

You are requested to attend a meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board to be held in Ground Floor Conference Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton on 20 August 2018 at 18:00.

Agenda

- 1 Apologies.
- 2 Minutes of the meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board held on 25 June 2018 (attached).
- 3 Public Question Time.
- 4 Declaration of Interests
To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or personal or prejudicial interests, in accordance with the Code of Conduct, in relation to items on the agenda. Such interests need to be declared even if they have already been recorded in the Register of Interests. The personal interests of Councillors who are County Councillors or Town or Parish Councillors will automatically be recorded in the minutes.
- 5 Transformation Update. Report of the Assistant Director for Housing and Community Development (verbal update).
Reporting Officer: Simon Lewis
- 6 Sheltered Pilot. Report of the Project Manager (attached).
Reporting Officer: Jan Errington
- 7 TPAS Conference Update. Report of Councillor Bowrah (verbal update).
- 8 Star Survey Update. Report of the Tenant Services Development Officer (attached).
Reporting Officer: Steven Clarke

Bruce Lang
Assistant Chief Executive

14 August 2018

Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting and listen to the discussions.

There is time set aside at the beginning of most meetings to allow the public to ask questions.

Speaking under “Public Question Time” is limited to 4 minutes per person in an overall period of 15 minutes. The Committee Administrator will keep a close watch on the time and the Chairman will be responsible for ensuring the time permitted does not overrun. The speaker will be allowed to address the Committee once only and will not be allowed to participate further in any debate.

Except at meetings of Full Council, where public participation will be restricted to Public Question Time only, if a member of the public wishes to address the Committee on any matter appearing on the agenda, the Chairman will normally permit this to occur when that item is reached and before the Councillors or Tenant Services Management Board Members begin to debate the item.

This is more usual at meetings of the Council’s Planning Committee and details of the “rules” which apply at these meetings can be found in the leaflet “Having Your Say on Planning Applications”. A copy can be obtained free of charge from the Planning Reception Desk at The Deane House or by contacting the telephone number or e-mail address below.

If an item on the agenda is contentious, with a large number of people attending the meeting, a representative should be nominated to present the views of a group.

These arrangements do not apply to exempt (confidential) items on the agenda where any members of the press or public present will be asked to leave the Committee Room.

Full Council, Executive, Committees and Task and Finish Review agendas, reports and minutes are available on our website: www.tauntondeane.gov.uk



Lift access to the Committee Rooms on the first floor of The Deane House, is available from the main ground floor entrance. Toilet facilities, with wheelchair access, are also available off the landing directly outside the Committee Rooms.



An induction loop operates to enhance sound for anyone wearing a hearing aid or using a transmitter.

For further information about the meeting, please contact Democratic Services on 01823 219736 or email r.bryant@tauntondeane.gov.uk

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Tenant Services Management Board Members:-

Mr A Akhigbemen	(Chairman)
Mr D Galpin	(Vice Chairman)
Councillor R Bowrah, BEM	
Mrs J Bunn	
Mrs J Hegarty	
Mr K Hellier	
Mr I Hussey	
Councillor H Prior-Sankey	

Minutes of the Meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board held on 25 June 2018 at 6.00pm in Meeting Room C in Flook House at The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton.

Present: Mrs J Bunn, Mr D Galpin, Mrs J Hegarty, Mr K Hellier, Mr I Hussey, Councillor B Bowrah and Councillor H Prior-Sankey.

Officers: Simon Lewis (Assistant Director for Homes and Community Development), Richard Burge (Open Spaces Manager), Neil Anderson (Strategy and Partnership Officer) and Clare Rendell (Democratic Services Officer).

(The meeting commenced at 6.00pm)

1. Apologies

An apology was received from Mr A Akhigbemen.

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board held on 21 May 2018 were signed and taken as read.

3. Public Question Time

No questions were received for Public Question Time.

4. Declarations of Interests

Mrs J Bunn, Mr D Galpin, Mrs J Hegarty, Mr K Hellier and Mr I Hussey declared personal interests as Taunton Deane Borough Council Housing Tenants. Councillor Bowrah declared a personal interest as a Member of Wellington Town Council.

Councillor H Prior-Sankey declared a personal interest as a Member of Somerset County Council.

5. Grounds Maintenance Update

The Open Spaces Manager and Strategy and Partnership Officer presented an update on the Grounds Maintenance Department.

Since their last update in September 2017, where the officers had made several recommendations about the grounds maintenance contract, the team had implemented the following:-

- The service charge had been increased from £0.81 to £1.84 per week;
- The specification was changed, which took into account certain complaints that had been made about works on trees, shrubs and grass;
- A service specification had been set based on standard rather than the amount of times tasks should be done;
- A budget was set aside to tackle the backlog of work, which commenced in September 2017. The teams had worked hard to catch up on the work load; and
- A panel had been set up to monitor the work, which was comprised of tenants and officers, who worked together to ensure the specification was maintained.

The Grounds Maintenance update had three sections:-

- Ongoing Improvement Project;
- New Grounds Maintenance Standard; and
- Progress.

The Ongoing Improvement Project had seen the team working hard over the winter months to catch up on the areas that needed the most attention.

New Grounds Maintenance Standard included three looks, what it should look like before the team arrived, what it should look like after the work was done and what it should never look like.

Progress had been made within the team, who had been given specific priority to focus on housing projects rather being pulled away to carry out works in other areas.

The team had procured new machinery which included a grass mulcher and a power scrubber. The new machinery had proved very popular and had improved the team's time management. The grass mulcher was very manoeuvrable and cut back on the need for another officer to attend the area and use a strimmer to tidy up. The power scrubber could also be used for other functions, for example, a snow plough in the winter months. The Board was shown several before and after photos of the work that had been carried out.

A customer survey was due to be sent out over the next month which would collate results for the last quarter, however, the officers were not expecting it to show any improved results based on the new machines only being in operation since April 2018. Officers had expressed what a positive project it was and hoped to see improved results in the next customer survey.

During the discussion, the Board Members made the following points:-

- Board Members queried how the grass clippings were disposed of.
The grass clippings were taken to the local waste depot and the grass mulcher put the grass back into the ground which acted as a fertiliser.
- Board Members had queried what savings had been made with the new machinery.
The equipment had not been used long enough to collate the figures. The officers would return in September 2018 with an update on the service and a business case which would show the figures for the use of the new machinery.

Resolved that the Board noted the officer's update.

(The meeting ended at 6.30pm)

Taunton Deane Borough Council

Tenant Services Management Board – 20 August 2018

Sheltered Housing Pilot and Allocation Plan

This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Terry Beale, Portfolio Holder for Housing

Report Author: Jan Errington, Project Manager

1 Executive Summary / Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report outlines a proposed pilot scheme to provide access to under 60s with disabilities to Sheltered Housing. The scheme aims to provide fairer access to our sheltered housing and opportunities for supported and accessible housing for our most vulnerable. It presents a new Sheltered Housing Pilot Allocations Plan to enable the Council to manage the pilot effectively and fairly to make it a success.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 TSMB comment on the proposed pilot scheme
- 2.2 TSMB support the draft Under 60's Sheltered Pilot Allocations Plan and recommend it for approval to the Portfolio Holder for Housing.

3 Risk Assessment

Risk Matrix

Description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall
<p>Risk of lettings made without due regard to the nature of sheltered housing leading to disruption of sheltered schemes and management issues. The mitigations for this are the proposed changes as set out in the draft Under 60's Sheltered Housing Pilot and outlined in the report. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertising all suitable sheltered properties as a sensitive let • Properties will be allocated conscious of the need to maintain a balanced community and lettings staff will check with the ACM, or the Lettings Manager in their absence, before placing an advert • All lettings will be on an introductory tenancy where the applicant is new to social housing • Housing Options and Lettings colleagues will work closely together to ensure lettings decisions are in line with the Allocations plan • Applicants will have low support needs or Where an applicant has higher levels needs there would need to be a full social and health care package appropriate to their needs in place <p>The Pilot scheme will be closely monitored and managed to ensure appropriate lettings and prompt adjustments and actions where required.</p>	3	2	6
<p>Risk of Right to Buy applications for sheltered stock mitigated by advertising and lettings in line with the Sheltered Under 60s Pilot Allocation Plan to ensure all lettings are made accordance with the Right to Buy exemptions and that applicants and officers are aware of this in line with the plan. The plan includes specific guidance on letting in accordance with the legislation on exemptions.</p>	2	3	6

Risk Scoring Matrix

Likelihood	5	Almost Certain	Low (5)	Medium (10)	High (15)	Very High (20)	Very High (25)
	4	Likely	Low (4)	Medium (8)	Medium (12)	High (16)	Very High (20)
	3	Possible	Low (3)	Low (6)	Medium (9)	Medium (12)	High (15)
	2	Unlikely	Low (2)	Low (4)	Low (6)	Medium (8)	Medium (10)
	1	Rare	Low (1)	Low (2)	Low (3)	Low (4)	Low (5)
			1	2	3	4	5
			Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
Impact							

Likelihood of risk occurring	Indicator	Description (chance of occurrence)
1. Very Unlikely	May occur in exceptional circumstances	< 10%
2. Slight	Is unlikely to, but could occur at some time	10 – 25%
3. Feasible	Fairly likely to occur at same time	25 – 50%
4. Likely	Likely to occur within the next 1-2 years, or occurs occasionally	50 – 75%
5. Very Likely	Regular occurrence (daily / weekly / monthly)	> 75%

4 Background and Full details of the Report

- 4.1 Taunton Deane Borough Council has over 800 sheltered housing properties. We have invested in our Sheltered Stock and service over recent years and we want to use it to help as many people in need as possible.
- 4.2 We have invested in the phased improvement of sheltered stock to make it more accessible and suitable for older and disabled people through:
- Swapping out unsuitable properties and swapping in suitable bungalows in appropriate locations
 - Gradually working towards a sheltered housing standard that ensures properties are suitable to meet current and future needs
 - Installing wet rooms in ground floor sheltered as opportunities arise through our voids and replacement works as normal
- 4.3 Currently our Sheltered Housing is accessible through the Homefinder Somerset register for applicants over 60 years old. Those with disabilities who are younger cannot access sheltered housing and compete with the overall register for general needs properties.

- 4.4 The Homefinder Somerset Board and Homelessness Managers Group identified the need to offer Sheltered Housing to people with disabilities regardless of age. Many Somerset landlords have changed their allocations policies to enable their sheltered housing to be available to applicants with disabilities regardless of age.
- 4.5 Colleagues in Housing Options and Occupational Therapy report that it is difficult for younger disabled people to gain access to suitable accommodation with sometimes long waiting times which in turn can be detrimental to their wellbeing where they may be in need of level access, a safe and supportive environment such as Sheltered Housing.
- 4.6 Furthermore, the Care Act 2014 promotes better informed customers, greater choice, and greater empowerment and a duty on Local Authorities to work in partnership to promote health and wellbeing, safeguarding and prevent or reduce risk and care. Sheltered Housing clearly contributes to this agenda.
- 4.7 Supporting the most vulnerable is a high priority for us and we can help by making our supported sheltered accommodation more accessible regardless of age.
- 4.8 To help us deliver our priorities and help more vulnerable people we propose to run a 9 month pilot scheme for designated sheltered schemes with access to meeting hall facilities. The intention is to embed the Allocations Plan into business as usual with the lessons learned along the way to make the most of our sheltered housing provision.
- 4.9 The pilot will be managed tightly by an appointed internal project manager to ensure effective management of the scheme. Project management with continuous monitoring will enable us to respond rapidly to issues, make adjustments and enable the success of the scheme.
- 4.10 The Sheltered Housing environment is intended to be supportive and safe for those who are vulnerable due to poor health or disabilities or are age. Key to the pilot scheme's success will be the proposed Sheltered Pilot Allocations Plan to govern lettings in the pilot at appendix A.
- 4.11 The Proposed Allocations Plan sets out how allocations will be managed in designated Sheltered Housing schemes to ensure fair access, due regard to the nature of the sheltered community, and that lettings are in accordance with Right to Buy Exemptions
- 4.12 Key features of the plan are:
- Advertising all suitable sheltered properties as a sensitive let to assist people regardless of their age who have disabilities (physical, mental health, learning disabilities, sensory loss) who cannot currently access this type of accommodation
 - Properties are to be allocated conscious of the need to maintain a balanced community, in order to ensure this lettings staff will check with the relevant Area Community Manager (ACM) or the housing manager – lettings in their absence
 - Tenants who are new to social housing will be allocated an introductory tenancy
 - Close liaison on the pilot for each letting between housing Options and Lettings colleagues and ACMS
 - These principles also apply to applications to exchange into our stock.

- 4.13 Sheltered Housing staff are used to working with a wide range of needs. Training will be offered to those who need to be upskilled in relation to the pilot. In addition, from October, Community Agents will provide support to all of our sheltered stock; they work with a wide range of needs regardless of age.

5 Links to Corporate Aims / Priorities

- 5.1 The Sheltered Housing Under 60s pilot links to our Housing Revenue Account Business Plan Priority of 'supporting the most vulnerable' by providing access through appropriate lettings to applicants with disabilities and support needs regardless of age. It provides a better and stronger service offer meeting more local needs in keeping with the Care Act and our priorities below:

Supporting the most vulnerable

This means we are committed to letting homes to people who have the fewest housing options and will provide additional support that helps people who are older, disabled, or socially excluded to live comfortably in their Council-owned home.

Better Service

This means we are tenant and community focused and are committed to improving our services in line with what our residents have said matters to them. Our approach will support people to move through our social housing to cater for their changing needs and aspirations over time.

A Stronger Business

This means we will prioritise efficiency to support delivery of our social priorities and objectives.

6. Finance / Resource Implications

- 6.1 There are no financial implications, the pilot is about how Lettings and Housing Options colleagues work together to advertise and let suitable properties which is business as usual.

7 Legal Implications

- 7.1 Our sheltered stock is exempt from the Right to Buy. We need to protect the status of our sheltered housing stock because it is suitable for people with disabilities and older people and to ensure it's ongoing availability.
- 7.2 Guidance on letting properties in accordance with the exemptions to the Right to Buy in line with legal advice is included within the draft Under 60s Sheltered Housing Pilot Allocation Plan to ensure that lettings are made under the scheme in a way that does maintains the exemption.

8 Environmental Impact Implications

- 8.1 There are no environmental impacts arising from this report.

9 Safeguarding and/or Community Safety Implications

- 9.1 There are no safeguarding implications in relation to the pilot scheme. However, sheltered housing services with its emergency alarm systems creates a safe living environment for vulnerable tenants. Therefore, the pilot supports the safeguarding of our vulnerable under 60s tenants with disabilities.

10 Equality and Diversity Implications

- 10.1 Following Equality Impact Assessment there are no adverse impacts arising from this proposal. The scheme positively supports accessibility of services to vulnerable applicants with disabilities regardless of age where previously there has been a lower age threshold. Therefore, it will have a positive impact for those who fall under the protected characteristics of age and disabilities. In addition, the pilot gives disabled applicants access to more flexible and accessible properties throughout the district.

11. Social Value Implications

- 11.1 Supported housing plays an important part in directly helping our most vulnerable tenants their independence and wellbeing and helps their families feel reassured. This in itself is big contributor of social value within the district. Extending access to under 60s with disabilities will benefit a greater number of vulnerable tenants and their families in this way.
- 11.2 Our meeting halls and service also contribute to a sense of community providing opportunities for social activities for health and wellbeing, reducing potential isolation and loneliness and bringing communities together. These are part of Sheltered Housing facilities in the Pilot Scheme.
- 11.3 A fundamental part of enabling supported housing to contribute to social value is ensuring its accessibility to vulnerable tenants who need it whilst maintaining the safe and supportive environment that is part of the sheltered provision.

12 Partnership Implications

- 12.1 Sheltered Housing tenants may require the support of our partners in Adult Social Care and specific support organisations including Village and Community Agents. This will be business as usual for partnership working in relation to sheltered housing here and across Somerset with key support and social care agencies. The increased access to Sheltered Housing is welcomed by our partners.

13 Health and Wellbeing Implications

- 13.1 TDBC's sheltered housing schemes and services have a direct link to the council's health and wellbeing agenda and contribute towards increasing the health and wellbeing of council tenants through the provision of services such as:
- Suitable properties
 - Enabling the provision of care and support services
 - Enabling a safe environment for our most vulnerable tenants
 - Enabling an environment that helps older people and those with mental health and physical disabilities to live as independently as possible for as long as possible.

13.2 The council has an enhanced duty under the Care Act 2014/2015 to work together with other agencies to ensure the safety of vulnerable individuals and support the delivery of outcomes focused services that meet needs. Many disabled people face health and social issues, and the council needs to be working with local partners to reduce the more preventable health issues that are linked to wider local health aims. The pilot scheme supports these aims.

14 Asset Management Implications

14.1 The report does not relate to Asset Management and there are no asset management implications within the proposed sheltered under 60s pilot scheme. However, the Council has previously supported working towards a new sheltered housing standard including improving ground floor accessibility with a wet room programme and rationalisation of the stock to swap in suitable ground floor bungalows, to ensure that the physical environment on our sheltered housing schemes is supportive of the needs of tenants with disabilities. Therefore, Sheltered Housing physically supports the needs of applicants who will benefit from access to more suitable properties.

15 Consultation Implications (if any)

15.2 Tenants have been consulted on the proposed pilot scheme through the Tenant Forum. The Tenant Forum supported the Sheltered Under 60s pilot scheme on 16 July 2018.

15.3 The Portfolio Holder for Housing has been consulted and supports the pilot scheme subject to consideration of comments from the Tenant Services Management Board.

15.4 Colleagues have been consulted and welcome this greater access whilst also keen that the scheme is carefully and sensitively managed.

Democratic Path:

- **Scrutiny / Corporate Governance or Audit Committees –No**
- **Cabinet/Executive – No**
- **Full Council – No**

Reporting Frequency : **Once only** **Ad-hoc** **Quarterly**
 Twice-yearly **Annually**

List of Appendices (delete if not applicable)

Appendix A	Under 60s Sheltered Housing Pilot Allocations Plan
Appendix B	
Appendix C	

Contact Officers

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Name		Name	
Direct Dial		Direct Dial	
Email		Email	

UNDER 60's SHELTERED HOUSING PILOT ALLOCATIONS PLAN

EFFECTIVE: 01 September 2018 – 31 May 2019

This plan has been approved by the Tenants Services Management Board, Portfolio Holder for Housing (Cllr T Beale) and senior management on *****.

This is a Taunton Deane Borough Council (TDBC) allocations plan for the Under 60's Sheltered Housing Pilot.

Background

TDBC own in excess of 800 properties which have traditionally been categorised as "sheltered housing" (housing for older people), these properties are typically located on self-contained schemes many of which have the benefit of a meeting hall, for use by residents. These sheltered housing schemes are located across the whole geographic area of the borough.

The proposed Allocations Plan

It is proposed to operate an allocations plan by advertising all suitable sheltered properties as a sensitive let. This will assist people regardless of their age who have disabilities (physical, mental health, learning disabilities, sensory loss) who are either tenants or applicants who cannot currently access this type of accommodation as follows:

- Where there are assessed needs in the household for this type of low level supported accommodation, or;
- Where an applicant has higher levels needs there would need to be a full social and health care package appropriate to their needs in place as sheltered would not meet for example, complex mental health needs.

Schemes and Properties

The following schemes will be included in the pilot:

Churchill Way, Darby Way, Elms, George St, Grange Walk, Heathfield Dr (bungalows), Henderson Cl, Hope Corner Lane, Middleway, Moorland Pl, Newton Rd, Lower Quantock Rd, Upper Quantock Rd, Roland Cl, Seabrook House, Squirrel Court, Wellesley St.

The properties that will be advertised for the pilot will be ground floor and accessible to persons with mobility needs.

Marketing of void properties on Homefinder Somerset Website

All of the properties that are within a Pilot will be advertised as follows:

Sensitive Let forms will be submitted to Housing Options, these will outline why the particular property requires to be sensitively let and contain marketing text that requires applicants to have no recent history of ASB, drug or alcohol issues.

Only properties that are exempt from Right To Buy (RTB) in accordance with RTB exemptions, Schedule 5 of the Housing Act 1985 will be used as part of this pilot. See the attached Appendix 1 for more information.

Allocations

Properties will be allocated conscious of the need to maintain a balanced community, in order to ensure this Lettings staff will check with the relevant Area Community Manager (ACM) prior to adverts being placed on Homefinder. In the event that the ACM is not available the Housing Manager - Lettings will approve to avoid delay in adverts being placed.

These principles will also apply to applications to exchange into our stock.

Tenancy Type

All tenants that move as part of this plan will continue with existing tenancy rights' in those cases where the household are new to Social Housing or have had a break in tenancy history they will be allocated an Introductory Tenancy.

Partnership Working

In order to achieve the greatest success of the plan officers from all Area Teams, Housing Options Team and Lettings Team will need to work closely together.

Monitoring and Review

Careful monitoring of property allocations and the management of the plan will be the responsibility of the Housing Manager – Lettings.

Operation of the pilot will be reviewed on a monthly basis. The review will include number of properties let that month, and commentary on issues that have arisen either with tenants or the communities on the schemes.

Appendix 1

Right To Buy

Properties can fall in and out of the right to buy exemptions. The exemption applies only for the period let to a tenant in accordance with the exemption. So if a qualifying property (suitable with different/additional relevant features e.g. sheltered housing) was let to a 59 year old with no identified specific learning disability, mental illness or physical disability, the Right to Buy would apply for the duration of that tenancy, and if it was a property that could be succeeded to, to the successor (e.g. adapted general needs let on a secure tenancy). If the property was then relet to a new tenant in accordance with the exemptions the Right to Buy would not apply for the life of that tenancy.

To remain RTB exempt we must

Let in accordance with RTB exemptions, Schedule 5 of the Housing Act 1985, i.e.

What the law says

There is no Right to Buy if the property is:

Sheltered housing for the **elderly, people with physical or Learning disabilities or mental illness**. Special rules must be met in these cases. 'Sheltered housing' normally means that the property is one of a group of such dwellings, that has a community alarm, that there is a common room nearby which can be used for relevant activities, that either a warden service is provided on or off site, or a social service or special facilities are provided wholly or partly for the purpose of assisting those persons, and

- was let for occupation by a person with the above assessed needs
- 'Housing for the disabled' means a property that is one of a group and has features that are substantially different from those of ordinary dwellings and with special facilities that are provided nearby.

Or, is

- is particularly suitable for occupation by elderly persons, taking into account its location, size, design, heating system and other features, and
- was let for occupation by a person aged 60 or over, whether they were the tenant or not; and
- was first let before 1 January 1990.

Extract from Housing Act 1985, Schedule 5

Physically Disabled – Suitable Property usually e.g. accessible, ground floor, wet room, possibly other adaptations, piper alarm etc

The right to buy does not arise if the dwelling-house has features which are substantially different from those of ordinary dwelling-houses and are designed to make it suitable for occupation by physically disabled persons, and—

(a) it is one of a group of dwelling-houses which it is the practice of the landlord to let for occupation by physically disabled persons, and

(b) a social service or special facilities are provided in close proximity to the group of dwelling-houses wholly or partly for the purpose of assisting those persons.

Mental Health Needs – Sheltered if there is a meeting hall and support is provided

(1) The right to buy does not arise if—

(a) the dwelling-house is one of a group of dwelling-houses which it is the practice of the landlord to let for occupation by persons who are suffering or have suffered from a mental disorder, and

(b) a social service or special facilities are provided wholly or partly for the purpose of assisting those persons.

(2) In sub-paragraph (1)(a) “mental disorder” has the same meaning as in the Mental Health Act 1983

Sheltered Housing for over 60s and the physically disabled

10(1) The right to buy does not arise if the dwelling-house is one of a group of dwelling-houses—

(a) which are particularly suitable, having regard to their location, size, design, heating systems and other features, for occupation by elderly persons and

(b) which it is the practice of the landlord to let for occupation by persons aged 60 or more, or for occupation by such persons and physically disabled persons,

and special facilities such as are mentioned in sub-paragraph (2) are provided wholly or mainly for the purposes of assisting those persons.

(2) The facilities referred to above are facilities which consist of or include—

(a) the services of a resident warden, or

(b)the services of a non-resident warden, a system for calling him and the use of a common room in close proximity to the group of dwelling-houses.

The Elderly

The right to buy does not arise if the dwelling-house—

(a)is particularly suitable, having regard to its location, size, design, heating system and other features, for occupation by elderly persons, and

(b)was let to the tenant or a predecessor in title of his for occupation by a person who was aged 60 or more (whether the tenant or predecessor or another person).

(2)In determining whether a dwelling is particularly suitable, no regard shall be had to the presence of any feature provided by the tenant or a predecessor in title of his.

(6)This paragraph does not apply unless the dwelling-house concerned was first let before 1st January 1990.

Your views

Taunton Deane Borough Council
Tenant Satisfaction Survey



About the survey

Between January and February this year many of you took part in an important survey. The survey focused on how happy you are with the way Taunton Deane Borough Council Housing Service delivers key services and maintains your homes. The survey was anonymous and carried out by an independent market research company – Acuity Research and Practice. The survey was sent to a sample of general needs tenants and all tenants in supported housing (including Extra Care) and leaseholders. A total of 1,533 residents responded (46%).

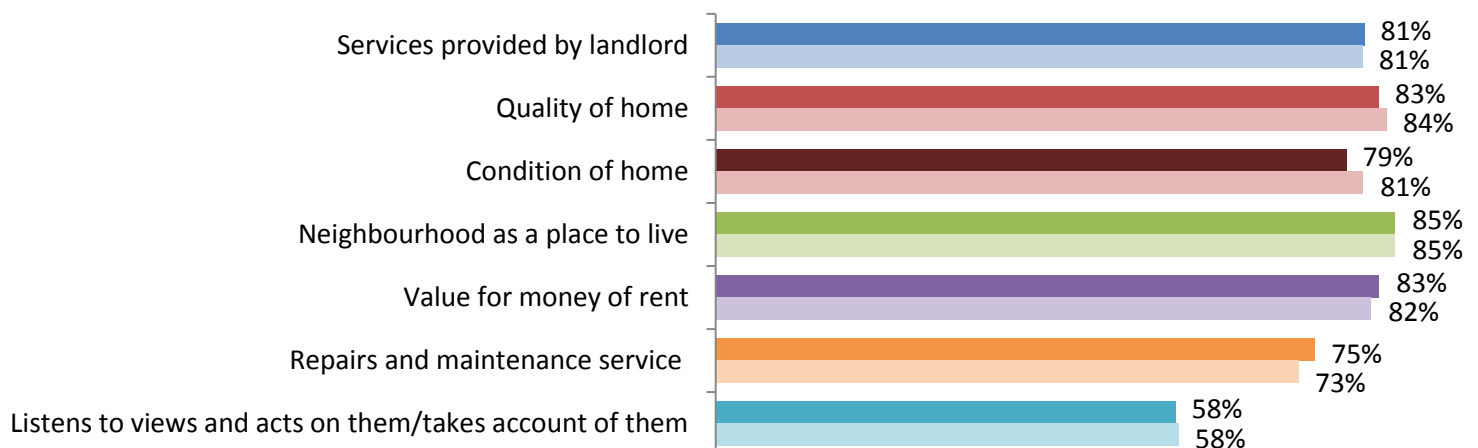
The following report summarises the findings and provides you with some information about what we are doing to improve.

Satisfaction with key services

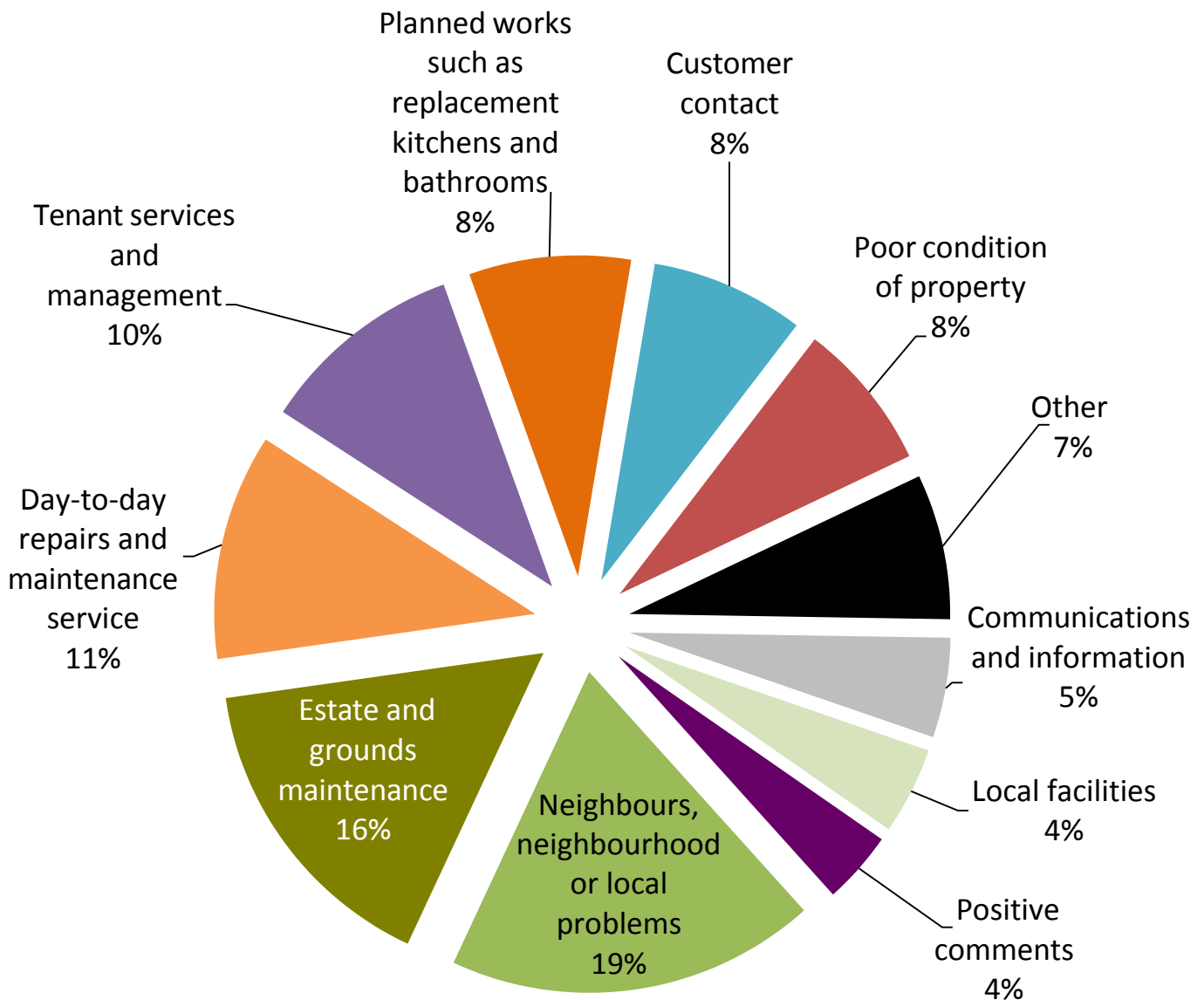
- 81% of Taunton Deane tenants are happy with the overall services they receive.
- 84% of tenants are satisfied with the quality of their home and 79% with its condition.
- Value for money of rent is rated at 83%.
- 85% of tenants are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live.
- 75% of tenants are satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service.
- 58% are satisfied with how Taunton Deane listens to views and acts upon them.

Four ratings have changed since 2015, shown below;

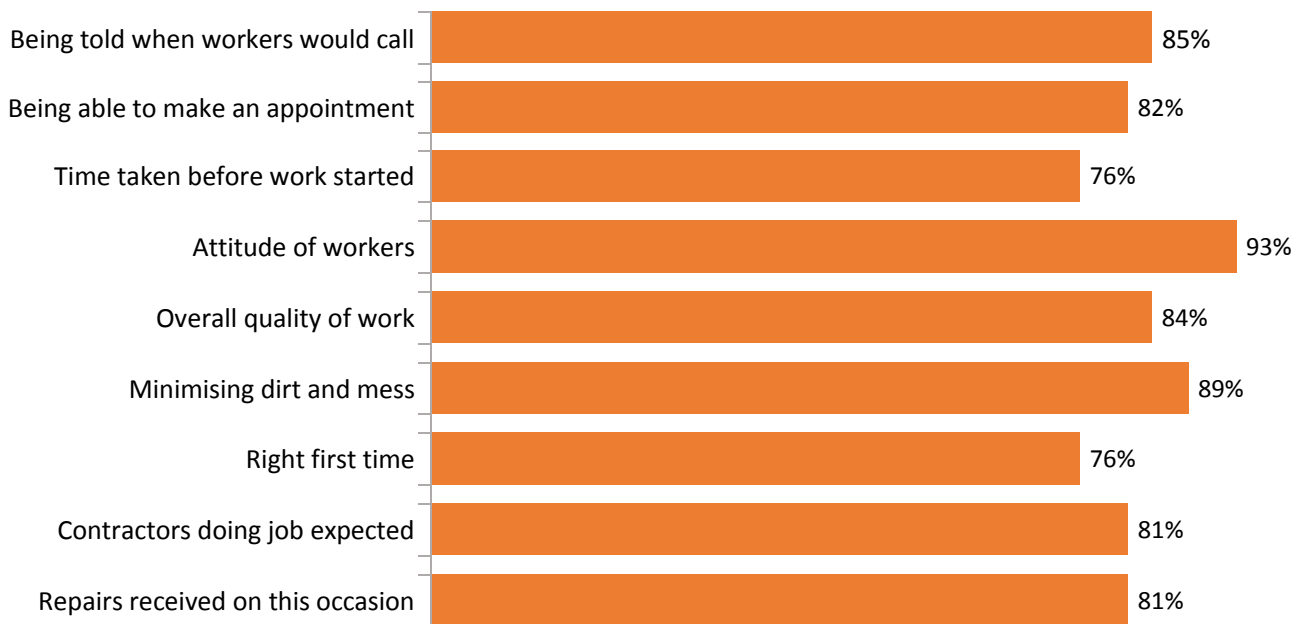
Satisfaction with key services 2018 (2015 ratings shown below this year's rating)



- Tenants were given the opportunity to make comments on whether, if there was one thing that Taunton Deane could improve, what they would like it to be. Some 779 comments were made which are summarised below.

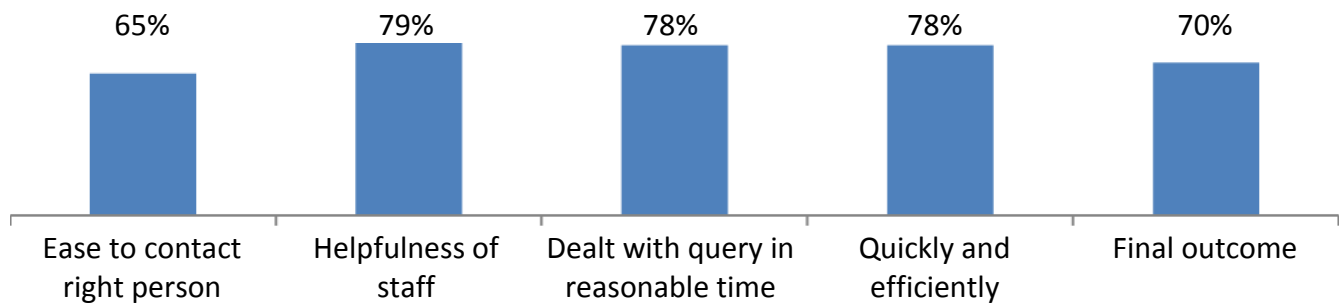


- 75% of tenants are satisfied with the overall repairs and maintenance service and ratings were in the high 80s and 90s for most aspects of the work carried out. Satisfaction with the attitude and behaviour of workers is consistently at or above 93%.
- Fewer tenants were satisfied with the time taken before work started (76%) or with the repair being done right first time (76%).



- Since the survey results were received there have been a number of changes. A new Repairs and Logistics Manager is in place and the service has been thoroughly reviewed. Improvements are already being seen across the Borough.
- There has been improved performance in the following:
 - Responsive Repairs Complaints handling (50% reduction in complaints, 100% handled on time)
 - Customer satisfaction with Responsive Repairs is at 98%
 - Call waiting times (down from average of over 2 minutes to 38 seconds)
 - Unanswered calls (down from an average of 40% to under 5%)
 - Jobs started on time (up from an average of 78% to 93%).

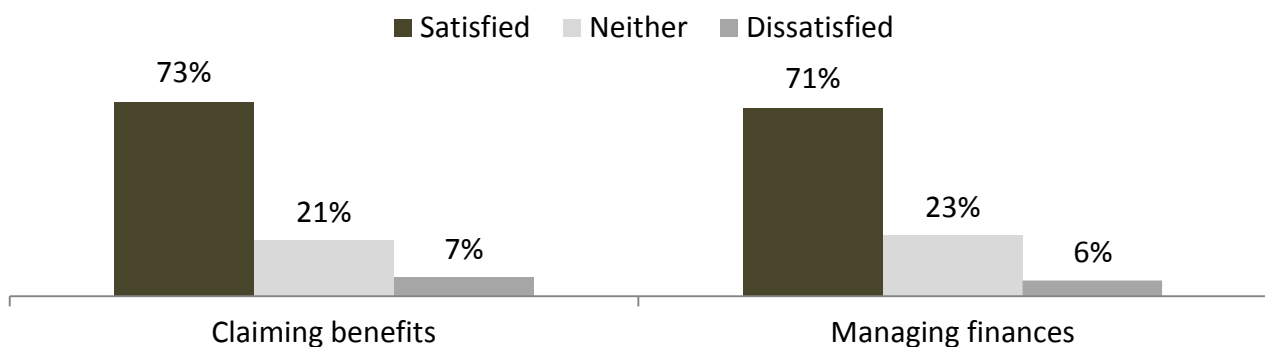
- 65% tenants were able to speak to the right person when contacting Taunton Deane, with even more finding staff helpful (79%). 78% of tenants also found that staff dealt with their query in reasonable time, quickly and efficiently. However, fewer tenants were satisfied with the final outcome of their contact (70%).



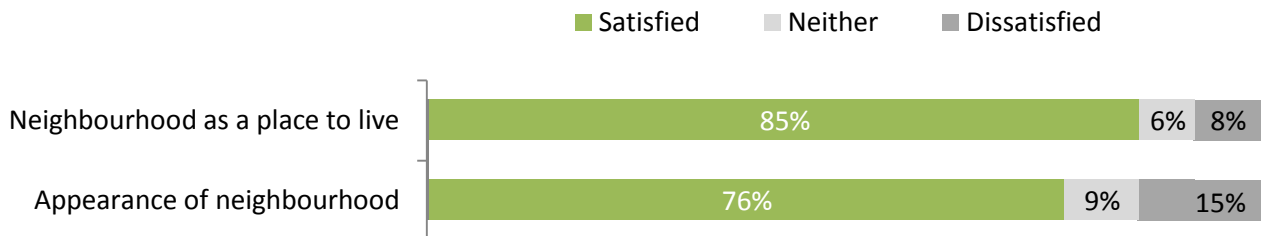
- The Council is transforming how it responds to Customers from 2019/20 and this will improve how we resolve tenant's queries.

Financial Advice

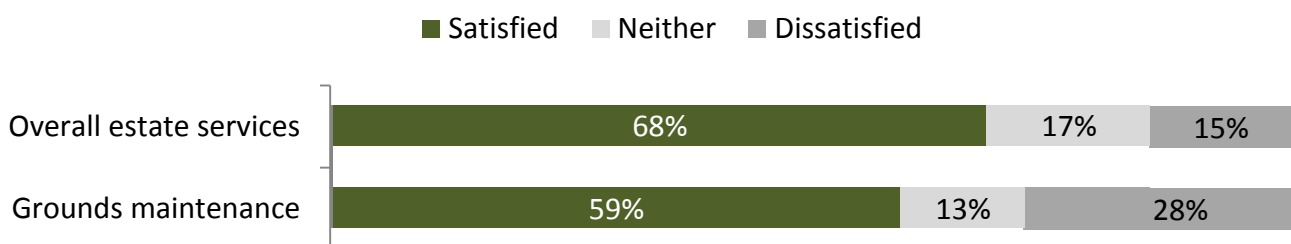
- 73% of tenants are satisfied with the advice on claiming benefits and other welfare benefits. A similar number of tenants are satisfied with the advice and support provided managing finances (71%).



- 85% of tenants expressed a positive view about the neighbourhood in which they live. However, fewer tenants were as satisfied with the appearance of their neighbourhood (76%). The majority of tenants felt that their neighbourhood had stayed the same over the past three years.

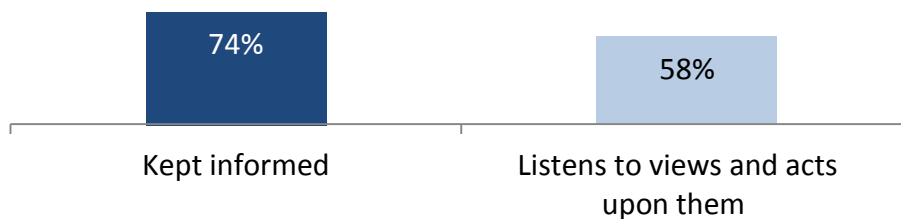


- Much lower ratings were given for estate services (68%), particularly grounds maintenance (59%).

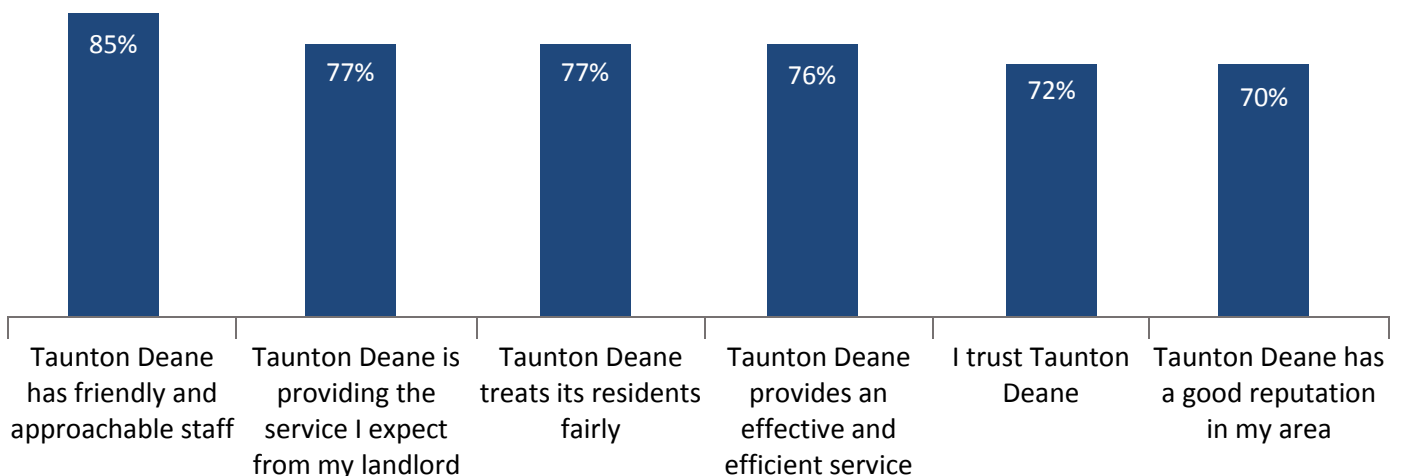


- Our grounds maintenance services has been reviewed, a new contract is in place and you should see a significant improvement over the coming summer period. Our Open Spaces Teams have worked hard to tackle a number of neglected areas, bringing them in line with the new standard that was agreed with the Tenants Groups that represent you. Hopefully you are noticing improvements across your neighbourhood.

- 74% of tenants feel that Taunton Deane keeps them informed about things that might affect them as a tenant and 58% of tenants feel that Taunton Deane listens to their views and acts upon them.
- We know we still have more to do. Our new Transformation programme will help with streamlining our processes and we plan to review how we can better engage with more tenants to properly listen to and act on your views.



- 40% of tenants are aware of Taunton Deane's published housing service standards, however far fewer are aware of how to challenge these standards (23%). This is something that we are aware of and following transformation we intend to work with our Tenants Board to develop and publish a new set of standards which will be widely available.
- Over 75% of tenants agreed that Taunton Deane provides an effective and efficient service, provides the service expected, have friendly and approachable staff, and treat tenants fairly. Around 66% find us trustworthy and feel we have a good reputation in their area. 41% of tenants are likely to recommend Taunton Deane to family or friends. We want these figures to be higher and are continuing to work hard to make improvements.



Carrying out this survey is just part of the part of the work Taunton Deane Borough Council does to involve you in developing services.

As well as publishing the results of the survey, Taunton Deane plans to put the findings to good use by working with tenants to further improve the services they provide.

