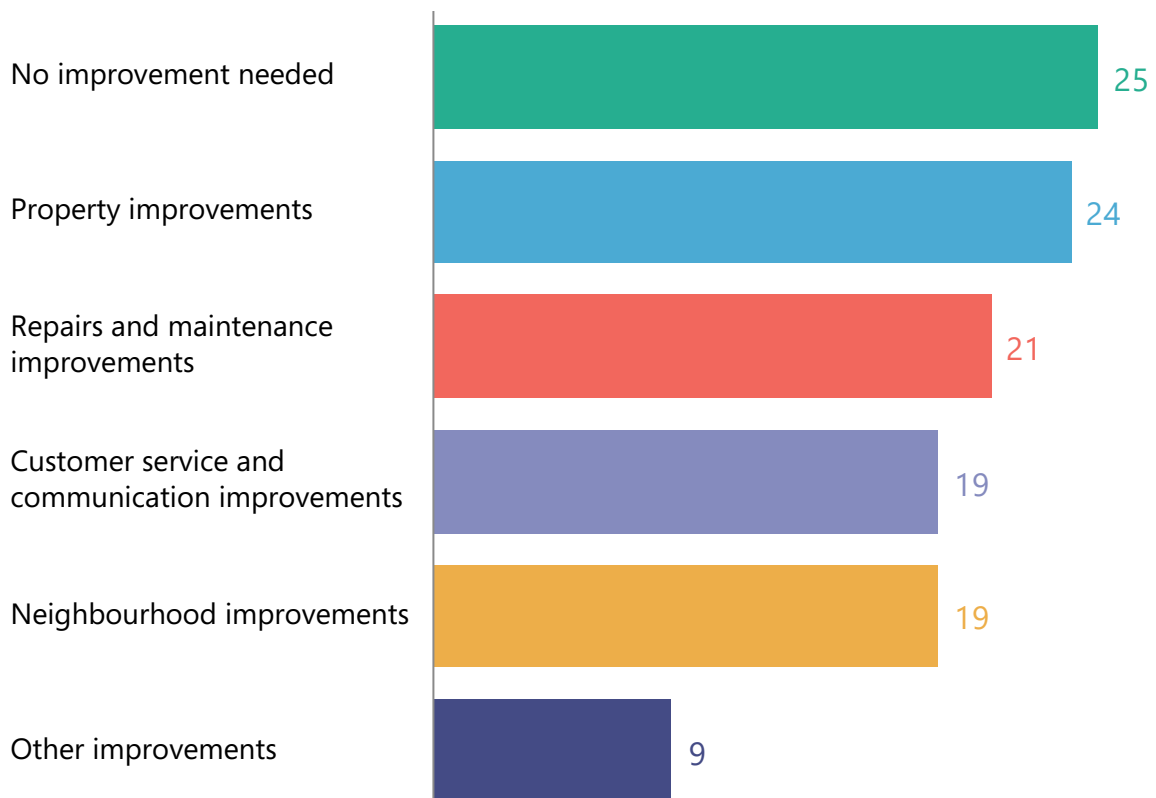
* See appendix A for further information on statistical tests and confidence levels

11. Further comments



11.1 Anything else you would like to say - summary

% Base 161 | Proportion of all tenants that commented. Includes multiple responses. Coded from verbatim comments.



11. Further comments

The final question that tenants were asked at the end of the survey was simply whether they had anything else that they would like to say about their home or the services they received, including any compliments or suggestions. Around half of the sample (52%) chose to do so, and all the percentage results presented in the following charts are calculated as a percentage of that group. These comments are coded and organised into different categories, both as broad headings, and in a further level of detail. Note that many respondents made comments that fall into multiple categories.

Chart 11.1 presents this analysis in terms of just a handful of broad categories, of which it is pleasing to see that a quarter of commenters simply wanted to **praise the service** that residents receive. This included 6% that praised **the home** that they lived in, which is to be expected when the quality of the home is the dominant driver of satisfaction (chart 11.2). However, plenty (4%) also wished to draw attention to the standard of **customer care** that they received:

“I am very satisfied and happy in my home and appreciate the help I have been given to settle in. Everyone I have dealt with has been very helpful and professional. Thank you.”

“I have lived here for almost two years and feel very privileged. Beautiful outside, natural grounds and friendship. Lovely little home which I can make my own. Lovely day room for our social life and groups which help our mental health, yoga, mindfulness, coffee mornings and crafts.”

“Stroud District Council have given me a home I love for last 10 years for which I am very grateful. I've lived in many other council properties over the years, but SDC is sincerely the best.”

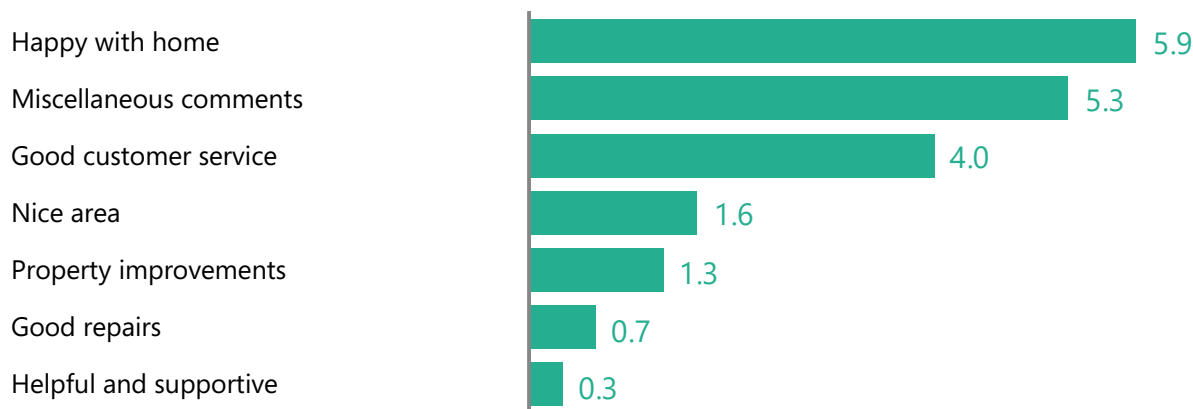
“My answers are based on the ten weeks I've been an applicant or tenant. So far you've been brilliant, every contact with staff has been fab.”

“With all my recent problems I feel really taken care of by the council they are so polite and friendly and helpful in getting me sorted and boy do I need sorting.”

“We are very fortunate to have a wonderful team at our disposal from our service delivery manager right to our coordinator and site officers and manager.”

11.2 Positive comments - detail

% Base 161 | Coded from verbatim responses. Excludes non respondents.



11. Further comments

Appendix B

Aside from these compliments, however, the majority of comments still made suggestions for how the services could be improved in the future. The key driver theme continues here, with the most common suggested improvements are in the broad category of **property improvements** (24%), chief amongst these being upgrades to the **heating/energy efficiency** (5%) and **windows** (2%, chart 11.3).

“My flat is always cold, no insulation, draughts everywhere and ancient storage heater. Also lots of mould.”

“Money would be better spent on improving insulation and stopping drafts.”

“Cannot afford to put heating on as storage heater.”

“Overall I am very satisfied my only issue is the inadequate heating system, antiquated storage heaters.”

“As the council are aware a lot of the residents are unhappy with the heating in the bathrooms and the windows are very poor, if it's windy the blinds/curtains move constantly.”

“Draughts from poor windows and gaps, this has been reported more than once, has been seen by you and photos taken but no response.”

Moving on to specific comments about the **repairs and maintenance** service, the fact that outstanding jobs was the most common cause of complaint (4.9%) is entirely unsurprising in the context both of the poor repairs satisfaction scores in this survey, and the fact that it was also the dominant topic for general needs tenants in their own surveys. Some examples of such comments include:

“I have small jobs I need help with but no luck with any help yet.”

“We have walkabouts to point out jobs that need doing. Rarely are these walkabouts leading to the job being done”.

“We are not happy with the repairs just before covid I reported a problem ... That was 18 months ago.”

“I have been waiting several years for the wet room to have repairs.”

However, outstanding repairs wasn't quite the overwhelming issue it was for general needs survey respondents, with almost as many Independent Living residents focusing on a **lack of information** on when repairs would be completed (4.4% of comments).

“When it comes to building repairs /repairs the information is poor.”

“The repairs service needs to communicate better regarding appointments and would be a good idea to have a follow up call after the repair to ensure customer satisfaction.”

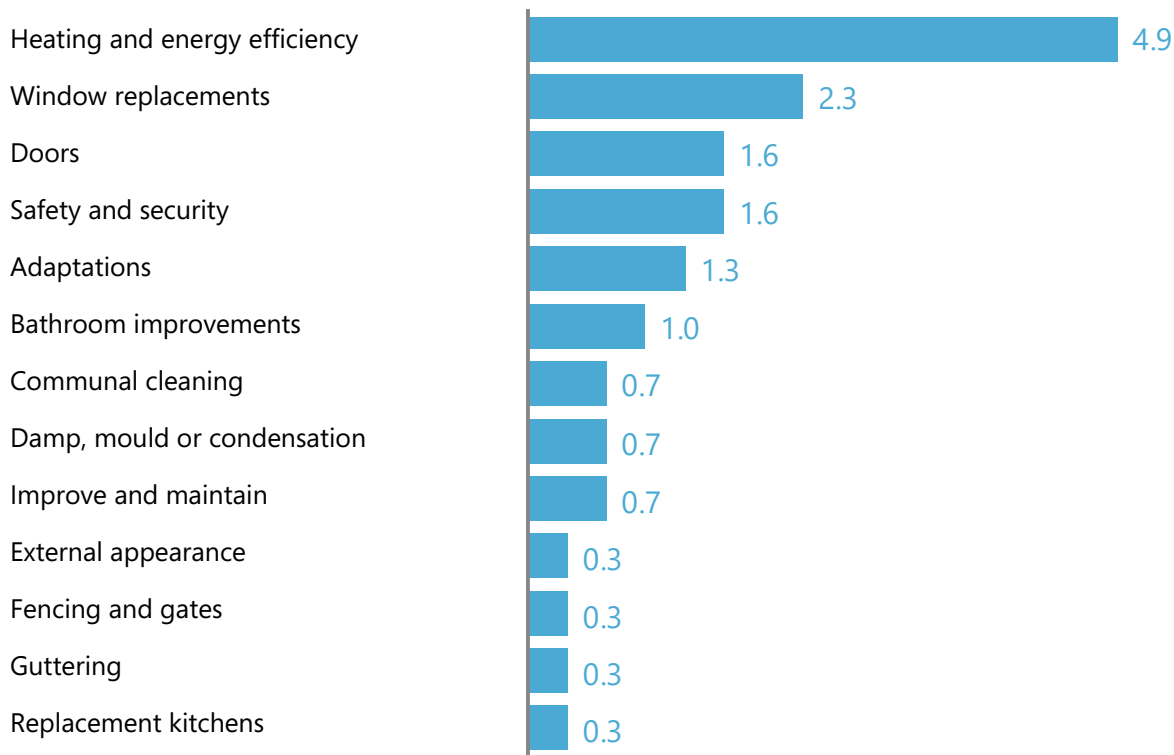
“If we ask for something or request a repair SDC should respond with yes or no and a timeframe.”

“Repairs. Have emailed repairs as suggested but ten days later no reply! I phoned to address my email with outstanding repair and explained that a simple reply from them saying my email was received would satisfy me and I would realise I had been heard. Customer response is vital.”

11. Further comments

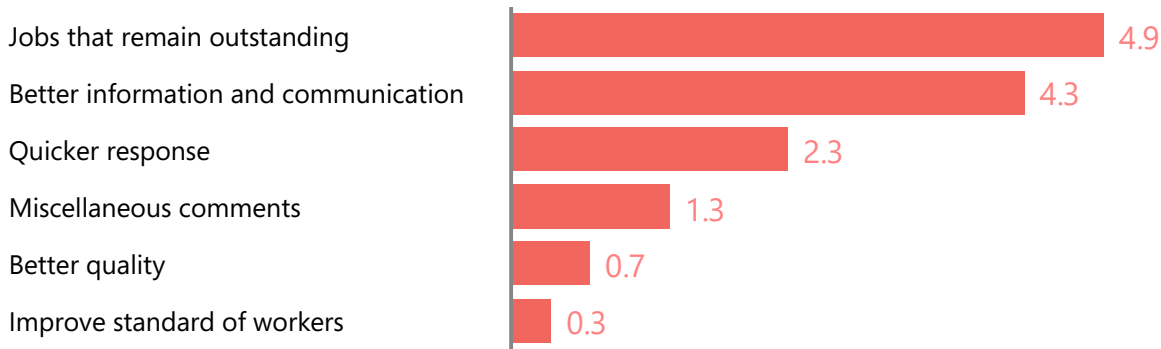
11.3 Property improvements - detail

% Base 161 | Coded from verbatim responses. Excludes non respondents.



11.4 Repair and maintenance improvements - detail

% Base 161 | Coded from verbatim responses. Excludes non respondents.



Around a fifth of the comments made were about **neighbourhood issues**, although they should be understood in the context of relatively high satisfaction with the tenant's local areas, including a substantial improvement in how the grounds maintenance service is perceived (section 8). Nevertheless, 3.6% of comments were complaints about untidy gardens and grounds maintenance, whilst a few tenants also noted issues that they had encountered with anti-social behaviour. For example:

"Our garden is an utter disgrace."

"Only that the upkeep of grounds is an absolute disgrace with overgrowing flower beds outside where, and beds that were "sorted" are now in need of remedial action."

"Not enough attention to the garden."

"The grass is not cut to a good standard and the rest of the gardens are not tended and are overgrown. The waste and recycling bins need cleaning more as there is a smell."

"Previous ASB completely ignored by Council - not at all satisfied. Two and a half years of neighbours breaking tenancy rules. Seriously, could do better."

"There is drug dealing going on at the moment which I'm not happy about."

One thing that makes Independent Living respondents different from those living in general needs is that problems with getting hold of the right person or returning calls seem to be relatively minor issues, even though they dominated the customer experience comments made by general needs respondent. Instead, the primary customer issue for this group is receiving the appropriate **wellbeing and disability support** that they think they need (4.9% of comments). Some examples of these type of comments include:

"I feel more isolated and lonely since Concord has become a hub."

"I do feel isolated at times being of a different culture."

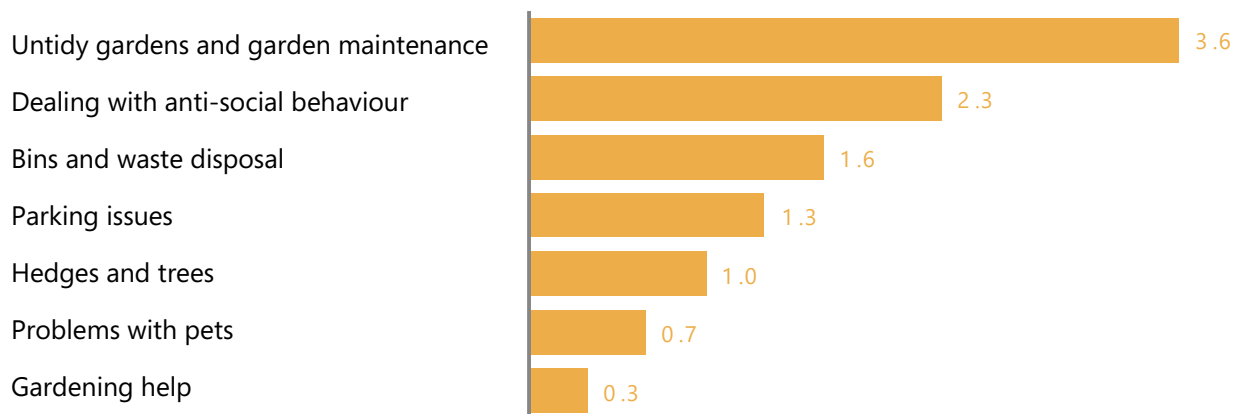
"Nan really misses having a warden, just the comfort, peace of mind of someone calling in/ringing to check everything is ok."

"I believe that some people in our building were left behind when we changed from sheltered accommodation to independent living."

11. Further comments

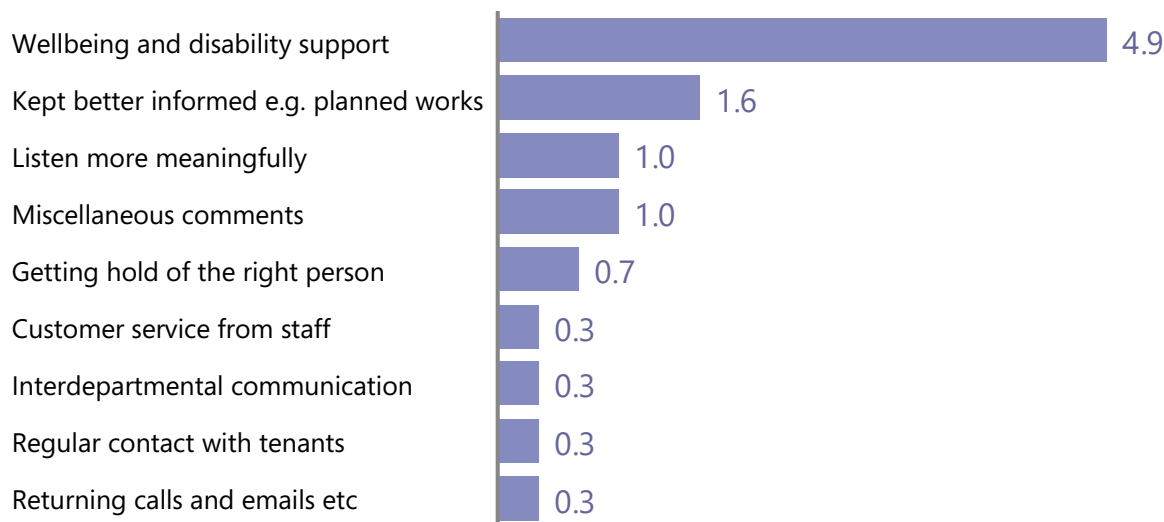
11.5 Neighbourhood improvements - detail

% Base 161 | Coded from verbatim responses. Excludes non respondents.



11.6 Customer service and communication improvements - detail

% Base 161 | Coded from verbatim responses. Excludes non respondents.



11.7 Other improvements - detail

% Base 161 | Coded from verbatim responses. Excludes non respondents.



12. Respondent profile

In addition to documenting the demographic profile of the sample, tables 12.5 and 12.7 in this section also display the core survey questions according to the main equality groups. When considering these tables it is important to bear in mind that some of the sub groups are small, so many observed differences may simply be down to chance. To help navigate these results they have been subjected to statistical tests, with those that can be confidently said to differ from the average score being highlighted in the tables.

12.1 Scheme

% Base 307

	Total	% 2022	% 2019		Total	% 2022	% 2019
Archway Gardens	7	2.3	4.1	Hamfallow Court	12	3.9	2.4
Ashcroft House	6	2.0	2.4	Hazelwood	17	5.5	5.1
Ashwell House	8	2.6	3.4	Jenner Court	11	3.6	4.1
Broadfield Road	14	4.6	2.7	Malvern Gardens	7	2.3	2.0
Burdett House	11	3.6	2.9	Sherborne House	8	2.6	3.1
Chapel Lane	8	2.6	2.7	Springfields Court	14	4.6	3.7
Concord	18	5.9	6.3	St Nicholas Court	18	5.9	4.1
Draycott	8	2.6	1.9	Tanners Piece	5	1.6	0.0
Dryleaze Court	15	4.9	6.5	The Beeches	6	2.0	2.7
Dryleaze House	15	4.9	5.8	The Corriett	10	3.3	2.7
George Pearce House	13	4.2	3.4	The Long Ground	2	0.7	1.4
Glebe Road	4	1.3	0.7	Trinity Drive	7	2.3	1.7
Glebelands	5	1.6	3.7	Vizard Close	8	2.6	2.7
Grange View	12	3.9	2.7	Walter Preston Court	16	5.2	6.1
Grove Park Road	13	4.2	5.1	Willow Road	9	2.9	2.0

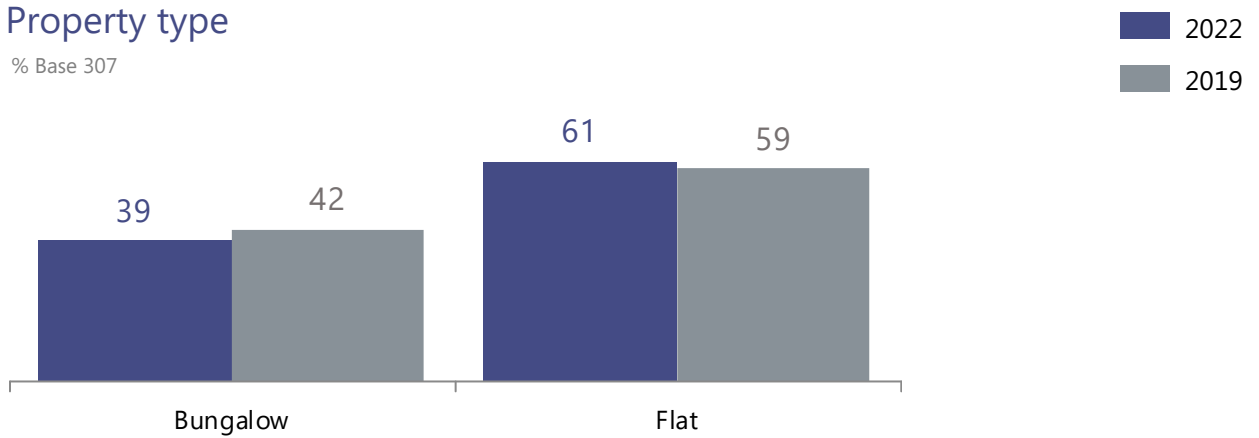
12.2 Area

% Base 307

	Total	%
Housing 1	74	24
Housing 2	8	3
Housing 3	63	21
Housing 4	52	17
Housing 5	42	14
Housing 6	39	13
Housing 7	29	9

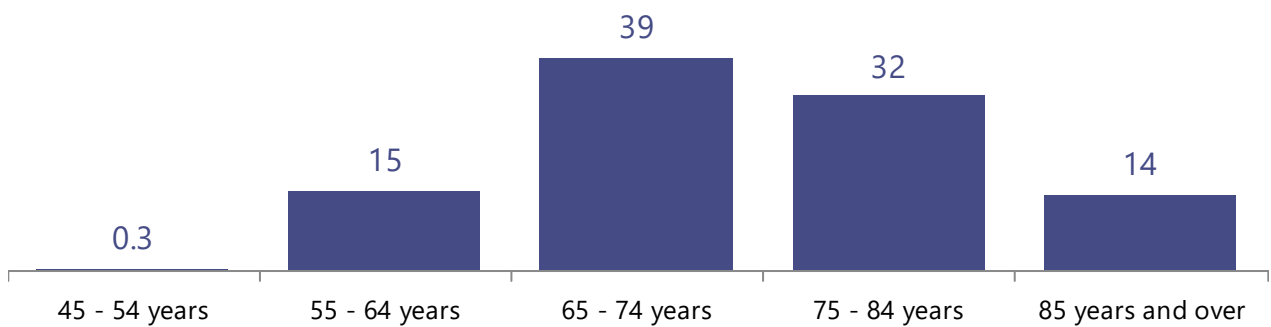
12.3 Property type

% Base 307



12.4 Age

% Base 307



12.5 Core questions by age

	Overall	% positive			
		55-64 years	65-74 years	75-84 years	85 years and over
Sample size	307	45	120	98	43
Service overall	81	78	81	81	81
Quality of home	86	84	84	90	86
Safety and security of home	87	80	83	93	88
Communal areas	77	70	76	83	75
Repairs & maintenance service	68	63	65	72	74
Last completed repair	76	55	78	81	79
Neighbourhood as a place to live	90	91	84	96	93
Positive contribution to communities	68	64	63	74	73
Dealing with anti-social behaviour	59	67	57	57	65
Rent value for money	86	81	84	90	86
Treated fairly and with respect	79	80	79	78	86
Is easy to deal with	70	68	71	67	74
Listen to views and act upon them	64	57	63	64	70
Keeps tenants informed	71	64	72	70	74
Opportunities to make views known	69	64	66	72	76
Approach to handling complaints	61	63	58	61	63

Significantly worse than average (95% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (95% confidence*)
Significantly worse than average (90% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (90% confidence*)

* See appendix A for further information on statistical tests and confidence levels

12. Respondent profile

12.6 Core questions by patch

		% positive						
	Overall	Housing 1	Housing 2	Housing 3	Housing 4	Housing 5	Housing 6	Housing 7
Sample size	307	74	8	63	52	42	39	29
Service overall	81	80	88	74	82	81	82	93
Quality of home	86	85	100	87	78	91	82	97
Safety and security of home	87	88	75	77	85	93	92	93
Communal areas	77	77	100	74	64	82	83	85
Repairs & maintenance service	68	70	63	72	60	70	71	69
Last completed repair	76	83	50	66	78	73	80	91
Neighbourhood as a place to live	90	93	75	90	84	91	92	93
Positive contribution to communities	68	65	50	62	71	73	73	74
Dealing with anti-social behaviour	59	66	50	57	57	81	42	50
Rent value for money	86	84	88	85	83	88	92	86
Treated fairly and with respect	79	78	75	81	79	81	81	76
Is easy to deal with	70	67	63	73	67	83	57	70
Listen to views and act upon them	64	65	50	63	64	69	61	62
Keeps tenants informed	71	75	63	66	69	71	69	79
Opportunities to make views known	69	74	75	67	57	68	74	75
Approach to handling complaints	61	60	57	58	57	63	71	57

Significantly worse than average (95% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (95% confidence*)
Significantly worse than average (90% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (90% confidence*)

* See appendix A for further information on statistical tests and confidence levels

12.7 Core questions by property type

	% positive		
	Overall	Bungalow	Flat
Sample size	307	120	187
Service overall	81	81	81
Quality of home	86	84	88
Safety and security of home	87	91	84
Communal areas	77	79	77
Repairs & maintenance service	68	72	66
Last completed repair	76	79	74
Neighbourhood as a place to live	90	91	89
Positive contribution to communities	68	69	68
Dealing with anti-social behaviour	59	64	57
Rent value for money	86	86	86
Treated fairly and with respect	79	84	77
Is easy to deal with	70	78	64
Listen to views and act upon them	64	69	60
Keeps tenants informed	71	76	67
Opportunities to make views known	69	69	69
Approach to handling complaints	61	61	60

Significantly worse than average (95% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (95% confidence*)
Significantly worse than average (90% confidence*)	Significantly better than average (90% confidence*)

* See appendix A for further information on statistical tests and confidence levels



Appendix A. Methodology & data analysis

Questionnaire

The questionnaire was based on the Housemark STAR survey methodology, with the most appropriate questions for Stroud DC being selected by them from the STAR questionnaire templates. This year’s questionnaire also referenced The Regulator of Social Housing’s proposed tenant satisfaction measures (TSMs) that social landlords will be required to report on in future years. The questionnaire was designed to be as clear and legible as possible to make it easy to complete, with options available for large print versions or completion in alternative languages. Postal versions of the questionnaires were printed as A4 booklets.

Fieldwork

The survey was carried out between September and October 2022. Paper self completion questionnaires were distributed all 718 independent living households, followed by a reminder approximately three weeks later for all those that had not yet replied. In addition, email invitations and reminders were sent to every valid email address in the sample, plus a text invitation and reminder to all mobiles in the sample. The survey was incentivised with a free prize draw.

Online survey example pages:

Response rate

In total there were 307 responses to the survey which represented a response rate of 43% (error margin +/- 4.2%). Online responses comprised 24% of the total (74), including 40 direct responses to email (11% response) and 18 to text message (4% response). The returns exceeded the stipulated STAR target error margin of +/- 5% with a 2% increase in response rate compared to 2019.

Weighting

The results were checked to ensure that they were representative of the tenant population on the main demographic and geographic characteristics, and it was determined that no further weighting was required.

Data presentation

Readers should take care when considering percentage results from some of the sub groups within the main sample, as the base figures may sometimes be small.

Many results are recalculated to remove 'no opinion' or 'can't remember' responses from the final figures, a technique known as 're-basing'.

Error Margins

Error margins for the sample overall, and for individual questions, are the amount by which a result might vary due to chance. The error margins in the results are quoted at the standard 95% level, and are determined by the sample size and the distribution of scores. For the sake of simplicity, error margins for historic data are not included, but can typically be assumed to be at least as big as those for the 2022 data. When comparing two sets of scores, it is important to remember that error margins will apply independently to each.

Tests of statistical significance

When two sets of survey data are compared to one another (e.g. between different years, or demographic sub groups), the observed differences are typically tested for statistical significance. Differences that are significant can be said, with a high degree of confidence, to be real variations that are unlikely to be due to chance. Any differences that are not significant *may* still be real, especially when a number of different questions all demonstrate the same pattern, but this cannot be stated with statistical confidence and may just be due to chance.

Unless otherwise stated, all statistically significant differences are reported at the 95% confidence level. Tests used were the Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney test (rating scales), Fischer Exact Probability test (small samples) and the Pearson Chi Square test (larger samples) as appropriate for the data being examined. These calculations rely on a number of factors such as the base figure and the level of variance, both within and between sample groups, thereby taking into account more than just the simple difference between the headline percentage scores. This means that some results are reported as significant despite being superficially similar to others that are not. Conversely, some seemingly notable differences in two sets of headline scores are not enough to signal a significant change in the underlying pattern across all points in the scale. For example:

- Two satisfaction ratings might have the same or similar *total* satisfaction score, but be quite different when one considers the detailed results for the proportion *very satisfied* versus *fairly satisfied*.
- There may also be a change in the proportions who were *very* or *fairly* dissatisfied, or ticked the middle point in the scale, which is not apparent from the headline score.
- In rare cases there are complex changes across the scale that are difficult to categorise e.g. in a single question one might simultaneously observe a disappointing shift from *very* to *fairly* satisfied, at the same time as their being a welcome shift from *very dissatisfied* to *neither*.
- If the results included a relatively small number of people then the error margins are bigger. This means that the *combined* error margins for the two ratings being compared might be bigger than the observed difference between them.

Key driver analysis

“Key driver analyses” are based on a linear regression model. This is used to investigate the relationship between the overall scores and their various components. The charts illustrate the relative contribution of each item to the overall rating; items which do not reach statistical significance are omitted. The figures on the vertical axis show the standardised beta coefficients from the regression analysis, which vary in absolute size depending on the number of questionnaire items entered into the analysis. The quoted *R Square* value shows how much of the observed variance is explained by the key driver model e.g. a value of 0.5 shows that the model explains half of the total variation in the overall score.

Benchmarking

The questions are benchmarked against the Housemark STAR database of sheltered tenants, using Stroud DC’s normal peer group of English landlords with between 3,000 and 6,000 units. For the overall satisfaction score this includes 17 landlords. HouseMark benchmark scores are supplemented for the remaining questions with benchmark data from ARP Research clients who have carried out surveys in the last 2 years using the STAR questionnaires. The group selection has been verified against the core Housemark data to ensure that both benchmark groups are closely matched on their scores across those questions. This supplementary group included 15 landlords.




Appendix B. Example questionnaire



STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL
 Ebley Mill • Ebley Wharf • Stroud • Gloucestershire • GL5 4UB
 01453 766321
www.stroud.gov.uk

Mr A B Sample
 1 Sample Street
 Address line
 Address line
 Sample District
 Sample Town
 AB1 2CD

999999



scan me
 your code:
9999mnmw

www.arpsurveys.co.uk/stroud

Dear [Contact_Name]

Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2022

This is your chance to tell us what you think of your home and the services Stroud District Council currently provides as your landlord. If you choose not to participate in this survey this will not alter our services to you.

To help us understand your levels of satisfaction with the services we provide, ARP Research (an **independent** company) is carrying out this survey on our behalf. The survey is optional and confidential. Stroud District Council will **not** be able to link your answers to your name and address without your agreement.

Please either complete and return the survey in the enclosed freepost envelope, or complete the survey online using the link above. The closing date is **11 October 2022**. As a thank you for completing the survey, you can opt for entry into a **prize draw**, where one lucky person will win **£150** and two more will receive **£50** in shopping vouchers.

This information will be used to help us improve our services. We will publish the survey results on our website, SDC Housing Facebook page and Keynotes newsletter.

This survey is a regulatory duty as a social housing landlord. We take your privacy very seriously. For information about your rights and how we use your information please see Housing privacy notices at <https://rb.gy/6in4u3> which explains why we collect information, and how that information may be used, kept safe and confidential.

If you have any questions or concerns about this survey, please contact ARP Research on 0800 020 9564 or email support@arp-research.co.uk who will be happy to answer your queries. Alternatively, you can contact Christine Welsh on 07774453357 or email christine.welsh@stroud.gov.uk

Yours sincerely

Michelle Elliott
 Housing Manager

PRIZE DRAW! 1 x £150 2 x £50

Leading a community that is making Stroud district a better place to live, work and visit for everyone
 Chief Executive: Kathy O'Leary

Appendix B. Example questionnaire



scan me
code: 999abcd



STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2022

www.arpsurveys.co.uk/stroud your code: **999abcd**

About us

1 Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided by the council as your landlord?

Very satisfied Fairly satisfied Neither Fairly dissatisfied Very dissatisfied

Your home

2 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you:

Very satisfied Fairly satisfied Neither Fairly dissatisfied Very dissatisfied

a. With the overall quality of your home?

b. That we provide a home that is safe and secure?

c. Your rent provides value for money?

Prize Draw!
1x £150 2x £50 in shopping vouchers

 **return by 11 October 2022**

Repairs & maintenance

3 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you:

Very satisfied Fairly satisfied Neither Fairly dissatisfied Very dissatisfied No opinion

a. That we provide a home that is well maintained and safe for you to live in?

b. With the way we generally deal with repairs and maintenance?

c. With your gas servicing arrangements (if applicable)?

4 Have you had any day to day repairs carried out in the last 12 months, e.g. a leaking tap?
 Yes **go to Q5** ↓ No **go to Q7** →

5 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you repair service you have received to your home from the Council in the last 12 months?
 Very satisfied Fairly satisfied Neither Fairly dissatisfied Very dissatisfied

6 Thinking about you most recent repair, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you:
 Very satisfied Fairly satisfied Neither Fairly dissatisfied Very dissatisfied


a. That it was easy to access the repairs service?

b. With the time taken to complete the repair after you reported it?

c. With the overall quality of the work?

d. That the repair was done 'right first time'?

e. With the overall repairs service we provided on this repair?



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www.stroud.gov.uk

Communication

7 How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement? "Housing Services treat tenants fairly and with respect."

Strongly agree Tend to agree Neither Tend to disagree Strongly disagree No opinion

8 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that housing services are easy to deal with?
 Very satisfied Fairly satisfied Neither Fairly dissatisfied Very dissatisfied No opinion

9 Have you contacted housing services in the last 12 months?
 Yes **go to Q10** ↓ No **go to Q11** ↶

10 Thinking about the last time you contacted us, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you:
 Very satisfied Fairly satisfied Neither Fairly dissatisfied Very dissatisfied

a. With the helpfulness of the staff?

b. With their ability to deal with your query?

11 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that housing services:
 Very satisfied Fairly satisfied Neither Fairly dissatisfied Very dissatisfied No opinion

a. Listen to your views and act upon them?

b. Give you the opportunity to make your views known?

c. Keep tenants informed about things that matter to them?

12 In your daily life, have you used any **apps** or **websites** to do any of the following in the last year?
 tick all that apply

Used Facebook, Instagram or other social media

Used video calling, such as Zoom or Facetime

Online shopping

Online banking

Booked a service or appointment online

Read an email newsletter

Contacted any organisation by email, app or on their website

Contacted any organisation on social media, such as Facebook or Twitter

Used Government services online

Visited the Council's Facebook or Twitter

Used the Council's online services

13 If we produce a newsletter, such as Keynotes, would you prefer to receive it online via email or on paper? (If you wish you can give us your email address below).

Online Paper

! By answering this question you consent for the Council to record your preference.

14 If you would like housing services to contact you either by email or mobile phone, please give us your below and tick the box to confirm :

Mobile:

E-mail:

I confirm that the Council can contact me via these methods

! By providing this information you consent for the Council to record this information on your customer record.



Appendix C. Data summary

Please note that throughout the report the quoted results typically refer to the '*valid*' column of the data summary if it appears.

The '*valid*' column contains data that has been rebased, normally because non-respondents were excluded and/or question routing applied.

Representative, Unweighted			
Count	% raw	% valid	% +'ve

Q1 Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided by the council as your landlord?

Base: 307

1: Very satisfied	107	34.9	35.4	80.8
2: Fairly satisfied	137	44.6	45.4	
3: Neither	20	6.5	6.6	
4: Fairly dissatisfied	32	10.4	10.6	
5: Very dissatisfied	6	2.0	2.0	
N/R	5	1.6		

Q2a With the overall quality of your home

Base: 307

6: Very satisfied	139	45.3	45.4	86.2
7: Fairly satisfied	125	40.7	40.8	
8: Neither	15	4.9	4.9	
9: Fairly dissatisfied	21	6.8	6.9	
10: Very dissatisfied	6	2.0	2.0	
N/R	1	0.3		

Q2b That we provide a home that is safe and secure

Base: 307

11: Very satisfied	169	55.0	55.8	86.5
12: Fairly satisfied	93	30.3	30.7	
13: Neither	16	5.2	5.3	
14: Fairly dissatisfied	19	6.2	6.3	
15: Very dissatisfied	6	2.0	2.0	
N/R	4	1.3		

Q2c Your rent provides value for money

Base: 307

16: Very satisfied	154	50.2	51.2	85.8
17: Fairly satisfied	104	33.9	34.6	
18: Neither	23	7.5	7.6	
19: Fairly dissatisfied	13	4.2	4.3	
20: Very dissatisfied	7	2.3	2.3	
N/R	6	2.0		

Q3a That we provide a home that is well maintained and safe for you to live in

Base: 307

21: Very satisfied	121	39.4	40.1	81.2
22: Fairly satisfied	124	40.4	41.1	
23: Neither	10	3.3	3.3	
24: Fairly dissatisfied	31	10.1	10.3	
25: Very dissatisfied	16	5.2	5.3	
26: No opinion	1	0.3		
N/R	4	1.3		

Q3b With the way we generally deal with repairs and maintenance

Base: 307

27: Very satisfied	86	28.0	29.0	68.4
28: Fairly satisfied	117	38.1	39.4	
29: Neither	29	9.4	9.8	
30: Fairly dissatisfied	38	12.4	12.8	
31: Very dissatisfied	27	8.8	9.1	
32: No opinion	4	1.3		
N/R	6	2.0		

Representative, Unweighted			
Count	% raw	% valid	% +ve

Q3c With your gas servicing arrangements (if applicable)		Base: 307			
33:	Very satisfied	99	32.2	61.9	89.4
34:	Fairly satisfied	44	14.3	27.5	
35:	Neither	10	3.3	6.3	
36:	Fairly dissatisfied	4	1.3	2.5	
37:	Very dissatisfied	3	1.0	1.9	
38:	No opinion	51	16.6		
	N/R	96	31.3		
Q4 Have you had any day to day repairs carried out in the last 12 months?		Base: 307			
39:	Yes	149	48.5		
40:	No	144	46.9		
	N/R	14	4.6		
Q5 Satisfaction with the repairs service you have received to your home from the Council in the last 12 months		Base: 149			
41:	Very satisfied	63	20.5	42.6	79.1
42:	Fairly satisfied	54	17.6	36.5	
43:	Neither	3	1.0	2.0	
44:	Fairly dissatisfied	16	5.2	10.8	
45:	Very dissatisfied	12	3.9	8.1	
	N/R	159	51.8	0.7	
Q6a That it was easy to access the repairs service		Base: 149			
46:	Very satisfied	61	19.9	41.2	75.7
47:	Fairly satisfied	51	16.6	34.5	
48:	Neither	13	4.2	8.8	
49:	Fairly dissatisfied	14	4.6	9.5	
50:	Very dissatisfied	9	2.9	6.1	
	N/R	159	51.8	0.7	
Q6b With the time taken to complete the repair after you reported it		Base: 149			
51:	Very satisfied	47	15.3	31.8	65.6
52:	Fairly satisfied	50	16.3	33.8	
53:	Neither	7	2.3	4.7	
54:	Fairly dissatisfied	25	8.1	16.9	
55:	Very dissatisfied	19	6.2	12.8	
	N/R	159	51.8	0.7	
Q6c With the overall quality of the work		Base: 149			
56:	Very satisfied	78	25.4	53.4	80.1
57:	Fairly satisfied	39	12.7	26.7	
58:	Neither	10	3.3	6.8	
59:	Fairly dissatisfied	12	3.9	8.2	
60:	Very dissatisfied	7	2.3	4.8	
	N/R	161	52.4	2.0	
Q6d That the repair was done 'right first time'		Base: 149			
61:	Very satisfied	73	23.8	50.3	75.1

	Representative, Unweighted			
	Count	% raw	% valid	% +ve
62: Fairly satisfied	36	11.7	24.8	
63: Neither	8	2.6	5.5	
64: Fairly dissatisfied	12	3.9	8.3	
65: Very dissatisfied	16	5.2	11.0	
N/R	162	52.8	2.7	
Q6e With the overall repairs service we provided on this repair		Base: 149		
66: Very satisfied	61	19.9	41.8	76.0
67: Fairly satisfied	50	16.3	34.2	
68: Neither	8	2.6	5.5	
69: Fairly dissatisfied	16	5.2	11.0	
70: Very dissatisfied	11	3.6	7.5	
N/R	161	52.4	2.0	
Q7 Housing Services treat tenants fairly and with respect		Base: 307		
71: Strongly agree	88	28.7	29.7	79.4
72: Tend to agree	147	47.9	49.7	
73: Neither	36	11.7	12.2	
74: Tend to disagree	17	5.5	5.7	
75: Strongly disagree	8	2.6	2.7	
76: No opinion	6	2.0		
N/R	5	1.6		
Q8 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that housing services are easy to deal with		Base: 307		
77: Very satisfied	81	26.4	27.4	69.6
78: Fairly satisfied	125	40.7	42.2	
79: Neither	42	13.7	14.2	
80: Fairly dissatisfied	34	11.1	11.5	
81: Very dissatisfied	14	4.6	4.7	
82: No opinion	5	1.6		
N/R	6	2.0		
Q9 Have you contacted housing services in the last 12 months?		Base: 307		
83: Yes	193	62.9		
84: No	98	31.9		
N/R	16	5.2		
Q10a With the helpfulness of the staff		Base: 193		
85: Very satisfied	84	27.4	44.2	73.1
86: Fairly satisfied	55	17.9	28.9	
87: Neither	16	5.2	8.4	
88: Fairly dissatisfied	24	7.8	12.6	
89: Very dissatisfied	11	3.6	5.8	
N/R	117	38.1	1.6	
Q10b With their ability to deal with your query		Base: 193		
90: Very satisfied	70	22.8	38.0	66.3
91: Fairly satisfied	52	16.9	28.3	
92: Neither	25	8.1	13.6	
93: Fairly dissatisfied	23	7.5	12.5	

	Representative, Unweighted			% +ve
	Count	% raw	% valid	
94: Very dissatisfied	14	4.6	7.6	
N/R	123	40.1	4.7	
Q11a Listen to your views and act upon them	Base: 307			
95: Very satisfied	75	24.4	26.4	63.7
96: Fairly satisfied	106	34.5	37.3	
97: Neither	46	15.0	16.2	
98: Fairly dissatisfied	39	12.7	13.7	
99: Very dissatisfied	18	5.9	6.3	
100: No opinion	13	4.2		
N/R	10	3.3		
Q11b Give you the opportunity to make your views known	Base: 307			
101: Very satisfied	88	28.7	31.5	68.8
102: Fairly satisfied	104	33.9	37.3	
103: Neither	52	16.9	18.6	
104: Fairly dissatisfied	24	7.8	8.6	
105: Very dissatisfied	11	3.6	3.9	
106: No opinion	15	4.9		
N/R	13	4.2		
Q11c Keep tenants informed about things that matter to them	Base: 307			
107: Very satisfied	93	30.3	32.7	70.7
108: Fairly satisfied	108	35.2	38.0	
109: Neither	38	12.4	13.4	
110: Fairly dissatisfied	29	9.4	10.2	
111: Very dissatisfied	16	5.2	5.6	
112: No opinion	10	3.3		
N/R	13	4.2		
Q12 In your daily life, have you used any apps or websites to do any of the following in the last year?	Base: 307			
113: Used Facebook, Instagram or other social media	109	35.5		
114: Used video calling, such as Zoom or Facetime	73	23.8		
115: Online shopping	107	34.9		
116: Online banking	117	38.1		
117: Booked a service or appointment online	93	30.3		
118: Read an email newsletter	105	34.2		
119: Contacted any organisation by email, app or on their website	91	29.6		
120: Contacted any organisation on social media	42	13.7		
121: Used Government services online	95	30.9		
122: Visited the Council's Facebook or Twitter	24	7.8		
123: Used the Council's online services	58	18.9		
N/R	125	40.7		
R12 Use the internet	Base: 307			
124: Yes	182	59.3		
125: No	125	40.7		
N/R	0	0.0		

Representative, Unweighted			
Count	% raw	% valid	% +'ve

Q13 If we produce a newsletter, such as Keynotes, would you prefer to receive it online via email or on paper?

Base: 307

126: Online	72	23.5		
127: Paper	218	71.0		
N/R	17	5.5		

Q15 Would you be interested in having your say about our services in any of the following ways?

Base: 307

128: Taking part in short online or social media polls	40	13.0		
129: Online discussion groups about the latest issues	13	4.2		
130: In person discussion group about the latest issues	74	24.1		
131: None of these	165	53.7		
N/R	33	10.7		

R15 Interested in having your say about our services

Base: 307

132: Yes	109	35.5		
133: No	165	53.7		
N/R	33	10.7		

Q16a Your neighbourhood as a place to live

Base: 307

134: Very satisfied	152	49.5	51.0	89.9
135: Fairly satisfied	116	37.8	38.9	
136: Neither	12	3.9	4.0	
137: Fairly dissatisfied	10	3.3	3.4	
138: Very dissatisfied	8	2.6	2.7	
139: No opinion	3	1.0		
N/R	6	2.0		

Q16b How much we make a positive contribution to your neighbourhood

Base: 307

140: Very satisfied	76	24.8	27.6	68.0
141: Fairly satisfied	111	36.2	40.4	
142: Neither	61	19.9	22.2	
143: Fairly dissatisfied	17	5.5	6.2	
144: Very dissatisfied	10	3.3	3.6	
145: No opinion	16	5.2		
N/R	16	5.2		

Q16c The grounds maintenance, such as grass cutting in your area

Base: 307

146: Very satisfied	119	38.8	40.3	75.6
147: Fairly satisfied	104	33.9	35.3	
148: Neither	14	4.6	4.7	
149: Fairly dissatisfied	35	11.4	11.9	
150: Very dissatisfied	23	7.5	7.8	
151: No opinion	4	1.3		
N/R	8	2.6		

Q16d Our approach to handling of anti-social behaviour

Base: 307

152: Very satisfied	78	25.4	32.4	59.4
153: Fairly satisfied	65	21.2	27.0	
154: Neither	57	18.6	23.7	

	Representative, Unweighted			% +ve
	Count	% raw	% valid	
155: Fairly dissatisfied	22	7.2	9.1	
156: Very dissatisfied	19	6.2	7.9	
157: No opinion	51	16.6		
N/R	15	4.9		
Q17 Do you live in a building with communal areas, either inside or outside, that you share with other people who live in the building?				
Base: 307				
158: Yes	251	81.8		
159: No	46	15.0		
N/R	10	3.3		
Q18 Satisfaction that housing management services keeps these communal areas or scheme clean, safe and well maintained				
Base: 251				
160: Very satisfied	98	31.9	40.5	77.3
161: Fairly satisfied	89	29.0	36.8	
162: Neither	16	5.2	6.6	
163: Fairly dissatisfied	24	7.8	9.9	
164: Very dissatisfied	15	4.9	6.2	
165: No opinion	7	2.3		
N/R	58	18.9	0.8	
Q19a Rubbish or litter				
Base: 307				
166: Very big problem	14	4.6	5.1	16.1
167: Fairly big problem	30	9.8	11.0	
168: Not a very big problem	105	34.2	38.6	
169: Not a problem at all	123	40.1	45.2	
N/R	35	11.4		
Q19b Noisy neighbours				
Base: 307				
170: Very big problem	5	1.6	1.9	9.4
171: Fairly big problem	20	6.5	7.5	
172: Not a very big problem	69	22.5	25.9	
173: Not a problem at all	172	56.0	64.7	
N/R	41	13.4		
Q19c Dog fouling/ dog mess				
Base: 307				
174: Very big problem	23	7.5	8.2	21.1
175: Fairly big problem	36	11.7	12.9	
176: Not a very big problem	78	25.4	28.0	
177: Not a problem at all	142	46.3	50.9	
N/R	28	9.1		
Q19d Other problems with pets & animals				
Base: 307				
178: Very big problem	5	1.6	1.9	4.6
179: Fairly big problem	7	2.3	2.7	
180: Not a very big problem	59	19.2	22.3	
181: Not a problem at all	193	62.9	73.1	
N/R	43	14.0		
Q19e Racial or other harassment				
Base: 307				

	Representative. Unweighted			
	Count	% raw	% valid	% +'ve
182: Very big problem	4	1.3	1.5	3.0
183: Fairly big problem	4	1.3	1.5	
184: Not a very big problem	36	11.7	13.5	
185: Not a problem at all	223	72.6	83.5	
N/R	40	13.0		
Q19f Drunk or rowdy behaviour Base: 307				
186: Very big problem	6	2.0	2.2	6.3
187: Fairly big problem	11	3.6	4.1	
188: Not a very big problem	41	13.4	15.1	
189: Not a problem at all	213	69.4	78.6	
N/R	36	11.7		
Q19g Vandalism and graffiti Base: 307				
190: Very big problem	2	0.7	0.8	1.2
191: Fairly big problem	1	0.3	0.4	
192: Not a very big problem	42	13.7	15.8	
193: Not a problem at all	221	72.0	83.1	
N/R	41	13.4		
Q19h People damaging your property Base: 307				
194: Very big problem	4	1.3	1.5	1.5
195: Fairly big problem	0	0.0	0.0	
196: Not a very big problem	32	10.4	12.0	
197: Not a problem at all	231	75.2	86.5	
N/R	40	13.0		
Q19i Drug use or dealing Base: 307				
198: Very big problem	6	2.0	2.2	4.0
199: Fairly big problem	5	1.6	1.8	
200: Not a very big problem	47	15.3	17.3	
201: Not a problem at all	213	69.4	78.6	
N/R	36	11.7		
Q19j Abandoned or burnt out vehicles Base: 307				
202: Very big problem	1	0.3	0.4	0.4
203: Fairly big problem	0	0.0	0.0	
204: Not a very big problem	27	8.8	10.2	
205: Not a problem at all	238	77.5	89.5	
N/R	41	13.4		
Q20 I know how to make a complaint to housing services if I am not happy with the service I receive Base: 307				
206: Strongly agree	88	28.7	31.5	77.0
207: Tend to agree	127	41.4	45.5	
208: Neither	46	15.0	16.5	
209: Tend to disagree	11	3.6	3.9	
210: Strongly disagree	7	2.3	2.5	
211: No opinion	18	5.9		
N/R	10	3.3		

Representative, Unweighted			
Count	% raw	% valid	% +ve

Q21 Satisfaction with housing management services' approach to the handling of complaints

Base: 307

	Count	% raw	% valid	% +ve
212: Very satisfied	58	18.9	22.1	60.6
213: Fairly satisfied	101	32.9	38.5	
214: Neither	54	17.6	20.6	
215: Fairly dissatisfied	31	10.1	11.8	
216: Very dissatisfied	18	5.9	6.9	
217: No opinion	35	11.4		
N/R	10	3.3		

Q22 Over the past 12 months, at times, have you felt lonely and isolated?

Base: 307

	Count	% raw	% valid	% +ve
218: Always	19	6.2	6.8	
219: Often	23	7.5	8.2	
220: Sometimes	74	24.1	26.3	
221: Rarely	55	17.9	19.6	
222: Never	110	35.8	39.1	
223: Prefer not to say	10	3.3		
N/R	16	5.2		

R22 Over the past 12 months have you always or often felt lonely and isolated?

Base: 307

	Count	% raw	% valid	% +ve
224: Yes	42	13.7	14.9	
225: No	239	77.9	85.1	
N/R	26	8.5		

Q23a My rent and service charges are affordable

Base: 307

	Count	% raw	% valid	% +ve
226: Strongly agree	78	25.4	28.1	75.2
227: Tend to agree	131	42.7	47.1	
228: Neither	38	12.4	13.7	
229: Tend to disagree	28	9.1	10.1	
230: Strongly disagree	3	1.0	1.1	
231: Prefer not to say	13	4.2		
N/R	16	5.2		

Q23b I am financially secure

Base: 307

	Count	% raw	% valid	% +ve
232: Strongly agree	45	14.7	17.9	56.0
233: Tend to agree	96	31.3	38.1	
234: Neither	67	21.8	26.6	
235: Tend to disagree	27	8.8	10.7	
236: Strongly disagree	17	5.5	6.7	
237: Prefer not to say	32	10.4		
N/R	23	7.5		

Q23c I have a good quality of life in my home

Base: 307

	Count	% raw	% valid	% +ve
238: Strongly agree	92	30.0	31.8	78.9
239: Tend to agree	136	44.3	47.1	
240: Neither	40	13.0	13.8	
241: Tend to disagree	13	4.2	4.5	
242: Strongly disagree	8	2.6	2.8	
243: Prefer not to say	8	2.6		

Representative. Unweighted			
Count	% raw	% valid	% +ve

N/R	10	3.3		
Q23d I feel part of the community		Base: 307		
244: Strongly agree	63	20.5	23.1	68.9
245: Tend to agree	125	40.7	45.8	
246: Neither	50	16.3	18.3	
247: Tend to disagree	20	6.5	7.3	
248: Strongly disagree	15	4.9	5.5	
249: Prefer not to say	18	5.9		
N/R	16	5.2		
Q23e I would come to the Council for help if I had wellbeing or money problems		Base: 307		
250: Strongly agree	73	23.8	28.0	65.2
251: Tend to agree	97	31.6	37.2	
252: Neither	51	16.6	19.5	
253: Tend to disagree	22	7.2	8.4	
254: Strongly disagree	18	5.9	6.9	
255: Prefer not to say	32	10.4		
N/R	14	4.6		
Q24 Do you currently need help from the Council or another support agency with wellbeing or money problems?		Base: 307		
256: Yes	31	10.1		
257: No	259	84.4		
N/R	17	5.5		
D101 Stock type		Base: 307		
258: General needs	0	0.0		
259: Independent Living	307	100.0		
N/R	0	0.0		
D102 Property type		Base: 307		
260: Bungalow	120	39.1		
261: Flat	187	60.9		
262: House	0	0.0		
263: Maisonette	0	0.0		
N/R	0	0.0		
D103 Patch		Base: 307		
264: Housing 1	74	24.1		
265: Housing 2	8	2.6		
266: Housing 3	63	20.5		
267: Housing 4	52	16.9		
268: Housing 5	42	13.7		
269: Housing 6	39	12.7		
270: Housing 7	29	9.4		
N/R	0	0.0		
D104 Main Tenant Age Group		Base: 307		

	Representative. Unweighted		
	Count	% raw	% valid % +ve
271: 16 - 24 years	0	0.0	
272: 25 - 34 years	0	0.0	
273: 35 - 44 years	0	0.0	
274: 45 - 54 years	1	0.3	
275: 55 - 64 years	45	14.7	
276: 65 - 74 years	120	39.1	
277: 75 - 84 years	98	31.9	
278: 85 years and over	43	14.0	
N/R	0	0.0	
D105 Main Tenant Age Group [simple]	Base: 307		
279: 16-34	0	0.0	
280: 35-49	0	0.0	
281: 50-64	46	15.0	
282: 65+	261	85.0	
N/R	0	0.0	
D108 Scheme	Base: 307		
289: Archway Gardens	7	2.3	
290: Ashcroft House	6	2	
291: Ashwell House	8	2.6	
292: Broadfield Road	14	4.6	
293: Burdett House	11	3.6	
294: Chapel Lane	8	2.6	
295: Concord	18	5.9	
296: Draycott	8	2.6	
297: Dryleaze Court	15	4.9	
298: Dryleaze House	15	4.9	
299: George Pearce House	13	4.2	
300: Glebe Road	4	1.3	
301: Glebelands	5	1.6	
302: Grange View	12	3.9	
303: Grove Park Road	13	4.2	
304: Hamfallow Court	12	3.9	
305: Hazelwood	17	5.5	
306: Jenner Court	11	3.6	
307: Malvern Gardens	7	2.3	
308: Sherborne House	8	2.6	
309: Springfields Court	14	4.6	
310: St Nicholas Court	18	5.9	
311: Tanners Piece	5	1.6	
312: The Beeches	6	2	
313: The Corriett	10	3.3	
314: The Long Ground	2	0.7	
315: Trinity Drive	7	2.3	
316: Vizard Close	8	2.6	
317: Walter Preston Court	16	5.2	
318: Willow Road	9	2.9	
N/R	0	0	



(t) 0844 272 6004

(w) www.arp-research.co.uk

ARP Research Ltd

1 Dickenson Court, Sheffield, S35 2ZS

Stroud District Council Tenants Anti-Social Behaviour



Contact Details

Adult Social Care

01452 426868
Socialcare.enq@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Victim Support

0808 1689111

GL Communities

01452 505544

P3

08081 786003
Refer2@p3charity.org

Citizens Advice Bureau

0808 800 0510 and 0808 800 0511

Mental Health Crisis Team

0800 169 0398

Children and Family Services

01452 426565

Community Wellbeing Service Team

0345 863 8323
communitywellbeing.stroud@NHS.net

Stroud Drug and Alcohol Support—Change Grow Live

01452 223 014 or
Gloucestershire.info@cgl.org.uk

Victim Support

Victim Support is an organisation which operates across Stroud District to provide help and support to victims of crime or anti-social behaviour. Your Housing Officer can make a referral for you or they can be contacted on 08081 689111.

How to report anti-social behaviour to the Council and Police

Stroud District Council

01453 766321

Housing.Management@stroud.gov.uk

Council Out of Hours anti-social behaviour Line

0800 075 6699

Stroud Police

101 or in an emergency 999

Crimestoppers

0800 555111

Crimestoppers-uk.org

How do non council tenants report anti-social behaviour to the council

Phone: 01453 766321.

Email: Customer.services@stroud.gov.uk

Website: www.stroud.gov.uk

What happens next?

Once you have reported Anti-Social Behaviour, your Housing Officer will contact you and advise on what can and can not be done and what the next stages will be. This may involve you completing diary sheets or using the ASB App on your phone. You will be asked to log the dates and times when you are affected, to evidence the persistent nature of the activity. Your Housing Officer will complete a risk assessment and action plan with you. This will include considering mediation.

What is Anti-Social Behaviour

Anti-Social behaviour (ASB) is generally described as nuisance behaviour that is persistent and causes harassment, alarm, or distress. This can cover a wide range of unacceptable activities involving:

- Loud Televisions and music
- Persistent, unnecessary or excessive noise
- Persistent alarms
- Frequent loud parties
- Dogs persistently barking
- Keeping and failing to control an aggressive dog
- Street Drinking
- Fly-Tipping
- Vandalism
- Dog Fouling

The following activities wouldn't ordinarily be considered as anti-social behaviour:

- Children playing in the street or communal areas
- People gathering socially unless they are being intimidating
- Being unable to park outside your own home
- Parking in unrestricted areas
- Domestic DIY and minor car repairs unless they are taking place late at night
- Civil disputes between neighbours e.g. shared driveways
- One off complaints about noise e.g. parties, or other similar one off incidents.

Further information can be found in our policy which is published on our website and in your tenancy conditions.

Mediation

If the problem is a dispute between you and your neighbour, with each of you making allegations against the other, we'll pay for an independent mediation service to help you settle it. Mediators can find a way forward for both parties.

There is an expectation that you engage with mediation regarding neighbourhood disputes as this has the highest chance of finding a positive resolution as both parties make the commitment to resolving the issue.

Community Trigger

If you feel that the Council has not dealt with your anti-social behaviour satisfactorily, and you have sufficient evidence, and the threshold is met, then, you have the right to enact the community trigger.

This is where you, or a third party (with your consent), such as a family member, friend or local elected representative (a councillor or MP) can request a formal case review by an independent body and this can be done by contacting The office of the Police and Crime commissioner on 01452 7545601 or email:

communitytriggers@gloucestershire.police.uk

Hate Crime and Hate Incidents.

If you feel you have been subjected to a hate crime or incident in relation to race, religion, sexual orientation, gender, or disability then you should contact the police regarding hate crimes and Victim Support regarding hate incidents.

A hate crime can include verbal abuse, intimidation, threats, harassment, assault and damage to property.

A hate incident is behaviour which isn't a crime but which is perceived by the victim or anybody else, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice.

Anonymous Reporting

To deal with complaints of Anti-Social Behaviour in the most effective way, we will need to know who the complainant is and how to contact them. To give anonymous information about a crime or antisocial behaviour, call Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

When Reporting Anti-Social Behaviour

When reporting ASB, you will need to describe what happened, where, when, how often, who was involved and how you and other people were affected by it. If you are reporting ASB involving drug abuse this will also need to be reported to the Police.

Communication

Your housing officer will agree your preferred method of communication and how often they will contact you. They will not be able to respond to every piece of evidence submitted. They will keep you up to date regarding progress.

If the case progresses to court, you may be required to attend court as a witness. We will support you through the process.



Anti-social behaviour in your flat or house

Stroud District Council



EasyRead version

Appendix D About anti-social behaviour



Anti-social behaviour happens when people continually behave in an annoying way. Anti-social behaviour can make you feel scared.

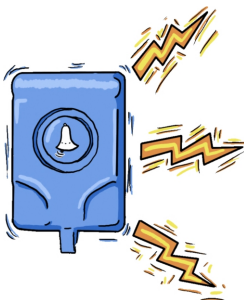


Here are some examples anti-social behaviour:

- playing loud music or television



- making too much noise



- letting your alarm keep ringing



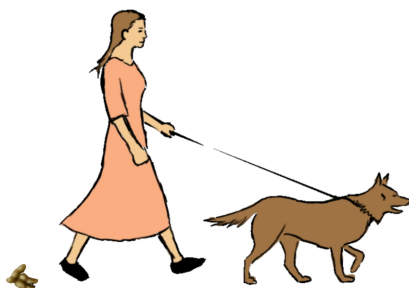
- having lots of loud parties



- letting your dog bark for a long time



- keeping a dangerous dog you cannot control



- leaving dog mess on the ground



- drinking in the street



- dumping rubbish. This is called fly-tipping



- causing damage.



Here are some examples of things that are **not** anti-social behaviour:

- children playing in the street or shared areas



- people getting together socially - unless they are scaring other people



- not being able to park your car outside your own home



- people parking in areas where parking is allowed



- doing repairs to your home or your car - unless you are doing it late at night



- arguments with neighbours, such as shared driveway worries



- one off noisy parties.



There is more information on our website and in your tenancy papers.

How we help you sort out anti-social behaviour

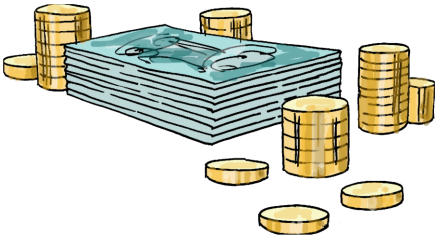
1. Mediation



If you and your neighbour both have a problem, we want you to talk to a mediator to sort it out.



A mediator is a person who will listen to you both and help you work out your problem.



We will pay for independent mediation.



2. Community Trigger

You can ask Council to help sort out some anti-social behaviour.



You need to have **evidence** about your complaint.

Evidence is proof about your worry.



If you think the Council has not helped you, you can **enact a community trigger**. This means you or someone you ask to help you ask for another point of view.



The person you ask to help you can be a family member, friend or local elected representative (like a councillor or MP).



They can help you phone The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner on **01452 754601**



or email: **communitytriggers@gloucestershire.police.uk**

Hate Crime and Hate Incidents

Appendix D



Hate crime is about the bad things someone does to another person because of who they are.



Hate crime is when the one person attacks another person because the attacker hates their:

- disability



- race



- religion



- sexual orientation



- transgender identity.



A hate crime can be:

- verbal abuse which is when someone shouts at you



- intimidation or when someone is scaring you



- threats or someone saying they are going to do something bad



- harassment or someone bothering you over and over



- assault or someone hurting you



- damage to your property.



A **hate incident** is behaviour which is not a crime but you see it happened because of hostility or prejudice.



If you have come across a hate crime or a hate incident in relation to your disability, race, religion, sexual orientation, or gender, contact the police.

Reporting anti-social behaviour



When you report anti-social behaviour, you will need to describe:

- what happened



- when and where it happened



- how often

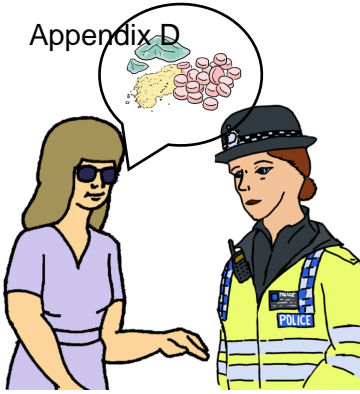


- who was involved



- what happened to you and other people.

Appendix D



If the anti-social behaviour is about drug abuse you will also need to tell the police.

Keeping your name secret



When you give us your name and phone number we can contact you to talk about your complaint.



But we know sometimes people do not want to give us their name.



Anonymous reporting is when you report anti-social behaviour but do not want anyone to know you have made the report.



You can give anonymous information about a crime or antisocial behaviour by calling Crimestoppers on **0800 555 111**.



How we will talk to you

Your housing officer will ask you how you like to be in touch and how often you will hear from them.



They will try to keep you up to date about your complaint.



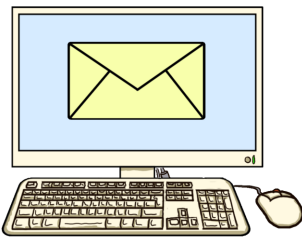
If your complaint goes to court, you may have to attend court as a witness. We will support you through the process.

How to report anti-social behaviour to the council and police



Stroud District Council

Phone: **01453 766321**



Email:

Housing.Management@stroud.gov.uk



Council out of hours anti-social behaviour line

Phone: **0800 075 6699**



Stroud police

Phone: **101** or in an emergency **999**



Crimestoppers

Phone: **0800 555111**

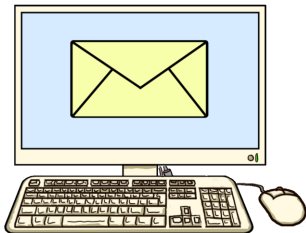


Website: **Crimestoppers-uk.org**



How do non council tenants report anti-social behaviour to the council

Phone: **01453 766321**



Email: **Customer.services@stroud.gov.uk**



Website: **www.stroud.gov.uk**

What happens next?



If you report anti-social behaviour, your housing officer will contact you to tell you what can and cannot be done and what you can expect.



They may ask you to write down what is happening or use the ASB app on your phone.



Then your housing officer will talk to you about what to do.

Some more information



Adult Social Care

Phone: **01452 426868**



Email:

Socialcare.enq@gloucestershire.gov.uk



Victim Support

Phone: **0808 1689111**



GL Communities

Phone: **01452 505544**



P3

Phone: **08081 786003**



Email: **Refer2@p3charity.org**



Citizens Advice Bureau

Phone: **0808 800 0510** or **0808 800 0511**



Mental Health Crisis Team

Phone: **0800 169 0398**



Children and Family Services

Phone: **01452 426565**



Community Wellbeing Service Team

Phone: **0345 863 8323**



Email:
communitywellbeing.stroud@NHS.net



Stroud Drug and Alcohol Support— Change Grow Live

Phone: **01452 223 014**



Email: **Gloucestershire.info@cgl.org.uk**

Victim Support

Victim Support is an organisation which operates across Stroud District to help and support victims of crime or anti-social behaviour. You can ask your housing officer to help link you.



Phone: **08081 689111.**



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Concern to be addressed	Action	Outcomes	Responsible	Timeline
Response times & communication regarding Repairs & Maintenance Service	Review Service Structure	Greater transparency of the housing service	Andy Kefford	2023
Damp & Mould	Policy review taking place	Clear Policy for staff/cllrs/tenants to understand . Training to be arranged for all staff	Jon Priest	April 2023
ASB App	Update ASB App with victim support leaflet and evidence gathering sentence	Clear documentation of evidence and support pathway for tenant	Charlie Mosse	April 2023
Understanding of ASB Process	Produce ASB Leaflet for tenants	Clear communication for our tenants to understand what is and what is not ASB	Charlie Mosse	April 2023
Communal Cleaning	Consultation with tenants	Opportunity to review cleaning standards in line with the depooling service charge project	Michelle Elliott	June 2023
Communication	<i>Keynotes due to be sent out</i> <i>4 x café conversations booked</i> <i>Walkabouts to be Promoted on Social Media</i> <i>Housing HUBS to be promoted on Social Media</i>	Engagement with tenants is key to increase satisfaction in communication levels	Christine Welsh/ Rita ODwyer	March 2023 and ongoing
Neighbourhood as a place to live	Consulting with Community Services concerning refuse services Working with Police to understand drug related issues and outcomes	To look at ways to continue to improve refuse services in flat blocks Ensure we can communicate with tenants how drug related issues are investigated and what can and cannot be done	Michelle Elliott/Michael Towson Charlie Mosse/Michelle Elliott/ Inspector Cruise	April 2023 March 2023

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STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

HOUSING COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, 28 MARCH 2023

Report Title	Empty Council Homes Policy			
Purpose of Report	Following a recommendation from Audit Risk Assurance this report presents an Empty Council Homes Policy for approval. The policy will provide the strategic framework for our operational void procedures.			
Decision(s)	The Committee RESOLVES to: a) Approve the Empty Council Homes Policy b) Note that the Policy will take effect from 01 April 2023			
Consultation and Feedback	The Tenant Scrutiny Panel independently investigate Stroud's Housing Services and make recommendations for improvement. A tenant focus group was formed to review the Council's void management with the scope to understand the effectiveness of the Council's current void process and to ensure tenants are engaged in helping to shape and improve this aspect of housing services. The new Empty Council Homes Policy has been shared with the Council's tenancy representatives for involvement and feedback.			
Report Author	Helen Scullard, Interim Head of Housing Tel: 4213 Email: helen.scullard@stroud.gov.uk			
Options	The policy is presented following a recommendation from Audit Risk Assurance. The Committee could determine not to adopt the policy, but this would be against the advice of our auditors. Therefore, no other options have been considered.			
Background Papers	None			
Appendices	Appendix 1: Voids Policy			
Implications (further details at the end of the report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	No	No	No	No

1. INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

- 1.1 A Council property becomes vacant (void) when a tenancy ends, for example when a tenant terminates their tenancy. The period between a property becoming vacant and subsequently relet is known as the void period.
- 1.2 In all Council homes that become void, the Council will undertake a series of checks to establish the property condition and whether there is any remedial work required to ensure the property meets the Council's lettings standard before another tenant can move in. This process is known as void management and is the method of bringing an untenanted property up to standard.
- 1.3 In January 2022, Audit Risk Assurance published its final review into an audit of voids management in the Council's housing stock. The report identified that while Property

Care, the team that are responsible for ensuring Council homes meet regulatory standards, has a voids procedure, there was no voids policy. One of the 20 recommendations in the Audit Report was that a Voids Policy should be produced.

- 1.4 Later in 2022, with the support of the Tenant Advisory Participation Service, the new Tenant Scrutiny Panel was formed. The panel chose to scrutinise void performance and their report, which included 16 recommendations, was published in November 2022. One of the recommendations arising from this panel is the establishment of a Voids Management Policy
- 1.5 The new Empty Council Homes Policy covers the recommendations from the two reports, and our procedures will be updated accordingly.

2. MAIN POINTS

- 2.1 The Empty Council Homes Policy will apply to all Council Homes and the objectives of this policy are:

- To minimise the loss of rental income as a result of properties being empty
- To ensure the Council makes the most effective use of its housing stock to let to the best matched applicants
- To reduce pressure on temporary accommodation for homeless households
- To clearly define the responsibilities of tenants and the Council in relation to void management
- To ensure tenants and prospective tenants understand the basis of our decisions in managing vacant properties and organising for these to be relet quickly and appropriately
- To ensure that properties are brought up to a consistent and acceptable standard when let

- 2.2 The policy includes a three stage voids management process:

Pre-void – this is the stage where we know a property is due to become vacant but hasn't yet, for example, where a tenant has given or been given a valid notice. During this stage property care will arrange to inspect the property in order to assess and plan any known required works either during the pre-void stage or once the property becomes void,

Void – this is the period where the works are scheduled and the completion of any necessary repairs to get the property to our lettings standard and ready for relet.

Ready to let – in order to reduce void times and ensure homes are available to let to those in housing need, Property Care will ensure all health and safety requirements are met prior to letting. There may however be some minor works that can be undertaken once a tenant has moved into the property.

- 2.3 When a property is void, the required void work is generally classed as major or minor. Major voids are defined as those where structural works are required, or significant works which are difficult to do when the property is occupied. Minor works include statutory safety checks and bringing the home up to the Council's Lettable Standard. Unless the new tenant is vulnerable, the Council do not do decoration work, but if appropriate we offer vouchers so that the new tenant can decorate their home to their taste.
- 2.4 The Housing industries performance on voids was badly affected by the pandemic. It was further affected by national shortages of skilled workers and both the availability and costs of building materials.
- 2.5 The Council recognise the importance of void management and as a result undertook a review into our procedures. to speed up processes where possible. For example, the re-

introduction of pre-termination inspections has made a positive difference. These inspections allow a draft schedule to be prepared prior to the tenant leaving and has enabled us to make it very clear to tenants when works are their responsibility to complete before they move, otherwise they will be recharged.

- 2.6 Over the last quarter the number of homes which at any one time are empty and undergoing works has been stable at around 35. To maximise availability of homes for those in need, work has been prioritised to those empty properties that can be returned to occupancy quickly (known as 'minor voids'). This is most effective at reduce the time when rent is not collected. This was considered by the voids working group which recognised and understood this approach.
- 2.7 The impact of this is that properties requiring major and structural works can sometimes take significantly longer to be completed. The overall effect is that the mean average time for all empty properties to be returned to occupancy is extended. Stroud District Councils performance on voids over the last quarter:

Number of days to return a void back into use:	
Target:	42
Actual for minor works:	37
Actual for all work:	121

- 2.8 The new Empty Council Homes Policy sets the framework for continuing to improve performance in managing void properties efficiently and effectively.

3. IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Financial Implications

There are no implications arising directly from this report. Any expenditure arising will be met through established budgets.

Jon Coldridge, Principal Accountant

Tel: 01453 754030 Email: jon.coldridge@stroud.gov.uk

3.2 Legal Implications

An Empty Council Homes or Void Policy is instrumental from a government perspective. Establishing KPI's provides transparent accountability for Housing Revenue Expenses.

Whilst there are no significant legal implications arising from this report, the advice of One Legal should be sought when for example, dealing with evictions and abandonments.

Email: legalservices@onelegal.org.uk

3.3 Equality Implications

There are not any specific changes to service delivery proposed within this decision.

3.4 Environmental Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

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Empty Council Homes Policy

March 2023

Policy Owner: Head of Assets
and Investment

Last updated:

Next document review by:

Prepared by:

Reviewed by:

Approved by:

Appendix A

Information:

This document constitutes Stroud District Council’s Empty Council Homes Policy. The amendment and review of this document should be undertaken in accordance with the guidance under Version Control below. Stroud District Council undertakes to review this policy regularly, at least every three years, with regard to:

- relevant legislation, rules, regulations, and guidance;
- changes in the organisation;
- maintaining best practice.

A summary of this policy can be made available in a number of other languages and other formats on request.

Document Owner: Head of Assets and Investment

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Version Control:

The Document Owner must maintain version control by completing the table below whenever amendments are made or following the scheduled review of this document.

Version Number	Purpose / Change	Author	Date	Date of Next Review
1.0	Drafted	Helen Scullard	November 2022	April 2024

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1. Purpose

This policy is designed to contribute to the priorities in the Council Plan and the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan.

The specific objectives of this policy are:

- to ensure that properties achieve a consistent and acceptable standard when let;
- to clearly define the responsibilities of tenants and the Council in relation to void management and be open and accountable for all actions and decisions;
- to ensure that tenants and prospective tenants understand the basis for our decisions in managing vacant properties and organising for these to be re-let quickly and appropriately;
- to ensure that the Council makes the most effective use of its housing stock;
- to minimise the loss of rental income and Council Tax costs as a result of properties being empty.

2. Scope

The Empty Council Homes Policy sets out the council's commitment to managing its empty homes in order to achieve good standards of repair, value for money and maximise rental income. Voids management includes the following activities:

- tenancy termination;
- inspections;
- viewings and offers;
- work to void properties;
- creating tenancies;
- management of long-term voids;
- management and minimisation of low-demand properties.

3. Key Principles & Service Standards

This Policy will apply to all buildings in the Council's full ownership and to all individuals employed and / or engaged by the Council. It covers all aspects of the void management service affecting re-lets and new lets delivered by the Council and its partners, contractors, or other agencies.

This policy aims to ensure that a property is properly managed when it becomes vacant, is brought up to the council's Lettable Standard before a new tenant moves in, and that the rent loss is minimised within the whole process.

This policy is be aligned to the HomeSeekerPlus Policy to ensure the most effective use of the housing stock in order to help meet housing need in Gloucestershire and West Oxfordshire. This policy will ensure that a forward-thinking and strategic approach is adopted to void management by:

- ensuring that outgoing tenants are aware of their responsibilities prior to leaving the property in order to keep repair costs to a minimum;

- ensuring that tenants who are found to have wilfully damaged or neglected their homes are recharged for repairs;
- reducing rent loss by minimising the length of time during which properties are void;
- ensuring properties are available as quickly as possible for people in housing need.

4. Background

The Council owns and manages around 5,000 properties across the Stroud District. Each year, there are approximately 350 properties available to let. The council is responsible for ensuring void properties are brought up to an appropriate standard and let as efficiently as possible. All repairs and maintenance and health and safety work carried out to council properties, including void properties, is undertaken by Property Care and its contractors. The Council has developed a lettable standard to improve the quality of stock that is offered to applicants, this forms part of the Voids Management Procedure.

5. Legal & Best Practice Framework

This Empty Council Homes Policy and the way in which services are delivered comply with the requirements of the following standards and legislation:

- Localism Act 2011;
- The Housing Act 1985;
- Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982;
- Housing Act 1996 (Part 6);
- Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 (GSIUR) as amended 2018. Approved Code of Practice and guidance;
- British Standard 7671 As Amended (Electrical Installations);

This policy is also compliant with the Homes England and Regulator of Social Housing Framework – The Tenancy and Home Standard by specifically addressing the following requirements:

- minimising the time that a property is empty between lettings;
- meeting all applicable statutory requirements that provide for the health and safety of new occupants;
- ensuring that tenants' homes meet the standard set out in the Government's Decent Homes Guidance.

Linked Policies & Procedures

This Empty Council Homes Policy is intended to be consistent with and complement other policies and procedures, in particular:

- Homeseekerplus Policy
- Tenancy & Estate Management Policy
- Income Collection & Recovery Policy

It should also be considered in conjunction with the Council's other wider policies and policy framework.

6. Equalities Statement

The Council recognises that it provides housing for communities which include wide social diversity and is committed to providing equal access to services. This policy aims to treat all customers fairly, with respect and professionalism.

In cases where housing applicants have particular needs, whether based on protected characteristics or other evidenced needs, and require additional works not normally undertaken as void works, sympathetic consideration will be given to these. For example, works to adapt a property to make it suitable for a disabled tenant or member of their family may be required. Each case will be considered on its individual merits, looking at the options available to meet the applicant's needs and the feasibility and practicability of the proposed works.

Consideration will therefore be given to language barriers, accessibility and cultural issues which may affect a tenant's ability to manage their tenancy or seek advice on problems, and resolutions which take account of the individual's beliefs and abilities. The Council will enable all of our tenants to have clear information and equal access to available services and information in a range of appropriate languages and formats will be provided when requested.

This policy has been designed to be fully inclusive regardless of the ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religious belief, or disability of service users or residents.

From time to time, the Council may ask tenants to provide details of their gender, age, religion, disability, ethnicity, and sexual orientation in line with the protected characteristics identified within the Equalities Act 2010. This is to help the Council to deliver more effective, appropriate, and inclusive policies and practices. All data collected is kept securely, used only for monitoring purposes and is de-personalised at the point of analysis to protect individuals' privacy.

7. Policy Detail

The Council, in its formal approval of this policy, acknowledges that it accepts full responsibility for its implementation. Day-to-day responsibility for the operation and monitoring of this policy lies with the appropriate officers. All relevant officers have a responsibility to ensure that this policy is applied as instructed.

7.1. Our Void Process

The Council operates a three-stage voids management process (see Figure 1 below for a high-level overview). This encompasses:

- Stage 1 (Pre-Void) – this covers the point from the provision of valid notice, to the end of the tenancy and the handover of keys to Property Care;
- Stage 2 (Void) – this covers the point from the handover of keys to Property Care (from Tenancy Management) to the property being ready-to-let. Stage 2 involves the scheduling and completion of any necessary repairs (excluding those that were agreed to be completed pre-void).

- Stage 3 (Ready-To-Let) – This covers the point from the property being ready-to-let through to letting. Stage 3 involves the advertisement, viewing, and letting (sign-up) processes.

In order to minimise the total void time, Stages 2 and 3 may overlap.

The Council is committed to ensuring that the voids management process proceeds as efficiently and effectively as possible. Stages 1-3 above are monitored in line with our approach to Measuring Quality & Performance (see Section 10), each assigned to a senior officer who has the responsibility for delivering the required outcomes and meeting the agreed targets.

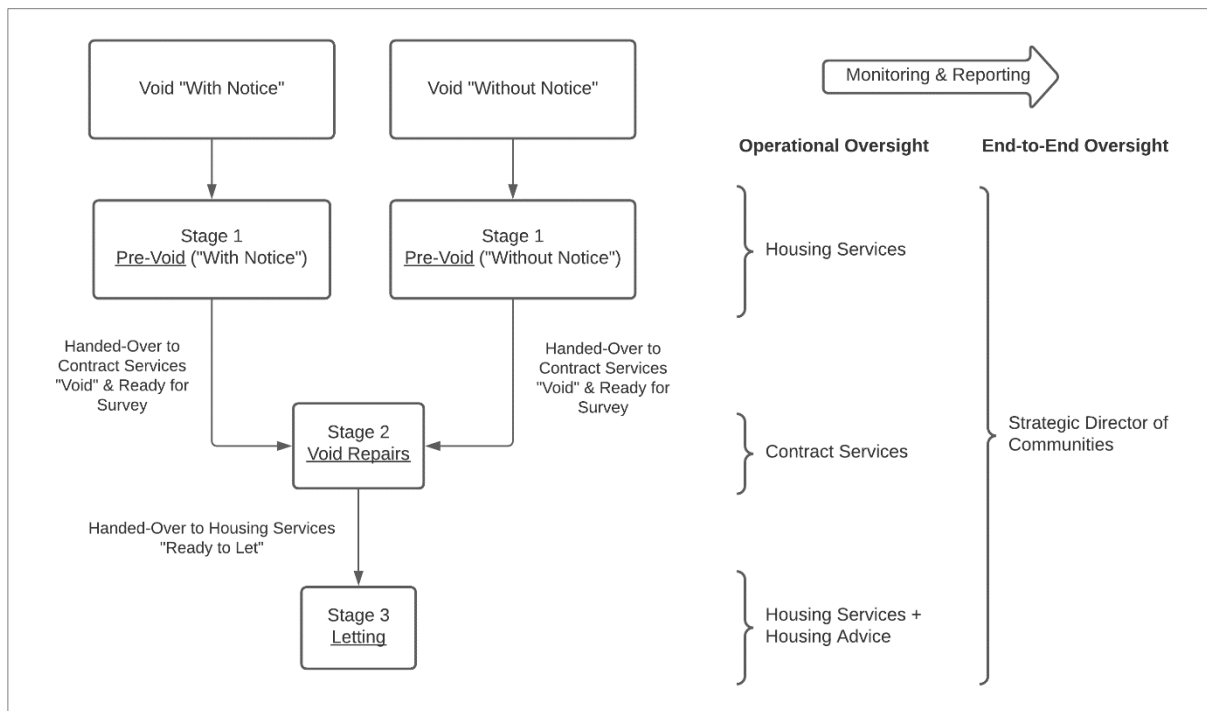


Figure 1: Stroud District Council’s approach to voids management.

7.2. Tenancy Termination

The requirement set out in the Tenancy Agreement is for 4 weeks’ written notice to terminate a tenancy. Full details about ending a tenancy can be found in the Tenancy Agreement and Tenants’ Information and Property Update.

Tenants who are transferring to another social tenancy may be permitted to give a reduced notice period. All decisions in this respect will be agreed with the Council in advance and confirmed to the tenant/applicant in writing.

Where the outgoing tenant has given notice and fails to leave the property after the end of the notice period, legal action may be taken to remove them from the property. The Council will, wherever possible, inspect properties becoming vacant, both prior to and following the termination of a tenancy.

The procedure following the death of a tenant is described in 7.2.4 below.

7.2.1. Pre-Termination Inspections

Once written notice has been received, a pre-termination inspection will be undertaken. This visit will determine the condition of the property and highlight any repairs that the tenant will be required to undertake before leaving the property. At this stage, if the tenant has undertaken their own improvements, where permission has not been authorised, the inspecting officer will assess whether these may remain for the new tenant, or whether they do not meet our standards and must be removed. The outgoing tenant is liable for all costs associated with returning the property to the original state and rectifying unsafe/unacceptable work.

If the tenant is transferring to another council property their transfer may be suspended or cancelled until all works which are their responsibility are completed. Alternatively, they may be recharged for the Council undertaking the necessary works.

Where improvement work of a good standard has been carried out to the property, the outgoing tenant may request compensation to cover part of the costs.

7.2.2. Key-Return

Keys must be returned to the Council's offices at Ebley Mill by 10.00 on the Monday specified as the end date of the tenancy. If keys are not returned by this deadline, the tenant will be charged rent for another week. If keys are not returned the following week, the Council will contact the tenant and warn them that unless the keys are returned promptly, the locks will be changed and this will be recharged to the tenant. If this is necessary, the Council will advise the tenant of the proposed date of the lock change and give them a final opportunity to return their keys.

7.2.3. Post-Termination Inspections

A post-termination inspection will be undertaken on all void properties as soon as possible after the tenant leaves. The purpose of this inspection will be to:

- ensure the property is empty, and to remove any items that pose a risk to the health and safety of prospective tenant(s), staff or contractors;
- determine whether prospective tenants may view the property while works are undertaken;
- ensure the property is secure and change the front and back door locks;
- identify any outstanding disrepair which may be the responsibility of the previous tenant;
- arrange for gas and electrical appliances and installations to be checked;
- identify if the property requires a pre-clean or other works before prospective tenants can view;
- identify any major repairs;
- identify works needed to comply with health and safety requirements;
- identify necessary repairs which are required to enable a property to be re-let as soon as possible.

7.2.4. Terminations Following the Death of the Tenant

Legally, following the death of a tenant the only person who may give notice is the Executor of the tenant's will. If the tenant has either died intestate, or has not named an Executor, the Council will decide whether the case must be referred to the Court of Protection or whether the next of kin will be allowed to give notice.

The Executor or the next of kin for deceased tenants will be allowed up to four weeks in order to enable them to clear the property. These weeks are counted from immediately after the date that the death was registered. If the property is not cleared during this time, any additional weeks' rent and/or clearance costs, together with the cost of any rechargeable repairs will be charged to the estate.

7.2.5. Evictions and Abandonments

The outgoing tenant is responsible for removing all personal possessions from the property, but there could be instances where the tenant fails to give notice (either as a result of eviction or abandonment) and belongings are left in the property. The Council does not take responsibility for any items left on its land. We will arrange clearance of any items left by the tenant and will recharge for this.

The Council will serve a notice as per Schedule 1 of the Torts (Interference with Goods) Act 1977, advising there are personal belongings in the property and upon expiry of the notice any belongings in the property will be treated as abandoned. The Council reserves the right to recharge the outgoing tenant for costs incurred as a result of storing or disposing of goods charged at the weekly rent for the property.

7.2.6. Transfers

In order to minimise void times and rent loss, transfers to another Council property will normally only be permitted when there has been a satisfactory property inspection of the current property prior to a tenancy offer being made. The Council will arrange a pre inspection to maximise the time available for tenants to carry out any repairs. The Council will facilitate the movement of belongings, but the prospective void property must be fully transferred to the Council (e.g. keys, fobs) on the termination date. Transfers are encouraged where they help ensure the best use of the Council's housing stock to meet tenants' and applicants' needs.

7.2.7. Mutual Exchanges

Mutual exchanges are an assignment, not a transfer. As such, no void checks or repairs are undertaken by the Council for properties being exchanged. It is the responsibility of the tenants participating in the exchange to check that they are satisfied with the condition of their prospective home.

7.2.8. New Purchases

To ensure that the Council is able to meet local housing need, and due to the gradual attrition of our housing stock due to "Right to Buy", we take a proactive approach to the acquisition of new properties. These are treated as void properties, and managed similarly to other voids mentioned above where notice is given.

7.2.9. Recharges

The Council may recharge any outgoing tenant for the costs of making good or renewing any damage caused to the property (outside of normal wear and tear), removing or undertaking repairs to poorly fitted tenant improvement works and for clearing any rubbish and/or belongings that have been left at the property, including in any garden or communal space. Recharges may also be applied for the cost of cleaning and/or de-infesting the property. Photographic evidence will be obtained before the void works are carried out to formally record and prove the need for the recharge. The Council will make every reasonable effort to contact the previous tenant to inform them of any outstanding items for which they will be recharged and the means of payment. All recharges will be noted on the debtors system and may affect any future application for re-housing if they are not cleared. Further information on charges and recovery of rechargeable repairs are to be found on the Council's website under Housing – Council Tenants and Leaseholders.

7.3 Letting a Void Property

The Council aims to ensure that allocations are made giving full consideration of the customer needs, the property, and any issues in the local area. In some instances, for example where the property is in poor condition, the Council will undertake repairs to the property prior to a prospective tenant being identified. All allocations are made using the HomeSeekerPlus platform, which covers the Gloucestershire and West Oxfordshire area. Detailed guidance can be found on the Council's website at <https://www.stroud.gov.uk/housing/housing-advice/applying-for-council-housing-association-accommodation>

7.3.1. Selection of New Tenant(s)

To ensure that void rent loss is kept to a minimum, the process of selecting a new tenant for a property will begin as soon as possible after notice is received from the outgoing tenant or the Council is made aware that the property will shortly be available for re-letting. Prospective tenants will be selected in accordance with the HomeseekerPlus policy and procedures.

7.3.2. Viewings and Offers

Once a suitable applicant has been identified they will be invited to attend a viewing at the property. The viewing is intended to ensure that the property is suitable for the applicant and identify any specific work the applicant requires to enable them to move into the property. Requests for additional works will be considered if the applicant or a member of their family has specific needs due to vulnerability or a protected characteristic. Once the works have been agreed and the prospective tenant has accepted the property, a completion date for the property to be returned will be agreed. In setting the completion date, due regard will be taken of the amount of work required and any customer requirements. Prospective tenants will be advised of the date and informed in advance if this date is unlikely to be achieved, for example if additional works are identified during the course of completing the repairs.

7.3.3. Creating New Tenancies

As soon as all essential repairs are completed satisfactorily, the prospective tenant will be invited to sign the Tenancy Agreement, as in the above section. The terms of the tenancy agreement will be explained to ensure that the tenant(s) is fully aware of the terms and conditions and the consequences if these conditions are breached. The new tenant will also be provided with appropriate advice about:

- paying their rent;
- applying for benefits, if required/eligible;
- setting up utilities;
- reporting any repairs;
- fire safety.

The tenant will be given a copy of the Tenants' Handbook and the most recent copy of the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) and gas and electrical certificates for the property. The tenant will be encouraged to read the Handbook and understand their rights and responsibilities.

7.4. Works to Void Properties

All properties will meet the Lettable Standard, as shown in Appendix 2, in relation to health and safety prior to letting, including gas safety checks as required. Prior to any works being undertaken, the Council will ensure that there is an up to date asbestos survey for the property.

In order to minimise any delay in re-letting void properties, where it is possible and appropriate repairs and improvements will be undertaken after the new tenant has moved in. Targets will be set for statutory checks/EPC and for repair work, and these will be closely monitored by the managers and teams responsible. Targets will also be set for re-letting properties once keys are in and properties are ready, and again performance will be closely monitored and reported.

The focus of works on voids will be to undertake works which are necessary to enable the tenant to live in their home. This will ensure that the property meets the Decent Homes Standard and any specific needs of the individual tenant(s). Prospective tenants will not be given access to the property before their tenancy has started while works are being undertaken, except for their viewing appointment, due to health and safety reasons.

An important element of void works is to check for and remedy any damp and mould problems. Air bricks, vents and fans should be checked to ensure that they are free from obstruction and operating properly. Damp meter readings should be taken on all external walls, and if damp and/or mould are present this should be treated and remedied. The property should be checked for rising and penetrating damp and appropriate remedial work undertaken.

External works to the property will usually be undertaken after the new tenancy has started.

The Council may also delay the completion of some works if the property is known to be included on a planned programme in the near future. In these cases the works

Appendix A

will be highlighted as required and undertaken as part of the planned programme and completed once the property is occupied and the planned programme of works has started. The tenant will be given written information about this.

Where a property requires an element of decoration, the tenant will be given a decorating voucher to cover the costs. This allows the tenant to decorate their home to their taste.

7.4.1 Utilities and Services

When a property has become void the Council will cap both the electric and gas supplies in order to reduce any health and safety risks. Wherever possible, the supplies will also be transferred to a preferred supplier in order to reduce any delays in managing the void process.

The electric supply will be uncapped as part of the final works to the property before the sign up is arranged. Incoming tenants will therefore have a working supply at the point of sign up – subject to appropriate levels of payment on the meter.

Fluorescent lights will be changed to LED fittings.

The gas supply will not be uncapped until the tenant confirms that they have moved into the property, this is to ensure that any risks of gas build-up are minimised. Tenants will be advised on the process for arranging the gas uncapping when they attend the sign up. The Council aims to ensure that the gas is uncapped as soon as possible following the request of the customer. When the gas is uncapped the tenant will also be provided with the annual Gas Safety Certificate.

During the health and safety checks the electric and gas meters at the property will be checked. Any evidence of tampering will be recorded. Tampering with meters is a criminal offence and the Council will provide tenancy details to utilities companies and the Police if there is evidence that a meter has been damaged.

7.4.2 Major Voids

If a void property requires major works, and therefore a high level of investment, in order to be brought up to an appropriate standard, an options appraisal may be undertaken in order to assess whether the works should be completed, or if the property should be taken out of use. Consideration will be given to:

- the rent loss if the property is not tenanted and consequent impact on the Housing Revenue Account;
- the level of demand for the property type and area;
- the overall cost of the works required;
- the anticipated remaining life of the property.

If the assessment finds that the works are financially viable they will be completed. For properties where the assessment finds that it is not financially viable to undertake the works, and there is little demand for the property type and/or area, the property may be disposed of, either through sale or demolition.

Consideration will also be given to the possibility of using the property as temporary accommodation until major works can be started.

7.4.3 Low Demand Properties

The priority for the Council is to ensure that all homes are let as soon as possible to tenants who are able to sustain the tenancy. While HomeseekerPlus prioritises housing applicants who are in housing need, some housing stock in the city is more difficult to let due to low levels of demand for the property type or area. A property will be considered to be low demand if there are not suitable applicants on the Housing Register for the property. Additional action(s) may be taken when a low demand property is identified in order to attract a suitable tenant. A combination of the following may be agreed and implemented:

- additional internal works beyond the needs of the customer;
- internal decoration;
- improved security;
- fencing and landscaping improvements;
- support for tenants moving in.

7.4.4 Adapted Properties

Properties which are adapted when they become void will be considered in line with the Council's HomeseekerPlus Policy for a direct match with an applicant needing an adapted home, with the priority being on ensuring best use of the adaptations on the needs of disabled applicants. In some instances, where a property has major adaptations, the Council may choose to leave the property void for a longer period until a suitable tenant, who requires the adaptations, can be identified. Decisions to remove major adaptations from properties will be made by a service manager based on all available information on the demand for the property.

7.4.5 Redecoration & Re-Let Standard

We will aim to ensure that all vacant properties are brought up to our current Lettable Standard before they are re-let. Where certain items covered by the standards are due to be improved within a reasonable time as part of current planned maintenance programmes the new tenant will be given the appropriate information. Internal decoration is normally the tenant's responsibility. However where the internal condition of a void property would adversely affect the time taken to re-let it, we will consider either carrying out some decoration or providing the incoming tenant with a decoration allowance, in accordance with current procedures. We will ensure that prospective tenants are kept fully informed about the commencement of their tenancy and about any delays which affect when they can move in.

7.5. Tenancy Sustainment

The Council will be mindful of households likely to abandon their property, particularly those with rent arrears, those facing legal action, first-time tenants, and vulnerable people. Whenever possible, we will offer financial advice and other support to tenants who are at risk in order to reduce the likelihood that a property will be abandoned. We will also seek to identify any potentially abandoned properties as quickly as possible by for example visiting tenants who fail to respond to contact, by following up reports of tenants moving out, and by regular estate inspections.

Appendix A

We will seek to minimize unnecessary voids through our tenancy sustainment procedures such as referral to support services, through effective housing management, by supporting tenants with financial inclusion advice (for example relating to benefits, debt, or budgeting), by the installation of adaptations so that tenants with particular needs can remain in their home, and by signposting tenants to the relevant resources for the provision of housing support. All new tenants will be advised where to find information on the Council's website about managing their tenancy (Housing – Council Tenants and Leaseholders) and will be given the name and contact details of their Housing Officer.

7.6. Tenant Responsibilities

Tenants must meet their obligations as described in the Tenancy Agreement and in the information on the website under Housing – Council Tenants and Leaseholders. This includes giving the required 28 days' notice (unless a shorter notice period has been agreed with us) and leaving the property in an acceptable condition which as far as possible meets the Re-Let Standard (see Appendix 2), with the exception of fair wear and tear. Where this is not the case, the Council will recharge outgoing tenants for any repairs required to the property which are due to tenant damage, disrepair, or neglect, for changing locks or replacing keys if not returned, and for the cost of removing rubbish, furniture, or personal belongings.

8. Financial Implications

Any repair work carried out in the property whilst vacated will be charged to the void budget. The management and monitoring of this budget will be undertaken by the Head of Housing Contracts, Operations Manager and Maintenance & Voids Manager.

9. Measuring Quality & Performance

9.1. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

The Council take a proactive approach to performance monitoring, and do so on a continuous basis. Targets are included in the quarterly Performance Monitoring and include:

- Length of time to re-let minor and major voids;
- Benchmarking void performance against other social landlords;
- Cost of void works.

If any significant issues of concern arise, these will be dealt with by the Head of Assets and Investments, the Strategic Head of Housing or the Strategic Director of Communities, who will report such matters to the Strategic Leadership Team and the Housing Committee. Any matter which demonstrates a serious failure of internal controls will also be reported immediately to the Chief Executive.

STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

HOUSING COMMITTEE

28 MARCH 2023

Report Title	Tenant Information & Property Update			
Purpose of Report	To update members on what was formerly known as the Tenant Handbook and updates that are being considered.			
Decision(s)	The Committee RESOLVES to accept and support the changes to the tenant handbook including its renaming to Tenant Information and Property Update.			
Consultation and Feedback	Consultation took place in February 2022 with tenants at three café conversation events and with colleagues in Property Care.			
Report Author	Michelle Elliott – Housing Manager Email: michelle.elliott@stroud.gov.uk			
Options	The committee could decide not to accept the changes			
Background Papers	None			
Appendices	Appendix A – Equality Impact Assessment			
Implications (further details at the end of the report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	No	Yes	Yes	No

1. INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Tenant Information and property information outlines tenancy conditions, informs tenants about their rights and responsibilities as a tenant and the rights and responsibilities of Stroud District Council as a landlord. The information can be found on the Stroud District Council website at <https://www.stroud.gov.housing/council-tenants-and-leaseholders>
- 1.2 A review of the tenant handbook was undertaken during February 2022 by staff and tenants during a café conversation focus group. The focus of this review was on the ease of finding appropriate information on the Stroud District Council website and understanding of responsibilities in line with the tenancy agreement.
- 1.3 Since becoming an online document, the information is not held in a typical handbook method and therefore we have re-addressed the information to be known as Tenant Information and Property Update. Any searches on the Stroud District Council website for a Tenant Handbook, will refer searchers to the Tenant Information and Property Update section.
- 1.4 The tenant information and property pages aim to answer many of the common questions that tenants ask about their homes. It also clearly defines the responsibilities of our tenants and of us as a landlord and is split into the following main sections:
 - Your Tenancy
 - Council Housing Repairs
 - Your Home

- Your Neighbourhood
- Our customers matter
- Right to buy/ Leasehold/ shared ownership
- Tenants News
- About Tenant Services

2. CHANGES TO TENANT INFORMATION AND PROPERTY UPDATE

- 2.1 The main changes to the Tenant Information and Property Update are set out the following paragraphs.
- 2.2 All reference to Sheltered Housing to be changed to Independent Living to reflect recent changes.
- 2.3 All reference to Neighbourhood Management Officers to be changed to Housing Officer to reflect recent change in title.
- 2.4 Permissions required to be highlighted, to remind tenants that permissions need to be sought for any alteration or additions to the property.
- 2.5 Inclusion of the requirement to seek permission for installing Hot Tubs – during lockdown it became noticeable that many tenants had purchased hot tubs. As these feed into the electricity supply it is important that permission is sought so that the electricians can be checked for suitability.
- 2.6 Refusal of permission for wood burners added. Whilst we acknowledge that wood burners can provide a relatively efficient form of heating, there are significant risks with the appliances in respect to health & safety, if they are not correctly installed, maintained and used.
- 2.7 Fluorescent Lighting - in response to feedback from tenants it has been agreed that we as a landlord will be responsible for removing and replacing fluorescent lighting. In the longer term this type of lighting will be replaced by LED lighting.
- 2.8 A reminder that fences surrounding a property are the responsibility of the tenant, but stone walls are the responsibility of the landlord.

3. CHANGES TO TENANCY AGREEMENTS

- 3.1 In addition to the above, changes to the Tenancy Agreement are necessary to ensure that the Tenancy Agreement is more robust. Once the Tenancy Agreement has been reviewed and agreed with One Legal further changes to the Tenant and Property Information required.
- 3.2 If these changes are agreed officers will consult with tenants on the amended Tenancy Agreement. We are looking to
 - Changes suggested to the tenancy agreement include:
 - Explanation concerning the depooling of service charges.
 - Temporary accommodation due to a property becoming inhabitable and the Council's responsibility.

- The responsibility for tenants to accept and allow radon equipment to run in the property.
- A Clear loft space
- CCTV and Doorbells with CCTV and relevant permissions required.
- Communal gardens to be kept clear of personal items and to be left as open spaces.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 This report provides Housing Committee with updated information in relation to the current proposed changes and the changes being considered for the future in line with the Tenancy Agreement change.

5. IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial Implications

There are no implications arising directly from this report. Any expenditure arising will be met through established budgets.

Jon Coldridge, Principal Accountant

Tel: 01453 754030 Email: jon.coldridge@stroud.gov.uk

5.2 Legal Implications

Except for the variation of rent and service charges, Sections 102 and 103 of the Housing Act 1985 give the Council the power to vary the terms of the tenancy agreement by serving notice of variation on the Tenant. Before serving a notice of variation, the Council has to give a preliminary notice and the tenant has to be invited to make comment on the proposed changes. The Council is then required to consider the comments made.

One Legal are being consulted about the proposed variations and are in the process of making recommendations to the Council's Housing Manager.

One Legal

Email legalservices@onelegal.org.uk

5.3 Equality Implications

An EIA has been carried out by Officers in relation to the decision made in this report and no equality implications arise, please see appendix A.

5.4 Environmental Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

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Equality Analysis Form

By completing this form you will provide evidence of how your service is helping to meet Stroud District Council's General Equality duty:

The Equality Act 2010 states that:

*A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have **due regard** to the need to –*

(a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;

(b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

(c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The protected characteristics are listed in Question 9

Stroud District Equality data can be found at: <https://inform.gloucestershire.gov.uk/equality-and-diversity/>

Please see Appendix 1 for a good example of a completed EIA.

[Guidance available on the HUB](#)

1. Persons responsible for this assessment:

Name(s): Michelle Elliott	Telephone:
	E-Mail: michelle.elliott@stroud.gov.uk
Service: Housing Services	Date of Assessment: 20 March 2023

2. Name of the policy, service, strategy, procedure or function:

Tenant & Property Information Update

Is this new or an existing one? **Existing**

3. Briefly describe its aims and objectives

To enable council tenants to enjoy their home and to understand their responsibilities and our responsibilities as a landlord

4. Are there external considerations? (Legislation / government directive, etc)

**The Housing Act 1985
The Housing Act 1988
Localism Act 2011
The charter for social housing residents. Social Housing white paper 2020**

5. Who is intended to benefit from it and in what way?

Tenants and residents will benefit by understanding responsibilities and permissions needed for adaptations

6. What outcomes are expected?

**For the service to be measurable and cost effective and delivering an increase in tenant satisfaction results.
Provide safe homes and estates
Protect and enhance the reputation of SDC**

7. What evidence has been used for this assessment?: (eg Research, previous consultations, Inform (MAIDEN); Google assessments carried out by other Authorities)

Research and understanding of legislation

8. Has any consultation been carried out?

Yes
Details of consultation
Consultation carried out with involved tenant groups :
Tenants Voice Representatives
Tenants attending Café Conversations

If NO please outline any planned activities

**9. Could a particular group be affected differently in either a negative or positive way?
(Negative – it could disadvantage and therefore potentially not meet the General Equality duty;
Positive – it could benefit and help meet the General Equality duty;
Neutral – neither positive nor negative impact / Not sure)**

Protected Group	Type of impact, reason and any evidence (from Q7 & 8)
Age	Positive, the policy is all-inclusive and all tenants have the opportunity to take ownership and responsibility along with their landlord to ensure their homes are well managed.
Disability	Positive, the policy is all inclusive and all tenants have the opportunity to take ownership and responsibility along with their landlord to ensure their homes are well managed. Provision will be made for tenants who require information in different formats There is opportunity for hard copy documentation to be in larger print or other languages for those who may not be digitally enabled, or on an audible solution for visually impaired. For those with learning disabilities alternative easy read versions will be available.
Gender Re-assignment	Neutral – We are not aware of any tenants that sit in this group but any requirements would be acted upon if reasonable and proportionate
Pregnancy & Maternity	Positive, the policy is all-inclusive and all tenants have the opportunity to take ownership and responsibility along with their landlord to ensure their homes are well managed
Race	Positive, the policy is all-inclusive and all tenants have the opportunity to take ownership and responsibility along with their landlord to ensure their homes are well managed. There is also opportunity for hard copy documentation to be in other languages for those who may not use English as their primary language
Religion – Belief	Positive, the policy is all-inclusive and all tenants have the opportunity to take ownership and responsibility along with their landlord to ensure their homes are well managed. There is also opportunity for hard copy documentation to be in other languages for those who may not use English as their primary language
Sex	Neutral, the policy is all-inclusive and all tenants have the opportunity to take ownership and responsibility along with their landlord to ensure their homes are well managed.
Sexual Orientation	Neutral, the policy is all-inclusive and all tenants have the opportunity to take ownership and responsibility along with their landlord to ensure their homes well managed.
Marriage & Civil Partnerships (part (a) of duty only)	Neutral, the policy is all-inclusive and all tenants have the opportunity to take ownership and responsibility along with their landlord to ensure their homes are well managed.
Rural considerations: le Access to services; transport; education; employment; broadband;	Positive, the policy is all inclusive and may have increased benefit for those tenants in rural locations where community engagement may not be as prevalent but the policy outlines expectations and routes to take when things don't go well. There is opportunity for hard copy documentation to be in larger print or other languages for those who may not be digitally enabled

10. If you have identified a negative impact in question 9, what actions have you undertaken or do you plan to undertake to lessen or negate this impact?


Please transfer any actions to your Service Action plan on Excelsis.

Action(s):	Lead officer	Resource	Timescale

Declaration

I/We are satisfied that an Impact Assessment has been carried out on this policy, service, strategy, procedure or function * (delete those which do not apply) and where a negative impact has been identified, actions have been developed to lessen or negate this impact.

We understand that the Equality Impact Assessment is required by the District Council and that we take responsibility for the completion and quality of this assessment

Completed by: Michelle Elliott	Date: 20/3/2023
Role: Housing Manager	Date: 20/3/2023
Countersigned by Head of Service: 	

Date for Review: Please forward an electronic copy to eka.nowakowska@stroud.gov.uk



STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council Offices • Ebley Mill • Ebley Wharf • Stroud • GL5 4UB

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HOUSING COMMITTEE MEMBER/OFFICER REPORT

NAME OF ORGANISATION/BODY	Stroud District Council
DATE OF LAST MEETING ATTENDED	n/a

BRIEF REPORT: The Former Ship Inn Site, Stonehouse

1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to update members on the current position with regard to identifying options for the future of this site, further to the approved motion to Council in July last year (CL. 016)

'To request the Head of Property Services to report to Housing Committee by the end of Spring 2023 on options for a suitable use for the former Ship Inn site in Stonehouse that:

1. *Considers non-housing uses.*
2. *Builds upon the District Council's Canal Strategy and this Council's previous consultations for all its canal side sites in this area and, in light of the Stonehouse Town Council survey, continues to engage with the community and other stakeholders in exploring potential future uses for the site.*
3. *Invests any value from the site, if the site is not used for council housing, into affordable housing in the local area.'*

2. Consultants Brief

Since the motion was passed officers and ward members have met with representatives from Stonehouse Town Council and ShiPs and agreed how the parties will work together. Consultants (David Hawes Urban Design partnership) were then approached to prepare a high level brief for exploring potential future uses for the site in accordance with Council's decision. The key stakeholders were then consulted on and are supportive of the approach.

Based on this document DHUD have now set out a proposal for delivering this work(working with other consultants) which includes the following broad areas:

- a) Stakeholder and community engagement and identification of common ground
- b) Identification of strategic opportunities (multi-site approach)
- c) Strategic viability and Delivery Testing
- d) Co-Design of Former Ship Inn site options

3. Programme

The programme proposed by DHUD is set out below, in order to report to Committee, the consultation dates set out will need to be achieved.



HOUSING COMMITTEE MEMBER/OFFICER REPORT

Understanding Common Ground	Stage 1	Inception meeting	27 th March
	Stage (4) report back	Housing Committee report - update	28 th March
	Stage 2	Stakeholder meetings	26 th & 27 th April and 3 rd & 4 th May
	Stage 3	Common Ground Report	19 th May (subject to all stakeholder meetings completed)
	Stage(4) Report back	Summary of common ground report and initial Strategic Design Themes	
Strategic Design	Stage 5	Stakeholder event	25 th May
	Stage 6	Public Event	1 st June
	Stage 7	Strategic Design Optioneering	25 th May start
	Stage 8	Strategic Viability and Delivery Testing draft report	13 th June
	Stage (4) Report back	Summary of common ground report and initial Strategic Design and draft brief for approval - Housing Committee	27 th June

Progressing to next stage will be dependent on Committee approval.

Site Design	Stage 9	Site co-design	June to Sept (workshop early July)
	Stage 10	Site design refinement & Outputs	Sept-Oct
	Stage (4) Report back	Report on draft options for the former Ship Inn Site for Committee approval – Housing Committee	Sept 19 th

End of DHUD's current commission

(Note: 'Report back' runs through programme as Stage 4)

Delivery	Commissioning body and funding to be agreed, dependent on the option chosen
-----------------	---

It is, therefore, expected that a summary of the Common Ground report & initial strategic design themes will be reported to the next meeting of this committee at the beginning of June for approval and before any more detailed site design will begin.

FUTURE MEETINGS	June and September Housing Committee
REPORT SUBMITTED BY	Alison Fisk, Head of Property Services
DATE	20 th March 2023

Damp and Mould

1. SUMMARY / INTRODUCTION

- This briefing sheet is to present an update to our current response to damp and mould within the SDC housing stock and introduce elements of a new policy to go to consultation and be presented to the next Housing Committee in June
- It is proposed that a Working Group comprising officers and tenant representatives is established to lead consultation on a revised damp and mould policy.

2. BACKGROUND

- The Council's previous Damp and Mould Policy was due for review in September 2021.
- In October 2021, the Housing Ombudsman published a Spotlight Report into damp and mould in social housing, entitled It's Not Lifestyle. This was followed in February 2023 by a follow up report. These two reports made a number of recommendations for social landlords, which have been incorporated into drafts updated policy and our initial responses.
- In November 2022, a Coroner's report into the death of Awaab Ishak was published. Awaab was a toddler who died of respiratory disease caused by severe and prolonged exposure to mould in his home. The Ishak family had repeatedly reported damp and mould, but their landlord took little or no action in response.
- This tragic and avoidable death resulted in considerable media coverage and political interest. The Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities has requested information from all local authorities about their actions to identify and tackle damp and mould in homes and has indicated that he intends to revise the Decent Homes Standard, Housing Health and Safety Rating System and impose timescales in which local authorities must respond to complaints of damp and mould in social and privately rented housing.
- A request for information and subsequent request for further information was made from the Regulator of Social Housing to Stroud District Council. Significant points regarding these responses are detailed in this report.

3. MAIN POINTS

- Currently we have made some interim operational changes to strengthen our response to damp and mould cases. This is to ensure that prior to policy change we continue to prioritise our tenants safety while considering updated guidance from the regulator. We aim to formalise these new arrangements within our new policy.
- We currently inspect our properties prior to tenancy termination and use this inspection to identify defects or repairs required to return the property to our lettable homes standard. This process involves the identification of any damp or mould within the property and the scheduling of any works required to resolve the issue. As a standard part of the inspection all tenants are asked about their experience of living in the

property, including if they have had any disrepair issues such as damp and mould so that operatives are able to remedy this prior to relet.

- Within the new policy it is proposed to work to improve this process further by creating a specific damp and mould checklist in addition to the current inspection. This will include a further range of testing including testing the moisture content of walls in all properties, regardless of any apparent damp or mould. We are also proposing to recruit tenant voluntary empty homes inspectors to review and inspect the works being undertaken on our empty homes to provide a different perspective from representative tenants
- When tenants take out a new tenancy with Stroud District Council, they are visited by their housing officer in the first 6 weeks, at 3 months and at 9 months of tenancy or more frequently as required. The aims of these visits are to ensure that the tenant is settling into their tenancy and highlight any concerns or issues early in the tenancy so that they can be swiftly resolved. We have added the topic of damp and mould to the questions asked and requested observations by housing officers. This is to review the prevalence of any early indicators of damp and mould. Should these be observed, these will be reported for further investigation.
- New tenants are provided with advice on condensation within the home which has been recently updated. We highlight the steps that tenants can take to reduce condensation. This updated information is also included on our website for ease of access for our tenants.
- We advise tenants to contact our repairs service if they find that they are having issues with condensation so that further investigations can be undertaken. When our properties are tenanted, we use the skills of our repairs operatives from our in-house repair service to report back any instances of damp and mould that they observe when they conduct repairs or regulatory servicing such as annual gas servicing. We also use the skills of housing officers when they enter a property to speak with a tenant on any matter to report back any early signs of damp and mould.
- Reports back to us regarding early signs of damp and mould are logged and followed up.
- We are currently investing in additional training for our frontline staff to ensure that any staff who visit our properties are upskilled in reporting back cases of damp and mould and are better able to judge the severity of initial cases.
- Reports of damp and mould within a property can be made by either our tenants via our repairs service, or by our staff. We have updated our process so that now when we receive a report, we initially fill out a set of screening questions with attached photographs, which aims to identify the severity, likely cause and any specific building defects. The current proposal is to include this in the new policy with an additional update to include scoring in line with the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) once this has been updated by central government. This may mean a two-stage approach with the initial screening system to be included in the forthcoming policy review and then a separate minor amendment following the modification of the HHSRS.
- Depending on the outcome of the screening, we may give specific advice to tenants regarding the responsibilities of both tenant and landlord. We then schedule an

Jonathan Priest, Compliance & Assurance Manager Housing

Email: jon.priest@stroud.gov.uk Ext: 4086

Housing Committee
BRIEFING SHEET
16/03/2023

inspection by our surveyors or repairs team leaders. Our surveyors and team leaders have a variety of tools at their disposal to identify the causes of the damp and mould to ensure that we are dealing with the root cause and not merely the symptoms. Should the initial screening or survey identify a serious issue, this is escalated, and all options are thoroughly considered, including emergency moves.

- During our inspections we review the construction of the building and asset data, and check for defects and deficiencies. Our assessments include using damp meters and humidity monitoring equipment. Where we are unable to find a defect with the building, we can now ensure that we engage with our tenants in using new digital monitoring equipment. This helps us to identify when humidity levels spike and can help us to identify causes where they are not immediately apparent. The use of this new equipment will be considered in the updated policy.
- Should our inspection reveal building defects the report would generate a list of works required and these are booked in with our internal repairs service for repair works or added to current planned programmes as a priority. During this process we assess whether the property is safe to inhabit. We liaise with the tenant, tenancy management, and housing advice team to ensure that a solution can be found for any severe issues. A solution can include temporary alternative accommodation pending the completion of works, or a permanent move if works will take a longer time, to minimise disruption to our tenants as far as reasonably possible.

4. WORKING GROUP AND TENANT INVOLVEMENT

- As the damp and mould policy affects a wide range of other policies and procedures as well as being an important topic for our tenants, it is proposed to set up a working group.
- It is proposed that the working group comprise of officers from Property Care, Housing, Asset and Housing Advice and tenant representatives.
- The objective of the working group is to review and advise on the creation of the new damp and mould policy. This will be a significant revision of the policy from the existing Damp and Mould policy approved by committee in 2017
- The updated policy will be presented at the June 2023 Housing Committee for Approval

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STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Performance Monitoring Report Q3: Housing Committee

Date of Meeting	Performance Monitoring Meeting, 14 February 2023	
Attendees	Members: Lindsey Green & Katrina Davis Officers: Keith Gerrard, Rachel Brain, Helen Scullard, Alison Fisk, Maria Hickman, Steve Miles	
Performance Update (See report below/attached)		
Council Plan Priorities <i>(see performance management system)</i>	Summary:	Progress & RAG Status
	Action Plans:	7 On Target
	See detailed report below.	0 Not started
	<i>Actions where no information has been provided will be highlighted</i>	1 Overdue
		0 Completed
Council Plan Performance Indicators or Milestones <i>(see performance management system where applicable)</i>	Summary:	Progress & RAG Status
	Milestones:	4 On Target
		0 Not started
		0 Overdue
		2 Completed
	Summary:	Progress & RAG Status
	Performance Indicators:	16 On Target
		0 Not Started
		0 Overdue
Reports being presented to this Committee associated with Council Plan:		
Service Area Indicators <i>(not covered in Council Plan)</i>		
Risks	Corporate Risk Register presented to Audit & Standards Committee. <i>List any relevant Service specific risks.</i>	

Relevant finance issues	
Any other service issues considered at the meeting (eg staffing / resources)	
Follow up (any issues for consideration at the next meeting)	

Any issues of significant concern to be reported to Audit and Standards
--

No issues of concern to report to Audit and Standards

Any actions/recommendations for the Committee
--




Any issues will be raised at Committee by the Performance Monitors.



Report submitted by	Cllr Davis & Cllr Green
Date of report	14 March 2023



Please complete and return to the Democratic Services ASAP for circulation to the Committee

PART 1 – PRIORITY INDICATORS




CW2: Affordable homes: Build affordable, energy efficient homes and deliver high quality services for all tenants by investing in the renovation of existing council homes and meet a range of housing needs for those who experience disadvantage and creating a culture of tenant engagement and empowerment.

Code	Action Required / Description	Deadline	Lead Officer	Status	Last Monitored	Comments
» CDPCW2.1a	Number of new affordable Council homes completed p.a.	N/A	Kimberley Read	Target: 24 Actual: 24 	December	Annual figure achieved in June 2022 of 24 new homes.
» CDPCW2.1b	Number of new affordable homes completed p.a. by partners	N/A	Pippa Stroud	Target: 120 Actual: 245 		Additional delivery last year was largely attributable to new homes completed at Great Oldbury, near Stonehouse. Affordable homes are generally built-out in step with market housing; as market housing sales have remained strong here, build rates have remained high.
CW2.2	Invest £30m over the next 5 years to repair, maintain and invest in current council housing stock and bring empty council homes back into use as soon as possible.	31/03/2026	Tara Skidmore	On Target 	24/01/2023: Quarter 3	24/01/2023: Quarter 3: This programme is on track. Our capital programme will be reviewed to take account of greatly increased costs for materials and labour. Some works may have to be re-profiled
» CDPCW2.2a	Spend per council property in upper quartile compared with peers	N/A	Tara Skidmore	Target: 145 Actual: 168.04	December	The average spend on repairs per council property is above target. This figure is based on internal quarterly performance monitoring and is not fully peer grouped benchmarked . We will be upgrading from April 2023, more accurate peer group benchmarking will be available.

» CDPCW2.2b	Empty property (void) ready to let turnaround time in upper quartile compared with peers	N/A	Adrian Erwood	Target: 42 days Actual for all work: 121	December	<p>Over the last quarter the number of homes which at any one time are empty and undergoing works has been stable at around 35. To maximize availability of homes, for those in need work has been prioritised on those empty properties which can be returned to occupancy quickly (known as 'minor voids'). This also is most effective at reducing the time when rent is not collected.</p> <p>This was considered by the voids working group which recognised and understood this approach.</p> <p>The impact of this is that properties requiring major and structural works take significantly longer to be completed. The overall effect is that the <u>mean average</u> time for all empty properties is extended.</p> <p>This figure is based on internal performance monitoring and is not peer grouped benchmarked. We will be upgrading from April 2023, more accurate peer group benchmarking will be available.</p>
CW2.4	Provide more opportunities for resident involvement in housing decisions through delivery of the Charter for Social Housing Residents and our continuing commitment to build on resident involvement opportunities.	31/03/2023	Michelle Elliott	On Target 	24/01/2023: Quarter 3	24/01/2023: Quarter 3: In the third quarter our Tenant Scrutiny Panel has published its report into void performance and presented it to managers. There have been social events, café conversations, seven estate walkabouts, 17 Housing Officer drop in sessions on patches, four partnership forum meetings with staff and three TPAS online meetings/training. We have carried out our tenant satisfaction (STAR) survey and are awaiting the detailed results. We are particularly pleased that a Stroud tenant is on the national Social Housing Quality Panel.
» CW2.4.2	Cross service tenants' scrutiny panel established with half yearly report to HC on work programme delivery.	30/12/2022	Michelle Elliott	On Target 	N/A	The Tenant Scrutiny Panel reported on the empty property (void) process and reported back to Housing Committee through the two Tenant Reps. It is now moving to support consultation on the revised Damp and Mould Policy.






» CDPCW2.4a	80% of tenants are satisfied with the training they receive	N/A	Michelle Elliott	Target: 80 Actual: 80 	December	After tenancy consultation or involvement event participants satisfaction is evaluation. To date we have had positive feedback from tenants attending events, however, we recognise assessing and recording satisfaction this needs to be more rigorous and consistent. Looking forward the Social Housing Regulator is introducing new tenant satisfaction measures and we will report on these when this information is available
» CDPCW2.4b	80% of tenants are satisfied with the quality and relevance of SDC tenant events they attend	N/A	Michelle Elliott	Target: 80 Actual: 80 	December	To date tenants are reporting satisfaction with events however we recognise assessing and recording satisfaction this needs to be more rigorous and consistent. Looking forward the Social Housing Regulator is introducing new tenant satisfaction measures and we will report on these when this information is available
» CDPCW2.4c	10% increase in the overall number of tenants engaged, including all consultation events, scrutiny panels and performance management activity. Baselines to be confirmed	N/A	Michelle Elliott	Target: not available – see narrative Actual: not available – see narrative	December	A baseline for this indicator has not been properly established. This has been due to the wide range of issues covered at a variety of events where attendance varies greatly and is depending on location, subject matter and timings. Although attendance and satisfaction with events is overall good it has been difficult to achieve a consistence meaningful measure for direction of travel for numbers of participants. We recognise this is unsatisfactory and now need to review our processes. Looking forward the Social Housing Regulator is introducing new tenant satisfaction measures and we will report on these when this information is available.
» CDPCW2.4d	Increase the number of tenants engaged who are under 30 years old, including all consultation events, scrutiny panels and performance management activity. Baselines to be confirmed	N/A	Michelle Elliott	Target: not available – see narrative Actual: Not available – see narrative	December	We have not been able to set a base line for this. Although we are prioritising attracting younger tenants into participation and engagement events. This has been difficult to achieve and to measure consistently. Under 30s participation is overall low and varies greatly depending on location, issues being discussed and timing. We recognise this is not satisfactory and requires more focus.


EC3: Sustainable Construction and Retrofit: Work with partners to retrofit our council housing stock and other public sector buildings, and investing in the skills and capacity in the local economy so all buildings across the district can become energy efficient

Code	Action Required / Description	Deadline	Lead Officer	Status	Last Monitored	Comments
EC3.1	Agree a costed plan to retrofit all council homes as necessary and begin the first phase of delivery to realise optimum emission reductions and achieve an average Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating C across all council homes by 2030.	31/03/2024	Tara Skidmore	On Target 	24/01/2023: Quarter 3	06/02/2023: A costed plan has been agreed. First phase: A Council house decarbonisation Wave 1 project will carry out 167 retrofit installations. As of Quarter 3: Hamfallow is completed, 26 are rated A and 2 are rated as a high B in the EPC SAP rating., alongside standard planned work programme. Phase 2: A Social Housing Decarbonisation bid has been submitted for Wave 2, which encompasses 250 properties. These projects all contribute to achieving an EPC C SAP rating across our housing stock.
» CDPEC3.3a(C)	Number of enquiries to Warm & Well Advice line	N/A	Maria Hickman	Target: 100 Actual: 424 	September	424 enquiries, as the cost-of-living crisis rises we are seeing a large increase in the number of enquiries many from people who are 'first time' fuel poor households and many who are in employment but still in fuel poverty.
» CDPEC3.3b(C)	Number of measures installed through Warm & Well Scheme	N/A	Maria Hickman	Target: 18 Actual: 2 	September	2 measures installed this quarter, this is expected to increase over the next quarter as the Sustainable Warmth project beds in and ECO4 has just been finalized.



PART 2 – OTHER INDICATORS




CW2: Affordable homes: Build affordable, energy efficient homes and deliver high quality services for all tenants by investing in the renovation of existing council homes and meet a range of housing needs for those who experience disadvantage and creating a culture of tenant engagement and empowerment.

Code	Action Required / Description	Deadline	Lead Officer	Status	Last Monitored	Comments
CW2.1	Deliver new affordable homes across the District, through planning policy and work with partners including community-led housing groups, housing associations and via our own New Homes Programme, which will deliver EPC-A rated properties in line with our Strategy for New Council Homes 2020-2024.	31/03/2024	Pippa Stroud	On Target 	12/01/2023: Quarter 3	12/01/2023: Quarter 3: 2.1a –New Council Homes Delivery – targets achieved for this financial year. Soft stripping and demolition has started on the next set of sites at Gloucester Street/Bradley Street, Cambridge House & Glebelands with this work due to finish in July 2023. Additional budget of £5.4m has been requested to deliver the remainder of the New Homes Programme following a sharp increase in the cost of construction and labour, Housing Committee have recommended to Full Council that this budget is approved. A decision will be made at Full Council in February. Local Plan Inquiry commences March 2023
CW2.3	Prioritise the prevention of homelessness by delivering the Next Steps Accommodation Programme and invest in temporary accommodation and specialist support, including working with partners countywide to develop the specialist housing and support needed.	31/03/2024	Pippa Stroud	On Target 	12/01/2023: Quarter 3	12/01/2023: Quarter 3: Works at the Minister's house are nearly completed and the accommodation should be available for occupation in early February. We are currently working with Gloucester City Homes and The Dogs Trust to draft policies relating to the accommodation of pets.
» CW2.3.1	Gloucester City Homes has now acquired the Minister's house and will be carrying out refurbishment works.	31/03/2024	Pippa Stroud	On Target 	N/A	12/10/2022: The accommodation is anticipated to be available from February 2023
» CDPCW2.3a	Increase the number of homeless cases prevented by 25% p.a.	N/A	Pippa Stroud	Target: whole year 96 Actual: year to date (Q3) 90 	January 2023	The baseline at the beginning of the year was 77 cases prevented. This measure is on target.
» CDPCW2.3b	Reduce the number of households in temporary accommodation after 56 days by 25% pa	N/A	Pippa Stroud	Target: whole year 26 Actual: year to date (Q3) 24 	January 2023	The baseline at the beginning of the year was 34 households families in temporary accommodation for more than 56 days. This measure is ahead of target


CW2.5	Continue to invest and deliver the programme to modernise our Independent Living homes for older people.	31/03/2026	Alison Fisk	On Target 	18/01/2023: Quarter 3	18/01/2023: Quarter 3: Works at Burdett House have started and are proceeding on schedule. CDM consultant appointed at Hamfallow Court and resident consultation has been carried out. Initial designs with contractor and cost exercise has started.
» CDPCW2.5	Number of Independent Living Schemes modernised	N/A	Alison Fisk	Target: 1 Actual: 1	December	The 1st of the 3 schemes to be modernised this year is complete and construction work at the 2nd has now started. Pre-contract work has also begun on the 3rd, with architects appointed and the consultation process underway.

EC3: Sustainable Construction and Retrofit: Work with partners to retrofit our council housing stock and other public sector buildings, and investing in the skills and capacity in the local economy so all buildings across the district can become energy efficient

Code	Action Required / Description	Deadline	Lead Officer	Status	Last Monitored	Comments
» EC3.1.1	Agree an investment plan to retrofit council homes	31/03/2023	Tara Skidmore	Completed 	N/A	
» CDPEC3.1	Number of homes retrofitted each year (Average 470 / year)	N/A	Tara Skidmore	Target: 470 Actual: 207 	December	To date this year we have undertaken retrofit works to 207 homes, including 70 loft insulations, 58 cavity wall insulations, 15 external wall insulations and 135 window replacements (NB some homes had more than one item). The shortfall is due to material shortages across industry and staff resourcing issues experienced by contractors.
» CDPEC3.1(C)	Tonnes of carbon saved through council home retrofit i) cumulative since April 2019, ii) in previous quarter	N/A	Tara Skidmore	Target: 53 Tonnes Actual: 73.4 Tonnes	December	Figures for Hamfallow only Performance measures will be assessed as Wave 1 and Wave 2 programmes are completed. Retrofit works at Hamfallow are complete, therefore we can provide the following data: Prior to retrofit works the 28 flats were producing 71 tonnes of carbon per annum. Post works they are now producing negative 2.4 tonnes of carbon, this means the site is reducing the amount of carbon annually. Overall, the site has a 103% reduction in carbon.

EC3.3	Develop partnerships, provide advice, and support local action to help private home owners and businesses meet the retrofit challenge (CN2030 BE2, BE7 and BE8)	31/03/2023	Rachel Brain	On Target 	25/01/2023: Quarter 3	25/01/2023: Quarter 3: The partnership working on affordable warmth, social housing, public estates and private households continues with progress being made on funding, and development of support services.
» EC3.3.1	Annual reporting on capacity to service the district's businesses and homes with support for retrofit. Baseline drawn from the first annual report due Feb 2022.	31/03/2022	Rachel Brain	On Target 	N/A	25/01/2023: Work is continuing on our Innovate to Renovate partnership and pipeline funding has progressed to second stage to enable us to build further capacity for advisers focused on the self financing domestic sector.
» EC3.3.2	Establish a working group to consider Retrofit Centre for Excellence and establish aims, objectives and identified projects (working group in place Summer 2022, work plan identified by Jan 2023).	30/01/2023	Rachel Brain	On Target 	N/A	25/01/2023: This work is now moving to the commencement of a practical action research phase as we are in progress on project set up for a programme of work for "learning by doing" which will see communities working with us closely so we can learn from each other.
» CDPEC3.3	Number of successful projects and schemes in the district to help private home owners and businesses meet the retrofit challenge	N/A	Rachel Brain	Target: Actual:		We have one scheme in operation. It is Warm and Well. Although this has an affordable warmth focus it does offer advice and services for all householders. We are in development on services for those not eligible for grants working with the same councils as Warm and Well under the Innovate to Renovate partnership agreement. We are in scoping stage at the moment nearing the completion of desk based research. We are not offering services so we do not monitor this provision and Warm and Well is monitored elsewhere.

EC6: Renewable energy: Increase the proportion of energy generated by renewable sources in the district and work on decarbonizing existing networks.

Code	Action Required / Description	Deadline	Lead Officer	Status	Last Monitored	Comments
EC6.4	Deliver key low carbon demonstrator projects, including a project for 7 homes in Draycott, Cam.	31/03/2023	Tara Skidmore	Not Started 	24/01/2023: Quarter 3	24/01/2023: Quarter 3: tenders have been produced ready for procurement, however we need further feasibility studies. We do not anticipate starting this work in this financial year

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STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

HOUSING COMMITTEE

2023

WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24

Date of meeting	Matter to be considered	Notes (e.g. lead Member/Officer)
June	Housing Revenue Account Outturn	Principal Accountant
	Independent Living Strategy 2023-26 (Verbal Report)	Service Delivery Manager (Independent Living)
	Tenant Handbook Update	Housing Manager
	Canalside Site /A419 Stonehouse (Former Ship inn Site)	Head of Property Services
	Appointments: a) Performance Monitors Member/Officer Reports a) Progress update on Key action plans (Cleaner Estates & Service Standards and tenant engagement) b) Tenant Representatives	Lead Members /Officers
September	Budget Monitoring Q1	Principal Accountant
	Member/Officer Reports a) Progress update on Key action plans (Cleaner Estates & Service Standards and tenant engagement) b) Performance Monitoring Q1 c) Tenant Representatives	Lead Members /Officers
December (Budget)		
	Budget Monitoring Q2	Principal Accountant
	Tenant Handbook Update	Housing Manager
	Housing Committee Estimates and – Revised 2022/23 and Original 2023/24, and HRA Medium Term Financial Plan	Principal Accountant
	Member/Officer Reports a) Performance Monitoring Q2 b) Tenant Representatives	
January		
	Member/Officer Reports	

Agenda Item 14

	a) Progress update on Key action plans (Cleaner Estates & Service Standards and tenant engagement) b) Tenant Representatives	
March	Social Housing Decarbonisation fund	Head of Housing Services
	Budget Monitoring Q3	Principal Accountant
	Member/Officer Reports a) Progress update on Key action plans (Cleaner Estates & Service Standards and tenant engagement) b) Performance Monitoring Q3 c) Tenant Representatives	

Items to be considered at a future meeting

- Tenancy Agreement (part of the de-pooling project) (2023)
- New Homes update on the site at Orchard Road.
- Anti-Social Behaviour Policy – Head of Community Services

Future Information Sheets:

- Updated Local Plan Affordable Housing Policies (2023)– Head of Strategic Housing Services (interim)
- Review of the Gloucestershire private sector housing survey (June 2023) – Housing Renewal Manager
- Social Housing Regulation Bill - Head of Housing Services (January 2023)