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# Bespoke Supportive Tenancies (BeST)

TSM Survey – 2023 Report

November 2023

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# Contents

1. [Introduction](#)
2. [Key Metrics Summary](#)
3. [Overall Satisfaction](#)
4. [Keeping Properties in Good Repair](#)
5. [Responsible Neighbourhood Management](#)
6. [Respectful & Helpful Engagement](#)
7. [Improvements & Home Opinions](#)
8. [Wellbeing](#)
9. [Trends](#)
10. [Understanding Satisfaction](#)
11. [Conclusion](#)
12. [Recommendations](#)



# Introduction

Bespoke Supportive Tenancies' (BeST) is a dedicated charity, specialising in the provision of homes for people with support needs across England and Wales. The organisation was founded in 2010 in order to provide homes for people with a wide range of needs and abilities.

Acuity has been commissioned to undertake an independent tenant satisfaction survey of BeST's tenants to understand their opinions and attitudes towards the services they receive.

The survey was designed to meet the requirements of the Regulator of Social Housing and to collect the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) which became mandatory from April 2023.

The survey results provide an overview of the key drivers behind satisfaction levels and the issues tenants are most concerned about to allow the identification of areas for improvement to enhance the tenant experience.

The survey was undertaken between September and October 2023. It adopted a census approach, with all tenants of BeST sent a postal questionnaire (two mail-outs) which included a link for those who wished to complete the survey online, as well as a covering letter and reply-paid envelope. The survey was sent to 1,261 tenants, with a total of 350 responses being received at the close of the survey on 30 October 2023. This gives a response rate of 28%, with 96% of all responses being received by post. This follows a similar survey conducted by Acuity on BeST's behalf in 2022.

This report presents an analysis of the results based on the 350 returned surveys. This includes a breakdown of the results by various subgroups, including area. As this is a one-off survey, the report also contains an analysis of what is driving satisfaction at BeST, a comparison with other landlords who have completed TSM surveys and an understanding of the context in which BeST is currently operating.

The survey was confidential, and the results were sent back to BeST anonymised; unless tenants gave their permission to be identified – 86% of tenants did give permission to share their responses with their details attached and 68% of these tenants are happy for BeST to contact them to discuss any information they provided.

The aim of this survey is to provide data on tenants' satisfaction to allow BeST to:

- Understand its tenants' perceptions of current service provision.
- Compare the 2023 results with the previous survey carried out by Acuity in 2022.
- Compare the results with other landlords (where appropriate).
- Inform decisions regarding future service development.
- Report to the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) from April 2024 in line with the Tenant Satisfaction Measure (TSM) requirements.

For the overall results, Acuity, Housemark and the RSH recommend that landlords with fewer than 2,500 properties should achieve a sampling error of at least  $\pm 5\%$  at the 95% confidence level. For this survey, 350 responses were received which is high enough to conclude that the findings are accurate to within  $\pm 4.5\%$ . The data has also been weighted by area to ensure the results are representative of the whole tenant base.

The majority of figures throughout the report show the results as percentages. As percentages are rounded up or down from one decimal place to the nearest whole number, they may not always total 100%. Rounding can also cause percentages described in the supporting text to differ from the percentages in the charts by 1% when two percentages are added together.



62%

## Overall Satisfaction

The survey in 2023, found that 62% of tenants are satisfied with the overall service provided by BeST.

The highest level of satisfaction is for the overall repairs service over the last 12 months (65%). While 61% of tenants are satisfied that they are provided with a safe home and treated fairly and with respect.

However, there is room for improvement in areas such as how tenants' views are listened to and acted upon (46%) and the handling of complaints (31%). Although these two metrics are often among the lowest-performing for other social landlords (see benchmarking pages 29 and 30).

As will be shown throughout this report, satisfaction rates have generally decreased compared with the previous survey in 2022. This tends to mirror the experiences of many other landlords in the sector (see page 7 for national context).

# Key Metrics Summary 2023



**53%** Well maintained home



**57%** Easy to deal with



**61%** Safe home



**46%** Listens & Acts



**65%** Repairs - Last 12 months



**54%** Keeps you informed



**51%** Time taken - Last repair



**61%** Treats fairly & with respect



**50%** Communal areas clean & well maintained



**31%** Complaints handling



**47%** Positive contribution to neighbourhood



**60%** Housing officer



**52%** Anti-social behaviour



# Overall Satisfaction





Tenants were asked, “Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided by BeST?” This is the key metric in any tenant perception survey.

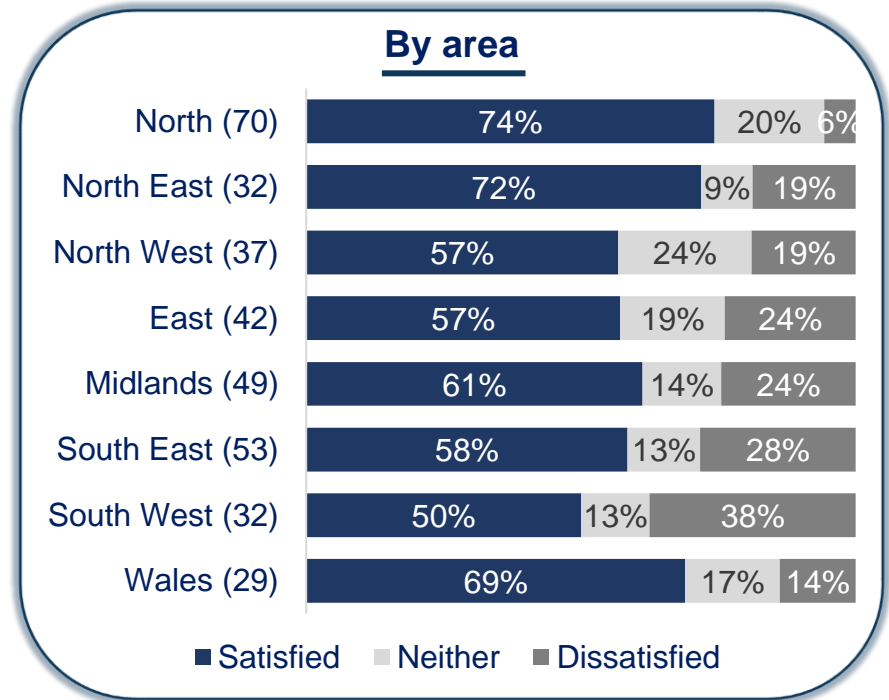
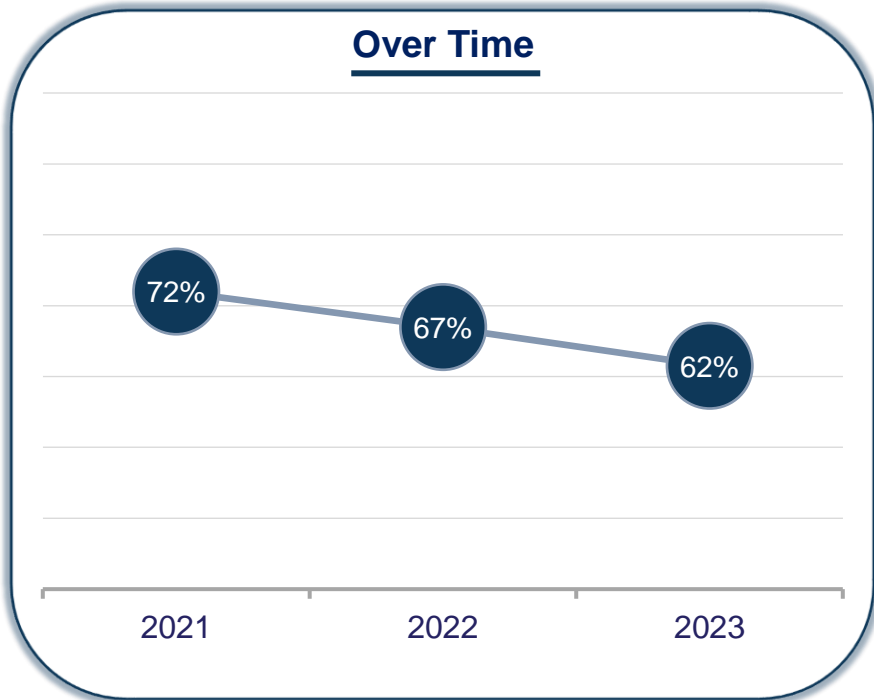
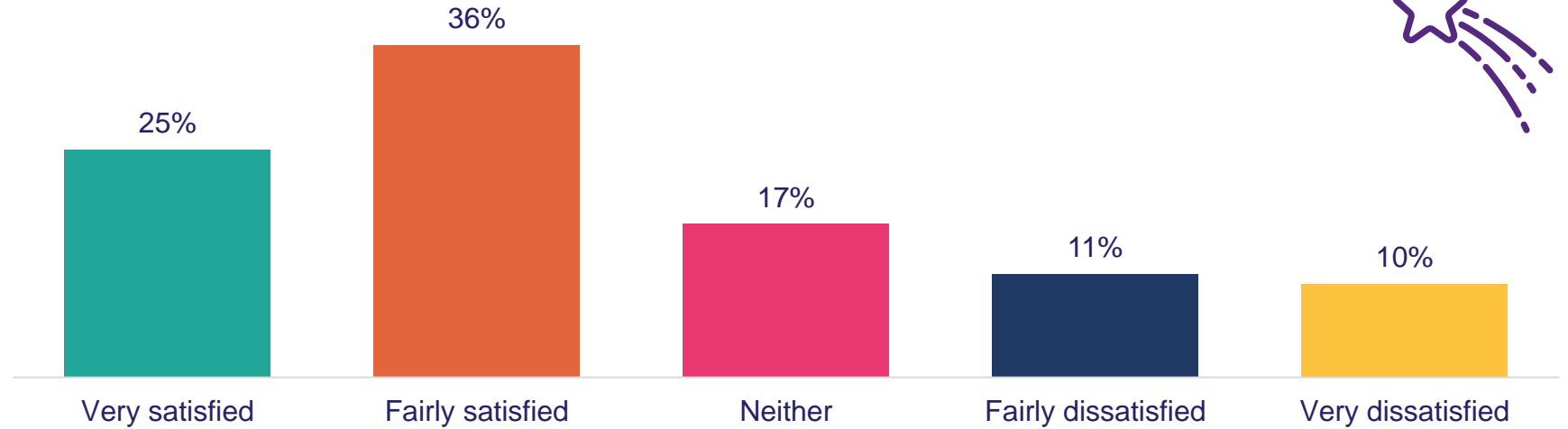
Around six out of ten tenants that responded to the survey are satisfied (62%), with fewer being very satisfied (25%), than very satisfied (36%).

However, just over one-fifth of tenants are dissatisfied with the overall service provided by BeST (22%), with the remaining 17% being neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

Overall satisfaction has fallen slightly since the previous survey in 2022 (down 5% from 67%). Although dissatisfaction has stayed the same, with more tenants now giving a neutral response.

Of the 8 different management areas, tenants in the North are the most satisfied with the overall service provided (74%), with those in the South West the least satisfied (50%). Correspondingly, tenants in the North are the least dissatisfied (6%) and those in the South West are the most dissatisfied (38%). The North West area has the greatest percentage of tenants that are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied at 24%.

# Overall Satisfaction



When considering the survey results, it is important that the national context and external factors impacting both landlords and tenants should also be taken into account. For example:

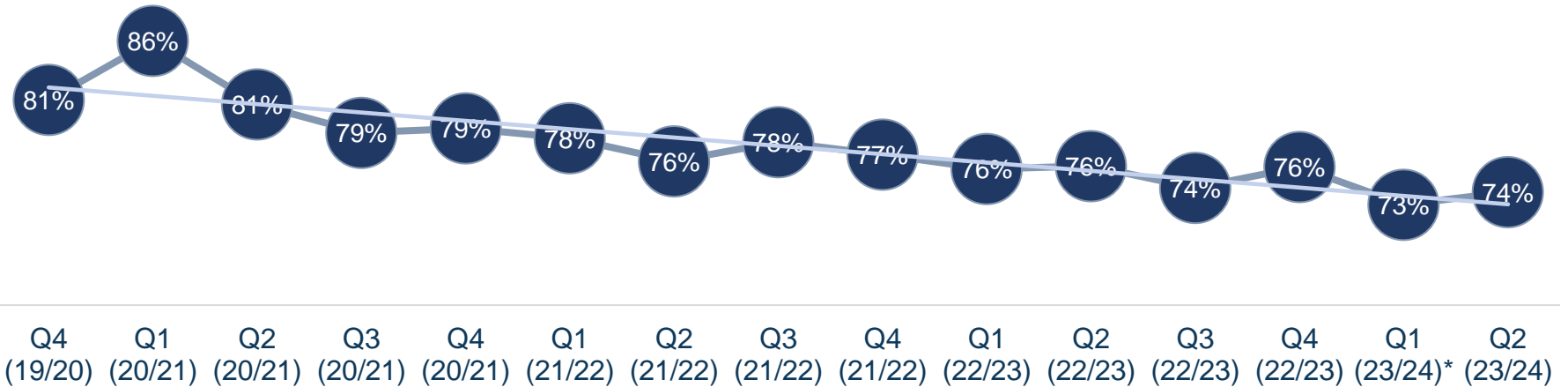
- The cost of living crisis
- Availability of skilled workers and supply-chain issues
- Government, regulatory and political changes
- A general uncertainty about the sector's future
- Economic instability

Satisfaction is based on perception rather than specific values so can be affected by how positive tenants feel about their lives. Factors such as the pandemic also altered the way social landlords operate, possibly making them less accessible and responsive to tenants than in the past. Additionally, tenants faced more time at home, which may have impacted how they view their homes and their willingness to accept any issues.

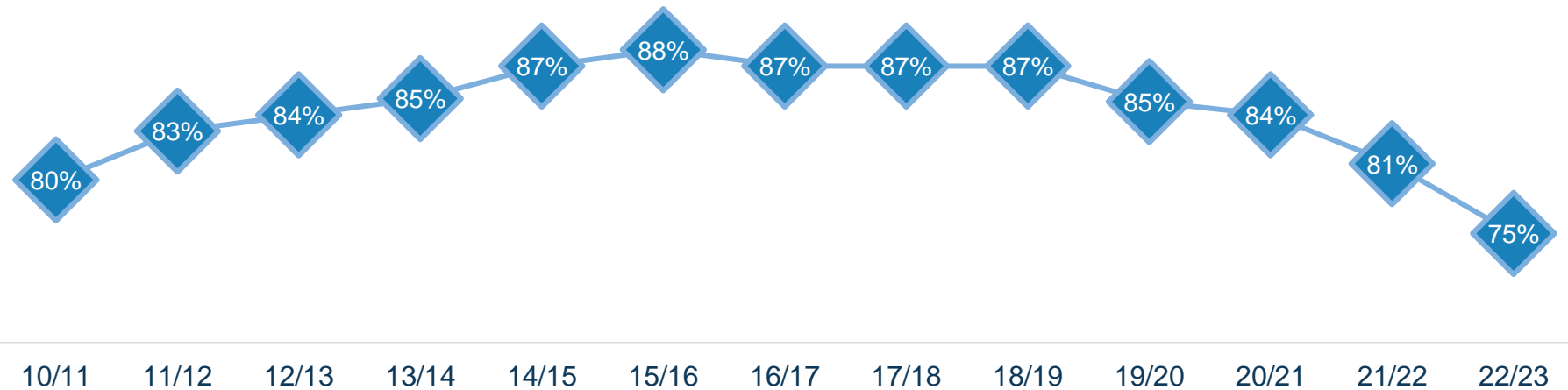
The top graph to the right shows how overall satisfaction has changed for Acuity's clients (tracker only) since 2019/20. The lower chart shows the results from Housemark members, with satisfaction peaking in 2015/16, but a steady decline since.

# National Context

Overall Services (Acuity Clients)



Satisfaction with services provided (NHF/Housemark median - general needs)



\*LCRA only onwards



## Keeping Properties in Good Repair





Following the introduction of the TSMs, tenants are now asked specifically to rate their satisfaction with a number of factors about their home; how well it is maintained, how safe they feel it is, the overall repairs service and the length of time taken to complete repairs.

Over half of tenants are satisfied that their homes are well maintained (53%), with more satisfied that they are safe (61%), which is common in surveys of this kind.

Around four-fifths of tenants stated that BeST had carried out a repair to their home in the last 12 months (82%). Of these tenants, 65% are satisfied with the overall repairs service during this period.

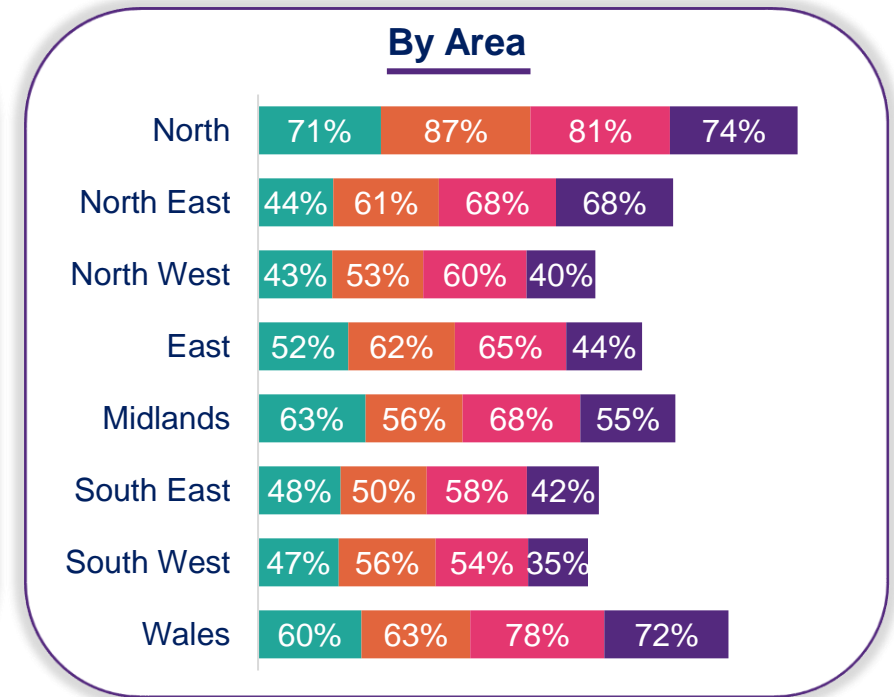
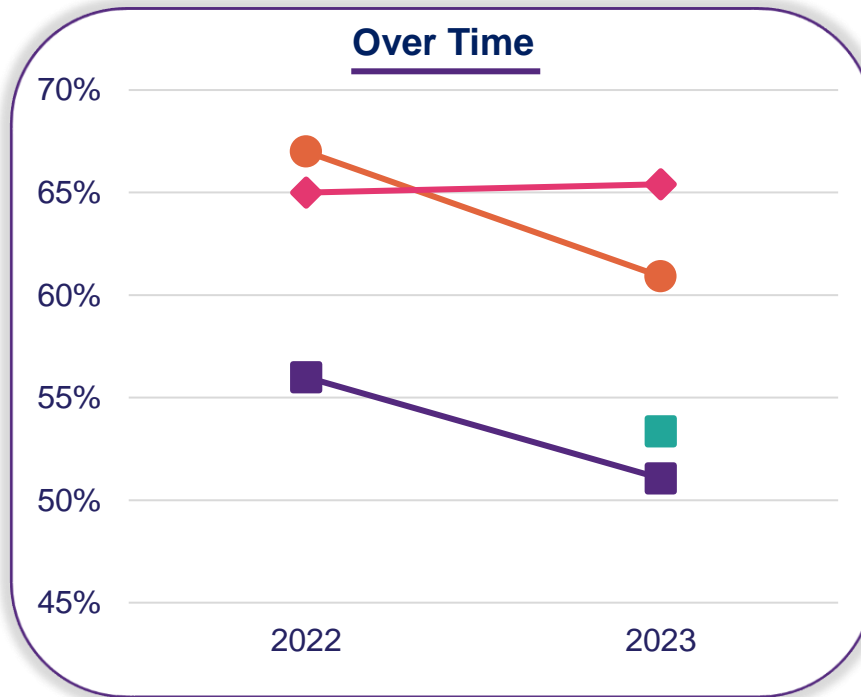
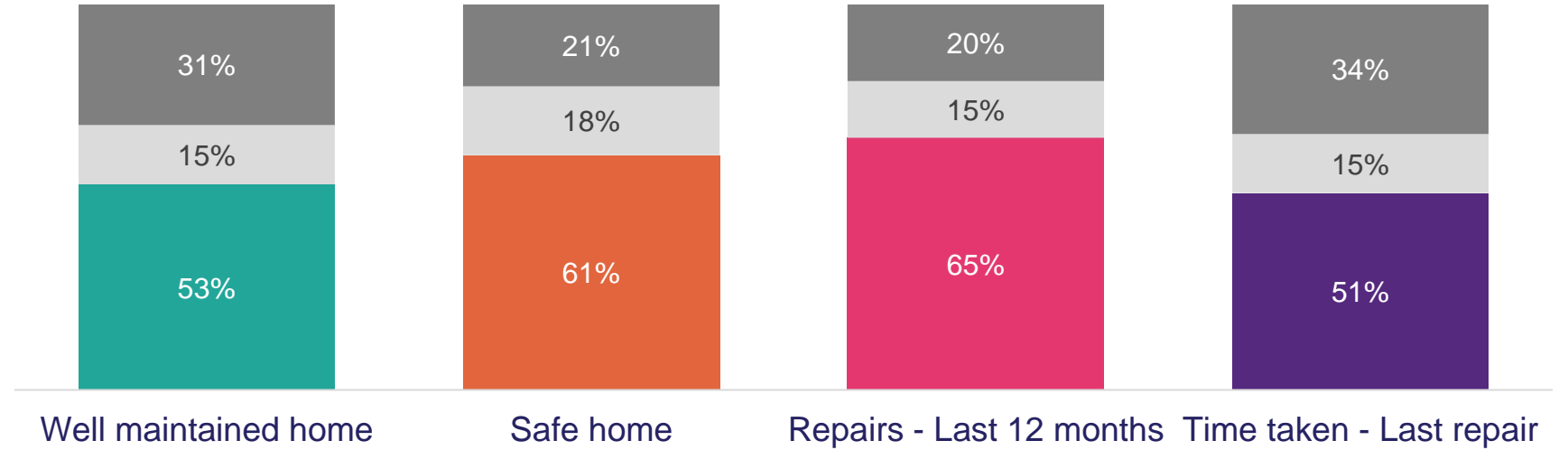
Fewer tenants are satisfied with the time taken to complete their most recent repair (51%), with 34% dissatisfied. Tenants in the North are the most satisfied (74%), with those in the South West the least (35%).

Satisfaction has fallen since 2022 for all comparable measures, aside from the repairs service over the last 12 months which has remained the same. The biggest decrease in satisfaction is for the home being safe (down 6%).

Tenants in the North area are the most satisfied in relation to their homes and the repairs service.



# Keeping Properties in Good Repair





# Responsible Neighbourhood Management



Eight out of ten tenants who responded to the survey stated that they live in a building with internal/external communal areas that BeST is responsible for maintaining (80%).

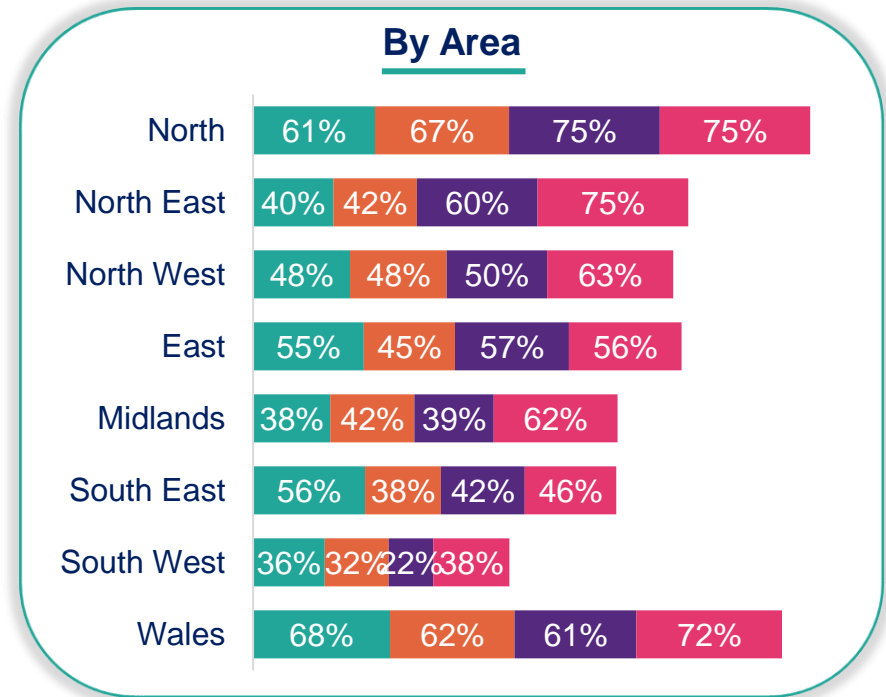
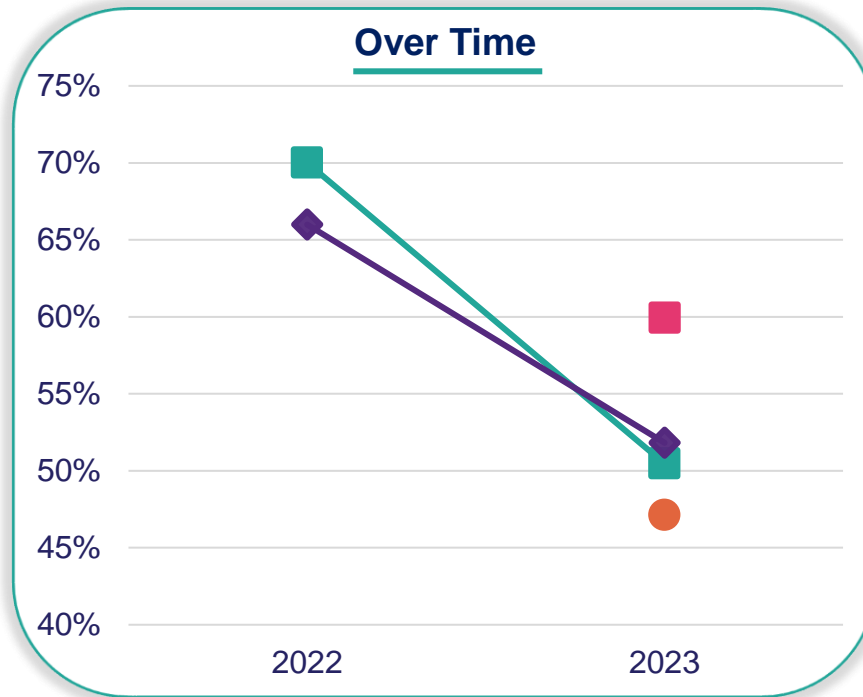
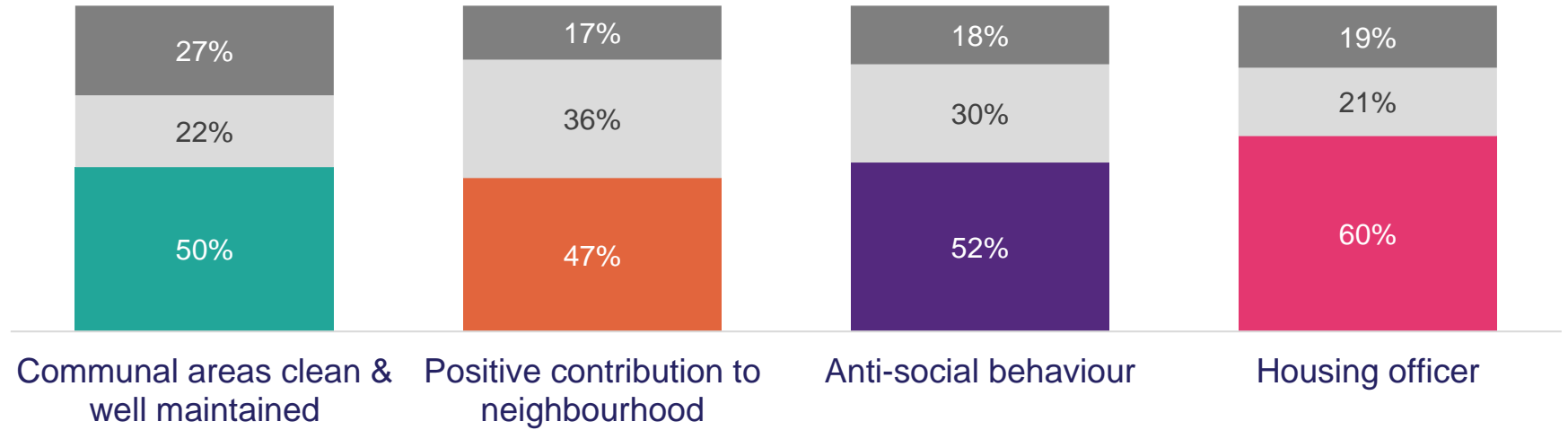
Half of these tenants are satisfied that BeST keeps their communal areas clean and well maintained (50%), with tenants in Wales being the most satisfied (68%), and those in the South West the least satisfied (36%). Satisfaction with the upkeep of the communal areas has decreased considerably since the previous survey in 2022, down from 70%.

Just under half of tenants are satisfied that BeST makes a positive contribution to their neighbourhood (47%). Although a significant proportion are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (36%), perhaps as they are unaware of the contribution made.

Satisfaction with the handling of anti-social behaviour has fallen from 66% in 2022 to 52%. Tenants in the North area are the most satisfied (75%), compared to just 22% in the South West.

In addition, three-fifths of tenants are satisfied with the overall service provided by their Housing Officer (60%). Three-quarters of tenants in the North and North East are satisfied (75%), compared with 38% in the South West.

# Responsible Neighbourhood Management





**Respectful & Helpful Engagement**



# Respectful & Helpful Engagement

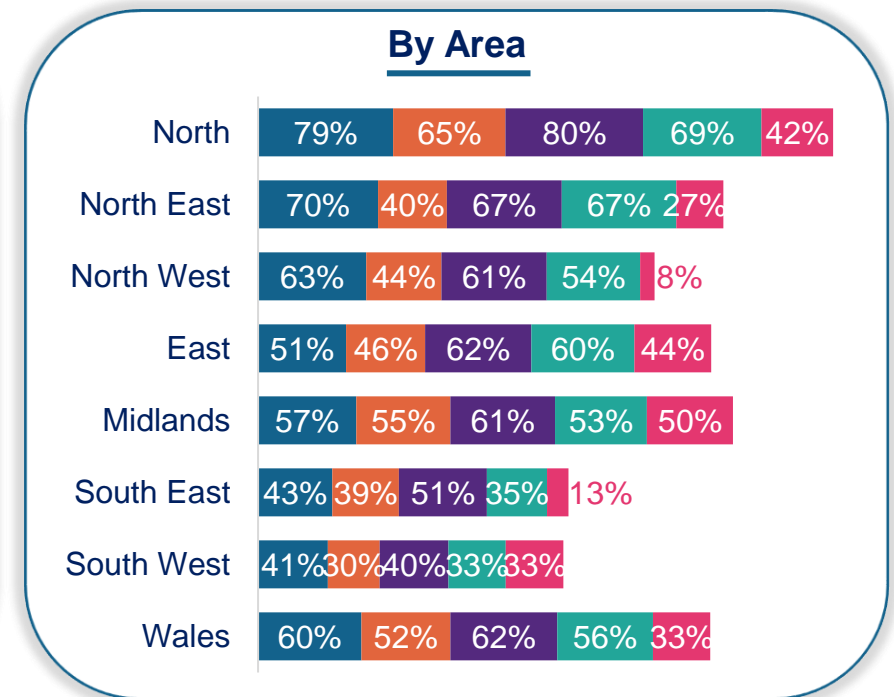
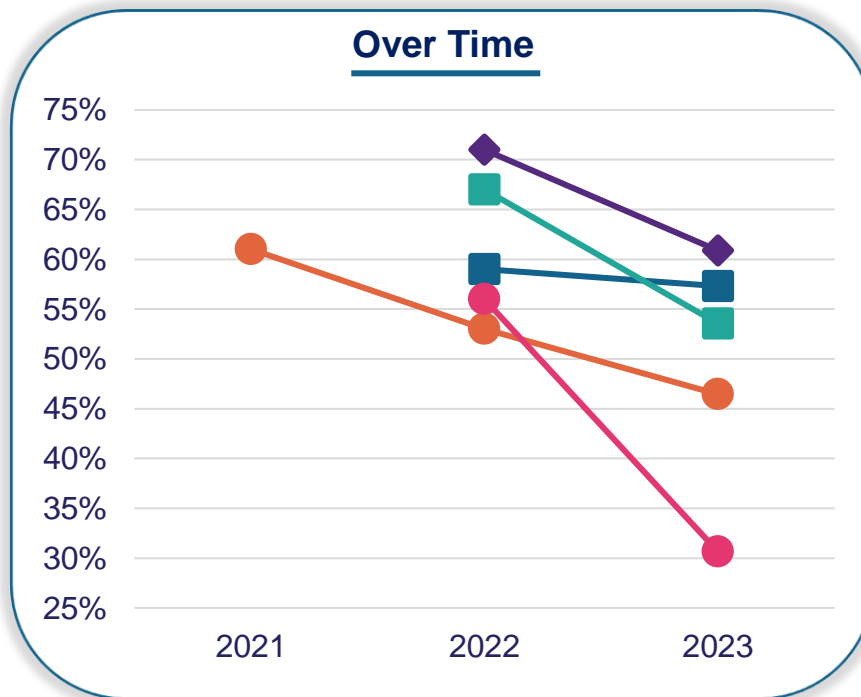
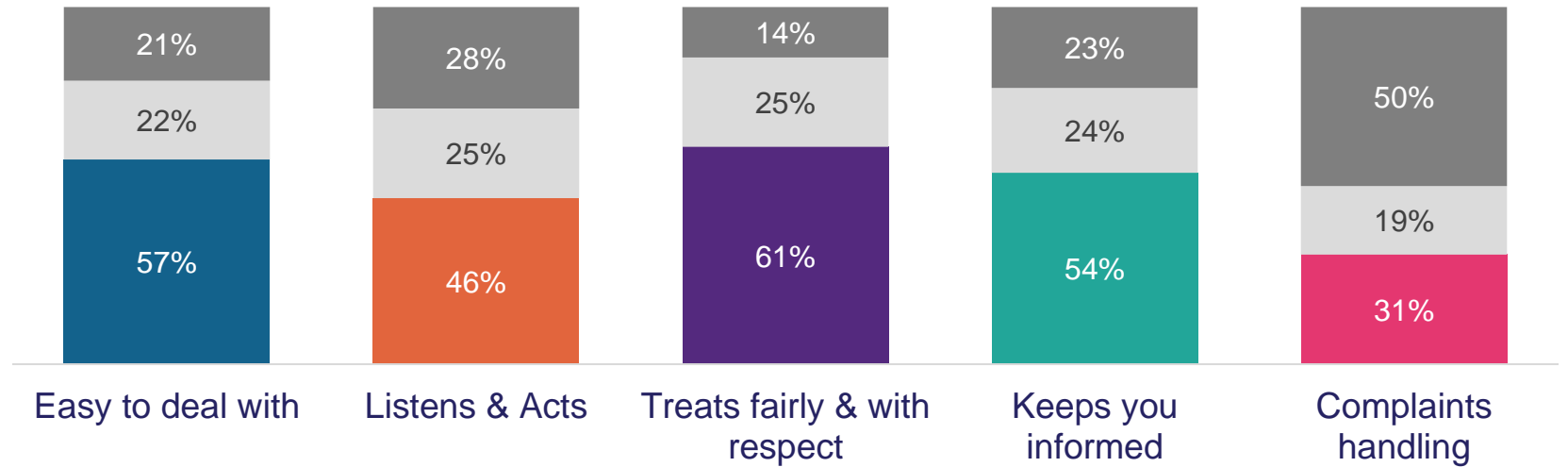
Just under three-fifths of tenants feel that BeST is easy to deal with (57%), which is a marginal decrease compared with the 2022 survey (down from 59%).

Fewer tenants are satisfied that BeST listens to their views and acts on them (46%), a fall from 53% in 2022. Tenants in the South West are the least satisfied at 30%, although this area also had the highest number of 'neither' responses.

Three-fifths of tenants (61%) agree that they are treated fairly and with respect, a decrease of 10% compared with the previous survey.

Over half of tenants are satisfied with how they are kept informed about things that matter to them (54%; down 13%), with 23% dissatisfied.

A third of tenants stated that they had made a complaint to BeST in the last 12 months (33%). Of these tenants, 31% are satisfied with the way their complaint was handled, with half being dissatisfied (50%). However, it should be noted that these may not all be complaints handled under the formal complaint procedure, as it is based on the tenant's personal perception of whether they feel they had made 'a complaint' to BeST.





# Improvements & Home Opinions



Tenants were asked what BeST could do to improve its services, and 233 tenants gave comments.

Although 15% of the tenants made positive comments and a further 7% had no suggestions, perhaps also feeling no improvements are necessary.

Of the more negative comments, the top four service areas noted for improvement are:

- Day-to-day repairs
- Property condition
- Customer services and contact
- Communications and information

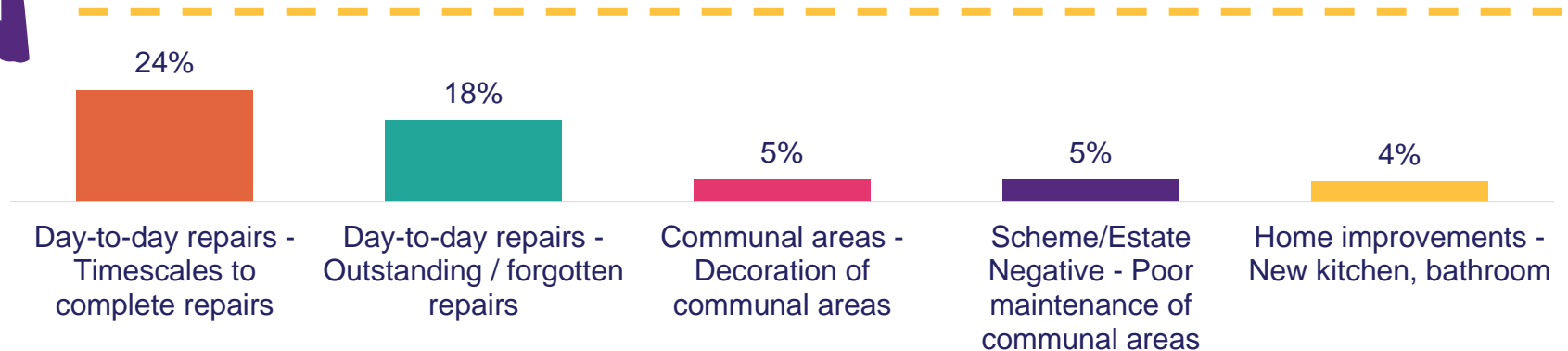
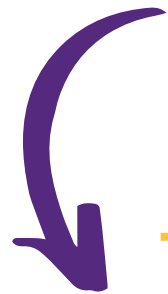
In particular, tenants commented upon repairs taking too long to be completed and outstanding or forgotten repairs that have not yet been carried out.

Reviewing the suggested improvements will enable BeST to target resources to achieve the greatest impact for tenants, which should help to improve satisfaction scores for the 2024 survey. Taking action will also demonstrate a listening organisation, that is keen to hear and act on feedback from its tenants.

The following page provides examples of the comments received regarding the top four service areas noted for improvement.

# Improvement Suggestions

## Categories



# Improvements to Service – Comments

## Day-to-day repairs

*“Respond to repairs reported online and give time frames.”*

*“Reply to repairs, problems in a more timely matter. Stuff needs fixing in the house and the side door, new furniture, they don’t come very quickly to do it.”*

*“Get jobs done a lot quicker and clean up after themselves.”*

*“Respond to repairs and damage quicker”.*

*“To finish jobs not leave half completed and leave in dangerous conditions.”*

*“Respond to repairs in a timely manner.”*

*“Act more rapidly. Inform the house when workmen etc. will attend as they arrive randomly. Send the right person for the job. People arrive and leave because they are unable to do the work.”*

*“Act on things quicker, for example fixing a leaking bath, then the water leaks out the sides.”*

## Property condition

*“Building needs updating.”*

*“Garden maintenance. Decorating out of date”.*

*“Regular inspections of the property. Replace threadbare entrance carpets. Improve the security of the property.”*

*“Please tell us when the house will be repainted.”*

*“Have something on the walls to protect against wheelchair wheel damage.”*

*“Painting communal areas.”*

*“Building needs updating throughout.”*

*“Help support with new carpets and updating the hallways as they smell and are dark.”*

*“Proper renovation. Fix our open walls and flooring. Fix/renovate our heating system!”*

*“Decorate the home.”*

*“Maintain the property better.”*

## Customer services and contact

*“Need to deal with complaints better.”*

*“Act upon complaints.”*

*“Reply to repairs, problems in a more timely matter.”*

*“Having a more responsive approach to resolving issues in a complaint.”*

*“Quicker responses.”*

*“Maybe once in a while a visit (preferably after a text message to arrange) from the Housing Officer to chat about any concerns.”*

*“Act upon complaints and keep us/staff up to date on progress.”*

*“Have a meeting once a month.”*

*“Be more proactive.”*

*“Act quicker when dealing with complaints, stop passing to other departments.”*

*“Understand Autism, more understanding and listen to the tenant.”*

## Communications and information

*“Listen to mine and the staff’s views and opinions.”*

*“Listen to customer complaints.”*

*“Communicate with tenants about what you do.”*

*“See the tenants more. Listen to our needs more.”*

*“Better communication and better action.”*

*“Listen to us more.”*

*“Get in touch more.”*

*“Listen to my problems.”*

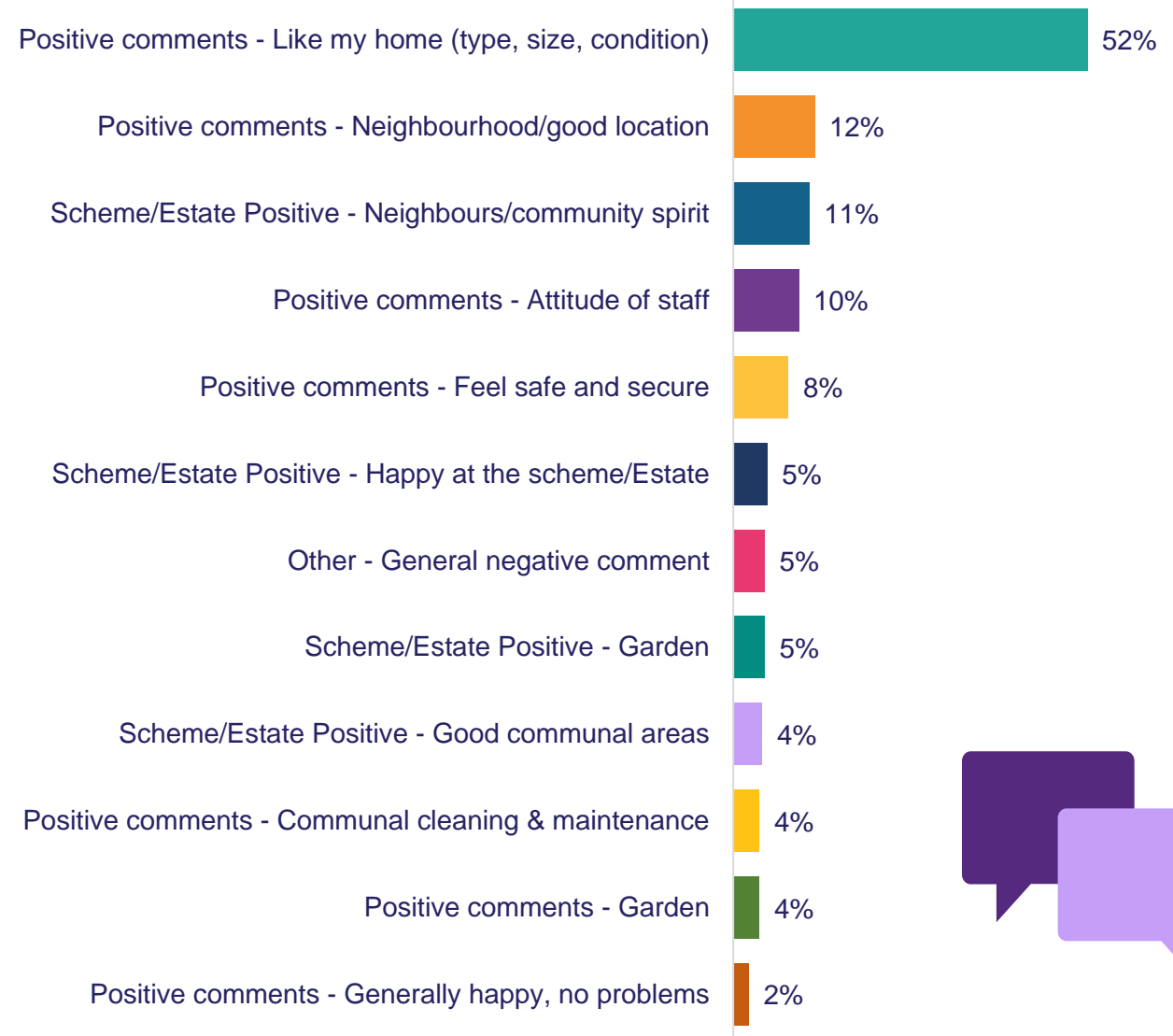
*“Ring the house phone. Let me know when coming up.”*

*“Speak more to the residents.”*

*“Better communication.”*



# Comments – Like About Home



Tenants were also asked what they like about their homes and 262 tenants gave comments.

Tenants most frequently mentioned that they like the type, size or condition of their home, followed by the neighbourhood and location of their home and the community spirit.

In addition, tenants praised the attitude of the staff and stated that they feel safe and secure in their homes.

Some tenants also positively referred to areas outside their individual homes, including the communal areas and gardens.

Other tenants made more general comments about being happy where they live and having had no problems.

While the vast majority of these comments are positive, a few tenants took this opportunity to make more negative comments, such as '*Nothing*'.

Examples of the types of comments received are demonstrated on the following page. Although categorised under the four main topics, some cover more than one area, with tenants praising multiple aspects of their homes.

# Like About Home – Comments

## Home

*“I like my bedroom, lounge and kitchen. Nice garden and I like the other clients and staff.”*

*“Sitting in the lounge watching TV.”*

*“The privacy.”*

*“It is the best flat ever, bright and lovely.”*

*“I love everything about my home. I enjoy using the kitchen to cook meals and there is enough space for everything. I wouldn’t change it for the world.”*

*“It is my home. I feel safe.”*

*“The bathroom, garden the kitchen, my room, sitting rooms and the staff.”*

*“It’s comfortable, clean and tidy and my friends live here.”*

*“It’s a good flat. it is comfortable. It’s a nice flat to live in.”*

*“I like my room because it has more privacy, and I am shy.”*

*“En-suite bathroom and kitchenette.”*

## Neighbourhood/location

*“People near, bus routes. Can walk to local shops.”*

*“The area where my house is.”*

*“It’s in a quiet area.”*

*“I’m in a secure place and location and I can come back to my safe place when I need to.”*

*“The space and location.”*

*“I like the area and my neighbours.”*

*“The position of the house.”*

*“Nice area. Spacious.”*

*“Nice residential area.”*

*“Quite spacious and good location.”*

*“Good location. Easy to maintain. Very few maintenance issues.”*

*“It’s a safe place to live.”*

*“Nice and clean. It’s very close to nice cafes and shops.”*

## Neighbours/community spirit

*“I love my home and neighbours.”*

*“The people I live with, the staff who support me.”*

*“The people I live with.”*

*“Communal feel, the lads.”*

*“Safe area, good neighbours.”*

*“My home is safe. I have all my things around me. I have nice neighbours and a garden. My staff can stay with me.”*

*“Housemates.”*

*“I like everyone.”*

*“Got my friends and staff.”*

*“The other tenants – location.”*

*“It is friendly.”*

*“It’s friendly, it’s a nice home.”*

*“I like it because I have housemates to keep me company.”*

*“The girls I live with. The staff.”*

## Staff

*“Staff and tenants are nice, and it looks posh.”*

*“Being treated with respect.”*

*“Nice location, brilliant support staff, my flat is my home.”*

*“Care is good.”*

*“The staff that help me.”*

*“It’s very relaxed and chilled, not too many people. I have a nice room and nice staff looking after me.”*

*“The tenants and staff.”*

*“The support staff.”*

*“That I have people who care about me.”*

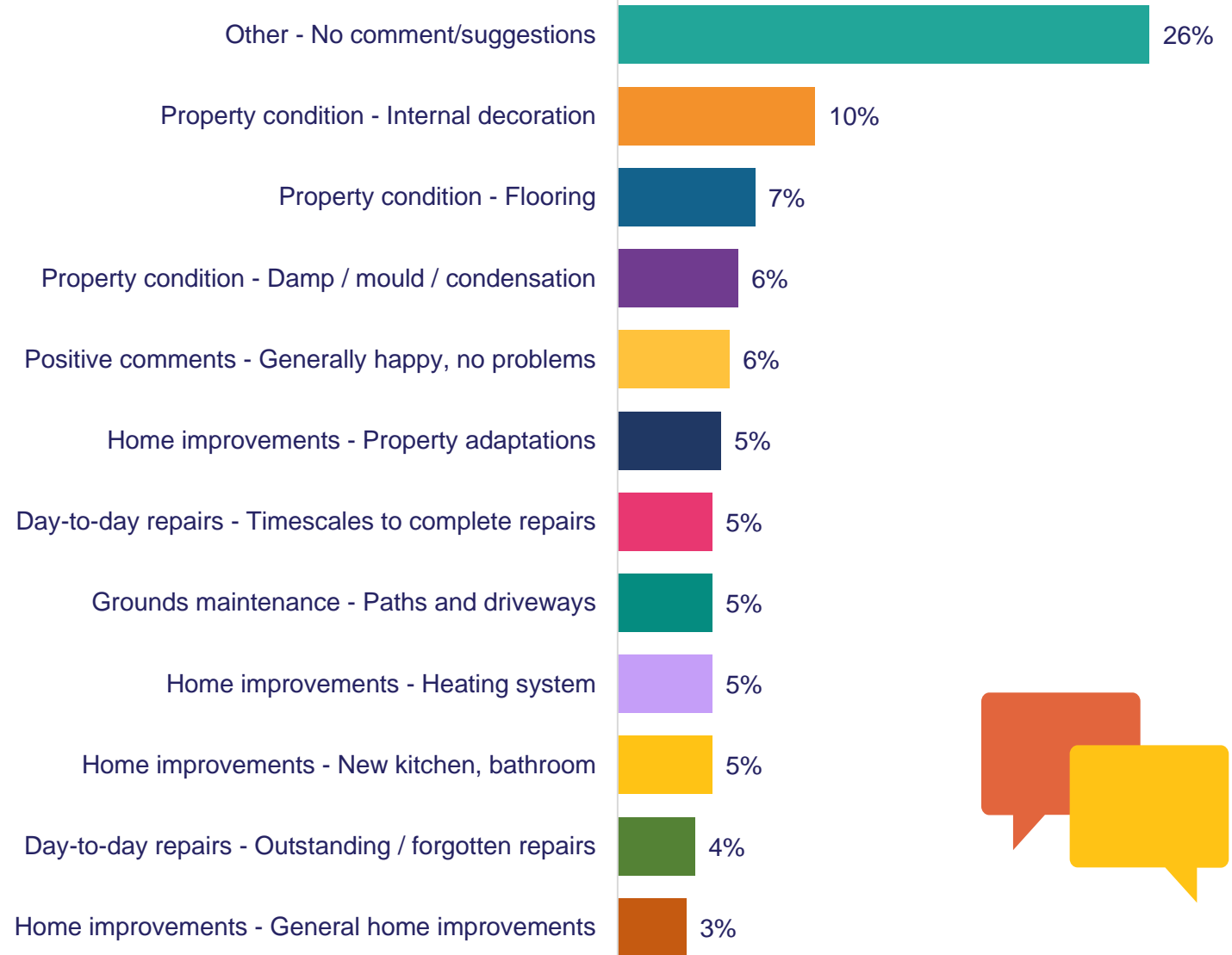
*“Good staff that support me, I can go out and come in as I want to.”*

*“My room and the staff.”*

*“Interacting and chatting to staff (support staff).”*

*“The staff.”*

# Comments – Dislike About Home



Tenants were then asked what they dislike about their homes, with 235 tenants giving comments – 11% less than the percentage that gave positive comments.

Of the negative comments made, the top three areas relate to the condition of the property, specifically internal decorations, flooring and issues with damp, mould or condensation.

Tenants also commented upon the repairs service and grounds maintenance, including the timescales to complete repairs and paths and driveways.

While other tenants would like home improvements, such as improved heating systems and new kitchens or bathrooms.

In addition, 6% of the tenants took this opportunity to make positive comments about their homes, with approximately a quarter of tenants making no comments or suggestions.

Examples of the comments received are once again shown on the following page and give further insight into what tenants are most concerned about regarding their homes.

# Dislike About Home – Comments

## Internal decorations

*“Walls need to be repainted.”*

*“Needs redecorating.”*

*“Dull and depressing - needs decorating.”*

*“I do need my flat painting all the way round and the hallways need painting too and I also need my board putting back on my boiler.”*

*“Decor and old carpets.”*

*“Standard of furnishings and decor.”*

*“Carpet in lounge, bathroom needs doing up.”*

*“The carpets in the lounge need replacing and an overall decor could improve the home where I live.”*

*“Not well maintained. Decorating has not been done since the tenants moved in. Driveway not fixed yet after over 20 months since reported. Gardeners not visiting as frequently.”*

## Flooring

*“The garden patio/path stones are all broken and not fixed in. Large hole in the floor making it extremely unsafe for me to use my wheelchair on.”*

*“Unsafe flooring throughout the house. Drain smell.”*

*“The pavement outside. Slabs are taken off, leaving some. Others are broken and it’s hazardous to staff and service users.”*

*“Needs new kitchen as the bottom of cupboards are dropping, doors falling off, the hob picks and chooses when it works. Bathroom floor is lifting and stinks of mould. The floor isn’t draining properly and flows into the hallway. Need more parking for staff and service users’ cars as getting complaints continuously from the cul de sac residents.”*

*“Flooring needs replacing in lounge area. Bathroom needs new bath and flooring, hoist needs replacing as it’s shared and keeps breaking.”*

## Damp, mould and condensation

*“The damp, no kitchen floor, gardens are untidy, furniture damaged and old. No curtains or blinds on communal areas.”*

*“The damp, paint on the walls.”*

*“The damp, maintenance of the garden.”*

*“Small bedroom. Bathroom with no window and is not in great condition. Damp, mildew, poor drain - raised in wet room. Radiators in poor condition.”*

*“The damp, decor and maintenance of the garden.”*

*“I dislike the repairs that have to be done such as damp in my wall electric plug sockets to be checked.”*

*“Damp in bedroom, no window in bathroom.”*

*“Dampness!”*

*“Sleeping in a room with mould, ruined blinds due to mould, no one listening to my repair issue.”*

## Home improvements

*“I need a higher grab rail in the bathroom.”*

*“Corners hurt me.”*

*“It’s not wheelchair accessible.”*

*“The hoist breaks down a lot. The bath doesn’t suit my needs.”*

*“We would like a lower wash basin and mirror.”*

*“Kitchen needs a new one - no one will tell me when we will get it.”*

*“Old draughty windows.”*

*“Not enough soundproofing between myself and my neighbour. Not enough storage - coat hanging space.”*

*“No shower.”*

*“I don’t like the back door, don’t like the handrail.”*

*“The state my bathroom is in.”*

*“More shelves in the bathroom.”*



# Wellbeing



# Damp & Mould

BeST also took the survey as an opportunity to ask tenants if they currently have any damp or mould problems in their homes.

Just over a fifth of tenants who responded to this question stated that they believe they currently have damp or mould in their home.

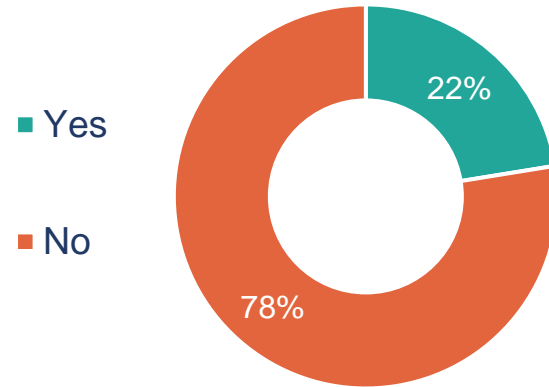
The majority of these tenants said that they had already reported the problem to BeST (90%).

The most instances of damp or mould were reported in the North West (19) and South East (18), with the fewest reported in Wales (2).

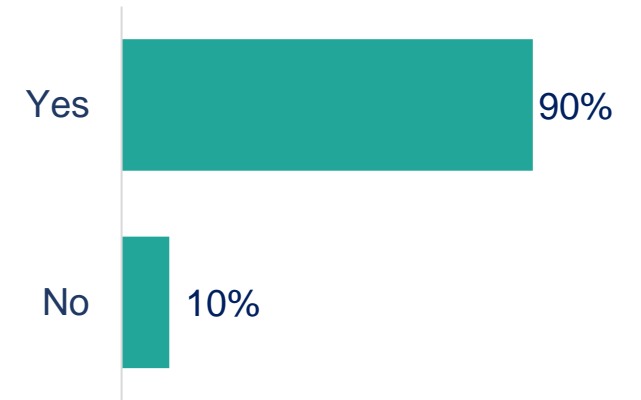
The details of the tenants with damp or mould issues have been passed back to BeST, with the tenants being advised this would happen when completing the survey.

These tenants should be contacted as a matter of urgency to build trust and reinforce that BeST does what it says it will. In addition, damp can cause health issues for tenants and further deterioration of properties.

## Damp/Mould in Home



## Reported it?



## By Area





# Trends



Satisfaction with key services has fallen in all but one area since 2022 – a trend that is being seen generally across the housing sector as noted on page 7, in light of landlords and tenants facing a number of external challenges.

Overall satisfaction has continued to drop from 72% in 2021 and 67% in 2022 to 62% in 2023.

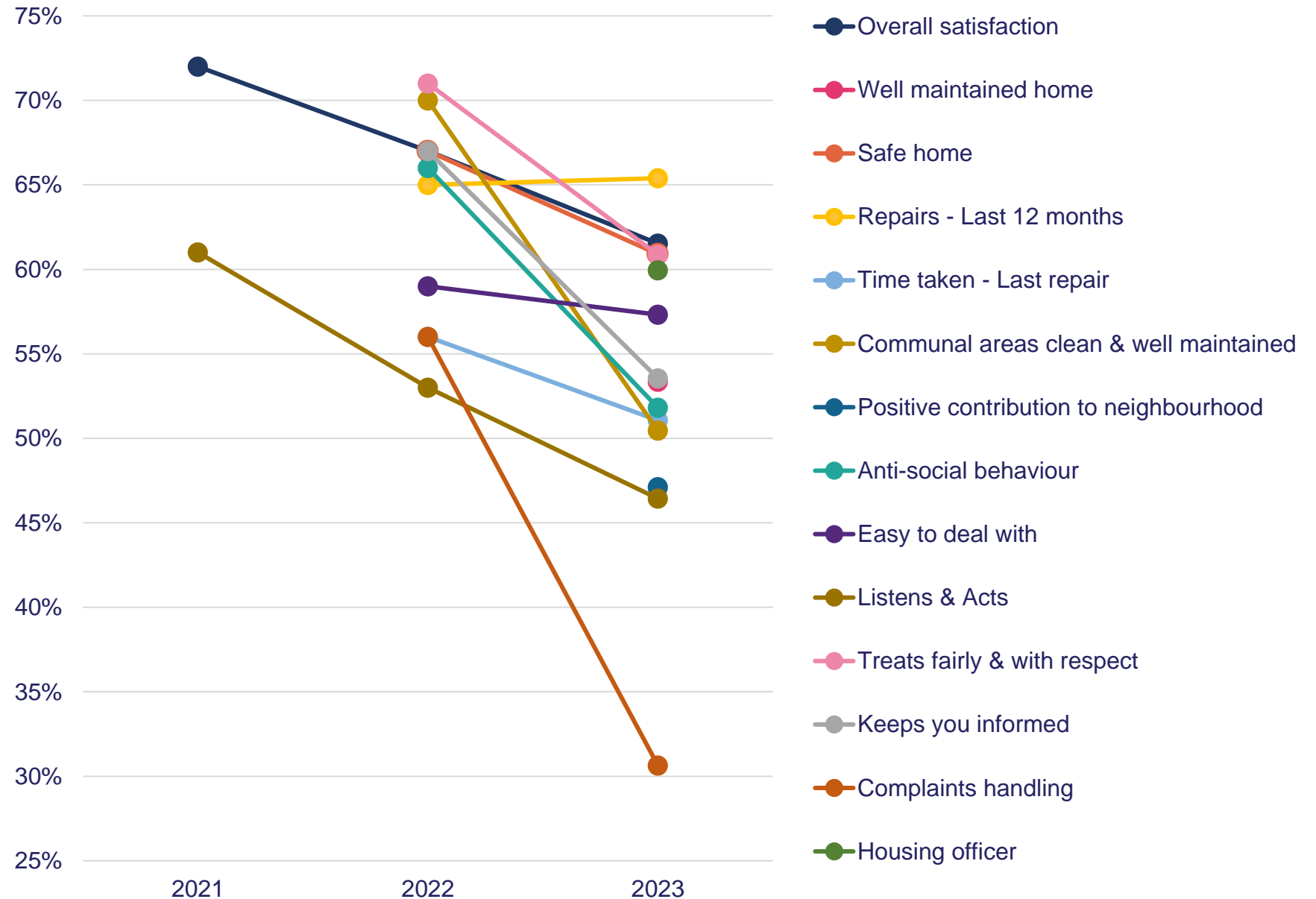
Although a decrease, this is not as significant as seen for other services since the previous survey, such as the handling of complaints (down from 56% to 31%) and the cleaning and maintenance of communal areas (down from 70% to 50%).

However, the way tenants are questioned about complaints has changed with the introduction of the TSMs, which has generally led to a decline in satisfaction across the sector.

Tenants are also less satisfied than they were with how BeST communicates with them, with drops for the ease of dealing with BeST, how views are listened to and acted upon, tenants being kept informed and feeling that they are treated fairly and with respect.

The only metric that has not decreased is the overall repairs service over the last 12 months, which has stayed the same.

# Trend Over Time





The table to the right further demonstrates the results of the 2023 survey against those from 2022 in a different format.

This evidences the general decline in tenant satisfaction. Although satisfaction with the repairs service over the last 12 months has remained the same since the previous survey was carried out. This is positive in the context of landlords still catching up with repairs after the pandemic and challenges around the availability and cost of labour and materials.

The largest decrease in satisfaction relates to complaints handling (down 25%), but as mentioned previously, the way this question is asked has changed since 2022. In addition, BeST has seen a notable increase in the number of complaints received, following a successful promotion campaign, meaning adjustments are necessary to adapt to this increased frequency.

It should be noted that the margin of error for the survey is  $\pm 4.5\%$ , so only changes of around 9% across the two surveys can be considered statistically significant. For example, satisfaction that BeST is easy to deal with has decreased by just 2%.

## Year on Year Change

	2022	2023	Change
Overall satisfaction	67%	62%	-5%
Well maintained home	--	53%	
Safe home	67%	61%	-6%
Repairs - Last 12 months	65%	65%	0%
Time taken - Last repair	56%	51%	-5%
Communal areas clean & well maintained	70%	50%	-20%
Positive contribution to neighbourhood	--	47%	
Anti-social behaviour	66%	52%	-14%
Easy to deal with	59%	57%	-2%
Listens & Acts	53%	46%	-7%
Keeps you informed	67%	54%	-13%
Treats fairly & with respect	71%	61%	-10%
Complaints handling	56%	31%	-25%





# Understanding Satisfaction





# Key Driver Analysis

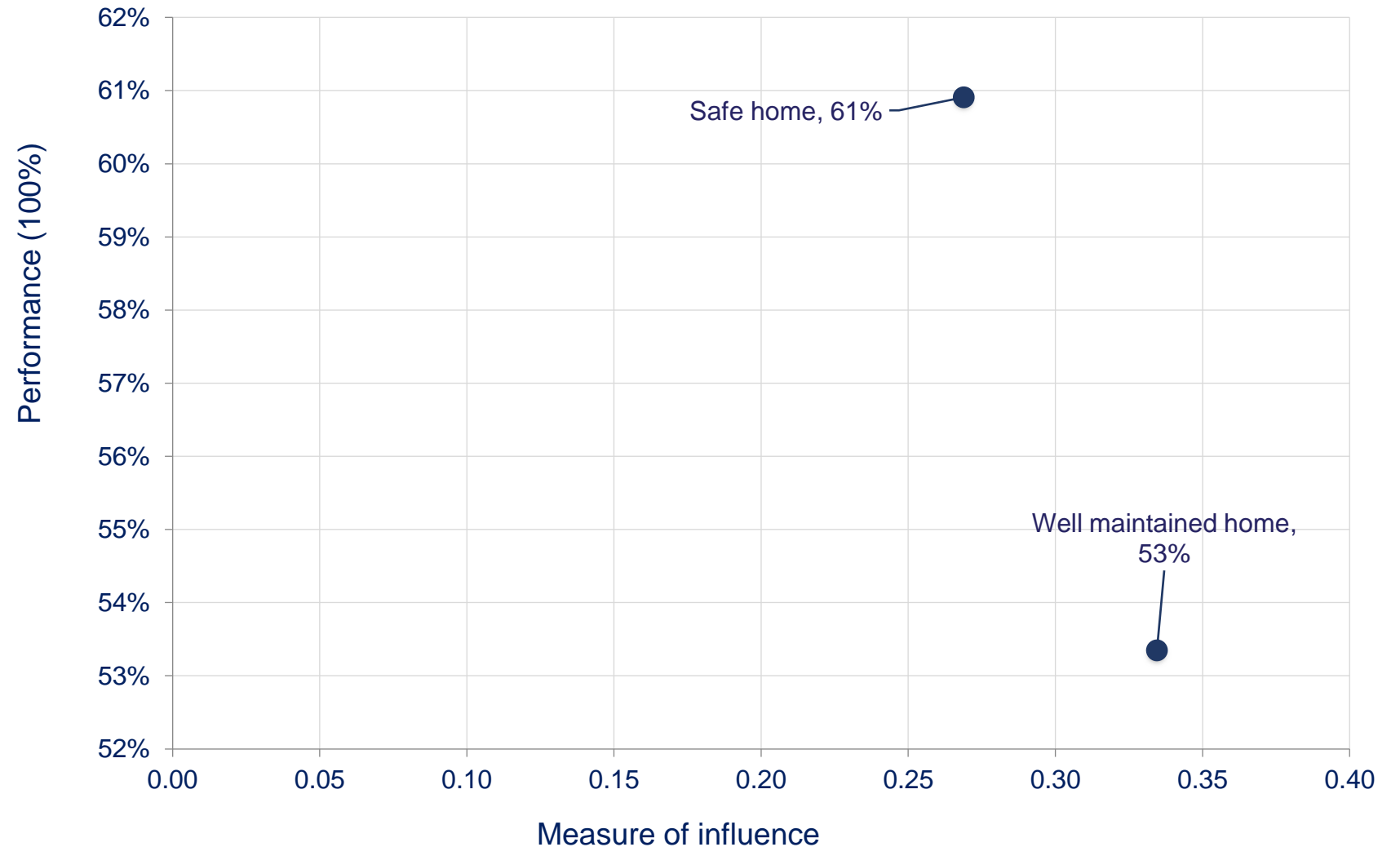
Key driver analysis is used to examine the relationship between the different variables (the questions asked in the survey) and determine which elements of the service are the key drivers for tenants' overall satisfaction.

In 2023, the most important driver for tenants' satisfaction with the overall services is that BeST provides a home that is well maintained, followed by the provision of a safe home.

No other metrics were found to have a significant influence on overall satisfaction.

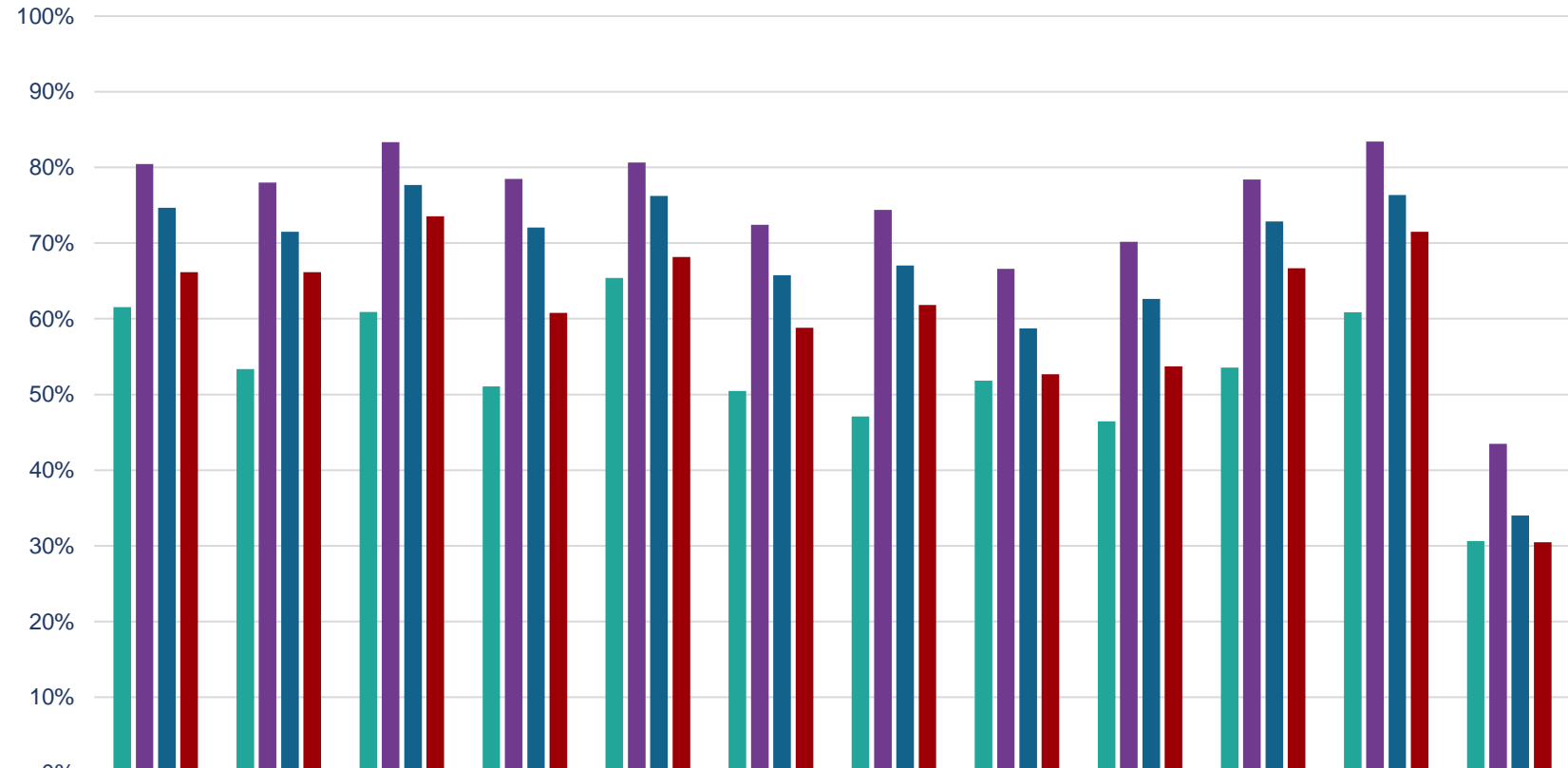
The implication of this analysis is that if improvements around the most influential measures can be achieved, it is more likely to lead to increased satisfaction with the overall service provision.

## Key Driver Analysis – Overall Satisfaction



# Benchmarking – Acuity Clients (LCRA)

## Satisfaction Levels Acuity Median Q1 – Q2 23/24



	Overall satisfaction	Well maintained home	Safe home	Time taken - Last repair	Repairs - Last 12 months	Communal areas clean & well maintained	Positive contribution to neighbourhood	Anti-social behaviour	Listens & Acts	Keeps you informed	Treats fairly & with respect	Complaints handling
■ BeST	62%	53%	61%	51%	65%	50%	47%	52%	46%	54%	61%	31%
■ Upper Quartile	80%	78%	83%	78%	81%	72%	74%	67%	70%	78%	83%	43%
■ Acuity Median	75%	71%	78%	72%	76%	66%	67%	59%	63%	73%	76%	34%
■ Lower Quartile	66%	66%	74%	61%	68%	59%	62%	53%	54%	67%	71%	30%
Quartile Position	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3
Number of Landlords	77	68	69	69	69	68	68	75	76	69	68	69

BeST’s performance on the core questions can be compared against Acuity’s clients who have been using the new TSM questions during 2023. The chart to the right demonstrates the quartile positions based on the results collected from Q1 and Q2 2023/24.

BeST’s 2023 ratings all fall below the median for this group and are all in the bottom quartile except for the handling of complaints (third quartile).

This chart also shows that while complaints handling is the lowest-performing measure for BeST and seems particularly low, this picture is replicated across Acuity’s clients and the sector generally.

This cohort is based on around 70 landlords of different types, sizes and locations, and mostly includes general needs tenants of different ages. Therefore, this comparison will not entirely reflect the tenant base of BeST but does provide some context into satisfaction across the sector. As more landlords complete TSM-based surveys, additional benchmarking data will become available, and BeST will be able to choose a peer group more in line with their own characteristics.



# Benchmarking – Acuity Benchmarking (Supported)

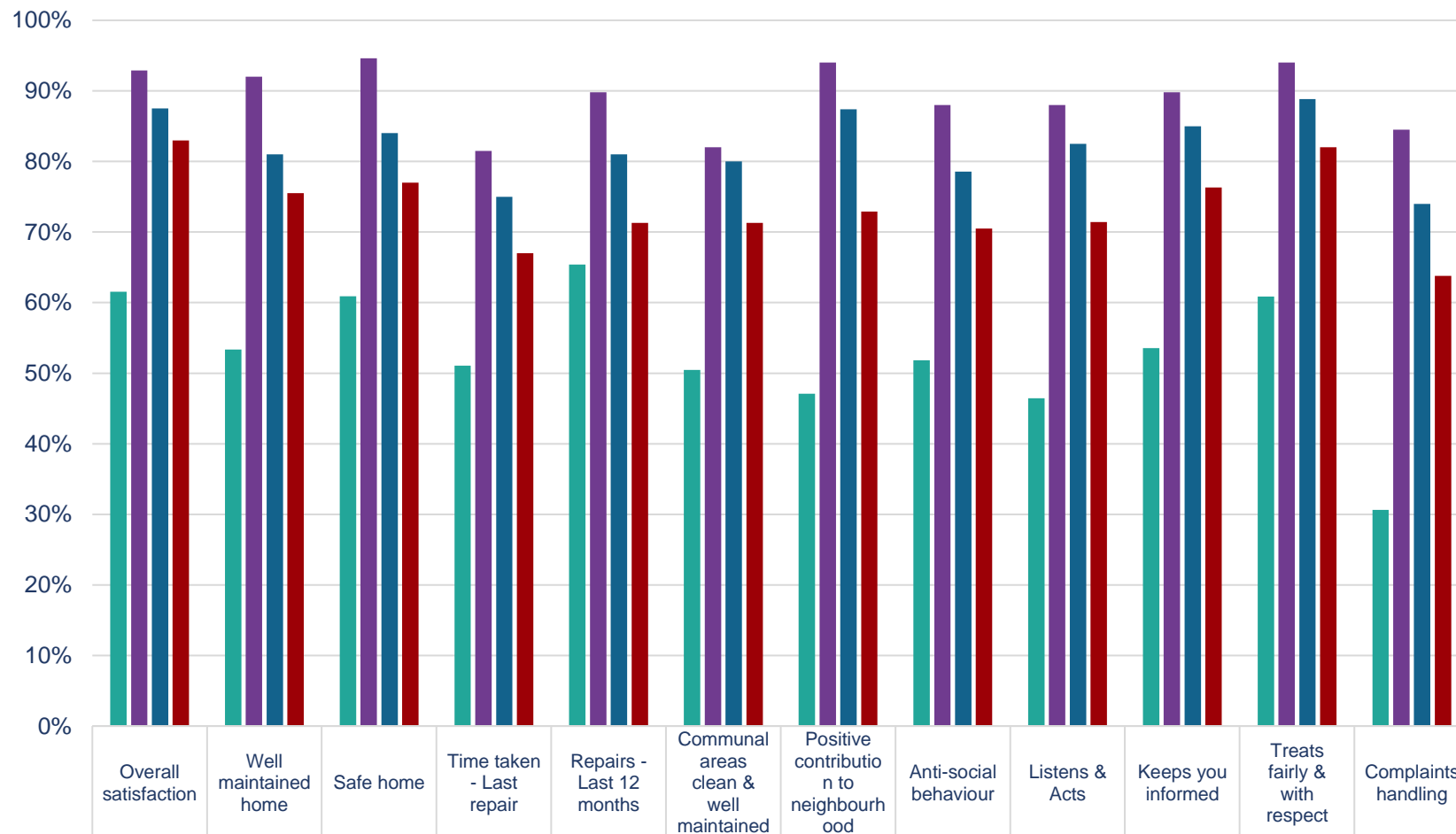
The chart to the right also provides benchmarking of the results of BeST's tenants against landlords with the same client type.

This utilises data from Acuity's Supported Benchmarking group, which is generally high-performing.

Again, all results are below the group's median, with all falling into the bottom quartile.

The differences are more significant than compared with those for all of Acuity's clients.

**Satisfaction Levels Acuity Median Q1 – Q2 23/24**



■ BeST	62%	53%	61%	51%	65%	50%	47%	52%	46%	54%	61%	31%
■ Upper Quartile	93%	92%	95%	82%	90%	82%	94%	88%	88%	90%	94%	85%
■ Acuity Median	88%	81%	84%	75%	81%	80%	87%	79%	83%	85%	89%	74%
■ Lower Quartile	83%	76%	77%	67%	71%	71%	73%	71%	71%	76%	82%	64%
Quartile Position	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Number of Landlords	17	10	13	9	15	9	4	8	14	10	10	8



This table further demonstrates the 2023 satisfaction survey results by area.

As has been shown throughout this report, generally, tenants in the North area are the most satisfied. In fact, they are most satisfied with all but three metrics; the cleaning and maintenance of the communal areas, the handling of complaints and the overall service from their Housing Officer.

On the other hand, tenants in the South West are the least satisfied with all but three measures.

For example, in regard to overall satisfaction with the service provided by BeST, 74% of tenants in the North are satisfied, compared with 50% in the South West. While satisfaction with the positive contribution made to the neighbourhood is over twice as high in the North than in the South West (67% and 32% respectively).

There may be a number of reasons to explain this, such as:

- Age of stock
- Property location
- Category of tenancy
- Type of accommodation
- Differences in the provision of services
- Age of tenants



## Area

	North	North East	North West	East	Midlands	South East	South West	Wales
Overall satisfaction	74%	72%	57%	57%	61%	58%	50%	69%
Well maintained home	71%	44%	43%	52%	63%	48%	47%	60%
Safe home	87%	61%	53%	62%	56%	50%	56%	63%
Repairs - Last 12 months	81%	68%	60%	65%	68%	58%	54%	78%
Time taken - Last repair	74%	68%	40%	44%	55%	42%	35%	72%
Communal areas clean & well maintained	61%	40%	48%	55%	38%	56%	36%	68%
Positive contribution to neighbourhood	67%	42%	48%	45%	42%	38%	32%	62%
Anti-social behaviour	75%	60%	50%	57%	39%	42%	22%	61%
Easy to deal with	79%	70%	63%	51%	57%	43%	41%	60%
Listens & Acts	65%	40%	44%	46%	55%	39%	30%	52%
Keeps you informed	69%	67%	54%	60%	53%	35%	33%	56%
Treats fairly & with respect	80%	67%	61%	62%	61%	51%	40%	62%
Complaints handling	42%	27%	8%	44%	50%	13%	33%	33%
Housing officer	75%	75%	63%	56%	62%	46%	38%	72%

Base: North = 72, North East = 34, North West = 38, East = 42, Midlands = 49, South East = 53, South West = 32, Wales = 30

# Property Type

	Room	Flat
Overall satisfaction	59%	65%
Well maintained home	49%	62%
Safe home	59%	65%
Repairs - Last 12 months	64%	68%
Time taken - Last repair	50%	53%
Communal areas clean & well maintained	46%	63%
Positive contribution to neighbourhood	42%	55%
Anti-social behaviour	52%	51%
Easy to deal with	56%	62%
Listens & Acts	43%	51%
Keeps you informed	51%	60%
Treats fairly & with respect	59%	65%
Complaints handling	21%	40%
Housing officer	56%	68%

Base: Room = 217, Flat = 114

The table shows the results for the two main property types; rooms and flats.

As might be expected, tenants residing in a flat are more satisfied than those who have a room.

This can be for a number of reasons:

- Size of accommodation
- Shared facilities
- Relationships with other tenants
- Privacy

The only exception to this pattern is that tenants living in a room are marginally more satisfied with the handling of anti-social behaviour than those living in a flat. This may be due to the support provided to tenants living in shared accommodation and the need to deal with any issues affecting the home.

One of the biggest differences is for the cleaning and maintenance of the communal areas (17% more tenants in the flats are satisfied), with these areas being more likely to be used and important to tenants residing in rooms.





# Response Method

The results have also been split by the method used to respond to the survey. Returning a postal questionnaire was by far the most popular method, with only 14 tenants completing their survey online.

The table opposite shows a clear pattern across the two methods, with tenants that responded by post likely to be more satisfied than those using the online method.

This is consistent with other similar surveys, with one theory being that older tenants are more likely to choose to respond by post and are generally more satisfied than their younger counterparts.

There are only two exceptions, with the tenants that responded online being more satisfied that their communal areas are kept clean and well maintained and with the handling of complaints.



	Postal	Online
Overall satisfaction	62%	59%
Well maintained home	53%	53%
Safe home	61%	55%
Repairs - Last 12 months	66%	38%
Time taken - Last repair	51%	38%
Communal areas clean & well maintained	50%	62%
Positive contribution to neighbourhood	47%	42%
Anti-social behaviour	52%	37%
Easy to deal with	58%	39%
Listens & Acts	47%	28%
Keeps you informed	54%	41%
Treats fairly & with respect	61%	47%
Complaints handling	30%	44%
Housing officer	61%	31%

Base: Postal = 336, Online = 14

# Assistance Completing Survey

As part of the survey, tenants were asked if anyone had helped them to fill in the questionnaire.

The table to the right demonstrates that tenants who were helped by a friend or family member to complete their survey, are generally less satisfied.

For example, 60% of tenants who completed the survey by themselves are satisfied with the time taken to complete their last repair, compared with 23% of tenants who were helped by a friend or family member to complete the survey.

The results also tend to be more positive when a carer or support worker assisted the tenant. This may be because the tenant felt uncomfortable answering honestly or a more positive answer was given for neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

	Alone	Carer or support worker	Friend or family
Overall satisfaction	59%	62%	50%
Well maintained home	53%	53%	32%
Safe home	59%	59%	63%
Repairs - Last 12 months	62%	67%	52%
Time taken - Last repair	60%	51%	23%
Communal areas clean & well maintained	61%	48%	35%
Positive contribution to neighbourhood	57%	43%	28%
Anti-social behaviour	51%	53%	33%
Easy to deal with	55%	58%	36%
Listens & Acts	48%	46%	23%
Keeps you informed	48%	56%	34%
Treats fairly & with respect	52%	64%	47%
Complaints handling	40%	25%	42%
Housing officer	62%	59%	45%

Base: Alone = 74, Carer or support worker = 232, Friend or family = 26, BeST employee = 3, Volunteer = 1, Other = 7



# Assistance Completing Survey – Neithers

Looking at the neither satisfied nor dissatisfied responses by whether tenants had assistance completing the survey shows the following:

- In all but two areas (complaints handling and Housing Officer), this option was selected most frequently when friends or family members assisted tenants with completing the form.
- In all but one area (treated fairly and with respect), this option was selected the least frequently when the survey was completed by the tenant alone.
- When the survey was completed with a carer or support worker, this option was selected most for complaints handling and Housing Officer.

As stated previously, these results may indicate that the tenants feel uncomfortable giving honest answers when they are being assisted.

In addition, several of the questions have a 'not applicable/don't know' option, which might be chosen less frequently when assistance is given or not being read out and fully explained to tenants. For future surveys, the importance of this option may need to be highlighted.



	Alone	Carer or support worker	Friend or family
Overall satisfaction	10%	19%	21%
Well maintained home	11%	17%	22%
Safe home	7%	21%	24%
Repairs - Last 12 months	11%	15%	24%
Time taken - Last repair	8%	15%	35%
Communal areas clean & well maintained	14%	24%	31%
Positive contribution to neighbourhood	18%	43%	49%
Anti-social behaviour	13%	38%	41%
Easy to deal with	10%	25%	37%
Listens & Acts	15%	28%	33%
Keeps you informed	18%	25%	39%
Treats fairly & with respect	26%	24%	34%
Complaints handling	10%	23%	19%
Housing officer	10%	25%	24%

Base: Alone = 74, Carer or support worker = 232, Friend or family = 26, BeST employee = 3, Volunteer = 1, Other = 7



# Conclusion



## Satisfaction 2023



## Conclusion

The survey in 2023 incorporated all of the TSMs for the first time, which became mandatory for all Registered Providers of social housing to collect from April 2023. The results provide an important baseline for BeST moving forward as a way of tracking satisfaction, measuring future service improvements and benchmarking performance against other landlords.

Overall, the survey shows that satisfaction with the services provided by BeST has declined, although this is in the context of decreasing satisfaction across the sector. Nonetheless, when compared with other landlords BeST falls below the median for all of the TSMs.

Around six out of ten tenants are satisfied with the overall service provided by BeST (62%). Just one measure has satisfaction above this; the overall repairs service over the last 12 months (65%). While 61% of tenants are satisfied that they are provided with a safe home and treated fairly and with respect.

The lowest level of satisfaction and the highest level of dissatisfaction is for complaints handling, but possible explanations for this are given throughout this report. In addition to the changing format of the question since the introduction of the TSMs, dissatisfaction with this measure is likely to incorporate more than just how the tenant's complaint was handled, for example, tenants not getting the outcome they expected or still awaiting a response.

The survey included multiple open-ended questions giving tenants the opportunity to say what they like and dislike about their homes, as well as to suggest areas for improvement. Tenants most frequently mentioned they would like improvements to the repairs service, the condition of their properties and the way BeST communicates with them. Tenants like their homes for a multitude of reasons, including the size and condition, their neighbours, the location and that they feel safe.

This report has also analysed the ratings by the 8 different management areas across which BeST operates. This demonstrates that tenants in the North area tend to be the most satisfied, with those in the South West being the least satisfied. However, there are some anomalies to this, with tenants in Wales being the most satisfied with the cleaning and maintenance of the communal areas and the Midlands having the highest level of satisfaction with complaints handling.

The results also show that tenants in flats are more satisfied than those in rooms and tenants that responded by post are more satisfied than those that used the online method. In addition, tenants who were assisted by a friend or family member to complete the survey tend to be the least satisfied.

# Recommendations

BeST's values underline how it works with its tenants:

- Bespoke – tailoring services where possible
- Exciting – providing good homes that tenants enjoy and working together with them
- Safe and secure – ensuring tenants feel safe in their homes
- Tenant focused – this drives everything!

The results of the 2023 survey suggest that BeST is on its way to providing services that match these values but have also highlighted services that require improvement.

The comments made by tenants give insight into what they are most concerned about and will help BeST target areas that may need some development.

Shown opposite are some recommendations that BeST may wish to follow up on to help improve satisfaction in the future and ensure the services it delivers align with its values.



## How complaints are dealt with

Dealing with complaints has become a priority area for the sector with a focus on this in the new TSM questions and the increasing powers of the Housing Ombudsman. The survey now includes a qualifying question, meaning only those who have made complaints give their satisfaction rating. This does not necessarily mean they have had a complaint dealt with under the complaints process and may have contributed to the fall in satisfaction. Despite this, the way complaints are handled is important so any failures in service should be addressed. Therefore, it is recommended that BeST revisits this area to see if any improvements in the process could be made, as well as how this process is communicated to tenants. In particular, when asked to give improvement suggestions, several tenants referred to the time taken to deal with complaints and how they are kept informed about progress.



## Maintenance of property

BeST took the opportunity of the survey to understand tenants' views of whether they have damp or mould in their property and a considerable proportion stated that they do. Whilst there may not be quick fixes to understand the causes of these problems, BeST should ensure that each tenant is contacted and where possible these issues are resolved as a matter of urgency. This will help build trust with tenants that their views are welcomed and acted upon. A review of the time taken to complete repairs (and how expected response times are communicated to tenants) would also be beneficial, as satisfaction with this metric has dropped since the previous survey, with just 51% of tenants satisfied. In addition, the timescales to complete repairs was the most frequent specific improvement suggestion from tenants. With repairs being the most common reason for tenant-landlord interaction and the maintenance of the home being the key driver of overall satisfaction, improvements in these areas are likely to have a positive impact overall.



## Listening to tenants

Tenants were asked what they like and dislike about their homes, as well as what BeST could do to improve. It is recommended that this feedback is analysed in greater detail to identify any quick wins that would improve satisfaction with tenants' homes. Flooring and internal decoration were issues noted by many, and whilst budgets may not allow for all works to be completed, communicating with tenants to acknowledge their feedback could help to improve satisfaction, with action plans developed to address the areas identified. This is especially important as listening to tenants' views and acting upon them attracted the second lowest level of satisfaction in the survey (46%).



This research project was carried out to conform with ISO20252:2019 and the MRS Code of Conduct.

For further information on this report please contact:

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