

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Classification</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> October 2011	<b>MEETING NAME</b> Home Owners' Council
<b>Report title:</b>		Leasehold Satisfaction	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Antoinette Stasaitis Business Improvement Manager	

## PURPOSE

This report is to provide Home Owners' Council with highlights from the Home Owner Survey that has been carried out by the Business Improvement Unit.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Home Owners' Council is asked to note the contents of this report.

## BACKGROUND

1. The Council began a quarterly sample survey of 800 home owners in quarter three of 2010/11. The survey was conducted to establish what home owners think about their home and how satisfied they are with the services provided by the council. The consultation took place over a four-week period using a postal questionnaire and random selection of leaseholders from across the borough.
2. Three £25 vouchers are offered as an incentive to return the questionnaire. Return rates over the three quarters have been between 9% and 11%.
3. This report summarises the results for the first three quarters that the survey has been conducted.

## SUMMARY RESULTS FROM THE SURVEYS

<b>Performance Indicator</b>	<b>2010/11 Qtr. 3</b>	<b>2010/11 Qtr. 4</b>	<b>2011/12 Qtr. 1</b>	<b>Quarterly trend</b>
% satisfied with the overall services provided by the council (NI 160).	46%	57%	47%	↓
% satisfied that their annual service charge represents value for money.	27%	25%	30%	↑
% satisfied that the major works service charges represent good value for money.	12%	5%	24%	↑
% satisfied with the way the council generally deals with communal repairs and maintenance.	30%	32%	24%	↓
% satisfied with the overall quality of the major work carried out.	46%	37%	31%	↓
% satisfied with the general upkeep of their block or estate.	51%	66%	56%	↓
% who feel that the council is good at keeping them informed about things that affect them as a homeowner.	52%	62%	50%	↓
% who described their officer as very or fairly helpful.	55%	59%	58%	↓
% satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live.	62%	76%	92%	↑
% satisfied with the play areas in their neighbourhood.	66%	70%	53%	↓

4. The overall satisfaction of home owners is lower than that of tenants, which for the same period was between 69% and 76%.

5. The areas of poorest satisfaction are:
- The value for money of the annual service charge
  - The value for money of major works service charges
  - The way the council generally deals with communal repairs and maintenance
  - The overall quality of the major work carried out

## OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

These are cumulative results from over the three quarters and the percentages are of those respondents that completed the particular question.

### Contact with the Council's housing services

6. The ways home owners last contacted the council were:

Telephoned	55%
Emailed	22%
Visited office	12%
Sent letter	8%
Online via council's website	4%

7. The reasons for home owners last contacting the council were:

Service charge information	20%
Communal repairs	18%
Other, please specify	12%
Major works	12%
Leak from other property	7%
Grounds maintenance	6%
Antisocial behaviour	5%
Estate lighting	4%
Cleaning	4%
Refuse collection	4%
Tenant and resident association, area housing forum, or homeowner council	2%
Recycling services	2%
Altering or improving your property	2%
Selling a property	1%
Buying a property	1%

(a variety of reasons including: checking meters, insurance claims and structural problems)

### Resident Involvement

8. The ways that respondents were currently involved was (percentage of total responses):

Home owner council	26%
Area forums	25%
Tenants and resident association	16%
Estate inspections	10%
Web forums	7%
Home owner conference	5%
Email consultation groups	4%
Tenant management organisations	4%
Resident working groups	3%

9. The ways that respondents would like to be involved was (percentage of total responses):

Email consultation groups	21%
Home owner council	15%
Web forums	15%
Estate inspections	12%
Home owner conference	10%
Tenants and resident association	9%
Resident working groups	8%
Tenant management organisations	6%
Area forums	5%

### Crime and antisocial behaviour

10. The percentage of respondent's saying this area was a very big or fairly big problem were (each area assessed separately):

Noisy neighbours	37%
Vandalism	33%
Disruptive children/teenagers	30%
Crime	26%
Drug use or drug dealing	26%
Sexual harassment	5%
Homophobic harassment	5%
Racial harassment	3%

### Block and estate services

11. The percentage of respondent's saying this was a very big or fairly big problem were (each area assessed separately):

Parking facilities	42%
Rubbish or litter	40%
Dogs fouling	40%
Maintenance of roads and paths	30%
Fly tipping	29%
Vandalism/Graffiti	19%
Noisy dogs	17%
Empty garages	10%

### Annual service charges

12. The percentage of respondents saying the following services for which they pay annual charges were poor or very poor value for money were (each area assessed separately):

Responsive (minor) repairs	43%
Care and upkeep	34%
Lifts	29%
Estate grounds maintenance	28%
Entry phone	27%
Security services	26%
Communal TV aerial	26%
Heating	22%
Lighting and electricity	21%
Building insurance	18%

## Major Works

13. The percentage of respondent's saying they were unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with the following areas for the last major works which took place in their block or estate were (each area assessed separately):

Cost of work	73%
Quality of work	56%
Consultation with yourself	47%
Clarity of information provided about the work	46%
Consultation with resident representatives	35%

## USING FEEDBACK

14. This report confirms the areas of concern that home owners have been expressing to officers and councillors regarding the services that they receive. We use satisfaction reports along with other feedback to tailor our services and prioritise our improvements in a variety of ways at many different levels within the Council. It is therefore not surprising that the Council plan promises to addresses many of the major concerns that home owners have been raising including:
- improving the housing repairs service and other aspects of customer care, which are key issues for tenants and homeowners. We want our tenants and homeowners to be involved in the design and delivery of ongoing service improvement. Practical improvements include ensuring that service charges for homeowners are accurately estimated and billed, that major works are value for money and that charges for major works are fully explained to homeowners. We will also deliver all of the recommendations of the leaseholder audit action plan.
  - widening the opportunities for residents to become involved in the delivery of housing services through a refreshed resident involvement strategy

A delivery schedule is in place for the housing service to ensure that the plans become a reality.

