

High Peak Borough Council

TSM Report 2023/24





Introduction

Acuity was commissioned to undertake an independent satisfaction survey of the tenants of High Peak Borough Council (High Peak) at the end of 2023 to collect data on their opinions of, and attitudes towards, their landlord and the services provided. The survey was based on the Tenant Satisfaction Measures from the Regulator of Social Housing which became mandatory to collect in April 2023 and will be reported for the first time in 2024.

The survey was undertaken by telephone interview throughout late November and early December 2023, with the aim of achieving a minimum of 522 interviews to achieve the required margin of error for the Regulator. Quotas were applied to the sampling frame on tenure, area and age to ensure the responses were representative of the tenant population. By the close of the fieldwork, a total of 551 interviews had been completed, slightly exceeding the minimum target and giving good accuracy of results.

This report explores results from this one-off annual survey, and provides a deeper level of analysis of satisfaction by various subgroups, including age, gender, length of tenancy. The report also provides additional benchmarking information, which includes Acuity clients who have used the TSM questions over the past year.

The telephone survey was confidential, and the results were sent back to High Peak anonymised unless tenants gave their permission to be identified – 78% of tenants did give their permission and of these 97% were happy for High Peak to contact them to discuss any information they provided.

The aim of this survey is to provide data on tenants' satisfaction, which will allow High Peak Borough Council to:

- Provide information on tenants' perceptions of current services
- To act as a baseline to compare future surveys against
- Inform decisions regarding future service development
- Report to the regulator from April 2024 onwards.

For the overall results, Acuity, Housemark and the Regulator of Social Housing recommend that landlords with over 2,500 and under 10,000 dwelling units gather enough responses to achieve a sampling error of $\pm 4.0\%$ at the 95% confidence interval. For the present survey, 551 responses were received, which is high enough to conclude that the findings are accurate to within $\pm 3.9\%$, so a little inside the required margin of error.

The majority of figures throughout the report show the results as percentages. The percentages are rounded up or down from two decimal places in the original results file to the nearest whole number, and for this reason, they may not in all cases add up to 100%. Rounding can also cause percentages described in the supporting text to differ from those in the charts by 1% when two percentages are added together. The comments charts include the number of responses in the base for each measure shown as n=...

Key TSM Metrics

Overall Satisfaction

The Home

Neighbourhood

Engagement

NPS

Improvements

Further Insight

Summary

Demographics



77% 

Overall Satisfaction

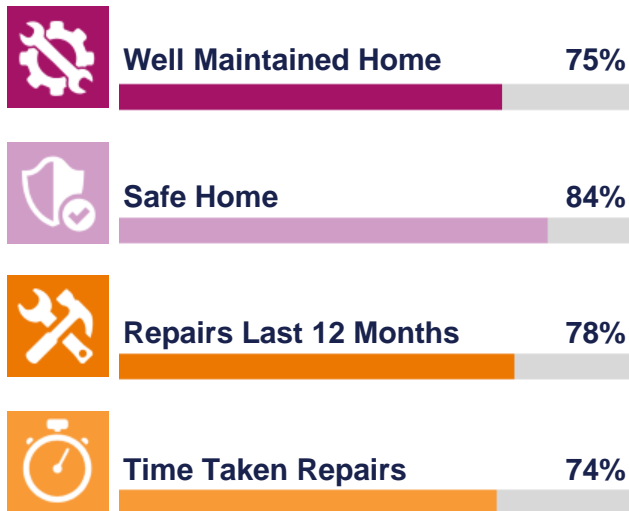
Just over three-quarters of tenants (77%) are satisfied with the overall services provided by High Peak. This compares well with other councils, ranking in the top quartile of Acuity council clients, as is shown later in the report.

There is even higher satisfaction for the provision of a safe home (84%), treating tenants fairly and with respect (79%) and 78% are satisfied with the repairs service in the last 12 months.

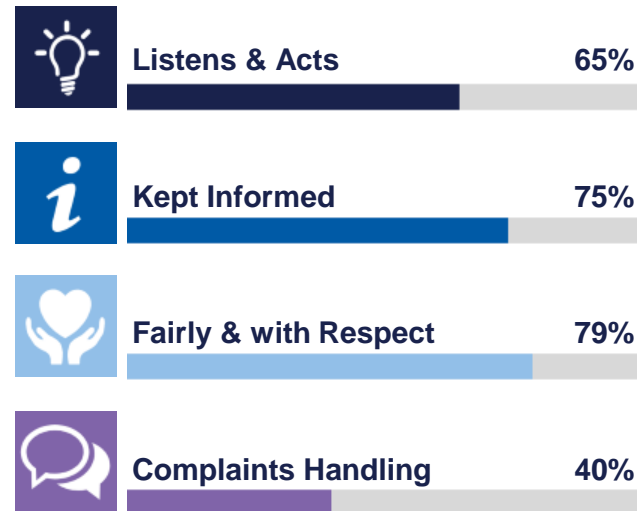
Just three measures fall below 70% in satisfaction, these being the way the Council listens to its tenants' views and acts upon them (65%), the approach to handling anti-social behaviour (61%) and the handling of complaints (40%). This generally reflects the norm of social housing providers, with these three measures commonly being the three lowest scoring.

TSM Key Metrics

Keeping Properties in Good Repair



Respectful & Helpful Engagement



Responsible Neighbourhood Management





Overall Satisfaction

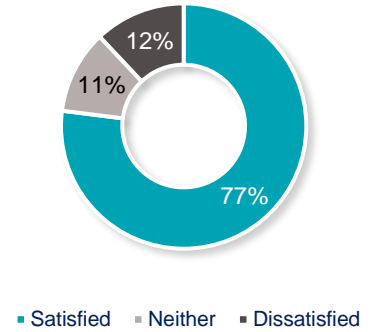
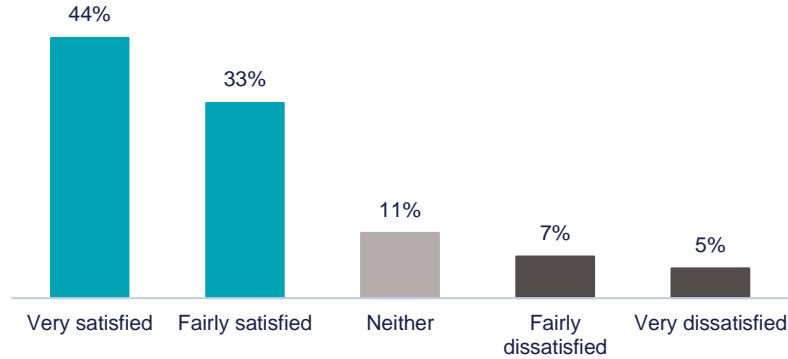


Overall Satisfaction

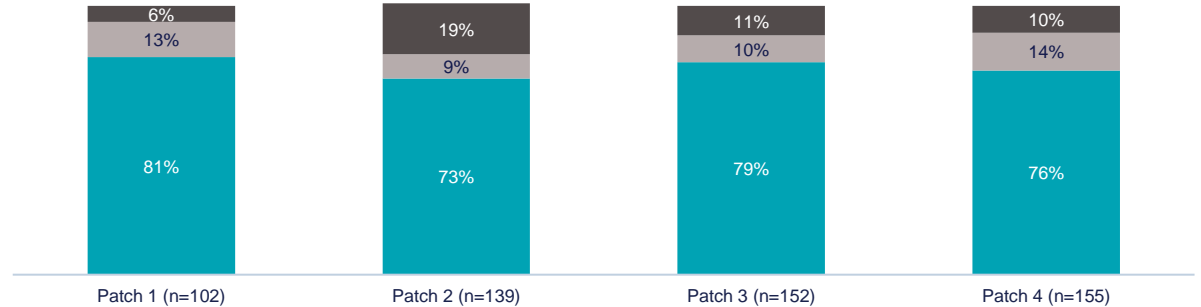
When asked about their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the overall services provided by High Peak, 77% said they were satisfied with more very satisfied (44%) than fairly satisfied (33%).

Just 12% of tenants are dissatisfied with the services provided and a further 11% are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

When looking at the four area patches operated by High Peak, there is little difference between these, although tenants in Patch 1 are the most satisfied (81%) and those in Patch 2 the least (73%), correspondingly, this Patch also has the most dissatisfied tenants 19%.



Satisfaction by Patch





Keeping Properties in Good Repair



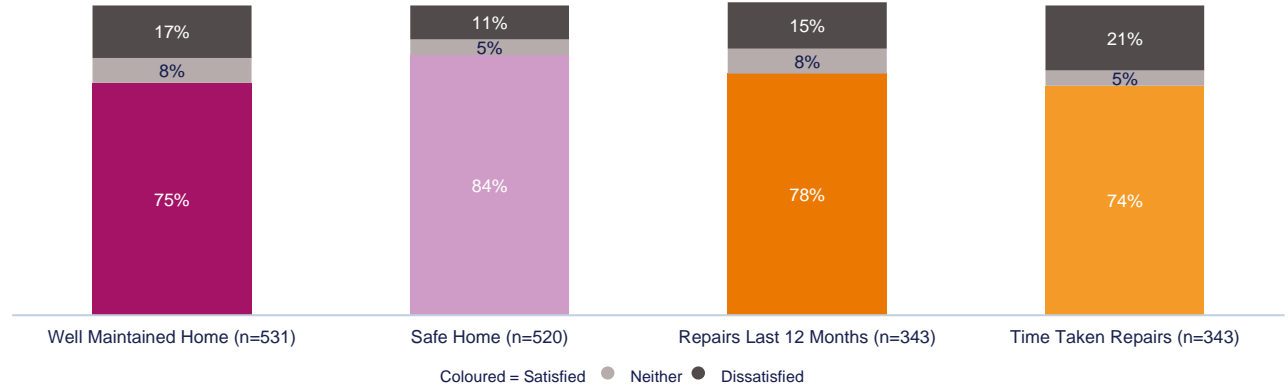
Keeping Properties in Good Repair

The highest rating within the survey is for the home being safe, 84% are satisfied and just 11% are dissatisfied. It is common that this scores higher than for the maintenance of the home, and this is the case here where 75% are satisfied that their home is well-maintained.

Two-thirds of tenants said they had a repair completed by the Council in the last 12 months and 78% of these are satisfied with the repairs service during this period, with 15% being dissatisfied.

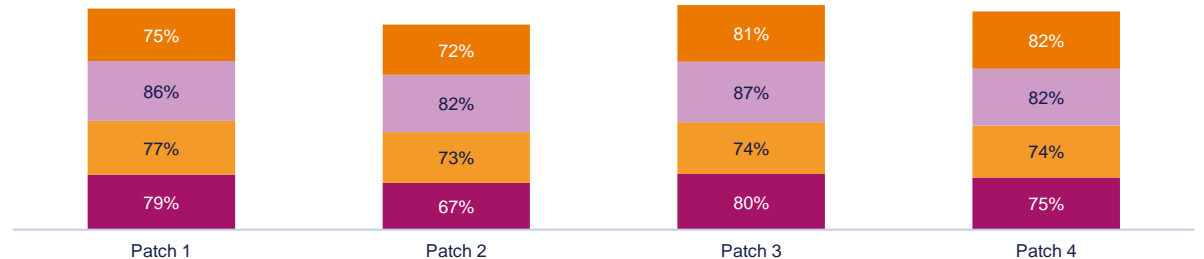
Slightly fewer (74%) are satisfied with the time taken to complete the most recent repairs, again a common pattern often seen in other similar surveys.

There is little difference between the patches again with those in Patch 3 just a little more satisfied with their home and the repairs service than those in the other areas.



Satisfaction by Patch

Well Maintained Home Time Taken Repairs Safe Home Repairs last 12 months





Comments - Home and/or Communal Areas

Tenants not satisfied with their home or communal areas were asked to explain why and 175 tenants gave comments.

The most common comments relate to repairs which are outstanding or appear to have been forgotten, this is followed by tenants concerned about damp and mould in their homes and the timescales for completing work.

To some extent, these are linked, as some work will have to be delayed to address damp issues and this is often time-consuming.

Other comments mention the need for home improvements such as new doors and windows and updated kitchens and bathrooms, insulation in the home and grounds maintenance, whilst some mention the condition of their home at letting.

Examples of the comments are shown on page 9, which will help give the Council a better understanding of how tenants feel about their homes and the communal areas around them.





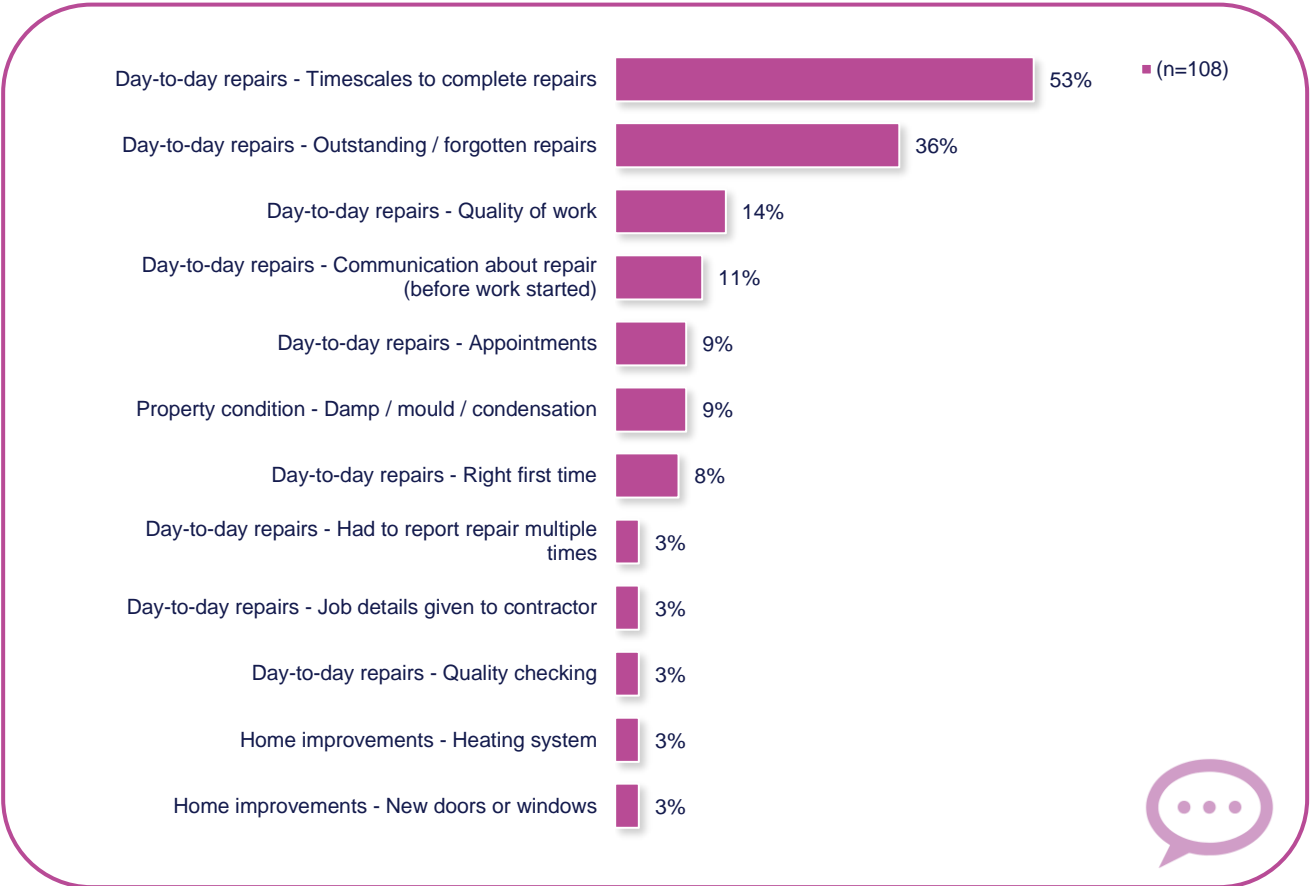
Comments - Dissatisfaction with Repairs

Tenants not satisfied specifically with the repairs and maintenance service were asked to explain why and 108 tenants gave comments.

Similar to many other social landlords, the timescales for repairs to be completed received the most comments. This is followed by outstanding or forgotten repairs and the quality of work.

The time taken to complete repairs is a theme across the sector, with landlords being impacted by the wider context, such as issues around the cost and availability of labour and materials. Additionally, tenants can sometimes have high expectations around timescales. Therefore, it is important that High Peak clearly communicates with tenants about when they can expect repairs to be completed and keeps them updated throughout the process.

The next page shows some examples of these comments in full to help provide insight into what tenants are most concerned about, and this should help the Council target areas in need of improvement.



The Home & Repairs - Example Comments



Outstanding repairs

"I had a gas leak almost 18 months ago and there is still a hole in the back garden from where they dug and all the rubble was left outside. I can not use my back garden due to the hole in it. There are vents in the house to get rid of condensation and mould that need fixing, but no one has got in touch about them."

"I have a lot of outstanding issues to be fixed in my home and the building is not well maintained. Overgrown grass and bushes outside."

"I have been waiting for months for my kitchen ceiling to be checked for asbestos and to be repaired."

"I have cracks everywhere and damp. They are not very quick to sort it."

"It's not very well maintained, only just moved in and quite a few repairs that needed doing."

Time to complete

"Be quicker with enquiries and stop making excuses when you ask them to do work."

"General communication about repairs and the time that it takes to get anything done is very bad."

"Resident is still waiting on repairs for bathroom and outside of the property and has been waiting too long."

"They are very slow to respond to the repairs. Its hard to get through the rights person."

"They need to be more quicker with repairs and maintain the property."

"You have to wait a long time for repairs."

"When you report a repair, it usually takes a month or more to do it."

"It took about 14 months for a new fire to be fitted."

"It took a few months to do my last repair."

Other repair issues

"General communication about repairs and the time that it takes to get anything done is very bad."

"They bodge jobs. They should spend less time chatting and concentrate more on doing a good job."

"My kitchen is falling apart, and I really need a new one, but they just keep doing botch jobs instead of replacing it."

"Better communication. I reported a repair online, 4 separate workman have been out and measured up, but it's not yet been fixed (plastering needs to be done for a hole made after renovation)"

"The quality of the workmanship could be improved. Quality is extremely poor."

"Do general maintenance and look after the elderly better."

Other matters

"Clean the grass up when they have cut it and not leave it till its 6 foot long to come out and cut it again."

"I have damp and mould and I think my home needs re-pointing."

"I have got mould in some of the bedrooms and when you get them to come out, they are not great. They just tell you to open the windows but it's winter."

"I have things that still need to be done by High Peak and the only communal area is the park but it only just has one slide in it so it is not much of a park."

"I have to pay a service charge and they never clean, my neighbour does it. The neighbour has complained, and the cleaners come once or twice then that's it, drug users even come in the building."

"The cleaners don't attend often enough; they come and say they can't get in and when they do get in its not done well and only Hoover."



Responsible Neighbourhood Management



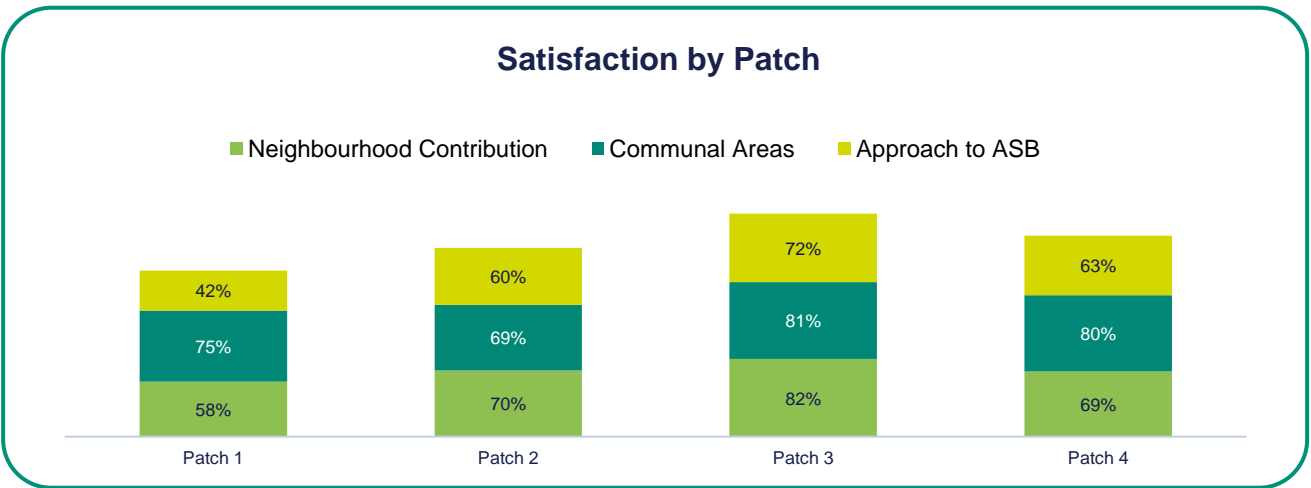
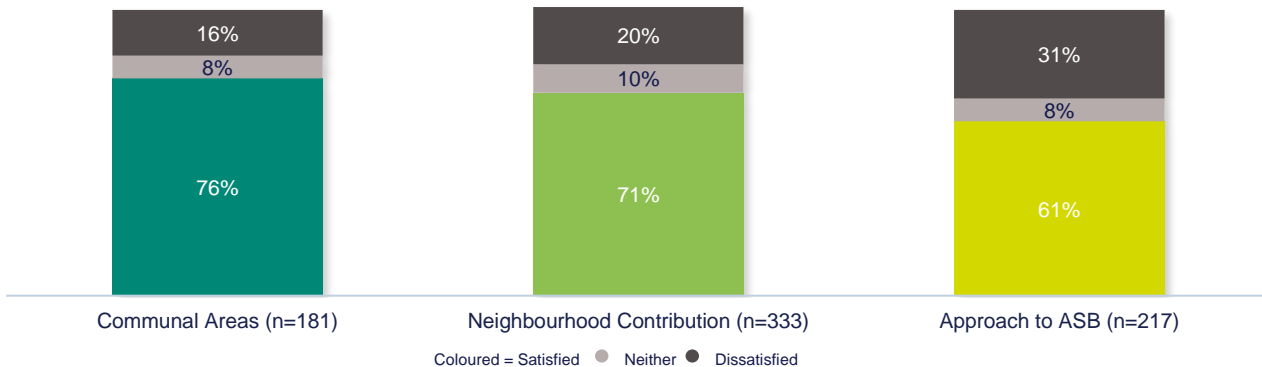
Responsible Neighbourhood Management

A third of tenants stated that they live in a building with communal areas that High Peak is responsible for maintaining (34%), with the highest proportion in Patch 2 (37%).

Three-quarters of these tenants are satisfied that the Council keeps their communal areas clean and well maintained (76%), with 16% dissatisfied. Satisfaction is highest in Patch 3 and Patch 4 (81% and 80%), and lowest in Patch 2 (69%).

Seven out of ten tenants are satisfied that High Peak makes a positive contribution to their neighbourhood (71%), with a fifth dissatisfied. Those in Patch 3 again were the most satisfied (82%), considerably more than those in Patch 1 (58%).

Six out of ten tenants are satisfied with the Council's approach to dealing with anti-social behaviour (61%), and this time, a third are dissatisfied (31%). There is quite a variance across the patches from 72% satisfied in Patch 3 to just 42% satisfied in Patch 1.





Respectful & Helpful Engagement



Respectful & Helpful Engagement

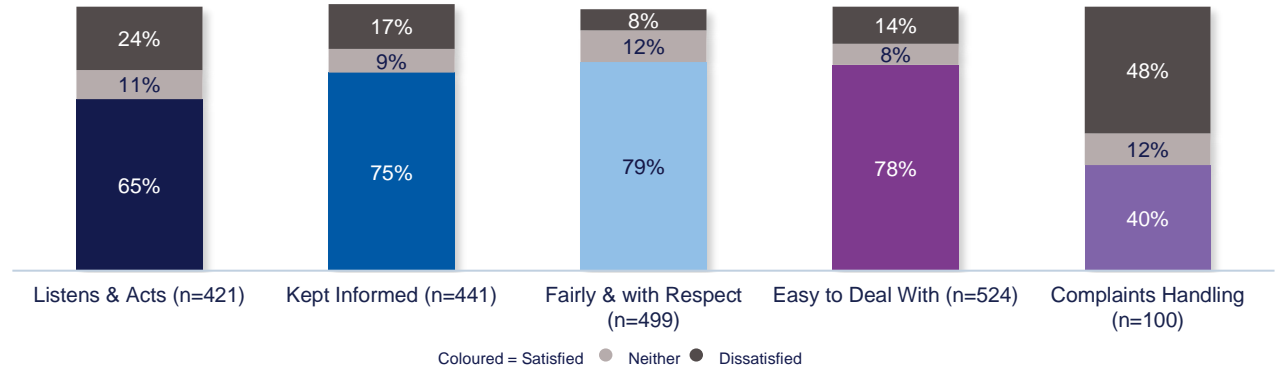
Just over three-quarters of tenants find High Peak easy to deal with (78%), while 75% are satisfied with how they are kept informed about things that matter to them. However, fewer tenants are satisfied that the Council listens to their views and acts upon them (65%), where nearly a quarter of tenant are dissatisfied.

Nearly four-fifths of tenants also agree that they are treated fairly and with respect by High Peak (78%), although 8% disagree.

Some 19% of tenants stated they had made a complaint to High Peak in the last 12 months, although it is unclear how many of these are genuine complaints following a failure of service or service requests yet to be fully actioned.

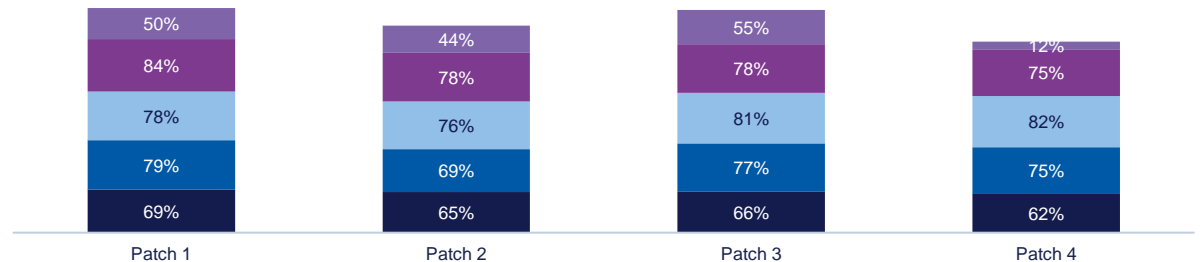
However, of these tenants, just 40% are satisfied with how their complaints were handled, with more (48%) dissatisfied.

Tenants in Patches 1 and 3 tend to be the most satisfied with these aspects of engagement and those in Patch 4 the least; only 12% here are satisfied with the handling of complaints. However, we should bear in mind only those who report that they have made a complaint in the last 12 month were asked the question on complaints handling, which reduces the sample size for each patch. For instance, just 16 tenants in Patch 1 reported they had made a complaint.



Satisfaction by Patch

■ Listens & Acts ■ Kept Informed ■ Fairly & with Respect ■ Easy to Deal With ■ Complaints Handling





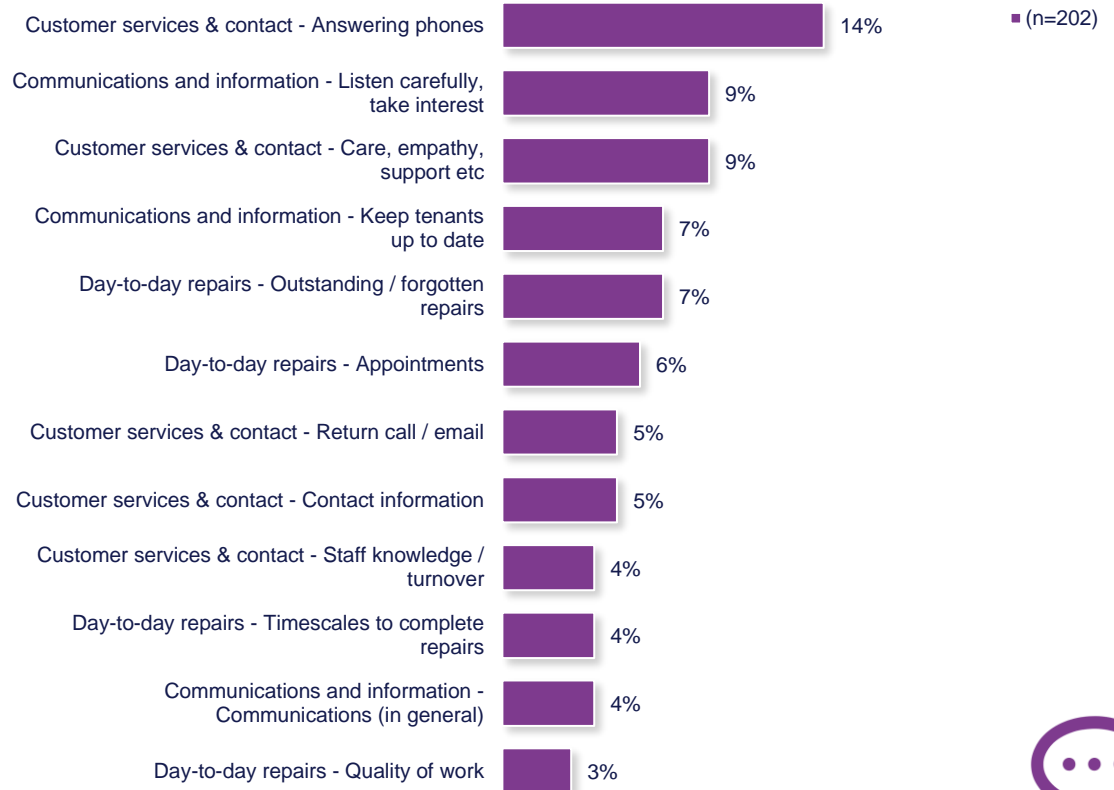
Comments - Customer Service

Tenants who stated that they were not satisfied with High Peak's customer service and communications were asked to explain why and suggest what could be improved; 202 tenants gave comments.

The most frequent comment areas relate to staff not answering the phones, followed by tenants wanting to be listened to more carefully and shown more care, empathy and support when they make contact.

Other comments focus on other aspects of customer service such as returning calls, keeping tenants up to date and having the right contact information. There are also some comments about the repairs service, with outstanding repairs and the time to complete repairs again mentioned here.

The next page includes examples of these comments to help the Council identify issues and target areas in need of improvement.



Customer Service - Example Comments



Call handling

"Answer the phones a bit quicker."

"Have to wait on the phone for nearly an hour to get through on the phone."

"I had to call them twice to get a repaired done to my roof that was causing a leak they didn't reply to my calls and did not act on them."

"I have had 4 phone calls with High Peak and each time they said they would contact me back about it and they have not done so."

"I sometimes find it difficult to get through on the phone."

"It is difficult to get through, they say they will call back and don't. They are always passing on problems or getting you to do it online."

"It takes a long time to get through about half an hour on the phone."

"It takes ages for them to answer the phone."

Listen, show care

"Understanding the residents needs above red tape."

"They've not listened to the fact that work is substandard in the past and they should follow up on that feedback."

"They need to listen to us and listen to the truth. They need to treat people with respect."

"The repairs team do not listen, and they do not carry our repairs."

"Sometimes they do listen and sometimes they don't. The mould is one of them where they haven't listened to me."

"Listen to customers more."

"It would help if they keep us informed of what matter to us. More information."

"Actually listen to what the tenants are asking for."

"I have to chase them up a lot and they speak down to me and not nicely."

Customer service - Other

"When you get through to the main reception, they are not sure who to put you through to. They need more transparency."

"They need to train the Customer Service more so they can deal with problems and have qualified people to cover for people on holiday."

"They could be more informative."

"Sometimes you are fobbed off by the receptionists."

"Not communicating with themselves and with us."

"It's not the call centre its what happens after the call centre."

"It depends who you speak to, their attitude."

"9 out of 10 times I get hung up on. The waiting time to get through is very long. The repairs team are not approachable."

"Customer service are great. The workforce is unsatisfactory."

Other matters

"Had noise complaints and the bad repair and abuse and have been treated terribly through the entire process by our neighbourhood officer."

"I had to get support to be able to push them to do something. Their attitude completely changed when I joined this protest group."

"I would like the contractors to come and do the jobs properly."

"I would like to be informed about appointments rather than the workers just turning up unannounced."

"Just to reiterate to attend quicker as it is a higher priority when children live there, things like heating and hot water."

"Not having to constantly chase them to finish repairs to a high standard."



Recommending High Peak



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

Just under half of tenants are promoters, very loyal and happy to promote the Council to other people (46%), with 38% of tenants giving a score of 10 out of 10. Three out of ten tenants are currently passive and could be persuaded either way (29%), whilst a quarter are detractors (25%), and likely to have negative views about the Council.

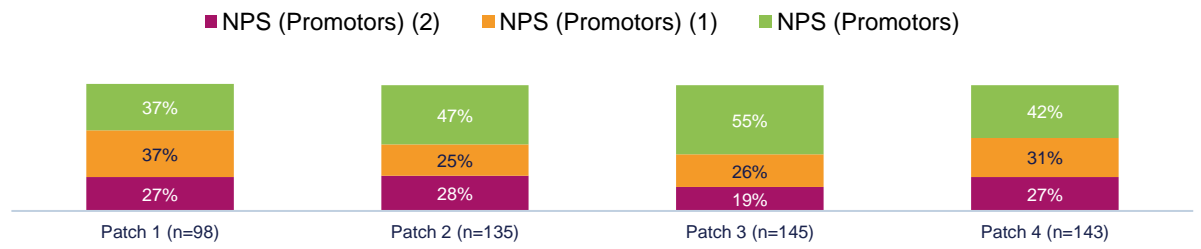
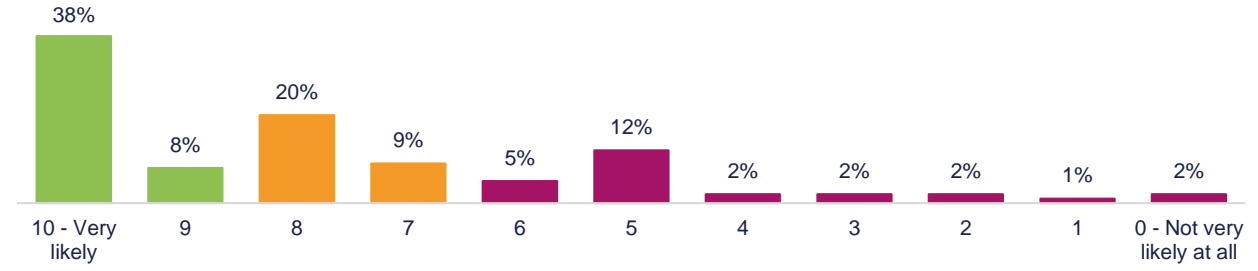
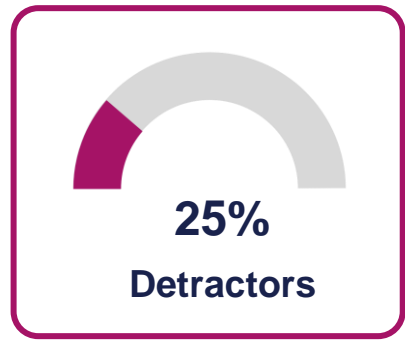
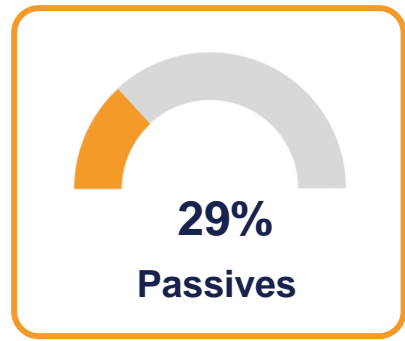
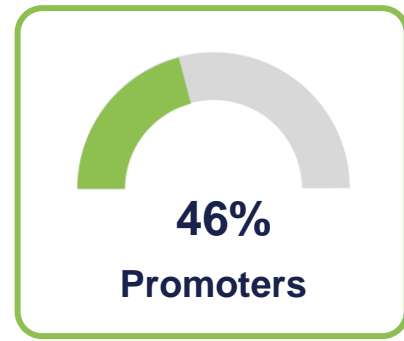
Some 20% of tenants gave a score of 8, and it would be interesting to know how this group could be converted into promoters. Looking at the comments from these tenants, their main concerns appear to be around repairs and customer service.

The Net Promoter Score (promoters minus detractors) is +21, which is good and similar to other landlords using this question in the last year (Acuity clients Q1 & Q2 23/24 average +25).

There is some difference in the NPS across the patches from 36 in Patch 3 to 10 in Patch 1.

21
NPS

Net Promoter





Improvements



Improvement Suggestions

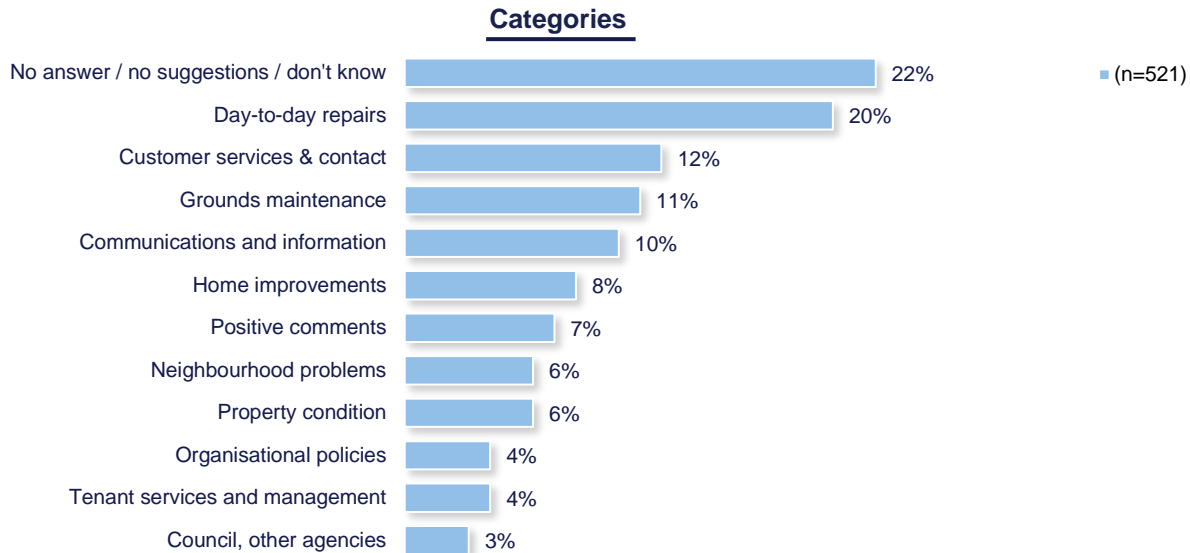
Tenants were asked if there was one thing High Peak could do to improve its services, and 521 tenants gave comments.

Encouragingly, some 7% of the comments are positive about the current service and 22% had no suggestions, perhaps also feeling no improvements are necessary.

However, of the more negative comments, tenants most frequently referred to the repairs service, in particular, the time to complete repairs and dealing with outstanding work, issues already mentioned throughout the report which are trend for social housing providers.

Tenants also commented on customer service, grounds maintenance, communications and home improvements. On the individual comments, in addition to the repairs issues, tenants want better communication, for High Peak to listen to them more carefully and for staff to show them a little more care, empathy and support.

Once again, these comments, examples of which are shown on the next page, will help High Peak target those areas where improvements are needed.



Improvements - Example Comments



Repairs

"When they start jobs and repairs for them to get them finished."

"Turn up for appointments."

"To keep their promises, do the repairs they say they will do and to do them on time."

"To get the repairs done quickly and correctly."

"They need to maintain their properties better and ask their tenants what is wrong with their properties."

"Speed up the repairs."

"For repairs to be more accessible and quicker."

"Again, just complete the jobs that they are given. They came out for the damp and mould, and they did not complete the job and now the damp and mould has come back."

"A bit more prompt at repairs, sometimes it takes a bit of a while."

Customer service

"Treat everyone individually taking into account their circumstances."

"To listen to tenants, understand the anxiety levels and follow up especially in regards to ASB."

"To basically answer calls and communicate better, I have tried numerous occasions, but they never get back to me."

"They need to be polite and professional to us and to carry out the repairs."

"More human interaction."

"Make it easier to speak to the right person. Make it simpler."

"Have someone on the phones rather than having to use the internet."

"Have an online portal so you can see your rent."

"Customer service can be very much improved."

Grounds maintenance

"When they cut the grass, they should not leave all the cuttings there as it looks a mess after they cut the grass."

"To be able to have fences for the gardens."

"They should offer a gardening services to those who can't do their own."

"The way they cut the grass it's not very good."

"The grounds maintenance has to be improved so High Peak need to get the contractors to do it properly and regularly."

"Sort out the grass areas and stop the cars parking on it."

"I think the paths and the grass cutting. That could be done better. The reason I say that, a few years ago, there was grass growing between the paving of the path and the gardener I asked can that be trimmed, and he said what for, it will only grow back again."

Communications

"Better communication for example when you report repairs give us a time scale when they are coming out."

"Communication needs to be worked on as they need to keep us informed about things."

"Improve communication in general."

"Just communication and communicating better with their residents."

"Listen to people in a genuine manner and consider what we have to say."

"More communication and a friendlier approach."

"The main thing to improve is communication with tenants, keeping us up to date on the day to day running of things. One positive is they are using local contractors to do the windows. I think that is brilliant using local people. They won't do a cowboy job on their own doorstep."



Further Insight



Satisfaction & Dissatisfaction

The charts opposite set out both satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the range of measures included in the survey.

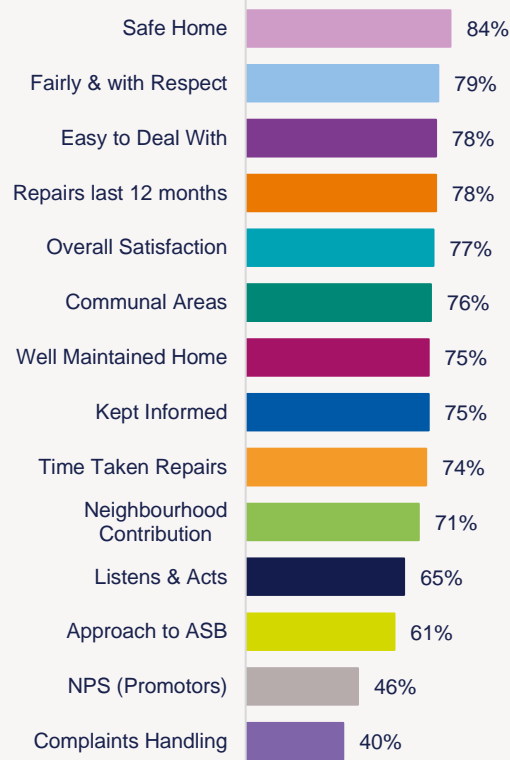
Just over three-quarters of tenants are satisfied with the overall service, and this sits towards the top of the list of measures with the provision of a safe home having the highest level of satisfaction (84%), followed by the way tenants are treated fairly and with respect (79%), High Peak being easy to deal with and the repairs service in the last 12 months (both 78%).

Some measures received less than 70% satisfaction, these being the way the Council listens to tenants' views and acts upon them (65%), the approach to handling ASB (61%) and just 40% are satisfied with the handling of complaints.

Dissatisfaction tends to correspond with satisfaction, the highest being for the handling of complaints (48%) and ASB (31%). However, just 12% are dissatisfied with the overall service.

There was throughout generally a small number of respondents who responded neutrally (neither satisfied nor dissatisfied), with this being between 5 and 12%. While dissatisfaction with High Peak treating tenants friendly and with respect is low, they had a slightly higher proportion of tenants in the neutral category (12%).

Satisfaction with Measures 2023/24



Dissatisfaction with Measures 2023/24



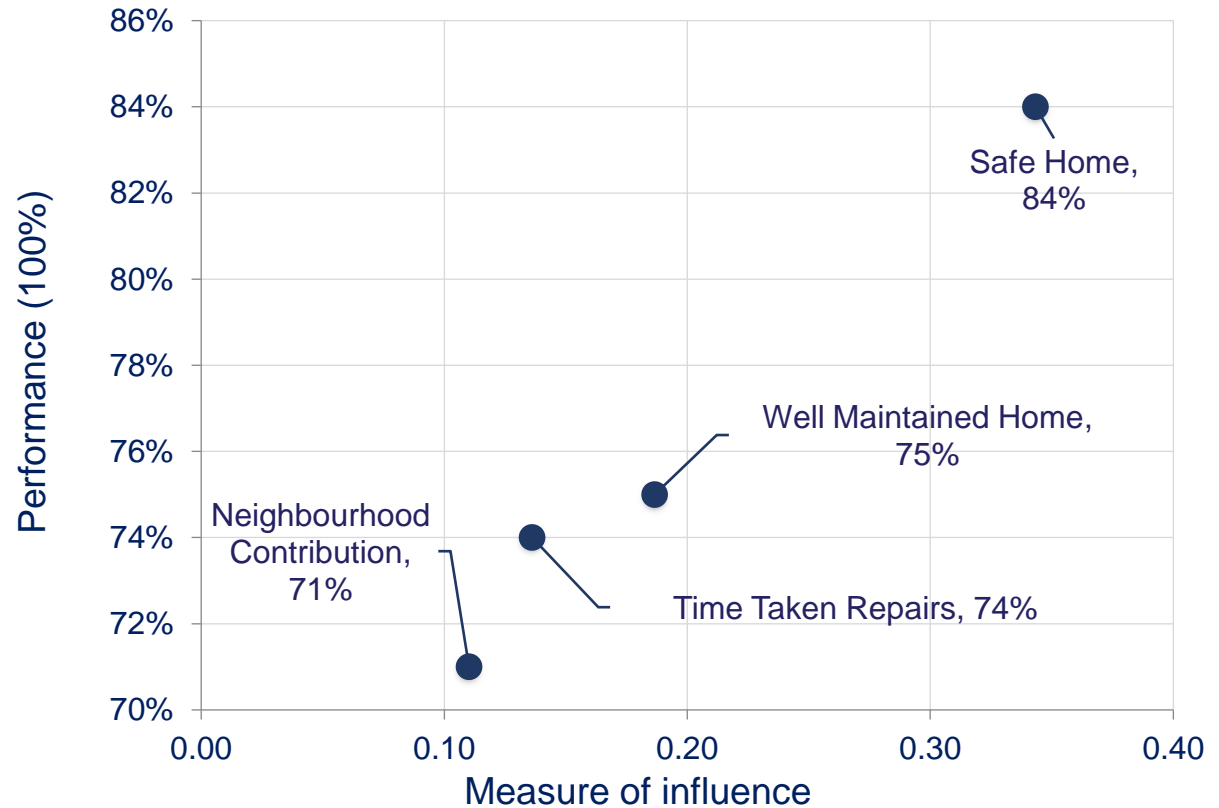


Key Driver Analysis – Overall Satisfaction

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

When considering the results for 2023/24, the most important driver for tenants' satisfaction with the overall services is that High Peak provides a safe home, followed by the home being well maintained. The time taken to complete repairs and the contribution the Council makes to the neighbourhood are also important, but not as influential.

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





Benchmarking - Acuity Landlords (LCRA)

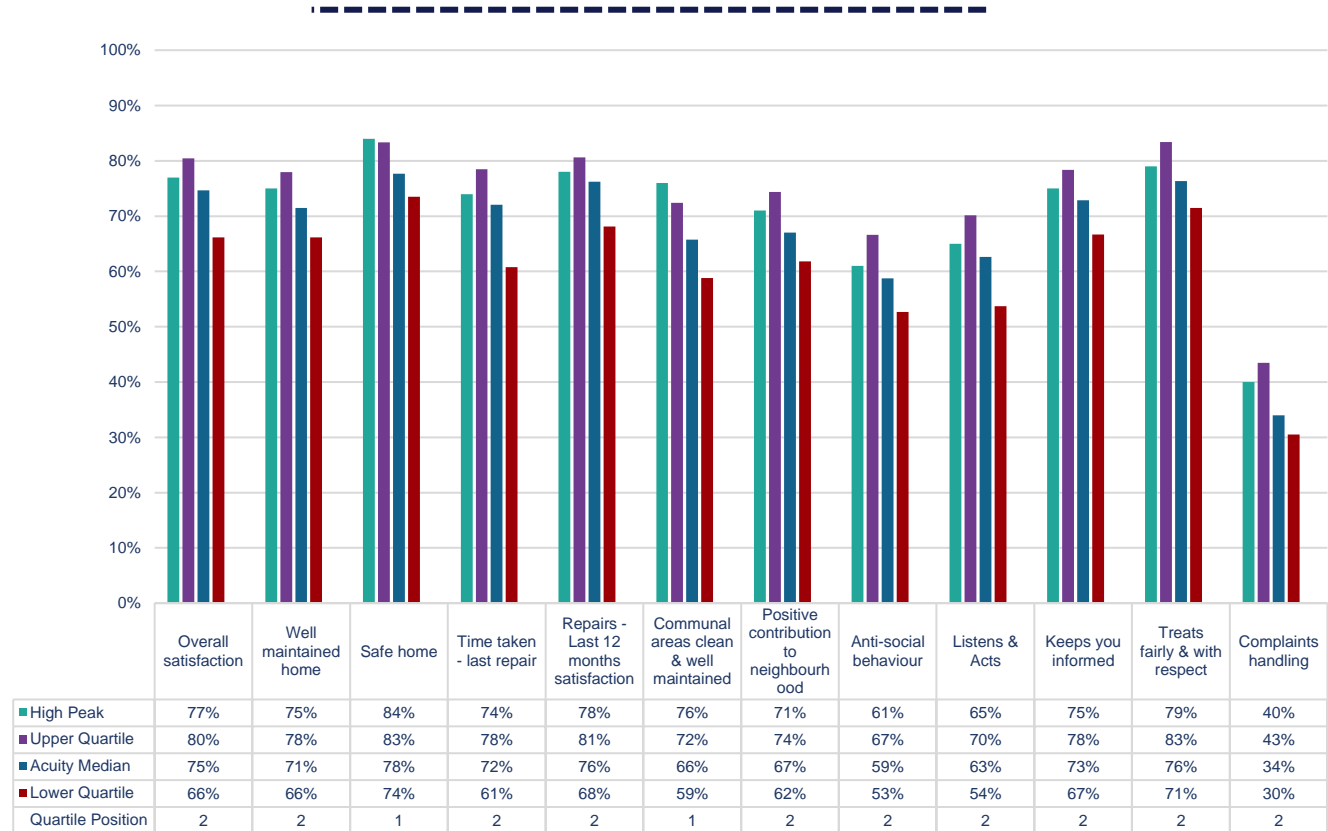
It is possible to compare performance on the core questions against Acuity clients that have been using the new TSM questions during the year. The chart shows the quartile positions based on the results collected from Q1 to Q2 2023/24.

The results from High Peak compare very well on all measures against other LCRA landlords, with all measures being above the Acuity median. Two measures, the provision of a safe home and that communal areas are kept clean and well maintained, are in the top quartile while the remaining measures fall into the second quartile.

This cohort of landlords varies in type, size and location, with smaller as well as larger housing associations and councils. The data here should be encouraging, particularly as councils tend to perform less well against the general average.

As landlords submit their results later this year, a greater bank of information will start to build up, which will provide a more accurate and robust picture of how High Peak are performing.

Satisfaction Levels Acuity Median Q1 - Q2 2023/24



Benchmarking - Acuity Councils (LCRA)

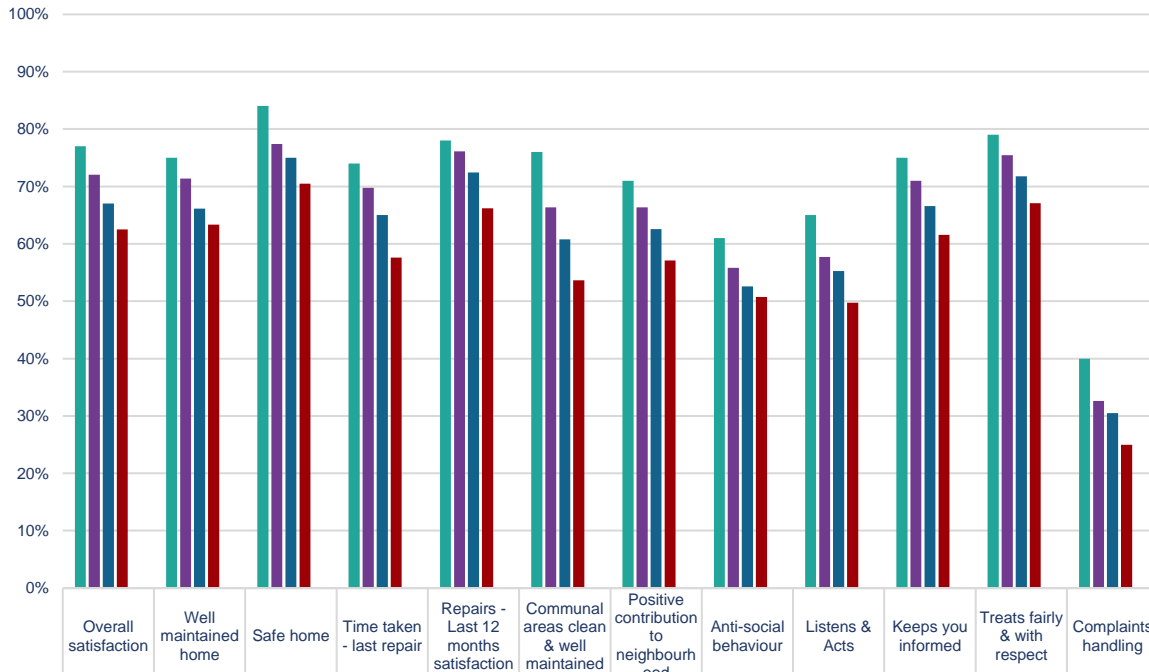


Satisfaction Levels Acuity Median Q1 - Q2 2023/24

The results from the High Peak survey compare even better against the other councils who have used the TSMs over the past year.

All measures fall into the top quartile, with the rating for the overall services 10% higher for High Peak than the median.

This is clearly very encouraging and is an endorsement of the hard work done by the Council and its staff.



	Overall satisfaction	Well maintained home	Safe home	Time taken - last repair	Repairs - Last 12 months satisfaction	Communal areas clean & well maintained	Positive contribution to neighbourhood	Anti-social behaviour	Listens & Acts	Keeps you informed	Treats fairly & with respect	Complaints handling
■ High Peak	77%	75%	84%	74%	78%	76%	71%	61%	65%	75%	79%	40%
■ Upper Quartile	72%	71%	77%	70%	76%	66%	66%	56%	58%	71%	75%	33%
■ Acuity Median	67%	66%	75%	65%	72%	61%	63%	53%	55%	67%	72%	30%
■ Lower Quartile	62%	63%	70%	58%	66%	54%	57%	51%	50%	62%	67%	25%
Quartile Position	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1



National Context

When considering the results, it is important to consider the national context and external factors.

For example:

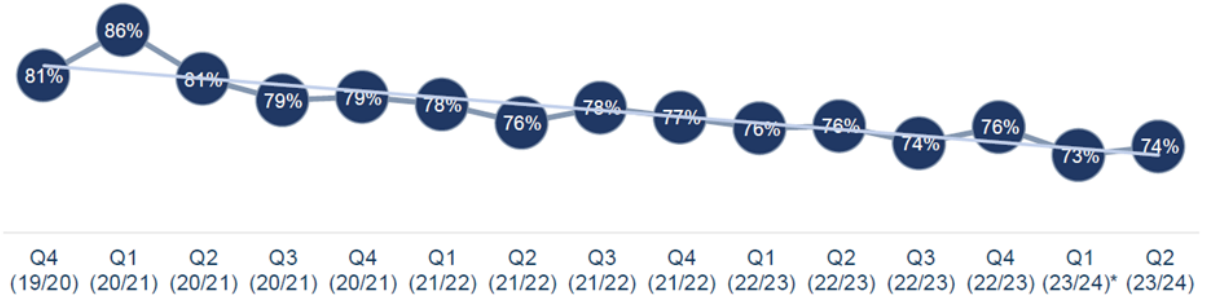
- Cost of Living Crisis
- Government & Political Changes
- Uncertainty about the Future
- Brexit and the economy

Satisfaction is based on perception rather than specific values so can be affected by these factors and how positive people feel about their lives. Factors such as the pandemic has altered the way some social landlords operate.

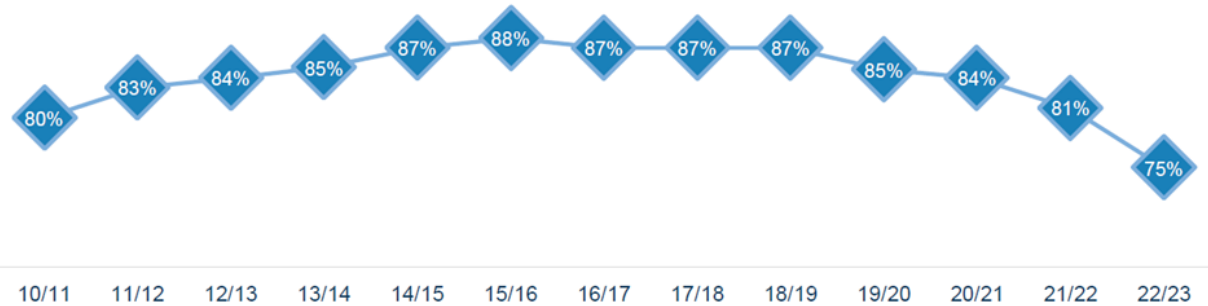
The top graph demonstrates how overall satisfaction has changed over time (tracker only). The trendline is downward. The lower chart shows the results from Housemark members with a peak in 2015/16 but a slow decline since; this starting before the effects of the pandemic started to hit.

As no historical data has been provided, it is unclear whether satisfaction has increased or decreased over time for High Peak. However, that satisfaction is generally high, even against the backdrop of falling satisfaction levels, is a positive sign.

Overall Services (Acuity Clients)



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

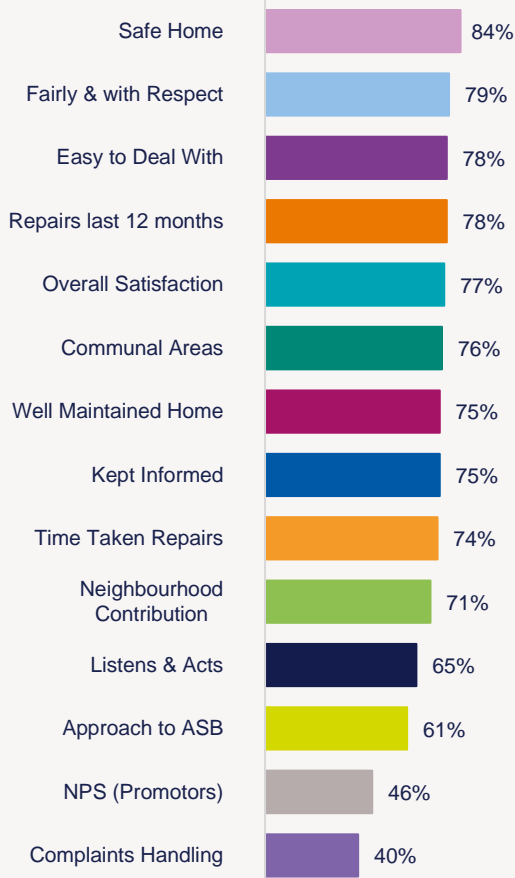


*LCRA only onwards



Summary & Recommendations

Satisfaction with Measures



Summary



Throughout late November and early December 2023, Acuity undertook a satisfaction survey with 551 High Peak tenants by telephone interview to help them collect Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs), which are to be reported to the Regulator of Social Housing for the first time this year. This report explored results from that survey.

Overall, the results show that High Peak Borough Council is delivering a good service for its tenants across the full range of service areas, which is reflected by the strong levels of satisfaction shown throughout. For instance, satisfaction with the overall service provided by High Peak is good at 77%, with even higher levels of satisfaction for the provision of a safe home (84%), how tenants are kept informed and treated fairly and with respect (79%), the Council being easy to deal with and the repairs service in the last 12 months (both 78%). In addition, 46% of tenants would recommend High Peak to other people, with an NPS of 21.

Just three measures have ratings below 70%; the way the Council listens to tenants' views and acts upon them (65%), dealing with ASB (61%) and the handling of complaints (40%). Correspondingly, dissatisfaction is highest with how complaints are handled (48%), followed by the handling of ASB (31%).

In all, the results compare positively against not just other councils but all LCRA landlords who have undertaken TSM surveys with Acuity this year in Q1 and Q2. Two measures, the provision of a safe home and that communal areas are kept clean and well maintained, sit in the top quartile for satisfaction of all Acuity clients. Against other councils, High Peak sit in the top quartile across all metrics.

The key drivers for overall satisfaction are the provision of a safe and well-maintained home, the time to complete repairs and the positive contribution made to the neighbourhood are also important, but not as influential. The suggestion is, because satisfaction is linked more closely with overall satisfaction in these areas, if targeted improvements are made here it is likely to have a more positive impact on overall satisfaction.

Furthermore, when asked about possible improvements to the services provided by High Peak, the repairs service receives the most comments. In particular, tenants want their repairs completed quicker and outstanding repairs dealt with. However, some tenants have problems making contact with the Council saying that phones are sometimes not answered and when they are, calls are not returned. Some would like the staff to listen to them more carefully, keep them informed and show them more care, empathy and support when they make contact.



Recommendations

High Peak Borough Council has around 4,000 properties in Derbyshire and aims to provide a good quality and responsive housing service.

The survey shows strong levels of satisfaction which compare well with other landlords, councils in particular.

However, there are always areas which could be improved further, and these recommendations should help High Peak to prioritise areas for action.

Repairs service

Satisfaction with the repairs and maintenance service is generally good with three-quarters of tenants happy that their home is well maintained; this and the safety of the home are the key drivers for overall satisfaction. However, when asked about the repairs service and what could be improved, tenants most frequently mention the time it takes to complete repairs and dealing with those repairs which remain outstanding. Some suffer from damp and mould in their homes, and some feel the quality of repairs could be better. These issues are linked and are a common trend among other social landlords. Problems with damp and mould tend to take priority and can delay work on other, less urgent matters, and this can also add to the time taken to respond to repair requests. In addition, landlords are facing cost increases and, in some areas, shortages of materials and labour. While solving this is difficult and resource-intensive, good communication with tenants is key to managing expectation and easing the impact of delays which can sometimes be unavoidable. This is not just about quality of communication but also frequency. Keeping tenants informed of progress and any delays may have a positive impact on satisfaction in this area, easing dissatisfaction when it arises.

Handling of complaints

The handling of complaints is the lowest-performing metric in the survey, with more dissatisfied with their handling than are satisfied. However, it should be noted that High Peak compares well with other landlords, and it is also very difficult to tell whether the complaints made are genuine or are service requests yet to be fully actioned. Nonetheless, it is important that tenants feel confident any complaint they make will be taken seriously and dealt with effectively and in good time. Clear communications around how to make a complaint and the complaints process is vital to increasing awareness and accessibility.

High Peak may also consider including additional questions in their survey for 2024/25 which aim to understand more about how and what complaints are being made and how tenants perceive the complaints process in general (for instance, their expectations) to provide more context to satisfaction in this area. It may also be worthwhile cross-matching those who report they have made in the last twelve months against internal records. For those who have given permission for High Peak to contact them to discuss any issues raised, this may be an opportunity to resolve any outstanding issues.



Recommendations Continued

High Peak Borough Council has around 4,000 properties in Derbyshire and aims to provide a good quality and responsive housing service.

The survey shows strong levels of satisfaction which compare well with other landlords, councils in particular.

However, there are always areas which could be improved further, and these recommendations should help High Peak to prioritise areas for action.

Customer service & customer recovery

Various issues were uncovered when tenants were asked about the customer service they receive. This was also an area where some tenants commented that improvements could be made. Some tenants, for instance, highlighted that phones are often not answered and when they do get through, calls are not returned when promised. In addition, some tenants say that they are not listened to and not shown the level of care, empathy and support expected of High Peak. Whilst this won't be the experience for all, it is important to provide a consistent service and it is clear that some feel this isn't the case. Whilst resolving these types of issues with high call volumes is difficult, an examination of the comments will help the Council pinpoint areas which could be better so improvements can be put in place.

Moreover, 24% of tenants were dissatisfied with the way High Peak listens to their views and acts upon them. As mentioned, engaging with those tenants who were happy to be contacted by High Peak to discuss any issues raised will be a good starting point to demonstrate that High Peak are listening and acting. Working through the alerts raised during the fieldwork, which are visible on the dashboard, will also help with customer recovery.

Increasing understanding

The survey for 2023/24 included a number of additional open-ended questions and probes to help understand the various themes that underpin dissatisfaction for some tenants. For the next 2024/25 survey, it may be useful to consider what additional insight High Peak can draw which may aid service improvements, in the form of additional questions.

While the surveys for 2023/24 were undertaken as an annual exercise, High Peak may consider undertaking quarterly surveys in 2024/25 to understand satisfaction trends across the year. This might include a review of the methodology – for instance, to consider including online as well as telephone surveys. Acuity's live dashboard will enable High Peak to monitor satisfaction and keep abreast of changing needs and issues that occur throughout the year.



Demographics



Patch

High Peak Borough Council operates over four patches within the district and the satisfaction results are shown here against these.

This shows that overall satisfaction is highest in Patch 1 (81%). Tenants in Patch 1 also tend to be the most satisfied when it comes to customer service and communications. However, they are the least satisfied when it comes to the neighbourhood – both with ASB handling and the positive contribution High Peak makes to the neighbourhood.

Tenants in Patch 3 tend to have higher satisfaction across the majority of metrics. Compared with other patches, Patch 3 has a higher proportion of older tenants, with 46% over the age of 65 (this is 30%-35% in other patches). This may have some influence on the differences, as older tenants tend to be more satisfied generally than younger tenants. Patch 2 meanwhile, has a slightly higher proportion of younger tenants (33% below the age of 44), which may also have some bearing on the results seen.

Of course, age will not be the only decisive factor here, and there will be other factors at play, which needs to be explored further.

	Patch 1	Patch 2	Patch 3	Patch 4
Overall Satisfaction	81%	73%	79%	76%
Well Maintained Home	79%	67%	80%	75%
Safe Home	86%	82%	87%	82%
Repairs Last 12 Months	75%	72%	81%	82%
Time Taken Repairs	77%	73%	74%	74%
Communal Areas	75%	69%	81%	80%
Neighbourhood Contribution	58%	70%	82%	69%
Approach to ASB	42%	60%	72%	63%
Listens & Acts	69%	65%	66%	62%
Kept Informed	79%	69%	77%	75%
NPS (Promoters)	37%	47%	55%	42%
Fairly & with Respect	78%	76%	81%	82%
Easy to Deal With	84%	78%	78%	75%
Complaints Handling	50%	44%	55%	12%



Age Group

High Peak has a slightly higher proportion of older tenants than younger tenants, with 36% of respondents over the age of 65. 27%, meanwhile, are below the age of 45.

It is often found in surveys of this kind that satisfaction generally increases with age. For High Peak this tends to be the case, with tenants aged over 85 the most satisfied, and those aged 25 to 34 the least satisfied.

The general trend is consistent with many other surveys and means that the age profile of different landlords will be a major factor in determining satisfaction levels.

It is not entirely clear why this is, but it could be that older people are generally less likely to complain and, perhaps, put up with lower standards of service, whereas younger tenants can have higher expectations of what they feel services should look like.

	0 - 24	25 - 34	35 - 44	45 - 54	55 - 59	60 - 64	65 - 74	75 - 84	85 +	Unknown
Overall Satisfaction	40% *	57%	67%	77%	74%	77%	81%	91%	93%	88%
Well Maintained Home	50% *	61%	52%	70%	78%	76%	85%	91%	92%	91%
Safe Home	50% *	61%	75%	84%	90%	85%	92%	97%	92%	86%
Repairs Last 12 Months	67% *	56%	64%	72%	86%	91%	79%	93%	89%	86%
Time Taken Repairs	67% *	55%	62%	70%	79%	79%	77%	91%	84%	79%
Communal Areas	50% *	64%	69%	73%	61%	75%	81%	87%	90%	80% *
Neighbourhood Contribution	100% *	48%	68%	61%	71%	69%	75%	88%	82%	75%
Approach to ASB	100% *	44%	48%	48%	50%	62%	63%	81%	100%	78% *
Listens & Acts	67% *	48%	45%	61%	62%	66%	73%	80%	92%	88%
Kept Informed	50% *	61%	56%	72%	69%	74%	82%	89%	94%	88%
NPS (Promoters)	50% *	22%	35%	49%	47%	46%	57%	48%	58%	57%
Fairly & with Respect	67% *	67%	66%	84%	70%	88%	77%	90%	97%	89%
Easy to Deal With	50% *	69%	66%	79%	72%	74%	87%	83%	97%	86%
Complaints Handling	0% *	25%	29%	8%	36%	43%	61%	67% *	100% *	50% *

*Base below 10



Length of Tenancy

There were a higher proportion of tenant respondents with longer tenancies (43% over 11 years) than shorter tenancies (28% below 3 years, 29% between 4 and 10 years).

Tenants with longer tenancies tend to be among the oldest tenants. Around half of respondents (51%) with tenancies longer than 11 years were over the age of 65. As such, satisfaction is often higher for these groups, and that is to some extent the case for High Peak tenants.

Satisfaction also tends to be high for newer tenants, as seen here where the less than 1 year group is the most satisfied with six of the measures. Newer tenants are particularly most satisfied with customer service and communications.

One theory for this pattern is that tenants are often happy to finally get an offer of a home but as they experience more issues over the years, they become more critical, and then as they age, satisfaction tends to increase again. This is shown here, with, for example, tenants of 6 to 10 years being the least satisfied, including with the overall service.

	A. 1 year	B. 1 - 3 years	C. 4 - 5 years	D. 6 - 10 years	E. 11 - 20 years	F. Over 20 years
Overall Satisfaction	86%	71%	75%	70%	79%	86%
Well Maintained Home	83%	63%	75%	67%	81%	85%
Safe Home	88%	78%	75%	79%	88%	94%
Repairs Last 12 Months	75%	72%	86%	66%	79%	89%
Time Taken Repairs	75%	65%	81%	66%	80%	81%
Communal Areas	81%	62%	75%	81%	78%	92%
Neighbourhood Contribution	90%	68%	61%	58%	79%	74%
Approach to ASB	70%	52%	58%	52%	63%	75%
Listens & Acts	77%	53%	64%	58%	71%	75%
Kept Informed	84%	63%	69%	62%	85%	87%
NPS (Promoters)	66%	40%	52%	40%	44%	48%
Fairly & with Respect	97%	72%	71%	75%	84%	83%
Easy to Deal With	90%	71%	78%	71%	81%	84%
Complaints Handling	50% *	21%	38%	41%	58%	46%

*Base below 10



Female tenant respondents (317) outnumber their male counterparts (233) and are generally a little less satisfied with the majority of measures.

In fact, male tenants are more satisfied with all but one of the satisfaction measures, the handling of complaints, where female tenants are 14 percentage points more satisfied than male tenants. For this measure, only those who reported they had made a complaint in the last 12 months were asked the follow-up question on complaints handling. While there was an equal proportion of male and female tenants who reported they had made a complaint (18-19%), the sample for the follow-up question was small compared to other measures (just 44 male tenants and 57 female tenants).

The differences here do tend to be relatively small – 4 of measures, for instance, have a difference of between 1 and 3p.p. However, there are measures with more sizeable differences, including complaints handling (14p.p.), neighbourhood contribution (12p.p.) and Net Promoter Score (10p.p.).

It is not clear why differences in satisfaction between genders occur, whether it is to do with expectations or other factors, but this is consistent with many other social landlords.

Gender

	F	M
Overall Satisfaction	75%	80%
Well Maintained Home	73%	78%
Safe Home	81%	87%
Repairs Last 12 Months	75%	81%
Time Taken Repairs	74%	75%
Communal Areas	73%	80%
Neighbourhood Contribution	65%	77%
Approach to ASB	61%	62%
Listens & Acts	63%	68%
Kept Informed	72%	77%
NPS (Promoters)	42%	52%
Fairly & with Respect	79%	80%
Easy to Deal With	77%	80%
Complaints Handling	46%	32%



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

For further information on this report please contact:
Alison White: alison.white@arap.co.uk

Acuity
Tel: 01273 287114
Email: acuity@arap.co.uk
Address: PO Box 395, Umberleigh, EX32 2HL

