



Tenant satisfaction survey
Housing Management
2004

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Salisbury District Council conducted a survey of Tenant's satisfaction with current service delivery as part of the Council's annual review of their Housing Management services.
- 1.2 The aims of the survey are to:
 - Assess current levels of satisfaction with services;
 - Meet the requirement on the Council to demonstrate tenant consultation;
 - Highlight areas where service may need to be improved.
- 1.3 The report details the layout of the questionnaire, the results of the questionnaire and recommendations for improvements to the current service provided.
- 1.4 The survey shows that satisfaction levels with every aspect of the service remain high and overall satisfaction is now up to 92.9%, an increase of 9.3% since the last survey.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 It was agreed by the tenants and Housing Management that a questionnaire would be the best form of carrying out this survey.

2.2 Survey of Tenants' Satisfaction with Services Questionnaire

1.2.1 The questionnaire, which was sent out to all tenants in December 2003.

1.2.2 Following the success of the first survey, it was agreed that the questionnaire should be sent out annually with a slight shift in emphasis on the questions to be asked.

1.2.3 The year's questionnaire is the fifth Annual Satisfaction Survey and was prepared in close consultation with the Tenants' Panel. A specific area on Services to Tenants' and Housing Repairs was included as part of the Consultation process. There were also additional questions on anti-social behaviour to improve the Council's approach to Anti-Social Behaviour.

1.2.4 In addition the questionnaire asked tenants for information on:

- Present housing circumstances;
- Communications with the Council;
- Contact with the Council;
- Services to tenants;
- Their views on the housing repairs service;
- Opportunities for participation;
- Their image of the Council;
- Information technology;
- Household information.

1.2.5 Pre paid envelopes were distributed with the questionnaires. The results were processed in-house.

2.3 Analysis

1.3.1 This report shows a comparison with results, which were obtained from the last survey in 2002, which are shown in italics. However, as additional questions have been added to this survey comparable results from the previous year will not be available in all instances.

1.3.2 For greater accuracy the results have been analysed from those responses where a definite answer was given for each question.

1.3.3 In the text, percentages are rounded up to whole numbers in most cases to improve readability. In some cases, the percentages may not sum to a hundred due to rounding.

2. SURVEY OF TENANTS' SATISFACTION WITH SERVICES

2.1 Survey response

2.1.1 A total of 1445 (26%) responded to the postal survey by the closing date compared to 1568 tenants (28%) in 2002.

2.1.2 The majority of respondents, 63% had been tenants for over 10 years at the time the survey was carried out, compared to 63% in 2002.

2.2 Contact with the Council

2.2.1 82% (83%) of tenants said they had contacted the Council in the last 12 months. Among this group, 79% (79%) made contact by phone and 17% (16%) visited a Council office.

2.2.2 Levels of satisfaction with contact in comparison to last year are reproduced in table 2.2.2 below

<u>Type of Contact</u>	<u>% satisfaction</u>	
	2002	2003
<u>Visit</u>		
Ease of making appointment	79%	95%
Convenience of office opening hours	76%	95%
Waiting time at office	71%	94%
Quality of advice/help	80%	92%
<u>Telephone</u>		
Time taken to answer	87%	95%
Ease of getting through to right person	79%	91%
Quality of advice/help	83%	92%
<u>By Letter</u>		
Promptness of reply	74%	86%
Quality of advice/help	67%	85%

2.3 Services to tenants

- 2.3.1 89% (85%) of tenants are satisfied overall with the housing services they receive from the Council. Only 4% (3%) are dissatisfied.
- 2.3.2 77% (77%) of all tenants had used the repairs service within the last 12 months.
- 2.3.3 The table below shows the levels of satisfaction shown by tenants using the service in the last 12 months.

SERVICES TO TENANTS		
Service	2002	2003
Housing repairs	77%	77%
Housing improvements/mods	64%	62%
Dealing with transfer applications	58%	62%
Advice on rent payment difficulties	68%	67%
Rent payment methods	83%	81%
Consultation on housing proposals	60%	62%
Assistance with neighbour problems	42%	40%
Assistance with security	49%	48%

2.4 Housing Repairs

- 2.4.1 81% (80%) of tenants said that they had used the repair service in the last 12 months. 84% (82%) of repairs were reported over the phone, 7% (5%) at a Council office, 9% (11%) via a warden and 2% (2%) by other methods. It is important to note that the main way in which repairs are reported to the Council is by phone.
- 2.4.2 96% (95%) of tenants said they found the system of reporting repairs easy.

92% (90%) of tenants said that they had received a card from the Council giving details of the repair, a target date and a satisfaction slip.

Overall 74% (72%) of tenants said that they were satisfied with the overall Housing repairs service, only 5% (7%) expressed that they were dissatisfied.

2.5 Anti-Social Behaviour

Just under 20% of tenants said they had suffered from anti-social behaviour in the last 12 months, over 54% of which was because of noise. Of the 20% that had suffered anti social behaviour, 48% reported the incident to the Council. Of these 38% were satisfied with the way the Council dealt with the complaint, 29% were dissatisfied and 34% were neither satisfied or dissatisfied.

2.6 **Rent Collection and Rent Arrears**

2.6.1 Table 2.6.1 shows how tenants normally pay their rent:

TABLE 2.7.1		
RENT COLLECTION		
<u>Payment Method</u>	% using the service	
	2002	2003
Post Office	32%	30%
Cash Office	21%	18%
Standing Order	20%	21%
Credit/debit card over phone	1%	1%
Don't pay rent	23%	23%
Other	3%	3%

2.7.2 Table 2.7.2 shows how tenants keep track of their rent account balance:

TABLE 2.7.2		
RENT COLLECTION		
<u>Type of record</u>	% using service	
	2002	2003
Keep own record	59%	52%
Request a statement from the Council	7%	16%
Get balance at the cash office	8%	10%
Telephone for a balance	3%	3%
Don't keep a record	3%	22%

2.7.3 Table 2.7.4 shows how often tenants would like statement sent out if the Council sent out regular statements.

TABLE 3.7.3		
RENT COLLECTION		
<u>Frequency</u>	%	
	2002	2003
Monthly	22%	21%
Every 2 months	6%	8%
Every 3 months	20%	26%
Every 6 months	19%	25%
Don't require statement	32%	23%

- 2.7.4 86% (84%) of tenants said they were satisfied with the information on how much rent they should pay; only 4% (4%) said they were dissatisfied.
- 2.7.5 87% (84%) said they were satisfied with the information provided by housing staff when they queried their rent, compared to 3% (3%) who said they were dissatisfied.
- 2.7.6 Of those tenants who had been in arrears 77% (73%) said they were satisfied with the way in which the arrears were dealt with, compared to 10% (10%) who said they were dissatisfied.
- 2.7.7 Of those tenants who had been in arrears 44% (39%) said they had been advised of welfare benefits they may be entitled to compared to 57% (61%) of tenants who said they hadn't.

2.8 Image of the Council

2.8.1 The overall opinions which respondents have of the Council are presented in Table

TABLE 2.8.1				
IMAGE OF THE COUNCIL				
<u>Indicator</u>	% agreeing		% disagreeing	
	2002	2003	2002	2003
Caring Landlord	68%	68%	5%	5%
Adequately resourced	63%	63%	9%	9%
Efficient landlord	72%	72%	4%	4%
Easy to contact	89%	89%	2%	2%
Friendly staff	86%	86%	1%	1%
Provides good service	74%	74%	4%	4%
Keeps tenants informed	77%	77%	4%	4%
Provides good value for money	68%	68%	6%	6%

2.8.2 Tenants were asked whether their view of the Council had improved over the last twelve months, 27% (20%) said it had improved 8% (4%) said it had worsened; and 67% said their view had remained the same.

2.9 Information Technology

2.9.1 This section of the survey was included to determine whether tenants would benefit from the setting up of new systems to contact the Council via a computer.

2.9.2 Only 17% (14%) of tenants said they had access to the internet compared to 84% (86%) who said they did not. These figures remain the same with regards to access to e-mail.

2.9.3 Table 2.9.3 is an indication of when those tenants who do not have access to the internet or e-mail may have these facilities.

TABLE 2.9.3		
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY		
<u>Time Span</u>	% considering	
	2002	2003
In the next 12 months	4%	7%
In the next 2 years	4%	5%
In the next 5 years	2%	3%
Do not intend access to these facilities		90%

2.9.4 For those tenants who do have access to the internet and e-mail or are considering it, 27% (25%) said they would like to access Housing services like rent and repairs in this way, compared to 74% (75%) who said they wouldn't use this facility.

For those with e-mail who were considering it 20% (20%) said they would prefer this method to communicate with the Council, compared to 80% (80%) who said they would not.

2.10 **Tenant Involvement**

In a change to the previous survey, which asked tenants how they would like to be involved in Council decision making, this year we asked how satisfied or dissatisfied tenants were with the opportunities for participation and management in decision making. 64% (62%) of tenants said they were satisfied and only 4% (5%) said they were dissatisfied.

2.11 **Household characteristics**

2.11.2 66% (65%) of tenants were over 60. 61% (59%) were female. 99% (99%) of tenants who responded were white.

CONCLUSIONS

3. Conclusions

- 3.1 It is very pleasing to note that levels of overall satisfaction with the housing service has reached it's highest ever level at 85% and just over that figure are satisfied with their home.
- 3.2 Tenants have become accustomed to the telephone system for reporting repairs with 96% of respondents saying they found it easy to report repairs.
- 3.3 From the survey undertaken the satisfaction with the way arrears were dealt with rose to 78%. There were also increased satisfaction levels with information on how to pay rent and general rent queries.
- 3.4 The image of the Council also improved in all aspects. 91% of tenants found us easy to contact, 89% said we had friendly staff, 72% said we keep them informed, 74% said we provided a good service and 68% said we provided good value for money.
- 3.5 There was also an increase in the levels of satisfaction with the opportunities for participation and management in decision making to 64%, an area we targeted to improve from the last survey.

APPENDICES

APPENDICES 1 - SURVEY RESULTS

Your Present Housing Circumstances

Q1 How long have you been a tenant with Salisbury District Council?

Less than 1 year	6.29%
Between 1 and 5 years	20.90%
Between 6 and 10 years	10.66%
More than 10 years	62.15%

Q2 Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your home?

Very satisfied	40.96%
Satisfied	43.09%
Neither nor	8.86%
Dissatisfied	4.11%
Very dissatisfied	2.98%

Contact

Q3 When did you most recently contact the Council?

Within last 12 months	81.57%
Over a year ago	13.70%
Never	1.27%
Don't know	3.46%

Q4 Which method of contact did you use last time you contacted the Council?

Personal visit	16.44%
Phone	78.37%
Letter	3.26%
Don't know	1.93%

Q5 How satisfied were you with the following when you visited the office?

	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Ease of making an appointment	94.90%	5.10%
Convenience of office opening hours	94.38%	5.62%
Waiting time in office	93.30%	6.70%
Quality and clarity of advice given	91.54%	8.46%

Q6 How satisfied were you with the following aspects of your phone call?

	Satisfied	Neither nor	Dissatisfied
Time it took for phone to be answered	94.09%	5.72%	0.18%
Ease of getting through to person you wanted to speak to	90.63%	9.17%	0.20%
Quality and clarity of advice given	91.49%	8.12%	0.31%

Q7 How satisfied were you with the following when you wrote to the Housing Department?

	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Promptness of reply	85.13%	12.27%
Quality and clarity of advice given	84.73%	14.87%

Services to Tenants

Q8 Please tell us if you have used any of the services below and whether you were satisfied with the service?

	Satisfied	Neither nor	Dissatisfied
Housing repairs	76.86%	10.68%	12.46%
Improving and modernising tenants homes	61.11%	16.67%	22.22%
Dealing with transfer applications/enquiries	61.61%	19.64%	18.75%
Providing advice for tenants who have difficulty paying their rent	68.32%	16.83%	14.85%
Providing convenient ways for tenants to pay rent	80.95%	10.20%	8.84%
Consulting tenants on housing proposals for their area/neighbourhood	61.11%	20.00%	18.89%
Helping to resolve neighbour problems	39.62%	26.42%	33.96%
Helping to make Council tenants area/neighbourhood more secure	47.06%	22.55%	30.39%

Q9 If your answer is 'yes' to any of the questions above, could you tell us how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with the way these services are provided by the Council?

Very satisfied	33.46%
Satisfied	44.24%
Neither nor	11.24%
Dissatisfied	7.68%
Very dissatisfied	3.38%

Housing Repairs

Q10 Have you used the repairs service in the last 12 months?

Yes	80.73%
No	19.27%

Q11 How did you report your repair?

By phone	83.76%
Warden	8.08%
At office	6.50%
Other	1.67%

Q12 Did you find the new method of reporting repairs easy or hard?

Easy	95.83%
Hard	4.17%

Q13 Did you receive a card giving details of the repair, target date and satisfaction slip?

Yes	91.21%
No	8.79%

Q14 What is your overall impression of the Housing Repairs Service?

Very Good	36.05%
Good	37.22%
Average	17.24%
Below average	5.16%
Poor	4.33%

Anti-Social Behaviour

Q15 Have you suffered from anti social behaviour in last 12 months?

Yes	19.09%
No	80.91%

Q16 What type of anti social behaviour did you suffer from?

Noise	53.56%
Abandoned vehicles	11.53%
Harassment	13.90%
Vandalism	14.24%
Other	6.78%

Q17 Did you report the incident to the Council?

Yes	47.09%
No	52.91%

Q18 How satisfied were you with the way the Council dealt with your report?

Satisfied	37.67%
Neither	33.95%
Dissatisfied	28.37%

Rent Collection and Rent Arrears

Q19 How do you normally pay your rent?

Post Office	30.01%
Cash Office	17.88%
Standing Order	20.003%
Credit/debit card over phone	2.80%
Don't pay rent	24.12%
Other	5.17%

Q20 How do you keep track of your rent account balance?

Keep own record	51.11%
Request a statement from the Council	15.19%
Get a balance at the cash Office	9.17%
Telephone for a balance	2.87%
Don't keep a track of rent Balance	21.67%

Q21 If the Council were to send out regular rent statements, how often would you like to receive them?

Monthly	20.27%
Every 2 months	7.75%
Every 3 months	25.12%
Every 6 months	24.18%
Don't require a statement	22.69%

Q22 At the start of a new rent year you are provided with information on how much to pay, are you satisfied with this information?

Very satisfied	29.65%
Satisfied	56.08%
Neither nor	10.27%
Dissatisfied	3.06%
Very dissatisfied	0.94%

Q23 When you have a query about your rent, are you satisfied with the information provided by Housing staff?

Very Satisfied	28.65%
Satisfied	57.94%
Neither nor	10.13%
Dissatisfied	2.74%
Very dissatisfied	0.55%

Q24 If you have been in rent arrears, how satisfied were you with the way your arrears were dealt with?

Very Satisfied	30.09%
Satisfied	46.30%
Neither nor	13.66%
Dissatisfied	7.41%
Very dissatisfied	2.55%

Q25 If you have been in arrears, were you advised about welfare benefits you may have been entitled to?

Yes	43.77%
No	56.23%

Opportunities for Participation

Q26 Thinking about the housing services we provide, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the opportunities for participation in management and decision making?

Very Satisfied	16.69%
Satisfied	47.12%
Neither nor	31.33%
Dissatisfied	3.78%
Very dissatisfied	1.07%

Q27 What could the Council do to improve satisfaction with the opportunities for participation in management and decision making?

Arrange more public meetings	9.32%
Arrange local residents associations meetings	15.42%
Send out more questionnaires	35.20%
Send out open invitations for people to give their views	26.60%
Carry out telephone surveys	13.46%

Q28a Would you be interested in being involved with the Tenants Panel?

Yes	10.25%
No	89.75%

Q28b Would you be interested in being involved with a local residents group?

Yes	14.55%
No	85.45%

Image of the Council as a Landlord

Q29 We would now like to find out about your general opinions of the Housing Department. Listed below are some statements that can apply to landlords generally. Thinking about Salisbury District Council, for each statement:

	Satisfied	Neither nor	Dissatisfied
Care about its tenants	70.20%	24.42%	5.38%
Has the resources to do a good job	61.23%	30.70%	8.06%
Is an efficient landlord	72.51%	23.47%	4.02%
Is easy to contact	90.10%	8.60%	1.30%
Has friendly staff	88.05%	10.52%	1.43%
Provides a good service	75.18%	20.95%	3.86%
Keeps tenants informed	71.25%	23.39%	5.35%
Provides good value for money	67.25%	25.48%	7.27%

Q30 Has your view of the Housing Department improved over the last 12 months?

Yes (improved)	26.16%
No (Worsened)	7.64%
The same	66.20%

Q31 Comments

Information Technology

Q32 Do you have access to the internet?

Yes	16.23%
No	83.77%

Q33 Do you have access to an E-mail facility?

Yes	16.35%
No	83.65%

Q34 If you answered “no” to questions 32 – 33, are you considering obtaining access to these facilities?

In the next 12 months	6.18%
In the next 2 years	4.06%
In the next 5 years	2.58%
I do not intend having access to these facilities	87.18%

Q35 If you do have access to the internet or are considering it, would you want to access housing services like repairs, rent accounts by this method?

Yes	26.79%
No	73.21%

Q36 If you do have access to e-mail or are considering it, would you prefer this method to communicate with the Council?

Yes	20.03%
No	79.97%

Yourself, the Tenant

Q37 Are you male or female?

Male	39.62%
Female	60.38%

Q38 In which age bracket are you?

Under 25	3.33%
25 – 40	10.57%
40 – 60	20.85%
Over 60	65.24%

Q39 Which of these activities best describe what you are doing at present?

Employee in full time work (>30 hrs)	12.29%
Employee in part time work (16 – 30 hrs)	8.40%
Self employed	1.60%
On Government support training Programme	0.38%
Full time education	0.23%
Unemployed and available for work	1.07%
Permanently sick/disabled	12.21%
Retired	51.30%
Looking after home	10.84%
Doing something else	1.68%

Q40 To which of these groups do you consider you belong?

White	98.37%
Mixed	0.07%
Asian	0.00%
Black	0.21%
Chinese	0.00%
Other	1.35%

Q41 Do you have any long standing illness, disability or infirmity?

Yes	53.73%
No	46.27%

Q42 Does this illness or disability limit your activities in any way?

Yes	56.26%
No	43.74%

1445 responded from a total of 5600 issued, which gives an overall percentage of 25.8% of surveys returned.