



East Devon District Council

TSM LCRA Tracker Q1 2025/26 Report

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 during 2024/25, and now into 2025/26.

This report is based on the findings from the East Devon DC (EDDC) survey, with separate reports for Exeter CC and Mid Devon DC. The aim for East Devon is to complete 522 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 131 per quarter to achieve the desired number at year-end. This report is labelled as Q1 2025/26.

At the close of the survey, 134 completed surveys were received, plus a further five incomplete surveys, which are required to be included by the Regulator. The split of 20%/80% was also achieved, with 27 completed online and 112 by telephone interview. This report also includes comparisons with the previous quarterly surveys.

The survey is confidential, and the results are sent back to EDDC anonymised unless tenants give their permission to be identified. 73% of tenants gave permission to share their responses with their details attached, and 96% of these tenants are happy for EDDC to contact them to discuss any information they provided.

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

- Provide information on tenants' perceptions of current services
- Compare against the surveys undertaken in 2024/25
- 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 EDDC, 134 completed responses were received this quarter. This response is high enough to conclude that the findings are accurate to within $\pm 8.3\%$ for the quarter and $\pm 3.9\%$ annually; therefore, exceeding the required margin of error.

The majority of figures throughout the report show the results as percentages. The percentages are rounded up or down from two decimal places in the results file to the nearest whole number, and for this reason, may not in all cases add up to 100%. Rounding can also cause percentages described in the supporting text to differ from the percentages in the charts by 1% when two percentages are added together. Base numbers are shown against the charts as n=...

Key TSM Metrics
Overall Satisfaction
Good Repair
Building Safety
Neighbourhood
Engagement
Complaints
Wellbeing
Trends
Summary

Overall Satisfaction

Three-fifths of tenants are satisfied with the overall service provided by EDDC, the same as in the previous survey. However, many of the other measures have increased in satisfaction since Q4 2024/25.

The highest satisfaction in Q1 2025/26 is for the home being safe at 74%, although this is the only measure with satisfaction above 70%.

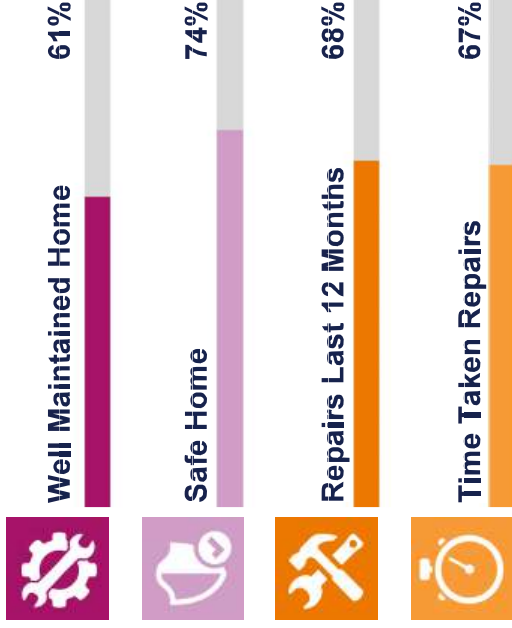
Five measures fall below 50% satisfaction: the contribution made to the neighbourhood by the Council (48%), the handling of anti-social behaviour (48%), how the Council listens to tenants' views (47%) and maintains the communal areas (47%). Just 28% are satisfied with the handling of complaints, although this is up 12 percentage points (p.p) since the last survey.

The following pages show the results from the key measures, how these have changed over time and assess the open questions asked of tenants.

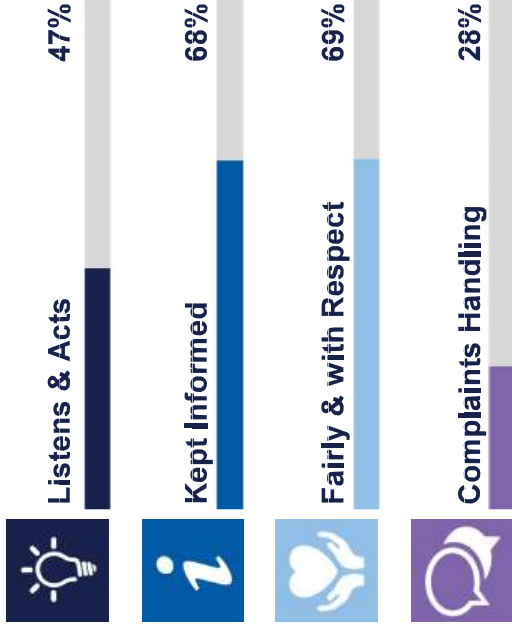
TSM Key Metrics



Keeping Properties in Good Repair



Respectful & Helpful Engagement



Responsible Neighbourhood Management

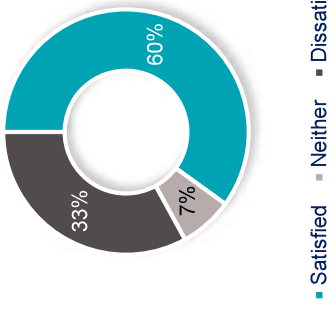
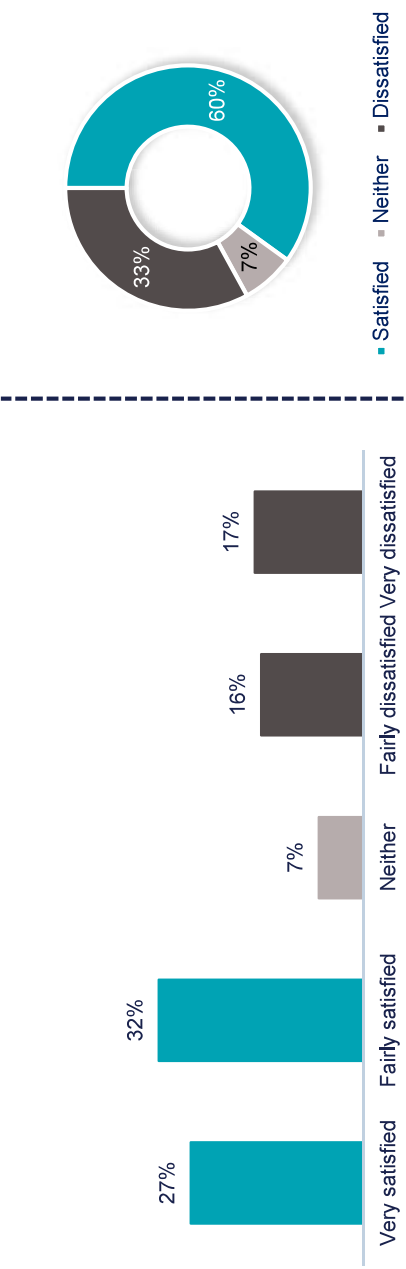




Overall Satisfaction



Overall Satisfaction

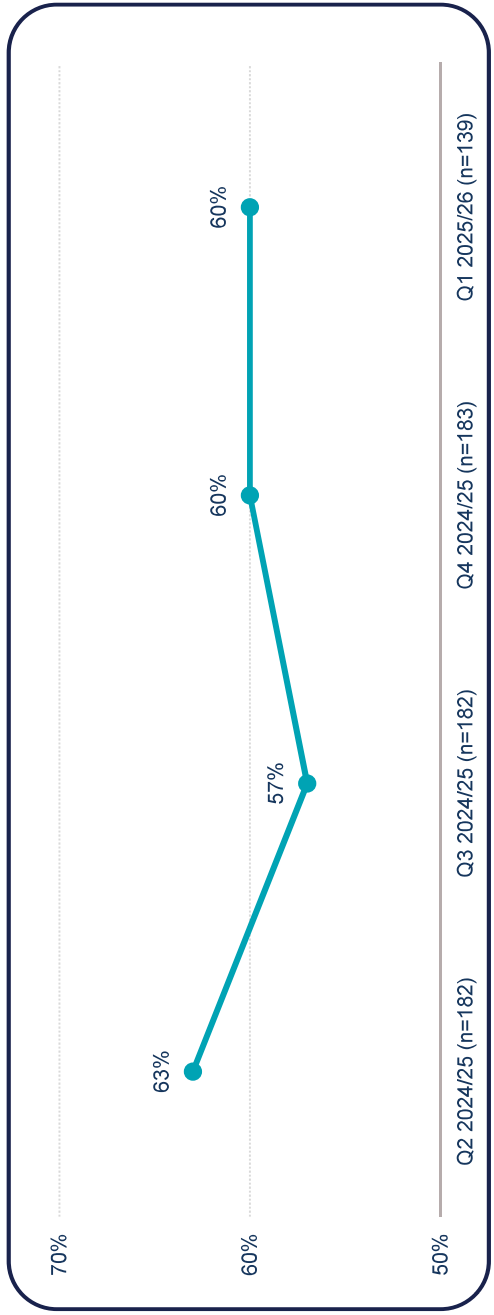


Tenants were asked, "Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided by East Devon District Council?" This is the key metric in any tenant perception survey.

There are 60% of tenants satisfied with the overall service, although fewer are very satisfied (27%) than fairly satisfied (32%).

A third of tenants are dissatisfied (33%), with a further 7% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

Satisfaction fell in Q3 of last year from 63% to 57% before increasing in Q4. The Q12025/26 result has stayed at this level. The surveys will continue to plot the levels throughout the year to see whether satisfaction is rising or falling.



When asked to explain the reasons for the overall service scores, 126 tenants left comments. These responses reveal a mixed sentiment towards the services provided by East Devon District Council (EDDC). Many respondents express frustration with the slow response times and lack of follow-through on repair requests, with some waiting months or even years for issues to be addressed.

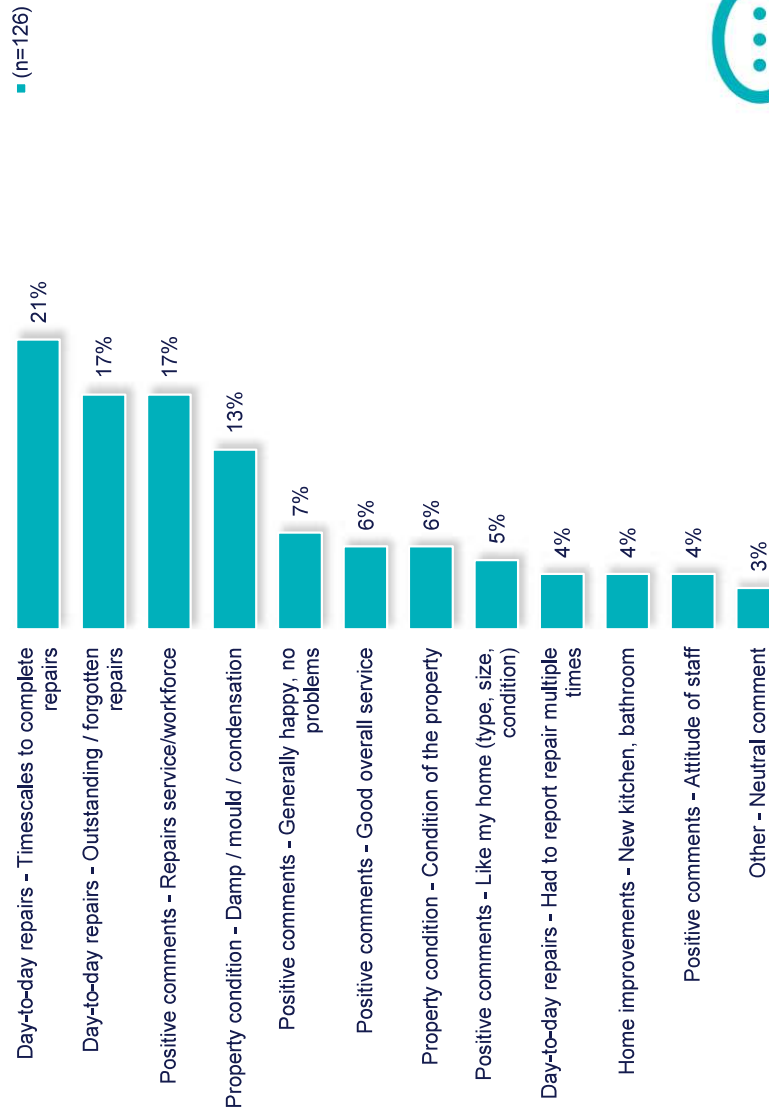
Common complaints include unresolved damp and mould problems, inadequate communication, and poor maintenance of properties and communal areas.

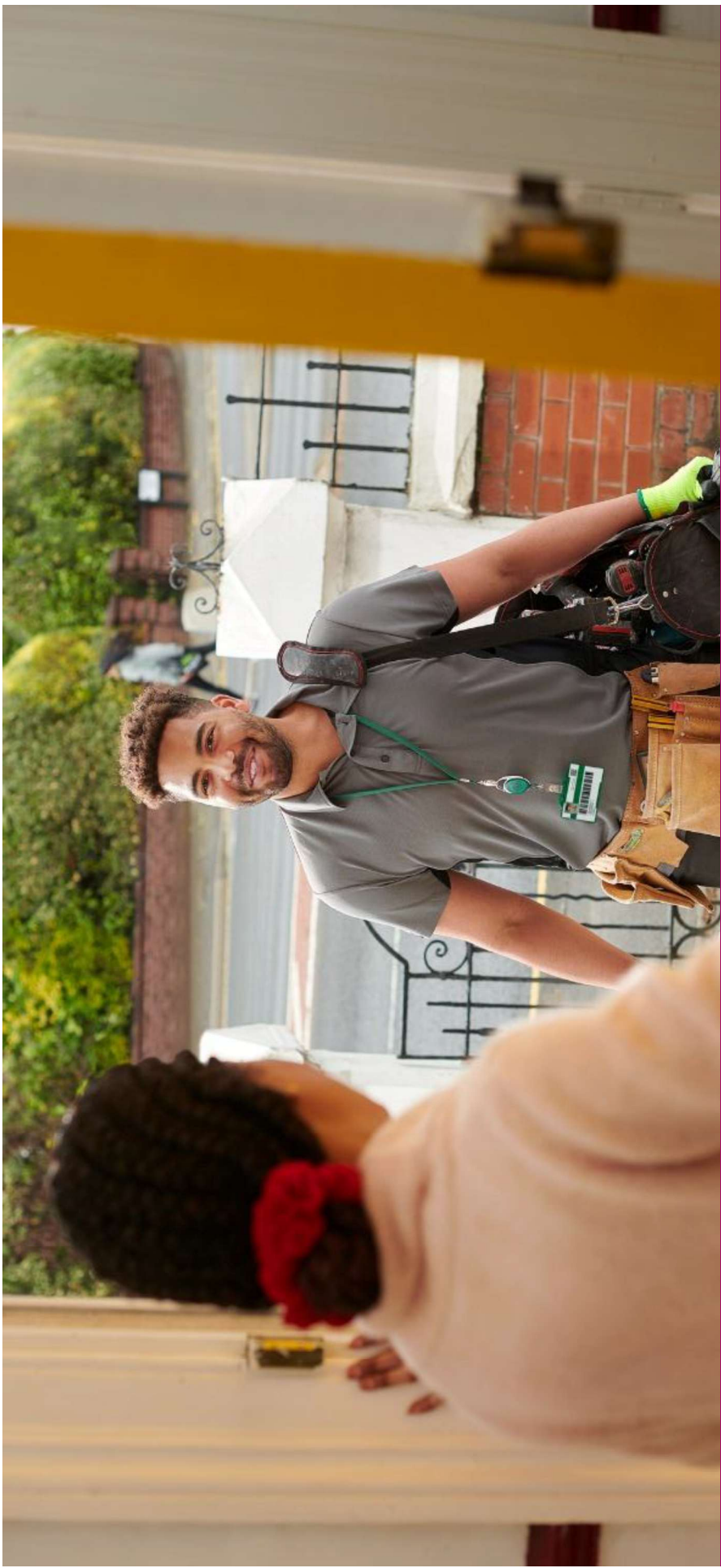
While some tenants appreciate the promptness of certain repairs and the helpfulness of staff, others report dissatisfaction with the quality of work and the need for ongoing follow-ups. Positive experiences are noted, particularly regarding the initial move-in process and some successful repairs. However, a significant number of respondents feel neglected, citing a lack of prioritisation for urgent repairs and general maintenance.

Overall, the feedback indicates a need for improved communication, timely repairs, and better maintenance practices to enhance tenant satisfaction and property conditions.



Comments - Overall Satisfaction





Keeping Properties in Good Repair

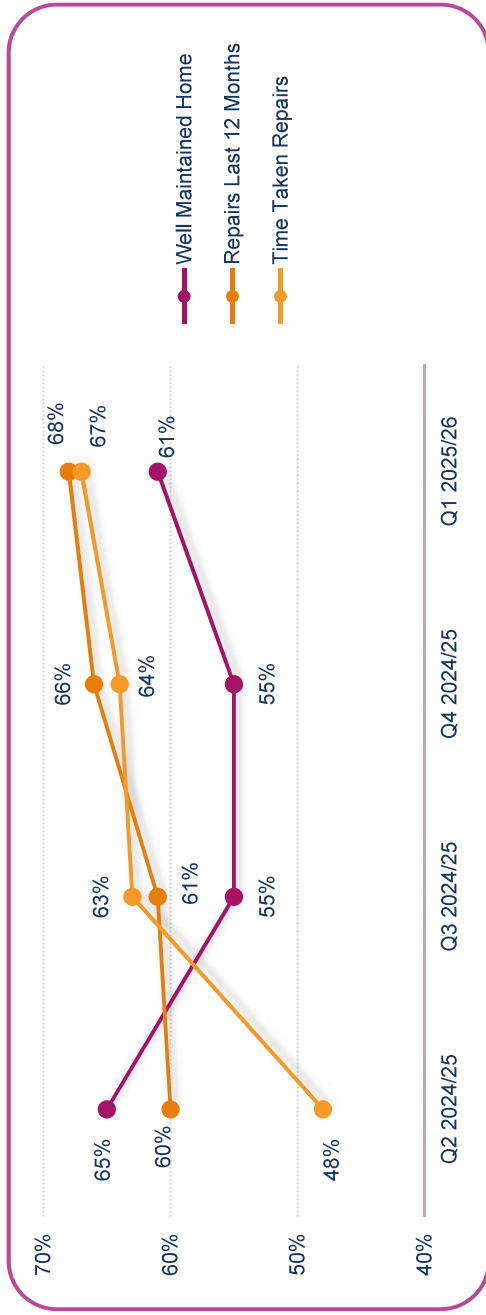
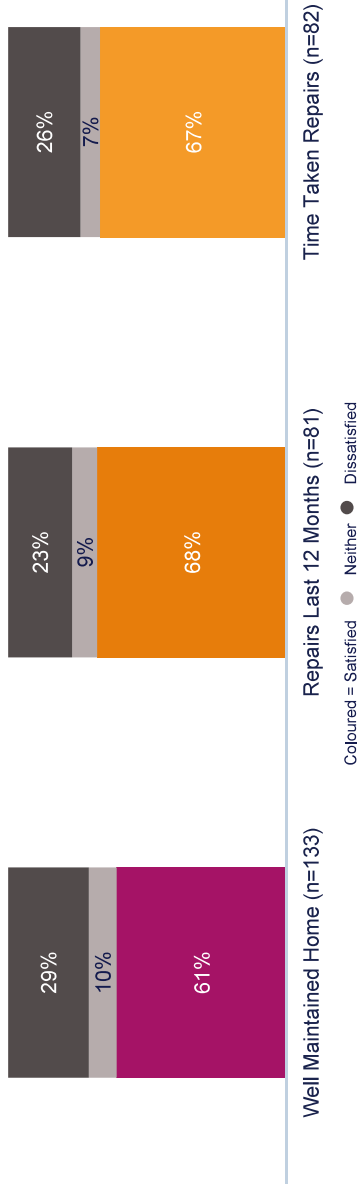


Keeping Properties in Good Repair

Just over three-fifths of tenants are satisfied that their home is well maintained (61%), up by 6p.p since the previous survey. Dissatisfaction stands at 29%, this falling over the same period by 5p.p.

Six out of ten tenants (61%) said they had a repair completed in the last 12 months, and of these 68% are satisfied with the repairs service during this period, although 23% are dissatisfied. This measure has been rising slowly from 60% in Q2 last year to its highest score this quarter of 68%.

Commonly, satisfaction with the time to complete repairs is lower than with the service itself: this is true, but with only a 1p.p difference. This has also seen a steady increase in satisfaction, up 3p.p in Q1 2025/26 to its highest point in the last year (67%).





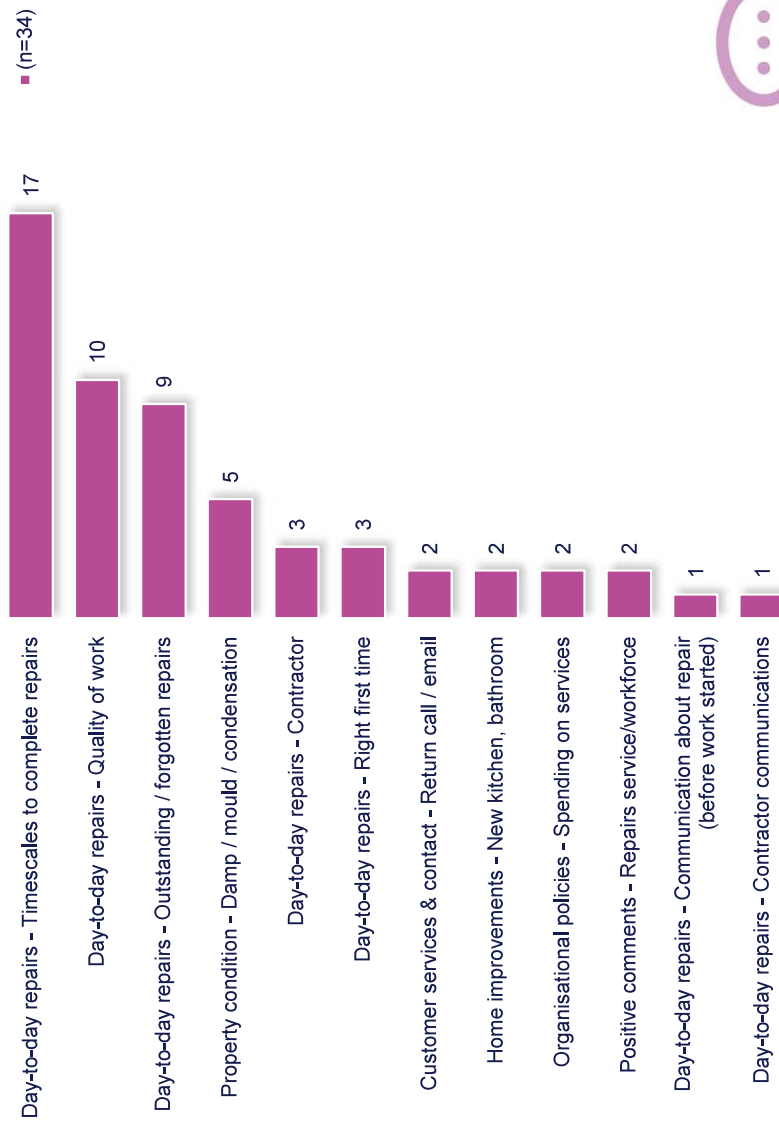
Comments - Dissatisfaction with Repairs



With regard to repairs, there is some dissatisfaction with the service provided, highlighting issues such as poor communication, delays, and substandard workmanship. Many respondents report waiting extended periods for repairs, with some cases exceeding six months. Specific complaints include unresolved leaks, incomplete jobs, and inadequate responses to urgent issues. For instance, one respondent mentioned waiting over a year for essential repairs, while another faced a week without hot water due to delays.

Several respondents express frustration with the quality of work, noting that repairs often appear rushed or are merely patch jobs rather than comprehensive solutions. There is a recurring theme of inadequate communication, with many stating that they receive little to no updates on the status of their requests. Additionally, some respondents indicated that the council prioritises cost over quality, leading to repeated calls for the same issues.

Overall, the feedback underscores a pressing need for improved responsiveness, communication, and quality assurance in repair services.





Maintaining Building Safety

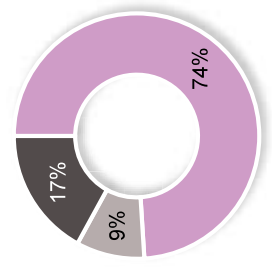
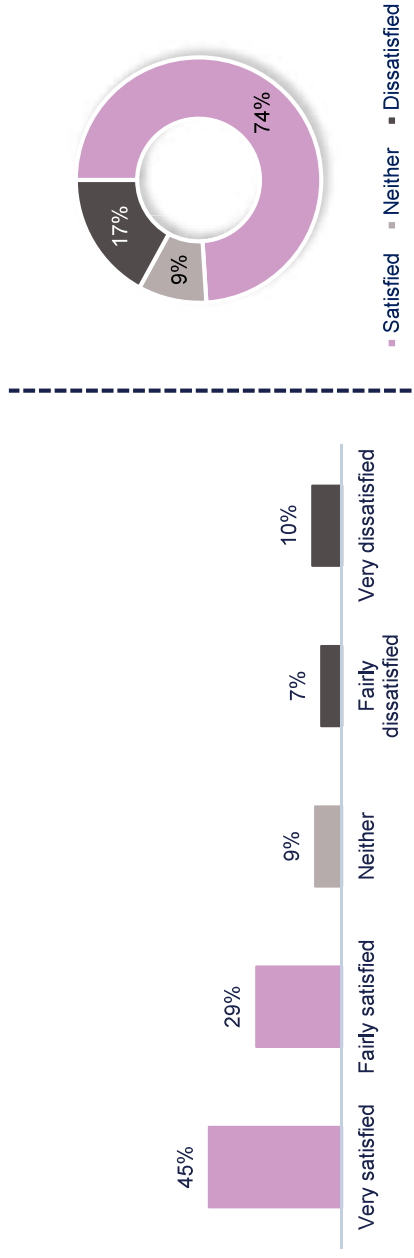


Maintaining Building Safety

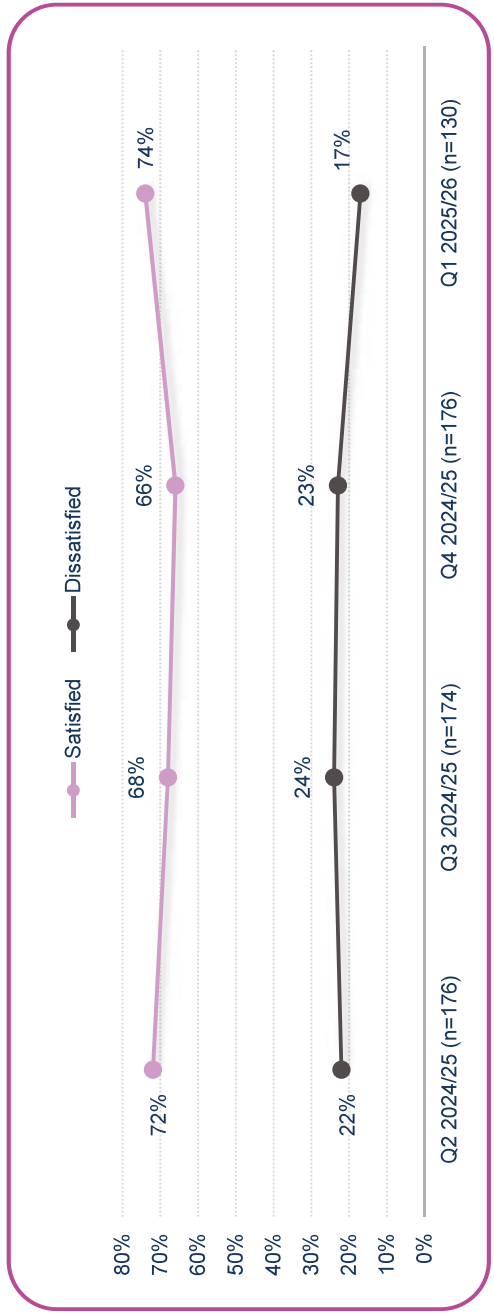
Satisfaction with the safety of the home has seen a rise of 7p.p in Q1 2025/26 to its highest score of 74%. Now just 17% of tenants are dissatisfied, down 6p.p since Q4 2024/25.

There are more very satisfied (45%) than fairly satisfied (29%), with a further 9% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

The comments shown overleaf help to explain some of the reasons given for both the satisfaction and dissatisfaction, and the full text is available to view on the Acuity dashboard.



■ Satisfied ■ Neither ■ Dissatisfied





Comments - Home or Communal Areas not Well Maintained or Safe

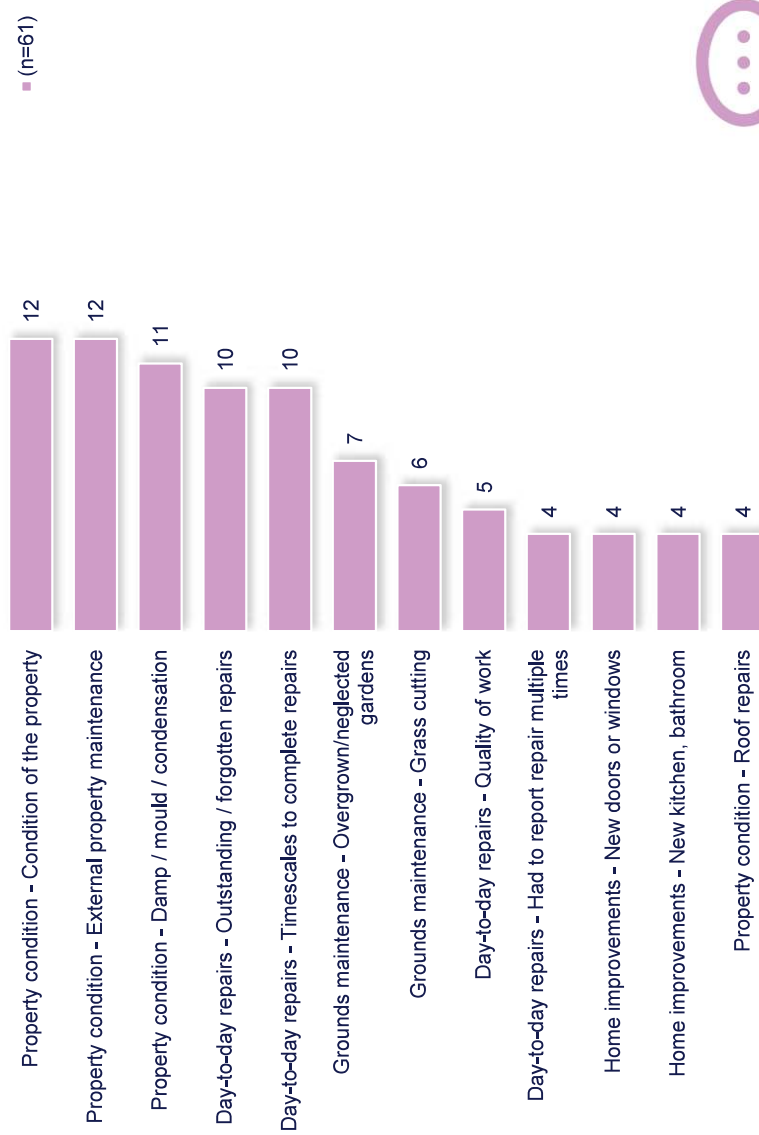


Many respondents report issues such as overgrown communal areas, unaddressed damp and mould problems, and inadequate communication regarding repairs. Specific complaints include long wait times for repairs, poor quality of work, and a lack of proactive maintenance, with some tenants feeling compelled to undertake repairs themselves.

Common themes include the neglect of gardens and communal spaces, with infrequent grass cutting and maintenance leading to untidy environments. Tenants express frustration over unresolved issues, such as asbestos presence, broken windows, and ineffective communication about repair timelines.

Several respondents highlight the need for better management of external areas, including the clearing of gutters and addressing structural issues like rotting fascia boards.

Overall, the feedback indicates a need for improved maintenance practices, timely communication, and a more responsive approach to tenant concerns to enhance living conditions and tenant satisfaction.





Responsible Neighbourhood Management



Responsible Neighbourhood Management

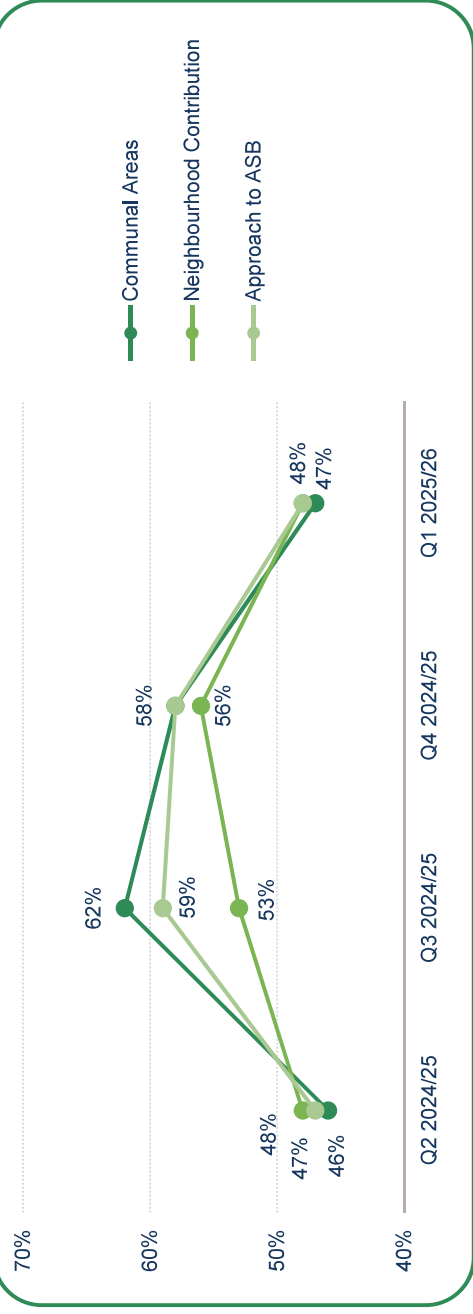
Just over a third of tenants stated that they live in a building with communal areas that EDDC is responsible for maintaining (35%). Of these, 47% are satisfied that the areas are kept clean, safe and well-maintained, although this is down by 11p.p, returning close to the level seen in Q2 of last year. There are now 42% of tenants dissatisfied, up 10p.p.

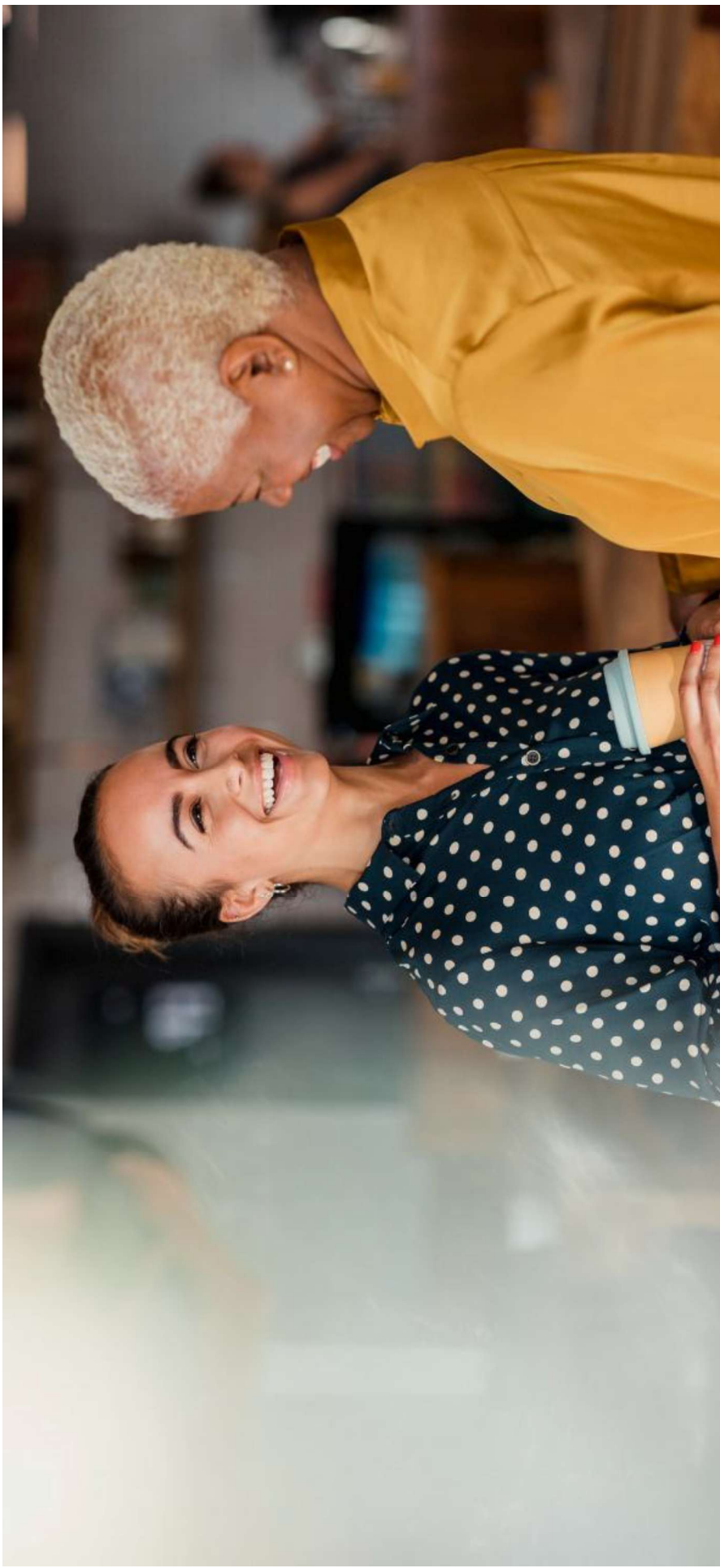
Similar numbers of tenants are satisfied with the positive contribution made by the Council to their neighbourhood (48%), and this is also down from Q4 2024/25, this time by 8p.p, and 32% remain dissatisfied. Perhaps the Council needs to do more to promote what it achieves locally and the impact its actions have.

Finally, in this section, tenants were asked about the approach taken by the Council to handling anti-social behaviour; satisfaction rose to 59% in Q3 of last year but is now down to 48%, with 29% of tenants dissatisfied with how these issues are dealt with.



Coloured = Satisfied Grey = Neither Black = Dissatisfied





Respectful & Helpful Engagement

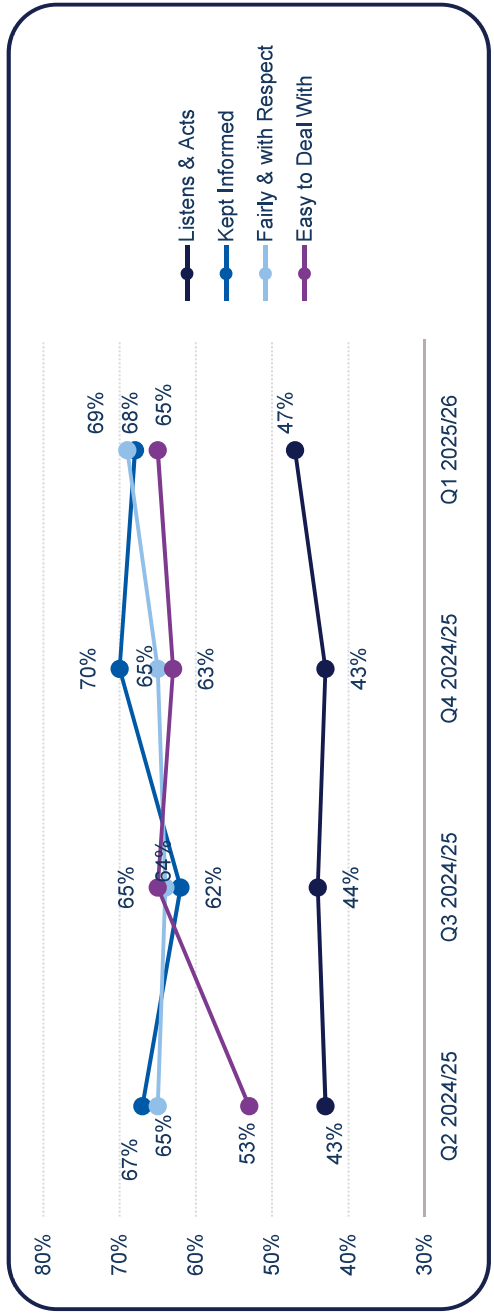
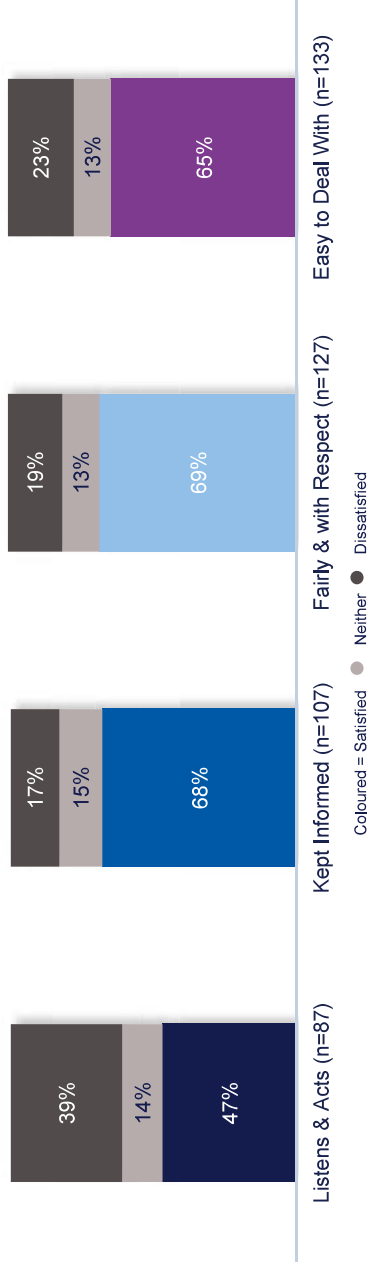


Respectful & Helpful Engagement

Two-thirds of tenants (65%) find dealing with EDDC easy, this having increased by 2p.p since Q4 2024/25, and back to the same level seen in Q3 of last year. There are now 23% who find dealing with EDDC difficult, although this is down by 4p.p.

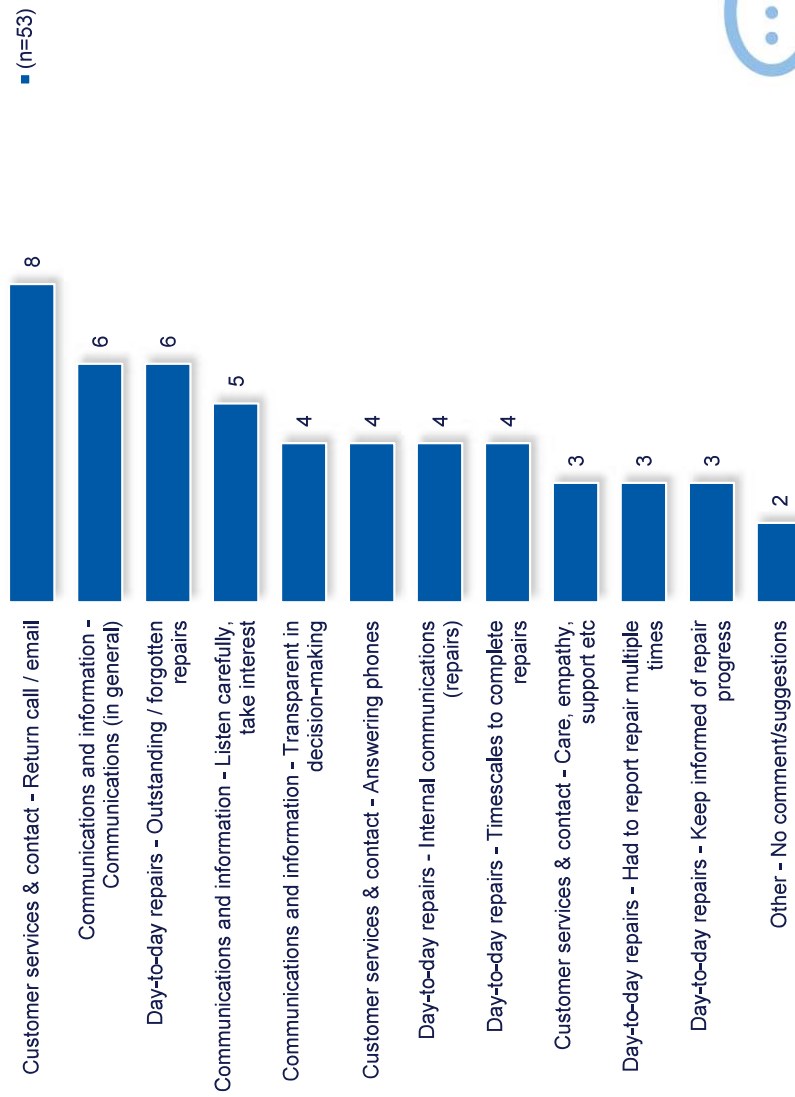
More tenants (69%) agree that the Council treats them fairly and with respect (up 4p.p), and 68% are satisfied that they are kept informed about things that matter to them, although just under a fifth are dissatisfied. Satisfaction with being kept informed is also down a little, by 2p.p.

Commonly, satisfaction with how their landlord listens to their views and acts upon them is lower than the other engagement measures, and this is the case here with 47% satisfied, although this is up just a little (by 4p.p) since the last quarter. However, 39% of tenants remain dissatisfied with this aspect of service, although this is 4p.p better than in Q4 2024/25.





Comments - Customer Service



There is dissatisfaction among tenants regarding communication and repair services provided by East Devon Council. Many respondents express frustration over a lack of follow-up on reported issues, with several stating that they had to repeatedly chase for updates or repairs that were promised but never completed.

There is a notable breakdown in communication, with tenants feeling that their concerns are not taken seriously or acknowledged. Some highlighted the inconsistency in service quality, noting that experiences vary depending on the staff member they interact with. Vulnerable tenants, including the elderly, report feeling neglected and unsupported, particularly in urgent situations. Additionally, there are calls for more direct communication methods, such as email addresses for specific departments, and a need for timely responses to inquiries.

Overall, the feedback indicates a pressing need for improved communication, accountability, and responsiveness to tenant needs to enhance satisfaction and trust in the Council's services.



Effective Handling of Complaints

Effective Handling of Complaints



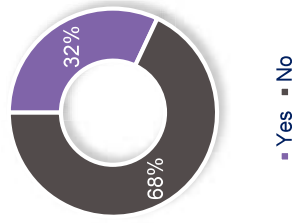
Around a third of tenants (32%) said they had made a complaint to the council in the last 12 months, which equates to around 43 tenants who had responded to the survey. However, it is impossible to say how many of these are formal or genuine complaints rather than service requests that have yet to be fully actioned.

Just 28% of these tenants are satisfied with the handling of these complaints, with considerably more dissatisfied (67%). However, satisfaction has increased by 12p.p since Q4 2024/25 and dissatisfaction is correspondingly down by 9p.p.

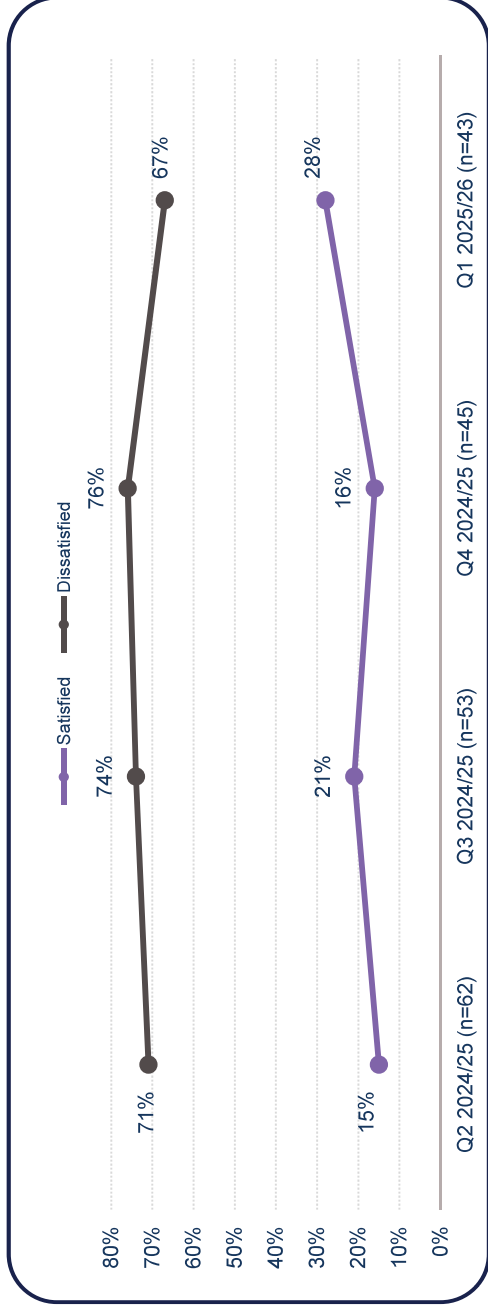
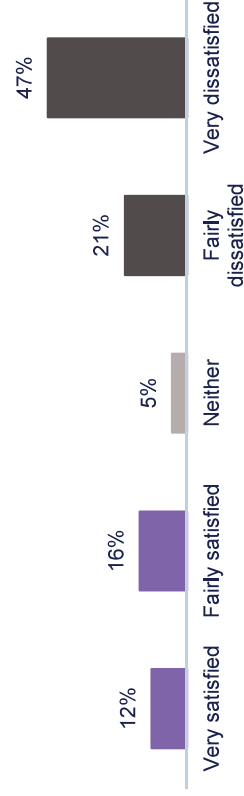
This is, again, the lowest-rated service in the survey, but this is generally the case as complaints handling has scored poorly ever since the question was included in the suite of TSM questions. However, the low level of satisfaction should still be a cause for concern for the Council, despite the small increase in satisfaction.

It is also not clear whether the dissatisfaction is driven by the outcome of the complaint, its handling, or a combination of both. For this reason, some landlords have started to include additional questions in their surveys to find out more, or to monitor complaints separately; this is something the Council may wish to consider in future surveys.

Complaint in last 12 months



Satisfaction with Complaints Handling

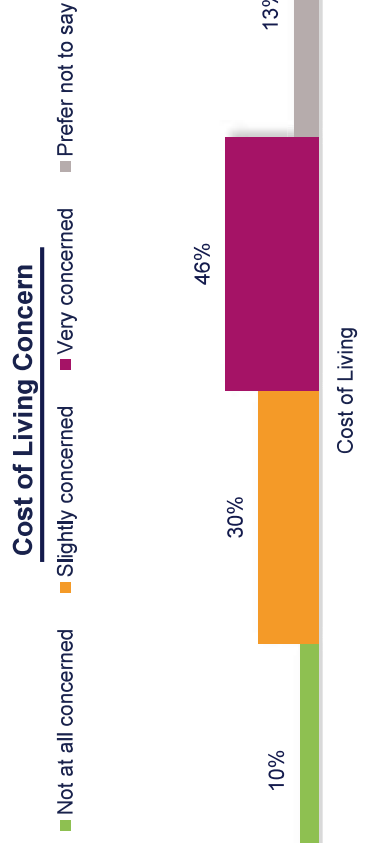




Wellbeing



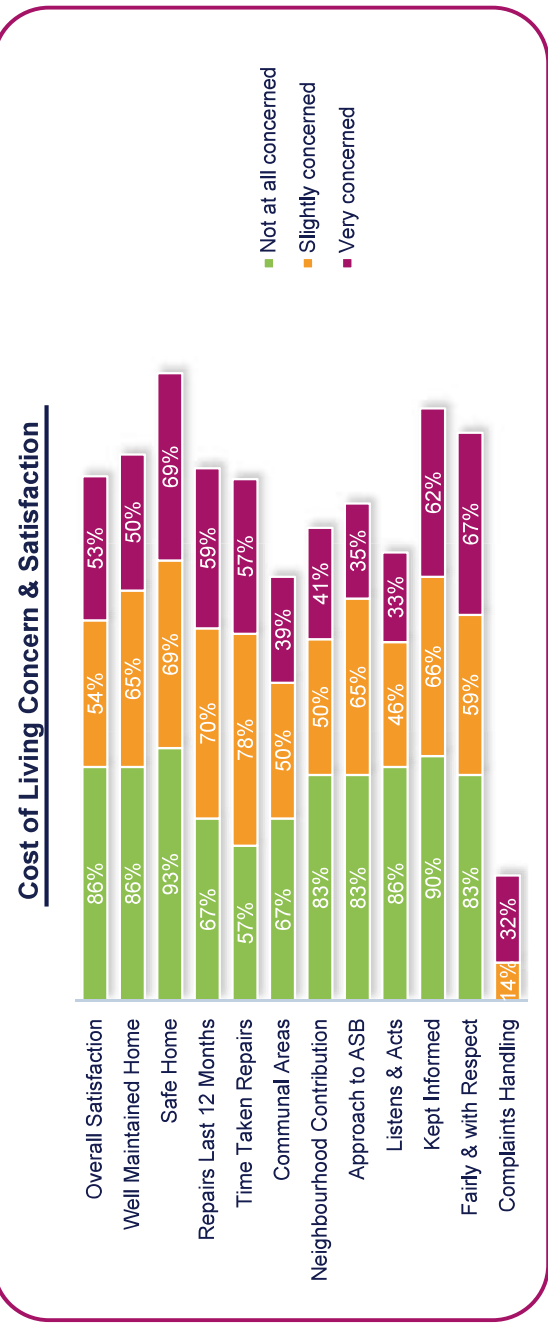
Cost of Living

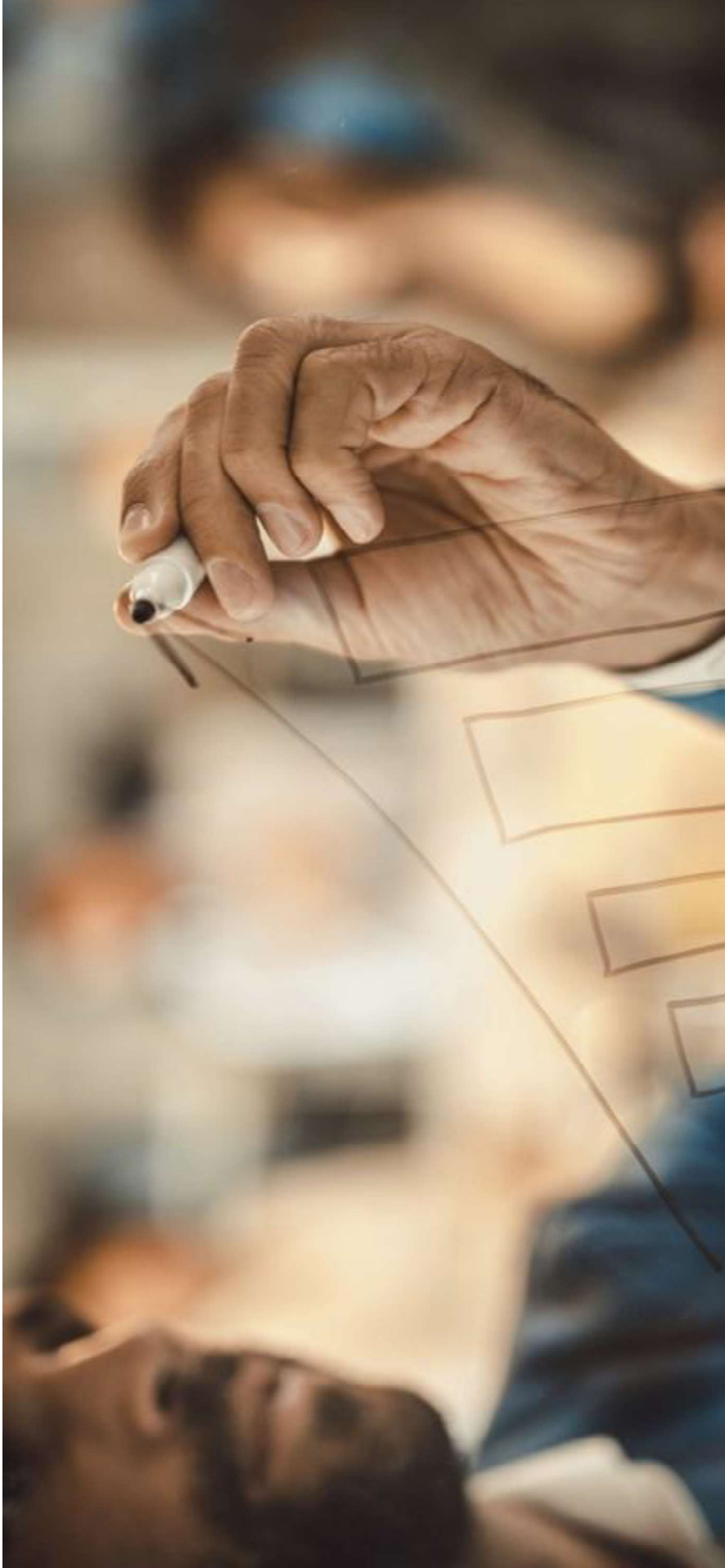


Three-quarters of tenants (76%) say they are concerned about the cost of living, 46% are very concerned, and a further 30% are slightly concerned. There are just 10% of tenants who are not concerned at all, with a further 13% preferring not to say.

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 86% satisfied with the overall service provided, compared to just 53% of those who were 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.





Trends



Trends Over Time

Now the fourth survey of this type has been completed, it is possible to compare the results across the four surveys.

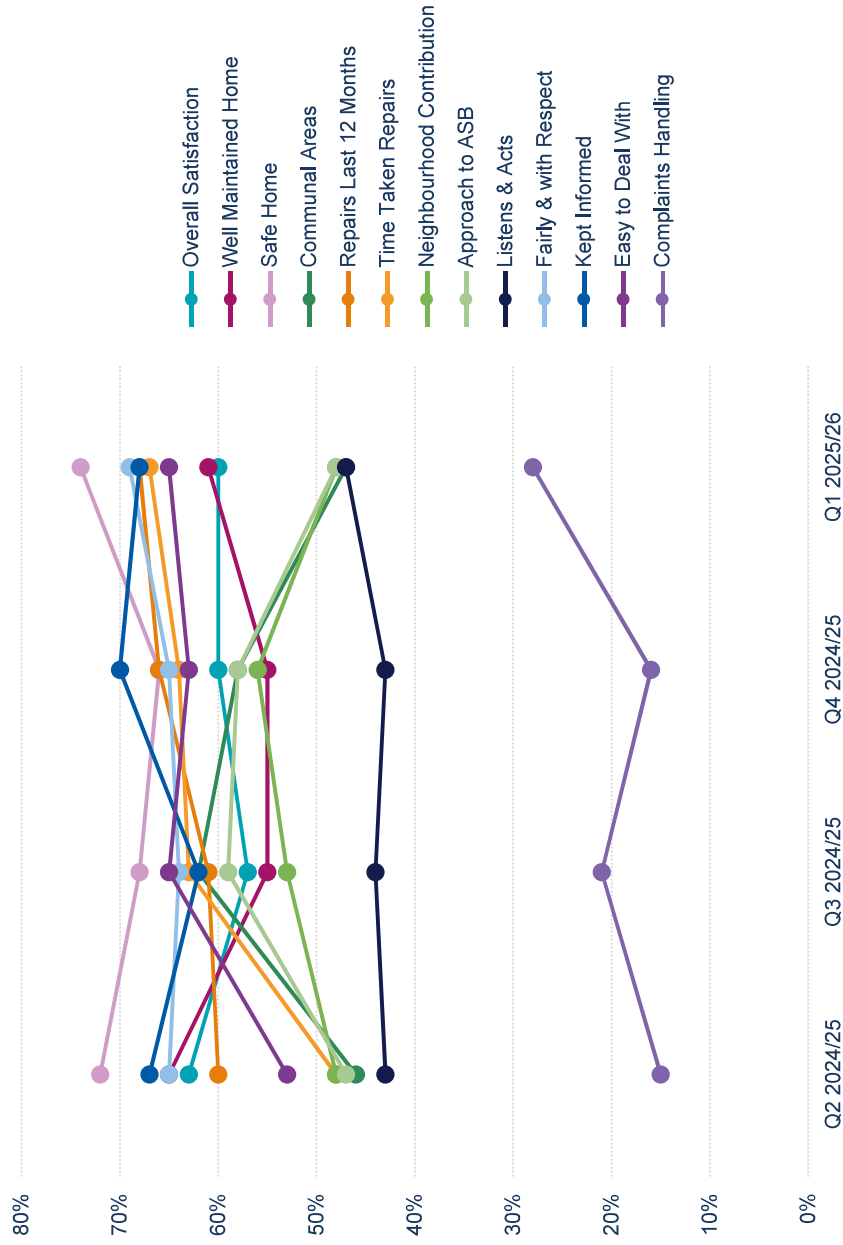
In Q1 2025/26, most measures are up, although four have decreased since Q4 2024/25.

To be statistically significant, changes need to exceed the combined margins of error for both surveys, around 15p.p, so none of these changes reach this but smaller changes can indicate a direction of travel.

Overall satisfaction is the same as previously, but the handling of complaints is up by 12p.p, and 7p.p more are satisfied with the safety of their homes.

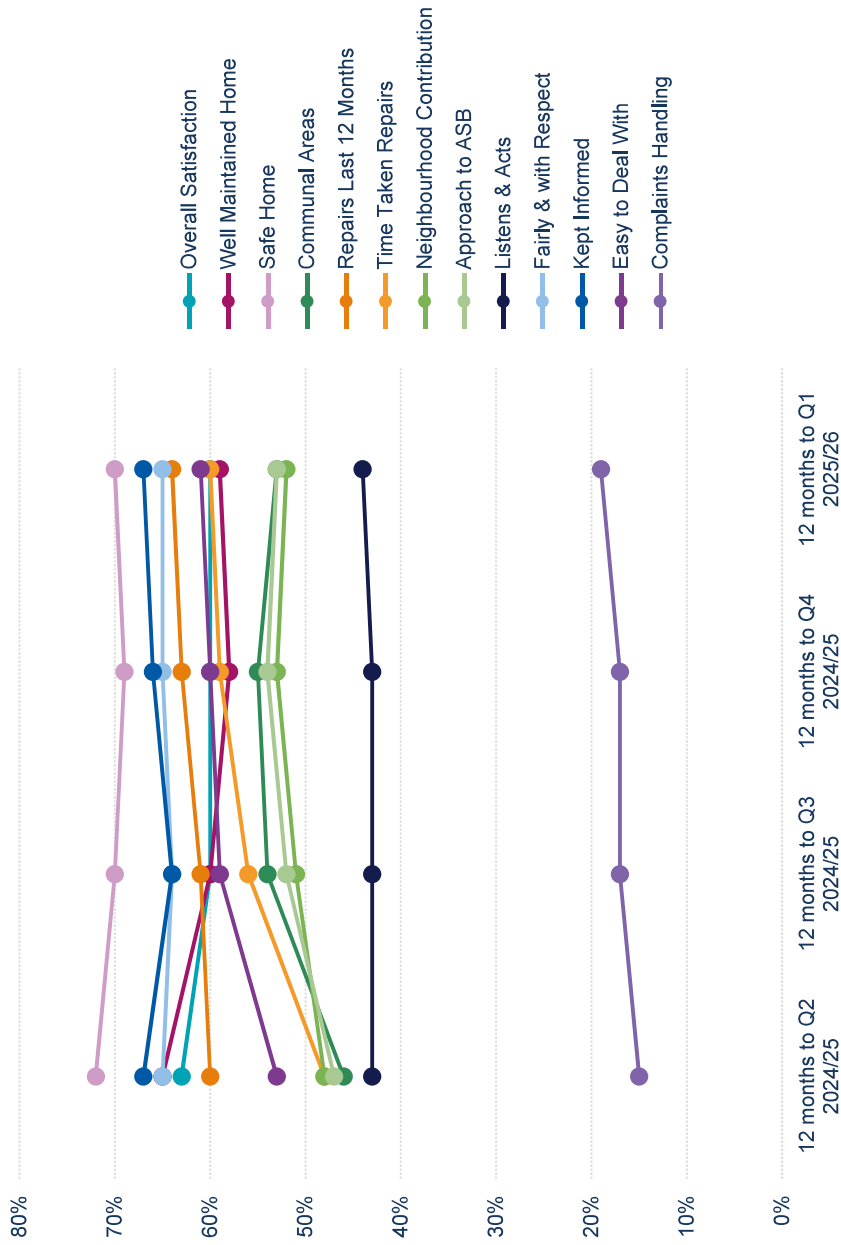
However, how tenants are kept informed is down a little (by 2p.p), as is the contribution to the neighbourhood (down 8p.p), the handling of ASB (down 10p.p), and the maintenance of the communal areas (down 11p.p).

There are often fluctuations in satisfaction throughout the year, so it will be interesting to see the direction of travel as the year progresses.





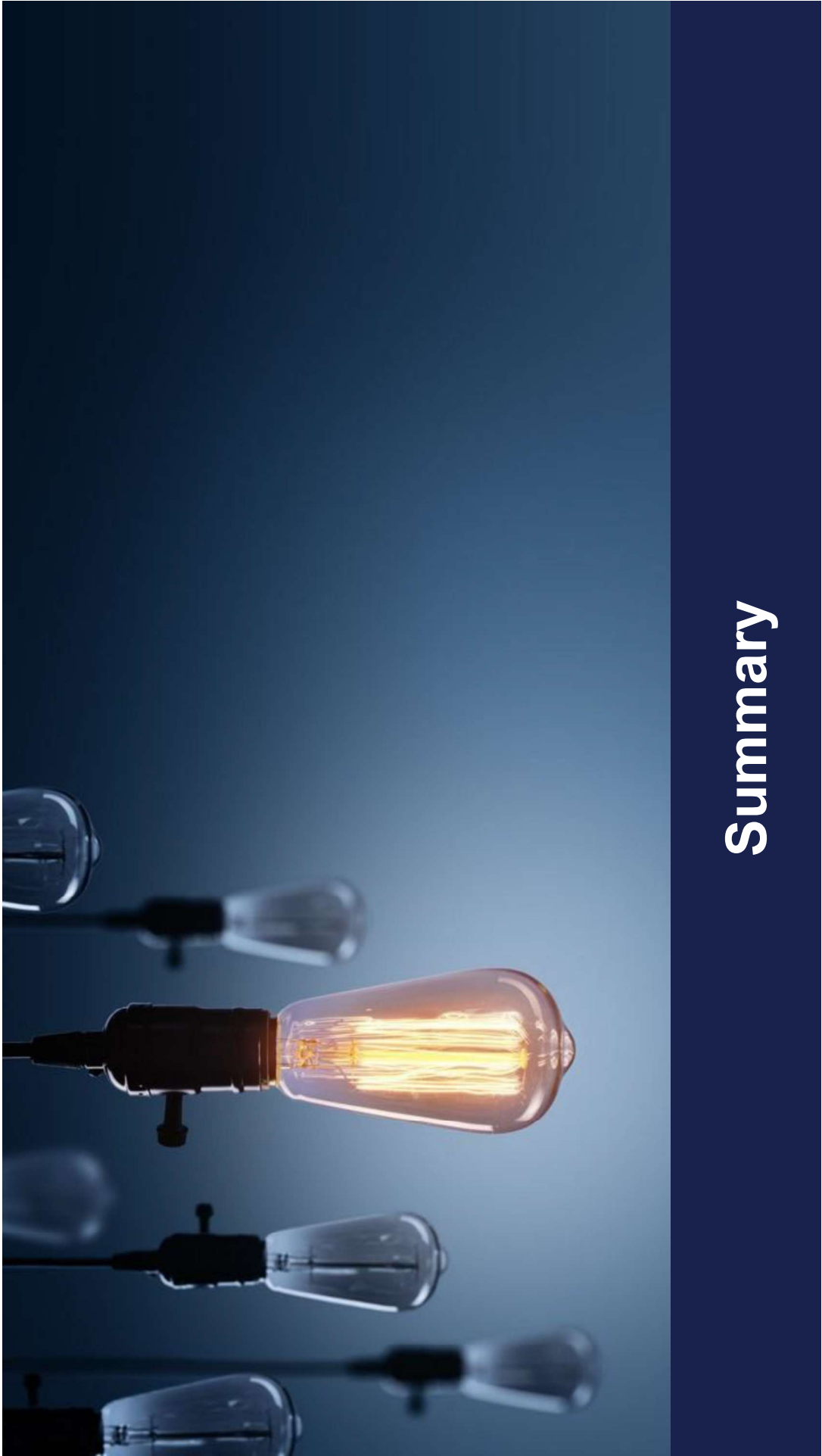
12 Month Rolling Averages



The chart opposite plots the 12-month rolling averages, and these provide a better view of the longer-term or underlying levels of satisfaction, but the averages are as much influenced by those results dropping off as those being added on.

The trend lines shown here are flatter and are less subject to quarterly changes.

None of the changes exceed 2p.p, with complaint handling up by this amount.



Summary



Summary & Recommendations

Following the completion of three quarterly surveys in 2024/25, the surveys have moved into 2025/26 and have continued every quarter. In Q1 2025/26, 134 completed responses were received from a mixture of telephone interviews and online surveys.

Overall satisfaction is at 60%, which sits roughly in the middle of the range of measures, with the highest satisfaction for the provision of a safe home (74%) and the Council treating tenants fairly and with respect (69%). However, five of these measures have satisfaction levels less than 60%, with 47% satisfied with the way the Council listens to tenants' views and acts upon them and the maintenance of the communal areas. Just 28% satisfied with the handling of complaints there are also more tenants dissatisfied than satisfied.

There have been a number of changes in satisfaction since the previous survey, mostly positive, although none are statistically significant. Overall satisfaction hasn't changed, but 12p.p more are satisfied with the handling of complaints and 7p.p more feel their home is safe. However, fewer are satisfied with the way they are kept informed, with the contribution to the neighbourhood, handling ASB and the communal maintenance.

The survey also included some open-ended questions, allowing the tenants to explain the reasons for their scores and suggest ways the council could improve its services. Again, the repairs service attracted the majority of comments, both positive and negative, showing how it works well for some but not for others. Tenants highlighted delays in repairs, some poor quality work, and unresolved problems with damp and mould. Communication also attracts some criticism and inconsistency in service.

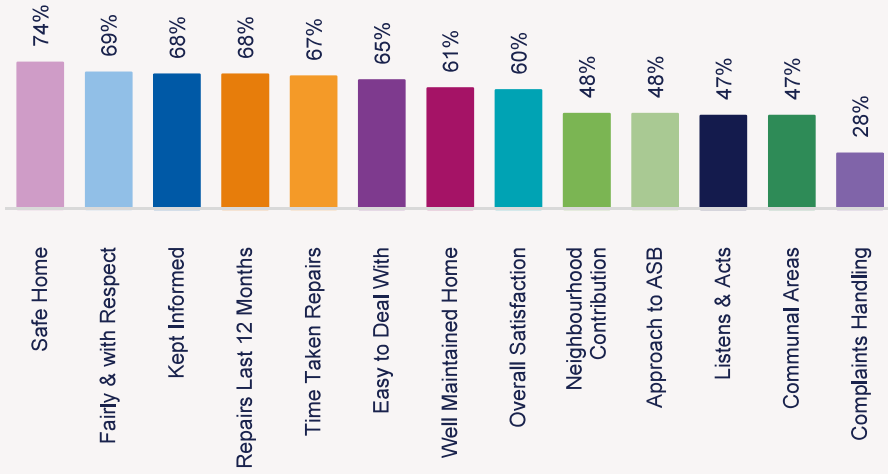
Around three-quarters of tenants continue to be concerned about the cost of living, and this tends to affect the way they feel about the services they receive.

Recommendations

Complaints and engagement – There are more than twice as many tenants dissatisfied with the handling of complaints as are satisfied, although this has improved since the previous quarter. Tenants complain of slow responses, poor communication and a feeling of being ignored. This extends to the way views are listened to, tenants feel the approach is inconsistent, and concerns are often not taken seriously. The Council needs to improve communication, accountability and responsiveness to tenants' needs.

Maintenance – Satisfaction with the repairs service has improved a little, but there appears to be more to do to increase satisfaction further. Long delays to complete works, a lack of follow-up, poor quality and poor maintenance of external areas all add to a feeling of frustration among some. Overall, the feedback underscores a pressing need for improved responsiveness, communication, and quality assurance in repair services.

Satisfaction with Measures





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:

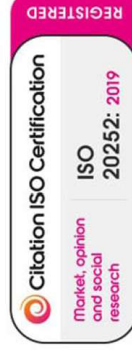
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