



Survey of Tenants and Residents 2016

Dacorum Borough Council – Housing Service

1.0 Executive Summary

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1.0 Executive summary

In 2016 Dacorum Borough Council (DBC) housing service conducted its third biennial Survey of Tenants and Residents (STAR).

Whilst there has been a reduction in satisfaction since 2014, results indicate that on the whole tenants and leaseholders are satisfied with the service provided.

Overall satisfaction

95% of our general needs tenants, 92% of our supported housing tenants and 90% of leaseholders are satisfied with the service they receive.

Quality of the home

85% of our general needs tenants, 94% of our supported housing tenants and 96% of leaseholders are satisfied with the quality of their home.

Neighbourhood

92% of our general needs tenants, 97% of our supported housing tenants and 90% of leaseholders are satisfied with the neighbourhood they live in.

Value for Money

93% of our general needs tenants, 98% of our supported housing tenants and 79% of leaseholders are satisfied the service they receive is value for money.

Repairs and Maintenance

77% of our general needs tenants, 88% of our supported housing tenants and 67% of leaseholders are satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service.

Feedback and Influence

84% of our general needs tenants, 85% of our supported housing tenants and 82% of leaseholders are satisfied their feedback is listened too and they can influence the service.

Priorities

Developing new homes to meet local housing need was our tenants' biggest priority

N.B. Throughout the report all references to percentage increases or decreases are the change in percentage points rather than overall percentage change.

2.0 Introduction

3.0 Methodology

4.0 Profile of respondents

2.0 Introduction

In January and February 2016 the Policy and Participation team conducted the STAR survey.

STAR is a satisfaction survey that complements the different regulatory frameworks across the UK by helping landlords to identify and evidence how well they are meeting the needs of tenants and leaseholders and engaging them in the work that they do.

It allows us to measure satisfaction with our services and to benchmark our results against other housing providers. The purpose is to gain an understanding of the levels of satisfaction Dacorum Borough Council tenants and leaseholders have with their homes and associated services provided to them. It also gives us an insight into our tenants' priorities for the service.

This report outlines and analyses these results, making recommendations for improving services and highlighting areas of success.

3.0 Methodology

The method used to conduct the 2016 STAR was a 'sample' telephone survey, rather than the postal 'census' survey of previous years. We contacted a randomly generated selection of general needs, supported housing tenants and leaseholders and asked if they would like to take part in the survey. This process began on 11 January 2016 and finished on 26 February 2016.

Statistical reliability and analysis

This report will present results using the following headings:

- % satisfied = very satisfied + fairly satisfied + neither
- % dissatisfied = fairly dissatisfied + very dissatisfied

All respondents were able to choose whether or not to answer each question. This means that some questions have fewer responses than others.

Percentages displayed in the report have been rounded so may not always add up to 100% and may differ slightly when compared with the appendices.

Where possible this report shows trends over time using the 2014 and 2016 STAR results. To provide further insight into the results, analysis by demographic groups has been undertaken and where statistically significant differences occur these have been drawn out in the report.

The service will continue to use the STAR results and conduct further trend analysis. This will support us in shaping the services we offer and make informed decisions on how best to target available resources, particularly when exploring preventative initiatives.

4.0 Profile of respondents

In total, 1179 telephone surveys were completed, comprising 946 general needs tenants, 117 supported housing and 110 leaseholders.

Staff telephoned a randomly generated selection of tenants and leaseholders.

This method does mean that the most vulnerable tenants may not have had the chance to participate (those without a telephone or with poor English language skills.)

5.0 Survey Results

5.1 Core Questions

At the start of the survey, tenants and leaseholders were asked six core questions. These covered:

- Overall satisfaction
- Quality of the home
- Their neighbourhood
- Value for money
- Repairs and maintenance
- Their feedback and influence on the service they receive

5.1.1 Overall satisfaction

When asked *‘Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided by Dacorum Borough Council as your housing landlord?’* results showed:

- 95% of our general needs tenants said they were satisfied with the overall service they received. This is a 3% increase when compared with the 2014 STAR results.
- 92% of our supported housing tenants said they were satisfied with the overall service they received. This is a 4% decrease when compared with the 2014 STAR results.

- 90% of our leaseholders said they were satisfied with the overall service they received. This is a 6% increase when compared with the 2014 STAR results.

5.1.2 Quality of the home

When asked *‘How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall quality of your home?’* results showed:

- 85% of our general needs tenants said they were satisfied with the quality of their home. This is a 1% decrease when compared with the 2014 STAR results.
- 94% of our supported housing tenants said they were satisfied with the quality of their home. This is a 1% decrease when compared with the 2014 STAR results.
- 96% of our leaseholders said they were satisfied with the quality of their home. This is a 6% increase when compared with the 2014 STAR results.

5.1.3 Neighbourhood

When asked *‘How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your neighbourhood as a place to live?’* results showed:

- 92% of our general needs tenants said they were satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live. This is a 2% increase when compared with the 2014 STAR results.

- 97% of our supported housing tenants said they were satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live. This is comparable to the 2014 STAR results.

- 90% of our leaseholders said they were satisfied with the overall their neighbourhood as a place to live. This is a 7% increase when compared with the 2014 STAR results.

5.1.4 Value for Money

93% of our general needs tenants, 98% of our supported housing tenants and 79% of leaseholders are satisfied with the service they receive.

When asked *‘How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that your rent provides value for money?’* results showed:

- 93% of our general needs tenants said they were satisfied their rent provides value for money. This is a 3% increase when compared with the 2014 STAR results.
- 98% of our supported housing tenants said they were satisfied their rent provides value for money. This is a 1% increase when compared with the 2014 STAR results.
- 79% of our leaseholders said they were satisfied their rent provides value for money. This is an 8% increase when compared with the 2014 STAR results.
(NB the leaseholder question related to service charges rather than rent.)

Survey Results (continued)

5.1.5 Repairs

When asked ‘How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way Dacorum Borough Council as your housing landlord deals with repairs and maintenance?’ results showed:

- 77% of our general needs tenants said they were satisfied with the overall service they received. This is an 8% decrease when compared with the 2014 STAR results.
- 88% of our supported housing tenants said they were satisfied with the overall service they received. This is a 6% decrease when compared with the 2014 STAR results.
- 67% of our leaseholders said they were satisfied with the overall service they received. This is a 1% decrease when compared with the 2014 STAR results.

5.1.6 Feedback and Influence

84% of our general needs tenants, 85% of our supported housing tenants and 82% of leaseholders were satisfied with the service they receive.

When asked ‘How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way Dacorum Borough Council as your housing landlord listens to your views and acts upon them?’ results showed:

- 84% of our general needs tenants said they were satisfied the council listened to them and their views were acted upon. This is a 2% decrease when compared with the 2014 STAR results.
- 85% of our supported housing tenants said they were satisfied the council listened to them and their views were acted upon. This is a 7% decrease when compared with the 2014 STAR results.
- 82% of our leaseholders said they were satisfied the council listened to them and their views were acted upon. This is a 4% increase when compared with the 2014 STAR results.

5.3 Priorities

The top three priorities for our tenants were as follows:

1. Develop new homes to meet local housing need
2. Increase the replacement programme (e.g. kitchens, bathroom and doors)
3. Improve the estates and neighbourhoods

5.3 Anti-social behaviour (ASB)

92% of general needs tenants, 93% of supported housing tenants and 84% of leaseholders were satisfied with the housing service’s approach to handling ASB.

Satisfaction levels have increased for both general needs tenants and leaseholders when compared with the 2014 STAR results. There has been a 1% decrease for supported housing tenants.

From April 2015/16 the housing service received 383 reports of ASB, which is 222 reports fewer than 2013/14.

The most reported issue for both years is noise. In 2013/14 there were 188 cases of noise-related ASB, which decreased to 125 in 2015/16.

In 2015/16 it took an average of 55 days to close an ASB case, which is 6 days fewer than 2013/14.

This indicates that satisfaction has generally increased and cases are being dealt with more efficiently.

Survey Results (continued)

5.4 Complaints

87% of general needs tenants, 87% of supported housing tenants and 89% of leaseholders were satisfied with the housing service's approach to dealing with complaints.

Satisfaction levels have decreased for general needs and supported housing tenants. For supported housing tenants this was a significant decrease of 8% when compared with the 2014 STAR results. Leaseholders' satisfaction with complaints, however, has increased by 11%.

During the year April 2015/16 the housing service received 303 complaints. This is 199 more than in 2013/14.

5.5 General enquiries

91% of general needs, 90% of supported housing and 91% of leaseholders were satisfied with the housing service's approach to dealing with general enquiries.

When compared with the 2014 STAR results, satisfaction levels again show a decrease for general needs and supported housing tenants with a 6% decrease for supported housing. Leaseholders' satisfaction shows an increase of 8%.

5.6 Moving or swapping home

93% of general needs tenants and 97% of supported housing tenants were satisfied with their experience of moving or swapping home.

When compared with the 2014 STAR results both groups show an increase in satisfaction. For general needs there was a 6% increase and supported housing tenants a 4% increase.

In 2015/16 106 of tenants moved home compared with 169 in 2013/14.

5.7 Cleaning Service

87% of our general needs tenants said they were satisfied with the cleaning of internal communal areas and 75% were satisfied with external areas. Internal areas remained comparable to the 2014 STAR results whereas external areas showed a 4% increase.

95% of our supported housing tenants said they were satisfied with the cleaning of internal communal areas and 89% were satisfied with external areas. Both were an increase when compared with the 2014 STAR results.

89% of our leaseholders said they were satisfied with the cleaning of internal communal areas and 77% were satisfied with external areas. Both were an increase when compared with the 2014 STAR results. Satisfaction with the cleaning of external areas increased by 11%.

5.8 Communication and Contact

It is important to note that around 50% of the survey participants had made an enquiry with the housing service that was not related to paying rent or service charges. This is a decrease of 12% since 2013/14.

11% more general needs tenants found it difficult to get hold of the right person in 2015/16 than in 2013/14. 2% fewer were satisfied with how helpful the officer was dealing with their enquiry and 11% fewer were satisfied their query was answered within a reasonable time.

10% more supported housing tenants found it difficult to get hold of the right person in 2015/16 than 2013/14. 8% fewer were satisfied with how helpful the officer was dealing with their enquiry and 22% fewer were satisfied their query was answered within a reasonable time.

6% more leaseholders found it difficult to get hold of the right person in 2015/16 than 2013/14. 3% more were satisfied with how helpful the officer was dealing with their enquiry and 6% more were satisfied that their query was answered within a reasonable time.

Survey Results (continued)

5.9 Internet Usage

As part of the survey tenants were asked about their personal use of the internet:

- 61% of our general needs tenants use the internet every day
- 65% of our supported housing tenants surveyed stated they have never used the internet
- The most common device for accessing the internet is a mobile smart phone
- The least common method for accessing the internet is internet cafés
- 62% of those tenants who use the internet had accessed the council's online services
- The most common services accessed were 'paying rent' and 'general council information'

5.10 Equality and diversity

"Dacorum Borough Council must give all its tenants and leaseholders the same opportunities to use all of our services and benefit from peaceful enjoyment of their homes. We must not discriminate against you by treating you differently from other tenants and leaseholders or by failing to take any special needs you may have into account"

93% of our tenants and leaseholder agreed the council is meeting this obligation.

5.11 Repairs and Maintenance

In 2015/16, 8% fewer general needs tenants, supported housing tenants and leaseholders were satisfied with all the repairs and maintenance service than in 2013/14.

Leaseholders reported significant decreases in satisfaction levels when compared with the 2013/14 STAR results.

5.11.1 General Needs

- 82% were satisfied with being told when workers would call (-8%)
- 86% were satisfied with their ability to make an appointment (-6%)
- 80% were satisfied with the time taken before work started (-7%)
- 82% were satisfied with the speed of completion (-8%)
- 93% were satisfied with the attitude of the workers (-2%)

- 82% were satisfied with the overall quality of work (-6%)
- 92% were satisfied that workers kept dirt and mess to a minimum (-2%)
- 73% were satisfied their repair had been done right first time (-8%)
- 84% were satisfied with the contractors carrying out the expected job (-4%)
- 82% were satisfied with the repair service received (-6%)

5.11.2 Supported Housing

Overall results showed high satisfaction:

- 95% were satisfied with being told when workers would call (-2%)
- 95% were satisfied their ability to make an appointment (-1%)
- 86% were satisfied with the time taken before work started (-6%)
- 92% were satisfied with the speed of completion (-2%)
- 92% were satisfied with the attitude of the workers (-6%)
- 86% were satisfied with the overall quality of work (-9%)
- 96% were satisfied that workers kept dirt and mess to a minimum (=)
- 84% were satisfied their repair had been done right first time (-4%)
- 90% were satisfied with the contractors carrying out the expected job (-3%)
- 87% were satisfied with the repair service received (-8%)

Survey Results (continued)

6.0 Analysis and Recommendations

5.11.3 Leaseholders

- 64% were satisfied with being told when workers would call (N/A)
- 49% were satisfied their ability to make an appointment (N/A)
- 51% were satisfied with the time taken before work started (-22%)
- 60% were satisfied with the speed of completion (-17%)
- 57% were satisfied with the attitude of the workers (-35%)
- 60% were satisfied with the overall quality of work (-13%)
- 79% were satisfied that workers kept dirt and mess to a minimum (-3%)
- 56% were satisfied their repair had been done right first time (-14%)
- 60% were satisfied with the contractors carrying out the expected job (-19%)
- 63% were satisfied with the repair service received (-14%)

6.0 Analysis

- Overall the results of the STAR survey show the housing service is delivering a good quality service to our tenants and leaseholders.

There has been a small drop in satisfaction since 2014.

The majority of the core questions show no significant change in satisfaction with the exception of repairs and feedback and influence.

Results show that the development of new homes and home improvements are the main priorities for tenants.

Overall leaseholder satisfaction has increased.

Supported housing tenants have a 6% drop in satisfaction and they are less satisfied in getting through on the telephone.

Overall there has been no increase in the number of supported housing tenants going online.

6.1 Recommendations

- Work in partnership with all repairs service providers to develop an action plan addressing changes in satisfaction. Key focus on leaseholders and 'attitude of workers'
- Explore how the housing service can improve tenants' and leaseholders' perceptions of feeling listened to. It should be noted that this was our first telephone survey and may therefore have given a clearer 'snapshot' of tenants' opinions than previous postal surveys
- Work with Osborne to raise the profile of five-year installation programme
- Capture and promote success stories around development and improvements
- Improve communication channels so tenants and leaseholders can easily access information or contact 'the right person'

- Investigate the relationship between an increase in complaints received and increased dissatisfaction with how they are dealt with
- Analyse and identify trends within complaints and take an informed approach to service improvement
- With the council moving to digital platforms ensure that older people particularly in supported housing have the skills to access the housing service through a variety of channels
- Use information collected from customer profiling and conduct further analysis on specific target groups highlighted within the STAR report e.g. supported housing tenants and leaseholders
- Work with all teams in the housing service to embed the learning gained from the STAR survey into team plans (e.g. targeting of resources towards the cleaning service since it was identified as an area of unrepresentative dissatisfaction in 2012)

6.2 Areas of success

- ✓ Overall satisfaction, Neighbourhood and Value for money across all tenures have increased satisfaction
- ✓ The way we deal with Anti-social behaviour has improved since 2013/14.
- ✓ Satisfaction with the cleaning service has significantly improved
- ✓ Leaseholders are more satisfied with the services they receive from DBC housing service