



Lancaster City Council

LCRA TSM 2024/25 Report

Prepared by: Acuity Research & Practice



Introduction

In 2023, Lancaster City Council commissioned Acuity to undertake three annual independent satisfaction surveys with its tenants to help collect and report Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) and meet the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) requirements. The following report outlines results from the second annual survey (2024/25), which was undertaken between the 27 August and 13 September.

The aim of the survey was to provide data on tenants' satisfaction, which will allow Lancaster City Council to:

- Provide information on tenants' perceptions of current services
- Compare the results with the survey conducted in 2023/24
- Compare the results with other landlords (where appropriate)
- Report to the Regulator annually

The survey used a sampled approach and a full telephone methodology, though tenants were able to request an online email survey should they have preferred to complete the survey in this way. The survey aimed to gather at least 600 tenant responses (including both completed and partially completed responses) to meet the margin of error required by the RSH.

The sample was randomly selected from 3,449 LCRA units, where quotas were applied to the sampling frame on housing need, area and age, to ensure the response was representative of the overall tenant population as far as possible. Although the Council has a number of leaseholders, these were excluded from the survey in 2024/25.

The survey was confidential and the results were sent back to Lancaster City Council anonymised unless tenants gave their permission to be identified – 77% of the tenants are happy to be identified and 94% of these tenants are happy for Lancaster City Council to contact them to discuss any issues they raised.

For the overall results, Acuity and the Regulator of Social Housing recommend that landlords with between 2,500 and 9,999 LCRA properties achieve a sampling error of at least $\pm 4\%$ at the 95% confidence level. For Lancaster City Council, 628 responses were received (including 28 partially completed interviews), which is high enough to conclude that the findings are accurate to within $\pm 3.54\%$, well within 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 results file to the nearest whole number, and for this reason, may not in all cases add up to 100%. Rounding can also cause percentages described in the supporting text to differ from the percentages in the charts by 1% when two percentages are added together. Base numbers are shown against the charts as n=...

Key TSM Metrics

Overall Satisfaction

Good Repair

Building Safety

Neighbourhood

Engagement

Complaints

NPS

Improvements

Trends

Further Insight

Summary

Demographics

77% Overall Satisfaction



Three-quarters of tenants are satisfied with the overall service provided by the Council. This is an increase from the previous survey and compares well with other social landlords who have worked with Acuity over the last year.

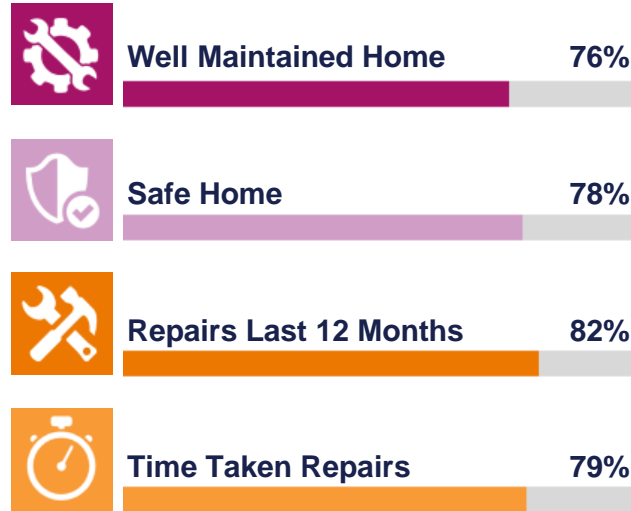
Two of the measures achieved satisfaction levels above 80%, these being the overall repairs service over the last 12 months (82%) and tenants being treated fairly and with respect by the Council (81%).

However, at the other end of the scale, two measures fall below 60% - the approach taken to handling anti-social behaviour (55%) and complaints (37%). Although as will be shown later in the report, these are often two of the lowest-performing metrics for landlords.

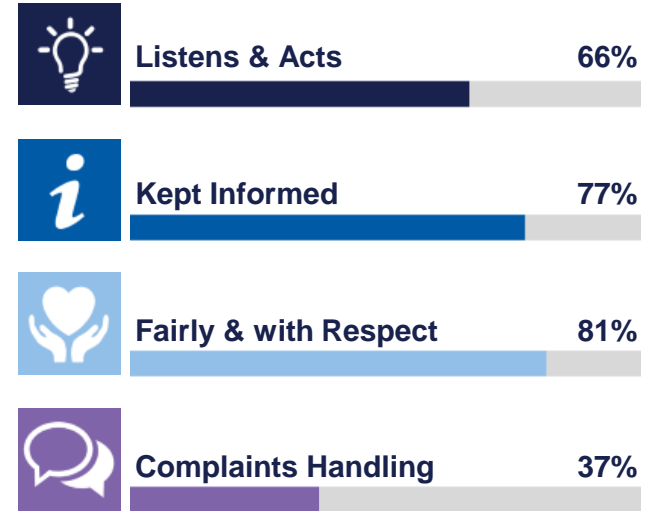
This report will focus on the headline figures but will also show how the results compare with the previous survey and other social landlords. Additionally, the demographics section further breaks down satisfaction by different subgroups to give a better understanding of what is driving satisfaction at Lancaster.

TSM Key Metrics

Keeping Properties in Good Repair



Respectful & Helpful Engagement



Responsible Neighbourhood Management





Overall Satisfaction

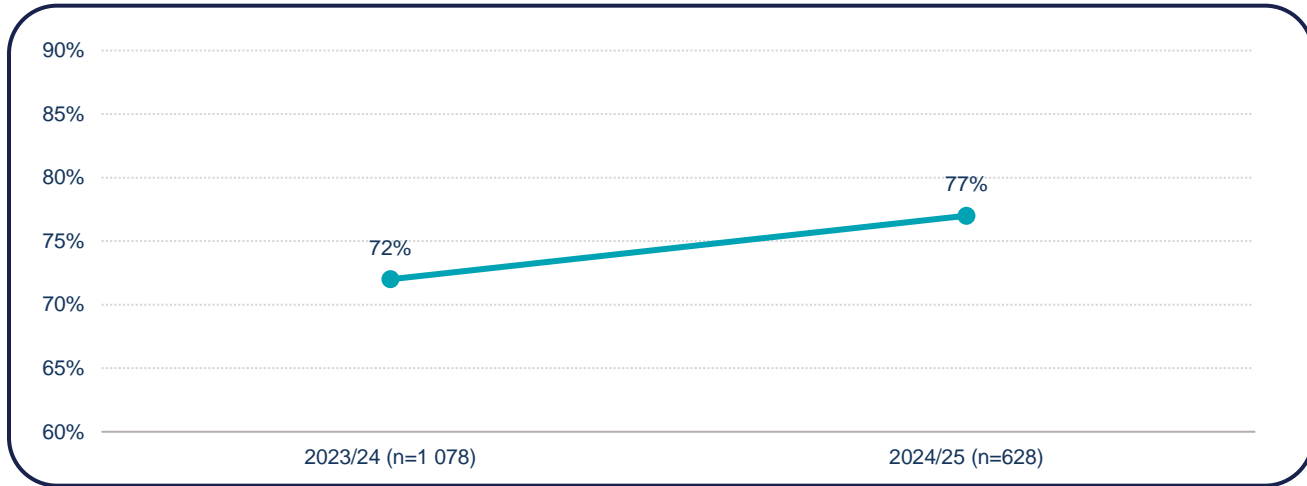
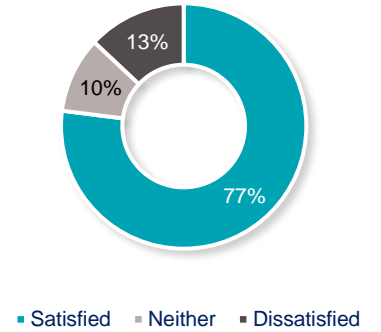
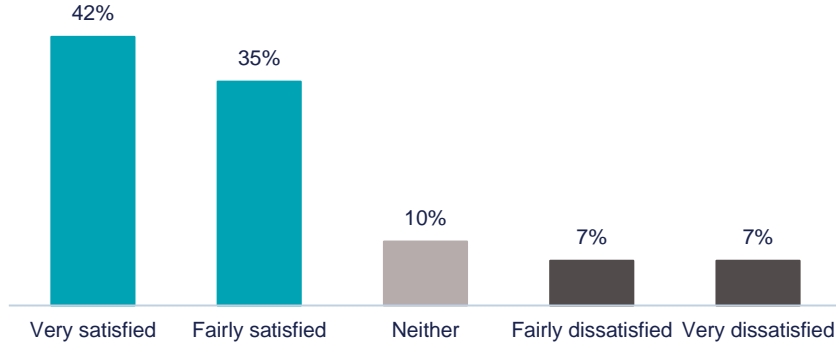


Overall Satisfaction

Tenants were asked, "Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided by Lancaster City Council?" This is the key metric in any tenant perception survey.

Around three-quarters of tenants (77%) are satisfied with the overall service provided by Lancaster City Council, and it is encouraging that more are very satisfied (42%) than fairly satisfied (35%). Just 13% of tenants are dissatisfied with the overall service provided and a further 10% are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

Acuity carried out a similar TSM survey for Lancaster City Council for 2023/24. Encouragingly, overall satisfaction has increased in this time by 5 percentage points (p.p), from 72% to 77%, which may in part reflect improvements in service provision. This increase in satisfaction is also reflected across all other metrics, to varying degrees. Dissatisfaction with the overall services provided by the Council has marginally decreased (down 2p.p).





Keeping Properties in Good Repair



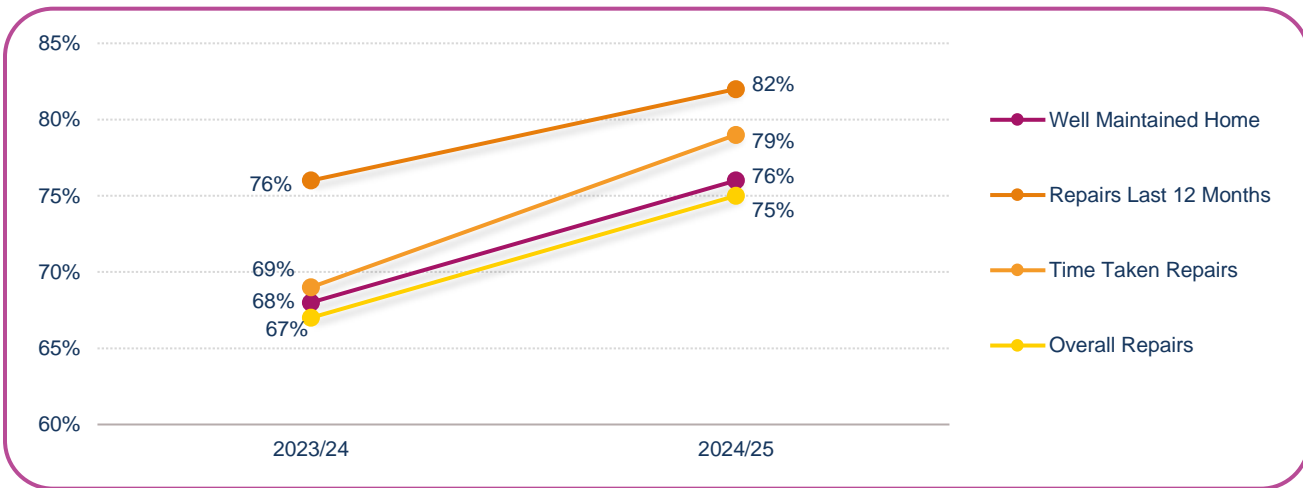
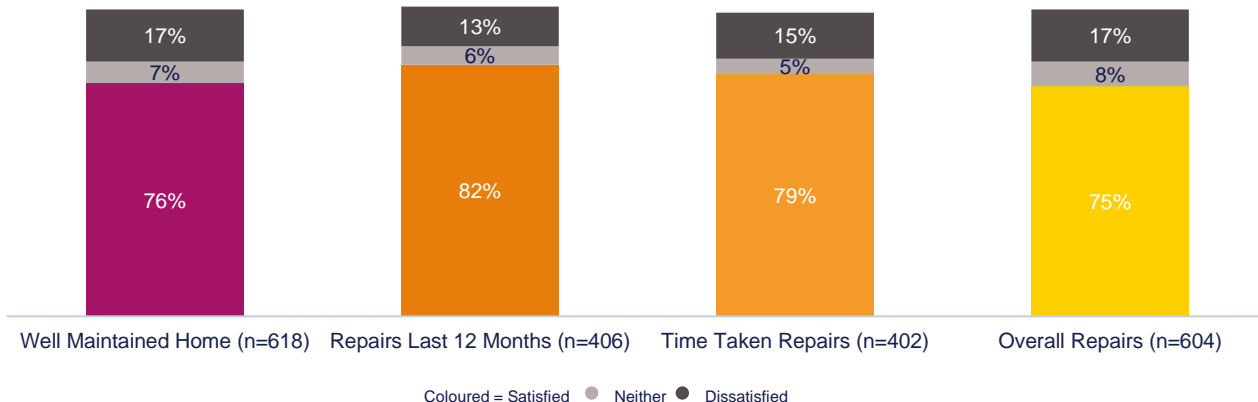
Keeping Properties in Good Repair

Three-quarters of tenants (76%) are satisfied that their home is well maintained, this having increased by 8p.p since the previous survey, with 17% dissatisfied.

Two-thirds of tenants said they had a repair carried out on their home in the last 12 months. Of these tenants, 82% are satisfied with the overall repairs service during this period; this has also seen an increase in satisfaction, up 5p.p compared with last year. There are now just 13% of tenants dissatisfied with the service.

It is common that fewer tenants are satisfied with the time taken to complete repairs and this is the case here, although there are still 79% satisfied with the time taken, with 15% dissatisfied. This has also seen an increase in satisfaction, this time up by 10p.p.

Finally in this section, all tenants, whether they had a repair completed or not, were asked about the overall repairs and maintenance service, and 75% of tenants are satisfied, with 17% dissatisfied. Satisfaction with the overall repairs and maintenance service has increased from 67% in 2023 to 75% in 2024.





Tenants who were not satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service were asked to explain why and what could be improved. 178 tenants made comments.

The most commonly cited areas were the timescales for work to be completed and dealing with outstanding repairs, followed by issues with damp and mould in the home.

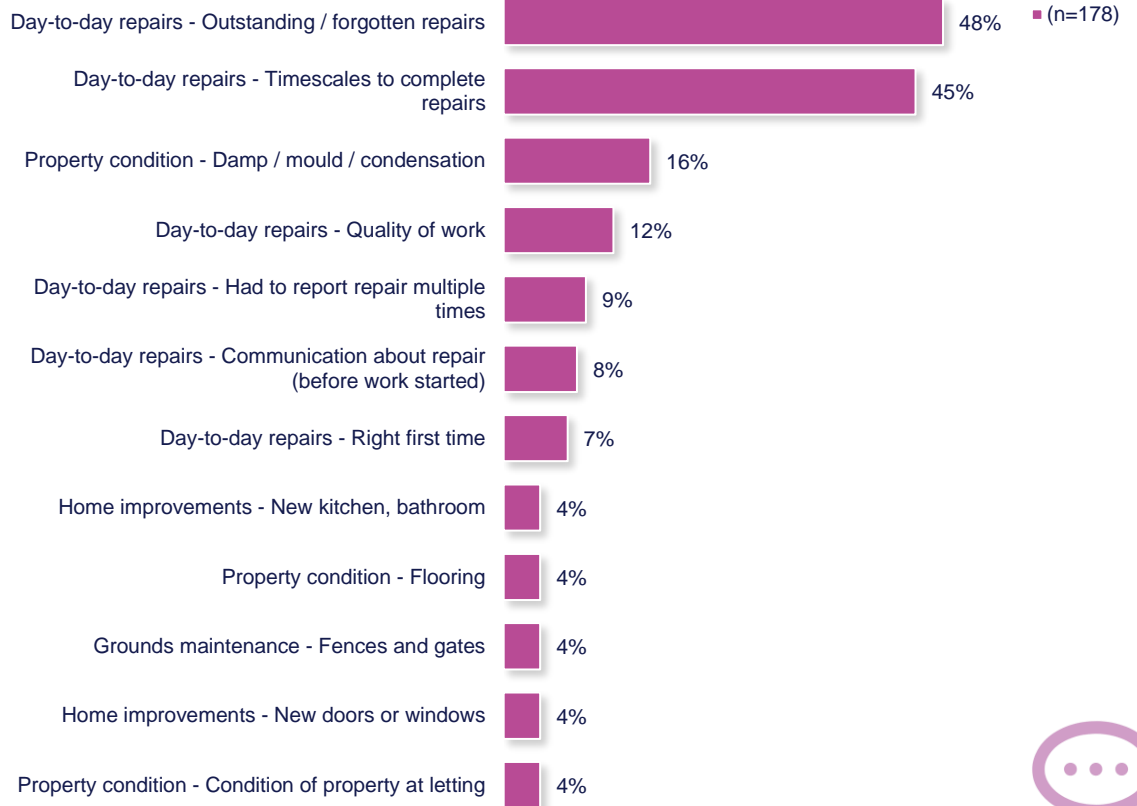
Some comments cover all three issues, such as, *"They take so long to sort anything out. They blame everything on the damp. The attic has completely gone. It is causing damp in the bathroom. We have water running down in the bedrooms. I have been fighting this since 2012."*

These concerns are common to many other social landlords and with increasing pressures on repairs departments it is very difficult to satisfy everyone, particularly as expectations of service are often high

Dealing with damp problems has to take priority but this can delay other, less urgent works, thereby adding to the timescales and reducing satisfaction. Keeping tenants fully informed on progress and any delays can help mitigate this a little.

Overleaf shows examples of these comments which will help to provide more insight into issues tenants face and what can be improved.

Comments - Dissatisfaction with Repairs



Repairs – Comments



Outstanding repairs

“Still waiting for a repair to be done. It is the most important repair- my intercom isn't working.”

“I asked for repairs like guttering and drains and it does not happen.”

“I feel that when I report a repair, it never gets done. Some out of hours jobs do get done, however. I feel that they should not have let me move into a building with a collapsed floor, or no smoke alarms or carbon monoxide detectors. I had to pay £245 extra to sort out the issue.”

“There are a couple of issues with the property when I moved in which was two or three months ago now. I reported these to the council who said they'd send someone to take care of them but I've yet to have someone do so.”

“The entrance door has not been working since May this year.”

“When I moved in there was meant to be fire alarms, but they have not done it. It has been 3 and a half years.”

Time to complete repairs

“It took about five months before they sorted the issue with sewage coming up through the shower. They sent several people out including the water people. Eventually they found it was collapsed pipes and there was sewage all over our garden and they expected us to clean it all up.”

“Takes too long to carry out repairs.”

“They say they will do a repair, but it takes them three months to come and look at it. It seems that they are not desperate to come out to look at a repair.”

“It takes a while for the council to respond to the queries; hesitant to make call as it may not get resolved.”

“They take a long time to come and do the repairs, e.g. replace and fix a gate and the back door.”

“It took a long time to fix the most recent repair which is the pipe for my toilet, so it was leaking for a long time.”

“Took them a year to do the boiler.”

Damp & mould

“I had a damp problem, and it took 3 years for them to fix.”

“They come and go, spends two hours so damp re appears.”

“Have damp issues, dealt with nothing told to paint over.”

“Damp was inspected but there was no follow up no one came to fix it still waiting.”

“There is continuous damp affecting our health and it's not been repaired or fixed inspector came out three weeks ago and also repair the kitchen due to there has not been any follow up worried about winter approaching.”

“When we moved in we were told, we found damp on one of the walls, I rang up and as told there is a problem with the roof causing damp and it needs doing, the shed in the garden needed a new roof as well and they haven't been done, the back garden patio bit is unsafe for a child and I have a 9-month-old child, just needs a bit of work on it.”

Other matters

“I have had to have a wet room installed as I am in a wheelchair and there are different kinds of tiles, so they're mismatched. The flooring is done wrongly, and it is going rusty. I have told them months ago and hopefully this is being sorted.”

“We asked for a new kitchen. They don't do anything. They say they can't do it as it is not within the timeframe, and it is a 7 year wait.”

“Because when you ask them to do something they take too long to do it. When you tell them what you want doing, they say they don't know what you're talking about.”

“There is no storage space in the flat. The garden is not cordoned off, so my little boy cannot play in it. There is no storage space. I have reported noise and nuisance a number of times. I feel it just goes over their heads.”

“There's garbage everywhere, the stairs are a deathtrap when it rains, the pipes are always blocked.”



Maintaining Building Safety

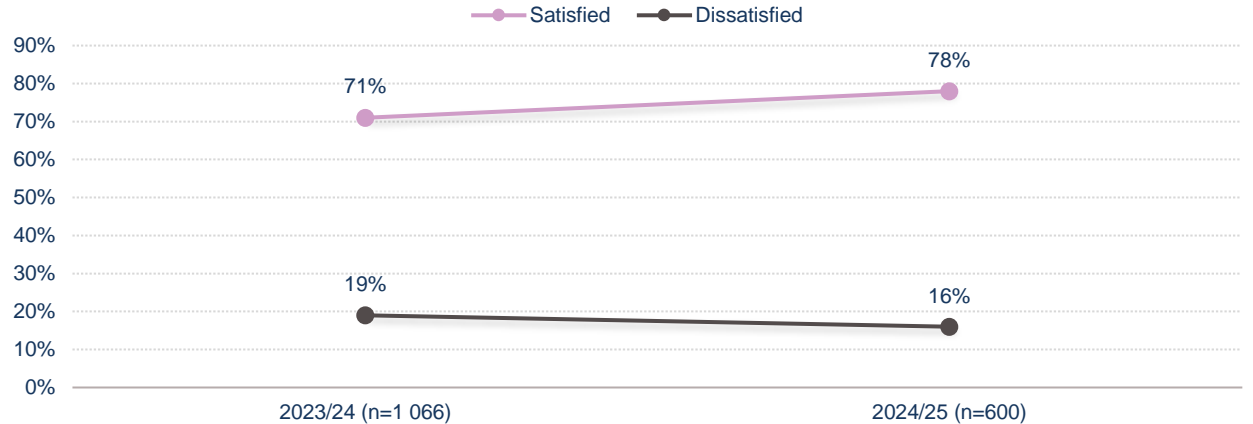
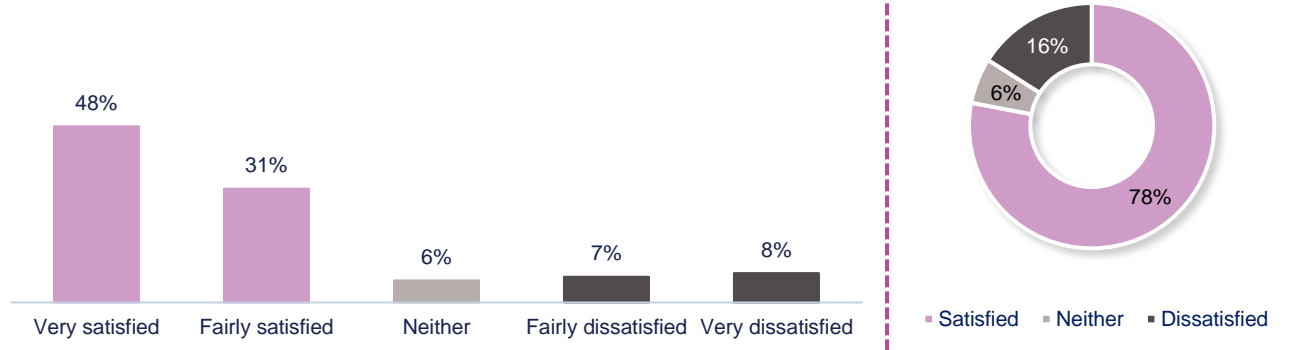


Maintaining Building Safety

Over three-quarters of tenants (78%) are satisfied that they are provided with a safe home, this having increased by 8p.p compared with the previous survey. Almost half the tenants are very satisfied with the safety of their home (48%), with 31% fairly satisfied.

Just 16% of tenants are dissatisfied, this having fallen by 3p.p since last year, and a further 6% are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

It is common in surveys of this type that more tenants are satisfied with the safety of their home than with its maintenance, and this is the case here, although the difference is small, 78% and 76% respectively.





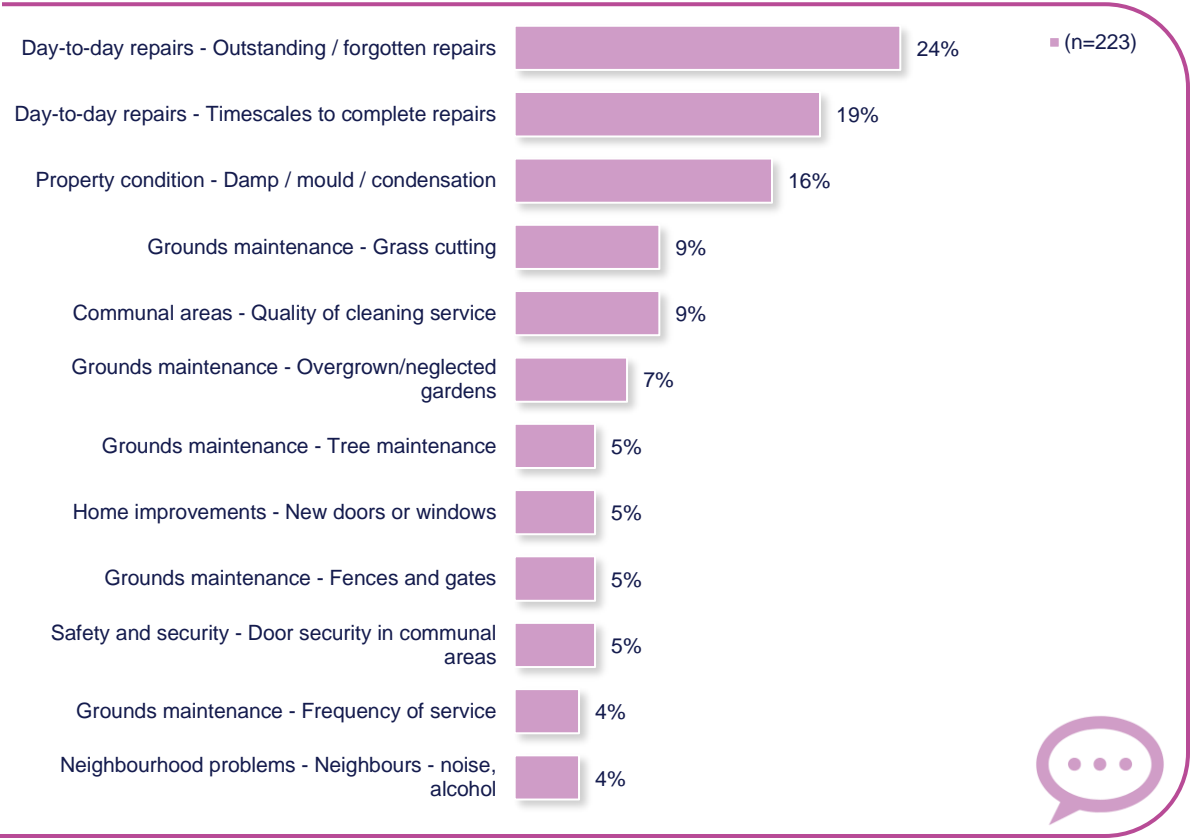
Comments - Home or Communal Areas not Well Maintained or Safe

Tenants who were not satisfied with their homes and/or communal areas were also asked to explain why and what could be done to improve this, and 223 tenants made comments.

The three main issues are similar to many other social landlords and focus again on repairs: dealing with outstanding repairs, the time taken to complete repairs and problems with damp and mould. For example, one tenant stated, *"We've had damp for years, and it has not been resolved."*

Other comments relate to the communal areas, including grass cutting, overgrown gardens, tree maintenance and the quality of the communal areas cleaning service.

Examples of the comments are shown overleaf.





Home or Communal Areas – Comments

Repairs

"My only criticism is when I reported jobs myself some have been done, especially regarding damp they do say it will get dealt with, but I am still waiting."

"I reported a hole in my roof when I first moved in in 2012. We have a leak we are waiting to be sorted, that they said was air vents. My son went through the roof. We have had damp also."

"I'd like them to follow up on the repairs. A number of times I called up and nobody came out."

"I wish they wouldn't use cowboy builders. It causes problems. I had a damp proof done but it was a mess done by cowboys. The roofers looked at the outside but didn't come inside to look. We found out that there is daylight coming through."

"If a contractor comes in to do work, its not sorted out and followed up. They left holes in my bathroom when they refitted the bathroom. I contact them and they said they will get back but have not."

Communal maintenance

"Well maintained communal areas, but children leave bikes and toys in communal areas that are trip hazards. Has been reported many times."

"It's full of rubbish, it's a hazard, there's glass and everything."

"Homeless sleeping on stairs, junkies coming into areas smoking dope, people getting into the entrance, doors don't lock, anyone can get into the block, not enough bins, bin shoots blocked up."

"The cleaning. They come once a month for 5 minutes and we are paying for it."

"We pay a communal charge, but it is not good value for money, the area could be kept cleaner and more secure."

"Every time grass gets cut, it gets left there instead of disposing of it. We pay service charges towards getting the garden done and communal garden is disgusting."

"They haven't been round to cut the grass for a while."

Property condition & improvements

"Had a lot of damp since I've been here for 35 years. They kept saying it's condensation. My granddaughter started getting chest infections and a builder said its rising damp. They've only just got round to start sorting it."

"My issue is that I have massive cracks down the side of house, and it has been flagged many times, but nothing has been done about it."

"It is in disrepair. All of the repairs I have reported seem to have fallen on deaf ears or take a long time to be addressed."

"When I first moved in, I was told I'd get a new kitchen fitted but they haven't yet done that, nearly 2 years ago."

"My kitchen and bathroom need updating."

"They haven't replaced her doors that needs replacing even though the neighbours had gotten their ones replaced."

"I would like them to improve these houses. I would like decent houses. Maybe with own gardens, so our children can use them."

Other matters

"Front door is a communal door, it's meant to lock itself automatically, but it doesn't, so it's a pointless door, it's a security concern."

"Front door lock is not secure enough. I live on the ground floor and people congregate in the hallway. There is no CCTV, and it is not safe."

"Feel not safe in the estate, neighbours argue, worried about son playing outside."

"There's a lot of rubbish in the area because other people don't care about the area or their properties so don't clean up after themselves, especially young people/children."

"There's a kids park and there's glass and rubbish everywhere."

"Over my 6 years of tenancy at this address. I have had people just walk into my house.....this has affected my well being. I have received nothing from them about my neighbours dumping stuff in my garden."



Responsible Neighbourhood Management

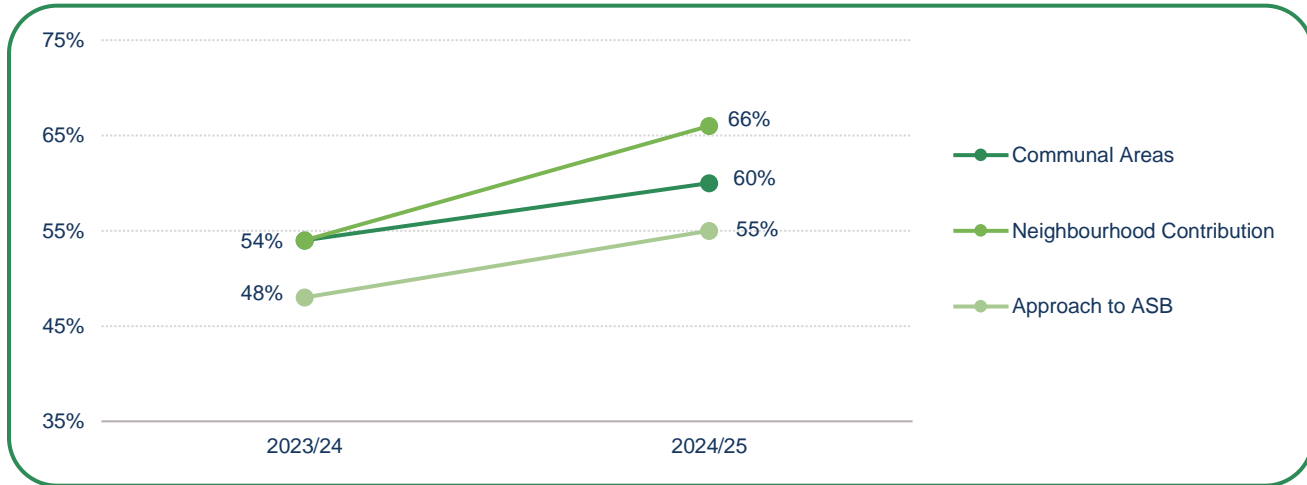
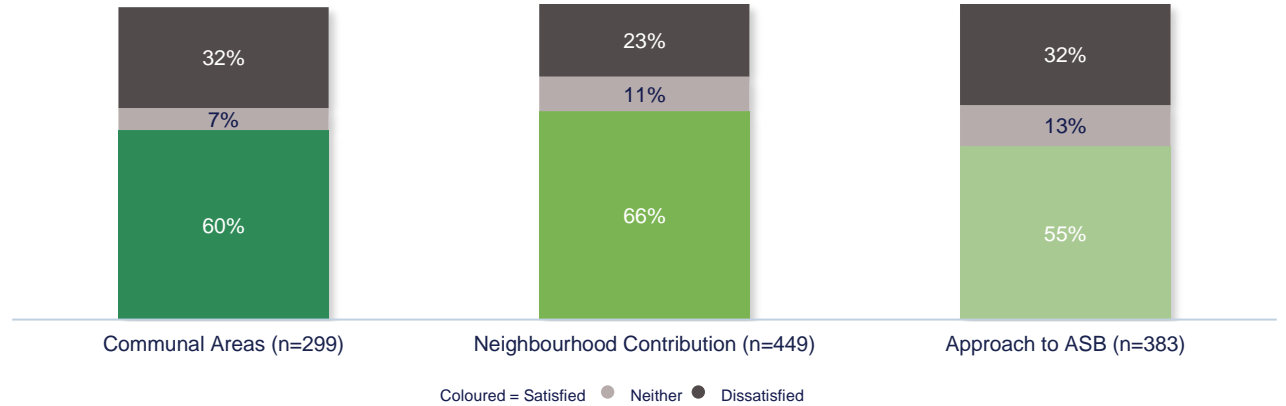


Responsible Neighbourhood Management

Half of the tenants said they live in a building with communal areas that Lancaster City Council is responsible for maintaining (51%). Of these tenants, 60% are satisfied that Lancaster City Council keeps their communal areas clean and well maintained, although 32% are dissatisfied. However, satisfaction has increased by 6p.p since the previous survey.

Two-thirds of tenants are satisfied that Lancaster City Council makes a positive contribution to their neighbourhood, with 23% dissatisfied and 11% neither one nor the other, perhaps because they are unaware of the contribution the Council makes.

Just over half the tenants are satisfied with the Council's approach to dealing with anti-social behaviour, up 7p.p since last year. However, a third of tenants remain dissatisfied with this measure (32%).





Tenants who stated they are not satisfied with the Council's approach to handling anti-social behaviour were asked to explain why. 157 tenants gave comments.

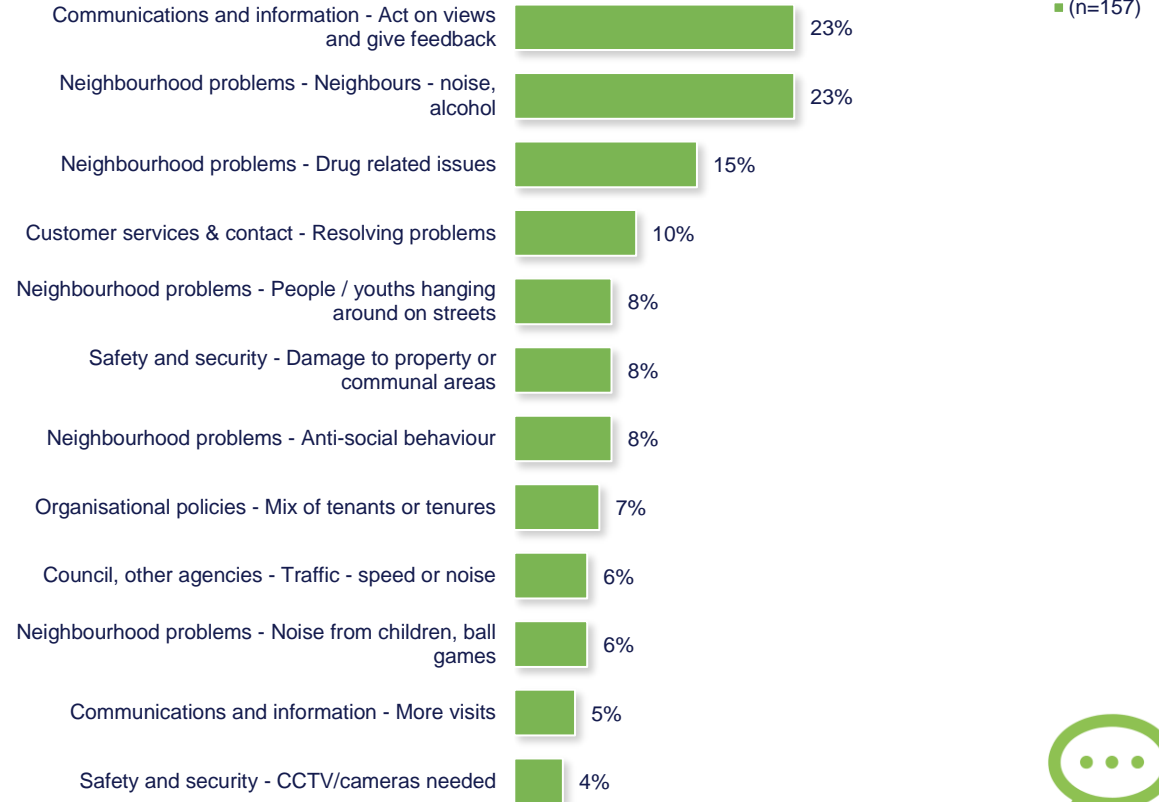
The comments are split between tenants identifying the problems they are experiencing and the handling of these instances. The most common comments are around how the Council acts on views and gives feedback and references to noise from neighbours, each receiving an equal proportion of comments.

For instance, one tenant commented, "I don't know what else could be done, they just don't like to get involved, they say to ring 101 and log stuff down, they just don't like to get involved and it makes me feel unsafe" and another "I have an abusive drunk neighbour and a neighbour that abuses dogs. The council has talked to them but they're still here. Also, people banging doors shut at one AM."

Other problems raised include issues with drug use, property being damaged, youths hanging around and general anti-social behaviour. Some tenants would like to see CCTV installed to help.

The comments overleaf will help the Council gain a better picture of the problems some experience.

Comments - ASB



Anti-Social Behaviour– Comments



Neighbourhood problems

“People outside making a bit of noise very occasionally.”

“It’s not the Council’s fault that the parents don’t look after their kids. However, they don’t put the budget for proper doors.”

“We have a neighbour who bangs the doors and is constantly shouting abuse and causing problem.”

“I’ve phoned the Police about the kids vandalising the local park which is over the road from my house. I’ve reported it to the Council as well but it’s still going on, not as much as it was though.”

“We have drug addicts and drinkers on the street that is full of kids, we need family zones.”

“He has lived there a long time and there is a lot of ASB, been so much over the years. Younger people have moved in, and problems started, the area was supposed to be for over 40’s.”

“There is a lot of antisocial behaviour on most estates.”

Communications & contact

“Lancaster is not bothered and don’t handle complaints seriously.”

“All the issues that are going on around me. We report the ASB, and the Council says to call the police. But that doesn’t always help or feel supportive.”

“Council isn’t seen anywhere near the estate. Feels forgotten about on the estate. Playground is rotten, overgrown everywhere.”

“Go around and listen to everyone and actually deal with issues. Slapping people on the wrists does not solve anything.”

“They take too long to address the situation and come up with an acceptable solution or do nothing.”

“Appropriate action should be taken when a complaint is made.”

“When you report things, it never gets done.”

“No matter with what you report, they do nothing.”

Safety & security

“My estate is terrifying; I’ve had my windows and fences smashed; things get robbed from my garden.”

“More CCTV. Too many people being destructive and breaking into properties up for sale etc. Insufficient CCTV to put a name to a face.”

“They have not put cameras up on the street as they should have.”

“it gets quite busy so there is some noise coming from the public, however, suggest for cameras to be installed.”

“There was a caravan all smashed up near me and the council said it was a police matter etc. It was in the communal car park. Elderly people even ring up. The estate manager has not acted on anything.. a female. She comes out a few times and gives out notices, but nothing happens. We need security cameras for children’s safety.”

“Security issue, back gates kids running in out, leaving rubbish behind.”

Other matters

“Not really encountered anything any serious in 20 years. If the children are noisy, I go & tell them off. I’ve here a long time so everyone knows me.”

“I haven’t seen any anti social behaviour as of yet.”

“It is not something I’ve had issues with.”

“They could improve by vetting tenants a lot more. There has been people they have let in here that are causing a headache.”

“Because of the people they’re bringing into the council houses. They’re bringing trouble with them.”

“They need more things for children to do, this generation is scary now.”

“People leaving dog waste around. They could do with the general upkeep and keeping things cleaner.”

“Maybe hand more ASBOs and put a speed limit. They race up and down the road, there are a lot of kids here. They should have a speed limit.”



Respectful & Helpful Engagement



Respectful & Helpful Engagement

Over three-quarters of tenants (78%) find Lancaster City Council easy to deal with; just 12% find it difficult dealing with the Council. Satisfaction for this metric has risen by 8p.p since the previous survey.

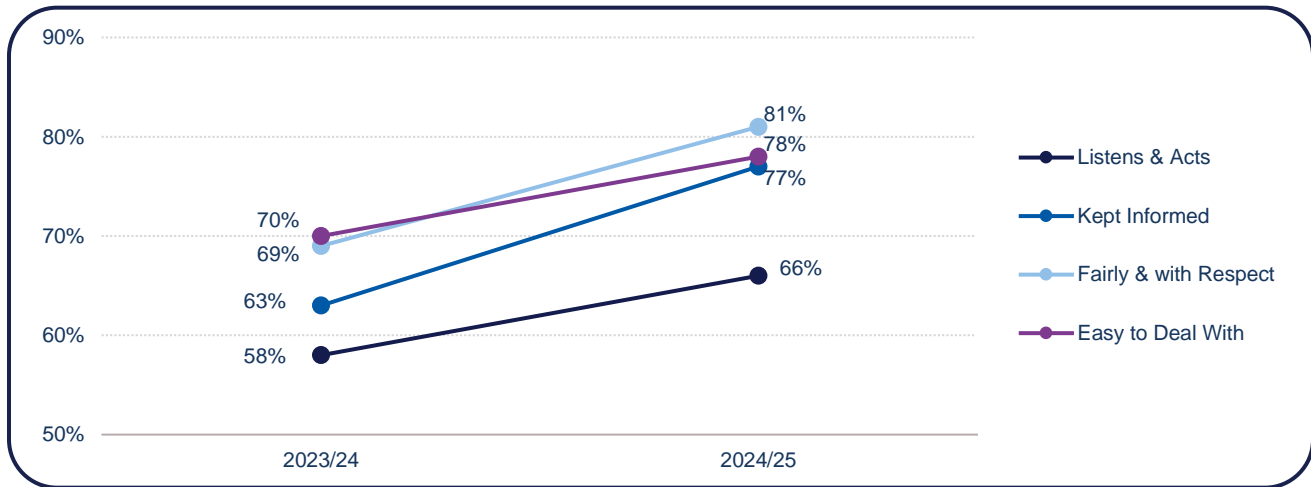
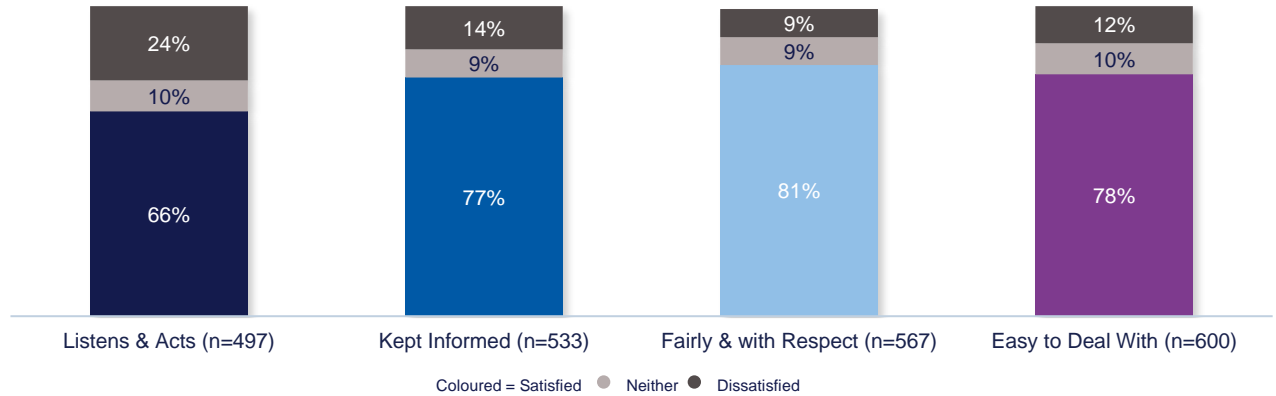
Tenants are similarly satisfied (77%) that the Council keeps them informed about things that matter to them, up from 63% in 2023.

However, fewer tenants are satisfied that their views are listened to and acted upon (66%), with a quarter dissatisfied. Satisfaction with this aspect has also increased, up by 9p.p compared with last year.

As shown previously, this measure can be influenced by a range of factors, including how the Council handles instances of anti-social behaviour and repairs that are reported to them.

One of the highest-performing metrics in the survey is tenants being treated fairly and with respect, with 81% agreeing they are and just 9% disagreeing. This has also increased – in this case by 13p.p.

It is encouraging that these measures all show good increases in satisfaction and the tenants feel engaged with the Council.





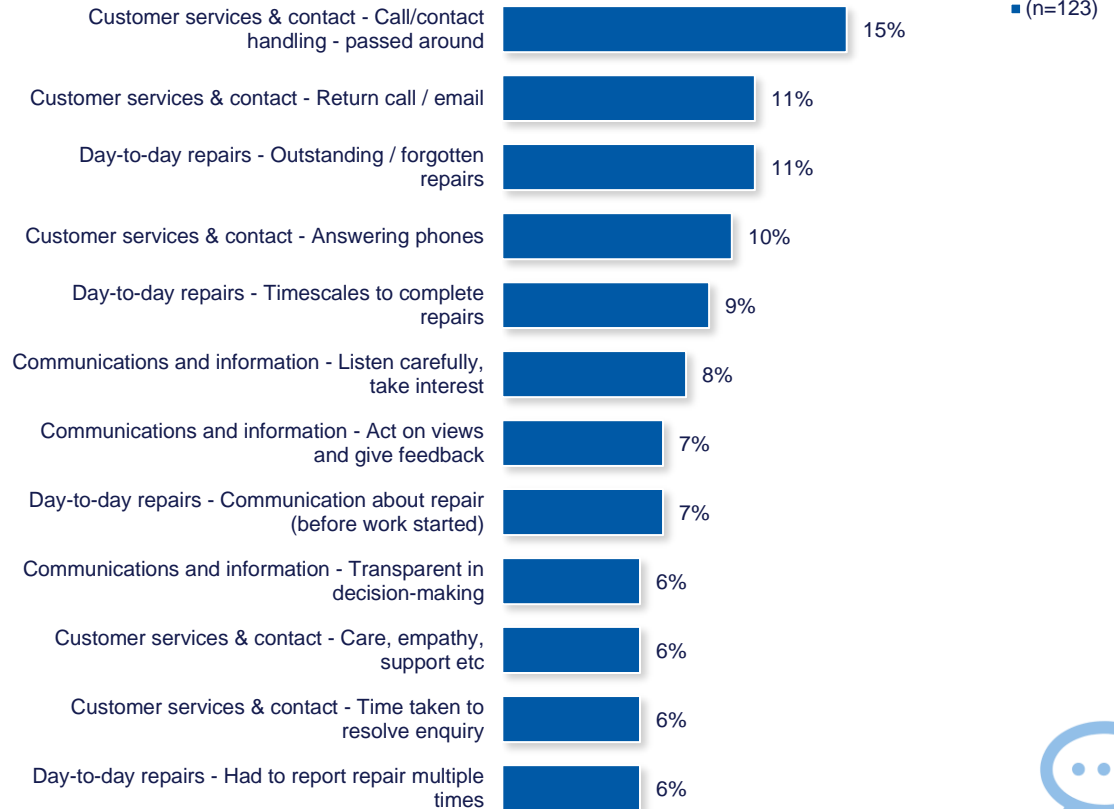
Comments - Easy to Deal With

Tenants who stated they are not satisfied that Lancaster City Council is easy to deal with were asked to explain why and 123 gave comments.

There is no one standout issue for respondents, although the majority of comments centre around call handling, followed by not returning calls when promised and the common issue again of outstanding repairs.

Some tenants clearly have problems getting in touch with the right people. For example, one tenant commented, *"When I ring them, I call the Council, and they tell you to ring the work department who say they need a referral. We are passed from pillar to post and I am none the wiser when I come off the call."*

Other tenants would like the staff to listen to their problems a little more carefully and show them more care and support, although some concerns are about repair requests, such as having to report repairs multiple times and the time taken to complete repairs.





Easy To Deal With – Comments

Call handling

“We have to jump through a lot of hoops, to talk to someone. They are not very good with informing us when workmen are coming, for repairs. I am disabled and I use a wheelchair. So, it is not great, when workmen just turn up, on the doorstep.”

“You ring them up and get passed from one person to another and it is frustrating.”

“We ring up several times and don't answer. When they do come out one or two years later, they don't do the repairs.”

“It's almost impossible to speak to someone on the phone and report any repairs or issues.”

“When you call them, they don't answer quickly.”

“You have to ring up four or five times for the same reason, they say they have passed it on but come back with excuses as to why they haven't replied.”

“Sometimes they don't call back and you go round in circles.”

Customer service

“The problems don't get solved; you have to wait for a lot of stages.”

“Lack of communication not responding on time.”

“They look at everyone the same, but I have health concerns and need to be approached differently. There is no support.”

“When I first moved in and had issues a chap from Lancaster tried to help me, but as time has gone on, its a lot more complicated than it should be with lots of loopholes trying to solve issues. They do not take issues properly and their response seems to be that I do not matter. I am classed as vulnerable as well.”

“Lack of accepting responsibility and the issue gets passed around till it gets lost in the system.”

“Just the recording, you have to press the right buttons. They put people on hold for ages and when you do get through it is the wrong department and they can't transfer so it is quite difficult

Communications

“Because half the time inspectors haven't got a clue what they are talking about, and they try fob you off with excuses.”

“They do not listen to you, flat falling apart.”

“There is no easy point of contact that is accessible. I feel that the repairs line falls on deaf ears.”

“I do not really think that they listen to what I have to say. They do not take it into consideration.”

“Reception lady is nice and helpful, but the council are not doing their part.”

“Apart from the repairs service when you try and contact them, they just pass you onto someone else and nothing gets done. I get nowhere with reporting issues to them; it is as if they just don't care about me.”

“When you ask them to do something they don't do it.”

“They tell you what you want to hear on the phone. I have to keep ringing them, but they don't do anything.”

Other matters

“Needed help cutting the big garden per request of neighbour due to rats and having no money or equipment to do it. Council came out and explained that they don't provide that service, but another neighbour received the service free of charge.”

“Been living here for 33 years and have not had a new bathroom - had been told it was due nobody has come to look at the bathroom.”

“There's things wrong with the house. The electrics and showers are 20 years old, and they said they won't change anything in my house for 6 months as I just moved in.”

“They don't get repairs done, you have to wait years and years.”

“I do not seem to get anywhere, you can never give me an appointment anymore. No one rings me back when you say you will. I work and cannot be in the house all the time. You turn up without me being made aware of it in advance.”



Effective Handling of Complaints



Effective Handling of Complaints

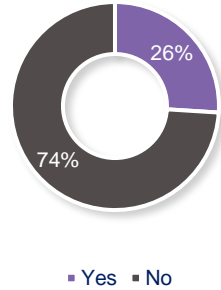
A quarter of tenants said they had made a complaint to the Council in the last 12 months, but it is impossible to say how many of these are genuine complaints following a failure of service or service requests yet to be fully actioned.

Nevertheless, just 37% of these tenants are satisfied with the handling of complaints, with many more (54%) dissatisfied, including 31% who are very dissatisfied.

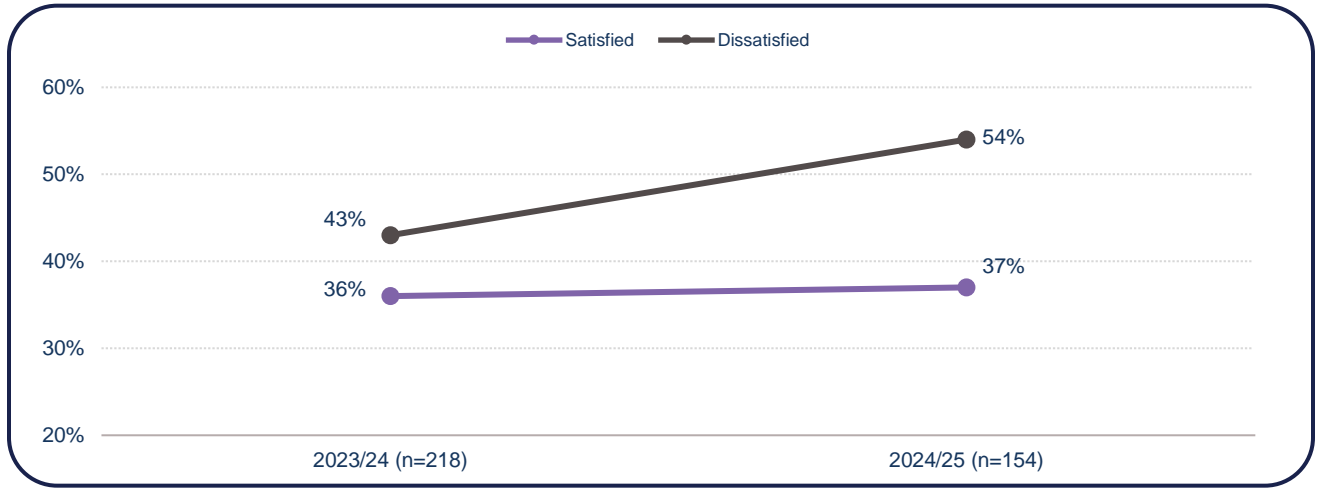
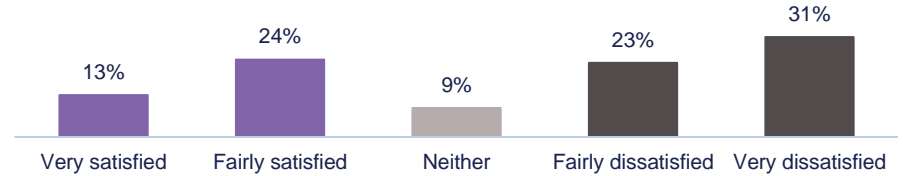
While satisfaction has remained stable since the previous survey (up 1p.p), dissatisfaction has increased by 11p.p during the same period, and this will be a worry for the Council.

It is also not clear whether this dissatisfaction is driven by the outcome of the complaints, their handling or a combination of both. Some landlords have started to use additional questions to find out more about the complaints process, something which the Council may wish to consider in the future.

Complaint in last 12 months



Satisfaction with Complaints Handling





Net Promoter



Net Promoter

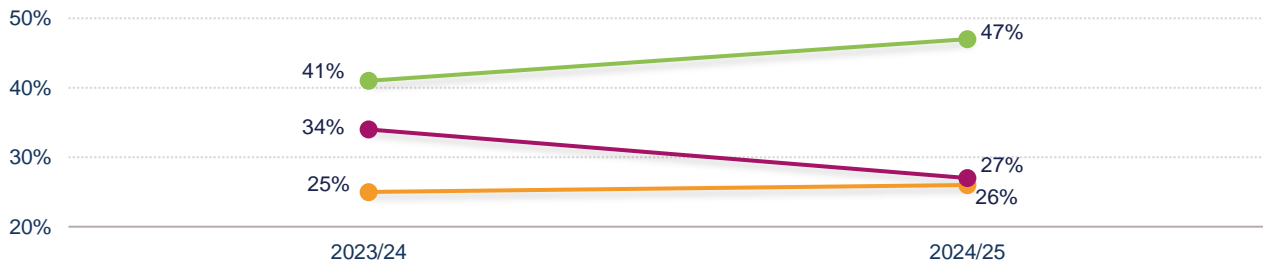
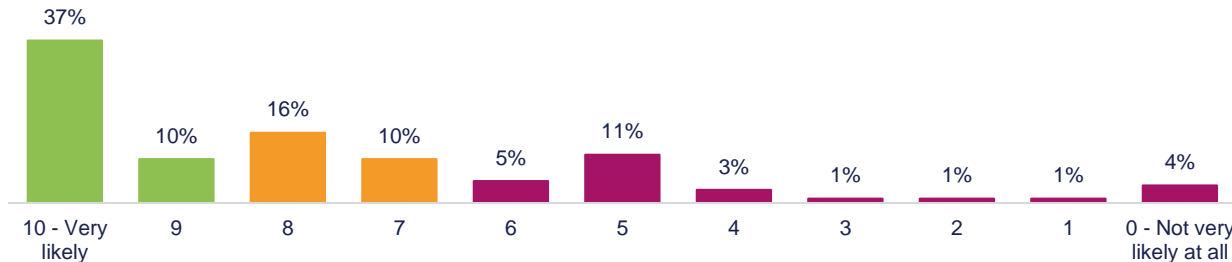
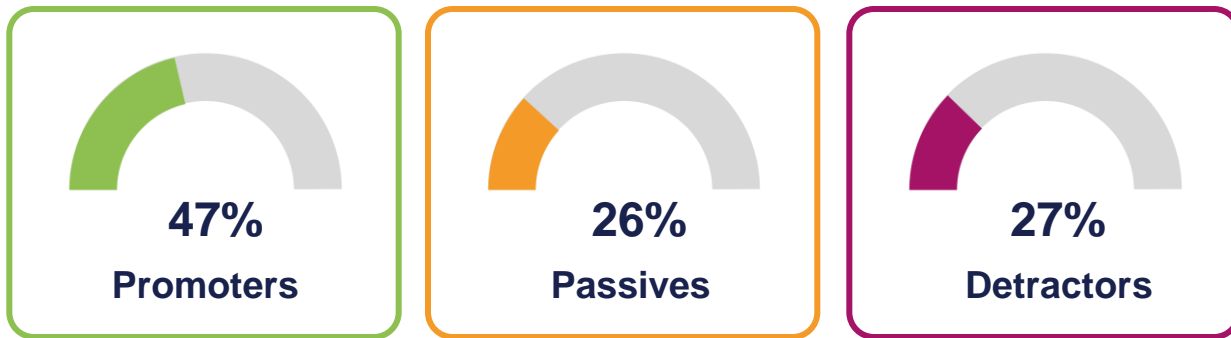
Tenants were asked, "How likely would you be to recommend Lancaster City Council to other people on a scale of 10 to 0, where 10 is extremely likely and 0 is not at all likely?"

Just under half the tenants (47%) are promoters, very loyal and happy to promote Lancaster City Council to other people, with 37% scoring the Council at 10 out of 10.

A quarter of tenants are currently passive and could be persuaded either way (26%). However, 27% are detractors, and likely to have negative views about Lancaster City Council.

The Net Promoter Score (promoters minus detractors) is +21, which is a little lower than the average score for Acuity clients in 2023/24 which is around +29.

However, the NPS has increased by 14 points since the previous survey, driven by a rise of 6p.p in the number of promoters and a fall of 7p.p in detractors.



21
NPS ↑ 14



Improvements



Improvement Suggestions

Finally, tenants were asked what one thing Lancaster City Council could improve, and 557 tenants gave comments.

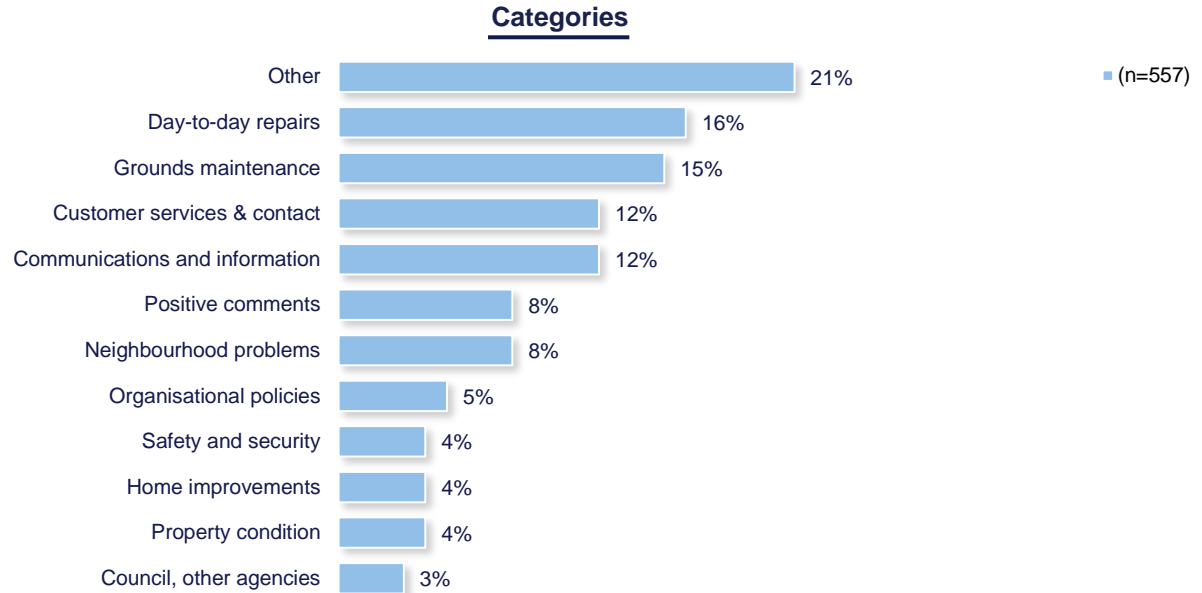
There are 8% of the comments positive about the current service provided and a further 21% gave 'other' comments, including many with no suggestions or who do not know what to suggest, perhaps also feeling no improvements are needed.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the most frequent suggestions refer to the repairs service, attracting 16% of the comments made.

This includes the common issues of the time taken to complete repairs and dealing with outstanding works. For instance, one tenant commented, "Quicker times - get the job done quicker. Takes forever to come."

Almost as many tenants commented on grounds maintenance and this is followed by customer contact and communications, including how staff listen to tenants.

This does reveal that whilst many tenants are happy with the services they receive, some have concerns, and these comments help to pinpoint those areas that are in need of improvement.



Top 5 Improvements





Trends



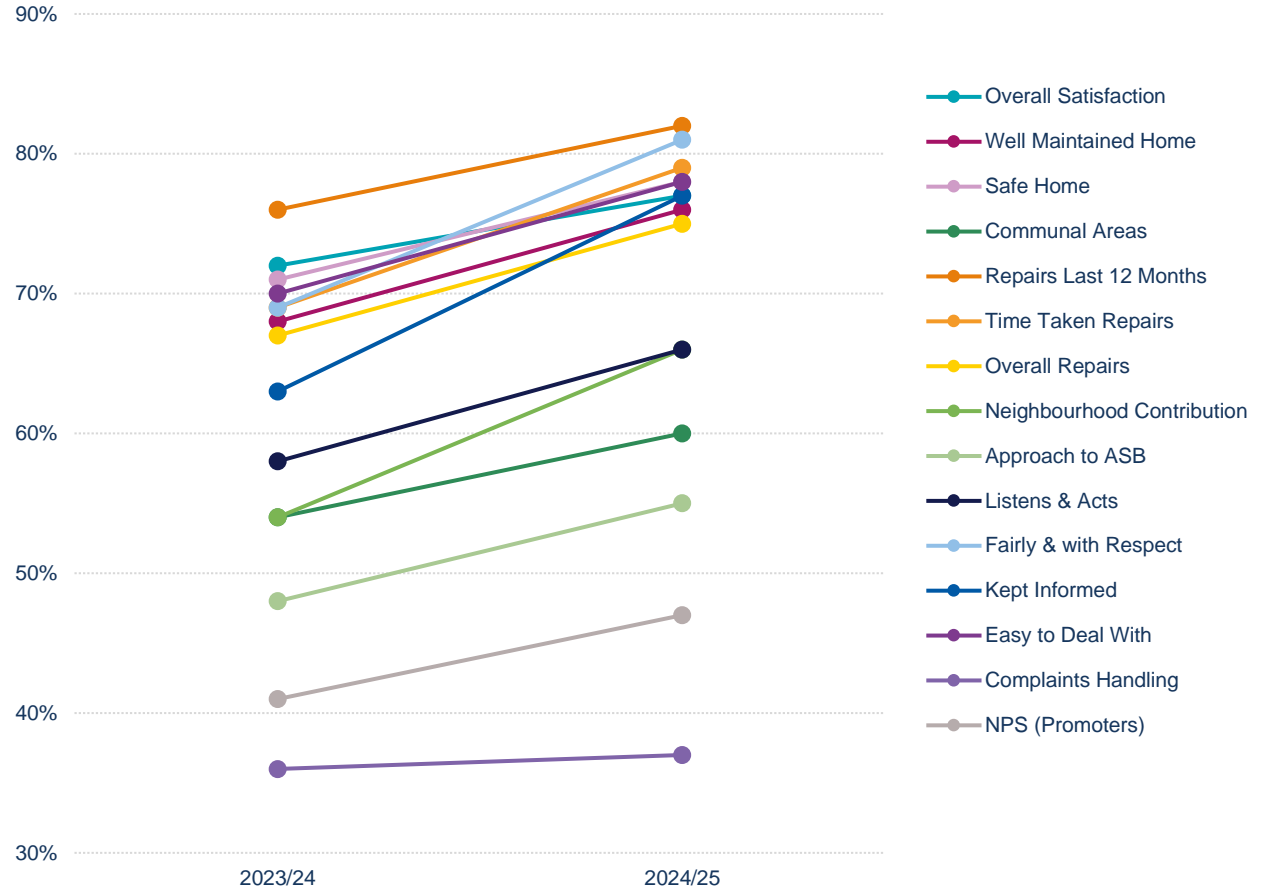
Trends Over Time

The chart opposite shows the changes in satisfaction between the survey of 2023 and the current set of results.

Encouragingly, all measures have seen increases in the last year which range from 1p.p (complaints handling) to 14p.p (keeps informed). The biggest increases are for those metrics who focus around how the Council engages and communicates with tenants.

To be statistically significant, changes need to exceed the combined margins of error for the two surveys, in this case around 8p.p. Therefore a number of these changes do exceed this threshold, including how tenants are kept informed (up 14p.p), tenants being treated fairly and with respect (up 13p.p), the positive contribution made to the neighbourhood (up 12p.p) and the time taken to complete repairs (up 10p.p).

In addition, overall satisfaction has increased by 5p.p since the previous survey.





Further Insight



National Context

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

For example:

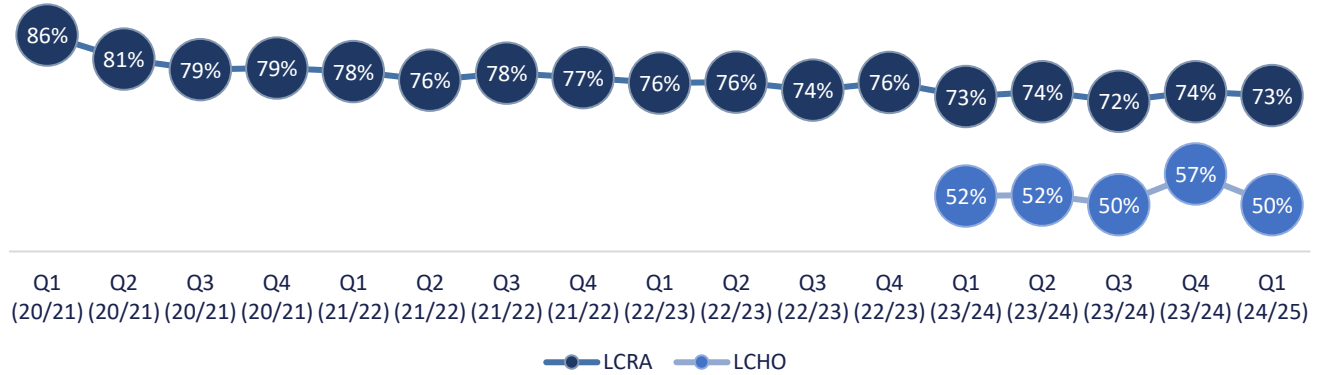
- Cost of Living Crisis, increase in poverty and pressure on local authority funding
- Government & Political Changes
- Uncertainty about the Future
- Brexit and the Economy

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 have also altered the way some social landlords operate.

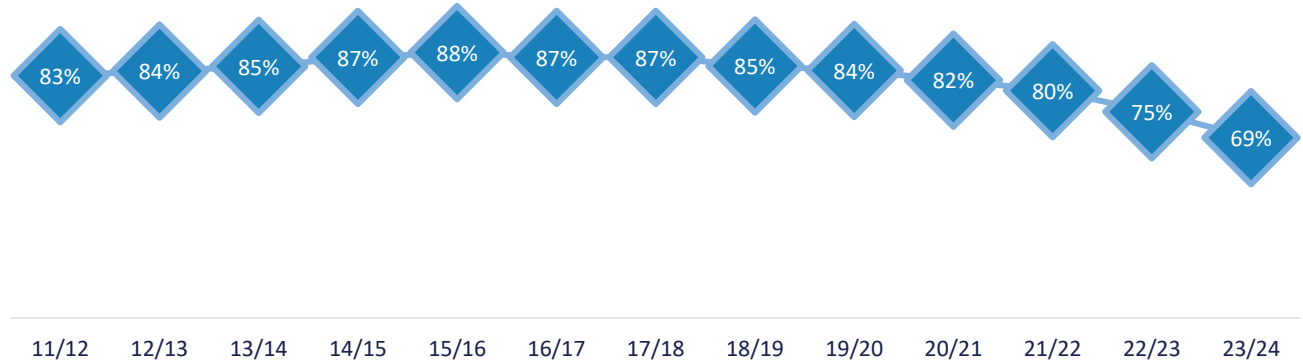
The top graph demonstrates how overall satisfaction has changed over time (tracker only). The trendline is downward.

The lower chart shows the results from Housemark members with a peak in 2015/16 but a slow decline since; this started before the effects of the pandemic started to hit.

Overall Services (Acuity Clients)



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





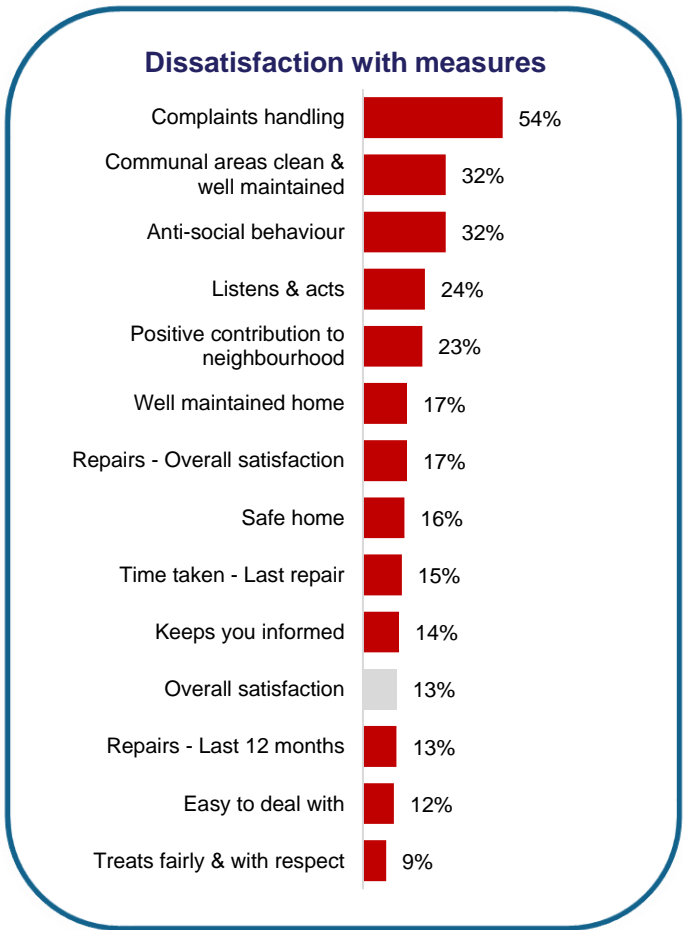
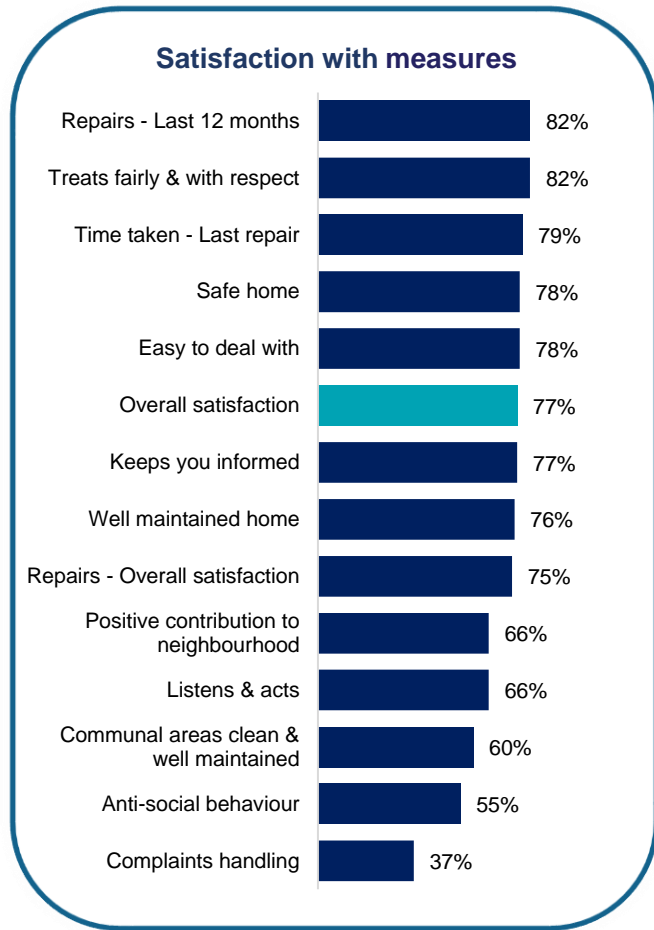
Satisfaction & Dissatisfaction

The charts opposite show both the levels of satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the range of services provided.

This shows that the range of satisfaction is high for Lancaster with the overall satisfaction sat in the middle of the list of measures at 77%, but two measures achieving satisfaction levels above 80%.

The two measures at the bottom being the way the Council listens to tenants' views and the handling of complaints.

Correspondingly, dissatisfaction is limited, just 13% being dissatisfied overall, although around a third of tenants are dissatisfied with both the communal areas and the handling of ASB, with half dissatisfied with the handling of complaints; although this is the only measure where more tenants are dissatisfied than satisfied.





Key Driver Analysis

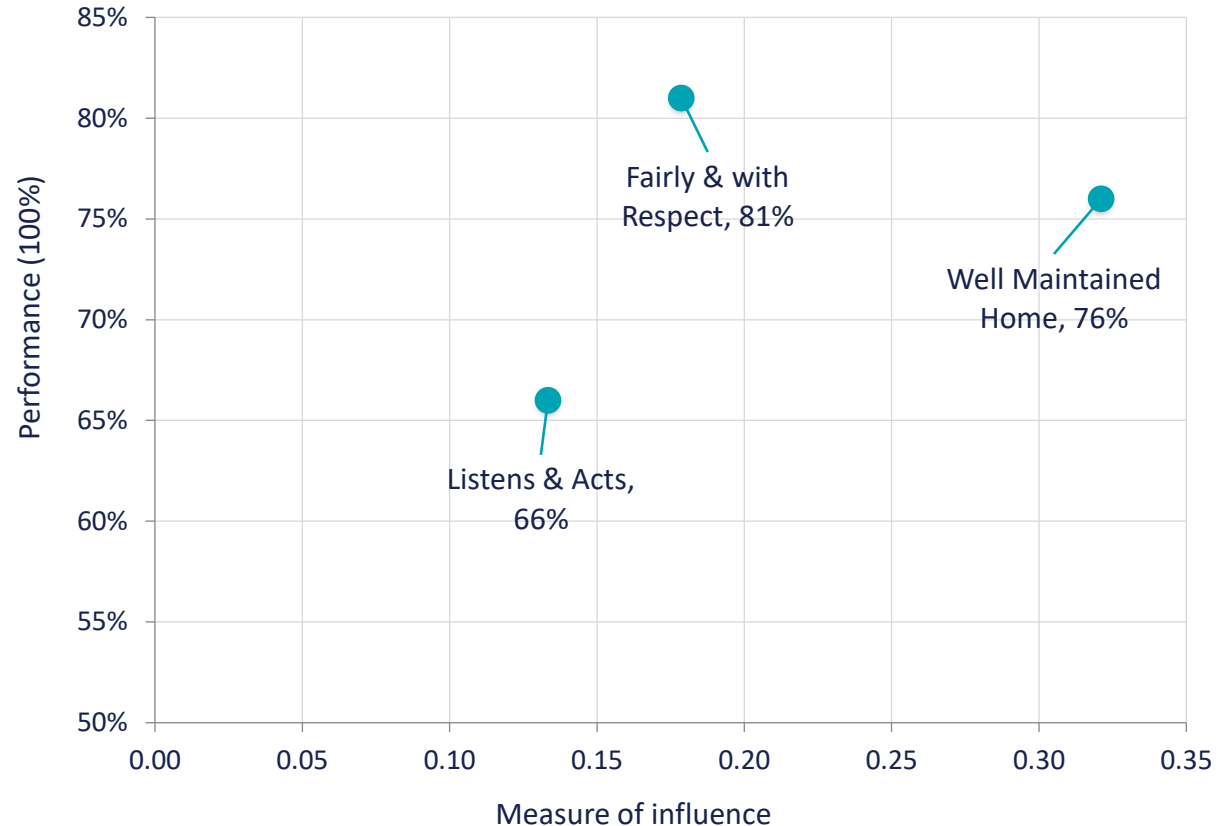
Key driver analysis is used to examine the relationship between the different variables (the questions asked in the survey) and determine which elements of the service are the key drivers for tenants' overall satisfaction.

Each landlord has its own unique pattern of influence, and when considering the results for 2024, the most important driver for tenants' satisfaction with the overall service is that the Council provides a well maintained home.

How tenants are treated fairly and with respect and that their views are listened to and acted upon 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 service provided by the Council.

Annual Key Driver Analysis – Overall Satisfaction





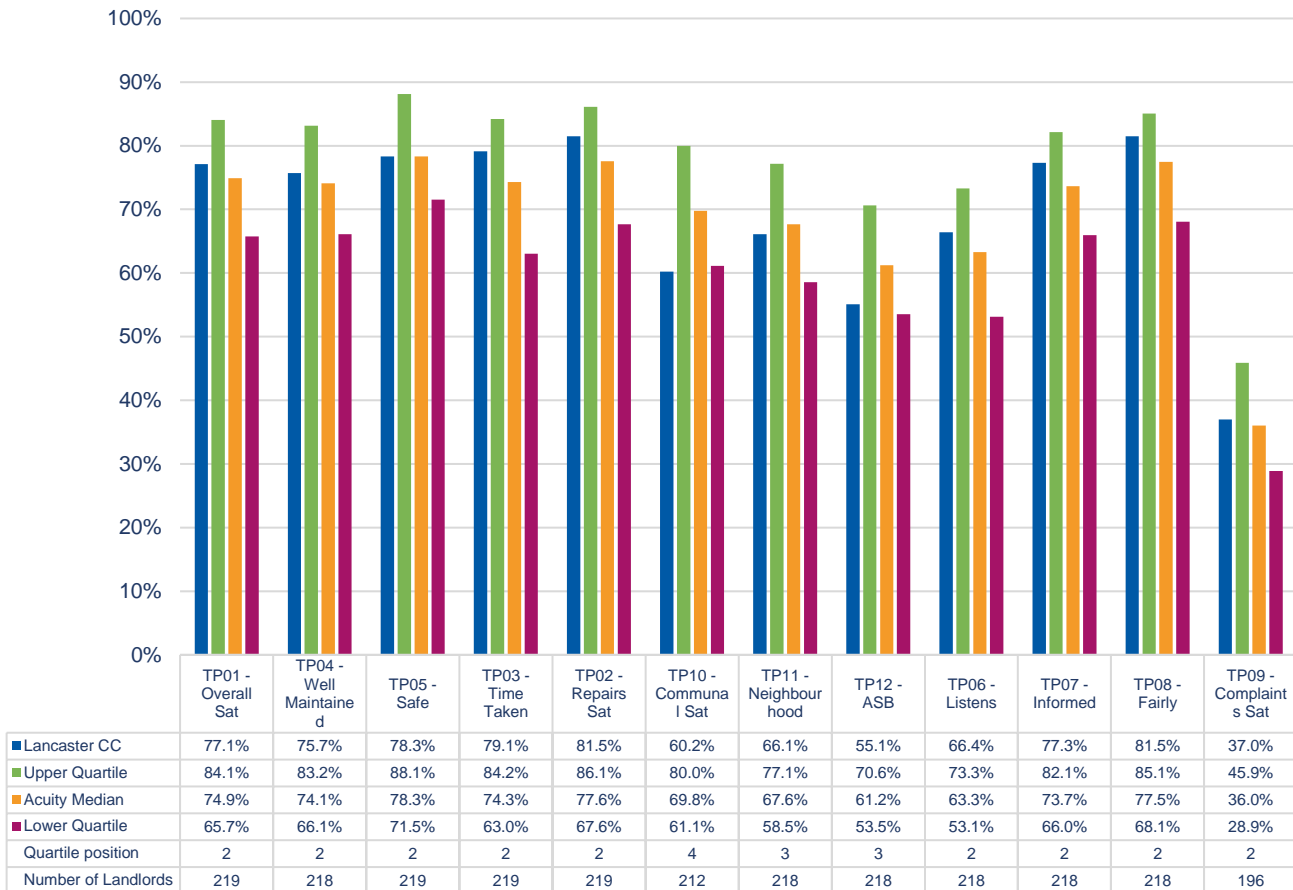
Benchmarking – Acuity Clients (LCRA)

It is possible to compare performance on the core questions against Acuity clients who have used the TSM questions throughout the year. The chart shows the quartile positions based on the results collected during 2023/24.

The ratings from Lancaster City Council compare well, with all but three measures above the group medians and in the second quartile, including overall satisfaction.

The only exceptions are the positive contribution made to the neighbourhood and the approach to handling anti-social behaviour, which fall into the third quartile and the upkeep of the communal areas which is in the lower quartile.

Although this cohort of landlords now exceeds 200, it varies in type, size and location, so does not directly match the characteristics of Lancaster City Council. However, when the Regulator releases the TSM results for this year it will be possible to provide more accurate and robust peer groups.



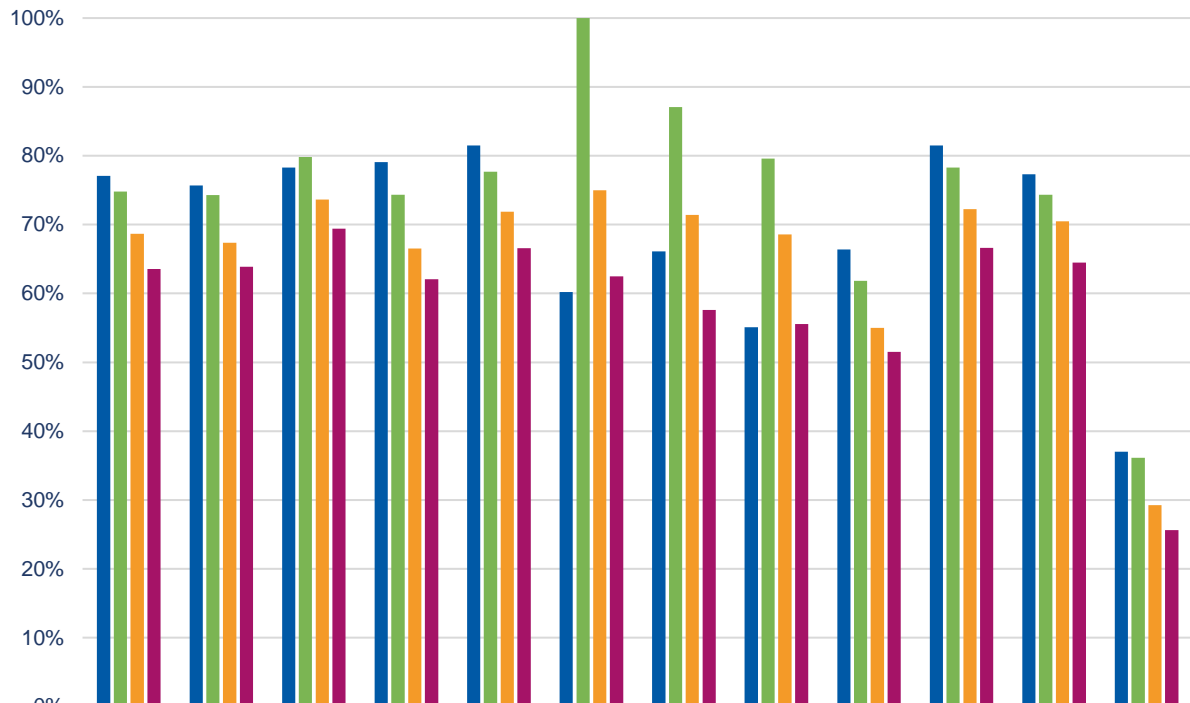


Benchmarking – Acuity Clients (LCRA)

Given that Lancaster City Council is a Council landlord it is, perhaps, more appropriate to compare the results just against other councils. Therefore, the chart opposite demonstrates the ratings for Lancaster against 51 other councils that have worked with Acuity over the last year

The results compare even better against this group of council landlords, with eight measures in the top quartile, including the overall service provided. The safety of the home is also above the median but falls into the second quartile.

Of the remaining three measures, the positive contribution made to the neighbourhood falls into the third quartile, whilst the cleaning and maintenance of the communal areas and the handling of anti-social behaviour fall into the lower quartile.

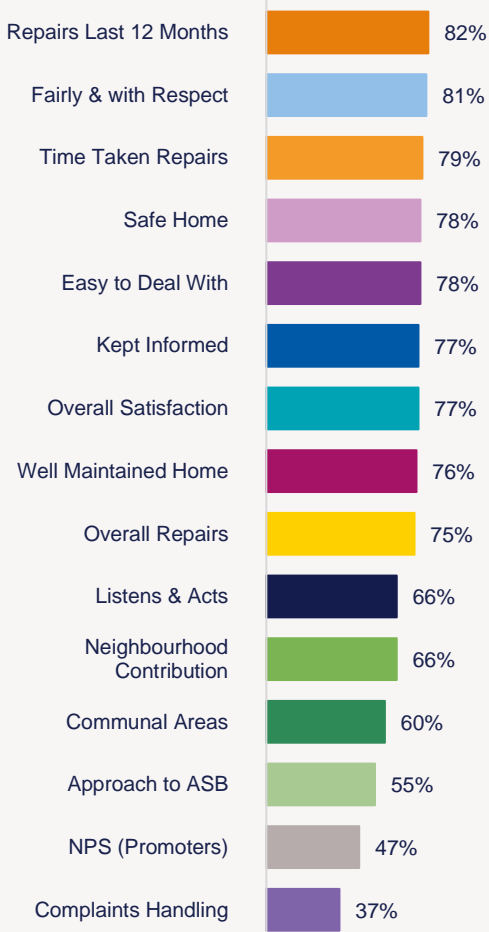


	Overall Sat	Well Maintained	Safe	Time Taken	Repairs Sat	Communal Sat	Neighbourhood	ASB	Listens	Fairly	Informed	Complaints Sat
■ Lancaster CC	77%	76%	78%	79%	82%	60%	66%	55%	66%	82%	77%	37%
■ Upper Quartile	75%	74%	80%	74%	78%	100%	87%	80%	62%	78%	74%	36%
■ Acuity Median	69%	67%	74%	67%	72%	75%	71%	69%	55%	72%	70%	29%
■ Lower Quartile	64%	64%	69%	62%	67%	63%	58%	56%	52%	67%	64%	26%
Quartile position	1	1	2	1	1	4	3	4	1	1	1	1
Number of Landlords	51	51	51	51	51	45	51	51	51	51	51	51



Summary

Satisfaction with Measures



Summary

Acuity is working with Lancaster City Council to undertake a series of satisfaction surveys of its tenants, starting in 2023 and running through to 2026. This is the second year of this contract and this report focuses on the findings from the survey of the Council's tenants, with the survey undertaken in August and September 2024. A total of 628 completed and partially completed surveys were received, achieving a margin of error of $\pm 3.54\%$ which is within the required margin of $\pm 4.0\%$ and gives good accuracy of results.

Satisfaction is high, with over three-quarters of tenants satisfied with the overall service provided and even higher satisfaction for several measures, including the repairs service over the last 12 months (82%), the way the Council treats its tenants fairly and with respect (81%) and the time taken to complete repairs (79%). However, two measures received satisfaction levels below 60%, these being the approach to handling anti-social behaviour (55%) and just 37% being satisfied with the handling of complaints, with considerably more dissatisfied (54%). In addition, 47% of tenants would recommend the Council to other people, with a Net Promoter Score of 21.

When comparing the results with the similar survey undertaken this time last year, satisfaction has increased across the board, ranging from just a 1p.p increase for the handling of complaints to a 14p.p increase for the way the Council keeps its tenants informed. Overall satisfaction is up by 5p.p and many of the positive changes are statistically significant, marking a very positive direction of travel. This trend does go against the general movement across the sector which has seen satisfaction reducing over the past few years.

When compared with other landlords who have worked with Acuity in the last year, Lancaster City Council does compare well, with all but three of the measures above the medians and in the second quartile, including overall satisfaction. Against other council landlords, Lancaster compares even better, with eight measures in the top quartile, including the overall service provided, the maintenance of the home and the repairs measures. The maintenance of the home is also shown to be the key driver for overall satisfaction.

The survey included a number of questions designed to find out more about why tenants gave the ratings they did and what they feel the Council could do to improve further. Some familiar issues are raised, namely, the time taken to complete repairs and dealing with those repairs which are outstanding, although some also complain about damp and mould in their homes. Some tenants also clearly have problems getting in contact with the Council and when they do make contact some would like the staff to listen to them more carefully and show them more care and support. In addition, other tenants are critical of the grounds maintenance services and general maintenance of the communal areas.





Recommendations

The survey reveals many areas of good performance, with satisfaction increasing for all measures since last year, but it has also highlighted some areas where improvements could be made.

The comments made by tenants give insight into what they are most concerned about and will help Lancaster City Council target services that may need some improvement.

Shown opposite are some recommendations that Lancaster City Council may wish to follow up on to help improve satisfaction in the future.

Repairs & maintenance

Satisfaction with the repairs service delivered by Lancaster City Council is good and has improved significantly since last year. In addition, having a well maintained home is the key driver for overall satisfaction. Despite the high levels of satisfaction, some common issues are raised when tenants are asked about their experiences. These include tenants who want repairs to be carried out quicker and some have outstanding repairs which have been around for quite some time. These concerns are common to many other social landlords and resolving them to everyone's satisfaction is virtually impossible, often faced with high expectations that landlords can not meet with the resources that have available.

In addition, some tenants suffer from problems with damp and mould and given the focus on these problems, the Council has to act to investigate and deal with these issues, which can cause other, less urgent, repairs to be put back. Landlords face this dilemma, and some tenants will never be happy with how they approach this, but good communication is key; tenants are usually willing to put up with delays if fully informed about the process and when they can expect action. With this in mind, the Council should look at how it communicates these repair-based issues to its tenants.

Customer contact & communications

Satisfaction with the different aspects of contacting the Council and how it communicates is generally good and has increased since last year. There are now 78% of tenants who find dealing with the Council easy, similar numbers feel well informed and 81% agree they are treated fairly and with respect. Fewer are satisfied that the Council listens to their views and acts upon them, with a quarter dissatisfied. When looking for the root of the problems, some tenants cite problems getting in touch, including saying phones are not answered and when they are they are passed around from one person to another and then calls are not returned when promised. Additionally, some tenants feel that when talking to members of staff they are not listened to carefully enough and they are not given the care and support they expect.

Providing this level of customer care can be difficult when faced with high call volumes but initially, the Council could look to see if some of the contact problems could be eased. When making contact there may also be a case for improved training for front-line staff to ensure tenants feel valued and listened to.



Recommendations

This page continues with suggestions which may help the Council target areas in need of some further improvement.

Handling of complaints

A quarter of tenants said they had made a complaint to the Council in the last 12 months, although the issue of 'what is a complaint?' still exists; many are likely to be service requests rather than formal complaints. Despite this, just 37% of tenants say they are satisfied with the handling of complaints, with many more dissatisfied (54%). Whilst satisfaction is up marginally, it is a little worrying that dissatisfaction is up by 11p.p since last year. It is also not clear from the results alone whether this dissatisfaction is driven by the outcome of the complaint, its handling or a combination of the two.

The handling of complaints has become a hot topic across the sector and is consistently the lowest-rated measure in these TSM-based surveys. Few landlords have been successful with complaints but where they have, good communication appears to be the key. Tenants need to know how and when to complain and what they can expect in terms of the standard of service. Crucially, they also need to be kept up to date with progress, or even a lack of progress. This may not satisfy everyone but could help build on the satisfaction already shown.

Communal areas & ASB

Around half the tenants live in a building with communal areas, so the upkeep of these is an important issue. Satisfaction with the cleaning and maintenance of communal areas is one of the lowest-rated services and this does not compare well with other social landlords, although this is up by 6p.p since last year, a third of tenants are dissatisfied. When asked why some are experiencing problems with ASB, tenants particularly mentioned noise from others, drug problems and people hanging around the areas. In addition, some are critical of the maintenance, including the grounds maintenance and the cleaning of the common areas. The grounds maintenance issues may drop off now we have reached the autumn and are out of the growing season but the Council does need to be proactive in dealing with ASB, taking complaints seriously and acting as quickly as possible, as ASB is clearly spoiling the enjoyment of these areas for some tenants.

Maintaining satisfaction levels

It is very encouraging that all measures in the survey have seen increases in satisfaction since the previous survey in 2023/24. The results now compare very well with other landlords, in particular other council landlords where eight measures fall into the top quartile. However, there is no room for complacency as there are also many areas which could improve further, some of which are highlighted above. Despite this, the Council should be delighted with this set of results and the challenge moving forward will be to maintain, or even increase these levels further. The Council are clearly doing many things right and this needs to continue.



Demographics



Tenure

Although the vast majority of tenants are general needs, 97 of those who responded to the survey live in Independent Living accommodation and the table shows the difference in satisfaction between the two groups.

It is common that older tenants, and those in Independent Living, are generally more satisfied than their general needs counterparts, and this is the case here.

In fact, Independent Living tenants are more satisfied with all the measures in the survey, including 15p.p more satisfied with the overall service provided and 20p.p more who would recommend Lancaster City Council to other people.

	All Tenants	General Needs	Independent Living
Overall Satisfaction	77%	75%	90%
Well Maintained Home	76%	72%	94%
Safe Home	78%	75%	97%
Repairs Last 12 Months	82%	79%	97%
Time Taken Repairs	79%	77%	90%
Overall Repairs	75%	72%	93%
Communal Areas	60%	54%	78%
Neighbourhood Contribution	66%	63%	86%
Approach to ASB	55%	52%	76%
Listens & Acts	66%	64%	82%
Kept Informed	77%	75%	88%
Fairly & with Respect	81%	79%	96%
Easy to Deal With	78%	76%	88%
Complaints Handling	37%	34%	63%
NPS (Promoters)	47%	44%	64%

*Base below 10



Area

Lancaster City Council operates over three main areas: Lancaster, Carnforth and Morecombe.

Overall satisfaction is highest in Carnforth at 83%, compared with 77% in Lancaster and 76% in Morecombe.

Carnforth is also the most satisfied with a further nine measures and tenants here are the most likely to recommend the Council to others.

There is little between the satisfaction levels from the other two areas, with the lowest level of satisfaction varying across these, although it is tenants in Morecombe who are the least likely to recommend Lancaster City Council.

	All Tenants	Lancaster	Morecombe	Carnforth
Overall Satisfaction	77%	77%	76%	83%
Well Maintained Home	76%	76%	73%	83%
Safe Home	78%	78%	77%	85%
Repairs Last 12 Months	82%	81%	83%	77%
Time Taken Repairs	79%	82%	74%	71%
Overall Repairs	75%	74%	77%	76%
Communal Areas	60%	59%	60%	74%
Neighbourhood Contribution	66%	66%	61%	82%
Approach to ASB	55%	54%	52%	80%
Listens & Acts	66%	66%	64%	73%
Kept Informed	77%	78%	73%	81%
Fairly & with Respect	81%	80%	83%	90%
Easy to Deal With	78%	77%	79%	88%
Complaints Handling	37%	37%	43%	10%
NPS (Promoters)	47%	47%	44%	60%



Age Group

It is common in surveys of this type that satisfaction tends to increase with age, and this appears to be the case with Lancaster City Council.

Satisfaction with those groups over 60 is high, including 92% of tenants aged 65 to 74 satisfied overall, with those aged 75 to 84 the most likely to recommend the Council to others.

Tenants aged 35 to 44 are the least satisfied overall and those under 25 are the least likely to recommend the Council.

	All Tenants	0 - 24	25 - 34	35 - 44	45 - 54	55 - 59	60 - 64	65 - 74	75 - 84	85 +
Overall Satisfaction	77%	68%	67%	61%	69%	70%	90%	92%	90%	87%
Well Maintained Home	76%	71%	59%	62%	65%	72%	90%	88%	92%	87%
Safe Home	78%	75%	58%	69%	75%	65%	93%	91%	97%	73%
Repairs Last 12 Months	82%	75%	64%	77%	71%	81%	98%	90%	92%	88% *
Time Taken Repairs	79%	67%	61%	75%	70%	84%	88%	89%	92%	88% *
Overall Repairs	75%	47%	62%	61%	64%	73%	90%	88%	92%	73%
Communal Areas	60%	73%	38%	47%	44%	76%	67%	66%	74%	60%
Neighbourhood Contribution	66%	54%	70%	61%	49%	61%	78%	73%	79%	83%
Approach to ASB	55%	60%	45%	47%	40%	33%	68%	63%	79%	56% *
Listens & Acts	66%	64%	44%	61%	53%	58%	80%	78%	84%	69%
Kept Informed	77%	83%	69%	70%	58%	70%	84%	91%	89%	77%
Fairly & with Respect	81%	87%	68%	78%	76%	64%	91%	89%	93%	100%
Easy to Deal With	78%	73%	57%	70%	69%	76%	91%	91%	90%	73%
Complaints Handling	37%	0% *	27%	42%	30%	9%	47%	41%	78% *	0% *
NPS (Promoters)	47%	20%	27%	41%	41%	56%	61%	60%	64%	40%

*Base below 10



Property Type

Lancaster City Council has three main property types; flats, houses and bungalows, plus a few bedsits and maisonettes.

It is, perhaps, no surprise that tenants in the bungalows are the most satisfied. These are not only desirable types of property but are most likely to be occupied by older tenants, who as shown previously, tend to be the most satisfied. However, the few tenants of bedsits are also highly satisfied.

There is little between the other two main property types, with 76% of tenants in flats satisfied overall and 72% in houses, whilst 41% and 42% respectively would recommend Lancaster City Council to other people.

	All Tenants	BSIT	BUNG	FLAT	HOUS	MAIS
Overall Satisfaction	77%	88%	88%	76%	72%	67% *
Well Maintained Home	76%	88%	90%	71%	72%	83% *
Safe Home	78%	94%	91%	72%	76%	80% *
Repairs Last 12 Months	82%	100% *	89%	84%	75%	80% *
Time Taken Repairs	79%	100% *	88%	76%	77%	100% *
Overall Repairs	75%	88%	83%	77%	68%	100% *
Communal Areas	60%	87%	64%	56%	63%	50% *
Neighbourhood Contribution	66%	89% *	76%	67%	59%	75% *
Approach to ASB	55%	90%	68%	50%	53%	33% *
Listens & Acts	66%	100%	78%	62%	62%	67% *
Kept Informed	77%	100%	86%	77%	72%	60% *
Fairly & with Respect	81%	100%	90%	79%	78%	67% *
Easy to Deal With	78%	100%	89%	76%	74%	60% *
Complaints Handling	37%	100% *	42%	34%	35%	- *
NPS (Promoters)	47%	63%	66%	41%	42%	40% *

*Base below 10



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:
Adam Jewitt: adam.jewitt@arap.co.uk

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



Certificate No: 359292021

