

Babergh & Mid Suffolk District Councils TSM Tracker

Q4 & Annual 2022/23 Report

March 2023

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Acuity has been commissioned to undertake quarterly, independent satisfaction surveys of the tenants of Babergh & Mid-Suffolk Councils to collect data on their opinions of, and attitudes towards, their landlord and the services provided.

The survey was designed using the new Tenant Satisfaction Measures from the Regulator of Social Housing, which are due to become mandatory in April 2023.

Introduction

Every quarter, tenants are telephoned and invited to take part in a telephone interview. The survey is designed to collect the views of approximately 600 tenants per quarter (300 online and 300 telephone), with half from Babergh Council and the other half from Mid Suffolk Council. This report presents an analysis of the results based on the 758 completed interviews for Q4 2022/23.

In addition, as this is the final report of the 2022/23 year, additional analysis is included on the annual results and what is driving satisfaction at Babergh & Mid-Suffolk.

The telephone survey is confidential, and the results are sent back to Babergh & Mid-Suffolk Councils anonymised unless tenants give their permission to be identified – 76% of tenants did give permission to share their name and 92% of these tenants are happy for Babergh & Mid-Suffolk to contact them to discuss any issues they raised.

The aim of this survey is to provide data on tenants' satisfaction, which will allow Babergh & Mid-Suffolk to:

- Provide information on tenants' perceptions of current services
- Compare the results with previous surveys, where possible
- Compare the results with other landlords (where appropriate)
- Report to the regulator from April 2023 onwards.

For the overall results, Acuity, Housemark and the Regulator of Social Housing recommend that landlords with under 10,000 properties achieve a sampling error of at least $\pm 4\%$ at the 95% confidence level. For Babergh & Mid-Suffolk, 758 responses were received this quarter. This response is high enough to conclude that the findings are accurate to within $\pm 3.35\%$ for the quarter and $\pm 1.31\%$ annually.



59%

Overall Satisfaction

The survey for Q4 2022/23, carried out in February 2023, revealed that the highest performing areas for Babergh & Mid-Suffolk include providing a safe home (65%), tenants feeling like they are treated fairly and with respect (63%) and the maintenance of communal areas (62%). It has, however, highlighted a lower-than-average rating for the timing taken to complete tenants last repair (47%). There are also some other factors where there is room for improvement, such as dealing with ASB (49%) and how complaints are handled (23%).

Key Metrics Summary Q4 2022/23



58% Well maintained home



65% Safe home



58% Repairs - Last 12 months



47% Time taken - Last repair



62% Communal areas clean & well maintained



50% Positive contribution to neighbourhood



49% Anti-social behaviour



44% Listens & Acts



58% Kept informed



63% Treats fairly & with respect



23% Complaints handling



31% Promoters



Overall Satisfaction

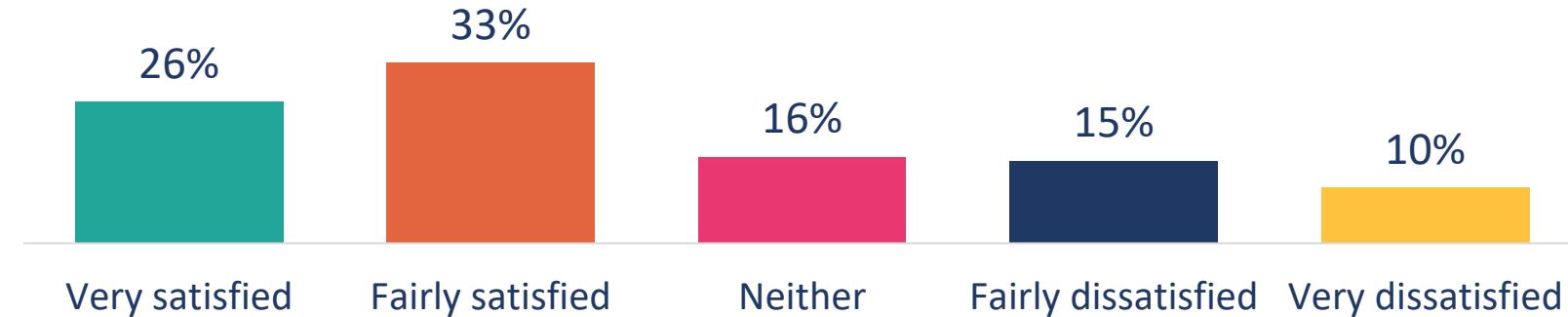


Tenants were asked, "Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided by Babergh & Mid-Suffolk?" This is the key metric in any tenant perception survey.

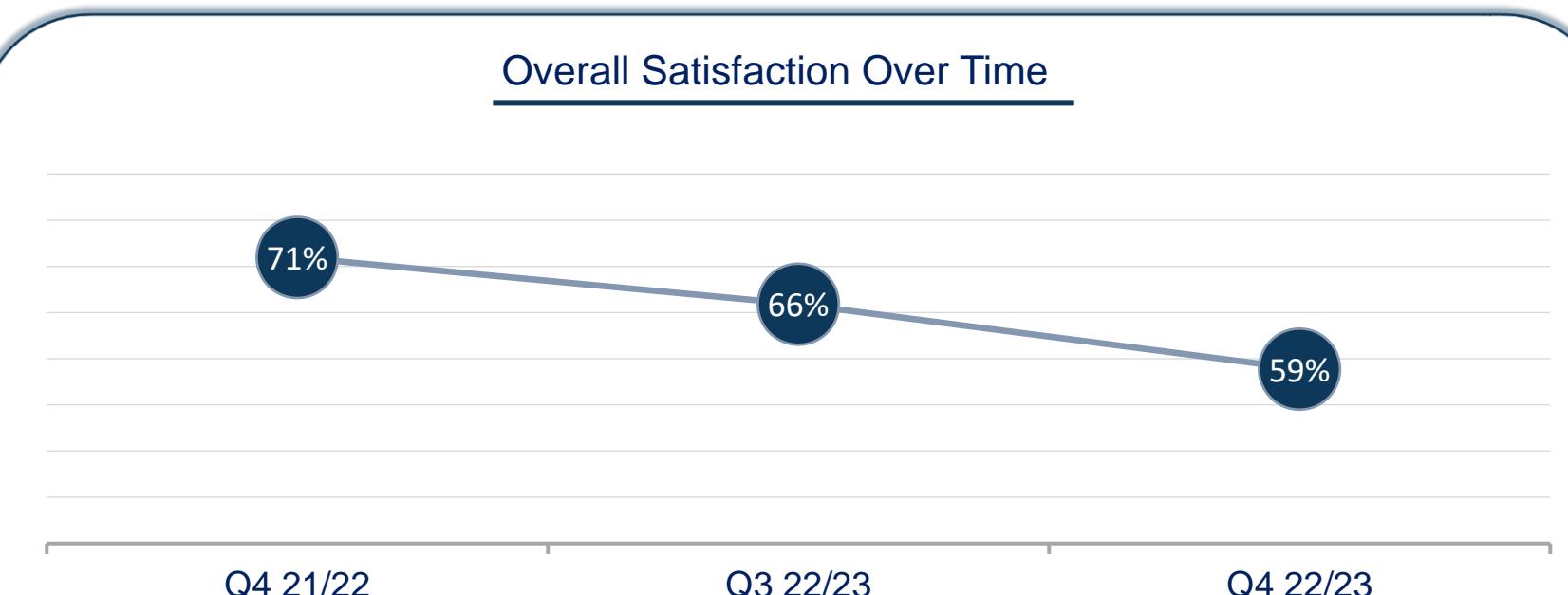
59% of tenants are satisfied, however, fewer are very satisfied (26%) than fairly satisfied (33%). A quarter of tenants (25%) are dissatisfied with the overall services provided and a further 16% are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

Overall satisfaction has been falling over the last year from 71% at the end of 21/22 to 66% in Q3 22/23 and down a further 7% in Q4 22/23.

Overall Satisfaction



Overall Satisfaction Over Time





Keeping Properties in Good Repair



The previous question about the home asked tenants to rate the maintenance and safety of their homes but following a review by the Regulator of Social Housing, this has now been split into two questions.

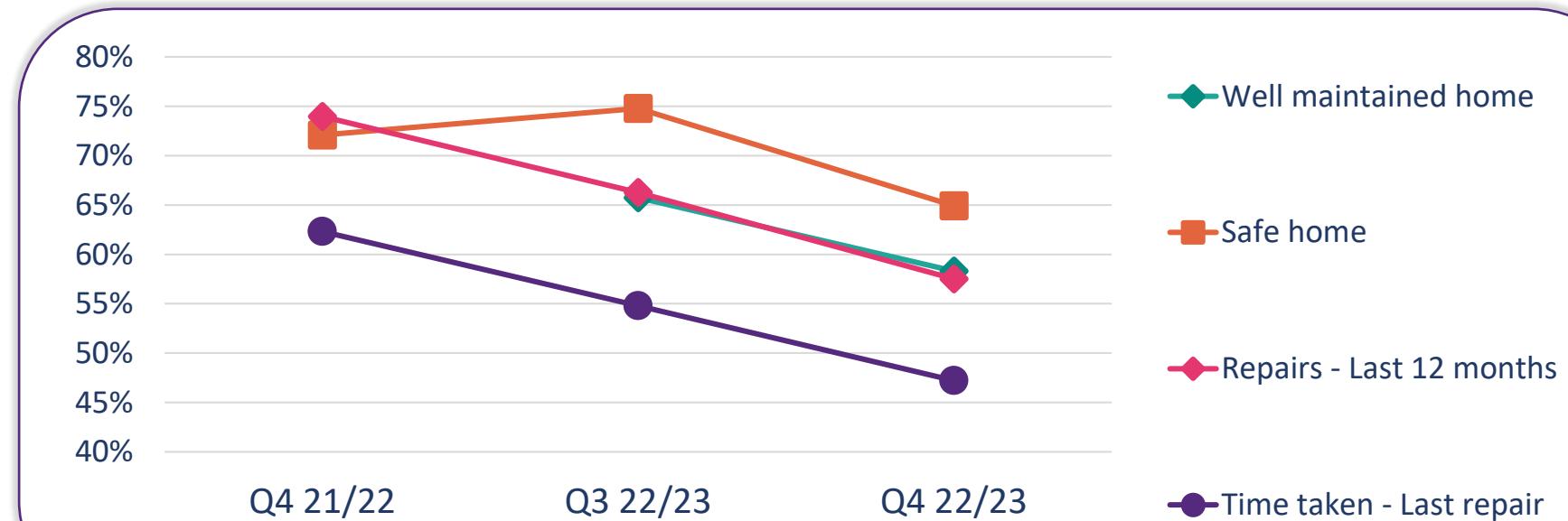
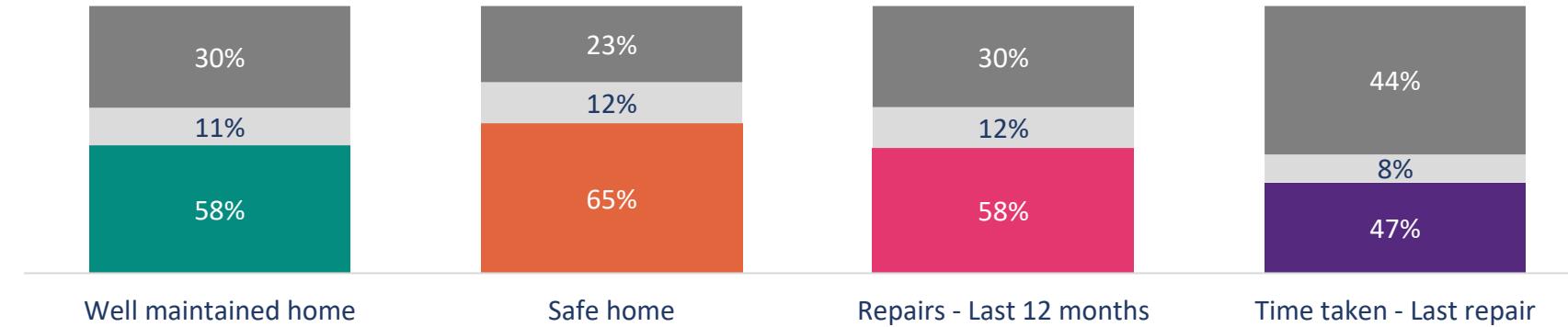
58% of tenants feel their home is well maintained, with more who feel it is safe (65%).

Additionally, 58% of tenants are satisfied with the repairs service in the last 12 months. However, fewer are satisfied with the time taken to complete their most recent repair (47%).

Satisfaction with the recent repairs service is down by 9% since the previous survey, whilst it is down by 8% for the time taken to complete the most recent repair.



Keeping Properties in Good Repair



*Safe home changed from “safe and secure” to “well maintained and safe” in Q1 22/23 and to just “safe” in Q3 22/23.



Responsible Neighbourhood Management



28% of tenants live in a building with communal areas that Babergh & Mid-Suffolk is responsible for maintaining.

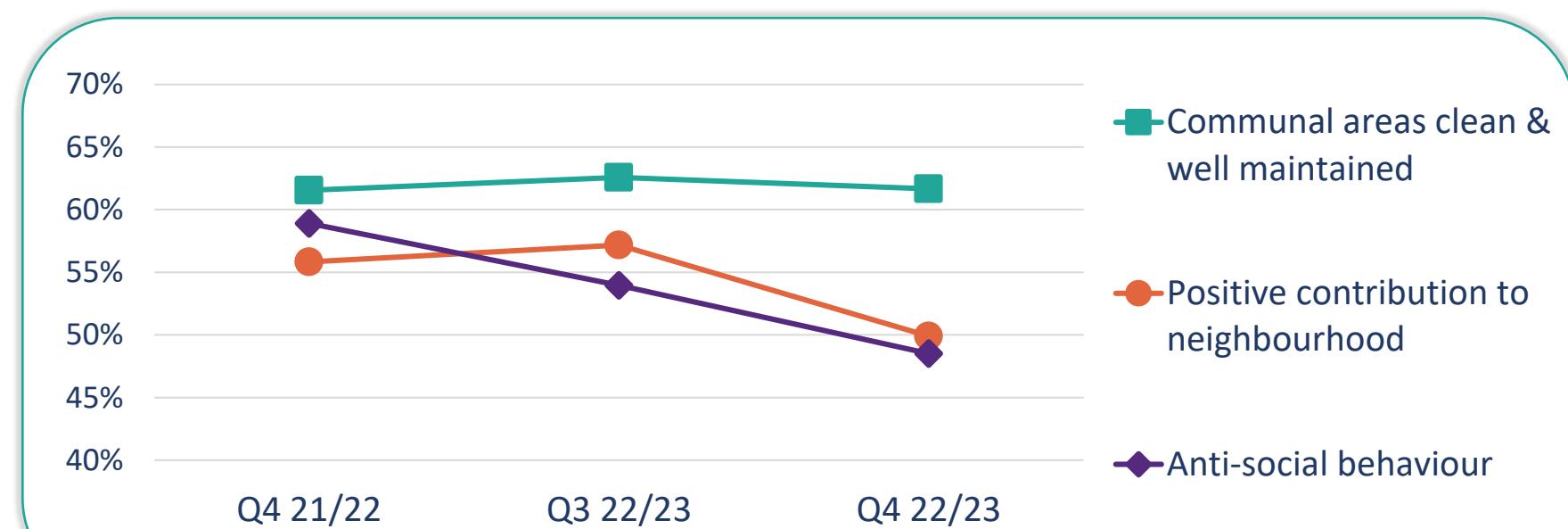
Just over six out of ten of these tenants are satisfied that Babergh & Mid-Suffolk keeps their communal areas clean and well maintained (62%), although 24% are dissatisfied. Satisfaction is marginally down (1%) since last quarter.

50% of tenants are satisfied that Babergh & Mid Suffolk Councils make a positive contribution to their neighbourhood, which is a decrease of 7% since Q3.

Additionally, in Q4, satisfaction with how anti-social behaviour is handled has decreased by 5%; from 54% to 49%. Dissatisfaction only rose by 1% to 19%, with the reduction in satisfaction coming from more tenants selecting the neither option.



Responsible Neighbourhood Management





Respectful & Helpful Engagement

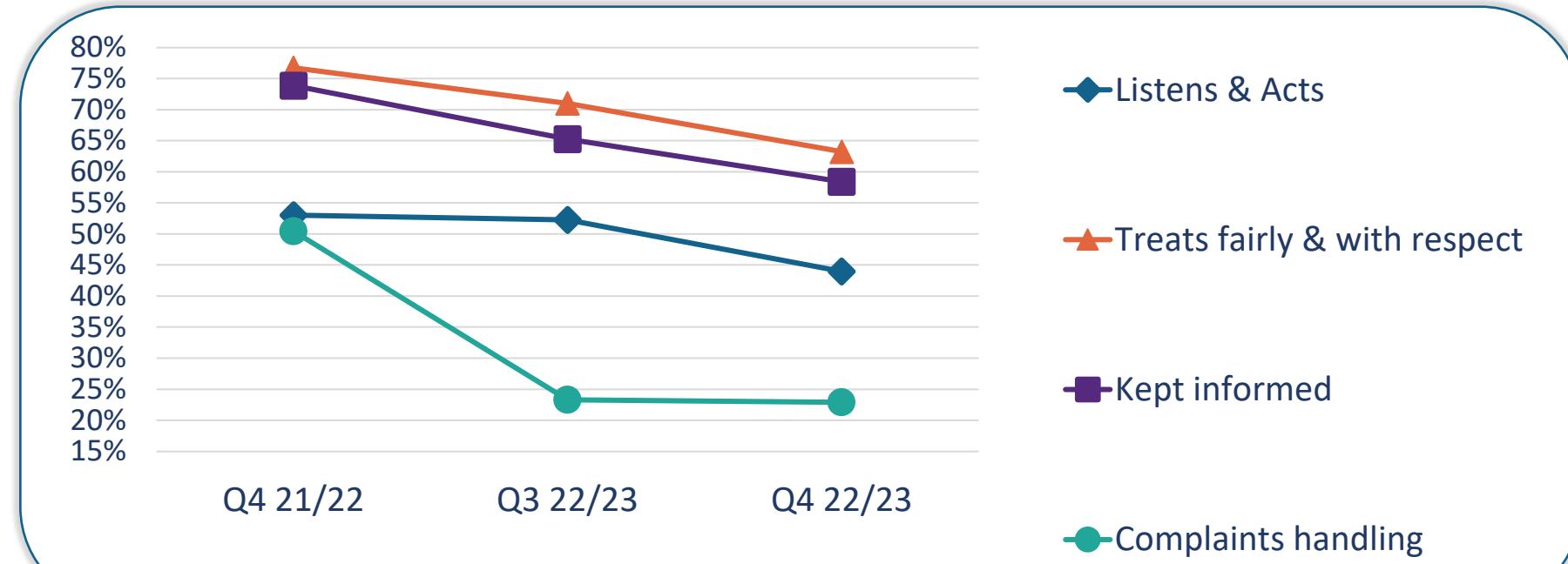
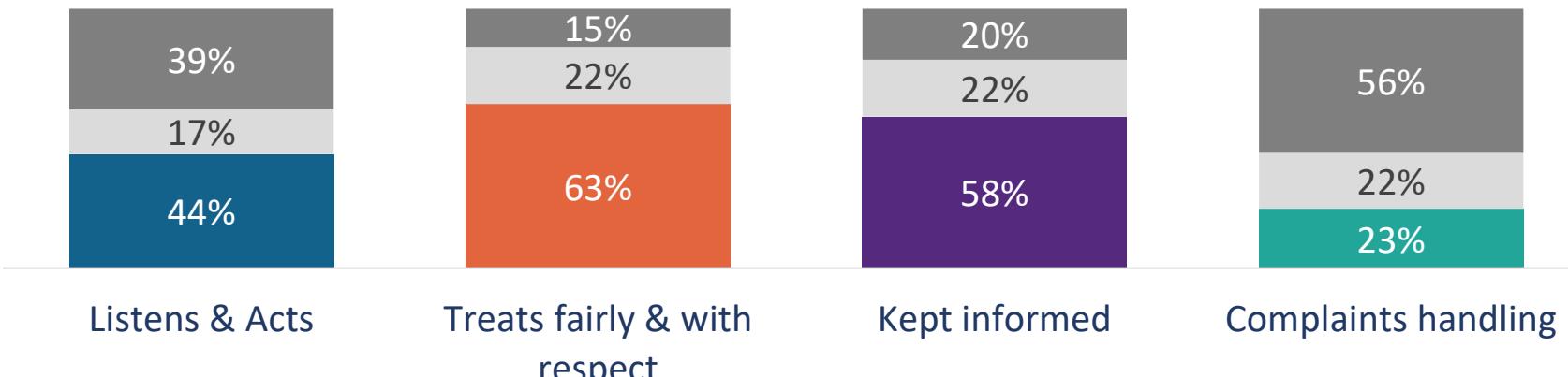


Respectful & Helpful Engagement

Just under three-fifths of tenants are satisfied with how they are kept informed about things that matter to them (58%); however, fewer are satisfied that Babergh & Mid Suffolk listens to their views and acts upon them (44%).

Over six out of ten tenants agree that they are treated fairly and with respect (63%).

Just 23% are satisfied with the way complaints are handled, with far more dissatisfied (56%). Satisfaction has remained the same since the previous survey, stabilizing since the introduction of the qualifying question last quarter, which meant only those that made a complaint in the past 12 months answer the question.



*From Q3 2022/23 satisfaction with complaints handing is now only asked to those who had used service in last 12 months



Tenants not satisfied with the way Babergh & Mid Suffolk listens to their views and acts upon them were asked why, and 306 tenants made comments.

Tenants' main concern is around the time taken to complete repairs, followed by dealing with outstanding or forgotten repairs. Also, of concern to some tenants is damp and mould in their property and communication issues, particularly around reporting repairs.

Furthermore, other tenants would like improvements to their home or improved customer service.



Comments – Listens & Acts



Number of respondents: 306



Recommending



Tenants were asked, "How likely would you be to recommend Babergh & Mid Suffolk Councils to other people on a scale of 10 to 0, where 10 is extremely likely and 0 is not at all likely?"

Almost a third (31%) of tenants are promoters, very loyal and happy to promote Babergh & Mid Suffolk to other people. Over a quarter of tenants are currently passive and could be persuaded either way (29%). However, two-fifths are detractors (40%), and are likely to have negative views about the Councils.

The Net Promoter Score in Q4 (promoters minus detractors) is -8, which is down 19 points since Q3 22/23.

-8

NPS ↓ 19

Recommending Babergh & Mid-Suffolk

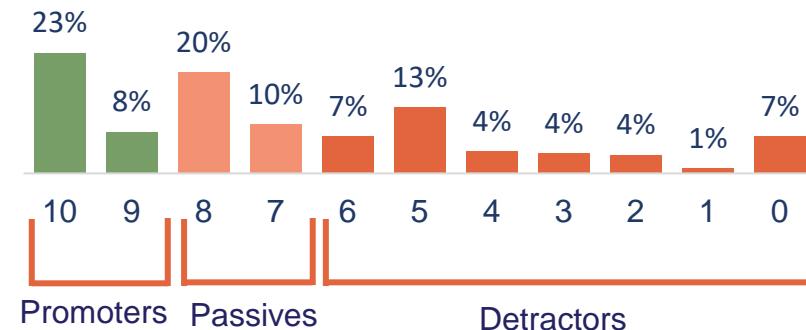


31%
Promoters
↓ 13%

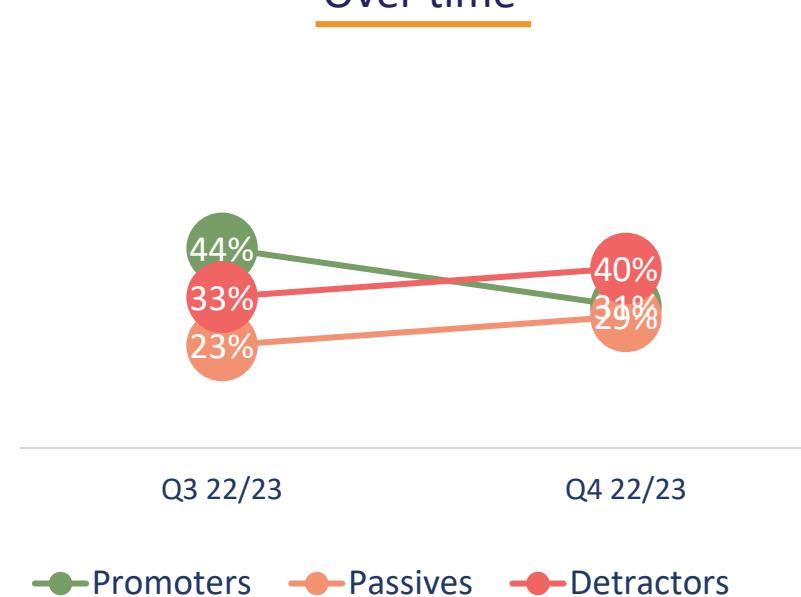
29%
Passives
↑ 6%

40%
Detractors
↑ 6%

How likely would you be to recommend Babergh & Mid-Suffolk to other people?



Over time





Internet & Online Services

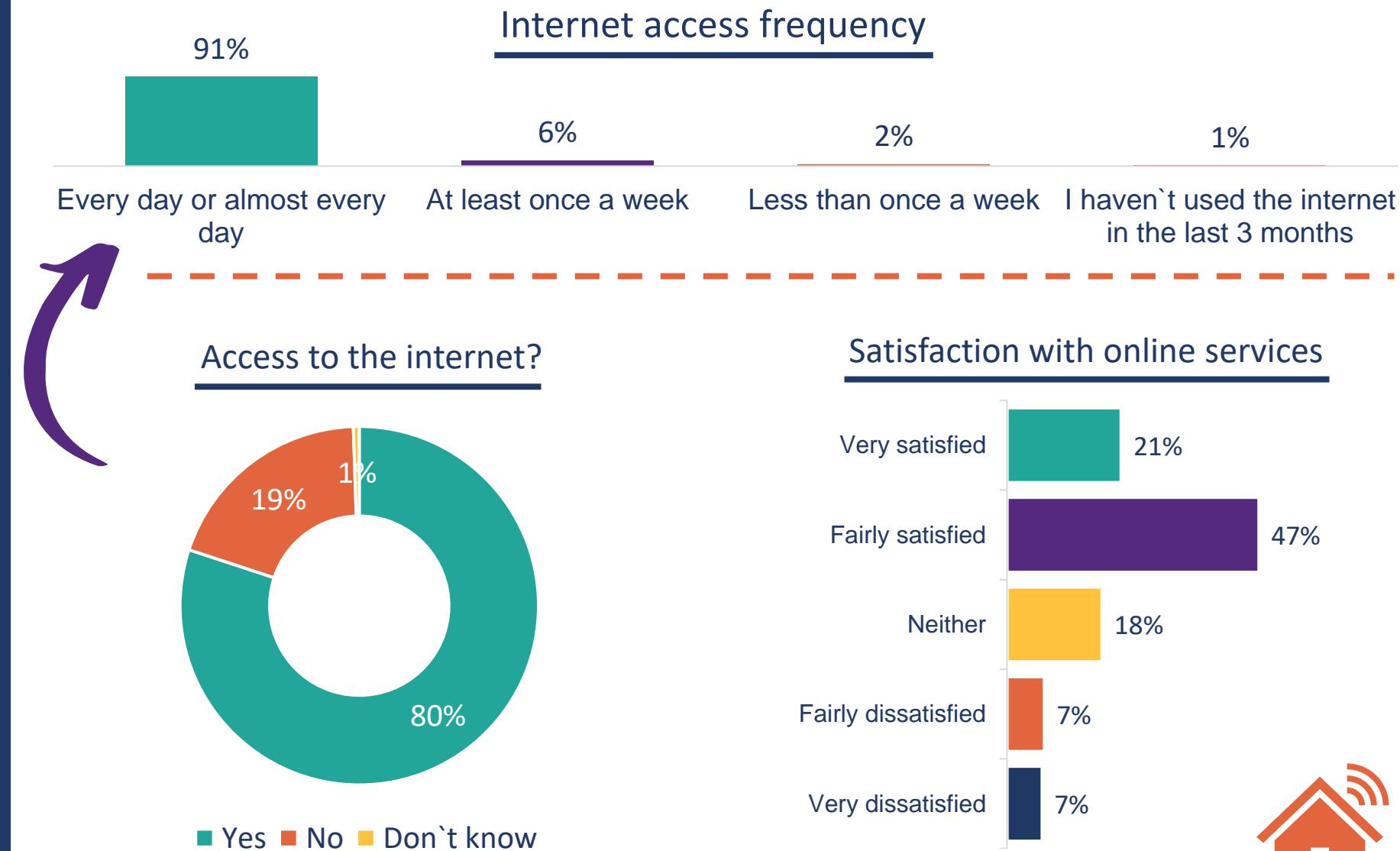


Internet & Online Services

80% of tenants say they have access to the internet whilst 19% say they do not.

Of these, the vast majority of tenants use the internet daily or almost daily (91%), or weekly (6%). Just 1% say they have not used the internet in the last 3 months.

In terms of satisfaction with the online services provided by Babergh & Mid Suffolk Councils, 69% of tenants are satisfied. Just 13% are dissatisfied, whilst 17% say they do not use these services.





Trends



Satisfaction with key services is down in most areas, with complaints handling remaining the same at 23% satisfaction.

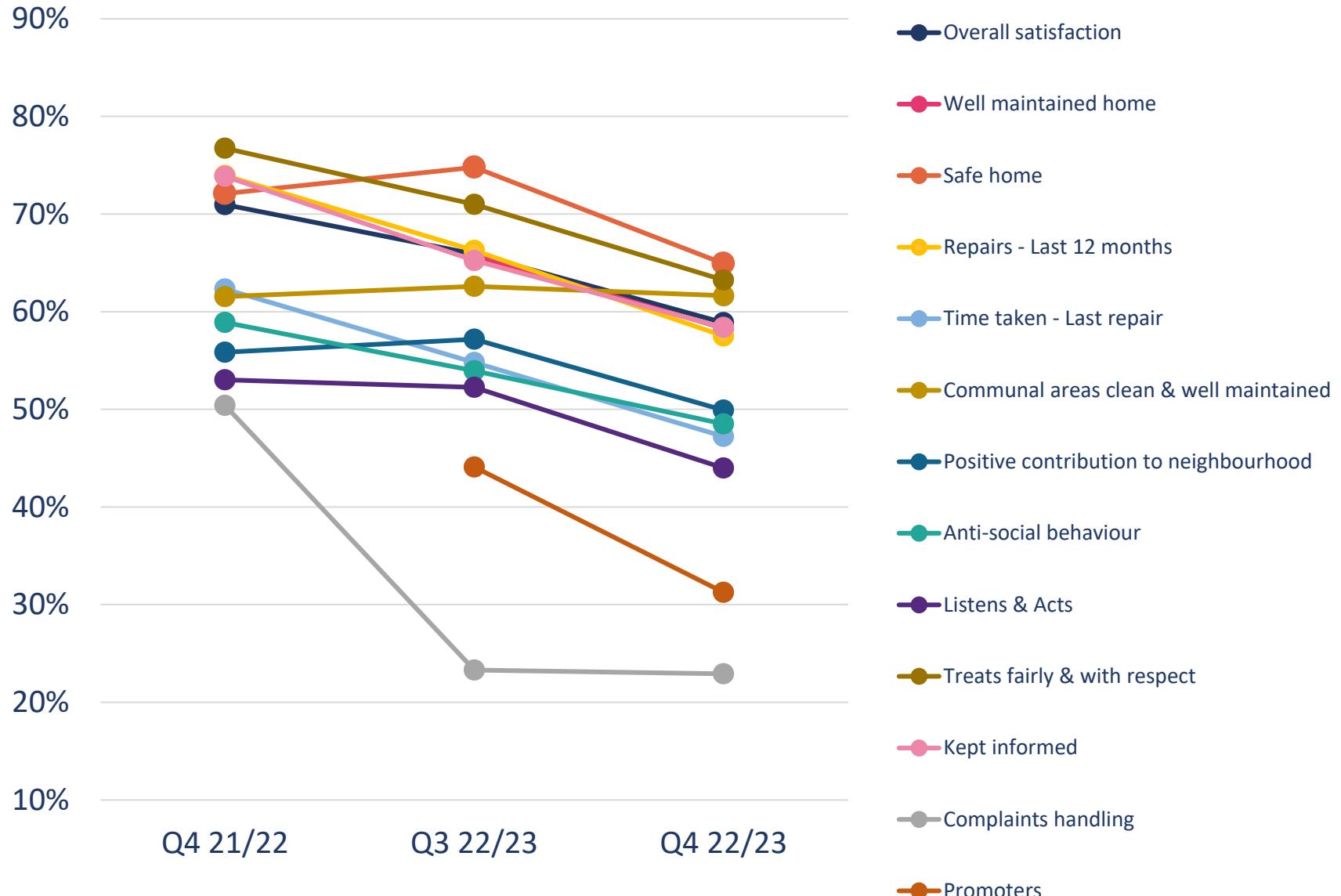
Overall satisfaction is down by 7%, there are 5% fewer tenants satisfied with the way anti-social behaviour is handled, 7% fewer feel well informed and 8% fewer feel they are treated fairly and with respect.

The biggest change is with the number of promoters, which is down by 13% since the last survey.

However, satisfaction with complaints handling has remained the same (23%) since Q3; recovering from the large drop between Q4 21/22 and Q3 22/23.



Trend Over Time



*Safe home changed from “safe and secure” to “well maintained and safe” in Q1 22/23 and to just “safe” in Q3 22/23. And from Q3 2022/23 satisfaction with complaints handling is now only asked to those who had used service in last 12 months



Annual Summary



Sometimes where satisfaction is low, the remaining tenants can be split between those who fall into the neutral middle ground and those who are actually dissatisfied. This difference can signal areas where tenants do not have strong opinions or areas where a high percentage of tenants are actually dissatisfied.

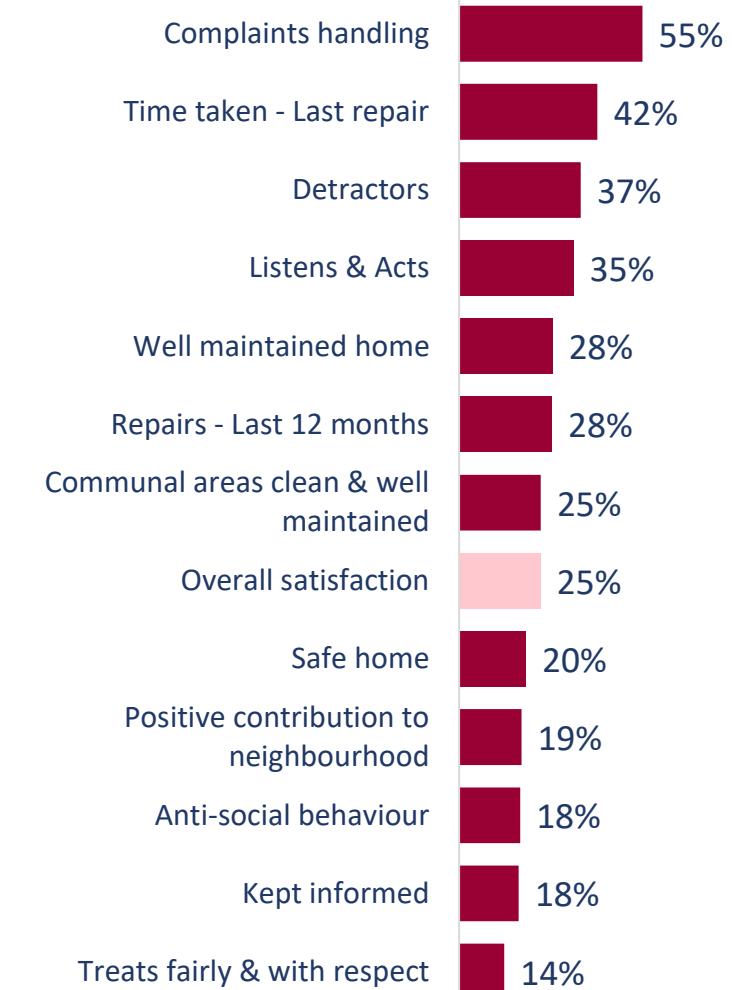
Annual satisfaction is the lowest for complaints handling (23%), correspondingly, this measure has the highest level of dissatisfaction (55%), whilst 42% are also dissatisfied with the time to complete the most recent repair. Some questions have a considerable number of tenants respond as neutral. For example, anti-social behaviour had a low satisfaction rate of 51%, but also a low dissatisfaction of 18%.

Annual Satisfaction & Dissatisfaction

Satisfaction with measures 2022/23



Dissatisfaction with measures 2022/23



As this is the last survey of 2022/23, this section will now analyse the annual results and further explore what is driving satisfaction.

The table shows the annual results for 2022/23 against those for 2021/22. It shows that satisfaction has generally decreased over this time period, down 9% for the overall satisfaction with services and between 3% and 27% for the remaining measures, the most for complaint handling.

The only improvement (1%) was in the maintenance of communal areas, though there were smaller decreases (3%) in providing a safe home and contribution to the neighbourhood than in other areas.

Year on Year Change

	2021/22	2022/23	Change
Overall satisfaction	71%	62%	-9%
Well maintained home	--	62%	
Safe home	72%	69%	-3%
Repairs - Last 12 months	74%	61%	-13%
Time taken - Last repair	62%	51%	-12%
Communal areas clean & well maintained	62%	62%	1%
Positive contribution to neighbourhood	56%	53%	-3%
Anti-social behaviour	59%	51%	-8%
Listens & Acts	53%	48%	-5%
Kept informed	74%	61%	-12%
Treats fairly & with respect	77%	67%	-10%
Complaints handling	50%	23%	-27%
Promoters	--	37%	

Base: 2021/22 = 801, 2022/23 = 806



The tables to the right include analysis of all the comments received in 2022/23 for the only open question in the survey which is dissatisfaction with Babergh & Mid-Suffolk listening to views & acting upon them. 522 comments were received.

The most common area for comment is the day-to-day repairs service, attracting 63% of the comments made. In particular, tenants want repairs done quicker and outstanding repairs dealt with. However, 13% of comment refer to issues with damp/mould whilst 9% said they had to report repairs multiple times before anything was done.

Other comments refer to listening more carefully to tenants needs, returning calls when promised, whilst some would like to see improvements to their homes.

Annual Comments

Top Comment Areas 2022/23

Day-to-day repairs	63%
Customer services & contact	25%
Property condition	23%
Communications and information	16%
Home improvements	13%
Tenant services and management	7%
Grounds maintenance	7%
Organisational policies	6%
Safety and security	6%
Neighbourhood problems	4%
No comment / don't know	4%

Hot Topics 2022/23

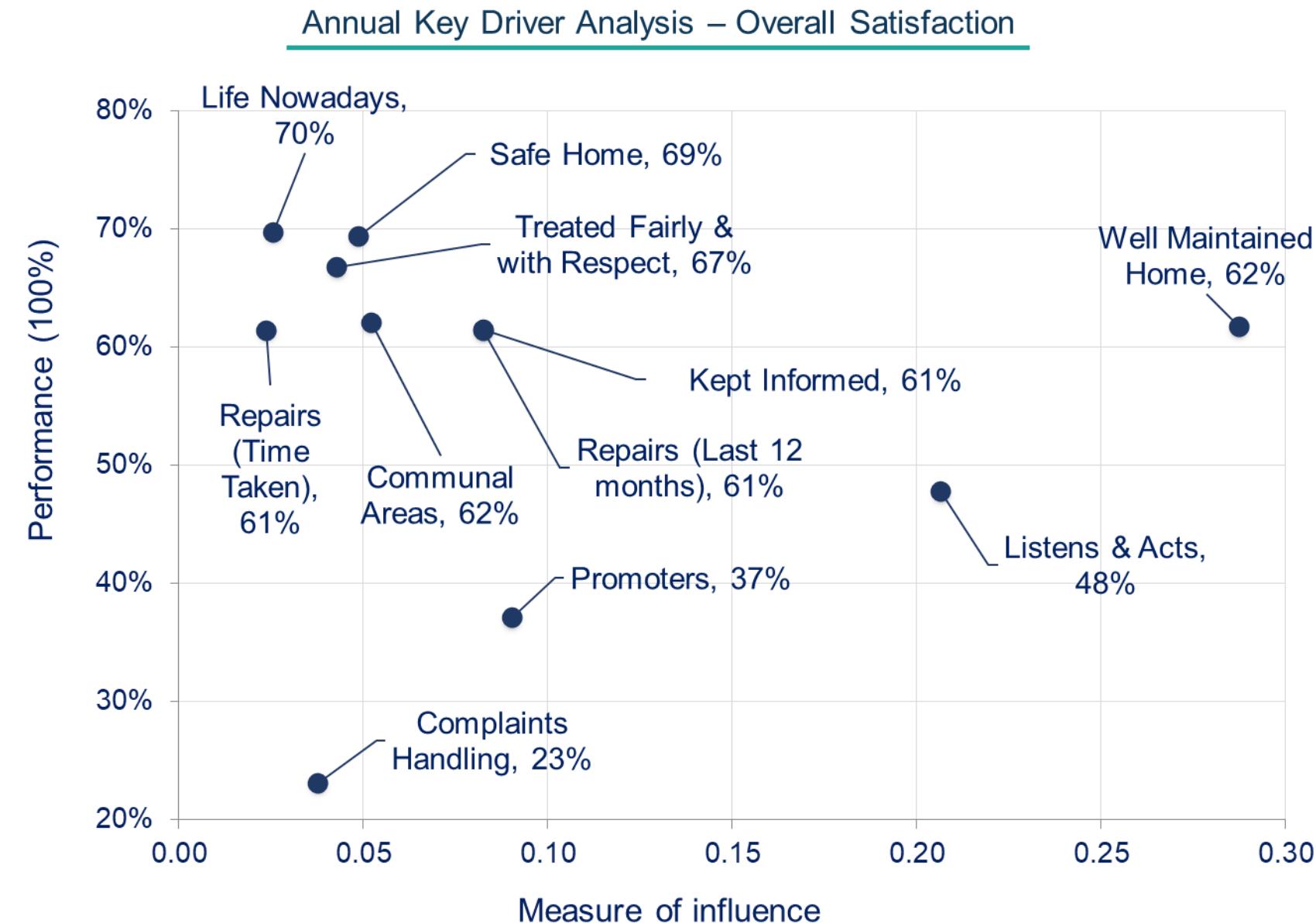
Day-to-day repairs - Timescales to complete repairs	33%
Day-to-day repairs - Outstanding / forgotten repairs	29%
Property condition - Damp / mould / condensation	13%
Day-to-day repairs - Had to report repair multiple times	9%
Communications and information - Listen carefully, take interest	9%
Customer services & contact - Return call / email	8%
Day-to-day repairs - Communication about repair (before work started)	7%
Home improvements - New kitchen, bathroom	5%
Day-to-day repairs - Quality of work	4%
Tenant services and management - Help for older tenants/health issues	4%
Day-to-day repairs - Appointments	4%
Home improvements - Heating system	4%
Communications and information - Act on views and give feedback	4%

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 combining all the results for 2022/23, the most important driver for tenants' satisfaction with the overall services is that Babergh & Mid-Suffolk provide well-maintained homes and that they listen to tenants' views and act upon them. Keeping tenants informed, the repairs service in the last 12 months and how tenants would recommend the Councils to other people are also important.

The implication of this analysis is 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.

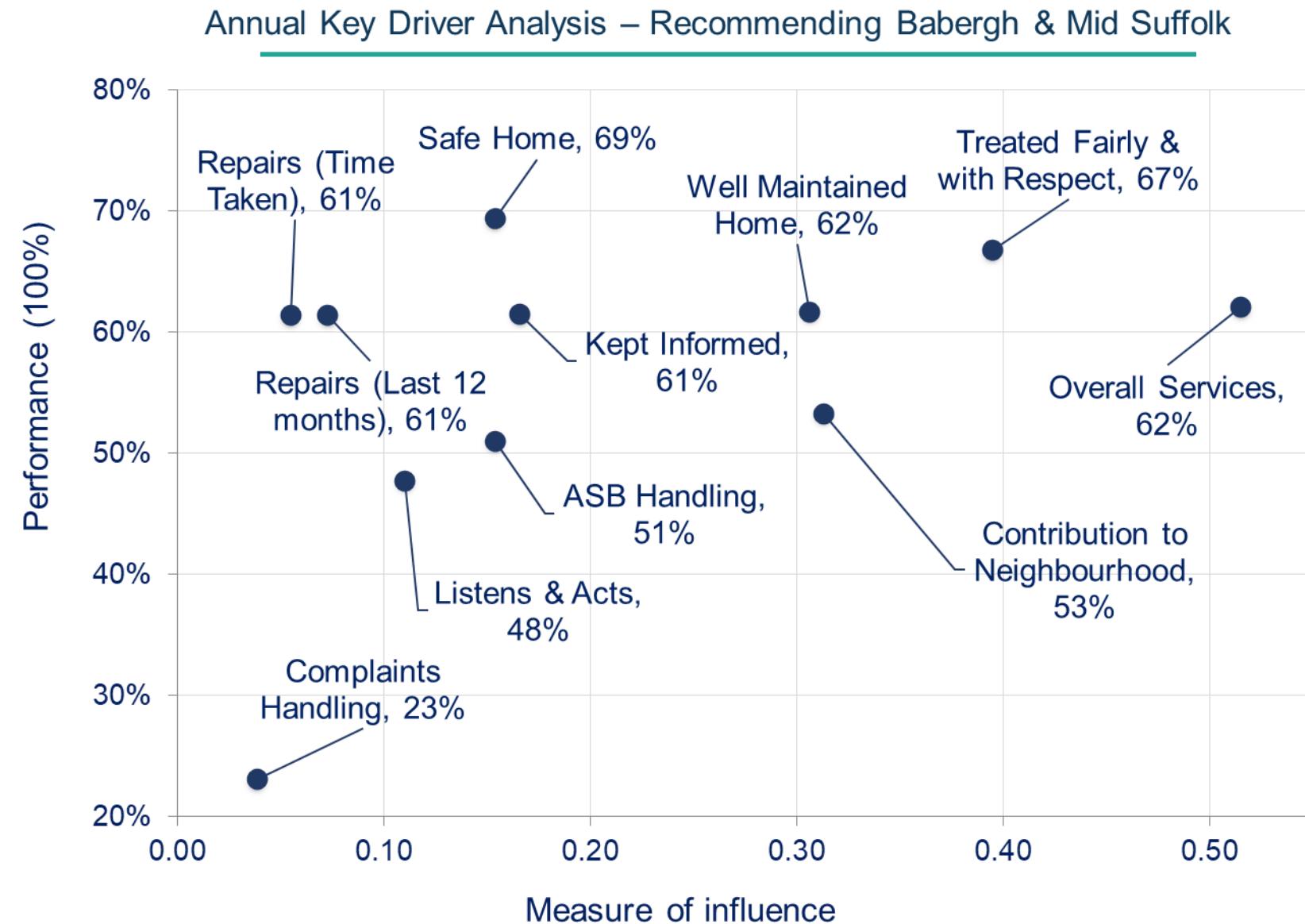
Key Driver Analysis – Overall Satisfaction



When the key driver analysis is altered to consider the factors which have the most impact on tenants' NPS, it is found that satisfaction with the overall services is the most prominent driver, tenants being treated fairly and with respect next in importance. Providing a well-maintained home and a positive contribution to the neighbourhood are also influential but less so.

The implication from this analysis is that if improvements around the overall service and the way tenants are treated can be achieved, it is more likely to lead to more tenants recommending Babergh & Mid-Suffolk to others.

Key Driver Analysis – NPS



It is also possible to compare performance on the core questions against Acuity's clients benchmarking data for Q1-Q3 2022/23. The graph shows the results for all tenants alongside the median and quartiles.

Just one of the twelve measures shown of Babergh & Mid-Suffolk's annual ratings (keeping tenants informed) is above the median (10% above) and is in the top quartile.

However, the remaining measures all fall below the median by between 9% and 42%. The upkeep of the communal areas and treating tenants fairly and with respect are in the third quartile but the other measures, including the overall satisfaction, the home, repairs and communication issues all fall into the lower quartile.

The biggest difference is for the complaints handling, 42% below the group median.

Benchmarking – Acuity

Satisfaction Levels Acuity Median Q1 - Q3 22/23



When considering the results, the national context and external factors should also be taken into account. For example:

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

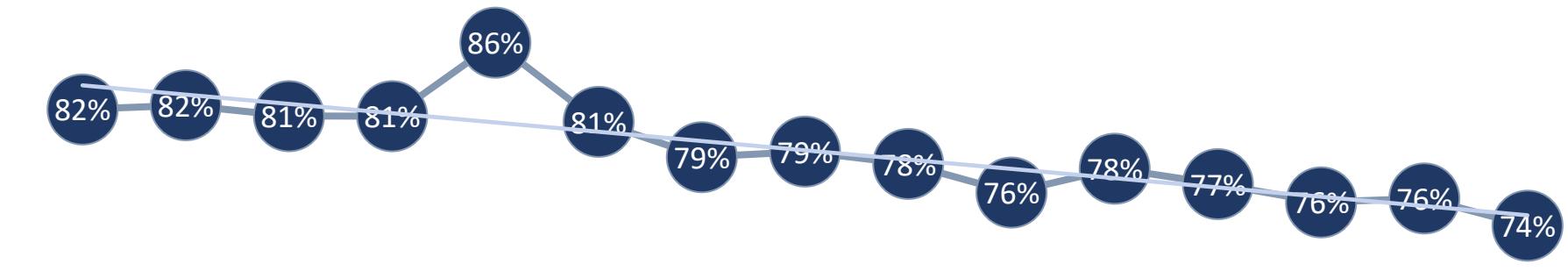
Satisfaction is based on perception rather than specific values so can be affected by these factors and how positive people feel about their lives. Factors such as the pandemic also altered the way social landlords operate.

The top graph demonstrates how overall satisfaction has changed over time for Acuity's clients (tracker only). The trendline is downward over the last few years.

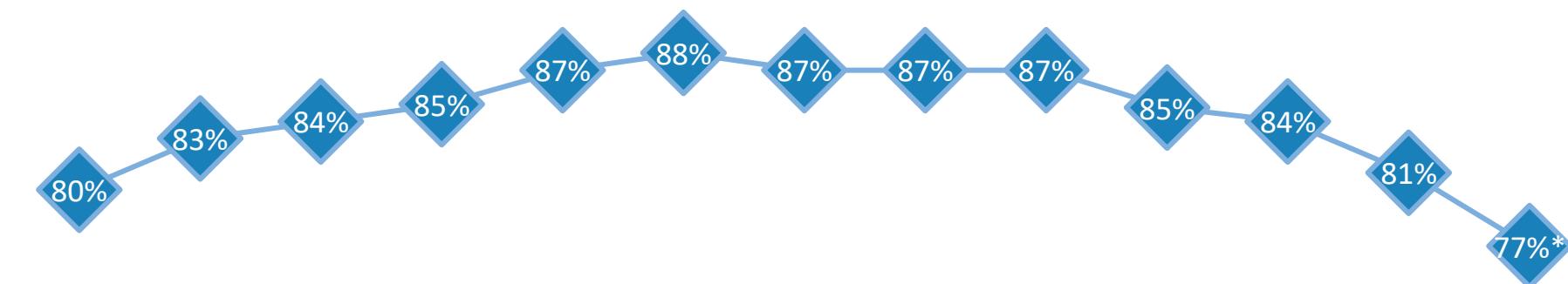
The lower graph is from Housemark and shows a steady reduction in satisfaction since 2015/16.

National Context

Overall Services (Acuity Clients)



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



*As reported by Housemark in January 2023.



Conclusion



Satisfaction with measures



Conclusion

2022/23 survey shows some good levels of satisfaction with the services provided by Babergh & Mid-Suffolk, although satisfaction has generally been falling between the surveys in Q3 and Q4 and from year to year.

62% of tenants are satisfied with the overall services provided throughout the year, although a quarter (25%) are dissatisfied. The highest ratings are for the provision of a safe home (69%), tenants being treated fairly and with respect (67%), the upkeep of the communal areas and Babergh & Mid-Suffolk providing a well-maintained home (both 62%). However, just 48% of tenants are satisfied with the way the Councils listen to tenants' views and act upon them and only 23% are satisfied with the way complaints are handled, with more than twice as many dissatisfied. 37% of tenants would recommend Babergh & Mid-Suffolk to other people, the same number wouldn't; the Net Promoter Score for 2022/23 is 0.

Overall satisfaction has decreased by 9% since last year, with most of the other measures also down, the most for complaints handling (down 27%) and the repairs service in the last 12 months (down 13%). The only measure showing an increase is for the upkeep of the communal areas (up 1%).

The survey included an open question about the home and 522 tenants made comments in the year. The biggest issues are the timescales for works to be completed, dealing with outstanding or forgotten repairs, and problems with damp and mould. In this respect, these are similar to those voiced previously, which suggests more needs to be done to resolve these issues.

Recommendations

As the largest area of concern for most residents appears to be the repairs and maintenance service, a review of the transactional surveys Acuity carry out on behalf of Babergh and Mid-Suffolk has also been conducted. For the 2022/23 year so far, being kept informed (76%) and the ease of dealing with Babergh and Mid-Suffolk (70%) attract lower than average scores. The majority of open-ended responses stem from a lack of communication and urgency regarding residents' repairs and the difficulty residents have in trying to arrange for their repairs to be carried out.



How complaints are dealt with

Dealing with complaints has become a hot topic across the sector with a new focus on this as part of the TSM questions. The survey now includes a qualifying question, meaning only those experiencing complaints give their satisfaction rating, and this appears to have contributed to a general fall in satisfaction. However, just 23% of tenants are satisfied with the way their complaints were handled in 2022/23 with far more dissatisfied (55%). Whilst it is notoriously difficult to resolve issues to everyone's satisfaction, tenants need to have confidence they will be taken seriously and dealt with professionally.

Repairs & maintenance

Although the only open question in the survey is in relation to Babergh & Mid-Suffolk listening to views and acting upon them, the most frequently mentioned issues with this stem from the repairs service which continues to be the most commented on area. In particular, tenants want their repairs completed quicker and outstanding repairs dealt with. In this respect these are the same issues are previously mentioned so, perhaps, progress is slow in tackling these. In addition, some complain of damp and mould in their homes; given the current focus on these issues it is important these are investigated and dealt with where necessary.

Communications

How Babergh and Mid-Suffolk listens to tenants' views and acts upon them received one of the lower scores in the survey, 48% satisfied throughout the year. Also, when asked about improvements to service some cited this as an issue, both in terms of the interest shown to tenants and then how they act on views. The Councils could look at the way they communicate with and involve tenants to further increase opportunities and take more notice of the views expressed.



Appendix 1 – Annual Demographics



The table opposite shows that there is a mix of results when comparing one Council against the other.

Whilst both have 62% of their tenants satisfied with the overall services provided, those in Mid-Suffolk are more likely to be satisfied with their home and the communal areas, how they are informed about things that matter to them and slightly more feel they are treated fairly and with respect. 3% more tenants would recommend Mid-Suffolk Council to others than would recommend Babergh.

Babergh tenants are more satisfied with the time to complete repairs, neighbourhood issues and complaints handling.

However, the differences between the Councils are small.



Council

	Mid Suffolk District Council	Babergh District Council
Overall satisfaction	62%	62%
Well maintained home	62%	61%
Safe home	71%	68%
Repairs - Last 12 months	62%	61%
Time taken - Last repair	48%	53%
Communal areas clean & well maintained	65%	60%
Positive contribution to neighbourhood	52%	54%
Anti-social behaviour	51%	51%
Listens & Acts	48%	48%
Kept informed	62%	61%
Treats fairly & with respect	67%	66%
Complaints handling	19%	26%
Promoters	39%	36%

Base: Mid Suffolk = 660 , Babergh = 721

Babergh & Mid-Suffolk has three main tenure types, and the results from each are shown opposite.

Generally, those on an Introductory tenancy are far more satisfied than those with a secure tenancy. 27% more are satisfied with the overall services, 23% more with the recent repairs service and 25% more would recommend the Councils to other people.

The results from those with a non-secure license are closer to those with a secure tenancy, although generally a little higher.



Tenure

	Secure	Introductory	Non Secure License
Overall satisfaction	60%	87%	69%
Well maintained home	60%	78%	69%
Safe home	68%	82%	63%
Repairs - Last 12 months	60%	83%	71%
Time taken - Last repair	50%	60%	71%
Communal areas clean & well maintained	60%	73%	73%
Positive contribution to neighbourhood	51%	74%	57%
Anti-social behaviour	50%	57%	75%
Listens & Acts	46%	68%	73%
Kept informed	60%	74%	53%
Treats fairly & with respect	65%	81%	88%
Complaints handling	22%	41%	33%
Promoters	35%	60%	40%

Base: Secure = 1257, Introductory = 107, Non secure license = 16

Age group

When looking at the results of the survey by the age range of the tenants it shows that generally satisfaction increases with age, and in this respect, this is similar to many similar surveys with other social landlords.

In fact, on all the measures shown the most satisfied are those aged 85 and over and 75 to 84. The younger age groups being generally the least satisfied.

For example, on the overall satisfaction with the services provided by Babergh and Mid-Suffolk 79% of those 85 and over are satisfied compared with just 51% of those 35 to 44.



	0 - 24	25 - 34	35 - 44	45 - 54	55 - 59	60 - 64	65 - 74	75 - 84	85 +
Overall satisfaction	67%	52%	51%	58%	55%	67%	66%	71%	79%
Well maintained home	52%	45%	47%	57%	53%	69%	68%	79%	78%
Safe home	48%	55%	53%	65%	68%	70%	78%	84%	83%
Repairs - Last 12 months	69%	53%	50%	51%	64%	65%	67%	72%	70%
Time taken - Last repair	38%	38%	44%	45%	53%	49%	59%	59%	58%
Communal areas clean & well maintained	56%	59%	60%	46%	58%	59%	62%	65%	76%
Positive contribution to neighbourhood	41%	48%	46%	43%	53%	49%	59%	67%	70%
Anti-social behaviour	53%	44%	43%	41%	55%	37%	60%	60%	72%
Listens & Acts	42%	38%	42%	42%	42%	50%	50%	60%	64%
Kept informed	56%	55%	52%	58%	57%	58%	66%	71%	78%
Treats fairly & with respect	60%	60%	63%	60%	68%	64%	68%	76%	80%
Complaints handling	20%	12%	28%	16%	23%	17%	21%	30%	35%
Promoters	29%	32%	26%	35%	35%	41%	45%	39%	49%

Base: 0-24 = 21, 25-34 = 128, 35-44 = 202, 45-54 = 212, 55-59 = 128, 60-64 = 112, 65-74 = 232, 75-84 = 208, 85+ = 104

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

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