

Tenant Satisfaction Measures 2024/2025

The Tenant Satisfaction Measures

The Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) Standard requires all registered providers to conduct tenant perception surveys to generate and report TSMs annually, as specified by the Regulator of Social Housing. TSMs are intended to make landlords' performance more visible to tenants and help tenants hold their landlords accountable.

The TSM standards consist of 22 measures: 14 management information measures and 12 satisfaction measures. They cover five key themes: keeping properties in good repair, maintaining building safety, respectful and helpful engagement, responsible neighbourhood management, and effective handling of complaints, alongside an additional measure for overall satisfaction with landlord services.

All information must be accurate, reliable, and valid to provide a transparent reflection of performance.

This report is a brief analysis of the 12 satisfaction measures, including areas for focus and improvement.

Performance

The tables included show how Guildford Borough Council (GBC) performed against the TSM measures.

The one-off survey undertaken by Acuity, ran from the 21st June 2024 to the 19th July 2024.

Satisfaction Summary

KPIs	24/25 Performance
Overall satisfaction	61%
Satisfaction with repairs	63%
Satisfaction with the time taken to complete the most recent repair	63%
Satisfaction that the home is well maintained	61%
Satisfaction that the home is safe	68%
Satisfaction that we listen and act	41%
Satisfaction that we keep tenants informed	56%
Agreement we treat tenants fairly and with respect	64%
Satisfaction with complaints handling	22%
Satisfaction communal areas are kept clean and well maintained	48%
Satisfaction we make a positive contribution to the neighbourhood	45%
Satisfaction with ASB handling	43%

Overview

- Satisfaction levels are moderate but fall below the median for other councils using Acuity to undertake their TSM surveys over the past year.
- All but one metric sits in the lowest quartile, this exception being the 'time taken to complete repairs'.
- Overall satisfaction is at 61%, with the highest satisfaction for the provision of a safe home (68%) and the way the Council treats its tenants fairly and with respect, although none of these measures reach 70% satisfaction.
- At the other end of the scale, five measures fall below 50% satisfaction, the least for the way the Council listens to its tenants' views and acts upon them (41%) and just 22% are satisfied with the handling of complaints, with three times as many being dissatisfied.
- When tenants were asked to explain their scores for overall satisfaction, it was the repairs service that attracted the most comments, both positively and negatively. Many of those very satisfied with the overall service also praised the repairs service and its workforce, for their attitude, speed of work and quality of work.
- However, this is also a source of some dissatisfaction, with tenants particularly mentioning the time taken to complete repairs and for dealing with those repairs which remain outstanding. This suggests that whilst most repairs go off without a hitch, some experience problems and there does appear to be some room for improvement.
- Customer service is also a source of some concern, in particular the answering of the phones and returning calls, and some would like the Council staff to show them a little more care and support when they make contact.

Areas of focus/improvement

Handling of complaints

The handling of complaints is the lowest performing metric in the survey, with just 22% being satisfied and three times as many (66%) being dissatisfied. This is a common trend for social housing providers who have conducted the TSM survey this year, although it is unclear how many of those who reported they had made a complaint (23% of respondents in this survey) are genuine complaints, following a failure of service or service requests yet to be fully actioned.

Nonetheless, it is important that tenants feel confident that any complaint they make will be taken seriously and dealt with effectively and in good time. Clear communications around how to make a complaint and the complaints process is vital to increasing awareness and accessibility. It is suggested that the Council review the application of the processes and that we may need to publicise the procedures and outcomes more widely.

The Council may also consider revising the question set for next year to include questions which aim to understand more about how and what complaints are being made and how tenants perceive the complaints process in general to provide more context to satisfaction in this area. It may also be worthwhile cross-matching those who reported they have made a complaint within the last twelve months against internal records. For those who have given permission for the Council to contact them to discuss any issues raised, this may be an opportunity to resolve any outstanding issues.

Communication and Customer Service

Less than half the tenants are satisfied that the Council listens to tenants' views and acts upon them. This is a key perception metric which often underpins satisfaction in other service areas, for instance, complaints and the repairs service.

It is important that we target how it can improve communication with tenants, both in terms of how it communicates with tenants and how accessible it is to tenants – for instance, some tenants highlighted concerns making contact with the Council and having calls returned when promised.

The survey included two permissions questions which asked tenants firstly if they are happy to be identified and secondly if tenants are happy for the Council to call them to discuss any issues raised. Engaging with those tenants who are happy to be contacted will be a good starting point to demonstrate that the Council are listening and acting.

Repairs and maintenance

Although satisfaction with repairs in the last 12 months and with the time taken to complete the last repair are among the highest performing metrics for the Council, although only at 63% for both measures, 29% and 30% respectively, remain dissatisfied. However, having a well-maintained home is the most influential key driver of overall satisfaction followed quite closely by the repairs service and time to complete repairs, indicating how important these factors are for tenants.

When those dissatisfied with the overall service were asked to explain why they are dissatisfied and what could be improved, the main issues are around the time to complete repairs and outstanding/forgotten repairs, although other aspects of the service were also mentioned, such as the quality of work and reporting issues.

32% of tenants reported issues with damp and mould in their homes, which will need to be investigated and action taken where necessary. Problems with damp and mould tend to take priority and can delay work on other, less urgent matters, and this can also add to the time taken to respond to repair requests. In addition, landlords are facing cost increases and, in some areas, shortages of materials and labour.

Whilst solving this is difficult and resource intensive, good communication with tenants is key to managing expectation and easing the impact of delays which can sometimes be unavoidable. This is not just about quality of communication but also frequency. Keeping tenants informed of progress and any delays may have a positive impact on satisfaction in this area, easing dissatisfaction when it arises.

Communal area maintenance

Finally, less than half the tenants are satisfied with the maintenance of the communal areas, and this

affects around a third of tenants who live in a building with communal areas that the Council is responsible for maintaining.

There was no specific question included in the survey about these areas, something the Council may wish to consider on future occasions, but some comments refer to the poor state of some areas, the cleaning and grounds maintenance of the external areas. In addition, some experience issues with ASB which can affect their enjoyments of their neighbourhoods.

The maintenance of these areas is important in helping to shape the standard of living on the estates and should be delivered to a consistently good standard. A review of the estate-based services may help identify areas which could be improved.

How we will continue to improve in 2024/25

- We continue to work with our repairs teams and future repairs partners on improving the delivery of responsive repairs. We have improvement plans in place to address areas of weakness, and we will continue to adjust the service to deal with higher volumes and strengthening the supply chain, along with operational management actions to improve performance.
- We have implemented a plan to improve complaints handling. Actions agreed as part of the complaints responses are tracked through to resolution to ensure they are fully completed.
- We have introduced a new Housing Operations Board. This will help us provide a lot more opportunities for us to listen to our tenants, and act on their feedback to improve and shape our current and future services.