



Mid Devon District Council

TSM Annual Report 2025/26

Prepared by: Acuity Research & Practice



Introduction

Three councils in Devon, Exeter City Council, Mid Devon District Council and East Devon District Council have joined together to form the Devon Consortium, and this has commissioned Acuity to carry out regular satisfaction surveys of the tenants of the three Councils. Following the completion of three surveys in 2024/25, quarterly surveys have continued into 2025/26.

This report is based on the findings from the Mid Devon DC (MDDC) survey, with separate reports for Exeter CC and East Devon DC. The aim for Mid Devon DC is to complete 500 surveys for the year using a mixture of online surveys and telephone interviews on a 20%/80% split. The target is to complete a minimum of 125 per quarter to achieve the desired number at year-end.

Four quarterly surveys were completed throughout the year, and this report combines the results to give an annual perspective. Across the year, a total of 566 responses were received, 534 complete with a further 32 incomplete, which also have to be included. Of these, 427 were completed by a telephone interview with Acuity's in-house telephone team, and 139 were completed online. The final split between these was 75%/25% in favour of the telephone interviews, so a little different from the target.

The report has used sentiment analysis to better understand tenants' comments and why they have responded to the satisfaction questions the way they have. Analysis of the four open questions and information about how this works is shown later in the report and adds an extra layer of focused insight to the results to help MDDC better understand what is driving satisfaction, what tenants are most concerned about, and what could be improved.

The survey is confidential, and the results are sent back to MDDC anonymised unless tenants give their permission to be identified. A total of 69% of tenants gave permission to share their responses with their details attached, and 92% of these tenants are happy for MDDC to contact them to discuss any information they provided.

This survey aims to provide data on tenants' satisfaction, which will allow MDDC to:

- Provide information on tenants' perceptions of current services
- Compare against previous surveys
- Inform decisions regarding future service development
- Report to the Regulator annually, as required.

For the overall results, Acuity and the Regulator of Social Housing require that landlords with over 2,500 but under 10,000 properties achieve a sampling error of at least $\pm 4\%$ at the 95% confidence level. For MDDC, 563 responses were received for the overall service question, and this response is high enough to conclude that the findings are accurate to within ± 3.7 , therefore, meeting the required margin of error.

The majority of figures throughout the report show the results as percentages. The percentages are rounded up or down 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

Annual Summary

Further Insight

Wellbeing

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Summary

Annual Demographics

74%



Overall Satisfaction

Three-quarters of tenants (74%) are satisfied with the overall service provided by MDDC across the year, this having increased by four percentage points (p.p) since last year, part of a general increase across most measures.

The highest satisfaction is for the home being safe (83%); however, this is the only measure to exceed 80% satisfaction, although 79% are satisfied with both the repairs service in the last 12 months and being treated fairly and with respect.

Just three measures fall below 60% satisfaction: how tenants' views are listened to and acted upon (58%), how instances of anti-social behaviour are handled (50%), and just 31% are satisfied with the handling of complaints.

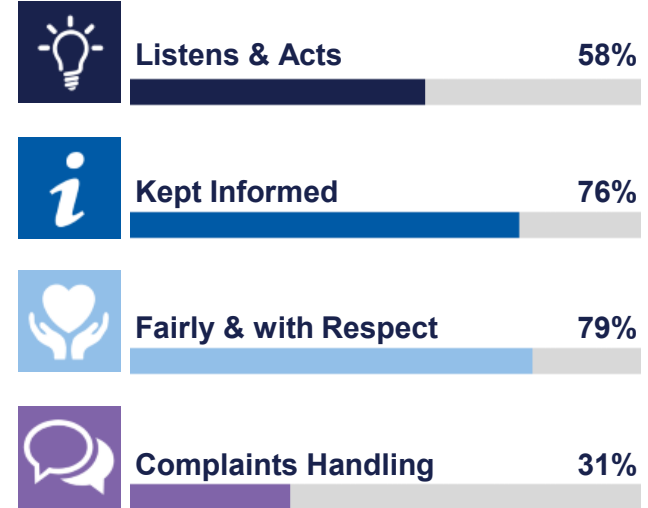
The report summarises the results across the year, shows how satisfaction has changed over time, how the results compare with other landlords and includes extra analysis, including the open comments, to show what is driving satisfaction and where improvements could be targeted.

TSM Key Metrics

Keeping Properties in Good Repair



Respectful & Helpful Engagement



Responsible Neighbourhood Management





Annual Summary



Annual Satisfaction & Dissatisfaction

The charts opposite demonstrate the range of satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the different survey measures.

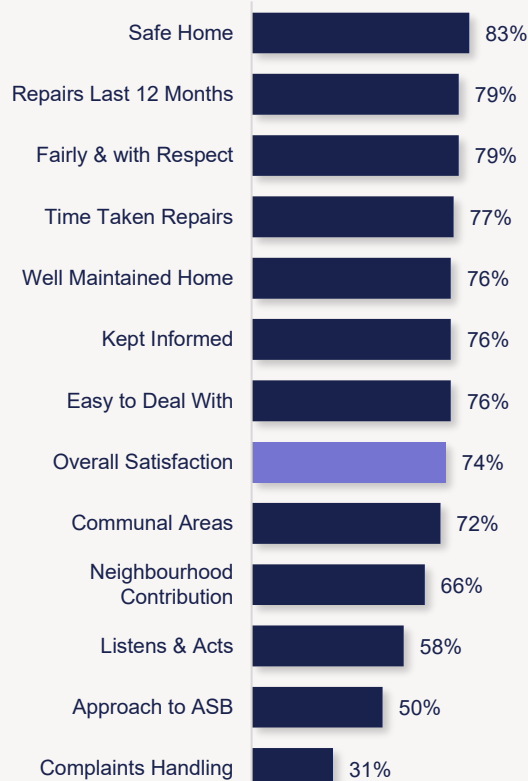
Although satisfaction may appear low, there is sometimes a significant number of tenants who have no opinion either way, selecting the neither satisfied nor dissatisfied option, rather than being actively dissatisfied with the service.

For example, whilst just 50% of tenants are satisfied with the handling of ASB (ranking in the bottom two for satisfaction), 29% are dissatisfied, but 20% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. This may be because they have not experienced ASB themselves, so they feel unable to give a more definitive response. The proportion giving a neutral response is also relatively high on the neighbourhood contribution (17%) and some of the engagement measures.

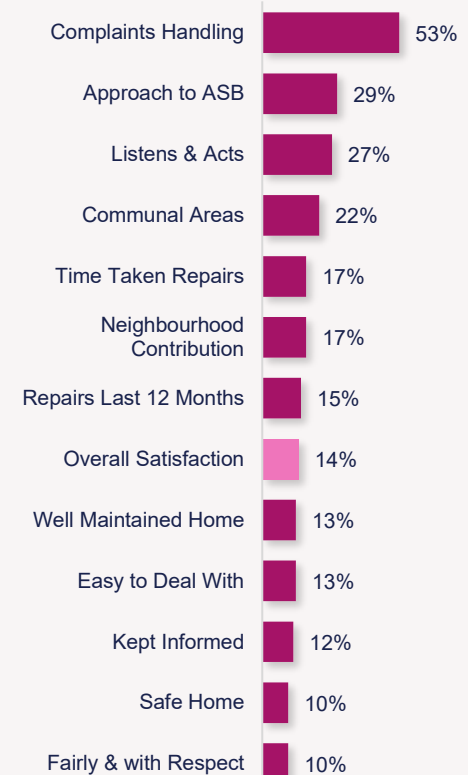
Satisfaction with the overall service sits in the lower middle of the range of measures, and it could be argued this should be a little higher, given higher satisfaction on several other services, perhaps suggesting that trust in the Council is not as high as it could be.

The range of dissatisfaction, however, is relatively low, although the handling of complaints stands out at 53%, which is much higher than the proportion of those who are satisfied (31%).

Satisfaction with Measures 2025/26



Dissatisfaction with Measures 2025/26





Key Driver Analysis

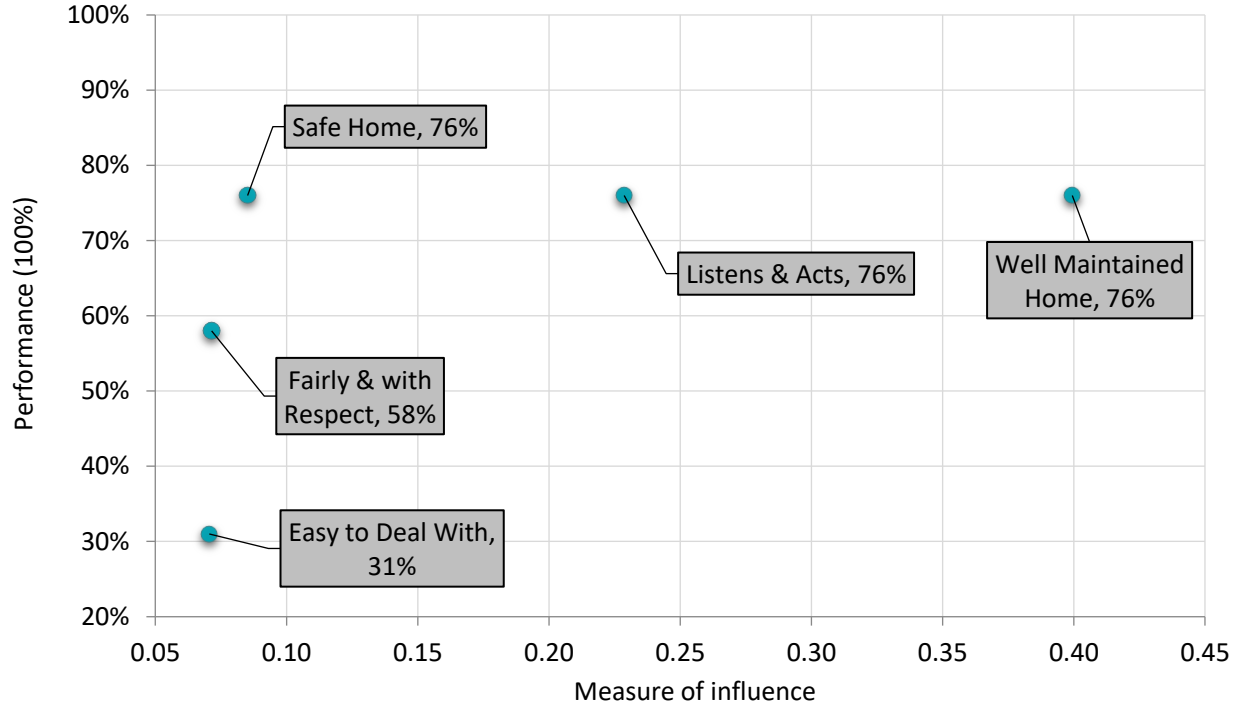
Key driver analysis is used to examine the relationship between the different variables (the questions asked in the survey) and determine which elements of the service are the key drivers for tenants' overall satisfaction.

Each landlord has its own unique pattern of influence, and when considering the results for 2025/26, the most important driver for tenants' satisfaction with the overall service provided is that the Council provides a well maintained home, followed by how tenants' views are listened to and acted.

The provision of a safe home, being easy to deal with and treating tenants fairly and with respect 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 – TSM results 2024/25 (LCRA)



All registered providers with over 1,000 units are required to submit their TSM results for 2025/26 to the Regulator of Social Housing by the end of June 2026. The full set of results for the year will be released later in the year.

Typically, national datasets do not vary much year on year, and here we provide a comparison with the previous year's dataset (2024/25), which includes local authorities and housing associations.

When compared against all landlords, all but three measures for Mid Devon are above the median; seven are in the second quartile, including the overall service, but the time to complete repairs and the home being safe are in the top quartile.

Just listening to tenants and acting on their feedback and the handling of complaints are in the third quartile, qhllw the handling of ASB is in the lower quartile.

This is very encouraging and shows that Mid Devon is performing well against other landlords, particularly for a local authority, which often performs a little below that of housing associations, particularly the smaller ones.

Base: 353 landlords.





Benchmarking – TSM results 2024/25 (LCRA Councils only)

Given that this is a local authority, it is appropriate to compare the results against other local authorities only, and the chart shows the differences against the quartile positions, again using the 2024/25 RSH data set.

The Council compares even better against this group, with all but one measure above the median. This exception is the handling of ASB, which is in the lower quartile.

There are six measures in the top quartile, including the repairs and maintenance measures, whilst the remaining five are in the second quartile, including the overall service.

This is clearly a good comparison, helping to provide some context to the results and showing that Mid Devon performs very well against other councils.

Base: 158 landlords





Top 30 Comments

The table to the right presents the top 30 comment areas from tenants from the four sentiment questions used in the survey, and ranked in order of frequency.

By far the most commonly-mentioned area is property services, particularly the timeliness and responsiveness of repairs, which has a negative score of -1.95. This shows that this aspect of service is of the utmost importance to tenants, but could be improved, with more tenants reporting negative experiences of this, which have shaped their perception of the services provided. Tenants also negatively commented on other aspects of the responsive repairs service.

Additionally, tenants would like improvements to the quality of work and to the treatment of damp and mould in their homes.

On the other hand, customer service and contact is viewed more positively, including responsiveness (+1.81) and customer service generally (+3.50).

The full text of these comments is available to view on the Acuity dashboard and can help the Council target areas of most concern to tenants.

	%	Count	Score
Property Services - Responsive Repairs - Timeliness / Responsiveness	38.82%	191	-1.95
Property Services - Responsive Repairs - Other	15.04%	74	-1.20
Property Services - Responsive Repairs - Resolution	13.41%	66	-1.89
Property Condition - Damp	13.41%	66	-2.98
Property Services - Responsive Repairs - Quality of Work / Service	13.01%	64	-0.94
Housing Services - Customer Service & Contact - Communication / Transparency	10.77%	53	-1.40
Housing Services - Customer Service & Contact - Timeliness / Responsiveness	10.57%	52	1.81
Property Services - Responsive Repairs - Communication / Transparency	9.76%	48	-2.27
Uncategorized Comments	9.76%	48	0.77
Housing Services - Customer Service & Contact - Other	8.33%	41	0.77
Property Condition - Window/doors	8.13%	40	-2.24
Housing Services - Customer Service & Contact - Satisfaction	7.32%	36	3.50
Housing Services - Customer Service & Contact - Staff Conduct	7.11%	35	2.23
Property Condition - Roofs & Gutters	6.91%	34	-3.31
Property Services - Responsive Repairs - Effort	5.89%	29	-2.10
Equality, Diversity & Inclusion - Vulnerabilities	5.49%	27	-3.67
Property Services - Planned Maintenance - Timeliness / Responsiveness	5.08%	25	-3.15
Housing Services - Grounds Maintenance - Timeliness / Responsiveness	5.08%	25	-3.30
Housing Services - Customer Service & Contact - Effort	4.67%	23	-0.50
Property Condition - Bathrooms	4.47%	22	-3.87
Property Services - Responsive Repairs - Appointments / Convenience	4.27%	21	-3.57
Housing Services - Customer Service & Contact - No Comments	4.27%	21	-2.50
Housing Services - Grounds Maintenance - Other	4.27%	21	-2.91
Housing Services - New Lettings - Timeliness / Responsiveness	3.66%	18	-1.80
Housing Services - Grounds Maintenance - Quality of Work / Service	3.46%	17	-3.06
Housing Services - Customer Service & Contact - Quality of Work / Service	3.25%	16	2.75
Property Condition - General Condition	3.25%	16	-2.35
Property Condition - Decoration	3.25%	16	-4.18
Property Condition - Kitchens	3.25%	16	-3.31
Neighbourhoods - Anti Social Behaviour	3.25%	16	-2.35



National Context

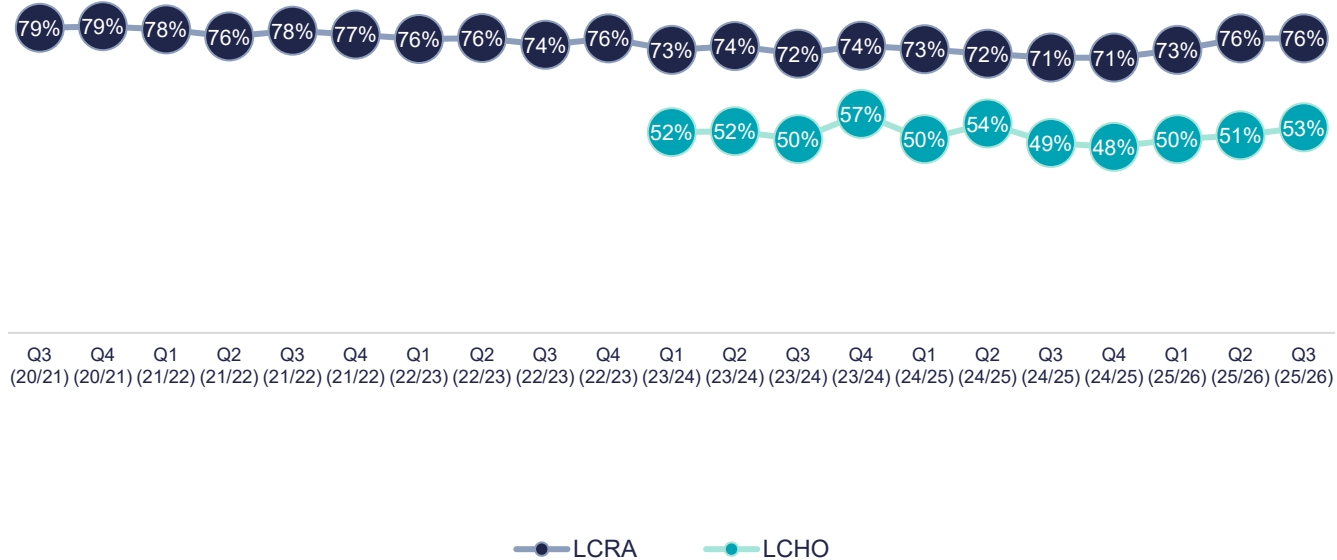
When considering the results, the national context and external factors must also be taken into account.

Satisfaction is based on perception rather than specific values, so it can be affected by these factors and how positive people feel about their lives.

Tenants have had to face considerable challenges in recent years, particularly the ongoing cost-of-living crisis, political changes and some will still be recovering from the disruption caused by the pandemic of 2020 and the effect it had on the delivery of services.

The graph demonstrates how overall satisfaction has changed over time for Acuity's clients (tracker only). The trendline is downward over the last few years, but there are signs that it is starting to increase again as we move through 2025/26.

Overall Services (Acuity Clients)





Further Insight

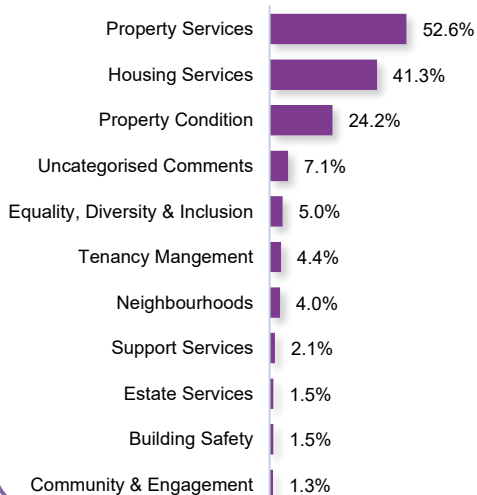
Overall Satisfaction

Please describe your specific experiences that have shaped your view of Mid Devon District Council's service.

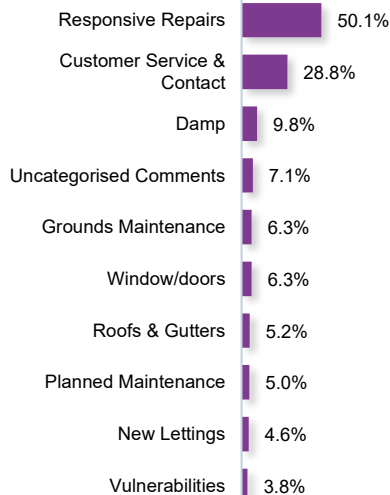
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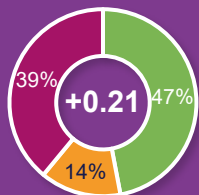
Categories



Top 10 Subcategories



Attribute	Count	%	Sentiment Score
Timeliness / Responsiveness	209	50.6%	-0.66
Subcategory, no attribute (yet)	75	18.2%	+0.21
Quality of Work / Service	69	16.7%	+0.19
Communication / Transparency	60	14.5%	-0.15
Resolution	57	13.8%	-1.19
Satisfaction	39	9.4%	+3.21
Staff Conduct	32	7.7%	+3.28
Effort	29	7.0%	-0.28
Listening / Acting	17	4.1%	-1.29
No Comments	15	3.6%	-1.67
Appointments / Convenience	12	2.9%	-2.67
Empathy	8	1.9%	+0.75
Safety	8	1.9%	-4.38
Trust	7	1.7%	-1.00
Accountability	6	1.5%	-0.17
Worker Conduct	4	1.0%	+2.00
Consistency	2	0.5%	+4.00
Fairness	1	0.2%	-5.00
Accessibility			-



Tenants were asked, "Please describe your specific experiences that have shaped your view of Mid Devon District Council's service," and 479 left comments. Many praise polite, helpful staff and timely emergency responses (boilers, leaks), new kitchens/windows, and specific officers who went above and beyond.

Recurrent negatives reveal long waits, repeat visits, missed appointments, poor contractor quality control, and unresolved outstanding jobs (doors, windows, roofs, bathrooms, heating). Damp, mould and ventilation problems are widespread, sometimes causing health issues and repeated temporary fixes rather than lasting. Missed follow-ups, lost jobs, poor phone/email response, and inconsistent handling of complaints occur too. Several tenants report inadequate prioritisation for vulnerable or disabled tenants, long waits for adaptations, and bureaucratic friction (benefits, rent errors, Right to Buy delays). Anti-social behaviour and neighbour disputes are frequently reported as insufficiently addressed. Some praise rapid emergency attendance, and long-term positive relationships.

Overall sentiment combines appreciation for individual staff and core maintenance work with frustration about systemic delays, quality control, poor communication, and unresolved damp/ASB issues.

For further information about Acuity's Resident Sentiment Index, please see Appendix 1.

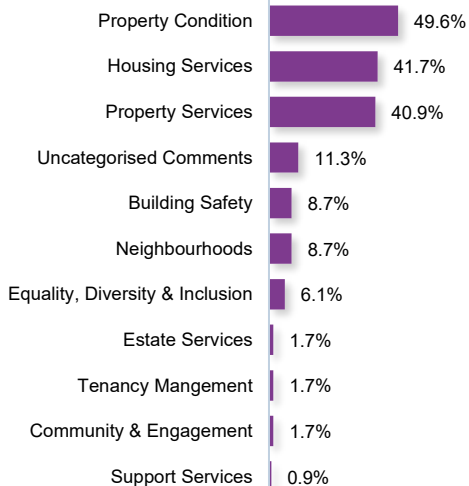
The Home

If you do not feel that your home (and / or communal areas) are safe and/or well maintained, please can you explain why and suggest what could be improved?

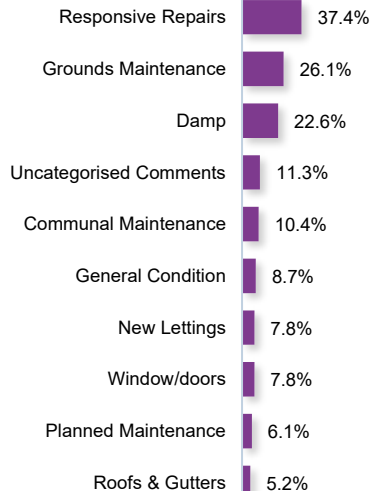
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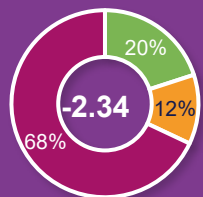
Categories



Top 10 Subcategories



Attribute	Count	%	Sentiment Score
Timeliness / Responsiveness	29	35.8%	-2.62
Subcategory, no attribute (yet)	21	25.9%	-2.86
Quality of Work / Service	20	24.7%	-2.60
Safety	12	14.8%	-1.83
Communication / Transparency	11	13.6%	-3.18
Effort	7	8.6%	-3.57
Resolution	6	7.4%	-3.83
Accountability	2	2.5%	-5.00
Listening / Acting	2	2.5%	-5.00
Accessibility	1	1.2%	-5.00
Consistency	1	1.2%	-5.00
Empathy	1	1.2%	-5.00
Fairness	1	1.2%	-5.00
Trust	1	1.2%	-5.00
Appointments / Convenience			-
Satisfaction			-
Staff Conduct			-
Worker Conduct			-
No Comments			-



Tenants who do not feel that their home and/or communal areas are safe and/or well maintained were asked to explain why and suggest improvements. The dominant issues are persistent damp and black mould across many homes, often long-standing and inadequately resolved despite repeated reports.

Tenants describe failed or partial remedial work (e.g., extractor fans not routed outside, ineffective treatments, unfinished asbestos removal) and slow, inconsistent repair responses that require repeated chasing. Security and safety concerns recur: faulty or draughty doors and locks, single exits for some homes, broken communal doors, trip hazards from uneven paths, loose floorboards, and unfinished roofs or walls. Communal areas are frequently unclean, overgrown, used as dumping grounds, poorly lit, and suffer from removed or reduced services (e.g., grass cutting, cleaners, bins), creating anti-social behaviour and safety anxieties. Communication and contractor quality are criticized, with promises unkept, poor workmanship, and lack of follow-up. Vulnerable tenants (disabled, elderly, families with young children) report disproportionate impact and having to pay or carry out work themselves.

Overall sentiment is frustration, feeling ignored, and a lack of trust in housing services to deliver timely, effective maintenance.

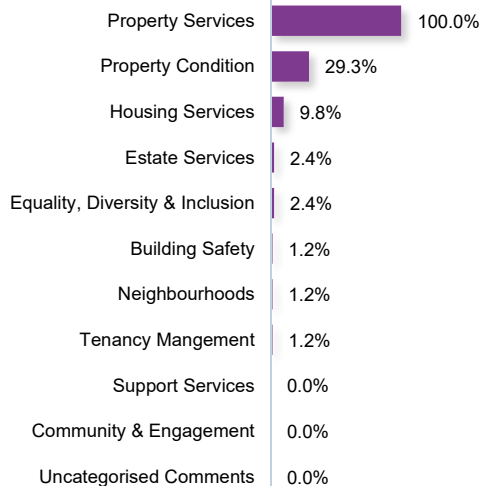
Repairs & Maintenance

If you are not satisfied with how Mid Devon District Council deals with repairs and maintenance, please could you explain the reason why?

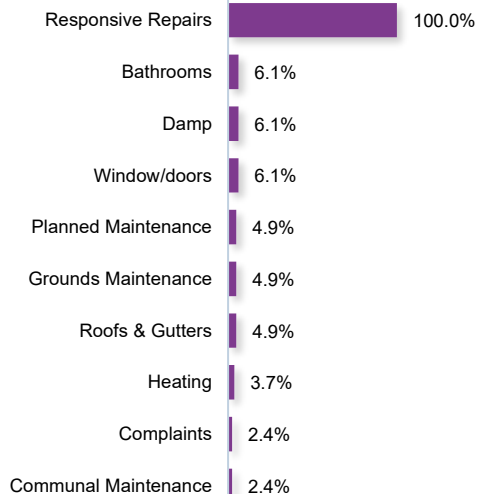
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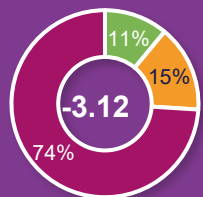
Categories



Top 10 Subcategories



Attribute	Count	%	Sentiment Score
Timeliness / Responsiveness	53	64.6%	-3.55
Resolution	20	24.4%	-2.20
Subcategory, no attribute (yet)	18	22.0%	-2.83
Quality of Work / Service	15	18.3%	-1.27
Appointments / Convenience	5	6.1%	-5.00
Communication / Transparency	5	6.1%	-5.00
Effort	3	3.7%	-0.67
Empathy	2	2.4%	-2.50
Listening / Acting	2	2.4%	-5.00
Worker Conduct	2	2.4%	-2.50
Accountability	1	1.2%	-5.00
Safety	1	1.2%	-3.00
Satisfaction	1	1.2%	-5.00
Accessibility			-
Consistency			-
Fairness			-
Staff Conduct			-
Trust			-
No Comments			-



Just those not satisfied with the repairs service were asked why, and 82 tenants left comments. The dominant issues are long wait times (weeks to years), cancelled or missed appointments, repeated return visits for incomplete fixes, and slow/absent communication from the repairs team. Quality concerns describe temporary, patchy, or shoddy workmanship (filler, partial repointing, scratched panels, poor finishes), incomplete jobs left without follow-up, and perceived corner-cutting.

Vulnerable households report disproportionate impact (disabled tenants, households with babies, and those with health issues) are experiencing prolonged hardship. Specific recurring problems include heating/hot water failures, damp and mould, leaking roofs, windows and doors, guttering, and persistent drainage/flooding. Several recount multi-year delays and repeated chasing of the council; some report inappropriate staff conduct or poor communication (sarcastic emails).

A few notes of satisfactory experiences exist (some quick, effective repairs and good workers), but they are overshadowed by widespread dissatisfaction with timeliness, reliability, and repair quality.

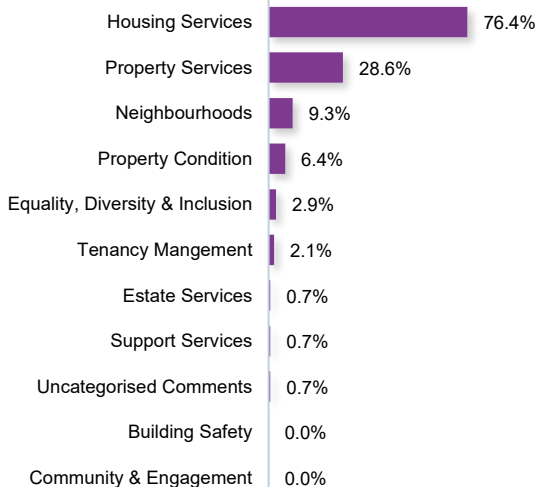
Customer Service & Communication

If you are not satisfied with customer service and communications please provide more information, and what could Mid Devon District Council improve?

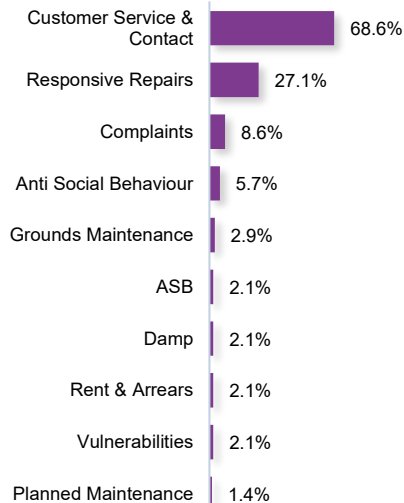
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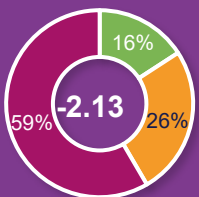
Categories



Top 10 Subcategories



Attribute	Count	%	Sentiment Score
Communication / Transparency	44	31.7%	-2.86
Subcategory, no attribute (yet)	35	25.2%	-0.77
Timeliness / Responsiveness	29	20.9%	-3.24
Effort	20	14.4%	-3.65
Listening / Acting	16	11.5%	-2.94
Resolution	9	6.5%	-2.44
Staff Conduct	9	6.5%	-3.67
No Comments	8	5.8%	-0.63
Appointments / Convenience	7	5.0%	-3.14
Accountability	6	4.3%	-3.67
Satisfaction	6	4.3%	+2.17
Quality of Work / Service	5	3.6%	-3.40
Accessibility	3	2.2%	-0.67
Empathy	3	2.2%	-4.33
Safety	2	1.4%	-1.00
Trust	2	1.4%	-2.50
Worker Conduct	2	1.4%	-2.50
Consistency	-	-	-
Fairness	-	-	-



Again, just those not satisfied were asked this question, resulting in 140 comments. Responses overwhelmingly cite poor communication and inconsistent customer service from housing/repairs teams. Tenants report difficulty reaching the right person, long waits for callbacks, appointments not kept or cancelled without notice and repeated need to chase progress on repairs or ASB complaints. Many describe hand-offs and “*passing the buck*” between departments, lost records, and inadequate internal coordination, office staff, inspectors and contractors often lacking shared information.

Repair delays are frequent (examples: months for damp/mould, repeated plumber visits, missing inspector logs), and workmanship or contractor conduct is sometimes disrespectful. Vulnerable tenants note inaccessible online systems, small print, and lack of tailored support; some feel dismissed, gaslighted, or ignored after making complaints. A minority are satisfied, praising specific officers or phone staff, but others highlight uneven service depending on who answers. Recurring themes: no follow-up, poor IT/website functionality, weak ASB handling, and limited transparency about timelines.

Overall sentiment is frustration and distrust driven by slow response, inconsistent standards, and inadequate communication across teams.



Wellbeing



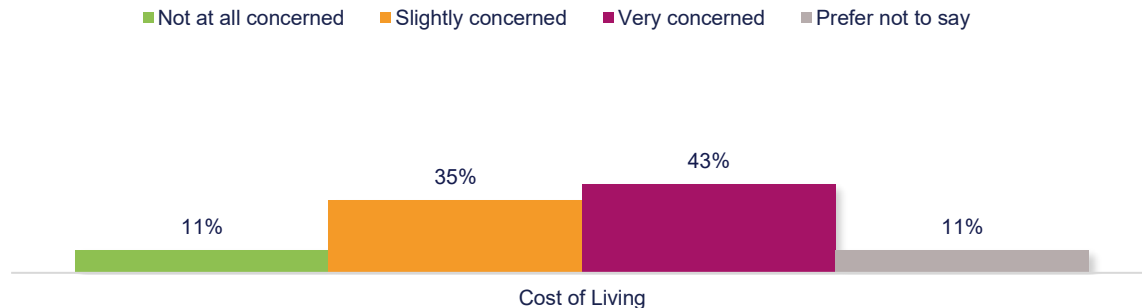
Cost of Living

Just over three-quarters of tenants (79%) say they are concerned about the cost of living, with 43% very concerned, and a further 35% are slightly concerned. This level of concern is very similar to that seen in the last few surveys. Just 11% of tenants are not concerned at all, with a further 11% preferring not to say.

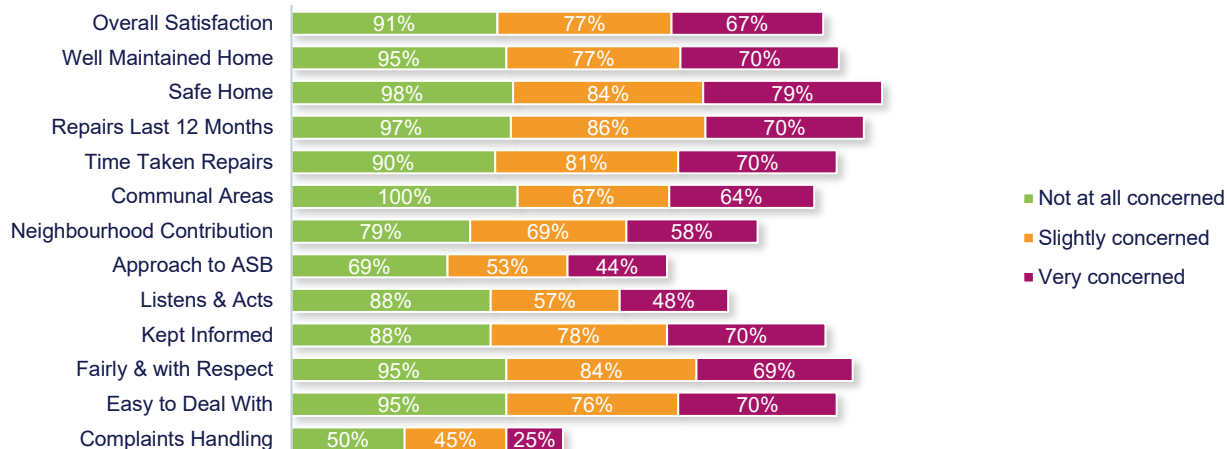
There is a theory that those struggling financially are often less satisfied with the services they receive, and this does appear to be the case here. Those not at all concerned about the cost of living are 91% satisfied with the overall service provided, compared to just 67% of those who are very concerned.

This pattern continues across the range of measures and tends to support this theory. It also implies that if the Council can help relieve the pressure on household finances, perhaps by helping with benefits, etc., it could bring some increase in satisfaction.

Cost of Living Concern



Cost of Living Concern & Satisfaction





Trends



Year-on-Year Change

The table shows the annual results for 2025/26 against those for 2024/25. Those in green show where the results have increased, and those in purple show where they have decreased.

It should be noted, however, that with an annual margin of error of around $\pm 3.7\%$, a change of more than $\pm 7.5\text{p.p}$ would be needed to be statistically significant, although any change can show a direction of travel; none of the changes are more than this.

Most measures have improved their satisfaction levels; just two of the 13 survey measures have decreased, with overall satisfaction up by 4p.p. The biggest positive changes are for the upkeep of the communal areas and the repairs service in the last 12 months, both up by 7p.p.

The two going down are the handling of ASB and of complaints, both of which have decreased by 6p.p this year compared with last.

The Council should be pleased with these increases and how it compares with other councils, showing things are moving in the right direction.

	2024/25	2025/26
Overall Satisfaction	70%	74% (+4)
Well Maintained Home	73%	76% (+3)
Safe Home	79%	83% (+5)
Communal Areas	65%	72% (+7)
Repairs Last 12 Months	72%	79% (+7)
Time Taken Repairs	71%	77% (+6)
Neighbourhood Contribution	63%	66% (+3)
Approach to ASB	56%	50% (-6)
Listens & Acts	54%	58% (+4)
Fairly & with Respect	78%	79% (+1)
Kept Informed	74%	76% (+2)
Easy to Deal With	72%	76% (+4)
Complaints Handling	37%	31% (-6)



Quarterly Change 2025/26

The table shows the changes from quarter to quarter during the 2025/26 year.

As you might expect, there has been some fluctuation in satisfaction throughout the year, but most measures ended the year with higher satisfaction than at the start. For example, the overall service went from 69% satisfied in Q1 to 74% in Q4. However, satisfaction with the maintenance of the communal areas went from 79% in Q1 to just 61% in Q4.

These types of changes are expected during the year and are not a cause for concern, as the annual improvement, shown above, is encouraging.

	Q1 2025/26	Q2 2025/26	Q3 2025/26	Q4 2025/26
Overall Satisfaction	69%	75% (+5)	79% (+4)	74% (-5)
Well Maintained Home	72%	76% (+3)	80% (+4)	77% (-3)
Safe Home	81%	84% (+3)	85% (+1)	82% (-3)
Communal Areas	79%	78% (-1)	70% (-8)	61% (-9)
Repairs Last 12 Months	77%	76% (-1)	78% (+2)	85% (+8)
Time Taken Repairs	70%	78% (+8)	79% (+0)	77% (-1)
Neighbourhood Contribution	64%	73% (+9)	65% (-8)	64% (-2)
Approach to ASB	41%	52% (+11)	57% (+5)	51% (-6)
Listens & Acts	55%	57% (+2)	63% (+6)	55% (-9)
Fairly & with Respect	75%	80% (+5)	82% (+2)	77% (-5)
Kept Informed	77%	75% (-1)	80% (+4)	72% (-8)
Easy to Deal With	71%	74% (+3)	83% (+9)	72% (-11)
Complaints Handling	31%	35% (+4)	28% (-6)	32% (+4)



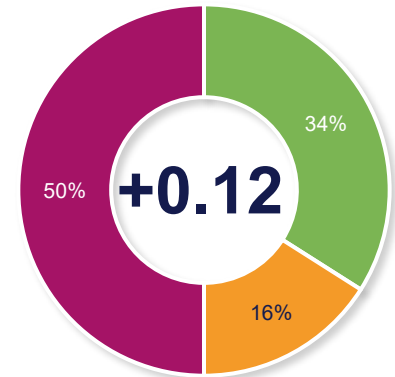
Summary

Overall RSI Score

The Organisational-Level RSI offers a single, headline metric that captures the overall emotional tone of tenant feedback across all key service areas.

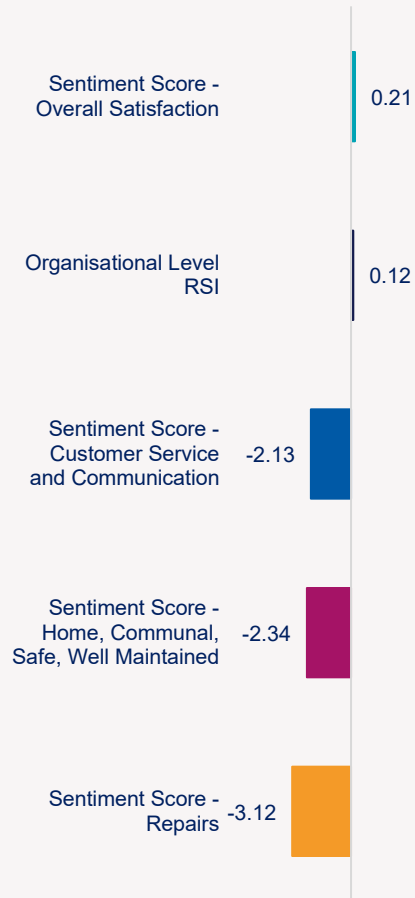
It is based exclusively on responses to the four RSI open-ended questions. It reflects how positively or negatively tenants feel about the organisation's performance across these key areas.

Please note that if your organisation does not ask all seven core RSI questions, you are unable to benchmark your Organisational RSI Score. Each individual RSI question will be analysed in its relevant section throughout the report.



■ Positive ■ Neutral ■ Negative

Sentiment Scores



Sentiment Summary



Overall Satisfaction

Tenants are broadly appreciative of staff politeness and prompt responses for urgent repairs, but many report long waits, poor communication, missed appointments and inconsistent contractor quality. Recurring issues include damp/mould, heating inefficiencies, unresolved structural defects, and slow or absent follow-up. Anti-social behaviour and accessibility/adaptation delays cause significant distress for vulnerable tenants. Overall satisfaction is mixed: good frontline service contrasted with systemic delays, record-keeping problems and uneven maintenance standards.

The Home

Those tenants who are dissatisfied with their homes report widespread damp, black mould and recurring repairs with slow or incomplete responses from the Council. Communal maintenance is patchy: overgrown hedges, poor cleaning, litter, broken doors, fencing and parking issues. Safety concerns include inadequate locks, single exits, asbestos remnants and anti-social behaviour. Communication and contractor quality are criticised; many tenants have had to fix or fund work themselves. Vulnerable tenants feel unsupported, citing health impacts, accessibility problems and long waits for effective remediation.

Repairs

Dissatisfied tenants also report widespread issues with repairs, with long waits (weeks to years), frequent missed or cancelled appointments, poor communication and the need to chase, and many jobs left incomplete or patched rather than properly fixed. Some tradespeople are praised, but others are seen as unskilled. Recurring issues include damp, heating, windows, doors and mould, with added concerns about accessibility for disabled tenants. Overall sentiment: frustrated, feeling ignored, and believing work is low-quality and poorly managed.

Customer Service & Communication

Those not satisfied with their contact with the Council report poor communication, slow or inconsistent repairs, and difficulty reaching or getting responses from the right staff. Common issues include missed appointments, blame-shifting, lack of follow-up, and weak coordination between the office and contractors. Vulnerable tenants struggle with inaccessible online services and inadequate support for ASB, damp/mould and disability needs. A minority praise helpful staff, but overall sentiment is frustration, distrust and a desire for clearer, timely updates and accountability.

Note

Apart from the overall satisfaction question, the questions were only asked of those not satisfied with the services they received, so are inevitably negative. This needs to be remembered when analysing the responses as satisfaction with these aspects is actually high.

Satisfaction with Measures



Summary



As part of the Devon Consortium, Mid Devon District Council commissioned Acuity to complete regular quarterly surveys of its tenants, based on the Tenant Satisfaction Measures from the Regulator of Social Housing. This report pulls together the results from the four surveys to give an annual perspective and is based on 566 responses received throughout the year.

Satisfaction is good, with three-quarters of tenants satisfied with the overall service provided by MDDC. Overall satisfaction sits in the middle of the range of measures, with the safe home at the top (83%), followed closely by the repairs service in the last 12 months and treating tenants fairly and with respect, both at 79%. However, at the other end of the range are listening to tenants' views and acting upon them (58%) and the handling of anti-social behaviour (50%). In addition, just 31% of tenants are satisfied with the handling of complaints, with far more (53%) dissatisfied. This is commonly the lowest scoring metric in surveys of this type, but for MDDC is the only measure with more dissatisfied than satisfied.

Satisfaction has generally increased since last year, although none of the changes are statistically significant. Satisfaction with the overall service is up 4p.p with the biggest increases for the time to complete repairs (up 6p.p), the maintenance of the communal areas and the repairs service in the last 12 months (both up 7p.p). Just two measures fell in satisfaction, the approach to handling ASB (down 6p.p) and the handling of complaints, also down by 6p.p. However, overall, this is a good set of results and moving in the right direction, and to some extent, this mirrors the positive changes seen across the sector this year.

MDDC compares very well against other council landlords, with all but one measure above the group medians and six in the top quartile, including the repairs and property-based measures. The overall service is in the second quartile, but the handling of ASB falls into the lower quartile.

Sentiment analysis has been used against four qualitative questions, covering overall satisfaction with the service provided, although three of these were only asked of those not satisfied with the service, so are inevitably negative. This provides a sentiment score based on the comments and highlights where tenants are happy with the service and where they think improvements could be made. The overall sentiment score is just positive at +0.12, with tenants wanting improvement to the timeliness and quality of repairs and the condition of their properties. Analysing the scores and reading the comments will help the Council get a better understanding of what is driving satisfaction and what is not working quite as well.

The results were also broken down by age and length of tenancy and shows that satisfaction does tend to increase with age, supporting the theory seen across many similar surveys, and those newest to the Council and resident for the longest periods are the most satisfied, with satisfaction tailing off in the middle years, particularly for those with MDDC for between four and five years.



Recommendations

Council has around 3,000 LCRA tenants and commissioned Acuity to carry out an independent survey of its tenants, based on the TSMs from the Regulator of Social Housing, as part of the Devon Consortium.

The survey reveals many areas of good performance, with most increasing in satisfaction 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 the Council target services that may need some improvement.

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

Repairs Service

Satisfaction with the repairs service has improved since last year, but remains the main source of complaints and reason for tenant/Council contact. Tenants' comments reveal an inconsistent service, with most happy with the work done but some complaining of long delays in work completion, missed appointments, repeat visits, poor contractor control and outstanding repairs. Some also say that work is often temporary or of poor quality, requiring more permanent work later. Several tenants also refer to problems with damp and mould in their homes, it is not clear how widespread the problem is or the severity of issues, the Council could consider adding an additional question into the surveys to find out the extent of the problems but may already be carrying out surveys in the light of the responsibilities placed by the advent of Awaab's Law. The Council may wish to look at its repairs processes, looking to tighten up on the inconsistencies.

Handling of Complaints & Contact

Since the introduction of the TSMs, the handling of complaints has been consistently the lowest-rated service, and it is also the lowest-rated in this survey. Around a fifth of tenants said they had made a complaint, but the question of 'what is a complaint?' to tenants continues, so it is not clear how many of these are genuine complaints or service requests. Dissatisfaction is high at 53%, and although the survey did not include any follow-up questions, this is often linked to the quality and frequency of communications. There appears to be a link to contact issues generally, with some complaining of long waits to be answered, problems reaching the right people, 'passing the buck' between departments and an inconsistent response depending on who dealt with the complaints. The Council should investigate this further to see if it can be made easier to report complaints. Also, communication should be prompt and informative so tenants feel confident that complaints will be dealt with quickly and professionally.

Neighbourhood Management

Around a fifth of those who have access to communal areas are dissatisfied with the management and maintenance of the communal areas, with reports of areas being left unclean, overgrown, used as dumping grounds, poorly lit and suffering from poor services, such as grass cutting and rubbish clearance. In addition, in some areas, tenants complain of anti-social behaviour, which is not adequately addressed, leading to frustration. Good management of communal areas can have a positive effect on the lives of tenants, and whilst these issues are not universal, where they exist, tenants are unhappy with the efforts of the Council. On this basis, the Council should look more closely at the areas worst affected, so improvements can be planned.

Resident Sentiment Index (RSI)

Resident Sentiment Index (RSI): Overview

Our new Resident Sentiment Index (RSI) uses a sector-specific sentiment categorisation model developed from decades of housing data and commentary. It allows landlords to move beyond satisfaction scores by showing not only how residents feel, but why. The framework includes seven key open-ended TSM questions across each of the main service areas, allowing organisations to benchmark with their peers.

Our model analyses open-ended survey responses across key service areas, categorising them using a deep learning sentiment engine. Each comment is scored on a 5-point scale (from -5 to +5) and grouped by category, subcategory, and – where relevant – cross-cutting attributes such as trust, listening, or communication. These attributes help identify what drives sentiment within services like repairs or tenancy management.

Note: Not every subcategory will have attributes. Some service areas (e.g. Property Condition, Neighbourhoods) are stand-alone themes that don't require further layering.

Key Features

- A clear, overall sentiment score for your organisation and each service area
- Detailed analysis by category, subcategory, and (where applicable) attribute
- Automated, regulator-ready reporting aligned to TSM and STAR survey requirements
- Scalable benchmarking for tracking performance over time and against sector peers

How We Categorise Feedback

We follow a multi-stage process to turn unstructured comments into actionable insight:

- **Model Design:** Combining housing sector expertise with real resident language to build a structured categorisation model
- **Expression Building:** Creating comprehensive expressions to detect key themes and sentiments
- **Testing & Tuning:** Refining expressions to maximise accuracy and coverage
- **Deployment:** Automatically categorising and scoring comments at scale

Some feedback will remain “Uncategorised” – particularly when language is highly specific, off-topic, or outside current theme coverage. This is expected and will reduce as the model continues to grow.



Demographics



Age Group

It is common in surveys of this type that satisfaction generally increases with age, and this appears to be the case for Council.

Tenants aged 85 and over are the most satisfied with the overall service provided by the Council (94%), with those aged 35 to 44 the least satisfied (56%). Tenants aged over 85 are also the most satisfied with ten of the other survey measures, all satisfied that they have a well-maintained and safe home and they are treated fairly and with respect.

Tenants aged 35 to 44 are the least satisfied with seven measures, apart from the overall service, although it is those aged 55 to 59 who are the least satisfied with the communal areas, and how ASB and complaints are handled.

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

It is not entirely clear why this is, but it could be that older people are generally happier in their home and understand how the system works, whereas younger tenants can have higher expectations of what they feel services should look like.

	All Tenants	0 - 24	25 - 34	35 - 44	45 - 54	55 - 59	60 - 64	65 - 74	75 - 84	85 +
Overall Satisfaction	74%	60%	72%	56%	64%	75%	81%	81%	85%	94%
Well Maintained Home	76%	89% *	71%	50%	72%	73%	76%	84%	90%	100%
Safe Home	83%	75% *	81%	66%	76%	84%	83%	89%	94%	100%
Repairs Last 12 Months	79%	80% *	87%	63%	76%	74%	76%	83%	90%	95%
Time Taken Repairs	77%	80% *	83%	63%	71%	69%	79%	86%	81%	89%
Communal Areas	72%	75% *	68%	70%	71%	50%	85%	79%	76%	67% *
Neighbourhood Contribution	66%	88% *	76%	49%	63%	73%	55%	69%	75%	78%
Approach to ASB	50%	40% *	50%	46%	45%	44%	49%	51%	57%	76%
Listens & Acts	58%	67% *	61%	47%	51%	51%	53%	58%	73%	75%
Kept Informed	76%	86% *	73%	70%	69%	70%	75%	75%	92%	93%
Fairly & with Respect	79%	100% *	80%	68%	64%	76%	76%	85%	89%	100%
Easy to Deal With	76%	78% *	72%	63%	65%	79%	80%	78%	87%	90%
Complaints Handling	31%	50% *	22% *	24%	19%	18%	0% *	46%	31%	71% *

*Base below 10



Length of Tenancy

Satisfaction tends to be high for newer tenants, as seen here, where the under one-year group is the most satisfied with six of the measures in the survey.

New tenants are often happy to have received an offer and move into social housing accommodation, but as they experience more issues over the years, they become more critical. This is shown here, with, for example, tenants of 4 to 5 years being the least satisfied overall and with nine other measures. These tenants are more likely to have been waiting for repairs for some time, compared with new tenants, who typically move into homes where any necessary repairs have been done during the voids process.

As those with the longest tenancies are often among the oldest tenants, satisfaction tends to improve again for these groups, as is the case for the Council. Tenants of over 20 years are the most satisfied overall and with five other measures. These tenants may also have a higher sense of loyalty and commitment to the Council and feel settled in their homes, having been there for a long time.

	All Tenants	< 1 year	1 - 3 years	4 - 5 years	6 - 10 years	11 - 20 years	Over 20 years
Overall Satisfaction	74%	82%	78%	59%	73%	68%	83%
Well Maintained Home	76%	90%	77%	66%	68%	76%	84%
Safe Home	83%	91%	85%	76%	79%	79%	90%
Repairs Last 12 Months	79%	84%	85%	68%	73%	80%	82%
Time Taken Repairs	77%	90%	80%	63%	72%	80%	77%
Communal Areas	72%	83%	64%	75%	65%	76%	80%
Neighbourhood Contribution	66%	73%	74%	50%	59%	64%	77%
Approach to ASB	50%	53%	54%	36%	42%	48%	67%
Listens & Acts	58%	67%	62%	44%	49%	53%	69%
Kept Informed	76%	82%	78%	66%	74%	72%	83%
Fairly & with Respect	79%	91%	81%	72%	70%	76%	87%
Easy to Deal With	76%	81%	80%	71%	71%	70%	81%
Complaints Handling	31%	31%	29%	13%	29%	44%	42%



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:
Denise Raine: denise.raine@arap.co.uk

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

