



Report to:	STOCKPORT HOMES MEMBER COMMITTEE		
	05 July 2021		
Report of:	ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE		
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Type of Report	Assurance		
Title of Report:	TENANT EXPERIENCE REPORT YEAR-END 2020-21		
Purpose of Report:	To update the Stockport Homes Member Committee on the experiences of tenants using data from a range of customer interactions.		
Recommendation(s):	That the Member Committee comment on and note the report.		
Confidentiality	Non Confidential		
Resource Implications	Analysing tenant satisfaction ensures services are tailored to meet diverse tenant needs and helps sustain tenancies.		
Impact on Risk Appetite and Risk Register	SHG has a 'minimal' or 'averse' appetite for anything that might harm the organisation's reputation or relationships with its tenants, or put their safety at risk, so this report gives Board assurance about how services are perceived by tenants and for any areas of concern to be addressed.		
	Risk Number	Risk Description	Risk Mitigation
	n/a	Not using feedback to understand service delivery and the impact of services on customers risks	Tenant feedback is monitored at directorate, senior management and Board level on an on-going basis to identify areas

		failure to tailor services to meet need and demand	where services can be improved and lessons learned are implemented
Customer Voice	Effective monitoring of tenant feedback ensures any negative experiences are addressed quickly and minimises their impact. Positive feedback informs evaluation and planning.		
Equality, Diversity & Inclusion implications	The surveys and other data collection methods referred to in the report are analysed by diversity strand to ensure that no group is adversely affected by service delivery.		
Regulatory compliance	The Consumer Standards require Providers to meet requirements with regards to homes, the local area and tenant involvement. Feedback from tenants inform the setting of the strategic direction of the organisation and decisions about the management of housing services. This report provides information that will inform business planning and service improvement, and gives Board insight into the lived experience of tenants to help inform their strategic decision making.		
Comments of the Stockport Homes Monitoring Group	<p>The Stockport Homes Monitoring Group provided comments relating to the Tenant Experience Report. The comments covered:</p> <p>The Monitoring Group were pleased to hear that the complaints process has been revamped, in line with the Social Housing White Paper. They added that the shorter process will improve SHG's approach with dealing with customers.</p> <p>Although specific processes, such as complaints, commencing or ending of a tenancy, trigger opportunities for feedback to be provided by customers, the Monitoring Group was pleased that SHG also encouraged customers to provide feedback without being asked through formal processes, such as via social media.</p> <p>The Group discussed the welfare calls to vulnerable customers throughout the pandemic and commended the impact they will likely have on many customers lives.</p>		

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of tenant experiences of Stockport Homes' services. It also provides details of performance against service expectations and learning from customer groups. Specifically, it covers:
- Tenancy visit surveys
 - Service expectations
 - An update on key indicators from the Survey of Tenants and Residents (STAR)
 - A summary of learning from customer engagement
- 1.2 This report gives a strategic overview of feedback, with summary tables and more detail on performance against service expectations available in the accompanying appendices.
- 1.3 Where satisfaction results are compared to previous years it should be noted that small changes can be the result of fluctuations inherent in statistics. The level of increase/decrease that reflects a true change will vary between satisfaction measures as it is linked to the number of surveys undertaken and the number of customers receiving a service.

2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 Satisfaction with tenants' home, the area and SHG as a landlord remains high across new and current tenants. Satisfaction amongst terminating tenants is lower in comparison, but in line with previous years.
- 2.2 The new Service Expectations have now been in place for 12 months and performance has been consistently high, with similar or improved figures being recorded for almost all expectations when compared to previous years.
- 2.3 Customers have been engaged in a range of ways over the last 12 months, despite the impact of Covid-19 restrictions. Feedback from customers has been used to review policies and strategies, monitor service delivery and influence spending decisions.

3 TENANCY SATISFACTION SURVEYS

- 3.1 The approach to completing tenancy visits was reviewed as a result of the Covid-19 restrictions. With the ongoing pandemic and restrictions in place, routine tenant visits have been completed via telephone, with face-to-face tenancy visits only taking place where absolutely required for tenants requiring additional support, or in complex cases.
- 3.2 Responses to the 'new tenant survey', the 'current tenant survey' and the 'termination survey' are monitored on a monthly basis through the Operations Directorate performance process. Improvement actions are identified and addressed as part of that process.
- 3.3 Satisfaction remains high in relation to both the new and current tenant surveys, with each question recording results that are in line with previous years. The tenancy termination survey results are less positive, which is perhaps not surprising given the part of the tenancy lifecycle to which they

relate, however the results are in line with the previous years. More detailed analysis by diversity strands has not highlighted any significant deviations from overall performance levels, meaning that specific groups are not disadvantaged in service delivery. Headline results for each of the three tenancy surveys are provided in the following sections.

4 NEW TENANT SURVEY

- 4.1 The survey is completed after a tenant moves into a Stockport Homes property. It is designed to explore how well new tenants are settling into their new homes and identify any issues that need further action. There were some initial delays in completing new tenant visits at the beginning of the year as a result of the uncertainty and restrictions of Covid-19 and the change to a greater number of visits being undertaken over the phone. However, most surveys are now carried out over the telephone or, where required, face-to-face.

New Tenant Survey question	Period	Satisfaction	Significant change? ¹	Three Yearly Average
Your home	Apr 20 – Mar 21	97.9%	No	98.4%
	Apr 19 – Mar 20	98.7%		
	Apr 18 – Mar 19	98.4%		
Area as a place to live	Apr 20 – Mar 21	97.3%	No	98.0%
	Apr 19 – Mar 20	98.7%		
	Apr 18 – Mar 19	97.9%		
SHG as a landlord	Apr 20 – Mar 21	99.6%	No	99.3%
	Apr 19 – Mar 20	99.4%		
	Apr 18 – Mar 19	99.0%		

- 4.2 There were 526 surveys undertaken during 2020/21 which differs from the total number of lets because of instances of “no access” and tenancies starting towards the end of the year. This resulted in some tenants being contacted at a later date once the issue was highlighted. The issue has been raised with IT and steps are being taken to ensure it does not re-occur.
- 4.3 Satisfaction with the three headline indicators remains exceptionally high among new tenants and is in line with the satisfaction levels recorded in previous years. This is a positive reflection on the services provided by Stockport Homes, the neighbourhood and the property itself, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic and in comparison, to other landlords that have suspended large parts of their services.

5 CURRENT TENANT SURVEY

- 5.1 Current tenant surveys have historically been prioritised based on the length of time since the previous visit. However, the process has now been reviewed, resulting in a more targeted approach that prioritises tenants based on the level

¹ Statistical significance helps those analysing surveys to decide whether the difference between two surveys reflects a true change rather than being attributable to random variation

of support required. This is based on key indicators, such as the number of repairs reported, rent arrears and properties where access has not been gained for safety compliance checks. The factors that trigger tenancy visits or telephone calls are reviewed on an on-going basis to ensure that they continue to prioritise customers that require tenancy engagement.

Current Tenant Survey question	Period	Satisfaction	Significant change?	Three Yearly Average
Your home	Apr 20 – Mar 21	97.6%	No	97.2%
	Apr 19 – Mar 20	97.1%		
	Apr 18 – Mar 19	96.6%		
Area as a place to live	Apr 20 – Mar 21	97.2%	No	96.4%
	Apr 19 – Mar 20	96.6%		
	Apr 18 – Mar 19	94.7%		
SHG as a landlord	Apr 20 – Mar 21	98.4%	No	98.0%
	Apr 19 – Mar 20	98.0%		
	Apr 18 – Mar 19	97.5%		

- 5.2 There were 5106 surveys completed during 2020/21, which is significantly higher than the number of visits completed in the previous year². The significant increase in the number of surveys completed is due to Covid-19 welfare calls being integrated with remote tenancy surveys, which resulted in more tenants being contacted than usual and, in some cases, tenants being contacted for follow-up welfare calls. Tenant satisfaction with the three headline indicators remains high and is in line results seen in previous years.

6 TENANCY TERMINATION SURVEY

- 6.1 The survey is completed by tenants on ending a tenancy, whether they are moving to another Stockport Homes property or elsewhere. In 2020/21 a total of 123 tenants completed the survey, which represents 19 per cent of terminations in the year³. This is significantly less than the 402 surveys completed in 2019/20, which represented 53 per cent of terminations completed in the year⁴. This is in part due to the high number of terminations due to the tenant passing away, which made up 29 per cent of all terminations and is considerably higher than the same category last year⁵.
- 6.2 Completion levels are inevitably relatively low because it is not mandatory to complete the survey and they are not done on terminations that occur where it is unreasonable to carry it out⁶. As the office has been closed during Covid-19 and tenants have had to post their notice of termination, the team have also not had the opportunity to complete the terminations survey at the point of notice. Now that the Cornerstone Reception is open, it is expected that more termination surveys will be completed face-to-face over the coming year. A new

² 3,780 visits were completed during 2019/20

³ 665 terminations were recorded for 2020/21

⁴ 752 terminations were recorded for 2019/20

⁵ Death accounted for 193 terminations compared to only 59 in 2019/20

⁶ Other than the death of a tenant, this includes moving into residential care which accounted for 48 terminations and imprisonment which accounted for one termination

way of surveying terminating tenants is also being considered which includes the use of digital surveying, in an attempt to increase the number of surveys completed

Tenancy termination survey question	Period	Terminating tenants	Significant change?	Three Yearly Average
Your home	Apr 20 – Mar 21	72.4%	No	70.3%
	Apr 19 – Mar 20	71.5%		
	Apr 17 – Mar 18	71.2%		
Area as a place to live	Apr 20 – Mar 21	63.6%	No	60.6%
	Apr 19 – Mar 20	62.5%		
	Apr 18 – Mar 19	58.1%		
SHG as a landlord	Apr 20 – Mar 21	72.5%	No	73.5%
	Apr 19 – Mar 20	74.6%		
	Apr 18 – Mar 19	72.9%		

- 6.3 Tenants expressed levels of satisfaction that are similar to those recorded in the previous years. Analysis shows that a significant number were 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied'⁷, which is similar to or outweighs negative responses in most cases but has the effect of reducing the overall satisfaction percentage⁸. Analysis of negative responses shows that, of the 27 comments received, 11 cited anti-social behaviour and a further five said they were dissatisfied with the wider area in general. Other comments related to repairs (three responses), neighbour issues (three responses) and the remaining five were unique comments. Of the comments that cited anti-social behaviour, seven out of 11 cases had previously been reported to and investigated by the ASB Team. The remaining four cases had not been reported and SHG was therefore not given the opportunity to investigate prior to the tenancy being terminated. The ASB Team continues to promote its service to customers in order to raise awareness of how to report instances of ASB so that they can be investigated, and action taken. The launch of the new app 'Remote' has also made it easier for tenants to report and provide evidence of ASB incidents.
- 6.4 The Housing Management Team reviews each individual piece of negative feedback throughout the year to identify learning points. Where the team are not already aware of issues, the Neighbourhood Housing Officer will contact the tenant to understand the reasons and discuss remedies in an aim to prevent the termination where possible, or to resolve the tenant's reasons for dissatisfaction. Although any changes in the tenants' satisfaction will be noted, it is not currently possible for the online survey response to be updated if the tenant changes their response after the issue has been resolved.

⁷ "Neither/nor" accounted for: 23 responses for home, 12 responses for area; and 20 responses for SHG as a landlord

⁸ "Dissatisfied" and "very dissatisfied" accounted for: 11 responses for home, 32 responses for area; and 13 responses for SHG as a landlord

7 SERVICE EXPECTATIONS PERFORMANCE

- 7.1 April 2020 saw the implementation of SHG's new service expectations, which were developed following a wide-ranging consultation exercise to replace the previous 'service standards'. The service expectations focus on three themes that are most important to customers – your home, your estate and your voice. There are five pre-existing key indicators⁹ within each theme and SHG reports performance on a six and 12-month basis. The performance figures are published for customers on the SHG website. The service expectations and performance levels can be found in Appendix One.
- 7.2 Performance has been consistently high across all service expectations during 2020/21 compared with previous years, with similar or improved figures being recorded for almost all expectations. The expectation of 'we will ensure you are satisfied with the handling of your complaint' saw a slight decrease compared to 2019/20, but is still higher than performance recorded in 2018/19. Analysis of reasons for customers' dissatisfaction suggests that better communication with customers, both at case-handling and survey stage, may have resulted in a positive outcome. Following a recent review of the Customer Feedback Policy and Procedure, case handlers are being encouraged to take a more conversational, engaged approach to complaint handling, explaining the scope of the customer feedback process and reasoning for the outcomes.

8 SURVEY OF TENANTS AND RESIDENTS (STAR)

- 8.1 Stockport Homes asks five key STAR questions on a rolling basis as part of the Current Tenant Visit Survey. The results, which are exceptionally positive for each of the five measures, range from 97.2 per cent for "area as a place to live" to 99.0 per cent for "rent provides value for money". The full results are available in Appendix Two. The data can be benchmarked and the results for 2020/21 show that Stockport Homes is in the top quartile for all five measures when compared to both Arms' Length Management Organisations (ALMOs) and all providers. However, the number of returns is small, particularly for ALMOs, although numbers are more robust for all providers.
- 8.2 Housemark conducted a review of the STAR framework in early 2020, following indications in the Social Housing Green Paper that tenant views were going to become a more formal part of the regulatory framework. Housemark launched the changes in early 2020. Stockport Homes has begun to implement changes to reflect the new STAR framework, which will enable Stockport Homes to continue to compare its performance with other providers. The changes will be reported at the end of 2021/22.

9 LEARNING FROM CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

- 9.1 Stockport Homes is accountable to its customers in a range of ways, in addition to insight gained through surveys, complaints and informal dialogue. Customers are involved in formulating policies and strategies, monitoring service delivery and working with SHG to make spending

⁹ With the exception of 'we will respond to emails and webchats promptly'

decisions. Examples from 2020/21 are included in Appendix Three and a summary of some headline results are highlighted below.

- 9.2 The increasing importance and popularity of digital engagement was demonstrated by a consultation exercise about the five-year delivery plan, which resulted in 1,455 'views' of the information video, with 740 individuals completing the associated online survey.
- 9.3 Similarly, the Employment Team reacted to the Covid-19 restrictions and customer feedback by developing an online service, producing a suite of 27 videos which attracted 3,070 views online and attracted new customers to the service.
- 9.4 The Assets and Development team received over 100 responses through a mix of email/text communications and phone calls relating to the 2021/22 capital programme budget, and 256 responses were received via email and phone relating the timings for district heating systems. This feedback will ensure changes in customer priorities following the pandemic are reflected in investment spending decisions and service delivery.
- 9.5 Following analysis of customer feedback, the Carecall and Concierge Team completed enhanced customer service training which has demonstrably reduced customer complaints to the service.
- 9.6 Lastly, a panel of customers allocated over £38,000 for the Community Fund for a range of local projects, including software for a domestic abuse peer-to-peer support group; funding for security measures for a local allotment and supporting Cherry Tree youth project with a youth café.

10 CONCLUSION

- 10.1 Stockport Homes uses a broad range of methods to understand the experience of tenants. This report provides a strategic overview of satisfaction with the services provided as well as the learning gained from customer groups. Services continue to be positively received and satisfaction is high among new and current tenants. Satisfaction among tenants terminating their tenancies is lower, as is to be anticipated, although the headline measures have seen performance recorded in line with previous years. The methods used for gaining feedback from customers on service delivery show that customers remain engaged, despite the impact of Covid-19 restrictions.

11 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 That the Member Committee comment on and note the report.