

Housing

CONNECT

Tenant Satisfaction Measures Edition

May 2024



DARLINGTON
Borough Council



www.darlington.gov.uk/housing

Welcome

Welcome to the first Tenant Satisfaction Measures edition of Housing Connect.

I am the Housing Asset and Compliance Manager. In my role I have responsibility for our Compliance and Performance. I also manage our Housing ICT systems, Complaints, Asset (property) portfolio and Climate Change.

I would like to thank all that took part in the Tenant Satisfaction Measures Surveys (TSM's). The surveys are taken from a random representative sample, so if you did not take part this time, don't worry, you may be asked in future surveys.

The feedback has been really helpful to us and we continue to learn and build on your responses to improve our services.

In this edition you can learn what the TSM's are and what they mean. We will share the results and see how we compare with other organisations.



One of the ways to get involved will be if you receive one of our new satisfaction surveys. This will ask about the service you have recently experienced and you

can tell us about how that went. They will be sent to you after you have had a repair, new tenancy, complaint, attended an event or reported an anti-social behaviour case to us.

I would encourage everyone to complete these with your honest opinions to tell us what we are doing well or where you feel improvement is needed. Alternatively, we are always looking for new members to join our Tenants Panel and our new Digital Tenants Panel. You can find out more details on page 9.

Cheryl Williams

Housing Asset and Compliance Manager

Regulator of Social Housing

The Regulator of Social Housing regulates registered social housing providers including local authorities and housing associations. It is a stand alone non departmental public body of government.

The Regulator of Social Housing sets consumer and economic standards for social housing providers and can take action if these are breached.

In 2024 the Regulator of Social Housing's new consumer standards came into effect from April. This will start a programme of 4 yearly inspections of landlords with over 1000 homes which will include Darlington Borough Council.

The Regulator has published revised consumer standards ahead of the introduction of the proactive consumer regulation regime. It's consultation for this closed in October 2023.



If you would like to find out more please go to
www.gov.uk/government/collections/regulatory-standards-for-landlords

What are the Tenant Satisfaction Measures?

In April 2023 the Regulator of Social Housing introduced the first Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM).

The aim of these TSM's is to hold all social housing providers to account for their actions. It allows providers to find out what they are doing right, what they are getting wrong and areas for improvement whilst increasing public visibility.

The Tenant Satisfaction Measures allowed us to ask our tenants set questions in a survey. Those set questions did not change throughout the country with all housing providers asking the same questions to ensure consistency.

There were 22 Tenant Satisfaction measures in total which were split into two parts

- 10 performance measures that were collected through management performance information.
- 12 tenants perception survey measures that were collected through surveying customers directly.

The 12 questions we asked you were as follows;

TP01 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided by Darlington Borough Council Housing Service?

TP02 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall repairs service from Darlington Borough Council Housing Service over the last 12 months?

TP03 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the time taken to complete your most recent repair after you reported it?

TP04 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Darlington Borough Council Housing provides a home that is well maintained?

TP05 Thinking about the condition of the property or building you live in, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Darlington Borough Council Housing provides a home that is safe?

TP06 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that the Darlington Borough Council Housing Service listen to your views and acts upon them?

TP07 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that the Darlington Borough Council Housing Service keeps you informed about things that matter to you?

TP08 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement 'the Darlington Borough Council Housing Service treats me fairly and with respect'?

TP09 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the Darlington Borough Council Housing Service's approach to complaints handling?

TP10 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Darlington Borough Council Housing Service keeps these communal areas clean and well maintained?

TP11 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that the Darlington Borough Council Housing Service makes a positive contribution to your neighbourhood?

TP12 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the Darlington Borough Council Housing Service's approach to handling anti-social behaviour?

All 22 measures from every housing provider will be visible online for the public to view, compare and question.

Our surveys were completed in late September and early October 2023 with 716 of our tenants fully completing the Tenant Satisfaction Measures. That included 390 (54%) via telephone and 326 (46%) online.

BMG

To ensure an Independent survey we decided to work with BMG Research to carry out the research with our tenant. This helped ensure impartiality and fairness.

BMG are a leading independent provider of market research services to the UK public and social sectors. With over 35 years of experience BMG have over 100 experts and are based in Birmingham, Glasgow and London.

Our team worked with BMG and were in regular contact to ensure the smooth running of the research and that all of our tenants details were fully up to date.

Tenant Satisfaction Survey

- 716** Tenants fully completed the survey
- 326** Tenants Completed the survey online
- 390** Tenants Completed the survey via the telephone
- 86** Tenants partially completed the survey

SATISFACTION STATS

- 76%** of tenants felt satisfied overall
- 14%** of tenants stated they were dissatisfied

SATISFACTION BY AGES

- Highest 83%** Age bracket 55 to 64
- Lowest 66%** Age brackets 18 to 34 and 35 to 44

SATISFACTION BY PATCHES

- Highest 83%** Patch 1 – Albert Hill, Branksome and Rise Carr
- Lowest 71%** Patch 3 – Cockerton, Heatherwood Grove, North Riverside and Park Place

REASONS FOR SATISFACTION

- 24%** Repairs, issues or queries dealt with efficiently
- 16%** Customer Service
- 8%** Resolution of Repairs

REASONS FOR DISSATISFACTION

- 42%** Outstanding repairs, issues and complaints
- 29%** Poor Customer Service and not listening to residents
- 20%** Slow Responsiveness

Key Results

KEY STRENGTHS

| | |
|---|------------|
| TPO5 Thinking about the condition of the property or building you live in, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you that the Darlington Borough Council Housing Service provides a home that is safe? | 81% |
| TPO2 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall repairs service from the Darlington Borough Council Housing Service over the last 12 months? | 80% |
| TPO3 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the time taken to complete your most recent repair after you reported it? | 80% |

KEY GROWTH AREAS

| | |
|--|------------|
| TPO9 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the Darlington Borough Council Housing Service's approach to complaints handling? | 38% |
| TP12 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the Darlington Borough Council Housing Service's approach to handling anti-social behaviour? | 58% |
| TP11 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that the Darlington Borough Council Housing Service makes a positive contribution to your neighbourhood? | 65% |

"The whole process from start to finish has been excellent, any worries I had were all sorted out. All the lads that worked on my flat made it an easy hassle-free journey from start to end. They all made me feel at ease and comfortable. They were very sociable and took time to chat to me and have a laugh with me and any issues were no trouble to them. Can't say enough good things about them all"

"I have an ongoing problem at the moment and they are pretty fair and helping to the best of their ability"

"They do well on some bits and others they fall down on. Some things are good and some are bad and where I live in North Road of Darlington, we have been left out on things they do in the area."

"Darlington Borough Council provide repairs and checks on the home when needed and also provide the facility to book these visits when there is a person in the home, which makes it very accessible for us"

How we compared to ot

When looking at our results it is important to compare them to other Housing Providers to give further indication of how we are doing in all areas.

Our Benchmarking results were compared to 189 landlords who chose to submit mid-year Tenant Satisfaction results from the period of April to September 2023 to Housemark.

As Darlington Borough Council conducted our Tenant Satisfaction Results in September and October 2023 we were not involved in this survey but it is a fantastic indication of where we as a landlord stand in relation to other providers.

The Benchmarking data collection included headline results for all 22 TSM's and took place between the 2nd and 16th October 2023. Our Benchmarking results were provided by Housemark who are the leading data and insight company for the UK housing sector.

We, along with countless other Housing Providers, use Housemark to stay ahead with exclusive research and analysis of which the Tenant Satisfaction Measures are a significant part.



TPO1

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided by Darlington Borough Council Housing Service?

TPO2

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall repairs service from the Darlington Borough Council Housing Service over the last 12 months?

TPO3

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the time taken to complete your most recent repair after you reported it?

TPO4

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that the Darlington Borough Council Housing Service provides a home that is well maintained?

TPO5

Thinking about the condition of the property or building you live in, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you that the Darlington Borough Council Housing Service provides a home that is safe?

TPO6

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that the Darlington Borough Council Housing Service listens to your views and acts upon them?

TPO7

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that the Darlington Borough Council Housing Service keeps you informed about things that matter to you?

TPO8

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement 'the Darlington Borough Council Housing Service treats me fairly and with respect'?

TPO9

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the Darlington Borough Council Housing Service's approach to complaints handling?

TPO10

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Darlington Borough Council Housing Service keeps these communal areas clean and well maintained?

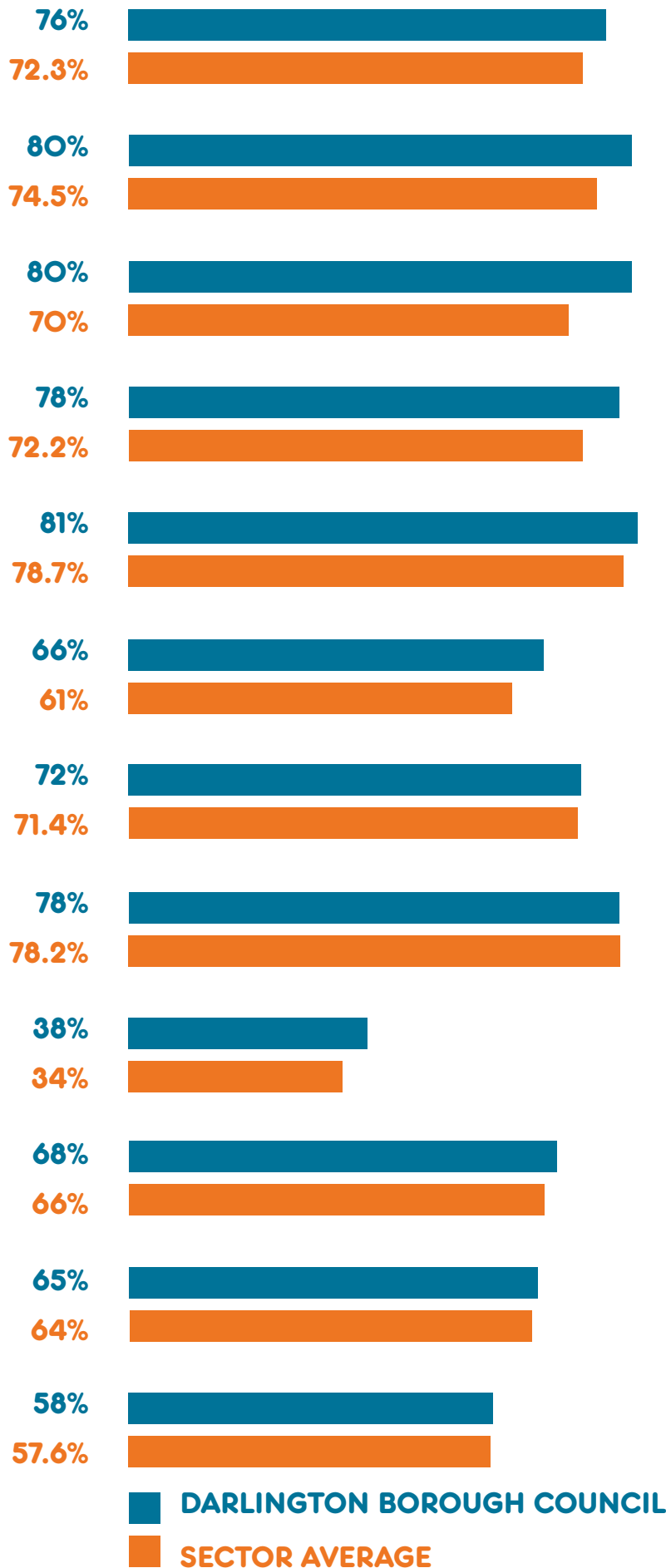
TPO11

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that the Darlington Borough Council Housing Service makes a positive contribution to your neighbourhood?

TPO12

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the Darlington Borough Council Housing Service's approach to handling anti-social behaviour?

her landlords



When Darlington Borough Council received our Tenant Satisfaction Results in 2023/24 we were then able to see whether we performing above or below the Benchmark.

In the graph we are represented by the blue bar while the sector average is represented in orange.

In 11 of the 12 questions we were above the sector average and in the one question where we were below sector average it was very minimal with 78% compared to 78.2% which of course is very pleasing.

It is also important to note that in the areas where we need to improve in, such as complaints handling and anti-social behaviour that the sector average is also lower, showing that improvements need to be made across the board.



Tenants Panel

Our Tenants Panel viewed our Tenants Satisfaction Measures results in March 2024 going through the full list of TSM's and were involved in a focus group during a Tenants Panel meeting. This focus group was chaired by Customer Engagement Co-Ordinator Matthew and included Tenants Panel members Dawn, Karen, Hugh, Denise and Simon.

Overall Satisfaction

'I am not surprised that the satisfaction levels are high, in my opinion and experience everything is dealt with quickly with tenants very rarely having to wait. Working in the Firth Moor Community Centre I quite often make calls for residents and I am often pleasantly surprised.'

(Karen)

'Even if waiting times is a little longer at times I feel that the Council stick to their word. They are very honest and give realistic expectations which is something that will drive the levels of satisfaction.'

(Simon)

Anti Social Behaviour

'In my opinion the Anti-Social Behaviour has got a lot better in the area where I live. With the work from the Council I believe it has turned a corner in the last couple of years'

(Hugh)

'I think what some tenants don't understand is that it is not a quick fix. It is a long drawn out process and people must log it with the Police, even if they think it is not important.'

(Karen)

Repairs

'Sometimes repairs take a couple of appointment before they are fixed completely. I had my front door replaced and it kept dropping, I called them and they came back but it would be nice if it was sorted straight away. Although I have no complaints there can always be improvements.'

(Denise)

'I think the dissatisfaction will be more down to the time taken to get an appointment rather than the work that has been done. My bedroom door got locked on Christmas Morning and it took about a month for it to be fixed, but once it was I had no complaints whatsoever.'

(Simon)

Positive contribution to your Neighborhood

'I think the Council does have a positive contribution to our communities. As I have said before things are improving.'

(Hugh)

'I think an aim moving forward should be to level contribution so its equal in every area.'

(Denise)

What's next

With the Tenants Panel being the cornerstone of their communities and a link between tenants and the Housing Team they will be part of the change coming off the back of the Tenant Satisfaction Measures.

With any focus group that comes from the results a member of the Tenants Panel will be invited to represent the needs of every DBC Tenant. They will also be involved with the Estate Inspections.

In March Tenants Panel member and Firthmoor Community Centre employee Karen joined Housing Officer Rachel at the Firthmoor walkabout to voice the concerns of local tenants who she has dealings with every day.

The panel will also be involved in vital training on scrutiny so that their skills are honed and they can impact their communities even more successfully moving forward.

Tenants
Panel
Approved



Tenants Panel and Online Tenants Panel



WE NEED
YOU!

Are you passionate about your home and want to make things happen in your neighbourhood?

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All this can be done from the comfort of your own home!

We want you to shape our services going forward.



DARLINGTON
Borough Council

Can you

- Become a champion for your area.
- Complete online Surveys.
- Review our policies and give us your opinions.
- Contribute to our Housing Connect magazine.
- Promote our tenants panel in your neighborhood.

How to become a member

Contact our Customer Engagement team via:



customerengagement@darlington.gov.uk



07917 040599 (during office hours only)



01325 405333 press option 7 and ask for the Customer Engagement Team

Looking to improve

What are the next steps from the survey results?

Following on from the survey results being received and after reviewing the scores, reading comments and consulting with our Tenants Panel we have looked at which areas we will focus on this year.

The Tenants Panel agreed that we focus on the following 3 specific areas, these are:

- **Complaints handling.**
- **Listening to tenants views.**
- **Dealing with anti-social behaviour.**

Complaints handling

As with most landlords the results of the complaint handling survey was lower than others. To combat this we are looking at a number of steps to help improve our complaints service. This includes how we inform our tenants about our complaints process.

The Tenants Panel suggested and agreed that we:

- Set up a dedicated complaint webpage with details of the process of making a complaint.
- Improve feedback providing transactional feedback surveys which tenants can complete at the end of an investigation so we can look to see if we adhered to the policy and whether our internal processes are robust and fit for purpose.
- Improve the analysis of complaints through our Senior Managers group who meet quarterly to analyze complaints that have come in to establish patterns and formalise action plans.

Listening to tenants views

Moving forward we want to ensure that you feel listened to. Although our results were similar to national averages our Tenants Panel agreed this was an area we could look at.

To combat this our tenants panel have agreed:

- That they will work with us to increase the visibility of the Tenants Panel.
- That we introduce a new Digital Tenants Panel to allow people who may not be able to attend meetings to have their say.
- That we look to improve our web pages and social media posts to increase the information we provide to tenants.

- That we take the Tenants Panel meetings “on the road” and hold them at various locations around the Town to make it easier for people to attend.
- That we introduce and promote Customer Service Standards to ensure residents are aware of the standards they should receive when requesting a service from Housing.
- That we introduce surveys following on from events so those that attend can tell us what they thought, what went well and what other events they would like in their area.
- That we will organize focus group events in areas so we can focus on specific improvements that matter to an area based on TSM results.
- That we consider how we can promote good news stories and ‘you said we did’ better.

Dealing with Anti Social Behavior

Our approach to dealing with anti-social behavior is also a key area the Tenants Panel suggested we looked at this year.

They agreed that:

- We will organize focus group events in areas so we can focus on specific improvements that matter to an area.
- Improve feedback with transactional feedback surveys which tenants can complete at the end of an investigation so we can look to see if we adhered to the policy and whether our internal processes are robust and fit for purpose.
- Include a regular article in Housing Connect about what actions we have taken and how tenants can report issues to us.
- Review the current webpages with the panel to ensure they provide all the information that our tenants want and need.
- We will also continue to work with our partner agencies such as Civic Enforcement and the Police.

We need you

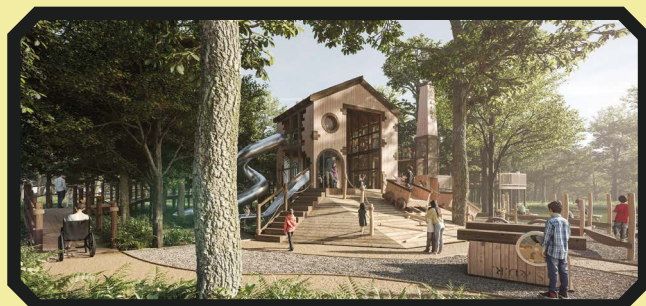
We cannot improve without your views and help.

If you have any ideas on improvements we can consider or would like to join our Tenants Panel or Digital Tenants Panel please contact us via email at customerengagement@darlington.gov.uk or call us on 01324 405333.

HOPETOWN

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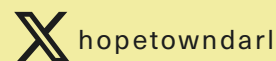
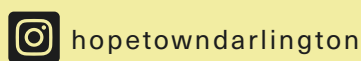
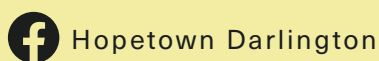
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www.hopetowndarlington.co.uk



How to Contact us

It has never been easier to contact us.

You can log onto your **Darlington Home Online** account via www.darlington.gov.uk/housing/darlington-home-online

- Check your rent balance and transactions
- Make online rent payments
- Report repairs
- Send messages to our Housing team
- View and print your rent statements

**DO IT
ONLINE**

Contact us via email at housing@darlington.gov.uk

You can contact the Housing team via phone as well as other teams with the numbers below

Housing Services

01325 405333

StreetScene & Environmental Services

01325 405111

Transport & Projects (inc parking)

01325 405222

Planning & Property

01325 405777

Civic Enforcement & Anti-Social Behaviour

01325 406999

Council Housing inc Homelessness

01325 405333



Housing Benefit

01325 405444

Council Tax

01325 405555

Business Rates

01325 405666

Adult Social Care

01325 406111

Children & Families

Social Care

01325 406222

Complaints, Comments

& Compliments

01325 406777

Lifeline Services

01325 406888



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