



THE ELDER



Autumn & Winter Newsletter 2016 **Issue 14**

An Extract from The 2016 Tenant Satisfaction Survey Report Carried out by Acuity

Executive summary

Norwich Housing Society commissioned Acuity to carry out a tenants' satisfaction survey. All tenants were included in the postal survey, which took place during June and July 2016. Out of 290 tenants, 208 responded giving a response rate of 72%.

The results from the survey demonstrate that the great majority of tenants are satisfied with the Society and satisfaction in key areas is level with or better than three years ago. Overall satisfaction with the services provided by the Association is at 95%, with very high ratings also awarded for the quality of the home (96%) and the neighbourhood (94%). The satisfaction ratings found are evidence of strong performance at the Society and a credit to staff, management and the Board.

Key findings

Overall services: The vast majority of the Society's tenants are satisfied with the overall service provided by the Association (95%), a slight increase (up by 1%) on the previous survey which was carried out in 2013. Very few tenants are dissatisfied with the overall service (1%).

Recommending Norwich Housing Society: Four out of five tenants were positive about the association and indicated that they would promote the Society to friends and family (81%), while one in twelve are considered detractors (8%).

Perceptions: Virtually all of the tenants agree that staff are friendly and approachable (98%) and that the Society provides an efficient and effective service (95%). A high percentage of residents felt that the Society would act upon the findings in this survey (87%). Very few residents expressed negative views.

The home: The vast majority of tenants are satisfied with the overall quality of the home (96%), similar to the previous survey three years ago (95%). Just 2% of tenants are dissatisfied with the overall quality of the home, the same as in 2013.

Neighbourhood: Over nine out of ten tenants are satisfied with the neighbourhood as a place to live (94%), the same as in 2013. Very few tenants are dissatisfied with the neighbourhood as a place to live (5%), 2% higher than 2013.

Value for money: Around nine out of ten tenants are satisfied with the value for money of the rent (93%) and with their service charges (88%). One in fourteen is dissatisfied with the VFM of their service charge (7%). VFM satisfaction has increased slightly since 2013 for rent (3% higher) and the service charges (5% higher).

Customer services: The vast majority of tenants were satisfied with the overall experience last time they contacted the Society (94%). Virtually all of the tenants said that they had no difficulty contacting the Society (99%), while more than nine out of ten were able to speak to the right person (94%). With equally high numbers said that they received a response that was helpful (95%), friendly (98%) and they were treated fairly (95%).

Satisfaction with the final outcome of their query (91%) and the time taken (92%) were also very high.

Repairs and maintenance: More than nine out of ten tenants are satisfied with the overall repairs and maintenance service (94%), 3% higher than in 2013. For those tenants who had had a repair carried out in the last year, 95% were satisfied with the repair work. Satisfaction with specific aspects of the experience ranged from 98% (keeping dirt and mess to a minimum) to 87% (time taken before work started). Satisfaction with the contractors' attitude, the quality of the work and reporting the repair were all very high (96% - 97%). Satisfaction was slightly lower for the speed of completion, being kept informed and getting jobs 'right first time' (92% - 94%) and nine out of ten respondents were satisfied with the being able to make an appointment and being told when workers would call (90%).

Satisfaction with the last completed repair has increased (+4%) over the past three years. This reflects increases in satisfaction with individual aspects of the repair of between 2% and 6%.

Scheme services: More than nine out of ten respondents expressed a positive view about scheme services (93%). Very few tenants expressed a negative view. Satisfaction with individual aspects of the service was highest with internal cleaning (96%) and the appearance of the scheme (92%). Satisfaction was also high for grounds maintenance and external cleaning (86% and 87% respectively).

There appears to have been a significant increase in satisfaction with scheme services overall (up 16%) since the last survey. The increase is driven by considerable increases in satisfaction with the cleaning of internal and external communal areas (14% and 15% respectively) as well as the appearance of the scheme (+11%) and grounds maintenance (+8%).

Sheltered housing: The vast majority of HfOP tenants expressed a positive view about the scheme where they live overall (97%). Just 1% expressed a negative view. Satisfaction with other aspects of sheltered housing ranged from 97% (emergency alarm system) and 95% (safety and security), 94% (ease of access). Satisfaction was almost as high for the visiting support service and support plans (both 92%), followed by scheme facilities (89%) and frequency of contact with scheme manager (87%).

Satisfaction with sheltered services has increased in all aspects except for satisfaction with facilities which has decreased slightly.

Communication and information: 85% of tenants expressed a positive view when asked if the Society listens to tenants' views and acts upon them. 3% expressed a negative view. Satisfaction in this area has increased by 12% since 2013, while dissatisfaction has fallen by 10%.

One in six tenants is interested in finding out more about getting involved with the Society (17%). Contact in writing (75%) is most popular with tenants, followed by scheme meetings (52%) and home visits (39%). Around one in seven like to be kept informed by email and thirty-seven respondents (around 18%) provided email addresses for the Society to use to communicate with them

Other services: Six out of seven residents are satisfied with the advice the society offers on rents and benefits and with the way it deals with anti-social behaviour (86% to 87%). Slightly fewer residents are satisfied with the way handling of improvements and complaints (both 84%). Eight out of ten are satisfied with the handling of neighbour disputes and internal transfers (both 82%).

Further analysis

Lower levels of satisfaction

The survey found a few service areas with lower levels of satisfaction, where satisfaction drops noticeably below 90%, suggesting that these might be areas for the Association to focus on:

- Communications – listening to views and acts (85%), doing enough to involve tenants (80%)
- Other services – dealing with neighbour disputes (82%), transfers (82%), improvements to the home (84%) and dealing with complaints (84%)
- Scheme services - grounds maintenance (86%)

Alternatively, the Society could focus on areas where dissatisfaction is highest. As ratings are generally very high there are few areas where more than one in twenty or more tenants are dissatisfied:

- Dealing with neighbour disputes (9%)
- Moving home (internal transfers due to health reasons) (9%)
- VFM SC (7%)
- Improvements (6%)
- Complaints (6%).

Change over time

Overall satisfaction with landlord services has increased by 1% since the previous survey (2013) and is now at 95%. Satisfaction had in many areas increased by more than five percentage points (overall scheme services, complaint handling, external cleaning, internal cleaning, listens & acts, appearance of scheme, involving tenants, improvements, handling of ASB reports, emergency call system, sheltered scheme overall, grounds maintenance, act on findings, kept informed, visiting support, advice on rent & service charge, effective and efficient service, dealing with neighbour disputes, quality of repair and advice on benefits.

The latest survey found no areas where satisfaction has fallen. There were a few areas where satisfaction was 1% lower than the 2013 (home, scheme facilities, being able to speak to the right person), however the difference is marginal and does not suggest any statistically significant fall in satisfaction.

Comparison with other landlords

The Society has a very strong performance when compared with the most recent data published by HouseMark and SPBM benchmarking for general needs and HfOP tenants.

When compared with the levels of satisfaction reported by HouseMark members for the seven STAR core measures the Society's HfOP ratings are in the top quartile for all measures and Net Promoter Score (NPS). General needs ratings are also in the top quartile for NPS and all measures apart from satisfaction with neighbourhood, which is in the second quartile.

When compared with a peer group of smaller housing providers the Society's satisfaction ratings for HfOP tenants are above the median (second quartile) for all measures apart from VFM service charges (3rd quartile) and Net Promoter Score (3rd quartile). General needs tenants' satisfaction ratings are in the top quartile for overall satisfaction, repairs and maintenance and Net Promoter Score. Ratings are in the second quartile for VFM and listening to tenants' views. Ratings are in the third quartile for quality of home and neighbourhood.

Key strands of diversity and other influences

Satisfaction with different services has been analysed by the key strands of diversity and other attributes. The survey found some differences which may need exploring – such as differences between different schemes and scheme types, age and length of tenancy.

Recommendations

The findings from the survey are very positive, with high ratings for the home and neighbourhood, VFM and repairs. Overall satisfaction remains at the same high level or better than that found in 2013. The Society has many promoters and the survey found few areas where over one in twenty of tenants are dissatisfied.

It is recommended that the Society reviews the few areas highlighted in the survey where satisfaction falls below the higher ratings found for the home and the neighbourhood, in particular dealing with transfers, ASB, neighbour disputes and complaints – all areas with a strong correlation with overall satisfaction. The open comments provide even more insight into customer satisfaction and should be used alongside the results to inform planning and improve the level of services delivered by the Society.

Laundry Charges

All of the Society's sheltered schemes benefit from laundry facilities. The laundry at Westwood House has been free of charge at point of use and the cost included within the service charge for some years. This has the advantages that there is no need for 20p coins and no need for the coin meters to be emptied and the coins banked.

From January 2017 the laundry facilities at Fiddy's Yard and Stuart Court will also be free of charge at point of use and the cost included within the service charge. (Please note that you will be advised of the new revised service charge with your rent revision, you do not need to make any changes in payment until then.) This will be a more efficient way of working for the society, particularly as the HSBC branch we used to bank the coins has closed.

- Mike Allen, Chief Executive

Visiting the office.....

If you would like to see a member of staff, whether it be to discuss your housing benefit or any concerns you may have, please ensure you call to make an appointment first. We want you to talk to the right person and we can't guarantee that person will be available or in the office when you arrive. We wouldn't want you to experience a wasted journey.



To all the Society's residents

Opening hours for the Society's Office over the Christmas and New Year period will be as follows:

Monday 19-Dec	Tuesday 20-Dec	Wednesday 21-Dec	Thursday 22-Dec	Friday 23-Dec	Monday 26-Dec	Tuesday 27-Dec	Wednesday 28-Dec	Thursday 29-Jan	Friday 30-Dec	Monday 02/01/2017
OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	CLOSED	CLOSED	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	CLOSED
9.00am - 5.00pm	9.00am - 5.00pm	9.00am - 12.00 noon only	9.00am - 5.00pm	9.00am - 12.00 noon only			9.00am - 12.00 noon only	9.00am - 12.00 noon only	9.00am - 12.00 noon only	

If you are in a sheltered flat your scheme manager will advise you of when he/she will be on and off duty over this period. The community alarm service will continue to operate 24 hours a day every day and will also be able to deal with emergency repairs.

To access this service please pull your orange cord.

May we take this opportunity of wishing you an enjoyable Christmas and a healthy and peaceful New Year.

Mike Allen
Chief Executive

Just for fun.....

At one end of the Norwich Cathedral Green there is a statue of The Duke of Wellington and at the other end there is a statue of Lord Nelson. What is Lord Nelson holding in his right hand?

Keeping Your Home Warm

Low temperatures increase the risk of flu and other respiratory problems and can raise blood pressure. Blood pressure takes longer to return to normal in older people after being out in the cold and this puts us at greater risk of heart attacks and strokes. The colder your home, the higher the risk to your health.

- Keep your main living room around 70°F (21°C), and the rest of your home heated to at least 64°F (18°C).
- Check your thermostat or use a room thermometer to monitor temperature but if you feel cold, turn the heat up regardless of what the thermometer reads.
- Get to know how the timer and thermostat on your heating system work. If you have individual thermostats on your radiators, make sure they're set at the right temperature in the rooms where you spend time.
- Close the curtains at dusk and fit thermal linings if you can. This will keep the heat in.
- Don't block up air vents, as fires and heaters need ventilation.
- Keep your bedroom window closed at night when the weather is cold. The coldest time of the day is just before dawn and breathing in cold air raises the risk of chest infections.
- Contact your local Age UK for a benefits check and advice on any financial support you may be eligible for. If you're having difficulty paying your heating bills, Charis Grants can direct you to grants to help with utility debts. For application form requests call the request line on: 01733 421060 (automated) or Email: applications@charisgrants.com

Keeping warm indoors and out

- Even if it isn't a severe winter, cold weather makes us more vulnerable to certain illnesses. You're at risk of a heart attack, a stroke or even hypothermia if you're exposed to a cold environment for a long time, or to extreme cold for only a short time.
- Make sure you keep your hands and face warm. As well as wearing gloves and a hat, always wrap a scarf around your face when you go out in cold weather, even for short intervals. This helps to warm the air you breathe.

- Several thin layers of clothing will keep you warmer than one thick layer, as the layers trap warm air. Clothes made from wool or fleecy synthetic fibres such as polyester are a better choice than cotton. Start with thermal underwear, warm tights or socks.
- If you're sitting down, a shawl or blanket will provide a lot of warmth. Try to keep your feet up, as the air is cooler at ground level.
- Wear warm clothes in bed. When very cold, wear thermal underwear, bed socks and even a hat – a lot of heat is lost through your head
- Use a hot-water bottle, wheat bag or an electric blanket to warm the bed, but never use a hot-water bottle and an electric blanket together as this can be dangerous. Check whether your electric blanket can be kept on all night or whether it's only designed to warm the bed before you get in. Get it checked every three years by an expert. If you have continence difficulties, talk to your doctor before using one.
- Keep your feet warm. Choose boots with non-slip soles and a warm lining, or wear thermal socks.

Check local news and weather forecasts for advice when cold weather is predicted.

Events and Festivities

Last month, Fiddys Yard had a lovely fish and chip supper night, rounded off with a few games of hoy, which was thoroughly enjoyed by the residents who attended. I have to report that I didn't win once and when I have saved up again I will hold another one in January!!!

Eleanor Road had a successful Christmas Fayre and we raised £211.00 which helped greatly towards our Christmas evening with the local Beaver Group Party and our forthcoming Christmas lunch with entertainment.

As you can see by the photos the residents enjoyed chatting to the Beavers about their Christmas experiences and we were all amazed by the expectations of their Christmas presents...one wanted a pony and the others wanted very expensive play stations, computers and televisions - a huge contrast to the residents' orange or apple in the stocking with a tin of toffees if they were really lucky!!!

They sang the twelve days of Christmas with picture prompts to rapturous applause and we made a collection so they could enjoy some special treats at their Christmas party.

It all ended with everyone leaving with lots of sweets and big smiles we all loved it.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all my residents a very happy and healthy Christmas and new year!

- Sue Closs, Scheme Manager



During the summer Residents at St Barnabas Courts were treated to a Fun Day in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support. In total we raised £309.00 with £185.00 going to Macmillan. Entertainment was provided by soul singer, Lucas, who was truly amazing. It was an enjoyable day and a great success from start to finish.

- Ms Sullivan, Resident at St Barnabas Court





Lanchester Court and Westwood House joined together for our 4 course Christmas Lunch at Norwich City College on 6th December, and we all had a very enjoyable meal.

Thank you to June of Lanchester Court for arranging the meal, collection of money and organising Taxis.

A good time was had by all and looking forward to Next year's Lunch.

- Mrs Robertson, Resident at Lanchester Court

Pistachio and Cranberry Cookies

This is a Mary Berry recipe and is highly recommended by Sarah Tiffen because it's easy to follow and very Christmassy!

Ingredients:

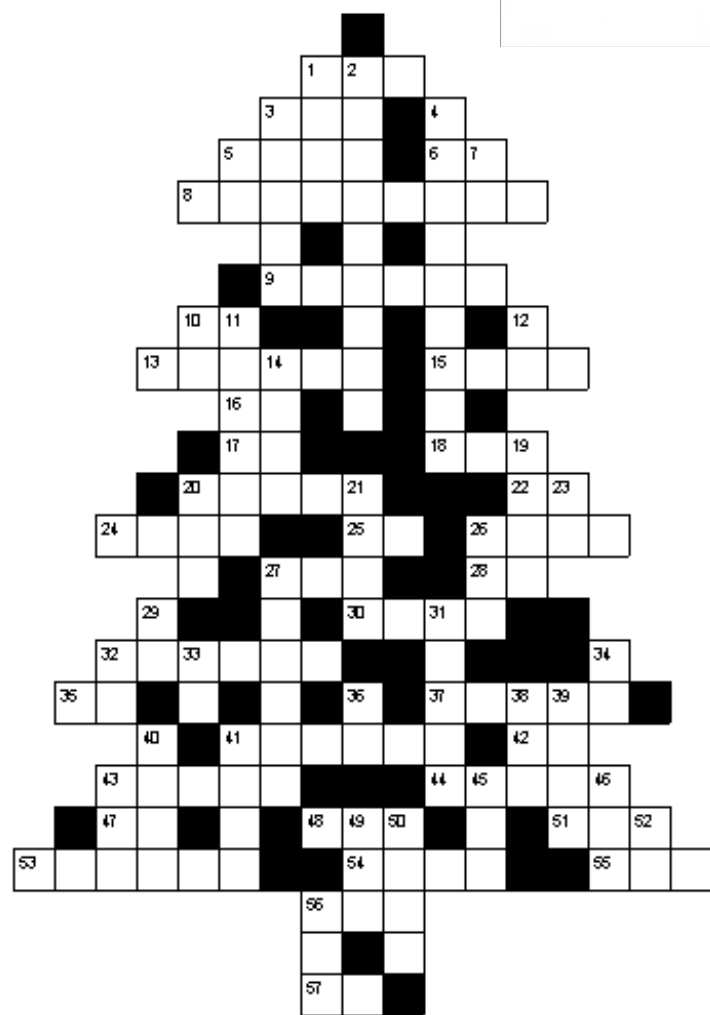
- 175g Butter, softened
- 85g Golden caster sugar
- ½ tsp Vanilla extract
- 225g Plain flour
- 75g Pistachios
- 75g Dried cranberries



Method:

- Mix the butter, sugar and vanilla extract with a wooden spoon. Stir in the flour, and then tip in the pistachios and cranberries (you might need to get your hands in at this stage to bring the mix together as a dough). Halve the dough and shape each half in to a log about 5cm across. Wrap in cling film, then chill for 1 hour or freeze for up to 3 months.
- Heat oven to 180C/160c fan/Gas 4. Slice the logs into 1cm-thick rounds, place on a baking tray lined with baking parchment and bake for 12-15 mins. Cool completely on the tray.

Christmas Puzzle



Across

1. President
3. Observe
5. Discuss
6. "And _____ shall reign over the house of Jacob..."
8. Flock watchers
9. Satisfy
10. The great I _____
13. Mary's resting place
15. Mother of Jesus
16. Negative
17. "_____ and search diligently for the young child"
18. Jesus is the _____ of God
20. The baby
22. "...and shall be called the Son _____ of the Highest:"
24. Destitute
25. "...and laid Him _____ a manger"
26. Bearded nanny
27. "And she brought her first born _____,"

28. "...and _____ earth peace, good will towards men."
30. Wiseman gift
32. "And _____ him with all the heart" (two words)
35. "...what have we to _____ with thee, thou Jesus..."
37. What the wisemen brought
41. Stepfather
42. Either
43. More accurate.
44. "And all went to be _____, every one into his own city."
47. "For unto you _____ born this day
48. No room here
51. Consume
53. Singing Cherubs
54. Present decorations
55. "For unto you is born, this _____ in the city..."
56. Pro
57. Way to win in boxing



Down

1. Jump
2. Birth city
3. Shepherds flock
4. The Holiday we observe
5. Brand of sugar
7. Mr. McMahon
10. "Hee shall be born of Mary, _____ Jerusalem..."
11. Baby's bed
12. Northwestern state
14. Hisses
19. Mid day
20. Happiness
21. What the angels did
23. "_____ la la la la la la la"
26. Jehovah
27. Redeemer
29. "His name was called Jesus, which was _____ named of the angel"
31. Illumination
32. "and it came _____ pass..."
33. "... and _____, the star which they saw in the east..."
34. "When _____ his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph,"
36. "Master what shall _____ do?"
38. Sly canine
39. Decorated pine
40. "...behold, there came _____ men from the east."
41. Not Gentiles
43. Parable of the _____ tree
45. Mary's transportation
46. Father
49. Broadcast TV network
50. Christmas carol
52. Instructor's helper
56. Inquire

The Missing Five Pound Note

David George worked for the Post Office and his job was to process all the mail that had illegible addresses. One day just before Christmas, a letter landed on his desk simply addressed in shaky handwriting: 'To God'. With no other clue on the envelope, George opened the letter and read:

I am a 93 year old widow living on the State pension. Yesterday someone stole my purse. It had £100 in it, which was all the money I had in the world and no pension due until after Christmas. Next week is Christmas and I had invited two of my friends over for Christmas lunch. Without that money, I have nothing to buy food with. I have no family to turn to, and you are my only hope. God; can you please help me?

David George was really touched, and being kind hearted, he put a copy of the letter up on the staff notice board at the main Cambridge sorting office where he worked. The letter touched the other postmen and they all dug into their pockets and had a whip round. Between them they raised £95.00. Using an officially franked Post Office envelope, they sent the cash on to the old lady, and for the rest of the day, all the workers felt a warm glow thinking of the nice thing they had done.

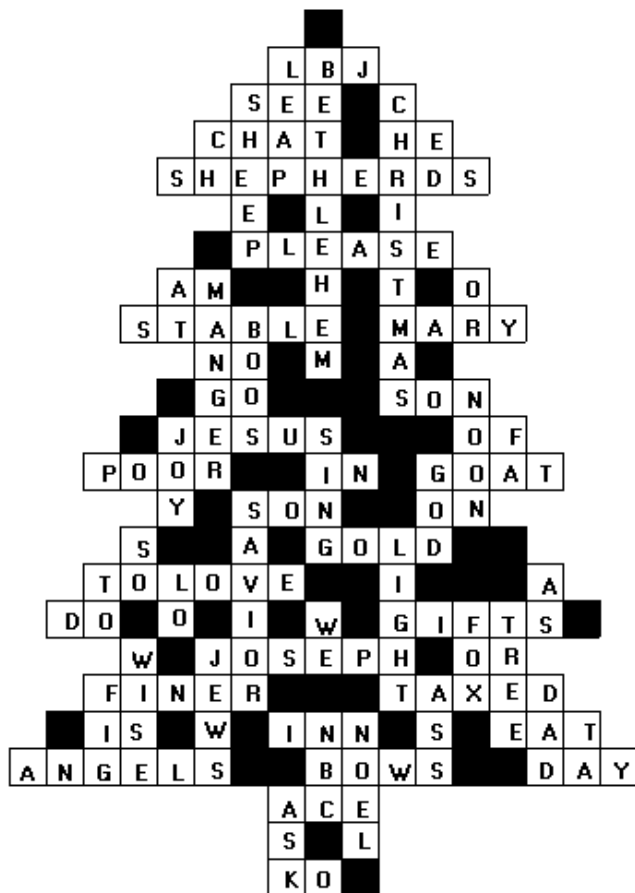
Christmas came and went. A few days later, another letter simply addressed to 'God' landed in the Sorting Office. Many of the postmen gathered around while David opened the letter. It read,

How can I ever thank you enough for what you did for me? Because of your generosity, I was able to provide a lovely lunch for my friends. We had a very nice day, and I told my friends of your wonderful gift - in fact we haven't gotten over it and even Father John, our parish priest, is beside himself with joy. By the way, there was £5.00 missing. I think it must have been those thieving fellows at the Post Office.

David could not help musing on Oscar Wilde's quote: 'A good deed never goes unpunished'

During 2016 we re-housed 28 new and existing tenants. The existing tenants were from the internal waiting list. If you need to move for health reasons e.g. you are struggling with your stairs or you need to be nearer family, then please write into the office, we also require a doctors letter to support your reasons for needing to move.

Puzzle Answers



Wishing you a very
merry Christmas!
May it bring you joy,
happiness and
everything else you
deserve.

**What would you like to see in the next
newsletter?**

**If you have any stories, poems, jokes,
interesting hobbies, recipes, holiday stories or
if you would like to see anything else in the
newsletter; we would love to hear from you,
please get in touch on: 01603 625078 or
email:**

reception@norwichhousingociety.co.uk