



East Devon District Council

TSM Annual Report 2025/26

Prepared by: Acuity Research & Practice



Introduction

In 2024, East Devon District Council (EDDC) first commissioned Acuity, a specialist market research company, to undertake independent satisfaction surveys with their tenants to collect data on their opinions of and attitudes towards their landlord and the services provided, and this has continued into 2025/26. The survey was designed using the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) from the Regulator of Social Housing.

The surveys are carried out on a quarterly basis, with the aim of capturing the views of approximately 131 tenants per quarter, proportionately sampled based on housing need, age group, ward and length of tenancy. A mixed-methodology approach of online surveys and telephone interviews is utilised, with the target of a 20%/80% split. This report presents a summary of the results for 2025/26, based on 539 complete and 19 incomplete responses, which are also required to be included. Of these responses, 445 were by telephone interview, and 113 were online – achieving the desired split.

The report has used sentiment analysis to better understand tenants' comments and why they have responded to the satisfaction questions the way they have. This adds an extra layer of focused insight to the results to help EDDC better understand what is driving dissatisfaction, what tenants are most concerned about, and, as a consequence, what could be improved.

The survey is confidential, and the results are sent back to EDDC anonymised unless tenants give their permission to be identified – 71% of tenants gave permission to share their responses with their details attached, and 94% of these tenants are happy for EDDC to contact them to discuss any issues they raised.

The objective of this survey is to gather data on tenant satisfaction, enabling EDDC to:

- Provide information on tenants' perceptions of current services.
- Compare the results against the previous annual results.
- Compare the results with other landlords submitting results to the Regulator.
- Report to the Regulator annually, as required.

For the overall results, Acuity and the Regulator of Social Housing recommend that landlords with over 2,500 and under 10,000 properties achieve an annual sampling error of at least $\pm 4\%$ at the 95% confidence level. For EDDC, 556 responses were received to the overall satisfaction question (TP01) this year, and this response is high enough to conclude that the findings are accurate to within $\pm 3.9\%$, so within the required margin of error.

Note: 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.

Key TSM Metrics

Annual Summary

Wellbeing

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Summary

Annual Demographics

60% Overall Satisfaction

Satisfaction with the 12 TSMs in 2025/26 is summarised to the right. Six out of ten tenants are satisfied with the overall service provided by EDDC (60%), which is stable compared with 2024/25. As will be shown in this report, satisfaction has increased slightly or remained stable for almost all the survey measures.

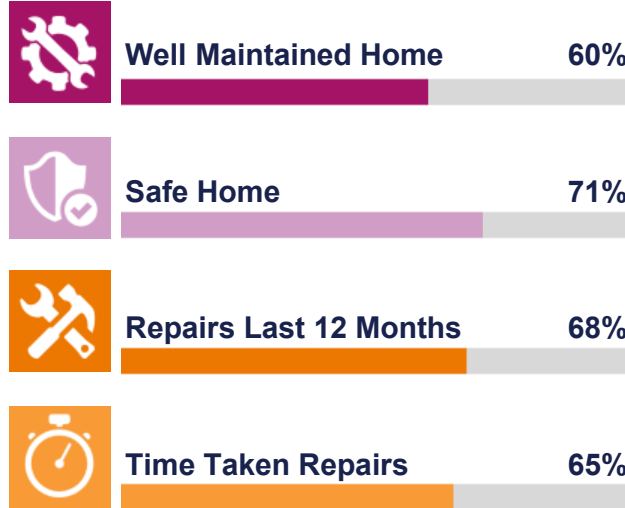
The highest levels of satisfaction are for the home being safe (71%), tenants being treated fairly and with respect (68%) and the overall repairs service over the last 12 months (68%).

On the other hand, satisfaction is below 50% for two measures: how tenants' views are listened to and acted upon (46%), and the approach to handling complaints, at just 27%. These metrics are, however, typically amongst the lowest-performing for landlords, and have improved compared with 2024/25.

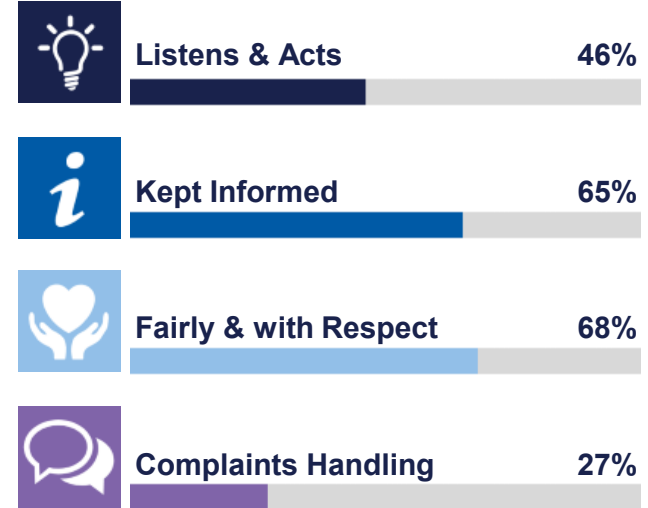
This annual report combines the results of all surveys in 2025/26 and compares them with those from 2024/25. By analysing tenants' comments, using key driver analysis, and providing benchmarking against other landlords, this report will explore any changes EDDC can implement to improve services and tenant satisfaction.

2025/26 TSM Key Metrics

Keeping Properties in Good Repair



Respectful & Helpful Engagement



Responsible Neighbourhood Management





Annual Summary



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 53% of tenants are satisfied with the positive contribution made to the neighbourhood (ranking in the bottom half for satisfaction), 26% are dissatisfied (also in the bottom half for dissatisfaction), with 20% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. This indicates that some tenants are unsure how to interpret this metric and what their landlord is responsible for, or are unaware of the contribution EDDC makes to their local area. With this in mind, more could be done to promote the positive impact the Council has locally.

Satisfaction with the Council's approach to complaints handling has both the lowest level of satisfaction (27%) and the highest level of dissatisfaction (65%). This is the only measure where dissatisfaction exceeds satisfaction.

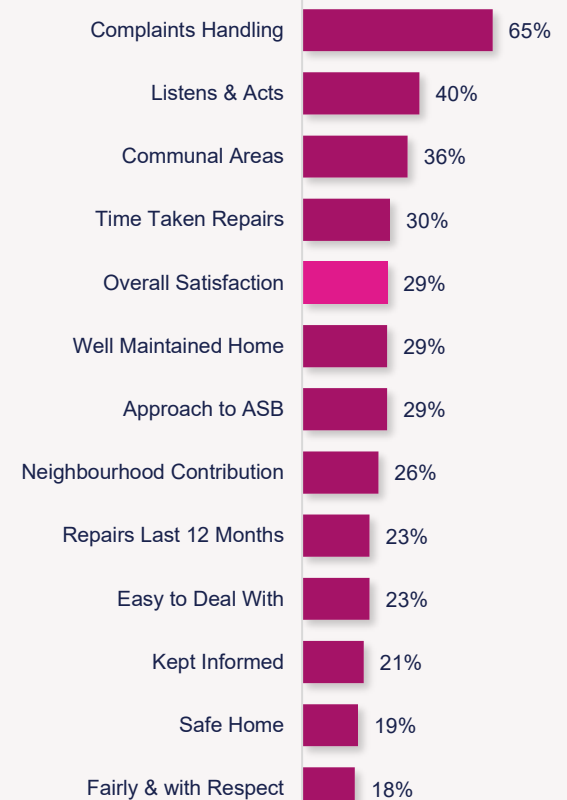
The fewest 'neither' responses are for the time taken to complete repairs, at just 5%, with tenants generally having a strong opinion on this either way.

Annual Satisfaction & Dissatisfaction

Satisfaction with Measures 2025/26



Dissatisfaction with Measures 2025/26





Key driver analysis (KDA) 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.

When combining all the results for 2025/26, the most important driver for tenants' satisfaction with the overall service provided is the provision of a well maintained home.

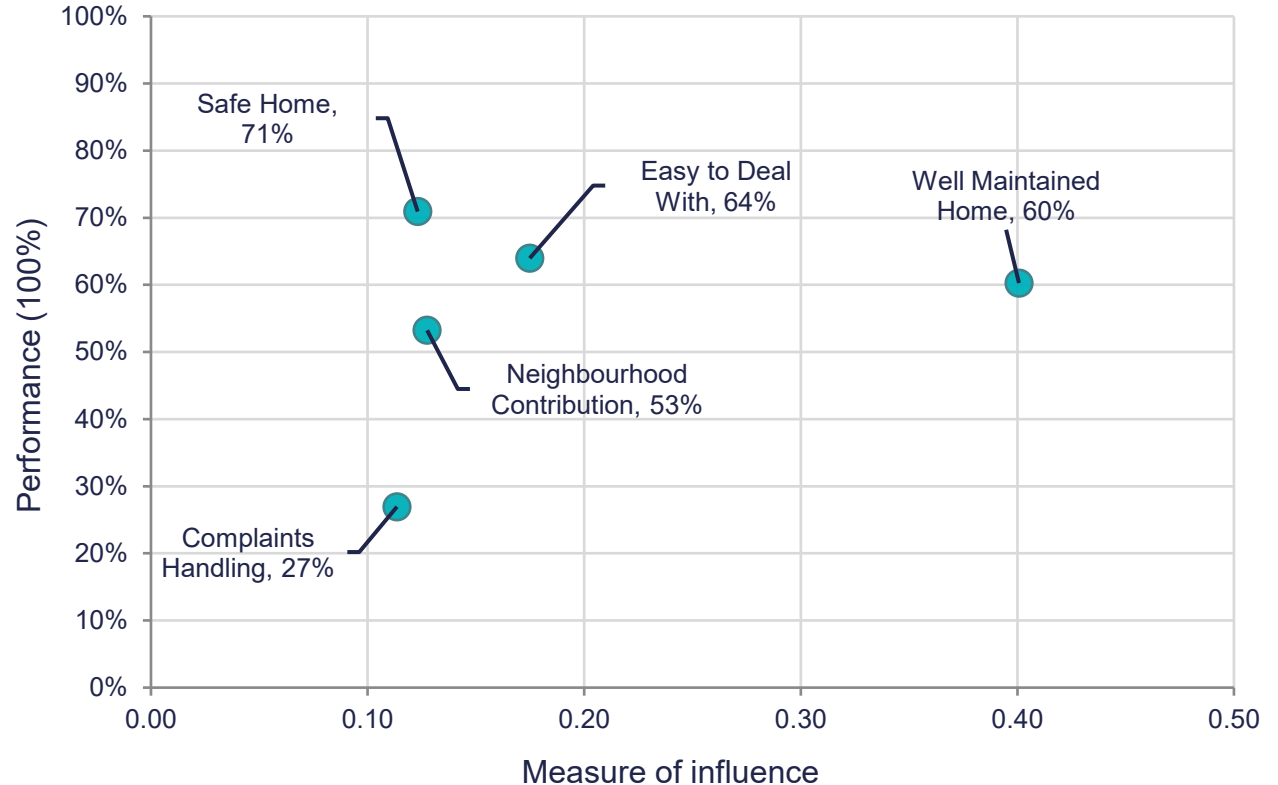
This is not unexpected, given that Acuity KDA of over 200,000 responses from TSM surveys demonstrated that the maintenance of the home had the strongest influence on overall satisfaction.

Also of influence, but not as important, are EDDC being easy to deal with (also a common key driver), the positive contribution made to the neighbourhood, the provision of a safe home and the approach to handling complaints.

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 EDDC.

Key Driver Analysis

Key Driver Analysis – Overall Satisfaction





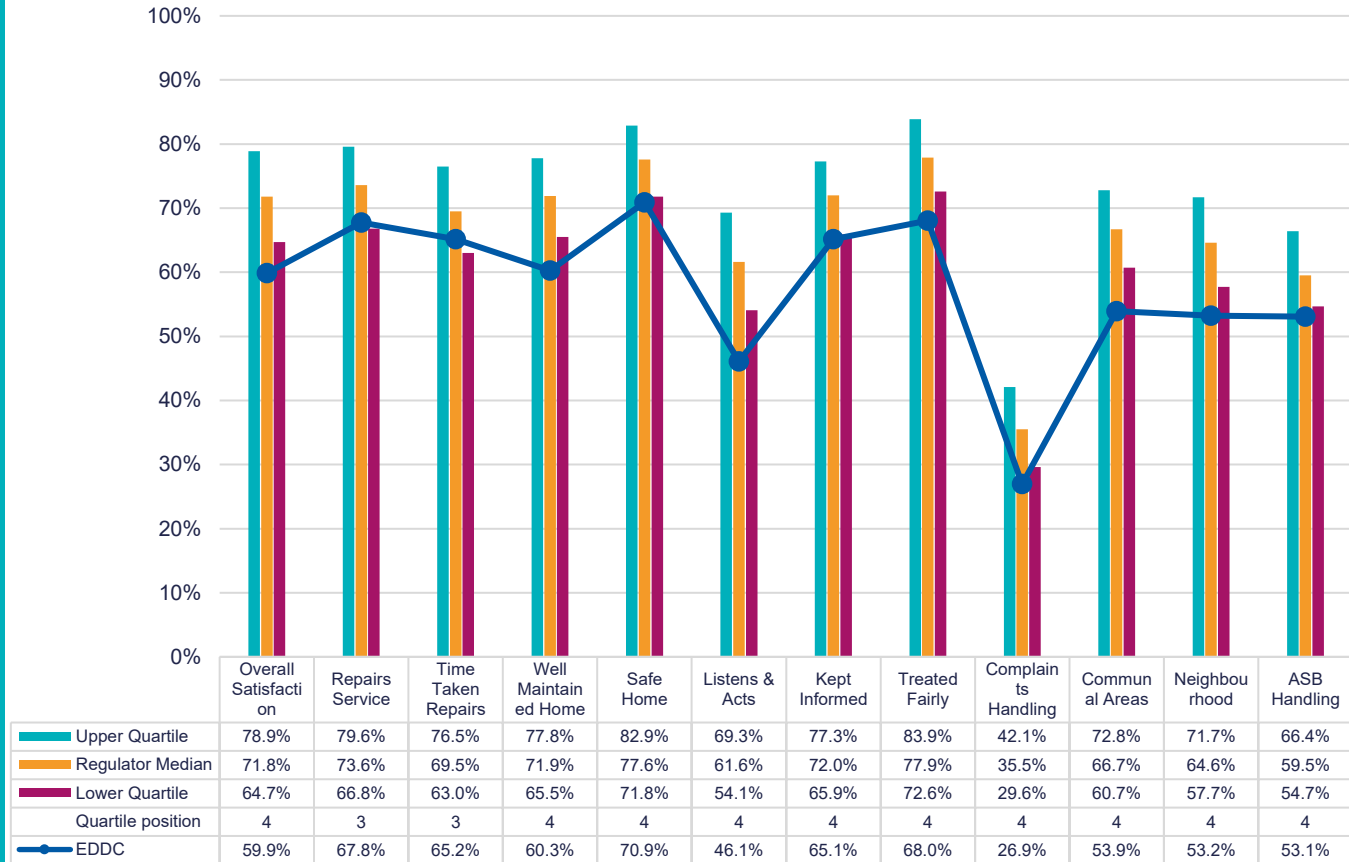
Benchmarking – RSH Results 2024/25 (LCRA)

All registered providers with over 1,000 units were required to submit their TSM results for 2024/25 to the Regulator of Social Housing by the end of June 2025. The full set of results was then released late in the year, so it is possible to compare the results from EDDC against these.

All but two of EDDC's satisfaction ratings are below the median and in the lower quartile. The only exceptions are the overall repairs service in the last 12 months and the time taken to complete the most recent repair, which are in the third quartile.

The overall service provided is 11.9p.p below the median, with the time taken to complete the last repair the closest to the median (4.3p.p below).

The cohort of landlords used in this comparison varies in type, size and location, including smaller as well as larger housing associations and councils, and therefore are not necessarily similar to EDDC. A more specific comparison is provided on the following page.





Benchmarking – RSH Results 2024/25 (Councils)

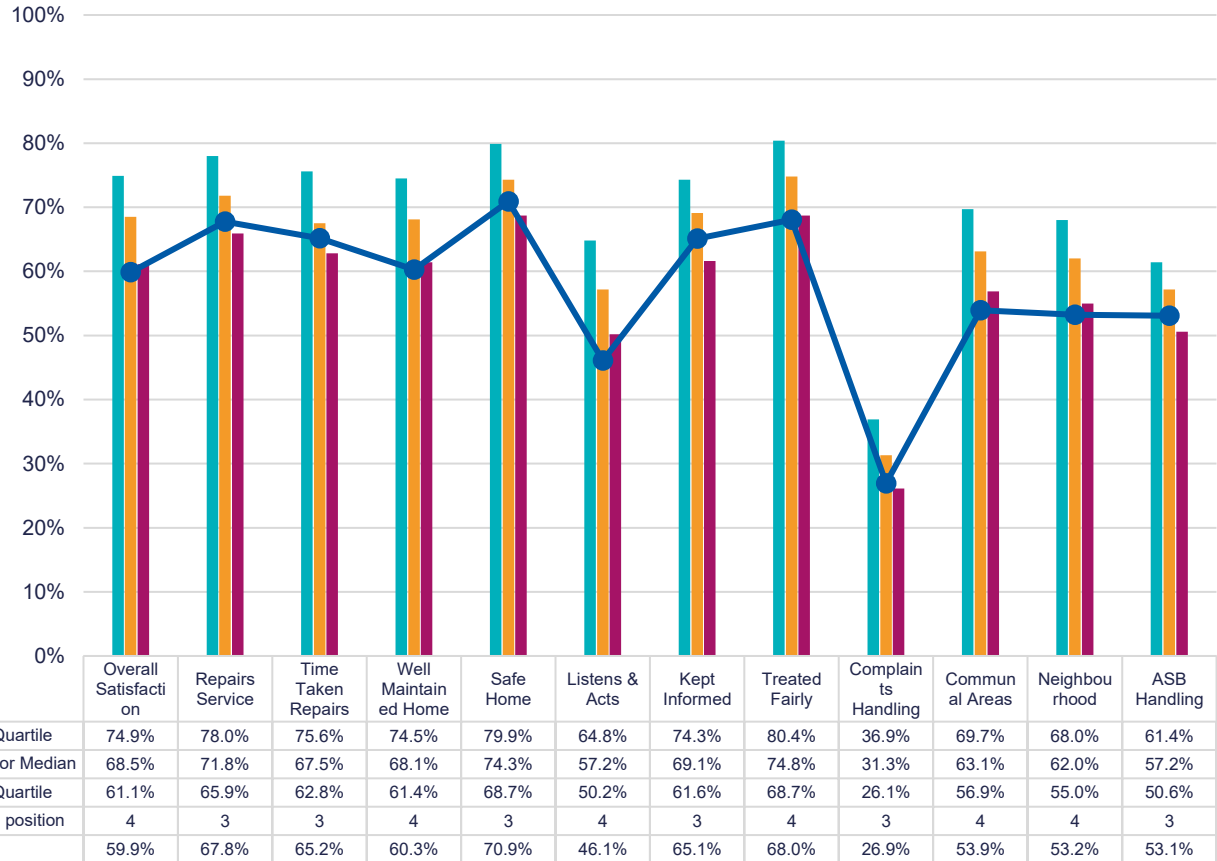
EDDC's ratings can also be compared against the results published by the Regulator of Social Housing for Local Authorities.

The chart opposite shows the quartile positions for Local Authorities who submitted their data to the Regulator for 2024/25.

This group generally does not perform quite as well as the overall group and Housing Associations – for example, the overall satisfaction median for Local Authorities is 68.5%, compared with 75.4% for Housing Associations.

While none of EDDC's ratings are above the median for this group, more are in the third quartile, including the overall repairs service, the time taken for repairs, the home being safe, how tenants are kept informed, complaints handling and the approach to handling anti-social behaviour.

The measures closest to the median are the time taken for repairs (2.3p.p below), how tenants are kept informed (4.0p.p below) and the overall repairs service (also 4.0p.p below).





The table to the right summarises the top comment themes raised by tenants in response to the four sentiment questions asked in the survey. It should be noted that three of these questions were only asked to tenants not satisfied with aspects of the service provided. Therefore, many of these comments are naturally negative.

The most frequently mentioned theme relates to the timeliness and responsiveness of repairs, which is common in surveys of this kind. This appears in 204 comments (39%) and has a sentiment score of -2.67. Of these, 23% are positive, 13% neutral, and 72% negative, reflecting mostly negative experiences perceived by tenants. This shows how important it is to keep tenants updated regarding expected timescales and the reasons behind any delays.

Tenants also commented on the quality (-2.49) and resolution of repairs (-3.47), as well as communication around repairs (-3.44). Additionally, there are concerns raised around the condition of their property, particularly damp (-3.86), windows/doors (-4.40) and roofs and gutters (-3.77). The comments, therefore, align with the finding that the maintenance of the home is the key driver of overall satisfaction.

The only two themes with positive sentiment scores are around customer service and contact, including satisfaction (+3.63), and staff conduct (+1.89).

Top 30 Comments

	%	Count	Score
Property Services - Responsive Repairs - Timeliness / Responsiveness	39.38%	204	-2.67
Property Condition - Damp	18.34%	95	-3.86
Uncategorized Comments	18.34%	95	-0.16
Property Services - Responsive Repairs - Quality of Work / Service	17.76%	92	-2.49
Property Services - Responsive Repairs - Other	17.57%	91	-2.49
Property Services - Responsive Repairs - Resolution	17.18%	89	-3.47
Property Services - Responsive Repairs - Communication / Transparency	14.67%	76	-3.44
Property Condition - Window/doors	11.00%	57	-4.40
Property Condition - Roofs & Gutters	10.62%	55	-3.77
Housing Services - Customer Service & Contact - Other	9.65%	50	-1.43
Housing Services - Customer Service & Contact - Communication / Transparency	9.27%	48	-1.37
Housing Services - Customer Service & Contact - Satisfaction	8.30%	43	3.63
Housing Services - Customer Service & Contact - Timeliness / Responsiveness	8.11%	42	-0.90
Housing Services - Grounds Maintenance - Quality of Work / Service	7.53%	39	-2.98
Property Services - Responsive Repairs - Effort	6.95%	36	-3.03
Property Services - Planned Maintenance - Timeliness / Responsiveness	6.56%	34	-3.36
Housing Services - Grounds Maintenance - Timeliness / Responsiveness	6.56%	34	-4.53
Property Condition - Bathrooms	6.18%	32	-3.91
Property Condition - General Condition	5.60%	29	-2.50
Equality, Diversity & Inclusion - Vulnerabilities	5.60%	29	-3.70
Property Condition - Kitchens	5.41%	28	-4.23
Housing Services - Customer Service & Contact - Staff Conduct	5.21%	27	1.89
Property Services - Responsive Repairs - Appointments / Convenience	4.83%	25	-3.96
Property Services - Responsive Repairs - Listening / Acting	4.83%	25	-4.04
Housing Services - Customer Service & Contact - Effort	4.83%	25	-2.72
Housing Services - Grounds Maintenance - Other	4.83%	25	-2.73
Housing Services - Customer Service & Contact - Listening / Acting	4.63%	24	-2.08
Housing Services - Customer Service & Contact - No Comments	4.05%	21	-0.65
Housing Services - Communal Maintenance - Quality of Work / Service	3.86%	20	-2.33
Housing Services - Complaints - Timeliness / Responsiveness	3.67%	19	-3.80



National Context

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

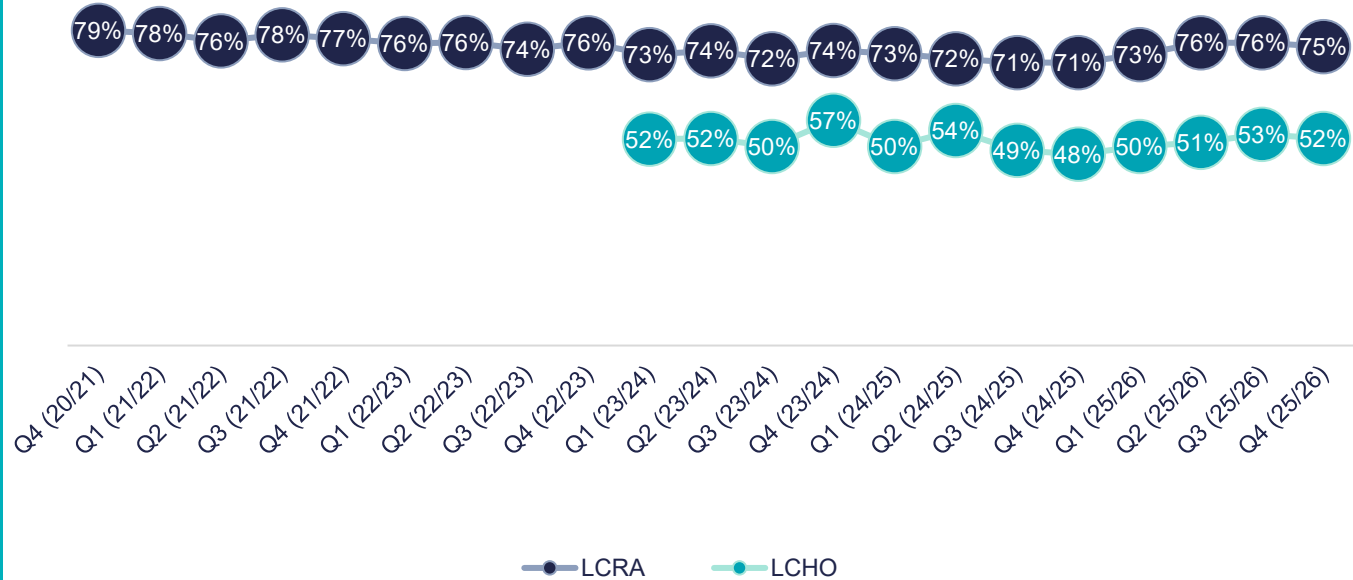
Satisfaction is based on perception rather than specific values, so it can be affected by these factors and how positive people feel about their lives.

Tenants have had to face considerable challenges in recent years, particularly the recent cost-of-living crisis, political changes and some landlords 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 slightly in 2025/26.

As shown in this report, satisfaction has generally increased for EDDC compared with 2024/25. The Council is, therefore, doing well to improve levels of satisfaction, despite challenging external factors.

Overall Services (Acuity Clients)





Wellbeing



Cost of Living

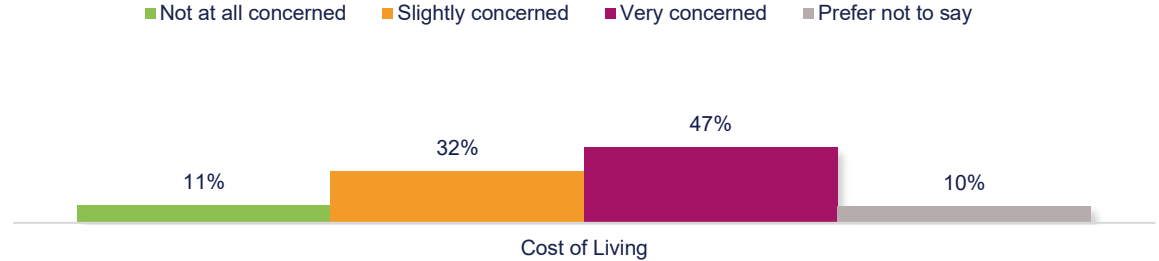
Around eight out of ten tenants say they are concerned about the cost of living for them personally; 47% are very concerned, and a further 32% are slightly concerned. There are just 11% of tenants who are not at all concerned, with a further 10% preferring not to say.

There has been little change compared with 2024/25, where 33% of tenants were slightly concerned and 48% very concerned.

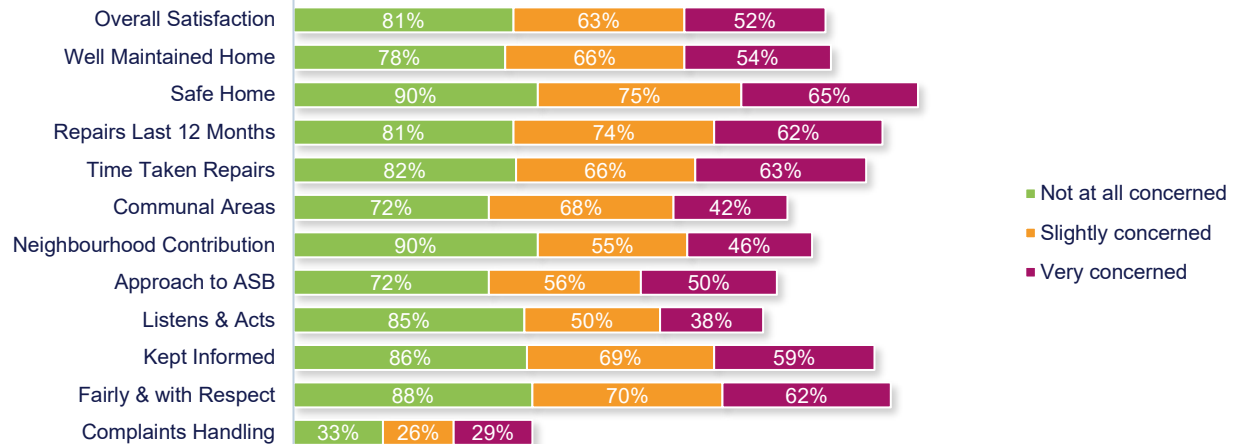
Tenants struggling financially tend to be less satisfied with the services provided by their landlord, and this does appear to be the case for EDDC. For example, 81% of tenants not at all concerned about the cost of living are satisfied with the overall service provided, compared with 52% of those who are very concerned. This pattern continues across the range of measures.

This demonstrates that if the Council can help relieve the pressures on household finances in any way, such as helping tenants access benefits, etc., it could bring some increase in tenant satisfaction.

Cost of Living Concern



Cost of Living Concern & Satisfaction





Further Insight

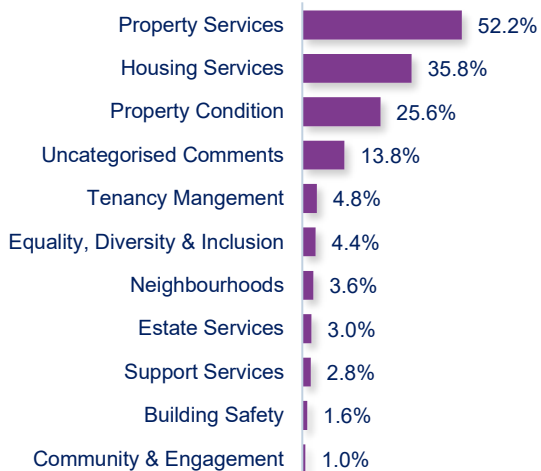
Overall Satisfaction

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

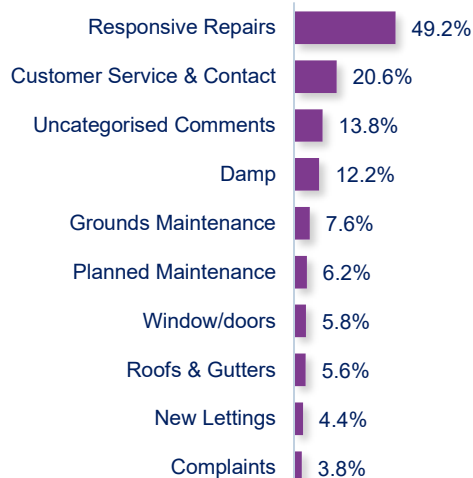
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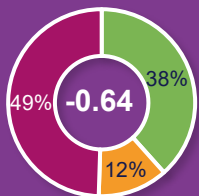
Categories



Top 10 Subcategories



Attribute	Count	%	Sentiment Score
Timeliness / Responsiveness	193	49.0%	-1.71
Quality of Work / Service	77	19.5%	-1.73
Resolution	73	18.5%	-2.84
Subcategory, no attribute (yet)	69	17.5%	-1.46
Communication / Transparency	53	13.5%	-2.30
Satisfaction	51	12.9%	+3.12
Effort	21	5.3%	-0.90
Listening / Acting	21	5.3%	-3.48
Staff Conduct	19	4.8%	+2.68
Appointments / Convenience	14	3.6%	-3.36
No Comments	10	2.5%	-1.00
Safety	9	2.3%	-2.78
Empathy	7	1.8%	-3.00
Accountability	4	1.0%	-5.00
Worker Conduct	4	1.0%	-0.50
Accessibility	3	0.8%	-1.67
Fairness	3	0.8%	-4.33
Trust	3	0.8%	-1.67
Consistency	1	0.3%	-5.00



All tenants were asked to describe their specific experiences that shaped their view of EDDC's service. The comments from tenants express mixed satisfaction. Many praise responsive staff and individual housing officers, timely urgent repairs, and supportive services (sheltered/Mobile Support Officers). Positive notes also include the quality of some refurbishment projects, effective emergency responses, fair rents, and appreciation for allocated homes.

However, others raise concerns around slow, inconsistent or incomplete repairs, poor contractor performance (notably Ian Williams), repeated survey-only visits without action, and weak communication/follow-up from management. Damp, mould, leaking roofs, failed windows, heating and boiler problems recur across properties, and tenants report health impacts, long waits (months to years), and repeated need to chase work or escalate to complaints/Housing Ombudsman. Some tenants also feel that external maintenance, communal areas, gardens, and pest control are neglected. Accessibility, adaptation and safety needs (ramps, doors, alarms) are sometimes met but also delayed. Tenants report inequitable treatment, unclear prioritisation, and frustration with online-only reporting and long call waits.

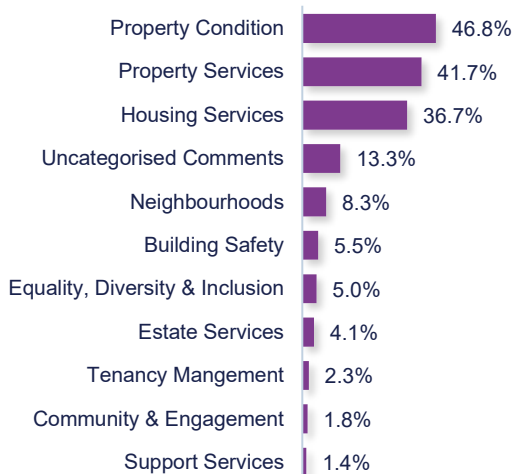
The Home

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?

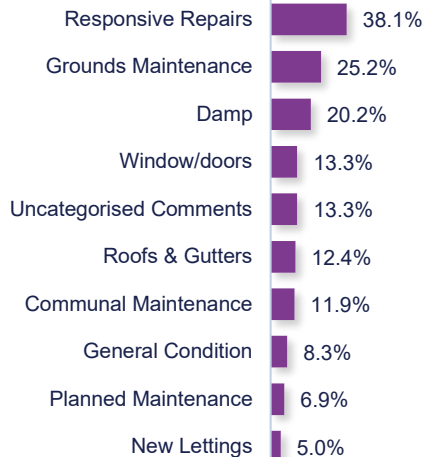
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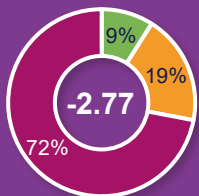
Categories



Top 10 Subcategories



Attribute	Count	%	Sentiment Score
Timeliness / Responsiveness	62	40.8%	-3.69
Quality of Work / Service	59	38.8%	-3.29
Subcategory, no attribute (yet)	35	23.0%	-2.17
Communication / Transparency	16	10.5%	-3.38
Resolution	16	10.5%	-3.81
Safety	14	9.2%	-3.36
Effort	6	3.9%	-4.67
Listening / Acting	5	3.3%	-2.60
Empathy	3	2.0%	-3.67
No Comments	2	1.3%	-2.50
Accountability	1	0.7%	-5.00
Appointments / Convenience	1	0.7%	-5.00
Fairness	1	0.7%	-5.00
Satisfaction	1	0.7%	-3.00
Staff Conduct	1	0.7%	-3.00
Trust	1	0.7%	0.00
Worker Conduct	1	0.7%	+5.00
Accessibility	-	-	-
Consistency	-	-	-



Tenants who do not feel their home or communal areas are safe and well maintained were asked to explain why. Tenants report widespread dissatisfaction with property and communal maintenance. The most frequent issues are damp and black mould inside homes, leaking roofs/gutters, blocked drains, and old or blown windows and poor insulation leading to cold, high heating costs and health impacts. Many tenants describe slow, inconsistent or poor-quality repairs, long waiting times (months to years), repeated re-reporting, and weak inter-departmental communication. In addition, external areas and communal spaces are said to be overgrown, littered, slippery with moss, poorly cleaned, and sometimes unsafe (e.g. broken lights, damaged doors, missing CCTV, antisocial behaviour, drug use). Some tenants note botched contractor work, scaffolding left idle, and perceived unfairness in upgrade allocations. Vulnerable tenants report accessibility problems, trip hazards, and anxiety about safety; some mention asbestos, subsidence, and structural cracking.

While a minority of tenants are satisfied with cleaning or prompt responses, overall sentiment is that maintenance is reactive and under-resourced, with poor communication and inconsistent standards, leaving homes damp, cold, and in disrepair, affecting health, safety, and quality of life.

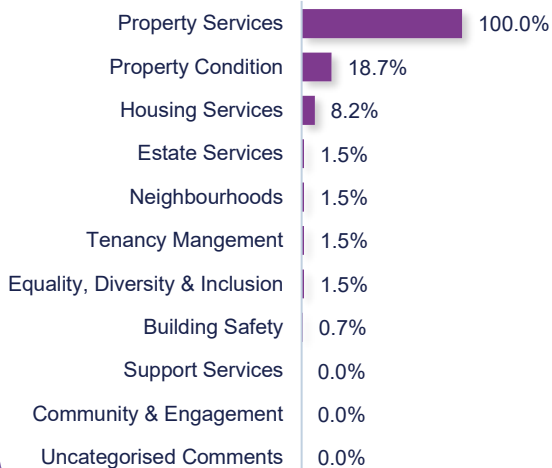
Repairs & Maintenance

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

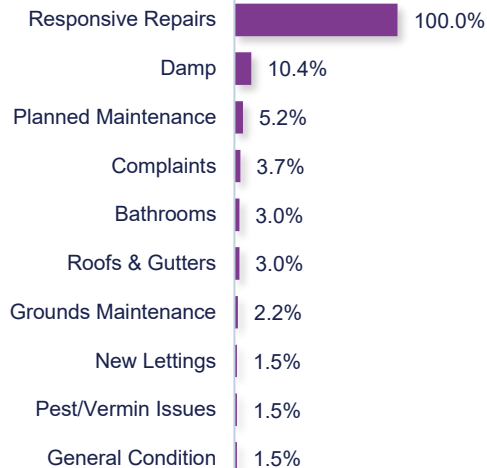
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Categories

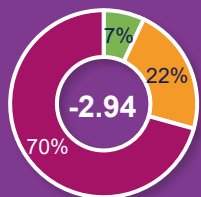


Top 10 Subcategories



Attribute

Attribute	Count	%	Sentiment Score
Timeliness / Responsiveness	60	44.8%	-3.32
Subcategory, no attribute (yet)	31	23.1%	-2.23
Quality of Work / Service	29	21.6%	-1.97
Resolution	26	19.4%	-3.50
Communication / Transparency	24	17.9%	-3.75
Appointments / Convenience	6	4.5%	-3.83
Effort	6	4.5%	-3.50
Listening / Acting	4	3.0%	-5.00
Safety	3	2.2%	-5.00
Worker Conduct	3	2.2%	-2.33
Accountability	2	1.5%	-4.00
Empathy	1	0.7%	-5.00
Trust	1	0.7%	-3.00
No Comments	1	0.7%	0.00
Accessibility			-
Consistency			-
Fairness			-
Satisfaction			-
Staff Conduct			-



Tenants not satisfied with repairs and maintenance were asked to explain why. Many tenants report a poor repairs service driven by long delays, weak communication, and inconsistent contractor quality. Tenants cite waits of weeks to years before work starts or is completed, with frequent missed appointments, lack of updates, and repeated need to chase progress. Work quality issues recur: incomplete jobs, temporary “bodge” fixes, repeated callbacks for the same fault, wrong trades sent, and visible shoddy workmanship (leaks, unresolved damp/mould, unfinished ceilings, doors/windows not secure). Contractors’ lack of materials, skills, coordination and accountability is often blamed; several tenants contrast competent individual tradespeople with an overall failing system. Safety and health impacts appear (damp/mould, water leaks, security issues, rats, asbestos concerns, time without hot water), and some tenants report additional costs or displacement. Administrative problems include poor record transfer between teams, contradictory assessments, and failures to follow complaint/escalation procedures.

While a few tenants praise prompt minor repairs and individual staff, the dominant sentiment is frustration and distrust toward the repair process and contractor management.

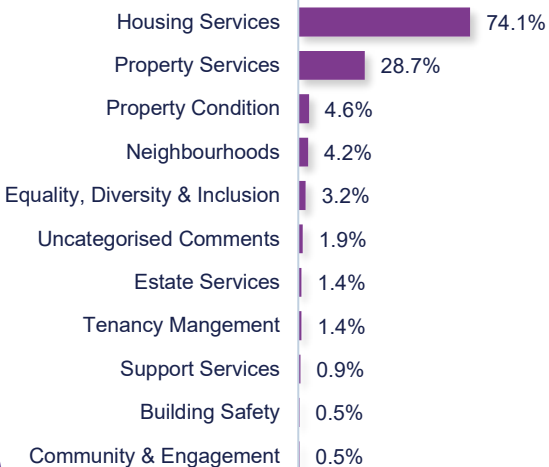
Customer Service & Communication

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

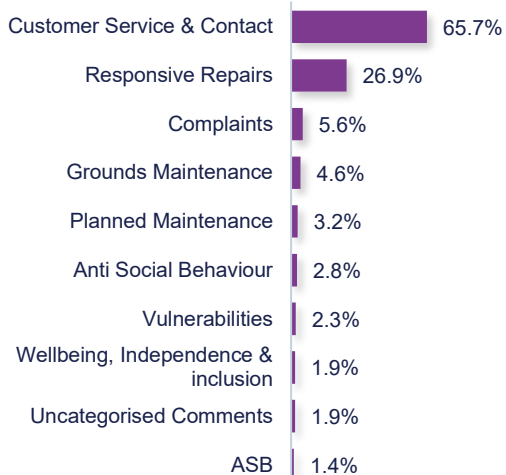


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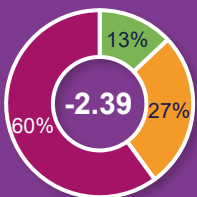
Categories



Top 10 Subcategories



Attribute	Count	%	Sentiment Score
Communication / Transparency	67	31.6%	-2.24
Subcategory, no attribute (yet)	59	27.8%	-2.90
Effort	31	14.6%	-3.10
Timeliness / Responsiveness	31	14.6%	-3.61
Listening / Acting	30	14.2%	-3.17
No Comments	14	6.6%	-0.36
Resolution	13	6.1%	-3.46
Staff Conduct	13	6.1%	-1.77
Quality of Work / Service	10	4.7%	-2.00
Appointments / Convenience	9	4.2%	-3.56
Empathy	6	2.8%	-2.50
Trust	6	2.8%	-5.00
Consistency	4	1.9%	-3.25
Worker Conduct	4	1.9%	-0.50
Satisfaction	3	1.4%	+5.00
Fairness	2	0.9%	+1.50
Accessibility	1	0.5%	+5.00
Accountability	1	0.5%	-5.00
Safety	-	-	-



Tenants not satisfied with customer service and communication were asked to provide more information on what could be improved. Common issues include failure to return calls or emails, being passed between departments, missed or unannounced appointments, and a lack of a single point of contact. Many tenants, once again, describe long delays or no action on repairs (months to years), inconsistent follow-up, and broken logging/tracking of jobs. Contractors and subcontractors are seen as uncoordinated or delivering low-quality work. Antisocial behaviour complaints and safety concerns are not addressed, leaving tenants feeling ignored and unsafe. Vulnerable groups (elderly, those with mental health, hearing or mobility needs) report particular difficulties: lack of empathy, unsuitable online-only processes, and insufficient accommodation for hearing/telephone-impaired tenants.

Positively, some individual officers and contractors are praised for politeness and competence. However, operational problems hinted at include understaffing, poor inter-departmental coordination, and ineffective digital systems (apps/online reporting). Overall sentiment is frustration, distrust and repeated need to chase for actions, with tenants feeling overlooked and unsupported.



Trends



The table shows the annual satisfaction results for 2025/26 against those for 2024/25.

Many of the ratings have improved, with the biggest increase for the handling of complaints (up 10p.p), followed by the time taken to complete the most recent repair (up 7p.p) and the overall repairs service over the last 12 months (up 5p.p).

Some measures have remained stable, either staying the same, or increasing/ decreasing by just 1p.p. This includes overall satisfaction, which has remained at 60%, and positive contribution made to the neighbourhood, which has stayed at 53%. The cleaning and maintenance of communal areas, the approach to handling anti-social behaviour, and tenants being kept informed have all decreased by just 1p.p.

All other measures have increased by between 2p.p and 4p.p.

It should be noted that for a change to be considered statistically significant, it must exceed the combined margins of error for the last two surveys – in this case, around 8p.p, meaning only complaints handling exceeds this. However, smaller changes can indicate a direction of travel, and it can be concluded that the Council is heading in the right direction of improvement.

Year-on-Year Change

	2024/25	2025/26
Overall Satisfaction	60%	60% (+0)
Well Maintained Home	58%	60% (+2)
Safe Home	69%	71% (+2)
Communal Areas	55%	54% (-1)
Repairs Last 12 Months	63%	68% (+5)
Time Taken Repairs	59%	65% (+7)
Neighbourhood Contribution	53%	53% (+1)
Approach to ASB	54%	53% (-1)
Listens & Acts	43%	46% (+3)
Fairly & with Respect	65%	68% (+3)
Kept Informed	66%	65% (-1)
Easy to Deal With	60%	64% (+4)
Complaints Handling	17%	27% (+10)



Quarterly Change 2025/26

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

As you might expect, there have been fluctuations in satisfaction throughout the year, with some measures ending the year with higher satisfaction than at the start.

For example, the cleaning and maintenance of the communal areas went from 47% satisfied in Q1 to 58% in Q4.

Overall satisfaction has remained fairly consistent throughout the year, only varying between 58% (Q2) and 63% (Q3). Similarly, the maintenance of the home has stayed between 58% and 61% throughout the year.

The approach to handling anti-social behaviour had two of the biggest fluctuations, increasing by 15p.p between Q1 and Q2, before decreasing by 14p.p between Q2 and Q3.

The approach to handling complaints also fluctuated between 9p.p and 18p.p each quarter following Q1. However, these fluctuations are to be expected given the lower base for this question, with only tenants who made a complaint in the last 12 months asked to respond.

	Q1 2025/26	Q2 2025/26	Q3 2025/26	Q4 2025/26
Overall Satisfaction	60%	58% (-2)	63% (+5)	59% (-4)
Well Maintained Home	61%	61% (0)	61% (+0)	58% (-3)
Safe Home	74%	64% (-10)	75% (+11)	71% (-4)
Communal Areas	47%	54% (+8)	56% (+2)	58% (+1)
Repairs Last 12 Months	68%	66% (-2)	68% (+2)	70% (+2)
Time Taken Repairs	67%	63% (-4)	68% (+5)	63% (-5)
Neighbourhood Contribution	48%	55% (+7)	55% (+0)	54% (-2)
Approach to ASB	48%	63% (+15)	49% (-14)	51% (+2)
Listens & Acts	47%	41% (-7)	49% (+9)	48% (-2)
Fairly & with Respect	69%	69% (+1)	71% (+2)	63% (-7)
Kept Informed	68%	61% (-7)	65% (+4)	67% (+2)
Easy to Deal With	65%	57% (-8)	68% (+12)	66% (-2)
Complaints Handling	28%	18% (-10)	36% (+18)	26% (-9)

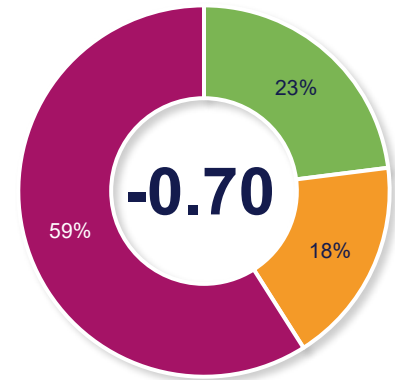


Summary

Overall RSI Score

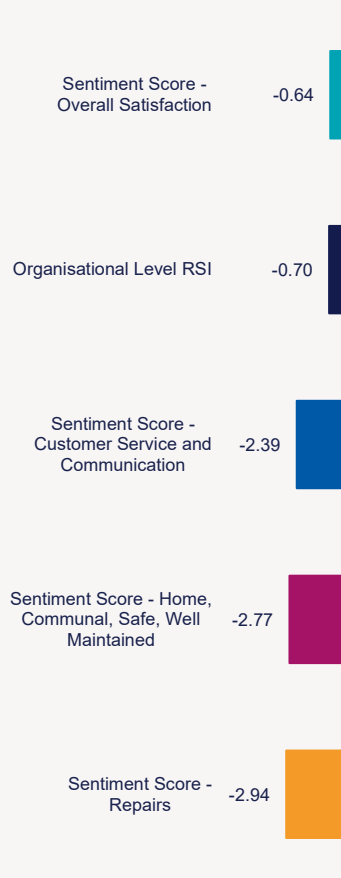
The Organisational-Level RSI offers a single, headline metric that captures the overall emotional tone of resident feedback across all key service areas. It is based exclusively on responses to the 7 core RSI open-ended questions. It reflects how positively or negatively residents feel about the organisation's performance across these key areas.

Please note that if your organisation does not ask all 7 core RSI questions, you are unable to benchmark your Organisational RSI Score. Each individual RSI question is analysed in its relevant section throughout the report.



■ Positive ■ Neutral ■ Negative

Sentiment Scores



Sentiment Summary

Overall Satisfaction

Tenants value having secure, affordable homes and praise helpful staff and timely urgent repairs, but common issues undermine satisfaction, including chronic damp, mould, leaks, poor insulation, and unfinished/slow repairs. Contractors' quality and communication, plus inconsistent follow-up and long wait times, are frequent complaints. Accessibility, safety (ASB, doors, paths), and external maintenance are also seen to be inconsistent. Tenants report repeated survey visits without action, poor contractor coordination, and inadequate resourcing to resolve long-standing repairs and adaptations.

The Home

Tenants not satisfied with their homes or communal areas report widespread poor maintenance and slow, ineffective repairs: persistent damp and mould, blocked gutters, old/failed windows, leaking roofs, heating and insulation problems, and unfinished or low-quality contractor work. Communal grounds and cleaning are viewed to be neglected, with overgrown grass, brambles, rubbish, slippery moss and damaged paths, plus antisocial behaviour, security and communication failures. Tenants cite long delays, poor inter-departmental coordination, inconsistent responses, and disproportionate impact on vulnerable tenants and families with children.

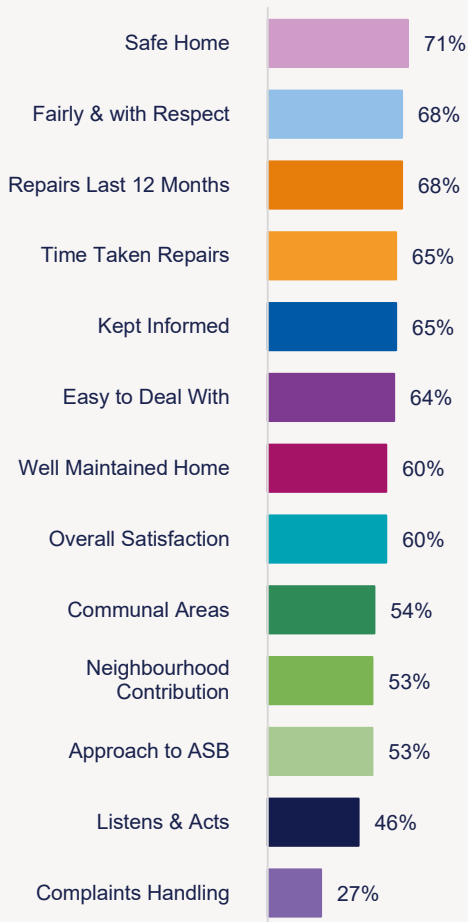
Repairs

Tenants not satisfied with repairs cite slow response times, poor communication, missed appointments and repeat visits. Contractors are criticised for low-quality, temporary fixes, incomplete jobs and lack of expertise, often requiring multiple call-outs. Persistent issues include damp, mould, leaks and unfinished work, with safety concerns (such as doors, electrics, rats, asbestos) noted. While individual tradespeople are sometimes praised, systemic problems, coordination between the Council and contractors, scheduling, follow-through and quality control drive negative sentiment.

Customer Service & Communication

Common issues mentioned by tenants not satisfied with customer service and communication include poor or no callbacks, inconsistent staff, missed or unconfirmed appointments, long repair delays, and inadequate coordination with contractors. Vulnerable tenants struggle with online-only systems and a lack of personalised contact. Complaints about antisocial behaviour, ignored reports, and slow or incomplete maintenance recur. While some tenants praise individual staff or contractors, overall sentiment is that EDDC is disorganised, understaffed and fails to keep tenants informed.

Satisfaction with Measures



Conclusion

East Devon District Council commissioned Acuity to complete quarterly tracker surveys throughout 2025/26, following on from the surveys completed in 2024/25. In this report, the results of the quarterly surveys have been combined, analysed and compared with the results of 2024/25. A total of 558 responses were received in 2025/26, with most by telephone interview (445), and far fewer online (113). The survey was designed using the Tenant Satisfaction Measures from the Regulator of Social Housing, which became mandatory to collect from April 2023, and are required annually.

Satisfaction is highest for the provision of a safe home (71%), tenants being treated fairly and with respect (68%) and the overall repairs service over the last 12 months (68%). Overall satisfaction now sits in the lower half of the ratings, having not changed since 2024/25, despite many other measures improving.

Two measures have satisfaction below 50%: how tenants' views are listened to and acted upon (46%), and EDDC's approach to handling complaints (27%). Correspondingly, dissatisfaction is highest for complaint handling, at 65% - the only measure where dissatisfaction exceeds satisfaction. Dissatisfaction with this service is likely to incorporate more than just how tenants' complaints are handled, for example, tenants not getting the resolution they want or expect, or still awaiting the outcome. It should also be noted that this is often the worst-performing measure for Registered Providers, as seen on the benchmarking information pages.

Satisfaction with the overall service provided and the positive contribution made to the neighbourhood have remained the same as last year. The biggest increase is for the handling of complaints (up 10p.p), followed by the time taken to complete the most recent repair (up 7p.p) and the overall repairs service over the last 12 months (up 5p.p).

When comparing EDDC's results with other LCRA providers who submitted results to the Regulator, they are in the lower quartile for all TSM metrics, aside from the overall repairs service in the last 12 months and the time taken to complete the most recent repair, which are in the third quartile. Compared to just other councils, EDDC has six measures in the third quartile and six in the lower quartile.

Sentiment analysis has been used against four qualitative questions, covering the main areas of service. This gives a sentiment score based on the comments made and also highlights where tenants are happy with the service or where they think improvements could be made. The overall sentiment score is negative at -0.70. However, only the overall satisfaction question was asked of all tenants (with the others asked only of those not satisfied). The lowest sentiment score is for the repairs service, with tenants wanting improvements to the timeliness and quality of repairs, and outstanding repairs to be completed.

The end of this report breaks down satisfaction scores by different demographics and subgroups. This shows that General Needs tenants are generally less satisfied than Sheltered tenants. In addition, satisfaction is higher for older tenants, those who are male, and those with tenancy lengths of over 20 years.





Recommendations

East Devon District Council commissioned Acuity to complete compliant surveys based on the TSM questions from the Regulator of Social Housing.

Surveys for 2025/26 were completed on a quarterly basis and show good performance in some areas, with satisfaction generally increasing or remaining the same compared with last year.

However, the comments made by tenants provide more insight into the issues that concern them the most. These can help EDDC target services for improvement as a priority.

Shown opposite are some recommendations, building on the results of previous surveys and for this year, that EDDC may wish to follow up on to help improve satisfaction in the future.

Repairs Service

Although most tenants are satisfied with the repairs service, and satisfaction has improved since the previous year, it is one of the main focuses of negative comments when tenants were asked to expand on their answers. In particular, tenants mention the timescales to complete work, with long delays and outstanding repairs not being completed, despite reporting them on multiple occasions. These concerns could be linked to issues around resources and delays caused by more urgent problems. Tenants' expectations around timescales can also sometimes be hard to match. Good communication is important, so tenants are fully aware of when a repair will be done and kept informed of any progress or delays, with many saying they have to chase the Council to be updated on progress. In addition, there are concerns around the quality of repair work, which suggests spot-checking may be necessary to ensure standards are met. There could also be a system implemented for contractors to upload photos of completed work. This would help to improve accountability, with tenants complaining of incomplete jobs and temporary fixes. Some tenants are also experiencing problems with damp and mould, which need to be resolved as a matter of urgency, particularly in the context of Awaab's Law. Other key property concerns include roofs/gutters and windows. The home being well-maintained is the biggest driver of overall satisfaction, so it is important that improvements are made wherever possible.

Tenant Engagement

Just 46% of tenants are satisfied that their views are listened to and acted upon. Tenants express frustration that their repair requests and complaints go unanswered, which can make them feel like they are not being listened to. It is, therefore, important to give an initial acknowledgement to all requests, even if no timeline can yet be established. Some tenants are also frustrated due to calls and emails not being returned, and raise concerns about online-only processes. EDDC should recongise that not all groups are able to report issues online and look to provide alternative options and accommodations where necessary. Clear guidelines and timescales for responding to tenants' contact can also be implemented. In addition, the Council could look to create a "You said, We did" campaign to highlight key areas that EDDC are focusing on improving as a result of tenant feedback. Showing both improvements from the TSM and other forms of feedback is crucial to ensuring tenants feel listened to. EDDC could also reach out to those tenants who gave permission to be re-contacted to discuss any concerns raised in the survey, as an opportunity to demonstrate that it listens to its tenants' views and acts upon them.

Handling of Complaints

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. Just over three in ten tenants said they had made a complaint, but the question of 'what is a complaint?' to tenants continues, and it is not clear how many of these are genuine complaints or service requests. Dissatisfaction is the highest in the survey at 65%, with tenants wanting improvements to communication, including how they are kept informed and listened to. Where landlords do well with complaints, it is usually because they are clear on how and when tenants should complain, what they can expect in terms of service and have regular updates on progress. While the effective handling of complaints is an issue for all social landlords, EDDC may wish to review processes to ensure responses are adequate and tenants' frustrations are addressed.

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 7 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



Management Area

The results can be split by General Needs and Sheltered tenants, with around two-thirds of the responses coming from those in General Needs properties.

Sheltered tenants tend to be more satisfied, with the only exceptions being how tenants are kept informed and the handling of complaints. Both groups are also equally satisfied with the cleaning and maintenance of communal areas and the Council being easy to deal with.

The differences between these two groups are, however, generally small. For example, 61% of Sheltered tenants are satisfied with the overall service provided, compared with 59% of General Needs tenants. The biggest difference is 11p.p for the positive contribution made to the neighbourhood.

These differences are not unexpected given the different services provided to tenants. In addition, more Sheltered tenants are older, and as shown on the following page, satisfaction does tend to increase with age.

	All Tenants	GEN	SHELT
Overall Satisfaction	60%	59%	61%
Well Maintained Home	60%	58%	66%
Safe Home	71%	70%	72%
Repairs Last 12 Months	68%	67%	70%
Time Taken Repairs	65%	63%	70%
Communal Areas	54%	54%	54%
Neighbourhood Contribution	53%	49%	60%
Approach to ASB	53%	52%	55%
Listens & Acts	46%	45%	48%
Kept Informed	65%	66%	64%
Fairly & with Respect	68%	68%	69%
Easy to Deal With	64%	64%	64%
Complaints Handling	27%	30%	20%



As is often seen in surveys of this kind, satisfaction does appear to increase with age. This is shown by the age groups under 59 generally having the lowest levels of satisfaction, and tenants aged 85 and over having the highest levels of satisfaction.

Regarding overall satisfaction, 91% of tenants aged over 85 are satisfied, compared with 47% of those aged 35 to 44.

Tenants aged 25 to 34 are the least satisfied with their homes, including their safety and maintenance, as well as repairs service, and that the Council is easy to deal with. Tenants aged 55 to 59 are also the least satisfied with five measures, including that they are treated fairly and with respect.

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.

Across all the demographic data presented in the section, as shown on the chart, * indicates the scores originate from fewer than ten responses. Therefore, care should be taken when interpreting these results, and they are not included in the analysis.

Age Group

	All Tenants	0 - 24	25 - 34	35 - 44	45 - 54	55 - 59	60 - 64	65 - 74	75 - 84	85 +
Overall Satisfaction	60%	50% *	50%	47%	53%	53%	50%	65%	77%	91%
Well Maintained Home	60%	71% *	42%	42%	51%	57%	62%	72%	74%	95%
Safe Home	71%	57% *	53%	62%	64%	57%	64%	78%	85%	95%
Repairs Last 12 Months	68%	100% *	41%	62%	53%	59%	69%	74%	79%	90%
Time Taken Repairs	65%	50% *	39%	64%	67%	52%	58%	76%	71%	80%
Communal Areas	54%	100% *	56%	52%	32%	30%	53%	52%	62%	57% *
Neighbourhood Contribution	53%	0% *	41%	35%	46%	48%	59%	62%	71%	86%
Approach to ASB	53%	33% *	35%	38%	53%	33%	48%	53%	59%	100%
Listens & Acts	46%	0% *	38%	37%	40%	34%	48%	56%	61%	83%
Kept Informed	65%	100% *	55%	56%	61%	49%	64%	64%	77%	88%
Fairly & with Respect	68%	86% *	62%	57%	69%	50%	61%	72%	78%	95%
Easy to Deal With	64%	71% *	45%	54%	63%	49%	59%	71%	75%	95%
Complaints Handling	27%	- *	25%	19%	27%	29%	24%	17%	38%	67% *



Property Type

Tenants living in flats have the highest level of satisfaction across most measures, including overall satisfaction (68%).

Conversely, tenants in houses are generally the least satisfied. In particular, tenants in houses are considerably less satisfied with the maintenance of their homes and the time taken for repairs, suggesting they may have more maintenance concerns that have not been resolved. This is not unexpected, given that housing stock is often older than flats, and houses typically come with more components to maintain.

The safety of the home is consistent across those in bungalows, flats and houses, only ranging between 71% and 72%.

The other property types received only a few responses (five or fewer), so they are excluded from the analysis.

	All Tenants	Bedsit	Bungalow	Flat	House	Maisonette	Garage	Room - HMO
Overall Satisfaction	60%	80% *	58%	68%	56%	0% *	33% *	100% *
Well Maintained Home	60%	80% *	62%	71%	53%	0% *	- *	100% *
Safe Home	71%	80% *	71%	72%	71%	0% *	0% *	100% *
Repairs Last 12 Months	68%	100% *	69%	73%	61%	- *	- *	100% *
Time Taken Repairs	65%	50% *	72%	73%	58%	- *	- *	100% *
Communal Areas	54%	60% *	52%	53%	50% *	- *	0% *	100% *
Neighbourhood Contribution	53%	60% *	56%	53%	51%	0% *	- *	- *
Approach to ASB	53%	100% *	55%	54%	52%	0% *	0% *	- *
Listens & Acts	46%	60% *	48%	52%	39%	0% *	0% *	- *
Kept Informed	65%	75% *	63%	65%	65%	0% *	100% *	100% *
Fairly & with Respect	68%	100% *	70%	73%	66%	0% *	50% *	100% *
Easy to Deal With	64%	80% *	61%	69%	60%	100% *	50% *	100% *
Complaints Handling	27%	- *	19%	37%	27%	0% *	0% *	- *



The results can also be broken down by the length of tenancy of tenants. It is typical for tenants who have been with their landlord for a shorter period to report higher satisfaction, possibly because they may have waited a long time for an offer or have moved from standard accommodation. Satisfaction tends to decline slightly over time as tenants begin to encounter issues with their homes. However, the longest-serving tenants, who are often the oldest, can also report high levels of satisfaction.

For EDDC, indeed, the tenants with the longest tenancy lengths are generally the most satisfied, as shown here by the over 20 years group. 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.

Tenants of under a year are also highly satisfied with several measures, including being the most satisfied with the overall service provided.

Tenants with tenancy lengths of four to five years are the least satisfied with all of the measures, including just 33% satisfied with the maintenance of their home and 45% with the time taken for repairs. These tenants are more likely to have been waiting for repairs for some time and may have started to experience more problems with their home.

Length of Tenancy

	All Tenants	< 1 year	1 - 3 years	4 - 5 years	6 - 10 years	11 - 20 years	Over 20 years
Overall Satisfaction	60%	71%	59%	39%	56%	58%	67%
Well Maintained Home	60%	69%	61%	33%	57%	61%	66%
Safe Home	71%	71%	69%	56%	67%	66%	85%
Repairs Last 12 Months	68%	60%	66%	45%	63%	69%	80%
Time Taken Repairs	65%	62%	66%	48%	68%	58%	74%
Communal Areas	54%	57%	57%	23%	48%	60%	78%
Neighbourhood Contribution	53%	48%	56%	30%	55%	50%	65%
Approach to ASB	53%	62%	54%	22%	55%	53%	63%
Listens & Acts	46%	33%	51%	24%	50%	44%	52%
Kept Informed	65%	70%	65%	31%	66%	61%	77%
Fairly & with Respect	68%	74%	71%	32%	66%	69%	74%
Easy to Deal With	64%	68%	65%	33%	65%	58%	75%
Complaints Handling	27%	13% *	24%	12%	32%	25%	39%



Gender

More female than male tenants responded to the survey (340 and 218, respectively), which is representative of the tenant base.

As is often found in surveys of this kind, male tenants are generally more satisfied than female tenants. For EDDC, the only exceptions are how tenants are kept informed, the Council being easy to deal with and the handling of complaints.

The differences are generally small, with the biggest being 8p.p for the positive contribution made to the neighbourhood, followed by 7p.p for the cleaning and maintenance of the communal areas.

Overall satisfaction is fairly similar; 63% for male tenants and 58% for female tenants. This does suggest that gender is not a major factor in determining satisfaction.

	All Tenants	F	M
Overall Satisfaction	60%	58%	63%
Well Maintained Home	60%	59%	63%
Safe Home	71%	69%	74%
Repairs Last 12 Months	68%	67%	69%
Time Taken Repairs	65%	63%	69%
Communal Areas	54%	51%	58%
Neighbourhood Contribution	53%	50%	58%
Approach to ASB	53%	52%	55%
Listens & Acts	46%	45%	47%
Kept Informed	65%	65%	65%
Fairly & with Respect	68%	67%	69%
Easy to Deal With	64%	64%	64%
Complaints Handling	27%	30%	23%



Bedrooms

Tenants with one bedroom are more satisfied than those with two or three bedrooms, aside from the approach to handling anti-social behaviour.

This aligns with the previous findings that tenants in flats are generally more satisfied than those in houses or bungalows. In addition, the majority of Sheltered tenants are in one-bedroom units.

Overall satisfaction is 72% for tenants with one bedroom, compared with just 49% for those with three bedrooms.

Tenants with three bedrooms are also considerably less satisfied with the overall repairs service and that their homes are well maintained.

	All Tenants	1	2	3	4
Overall Satisfaction	60%	72%	57%	49%	0% *
Well Maintained Home	60%	80%	60%	41%	0% *
Safe Home	71%	80%	68%	71%	100% *
Repairs Last 12 Months	68%	81%	69%	57%	- *
Time Taken Repairs	65%	69%	66%	63%	- *
Communal Areas	54%	53%	43%	0% *	- *
Neighbourhood Contribution	53%	64%	39%	38%	- *
Approach to ASB	53%	50%	41%	52%	0% *
Listens & Acts	46%	63%	44%	38%	- *
Kept Informed	65%	76%	59%	68%	- *
Fairly & with Respect	68%	82%	63%	56%	100% *
Easy to Deal With	64%	71%	60%	62%	0% *
Complaints Handling	27%	36%	20%	36%	0% *



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

