



Berwickshire Housing

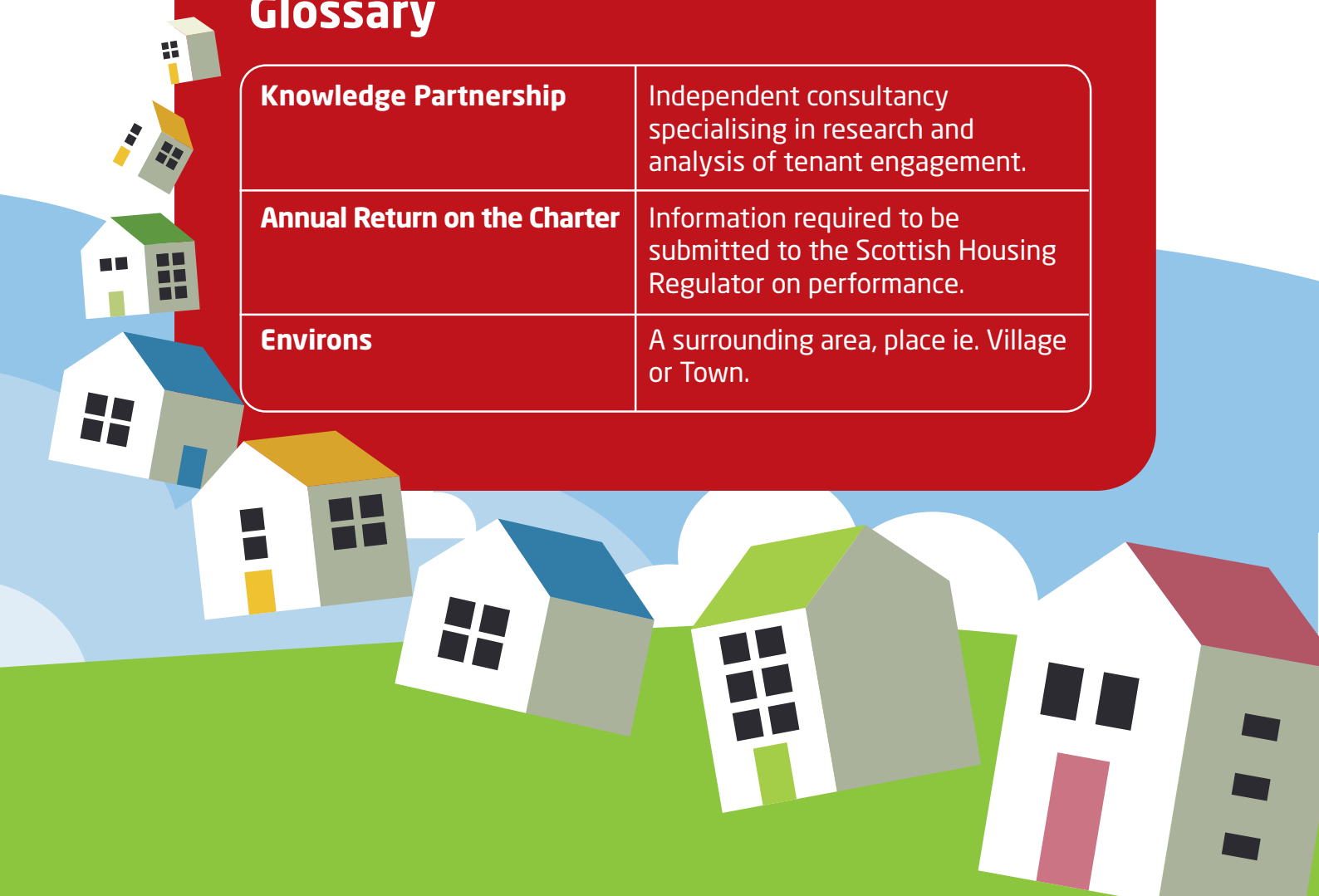
Customer Satisfaction Survey Executive Summary



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Glossary



Knowledge Partnership	Independent consultancy specialising in research and analysis of tenant engagement.
Annual Return on the Charter	Information required to be submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator on performance.
Environs	A surrounding area, place ie. Village or Town.

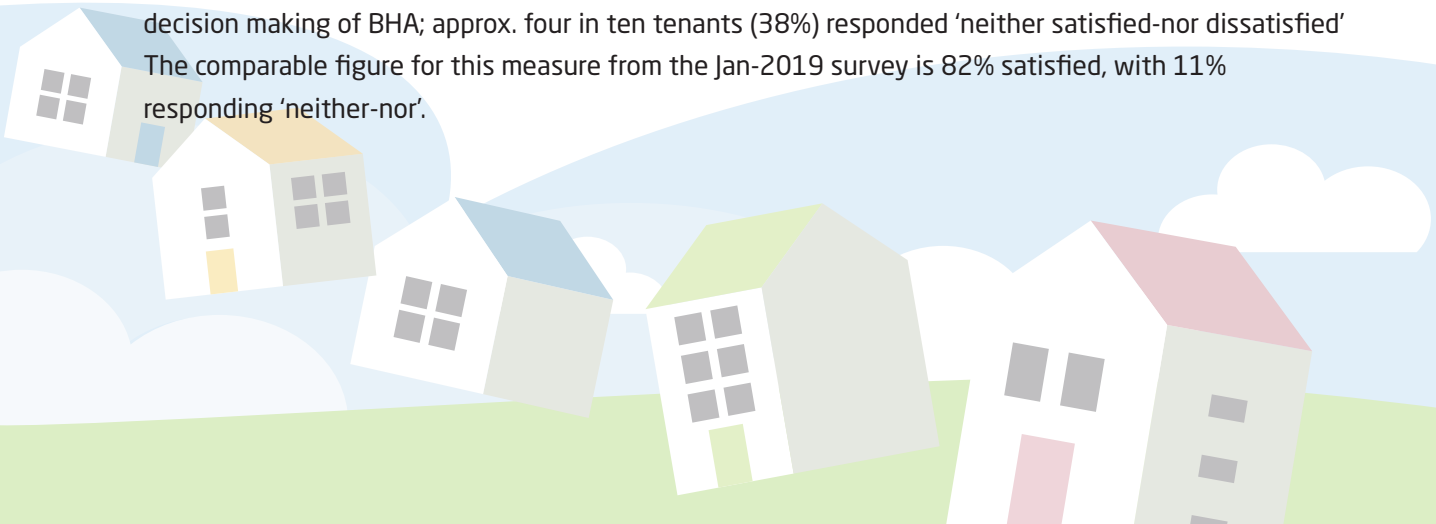
1. Introduction and Methods

This report provides the results of research into the satisfaction levels of a sample of Berwickshire Housing Association (BHA) tenants in relation to services such as information provision, repairs, housing quality, contact etc. It has been prepared by Knowledge Partnership who carried out the research on behalf of BHA.

The research draws on quantitative feedback gathered from tenants by means of a postal, telephone, and online administered questionnaire. The survey was delivered in two waves between 4th November 2019 and 11th December 2019 and by the conclusion of the fieldwork period, 711 tenants had responded to the survey, representing 40% of the available survey sample.

2. Annual Return on the Charter (ARC) Measures

- Considering BHA's services overall, 77% of tenants are very or fairly satisfied with the service provided; 16% of tenants are dissatisfied with the service. The figure for the current survey (December 2019) compares with 88% tenant satisfaction reported during the Association's last large-scale satisfaction survey in January 2019.
- On the measure of satisfaction with housing quality, 71% of tenants in Dec-2019 are very or fairly satisfied compared with 21% who are dissatisfied. In Jan-2019, 86% of tenants were satisfied with their home whilst 11% were dissatisfied.
- Most tenants (78%) were satisfied with their last repair (carried out in the last year); 18% were dissatisfied with this service. In Jan-2019, 86% of tenants were satisfied with the repair service.
- For the question, 'Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with BHA's contribution to the management of the neighbourhood you live in?' 67% of tenants are very or fairly satisfied on this measure and 9% are dissatisfied (and 24% responded 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied'). In Jan-2019, 86% of tenants were satisfied with the management of their neighbourhood.
- Most tenants agree that the rent they pay for housing and related services is value for money i.e. 77% of tenants agrees that rent is very or fairly good value for money whilst 9% say that rent value is poor. In the Jan-2019 survey, 86% of tenants agreed that rent was good value for money; 10% disagreed.
- For the question 'How good or poor is BHA at keeping you informed about their services and decisions?', 79% of tenants in Dec-2019 rate BHA as either very or fairly good in this area whilst 6% say the Association is 'fairly or very poor'. The equivalent figure recorded in Jan-2016 was 89% saying 'good'.
- The majority of tenants (57%) are satisfied with the opportunities they have for participating in the decision making of BHA; approx. four in ten tenants (38%) responded 'neither satisfied-nor dissatisfied'. The comparable figure for this measure from the Jan-2019 survey is 82% satisfied, with 11% responding 'neither-nor'.



3. Contact experience and processes

- Amongst those tenants that had contacted BHA in the last year, 80% were satisfied with their experience of contacting the Association whilst 8% were dissatisfied.
- Tenants mainly contact BHA to report/discuss a repair (87% of all contact) or to discuss a rent account (19%).
- In December 2019, 75% of all tenants had access or planned to arrange access to the Internet. Amongst tenants with Internet access there is a high level of use of digital service e.g. 75% use online shopping, 73% use Facebook and 69% use online banking.

4. Tenant participation

- Whilst 57% of tenants were satisfied with BHA's opportunities to participate, analysis shows that when tenants are aware of participation methods, they are more likely to be satisfied on this measure i.e. amongst aware tenants, 62% are satisfied with opportunities to participate compared to 32% satisfaction for those who are unaware of BHA's tenant participation methods.
- Approximately nine in ten tenants (88%) have heard of one or more of BHA's tenant participation activities e.g. 69% have heard of surveys and 32% have heard of Tenant Volunteers.

5. Housing

- Although most tenants (71%) are satisfied with the quality of their home, satisfaction varies by household composition e.g. the least satisfied households are those containing children (51%), those who pay full rent (69%), and tenants who live in Greenlaw and environs (59%). Conversely, the most satisfied tenants are households where the tenant is aged 75 plus (86%) and those who live in Duns and environs (78%).
- Amongst tenants who are dissatisfied with housing, 54% (of dissatisfied tenants) think that their windows could be improved, alongside their kitchens (42%), boiler/heating systems (37%), and heating costs (36%).
- Approximately half of tenants (48%) agree that their home is energy efficient; 31% disagree. In relation to heating affordability, 44% of tenants said that they spend more than 10% of their income (after paying rent) on heating their home; 27% disagreed this was the case in their household.

6. Repairs

- Whilst 78% of tenants are satisfied with their last repair, satisfaction varies by location and 'employment' type e.g. 82% of tenants living in Chirside and environs are satisfied with the repair service compared to 70% of tenants living in Greenlaw and environs. In addition, 87% of retired tenants are satisfied with their last repair (carried out in the last year) compared to 68% of working tenants.
- 18% of tenants were dissatisfied with their last repair identifying problems with the standard of the repair (40%), and repairs not being started promptly (29%). In addition, amongst tenants who were dissatisfied with BHA's service overall (16%), the principal cause of dissatisfaction was the repairs service (65%).

7. Rent

- In relation to value for money, 77% of tenants agree that rent is good value for money whilst 23% think that their rent is not always good for money (2)*. As might be anticipated, there is some variation in value for money perceptions by property location e.g. for tenants who live Duns and environs (82% say rent is 'good value'). This contrasts with a less positive view amongst tenants who live Greenlaw and environs (70% say 'good value').
- The three main changes that would enhance value for money for those tenants who rate value as 'poor or neither good nor poor' are reducing rent levels (54%), minimising rent increases (48%), and upgrading the internal parts of homes (35%).

* Money (2) * = 14% say neither good nor poor and 9% say poor value.

8. Neighbourhoods

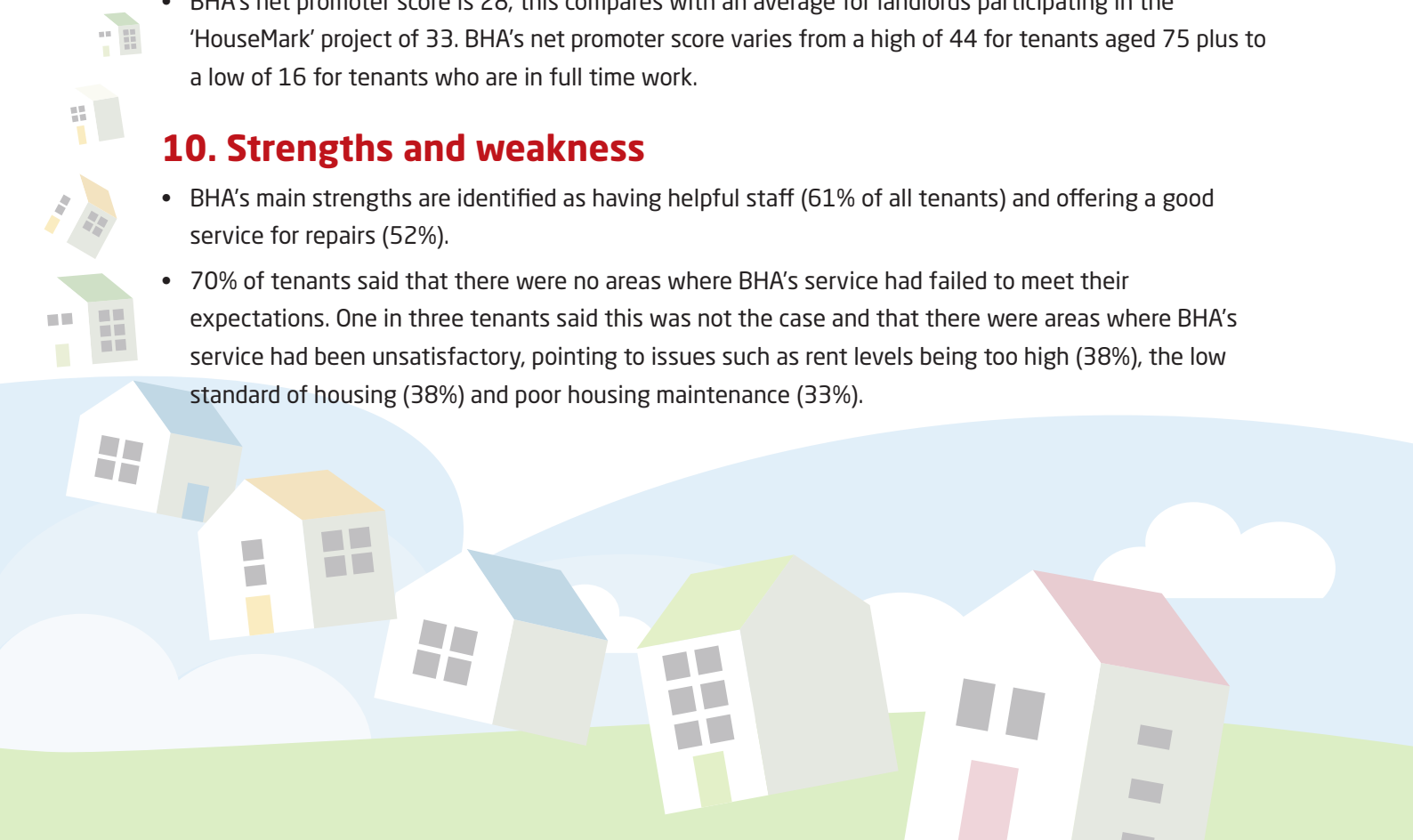
- Most tenants (88%) said that their neighbourhood was a good place to live although 5% said they were dissatisfied on this measure.
- Amongst all tenants, the main neighbourhood improvements required relate to tackling dog fouling (32% say this is an issue), better landscape maintenance (28%) and improving parking (28%).

9. Recommending BHA

- Approximately four in ten tenants (42%) would be 'very likely' to recommend BHA to friends and relatives (2% said they would be 'not at all likely to recommend BHA').
- BHA's net promoter score is 28; this compares with an average for landlords participating in the 'HouseMark' project of 33. BHA's net promoter score varies from a high of 44 for tenants aged 75 plus to a low of 16 for tenants who are in full time work.

10. Strengths and weakness

- BHA's main strengths are identified as having helpful staff (61% of all tenants) and offering a good service for repairs (52%).
- 70% of tenants said that there were no areas where BHA's service had failed to meet their expectations. One in three tenants said this was not the case and that there were areas where BHA's service had been unsatisfactory, pointing to issues such as rent levels being too high (38%), the low standard of housing (38%) and poor housing maintenance (33%).



11. Conclusion and Areas for Investigation

CONCLUSION

On balance, this research has indicated that a majority of tenants are very or fairly satisfied with the overall service they receive from BHA (77% are very or fairly satisfied overall). Aside from being satisfied overall, the majority of tenants are also satisfied with most aspects of the service provided e.g. the repairs service, being kept informed, housing quality, and contact.

AREAS FOR INVESTIGATION - VARIATION IN SATISFACTION

Whilst overall satisfaction with BHA's service is fair (77%), some customers are less satisfied than others. In particular, younger tenants, employed tenants, and those with children at home tend to be less satisfied than other households. In addition, tenants living in Greenlaw and environs (3)* tend to be much less satisfied overall. It is worth noting here also that survey respondents from the Greenlaw and environs area are consistently less satisfied than other BHA areas on most measures of satisfaction.

* environs (3) = Greenlaw, Gordon, Westruther, Hume, Eccles, Leitholm and Birgham

Property maintenance

Property maintenance features at various stages of the survey as a reason for tenants to be dissatisfied with the service provide by BHA. For example:

- Approx. one third of tenants who say that BHA's service has not met their expectations indicate that this is because of issues with property maintenance and the repairs service
- Most tenants (65%) who are dissatisfied with BHA's service overall say that this is because of the repair service (in addition, 37% of dissatisfied tenants also say that their home is in a poor condition)
- For tenants whose homes have been repaired in the last year, 18% are dissatisfied with the service, with the main issue being the standard of the repair carried out (40%)
- On the measure of housing quality, 21% of all tenants say that they are dissatisfied with the quality of their home. The housing components that cause tenants to be most dissatisfied with their housing are windows, kitchens and heating systems, including insulation. We also observe that approx. one in three tenants (31%) disagree that their home is energy efficient.



Contact with BHA

Whilst most tenants agree that they are satisfied with contacting BHA, there are some areas of customer contact that could merit further investigation e.g. amongst the 8% of tenants who were dissatisfied with their last contact, 50% were dissatisfied with the outcome of their enquiry, 48% said it took too long to deal with the issue, and 37% said it was difficult get to the right person easily. We also observe that across all tenants, 11% said that getting hold of the right staff member to deal with an enquiry was difficult, although this figure rises to 22% in the case of tenants living in Greenlaw and environs.

Participation

Almost four in ten tenants (38%) answered 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' for the question, 'How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the opportunities given to you to participate in Berwickshire Housing's decision-making processes? This response may indicate either a lack of interest in the question area, or a lack of involvement by the tenant in this activity.

Rent levels/increases

Approx. one in four tenants (23%) do not specifically say that rent is good value for money, with the reasons for this view mainly to do with absolute rent levels and the amount of the annual rent increase. Rent levels/increases are also the main reason given by tenants who say that BHA's service has not met their expectations.

Neighbourhood improvements

- The need for neighbourhood improvements is focused on issues such as dog fouling (32% of all tenants see this item as requiring improvement), soft landscaping (28%) and parking (28%). Areas such as Eyemouth tend to have the greatest need for improvement around anti-social behaviour e.g. dealing with drug related activities.
- In relation to neighbourhood management, approx. one in four tenants answered, 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' to the question 'Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with BHA's contribution to the management of the neighbourhood you live in?'
- This response may indicate either a lack of awareness of how BHA performs in relation to its contribution to neighbourhood management, or a view that for some elements of this provision BHA performs in a satisfactory way, whilst in others, its performance is deemed unsatisfactory.

