



Renfrewshire Council
Tenant Satisfaction Survey
Research Report
December 2007

Prepared by:	Prepared for:
<p>Research Resource 25 Main Street Cambuslang G72 7EX</p> <p>Contact: Lorna Shaw</p> <p>Tel: 0141 641 6410 E-mail: info@researchresource.co.uk</p>	<p>Renfrewshire Council Housing and Property Services Renfrewshire House Cotton Street Paisley PA1 1UJ</p> <p>Contact: Brian Spence</p> <p>Tel : 0141 840 3398 E-mail: brian.spence@renfrewshire.gov.uk</p>

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1 BACKGROUND, OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

1.1 Introduction

This report presents and discusses the findings to emerge from a Customer Satisfaction Survey for Council House Tenants of Renfrewshire Council. The aim of the survey was to obtain an indication of satisfaction levels with the home, neighbourhood and services which the Council provides as a landlord.

1.2 Background and Objectives

Renfrewshire Council covers the area of Paisley, Scotland's largest town and extends to Renfrew, Johnstone, Erskine and several villages. The Council area has a population of nearly 178,000 making Renfrewshire Scotland's ninth largest Council area covering an area of around 270 square kilometres spanning south from Glasgow to the border with North Ayrshire and West from East Renfrewshire across to Inverclyde.

At the time of the survey the Council had approximately 13,000 tenanted properties and wished to undertake a customer satisfaction survey to obtain a broad picture of the views of Council house tenants on a range of issues related to the provision of the housing service, to allow identification of any shortfalls within the services currently provided and the delivery of appropriate service improvements.

It is against this background that Renfrewshire Council commissioned Research Resource to undertake this tenant satisfaction survey.

1.3 Objectives

The Council commissioned Research Resource to carry out its tenant satisfaction survey aimed providing information on the following:

- a profile of tenants
- to obtain an indication of satisfaction levels with the services provided by the Council
- to identify satisfaction levels with the home and neighbourhood

1.4 Methodology

The Tenant Satisfaction Survey was undertaken using a telephone based survey methodology utilising a structured questionnaire. All interviews were undertaken in-house by Research Resource's highly trained and experienced team of telephone interviewers. A total of 1,303 interviews were achieved with a sample of tenants. The profile of interviews were structured in order that they provided proportional coverage of the geographical areas covered by the Council's stock. The table below shows the number of interviews achieved by area.

Area	Interviews Achieved
Renfrewshire North and West	67
Johnstone	267
Linwood	59
Paisley	722
Renfrew	188
Total	1,303

1.5 Report Structure

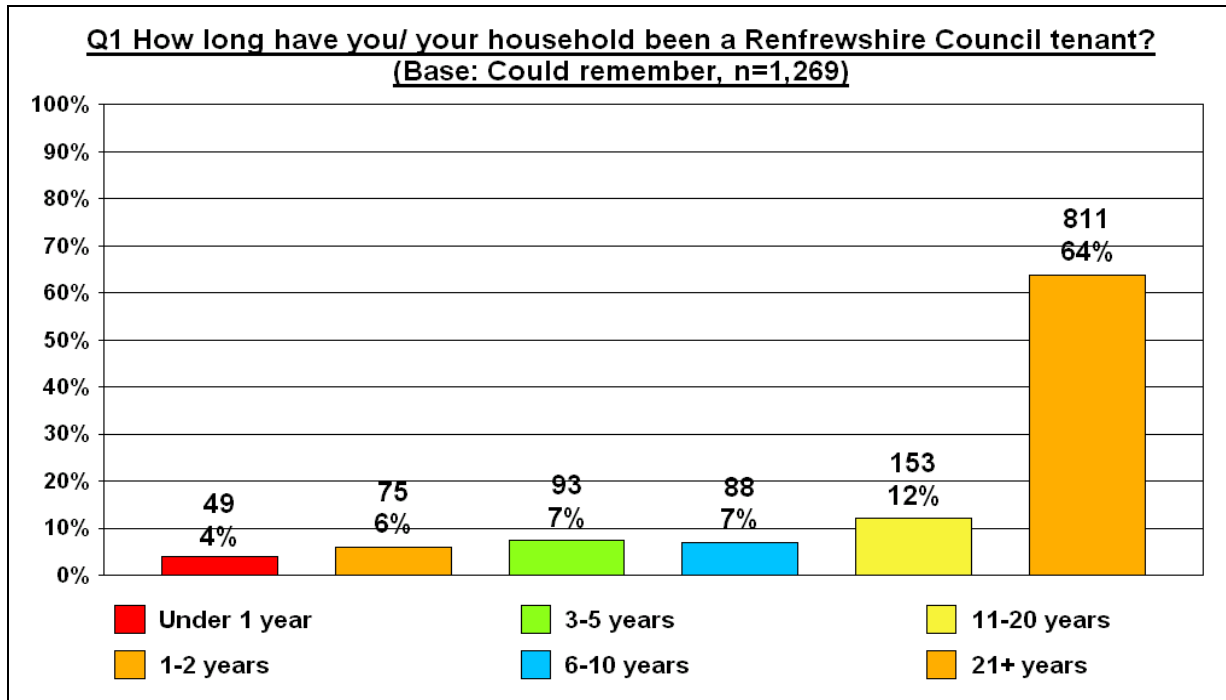
This document details the key findings to emerge from the survey for Council tenants overall. The subsequent sections of this report outline the key findings of the survey.

- 2.0 THE HOME
- 3.0 THE NEIGHBOURHOOD
- 4.0 CONTACT WITH THE HOUSING AND PROPERTY SERVICES DEPARTMENT
- 5.0 TENANT PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNICATION
- 6.0 REPAIRS
- 7.0 RENT
- 8.0 SERVICE PRIORITIES AND IMPROVEMENTS
- 9.0 HOUSEHOLD PROFILE
- 10.0 BENCHMARKING

2 THE HOME

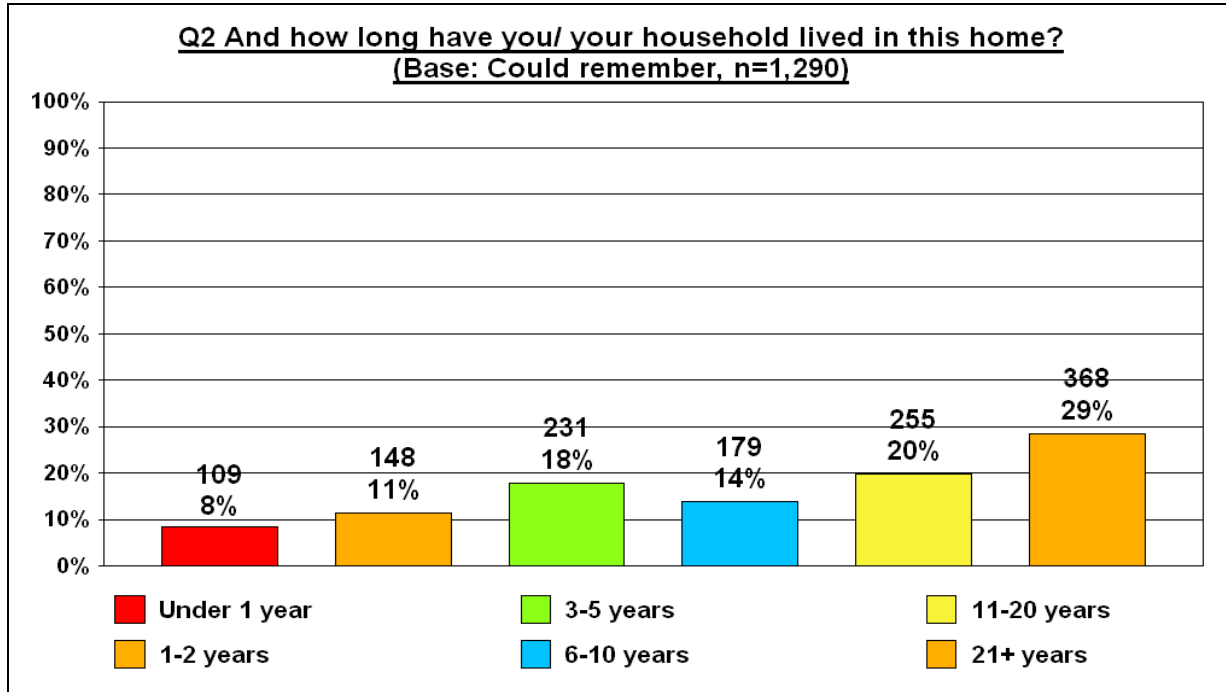
2.1 Length Of Tenancy (Q1)

The majority of tenants have been a Renfrewshire Council tenant for over 21 years (64%). A further 19% have been a Renfrewshire Council tenant between 6 and 20 years, 13% between 1 and 5 years and just 4% for less than 1 year.



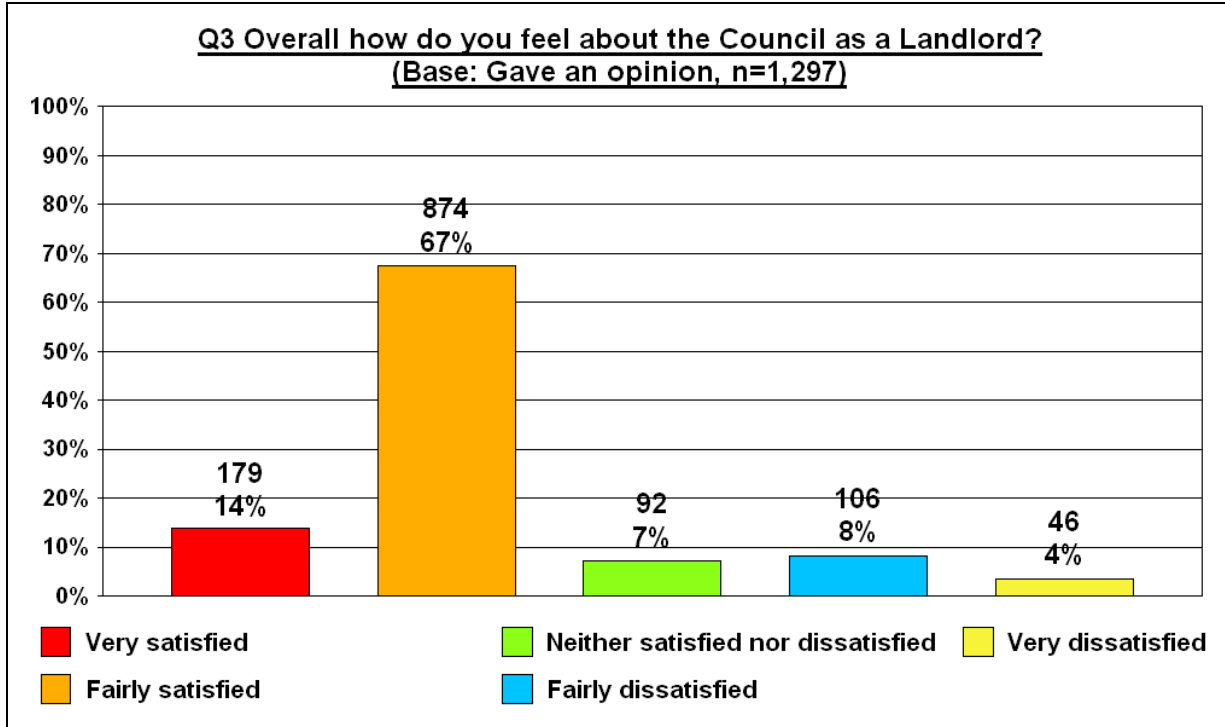
2.2 Length of Stay in Current Household (Q2)

In terms of length of stay in current house the majority of respondents, have lived in their current home for over 21 years (29%).



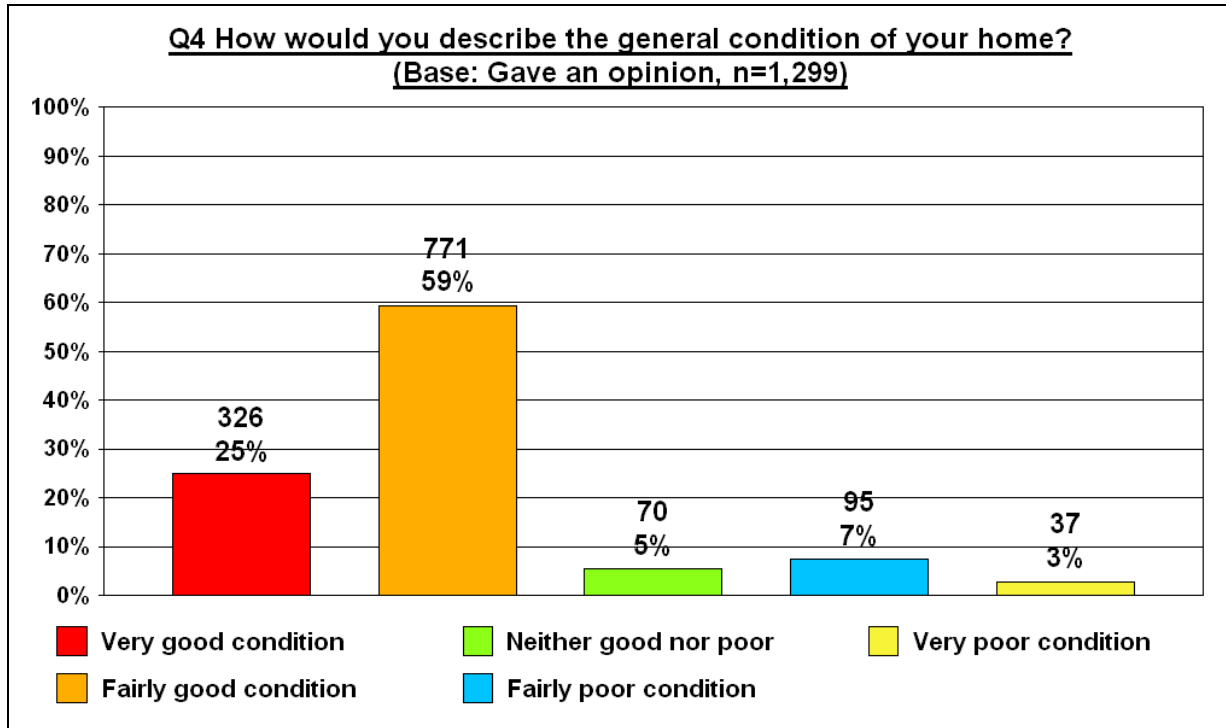
2.3 Satisfaction with the Council as a Landlord (Q3)

Over 8 in 10 tenants are very or fairly satisfied with the Council as a Landlord (81%) compared to 12% who are very or fairly dissatisfied in this respect.



2.4 General Condition of Your Home (Q4)

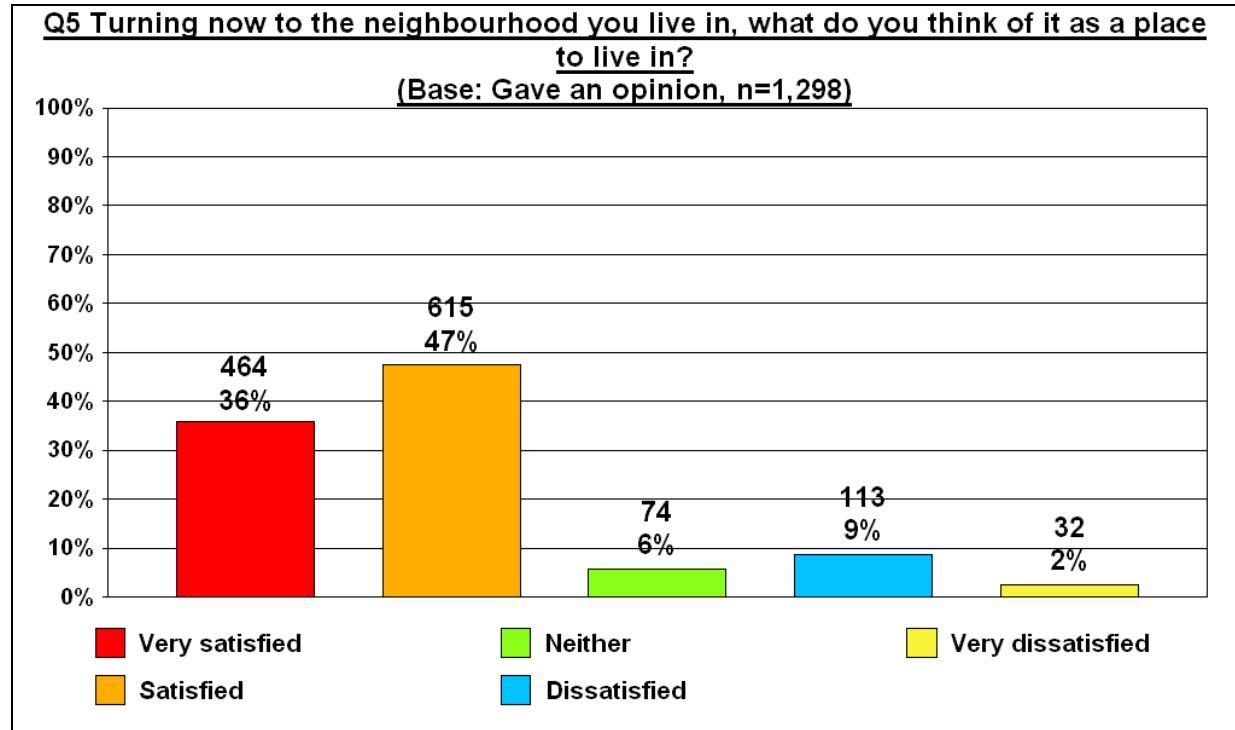
84% of tenants stated their home is in very or fairly good condition compared to 10% who felt their home was in fairly or very poor condition.



3 THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

3.1 Satisfaction with the Neighbourhood (Q5)

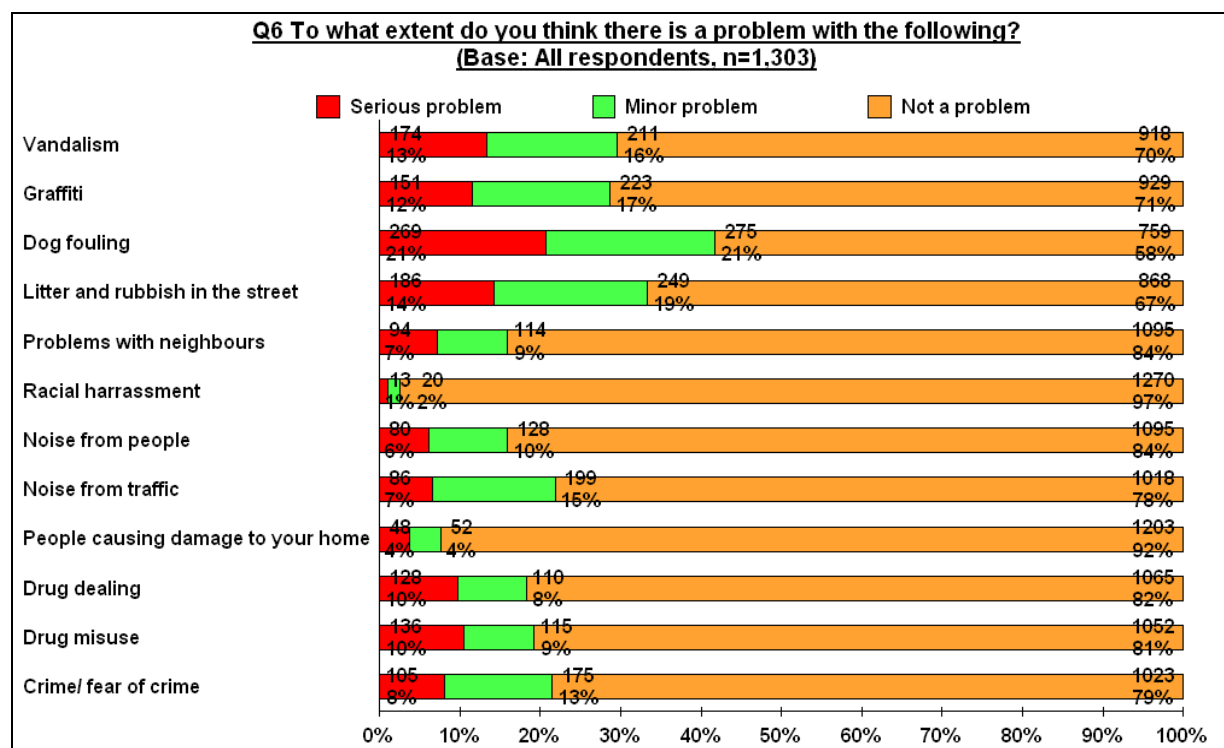
With regards to satisfaction with the neighbourhood, 83% of tenants stated they are satisfied in this respect compared to 11% who are dissatisfied.



3.2 Neighbourhood Problems (Q6)

Tenants were read a list of potential problems in their neighbourhood and asked to state the extent to which they believed they were a problem for them, stating whether it was a serious problem, minor problem or not a problem. As shown in the chart below, the most serious perceived problems were:

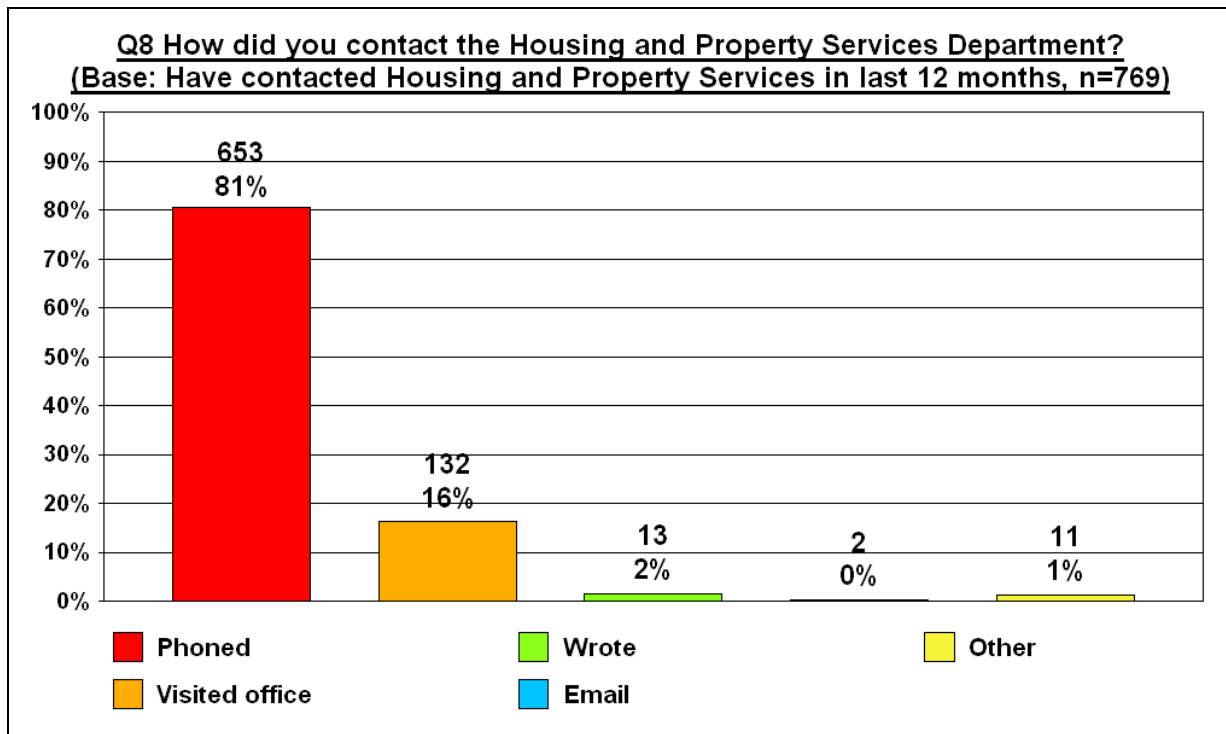
- Dog fouling (21% stating serious problem)
- Litter and rubbish in the street (14% stating serious problem)
- Vandalism (13% stating serious problem)
- Graffiti (12% stating serious problem)



4 CONTACT WITH HOUSING AND PROPERTY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

4.1 Contact with Housing and Property Services Department (Q7/8)

Just under 6 in 10 tenants (59%) have been in contact with the Council Housing and Property Services Department in the last 12 months (other than to pay their rent). Of these 769 tenants, the majority have contacted the Council by telephone (81%) followed by visiting the office (16%).

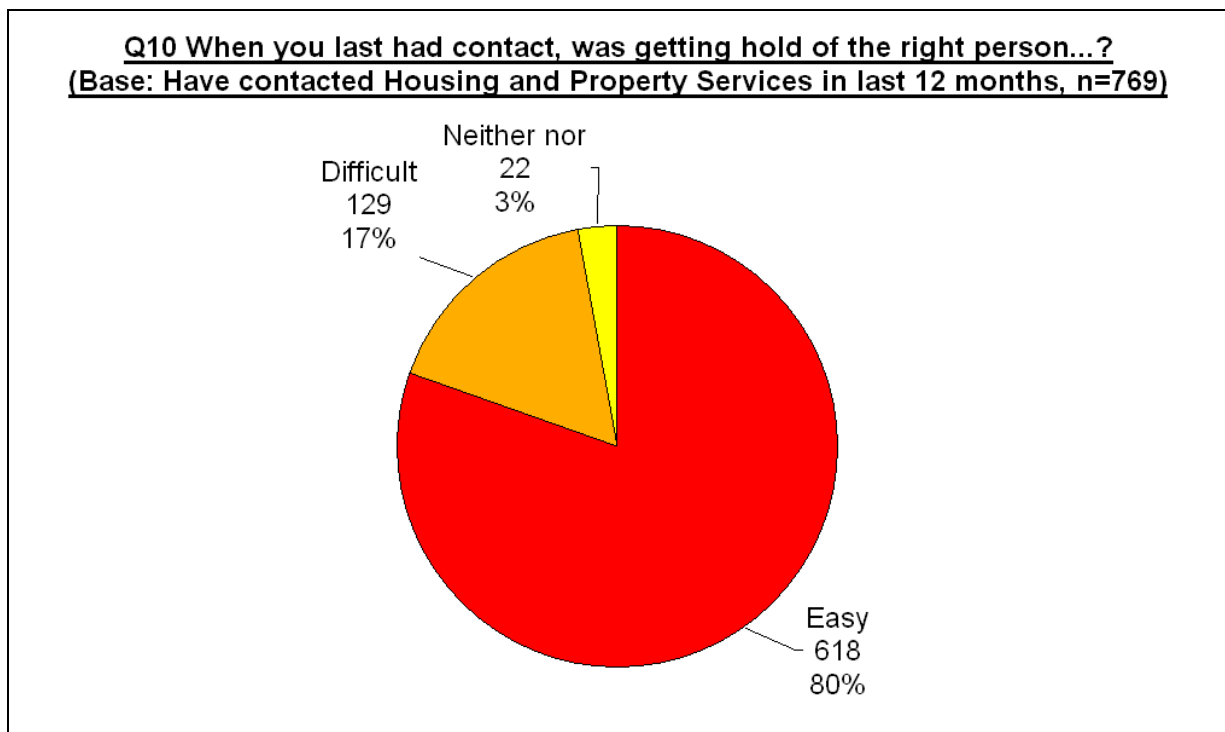


4.2 Nature of Contact (Q9)

In terms of the nature of this contact, the majority (76%) contacted the Council about a repair. A further 8% contacted the Council to discuss a transfer or exchange, 6% to discuss rent or housing benefit, and 6% with regards to neighbours, 1% contacted about home improvements, 1% could not remember the specific nature of their last contact and 4% had contact for some 'other' reason.

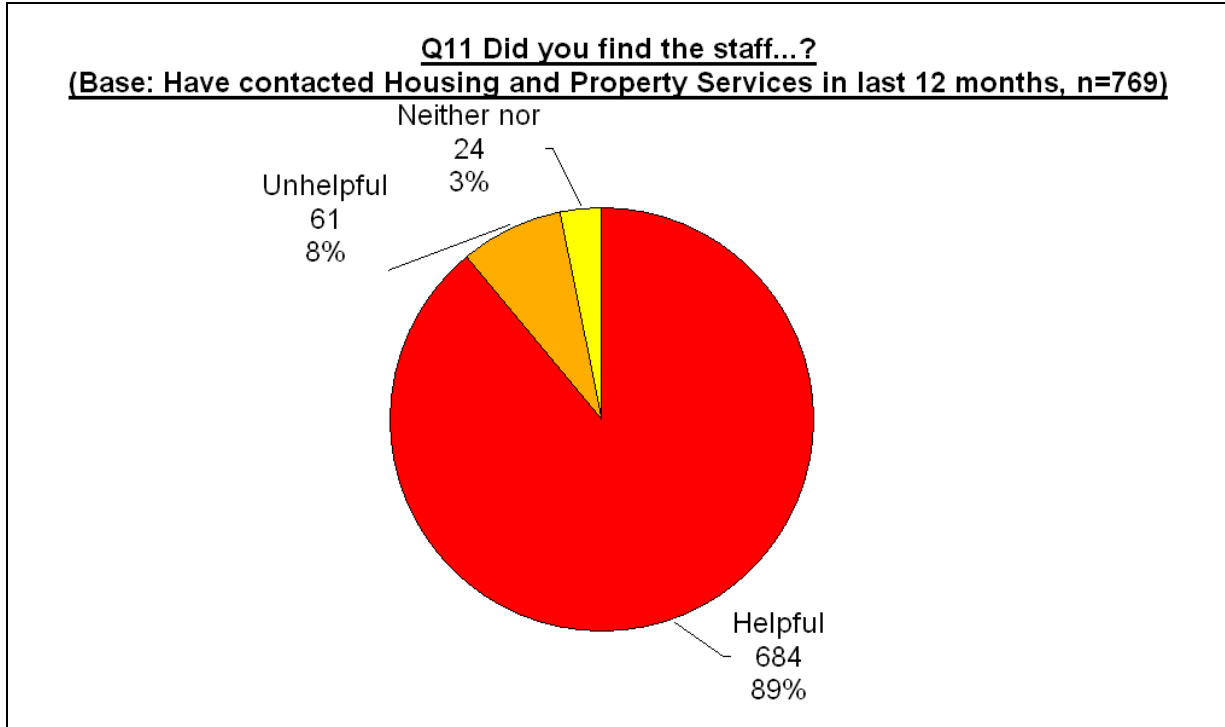
4.3 Ease of Getting Hold of Right Person (Q10)

8 in 10 tenants (80%) who have contacted Housing and Property Services in the last 12 months stated they found it easy to contact the right person to help with their enquiry compared to 17% who found it difficult and 3% who found it neither easy nor difficult.



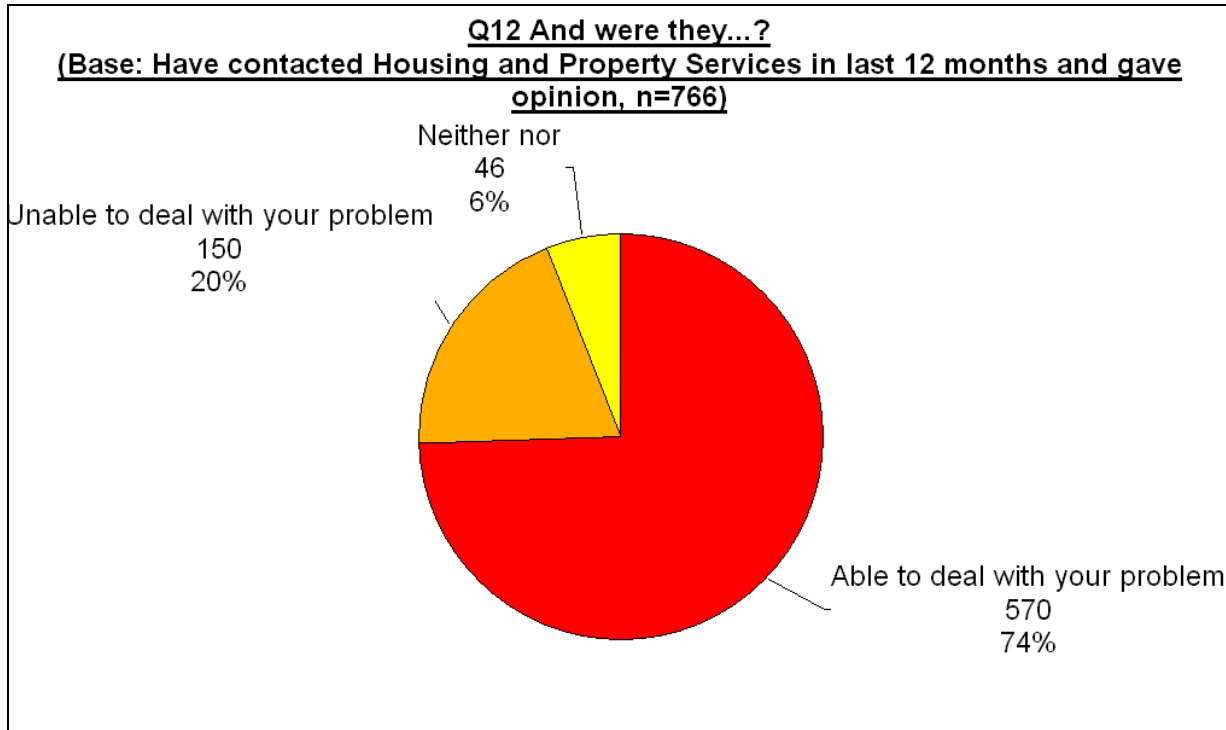
4.4 Helpfulness of Staff (Q11)

With regards to helpfulness of staff, fewer than 9 in 10 tenants (89%) felt the staff they spoke to were helpful compared to 8% who felt the staff were unhelpful.



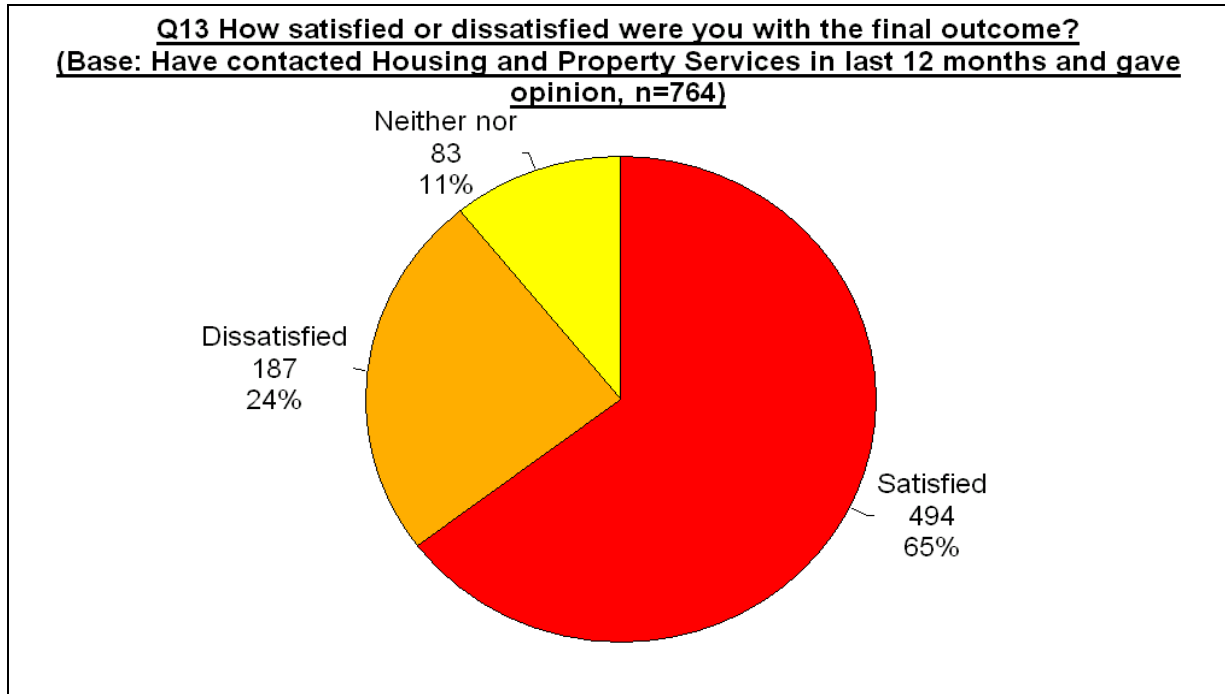
4.5 Dealing with Tenants Problems (Q12)

Almost 3 in 4 tenants (74%) stated the Council was able to deal with their problem when they had contact with the Council compared to 2 in 10 tenants (20%) who stated the Council were unable to deal with their issue.



4.6 Satisfaction with Outcome (Q13)

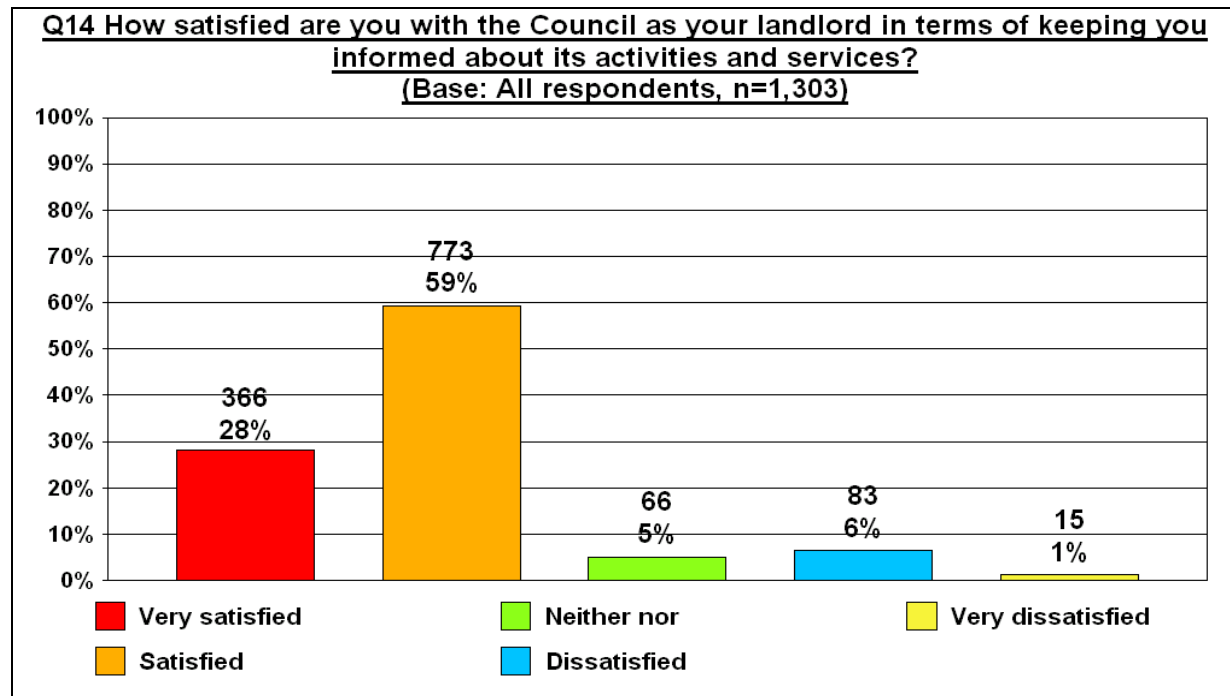
With regards to the outcome of this contact, 65% of respondents were satisfied with the final outcome of their contact with the Council compared to 24% who were dissatisfied and 11% who were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.



5 TENANT PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNICATION

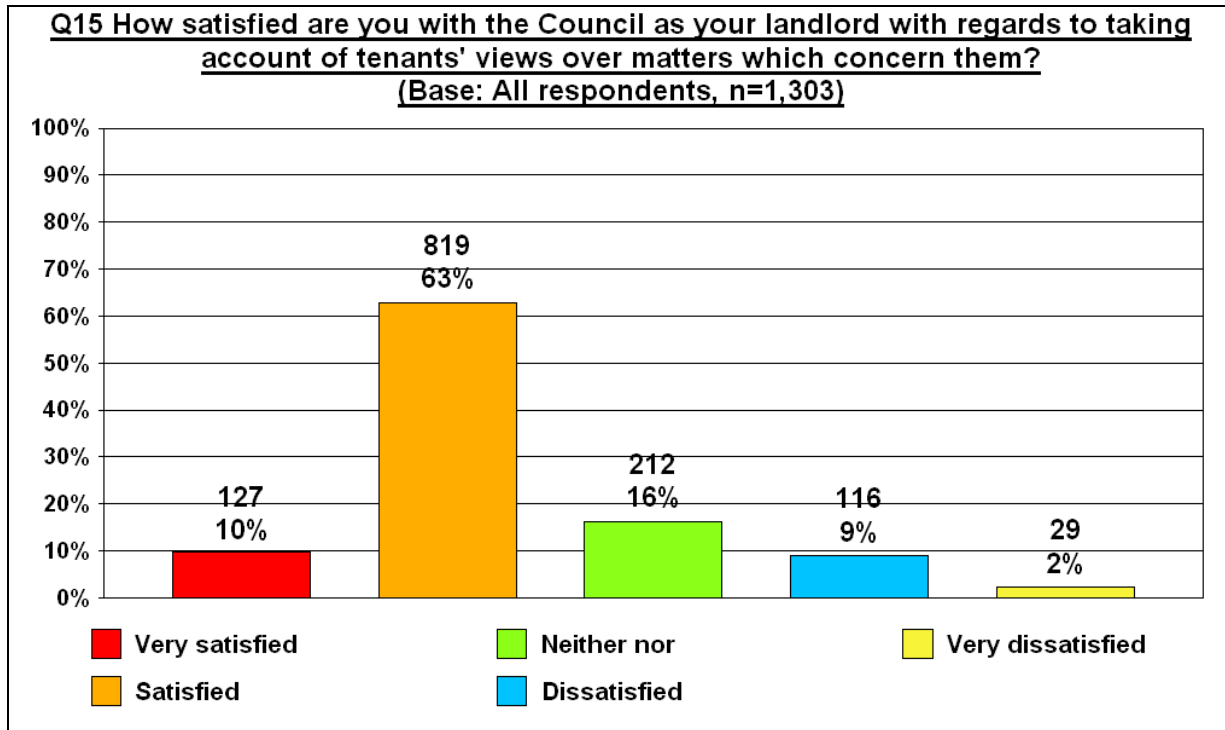
5.1 Keeping You Informed (Q14)

Under 9 in 10 tenants stated they are very satisfied or satisfied with the Council in terms of keeping them informed about its activities and services compared to 7% who were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.



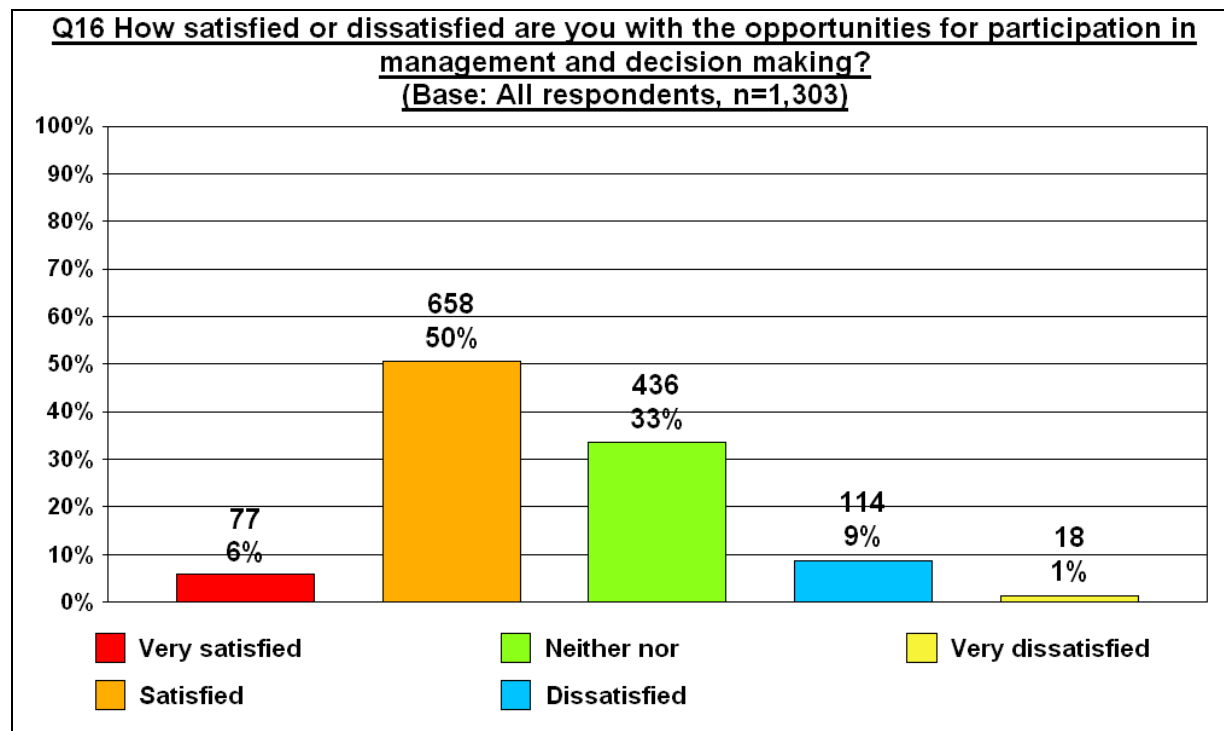
5.2 Taking Account of Tenants Views (Q15)

73% of tenants are satisfied with the Council in terms of taking account of their views over matters which concern them. This is compared to 11% of tenants who are dissatisfied in this respect.

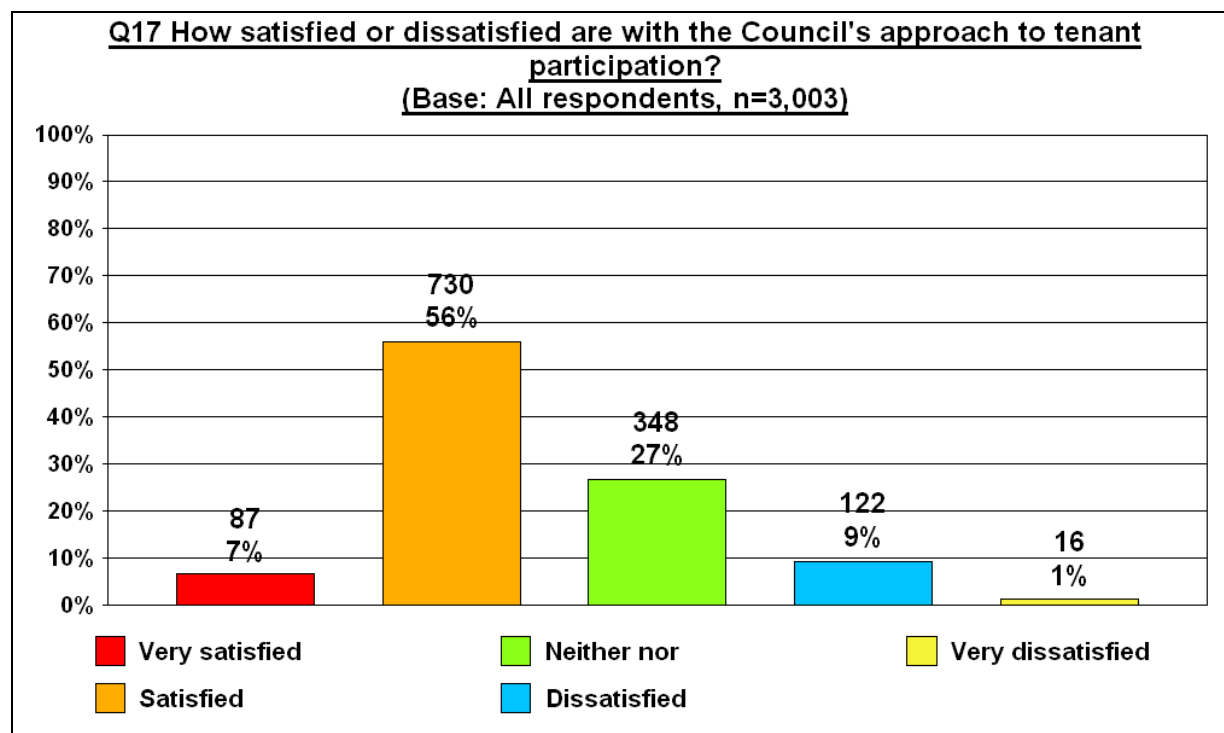


5.3 Satisfaction with Tenant Participation (Q16/17)

56% of tenants are satisfied with the opportunities for participation in management and decision making compared to 10% who are dissatisfied. A third of tenants (33%) stated they are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied in this respect.



In terms of the Council's approach to tenant participation, 63% of tenants stated that they are satisfied this compared to 10% who are dissatisfied.

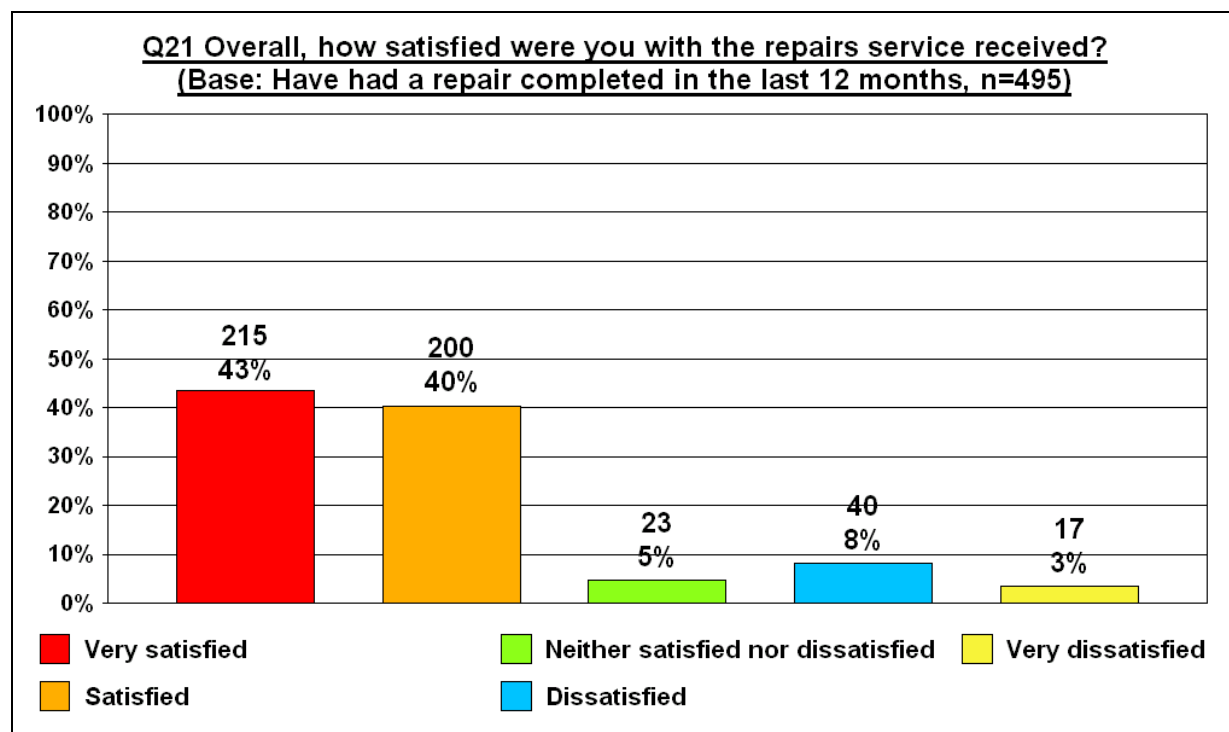


6 REPAIRS SERVICE

6.1 Overall Satisfaction with the Repairs Service (Q19-21)

55% of respondents have requested repairs to their home in the last 12 months. Of these tenants 68% have had repairs completed in the last 12 month amounting to 495 tenants.

Of those who have had a repair completed, 83% were satisfied overall with the repairs service received compared to 11% who were dissatisfied.



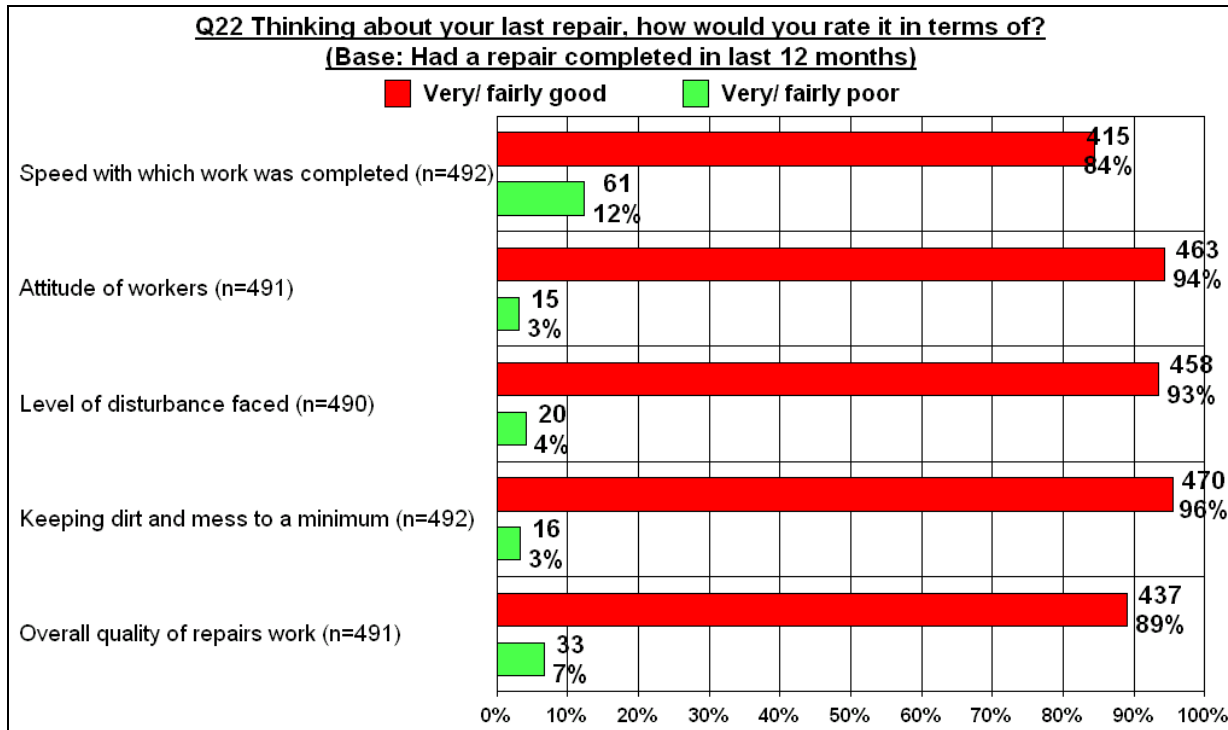
6.2 Satisfaction with Various Aspects of the Repairs Service (Q22)

Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with a number of aspects of the repairs service. The chart below reveals that satisfaction levels with the repairs service are highest in terms of:

- Keeping dirt and mess to a minimum (96%)
- Attitude of workers (94%)
- Level of disturbance faced (93%)

However, satisfaction levels fall below 90% in terms of:

- Speed with which work was completed (84%)
- Overall quality of repairs work (89%)

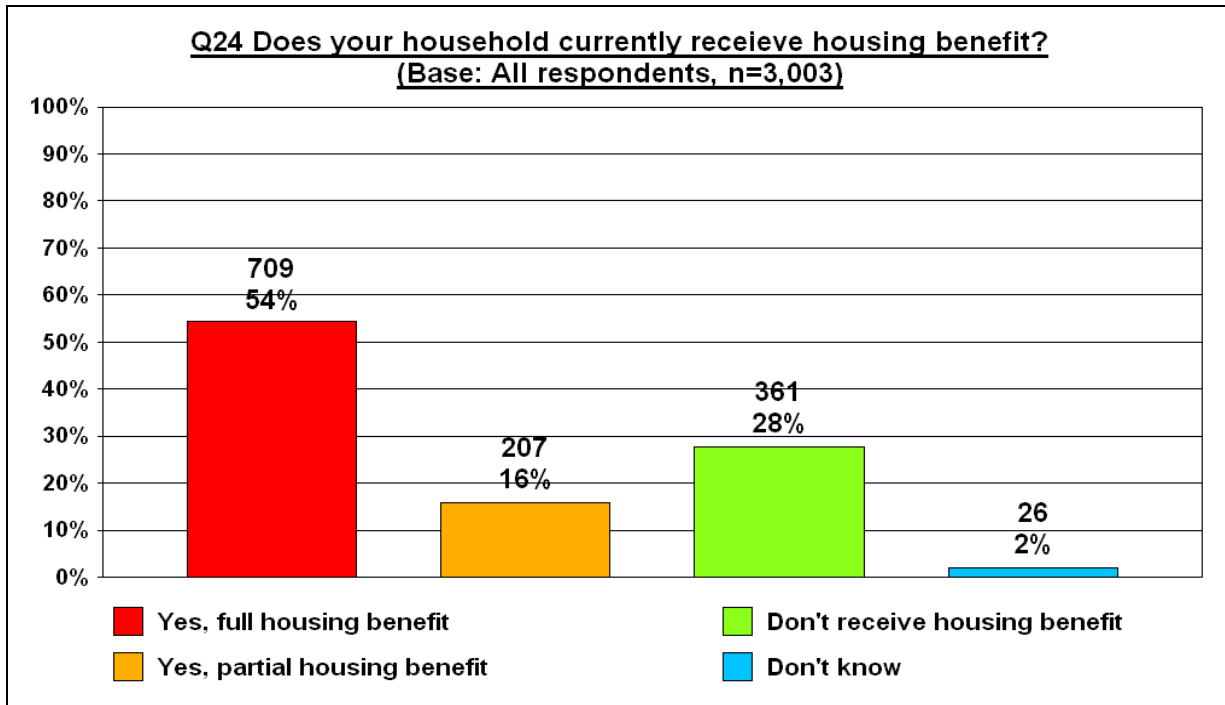


With regards to the current repairs timescale, 15% of respondents who have had a repair completed in the last 12 months would be happy to pay more to receive a faster service. Of the remaining tenants 76% stated they would not be interested in paying an additional charge and 10% were unsure.

7 RENT

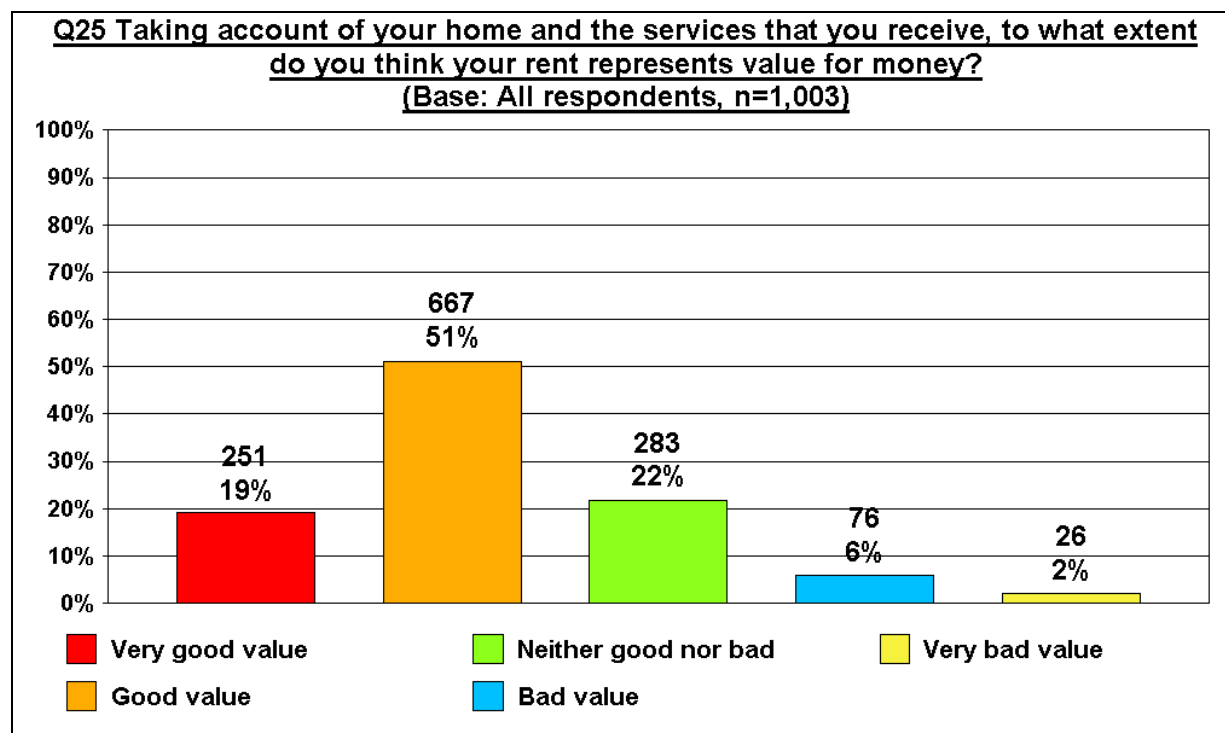
7.1 Housing Benefit (Q24)

7 in 10 ten households currently receive housing benefit. 54% of tenants receive full housing benefit and 16% receive partial housing benefit.



7.2 Value for Money of Rent

In terms of value for money of rent charge, 7 in 10 tenants stated their rent represents good or very good value for money compared to 8% consider their rent is bad or very bad value for money.



Those who felt their rent represents poor value for money were most likely to feel this way because they believe that their home (32%) or the repairs service is in need of improvement (37%).

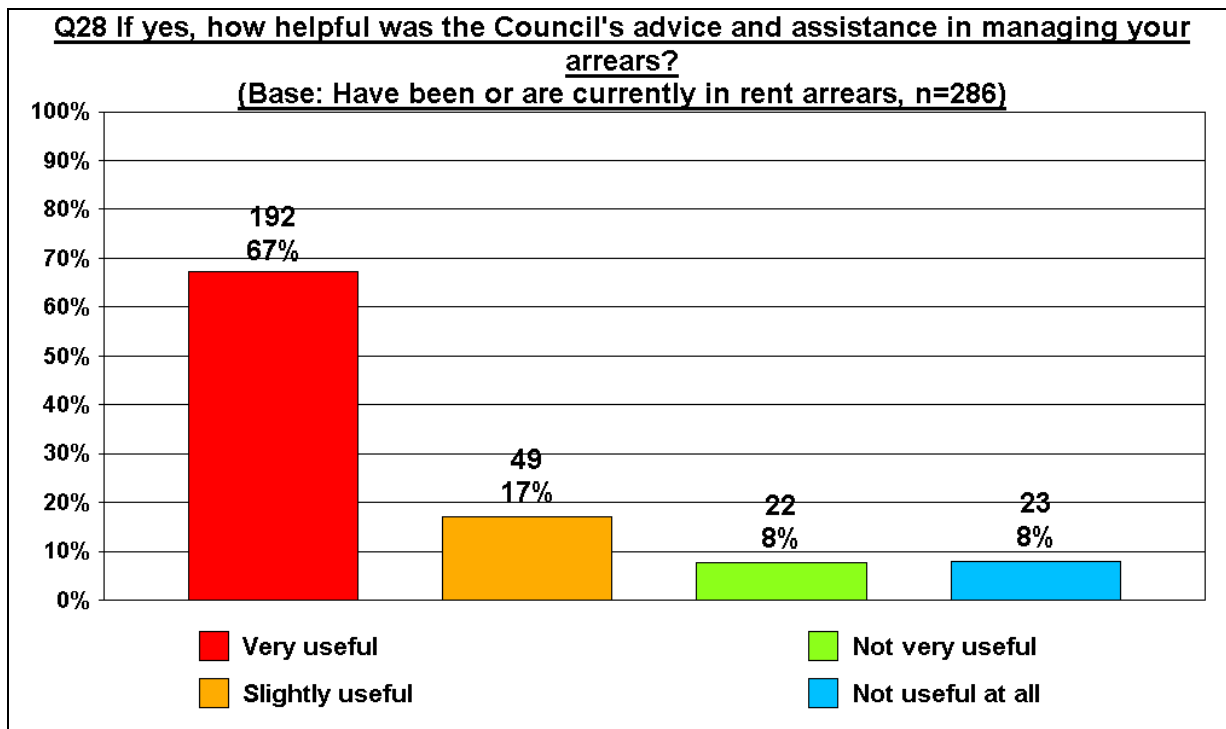
Q26 If you feel your rent represents bad value for money, why do you say this?
Base: Feel rent is bad value, n=102

Reason	No.	%
The repairs service provided is in need of improvement	39	38%
My home is in need of improvement	37	36%
The maintenance of communal areas is in need of improvement	15	15%
The customer service provided by the Housing department is in need of improvement	14	14%
Believe rent too high	12	12%
I never see any housing officers	7	7%
I don't get enough information about how my rent is spent	5	5%
Don't know/ not specified	4	4%
Other	6	6%

7.3 Rent Arrears (Q27/28)

22% of tenants questioned stated that they have been, or are currently in, rent arrears.

Of those, the rating of the Council's advice and assistance in managing arrears was positive, with 67% stating that they found it very useful and 17% stating that they found it slightly useful. Just 8% found it not useful at all.



8 SERVICE PRIORITIES AND IMPROVEMENTS

8.1 Service Priorities (Q29)

Tenants were read a list of aspects of the housing service and asked which of these services they considered to be top priority, 2nd top priority and 3rd top priority. For ease of analysis, an overall ranking of priority has been calculated by adding together the proportion of tenants which stated each service was a priority. As shown in the table below, tenants top priorities are:

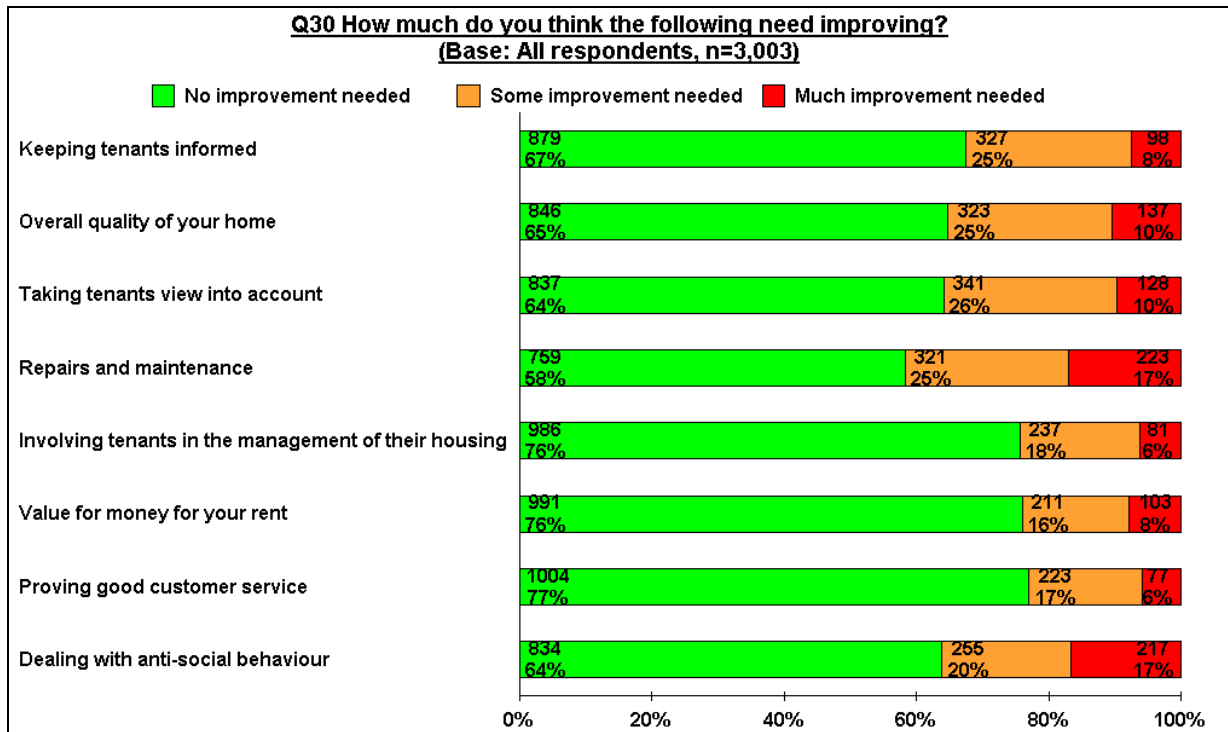
- Repairs and maintenance (74% ranking as priority)
- Overall quality of your home (45%)
- Dealing with anti social behaviour (42%)
- Keeping tenants informed (41%)

Q29 Which of these services do you consider to be.....?				
Base: All respondents, n=1,303				
	Top Priority	2nd Top Priority	3rd Top Priority	Overall Ranking of Priority
Repairs and maintenance	29%	32%	13%	74%
Overall quality of your home	19%	13%	13%	45%
Dealing with anti-social behaviour	18%	9%	15%	42%
Keeping tenants informed	13%	11%	17%	41%
Value for money for your rent	8%	11%	14%	33%
Providing good customer service	4%	5%	14%	23%
Taking tenants views into account	6%	7%	7%	20%
Involving tenants in the management of their housing	1%	9%	3%	13%
Don't know	2%	3%	3%	8%
None	1%	2%	2%	5%

8.2 Service Improvements (Q30)

Utilising the same list, tenants were then asked the extent to which they believed each service requires improving. The following services were rated as requiring most improvement:

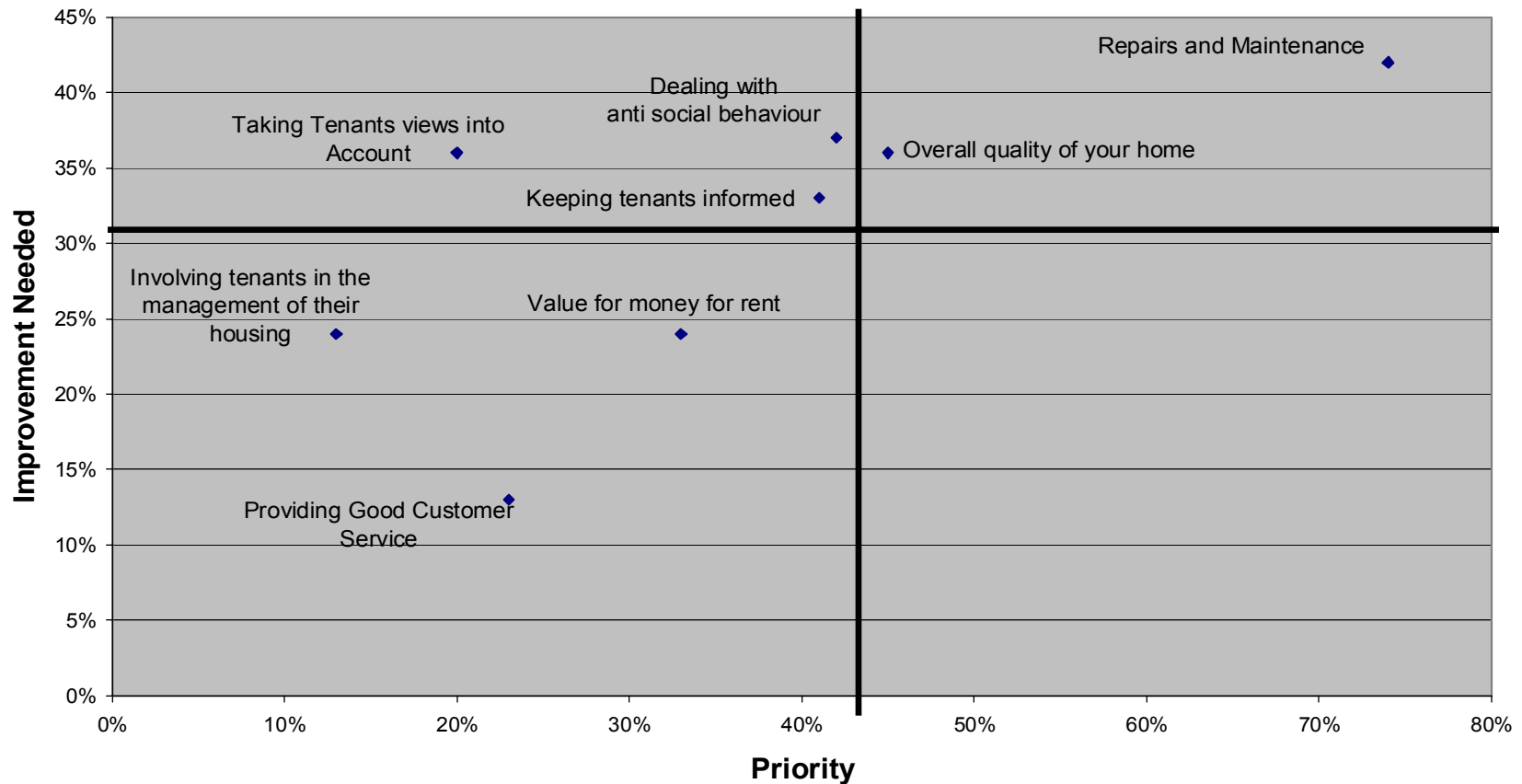
- Repairs and maintenance (42% stating some or much improvement needed)
- Dealing with anti-social behaviour (37%)
- Taking tenants views into account (36%)
- Overall quality of your home (35%)



8.3 Prioritisation Analysis

In order to provide some guidance in terms of where tenants believe the Council should be focusing their efforts in terms of housing services, an analysis was undertaken to highlight the tenant priorities against service improvements.

Prioritisation Analysis



The chart is then split into four quadrants which indicate whether the service is:

- High priority, much improvement needed
- Low priority, much improvement needed
- Low priority, little improvement needed
- High priority, little improvement needed

As shown, the aspects of the Council's housing service which are greatest priority and where most improvement is required are:

- Repairs and Maintenance
- The overall quality of the home

It is these areas that, from the tenants perspective, improvements are likely to yield greatest increases in tenant satisfaction.

9 HOUSEHOLD PROFILE

9.1 Age (Q33)

The majority of respondents are aged 65-74 (26%) or aged 75+ (25%).

Q33 Age		
Base: All respondents, n=1,303		
Age	No.	%
16-24	38	3%
25-34	84	6%
35-44	135	10%
45-54	145	11%
55-59	86	7%
60-64	144	11%
65-74	335	26%
75+	329	25%
refused	7	1%

9.2 Gender (Q34)

In terms of gender, 67% of respondents are female compared to 33% who are male.

9.3 Household Composition (Q38)

With regards to household composition, the majority of households consist of single adults (56%). A further 23% of households comprise of 2 adults, 4% consist of 3 or more adults, 7% 1 parent families and 7% 2 parent families.

Q38 How would you describe the composition of your household?		
Base: All respondents, n=1,303		
Household type	No.	%
One adult under 60	214	16%
One adult aged 60 or over	518	40%
Two adults under 60	81	6%
Two adults both over 60	174	13%
Two adults at least one 60 or over	56	4%
Three or more adults, 16 or over	47	4%
1 Parent family with children at least 1 under 16	89	7%
2 Parent family with children at least 1 under 16	92	7%
Other (please specify)	32	2%

9.4 Disability (Q39-42)

53% of tenants stated they have a longstanding illness, disability or infirmity. Of these tenants 81% stated the illness or disability limits their activities. With regards to the nature of the disability, the majority of tenants stated they have a physical disability (85%). 8% of households stated someone in their home uses a wheelchair.

Q41 What is the nature of the illness/ disability?		
Base: Have a disability, n=695		
Nature of disability	No.	%
Physical	593	85%
Vision	36	5%
Hearing	19	3%
Addiction	3	0%
Mental health	48	7%
Learning difficulty	5	1%
Other	50	7%

9.5 Ethnicity (Q43)

In terms of ethnicity, the majority of respondents (97%) stated they are White British.

10 BENCHMARKING

10.1 Introduction

This section of the report compares results for the Tenant Satisfaction survey against comparator landlords. Results were compared to those of other comparator local authorities..

It should be noted that the ambition of the Council is to use this survey as a baseline survey and to repeat the exercise in one years time, at which point progress internally for the Council can be tracked with regard to customer satisfaction and service delivery. In doing so, the Council will be able to determine key areas of improvement and also any potential areas which should be considered for action planning.

10.2 Local Authority Benchmarking

The table below benchmarks the tenant satisfaction survey results of the 2007 survey with those of other comparator local authorities. Three other local authorities were chosen due to their organisational size and profile and, where possible, utilising their most recent tenant satisfaction survey data Renfrewshire Council data was benchmarked against this.

Question	Renfrewshire Council	LA1	LA2	LA3
Keeping tenants informed about activities and services	87%	81%	79%	-
Taking account of tenants views over matters which concern them	73%	55%	60%	-
Overall satisfaction with the Council as a Landlord	81%	68%	71%	87%
Satisfaction with repairs service	83%	62%	74%	78%
Satisfaction with the neighbourhood as a place to live	83%	84%	82%	70%

As shown in the table above, when it comes to keeping tenants informed about activities and services, Renfrewshire sits at the top of the benchmarking group, with 87% satisfaction compared to 81% and 79% in comparator authorities. This is also the case when it comes to taking account of tenants views over matters which concern them, where Renfrewshire satisfaction sits at 73% compared to 55% and 60% for comparator local authorities.

In terms of overall satisfaction with the Council as a Landlord, one of the benchmark local authorities sits at 87%, which is the highest reported level of satisfaction, with Renfrewshire sitting 2nd top at 81%, followed by 71% and 68%.

When considering overall satisfaction with the repair service provided by the Council as a landlord, Renfrewshire sits at the top of the benchmarking group with 83% stating they are satisfied compared to 78%, 74% and 62%.

The final question against which Renfrewshire tenant satisfaction results were benchmarked was satisfaction with the neighbourhood. In this respect, Renfrewshire sits second top of the benchmarking group, although all Authorities in the top 3 are within 1% of each other. The highest level of satisfaction with the neighbourhood reported is 84%, with Renfrewshire sitting at 83% and then the third highest being 82%. Satisfaction for the final Authority in the benchmarking group is 70%